

TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 474

March 1998



Red Fox by Eva Davis

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TFN MEETINGS

- Sunday, March 1, 1998 - OBSERVING THE NIGHT SKY
an illustrated talk by Philip Gebhardt, a teacher
in Whitby and an amateur astronomer
- The speaker will tell us about features in the
night sky that we should all be able to see with
the naked eye or at least with our binoculars.
 - + a social hour beginning at 2 pm with free juice
and coffee
 - + a quilt raffle ticket sale to benefit Bird Studies
Canada. Tickets: \$5 each.

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, April 5, 1998

NEXT NEWLETTER: April 1998 (to be mailed in mid-March)

IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER

Requested: Essays (no longer than 500 words), reviews (no longer than 300 words), poems, cartoons, sketches and newspaper clippings.

Subjects: plants, animals and natural areas in the Toronto region, especially reports of personal experiences with wildlife.

Please include your name, address and telephone number so submissions can be acknowledged. With newspaper clippings, include source and date of each clipping.

Time-dated material such as notices of meetings should be submitted at least six weeks before the month in which the event is to take place.

Send material to: Toronto Field Naturalists
605 - 14 College St.
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1K2

Artists who draw birds -- especially those who work in the field -- often have a profound understanding of their subjects. They have to, if they're to interpret and then reproduce the essence of 'bird' -- the patterns, poses, movements and landscapes that are as much part of the picture as the creature itself. ... All birdwatchers should draw -- however badly -- the birds they see, if only as a way of remembering how lovely they are.

from "Flying Colours" by Nick Hammond in BBC WILDLIFE, Vol. 15, No. 3, March 1997

TFN OUTINGS

REMEMBER: Children and visitors are welcome on all outings but please, **NO PETS!**
 To get to outings on time, check TTC routes and schedules by calling 393-4636.
 Check the weather by calling 661-0123 so you will know what to wear on outings which go rain or shine.

- Wednesday
 March 4
 10:30 am
 HUMBER BAY PARK - bird study
 Lakeshore, Etobicoke
 Leader: Margaret Catto
 Meet at the park entrance on the south side of Lake Shore Blvd. West opposite Park Lawn Rd. Lunch optional.
 Bring binoculars, bird book, note book and be prepared to stop, look and listen as we look for early migrants and wintering waterfowl at this lakeshore park.
- Saturday
 March 7
 10:30 am
 ST. LAWRENCE MARKET - nature arts
 Toronto
 Leader: Alf Buchanan
 Meet inside the market entrance (beside the elevators). The market is on the south side of Front St. East at Jarvis St.
 Bring sketching materials and stool and/or camera. Lunch optional. As usual we will discuss our "work" after lunch.
- Wednesday
 March 11
 10:30 am
 \$ ferry tickets
 TORONTO ISLANDS - nature walk
 Lakeshore, Toronto
 Leader: Ann Millett
 Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. Bring lunch and warm clothing, binoculars and notebook.
 Some early migrating birds may have arrived and waterfowl should still be present as we explore the Great Lakes' shoreline habitats of the Islands.
- Saturday
 March 14
 10 am
 HIGH PARK TRAINING CENTRE - TFN Leaders' training
 Toronto
 Leader: Morris Sorensen
 Meet at 77 High Pk. Blvd. (Hibiscus International Building).
 See President's Report for more information (page 5).
 Call 968-6266 or 755-6030 if you want to attend.
- Sunday
 March 15
 2 pm
 YELLOW CREEK - nature walk
 Don tributary, Toronto
 Leader: Peter Hare
 Meet at the southwest corner of Yonge St. and Davisville Ave.
 In this walk we will explore the new right-of-way recently opened between Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and the Yellow Creek Ravine.
- Wednesday
 March 18
 10 am and 10:45 am
 THE LIVING MACHINE AT THE BODY SHOP - tour
 North York
 Leader: Helen Mills
 Call Helen Mills at 781-7663 to sign up and get details about where to meet. Morning only. [Two tours this morning.]
 This is a repeat of last month's tour which was overbooked -- so this is your second chance to see how the Body Shop has installed a living machine which uses living plants and animals to transform polluted water into clean drinkable water.

MARCH OUTINGS (cont'd)

- Thursday
March 19
10:30 am
COL. DANFORTH PARK - nature walk
Leader: Karin Fawthrop
Meet at the park entrance on the south side of Kingston Rd. at Col. Danforth Trail. Lunch optional.
This park is connected by trails north to Morningside Park and south to Lake Ontario. The valley is very deep and wild with lots of places for wintering birds to hide and feed and early migrants to shelter.
Highland Creek, Scarborough
- Saturday
March 21
1:30 pm
EASTERN RAVINE & BEACHES - discovery walk
Leader: Jerry Belan
Meet on the north side of Queen St. East at Glen Manor Rd. at the Ivan Forrest Park.
This is one of six DISCOVERY WALKS created by Toronto Parks Dept. (See page 17-18 in TFN 475 - Feb.) Come prepared for a long walk. These are basically self-guided walks so there are signs to read along the way as well as much to look at and enjoy. Welcome spring with a walk!
Toronto
- Sunday
March 22
10 am
HIGH PARK - early migrating birds
Leader: Ross Harris
Meet at the park entrance on the south side of Bloor St. West opposite High Park Ave. Bring lunch.
The migration of birds back to our area and beyond has begun. We will explore the park from north to south, hoping to meet the birds. Bring binoculars and note book and be prepared to stop, look and listen.
Toronto
- Thursday
March 26
10:30 am
CEDARVALE RAVINE - nature walk
Leader: Ruth Munson
Meet at the Heath St. exit of the St. Clair West subway stn. Morning only.
This walk will be on fairly level ground. This will be an exploration.
Don tributary, Toronto
- Saturday
March 28
1 pm
ASYLUM CREEK - heritage walk
Leaders: Jeff Stinson & Ian Wheal
Meet at the southwest corner of Queen St. West and Shaw St.
This will be another exploration of a lost creek -- a tributary of Garrison Creek -- and will be mostly walking on streets. □

Adjacent agricultural land usually means herbicides and pesticides; bridges, paved roads and built-up areas mean urban runoff, all adversely affecting the closest waterway. Trees and natural green cover mean surface groundwater reaching the stream has been cleansed through root systems. Studies showed that if you look at the land use within 100 metres either side (of a stream), you'd get the same information as if you looked at the whole catchment area.

extracted from "Satellite data gives firm a big edge" by Gordon Sanderson in the LONDON FREE PRESS, Dec. 6, 1997

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As President of TFN I am constantly reminded as to how much our club depends upon volunteers. Indeed we have no paid staff. Volunteers handle our correspondence, produce our newsletters, set up and man our displays, co-ordinate our outings, arrange our speakers, attend numerous meetings, liase with other environmental groups, educate politicians to support environmental causes, compile records of flora and fauna and perform countless other tasks.

One area where we are always looking for help is that of leading field trips. To this end I hope that many of you will set aside some time on Saturday, March 14th to attend our third annual leadership training session. Previous sessions have taken place at Todmorden Mills and at the Metro Zoo. This year, in accordance with our policy of rotating the session to various parts of the city, we will meet at the High Park Training Centre located at 77 High Park Blvd. at Parkside Dr.

As I write this, the program is not yet finalized. Rest assured however that we will have a number of experienced outings' leaders available to share helpful tips and valuable information with you in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Even if you have never led a TFN walk, please consider joining us. You don't have to be a professional naturalist to lead an outing. Indeed, few of us are. We invite experienced leaders to come too. Those of you who have attended in the past know that our panel discussion and open forum are a great time to share ideas, voice concerns and resolve problems. I've been leading nature walks for various organizations for years now, yet I always learn something new just by talking to others.

The High Park Training Centre is located in the offices of Hibiscus International Cultural Tours located at 77 High Park Blvd. (at the corner of High Park Blvd. and Parkside Dr.). It is a 15 minute walk south along Parkside from the Keele subway station or you may take the Queensway Bus # 80 southbound from Keele station on the hour or half hour. The Centre is in a converted private home. Please enter by the side door and follow the signs to the second floor. Note that the location is on High Park Blvd., not High Park Ave!

The session will begin promptly at 10 am. Bring lunch. Coffee and snacks will be available. I anticipate that the indoor session will end around 1:30 pm. Weather permitting, a short optional walk in High Park will follow.

Registration is limited, so please call me at 416-755-6030 or leave a message at the TFN office at 416-968-6255 if you plan to attend. I hope to see many of you there.

President's Field Notes #5

March is a transitional month in our area. Many signs of spring can be observed by the watchful naturalist, yet fierce winter storms are also a possibility and major snowfalls can occur after spells of mild weather.

Here are a few excerpts from my March 1997 field notes.

▷

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (cont'd)

March 8, 1997 - Leslie Spit. Snowy owl (immature) photographed on tern nesting raft. Saw fairly large tree which had been nearly felled by beavers. Temperature -1°C with moderate snow cover.

March 11 - Saw a real sign of spring today -- at least 3 red-winged blackbirds calling from a tree along Mimico Creek near Montgomery's Inn. Black-capped chickadees giving mating calls. Crows and grey/black squirrels active. Lots of water running in creek. Sunny, about 0°C , a lovely day!

March 15 - Up at 4:45 am for a photo outing to Muskoka. Still really winter up there. Ran into heavy snowstorm between Barrie and Orillia but cleared by Gravenhurst! Enjoyed photographing waterfalls and ice formations in Bracebridge area (High Falls, etc.) and of Arrowhead Park, north of Huntsville. Despite deep snow, temperature of -9°C , chickadees were giving mating calls.

March 16 - Morningside Park - mostly sunny, about -4°C , heavy crust of ice over snow. Ice crystals in snow glistening like diamonds! Pre-walk with Starr for TFN outing later in month. Noted belted kingfisher, red squirrel, crows mobbing what was probably a red-tailed hawk.

March 19 - Toronto Islands - sunny, clouding over later in the day, TFN birding outing with Louise Orr yielded a Carolina wren among many others. The oldsquaws were beginning to change plumage.

March 22 - From my home in Scarborough I was able to get a good look at Comet Hale Bop around 7:30 pm.

March 23 - With Starr to Leslie Spit looking for coyote signs. Found tracks, scat, fur and feathers. Flushed up several woodcock and also my first killdeer and robin of the season. Some years I observe the latter overwintering in ravines. Also got a good look at a cottontail rabbit. A sunny day but temperature -4°C with some wind chill. That evening between 10-11 pm I was able to observe and photograph the lunar eclipse.

March 30 (Easter Sunday) - Starr and I led a TFN walk in Morningside Park with about 15 participants. Temperature was about $+3^{\circ}\text{C}$, dropping to 0°C later in the afternoon with some snow starting to fall. Otherwise a vastly different landscape from our March 16 pre-walk as nearly all the snow had melted and there was not a lot of ice remaining. The skunk cabbages were pushing up in some areas and pussy willows were out. I saw my first eastern chipmunk of the season, and Starr, who can always find fungi, spotted a dryad's saddle. Birding highlights included a winter wren, which despite its name, is generally a sign of spring in our area.

March 31 - Birding at Thomson Memorial Park, Scarborough, yielded my first brown creeper of the year. A belted kingfisher gave its noisy rattle and flew off along Highland Creek. Downy woodpeckers were numerous and many robins thronged the park. Male red-winged blackbirds called along the slopes. The silver maples were in bud. Ah, Spring!

That's it for now. March is a particularly joyful month despite (or maybe because of) the changeable weather and I urge you to get out and experience it.

Morris Sorensen

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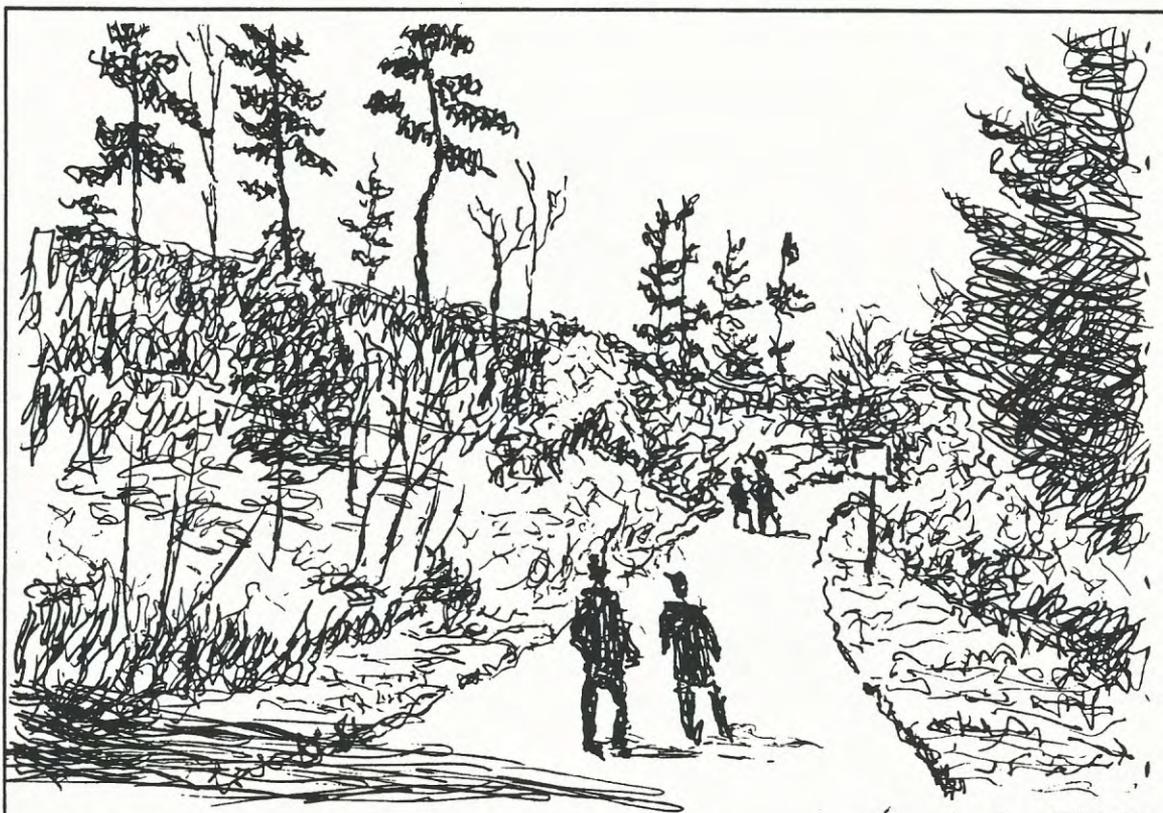
KEEPING IN TOUCH

Dec. 1997

The scene below is from one of the walks I take. In the summer of 1996 a pair of beaver moved into the pond in the West Don Valley between Page and Alamosa, built a couple of dams and a lodge. They also cut down several trees and stripped off the branches for their winter food cache. Someone reported that they had three young this spring (1997), but I am afraid something(s) got these later. A friend found the remains of one on the bicycle-pedestrian path. There are, of course, foxes, raccoons, hawks there, and even a peregrine falcon and coyotes have been reported. Other frequenters are: blue herons, little green herons, mallard ducks, painted turtles and even white tailed deer. I have seen some of these myself but not all, of course. Sightings often depend on being there at the right time of day. It's quite a woody place considering it is in the very midst of suburbia!

Alen McCombie

▷



WALKERS IN THE EAST DON VALLEY, SOUTH OF FINCH, sketched by Alen McCombie

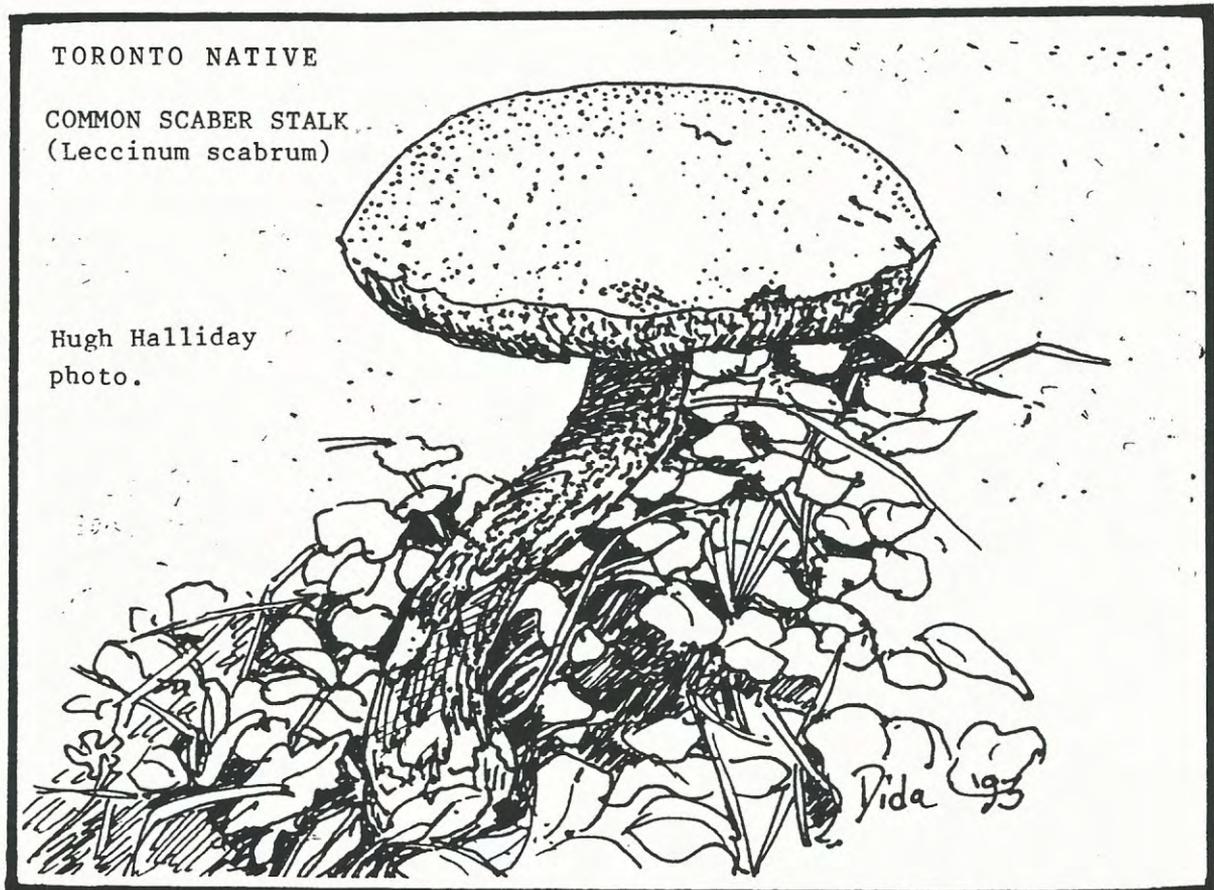
Radio is off.
This March morning, the robin
perseveres in song.

haiku by Diana Banville
Good Friday, 1997

Jan. 16, 1998

Yes I am still keeping the TFN amphibian and reptile sightings database. I hope before the year 2000 to get these published as one or two accounts at a time in the TFN newsletter. When they are all done they will be a source of information for everyone and I may even pull out the accounts and bind these together so that TFN can sell them. I appreciate your reliable submissions.

Bob Johnson
Metropolitan Toronto Zoo



Jan. 22, 1998

I often think of you all on your outings. Unfortunately arthritis has put a stop to my walking. I was shocked when I read of East Point destruction. It was one of my favourite areas. All the best to you all.

Betty Greenacre

Comment: See page 22 for news about East Point Park. A letter has gone out from TFN asking about the developments at East Point. Anyone wanting information should write to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority at 5 Shoreham Dr., Downsview M3N 1S4 and send a copy to your municipal representative.

H.J. □

OUTINGS REPORTS

Following are three outings reports received from leaders. Not all are just like these, but all are on file so we know where we went and how it all worked out.

High Park evening ramble - June 18, 1997

The main goal of this walk was to find wild lupines in bloom and it was entirely successful. Although slightly past the peak, the lupines were still flowering in abundance in the area between West Road and Wendigo Creek, north of the Grenadier Restaurant. In early spring, Parks and Recreation had managed a small controlled burn in the area to bring back vegetation typical of a black oak savannah. The burn has since been called a success as the abundance of the lupines in the area seems to prove. Very little evidence of the burn was visible as the area had in a couple of months, grown back lush and healthy.

Another interesting plant observed on the walk was the cup plant which grows on the open area sloping down to Grenadier Pond, next to a grove of Sassafras. The cup plant had become very uncommon in High Park, and the two healthy patches in this area are a result of efforts to bring back some of the vegetation fast disappearing from the park.

A fog that started to drift in from the lake at the beginning of the walk gradually deepened as the walk progressed. It added a lot of fun and atmosphere although it also created a slight problem with orientation, especially near the end when the fog was thickest and it was becoming dark. At the end of the walk, about half the party went off to look for serviceberry at a small knoll just north of the allotment gardens. Unfortunately, the fog was so thick, I totally lost my sense of direction and led them north instead of east. We never did find the knoll.

The group got to observe close-hand, a growing scourge of High Park, when mountain bikers forced the group off the path. Grabbing vegetation to help them gain steep slopes, the bikers were seen to have little concern for the deep gullies they are creating on the sandy, easily eroded hills. An increasing problem for many parks and natural areas in Toronto and elsewhere.

Elaine Farragher



Webbed morning patterns
stretched out in the sunlight as
ferns play cat's cradle.

haiku by Karen Parker

OUTINGS REPORTS (cont'd)

Davenport Trail

On Sept. 14, 1997 the TFN heritage-nature walk of the Old Stockyards section, Davenport Trail and Ridge went north on Runnymede Rd. and east on Ryding Ave., into Runnymede Park, a gem on the former Davenport Ridge (soil sandy and dry, lots of old trees). This is an under-utilized park with an active CP Rail spur-line running through it with short trains (switching) once or twice a week.

This trail spur-line is unique and shows that a live rail line and a park can co-exist. Trains are hand-flagged and move slowly in daytime and cross busy St. Clair Ave. West.

After pausing in the park we walked north on Cobalt Ave. to St. Clair Ave. West and then to the south side along the abandoned CN Rail right-of-way (ex CNR and GTR siding) now proposed as an urban nature-heritage trail (Old Stockyards and Davenport Trail). Such a rails to trails urban trail, small park (on the site of Canada Packers employees park) could, with markers and signage and other industrial rail-natural features, be a lasting link in the chain of Davenport Ridge. It would recognize its rare flora of prairie grasses, shrubs, etc. as well as providing a memorial to native people who passed this way. Such a trail could serve as a fitting memorial to the old stockyards and their workers and in terms of urban design, be a positive blend of past and future, as well it could be a valuable attraction and asset to future commercial-residential development by establishing a connection to the now vanished Davenport Ridge.

Ian Wheal

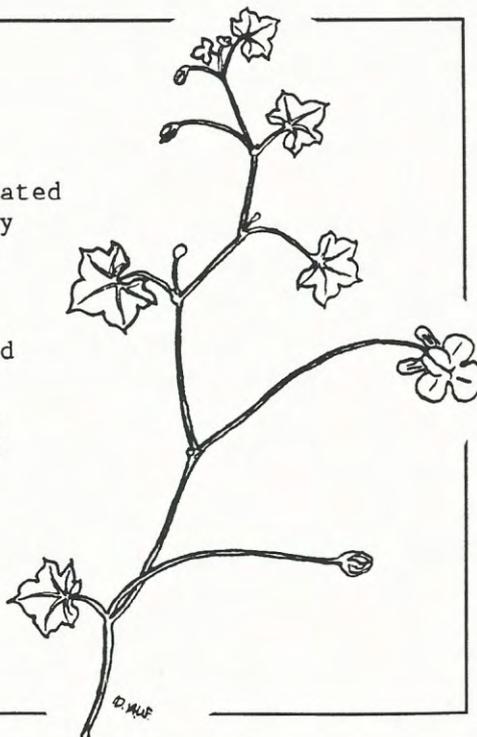


KENILWORTH IVY or IVY-LEAVED TOADFLAX

is known by many other names (See illustrated article, "Kenilworth Ivy - or Whatever" by Jean Macdonald, in TFN 338, March, 1981).

D. Andrew White made this drawing from a slip taken from the plant growing around his home in Scarborough, especially near concrete areas. (It's a limestone-loving plant of Eurasia.) If you have it around your home, let us know.

ref.: A FIELD GUIDE TO WILDFLOWERS
by Peterson & McKenny.



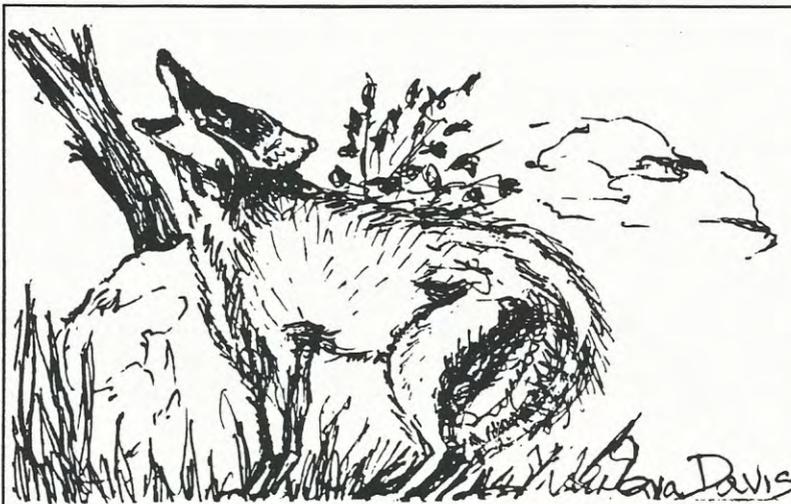
OUTINGS REPORTS (cont'd)

Burke Brook Ravine - Oct. 29, 1997

At the beginning I gave a brief talk about the history and development of Lawrence Park, standing near the historical plaque to the Hon. William McDougall. Using the "Historical Walking Tour of Lawrence Park", I pointed out three of the original houses from the 1909 plans, as we walked along St. Edmund's Drive to Alexander Muir Memorial Gardens and past the lawn bowling and tennis club, which was part of the original plan. A milder, mostly sunny day made our walk through the ravine and the Sherwood Park forest unusually pleasant. Although channelled for much of the way, Burke Brook, where visible, seemed free of debris and obvious pollution. As ever, many people were walking their dogs, mostly one or two, although one couple in the woods had about 12, some running free. The main path in the woods has been widened and lined with logs, probably to facilitate Parks vehicles. However, many areas throughout have been given over to "natural regeneration" and workers were busy fencing off an over-used area. No washrooms were available except at the George Locke Library at the beginning. Those in the park were locked. We ate lunch sitting on a log in the woods. Some left after that, but most walked through to Bayview, where the conducted walk ended... The outstanding feature of this walk in autumn is the trees in all their variety and colour. In addition to the blooming witch hazel, we observed Basswood, Ironwood (Blue Beech), many huge American Beech, Red Oak and at least one White Oak, Red, Sugar, Silver and Norway Maple, Rock(?) Elm, White and Yellow Birch, Eastern Cottonwood, Linden, White Ash, Black Cherry, and Staghorn Sumac. Besides Ring-billed Gulls overhead and a few Rock Doves, we saw two Red-tailed Hawks, 12 American Crows, 6 Black-capped Chickadees, one White-breasted Nuthatch, one Downy Woodpecker, one Winter Wren and one Song Sparrow. The latter was bathing in the brook and then hopped up on a fallen branch to fluff his feathers and preen. Some Blue Jays flew over and there were a few Starlings and House Sparrows. No thrushes were seen, although I had seen one Hermit Thrush in the underbrush east of Bayview, behind the CNIB, on the previous day.

Phobe Cleverley

□



THE COYOTE tends to draw its tail close to its hind legs, according to Ontario MNR's booklet WOLVES & COYOTES IN ONTARIO, as shown in this drawing by Eva Davis. (Phone 755-6030 with coyote observations.)

Lake Ontario Mid-Winter Waterfowl Inventory

January 11, 1998

Compiled by: Bill Edmunds

Species	TORONTO AREA													Hamilton	Niagara	TOTAL	
	Kingston	Quinte	Presqu'ile	Port Hope	Durham	Route1	Route2	Route3	Route4	Route5	Route6	Route7	Subtotal				
Red-throated Loon	1																1
Common Loon	17							1					1	1	1		26
Horned Grebe	2													1	1	1	4
Red-necked Grebe										1			1	2	1		4
Great Cormorant	1																1
Double-crested Cormorant																7	9
Tundra Swan	42													63			105
Trumpeter Swan	2					4				1			5	9			16
Mute Swan			15			29	6	32	28	16	47	18	176	49			240
Snow Goose	1			1						1			1				3
Brant														2			2
Canada Goose	9021	45		1132	1943	5895	404	146	119	559	1041	1602	9766	3487	303		25697
Green-winged Teal	3					2				2			4	2			9
American Black Duck	568	10		95	77	452	19	12	11	8	85	132	719	301	121		1891
Mallard	2542	133		1270	448	5355	193	487	628	374	1737	1193	9967	2747	1022		18129
Northern Pintail	4			1		2							2	50			57
Northern Shoveler	2									1			1	58			61
Gadwall	53						15	369	2	35	328		749	57			859
American Wigeon	1							1					37	4			42
Canvasback		22							4	2			6	125	4		157
Redhead	298	11	9	1050	35	155		352		5	111	37	660	34	1		2098
Ring-necked Duck	5					1				1			2	43			50
Greater Scaup	285	2		43	452	1278		708		7	64	4	2061	11933	5		14781
Lesser Scaup	47		5	12		4		4					8	1363	1		1436
Scaup sp.					400												400
Harlequin Duck							2			1			3				3
Oldsquaw	32167	94	527	31	155		10548	1165	890	5848	1696	3325	23472	3344	15		59805
Black Scoter	4				1	2							2	1			8
Surf Scoter					1												1
White-winged Scoter	1108	1						1		1	8		10	8	91		1218
Common Goldeneye	4862	127	118	254	3951	685	71	287	88	37	935	711	2814	10041	379		22546
Bufflehead	714	28	32	70	251	402	27	169	245	140	169	249	1401	720	144		3360
Hooded Merganser	17							1	2	4			1	8	4		29
Common Merganser	17641			20	129	81	50	3	28	50	208	44	464	3119	795		22168
Red-breasted Merganser	31	14	1	10	115	69	20	16	36	2	29	7	179	103	265		718
Ruddy Duck						2							4	6	9		15
American Coot	3			7			1		1			3	7	12	106	2	130
Scoter sp.					2								35	35	60		97
Duck sp.		87		3	303	4000							4000				4393
Mallard X Black Duck				3					5				5				8
Total Birds	69442	574	707	4002	8263	18418	11356	3754	2087	7096	6501	7365	56577	37848	3158		180571
Total Species	28	11	7	14	12	17	12	17	14	22	16	13	29	31	18		36
Bald Eagle	24												1	1	1		26

TPN 474 - 12
 WINTER WATERFOWL COUNT

LAKE ONTARIO MID-WINTER WATERFOWL INVENTORY

Routes: Kingston Area (Ivy Lea to Prince Edward Point)
 Quinte (Wellers Bay to Point Petre)
 Presqu'ile (Provincial Park area)
 Port Hope (Wicklów to Wesleyville)
 Durham (Wesleyville to Whitby)
 Toronto (Whitby to Oakville)-Route 1-Whitby to Rouge
 2-Rouge R. to Coatsworth Cut
 3-Eastern Headland to Cherry St.
 4-Toronto Islands
 5-Parliament St. to Humber R.
 6-Humber R. to Watersedge Park
 7-Watersedge Park to Bronte
 Hamilton (Bronte to 50 Point + Hamilton Bay)
 Niagara (50 Point to Niagara-on-the-Lake)

Conditions: The temperature ranged from -10°C to -5°C , and the wind was strong (up to 40 km/h), from W to NW. Visibility was quite good, although most groups said that there were many unidentifiable ducks flying well offshore "in the haze". Most bays and channels were open, due to the warm temperatures that we enjoyed in December. The sky was clear during the morning, but clouded over during the afternoon.

Remarks: This is the 52nd Duck Count for the Toronto Ornithological Club and the eighth year that we are reporting Census results for the entire Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario. Low numbers were observed for only a few species (e.g. No Wood Ducks!); generally numbers reported were average or above-average (compared with the past 8 years). For the entire census area (Kingston to Niagara-on-the-Lake), 180,571 waterfowl were found of 36 species. This is the highest number of waterfowl ever recorded on this count; the previous high was 162,775 in 1996. Record numbers for Mallard, Scaup, Oldsquaw, Common Goldeneye and Common Merganser contributed to this record count. Kingston had their usual high numbers of Oldsquaw, but the Toronto area also had record Oldsquaw numbers. Kingston also had record high numbers of Common Merganser, white Greater Scaup were concentrated in Hamilton. Common Goldeneye were everywhere, but were concentrated in Hamilton.

In the Toronto area, a record 56,577 waterfowl from 29 species were seen. Average numbers for the past 7 years area 36,379 birds and 26 species. Record high numbers were seen for Mute Swan, Mallard, Redhead, Oldsquaw, Bufflehead and Ruddy Duck. Low numbers were recorded for Canada Goose (only 9,967!), Northern Shoveler, and White-winged Scoter. Rarities included the second record for Red-necked Grebe, 1 Snow Goose, 4 Green-winged Teal, 2 Northern Pintail, 6 Canvasback, 2 Ring-necked Duck, 3 Harlequin Duck, 2 Black Scoter, 8 Hooded Merganser, 6 Ruddy Duck, 12 American Coot, and an adult Bald Eagle.

Thanks to all the clubs and individuals who participated. Next year's count will take place on Jan. 10, 1999.

Bill Edmunds, Compiler
 Toronto Ornithological Club □

FOR READING

A COMPARISON OF THREE WILDFLOWER FIELD GUIDES

When I first purchased a copy of NEWCOMB'S WILDFLOWER GUIDE (Boston: Little Brown, 1977, \$25.95 soft cover) -- when it was only \$16.95 for the hard cover edition -- I was dismayed to find it didn't contain many pretty coloured pictures. However, one quickly learns that colour is one of the least significant features in identifying wildflowers. Much more important are form and structure which are superbly rendered in line drawings by Gordon Morrison. Likewise, books containing photos of flowers, while nice to look at, are less satisfactory as field guides as no photograph can capture all the details of leaf, stem, flower and fruit as a line drawing can. A special feature of Newcomb (as it is familiarly called) is the system it uses for keying out plants. Believe me, if one takes the time to work through it, it forces one to really look at a plant and it does work! Other advantages of Newcomb are that it concentrates on Northeastern and North-central North America and it includes, in addition to wildflowers, the common flowering shrubs and vines of these areas.

A second choice might be A FIELD GUIDE TO WILDFLOWERS in the Peterson series (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1968, \$24.95 soft cover). Not as systematic in its approach as Newcomb, it groups plants together by flower colour -- white, yellow, red and blue. While it does have more coloured plates than Newcomb, it, too, relies predominately on line drawings.

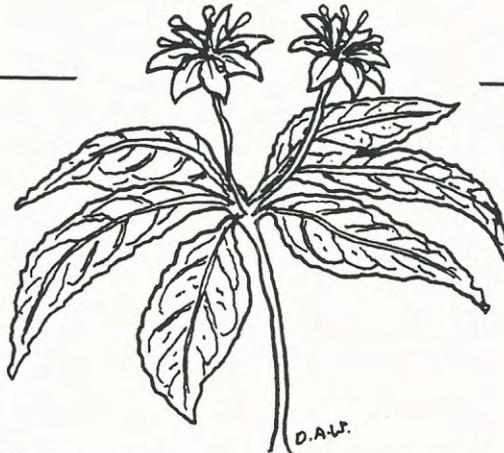
One other recent book that caught my attention is FOREST PLANTS OF CENTRAL ONTARIO by Brenda Chalmers et al. (Edmonton: Lone Pine, 1996, \$24.95). With both photos and line drawings, this would seem to make a good companion volume for anyone who spends time in Ontario's cottage country (Muskoka, Algonquin, Georgian Bay, etc) as it includes, in addition to the common wildflowers of these areas, some of the trees, shrubs, sedges, rushes, ferns, mosses and liverworts.

extracted from 'The Naturalists Bookshelf' in the WOOD DUCK (Hamilton), Vol. 50, No. 8, April 1997

STARFLOWER,

a Toronto native
member of the
Primrose family,
has been found in
at least 8
locations.

Drawing by
D. Andrew White



FOR READING (cont'd)

RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

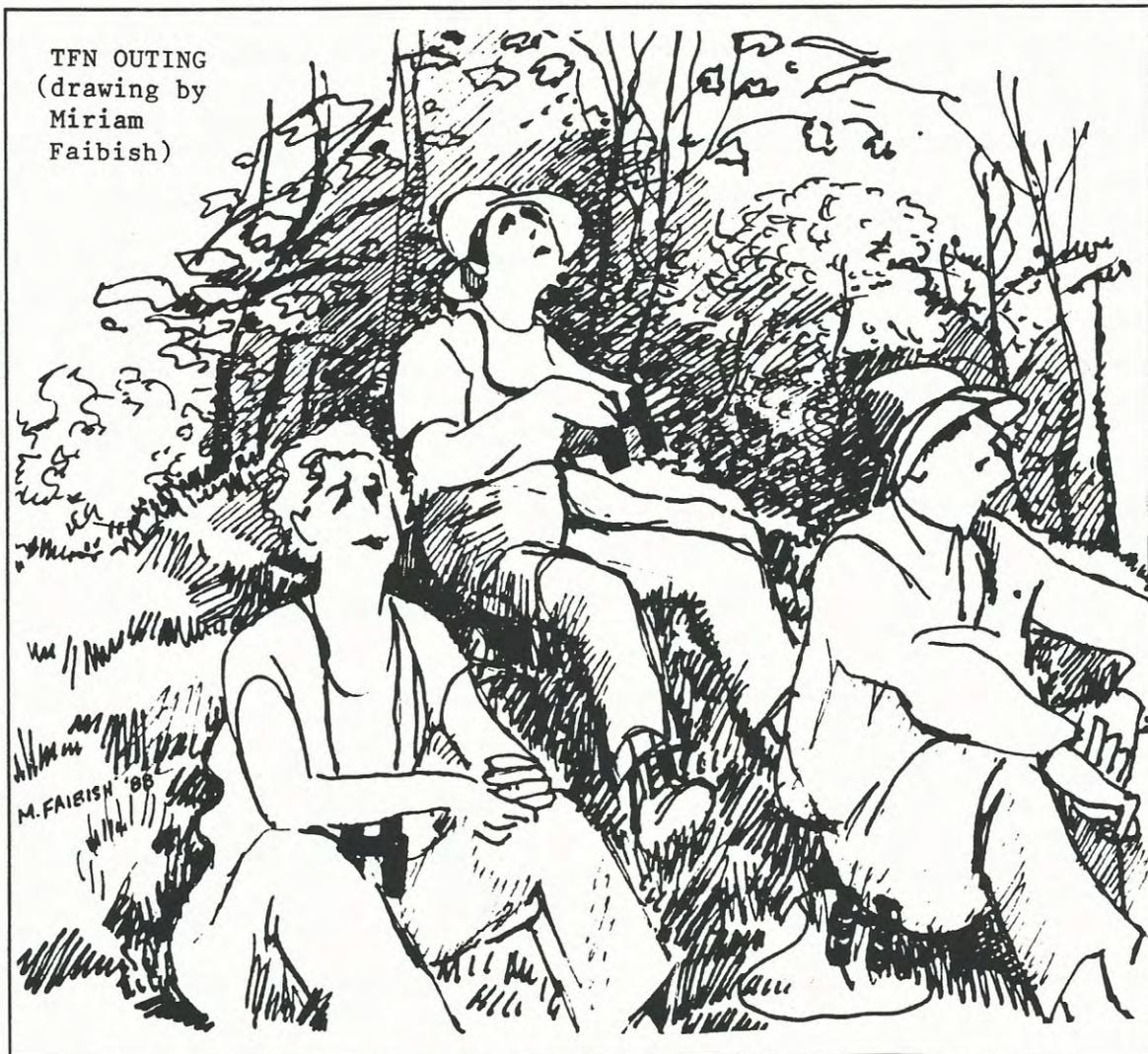
PLANTS OF THE KINGSTON REGION by Adele Crowder, published by the Fowler Herbarium, Dept. of Biology, Queen's University, Kingston, Ont., K7L 3N6, \$14 postage included, 133 pages.

This list of the plants of the Kingston area includes an introduction, references, bibliography, maps and an index.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY, ONTARIO by Peter Christie, published by Natural Heritage/ Natural History Inc., Toronto, 1997, 144 pages, \$12.95.

This book takes a comprehensive look at the little-known residents of a well-known corner of rural Ontario. Included are descriptions, illustrations, maps, references, a list of singing periods, and an index.

H.J. □



WINTER MOTHS

You never know what you're going to see on a TFN outing. On Nov. 19, 1997, Phoebe Cleverley led a walk in Earl Bales Park where we found dozens of pale brown moths walking over the oak leaf litter and snow.

On Dec. 3, George Bryant led a walk in High Park where we found more moths in the leaf litter and hundreds more on an oak tree trunk. One wingless moth was also spotted.

Although all the moths looked pale brown at a distance, we could distinguish two types when we got a closer look. Identifying them was an exercise in frustration. I finally got a name for one at a Toronto Entomology Association meeting. Later I found an excellent library book, "Insects Harmful to Forest Trees", by R. Martineau. Published by the Canadian Forestry Service in 1984, it has excellent photographs and details on both species. Now out of print, unfortunately.

The most abundant moth was the Fall Cankerworm, *Alsophila pometaria*. It is greyish-brown with two narrow wing bands of black edged with white which end in white blotches at the outer wing margin.

The other moth was the Bruce spanworm, *Operophtera bruceata*. It is pale brown with a narrow brown line across the wing ending in a dark brown blotch. These are the males; the females of both species are wingless. The cankerworm female is dark grey, the spanworm female dark brown.

Both species have a similar life history. The moths emerge from their pupas in or on the ground late in the year. The females may emerge a day or two before or after the males. They climb the tree trunks and wait for the males who are most active at sunset. The spanworm lays her eggs in bark crevices, the cankerworm on the bark of twigs or branches

The eggs hatch in the spring and the caterpillars munch leaves -- almost any hardwood will do but maple is a favourite -- until the end of June. Then they spin a silken thread on which they drop to the ground, spin a cocoon, and pupate for four to five months.

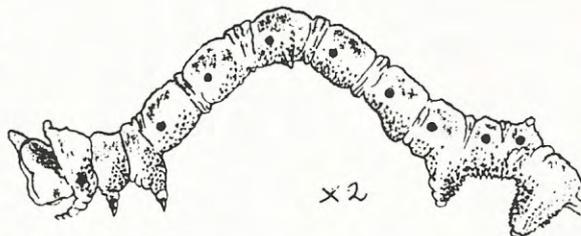
And then the cycle begins again as the moths emerge, long after you've put away bug net and jars, thinking it's going to be a long, long winter without any insects.

Carol Sellers

□

CLEFT-HEADED SPANWORM
larva of PEPPER-&-SALT MOTH
drawn by D. Andrew White -
common on Toronto willows and
other deciduous trees.

ref.: BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS,
Golden Guide



A JEWEL OF A RAVINE

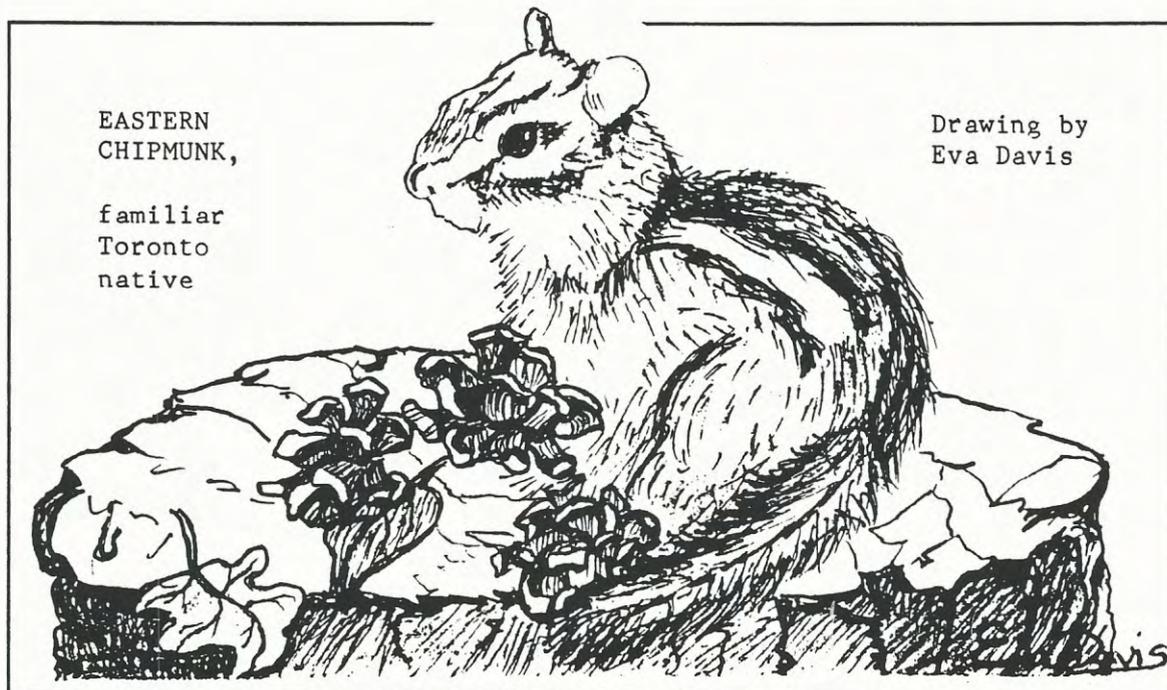
One of the tiniest of Metro's ravine jewels is Glen Stewart, a thriving remnant of Toronto's old red and white oak forests. The ravine runs from the noise and traffic of Kingston Road south to the noise and traffic of Queen Street East, green lungs working for us against the ongoing pollution, small as this stretch of parkland is. The segment which particularly delights me is, of course, the upper fraction from Kingston Road to Glen Manor Drive, where the stream is still unburied. The lower fraction is buried under "proper" mowable grass and tree growth equally properly thinned to a tall and elderly few. The burial of the stream remains an irremediable fact of long-ago managerial misjudgement.

In the fall the natural area is at its best, a mix of huge old trees, with oak predominating, and almost the second tallest growth the waist-high thrust of jewelweed with its peculiarly pungent aroma. Signs tell us that Toronto Parks plan reintroduction of native grasses and wildflowers. While I am presently puzzled as to how any grasses would find a foothold in the midst of all that jewelweed, I have to trust Parks to know what they are up to. We do owe them deep thanks for what they have already achieved in the way of preservation and public awareness of this lovely little ravine.

Eva Davis

Comment: Members may be interested to learn that the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation has a small booklet called "Glen Stewart Ravine Nature Trail" containing maps, a little history, rules for visitors to the ravine, natural history including sketches of common plants. Call 392-1111 to obtain one. See page 4 for details of March 21 outing to this ravine. Glen Stewart is now on the route of one of the Discovery Walks

□



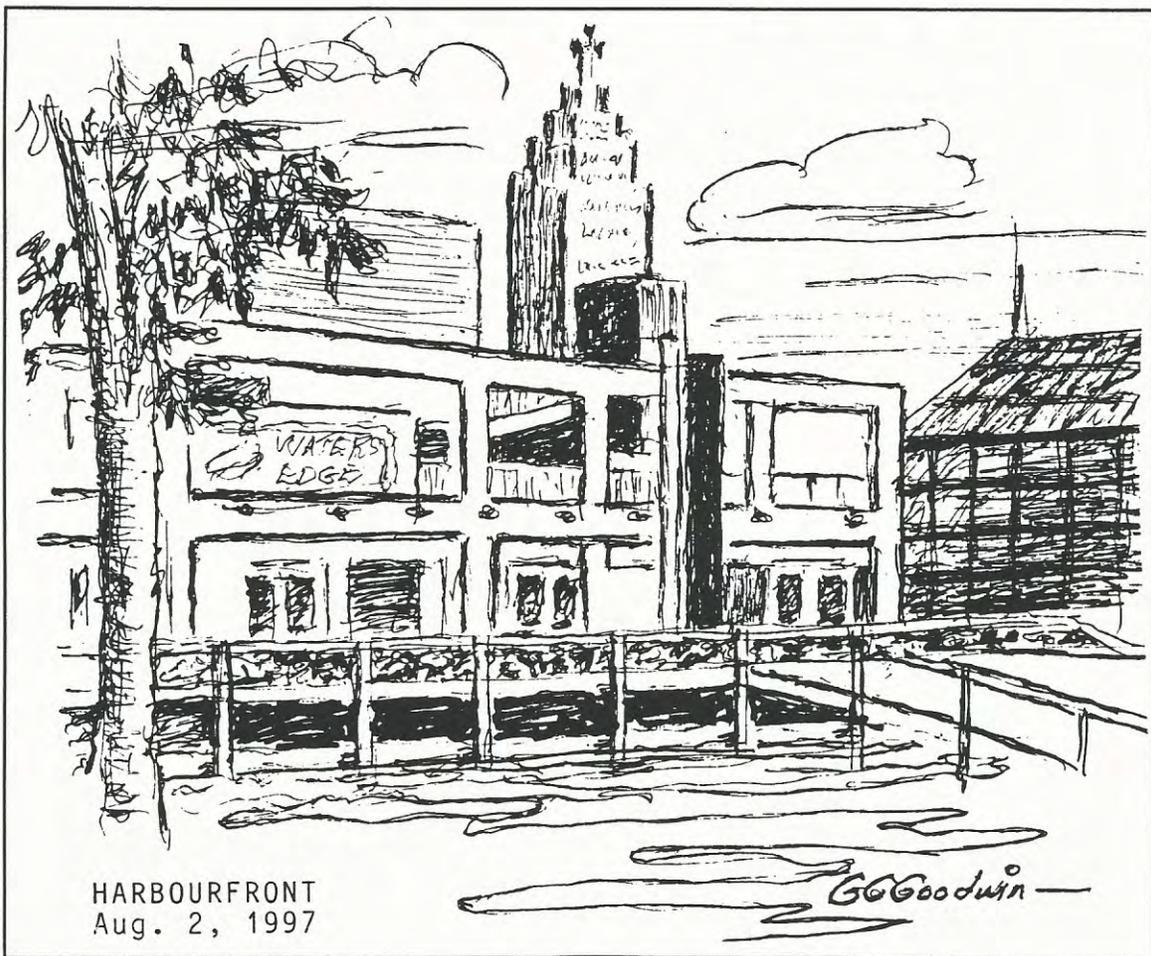
DOWNY AT FEEDER

In early July 1997, I was sitting on my patio at my place in the country a little north of Cobourg. It was a lovely hot day. My patio is surrounded by maple trees, and from the branches I hang hummingbird feeders. Last year I had a female Downy Woodpecker coming regularly to feed from these feeders. This year I have had two "Downys" feeding at the feeders.

On this particular day, the female Downy flew to the feeder closely followed by a young Downy which landed on the branch from which the feeder was hanging. The branch was about two inches thick. A few minutes later, a Blue Jay flew to a branch just above the feeder and "squarked" loudly. Immediately the young Downy slid to the underside of the branch it and the feeder were on and remained there, absolutely still, until the Blue Jay left. A few minutes later, the Blue Jay flew back to the same branch above the feeder and the young Downy slid to the underside of the branch as before and froze there until the Blue Jay left. All this time the adult Downy continued to feed at the feeder and when she had finished she flew off, followed closely by the young Downy.

Barbara Edwardes-Evans

□



HARBOURFRONT
Aug. 2, 1997

SAVING THE ROUGE

I would make it a condition of citizenship that those Torontonians yearly impelled to drive miles to view "the colours" leave their automobiles at home and "TTC - it" to the Rouge Valley which is as good as anything the province has to offer.

I went there on Thanksgiving weekend. The scene was one of riot between still surviving greenery and invading gold interspersed with fire. The reds ran all the way from pillar-box to burgundy, the orange tones from champagne to tangerine, the pinks from flushed rose to wine-purple. The stands of scarlet sumach were draped with the lime-yellow of vine leaves. The cedars and pines soon to come into their own, remained the only "immutables".

The flower scene was, of course, dominated by gold and purple, the royal colours: goldenrod and patches of Jerusalem artichoke and black-eyed Susans, with the startling purple of New England aster and its many pale mauve compatriots. Sky was reflected in late blooming chicory and viper's bugloss and -- serendipitous find -- a patch of small fringed gentians the very blue of heaven. White still presented in trailing white sweet clovers and heath asters and the endless flowing traceries of swallowwort's small silvery pods glinting in the sunshine.

Wildlife? -- various flitting small brown birds, a clutch of alarmed female mallards, two (black phase) gray squirrels in a territorial dispute from which one fled whimpering, and a deep yellow sulphur butterfly.

Last summer on a visit I had turned from a view of the river to discover a fawn -- no higher than my waist -- observing me from a few yards away. We both froze for an unconscionable time, then, having decided I presented neither threat nor sustenance, it pranced around nibbling at random. A man and his small son joined me and we all three watched breathlessly (the father carried a camera, while I, of course, had left mine at home). What eventually broke the spell was a gust of wind which evidently meant more to the fawn than it did to us, and with three graceful leaps it disappeared. The man and I hoped that it would be given a good talking-to by its mother as to being more careful about the company it kept.

Away from this subject but far from beside the point, I understand the spectre of housing "development" in the Rouge has again raised its greedy head.* This, surely, was where the Save-the-Rouge people came in years ago. In matters environmental it appears that nothing is ever settled and nothing is ever safe. To paraphrase John Kennedy, the price of anything of value remains that of eternal vigilance. That one group might encroach upon the beauty which should be free for all strikes me as something of an obscenity. While the wheeling-and-dealing is going on, however, we should all get out and enjoy the Rouge "as is", for who knows what its political future may bring.

Eva Davis

□

* See "Down by the River" news on page 26.

MIMICO MEANDERS: KINGBIRDS

"After observing them (the Cliff Swallows) for a while, I clambered up the slope, off to check out the Kingbird nest".* That's how I ended a previous account of one of my trips through West Deane park. This is the continuation. First some background.

In May, a group of TFNers on one of our West Deane walks noticed a nesting bird. It was about two metres up in a hawthorn which was about two and a half metres tall. It was only twelve to fifteen metres from a trail used by local dog walkers and was completely exposed. On closer inspection it belonged to a pair of Kingbirds. Now to me, Kingbirds are very interesting. I wrote about them before. I was happy now to have the chance to watch them closely as the young developed... or so I hoped. (This is becoming a recurring theme of this series I know, but...it goes with the territory.)

The Kingbird is a fly catcher which is slightly smaller than a Blue Jay. They have a very distinctive flight pattern as they fly their low level reconnaissance missions over a meadow. It's a flutter-flapping slow flight with lots of maneuvering. Another way Kingbirds capture their prey is by "hawking". I find it very relaxing just watching a Kingbird do that. What is hawking? Okay... Smaller flycatchers dart about, stabbing at insects as they pull sharp turns and twisty air acrobatics. But Kingbirds fly in slow relaxed patterns as they feed. They remind me of fish swimming in an aquarium. They take up position on a perch and try to spot tasty looking insects. When they do, they plot an interception course and glide out in an unhurried manner, following a smooth trajectory toward their moving prey. With a tiny little correction as they approach the insect, they snap it out of the air and follow a smooth path back to the original or alternative perch. They do this over and over in a leisurely manner. But those are just two aspects of their flight. The fun really begins when they are defending their territory from birds which stray a bit too close to their young. The errant bird usually does this only once. To see how they are equipped for these encounters, I'll explain some interesting facts about the bird.

The eyes of the Kingbird, and all flycatchers for that matter, are the focus of a lot of attention (focus...get it...sorry). Birds of prey can see incredible detail at tremendous distances; flycatchers can see incredible detail at very, very short distances. Don't laugh, this is an extremely important adaptation. If you remember the theory of sight, the curvature of the eye's lens, which controls the focal length, is continually varied by the contraction of muscles in the eye. To focus close in, the curvature of the lens is at its maximum. More importantly, to maintain sharp focus on something that is very close and moving, this curvature must be rapidly modified. This is how a flycatcher can snap up an evasive insect a few millimetres from its nose. (Not to take anything away from our raptors: they have the best eyesight, but they are focusing at infinity which requires no rapid focal length adjustment.) This adaptation of sight helps the Kingbird greatly in defending its territory from other birds. Here's what it does... it maneuvers itself right over the back of its opponent and makes precise and vicious thrusts at its neck and head... (charming). The other thing that helps is the power of

* See TFN 471:14:NOV



its small beak. It's the shape of the beak which gives it some added oomph. If you look at the side view of the beak, it is very thin and pointed, but a top view reveals that it is very wide at the base in proportion to its length. Think of a duck bill coming to a point and being scaled down to a Blue Jay size. Why has this slightly wider than normal beak evolved? Better chance of success, snapping at insects in the air. Just so happens that it also makes a formidable weapon.

Apart from their flight, Kingbirds also have a very interesting warning mechanism... a single hidden scarlet feather on the top of the head of a purely black and white bird. If an intruder is spotted on a perch nearby, the Kingbird will fly right up to it (sometimes landing centimetres away), present the top of its head to the other bird, flash out the red feather (I saw one literally tickle the nose of a Blue Jay with his) and if the other bird doesn't leave, thrash out at him like a loose chainsaw. Next time the other bird sees a red feather like that... it leaves very quickly. The Blue Jay I mentioned? He was one of four which were "beaten up" by the tickler on the same encounter. He was knocked right out of the sky, lost complete control of his flight, was further harassed and ended up pulling out about two or three metres above my head.

Okay... our West Deane Kingbirds... sorry to say that after several weeks of watching them on the nest (in intense heat at times), one day there was no nest or Kingbirds visible. I approached the hawthorn and the nest was on the ground. No eggs or shells or any sign of chicks. Could be that they were so sure of their nest defence capabilities that they didn't realize that they still have to hide it. I only hope that they return next year and try to make a go of it. I'll be watching... I like Kingbirds.

Regarding the West Deane bird watch in general, I did encounter one real success. I watched a haggard and exhausted little Song Sparrow feeding mulberries to the plumpest and most contented looking little Brown-headed Cowbird I've ever seen. Sigh...

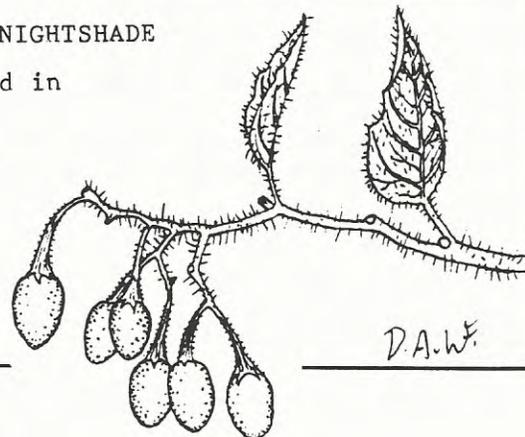
Ken Cook

□

CLIMBING NIGHTSHADE or BITTERSWEET NIGHTSHADE

from Eurasia, is well-established in Toronto, fruit red when mature.

Drawing by D. Andrew White



IN THE NEWS

RUSTIC AREA BULLDOZED *

While taking a walk at East Point Park, at the foot of Beechgrove Ave. recently, I was shocked to find some dramatic changes to the Scarborough waterfront. East Point extends from approximately Manse Road to Highland Creek. It is one of the last areas of the Scarborough Bluffs that is still rustic and in a very natural state. Not any longer! Recently, a portion of the Bluffs has been bulldozed away to make room for a road down to the beach. This destruction of the natural surroundings continues along the beach until it nears Highland Creek where another chunk of the Bluffs has been torn away to allow the road to slope up to the top of the original trail. All natural vegetation has been flattened along the way. Apparently this road was built as part of the Highland Creek Trail that runs south from Col. Danforth Park at Kingston and Lawson Roads. The trail is expected to be completed in May/June 1998. While this project has merits and will permit enjoyable use of the Highland Creek area, why this intrusive method was selected is not known. An access road is already available at the railway bridge from the nearby treatment plant. The top of the bluffs had a natural path along it and minimal backfilling would have been required to widen it to the appropriate size. Instead, this road has been built with a large stone bed that will support heavy construction trucks. Eventually, this route will be used to construct the waterfront trail that will link East Point Park to Rouge Park by pedestrian/bike path along the waterfront. Again Metro Park has chosen a more expensive and difficult construction method. Current plans will require thousands of truckloads of fill to be dumped into the lake to permit the path to continue on the lake side of the GO tracks. These trucks will have to follow this new road at East Point and continue across Highland Creek to another stretch of unspoiled beachfront. An alternative route would have been to use an existing trail along the north of the tracks until the natural shoreline permitted water's edge access. Plans already show beachfront access from the foot of Port Union Road that is near where the underpass would be. I am opposed to the wholesale destruction of the Scarborough Bluffs for a walking trail. What's the point of having a scenic trail when the scenery has been destroyed?

a letter from Fred Bate to the SCARBOROUGH MIRROR, Jan. 21, 1998

BUTTERFLY RESERVE

Canada and Mexico are each contributing \$1.2-million to create a 795,000-hectare refuge for migrating monarch butterflies. Each autumn, millions of monarchs leave Canadian breeding grounds and fly 4,000 kilometres to their winter home in Michoacan state.

from the GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 24, 1998

* See Comment on page 8.

COMMUNITY AND INDUSTRY COOPERATE TO PROTECT WESTSIDE MARSH

It isn't a perfect compromise, but a deal inked last November should save most of a fragile marsh along the Waterfront Trail. After more than four years of public meetings, discussions and negotiations, Clarington council has approved principles of understanding with Blue Circle of Canada (previously St. Mary's Cement) to protect much of Westside Marsh and create 120 acres of public parkland. The marsh is a provincially significant wetland just east of Oshawa. It is the most diverse wetland in Durham Region with over 250 species of birds and many rare plants. Blue Circle has a license dating from 1974 to expand its existing operations adjacent to Westside Marsh and quarry limestone from most of the wetland. Community concerns about the marsh came to a head in 1993 so the Waterfront Regeneration Trust worked out a complex exchange of land and money. The resulting agreement protects much of the marsh, adds new habitat, and provides an increased buffer between area residents and future quarry operations. Like all negotiations, each party gave up something in the interest of coming to an agreement. The result, however, has been a new kind of coexistence among the wildlife, residents, and industries of Port Darlington.

extracted from an article in the LAKE ONTARIO WATERFRONT TRAIL NEWSLETTER, Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan. 1998

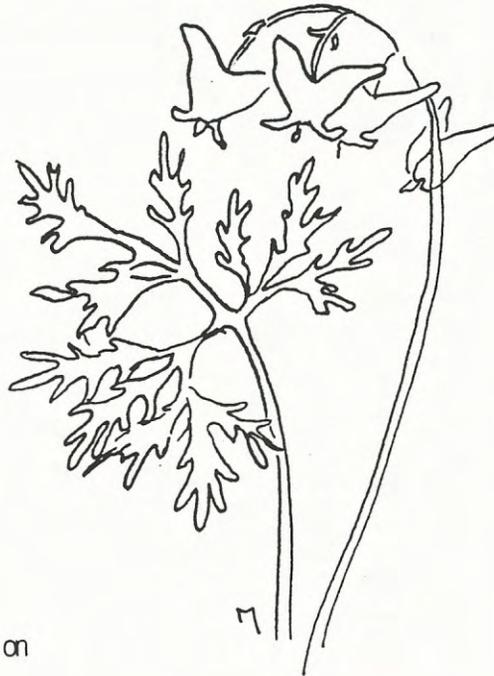


TWO FUMITORIES...

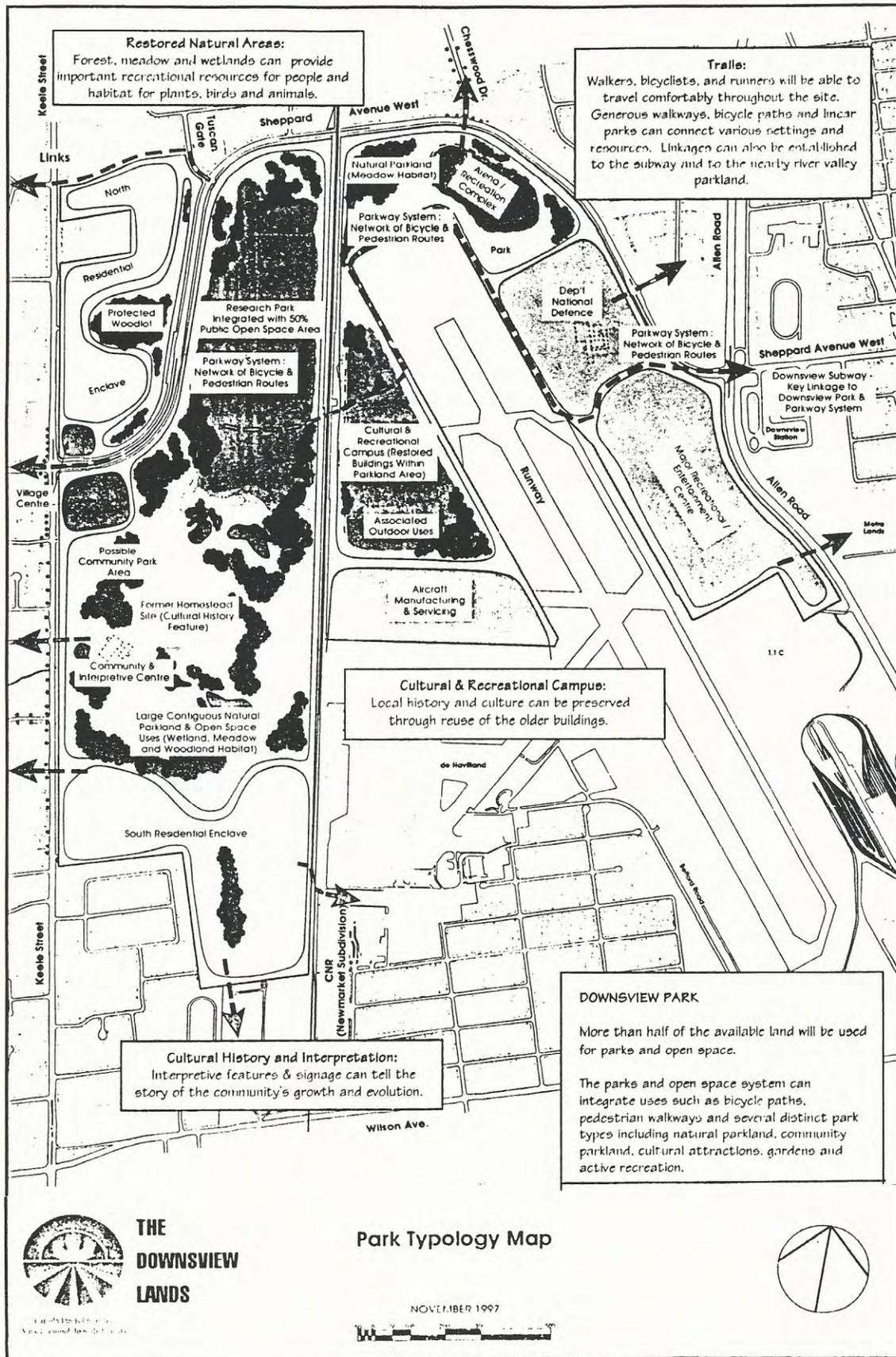
by Mary Anne Miller



Pink Corydalis
native to York Region
but not Metro



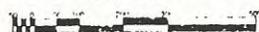
Dutchman's Breeches
native to Metro
(in 4 watersheds)



**THE
DOWNSVIEW
LANDS**

Park Typology Map

NOVEMBER 1997



IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

DOWNSVIEW LOCALS WANT A SAY

They're being told it can't happen again, but residents living near the former military base at Downsview fear the debacle that has haunted Harbourfront may be forming in their backyard. At 259 hectares, the old army installation is one of the largest pieces of publicly owned real estate up for redevelopment in Canada. The site is bordered by Sheppard Ave. West, Keele St., Wilson Ave., and Allen Rd. Half the site -- 129.5 hectares -- has been set aside by the federal government for a park. So the bequest doesn't become a burden, a portion of some of the rest of the site will be sold or leased to developers to finance it. In fact, the government stands to make as much as \$1.4 billion from developments. [However, local citizens] don't want mega-developments that will attract throngs of people and create traffic chaos on neighbourhood streets. More than 40 community meetings attended by several thousand people in total have been held in the past year and a half, but according to residents, most of the redevelopment proposals have been stage-managed and leaked to the media before residents had a clue. It will be up to the new City of Toronto council to decide what ultimately happens on the land.

extracted from an article by Leslie Ferenc in the TORONTO STAR, Dec. 23, 1997

GULLS BLAMED FOR HERDING BIRDS TO DEATH

Squadrons of gulls appear to be sending small migrating birds to their deaths by driving them into Toronto skyscrapers. The gulls seem to have learned to use the towers as tools during dawn raids on their tiny, disoriented cousins, says Michael Mesure, head of the Fatal Light Awareness Program, which picks up dead and injured birds from the bases of the buildings during migration periods. Ornithologists at the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of Toronto, however, say they doubt the gulls had learned to use the buildings in their hunt because they are day-time scavengers and the small migrators fly by night. But Mesure said it's at first light -- when the gulls come out and disoriented birds are still flying trapped in the skyscraper canyons -- that the raids take place. The Fatal Light Awareness program (FLAP) attempts to save building-injured birds and convince downtown landlords to change lighting arrangements during spring and fall migrations.

extracted from an article by Joseph Hall in the TORONTO STAR, Jan. 29, 1998

Flowers and plants used to be taken out of hospital rooms at night because it was believed they gave off carbon dioxide, which interfered with patients' breathing. But tests have proven that plants actually absorb carbon dioxide, along with pollutants, at night and give off oxygen.

from "Fight off pollutants with house plants" by Ruth Zavitz in the LONDON FREE PRESS, Dec. 28, 1996

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

HEAVENLY WEATHER

Scientists using NASA satellites have identified Jupiter as the mystery source of killer electrons that periodically bombard the Earth, knocking out power grids and causing blackouts; they already know the sun bombards the planet this way. The gravitational pull of Jupiter and other planets causes long-term changes in the tilt and orbit of the Earth. In 1920, a Serbian astronomer named Milutin Milankovitch proposed that these changes can plunge the Earth into regular ice ages, and today Milankovitch cycles remain the best explanation we have for these periodic freeze-outs.

extracted from "Social Studies" by M. Kesterton in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Dec. 30, 1997

SCARBOROUGH BEAR SIGHTINGS A YULE SURPRISE

After a security guard at the Scarborough Board of Education near Sheppard Ave. and McCowan Rd. spotted two black bears around 7 am Christmas morning, police brought dogs to help search for the animals. But the tracks -- which at one point were seen heading for a McDonald's restaurant -- petered out in the melting snow. A Metro zoo spokesperson who helped the police hunt said all of his bears were present and accounted for and suggested that warmer weather may have lured the bears out of winter dens to look for food.

extracted from an article by Kenny Yum and Maithily Panchalingam in the TORONTO STAR, Dec. 26/97

Comment: Was someone (or two) "bearly" clothed? TFN members on an outing to Morningside Park on Dec. 28 saw no sign of bears!

H.J.

METRO ZOO PAYS \$75G TOWARDS GEESE PROJECT, JUDGE RULES

The Metropolitan Toronto Zoo will pay \$75,000 towards a project aimed at controlling geese. The research funding deal is part of a suspended sentence imposed on the zoo following the guilty plea in Ontario Provincial Court, Criminal Division, at Old City Hall. The zoo will participate in a two-year research project conducted by the zoo and the Ontario Veterinary College of the University of Guelph. The project will explore a vaccine technique for contraception, which has been successfully applied to mammals but not to birds. The charge was laid in September after an Environment Canada investigation found that zoo officials, without a permit, illegally herded and held in captivity approximately 300 wild Canada geese in the summer. About 80 birds died when zoo officials tried to transport the geese to the Rouge River for release.

extracted from an article by Kim Goodman in the SCARBOROUGH MIRROR, Nov. 26, 1997

DOWN BY THE RIVER

A new concept in house construction to Scarborough is a project called Harmony. It will consist of 222 townhouses right beside North America's largest urban park, Rouge Valley, just where it passes under Meadowvale Rd. immediately north of Sheppard Ave. As well as putting a 3-acre neighbourhood park in the heart of the Harmony project, the developers are carving hiking/biking trails from the homes down the steep banks of the valley to create easy access to the 20,000 acres in the big park.

extracted from an article by Pat Brennan in the TORONTO STAR, Nov. 22, 1997

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THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

March 1997, Toronto

After a mild beginning, March was dominated by a long wintry spell. The mean temperature was about half a degree below normal -- nothing that would normally be noticeable, except that the period from March 3rd to March 24th was pretty consistently cold. Not only was it chilly during this long spell, but it was also quite snowy. There were three snowstorms, and the third one on March 13th-14th was accompanied by ice pellets and freezing rain to boot. Downtown Toronto's snowfall of 40.2 cm was the most for March since 1972 when it was 40.9 cm. Pearson Airport's 37.6 cm was also the highest since 1972 when it was 42.4 cm. There was snow on the ground for about 20 days from March 6th to March 25th.

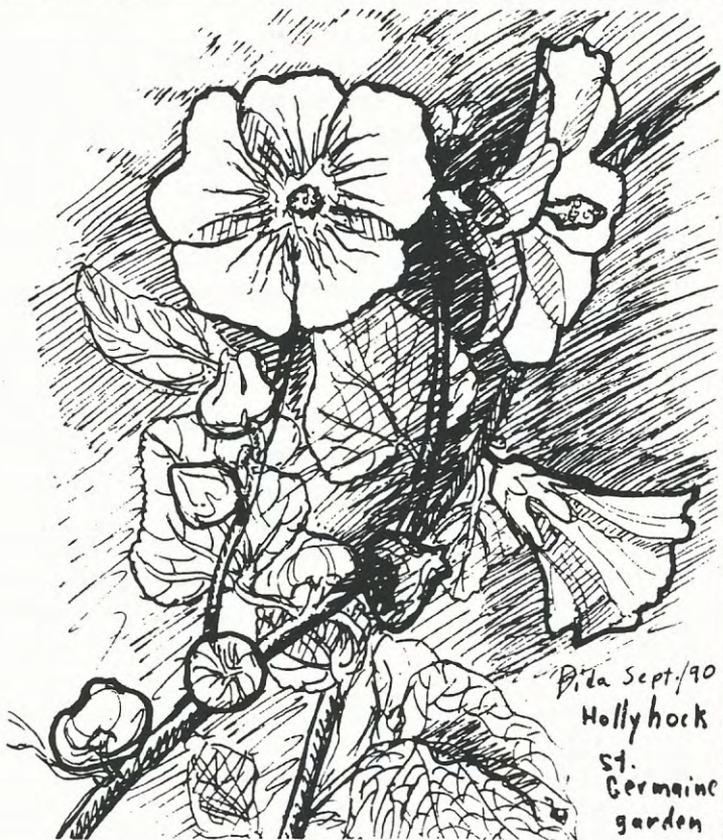
A brief warm-up just before Easter (on March 27th to 29th) brought temperatures into the teens and got rid of the snow, but the month closed with another cold front and snowflurries.

Total precipitation, over 80 mm downtown, was the highest since 1991.

Gavin Miller

□

THE HOLLYHOCK, a member of the mallow family introduced from Eurasia, is listed in A CHECKLIST OF THE FLORA OF ONTARIO by Morton & Venn. In Metro it is treated as "not established" - a garden escape or persisting in old gardens. Found in the Rouge Valley, Etobicoke Creek and Leslie Street Spit.



Picta Sept./90
Hollyhock
St.
Germaine
garden

COMING EVENTS

Toronto Ornithological Club - Jim Baillie Memorial Bird Walks - aimed at the intermediate birder, but beginners are also welcome. Free.

- Waterfowl from Toronto to Burlington- Sat. March 14 from 9 am (all day) with Glenn Coady. Meet at the southwest corner of Grenadier Pond at Ellis Ave. and the Queensway to form a car pool. Bring a lunch and dress warmly.

Toronto Entomologists' Association - meeting - Sat. March 28 at 1 pm in Metro Hall, Room 314, 55 John St., south of King St. West. Matt Holder will be speaking about Algonquin Provincial Park and its insects. Call Al Hanks at 905-727-6993 for further information.

High Park Winter Walking Tours - Sunday afternoons at 1:15 pm starting at the south side of the Grenadier Restaurant and ending at Colborne Lodge. Especially recommended for families. \$2 donation suggested.

- March 8 - Birds of Winter
 - March 22 - Spring comes to Grenadier Pond
- Call 392-7276, ext. 301 for more information.

Royal Canadian Institute - Sunday afternoon lectures on science at 3 pm in the JJR Macleod Auditorium, Medical Sciences building, 1 King's College Circle. Call 928-2096 for more details. Free.

March 1 - Music listening in infancy

March 8 - The evolution of memory: what bird-brains can tell us

March 15 - Polymers and the periodic table: the inorganic approach to new high tech materials

Canadian Wildflower Society - East Toronto Chapter - meeting - March 25 at 7:30 pm at the Beaches Recreation Centre, 6 Williamson Rd. Free.

- The Queen Street Heritage Garden Project with Steven Hughes and Martin Rudd

Metro Archives exhibition - starting March 1 - After the Sprawl? Suburban Pasts and Futures in the Greater Toronto Area - Free. Mon. to Fri. from 10 am to 6 pm; Sundays from 12 noon to 6 pm. Call 397-5000 for more information. Archives is at 255 Spadina Rd.

The Toronto Flower and Garden Show - Canada Blooms - March 11 to March 15 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Wing, 225 Front St. West. Price: adults, \$10; Seniors, \$9; Students, \$5.50. Call 593-0223 for more details.

Willowdale Gem and Mineral Show - Sat. March 21 from 10 am to 6 pm and Sunday, March 22 from 11 am to 5 pm at Armour Heights Community Centre, Avenue Rd. and Wilson Ave.

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COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Walker Mineralogical Club - meeting - Wed. March 11 at 8 pm in Rm 2093, in the Earth Sciences Building, 22 Russell St. Andy McDonald will be speaking about Phyllosilicates from Mt. St-Hilaire -- the past and the future. Everyone welcome.

Royal Ontario Museum - I.D. Clinic - Wed. March 25 from 1 pm to 3 pm in the Eaton's Court. (Enter via Druxy's restaurant on the main floor.) Experts from the ROM's Earth Sciences, Palaeobiology, and Anthropology Departments will identify your rocks, minerals, gems, fossils, meteorites and North American stone artifacts. Free.

Urban Naturalist

- Niagara Falls butterfly conservatory bus trip - April 18 from 9:30 am to 5 pm; \$45 includes entry fees and tour of Falls and greenhouses. Call Morris Sorensen at 755-6030 to register.
- Open House for TFN members - Friday, March 20 from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm and Saturday March 21 from 10:30 am to 2 pm at West Hill Travel, 2012 Sheppard Ave. East. (Morris is also available most Friday afternoons. Call 499-9262 to check.)

Market Gallery exhibit - starting March 7 - Playing by the Rules: children's leisure in Toronto (maps, photos and artifacts) from 1897 to 1934. Free. 95 Front St. East. Call 392-7604 for more details.



LANDS *for* LIFE

Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Planning Region

c/o Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
300 Water St., 4th Floor, South Tower, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 8M5
(phone) 1-800-898-8530 (fax) 705-755-3292

This is a Crown land planning exercise. Publications are being prepared, and public meetings in key Southern Ontario communities will occur in late March and early April. For more information you can phone the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Project Team toll free hotline at 1-800-898-8530. □

SPRING HAWK WATCH

Beamer Conservation Area in Grimsby is the place to be for spring hawk-watching (if weather conditions are right -- southerly winds are best for hawk flights in spring) from mid-March to mid-May each year. Take the Queen Elizabeth Way to Christie Street at Grimsby. Drive up the escarpment to the first road on your right, and follow the signs to Beamer Conservation Area.

extracted from "Field Trips" in the PICKERING NATURALIST, Vol. 22, No. 1, March 1997

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

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TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

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