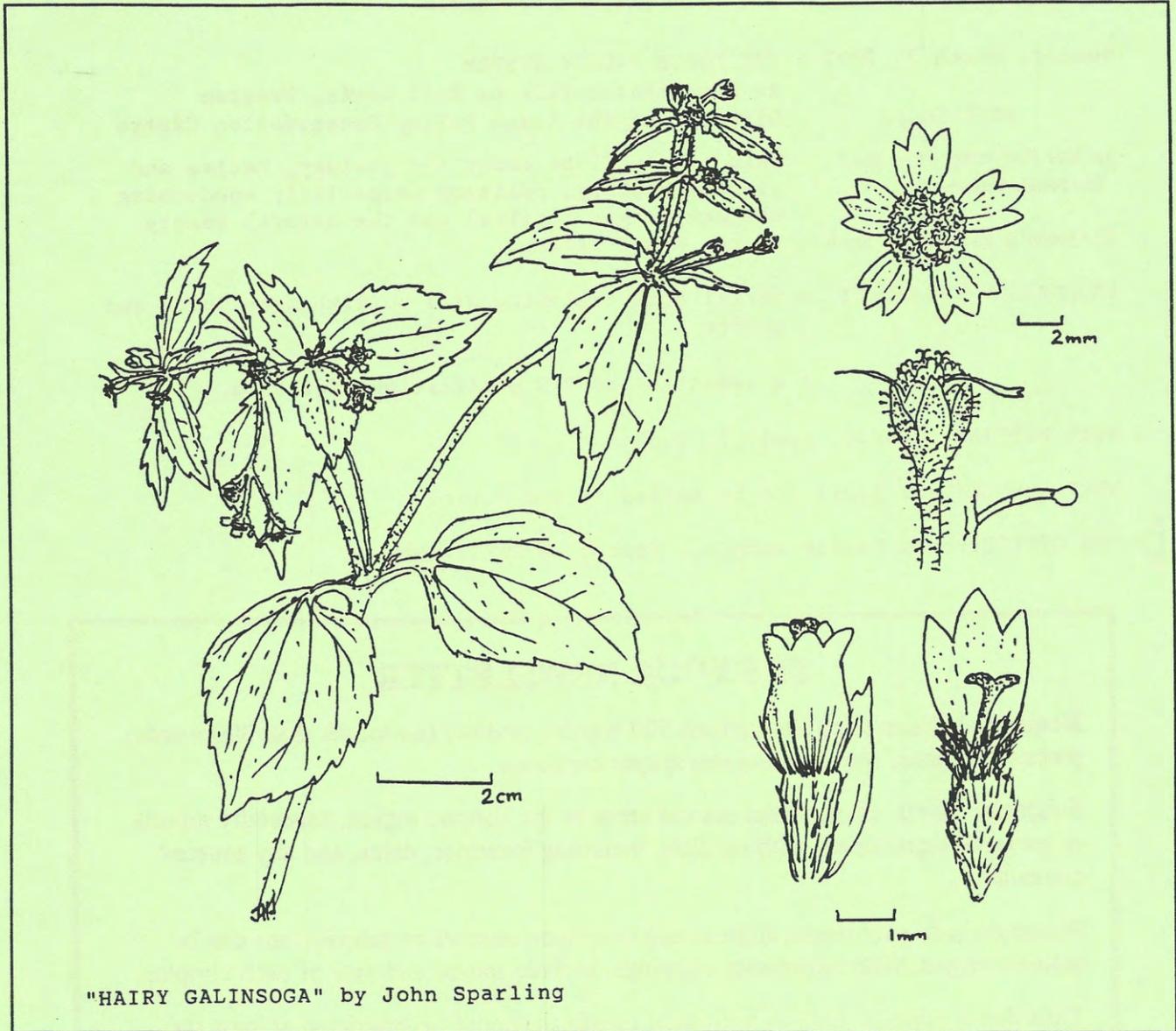


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 506

March 2002



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## TFN MEETINGS

Sunday, March 3, 2002 - THE ROUGE VALLEY SYSTEM  
an illustrated talk by Bill Lewis, Program  
Director at the Rouge Valley Conservation Centre  
at 2:30 pm

in the Northrop Frye Hall - This talk will be about the geology, native and  
Victoria University pioneer history, politics (especially concerning  
73 Queen's Park Cres. East the Oak Ridges Moraine) and the natural beauty  
of the Rouge Valley.

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

+ a selection of TFN publications for sale

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, April 7, 2002

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

▷ TFN OFFICE: open Friday mornings from 9 am to 12 noon

### 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

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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 416-393-4636.  
 Check the weather by calling 416-661-0123 so you will know what to wear on outings  
 which go rain or shine.

- Saturday  
 March 2  
 1:30 pm  
 TORONTO NEIGHBOURHOODS - urban natural history  
 Leaders: Colleen Prentice & Maryse Mahy  
 Meet at the northwest corner of Bathurst St. and Davenport Rd.  
 Walk will end at the Toronto Archives, 255 Spadina Rd.
- March 3  
 TFN MEETING [See page 2 for details.]
- Wednesday  
 Mar. 6  
 2 pm  
 to 4 pm  
 DEER PARK LIBRARY - nature arts (photography)  
 Leader: Robin Powell  
 Meet on the second floor of the library, on the north side of  
 St. Clair Ave. East, one block east of Yonge St.  
 Bring your own nature slides, as many as 20, or just come and enjoy looking.  
 A projector and screen will be provided. If you have any questions, please  
 call the TFN office at 416-593-2656. Snap shots are also welcome.
- Saturday  
 Mar. 9  
 10:30 am  
 MIMICO CREEK - nature walk  
 Leader: Robin Powell  
 Meet on the south side of Lake Shore Blvd. West opposite  
 Park Lawn Rd. Bring lunch.  
 We will be exploring a small tributary of Mimico Creek.
- Sunday  
 Mar. 10  
 1 pm  
 RUNNYMEDE LANES & ALLEYWAYS - heritage walk  
 Leader: Madeleine McDowell  
 Meet at the northwest corner of Runnymede Rd. & Annette St.
- \$  
 ferry  
 Thursday  
 Mar. 14  
 9 am  
 TORONTO ISLANDS - birds  
 Leader: Doug Paton  
 Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. Bring lunch.
- Sunday  
 Mar. 17  
 2 pm  
 YELLOW CREEK - urban ecology  
 Leader: Peter Hare  
 Meet at the southeast corner of Bathurst St. and Glengrove Ave.  
 This is a joint outing with the North Toronto Green Community.
- Tuesday  
 Mar. 19  
 10 am  
 to 12 noon  
 ASHBRIDGES BAY - nature walk  
 Leader: Marg Catto  
 Meet on the south side of Lake Shore Blvd. East at the foot of  
 Coxwell Ave. Morning only.
- March 21  
 SPRING BEGINS

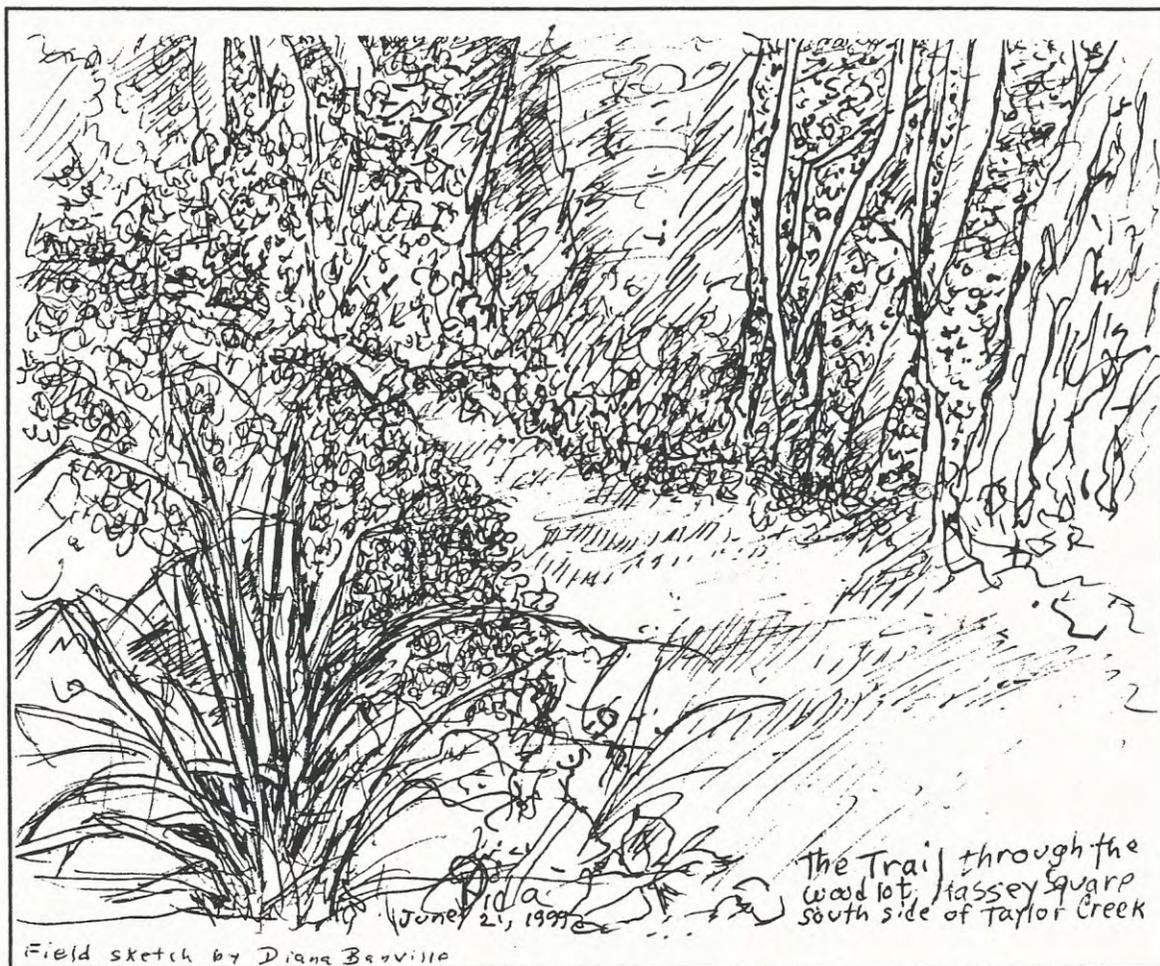
MARCH OUTINGS (cont'd)

Saturday EAST POINT - nature walk  
Mar. 23 Leader: Boris Mather  
10 am Meet at the foot of Morningside and the east end of the  
Guildwood Parkway. Bring lunch and water. This will be an  
all-day outing.

Thursday WESTERN LAKESHORE - birds  
March 28 Leader: Doug Paton  
10 am Meet at the southwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd. West and  
Royal York Rd. Bring lunch.

Saturday G.R. LORD PARK - birds  
Mar. 30 Leader: Carol Sellers  
10:30 am Meet at the northeast corner of Finch Ave. West and Dufferin St.  
Bring lunch and binoculars.

□



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

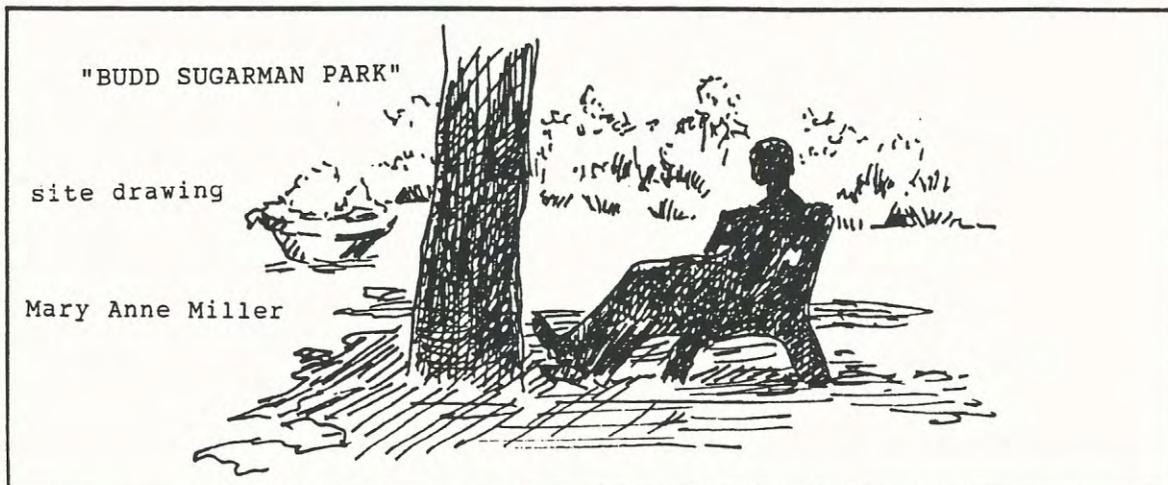
In the last newsletter, I mentioned briefly that the TFN Board of Directors was reviewing the proposed purchase of two adjacent parcels of land beside the Pefferlaw Brook northwest of Uxbridge. The conservation merits of these two properties are academic now. Someone else recently purchased the larger of the two properties. The search begins again!

I was concerned to read that the section of highway No.407 that runs across the Humber River valley (and Rainbow Creek) is going to be widened. It's a response to traffic congestion problems at the Pine Valley Drive interchange east of Islington Avenue. A swath of environmental destruction resulted from the original highway construction. The area north of the old Thackeray landfill site (especially the Rainbow Creek area) was relatively undisturbed and a wildlife sanctuary. A fall walk in this area had few equals elsewhere in Toronto. There's little consolation in the fact that the TFN has material in the photo and slide library of what this area was like originally. It appears as if this highway widening is exempt from an environmental assessment by way of an order-in-council from the cabinet of the provincial government.

The piecemeal degradation and outright destruction of the GTA's remaining natural areas are all too common. A misguided continuing education course from the Durham District School Board can only make matters worse. The course -- Wild Edibles -- has a plant identification/cultural history component. I'm concerned about the culinary slant to the rest of this course. Anything that would appear to promote the harvesting of wild plants increases the risks of further environmental degradation. The FON showed a similar disregard for the natural environment in their summer 2000 issue of Seasons. The article, Midsummer's Feast, contained the briefest of warnings not to disturb the environment while harvesting edible wild plants. That article tarnished the image of the FON.

Robin Powell

□



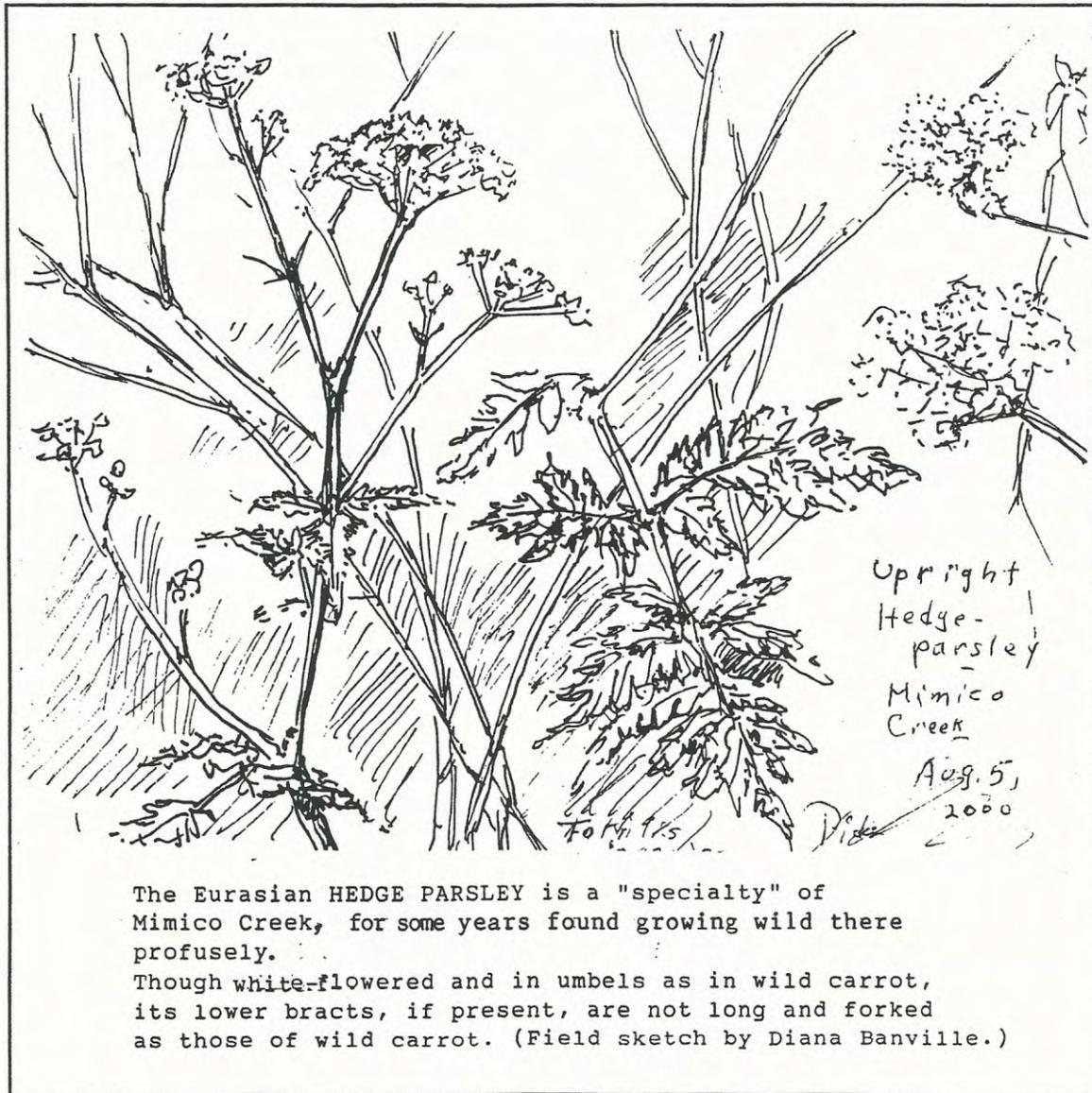
## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Jan. 27, 2002

Ladybug in Winter: On this sunny Sunday, at 10:30 am, I saw a ladybug crawling on my outdoor balcony floor. Outdoor temperature (in the shade) was 15°C (higher than the 11°C reported on the radio weather). It looked like *Harmonia axyridis* (southern lady beetle). At 11:00 am, I saw a second *Harmonia axyridis* on the balcony. (There were lots of them here in the fall of 2001, but not as many as in the fall of 2000.) At 11.05 am, I saw a third ladybug (couldn't identify it) flying above the lawn.

Sandy Cappell

□



## THIS MONTH'S COVER

GALINSOGA OR GALLANT SOLDIER:  
A MUCH TRAVELED PLANT

Galinsoga is one of those plants that may mislead us until we look at it more carefully. It appears to have five white petals surrounding a yellow disc. More careful examination tells us that the white petals are ray florets, reduced here to five and surrounding a cluster of bright yellow disc florets, each with five small triangular petals which are seen best under a lens. The white ray florets appear to have three petals fused together at their edges, to make one three-lobed "petal". There are a few other members of the aster family with reduced numbers of ray florets including, of course, yarrow.

Galinsoga was first described from Peru, and collections were sent to the Royal Gardens at Kew in London in 1796. It was undoubtedly grown in gardens at Kew but seems to have escaped and become naturalized in the vicinity, where it was called "Gallant Soldier". Actually it was named for Martinez Galinsoga, a Spanish doctor and botanist, and had nothing to do with military matters. The common name was clearly a corruption of the generic name, Galinsoga. Other names in use are Kew-weed, quickweed and Peruvian daisy, but perhaps Galinsoga is least confusing. For some reason, it was also sent to the Paris Botanic Garden and from these sources spread throughout Europe. In Europe, the commoner species now is the small-flowered Galinsoga, *Galinsoga parviflora*, which is infrequent here. In all likelihood many of the populations of this species may have been accidentally brought in from Europe and spread. Hairy Galinsoga, *Galinsoga quadriradiata*, originally *G. ciliata*, is the commoner species here. It may have hopped from town to town in North America, eventually arriving in Ontario in the latter part of the 19th century. It occurs now in towns and cities throughout the world.

The differences between the two species are: *Galinsoga quadriradiata*, which has sharply toothed leaves, is more or less hairy with glandular hairs on the flowering stems. The pappus (bristles) surrounding the fruit of the ray florets is well-developed and extends to the ray. *G. parviflora*, by contrast, has leaves with rounded or blunt serrations, and is hairless to slightly hairy with very short glandular hairs on the flowering stems. Also the pappus in this species is either not well-developed or lacking.

It is interesting to see weedy plants coming from somewhere other than Europe, although as with Galinsoga, they may have stopped there on the way.

[See also pages 13 & 29.]

John Sparling

□

Harbinger of spring,  
sure as robin's arias,  
old scissor-man's bell.

Haiku by Arthur F. Wade  
Good Friday, 2001

### WALKS ON THE WILD SIDE

Carol and I will be escaping Toronto and leaving the TFN at the end of May to get lost somewhere around Parry Sound. Before we go, I'd like to say something about leading TFN walks. I can't praise the practice highly enough. If you have a place or a subject that you know and love, consider volunteering to lead a walk. Based on our experience, I offer some suggestions.

1. Don't think you have to know everything; nobody does. And even what we "know" is open to question. For example, carnivores eat meat. True, but coyotes love apples -- their scats give abundant evidence every fall. We "knew" that hairy woodpeckers probed tree bark for insects, until we saw one taking seeds from a feeder tray and busily tucking them into a nearby crevice. And so on.
2. Always admit your ignorance. This not only prevents the spreading of misinformation, it also avoids the embarrassment of being corrected by someone else on the walk who is better informed, and there usually is. There is no shame in saying, "anybody know what this is?"
3. Definitely do a pre-walk a week or less before your outing. Trails change, bridges disappear, trees fall. We started to lead a walk up the Rouge the day after a once-in-fifty-year storm but when we got to the river, we found our trail was under three feet of rushing water. We did an instant plan modification and had a great walk. The other reason for pre-walks is that you are much more likely to see wildlife when alone than when travelling with 10 or 20 other people.
4. Don't rush. You'll find that when there are interesting things to be seen, a leader with a schedule is at best annoying.
5. Be prepared to learn lots.
6. Be prepared to share time, laughter, wonder and the joy of discovery.
7. Be prepared to have some of the most rewarding days of your life.

▷ If you've ever considered leading a walk, don't wait for an invitation; call the office any Friday morning and Just Do It!

Our heartfelt thanks and deep gratitude to everyone at TFN; you've given us so much pleasure during our years of membership. And if you're ever in Parry Sound...

Murray Seymour

□

Four swans move along  
with their wings raised, making sails.  
Easier than paddling.

Haiku by Aarne and Helen Juhola  
Toronto Harbour, March 10, 2001

## GARTER SNAKE MYSTERY RESOLVED

On Sunday afternoon, September 23, 2001, the TFN conducted an outing to the former Don Valley brickyards. Led by experts in local geology, history and urban structures, the group crossed the Old Belt Line and stopped to look at a rock outcrop beside the new ponds. Several 8-foot-tall white pines were planted here; one contained an odd lump about eye level halfway up the trunk. Possibly it was a nest of wasps or caterpillars. I parted the branches for a closer inspection and was astounded to discover that the lump consisted of at least four entwined eastern garter snakes; all looking right back at me.

Now this was a mystery. To me it looked like a mating aggregation. But I understood eastern garter snakes to mate in the spring, thereby producing their live young in late summer. Although red-sided garter snakes, the prairie subspecies, assemble outside of their dens just before hibernation, I was not aware that our garter snakes would do this. And why were they up a tree?

The outing participants were engrossed in a discussion about the various properties of shale, slate and schist. I reluctantly interrupted this to point out the hydra-headed snake lump. After discreetly viewing the snakes, we returned to the outcrop discussion. I was left to wonder just what it was we had observed.

The most recent issue of The Canadian Field Naturalist (Volume 115, Number 2) provided the answers to my puzzlement. In an article "Arboreal Courtship Behaviour by Eastern Garter Snakes in September in Bruce County", David Galbraith reports on a mating ball of eastern garter snakes. His observations sounded very familiar. On September 14, 1997, he noted three snakes one metre above the ground in the middle of a jack pine!

The article contained much interesting information about the behaviour of our garter snakes. Although they generally mate in the spring, they will occasionally do so in the fall. The female then stores the unfertilized sperm until the spring (delayed fertilization). The Ontario Herpetological Summary includes twelve observations of courtship, with two in late summer, and four in a tree or bush. The author concluded that tree climbing by garter snakes in Ontario is most common in September. He speculated that the ground was still cold while the air was much warmer. By climbing a tree, snakes would increase their body temperature and thereby improve their mating opportunities.

Over the decades, I have been on many TFN trips and acquired memories of many encounters with nature. But surely the most improbable natural spectacle I will ever see was on this outing right in the middle of the old brickworks.

George Bryant



## THE JUMPER

The other day my son-in-law called me to the window with the remark, "Hey George, those pesky chickadees are back on your squirrel feeder again." I knew then that I had to do something to make the bird feeder less accessible to the squirrels. Not that I begrudge them a few peanuts but while they are on the feeder no birds will visit. Better they should feed on the spilled seeds on the ground under the feeder. My feeders are all arranged on a single vertical metal pole topped with a two-foot square wooden platform. A sunflower seed feeder with a peaked roof sits on the top of the platform and tube thistle seed feeders and an onion bag of fat are hung on nails from the edges of the platform. A conical squirrel guard is set halfway up the pole. The guard works well but the squirrels were gaining access from a tall mountain ash on the fence line.

I moved the feeder farther away from the tree. This kept the squirrels off, all except one gray squirrel with very white ears. "White-ears" had found a high branch on our mountain ash from which he could leap and land on the feeder platform. I walked out with the broom and pushed him off the feeder. He headed back to the mountain ash and I watched carefully to see which branch he used as a launch platform. I then brought the ladder, climbed up and sawed it off. I then broomed him off the feeder a second time, went back in the house and watched. He tried several other branches checking for firmness and distance but at first could not get up enough nerve to make the jump. In the meantime the peanuts were quickly disappearing as four blue jays hauled them away to their winter caches.

Finally he braced himself and sprang out into space. It was a magnificent leap but he missed the feeder by a few inches and crashed to the ground. He sat quietly for about five minutes, then returned to the tree, climbed back up and after two or three false starts launched himself again. This time he hit one of the tube feeders, knocked it from its nail and rode it to the ground. I was called away and when I returned he was back on the feeder munching on the remaining peanuts on the feeder deck. Rather than continue the battle with "white-ears" I have decided to call a truce and watch and see what is so different about him.

▷

Ecologists know that big cities are far more friendly to wildlife than small ones, because the potential habitat is both immense and varied. Parks and greenways and suburban gardens offer ideal hiding places and travel corridors; urban creeks and backyard lap pools and corporate fountains yield reliable fresh water. To a twenty-first century raccoon or deer New York [or Toronto] looks like a fine big animal sanctuary, with the prime food sources in the middle of town.

from WILD NIGHTS: NATURE RETURNS TO THE CITY by Anne Matthews, North Point Press, N.Y., 2001

## THE JUMPER (cont'd)

If I were not afraid of being accused of anthropomorphism I would say that he was an extrovert. He seems to have a very different personality from that of the remaining seven squirrels that frequent our yard. (We have three other eastern gray squirrels in the gray colour-phase and four in their black phase.) While the others are contented to graze on the peanuts and sunflower seed that spill from the feeder, he is constantly on the run. He will go up the pole to the squirrel guard, slide back down, fight with another squirrel, run along the fence, climb the mulberry tree, over to the cedars, back down to the fence, over to the mountain ash, up and down each of the main branches and then make a long jump to the feeder. After a few minutes on the feeder, he drops to the ground and starts all over again. He should be thin as a rail but strangely is fat and sleek.

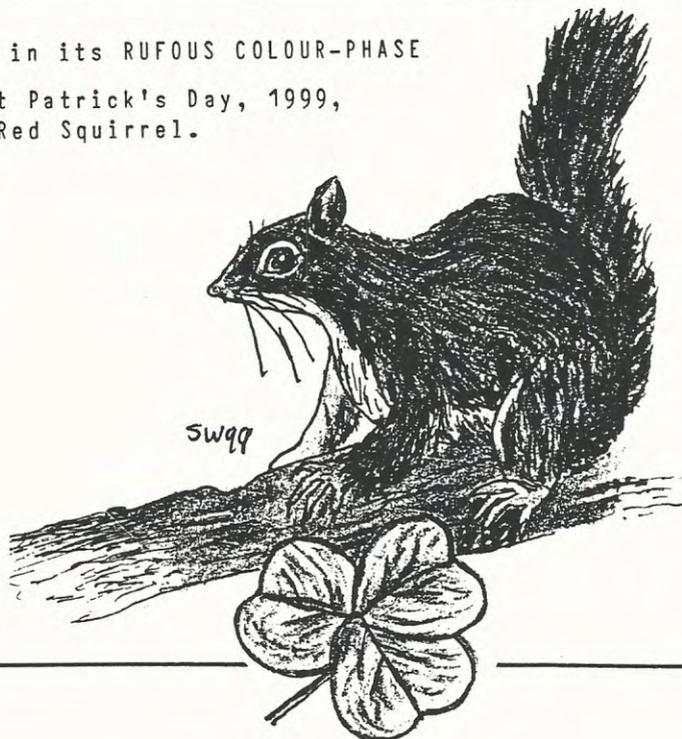
It is not only when he is hungry that he jumps to the feeder. If the birds appear to be eating up all the food he jumps to frighten them off. He lands with a belly flop, blue jays and pigeons flying off in all directions. He stays about one minute, then drops to the ground. The pigeons quickly return and the routine is repeated. "White-ears" is a real squirrel-in-the-manger. This morning I measured the (horizontal) distance from the tree branch to the platform -- 3.6 metres! (12 feet). Any squirrel that can jump that far has earned his keep. I am getting a lot of fun watching his high jinks, and as long as he is the only jumper in the gang, I guess I can spare a few peanuts.

George Fairfield

□

AN EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL in its RUFOUS COLOUR-PHASE  
at Allan Gardens on Saint Patrick's Day, 1999,  
looked like an enormous Red Squirrel.

It was seen  
around the statue  
of Robert Burns,  
erected  
July 21, 1902,  
in memory of  
the beloved  
Scottish poet,  
as Susan Weiss  
noted in her  
illustrated journal  
of TFN outings.



## JANUARY WILDFLOWERS IN TORONTO

The TFN Newsletter of March, 1977 contained a fascinating article entitled "The First Spring Flowers" by former editor, Richard M. Saunders. In the article he stated: "If you will watch south-facing banks along the streets of railway embankments near overpasses, plots warmed by sun reflected from south-facing buildings, extra-sheltered spots of all kinds you may find during March -- in fact, in any month of the year, including December, January, and February -- the occasional chickweed, shepherd's purse, dandelion, common ragwort and perhaps other so-called 'weeds'".

Despite Dr. Saunders' suggestion, the possibility of seeing wildflowers blooming in Toronto in January had always seemed inconceivable to me. This was boosted by decades of scanning the suggested south-facing spots without reward. However, global warming and the lack of snow this winter gave me renewed hope of final success.

On November 2, 2001, I discovered a recently-disturbed area on which many weeds had set seed. Located by the Waterfront Trail, just east of Humber Bay Park, the site sloped south to the lake. Here, amongst masses of flowering mustards, I observed an orange sulphur, my latest date for any butterfly in Ontario. I realized that if any place could produce a January wildflower, this was it.

After several days of above-freezing weather, the forecast for Sunday, January 27, 2002 was sunny, with a high of 11°C. Here was my chance. About noon, along with many summer-attired roller-bladers and bicyclists, I cycled over to Humber Bay. After checking out the many waterfowl species there, I headed over for my secret rendezvous. Much warm soil and green basal rosettes now replaced the blaze of yellow flowers. But with little searching I did find four species in flower -- my first January wildflowers! They were: pennycress (*Thlaspi arvense*), flixweed (*Descurainia sophia*), creeping yellowcress (*Rorippa sylvestris*), and common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*). Note that the first three are in the mustard Family while groundsel is a composite and, of course, all are non-native.

There is much concern about the implications of global warming, all very justified. For me there is some compensation in experiencing warmer weather similar to areas just south of Toronto. After all, what could be finer than to be out on a mild sunny day and see birds and flowers in January?

George Bryant

Comment: Between Dec. 25 and Jan. 25 low temperatures finally stopped flowers from blooming in Toronto, but by Jan. 26 a thaw inspired insects to appear (see page 6 ) and flowers to bloom again. At Riverdale Farm, ice pansies and primulas; in Cabbagetown, periwinkle; in Court House Park, snowdrops; on streets downtown, chickweed and groundsel; and in a garden in Bayview Village, Christmas rose (*Helleborus*).

H.J.

□

## A "WEED" BY ANY OTHER NAME

Weeds, like beauty, lie by and large in the eye of the beholder. I have house plants, both indoor and balcony, which have been with me so long they have become 'part of the family', accompanying me on every change of residence. All they have required is yearly repotting, water, and light (I've never bothered with fertilizers), plus frequent acknowledgement of their companionable tenacity -- "You can do it, kid! ..."

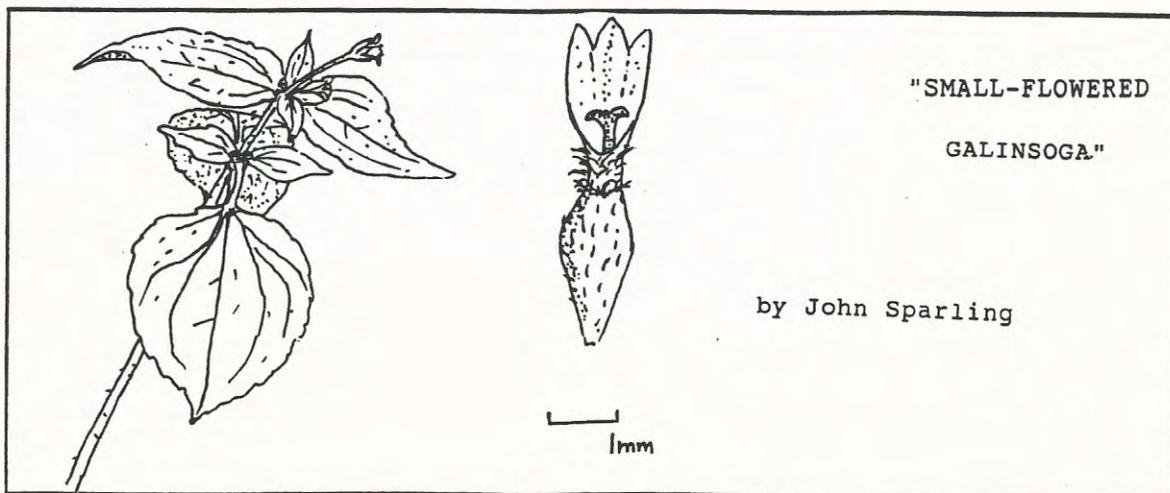
I have an oxalis at least 16 years old. It is now soup-plate size, with its shamrock-green leaves and starry white flowers. Periodically -- like all oxalis -- it goes into retreat. At first I thought this was The End, but had delayed discarding it because I hate to lose any plant, and, lo and behold, it always came back from apparent demise with renewed vigour. This last winter it took its usual rest period and, suddenly, beside its prostrate brown leaves there popped up bright green sprigs of galinsoga -- where from, I don't know, my oxalis lives a strictly sequestered apartment life. I repotted, and separated the "weed", and for the past few months one of the most flourishing plants on my window ledge has been this wildflower, burgeoned to a foot in diameter with its toothed, narrow leaves and its literally hundreds of tiny, white five-rayed heads of bloom. See page 29.

"Galinsoga ciliata. Alien" reads Peterson. "Waste places". This is somewhat dismissive of something so determined to survive. And of something beautiful for, believe me, in the midst of winter this fuzzy ball of bright green is eye-catching and heart-warming, arriving as it did out of the blue. (The peanut-vine which turned up in my balcony planter years ago had more obvious means of transport: air, birds, neighbourhood cats.)

Is galinsoga also dismissed as a weed in its native habitat? Or is it larger and more conspicuous there? Never mind. It has chosen to join 'my family' and I've been grateful.

[See also page 7.]

Eva Davis



### A SCHOOL OF FISH

Have you ever seen a school of fish? It is something you don't expect to see in Lake Ontario in the winter. I don't mean 20 minnows swimming in the river or a group of suckers spawning in a river gravel bed. I mean tens of thousands of fish, tiny fish, shiners, in a school thirty feet long and ten feet across.

It was on a Toronto Field Naturalist walk at Humber Bay Park.

A red-necked grebe was feeding on these fish and most of the people on the walk were focusing on the bird. I had seen these birds many times before so it did not interest me as much as what it was eating.

A group of fish like these shiners is something I had never experienced before. The reason is probably because of the introduction of the zebra mussel. They have made the water much clearer and it is now possible to see down through the water.

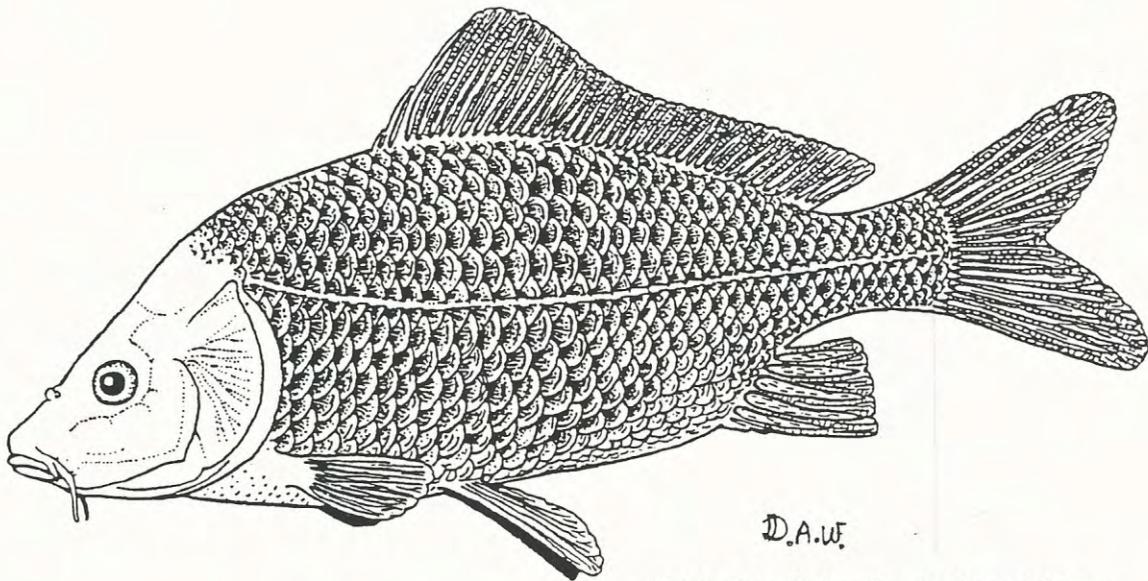
Emerald shiners have pretty good camouflage when viewed from the top, but if you use binoculars and look down into the water you can see them quite well. With the naked eye you can see them shine. It is like a tiny flash bulb going off under water. If a fish is moving the silvery side reflects light. In a large school this is happening continually.

The emerald shiner is our most striking fish -- yes, it is small but still beautiful. The body looks like it was made of pure silver and the eye is like a precious stone.

I have never been skin-diving on a coral reef so this was a first for me. A school of fish. Amazing.

Roger Powley

□



"The Carp" by D. Andrew White

# PROJECTS

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ABOUT NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRDS IN THE GTA

The northern mockingbird appears to be rapidly expanding its range as both a breeding and wintering species in the Toronto area. In connection with our ongoing investigation of this expansion, we are requesting detailed reports of northern mockingbirds from anywhere within the GTA (Toronto, York RM, Peel RM, Durham RM and Halton RM). Both current and historic records are sought, particularly older, unpublished records and those from previously unreported sites. Reports should contain, at minimum, date (time), number of birds, exact location, and observer(s). GPS location would be a bonus, as would any notes on breeding evidence.

▷ Please send reports to Roy Smith, 801 King St. West, #804, Toronto M5V 3C9, telephone 416-504-3721, FAX 416-504-6117, Email: rbhs@sympatico.ca or Winnie Yung wnyung@idirect.com All contributions will be acknowledged in any resulting publication.

from TOC NEWSLETTER, Number 121, Jan. 2002

## WARNING TO WELL-MEANING DONORS

Be sure to verify that the wildlife organization that you donate to is in alignment with your intentions before you donate!

As a donor it is easy to be misled by groups who promote/support sport hunting and other exploitative behaviours.

Beware of those groups who use words such as heritage, conservation, management and wise use. These terms are regularly used by organizations to mask their true intention: to promote extractive uses such as hunting, logging, fishing and trapping. In fact many "wildlife" organizations promote and lobby for the "conservation" of high-impact uses with little to no concern for the health of natural ecosystems.

Before you donate ask for their official position in writing first!

from THE PRONATURE NETWORK, Jan. 10, 2002

## WORK AVAILABLE AT THE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

▷ TRCA (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority) is looking for two field biologists; six field assistants and one field biologist (flora). Forward resumé to Human Resources, 5 Shoreham Dr., Downsview, Ont. M3N 1S4; FAX 416-661-6898 by Feb. 22, 2002. ▷

Even now I'm surprised by the great and continuing pleasure that discovering the life of Nature holds for me.

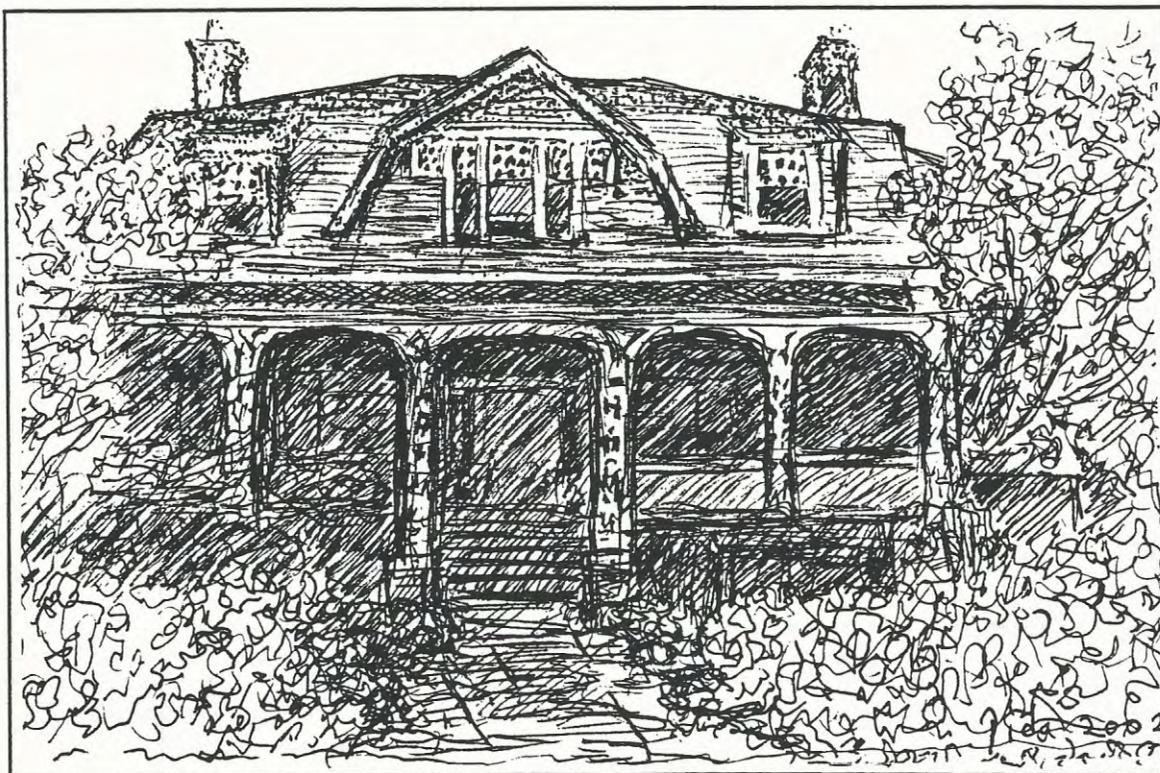
from "WILD STONE HEART: AN APPRENTICE IN THE FIELDS" by Sharon Butala,  
Harper Flamingo Canada, 2000

PROJECTS (cont'd)

WHERE ARE THE LONG-TAILED DUCKS?

The Canadian Wildlife Service is trying to locate major concentration areas for long-tailed ducks in the Greater Toronto area, particularly first thing in the morning (where do they first go to feed?) and in the evening (where do they roost?). They would appreciate any specific observations or information on these kinds of concentration areas. For example, to what extent do they roost in Toronto's inner, or outer, harbour? What kind of numbers arrive at Humber Bay Park first thing in the morning, i.e. before sunrise or shortly thereafter? Bluffer's Park? Mouth of the Rouge?

Send your observations : D. V. Chip Weseloh, Ph.D., Wildlife Biologist, Canadian Wildlife Service Ontario Region, 4905 Dufferin St., Downsview, Ont. M3H 5T4 Ph=416-739-5846, Fax=416-739-5845, email=chip.weseloh@ec.gc.ca



JESSIE ASHBRIDGE HOUSE, 1444 Queen St. East, drawing by Diana Banville based on a photograph

Housed under carpet  
awaiting spring wake-up call,  
dormant ladybugs.

Haiku by Therese Paradis

## IN THE NEWS

### BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

For the first time, light is being investigated seriously as a human health hazard, a possible contributor to the sharply rising incidence of breast cancer, depression and other ailments. And for many wildlife species, light pollution seems to be as grave an environmental threat as bulldozed habitats and toxic-chemical dumping. Many people's eyes now never get to the stage where they are fully adapted to darkness. About one-10th of the people in the world, including 59 per cent of Canadians, have lost much of their night vision.

Remarkably, this dramatic transformation of the lightscape has taken place in only a little more than a century. Electric lighting liberated the night, invented nightlife, and altered our whole approach to the day. Lighting from modern office towers confuses migratory birds, which fly into buildings lit up at night.

Florida researchers have noticed since the 1980s that artificial light along ocean beaches also confuses baby sea turtles. Lepidopterists similarly blame night lighting for the decline in moths over the past four decades. It can also cause mated male mockingbirds to sing at night, when normally only unmated ones do, and stop tree frogs from croaking, blocking a key courtship ritual. The dim light of a child's night light is enough to blind nocturnal frogs, impairing their ability to hunt crickets. When a campus sports stadium lit up for nighttime games, frog courtship stopped dead -- a worrisome development for animals that may breed only a few nights a season and are subject to declining numbers around the world.

Biologists say light at night has an effect similar to habitat loss. As surely as development alters habitat, light can render an area unsuitable for wildlife. As well, like many toxic compounds, light has the ability to cause mental distress or impairment in vulnerable species.

extracted from an article by Martin Mittelstaedt in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, January 12, 2002

### WHY BIRDS MIGRATE AT NIGHT

Temperatures are always cooler at night -- that is the decisive factor. Birds flying in higher daytime temperatures lose more water than those flying by night, water required for thermoregulation and for metabolism. During long and necessarily uninterrupted flights over oceans or deserts when they cannot replace lost water, migrants run the risk of dying of dehydration. By flying at night they can go greater distances on smaller water reserves. In addition the absence of updrafts associated with daytime thermal currents allows night-flying birds to maintain straight, level courses. Thus they can conserve precious energy on long flights.

from RED-TAILS IN LOVE: A WILDLIFE DRAMA IN CENTRAL PARK by Marie Winn, Vintage Books, N.Y. 1998/1999

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

SO FEED THE BIRDS

Birds in winter are not lured to their doom by dependency on backyard feeders. Researchers from the University of Wisconsin made a remarkable discovery when they removed feeders from a woodland where birds had been fed for the previous 25 years.

They learned that the 'pampered' birds immediately switched back to natural food sources and had winter survival rates equal to birds that had never visited a feeder in their lives.

from an article by Michael Kesterton in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 30, 2002

MAPLE LEAF METEOROLOGY OF YESTERYEAR

Way before modern meteorology, people knew what to expect from the coming winter. In early fall, people used to watch how trees, maples in particular, shed their leaves. If maples started shedding their leaves from the very top early in the season, before any sign of frost, it indicated that winter would come early and be very cold. But if the first snow fall came when trees were still full of leaves, the winter could be a mild one.

The pattern of falling maple leaves this fall indicates that this winter in southwestern Ontario will begin with a bout of bitter cold in early December or late November. But the wave of frigid air won't last very long. Warmth will return in mid-December and could stick around until the mid-January. The cold will make a comeback but won't be as consistent as last year.

from a letter to THE TORONTO STAR, Nov. 18, 2002, by Kostanicja Degutyte, Thornhill



## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## BUTTERFLY VENDOR TARGETS WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS, BUT CRITICS COMPLAIN

A former Telus saleswoman wanted a less stressful occupation. And what could be better for her soul's nourishment than clouds of butterflies taking wing overhead? First, she started raising them for pleasure at her house in Chilliwack, B.C., and was happy to give away extras to neighbours and friends who enjoyed them too. Then wedding parties came knocking at her door. In 2001, she filled more than 50 orders for butterflies. Some were for two or three insects only -- usually for funerals or memorial services -- but the largest were for as many as 100.

She has four species in her catalogue:

- . The monarch, the largest and most popular of the four.
- . The painted lady, which is speckled white, brown, orange and black.
- . The red admiral, which is dark brown (almost black) with red bands across its wings and three white dots at the wing tips.
- . The Milbert's swallowtail, which is black and yellow.

This year, she hopes to add mourning cloaks as well, which are purplish black with white marks.

Prices vary from \$10 apiece for painted ladies to \$14 to \$20 each for monarchs. Shipping costs range from \$5 to \$20 per insect, depending on the size of the order and the distance the shipment has to travel.

The North American Butterfly Association says butterflies should not be bred for business, and that people are doing them and the environment serious harm. The association says breeding and releasing butterflies threatens natural butterfly populations, which in turn affects the plant populations that butterflies pollinate. It says shipping butterflies between regions can spread disease, and it allows members of one species of butterfly to mate with members of another species, thereby creating artificial hybrids.

from an article by Nicholas Read in THE TORONTO STAR, January 5, 2002

## SNIFFER WASPS

Dutch scientists have trained a species of wasp with an acute sense of smell to detect buried landmines. They are also trying to program the insects to serve as an early warning system for biological weapons. The scientists say that the wasp they are using -- *Microplitis croceipes*, from the southern United States -- can perform to far higher standards than any sniffer dog and takes as little as an hour to train. The speed of training makes up for the fact that its lifespan rarely extends beyond six weeks. Unlike a dog, the wasp is unable to bark to draw its handler's attention to what it has 'sniffed'. Instead, the insect, barely one centimetre long, rubs its antennae against the floor of the [perforated training] box.

from an article by Michael Kesterton in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, January 2, 2002



#### SECOND-WARMEST YEAR

The Earth's average temperature in 2001 is expected to be the second-highest in 140 years of global record keeping. The year's temperatures are slightly higher than those of 1997, which was previously the second-warmest year. The warmest of all years in modern history was 1998. The warmer temperatures had sparked an increase in the severity and frequency of storms and droughts, as well as other unusual conditions.

from an article by Steve Newman in THE TORONTO STAR, December 22, 2001

#### ECOLOGICAL MOSAIC FACING PERIL

The better off we are the worse off we become, a new study of the environment in North America concludes. The North American lifestyle, primarily our consumer-oriented society in Canada and the U.S., has brought us plenty of comforts but at a high cost to everything else around us. Nature is suffering from our success and excess. The report, "The North American Mosaic," is the first publication of the Commission for Environmental Co-operation, a tri-country agency based in Montreal and created under the North American Free Trade Agreement.

North Americans are faced with the paradox that many activities on which the North American economy is based impoverish the environment on which our well-being ultimately depends. The three governments are not anticipated to respond to the report, a compilation of ecological ills that environmental groups have railed against for years, but are now given greater credibility coming from the governmental advisory agency. However, the commission has no regulatory authority so all it can do is monitor progress or lack of it.

Amidst a growing amount of degraded landscapes, the continent has at least 235 species of mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians threatened with extinction, according to the report.

Among other unnatural behaviour, the report found:

- . Forests have shrunk across the continent by 37 per cent during the past two centuries.
- . Less than half of North American rivers are "wild," meaning they run freely along their natural course without dams or diversions.
- . Increased international trade and travel widens the threat of non-native species, such as zebra mussels, invading lakes, rivers and the landscape.
- . Similar to the collapse of the commercial cod fishery in the Atlantic provinces, nearly one-third of the federally managed species of fish in the U.S. are over-fished.

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## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

- . In the past 25 years, the number of cars in Canada has doubled, increasing air pollution and destroying non-renewable fossil fuels.
- . Smog levels in rural areas in the past few years have inexplicably become higher, on average, than in cities.
- . The number and costs of natural disasters are increasing, causing extensive damage partly because more people are living in high-risk areas, such as coastal zones.
- . Municipal garbage disposal is becoming increasingly more difficult as a growing number of communities reject landfill sites.

The report notes that governments created environment departments in the 1970s. Much of the environmental advances were made in the 1980s, but dwindled following the recession of the early 1990s when jobs and spending were slashed.

extracted from an article by Brian McAndrew in THE TORONTO STAR, January 15, 2002



"THIN-LEAVED CONEFLOWER"

an uncommon Toronto native wildflower, can be distinguished from black-eyed Susan by its lobed lower leaves - as in this field drawing by Mary Cumming at the wildflower garden in Mimico Creek near Montgomery Inn.



## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## SEVERAL SPECIES SPOTTED IN ANNUAL BIRD COUNT

Toronto's 77th annual Christmas bird count, held Sunday, December 30, 2001, had its own surprises, including the sighting of a common yellow-throat seen at Knox College on the University of Toronto campus and a Swainson's thrush hanging out on Toronto Island. There were record numbers tabulated for no fewer than 13 species. These included three double-crested cormorants (a tie with the 1994 count), eight tundra swans, 673 gadwalls, 36 American wigeons, 3,208 redheads, 31 lesser scaup, 105 hooded mergansers, 18 sharp-shinned hawks, eight peregrine falcons, 6,540 ring-billed gulls, 2,983 rock doves (pigeons), 1,290 blackcapped chickadees and five Carolina wrens.

On the other hand, there were only 15 song sparrows, the fewest seen on a Toronto Christmas bird count since 1947. The numbers of blue jays, American tree sparrows and dark-eyed juncos were also low. Other highlights of the Toronto count included the sighting of a bald eagle and a Lapland longspur on Toronto Island, a red-bellied woodpecker at Lambton Woods and another at Wychwood Park, a couple of American pipits, a fox sparrow and an eastern towhee in High Park, and a field sparrow at the Downsview Air Base.

from an article by Barry Kent MacKay in THE TORONTO STAR, January 6, 2002

## CROOKED CROWS ARE AS ARTFUL AS HUMANS

The sophisticated social behaviour of crows and their relatives -- collectively, the corvids -- has earned such respect among scientists that scores of papers have debated whether corvids have a "theory of mind." There is evidence that individual corvids can picture themselves as players in future social situations, and work out how to take advantage of such imagined scenarios. The same mental agility that has turned corvids into expert improvisers, planners and strategists has made them the second-best liars, cheats and thieves in the animal kingdom.

One kind of crow has learnt to drop nuts in front of the tyres of trucks -- but only on pedestrian crossings, so the crows can retrieve their dinner in safety. There is a crow, known only from the Pacific island of New Caledonia, that fashions leaves into awls and saws, the better to wheedle grubs out of crevices. European jays, ravens and the Florida scrub jay cache food in full view of their peers, but sometimes return to their caches and move them elsewhere later on. The birds that go in for the surreptitious switching of caches are those with criminal form -- the birds with previous experience as thieves of other birds' caches. Birds as yet innocent of this crime tend to leave their caches where they buried them the first time, in plain view. Previous experience of pilfering -- and the ability to recall it -- are needed for a jay to make a connection between being watched, and the possible intentions of the watcher.

from an article by Henry Gee in THE GUARDIAN WEEKLY, December 27, 2001-January 2, 2002



IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## RESEARCHERS RAISE ALARM OVER TOXIC CHEMICAL SPILL

Research into an accidental spill of firefighting foam into Etobicoke Creek in June, 2000, has revealed that a widely-used chemical compound persists longer and builds up higher concentrations in the environment than anyone suspected. These just-published findings strongly suggest the world is going to have a hard time getting rid of the toxic compound, known as PFOS, even though the manufacturer is stopping production this year. This chemical redefines the term persistent pollutant. Other supposedly persistent pollutants like PCBs and DDTs do slowly break down in soil. PFOS doesn't seem to.

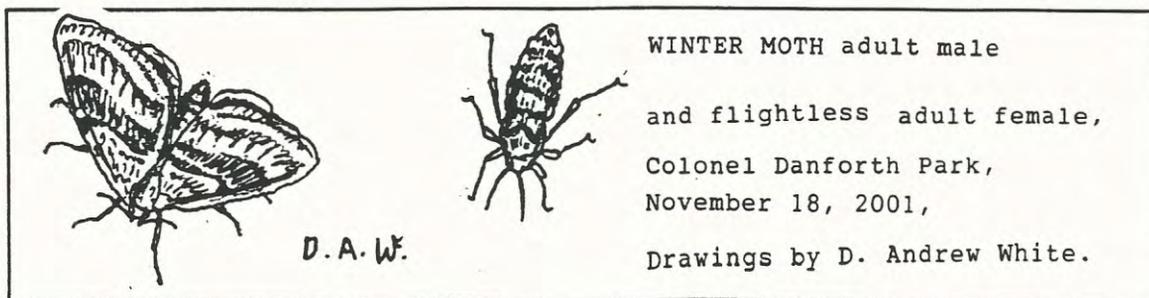
A research team found substantial traces of PFOS in the creek seven months after 22,000 litres of fire-retardant foam spilled into storm sewers after a fire alarm malfunction at Pearson International Airport. The storm sewers empty into Spring Creek, which then joins Etobicoke Creek. The researchers also discovered that fish from Etobicoke Creek had concentrations of PFOS in their liver almost 100,000 times higher than the levels of the chemical in the water. The shiners, a common baitfish from the creek, contained as much as 80 parts per billion PFOS, roughly 1,000 times greater than any fish concentrations measured previously by scientists around the world.

While PFOS is a key ingredient in fire-retardant foams, the major source until now has been Scotchgard stain-repellent products. In 2000, they accounted for three-quarters of the 3 million kilograms global consumption of perfluorooctane sulfonate, the full chemical name for PFOS. The sole manufacturer of PFOS, chemical giant 3M, is phasing out production before 2003 after tests found traces in blood samples from North America, Europe and Asia. No PFOS was detected in blood samples from the 1980s, suggesting the build-up took place in the 1990s when worldwide consumption of this class of chemical more than tripled.

The research team began sampling the creek water the day after the airport spill, working at six sites right down to where the creek flows into Lake Ontario, 15 kilometres away. Fish were collected in late June, 2000, and last January. The research clearly shows the failure of the emergency cleanup efforts at the time, which were geared to preventing the chemicals from reaching Lake Ontario.

from an article by Peter Calamai in THE TORONTO STAR, January 5, 2002

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D.A.W.

WINTER MOTH adult male

and flightless adult female,

Colonel Danforth Park,

November 18, 2001,

Drawings by D. Andrew White.



COMMON COLTSFOOT  
by D. Andrew White,  
April 28, 2001.

COLTSFOOT vs. DANDELION - first  
blooming dates compared

What was your earliest blooming date in Toronto for coltsfoot in 2001, compared to other years? Mine was April 16 - compared to April 26 for common dandelion - exactly the same date as for 1991, when I found coltsfoot in bloom much earlier - March 20! In 2000, I first encountered coltsfoot in bloom April 15, dandelion just four days later, April 19. In 1996 my first coltsfoot-blooming date was later, April 24, but then my first dandelion date that year was May 14.

I doubt if I'd ever have a year when the dandelion could beat the coltsfoot at its own game, but though there is some overlap, have you ever seen a March-blooming dandelion in Toronto? April 15 was my earliest - in 1992 - only one, growing close to the ground.

Diana Banville

COMMON

DANDELION

by

Mary Cumming



The only leaves of both species are basal. Note those of the dandelion in the illustration. Those of the coltsfoot are broad and appear only after the plant has bloomed. Note its scaly flower-stalks, compared to the dandelion's smooth ones.

## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## DEADLY EYE DISEASE IS AFFLICTING HOUSE FINCHES

Birds that thrive in the proximity of people and dine at backyard feeders delight nature enthusiasts. But the birds sometimes pay a hefty price for their easy meals and use of human structures for shelter. Birds that nest on or around buildings are often disturbed by people and their pets, particularly cats. Now ornithologists have discovered yet another hazard of consorting with humans that can be even more devastating; the ease with which a debilitating disease can spread among birds that congregate at feeders.

Witness the plight of the house finch, a sparrow-size bird with a reddish breast that is a popular year-round visitor to feeders. In just seven years, some 180 million house finches -- 60 per cent of the population -- have disappeared from the Eastern United States, the apparent victims of a highly contagious eye disease.

The house finch, a songbird native to the Western desert, has proved to be highly adaptable, having rapidly colonized the Eastern states after its release on Long Island in the early 1940s.

With data gathered by thousands of "citizen scientists" who participate in Project FeederWatch, a continent-wide program organized by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, researchers have been able to track the spread of the disease, which now affects finches throughout the East. From November, 1994 to February, 1996 participants' data tracked the disease, which originated near Washington and spread from Ontario to Florida and as far west as Missouri. The disease is spread when healthy birds come into contact with an infected bird or an object contaminated by a diseased bird.

The strain of mycoplasma affecting the finches was previously unknown. Other strains of the same bacterium cause disease in poultry and other birds but had never been found in songbirds. And while the house finch strain can infect related birds, only in house finches has it resulted in a major epidemic.

from an article by Jane Brody in THE TORONTO STAR, January 5, 2002

## SILENT WINTER

Pakistani ornithologists fear that birds normally migrating over Afghanistan during November and early December may have been devastated by the U.S. and British bombing campaign. Not a single migrating waterfowl has arrived at a sanctuary normally teeming with the sounds of birds wintering there after their long flights from Siberia. Similar reports have been received from wildlife observers in key wintering habitats all over Pakistan. It is feared that the birds were either killed directly through the bombing or that they were diverted from their usually precise paths over the Hindu Kush and Himalayan mountains by the nearly continuous military air traffic over Afghanistan.

from an article by Steve Newman in THE TORONTO STAR, January 5, 2002

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#### TOUGH CANADIANS SHUT OUT FEEBLE RUSSIANS

They munched their way through Finland and Sweden. They flooded the remote forests of Tierra del Fuego. Now the Canadian beavers are invading Russia. The Canadian beavers were introduced in the 1950s and 60s into Finland and Sweden, where no native beaver population existed. With no natural predators, they swiftly expanded their area. Beginning about 25 years ago, they spread from Finland into the northern Russian region of Karelia, where they continued to expand. Up to 20,000 Canadian beavers are believed to be thriving in north-western Russia today.

One of the main differences between European and Canadian beavers is that Canadian beavers build dams -- sometimes huge structures up to hundreds of metres in length -- while European beavers generally don't. Canadian beavers are changing the Russian ecology in unpredictable ways.

The beavers could have positive effects. In areas that have become dried out by logging, beavers can help restore wetlands, creating havens for animals and resting spots for migrating birds.

Beavers became extinct in most parts of Europe centuries ago. Now Russia has become the first zone of direct contact between large numbers of European and Canadian beavers.

In 1946, Argentina imported 25 pairs from Canada to help the fur industry in Tierra del Fuego. By the 1990s, the original 25 pairs had multiplied to 50,000 on the Argentinian side. Their dams were flooding forests and roads, eroding farmland and creating alarm among scientists who feared the beavers would swim to the South American mainland and take over the Andean forests.

In Finland, Canadian beavers have caused heavy damage to commercial forestry in some regions, with dams flooding forest and killing valuable trees.

When an English wildlife trust decided last year to reintroduce beavers in wetlands (almost 1,000 years after beavers became extinct there), it deliberately chose the European beaver.

from an article by Geoffrey York, THE GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 22, 2002

#### ADAPTABLE BEAVERS

Re Tough Canadians Shut Out Feeble Russians (Jan.22): On a recent trip to the Chilean side of Tierra del Fuego, I came across a very strange sight. In the north of the island, the dry, cool weather precludes any significant tree growth. Yet the local sheep producers complain about the Canadian beavers infesting their lands. Without trees -- which I thought were necessary to the diet and home construction of our national symbol -- the very adaptable beaver has resorted to building homes with grass.

from Letters To The Editor, THE GLOBE & MAIL, Jan. 24, 2002  
Paula Menzies, Ont. Veterinary College, Univ. of Guelph.

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## THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

March 2001, Toronto

Aside from a big snowstorm on March 4th-5th, the month was uneventful. It was relatively cold and cloudy -- the cloudiest since 1976 with only 121.9 hours of sunshine downtown as opposed to the normal 157.3, and the coldest since 1997 with a mean of 1.0°C downtown (the average from 1971-2000 is 1.3°C). This made for the coldest winter since 1995-1996. There was no exceptionally cold weather, although the highest temperature was only 11.6°C, the lowest March maximum since 1984. During the recent phase of warming climate since the 1997-1998 El Nino, the temperature has reached 20°C at least once in March except this year. A below-freezing maximum temperature was recorded as late as March 25th. As a consequence of the earlier snowfalls and moderately cold temperatures, downtown Toronto recorded its longest stretch of measurable snow cover on record, 104 days from December 6th, 2000 to March 19th, 2001. In addition, there was little variation in temperature; the average daily range between high and low was only 5.4° (7.0° at Pearson).

Although it was drier than the long term average, March was the wettest since 1998, mostly due to the snowstorm on March 4th-5th. Total precipitation was 31.4 mm at Pearson and 40.4 mm downtown. Total snowfall was 26.4 cm at Pearson (compared to the normal of 19.0 cm); but 35.4 cm fell downtown, the most for March since 1997, During the storm 26.4 cm fell downtown, and 17.0 at Pearson. This generated chaos for a short period, and allowed the previously almost vanished snow-cover to be recharged, making the way for the new record duration.

March was relatively windy; Toronto Island's 21.0 km/h was the highest average since 1997, and Pearson recorded an average wind speed of 18.3 km/h as opposed to the normal 17.1.

Gavin Miller

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### THE EXCITEMENT OF BIRDWATCHING

Usually the excitement of birdwatching is based on unpredictability, for unpredictability breeds hope. As you stroll around with binoculars at the ready, you never know when something new and exciting, perhaps something rare or beautiful might show up. That's hope.

Predictability breeds hope too; the same sort of hope that each year's cycle of seasons inspires. It is somehow deeply fulfilling and hopeful to know that the phoebe will arrive [at a particular place] on [a certain date] every year, give or take a few days. Or that if you stand at a certain place at a certain time a particular bird will show up and perform a predictable action.

from RED-TAILS IN LOVE: A WILDLIFE DRAMA IN CENTRAL PARK by Marie Winn, Vintage Books, N.Y. 1998/1999

## COMING EVENTS

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

- Sat. Mar. 2 at 9 am (all day) with Ron Scovell - Waterfowl from Toronto to Burlington. Meet in the parking lot at Humber Bay East to form a car pool. Bring a lunch and dress warmly.

Toronto Entomologists Association meeting - Sat. Mar. 23 at 1 pm in Rm N306, Ross Building, York University, 4700 Keele St. Short talks and posters by students of entomology. Call 416-222-5736 for more information.

Toronto Wildflower Society meeting - Wed. Mar. 27 at 7:30 pm at the Beaches Recreation Centre, 6 Williamson Rd. The topic will be Naturalizing Your Garden with Frank Kershaw. Free. Call 416-222-5736 or cking@yorku.ca

Scarborough Camera Club meeting - March 26 at 8 pm at the David and Mary Thomson Collegiate, 2740 Lawrence Ave. East. Free. Call 416-222-5736.

High Park Sunday afternoon walking tours

- Sun. March 10 at 1:15 pm - Everything you always wanted to know about Colborne Lodge
- Sun. March 24 at 1:15 pm - Lost waterways in High Park and vicinity  
Walks begin just south of the Grenadier Cafe and Teahouse in the park. \$2 donation requested. Call 416-392-1748 or 416-392-6916 for details.

Royal Canadian Institute - Sunday afternoon lectures on science at 3 pm

- March 3 - What do animals learn about sex?
  - March 10 - Science Circus (especially for kids 7-12)
- Lectures take place at the JJR Macleod Auditorium, 1 King's College Circle. Call 416-977-2983 for more information. Free.

Ian Wheal heritage walks

- March 9 at 1:30 pm - Gardiner East, pedestrian/cyclist pathway.  
Meet at the southwest corner of Leslie St. and Queen St. East.
- March 16 at 1:30 pm - Victorian housing in Toronto. Meet at the northwest entrance to Osgoode subway station (Queen St. West and University Ave.)
- March 30 at 1:30 pm - Sunnybrook Estate. Meet at the northeast corner of Bayview Ave. and Eglinton Ave. East.

Rouge Valley Conservation Centre guided theme walks

- March 10 at 1 pm (for 2 hours) - Nature Photography. Walk starts and ends at the Pearse House (east side of Meadowvale Road, north of Sheppard Ave. East). Call 416-282-8265 for details.

North Toronto Green Community - Lost Rivers Walk

- March 9 at 1:45 pm beginning at the northeast corner of Bathurst St. and Eglinton Ave. West. Leader is Ed Freeman. Walk is from Forest Hill to the Annex and all about drumlins, ravines and lakeshores.

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## COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Willowdale Gem & Mineral Club Show - March 16 & 17 from 11 am to 5 pm  
at Armour Heights Community Centre, 2140 Avenue Rd.

## OOPS, ERRORS!!!

1. Canadian Nature Federation Annual Conference in Ottawa takes place June 19-23 (not the dates listed in TFN 505). Call 1-800-267-4088 for details.
2. Federation of Ontario Naturalists Annual General Meeting, (May 31-June 2) takes place at Port Rowan (not the location listed in TFN 505). Call 416-444-8419.
3. TFN member Jo Butler hopes to maintain the Aammiq Wetland in Lebanon, a threatened significant area and a stopover between Africa and Europe for 200 species of migratory birds. Call Jo at 416-969-9166 (not the number listed in TFN 505) if you want to help.

H.J.



Galinsoga  
See page 13.



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Publications Mail  
 Registration No.  
 40049590

MR. & MRS. A. O. JUHOLA 33 (D)  
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 TORONTO ON M4Y 1B3

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST**

Published by the Toronto Field Naturalists, a charitable, non-profit organization, the aims of which are to stimulate public interest in natural history and to encourage the preservation of our natural heritage. Issued monthly September to December and February to May.

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