



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 267

April 1972

Visitors welcome!

APRIL MEETING

Visitors welcome!

Monday, April 3, 1972, at 8:15 p.m.
in the auditorium of the
ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
252 Bloor Street West

Speaker: Mr. W. A. MCLEAN

Subject: TORONTO'S OUTER WATERFRONT

The future of the outer waterfront is of keen interest to all Club members. Mr. McLean is Director of the Waterfront Project for the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The MTRCA is responsible for implementing the outer sections of the Waterfront Plan, upon which the Club has made submissions. Members will wish to hear details of the many new developments proposed for this area, which includes Etobicoke, Scarborough and Pickering.

We welcome the following new members who enrolled between February 12 and March 10:
Mr. A. Armitage, Mr. Finn Bay, Miss Susan Boot, Miss Christine E. Earl, Mrs. Greta C. A. Carburn, Mr. M. Isenbaum, Miss Jane Kennedy, Miss Elizabeth Kirk, Mr. & Mrs. F. Lowe, Mr. & Mrs. G. MacCready, Mrs. Dorothy Manley, Mr. & Mrs. David Newbery, Mrs. Mady Niel, Mr. Philip Niel, Mr. & Mrs. R. Occomore, Dr. & Mrs. J. L. Provan, Mr. & Mrs. Ron Roy, Mrs. L. Scott, Mr. Y Mrs. A. G. Spinney, Mr. D. W. Stanley, Mrs. T. F. Storie, Mr. Chas. F. Waller, Mr. & Mrs. Brian Waters, Mrs. R. E. Watts, Mrs. S. Wilner.

Contributions are requested for the JIM BAILLIE RESERVE. A progress report will be found in the body of the Newsletter. A coupon is provided below for your convenience

To: Mr. A. D. Fry,
250 Martin Grove Road,
Islington, Ontario

Date _____

I wish to contribute to the Jim Baillie Reserve. My cheque/money order in the amount of \$ _____ is enclosed. Kindly send receipt for income tax purposes.

Name _____

Address _____

JUNIOR CLUB Meet in the theatre of the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park.
Saturday Visitors are welcome.
April 1
10:00 a.m. Director: Mr. Mike Singleton (447-4197)

FIELD Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, on Avenue Rd. just north of
BIOLOGISTS' Eglinton. For details of this meeting please phone the chairman.
GROUP
Thursday
April 13
8:15 p.m. Chairman: Mr. Don Burton (222-6467)

ECOLOGY & Meet in Room 378 of The College of Education, 371 Bloor St. W., at
CONSERVATION Spadina.
GROUP
Wednesday
April 19
8:00 p.m. Chairman: Prof. Wm. Andrews (425-4607)

BOTANY GROUP There will be no more meetings of the Botany Group this season.

BIRD GROUP Meet at St. James-Bond United Church, on Avenue Rd. just north of
Thursday Eglinton. Topic: "Look-alikes in the Bird World, Part 2". Also a
April 27 short film.
8:00 p.m. Chairman: Mr. Red Mason (621-3905)

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One of our Club members has written to us as follows:

"I am fortunate enough to have acquired a small piece of property (1/3 acre, approximately) about 140 miles from Toronto on the southern tip of Algonquin Park. It is beautiful country for birds and plants, and I would be glad to share it with some Club members. It is rather primitive up there, as I do not have a cottage, only a construction shack and a room for two or three tents. I realize it is rather cold for tenting just now, but if winter comes, can spring be far behind? Keep it in mind, will you, for the future. Let me know any time, and I will be happy to give directions. 221-0237."

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It is with great pleasure that the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club takes note of the recent appointment of Dr. Walter M. Tovell as Associate Director of the Royal Ontario Museum.

For many years Curator of the Department of Geology of the ROM, Dr. Tovell served as President of our Club from 1957-1959 and was subsequently President of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. A very popular leader of many outings, and an all-round naturalist, Dr. Tovell is well known to a wide public as a superb interpretative lecturer and writer on geology, and continues to be an active member of our Club.

We offer our warmest congratulations and best wishes to Walter Tovell in his new position.

President - Mr. Clive E. Goodwin

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

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Board of Directors of the Club has consisted of the following people during the 1971-2 club year:

President	Clive E. Goodwin
Vice-President	Rosemary Gaymer
Immediate Past President	John A. Gingrich
Directors retiring in May 1974	Stuart Corbett Mike Singleton Douglas Wilkins
Directors retiring in May 1973	John ten Bruggenkate Trevor Hamilton Erna Lewis
Directors retiring in May 1972	Prof. William Andrews Paul Catling Emily Hamilton

The nominating committee recommends the following nominations:

President	Rosemary Gaymer
Vice-President	Prof. William Andrews
Directors to retire in 1975	Henry Fletcher Dr. Margaret Knight Harold Taylor

According to By-law No. 1 of our incorporated club,

"Nominations of members of the Corporation (i.e. the TFNC) may be proposed in writing to the Secretary by any three members of the Corporation accompanied by the written consent of the nominee. Such nominations shall be published in the May issue of the Newsletter and the names of such nominees shall be added to the list of candidates submitted by the nominating committee and shall be presented to the annual meeting."

NOTE: Material for publication in the May Newsletter must be delivered to the Secretary on or before April 3.

John A. Gingrich
Chairman, Nominating Committee

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BERMUDA GLIMPSES

by Elmer Talvila

Sunday, Spittel Pond

Eighteen pairs of eyes are looking across the water.

An American egret ... a snowy egret. Not bad!

A Louisiana heron. Nice!

Now a better look at that 'other egret'. Ha! it's an immature little blue heron.

A few raindrops are falling now but nothing to worry about. Showers don't last long in Bermuda.

A few yellowlegs over there behind the coots.

Say, this is a persistent shower. So we start looking for refuge. The trees here leak for they are the casuarinas or whispering pines and have leaves like big bundles of horsetails. No shelter at all, so we hide under a rock overhang and eat our lunch.

I eat some prickly pear fruit with it. I warn everybody about the fine hairs which you can't get off your fingers or tongue or lips or anything if you don't watch yourself. I don't watch myself. I still have some in my mouth. Good souvenirs - they last and last.

How it rained! Couldn't get taxis. Couldn't get a bus. My old birding jacket begins to weigh more than me. The sleeve comes loose. Puddles are forming in my pockets. I no longer try to keep dry - hopeless. Everybody is back at the Biological Station by now, except me and Mary and Ida Marie. Finally we slosh into a bus and end up at the Police Station in Hamilton sitting on benches and making puddles on the floor.

Two hours later back at the Bio. Station I throw all my clothes into a dryer - jacket, pants, shoes - the lot. The shoes clunk too much so I take them out.

In the evening we are still drying out before a Bermuda cedar fire. Lovely aroma.

Next day, the Royal Gazette reports that it was a record rainfall for February. We feel kind of proud. Yesterday we were the wettest people on the island. And I found out something new too: showers can last a long long time in Bermuda.

Monday, Botanical Gardens

A beautiful sunny day in the 70's. We visit the garden of Eden - the Botanical Gardens. I find it hard to keep calm. Everything excites me. We marvel at the fig trees; the great Peepul tree, the banyan, the Indian laurels, the giant rubber plant. We sniff like crazy in the Garden for the Blind. A camphor tree, rosemary and thyme, sage and lavender.

Later we sit down on the grass and benches and lunch at the formal gardens - informally. I break the law by taking off my shirt. So does the 'Colonel'. We munch on sandwiches and sip fruit juice. I begin to wonder why anybody would be crazy enough to want to go back to that country up north - what was it again - Canada. We feel happy and warm and dry.

Now we wander off to look at some palms and orange trees and orchids. We examine the big trees on the lawn; the silk cotton, the Indian almond, the swordtree, Queensland umbrella tree and the black ebony. Eyes tired from looking so we try eating again. In the woodlands I climb up and get down some ripe papayas - a lovely orange colour. They taste sickly sweet - just like those in Florida. I wash it all down with loquats, a lovely tart taste.

Some of us tour Camden House and look at Bermuda's history. Others take the truck and see an even older history in the Crystal Caves.

Finally the truck returns and we leave our garden of Eden - sunburned and happy and promoting ourselves that someday we will be back.

Tuesday, Nonsuch Island

A lovely calm day. David said to go on the first calm day. So we get the lobster boat, the 'Micmac', ready and set off for Nonsuch Island. We have to go by St. George's Channel, the long way round, because of the high tide and the low bridge. Some of us are looking green at the gills, but no worry - the ocean is dead calm.

A big thrill over the starboard side near St. David's Light. Longtails! Some 5 or more yellow-billed tropicbirds come swooping in, streamers flying. Spring has come to Bermuda.

David Wingate is waiting for us at the 'dock'. Shades of William Beebe - we step off the 'Micmac' onto the old hulk that Beebe sank there some 40 years ago. Then through the tunnelling like pirates and up to the ruins where David tells us the story of Beebe, the yellow fever hospital, the reformatory and the Living Museum project.

Everything is being planted on Nonsuch to make it look like Bermuda used to look before man came. Sabal palmettos, chinaberry, Bermuda cedar, Jamaican dogwood. It is already beginning to look wild, overgrown, savage and beautiful.

We take the western trail with David and look longingly at the cahow nesting islands - near but inaccessible. We study the sea ox-eye, the sea spurge, sea lavender and yucca. David shows us an artificial cahow burrow and tells us about the bird he helped get away.

We eat lunch on the beach among the sargasso weed and talk about the sea turtles that are nesting here again. I go for a long swim. The water feels tremendously exhilarating. Afterwards I try snorkelling - a first experience. Unbelievable things appear before my eyes. I am lost, lost, lost - I recognize nothing. Several enormous rainbow parrots drift by flashing brilliant jade green and brown. A great school of white bream. A long ribbon of tiny turquoise striped fish surround me. I stare fascinated unable to move. Pure delight. And to think this world was always here and I saw it not. I feel the same eye-opening joy as I had on my first trip to Pt. Pelee. I look expectantly for a barracuda or a shark. Unfortunately - or fortunately - none. Finally I swim reluctantly back to shore with David. I had been in the water an hour but felt I had left the world for a century.

Just before leaving Nonsuch I decided to make a quick tour of the North Hill trail for plants. I find hundreds of crab spiders most of them in my face. But I also see yellowwood, the endemic Bermuda chinaberry, and the endemic Bermuda bean. The boat hoots and I hurry back. We all board with reluctance. I have to count to 18 several times to make sure we all go back. No Robinson Crusoes on this trip.

On the way back we cruise through Castle Harbour Sound. Low tide now so we make the low bridge back to Ferry Reach and the Bio. Station.

Nonsuch is still the land of water, and wild beauty and lasting memories.

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Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday still to come.

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- Did you know that ...

The Ontario Wolf League has obtained 17,000 names on a petition to ask the provincial government to remove the \$25 bounty on wolves. The goal is at least 50,000 names. If you wish to add your name to the petition write to Ontario Wolf League, Box 177, Postal Station 'S', Toronto 382.

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COMING EVENTS

Royal Ontario Museum

Information 928-3690

April 11-30 Pollution posters by children in the Lower Rotunda.
Regular gallery tours of mineralogy, geology, natural history.

Metropolitan Toronto Parks

April 16 - go hiking with Commissioner Tommy Thompson through lower Humber Park.

Richview Library, 1806 Islington Ave., Etobicoke

April 18 - 8:00 p.m. - Fred Bodsworth takes part in the 'Authors and Books' program. Widely known as the author of Last of the Curlews and three novels set in Canada's North, he has also written The Pacific Coast for the recently published Illustrated Natural History of Canada series. An active spokesman for conservation in Ontario, Mr. Bodsworth is past president of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and a former president of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.

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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE

by John ten Bruggenkate

Since we reported to you last in the Newsletter of April 1971, twenty-one different people have spent a total of ten days working at the reserve. We put in 198 hours during April and May of last year and also in November. For transportation twelve different cars were utilized, for a total distance of 1500 miles.

The Spring saw us erecting signs and completing the survey. The "No Hunting or Trespassing" type of sign has now been posted along the entire boundary. Direction signs were placed at the main entrance and on both north corners bordering Stevenson's Sideroad. Unfortunately the arrow we located on our turn-off point at the highway (Ontario County Road No. 1), has been removed late in the fall by others, who commenced to relocate the hydro power poles. It appears to be a preparation for an apparent road widening and reconstruction of that highway this year.

As far as the survey is concerned, we put in new lines and adjusted others. This was followed by preliminary marking of the existing trails. Next came the collection of data for mapping: river, trails, boundaries and various natural features.

One name to be mentioned here is that of Jim Clulow, whose determined efforts were one of our most important assets to help get us through those stages. It was he too who spent some thirty hours of drafting during the summer, to produce one large and two small-scale maps of our property. This was done twice, the latter set consisting of an improved and more final version of these maps.

It should be pointed out that much preparation was necessary behind the scenes, to enable us to carry out the above program. This included planning by individuals, numerous telephone conversations and hours of discussions by the Board of Directors and others. On October 7, 1971 the Management Committee of the Reserve met in full to ponder everything done and found so far and to decide upon our actions in the near future. Some materials had to be purchased and when we think about all the signs that were mounted on plywood and others that were constructed, we should not forget to mention Jack Gingrich, another person who has spent a considerable number of hours on the development of the Baillie Reserve. On behalf of every naturalist we should perhaps thank him and all the others that were involved during the course of 1971 very much, for their precious time, sincere dedication and fine achievements.

In the fall we occupied ourselves with trail blazing, in addition to improvements to old, existing trails. It consisted chiefly of relatively light clearing operations. This was followed up by marking the trails. After some experimenting we resolved to do this by means of pieces of a thin, hard and stiff type of plastic which we cut ourselves. Various colours were employed and different shapes were made. These markers were secured to the trees with nails at very frequent intervals all along our nature trails. Each trail market has a different combination of shape and colour. Thus we now have:

A Blue Rectangle Trail  , approx. 1,300 feet long.

A White Circle Trail  , approx. 400 feet long.

A Yellow Triangle Trail  , approx. 2,250 feet long.

A Red Hexagon Trail  , approx. 550 feet long.

A White Square Trail  , approx. 1,000 feet long.

A Red Diamond Trail  , approx. 900 feet long.

These trails will lead you through the greater part of the Reserve and through its various habitats. Further local improvements to these trails will no doubt have to be carried out, as well as extensions to make possible a more complete set of nature trails. This initial trail system provides us with almost one and one quarter of a mile walking distance altogether. The accompanying sketch shows it all and is in fact meant to be used by you on the site. For orientation purposes this plan also shows the survey lines at 200 foot intervals. Though impossible to find these lines in the forest, you may well run into some of the survey stakes, that were placed at each intersection of the lines a year ago. They are marked with the location and will prove to be of considerable assistance to you if used in combination with this map when you visit the Reserve. In other words: The Jim Baillie Nature Reserve (Your Reserve) is ready to welcome you this Spring!*

*For travel directions to the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve please consult the map in our April 1971 Newsletter.

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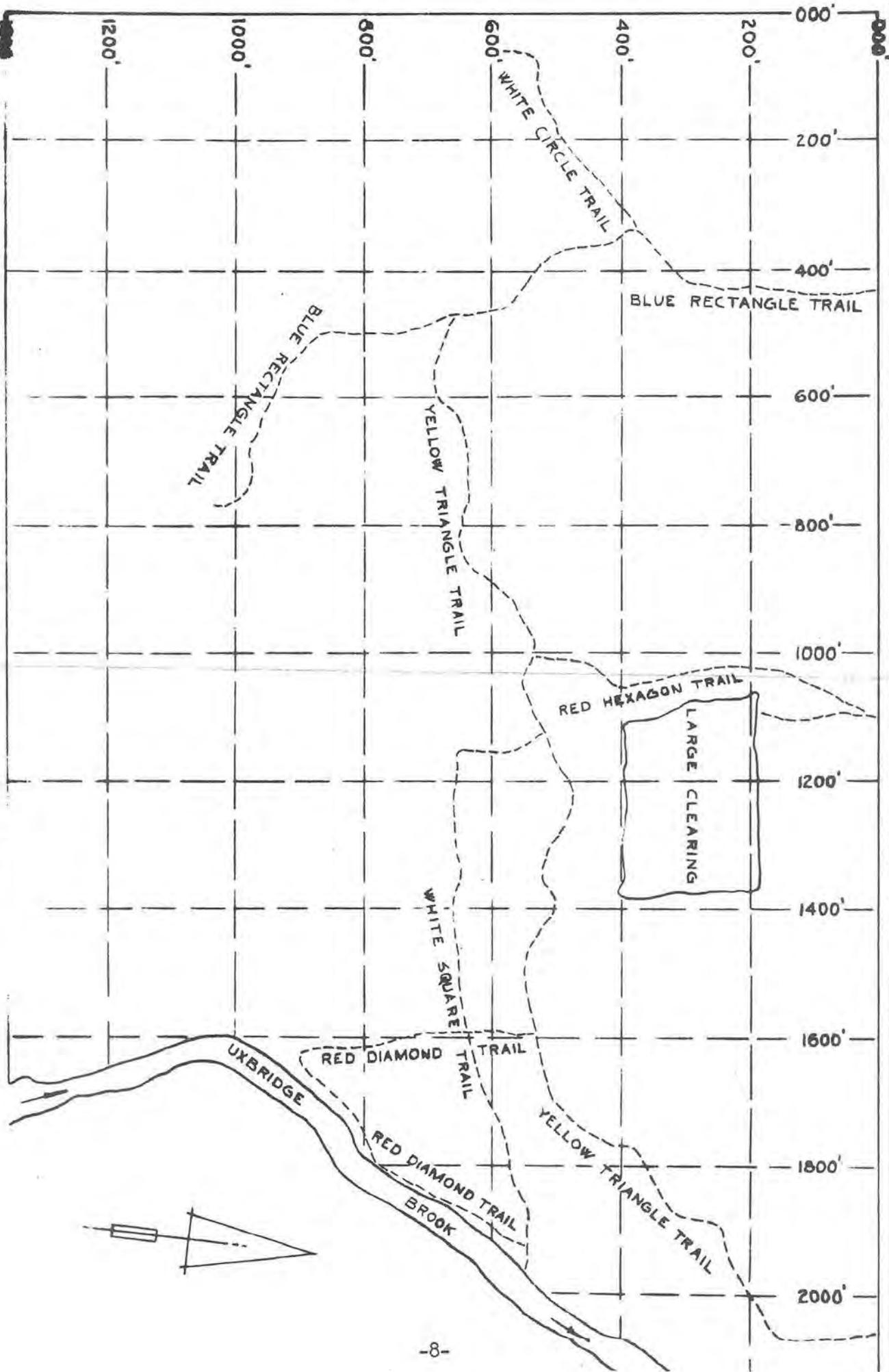
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Did you know that?

- This winter the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters have been working together to construct nestboxes for wood ducks, grey squirrels, Canada geese, bluebirds and several other species of wildlife in Southern Ontario. Through the Wildlife Extension Program of the Department of Lands and Forests, the naturalists and sportsmen have been organized into working field groups to find suitable locations for nest boxes. These groups will now be brought together in a workshop, to build the required nest boxes and get them ready for placement in the needed locations. To take part in this program, call the F.O.N. at 444-8419.

- Did you know that the IFYGL which is part of IHD will commence on April 1, 1972? What that means is that the research project called the International Field Year Great Lakes, a part of the program called the International Hydrological Decade begins on April 1, 1972. What that means is that Canada and the United States will co-operate on an intensive year-long research program of Lake Ontario: on, above and below the surface. Biological, meteorological, oceanographic and chemical observations will be made. It is nice to know that a Canadian, Dr. D. V. Anderson of the University of Toronto first proposed the project. To find out more and get some information brochures, write to: Mr. Joseph MacDowell,
IFYGL Co-ordinator,
Canada Centre for Inland Waters,
P.O. Box 5050,
Burlington, Ontario.

STEVENSON'S SIDEROAD



JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE

SCALE: 1" = 200'

T. F. N.

FIRST NESTING FOR WHITE-EYED VIREO IN CANADA

by William J. Rayner

I suppose it's the dream of every ornithologist, whatever his level of involvement or degree of enthusiasm, to discover a rare bird or even find a new nesting species for Canada and I must confess these thoughts were furthest from my mind when we set out that rather warm May afternoon for a leisurely walk. My wife and I had been enjoying good birding all that holiday weekend at the cottage of my father-in-law, A. J. Cahill of London, and we had decided to take one last walk down our 'back' road to see if we could add another species or two to our ever growing list.

On our return, we'd almost reached the cottage when we noticed some movement in a clump of bushes just ahead. This particular area was well populated with thrashers, catbirds and robins so it was with some indifference that I raised my binoculars to get a better look at the activity ahead. Imagine my excitement and surprise as I suddenly realized that I was looking at a bird I had never seen before, although by its actions and size I felt sure it belonged to the Vireo family.

When first observed the bird was flitting from a brush pile on one side of the road to some bushes on the other, pausing momentarily in a vireo-like manner, affording us excellent views from a variety of angles at a distance of never more than 15 feet. In fact, at one point, I actually had to back up a few steps in order to bring the bird into focus.

The very first thing that struck us about the bird was the unusual eye colour. The whiteness of its eye, combined with a yellow band which runs from one eye over the bill and around the head to the other eye, left no doubt in my mind that we were watching a White-eyed Vireo (*Vireo griseus*). The wing bars, yellow side patches and white underparts subsequently revealed themselves as the bird was observed again and again. Having the Peterson Field Guide with us, I quickly checked in order to eliminate any other similar species. Both Bell's and the Solitary Vireo have wing bars but Bell's shows a dark eye with spectacles and the Solitary also shows a dark eye but with a darker coloured head, hence both species were eliminated.

After having observed the bird for a period of half an hour or so we returned to the cottage for a well deserved cold drink and to recount our experience to other members of the family. Soon I had raised the curiosity of my father-in-law and off we went down the road again, hoping for a 'second' look at our new find. We were not to be disappointed for as we approached the general area, once again the Vireo made its presence known but not in a way we had expected. This time we discovered two birds, one having been observed carrying nesting material in its bill!

My mind began to race. Was there a nesting record in Ontario for the White-eyed Vireo - or was I confusing it with another species? Then I remembered I had a F.O.N. check-list in my bird book. Quickly I pulled it out and somewhat nervously ran my finger over the list. No asterisk! That meant until at least 1967 no nesting record of the bird had been authenticated. Now began the task of finding the nest, if in fact they'd actually started one. Careful observations were made of the two birds from a discreet distance and presently we were able to judge that the pair seemed to be favouring a choke cherry bush just on the edge of the road.

Once we were certain of the right location we approached the bush to confirm our observations. There on the fork of a branch approximately 4 feet off the ground we found the beginnings of a nest! Although construction had just begun, the placement of the anchor strands of the nest around the fork of the branch indicated that this was a vireo-type nest as opposed to say that of a Yellow Warbler. (A Vireo nest hangs from a fork, a warbler's nest is usually placed in the fork or a branch.) Also, the height at which our nest was found coincided with the usual placement of the nest according to research material cited.

My wife and I returned home to St. Thomas that evening with high hopes for our new found nest, little realizing what disappointments and frustrations the nest would eventually bring us. Marshall Field, a well known local naturalist was contacted regarding the nest status of the species as was Harry Wressell of Chatham (for it was in Kent County that the sightings took place) and Clive E. Goodwin of Weston, Ontario. All reports indicated that although many sightings had occurred over the years in the Rondeau Park area, as well as at Point Pelee and other Ontario points, no known documentation existed for a White-eyed Vireo nesting.

On the evening of May 28 we returned to Rondeau and upon checking the general area we found neither of the Vireos to be present but noticed that where earlier there had been evidence of nest beginnings, now there was a beautiful cone-shaped nest, tightly built and constructed of various materials including twigs, pine needles, paper, grass and string. No eggs were found to be present.

The next morning both birds were observed feeding near the nesting site much to everyone's relief. In the afternoon, Marshall Field arrived with a parabolic microphone and a tape recorder containing recorded calls of a White-eyed Vireo. Almost immediately upon commencement of the tape the Vireo dropped from nowhere to begin singing, undoubtedly searching for the 'new bird' which he felt was there to claim his territory. (Up to this point none of our party of observers had heard a note, call or song from either Vireo.) We then began to record his singing which included several interesting variations on a theme, in addition to a loud, defensive, scolding note not unlike the note of a White-breasted Nuthatch but increasing in volume and intensity much like that of an Ovenbird.

Later in the day, photographs were taken of the bird as it hopped from branch to branch, searching for the 'other' bird emanating from the tape recorder which we had concealed in some long grass underneath a cedar tree near the nest. On several occasions that afternoon a Ruby-throated Hummingbird was seen 'dive-bombing' the Vireo as it too was nesting nearby and had become disturbed at all the activity of the Vireos.

The following day yet another visit was made to the nesting site and as we approached within 12 or 15 feet of the nest we saw much to our delight one of the birds sitting on the nest, presumably incubating their first egg. Realizing the importance of the situation and fearful of what might happen to the nest before we could return to the area for some photography from a blind, I took several 'record' shots of the Vireo on the nest by simply handholding a 300mm lens on a Pentax camera from about 12 feet away. In true vireo fashion, the bird did not flush at my approach or during the time the photographs were being taken.

Marshall Field and I returned to Rondeau on the following Thursday (June 3) loaded down with camera equipment including an electronic flash unit, anxious to photograph the brooding birds from the blind in order to further authenticate our findings. We parked our car a short distance from the nesting site and began walking down the road, fully expecting to be scolded as we approached so close, but there was no evidence of the birds whatsoever. Marsh dropped down into the shallow ditch beside the road and peered into the choke cherry bush for a closer look. The disappointment showed in his face as he reported the nest contained only the egg of a Cowbird. Our nest had been abandoned! What a letdown! After all our travelling back and forth and now to find the nest deserted. We began searching the nearby area playing their recorded call as we went, but could find no trace of either bird.

About 100 yards from the original nesting site a White-eyed Vireo began replying to our taped call and presently Marsh spotted the Vireo hopping about in a thicket just ahead of us. As we approached we saw both birds flitting from branch to branch and one bird was observed to be holding something in its bill! After considerable searching we finally got a 'line' on their flight pattern and upon closer inspection we were able to note the beginnings of a nest started no earlier than the previous day. Since this nest was in such close proximity to the first nesting site and since nest building had just commenced, we judged this pair to be the same as we had observed

earlier. With our spirits buoyed once again, we looked forward to capturing this nest on film.

The interesting fact to note here is the type of habitat the bird was found in and how it contrasted with the actual nest placement. The general area was basically dense scrub and thicket with red cedars intertwined with wild grape vines, ideal nesting habitat according to literature cited. However, our pair seemed to have chosen a small oak sapling about 6 feet high with little vegetation surrounding it, certainly much less concealed than the previous nesting site.

On the following Saturday, June 5, my father-in-law made a visit to the new nesting site and found the nest completely built but containing no eggs as yet. Similar observations were made later in the day as well as on the following morning but the status of the nest remained unchanged. Meanwhile, the former nest was being checked periodically as well but by now we were thoroughly convinced that this nest had definitely been abandoned.

Despite the fact that it was a 100 mile round trip from St. Thomas, on Monday June 7 my wife and I drove to Rondeau in the evening arriving around 8 o'clock in the midst of a thunderstorm. Just before the rains came we collected the first nest from the choke cherry bush. Once the storm let up we proceeded to the new nesting site and finding no sign of the Vireos (we had come to expect this) we quickly had a look in the nest and found one creamy white egg. There was no doubt that this indeed was a White-eyed Vireo egg and that a nesting attempt had been carried at least to this stage of development.

However, somewhat disconcerting was the fact that even though the nest had been completed for 3 days and they were already delayed in their nesting, she had produced only one egg in that time. Our next report came via a phone call from my father-in-law on the Friday evening (June 11) stating that an observation that evening had revealed two Vireo eggs and one Cowbird's egg. Further checks that weekend disclosed that despite the presence of the Cowbird's egg, the Vireos continued to incubate the eggs.

Despite the fact the Cowbird's egg was in the nest, we hoped that the Vireo would proceed with the laying of one or two additional eggs over the following few days. With that premise in mind, Marsh and I returned once again to the nesting area on Tuesday, June 15 for photography purposes but upon examination of the nest found only the three eggs, which were cold, even damp from the previous night's rain. No trace of the birds could be found despite repeated playings of their song and no further observations were made of the White-eyed Vireo in that area during the remainder of the breeding season.

In summing up our findings it should be noted that the Vireos were observed sitting on the nest on the evening of the 11th, the morning and evening of the 12th, the morning of the 13th but not the evening of the 13th. In other words the pair continued to incubate for at least 3 days after the depositing of the Cowbird's egg. This was also the case with the first nest when on May 30 the Vireo was noted incubating what later was identified as a cowbird's egg. It therefore could be concluded that it was simply not the depositing of the cowbird's egg that made them abandon the nest and eggs immediately but rather something that occurred a day or two after the deposit. Whether it was then the realization that they were incubating a 'foreign' egg that made them decide to leave or whether it was some other external factors, it may never be known.

Neither nest showed any sign of predation as both nest and eggs were in perfect condition. The first nesting site being located in bushes adjacent to the road was subject to some human and vehicular traffic, but the second nest as mentioned was located in an oak sapling which was surrounded by well protected thicket cover through which very little human traffic would pass. So it is very difficult indeed to understand why they stopped at two eggs, particularly in view of the fact that they had

already been unsuccessful in nesting the first time. Any research material we have checked makes mention that often a cowbird's egg will be found with their clutch but nowhere have we found any written indication of nest rejection because of a cowbird's egg. Reference material keeps mentioning the White-eyed Vireo as a very loquacious, aggressive bird, ready and willing to let you know you're intruding. How then, can we justify their actions in these situations?

When all our data had been gathered and compiled, it became evident that more than enough evidence had been gathered to substantiate our findings despite the fact that a successful nesting of the species had not taken place. The several hand held shots along with other photographs of the nest and eggs disclosed enough detail to convince members of the Ontario Ornithological Records Committee of their authenticity. Both nests were collected including the two Vireo eggs and they have now been turned over to the Royal Ontario Museum at Toronto. Tape recordings which were made by Marshall Field also aided in the confirmation of our findings and are presently undergoing study by research personnel. The assistance of Clive Goodwin in gathering and processing our information and materials is greatly appreciated.

Once again come next May, you can bet we'll be watching the thickets and nature trails at Rondeau for the reappearance of the White-eyed Vireos with housekeeping aspirations!

TORONTO ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB

Mid-Winter Waterfowl Inventory - January 9, 1972

Compiled by: C.E. Goodwin

Route Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Mute Swan	4			2				6
Canada Goose		19		327	234		100	680
				(1 Hutchins)				
Blue Goose				1				1
Mallard	109	150	12	630	895	390	378	2564
Black Duck	24	164	13	60	144	317	322	1044
Gadwall					5	5	157	167
Pintail					2	1		3
Am. Widgeon							83	83
Wood Duck					1		1	2
Redhead						1	216	217
Canvasback								
Greater Scaup		22	66	670	1002	572	1863	4175
Co. Goldeneye	161	44	1	41	55	110	220	632
Barrows Goldeneye							2	2
Bufflehead	38	4	1	132	103	80	91	449
Oldsquaw	11	42	376	440	359	136	123	1487
				(3500)				
Harlequin Duck				3			1	4
Common Eider						1		1
Ruddy Duck				1				1
Hooded Merganser				1	1			2
Co. Merganser	7		31	42		68		148
Red-breasted Merg.				3			1	4
Coot							1	1
TOTALS	354	425	500	2363	2801	1681	3559	11683

(continued)

Routes and Observers

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Whitby to Altona Road | - J. M. Speirs, D. Pace, D. Price. |
| 2. Altona Road to Woodbine | - F. & J. Bodsworth, B. & A. Falls. |
| 3. Woodbine to Cherry Beach | - G. Lambert, G. Fairfield. |
| 4. Toronto Islands | - P. Middleton, M. Dwyer, H. Coneybear,
M. Gartshore. |
| 5. Parliament St. to Humber R. | - G. & N. Bellerby, J. & C. Cranmer-Byng,
K. & G. Carmichael, R. Gadd, D. Troy. |
| 6. Humber R. to Watersedge Park | - D. Perks, J. Lamey, A. Gray. |
| 7. Watersedge Park to Bronte | - C.E. Goodwin, A. Dawe, D. Corbridge. |

Time and Weather 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Heavy overcast, with driving rain and occasional sunny periods. Gale force S. W. winds to 40 mph, abating later.

Lake very rough. Temp. 35°.

Ice Conditions - lagoons and most rivers open; bay and gaps mainly open.

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WINTER OBSERVATIONS IN A CITY GARDEN

by: Margaret Winnett

Despite a slow start, December, January and February have proved fairly interesting in and about our garden.

A red-breasted nuthatch has been with us all winter. Also we have had 2 white-breasted nuthatches, 2 robins, 4 mourning doves, a tree sparrow, two white-throated sparrows, a grackle, downy woodpeckers, juncoes, chickadees, and a male and female cardinal.

On Dec. 27 a hermit thrush visited us, and stayed for the winter.

A flock of 13 cedar waxwings paused to feed on Jan. 19. In February we have had them occasionally in groups of 2 or 3. This latter seemed unusual as I think of them as staying in flocks in the winter.

Evening grosbeaks have visited us off and on since Jan. 14. On the 15th a pine grosbeak arrived, the first we have ever seen in the garden.

Goldfinches arrived on Jan. 9, to be joined on the 24th by siskins. This combined flock one day numbered 28 around the feeders. During the last week in February redpolls arrived, 7 at least. They add such a lovely touch of colour among the finches.

A noisy hubbub of bluejays drew us to the window one day. In the centre of 4 circling, screaming jays sat a northern shrike. It would make a dive at a jay and return to its perch, a dive at another, seeming almost to touch it, and return. But it soon tired of this and flew off.

Another day crows gave the alert, five of them. High in an evergreen sat a great horned owl. It tolerated its tormenters for a while, shifted to another perch but couldn't evade them, and finally flew off with the rabble in pursuit.

I glimpsed a large hawk surveying our garden from a spruce nearby, but did not succeed in identifying it.

We have been amazed at the dearth of English sparrows. Last winter they were noticeably reduced in numbers. But this winter only occasionally we have had one or two at our feeders.

Something new in our garden - 2 red squirrels arrived at the beginning of January. I have never seen them in this part of the city before.

Now in early March we are still enjoying winter visitors but looking for the spring ones.

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LUTHER MARSH WILDLIFE HELPED BY WINTER WORK

(from Newsletter of Ont. Dept. of Lands & Forests)

Winter works projects at Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area, are being conducted under the supervision of department of lands and forests Lake Huron District staff and Grand River Conservation Authority staff.

Several areas are undergoing selective cutting and thinning to improve wildlife habitat, and a number of clear areas will be planted to lure-crops next summer; ready for 1972 public waterfowl hunting.

Dead elm trees have been removed from locations where it was felt they might become a public hazard, as in viewing areas and along nature trails. Some elms, in more remote areas, were left standing as a food source for woodpeckers, flickers and other insect-eating birds.

About 200 bird houses and duck nesting boxes are being constructed this winter. Song bird houses are being placed in the better habitat and public access areas, while wood-duck nesting boxes are being put in prime wood-duck breeding areas on Luther Lake.

Goose nesting structures, boxes and rafts will be located on Wylde Lake, Luther Lake and in the Canada goose enclosure. New feeding platforms will also be located on the two lakes.

Construction of duck blinds, to accommodate hunters during the 1972 waterfowl season, has been underway for several weeks. Three types of blinds planned for the areas are: floating blinds for the lake proper, staked or fixed blinds for islands and shore line areas, and pit blinds for field shooting.

Persons wishing to obtain information regarding the projects, programs or activities at the Luther Marsh Wildlife Management Area should contact:

Grand River Conservation Authority,
Box 792,
Galt, Ontario.
Telephone (519) 621-2761

or

Department of Lands and Forests,
Division Office,
Wingham, Ontario.
Telephone (519) 357-3131

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Elmer Talvila, editor
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Islington, Ontario