TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

NEWSLETTER

Number 253 October, 1970

A N N O U N C I N G - OUR FIRST T.F.N.C. NATURE RESERVE!

The place: A mixed woodland, ranging from wet bottomland to the east through a dense woodlot with northern characteristics on the west.

The size: 60 acres.

The locality: On Uxbridge Creek, on the seventh line of Scott Township, off Ontario County Road #1.

The cost: $20,000.

Articles on the area, and on the importance of natural reserves, follow in the body of the Newsletter.

For years we have talked....and hoped....and looked! Now we have it ....but the real work is just beginning. We need YOUR help, we need YOUR contribution, to enable this important undertaking to succeed.

Please Donate Now!

The money must be raised to attain our goal. If every T.F.N.C. member were able to give $20.00, that would be ideal....but no donation will be too little....or too big!

This is YOUR reserve, for the naturalists of Toronto now and in the future.

ALL DONATIONS ARE INCOME TAX DEDUCTIBLE. A RECEIPT WILL BE SENT.

. . . . . .

To Mr. A. D. Fry,
250 Martingrove Rd.,
Islington, Ont.

Date_____

I enclose $_____ donation towards the purchase of our new reserve.

Name_____

Address_____

_____

Visitors welcome! **OCTOBER MEETING** Visitors welcome!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1970, at 8:15 p.m.
at the
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

FILM NIGHT: "Great Barrier Reef" - A study of marine and bird life on the Great Barrier Reef of Australia.

"Land of the Loon" - The wilderness of Algonquin Park photographed by Dan Gibson.

PLUS - A brief description of the Club's new property, illustrated by colour slides.

Note for next month: As the Museum will require the rotunda for an opening on our regular meeting night, the November meeting will be on Tuesday, November 3.

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FON CHRISTMAS CARDS — The Federation of Ontario Naturalists have chosen for their Christmas card design this year a white-footed mouse, painted in full colour by Robert Bateman. This charming card is also available without a greeting, for use as a hasti-note. By purchasing one or more boxes you will help support both the FON and the TFNC, as well as having a prestige card to send to your friends. Available at the October meeting. Price $2.50 doz., plus Ontario sales tax.

CLUB FEES ARE NOW DUE. We suggest you use the following coupon, in order to avoid the long line-up at the October meeting.

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To Mrs. H. C. Robson, Secretary,
Toronto Field Naturalists' Club,
49 Craighurst Ave., Toronto 12, Ont.

Date_____

I (We) wish to renew TFNC membership and enclose cheque or money order.

( ) Single $4.00 ( ) Family (adults) $6.00 ( ) Life $100.00

( ) Corresponding (more than 20 miles from the Museum) $2.00

( ) Full-time student (aged 16 or over) $1.50

Please send also ( ) TFNC arm-badge, 4" diameter, showing the Club name, and Club symbol in four colours - $1.25

TFNC decal for car window, design as arm-badge:
( ) a) 4" diameter, for outside application - 50¢
or ( ) b) 3" diameter, for inside application - 50¢

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Rain or shine! **OCTOBER OUTINGS** Visitors welcome!

Saturday Oct. 3 — VIVIAN FOREST - BIRDS — Leader: Mr. Ed. Franks

10:00 a.m. Follow Hwy. 48 north of Markham for 11 miles to Ballantrae. Meet in the Texaco service station lot at the Aurora Road. Those wishing and willing to give rides meet at the Glen Echo Loop (city limits) not later than 9:15. Bring lunch.

Sunday Oct. 4 — WILKET CREEK PARK - BOTANY — Leader: Miss Erna Lewis

1:00 p.m. Meet in the parking lot at the entrance on Leslie St. just north of Eglinton Ave. E. Afternoon only.

Saturday Oct. 10 — HEART LAKE CONSERVATION AREA - BOTANY — Leader: Mr. Stu Corbett

9:15 a.m. & 10:00 a.m. All interested members, with and without cars, meet at the Glen Echo Loop (city limits) on Yonge St., not later than 9:15. Driving instructions will be given here. Bring lunch.

Sunday Oct. 11 — LAMBTON PARK, HUMBER VALLEY, LAKEFRONT, GRENADIER POND - BIRDS — Leader: Mr. Don Burton

9:00 a.m. Meet in Lambton Park, which is north of Dundas St. just east of the Humber River. Turn north at the first road east of the Humber off Dundas St. This road leads directly into the park. Morning only.

Saturday Oct. 17 — BRUCE'S MILL CONSERVATION AREA - BIRDS — Leader: Prof. Jack Cranmer-Byng

10:00 a.m. Follow the Don Valley Parkway and Woodbine Ave. north to the Gormley-Stouffville sideroad. Drive east for 1-1/2 miles to the entrance. Meet at the first parking lot. Admission charge, $1.00. Bring lunch.

Sunday Oct. 18 — WYE MARSH WILDLIFE CENTER - BIRDS & BOTANY — Leaders: Mr. Clive Goodwin, Mr. Stu Corbett

8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. The Wye Marsh Wildlife Center is operated by the Canadian Wildlife Service at Midland, Ontario. It is surrounded by 2500 acres of public land. Facilities include a display hall, closed-circuit television direct from the marsh, and an underwater viewing window. Admission, 50¢.

A bus will be chartered for this outing; the fare is $5.00. Passengers may board at the following points:

N.E. corner of Yonge & Bloor	8:30 a.m.
" " " " " St. Clair	8:35 "
" " " " " Eglinton	8:40 "
" " " " " Lawrence	8:45 "
Glen Echo Loop (city limits)	8:50 "

The bus will arrive back in Toronto around 5:00 p.m. To make reservations phone Mrs. K. Shimkanen (261-6807) before October 3rd. If you intend to travel by car, allow two hours. Follow Hwy. 27 north from Barrie to Hwy. 12. The Center is 3 miles east of Midland on this highway and shares the same entrance road as Ste. Marie. Bring lunch. Everyone is asked to meet in the auditorium at 11:00 a.m.

Saturday Oct. 24 — SECRET LOCATION - BIRDS — Leader: Miss Rosemary Gaymer

For beginners only! Group restricted to 12 members--the first 12 to phone Rosemary Gaymer at 925-2007 after 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, October 22nd. Location and time of outing will be given when you make your reservation. (The next time there is such an outing, the 12 members who attend this one will go to the bottom of the list.)

Sunday Oct. 25 — LAKESHORE, EAST OF TORONTO - BIRDS — Leader: Mr. Harry Kerr

9:30 a.m. Meet in the parking lot of the Golden Mile Plaza on the north side of Eglinton Ave. E., just east of Victoria Park. If possible, rides will be arranged for those members without cars. Detailed driving instructions will be given at the meeting place. The outing will follow the lakefront east with stops at numerous points of interest, but will go no further east than Whitby Harbour. Bring lunch.

Saturday Oct. 31 — MORNINGSIDE PARK - BIRDS — Leader: Mr. John ten Bruggenkate

9:30 a.m. Follow the 401 to interchange 61, then proceed south on Morningside Ave. The park entrance is on the west side about 1/2 mile south of Ellesmere Rd. Buses run north on Morningside every 20 minutes from Kingston Rd. and stop at the park gate. Meet at the first parking lot. Morning only.

M.T.R.C.A. HIKES. The Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has scheduled the following hikes:

Sunday, Oct. 4, 2:00 p.m. - colour tours at Glen Haffy & Glen Major
Sunday, Oct. 11, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. - automobile colour tour, Boyd to Greenwood
Sunday, Oct. 25, 2:00 p.m. - Parks & Conservation Hike, Highland Creek

Please note:
1. T.F.N. outings will begin on time.
2. Wear comfortable clothing, especially shoes.
3. No lunch is required unless indicated, but members may wish to bring a lunch to avoid rushing home after an outing.
4. For information regarding TTC routes, phone 487-2424.

Outings Chairman, Mr. Stu Corbett - 261-7361

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INVERTEBRATES--MAN'S UNSEEN ASSOCIATES, will be the topic of a lecture series to be given this fall at the Royal Ontario Museum by Dr. Glenn B. Wiggins and the staff of the Museum's Department of Entomology and Invertebrate Zoology. Involvement will be the keynote. Thursday evenings, October through December. Fee for 10 sessions, $30.00. For further information, telephone 928-3677.

Volunteers needed!
Later in October we will be doing a survey of our new reserve. We need folk who will help in this work, whether or not they know anything about surveying. Anyone who does have experience in survey work (even a little) would be especially valuable. Phone John ten Bruggenkate, 425-6096.

JUNIOR CLUB Saturday Oct. 3 10:00 a.m.	Children 8 to 16 are invited to join the Toronto Junior Field Naturalists' Club. Meetings are held in the Museum theatre. As numbers must be limited, it is advisable to register at this first meeting.

Director: Mr. Bob MacLellan - 488-9346

FIELD BIOLOGISTS' GROUP Thursday Oct. 8 8:00 p.m.	Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton. Speaker: Mr. Don Baldwin, Science Master, Upper Canada College. Topic: "Birding in British Honduras" - with colour slides. See Bird Group announcement below for note re parking.

Chairman: Mr. Don Burton - 222-6467

CONSERVATION & ECOLOGY GROUP Tuesday Oct. 13 8:00 p.m.	Meet in Room 300 (third floor), College of Education, 371 Bloor St. W., at Spadina. Topic: "A Review of Basic Ecological Concepts". This is a good chance for new members to catch up on what has been covered by the group during its first two years, and for old members to refresh and expand their knowledge.

Chairman: Prof. W. A. Andrews - 425-4607

BOTANY GROUP Thursday Oct. 15 8:00 p.m. sharp	Meet in the library of Hodgson School, Davisville Ave. just east of Mt. Pleasant (parking entrance from Millwood Rd., the first street north). Speaker: Mrs. Betty Greenacre, from the Toronto Guild for Colour Photography. Topic: "Along Nature's Trail", with colour slides.

Chairman: Miss Florence Preston - 483-9530

BIRD GROUP Tuesday Oct. 27 8:15 p.m. sharp	All welcome, especially beginners! Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton. There will be a quiz on gulls--adult & immature--and Mr. Gary Page will speak on "Bird Banding".

As parking can be hard to find on side streets, three parking lots are suggested: (1) Gulf gas station, south side of Eglinton, just east of Avenue Rd.; (2) lot on corner of Eglinton and Braemar (south side, just west of Avenue Rd.); (3) Parking Authority of Toronto lot at Castle Knock Rd., which is the first turning north from Eglinton, west of Avenue Rd.

Chairman: Miss Rosemary Gaymer - 925-2007

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AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

It is in large part due to the profits from the showing of Audubon Films that we were able to make a substantial down payment on the new TFNC property near Uxbridge. Much depends upon their continued success. A substantial yearly profit from the films enables us to build up reserves for effective use in the future, while keeping Club fees low.

The five films for this season promise to be exceptionally interesting. We suggest that you obtain season tickets now (if you have not already done so) and recommend the films to your friends. Extra programme folders are available from Mrs. Freeman - 481-7174.

A cordial welcome is extended to the following members, who were enrolled between April 1 and September 7:

Mr. W. A. Agnew, Mrs. Donna Androsoff, Mr. John F. Ashdown, Miss Kathleen Barnes, Mr. A. B. Bezzo, Mr. & Mrs. A. Bingham-Wallis, Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bodnar, Mrs. June Braaten, Miss Jane Brison, Miss W. A. Brown, Mrs. Adelaide Burke, Mr. & Mrs. Paul Chodura, Miss Elizabeth M. Collyer, Miss Eileen Comba, Miss V. Cooper, Lt.-Col. H. Austin Davis, Mr. Joe Dobko, Mr. & Mrs. John L. Farrar, Mr. & Mrs. K. M. Fletcher, Mrs. Jean Fraser, Miss Susan Gibson, Mr. & Mrs. J. D. Gilbert, Mr. & Mrs. Lorne Grainger, Miss Joan Hansen, Mr. & Mrs. G. V. Helwig, Miss Victoria Hnatyk, Mr. John E. Holzbach, Mr. W. Hollander, Mr. & Mrs. W. Paul Hughes, Mrs. H. P. Kidd, Miss Anne Lambert, Mr. Fred C. Lister, Dr. & Mrs. E. A. McCulloch, Mrs. Ruth McEvoy, Mr. & Mrs. Gilbert McKeane, Miss K. McMullen, Mrs. Rose Milani, Mr. U. K. Mondal, Mrs. Constance Mort, Miss Christine B. Orlowski, Mr. Martin Parker, Mr. & Mrs. Donald C. Pegg, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Penrose, Linda & Donna Penrose, Mr. & Mrs. J. L. Pike, Mr. Kenneth Rex, Mr. & Mrs. W. Robus, Mr. Henry Rogers, Miss Jean Ross, Mr. A. G. Sangster, Miss U. Schramm, Miss Dorothy Sharp, Mr. & Mrs. E. F. Sheffield, Miss Myrna Skuce, Mr. Wm. B. Stevens, Mrs. B. J. Stewart, Mr. & Mrs. L. C. Sutherland, Mr. Fred Turner, Mr. Richard E. Zurbrigg.

CLUB POSTER COMPETITION. The Board of Directors invite entries from members in a competition for a Club poster that can be displayed at such functions as the Sportsmen's Show, FON Annual Meeting, Flower Show, etc.

1) Each entry shall be 11" x 17" and may have three colours plus black and white. It must include the Club crest in colour, about 3" high.

2) The lower right- or left-hand corner should have an area of about 2" x 3" left for the later attachment of a pocket to contain information leaflets.

3) The pictorial design of the poster is left to the competitors, the only requirement being a relationship to the Club and its aims. We want to develop an image of an active an socially conscious group of people with outdoor interests.

4) Deadline will be October 31st, 1970. Entries should be mailed to Mr. A. S. Corbett, 12 Kitson Drive, Scarborough, Ont.

5) Prizes: First prize, a $25.00 FON credit token. Any other poster accepted for use by the TFNC will be awarded a $10.00 FON credit token. All entries will become the property of the Club.

6) All entries must have the artist's name and address printed on the back of the poster.

7) The Club reserves the right to accept any or all entries and to reproduce winning entries for any purposes whatever.

President: Mr. Clive E. Goodwin Secretary: Mrs. Mary Robson, 49 Craighurst Ave., Toronto 12 (481-0260)

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Officers and Board of Directors, 1970-71

Board of Directors:

President - Mr. Clive E. Goodwin

Vice-President - Miss Rosemary Gaymer

Immediate Past President - Mr. John A. Gingrich

and

Prof. Wm. A. Andrews	Miss Emily Hamilton
Mr. John ten Bruggenkate	Mr. Trevor Hamilton
Mr. Paul Catling	Miss Erna Lewis
Mr. A. S. Corbett	Mr. H. D. Wilkins

(One seat vacant due to retirement of Mr. W. Hutton)

Secretary: Mrs. Mary Robson

Editor of Newsletter: Mr. E. Talvila

Treasurer: Mrs. Dorothy Mathers

Director, Junior Club: Mr. R. MacLellan

The following secretarial assistants have been appointed:

Audubon Wildlife Films: Mrs. Irene Freeman

Newsletter mailing: Mrs. S. Ostrower

Committee Chairmen

Programme	- Mr. John A. Gingrich	- 489-9953
Outings	- Mr. S. A. Corbett	- 261-7361
Audubon Wildlife Films	- Mr. John A. Gingrich	- 489-9953
Botany Group	- Miss Florence Preston	- 483-9530
Bird Group	- Miss Rosemary Gaymer	- 925-2007
Conservation & Ecology Group	- Prof. W. A. Andrews	- 425-4607
Field Biologists' Group	- Mr. Donald E. Burton	- 222-6467
Land Acquisition	- Mr. Paul Catling	- 694-4010

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES
for the Year Ended April 30, 1970

REVENUE		
Membership fees		$ 3,349.50
Donations		183.00
Dividends on shares		113.72
Interest on bond and trust company certificates		346.79
Interest on savings accounts		228.24
Audubon Wildlife Films (net)		3,261.54
Profit on sales:		
Club literature and crests	$ 633.81	
F.O.N. cards	147.42	781.23
Miscellaneous revenue		155.29
		$ 8,419.31
EXPENDITURE		
Printing		$ 2,441.22
Salaries and honoraria		985.00
Theatre rentals and expense		430.00
Postage		619.76
Donation to Junior Club		200.00
Loss on sale of bond		25.00
Office supplies		208.03
F.O.N. - affiliation fee	$ 87.10	
- Annual Meeting	115.12	202.22
Miscellaneous expenses		246.98
Net income for the year, transferred to Surplus		3,061.10
		$ 8,419.31

BALANCE SHEET - April 30, 1970

ASSETS

Cash on hand and on deposit		$ 4,289.36
Inventory of merchandise for sale		1,500.00
Accounts receivable		133.45
Investments - 50 shares Bell Canada	$ 2,444.74	
- Royal Trust Co. G.I.R.	6,000.00	8,444.74
Total Assets		$14,367.55

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities	
Accounts payable	$ 426.24

SURPLUS

Balance, May 1, 1969	$10,880.21	
Add: Net income for year ended April 30/70	3,061.10	
Balance, April 30, 1970		13,941.31
Total Liabilities and Surplus		$14,367.55

Audited and found correct
May 2, 1970

(signed)
D. E. BURTON
Chartered Accountant

BOARD DOINGS

A Report from your Directors

Things normally quieten down over the summer, but the Board has been kept quite busy, and members might like to know some of the things that have been going on.

Shortly after the Annual Meeting our lawyers assured us that we were "legally and properly incorporated", and the first task of the new Board was to make a decision on the purchase of our Nature Reserve. Articles on this matter appear on subsequent pages.

Support for the F.O.N.

In keeping with the vote at the last meeting the two senior levels of government were advised of our support for the Resolutions passed at the F.O.N. Annual Meeting. This resulted in a series of letters from different Ministers thanking us for our views and outlining the current views of Government. There was little in the exchanges that we did not already know, but it is important for our positions and interests to be kept before our representatives.

A similar exchange occurred on our support for the Government's Arctic Pollution Prevention Bill.

Waterfront Matters

Closer to home, the Waterfront Plan continues to move in and out of the news, but solid facts seem hard to pin down. The Board has approved a comprehensive review of the Plan which was developed by a Committee of the Club. Armed with a policy, we are in communication with the Department of Trade & Commerce, specifically on Harbour City.

Members may recall the President expressing concern about Harbour City and the Airport proposals at the May meeting. Really we are not so much opposed to these parts of the plan, but rather to the way in which they have been presented.

If a city the size of Barrie is to be placed on the site of the present airport, what impact will this have on the rest of the Island Park? Will the additional parkland which is supposed to be "created" by the Plan be adequate for both the new population and the existing Island users? How will the canals be kept free of litter and pollution? Will the fill operations damage the water quality of the Bay? These are the kinds of question to which we are seeking answers. So far, we are not convinced the answers exist.

The Belt Line Railway

Anyone reading the papers lately will probably have seen details on the controversy over the future of the Belt Line Railway. The matter broke while everyone was out of town, but a hurried brief was put together expressing the Club's support for the use of the right-of-way as a walking park. This was presented at a public hearing. The ratepayers groups representing those whose property abuts the line presented well prepared and highly emotional opposition to the idea.

The matter is now back with the Planning Board, and by the time you read this, further public hearings will probably have been announced. It is important that you express your views to your alderman promptly; the matter is far from settled.

Four alternatives have been proposed, but really the issue divides into two broad positions: one, to allow the property owners along the line to acquire, or at least use, the bulk of the land; and the other, for the city to acquire the line as a walking park. We will have more details for those who desire them, at the next meeting, but do act on this matter. Write your alderman, or the Mayor, now!

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NATURE RESERVES

Why do we need one? What will we do with it?

by Clive Goodwin

Today we all hear much about the need to preserve the "quality of our environment". It's hard, however, to find really effective things to do, and even group efforts often seem very limited. Most current emphasis is on pollution, but we do not have to look very far to realize that the ultimate pressures will be on land. So one very direct, very meaningful action open to any nature club is to acquire nature reserves.

Perhaps you feel doubtful about the importance of preserving natural land. If so, just consider the lakeshore between Toronto and Hamilton. The last significant natural area was Rattray's Marsh, now lost to development. How grateful we would be today if the T.F.N.C. had been able to buy this fine marsh 50 years ago! The Federation of Ontario Naturalists' Dorcas Bay reserve was the last available section of dune and bog along the entire western shoreline of the Bruce Peninsula.

Shorelines are most vulnerable, but wetlands and woodlots everywhere are disappearing: little is left of Pottageville swamp, Purpleville woods was lost to logging and private homes, and woodlots closer to the city are no more than memories. Some fine areas are in public hands, but we cannot rely on this: the Humber marshes have progressively been reduced under the pressure for recreational space, and even the fine woodlands in the Boyd area are suffering under the heavy public use they receive.

The projections of urban growth in the next 30 years are alarming, and a glance at the populous countries of Europe shows how scarce natural areas can become if an effort is not made to preserve them.

A nature reserve need not be a wild area of exceptional significance to be valuable. Dr. Bruce Falls, discussing the value of nature reserves to science in the December 1967 issue of the Ontario Naturalist, has said: "There may be considerable merit in maintaining areas representing various degrees of alteration [by mankind]." In this paper--well worth reading for anyone who wishes a comprehensive discussion on this topic--he distinguishes five reasons for reserves, of which three are of particular interest to us: to provide undisturbed areas for study; to provide "outdoor museums"; and to provide "aesthetic inspiration and recreation in the best sense."

Considerations such as these--coupled with considerable prodding from concerned members--led the T.F.N.C. Executive of some three years ago to start the necessary moves towards acquiring a reserve.

It soon became clear that the task was not going to be an easy one. The most uninspiring plots as far north as Highway #9 were selling for up to $3000 an acre, and waterfront property reached astronomical prices. Escarpment property was similarly inflated, and the moraine was being sold off in ten-acre lots to affluent folk escaping the city. The prospect looked gloomy indeed. Yet there was no prospect of land values decreasing: we felt we must act soon.

These difficulties also brought us face to face with the question of what kind of land would be most suitable for the Club. Obviously, we would all have readily agreed that Rattray's or Eastbourne marshes, the Boyd area, or the Island natural area would have been ideal. But these and similar areas were hopelessly out of reach, and the Executive was faced with hours of soul-searching discussion about what our second choice should be. Should we seek an area of exceptional significance somewhere in Ontario, or a more ordinary area closer to home? Should we seek an area in which the Club could plant trees and erect bird boxes, or should we seek an area with some features of natural significance? Should we fret about things like parking space, or should we look for a good natural area and worry about facilities later?

Well, we felt the Conservation Authorities were in the tree-planting business, but not so sensitive to natural areas. We felt that the area should be reasonably accessible to our members, to enable field work and projects to develop--perhaps no more than one hour's drive away. We looked for a good natural area first, but kept our eyes on the need for some facilities.

So we wanted an area worth preserving, and in our region wetlands and woodland are the habitats disappearing most rapidly. When we had an opportunity to buy 60 acres of wooded bottomland north of Uxbridge it seemed as though it might be ideal for our purposes. And in many ways it was.

Other articles in this issue chronicle our initial reactions to this area, and some of the interesting animals and plants that are to be found there. The rest of this article will look at some things that a naturalists' club can do with a nature reserve, and discuss some of our thinking on the things we should do.

Probably everybody's first instinct on buying a piece of property is to start making plans to "improve" it. But with a natural area "improvements" can backfire: the White Adder's Mouth, for example, is about 3" high in full bloom, and we have located just one plant. Careless positioning of a nature trail could lead to the destruction of a rare and interesting orchid. So the first step must be to establish in detail what plants and animals are on the plot, and this will entail detailed surveys by our various groups. To do the work properly will take an entire season, as breeding bird censuses should be taken, and plants located and identified as they come into bloom. The initial steps in these activities--surveying and staking the area to make possible accurate positioning of the things we find--is already underway.

A good case can be made for leaving the area untouched, and following the changes in flora and fauna over the years. This is the

"undisturbed area for study" function mentioned by Dr. Falls above. We felt that this, however, would restrict the plot to our more expert members, and that it would not really be in keeping with the area's present character--a lot of it is disturbed already!

The opposite approach would be similar to that used by the Conservation Authorities in most of their areas, where the environment is extensively modified to provide recreational opportunities. One argument for this approach would be that it could provide a diversity of habitats by judicious clearing and planting. The only problem with this, however, is that existing natural communities often suffer from such modifications, and are replaced by less sensitive, more commonplace plant and animal associations.

Our surveys will reveal the broad character of the area, and we feel sure that some sections will allow for thoughtful modifications, with nature trails that could give access to a pleasant variety of habitats. At the same time it appears that other sections will be sensitive to disturbance, and in these parts we should avoid heavy use. For the time being, then, we will avoid activities which would result in heavy, widespread disturbance. By this time next year we hope to be able to map out a programme for our reserve which will preserve those features that are significant, give everybody an opportunity to enjoy this interesting area, and perhaps also enrich the diversity of species and habitat already ours.

As for the future--who can say? It would be wonderful if one day we could look to several T.F.N.C. reserves, representing the different kinds of habitat around Toronto, and preserving significant and interesting plant and animal associations. At least we have made a start.

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IT WASN'T POSSIBLE

by Rosemary Gaymer

After many years of hoping, of watching the Club's bank balance grow to the point where we might, just might, consider a land purchase ... of weighing the merits of other possible properties and deciding against them without much difficulty ... it was difficult to believe that this excursion would be different. Everything had happened too suddenly, there was many a slip yet to come, somebody must be exaggerating....

Or so I found myself rationalizing towards the end of April as two cars with six TFN people travelled north-east from Toronto, through Stouffville and Uxbridge. Fairly ordinary-looking country, nothing special.

We turned off the highway onto a quiet sideroad, lined with fine trees. Still ordinary? A little excitement lurked under the matter-of-fact voices that began to ask, "Where does the property begin?" Then there really was a large bush that looked most inviting--conifers and hardwoods, with much undergrowth.

We stopped by the bridge over the river, still talking hard. Perhaps no one noticed at the time that the matter-of-factness had

changed already to possessiveness--"We could do this or that ... our part of the property starts this side of the river...."

Our talking was silenced by a stream of song. Someone said with the rising inflection of surprise, "That was a Winter Wren!" The sun seemed even warmer. Then a White-throated Sparrow proclaimed his citizenship and several birdwatchers immediately tested their whistles to discover whether they'd lost the art of mimicry through the long winter.

Stumbling over cut branches which lay across the beginnings of a road, we reached a clearing that had been made among the trees. Rich, wet topsoil exposed, tangled ditches, lots of low bushes and greenery. My thoughts anticipated future Mourning Warblers and Indigo Buntings, and a wonderful warbler observation patch during migration. The botanists were already arguing the probabilities of various young shoots. There was promise of much excitement to come.

In single file, we left the clearing and picked our way through the bush, looked briefly at the drier, hardwood area, flushing a Whip-poor-will and Ruffed Grouse. We found ourselves ankle-deep in many little streams, mossy banks and muddy paths between and under the cedars. At the far southern end of the area were the "ruins" of an ancient pioneer snake fence, collapsed and overgrown with moss and cedars. I have always been fascinated by the atmosphere of pioneer days. Although I was highly interested by the property from the moment we arrived there, after seeing the fence I had to work hard to remain logical about the pros and cons of the area.

We thought perhaps that a straight line of very old tree stumps was another boundary marker of bygone years. Following the line, we turned east and eventually came out by the river. A Kingfisher rattled with surprise at seeing us, and the botanists probed the tangle of old and new plant growth along the riverbank.

Regaining the road and our lunches, we walked up the hill to the Adams' house, beautifully built of old logs rearranged in a modern layout, and hidden from the road behind great cedar trees that were busy with Evening Grosbeaks. The place was alive with birds. As we picnicked, "our" part of the big bush was spread out before us across the valley. Here was an area that the TFN was in a position to buy, on what seemed ideal terms. We all recognized the challenge we were facing. But it was going to be worth the effort.

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ON THE NATURAL HISTORY OF THE LEASKDALE PROPERTY

by Paul Catling

Two words may be used to briefly describe our land: boreal and wet. Approximately 2.5 miles north of Leaskdale in Ontario County, the 60-acre area lies along the west side of Uxbridge Brook, one of those long, swampy lowlands draining northward into Lake Simcoe. Thus far, the size and nature of the land (deadfalls, thickets, mosquitoes and mire) have rather impeded exploration. However, the Board of Directors traversed the periphery with Ian Adams in the April 19th meltwater. (Ian, a writer and ardent naturalist from whom we purchased this land,

lives on the adjacent property east of the Brook, and will act as our steward.) On this day we were impressed with the greenness of the area, due to the abundance of evergreen plants--Cedar, Balsam Fir, Canada Yew, Wintergreen, Twinflower, Dwarf Cornel, and the evergreen Woodferns amongst up to a foot of melting snow. Since then the area has been visited by certain members of the Botany Group, Jack Gingrich, and Clive Goodwin, all of whom have provided me with their observations. This, as well as my own records for three visits, in the company of Miss S. McKay and others, forms the basis of the following brief account of the natural history.

The area is essentially a White Cedar - Balsam Fir - Paper Birch swamp (Thuja occidentalis L., Abies balsamea (L.)Mill., Betula papyrifera Marsh.), sometimes with an understory of Canada Yew (Taxus canadensis Marsh.) to 3 feet high. The ground is wet, and in many places sphagnous. It appears that this is a long-lasting sub-climax forest community, and the area has probably been like this for many years, the only major change being the removal of much White Pine (Pinus strobus L.), the stumps of which are scattered throughout. Rowe (1959, p. 11) refers to this general forest type as "the Boreal species of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Forest Region."

Near the Brook, where periodic spring flooding probably occurs, there is more variety in the forest which here includes: American Elm (Ulmus americana L.), Ash (Fraxinus sp.), Basswood (Tilia americana L.), and a few Spruce (Picea sp.). Abundant herbaceous species here are: Ostrich Fern (Matteucia struthiopteris (L.)Todaro), Sensitive Fern (Onoclea sensibilis L.), Bulblet Bladder-fern (Cystopteris bulbifera (L.)Bernh.), Poison Ivy (Rhus radicans L.), Spotted Touch-me-not (Impatiens biflora Walt.), Virginia Creeper (Parthenocissus sp.), Wood Nettle (Laportea canadensis (L.)Wedd.), and scattered specimens of Skunk Cabbage (Symplocarpus foetidus (L.)Nutt.) A somewhat similar association is found in the extreme north-west section, where there are also a number of large Red Maples (Acer rubrum L.). Dense Alder thickets (Alnus sp.), characteristic of some sections along the brook, occur locally elsewhere.

On the south side of the property, near telephone pole #6, the land has been cleared, and drained by small ditches. Here the pioneer species in the plant succession may be studied. There is a fine stand of immature Trembling Aspen (Populus tremuloides Michx.), and also a rank growth of Evening Primrose (Oenothera biennis L.), and Fireweed (Epilobium angustifolium L.) in the open.

Perhaps the area of greatest diversity in the flora and fauna is along the Brook. In ca. 3' of water near the bridge are long, sweeping, hair-like mats of Pondweed (Potamogeton vaginatus Turey.). Other submerged plants in the deeper water include Bigleaf Pondweed (Potamogeton amplifolius Tuckerm.), Coontail (Ceratophyllum demersum L.), and Elodea (Anacharis canadensis (Michx.)Rich.). In quieter water near to shore are the large round floating leaves, and flowers up to 5" across, of the White Water-lily (Nymphaea sp.). Along the very edges of the Brook, but still rooted in the water, is found the Great Bulrush (Scirpus validus Vahl.), and the Giant Bur-reed (Sparganium eurycarpum Engelm.), the seeds of which, dispersed by water, are similar to those of Iris in their size and buoyancy.

In the forest glades along the Brook there is great diversity in the vegetation, the following being noteworthy: Blue Vervain (Verbena

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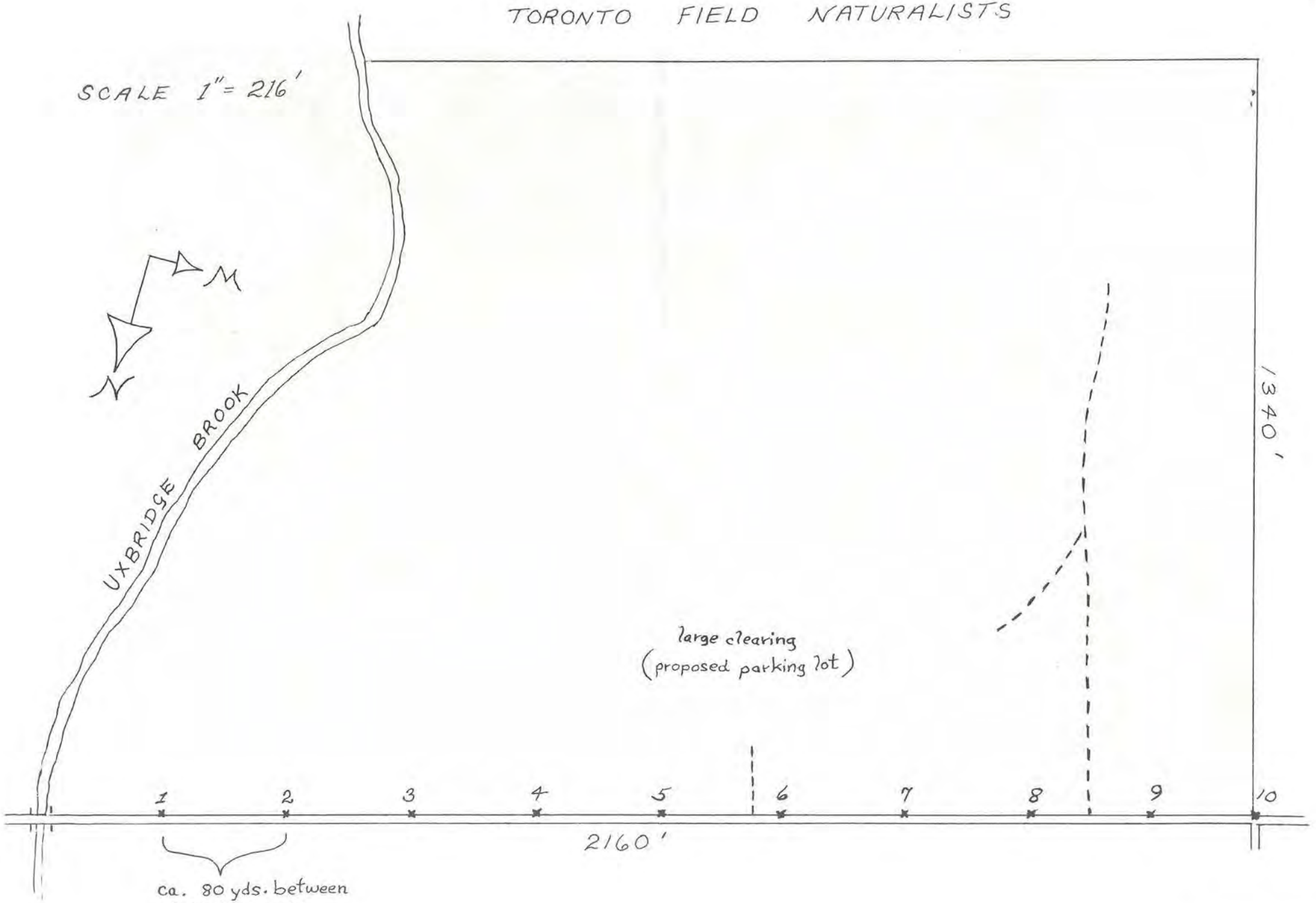

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hastata L.), Nettle-leaved Vervain (Verbena urticifolia L.), Joe-Pye Weed (Eupatorium purpureum L.), Boneset (E. perforatum L.), Stinging Nettle (Urtica sp.), Loosestrife (Lysimachia ciliata L.), and creeping over wet mud, the introduced Moneywort (L. nummularia L.); Monkey-flower (Mimulus ringens L.), Blue Lobelia (Lobelia siphilitica L.), Cardinal Flower (L. cardinalis L.), Swamp Milkweed (Asclepias incarnata L.), Bedstraw (Galium asprellum Michx.), Virgin's Bower (Clematis virginiana L.), and the leafless, orange-coloured Dodder (Cuscuta gronovii Willd.), a vine-like parasite, particularly on Jewelweed. (Most of the preceding plants were in flower on August 2.)

Returning to the Cedar-Fir-Birch swamp which, as already described, is typical of most of the area, we find some of the very unusual and interesting elements of the flora. Here there are many habitats available, ranging from deep shade in the dense Cedar woods, to open sphagnous clearings. Moisture conditions are also variable due to the sphagnum, and deadfalls creating drier hummocks. Six species of orchids have been discovered so far: Ladyslipper (Cypripedium sp.), Helleborine (Epipactis helleborine (L.)Crantz.), Northern Leafy Green Orchid (Habenaria hyperborea (L.)R.Br.), Club Spur Orchid (H. obtusata (Pursh.) Richards), Loesel's Twayblade (Liparis loeselii (L.)Rich.), and White Adder's Mouth (Malaxis monophylla (L.)Sw.). A test of the mossy soil where the Twayblades grew indicated a basic soil condition (pH 7.2-7.4). This orchid, as well as the White Adder's Mouth, appears to be most abundant on the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island, and is quite restricted in Southern Ontario. The Club Spur Orchid, essentially northern in its Ontario distribution, is rare and local south of Algonquin Park. Other typically northern elements of the flora, rare in the Toronto region, are: Balsam Fir (Abies balsamea (L.)Mill.), Ground Pine (Lycopodium obscurum L.), Shining Clubmoss (L. lucidulum Michx.), Twinflower (Linnaea borealis L.), and Dwarf Cornel (Cornus canadensis L.). Also encountered were the following: Rattlesnake Fern (Botrychium virginianum (L.)Sw.), Crested Shield Fern (Dryopteris cristata (L.)Gray), Maidenhair Fern (Adiantum pedatum L.), Indian Tobacco (Lobelia inflata L.), Agrimony (Agrimonia gryposepala Wahl.), Enchanter's Nightshade (Circaea alpina L. and C. lutetiana L. var. canadensis (L.)Aschers. & Magnus), Shinleaf (Pyrola elliptica Nutt.), Willowherb (Epilobium strictum Muhl.), Starflower (Trientalis borealis Raf.), Mitrewort (Mitella diphylla L. and M. nuda L.), Foamflower (Tiarella cordifolia L.), Clintonia (Clintonia borealis (Ait.)Raf.), Self-heal (Prunella vulgaris L.), Cottongrass (Eriophorum sp.), Wild Sarsaparilla (Aralia nudicaulis L.), and many others. (A suitable trail into the Cedar-Fir-Birch swamp is located between telephone poles 8 and 9.)

As the flora has a northern character, we might expect the same from the fauna. Although an accurate general account is impossible at present, a similar richness in the fauna may be deduced.

In late July, I found the larvae and chrysalids of one of Ontario's rarest and most interesting butterflies--the Harvester (Feneseca tarquinius), on Alders near the Brook. The caterpillars of this insect are carnivorous (our only carnivorous butterfly!), feeding on the woolly aphids (plant lice) that were abundant on the twigs of the Alder. Although light green in colour, the caterpillars were covered with the white, waxy secretion similar to their prey, and except for their movement over the leaves, resemble groups of aphids. According to Klots (1938, p. 150), "the larvae are to be found buried beneath a mass of aphids, covered with a web in which are entangled fragments of

the prey, grass, etc. The larval stage is greatly speeded up, there being only three molts and the whole stage taking only ten or eleven days. Perhaps this is caused by the greater nutritional value of its food, - or perhaps it has come about because of the danger to the larvae from ants." No less unusual are the chrysalids which were found on the tops of leaves and bear a remarkable resemblance to bird dropping, being round in shape and blotched with brown and white. "The adult butterflies, coloured with black and orange, have a wingspread of ca. 1.25 inches, and are usually found within a few rods of Alders, where they alight on twigs to suck aphid honeydew."

Another unusual butterfly, the Pearly Eye (Lethe portlandia), a very local species of deep woodlands that usually alights on vertical tree trunks, was found in the Cedar swamp also on August 2.

Birds observed during the breeding season included White-throated Sparrow, Winter Wren, and Brown Creeper. On a day in July Clive Goodwin listed 25 species including Mourning Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, and Whip-poor-will. Red-tailed and Sharp-shinned Hawks were observed throughout the summer. Great Horned and Saw-whet Owls have also been observed during their breeding seasons. Kingfishers surely nest in stubs along the Brook, and Grouse are very abundant.

White-tailed Deer, Porcupine and Weasels are common in the area, as evidenced by tracks and scat on April 19. Ian has even found the tracks of Bobcat along the Brook.

In summation, our Leaskdale property is quite wild, large enough to be lost in, and somewhat unique in the Toronto Region for certain rare species and for plant communities typical of more northern and more calcareous regions. So another 60 acres may be added to the list, which is not nearly long enough, of natural areas in the vicinity of Toronto that will be there tomorrow, undisturbed. We are indeed fortunate to own this property--ownership being one of the most direct means of environmental improvement, with which we as naturalists are most concerned. Hopefully this is only the beginning.

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