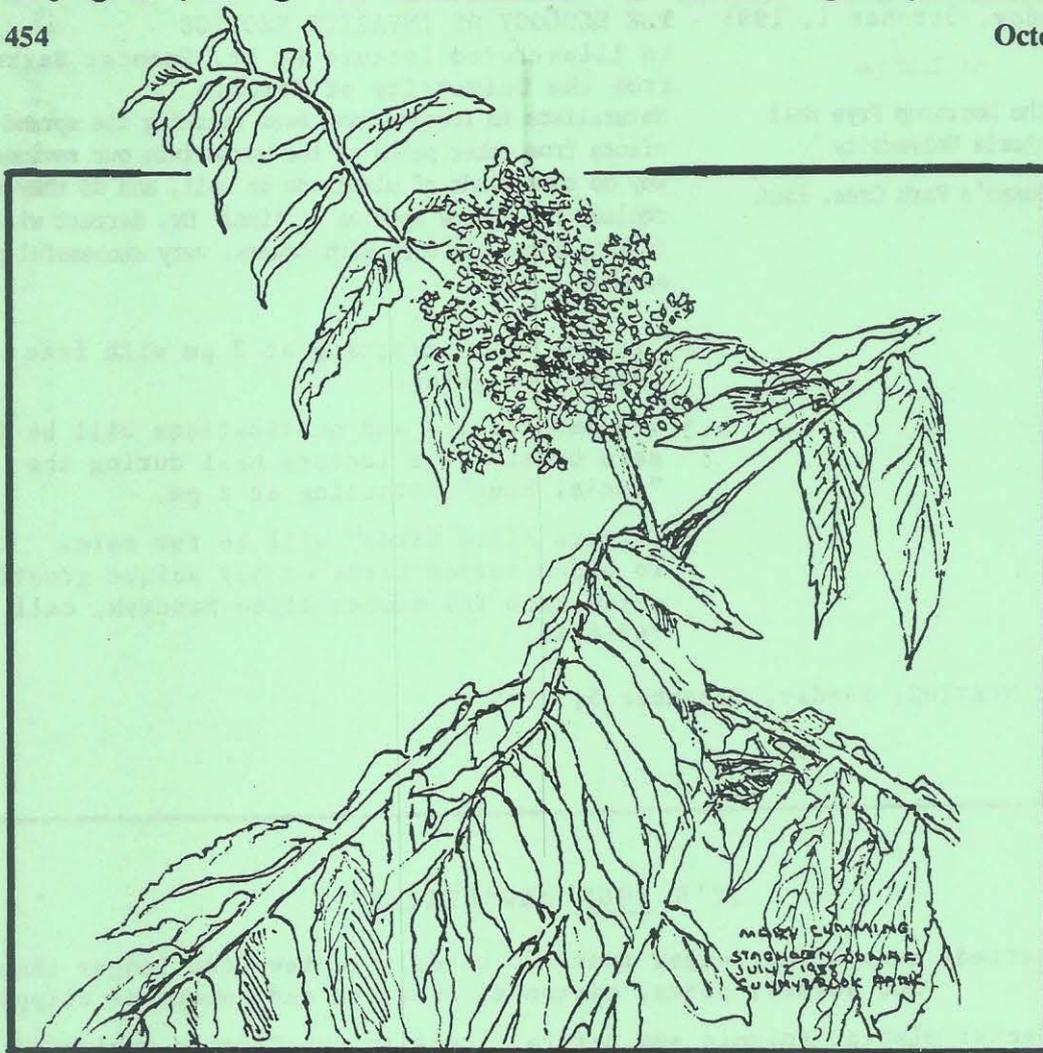


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 454

October 1995



Male staghorn sumac

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## TFN MEETINGS

Sunday, October 1, 1995 - THE ECOLOGY OF INVASIVE EXOTICS  
at 2:30 pm  
in the Northrop Frye Hall  
Victoria University  
73 Queen's Park Cres. East

an illustrated lecture by Dr. Spencer Barrett,  
from the University of Toronto

Naturalists in Toronto have been watching the spread of  
plants from other parts of the world into our ravines.  
Why do some kinds of plants do so well, and do they really  
replace the native species in time? Dr. Barrett will be  
talking about his work with several very successful plant  
species.

- + "social hour" starting at 2 pm with free coffee and juice.
- + TFN memberships and publications will be for sale outside the lecture hall during the "social hour", starting at 2 pm.
- + "Always Alice Cards" will be for sale. To order custom cards or buy unique greeting cards from TFN member Alice Mandryk, call 767-6149.

NEXT MEETING: Sunday, November 5, 1995

### 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

Newsletter Committee members: Helen Juhola, Diana Banville, Jenny Bull, Eva Davis, Nancy Fredenburg, Eileen Mayo, Joan O'Donnell, Toshi Oikawa.

# TFN OUTINGS

**REMEMBER:** children and visitors are welcome on all outings but, please, NO PETS!  
 To get to outings on time, check TTC routes and schedules by calling 393-4636.  
 Check the weather by calling 661-0123 so you'll know what to wear on outings which go rain or shine.

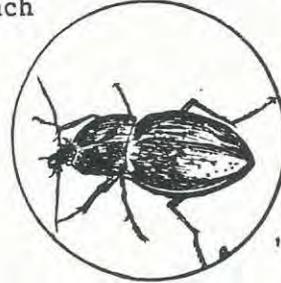
- Sunday            TFN MEETING - see page 2  
 Oct. 1  
 2:30 pm
- Thursday        HUMBER BAY PARK - ducks & other birds                      Lakeshore, Etobicoke  
 Oct. 5            Leader: Helen Smith  
 10:30 am        Meet at the park entrance on the south side of Lake Shore Blvd.  
                     West opposite Park Lawn Rd. Bring lunch.  
                     This large lake-fill park with its sheltered bays at the mouth of Mimico  
                     Creek is an excellent place to view migrating birds, especially waterfowl at  
                     this time of year.
- Saturday        UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO (Scarborough Campus) - nature arts  
 Oct. 7            Leader: Mary Taylor    Highland Cr., Scarborough  
 10:30 am        Meet at the main entrance to the campus at 1265 Military Trail  
                     just south of Ellesmere Rd. Bring lunch and your supplies.  
                     We will be sketching, photographing or painting the gardens, the woodlot,  
                     the huge erratics (boulders left by retreating glaciers) and the wild areas  
                     adjacent to Morningside park.
- Monday          EARL BALES PARK - fall colours nature walk                      West Don, North York  
 Oct. 9            Leader: Sheila Van Landeghem  
 2 pm             Meet at the main park entrance on the east side of Bathurst  
                     St. opposite Bainbridge Ave.  
                     The slopes of this deep part of the Don Valley should be as colourful as  
                     anywhere at this time. All the species of the mixed forest (Great Lakes-  
                     St. Lawrence) forest zone grow here and each has its own fall colour.
- Thursday        TORONTO ISLANDS - nature walk                                      Lakeshore, Toronto  
 Oct. 12          Leader: Maureen Allain  
 10:30 am        Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. Bring lunch.  
                     This is always a good place for naturalists to visit. The modifying  
                     influence of the lake is felt -- flowers bloom later here than on the  
                     mainland, and migrants rest and feed waiting for suitable weather before  
                     crossing the lake on their way south.
- Sunday          HUMBER VALLEY - nature walk                                      Humber River, Etobicoke  
 Oct. 15          Leader: Ken Cook  
 1:30 pm        Meet at the northeast corner of the Queensway and Windermere  
                     Ave.  
                     This is the first in a series of walks to follow the Humber River and  
                     its tributaries in Metro Toronto.



## KEEPING IN TOUCH

April 24, 1995

The enclosed drawing may interest your newsletter people. I brought soil from my composter into the house in early March in order to start seedlings, and my husband found this one inch long fellow walking down the stairs. I sketched him - before releasing him - and all the while I was thinking of A. A. Milne's "Alexander was a beetle". I think he was a common blue-black beetle which likes to hide under rocks.



ground  
beetle

"Alexander"

Anne León

June 1995

Kingbirds are regal in their stately robes trimmed with ermine. The red tuft on top eluded me until June 1, 1995 when I spotted an Eastern Kingbird on the fence around the Don River sewage treatment plant. I approached as near as I dared and watched for a minute. I noticed that he seemed a bit more fidgety than is the norm. After some stretching he tipped his head forward... (the red tuft...thank you) then threw it back in an enormous yawn. He then forced out his tongue, immediately followed by a shiny black sphere the size of a blueberry. After composing himself, he flew off. I approached the fence and with some diligence found the black pellet. It was an absolute witch's brew of beetle legs, fly eyes and mosquito wings!

Ken Cook

▽

### HOMAGE

Ancient fault in the planet's crust  
over one billion years old:  
The Agawa Canyon.

Now riotous in autumn's colours,  
your waterfalls and plunging vistas  
endlessly bewitch the seeker.

visited Sept. 21, 1994

Eva Davis

## TFN SLIDE AND PHOTO LIBRARY

It's been a while since I last reported on the status of the library. Thanks to generous donations from members as well as an ongoing program to update and fill gaps in the collection, it's grown to almost 11,000 35mm colour slides. The main areas are location, flora and fauna. The breakdown is as follows:

LOCATION: Rouge River	FLORA: trees and shrubs
Highland Creek	wild flowers
Scarborough Bluffs	mosses and liverworts
Lower Don River	fungi
East Don River	grasses and sedges
West Don River	
High Park	FAUNA: birds
Humber River	mammals
Mimico Creek	amphibians
Etobicoke Creek	reptiles
lakeshore	insects
miscellaneous (Metro)	fishes
miscellaneous (GTA)	

Most of these colour slides are stored in translucent plastic sheets for easy viewing. Almost all areas of the library have good coverage, some are probably as good as any collection in Metro Toronto. However, there are areas that could be better covered, e.g., Rouge Park area, mammals, amphibians, birds and fishes. Donations of suitable colour slides are welcome. Please label each slide for species, location and date.

Although these colour slides have been assembled and categorized primarily for TFN use, individuals and groups outside TFN use them to almost an equal degree. From this collection, several hundred mounted colour photographs have been made for our portable display units. These are placed in schools, libraries and used at special events.

Robin Powell  
Slide and photo librarian  
327-2877 (business)

Satisfactory  
there, above the city's cubes'  
round, red autumn moon!

haiku by Arthur Wade

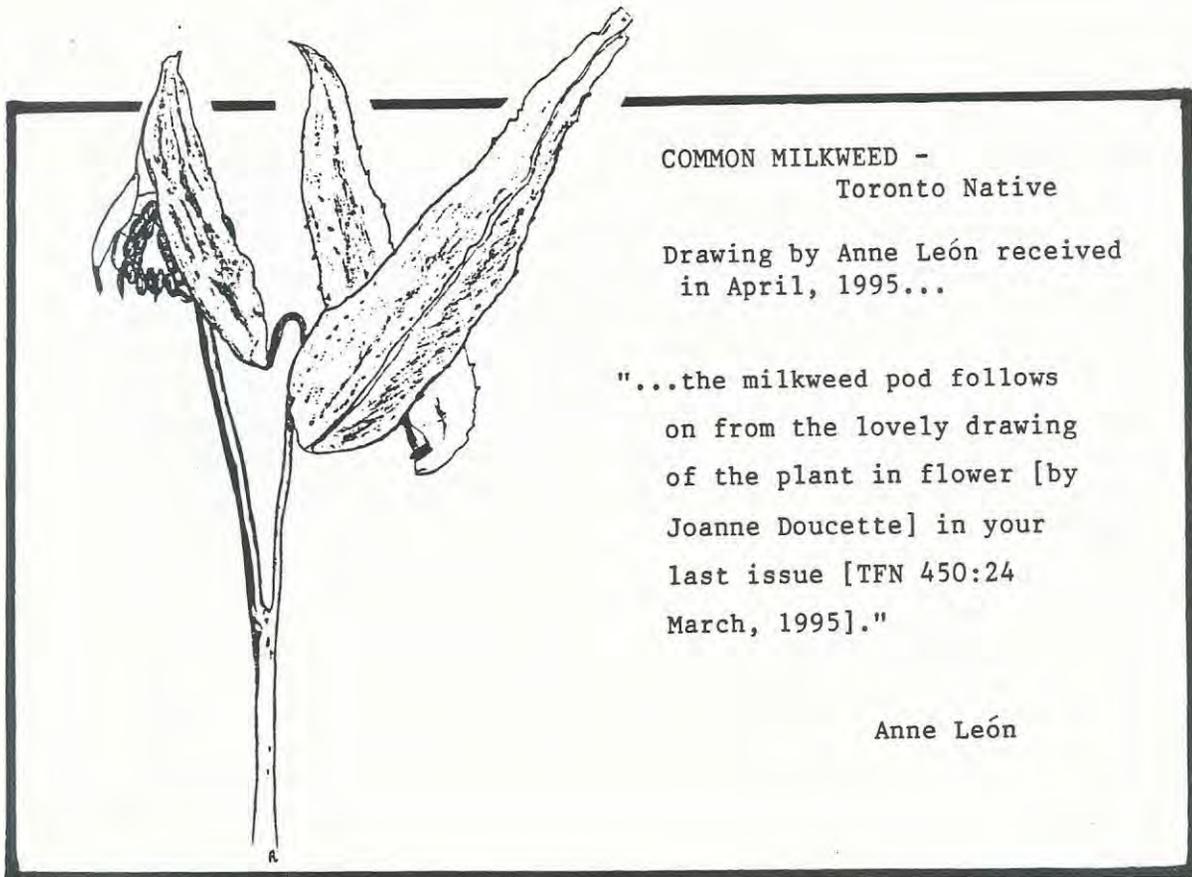
## FOR READING

THE ONTARIO NATURALIZED GARDEN - a complete guide to using native plants - by Lorraine Johnson, published by Whitecap Books (phone 416-703-1791). 142 pages of text; reading and resource list 37 pages (in addition to the list of references at the end of each chapter); index 8 pages; 26 black-&-white illustrations; 2 maps; \$18.95 soft cover.

"Go wild!" urges the promotional literature for Lorraine Johnson's book. There probably is not a naturalist who is not a little that way already but read the book and find out where you fit into the picture. This subject is not without dilemma. A kaleidoscope of attitudes and possibilities is described. In twelve chapters, habitat, garden design, and acquisition and propagation of native Ontario plants are discussed, as well as the tyranny of the lawn, the "weeds" concept, and wildlife attraction. By the way, don't skip the introduction. This author has an engaging style. The chapters are decorated with thumbnail black-&-white drawings by Andrew Leyerle, as well as quite a number of reduced illustrations from the TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST, which in many cases has worked well in this treatment. Close to a hundred individual native plant species and their needs are described - most of them Toronto natives. An emotional, amusing, satirical, at the same time, thoroughly detailed guide.

DB

□



COMMON MILKWEED -  
Toronto Native

Drawing by Anne León received  
in April, 1995...

"...the milkweed pod follows  
on from the lovely drawing  
of the plant in flower [by  
Joanne Doucette] in your  
last issue [TFN 450:24  
March, 1995]."

Anne León

## PROJECTS

### HELP THICKSON'S WOODS

Thickson's Woods in Whitby, as renowned for its old-growth white pines as it is for migrating warblers in May, was saved in the eighties by the extraordinary efforts of concerned naturalists. The nineties bring a new challenge: buffering this sensitive woods and wetland from encroachment by homeowners and heavy industry.

Support Thickson's Woods with the following fundraising specials:

T-shirts (M,L,XL,XXL)	\$15
Sweatshirts (M,XL,XXL)	\$25

Please add \$3.50 per item for postage.

**Waiting for Whimbrels**, a collection of nature poetry for Thickson's Woods. \$8.95 plus \$1.05 postage

▷ Or send your tax-receiptable donation to: Thickson's Woods Heritage Foundation, Box 541, Whitby, Ontario L1N 5V3. All fundraising suggestions welcome; phone (905) 725-2116.

Margaret Carney

### ADOPT A PARK IN EAST YORK

The East York Parks, Recreation and Operations Department is looking for enthusiastic, dedicated volunteers to pitch in and help keep parks and green spaces clean and green by doing some simple but effective duties such as: litter pick-up, spring clean-up, reporting illegal activities such as dumping or vandalism. Work on your own, with a group of friends or neighbours, or as a part of a community club. Any way you choose, your contribution will be noticed and appreciated by many. The Adopt-A-Park Co-ordinator will register you and ensure that you receive all the support and supplies you need to do the job such as garbage bags for litter pick-up. Adoptions are available in all East York parks including Todmorden Mills and the ravine areas. For more information, please call the

▷ Adopt-A-Park Co-ordinator at 396-2811.

Twelve cedar waxwings  
on an ornamental crab,  
a fruitful dinner.

haiku by Helen Juhola

## PROJECTS (cont'd)

## NATURE GROUP SENDS OUT A PLEA FOR INFORMATION ON LADYBUGS

Ladybugs might be called the Canadians of the insect world. That's one reason the Canadian Nature Federation wants people to study the ladybugs--or more correctly ladybug beetles--in their gardens. It wants to know which indigenous species are out there and which foreign species have assumed dominance. Ladybugs have been used as a natural pest control for hundreds of years. Farmers and gardeners love them because they eat nasty bugs like aphids and other small soft-bodied insects that attack crops. The ladybug beetle survey is part of the Canadian Nature Federation's program on endangered plants and invertebrates. For more information or to get a survey card, write to the Canadian Nature Federation, 1 Nicholas St., Suite 520, Ottawa, Ont. K1N 7B7; phone (613) 562-3447; fax (613) 562-3371.

extracted from an article in THE TORONTO STAR, 22 August 1995

## THE WHITE OAKS PROJECT

The White Oaks Project is a community endeavour to preserve existing stock of historic white and red oaks through up-to-date research, fertilization and aeration programs and the encouragement of new plantings has begun. Bounded by the Nordheimer ravine on the northeast and the old Lake Iroquois shoreline on the south (Davenport Road), the Casa Loma area has magnificent stands of irreplaceable red and white oaks -- some 100 to 150 years old. These tall trees are descendants of the original forest of the escarpment and many were just seedlings when development first took place in the early 1900s. Sadly the white oaks in particular are in decline, difficult to grow, sensitive to pollution and not readily available in nurseries. The White Oaks Project is initiating an oak nursery using acorns from this original oak stand. Anyone living in Ward 14 who is interested in this program is urged to contact Councillor Howard Joy at 392-7912.

## WANT TO LEAD A TFN OUTING?

The TFN is not unique, but I've never found a group MORE willing to share their knowledge so freely. I have drawn from this storehouse, giving a bit back where I could. The TFN, however, is a volunteer organization and as such can only be run by active members. New leaders for outings are always welcome. So, if you remember a walk you were on, the interesting things you saw, and how grateful you were to learn about them, you could volunteer to do a similar walk. We (the TFN membership) would all be grateful. As well, participation in walks is going up which has led people to say, "There should be a co-leader on well attended outings." I agree but this is tough to co-ordinate via the phone. So if you have never led a walk, would like to but are a bit timid, you could approach someone who has, and ask if they need a co-leader on their next outing. See where this all leads!

Ken Cook

Call 968-6255 and leave a message with your name and telephone number.

## TRAIL ALONG LAKE ONTARIO AWAITS

Marshes, marinas, bluffs and beaches are among the delights awaiting walkers and cyclists on Ontario's newest trail, the 325 kilometre Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail. Meandering from Hamilton to Trenton, the trail connects dozens of parks, museums and attractions as diverse as Toronto's CN Tower and Whitby's Lynde Shores Conservation Area.

Born out of a 1988 Royal Commission that discovered folks prefer a clean, green and accessible waterfront to a lakeside industrial zone, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust was established to co-ordinate conservation and regeneration efforts while developing the trail. Winding through some of the most densely populated areas of the nation, the Waterfront Trail is not all pretty parklands. Based on the premise that people who experience the waterfront and enjoy it first hand will develop the passion to protect it, the Waterfront Trail is designed to get people exploring the north shore of Lake Ontario. Although the Waterfront Trail has many scenic stretches, it also passes industrial lands and urban centres; it is not a wilderness hiking trail like the Bruce Trail.

*The Waterfront Trail: Explore Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow Along the Shores of Lake Ontario* is a useful, 400 page guide containing maps, directions, distances and many practical tips for wheelchair accessibility, parking, admission fees and hours. It costs \$19.95 and may be ordered by phone from the Waterfront Regeneration Trust at (416) 326-6702.

extracted from an article by Betty Zywatkauskas in the GLOBE & MAIL, May 31, 1995

## TOMMY THOMPSON PARK WILDLIFE HOTLINE

Call MTRCA, 24 hours a day, at 416-661-6600, extension 233 and listen to the recorded information. To record your own experiences, push "5" on your touch tone phone at any time. Information related to birds, mammals, plants, herptiles, fish, insects or nature in general is welcome. Please include the date and time of your observation, details, your name and phone number. The hotline information message will be updated prior to each weekend.

Conservation and economic development are mutually dependent. The conservationist isn't in love with insects, for instance. He sees their need. Beneficial insects serve as predators and parasites of more serious pests. If they are indiscriminately wiped out by pesticides, the results can be catastrophic. The number of pesticide-resistant insects and mites has doubled in twelve years.

extracted from PASSPORT TO ANYWHERE: THE STORY OF LARS-ERIC LINDBLAD, Times Books, 1983

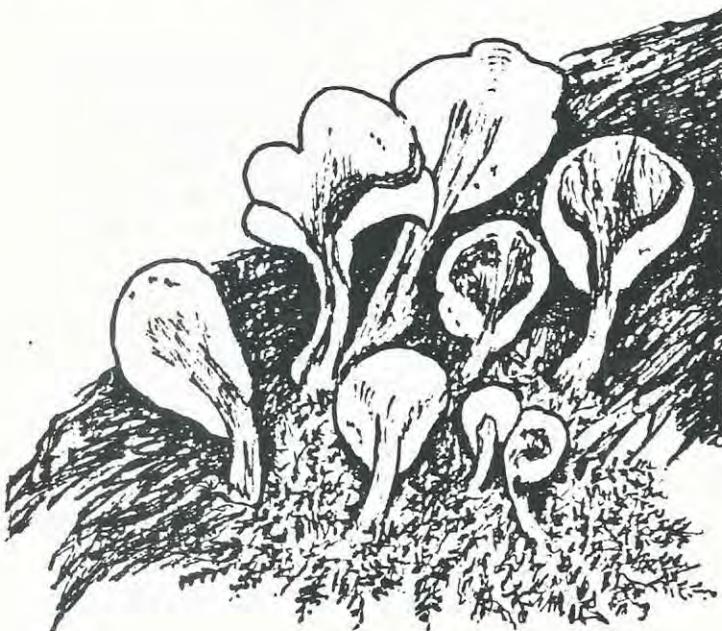
## TWO CONTRASTS

To enthusiasts the world over the finding of something new in relation to their hobby is most exciting. In the Upper French River region last summer, the forests were bursting with fungi and I discovered two species I had never seen before. The first belongs to the Chanterelles (the Cantharellaceae), the second to the Ascomycetes, specifically the Earth-Tongues group, and was truly *A Find*. (Jack Parkin, that doyen of mycological information, says he has only come across it once in his life. So I indeed struck gold!) These specimens could not have been more disparate in size and colour and each is weirdly beautiful.



**Scaly Vase Chanterelle, *Gomphus floccosus***

Fruiting body: Up to 8" by 1/2" to 1/4" wide at base, first forming a cylindrical body, then expanding to a deeply funnel-shaped cap, 1 1/2" to 6" across and hollow nearly to the bottom; brilliant yellow-orange cap surface, first smooth, then coarsely scaly; spore-bearing under-surface buffy-ochre longitudinal wrinkles; single to caespitose clusters in mixed woods. Stipe: not distinct from cap, white at base, buff above, bruising brownish. Flesh: firm, whitish. Spore deposit: dull ochre. Season: June to September. Edibility: not recommended. Contains indigestible acids.



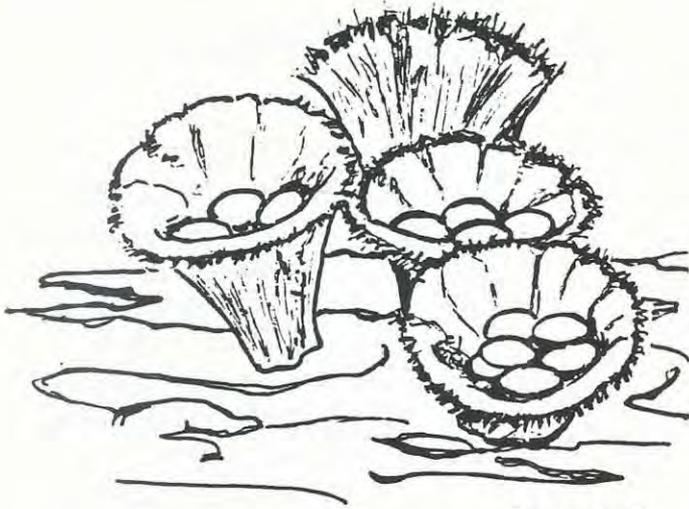
**Velvety Fairy Fan, *Spathularia velutipes***

Fruiting body: 1/2" - 2" high, forming a fan or spoon-shaped head, irregular or lobed, on a narrow stem; cream or buff; clustered on decaying logs in pine woods. Stipe: 1/8" to 1/4" long, russet-brown, velvety. Flesh: soft. Spore deposit: white. Season: August to September. Edibility: not edible.

Eva Davis

## BIRD'S NESTS AND EARTHSTARS

The Nidulariales -- Bird's Nest fungi -- are smaller than a dime and resemble their common name. The "nest", covered at first, matures to reveal the "eggs" -- the peridioles -- that enclose the spores, which are ejected when hit by raindrops. In *Cyathus striatus* the eggs are attached to the nest by a thin cord which wraps around nearby stems upon ejection and holds them in place until they burst and release the spores.



Eva Davis

Bird's Nest Fungus  
*Cyathus striatus*

Fruiting body: generally  $\frac{1}{2}$ "- $\frac{5}{16}$ " across,  $\frac{1}{4}$ "- $\frac{1}{2}$ " high, resembling a goblet, outer surface with hairs near margin, brownish to dark gray, grooved inner wall; containing several gray "eggs" at first concealed by a membrane over the goblet; eggs flattened and attached by an elastic cord; nests scattered on wood debris. Widely distributed, particularly during wet periods.

Spores: ellipsoid, smooth, colourless, notched at one end.

Season: July to October.

Edibility: not edible.

The Earthstars are closely related to the puffballs. Like them, they have two walls, the outer one of which splits and curves back, forming the rays on which the "bowl" or "fruiting body" sits.



Eva Davis

Collared Earthstar  
*Geastrum triplex*

Fruiting body: medium to large, brownish, round spore case, 2"-4" across, with wide, star-like rays whose upper surface form a saucer for the spore sac, with the outer rays -- four to eight in number -- becoming recurved at maturity to lift the sac from the ground; no stalk attached to spore sac, but the sac has a slightly raised "mouth" (for the escape of spores); grouped to scattered on hardwood forest floors. Widely distributed.

Spores: brown, warted, globose.

Season: August to October, but specimens can linger on, without decaying, for months.

Edibility: not edible.

Eva Davis □

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## IN THE NEWS

### WHAT YOU CAN AND CAN'T DO WITH YOUR TREES

The benefits of having trees in your yard are numerous. In the summer, trees provide shade, cool your house and keep parked cars and city streets more comfortable. If the trees are deciduous, they will shed their leaves in the fall and still allow the sun's warmth and light to reach your house during the cold winter months. Planted strategically on the north side, coniferous trees and even bare deciduous trees will slow howling winds and help reduce heating costs. Trees also help filter air pollution, reducing dust and noxious gases in the atmosphere. If a tree is your own, you can do what you want with it -- within limits. When an apparently healthy tree suddenly takes a turn for the worse, the perpetrator is often a well-meaning homeowner. If you are landscaping, be careful not to raise the soil level around the tree more than four or five inches, because this will bury the roots, resulting in damage to the tree. When building, fence off as much of the "drip line" (the area beneath the spread of the branches) as possible to keep contractors' equipment and materials from compacting the soil. Compaction destroys the porosity of the soil and robs it of air, causing the roots to suffocate. Also bear in mind that excavation of any kind, whether it be for landscaping, putting in an underground irrigation system, repairing pipes or installing a walkway or parking pad, will harm the roots of a nearby tree. This is because a high proportion of a tree's water and nutrient-absorbing roots are located in the top eight inches of soil.

extracted from an article in REAL ESTATE NEWS, 28 July 1995

### FOXES LURED BY RABIES BAITS

If you spot an unusual plastic container in the woods, don't touch it. A small portion of live rabies virus may be inside. Thousands of these "rabies baits," designed to inoculate foxes, are being distributed by volunteers in wooded areas and creek valleys from Durham Region to Hamilton. Each plastic container holds beef tallow or fat, fish oil and chicken essence to entice foxes to eat the rabies vaccine inside. People are advised not to touch the baits as "there is a small risk" because of the live rabies virus they contain. If someone is exposed to the bait inside the container he or she should contact a doctor. The bait won't harm a dog or cat. In fact most dogs will get the equivalent of a rabies shot that way. It's all part of an extensive rabies control program in operation for the past two years. Hundreds of thousands of these rabies baits have been scattered across the region by hand and by low-flying aircraft. Ontario is the rabies capital of Canada, with 85 per cent of all rabid animals found here. Of the roughly 1,500 confirmed rabid animals each year, foxes and skunks make up 66 percent while dogs and cats account for 10 per cent.

extracted from an article by Stephen Leahy in THE TORONTO STAR, 10 August 1995



## LOTS OF FRESH ARIA FOR BEES

Bees are found from the Arctic to the equator but when it comes to location there is one beehive without peer. It sits on the roof of the Paris Opera House overlooking the Seine, Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame Cathedral. It was the idea of Jean Paucton who works back-stage at the Opera. After taking a course in apiculture he searched for somewhere suitable to start. The Opera roof seemed a possibility. So he installed (10 years ago) a small hive there, with a queen and some worker bees. Within a week the hive was dripping honey. His boss was eventually convinced. Mr Paucton suggested the honey could be sold at the Opera souvenir shop - a deal was done. There are hundreds of licensed beehives in Paris, reputedly more productive than the out-of-town hives. Paris has hundreds of tree lined streets. There are abundant flower-lined balconies and many gardens. The Opera bees occupy a 3 km radius which includes a 47 hectare cemetery. The honey is richer than sunflower or canola honey, with a bouquet reminiscent of mint and lemon. These city bees have a predator free life, are virtually safe from pesticides and have a climate several degrees warmer than their local rural relations. Last year Mr Paucton collected 45 kilos of honey from his three Opera hives. Opera honey sells for \$15 per 125 gram jar, but what other honey so literally puts "culture" back into apiculture?

from an article in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, Jan. 14, 1995, as copied from the Guelph Field Naturalist, Vol. 25, No. 6, June-July 1995

## MASSIVE MUDSLIDE

At the south end of Beechgrove Drive west of the sewage treatment plant an enormous mudslide has occurred at the edge of the bluffs. The Metro Parks service believes that the mudslide occurred due to winter conditions which caused underground drainage pipes to back up. A stream (apparently back-wash from the water treatment plant) flows through East Point Park into an inlet pipe and out of the bluffs. It is believed that the inlet pipe, which is about three feet in diameter, was likely plugged with melting snow, ice and dirt causing the stream to go directly toward the bluffs. Metro staff are now trying to sort out the exact cause and, if underground drainage did fail, who is responsible for repairing the damage to the bluffs.

extracted from an article in WEST HILL TIMES, April 1995

Just missing my head  
a glossy chestnut's falling.  
Treasure of childhood.

Haiku by Arthur Wade

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 IN THE NEWS (Cont'd)

## AIRPORT GIVES LOCAL COYOTES REPRIEVE

Pearson International Airport (PIA) has stopped baiting and shooting coyotes and promised to consult with animal groups when dealing with wildlife in the future. There will be no shooting of coyotes unless one is on the runway and becomes a threat to planes and passengers. If the airport experiences problems with wildlife in the future, it has promised to consult with animal groups before implementing any management programs. Without extensive media coverage of the coyote issue, Transport Canada would probably not have met with animal activists to discuss changes in wildlife policy.

extracted from an article by Lidia Ferrari in THE ETOBICOKE GUARDIAN, April 12, 1995

## AIRPORT COYOTES WON'T BE SHOT

A program to bait-and-shoot coyotes at Pearson International Airport has been stopped - at least temporarily. Dogs and all-terrain vehicles will be used to move them off instead of shooting them.

extracted from an article in THE TORONTO STAR, April 13, 1995

## COYOTES ARE JUST A SPIT FROM DOWNTOWN

Who would have thought that you could find a beaver lodge and a coyote den in Toronto. Both are part of the remarkable urban wilderness that is evolving in Tommy Thompson Park, otherwise known as the Leslie Street Spit. Begun in the 1950s to expand harbour facilities, the spit has been used as a disposal site for sand and rubble from construction sites as well as silt dredged from the harbour. Now extending five kilometres into Lake Ontario, the landfill has been colonized by a wide variety of flora and fauna including spectacular gull colonies. To help visitors to learn more about this waterfront wilderness, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has created the Spit Cart, a mobile nature display tucked into a wagon that looks like a hot dog vendor's cart but is filled instead with bits of bones, fur, nests and other natural artifacts from the park.

Old rubble piles provide ideal den sites for coyotes who find ample meals among the colonies of nesting gulls and geese. Although the chance of spotting a coyote, especially in broad daylight, is rare, the unmistakable evidence of their presence has been found in both footprints and dens, strewn with gull carcasses. Other rubble masses buried below the frost line have turned out to be ideal living quarters for snakes. Eastern garter and northern brown snakes are most commonly found here but northern red bellied and northern water snakes have also been spotted in the park. The bird life is both richly varied and prolific.

extracted from an article by Betty Zyvatkaukas in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, June 21, 1995

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## BOTANY WINS ON HOME TURF

When it comes to the greening of lawns, U of T is at the cutting edge. To respect environmental concerns, the University has largely turfed out the use of weed killers, pesticides and other chemicals. But now there's a rub. The grass was greener, some say, when it was poisoned. U of T began phasing out chemicals and controlling weeds and pests in 1992, when it moved to implement what people in the landscape business call integrated pest management. That's basically trying to fight off weeds and bugs on grass and shrubs by selecting hardier strains and strengthening plants so they can survive without chemical agents. Front campus is particularly weed prone because during much of the year the turf is ground down by the short cuts taken by students and staff and by the pounding of soccer players. Rather than being doused in chemicals, front campus is aerated (punched full of small holes to let water and air in), reseeded with hardier strains of grass and fed a nutritious top-dressing. Lawns have an interesting history. Lawns first grew popular during the early Industrial Revolution, when newly wealthy entrepreneurs were looking for highly visible ways of showing off their wealth. Lawns fit the bill because they were public and very hard to maintain. The pest management program was planned by a committee that includes forestry, zoology, botany, geology, the Division of the Environment and the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.

extracted from an article by Alfred Holden in the University of Toronto's THE BULLETIN, June 12, 1995

## DREDGING OF LAKE REJECTED BY METRO

Residents and Metro politicians are teaming up to have Lake Ontario sand dredging plans scuttled before money is spent on 'unnecessary' environmental tests. Metro councillors agreed to urge the provincial government to reject the application by Windsor-based Bedrock Resources Inc. on the grounds that the operation will stir up toxins that threaten Metro's drinking water supply. The company plans to take sand from the bottom of an 8 km-long section of the lake between Scarborough and Ashbridges Bay in Toronto for use in concrete. Concerns have been raised, however, about potential contamination from ammonia, oil and cancer-causing PCBs which have been found in sand samples taken from the area around the proposed dredging site. Bedrock stands to make \$1 billion over the hundred year life of the project. The company's president maintains that tests performed for Bedrock show the project is not only environmentally safe, it will reap financial rewards for the province. The site has been subjected to rigorous testing over the five years since the project was proposed.

extracted from an article by Stuart Green in THE SCARBOROUGH MIRROR, June 3-4, 1995



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 IN THE NEWS (Cont'd)

### 'LITTLE OLD LADIES' MAJOR ROADBLOCK

It was with some trepidation that members of the Riverfront Conservation Association of Carleton Place took on a battery of opponents: city hall, a real estate developer, the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, an engineering consultant and a lawyer or two to save the town's natural waterfront. Before the hearing last November, the group decided to represent themselves, since an estimate of legal help came in at \$15,000. And this for a group that barely had 15 cents. So, three days before the hearing, they spread a mess of papers on the floor, combed through piles of documents, and put together a brief with a borrowed computer printer. Among the volunteers was Agnes Iveson, who has a crackerjack memory for dates, regulations and local history. This is a good thing, since guarding the waterfront is a job that will last as long as there's a river. In a ruling from the Ontario Municipal Board a proposal to build 45 houses and eight apartments on a riverfront site was rejected. Board member Barbara Heidenreich accepted almost every one of the association's arguments. "The Board had no evidence that any consideration had been given to natural features, wooded areas, swamps on the site or even that the nature and porosity of the soil was known." The town wanted two access roads, including one that would cut a portion off O-Kee-Lee Park, an unofficial bird sanctuary and wetland. Part of the building site is also in a flood plain and would need raising by at least a metre. Heidenreich said the town of Carleton Place placed "a splendid faith in government" but concluded: "There was abundant faith but a decided lack of evidence on this matter."

extracted from an article by Kelly Egan in CITIZEN, June 7, 1995

### MUTANT GULLS IN HARBOUR

Nearly half the nestling herring gulls in a study of Hamilton Harbour have genetic mutations that researchers believe are caused by contaminants in the water. The mutations found by a McMaster University study are being attributed to a class of chemicals called polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which are at high levels in the harbour. The study says the findings "should be viewed as an early warning signal" of the damage toxic chemicals can cause to mammals, including humans. "This is genetic damage, and so we should be concerned."

article from THE GLOBE AND MAIL, June 10, 1995

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...the inescapable truth is that the battle to save endangered species and their habitats never ends. On the front lines of conservation there are no time-outs, no shortcuts, and few final victories.

extracted from REFLECTIONS OF EDEN by Birute M.E. Galdikas, published by Little Brown and Company, 1995.

## GANG DESTROYS YARD IN REVENGE

Last week my parents were awakened by loud cries coming from the driveway. Looking outside they discovered a gang of seven or so sitting comfortably on the hood of their car. Even when my father approached, the gang refused to remove. They each had huge dark circles around their eyes and very hairy faces... Now that you are probably picturing a scary group of knife-waving thugs terrifying an innocent family, I'll tell you the most interesting part of this story. The gang was seven raccoons who, upon finding the remains of another raccoon on the bottom of the car (hit while already dead on the highway), decided to take revenge. When my father finally managed to scare them away, and this was not easy, the real party began. In the morning, our yard was in shambles; pots overturned, plants dug up and the mesh covering our pond torn in two. The only evidence of the culprits were the tiny paw prints that made trails throughout the garden. A line from an old movie comes to mind: 'You mess with me, you mess with my entire family.' Whoever it was that said animals are a lot like people knew what they were talking about.

an article by Lisa Machado in WEST HILL TIMES, July 1995

## DUCK POPULATION RISES

North America's duck population is at a 15-year high due to ample rains and helpful conservation practices, says the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The number of breeding birds rose 10 per cent to nearly 36 million in a survey area covering 5,000 hectares across Canada, Alaska and north-central United States. Record numbers of canvasbacks, redheads and gadwalls were reported and the breeding mallard population rose 18 per cent to more than eight million, the highest since 1972.

from Digest in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, 22 July 1995

## TONE DEAF

Songbirds living near British motorways are losing the ability to produce their true natural mating and territorial songs because of the discordant roar of traffic that has confused their auditory senses, the British Ecological Society announced. Birds, ranging from wrens and blue tits to woodcocks and pheasant, are so off-key that they cannot ward off intruders from their territory or attract a mate, according to research published in the society's journal. The report quotes a Dutch study that says noise pollution also affects the reproduction of birds living within five kilometres of major highways by drowning out the chirps and coos to prospective partners.

from Earthweek by Steve Newman in THE TORONTO STAR, 22 July 1995



IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

## WOODPECKERS PECK HOLES IN US SHUTTLE TIMETABLE

Two yellow-shafted flickers have grounded the US space shuttle. A satellite-delivery launch had to be postponed after the woodpeckers drilled 105 holes in the insulating foam of Discovery's huge fuel tank. The shuttle will have to be hauled from the launch pad back to the hangar for patching, at a cost of nearly \$100,000 (US). NASA, the US space agency, has convened a Bird Investigation Review and Deterrent team - yes, the acronym is BIRD -- to study humane ways of dealing with the woodpeckers. The Kennedy Space Centre on Florida's Atlantic coast is in a wildlife refuge.

extracted from an article in THE TORONTO STAR, 9 June 1995

## DAMAGE FROM OZONE DEPLETION

Attention is being directed to UV-B, the type of ultraviolet radiation that will reach ground level with greater intensity as the ozone shield perforates. Peak global ozone depletion is expected to occur during the next three years, after which the levels of ozone-depleting chemicals should slowly decrease, resulting in a gradual recovery of the ozone layer in about 50 years. Several trends of interest to plant people are already evident. Of the approximately 300 plants studied thus far, about half are sensitive to ultraviolet radiation. There's a striking range of sensitivity among different species and among cultivars of the same species. The most sensitive include members of the pea and bean families, the squash and melon families, especially cucumbers, and the mustard and cabbage families. Effects can include impaired photosynthesis and leaf chemistry, plant stunting, increased branching, leaf discoloration, reduced biomass and seed yield. Fungal infections appear to increase with greater UV-B exposure. One study of cucumbers exposed to 12 per cent ozone loss showed a reduction of leaf size of about 20 per cent, soybeans showed chlorosis on the leaves, indicating destruction of chlorophyll. Flower production and viability of pollen were also affected. Water-stressed plants seemed to have lower UV-B sensitivity than well-watered ones, as did phosphorous-deficient plants. We should all become activists, pressuring government and industry to speed up elimination of ozone-depleting chemicals. For further information, contact: The Skies Above Foundation, 2701 Seaview Road, Victoria, BC V8N 1K7. Fax (604) 472-0700. E-mail: ub451@freenet.victoria.bc.ca

extracted from an article by Des Kennedy in THE GLOBE AND MAIL, 29 July 1995

Tall stalks of barley,  
all bowing in unison,  
greet golden fall morn.

Haiku by J. Kenneth Cook

## DUCK HUNTERS URGED TO GET THE LEAD OUT

Every year waterfowl hunters discharge about 2,000 tonnes of lead into the Canadian environment, a new government study says. Every year about 55 million game ducks migrating from Canada swallow one or more of the spent pellets that missed their less lucky feathered friends. And every year somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 waterfowl die of acute lead poisoning because they have either been hit and wounded by lead shot or swallowed it. Those statistics are contained in the first-ever nationwide review on the environmental impact of lead shot, prepared by two biologists for the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). The review is the strongest statement to date on lead shot from the service, a federal government department often criticized by conservationists for its cautious approach on the issue. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters argues that current supplies of steel shot are ballistically inferior to lead and will result in more birds being crippled than are currently poisoned. The CWS study identified waterfowl as the species most severely affected because they swallow the spent lead pellets, mistaking them for grit used to digest their food. When pellets get stuck in the gizzard, the lead dissolves and poisons the bird. Not only do hundreds of thousands of birds die from lead poisoning every year but also a further 7 to 10 million birds are weakened, disoriented and emaciated by sub-lethal doses. According to CWS wing-bone analysis of dabbling ducks, Ontario waterfowl suffer the country's second-highest level of lead contamination and all parts of the province experience a serious problem. CWS research in western Canada also confirmed a serious problem for birds who prey on waterfowl and scavengers who eat contaminated carcasses.

extracted from an article by Mary MacNutt in THE TORONTO STAR, 2 July 1995

## BLOODSUCKERS TO THE RESCUE

The use of leeches in medicine dates back to ancient Egypt. They fell out of use in the 1840s, when science produced better methods and medicines. In recent years, however, surgeons have found that the small invertebrate can help restore circulation after delicate micro-surgery. In addition to the bloodsucking ability of the leeches, they emit, through their saliva, a natural blood thinner, which also improves circulation.

extracted from an article by David Cannella in THE TORONTO STAR, 13 November 1994

DO NOT TREAD, MOSEY, HOP, TRAMPLE, STEP, PLOD, TIPTOE, TROT, TRAIPE, MEANDER, CREEP, PRANCE, AMBLE, JOG, TRUDGE, MARCH, STOMP, TODDLE, JUMP, STUMBLE, SPRINT OR WALK ON PLANTS

A sign in a high alpine meadow on Mount Rainier in Washington.

extracted from "Silly Signs" in THE LONDON FREE PRESS, 24 December 1994

IN THE NEWS (cont'd)

### OUTDOOR EDUCATION SCRAPPED

The North York school board reaffirmed a decision to cut outdoor education classes for Grade 5 students. The trips to Mono Cliffs and Bolton Outdoor Education Centres were eliminated during the recent round of budget cuts, saving the board \$100,000.

extracted from an article in the NORTH YORK MIRROR, 20-21 May 1995

### CONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION COMES AT COST TO US ALL

We need to reconsider what is essential to our existence. Not many generations ago, consumption referred to a terrible wasting away of the body. Today, consumption in the industrialized countries of the world is leading to a wasting away of spiritual values, communities, families and ecosystems. If endless consumption is the measure of progress, what society will ever stop to ask: "In a finite world, is it desirable or even possible to increase consumption forever?" No one opposes progress so we will never ask "how much is enough?" Once people took pride in a product that could be used and handed down from person to person or even through generations. Today, style and fashion are the selling points, not durability. Today we can choose from 25,000 products in supermarkets, including more than 200 breakfast cereals.

extracted from an article by David Suzuki in LONDON FREE PRESS, 22 July 1995

### TORONTO ISLAND AIRPORT EXPANSION (WITH JETS)

Tens of thousands of residents and millions of visitors value Toronto's central waterfront as an important economic and life-quality asset. It would be ruined by the substantial increase in noise, events and fumes that island airport expansion would bring.

extracted from a letter written by David Wilson to NOW MAGAZINE, 29 June -5 July 1995

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A selfish and blind preoccupation with material interests has caused us to reduce this cosmos, so marvellous to him with eyes to see it, to a hard matter-of-fact place. Soon the horse and the pig on the one hand and wheat and potatoes on the other will replace hundreds of thousands of animals and plants given us by God.

from SAILING THROUGH CHINA by Paul Theroux, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1984 (the words are a reflection of Abbé David as he travelled through China as a naturalist in the 1860s)

## ONTARIO BIRDS AT RISK

### Bobolinks

Recent studies on Bobolinks showed that it would be better to protect a series of low quality hay fields managed by part-time farmers (because they mow less often and use low amounts of chemical fertilizer), than a few high quality hay fields managed by full-time farmers. Even though Bobolinks are still selecting the high quality hay fields ('optimal' habitat by human standards), low quality hay fields ('suboptimal' habitat by human standards) support higher densities of Bobolinks, and produce more fledglings per hectare and per individual than high quality hay fields.

### Red-shouldered Hawk

The Red-shouldered Hawk Survey was established in 1991 by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Rare Breeding Bird Program to determine the population status of Red-shouldered Hawks in Ontario. A substantial decline in numbers of Red-shouldered Hawks (*Buteo lineatus*) overwintering in the United States was first noticed in the 1950s, and was subsequently supported by an analysis of Christmas Bird Count data from 1950 to 1969. Declines on both a national and provincial scale were shown in Canadian Red-shouldered Hawk populations as well. However, data collected more recently from hawk migration counts suggest that although the Red-shouldered Hawk is fairly uncommon in Ontario, populations are now stable or increasing. Preliminary analyses of Red-shouldered Hawk survey data also indicate a stable population. The fact that our results and those from migration counts both indicate that Ontario Red-shouldered Hawk populations are stable gives us hope for the species' continued survival.

### Loggerhead Shrike

The Loggerhead Shrike population in Ontario is continuing to decline. Loggerhead Shrikes prey primarily on grasshoppers and other large insects. A noticeable decline in large insects (grasshoppers and dragonflies) was observed in 1993 and 1994. The current situation in Ontario may be similar to a period in the 1970s when populations of western shrikes declined significantly due to a reduction in grasshopper numbers with increased pesticide use.

extracted from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists Ontario Birds At Risk Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 2, Winter 1994/95

□

On a warm night, the surface of the road attracts swarms of tiny insects. If you crouch down at the side of the highway you can see millions of minute creatures spreading off into the distance -- a seemingly endless tempting meal for a hungry animal.

from "Amigo dillo" by Dilys Breese in BBC WILDLIFE, Vol. 13, No. 7, July 1995

## LOST TORONTO FLOWER

Pitcher plants (family Sarraceniaceae) make their food by photosynthesis, but grow in areas where they get little nitrogen from the soil. This is supplied by the insects which the leaves trap. The common northern pitcher plant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) grows east of the Rockies in marshes and swamps from Labrador to Florida. It is the provincial flower of Newfoundland.

The lower edges of its heavily veined red or green leaves fold together to form a tube, the top edges are open to form a spout, hence the name. Rain collects in these containers. The thick hairs at the mouth of the leaf all point downwards. Honey glands, attracting insects, cover the inner surface. The hairs trap them and they slide to the base of the pitcher where they drown and are eventually digested by the plant.

The single globe-shaped bloom, with five broad petals and five broad sepals, grows at the end of a long, slender stalk. The style carries a large, five-rayed, umbrella-like cap. The flower is a curious combination of deep brick-red and purple and the petals give the appearance of having been lacquered.

When found in profusion these stiffly beautiful, sculpted growths look like sproutings from an alien world, yet they are as much a part of northern bogs as that quintessential Canadian, the loon.



Eva Davis

Comment: According to "The Natural History of the Toronto Region" by J.H. Faull, published by the Canadian Institute, 1913, up to about 1905 there was a bog in Swansea (just west of High Park) in which pitcher plants grew. □

## "SWEET-TOOTHED" DOWNY WOODPECKER

At my place in the country, five miles north of Cobourg, I have hummingbird feeders hanging in the trees near the front windows at the balcony where they make hummingbird watching very easy. The Northern Orioles came to feed at the feeders frequently too, but, to my surprise, as I watched two days ago, a male downy woodpecker landed on the same feeder. Clinging there, it fed for two or three minutes, then it flew to a nearby maple tree but returned to the feeder almost immediately. Since then, in the last two days I have seen it at the same feeder a number of times. Both male and female downies are frequently visible in the nearby trees and at the bird feeders with the bird seed in them in the spring, but I have never seen them feeding at the hummingbird feeders until now.

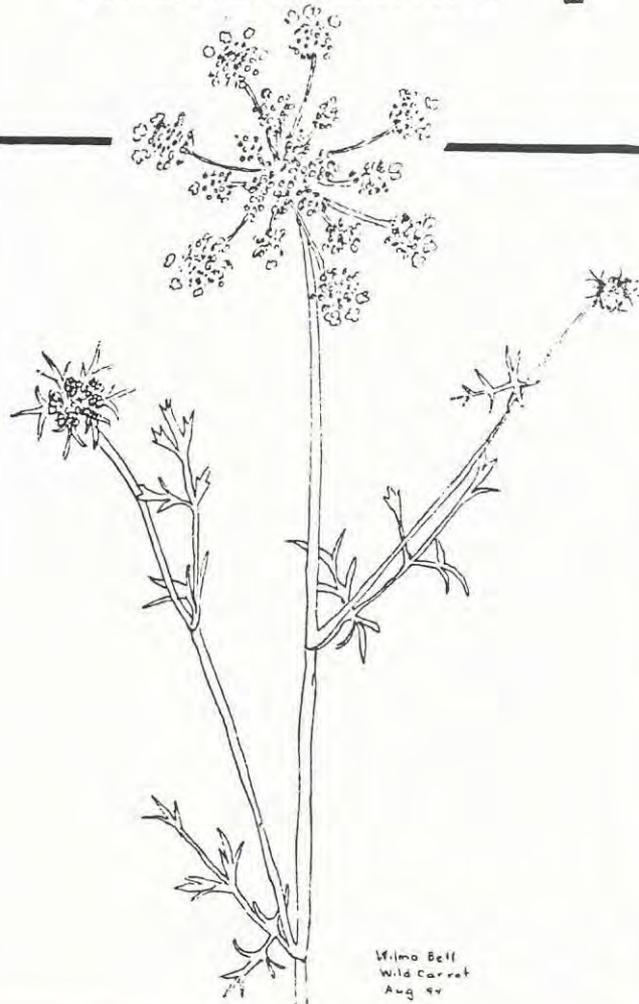
Has anyone else seen this behaviour in downy woodpeckers, or is it possible that this particular male downy has a "sweet tooth"?

Barbara Edwardes-Evans  
Cobourg, Ontario, June 2, 1995

□

WILD CARROT or  
Queen Anne's Lace  
is the original  
of the cultivated  
carrot, according to  
Britton & Brown's  
ILLUSTRATED FLORA  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
AND CANADA.

The drawing of  
this familiar  
introduced Toronto  
plant was made by  
Wilma Bell.



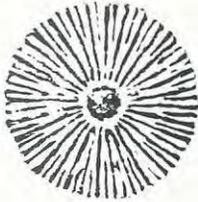
Wilma Bell  
Wild Carrot  
Aug 94

## NATURE SURPRISES

Nature never ceases to surprise. One morning not long ago I looked out of my window on rising and saw a rather large number of "white spots" in the lawn. I thought some of the "nuisance" wildlife had spread their treasures there but on closer investigation the "spots" turned out to be a little crowd of fungi. By noon they were disappearing, becoming darker, becoming limp, and by evening had become a colony of black pellets.

However, that wasn't the end. As the days went on, the crowd became more numerous - the members covered more of the grass area and with remarkable speed moved into and took over the portulaca bed

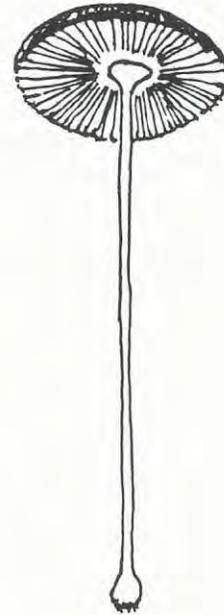
-- each morning with a different pattern of growth, inhabiting a slightly different space.



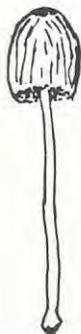
Cap from above  
Ridged texture

This was no fly-by-night thing -- or was it? -- so I decided I had to find out what they were. As they were quite distinctive it didn't take long to identify them as *Coprinus plicatilis*

(*Copri'nus plica'tilis*). They are very fragile little fungi, caps 1.0 to 2.5 cm across and almost translucent, furrowed, pale beige in colour and with a brownish boss at the centre of the cap. The gills are joined to a collar at the apex of the stipe and are stained with black spores. This particular little coprinus withers rather than autodigests (melts to a black liquid).

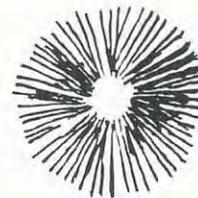


From below



Immature

Why did it take 30 years for them to find my garden? Possibly because I had a tree cut down, bought top soil to repair the mess and changed the environment somewhat. Whatever the reason, this invasion has given me pleasure, amusement and interest.



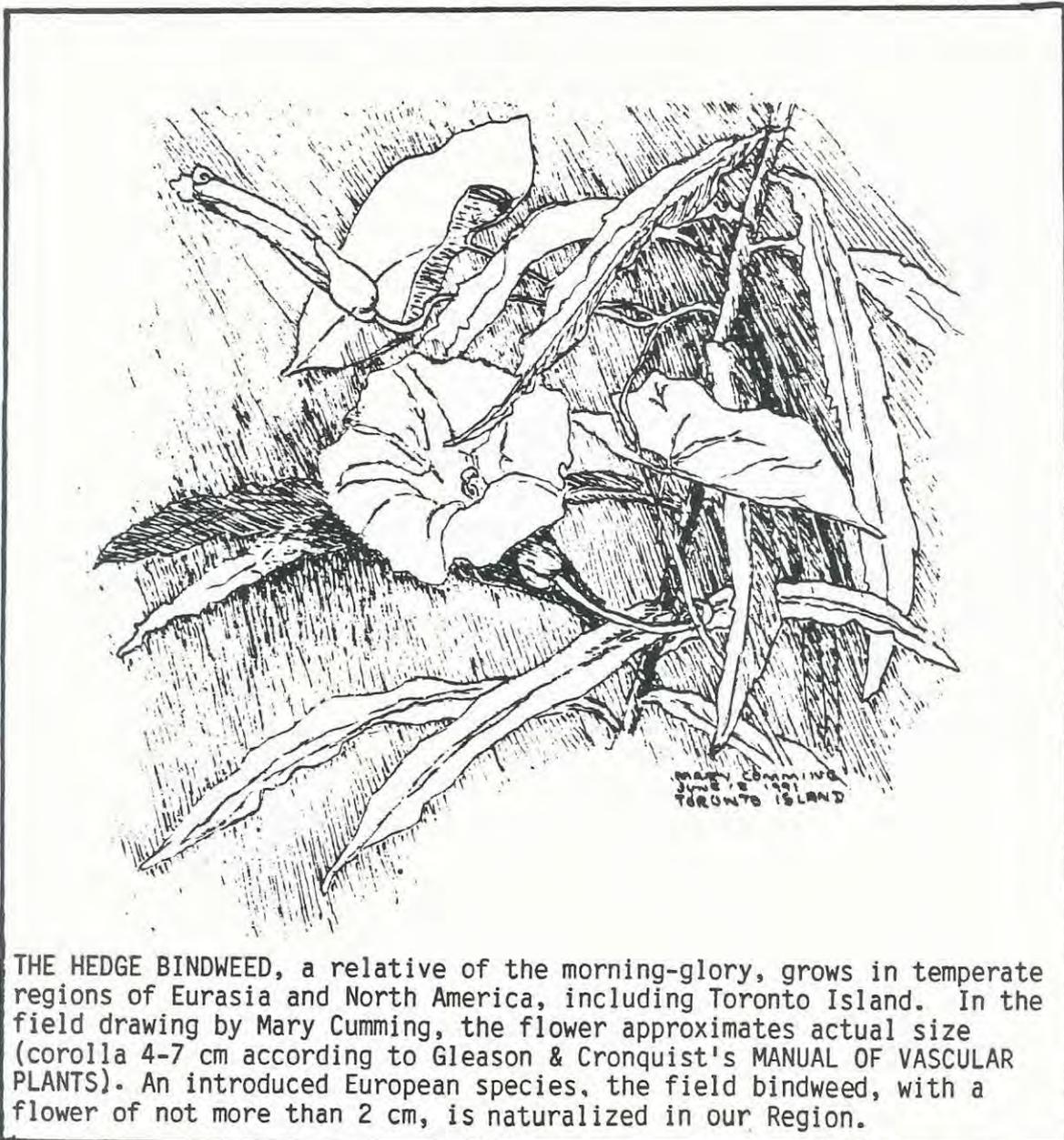
Spore print

A JAMAICAN MYSTERY SOLVED

On a February visit to Runaway Bay, Jamaica, I was awakened every morning to what sounded like a Northern Cardinal. This wouldn't be unusual at home in Scarborough, but was rather unexpected in Jamaica. Finally, after a couple of days the mystery was solved when I identified the culprit -- a Northern Mockingbird! He had probably learned the calls further north in the summer before migrating to Jamaica for the winter. Throughout the week he continued to serenade me with his cardinal calls every morning, sometimes throwing in a series of other calls including a Killdeer for good measure!

Morris Sorensen

□



THE HEDGE BINDWEED, a relative of the morning-glory, grows in temperate regions of Eurasia and North America, including Toronto Island. In the field drawing by Mary Cumming, the flower approximates actual size (corolla 4-7 cm according to Gleason & Cronquist's MANUAL OF VASCULAR PLANTS). An introduced European species, the field bindweed, with a flower of not more than 2 cm, is naturalized in our Region.

## THE WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

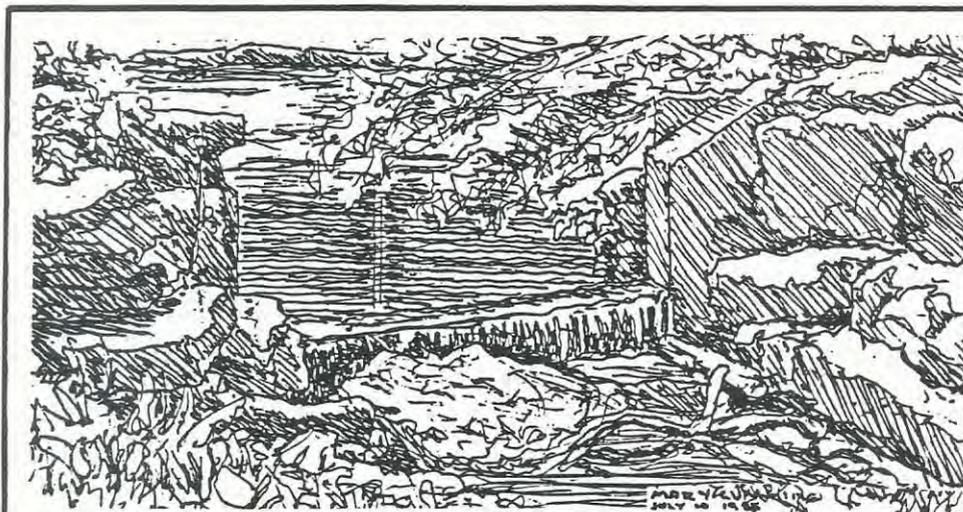
October 1994, Toronto

High pressure areas dominated the weather across most of the continent this month, making it warm, dry, and calm in Toronto. It was the warmest October since 1991, but the mean maximum downtown of  $15.0^{\circ}\text{C}$  was the highest since 1984. Downtown was frost-free, with a monthly minimum of  $3.2^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Sunshine hours were considerably above normal at 183.5, the most since 1966 which had 188.6 hours. Average wind speeds were near record lows for October both at Toronto Island and at Pearson Airport. (This extends the light-wind trend at Toronto Island into its forty-fifth consecutive month.) Both stations recorded their lowest peak gust on record, 48 km/h at the Island and 52 km/h at Pearson. The medium-term drought conditions affecting ground water in our area intensified, as October had the least rain since 1984, with 33.4 mm downtown and 27.4 mm at Pearson Airport.

The typical pattern for the month was for a large high pressure system accompanied by slightly cool temperatures to slowly move eastward, then yield to warm weather and eventually a cold front which brought only light showers. This having passed, another large high would move in. Such a zonal pattern has firmly established itself this fall, with only a few slight deviations. Thanksgiving weekend enjoyed a warm beginning but was interrupted by showers as one of the fronts moved through. A period of almost totally clear skies prevailed from October 10th (Thanksgiving Day) to October 17th, very unusual at any time of year in Toronto, which usually has more active weather even in mid-summer. Warm, sunny conditions prevailed as late as October 30th, and approaching rain held off long enough on the final day to allow the trick-or-treaters to do their rounds unimpeded.

Gavin Miller

□



WEIR ON  
GRENADIER  
POND  
by Mary  
Cumming  
July, 1995

## COMING EVENTS

### NATURE CLUBS

JIM BAILLIE MEMORIAL BIRD WALKS - sponsored by the Toronto Ornithological Club - aimed at the intermediate birder, but beginners are also welcome.

- Lake Migration at the Toronto Islands - Sat. Oct. 7 from 8 am (all day) with Hugh Currie as leader. Meet at the Toronto Islands ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. to catch the 8:15 am ferry to Hanlan's Point. Bring a lunch. Free to the public.

Ontario Field Ornithologists Annual General Meeting - Sat. Oct. 14 at 8 am at Nobleton Community Hall. Illustrated talks on "Birding Scenic North America" with Ron Scovell and "Ontario Nesting Birds" with George Peck; a bird quiz, and a sale of books and equipment are part of the program. The sale is open to OFO members only in the morning, but to non-members in the afternoon. The registration fee is \$30 and covers morning coffee and muffins, lunch, country style banquet and social hour snacks. For pre-registration forms, contact George Bryant at 416-223-6284. Space is limited.

Evening with Jon Dunn on warbler identification - Mon. Nov. 20 at 8 pm at Cardinal Carter Academy auditorium, 36 Greenfield Ave. sponsored by the Toronto Ornithological Club, Ontario Field Ornithologists and "Birders Journal". For more information call Ron Scovell at 416-744-3888. Tickets will be available for purchase at the October and November TFN meetings.

Toronto Entomologists' Association monthly meeting - Sat. Oct. 21 at 1 pm in the Planetarium Lecture Room. For further information call Alan Hanks at 905-727-6993.

Mycological Society of Toronto - meetings and forays - for details call HI-FUNGI.

Canadian Wildflower Society - Annual General Meeting - Oct. 14 at 10 am at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. East. For more details call 905-294-9075.

### EVENTS

"Going, going, gone?" - an exhibition of original Audubon prints and Wm. Pope watercolours of Ontario birds designated as vulnerable, threatened or endangered - until Sept. 30 at the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St.

North American Amphibian Monitoring Program (2nd annual general meeting) at the Canada Centre for Inland Waters in Burlington, Ont. - Sept. 27 to Oct. 1; also Task Force on Declining Amphibian Populations in Canada (5th annual meeting). Anyone interested in amphibians is encouraged to attend. These meetings are open to the public. For more information and registration form (fee is \$25 to cover costs of lunch and refreshments), write to NAAMP Conference, Sam Droege, National Biological Survey, 12100 Beech Forest Dr., Laurel, Maryland, U.S.A. 20708 or call 301-497-5840.

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## COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Spiders! an exhibition about spiders, organized by the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History, makes its only Canadian stop at the Royal Ontario Museum from Oct. 22, 1995 to Jan. 14, 1996; admission for adults \$8; seniors \$4; children \$4.

The Natural Garden is the topic of the 6th Great Canadian Gardening Conference - Oct. 27, 28, & 29 at the Civic Garden Centre. For a free conference brochure or to register please call the Civic Garden Centre, at 416-397-1340 or write to the CGC, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, North York M3C 1P2.

Citizens for a Lakeshore Greenway walk - Oct. 14 from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm. Meet at the corner of Brimley Rd. and Kingston Rd. to walk from Bluffer's Meadow to Rosetta McClain Park with Boris Mather.

Canadian Railroad Historical Association and Ontario Society for Industrial Archaeology walk - Oct. 22 at 1:30 pm. Meet at the corner of Don Mills Rd. and Greenbelt Dr. The walk, led by Ian Wheal, will take us into the East Don Valley.

Plants & Plant Lore - a presentation by the "Urban Naturalist" at Thomson Memorial Park in Scarborough from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. Bring lunch if you wish. This is a workshop about native and early European use of our wild plants for food and medicine. Pre-registration necessary. Fee \$5 per person (\$3 for TFN members). To register, please call Morris Sorensen at 755-6030.

Education/  
Travel

Natural History Tours with George Bryant-- Costa Rica, Texas, Crawford Lake, Algonquin Park, Credit Forks, Oak Ridges Moraine and others. Call George at 223-6284 or write for more details to 58 Fairmeadow Ave., Willowdale, Ont. M2P 1W7.

The Urban Naturalist - group outings or travel abroad. For more details write to the Urban Naturalist at 2085 Lawrence Ave. East, Suite 5-140, Scarborough, Ont. M1R 2Z4 or call 755-6030 (FAX 416-750-9461).

Rouge Park Fundraising Event - Thursday, Oct. 12 from 5:30 pm to 8 pm at the Scarborough Civic Centre. The evening will feature complimentary bar, hors d'oeuvres, music, entertainment and door prizes. Tickets are \$25 each and available by calling 661-6600 or 287-6843. A Rouge Park poster and logo will be unveiled, with the original work of art for the poster being auctioned off at the event and 400 signed, numbered Special Edition art prints offered for sale at \$100 each. Posters, T-shirts, postcards and other items bearing the new design and logo will also be sold, with something for every budget range.

## Black Creek Project -

- meeting - Wed. Oct. 4 at 6:30 pm.
- Garbage Cleanup - Sat. Oct. 14 from 10 am to 1 pm at Black Creek Park on the east side of Jane St. at Alliance Ave. opposite Smythe Park. Call Gavin at 921-9305 or Kristin at 661-6600, ex. 364 for more details.

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

20 College St., Suite 11  
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1K2

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