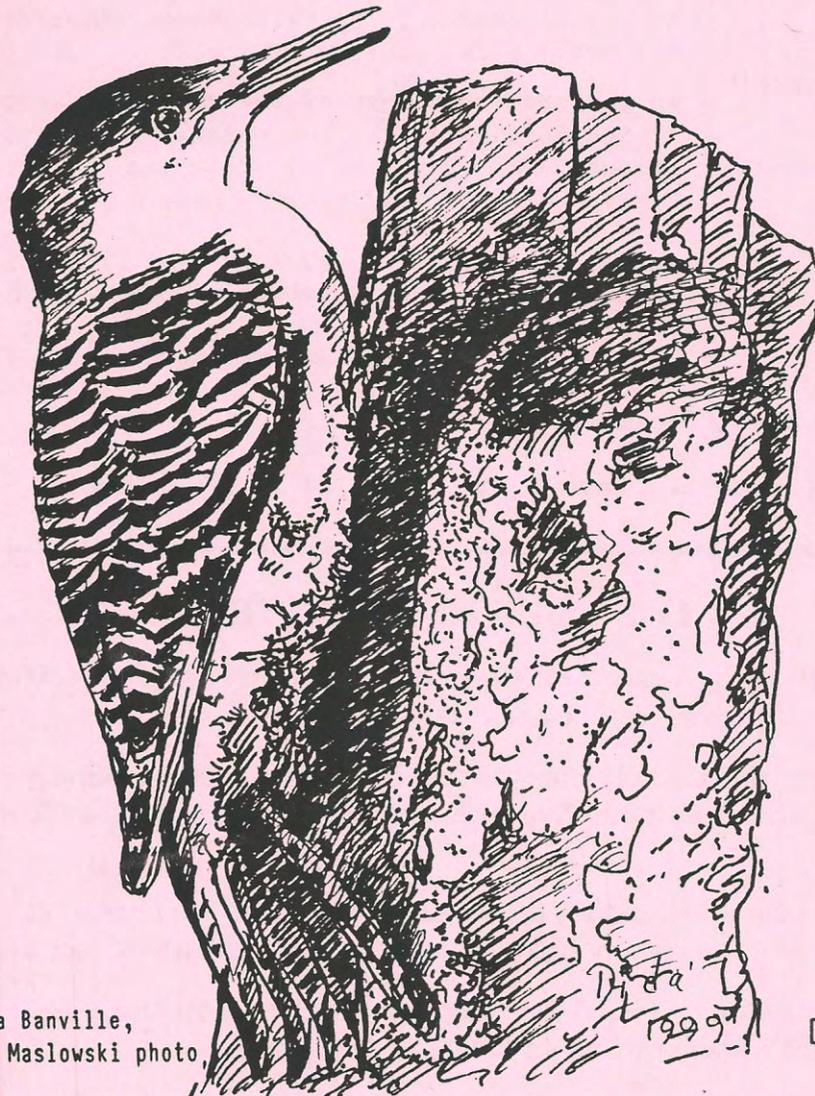


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 487

November 1999



RED-BELLIED

WOODPECKER -

male

Drawing by Diana Banville,  
based on a Karl Maslowski photo.

[See page 10.]

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## TFN MEETINGS

- Sunday, Nov. 7, 1999 - MUSHROOMS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
at 2:30 pm an illustrated talk by Vello Soots, President of  
the Mycological Society of Toronto
- in the Northrop Frye Hall - We will be shown some of the mushrooms to be found  
Victoria University in Southern Ontario. The speaker will explain the  
73 Queen's Park Cres. East structure of mushrooms as organisms and the  
ecological role they play in nature.
- + Social Hour beginning at 2 pm with free juice and  
coffee [+ display & book sale by Mushroom Society]
- + selected TFN publications and memberships for sale

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, December 5, 1999

NEXT NEWSLETTER: December/January (to be mailed in mid November)

### 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, including locations, dates, and any sources consulted.

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  
2 Carlton St., #1519  
Toronto, Ont. M5B 1J3

**Editor:** Helen Juhola

**Poetry, Art and Nature Observations:** Diana Banville

**Assistants:** Patricia Brind, Eva Davis, Karin Fawthrop, Nancy Fredenburg,  
Toshi Oikawa, Marilyn Murphy, Robin Powell

**Printer:** DM Printing

**Mailer:** Perkins Mailing Services

# 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 SCARBOROUGH TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR - nature walk  
 Nov. 3 Leader: Karin Fawthrop  
 10:30 am Meet at the northeast corner of St. Clair Ave. East and Midland Ave. If you are far from home, bring lunch.  
 We will be exploring the route of what was a proposed Scarborough transportation corridor. Many plans are being proposed for its use.
- Saturday GALLERY HOPPING - nature arts  
 Nov. 6 Leader: Mary Cumming  
 11 am Meet at the Cumberland exit of the Bay subway station. Following the outing we will meet in a food court for lunch.  
 This is a tour through the galleries of Yorkville so anyone is welcome to attend.
- Sunday TFN MEETING (See page 2 for details.)  
 Nov. 7  
 2:30 pm
- Tuesday WIGMORE RAVINE - nature walk  
 Nov. 9 Leader: Carol Miller  
 2 pm Meet at the school on the west side of Sloane Ave. north of Eglinton Ave. East.  
 This is a large wild area with many hills to climb and slippery places to navigate around and part of the Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve.
- Saturday LOWER MIMICO CREEK - nature walk  
 Nov. 13 Leaders: Diana Karrandjas & Rhona Swarbrick  
 10:30 am Meet on the northeast corner of Lake Shore Blvd. West and Park Lawn Rd. Bring lunch.  
 This will be a long and rugged walk as we follow the stream north to Montgomery Inn where tours and tea will be available (for a price). This is a joint outing with the Friends of Mimico Creek.
- Sunday WATERFRONT TRAIL - nature walk  
 Nov. 14 Leader: Joanne Doucette  
 1 pm Meet at the western entrance to Humber Bay Park at Lake Shore Blvd. West, just west of the bridge across Mimico Creek. Wear comfortable walking shoes and warm clothes and bring something hot to drink.  
 On this walk we will be travelling from Humber Bay Park to Sunnyside. Bring binoculars. This is a great time of year to see ducks and gulls.

+

▷

## NOVEMBER OUTINGS (cont'd)

+

- Sunday  
Nov. 14  
1 pm WEST TORONTO PARKS - heritage walk  
Leader: Ian Wheal  
Meet at the southeast corner of Dundas St. West and Keele St.  
This tour will lead us through some of the parks and green spaces which were put to war use from 1914 to 1919.
- Wednesday  
Nov. 17  
10:30 am HUMBER VALLEY - bird study  
Leader: Louise Orr  
Meet at the Old Mill subway station. Bring lunch.  
Bring binoculars and be prepared to stop, look and listen.
- Saturday  
Nov. 20  
10:30 am RAINBOW CREEK - nature walk  
Leader: Robin Powell  
Meet at the northwest corner of Steeles Ave. West and  
Islington Ave. Bring lunch.  
This will be a long walk with lots of hills to climb as we explore a tributary  
of the Humber River north of Steeles.
- Sunday  
Nov. 21  
2 pm YELLOW CREEK - urban ecology  
Leader: Peter Hare  
Meet at the Davisville subway station.  
We will be looking at the results of the Yonge St. reconstruction. A brass  
plaque commemorating Yellow Creek may be in place! Joint outing with N.Toronto  
Green Community.
- Tuesday  
Nov. 23  
10:30 am CABBAGETOWN - heritage walk  
Leader: Mazette Best  
Meet at the southwest corner of Winchester St. and Sumach St.  
This is a lovely old section of Toronto with many historic houses and small  
front-yard gardens. The district also is home to Riverdale Farm and the  
Necropolis Cemetery. Bring lunch if you are far from home.
- Saturday  
Nov. 27  
10:30 am NORTHERN WEST HIGHLAND CREEK - nature walk  
Leaders: Carol and Murray Seymour  
Meet at the entrance to Birkdale Park, on the south side of  
Ellesmere Rd., east of Midland Rd. Bring lunch.  
We will be following a Highland Creek tributary south to Lawrence Ave. or  
Midland Rd. through a series of parks with a variety of landscapes.
- Sunday  
Nov. 28  
1:30 pm HUMBER RIVER, OLD MILL & MARSHES - discovery walk  
Leaders: Jerry Belan and/or Ron Allan  
Meet at the Old Mill subway station.  
This is a long walk, partly on streets and partly through parkland.  
See page 13 for more information about this walk.
- Tuesday  
Nov. 30  
10:30 am \$ ferry tickets TORONTO ISLAND - bird study  
Leader: Ann Gray  
Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. in time to take  
the 10:30 ferry to Wards Island. Bring lunch and binoculars.  
We will be looking for wintering birds so dress warmly and be prepared to  
stop and look. □

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A circle of sharing around a campfire - a Canadian image; does it stir something in your memory, close to your heart? Such a gathering, around a glowing teepee-shaped fire, drew me to Etienne Brûlé Park on Friday, the 24th of September. It was labelled a "sunrise ceremony" - I had pictured blue sky and pink fluffy clouds. But the sun didn't rise; the clouds at 6:30 that morning were dark and dripping with rain. Perhaps participants were fewer, but enthusiasm was not at all dampened by the weather. This celebration of the river (KABECHENONG, now called the Humber) was prepared and shared by the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, whose ancestors have lived in this area for millennia. Their overland route along the river corridor to the upper Great Lakes was later called the Toronto Carrying Place Trail and was used by explorers and settlers on their way to the Canadian interior.

Small baskets held cedar, sage, sweetgrass, and tobacco, which were sprinkled on the fire from time to time. One was passed around the circle in a ritual of cleansing through smoke. Prayers, mostly in Ojibway, were offered by both male and female elders, but water, its care and distribution and rituals of thanksgiving are traditionally the responsibility of women. We could hear crows and blue jays calling in the trees and ducks and Canada geese obliged by flying overhead. As final prayers were offered to the Creator, we faced east, then south, west and north. A blanket was presented to Madeleine McDowell, who has been tireless in her efforts to preserve the valley and have the Humber River designated a Canadian Heritage River.

When the campfire events finished at 8:00 a.m. I went for a walk northwards along the river, frequently a location for TFN walks. No spectacular sightings: goldenrod and asters, white snakeroot and butter-and-eggs were still showing their colours, ducks and gulls (ring-billed, herring, and one great black-backed) were at home on the river, and several flickers were busily digging for ants. As I returned, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority staff were setting up displays, a large stage-on-wheels and rows of chairs, while a kilted piper from the Toronto Police Pipe Band brought a whiff of the area's Celtic heritage. Uniformed members of the Toronto Fire Service, Toronto Police Service, Ontario Parks and I think one or two Queen's Park Rangers, some women in Victorian costumes, and First Nations people of all ages in native dress made this a colourful assembly. Proceedings began with a circle of native drummers and singers from Rice Lake, a colour party with flags, and a procession of dignitaries to the platform. The Humbercrest School Choir sang O CANADA beautifully in English and French. The roster of distinguished citizens on the platform was impressive, with representatives of federal, provincial and municipal governments, the TRCA chair, elders and chiefs from several First Nations. All were introduced and spoke, mercifully not at great length. ▷

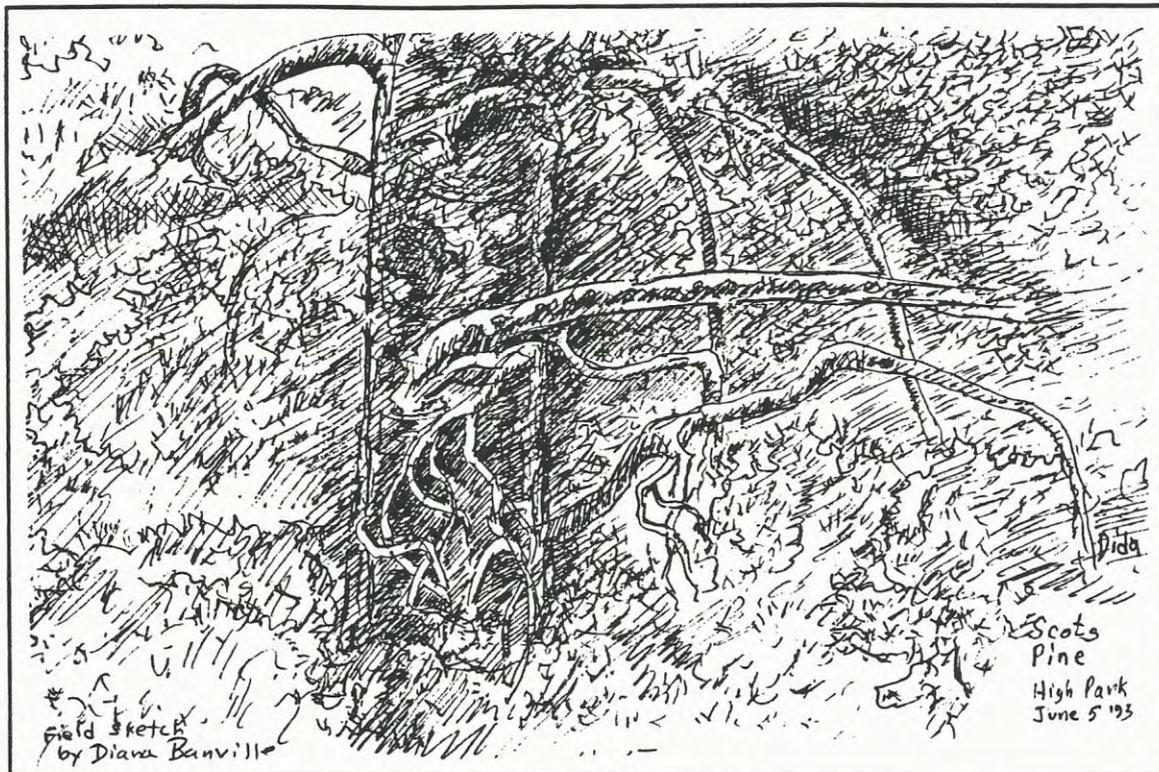
PRESIDENT'S REPORT (cont'd)

The actual unveiling of the plaque designating the Humber River a Canadian Heritage River was accomplished by the Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, with the Honourable John Snobelen, Ontario Minister of Natural Resources, Chief Carolyn King of the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation, and TRCA Chair, Dick O'Brien. They were flanked by two Toronto police officers in ceremonial dress mounted on a pair of handsome black horses. The commemoration on the plaque is in three languages: Ojibway, English and French.

Water is fundamental to all of life. We need to be vigilant to protect our abundant (but continually threatened) watersheds, rivers, lakes, and wetlands. The Humber Heritage Committee has shown that persistent, cooperative effort within a community can achieve positive results.

Phoebe Cleverley

□



RECYCLING TIP

Holey socks! Hole in the toe? -- your grandmother doesn't do darning? She's on a birding trip (ecotourism), or surfing the net?

Try cutting off a clean sock and dressing up your water bottle. It will absorb the condensation. [courtesy of Fanny Wong & Phoebe Cleverley]

TFN BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- 1999-2000

President: Phoebe Cleverley, 506 - 110 The Esplanade, Toronto M5E 1X9  
(369-0546)

Vice President: Karin Fawthrop, 347 Beechgrove Dr., Scarborough M1E 4A2  
(282-6044)

Past President: Morris Sorensen, 29 Janet Blvd., Scarborough M1R 1H7  
(755-6030)

Secretary-Treasurer: Aarne Juhola, 112 - 51 Alexander St., Toronto M4Y 1B3  
(924-5806)

Other Directors:

Alexander Cappell, 109 - 35 Cedarcroft Blvd., Willowdale M2R 2Z4 (663-7738)

Elaine Farragher, 23 Wright Ave., Toronto M6R 1K9 (537-5877)

Nancy Fredenburg, 807 - 360 Ridelle Ave., Toronto M6B 1K1 (781-8550)

Helen Juhola, 112 - 51 Alexander St., Toronto M4Y 1B3 (924-5806)

Ann Millett, 138 Folkstone Cres., Brampton L6T 3M5 (905-792-0844)

Robin Powell, 703 - 169 St. George St., Toronto M5R 2M4 (928-9493)

Colleen Prentice, 1202 - 135 Rose Ave., Toronto M4X 1P1 (925-0347)

Andre Vietinghoff, 403 - 24 Burnhamthorpe Rd., Etobicoke M9A 1G8 (232-9241)

□

Did you know?

It's blown afield

The Canadian Shield

is a giant rug

under which we can sweep -

- with all haste -

our nuclear waste!

(CBC RADIO News March 8, 1999.

Diana Banville.

(and with the least possible public consultation)

## PROMOTION REPORT

The Toronto Field Naturalists is a club that has always relied on volunteers. Those who lead outings are volunteering their time. So are those who participate in clean-ups of our own nature reserves or of stream valleys within metropolitan Toronto. Volunteers are needed to sit at a TFN booth or table at community or organizational events. Last but not least, those who sit on the board of directors are performing their duties on a voluntary basis. Yes, the services of volunteers are indispensable to the life of our club as they are to any club. Yet these services cannot be taken for granted. Often the same core group of persons will be asked to volunteer again and again. Sometimes, one is really asking these persons to dig down deep to sacrifice their time yet again on behalf of an organization.

Sandy Cappell is the director who has been in charge of promotion for many years. I take over his role with some trepidation but also with hope. Sandy has already made many invaluable suggestions to me, as has Helen Juhola. Both have given me the names of contact persons. TFN fortunately boasts a very large membership. One of my goals as the new person responsible for promotion would be to expand the roster of volunteers who could be contacted. It would also be nice to recruit 2 or 3 persons who might help with the phoning. As a member you could begin by offering to be on a list of volunteers for TFN events\*. That is not quite the same as asking you to volunteer for an event! Of course, our hope is that if we phone you sufficient times, you might be willing to volunteer once or twice.

Jean Macdonald is the person who prepares the displays for promotional events. Jean will use a combination of pictures and text to make up a meaningful bulletin board. TFN has a portable display unit which can easily be carried, even for great distances, and set up on a table. The TFN membership brochures promote our organization. TFN booths at events are used to "deliver" these brochures to members of the public. Our colourful flyers promote the monthly nature talks at Northrop Frye Hall. Brochures, flyers, and other relevant literature are available to the community at public libraries and community centres.

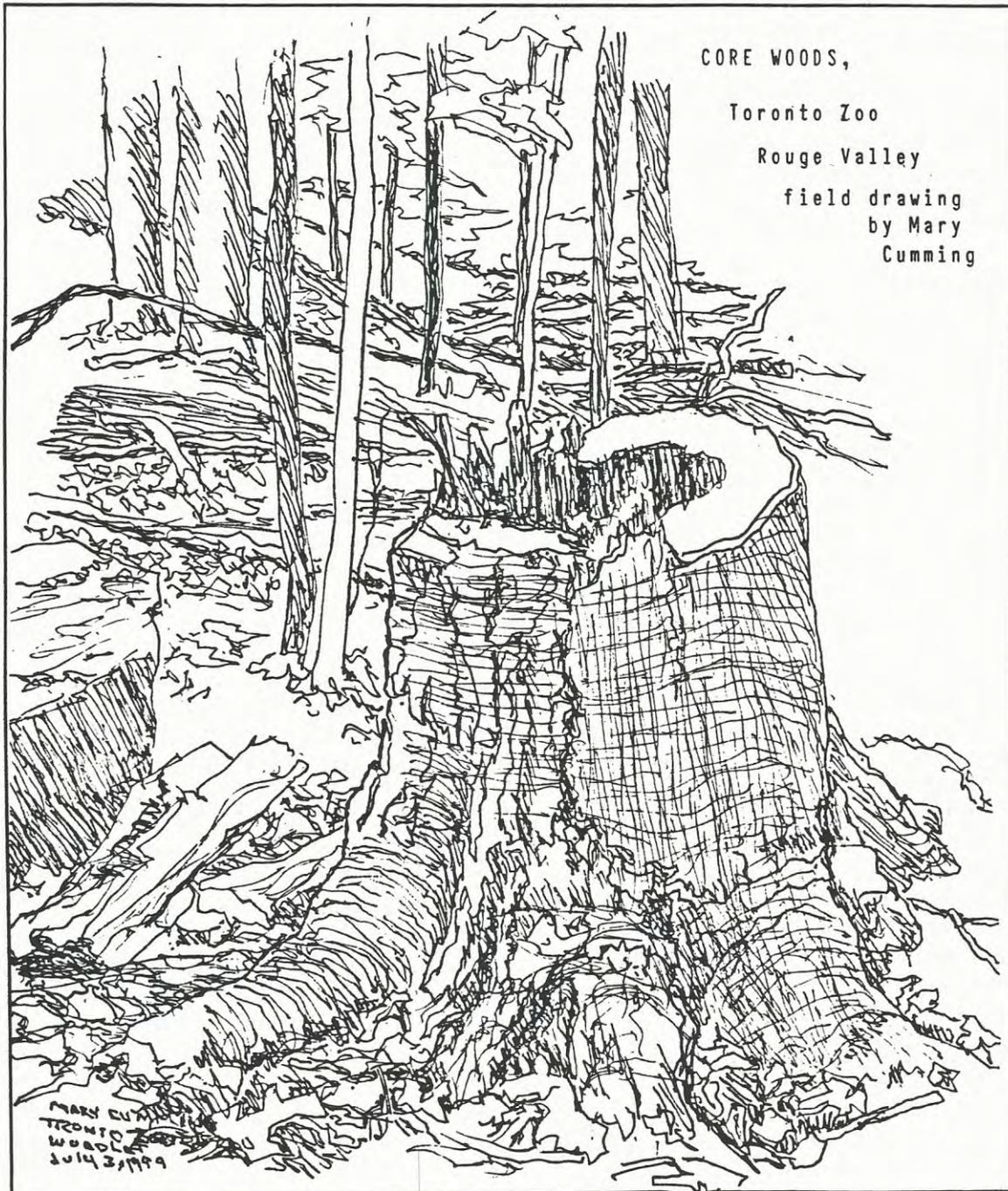
Finally, our best method of promotion may be the events themselves. If members, friends, acquaintances, and indeed anyone from the public, enjoy a nature walk sponsored by TFN or are inspired by one of our guest speakers, then the event was a success. Such successes and "word of mouth" may draw more members. However, I'm not preaching the goal of increased membership: that is not our mandate. I think it is much more important that our members are satisfied with the events the club organizes. Our chief aims should be to enjoy nature, learn more about it, and gain and promote awareness of environmental issues, especially in the city. We should be thankful for the participation of volunteers and of "spectators" or "attendees" alike.

\* Call me, Andre, at 232-9241 or the TFN office at 593-2656.

## PROMOTION REPORT (cont'd)

Since the summer, TFN had a table at the Riverdale Farm Day which was part of the larger Cabbagetown Festival. We also had a booth at the Harvest Festival in High Park on the afternoon of October 3. There will be many more opportunities over the coming months to make known to the public our presence and purpose. Promotion has had, and will continue to play, an important role in our organization. I wish you all a very enjoyable and participatory 1999/2000 season!

Andre Vietinghoff



Toronto Bird-status notes

## A WOODPECKER TO WATCH FOR...

The Red-bellied Woodpecker was named thus by early artist-ornithologist Mark Catesby who noted the breast and underparts to be "ash-colour... except the belly near the vent, which is stained with red." Our two most popular field guides do not explain this, as it is not considered a field-mark. The Jacksons assure us it is not a misnomer; they write, "Every adult we have examined has had red belly feathers, and these are often mixed with yellow and orange. This splash of colour is between and behind the bird's legs - low enough to be relatively inconspicuous when the bird is perched on the trunk of a tree."

An old nick-name, "Zebra Bird" is well earned, if you can imagine a zebra with a red helmet. The name might fit an immature of the species better, since it has an all-brown head. The adult female does not have the full helmet, but she has much more red on the back of head and nape than the Northern Flicker or any Hairy or Downy Woodpecker. The species is closely related to the Red-headed Woodpecker.

The Red-bellied Woodpecker was not listed on TFN's TORONTO REGION BIRD LIST of 1982 but appeared on our 1985 list as it was considered to be increasing. When our 1990 list was published, we had not been able to find ten reports in the previous decade (perhaps because of inadequate records) so the species did not appear - nor is it on our present 1993 checklist. However, since we have received at least 45 reports in the first 9 years of the decade, we have quietly tucked a page in among the "regular" woodpeckers in our Toronto Region Species Field Notes binder, so that we can monitor it more closely, particularly inasmuch as it may possibly be nesting within Toronto Region, according to the ATLAS OF THE BREEDING BIRDS OF ONTARIO. It appears on the TORONTO REGION CHECKLIST OF THE BIRDS published May, 1996, by the Toronto Ornithological Club, as having been "known to breed in the Region".

Considered non-migratory, it visits feeders in Toronto in winter. Joan O'Donnell reports it competes successfully with the Blue Jay for peanuts. She describes its short, harsh, ascending call. The Jacksons speak of its "Churr!" So do listen for it. They also say it eats "everything from insects and spiders to poison ivy and oranges". My own most vivid memory of the bird comes from the Hudson Valley, where poison ivy trunks are often as thick as the tree they're climbing on. However, at the time, this bird was busy at a corn crib, blazing in the open. We have no dearth of poison ivy in Toronto for woodpeckers and other species to fight over. Mulberries are mentioned, too - often planted here. The Red-bellied Woodpecker has been reported in all seasons in Toronto Region. If you have seen or heard it, please write your experience (with place, month, and year, as best you can recall) and send it in to TFN. Thanks again to our reporters for "taking the trouble". It's so worthwhile.

Diana Banville.

Ref.: NATURE SOCIETY NEWS Feb., 1987, "Red-bellied is a generalist expanding its range", WOODPECKERS Series by Jerry & Bette Jackson. (See also TFN 479:17.)

□

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

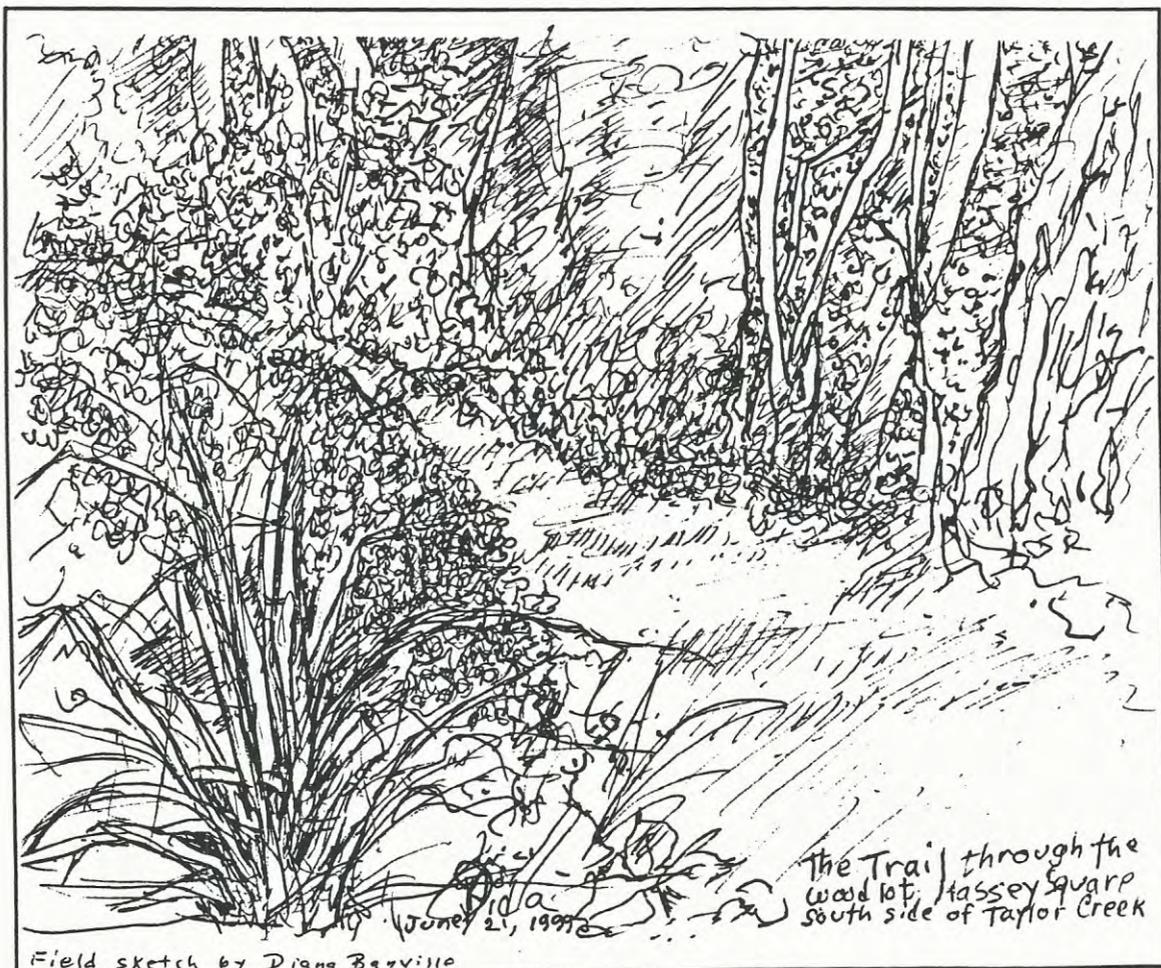
September 14, 1999

The September 1999 newsletter mentions TFN's request for fox sightings.

My cat and I were abruptly awakened at 6:10 a.m. on Thursday, 10 June, 1999 by loud shrieks of anguish. Looking out of the living-room window into a neighbour's back garden, I saw a baby raccoon (one of a family of 4 plus mother who live in a woodpile beside my building) being eaten by a young yellow fox who was standing in the middle of the lawn. The fox was a youngster and in prime condition with a beautiful brush of a tail. He was very nervous and eventually dragged the poor raccoon baby into denser shrubbery.

I always hope to see wildlife in our many ravines but the above episode took place just west of Avenue Road, on the south side of Lonsdale, very close to Upper Canada College. The closest ravine would be west of Spadina Road - Cedarvale Park, which is densely wooded.

Gerry Shepherd



Field sketch by Diana Barville

Sept. 20, 1999

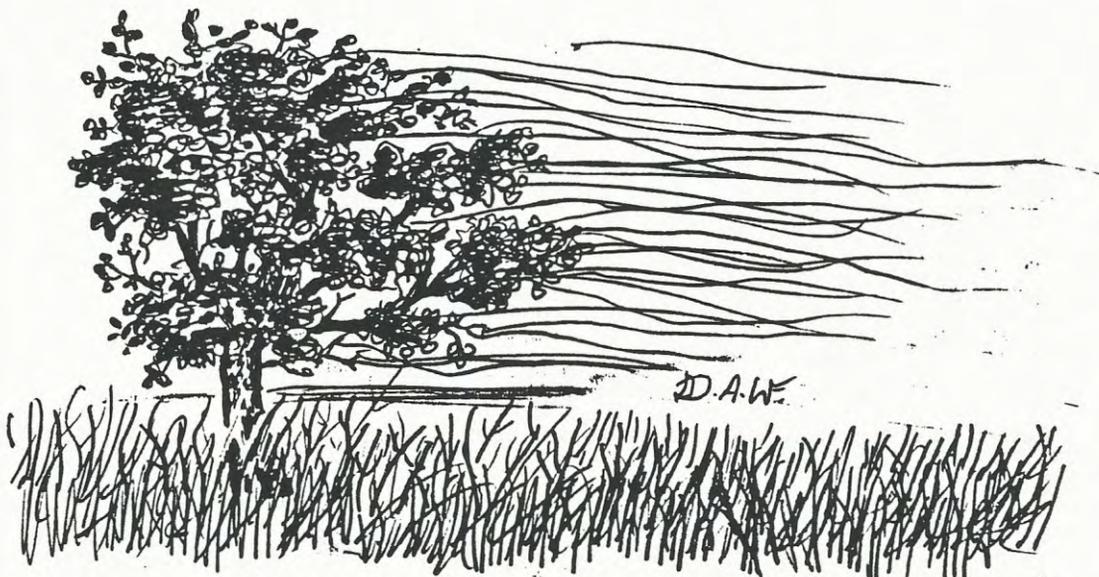
On September 18, 1999, on the Waterfront Trail near Pickering, my wife and I observed what I can only presume were spiders preparing to become airborne on strands of "angel hair". We noticed these silky strands when we stopped to admire a large spider web. From a nearby apple tree we saw, glimmering in the sunlight, a myriad of long silky strands waving like ribbons in the wind. The number of strands was certainly very high, probably in the hundreds. The strands were over three metres in length, anchored to the tree at one end, and waving free at the other end. These strands were only visible where they shone in the direct sunlight. In the shade these strands were virtually invisible. Consequently, it was difficult to follow any particular filament back to its source. When observed at very close range, from a few centimetres, these webs were barely visible, doubly so in the shade. The filaments were extremely thin. I could not feel any of the samples that I tried to touch. The breeze was not at all vigorous, yet the strands were blown almost horizontally by this feeble draft. I could find only one spider at the beginning of one such strand. The spider was about two millimetres long, it was grey and it had an elongated body. The tiny spider was stationed on a crude little 'web' stretched between two branches. Perhaps this spider's tiny web was a mechanism for gaining exposure to the breeze. This spider seemed to sever the strand when I approached too closely. Because of this I was unable to fully convince myself that this spider was the true source of the filament that I had traced.

Juvenile spiders sometimes migrate by being carried aloft on strands of gossamer, a process referred to as "ballooning". I suspect that the strands of gossamer that we witnessed were created by young spiders as a prelude to ballooning. I did not see any direct evidence of airborne spiders. There were, however, a few samples of long silk stretched between goldenrods at various places downwind of the tree. These filaments were too long to have been stretched by any agent other than the wind.

I would greatly appreciate any suggestions from the TFN members, or others, as to what kind of spiders may have been responsible for these webs, or as to whether these spiders were really preparing to become airborne. Perhaps there was another explanation for the tree adorned in gossamer.

D. Andrew White

□



(Aspect drawing - general appearance, of phenomenon described)

## ANOTHER DISCOVERY WALK

***FOLLOW THE PATH OF AN ANCIENT FIRST PEOPLES. DISCOVER PANORAMIC VIEWS, RIVER MARSHES AND THE RUINS OF AN OLD MILL.***

On Friday, September 24, 1999, the City of Toronto, Parks & Recreation Division launched its 7<sup>th</sup> Discovery Walk – the Humber River, Old Mill and Marshes Discovery Walk. The walk launch coincided with the official designation and celebration of the Humber River as a Canadian Heritage River.

This much awaited addition to the original six Discovery Walks has several firsts. It is the first Discovery Walk to extend out of the former City of Toronto and into an adjacent former municipality – that being Etobicoke. A positive result of amalgamation!

The walk is also the first to be initiated by an agency other than the Parks and Recreation Department. Staff from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority as well as volunteers from the Lower Humber/Black Creek Subwatersheds Committee helped Parks & Recreation in determining this walking route, location of signage, interpretive research, written text and photo images. Many thanks to all of you!

Similar to other Discovery Walks, interpretive and directional signage is strategically located along the entire route. Interpretive highlights of this walk include the Old Mill, the Old Mill Bridge, Toronto Carrying Place Trail, the Humber River, the Humber Valley, Humber marshes and early settlement sites. This walk is approximately 7.3 km long with a walking time of about 2 hours (minimum!).

▷ For a copy of the Humber River, Old Mill & Marshes Discovery Walk brochure (and for brochures of the other six Discovery Walks), please call City of Toronto Parks & Recreation Information at 392-1111. The Humber walk brochure is also available at the Jane-Dundas, Runnymede or Annette Branches of the Toronto Public Library.

***YOUR ASSISTANCE IS REQUESTED IN.....reporting any damage or vandalism that you see on Discovery Walk signs.***

▷ With the number of interpretive and directional Discovery Walk signs in our public parks, ravines, gardens and beaches, it is becoming a challenge for City park's staff to keep an eye on the condition of these same signs. That is why Parks & Recreation is requesting that you report any sign damage or vandalism that you see to Dominic Fantauzzi, Facility & Mechanical Services Supervisor at 392-7265 ext.# 305.

*Thank you for your assistance!*

Jerry Belan

□

# FROM THE PAST

## ENGLISH SPARROWS

The question as to the desirability or non-desirability of introducing the English sparrow, *Passer Domesticus* into Canada has been not unfrequently discussed. My own opinion has always been adverse to such introduction, and my principal reason, as a lover of birds, has been, and is, that the English sparrows drive away our own more charming native birds. That opinion has just been emphasized by the following incident. I was passing down one of our streets the other morning when I observed four birds in a state of great commotion on the ground, kicking up, in fact, an awful dust; the birds, being, as I soon ascertained, three English sparrows and one Chipping sparrow, *Spizella socialis*. The poor little native bird was being unmercifully attacked by the three more robust immigrants, and I verily believe would have been killed, but that my companion, a lady, begged to be allowed to rescue it by driving its aggressors away. For myself, I confess I should have been cruel enough to await the issue of the conflict for the purpose of exemplifying my theory, whereas now, instead of a charge of "wilful murder," I can only prefer that of "assault with intent."

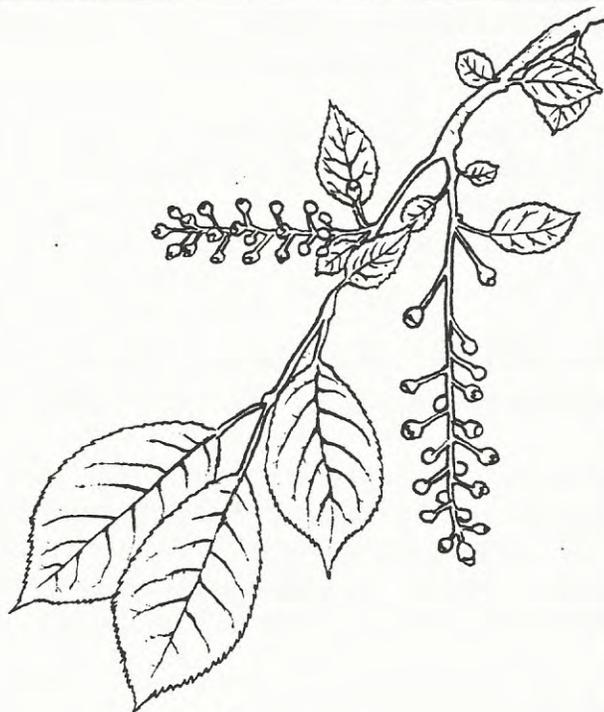
an article by Vincent Clementi, Peterboro' May 9, 1881 in CANADIAN SPORTSMAN AND NATURALIST, June 1881, vol I no.6, 46-47

□

Toronto native  
CHOKER CHERRY IN BUD

Scarborough  
Golf Club

- drawing by  
D. Andrew White  
May 13, 1999



D.A.W.

## RACCOONS

I guess every Toronto householder with a back yard has a few raccoon stories, many of them true.

Our first knowledge of there being a raccoon population in Toronto was in 1954. Jean and I came out one morning to find a large raccoon exploring our roof, no doubt looking for a place to den up until nightfall. We were surprised and pleased to see such a handsome wild animal so far downtown.

Over the intervening years our encounters with raccoons have provided both pleasure and frustration; pleasure at their tameness and handsome appearance and frustration at their raids on our property. We enjoyed watching them climb to the slender branches at the top of our Chinese Elm and pull in handfuls of seeds, munching them like popcorn. We did not enjoy the mess they left for us to clean up when they raided our garbage cans.

We found that the raccoons could open almost every type of garbage can. We thought the problem was solved when Rubbermaid came out with their big blue plastic containers with lock-over handles. However it was not long before the raccoons learned to pull open the locking handles. I was not surprised at this and had a solution ready. I went to the hardware store and bought a length of bungee cord. I strapped the two locking handles together with the bungee cord, passing the cord over the lid so that the raccoons could not spread the handles and flip the lid off. When our son-in-law saw this he laughed and said I could expect to see the animals bungee-jumping off the roof the next morning. However my efforts were successful - for a few weeks.

One morning I found that the raccoons had pushed the can on its side and pried the lid off in spite of the cord. After some thought I found a solution. I placed the container up against the fence and passed one loop of bungee cord around one of the fence boards thus preventing the can from being toppled. Since the raccoons could not get the container on its side they could not pry off the lid. We have not had a problem with raccoons in the garbage since.

A few weeks ago we had another run-in with a raccoon. We have a small pool at the back of the yard with a pump that creates a little waterfall. This is an excellent attraction to the birds, especially the migrating warblers who are attracted to the sound of running water. In summer the pool is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. I replace the water occasionally but it is not long until the mosquito larvae are again wiggling in the pond and I am receiving complaints from the neighbours.



The answer seemed to be to find a pool resident that would eat the mosquito larvae. I calculated that two small goldfish, if not fed too liberally with fish food, would keep the pool free of mosquito larvae for the remainder of the summer. I visited the pet superstore and picked out two dull coloured fish that were marked "Excellent for outdoor pools". The salesperson warned me that goldfish often fell victim to raccoons. I had thought of that, but since the pool had been there for years without goldfish, I was sure that it would be a very long time, if ever, before they were discovered. As a precaution I left lots of overhanging rocks under which the fish could hide.

I introduced the goldfish into the pool that evening. I was up early the next morning to check on the mosquito larvae. The larvae were as abundant as ever, and the goldfish were gone.

Later that day I glanced out the window to see a large raccoon sitting in the middle of the pool busily exploring under the rocks with his little hands. I can only assume that raccoons check the pool regularly for worms and other small creatures that fall into the pool. ~~None~~-the-less I was surprised to see a raccoon out hunting in the middle of the afternoon. I supposed he felt that if we were supplying treats he did not want to miss out on any of them. After about twenty minutes he wandered over to our neighbour's garage, and, finding the door open, he entered and went to sleep. Later our neighbour, Sheila, returned, put the car away and locked the garage door.

We were awakened that night by the arrival of the police. Sheila had called them upon hearing an uproar in the garage. The officers opened the garage door and the raccoon scuttled out and ran off into the night. The garage was a shambles. Everything that had been on shelves was on the floor. Even pieces of the inner wall had been torn off in the raccoon's attempt to escape.

In our discussions of the events with the neighbours next morning my remarks were guarded. I did not wish them to know I was attracting raccoons by spiking our pool with goldfish.

The popularity of raccoons at our house rises and falls depending on our latest contact with them. Still, I am sure we would miss them if they were ever to be classified as a pest and eradicated in the city. And our inventory of animal stories would be sadly diminished.

George Fairfield      □

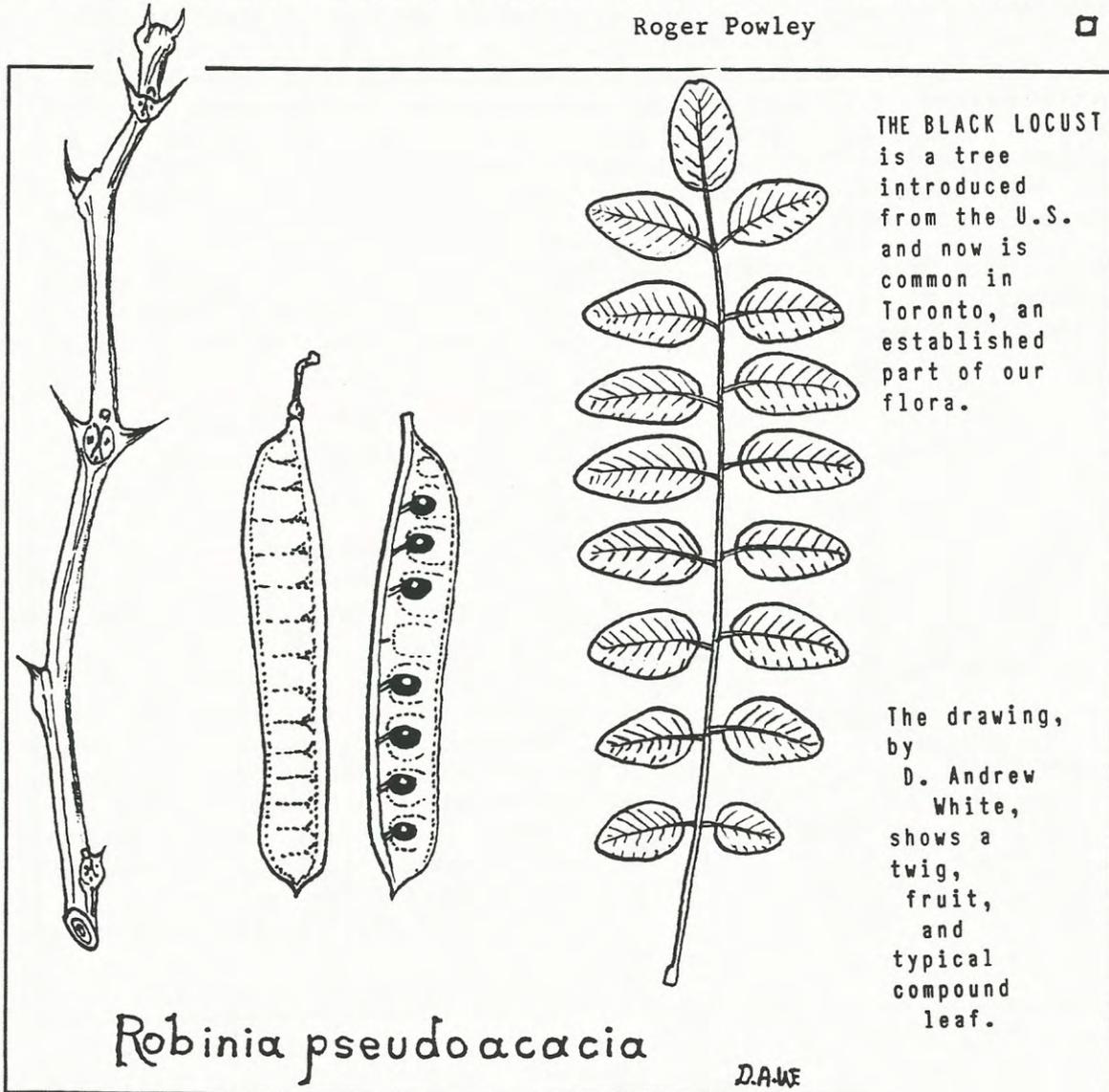
## THE TREES OF MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY

There are many trees in Mount Pleasant which are native, although they are rare in the wild and barely grow this far north. I have not written about these particular trees because they can be found in NATIVE TREES OF CANADA by R.C. Hosie. His book is a "must have" for all tree enthusiasts. It contains range maps, photographs and trivia which make it interesting. The trees I am referring to are things like chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), Chinkapin oak (*Quercus muehlenbergii*), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), and cucumber tree (*Magnolia acuminata*).

An exotic you won't find easily in tree books is the "pride of India" (*Koelreuteria paniculata*). The unusual leaf makes it easy to identify. The fruit is a papery bladder containing three black seeds. These are very conspicuous in autumn. I first discovered this tree growing on a lawn. It is on the north side of Bloor St. West, just west of High Park Ave. The one in Mount Pleasant is in Section 29. This is an oriental tree which is rarely planted by gardeners and a very beautiful tree.

Roger Powley

□



THE BLACK LOCUST is a tree introduced from the U.S. and now is common in Toronto, an established part of our flora.

The drawing, by D. Andrew White, shows a twig, fruit, and typical compound leaf.

*Robinia pseudoacacia*

D.A.W.

## A MYSTERY EXPLAINED

I have two huge planters on my balcony in which, for the past four years, I have been attempting to rear Chinese lanterns. After digging in lantern pods religiously, I achieved, last Summer, growths which actually flowered, though no lanterns followed. This year, I thought, they will go the whole cycle and I will be able to harvest my own Chinese lanterns for Christmas.

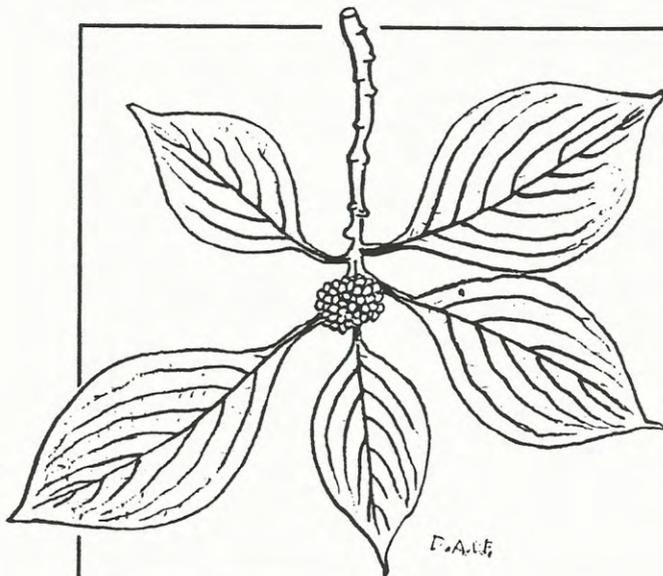
Not so. Great sproutings did indeed occur in both planters, and when my youngest commented that I was obviously raising flourishing sunflowers, I set him right -- until I took a real look. Sunflowers, indeed! A dozen of the eight-footers with the huge heads towered on my balcony before Summer was out. Of Chinese lanterns, there was nary a one.

As with all my balcony gardening, I had no idea how this came about. I am, after all, on the second floor, overlooking a parking lot. The conundrum was solved this morning -- at least, partly. A flash against the windows revealed a resplendant male blue jay. He carried a peanut in his beak and was mightily exercised as to the right repository. For several minutes he flitted between my big planters and my small planters. Singling out a pot of asiatic day flowers, he left. NOW I know how I acquired that peanut plant, flowers and fruits, four years ago. And, I suppose, this year's sunflowers. (Though what happened to my Chinese lanterns?)

This solution leaves me with a question, of course. As an ignoramus on the habits of birds, does a blue jay play the same game as a squirrel in building a reserve against hard times? I should love to know.

Eva Davis

□



PAGODA or  
ALTERNATE-LEAFED  
DOGWOOD,

a common native Toronto shrub, was drawn by D. Andrew White May 13, 1999, Scarboro Golf Club area. The drawing shows the unusual (for a dogwood) arrangement of the leaves "alternate, frequently so crowded at, and near, the ends of the branches as to appear opposite or whorled" ...Soper & Heimburger in SHRUBS OF ONTARIO, ROM 1982.

## EVENING AT THE LODGE

If you want to see the maximum amount of wildlife with the minimum of effort, may we suggest visiting a beaver pond. It's preferable that it be occupied, but that's not strictly necessary. Within the city, beaver may be live trapped and relocated if their efforts threaten any of man's more important engineering works, such as a paved bicycle path, so there are usually a couple or more beaverless ponds available.

We were visiting one\* on a warm June evening with the hope of meeting the builders. Of course beaver are mainly nocturnal animals, but they often start their day well before sunset and continue it after sunrise. Many birds and animals remain quiet during the day when only mad dogs and humans go out in the noonday sun, becoming active again later as the day cools. Consequently, the day and night shifts often overlap around sundown. If getting up at 5:00 am is not to your liking, try staying out till 8:00 or 9:00 on a summer evening: same benefits. (With those long shadows and warm colours, it's a great time for taking photographs as well.)

Everybody seems to enjoy a little drink at the end of the day and the pond dwellers don't mind visitors dropping by. The resident ducks and Canada geese go on happily burbling to themselves, with the occasional honk-honk for variety. The gray tree frogs and their green cousins take a break every once in a while, creating a welcome silence. (It's amazing how one small animal can make such a large noise. Imagine the volume Pavarotti could generate if he had a couple of those inflatable resonators slung under his chin!)

A mink stops to take a look at us from across the way before undulating off about his business. The fox and racoon will be along later when hunting's better. Every bird from a mile around seems to have come in for its dip and sip before retiring for the evening.

Finally, as the shadows lengthen and the pink sky is reflected in the leaf dotted water, from the other end of the pond comes a loud "ker-plonk." The beaver are out.

We saw four of the flat-tailed engineers that evening and easily, although possibly mistakenly, identified them by size.

Beaver just keep growing and growing, so you can't always be sure that the largest is the male as it would probably be in other species. To further complicate matters, while most male mammals are quite up front about their sex, beaver are one of the very few species that keep such facts totally to themselves. For both sexes of beaver, all the special bits are on the inside. We assumed that Dad was the first and biggest on the scene.

He may not have "seen it all before," but he certainly has seen people. Mildly interesting, so long as they mind their manners, nothing to get too excited about.

\* in the Rouge River Valley south of the Zoo



EVENING AT THE LODGE (cont'd)

He swam by with one eye pointed our way and his nose and ears lifted above the water, made a turn, came back, made one more and swam on about his beaver business. Beaver eyesight isn't the greatest, but their senses of smell and hearing are first rate. What breeze there was blew towards us from him, and since we stopped all movement except breathing, there was nothing to alarm him.

A few moments later along came Mom. She was an animal of decidedly different temperament. She swam up in front of us and stopped dead still. I've never been able to read beavers' minds and in this case I was just as glad. She glared at us from both eyes, sniffed, sniffed again and then "ker-plonk"! She surfaced a few yards away, glared again, and again "ker-plonk"! Just so there would be absolutely no mistaking her intent, she followed up with a couple more "ker-plonks" before swimming off in another direction.

We had the definite feeling we would never be welcome in her lodge.

Finally, along came the two kids. (Probably Mom had told them definitely, under no circumstances, to come anywhere close!) Youth, thy name is curiosity.

They swam by. They swam back and stopped. They swam away and returned, passing closer, then closer, stopping, then closer still. If beaver had conversations, theirs might have been something like: "Wow, did you see that? That's strange. I've never seen anything like that. I mean like that's weird man, really weird!" Well, we enjoyed watching them, there's no reason we shouldn't return the favour.

Eventually even their curiosity was satisfied, and they left in search of pond lilies or young green shoots. After all, their day was just beginning and they needed breakfast. After mom returned for a final sniff and "ker-plonk" we decided to leave.

By now a bit of a moon was shining, enough that, aided by the afterglow, we could see to pick our way across the top of the dam with fairly dry feet.

In the valley beyond, with our eyes focused downward to avoid tripping, we felt rather than heard the "whhhhhh" sound a large owl makes as it glides overhead. We looked up in time to see a big, dark shadow briefly obscure the moon. Before we reached the bus stop, a passing train sounded its whistle. This prompted a chorus of yips from old and young at the coyote den a mile or so away. We were mostly silent on the trip home.

I don't know if we dreamed of beaver or owls or coyotes that night, but we both woke up smiling.

Murray and Carol Seymour

□

## A WINTERING MOUSE

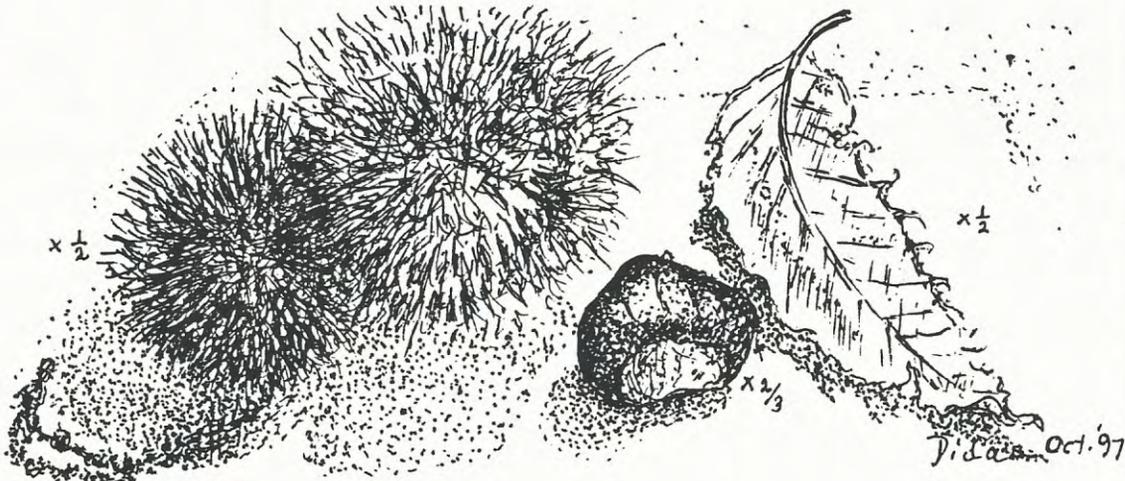
There was a lot of snow at my place just north of Cobourg this winter and it blew right up to the glass patio doors. Just outside the doors I have a footbrush – it has a wooden base with bristles about two or three inches long all over the top of it and looks like a hedgehog. It became totally covered with snow so that not even the tops of the bristles were visible for a time. Towards the end of January, I noticed the snow in a small circular area at the tops of the bristles was melting and as the days went by, this area became bigger and bigger until it was about two inches in diameter and small ice droplets formed around the tops of the bristles. When the temperature outside went up, little mouse footprints appeared all around the hedgehog and leading away from it into the garden. I felt honoured that my hedgehog was home to a mouse for about four weeks in some of the coldest weather this winter, and that for the first time in my life I was able to “see” a mouse’s breath.

Barbara Edwardes-Evans

□

CHESTNUT SPECIES at Vineland, Ontario, October, 1997.

Some of the fallen husks contained edible nuts as in the drawing; others produced only groups of flattened nutlets which would not be good to eat. Two Old World species are grown in Ontario, the Sweet or Spanish Chestnut and the Chinese Chestnut, the latter considered to be the more successful of the two.



Our native species in Ontario, the Wild or American Chestnut, has no status in Toronto; south-west of here it barely survives as suckers from old stumps, since the blight which arrived a century ago. (Beech family - not to be confused with horse-chestnut.)

Ref.: TREES by Allen J. Coombes, Eyewitness Handbooks.)

DB

# IN THE NEWS

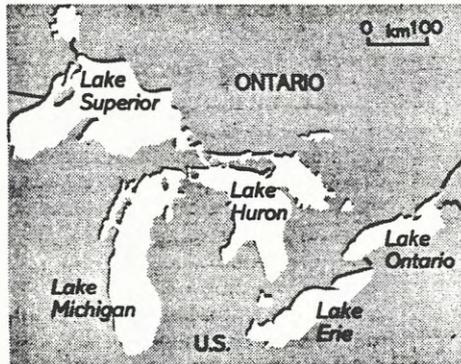
## GREAT LAKES WATER LEVELS FALL TO LOWEST POINT IN 30 YEARS

Water levels in the Great Lakes have fallen to their lowest levels in three decades, causing commercial ships to run aground and creating problems for recreational boaters. Levels are declining because of low precipitation for most of the past fall and winter and above-average temperatures, leading to significant increases in evaporation. The Great Lakes have had extremely high water levels in the early 1950s, mid-1980s and mid-1990s. The lakes were at low levels in the 1960s and before that in the 1920s and 1930s. The lakes show a seasonal water pattern, with levels rising in the spring and falling in late summer and early fall. Water managers have a limited ability to control the levels of Lakes Ontario and Superior. Currently, a reduced flow is being allowed out of Lake Ontario, but authorities are reluctant to curtail it any further because levels downstream in Montreal Harbour are low, at almost 1.5 metres below a year ago.

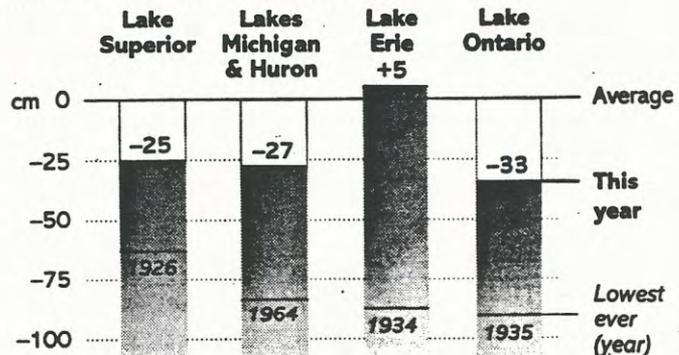
extracted from an article by Martin Mittelstaedt in the GLOBE AND MAIL, May 7, 1999

### GREAT LAKES WATER LEVELS

Change from average water level, in centimetres, as of May 7



Source: International Joint Committee



The Globe and Mail

ME

*Kin to the porpoise,  
the oak and kiskadee,  
wherever you should find them,  
that's where you'll find me.*

Spara

poem by  
Diana Karrandjas

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## REDUCING TRAFFIC ALMOST HALVES ASTHMA PROBLEMS

During the 1996 summer Olympics, the city of Atlanta saw a 40% overall reduction in acute asthma events. At the time, a city-wide strategy was in place to reduce traffic. Numerous epidemiological studies have found statistically significant associations between high pollution days and acute asthma exacerbations. Data on asthma rate, pollution levels and traffic volume were collected for the 28 days before and 28 days after the Olympics as well. The most significant change was in the ozone levels. The higher the ozone, the higher the asthma events.

from an article in the MEDICAL POST, May 18, 1999, Vol. 35, No. 19

## CANCER FOUND IN LAKE CREATURES

Researchers at the Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory said they have discovered what appeared to be the first known cancerous tumours on tiny crustaceans living in Lake Michigan, raising new questions about water pollution.

from the GLOBE & MAIL, May 25, 1999

## TEMPERATURE CAN AFFECT WHAT'S AFOOT IN TAP WATER

Toronto's water supply is invaded by geosmin, a compound that forms when blue-green algae and actinomyces bacteria combine in still, warm water. The warmer the weather, the stronger the smell. The musky-smelling compound can be detected by super-sensitive sniffers at parts per trillion. The water is still safe to drink. Last year, water drinkers held their noses for two weeks. There were 10 days of complaints of water that smelled like rotten cabbage in 1996 and a few days of "old shoe" water in 1994. A city report completed this year says we are in for more frequent attacks of foul-smelling water that last longer. Granular filters, part of the city's \$6-million water improvement scheme, will be installed at the Island plant this fall and the R.C. Harris plant next year. The city opted not to spend \$100-million for a filter at the end of the water-treatment process, which would have all but eliminated the smell, saying the cost was too overwhelming. The powerful odour can be tamed with ice cubes, adding ice to tap water, or letting it cool in the refrigerator. Add a teaspoon of lemon juice to a cup of cool water. The citric acid neutralizes the earthy odour.

extracted from an article by Karen Palmer in the GLOBE & MAIL, Aug. 30, 1999

▷

Tsk! House sparrow's nest  
of cellophane, cassette-tape...  
(Recycling, of course!)

haiku by Diana Banville and  
Melanie Milanich, July 11, 1999

SPRING EARLIER AND EARLIER

Spring is arriving earlier and autumn is coming later in the Northern Hemisphere, especially in a band of Earth that includes Canada. New evidence of the warming trend comes from a network of 77 research sites called the International Phenological Gardens that are dotted across Europe. Since 1959, researchers have recorded the dates when buds appear, leaves unfold and plants flower. Each fall, they note the dates when leaves turn colour and fall from trees. Analyzing the results, scientists at the University of Munich in Germany report that over 30 years, the advent of spring advanced an average of six days, while autumn delayed its arrival by an average of about five days. The study confirms results of a 1997 U.S. study that shows warming is substantially greater than the global average in regions north of the 45th parallel, which runs through Minneapolis, Ottawa, Boston, Bordeaux, Belgrade and Vladivostok.

from the GLOBE AND MAIL, Mar. 13, 1999

MAGNETS HELP CLEAN OILY BIRDS

The tortuous and distressing process of cleaning birds caught in oil spills may soon become much easier thanks to magnets, Australian researchers said. Instead of scrubbing oily feathers with detergents that can destroy their waterproof properties, scientists at Victoria University of Technology in Melbourne say they can be dusted with fine iron powder. Combing them with a magnet will then remove both the oil and the iron. Iron powder is cheap and plentiful and both non-toxic and a non-irritant. Researchers are working on portable field units so that birds can be treated immediately at the site of an oil spill.

extracted from an article in the GLOBE AND MAIL, March 29, 1999

TOO FEW WEEDS

Germans are so efficient at weeding their gardens that the nation's free-flying bee population is rapidly declining, according to a leading expert. Gardeners and farmers should leave at least a strip of weeds and wildflowers along the perimeter of their fields and properties to give bees a fighting chance in our increasingly pruned and pristine world. Bee populations have declined 23 per cent over the past decade across Germany and wild honeybees are virtually extinct in Central Europe.

from "Earthweek: Diary of the planet" by Steven Newman in the TORONTO STAR, June 5, 1999

A good city is a place where people live their life cycles without ever owning a car and do not feel deprived.

from "Sensitivity faces off against greed" by Michael Valpy in the GLOBE & MAIL,  
Feb. 20, 1999

## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## A BIG FLAP OVER A BILLION BIRDS

The Niagara River in Niagara Falls, Ont. is a major tourist attraction flowing through a city that depends on it for electrical power, drinking water and recreation. Its deep gorge and swift rapids also attract the largest, most diverse concentrations of gulls in the world. The idea of a huge flock of gulls as a scientific wonder makes most people laugh, but they need to understand that this is an amazing phenomenon. In early winter, more than 100,000 gulls can be seen foraging along the river. During the peak in November, up to 19 gull species and 10 per cent of the world's Bonaparte's gulls reach the river.

extracted from an article by Roberta Walker in the GLOBE & MAIL, May 1, 1999

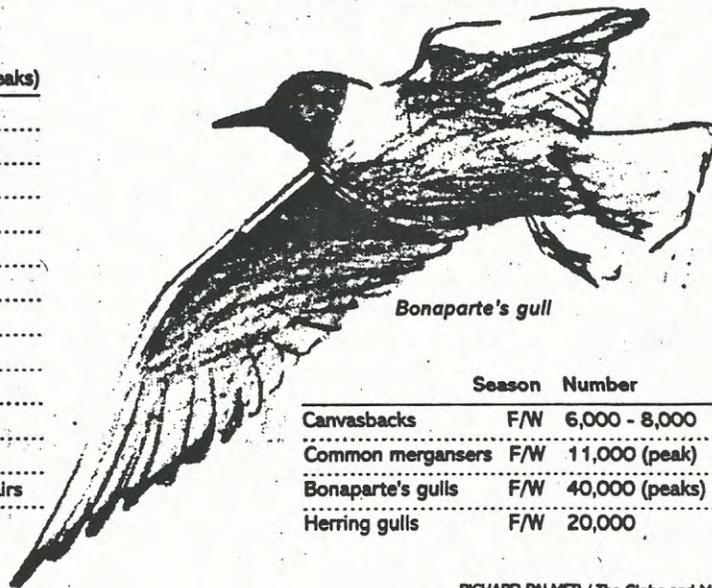
KEY	
B	Breeding season
F/W	Fall/winter
SM	Summer migration
FM	Fall migration
.	Potential IBA site

## NIAGARA RIVER CORRIDOR

Niagara Falls, Ontario

Habitats: gorge habitats, cliffs, ledges, rich feeding sites at upwellings.

	Season	Number
		(one-day peaks)
Tundra swan	SM/FM	11,260
American black duck	SM/FM	7,650
Canvasback	SM/FM	41,865
Ring-necked duck	SM/FM	8,270
Greater / lesser scaup	SM/FM	61,804
Redhead	SM/FM	10,089
Common merganser	SM/FM	4,950
Whimbrel	SM	600
Bonaparte's gull	SM/FM	20,000
Common tern	FM	2,000
King rail	B	2 + pairs
Least bittern	B	11-100 pairs
Prothonotary warbler	B	?



	Season	Number
Canvasbacks	F/W	6,000 - 8,000
Common mergansers	F/W	11,000 (peak)
Bonaparte's gulls	F/W	40,000 (peaks)
Herring gulls	F/W	20,000

RICHARD PALMER / The Globe and Mail

## HAWK INVASIONS OF FEEDERS ON INCREASE

It is usually immature hawks that venture into the cities. Adults are more adept at hunting and find prey in the countryside. Hunting is more difficult when the snow is deep and many small birds flee the country to urban feeders. Adult hawks follow them and find the "pickings" so good they tend to stay. They even set up routes covering a group of feeders. Doves and squirrels are their main prey. In the countryside, red-tailed hawks seldom eat birds, but instead prefer meadow voles when snow cover is not too deep.

extracted from an article by Tom Hayman in the LONDON FREE PRESS, Feb. 13, 1999



## CRACKDOWN ON PETS ON THE LAM

Since July 1, Toronto has had the province's permission to issue tickets for infractions of animal bylaws and more tickets will follow. To give dog owners the opportunity to let their pets run free, city council decided in July to consider no-leash areas in 17 city parks. All existing no-leash areas in the former cities of Toronto, North York and Etobicoke -- with one exception -- will be maintained for a one-year period ending next July. The single exception is Sherwood Park in north Toronto, which will receive an accelerated review and consultation. The speed was prompted by complaints from neighbours about public safety and environmental damage being caused by dogs running free. Meanwhile owners of animals banned under the new bylaws have until Sept. 1, 1999 to register them with the city. There will be no charge for this registration, which must be done in person at local animal control centres. For information about the new bylaw, including the phone numbers of animal services centres in each former municipality, call the Toronto animal services information line at 392-1072.

extracted from an article by Rebecca Bragg in the TORONTO STAR, Aug. 31, 1999

## CATS KILLING OFF ENDANGERED BIRD SPECIES

Domesticated cats are a major threat to endangered bird species. The American Bird Conservancy and the Audubon Society are urging cat owners to keep their pets indoors in an effort to save numerous species of wild birds that have recently been placed on the endangered species list. One cat can kill up to 1,000 small animals a year, including mice and birds. The hunting instinct persists even if the cats are fed well at home. U.S. researchers recently documented the activities of a well-fed domestic cat that killed 1,600 small animals in 18 months. Glass windows, habitat destruction and pesticides are also to blame for the dwindling numbers of certain species. There are now about 66 million domesticated cats in the world, a number that grows steadily as the human population increases. Keeping your cat indoors is more than just a matter of preserving wildlife. It is also important for the pet's safety. The humane society says the average lifespan of an outdoor cat is three years, compared with about 16 to 20 years for an indoor cat.

extracted from an article by Corbin Andrews in the NATIONAL POST, July 26, 1999

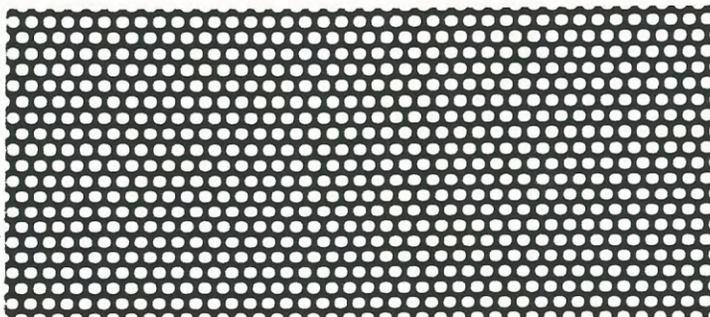
Honeysuckle, in full bloom,  
drew me by its fragrance.  
I brought a couple of slips home.  
Maybe it will be competition  
for poison ivy.

Margaret Banville

## PROJECTS

### STOP BIRD COLLISIONS

The transparent and reflective characteristics of glass cause bird collisions. To eliminate this problem one must make glass visible to birds. A special window film called CollidEscape is now available. It is bright white on the outside to reduce glare and transparency, black on the inside to absorb light. This vinyl film adheres to the outside surface of the glass. Thousands of small perforations allow ample light to pass through into the room. It costs \$2.50 per square foot. To find out more about this film call FLAP at (905) 831-3527.



### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR BIODIVERSITY GALLERY

The Royal Ontario Museum needs enthusiastic volunteers to assist visitors in a new Hands-on Biodiversity Gallery. Volunteer Facilitators will engage visitors actively in handling artifacts and specimens, in using discovery boxes and displays to explore the diversity of life on the planet, Ontario in particular. If you enjoy working with people, especially children and families, and can commit to 4 hours a week, if you enjoy the natural world and want to share your interest, contact Deborah Longman-Marien, Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ont. M5S 2C6 or call 416-586-8021 (FAX 416-586-5562) e-mail [deborahl@rom.on.ca](mailto:deborahl@rom.on.ca)

□

### NOW THAT'S OBSERVING!

...six legs being the most efficient number for insect walking. An insect walks with the two outer legs on one side coordinated with the middle leg on the other, proceeding in the three-point stability of triangles.

extracted from WIND IN THE ROCK: THE CANYON LANDS OF SOUTHWESTERN UTAH by Ann Zwinger,  
The University of Arizona Press, Tuscon, 1978

## THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

NOVEMBER 1998, Toronto

After appearing to settle down into seasonably cool temperatures, November was ultimately not able to let go of the unprecedented warmth which has now lasted a full year. A trough over the Great Lakes manifested itself off and on until two thirds of the way through the month, and several cm of snow fell as far south as Highway 7 on Nov.17th. A general frost had reached into sheltered downtown areas by Nov. 4th; this is a little late but not too unusual given the urban heat island. The long spell of months with near or over 200 hours of sunshine came to an abrupt end with only about 74 hours recorded, near or slightly below normal.

A strong weather system, reminiscent of the 1975 storm which sank the Edmund Fitzgerald, swept through on Nov.10-11th. This brought the first really measurable rain in almost a month, along with wind gusts to 100 km/h at Pearson Airport.

All, though, was not back to normal. The Canadian Arctic was not cooling the way it normally does. In late November, Hudson Bay was not frozen, and the polar bears were still hanging around Churchill. During the final week of the month, warm weather typical of September moved from the central U.S. across our area, with temperatures rising to the mid-to-upper teens. And the warmth was here to stay. By Nov.30th, it reached 18.8°C at Pearson Airport, breaking a 1991 record.

At the same time, severe cold collected over Eurasia, with a hard freeze reaching westwards to France by month's end.

Overall, November came around as another mild, quiet, dry month. Only a trace of snow fell, the fourth such November at Pearson Airport. Rainfall was in the mid-thirties, giving us a total precipitation of under half the average. Mean temperatures ran about 1.5°C above normal, mostly due to the strong warming trend later in the month. This gave us the mildest November since 1994. Average wind speeds were near normal, varying from very light to gale force at different times during the month.

-Gavin Miller-

□

The popularity of growing wild plants in gardens is applauded by everyone interested in conservation. But there are problems with it. Do we really want to knock the "wild" out of wildflowers by turning them into yet another gardening commodity? Are we in danger of ignoring the distraction of the grasslands, wetlands, woodlands and heaths of their original habitats because wildflowers are thriving in gardens?

from "Gardening on the Edge" by Paul Evans in BBC WILDLIFE, Vol. 16, No. 7, July 1998

## COMING EVENTS

Royal Canadian Institute free science lectures Sundays at 3 pm at the Macleod Auditorium, Medical Sciences Building, 1 King's College Circle, (Queen's Pk. Cres. West at College St.) Call 928-2096 for details.

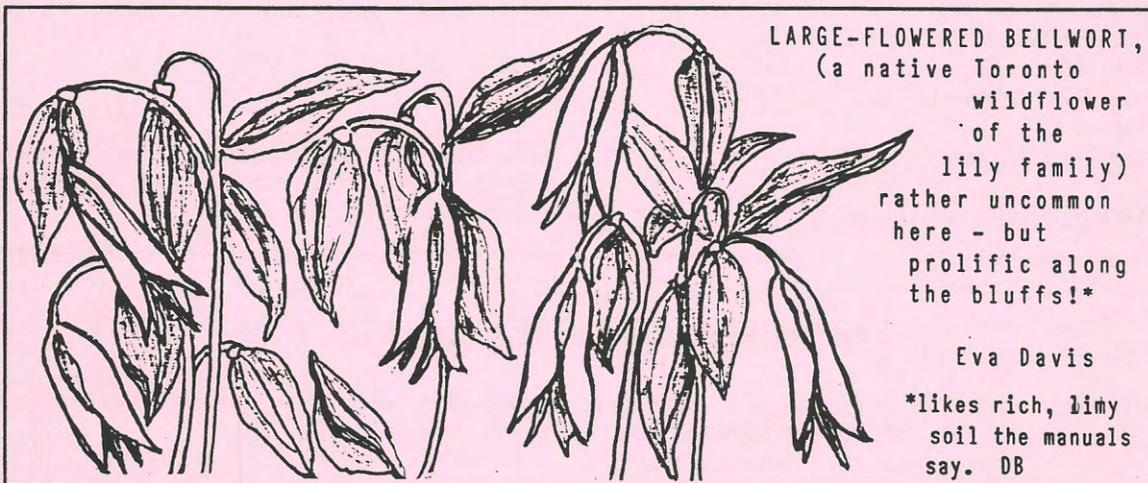
- Oct. 24 - The RCI: Achievement and change through 150 years
- Oct. 31 - Global Warming: the science and the risks
- Nov. 7 - What makes a chemical a pollutant?
- Nov. 14 - Brain development: neuronal sculpting by the physical and social environment
- Nov. 21 - Fog and fog collection: exploring this hidden water resource
- Nov. 28 - Fine fly dining: will that be for here or to go?

Toronto Entomologists' Association meeting - Sat. Nov. 27 at 1 pm at the Royal Ontario Museum, Room 603 - Biological insect control, a lecture about integrated insect control by Peter Dmytrasz from the Forestry section of Toronto Parks. Call Alan Hanks at 905-727-6993 for details.

Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP) meeting - Nov. 3 at 7 pm - a talk by Peter Tabuns about the Greenhouse Effect on Migratory Birds at 7:30 pm - at the World Wildlife Fund Office at 245 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 410. Space is limited, so PLEASE CALL 905-831-FLAP if you want to attend.

Black Creek Project - Sat. Nov. 6 at 10 am to 1 pm - in-stream clean-up at Jane/Wilson (Chalkfarm Park). Meet in the park at the dumpster. All materials provided. Call 661-6600, ext. 364 for more details.

Toronto and Regional Remedial Action Plan Annual Clean Waters Summit - Special focus on Oak Ridges Moraine. Call Tija Luste for more information at 943-8080, ext. 231. The event is to be held on Sat. Nov. 20 from 9 am to 4 pm. □



LARGE-FLOWERED BELLWORT,  
(a native Toronto  
wildflower  
of the  
lily family)  
rather uncommon  
here - but  
prolific along  
the bluffs!\*

Eva Davis

\*likes rich, limy  
soil the manuals  
say. DB

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

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2 9 (C)

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## TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

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