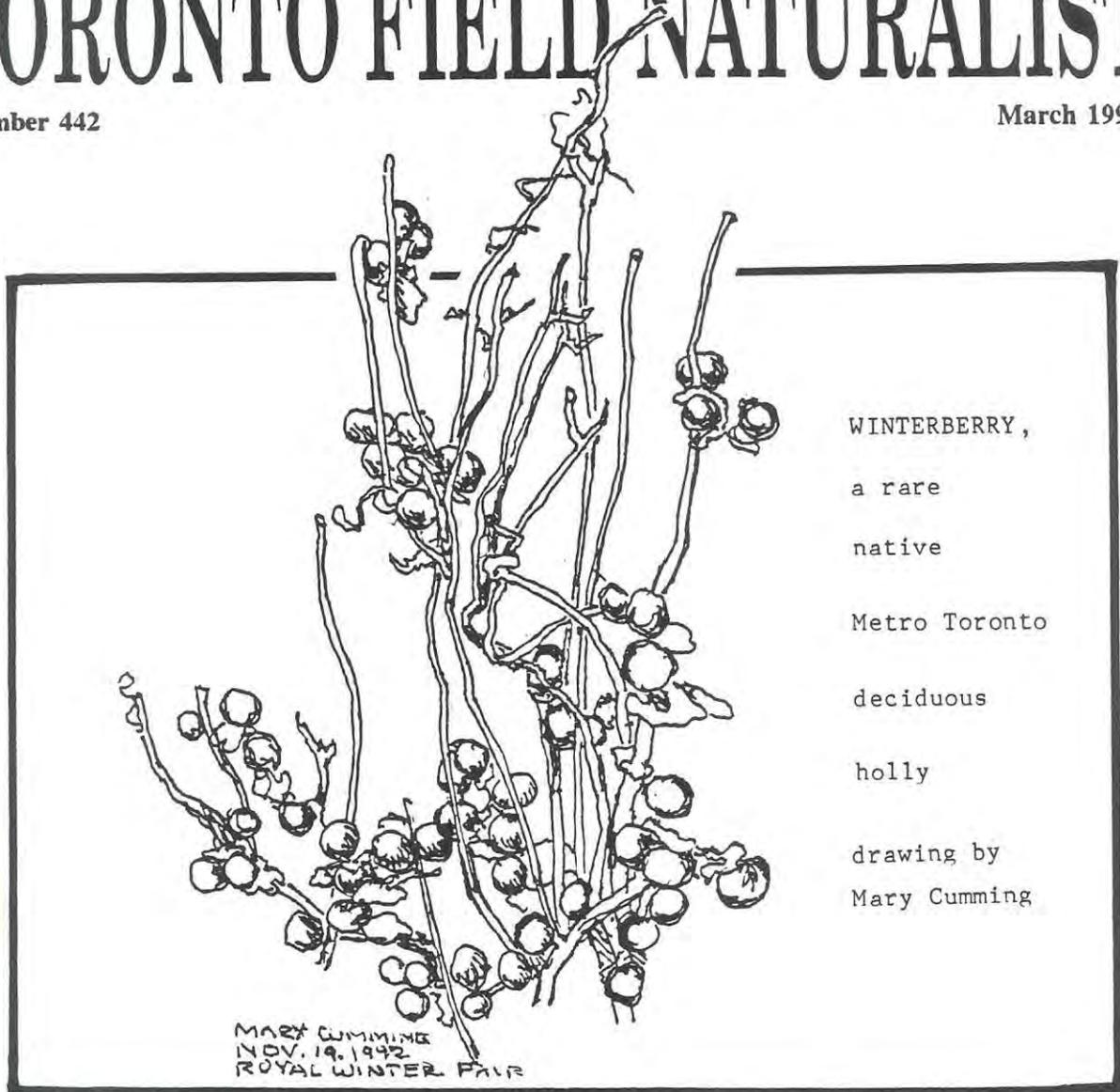


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 442

March 1994



WINTERBERRY,  
a rare  
native  
Metro Toronto  
deciduous  
holly  
drawing by  
Mary Cumming

## Inside

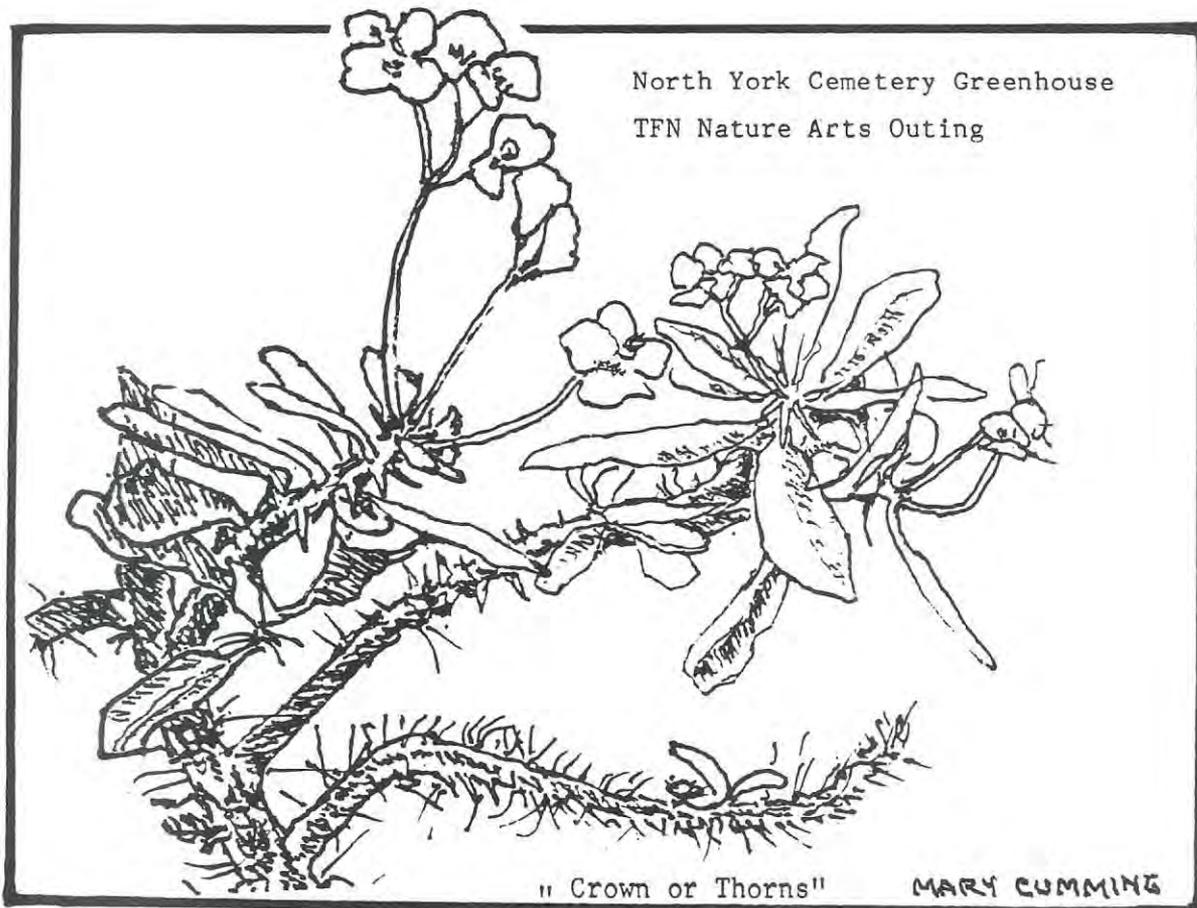
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## TFN MEETINGS

- Sunday, March 6, 1994 - PLANTS AND PEOPLE IN THE CITY  
at 2:30 pm  
in the Northrop Frye Hall  
Victoria University  
73 Queen's Park Cres. East
- an illustrated talk by Terry Fowler, Associate Professor of Political Science, Glendon College, York University
  - Even city-dwellers find it impossible to ignore our connections with the plants, water, soil, rocks, and air around us. The speaker's aim is to suggest how our social relations are linked to our relations with "nature". In caring for each other, we must care for our natural and built environments and vice versa. Examples will include downtown Toronto's front yards and community gardens.
  - TFN memberships and publications will be for sale from 2 pm to 4 pm outside the lecture room.
  - Coffee and juice will be available during the "social hour" starting at 2 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, April 3, 1994



## March TFN OUTINGS

March 19 1794 This is the month for making Maple Sugar, a hot sun & frosty nights cause the Sap to flow most. Slits are cut in the bark of the Trees & wooden troughs set under the Tree into which the Sap -- a clear sweet water -- runs.

extract from MRS. SIMCOE'S DIARY, edited by Mary Quayle Innis, MacMillan of Canada, Toronto, 1965.

- Saturday March 5 2 pm  
 NEWTONBROOK UNITED CHURCH - members' photos North York  
 Leader: Eva Davis  
 Meet at the church on Cummer Ave. just east of Yonge St. A projector and screen will be provided. Bring as many as 20 of your favourite slides, preferably in a carousel. Everyone welcome (with or without pictures).
- Sunday March 6 2:30 pm  
 TFN MEETING [see page 2]  
 73 Queen's Park Crescent East  
 Northrop Frye Hall
- Tuesday March 8 10:30 am  
 METRO ZOO - Canadian animals & their close cousins Rouge, Scarborough  
 Leader: Ann Millett  
 Meet inside the zoo entrance beside the information board. Lunch optional.  
 \$ entry fee  
 The zoo is always a good place to go because there's lots to see both indoors and out (depending on the weather).
- Saturday March 12 11 am  
 ROUGE - nature walk Rouge, Scarborough  
 Leader: Robin Powell  
 Meet outside the zoo entrance (on Meadowvale Ave., north of Sheppard Ave. East). Bring lunch and a warm drink. This will be a long walk with lots of hill climbing and perhaps slippery places to traverse. Early migrants such as killdeer and red-winged blackbirds and song sparrows may be found.
- Sunday March 13 10:30 am  
 TORONTO ISLANDS - birds lakeshore, Toronto  
 Leader: Ross Harris  
 Meet at the ferry terminal at the foot of Bay St. Bring lunch. The island is an excellent place to meet returning birds as they follow the shoreline or cross the lake to head up our valleys. Bring binoculars, notebook and favourite bird book and be prepared to listen to the sound of spring.  
 \$ ferry tickets
- Wednesday March 16 10:30 am  
 PINE HILLS CEMETERY - birds Taylor Creek, Scarborough  
 Leader: Karin Fawthrop  
 Meet at the cemetery entrance on the northwest corner of St. Clair Ave. East and Kennedy Rd. Morning only. This cemetery with its great variety of trees and shrubs and its location on both sides of Taylor Creek make it a great place to see birds throughout the year.

MARCH OUTINGS (cont'd)

- Sunday WEST DEANE PK. - nature walk Mimico Creek, Etobicoke  
March 20 Leader: Ken Cook  
11 am Meet at the northwest corner of Martin Grove Rd. and Rathburn Rd. Bring something warm to drink. Morning only.  
We will be exploring a small tributary of this creek, looking at some unusual trees and shrubs and possibly finding some spring birds.
- Wednesday HUMBER VALLEY - nature walk Humber, Etobicoke/York  
March 23 Leader: Nancy Fredenburg  
1 pm Meet at the Old Mill subway station.  
Good walking along this historic valley. We will be looking for early signs of spring -- swelling buds, early migrants, perhaps beaver in the river.
- Saturday BIRKDALE PARK - birds Highland Creek, Scarborough  
March 26 Leader: Karin Fawthrop  
10:30 am Meet at the park entrance on the west side of Brimley, half way between Lawrence Ave. East and Ellesmere Rd. Morning only.  
Come prepared to look and listen carefully. Bring your favourite field guide and binoculars.
- Wednesday UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO - greenhouses Toronto  
March 30 Leader: Dr. Nick Badenhuisen  
11 am Meet at the west entrance to the buildings on the north side of College St., west of University Ave. Morning only.  
This is an excellent opportunity to visit these greenhouses and learn about the exotic plants in the buildings.

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I have been privileged to attend a fascinating series of meetings on High Park as TFN representative. This month I want to share with you some of the information we received.

On childhood visits to High Park I had noticed the scattered trees south of Bloor Street. Their horizontal branches, in close proximity to each other, would have been perfect for climbing, had some spoilsport not removed the lower ones. Disorderly clumps of grass grew in the sandy soil beneath the trees. This, it turns out, is the Black Oak Savannah, which has received a lot of attention lately.

Oak savannah has been defined as a region of native prairie vegetation, on fertile soil, with the tree canopy comprising less than half the area. Even expert botanists have trouble distinguishing Black Oaks from Red Oaks. In the former, however, the rough, serrated bark continues two-thirds of the way up the trunk to the crown, whereas in the latter the bark becomes smooth much lower down.

Over the years the High Park savannah has become severely degraded. The original grasses have been replaced with turf grass, which forms a thick mat and prevents acorns from reaching the soil. In addition a proliferation of squirrels eat the acorns. Some areas that had been mown and herbicided lawn have been invaded by non-native shrubs and saplings such as buckthorns, honeysuckles, and Norway Maples. These shade out desirable prairie species. Most of the Black Oaks are now mature or old, and half of them suffer from heart rot. Sulphur fungus on a tree indicates that the heart wood is decaying. At present experiments are underway to determine scientifically why there is little or no regeneration of Black Oaks. The best method of dealing with the invasive Swallowwort will also be determined.

As naturalists we're aware that Jack Pine seeds need fire to release them from their closed cones. Savannahs, too, rely on periodic fires so that the ecosystem will remain viable. Fire provides the mineralized soil necessary for regeneration. It reduces non-native species, and makes space for oak seedlings to grow. A few years ago a small area of the park was swept by wildfire. Since then native grasses and lupines have reappeared. Amazingly, bluebirds even nested there for a couple of years. Historically the native people burned the savannah vegetation for improved hunting. In Elizabeth Simcoe's day the area of sandy soil south of the Lake Iroquois shoreline was savannah. Back then it was called parkland, or barrens, because it is open, as opposed to dense maple forests. When the Howards resided at Colborne Lodge, the hillsides were blue with lupines. Most such area, however, declined very rapidly after settlement, when the fires stopped.

Now oak savannahs are an endangered habitat in North America, but here in Toronto we are blessed with one of the few areas suitable for restoration. Soon birds such as bluebirds and red-headed woodpeckers will return; tufts of little bluestem grass, and plants such as lupines will regenerate from seeds in the soil or spread from remnants. As well, the High Park greenhouse can propagate native plants from seeds, for introduction. Then in a few years there will be a far greater diversity of species. In addition nearby residents will be encouraged to include prairie species in their

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT (cont'd)

gardens. Steven Appelbaum, the head consultant for the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Department High Park restoration program, stated that where restoration had been undertaken in the midwest the results are awe-inspiring. Moreover members of the public, many of whom had been dubious or opposed, were enchanted by the beauty of the plants.

How unfortunate it is that most Canadians know more about the African savannah, home of lions, zebras, and giraffes, than our own! Therefore the Oak Coalition, representatives of local environmental groups encouraging the restoration of High Park, is compiling information, preparing a Speakers' Bureau, and organizing an ongoing series of events to inform the public about this neglected aspect of our natural heritage.

Joan O'Donnell

[See also page 17.]

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## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Jan. 4, 1994

... Monarch #15321, tagged by myself at Presqu'ile Provincial Park on Sept. 14, flew into Fred's Showcase Inc. -- a furniture store -- located in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, at an as yet unconfirmed date in October or November. It apparently flew in when a door was opened, and was unable to find its way out, even though they left the store door opened! It was later found dead, and they discovered it was bearing a tag. ...

Donald A. Davis

Jan. 17, 1994

In response to your inquiry regarding the Metro Parks, I am pleased to provide you with the following information:

1. The Parks and Property Department operates 62 washroom facilities. Of these, approximately 70% are designed for year-round use.
2. Our washrooms remain open for public use during the normal daylight operating hours of our parks. There are special cases or instances, however, such as for special events on Toronto Island or elsewhere when these hours may be extended.

These hours of operation may change depending on the season, so it's best to check with our information number at 392-8186 if you have any specific questions.

3. There are a total of 8201 vehicle parking spaces available.
4. There are bike racks available at most major park areas such as Edward Gardens and the Toronto Island Ferry Terminal at Yonge Street and Queen's Quay.
5. We have nearly 80 km of paved trails within the parks. At this point, there are no separate trails dedicated solely for bicycles. We do, however, restrict or prohibit cycling in certain areas such as James Gardens, Rosetta McClain Gardens, the wildflower preserve at Lambton Woods, and at portions of Edwards Gardens. Traffic is separated along boardwalk and pathway at the Beaches, east from Ashbridges Bay Park. A median stripe has also been used to improve traffic separation along portions of the Tommy Thompson Trail in the Lower Humber Valley.
6. It is the goal of the Parks and Property Department to extend its paved trail network, where possible, along the main river valleys from Lake Ontario north to Steeles Avenue. Our most extensive trails can be found in the Humber Valley and Don Valley. Trail extensions beyond the Metro boundary into Woodbridge and beyond would fall under the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and I would suggest you contact Ian DeLaurier if you have more specific questions (661-6600, extension 297).

I hope we have been able to answer your questions. If you do require any further clarification for these points or would like more information, please feel free to contact the department. Once, again, thank you for your interest in Metro's regional parks.

Frank Kershaw  
 Director, Planning Research & Construction  
 Metro Parks & Property Dept.

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## PUBLICITY REPORT

In 1993, the TFN decided to greatly increase the advertising of its outings, meetings and art/photo displays in the many Toronto publications which announce such community events for free. Till then, this work had been done singlehandedly by club president Joan O'Donnell on a monthly basis. We started advertising in weekly publications as well, such as EYE and NOW magazines, and custom-tailoring ads to suit the local nature of Toronto's neighbourhood monthlies -- for example, we'd ask a Leaside, but not an Etobicoke, paper to publicize a Leaside outing, since it was unlikely that the Etobicoke paper would do so, given the limited space for free ads.

It was now far too much work for one person, so a special team was formed to write and send the material: TFN board member Tracy Butler (who also coordinates the team), Jean Macdonald, Eileen McGeean, Barbara Nair, Rose Sergio, Joan Stevenson and others who asked to be anonymous. The ads were more successful than we expected and have led to many telephone inquiries and increased attendance at outings. Since most club events are still published only in the TFN newsletter, we hope these new people will decide to join.

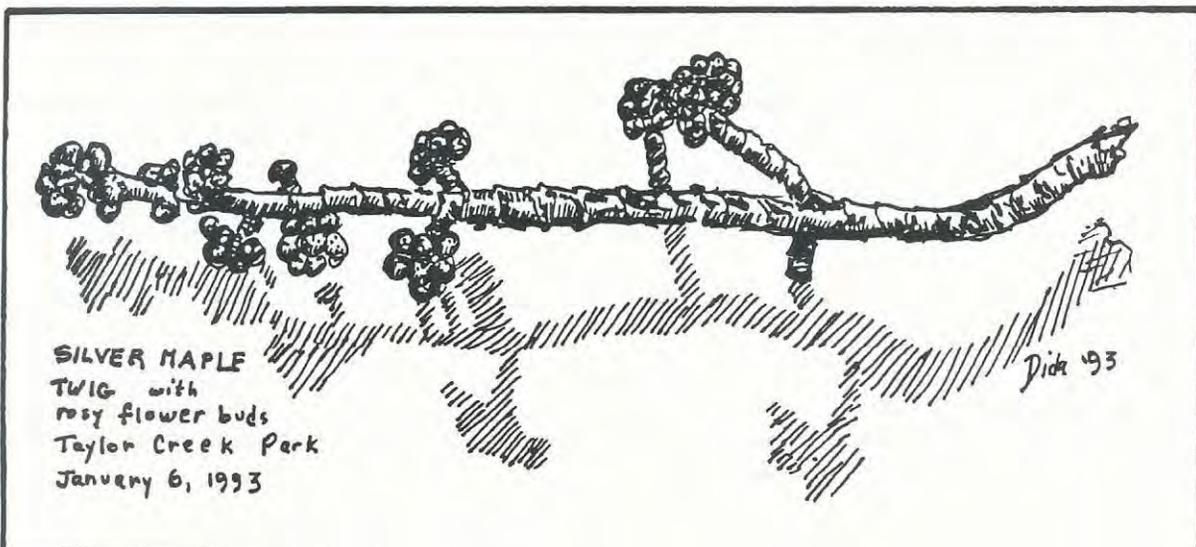
▷ If you see a TFN ad in your neighbourhood newspaper, please call Jean Macdonald at 425-6596 to help us keep track of where and when our ads appear.

The TFN's Simcoe Display, a well-mounted art and colour photo exhibit specially prepared last year by Ken Cook and Robin Powell to mark 200 years of Toronto's natural history (a theme in the 1993 200th anniversary celebration of Toronto's founding by Colonel Simcoe) continues to be in demand in 1994. It spent a week at the Toronto City Hall rotunda in January and all of February at the Toronto Historical Board's new home at 205 Yonge St.

Club members are invited to view it in March at the Community History Project, on the second floor of Cumberland Terrace, at the southeast corner of Cumberland and Bay, one block north of Bloor in Toronto.  
[See page 29.]

Alexander Cappell

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## 1993 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 69th consecutive Toronto Christmas Count was conducted on Dec. 27, 1993. Eighteen routes, plus two sub-routes were surveyed by 61 field participants in 26 parties, plus six feeder watchers, within the official 7.5 mile radius circle centred at Avenue Road and Roselawn Avenue.

The weather was overcast to clear with light flurries. Visibility was generally unlimited. The area was 80% covered with 2-3 cm of crusty snow and even moving water was only partly open. Temperatures ranged from -18°C to -8°C. Winds were calm in the morning, making excellent (and comfortable) lake viewing condition. Winds picked up to 25 km/h in the afternoon, bringing with it clearing skies.

A total of 175.75 Party Hours was spent in the field -- 135.5 h on foot and 40.25 h by car, covering 480.5 miles of the city (119.25 mi. on foot). In addition a total of 18 hours was spent counting birds at feeders and 1.5 hours spent owling, covering 1 mile of territory. Seventy-four species of birds (3 exotics and 2 hybrids) totalling 29,784 individuals were observed this year compared to 74 species and 30,966 individuals last year.

The number of individuals were the second highest ever with the total number of species the same as last year. Toronto was headed to a record warm December until an extended cold snap arrived on Christmas Eve. The earlier mild weather may have been responsible for keeping the individual counts high; however, this was not reflected in a greater than normal number of "stragglers". Many of these birds did not show up at local feeders until well into January, when the cold temperatures were at their severest. Two Carolinian species, Red-bellied Woodpecker (3) and Carolina Wren (3), were at record high numbers, reflecting their northward expansion in recent years.

Three Black-crowned Night Herons were recorded; record high within the 15 mile diameter count circle. Six waterfowl species were counted with a record high in individuals: Mute Swan (100), Canada Goose (3,844), Northern Shoveler (36), Surf Scoter (20), White-winged Scoter (25), and Red-breasted Merganser (179). The three Hooded Mergansers reported were the highest since 1970. Only in 1981 was a higher Greater Scaup count (2,925 vs 2,727) recorded. A single Northern Pintail was recorded near a warm water outlet in the Lower Don River. A female Harlequin Duck which was present just before Count Week near the pier at the Toronto Islands was not recorded on Count Day, despite three determined trips to the pier by Hugh Currie on bicycle! However, his persistence on scanning the lake from Gibraltar Point produced a record high number of Scoters, even when the larger count circle is taken into consideration.

The arrival by Alfred Adamo at a normally productive feeder adjacent to a cemetery in the Royal York Road and Dixon area coincided with a hunting foray by a Northern Goshawk. The adult bird spent several minutes on a conspicuous perch, giving a baleful stare to the intruder as if he alone was responsible for it coming up empty-handed! Accipiter species were found in record high numbers, possibly attracted to the increasing quantity and quality of city feeders.

Woodpecker species additionally, were counted in record numbers, notably

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## 1993 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT (cont'd)

the previously mentioned three Red-bellied, Pileated (5), Downy (160), and Hairy (57). This is despite the lowest Northern Flicker count (4) since 1985! Furthermore, both Black-capped Chickadee (1,246) and Red-breasted Nuthatch (53) numbers confirmed the irruption of these species, that was first noted earlier in the season. The Red-bellied Woodpeckers were recorded in Lambton Woods, Fallingbrook Ravine and "feeding very aggressively" at John Stevens' feeder adjacent to Downsview Dells Park. All these areas meet the requirements for these wintering woodpeckers: oak copses and well-serviced feeders.

Good birds recorded in single numbers included singles of Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Field Sparrow, and Common Grackle. The latter two were dependent upon feeders. Other species recorded in single numbers were Great Blue Heron, Green-winged Teal, Lesser Scaup, Northern Harrier, Northern Goshawk, Snowy Owl (at Downsview Airport) and Swamp Sparrow.

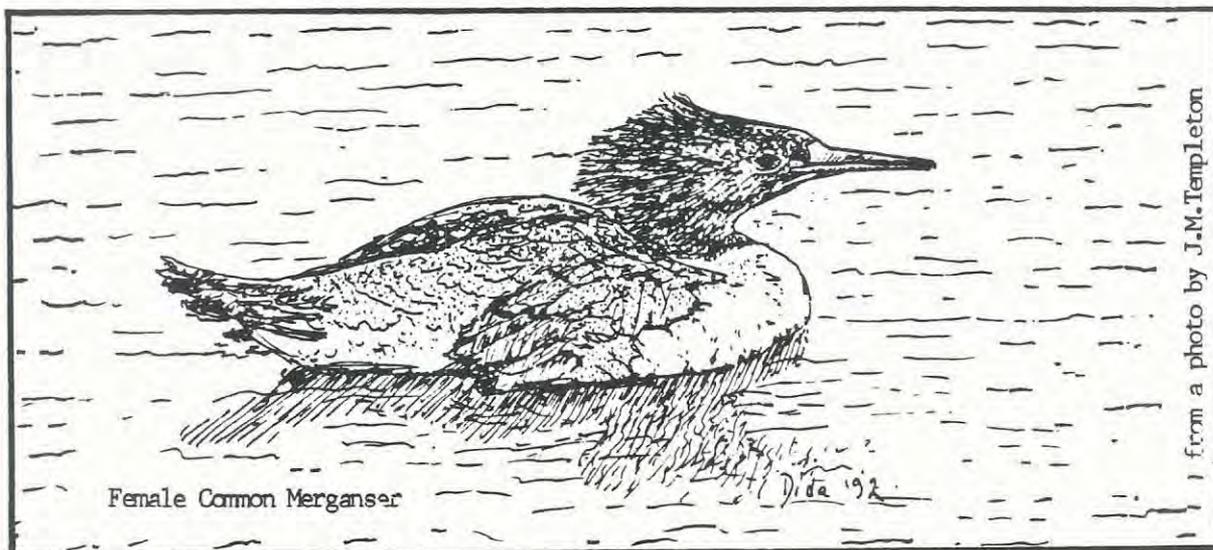
Good counts of Common Redpoll (188), highest since 1986, and Pine Siskin, signified that the winter of 93-94 may have been an irruption season, at least for some finch species. House Finch (828) numbers were record high, but not due to any irruption! The highest individual count of American Tree Sparrow (163) since 1986, might be further indication of an exodus of birds from more northerly latitudes.

Low counts were recorded of Golden-crowned Kinglet (1), American Robin (126), Cedar Waxwing (66) and Song Sparrow (29); possibly indicating that some species/individuals may have better anticipated the extreme cold lying ahead. However, numbers of White-breasted Nuthatch (163) indicate that this species likely has recovered from last year's low count (47).

The only additional species recorded from Count Week was a White-crowned Sparrow found by Patrick Stepien-Scanlon at College Park in the Downtown area. Glen Coady's group recorded 49 species in Route 1 (Humber Bay Park and Humber Marshes), which may be a record number for any count area within the smaller circle.

Alfred Adamo, Compiler  
Toronto Ornithological Club

□



Female Common Merganser

from a photo by J.M. Templeton

## LAKE ONTARIO MID-WINTER WATERFOWL INVENTORY

Weather/Visibility: All along Lake Ontario, the weather was clear (no clouds), calm (no wind), and cold (no heat); the temperature ranged from -25°C to -10°C. Only Kingston reported any wind. There was extensive 'lake steam' during the morning which cleared by about noon. Most of the bays were frozen over and the west end of the lake had massive amounts of ice, (up to 2 km), jammed up on the shoreline.

Remarks: This is the 48th year for the Toronto area 'Duck Count', and the fourth year that we are reporting Census results for the entire Canadian shoreline of Lake Ontario. This year the Belleville Field Naturalists joined the MWWI and covered the area from Wellers Bay to Point Petre (Quinte). They had good success, reporting 4,384 waterfowl and 9 species.

All areas reported difficult weather and viewing conditions. Despite this, however, record numbers were seen for several species. Kingston had 25,372 Oldsquaw; and the 33,999 seen in total, is undoubtedly an underestimate! Greater Scaup numbers were low for the Toronto area, but led by Kingston and Hamilton, there was an impressive total of 21,170. Common Goldeneye numbers were also high at 17,193. And of course Canada Goose numbers at 25,561 continued their annual increase.

For the entire census area (Kingston to Niagara-on-the-Lake), a record 132,859 waterfowl were found from 32 species. The previous high number of waterfowl was 99,226 from last year's MWWI count.

In the Toronto area: A record 38,517 waterfowl from 23 species were seen. The previous record was 34,261, and the 10-year average is 22,613.

Record high numbers were seen for Mute Swan (119), Canada Geese (17,610), Mallard (8,248), Northern Shoveler (28), and Common Goldeneye (2,907).

Low numbers were noted for American Black Duck (357), Redhead (64), and Greater Scaup (687); and for the 6th time in the past 8 years there were no Canvasback reported.

Rarities included 3 Common Loons, 1 Horned Grebe, 3 Wood Duck, 4 Green-winged Teal, 4 Northern Pintail, and 3 Hooded Mergansers.

Outside of the Toronto area, there were some excellent sightings.

Niagara had 2 Double-crested Cormorant and a Hooded Merganser. Outside the Lake Ontario census area, but still interesting, were the 8,400 Canvasback above the Niagara Falls Control Dam.

Hamilton had the MWWI's first Eared Grebe, 4 swan species, 12 Northern Pintail, 2 Canvasback, a Tufted Duck, a King Eider, 12,944(!) Scaup, 5,000 White-winged Scoter, 8,725(!) Common Goldeneye, 6 Hooded Merganser, 1 Ruddy Duck, and 3 Bald Eagles.

Presqu'ile had few ducks but did have a Bald Eagle.

Kingston area had 4 Common Loons, 1 Tundra Swan, 6 Canvasback, 9,511 Greater Scaup, 25,372(!) Oldsquaw, 5 Black Scoter, 3,472 Common Goldeneye, 4,595 Common Merganser, 28(!!) Bald Eagles, (13 adult and 15 immature), and a Golden Eagle.

Exotics/Introduced species included 10 Trumpeter Swans, a Whooper Swan,

Lake Ontario Mid - Winter Waterfowl Inventory

January 9, 1994

Compiled by: Bill Edmunds

Species	TORONTO AREA														Hamilton	Niagara	TOTAL
	Kingslon	Quinte	Presqu'ile	Port Hope	Durham	Route1	Route2	Route3	Route4	Route5	Route6	Route7	Subtotal				
Common Loon	4							1		1		1	3				7
Horned Grebe											1		1				1
Eared Grebe														1			1
Red-necked Grebe																	
Double-crested Cormorant																2	2
Tundra Swan	1														50		51
Trumpeter Swan						2							2	8			10
Mute Swan			3		3	6	5	2	2	6	94	4	119	30			155
Snow Goose						3						2	5	1			6
Canada Goose	636			364	897	11269	964	81		1277	2554	1465	17610	5436	618		25561
Wood Duck						1				2			3	2			5
Green-winged Teal	1					1		3					4	2			7
American Black Duck	845	2		37	73	136	51	15	11	31	48	65	357	235	12		1561
Mallard	1383			1571	562	3109	573	992	567	1506	1299	202	8248	1533	350		13647
Northern Pintail	2				4	3					1		4	12			22
Northern Shoveler										28			28				28
Gadwall	12					5		257		3	116	1	382	20			414
American Wigeon						1				1	18		20		4		24
Canvasback	6													2			8
Redhead		1								14	50		64	11			76
Ring-necked Duck																	
Tufted Duck														1			1
Greater Scaup	9511	2			35	15	2	1	1	1	659	8	687	10935			21170
Lesser Scaup	44													2009			2053
Scaup sp.		1													10		11
King Eider														1			1
Harlequin Duck																	
Oldsquaw	25372	3558	319	28			13	3019	530	467	568	2	4599	2	121		33999
Black Scoter	5																5
White-winged Scoter	795	1							58				58	5000			5854
Common Goldeneye	3472	593	635	243	369	114	18	52	31	40	224	2428	2907	8725	249		17193
Bufflehead	180	103	12	6	150	85	20	51	65	11	105	145	482	499	98		1530
Hooded Merganser	1					2			1				3	7	1		12
Common Merganser	4595	21	4	2	70	44	33	4		30	77	8	196	54	222		5164
Red-breasted Merganser	90	2	8	10	46	12	29	126	33	1	22	25	248	80	170		654
Ruddy Duck														1			1
American Coot																	
Ducks sp.		100				14	250		9	60			2483		1020		3603
Mallard X Black Duck				18		2				2			4				22
Total Birds	46955	4384	981	2279	2209	14824	1958	4604	1308	3481	5836	6506	38517	34657	2877		132859
Total Species	19	9	7	8	10	17	10	13	10	16	15	13	23	26	11		32
Bald Eagle	28		1										0	3			32
Golden Eagle	1																1

WATERFOWL COUNT (cont'd)

TPN 442 - 12

## WATERFOWL INVENTORY (cont'd)

a Mandarin Duck, a Muscovy Duck, an Egyptian Goose, and a Bar-headed Goose.

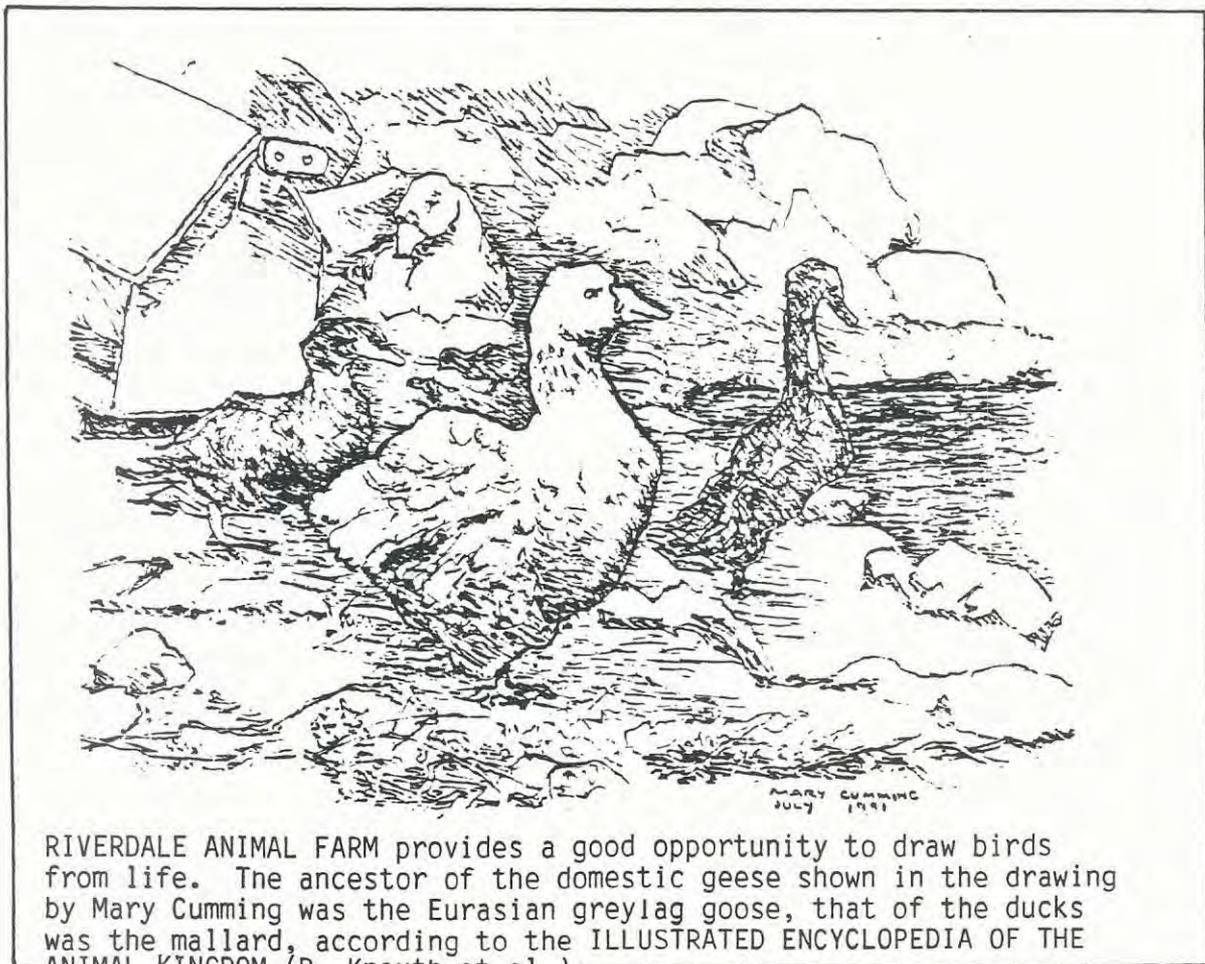
Routes: Kingston Area (Ivy Lea to Prince Edward Point)  
 Quinte Area (Wellers Bay to Point Petre)  
 Presqu'ile (Provincial Park Area)  
 Port Hope Area (Wicklow to Wesleyville)  
 Durham Area (Wesleyville to Whitby)  
 Toronto Area - Route 1 (Whitby to Rouge River)  
                   Route 2 (Rouge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

Thanks to all the clubs and individuals who participated.

Next year's count will be on Jan. 8, 1995.

Compiler: Bill Edmunds

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RIVERDALE ANIMAL FARM provides a good opportunity to draw birds from life. The ancestor of the domestic geese shown in the drawing by Mary Cumming was the Eurasian greylag goose, that of the ducks was the mallard, according to the ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THE ANIMAL KINGDOM (P. Knauth et al.)

## TORONTO REGION WILDLIFE REPORT 1993 (within 48km radius of R. O. M.)

INVERTEBRATES: 12 members reported over 200 observations. Mosquitoes were around May 26 to Sept. 4; blowflies on dung and dead fish performed a service. (Their larvae in bluebird boxes did not worry trail managers who said parasitic wasps were handling the situation.) Wasps, bumble-bees and honey bees were found on (and sometimes entering) flowers of turtlehead, butter-and-eggs, balsam, sunflower, aster, thoroughwort (e.g. Joe-Pye-weed), clover, thistle, goldenrod, sarsaparilla, snow-berry, bouncing Bet, and purple loosestrife. Ants flourished, a small, pale biting species making its presence felt in dry woodland. First cicada report July 10, last Sept. 5 (at 24° to 30°C). Humbug snails were found on leaves and stems. Earwigs and orb-weaver spiders enjoyed park compost-box interiors. 31 butterfly species were reported (though a light year for some). Compton's tortoiseshell was reported, in one case taking sap (seen on oregano in 1992). A Virginia ctenucha caterpillar pulled its own hair to use in its cocoon! 18 species of moth were reported.

FISHES: 9 reports - including salmon, carp, minnows, river chub, sucker, brown bullhead and possibly walleye (no reports of alewife).

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES: 47 reports of 9 species - none of Blanding's turtle so far. The red-backed salamander report was a welcome note, since we had no TFN report of the species for 1991-2.

BIRDS: All species on TFN checklist reported, except western meadowlark. To those worrying about wood-warbler decline, spring migration was gratifying. Downtown, in May, crows and ring-billed gulls scavenged casualties beneath office towers. Besides reports of "cravens" (hybrid of common raven and American crow) there were reports of hybrid ducklings of a female mallard and male wood duck in High Park. It seems isolated individuals will eventually mate outside their species or even their genus. During high-water, some ring-billed gulls used cormorant tree-nests until evicted. The red-winged blackbird, chaser of hawks and owls, was itself chased by a ruby-crowned kinglet, its red crest flashing. A warbling vireo sang on its nest on May 25. 56 "irregulars" were reported; the South American variegated flycatcher, which flew the wrong way and ended up on Toronto Island Oct. 7-Nov. 6, was feeding with an unusually large number of eastern phoebes.

MAMMALS: Over 150 observations of 25 species. Some bat reports are in - not only of the little brown bat but some rescued office-tower casualties - the big brown and silver-haired bats. The last-mentioned, new for our TFN checklist, migrates through Toronto in May and September. 4 of our 6 species of squirrel were reported. The rufous tail of a black phase eastern grey quirel was seen gradually to turn black. 6 of the 11 other rodents on the 1993 TFN checklist were reported, including Norway rat on the Humber banks. 7 reports of eastern cottontail were received, January to May, and 5 of white-tailed deer, January to June.

▷ More details are in TFN files. Keep sending your notes, reporters, if possible arranged by location (thank you!), to me at #710 - 7 Crescent Place Toronto, Ont. M4C 5L7, and (on amphibians and reptiles) to Bob Johnson, Metro Zoo, P. O. Box 280, West Hill, Ont., M1E 4R5 (phone 392-5900).

Diana Banville □

## PROJECTS

## PROJECT TANAGER

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology is looking for birders to assess the breeding status of tanagers in forests of different sizes. Tanagers are neotropical migratory birds whose populations may be declining due to fragmentation of their forested habitats. Local birders are encouraged to locate tanagers, monitor their reproductive behaviour, and search for nests. In 1993 a pilot study was conducted. Data from this suggests that Scarlet Tanagers in the East may disappear from small woodlots (under 3 acres). All participants in the study will receive a kit with full instructions, data forms and cassette tapes for learning tanager vocalizations. There is no charge to participate. For more information or to sign up, write: Mindy Westgate/Project Tanager, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850, U.S.A. (606)254-2446.

## LOON SURVEY

The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey requires assistance from people who can visit lakes at least three times during the summer -- June to watch resident adults, July to look for newly hatched chicks, and August to record the number of chicks surviving the summer. Information is needed from every type of lake -- from pristine wilderness retreats to busy cottage intersections. You don't even need a pair of nesting loons to do a survey on your lake. It is vitally important to know which types of lakes are not occupied by nesting loons and to determine which factors might exclude loons from an area. Each completed survey form will provide valuable information. Anyone wishing to become a volunteer surveyor should send their name, mailing address, and the name and location of the lake or lakes they wish to survey to: Canadian Lakes Loon Survey, Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario NOE 1M0 (519)586-3531. A survey kit, complete with instructions, a report form, and information about conservation education signs and nest-site warning signs will be sent, free of charge, to anyone able to survey a lake or large river. All volunteers receive the annual newsletter each fall.

## ENVIRONMENTAL LIBRARY

The Canadian Environmental Law Association's Resource Library (CELA) to the Environment is the only publicly accessible environmental library in Ontario. It has now been incorporated as a charitable foundation. Donations can help keep the library open and are registered for tax receipts. Make cheques payable to the Resource Library for the Environment and Law, c/o CELA, 517 College St., Suite 401, Toronto M6G 4A2.

Through shoji pours  
an early wakening light  
fragrance of new snow.

Haiku by Arthur Wade

("Shoji" - translucent rice-paper window-screens -  
the  $\bar{o}$  is a double beat.)

## FOR READING

THE LOST NOTEBOOKS OF LOREN EISELEY, Little Brown and Company (Canada) Ltd., illus., 1987. [in the Northern District Library]

Literary naturalist, anthropologist and humanist Loren Eiseley died in 1977 without completing the second volume of his autobiography. Later an article entitled "The Lost Nature Notebooks of Loren Eiseley" appeared in OMNI magazine and aroused such interest that his widow was persuaded to permit publication of much material he had left behind. This book is the result.

Eiseley, a Nebraskan, did post-grad work at the University of Pennsylvania with Frank Speck, noted ethnologist and naturalist. Later he succeeded Speck as Chairman of the Department of Anthropology. He spent much of his time at digs, sorting old bones and artifacts, and it was on the basis of this experience that much of his creative writing was done. His poetry and prose appeared in journals and book form over the years.

One of his pleasures as a naturalist was the observation of quantum leaps made by individual creatures in problem solving. In all his writing he expresses an interior experience moving back and forth in time, visualizing ages before man -- and after man? Pondering the future he wrote: "What persists in my mind is an utter distrust of the longevity of civilization." He claimed Thoreau was an archaeologist of the heart who warned (man) of uncompleted business. "Man", wrote Eiseley "is always marvelling at what he has blown apart, never at what the universe has put together and this is his limitation." Despite the relentless advance of science, Nature for him encompassed endless mysteries. He echoed Thoreau's summary: "There has been nothing but the sun and the eye since the beginning."

Unpublished poetry, essays, articles, letters, scraps of autobiography comprise this anthology. Included is part of his unfinished novel THE SNOW WOLF, a chilling, poignant tale of the extinction of a species.

Eiseley was always trying to find homes for strays and this side of him is summed up in the last paragraph. Shortly after he died, a lost dog appeared at his door and when brought in, gravely shook hands with Mrs. Eiseley without being told to. "Loren," wrote the editor, "would have looked hard at this encounter and it would have seemed to look hard at him."

Jean McGill

### RECENTLY PUBLISHED:

Oak Ridges Moraine Area Planning Study - Background Study No. 2 - Biophysical Inventory by Ministry of Natural Resources; cost \$10  
Background Study No. 12 - Water Supply and Sewage Treatment systems in the Oak Ridges Moraine Area by Ecologistics Ltd.; cost \$15  
Copies may be ordered from the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, 5 Shoreham Dr., Downsview, Ont. M3N 1S4.

Ontario Poster Series - Fishes of Ontario (\$8); Common Game Animals (\$8); Winter Birds of Ontario (\$8); Raptors of Ontario (\$8)  
also LANDSCAPING FOR WILDLIFE (\$5.30); all available from the Ministry of Natural Resources, Natural Resources Information Centre, Room M1-73, Macdonald Block, 900 Bay St., Toronto, Ont. M7A 2C1.

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## SELECTED READINGS ON OAK SAVANNA IN ONTARIO

Anyone interested in reading factual information about the High Park restoration project or oak savannas in general will find copies of the following in the High Park public library on Roncesvalles Avenue. Anyone with more information on this subject is urged to contact the TFN or the compiler of this list.

- Abrams, M.D. 1992. "Fire and the Development of Oak Forests". BIOSCIENCE 42(5):346-353.
- Anderson, R.C. 1983. "The Eastern Prairie-Forest Transition -- An Overview!" Pages 86-92 in PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8th NORTH AMERICAN PRAIRIE CONFERENCE. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. 175 pages.
- Apfelbaum, S.I. 1993. ANALYSIS OF HISTORIC AND EXISTING ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS OF SIGNIFICANT OAK WOODLANDS AT HIGH PARK, Toronto, Canada. Applied Ecological Services, Inc., P.O. Box 256 Brodeur, Wisconsin 53520.
- Bakowsky, Wasyl. 1988. THE PHYTOSOCIOLOGY OF MIDWESTERN SAVANNA IN THE CAROLINIAN REGION OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO. M.Sc. thesis Botany Dept., University of Toronto. 121 pages.
- Catling, P.M. et al. 1992. "The Extent, Floristic Composition and Maintenance of the Rice Lake Plains, Ontario, Based on Historical Records. CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST 106(1):73-86.
- Day, G.M. 1953. The Indian as an Ecological Factor in the Northwestern Forest. ECOLOGY 34(2):329-346.
- Dyksterhuis, E.J. 1957. "The Savannah Concept and its Use". ECOLOGY 38(3): 435-442.
- Haney, A. et al (in press). OAK BARRENS OF THE UPPER MIDWEST. Castanea.
- Langendoen, D. et al. 1983. "Preliminary Observations on the Distribution and Ecology of Tallgrass Prairie in Southern Ontario". Pages 92-97 in PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8th NORTH AMERICAN PRAIRIE CONFERENCE.
- Nuzzo, V.A. 1986. "Extent and Status of Midwest Oak Savanna: Presettlement and 1985". NATURAL AREAS JOURNAL 6(2):6-36.
- Packard, Steve. 1993. "Restoring Oak Ecosystems!" RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT NOTES 11(1):5-16.
- Russell, E.B. 1983. "Indian-set fires in the forests of the Northeast United States". ECOLOGY 64(1):78-88.
- Szeicz, J.M. et al. 1991. "Postglacial Vegetation History of Oak Savanna in Southern Ontario". CANADIAN JOURNAL OF BOTANY 69:1507-1519.
- Veatch, J.O. 1931. SOIL MAPS AS A BASIS FOR MAPPING ORIGINAL FOREST COVER. Michigan Academy Arts, Sciences and Letters. 15:267-273.
- Varga, S. 1989. A BOTANICAL INVENTORY AND EVALUATION OF THE HIGH PARK OAK WOODLANDS AREA OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. 48 pages.

Jim Hodgins

also: Curtis, J.T. 1959. "Savanna and shrub communities" in THE VEGETATION OF WISCONSIN, University of Wisconsin Press (pages 325-351).

□

Boughs bent to limit  
encrusted with ice jewels,  
imprisoned trees moan.

Haiku by J. Kenneth Cook

GOLF COURSES AND THE ENVIRONMENT

As I was birding down in the [Don] valley and on the Uplands and Thornhill Golf Courses, the workers were quite conscientiously gathering up wagon loads of leaves from the total golf course where they would do a lot of good, and dumping them down the ravines where they will smother out any woodland plants trying to grow. Of course, next spring the golf course will have to be fertilized and aerated! What an amazing way to waste energy, as well as wreck the environment!

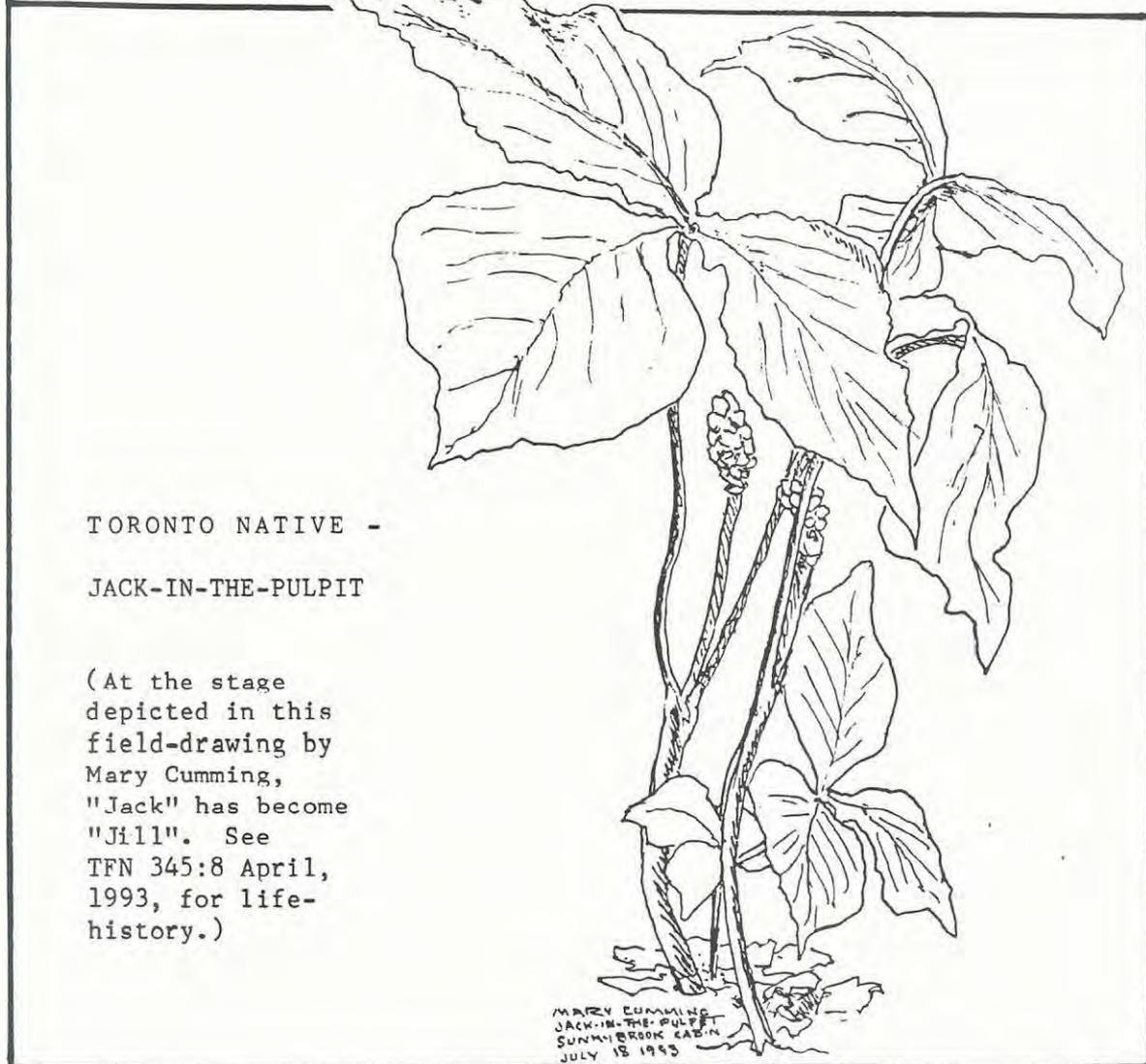
an article by Ed Gillan in THE BULLETIN (Richmond Hill Naturalists), No. 342, Nov. 1993

For further reading on golf courses try:

"Hazards of the Game" by Jolie Edmondson in AUDUBON, Nov. 1987

"How Green are these Fairways?" by John Grossmann in AUDUBON, Sept./Oct. 1993

□



## BIRD FEEDER HYGIENE

Salmonellosis is commonly associated with the death of birds that frequent backyard feeders. In the past, house sparrows, evening grosbeaks, cardinals, pine siskins, American goldfinches, European starlings, brown-headed cowbirds, blackbirds, common grackles, and mourning doves have all been affected by the disease.

The source of the infection is usually feed and feeding platforms that are contaminated by faeces containing the organism *Salmonella typhimurium*. Birds suffering from the disease can exhibit a variety of signs that are often confused with poisoning. Symptoms include weakness, depression, diarrhoea, and "golden eye" (when the globe is filled with pus). Some birds may convulse or show other neurological signs shortly before dying.

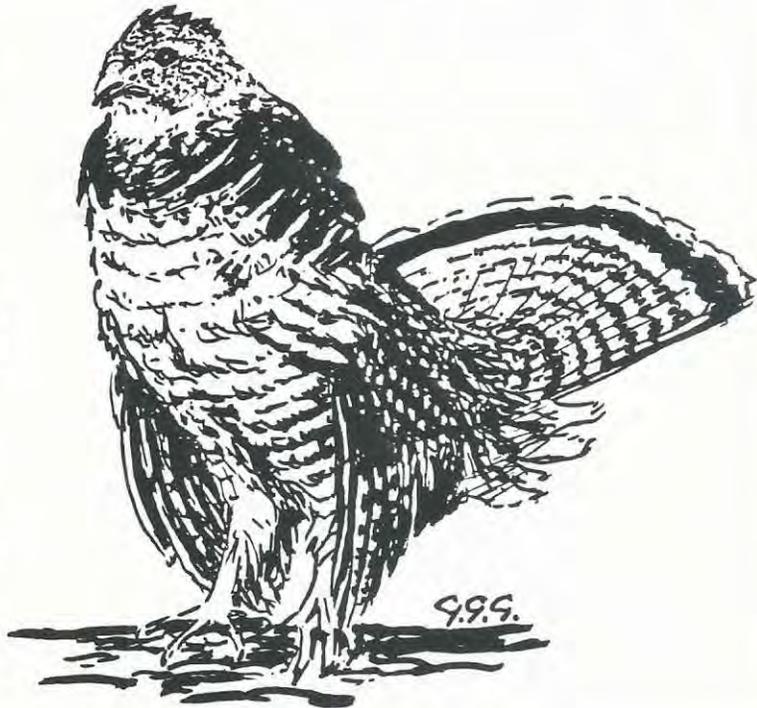
The risk of salmonella outbreaks increases during periods of poor weather when food sources decrease. At that time, more birds visit feeders. Clean feeding stations are an effective way to help control and prevent the spread of salmonella. Make sure yours are disinfected regularly (preferably with bleach) and remove spilled and soiled feed. Should an outbreak of the disease occur in your area, discontinue supplemental feeding for the time being, as even healthy birds can act as carriers.

from NATURE ALERT, Vol. 4, No. 1 (who took it from Ontario's Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Network News, Issue 1, Oct. 1993)

□

THE MALE RUFFED GROUSE  
is pictured on a  
drumming log in this  
drawing by  
Geraldine Goodwin  
from a Savage photo.

Its breeding status is  
given as "becoming very  
rare" by Fleming in THE  
NATURAL HISTORY OF THE  
TORONTO REGION, 1913  
(ed. by Faull), it is  
listed as "confirmed"  
on a chart of breeding  
birds in the ECOLOGICAL  
SURVEY OF THE ROUGE  
VALLEY PARK, by Varga,  
Jalava and Riley, 1991.



## FUNGI IN THE SNOW

Snow is not where most people expect to find fungi. Contrary to common belief, they are not fragile beings but tough survivors. I recollect a flourishing cluster of *Pleurotus ostreatus* sprouting from a log barricade still green from an application of pentatetrachloride, a fungicide sold to prevent such things. The mushrooms were also contending with Kingston Road pollution and doing better at it than I. The first specimen below is indeed called the Winter Mushroom, being one of the few that fruits in winter. This individual was in Sunnybrook Park. The second drawing is of a Scarlet Cup, which may be found in early spring - in snow, if one is lucky, for it makes a lovely photograph.



The Winter Mushroom  
*Flammulina velutipes*

Fruiting body: viscid, orange-yellow cap, 3/4"-2 3/4" across, convex, nearly flat in age, gills pale yellow; in cespitose clusters on deciduous logs.

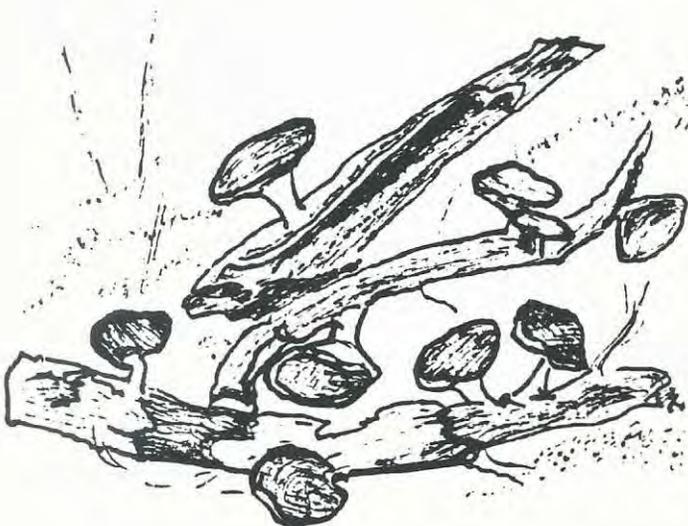
Stipe: yellow at top, dark brown and densely velvety below.

Flesh: thick, white to yellow.

Spore deposit: white.

Season: October to May.

Edibility: Edible, but stalk is tough and should be discarded.



Scarlet Cup  
*Sarcosypha coccinea*

Fruiting body: deeply concave cup, 1/2"-1/2" across, scarlet interior, exterior dull white, cottony smooth; singly or several on sticks and branches.

Stipe: white, short or lacking.

Flesh: brittle.

Spores: transparent.

Season: early spring.

Edibility: unknown.

## TWO LOOK-ALIKES



Yellow Morel  
Morchella esculenta

Fruiting body: 2"-6" tall, sponge-like structure, ridges and pits both yellow-brown; in forests and old orchards.

Stipe: hollow, brittle, creamy white, swollen at base.

Flesh: crisp, white.

Spore deposit: ochre-orange.

Season: April to May.

Edibility: one of the most highly prized of morels. (It should be remembered, however, that some people are allergic to all morels.)



False Morel  
Gyromitra esculenta

Fruiting body: cap 1½"-4½" across, lobed, wrinkled, brown to red-brown; in mixed forests.

Stipe: expanded at either end, white brownish, often flushed with pink tones.

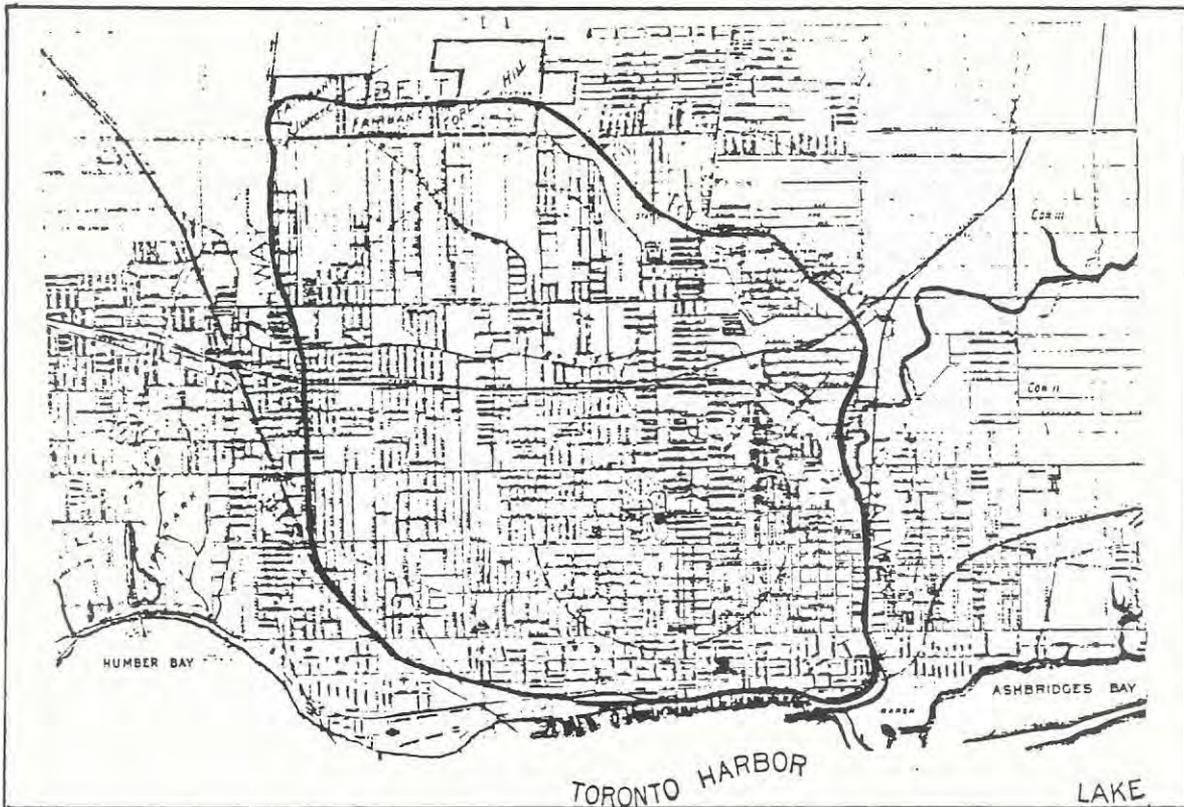
Flesh: thick, brittle.

Season: March to May.

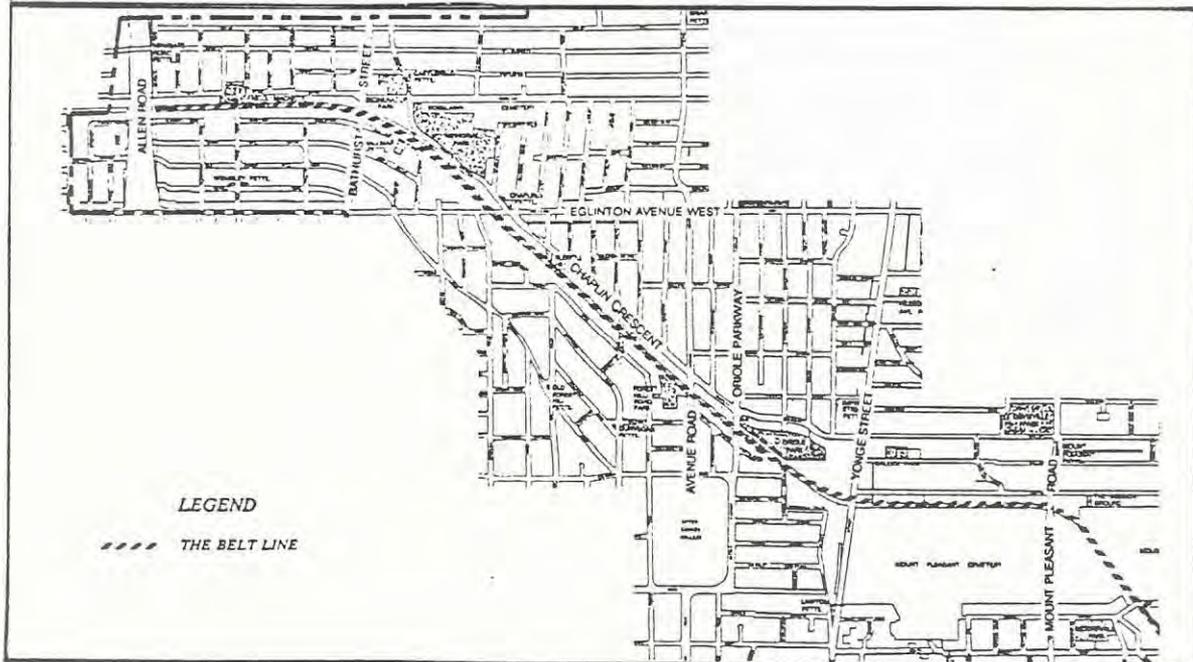
Edibility: DEADLY WHEN EATEN RAW; prolonged cooking may reduce toxicity, but why bother to prove that you are one of the few who can stomach this mushroom without ill effect.

Recommended Reading: MUSHROOMS OF NORTH AMERICA by Orson K. Miller, Jr., E.P. Dutton, New York, 1981. (Out of print, but if unearthed in a second-hand store it should be fallen upon!)

TORONTO'S BELT LINE



The Toronto Belt Line Railway Co. received its charter in 1891, but the land boom of the 1880s had come to an end and by 1894 passenger service was discontinued. Tracks were converted to industrial spurs and storage and by 1970 CNR announced all service to be discontinued on remaining track within the city.



## IN THE NEWS

### SUN GETS BLAME FOR ZAPPED ANIKS

An electrical storm caused by a rip in the surface of the sun is being blamed for zapping both of Canada's Anik E satellites. The surge of solar radiation swept across the earth's magnetic field like the beam from a lighthouse. Other communications satellites had momentary problems, but none as serious as Telesat Canada's Aniks, which may have just been in the wrong place at the wrong time, researchers said. The tear in the sun, or coronal hole, is distinct from more dramatic and larger solar flares, yet produces the same effects in the Earth's atmosphere according to a space scientist at the U.S. government's Space Environment Services Center in Boulder, Colo. The centre, which is jointly operated by the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Air Force, maintains a fleet of satellites to monitor the Earth's weather and conditions in space and on the sun's surface. Instruments aboard one of the centre's satellites detected an intense geomagnetic storm beginning on Jan. 13 that resulted from a corona hole. Unlike flares, which are generated by sun spots and occur in 11-year cycles, a corona hole can occur anytime. The cause of the holes remains a mystery. A corona hole allows large amounts of the sun's highly charged plasma gas to escape from the star's surface. The plasma discharge sends enormous clouds of radiation and high-density electrons streaming into space and toward the Earth's atmosphere when our planet is aligned with the defective region of the sun. Because the sun completes its own orbit every 27 days, the hole will cause periodic geomagnetic storms for several months. Electrical particles stream constantly from the sun, an effect known as solar wind. A few times a year, they increase in unpredictable storm-like bursts that last a few hours or days. The storms cause the spectacular Northern Lights, or aurora borealis, and disrupt high-frequency radio communications when the electrons from the sun collide with charged ions in the upper atmosphere. The current corona hole bombarded the Earth's outer atmosphere with a cloud of electrons a thousandfold denser than normal on Jan. 13 -- an amount that wasn't out of the ordinary for such events. The satellites are parked in orbit about 37,000 kilometres above the equator in a region of the atmosphere called the magnetosphere where the effects of geomagnetic storms are heightened. In 1976, Canada lost the Hermes satellite, a prototype of its first Anik satellite, because of an electric discharge after a solar disturbance.

extracted from an article by Wallace Immen & Lawrence Surtees in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 25/94

### BRIDGE COMPLETES BELT LINE

With one quick scissor cut, the Belt Line railway right of way became one continuous linear park in December 1993. After a year of renovations costing about \$250,000 the Yonge Street overpass that connects the two sides of the park was opened on Dec. 4. Its completion means users of the Belt Line can follow it without interruption from Allen Rd. to Bayview Ave.

adapted from an article in the LEASIDE-ROSEDALE TOWN CRIER, Jan. 1994

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IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

EARLIER THAW AMPLIFIES EFFECTS OF GLOBAL WARMING

Global warming is making snow melt earlier than it did 20 years ago, causing average spring temperatures to rise more than in other seasons, concludes a study reported in SCIENCE magazine. The portion of the Northern Hemisphere that is covered with snow for periods of at least a week in April and May is now an average 10 per cent smaller than it was during the same months in the early 1970s. The shrinking snow cover is equivalent to an area the size of Alberta and Saskatchewan combined. The comparison was made using photos taken by weather satellites. The decreases in snow cover were seen not only in Canada and the United States, but also in Europe and Western Asia. Bare ground absorbs more heat than snow and this raises the temperature and allows even more snow to melt. Comparisons of satellite photos show that the Great Lakes region and the St. Lawrence Valley are sensitive areas, or hot spots, where snow disappears quickly if temperatures rise above freezing. Other areas that show reductions in snow cover compared with 20 years ago are James Bay, Hudson Bay and the Maritimes.

extracted from an article by Wallace Immen in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 14, 1994

AIRCRAFT FUEL LEAK PROMPTS CLEANUP OF MIMICO CREEK

Two Etobicoke work crews were working in Mimico Creek to contain and remove aircraft fuel originating from a ruptured line at Pearson International Airport. The city found fuel running into the creek from discharge pipes that drain the airport. City crews were preparing for the "hard labour" required to remove the fuel, contained behind booms, from the creek. With no room for a pump, the crews were planning to soak up the liquid with absorbent pads and then somehow lug it out. Pearson was the site of a ruptured fuel line that delayed some departures, although there is no way of telling how much fuel was lost. At the time of the break, which was discovered when fuel began to seep up through the frozen ground onto the apron where aircraft park, the ministry began to clean up and called in the environmental experts. Officials had been monitoring Mimico Creek since the leak was discovered. Earlier this year, Environment Canada withdrew charges of polluting Mimico and Etobicoke Creeks with de-icing fluid that had been laid against Air Canada and Transport Canada last year.

extracted from an article in the GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 25, 1994

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THE SPARROW

It hops across barren white  
dropping footprints behind -  
petals in the snow.

Giovanni Malito

## IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## BAY ADELAIDE TAKES PARKS TO NEW HEIGHTS

The elaborate \$5 million park, just west of Yonge St. between Richmond and Temperance Streets, includes balconies, bridges, ramps, stairways, as well as a cavernous conservatory filled with exotic flora from the tropical cloud forests of South America and Asia. The park began life in the mid-1980s as part of the \$1 billion Bay Adelaide Centre. In return for extra density and height, developers Markborough Trizec agreed to provide an open public space. Then the recession intervened and the tower became history. The plug was formally pulled on the office project, but amazingly not before the park got built. How ironic that the only part of the scheme to reach completion -- other than the underground parking lot and a six-storey service shaft -- is the most expensive park in Toronto. The whole structure [designed by Barry Sampson and George Baird who won a competition to design the space] rests on top of an underground garage. But with so many plants and trees, some as much as 15 years old, the site looks like anything but a roof. The west half of the park consists of gardens with paths, benches and the kinds of things you'd expect in a compact downtown setting. It provides a north-south passageway for pedestrians as well as a place to sit and eat lunch. The really fancy stuff, on the east side of the park, includes a series of planted terraces that lead progressively higher until they culminate in an elegant steel platform from which visitors can view the entire project. There's also a waterfall. A highlight is a substantial greenhouse filled with palms, fern trees and other tropical plants. Every 20 minutes, a computer-controlled watering system releases clouds of mist into the room. The Bay Adelaide Conservatory will be controlled from a parks department office in High Park. Finally, the park includes "The Monument to Construction Workers". This type of park has never been attempted in Toronto. Instead of the expected urban plaza, the designers opted for a garden. The site is small, about half an acre, and the scale is intimate. What it lacks in size, it gains in diversity.

extracted from an article by Christopher Hume in the TORONTO STAR, Dec. 17, 1993

## UPDATE ON RABIES

Rabies is among the deadliest of infections that can be transmitted from other animals to humans. At least 35,000 people in the world perish from the disease each year. While dogs remain the main source of rabies globally, wildlife is the chief threat in North America. A recent epidemic among raccoons in the eastern U.S. apparently started with the inclusion of a rabid raccoon in a shipment to replenish hunting stocks in the Virginias in the mid-1970s.

adapted from an article entitled "When rabies almost went undetected," the GLOBE & MAIL, Aug. 28, 1993

The vendor's fish leap,  
frozen arcs, far from the sea,  
this cold winter day.

Haiku by Arthur Wade  
Kensington Market

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

WATERFOWL SEASON OPENS WITH BAN ON LEAD SHOT AT WYE MARSH

The Canadian Wildlife Service's proposal to convert hunters completely to non-toxic shot by the end of the century took another step forward at the opening of the waterfowl season with the banning of lead shot in a second Ontario hunting area. Lead shot has been banned in Wye Marsh near Midland, after three trumpeter swans died from lead poisoning after eating some pellets. The southeast corner of Lake St. Clair, where there had been high waterfowl mortality from lead pellet ingestion, was the first area to ban lead shot.

extracted from an article by Burt Dowsett in the LONDON FREE PRESS, Oct. 2, 1993

LITTLE WHITE BIRDS

Swans are "white" birds. Gulls and terns are "white" birds. Most other white birds range in size somewhere between the two, for generally speaking, birds with white plumage are found only among the larger species ...with the exception perhaps of some arctic species. Why are there so few species of little white birds? Obviously it is a matter of survival. In the world of colour, white stands out. In a world of "large" predators, little birds need camouflage not contrast to survive. They need "protective colouration". Among all animals there are, from time to time, certain individuals whose bodies are unable to produce colour, in whole or in part. They suffer from albinism, a condition that may be present from birth, or may be brought about by a great physical or mental shock to the system. The most closely observed albinos of this summer were three sparrow sized birds spotted at Albert Noland's, in Evansville...immatures when first seen, and apparently all from the same nest. The next unusual "albino" was one of three Belted Kingfishers (the other two normal) fishing along the shores of Lake Kagawong and observed by Elsie McDougall and her parents while boating there. The third little white birds was farther afield, and the smallest of all. According to Lois Noland, formerly of Evansville, an albino hummingbird was spotted in London, Ontario this summer.

extracted from "Manitoulin...Naturally Speaking" by Doreen Bailey in the MANITOULIN RECORDER, Oct. 6, 1993

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SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

The western world's lifestyle of excess, pollution and depletion of natural resources cannot continue without irreparable damage to the planet. "Sustainable" development means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The three A's of sustainability: 1. Anticipate and prevent problems instead of just reacting to them. 2. Assume responsibility for consequences of actions or decisions. 3. Account for full environmental cost of a product, including use of resources and pollution. Always ask: o What is the environmental impact? o How can I neutralize this effect? o Is there a less harmful alternative?

adapted from "Ecoline" by Catherine Farley in the TORONTO STAR, May 8, 1983

## THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

March 1993, Toronto

Winter retained its hold over Toronto area for most of March, 1993. Both downtown and at Lester B. Pearson International Airport, March was the coldest since 1989 and the snowiest since 1985. Snowfall amounts totalled in the range of 28 cm: again, not exceptionally high, but persistent. Patches of snow remained on the ground in sheltered places well into April. Mean temperatures ran just over 1°C below normal. While snowfall amounts were moderately high, rainfall totals were much below normal. Pearson Airport's 6.6 mm was the least since 1971. Sunshine and winds were below normal; it was the cloudiest March since 1981.

Seasonable temperatures accompanied a snowfall on March 4th-5th. This storm had thunder and lightning in the evening and was quite intense. Snow accumulations were up to 20 cm.

Arctic air eased its way into central and eastern North America for the middle of the month. At the same time, a violent disturbance began in the Gulf of Mexico and brought what was called the blizzard of the century to the eastern seaboard of the United States. Toronto got away with only 5 cm of snow (with high winds and severe wind chill) but parts of the Appalachians received over a metre of snow. Snow fell as far south as the Florida panhandle, and chilly, unsettled, showery weather invaded even the Caribbean. The storm was in time for the beginning of the March break and left many families stranded en route to the southern U.S.

High pressure dominated the rest of the month, with cold persisting for a week, then gradual warming. In northern Ontario, it got positively warm, although there was more cloud cover and mist in the south. Finally, another, less remarkable cold front eased its way in on the last day of March.

Gavin Miller

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## COMING EVENTS

- Toronto Entomologists' Association (insects) - monthly meeting - Sat.  
March 26 at 1 pm in the lecture room of the McLaughlin Planetarium.  
Free, but membership encouraged.
- Mycological Society of Toronto (mushrooms) - monthly meeting - Monday,  
March 21 at 8 pm at the Civic Garden Centre. Call 444-9053.
- Save the Rouge Valley System - monthly free walk - call 287-1776 for details.
- Black Creek Project - monthly meeting - Wed. March 2 at 6:30 pm in the  
Haultain Building on College St. opposite McCaul St. Call 661-6600,  
ext. 345 for more information.
- Task Force to Bring Back the Don - free monthly meetings at Toronto City  
Hall. Call 392-0068 for details.
- Friends of the Don East York - monthly meeting - Tues. March 22 at 7 pm  
in the East York Civic Centre, 850 Coxwell Ave. Call 467-7305 for details.
- Don Watershed Task Force - monthly meeting - Thurs. March 24 at 6:30 pm in  
North York City Hall. Call 661-6600, ext. 325 for more information.
- Royal Canadian Institute - Sunday afternoon lectures on science at the  
JJR Macleod Auditorium, Medical Sciences Building - 15 King's College  
Circle, University of Toronto at 3 pm. Free. Call 928-2096 for details.
- March 6 - From fruit flies to man: the genetics of animal design  
with Janet Rossant
  - March 13 - Reducing the catastrophes from natural hazards  
with A.G. Davenport
  - March 20 - Ideas, wealth creation and the health and well-being of  
societies with J.F. Mustard
- The Garden Club of Toronto Flower Show - March 2 to March 6 (Wed. to Fri.  
10 am to 8 pm; Sat. & Sun. 10 am to 6 pm) - at the Civic Garden Centre.  
Admission: Adult, \$8; Senior & Student, \$6; Children 5-12, \$1; under 5,  
free. Call 447-5218 for more information.
- The Market Gallery - free exhibition - A Hazardous Crossing. Building  
Toronto's Great Railway Viaduct 1924-1930 (historical maps, photographs  
and documents from the City of Toronto Archives extensive collections) -  
95 Front St. East. Call 392-7604 for details on hours.
- Kortright Centre for Conservation (Kleinburg) - Call 905-832-2289 to reserve.
- Feb. 26 - Great Horned Owl Prowl
  - March 26 - Screech Owl Prowl - 6:30 pm or 9 pm
  - March 5 to April 10 - Maple Syrup Days - 10 am to 3 pm
- Entrance fee \$7 per person.
- Willowdale Gem and Mineral Club - 20th Annual Show - Armour Heights  
Community Centre (Avenue Rd. and Wilson Ave.) - March 19 from 10 am  
to 6 pm; March 20 from 11 am to 5 pm. Free admission. ▷

## COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Don River Management Plans - Workshop Series #3 - free - everyone welcome

- Upper East Don - Pomona Valley Park Concept - Thurs. Feb. 10 at Heintzman House, 135 Baythorn Dr., Thornhill
- Lower Don East - Finch/Cummer Concept site - Mon. Feb. 14 at Pineway Elementary School, 110 Pineway Blvd., North York
- Lower Don West - G. Ross Lord Dam Concept site - Wed. Feb. 16 at C.H. Best Middle School, 285 Wilmington Ave., North York
- Taylor/Massey Creek - Terra View School Concept site - Thurs. Feb. 17 at Terra View Elementary School, 95 Pachino Blvd.
- German Mills Creek - Harding Park Concept site - Tue. Feb. 22 at Richmond Hill Public Library, Meeting Room B, Major Mackenzie Dr. and Yonge St.
- Upper Don West - Fieldgate Concept site - Wed. Feb. 23 at George Bailey School (north of Rutherford Rd., west side of Keele St.), Maple Meetings begin at 7 pm. Call 661-6600, extension 325 to confirm location.

LATE NOTICE

February events



200 Years of Toronto's Natural History (a TFN display) - at the Toronto Historical Board, 205 Yonge St. from Jan. 31 to Feb. 28.



200 Years of Toronto's Natural History (a TFN display) - at the Heritage Centre - Cumberland Terrace (2nd floor), southeast corner of Bay St. and Cumberland Ave. Open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 12 noon to 5 pm; March 3 to March 30.

□

Winter tree bared  
but already, upon its bough,  
it is wearing spring.

haiku by  
Giovanni Malito

IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

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

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

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

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

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

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

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(416) 968-6255

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## TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Published eight times a year 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.

### OTHER PUBLICATIONS

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB: ITS HISTORY AND CONSTITUTION, 1965 . . . . . \$ 2.00	INDEX OF TFN NEWSLETTERS (1938 to present) . . . . . \$ 10.00
CHECKLIST OF PLANTS IN FOUR TORONTO PARKS: WILKET CREEK, HIGH PARK, HUMBER VALLEY, LAMBTON WOODS, 1972 . . . . . \$ 2.00	TORONTO REGION BIRD CHART, 1983 . . . . . \$ 4.00
TORONTO THE GREEN, 1976 Metropolitan Toronto's important natural areas are described and recommendations given for their conservation and management; includes maps, bibliography and index . . . . . \$ 8.00	A GRAPHIC GUIDE TO ONTARIO MOSSES, 1985 . . . . . \$ 4.00
TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' RAVINE SURVEYS . . . . . ea \$ 4.00	GUIDE TO THE TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' NATURE RESERVE, LEASKDALE, ONT., 1986 . . . . . \$ 4.00
Survey #1 - Chatsworth Ravine, 1973	TORONTO ISLANDS: PLANT COMMUNITIES AND NOTEWORTHY SPECIES, 1987 . . . . . \$ 4.00
Survey #2 - Brookbanks Ravine, 1974	TODMORDEN MILLS, 1987 . . . . . \$ 4.00
Survey #3 - Chapman Valley Ravine, 1975	VASCULAR PLANTS OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO, 1990 . . . . . \$ 8.00
Survey #4 - Wigmore Ravine, 1975	
Survey #5 - Park Drive Ravine, 1976	
Survey #6 - Burke Ravine, 1976	
Survey #7 - Taylor Creek-Woodbine Bridge Ravines, 1977	
Survey #8 - West Don Valley, 1978	

NO G.S.T.

All publications are available at the monthly general meetings or may be ordered from Toronto Field Naturalists, 20 College St., Suite 11, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1K2. (Add \$2.00 per item for postage and handling).

### MEMBERSHIP FEES (No G.S.T.)

- \$30 FAMILY (2 adults - same address, children included)
- \$25 SINGLE, SENIOR FAMILY
- \$20 STUDENT, SENIOR SINGLE
- Tax receipts issued for donations

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