



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Number 281

February, 1974

Visitors Welcome!

FEBRUARY MEETING

Visitors Welcome!

Monday, February 4, 1974 at 8:15 p.m.

at the

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

252 Bloor Street West

The OISIE building is midway between the two exits (St. George and Bedford, of the St. George Subway Station. To park, enter from Prince Arthur Avenue, under the building .. (parking fee 50¢).

SPEAKER: Mr. Barry Ranford

SUBJECT: Two Arctic Inhabitants .. the Snow Goose and the Polar Bear.

Illustrated talk tells what man's influence has had on their population. We follow migration of the entire world's population of the Greater Snow Goose from the East Arctic to the Coast of North Carolina, visiting Cap Tourmente, the national wildlife refuge in Quebec, where the birds stop to rest and feed in the spring and fall.

Next we follow by Eskimo dog-sled a search for the polar bear at Barrow Strait, 60 miles from the magnetic north pole.

JUBILEE ISSUE NEXT MONTH

You still have a chance to contribute to this issue if you act at once. Any items, recollections, stories relating to the early history of our Club would be most welcome. BUT ACT NOW!

Elmer Talvila: 231-1064.

Dear T.F.N'ers:

Season's Greetings and the best New Year ever! I have so many things to thank all of you for .. namely the many telephone calls and get-well cards sent so often .. how could one feel forgotten!

I did request no flowers but a donation to the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve if you insisted. I was overwhelmed to receive both gifts. The pot of yellow mums was admired and enjoyed by all the patients in the orthopaedic wing at Sunnybrook - there were more than a hundred blooms at one time.

I was deeply touched and honored to be given an Honorary Life Membership in the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club, especially pleased to be recipient along with Helen Baillie, one of my many friends in the Club.

Good birding in 1974.

Affectionately,
Doreen Lewis.

FEBRUARY OUTINGS

- Saturday
February 2
8:30 a.m. - LAMBTON WOODS - Birds Leader: Mr. David Broughton
Meet in the parking lot of James Gardens. (take Royal York bus from Subway to Edenbridge Drive and walk east 0.14 mile).
- Saturday
February 9
10:00 a.m. - MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - Botany. Leader: Prof. W. Morsink
We are fortunate that Prof. Morsink, of the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, has agreed to show us the trees of the cemetery as they appear in winter. Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge Street. 0.3 mile north of St. Clair Avenue (Subway). Morning only.
- Sunday
February 17
10:00 a.m. - rear of BOYD CONSERVATION AREA - Birds. Leader: Mr. Walter Hutton
Meet at the north end of Pine Valley Road. Drive west from hwy 400 on hwy 7 for 1.5 mile, to Pine Valley Road (1 mile east of Woodbridge). Turn north and go 2 miles to the top of this road. Park on roadside. Wear warm clothing and bring lunch.
- Saturday
March 30th: Charter bus to LONG POINT. Details to be announced.
Chairman - Charles Chaffey, 752-2897.
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- JUNIOR CLUB
Saturday
February 2
10:00 a.m. - The Toronto Junior Field Naturalists' Club will hold its February meeting in the Theatre at the Royal Ontario Museum.
Special presentation by the Mammals Group; several colour films; Junior field trip to follow by some of the groups. Visitors welcome.
For information phone: Director - Mike Singleton (444-8419).
- BOTANY GROUP
TUESDAY
February 19
8:00 p.m. - At Hodgson Public School, in the basement room, Davisville Avenue, just east of Mt. Pleasant Road. We were very sorry that due to ill health, Mr. Roger Chittenden was unable to present his program last month but he assures us he will be at the February meeting to give his program "The RIVER IN ALL SEASONS".
I wish to thank Miss Edith Cosens, and my wife Helen, for filling-in with their separate programs last month on such short notice.
Chairman - Wes Hancock (757-5518)
- ECOLOGY AND
CONSERVATION
GROUP
Wednesday
February 20
8:00 p.m. - Meet in Room 378 of The College of Education, 371 Bloor Street West at Spadina.
TOPIC: Status and ecology of the Red-shouldered Hawk in Southern Ontario by Mr. J. Edward Hanna.
Chairman - Mr. Ron Thorpe, days:445-9140
evenings:484-1807
- BIRD GROUP
Wednesday
February 27
8:00 p.m. - Meet in St. James-Bond United Church on Avenue Road, just north of Eglinton. An evening you won't want to miss.
Dr. Donald Gunn's subject will be: "Let's Talk about the Winter Birds in Your Garden." Illustrated with colour slides.
Chairman - Red Mason (621-3905)
- ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMITTEE
- No meeting scheduled for February.
- FIELD
BIOLOGISTS
- See page 3 for details.

FIELD BIOLOGISTS' GROUP

Club members will recall that we held a meeting on November 28, 1973 to discuss nature projects of one kind and another, and future direction for this group. This is our first opportunity to report to everyone on our ideas.

First of all, we should clear up a misconception: we used bird projects just as an example of the kind of thing we had in mind. But any branch of nature could have been used equally well, because there are equivalent, and useful, activities with plants, insects or whatever. In fact, these can be even more productive because less is known about them, but by the same token fewer persons are experienced in these areas.

The general feeling at the meeting was that regular monthly indoor meetings were not the answer for a group that was interested in doing things. Some indoor meetings could be in order to plan activities, but these would be determined by the needs of the particular project chosen.

One kind of activity has already begun, and that is one of putting interested persons in contact with individuals who are already running projects of one sort and another. At our meeting we found that the manning of routes for the Christmas Bird Census was underway, and the kinds of information needed in the Ravine project were outlined by Jack Cramer-Byng.

Different projects need different skills, of course, and once we know of your interests and skills it may be possible to find projects with which you can help. For example -- one of the more difficult projects really -- a Breeding Bird Survey observer must be first-class both in sight and sound identification of birds. But up to three persons are useful on these surveys, and only one does the actual identification. Someone else mans the stop watch and a third persons notes down the birds as they are called out, and all three share in the interest. So there is scope for the beginner, provided (in this case) that he or she is willing to get up at two or three o'clock in the morning on one day in June!

So you don't like getting up early? The ravine project could use persons who have feeding stations on ravines; even persons who watch birds at all regularly in ravines -- this activity just needs some good lists of ravine birds, plants and other kinds of life. There is, in fact, an enormous range of activities that could suit almost any temperament or taste.

Future activities of the Group will depend on the interest of Club members, and the direction of this interest. We discussed a number of things that we could do, but we do not propose to start new projects unless there is enough interest shown in a particular kind of activity to enable an effective plan to be worked out. So it is up to interested members to let us know who they are, what they would like to do and provide a few details on their experience and availability. If you are interested call Clive Goodwin, 249-9503 (or write, 45 LaRose Ave., Apt. 610, Weston) and we will add your name to our list.

REMINDER:

Date of next meeting - Monday, March 4, 1974.

Date of next Audubon Wildlife Film: Thursday, March 21, 1974,
(months)

COMING EVENTS

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

- Information: 928-3690

Sunday evening films - 7:00 p.m.

Feb. 3 - The private life of the large white cabbage butterfly; The perception of life: evolution of microbiology from the 17th century to today; The elephant will never forget: London's last tram.

Feb. 10 - Walking; What on earth?; Grass: A nation's battle for survival.

Feb. 17 - One, two, three: traces numbers; Signals for survival: An absorbing study of the lesser black gull, a migrant that virtually establishes a bird city, a stable and well-organized social structure which includes a complex language.

Feb. 24 - The image: British Museum Print Room; The art of the Conservator.

Sunday family films - 2:30 p.m.

Feb. 3 - Fly geese fly: Dan Gibson and his family raise three orphan goslings. (2 others).

→ Feb. 24 - Nomads of the Jungle: life in the rain forests of Malaya. (2 others).

CBC - TV 7:00 p.m. To The Wild Country.

→ Feb. 24 - The great Canadian Southwest: meadows and grasslands of the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan; Badlands of Southern Alberta.

Federation of Ontario Naturalists' Field Activities - Information: 444-8419

1262 Don Mills Road
Don Mills, Ontario.
Jan. 25-27 - Winter Survival
Jan. 25-27 - Canoeing Workshop
Feb. 15-17 - Algonquin Winter Weekend
Feb. 22-24 - Bruce Winter Weekend

ONTARIO NATURE TOURS

Information: 6372 Montrose Road
Niagara Falls, Ont. L2H 1H6.

Feb. 2-10 - Trinidad and Tobago Tour
Mar. 2-10 - Bermuda Naturalist Tour (phone: 231-1064)

ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE

- Information: 922-2804

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

✓ Feb. 2 - "Feeding Mankind: facts, fancies, paradoxes and dilemmas"
Stanley J. Slinger, University of Guelph, Ont. (illustrated with slides)

✓ Feb. 9 - "Food for Thought: the microcirculation of the brain"
William Feindel, Montreal Neurological Institute (illustrated with colour slides and movie).

X Feb. 16 - "Flood Protection and Control" Donald McMullen, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. (illustrated).

Feb. 23 - "Fossil Sunshine" Gordon Williams, University of Alberta.

ADVANCE NOTICE

→ Mar. 16 - Richard Saunders - "Flowers of the Swiss Alps" A joint meeting with the T.F.N.C. Keep this evening free!

BIRD NEWS

*** The Slim Pickins Project

For several winters now Gerry Bennett has been keeping a composite record of all winter birds (December 1 to February 28) observed in that part of the Toronto area which lies north of #401 Highway and west of Yonge Street. Gerry is interested not only in rarities but also in other types of observations such as: unusually large flocks of commoner birds; well-patronized feeders; marshy areas; roosts and so on. In short, anything you might consider noteworthy during your outing. If you are interested in contributing to this worthwhile project, please phone:(231-1064) or write to the Editor. If you see a real rarity phone Gerry at once (832-1357). If you wish to write to Gerry, his address is: R R 2, Woodbridge, Ontario.

*** Questionable Bird Species List

The Ontario Ornithological Records Committee has published a list of species needing special treatment if the records are to be accepted by the Committee. It is felt that the usual bird guides do not provide adequate information to allow the following species to be separated and identified. Notes on these will be published by the Committee (and the T.F.N.C. Newsletter if possible).

Female Cinnamon and Blue-winged Teals
Willow and Rock Ptarmigan
Long and Short-billed Dowitcher
Immature Jaegers
Herring and Thayer's Gulls
Silent Empidonaces in migration
Willow and Alder Flycatchers
Silent Eastern and Western Meadowlarks
Immature Song, Swamp and Lincoln's Sparrows

(adapted from Newsletter of the
Thunder Bay Field Naturalists).

*** Six New Birds Added to Ontario List

The Ontario Ornithological Records Committee, entrusted with the task of deciding whether or not a bird record should be admitted to the official Ontario list, has set its stamp of approval on six recent records. To be accepted, a record must be supported by a specimen in hand or an irrefutable photograph. The following species have been accepted:

BROWN PELICAN .. One at Waverly Beach on September 25, 1971, was photographed by P. M. Benham.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL .. One at Hamilton photographed by P. M. Benham.

PAINTED REDSTART .. One captured in a barn in Pickering Township on November 15, 1971 by Mrs. Lindsay Death and Edgerton Pegg. It was later turned over to Barry MacKay who has had considerable success in keeping warblers in his aviary.

TOWNSEND'S WARBLER .. One satisfactorily identified and photographed at Point Pelee in May, 1972.

CLARK'S NUTCRACKER .. One satisfactorily identified in the Dryden area of North-western Ontario.

LEWIS'S WOODPECKER .. One present for weeks in a Windsor city park during February, 1973 and where it was observed and photographed by many naturalists.

Bell's Vireo has been deleted from the Ontario list. An earlier record based on a photograph taken ten years ago at Point Pelee is now judged to be that of an immature White-eyed Vireo. Young White-eyed Vireos surprisingly enough have dark eyes and are easily confused with Bell's Vireo.

(reprinted from "Bulletin" of Richmond Hill Naturalists) O.E. Devitt.

*** Mysterious Garden Area Near Kaladar .. If recent discussions with representatives of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Communications are any indication, the attitudes of those agencies outside the Ministry of Natural Resources toward the conservation of natural resources are changing decidedly for the better.

One discussion involved something as unlikely as Cactus. Ontario has only two known incidences of Cacti growing wild. One cactus site of (Opuntia humifusa) is found on Point Pelee, the southern-most point in Canada. The other site, with a rare species of Cactus is located oddly enough, just south of Kaladar in Lennox and Addington County. The Kaladar Cactus, known scientifically as Opuntia fragiles, is a small, prickly pear, usually not much bigger than a person's thumb, with small spines, and as its name indicates is quite fragile. The nearest known occurrence of Opuntia fragiles is in Wisconsin some 600 miles south west of Kaladar. In this same small site of about an acre (here in Ontario) there are also a number of plants such as Tall Cinquefoil, Sleepy Catchfly, Upland White Aster, Pineweed and Northern Downy Violet, all of which are common to warmer areas south and west. There is also a small population of Five-lined Skinks, small lizards that are also rather out of place this far north and east.

This little area forms what could be thought of as a small community left over from a warmer, drier geologic age. Just why the cacti have survived here and no where else in Ontario can so far only be guessed at. It would also be interesting to compare these cacti, that have been living and reproducing in isolation for perhaps thousands of years, with Opuntia fragiles from other areas.

For a time though, it appeared that there would never be an opportunity to investigate these questions. The Ministry's new version of Hwy. 41 was routed right through the little cactus site. When Natural Resources personnel explained the case, however, the Ministry of Transport and Communications' engineers agreed to shift the route of the new highway enough to the east to assure that the prickly pear will not be affected. The site will soon be purchased by the Province and turned into a nature reserve.

(from the Weekly release, Tweed Office, Ministry of Natural Resources, via The Orchid, bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists, Vol.18,#6) and The Wood Duck, Hamilton Naturalists' Club).

*** The Nervous Sundew .. A Cornell University biologist, Stephen Williams, has determined that certain cells in the sundew plant act much like human nerve cells in transmitting nervelike signals from one point to another.

The sundew plant is one of several types of carnivorous plants which grow in bogs and other swampy spots. It captures small insects with sticky substances on its leaf, much as flypaper catches flies.

When an insect is caught, it often rubs the tips of neighboring tentacles causing the tentacles to bend over and hold the prey against the leaf; the victim is then digested by enzymes, providing nourishment to the plant.

The question is, how does the base of the hairlike tentacle "know" when to bend over and pin the prey against the leaf if all that the insect touches is the tentacle tip?

Williams explains that the tentacle tip is made of layers of highly sensitive cells that are capable of converting a mechanical or physical stimulus, such as touching, into electrical impulses much like nerve signals. The message travels down to the base of the tentacle when the tip is touched, much the same way human nerve cells relay signals throughout the body in the form of electrical pulses.

Using very small electrodes, Williams was able to measure how fast the "nerve" signal travels through these cells. He found that the signal in the sundew travels as much as 10,000 times slower than in animal systems.

"This is the major difference between the nerve-like processes of sundew cells and those of nerve cells in animals," he notes. Discussing implications of his findings, Williams says that study of this group of plants could shed much light on the evolution of sense organs. "It is remarkable that these plants are totally unrelated to animals and yet they have developed very similar sense organs completely independently," he notes.

(contributed by John ten Bruggenkate).

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A EUROPEAN BLUE TIT (Parus caeruleus) at GRAVENHURST

- Bruce W. Duncan

It is always a pleasure to see an uncommon bird whether it is uncommon because of its small numbers or because of its being out of its range. We are very fortunate this winter in having a small European bird, the blue tit, at a feeding station at the home of Mrs. A. Baston in Gravenhurst, Ontario. The bird has been at the feeder since October and appears daily with a small group of chickadees (Parus atricapillus), the same genus as the tit) to feed on sunflower seeds and walnuts. The blue tit is a delightful little creature acting very much like the chickadees but standing apart from them by its very handsome appearance. Please don't infer that I think chickadees are ugly - far from it.

The blue tit is grey above shading to a steel blue on the wingtips and tail; the breast and belly are yellow, the face white with a black frame running from the base of its small black bill along the sides of the neck, up the sides of the head well behind the eyes and then running as a thin black line through the eyes. The bird also has a blue cap and a single short white wingbar in each wing.

If you are worried about birding on a cold winter's day over a hundred miles north of Toronto, perhaps standing knee deep in snow for an hour or more waiting for the bird to show up at the feeder, you may rest easy. It is as delightful to meet Mrs. Baston as it is to meet the bird. A sign at the front door asks you to please come in; you are seated at the 'blind' which is the kitchen table placed at a picture window about six feet from the feeders; and there you are in warmth and comfort waiting for the bird. You may look over the guest book while you wait or watch the bluejays and Evening Grosbeaks or admire the snow on the white pines outside or talk about the bird and birders who have previously come to see it .. or .. you may speculate on how the bird arrived in Gravenhurst. Did it come from Churchill, Manitoba from an ocean vessel? Did it jump off a freighter while on Lake Huron? Some freighters carry bird feeders for birds that stray and stay on board after the ship leaves harbour. Is it an escaped or released captive bird? .. the blue tit is not known to be a successful cage bird: its survival rate is poor. Or is there some other explanation? You can always ask the bird .. it knows!

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REMINDER : AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM night, Thursday, February 21, 1974.

SPEAKER: Walter Berlet. SUBJECT: East Side Story, Bahamas to Quebec.

Come and bring your friends. EATON AUDITORIUM - 8:15 p.m.

A NOVEMBER DAY ON THE EASTERN LAKESHORE

By Jo Ann Murray

Grey skies threatened rain as 37 determined and optimistic people assembled at the Pickering GO Station on November 18, 1973. Mild weather had kept the marshes open and we expected to see a variety of waterfowl, and perhaps some shorebirds along the eastern lakeshore from Frenchman's Bay to Whitby Harbour. We were encouraged then, and later, to see many flocks of ducks and geese arriving from the north, and coming down at various places along our intended route.

We began our journey by overlooking Lake Ontario on the west side of Frenchman's Bay where we found Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Mergansers, and the ever-present Mallards. A Purple Finch added colour in a spruce above. The north end of the marsh off Base Line Road, yielded 4 Killdeer and a Coot among the Herring Gulls. Many Canada Geese rested on the shore of the bay beside the Pickering Nuclear Power Plant, along with several Hooded Mergansers, while on the east side of the Nuclear Power Plant, we found Mourning Doves and Red-winged Blackbirds.

At Corner Marsh, off Squire's Beach Road, a Pintail swam sedately among the Mallards and Black Ducks, as Pine Siskins twittered overhead. At this point, our luck with the weather ran out, the rain pelted down, and we were forced to eat lunch in our cars. After half an hour, most participants dropped out as the steady, dismal rain showed no signs of letting up. Three intrepid carloads of the faithful pressed on, passing a wretched-looking Great Blue Heron in a tree. We sympathized!

The cold rain was momentarily forgotten as we excitedly counted approximately 100 Hooded Mergansers, among Common Mergansers, and more Mallards and Blacks at Cranberry Marsh. Twenty-two Great Blue Herons formed a tableau in the cattails and sedges beyond.

Base Line Marsh at Whitby yielded 11 Gadwall and a female Shoveler.

An immature Mute Swan fed peacefully in Whitby Hospital Marsh: a family group of 5 Mutes were seen here a week earlier. Also a week earlier, two immature blue form Snow Geese were seen on the lawn opposite the Hospital sewage treatment station: today, unfortunately, they were gone.

Three Yellow-rumped Warblers darted among the remains of the cattails beside Pringle Creek east of Brock Road South.

At the mouth of Whitby Harbour, an immature Bonaparte's Gull gracefully flashed to a touchdown in the water, oblivious to the much larger Herring Gulls surrounding it.

Our hardy group of birders, now reduced to two cars, finished the outing at Pringle Creek again, north of the Dunlop plant at 4:30 p.m. Here we were treated to a grand finale of 7 more Yellow-rumped Warblers, a Cowbird, and 6 Rusty Blackbirds!

Our day's tally of 37 species included, in addition to those already mentioned: Greater Scaup, Bufflehead, Red-tailed Hawks, Kestrels, Pheasants, Great Black-backed Gulls, Ring-billed Gulls, Rock Doves, Blue Jays, Crows, Black-capped Chickadees, the ubiquitous Starlings and English Sparrows, and Goldfinches.

Wet, muddy, tired, but pleased, we headed home.

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REMINDER:

MARCH MEETING DATE MONDAY, MARCH 4th, 8:15 p.m.

TORONTO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - 1973, DECEMBER 23.

Area covered: 99 participants in 28 parties

Ice and snow conditions: snow 6" - 20" deep. Ponds, streams and creeks frozen.
snowed morning approximately 1 hour. Temperature 18°F

Time on foot: 134 hours

Time in car: 75 hours

Miles on Foot: 158

Miles in car: 525

No. of species - 91

No. of individual birds - 24,307

New species recorded: Palm Warbler

BIRDS COUNTED

Common Loon	1	Glaucous Gull	1	Hermit Thrush	1
Gt. Blue Heron	25	Iceland Gull	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet	11
Mute Swan	13	Great Black-backed Gull	23	Cedar Waxwing	2
Canada Goose	747	Herring Gull	1218	Northern Shrike	27
Mallard	3381	Ring-billed Gull	1025	Starling	4469
Black Duck	1035	Bonaparte's Gull	1	Yellow Rumped Warbler	
Gadwall	2	Mourning Dove	340	(Myrtle)	1
Pintail	2	Barred Owl	2	Palm Warbler	1
Blue-winged Teal	1	Screech Owl	3	Common Yellowthroat	1
American Widgeon	15	Great Horned Owl	15	House Sparrow	3095
Wood Duck	1	Long-eared Owl	2	Eastern Meadowlark	1
Canvasback	1	Short-eared Owl	2	Red-winged Blackbird	9
Greater Scaup	1352	Saw-whet Owl	1	Rusty Blackbird	5
Common Goldeneye	217	Belted Kingfisher	5	Common Grackle	3
Bufflehead	179	Flicker, Common	2	Brown-headed Cowbird	16
Oldsquaw	1720	Pileated Woodpecker	3	Cardinal	193
Harlequin	1	Red-headed Woodpecker	3	Evening Grosbeak	219
Surf Scoter	3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Purple Finch	18
Common Merganser	156	Hairy Woodpecker	28	Pine Siskin	53
Goshawk	2	Downy Woodpecker	147	American Goldfinch	167
Cooper's Hawk	2	Horned Lark	11	Rufous-sided Towhee	3
Red-tailed Hawk	117	Blue Jay	296	Dark-eyed Junco	555
Red-shouldered Hawk	5	Common Crow	156	Tree Sparrow	684
Rough-legged Hawk	11	Black-capped Chickadee	263	Field Sparrow	4
Marsh Hawk	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	144	White-throated Sparrow	27
Gyr Falcon	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	Fox Sparrow	1
Kestral Hawk	52	Brown Creeper	11	Swamp Sparrow	4
Ruffed Grouse	6	Winter Wren	4	Song Sparrow	102
Ring-necked Pheasant	190	Mockingbird	1	Lapland Longspur	22
American Coot	1	Brown Thrasher	3	Snow Bunting	813
Common Snipe	1	Robin	20		

COMPILER - Jack Cranmer-Byng.

- NOTES:
1. Very high numbers of great blue herons; normal is 3-6.
 2. Gyr Falcon was seen in King Township near Purpleville. Call Gerry Bennett for latest report on it (832-1357).
 3. Barred owl seen in Shell Point Woods.
 4. Mockingbird was at a bird feeder in Port Credit area. For location see Don Perks.
 5. Palm warbler was at a feeder on the lower Humber. Location from John Lamey.
 6. Common loon was in Whitby Hospital area.
 7. Lapland Longspurs and horned larks can probably be seen on the Leslie Street causeway.

CONSERVATION CONVERSATION

by Leo Smith

BLUEBIRDS GALORE

About 350 nesting boxes were in position by early June. On the July 1st weekend we did a lot of chasing around through all the main areas and reckon on 55 breeding pairs.

We are now the 5th largest bluebird promoters in Canada. Here are the biggest schemes: John Lane of Brandon, Manitoba with 4,000 boxes; Lorne Scott of Indian Head, Sask., with 2,000 boxes; Dennis Barry of Bowmanville (Oshawa Naturalists) with 600 boxes, and Hazel Bird of Harwood (Willow Beach) with 440 boxes.

Most of my townships are doubling the numbers of breeding pairs every year but one place, the farm of Mrs. Cole in Adjala Township, has four times as many good nests as in 1972.

We have had set backs. In Mono Township, our best area, Box 200 was stolen. Caledon is still a failure township and King Township and Darlington Township did very poorly.

The happiest moment was finding a second brood in Box 224 on the farm of Bob Healey in the Pretty River Valley. This Township, Osprey, was the fourteenth of our townships known to have successful nests of bluebirds.

Failure Townships

During the summer I bought soil distribution maps from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture. The geological understory favoured by Sialia sialis for breeding is any one of fifteen sandy loams. They must be well-drained and alkaline or neutral in chemical composition.

I mention this because it will be a waste of time and money trying nesting units in the Niagara Falls area or the farmlands of intensive cultivation, or the damp areas and acid-type soils. We have thirty townships with our nesting boxes in them and some are now failures and will always be failures and devoid of bluebirds because of the nature of the geological foundations.

Anglers and Hunters, Islington

Some years ago I put up 19 boxes for this Club. They are good houses with a better batting average than my own. Early in June I put up 15 more and at least one of these has a good family raised in it. Two weeks ago I got fifteen more, but in the un-assembled condition. This work of assembly is going ahead steadily in the basement of my home. There are still cut boxes available. Just call Peter Edwards at 233-3297.

A New Group at Barrie

John Wiseman reports 24 breeding pairs of bluebirds in his boxes in Simcoe County. This eager bunch of teenagers could do wonders with a little money.

ALAN COVENTRY MEMORIAL

'Covers' will be remembered by many of you as an inspiring leader with a wide and infectious interest in all aspects of nature. He played a vital part in the organization of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and in the running of the many F.O.N. Summer Nature Camps. In his memory a fund has now been started to provide for an annual award to a student of any year in the Field Biology course at Erindale College (University of Toronto).

It is felt that a fund of a few thousand dollars will yield an annual income of a few hundred dollars in interest for the prize. This will be a small but continuing memorial to a man who made such a great contribution to Canada and to generations of students, naturalists and other friends.

Erindale College will receive contributions to the fund, issue receipts for Income Tax purposes and administer the prize. Club members and other friends wishing to contribute should make cheques out to:

Erindale College, 3359 Mississauga Road, Clarkson, Ontario
designated for the Alan Coventry Memorial Prize and to the attention of
Dr. J. Tuzo Wilson, President of Erindale College.

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 15 - 24
The place: The Coliseum of the C.N.E.

The times:	<u>weekdays</u>	<u>Saturdays</u>	<u>Sundays</u>
	12:30 - 3:30	10:00 - 2:30	1:00 - 5:00
	3:30 - 7:30	2:30 - 6:30	5:00 - 9:00
	7:30 - 11:00	6:30 - 11:00	

Come and help, and see the exhibit, which this year will feature the theme: "The Living City". 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. & Mrs. Harry Kerr
47 Cameron Crescent
Toronto, Ontario.

I can be available - dates _____
- Shifts:(select one or more of the time periods above)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Phone _____

*** Mono Rocks Provincial Park

A 1,500 acre tract of the Niagara Escarpment 8 miles north of Orangeville will become a new provincial park. Situated 45 miles northwest of Toronto in Dufferin County, Mono Township, near the village of Mono Centre, the park's terrain is special because it is part of the Orangeville Moraine and contains two outliers, or rock islands, within its boundaries. We will watch with interest as this newest park is developed over the next few years.

If you have any information regarding the natural history of this area and wish to contribute to the master plan for the park, then write to:

Mr. David Tomlinson, Landscape Architects,
Quality Farm, R. R. 3, King, Ontario (Phone: 884-2851)
(as reported to me by Leo Smith).

*** Tall Grass Prairie Nature Reserve

A joint effort on the part of the Natural Areas Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy of Canada has resulted in the purchase of 175 acres of the famous Tall Grass Prairie at Ojibway (Windsor). This area has been described as the 'last major remnant of tall-grass prairie in Canada and the Eastern United States'. Resources Minister Bernier has also announced that the Ministry hopes to acquire more land in the surrounding area.

*** The Nature Conservancy of Canada

Besides helping to establish the Tall Grass Prairie Reserve at Windsor and the Chesney Conservation Area at Woodstock, the Conservancy has been very busy helping to acquire Niagara Escarpment land and an increasing number of the major wetlands in southern Ontario. Large acreages have been acquired in the Cavan Bog, Minesing Swamp, Greenoch Wetlands and Sawyer Creek. Other areas under review include the Wainfleet Bog, Long Swamp, and Osprey Wetlands. Another project of interest to T.F.N.C. members: the Conservancy is working with the Garden Clubs of Ontario to find an unusual wildflower area which can be preserved in its natural state.

If you are interested in contributing to their work please send contributions, queries or information to:

The Nature Conservancy of Canada
2200 Yonge Street, Suite 611
Toronto, Ontario. Phone: 486-1011.

oo

Phone: 231-1064

Elmer Talvila, Editor
12 Cranleigh Court
Islington, Ontario.

YOUR RESERVE

NEEDS

YOUR HELP!

Have you mailed in a donation yet? If you haven't, why not take a few moments and do so today.

Your Club is endeavoring to raise \$10,000. this year to help pay for the 30-acre addition to the JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE.

We are proud owners of a treasured piece of wild countryside within 50 miles of Toronto. Here are 90 acres of land upon which we can tramp, birdwatch, photograph, or do whatever we ecologically please.

Please help us conserve this acreage and the abundant wildlife it shelters. Revised lists of the bird list (May, 1973, Newsletter), and the plant list (October, 1972, Newsletter) will appear in the Jubilee Issue scheduled for March, 1974.

The form below should be filled out and sent along with your contribution. Any amount you can spare would be welcomed! We will mail you a receipt for income tax purposes.

----- detach -----

TO: Stuart Corbett
52 Haileybury Drive
Scarborough, Ontario.

1974, February.

I enclose a cheque or money order made out to the TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS in the amount of \$ _____, as a donation toward the

JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Postal Code _____