

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

JANUARY MEETING

Monday, January 6th, 1964, at 8:15 P.M.
at the
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

SPEAKER: Dr. Loris S. Russell, Life Sciences Division, Royal Ontario Museum

SUBJECT: "A Naturalist in Canadian Deserts" (with slides in colour)

We welcome Dr. Russell, who is a new senior staff member of the Museum, having recently arrived from Ottawa, where he had been head of the National Museum of Canada for a number of years.

January Outings

Saturday Claremont Conservation Area - Birds. Leader - Fred Bodsworth
Jan. 11 From Brougham (north of Pickering) travel east on Hwy. 7 about
10:00 AM 2.2 miles, to the fourth road north. Travel north about 1 mile
to the entrance. Bring lunch.

Saturday HUMBER RIVER - Trees Leader: Dr. Kenneth A. Armson
Jan. 25 Meet at the parking lot of Etienne Brule park on the east side
9:30 A M of the Humber River, on Old Mill Road, which is the first road
north of Bloor St. which crosses the river. The Kingsway and
Anglesey bus lines run from Bloor & Jane Sts. to the Old Mill,
just across the river from the park. Morning outing only.

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If the rest of your Newsletter is missing, it means that according to our records you have not yet paid your fee for 1963-64. Upon receipt of your renewal we will gladly send your missing Newsletter. Single membership, \$4.00; Family (adults), \$6.00; Corresponding (20 miles or more from the Museum), \$2.00. If you think there has been an error, please notify the secretary, as we could be wrong!

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BOTANY GROUP We have the great pleasure to present a magnificent photo-
Thursday graphic lecture entitled "Botanical Excursion to Vancouver
January 16th Island", by Mrs. Mary Ferguson. All T.F.N.C. members are
8 P.M. Sharp welcome. Place, as usual, Hodgson School, Davisville Ave.,
near Mt. Pleasant Rd. Parking entrance from Millwood Road.

President - R. F. Chittenden, HU 3-2636

JUNIOR CLUB Meet at the Museum theatre. The Fish, Reptiles & Amphibians
Saturday group will present films and speakers on their branch of
January 4th natural history. Adult visitors welcome.
10:00 A.M. Director - Robert MacLellan, HU 8-9346

Have we a lawyer in the Club, who could advise us on the wording of the new Constitution which is being prepared by the Executive Committee? If so, a telephone call to the secretary (HU 1-0260) would be much appreciated.

President - Dr. David Hoeniger

Secretary - Mrs. H. Robson
49 Craighurst Avenue,
Toronto 12 - HU 1-0260



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December 1963

Birdwatching in Tobago and Trinidad

by Robert W Trowern*

Last winter in looking about for a quiet, peaceful place to take a needed holiday, to get away from it all, particularly the cold and snow, my wife and I picked on Tobago and Trinidad. Our choice was equally determined, as our fellow field naturalists will realize, by the prospect of seeing new plants and birds, and of finding new subjects to photograph. Tobago and Trinidad, though both are politically parts of the Federation of the West Indies, are so close to South America as to have a nearly continental fauna and flora, and so far south as to be virtually tropical. These were the drawing cards.

Trinidad lies just north of the vast Orinoco River delta, only ten miles of sea separating its northwesterly point from Venezuela's Paria peninsula at approximately ten degrees latitude. The island is nearly square, measures 50 x 37 miles, and slopes up from beaches and lagoons to two big mountain ranges in the interior. The population of 800,000 is made up of a polyglot people of Negroes, Hindus, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and a sprinkling of Chinese. Religiously, they are divided amongst Christians, Moslems, Hindus and Buddhists. The Negroes are the descendants of slaves, brought to

*We are very pleased to have from Bob Trowern an account of his impressions of these far southern islands that have attracted other members of this club in the past and to which additional members are planning to go this winter. Bob's account and his list of birds seen will be a valuable guide to those who plan to go to these fascinating islands in the future.

the islands from Africa and dominated by white men for three or four centuries. The Hindus, the Moslems and Buddhists are descended from people transported from India as indentured labor. Possibly island hoppers, visiting only places chosen by travel agencies, might not sense the rising feeling of such people toward the white man. It was apparent to us in the brief span of a month.

Most of the West Indies are historically rich. It was Columbus, for instance, who gave Trinidad its name, calling it so for the three peaks sighted at first landfall. Plundered time and again by pirates and buccaneers, control and possession of the island was held formally by the Spaniards until it was captured by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595. Subsequently, it was seized and fought over by the French and the Dutch until the British reasserted control. It remained a colony of Great Britain until it joined the Federation of the West Indies in 1957.

We visited Trinidad and Tobago during the period February 14 - March 14, 1963, leaving Toronto on February 13 at 1.30 p.m. by T.C.A. DC-8 jet, stopping at Bermuda, Antigua and Barbados, arriving at Trinidad at 9.30.

Ornithologically Trinidad is a Mecca, being larger than Tobago and endowed with a very varied series of habitats, especially the three large swamps: the Caroni on the West, where I spent a wonderful day with a Hindu guide, the Nariva on the East and the Oropouche to the South, and the big hills in the interior. However, we found it very hot and humid and, though we did some exploring and saw some lovely sights, we must confess that we found Tobago more attractive and more liveable. We spent most of our time there.

Tobago is twenty-nine miles to the northeast of Trinidad and is comparatively small, being twenty-six miles long and seven and a half miles at its widest point. The southwest end of the island is low, being just above sea-level, but the northeasterly section has hills that rise to an altitude of 2000 feet, and which support a rain forest of almost impenetrable jungle. On a superbly beautiful beach of this northeasterly section stands the most attractive Bird of Paradise Inn. This is where we stayed and, consequently, most of our observations were made in that same region.

We tramped the roads, the beaches, the trails cut through the jungle with machettes, trails that have to be unceasingly renewed. We watched from our windows, sat on benches and on the sand. Everywhere we saw fascinating birds and glorious flowers. Everywhere we revelled in the ever-varying colors of forest and sea, in the never-ending scenic delights. Tobago was even more enthralling than we had been led to suppose.

The birds of Trinidad and Tobago, with the exception of the migrants from North America, are all South American. They were, therefore, exotic to us, this being our first visit so close to the equator. During the month I observed 105 species, of which 68 were new to my life list. According to Porter the entire list for the West Indies as a whole is 463 species, but this covers a very wide area.

Although I had studied up on the birds of the area to a certain extent I would have been very much at a loss had I not possessed The Birds of Trinidad and Tobago by G. A. C. Herklots. This has over 260 birds illustrated, 195 of which are in color, painted by the author. This book was published in 1961 by Collins of London. In comparison with the many splendid bird guide books which we can use in North America this book has certain limitations. The author did his own illustrating, working obviously from skins and for the most part depicting only the head and upper parts of the body. In many cases the coloring is not too good. Also, although the text is full and gives considerable detail, the author falls into the error, common to many popular guides, of being too definite about habitat and location. Both islands are

covered in large part by impenetrable jungle so that to state, after only seven years of observation, that, for example, the range of a certain species is on Tobago only, is, in my opinion, a mistake. However, it is all too easy to criticise. The labor of writing and illustrating this book was undoubtedly tremendous and, considering the probably limited sale and the high cost of reproducing colored plates, the publication must have been a costly one. It is a real contribution and I, for one, am thankful that such a book is available.

I also had James Bond's book, Birds of the West Indies, but it was of little value in this area since it covers the Bahamas and the Antilles to Granada whereas Trinidad and Tobago are south of this range. Another book of some use was the Avifauna of Trinidad and Tobago by Junge and Mees. A field check list of the birds of Trinidad and Tobago, prepared by the Florida Audubon Society, and a list made by Dr. Mary Tremaine, a biologist from New York, were most convenient to have.

For the flowers it was more difficult as there was no suitable book to be had though we did have some help from a beautifully illustrated pamphlet called Tropical Blooms. This is published by Dorothy and Bob Hargreaves and may be obtained from the Hargreaves Industrial, P.O., Box 4095, Portland 8, Oregon.

With the aid of these publications and of like-minded acquaintances and friends whom we met there we did very well.

A special attraction was to be found on Little Tobago, a mile-long island that could be seen from our bedroom window. About sixty years ago an Englishman, Sir William Ingram, fearing that the Greater Bird of Paradise, a native species of New Guinea in the Pacific, would become extinct because of the terrible depredations made by the millinery trade, purchased this little island and transplanted fifty birds thereto. The birds have not multiplied, possibly because of the small area of the island, but they are holding their own. The island has now been taken over and is maintained by the government of Tobago for it is, of course, a great attraction to tourists, especially to birdwatchers. And it's quite an adventure to go out to that little mountain across the bounding main, and still another to find the birds. It's a challenge.

Since people commonly ask me about snakes in those parts I will point out that in Trinidad there are indeed some dangerous snakes, particularly the fer-de-lance of the wet lowland forest and the bushmaster in the mountains. There are anacondas in the Nariva swamp and boa-constrictors in the forest at all levels. There are numerous harmless snakes. On Tobago there are stated to be no poisonous snakes. We did see one large black snake, about ten feet long, and a green snake that was climbing a tree. Numerous lizards scuttled away as you went along the paths through the forest but they are not harmful.

One of the things that surprised us most was to find how rare were both mosquitoes and flies. It was at first unbelievable to find windows without screens that were open at all times, except when the sudden and frequent rain squalls occurred. However, this practice soon appeared reasonable enough, so rare were the flying insects. The only really noticeable insect pest was the bete rouge, a burrowing mite. When we came home my ankles were still bearing the marks of this "no see um" beast.

Yet, whatever discomfort there was must be counted for little. It was a wonderful vacation, a stimulating adventure, an introduction to a great new realm of nature. Even now my mind goes back to those magnificent beaches where the long green rollers come crashing in. Robinson Crusoe is supposed to have dwelt on this island. How easy it would be to live like him and be a beachcomber on beautiful Tobago, forgetful of all tomorrows.

A List of Birds Observed in Tobago and Trinidad

February 14 - March 14, 1963*

- L. Audubon's Shearwater - *Puffinus Ilherminieri Ilherminieri*
- L. Red-Billed Tropic-Bird - *Phaethon aetherus mesonauta*
Brown Pelican - *Pelecanus occidentalis*
- L. Brown or White-Bellied Booby - *Sula leucogaster leucogaster*
Magnificent Frigate Bird - *Fregata magnificens rothschildi*
Cattle Egret - *Ardeola Ibis* (TR)
Great Blue Heron - *Ardea herodias* (TR)
West Indian Green Heron - *Butorides virescens maculatus*
- L. Streaked Heron - *Butorides striatus striatus* (TR)
Little Blue Heron - *Florida caerulea*
American Egret - *Casmerodius albus egretta* (TR)
Snowy Egret - *Leucophoyx thula thula* (TR)
Tricolor Louisiana Heron - *Hydranassa tricolor rufimentum* (TR)
Yellow-Crowned Night Heron - *Nyctanassa violacea cayennensis* (TR)
- L. Boat-Billed Heron - *Cochlearius Cochlearius* (TR)
- L. Scarlet Ibis - *Eudocimus ruber* (TR)
Black Vulture - *Coragyps atratus* (TR)
Turkey Vulture - *Cathartes aura ruficollis* (TR)
Antillean Broad-Winged Hawk - *Buteo Platypterus antillarum*
Shining Buzzard-Hawk or Grey Hawk - *Buteo nitidus nitidus*
- L. Brazilian Eagle - *Hypomorphnus urubitinga urubitinga*
American Osprey - *Pandion haliaetus carolinensis* (TR)
Pigeon Hawk - *Falco columbarius columbarius*
Sparrow Hawk - *Falco sparverius isabellinus* (TR)
Rufous-tailed Chachalaca - *Ortalis r. ruficauda*
Semipalmated Plover - *Charadrius semipalmatus Bonaparte* (TR)
- L. South American Jacana - *Jacana spinosa intermedia* (TR)
Turnstone - *Arenaria interpres morinella*
Spotted Sandpiper - *Actitis macularia*

*Two days only were spent in Trinidad, February 14th at Piarco Airport and Port-au-Spain, March 14th in the Caroni Swamp. Birds observed in Trinidad will be marked TR. Those new to my lifelist are marked L.

- Eastern Solitary Sandpiper - *Tringa solitaria solitaria*
 Lesser Yellow-Legs - *Tringa flavipes* (TR)
 Greater Yellow-Legs - *Tringa melanoleuca* (TR)
 Semipalmated Sandpiper - *Ereunetes pusillus* (TR)
 Western Sandpiper - *Ereunetes mauri* (TR)
 Least Sandpiper - *Erolia minutilla* (TR)
 Laughing Gull - *Larus atricilla* (TR)
- L. Sooty Tern - *Sterna fuscata fuscata* (TR)
- L. Blue Pigeon or Pale-vented Pigeon - *Columba cayennensis pallidicrissa*
 L. Narrow-Tailed Eared Dove - *Zenaida auriculata stenura*
 L. Plain-breasted Ground-Dove - *Columbigallina minuta minuta* (TR)
 L. Rufous-Winged or Ruddy Ground-Dove - *Columbigallina talpacoti rufipennis*
 Tobago White-Fronted Dove - *Leptotila verreauxi tobagensis*
- L. Partridge-Dove or Ruddy Quail-Dove - *Geotrygon montana montana*
 L. Mountain Dove - *Geotrygon linearis trinitatis*
 L. Common Amazon Parrot - *Amazona amazonica tobagensis*
 Smooth Billed Ani - *Crotophaga ani* L.
 Barn Owl - *Tyto alba hellmayri*
- L. Lawrence's Swift - *Chaetura cinereiventris lawrencei* Ridgway
 L. Short-Tailed Swift - *Chaetura brachyura brachyura*
 L. Hairy Hermit Hummingbird - *Glaucis hirsuta insularum*
 L. Blue-throated Sabre-Wing Hummingbird - *Campylopterus ensipennis*
 L. Jacobin - *Florisuga m. flabellifera*
 L. Common Emerald - *Amazilia t. tobaci*
 L. Black-Throated Mango - *Anthracothorax nigricollis*
 L. Ruby Topaz - *Chrysolampis mosquitus*
 L. Little Green Kingfisher - *Chloroceryle americana croteta*
 L. Swainson's Motmot - *Momotus monota bahamensis*
 L. Rufous-Tailed Jacamar - *Galbula ruficauda ruficauda*
 L. Green or Blue-Headed Woodpecker - *Piculus rubiginosus tobagensis*
 L. Red-Crowned Woodpecker - *Centurus r. rubicapillus*
 L. Kirk's Red-Rumped Woodpecker - *Veniliornis Kirkii Kirkii*
 L. Cocoa Woodhewer - *Xiphorhynchus guttatus susurrans*
 L. Ochreous-Bellied Woodhewer - *Dendrococincla fuliginosa meruloides*
 L. Tobago Cinnamomeous Spinetail - *Synallaxis cinnamomea terrestris*
 L. Tobago White-Barred Bush-Shrike - *Thamnophilus doliatus tobagensis*

- L. Tobago Bush Bird - *Dysithamnus mentalis oberi*
- L. Tobago Allied Ant-Wren - *Formicivora grisea tobagensis*
- L. Tobago or Blue-Backed Manakin - *Chiroxiphia pareola atlantica*
- L. White-Shouldered Washerwoman or Water-Tyrant - *Fluvicola p. pica*
- Yellow Kingbird (Tropical Kingbird) - *Tyrannus melancholicus chloronotus*
- L. Grey Kingbird - *Tyrannus dominicensis dominicensis*
- L. Streaked Flycatcher - *Myiodynastes maculatus tobagensis*
- Kiskadee - *Pitangus sulphuratus trinitatis* (TR)
- Tobago Rusty-Tailed Petchary - *Myiarchus tyrannulus tobagensis*
- L. Dark-Capped Petchary - *Myiarchus t. tuberculifer*
- L. Lawrence's Flycatcher - *Empidonax euleri lawrencei*
- L. Leotaud's Dusky Flycatcher - *Cnemotriccus fuscatus cabanisi*
- L. Yellow-Vented Flat-Bill - *Tolmomyvias flaviventris collingwoodi*
- L. Pale-Bellied Pipromorpha - *Pipromorpha oleaginea pallidiventris*
- L. Common or Yellow-Bellied Elaenia - *Elaenia f. flavogaster*
- L. Caribbean Martin - *Progne subis dominicensis*
- L. Greater Bird-of-Paradise - *Paradisea apoda Linnaeus*
- L. Tobago Rufous-Breasted Wren or Bush-Wren - *Thryothorus rutilus tobagensis*
- Tobago House-Wren - *Troglodytes aedon tobagensis*
- L. Mockingbird - *Mimus gilvus tobagensis*
- L. White-Throated Thrush - *Turdus albicollis phaeopygoides*
- L. Bare-Eyed Thrush - *Turdus nudigenis nudigenis*
- L. Cocoa or Sabian Thrush - *Turdus fumigatus aquilonalis* (TR)
- L. Black Thrush - *Platycichla flavipes xanthoscelus*
- Caribbean Vireo - *Vireo olivaceus tobagensis*
- L. Tobago Hylophilus - *Hylophilus flavipes insularis*
- L. Red-Legged Honey-Creeper - *Cyanerpes cyaneus tobagensis*
- L. Bananaquit - *Coereba flaveola luteola*
- Northern Water-Thrush - *Seiurus noveboracensis noveboracensis*
- L. Yellow-Tail or Large Cornbird - *Psarocolius decumanus*
- L. Glossy Cowbird - *Molothrus bonariensis minimus*
- L. Boat-Tail - *Quiscalus lugubris lugubris*
- L. Cravat - *Tanagra trinitatis*
- L. Blue Tanager - *Thraupis virens berlepschi*
- L. Parson or White-Shouldered - *Tachyphonus rufus*
- L. Larger Black and White Seed-Finch - *Sporophila a. americana*

- L. Yellow-Bellied Seed-Eater - *Sporophila nigricollis nigricollis*
- L. Black-and-White Moustache-Finch - *Sporophila Lineola bouvronides*
- L. Small Red-Bellied Finch - *Sporophila minuta minuta*
- L. Glossy Grassquit - *Volatina jacarina splendens*

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From the pages of the Nature Bulletin issued by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, we bring the readers of the Newsletter two highly enlightening articles. Bulletin No. 726 deals with the disappearance of insects in the fall and their winter survival while Bulletin No. 729 tells us about animals' sense of smell.

Where Do They Go?

Walking thru the meadows, fields and prairies on a balmy autumn day we hear the chirps, trills, buzzing and humming of innumerable insects. Many kinds have been multiplying since spring until their populations are beyond comprehension.

Butterflies dance in the air and flutter from flower to flower. Bees are industriously gathering nectar and pollen. Scads of startled grasshoppers and crickets leap and scatter ahead of us. The ground is alive with myriads of ants, bugs, beetles, caterpillars and smaller forms of insect life. In the woodlands, great companies of insects creep down from trees to find winter homes in weeds or the litter and humus beneath fallen leaves.

Inevitably there comes a night when the temperature drops much below the freezing point and the vegetation is thickly coated with frost. On the following day no insects are seen or heard. Where did they go?

The grasshoppers died. So did all but a few species of butterflies, moths, and the adults of many other kinds of insects whose young, however, pass thru winter in the egg stage or hibernate as larvae, pupae, or nymphs. The ants huddle in their burrows. The honeybees huddle in their hives. The bumblebee queens and the queens of colonies of social wasps have crept into protected places where they hibernate until spring, but the males and workers died.

All of the male mosquitoes died. Fertilized females of the common house mosquito (*Culex pipiens*), and of the *Anopheles* mosquito which transmits malaria, congregated in cellars, catchbasins, hollow trees and other protected places where they hibernate. The woodland and floodwater mosquitoes winter over as eggs.

Housewives are unpleasantly familiar with the adults of insects which, seeking places to hibernate, manage to creep thru cracks and invade our homes: houseflies, the bluebottle and greenbottle blowflies, wasps, lady beetles, and that harmless nuisance - the boxelder bug.

A few species of butterflies and moths migrated southward earlier in autumn: notably the Monarch butterfly -- sometimes in vast flocks, sometimes as far as the West Indies -- and some of them, tattered and torn, return in spring to lay eggs on young milkweeds. Adult angle-winged butterflies, such as the Mourning Cloak and Red Admiral, hibernate in outbuildings or hollow trees and become torpid but, on balmy winter days, may emerge and flutter aimlessly about.

Some kinds of adult insects can endure long periods of extreme cold while hibernating if those periods are continuous -- not interrupted by warm thawing days -- and some, believe it or not, survive being frozen.

The Viceroy, the fritillaries, and the little skippers, are butterflies that hibernate as caterpillars. The swallowtails and the white cabbage butterfly are some of those that hibernate as pupae--naked chrysalids not protected by cocoons.

Some of the moths -- especially the tent caterpillar, bagworm, cankerworm, gypsy moth and other injurious kinds -- pass thru winter as masses of eggs. The woolly bear caterpillar, larva of the Isabella tiger moth, is a familiar example of those which hibernate in the larval stage. The caterpillars of many kinds of moths, however, spin silken cocoons around them and change into pupae before winter comes. Most youngsters are familiar with and collect cocoons of the big silk moths -- the Cecropia, Prometheus, Polyphemus and Luna species.

In winter, if you turn over a rotting log, you may find a mouse's nest, a torpid snake or a salamander, a woolly bear caterpillar curled up tightly, and the pupae of beetles or other insects. Please put the log back as it was.

You may learn far more about "Where Do They Go" from the Field Book of Animals in Winter, by Dr. Ann Morgan, published by G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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Animal Noses

"Of all the animals, man has the poorest nose; he has virtually lost the sense of smell". Like so many general statements, that remark by Ernest Thompson Seton, the great naturalist, artist and storyteller, should be taken with a grain of salt. Seton was speaking of mammals only.

Modern man does have a sense of smell and in some individuals, such as wine tasters, coffee tasters and perfumers, it is highly developed but, in general, his nose is far inferior to the smellers of other mammals. Nearly all of them have noses which provide the most acute and discriminating of the five senses: Smell, sight, hearing, touch and taste. Among the few exceptions are the toothed whales, believed to have no sense of smell at all.

There are other groups in the animal kingdom which apparently have no sense of smell comparable to that of mammals. The lower invertebrates have none. Birds, with few exceptions, have none. Contrary to popular belief, vultures find their prey -- dead animals -- by means of their marvelous telescopic vision and not by any ability to smell it. They commonly find carrion before it begins to rot and stink.

However, experiments have demonstrated that some seabirds -- petrels, shearwaters, and the albatross -- do have a well-developed sense of smell; and that the kiwi, a queer humpbacked flightless bird in New Zealand, finds its prey at night by means of its acute senses of smell and hearing. There are slitlike sensitive nostrils near the end of the long bill.

Many insects -- notably moths, some butterflies, honeybees and ants -- have an extraordinary sense of smell. Lacking any nose, they have sensory organs located in the outer segments of their antennae or "feelers". We know of an instance when the scent of a female Cecropia moth, newly emerged from a cocoon in a cage within a greenhouse where a few windows were partially open, attracted scores of males -- some of them from miles away. Bees in search of nectar are attracted to flowers as much or more by their scent as by their color. Ants follow odor trails made by co-workers. They live in a world of smells.

Fish are commonly ranked among the supersmellers but most scientists agree that, instead, they are supertasters. As explained in bulletin No. 270 (Smells and Smellers), smell and taste are closely related chemical senses but odors come as minute particles in gaseous form, whereas taste is a sensation produced by particles in a solution such as water. Some fish have sense organs located from mouth to tail, so that they literally taste with the whole body.

Having such poor noses ourselves and no other way of detecting or measuring odors, it is difficult for us to appreciate how important -- how vital -- an acute sense of smell is to most wild four-footed animals. By means of it they find their food, evade their enemies, find others of their kind and find mates. For deer, rabbits and other defenseless species it spells life or death. It enables an arctic hare to survive by finding the tops of dwarf willows beneath several feet of snow, or a squirrel to find acorns that he buried in autumn.

Much of what we know about animal noses has been learned by observers and hunters of wildlife; also from dogs bred and trained to trail and find certain kinds of game. A dog's sense of smell is as marvelous as that of a wolf or an elephant. A 'coon hound, for instance, knows when a raccoon's track was made, how fast it was travelling, and in what direction. He will ignore the scent of a rabbit or any other animal.

"Does it not betray itself by its odor?" (Cicero).

Highlights of the T.F.N.C. hikes (September-October, 1963)

The fall hikes opened at Wilket Creek Park on September 7, when a large turnout of 74 observers found the area full of flowers and of plants in fruit under the guidance of Dr. Fletcher Sharp, Miss Llewella Mann and Mr. George Mark.

On the next day, September 8, approximately 40 persons went to the Island, where, with Jack Gingrich in the lead, they saw 36 kinds of birds. A good number of accipiters--sharpshins and Cooper's -- were migrating along the lake, and bay-breasted warblers were numerous. A yellow-throated vireo and a ruddy duck were the outstanding birds of the trip. Many Monarch butterflies were also migrating, and at one point a good stand of ladies' tresses orchids was seen.

September 14th found 33 people in Wilket Creek Park with Len Butcher looking for birds. Thirty-seven species were located, of which pileated woodpecker, four red-breasted nuthatches, a Wilson's warbler and a scarlet tanager were the most appreciated. Most people do not realize that the big logcock can be seen so near the centre of Toronto.

On September 21st Alf. Bunker and a group of 45 unearthed 58 kinds of birds in the Cherrywood and Pickering area. Again a pileated woodpecker was a highlight with red-breasted nuthatches, winter wrens, pipits, solitary vireo and scarlet tanager attracting plenty of attention.

A botany trip led by Miss Erna Lewis and Dr. Sharp along the west branch of the Don River (Wilket Creek Park) saw some twenty-five enthusiasts out on the hunt. They turned up a good assortment of asters, goldenrods, white snakeroot, turtlehead, ditch stonecrop and others in bloom, gray dogwood, bittersweet and black swallowwort in fruit.

Up till September 29th all trips had perfect weather conditions but on that day Gerry Bennett went up the Humber from the Old Mill to Dundas Street in a steady rain. The thirteen sturdy observers who braved the rain with Gerry were well rewarded for

they not only saw 53 kinds of birds, they had an excellent view of a pigeon hawk, of the uncommon black-backed three-toed woodpecker and of several gray-cheeked thrushes. Proof again that a rainy day may be one of the best if you can keep the drops from trickling down your spine.

At Terra Cotta Conservation Area on October 5th, in perfect weather, 75 members and friends appeared. With R. M. Saunders in the lead, forty-one kinds of birds were found, a large count for such an inland wooded area at this time of year. Ovenbird, purple finches, pipits, gray-cheeked thrush, red-breasted nuthatch and two pileated woodpeckers topped the list for interest. Along with the birds there was a fine display of woodland blue aster, zigzag and blue-stemmed goldenrods and other flowers. A profuse stand of shaggy mane mushrooms created quite a stir. The autumn coloring was at its best.

On October 19th some twenty-eight field naturalists followed Prof. E. Jorgenson through the bush at Gormley Side Road and Bayview to see examples of tree diseases. So far as the editor knows this is the first occasion when this has been the subject of a field trip. We are branching out.

Rattray's Marsh was the scene on October 27th of a trip led by E. F. Damude. Forty-nine observers appeared and again in beautiful weather -- what a wonderful autumn this has been -- amassed a count of 42 species of birds seen. This time a long-eared owl occupied top place in interest, strongly assisted by pine siskins, white-crowned sparrows and fox sparrow.

Note: This looks like the year for snowy owls. Several have been reported already. Watch open fields, beaches, prominent perches such as haycocks, fenceposts, lone trees, TV aerials, etc. for this great white owl from the Arctic. Be sure and encourage everyone to give it full protection. Four of the owls were seen along the Lakeshore from Port Credit to the Cement Plant beyond Oakville on December 1.

R. M. Saunders,

Editor.