



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Number 297

February, 1976.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Monday, February 2, 1976, at 8:15 p.m.
at
252 Bloor Street West

The OISIE Building is midway between the two exits (St. George and Bedford) of the St. George subway station. Entrance on the west side of the building via covered walk from Bloor Street. To park, enter from Prince Arthur Avenue, under the building, (parking fee 50¢).

SPEAKER: Mr. Barry Ranford

SUBJECT: "The Big Sky Country -- wildlife of the plains and foothills."

Barry Ranford is 'tops' as a nature photographer. Come and bring your friends; enjoy the thrills of this wonderful land as shown in the coloured slides.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Monday, March 1, 1976.

TWO MORE AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS IN THIS SERIES: - Eaton Auditorium - 8:15 p.m.
- Thursday, February 19 - "Bermuda - Land and Sea"
- Thursday, March 18 - "The Vanishing Eden"

FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW - March 9 to March 14, 1976

(Presented by the Garden Club of Toronto -- Automotive Building, C.N.E.)

The Club will have an exhibit at this Show but we need your help!

Could any Club members loan us a terrarium or colour slides of nature, especially flowers? These would be required by Sunday, March 7th and should be available to March 14th. The terrarium should contain at least 10% fresh plant material. If you have a terrarium or slides to lend, please contact:

Jeanine Dykstra at 255-2107 (after 5:30 p.m.)

-detach-

CLUB DUES - We are having a wonderful response to renewal memberships (despite problems with the mails). One last call! Should you not have renewed for the coming year... won't you mail your fees to the Membership Secretary today?

TO: Mrs. E. Hanson, Membership Secretary

Toronto Field Naturalists' Club

83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ont. M5M 2T4

Date _____

Please don't stop the Newsletters! Renew my membership for:

- () Single \$ 7.00 () Family (adults) \$10.00 () Life \$100.00
- () Corresponding (living more than 30 miles from the Royal Ontario Museum) \$3.00
- () Full-time student (aged 16 or over) \$2.00
- () Senior Citizens, 65 and over: () single \$4.00 () family \$6.00 () corresponding \$2.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ Postal Code _____

- JUNIOR CLUB Meet in the Royal Ontario Museum, 100 Queen's Park, at 10:00 a.m.
 Saturday The meeting will be in charge of the Bird Group, under the leader-
 February 7 ship of Jean-Pierre Savard and Joanne Egan.
 10:00 a.m. Director - Lynn Scanlan (488-8321, after 5:30 p.m.)
- ENVIRONMENTAL Meet at St. James Bond nited Church on Avenue Road, just north of **
GROUP-Tuesday Eglinton Avenue. If you haven't attended a meeting, why not come
 February 10 out on the 10th? As well as interesting, you might find it a
 8:00 p.m. challenge. Chairman, Henry Fletcher (421-1549)
- BOTANY GROUP Mr. John Riley of the Botany Department, University of Toronto,
 Tuesday will present the third lecture in our series on Tree Identification.
 February 17 His lecture will be on the "Evergreen" trees.
 8:00 p.m. Location: Hodgson Public School, Davisville Ave., just east of Mount
 Pleasant Road. Enter the school at the east end, or if you park in
 the school yard, the centre rear door is open, entrance to the yard
 is from Millwood Road, one block north of Davisville Ave. We meet
 in the cafeteria in the basement.
 Chairman, Wes Hancock (757-5518)
- BIRD GROUP Meet at St. James Bond United Church (see above for directions) **
 Wednesday NOTE: John and Janet Foster were not able to keep their date with
 February 25 us in January, but tonight they will tell us of the 'trials and
 8:00 p.m. tribulations' of making a nature series for TV .. illustrated with
 colour slides. Copies of their latest book "To the Wild Country"
 will be available. A wonderful opportunity to have your copy
 autographed. Chairman, Red Mason (621-3905)

OUTINGS FOR FEBRUARY, 1976

- Sunday DAVID BALEFOUR PARK AREA - Nature Walk Leader: Helen Juhola
 February 8 Meet at the Nature Trail sign on the north side of St. Clair Ave.
 10:00 a.m. East at Avoca. (0.2 mile east of Yonge Street). Walk will follow
 the ravine south to Bloor Street and will last about two hours.
 Public transportation would be practical.
- Sunday MORNINGSIDE PARK - Animal Tracks and Birds Leader: Gordon Lambert
 February 15 Meet in the first parking lot immediately west of Morningside Ave.,
 10:00 a.m. by pavilion. Drivers take 401 east to Exit 61, then go south on
 Morningside Avenue 1.0 mile.
 Eglinton East 34B bus. Morning only.
- Sunday MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - Trees in Winter Leader: Bruce Parker
 February 29 Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge Street. (0.3 mile
 10:00 a.m. north of St. Clair Avenue subway station). Morning only.
- Sunday TORONTO LAKESHORE - Waterfowl (Humber to Leslie Street)
 March 7 Leader: Ann Macdonald
 9:30 a.m. Meet in the Lakeshore parking lot, (east of the Humber River and
 west of Windermere Avenue, opposite the Seaway Hotel). Bring lunch.
 Chairman, Harry Kerr (481-7948)

"Did you renew your membership for this year" ??

Handy order form on reverse

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

With winter here, many of our birds have gone south. Some mammals are hibernating; others have curled up in dens, sleeping through the cooler times and returning to activity on sunny days. Most plants lie dormant beneath a blanket of snow. Regretably, many naturalists follow the pattern of these living things. They go south or they enter into a semi-dormant state, awaiting the return of spring and its myriad lifeforms.

But all life does not disappear with the coming of winter and you are missing a great deal of enjoyment if you deny yourself excursions into nature at this time of year. Let me describe just part of what I saw during a two-hour hike along a river in south-western Ontario a few days ago.

The early part of this hike took me past a dense grove of cedars. Bluejays, cardinals, and evening grosbeaks competed for sunflower seeds at a feeder on the edge of the grove. Pine siskins, chickadees, tree sparrows and juncos cautiously approached for their share of the seed. A flock of redpolls winged overhead, competing for my attention with a flock of evening grosbeaks in a nearby tree. A number of goldfinches undulated across the landscape. A red-tailed hawk surveyed the territory that had been thoroughly investigated by a red fox the evening before. A lone Canada goose wandered along the far bank of the river, hissing in defiance at me. As I pondered the fate of this magnificent bird, apparently the victim of a hunter, a flock of goldeneyes whistled overhead. Downy woodpeckers were busy extracting insects from the goldenrod galls. A hairy woodpecker drummed a steady beat on a dead elm tree. As I watched a flock of cedar waxwings foraging for food and listened to the call of a lone robin sunning itself in the branches of a tree in a sheltered nook, a pileated woodpecker lit in a tree no more than 25 metres from me. Further along, five grouse burst from a nearby tree. Bird life was everywhere!

Tracks in the snow revealed that cottontails and hares inhabited the area. Red squirrels chattered as I passed their sites of activity. A pair of porcupines drooped themselves over a branch of their favourite basswood tree.

I stopped on the top of a hill for a rest on the way back. I sat in a spot where the snow had been melted by a deer as he rested there a few hours earlier, undoubtedly surveying my earlier activities. Yes, there's a lot to see out there in the winter-time. And it's so peaceful. You see, most of the people stay inside.

..... Bill Andrews

INTERPRETIVE NATURALISTS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

About 20 positions are open this summer for amateur naturalists in Algonquin, Arrowhead, Grundy and Killbear Provincial Parks. Employment period is May or June to Labour Day. Salary \$37. - \$45. range. Applicants should have some background in most fields of natural history with perhaps a specialty in one. Preference given to students in last year of high school or first two years of university. Duties include hikes, evening programs, information desk, publications and speaking.

Requests for applications and other enquiries should be addressed to:

Interpretive Services Supervisor,

Ministry of Natural Resources, Box 219,

Whitney, Ontario. KOJ 2M0

phone: (705) 633-5592.

200 BIRDS IN TWO WEEKS?

..... by Clive Goodwin

(continued from January Newsletter)

The next couple of days were spent on Manitoulin in country familiar to us from the Bruce -- limestone pavements, rocky fields and cedar woods. First we went west, to Mississaugi Light, the rather remote point where John Nicholson has recorded so many intriguing sightings. On arriving there we were surprised to find a picnic area and campground, although we were the only human visitors. There were numbers of migrants about, even though it was approaching mid-day when we arrived. A mockingbird was the highlight. The rocks were carpeted with early saxifrage and the wetter areas with early buttercup, and occasional hawks soared over the lighthouse in its idyllic setting among white rocks, green cedars and the blue waters of the Straits. We fell in love with the place and almost returned the next day.

That evening we met Chris Bell and John and made some plans for the Saturday, when we would all meet at the Causeway at Bayfield Sound. Due to the configuration of the Island, this relatively inland spot is a concentration point for landbirds, and breakfast was punctuated by sorties to identify various warblers and fly-catchers that had arrived overnight. After a week with almost no warblers it was almost like turning the clock back to Pelee again.

The south shore of Manitoulin is rather inaccessible, so the trip into Belanger Bay was initially over bush roads which deteriorated steadily and finally -- when a tree across the road stopped even John's Volkswagen -- on foot. This was an expansive area of limestone pavement with scattered pines, and it yielded such southern birds as Field Sparrows, towhees and thrashers. Once again, a strange parallel to Pelee emerged with these species that are so typical of the Point. There were Pine Warblers singing as well, apparently residents in the taller pine trees.

In the evening we visited the south shore again, this time to watch a duck migration. Just before dusk, large flights of Old Squaw and White-winged Scoter started to move westwards, flying high and fast some way offshore. The origin and ultimate destination of these birds continues to intrigue us.

When we arrived at South Baymouth next morning we found dense fog and quite a grounding of migrants along the harbour front. Another mockingbird, two Red-headed Woodpeckers, a Long-billed Marsh Wren and a Warbling Vireo all were noteworthy for the Island, and there was a host of other birds including more flocks of Evening Grosbeaks. This small village is one of the most delightful parts of Manitoulin, although it is a little overwhelmed by the elaborate facilities for the new ferry.

We had looked forward to the crossing to Tobermory, hoping to see waterfowl and possibly landbird migrants. Chris had deflated us a little by saying that all they ever seemed to see were hummingbirds, and the fog deflated us still more. However, we embarked on the ChiChemaurum in high spirits. Three hours later we were at Tobermory and we had seen one Barn Swallow and -- one hummingbird!

The Bruce is a very special place for both of us. We met there, and spent our first anniversary there, but the contact with the place goes back many years and it is an area we know well. So if there was anywhere that we could hope to reach the 200-mark it would be on the Bruce. I say "reach", because now it had become

an interesting challenge: we landed at Tobermory with a list of 195 birds for the Ontario part of the trip, and anyone who has tried to turn 195 into 200 in Ontario over the course of a couple of days knows how difficult it is. And we had two days left.

We stayed on the east side of town -- oddly enough, the first time we have ever done this, and May is not normally a time one visits the Bruce. Why, I don't know, because it is a beautiful time, with the beach dunes carpeted with the blue of dwarf iris and pink of bird's-eye primrose, and the woods of the lower Peninsula sheltering fragile Calypso blooms here and there. But, then, any time on the Bruce is beautiful.

We had three clear objectives in mind this time: we wished to watch migration at the tip of the Bruce -- the area immediately around where we were staying -- and to visit Cabots Head in the east and Cape Hurd in the west to see if they also concentrated migrants. We had also added a fourth objective after our time with John Nicholson, and that was to watch for evidence of the Old Squaw flights off the Bruce.

In list terms, we hoped for Black-billed Cuckoo, Loggerhead Shrike and perhaps Olive-sided Flycatcher, but just what the other two birds might be was debatable. and indeed there might be no more, although we had yet to see a Wilson's Warbler. So we embarked on our first day, which was to yield 101 species, all our hoped-for birds plus a Barred Owl, and leave us with a tantalizing 199!

Tobermory at dawn was fascinating. The migrants which had reached the tip were moving down the east side of the harbour, feeding and singing. Sparrows and thrushes foraged on the lawns, flycatchers and warblers flew and chased and probed and sang through the trees and shrubs. It was a Pelee in miniature. And it seemed that both Cabots Head and Cape Hurd might have a similar concentrating effect, although perhaps much less pronounced.

Through the day we criss-crossed the Peninsula, finishing at sunset on the shore at Cape Hurd, looking west for evidence of waterfowl movement. Finally, at the very limits of telescope vision, I detected a familiar pattern of high flying birds with the loose flock and distinctive flight pattern of Old Squaw. Their heading would take them directly across to Manitoulin -- presumably the same course that John's birds were taking two nights earlier.

That day had been hot, surprisingly so for the third week in May, and the next day dawned mild and sunny. We were to find that a huge mass of hot air had pushed out the cool weather which had dominated the spring to that time, and Toronto was sweltering in 90° temperatures and high humidity. The heat was to continue into June, and its impact on migration was dramatic -- the migrants must have poured north in an unseen flood and suddenly the spring passage was over.

We knew none of this, but that dawn was a remarkable contrast to the day before. Where warblers had fed quietly and moved through the trees, now they flew rapidly north through the treetops, launching themselves high into the air while still well short of the Point itself, and battling the strong west wind to press slowly but determinedly out over the water. It was one of those rare occasions when the sense of urgency which must drive these tiny mites north becomes suddenly clear: it was a dramatic sight.

But not all were pressing north so hurriedly. The birds leaving were Magnolias and Yellow-rumps, Nashvilles and Black and Whites. They were the warblers that

move first in the spring flood. Among the bushes the species were different, and there feeding quietly we saw first Wilson's and then a dapper Blackpoll, putting the plates in the guides to shame.

There was more to the trip, of course. We idled south through the spring Bruce before driving home in the late afternoon heat, completing in shorts a journey that had demanded parkas only a few days earlier. But in memory now, months later, it is that last dawn at Tobermory that remains, together with the hawks and trailing arbutus of Whitefish and a warbler flock in the cedars at Pelee. As ever, it is not so much the birds, as the quality of the experience they provide.

Yet the birds were there. We had 201 in our two weeks in Ontario. Were we lucky? Quite the reverse, in some ways we were unfortunate, as migration had almost stopped while we were in the north-west, and we had sought some species -- crossbills and spruce grouse for example -- without success. So perhaps you will be tempted to do better, and with planning and luck I am sure you will. But I doubt if you will be able to have more sheer pleasure!

ONTARIO BIRD-BANDING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

The Ontario Bird-Banding Association invites visitors to attend its annual meeting on February 7, 1976 in the McLaughlin Planetarium auditorium (south of the Royal Ontario Museum). There will be a business session in the morning and the open session of interest to visitors will start at 1:30 p.m. Admission is free.

The featured speaker will be Dr. Fred Cooke of the Department of Biology, Queen's University and President of the Kingston Field Naturalists' Club. He will be talking on Snow Geese and his experiences in banding and studying them. There will also be a number of speakers giving short talks on aspects of bird study in Ontario.

Try to make this meeting which promises to be exceptionally interesting. For further information contact:

David Broughton at 489-7444, between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

BIRD FEEDERS INFORMATION

Last year a project was started on bird feeders. The project will resume this year with your co-operation.

We ask the owners of bird feeders to please record the birds seen at their bird feeders each week. We would like them to record the maximum number of individuals of each specie seen at any one time during the week. Each week starts on a Monday. We would also appreciate a description of the bird feeder and the type of food provided.

Information should be sent at the end of the winter (March 31), to:

Jean-Pierre Savard, Department of Zoology, Harbord Street,
University of Toronto, Toronto. Phone: 533-0350,

Thank you for your co-operation.

19 WOMEN SCIENTISTS HONORED BY MUSEUM

(From The Globe and Mail, Friday, July 4, 1975
by way of C.A.R.S., Editor, Barbara Froom)

OTTAWA (CP) - Nineteen women were honored for their contributions to natural sciences in a special display opened yesterday at the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa.

The work ranged from Arctic ice explorations to study of snakes. In September the display is scheduled to go on tour.

The women honored were: conservationist Barbara Froom, Toronto; entomologist Jean Adams, Fredericton; zoologist Dr. Helen Battle, London; geologist Dr. Helen Belyea, Calgary; glaciologist Moira Dunbar, Ottawa; astronomer Dr. Helen Hogg, Toronto; botanist Dr. Mildred Nobles, Ottawa; ornithologist Doris Speirs, Toronto; zoologist Dr. Anne Dagg, Waterloo; ornithologist Dr. Louise Lawrence, Toronto; geologist Dr. Madeleine Fritz, Toronto; entomologist Margaret MacKay, Ottawa.

Several of the women honored are dead: zoologist Edith Berkeley, Nanaimo; cytotoxicologist Dr. Lulu Gaiser, Hamilton; botanist Marcelle Gauvreau, Montreal; botanist Dr. Margaret Newton, Winnipeg; botanist Catharine Parr Traill, Peterborough; genealogist Dr. Norma Walker, Toronto; geologist Dr. Alice Wilson, Ottawa.

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE INSECTS OF CANADA

It is reliably estimated that there are over 100,000 species of insects in Canada, yet only 50% of these have been described and named. To remedy this the Entomological Society of Canada is proposing to initiate a major biological survey. The object is to develop over a period years a knowledge of what species of insects and other terrestrial arthropods occur in Canada, how they can be identified, where they are found, what their life histories are, what economic, ecological and environmental significance they have, and how they are affected by man.

The Society will co-ordinate the relevant activities of Canadian entomologists and organizations. If you wish to take part or wish more information, write to:

Entomological Society of Canada, 1320 Carling Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K1Z 7K9
(from Nature Canada, Vol.4, No. 4)

TOADS HAVE RIGHTS TOO IN GERMANY

In Hildesheim, West Germany, two dozen rare yellow-bellied toads have halted construction of five houses on a new suburban estate. The toads are protected by local law. As a result town planners had to redraw their building plans for the 50-house development; it is estimated the toads will cost the town \$122,000. Yellow-bellied toads have been found in only one other pond in the State of Lower Saxony.

(from the Sudbury Star, July 23, 1975
by way of C.A.R.S.C., Editor, Barbara Froom)

TO THE SAGUENAY FOR WHALES

..... by Jo Ann Murray

At 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 11, 1975, a busload of Ottawa Field Naturalist's Club members began a whale-watching and bird-watching excursion which would take us to Riviere-du-Loup and Cap Tourmente, Quebec, and by boat along the St. Lawrence and Saguenay Rivers. The excursion was arranged and led by Roger Foxall, in co-operation with the Montreal Zoological Society, which ran a similar itinerary 24 hours ahead of us. Their leader, Mr. J. T. Iles accompanied us on our excursion. Of course, there was no guarantee that we would find whales. However, the Montreal Society had organized many such trips in the past, and every trip had located some whales.

Saturday's lunch stop was at Montmagny, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, beyond Quebec City. Here was a small waterfowl sanctuary where perhaps 5,000 Greater Snow Geese were resting and feeding. Ducks included Mallard, Black, Pintail, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal. There were also hunters on the shore on both sides of the sanctuary, forbidden to enter the sanctuary, but allowed to shoot any geese they could hit passing overhead or lure outside the boundary with decoys. The scene resembled a carnival shooting-gallery, although very few geese were actually shot. Even a small sanctuary under such conditions is better than none, as the tired birds had to run the gamut of hunters all along the shoreline to reach this place of comparative safety.

Continuing on, we reached Riviere-du-Loup in late afternoon. Our hotel was the Auberge de la Pointe, the location of which afforded an excellent view of the river below. Some of our group excitedly sighted our first whales almost at once -- a small pod of Belugas well out on the river. The backs of these small whales resembled oval ice floes as they rose to the water's surface to breathe. Here we also saw an immature Gannet, and two adult black-legged Kittiwakes.

Next morning, we set off downriver aboard a 45-foot boat. The wind was bone-chilling. Forewarned, we had piled on layers and layers of clothing. Our destination was the mouth of the Saguenay River. The cold waters of the wide, deep St. Lawrence River become partially saline there when mixed with the cold North Atlantic tidal inflow. The Saguenay is also cold and deep. The mixing of the three waters, all cold and rich in plankton, results in a very rich "planktonic soup", and as such, is an excellent feeding area for baleen whales.

About noon, some distance from the boat, we saw a black back rise out of the water, showing a dorsal fin with a curved tip. Shouts of "Whale!" brought everyone scrambling to the forward rail for a good look at our first Minke, or Piked whale. It surfaced and spouted several times, once quite close to our boat. It was difficult to tell how many Minkes there were; at least two. After a while, the whales seemed to tire of people-watching and disappeared.

Our boat turned back upriver, and headed into the beautiful rocky-walled Saguenay where Beluga whales live year-round. Although the scenery on land was colorful and impressive, we saw no whales.

On our return to Riviere-du-Loup, we saw several more Minke whales. A few observers on the forward upper deck saw a harp seal regarding us curiously.

Birding was good, too. Kittiwakes were common, as were Black Guillemots in winter plumage. There were other alcids: a few Razorbills and Murres, and an immature

Common Puffin looked us over carefully before diving. A light-phase Northern Fulmar flew stiffly past, as we wondered how it happened to be so far out of range. Several Parasitic Jaegers chased gulls. A large raft of Common Eiders took to the air as we went by.

A light snow was falling as we docked at Riviere-du-Loup at 5:00 p.m. and boarded our bus for the return to Quebec City.

The next morning, Thanksgiving Day, found us at Cap Tourmente near Ste-Anne-du-Beaupre. This is a major staging area for the Great Snow Goose, and there were probably 125,000 of the birds present. A Ross's Goose turned up here last spring, but we found none. There were many sparrows present, including -- Sharp-tailed. The "Cape of Torment" (so named by Jacques Cartier four centuries ago because of the incessant wind) was warm and sunny for us. The striking autumn color and the masses of noisy Snow Geese kept the photographers busy.

It was a perfect ending for a memorable trip.

"OWLS ANYONE?"

It started out as a cold grey morning, December 28, 1975, as 26 of us stood at the Lakeshore listening to Red Mason greet us prior to the day's outing. Suddenly 3 Mute Swans appeared out of the east flying past in perfect formation; always nice to see especially in flight.

This was an appropriate beginning for Red's T.F.N. Bird Club outing which intended to search for owls as part of the day's objectives. Red wasn't able to accompany us as he was still recuperating from a previous illness.

Moving over to Humber Bay Park we saw a beautiful Snowy Owl sitting high on top of a signal light standard. It was in plain view and stayed long enough for everyone to have a good look. Seven people indicated to me that this was the first time they had ever seen a Snowy Owl.

Next stop was Clairville Conservation Area where we saw 1⁴ Long-eared owls and 2 Short-eared but no luck on Saw-whets.

Would you believe it -- the weather changed into a clear, sunny, no-wind condition. Together with the amount of clean white snow all around us at Clairville, it made things just beautiful. We had lunch outside, around picnic tables, and while doing so we were suitably entertained by a Mockingbird who was flitting around some nearby lilac bushes in plain view. A good bird anytime around Metro.

At the old lumber yard on Torbram Road we saw 4 more Short-eared owls and at Bouvaird's woods we got 2 Great Horned owls in flight. Later we heard them "hooting" several times just as a climax to our day. This turned out to be a very satisfying outing. We saw 13 owls (4 species) a total of 40 species for the day which included various ducks, Mute swans, hawks, the Mockingbird and other passerines as well.

The fine winter weather conditions, the enthusiasm of the group and a good bird count for the day, made this a delightful outing -- one of the best we have led.

..... Bruce and Jerry White.

THE 51ST

TORONTO CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - DECEMBER 21, 1975

Area covered: 30 mile radius of the Royal Ontario Museum

Ice and snow conditions: 10 - 12 inches of snow; lake open with mist, creeks and rivers partially frozen; ponds and marshes completely frozen.

Temperature: 6 - 10 F.; sunny and clear.

Participants 97 in 28 parties. Species 89 Total birds 29,344

Great Blue Heron	10	Common Flicker	5
Black-crowned Night Heron	1	Pileated Woodpecker	7
Mute Swan	2	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1
Canada Goose	1909	Hairy Woodpecker	94
Brant	1	Downy Woodpecker	209
Snow Goose	12	Horned Lark	81
Horned Grebe	3	Blue Jay	304
Mallard	3885	Common Crow	181
Black Duck	273	Black-capped Chickadee	1265
Gadwall	52	Boreal Chickadee	1
Pintail	2	White-breasted Nuthatch	235
American Widgeon	28	Red-breasted Nuthatch	6
Shoveler	1	Brown Creeper	4
Redhead	21	Winter Wren	3
Canvasback	31	Carolina Wren	1
Greater Scaup	2041	Brown Thrasher	1
Common Goldeneye	943	Robin	14
Bufflehead	343	Golden-crowned Kinglet	5
Oldsquaw	1720	Cedar Waxwing	8
Harlequin Duck	1	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Black Scoter	1	Northern Shrike	12
Hooded Merganser	2	Starling	4146
Common Merganser	182	Common Yellowthroat	1
Red-breasted Merganser	1	House Sparrow	2402
Goshawk	1	Eastern Meadowlark	4
Red-tailed Hawk	127	Red-winged Blackbird	1
Rough-legged Hawk	9	Rusty Blackbird	2
Marsh Hawk	3	Common Grackle	10
American Kestrel	40	Brown-headed Cowbird	1
Ruffed Grouse	11	Cardinal	182
Ring-necked Pheasant	176	Evening Grosbeak	374
American Coot	1	Purple Finch	11
Glaucous Gull	7	Pine Grosbeak	179
Iceland Gull	1	Common Redpoll	140
Great Black-backed Gull	42	Pine Siskin	76
Herring Gull	2203	American Goldfinch	281
Ring-billed Gull	467	Rufous-sided Towhee	1
Mourning Dove	366	Dark-eyed Junco	338
Rock Dove	1640	Tree Sparrow	545
Screech Owl	1	Field Sparrow	1
Great Horned Owl	9	White-throated Sparrow	8
Snowy Owl	2	Swamp Sparrow	16
Long-eared Owl	7	Song Sparrow	87
Belted Kingfisher	17	Lapland Longspur	5
		Snow Bunting	1500

BIRD CENSUS HIGH-LIGHTS

This year's Toronto Christmas Bird Count was held on Sunday, December 21, 1975 and was organized by the Toronto Ornithological Club and assisted by members of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.

The most unexpected bird was a Black-crowned Night Heron spotted by Bruce Cruickshank and his party in Wilket Creek. It was the first of its species ever seen in the 51 years of Christmas counts.

The first Brant seen since 1967 and the first Black Scoter since 1944 were seen in the Leslie Street area by Don Pace's and Barry MacKay's group.

There were single sightings of the following species:

- A Brown Thrasher by Walter Hutton and Ed Franks
- A Boreal Chickadee seen by Don Burton's group
- The only Red-winged Blackbird and Screech Owl went to Dave Fidler
- The elusive Harlequin Duck at Pier 4 was found by Paul Catling
- Don Perks spotted a Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Gerry Bennett had the only Cowbird
- An Iceland Gull, flying near James Gardens was seen by John Sherrin's party, and in the Lower Humber marshes, John Lamey came up with a Goshawk, a Carolina Wren and a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. The first Shoveler since 1969 was spotted in Grenadier Pond by Doug Wilkin's group

There was a record high of 1,909 Canada Geese, (up from last year's record high of 1,676).

Twelve Snow Geese seen by Fred Bodsworth, is an all time high for this species.

Ann Macdonald and Bruce White found the only Long-eared Owls at Claireville, and Dave Maughan found 85 of the 176 Ring-necked Pheasants.

Mallards, Blacks and Common Mergansers were down and this was attributed to the heavy mist over the lake. Ian Tate reported that visibility was reduced to 2 or 300 yards and Ashbridges Bay was completely ice-covered.

Last year 110 observers reported 90 species with a total of 31,943 individuals, (compared to 89 species and 29,344 birds this year); down a little but still a very good count.

On behalf of the Toronto Ornithological Club I would like to thank the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club members and other participants who assisted in making this census a successful one.

..... Harry Kerr (T.O.C. Records Committee)

REMINDER Phone Numbers for Terrariums and colour slides:
until 3:00 p.m. - 225-2649 after 5:30 p.m. 255-2107
Flower and Garden Show - Automotive Building, C.N. E. March 10 - 14

Will you be able to help 'man-the-booth' ?
check page 1 and page 18 many thanks

TO CATCH A WOLF

An article recently printed in a local newspaper deserves a mention to T.F.N. members, who may have missed it. It concerns a wolf recently found in the Kingston area.

"Betty Cumpson, Kingston Township's new dog-catcher, received a call from Provincial police this week to pick up an animal that had been hit by a car.

She found the animal, believed to be a German Shepherd, lying on the road, but it ran away as she approached. Mrs. Cumpson chased it through fields and avoided several attempts by the animal to bite her before she finally managed to get a muzzle and chain lead on it.

She didn't learn until later that it was a wolf, not a German Shepherd.

'I wasn't frightened because I thought it was a dog', she said. 'If I had known it was a wolf, I might not have been so brave.'

A Kingston veterinarian said the wolf had to be destroyed because of its injuries.

Mrs. Cumpson received \$50.00 bounty for the wolf."

Likely many people were under the impression that the wolf bounty had been removed, here in Ontario, because of publicity given this by the news media some years ago. The Government is still using your tax dollars to encourage the slaughter of, and possible extinction of, this animal.

A good deal of research has been done on wolves, which are probably one of the last links we have remaining with the wild past of this country. A standing offer of reward still exists for anyone who can prove a healthy wolf attacked a human. None have come forward to claim this offer. Through the research we have learned a good deal about wolves and, if you study this, you can't help but be against the wholesale slaughter of this animal.

In most countries the wolf is already extinct. Only the fact that so much of Canada is made up of wilderness, unsuited for agriculture - or even to live in - has preserved the wolves here. Although this fact does help them to survive, the bounty on them is a disgrace that should not be tolerated by us. It even lacks the skill required to hunt, since it is easier and quicker to use poison or run them down with planes or snowmobiles. With the use of poisoned bait many other innocent creatures are slain every year. How much of our wildlife has to die before we realize it is our money that is being used to rob our future generations of their natural heritage?

I strongly urge all members to fight this bounty, which has cast a dark shadow over our country for a hundred years. DO IT NOW!

..... Ed O'Connor.

TREES BITE WORSE THAN BARK

A maple tree growing in a Toronto school yard obtained a conviction against a construction company which injured it. (It got some help from the Canadian Environmental Law Association). The judge imposed a suspended sentence. It was the first recorded decision under any section of the Trees Act of Ontario since 1914. It's about time this Act was cleaned up and reasonable fines established.

The maximum fine that could have been imposed was only \$25.00. (from Nature Canada Vol. 4 No. 4)

HAMILTON NATURALISTS' CLUB - 1975 SPRING HAWK COUNT ON GRIMSBY PEAK, GRIMSBY, ONT.

Of great interest to me was a report in the October 1975 'Wood Duck' about the Hamilton Club's spring hawk watch. It was especially galling to note that their members had seen 220 red-shouldered hawks -- 44 in one day! -- whereas I managed to see NONE during the whole of 1975! Look for me at Grimsby Peak next March 27-28th.

To help you plan your own March and April hawk watch, here is my summary of their observations from March 16 - May 3, 1975:

<u>Species</u>	<u>Peak days</u>	<u>No. seen</u>	<u>Best times</u>	<u>Total observed</u>
1. Turkey vulture	April 9	21	April 9 - 13	56
2. Goshawk	April 9, 10	3	Mar.20-Apr 13	12
3. Sharp-shinned	April 23	307	Apr. 13 - May 3	844
4. Cooper's	April 10	7	Mar. 27 - Apr. 29	36
5. Red-tailed	March 27	170	Mar. 16 - Apr. 17	1139
6. Red-shouldered	March 28	44	Mar. 21 - Apr.17	220
7. Rough-legged	April 23	10	Mar. 18 - Apr.30	40
8. Broad-winged	April 24	259	April 22 - May 3	968
9. Marsh	April 11, 30	3	Mar. 28 - May 3	20
10. Osprey	April 29	3	April 17 - 30	7
11. Kestrel	Mar. 28, Apr. 11	5	Mar. 18 - Apr.20	32
12. Merlin	April 9, 13	1		2
13. Bald Eagle	March 23	1		1
14. Unidentified				<u>53</u>
			TOTAL	3428

(I know it doesn't add up right - Elmer Talvila)

KIRKLAND'S WARBLER SUCCESS STORY

Last spring Kirkland's Warblers succeeded in stopping the artillery practices of the Michigan National Guard when about 30 percent of the warbler population set up nests right in the middle of the tank training area. Now they have had an even greater success -- a great breeding season. Some 1,200 warblers flew south to their wintering grounds in the Bahamas compared with about 350 of the birds which arrived in Michigan last spring.

Much of the success was due to the spring campaign of trapping the cowbird which is a persistent parasite of the warbler. Some 4,000 cowbirds were removed from the warbler's breeding grounds and so prevented from laying their eggs in the warbler's nests.

THE MYCOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Two years ago a group of active students of the extension courses conducted by Dr. Roy Cain on "Edible and Poisonous Mushrooms" organized the Mycological Society of Toronto. In spring and fall forays are organized to various forest areas, the most successful being held at the Dorset Forestry School where the staff was most co-operative and appreciative, even providing leaders for some of the walks around the beautiful Nora lake and the nearby woods. This took place on the weekend of September 5; it is hoped there will be a repeat in 1976.

The ravines around Toronto abound with rare and beautiful specimens from this most intriguing branch of botany. In Rosedale was found the rare blue *Stropharia* and in Wilket Creek the *Clitocybe illudens*, the mushroom that glows in the dark. Just one word of caution though, never go to these places unaccompanied, especially if one belongs to the so-called gentler sex.

The Mycological Society of Toronto is being privileged to have a booth at the forthcoming Garden Club Show in March, which this year is going to be held in the Automotive Building at the C.N.E. Also there will be an instructive and entertaining slide presentation in the 'rest your feet' area on the upper floor.

The Society now meets at the John Fisher Public School, 40 Erskine Avenue -- 3 blocks north of Eglinton, east of Yonge Street. Meetings are at 8:00 p.m. on the THIRD Monday of each month. Anyone interested in the fungi world is welcome to attend these programs. If you wish to be on their mailing list or to join the Society, contact:

Mrs. Connie Morgan, 36 Walmsley Blyd., Toronto, Ont. M4V 1X6 Phone:485-7228.

FILM: 'WINGS IN THE WILDERNESS'

Toronto opening on January 15, 1976 at Varsity Theatre, Bay and Bloor Streets, Toronto. This film features Dan Gibson and some imprinted Canada Geese goslings. It has won two awards for Cinematography and one for sound recording.

NOTE:

Canadian Wildlife Service has recently sent me some fine informative 4-page bulletins on some of Canada's wildlife in its 'Hinterland Who's-Who' series. For each species these bulletins cover such topics as : distribution, life history, appearance, migration, relation to man, limits to population and a reading list.

These are available free from Information Canada.

The following sample bulletins will be on the publications desk at the next meeting:

trumpeter swan - killdeer - wood duck -- muskrat
canvasback -- raccoon -- muskox.

THE ARM-CHAIR BIRD WATCHER

Some of my birdie friends have, probably correctly, classified me as an arm-chair bird watcher. They claim that if I am sitting in my arm-chair opposite the living room window and a bird passes by, I will look at it. Be that as it may, I certainly won't go very far to look at even a yellow-bellied people watcher. My domain is a half-mile of shoreline of Sturgeon Lake just south of Fenelon Falls. The following are a few jottings of the laziest bird watcher south of Haliburton .. I keep hearing of Phoebes that nest in the strangest of places. One continually nests over the door of a friend who has to use another entrance to his cottage until the nesting season is over. Our family finally joined this group last year when a slightly demented Phoebe decided to build her nest right above our back door at the cottage. She deposited five eggs in a nest on a beam just above and to one side of the door while we were minding our own business in Toronto. As soon as we arrived for the summer, we were the bad guys. Every time we opened the door, she flew off the nest.. To add to our troubles, a Cowbird decided she liked the neighborhood and deposited one of her eggs in the nest. A week later, two of the eggs had hatched. On one of her frantic departures from the nest, she knocked one of the baby birds right out. It hit my wife on the back and ricocheted onto the sun-deck. I put it right back in the nest, but Mrs. P's luck just wasn't running good last spring. Within a week all the eggs and young ones had disappeared except one. Fortunately that one lived to maturity and we had the pleasure of seeing it fly off into the great mysterious outside world under its own steam. Having a nest within arm's reach at one's own back door makes it easy to record data for the Royal Ontario Museum's Bird Nest Records Scheme, but it's not easy on the nerves!

One day in late June, our resident pair of Kingbirds seemed to be making more noise than usual, so we went to have a look. My wife discovered that the cause of the uproar was a young Kingbird who was perched on our garden lounge, having obviously just left the nest. My keen-eyed spouse also found the nest high up in a locust tree, occupied by the youngster's two brothers (or sisters - her eyes aren't that keen). The parents were frantically trying to encourage Junior to get up to safer territory. His first erratic attempt landed him in a tiny locust tree and the second got him up to the peak of the roof of the cabin, where he stayed in one spot from noon to 8:00 p.m. The parents refused to feed him all that time - I guess trying to force him back to the home tree only a few feet away. When I looked out next morning, the two nest-bound juveniles had moved out to an outer limb and there was roving Junior on the limb above. A little later, all three had gone - presumably out into the cold, cold world.

In our little "1/2 mile of shoreline" we put up 61 tree swallow and house wren boxes in late April, thanks to help from four pre-teenagers. Our unblemished record of 24 years of failing to attract Bluebirds was kept intact but we were able to persuade 19 House Wren couples to raise successful broods out of 25 boxes where nests were started and 32 tree swallow pairs out of 36 nests started. In addition, our helpers ferreted out 3 successful Robin nestings and 7 Barn Swallow nests. A special "A" for effort has to go to a Barn Swallow pair who had a nest destroyed with four young ones in it (by homo sapiens - an appropriate name) on July 10th. When I looked against the same spot on July 16th, a new nest had been built!

It's certainly no mystery why small birds lay so many eggs. The little songsters have so many enemies that it's a wonder that any are successful in raising a brood. Of all the nests mentioned above, only 33 were not molested and graduated their full complement of youngsters. Ten nests had a total of 43 eggs

taken by predators and 12 other nests had 23 young ones taken (by garter snakes, red squirrels or raccoons??).

A neighbor maintains two simple feeders for Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, which he takes in every autumn. He says that the Hummingbirds return each spring to the exact same location and hover at the same height that the feeders had been the previous season. If the feeders are empty any morning, the 'Hummers' hover around until the neighbour drops everything, including his shaving brush, to rush out and prepare their "breakfast".

We have been waiting patiently for Purple Martins to come to our apartment house in the back field. Three years ago a man across the lake had a full house in his apartment. The next year, the overflow went to a new house nearby. "Ha", we thought, "next year will be our year for the overflow". No such luck. Some sneaky guy on the far side built another new house and he got the overflow! Oh, well, maybe this year.

We have spent some time in teaching all the young fry on our shore to inspect the boxes to count eggs and juveniles, without giving the parents heart attacks (the bird parents, that is). One eight-year old in her enthusiasm started to check the boxes unattended by her parents. My wife was sitting on the lawn enjoying the sun when she was startled to see the youngster with an adult tree swallow in her hand. She had opened the nest roof where the mother was sitting on the eggs and the mother had not flown off. Thinking it was an injured juvenile, she brought it over for my wife to inspect. She told her that she was going to take the bird to Toronto and train it as a pet! She released her hand slightly and the bird soared off leaving a broken-hearted youngster. My wife explained that this was the mother bird protecting her young. Shortly after she called to say that the mother was back in the nest, confounding the 'old wife's' tale that if parent birds are touched they won't return to the nest.

While visiting acquaintances one evening, I noticed a small bird feeder hanging from a tree branch. I said to the hostess, "I hope you keep that well filled with seed". She laughed. "Well, at the moment it is filled with a house wren's nest." Sure enough, when I looked at it more carefully, I saw that there was a 3/4" space at the bottom of the glass side. Somehow the mother wren had squeezed under the glass and had built a complete nest of twigs inside the tiny feeder. I could hear the young ones squeaking inside. Just as we moved away, the Wren squeezed under the glass and flew off for more food for her youngsters.

..... L. Pritchard.

If you want to follow up Allan Wainio's enthusiastic talk on 'Habitat Improvement for Wildlife' with some plantings of your own, there's a few good books you can get. One is:

'Attracting Birds to Your Garden' (Sunset Books, \$1.95). It has many hints on what to plant, and on feeding stations and nest boxes.

Another paperback is:

'The Hungry Bird Book' (by Robert Arbib and Tony Soper).

..... and may your lawns be forever yellow!

COMING EVENTS

ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE

- Information 922-2804

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

February 7 - "Canada's Water - A Resource and an Environment" - colour slides.
J. P. Bruce, Director General, Inland Waters, Environment Canada, Ottawa.

February 14 - "Astronomy in Canada - Then and Now" - colour slides; joint meeting with Toronto Centre, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.
Dr. Helen Sawyer Hogg, Research Professor of Astronomy, University of Toronto.

February 21 - "History of Medical and Related Sciences" - Dr. Ruth G. Hodgkinson, Jason A. Hannah Professor in the History of Medical and Related Sciences, Queen's University, Kingston.

February 28 - "The Making of a Capital City" - an exercise in environmental design - colour slides. Dr. Thomas Howarth, Professor of Architecture and former Dean of Faculty, University of Toronto; also Mr. Jaap Schoulten, Sr. Urban Planner with the National Capital Commission.

March 6 - "Adam Smith - The Man" - with slides. Dr. W. E. Swinton, Professor Emeritus, Department of Zoology, University of Toronto; Sr. Fellow of Massey College.

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

Sunday Family films - Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Information: 928-3690

GETTING THE URGE TO PLAN YOUR WEEKENDS AND HOLIDAYS ?

ONTARIO NATURE TOURS, 71 Thorncliffe Park Dr., #511, Toronto, M4H 1L3 (421-4537)

OFFER: 6372 Montrose Road, Niagara Falls, Ontario - Gus Yaki

Birding for Beginners - Toronto Area - February 7 - 8
March 6 - 7
April 10 - 11

Winter is the prime time to begin learning to identify our native birds. With few obstructions, and the birds often in large groups, they are easy to see. Over one hundred species can be observed.

Join David Broughton for a fun-filled weekend, seeing the birds in their favourite haunts. Dave will quickly point the diagnostic aids to identification. Become an expert, too. Travelling via minibus, visit areas within a 30-mile radius of Toronto. Cost: \$12.00 one day, \$20.00 for both days, each day visiting different places. Phone 421-4537 for details.

.... or you might be interested in:

Bermuda Nature Tour - February 4 - 14
Trinidad and Tobago Tour - February 19 - March 3
Caribbean Cruise - March 3 - 19
Coastal Texas Tour - March 20 - 28
Northeastern Mexico - March 28 - April 4
Southeastern Arizona - April 4 - 14
Great Smoky Mountains National Park - April 17 - 25
Point Pelee National Park (daily tours) - April 29 - May 4
Pelee Island Visit - May 5 - 7
Southern Ontario Birding - May 8 - 22
Britain Nature Tour - May 25 - June 15

and many more. Phone or write for details.

AND ... more opportunities to get away for a weekend or a holiday :

Environmental Experiences Club - Ed O'Connor, 2 Nursewood Road, Apt. 11,
Toronto, M4E 3R8 (699-9211, after 6:00 p.m.)
- Norm Cramp, R. R. 2, Georgetown, Ont. (877-1829)

OFFER:

Feb 27 - 29 - Dorset Winter Weekend
March 12 - 14 - Winter Camping (Algonquin Park)
April 30 - May 2 - Exploratory Canoe Trip (Johnnie Lake)
May 14 - 16 - Ojibway Weekend (Parry Island Reserve)
July 25-Aug 1 - Last Lake Canoe Trip (Pickerel River area)
Aug. 15 - 22 - Johnnie Lake Canoe Trip (Killarney area)
Aug. 20 - Sept 5 - Bell Lake Canoe Trip (Killarney area)

.... write or phone for complete details.

BATHURST INLET - CAMBRIDGE BAY

Trish and Glenn Warner, who operate Bathurst Inlet Lodge for naturalists, will conduct bird watching tours this summer to Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island, in the Northwest Territories. Bathurst Inlet is 360 miles north of Yellowknife and Cambridge Bay is 175 miles north of Bathurst Inlet. Tours commence June 16.

The outstanding bird life at Cambridge Bay has been described by British authority Raymond Waters as being richer than any other Arctic area visited by him, and by European standards, is rated as a "bird paradise."

Karl Maslowski, of Cincinnati, did a film on the birds of Cambridge Bay last summer and this will be shown by the Warners at the St. Lawrence Town Hall in Toronto on Saturday evening, February 21. Other films of interest will also be shown. Tickets are available free from: Lucow Public Relations, 4003 Bayview Ave. Suite 1009, Willowdale, Ont. M2M 3Z8. Phone: 223-6097.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED - FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW - MARCH 9 - March 14, 1976

Can you help by taking on a 'shift' during the hours: Place:
Weekdays 10:00 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. Automotive Building,
Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. C.N.E.

A schedule of hours will be worked out but we need to know that we will have members available during the day periods especially. There is no selling .. just a wonderful opportunity to make the public aware of the Club and its activities. Material will be on hand as 'hand-outs' to those interested.

This is the Club's first opportunity to have a booth at this show. It will be a great success if you will help us by volunteering your time. Please phone:

Daytime: 422-4830 after 9:00 p.m. 925-0549 (never too late)

ONCE AGAIN ! The Editor is still pretty short of material for the next Newsletter. All stories, book reviews, reminiscences, hike reports welcome. Deadline for the March issue is February 7th.

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