

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Visitors Welcome!

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FEBRUARY MEETING

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1970 at 8.15 PM

at the

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

SPEAKER: PROFESSOR K. A. ARMSON

SUBJECT: Soil - A resource often overlooked and frequently duntrodden.

Professor Armson is Professor of Forestry at the University of Toronto. He will discuss the kinds of soil, how they are formed, soils and vegetation, and man's use of soil, including pollution. Illustrated with coloured slides.

F.O.N. Office and Bookshop open Monday-thru-Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m., and  
BOOKSHOP Saturdays from 9.30 to 4.30, located at 1262 Don Mills Road, Don Mills.  
HOURS Phone: 444-8419.

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The Executive of the T.F.N.C. has been preparing to have the Club incorporated without share capital. The main reason for doing this is to enable the Club to purchase and own property. Ratification of this major decision of the Executive will be done by a vote at the February Meeting.

Also at the February Meeting, notice will be given of the proposal to change the Constitution of the Club to a form which is suitable for incorporation. This revised Constitution will be called BY-LAW No. 1. It basically continues the operation of the Club in a manner similar to the present Constitution but changes have been made to conform to the requirements of corporate law.

The new BY-LAW No. 1 will be published in the March Issue of the Newsletter and members will be asked to vote for this change in our Constitution by a vote at the March meeting Monday, March 2, 1970. According to the present Constitution, any change in the Constitution requires approval from at least two-thirds of the members present at a Club meeting.

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FEBRUARY OUTINGS

SUNDAY OWLS - Leader - Mr. Ken Walton.

FEBRUARY 8 Meet at the northwest corner of Dixie Road and the Baseline at 10 a.m.  
9.15 and From the City go west on Hwy. 401 to the Dixie Rd. Interchange. Go south  
10.00 a.m. on Dixie Road about 1 mile to the Baseline. Those wishing and those willing to give rides, meet at the northwest corner of Bloor & Jane Sts. no later than 9.15 a.m. Morning only but lunch recommended.

SUNDAY Rear of Boyd Conservation area. Leaders - Mr. & Mrs. Earl Damude.  
FEBRUARY 22 From the Intersection of Hwys. 400 and 7, go west on Hwy. 7 approx. 1 1/2 mis.  
9.30 a.m. to Pine Valley Drive. Go north on this road about 2 miles and park on the roadside where the road turns right at a dead end. Morning only but lunch is recommended.

Chairman - Mr. Walt Hutton  
782-5955

JUNIOR CLUB This meeting will be in charge of the Insect Group. The program will include 3 speakers, also 2 or 3 short films will be shown.

SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 7

Chairman - Mr. Robt. MacLellan  
488-9346

FIELD Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, 1066 Avenue Road, just north of  
 BIOLOGIST'S Eglinton Avenue.  
 THURSDAY Speaker: Mr. Eric Tull  
 FEBRUARY 12 Topic: Birds seen on his recent trip to Newfoundland and the Grand Banks,  
 8.00 P.M. Illustrated with slides. Chairman - Mr. Don Burton - 223-3663

ECOLOGY AND Meet in Room 300 (third floor) College of Education, 371 Bloor St. West, at  
 CONSERVATION Spadina.  
 TUESDAY Topic: 'Soil' - Earth Materials.  
 FEBRUARY 17 A laboratory study of rocks and minerals.  
 8.00 P.M. Chairman - Prof. W. A. Andrews, 425-4607

BOTANY GROUP Meet at Hodgson School, Davisville Ave., just east of Mt. Pleasant Road.  
 THURSDAY Speaker: Mrs. Kay McGregor  
 FEBRUARY 19 Topic: 'Flowers of the Mountains and Valleys' An outstanding photographer  
 8.00 P.M. will share her knowledge and enjoyment of the flowers she has seen in the  
 Western National Parks. Chairman - Miss Erna Lewis, 923-8904

BIRD GROUP Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, 1066 Avenue Road, just north of  
 TUESDAY Eglinton Avenue. General discussion on the basics of bird identification.  
 FEBRUARY 24 Members are asked to bring their Bird Guides with them. Miss Rosemary  
 8.00 P.M. Gaymer, new Chairman of the Group, will be introduced at the meeting.  
 Chairman - Mr. Clive Goodwin, 241-1572

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NEW MEMBERS

It is with great pleasure that we welcome the following new members to the Club:

- Mr. Jack Bateman, 2 Hawthorn Avenue, Toronto 287
- Miss Carol Ann Bell, 17 Luttrell Avenue, Toronto 13
- Mr. & Mrs. P. Berridge, 221 Balliol Street, Apt. 725, Toronto 295
- Miss Mary Ann Cleland, 37 Oriole Road, Apt. 309, Toronto 195
- Miss O. Evans, 22 Melrose Avenue, Toronto 320
- Mr. & Mrs. R. B. Foster, 1050 Markham Road, Apt. 1501, Scarborough
- Mrs. Edna Green, 92 Bexhill Avenue, Scarborough
- Mr. Donald R. Halward, 1102 Eglinton Avenue West, Apt. 2, Toronto 347
- Mrs. Audrey B. Harris, 29 Hounslow Avenue, Willowdale
- Mr. Wayne Hingston, 28 Blackcreek Blvd., Toronto 334
- Mr. & Mrs. Arthur W. Holbrook, 366 Balliol Street, Toronto 298
- Mr. Frank Hortop, 77 Charlemont Crescent, Agincourt
- Mrs. C. C. Maidwell, 1860 Jane Street, Apt. 210, Weston
- Mr. Paul Middaugh, 119 Stratford Crescent, Toronto 317
- Miss Edna Savage, 485 Eglinton Avenue East, Apt. 704, Toronto 315
- Miss Alice Schendel, 199 Howard Park Avenue, Toronto 3
- Mrs. W. A. Starke, 59 McRae Drive, Toronto 352
- Dr. John B. Steeves, 1414 Drummond Street, Suite 515, Montreal 107, P.Q.
- Mrs. Helen Stille, 158 Gilbert Avenue, Toronto 341
- Mr. & Mrs. Eric Stopps, 235 Grandravine Drive, Apt. 407, Downsview
- Mrs. E. A. Tancock, 3541 Yonge Street, Apt. 501, Toronto 319
- Mr. Richard Tisseman, 65 Cloverhill Road, Apt. 21, Toronto 18
- Mr. C. H. Walker, 184 Beech Avenue, Toronto 260

# Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.



Number 249

February, 1970

## METROPOLITAN TORONTO ZOOLOGICAL PARK

The first administrative stage in adoption of the Master Plan for the Zoo took place at City Hall in September, 1969, when the presentation of the plan to the Metro Parks and Recreation Committee was enthusiastically endorsed.

The Master Plan has been developed to make full use of three unique features of the site -- the magnificent variety of landscapes; the abundance of acreage to create natural displays; and the topography which will allow the visitor to become isolated in one area at a time.

The beautiful forest in the heart of the site is to be the zoo core. A ring walk around this core will join together all the principal elements of the Master Plan.

The park will be unique in that no other zoo has been designed with both continental pavilions as well as continental paddock areas. Each pavilion will contain a composite of birds, animals, fish and reptiles representatives of the particular continental area. The pavilion buildings will have carefully located viewing windows and from these floodlit paddocks can be seen at night, again a great advantage for zoo visitors in winter.

All pavilions will have theme displays and teaching areas. In the European pavilion, for example, audio-visual exhibits will show man's wilful destruction of animals and their habitats.

Some highlights of the Master Plan are:

(a) Between the World of the Oceans and the American pavilion there is a valley which will be covered by a giant net. The visitor crosses on a high level bridge through the trees, where he is surrounded by flocks of birds in flight.

(b) In the Asian pavilion a 35 foot waterfall falls over a high rock exhibit displaying snow leopards. At the entrance to the building will be a Siberian tiger, the world's most northern large cat who will be seen outdoors even in the coldest weather.

(c) The rock work and pools of the Polar bear exhibit will allow the animals to be seen from many vantage points; from above, through underwater windows, and in particular, unusually close up views from caves inside the rocks.

(d) The African paddocks will be arranged in a horseshoe around a central viewing point. In addition, from the roof of the Veldt building the visitor will be able to see over 30 acres of Veldt land where the famous herds from the African plains will graze.

(e) The Great Barrier Reef exhibit in the Australian pavilion ... people will walk through a darkened underwater tunnel. The water on each side and overhead will teem with vivid fish.

(f) The most dramatic feature of the zoo will be Canadian Animal Domain where nearly 600 acres of river valley land is being set aside for Canadian animals. Here Rocky Mountain goat, deer, elk, moose, bears and wolves will wander freely.

(g) The Animal Domain will be seen from a mini-rail which will wind through the valley across the river, over the hills and through forests. The cars will be closed and heated in winter, giving the visitor an unique opportunity to sit comfortably at any time of the year and watch northern animals in their natural environment as the seasons change.

(Excerpts from the Metropolitan Toronto Zoological Society's letter)

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LETTERS FROM READERS - from Mr. J. Stafford Harris

In January 1970 Newsletter, No. 248, under heading Letters from Readers, from Mr. Don Burton, reference my report in April Newsletter on "Savannah Sparrow", I agree with Mr. Burton that in the field, the male and female birds are indistinguishable as to plumage but when observed together at a feeding station just outside our dining room window over a period of three winters, it was observed that one Savannah had a slightly lighter streaked breast than the other one. Also, when domestic disputes rose at the feeding station, it was invariably the bird with the slightly lighter streaked breast who chased the other one to the opposite side of the feeding station.

In several aerial combats between the Savannahs and the House Sparrows, in each instance this occurred between the Savannah with the slightly darker streaked breast and a male House Sparrow. From these observations we concluded that the Savannah with the slightly lighter streaked breast to be the female, and the one with the darker streaked breast, who fought the House Sparrow (male), to be the male.

I am not surprised at this slight difference in breast stripe coloration between the two Savannahs, since text books refer to eight subspecies with variances in coloration and with wide distribution from Labrador to Vancouver Island, B.C.

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## BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRST

Although the Whiteheaded Woodpecker has been listed as casual in British Columbia, it is now recorded in the Canadian Field Naturalist as having nested at Osoyoos, B.C. In May and June, 1967 a male Whiteheaded Woodpecker was seen excavating a nest hole in a dead Douglas Fir and later a female was observed incubating four eggs.

## METEORITE CRATERS STUDIED

Over the last 10 years a study has been taking place in Canada of possible meteorite craters. Twenty-nine old scars have been found and of these twelve are considered to be of meteoritic origin as they show definite shock deformation caused by impact.

## ALDER FLYCATCHER (by Eric Nasmith - South Peel Naturalist)

The Alder Flycatcher was the subject of a newspaper story early this year. The two distinct song patterns of this one species has puzzled naturalists for years. One song is interpreted as "fitz-bew" and the other as "wee-be-o". The writing of both Bent and Peterson speculate on the problem, posing the idea of geographical differences or nesting habits. Recently a young American biology student took the question as the basis for his doctorate. His work included studies in North, Central and South America. The discovery that the winter ranges of the two song-pattern groups of Alder Flycatchers are separate, plus other observations on nesting sites, have established the strong possibility that there are two, non-interbreeding species instead of one, as thought heretofore. Thus, subject to the usual solemn approvals of the American Ornithological Union, a new species of North American songbird may have been added.

## A NEW ONE FOR ELGIN COUNTY

Last September, Dr. Harold Axtell and members of the Buffalo Ornithological Society sighted an immature Laughing Gull near Haw Cliff east of Port Stanley. This new bird has brought the Elgin County list up to 286 species. Since 1954, twelve new birds for the County have been recorded.

## WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

In memory of A. B. (Peter) Schultz, a leading naturalist and conservationist in the Port Hope-Cobourg area, the Willow Beach Field Naturalists' Club is seeking the support of interested persons for their campaign to purchase 80 acres including a near virgin woodlot. Donations (made payable to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists) should be mailed to Miss Eleanor Ralls, 355 Division Street, Cobourg, Ontario.

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## THE HEAVENS ABOVE

- February 2 - Sunrise 7:35 E.S.T. Sunset 5:29 E.S.T.  
5 - Mercury is in greatest western elongation and (with some difficulty) may be seen low in the south-east just before sunrise.  
16 - Sunrise 7:16 E.S.T. Sunset 5:49 E.S.T.

- February 20 - Venus is just becoming visible -  $5^{\circ}$  above western horizon at sunset and so may be seen for half an hour in the twilight.  
 20 - Jupiter stationary in Virgo - 2 a.m.  
 21 - Full Moon  
 20-21 - Partial eclipse of moon - 1/20 of moon will be in shadow (starts February 21 at 3h.19m. E.S.T.)

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### STARGAZING

To go stargazing you need patience, a chart of the sky and a flashlight, by which to study the chart. There is really little need for anything else at the outset as binoculars or telescope will limit your range for picking out constellations. The major constellations can be seen with the naked eye and as only about 20 can be seen at any given time, it need not take too long for anyone with the first ingredient -- patience -- to acquire a good working knowledge of the sky. I should point out that there are only about 88 constellations in the entire sky and we can expect to see about 60 of them here sometime during the year.

As you will see in "The Heavens Above" Jupiter will be in the constellation Virgo (The Virgin) on the 20th. The constellation is rather a faint one but her brightest star is SPICA -- which is situated in the least expected place! To find Spica is relatively easy. First find the Big Dipper, then follow the Dipper's handle in a sweep across the sky until you come to orange-coloured ARCTURUS (Part of the Herdsman) which is the sixth brightest of all stars. Continue the sweep through Arcturus and you will come to the bluish 1st magnitude star Spica. You can't miss it! Jupiter will be a little to its east.

The largest of planets Jupiter is an ideal one for telescopic study, as there is always something unexpected happening. It has a mean diameter of 87,000 miles and has 12 satellites -- their names won't mean too much but it is interesting to note that four of them were found by Galileo in 1610 and the latest one by Nicholson in 1951.

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### THE TORONTO JUNIOR FIELD NATURALISTS WINTER COUNT

Sunday, January 4, 1970, the Bird Group participated in its annual winter count. The temperature was  $14^{\circ}$ ; sunny, winds s.w. to w. at 6-10 mph; lake open and rough, ponds and creeks frozen; 3" of snow on the ground.

The routes covered were:

- Route 1... West side of High Park including Grenadier and Ellis Avenue, ponds and the lakefront from the mouth of the Humber east to Coronation Park.  
 Route 2... Serena Gundy and Wilket Creek Parks, Sunnybrook, Glendon Hall and Edwards Gardens.

Above count commenced at 9 a.m. and finished at 1:30 p.m.

NOTE: For future outings, the subway starts running at 9 a.m. on Sundays--this didn't deter 6 members from reaching High Park on time.

The 36 species counted, and the number of each, were as follows:

Canada Goose	160	American Coot	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	2
Mallard	400	Glaucous Gull	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1
Black Duck	132	Great Black-Backed Gull	2	Robin	2
Gadwall	1	Herring Gull	250	Cedar Waxwing	4
Pintail	1	Ring-billed Gull	50	Starling	45
Canvasback	10	Rock Dove	66	House Sparrow	39
Greater Scaup	59	Mourning Dove	2	Cardinal	1
Common Goldeneye	7	Hairy Woodpecker	1	Common Redpoll	40
Bufflehead	19	Downy Woodpecker	2	American Goldfinch	3
Old Squaw	12	Blue Jay	6	Tree Sparrow	4
Red-tailed Hawk	1	Common Crow	9	Field Sparrow	1
Ring-Necked Pheasant	1	Black-capped Chickadee	67	Song Sparrow	4

Total: 36 species .... 1,388 individuals

(K. T. Hamilton)

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#### GLOBAL ROUNDUP

##### WARSAW

Poles are turned on by mushrooms -- but lung expansion, rather than mind expansion is what prompts thousands of Warsaw residents to stream out of their city. Hundreds of private cars and dozens of buses carrying workers on special excursions have been descending on favorite mushroom sites at weekends.

Recently, for example, one of the Government's many tourist agencies announced that 4,200 Poles had signed since September for its special weekend mushroom hunting expeditions.

Practical justification for mushroom hunting is found in the national fondness for marinated mushrooms, which Poles contend, are just the thing to drink vodka with on a winter evening. Judging from the amount of camping material -- blankets, tents, tables and folding deck chairs -- on various mushroom hunting sites on recent Sundays, active participation in the actual gathering is not required.

Somewhat like fishing guides, who provide customers with fish no matter how bad the day's catch, Polish peasants line the roads near the mushroom grounds to sell baskets of them to the unlucky or to the lazy so that no one will have to go home empty-handed.

##### SOVIET UNION

The Soviet Union has announced that they can forecast the ice floes of the Northeast Passage so accurately by computer that it is now one of their most important waterways. The Northeast Passage which runs along the Siberian coast of Asia carries millions of tons of freight needed in the eastern areas of the country.

##### ISTANBUL, TURKEY (Fact or fancy?)

Eyewitnesses in Turkey provide amazing accounts of deadly wars between storks and eagles with at least one major battle a year in which the sky becomes dark with birds, and blood rains on the ground.

A Reuter report of a two-day fight which left 50 dead on the ground and sea caused controversy and scepticism among ornithologists. Christopher Mead of the British Trust for Ornithology attributed the story to the mingling of birds in a storm giving the impression of a fight but a Turkish zoology professor confirmed that the fights are very real indeed. Another eyewitness has described how the birds fight in actual battle formation. He said he was in the Shakshak Mountains near Erzurum in 1921 when he saw thousands of eagles and storks fighting. The storks tactics were to gain height -- not vertically but gradually winging higher. The eagles, flying in a horizontal line, attacked as they rose in the air but those storks that got above the eagles selected their individual enemy targets. Extending their beaks, drawing back their feet and folding their wings, they dived like an arrow. When the stork's beak struck the head of the eagle, there was no chance of the eagle surviving. Sometimes the stork was unable to disentangle itself from its enemy and they both fell and died together. During the battle, the sky was black with fighting birds. Sometimes the warriors took time out to re-organize before fighting again.

Several professors at the Istanbul University confirmed the battle of the birds which usually took place when storks were migrating for the winter, passing over the mountains where the eagles live. They said that the storks on their return search out for the wounded they have left behind and take any survivors with them.

#### LIMA, PERU

The Peruvian Government, concerned that the Andean Condor will suffer the same fate as the Californian Condor, of which there are now only 50 left in the parks of the United States, has created a national parks administration to provide sanctuaries for the species.

#### SPACE CENTRE, HOUSTON

The grey powder brought back from the lunar Ocean of Storms has been sprinkled like food on water in aquariums and placed inside containers where various fish, flies and moths live, in order to see whether the lunar material contains poisons or germs that could harm earth life.

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#### CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF ONTARIO

It is a great pleasure to report that the Soil Conservation Society of America, at its Annual Meeting at Fort Collins, Colorado, honoured The Conservation Council of Ontario with a Merit Award for outstanding achievement in the field of conservation.

#### ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

A new R.B.G. Technical Bulletin "The Common Solidago Species (Goldenrods) of Southern Ontario", by James S. Pringle, was released in 1969. Although thorough in its coverage of this genus, the guide is considered more ideal for the amateur than many other manuals. Copies may be obtained by writing or calling the Royal Botanical Gardens' office.

## SNAP TO IT!

If you were lucky enough to get a Polaroid camera in your stocking this Christmas -- take note!

Wildlife biologists have warned outdoor photographers against discarding the tear-off negative in the woods. It has been found that chemicals on the Polaroid negative film have brought death to animals. Camera buffs are therefore urged to take time to dispose of the negatives properly.

## SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

The Sportsmen's Show will be held this year from March 13-22, in the Coliseum at the C.N.E. For the first time, the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club will have a display -- so come on out and see it. In fact, why not do more than that? Why not come and give a hand at manning it for a few hours or more? It will be fun; you will meet interesting people; talk yourself hoarse; and above all, will have contributed in a big way towards promoting the Club. Think about it! The next Newsletter will have a few more details -- such as to whom you should phone.

NOTE: Whilst on the subject, we are in need of more help around the Club. I know Walter Hutton in the January Newsletter was asking for new leaders but we would like also to have a few people to help at the monthly meetings -- such as operating the projector, putting on-and-off the lights, etc. No skill needed but then no pay either! Call Jack Gingrich at 489-9953 if you would like to help out.

## FROM THE F.O.N.

A number of Herring Gulls have been dyed yellow, banded and color-banded in an effort to study their daily and seasonal wanderings. If anyone should sight such a bird, would they direct their information to Dr. F. Cooke, Department of Biology, Queen's University, Kingston, stating (if possible) time, place, date of observation, the color of bands, which leg had the color-band and which the aluminum one.

Mr. J. E. "Red" Mason of 265 Markland Drive, Apt. 205, Etobicoke, is very anxious to hear from anyone having information on the cause of owl movements. Such details as temperature, snowfall, wind velocity, population of mice and lemmings and other prey are some of the areas needed to be explored. If you have any information why not drop him a line?

## FOR THE BIRDS

Birds which frequent the Metro region won't go hungry this winter--that is, if they happen to visit the 12 conservation areas!

The Authority's winter programme doesn't overlook the birds that stay with us during the winter months; in fact, for a number of years now, it has set out feed in its areas.

In order to cope with hearty appetites, the Authority has laid in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  tons of feed. Last year, the birds ate their way through four tons in the areas.

The Authority is using two mixtures this year. One consists of 20% sunflower seed, 40% wheat and 40% cracked corn. The other has these ingredients plus chopped peanuts and millet. The latter mix proved to be the most popular when

tried for the first time last year.

As an added food bonus, the Authority also puts out suet.

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#### COMING EVENTS...FEBRUARY

##### ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

- ... Tours are held every Wednesday at 12:00 noon, 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. Two tours that may be of interest are: February 4th at 12:00 noon - Geology  
February 11th at 12:00 noon- Gems
- ... Free Sunday films at 2:00 p.m.  
February 8th - Man of Aran  
February 22nd - Private Life a Cat  
- African Heritage

##### McLAUGHLIN PLANETARIUM

... To April 5th, 1970 - The Story of Eclipses

This is one show that shouldn't be missed! It is being presented at a time when astronomers in North America are excitedly preparing to see the total eclipse of the sun on March 7th. This show, among other things, will trace its path over Mexico, Florida and Newfoundland.

Public Show times ... Tuesday-thru-Friday: 3:30 and 8:00 p.m.  
(except holidays) ... Saturday: 11.00 a.m., 2:00, 3:00, 5:00, 8:00 p.m.  
... Sunday: 2:00, 3:30, 5:00, 7:30 p.m.

##### ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE LECTURES - Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, 8:15 p.m.

- ... Saturday, January 24th - Studies of Moon Rocks  
... Saturday, January 31st - Radio Astronomy - A Changing View of the Universe  
... Saturday, February 7th - Origin and Cycles in the Emergency of the Family of Man  
... Saturday, February 14th - The Laser - Prodigy of Science (Hominidae)

##### DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND FORESTS

... The Department presents film shows every Wednesday at 11:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. in the MacDonald Block at Queen's Park (corner of Bay and Wellesley).

- ... January 28th 'The World at Your Feet' (color) 22 mins.  
... February 4th 'The Changing Maple Country' (color) 20 mins.  
... February 11th 'The House the Wasp Built' (color) 17 mins.  
... February 18th 'No Longer Vanishing' (color) 28 mins.  
... February 25th 'Wood Duck Ways' (color) 22 mins.

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Miss Deirdre Clark sent holiday greetings in December to all her friends in the Club. Since leaving Toronto in June, 1963, Deirdre has maintained a corresponding membership in the Club and follows our "doings" with interest. Her address is now Flat 3, Nikau Court, 238 Muritai Rd., Eastbourne, New Zealand.

Hi, Deirdre!

Editor: Margaret A. Jeffery  
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