



# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 260

May 1971

## MAY MEETING

Monday, May 3, 1971, at 8:15 p.m.  
at the  
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

ANNUAL MEETING and ELECTION OF OFFICERS

SPEAKER: Mr. Fergus Wilson

SUBJECT: "A Naturalist's View of Quetico Park" - illustrated with slides

Mr. Wilson is Park Supervisor for the Department of Lands and Forests, Fort Frances District, and was formerly Park Naturalist at Quetico. He is especially well qualified to deal with this subject.

Our speaker will be prepared to answer questions on the management of Quetico Park, a subject of considerable interest in recent weeks.

In the rotunda - The two prize-winning TFNC posters, by Mr. Fred Turner and Miss Pat Weese, will be on display.

- Issue #24 (1970) of The Ontario Field Biologist, \$1.00
- Flight, the annual publication of the Junior Club, 50¢

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## Important Notice for Next Season

The monthly meetings of the Club will be held in a new location next year-- at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), 252 Bloor St. West, between St. George and Bedford Rd. Parking available.

Also, there will be nine meetings next season instead of the usual eight. The first meeting will be on Monday, September 13, 1971. The remaining meetings will be on the first Monday in each month, from October 1971 to May 1972.

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Thanks to all the Club members who contributed so generously of their time at the Chain of Life exhibit at the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show. The show was a huge success; so was our exhibit, and TFN members provided the backbone of manpower for the display. Thanks to everyone.

JUNIOR CLUB Meet in the Museum theatre. This will be the closing meeting of the Saturday season. Films will be shown, prizes will be awarded, and Flight distributed to all members. The annual field trip will be held on Saturday, May 1, May 29, at Claremont Conservation Area.

Director - Mr. Mike Singleton, 447-4197

BOTANY GROUP No meeting in May.

Chairman: Miss Florence Preston, 483-9530

ECOLOGY & No meeting in May.  
CONSERVATION GROUP

Chairman: Prof. Wm. Andrews, 425-4607

BIRD GROUP Please see bottom of page 3.

Chairman: Miss Rosemary Gaymer, 925-2007

FIELD Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton Ave. W.  
BIOLOGISTS' GROUP

Speaker: Mr. Paul Catling.

Thursday Subject: "Insectivorous Plants of Ontario"

May 13

8:00 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Don Burton, 222-6467

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#### THE FIRST JIM BAILLIE MEMORIAL WALKS - Sunday, May 16, 1971

Sponsor: The Toronto Ornithological Club

Purpose: To see, hear, and enjoy the bird life of the Toronto area during Spring migration, in the best tradition of the late James L. Baillie. (Mr. Baillie was a founder member of the Toronto Ornithological Club, and dean and mentor of most of the field birders of the Toronto Region.)

There are still many good areas for birding in our city, that do not involve long drives or even the use of a car. This is a chance to know these areas at a peak season under the guidance of men who know the areas and their birdlife.

#### Locations:

1. HIGH PARK - starting from the west side of Grenadier Pond at its north limit.  
Leader: Mr. John Lamey (259-0542)
2. TORONTO ISLAND - starting at the Ferry Docks, Toronto side. Ferry time is 7:30; try to be there by 7:15.  
Leader: Mr. Gordon Bellerby (481-7345)
3. BELT LINE RAVINE - starting from the east end of Moore Park (Moore and Welland Aves.)  
Leader: Mr. Eric Nasmith (489-6587)
4. WILKET CREEK PARK and adjacent areas - starting from the Leslie Street parking lot, opposite the Inn on the Park.  
Leader: Mr. Donald Baldwin (488-7769)

5. HIGHLAND CREEK AREA - from Hwy. 2, east end of high level bridge, south on Military Trail into south parking lot. Look for sign: "Colonel Danforth Park".  
Leader: Mr. Lou Marsh (368-4974)
6. PICKERING BEACH - starting at the foot of Shoal Point Road where it meets the lake. To find Shoal Point Road, go east from the centre of Ajax on the Base Line about a mile and a half; turn south.  
Leader: Mr. George Fairfield (485-9083)
7. ETOBICOKE CREEK VALLEY - starting from the Base Line Road at the east end of the bridge over Etobicoke Creek. Base Line is parallel to Hwy. 401, and the first road south of it. Turn east off Dixie Road, or west off Indian Line.  
Leader: Mr. V. M. Trojek (247-3748)

Starting times: 7:15 a.m. at the meeting places stated above, except Pickering Beach (9:00 a.m.). All walks to be of about 3 hours duration.

Extra leaders: Each leader will have one or two assistants. If a large number of people arrive at one area, the group will be divided into smaller units and starting times spread out enough to allow a pleasant walk for each unit.

Equipment: Binoculars, seasonal clothing and footwear. Coffee or a mid-morning snack if you wish, each to bring his own.

Queries: May be directed to the leaders, or to Mr. Eric Nasmith (489-6587), or to Mr. Donald Pace (444-0664). No advance notice to the leaders is necessary. Any interested persons are welcome.

General chairman for the walks - Mr. Eric Nasmith (day, 368-6986; evening, 489-6587)

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TFNC OUTINGS (not listed in Spring Outings booklet)

Saturday FOR BEGINNERS ONLY - Birds Leader - Mr. Clive Goodwin  
May 29 The group will be restricted to 12 members--the first 12 to call Mr. Goodwin at 241-1572 on Friday, May 28, after 7:30 p.m. Location and time of outing will be announced when you make your reservation. Those who have attended previous beginners' outings may also call.

BIRD GROUP  
Saturday June 12 Instead of the usual evening meeting there will be a special outing on Saturday, June 12, for members of the Bird Group. No restriction on numbers, but please call Miss Rosemary Gaymer, 925-2007, after 7:30 during the evenings of June 8, 9, or 10, for instructions about location and time. Bring lunch.

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- Needed:
- (1) A reliable person to address (Elliot Addressing Machine) and mail the Newsletters each month. A few extra addressings may be required from time to time. There is a small honorarium for this work. Typing not necessary. Car needed. Please call Mrs. Robson (481-0260).
  - (2) People to help in breeding bird censuses and plant surveys on the Jim Baillie Reserve. You need not be an expert to help in some of the work, so please call Mr. John ten Bruggenkate (425-6096) if you are interested.

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WELCOME to the following new members who were enrolled between March 6 and April 6:

Miss Joanne Ball, Miss Mary Bourn, Miss Sally Brewitt, Mrs. Audrey Carscallen, Mrs. Fay Clark, Mr. & Mrs. David Cobden, Mrs. Priscilla Cole, Miss Mary Cowan, Miss E. M. Crow, Miss Sarah Ganci, Mr. Raymond V. Geras, Mr. E. A. Gomme, Mr. Loran L. Goulden, Mr. John Hill, Mrs. Melba Hillier, Dr. Mary E. Hunter, Mr. Francis J. Jones, Dr. Margaret Knight, Mrs. B. Krieger, Mr. Paul Laevens, Mrs. Rebecca Lafrance, Mr. Douglas Lochhead, Mr. Ernest Luwish, Mrs. Mary F. Miles, Mr. & Mrs. Orval Oppertshauser, Mr. Bruce Parker, Mr. & Mrs. H. R. Schell, Mr. & Mrs. S. D. Sigal, Miss Jean Simmonds, Mr. & Mrs. C. H. Stabler, Mrs. J. Stewart, Mr. John F. Stewart, Mr. & Mrs. D. J. Taylor, Miss Amy I. Wallace, Miss Cecelia Wallace, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Watson, Mr. & Mrs. E. E. B. Welch, Mr. Bill Welch.

President - Mr. Clive E. Goodwin

Secretary - Mrs. Mary Robson,  
49 Craighurst Ave.,  
Toronto 12 (481-0260)

LATE WINTER OBSERVATIONS OF HAWKS AND OWLS - Part 2

by Sheila McKay

Our major expedition for February began at 6:30 A.M. on the 28th. We journeyed far to the east, past Ajax, Whitby, Oshawa, Port Hope, Cobourg, Colborne and finally, at Brighton, we turned north. Now the excitement was really mounting - only a few more miles and we would be there! When we stopped about a mile north of Codrington, our thoughts centred around the all important question, "Would we see the one or maybe even the two that had been observed by others?". The wind blew fiercely and the gray sky did not seem very encouraging, but over the fence we went, and on and on over the trodden snow - others had been here - but we were the first today. On reaching the woods we discovered that he was not in the pines we had been told about. We decided to search the woods as far back as we could. This was not an easy task, for with each step we sank well above our knees into the crusted snow, thus walking was slow and difficult. When we were almost ready to give up, Paul called to us: he had found him. Anticipating success, a final burst of energy sent us bounding over the snow more quickly than ever, and before we knew it we were admiring through binoculars the bird we had come so far to see - the Great Gray Owl - A Lifer for us all.

The magnificent owl was about 5 ft. from the ground in a small deciduous tree at the edge of a field. With just a cursory glance one might have mistaken the bird for a tree trunk. Although we were 200 ft. away, his yellow eyes opened wide as we walked toward him. The wind ruffled the long brownish feathers of North America's largest species of owl (largest in appearance only, for in bodily bulk it is exceeded by the Snowy and Great Horned Owls). Despite the bird's common name, the huge facial disc was actually the only portion of the plumage that appeared distinctly gray. A tiny black bow tie linked the slender pure white collar that was visible at the base of the disc. Perhaps it was our impolite staring or our approach, but the Great Gray left the tree and flew into the pine woods we had first checked. In flight the owl appeared as a giant moth, moving slowly and gliding effortlessly between perches which were usually located along the border of a field and never more than 10 ft. from the ground. The large owl was very active, probably as a result of hunting, for the day had become even darker and more foreboding: just perfect for him. Even though the Great Gray remained on each low perch for no more than 5 minutes, we did manage to come quite close (within 30 ft.) and observed him well, before his departure across the fields. Everything about this mysterious and rare visitor from the north was intriguing. Great Gray Owls breed in the boreal forest zone but, because of their retiring nature, are seldom observed there. During some winters these owls may move south to utilize the more abundant food supply. At this time naturalists may have a chance to see them.

Another owl of the boreal forest zone which may move south during winter is the Hawk Owl. Though not as rare as the Great Gray Owl, it is by no means common and is seen only occasionally in Southern Ontario. An opportunity to see a Hawk Owl near Chemung Lake, north of Peterborough, could not be denied, so we drove directly from the Great Gray to this location. Not too much walking was necessary this time for the owl was high in a tree, right beside the road. Much smaller in size, with a longer tail and grayer colouration, the diurnal Hawk Owl chose tree tops and summits of poles on which to perch. The barred breast of this owl also contrasted with the streaked breast of the Great Gray. Even the flight of these birds differed, for the Hawk Owl flew more like a falcon than an owl, with quick strokes slicing through the air. We used a dead mouse to attract the owl's attention while photographs were taken. This method was very effective for the owl peered down, definitely interested in our bait.

The windy, snowy weather which at times almost produced blizzard conditions, only added to the mystique of the day on which we saw the Great Gray Owl and the Hawk Owl, for it was as if we had travelled hundreds of miles northward and were observing these birds in their northern habitat. Owls certainly took precedence on this day for we did not see even one hawk; but from local birders at Codrington we heard that a light-phase Rough-Leg had been sighted. In spite of the blizzard, and the fact that the countryside

was completely snow covered, we saw several flocks of Horned Larks. Shouldn't they have been discouraged by such weather? Perhaps these early migrants knew that this would be the last snow storm of the season and the spring sunshine would soon be warming the land,

As we were returning home the weather cleared so we stopped at a woods along the 401 between Ajax and Whitby, and found a sure sign of spring. The first bird to nest was already sitting on eggs. When we looked at the nest through the 10X scope we could see two ear tufts and one very angry yellow eye glaring at us - sure enough the Great Horned Owls were using the same nest as last year. By the time you read this article, the little owlets which were only eggs on Feb. 28, will probably be discovering a wonderful new world and spring certainly will have arrived.

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#### COMING EVENTS

Toronto Parks Department: Further information Syd Nicol 367-8176

April 25 - Conducted walk at Highland Creek Park, Morningside Ave., Scarborough

McLaughlin Planetarium: Information 928-8550

Starting April 21 - Drama of the Stars

Royal Ontario Museum: Information 928-3690. Free Museum tours 12:15 p.m.

April 26 - About Birds

April 28 - Geology: The Changing Earth

Federation of Ontario Naturalists: Information 444-8419

April 23-25 - Annual meeting at Skyline Hotel, Ottawa

May 8-9 - Point Pelee regional gathering

June 4-6 - Botany weekend, Bruce Peninsula

Conservation Council of Ontario: Information 366-1387

April 28-29 - Conference on Noise in the Environment, King Edward-Sheraton Hotel, Toronto.

Belt Line Walkway: Information: R,215, Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories.

Pollution Probe is sponsoring a walk along the C.N.R. Belt Line on the first Sunday of each month during the next few months. All supporters of the proposed Belt Line Walkway are invited. Meet at Oriole Parkway and Chaplin Crescent at 2:00 p.m. on the first Sunday of the month.

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#### BOTANY GROUP REPORT

The Botany Group held its final meeting of the season on March 18, when Mr. Harold Reinke, a former public school principal in Toronto, discussed some of the characteristics of native trees as an aid to identification. By using two projectors and two screens, Mr. Reinke was able to show a picture of the whole tree and a close-up of the leaves side by side. His pictures were lovely to look at, and served to remind us of the names of the trees that would soon be bursting forth with new life.

Although our evening meetings are over until next fall, many of our members will be going on T.F.N. outings during the coming weeks to enjoy the outdoors and increase their knowledge of Botany and related subjects.

- Florence Preston

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## Reptile Notes

\*\*\* from an ad in the Star, April, 1971

"The exotic and the unusual from T. Eaton Co.

#8 Specially priced pet turtles. An easy to care for land and water reptile that makes an ideal family pet. Special each .69

#11 Non-poisonous baby boa. Special each 6.99

#12 Select baby caimans. A tiny member of the alligator family.

Easily cared for in simulated tropical environment. Special each 2.99  
(Ed: the adult is not so tiny: 3-6 ft. long)

\*\*\* from a letter in the Star, July 22, 1970

This letter is to express concern regarding the exotic animals being offered for sale in Toronto pet and department stores.

Many of these animals have very exacting requirements in captivity and will not live long, no matter how well-intentioned the buyer. For example, Horned Lizards, currently in Toronto pet stores, have poorly understood dietary and temperature requirements and almost always starve to death after a few weeks.

The live animal importation business claims less animal lives than do the hide, skin and animal products businesses, but it nevertheless causes a lot of needless suffering and serious drains on the populations of such animals, especially serious in the case of rarer species.

Some animals, such as some species of monkeys, may survive in the home, but make delicate and difficult pets. For example, monkeys are subject to some human respiratory infections and make demands on the pet owner's time and patience (e.g. demands regarding companionship, house training, etc.) -- demands which many people are unable or unwilling to accept after the monkey has been in the home for a while..

Some of the animals being sold are definitely rare in the wild state. For example, many Toronto pet stores offer tortoises of rare and endangered species, e.g. Mediterranean Spur-Thighed Tortoise and Hermann's Tortoise (also from the Mediterranean region). These can be identified using good reptile books. These two species are on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources' rare and endangered animals list. Another species on this list which is often to be found among the small green turtles in pet stores is the Yellow-Spotted Amazon Turtle.

Animals such as these should not be purchased no matter how sorry you may feel for them. Many of the tortoises will die anyway, as they are often dehydrated and beyond the point at which they can effectively deal with food. Refusal to buy these and other exotic species, combined with the introduction of effective laws to prohibit large scale, indiscriminate importation of delicate and sometimes rare animals, would aid effective wildlife conservation, and, at the same time, stop a lot of needless suffering.

G. W. THOMSON  
Department of Zoology,  
University of Toronto

\*\*\* from an article in The Star, July 24, 1970

Thousands of exotic pets die in Metro each year because their owners get tired of them or don't know how to look after them, conservationists charged yesterday.

"It sickens me," said Bruce McBride, president of the Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Society.

Some tropical species are being brought to Canada and almost certain death even though they are in danger of extinction, McBride said in an interview.

George Hulme, manager of the Toronto Humane Society, called for government controls on imports of lizards, turtles, monkeys, alligators, snakes and other novelty pets that seldom survive more than a few months in this country in private homes.

Only about 100 of the 200,000 little green turtles brought into Metro pet stores each year reach reproduction age, McBride said.

People are told to feed the turtle packaged turtle food, but it's "guaranteed to kill it. There's not enough food value," he said.

Thousands of spectacled caimans are sold as baby alligators in Metro pet shops, but most are dead within six months, he said. "This species is in danger simply because of pet stores."

McBride, who has worked with reptiles 18 years, charged that pet store operators don't tell customers what they are getting in for -- that a pet iguana, for example, could grow to five feet "and quite easily take off a finger."

Paul Wettlaufer, owner of the Piranha pet shop, said he doesn't sell difficult pets to people unless he is sure they can look after them.

But he and Edward Leishman, Toronto merchandising manager for Eaton's, admitted their stores had sold some of the thousands of yellow-spotted Amazon turtles that came into Metro last December -- a species which zoologist Thomson says is listed as being in danger of extinction.

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### THE "WHISTLING" SWANS AT PORT ROWAN

by Hazel J. Angus

A word about the "whistling" swans to the folks disappointed in not finding them at Long Point this past March.

This (March 27-28) being the weekend for the "whistling" swans to drop into the Bay at Port Rowan (Long Point), my cousin and I made a trip to my brother's farm in that area for maple syrup. After obtaining a few gallons of this delectable stuff, we proceeded to make the rounds of visits to various relatives, decided to explore a country road we had not travelled since we were barefoot kids visiting uncles and aunts during the summer holidays, where we used to walk a narrow road through the swampy marsh near Big Creek, and shiver and admire the hundreds of snakes sunning themselves on the dense alderbushes hanging over the road on both sides, near the Creek. There were always "whooping cranes", which we called "teeter ass snipes" because they teetered up and down on their long legs before thrusting their noses deep into the mud with a "Wa Hoop" call.

While watching a huge marsh hawk sailing around and around the marsh, a motorist stopped and said if you want to see swans, they are just around the bend, in a farmer's field. So we drove up the road and there they were, hundreds of beautiful swans, feeding in the farmer's field, along with a large flock of Canada Geese.

The farmer's name is "Countryman" and he said that the swans came there to the same beanfield last Spring. He thought they were also attracted to the flocks of Canada Geese which Lee Brown feeds just across the concession to the south. We then drove up the road to Erie View, turned left to the Front Road, then left again, back to Lee Brown's place, and told the naturalists gathered there about the swans just a mile across the concession, so expect Mr. Countryman had a busy driveway full of cars coming to see this wonderful sight!

Apparently the swans prefer the beans to the grass at Long Point Bay and no doubt this food will give better mileage on their trip to their nesting place in the Arctic tundra!

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News in short

- \*\* Point Pelee National Park is going primitive. The main road will be cut off to traffic at the nature centre one and a half miles from the point. After the end of this season camping in the park will be ended. Within 5 years a trackless train will take the place of cars. It seems to be going to the birds.
- \*\* Saw two ads for snowmobiles recently. One showed a "Snow Cruiser" with side-by-side bucket seats, heater, radio, carpeting and inside lights - like a car on skis. The other advertised a free Winchester .22 rifle with each purchase. Help!

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NATURE OBSERVATIONS

by Doris Phillips

Ideally, the naturalist can move about freely to be "where the action is". It is surprising, though, how much action I saw last summer without moving farther than a few feet from the door of my cottage at Lake Simcoe. Seated quietly in my wheelchair I watched fascinated as many small dramas were enacted with scenes of humour, suspense, tragedy, devotion, etc.

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I had always believed that birds would be unlikely to nest where a squirrel could easily get their eggs but a red squirrel and flicker were sharing a tree on our lawn. I don't know if the flicker had been there first and her nesting hole been taken over by the squirrel, but I saw her busily preparing a new nest about a foot below the hole occupied by the squirrel. In future weeks it was not uncommon to see the two heads looking out from the tree trunk, the squirrel above and flicker below. After a while the eggs were hatched and the young birds raised with no interference from their upstairs neighbour.

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The bird bath was a popular spot for drinking and bathing but some purple grackles had their own use - for dunking! They had apparently found some food which was too hard and dry to eat so they would bring a piece and drop it in the water. After a short wait they would pick it out and either swallow it on the spot or fly off to some hungry nestlings perhaps.

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Our neighbour had been feeding a pigeon which had come there with an injured wing. It could only fly short distances and stayed close by. One day she had thrown the usual bird seed on the ground and the pigeon was eating when a chipmunk arrived and began helping himself. Suddenly the pigeon with a hop, landed on the intruder's outstretched tail and with the offender thus imprisoned the pigeon gave it several sharp pecks on the head. The chipmunk afterwards was released and made no more attempts at the pigeon's meal.

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Glancing up from reading one morning, I was startled to see a very young rabbit racing across the grass in my direction, closely pursued by a small brown animal. The weasel (if such it was) seemed on the point of overtaking its prey and expected and hoped they would be out of my sight before this happened. To my surprise, instead of running past me, the rabbit on reaching my chair, swerved sharply and began running in tight circles around me with its enemy close behind. Around and around they went while I wondered desperate what to do. At that point I called out to someone who was sweeping the verandah. They beat on the wooden floor with the broom handle and this sudden noise caused the weasel to stop and look to see what it was. The rabbit seizing its chance dashed off and disappeared through the cedar hedge. The weasel realized too late that its meal was gone and made off in another direction.

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## Books in brief

- \*\*\* Recently observed in Metro Public Libraries:  
Sheppard: Bird life of Canada's Niagara frontier (598.29713 S34)  
Mech: The wolf - the ecology and behavior of an endangered species (598.7442 M24)  
Coats: The Plant Hunters (581.0922 C57)  
Headstrom: A complete field guide to nests in the U.S. - including those of birds, mammals, insects, fishes, reptiles and amphibians (596.05 H24)
- \*\*\* The Algonquin Wildlands League has recently published a 'meaty' and valuable book on wilderness preservation in Ontario. Title: "Why Wilderness". Includes 16 photographs, 5 in colour, 4 maps. Cost \$2.50. Among many outstanding contributors: Fred Bodsworth, Douglas Pimlott, Bruce Littlejohn. Available at most bookstores or write to: The Algonquin Wildlands League, Box No. 114, Postal Station Q, Toronto 7, Ontario.
- \*\*\* The publishing industry has discovered 'ecology'. There is now a specialized book club offering books on this subject. To join write: The Ecological Book Club, Box 682, Rye, N.Y. 10580. They offer a free book for every 4 you buy.
- \*\*\* Read recently: The Plant Hunters by Tyler Whittle  
The adventures of these often fanatic plant hunters make for interesting reading, despite the author's somewhat 'ho-hum' style. Recommended for the bird 'nut' who thinks his is the only true passion. Our botany members know already the lure of the lily and the madness that lurks between the covers of Gray's or Britton's Flora!
- \*\*\* The Insect Realm: Chas. Hogue and Fred Truxal. Published by Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. 99 pages, many pictures and diagrams. Price \$2.00. Although actually a guide to the museum's 'Hall of Insects' this paperback contains much interesting material on insects in general. Included are chapters on evolution, physiology, classification, ecology, relations to man, and collecting. Useful as a beginners guide to insects. See our publication desk and Mrs. Gad at the May meeting.

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## Summer Activities

- \*\*\* Bird Bonanzas - a tour of Guyana, Surinam, and the Amazon basin. From Miami August 1-15. About 450 species of birds are expected. For information write to: Bird Bonanzas, 6630 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, Fla. 33138.
- \*\*\* Man and his Environment - an outdoor and conservation education course at Albion Hills and Claremont Conservation Field Centres. July 5-30. Limited to qualified teachers. For information write to: Prof. J. H. Passmore, College of Education, University of Toronto, 371 Bloor St. W., Toronto 5.
- \*\*\* F.O.N. Trips. Information 444-8419. 1262 Don Mills Rd., Don Mills, Ontario.  
July 3-10, July 10-17 - Quetico Canoe trips  
July 10-17 - Algonquin Park Canoe trip  
Aug. 11-21 - Float trip in the Yukon  
Aug. 21-28 - Bruce Trail hiking trip

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## FURRY BITS

- \*\*\* A major U.S. furriers union has reached an agreement with the World Wildlife Fund to no longer handle the skins of such endangered species as leopards, cheetahs, ocelots and jaguars for the fashion markets.
- \*\*\* Naga tribesmen in India armed with spears and knives slaughtered 13 tigers in Nagaland in a sacrifice for a good harvest.
- \*\*\* The International Fur Federation with members in 17 countries has asked its members to stop buying skins of Bengal tiger, snow leopard, cloudy leopard, giant otter, and La Plata otter. There will be no ban on jaguar or ocelot. More than 200,000 ocelots were killed for coats in 1969.
- \*\*\* Liz Taylor has taken the pledge. She will no longer buy fur coats - "in the interests of wildlife preservation". She already has an extensive fur wardrobe ranging from Arctic Russian sable to tropical leopard.
- \*\*\* Slaughter of Bolivian jaguars, pumas and ocelots has caused an outbreak of hemorrhagic fever in many jungle villages. Because of a scarcity of predators, the rat population has increased enormously bringing the disease with them. Villagers can sell a single jaguar skin to an illegal skin trader for \$200.
- \*\*\* Poachers in East Africa earn at least 6 million dollars a year. Wildlife experts predict the extinction of the leopard and cheetah within the next decade. Some areas in Kenya have been so systematically exploited that for hundreds of square miles there is no fauna.

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## Road Hogs

- The Department of Highways is trying to repeat its King City 'success' in three other areas that we know of but is meeting resistance. The opposition comes from:
- Citizens for Conservation which is pledged to retain the rural unspoiled beauty of Fonthill, Effingham, St. Johns area. The threat is a proposed relocation of Highway #20, north of Fonthill in the Niagara peninsula. The bypass would seriously affect the ecology of the area especially the streams originating in the Short Hills.
  - Save the Mississauga Road Committee is trying to stop the proposed straightening and widening proposed for the section from #5 Highway north to the Baseline. To join or for more information write to Mrs. Lenore Crawley, 1845 Burnhamthorpe Rd. W., Mississauga, Ont.
  - Terra Cotta. We don't know how they are making out in their struggle to prevent the widening and straightening of the picturesque road which follows the Credit River to the village.

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## BOOK REVIEW

THE DOOMSDAY BOOK by Gordon Rattray Taylor. Oxford University Press, Don Mills, 1970.  
\$6.50

This is a powerful work: a book that stops you in your tracks with the realization that we, the people of the Earth, may already have committed suicide. Many "doom theory" books have been written. The first that I knew about was MOMENT IN THE SUN by the Rienows which came to Ontario in the Summer of 1967. Now, is there anything new in Taylor's latest opus..? Well, I think there is and a summary of the chapter headings will show why: Man the Microbe; The Planetary Engineers; Ice Age or Heat Death?

Nature Hits Back; The Last Gasp: (There is an oxygen crisis, in spite of the re-assurances of Fred Bodsworth) The New Pollutants; Breathe only Out!; and the Technological Nightmare.

There are twelve chapters altogether and copious references and a list of the British Conservation Associations. Much of the book is melancholy, as where the author relates the death of entire species. I wish the makers of guns could be made to read of the slaughter of the passenger pigeons.

Much of the book is a warning on how not to interfere with the delicate balance of Nature; in particular the stupid plans to put a sea-level canal across the Isthmus of Panama. In Chapter 9 we get a warning on erosion. I just wish the makers of dune buggies could be made to understand this part.

Chapter 8 deals with the problems of radioactive wastes and cancer and the accident risks. Chapter 10 is about the population crisis. (Now you will see why I joined Zero Population Growth.)

A quotation from the last chapter will serve to show you the tone of the entire book: "Like the lemmings, Man is heading for the far bank of the river. Suicide is not his intention. Has he the intelligence to turn back,? The lesson of history is that he never avoids catastrophes; he just spends his time recovering from them. No doubt history will repeat itself.

It is the future of the human race that we have been talking about."

- L. A. Smith

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### THE BRUCE BECKONS

by Roberta Johnston

We own a section of one hundred acres south of Bruce Peninsula in Bruce County. When the snow piles up and it becomes cold here in the city, our thoughts return to that part of the country.

The ground hogs have returned to the land of the living. For no apparent reason and in no search for food, one little chap ascended the trunk of a willow tree and settled in a crotch fifteen or more feet from the ground. He stayed for some time remaining perfectly still then descended head coming first and went his way. Why did he do this?

It is cherry blossom time. The birds take possession. Yellow warblers and humming birds visit the blossoms, but the former chase away the latter and so there is conflict. The tiny birds return repeatedly with persistence. The squabble is of short duration and none of it is taken too seriously.

The cherries ripen. During their season various birds congregate - to name a few - robins, crested flycatchers, cedar waxwings, and brown thrashers. The robins tear greedily into the fruit, while on the ground a brown thrasher attacks a cherry stabbing it with vehemence, his yellow eye glaring all the while making him look ferocious. It is a great exhibition to watch, the enjoyment exceeding by far that of eating cherry pie.

A pair of kingbirds built a nest in the plum tree behind the cherry tree. It is precariously situated on the edge of a limb. Nearby on the fence sits a parent looking so demure, but a grackle has wandered too close to his vicinity and he flies into action. The kingbird charges militantly at the trespasser with crest raised and the red spot exposed! The battle is soon over for the offender realizes his error and flies elsewhere. The family protector returns to the fence and appears to resume his quiet demeanour. When these parents are hungry they will thrust themselves skyward thirty or more feet to catch insects on the wing.

If birds suffer headaches, surely the flicker is a victim of them. Five o'clock in the morning on the roof of the house he drills with his bill for insects and arouses the inmates. His hammering on the tree trunks is frequently heard. On the ground, his head vibrates as he jabs for insects with his bill, the red patch on the back of his head moving in unison. He is a dashing, noisy bird showing the gold lining of his wings in flight.

Before sundown the shadows lengthen in the golden sunlight. The birds present their last concert for the day. From the top branch of the old crabapple tree comes the clear flute-like notes of the meadowlark. Far in the distant trees a flock of catbirds give a prolonged series of whistles, warbles and kissing sounds. The odd one emits a mewling cat call. Another strays from the flock and capers through a clownish dance down the fence first head then tail, his black cap on his head remaining in position throughout. From far away comes the sad 'coo' of the mourning dove. On the hydro line a song sparrow forms a tiny silhouette against the evening sky. He throws back his head each time he pours out his melodious song.

Now it is nine o'clock. The birds have lodged for the night save for a few stragglers. Without pause the nocturnal life begins. From the narrow slits under the roof of the house the bats unfold themselves for flight to catch insects on their wings. Now and far into the night, the frog in the grass repeats his 'glump'. Darkness descends and there is the display of fireflies.

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#### NATIONAL PARKS TOUR WITH THE PHILIPS

by Kathleen Flynn

As my friend casually glanced through those fascinating travel ads which appear in the SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, she said, "Here's something you'd enjoy!" The advertisement described Nature Tours conducted by John and Dorothy Philip through Canada's Rocky Mountain National Parks and sounded intriguing. This was one of five tours originating in Vancouver. Travelling was done in a Ford Econoline Van and the group was limited to from six to eight people. It would leave Vancouver on July 5 arriving in Calgary July 18 and then reverse the route leaving Calgary July 19 and arriving in Vancouver August 1. Accommodation would be in various motels which the party would use as headquarters to explore the various parks and other points of interest.

It all sounded idyllic. Imagine being able to spend two weeks going from Calgary to Vancouver through such lovely country! Deposit was sent and a reservation was insured. Information came concerning the clothing and equipment suggested. It was obvious that this would be a very informal type of tour in which clothing and equipment would be kept at a minimum for luggage was limited to 50 lb.

I flew to Calgary and joined four other ladies making the tour. It was everything I could hope for. The leader, John Philip, a consulting engineer by profession, was an excellent guide, knew the flora and fauna of the area very well, and was an excellent driver. His wife, a trained nurse, made a very good helpmate, shopping for our "do-it-yourself" lunches which we ate in lovely scenic picnic sites and looking after the innumerable details required to make things run smoothly.

Using Banff, Jasper, L. Louise, Revelstoke and Manning Park as headquarters we explored the areas surrounding them. Hikes to the Alpine meadows near jewel-like Peyto Lake, to Parker's Ridge near the Saskatchewan Glacier, to Mt. Edith Cavell and to Mt. Revelstoke, not strenuous, and such a feast for the eyes, carpets of lupins with their heavenly colour, arnica sunshine yellow and the ever-present Indian paint brush with its shades varying from cream to brilliant scarlet.

John knew his birds and animals very well. We all had check lists and I was amazed when I realized I had checked 60 birds and 15 animals. What a thrill it was the day we saw a family of bluebirds sitting on a wire and how amusing to watch the antics of the Dipper in the stream at Johnson's Canyon! The Clark's Nutcracker and the Gray Jay, like their counterpart the Blue Jay, were guests, uninvited but never unseen, at all our picnics trying to outdo the ground squirrels in this "sharing the wealth" activity.

As a change of scenery the Okanagan Valley was quite different. To Eastern eyes the orchards looked very small compared to those in the Niagara peninsula and the intense heat (over 100°) made it apparent how important irrigation is in this district in order to produce such beautiful fruit.

Manning Park, a provincial park about one hundred and fifty miles from Vancouver, was our last stop. It is a lovely park from which interesting walks can be taken. The Beaver Pond near the Park lodge yielded many interesting species of birds and a muskrat.

It was a delightful trip and the only improvement could have been the weather which, after a long period of drought resulting in widespread forest fires, turned wet and rather cool. Accommodation and meals were excellent and the guides could not have been more competent, pleasant and knowledgeable. Since returning I have heard from three of the tour group who plan to go again this summer on one of the similar trips planned by the Philips.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thank you!

My heartfelt thanks to the many club members who have helped make a rather difficult season more pleasant with your contributions, letters and phone calls of encouragement. I only regret that lack of space has not allowed me to publish all the contributions that you have sent. Some of the stories about winter vacations down south I am saving till the November, December issues next season when they will serve to stimulate and inform others planning a similar trip. In the October issue I expect to have some long-delayed book reviews, a few innovations and an account of that botanist's hell and paradise - Bermuda. Next season I will be able to spend a lot more time on the Newsletter - or none at all.

Till then, have a pleasant summer - and thank you!

Elmer Talvila, editor  
12 Cranleigh Court, Islington

231-1064

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#### THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questionnaire is designed to ask just about all the questions we can think of! While we were finding out your views we thought we would do as thorough a job as possible. What we actually wind up doing will depend--as always--on your interest, and on the funds and volunteers available.

The success of the Club over the past several years is in large part due to the guidance and inspiration received from the membership on our last questionnaire (1964). Over 60% of the members replied to our questions then; let's try to make it 100% this time! This is your opportunity to influence and participate.

As the size of the metropolitan area can pose special problems for suburban members, an additional section is provided for them.

Please! -- do it now -- and mail by May 15th to Mrs. Mary Robson, Secretary,  
Toronto Field Naturalists' Club,  
49 Craighurst Ave.,  
Toronto 12, Ont.

(Husbands and wives can share the same questionnaire by using different colour inks.)

QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR ALL MEMBERS)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Bus, \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Res. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Class of Membership: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Family \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_ Corresponding \_\_\_\_\_

Age Range: 18-24 \_\_\_\_\_ 25-34 \_\_\_\_\_ 35-44 \_\_\_\_\_ 45-54 \_\_\_\_\_ 55-64 \_\_\_\_\_ 65 or over \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation or line of work \_\_\_\_\_

Interests (please rank): Birds \_\_\_\_\_ Botany \_\_\_\_\_ Ecology \_\_\_\_\_ Conservation \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of monthly meetings do you prefer? Travelogues \_\_\_\_\_ Films \_\_\_\_\_

Talks on particular aspects of nature \_\_\_\_\_ Panel discussions on topical issues \_\_\_\_\_

Other (Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any suggestions or comments about monthly meetings? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

About study groups? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you be interested in informal meetings during the day on weekdays? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to help arrange such meetings? \_\_\_\_\_ Host small meetings of this type? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you a bird feeder? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to have some of the following, even if you had to pay higher membership dues (say \$1 or \$2 more per year)? Refreshments at meetings \_\_\_\_\_ More meetings \_\_\_\_\_

A better Newsletter? \_\_\_\_\_ A permanent office \_\_\_\_\_

The Club more active in environmental issues \_\_\_\_\_ Another Reserve \_\_\_\_\_

Something else (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

About the Newsletter? \_\_\_\_\_

About outings? \_\_\_\_\_

Any other? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you be willing to assist with Club work? \_\_\_\_\_ Regularly? \_\_\_\_\_ Occasionally? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you be willing to help? (Please check the appropriate items):

Typing \_\_\_\_\_ Assembling & mailing \_\_\_\_\_ Bookkeeping \_\_\_\_\_ Telephoning \_\_\_\_\_

Assist with membership records \_\_\_\_\_ Publicity \_\_\_\_\_ Sell publications \_\_\_\_\_

Attend to production of printed materials \_\_\_\_\_ Help tabulate the results of this questionnaire \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange displays \_\_\_\_\_ Man displays \_\_\_\_\_

Run projectors or audio-visual equipment \_\_\_\_\_ Offer the use of such equipment \_\_\_\_\_  
(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Welcome new members \_\_\_\_\_ Help with coffee after meetings \_\_\_\_\_

Provide accommodation for guest speakers occasionally \_\_\_\_\_

Offer professional help or advice occasionally \_\_\_\_\_

Work with the Junior Club \_\_\_\_\_ Act as a committee chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Research, compile or prepare reports & submissions \_\_\_\_\_ Attend Municipal Council meetings and report to the Board \_\_\_\_\_ Lead a study group \_\_\_\_\_

Lead Club outings \_\_\_\_\_ Act as an assistant leader \_\_\_\_\_ Lead outings for other organizations (Guides, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Give talks to other groups \_\_\_\_\_

Do outdoor work on the Reserve (cut trails, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_ Conduct or participate in censuses or studies on the Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ Help maintain nature records \_\_\_\_\_

Have you a car? \_\_\_\_\_ Would you be willing to give people rides? \_\_\_\_\_

Act as a courier for urgent submissions occasionally? \_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONNAIRE (FOR SUBURBAN MEMBERS ONLY)

To be completed in addition to the main questionnaire.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Class of membership: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Family \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_

Locations: Willowdale \_\_\_\_\_ Rexdale \_\_\_\_\_ Etobicoke \_\_\_\_\_ Scarborough \_\_\_\_\_

Thornhill \_\_\_\_\_ Weston \_\_\_\_\_ Mississauga \_\_\_\_\_ Agincourt \_\_\_\_\_

Downsview \_\_\_\_\_ Islington \_\_\_\_\_ Don Mills \_\_\_\_\_ West Hill \_\_\_\_\_

Other (within 20 miles of the Museum) \_\_\_\_\_

Is it easy \_\_\_\_\_ difficult \_\_\_\_\_ impossible \_\_\_\_\_ for you to attend the monthly meetings at the Royal Ontario Museum? If difficult or impossible, is transportation a contributing factor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, please explain.

Would you like the Club to arrange occasional local meetings in the east \_\_\_\_\_

west \_\_\_\_\_ north \_\_\_\_\_ suburbs, i.e. local groups?

Can you suggest a location for a local indoor meeting in your area?

Do you feel that the outings arranged for members are fairly distributed so that suburban members can reach some of the meeting places without having to travel too far?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Other opinion \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any locations (parks, ravines, etc.) in your area where you think there should be occasional outings, which do not seem to be on our present "list"? If so, please list them. (Use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

Do you have any suggestions as to how the Club could better serve the suburban members in the future, in addition to the general service to the membership as a whole? (Use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

Would you be willing to assist in local arrangements when and if there is sufficient demand to warrant them?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_