

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Number 316

May 1978

Visitors welcome!

May Meeting

Monday, May 1, 1978, at 8:15 p.m.

at 252 Bloor Street West

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

Topic: HARSH ENVIRONMENTS OF THE BEST KIND

Speaker: Ron Thorpe

Ron Thorpe, our president for the past two years, is a Botany graduate of the University of Toronto. At present he is Head of Science at Overlea Secondary School. He is the former Director of Education and Biology at the Ontario Science Centre. In this, his last meeting as president of the club, he would like to share with his friends explorations into harsh environments in North America.

---

## FEDERATION OF ONTARIO NATURALISTS

Annual Meeting and Nature Conference at Thunder Bay, Ont. May 26-28

For application form and information, contact Carolyn Turnbull 444-8419 at the FON office, 1262 Don Mills Rd., Don Mills, Ont. M3B 2W8

---

## CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION

Annual Meeting and Canadian Conference for Nature at Charlottetown, P.E.I. August 17-21

The theme of the conference will be "Nature in the Gulf: Island, Man and Sea". Field trips in New Brunswick before the conference, on Prince Edward Island during the conference, and a trip to Sable Island after the conference have been organized for your education and enjoyment.

For information about the conference, write to Canadian Conference for Nature 1978, P.O. Box 2346, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island C1A 8C1

---

## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND PUBLICATION SALES

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

JIM BAILLIE MEMORIAL BIRD WALKS

- Sunday TORONTO ISLAND  
 May 14 Meet at the Ferry Docks at the foot of Bay Street to take the first  
 9:00 a.m. available ferry. The Island is the resting place of migrating birds  
 crossing the lake from the south. Many exciting birds have been  
 found there.
- 8:30 a.m. HIGH PARK  
 Meet in the first parking lot on West Road which is on your right  
 as you enter from Bloor Street West at High Park Avenue. (Subway  
 to High Park). High Park is one of the largest and most accessible  
 parks in Toronto and is a rewarding place to look for birds.
- 8:30 a.m. BELT LINE RAVINE  
 Meet at the northeast corner of Moore Park at Moore Avenue and  
 Welland Avenue. This eastern part of the site of the former Belt  
 Line Railway has grown back so that its trees and shrubs provide  
 a haven for migrating birds. Sixteen species of birds have been  
 found to breed there. Other natural and scenic features are the  
 heights of Chorley Park and the excavation of the Toronto Brick  
 Works where Toronto's geological past has been laid bare.
- 8:30 a.m. WILKET CREEK PARK  
 Meet in the parking lot off Leslie Street opposite the Inn on the  
 Park. This park is part of a chain of parks which includes Serena  
 Gundy, Edwards Gardens, and Ernest Thompson Seton Parks in the  
 valley of the West Don River. These provide varied cover for many  
 birds.

Members of the Toronto Ornithological Club (TOC) will lead the outings. This is the eighth year "bird walks" have been dedicated to the late James L. Baillie. Each walk lasts for about three hours. The pace is slow (about one mile an hour).

MIDSUMMER NIGHT PICNIC (See also page 14.)

- Wednesday SERENA GUNDY PARK  
 June 21 Leaders: Muriel Miville (463-8066), Laura Greer (691-4888)  
 4:30-10 p.m. A picnic area is reserved in Serena Gundy Park (north of  
 Eglinton Avenue and just west of Leslie Street). Get a supper  
 packed and meet us there. You can come early at 4:30 p.m. or,  
 like me, can come after work. It doesn't matter what time you  
 arrive, just so long as you come. (Isn't that a nice change?)

Many members have expressed the desire to meet and become acquainted with other club members. Apparently, many of you find that you do not get to know other people very well when you attend our walks; therefore, this outing is for PEOPLE ... not birds, botany, ravines, ecology ... just PEOPLE. The object will be to locate, identify, and become acquainted with individuals of the species commonly known as "TFN members".

We have arranged to have a council ring complete with firewood, a barbecue and picnic tables — what else would you like? — marshmallows? coffee? weiners? games? We need all the help and suggestions you may have. If you have a guitar bring it along. Please call either Muriel or Laura if you can help, and even if your can't help, come anyway and celebrate summer.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The May monthly meeting signifies that another year of general meetings has been successfully completed. Our yearly activities always culminate with the Annual General Meeting. I would hope you will attend our meeting to participate in the election of incoming officers and to vote on matters which pertain to the future operation of the club. The business portion of this meeting is an extremely important component of our club's operation since it presents the new President, Vice President and three newly elected members of the Board for all to see.

As outgoing president of the TFNC I would like to extend my special thanks to all of you for the enriching and rewarding experiences which I so enjoyed during the past two years. Without so many deserving people who gave willingly of their time and talent my task would have been insurmountable. It is impossible to adequately acknowledge the assistance of all of you who helped me during my term of office. To all, I wish to extend a special thanks for your kindness and support. And in particular I would like to recognize the special contributions of the Board of Directors, the Group and Committee Chairmen, the Secretaries, the Treasurer, the editor and support staff, and the large number of club members who regularly write briefs, attend meetings, man displays, lead fieldtrips, and respond to a need with vigour and enthusiasm.

During the past two years I have seen many of the following activities and issues develop. Recall with me: Metroplan and Toronto the Green, numerous Ravine Reports, Leslie Street Spit (Aquatic Park), Jim Baillie Nature Reserve dedication, Jim Baillie Birdathon, Toronto Bird Observatory, Southern Ontario Plant Checklist to name just a few. However, the most gratifying experience is the faithful support which I received from you, the club members. Without your generous financial assistance and regular attendance at TFNC functions few, if any, of the above endeavours would have been successful. It is to your credit that our club is healthy, viable, and responsive. As we enter a new year of operation I am confident of the TFNC's future accomplishments because of the continued support for the club executive. I would like to extend to your new President my sincere best wishes for a very successful and rewarding term of office.

Now that my term is completed I hope to be able to spend some of my time enjoying the sights and sounds of nature with my fellow TFNers.

"Every part of Nature teaches that the passing of one experience makes room for another. And so it is for life. As the maple dies and decays it nurtures the samaras establishment. So this constant abrasion and decay makes the soil of our future growth. And as we have sown so shall we reap."

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

JUNIOR FIELD NATURALISTS

- Saturday A general meeting will be held in the Theatre of the Royal Ontario  
May 13 Museum for boys and girls from 8 to 16 years of age. Prizes for  
10 a.m. "Flight" will be given out and next year's executive will be elected.
- Saturday NORTH PICKERING HIKING TRAIL - Annual Field Outing  
May 27 Bring lunch, hiking boots, and field guides. Bus leaves ROM at 10 a.m.  
10 a.m. and returns at 4 p.m. Cost \$2.00 each. Adults welcome to help as  
spare leaders. Anyone interested, contact John Martin (265-2818).

THANKYOU VOLUNTEERS!

Our booth at the Canadian National Sportsmen's Show (CNSS) was, from many different angles, very successful. A very large THANKYOU to those members who manned the booth during the Show. Some of our volunteers were regulars who have helped out on our booths before — we couldn't put on a display without these faithful people. Other volunteers were taking the plunge for the first time — apprehensive but willing. We hope our enthusiastic volunteers enjoyed themselves and will help out again. If you want to make new acquaintances among club members, the best way is to volunteer your services. If you wish to spread the naturalist's viewpoint, the best way is to volunteer your services. To all those who helped and gave moral support, a very warm thankyou. Your efforts are sincerely appreciated.

A very special thank you must also go to Bill Andrews who put together the specimens for our identification contest. The contest was not easy, and it was fun watching people attempting to identify the specimens while pouring over the keys which Bill also provided. The prize for this contest was an Audubon Society book entitled "This Good Earth", and it was won by Jaan Vilu of 8 Ralston Ave., Toronto, a university student who is not a club member. Jaan is, however, seriously considering becoming a member of the club. We had to draw many entries before we came up with Jaan's correct entry which he had completed in Latin. Our congratulations to this young man.

Another special thank you must go to Emerson and Eleanor Skelton who travelled across Metro in order to obtain the skunk cabbage which we had on display. This display, which was at the front of our booth, drew much attention from adults and children alike. Indeed, we learned more about skunk cabbage from the public than the public learned from us. Did you know that ... Mohawk Indians boiled the roots, then roasted and ate them? ... the leaves if rubbed on the skin will cause a painful rash? (This from a lady who had been chased by her brother with a handful of it when they were children.) ... bears eat skunk cabbage in the spring as a tonic? ... bees in the spring make a bee-line for skunk cabbage?

All in all, the booth was a success, but we don't think we can agree with the woman who said that we had the best booth at the show — that is going just a little too far. Our booth was, however, planned as the first step towards our booth at the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) this summer. This year the "Ex" celebrates its 100th anniversary, and as the "Ex" has very kindly given our club free space for many years, we would like to do our very best to put on a lively and interesting display. If you can help in any way — by manning the booth, making telephone calls, or helping with the booth preparations — please call us NOW. We will take your name and telephone number and contact you later. We want to spread our message at the same time as we are saying thanks to the CNE, and ONLY YOU CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Please call Muriel Miville (463-8066 - evenings)  
 Laura Greer (691-4888)

Muriel Miville

---

NOW AVAILABLE: Directory to Co-operative Naturalists' Projects in Ontario:  
 a guide for volunteers 1978

Copies may be obtained for 50¢ each from the Long Point Bird Observatory,  
 P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0

FROM ALGAE TO COMPOSITES -- A POCKET, FIELD  
CHECK-LIST OF PLANTS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO

In 1973 Dr. Charles Chaffey, who was then Outings Chairman of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club, designed and prepared a pocket Field Check-list of Plants to correspond to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists Field Check-list of Birds. The list has been used by the club's leaders on all botany outings since.

Now Emily Hamilton, a member of the Outings Committee and a leader of many botany outings, has revised the pocket check-list. Publications referred to in preparing this revision are:

TFNC's Check-list of Flowering Plants (1946)

TFNC's Four Parks List (1972)

Plants of Niagara Peninsula (1970) G. Yaki

A Floristic Study of Norfolk County, Ont. (1969) J. Cruise

More than 1000 plants are listed including many non-flowering plants (ferns etc.), trees, shrubs, vines, and herbaceous plants. Plant families are listed according to the order given in Gray's Manual. (See also Peterson's Field Guide to Wildflowers, pages xv to xxviii.) To be specific and to fit the names into the narrow columns, a mixture of English names and Latin names (sometimes abbreviated) has been used.

This pocket field check-list is useful for any area within a 100-mile radius of Toronto, but does not include rarities.

Copies of the TFNC Field Check-List of Plants of Southern Ontario (1977) may be obtained for 25¢ each, or 5 for \$1.00, plus postage from the TFNC, 83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ont. M5M 2T4.

Recommended books to use with this pocket-sized list are:

Non-flowering Plants (1967), F.S. Shuttleworth et al, Golden Press, New York

A Field Guide to the Ferns (1956/1963), B. Cobb, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston

A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs (1972), G.A. Petrides, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston

How to Know the Grasses (1953/1968), Pohl, Wm. C. Brown Co. Publishers, Dubuque, Io.

A Field Guide to the Wildflowers (1968), R.T. Peterson et al, Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston

Tribe 4		Tribe 8		DATE
.Everlasting ..pearly ..catfoot <i>obt.</i> ..low cudweed ..Pussy-toes <i>pl.</i> .. <i>neglecta</i> ..Elecampane		.Coltsfoot <i>Tuan.</i> ..Butterbur <i>Put.</i> ..Fireweed <i>Errrh.</i> ..Groundsel <i>Sen.</i> ..Indian Plantain ..Ragwort golden ..balsam		
Tribe 5		Tribe 9		OBSERVER
.Gt. ragweed ..ragweed ..Cocklebur ..Cup-plant ..Leaf-cup ..Plk-eyed Susan ..Tall Coneflower ..Sunflower ..tall/giant ..J. artichoke ..annual ..thin-leaf/ten ..pale-leaved ..woodland <i>div.</i> ..stiff-haired ..Wing-stem ..Bur-marigold ..nodding ..beggarticks .. <i>frondosa</i> ..Tickseed mgld. ..Water Marigold ..Galinsoga		.Burdock common ..great ..Thistle ..bull ..Canada/field ..nodding ..swamp <i>muticum</i> ..Scotch ..Cornflower <i>Cent.</i> ..Knapweed		
Tribe 6		Tribe 10		LOCATION
.Sneezeweed <i>Hel.</i>		.Chicory ..Dandelion com. ..fall ..red-seeded ..Goats-beard com. ..lemon-yellow ..salsify ..Nipplewort ..Lettuce <i>Lactuca</i> ..blue ..Canada ..prickly ..wall ..Sow-thistle com. ..spiny-leaved ..field ..White-lettuce ..tall <i>Prenanth.</i> ..smooth ..Hawkweed ..Canada ..orange ..field/king Devil ..rough/ <i>saabrum</i>		
Tribe 7				
.Chamomile wild ..scentless <i>Mat.</i> ..pineappleweed ..Mayweed <i>Anth.</i> ..Ox-eye daisy ..Tansy ..Wormwood ..tall <i>Artemes.</i> ..Canada ..biennial ..mugwort ..Yarrow				

Toronto Field Naturalists' Club  
FIELD CHECK-LIST OF PLANTS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO  
© 1977

READING OF INTEREST

Natural History in America from Mark Catesby to Rachel Carson by Wayne Hanley, Mass. Audubon Soc., A Demeter Press Book, Quadrangle/The N.Y. Times Book Co., 1977, 339 pp., colour plates

This well-written book traces the development of natural history in North America as we know it now from its beginnings with the describers of new species such as Audubon and Wilson, through the collectors such as Lewis and Clark, to the preservationists such as Muir, and the protectionists: Leopold and Carson. This book is about natural history and includes examples of both writing and art as well as stories of rivalries and the founding of the American Ornithological Union. Available from the Toronto Public Libraries.

Human Poisoning from Native and Cultivated Plants, Second Edition by James W. Hardin and Jay M. Arena, Duke University Press, Durham, North Carolina, 1974, 194 pp.

This book contains discussion on the types of plant poisoning (allergies, dermatitis, and internal poisoning) and gives excellent descriptions of the plants known or suspected to be dangerous. One description I found interesting was as follows: Phytophotodermatitis is often confused with poison ivy but is, in fact, caused by an individual with moist skin from water or sweat coming in contact with a particular species of plant such as wild parsnip and then being exposed to sunlight. A redness of skin and burning occur within 24 hours after exposure to plant and sun, and swelling and small to large blisters develop soon after. This is a different kind of reaction than that caused by contact with Cow Parsnip in which contact with the sap of the plant causes severe blisters and rash.

recommended by Jack Cranmer-Byng: The Householder's Guide to Community Defense against Bureaucratic Aggression: A report on Britain's government machine by Antony Jay, Jonathan Cape Ltd., London, 1972. Available from the newsletter editor along with newsletters from a selection of natural history clubs throughout Ontario and Canada.

recommended by Lois James: The Conserver Society by Ursula Franklin. Available from bookstores.

Wednesday RAVINE GROUP MEETING

May 10  
8:00 p.m. A general meeting of the group will be held to discuss projects: priorities and methods. Meet at Huron St. Public School, 541 Huron St., (north of Bloor St., west of St. George St.).  
Secretary: Ruby Rogers (789-9612)

Wednesday WATERFRONT GROUP MEETING

May 17  
8:00 p.m. A general meeting will be held to prepare for the club's wildlife viewing weekends at the Leslie Street Spit. Meet at Huron St. Public School, 541 Huron St., (north of Bloor St., west of St. George St.)  
Secretary: Melanie Milanich (924-0338)

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHS OF TORONTO STILL NEEDED

Photographs are needed for various club projects. Copies will be made and your originals returned. Please contact Mark Sawyer, 11 Shallmar Blvd. Apt. 508, Toronto M5N 1J6 (782-3116).

OUTINGS REPORT

Mt. Pleasant Cemetery (March 12, 1978). Trees were the subject being studied by the 35 participants on this trip. Gray skies and deep snow kept walkers on the roadways.

Owl Hunt (March 12, 1978). Fourteen cars containing "owl hunters" left the parking lot at the north side of the Toronto Airport. First stop: a pair of Great-horned Owls at a nest, then on to Clairville to see a Boreal Owl, a Short-eared Owl, and a Long-eared Owl. Earlier in the day, Jerry and Bruce White had helped me search the entire area for a Saw-whet Owl to no avail; however, they had seen three Snowy Owls north of Steeles, so off we went to have a look at them and were able to observe two of them. From here we took off for Edwards Gardens to look for a Screech Owl, but it was snoozing in its hole in a large beech and would not show itself so we ended the Owl Hunt with five species. The next day I visited Clairville again and found not only a Saw-whet Owl, but also a Screech Owl. That's the luck of an owl hunt. Next year we may see a Great Gray Owl! Red Mason

Leslie Street Spit (March 19, 1978). There was no respite from the bitter wind for man or beast when Bill Freedman led an ambitious group of 50 along the 3.5 miles of the Leslie St. Spit. Although spring was slightly behind schedule, the walk was enjoyable and productive. Over 20 species of birds were seen, mostly waterfowl including Redhead, Canvasback, Redbreasted Merganser, and Glaucous Gull. Surprises were a Harrier, Short-eared Owl, and Lapland Longspur. An informative and interesting walk. Steven Price

Taylor Creek (March 19, 1978). It was very cold and windy with the sun peeking out some of the time as 18 people were led into the ravine north of O'Connor. Crows, one red-tailed hawk, mallards, and pigeons were seen, and many birds' nests were still obvious from last year. People were very interested in the redevelopment site, expressing concern at the loss of this area. There was still a lot of snow and ice along the embankment path, and identification included beech, oak and birch trees, cattails, bergamot and goldenrod with galls. Anyone visiting the area could well bring a plastic bag to remove some of the more accessible litter.

Petticoat Creek (March 18, 1978). It was windy and clear and everything was freshly dusted with new snow. A good view of the lake from the 30-foot bluffs revealed about 2000 gulls resting on the lake (probably after feeding at the Pickering landfill site five miles north). Bill Dibble led 10 people over a foot of snow along the nature trail in the ravine where they were able to identify walnut, hickory, elm, beech, birch, several species of poplars, sugar and red maples, flowering dogwood, and serviceberry. Evergreens seen included red, white, and Scots pines, spruce, hemlock, and white cedar. Birds seen were rock doves, chickadees, house sparrows, and redpolls in the ravine, and Canada Geese, mallards, common goldeneyes and buffleheads on the lake. An English oak was the most unusual tree seen.

Long Point (March 26, 1978). Ruth and Eric Lewis and John ten Bruggenkate led 61 people in two buses. Lake Erie and Long Point Bay were still covered in ice; the weather was cold and rainy, but the Conservation Officer at the Canadian Wildlife Display Centre on the causeway volunteered to lead the way to an open pond several miles inland where 1000 to 1200 swans and numerous Canada Geese and many varieties of ducks were on view. Len Brown's farm was also visited to see Canada Geese and Redhead ducks.

Mary Smith (231-5302)

FROM THE "BIRDERS"

This was a good year for Boreal Owls in the Toronto region; at least eight birds visited our area. These along with the Gyrfalcon that stayed with us for so long caused birders from a five hundred mile radius to come and observe, and few went away disappointed. Nice to have them visit us!

Early in the winter near Nashville, north of Toronto, three families (the Carrs, the Kellys, and the Raymonds) had a funny looking robin-like bird at their feeders. They could not find the bird in their Peterson guides.

Mrs. Raymond had purchased some Christmas cards from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and was addressing them when, low and behold, there was the bird — on her Christmas card — a Varied Thrush. She showed her friends the card and soon the news spread among the birders. After that many, many birders visited the Kellys and the Raymonds and were treated to the best hospitality while they waited and watched for the female Varied Thrush to appear at the feeder.

Red Mason

Editor's Comment: Red Mason also submitted the note about the Gyrfalcon which appears on the Waterfront News page.

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

It was a foul winter for waterfowl in the Toronto region according to the Globe and Mail. On article on Feb. 14 told how the Toronto Humane Society had to rescue a "diver" wearing a Maryland leg band from the corner of Avenue Rd. and Lawrence Ave. and a Wood Duck from the corner of Mt. Pleasant Rd. and Roxborough.

Probably the most talked-about story was that of the Canada Geese who were fed poisoned bread at the south end of Grenadier Pond.

Then there were the ducks trapped in the Toronto Bay by rapidly-forming ice. Many were rescued by the Humane Society, but many others died in the ice.

"Death of 80 ducks could remain mystery" reported the death of 80 ducks at the foot of Leslie Street near the outlet of the Ashbridges Bay sewer plant (March 17). This story was followed by "Wandering falcon: Winter visitor dies far away from home" on March 31. The bird had been in Toronto since January 20 eating ducks.

.....

News of a Eurasian Curlew (which is supposed to winter in North Africa) being seen on the tidal flats of Martha's Vineyard caused "birders" to flock from afar to add a tick to life-lists.

.....

Good news in the Globe and Mail of March 2 was "Naturalist's work would have been destroyed — Mississauga saves wildlife sanctuary, changes route of new sewer line". Roy Ivor's internationally known Winding Lane Wildlife Sanctuary had been threatened with destruction until the Mississauga City Council and Planning Board moved to prevent a sanitary sewer from running through the property. For the story of Roy Ivor and his sanctuary, read I Live with Birds by Roy Ivor and published by McGraw Hill/Ryerson in 1968. The book is available in the Toronto Public Libraries.

NEWS FROM THE TORONTO BIRD OBSERVATORY

The executive committee of the Toronto Bird Observatory (TBO) has been making slow, but steady progress in setting up our program for 1978. We will have a number of projects on the go. The banding and migration-monitoring program at the Toronto Island Wildlife Sanctuary should provide some excellent base-line data on migrant birds. This project has proved to be very popular with volunteers; however, we have to limit the number of people participating in the Sanctuary to limit our impact on the area.

Fortunately we have two other projects for which additional volunteers are greatly needed. The first, a comparative study of bird mortality at man-made structures requires volunteers to make early morning visits during the spring and fall on a daily basis (if possible) to a site of their choice (a building, TV tower, etc.) The dead birds are counted and salvaged for research.

The second project involves ravine breeding bird studies. Volunteers make 8 to 10 visits to their study area (of about 40 acres) between mid-May and the end of June. Birds (primarily singing males) are plotted on a map. Territories can then be determined, and the species composition and density can be calculated. Complete instructions will be sent to volunteers for either of the above projects.

In addition to birders for the above projects, we could use some help from the botanists. Each breeding bird census requires a vegetation analysis of the the study area. Volunteers are also needed for typing and keeping our records in order. We would also like to start up another banding station in a ravine to take the pressure off the Sanctuary station as far as training banders. If anyone has such a location that they would allow us to use, we would be very grateful. If you have any suggestions along these lines, please contact us.

We are also in need of a filing cabinet and a typewriter, if anyone has either to donate.

Memberships are now available. Benefits include participation in the Toronto Bird Observatory activities, a newsletter and annual report, and an annual meeting. If you would like to be one of the founding members of the TBO, send in your membership fee (\$5.00 for individuals, \$8.00 for families) to Mr. Warren Russell, TBO Membership Secretary, 2575 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto. Donations are also solicited as our initial expenses are quite great. (Donors will receive an income tax receipt.)

I would like to thank all those who have responded so enthusiastically to date. We have a unique opportunity, being the only urban bird observatory in the world. I sincerely hope that together we can live up to its potential.

David Broughton, President  
Toronto Bird Observatory  
c/o 4 Heddington Ave.,  
Toronto, Ont. M5N 2K5

SURVEY OF KIRTLAND'S WARBLER HABITAT

As many naturalists are aware, the Kirtland's Warbler was rediscovered at Petawawa in the Ottawa Valley during 1978. This bird remained at the site throughout the breeding season but no nest or female was located. An examination of the early literature suggests that Kirtland's Warbler may have been a breeding bird at this location, but owing to the restricted status in the area, the bird was never the subject of intensive examination by naturalists or biologists.

Ontario has never been systematically surveyed for this species. The Wildlife Branch under the Endangered Species Program has been mapping soil, vegetation, fire data and climatic zones in an attempt to identify potential areas where the Kirtland's Warbler may possibly occur. All known site records have also been mapped. From these data, we have identified some locations which we feel should be systematically surveyed in June of this year.

Areas to be surveyed include several townships in the Parry Sound district; a number of sites over the northern half of Renfrew County plus one area near Calabogie Lake and the eastern section of Algonquin Park and north towards Mattawa in the district of Nipissing.

This survey is being coordinated by Gerald McKeating of the Wildlife Branch and is undertaken in conjunction with the Canadian Wildlife Service and interested amateurs. The success of this survey depends greatly upon our ability to receive volunteer help from competent birders. I am therefore soliciting the help of your organization and its members to assist us in this undertaking. The survey will be conducted between June 3 and June 18 and if any of you are interested in helping, would you please advise Gerald McKeating, 965-4251 or write him at the Wildlife Branch, Whitney Block, Queen's Park, Toronto M7A 1W3 as soon as possible. Survey forms will be prepared and surveyors will be working with a team captain.

FRIENDS OF THE SPIT

This is your last chance before the summer to give the "Friends your support. The group's two main objectives have been endorsed by the TFNC executive:

- 1) to open the Leslie St. headland this summer like last year
- 2) to oppose plans calling for excessive land use by boaters, including parking lots, moorings, marinas, etc.

If you've been to the spit you're a friend. Why not be a "Friend"? Send \$2.00 for membership and newsletter to Friends of the Spit, 174 Balsam Ave., Toronto, Ont. For more information call Steven Price at 491-4617 (evenings).

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

THE ONTARIO FIELD BIOLOGIST AND A SPECIAL PUBLICATION

The Ontario Field Biologist (OFB) is a journal published by the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club. From 1954 to 1973 the journal was published annually; since then, it has been published semi-annually. Now for the first time the OFB has produced a special publication:

## Special Publication No. 1

A Guide to the Vascular Plants and Wildlife of the Rouge River Valley  
in Metropolitan Toronto and Durham Region

by John L. Riley of the Department of Botany, University of Toronto

This paper, which was too long to publish in the OFB, comprises 54 pages and appears in the same format as the OFB. Copies may be purchased for \$1.50 each. As well as containing a general description of the lower Rouge River valley and descriptions of the major habitats, this special paper describes the wildlife of the area and includes an annotated checklist of 614 plants. The list indicates whether the plants are native and, where warranted, their frequency and habitat.

A subscription to the Ontario Field Biologist may be obtained for \$3.00 a year. Some back copies are still available and may be obtained for \$1.25 each. An index listing the contents of available back issues may be obtained on request.

The most recent issue, Volume 31, No. 2, contains an article entitled "Population trends in waterfowl wintering in the Toronto region, 1929-1976" which should be of particular interest to Toronto residents. Other articles are "A monitoring census of winter birds in the regional municipality of Waterloo, Ontario", "Colour preferences of the pond slider and the spotted turtle", "A summary of nesting records for ruddy duck in Ontario with particular reference to the regional municipality of Durham", and "Breeding bird censuses at Big Trout Lake, 1975". Also included are notes on the "First nesting of the Great Gray Owl in Ontario", "The smaller whorled pogonia, an orchid new to Canada", and "Snowy Owl exploits duck hunters".

TO: Toronto Field Naturalists' Club  
49 Craighurst Avenue  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M4R 1J9

Date \_\_\_\_\_

A. Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ copies of SPECIAL PUBLICATION NO. 1  
at \$1.50 each (10 or more, \$1.30 each) ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

B. Send a subscription to THE ONTARIO FIELD BIOLOGIST  
for \_\_\_\_\_ years at \$3.00 a year ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

C. Send back copies of THE ONTARIO FIELD BIOLOGIST as checked  
Vol. 27 \_\_\_ 28 #1 \_\_\_ 29 #2 \_\_\_ 30 #1 \_\_\_ 30 #2 \_\_\_ 31 #1 \_\_\_ at \$1.25  
each \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Payment enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Postal code \_\_\_\_\_

WATERFRONT NEWS

The TFNC Board approved a proposal to sponsor a public nature weekend at Leslie Street Spit, complete with TTC bus service. The first weekend will likely be in early July, and if successful, will be repeated in September. Club members are needed to help with publicity, pamphlet and questionnaire writing, and nature interpretation on the weekend. If you can help, please call Muriel Miville (463-8066) or Laura Greer (691-4888).

The TFNC recently learned that the Toronto Harbour Commission had the wet meadow plant communities on the western edge of Toronto Island Airport bulldozed "for aircraft safety reasons". This area has been identified in all the airport use studies and in Central Waterfront Planning Committee environmental studies as a sensitive area of unusual plant species. The club president sent a letter of protest to the Harbour Commissioners, and individual club members are encouraged to do the same.

The Wildlife Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority are planning to co-host a wildlife viewing weekend at the Leslie Street Spit on the weekend of June 24 and 25. Viewing stations, shuttle bus service, and interpreters will be on hand to enhance your enjoyment of this interesting area. For further information call Gerry McKeating at 965-4251 or Angus Norman at Maple 832-2761.

The Gyr Falcon which had been living along the Toronto waterfront since January was found dead by one of the workers on the docks below the window ledge it had used as its night perch for so many weeks. Some of us had forecast that the bird might die from eating gulls and ducks as a number of waterbirds had been dying from unknown causes. Barry MacKay was one who felt that this could happen and had spoken to many who frequented the area and even gave them his telephone number in case they found the bird in trouble. It happened, and Barry has turned the bird over to the Canadian Wildlife Service who are carrying out tests to try and determine the cause of its death. Barry had been trying to determine the reason why so many ducks had been dying along our waterfront.

THE STORY OF A TRAP

One of my 500 nesting boxes had porcupine trouble last year. It was box 14 on Montgomery land in Mulmur Township. Some time in May a male bluebird found the box, and when he had persuaded a female to be his mate, she took over the building of the nest and constructed a cup-shaped pad of old grass. Early in June I opened the lid and looked in on three newly-hatched young birds. There was some evidence of some mammal chewing at the plywood of which the box is made.

Over the long weekend of July First we cleaned out the old nest and remarked on the clean habits of this small, colourful thrush. By the following Sunday a new nest had been made and three eggs laid. Bluebirds love old orchards and derelict farmlands with poor soil and low, sparse vegetation.

It was about the 20th of July when the eggs hatched and in all of my visits to the box the teeth marks on the box were growing more extensive. A teacher friend, who has a trail of 600 boxes queried the diagnosis of 'porky' and suggested groundhog. But, can groundhogs climb up smooth metal?

I decided to set a trap at the base of the cedar post and used coat hanger wire to prevent it being dragged away. However I worried a good deal about using a trap, and after some reading and thought, decided to use lithium chloride which is soluble in water, and pressed it into cavities of the pole.

It is too soon to have results. The question of traps raises many questions: Is trapping a perverted method of killing? - Is the fur trade a national disgrace? - Are biologists doing enough research into methods to control wild pests without poisons, guns, or traps?

Leo A. Smith

Note from Leo: The bluebirds were seen at their houses on April 2, 1978.

---

The Rev. R. Charles Long, Research Associate, Department of Ornithology, Royal Ontario Museum, is conducting a three-year survey of the American Robin across North America.

The following information is desired for each of the three years, 1978-80: First arrival and departure dates; arrival and departure dates for the bulk of the birds; arrival of females; first and last dates for nesting, first egg laid, and/or clutch completion; size of clutch; indicate whether second or third brood; latest date for young in the nest.

Any unusual observations would be welcome.

CIVIC GARDEN CENTRE

Plant Sale (Garden and Indoor Plants): May 12, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
 Photography Course (The Joys of Photographing Our Natural World): starting  
 May 9 at 8 p.m. (6 sessions)  
 Bus tour to Niagara to see blossoms and greenhouses: May 17 at 9 a.m.  
 Bus tour to Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton: May 24

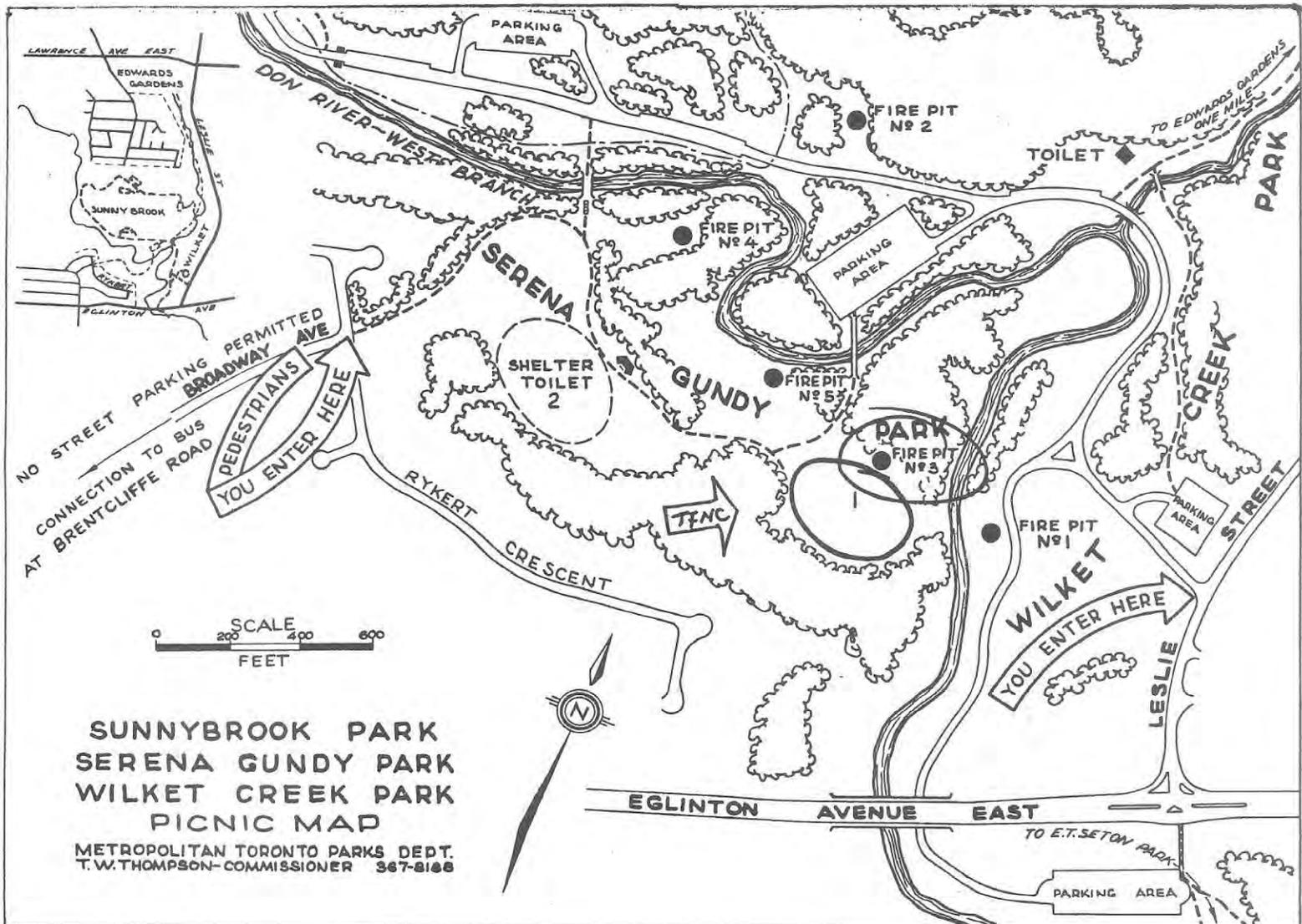
Information about any of these activities of the Civic Garden Centre,  
 77 Lawrence Avenue East, Don Mills, Ont. M3C 1P2 may be obtained by calling  
 445-1552.

Announcing a new service to naturalists:

Nature Travel Service (formerly Ontario Nature Tours), 246 Queen St. East,  
 Toronto, Ont. M5A 1S3 (363-6394).

Anyone wanting to be part of an Urban Wildlife Habitat Group, please contact  
 Ian Wilson (759-1069). For further details call Ian or read TFNC Newsletter  
 #312 (January 1978), page 15.

MIDSUMMER NIGHT PICNIC - Wednesday June 21, 4:20 to 10:00 p.m. (See also page 2.)



TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BOAT OUTING

The Cayuga II, a very capable vessel currently sailing out of Toronto has been booked for this special outing.

Date: Sunday, October 1, 1978

Time: Boarding time: 8:30 a.m.

Leaves dock sharp at 9:00 a.m.

Arrives back in Toronto not later than 4:00 p.m.

Leaders: Red Mason and Jerry White

Destination: We will leave from the foot of York Street (Queen's Quay behind the RCYC building) and sail out into Lake Ontario. The exact route will be determined on the day of the outing depending on weather conditions.

Purpose: This offshore cruise should be a marvellous opportunity to see migrating birds such as jaegers, phalaropes, gulls, ducks, cormorants, etc.

Parking: Available at pay-parking lot across the street from the dock.

Public Transportation to site: Bay Street bus to foot of Bay Street and walk west one block.

What to bring: Dress warmly and bring lunch, binoculars, cameras, and your favourite bird book. (Coffee will be available on the boat.)

Please note: We hope to accommodate 180 people on the boat. So... get your reservations in now! Don't delay -- do it today! Make your cheque out to the "Toronto Field Naturalists' Club Boat Outing".

Cost: \$11.00 per person

Tickets: Your ticket(s) will be distributed to you at the dock on the morning of the outing just before you board the boat. If further information is required, please contact Bruce or Jerry White at 741 - 2363.

IT IS NECESSARY THAT ALL RESERVATIONS BE ON HAND BY SEPTEMBER 22, 1978.

THE OUTING GOES RAIN OR SHINE. (NO REFUNDS.)

-----  
Please reserve \_\_\_\_ number of places on the Boat Outing for October 1, 1978.

Enclosed is a cheque for \$\_\_\_\_\_ to cover the cost. Make the cheque out to "Toronto Field Naturalists' Club Boat Outing" and mail with this application form to:

Mr. G. White  
8 Monterrey Drive  
Rexdale, Ont. M9V 1S8

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE

Since publication of "A Guide to the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve" in 1977, the following plants and birds have been discovered on the property:

Botychium multifidum  
Gentiana crinita

Leathery Grape Fern  
Fringed Gentian  
Ladies-tresses orchid

Canada Goose  
Turkey Vulture  
Coopers Hawk  
Red-breasted Nuthatch \*  
Lesser Yellowlegs (M)

Magnolia Warbler  
Rusty Blackbird (M)  
White-crowned Sparrow (M)  
Least Flycatcher (M)

The nuthatch and flycatcher were observed by Paul Cannon; the yellowlegs, by Keith Wade; the ladies-tresses by Laura Greer.

If you find any species not listed or whose status is different than shown in the "Guide", please send the details to the Land Management Committee.

Plants: John ten Bruggenkate, 147 Glenvale Blvd., Toronto, Ont. M4G 2W2 (425-6096)

Birds: Clive Goodwin, 11 Westbank Crescent, Weston, Ont. M9P 1S4 (249-9503)

John Lowe-Wylde (284-5628)

NEXT NEWSLETTER: October 1978

Please send all announcements for the October newsletter before September 1 to Diana Banville, 1011 Landsdowne Ave. Apt. 501, Toronto M6H 4G1 (536-1396).

Have a happy summer and don't forget to send reports of your observations and projects to Diana so we can all enjoy reading about them next winter.

Helen Juhola (924-5806)