



# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 257

February 1971

Visitors welcome!

## FEBRUARY MEETING

Visitors welcome!

Monday, February 1, 1971, at 8:15 p.m.  
at the  
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

**SPEAKERS:** Miss G. Ruth Marshall and Dr. Walter M. Tovell

**SUBJECT:** "Iceland 1970 - A Saga of Two Naturalists"

Vikings sailed westward to discover Vineland; our speakers flew eastward to discover Iceland. Equipped with 2 cameras, 4 lenses, 2 pairs of binoculars, and one telescope, with guided tours they explored this volcanic island which lies astride the mid-Atlantic Ridge. Their slides will illustrate Icelandic glaciers, geysers, waterfalls, and volcanic phenomena--plus a few birds in their habitat.

Next Month: On Monday, March 1, the subject will be "Grasshoppers", and the speaker Dr. Glenn K. Morris, Assistant Professor Zoology at Erindale College.

## February Outings

Sunday HIGH PARK--BIRDS Leader: Mr. Jack Sherrin  
February 14 Meet at the park entrance on Bloor St. at High Park Ave., west of Keele St.  
9:30 a.m. Morning only.

Saturday LAKESHORE, EAST TO LESLIE ST.--WATERFOWL Leader: Mr. Gordon Bellerby  
February 20 Meet at the first parking area west of the Palais Royale. This is on the  
9:30 a.m. south side of Lakeshore Blvd. within walking distance of the footbridge  
from Sunnyside Station (King & Roncesvalles). Rides will be arranged there  
for those without cars. Drivers: If travelling south on Parkside Drive, go west on  
Lakeshore Blvd. to first U-turn, then east to get to this parking area. Morning only.

Outings Chairman: Mr. Stu Corbett, 261-6807

**POSTER CONTEST WINNERS** After careful consideration of all entries, your Board of Directors have made the following awards:

A certificate for \$25.00 in merchandise at the FON Bookshop to:

Mrs. Fred Turner, 52 Shaver Ave. S., Islington

A \$10.00 FON merchandise certificate to:

Miss Pat Weese, 49 Kildonan Dr., Scarborough

FIELD BIOLOGISTS' GROUP  
Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton Ave. W. Several interesting films will be shown.  
Thursday February 11 8:00 p.m.  
Note re parking: As parking can be hard to find on side streets, three lots convenient to St. James-Bond Church are suggested:  
(1) Gulf gas station, south side of Eglinton, just east of Avenue Rd.;  
(2) corner of Eglinton & Braemar (south side, just west of Avenue Rd.);  
(3) Parking Authority at Castle Knock Rd., the first turning south from Eglinton, west of Avenue Rd.  
Chairman: Mr. Don Burton, 222-6467

ECOLOGY & CONSERVATION GROUP  
Meet in Room 300 (third floor), College of Education m 371 Bloor St. W., at Spadina. Mr. R. Thorpe will speak on the subject of Plant Ecology.  
Tuesday February 16 8:00 p.m.  
Chairman: Prof. Wm. Andrews, 425-4607

BOTANY GROUP  
Meet at Hodgson School, Davisville Ave. just east of Mt. Pleasant Rd. Parking entrance from Millwood Rd., the next street north.  
Thursday February 18 8:00 p.m.  
Speaker: Dr. N. P. Badenhuizen. Topic: "Why Toronto Needs a Botanical Gardens".  
Chairman: Miss Florence Preston, 483-9530

BIRD GROUP  
Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton Ave. W. See note above re parking. Subject: "BIRD SONG--Facts and Recordings". Speaker to be announced. Also a quiz on hawks; please bring field guides.  
Tuesday February 23 8:15 p.m.  
Chairman: Miss Rosemary Gaymer, 925-9007

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Welcome to the following new members who were enrolled between November 29 and January 4:

Mrs. Linda Anderson, Miss Judy Anderson, Dr. W. E. Boothroyd, Mr. Joseph Cebek, Mr. Martin B. Cooper, Miss B. A. Hood, Mr. Fred W. Hood, Mr. & Mrs. Sydney Harris, Mrs. M. McKinnon, Mr. R. Victor Palermo, Mr. Peter Perko, Miss Doris Phillips, Mrs. Lefa S. Prosser, Mrs. Phyllis Reaume, Mrs. Aina Shapley, Mr. & Mrs. Murray Snively, Mrs. Ronald Till, Mr. P. Van Vliet, Miss Averie Wells.

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A REMINDER that the annual Sportsmen's Show will take place this year from March 19 to 28, at the Coliseum, CNE grounds, and that we need volunteers to man the Conservation Exhibit. TFN members co-operated splendidly last year to make this exhibit a roaring success. Let's make it even better this year!  
See page 7 of this Newsletter for details.

President: Mr. Clive E. Goodwin

Secretary: Mrs. H. C. Robson,  
49 Craighurst Ave.,  
Toronto 12 (481-0260)

Thank you!

If you look through this issue carefully you will find that only a few articles have been written or put together by the editor; all the rest have been contributed by members. And that's the way it should be. My heartfelt thanks to all those kind members who have sent contributions or letters (nearly 20) this past month and have eased my load considerably. As a result of your timely aid this newsletter is being rather easily put together at 2:30 p.m. only two days late.

Thank you - and please write again and again.

Elmer Talvila

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OUR POOR RELATIONS?

by Howard Huggett

Some years ago I used to work in an office that had been a big old house. Behind and beside the building was a spacious lawn, well supplied with trees. There was also a great stub of dead pine pointing straight up for thirty feet or more. Obviously, the top had broken off long ago and someone had sawn it up for wood or lumber. The stub remained, unmolested by man and defiant of him. However, a number of squirrels had taken it over. It was an ideal spot for them because the ravages of time and the woodpeckers had provided a number of apartments for them. In this natural high rise and in the neighbouring trees they raised families, ate, slept and played. There always seemed to be plenty of time for hide-and-seek and other pastimes, and those squirrels could spiral up and down the great trunk at speeds that the eye could scarcely follow.

Meanwhile, inside the office we humans, undisputed masters of the earth, toiled on until the clock said that we could go out. On week-ends and holidays we could relax in the woods, but those darn squirrels seemed to do this whenever they pleased.

Sometimes, when I was supposed to be working, I sat there and asked myself this question: why was it that we humans, with our superior brains and advanced techniques, could not devise a system that would allow us to work less and play more? The squirrels were better organized than we were!

Now of course play of this sort is not just a fun thing for animals. Their gambollings help to tone their muscles, sharpen their reflexes, and keep them mentally alert, so that they can better meet the sudden dangers that often await them. But most of us humans could use some of that conditioning too. So you have to give the animals credit for having forms of recreation that are so beneficial. When you think of some of the ways that we amuse ourselves,...

Long ago I became convinced that our poor (poor?) relations can teach us something, if we are willing to learn.

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COMING EVENTS

Royal Canadian Institute: Saturday evening lectures, Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, at 8:15 p.m. Further information: 922-2804  
(see next page for details)

(Royal Canadian Institute lectures)

- January 30 - HISTORIC TORONTO--ITS RETENTION OR DESTRUCTION. Illustrated. Brigadier-General J. A. McGinnis, Managing Director, Toronto Historical Board.
- February 6 - NEW FASHIONS IN FORESTRY. Illustrated with a movie and colour slides. Kenneth A. Armson, B.Sc.F., Dip.For., R.P.F., Professor of Forestry, University of Toronto.
- February 13 - THE CHEMISTRY OF THE UPPER ATMOSPHERE. With demonstrations. Harold J. Schiff, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. Dean, Faculty of Science, York University, Toronto
- February 20 - ENERGY VERSUS ENVIRONMENT--THE ARCTIC DILEMMA. Illustrated with slides. Digby J. McLaren, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., Director, Institute of Sedimentary and Petroleum Geology, Geological Survey of Canada.
- February 27 - SCIENCE AND GREAT LAKES MANAGEMENT. Illustrated with slides. J. P. Bruce, M.A. Director, Canada Centre for Inland Waters, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, Burlington, Ontario.

Royal Ontario Museum: Free Sunday movies, 2:00 p.m. in the R.O.M. Theatre,

- February 7 - Legault's Place  
The Warm Coat  
Stalking Seal on the Spring Ice
- February 21 - People out of Time (Australian Aborigines)  
Circadian Rhythms (research of rhythms)

New Palaeontology Gallery opens Jan. 26. This popular gallery has been completely remodelled. Highlights are a mastodon, and a display of aquatic reptiles in a simulated underwater setting.

University of Toronto: Zoology Conversat. Open house at the Ramsey Wright Zoology Building, southwest corner of Harbord and St. George Sts. February 26,27,28. Try to go; these student organized conversats are always entertaining and enlightening.

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BOARD DOINGS

Members have followed with interest the progress of the fund raising drive. The announcement of our purchase was carried in the latest issue of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' newsletter and we are now receiving a good response to this appeal. Douglas Fry, chairman of our Fund Raising Committee, reports that total donations now exceed \$7,000, with the average running at about \$20 per donation. This means that we have received some 350 donations to date - about a third of our members. So - if you are one of those who have yet to contribute, no sum is too small, and that \$20,000 is still a long way away. We feel that the progress to date is encouraging.

Our optimistic ideas about how quickly we would finish surveying the Reserve have proved to be very naive. The southern boundary in particular is very dense, and in spite of the hard work of John ten Bruggenkate, George Fairfield and their dedicated helpers, much remains to be done. It will remain now until spring, for there will be little opportunity for survey work during the winter.

Meanwhile plans for the spring programme will be completed later in the winter. Some work will commence in May, but any breeding bird census work will probably be done in June. We will report on these activities, and on the continuing progress on our other projects, in later issues.

In March the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show will again be featuring a cooperative exhibit in which we will be participating. Planning is well underway, and a meeting of the steering committee, which is to be coordinated by the Conservation Council of Ontario, has been held. We will again be asking members to help in the manning of the display. Response last year was wonderful, and we are planning an even more exciting display this year. There are more details on this elsewhere in the Newsletter.

- Clive Goodwin

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### RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A HIKER-NATURALIST

by Leo A. Smith

In the middle of May, 1966, Margaret Jeffery and two other ladies took the Toronto Hiking Club on a 4 mile route through lovely unspoiled country in the Terra Nova area.

If it can be arranged I intend to organize a bus trip for this club to ramble the same region in June of this year, 1971. The wild strawberries are at their best just about then and some of my bluebird nesting boxes should have youngsters in them.

Margaret showed us a fence post with a bluebird family in it, but as the years went by the post collapsed and the birds moved elsewhere. Last Fall, I built my own box (#30 in my series) and took my own post and dug into the sand to make a good dry home for some of my most colorful friends.

Yesterday I made bluebird box #44 and intend to install it east of Ballantrae. This area is another charming place for a nature hike.

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Last summer, I bought the book "Memories" by Sir Julian Huxley. Every person of scientific inclination will enjoy this book and anyone interested in the great events of the twentieth century should read it too. The author is possibly the most respected zoologist, naturalist, Humanist, and "world civil servant" of our time.

Various chapters deal with Oxford University, the birds of rural England in the 1890's, the founding of the Rice Institute in Texas, the Italian Front in the First World War, expeditions to Spitzbergen, and visits to Russian, Germany and Africa.

All of these adventures are told with a wonderful sense of humour.

Published at \$12.50 by George Allen and Unwin, 1970

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Four friends of mine recently returned from four separate trips to Latin America. All of them report on the exploding humanity in that zone. The population is doubling in eighteen or nineteen years.

Now you see the futility of sending experts to help them grow more food. One of the relief agencies that takes part in MARCH FOR MILLIONS does that. Natural beauty must suffer. Why not MARCH AGAINST MILLIONS?

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I was out in many parts of rural Ontario over the Christmas holidays. There is now hardly a trail, a woodlot, a cemetery or a cranberry bog that is free of the tracks of the snowmobile.

It is a curious fact of life in January 1971 that High Park in the middle of Metro is quieter than the large woods south of Pottageville or the Long Sault Conservation Area.

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Another book that I am glad I bought is WILDLIFE CRISIS by the Duke of Edinburgh and James Fisher. This is published by Cowles Book Company, New York at \$18.75. Some of the pictures of the rare birds and mammals that now face extinction, are remarkably good. By this I mean the paintings and not the Royal photographs, which are only average.

Here is a quotation from page 77: "Of all the animals, man is the dirtiest. He is the most powerful pollutant, destroyer, eroder and exploiter that the biosphere has ever known."

In the foreword, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands urges you to support Planned Parenthood and the World Wildlife Fund.

In the Epilogue, Stuart Udall mentions the need to replace the "predator-bounty" programs with action that is ecologically sound. Well spoken, Sir!

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Until next time ... good hunting with binoculars or camera.

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The Second Audubon Nature Tour to BRITISH HONDURAS March 19 to March 28, 1971

We are pleased to announce completion of arrangements for the second C.A.S. British Honduras Tour during March of 1971. Limited to 15 persons and with priority given to C.A.S. members and their friends, the tour will cover the ten days from Friday, March 19th to Sunday, March 28th. Cost per person will be \$700.00 Canadian, which will include all transportation, meals and accommodation (on a double occupancy basis), gratuities. Tour members wishing single occupancy room will be required to pay an additional \$60.00.

The Tour Leader will again be Donald H. Baldwin, Treasurer of the C.A.S. and formerly of the Royal Ontario Museum. Local Leaders will include Esther Pendergast, Dora Weyer and Ford Young -- the Leaders of the highly successful 1970 Tour, which recorded 268 of the 488 species of birds known to occur in British Honduras, and added 2 completely new species to the avifaunal list. 1970 Tour members also found time to fish, snorkel, shop, study the fabulous May archaeology and generally relax, sun-bathe or sightsee within the framework of an itinerary kept loose enough to cater to the individual's tastes.

Half-day, day and two-day trips will be made out from Belize to visit different kinds of habitat to see as many birds as possible. One day will be spent at Altun Ha on the site of the Royal Ontario Museum's archaeological excavation of this ancient Maya temple complex. Dr. Pendergast, husband of our co-leader, will explain the work being done. From this site recently came the world's largest piece of carved jade - a head of the Maya sun-god. The site is also rich in birds and was the scene of two collecting expeditions by the ROM, one of which was conducted by Mr. Baldwin.

Including members of last year's tour returning for a second time, about half the seats are already spoken for. The remainder will be treated on a first come - first served basis, so signify your interest in joining the group by telephone or writing:-

Canadian Audubon Society, 46 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto 7, Ont.

925-3891

## Help Wanted!! The Canadian National Sportsmen's Show

This year we will again be cooperating in the Conservation Exhibit at the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show. The exhibit is being wholly redesigned, with a new slide show.

We will need the help of all our members to man this display. The Show will run from Friday, March 19 to Sunday, March 28, and we will be manning in "shifts" roughly as follows:

Weekdays: 12-3:30; 3:30-7:30; 7:30-11:00  
Saturdays: 10-2:30; 2:30-6:30; 6:30-11:00  
Sundays: 1-5; 5-9.

The duties are not onerous; chiefly a matter of distributing literature and answering simple questions. This year there will be two areas in the display to be manned, and in one section children will be invited to draw an animal, using paper and pastels we will supply. Members who like working with children will find this section particularly rewarding. The whole should be a more interesting display to man than the one last year.

Would members who can help call Miss Cratchley (762-5761) and give the days and hours they prefer, and also indicate if they would be willing to help with the young people. We should note that the F.O.N. and Pollution Probe will also be cooperating in this display, so the problem of divided loyalties does not arise.

We would like to get the names and addresses of those willing to help as soon as possible to give us an opportunity to mail out passes.

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## SPADINA REVIEW CORPORATION

Metro has voted to proceed with the Spadina Expressway without further review... BUT THERE WILL NOW BE A FULL REVIEW OF THE CASE FOR AND AGAINST SPADINA AT THE ONTARIO MUNICIPAL BOARD...

Ratepayers, residents and other groups are retaining J. J. Robinette, Q.C., to present their many concerns...

THE OUTCOME OF THIS DEBATE WILL DETERMINE THE SHAPE OF OUR CITY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME...

The estimated costs of the Spadina Expressway have doubled in a few years -- from \$73 million to \$142 million (in last year's prices!)

THE QUESTION INCLUDES OTHER EXPRESSWAYS: THE (EVEN MORE DEBATED) CROSSTOWN, RICHVIEW, CHRISTIE, PARKSIDE, SCARBOROUGH, 400 EXTENSION...

The hearings will also question Metro's financial circumstances and planning, ratepayers' tax burdens, air pollution, noise, traffic congestion and many other transportation problems...

BUT LEGAL HEARINGS COST MONEY...FUNDS MUST BE PUBLICLY RAISED TO COVER THE COSTS OF LEGAL COUNSEL, EXPERT WITNESSES, AND RESEARCH.

The Spadina Review Corporation has been formed to seek widespread financial support for the Ontario Municipal Board hearings. Contributions will be anonymous and financial statements of all receipts and expenditures will be published.

Show your concern for Toronto's future. Send your contribution today to:

SPADINA REVIEW CORPORATION, P.O. Box 5819, Postal Station "A", Toronto 1

What is all this commotion up ahead! Sounds like a flock of crows quarreling amongst themselves.

Reaching the vicinity from the open fields, looking down the ravine, I saw perched in the centre of a tall tree against the trunk (no doubt for protection), which was about halfway down the valley, a great horned owl being mobbed by a dozen or more of these black rascals circling around him, and cawing out all kinds of cuss crow talk.

The position of the bird, and the tree, void of foliage below me, provided an exciting view vantage.

Pestering their victim, these cohorts were putting on a bold front, although to me (watching behind a tree) their attitude seemed more teasing and half-hearted than antagonistic which they were camouflaging by their loud chatter and outnumbers.

Once in a while a bolder one would make a dive at the owl (goaded on by the more timid ones) managing to get in a quick peck and away as fast as he could get. Inter-mingled in all this crow chatter were other calls. No doubt distress signals. Something like: Attention all crows--come on over and join the fun, we have an enemy cornered up here. And in response, from all across the open fields came stragglers winging their way to take up the challenge.

It seemed to me that when the owl had had just about enough of this, he would slowly wing his way to another tree where he would jockey for another position of defence. I followed, and during the flight the crows would all follow managing to get in an occasional rear end peck, all the while increasing their crescendo, which by this time was echoing up and down the valley.

All owls being wise, he did not prolong his stay in the vicinity too long, as in this position he was certainly at a disadvantage, his opponents outnumbering him could have finished him off, but perched with a tree trunk at his back, he could very well handle the situation, and keep the cowardly beggars at bay.

I watched several of these manouverings, each one with more crows arriving, to chip in, and last I saw of him was wending his way over the tree tops, across the railway tracks, surrounded by black dots, their racket fading away in the distance. Towards the other valley of Don, which I hope he made safely.

I have read that these nocturnal birds turn the tables on their tormentors at night. Slaughtering them left and right from their roosting perches and dawn may show piles of plucked feathers strewn among a few carcasses over the ground below.

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Conservation Council of Ontario Brochures

The following small brochures (8-12 pages) are available: Air Pollution, Erosion, Extinction, Disposable Bottles, Solid Waste, Open Space, Pesticides, Water Pollution.

They are packed with information and well worth the attention of any conservationist. Write for your free copies to:

CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF ONTARIO  
BOX 1070, POSTAL STATION A, TORONTO 1

BUTTERFLY RESEARCH REQUESTS (from Toronto Entologists' Association Newsletter)

As with most of nature, the butterflies of Ontario are faced with an increasingly pessimistic future. Two species have already suffered drastically due to man's activities. Two or three known colonies of WEST VIRGINIA WHITE butterfly (Pieris Virginiensis) have been eliminated.

At the present the Toronto Entomologists' Association is urging the Ontario Government to create a National Park Reserve for this species in Halton Co. Forest, north of Campbellville. Mr. Walter Plath and Mr. Paul Catling presently are preparing an article on P. Virginiensis which will feature Walter's study of the life history of this species, as well as an account of the ecology, which may assist the Department of Lands and Forests in "managing" the area.

If you have collected this species in Ontario, it would be appreciated if you would send your data to Walter or Paul, as it would be most useful in establishing the flight periods of males and females.

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Records Wanted of the capture of LITTLE SULPHUR BUTTERFLY (Eurema Lisa) in Ontario. As I would like to document the occurrence of this species in Ontario, it would be appreciated if members could consult their records and collection, - and send the dates and locations to Paul Catling, 104 Victoria Park Ave., Toronto 13.

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THE BOTANY GROUP REPORTS by Florence Preston

What is the purpose of the various groups within the T.F.N.C. which meet monthly? I'm not sure just exactly what was in the minds of the people who first started these groups - of which there are now four - but I know why I go to the meetings of the Botany Group each month -- simply because I enjoy the speakers and find at the meetings a group of interesting, friendly people with a common bond of being lovers of wildflowers and plants, and having a desire to know more about them. Some of these people already know a great deal about the subject and are willing to share their knowledge, while others know comparatively little.

We always have interesting programs. At the first meeting of the present season, our guest was Mrs. Betty Greenacre, who took us along nature's trails in search of wild flower pictures. Her photography was superb and was a treat to see even for a person not especially interested in Botany. As the pictures were shown, Mrs. Greenacre talked about the plants and where they may be found, and made us all eager to go out into the woods again to see some of these treasures for ourselves.

At our second meeting, Mr. Stu Corbett fascinated us by demonstrating some of the methods used in imparting a love of nature to children. Stu is well known to T.F.N.C. members as Chairman of the Outings Committee this year. By vocation, he is vice-principal of an elementary school in Scarborough. He showed pictures of youngsters on out-of-school trips, and illustrated some of the aids used by teachers in school. He also discussed the ways in which an out-of-school trip may be tied in with lessons on many subjects.

By the time this is being read, the January meeting will be over, at which Mr. Lorne Jewitt is showing some of his collection of pictures of wild orchids.

At the meeting on February 18, Dr. Badenhuizen will discuss Toronto's need for a Botanical Garden. Anyone interested in Botany will be welcome. The meeting will be held in the library of the Hodgson Public School on Davisville Avenue, just a few steps east of Mount Pleasant Road. Either the St. Clair street car or the Sunnybrook bus will bring you to the corner of Mt. Pleasant and Davisville. We'll look forward to seeing you in February.

## WILKET CREEK PARK DEC. 13 OUTING

by Eileen M. Nicol

On Sunday 13th Dec. the "bird group" met in Wilket Creek Park. Despite the fact that it was snowing heavily and had been all night, there was a fair turn out of about twenty-five people including six or seven new members on their first outing. Our leader was Mr. Fred Bodsworth who, because of a scarcity of bird life, incorporated a lesson on winter buds of trees and shrubs. The first birds we heard and saw were the chickadees which came down quite close to investigate the noises Mr. Bodsworth was making to attract them. There were a few downy woodpeckers sighted plus a pair of mallards, many starlings and one crow. We heard but didn't sight a blue jay. One thing of great interest was a small flock of gulls flying in a V formation. Not even our experts had seen this before and we kept a close eye on them thinking it was just accidental, but though they broke formation once, they re-formed and held while we watched till they went out of sight. It continued to snow for the full three hours we were out but it didn't mar the pleasure any. Another great pleasure for me was the fact that I took with me my copy of "The Sparrow's Fall" written by Mr. Bodsworth which he graciously agreed to autograph for me. Whilst he was doing this Mr. Bodsworth told me that the day before a contract had been signed with a Canadian film company for the filming of "The Sparrow's Fall", so here's hoping in the future there will be a film which will be as much a pleasure to see as the book was to read.

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### CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

Toronto's 46th annual Christmas bird count was held by the Toronto Ornithological Club on Dec. 27, 1970. A total of 21,236 birds was seen representing 89 species, a rather good score. The varied thrush was the only bird new for the count. (The bobwhites are doubtfuls).

This year's list was as follows:

Starling 3,961; greater scaup, 2,577; house sparrow, 2,311; mallard, 1,778; oldsquaw, 1,441; herring gull, 1,136; tree sparrow, 951; black duck, 924; black-capped chickadee, 870; ring-billed gull, 582; ring-necked pheasant, 500; Canada goose 408; snow bunting, 365; American goldfinch, 297; slate-colored junco, 294; common goldeneye, 274; red-tailed hawk, 260; bufflehead, 257; blue jay, 219; downy woodpecker, 206; common crow, 147; evening grosbeak, 147; white-breasted nuthatch, 138; mourning dove, 136; common merganser, 127; cardinal, 120; red-winged blackbird, 108; song sparrow, 92; brown-headed cowbird, 60; sparrow hawk, 60; hairy woodpecker, 53; northern shrike, 43; gadwall, 40; rough-legged hawk, 32; robin, 29; brown creeper, 23; great black-backed gull, 23; long-eared owl, 22; cedar waxwing, 22; great horned owl, 20; white-throated sparrow, 19; yellow-shafted flicker, 16; canvasback, 11; red-breasted merganser, 11; golden-crowned kinglet, 11; pileated woodpecker, 8; red-breasted nuthatch, 8; bobwhite, 7; glaucous gull, 7; goshawk, 6; screech owl, 5; rusty blackbird, 5; swamp sparrow, 5; ruffed grouse, 4; belted kingfisher, 4; horned lark, 4; winter wren, 4; hooded merganser, 3; marsh hawk, 3; common redpoll, 3; baldpate, 2; common scoter, 2; red-shouldered hawk, 2; common snipe, 2; yellow-bellied sapsucker, 2; purple finch, 2; Oregon junco, 2; rufous-sided towhee, 2; field sparrow, 2.

The following are single birds: great blue heron; mute swan; wood duck; ring-necked duck; harlequin duck; ruddy duck; sharp-shinned hawk; Cooper's hawk; Iceland gull; snowy owl; saw-whet owl; northern three-toed woodpecker; mockingbird; catbird; brown thrasher; varied thrush; hermit thrush; common grackle; pine siskin; white-crowned sparrow.

It looks like a poor year for winter finches in the Toronto area; no crossbills or pine grosbeaks and only a few redpolls, pine siskins, and purple finches. Snowy owl are low (1); northern shrike (43) and goshawk (6) are high.

Many of these birds should still be here in February. Here's the location of some of the rarer ones in case you want to find them for yourselves:

- Mute swan - Sunnyside beach
- Ring-necked duck - Humber River near Baby Point
- Harlequin duck - Toronto Island, pier on south side
- Common scoter - Eastern Gap
- Bobwhite - Don Valley in Bayview-Lawrence Ave. area. These birds have been in the area since the last week in September, 1970. They appear to be very tame and may be escapes from some collection.
- Common snipe - the creek running into the east side of Whitby harbour.
- Snowy owl - the foot of Leslie St.
- Saw-whet owl - phone Doug Clark (293-4378)
- Northern three-toed woodpecker - just west of Leslie St. and Green Lane (Markham district).
- Mockingbird - Lorne Park area. Phone John Lamey for details (259-2542).
- Brown thrasher - phone John Lamey (259-2542).
- Varied thrush - north of the Maple side road, Purpleville area.
- Hermit thrush, catbird, robins - just south of the Queen Elizabeth highway bridge along the east bank of the Credit River.

Good luck!

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#### RAVENS IN WALES

by William Condry  
(contributed by Miss Holida Buckmaster)

December. For us it is now the raven season. For though we see these splendid birds on and off all the year, it is now that they appear in numbers. Strange in many ways, ravens are out of tune with the rest of nature, being always a season ahead. Early winter is their pairing time and by late winter they are building their great stick nests on rocks or trees. So in December we see them chasing each other wildly about the sky amid great croakings, barkings, and gruntings. Life can never be dull as long as ravens are about. As pets they are famous entertainers and they are just as good in the wild, always making funny noises or up to something interesting. This morning I watched one coming over in a long slow glide. Without warning he turned over on his back, uttered a loud deep "pruk-pruk", then righted himself. This he repeated every fifteen seconds, the notes always uttered when he was upside down. Once he seemed so lost in the joy of flying upside down that he glided on for a dozen yards in that strange position. Finally he flew slowly away, making a noise like a stone dropped in a bucket every few seconds. Then he called in a ridiculous falsetto voice, pulled a few corks out of bottles, turned over three times in rapid succession, and vanished by a sudden plunge into an oakwood.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### BIRD NOTES FROM ORTON (East Garafraxa Twp., Dufferin County)

by J. F. Ashdown

- \*\* On December 23 I saw my first snowy owl of the season in this area.
- \*\* In front of my picture windows I have two feeder stations and suet log. This year I have four Downy Woodpeckers feeding daily. In the same area I have planted two young maple trees, 3" diameter. The woodpeckers are shredding the bark on the trunks of these trees. Apparently they feed on the inner bark and I am worried about the damage to the trees. To-day I covered the trunks with tarpaper and tape and will watch the results.

\*\*For the second year in a row only one slate coloured Junco has shown at my feeders.  
In previous years flocks of 8 to 10 were common.  
\*\*Yesterday, on entering my drive shed, I discovered a ruffed grouse perching on an overhead beam. As I keep my stores of bird feed here perhaps the bird was looking for grain.

\* \* \* \* \*

A PLEA (What - another one?)

Would any member knowing anything about the birds, plants, fishes or people of Bermuda please phone or write to the editor as soon as possible.

I hope to be there during the last week of February recuperating from the trials of editorship and while there would like to see as much of the fauna and flora as possible. Any information would be appreciated. Thanks!

231-1064

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