

TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 475

April 1998

NELSON'S SHARP-TAILED SPARROW

has a status as a rare migrant
in Toronto Region.

It was reported
twice in 1990
and once in
each of four
years during
the next seven
years of the
decade.



Ron Scovell '97

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TFN MEETINGS

Sunday, April 5, 1998 - BIRDING IN VENEZUELA

at 2:30 pm
in the Northrop Frye Hall
Victoria University
73 Queen's Park Cres. East

an illustrated talk by Ron Scovell, educator,
naturalist, artist, photographer and well-known
field ornithologist. [See cover drawing.]

The speaker has been to Venezuela several times,
looking for birds. He is also interested in ferns
so this talk may have something for everyone.

+ social hour beginning at 2 pm with free juice and
coffee

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, May 3, 1998

NEXT NEWSLETTER: May 1998 (to be mailed in mid-April)

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

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET PAIR

The breeding status of this species for Toronto is "possible". For instance a pair was seen in Sam Smith Park where there is a row of conifers, in July, 1995.



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.

- Thursday
 April 2
 11 am
 TAYLOR CREEK - nature walk
 Leader: Carol Miller
 Don tributary, East York
 Meet at the southwest corner of Don Mills Rd. and Overlea Blvd.
 Bring lunch.
 This walk will take us near the forks of the Don and past the new "elevated wetlands", a piece of "working sculpture" and into the Taylor Creek Valley where we will look for signs of spring.
- Saturday
 April 4
 10 am
 DOWNSVIEW LANDS - visit to a plant nursery
 Leader: Gavin Miller
 North York
 Meet at the northeast corner of Sheppard Ave. West and Chesswood Dr. Morning only.
 This is a new project to grow Ontario native plants and a chance to see the Downsview Airport lands and some of the new uses for the lands.
- +
- Saturday
 April 4
 10:30 am
 ALLAN GARDENS - nature arts
 Leader: Leslie Mirylees
 Toronto
 Meet at the entrance to the greenhouses on the south side of Carlton St. just east of Jarvis St. Lunch optional.
 Bring sketching materials and stool or camera or just come and enjoy the beautiful plants and historic building. After lunch which may be at a nearby mall, we will look at each other's art.
- Wednesday
 April 8
 10 am
 EGLINTON FLATS - birds & early bugs
 Leader: Carol Sellers
 Humber, North York
 Meet at the southeast corner of Jane St. and Eglinton Ave. West.
 Bring lunch.
 This large flat area of parkland in the Humber Valley contains a pond and wetland areas so be prepared with binoculars and a jar for looking at insects. We may even see some early flowers.
- Sunday
 April 12
 2 pm
 CHERRY BEACH - nature walk
 Leader: Ken Cook
 Lakeshore, Toronto
 Meet at the foot of Leslie St. (at Unwin Ave.).
 This walk will take us west along the lakeshore, looking for waterfowl and early migrants, to Cherry Beach. Walk will end at King St.
- Wednesday
 April 15
 10:30 am
 ROUGE VALLEY - bird study
 Leader: Louise Orr
 Rouge, Scarborough
 Meet at the Pearse House, on the east side of Meadowvale Rd., north of Sheppard Ave. East. TTC stops at top of hill before bus turns left at zoo parking lot. Bring lunch.
 Bring binoculars and notebook and be prepared to stop, look, and listen.
 This could be a rugged walk.



APRIL OUTINGS (cont'd)

- Saturday
April 18
10:30 am
- RAINBOW CREEK - nature walk
Leader: Robin Powell
Humber tributary, Vaughan
- Meet at the northwest corner of Steeles Ave. West and Islington Ave. Bring lunch.
This will be a rugged walk, up and down hills and through wet areas, to see an important natural area and how it has survived (or not) the effects of highway construction. Sewer construction is the next impact!
- Sunday
April 19
1 pm
- RUSSELL CREEK - heritage walk
Leader: Ian Wheal
Toronto
- Meet at the northwest corner of College St. and Euclid Ave.
This is a joint outing with the North Toronto Green Community and the Grange Historical Society. We will be following the route of this lost creek south along streets.
- Tuesday
April 21
6 pm
\$ donation to ROM
- ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM - tour of geology exhibits
Leader: Kathleen Kemp
Toronto
- Meet in the rotunda of the museum (Avenue Rd. and Bloor St. West).
This is a last chance to look at the gem room, the gold room and the mineral display before the area is closed for renovations.
- Thursday
April 23
10 am
- HUMBER ARBORETUM - nature walk
Leader: George Bryant
West Humber, Etobicoke
- Meet at the arboretum entrance on the south side of Humber College Blvd., west of Hwy. 27. Bring lunch.
We should see some early spring flowers and migrating birds, so bring your binoculars and notebook.
- Saturday
April 25
9 am
- MORNINGSIDE PARK - birds
Leader: Ross Harris
Highland Creek, Scarborough
- Meet at the park entrance on the west side of Morningside Ave. north of Lawrence Ave. East. Lunch optional.
Bring binoculars and notebook and be prepared to stop, look and listen as we look for and try to identify migrating birds in this very large wild park.
- Sunday
April 26
1:30 pm
- SOUTH RIVERDALE - heritage walk
Leaders: Ian Wheal & George Hume
Toronto
- Meet at the northwest corner of Queen St. East and Logan Ave.
This walk will be through streets, looking at the effects of industry on the landscape.

+ see next page

UNINTRUSIVE RESEARCH

The continuous observation required for painting [of birds] can be a more penetrating method of inquiry than snapping with a camera, filming, or even assiduous note-taking. You pick up small distinctions which may not come back to you until later.

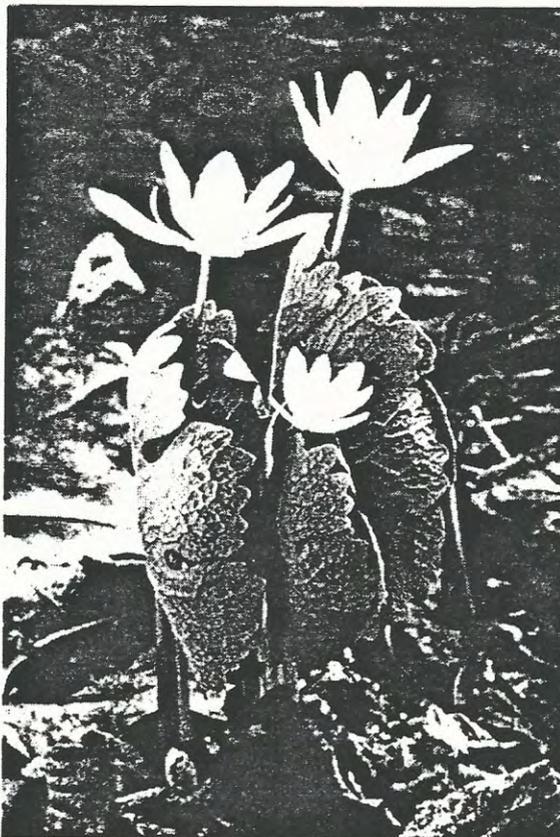
extracted from "Making a difference" by F. Greenoak, writing about wildlife artist Lyn Wells in BBC WILDLIFE, Vol. 15, No. 1, Jan. 1997

APRIL OUTINGS (cont'd)

- Sunday
 April 26
 10:30 am
 to 5 pm
 PMCL
 school bus
- NATURE RESERVES - property maintenance north of Uxbridge
 Leader: Robin Powell
 Call 968-6255 if you want to attend. Leave your name and telephone number. The bus leaves from the south exit of the York Mills subway station (on Old York Mills Rd. just east of Yonge St.) promptly at 10:30 am and returns there at 5 pm. This is a chance to get involved with the realities of owning a nature reserve. It's essential we do trail maintenance. Wear waterproof footwear; bring work gloves, lunch and beverage. We will be clearing trails and whatever else needs to be done. Whatever the weather, it's a chance to enjoy the property and do a little work. (If you want to, bring your own tools.)
- Wednesday
 April 29
 10:30 am
- WARDEN WOODS - nature walk Taylor Creek, Scarborough
 Leader: Susan Weiss
 Meet at the Warden subway station (Warden Ave. & St. Clair Ave. East). Lunch optional.
 This is a lovely wild park where we should see migrating birds and spring wildflowers and maybe even a fox.

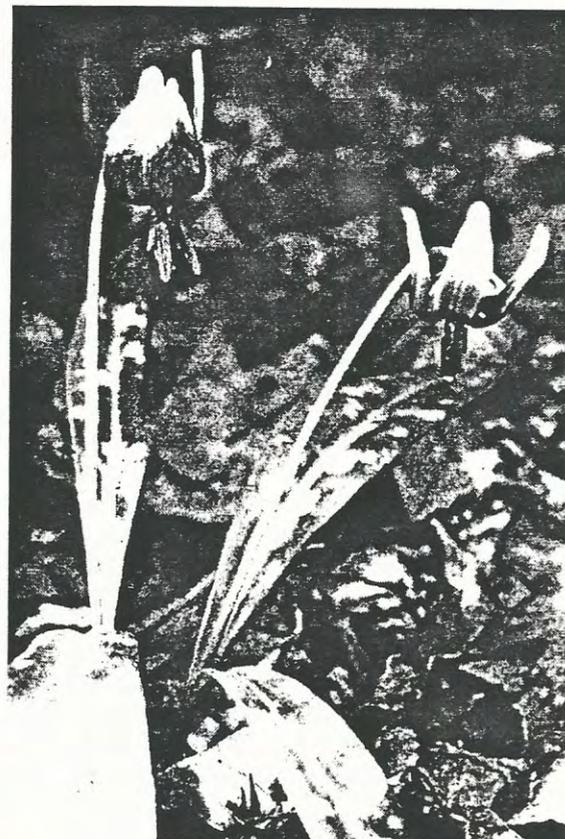
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Coming Soon to a Ravine Near You



Betty Greenacre

Bloodroot



Betty Greenacre

Trout Lily or Dogtooth Violet

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As many of you are probably aware, TFN is 75 years old this year. Around the first of June 1923 two friends, Mr. Will F. Gregory, a businessman who later became a teacher, and Dr. Lyman B. Jackes, then Director of Visual Aid, Department of Education, happened to meet. Both were keen naturalists. In their conversation they discussed the need for an organization in Toronto for people like themselves who were interested in nature to gather together for field trips, lectures and the sharing of observations. Mr. Gregory suggested that he would interview several people who might be willing to cooperate in forming such a society. The organizational meeting was held June 12, 1923 at the Central YMCA with 16 people present. They voted to establish a natural history society to be known as the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club. Professor R.B. Thomson of the University of Toronto's Department of Botany was the first President and Mr. Will Gregory was the first Secretary.

The Club's first public meeting was held at Forester's Hall, 22 College St. (very close to our present office!), on October 29, 1923. Actually, two meetings were held at the same location that day, one in the afternoon for teachers and senior pupils, the other in the evening with the addition of music, for the general public. The music consisted of songs by Mr. Tom Meach and Miss Elizabeth B. Champion, and a lecture entitled "Illustrated Nature Story" was presented by Dr. L.W. Jackes with moving pictures and "dissolving views", all made by members of the Club. Other speakers that first year included, in order:

- "Algonquin Park" by Mark Robinson, Park Superintendent
- "Our Winter Birds" by Stuart Thompson, TFNC
- "Bird Music" by W.E. Saunders of London
- "Our Bird Friends and How We May Protect Them" by Harrison F. Lewis of Ottawa
- "W.H. Hudson, Field Naturalist" by Francis J.A. Morris of Peterborough
- "Wild Life in Manitoba" by Norman Criddle of Ottawa
- "Our Spring Wild Flora" by Prof. Klugh of Queen's University, Kingston

There was also a member's meeting with various club members speaking and showing exhibits.

The first field trip was held on April 26, 1924. Organized by Stuart Thompson, the route followed was from the end of the College streetcar line in High Park to the lakeshore, and then up the Humber where the group split into two sections so that both sides of the river could be covered. The sections reassembled at the Old Mill to compare notes and observations. It is interesting to reflect that both High Park and the Humber River around Old Mill remain popular locations for TFN outings today.

For more information about the early days of TFN you may wish to purchase the booklet "The Toronto Field Naturalists' Club, its History and Constitution" by R.M. Saunders. The price is only \$2.00. Please call the club office at 968-6255 if you wish to obtain a copy.

The TFN is planning to mark its 75th anniversary in a number of ways including a series of noon-hour lectures under the auspices of Heritage Toronto (please see Coming Events on page 29 for details), a new

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (cont'd)

membership brochure, and a combined Birthday and Christmas Party in conjunction with our December meeting (more on that will appear later). I encourage long-time members to submit their own memories of TFN, even if only a few paragraphs, for publication in future newsletters.

President's Field Notes #6, April 1998

April is truly a month when Spring is bursting out all over. It can also be a very wet month, but as we all know, "April showers bring May flowers"!

Two real signs of Spring for me are the mourning cloak butterflies (which overwinter in the adult stage) and the garter snakes emerging from hibernation. A visit to Thomson Memorial Park, Scarborough, on April 6 of last year yielded both.

My birding highlights for April 1997 included a red-necked grebe off the Leslie Street Spit on April 5. I had to go out of Toronto to see my first groundhog. No "Wiarthon Willie", I think he slept in well past February 2, but he was out and about in a suburban park in Brockville, Ont. on April 10.

Wildflowers seemed somewhat late last year but I did note skunk cabbage fully out at Wilket Creek on April 20 and I probably would have found them much earlier had I made the effort as they were emerging at Morningside Park on March 30. For west enders, another good site to check for skunk cabbage is Lambton Woods.

Normally I find Wilket Creek to be one of the best spots for early wildflowers. A late April visit could easily produce hepatica, bloodroot, coltsfoot, blue cohosh and trout lily to name but a few. My first coltsfoot last year was April 27 at the Leslie Spit but some years I have seen coltsfoot as early as late March.

That's if for now. See you next month. Please don't forget to send in your own memories of TFN!

Morris Sorensen

□



GALINSOGA or
GALLANT SOLDIER

was found by Mary Cumming growing below a shrub in the roof-top garden of her apartment building on Eglinton West... typical of this little daisy of tropical America which has found its way into our Toronto wild flora.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Jan. 31, 1998

Crows

I live in the York Mills/Bayview/Sheppard area, where I have noticed a considerable number of crows. Is urban development a reason for their migration to the city?

Ron Singer

Comment: According to "A Guide to the Behaviour of Common Birds" by D.W. Stokes, published by Little, Brown & Co., Boston in 1979, "From fall through winter, crows are usually in large, raucous flocks that roam widely and gather into huge communal roosts. These are usually areas where there is abundant food." There do indeed seem to be more crows wintering in Toronto. Has anyone else noticed this? Crows have discovered how to open garbage bags (a source of food) and we have very little snow here, so it may be easy hunting for these birds in Toronto.

H.J.

February 22, 1998

The Return of Reynard

From conversations with TFN members and with neighbours, I get the impression that there has been a significant increase in the fox population in the Toronto region this winter. From the Bayview Village subdivision alone, an area bounded by Sheppard, Bayview and Finch Avenues and the East Don Ravine, I have the following reports of sightings: two on Citation Dr., two on the Forest Grove causeway over Newtonbrook Ravine, one on Burbank, one on Bunty Lane and one on Wycliffe Cr. The sighting on Bunty Lane was of 2 foxes together and playing on a lawn for a short time. But the strangest one was that on Wycliffe. As my neighbour tells it, they had visitors one day and one of them asked "Did you know you had a fox sitting on the walk at your front door? It wasn't inclined to move when I approached, and I had to shoo it away!" That was risky of course, but it doesn't sound as though the fox was rabid. Was it looking for a handout? We cannot say for certain that there are eight foxes, but there are two at least, and there may be more to come. Except for one of the sightings on Citation, all were made in daylight hours. My own sighting was at 11:30 a.m.

Can this be evidence of the success of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources anti-rabies program? Let's hope so! As John Power pointed out in the Toronto Star, Saturday, February 21, 1998, "Ontario's MNR is the recognized world leader in eliminating rabies among wildlife, a program which entails dropping vaccine baits from aircraft. When an animal eats one it is immunized. The ministry has just completed a \$700,000 four-week contract with Texas, bombing 114,000 square kilometres with baits."

Alen McCombie,

□

The middle of April
something wet and cold falling.
Let's call it white rain.

haiku by Helen Juhola

MARGARET BODSWORTH

Margaret Bodsworth -- community activist, avid birdwatcher and naturalist -- was her novelist husband's first and most critical lifelong editor. They were married 55 years.

Mrs. Bodsworth died in Toronto on Feb. 17. She was 82. She met Fred Bodsworth during a birding trip to Point Pelee, a place she would return to almost every year with friends such as historian Pierre Berton.

During those trips Mrs. Bodsworth's love of nature was only surpassed by her friendship with other birders whose lives and names she remembered meticulously. "Our friends used to say Fred knew all the birds and Margaret knew all the birders", said Fred Bodsworth whose books include the Canadian classic "Last of the Curlews".

extracted from an "Obituary" in the TORONTO STAR, Feb. 22, 1998

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Toronto native CLINTONIA or BLUEBEAD-LILY, Glen Stewart Ravine. Eva Davis.

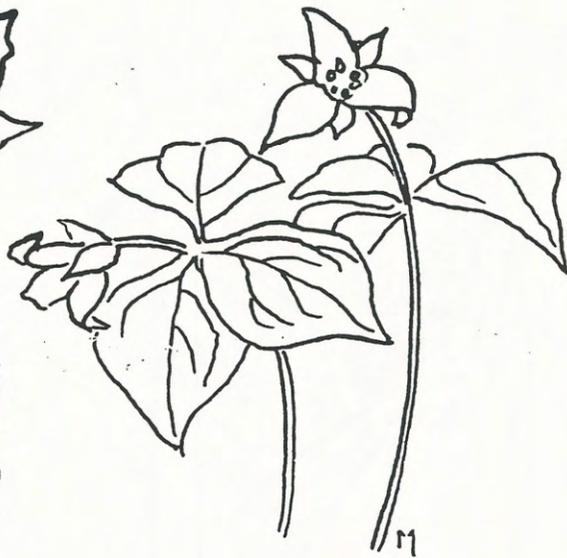
Wandering
on a forest path -
violets and lilacs.

haiku by
Giovanni Malito

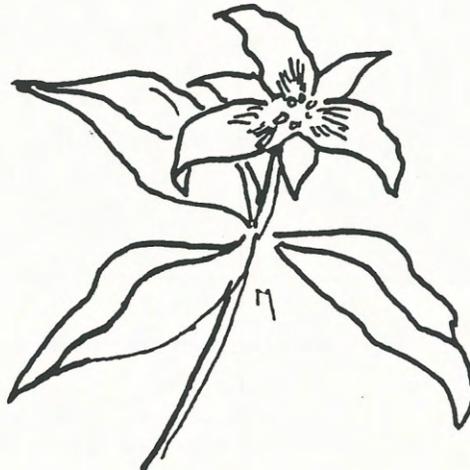
The appreciation of wild nature was an invention of the late 18th century, of the Romantics -- and more specifically, an invention of people who lived in cities.

from "Beyond Wilderness and Lawn" by Michael Pollan in HARVARD DESIGN MAGAZINE, Winter/Spring 1998

THREE TRILLIUM SPECIES - a comparison (drawings by Mary Anne Miller)



LARGE-FLOWERED or WHITE
TRILLIUM (above left),
RED TRILLIUM or WAKE-ROBIN
(above right)
both Toronto natives



PAINTED TRILLIUM (right)
rare in York Region

MIMICO MEANDERS

What's the Point?

Over the past few years, more and more lawn in Toronto parkland is *not* being mown (yea!). West Deane Park is no exception. The west side of the creek has been subject to renaturalization for several years. Now there are large patches on the east side where the grass has been left to grow at will. The problem is that people (including myself) get a bit impatient. They (we) want to see a real meadow. Where are the mixed varieties of asters and goldenrod? Where is the mosaic of warm earth tones we associate with autumn? Unfortunately, a meadow doesn't grow up in a couple of summers. What you start out with is just a patch of long tangled grass which comes back year after year. So "What's the point?" Are we only going to see long grass instead of short grass? Well, the importance of these long grass islands came clear to me last summer, and, after seeing other areas evolve, I am willing to wait for the natural succession to run its course. I'll explain how I "saw the point" regarding the long grass, but first an experiment that could add a bit of interest to your next walk.

Writing to this audience is like the classic "preaching to the choir". The awareness and concern is already there, but... I guess what I'm trying to do is reinforce these feelings... just a bit. So bear with me.

You have probably come upon a mature meadow, with a sharp dividing line between it and a large mown lawn. One of my favourite spots like this is in the Humber marsh area. During warbler migrations I follow a fixed route through the parkland at the mouth of the Humber. I was introduced to this route on a TFN walk and I have subsequently led others on this little trip*: It starts at the old Queen Street streetcar loop. A bit of a grizzly area at best, *but*, in the fall, if you go in behind the building that is there, you are confronted with an absolute jewel. A small forgotten piece of land in the midst of all the traffic and bridges and trains and streetcars. A little hollow with meadow flowers on its slopes and at its lowest point, a small cattail wetland. An earth tone mosaic at its best. (Formerly a scoured construction site and puddle no doubt.)

Now, there are probably no plants of real significance (in the study-of-botany sense), and you do have to rake away polystyrene coffee cups and burger wrappers in places, but it is an example of many years of natural succession at work. It is also bordered by the Oshawa food terminal, complete with well-maintained lawn — just what we're looking for. I've pointed this spot out to others at the start of each walk I've led there. One time we even saw a young fox hunting among the asters. To heighten people's awareness of the importance of little pools of biodiversity like this, I point to the lawn and say words to the effect that this massive lawn supports maybe three or four plant species, two or three of which someone is desperately trying to kill. I then point to the meadow and it speaks for itself. Try the following exercise. The results will be a revelation.

* It's a great way to get started leading. Try it!



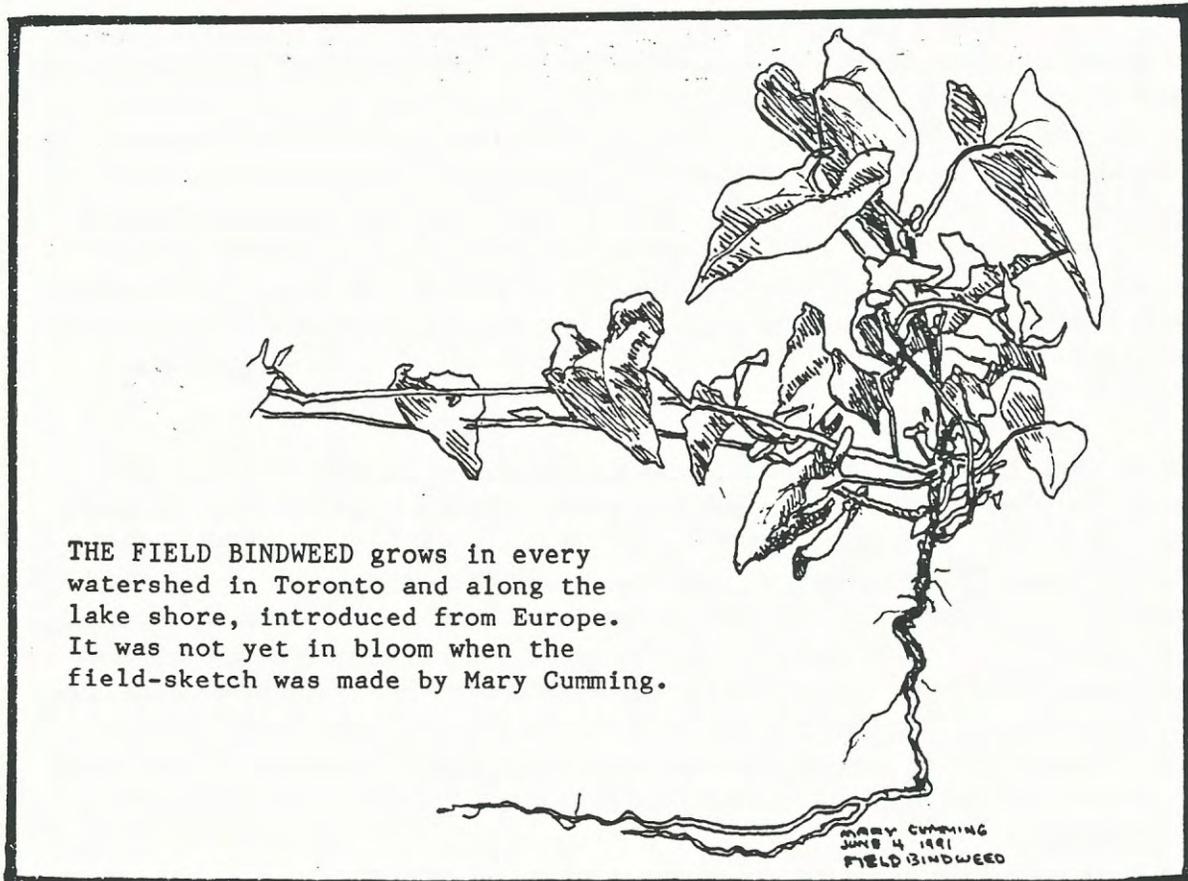
- Pick a spot on the margin between meadow and lawn.
- Take two large steps into the lawn area.
- Mark a line, about three large steps long, parallel to the margin.
- Walk along this line and count all the plant species within about 10 cm (4 inches) either side of the line
- Repeat the above but take the two large steps into the meadow area instead of the lawn.

Don't worry about identifying the plants, that's a different exercise. Some people get involved in those types of studies, I'm happy just to learn a few of the plant names at first, then to hit the plant identification books when something really interests me. What *is* important is that you begin to appreciate the *diversity*. You see differences. You recognize the different niches that each plant fills. What this little experiment does is quantify, albeit imprecisely, the diversity of plants that can coexist in a natural setting. *And* only steps from a virtual monoculture.

It will be a long time before the tangled grass island in West Deane that I'm talking about reaches the maturity I've noted above, but... the point now?... a pair of Eastern Meadow Larks nested there last summer... Works for me.

Ken Cook

□



HUMBER RIVER HERITAGE

Fourteen years ago the Humber Heritage Committee was formed to pursue the designation of the Humber as a Canadian Heritage River. Helen Juhola and Joan O'Donnell represented the TFN invaluable in this work of our committee.

The Humber Task Force and its successor the Humber Alliance, with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority prepared a nomination proposal for the river. It was presented to the Canadian Heritage River Systems board at their meeting in Quebec City on Feb. 4, 1998.

On behalf of Humber Heritage I was invited to participate in the presentation which resulted in the Humber's nomination being passed unanimously. Yahoo! The acceptance of the Humber as a national treasure will reinforce our work to preserve and restore its history, natural and human.

The nomination process is not complete until approved by John Snobelen for Ontario and Sheila Copps for Canada. We need someone to continue the TFN participation in this work, so that a year from now we can celebrate the Humber's designation.

Thanks again to Helen and Joan.

Madeline McDowell, Chair
Humber Heritage Committee

Comment: If you want to help, please
call Madeline at 767-7633. [See also page 23.]

Some
BOUNCING BET,
Saponaria officinalis,
that showed up in
my North York Garden
this summer, as a
pleasant surprise.

But I haven't tried
washing with it yet...

A. McC.



[Origin Europe, established in
Metro, also called "soapwort" -
ref. VASCULAR PLANTS OF
METROPOLITAN TORONTO - TFN 1994]

A. McCombe, Aug 97

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The Toronto Christmas Bird Count of Dec. 28, 1997, started off very well with a clear, bright, cool morning. Temperatures began around -10°C and increased throughout the day to a high of approximately -4°C by mid-afternoon with winds variable and light. Still water was mostly frozen and running water was open. Snow cover ranged from 2 cm to 5 cm.

The count day species total of 86 was the second highest ever and the 66,572 individual birds surpassed last year's high mark by 8,285, mainly due to the 23,910 European Starlings (21,000) at the roost under the Gardiner Expressway, as well as the 11,724 Oldsquaw counted on Lake Ontario (6,150 more than 1996's all-time high).

A few of the highlights for the day included firsts in many years of the following species: the Orange-crowned Warbler at James Gardens was the first in 25 years, the female Rose-breasted Grosbeak was also the first in 25 years, the Barred Owl found in the Black Creek Valley was the first in 14 years, the first American Pipit in 11 years, and the 7 Bonaparte's Gulls (5) were the first in 10 years and the 3 Ring-necked Ducks were the first in 7 years.

Other highlights included record high counts in many species including Canada Goose (5,849), Green-winged Teal (7), American Wigeon (31), Redhead (453), Ring-necked Duck (3), the Oldsquaw mentioned above, Bufflehead (508), Hooded Merganser (26), Cooper's Hawk (7), American Coot (3), Bonaparte's Gull (7), Iceland Gull (5), American Crow (897), Black-capped Chickadee (1,258), Red-breasted Nuthatch (57), White-breasted Nuthatch (214), Hermit Thrush (7), Northern Mockingbird (7), and Hoary Redpoll (2). Also, tying old highs were Red-necked Grebe (2), Merlin (2), Pileated Woodpecker (6), Orange-crowned Warbler (1) and Rose-breasted Grosbeak (1). Also of note were the 2 Yellow-rumped Warblers seen on the High Park route, again.

Some other notables included the lack of Wood Duck for the first time in 9 years, 16 Northern Shoveler were the lowest in 8 years, Northern Goshawk was missed for the first time in 6 years and 10 years if count week birds are included, and the 551 Mourning Doves were the lowest in 6 years.

These totals did not included two "count week" species, the pair of Harlequin Ducks which had been seen before and after the CBC day but not on the day itself as well as the Ring-necked Pheasant seen in a backyard.

Frank Pinilla, Compiler
Toronto Ornithological Club
Records Committee

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Just a pigeon but
worth a glance for plumage and
those oh so pink feet!

haiku by Diana Banville
Crescent Town, April, 1997

PROJECTS

CITIZEN-SCIENCE BIRD PROJECTS

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology is a membership institute dedicated to the study, appreciation, and conservation of birds worldwide. The Lab maintains programs in academic research, public education, and citizen science to foster understanding about nature and the importance of the earth's biological diversity. The Lab and Cornell University together provide an international centre for training both amateurs and professionals in the ecology, evolutionary biology, and conservation of birds. Projects include: a nest-box network, birds in forested landscapes, House Finch disease survey, project Feeder Watch, classroom Feeder Watch, project Pigeon Watch, and a Cerulean Warbler Atlas project. Lab members receive *LIVING BIRD*, a magazine covering bird biology, conservation, art and recreation, and *BIRDSCOPE*, a newsletter reporting the latest finding in research and conservation from the Lab's citizen-science projects. For more information, write to Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850-1999.



Are you interested in ferns and their allies? Tom Thomson, Horticulturist at Humber Nurseries, would like to bring together those who are interested to form the CANADIAN FERN SOCIETY.

Some of the activities would be meetings, lectures, a newsletter, field trips to gardens and natural sites, the creation and maintenance of a public fern garden, and to acquire a heated greenhouse for non-hardy ferns.

If you'd like to be one of the founding members of this Society, call Tom Thomson at Humber Nurseries at (416) 798-8733 or (905) 794-0555. You can fax at (905) 794-1311 or E-mail: humber@gardencentre.com

You can write R.R. #8, Brampton ON L6T 3V7

Supply your address, telephone number, fax or E-mail to receive more information.

JM

Fern-shaded places
recalled by my fountain's burble
here, fourteen floors up.

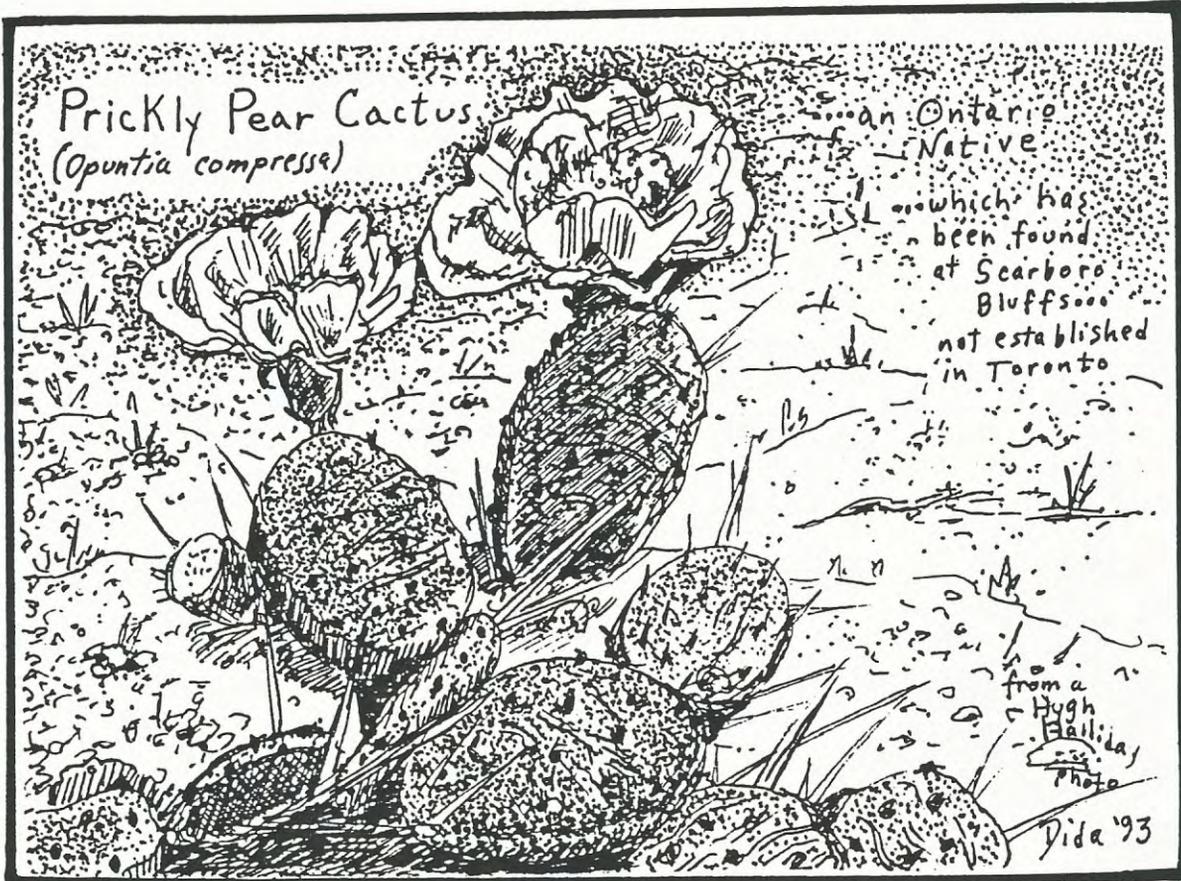
haiku by Arthur Wade

OTHER MEMBERSHIPS:

Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 355 Lesmill Rd., Don Mills, Ont.
M3B 2W8 (416-444-8419). Membership: individual, \$34; family, \$40;
student, \$25; senior, \$27. Includes SEASONS (4/yr.)

Canadian Nature Federation, 1 Nicholas St., Suite 606, Ottawa, Ont.
K1N 9Z9 (1-800-267-4088). Includes NATURE CANADA (4/yr.); individual: \$33; family: \$40.

Canadian Wildflower Society, Box 336, Postal Station F, Toronto, Ont.
M4Y 2L7. Includes WILDFLOWER (4/yr.); Regular: \$30; Family: \$35.



A CLEAN, WELL-LIGHTED PLANET

Cities can save electricity, money, and the night sky by making more informed lighting choices, such as installing inexpensive shielding to direct light downward where it is needed. To learn how you can get light pollution reduced in your area, write to the International Dark-Sky Association at 3545 N. Stewart Ave., Tucson, AZ 85716.

extracted from an article by Joe Rao in NATURAL HISTORY, Vol. 106, No. 8, Sept. 1997

MISSED THE BOAT

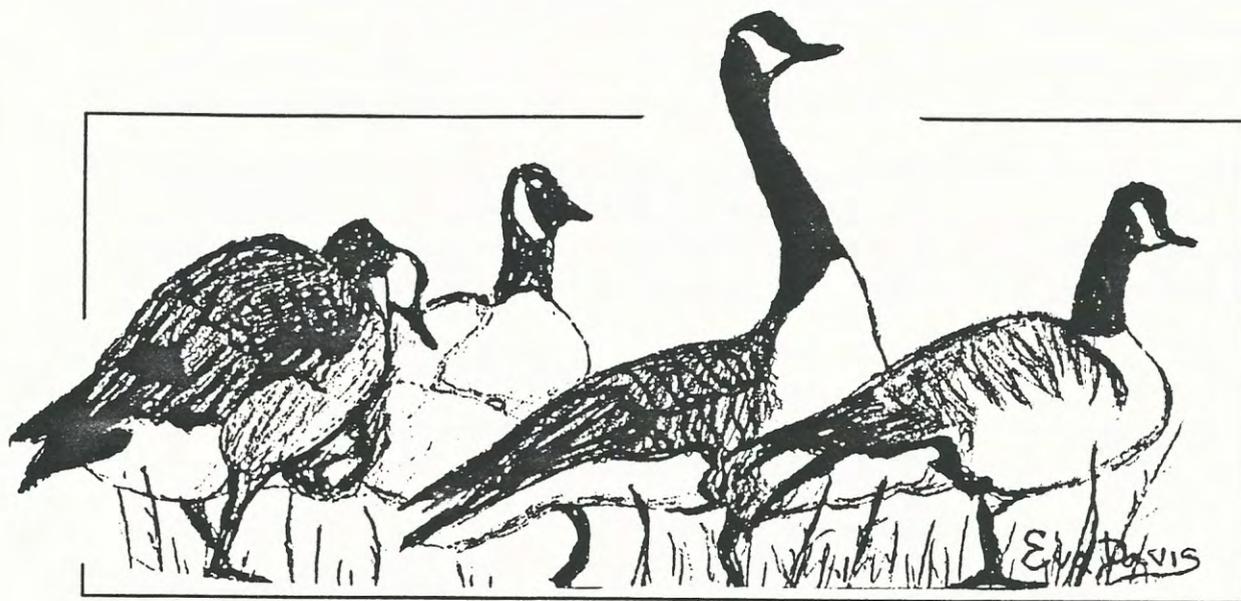
Okay, so I missed the boat. Next one to Ward's Island is in two hours? Guess I'll walk along the waterfront instead. Early fog has lifted almost half way up the CN Tower. It's not too cold and there's little wind. Oldsquaw ducks on the bay look ever so alert and natty in their black and white winter issue. Across the water the Island shimmers, somehow distant and enchanting, though only ten minutes away on the Ongiara. I'll take the 11 o'clock ferry to Hanlan's Point. Today is a monochrome: gray sky, slaty water, swans, ducks and gulls in shades of white, gray and black. Everything is ice-coated at the Hanlan's dock; lagoons and ponds are frozen solid and all the trees are sheathed in ice. (The Island is still asleep and dreaming; all is quiet.)

But there is some colour. Yes, the evergreens, hoary on the east, are deep green on the leeward side. Lighter green on tree trunks -- is that moss or lichen? Everywhere, young willow twigs gleam pale apricot in their icy coating. An euonymus grove is crowned with frozen berries of a deeper hue. Red-osier dogwood shines bright against the snow. These abundant bushes give us white flowers in late spring, off-white fruit on red stalks in autumn, and on this January day, ice blossoms! Each little cluster of stalks, encased in ice, sparkles as a pale winter sun struggles briefly through the clouds. Its light changes the gray lake to aquamarine as the restless waves roll onto the beach and crash against the rocks, creating ice sculptures all along the shore.

Even at the well-filled feeder outside the Island School, I saw no birds on the land. Three black squirrels, out foraging, didn't appear until well after noon; they slept in. I'm glad I didn't.

Phoebe Cleverley

□



THE MAGIC MUSHROOM MYSTERY

("Magic" does not, in this case, imply a hallucinogen, but it certainly means a fungus which has the experts stymied.)

"Chocolate-covered balls" Helen called them when she invited me to take a look that August. "Small, earth-encrusted potatoes" was my reaction. Either way, what *were* they? The balls — or potatoes — sat in clusters on dry soil close to a tree in a downtown neighbourhood garden. Each ball was solid and hard and possessed detachable brown scales.

The next stage was that the ball split open to reveal white lining. This evolved to level three, when the hard brown husk twisted backwards to create "legs" on which the interior, which had now assumed a cup-shape, was perched. The metamorphosis, from start to finish, took a few days, and the whole patch continued to fruit for the next couple of months.

The original "potato" had the appearance of a *Scleroderma* (a member of the puffball family), but without a *Scleroderma's* fleshy purplish interior. The peeling back to form supporting prongs, however, was the behaviour of a *Geastrum*, an earthstar. To complicate matters further, very young specimens, when cut open, sometimes contained a thick, dark amber jelly. This suggested the jelly found in a stinkhorn egg.

Various Mycological Society members were completely mystified by my phone descriptions. When I took specimens to Professor David Malloch of the U of T Botany Department, his opinion was earthstar. Unhappily, I was not able to include a sample showing the dark brown jelly (fortunately Helen Juhola had seen such a specimen or I would think I had imagined it), and this substance appeared to be a huge block to genus identification. Richard Aaron followed the matter up with Professor Malloch who said he would take some samples down to Professor Orson Miller, author of the field guide *Mushrooms of North America* (Dutton, 1978), when he visited the USA.

That was three years ago and the balls have continued to reproduce in the same place. One suggestion is that spores were in soil spread around that particular tree. All this illustrates the fact that it never does to underestimate Nature's capacity to effect magic and mystery even in the unlikely environs of the city's downtown core.

Eva Davis

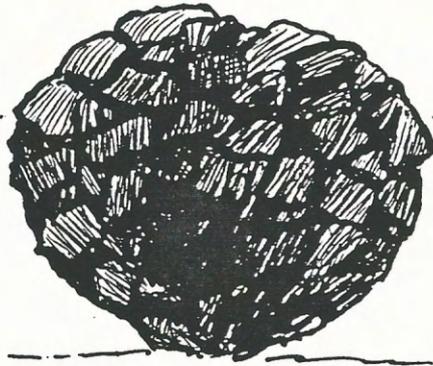
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For that first faint bloom,
searching where branches thicken,
eyes hungry for spring.

Haiku by Arthur Wade
January, 1997

MUSHROOMS (cont'd)

"MAGIC MUSHROOM"



1. Overall brown with detachable scales.



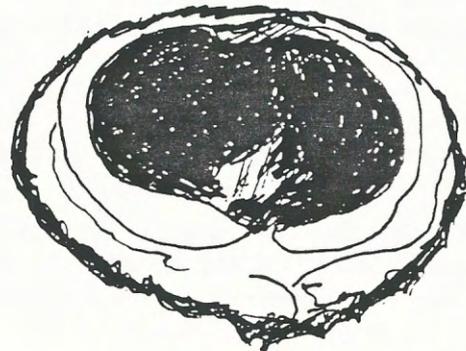
2. Splits open to reveal felty white inside.



3. This turns into a dry earthy cup or horn, pale brown, supported on original covering now brittle and brownish.

(Drawings by Eva Davis, from specimens, actual size, 1995.)

Half-section of young "magic mushroom" ball, showing brown, jelly-like substance, surrounded by firm white flesh. Very earthy smell, no apparent "roots", on soil of Toronto city streets, many specimens.



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MORE ABOUT CONSERVATION OF EASTERN LOGGERHEAD SHRIKES

The Eastern Loggerhead Shrike population and its declining state of health have been monitored in Ontario and Quebec for several years. This past spring, biologists from the Metro Toronto Zoo collected two-week old birds to create a captive breeding colony. A similar program is underway at McGill University in Montreal. Between the two programs, biologists hoped to have thirty breeding pairs of Eastern Loggerhead Shrikes in captivity, which would guarantee around forty baby birds to establish the breeding colonies. Unfortunately, only eighteen pairs nested.

At this first nesting, the Metro Zoo collected five, ten-day old birds, in accordance with a collecting protocol developed by a team of experts. I was employed, with another student, to care for the shrikes. We hand-fed them twelve hours a day, recorded their behaviours, tended to their health and tried to encourage their development. Imprinting was a problem with the young birds. One bird would insist on sitting on our heads. Later, he would fly toward our faces at full speed and stop -- centimetres away from our noses. If there was a change in their environment, like a new sound or the daily changing of newspapers in their cage, the birds would become excited and fly into the cage bars repetitively, with enough force to make the area between their eyes bloody. Some would pant violently.

Because of these behaviours, I am not sure I agree with captive-breeding programs with this species. There are also questions about the behaviour of captive-bred shrikes in the wild. Captive-bred Western Loggerhead Shrikes will hold their ground when confronted with hawks (a life-threatening stance). Furthermore, none of the captive-bred Westerns have succeeded in nesting after being released back into their habitats.

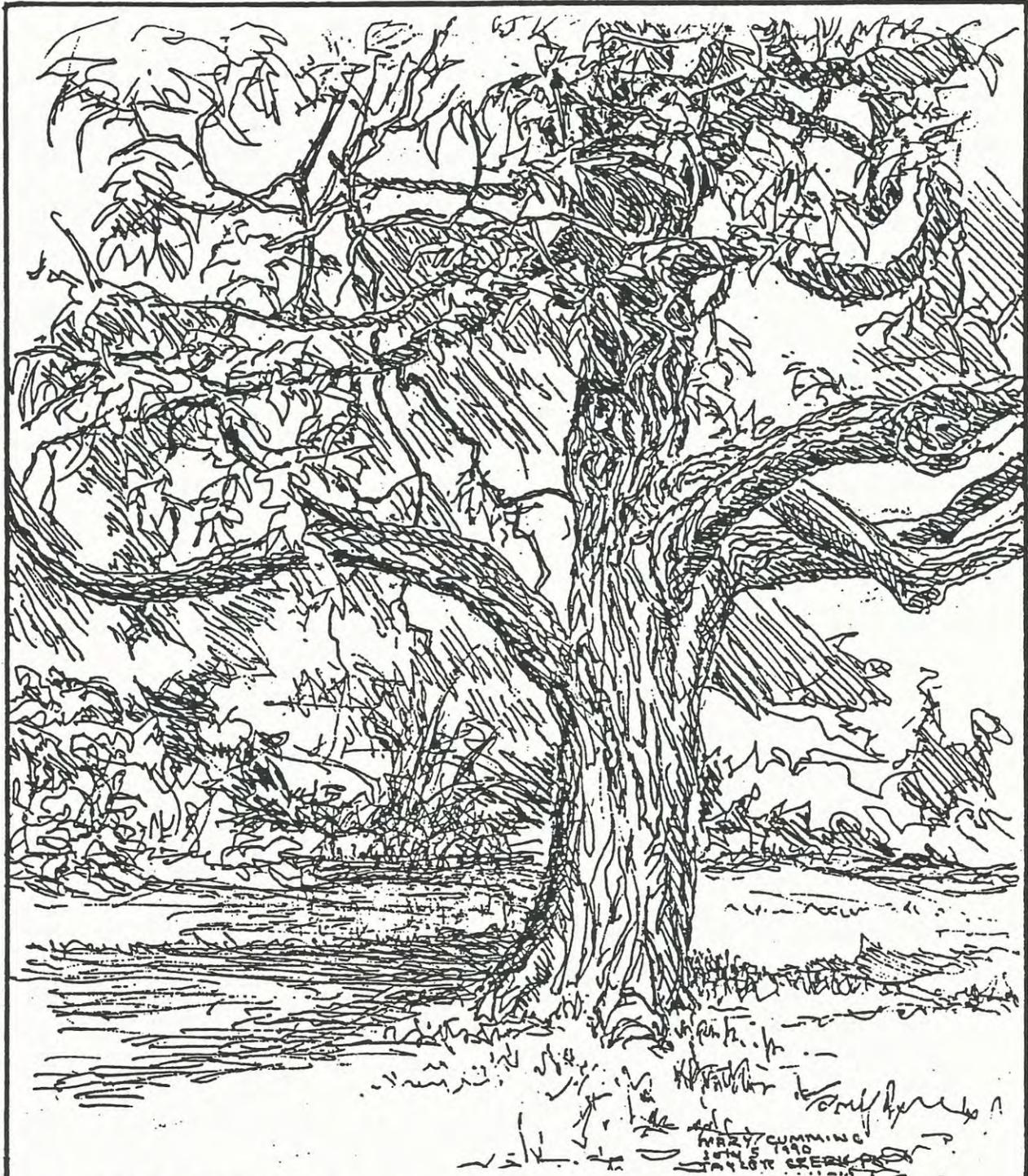
On the other hand, captive breeding may be the last chance for the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike. I became quite attached to the birds during this work. I hope that their offspring won't need to live in the safety of a zoo.

an article by Julie Ottewell from the HART'S-TONGUE HERALD (Owen Sound), Vol. 10, No. 3, Winter 1997

□

It can be pretty fatal when there are things that take priority over people or nature, according to Jane Jacobs, the world-renowned urban expert and author. Nature is important and people are important. Nothing else matters as much as these two. But people and nature must live in harmony. You don't just exploit the land. There are ways of using the land that are sustainable, not just of prolonging how long you can exploit it. Conservation-based development makes economic sense, though a lot of people haven't seen that yet.

extracted from "City, nature exist together on the bank of the Humber" by Christopher Hume in the TORONTO STAR, Oct. 18, 1997



THE CRACK WILLOW, European in origin, is our only established Toronto willow which grows as a large tree. Others, such as the planted white, weeping, and corkscrew willows, do not tend to "escape". There are a dozen shrub-sized species of native Toronto willows (some of which grow to tree-size elsewhere in their range), including the black, pussy, sandbar, and narrow heart-leaved willows. Field drawing is by Mary Cumming.

Ref. VASCULAR PLANTS OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO, TFN 1990.

IN THE NEWS

WOLVES RESHAPE YELLOWSTONE

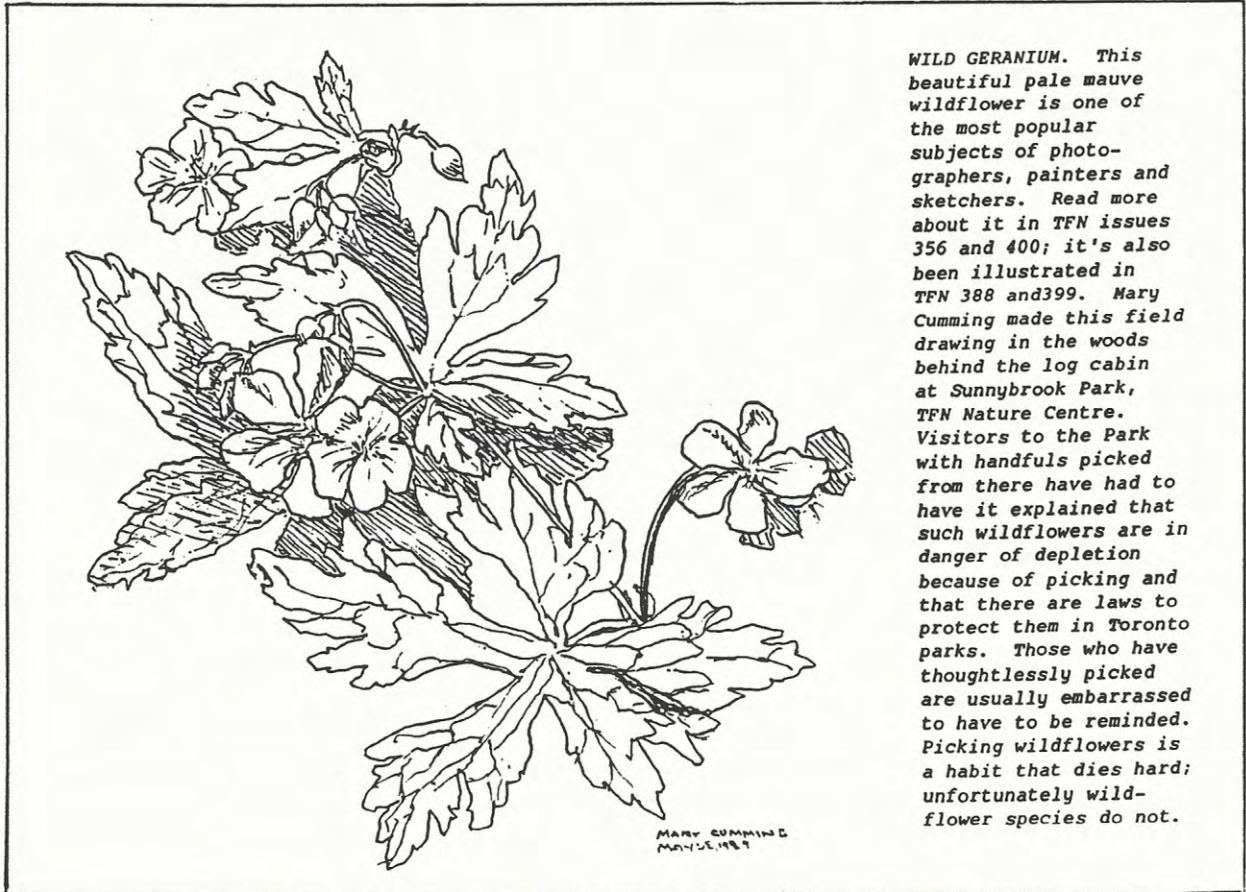
Just two years after 33 Canadian grey wolves were introduced to Yellowstone, they have dramatically made their presence felt. They have killed half the coyotes in the area, forced elk to become more vigilant and provided many opportunities for scavengers to share their kills. Because there are fewer coyotes, rodents are more plentiful, a boon for such predators as raptors, and overall biodiversity has increased. Research on how a large ecosystem responds to the return of a major predator is unparalleled because officials began assembling data far in advance.

from the *GLOBE AND MAIL*, Jan. 3, 1998

GOT KNOTWEED: GET AN ELEPHANT

At last, there's an answer to the jumbo-sized problem of Japanese knotweed -- use it as a snack for elephants and giraffes. When hungry elephants and giraffes were fed the invasive plant at Paignton Zoo, Devon, they loved it. The zoo's scientific officer recalled that it was one of 12 different plants tried on the animals. When they started munching they really liked it. And they had great fun playing around with it. It's a wonderful solution to the problem.

from *AMATEUR GARDENING*, Jan. 3, 1998



WILD GERANIUM. This beautiful pale mauve wildflower is one of the most popular subjects of photographers, painters and sketchers. Read more about it in *TFN* issues 356 and 400; it's also been illustrated in *TFN* 388 and 399. Mary Cumming made this field drawing in the woods behind the log cabin at Sunnybrook Park, *TFN* Nature Centre. Visitors to the Park with handfuls picked from there have had to have it explained that such wildflowers are in danger of depletion because of picking and that there are laws to protect them in Toronto parks. Those who have thoughtlessly picked are usually embarrassed to have to be reminded. Picking wildflowers is a habit that dies hard; unfortunately wildflower species do not.

RIVER HONOUR ONE STEP CLOSER

The Humber River was recommended for the nomination of Heritage River on Feb. 4, 1998 by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board, which is made up of park officials from across Canada. Members of the Humber Alliance sought the nomination at the board meeting in Quebec City. The board quickly endorsed the alliance's bid. Now the alliance must obtain formal support from Ontario Natural Resources Minister John Snobelen and federal Heritage Minister Sheila Copps. Heritage Rivers are selected for their cultural, natural and recreational significance.

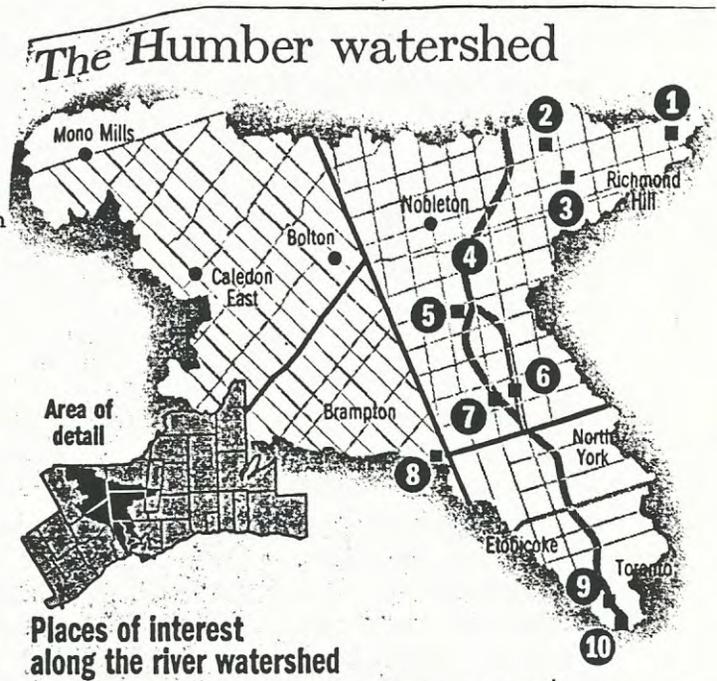
from an article in the TORONTO STAR, Feb. 5, 1998

THE FIGHT FOR HUMBER'S HERITAGE

Thirty-two rivers have gained heritage status or been placed on the nomination list, beginning with the French [River], the historic fur trading route between Lake Nipissing and Georgian Bay. The Humber is the most important urban waterway to go before the board, but it's not the first. The Grand River was bestowed heritage status four years ago largely because of its history as a "working river" for the industrial development along its shores. Gaining heritage status won't mean an end to development along the 100-kilometre river, with its 750 tributary streams. The 908-square-kilometre watershed is home to nearly 500,000 people. It's a soft approach to protection. There's nothing to stop development, but if there was anything done that destroyed those heritage features there would be political hell to pay.

extracted from an article by Brian McAndrew in the TORONTO STAR, Feb. 2, 1998

[See also page 13.]



Places of interest along the river watershed

- 1 Lake St. George, a kettle lake gouged by glacial activity 12,000 years ago, is the source of the east Humber.
- 2 Sir Henry Pellatt, the financier who built Casa Loma, constructed the largest solid-brick barn in Ontario on his Mary Lake summer estate about 1912.
- 3 The King Railway Station, built in 1853, is the oldest surviving railway station in Canada and now part of King-Township museum.
- 4 Étienne Brûlé was the first European to travel the Carrying Place Trail in 1615 and adopted the lifestyle and appearance of the Huron Indians.
- 5 A.Y. Jackson painted along the shores of the Humber and several members of the Group of Seven artists are buried on the grounds of the McMichael Canadian Art Gallery.
- 6 Florence Graham, who grew up along the river, moved to New York City in 1908 and created a cosmetics empire after changing her name to Elizabeth Arden.
- 7 The Hayhoe grain mill in Woodbridge is the last of 164 saw, grist, and woolen mills built along the Humber still operating.
- 8 The Claireville Dam and Reservoir built in the 1960s to control flash floods prevents the West Humber from being part of a Heritage River.
- 9 Telalagon was a fortified Seneca Indian village built in the 1670s that controlled fur trade along Humber, now the exclusive Baby Point neighbourhood.
- 10 Fur trader Jean Baptiste Rousseau in 1793 became the first permanent European settler along the Humber River.



CORMORANTS NOT HAVING AN EFFECT ON YELLOW PERCH

A study done by the state of Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources on Les Cheneaux Islands indicates that despite a significant population increase of cormorants, the birds have had little negative effect on yellow perch populations. Alewives and stickle-backs, it has been determined, have had more effects on the perch population than cormorants. The birds' impact on the yearly yellow perch taken is less than three percent, which is not as much as anglers take which is about nine percent of the annual mortality rate of the perch. Studies have been done for areas such as Lake Erie, Ontario, Superior and in reservoirs in the south, and no matter what species of fish is being looked at, cormorants have had minimal impact on them. People still have a hard time believing the cormorant doesn't and won't have a big impact on the fish, but studies have shown this to be the case.

extracted from an article by Tom Sasvari in the MANITOULIN RECORDER, Jan. 28, 1998

TOP FISH STOCKS SHRINKING FAST, DATA SHOW

Using nearly 50 years of data collected by the United Nations on more than 500 distinct species, caught in 180 countries, an exhaustive study led by a scientist at the University of British Columbia, shows that all commercial fisheries are in a widespread decline in what's called the trophic level, a term that ranks fish according to their place in the food web. Fish such as snapper and cod are at a high trophic level because they eat other fish. The fish they feed on are at a lower trophic level, and lower still are the krill and copepods that support the ecosystem. In both inland and ocean fisheries, when catches of valuable, long-lived fish such as salmon and tuna decline, fishermen switch to shorter-lived, smaller, plankton-feeding species. At first, they catch the new stocks in huge amounts. But soon these stocks also begin to decline. The collapse of the East Coast cod stocks provides a classical case study of what's happening around the world. After the cod were fished down, fishing pressure increased on shrimp. Cod feed on shrimp. If you remove the shrimp, how will the cod ever recover?

extracted from an article in the TORONTO STAR, Sat. Feb. 14, 1998

"SPRUCE PINEAPPLE-GALL",

a common gall of our eastern spruce species, induced by an insect of the aphid type.

(Drawing by D. Andrew White from a specimen found on a Scarborough white spruce in 1996.)

Ref.: A FIELD GUIDE TO THE INSECTS, 1970
Peterson Series (Borror & White)



IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

BIRDS IN WINTER

Winter wrens are not shy. They'll gladly huddle together for warmth on a cold night. Examples in Britain include nine observed sleeping together in an old nest of a song thrush. In the United States, a flock of 31 winter wrens piled into a nest box -- less than six inches square -- so tightly that they sat upon one another in two or three layers with their heads pointing inward. Small birds do this out of necessity. Two pairs of eastern bluebirds were observed fighting one another for possession of a nest box, but when temperatures dropped suddenly in January, the birds forgot their quarreling and slept in the box together.

from the GLOBE AND MAIL, Feb. 16, 1998

WHAT SONGBIRDS SAY

If you want to learn more about the language of humans, researchers say, listen to songbirds. Much of the complex vocalization of some songbirds is learned behaviour and may give a clue to the way humans learn to speak; for example, white-crowned sparrows develop a "dialect" distinctive to their home territory. A trained listener can distinguish among sparrows from Marin County, Berkeley and Sunset Beach, California.

from the GLOBE AND MAIL, FEB. 2, 1998

COMMENT: Marjory Tilley says that "perhaps this explains the impression I had when travelling in Brittany -- that the birds were singing in French!"

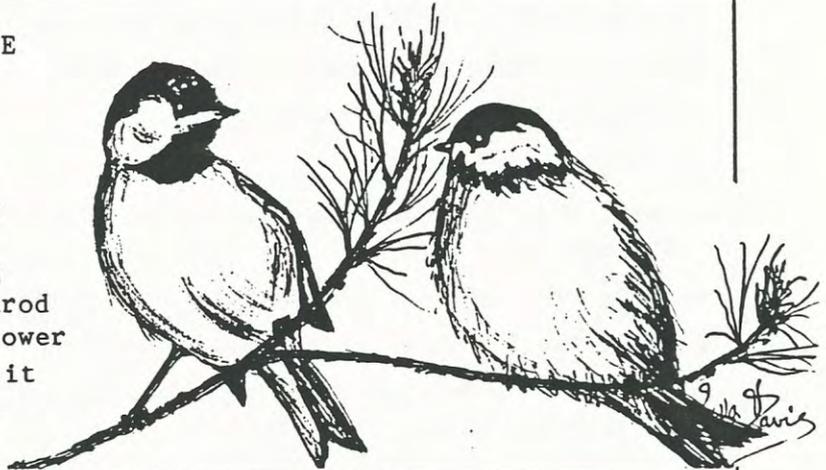
WHY ARE SOME BIRDS' EGGS PERFECTLY ROUND AND OTHERS POINTY?

The secret is in the number of eggs laid by the bird. Computer studies show how eggs can get the most warming possible from the parents. In clutches of one egg, the optimal shape was nearly spherical whereas with larger groups pointed eggs provided 8 per cent larger eggs for a given brood patch than spherical eggs.

from the GLOBE & MAIL, Feb. 5, 1998

THE BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

- drawn by Eva Davis -
a newsletter favourite.
In 9 issues (1960-1997)
5 other artists produced
drawings illustrating its
flight, nesting, young,
winter residence, feeding
from sumach fruit, goldenrod
galls and hand-held sunflower
seeds. In Eva's conifer it
could be insects or mast
they're after.



GOVERNMENT PROJECT IS FOR THE BIRDS

Three barren, small islands hugging the shore of Hamilton Harbour are part of a unique and particularly Canadian experiment in avian multiculturalism. The islands were built in 1995 to provide a nesting habitat for six bird species: two types of gulls, two of terns, the double-crested cormorant and the black-crowned night heron. The effort to create from scratch an environment catering to the habits and interests of such a large number of species was unique. On South and Centre Islands, stands of dogwood and willow were planted to provide a habitat for the herons as well as create nesting cover to keep gulls away. Nesting platforms-- from old telephone poles -- were also erected on Centre Island for the tree-dwelling cormorants. The poles were used instead of trees because the herons' acidic excrement initially kills and then rots the trees they nest in. And when they lose their treehouse nests, the cormorants aggressively compete with gulls and night herons for low-lying sites. The open ground sites were designed to separate the territories of the terns from the gulls. The gulls, it was felt, could nest almost anywhere. The terns were pickier. To make them feel at home, sand and gravel mixed with the driftwood, large stones and a few low-lying herbs they were known to favour were put on certain sites on Centre and North Islands. After two years, the \$2.5-million experiment in bird multiculturalism and social housing has been a hit. Five of the six bird species have successfully taken up residence on the islands in often large numbers. In 1997, there were 19 pairs of night herons, 62 pairs of herring gulls, 184 pairs of ring-bills, 364 pairs of Caspian terns and 564 pairs of common terns. The single exception to the success story is the cormorants, which have not found the telephone poles to their liking, even when old nests and nest building materials were placed underneath them.

extracted from an article by Stephen Strauss in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 29, 1998

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Tree-cover in urban areas is vital -- in parks, private gardens, along streets. So a strategy for promoting and managing street trees must form part of a sustainable transport policy. Trees serve as:

- solar-powered air-conditioning systems
- filtering and cleaning dirty air
- buffering winds
- shading paved areas from summer sun, but allowing sunlight to get through
- their root systems ensure a better hydrological balance
- their root systems reduce polluted storm surges to rivers

adapted from a letter from Judith Hanna, Permaculture Association, Devon in
BBC WILDLIFE, Vol. 16, No. 2, Feb. 1998

THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

April 1997, Toronto

We had a cool, very dry month in Toronto. It was the driest April since 1946 with 27.8 mm of precipitation downtown.

Although the month at the beginning was very warm, there was arctic air over Winnipeg -- which received a massive snowstorm on top of an already dangerously-high snow cover. (This later produced record flooding there which took weeks to subside.) The arctic air was within striking distance: a disturbance moving ahead of the cold front lifted temperatures briefly to the low 20s°C on April 7th before the cold hit. Daytime highs on April 8th-9th were near zero or below. The minimum of -8.5°C downtown on April 9th was the lowest for any April day since 1982. Pearson's -9.2°C matched 1995's minimum for the month. Conditions stayed cold for the next two weeks, finally rebounding to seasonable conditions for the final week of the month. The result was a month just less than half a degree below normal.

While Winnipeg faced massive flooding, April's dryness in Toronto resulted in fine conditions -- not too muddy -- by month's end -- this following a rather soggy winter and indeed a very wet 1996.

Gavin Miller

□



Robin Powell

Marsh Marigolds in Finch East Park

COMING EVENTS

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

- Sat. April 25 at 8 am (all day) with Norm Murr for spring migration at the Leslie St. Spit. Meet at the foot of Leslie St. Bring lunch.

Toronto Entomological Association meeting - Sat. April 25 at 1 pm in Room 314, Metro Hall, 55 John St. This program will be a viewing of the feature film "Microcosmos". Call Al Hanks at 905-727-6993 for more information.

Mycological Society of Toronto meeting - April 20 at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Civic Garden Centre (Leslie and Lawrence). For more information about the meeting and outings, call HI-FUNGI.

Walker Mineralogical Club meeting - Wed. April 8 at 8 pm in Room 2093, 22 Russell St. (Earth Sciences Centre, U of T). Brad Wilson will be speaking about the Minerals at Emerald Lake, Yukon Territory. For more details, call ROM Dept. of Earth Sciences at 586-5819.

Canadian Wildflower Society East Toronto Chapter meeting - April 22 at 7:30 pm at the Beaches Recreation Centre, 6 Williamson Rd. Jim Hodgins will be speaking about "Artistic Visions of Temagami's Old Growth Forest. For more information call Carolyn King at 222-5736.

High Park Winter Walking Tours - Sun. April 19 at 1:15 pm starting at the south side of the Grenadier Restaurant in High Park. This walk is to celebrate Earth Day. The subject will be Nature Lore and is especially recommended for families. For more information call 392-7276, ext. 301.

Society of Ontario Nut Growers (SONG) - annual auction - April 25 at 1:15 pm at the Civic Garden Centre (Leslie & Lawrence). Auction of nut trees, books, nut seeds, crafts, cookery and other related nut items.

Toronto Bay Initiative Annual Public Forum - Progress on the Bay - April 26 from 1 pm to 4 pm at the Harbourfront Community Centre, 627 Queen's Quay West. Call 314-9498 for more information.

Sherwood Park Advisory Committee - presentation of the 1998 Work Plan for Sherwood Park - Tue. April 7 at 7:30 pm at Blythwood Public School Cafeteria, 2 Strathgowan Cres. For more details, call 392-0730.

Ontario Science Centre - Bancroft Mineral Collecting Field Trip - May 2 from 7:30 am to 11 pm - an all-day field trip to collect minerals at various locations in and around Bancroft. Learn how to safely collect and identify minerals while exploring some of Ontario's unique geology. An overview of Southern Ontario's geology will be provided while en route to Bancroft. This is a physically demanding trip, involving hiking and climbing on steep slopes. Cost: public, \$55; members of Science Centre, \$40. Contact Vic Tyrer, Ont. Science Centre, 770 Don Mills Rd., North York, Ont. M3C 1T3 for more information or call 696-3255.

COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

+
TFN
display

Natural History lecture series sponsored by Heritage Toronto and the Toronto Field Naturalists (celebrating 75 years of TFN). Lectures are at 12 noon to 1 pm at the Heritage Toronto building, 205 Yonge St. Free to members of Heritage Toronto; \$2 each to members of TFN; and \$4 to members of the public. Call 392-6827 for more information.

- April 9 - Setting the Scene: the evolution of Toronto's landscape with Ed Freeman
- April 16 - Toronto's first natural history society - Louise Herzberg
- April 23 - Lost creeks of Toronto - Helen Mills
- April 30 - Ashbridge's Bay - a wetland lost - George Fairfield
- May 7 - On the trail of an artist-naturalist: Ernest Thompson Seton with Jack Lord

Task Force to Bring Back the Don & Toronto Parks and Recreation

- Sun. April 5 at 2 pm - Wildlife Week walk meeting at Chester subway station and proceeding west through streets to the Don Valley.
- Sat. April 25 at 10 am - Planting in Sackville Playground beginning at southeast corner of Richmond St. East and Power St. Dress for planting.
- Sunday, April 26 at 10 am - Planting at Riverdale Farm. Meet at the corner of Carlton St. and Sumach St.

For more information or to get on the mailing list, call 392-1255.

Save the Rouge Valley System events

- April 19 at 1:30 pm - Spring Flowers nature walk. Meet at the Finch Meander parking lot.
- April 26 at 9 am - 10,000 Trees Planting Day. Meet at Sewell's Rd. north of Old Finch. Bring work gloves, boots and shovels. Call 282-9983 for further information.

Lands for Life- Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Planning area public meeting
Tues. March 31 from 2 pm to 9 pm at Queen's Park, Macdonald Block,
900 Bay St.

Black Creek Project - work days and meetings every month. Call Amy Mayer at 661-6600, ext. 316 for more information.

Heritage Toronto walking tours

- Sunday, April 19 at 1:30 pm - City Halls
- Sunday, April 26 at 11 am - Battlefield Walking tour

For details about these and other walks and activities, call 392-6827, ext. 265.

The Urban Naturalist

- Introduction to Birding at Thomson Memorial Park - April 4 at 10 am. Cost: \$5.
- Bus trip to Butterfly Conservatory at Niagara Falls - April 18. Cost: \$45.

Call Morris Sorensen at 755-6030 to register or for more information.

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