

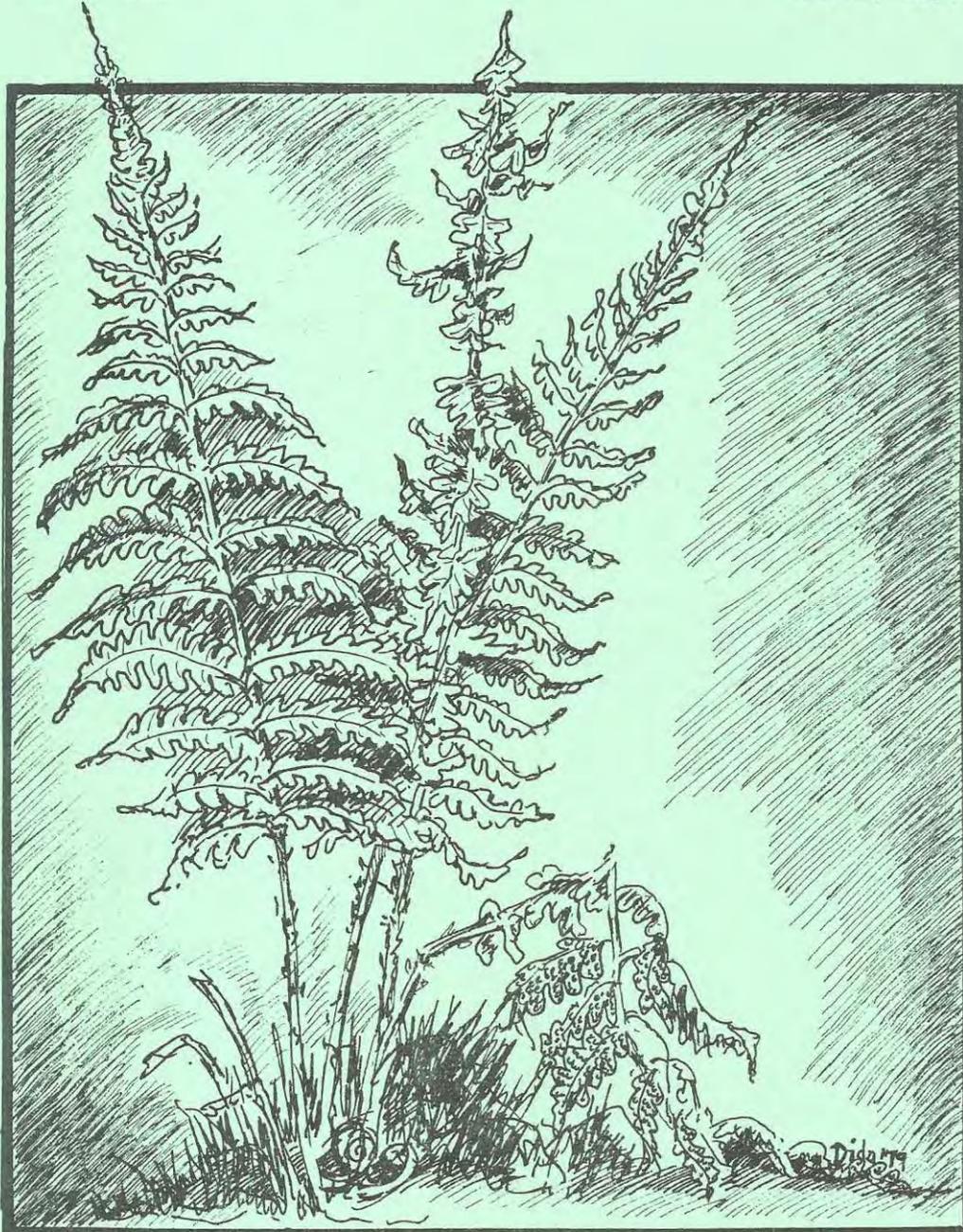


TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS

NEWSLETTER

Number 322

March, 1979



Clinton's Fern at Taylor Creek

See Page 25.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND PUBLICATION SALES
83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ont. M5M 2T4
or call 488-7304

TFN MEETINGS



GENERAL MEETINGS

252 Bloor Street West (O.I.S.E. Bldg.)
(Between Bedford Road and St. George Street)

Monday, March 5, 1979, at 8.15 p.m.

ANTARCTICA - UNDERWATER ADVENTURE STORY

Dr. George Benjamin, Benjamin Film Laboratories, Toronto
In addition to the film-story, Dr. Benjamin will present a series of slides on seals, albatrosses, penguins.

April meeting — Monday, April 2, 1979, at 8.15 p.m.

* * * * *

GROUP MEETINGS

Bird Group

Wed. Mar. 28 Birds of the Atlantic Coast
8.00 p.m. - Mr. Roy John, well-known birder in Port Hope area
Location: St. James Bond United Church
Avenue Road, just north of Eglinton
: : : : : : : : : : :

Botany Group

Tue. Mar. 13 Mushrooms and Fungi that grow in Metro Toronto
8.00 p.m. - Mr. A. E. Mills, President, Toronto Micology Club
Location: Hodgson Public School Cafeteria (basement)
Davisville Ave., just east of Mt. Pleasant Road
: : : : : : : : : : :

Junior Club (for children between 8 and 16 years of age)

Sat. Mar. 3 Dragon Flies - slide presentation
10.00 a.m. - Mr. Bill Stewart, graduate student in Entomology
Location: Theatre, Royal Ontario Museum (note change of location)
Queen's Park Cres. at Bloor Street West
: : : : : : : : : : :

Ravine Group

Wed. Mar. 14 Premiere of Slide Show illustrating
8.00 p.m. "Toronto the Green" (see Feb. Newsletter, page 21)
Discussion about future directions of Ravine Group
Location: School of Landscape Architecture, Room 105, U. of T.
Northwest corner, College and Huron Streets
: : : : : : : : : : :

Waterfront Group

Tue. Mar. 27 A Night on the Leslie Spit:
8.00 p.m. Ecology, with Pat Temple
Discussions with reps. of Friends of the Spit
Views of City Planning Proposals
Location: Essex Street Public School
98 Essex St., 3 blocks north of Christie subway station



Mar. 5-9 Time to reserve your place on the bus to Long Point

Sunday MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - Trees

Mar. 18 Leader: Emily Hamilton

10.00 a.m. Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge Street, 0.3 miles north of St. Clair Avenue.

Saturday LONG POINT (BUS OUTING)

Mar. 24 Leaders: Chip and Linda Weseloh

8.00 a.m. Meet at Bloor and Yonge (at subway entrance on Bloor near The Bay store) to board the bus at 8.00 a.m.

This is your opportunity to see Whistling Swans and other waterfowl. Reserve your place on the bus by phoning Eva Hunt (221-6303) March 5 to 9 between 9.00 a.m. and 9.00 p.m. Confirm by sending fare (\$8.00 payable to Toronto Field Naturalists Long Point Outing) to Miss Helen Yemen, 200 Brooke Avenue, Toronto M5M 2K6. Cheques must be received by March 20. Bring lunch. Bus will arrive back in Toronto around 5.00 p.m.

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

CARS - Go west from Port Rowan to Hwy. 59 and south on the causeway to the bridge. Meet at 10.00 a.m.

Wednesday BOTANY DEPARTMENT, U of T, GREENHOUSES AND HERBARIUM

Mar. 28 Leaders: Emerson and Eleanor Skelton

10.00 a.m. Meet at the greenhouses on the north-west corner of College and University. (By TTC, Carlton car to University, or Yonge-University subway to Queens Park station.)

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Tuesday "Okefenokee, Land of Trembling Earth"
 March 20 Dennis Holt
 8.15 p.m.
 Location: O.I.S.E. Auditorium
 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto.
 Tickets — \$2.75 each, available at the door.

FORNING

EVENTS

Civic Garden Centre

The following events will be held at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie Street. Telephone 445-1552.

March 9-11 — Garden Club Show - "A Victorian Manor"

Mar. 25-April 15 — Two Exhibitions—

"Canadian Nature Art" and "Botanical Art"

Mar. 29 — Dunnington Grubb Memorial Lecture

8.00 p.m. - Alan Paterson, Curator, Chelsea Physic Garden

Commencing April 3, there will be a series of morning bird walks at 8.00 a.m., starting from the west end of the parking lot.

=====

Royal Canadian Institute Lectures

Lectures at Convocation Hall, University of Toronto. Admission free.

Saturday The Peterborough Methodist Mafia & The Making of
March 3 Modern Toronto

8.15 p.m. - Prof. J. Michael Bliss
 Department of History, U. of T.

Saturday Toronto: Planning for the Paper Metropolis

March 10 - Professor Gunther Gad
8.15 p.m. Department of Geography, Erindale College, U. of T.

Saturday Einstein Commemorative Lecture

March 17 - Robert C. Roeder

8.15 p.m.

=====

HAPPENINGS AT THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

March is DINOSAUR month at the ROM. There will be lectures, films and special events relating to dinosaurs for both children and adults.

A contest will be held, open to anyone over 14 years of age, to make a realistic-looking dinosaur marionette. The prize will be a round trip for 2 to Hawaii. Entry forms at the ROM. Contest closes March 27.

During the week of March 19-23 there will be special demonstrations and behind-the-scenes tours in connection with dinosaurs.

The following lectures will be given, commencing at 7.30 p.m. on the dates indicated—

March 13 Finding and Collecting Dinosaurs in Western Canada
ROM Theatre - Dr. L. Russell

March 20 Hot-blooded Debate

ROM Theatre - Dr. C. McGowan

March 22 Dinosaurs - New Thoughts on Old Bones

Planetarium - Dr. P. Dodson

March 27 Death of the Dinosaur

ROM Theatre - Dr. W. Swinton

A new show will open at the McLaughlin Planetarium commencing March 16 and continuing to June 17 — A Sky For All Seasons.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Last month we appealed for volunteers for several vacancies on our committees and I was delighted with the response. I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Isabel Smaller volunteered to chair our Botany study group. Isabel is very knowledgeable in Botany and will provide the necessary guidance to keep the Botany group active and interesting.

Mr. Roger Chittenden volunteered to take over the Photo Librarian's duties from Mark Sawyer; he will also assist in the Ravine Group. Roger is a keen naturalist and photographer and will make a valuable contribution to the Ravine Group and the club generally.

There are still some areas where we need help. Please take another look at our appeal on page 5 of the February Newsletter. If you have a skill or knowledge you feel we can use, please phone us or speak to us at any meeting. The more members we have involved the more service we can provide.

Wes Hancock

.....

Last fall we were all saddened by the death of Douglas Pimlott, a prominent naturalist, teacher, and friend who worked tirelessly all of his life on conservation and environmental issues. In more recent years he successfully drew attention to many environmental issues in the Canadian north through his prominent involvement in the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee. During all his scientific endeavours he steadfastly maintained an active role in environmental education at the University and the School of Continuing Studies. Doug's enthusiasm for life, understanding, and commitment has touched many lives — my own included. It is because of his personal interest in students like me, that I feel a scholarship in his name is a most fitting tribute to his memory. The following is part of a letter by Wm. G. Saywell, Principal, Innis College, University of Toronto.

"I am writing to you in the hope that we can solicit your assistance in contacting friends and associates of the late Doug Pimlott. Among his many contributions, Doug was successful in establishing an Environmental Studies Programme at Innis College. The Programme for which he worked tirelessly in the last years of his life is not designed as an in-depth specialist training but one in the spirit of a liberal education concerned with the environmental issues that face all of us.

Innis College has established a scholarship in memory of Doug. This scholarship will be awarded to an undergraduate student, who like Doug in his own life, combines high academic achievement with dedicated social involvement in environmental concerns. It is our hope that we can raise sufficient funds to endow this award so that it will be an ongoing and tangible way of recognizing Doug's contribution to us all.

Contributions should be made payable to the Douglas Pimlott Fund, University of Toronto, and forwarded c/o The Principal's Office, Innis College, 2 Sussex Ave., Toronto, Ont. M5S 1J5. Any amount, however, modest, will be appreciated and a receipt for tax purposes will be sent to you."

Ron Thorpe, Past-president



RAVINE GROUP report

AN OPINION

During the next few years, landmark battles will be fought over the preservation of urban natural areas in Metropolitan Toronto. More often than not, it will be groups such as the Toronto Field Naturalists, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and local ratepayer groups fighting against municipalities and other government levels as well as developers to save Metro Toronto's rapidly vanishing urban natural areas for future generations.

The Toronto Field Naturalists has a key role to play in that it can be a central rallying point for those concerned about the preservation of urban natural areas. Because of its past expertise in opposing developments in natural areas, TFN must help provide the leadership and inspiration to those interest groups and members of the public who want to conserve urban natural areas.

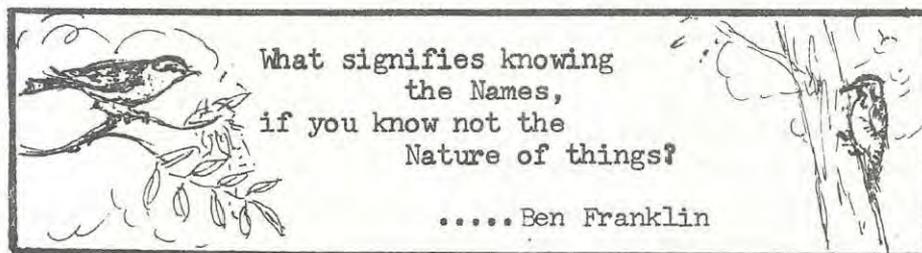
It is for this reason that the Ravine Group should be a strong body constantly monitoring political, bureaucratic, corporate, and private plans and policies which may threaten urban natural areas. The Ravine Group should be a strategy maker and be prepared to wage an aggressive fight against those who would unwittingly or deliberately destroy part of our City's heritage.

It is encouraging that the membership of TFN maintains a healthy and growing interest in the fauna and flora of our urban and natural areas. However, it is our duty to pay an equal amount of attention to ensure that those natural areas within the boundaries of Metropolitan Toronto are protected and enhanced for the enjoyment of all residents.

In the past, the good fight has been waged by all too few members. In order to be more successful in this endeavour, more members must become actively involved in protecting the interests of the TFN. The Ravine Group must have representation from many parts of Metropolitan Toronto.

The struggle to save Toronto's natural areas may not have the glamour of the high-profile issues, Quetico, Algonquin, the Niagara Escarpment or Second Marsh, but it is every bit as important since urban natural areas can provide an introduction to nature for people who would otherwise never have the opportunity to visit the Canadian wilds.

Paul Scrivener





The January meeting was more than interesting for those who braved the cold that night of the ninth. Paul McConnell, a TFN Member with a wealth of background in Botany— both academic and practical— did a good job selling us on the worthwhile activity of enjoying trees and shrubs in winter. He explained how they can be identified by their buds and other features apparent at this time of year. A grand array of twigs greeted us as we entered. Paul had gone to the trouble of collecting them and laying them out on the tables along with field guides for identification. It's surprising to see how different the twigs look from one another when you have a number of families and species represented. It should not be surprising considering the differences in plants, but somehow most of us have an impression, in winter, of just a lot of bare wood and brush. Paul commented that Canadians, at least, should have more of an eye for plants in winter, since we have five months of it. Nearly half the time the trees are in their winter state, so we might just as well look at them once in a while.

The "twig" is last year's growth extending from the scar of last year's end-bud. Some twigs are stout, some delicate. Some have side-buds opposite, some alternate. Some buds have scales; others are naked. Some scales overlap; others do not. Buds can be large, small, elongated, round, sticky or not. Twig colours vary according to species and some are smooth and shiny, others dull or even "velvety". The curious, face-like leaf-scar (from last year's leaf-stem) is another factor in identification.

Some of the twigs on display sported persisting fruits. These varied from ash and maple "keys" to persimmons! Still others had the remains of flowers on them, as the birches. Of course there was a delightful spray of witch hazel, with its profuse, yellow, late-fall blooms; the petals had dropped off but even the remaining calyx of the flower is attractive. To round it out there were a few conifer cuttings in the collection with their varying arrangements of evergreen needles and cones.

Paul reviewed with us the method for following botanical keys in identifying plants. One idea he passed on was the practice of jotting down the numbers on a slip of paper as you go through the key, so that if you find yourself on the wrong track, you won't have to start all over again. There is a vocabulary that goes with all of this, but most manuals have a glossary or otherwise explain the terms they are using.

Winter trees have a charm all their own. It really was not hard for Paul to convince us. And what a delightful excuse for a healthful walk on a bracing winter afternoon! All you need is a hand-lens.

A selection of recommended books: "Native Trees of Canada", R. C. Hosie, (Canada Environment); "Fruit Key and Twig Key to Trees and Shrubs", William Harlow (Dover, New York); "A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs", George A. Petrides (Peterson Series); "The Shrub Identification Book" and "The Tree Identification Book", Geo. W. D. Symonds (Morrow, New York); "The Forest Trees of Ontario", J. H. White/R. C. Hosie (Ont. Lands/Forests) (app.\$1.00) "The Tree Finder", Nature Study Guild (Outdoor Bookshop, Toronto)(app.\$1.00)

REPORT *for 1979*

JANUARY

January 10 - Allan Gardens - Helen Juhola - 30 people - bitterly cold day. It was warm inside the tropical greenhouse and pleasantly cool in the others. The Head Gardener, Mr. Gardiner, conducted the group around and pointed out the mixture of plants of economic and cultural interest. An enjoyable morning.

January 14 - Central Waterfront - Reid and Margaret Wilson - 14 people - cloudy with sunny intervals but with a bitterly cold wind. An ice storm had made walking treacherous - one person slipped and fell, hurting her arm. Some people will do anything to see a good bird! The trip began at Humber Bay Park and worked east to York Street. In addition to the usual common birds the group saw 2 snow geese and 2 Iceland gulls at Sunnyside, 9 canvasbacks at the Boulevard Club, 1 harlequin duck (male) at Bathurst, as well as greater scaup, common goldeneye, bufflehead, oldsquaw, common mergansers and great black-backed gulls.

January 21 - Heritage Trees - Mary Smith and Janet Rosenberg - 26 people - 7" snowstorm, hard to drive but lovely to walk. The trip by bus was around the central city and healthy trees of Heritage Stature were looked at. One tree of National significance is a Red Maple at Laing Avenue. Trees of Regional (Metro) significance were Red, White and Bur Oaks, individually and in a forest; Oriental Planes near Pape and Danforth, Buckeye in Clarence Square and a Poplar-Dogwood forest at Cherry Beach. Of Local significance in heavily built-up areas were seen Silver Maple, Horse Chestnut, Tree of Heaven and a Black Locust remnant. Some special purpose trees were also admired; Japanese Pagoda Tree and Zelkova. Trees living in association with Heritage Architecture were discussed at the Necropolis (1836). A good, friendly outing.

January 28 - Wilket Creek Park/Civic Garden Centre - Muriel Miville and Bruce Parker - about 40 people - cloudy, about 0°C with snow developing. An easy amble from the Edwards Gardens into Wilket Creek Park was led by Bruce Parker - the rear being brought up by Muriel Miville. Bruce pointed out and discussed some of the trees seen including hemlock, spruce and pine. Crows, goldfinches, a downy woodpecker and chickadees were seen and a cardinal was heard. The group saw the workings of a black-backed three-toed woodpecker on a dead hemlock but the bird did not appear.

After the walk everyone gathered in a private room in the Civic Garden Centre where Wes and Helen Hancock had coffee and cookies for us. There was enthusiasm for the opportunity to meet after a walk to talk, renew old acquaintances and make new ones.

Ontario Bird Banding Association Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday March 3, 1979 in the Planetarium lecture room (Bloor and Avenue Road). Registration fee \$1.00. Visitors welcome. Business in the morning; guest speaker in the afternoon will be Bill Clarke from the National Wildlife Federation (USA) - on the Raptors of Cape May.

1979 BAILLIE BIRDATHON - This year from 5.00 p.m. May 4th to 5.00 p.m. on May 5th. See next month's Newsletter for full details, and how you can participate.

Projects...

NEWSLETTER INDEX

Issue #320 (Dec. 1978/Jan. 1979) of the Newsletter contained 28 pages and dealt with 32 separate topics. Forty years ago the February (1939) issue of the Newsletter contained two pages and dealt with four topics. Clearly the Newsletter has changed, diversified, and grown with the club. The 320 issues of the Newsletter provide a record of the Toronto Field Naturalists from 1938 to the present. In the Newsletter are accounts of outings, programs, the various specialized groups of the club, summer nature camps, the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve, Christmas Bird Counts, and numerous other activities of the club and its members. Some of the items which have been encountered while indexing the first 100 newsletters include how to make a chickadee pudding, the increase of Cardinals around Toronto, a Gyrfalcon at Barrie, the foxes of Sugar Bowl Hill, birdwatching in South Africa, Cedarvale Ravine, Whistling Swans at Long Point, Green Snakes, and the locations of unusual trees in Toronto.

In order to make this great amount of information available, an index to the newsletters is now in preparation.

The first task of the index committee was to gather together the newsletters. An appeal was presented to the members of the club to donate newsletters. The result of this appeal has enabled the committee to put together sets of the newsletter which will be used — first to compile the index, and later as a reference for club members. Some of the newsletters will also be used to complete sets presently in the Toronto Central Library and the James Baillie Collection in the Fisher Rare Book Library. At the beginning of the project it was learned that the club possessed two sets of newsletters. When these were received from Hattie Beaton it was found that one set contained 299 newsletters and the other set only 84 newsletters. A very well-kept set (from #60 to #311) was donated by Mr. R.C. Jacobson. Donations were also received from Mary Robson (123 newsletters), Kay Baikie (97 newsletters), G.M. Bartman (113 newsletters), Colien Ainslie (79 newsletters), Kay Ketchum (237 newsletters), and Emily Hamilton (32 copies indexed).

On behalf of the Toronto Field Naturalists the index committee would like to thank those members who have generously donated their Newsletters.

Further donations of Newsletters will be welcome.

Bruce Parker (449-0994)
Chairman, Index Committee

Index update. An offer of newsletters and information about the early days of the Junior Field Naturalists has come from the Jacquiths; and Ida Hanson has contributed 37 issues with a promise of more to follow. As well, Anne Landry, a new volunteer, is helping with the indexing.

For information about VIA Rail Canada "Birdlovers Special" to Chatham March 16, 23, 30, May 4 and 11, 1979, call 868-7277 (Monday to Friday).

TORONTO ORNITHOLOGICAL CLUB
 Mid-winter Waterfowl Inventory - January 7, 1979
 Compiled by Clive E. Goodwin

ROUTE NUMBER	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	A	B
Common Loon			1					1		
Whistling Swan						1		1		
Mute Swan	4				9	14	10	37	2	
Canada Goose	626	127	400	333	703	689	331	3209	61	
Snow Goose					2		1	3		
Mallard	425	277	468	99	1421	1928	1509	6127	602	185
Black Duck	256	139	11	4	36	221	268	935	529	30
Gadwall	27	10	58	7		41	40	183	3	
Pintail		1	3			1	1	6	1	
American Wigeon						6	40	46		1
Wood Duck					2			2		
Redhead						9	458	467		
Canvasback				7	25	6		38		
Greater Scaup		3	27		151	4640	1401	6222	23	40
Lesser Scaup						1		1		
Common Goldeneye	85	109	19	23	51	302	278	867	1438	910
Bufflehead	38	48	20	90	45	129	36	406	165	57
Oldsquaw		254	4364	156	345	1830	395	7344	53	285
Harlequin Duck					1			1		
Ruddy Duck						1		1		
Hooded Merganser				2				2		
Common Merganser	104	101	116		350	387	30	1088		13
Red-breasted Merganser	1		8			3	1	13		
American Coot							2	2		
TOTALS	1566	1069	5495	721	3141	10209	4801	27002	2877	1521

ROUTES AND OBSERVERS

- Whitby to Rouge River - J. M. Speirs, R. Nisbet, R. Rogers
- Rouge River to Coatsworth Cut - F. & M. Bodsworth, R. Barclay, A. Dobson
- Leslie Street to Cherry Beach - G. Fairfield, B. Parker, D. Gavin et al, J. & P. Woodford, E. & R. Lewis
- Toronto Islands, Eastern Gap - J. Kelley, E. Geras, G. Stewart, Mr. & Mrs. McFarlane
- Parliament Street to Humber - G. Bellerby, J. Cranmer-Byng, B. Cruikshank, E. & K. Carmichael, K. Moores
- Humber to Watersedge Park - D. Perks, J. Lamey
- Clarkson to Bronte - C. E. and J. E. Goodwin, A. Dawe

TIME AND WEATHER

8.00 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.; -15° to -8°C. Cloudy, no wind in a.m. Light snow starting 11.00 a.m. Heavy loose ice on lake with harbour, gaps, lagoons and most river mouths frozen. Lake calm, some haze.

NOTE

- Whitby-Wesleyville (Durham F.N.) - M. Bain, D. Barry, G. Scott
- Wesleyville-Wicklow (Willow Beach F.N.) - R. John, E. R. McDonald

issues---

HUNTING IN PROVINCIAL PARKS

The practice of hunting in Provincial Parks has been tolerated for years. Barry Kent MacKay wrote a very revealing article on this subject in the Nov. 19/78 issue of the SUNDAY STAR on the situation at Presquile Park. The Ministry of Natural Resources has been saying recently that all Provincial Parks will shortly become hunting areas! In the meantime, illegal hunting is being carried on in Inverhuron, MacGregor Point and Cyprus Lake Provincial Parks. Members with strong feelings on this subject should write to: Hon. James Auld, Minister of Natural Resources, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ont. Some questions that might be asked are whether there is patrolling of parks where hunting is illegal and how many charges have been laid, what is being done about destruction of flora by erection of duck-blinds, why alcoholic beverages should be allowed where firearms are involved, why hunting is allowed at parks where the overwhelming majority of campers have expressed their opposition, who makes decisions on allowing hunting in parks, whether it is even economically feasible in view of the cost of cleaning up the incredible mess left by the hunters (who are subsidized up to 60% while campers' rents have been doubled). Clippings of newspaper articles are available from the Editorial Committee. This issue has been brought to our attention by Ron Reid. There is much concern about it among naturalists. Besides ducks, many small shorebirds and even passerines are killed by hunters, and as for deer, hunting is allowed where the deer population has not even been checked. And the dangers to human life we all know.

TORONTO ISLANDS' "ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS"

In a recent letter to the Central Waterfront Planners, Steven Varga, Sheila McKay, Paul M. Catling, Dr. Klaus Rothfels, and Dr. T.C. Hutchinson, botanists at the University of Toronto, outlined the careless degradation of natural areas on the islands. These areas are of great biological significance. Deterioration has proceeded over the past few years despite the readily available information indicating the importance of these sites. Among the unfortunate events:

- (1) Devastating bulldozing of valuable wet meadows on the airport in 1977, when cutting would have been adequate.
- (2) Careless and unnecessary damage to a wet meadow and dunes at Gibraltar Point involving a gas pipeline cut in Oct. 1978.
- (3) Unnecessary sodding and mowing of an important wet meadow on Wards Island up until June 1978.
- (4) Unexplained digging of a wide hole in an unusual prairie habitat in the Wildlife Sanctuary in Oct. 1978.
- (5) Unthinking cutting of a wide swath through a prairie community on Mugg's Island in Oct. 1978.
- (6) Degradation of a wet meadow near the Bird Observatory resulting from the continued dumping of wood chips and vehicle traffic.
- (7) The most serious loss of one of the best wildflower stands on the island (in the Wildlife Sanctuary) due to unnecessary dumping of fill in 1975.
- (8) The continued extensive land abuse in the region of the maintenance servicing yard leading to encroachment into the Wildlife area.
- (9) Unneeded mowing of wildlife habitat on Snake Island and adjacent islands.

Botanists also drew attention to:

- (1) the unforgiveable development of a "pay as you fish" trout pond in one of the last sizeable spawning areas for various indigenous fish.
- (2) the periodic disturbance and lack of adequate protection afforded to breeding colonies of gulls and Black-crowned Night Herons on Mugg's Island.

The botanists are of the opinion that attention to these items and avoidance of future damage can be accomplished with very little effort by the Metro Parks Dept. If decline of natural areas on the islands continues at the present rate, we very soon will lose a unique feature of the Toronto region.

Since that letter, the Central Waterfront Planning Committee has produced a Preliminary Plan for the Toronto Islands. In this plan they propose to protect three natural areas on the Islands by designating them "ecologically sensitive areas". These areas include: the Wildlife Sanctuary, Mugg's Island, and the wildlife communities on the western side of the Island Airport. The areas would be biologically managed and any development on the sites must be preceded by a report on the necessity, the alternatives, and the environmental effects of the development.

The botanists are protesting that the planners have failed to protect six other natural areas which should be labelled as "environmentally sensitive". These sites include: the woodland, wet meadows, dune ridge, and beach strands on Ward's Island; the valuable wet meadow and dune ridge extending from

Gibraltar Point to the Island Airport; a cottonwood stand next to the Island Nature Science School; a wooded island in Blockhouse Bay, Snake Island, and the two islands just to the west.

You are urged to protest the complete lack of protection for these important wildlife areas by writing to the Planning Committee with a carbon copy of your letter also going to the Mayor of the City of Toronto.

Central Waterfront Planning Committee, and ISLEX,
235 Queen's Quay West,
Toronto, Ont. M5J 1A6

Mayor John Sewell,
City Hall,
Toronto, Ont. M5H 2N2

Now is the time for naturalists to raise their voices against the continued deterioration of wildlife habitats on the Islands.

Steven Varga, Sheila McKay

.....
Ed. Note. To quote from "Alberta: a natural history" (Chapter 11 -- The Study of Natural History by M.T. Myres):

"...Naturalists must play another very important role. Resource biologists are dependent to a great extent upon the general public for information about abuses of the environment...An organized network of widely scattered amateur naturalists can alert the authorities to local occurrences of pollution, unnecessary habitat destruction, or changes in the composition of the flora or fauna."

Anyone observing abuses such as those listed on the previous page should contact the appropriate authority. See page 35 of "Toronto the Green" for numbers to call.

BIRDING IN TORONTO AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

The editorial committee was delighted to receive the following letter and accompanying nature notes of a Toronto naturalist in 1901.

.....
Several years ago Enid Goss Lowe, originally of Toronto, now of Princeton, New Jersey, sent me her mother's diary of 1901. Enid understood my keen love of nature, that I was familiar with her mother's poetry and philosophical writing of later years, but that I would not have seen this early diary of her mother containing so many nature notes. I had known her father also, Mr. Arthur Goss, the "A" and "Art" of this diary, to whom her mother, Edith, was engaged and with whom she went bicycling on the week-ends from her Kew Beach home. Mr. Goss was a fine nature photographer and was for many years a member of the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto. A word should be said also about Mrs. Goss's brother, James Alexander Munro, formerly Dominion Wildlife Officer for the western provinces. In the days when no bird record was accepted officially unless supported by a specimen, J.A. Munro (Jim) did a great deal of collecting for museums. He died September 29, 1958, but in May of that year the Royal Ontario Museum received by purchase from his collection 2,000 of his mammals and 8,461 specimens of his birds. James L. Baillie wrote his obituary, which was published in THE AUK, Vol. 86, No. 4, October 1969: pp. 624-630, and is worth reading. This lists a selected bibliography of his extensive nature writings. He was co-author of: "The Bird Fauna of British Columbia". (In the summer of 1953 Murray and I were able to visit the Munros at Okanagan Landing, B.C. As we listed his evening grosbeak collection (Mrs. Speirs has a special interest in evening grosbeaks.) he told us interesting experiences with this fascinating species in all seasons of the year.) Regretfully, several months ago, I returned the diary to my friend Enid. She sent it on to her cousin, Kitty Walker Carlisle, then in Cornwall. I wrote Kitty that I thought the members of the Toronto Field Naturalists might enjoy the nature notes from the journal for their Newsletter. She kindly made this selection for us, and Mrs. Lowe has given her permission that they be printed: "Birding in Toronto at the turn of the century!"

Doris Huestis Speirs

.....
The maps on pages 14 and 16 are part of a map prepared by the City Engineer's Office, Toronto, May, 1902. The scale is 1000 feet/1 inch. The original map is located in the Map Section of the History Department of the Metropolitan Toronto Library, 789 Yonge Street.

A close examination of the map will reveal that the Bloor Viaduct had not yet been constructed; north of the Danforth, Broadview Ave. was called "Mill Rd.". Many of the streets in The Beaches District did not exist. We have been unable to establish just what the boundaries of Leaside were in 1901 and the location of "Milne's Bush" and of "Fern Hill". What is meant by "the Government Road" (apparently in the Rosedale general area) is not clear, nor is "Lumberer's Camp" ("L. Camp") nor "Eruly Bush". Some names may have been the author's own. If any members have information on any of these locations, please let us know. By the way (younger members note) streetcars were called "cars" in the old days and "wheels" were bicycles.



WOODBINE
RACE COURSE

CITY LIMITS

TRUNK
RAILWAY

THE GLEN

WOODS

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY
YORK STATION

EAST CITY LIMIT

Extracts from the 1901 Diary of Ethel Ross Munro (Goss)

March 1901 came in like a lamb and there is a spring feeling already ... Walked up as far as Leaside and then back up to the Government Road. Just as we got out of the woods it began to rain — a regular soft spring rain, and we had to run for the car. We saw a lot of birds. It gives one such a feeling to hear them chirping in the still snowbound hills. Yes, Spring is coming ...

On the 18th we were up at the Reservoir and saw a downy woodpecker and three robins. The latter were swinging on a poplar tree, and after two or three calls they burst into song, which seemed to say, like the thristle, "Summer is coming, I know it, I know it".

So at last we come to our walk on the 30th ... I looked for signs of marigolds but could not see any — to Lumberers' Camp (?) where the finest view of all met us in the shape of a flock of bluebirds like pieces of the sky flashing from bush to bush. Al and I sat on a low hillock and watched them, silent from pure delight after the one shriek I gave when I saw them. Through their midst suddenly flashed 2 robins — their red breasts darted meteor-like across the blue and contrasted vividly with the gray bushes. Then 2 crows sailed along and cawed over our heads ... We also saw and heard juncos and chickadees in the woods by Government Road; and in the bush on the other side of L.Camp we saw a phoebe ... We heard the song sparrow of course, with its delicate song, but not as moving as A & I heard on the 29th down at the Beach where we found a grassy lane between Lee and Balsam, simply full of them. We named it "Song Sparrow Lane" ...

Friday, April 5th (Good Friday). A family party down at Kew Beach to view the lot on Wheeler Ave. The song sparrows and robins were singing, and spring was certainly in promise. I sat down on a log to listen to the birds and watched the stream rushing down the ravine and it was a goodly place ... (Later on the same day) ... glancing through the trees, I was suddenly startled by the whirring of a grouse which flew up almost under my feet ...

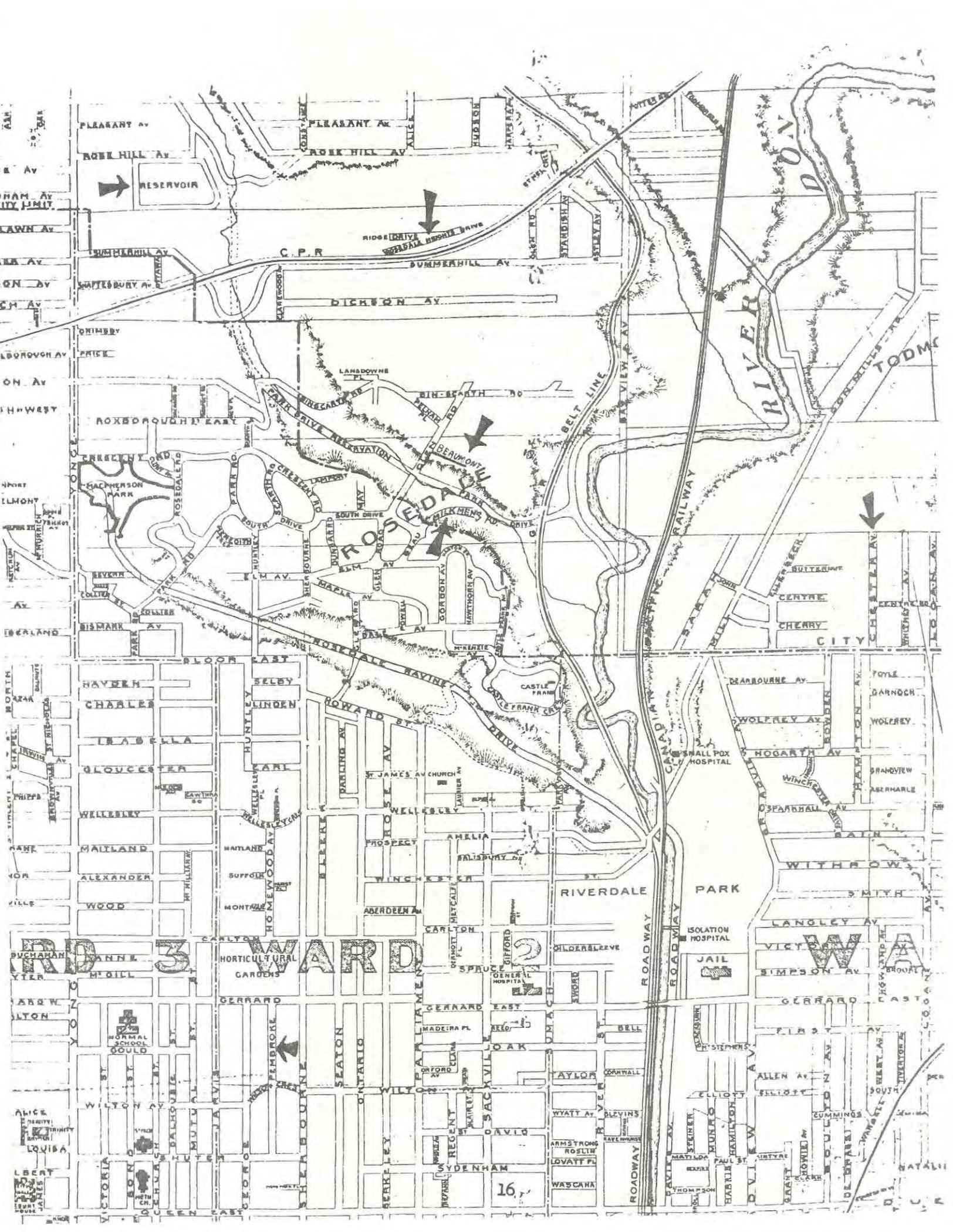
On Monday we put up a lunch and started out at 10 o'clock. We went by the valley. Going down Milkman's Road, Art saw an owl. In L.Camp we heard a meadowlark, beautifully clear and piercing, I thought, with a wild and delicate beauty about it which suggested Spring ... (Later that day) ... We saw a squirrel and a grouse and a lot of deserted nests — one of the red-eyed vireo — a beautiful little thing ...

April 16th. Went along Queen Street and saw a phoebe ... (Later) ... Heard the song sparrows on Lee Avenue ... Then up to the "Shadow of the Pines" where we stood on the site of our future domicile. There we heard what we thought was a new bird, a beautiful song, clear and low it came from a bird sitting up on one of the pines, and we quietly approached to examine it, when to our disgust it turned out to be a robin — the deceiver — it has as many notes as a catbird.

April 22nd. Al and Lil, A and I went down to Beach to see Jo about plans. Found arbutus and hepaticas and brought them home. Saw a kingfisher and some gulls, also a brown creeper.

April 23rd. Saw a kinglet on Gerrard Street, and a meadowlark on Pembroke.

April 26th. (Rosedale Heights) in the woods below the track saw a lot of birds. Most beautiful weather — sky turquoise and everything green. Heard the meadowlark's clear song with its sorrowful ending. Saw a groundhog ...



RESERVOIR

C.P.R.

DICKSON AV

ROSE EDGE PARK

WARD 3

WARD 16

RIVER DON

CITY

16

May 1st. Alice, Jo, A and I went up to "Happy Valley", wheeled by railroad. Saw a bluebird's nest on a fence post at the side of the track. Found violets, trilliums and anenomes. This week also saw two woodchucks up on Rosedale Heights.

May 4th. (Milnes' Bush). Jo, A. and I saw a grouse's nest. Bird whirred up and drew attention to nest which we found under a bush in the leaves. Saw a sapsucker. Heard a white-throated sparrow, a beautiful song. A flicker and butcher bird, sharp-shinned hawk and heard lots of others.

May 8th (Rosedale Golf Grounds). A great place for birds. Saw white-crowned sparrows, black and white creeping warbler. Such a dainty little thing creeping spirally up the tree and now and then darting aside to a twig. Heard a brown thrasher, the first song I ever noticed. He got up on a tree and lifted up his head and poured it forth — rippled and sang "sweet sweet sweet — carol carol carol", as if it were a very joy to be alive. In striking contrast was the long-drawn tender note of the meadowlark from the field to the right, an exquisite note — almost pain — or joy that is akin to pain. On the wires on the road were perched two barn swallows, and a purple martin flew over our heads as we reached the heights. When up there we heard some goldfinches chattering, and presently saw them, away up a tree singing "dearie, dearie, ee". At the end of Beaumont Road in a large tree we saw two gold-winged woodpeckers, evidently mating. There was a round hole in the tree, evidently a last year's nest, which they were going to use. They chased each other around, giving vent to a peculiar whistle now and then like the click of rubber but very sweet to listen to, as if they were calling each other pet names.

May 11th (Leaside, Second Dam and Fern Hill). Walked by track. Struck off at "Violet Nook". Walked along the valley by myself to Second Dam. Found some violets and some squirrel-corn ... Did not get home till 8.30. Whippoorwill over the Bridge.

May 12th (Sunday). Up at 7. A and I started for a wheel at 8.30 ... Along the Danforth Road we saw an oriole, and further along the Independent heard quite a few. They were like a bright flame darting in and out of the dark green pines and their song suggested some notes of the thrashers. When passing a meadow just before coming to the Chester Road we heard a bobolink rollicking, and I got off my wheel to listen, as it was the first I had ever heard, to my knowledge. I had probably heard it often but had not distinguished it from any other bird. Presently from another tree came the plaintive high note of the meadowlark, and in all the bird orchestra there does not seem to be a greater contrast than this to the rollicking, hilarious bobolink. He seems to fall all over himself, and it is the merriest thing you could imagine. It was the best wheel I ever had along this way. It was so fresh and cool ... Left our wheels in a little hollow and went through a wood that led to the valley. There we heard a bird that we did not recognize but we saw it on the top of a tree — black and white and slightly crested, and decided it was a kingbird. Rather a pretty call with a twitter at the end of it. The air was warm with the scent of the pines, and all the woodsey smells, and the ground was covered with white Trilliums, growing in clumps and large and well opened ... Every little knoll was sprinkled with violets and spring beauty, and at the foot of the trees were nodding clumps of adders' tongues fully out in the sunshine. When we reached Milnes' Bush we found it had grown considerably in a week — the bushes were fully out and the road was paved with white violets. We went up to the grouse's nest and took a snapshot of it on the nest, then flushed the bird and took a

time exposure of the eggs while I filled my hat with squirrel corn and violets. Saw a redstart, a black bird with orange on breast and wing — small and with a peculiar wild song. I listened to it carefully to see if I would know it again, but do not know whether I will or not. Also saw a hawk sailing along over our heads uttering a wailing scream. Heard the white-throated sparrow. It is beautiful, the most of any unless the hermit thrush. It is an actual song, and quite a contrast to the "teacher, teacher, teacher" of the ovenbird which I was also trying to learn. It does not sound as bad when you are far away ...

May 25th (Saturday). Today we went out for a wheel, A and I, in spite of grey sky. Went up towards railway — quite cool. Stayed and watched our bluebird's nest, now full of young, for a long time to try and see the old birds feed them, but they were frightened of us. They each came along with worms in their beak and we settled down to watch them. They hovered around, calling to each other now on the telegraph wire and now on the tree, just over the nest, and then the male took courage and swooshed down on the nest, disappearing below the top and re-appeared without the worm, but the female wouldn't go in. She dropped the worm at last, she was so nervous, but went off again and came back with a beetle, with which she continued the same manœuvres, so that we at last left her in peace ... Saw a red-headed woodpecker (my first) with snowy breast, and kingbird. Cuckoos with their long tail and guttural call, and many thrashers ... Sat down on the top of the hill and had a fine view of the valley. A goldfinch lit on a tree and began to scold in the most comical way, and then added the dearest, tenderest call, "come, come come, (peremptory) dearie, dearie". Saw the breast of the veery plainly, pure white, and heard its call, a plaintive whistle and A thought the hermit to be the liquid single chirp like water falling, which we also heard. Going home below the railway track saw a catbird, heard its meow, and its song, the latter beautiful.

June 3rd (Now living at the Beach). In the morning before I went to the office I took out the glasses and looked at the birds and wrote down a description of one whose song had bothered me. I found out from A that it was a towhee. The same evening he came down to mend my wheel and we went up to the druggists to get some benzine. Walked through the woods and heard this towhee, examined it through the glasses and found it to be my bird of the morning ...

June 8th (Saturday). Wheeled to Lumbermen's camp, left our wheels in the grass and went down to the valley. Saw a catbird's nest but the eggs were gone. Saw a cuckoo's with four blue eggs and the bird sitting on it in a low thorny bush. Rambled all over the Bruly Bush and saw a vireo's nest with the bird, an ashen gray, the same color as the nest, which was full of birch bark. I never saw anything as dainty as that fragile little nest, swaying to and fro with the breeze, hanging from the twig of a low bush in a delicate, leafy arbour.

Ethel Ross Munro (Goss) (1878-1960)

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference
Conference to be held at the Harbour Castle Hilton Hotel, Toronto, March 24-28. Topics will include wildlife administration in Canada, northern resource development and the Great Lakes. Further information available from Jim Steinhart, Ottawa, (819) 997-6555, or from Fisheries and Environment Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

POSITIONS OPEN AT LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY: 1979



The following positions are expected to be open in 1979. Applications stating qualifications, experience, and time available, and giving names of one or two people who can be referred to for recommendations, should be made in writing to: David J.T. Hussell, LPBO, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0.

LPBO Warden

The warden will be responsible for operation of the Observatory's field stations on Long Point for part or all of the period April 1 - October 31, 1978. The warden will be expected to work with volunteers on migration observation, banding and other projects, and will 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 fieldwork; 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 by March 15.

Observatory Assistants

Two or more assistants will be required in 1979 to assist in various aspects of the Observatory's program including any or all of the following: migration observation and banding, breeding bird censuses, research projects on migrant or breeding birds, maintenance and operation of physical facilities including buildings, boats, traps, etc., clerical work and typing, 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.

Volunteers

Many aspects of the LPBO program depend on the help of short-term volunteers. Anyone wishing to take part in the Observatory activities outlined above is encouraged to do so. A small fee is charged for accommodation and boat travel, and reservations must be booked well in advance. Write to David Hussell for further details (see address above).

Flower Show to be held in the greenhouses of the Botany Department, University of Toronto (College and University Avenues) March 24-30 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., weekends included. Visitors welcome.

WHY DID IT DIE?

Have you ever found yourself in the circumstance of finding a dead bird and wondering why it died? Being a veterinarian, I have probably encountered this particular problem more often in a single day than most people do in their entire lives. Yet producing an answer to this question is still very difficult. Establishing the cause of death in a single specimen is one of the most difficult things to do in medicine and when the specimen is a bird, the difficulty becomes even greater.

If I haven't as yet discouraged you, there are some standard things you can do. First, try to record as well as possible the situation in which you found the bird. For example, have you seen that particular bird in this area before? Was there any abnormal behaviour at that time? What was the bird doing in this area? Can you establish when death occurred? Where exactly was the bird found dead? What position was it in? What condition was the body in?

The next thing to do is take the bird as soon as possible to a veterinarian who is willing to do an autopsy on it. He will tell you whether an autopsy is possible based on the condition of the body. If death was recent and no severe exposure such as heat or freezing occurred, it may be possible to establish a cause of death on this postmortem. However, it is usually necessary to have specimens from the bird sent to a pathologist so that the tissues themselves can be examined. This can also be arranged through a veterinarian.

If the bird is fresh enough, i.e. less than 24 hours old, and a good description is given, a professional autopsy can often reveal why the bird died. If this were done more often, we would be better able to understand the pathological disorders and environmental pressures to which our native birds are exposed.

Dr. David Silver

635-9090; 636-4812

ELSA SAFARI TO KENYA

In July 1979 the Elsa Wild Animal Appeal of Canada will be sponsoring a safari to Kenya personally conducted by Betty Henderson, President of Elsa Canada.

This unique safari is of special interest to all naturalists and nature photographers. Not only do we visit all the major national parks and game reserves of Kenya where we will see an abundant variety of East African wildlife species (Meru, the home of Elsa the lioness and Pippa the Cheetah, Samburu, Amboseli, Tsavo, to name but a few), but also we travel to more remote areas of unusual interest to birdwatchers and botanists.

Highlights of the three-week tour include a specially arranged stay at two tented camps where we can take game-walks in the afternoon and savour the excitement of the sounds of an African night -- lions "whuffing", hyenas laughing, hippos munching.

First-class accommodation in both game lodges and tented camps.

For further details contact the Elsa Wild Animal Appeal of Canada, Box 864, Postal Station K, Toronto, Ont. M4P 2H2 or telephone 766-9897 (days), 489-8862 (evenings).

THE "CONVERGENCE" PHENOMENON
MEADOWLARK AND LONGCLAW

In a previous article in the NEWSLETTER (April, 1977) I mentioned an African bird which I was "dying to see" — the Yellow-throated Longclaw (Macronyx croceus) reportedly a "double" for the Eastern Meadowlark (Sturnella magna). It was my fondest wish on that trip but I did not expect to be so lucky. However, after a few frustrating glimpses from a speeding minibus, I caught up with it in the Shimba Hills near the coast and in Tsavo East National Park — on more leisurely tours. But better still, and surpassing all hopes, I discovered it while helping with bird study in a quarry reclamation project close to the little beach hotel where I was staying in Bamburi at the coast. In fact there were several pairs, sometimes forming a small flock.

This is about the best example of convergence in bird species and a favourite subject among bird-artists. Yet, when looking at the Longclaw, though struck by the remarkably similar field marks, I did not find myself inclined to say, "How did that meadowlark get into Africa?" In illustrations, however, one always gets the impression of "twins". My passion for comparisons led me into a study of the two species — necessarily chiefly academic. I have examined many descriptions and illustrations and have decided that artists tend to stretch the truth just a wee bit for sensational impact. Feeling very sanctimonious about the whole thing, I decided to outline not only the similarities but also the differences in these two species.

First of all, the Longclaw is a generally smaller bird up to 215 mm; the Meadowlark ranges from 220 mm to 285 mm. However, even if you took the smallest Meadowlark and put it beside the largest Longclaw, the Meadowlark would still appear bigger because the tail is proportionately shorter and the body larger in every way.

To be perfectly honest in rendering the Meadowlark in an illustration, one should always show a flattish crown forming a continuous line with the bill (the culmen intrudes well on to the forehead). On the other hand, the crown and forehead of the Longclaw are rounded from the base of the culmen. Crown shape makes a great deal of difference in the general appearance of a bird at first glance. Also the bill of the Meadowlark appears to be almost a head's-length, while that of the Longclaw is considerably shorter in relation to the head.

Tail width in proportion to tail length seems also to be a factor — the Longclaw's tail being comparatively slender, giving a more "svelt" appearance. The Longclaw, though of robust proportions for a pipit, is proportionately less broad in the body than our sturdy icterid, the Meadowlark. This is something that strikes one immediately. Relationship between size of head and size of body appear about the same in both species.

The flashing white triangles on the tail in flight are less extensive in the case of the Longclaw than in that of the Meadowlark. As far as I can establish, the Longclaw has fewer and narrower tail-feathers, with only one-third of the outer tail feathers white, the white area becoming gradually shorter on adjacent feathers. The Meadowlark, on the other hand, has wider tail-feathers, the outer four being largely white, giving a showier effect.

The two birds are similarly coloured in brownish, yellow, black and white. Certain tropical colours appear different from their counterparts of the temperate zones. I had the impression of a lighter, clearer, more brilliant, more sulphur yellow in the Longclaw, but of a deeper, richer yellow in the Meadowlark. This, however, is hard to prove from pictures and descriptions. The superciliary of the Meadowlark is longer and changes from white to yellow behind the eye; that of the Longclaw is all yellow. This makes little difference in the general appearance of the birds. However, the head of the Meadowlark looks more "striped" than that of the Longclaw which does not have the whitish crown stripe through the brownish cap. The "striped look" of the Meadowlark is further emphasized by the definite, clear dark streak through the eye extending to the nape, while the Longclaw has more of a dark-cheek-patch effect. This, too, is an important factor affecting the general appearance in the field.

There are some differences which are not very noticeable in the field. The Meadowlark has a wider band of white and more spotting along the sides than the Longclaw. It appears that the Longclaw (proportionately) has a slightly longer tarsus than the Meadowlark and the hind claw (which gives it its name) is actually longer than the toe—the Meadowlark's usually being represented as shorter than the toe. The tail-feathers of the Meadowlark are rather pointed while those of the Longclaw appear to be somewhat more blunt. The eyes appear to be rather dark in both species.

Both birds display the black chevron on the breast (or U-shaped, depending on the stage of the plumage). That of the Meadowlark ends at the cheeks; that of the Longclaw tapers out to a thin line ending near the base of the bill to form what has been described as a "circlet", this effect enhanced by the rounded inner edge of the band at the sides of the throat (the Meadowlark's being angular at this point).

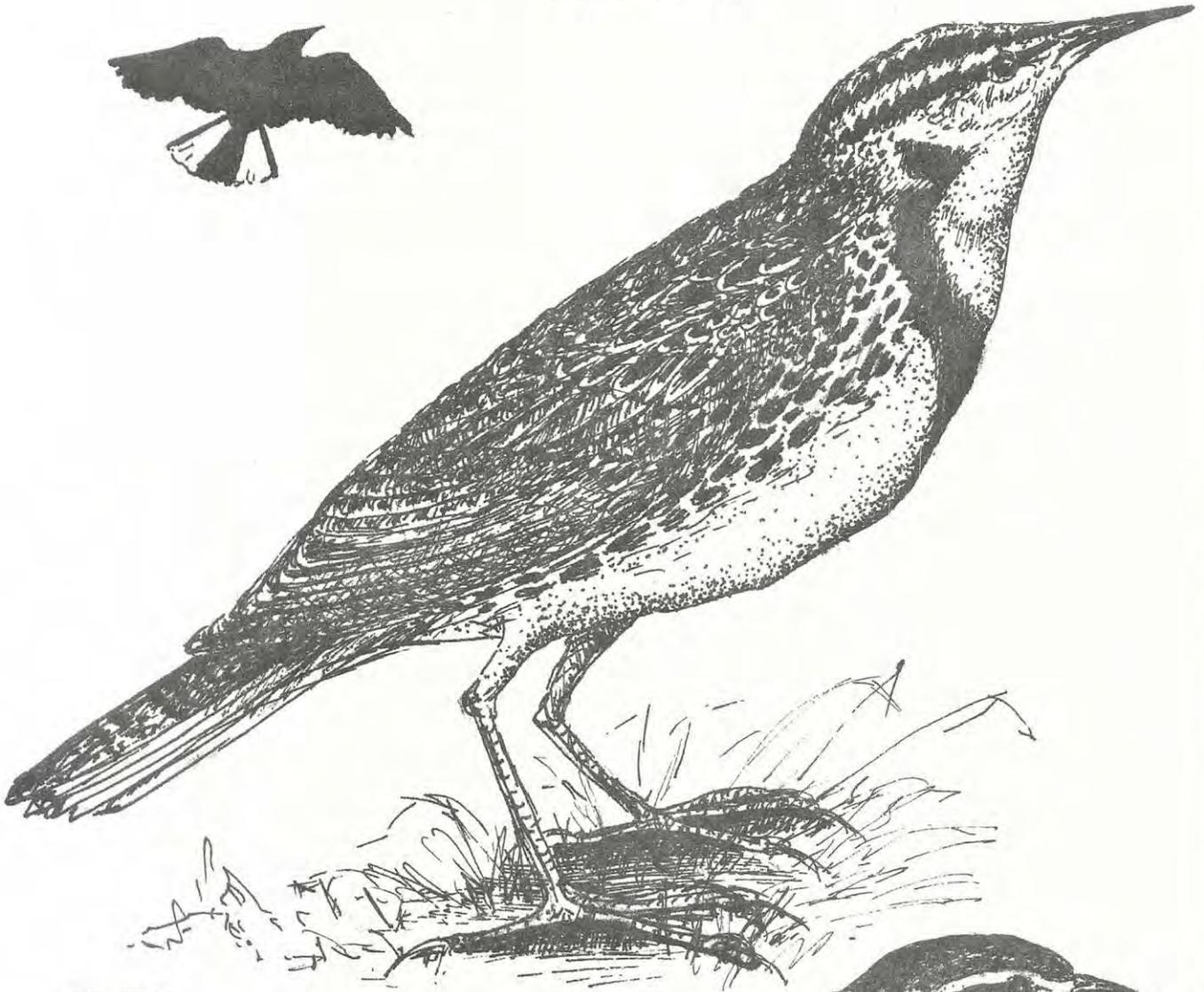
Much staring at illustrations of these two birds brought to light another (though lesser) phenomenon. The Meadowlark generally has a white triangular or arrow-shaped patch at the side of the throat pointing toward the front of the neck. The Longclaw's plumage includes such an arrow, but pointing toward the back of the neck.

In both species the female's markings are slightly less showy and the immatures still less so. None of the manuals mentioned a non-breeding plumage for adult birds in the case of the Longclaw such as we find in the Meadowlark.

One of the main differences in the two birds is in posture. We are all familiar with the Meadowlark's near-erect stance at times; the shortness of the tail is a factor here—the Longclaw's tail would get in the way if it tried this stance while on the ground. The tilt of the head is also usually represented as much higher in the Meadowlark than in the Longclaw.

These two birds have similarities other than field marks. They both have a flight display. The Meadowlark (maybe this accounts in some measure for its misnomer—for it was once classed as a lark!) spirals upwards with chattering notes. Some males, however, are contented with a ground display—pointing the bill upwards and puffing out the chest. The Longclaw rises in the air and hovers; then drops down beside its mate.

Sturnella magna
(Eastern Meadowlark)
.....Americas



Macronyx croceus
(Yellow-throated Longclaw)
.....Africa



One great difference between the two species is in mating customs. The Longclaw pairs are devoted and if one dies, the mate shows great distress. The Meadowlark, however, is often polygamous — yet Audubon describes a touching billing display. Since the male Meadowlark has to take over from the female while she (often enough) builds a second nest, he must be kept very busy. Eggs of the two species are somewhat similar — whitish with brownish or coloured spots — but the Longclaw's are more slender, pointed and glossy. The Meadowlark lays 3 to 7 (each nest) and the Longclaw 3 to 14, thus often rivalling the Meadowlark with her two nests. The Longclaw nests in June and July, sometimes coinciding with the Meadowlark's second effort.

The nest itself is similar in both species — both will utilize a hoof-print in the long grass (be it cow or congoni) though the Meadowlark has a tougher bill suitable for digging a hollow when necessary. Both build a somewhat domed nest with a "secret" tunnel-like entrance of grasses leading to it! Both nests are made of coarse grass and roots lined with fine material. Of course, both are savannah birds, but the Longclaw needs a few bushes around to perch on — it will perch on bush tops up to 40 feet. The Meadowlark prefers perching on fence-posts but will also perch in trees that may be handy. Cultivated areas are the favoured habitat of the Meadowlark, while the Longclaw chooses both wild and cultivated situations.

Both species feed on insects but also take vegetable matter in their diet. Though they are both more or less ground birds, they fly fairly often — the Meadowlark "with rapid beats alternating with short glides", the Longclaw "gliding for short distances on semi-stiffened wings".

We may think of the Meadowlark as a northern bird, but its range extends far south and in winter reaches sub-equatorial climates in Brazil and Colombia. The Longclaw is strictly an African bird — south of the Sahara — there being several geographical races, the largest in the south. There are several related species of Longclaw, the breast-colour varying, but none being so close in appearance as the Eastern Meadowlark is to the Western.

I have no clear recollection of the voice of the Longclaw (it was March). Its call is described as a loud, ringing "Kee-way!" Whether this is its alarm note is not evident from the texts but it does not sound much like the Meadowlark's "tyuk!" or harsh chatter. The Longclaw's song is described as a long "tuweeee" repeated over and over. The Meadowlark is not noted for repetition and the "vowel sounds" in the song are inverted compared with those of the Longclaw, one rendition being "tee-yu", though some say the Meadowlark says "tee-yair" and still others stretch it out to "spring-o'-the-year". I wonder if any such important announcement is attributed to the Longclaw?

Diana Banville

Ontario Ornithologists Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Ontario Ornithologists will be held in Room D, Stedman Lecture Hall, York University, Keele Campus, Downsview, Saturday, April 7, commencing at 9.30 a.m. Registration in the foyer from 8.30 a.m. \$2.00 per person.

Titles for papers and abstracts must be submitted before March 2 to Dr. David Fowle, Department of Biology, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario, M3J 1N9.

Further information may be obtained from David Fowle and Ted Miller, 667-3456, or Gerald McKeating and David Euler, 965-4251.

CLINTON'S FERN DISCOVERED AT TAYLOR CREEK

The following letter was sent to Dr. Donald M. Britton of the University of Guelph last summer at the suggestion of the Botany Department of the University of Toronto. Dr. Britton's reply follows.

I have just collected (August 30, 1978) and submitted to the Herbarium of the Botany Department of the University of Toronto two fronds of Clinton's fern. A small colony (four rosettes) of this species was discovered growing among cattails, jewelweed, white snakeroot, lady fern, common horsetails, and Diervilla lonicera (a Honeysuckle) on a north-facing slope of Taylor Creek near the corner of Woodbine Ave. and O'Connor Dr. in East York (a borough of Metropolitan Toronto).

This fern is not listed in any of the publications of the Toronto Field Naturalists and the Herbarium at the University did not have a sample of it. Could you please let me know its status in Ontario. I presume it is fairly uncommon, but would appreciate knowing a little more about it. The area where the fern is growing here is undergoing redevelopment. Would it be worth trying to relocate the specimens? We have not been able to stop the development.

HJ

.....

Thank you for your letter concerning Clinton's Fern. I am perplexed as to why TRT is missing a large number of this species for Ontario. On loan perhaps? It is less common than Dryopteris cristata (Crested Wood Fern), D. intermedia, and D. spinulosa (Spiry Wood Fern) but more abundant than D. goldiana (Goldie's Fern). There are many collections around Toronto of both D. clintoniana and D. goldiana from places that are no doubt now covered with asphalt or homes.

I enclose a xerox of a map made by Dr. James Soper from a paper he and I wrote in 1966 (Can. J. Bot. 44:p. 74). Because of the early collectors it appears that Metro Toronto was one of the centers for this fern! It has not been reported from the Precambrian shield although at times it is right along the contact line e.g. north Hastings and north of Kingston.

I presume that it is not listed in publications of the Toronto Field Naturalists because Gray's Manual (also Scoggan, also Boivin) prefer to treat it as a mere variety of D. cristata in spite of the fact that it is a good hexaploid and there is good evidence that it arose from a cross of D. cristata X D. goldiana. It is a good sexual species with its own fertile spores and with its own ecological preferences and its own range.

DMB

Helen Juhola

ARIZONA TOUR
(WORLD CIVILIZATION AND NATURAL HISTORY)

An exciting trip being organized by the Royal Ontario Museum to Arizona in April, 1979, may be of interest to some Members of the TFN. Under the direction of Dr. Walter Tovell, ROM's well-known geologist, the first week will be spent exploring the many canyons and cliff-dwellings north of Phoenix. Plants and wildlife abound in some of the areas. Spend the second week at your own pace in the southern desert area of Tucson exploring further wonders of nature or enjoying golf, tennis and riding. For further information call 922-4829.

THREE INTERESTING PLANTS OF THE SUNNYBROOK-WILKET CREEK AREA

Each of the ravines and valleys with which Metropolitan Toronto is so happily endowed is a home to interesting and distinctive plants. Many of these are commonly overlooked or disregarded, some because they grow in the least visited places, others because they do not strike one at first glance as being alluring, as might a rose or a lily. Yet, as every naturalist who has sought them out knows their attraction may lie as much in their character and history as in their general appearance, though if the seeker has brought along a magnifying glass, as one ought always to do, it may quickly be seen that within apparent plainness lies a wealth of hidden beauty. To indicate the possibilities of such a botanical hunt I have chosen three plants from the Sunnybrook-Wilket Creek area since it is one of the most popular and most commonly visited of Toronto ravine regions.

Tramping or skiing in this part of the Don Valley in the winter, you may easily find yourself faced with a wall of tan-coloured vines clambering over bushes and trees, a quite impenetrable tangle, or you may find your feet ensnared in a twining booby-trap of these same vines, half-hidden in the snow. Your first reaction is likely to be one of annoyance, your second, an urge to avoidance. Though you may not know it you have had your first encounter with the dog-strangling vine (Cynanchum nigrum) whose apt name was given by Linnaeus two hundred years ago.

When you feel better about it come back and have another look, preferably upon a sunny day for then you will see some of its pods open and the silky parachutes that top its seeds shining with glossy, silvery sheen. Then you will think, "This must surely be a milkweed," and you will be right for this is indeed a viney member of that family. Test it out any time of spring or summer and you will be able to squeeze milky juice from this plant.

Its flowers you may never have regarded; few people do as they are obscure, lost amidst green foliage and easily overlooked. Here then is a perfect chance to use your magnifying glass (10x) for it will show you an outer ring of five smoky, red-purple fingers, an inner ring of brighter red and a core of creamy white—the beauty that was hidden from the incurious passerby.

was introduced into various parts of this continent as a garden attraction, perhaps because of the fasciation of the opening



taking wing as to have brought the plant a second name of black swallowwort. The Don Valley population was probably introduced in just this way. What the gardeners did not count upon was the ability of the plant to fly the garden borders and go rampaging across the countryside, thanks both to its parachuted seeds and to its underground-travelling rhizomes. This it has done with such singular abandon and such success, not only in the Don Valley but in other parts of southern Ontario, that it has now received the distinction of prominent mention in the new book on Ontario Weeds (Alex and Switzer). It is, in effect, an excellent example of plant introduction and naturalization.



Our second plant will not announce its presence in the same robust manner as the first for it will yield the secret of its whereabouts only to the persistent seeker. Along the wet slopes and moist sandy banks of the valley are the most likely places to seek it out. Quite probably you may come upon it for the first time in winter when its sturdy, evergreen stalks pierce through the snow, standing above it in seeming defiance of the cold. In the Toronto region this plant may grow from a few inches to two or three feet in height but under more favorable climatic conditions to the south it can reach three meters. Yet



even with our plants, if you go along some summer's day, get down and take a mouse-eyed view through a good stand, you should be reminded of the great forests of closely-related plants that once dominated much of the earth during the Carboniferous Period, the great horsetails, whose decayed and pressed bodies have given us so much of our coal, oil and gas. This is then a horsetail, the largest in our area, and it is called Equisetum hyemale, the winter horsetail, because of its evergreen character. The conical heads on the green stalks are the spore-bearing apparatus of the plant and they continue to spread their spores with every winter wind, even into the next spring. Examine one closely with your magnifying glass and you will see a fantastic architecture of ribbed column, topped by a colonnaded balcony above which rises a pinnacled dome, decorated in black and brown. A close-up photograph shows this structure to perfection. So like some of the slender minarets of the Orient does it seem that one almost expects a muezzin to be calling the daily prayers from the balcony. Seen at the proper angle of light the stalks will glisten and gleam, thus revealing that the plants are strongly silicified, the crystals of silica being so abundant, in fact, that the softer parts may all be eaten out by insects and the plant still left intact as a silica skeleton. It was this characteristic that made it possible for the plant to be used in the polishing of wood before machines took over the job. That usage gained this horsetail its alternative name of Scouring Rush, and so gave it economic as well as historic and aesthetic value.

It is amazing that our third plant can dangle its rich brown, inflated capsules before unseeing eyes, especially when, by standing underneath the tall shrubs upon which they grow, these capsules may often be seen most dramatically arranged against a deep blue sky, a sight that should command anyone's attention.



Curiosity about them might well be aroused, you would think, when some wanderer amidst the shrubs looks up and sees the inflated bladders, so like Chinese or Japanese lanterns in shape and size if not in colour; the query might be, "What are they doing growing in bushes over my head?" The wonder might increase if the observer were informed of the truth that the nearest relatives of the bushes being studied do, in reality, grow in Japan and China though they belong to a quite different botanical family than the Japanese lantern. Our bush is named Staphylea trifolia and is commonly called Bladdernut. It is one of the plant

species that reveals a strong link between the flora of eastern North America and that of eastern Asia, a fact that has been used in recent years in the development of the current geological theory of continental drift. The tempting brown capsules of autumn are the fruit of charming panicles of campanulate, greeny-white flowers of spring, really polished white petals snuggled beneath delicate grey-green sepals, giving an overall effect of floral innocence in the midst of leafy-green bowers. Few people seem to know that these attractive shrubs grow in several parts of the Toronto area and are a particular treasure of Wilket Creek Park where they occur as a luxuriant stand at the bottom of the wooded slope that reaches down from the playing fields to face the Don River across the main road.



The examples of these three plants will, I hope, alert our readers to how much there is of interest in the plant world, not only in the area mentioned here, but in all the ravines and valleys of Toronto.

Richard M. Saunders

Letter to TFN editors:

I have been wondering whether the TFN should take paid advertisements for publication in the newsletter as one way to reduce costs, or perhaps to pay for the cost of producing a photograph occasionally?

Should advertising be for just any old thing, or should ads have relevance for our members (outdoor clothing, supplies, birdfood, etc.)?

Who would want to collect ads and set up the page(s) for the newsletter, or should they be run as strips along the bottom of each page?

And should there be one rate for amateurs and one for professionals? Do members rate a discount? Should there be a preferred list, or is "first come, first served" a better approach?

I wonder what other members think about advertising in the TFN newsletter?

Mary Smith

Newsletter Editorial Committee

Ms. Diana Banville -536-1396
#501, 1011 Lansdowne Ave., Toronto M6H 4G1
Miss Mildred Easto - 488-0962
#416, 28 Broadway Ave., Toronto M4P 1T5
Mrs. Helen Juhola - 924-5806
#112, 51 Alexander St., Toronto M4Y 1B3
Miss Jean Macdonald - 425-6596
88 Parklea Dr., Toronto M4G 2J8
Miss Florence Preston - 483-9530
#203, 368 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto M4P 1L9

Articles and/or drawings for the Newsletter will be welcome and must reach a member of the Editorial Committee by the first day of the month. Articles may be anywhere from one or two sentences to 1500 words in length.