



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 273

February 1973

Visitors welcome!

FEBRUARY MEETING

Visitors welcome!

Monday, February 5, 1973, at 8:15 p.m.
at the
ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
252 Bloor Street West

Speaker: R. BARRY RANFORD

Subject: TWO CONTRASTING WILDLIFE AREAS OF CANADA

- (1) The birds and flowers of the arctic tundra; (2) the spectacular seabird colonies of the North Atlantic, the highlight being a visit to Funk Island, the last nesting site of the now extinct Great Auk.

March 5: The New Metropolitan Toronto Zoo.

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February Outings

Saturday February 10 9:00 a.m. SERENA GUNDY PARK - Birds. Leader: Mr. John ten Bruggenkate
Meet in the second parking lot, 0.3 mile northwest of the park entrance on Leslie Street just north of Eglinton Ave. East. The meeting place is where the suspension bridge for pedestrians crosses the Don River. Morning only.

Sunday February 18 10:00 a.m. REAR OF BOYD CONSERVATION AREA - Birds Leader: Mr. Walter Hutton
Meet at the north end of Pine Valley Drive, 2.0 miles north of Hwy. 7. Pine Valley Drive is 1.9 miles west of Hwy. 400. Morning only, but you may wish to bring a lunch to be left in the car.

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NEST BOX PROJECT As indicated in the January Newsletter, Mr. Don Burton would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to participate in this project. Materials will be supplied by the Ministry of Natural Resources for the building of bird nesting boxes. The emphasis will probably be on bluebird boxes. There will be three phases of this work: (1) construction of the boxes; (2) erection of the boxes; (3) follow-up checks on the sites for some months after the boxes are placed. If you would like to become involved, please call Don (222-6467).

Audubon Wildlife Films

Aside from fees, the Audubon Films are the major source of revenue for our Club. In fact, they are the reason why (a) we have been able to keep the fees at such a low level and (b) we had money on hand when it was needed to make the down payment on the Jim Baillie Reserve. Their success depends in large measure upon the support they receive from you, the members. Ticket sales have been down somewhat this year and unless we have a full attendance at the remaining two film-lectures we shall not make the profit upon which we depend so heavily.

Here's what you can do to help:

- If you do not already subscribe to the series, make an effort to attend the February and March films. They are of high calibre, and you will be amply rewarded -- and you will be helping the Club as well.
- Tell your friends and colleagues about these films. Extra brochres are available from the Secretary.

The remaining films are:

Tuesday, February 13 - Charles T. Hotchkiss - "Exploring Big Bend"
The plans and animals of Big Bend National Park.

Tuesday, March 13 - Buzz Moss - "The Land No One Wanted"
A conservation film, focussing attention on a North American problem of waste and neglect.

Tickets \$2.00, available from the Attractions Ticket Office, Eaton Auditorium, at any time.

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Thanks to the generosity of T.F.N. members the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve Fund is now approaching the \$17,000 mark. Donations large and small are still needed to reach our objective of \$20,000. If you would like to help, please use the coupon below. Our Club is a Registered Charitable Organization, and an official receipt for income tax purposes will be sent to every donor.

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

Date _____

I enclose cheque/money order made out to Toronto Field

Naturalists' Club in the amount of \$ _____ as a

donation toward the JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE FUND.

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

HIGH PARK - AN URBAN WILDLIFE AREA

by Harold Taylor

In High Park a bit of the South comes to Toronto. For, in the park and along the lower reaches of the Humber River, the Deciduous Forest Region, sometimes referred to as the Carolinian Life Zone, has produced trees and plants more often encountered south of Lake Ontario. Toronto is at the northern and eastern limits of the Deciduous Region's penetration into Canada.

Emily Hamilton, who has led Club outings and who knows High Park well, has written of its special botanical attractions in affectionate detail in the accompanying article.

Unfortunately, some of the park's natural features have disappeared since 1873 when John George Howard deeded 125 acres to the city. Emily refers to the blue Wild Lupine that used to cover the slopes. Associated with the lupines was the rare Kerner Blue butterfly. In the Club's special Newsletter, April 1969, Paul Catling wrote of a sub-species of this butterfly that was collected regularly in High Park between 1890 and 1910. The last collection was probably in 1920. It seems that the disappearance of this butterfly was related to the great reduction in the number of lupines.

John Howard, architect and city engineer, had emigrated from England in 1832. He was responsible for many of Toronto's public buildings, most of which have long since been demolished. His most attractive work was his own house, Colborne Lodge, which still provides an impressive view of Lake Ontario. At Howard's death in 1890 the lodge, now open to the public, and the remaining 45 acres that he had retained in 1873, passed to the city.

The park was not a gift to the City of Toronto. Howard received for it a pension in 1873 of \$100 a month, not an insignificant amount at that time. In the seventeen years that followed he would have been paid about \$19,500. One wonders how often Toronto has had better value for its money.

However, in providing more amenities for the public city officials seem to have been unnecessarily concerned with "tidying up" the park. Trees and shrubs have been removed, parts of Grenadier Pond have been drained, and an asphalt walkway has been constructed along the Pond's eastern side.

Hopefully, man's erosion of High Park's natural attractiveness has ended. Toronto's Parks Department recently informed the writer that it has no plans to change wooded Wendigo Ravine at the north end of the pond or the section along the west side of this body of water. These areas produce most of the landbirds found in the park. The swampy areas and the pond itself can be expected to turn up species of marsh birds and waterfowl.

Spotted during the recent Christmas Count by a group led by Doug Wilkins were a northern shrike, a boreal chickadee, a red-breasted nuthatch, and eight song sparrows.

The charm of High Park for birders is that one never knows what will turn up. As Clive Goodwin, our immediate past president, wrote in the April 1969 special Newsletter, "Over the years the area has produced things as exotic as Ontario's only Vermilion Flycatcher, and a year rarely passes without some intriguing species being reported." Clive told of a phoebe that remained until a February ice storm and of a Red-bellied woodpecker that spent a winter in the area.

Birders who know the area will agree with Clive that "it's worth a visit."

BOTANY IN HIGH PARK

by Emily Hamilton

High Park is of considerable interest to botanists as it is the last remaining area of Prairie-Oak-woodland habitat in Toronto. There, growing beside plants which extend to the sub-arctic, are trees which are associated with the more southern Carolinian Life Zone.

On the western side of the park there are fine specimens of Black Oak (*Quercus velutina*) which are growing at their most northerly limit. Sassafras may be found as small trees and also as an understory shrub, covering a large area of the hillside east of Grenadier Pond. Also on the west side of the park are trees more typical of the Toronto area, namely, Red Oak, Red and Sugar Maples, Yellow and White Birch, Black Cherry, White Pine, and one lone Red Pine (*Pinus resinosa*). Down by the stream balsam Poplars and Speckled Alders live with Manitoba Maples. The main shrubs found along the Nature Trail are Round-leaved Dogwood, Choke Cherry and Beaked Hazelnut; and down by the stream Red Osier Dogwood forms a tangle with willows and a few Common Elders. The low shrubs on the slopes are Huckleberries (*Gaylussacia baccata*) and blueberries (*Vaccinium vacillans* and *V. angustifolium*) and a very low species of Juneberry. Dotted among the stands of these shrubs are patches of Sweetfern, New Jersey Tea, and Bush-honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*), with here and there a clump of Dwarf Prairie Willow (*salix tristis*). The herbaceous flora under these trees is not very rich, understandably as the slope is quite steep and the soil very sandy. In the early spring a few Hepatica and Wood Anemones appear, followed by Downy Yellow Violets, while among tufts of grasses (*Festuca ovina*) a few Northern Downy Violets (*Viola fimbriatula*) struggle to survive. In late spring come Starry Smilacina, Bastard Toadflax, the Baneberries and Columbine. Early summer brings a few Canada Anemones and Thimbleweeds; the Avens and Cinquefoils; and the Dwarf Carolina Rose, which is at its northern limit here. Growing among the low shrubs the interesting Low Bindweed is found (*convolvulus spithameus*), and down by the stream Purple Flowering Raspberry is in bloom.

Summer is the season for the Legume family and High Park is quite rich in these plants - The lovely blue Wild Lupine which used to cover the slopes is still present in a few places among the low shrubs. The Silvery and Hairy Bush-clovers (*Lespedeza* spp.) stand tall on the grassy slopes, and the Rabbit-foot Clover creeps among the short grass. The Canada and Pointed-leaved Tick-trefoils are also in the park, and the American Vetch is found on the west side grassy area; here also are two Rock Rose Family plants which are at their northern limit -- Frostweed (*Helianthemum canadense*) and Pinweed (*Lechea intermedia*). Late summer brings two sunflowers -- the Rough Woodland and the Ten-petalled Sunflowers. One must learn to distinguish them by their leaves, as the latter does not always have ten petals!

Taking a look at Grenadier Pond in summer we find remnants of a much more extensive flora. Broad-leaved Cat-tail predominates the northern marshy area, while on the west bank the interest but peculiar-looking Sweet Flag (*Acorus calamus*) grows among the Yellow Irises. Out in the water a few plants of Swamp Loosestrife (*Decodon verticillatus*) flower in late summer, while on the bank Purple Loosestrife is abundant and colourful. Along the path edging the pond may be found Water-horehound, Bugleweed, Skullcap and the Creeping Buttercup -- and plenty of Jewelweed -- Swamp Candles and the Tufted Loosestrife are also found here. At the southwest corner may be found the Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*), Water-arum, Broad-leaf Arrowhead, and the rare Bulblet-bearing Water Hemlock.

The east side of High Park has an interesting change in flora. To find it you must follow the narrow paths on the bank above the Spring Road stream. There among the shrubs in spring are Yellow Clintonia, Canada Mayflower, False Spikenard, Fringed polygala, Bunchberry, Starflower and Wood Betony.

Woody plants on this bank include Partridge Berry and Wintergreen; and the blueberries here are a northern species -- the Velvet-leaf Blueberry. The shrubs here include Witch-hazel and Alternate-leaved Dogwood. The trees are predominantly Red Oaks but include some Hemlock, Mountain Maple and Beech.

Throughout the park early fall plants are interesting with two tall grasses, Turkey Foot and Indian Grass (*Andropogon gerardii* and *Sorghastrum nutans*) standing up in clumps in open areas, while under the trees are species of Asters, notably the Sky-blue Aster and Heart-leaved. Later blooming are the Heath and New England Asters. The park is rich in goldenrods too -- the Early, Field, and Hairy Goldenrods grow in open wooded areas on the west side; the Stout on banks in the east, while Rough-leaved (*Solidago patula*) is to be found on the Wendigo Stream bank.

High Park has some little "secret Pockets" where interesting plants grow. Among these remnants are Goldthread, Indian Cucumber Root and Buffaloberry. It comes as a delightful surprise to find these plants.

This park is not very rich in ferns as most of these plants do not care for such a sandy soil. Down by the pond Sensitive Fern grows abundantly, and on the open hillsides bracken comes up among the low shrubs. On the east side beside the stream is a stand of Cinnamon Fern, while under Parkside Drive there are a few wet areas in which Lady Fern and Marsh Fern are to be found.

BOOK REVIEW

James Woodford's The Violated Vision: The Rape of Canada's North (McClelland and Stewart, \$5.95) is a short but very important book. It should be read by every conservationist in the country. In the book, Mr. Woodford attempts to draw public attention to the disastrous course he feels our government has set in the exploitation and development of our north. I could find little in the book with which to disagree.

That is not to say the book is without flaws. There are some indications that it was very hastily put together. In Chapter 2, for example, the name of Vilhjalmur Stefansson, our best-known arctic explorer is spelled incorrectly. As a whole Chapter 2 comes off rather badly. Here Mr. Woodford has attempted to give us a glimpse of the fauna and flora of the arctic. The result however is a jumble of completely unrelated facts on a wide variety of subjects. Many of the figures he gives are not referenced and a few seem highly doubtful -- such as the 1000 muskox reportedly on Cornwallis Island.

In spite of these imperfections I must agree with Mr. Woodford that the government really is bungling the management of our north. He describes how incredibly long it took Panarctic Oil to shut off the two gas wells which burned out of control on Melville and King Christian Islands. He also points out the magnitude of the disaster had these wells been oil rather than gas. Yet despite the obvious conclusion that our present well-drilling technology is not sufficient to cope with arctic conditions the mad rush to find oil continues and is encouraged by the federal government.

The situation is similar regarding pollution in the arctic. In spite of the countless examples we have here in the south of how not to handle sewage and solid waste the same old mistakes are being made in the north. Untreated sewage is simply dumped into lakes. The periodic reports of typhoid occurring in some arctic settlements should serve as a clear warning that better methods of disposal are urgently required. Garbage dumps and empty oil drums are presently the most common landmark near any arctic settlement.

I could go on at length with the list of problems which are already manifesting themselves in our so-called "unspoiled" arctic but I will leave these for the reader to discover. Mr. Woodford covers most of them quite adequately. The sad thing is that in the face of these present problems the government unconcernedly plans even bigger things for the future. The environmental safeguards which the government publicly touts seem adequate, if not ideal, but even these are almost completely disregarded and often by the government itself.

The latest government fiasco is the MacKenzie Highway which has been announced since the appearance of Mr. Woodford's book. Here again it appears that the government is prepared to rush ahead with a scheme which our present technology is not capable of handling and on which planning and research are almost totally lacking. Once again environmental impact has been virtually disregarded, in fact the route for the road was determined before ecological studies had even been started.

I get angry when I read a book like *The Violated Vision*. Perhaps if enough of us read it and get angry enough we can convince our government that things are going to have to be done differently in the future.

- Alex W. Caron

COMING EVENTS

Royal Ontario Museum

Information: 928-3690

Free Sunday Films - at 2:30 p.m.

- Feb. 4 - The drifting of the continents: New developments enable scientists to substantiate their theory, Eskimo artist Kenojuak.
- Feb. 11 - Films on paper: The story of paper making; Day after day; Noce de papier.
- Feb. 18 - Secret in the hive: The perfectly ordered society of a honey bee colony; Making a water jug (pottery); Nathalie Krebs, engineer and artist.
- Feb. 25 - The endless chain: an ecological study. And there was no more sea: land reclamation.

Nature: Cosmic and Earthbound

Free Wednesday night lectures in McLaughlin Planetarium at 8:30 p.m.

- Feb. 14 - Plate tectonics by Dr. John Dewey, Prof. of Geology, State University of Albany, N.Y.
- Feb. 21 - Evolution of Life by Dr. Frank Rhodes, Dean, College of Literature, Science & Arts, U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor.
- Feb. 28 - Pathological Eggshells: a possible cause for the extinction of dinosaurs, by Dr. H. K. Erben, Director, Institute of Palaeontology, Bonn.

Identification Nights. The curators of various galleries will be present to help identify your specimens.

Feb. 13 - Birds and bugs

Feb. 27 - Fossils, vertebrate and invertebrate.

Saturday evening lectures, Convocation Hall, U. of Toronto, at 8:15 p.m.

- Jan. 27 - The story of South African Flowers: Prof. N. P. Badenhuizen, Botany Dept., U. of Toronto. Illustrated with colour slides. South Africa has one of the richest floras in the world and has been the source of a large number of cultivated plants.
- Feb. 3 - The spruce budworm and its impact on Eastern Canadian forests: Dr. Carl Atwood, Dept. of Zoology, U. of Toronto.
- Feb. 10 - Energy from the Arctic. Illustrated with a movie film, Earle Gray, Director Public Affairs, Can. Arctic Gas Study Ltd., Toronto.
- Feb. 17 - Minority education and the concept of dignity: R. C. Harris, O.I.S.E., Thunder Bay and J. Morris, Bearskin Lake.
- Feb. 24 - The Victorian street arab. Illustrated with slides. Dr. A. C. Thomas, Dept. of English, Scarborough College.

Ontario Science Centre

Information: 429-4100, Ext. 175, 153

Week-end lecture series in theatre B at 1:30 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.
Half hour lectures given by the Education Staff using slides, movies, models or demonstrations in each presentation. Check with Centre to verify the topic.

- Jan. 27, 28 - Fun with chemistry and cryogenics.
- Feb. 3, 4 - Canadian North. Discussion of the rapid changes taking place.
- Feb. 10, 11 - Amateur radio.
- Feb. 17, 18 - Earthquakes and Volcanoes.
- Feb. 24, 25 - Genetics.

The Darwin adventure. Friday evenings at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m. in the auditorium. To February 25.
This film series recreates Darwin's famous and fantastic 5-year voyage of discovery aboard H.M.S. Beagle. Wildlife footage taken on a 2-year safari by the film director through South America, Galapagos, Europe and Africa.

A Stellar Performance. Every Tues., Wed. and Thurs. evening from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. on the patio, weather permitting. Amateur astronomers help you use the Centre's telescopes. On Thursday evenings a special astronomy lecture in the theatre. To April 1st.

Toronto Public Libraries

- Danforth Branch - Jan. 30, 7:30 Films: The world of West Africa; Hunting wild doves.
- Riverdale Branch - to Jan. 31. Insect display from the Royal Ontario Museum.
- Forest Hill - to Jan. 22. Botany as a hobby: plant booklets from many countries by Esther Carin.
- Annette - Jan. 27. Snakes alive! Discussion, slide show and display of live reptiles and amphibians. Presented by Ontario Herpetological Society.

Deer Park - Feb. 10. Critters and things - Dr. Mark Zimmerman 3:15 p.m.

Learning Resources: Feb. 21. Film: Endangered species. 8:30 - 11:00 p.m.

Danforth. Film series: Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Feb. 6 - Kon-Tiki (Thor Heyerdahl)

Feb. 13 - Japan season by season; Akiko - a Japanese girl

Feb. 20 - The search for Ulysses

Feb. 27 - Wilderness River Trail - a Sierra Club film of Dinosaur National Monument; Wonderful world of San Francisco.

Parkdale: Film series on Saturdays at 2 p.m. presenting the 'Undersea World of Jacques Costeau' Jan. 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24.

HELP WANTED - AT THE CANADIAN NATIONAL SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

The T.F.N. will again be taking part in the C.N.S.S. co-operative environmental exhibit which is organized by the Conservation Council of Ontario and funded by the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show itself. Our role is to help man the exhibit, and we need volunteers - volunteers - volunteers.

The dates: March 16 - 25

The place: The Coliseum of the C.N.E.

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

Come and help, and see the exhibit, which this year will be emphasizing urban themes. Call the Kerrs, 481-7948, or send the underlisted slip indicating when you will be willing to help. We need at least 120 people!

To: Mr. and Mrs. Harry Kerr,
47 Cameron Crescent,
Toronto 352, Ontario

I can be available - Dates: _____

Shifts: (Select one or more of the time periods above)

Name _____

Address _____

COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Ministry of Natural Resources. Information Branch, Room W-5305
Parliament Buildings. 965-2756

Feb. 19-24. Free evening course for rock hounds and prospectors, featuring lectures and films, mineral and rock samples. Open to all ages.

Metro Toronto Parks. Information: 367-8176

Walking tours with Commissioner Tommy Thompson.

Sat. Jan. 27 - Walking tour of new Metro Zoo site (at 2:00 p.m.)

Sun. Feb. 11 - Downtown walk from City Hall (at 10:00 a.m.)

Advance Notice

Please keep Saturday, March 3 free to attend a meeting of the Royal Canadian Institute - the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists are specially invited to see the outstanding slides of Mrs. Helen Sutton and hear her talk on Insects.

Full details in the next Newsletter.

A. SUMMER NATURALIST POSITIONS AVAILABLE IN ALGONQUIN PARK INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMME

Several summer naturalist positions are available for the 1973 season of the Algonquin Provincial Park Interpretive Programme. The programme is the oldest and largest in Canada and consists of services designed to help the public understand and appreciate the natural and human history of the park. These include a Park Museum devoted to natural history, a pioneer logging exhibit, evening programmes featuring slide talks on some aspect of the park, conducted hikes, public wolf howls, and a variety of publications. The Park Museum which is the naturalist staff headquarters also serves as the repository for the park's extensive botanical, zoological, archaeological, geological and photographic collections and includes an extensive library.

The seasonal staff consists of about 14 amateur naturalists with a wide range of interests and includes some of the best in Ontario. In some cases where a new summer naturalist has a good background in all fields of natural history or prior experience in Algonquin Park and in public speaking he will be phased into a full role in the programme very quickly. In most cases, however, because of the great amount of knowledge needed for a person to function as an effective park naturalist-interpreter, the first year is mainly a training year. For this reason preference is given to people who will be available, at least potentially, in following years (such as students in their last years of high school or the first one or two years of their university career.)

Duties in the first (training) year are divided between manning the Park Museum information desk, and watching more experienced staff in action and filling out areas where knowledge is weak. Later in the summer the naturalist trainee begins to lead hikes and give slide talks. Assuming a satisfactory performance by the trainee, summer employment in interpretive programmes is virtually guaranteed in following years either in Algonquin or in other provincial parks.

The normal period of employment is from May or June (depending on academic obligations) until Labour Day.

Salaries are pegged to experience and academic status. Accommodation is provided free in the museum staff house and meals are charged for on a cost basis.

All applications or enquiries should be addressed to Mr. Dan Strickland, Park Naturalist Supervisor, Ministry of Natural Resources, Whitney, Ontario, KOJ 2M0 (telephone 705 633-5592).

- B. Other Summer Job Applications invited by Mr. Bob Day, District Naturalist, Maple Southern Research Station, Ministry of Natural Resources, Maple, Ontario.

TORONTO'S 48TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT, 1972

by Jack Cranmer-Byng

The 48th Toronto Christmas Bird Count was held on 24 December 1972, under the direction of the Toronto Ornithological Club. 17 routes were covered within a circle of $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles radius from Avenue Road at Lytton Boulevard (the official Audubon Society count area for Toronto), while a further 10 areas within a 30 mile radius from the R.O.M. were also covered. This year there were 95 participants, exactly the same number as last year, but lower than the average for the previous ten years.

One new species for the Christmas Count was recorded this year - the Lincoln's Sparrow - by John Lamey in the Lower Humber area. Another species not hitherto recorded on the Christmas Count - the Eared Grebe - was observed by members of the Toronto Ornithological Club in the Sunnyside Park area several times prior to 24 December, and by Gerry Bennett on December 26, though it was not actually seen on the day of the count in spite of a careful search. With the addition of the Lincoln's Sparrow the total number of species recorded on the Toronto Christmas Bird Count since it was first begun in a small way in 1925 now stands at 150. The number of species recorded on the 1972 count was 99 (100 if one includes the Eared Grebe), which is a record high, the next highest totals being 92 in 1971 and 90 in 1968. The total of individual birds seen was 33,725, the highest count of individual birds ever recorded being 34,506 in 1963.

The relatively mild and wet weather from the fall right through to Christmas may have had something to do with the record number of different species seen. Certainly there was a wide range of different species for which only one or two individual birds were reported, viz: 1 Pied-billed Grebe; 1 Red-necked Grebe; 2 Horned Grebe; 2 Wood Duck; 1 Lesser Scaup; 1 Harlequin Duck; 1 Surf Scoter; 1 Hooded Merganser; 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk; 2 Cooper's Hawk; 1 Red-shouldered Hawk; 1 Marsh Hawk; 1 Common Gallinule; 2 Coot; 2 Glaucous Gull; 1 Snowy Owl; 1 Short-eared Owl; 1 Saw-whet Owl; 1 Red-bellied Woodpecker; 1 Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker; 1 Northern Three-toed Woodpecker; 1 Carolina Wren; 1 Mockingbird; 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 1 Yellowthroat; 1 Towhee; 1 White-crowned Sparrow; 1 Lincoln's Sparrow; 1 Lapland Longspur.

The following species were seen in larger numbers than on any previous count: Mallard 2985; Redhead 78; Bufflehead 395; Ruddy Duck 9; Mourning Dove 184 (previous high was 165 in 1964); Kingfisher 14; White-breasted Nuthatch 117 (previous high was 53 in 1969); Boreal Chickadee 8; Robin 164; Rusty Blackbird 17; Swamp Sparrow 14. In contrast the following species were not recorded at all, though from records of previous counts they might well have been seen: Common Snipe; Iceland Gull; Screech Owl; Barred Owl; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; Brown Thrasher; Hermit Thrush.

Apart from the first record of the Lincoln's Sparrow and the Eared Grebe the following points deserve comment. This year's total of 8 Boreal Chickadee is

outstanding since previously only single birds had been recorded on the Christmas Count, and then only over widely separated dates, viz: 1937, 1946, 1951, 1955, 1968. Of course large numbers of Boreal Chickadees were recorded during the fall of 1972 in the Toronto area, but nevertheless a count of 8 in late December is remarkable. Only second to this in interest is, perhaps the extremely large number of Robins recorded - 164 - as compared with the previous high of 53 in 1969, and the average over the past ten years which was only 22. Of this total of 164 Robins, 148 were seen within the 7½ mile radius of Metro Toronto. Moreover, these birds were not evenly spread out, but tended to concentrate in certain city ravines (e.g. Cedarvale, Sherwood Park, and the Belt Line Ravine), where loose flocks of between 26 to 30 birds were found feeding on open patches of wet earth on the sides of the ravines and on Mountain Ash (Rowan) berries in private gardens. It will be interesting to see if these numbers manage to survive the remainder of the winter in Toronto. Another surprisingly high total was that of 184 Mourning Doves, the previous high being 165 in 1964. In contrast this year's Christmas Count was a poor one for winter finches, only the Pine Grosbeak being present in seasonable numbers. Thus only 10 Common Redpoll were reported in 1972 in contrast to 1448 in 1969, and 1494 in 1971.

In conclusion it is worth noting that the Red-necked Grebe was the first seen on the Christmas Count since 1960, and the same applies to the Carolina Wren. A single Mockingbird has now been recorded yearly since 1969 at the same feeder. The Harlequin Duck has now been recorded from Toronto Island for the third consecutive year. The single Surf Scoter was the first reported since 1953. Only once before, in 1956, had 6 Great Blue Heron been recorded, while the count of 14 Kingfisher was far above the average of 4 seen over the past ten years. Finally Horned Larks have not been recorded often on the Christmas Count - only eight times in the past twenty years.

Weather. We were lucky with the weather since the thick fog of the previous day cleared sufficiently on December 24th to make visibility reasonably good. Temperature range 31° - 38° F. Overcast, no wind, partially melting snow with some thin ice. Streams and creeks open with no ice in the bays.

Note

In addition to the Eared Grebe one other species also not recorded on the count was seen a few days later, viz: an Iceland Gull on 30 December.

FELLOW-MEMBERS, WILL YOU HELP?

As you probably know, your club has had in operation for several months now, an 'Environmental Committee'. One of our projects is that of putting forth opposition to the new Pickering Airport. We would like to ask for your help, but first some background.

Ontario appears to be getting a second airport mainly because Montreal got one, not because traffic increases require it. Government task forces have twice recommended that Malton be expanded rather than an entire new airport be built (at considerable - \$800 million - saving), but the government has ignored these reports. In fact, the final location decision was in response to provincial pressure that the new airport, if built, be built east of Toronto, to encourage regional growth in that direction.

No proper ecological study has been done of the Pickering site; and there is considerable evidence that several environmental hazards exist in the area, including particularly the dangers of bird strikes, since the area is on a major flyway for gulls. As well, noise pollution will seriously limit the use of several Conservation areas in the district. Even Metro Council has objected to the federal government's

handling of the matter, and passed a motion asking for immediate clarification of several problems. The report to Council by former East York Mayor states (among other conclusions):

"It (the airport) will have a damaging effect on the entire green belt system and ecology of the area."

In short, it appears that the federal government has foisted an airport upon us, for purely political reasons, and the provincial government has decided where it will be located, again for purely political reasons.

There are two ways to argue - that there is no need for a second airport at all, or that the location is wrong. We wish to emphasize the former idea, and direct our attention to the federal government, so we would ask you to write:

- Prime Minister P. Trudeau
- Transport Minister Jean Marchand
- your federal M.P.
- pressure your representatives on Toronto's Metro Council to ask the federal government to reverse its decision.

Please write as an individual citizen to express your own opinion, and if you want more information, call Stew Hiltz, 967-1556. Remember, with the federal government in its present precarious position, now is the time to act. And you might also write David Lewis, and Robert Stanfield, who have expressed some opposition to the airport, asking them also to pressure the federal government.

- Stewart Hiltz

The following letter from Miss Deirdre Clark, a long-time member formerly of Toronto who now lives in England and is a corresponding member.

KENYA, AND "THE MEN OF THE TREES"

When I received an invitation to join a party going to Kenya last April to attend the golden jubilee celebrations of "The Men of the Trees" I was excited, especially as we were promised "colourful ceremony" and "tribal dancing" which brought visions of throbbing drums and stamping African feet in forest glades by the light of a tropical moon. However, events did not turn out quite as expected as all the foresters we met were nice neat young Africans wearing khaki drill suits and working in modern offices. As for tribal dances, I think these days they are mainly for the globe-trotting tourists.

In case you do not know very much about "The Men of the Trees" perhaps I should relate a little of the society's history. It was formed by Richard St. Barbe Baker when he was working as a forester in Kenya in the early 1920's. He found a lack of interest in tree planting amongst the Kenyan African people and, while considering what he could do to stimulate their interest, it struck him that ritual and ceremony played such a large part in the African way of life that it must somehow be brought into their forestry work to stir their imagination and interest. So he formed "The Men of the Trees".

This went very well. To become a member a man had to plant a certain number of trees and persuade a number of his friends - I think it was five - to do likewise. He was then enrolled and received his badge at a colourful enrolment ceremony which included "The Dance of the Trees".

Today the Society of "The Men of the Trees" has spread to many other countries including Britain and its founder - now Dr. Richard St. Barbe Baker - is a well known personality. He was granted an Honorary Doctorate by the University of Saskatoon last year.

We expected to spend a large part of our time in Kenya planting trees but although it was the season of the "long rains" not a drop fell for the first ten days in spite of Dr. Baker's efforts to procure "rain sticks". Everything looked dried up and tree-planting was out of the question. However, on about the 11th day of our 14-day stay, while we were all gathered together in the grounds of the East African Forest and Agriculture Research Station to listen to a speech by the Minister of the Environment, down came the rain and in about two minutes we were soaked to the skin and paddling about in chocolate-coloured mud. After that we did manage to plant a few commemorative trees.

Alas, forest cover in Kenya is much too sparse at only $2\frac{1}{2}\%$. The Kenyan Government is doing its best to encourage planting and the Forest Service provides seedling trees at 2 shillings for a box of 50 for anyone who will take the trouble to plant them. President Kenyatta shows a great personal interest and I noticed that many of the Forest Service officers were wearing "Men of the Trees" badges. Unfortunately, the Masai people who are a law unto themselves cut down what trees they have to make into charcoal which, we were told, they sell to Israel. The Government has introduced legislation to stop this but how can it be enforced in the remote Masai areas?

Enough about trees and a little about the rest of our trip. Nairobi deserves top marks for its beautiful flower-lined streets. Never anywhere else have I seen such a wonderful display of Bougainvillea of every shade from cream to yellow, orange, crimson and scarlet and many exotic flowering trees from all over the world were brilliant throughout the city. In other respects high-rise buildings are making Nairobi indistinguishable from any other modern city.

An afternoon in the Nairobi National Park was an interesting experience. We saw many kinds of buck, giraffes, zebra, lions, a family of warthogs, two jackals and, the great thrill, we were within about 20 feet of a rhino drinking at a pool. We were disappointed to hear that there were no elephants in the park which, although on the very outskirts of the city, is fenced only on that side. All the wild animals can come and go at their own free will.

I think for me the highlight was the day we drove down into the Rift Valley to visit Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru. At Lake Naivasha we saw many interesting birds including Sacred Ibis, Blacksmith Plover, Silver Pelicans, an Osprey, Weaverbirds, a Kite, some Spoonbills and many Hildebrand's Starlings, beautiful iridescent violet-blue birds with a typical starling gait. Lake Nakuru is a national park, as for most of the year it is the home of the Flamingos. The shallow margins of the lake were lined with a tight mass of Flamingos as far as the eye could see. Only one small group, probably young birds and massed together as tightly as they could pack, looked really pink. All the rest looked almost white. Amongst the Flamingos were Spoonbills and Avocet, while strutting along the shore in dignified manner was a large Yellow-billed Stork. Little groups of Pelican swam majestically out beyond the Flamingos - altogether a memorable sight.

We would have liked to have seen more of the wild animals of the national parks, particularly the elephants of which we saw not one, but time was short and transport very expensive.

I am wrong in saying that we saw no elephants, we did see two very small ones in wooden crates at Entebbe airport on our way home, and on the crates was stamped one word - "Longleat".

PUBLICATION PROFILE

by Leila Gad

the TFNC regularly receives a wide range of periodicals, magazines and newsletters, either because we are affiliated with certain organizations, or because we send our newsletter to them, or just because we are an important club! These publications are sent to Elmer Talvila or Mary Robson who sift out interesting snippets for our newsletter and eventually pass them on for general circulation. They then appear on a special table at the monthly meetings and may be borrowed by TFNC members. (In the absence of a permanent library this seems to be the only method of dissemination possible.) For new members and others here is a guide to what is available:

The 'Canadian Field Naturalist', a quarterly publication of the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club is a particularly important periodical to look for. Major scholarly articles, usually contributed by university or government professionals, covering all branches of natural history and without regional bias, for the meat of each issue. These are preceded by an editorial, often on a topic of Canada-wide importance, and followed by a series of 'Notes'. These 'Notes' are shorter articles of considerable significance, dealing most frequently with detailed observations of a particular species, or with unusual bird sightings and range extensions. The major articles and 'Notes' are well referenced and often accompanied by an abstract. For those who want to keep up with the new literature on the market the last section of each 'Canadian Field Naturalist' is essential reading. Often up to a dozen new books or research papers are reviewed at length and a handy list of 'Other New Titles', with a one or two line description, is appended. Altogether the 'Canadian Field Naturalist' is a must for those who want to 'keep on the ball'. It is an attractive periodical running to about 100 pages per issue, printed on glossy paper with a double-column format and with the articles well illustrated with black and white photos, maps and diagrams. At only \$5.00 for a personal subscription it is a pretty good deal too, for the TFNC members who don't want to rely on the literature table!

In addition to the 'Canadian Field Naturalist' the Ottawa Field Naturalist Club produces 'Trail and Landscape', described as 'a non-technical publication of general interest to local naturalists'. Produced five times a year this small periodical contains local Ottawa news, details of excursions and lectures, but also a number of interesting short articles by Club members. These articles, well illustrated, are often of interest for us too. Usually bound in a bright paper cover this can be picked out for lighter reading.

A neat little publication from 'out west', and in character somewhere between the 'Canadian Field Naturalist' and 'Trail and Landscape' is the 'Blue Jay'. This is published quarterly by the Saskatchewan Natural History Society. It is one of the main vehicles for articles concerning natural history in all three prairie provinces, though some articles of Canada-wide interest are included. Articles on 'Birds' are conveniently separated out in the table of contents, and include long well documented features as well as short notes. Contributions are illustrated with black and white photos and the general format is similar to the 'Canadian Field Naturalist' only on a smaller scale. The 'Blue Jay Bookshelf', towards the end of each issue, often has one or two interesting reviews. Certainly the 'Blue Jay' is a significant periodical and should not be overlooked.

Mentioning the 'Blue Jay' is a reminder that birders are catered for by a number of publications sent to the TFNC. Most important of these is probably 'Ontario Bird Banding', published quarterly by The Ontario Bird Banding Association. This is a small publication in both size and number of articles. Nevertheless, the three or four articles published are usually quite important and well documented. This is also the periodical with information on happenings at Long Point and Point Pelee Bird Observatories, or in which to advertise for assistance on ornithological projects. Individuals may join the Association and receive 'Ontario Bird Banding' for \$4.00 per year.

'Tchebec' is the call of the Least Flycatcher (so they tell me) and also sounds a little like 'Quebec' and is thus quite an appropriate title for the quarterly journal of the The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds. The language problem is overcome by printing both French and English articles, with English summaries for the former and French for the latter. (How often are French summaries provided for articles in Ontario journals?) This is an important periodical to keep an eye on if you're planning to do some birding in eastern Ontario or Quebec. The Society also sends us their 'Newsletter' with information about current Society activities.

If you are interested in birding in the U.S.A. then 'Birding', the bi-monthly publication of the American Birding Association based in Austin, Texas or 'Iowa Bird Life', published quarterly by the Iowa Ornithologists Union are both received by the TFNC. Although quite a number of pages in 'Birding' seem to be given over to publication of competitive 'life-lists' and annual records (e.g. 626 Species in One Year: A New North American Record, by Ted Parker III - Birding, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1972), there are articles of general interest too. An interesting feature of the publication is a pull-out section with loose-leaf pages describing, complete with map and directions, good spotting locations for rare species. Some of these are in Ontario and Quebec or in the border states, and are worth checking. 'Iowa Bird Life' is more local in interest but often contains relevant general articles.

Less frequent in appearance but of great interest are the publications of the International Council for Bird Preservation. In these you are most likely to find the latest news on endangered species, new rulings and recommendations and reports from important symposia.

Returning to Canada, and Ontario in particular, we should not neglect to mention our two 'colour glossies'; the well-known and popular 'Ontario Naturalist', and the new 'Nature Canada'. The former, an outstanding magazine for naturalists produced quarterly by the FON, will certainly be familiar to most TFNC members. Lavishly illustrated, this magazine specializes in interesting and informative 'popular' articles. There is a 'Viewpoint' section, which monitors current issues, and 'The Bookshelf', edited by Clive Goodwin, where substantial reviews of selected recent publications are given.

'Nature Canada', now entering its second year of publication, is the organ of the new Canadian Nature Federation and promises to be quite an exciting magazine. It is in many ways similar to the 'Ontario Naturalist' in general approach, but aims to serve the need for a strong national magazine. The other major objectives of the magazine are to keep readers up to date with environmental legislation, research, and international news. Hence, a major part of the magazine is given over to sections on 'The Federal Scene', 'Reports from the Provinces', 'Citizens in Action', 'Nature and Technology Research', and so on. There are also sections for letters and book reviews. For \$6.00 per year individuals can join the Federation and receive 'Nature Canada' - quite a good investment.

Last but not least in this 'catalogue of literature' are the many newsletters and bulletins sent to the TFNC on an exchange basis from other organizations. An important one is 'The Bulletin' of the Conservation Council of Ontario. (Clive Goodwin is the Editor and Executive Director.) This often carries very interesting illustrated articles on resource management and conservation policies, written by key figures in government and university research institutes. A five or six page 'Newsletter' is received from the Ministry of Natural Resources with just one or two articles on similar subjects, and a listing of new Ministry publications.

Interesting newsletters from neighbouring clubs are 'The Bulletin' of the Richmond Hill Naturalists, 'The Naturalist' produced by the Oshawa Naturalists Club, and the newsletter of the South Peel Naturalists Club. From further afield come 'The Wood Duck' from the Hamilton Naturalists Club, the Newsletter of the Thunder Bay

Field Naturalists Club, and 'The Orchid', bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists. These are a mixture of field trip announcements, meeting news and interesting articles, similar to our own newsletter, and provide an insight into the workings of other clubs.

Not all the publications received by the TFNC have been mentioned, in fact, some important ones may have been missed out. Check the literature table at the next meeting. Most items on the table will be marked with a 'return' tag, and should be returned before or at the next meeting; others without a tag, may be kept - free!

NOTE: Deadline for receiving material to go into the March Newsletter is February 7th.

231-1064

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