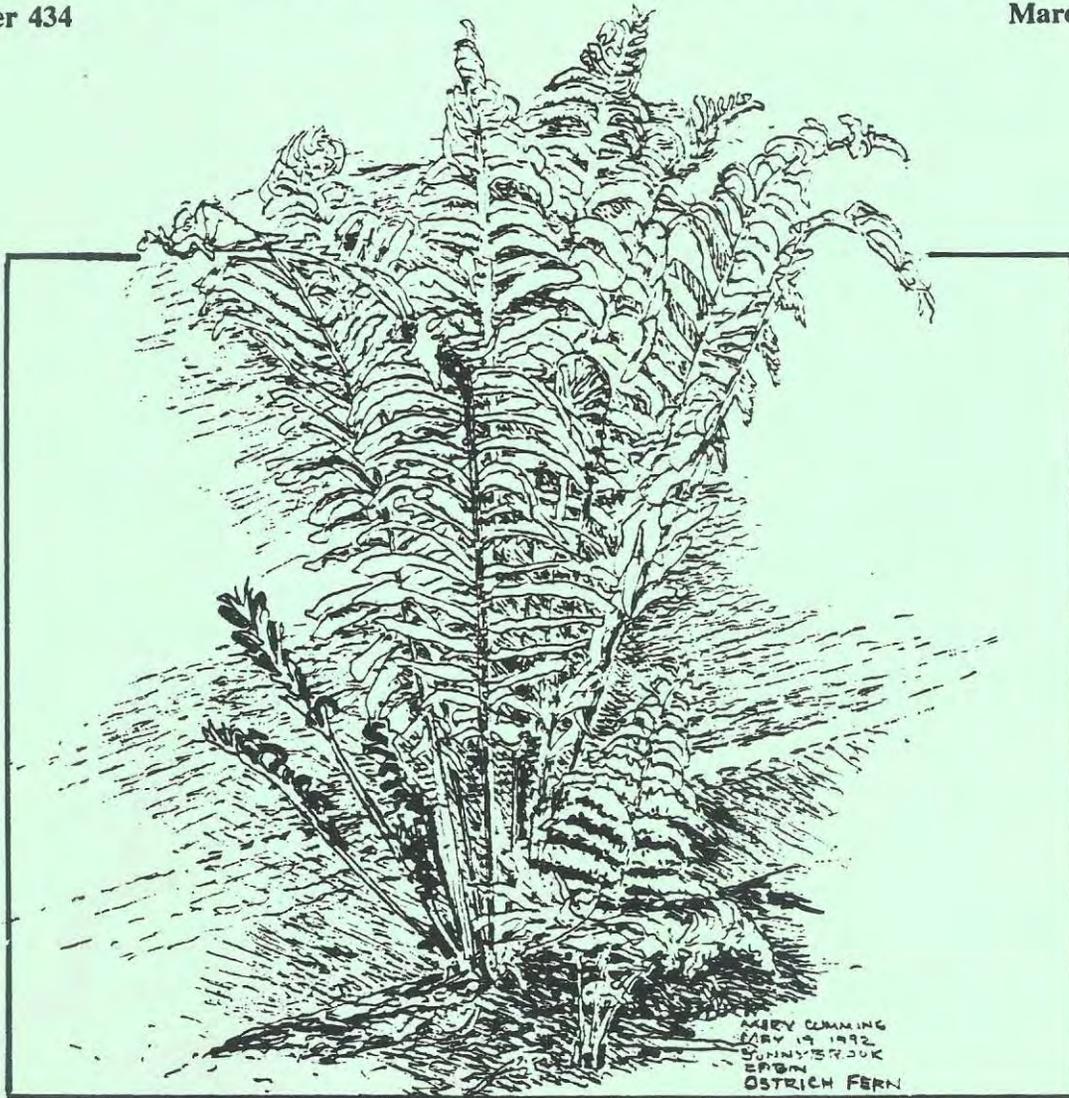


TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 434

March 1993



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TFN MEETINGS

Sunday, March 7, 1993 - THE LARGEST NATURE RESERVE IN SOUTHERN ONTARIO
- THE ROUGE PARK [See News on pages 22-23.]
at 2:30 pm

in the Northrop Frye Hall
Victoria University
73 Queen's Park Cres. East

an illustrated lecture by Stephen Marshall,
Chairman of Save the Rouge Valley System.
All you ever wanted to know about the Rouge and
your role in its future -- its history, extent,
features, what remains to be done, role of TFN
and other groups, places to go.

- + a display and sale of sweat shirts by the Save the Rouge Valley System
- + TFN memberships and publications will be for sale both before and after the meeting
- + sale of the Toronto Ornithological Club's book about Jim Baillie (See review on page 10.)
- + coffee and juices outside the lecture hall during the social hour (doors open at 2 pm)

NEXT MEETING:

Sunday, April 4, 1993

THE OSPREY in a photo by Wayne Lynch lent itself well to a Chinese brush painting. The subject-matter qualifies as Chinese - quite as much so as Canadian. It has a world-wide distribution.

This species breeds through most of Canada and the United States and on the sea-coasts further south. In the Old World it breeds and winters on all continents. East China is mentioned in the A.O.U. Check-List of North American Birds as a wintering location. Our osprey populations winter in the southern United States to northern South America. The osprey gets around.



TFN OUTINGS

March

- Tuesday BROOKBANKS RAVINE - nature walk East Don, North York
 March 2 Leader: Joan Patterson
 10:30 am Meet at the southwest corner of York Mills Rd. and Fenside Dr.
 Morning only.
 TFN published a report on the flora, fauna and history of this area in 1974.
 A chance to look for changes.
- Saturday METRO ZOO - nature arts Rouge, Scarborough
 March 6 Leader: Betty Paul
 10:30 am Meet at the zoo entrance on Meadowvale Rd. north of Sheppard
 Ave. East. Lunch optional.
 Bring cameras, sketching materials and stool, or just come and enjoy. The
 subject will be animals.
- Sunday TFN MEETING Toronto
 March 7 73 Queen's Park Cres.
 2:30 pm Northrop Frye Hall
- Thursday TORONTO ISLAND Lakeshore, Toronto
 March 11 Leader: Ann Millett
 10:30 am Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. Bring lunch.
 Dress warmly as the lake breezes can be very cold. Winter waterfowl should
 still be around and some migrants appearing (robins, killdeer, song sparrows,
 red-winged blackbirds).
- Saturday U OF T CAMPUS - trees Toronto
 March 13 Leader: Tom Butler
 10 am Meet at the northeast corner of Bloor St. West and St. George
 St. Morning only. Walk may end at a different public transit
 stop.
 This will be a leisurely walk around the campus to look at trees. Some very
 large and unusual specimens can be found on the campus. Bring a notebook
 and pencil.
- Sunday EMERY CREEK - nature walk Humber, North York
 March 14 Leader: Gavin Miller
 2 pm Meet at the northwest corner of Finch Ave. West and Weston Rd.
 Walk may end at a different public transit stop.
 Plans for this tributary of the Humber have included a North York Works Yard
 filling in much of Toryork Ravine and proposals to create settling ponds to
 deal with pollution from adjacent industries. Much natural beauty remains
 and may be saved if more imaginative plans can be found for this area.
- Wednesday ATRIUM ON BAY - nature arts Toronto
 March 17 Leader: Lenore Patterson
 10:30 am Meet at the fountain at the east end of the lower level of the
 Atrium (north side of Dundas St. West between Yonge St. and
 Bay St.). Lunch optional.
 Bring cameras, sketching materials and stool, or just come and enjoy.

MARCH OUTINGS (cont'd)

Sunday ELMCREST PARK - nature walk Etobicoke Creek, Etobicoke

March 21 Leader: Gavin Miller

2 pm Meet at the northwest corner of Rathburn Road and Elmcrest Rd. Walk may end at a different public transit stop. Time to look for signs of spring -- early migrating birds and swelling buds on trees and shrubs as we explore Metro's western border, Etobicoke Valley.

Wednesday HUMBER BAY PARK - birds Lakeshore, Etobicoke

March 24 Leader: Helen Smith

1 pm Meet at the park entrance on the south side of Lake Shore Blvd. West opposite Park Lawn Rd. Dress warmly as this will be a leisurely walk to look for late wintering birds and early spring migrants. The lakeshore can be a cold place. Bring binoculars, notebook and pencil and favourite field guide.

Saturday CHERRY BEACH - nature walk Lakeshore, Toronto

March 27 Leader: Ken Cook

10:30 am Meet on the south side of King St. East at Sumach St. Walk will end at a different public transit stop. Lunch optional. Meet spring along the lakeshore, past the mouth of the Don River, through Toronto's port area to the sand beaches of Cherry Beach Park and a view of the Leslie Street spit.

Wednesday MOATFIELD PARK - nature walk East Don, North York

March 31 Leader: Siglinde MacKay

10:30 am Meet on the south side of Sheppard Ave. East just east of Leslie St. Walk may end at a different public transit stop. Bring lunch. This walk follows the East Don River through a mixture of meadows and forests where we can look for early signs of spring.

□

GREEN AMARANTH originates in tropical America - unlike most of our introduced plants which originate in Europe and temperate Asia.

Also called red-root pigweed, it is found in cultivated gardens, fields, roadsides and waste places, preferring rich soils, according to WEEDS OF CANADA by Frankton.

The plant in the field drawing was made in Metro Zoo meadow.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At each Board of Directors' meeting of the TFN, there is a report given on the letters received and sent since the previous meeting.

In January, I reported on six letters sent and twenty-seven letters and pieces of information received at the office.

Three letters were sent acknowledging receipt of donations to the Club. Two letters urged that wildlife corridors be built or improved at river crossings.

A peppery letter composed by Eva Davis urged the Minister of the Environment to take action to clean up a longstanding contamination of Taylor Creek in Warden Woods. The Club, through Jean Macdonald, our representative on central waterfront issues, again opposed a temporary by-law to accommodate the Grand Prix power boat race in Toronto Harbour proposed for later this year.

Helen Juhola, as requested, sent comments on two publications by the Metro Planning Department: Regional Heritage Features on the Metro Toronto Waterfront and Metro Toronto Waterfront Environmental Study.

Letters received are often comments on letters sent out; e.g. a letter from the Parks and Property Department defending their position on spot spraying at the mouth of Mimico Creek. On the same subject, we had a letter from MTRCA supporting our censure of the spraying.

Reports come in; e.g. on a workshop attended by Helen Juhola in September on the Greater Toronto Bioregion Research and Information Network (BRAIN).

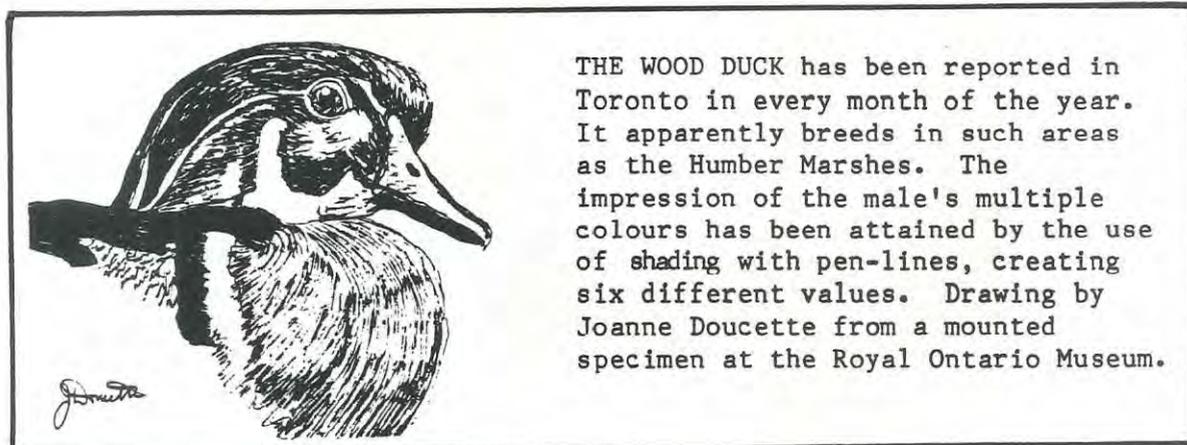
Notices of meetings are received; e.g. the Board of Health for the City of Toronto re consideration of "Centralized PCB storage site for Metro Toronto".

Some letters are printed in the newsletter. When the correspondence has been reviewed and acted upon, it is summarized and filed at the TFN office.

The Board of Directors meets nine times a year.

Joan Patterson

□



KEEPING IN TOUCH

January 5, 1993.

On Dec. 26, 1992, I was in the East Don Parkland walking south on the paved path from Finch Ave. East and stopped on the first footbridge. There was a beaver swimming upstream towards the bridge. The current in the rapids under the bridge was too strong for him so he dived and pulled himself along the stones on the bottom. With effort and several attempts at different channels through the rapids above the bridge he finally reached a large branch which had fallen into the river during the big snow-storm. There he wedged himself into a fork in the branch and proceeded to enjoy a meal of twigs. I was too cold to wait and see where he went when he finished.

Frances Chambers
Willowdale, Ontario

Jan. 23, 1993

How kind of you to send me the Toronto Field Naturalist No. 433! I was just turning the pages, full of admiration for its lay-out, interesting articles, the illustrations and the variety of contributors, when your card fell out, explaining about the latest Nature Reserve!

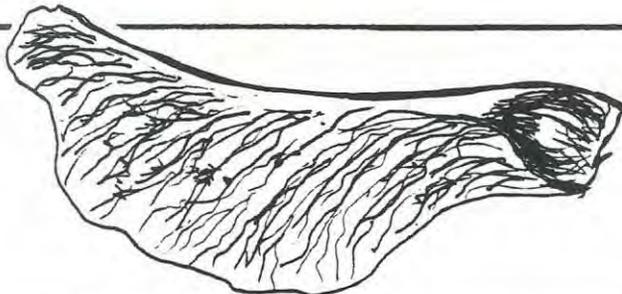
It is a wonderful tribute to Emily to have it named after her, and this will be much appreciated by the rest of our family, whom I will tell. I am the only survivor of her generation, but the next lot -- our nephews and nieces --were devoted to her.

I once took her to a disused gravel pit in Northumberland which the owners were turning into a nature reserve by flooding it, dropping loads of different soils to make different habitats, and then monitoring the arrival of plants, birds, butterflies and mammals. She said she was going to write it up for your Journal, "because in Canada we don't have to make reserves artificially from scratch; they're there!" I don't know if she ever got round to writing the article.

Anyway, many thanks for your kindness in sending me the February issue.

Esther Hamilton

□



A NORWAY MAPLE KEY
by Joanne Doucette (X2).
These winged seeds are
joined in pairs almost
horizontally.

TORONTO REGION WILDLIFE REPORT

(within a 48 KM radius of the Royal Ontario Museum)

For 1992, about 250 MAMMAL reports have been received. The insectivore order was under-represented with only a few star-nosed moles reported (even a live one included). On the casual list, the river otter and opossum turned up.

All the larger BIRDS on the TFN list were reported. (Why go to Aylmer to see tundra swans?) 329 pairs of common tern fledged 500 young. Of the songbirds, only 7 were unreported: Alder flycatcher (rare breeder), marsh wren and loggerhead shrike (former breeders), western meadowlark (recent breeder), pine grosbeak and red crossbill (erratic winter visitors), all hard-to-find, hard-to-identify, or both. Many songbirds were found as casualties below bank towers, according to a TFN member engaged in rescue operations. A pair of Carolina wrens raised a cowbird and a brood of their own later; an individual routed three winter wrens in succession in another location. On one trail, 61 bluebirds fledged. Feeding habits were reported; for instance, the American robin took mountain-ash berries, staghorn sumac fruit, honeysuckle berries, apparently multiflora rose hips, and of course earthworms. There were two reports of Brewster's warbler, with descriptions. The cold spring caused early nesting failure, and some songbirds were still singing towards the fall, such as the warbling vireo on September 9. King among the 45 species on the "irregular" list, for 1992, was the king eider. A flock of 50 were seen. A dozen golden eagles were reported during fall hawkwatches.

REPTILE AND AMPHIBIAN records (11 species) are being forwarded to Bob Johnson. The same number of species of FISHES were reported and a further list for 1989-91 became available for the Region.

INVERTEBRATES included a list of 11 galls and 51 species of butterflies and moths, with surprising rearing notes. An escaped cage-bird, the red bishop, was said to be attracted by termite-riddled wood. Strange sights were a water boatman in icy water and a European bark worm (an earthworm) on a wet tree-trunk. Emerging damselflies were described. A spider who caught a bee in her web was later killed herself by the bees. Pond life such as scuds, water fleas, and minute slugs and snails were reported.

Well done, reporters! All this data and much more will be kept on file. Lately, our TFN record files have been used by researchers working on official studies of "environmentally significant areas" (ESA's). We have started to file our TFN outings reports and those of individual members under "location" to facilitate these studies. If individuals will keep their records for each area they frequently visit on a separate sheet or checklist form, it would be helpful to researchers. Try it for 1993.

Send your reports periodically or annually to Diana Banville, #710 - 7 Crescent Place, Toronto, Ont. M4C 5L7, except for amphibian and reptile reports, which should be sent, as usual, to Bob Johnson, Metro Zoo, P.O. Box 280, West Hill, Ont. M1E 4R5 or phone him at 699-6879 (evenings 839-7139).



Dida
northern redbelly dace



Dida
fritillary



common redpoll

Owen fisher

DB

□

OUTINGS REPORT

Jan. 13, 1993 - Toronto Islands

It was amazing that we went at all considering the weather! (Freezing rain, snow, wind, ice pellets, -2°C .) As I battled my way down Bay St. against a gusty wind and icy sidewalks I couldn't help wondering who would be crazy enough to come out today. As so often happens in uncomfortable conditions we were rewarded with some excellent birds. There were several Old Squaws in the harbour. Having been told by the guys on the ferry that a loon had been sighted in the Eastern gap we hurried in that direction after first observing a magnificent Red Head who came paddling towards us. I'd seen him on a previous hike on New Year's Day. We didn't see the loon, or anything else at the Eastern gap; ice pellets were stinging our faces and the binoculars were quickly becoming clogged with snow. What self respecting loon would be out in that weather! So, thinking he might be in more sheltered waters we turned our backs on the icy wind and headed along the board walk, where we found conditions were not any better than at the gap. Great waves 15 to 20 feet high were crashing against the sea wall, with roaring thuds and then freezing on the concrete. We headed inland to calmer conditions. After lunch at the shelter near the pier we returned along the waterway observing several species of ducks in open water near the Wards Island dock. By this time the wind had calmed and the snow pellets ceased and there in the quiet waters around the dock we found the sensible loon, fishing!

Ann Millett (and four others)

□

The leaves
of our
native
Eastern
Cottonwood,
roughly
triangular
in shape,
earn for the
species its
scientific
name,
*Populus
deltoides*.

Ref.:
NATIVE
TREES OF
CANADA by
R.C. Hosie



MARY DUMMING
MAY 19 1892
TORONTO ISLAND
EASTERN COTTONWOOD

PROJECTS

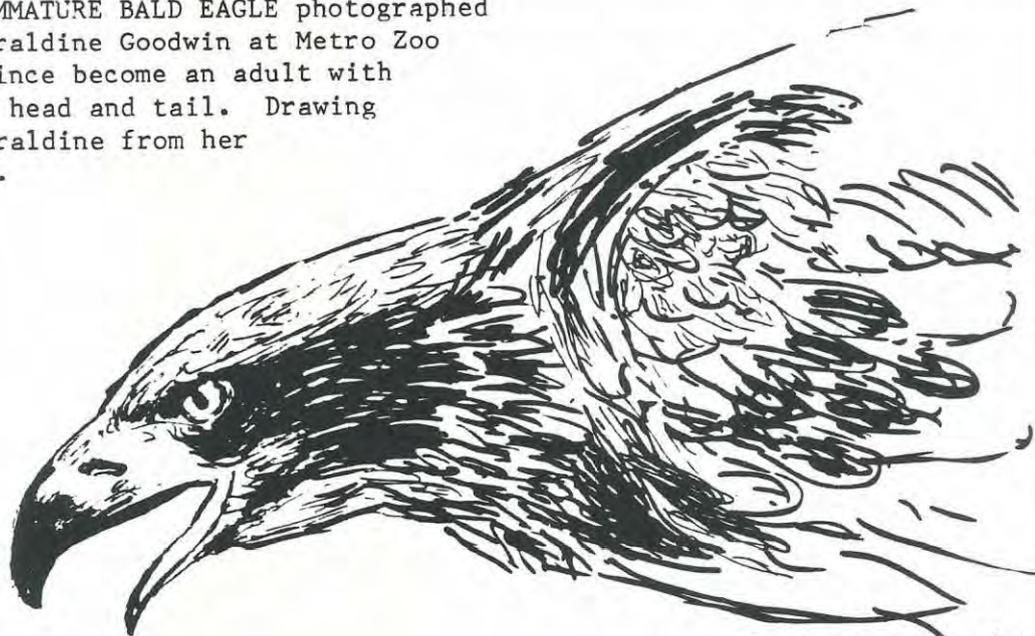
BALD EAGLES IN WINTER

Very little information is available on wintering bald eagles in the Great Lakes basin. Researchers are trying to determine the routes by which toxic chemicals get into the eagle's eggs. They would like to know:

1. what bald eagles are eating, i.e. deer/mammal carcasses, ducks, gulls, fish;
2. where eagles are hunting, i.e. lake, river, woodlot;
3. date and general location;
4. location of any overnight roost-sites so that regurgitated pellets can be collected.

▷ Please send your observations to Chip Weseloh or Pete Ewins at the Canadian Wildlife Service, CCIW, Box 5050, Burlington, Ont. L7R 4A6 or call 416-336-6434 (or at home 416-767-7492). □

THE IMMATURE BALD EAGLE photographed by Geraldine Goodwin at Metro Zoo has since become an adult with white head and tail. Drawing by Geraldine from her photo.



The preventative approach to flood plain management is the most effective way to minimize problems related to flooding. As hard as it may be for an individual whose application to build on a flood plain, has been denied, it must be realized that these regulations protect the landowner and the community as a whole. No one anticipated the rage of Hurricane Hazel in 1954 and not many will expect another like it. But history has proven time and time again that it can and probably will happen. Hopefully, Ontario's flood plain management program will save lives and minimize property damages should flood events occur.

from 1986 Annual Report, Halton Region Conservation Authority

FOR READING

BIRDER EXTRAORDINAIRE: THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JAMES L. BAILLIE (1904-1970) by Lise Anglin. Published by the Toronto Ornithological Club and the Long Point Bird Observatory. \$12.00 retail. (By mail, add \$2.60 for postage and handling from Toronto Ornithological Club, 560 Blythwood Rd., Toronto M4N 1B5) [Will be for sale at TFN March meeting -- see page 2.]

Long time naturalists and birders will meet many of their friends and acquaintances in these pages. "Jim" Baillie (as he preferred to be addressed) kept meticulous field journals and personal diaries and these, combined with correspondence and with reminiscences of many friends, have given Lise Anglin a rich source of information about this interesting man. His personality, his relationship with people, his achievements of difficult goals, his personal popularity, anecdotes about him are all here. Ms. Anglin also was able to bring together a vast amount of material linked to the times of Jim Baillie but not specifically about him. The book is full of detail given in a lively and readable way.

The first chapter, about family background and early years, provides a glimpse into Jim's future personality and broad interests. His first bird-watching expedition took place when he was fifteen and catapulted him into his lifelong passion for bird study.

He was employed at the Royal Ontario Museum in the Zoology Department. Reports throughout the book deal with his successes and his disappointments in his relationship with the museum.

One of the chapters is devoted to his "In Birdland" column in the TORONTO EVENING TELEGRAM, another describes his friendship with Terry Shortt. Yet another tells of his fascination with Charles Fothergill (1782-1840), a naturalist but also a man of many interests and talents. Personal details of Jim's life are included in narratives of his two marriages.

Jim Baillie's large collection of rare books is now in the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. Five photographs from this collection are reproduced in BIRDER EXTRAORDINAIRE.

All of this is in a setting of the "naturalist" environment, locally beginning in the early 1920s, and resulting in the clubs which were formed to meet the special and diverse interests of their members. The Toronto Field Naturalists was one of these and our name appears many times throughout the book, including, of course, mention of the dedication of our Jim Baillie Nature Reserve near Uxbridge.

Certainly this is a book for dedicated birders but it is also for anyone else moving in naturalist circles or interested in social, environmental or historical aspects of the mid-years of this century.

Jean Macdonald

▽

Soft sounds from the fen,
birds, moths and crickets too,
each has its own "den".

Mary Cumming
Taylor Creek fen, May 30, 1987

FOR READING (cont'd)

Renewals and Resolutions

As spring slowly emerges, a new cycle of life begins. This renewal is evident in the restless excitement of naturalists yearning for the fields. Perhaps this period is the true start of the year for naturalists. Now is the time to make your resolutions to explore new places and develop new skills. The following titles offer the possibility of new vistas (Kawarthas, Niagara Region, Hamilton-Wentworth) and new interests (nature photography, auditory recognition). Take advantage of them.

KAWARTHAS NATURE, compiled by the Peterborough Field Naturalists, published by Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 1992, \$24.95.

The Peterborough Field Naturalists celebrated their 50th anniversary (1942-1992) in grand style with a printed showcase of the natural features of their region. This team effort involved contributions from vastly knowledgeable club members, staff of the Ministry of Natural Resources, several conservation authorities, and Trent University. To the editors' credit, these diverse offerings have been combined into a harmonious and fluid product of top quality which has won several heritage publishing awards. As well as some thirty essays on publicly accessible river routes, marshes, boardwalks, trails, caves, parks and refuges, there are over a dozen others on local flora and fauna, human history, geography and fossils. Maps or written directions are provided for each location. The professional quality photographs help to make this book a worthy celebration of the Peterborough group's first half century of existence.

GUIDE TO THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE NIAGARA REGION, edited by J.C. Lewis, Brock University, 1991, \$26 (including G.S.T. & postage).

Instead of the slim volume I was expecting, I encountered a 450-page "tome". The reason became clear as the editor explained his goal: to compile the diverse and scattered literature of the Niagara region into a format accessible to the average reader. While much material is included, the styles and depths of treatment vary. For example, the section on insects spans 77 pages, birds get 13 and fungi a mere 5. As well, there is inconsistent use of keys, illustrations and checklists. The editor himself acknowledges the rather cursory treatment of some groups of organisms and the total absence of others. Included are coelenterates, rotifers and gastropods in this edition; while algae, mosses, arachnids and nematodes will have to wait for a future printing. Trying to provide both field guide and textbook is a daunting task, especially for an area which borders on two life zones (Carolinian and Great Lakes/St. Lawrence). While a comprehensive product would need to be several times larger, this current book, despite its idiosyncracies, still contributes greatly to the growing body of literature on local natural history being produced around the province.

Order from: J.C. Lewis, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Brock University, St. Catherines, Ont. L2S 3A1.

FOR READING (cont'd)

NATURALLY, HAMILTON!: A GUIDE TO THE GREEN SPACES OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH, by the Hamilton Naturalists' Club. 1992. Free.

This 12-page glossy booklet, containing colour photos, maps and wildlife hotspot listings, is available free-of-charge by writing the Hamilton club at P.O. Box 89052, Westdale P.O., Hamilton, Ont. L8S 4R5.

THE AUDUBON SOCIETY GUIDE TO NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY, by Tim Fitzharris, published by Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 1990, \$19.95.

Tim Fitzharris has impeccable credentials for writing such a book. He is one of North America's most respected nature photographers, publishing widely in magazines and books. He also conducts photography workshops at Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology. In this guide, Fitzharris has deftly combined quality instruction, gorgeous photos and mounds of personal tips into one lavish package. Chapters on equipment and film selection are followed by one on the techniques of picture composition. The remainder of the book details the three aspects of nature photography namely, close-up, wildlife, and landscape. This guide mainly targets amateur photographers wishing to graduate beyond the point-and-shoot stage. However, the outstanding photos and liberal seasoning of anecdotes of challenging shots will appeal to veteran nature photographers as well.

OWLS: THEIR LIFE AND BEHAVIOUR by Art Wolfe and Julio De La Torre, published by Crown Publishers, Inc., 1990, \$47.00.

This is the time of year when the public descend on their local conservation areas to engage in highly popular owl prowls. In preparation for such activity, or simply to learn something about these mysterious creatures, why not delve into this book. It has amazing photographs and some serious text to go along with it, making it much, much more than a pretty coffee table book. In addition to a chapter for each of the 19 owls breeding in North America, there are sections on owl evolution, anatomy, behaviour and conservation. A six-page bibliography is provided for further exploration. There's even a primer for do-it-yourself owl prowlers. You'll find this book both instructional and entertaining, with text and photographs vying for your attention. Of one thing I'm certain though -- if I had the choice, I'd skip the owl prowl and tag along with Art Wolfe to find out how he gets his shots.

Audio Nature Guides

Recordings are a useful complement to field guides, but are often overlooked by naturalists other than birders. A unique line of audio guides has been produced by NatureSound Studio of Ithaca, N.Y. All contain high quality narrated recordings accompanied by excellent descriptive booklets.

THE CALLS OF FROGS AND TOADS by Lang Elliott, 1992, \$15.95 Cdn.

This cassette covers sounds made by all 42 species of frogs and toads of eastern and central North America, including the 11 found in Ontario. It includes advertisement calls, aggressive calls, release calls, rain calls, distress calls and call alternation. The 66-minute cassette comes with a 28-page booklet which describes the calls in detail.

FOR READING (cont'd)

A GUIDE TO NIGHT SOUNDS by Lang Elliott, 1992, \$15.95 Cdn.

This features the incredible sounds made by 60 species of night-active birds, frogs, mammals, insects and reptiles. It includes owls, rails, loons, alligator, coyote, snipe, woodcock, porcupine, crickets, katydids, beaver, raccoon and deer, putting into perspective all those hoots, croaks, peeps and snorts which mystify so many of us. (66 minute tape + 28 page fully illustrated booklet)

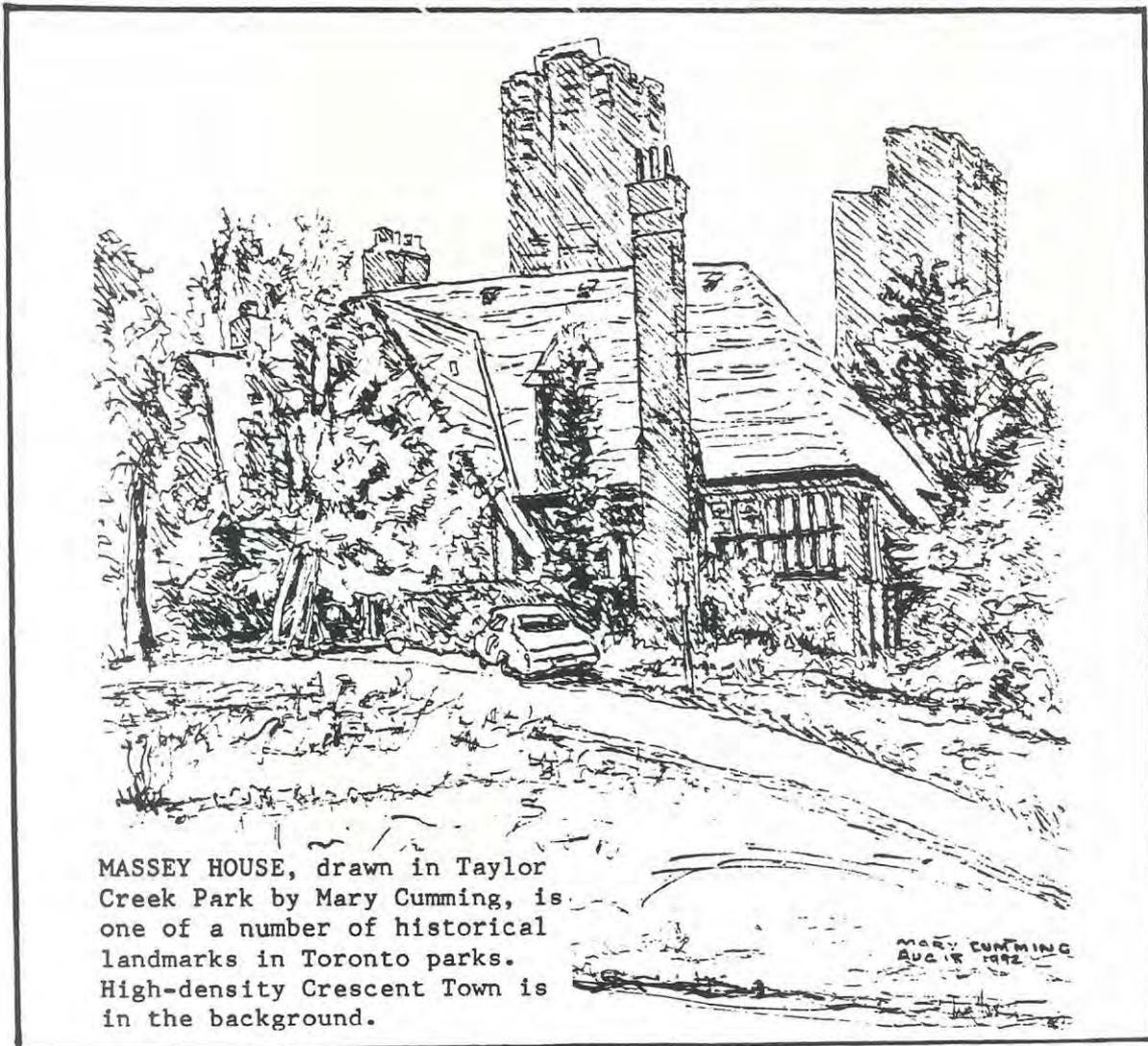
WILD SOUNDS OF THE NORTHWOODS by Lang Elliott and Ted Mack, 1990, \$15.95 Cdn.

This offers 111 species of birds, frogs, mammals and insects typical of northwoods habitats. In Canada this includes the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario and eastern Manitoba. (63 minute cassette + 30 page booklet).

Where to find them: Open Air Books and Maps, 25 Toronto St. (363-0719).

Richard Aaron

□



THE 1992 TORONTO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 68th consecutive Toronto Christmas Count was conducted on Dec. 27, 1992. Eighteen routes, plus two sub-routes were surveyed by 73 field participants in 22-26 parties, plus six feeder watchers, within the official 7.5 mile circle centred at Avenue Rd. and Roselawn Ave.

The weather was partly sunny to overcast with slight flurries. Visibility was generally unlimited. The area was 60% covered with 2-3 cm of crusty snow and only rushing water was open. Temperatures ranged from -8°C to -4°C. Winds were off the lake from the southwest at 4 km/h very early in the day, then south at 22 km/h by mid-morning, creating high waves and making observations of diving waterfowl difficult.

A total of 166.7 Party Hours was spent in the field--136.2h on foot and 30.5h by car, covering 376 miles of the city (112 mi. on foot). In addition a total of 19 hours was spent counting birds at feeders and 3 hours spent owling, covering 1.25 miles of territory. Seventy-four (74) species of birds (1 sub-species and 4 hybrids) totalling *30,966* individuals were observed this year compared to 76 species and 26,039 individuals last year.

Although this year's total species were lower than last year, total individuals were the highest ever (approximately 5000 more than last year's record) continuing the trend that may be the result of more concentrated coverage since the area was reduced from that of the 30 mile to the present 7.5 mile-radius circle in 1989. An extra effort was made counting starlings this year (1562 more skewing the totals somewhat). Generally Party Hours and Miles have increased. Highest total hours and miles were recorded in 1990 and Party Miles were the same this year, *376*.

Rare sightings were of *3* Common Loon, *2* Black-crowned Night Heron, 2 Northern Harrier. There were also single sightings of an Immature Bald Eagle, Thayer's Gull, Townsend's Solitaire, (the first ever!) Veery (the first ever for the smaller circle & not even listed in the CBC report form to be returned to American Birds!), Brown Thrasher, Oregon Junco, Wood Duck, Lesser Scaup, Hooded Merganser, Northern Goshawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Long-eared Owl, Iceland Gull, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Hermit Thrush, Northern Shrike, White-crowned Sparrow, and Purple Finch.

In reviewing the TOC historical CBC data, Roy Smith noted that there were only 9 Common Loon sightings for the period 1925-1990. These all involved single birds. Only 5 records of Red-throated Loon have occurred during the same period (never in the same years).

Highest counts were those toward the south, near open water. The Lake acts as a trap for migrants driven south by the colder weather. Highest ever numbers this year were recorded for the following water species: Mute Swan (*65*), Mallard (*3433*), Redhead (*136*), Glaucous Gull (*9*), Great Black-backed Gull (*107*, up 79 birds from last year's record). Herring Gull numbers have not been this high since 1979. Ring-billed Gull totals were up slightly this year from the last few years but have been higher in the past.

Again there were record highs of many of our "city birds" counted of what is basically a very urban circle: Rock Dove (*2359*) European Starling (*6597*) and American Crow (*782*). House Sparrows continue to increase but are not up to the peak of 1989 (1,949). House Finch totals (564) failed to reach last year's peak of 638. Mourning Dove numbers increased but did not surpass the peak of 776 in 1989. Bill Edmunds reports a large roost of several hundred birds nightly in Route 8 at Centre & Yonge Sts.

Also generally increasing but not setting record highs were

Gadwall (not this high since 1983). American Black Duck are still low compared to the average of 262 for the past 23 years, but have increased in the past two years. Greater and Lesser Scaup continue to decline in Toronto. Common Goldeneye were tallied as the highest since 1986 and Bufflehead have not been this high since 1987.

Low numbers of Oldsquaw (652) were reported, which might be due to the poor viewing conditions from shore. However record high totals were observed on the Halton-Peel Count, Dec. 19, for Oldsquaw, Goldeneye and Bufflehead, which might be an indication of their change in habitat due to feeding on a new food source, zebra mussels proliferating on the shale bedrock located west of the Toronto circle (unpublished data, B. Jefferson). Eleven White-winged Scoters is not as high as the 24 in 1990, but in the past three years numbers of scoters on the CBC are certainly greater than the one or two occasionally observed in previous years.

Downy Woodpecker (*158*), Northern Mockingbird (*2*), Northern Cardinal (*311*) also totalled the highest ever. Northern Mockingbird set a record in the Halton-Peel area, as did Carolina Wren so the absence of this latter species on the Toronto Count is curious.

Noticeable declines were observed in totals of Blue Jay, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin and Northern Shrike. Few sparrows were around except for Song, Tree, 46 White-throated (highest since the 52 in 1980) and the aforementioned single White-crowned. American Goldfinch were also less than the highs of the late 1980s.

Close to record totals were counted for 14 Brown Creeper (15 in 1982), 7 Winter Wren (8 in 1974), and 21 Golden-crowned Kinglet (24 in 1982). Increases in the past few years but not close to previous record numbers were noted for 411 Dark-eyed Junco (812 in 1989).

Six additional Count Week species were Northern Pintail, Red-shouldered Hawk, Ruddy Duck, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pileated Woodpecker and Brown-headed Cowbird. (Three exotic species were also observed.)

This year CBC participants also contributed several mammal sightings for the Mammal Atlas in the course of their surveys.

Approximately 22 participants gathered at the Fairfield's afterwards for a festive warm-up feast and exchange of experiences. Much appreciation is extended to Jean and George for their kind and generous hospitality.

We are also grateful for the valuable assistance of all the leaders, participants, members of the TOC, TFN, and the many other naturalists' clubs in the area.

Beth Jefferson, Compiler,
Alfred Adamo,
Toronto Ornithological Club

Bold print indicates a record high number.

Underlined bold print indicates an unusual bird that has not been seen more than once or twice on the Toronto Xmas Counts over the past 10 years, and thus requires submission of a Rare Bird Report (subject to review by American Birds).

THE 68TH TORONTO ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB
CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS
DECEMBER 27, 1992.

TOTALS	SPECIES
3	Common Loon
2	Black-crowned Night-Heron
65	Mute Swan
2,831	Canada Goose
1	Wood Duck
2	Green-winged Teal
124	American Black Duck
3,433	Mallard
4	Black X Mallard Hybrid
CW	Northern Pintail
28	Northern Shoveler
298	Gadwall
2	American Wigeon
136	Redhead
58	Greater Scaup
1	Lesser Scaup
652	Oldsquaw
11	White-winged Scoter
142	Common Goldeneye
188	Bufflehead
1	Hooded Merganser
185	Common Merganser
77	Red-br Merganser
CW	Ruddy Duck
21	Duck, sp.
1	Bald Eagle
2	Northern Harrier
3	Cooper's Hawk
1	Northern Goshawk
CW	Red-shouldered Hawk
31	Red-tailed Hawk
1	Rough-legged Hawk
13	American Kestrel
9	Ring-necked Pheasant
3,823	Ring-billed Gull
3,245	Herring Gull
1	Thayer's Gull
1	Iceland Gull (Kumlien's)
9	Glaucous Gull
107	Great Black-b Gull
169	Gull, sp.
2,359	Rock Dove
744	Mourning Dove
3	Eastern Screech-Owl
8	Great Horned Owl
3	Snowy Owl
1	Long-eared Owl
12	Belted Kingfisher
1	Yellow-b Sapsucker
158	Downy Woodpecker
27	Hairy Woodpecker
9	Northern Flicker
CW	Pileated Woodpecker
2	Horned Lark
86	Blue Jay
782	American Crow
821	Black-capped Chickadee
31	Red-breasted Nuthatch
59	White-br Nuthatch
14	Brown Creeper
7	Winter Wren
23	Golden-crowned Kinglet
CW	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
1	Townsend's Solitaire
1	Hermit Thrush
1	Veery
153	American Robin
2	Northern Mockingbird
1	Brown Thrasher
170	Cedar Waxwing
1	Northern Shrike
6,597	European Starling
311	Northern Cardinal
89	American Tree Sparrow
43	Song Sparrow
46	White-throated Sparrow
1	White-crowned Sparrow
411	Dark-eyed Junco
1	Oregon Junco
CW	Brown-headed Cowbird
1	Purple Finch
564	House Finch
370	American Goldfinch
1,403	House Sparrow
74	+6 Count Week Species
30,996	+6 CW [CW=Count Week]
CW	Exotics
1	Northern Shelduck
1	Egyptian Goose
1	Red-crested Pochard

Cattails bend with weight
of red-winged blackbird landing,
singing until late.

Mary Cumming
Taylor Creek fen, May 30, 1987

Lake Ontario Mid - Winter Waterfowl Inventory

January 10, 1993

Compiled by: Bill Edmunds

Species	TORONTO AREA												Hamilton	Niagara	TOTAL	
	Kingston	Presqu'ile	Port Hope	Durham	Route1	Route2	Route3	Route4	Route5	Route6	Route7	Subtotal				
Common Loon	8													2		10
Horned Grebe	2															2
Red-necked Grebe	1															1
Double-crested Cormorant														5	5	10
Tundra Swan	12															12
Trumpeter Swan												2				2
Mute Swan		2		42	1	2		8			33	21		8		119
Snow Goose					1							1		1		2
Canada Goose	1810	1		4192	7949	684		14	2010	1061	1434	13152	2069	416		21640
Wood Duck									1			1	3			4
Green-winged Teal	1				3		1						4			7
American Black Duck	1211		13	524	66	100	19	23	28	81	16	333	394	14		2489
Mallard	4612	2	671	1710	936	526	210	555	1608	1117	428	5380	1008	522		13905
Northern Pintail	3			2	2							2	28			35
Northern Shoveler			1							25		25				26
Gadwall	14				19	2	241		29	135	2	428	57	3		502
American Wigeon	8		1						1	36		37	1			47
Canvasback		17											41			58
Redhead	40	225						1	57	5		63	8			336
Ring-necked Duck	5												1			6
Tufted Duck													1			1
Greater Scaup	824	24		11		2			8	624	61	695	9891			11445
Lesser Scaup	49												1243			1292
Scaup sp.					7							7	550	1166		1723
Harlequin Duck								1				1				1
Oldsquaw	19741	271	21		1	47	56	113	891	151		1259	2	1009		22303
Black Scoter	5															5
White-winged Scoter	1626	1														1627
Common Goldeneye	2385	181	98	218	42	16	93	56	39	160	130	536	6997	194		10609
Bufflehead	229	30	16	167	28	12	101	50	26	50	44	311	999	122		1874
Hooded Merganser			1		1				1			2	8	1		12
Common Merganser	3974		5	21	29	9	5	22	51	11		127	623	467		5217
Red-breasted Merganser	68	2	1	26	7	60	35	58	4	14	5	183	42	220		542
Ruddy Duck													1			1
American Coot	1															1
Ducks sp.		1200	80	25			6		1			7	2000			3312
Mallard X Black Duck			14		1				9			10	24			48
Total Birds	36629	1956	922	6938	9093	1464	767	901	4789	3478	2141	22633	26009	4139		99226
Total Species	23	11	10	10	14	12	9	11	15	13	9	21	25	11		34
Bald Eagle	19											0				19

TORONTO AREA ROUTES: 1. Whitby to Rouge River; 2. Rouge River to Coatsworth Cut; 3. Eastern Headland to Cherry St.; 4. Toronto Islands; 5. Parliament St. to Humber River; 6. Humber River to Watersedge Park; 7. Watersedge Park to Bronte.

V

LAKE ONTARIO MID-WINTER WATERFOWL INVENTORY (Jan. 10, 1993)

Weather/Visibility: This was not a banner day for waterfowl viewing!

In the western half of the lake, there was a strong (50-70 kph) SE wind, with a steady snowfall throughout the day. There were 'spectacular breakers' and visibility was generally limited to 200-300 M. Temperatures were -10°C to -15°C. In the eastern half of the lake, there were also strong winds (from the north), with very cold temperatures (-20°C) and reduced visibility. The lake was free of ice, although some channels and bays were starting to develop ice patches.

Remarks: This was the 47th year for the Toronto area 'Duck Count', and the third year in which there has been a coordinated census for the entire Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario. All areas reported poor weather and viewing conditions; most areas also reported low waterfowl numbers; Hamilton and Kingston were the exceptions. Scoters were non-existent except for Kingston. Oldsquaw were in record low numbers for the west half, but Kingston had their usual 20,000! Scaup numbers were 'very low' except for Hamilton, where there were over 11,000! This is the first time in 25 or 30 years that there have been this many scaup seen on Lake Ontario. For the entire census area (Kingston to Niagara-on-the-Lake), 99,226 waterfowl were found from 34 species. The previous high value for number of waterfowl was 93,700 from 37 species in 1991 count.

In the Toronto area: 22,633 waterfowl from 21 species were seen. The number of waterfowl seen matches the average for the past 10 years, but the number of species is the lowest in 12 years. Record high numbers were only seen for Northern Shoveler (25). Low numbers were noted for American Black Duck (333), Redhead (63), Greater Scaup (695), Oldsquaw (1,259), and White-winged Scoter (0!). Rarities included a Wood Duck in High Park, 2 Northern Pintail at Whitby Harbour, a male Harlequin Duck at Toronto Islands, and 1 Hooded Merganser at Frenchman's Bay (Pickering) and another up the Humber River.

Outside the Toronto area, there were some excellent sightings. Niagara had 5 Double-crested Cormorant. Hamilton had 2 Common Loon, 5 Double-crested Cormorant, 28 Northern Pintail, 41 Canvasback, a Ring-necked Duck, the MWWIs first-ever Tufted Duck, 11,684(!) Scaup, 6,997(!) Common Goldeneye, 999(!) Bufflehead, 8 Hooded Merganser, and the only Ruddy Duck. Durham Mute Swan numbers have escalated to 42 (probably because their nesting is no longer being controlled by the MNR in this area). Presqu'ile had 225 Redhead and 17 Canvasback. Kingston area had 8 Common Loon, the only Grebes (a Red-necked and 2 Horned), 12 Tundra Swan, 19,741(!) Oldsquaw, the only Scoters (5 Black and 1,626 White-winged), 2,385 Common Goldeneye, 3,974 Common Merganser, the only American Coot, and 19(!!) Bald Eagles (13 adult and 6 immature).

Exotics/Introduced species included 2 Trumpeter Swans, 2 male Mandarin ducks, an Egyptian Goose, and a Bar-headed Goose, all in the Toronto area.

Thanks to all the clubs and individuals who participated.

Bill Edmunds, Compiler

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TREE HUSBANDRY

Many people want to live in a home with well established trees in their yards. Developers realize that leaving established trees in developments will increase the value of the houses they contain. This seems like a wonderful trend towards a better urban environment, but too many trees die only a few years after the new owners move in. This is usually due to the ignorance many developers have of what construction practices are acceptable around trees. One of the most serious problems occurs when earth is spread over the existing soil.

The majority of a tree's roots grow within the upper 18 inches of soil surface. The upper layer of soil is preferred by the tree because this is where the oxygen, moisture, and nutrients are most favourable for growth. When too much soil is spread over the existing earth, tree roots lose the ability to exchange carbon dioxide for oxygen. The water relations within the soil also change. Water can be restricted from roots especially if fine textured soils are laid on top of courser types. The water table can also rise when soil is added. Roots that become flooded by the water table soon die because they can no longer obtain enough oxygen to support themselves.

Some tree species are more likely to survive the shock associated with soil additions than others. Tree species that have become adapted to wet soil conditions survive much more often than trees that are naturally found in upland or dry conditions. Elms, willows, and pin oaks are often found in wet areas that are susceptible to flooding. Sugar maple, beech, and most pines are adapted to more favourable upland sites and are subsequently more susceptible to damage caused by soil additions. Older and less healthy trees are at an increased risk of death from these landscaping practices because they are less able to adapt to new soil conditions.

If there is a need to apply additional earth, it should be of a similar or more coarse texture than the existing soil. Soil additions must only be a few inches deep unless additional provisions are made to ensure tree roots are growing in a proper environment. Sometimes crushed rock and drainage pipes are used in a way that will facilitate the movement of water and gases through the soil. This can be a successful way to preserve trees, but this procedure must be researched and performed in a professional manner.

Prospective home buyers must take care not to buy properties whose trees have been mistreated, or they will be disappointed in the future.

Thomas Butler

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Soft rain on my face,
muddy path, a bird calling;
walking in spring time.

haiku by Arthur Wade

TRANSFORMATION SCENE

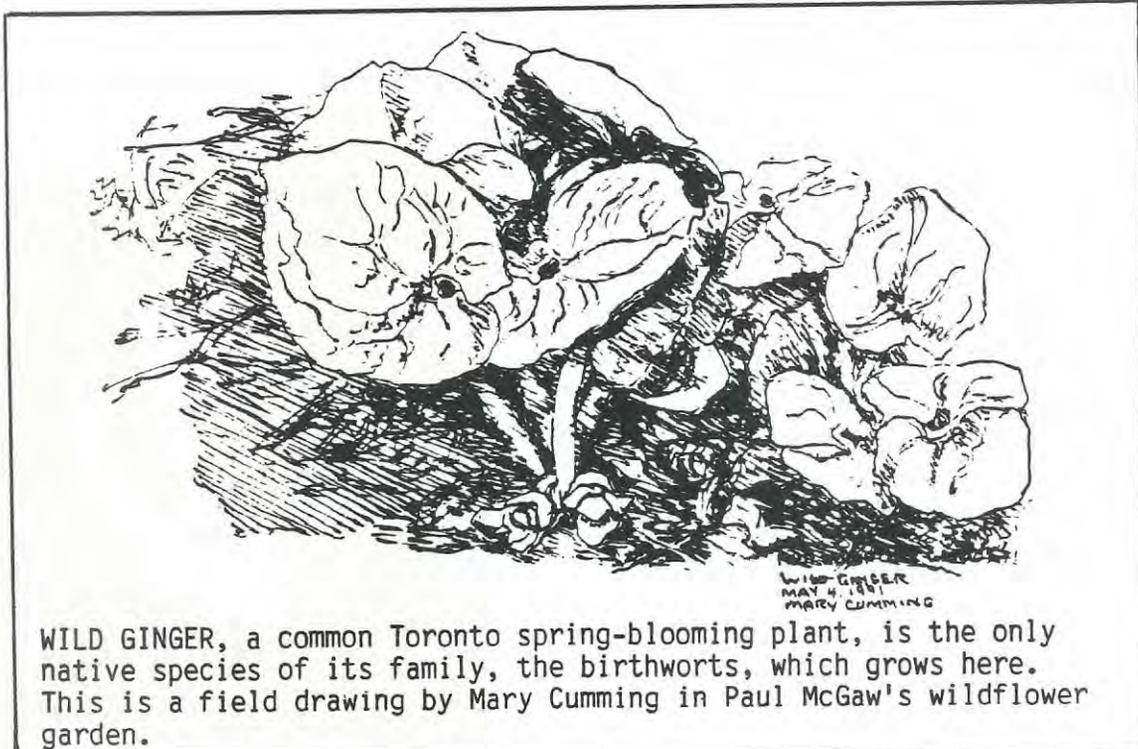
Not being a winter person, I miss much of the season's magic. Last week, however, having spent a lot of time immured in one of those health hazards known as a modern office block -- recycled air, sealed windows, an overload of what is euphemistically called "air freshener" -- I was driven to give my protesting lungs a chance to breathe that increasingly scarce commodity: real air. I found this in a brisk walk around Ashbridges Bay where the wind was blowing a splendid mini-gale.

I also found some of that seasonal magic. Against the glitter of snow, bushes stood out like brown skeletons and the conifers wore their dowdy winter garb of rusty blackish-brown. But along the eastern side of the park, where lake water had leapt skywards repeatedly and drenched the land, a kingdom of freakish beauty had materialized. Deciduous trees played at being conifers, sporting millions of tinkling ice-needles, or they went from the filigreed to the 'humungous', thrusting forth swollen branches which ended in attenuated, translucent fingers. Wire-thin stems of goldenrod and Queen Anne's lace were black silhouettes around which ice had thickened to massive proportions. Huge man-size mounds reared like beings frozen to the hard ground, familiar forms become monstrous, magical, a fairy tale parody of dwarfs and giants, goblins and half-humans, at once alien and pudgily homely. Everything, stolidly set against the wind, awaited the magic moment which would set it free to move and become its familiar self once more.

It wasn't quite the unearthly caverns of the fairy tales, but it was that in spirit. No doubt about it. I should seek the winter scene more often.

Eva Davis

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WILD GINGER, a common Toronto spring-blooming plant, is the only native species of its family, the birthworts, which grows here. This is a field drawing by Mary Cumming in Paul McGaw's wildflower garden.

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

What are the ingredients which make a perfect March outing? From long past experience we know the answer. There must be a thaw, some rain followed by a quick overnight freeze to make a hard crust on the snow. There should be sunshine, little wind, and finally a two or three hour ramble outdoors.

Until actually experienced, no one can imagine the delight of going off across country and through the woodlands in any direction without the impediment of snowshoes or skis. Your feet feel so completely free. The snow crust has covered most of the obstacles underfoot, where those rocks and stones, the fallen trees, the humps and hollows no longer exist to disrupt one's passage. The whole wide crusty surface makes for ideal roaming, hilltops provide open vistas, while valleys beckon with their quiet and sheltered solitudes.

On such a day in March, the joys seem endless, for little things are everywhere, waiting to catch your eye or your ear. We remember so many, the pleasant tinklings of fragile ice crystals tumbling from some rocky ledge, the odd-shaped or colourful fungi clinging to decayed wood, the fascinating texture of a hornet nest hanging from a branch, the gentle musical notes of finches feeding in the trees above, the distant pecking of a pileated woodpecker on some convenient tree, the bright strawberry-coloured cones among the branches of a tall spruce (some springs), and much more.

But best of all, is the joy of rambling "free" over the crust on a sunny March morning.

from "Nature Chat" by Bessie Waters in THE CHICKADEE, Vol. 32, No. 6, Feb. 1990 (Huntsville)

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Scarlet Cup (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*)
drawing by Eva Davis

The cup fungi come in many colours: Yellow, brown, orange, and the radiant brilliance of this scarlet cup. A spring species, it can be found peeping through dead leaves and even, upon occasion, through the snow - a photographer's dream. In Toronto Region, it has been encountered in Thornton Bales Park, King Conservation Area.

ref.: MUSHROOMS OF NORTH AMERICA
by Orson K. Miller, Jr.



AUTOMOBILE EMISSIONS AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OMISSIONS

Poor air quality, and high ground-level ozone (smog) levels are conditions frequently found across Ontario. Even last summer, despite the extremely cool temperatures, some parts of the province had more than 40 exceedances of the Federal Government's one hour ozone standard of 80 parts per billion. In many areas this standard is exceeded over 100 times each year. Toronto is especially hard-hit.

The greatest contributor to smog is the automobile. In Metro Toronto, cars contribute 92% of carbon monoxide, 74% of hydrocarbons, and 69% of nitrous oxides. While standards are set by the federal government for new cars, there are currently no emission standards for in-use vehicles (which is the domain of the provincial government). This is disturbing since it has been found that as vehicles age, emissions increase. It has been estimated that 10% of the in-use vehicles cause 60% of the air pollution. To put it bluntly, a small number of stinkers cause most of the pollution.

The most cost-effective method of reducing the number of these polluting vehicles on the road is through a car emission testing program. With such a program, all cars on the road are inspected and tested on a regular basis (at time of annual vehicle registration, for example) for tailpipe emissions, and for tampering of emission control equipment.

Such programs have been in operation in the U.S. since 1974, in over 100 urban areas, and recently the US-EPA has required that 84 of these areas enhance their emission testing equipment. Last summer, the Greater Vancouver Regional District implemented a car testing program for their area, the first one of its kind in Canada, which will test over 900,000 cars annually. They predict emission reductions of 30 to 40 percent, and the program will be self-financing, since the testing fee of \$15 will be paid by the car owners.

The Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment has proposed that car testing programs should be set up in the Windsor-Quebec Corridor by December 31, 1993. Unfortunately, there has been no action on the part of the Ontario government to implement such a program. Car testing programs have been supported by a wide number of organizations including the Canadian Automobile Association, the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers' Association, Canadian Auto Workers, Pollution Probe, the Lung Association, and Friends of the Earth.

If you think clean air is important, please write to the Ontario Government and demand that they establish a vehicle emissions testing program by December, 1993: A logical place to start would be Toronto!

Letters should be sent to:

The Honourable Gilles Pouliot, Minister of Transportation, 3rd floor,
Ferguson Flock, 77 Wellesley St. West, Toronto M7A 1Z8

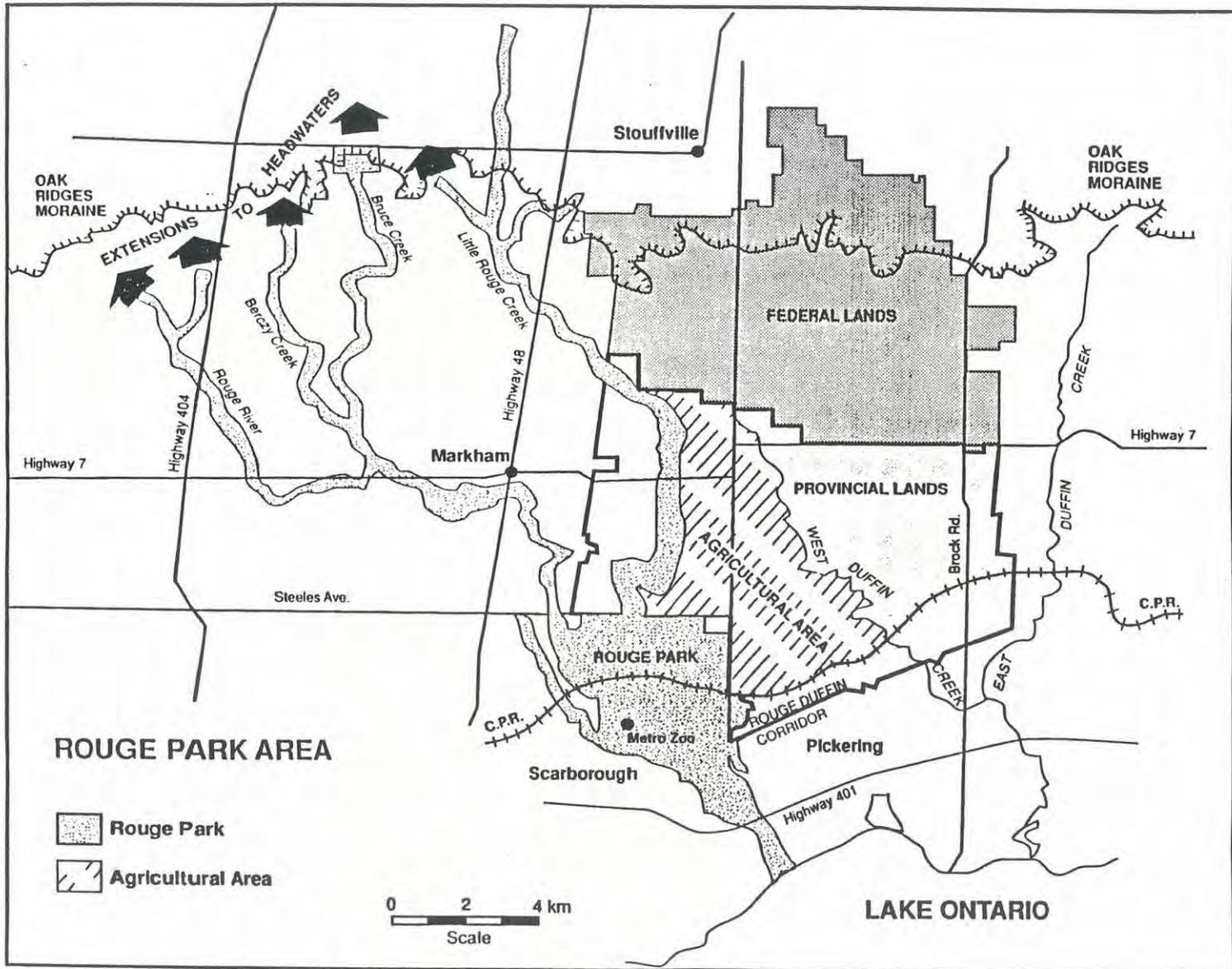
The Honourable Ruth Grier, Minister of the Environment, 135 St. Clair
Ave. West, 15th floor, Toronto M4V 1P5

The Honourable Floyd Laughren, Minister of Treasury and Economics,
7th floor, Frost Building South, 7 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto M7A 1Y7

Janis Haliniak, Researcher
Pollution Probe

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IN THE NEWS



[For more information on this story, come to the TFN March meeting -- see page 2.]

From MNR News Release, Jan. 19, 1993



IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

ROUGE RIVER VALLEY PARK UPDATE

- On March 26, 1990, the Government of Ontario announced its intent to establish a 10,500-acre (4,250 hectare) park in the area of the Rouge River Valley.
- In June 1990, the province appointed a Rouge Valley Park Advisory Committee to recommend a management plan for the proposed park.
- The Terms of Reference for the Rouge Valley Park Planning Project were developed by the committee and approved by the Minister of Natural Resources in January 1991.
- The Province asked the committee to prepare a plan for the proposed park area south of Steeles Avenue and to develop a strategy and time frame for preparing a park plan for the area north of Steeles Avenue.
- The park planning process was conducted in four phases between December 1991 and July 1992. The committee used a variety of methods to obtain public input throughout the planning process. These included public meetings at the end of each phase, questionnaires and newsletters, open meetings, deputations to the committee and a public workshop.
- The committee submitted a Recommended Park Management Plan to the Minister of Natural Resources, Bud Wildman, on Aug. 11, 1992.
- On January 19, 1993 the Ontario government announced that it plans to create North America's largest urban park -- 11,400 acres (4,560 hectares) and to preserve 8,000 acres of agricultural lands to ensure environmental protection and enhancement while addressing the need for economic vitality of the Greater Toronto Area. See the map on page 22.
- A Draft Rouge Park Management Plan will be available for public review and comment until the end of March. Copies may be obtained from the Natural Resources Information Centre, Room M1-73, Macdonald Block, 900 Bay St., Toronto M7A 2C1 or by calling (416) 314-1553.

extracted from a news release of the Ministry of Natural Resources, Jan. 19, 1993

VICTORY IN DEFENCE OF OSHAWA SECOND MARSH

Oshawa Second Marsh is saved and secured after 25 years of commitment by the Second Marsh Defence Association. Developers, industrialists and various levels of government have, at one time or another, coveted the priceless 214-acre wetland. The marsh and adjacent area have been viewed for light industry, condominiums, harbour expansion and a deep water port. The federal government has now turned the marsh over to the City of Oshawa which has made a commitment to preserve and enhance it for future generations. The Second Marsh Defence Association aims to return the marsh to its former glory as a birder's utopia, an important waterfowl breeding, resting and banding area, spawning grounds for pike and bass, home for amphibians and an outdoors classroom for school children. A pocket of paradise in the urban jungle.

extracted from an article by John Power in the TORONTO STAR, Dec. 19, 1992

*To move maple sap
they are using plastic pipe.
Intravenous trees.*

haiku by Aarne Juhola

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE PLACED ON ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST

The loggerhead shrike now is protected under Ontario's Endangered Species Act. Once considered a common breeding bird in southern Ontario and Quebec, the species has become extremely rare. While the precise causes of the decline are not known, it is thought to be due to changes to its habitat, habitat loss on its breeding grounds, and collisions with motor vehicles during breeding, migrating and wintering periods. Loggerhead shrikes usually nest in areas dominated by short grasses or low plants with scattered shrubs and small trees. Recent research has determined that a breeding pair requires an area from 30 to 50 hectares (80 to 120 acres) of suitable habitat. Recent surveys also indicate there are currently only about 50 pairs which breed in the province. These are concentrated in three core areas -- the Carden Plain (northeast of Lake Simcoe), and near the towns of Napanee and Smiths Falls in eastern Ontario. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is currently working with a team of provincial and federal agencies, conservation organizations and interested individuals, to reverse the decline of this species in Ontario. In areas where shrikes are known to nest, municipalities as well as provincial government agencies are being asked to limit road construction activities, not to cut trees or shrubs used for perching and nesting located on road allowances and to limit the use of pesticides during the breeding season (April 1 to September 30). Lowering the speed limits on municipal roads near known shrike nests during the breeding season could also help to reduce the number of shrikes killed by vehicles. Land management practices which maintain preferred habitat include: grazing or pasturing, especially over large areas which contain scattered shrubs and small trees; avoiding the removal of shrubs used as perches; and avoiding habitat fragmentation by changes in land use. Designation under the Endangered Species Act makes it illegal for anyone to wilfully destroy or interfere with the loggerhead shrike or its habitat.

adapted from a news release from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Dec. 18, 1992

GENES MAKE SOME GERMAN BIRDS PREFER TO WINTER IN BRITAIN RATHER THAN ITALY

Some European bird populations have taken to wintering in England rather than the usual Mediterranean sites in the last 30 years and there is evidence of a genetic basis for the change, according to an article in NATURE. The report's German authors say 7 to 11 per cent of blackcaps studied in parts of Germany and Austria now migrate toward Britain instead of the Mediterranean, while none were noted to do that before 1960. They caught 40 blackcaps in England during the winters of 1988 to 1990, and took them to Radolfzell in southwestern Germany. The birds produced 41 young, which were hand-raised. The researchers found that the young birds, like their parents, showed a tendency to migrate slightly north of due west, toward Britain, showing the migration direction was inherited. A genetic tendency to fly toward Britain may have started out within the normal range of behaviour, happening rarely at first but becoming more common because of survival advantages including improved winter food supply, shorter migration distance, and an earlier return to breeding areas.

adapted from an article in the TORONTO STAR, Jan. 3, 1993

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IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

GLEN STEWART RAVINE OASIS AMID THE URBAN BUSTLE

New signs along the nature trail and an informative new booklet combine to make a stroll in the Glen Stewart Ravine an even more rewarding experience these days. The Parks and Recreation Department (City of Toronto) has released the reference booklet "Glen Stewart Ravine Nature Trail" containing information about the flora and fauna in this urban oasis along with some history on how the ravine came to be. The booklet describes ravine vegetation and the birds and insects that inhabit the area. Free copies available at the city's public libraries or city recreation centres.

extracted from an article in the BEACH METRO NEWS, Nov. 3, 1992

KEELE VALLEY DUMP TOURS OFFERED TO PUBLIC

Tours of the Keele Valley garbage dump in Vaughan are being offered by Metro officials. Metro wants to let citizens know as much as possible about the landfill operations. Tours are open to individuals, groups and schools but must be arranged in advance. Opening hours at the Metro office in Maple are 2 to 6 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays and noon to 4 pm Saturdays. For information call 832-5775 and 392-4546 for tours.

extracted from an article by Brian Dexter in the TORONTO STAR, Jan. 28, 1993

PEDESTRIAN LINK

A pedestrian link between Mount Pleasant Cemetery and Balfour Park will soon belong to the City of Toronto and be open for public access. The City is purchasing the 130-foot by 15-foot strip of land that forms a passage into the cemetery through Heath Cres. Complaints that the once open path was blocked by the property owner initiated negotiations between the owner and the city.

from the LEASIDE TOWN CRIER, Jan. 1993

RATS! DON'T BLAME COMPOSTERS FOR THE RODENTS

Toronto may have an increasing rat population but composting is not the main culprit. Increased rat sightings are more prevalent within Toronto than in outlying areas such as Scarborough and Etobicoke because the old city is aging and the decay of cracked sewers and roads provides a home for rodents. Also the amount of rain in the region over the past year has washed many rats out of their nests. There is no serious health threat and the rats are not being drawn to composters unless they are not properly installed or used. The best way to avoid composter-related rodents is to follow the installation instructions carefully and make sure the mixture in the composter is balanced between food and a source of carbon such as leaves or a thin coat of soil.

extracted from an article by Caroline Mallan in the TORONTO STAR, Jan. 5, 1993

*The patient maple,
drop by drop into the pail,
lets us know it's spring.*

haiku by Helen Juhola

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

BEWARE A LAKE'S INTRUDERS

Canada's lakes and rivers face a greater threat from biological pollutants than from chemical pollutants [according to Paul Hebert, chairman of the University of Guelph's biology department]. Fauna such as zebra mussels, Chinese mitten crab, lamprey eels and other non-native species pose a tremendous threat to the fresh waters of Canada. Biological pollutants are far more insidious because they self-replicate. Once you introduce a biological contaminant, you're stuck with it forever. Lamprey eels, for instance, first became a problem in the 1950s. Not native to the Great Lakes, they threatened the entire fresh-water fishing industry and so an extermination program began. The control program -- which costs \$10-million a year -- hasn't been effective. Further, the lampricide used to control the eels has its own side effects, killing other organisms. Other newer invading organisms include the dreaded zebra mussels. They are believed to have arrived in the Great Lakes via dumped ballast from ocean-going ships. The common water flea which is dominant in the Great Lakes food chain has recently been found to be a hybrid species from other countries, with no more native North American water fleas to be found. A solution to further intrusions would include a crack down on the shipping industry -- ships entering the Great Lakes should be made to de-ballast -- first chlorinate or discharge their ballast into receptacles on the ground. A treaty between Canada and the United States should regulate the planned introductions of new species such as salmon.

extracted from an article in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Oct. 23, 1992

SEALS SHUN COD MENU, STUDY FINDS

A review of data collected during the past four decades indicates that Atlantic cod is rarely eaten by harp seals. A study by scientists David Lavigne and Susan Wallace of the International Marine Mammal Association in Guelph, Ont. says that more than 9,200 harp seal stomachs from northwestern Atlantic waters have been analyzed since 1949. Only a small number included cod. The stomachs were from seals collected over an area extending from western Greenland and the eastern Canadian arctic in the summer to the Gulf of St. Lawrence during the winter. At least 53 species of fish and 54 species of invertebrates have been identified in harp seal stomachs. The harp seal diet varies with age, season and geographic location. Nursing females and moulting harp seals rarely eat. Hungry seals, foreign overfishing and unusually cold water have been singled out as possible causes of the disappearance of cod. The northern cod fishery has been closed until 1994 to allow depleted stocks to recover. The closing has left thousands of fishermen and plant workers idle.

extracted from an article in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Oct. 27, 1992

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Mist rising off snow, warm rain falling steadily, a grey winter day.

haiku by Helen Juhola

THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

March 1992, Toronto

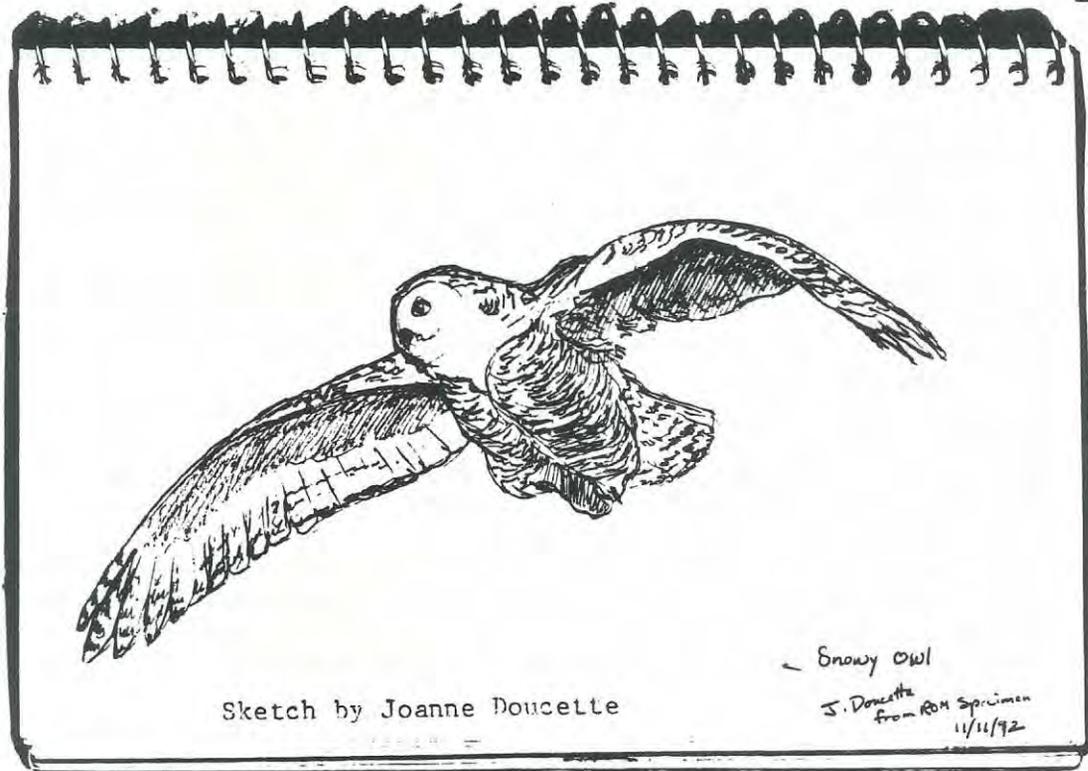
Mild, uneventful weather prevailed for the first ten days of March. There were some sunny days, some overcast, and a little light rain. This seemed to follow February's pattern. Temperatures peaked about March 9th with readings above 10°C. However, an extremely powerful cold front arrived on the afternoon of March 10th and ushered in an intense Arctic outbreak. Colder than normal temperatures prevailed much of the rest of March. The period from March 11th (immediately following the cold front with severe wind chills) to March 15th was especially cold. No records seem to have been broken. We had a snow fall on March 22nd; it was not extraordinarily heavy, but was noticed because of the paucity of snow in the Toronto area this winter. The final week was closer to normal. The lion-and-lamb adage didn't quite fit this year because the fiercest weather was in the middle of the month.

March averaged out fractionally cooler than normal; and quite dry. There were no episodes of heavy precipitation, even with the cold front on March 11th, or the snowfall on March 22nd. Amounts were often under 30 mm total precipitation. Lester B. Pearson Airport's 21.7 mm was the lowest since 1981. Average wind speeds were near or slightly below normal; and sunshine hours downtown were less than an hour below the 1951-80 average.

It is worth noting that east-central Ontario, e.g. the Ottawa valley had an unusually snowy and lingering winter with a continuous snow cover lasting into April in many areas. While the Toronto area had little snow, it remained cool.

Gavin Miller

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Sketch by Joanne Doucette

Snowy Owl
J. Doucette
from ROM Specimen
11/11/92

COMING EVENTS

Citizens for a Lakeshore Greenway - Toronto Chapter - public information meeting - Wed., March 24 in Room 310, Metro Hall (55 John St.) at 7:30 pm. "What's up on the Waterfront" includes an update on the Waterfront Greenway. For more information, contact Dorothy Thomas at 961-3759.

Annual Exhibition of Watercolour Paintings - Leslie Mirylees - Sunday, March 28th; Sat. April 3rd; Sun. April 4th and Sunday April 11 at Todmorden Mills, Pottery Road.

Mycological Society of Toronto - monthly meeting - April 19th at the Civic Garden Centre at 7:30 pm. Vickie Brown of the Toronto Orienteering Club will discuss how to use a compass as well as topographical and orienteering maps. Call Mary Illich at 629-4564 for more details.

Ontario Bird Banding Association Annual Meeting - Sat. March 6 from 9:30 am to 4 pm at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton. Feature speaker: Dr. Fred Cooke - Snow Geese long-term studies; Steve Carter - British Trust for Ornithology. Registration \$4 for members of OBBA; \$5 for non-members. All naturalists welcome!

Royal Canadian Institute - free science lectures - Sunday afternoons at 3 pm in the J.J.R. Macleod Auditorium, Medical Sciences Building, 1 King's College Circle, University of Toronto. Call 928-2096 for details.

- March 7 - The design of light recreational aircraft - Chris Heintz
- March 14 - Energy efficiency, conservation and Ontario's green industries strategy - Hon. Brian A. Charlton & Nick Marketos

Black Creek Project - monthly meeting - Wed. March 3 at 6:30 pm in the Haultain Building, 2nd floor. Call Ed Krolow at 661-6600, ext. 345 for details. Everyone welcome.

The Garden Club of Toronto Flower Show - A walk in the garden - March 3 to 7 at the Civic Garden Centre; adults: \$6.50; seniors and students: \$5.50; children: \$1. Wed. to Sat: 10 am to 8 pm; Sunday: 10 am to 6 pm.

Young Naturalists Camp - Junior - The Charm of the Bruce - ages 11 to 13; Cost \$345; Aug. 15 to Aug. 21.

Senior - Discovering Ontario's Limestone Heritage - Aug. 22 to Aug. 28; \$360; Ages 13 to 15.

Youth Camp - Adventures in an Old Growth Forest - Aug. 21 to Aug. 28; ages 15 to 18; cost \$495.

For more information contact the FON Membership Trips, 426 Falconer St., Port Elgin, Ont. NOH 2C2 or call (519)832-5928.

Mineral Exploration Classes - offered by Mines and Minerals Division, Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines and the Ontario Geological Survey - Ontario Room, Macdonald Block, 900 Bay St. from 7 pm to 10 pm - March 22 to March 26 - free admission. For more details call 314-3800.

COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

NATURALISTS' WORKSHOP, May 23-30, 1993 - at the Queen's University Biological Station on Lake Opinicon. Cost: \$470.80, or for students \$342.40. For more information write to Queen's University Biological Stn., P.O. Box 31, R.R. #1, Elgin, Ont. K0G 1E0 or call (613) 359-5629.

Toronto Entomologists' Association - monthly meeting - Sat. March 27 at 1 pm in the lecture room of the McLaughlin Planetarium.

Save the Rouge Valley System - monthly nature walk - Call Robert Marshall at 439-8489 after 7 pm for details.

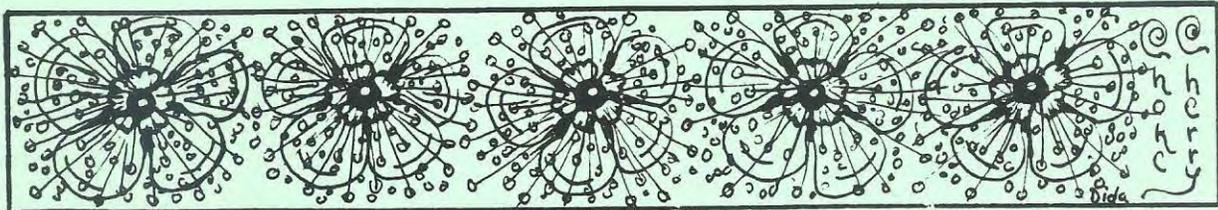
TFN → Heritage Tree display by the Toronto Field Naturalists - at Cumberland Terrace (Community History Project) - second floor, west end of mall. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays in March from 12 noon to 4 pm. Work of TFN photographers and artists will be on display.

TFN → Mountain Equipment Co-Op, 35 Front St. East - a TFN display in the window for the month of March.

Maple Syrup season - Contact local conservation authorities (MTRCA at 661-6600) or Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton for details.

Willowdale Gem and Mineral Club Show - Armour Heights Community Centre - March 20-21, 1993. Free admission.

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NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Needed: essays (no longer than 500 words), reviews (no longer than 300 words), poems, cartoons, sketches and newspaper clippings

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

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

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

Send material to: Toronto Field Naturalists
20 College St., Unit 11
Toronto, Ont. M5G 1K2

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TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

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