



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB NEWSLETTER

Number 275

April 1973

Visitors welcome!

APRIL MEETING

Visitors welcome!

Monday, April 2, 1973, at 8:15 p.m.
in the auditorium of the
ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
252 Bloor Street West

Subject: CANADIAN WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

Speaker: CHARLES ERICKSEN

Mr. Ericksen is a noted conservationist and photographer and Director of the Voyageur Wilderness Programme whose slogan is "Ecological Education through Wilderness Experience". Mr. Ericksen's 50-minute slide presentation will take us from the high Arctic, through the Rockies, across the prairies, and into the haunting vastness of the Precambrian Shield.

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Here is an interesting message from Mr. Bruce Murray, a TFN member of long standing, formerly very active in the Club and now serving as Director of the Audubon Nature Center in Babson Park, Florida:

ARE YOU PLANNING TO RETIRE THIS YEAR?

Here is a great opportunity for a retired couple, still young enough to work and to play in the Florida sunshine. We are looking for a naturalist with wife to live in a comfortable home, air conditioned, May 1 to September 30, rent free, in return for an average of 2 to 3 hours a day work in the garden, mowing grass, pruning, cultivating, etc. Rental value \$500 per month on Lake Caloosa, Central Florida. Good swimming, boating and fishing.

If satisfactory, there would be an opportunity to continue as a Naturalist at a Nature Center nearby for the winter months. Apply to Bruce Murray, Box 131, Babson Park, Florida, 33827. Please write telling about yourself and giving a reference.

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We wish to welcome the following new members:

Mr. Gordon C. Burbidge, Miss M. B. Byam, Mrs. Lilliam Dawson, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Evans, Miss Glenna Graham, Mr. Robert Gray, Mr. Henry Irwin, Mrs. Patricia Lippegaus, Miss M. Mrazik, Mrs. A. F. Newman, Mrs. N. Pawlik, Mr. George Pegg, Mr. & Mrs. R. Pitchford, Miss Terry Pleason, Mrs. Mary Rideout, Miss Barbara Thomas, Mr. & Mrs. John Thomson, Mr. V. Trudel, Mrs. Josephine Walther, Mrs. Lorraine Worth, Mr. Wayne D. Yetman.

JUNIOR CLUB Meet in the theatre of the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park,
Saturday Theatre meeting to be shared by Ecology and Astronomy Groups (leaders,
April 7 Mr. Sam Hambly and Miss Karen Potter). Visitors welcome.
10:00 a.m.
President - Miss Elizabeth Schell, 741-0371
Director - Mr. Mike Singleton, 447-4197

FIELD Meet in St. James-Bond United Church, on Avenue Rd. just north of
BIOLOGISTS' Eglinton Ave. W. For program details please phone the group
GROUP chairman.
Thursday
April 12
8:00 p.m. Chairman - Mr. Don Burton, 222-6467

ECOLOGY GROUP Meet in Room 378 of The College of Education, 371 Bloor St. West at
Wednesday Spadina. Ecology laboratory session--a session to demonstrate the
April 18 proper use of field and laboratory equipment. The equipment selected
8:00 p.m. will enable the members to examine aquatic and terrestrial environ-
ments. (If time permits, the technique for studying environmental
pollution may be discussed as well.)
Chairman - Mr. Ron Thorpe, 759-2948

BOTANY GROUP No more indoor meetings will be held this season. Please see the
Spring Outings booklet for botany trips.

BIRD GROUP Meet in St. James-Bond United Church, on Avenue Road just north of
Thursday Eglinton Ave West. Want to know where to go birding in Toronto -
April 26 Ontario - Canada - N.A.? Bring pen and paper.
8:00 p.m. Chairman - Mr. Red Mason, 621-3905

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Extra copies of the enclosed Outings booklet may be obtained from the Secretary
(see below).

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We note with deep regret the passing of two of our most highly respected members.
Prof. A. F. Coventry ("Covers") was instrumental in the founding of the Federation
of Ontario Naturalists and is remembered by many as a brilliant leader at the F.O.N.
Summer Nature Camps and on T.F.N.C. outings. Mrs. Irma Metcalfe's dedicated love
of nature and warm, quiet personality was an inspiration to all who knew her. We
shall remember them.

President - Miss Rosemary Gaymer

Secretary - Mrs. Mary Robson,
49 Craighurst Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M4R 1J9
(481-0260)

KNOW ANY GOOD WOODLOTS?

The Natural Areas committee is compiling an inventory of significant natural areas in the Toronto region. This will have a double purpose; one to help the Club in selecting possible future nature reserves, and the second to guide our activities in attempting to encourage other groups to preserve these areas.

Some locations are listed in the Naturalist's Guide to Ontario and the Toronto Birdfinding Guide, and others are already part of various parks systems or Conservation Areas. But we know there must be many others and perhaps you know of some. We really have in mind areas outside the city itself, because the various projects of the Environmental Committee are hopefully identifying significant areas within the city.

What are significant areas? The two key words might be quality and diversity. A woodlot with exceptionally fine old trees; locations with rare plants or bird-life; areas having unusual plant and animal associations, or with plant and animal associations that are particularly good examples of their natural communities. Then an area with a fine variety of different habitats might be well worth preserving for this alone; the Rattray Marsh is notable mainly for its fine diversity, with mixed woods, shrubland, marsh and field all close together.

Do you know of any likely areas, or would you like to look for some? If so, we need your help. Please send details of any areas you know of, or that you find, to:

Clive Goodwin,
Ste. 610, 45 LaRose Ave.,
Weston M9P 1A8

Please be sure to tell us why your area is significant, give full details of where it is, and your own name, address and telephone number.

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RYE COMMENTS

The following letter was received by Trevor Hamilton from a corresponding member of our Club in England. I thought you might find his remarks about English nature and society interesting.

Rye, Sussex, England

Dear Trevor:

I feel very ashamed when I think of the time that has elapsed since receiving your last letter especially as you had most generously enrolled me in your Club and sent that magnificent book to me, a most welcome gift and well used since. I find it splendid reading and had often glanced through it in or local bookshop. I do not know what I have done to deserve such kindness but I can assure you it is deeply appreciated. Whilst I have no desire to endure your arctic winters I do envy you and your fellow members the opportunities you have for such fascinating exploratory walks and expeditions. I wish we could get such enthusiasm going in our Society but as the main membership is almost entirely made up of retired and semi-retired elders our activities in that direction are rather limited. As for myself I am handicapped by my heart condition very much as very cold weather and icy winds force me to remain indoors where I spend much time in my little studio on the top floor, but the window there gives me an uninterrupted view across Rye Marsh to Winchelsea and across the houses in Winchelsea Road towards the sea which means that my field glasses work overtime on occasion. Last month we had a large flock of golden plover mingling with the lapwings in the field beyond our house but they were very restless and I learnt later that a falcon escaped from a private aviary was active on the Marsh all that day. Bird song at present is confined to the sparrows with their chatter on the roof tops,

the starlings with their uncanny calls, and just at dusk the sad little song of the robin; but Spring cannot be very far away as the blackbirds and thrushes are already having their usual squabbles before mating and the smaller fry, bluetits and finches are looking for nesting sites in the hedges and buildings. Yesterday we had a very special thrill. A magnificent kingfisher perched on one of the piles in the river near the lock gates occasionally diving into the water, without much success I fear as the Tillingham at present is full of chocolate coloured silt. This beautiful bird does not often approach so near to the town; it must have been very hungry to do so. We have caught a glimpse of it much further out. The Nature Society have spent much of these winter months enlarging the shingle banks in the gravel pits to attract more waders and we now have a splendid bird watching hut on the edge of the pits. The last time I was down there we saw oyster catchers, grebes, dunlin, turnstones and several herons and a fine flock of greenfinches, whilst on the way home across the Marsh a kestrel hovered overhead for some time. Very few Brent Geese this year but swans quite numerous and so are snipe. Wild duck quite plentiful but mostly mallard although we did see a small party of teal on one small gravel pit. There are great fears for the future of the bird sanctuary as the whole of the area around and including Camber Castle has been sold in lots, but we understand that development has been refused for a lot of the areas sold, and of course the Castle is national property; but the element of doubt remains and we shall fight for every inch of ground along that stretch of coast. We have a powerful ally in the East Sussex Nature Trust who hold a watching brief there on behalf of the Natural Trust and all attempts to develop the site will be contested by them.

There was some fear of an influenza epidemic in this country early in the winter and Rye has had its share of cases but thank goodness it seems to be on the wane. As usual the virus has changed its form, a unique phenomenon which baffles the medical world, and this time it is a particularly vicious type which leaves the victim exhausted and prone to other respiratory infections. Recovery usually takes about three weeks but so many folk are foolish enough to get around as soon as the 'flu' feeling leaves them with the inevitable result that they go down again with pneumonia or bronchitis. With the coming of winter the spate of visitors slowed down but this year there seems to be quite a few left in the town and many Americans are staying at the Mermaid and the other residential hotels plus a large sprinkling of Germans and the ever present French week-enders. The menace of the giant continental lorries continues to grow and there have been many demonstrations in some of the coastal towns near Dover and Folkestone; some come through Rye, the drivers have a complete indifference to our traffic rules; they roar through narrow streets giving forth clouds of filthy black diesel smoke and park on the pavements breaking the paving stones--in fact an all-round menace. Our government is trying to get a ruling as to the size limit of these giants especially the German ones but the EEC are not very helpful. There are many of us in this country who are certain that this Common Market business will be disastrous for Britain; the only beneficiaries will be big businesses, financiers and bankers who seem to have the major influence on the present ruling party. Inflation continues; in fact the value of the £ as a purchasing unit for the housewife is now roughly 65 pence and food prices are sky high with meat at the top of the tree. A good steak in a restaurant (if you could get it) would now cost £1.30 to £1.50 without the trimmings. The restaurants in Rye are feeling the pinch this winter and people who used to get their meals in them on visits to Rye are now turning to the pubs such as the Pipemakers where Brenda serves marveous value for money in the way of hot meals. She and John work very hard and they do look so tired at times but always come up smiling. I do not get along there so much in the winter months; as you know I do not drink much at all except for wine and John has the best value in Spanish wine in this area. Some of the plonk sold is an affront to one's taste with an old world flavour of red ink or paraffin oil. Must end this rather rambling screed now in the hope that you will forgive my rudeness in failing to acknowledge your letter and your generous gifts for so long a period and I trust you will continue to write whenever you can spare the time. With all good wishes to you, your wife and family and greetings to the Club from their Rye outpost.

Sincerely,

Bert Milliner

COMING EVENTS

FRED BODSWORTH and "THE WORLD OF BIRDS"

The noted Canadian author and naturalist, a long time member and former president of our club, will be talking and showing slides about his many nature trips in various parts of the world. We hope many of you will go and hear Fred; it should be an interesting evening.

TIME: Thursday, April 12, 8:30 P.M.

LOCATION: Morningside Public Library, Scarborough
Morningside Plaza at Kingston and Morningside Rds.
(the store closest to the movie theatre)

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BIRDING AT BOYD CONSERVATION AREA -- OUTING FEB. 18

The weather was almost perfect for bird-watching -- a sun shining in a slightly hazy sky. It was not so cold as to be uncomfortable for standing still.

The group was a fair size of about thirty people. We started out along the path which took us into the more unknown parts of the area. As we came to a clearing we saw a Red-tailed Hawk soaring in the distance.

Many of us were beginning to resign ourselves to the fact that it was a nice hike anyway, even though we weren't seeing any birds. Then they began to appear.

The Hairy Woodpecker sounded its rat-tat-tat, but the group was too far ahead to be called back, so it was only seen by a fortunate few of the stragglers. Further on, the White-breasted Nuthatch was spotted fluttering among the tree tops.

A few of us surging onwards came upon a suet log upon which much to our delight were feeding Chickadees, both White- and Red-breasted Nuthatches and a Downy Woodpecker.

A Brown Creeper was barely discernable among the pine trees. It took more expert eyes than mine to spot it in the first place, but when others had given up in the search, I continued on and was rewarded by the sight of it spiraling upwards around the tree trunk.

Entering the wood again we were presented with a display from the Pine Siskins and Goldfinches, which were well camouflaged in the dense conifers.

Perhaps the find wasn't too exciting to the 'expert' birders, but to us beginners it was great.

---Sharon Mulholland

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Route number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Totals
Bufflehead	20	5	42	76	52	64	33	292
Oldsquaw		25	589	141	440	70	42	1307
Harlequin Duck							1	1
Ruddy Duck			2					2
Co. Merganser	8	6	29	16	4	16	5	84
Red-breasted Merganser							3	3
Coot	1					2		3
TOTALS	973	784	3898	1582	2326	3893	2548	16004

Comparative figures from Kingston (R.D. Weir and Kingston Field Naturalists) and Niagara River (G. Yaki and H.S. Martin); totals in that sequence: Canada Goose 260 & 2; Mallard 28 & 843; Black Duck 63 & 918; Gadwall 0 & 16; Pintail 0 & 1; Am. Widgeon 0 & 150; Redhead 4 & 2; Canvasback 27 & 1958; Greater Scaup 135 & 3824; Lesser Scaup 0 & 1; Co. Goldeneye 643 & 4977; Bufflehead 410 & 2404; Oldsquaw 1544 & 2224; Harlequin Duck 0 & 1; Co. Scoter 0 & 1; White-winged Scoter 2 & 0; Hooded Merganser 1 & 3; Co. Merganser 2 & 10299; Red-Breasted Merganser 23 & 543.

Routes and Observers

1. Whitby to Altona Road - J. M. Speirs, A. Baker, S. Baker
2. Altona Road to Woodbine - F. Bodsworth, W.W. Smith
3. Woodbine to Cherry Beach - G. Lambert, G. Fairfield
4. Toronto Islands - D. Fidler, N.F. Fidler, G. Bennett, R.A. Davis
5. Parliament St. to Humber R. - G. & D. Bellerby, K. & G. Carmichael, R. Gadd, D. Troy
6. Humber R. to Watersedge Park - J. Lamey, D. Perks
7. Watersedge Park to Bronte - C.E. & J.E. Goodwin, A. Dawe, D. Corbridge

Time and Weather: 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Sunny, becoming lightly overcast later. Heavy lake mist not lifting until 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Winds N., light. 5°

Lake calm. Lagoons and inside of breakwalls frozen. Bay covered 75% ice.

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The following submission was made by our Environmental Committee,

SNOWMOBILING - Submission to the all party select committee on motorized snow vehicles.

As members of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club we see the following as some of the problems involved in the use of these vehicles:

- (1) There is increasing evidence of the damage being done to our environment by the use of these vehicles - our wild life, our soil and young tree growth.
- (2) Noise pollution will be a factor for many years to come in spite of technological improvements to the newer vehicles.

- (3) The use of these vehicles interferes with and is detrimental to many people's activities and enjoyment of other outdoor pastimes.
- (4) Damage to private property is increasing proportionately to the number of vehicles being used.

Our recommendations would be as follows:

1. Controlled expansion of exclusive trails and sanctuaries for snowmobilers - to be financed by annual levy on users.
2. Portions of provincial parks and conservation areas should be put aside for other outdoor activities, and snowmobiles excluded from these areas.
3. Reform of the "Trespass Act" - fines for vehicle users operating on property without owner's written permission.
4. Closure of depleted northern lakes to winter fishing.
5. Possible separate legislation for land north of farming district in Ontario.
6. Larger license plates for these vehicles.

It is our hope that legislation to include these points will be presented to the government at the earliest possible date, for its consideration and approval.

William C. Dibble
Snowmobile Committee, Toronto Field Naturalists' Club

Feb. 2, 1973

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F.O.N. NIAGARA RIVER REGIONAL GATHERING
November 24th to 26th 1972

Miss Emily Hamilton

It was a cold gray day, with some snow lying, when forty naturalists boarded a chartered bus at Niagara Falls, and wended their way along the Parkway to Fort Erie. At Rose Hill we visited Axtell's Sanctuary, but it was disappointing as Dr. Axtell had been away and no feed put out, so about all we saw was a flock of eighteen Evening Grosbeaks. After enjoying these lovely birds we examined the garden to see what was growing to attract them. There was a hawthorn pruned in a cone so that small birds can take sanctuary from predators; Phtolacca with juicy black berries; Multiflora Rose bushes; a huge Pin-cherry; many species grown for berries; and in an area planted with evergreens there was a group of prickly stout stems standing up - Hercules-club (*Aralia spinosa*) - without their huge leaves they made quite an opening in the otherwise dense bush area.

Along the road a bit we stopped to see a large Tulop tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) which is about six feet across at the base of the trunk. Although it had shed its leaves for the winter, the fruits were standing up like little cones at the end of the branches.

On we went to Erie-Waverley Beach Area, and into a woodlot to look for birds; there weren't any on our entering so our attention turned to another Carolinian Zone tree - the American Sycamore or Buttonball (*Platanus occidentalis*) with its flaky bark and ball-like fruits hanging singly from the twigs. Among the maples, beeches and tulip trees were some large Hop Hornbeams (*Ostrya virginiana*). These trees are usually understory trees, but here they had grown to forest size. A planted shrub of

interest was Jetbead (*Rhodotypos scandens*) with its well-named fruit on it; it is the only rosaceous plant with opposite leaves. Also found were some plants of a *Rubus* with lacerated leaves, still dark green (November 25th) and very prickly bright red stems (unidentified).

Winter Moths were flying around the trunks of the trees. The males have good wings (1 inch across) but the females have no wings, and are short rounded insects with antennae, the same gray colour of the males. They climb up the furrows in the bark of the trees to lay their eggs. The larvae of these moths are called Inch-worms, or Loopers (*Geometridae*, Earth-measurers); as they have no legs on the central segments of the body, they hump up when they walk. They are familiar to us in the spring when they let themselves down from the trees on long threads (*Alsophila pometaria*, Fall Cankerworm). In June they go underground to spin a cocoon and pupate, and start the life cycle again in the late fall.

A Winter Wren was heard clucking and given chase; other small birds appeared - a Hermit Thrush, a few Chickadees, Nuthatches, Downy Woodpeckers, and some noisy Blue Jays.

At Old Fort Erie we had a picnic lunch in a shelter, and looked at the ducks on the water, where the lake flows into the river - Oldsquaws, Buffleheads and many Goldeneyes. We drove down the road beside the river and stopped just above the Peace Bridge to see the rafts of ducks drifting down the river thousands of them, mostly goldeneyes. As the ducks get near the bridge they fly up and go to the head of the raft in the lake, and then start drifting down again. There are very strong currents below the bridge which accounts for their behaviour. Some White-winged Scoters were among them. Downstream again we stopped at a marshy place on the side of the river to look at the puddle ducks. A Hooded Merganser was among the Mallards and Black Ducks. Some Bonaparte's Gulls were on a log in the water, and among them was Little Gull (*Larus minutus*). He frequently showed us his dark wing-linings as he fought for his place on the log, and we got some really good looks at him (or her!).

Next stop we went inland to see two Golden Eagles which are tethered by great lengths of leather to their houses. These birds are twenty-one years old and were taken as juveniles in the Yukon, and have been used in films. The Pin Oaks along the Parkway have galls on them which will eventually kill these trees - a great pity as they are a good size now. We saw some trees of Osage Orange, covered with fruit, another more southern species. Down by the river side again someone spotted a fast-flying Kingfisher; then in the river, close to the bank were five Eider Ducks - juveniles - (eider species!). At the Hydro Control gates we stopped to look at tens of thousands of ducks - resting on the quieter water. The American Mergansers were on the American side - Gus Yaki, our leader, says they always are! Goldeneyes, Buffleheads, Canvasbacks, Redheads, and thousands of Greater Scaup. Next we drove around the Dufferin Islands - the road skirts this area, in the centre of which is a nature trail. There were no small birds around, so we examined a Kentucky Coffee Tree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) and collected some of its large brown hard-shelled pods. Next stop was at the Toronto Power Plant, where we looked across the rapids to an island covered with willows in which were the nests of Black-crowned Night-herons (abandoned for the winter). Some Great Black-backed Gulls, and a few Ring-billed were standing on the rocks; thousands of Herring Gulls were flying around; Goldeneyes were fighting the turbulent waters; Bonaparte's were in quieter places; and in the calmer waters behind a breakwall were Gadwall, Widgeon, Black Ducks and a few Mallards. Stopped again at the Horseshoe Falls; looking down into the gorge and getting a new perspective we saw two Common Loons and some Horned Grebes, but the wind was blowing too much spray our way and it was too wet to linger. It was now getting dark and time to return to the motel. After supper we had an excellent slide show of the flora and fauna of the Niagara district.

Sunday dawned wet, and rain was with us till afternoon. But it wasn't cold. Travelling in cars we went down to the riverside again. Walking down the road which leads to the "Maid-of-the-Mist" we got a good view of a Red-throated Loon in its winter plumage. Also seen were White-winged Scoters, Horned Grebes, Redheads and Black Ducks. Coming up the road again we saw a juvenile Red-tailed Hawk being chased by a crow (the only crow of the weekend).

A surprise was to find a small plant of Calico Aster (*A. lateriflorus*) in full bloom growing out of a crevice in the side of the gorge. Other flowers in bloom were: dandelion at Fort Erie, Tumble Mustard in the gravel road at the reservoir, and Hamamelis in the woods at Lake Erie. Taking a quick look at the Whirlpool en route, our next stop was at the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture to look for garden birds, but few were venturing out in the rain - two robins, cardinals and juncos. We saw a Princess Tree (*Paulownia tomentosa*) with its spikes of naked flower-buds standing up all over the tree, awaiting the spring to burst into violet-coloured blooms. The grounds are spacious, and contain many interesting exotic species of trees. Stopping at the power plant lookout we saw thousands upon thousands of gulls flying around in the gorge. The Hydro Reservoir had a few ducks upon it, but five Meadowlarks were in a field nearby.

After passing the Brock Monument we went down the escarpment to Queenston dock - here in a Buckthorn shrub, at last we found one Mockingbird! Some pheasants flew out of the shrubbery, and a few goldfinches went gaily twittering by. On to Paradise¹/₂ Grove - a forest of White and Black Oaks, where we examined a Black Gum Tree (*Nyssa sylvatica*) though it had shed all its leaves which are glorious in the early fall. A brown creeper, some nuthatches, chickadees and one flicker were around.

Picnic lunch was held at the Town Hall, Niagara-on-the-Lake, in a large upstairs room of this historic building.

It was still gray, but the rain had ceased, when we made our way to a "sure place" to look for Tufted Titmice. However, the titmice of One Mile Creek thought better than to come out. There is a Scarlet Oak (*Quercus coccinea*) across the stream, but the water was too deep for crossing to get a good look at the bark; many leaves had blown across to our side for identification.

Next stop was at Four Mile Creek, where we walked along the trail leading to Lake Ontario. Two Great Blue Herons flew up to give us that species for the list. We walked among shrubs of Sassafras, and saw the remains of Pearly Everlasting, which is rare in the Peninsula. The lake was cold and gray and only supported a few ducks, Oldsquaws, so we turned out thoughts to the traffic problem and home.

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BOOK REVIEW

AUTHOR MICHAEL FOX
TITLE BEHAVIOUR OF WOLVES, DOGS AND RELATED CANIDS

Discussing ethology, the study of animal behaviour, in an essay in a recent New York Review of Books P.D. Medawar says 'A very important element in the ethological approach is the comparison of behavioural structures as they occur in different but related animals'. In Behaviour of Wolves, Dogs and Related Canids, Michael Fox has done just this - he has written a scholarly study of canine behaviour, comparing the behaviour and social organization of wolves, dogs, coyotes, foxes, and jackals. In making these comparisons he has placed particular emphasis on signals - such things as head movements, facial expressions, vocalization, defense postures, and groin inspections, all of which evoke responses in animals of the same species. The author's investigations reveal that such non-verbal communication is much more highly developed in wolves than in other members of the dog family. The same can be said for social

organization. Wolves maintain much more stable family units or packs, demonstrate almost human parental care and training of the young, govern mating and reproduction in accordance with food scarcity, and do not overkill. Ethologist Michael Fox describes the wolf as a 'first class ethologist - extremely attentive and perceptive observer'.

The book is not without faults. While the material is excellent it is rather carelessly organized, something a good editor ought to have corrected. Black and white photographs illustrate points made in the text and are therefore useful, but many are dark and unattractive. The placing of these photographs often makes it difficult to follow the text. And several minor errors were not caught in the proof-reading. However, these things aside, members of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club who enjoyed Professor Douglas Pimlott's January lecture on wolves will find much of interest in this book, and a reading of it will give dog lovers a better understanding of their pets' behaviour.

- Marjorie Blakshaw

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THE AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM COMMITTEE

(This is another in the series of brief descriptions of the various committees of the T.F.N.C.)

The Audubon Wildlife Films have been sponsored in Toronto for the past 27 years by the T.F.N.C. These films are produced by the National Audubon Society in the U.S.A. and are available to any sponsor, such as our club, who wishes to present them. These films are shown in hundreds of cities in Canada and the U.S.A.

There are two things achieved by our club, in sponsoring these films:

- We make it possible for people in the Toronto area to see these superb nature films, containing timely conservation messages;
- We can, if we sell sufficient tickets, make a profit to assist the club financially.

This operation, of sponsoring these films each year, has become a major part of our programme. The responsibility for handling all aspects of these films is given by the T.F.N.C. Board of Directors, to the "Audubon Wildlife Film Committee". By a long-standing tradition, the chairman of this committee is the immediate past president, although this year the Board has departed from this tradition.

The work of this committee can be divided into three basic parts:

1. Basic policy decisions;
2. Secretarial work;
3. Conducting the actual meetings and entertaining the speakers.

We have been showing these films for many years at the Eaton Auditorium. Although we occasionally look around for another theatre, the present auditorium seems best suited to our needs. Other than an occasional (and reluctant) increase in ticket prices, there has not been too much to do lately in connection with item 1.

Item 2 requires a great deal of work. At one time the club secretary did all of the secretarial work connected with the Audubon Films. Now, however, we have a separate secretary for this work. The major effort is required in August, when most other people are enjoying the summer. Then, the immense task of mailing out thousands of brochures and application forms for the next season must be done. The mailing lists for several organizations are combined for these mailings, and we attempt to

eliminate multiple mailings to the same address where people belong to more than one of these organizations.

Throughout the rest of the year there are more routine tasks for the secretary, involving correspondence with the National Audubon Society, Eaton Auditorium and others.

Item 3 is possibly the most pleasant one, although the day of a performance can be nerve-racking for the chairman, as he sits by the phone wondering if the speaker will arrive in time, in spite of the snow-storm! The Audubon lecturers travel around with their films, and part of the effectiveness of the films is the live commentary during the film, by the photographer himself. They lead a rather hectic life during the film season, living out of a suitcase, and staying usually only one day in each city. Their schedule frequently allows very little time to get from one engagement to the next. Thus they appreciate hospitality from the sponsoring clubs.

The T.F.N.C. provides accommodation in a private home for the speakers, if that is what they prefer (most do). This usually includes a home-cooked dinner and breakfast the next morning. Also, we often treat the speaker to coffee and a snack after the film. The National Audubon Society has been able to attract top-notch photographers to the Audubon Wildlife Films, and they have produced some extremely fine 16 mm colour films. Some of them are Canadian photographers. It is extremely interesting to meet these people and talk with them. That is why I say that item 3 can be the most rewarding of the three.

These films should be supported by members of the T.F.N.C. By attending them you treat yourself to some excellent footage of wildlife throughout the world, and you also assist the club financially.

Jack Gingrich, Chairman
Audubon Wildlife Film Committee

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CONSERVATION CONVERSATION FOR APRIL 1973

by Leo Smith

Bluebird box 270 has been made but is not yet in position. I have had to rework vandalized boxes from King, Uxbridge and Adjala Townships, and have informed the authorities, who will do whatever they can to prevent a recurrence in the future.

The weekend of 3rd of March was eventful. I drove out to the 8th Concession of Amaranth Township and met Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd Whaley on their farm on Lot 10, about four miles north of Highway 9 and 9 miles west of Orangeville. For the first time in my life I saw a boreal chickadee on their feeding station. To help them, I was able to identify a female ruby crowned kinglet, which was their constant visitor.

We walked back of the Maple bush to the open fields and put up 5 bluebird boxes. Five boxes were left with Lloyd so that he can set new cedar posts in the ground with the auger on the tractor. He has two farms and a trucking business and their new ranch-type bungalow is a delightful place in a quiet setting, overlooking Willow Creek, a tributary of the Grand River.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has given me 32 Bluebird boxes to erect and one wood duck box. Some of these were built by the TFN Task Force that was at the Southern Research Station, at Maple, early in February.

I was there in January, when many hunters and individual naturalists attended. We were shown films and slides and told of the big plan to beautify the Ontario farmlands.

Farmers will be persuaded to plant hedgerows, floribunda rose bushes and many plants and shrubs that produce berries, nuts, cover and habitat for all kinds of wildlife, (They will have to stop growth to succeed.)

Here is a list of the people interested in nest box building, erection, inspection and cleaning...

Lloyd Pritchard.....422-5175	Gerry White.....741-2363
Warren Russell.....469-1786	Bram Verhoeff.....533-8636
Tony & Coryn Gooch,...368-4010	Wendy Wullf.....787-6472
Gerald Helrig.....489-8015	Dave Williams.....274-4852
Mac Smith.....225-3208	Bob Johnson.....534-0993
Bill Watts.....294-1701	

Trail Bikes. A new menace has appeared in rural areas this past Winter. We have seen trailers loaded with Japanese machines that have steel pegs in the solid rubber tires. Not all of the drivers stick to competition work or arenas and a quiet section of the Hockley Valley is being made hideous by these pests.

Stop Press. John Mitchele has 4 complete bluebird boxes and cut pieces to make 35 more. Any interested TFN member in the West End should call Toronto Anglers during the day on 233-3297.

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SCARBOROUGH WATERFRONT PLAN

Scarborough Planning Board will be holding two meetings to discuss the Waterfront Plan with the public.

March 27, 8:00 p.m. Laurier Collegiate, Guildwood, to discuss Cudia and Sylvan Parks. Master Plan is on display at Clifcrest Library, Kingston & McCowan's Rds.

April 5, 8:00 p.m. West Hill Collegiate, to discuss East Point Park. Master Plan is on display at Morningside Library, Kingston & Morningside Rds.

For further information or answers to questions please phone the Planning Board at 759-4747 or Metropolitan Region Conservation Authority at 485-7691.

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Dear Mr. Talvila:

Although I am only 15 years old, I am an enthusiastic birder. I am home more hours per day than other members of my family, so I enjoy keeping a list of the birds I see in and around my backyard in central Scarborough. The following is a list of the birds I saw during the period of the winter count, Dec. 1, 1972 to Feb. 28, 1973. Most of them were seen at one our bird feeders or suet holders.

Bluejay, Cardinal, English Sparrow, Starling, Ring-billed Gull, Crow, Slate-coloured Junco, Downy Woodpecker, Chickadee, Brown Thrasher (Dec. 1-4), Northern Shrike (Dec. 16), Song Sparrow (Dec. 21), Common Grackle (Dec. 28), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Jan. 7-8; verified by R. Mason), Goldfinches, Brown-headed Cowbirds (two, Jan. 24-25, Feb. 15), Kestrel (Feb. 8).

Linda Murray

MORNINGSIDE PARK

by Joan O'Donnell

Morningside Park, 333 acres, is easily reached by car and public transit. Persons driving to the park can travel Highway 401 East to Exit 61, then go South on Morningside Avenue 1 mile. Bus riders are served by the York Mills bus from the Glen Echo Loop (City Limits). Get off at Morningside Avenue and walk South $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.

The flats near Highland Creek are quite manicured, with many picnic tables here and in the nearby apple orchard. Elsewhere in the park, however, there is a variety of habitat in its natural state. In the eastern section there is a cold cedar bog with plants such as wintergreen, bunchberry, goldthread and snowberry that are usually seen farther north. In winter the tracks of grouse, in single file, are common. Just west of this a narrow stream feeds a wet scrubby area of red osier dogwood which is the haunt of pheasants and tree sparrows in winter. In spring there is a profusion of skunk cabbage and marsh marigolds, and woodcock may be seen or heard.

In the valley are many erratic boulders of granite, brought down from the Shield by the glaciers. The valley is bounded by steep hills, eroded by the creek in bygone days. These hills and much of the park are covered by a climax forest of maple, beech, and hemlock. To the birder such an area often appears deceptively lifeless, but persistence is rewarded by a list that may be low in quantity, but high in quality. It is worthwhile to leave the paths and explore the hard way.

In winter the whine of snowmobiles has been stopped by the protests of area residents. Now the park is used for quieter pursuits such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. A short trail beginning east of the first parking lot leads to a feeding station maintained by private individuals. Most of the winter birds congregate in this area. The chickadees fly very close, and readily pose for a camera.

Often a red-tailed hawk can be seen soaring above the valley. A pair of great horned owls nest in the used redtails' nest. One owl stands guard near the nest and emits a weird warning note when anyone approaches. Once he hooted in derision when I slid downhill. Occasionally a red squirrel is seen flinging himself up and over deep snow. When signs of life are scarce there are always tracks in the snow. Rabbit tracks are common. Then the single file of fox prints. Farther on signs of a skirmish - then rabbit fur and blood.

In spring the clumps of hepaticas, wild ginger, and other wildflowers make the slopes a favourite area for photographers. In the level woods of the north-east corner grow a profusion of trilliums - a gorgeous display that would be hard to surpass. One June day while I was negotiating a particularly steep section of hill on all fours, something yellow appeared in front of my face. It was a lady's slipper, and there were many clusters of them nearby! On subsequent visits maidenhair fern was seen, along with enormous specimens of Mayapple and Jack-in-the-Pulpit.

As elsewhere in Metro, birding is excellent here during migration. Thrushes can be heard singing on spring evenings. Once I experienced the thrill of seeing a pair of pileated woodpeckers flying near their nest - a large circular hole about twenty feet up in a dead tree.

Another day I spied a raccoon urging her three chubby offspring around a tree and out of sight of this interloper.

In the autumn woods dolls' eyes stand out among the foliage. The more muted mushrooms are beautiful too - like cinnamon flowers with velvet texture.

From the highest hill in the region can be seen both branches of the river, just north of their confluence. This is a good vantage spot from which to view autumn colours. Once directly below the steepest bluff, a muskrat was swimming.

On a dull October afternoon while I was marvelling at the hooting of an owl, a red fox came bounding about the hill, zig-zagging enregetically in an excess of joie de vivre.

Urban sprawl has now spread eastward to Morningside. Gas stations and high rises flank the park on the north. As naturalists we must be vigilant to ensure that the park will retain its urban wilderness character.

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Editor's Note: All material intended for the May Newsletter must be in by April 11, no later. The May issue is the last issue until next October.

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