



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Number 314

March 1978

Visitors welcome!

MARCH MEETING

Monday, March 6, 1978, at 8:15 p.m.

at 252 Bloor Street West

(between Bedford Rd. and St. George St.)

Topic: DARWIN AS A NATURALIST

Speaker: Dr. William Swinton

Dr. Swinton, a well-known scholar and author, is Centennial Professor at the University of Toronto and Senior Fellow of Massey College at the University of Toronto. He has given numerous official addresses in Europe, the U.S.S.R., and India and Pakistan. We are indeed fortunate that he has consented to speak to us, and show us slides.

April Meeting: Monday, April 3, 1978

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM SERIES

Tuesday American Heartland: The Great River Story by Walter Berlet
March 21 OISE Auditorium, 252 Bloor Street West
8:15 p.m. Single Admission: \$2.75

LONG POINT (BUS OUTING) Sunday, March 26, 1978

An opportunity to see the Whistling Swans and other waterfowl. Reserve your place on the bus by phoning Helen May (483-5178) after 6:30 p.m. March 12-18. Confirm by sending the fare (\$7.00 payable to the Toronto Field Naturalists) to Herb Elliott, 92 Morningside Ave., Toronto M6S 1S9. Cheques for this outing must be received by March 22. Bring lunch. There will be one pick-up at Bloor and Yonge (at subway entrance near Bay Store) at 8:00 a.m. Bus will arrive back in Toronto around 5:30 p.m. Leaders: Ruth and Eric Lewis

Note: To determine the number of buses to be chartered for TFNC outings, advance registration is required and cash can not be accepted on buses.

Drivers go west from Port Rowan to Hwy. 59 and south on the causeway to the bridge. Meet at 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND PUBLICATION SALES

83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ont. M5M 2T4 or call 488-7304

- JUNIOR CLUB This meeting will be presented by the Ecology Group. Meet in the Theatre of the Royal Ontario Museum. Membership is open to boys and girls from 8 to 16 years of age.
 Saturday March 4 10:00 a.m. Chairman: John Martin (265-2818), Mary Nickle (221-7124)
- BOTANY GROUP City Gardening — fun for all seasons with Hiles and Mary Carter
 Thursday March 16 8:00 p.m. Meet in the cafeteria in the basement of Hodgson Public School on Davisville Ave. just east of Mount Pleasant Road. Parking available in the schoolyard, off Millwood Rd. one block north of Davisville. Chairman: Wes Hancock (757-5518)
- BIRD GROUP Bathurst Island Area — a movie with Glen Warner. Meet in St. James Bond United Church on Avenue Rd. just north of Eglinton Avenue. Chairman: Red Mason (621-3905)
 Wednesday March 22 8:00 p.m.
- RAVINE GROUP Rouge River Valley, a report on a study by Bill Conrad of Ryerson
 Wednesday March 29 8:00 p.m. Meet at Huron Street Public School, 541 Huron St. (north of Bloor St., west of St. George Street). Chairman: Jack Cranmer-Byng (488-3262), Secretary: Ruby Rogers (789-9612)

OUTINGS

Everyone welcome!

Held rain or shine!

- March 12-18 Time to reserve your place on the bus to Long Point.
- Sunday MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - trees in winter
 March 12 Leader: Bruce Parker
 2:00 p.m. Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge St. 0.3 mi. north of St. Clair Ave. (subway).
- Saturday DUFFIN CREEK - Scarborough Nature Walk
 March 18 Leader: Bill Dibble (261-7955)
 10:15 a.m. Meet at Pickering GO Station parking lot. Bring lunch.
- Sunday LESLIE STREET SPIT - Waterfowl
 March 19 Leader: Bill Freedman
 9:00 a.m. Meet at gate entrance across from garden plots at south end of Leslie Street (Queen streetcar to Leslie St. and walk south). Bring good footwear, warm clothes, and a lunch to carry.
- 2:00 p.m. TAYLOR CREEK - Nature Walk (See story on page 4.)
 Leaders: Linda Cardini, Helen Juhola
 Meet at the corner of Woodbine and O'Connor. Take Woodbine or Coxwell bus north from the Bloor subway. Parking available at corner.
- Sunday LONG POINT - Whistling Swans
 March 26 Leaders: Ruth and Eric Lewis
 8:00 a.m. See page 1 for details.

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH ARBORETUM

Maple Syrup Exhibit on March 11 and 12, March 18, and March 25 and 26.
 For further information, call 824-4120, ext. 113.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This month there are several items of business which have been discussed by the Board and which may be of interest to you. For the past six months the FON and the federated clubs including the TFNC have been involved in discussions about our mutual roles and responsibilities. Through continuing dialogue, improved communications, financial support programs, shared projects, it is hoped that both the FON and federated clubs will benefit their memberships and the "cause of nature". These deliberations are not easy and there are no clear pathways; however, there is energy and optimism and I trust there will be many successes. If you have any comments about the direction which the TFNC and/or FON is taking I would be pleased to entertain your ideas and pass along salient recommendations. Please forward the information to my home address. I will endeavour to cover more of this issue at a later date after both the TFNC and FON executives have had a chance to exchange ideas.

I would like to commend the efforts of our energetic Taylor Creek Ravine Group and in particular Linda Cardini, Helen Juhola, and Brian Gray who are presently involved in the Ontario Municipal Board hearings on the development proposal by Trimontium. Our team has successfully completed Round One of the hearings in January. The second period of deliberation when we present our case, and the most critical, will be April 17 to April 21. I would like to urge you as strongly as possible to attend the hearings. It is very important that we support our Taylor Creek Ravine group in these precedent-setting hearings. Please attend — it's so important!

It is evident that we need more assistance from club members because the number of projects continues to grow as our membership increases. In the past when a call for "help" has gone out to you there has always been a willing hand to help. That's what makes this club so special and enjoyable; and people are responding. I am happy to report that Joan O'Donnell will be taking over from Norah Sturart as Program Committee Chairman in the fall. A special thanks to Norah for her help in setting up an excellent series of speakers this year. There are other unfilled positions which need attention. If you can help, please contact me or the person indicated:

- ▷ Auditor (call Helen Yemen 783-2155)
- ▷ Botany Group Chairman (call Wes Hancock 757-5518)

Ron Thorpe, President (484-1807)
217 Greer Road
Toronto, Ont. M5N 3N5

JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE ENDOWMENT FUND

If you have any nature books you would like to donate, we will sell them and put the money in the fund. Please contact Red Mason (621-3905).

PLEASE CHECK YOUR LIBRARIES

Someone has borrowed and forgotten to return the following from Jack Cranmer-Byng: Foxes and Watercress and General Biological Survey of Three Ravines within the City of Toronto. Please call 488-3262 if you find you have them.

THERE'S MORE TO NATURAL HISTORY NOW THAN WATCHING BIRDS...

Your Toronto Field Naturalists' Club showed up boldly at the Ontario Municipal Board offices on January 3rd, 1978 to oppose a redevelopment proposal for a 4.2-acre area of woodland and wet ravine lands on Taylor Creek. It was strictly a case of David versus Goliath — but whether or not with the same result, it's too early to tell. On one side was an inexperienced articling student and two nervous club directors; on the other side, what seemed like an army of assorted lawyers, attendants, and retainers. The developer had three lawyers — although only one ever said anything; Metro Toronto, one; and East York, one — all in support of the subdivision proposal.

From the atmosphere and the sub rosa comments made, it was clear than the Field Naturalists were regarded as a nuisance but not, at first, a serious threat to the developer's plans — a mere mote in the eye of development. Later, however, when the questioning became more detailed, and there was a chance that we might actually hold up the God-given right to develop, the sub rosa comments became more testy and the note taking and passing more nervous.

Although the developer proposes to virtually level the top of the ravine and put 22 houses where there are only three, although he is proposing to put houses into the ravine thereby destroying valuable wildlife habitat, and although a 100 to 120 year old red oak and maple woods will be destroyed in the process, the developer's lawyer argued that all he had to introduce were documents indicating East York Council approval and Metropolitan Toronto support. He said it was up to us to show why the development should not take place. Fortunately, the member of the OMB presiding rejected this argument, and the developer had to present evidence. This took two days. Then cross-examination of the Metro Toronto Planning Commissioner took another day. At that point the whole matter was adjourned until April 17, 1978 when the Field Naturalists will present their case.

There is a feeling even by many of the developer's witnesses that the site is not appropriate for single family residential development. The developer's argument is based on the fact that he believes it is the best that can be done with the site since it is clear from the zoning and official plan statements and the history of the site that only single family dwellings will be allowed there. The present proposal is a compromise, they say, but all these arguments are based on the underlying assumption that some development must take place. Why? No one asked the developer to buy this land which was already a stable large home neighbourhood. The large houses on large lots have in fact protected the ravine slopes and woods. The houses have only now begun to deteriorate with rumour of redevelopment and with the actual start of development on Trimonium I.

Why must a higher density be allowed on steeply contoured, wooded land just because it is now feasible from an economic and engineering point of view? On this logic all our ravines are in grave danger unless ravine control by-laws and official plan changes are enacted to prevent redevelopment at a higher density. When our present by-laws and official plans were created the kind of economic pressure which is now being put on private lands that border ravines was not considered, nor did anyone conceive that it would ever be economically feasible to flatten rugged valley slopes.

The TFNC is putting up the best fight it can considering it is working with almost no money and little experience, so we could use your help. Any money sent to the club would be appreciated. Send it to the TFNC c/o Helen Yemen, 200 Brooke Ave., Toronto, Ont. M5M 2K6 and mark on it "FOR RAVINE PRESERVATION".

Even more, we could use your personal support in the form of your attendance at the hearings during the week of April 17, 1978 at the OMB offices at 180 Dundas Street West.

Most club members use the ravines, and anyone who would like to speak at the hearing about their opposition to this project and their use of and concern for Metro ravines should call Brian Gray at 367-0655. Let's get our heads out of the sand and work to stop the gradual nibbling away at Toronto's ravine lands.

Brian Gray (367-0655)

WATERFRONT NEWS

In the past few months some rather interesting events have occurred which have helped to reinforce and strengthen the TFNC's position regarding the use of the Leslie Street Headland as a nature reserve and for other compatible low intensity uses. The first was the issuing of a report written by Miriam Wyman and Gerald McKeating of the Ministry of Natural Resources which summarizes the results of a survey taken of over 1200 participants in an advertised "Wildlife Viewing Weekend" at the Headland last summer. The data of this survey showed conclusively that most people felt that there were not sufficient opportunities for wildlife viewing, and that they would definitely participate more often if the opportunities were provided. Significantly, there was virtually no interest in the development of the Headland as a park for intensive recreational use, and people felt that its values as a natural resource and for educational opportunities should be emphasized. Noteable, more than two thirds of the respondents to the survey did not usually participate in wildlife-oriented activities, so that this was not a sample overly-weighted by naturalists.

Rather hopeful events have also occurred at City Hall in the committees dealing with the waterfront in which the TFNC has representatives. Both POHAT and CWPC recently approved a series of Interim Guidelines for the use of the Headland. The guidelines (in principle at least!) provide safeguards for the wildlife habitat on the site. One very contentious issue regarding these interim guidelines was an item that would severely limit car access by users of the site. Boating interests hotly debated against this issue as they claimed that they could not use the site effectively if they couldn't have frequent car access and parking facilities. Fortunately, however, the item was overwhelmingly approved by CWPC by a vote of 7 for and 2 against.

Another interesting development is the recent birth of a citizen's group called "Friends of the Spit". This group has objectives that are quite compatible with those of the TFNC, and is deserving of our support. Anyone interested in joining this group could contact their chairman, Russell Vaughan, at 790-8456.

Bill Freedman

REPORT ON THE JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE

At the most recent meeting of the TFNC nature reserve management committee the following topics were discussed.

HIGHWAY 89 EXTENSION. The Ontario government is planning an east-west provincial highway south of Lake Simcoe, basically following the Ravenshoe Road, and generally linking Highway 89 with Highway 7. A route along the Ravenshoe Road would not present a major threat to our nature reserve which is approximately one mile to the south. The Brock Road (County Road #1) which carries a fair amount of traffic passes within half a mile of the reserve now and is hardly noticeable. However, in the planning process, alternate routes must be considered. One possibility is that the highway could be routed along Stevenson's side-road which forms the northern boundary of our property. This could seriously affect the nature reserve. Factors such as an altered drainage pattern, a widened right-of-way, increased noise, etc., would render the nature reserve useless as such. Not only would our 2000 members lose a precious retreat, but the surrounding agricultural communities would be deprived of the many valuable benefits that a functioning nature reserve provides. The TFNC is keeping in touch with the Ministry of Transport and Communications on this matter. A Ministry decision is expected sometime in the spring of 1978.

CAMPING AT THE RESERVE. The committee has agreed that camping should not be permitted on the reserve. The TFNC insurance policy does not cover this activity and there are only basic sanitary facilities and no source of safe drinking water.

NEW PROJECTS. No major projects are planned. The committee agreed to a southerly extension of the Red Diamond Trail along Uxbridge Brook which is a very popular area for visitors to the reserve. Also discussed was a linking of the blue rectangle trail to the extended red diamond trail along the southern perimeter of the property. No final decision was made on this. It was recommended that the grid system in the original section of the reserve be checked and repaired where necessary.

The committee's proposals were accepted and placed in the minutes at the TFNC board meeting held on November 28, 1977.

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My first visit to the JBNR this year was on January 22, 1978, a sunny day, somewhat mild, with gentle breezes. The sideroad was plowed and I had no trouble parking. The snow was about 24 inches deep which made getting over the fence easy. We used cross-country skis to make our way to the shelter, but wished we had snowshoes when we tried some of the trails. We saw many animal tracks but few birds — just one partridge and a sprinkle of chickadees. Most delightful was the clean, quiet, softness of the snow-covered land.

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LOCK COMBINATION. This should be the same as last year. (I say should because I couldn't operate the lock on my last visit. It was frozen stiff and I had forgotten my oilcan!)

VOLUNTEERS. We need at least two people to start checking the grid system and we need more than that to work on the trails. Please call me if you are interested.

John Lowe-Wylde (284-5628)

IN SPITE OF THE METRO VALLEY LAND STUDY ...

A major section of wooded ravine property on the east side of the Humber River is about to be redeveloped for housing. The property is on the west side of Weston Road south of Sheppard Avenue in the borough of North York. The site is owned by a private developer who has applied to the Ontario Municipal Board for permission to build high-rise apartments. North York Planning Board has suggested a somewhat smaller scale of development, and local rate payer groups and council have supported single family use of the site.

Development of the site thus seems certain even though no detailed studies have been done of the potential impact on the natural environment. The OMB hearing is expected to take place in 2 or 3 months.

Anyone having special knowledge of the area or interested in helping to protect the environment in this area should contact Bill Anderson, Faculty Member, Urban Planning Department, Ryerson at 595-5165.

CANADIAN NATIONAL SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

We are planning to have a booth at the Show which takes place March 17 to March 26 and we need your help! We have many new and exciting ideas for our booth, but we cannot bring them to fruition without your assistance. If you can work at the booth, help us to prepare it, or make telephone calls — WE NEED YOU!! Please call Muriel Miville at 463-8066 or Laura Greer at 691-4888.

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Seasonal positions for students are available in Visitor Services Programmes for the period of May to September 1978. Resumes should be sent by March 1, 1978 to:

- ▷ The District Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Box 1168, Chatham, Ont. N7M 5L8 for positions at Rondeau or Pinery Parks
- ▷ The District Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, 611 Ninth Ave. East, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 3E4 for positions at Cyprus Lake, MacGregor Point, and Fathom Five Provincial Parks

LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Required: A warden, a person who will be responsible for operation of the Observatory's field stations on Long Point for part or all of the period April 1 to October 31, 1978. This person will be expected to work with volunteers on migration, observation, banding, and other projects, and be responsible for maintaining station facilities, for communications, and for transportation of supplies and personnel to and from the mainland. Essential qualifications include experience and interest in bird identification, banding and other field work; ability to carry out maintenance work on buildings, boats, and related equipment, to operate boats, and to work with volunteers in isolated conditions. Car ownership and possession of a driving licence will be assets. Remuneration will be \$400 per month. Applications are due March 15 and should include qualifications, experience, time available, and the names of one or two people who can be referred to for recommendations, and should be sent to:

r- David J.T. Hussell, LPBP, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0.

- required: Two or more observatory assistants to assist in various aspects of the LPBO 1978 program including any or all of the following: maintenance and operation of physical facilities including buildings, boats, traps, etc., clerical work and typing, migration observation and banding, breeding bird censuses, research projects on migrant or breeding birds, and educational programs for schools. These are essentially volunteer positions, but living expenses and accommodation are provided at the Observatory. Successful applicants can expect to benefit from extensive training and experience in various aspects of the Observatory's program. Positions are open throughout the year and to persons of any age or experience who are available for at least a month. Applications will be considered at any time, but should be submitted by April 1 for the university and high school summer vacation periods, and should state qualifications, experience, time available, and the names of one or two people who can be referred to for recommendations. Send to:
- ▷ J.T. Hussell, Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. MOE 1M0.
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Bird Study Workshops

- One or two four-day sessions of ornithological training, each for up to six students aged 14 through 16, will be held at the Long Point Bird Observatory in late June, or late August 1978, or both (exact dates to be announced later). These workshops will include an intensive introduction to techniques of censusing, trapping and banding birds, preparation of specimens, and an introduction to bird identification and behaviour. All training will be under the direction of experienced ornithologists. The course is intended for young people who already have some knowledge of birds and have a serious interest in learning more about field ornithology and bird study. Successful completion of the course will help qualify students for positions at the Observatory as summer assistants. The cost of the course will be \$35 including room and board at the Observatory Headquarters. Because we hope the participants will have a genuine interest in working with birds, we require each applicant to write a letter stating name, age and address, and explaining the extent of his or her background and interest in birds. The letter should also give the name and address of an adult (preferably a teacher or naturalist acquaintance) who could provide a recommendation. Applications should be sent by May 1 to:
- ▷ Bird Study Workshop, Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0

ANNUAL MEETING OF ONTARIO ORNITHOLOGISTS

When? Saturday, March 18, 1978

Where? University of Guelph, Room 113, Physical Sciences Building

Registration: between 8:30 and 9:30 in the foyer of the Physical Sciences Bldg.
fee - \$2.00

Facilities for both lunch and dinner will be available on campus. Ample parking is also available.

Morning session is from 9:30 to 12 noon; afternoon session from 1 to 5; in the evening Room 168 of the Zoology Building has been reserved for informal gathering and discussion.

Anyone who is interested is welcome to attend.

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

A lecture series entitled "A World in a Grain of Sand" will be given Thursdays at 8:00 p.m. in the Planetarium Lecture Room. (The lectures will be free.)

- March 9 On a Bone by Dr. Chris McGowan
 March 16 On a Rock by Dr. P. Von Bitter
 March 23 On Quartz by Mr. B. D'Arko Sturman
 March 30 On a Drop of Water by Mr. Renate Carson
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ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE

- March 4 What is the right size or Do limits to growth mean limits to size?
 illustrated with colour slides by Dr. P.M. Meincke
 March 11 Science, Technology and Modern Mythology
 illustrated with colour slides by Dr. J.E. Guillet

Lectures are held at 8:15 p.m. in Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, and are free to the public. Parking on the campus. College Streetcar to King's College Road (just east of St. George St.) and walk one block north.

▷ For further information apply to the Secretary, 191 College St., Toronto M5T 1P9 or telephone 979-2004.

THE CIVIC GARDEN CENTRE

Mini-show of Botanical Art from March 16 to March 19 in the lower link of the Civic Garden Centre.

A 30-minute appointment with a landscape architecture student can be arranged for March 11 or March 18 by calling the Civic Garden Centre. Cost to non-members of the Centre is \$10.00. Call 445-1552 or write to the Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. East, Don Mills, Ont. M3C 1P2.

KENYA SAFARI TOUR - July 6-24, 1978

This is a unique safari of special interest to all naturalists. Not only do we visit all the major national parks, game reserves (where we will see an abundant variety of wildlife species), but also we travel to more remote areas of unusual interest to bird watchers and botanists. Our superbly qualified driver/guides, expert in field identification, make an Elsa Safari an unforgettable experience.

First class accommodation in game lodges and tented camps; return air ticket allows stopovers in Europe, Britain, or Africa. All inclusive cost \$2495 per person. Personally conducted by Bettie Henderson, President of Elsa.

▷ For further details contact ELSA, Box 864, Postal Station K, M4P 2H2 or telephone Clair Wallace Travel at 925-4284 (days) or 489-8862 (evenings).

Information on group travel to the 17th International Congress of Ornithology, Berlin, West Germany, June 4-11, 1978, and pre and post congress tours throughout Europe is available from Lawson, McKay Tours Ltd., 11 Adelaide St. West, Suite 903, Toronto, Ont. M5H 1L9 or by telephoning 364-0622.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF BIRDING

Winter birding at the new Metropolitan Toronto Library may not be as exciting as along the waterfront, but it's a lot warmer! Among the 900,000 books and thousands of pamphlets and magazines moved last fall to the library's new home at Yonge and Asquith Streets, those devoted to birds fill more than two file drawers in the Science and Technology Section card index. Here are a few I found on a recent visit.

Books on the whereabouts of birds run the gamut of "Birds of Abd-al-Kuri" to "Birds of Zululand". (Lots of scope for reading up on that planned exotic birdwatching holiday.) Along the way you can stop for birds at Fair Isle (Scotland), Elgin County (Ontario), Poland, and the Mackenzie Valley.

You can find books on attracting birds, on birds colliding with airplanes (preferably read after your holidays), and books on bird psychology.

Our own Dr. Richard Saunders is represented by "Flashing Wings", his warm account of birding in Toronto in the 30's and 40's. Peter Iden's 1967 "Toronto Birdfinding Guide", published under the auspices of our club, is also in the library.

Jim Baillie, who was a friend to many of us, was the co-author with Paul Harrington of the 1936 Royal Ontario Museum publication "The Distribution of Breeding Birds in Ontario". Those were the days when "the Bald Eagle is found locally in summer throughout the province breeding from Lakes Erie and Ontario north at least to Lake Nipigon and Temiskaming District". And this about the Peregrine Falcon: "This Falcon is a rare breeding bird of Ontario but scattered pairs nest wherever there are suitable rock cliffs north from Leeds and Grey counties".

If your specialty is waterfowl, you'll enjoy looking at the four-volume edition of Jean Delacour's "The Waterfowl of the World" with colour plates by Peter Scott.

Veteran birders know the name of P.A. Taverner. Taverner was chief of the ornithological division of the National Museum of Canada and is probably best known for his "Birds of Canada" published in 1934. But how many are aware that he also wrote "Canada Land Birds; a pocket Field Guide"? The library has a copy of this 1939 book.

Elliott Coues (1842-1899) has been called "perhaps the most brilliant American ornithologist of all time". One of the sections in his "Key to North American Birds", two volumes, 5th edition, is a manual of collecting, preparing, and preserving birds. At the turn of the century popular-priced quality binoculars and authoritative field guides had not yet replaced the gun in bird identification.

One of the leaders in the movement to count birds rather than collect them was Frank Chapman. He's given credit for originating the Audubon Christmas Count in 1901. Chapman edited "Bird-Lore", an illustrated bi-monthly magazine, the predecessor of today's "Audubon". A bound volume of "Bird-Lore" for 1911 that I was looking at bore the stamp of the Central Circulating Library, Toronto, 1912. At that time it could be borrowed for two weeks. Now, like the other books in the library, it cannot be taken out.

Copies of "The Auk" from 1884 to the present can be seen. It is the quarterly journal of the American Ornithologists Union.

Perhaps you have wondered about the A.O.U. Check-List (5th edition, 1957) mentioned on your bird-listing cards. Well, that check list is on the shelf at the library, all 650 pages of it. For each species the breeding and wintering ranges are described as well as migration patterns and where the birds have turned up unexpectedly.

These are just a few of the pleasures awaiting the birder in the library's Science and Technology Section. Take the elevator to the second floor and turn to the right. The hours are: Mondays to Fridays - 9 to 9, Sundays until the end of April - 1:30 to 5. Just a short ride up from the waterfront after a cold morning looking for this year's rarities!

Harold Taylor

RESTRICTED MULTIPLE USE - PART 2

The following is from a letter dated January 17, 1978 from Eva Davis to W.C. Mansell.

"Your article on Restricted Multiple Use was most interesting, and your query says it all: Why do we allow parks departments etc. to reduce all parks and conservation areas to expansive areas of turf? How many times I have cycled to a "conservation" area only to find that conservation is a misnomer! One of my haunts in Willowdale was an area which has since become the G. Ross Lord Reservoir. When this project was announced I wrote to Mr. Thompson pleading that he leave a few stands of raspberries, an area of swamp, the largest trees, and the occasional bank of Day Lilies and Adder's Tongues. His return letter assured me that His People understood all about the necessity of leaving logs around etc., that indeed their aim was to conserve. When I went back briefly, there were certainly a number of trees, even a few patches of tangle, but they were quite overwhelmed by the vast stretch of tidy sod, the parking lots, the gravelled road winding in and out. Yet this was better than most. Maybe I have been unlucky, but your suggestion that the TFNC, FON, and CNF should be the ones responsible for the planning, if not the management, of conservation areas seems to me our only hope. As far as I can see, the worst fate any wild area can suffer, short of being "developed" is to fall into the hands of civil servants to whom anything growing of itself is suspect and the good earth is "dirt", whose primary concern is that motorists be able to park, and that nobody be bothered by bushes (harbourers of insects), wild flowers (read weeds), decaying trees (woodlice and similar nasties), and swamp (and we all know how unhygienic that is).

Editors Comment. It seems to me we really are in control — if only we will bother to call, write, or talk to people about our interests. In mid-January I had a call from a Rosedale resident complaining that parks department personnel were removing dead trees from a marshy area at the east end of Park Drive Ravine. I called the City Parks Dept. and explained that I was one of approximately 2000 members of the TFNC who objected to the destruction of wildlife habitat caused by this kind of tidying. After conversations with several officials I was told that as a result of calls from people like me it was no longer the policy of City Parks to tidy natural areas in this way. Apparently a similar activity in the Gerrard Street Ravine about two years ago had been stopped by someone complaining that parks personnel were removing fallen wood but leaving can, bottles, tires, etc. So keep those calls and letters moving. Our views do count! Make your letters educational, not angry, not everyone is as enlightened as we are or knows about our interests. Letters to newspapers are useful if you can't get officials to listen. See page 35 of "Toronto the Green" for telephone numbers of all the parks departments, the Conservation Authority, and the province's pollution complaint department.

NEW HORIZONS IN NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION

I think the time has arrived in Ontario's history to re-emphasize the urgency of rescuing some of our natural heritage from the onrush of mankind. I refer to those vestigial landscapes remaining after settlement and urbanization. When I see the rate of land conversion around Ontario I feel panic.

Raymond Dasman, a California conservationist, made a gloomy forecast: "unless the trend is stopped the old understanding of farm and forest, landscape and animals that was traditional to Americans will not be present in the urban America of the Future. They will disappear forever beneath a pattern of concrete highways, asphalt streets and housing".

Well, I am not so pessimistic, but we do have a problem. The problem is how to preserve some of our native woodlands, wetlands, and indeed the tapestry of rural Ontario from the onrush of industrial mankind. The massive destruction of the natural landscape has only begun if one considers recent provincial population dynamics — even modest ones — and the accelerating conversion of land into a sprawling urban-industrial complex. You've all heard it before, but because it is important, it bears repeating.

I think we can forestall the worst. William Whyte in his readable book "The Last Landscape" said it well "The land to be saved will have to be saved in the next few years. We have no luxury of choice. We must make our commitments now and look to this landscape as the last one". Whyte also noted that the less of our landscape there is to save, the better our chances of saving it. In fact, the issue becomes self-solving. If we sit back, no natural lands will be left except those few we have already managed to save.

The question is how to do it? How to do it fast enough? We have very little lead time. The big peril is the time factor.

The next question is who will do it? Government agencies are now loaded with commitments far beyond present revenues. Elected representatives have their eyes on short-term priorities. Increasing unemployment demands labour-intensive expenditures. Land-saving is not one of these. Evidence of this is that Ontario Cabinet Ministers proposed to sell off some provincial parklands in 1976. Provincial officials show increasing resistance to Federal invasion of the park domain in Ontario.

In the private sector, even the prices of wildlands have skyrocketed. Natural area acquisition by Nature Clubs, often in concert with Conservation Authorities, has slowed down. Donations by Foundations and private citizens dwindle before astronomical price tags for land.

We need:

- ▷ a new source of funds for purchase,
- ▷ identification and inventory of those significant natural areas and ecosystems we want to save,
- ▷ a planning policy and process whereby those lands of intrinsic natural beauty or possessing natural features can be protected from development,
- ▷ a philosophy that grants the conservation of natural areas equal importance in planning trade-offs with other land uses.

Let's look at the record briefly. The Federal Government has secured a few of these areas in Ontario as national parks, for example, Point Pelee; and the Canadian Wildlife Service is belatedly moving into Ontario with a purchase of marshland on Lake St. Clair.

The Federal Government has proposed a bold new program called "National Landmarks" whose purpose is to acquire historic, scenic, or natural areas across Canada. Resistance will be offered by Ontario politicians and senior bureaucrats even though the Provincial Treasury is committed elsewhere. One cannot, the other will not.

Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources, though primarily dedicated to resource development, has acquired or set aside some specific areas supporting unique or fragile ecosystems. Most of these are within the Provincial Parks systems. However, there are still many valuable areas outside the parks that should be secured. Any purchases by the Ministry of Natural Resources have been as a result of intense naturalist pressures.

Some Conservation Authorities have been effective in securing natural areas through purchases financed by private funding combined with Provincial grants. In other areas, either the "outdoor buffs" did not realize the potential of the local Conservation Authority, or the Authority was over-stocked with members to whom Conservation means Big Dams.

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists and some of the clubs affiliated with it were the first to buy lands they cherished. They were the first people to feel the loss of their resource base. Give full credit to those dedicated people who got into the act, and to those funding agencies which provided the money. Ontario would be much diminished were it not for their track record.

With the decline of preservation by outright acquisition, we are turning to the planning process. Some environmentalists argue that land should be treated as a common resource like air and water. North American land ownership has historically discouraged this, although the significance of a "deed" has declined due to the demands of industrial society on privately owned lands.

Some natural areas have been designated as hazard lands (ie. unsuitable for development) and public purchase has become possible.

The major thrust now is to identify, inventory, and designate ecologically sensitive areas in Official Plans; that is, to identify areas required to balance streamflow, to protect aquifers, to preserve habitat of endangered species, or to protect a valuable ecosystem. The designations must be politically acceptable and defensible in courts. A tough order!

The International Biological Program recently completed a four-year inventory of Ontario. Of 618 proposed reserves, only 30% are afforded some protection through public ownership. The rest are vulnerable.

For four years the Ministry of the Environment has financed university-based teams called Experience Programs to identify and inventory sensitive areas. Documentation is needed to defend these areas before the Environmental Assessment Board or the Ontario Municipal Board in order to avoid the impacts of pipelines, hydro lines, highways, municipal drains, and subdivisions. Natural resource teams have researched significant areas of the Niagara Escarpment and elsewhere. Some homework has been done.

Waterloo University and the regional government of Waterloo have pioneered in designation. Sixty significant areas have been incorporated into their approved Official Plan. Almost all landowners have accepted this designation. Some are even proud of it.

Waterloo is the vanguard. Other local governments are following suit, but do not expect the trend to sweep Ontario. Provincial leadership is awaited at

a time when the proposed revisions to the Planning Act will dump decisions and responsibility back on local governments. Back to the evils of the 1950's when exploiters had the Councillors in their hip pockets. Ontario Government policy on natural areas is stated six times in a 1976 policy statement; for example, "The acceptance of direct provincial responsibility for the protection of areas and features of unique importance" reads like the gospels, but like the foodland issue, how it can be done is never explained.

A few examples of what has been saved follow:

Quimet Canyon	Sandbanks PP	Outlet Beach PP
Windsor Prairie	Rondeau	Pelee

Over half the marshlands of southern Ontario have been lost. They are the key to wildlife survival. Of Ontario's people, about 85% live south of the Laurentian Shield. Only 1% of this area is suitable wetland for wildlife. Look at how it is being treated.

Murray Marshes - thousands of acres have been converted to growing corn, now a deadly surplus

Michael Bay - an Italian Syndicate paid \$2 million for this marsh when MNR did not have the money

South shore of Lake St. Clair - once marsh, now marinas

Walpole Island - several thousand acres have been converted to farmland

Oshawa Second Marsh - a proposed harbour site for declining seaway traffic

Wesleyville Marsh - endangered by a hydro plant

Turkey Point Marsh - largely gone to agriculture

Point Pelee Marsh - converted to onions

Mosa Twp Middlesex - forest-marsh being ruined by drainage

Calton Twp Marsh - drained out, but saved by beaver

Smith Lake Sarnia - a link in the big flyway - drained in 50's, topsoil blew away, now cottages allowed

Cookstown - Stroud swamps being drained

Randall - Adjala swamps being drained for farming

Mount Albert - Mud Lake lowlands being drained

Dundalk Plateau - potentially poor for agriculture, but rapidly being drained because of the Drainage Act

Byron Woods - 300 acres near London being threatened by subdivision

Amherstburg - owner wants tree cut down holding one of last three eagle nests left in that part of the country

As Hans Blumenfeld, a Toronto planner, said: "The American and Canadian people face a dilemma. They want and want badly, two things. They want to live in an efficient convenient and healthy environment and they want as individuals and collectively as municipalities, to be able to make an honest dollar out of every piece of property they happen to own. The two are basically incompatible. Sooner or later they have to decide which one is more important to them.

Malcolm Kirk, Ravenna, Ont.

Editor's Comment. In 1971 Malcolm Kirk compiled a "Nature Reserves Manual" for the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Copies may be obtained by contacting the FON, 1262 Don Mills Rd., Don Mills, Ont. M3B 2W8 (444-8419).

BIRD'S EYE VIEW

We've been reading a lot lately in the newsletter about bird names. But to this time we had not heard the birds' point of view. So a call was put out — a bird call naturally — for a bird to set out the birds' side of the story. The following article was found this morning in the empty bird feeder.

My name is Sooty Owl. I live on a farm. Since I have seen fourteen Christmas Bird Counts, the old circulation isn't what it used to be and my feet get chilled quite easily, so I roost on the farmhouse chimney. I live exclusively on mice and around here they live on the overflow from the silage. Since it is fermented they are quite easy to catch, no doubt accounting for my longevity, but the problem is that they make me very tipsy, so I fall down the chimney a lot and hence the name.

Well, the last time it happened I chanced to see a copy of the newsletter open on the table. What I read shocked me. They were going to change some of our names! The most shocking part of it was that until now I hadn't been aware that we had been arbitrarily given names by the humans. We'd always gotten by calling each other Hank, and Bill, or Mollie — that sort of thing. What a put down; I was merely "a barn owl" instead of "Sooty" or "S. Owl" or for formal occasions "Sooty Secondarily-Smashed Owl".

I immediately, after getting back up the chimney of course, called a meeting of all the birds. Had a lot of trouble getting a suitable time for maximum participation. What with some being on the day shift and others on the night shift, we finally compromised on dusk in order to catch them all. The meeting was held on a little knoll in the middle of an open field, out of deference to Lance a red-tailed hawk. He was starting to get a little short-sighted in one eye and was developing a slice on landing to compensate for it. No sooner had he landed than the starlings tried to get the meeting declared unconstitutional on the grounds that the warblers weren't represented. That was quickly squelched; naturally they weren't represented — summer visitors, mere tourists, were not entitled to a vote.

Then I announced the reason for the meeting. Not only had we all been assigned names by the humans but they were constantly changing them and then bickering amongst themselves about the changes. Well, that bombshell certainly got their attention. You could have heard a seed drop, a very small one. It was the first time I had ever heard complete silence from a gathering of birds, an eery sound that sent chills up and down my spine.

The chickadees recovered first: "Call us anything you like, but don't call us late for dinner", they chorused. But they are noted for their chronic immaturity and were ignored by all. Everyone else took it very seriously.

Then the babel started. From his great height the heron said most indignantly: "What right do they have monkeying about with our names? What on earth do they know about us? How many of them have ever grubbed about in the mud for food or even", he shuddered, "eaten, ugh, worms?"

Then it was chaos: "In our family the largest egg in each clutch has always been called Moose Jr."

"My family was here before binoculars were even invented, yeah verily". The robin tended to be pompous. "They were here before the humans came down out of the trees and started eating us. The only thing they called us then was delicious".

Then the starlings drowned everyone else out. "We have traditionally always

all been called Will, since he was the cause of our introduction here".

"Johnny-come-latelies", someone muttered, "what can you expect from nouveaux but to do something as stupid as calling everyone by the same name".

"It's not stupid. It's modern efficiency. We have no problems remembering each other's names".

I gave them a few of my best hoots and got them all quieted down. "We are all agreed then that we should not take this flagrant abuse of our rights sitting down".

"What will we do, all fly away?" Darn smart-aleck chickadee.

I ignored him. "All in favour of taking action, nod your heads". I noticed a few who didn't nod and figured I'd better nip any dissension in the bud. I didn't bother about the mourning dove who'd slept through the whole meeting, occasionally flipping a wing when she thought a vote was called for.

"Well Speedy", I asked the nuthatch. "why aren't you in favour?"

"Oh, I'm definitely in favour. It's just that I have to keep my head down. Lately I've been getting dizzy spells if I raise my head -- ever since I landed on that plastic Christmas tree and ate a couple of plastic grubs. They make them quite realistic now you know".

"Okay", I turned my gaze on Timmy. "why are you not in favour?" He was very timid and shrank away, afraid to speak. "Speak up Timmy, it is your democratic right and duty".

"Well", he began, blushing. "I don't like the name Timmy. I would much sooner be called Rock Dove. It would make me sound tough".

"Well at least you have a valid reason, albeit a selfish one. However, you wouldn't be Rock Dove, you would be a rock dove". I hooted for attention. Quite a few of my flock had begun poking about in the snow for edibles. "A snack will be served AFTER the meeting, so let's get back to business. We are in agreement that we must take some action. Let's hear your ideas."

"If we ignore the humans maybe they'll go away", whispered Timmy. Fortunately very few heard him, or the majority might have been in favour. A lot of birds are like that, preferring any course of action which requires no thought or effort on their part. They're willing to 'let George do it' even though George may have flown into a window the week before and broken his neck.

"Let us retain legal counsel and get an injunction", said the heron.

"Unfortunately", I pointed out. "they are no longer on the barter system and even if they were I doubt we have any possessions which would be considered legal tender".

"Why don't we put on a show for them at their Christmas Bird Count and try to get their sympathy and understanding?" The cardinal was a very flashy dresser and loved showing off. The blue jay had similar inclinations and was keen on the idea. "What kind of a show?"

"A musical, naturally."

The cardinal was getting quite excited so I thought it time to bring them back to earth. "Hold it you two. Let me tell you the facts of life. Humans wouldn't watch more than three seconds of such a show. To them you are not beautiful birds to be watched, admired, and enjoyed. No, to them you are

nothing but a tiny tick mark on a thin piece of cheap cardboard. They would merely tick you all and move on".

"Why don't we have a Christmas Birder's Count?" asked one of the chickadees. "We'd certainly get a lot of funny ducks".

"What a lot of sappy ideas", said the gull. "You sound like a bunch of humans. Let's get militant about this and hit them where it counts".

This was an improvement in tone I thought. "Kindly elucidate."

"My idea is this. We take one of the crows, cover him with mustard, get him to fly over the spit, and within half an hour every birder for a hundred miles will be there — at least those that don't kill themselves on the highway getting there. Any they are the ones causing us the problem, the birders, the rest of the humans wouldn't know us from Adam. Maybe from Eve, but not from Adam".

"What then?", I encouraged.

"Then ten thousand of my family swoop in and bomb their binoculars which are all pointed straight up in the air. Bingo! Every birder out of commission. You see, they aren't used to seeing out of the naked eye anymore, so if they don't see something through binoculars it doesn't exist".

"Perfect example of over-specialization, eh?", I asked.

"Definitely", he agreed.

Finally the wren spoke up, that mean, vicious little creature with a Napoleon complex, whatever that is. "So far all the ideas we've heard are nothing but temporary grandstanding. What we really need is a permanent solution. We need selective breeding to produce sports to the point where no species of bird has any diagnostic characteristics whatsoever. Then the humans will have to recognize us all as individuals."

"But that would take years".

"I realize that. In the interim we would have to develop forms of cosmetic camouflage to change our markings from day to day. I'm sure it could be organized without too much trouble. The jays could provide us with lipsticks from their stores. All they want is the containers, not the contents. Also, I'm sure we could talk quite a few tame budgies into doing some selective pilfering for us. It would certainly add a little excitement to their drab lives."

Just at this point when we were finally starting to get somewhere the starlings discovered the refreshments and there was a shift in that general direction. I'd have to wind up the meeting quickly or I'd lose it. This time it took many hoots to get their attention. "We will break for refreshments in a minute. So far we are agreed that we must do something and we have heard many suggestions. Some of them are even worth considering. We will have another meeting in the near future to consider them further and to set up a formal organization. It will be called...", I was now talking to myself (they were all into the goodies), "the Society for the Preservation of Lay Avian Terminology" — SPLAT".

As I took off for my chimney where I had a forty-proof mouse warming up for my night-cap, I wondered if humans ever had such difficulty getting concerted action on an important issue.

HUNTING FOR HERITAGE TREES

Happy hunting grounds for heritage trees, without traffic problems, are old cemeteries; also, old parks. On the first day this year that felt like spring (for a little while), we visited Allan Gardens which was first opened as a Botanical Garden in 1860, and sure enough we found some ancient trees guarding the greenhouses.

A female Kentucky coffee tree, Gymnocladus dioica, with a girth of six feet or so stands healthy and beautiful, about as broad as high, twigless branches hanging with big pods on the north side of the park.

Near the greenhouses stands an even fatter and much taller tree, a tulip tree, Liriodendron tulipifera, with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of seven feet and compound fruits clearly etched against the sky.

Black walnut is also present. See if you can find it.

The trip to Allan Gardens was planned to shut out the city for a lingering hour with the remembered lovely smells of fresh earth and tropical greenery. As it turned out, our steps got faster and faster until we were almost running. Chased out by chemical warfare — just like in Canadian Tire! Pfrg!

That was when we found the tulip tree. Better stay outside unless you are prepared to beat a hasty retreat.

What's the good of a garden, if you go home feeling sick?
 What's the good of a garden, if nothing makes it tick?
 Who will visit the garden that insults the nose, the brain?
 Can't remember a thing that was in it, but now I can breath again.

Mary Smith (231-5302)

TFNC ON CFRB

Have you heard Harold Taylor's "Nature Notes" on John Bradshaw's weekly gardening program? Every Saturday morning between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 John Bradshaw makes an announcement about our club activities (provided by Claire Bridgen) or reads a nature note provided by Harold Taylor.

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS OF TORONTO NEEDED

Anyone willing to provide photographs for club projects, please contact Mr. Mark Sawyer, 11 Shallmar Blvd. Apt. 508, Toronto M5N 1J6 (782-3116)

SUBMISSIONS TO NEWSLETTER

Please send material to:
 Helen Juhola, 51 Alexander St. Apt. 112, Toronto M4Y 1B3 (924-5806)