



# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 336, December, 1980



What about me?

...a good question...see page 29.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION  
&

PUBLICATION SALES

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

## President's Report

As 1980 comes to an end I remember some of the joys the study of natural history has brought me this past year: in April my first sight and scent of trailing arbutus in flower among fallen leaves and patches of snow; in July and August the great variety of plant and animal life in Toronto's valleys; on a TFN weekend at Dorset a V of geese honking its way south over a patchwork carpet of red, orange, yellow and green tree-tops and lead-coloured lakes, and eight long-eared owls warily watching the watchers on a TFN outing to the Scarborough Bluffs, and on and on I could go.

Although the memories I have just listed are of thrilling sightings, the articles in this newsletter are mostly about birds we can all see almost every day throughout the year in the Toronto region. Notes made by field naturalists, whether the "field" is a parking lot or a forested ravine, are important. Not all the bird species in the following articles have always been here, and the habits of even our most frequently seen birds do change. So even at this time of year when many of us expect to be spending more time indoors, or at least in the city, we find that there is still much for us to observe and wonder at. The editorial committee hopes that a future issue will contain as many articles on naturalized plants in the city as this one does on bird adaptations to urban living.

Do you ever wonder how such a large newsletter as ours gets put together? Well, first, many members have to write articles or inform the editorial committee about events they want to share with the rest of the members. In one sense, every member of TFN belongs to the editorial committee. Most of what we receive, we use. Diana Banville, as well as writing so many articles, draws many of the cover illustrations and cartoons, and initiated the idea of artistic headings for regular reports. Many of these were later redesigned by Mr. R. C. Jacobsen. Mildred Easto has written a number of articles and typed many others, including the Index for the 1979 Newsletters. For the past two years she provided the committee with homemade muffins and jelly at editorial meetings once a month. We have missed her this fall as she has been in hospital with a broken ankle, but we are looking forward to her return in 1981.

Jean Macdonald prepares all Upcoming Outings pages and has prepared many of the pages on Issues, and from 1978 to 1980 also prepared all the Outings Reports. Bruce Parker, the most recent addition to our committee, prepares the Toronto Region Bird Records, handles exchange newsletters, and is now preparing the Outings Reports. It was Bruce, along with Christine Hanrahan, who prepared the 1979 Newsletter Index. Florence Preston prepares the TFN Meetings, Coming Events, and Ethics pages. She is also the author of the "People" article which has appeared in so many of our newsletters.

As the wind tears the last few leaves from the trees, revealing the remains of birds' and wasps' nests built last spring--nests we knew were there but couldn't see--I am looking forward to our winter outings. As well as four Wednesday morning nature walks, the Outings Committee has planned a series of Sunday afternoon outings for December and January to explore part of the West Don Valley and its tributaries. I hope many of you will take the opportunity to attend, and I wish you all a 1981 filled with the pleasures of discovery.

Helen Juhola (924-5806)  
112-51 Alexander St.,  
Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1B3

	<p>Upcoming      TFN</p> <h1 style="margin: 0;">OUTINGS</h1>	
<p><b>RAIN</b> or</p>	 <p><b>SHINE</b></p>	<p><b>Everybody Welcome!</b></p>

- Wednesday      TODMORDEN MILLS - Nature Walk and Christmas Festivities (West Don)  
 Dec. 3              Leader: Mel Whiteside  
 10.00 a.m.        Meet at Todmorden Mills sign. (Broadview #8 bus from Broadview subway station, or Mortimer #62 bus between Broadview and Main subway stations. Get off at Mortimer and Broadview and walk down Pottery Road.)  
                       Cars. Pottery Road from Broadview or the Bayview Extension. Turn into the site at the Todmorden Mills sign and continue on to the parking lot. Walk back.
- Sunday            NORTH GLENDON CAMPUS - West Don Exploration  
 Dec. 7              Leader: Roger Powley  
 2.00 p.m.        Meet at the gates to Glendon Hall, Lawrence and Bayview. (Davisville #28B bus from Davisville subway station or Lawrence subway station, or Bayview #11 bus from Lawrence subway station.) Group will walk north.
- Saturday         ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM - Sketching Nature Displays. Beginners welcome.  
 Dec. 13            Leader: Diana Banville  
 10.00 a.m.        Meet at the front door. Stools are provided. Dry media only.
- Sunday            SOUTH GLENDON CAMPUS - West Don Exploration  
 Dec. 14            Leader: Wally Platts  
 2.00 p.m.        Meet at the same place as December 7 outing. Group will walk south.
- Wednesday      ALLAN GARDENS - Botany  
 Dec. 17            Leader: Peggy Love  
 10.00 a.m.        Meet at the greenhouses. (#506 Carlton car to the Allan Gardens stop - between Jarvis and Sherbourne.)
- Sunday            WEST BURKE BROOK - West Don Exploration  
 Dec. 21            Leader: George Fairfield  
 2.00 p.m.        Meet at the entrance to the Nature Trail on the west side of Bayview Avenue just north of the Chiropractic Clinic. (Davisville #28B bus between Davisville subway station and Lawrence subway station. Get off at the CNIB, cross Bayview by the overpass and walk north.)
- Sunday            EAST BURKE BROOK - West Don Exploration  
 Dec. 28            Leader: Howard Battae  
 2.00 p.m.        Meet on the east side of Bayview Avenue at the CNIB bus stop. (Davisville #28B bus between Davisville subway station and Lawrence subway station.) We will probably view the brook from the top of the steep ravine slope.
- Sunday         CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - A project of the Toronto Ornithological Club. If you wish to participate call Harry Kerr at 481-7948.  
 Dec. 28

## UPCOMING OUTINGS - Continued

- Sunday SERENA GUNDY PARK - West Don Exploration  
 Jan. 4 Leader: Jake Smythe  
 2.00 p.m. Meet in the first parking lot inside the entrance off Leslie Street just north of Eglinton Avenue East. (Leslie #51 bus or Lawrence East #54 bus from Eglinton subway station.) Get off at the first stop immediately after the turn on to Leslie. If you find crossing Leslie difficult you could use an Eglinton East #34 bus from Eglinton subway station to Leslie. Cross the difficult T intersection with the lights.
- Sunday WILKET CREEK PARK - West Don Exploration  
 Jan. 11 Leader: Brian Gray  
 2.00 p.m. Meet at the west side of the parking lot of the Civic Garden Centre at Lawrence and Leslie. Group will follow the river south. (Lawrence East #54 or Leslie #51 bus from Eglinton subway station.) Cars. (From west of Bayview) - Lawrence breaks at Bayview. Rejoin by going north on Bayview and then via Post Road. Or come to Leslie via Eglinton or Wilson/York Mills. Parking at the Centre.
- Sunday WINTER WATERFOWL COUNT - A project of the Toronto Ornithological Club. Date not confirmed, but if you want to participate call Clive Goodwin (home, before 9.30 p.m., 249-9503; office 445-1552).  
 Jan. 11
- Wednesday METROPOLITAN TORONTO LIBRARY - Plants, and Natural History Reference  
 Jan. 14 Leader: Melanie Milanich  
 10.00 a.m. Meet inside the entrance to the library (Yonge Street one block north of Floor). We will examine the many plants thriving in the library and visit the reference sections of interest to naturalists.
- Sunday ERNEST THOMPSON SETON PARK - West Don Exploration  
 Jan. 18 Leader: Professor Bill Andrews  
 2.00 p.m. Meet in the parking lot (Eglinton East #34 bus from Eglinton subway station to Leslie Street.) Go down the steps near the traffic lights on the south side of Eglinton. Cars. Use Wilket Creek Park entrance off Leslie Street just north of Eglinton Avenue. Follow road to the left and under the bridge to the parking lot of Ernest Thompson Seton Park.
- Sunday NORTH TODMORDEN MILLS - Lower Don Exploration  
 Jan. 25 Leader: Helen Juhola  
 2.00 p.m. Meet at the Todmorden Mills sign. See December 3 for how to get there.
- Wednesday TORONTO - Underground Flora and Fauna  
 Jan. 28 Leader: May Staples  
 10.00 a.m. Meet beside the clock on the main floor of Union Station. We will walk north to Dundas Street with only one open air street crossing.
- Sunday ANIMAL FARM AND NECROPOLIS - Lower Don  
 Feb. 1 Leader: Mary Smith  
 2.00 p.m. Meet at farm entrance. (#506 Carlton car to Gerrard and Sumach.) Walk north to Winchester. Go east on Winchester to farm entrance. No entrance fee. Cars. On-street parking in the vicinity.

If you think Christmas bird counts in Toronto are sometimes fraught with hardships and disappointments, consider yourself lucky when you read this account of two top birders over 60 years ago in THE FIRST TORONTO BIRD CENSUS.

Dec 24, 1919

- Came to Toronto for Christmas

... On the afternoon of the 24th Stuart Thompson and I faced a north wind with driving snow to take a bird census. Our route was from College St Entrance High Park, westerly to Grenadier Pond - South to Lake front, west to Humber, up Humber to Bloor St and home. The time actually spent observing was from 1 pm to 4.15 pm. just before sunset. Birds seen

Hairy Gull	7	Hooded Gull	1 (?)
Loon	2	Am. Osprey	1
Chickadee	11	Black-b. Gull	1
Hairy W	1 or 2	Duck (sp?)	1
W. C. Warbler	2	Scalp Lark	1
Song Sparrow	2	Tree Sparrow	1
Crowbill (?)	1	Redpoll	1

Distance 8 miles      individuals 34

wind 20-30 miles      species 14

Considering the day - the result was entirely satisfactory. The Song Sparrows were a good find. They were in the reeds at the head of Grenadier Pond in similar situation to ones I have found at Island and West Hill.

Excerpt from  
2nd volume of  
Journal of  
Hoyes Lloyd.

During his youth, Mr. Lloyd did a great deal of bird-watching in the Toronto area. On Dec. 11, 1918, he was appointed Ornithologist for the Dominion Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior and moved to Ottawa. He was at one time President of the American Ornithologists' Union (see TFN newsletter (103) 3 N. 51 on Canadian participation in A.O.U.)

See also:  
"Tribute to  
Hoyes Lloyd"  
Canadian Field  
Naturalist  
93: 331-336 with  
list of his  
publications.

(Stuart Thompson was, of course, a well-known TFN member and nephew of famous naturalist, Ernest Thompson Seton.)

(contributed by Marjorie Blackshaw - discovered by her in the course of participation in nesting-bird record project for ROM. Permission given for publication by Dr. Ross James.)

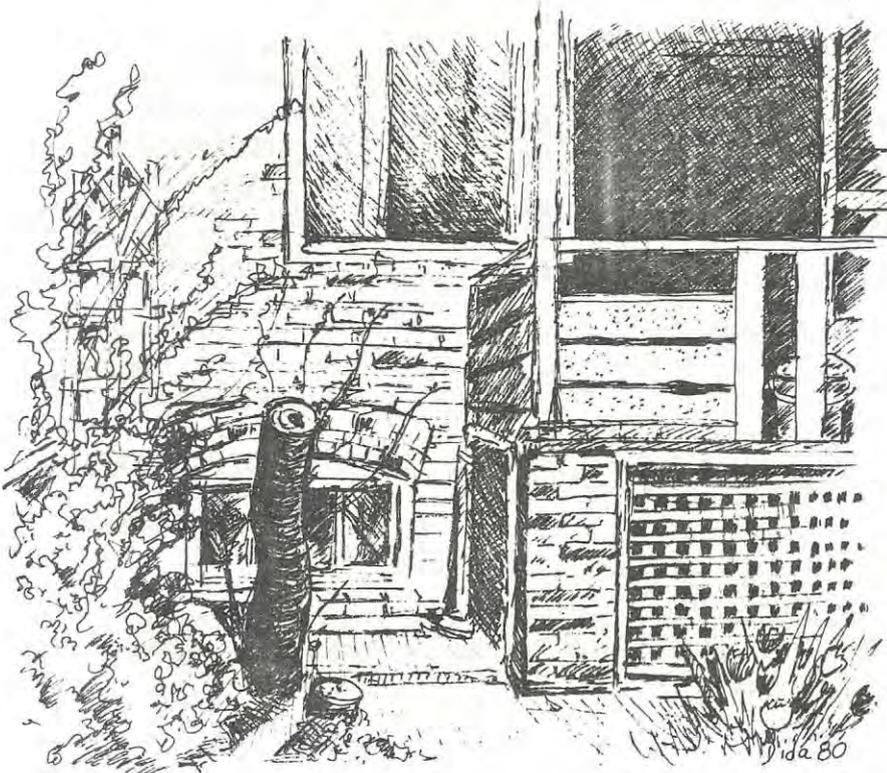
CHICKADEES NESTING IN CITY

On Saturday, May 10, 1980, two Black-capped Chickadees were observed removing chips of wood from the top of a 45" high, 4-3/4" diameter stump of a sour cherry tree in the backyard of a house on Moore Avenue (about one-quarter mile from the Moore Park Ravine). The stump is located about four feet from the back of the house which is occupied by a family of two adults and their four children between the ages of nine and nineteen. (The yard is not a neglected area, and the top of the stump can be viewed easily from the dining-room window.) For about four days the birds were seen carrying wood chips to an evergreen tree in an adjacent backyard - until they had excavated an 11" deep oval hole (measuring about 1-3/4" at its widest point) in the cherry-stump - then all activity seemed to cease. The family assumed that the birds had been frightened away.

Suddenly, on May 21, much to everyone's surprise, four eggs were observed in the hole. After that, the chickadees were constantly on guard. The one on the nest would hiss noisily if anyone approached, while the one out of the nest would fly about frantically, apparently trying to distract the "intruder" from approaching the stump. If no one was near, it would be seen carrying food to the nest via some round-about route. Once a woodpecker was observed being chased from the yard by a chickadee.

Finally, on the rainy Sunday morning of June 15, a young bird was actually seen leaving the nest. After about an hour, this short-tailed chickadee left the vicinity and the adults, too, disappeared. At this time the stump was examined and found to be empty. Since then chickadees are occasionally heard and seen - mostly in the vicinity of the evergreen tree in the adjacent backyard. The family is leaving the stump in the hope that the birds will nest again next spring.

Helen Juhola



1. The nesting site

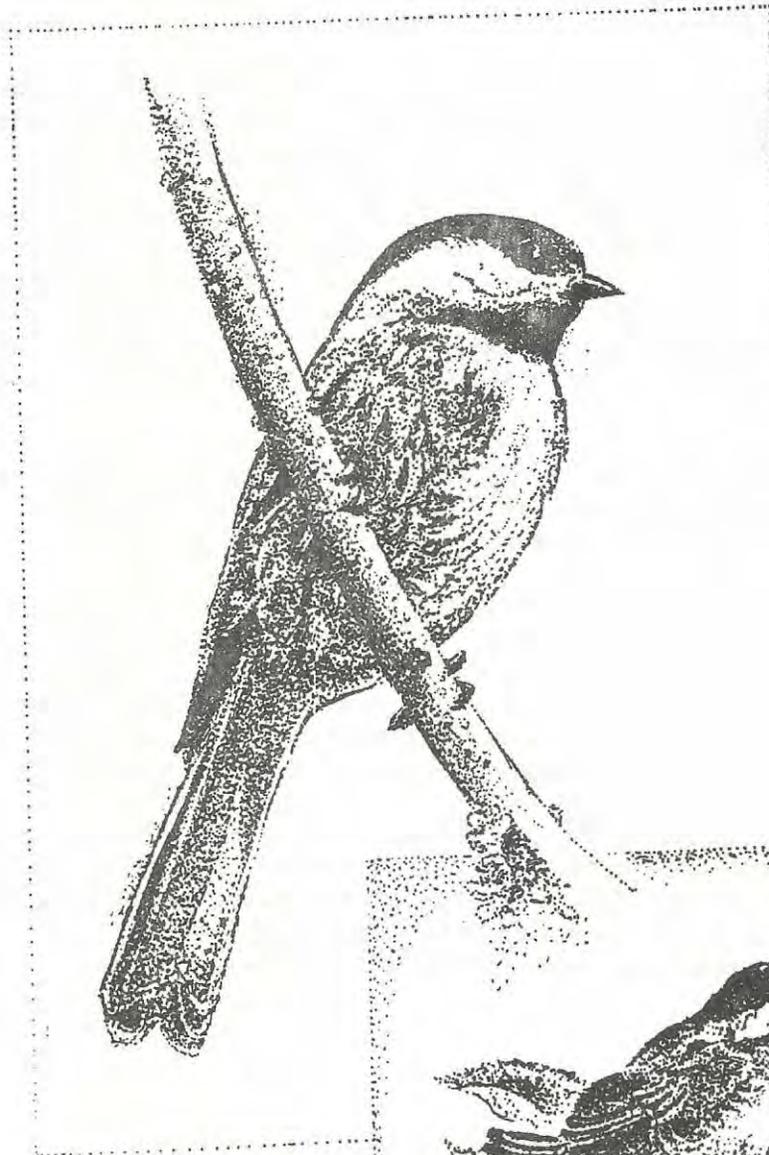
(All illustrations are drawings after photographs by E. G. Thompson and Stephen Thompson.)

2. Adult clearing cavity; carrying away strips of wood from interior of stump.

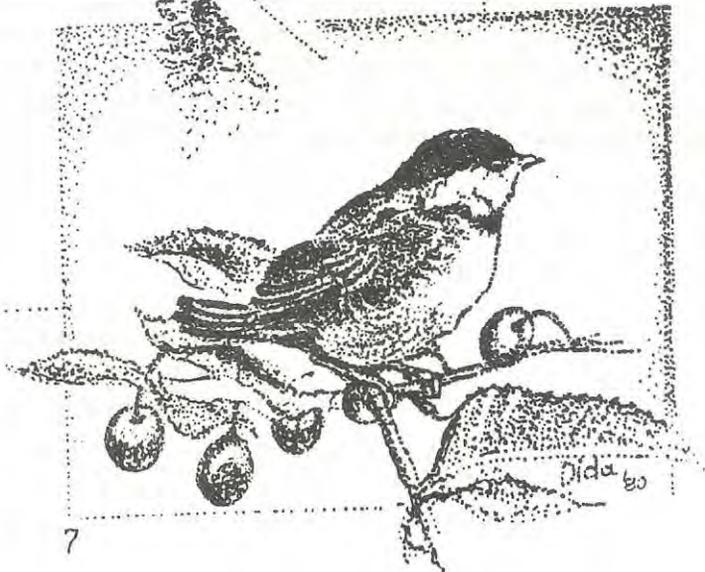


3. Adult perched on forsythia

(actual size - 4-1/2")



4. Fledgling perched on a sucker by the cherry-stump. (2/3 actual size of bird)



BATHERS IN THE DUST

The words "House Sparrow" have an affinity with "housewife", signifying "taken for granted but very missed if not around". This chirpy, cheerful, cheeky little bird (5¼") is with us all the time, has followed the white man around the world and is still extending its range. House Sparrows are non-migratory, eat insects and seeds and are not coy about copulating in public!

John P. S. MacKenzie is not at all kind to this little bird. In his The Complete Outdoorsman's Guide to Birds of Canada and North East America he calls them an "unfortunate mistake" and a "robust nuisance" and goes as far as to say the city House Sparrow is a "filthy city bird"! But what can you expect from someone who calls my friends, the Starlings, "thoroughly unpleasant"? To me the House Sparrow is a jolly, perky fellow and if the city birds become filthy, Man created the environment and the adaptable House Sparrow adjusted to it. It does indeed enjoy a dust-bath.

My first experience with these birds was when I was five years old. In spite of the efforts my parents made with wire under the eaves of the house, the sparrows built nests under the roof. Inevitably a baby bird would fall from the nest on to the path below at regular intervals. I would scoop these up and nurse them in a collection of matchboxes; my mother allowed me to keep them near the oven for warmth. All day I would tend these unfortunates with drops of milk and water. The following morning I would rush downstairs to discover my charges had not survived the night. A funeral service would follow in the back garden, complete with "dust to dust, ashes to ashes"; then the box was buried and a miniature cross erected. Not only God noticed the fall of these sparrows!

To be more scientific the House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) is not related to our North American sparrows but belongs to the Ploceidae, a large family of weavers and Old World sparrows, mostly found in Africa.

In spring the male is quite handsome, I think, for he drops the tips of the feathers of the bib and presents, instead of winter gray, a striking black bib. Several species of birds drop feather tips in springtime. His other features include, white cheeks, gray crown, chocolate collar, buffy areas and streaky back. She has a buffy streak over the eyes and a pale breast and can be confused with other sparrows, if unaccompanied by the male.

Of course they do build large, straggly nests - sometimes to Man's annoyance - in cities, towns and farming areas. I stayed once in a castle where a sparrow's nest caused the diverting of rainwater above a priceless Italian moulded ceiling which came crashing down to the floor. But I, for one, don't think that the sparrows were entirely to blame.

Joy Pocklington

The air must be as musical  
Even when the snowflakes  
Are not dancing.

(haiku by Paul W. Smith)



(Things are looking up...)

The Stars (A New Way to See Them) by H. A. Rey, published by Houghton Mifflin Boston, 1952, 160 pp, 17 enlarged constellation charts, 17 calendar charts of the heavens, around \$6.00. Available at book stores (try W. H. Smith).

During a pitch-black morning-rising, a fellow nature-traveller introduced me to The Stars. If you, like I, have ever wished you could identify something in the heavens besides the Big Dipper, this is your book. Guidelines between the stars in each constellation have been drawn to indicate the shape the name suggests.

Earlier drawings of constellations were...

"Allegorical" (decorative, but had little to do with stars);

"Geometrical" (rational, but without meaning);

AND NOW...

"Graphic" (gives the shape the name suggests).

This study of the skies is ideal for beginners and has been recommended as an additional text for classwork in navigation courses. Included in its pages is much general information about the moon, seasons, planets, brightest stars.

Left Page  
Sky as you see it

Right Page  
Same sky, with recognizable sketches  
of constellations superimposed

Get your copy before the next 25,000 years, by which time the Big Dipper may no longer be familiar to you. (psst...the Big Dipper is not a constellation - it's an asterism).

May Staples

#### TFN LIBRARY - NEW ACQUISITIONS

We appreciate, in every sense of the word, two books donated to our library; these are Botany for High Schools by A. Cosens and T.J. Ivey, 1928, and Wild Plants of Canada by Spotton, Cosens and Ivey, 1948. One of the authors, Dr. A. Cosens, was a founding member of TFN as recorded in TFN newsletter (100) 2, A 51. The donor is TFN member Edith Cosens, the author's daughter. Dr. Cosens was very active in natural history circles in Toronto from 1905 to 1927. These books will be of great value to our members of 1980.

We have once more to thank Charlie Crosgrey who seems to remember TFN as he haunts his favourite book stores. The Art of Glen Loates by Paul Duval, with 130 large-scale plates, is the pièce de résistance this time. Jane Embertson's Pods - Wildflowers and Weeds in their final beauty, with photography by Jay M. Conrader, will be popular with our members - for winter botany or just to look at! Forgotten Pleasures by Ruth Kudner is a "how-to" book on enjoying the great outdoors. And to take along on our mushroom-walks we now have A Mushroom Pocket Field Guide by Howard E. Bigelow.

(To arrange to borrow, call 690-1963.)

FOR READING - continued

The following publications of the Royal Canadian Institute are available in limited quantity; if you wish to purchase any of these, contact Bruce Parker:

Transactions of the Royal Canadian Institute... (each \$3.00)

Snyder, L.L. - "The Summer Birds of Lake Nipigon", 1928

Snyder, L.L. - "A faunal investigation of King Township", 1930

Snyder, L.L. - "A faunal investigation of Long Point and vicinity,  
Norfolk County", 1931

Saunders and Dale - "History and List of Birds of Middlesex County", 1933

Charles Fothergill's Notes on the Natural History of Eastern Canada, 1816-1837. 1934

Baillie and Harrington - "The Distribution of Breeding Birds in Ontario,  
Part I", 1936

Baillie and Harrington - "The Distribution of Breeding Birds in Ontario,  
Part II", 1937

Snyder, L.L. - "The Summer Birds of Western Rainy River District", 1938

Allin, A.E. - "Vertebrate Fauna of Darlington Township", 1940

Dear, L.S. - "Breeding Birds of the Region of Thunder Bay", 1940

Snyder, L.L. - "Summer Birds of the Sault Ste. Marie Region", 1942

Devitt, O.E. - "The Birds of Simcoe County, Part I", 1943

Devitt, O.E. - "The Birds of Simcoe County, Part II", 1944

Snyder, L.L. - "Summer Birds of Western Ontario", 1953

The Natural History of the Toronto Region, by J.H. Faull, 1913, 419 pp.  
Price: \$5.00.

Bruce Parker (449-0994)  
TH66 - 109 Valley Woods Rd.  
Don Mills, Ontario M3A 2R8

SUMMER NATURALIST/INTERPRETER JOBS IN ONTARIO'S NATIONAL PARKS

Point Pelee - Georgian Bay Islands - St. Lawrence Islands - Pukaskwa

For information and application forms for these positions, contact your student placement office on campus or the Ontario Public Service Commission office. Send completed applications (post-marked not later than January 19, 1981) to:

Public Service Commission of Canada,  
180 Dundas Street West, Suite 1100,  
Toronto, Ontario. M5G 2A8

BLUEBIRD SIGHTING - HIGH PARK!

On the November 1st TFN outing, led by Roger Powley, an Eastern Bluebird was spotted by Joan Foote on a fence-post in an open field in High Park. It changed perches but stayed in the area long enough for everyone on the outing to see it well, a male in handsome plumage. A harbinger of winter?

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 REPORT ON WINTER NESTING OF ROCK DOVE (Columba livia)
 

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- Dec. 10-14  
1979 One pigeon-egg laid, to be followed by another a few days later (in a window-box, one of 4 with earth left in them, on 6th-floor balcony). Parents take turns sitting on the eggs, which are not left alone for longer than a few seconds at any one "change-over".
- Dec. 14 Brought home our Christmas-tree; cut off a few of the bottom branches and positioned these near window boxes. Mother did not avail herself of these, but instead gathered small twigs elsewhere and made a cosy nest.
- Dec. 20 Some time between 14th and 20th the pigeon pushed one of the eggs out of the nest; it lay on cold, concrete balcony floor for a day or so, then disappeared. Had some snowfall; mother stayed put, melting the snow around her body.
- after  
Christmas Weather turned very cold; the parents never leave the nest unattended. Must be getting close to hatching time. Incredible that they don't freeze!
- Jan. 3-4  
1980 One yellow, scrawny-looking pigeon is finally hatched. We did not see it happen. Took one hasty photograph. Very cold day. Did not want the baby to catch a cold, focused quickly and left. Mother left the nest/baby for a short while, then returned as soon as I moved away.
- Jan. 5 Very cold! Mother will NOT leave the baby, even for a minute. I moved close, hoping for another shot - she must realize that the baby would catch a bad cold and never mind the danger from humans!
- Jan. 8 Weather turning milder. Watching baby feed (on food regurgitated by mother); eats quite a lot. After a meal, it turns around, backs out, with its hindquarters OUT - over the edge of the nest - and dirties my balcony. Four days old and already toilet-trained! Darn it!
- Jan. 12 Weather mild again. Mother and father take turns; we can see the baby for brief periods. Colour turning from yellow to pale grey, still no tail-feathers.
- Jan. 14 Baby starts chirping - other pigeons coming to visit (and dirty my balcony). Baby growing rapidly. Parents leave it alone for longer periods. The weather is mild again.
- Jan. 15 Watched it for quite a while (was late for work) - took some pictures. Baby's wingspan is about 8+ inches by now; he/she uses wings for balancing on the pine-tree branches. Parents left it alone for at least 60 minutes; baby is happily hopping from one window-box to the next. I was hoping to get a shot with the wings outstretched but as I neared, it cowered in the corner and drew itself into a small, protective ball. It seems three different pigeons take turns on sitting with/on baby. Visitors come throughout the day. Chirping louder than before.

Jan. 16 Baby alone for as long as two hours; weather is mild.

Jan. 17 Baby alone all morning, playing on Christmas-tree branches - no sign of parents till 11:30 AM. Mother (?) fed youngster then flew off. Mild and raining out. Baby seems to be watched intermittently as opposed to being sat on. 12:45 - feeding time - till 1:00 PM, sat on for a while, then mother flew off. 1:20 PM, mother checked on baby for five minutes, then left. Baby alone for most of day now, just checked on from time to time.

end Jan. Baby starting to hop/fly. Moves over to neighbour's balcony.

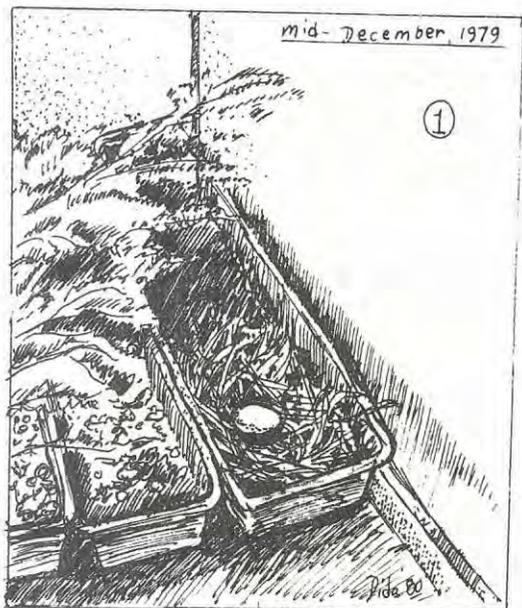
second week Feb. Baby is missing for longer stretches - can't see him/her on the other balcony either. Still comes back for night. Must be fending for itself somehow; mother has not fed it for days now.

about Feb.10 Baby has not returned.

Now comes the big cleaning-up operation; the earth from the window-boxes will have to be dumped, the floor and railing of the balcony cleaned, then cleaned some more!

Edith Sziraky  
Forest Manor Road

(See illustrations 1, 2, 3 and 4 on this and opposite page. All drawings after photographs by the author.)



THE GREAT TAKE-OVER

Like most invasions of our time, the inevitable had taken place before I became aware of it.

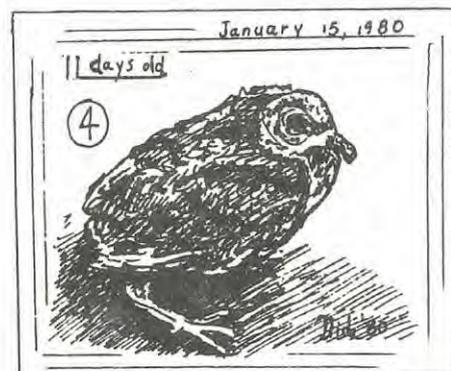
As I sat by my living-room window early one July morning, last year, my eye caught a large white bird flying up the street at fourth-floor level. On investigation it proved to be a large gull. He had landed on the lamp-standard across the street and later flew down on the lawn to snatch a piece of apple. This seemed strange - a gull on such a busy, narrow street. Later in the day, while enjoying the balcony, a great stillness came to me. On looking about, not a bird could be seen - strange, in such a pigeon-infested area. Just then a Sparrow Hawk floated by. He was a resident of the area and the pigeons often played Russian roulette with him. The stillness seemed to bring \*The Birds of Killingworth to mind. Each roof-top and TV antenna revealed no pigeons. Gulls came by every so often and seemed to be patrolling the street and the surrounding area. Later that evening at dusk, a huge colony of gulls wheeled and called high up in the sky northwest of Loblaws at Cedarvale Ravine area (St. Clair West). My mind flashed back to other evenings when many gulls seemed to be congregating. Perhaps they were getting organized for the take-over. From that time on, no flocks of pigeons were noted in my area. Rains came and went, roof-tops looked fresh and clean.

Noon, one year later, the cycle goes on. Only on rare occasions a pigeon is seen dashing for cover. The gulls (mostly Ring-billed but some Herring) still call and patrol this area; they congregate in the evening. (Yet, at time of writing, plenty of pigeons can be seen at Wells Hill Park just south of Loblaws.)

The "take-over" was not for oil - but perhaps for something more important - FOOD. Even in a large city like Toronto, Nature looks after her own.

Rowena Grant

\*Poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



## HAWKS AND DOVES

## The Thistletown Syndrome

Occasionally we notice that the creatures attracted to our feeder appear to "freeze" and we suspect that the Cooper's Hawk is in the vicinity.

One January day Ron saw it attack the ground feeder. Birds scattered. A Mourning Dove flew into a window and fell to the ground, stunned. Within seconds the hawk pounced on the dove, looked around triumphantly and carried it away into the woods.

A week later Ron observed the hawk's technique. It was hopping around on sticks and branches about a foot above the ground, while working its way up the ravine-slope towards the feeder - in an effort to frighten birds towards the house.

In the days that followed we deduced that feathers clinging to several circular marks on our windows were left by other doves that had also become victims. The Mourning Doves at our feeder dwindled from a high of 34 in December to 2 in March.

An article in American Birds, November, 1979, described how a Cooper's Hawk drowned a starling by holding it under water. The species must be quite intelligent to work out such individual strategies.

One hawk met its nemesis, however, and was found coated in ice, below a window, after an ice storm. The amount of feathering on its legs confirmed that it was a Cooper's Hawk. But two weeks later another Cooper's was seen terrorizing the feeder.

So far our resident Carolina Wren has been too small to tempt it. We hear him singing loudly every day in a vain effort to attract a mate.

April, 1980

Joan O'Donnell  
Ron Scovell

Ed. note: Over the years other observations have been recorded in the newsletter about the feeder/predator dilemma. See remarks (92) 8, A 50; discussion on Screech Owl boxes (93) 7-10 S 50 H. Roy Ivor and Doris H. Speirs; bird notes of Naomi LeVay (110) 11-12 O 52; "Our W'ntering Hermit Thrush" by Mary and Ray Pannell (233) 7-8 F 68 and (234) 3-4 M 68.

YESTERDAY

I saw a buttercup  
In proud display  
Amid the drab-brown fallen leaves...  
... 'Twas a mild December day.

TODAY

the winter snows have come,  
Draping the woods in white,  
And the little, waxy golden flower  
Is blanketed out of sight.

...Ralph Knights

IN EXCHANGE

The TFN is currently receiving newsletters from most of the naturalists' clubs in Ontario in exchange for our newsletter. If any members would like to borrow these, please contact Bruce Parker.

The Guelph Field Naturalist, Vol. 11 No. 2, Oct. 1980.

On May 7, 8 and 9, 1981, Guelph will be hosting the Conference of the Canadian Nature Federation...Like the TFN, the Guelph club has undertaken a project of organizing its archives; presently they are asking for copies of their newsletters prior to 1972...Among the bird sightings reported in this issue are a Bald Eagle at Mountsberg in late August, a Northern Phalarope at Conestoga Lake on Aug. 27 and a Le Conte's Sparrow at Mountsberg on Sept. 2.

The Orchid, Vol. 25 No. 7, Sept. 1980 (Peterborough).

A brief report of a survey of nesting Ospreys undertaken by the Ministry of Natural Resources in the Lindsay District mentions that 24 nests were found in the area...Observations reported in the "Orchid Diary" include the nest of a Loggerhead Shrike at Warsaw on June 12, the area's first breeding record of a Yellow-throated Vireo and the area's first House Finch on August 19. A Map Turtle and a Spicebush Swallowtail butterfly are also mentioned in this report.

Niagara Falls Nature Club, Bulletin No. 143, Sept. 1980

"The oldest tree in Canada!" The largest and most beautifully formed Sugar Maple anywhere!" The Comfort Maple in a park in the Town of Pelham, one of Ontario's "Honour Roll Trees", is impressively depicted in an article entitled, "I'd like to see that!"...The recent eruption of Mount St. Helen's is the subject of two thought-provoking articles in this issue; the first illustrates the enormity of the destruction in terms of wildlife, while the second contains comments from a visitor to the area.

The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds, Newsletter, Vol. 23 No. 2, Oct. 1980.

A survey of pigeon populations on the Island of Montreal is now being conducted at the Centre de Recherches Écologiques de Montréal. Though pigeons are common there as in Toronto, it was felt that available information on numbers, distribution and impact is at present inadequate. A questionnaire is printed in the PQSPB newsletter so that their members can participate in the project.

Bruce D. Parker  
449-0994

IF YOU HAPPEN TO FIND A BANDED PIGEON...

the person to call is Mr. Birkhoff, 266-5793, a racing-pigeon fancier who performs the service of maintaining a register of all the racing pigeons in the area. He can identify the pigeon and the loft from which it came, so that arrangements can be made to return it to its owner.

Laura Greer

HIGH VOLTAGE HAWKS

According to Godfrey in Birds of Canada, the Red-tailed Hawk (Buteo jamaicensis) makes its nest in tall trees or on cliff-edges. On March 20th of this year, I was wandering around Morningside Park with my binoculars around my neck looking for birds - which were few and far between. When I was about ready to come home, I met a young lad who later told me his name was Joe Serensits. He was similarly equipped and quite evidently on the same mission. He asked me if I had seen anything interesting and when I said I hadn't, he told me he had been watching a hawk on a nest. In view of my obvious interest, he offered to take me there. After clambering up and down a whole series of snow-and-mud-covered hills for about a mile, we arrived at the Ontario Hydro power-line towers which carry electricity at 230,000 volts from the Gattineau to the Scarborough Transformer Station. There, sure enough, built on an upper arm of one of the concrete towers (the "cliff-edge") was a large nest built of sticks.

Obviously it was impossible to see anything from the ground underneath the tower, so we observed through our binoculars from a hill about 75 yards away, where we could make out the head of a hawk sitting in the nest. Joe told me she had been up on the edge of the nest when he was watching her before and she was a red-tail. We watched for about half an hour and during this time the male flew over several times, alternately perching on one or other of the steel towers that run parallel to the concrete ones. I thanked Joe and told him I would send him a copy of Clive Goodwin's book, which I have since done. I watched the nest intermittently after that and the following are the very brief notes on my observations:

On Friday night, March 21st, there were heavy winds of 82 kilometres per hour and I was afraid the nest would blow off. Because Saturday, March 22nd, was blustery with heavy snow squalls, I delayed visiting the nest until Sunday, March 23rd. All was well; the nest was intact and the female was setting down in it, with only her head showing. However, with my scope set at 45X, which I used from then on, I could see the feathers on her head being ruffled by the wind, and the blinking of her eyes. The male was flying around the vicinity and visited the nest once.

Thursday, March 27th, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM. Female down in nest with only head showing. No signs of the male.

Friday, March 28th, 11:30 AM - 12:15 PM. Misty day. Female down in nest with only head showing. Male faintly discernible, soaring about three-quarters of a mile away. Two cats hunting in the area, under the tower, must take food away from the hawks.

Friday, April 4th, 9:00 - 10:00 AM. Female down in nest, only head showing initially but when male brought food both birds were up on the side of the nest for a brief time. No signs of young.

Sunday, April 13th, 8:00 AM - 9:45 AM. Female down in the nest the whole time with only the head showing. No signs of male.

Thursday, April 17th, 10:45 - 11:45 AM. Female down in the nest with only the head showing, but appeared to be more restless and changing position more often than she had up to now. No signs of young. Male appeared and

soared around the area. Lighted on a telephone pole for about five minutes, then flew off again.

Tuesday, April 22nd, 10:30 to 11:00 AM. Female down in nest, not very active. No signs of male.

Saturday, April 26th, 9:30 - 10:30 AM. Female down in nest - little movement; male soared over once.

Saturday, May 3rd, 11:00 AM - 12:00 noon. Female standing on side of nest, motionless for the whole hour. No young could be seen, but they probably had hatched. No signs of male.

Monday, May 5th, 9:00 - 10:00 AM. Female on side of nest. Frequently looked down into the nest. No signs of male.

Monday, May 12th, 9:15 AM to 10:20 AM. Female on side of nest. Saw two young for the first time, white and fuzzy. One baby very energetic, the other quieter. As I was leaving, the male arrived and perched on one of the towers.

Tuesday, May 20th, 8:30 - 9:30 AM. Female sitting on nest, but higher with more of body showing. Had brief glimpse of one baby. Male perched on top of the concrete tower, for the whole time. Amazed at the ability of these birds to remain completely motionless for long periods.

Monday, May 26th, 9:00 - 10:00 AM. Female up on the side of the nest. The two babies, now much bigger, were standing up in the nest and were both quite active. No signs of the male.

Friday, May 30th, 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM. Male perched on top of the concrete tower which held nest. The female was away, for the first time, when I arrived but returned soon after with a mouse. Larger baby fed on the mouse. The smaller one seemed disinterested. Both babies doing considerable flexing of wings. Down being replaced with feathers.

Tuesday, June 17th, 10:00 - 11:00 AM. The young had lost almost all the white baby-down. (They remove the down with their beaks and swallow it.) Both parents were perched on top of the tower. One was slightly larger. Otherwise, they appeared to me to be identical. The young were much bigger than formerly and almost fully feathered. They both were making long hops out on to the arm of the tower with their wings spread. It was evident they would fly very soon. The adults had a reddish-brown cast to their feathers while the young were a dark brown with cream colour on the throat and upper breast. There was a heavily streaked band across the abdomen. This was a bad day for the hawks. Three small birds which I think were Red-winged Blackbirds continually attacked the adults, forcing them into flight. No attacks were made on the young while I was there. Another annoyance for the birds were two youths who banged on the tower with rocks, until I chased them off.

Tuesday, June 22nd. Nest empty. No signs of adults or young anywhere in the vicinity. Observations concluded.

It was a real thrill for this very inexperienced birder to observe this nesting pair successfully raise their young in a heavily populated suburban

area, under today's conditions, when there are so many factors such as air pollution, residuals from insecticide spraying and weed spraying (Dioxin) and other problems that are affecting our bird populations.

Charlie Crosgrey.

### A Naturalist's Code of Ethics

As mentioned in previous Newsletters, we are endeavouring to compile a Code of Ethics for TFN members. If you have any suggestions in this regard, please send them to Miss Florence Preston, 368 Eglinton Avenue East, Apt. 203, Toronto M4P 1L9.

The Conservation Council of Ontario and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists have published a leaflet entitled "Conservation for Young People". The leaflet suggests the following ways in which young people can help to conserve the quality of our environment.

Discourage littering among your friends, and do not litter yourself. Litter is a kind of pollution.

Start a litter cleanup in a given area: a schoolyard, area of open ground or local stream or pond.

Use returnable pop bottles: they can be reused.

Do not throw solid or liquid wastes in rivers or streams.

It is actions such as this that pollutes our waters.

Get together on a survey of local pollution sources in your neighbourhood--put on a display in your school.

Treat parkland and other public open spaces as though they were your responsibility--they are. Don't pick the flowers, or cut boughs from the trees. Leave them for others to enjoy.

If you have a garden, find out about compost heaps, and start one.

Leave picnic areas cleaner than you found them. Be a good example to others.

Midday gloom;

I imagine it is sunny

Above the clouds.

(haiku by Paul W. Smith)

# OUTINGS REPORT

September 20 to October 15, 1980

"Ambush bugs, soldier beetles and tiger moth larvae" - sounds like the insect outing drew its attractions from an old war movie... (Sept. 20, Taylor Creek). This year's mid-autumn outings have provided excellent opportunities to observe and appreciate the beauty of our local plant-life. Many species are still flowering well into October; others are laden with ripening seeds and fruit while leaves are filling the ravines with colour. Reg Smith submitted an impressive list of 140 plants found on the Crescent Woods outing on October 1. Included in this list were the European gunpowder-tree, jetbead, Asiatic bittersweet and fringed gentian. A ginkgo tree bearing fruit was noted by Helen Juhola on an outing in the Rosedale Ravine on October 12. Particular attention was given on this walk to changes which have occurred in this area, such as the development of salt-resistant plant communities along the roadside, the dominance of introduced plants such as Japanese knotweed and the continuing encroachment of activities from neighbouring cemeteries and buildings. Some significant trees found in the Graydon Hall area on October 15 included a 200-year-old sugar maple and exceptionally large beeches, black cherries and bitternut hickories. Notable birds found on the mid-fall outings included a Scarlet Tanager (Sept. 21, Morningside Park), an Osprey, many Sharp-shinned Hawks and large numbers of Bluejays (Sept. 28, Toronto Islands), an Evening Grosbeak (Oct. 4, Wilket Creek) and three Turkey Vultures (Oct. 13, Toronto Islands).

The following list shows the date, location and leader of the mid-autumn outings with the number of participants in brackets:

Sept. 20	Taylor Creek	Bill Edmunds	(14)	insects
Sept. 21	Morningside Park	Paul Smith	(20)	botany, birds
Sept. 24	Chapman Creek	Jirina Jelinowicz	(16)	trees, mushrooms
Sept. 28	Toronto Islands	Dave Broughton	(32)	birds
Oct. 1	Crescent Woods	Reg Smith	(30)	botany, nature walk
Oct. 4	Wilket Creek	Harry Kerr	(31)	birds
Oct. 12	Rosedale Valley	Helen Juhola	(25)	botany
Oct. 13	Toronto Islands	George Fairfield	(25)	birds
Oct. 15	Graydon Hall	Mary Smith	(22)	trees, birds

Bruce D. Parker

## FREE MINERALOGY COURSE

FEBRUARY 23-28, 1981

7-10 PM

ED FREEMAN  
Main Lecturer

Location: Feb. 23: University of Toronto -  
Medical Science Auditorium  
(College/University NW, white building  
just north of Botany Building)

Feb. 24-28: Ontario Room, Macdonald Block, 900 Bay Street

Introductory course on rocks, minerals, geology of Ontario, with stress on identification and economic use of rocks and minerals. Free samples and literature will be available. Films will be shown.  
For further information, call 965-0190.

## ISSUES---

THE GARRISON DIVERSION PROJECT - "An international environmental outrage". These words were spoken by Mr. Edward M. Brigham III of the National Audubon Society during an address to the Canadian Nature Federation Conference in August.

What is Garrison? It is a project to irrigate agricultural land in North Dakota. Water will be drawn from the Missouri River for irrigation and discharged from the system into Manitoba's lakes and ultimately to Hudson's Bay through the Red and Souris Rivers. The system thus breaches the natural continental divide which has kept the watersheds separate since the last ice age. Fish, plants and other foreign biota will be introduced from the drainage into Canada's lakes and rivers as far as Hudson's Bay with possible devastating effect on a large part of Canada.

And this will irrigate only 6/10ths of 1% of North Dakota's agricultural land. It will flood and destroy almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  million acres of land now being farmed productively in order to irrigate only  $\frac{1}{4}$  million acres of other land. It will ruin seven major wildlife refuges and will violate the Boundary Waters Treaty made with Canada in 1909.

Not much publicity has been given to this project in Ontario but all Canadians should be informed and greatly concerned. The Toronto Field Naturalists, as a group dedicated, among other things, to the protection and preservation of nature, should take an active part in opposing this project, which, it is feared, could affect the ecology of a large part of Canada---forever!

Other facts given by Mr. Brigham:

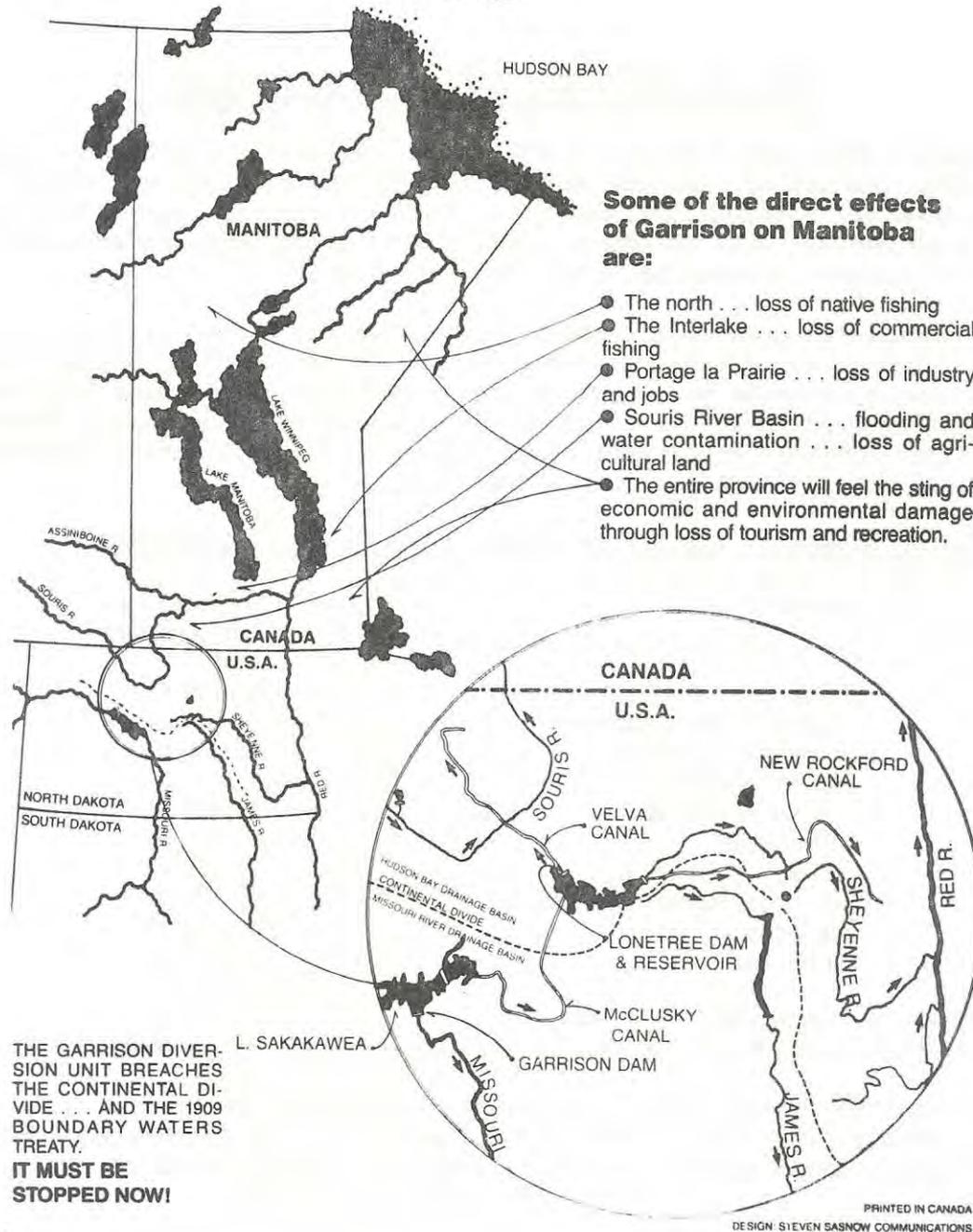
- the promoters have attempted to use deception with the people of Canada.
- the International Joint Commission concluded that severe damage could be inflicted on the human and natural resources of Canada.
- the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation promised not to injure Canadian interests while racing ahead with construction. They have ruined some American farmers.
- Senator Milton R. Young of North Dakota responded in June to Premier Sterling Lyon of Manitoba by stating that no part of the \$9.7 million being considered for Garrison can be used in a manner that would result in the drainage of water into Canada. In July Senator Young called for construction of the Lonetree Reservoir which lies in the Hudson's Bay watershed. (See map).

Mr. Brigham says: You are literally on the verge of major, international, environmental, economic and cultural disaster. Please wake up Canada, for the sake of your children's children. Time is running out. You must counter those determined to build the project no matter what, or who, gets in the way. This can be done, if you organize and act now. Many U.S. citizens, including the National Audubon Society, stand willing to help you.

READ

- The full text of Mr. Brigham's remarks, with many more disturbing facts. It ran to 11 double-spaced, typed pages. Borrow a copy from Jean Macdonald
- "Dr. Strangelove Builds a Canal" published in Audubon magazine in March, 1975. Ask for a copy at your library.

<p><b>CANADIANS! <u>STAND UP AND ASSERT YOURSELVES!</u> The government will not act unless it receives a flood tide of pressure from concerned people.</b></p>
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WRITE TO

- Your Members of Parliament - Federal and Provincial
- The Honourable John Roberts, Minister of the Environment
- The Canadian Nature Federation, 75 Albert Street, Suite 203, Ottawa K1P 6G1. Ask them what they are doing, as they represent Audubon in Canada
- The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 335 Lesmill Road, Don Mills M3B 2W8. What are they doing? Hudson's Bay has an Ontario shoreline.
- The Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20010. Copy to the President, or write him. Mr. Carter opposes the project.
- Mr. Andrus, Secretary of the Interior, 18th and C. Street, Washington, D.C. 20010. Mr. Andrus called the project a "dog".
- The Globe and Mail, The Toronto Star, Maclean's, CBC and U.S. equivalents.
- Action Committee against Garrison, 218-48 Albert Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1E7. This is a committee of the Canadian Environmental Protection Heritage, Inc. Send a donation to C.E.P.H. and mail to above address.

Jean Macdonald

ONTARIO BIRD FEEDER SURVEY: 1979-80 RESULTS

The Ontario Bird Feeder Survey (OBFS) has now completed its fourth season. Begun with the aim of learning whether regular observations at feeders could detect changes in population size of wintering birds, the survey has proved to be both popular with volunteer participants across the Province and a source of unique information about Ontario's birds.

The 10 species seen at most feeders last winter are listed...along with their average abundance. Evening Grosbeaks proved to be number 1, present in record numbers despite their rather late appearance in the more populated southern parts of Ontario...As in the previous winter, our survey showed that most of the northern birds were males (nearly 80%), while males represented only about 40% of birds reaching southern Ontario.

The 10 commonest species at Ontario Bird Feeders, 1979-80\*

Species	% feeders visited	Average no. per feeder**
Blue Jay	95	3.6
Black-capped Chickadee	83	4.6
Evening Grosbeak	77	14.8
Downy Woodpecker	77	1.0
Hairy Woodpecker	68	0.9
Starling	61	2.7
House Sparrow	57	8.2
White-breasted Nuthatch	56	0.7
Dark-eyed Junco	53	1.2
Tree Sparrow	49	1.6

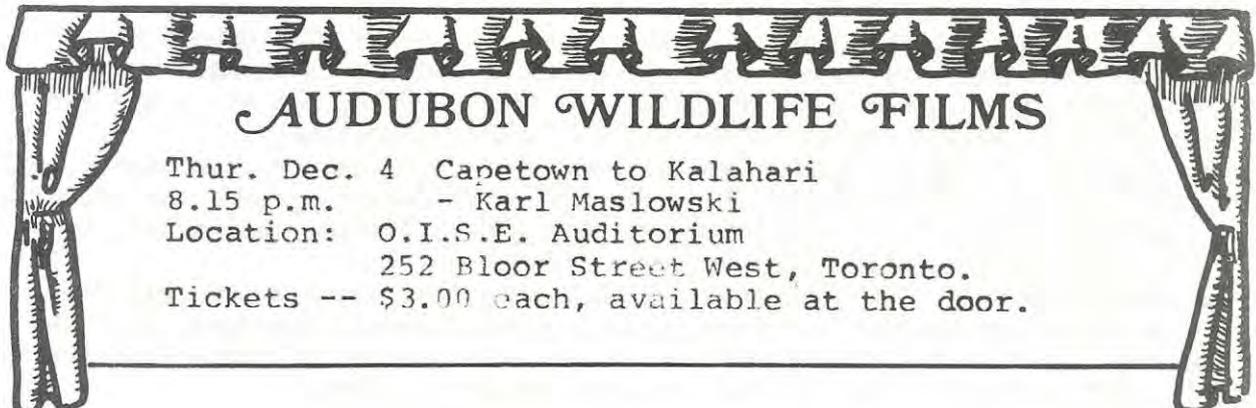
\*Based on data from 356 feeders

\*\*Average max. count per feeder per day, throughout 5-month survey period.

...Full details of the 1979-80 season are included in the fourth OBFS annual report, available for \$1.00 from LPBO...Anyone wishing to participate this winter should write LPBO, Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario N0E 1M0.

(EXCERPT from recent release)

Erica Dunn, LPBO



**AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS**

Thur. Dec. 4 Capetown to Kalahari  
 8.15 p.m. - Karl Maslowski  
 Location: O.I.S.E. Auditorium  
 252 Bloor Street West, Toronto.  
 Tickets -- \$3.00 each, available at the door.

## TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS, OCTOBER, 1980

Common Loon	18	Oct. 5	Cranberry Marsh	Clive & Joy Goodwin
Red-throated Loon	2	Aug. 17	off Cranberry Marsh	Jean Ahlgren, John Thompson
		Oct. 11	off Corner Marsh	John Kelley
Red-necked Grebe	6	Oct. 12	Walker's Line	John Kelley
D.-c. Cormorant		Sep. 27	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Snow Goose		Oct. 13	Cranberry Marsh	Murray Speirs
Ring-necked Duck	3	Sep. 27	Corner Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Turkey Vulture	23	Oct. 5	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
	5	Oct. 12	Kortright Centre	Fred Barrett
Goshawk		Oct. 4	Claireville	John Kelley
Osprey		Sep. 28	Toronto Island	Dave Broughton*
		Oct. 8	Lawrence and Avenue Rd.	Jack Cranmer-Byng
Peregrine Falcon		Sep. 28, Oct. 5	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Merlin		Oct. 4	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Yellow Rail		Oct. 4	Grenadier Pond	Jim Tanner, Lynne Schlichter
Black-bellied Plover		Oct. 12	Corner Marsh	Bruce Parker
Spotted Sandpiper		Oct. 4	Corner Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Solitary Sandpiper		Oct. 3	Amos Pond	C. & J. Goodwin
White-rumped Sandpiper		Oct. 1	Corner Marsh	Murray Speirs
Baird's Sandpiper	4	Oct. 4	Frenchman's Bay	C. & J. Goodwin
Short-billed Dowitcher	5	Oct. 4	Whitby	C. & J. Goodwin
Long-billed Dowitcher		Oct. 3	Donkey Ponds	Arnold Dawe
		Oct. 11	Whitby	John Kelley
Saw-whet Owl		Oct. 12	Moore Park Ravine	Harry Kerr
Common Nighthawk	6	Oct. 11	Oakville	Donald Gunn
Eastern Wood Pewee		Oct. 4	Lynde Creek	C. & J. Goodwin
Tree Swallow	20	Oct. 4	Pickering	C. & J. Goodwin
Bank Swallow		Oct. 4	Pickering	C. & J. Goodwin
Rough-winged Swallow	5	Oct. 4	Pickering	C. & J. Goodwin
Barn Swallow	2	Oct. 11	Frenchman's Bay	John Kelley
Mockingbird		Oct. 15	Brimley/St. Clair	Karin Fawthrop
Gray Catbird	2	Oct. 4	Wilket Creek	Harry Kerr*
Wood Thrush		Oct. 12	Moore Park Ravine	Harry Kerr
Swainson's Thrush		Oct. 12	Moore Park Ravine	Harry Kerr
Red-eyed Vireo	2	Oct. 4	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Philadelphia Vireo		Oct. 4	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Black-and-white Warbler		Oct. 4	Weston	C. & J. Goodwin
Black-thr. Blue Warbler		Oct. 3	Lynde Creek	C. & J. Goodwin
Orange-crowned Warbler		Sep. 28	Cranberry Marsh	C. & J. Goodwin
Magnolia Warbler		Oct. 4	Lynde Creek	C. & J. Goodwin
Wilson's Warbler		Oct. 4	Lynde Creek	C. & J. Goodwin
American Redstart	2	Oct. 4	Lynde Creek	C. & J. Goodwin
Rusty Blackbird	25	Sep. 26	Pickering	Murray Speirs
Scarlet Tanager		Sep. 21	Morningside Park	Paul Smith*
Evening Grosbeak		Oct. 4	Wilket Creek	Harry Kerr*
Pine Siskin	5	Oct. 4	Whitby	C. & J. Goodwin
	17	Oct. 15	Brookbanks Ravine	Bruce Parker
Clay-coloured Sparrow		Sep. 26	Woodbridge	Arnold Dawe

Everyone is invited to contribute his/her observations of birds in the Toronto Region. Please send your reports to Bruce D. Parker, TH 66, 109 Valley Rd., Don Mills, M3A 2R8, or phone 449-0994.

\*TFN Outing

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STUDIES OF THE WINTER BIRDS  
OF NATURAL AREAS IN TORONTO  
(Procedure)

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Recently there has been considerable interest in the preservation of natural areas and assessing which of them are most important in a biological sense. This is done by determining the composition of both the plant and animal communities of the selected areas. The task is relatively straightforward with plants; they are readily available for study. Animals, however, are less cooperative; large amounts of time and energy are required to inventory most groups of animals. Birds are an exception and, being so accessible for study, can be used as an indicator of the importance of particular areas to animals in general.

When comparisons are made of the bird-life of several areas, there are some problems in assessing which areas are more important to birds. Lists of birds migrating through various areas, although interesting, tend to be quite similar. The variety and numbers of birds breeding or wintering in a particular area are more indicative of the importance of that area to birds. Using information gathered on the densities of the various resident species, comparisons using several mathematical techniques can be very productive in assessing differences in the bird communities of several areas. This type of information is readily obtainable by naturalists living near natural areas in Metro.

In 1948 the National Audubon Society started a survey of wintering bird populations based on a standardized methodology (Kolb, 1965). That method, the "Winter Bird Population Study", is outlined by Kolb (1965) and has been appraised by Robbins (1972) and Brewer (1970). Many studies of this type, conducted by amateur naturalists, are published every year in American Birds. Last year seven such studies were done in Toronto. These studies are quite simple and interesting to conduct. I will outline all the steps necessary to do a Winter Bird Population Study. Further assistance is available through the Toronto Bird Observatory.

The first step in conducting such a survey is the selection of a study plot. The plot should be relatively close to your home to allow easy access. The size of the study area should be 20-30 acres, which can comfortably be surveyed in an hour. Any larger and it becomes a chore to survey; much smaller and the densities may be exaggerated and not comparable with other studies.

Next step is to obtain a base map of the area to be studied. Maps are often obtainable from City or Borough Works or Parks Departments (most convenient scale is 1 inch to 200 feet). Help on this aspect can be provided by the Toronto Bird Observatory. From these maps, a base map of your selected area can be traced. Ten photocopies of this base map should be made, one for each trip.

The study period is from mid-December to mid-February. Eight to ten counts should be conducted, spread out somewhat over the study-period. The counts should be conducted in the morning, preferably between 8:00 AM and 12:00 noon. This has been shown to be the most productive time of day (Robbins, 1972). Certain types of weather should be avoided if at all possible. Unusually cold temperatures, moderate to high wind speeds and heavy precipitation have all been shown to reduce activity in birds and thus reduce their observability (Grubb, 1978).

With binoculars and a base map on a clipboard, you can begin your first count. Every bird observed is marked on the map in its approximate location. To do this use letter codes for each species (e.g. "BCC" for Black-capped Chickadee) and number. Only birds observed within the plot or thought to be associated with it should be counted. That is gulls overhead or pigeons flying over but not landing should not be included. A hawk flying over and thought to be using the study area should be counted. Birds not observed to land in the plot but which could be associated with the area should be noted and an indication of their status written in the margin. The plot should be covered in a systematic way, visiting all sections on every count. The starting-point and route can be varied although this is not necessary. Keen observation is of key importance. Use both your eyes and ears; some species are more easily heard than seen. "Squeaking" can be useful to flush some species but should be used intermittently to minimize the chance of birds following you. Adherence to these outlines will ensure that the results are comparable with those in other studies.

After making eight to ten trips to the study area you are ready to determine the densities of each species. For each trip count the total number of birds of each species observed during the entire trip. After doing this for all trips made, calculate the average number for each species. The form of the report for publication in American Birds is outlined in Kolb (1965); copies of this can be obtained from the Toronto Bird Observatory. Anyone wishing further information on this project should contact David Broughton at 489-7444 (before 10 PM).

Paul Smith

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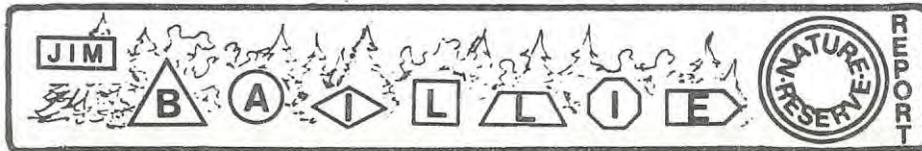
Literature cited:

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- Kolb, H. 1965. "The Audubon winter bird-population study." Audubon Field Notes 37:432-434.
- Robbins, C.S. 1972. "An appraisal of the winter bird population study technique". American Birds 26(3)
- Grubb, T.D. 1978. "Weather-dependant foraging rates of wintering woodland birds". Auk 95:370-376.

**TFN DISPLAY**

The unit which we purchased in the spring and used at the Sportsmen's Show and the CNE spent October 13-16 at Harbourfront as part of an Environmental Week display. Jean Macdonald, Mary Smith, Emily Hamilton and Roger Powley planned the display which Herb and Mary Smith erected. Tom Gough once again dismantled the display and re-erected it at the Thorncliffe Library where it will be tended by Diana Humphrys and remain until the end of November, except for one day at a Boy Scout Conference, November 15, at O.I.S.E.

If there are any other members on the staff of libraries in Metro who would like to have an eye to the display while on the premises, contact Sheila McCoy at 493-3262 (days) or 757-7570 (evenings).



VISITS TO THE RESERVE DURING 1980

Feb. 24 Quick check, approx. 6" snow, all very wet.

Mar. 30 Beautiful early-spring day. 4"-6" snow in bush. No signs of use, though padlock cover was out of position and the lock full of water. Walked all trails, some bridge repairs done. River running high. Wood poachers have removed poplar trunk at fence line 000-1600. Replaced old 'No Trespass' sign just east of farmlane 000-400. Many deer tracks seen, grouse at usual spot on white circle trail 500-300. Starlings busy in shelter.

Apr. 20 Rain shower early, sunny later. Winds SW gusty, mild. Cleared large poplar root at fence line 000-1600 and made temporary repair - ground still frozen, couldn't get posts back in. Repainted TFN reserve sign at 000-1100 and re-positioned for better visibility. Repairs to fence at 000-400. Trail markers checked. Picnic tables cleaned of bird-droppings. No bugs in bush, good working conditions. Saw pileated woodpecker from shelter. Replaced old TFN sign on maple tree on Durham Rd. #1 and installed old, refurbished sign at NE corner Stephenson's sideroad. No other visitors to reserve.

May 10 Annual picnic. Mild weather. Approximately 50 people. 10 cars in lot. 4 groups - birds, botany, sketching and "hackers".

June 8 Very cool, NW winds, cloudy. Bugs less active. Padlock cover not on again, full of water from last night's storm. Tsk! Cleared river trails and checked trail markers. Plant lists changed in shelter. Lots of bunchberry in flower, strawberries - only a few ripe. Foamflowers and hawkweed seen. Very wet in reserve. Marsh hawk active in field to west of parking lot, flying approximately 24" above ground. Golden ragwort and yellow hawkweed seen.

June 22 J. Burbidge visited reserve. All OK.

July 12 Quick check. Weather sunny and warm, very bad bugs in bush. Checked for showy ladyslipper along red hexagon trail, found one dead plant only. No strawberries left. All OK.

Aug. 17 Cleared entrance of Ingrid trail. This is an extremely wet area due to run-off from pond to west. Needs more reinforcing, may have to use chainsaw. Noted porcupine damage to old TFN sign at 000-000. Some trail work done. Bugs still hungry. Many large spiders, black and yellow ones that make "ladder" stitches in their webs. After lunch put canoe in Uxbridge Brook and paddled upstream for 1 hour. Saw blue heron, groundhog, ducks, kingfisher, signs of recent beaver activity but no dams, bullfrog, cardinal flower, white water-lily, freshwater clams galore and garter snake. Pleasant paddle back to reserve, more work on trails, then home.

Sept. 21 Warm, breezy SW; fall colours starting. Padlock not covered again. Tsk! Tsk! Asters plentiful. All OK at reserve, just peaceful and

green. On a clump of very light, almost-white asters some monarch butterflies resting with garden spiders and bees, all lit by early sun. Young porcupine up tree on white trapezoid trail south of blue rectangle junction; I shook tree gently to remind it to stay away from our toilets. Fringed gentians out around the south toilet. Met our neighbour on west, busy digging for house-foundations. I inspected scene where cement truck overturned on side-road near 000-800 on our side of road; large water-filled hole and black mud mark the spot. No damage to property. Replaced "No Trespass" sign at 000/000. Spent most time preparing fallen cedar trunks for later cutting up for reinforcing trails.

Oct. 19 Planned work party.

Nov. 16 Plan visit.

Dec. 14 Plan visit.

Another "typical" year at the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve. Best wishes for 1981 to all our members.

John Lowe-Wylde

**If you're so smart...** here's a NATURE QUIZ for you -  
devised by Roger Powley...

1. A group of geese is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A badger's den is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A young hare is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A female fox is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A young swan is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
6. The terrestrial stage of a newt is called an \_\_\_\_\_.
7. A female cottontail is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A male duck is called a \_\_\_\_\_.
9. An aplodontia, mountain phenacomys and eastern pipistrel have something in common.  
They are all \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Ontario's only lizard is called the \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

For answers  
see page 28.

FRED BODSWORTH, Former President of TFN

Fred Bodsworth has been active and interested in TFN activities for many years, and is wellknown far beyond TFN circles for his excellent writings on natural history. In addition to many articles and books on natural history, he has written four novels--The Last of the Curlews, The Strange One, The Atonement of Ashley Morden, The Sparrow's Fall--which link human and animal characters in a fiction format with strong natural history content and wilderness backgrounds. He has also conducted several groups of bird-lovers on tours to other parts of the world, searching out particular species.

Fred was born in Port Burwell, Ontario, and has lived in Toronto since 1943. He has always had a keen interest in nature, starting with butterflies, and then birds, and his writings reflect his knowledge and appreciation of wildlife in Canada and the interrelationship between animals and humans.

Florence Preston

Answers- "If You're So Smart..." (page 27 )

1. gaggle; 2. set or sett; 3. leveret; 4. vixen; 5. cygnet; 6. eft;
7. doe; 8. drake; 9. Canadian mammals; 10. five-lined skink.

CHORUS FROGS

On one of our fall Wednesday walks we discovered a tiny frog in the cattails just north of the Science Centre.\* No one knew the identity of this little creature, so I decided to pursue the issue. I knew the Wood Frog was small and had a black mask. The frog in question had a black eyeline, so I checked my field guide. The plate revealed this was not my friend as his mask was not as obvious nor as short. I knew it was not a peeper because of the toes which didn't have obvious pads. It finally dawned on me that it must be a chorus frog. There is only one in our range and I remembered having had a fleeting glimpse of it at Long Point.

According to the Peterson Guide, this frog is rarely found after the breeding season; we were extremely lucky to find him. The new field guides are "lumping" instead of "splitting" and this species is no longer called the "Western Chorus Frog" as he is in the Peterson Guide; in the Golden Guide he is referred to as the "Northern Chorus Frog" which includes two other subspecies formerly known by separate names. The frog in our area is Pseudacris triseriata triseriata.

The new Golden book is called A Guide to Field Identification, Amphibians of North America by Hobart M. Smith.

\*E.T. Seton Park, West Don valley

Roger Powley

## THIS MONTH'S COVER

"Feeding the Geese at Toronto's Waterfront" - drawing based on photographs by Margaret MacDonald, sister of TFN members Jean and Anne Macdonald.

1942 - TFN newsletter (27) - excerpt (notes of Walter Hahn): "While sitting on the bank of James Humble's pond, which is located on the corner of Mill Road and Bathurst Street, Richmond Hill, I was rather startled by a great flutter of wings. It was far too loud for any birds of ordinary size and I literally froze as the animals do, so as not to frighten whatever it was. Before I had time to guess any longer, three beautiful Canada Geese settled on the water not 25 yards away. To see these three lovely birds was like an apparition...They slowly swam (glided would express it better) to the north end of the pond where it peters out into a slough. Here they made themselves at home, conversing in low undertones and doing a bit of occasional feeding and preening. Fortunately I was camouflaged out of the landscape by some dense cedars and the birds were entirely unaware of my presence. I was nothing short of spellbound watching these magnificent birds float around in their home element utterly oblivious to the fact that two eager eyes were watching their every movement, and there I sat until darkness blotted them out."

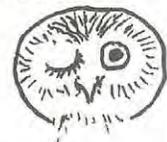
1953 - TFN newsletter (119) - editor's note (commenting on observations of Lois Sisman at Lake of Bays): "On that same date, October 6th, a large flight of Canada Geese was reported over the Toronto region. There have been repeated flights since then up to the present date, November 4th...Possibly the development of the great refuges at Oak Orchard Swamp in New York State, and of Pymatuning Lake in Western Pennsylvania, is having the effect of shifting the migration routes so that more geese than formerly pass through this area."  
R.M. Saunders

1980 - Dave Broughton tells us that this summer the Ministry of Natural Resources rounded up on Toronto Islands 2,000 Canada Geese (of which 1,000 were banded) and shipped them off to the United States. They will be kept for a year or two in captivity to reduce the instinct to return; then they will be released to establish whether or not they will come back to Toronto region. The group rounded up two years ago will be released soon; the results will be interesting. However, after this year's round-up, geese immediately began trickling in from (as bands revealed) elsewhere in the vicinity of Toronto. Life is easy on "The Island" with plenty of grass to eat and few predators. Nesting increases the flocks very rapidly (there were 48 nests on Mugg's Island last year; how quickly these birds - a hundred or so - can multiply to a thousand!) Populations remain high in spite of round-ups and such measures as spraying the eggs with kerosene. According to Dave Broughton, all manner of new schemes are being put forward as possible solutions to the "problem" of the geese - some of them such unlikely ones as "making the grass taste bad"! Dave describes the feelings of Torontonians toward their geese as a strange sort of "love-hate relationship". How will it all end - if indeed it does?  
D.B.

Wally Platts and his family were at the Toronto Islands on a recent Saturday of torrential rain and were thoroughly soaked in their search for a saw-whet owl.

We have learned they never even saw a wet owl.

Aarne Juhola



### HOW DID STARLINGS GET HERE?

It's an intriguing thought that when my mother was growing up in the Ottawa Valley there were no Starlings to be seen. (It's difficult to imagine a starlingless Ontario.) When I was about six or seven, some spotted birds landed in our backyard. (Up to that time this inner-city child had been familiar only with the House Sparrow, Rock Dove, Nighthawk, Crow of the area - and the gulls at Sunnyside Beach.) I asked my mother what those strange birds were and she hesitated; then, with a flicker of recognition lighting up her face, answered confidently, "They're mudhens." Perhaps she had a vague memory of a farm bird of similar proportions with a rather speckled-brownish appearance (on the back at least) - "the mudlark" - which we are more inclined to call "the Meadowlark". Oddly, its genus name, Sturnella is close to that of the Common Starling, Sturnus. Audubon classified the Meadowlark in family Sturnidae and referred to it as "the Meadow Starling\*". We know now that these birds are unrelated but if Audubon could be wrong, my mother's quandary was surely understandable. My point is that the Starling was still rare enough in Toronto at that time (late twenties) to be unfamiliar to the average citizen. I think I was about twelve by the time I had identified the Starling. For some time after that I often had to identify it for other children - for it was still far from a household word, though suddenly abundant. The subspecies present in Toronto is Sturnus vulgaris britannicus which was introduced into Central Park, New York City, around the turn of the century (my sources give four different dates). According to the Reader's Digest publication, Birds, Their Life, Their Way, Their World, they reached Ontario by 1919 and within fifteen years became the most common bird in the Province. It does not say just when the species reached Toronto (perhaps the first one was born here about the same time I was).

No doubt some TFN members who were a little more mature than I in the twenties will remember better the influx of the Starlings and their first experiences with the species. Reminiscences of this history-making event will be welcomed in the newsletter.

Diana Banville

\*Taverner in Birds of Canada lists the French name as "Etourneau de Près de l'Est." (Eastern Meadow Starling). "Etourneau" is applied to other icterids as well, including the Red-winged Blackbird which Audubon called the "Red-winged Starling".

Early Starling Observations: The period of Jim Baillie's observations used when compiling the Bird Migration Chart for the Toronto region was 41 years, ending in 1960. House Sparrow, Rock Dove, Common Crow, American Robin and others are shown on the chart as having been observed by him during the entire period, 41 years. The Starling, however, is shown as having been observed by Jim Baillie for only 38 years. This would indicate that his first observation of this species in Toronto was in 1922 or early 1923.

# News from the Toronto Bird Observatory



## SPRING MIGRATION:

Monitoring of spring migration began April 12, 1980, and ended June 7, 1980. Of the 55 days the station was open, 24 were covered. The shed was moved to the center of Mugg's (from the north end) and the net lanes extended north and south from there.

Compared to Spring 1979 on Mugg's, the 1980 migration was about one week later. Hermit Thrushes came through in the largest numbers May 3-4, 1980 (vs. April 22-23, 1979). Veerys and Swainson's Thrushes were at their peak May 16-19 in both 1979 and 1980. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were at their peak in the first and second weeks of May, 1980 (vs. the last two weeks of April, 1979). On the other hand, Golden-crowned Kinglets were most numerous almost two weeks later in 1979 than in 1980. The main warbler influx was May 16-19, 1980, (compared to May 12-14, 1979). White-throated Sparrows were at their peak April 27-May 6, 1979 (vs. May 2-19, 1980).

Species banded totalled 63. For the twenty most common species, see the accompanying table. Species observed on the daily censuses totalled 119.

The most unusual bird banded this spring was a Yellow-breasted Chat, first seen on May 18 and caught on May 19. A Whip-poor-will and a White-eyed Vireo were seen May 7 and four Parula Warblers were banded May 17-19.

Unfortunately the peak of the Spring migration came on Sunday, May 19. There was no further banding until May 24. This reinforces the need for banders on weekdays during peak periods. This is especially true in spring because the migration is more compact in the fall.

Donna C. Knauber

(reprinted from TBO Newsletter Vol. 3, No. 2 - October, 1980).

### The 20 most banded species on Mugg's Island, spring, 1980...

White-throated Sparrow---	158	Least Flycatcher-----	25
Common Yellowthroat-----	73	Ovenbird-----	23
Swainson's Thrush-----	67	Nashville Warbler-----	22
Hermit Thrush-----	65	Common Grackle-----	21
Magnolia Warbler-----	45	Dark-eyed Junco-----	21
Ruby-crowned Kinglet-----	38	Canada Warbler-----	17
Golden-crowned Kinglet---	33	Song Sparrow-----	15
Yellow-rumped Warbler---	31	Swamp Sparrow-----	15
American Redstart-----	31	Rose-breasted Grosbeak-----	14
Veery-----	27	Field Sparrow-----	11

If interested in banding and/or census-taking, call Warren Russell 466-2733 after 5:00 PM.

# COMING EVENTS

TFN 336

## COMING EVENTS

### Civic Garden Centre

The following events are planned at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie. Telephone 445-1552 for further information about any of these activities.

Wed., Thur., Dec. 3, 4 "Deck the Halls" presented by the  
10.00 a.m.-4.00 p.m. Garden Club. Admission \$2.50

Commencing Mon. Jan. 12 Course in Botanical Art. 6 sessions.  
10.00 a.m.-3.00 p.m. \$50.00 for course.

A course in Gardening with Wild Flowers is planned for January or February. This course will deal with sources of plants.

### Kortright Centre for Conservation

On Sundays in December, between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m., "Cooking for Wildlife" will be featured at the Kortright Centre for Conservation, Pine Valley Drive, Kleinburg.

### Royal Canadian Institute

Sat. Dec. 6 Lasers Make Light Work (illustrated)  
8.15 p.m. - Stephen C. Wallace, B.Sc., Ph.D.  
Convocation Hall, U. of T. Admission free.

Sat. Jan. 17 ) At the time of going to press, the programs  
Sat. Jan. 24 ) for these dates were not definite. Telephone  
Sat. Jan. 31 ) 979-2004 for information about the programs.

### Royal Ontario Museum

A new Odyssey film series, created for the American Public Broadcasting System by Michael Ambrosino, will be shown Sundays at 2.30 p.m. Free with Museum admission.

Dec. 7 The Chaco Legacy  
Dec. 14 Cree Hunters of Mistassini  
Dec. 21 Ongka's Big Moka

Until January 7, the Canadiana Building, 14 Queen's Park Crescent West, has an exhibition of historic watercolours and prints featuring Arctic voyages of the 18th and 19th centuries.

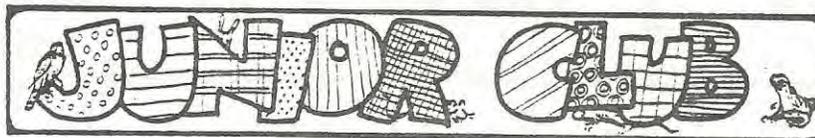
On December 9 and 10 at 7.45 p.m., an informal discussion on the current winter sky and astronomical happenings will be presented in the McLaughlin Planetarium Star Theatre. Adults \$1.75; senior citizens, ROM members, students and children \$1.00.

From December 11 to January 4, the McLaughlin Planetarium will present "The Christmas Star", showing the night sky as it would have been on the eve of Christ's birth.

### University of Guelph Arboretum

An outing to identify winter's weeds, and possible uses in Christmas decorations, will be held Saturday, December 6, at 1.00 p.m., conducted by Alan Watson. Dress warmly; hot chocolate and tea will be available after the walk.

To reach the Arboretum Centre, take Highway 401, exit at Highway #6. Continue to Stone Road, turn right, continue past Brock Road to Arboretum on the left.



This fall the Junior Club has been quite active. The Mineral Group, led by Leslie Ann Kennedy and Dan Somers, had a field trip in September to Lincoln Quarry in Beamsville, Ontario. Several interesting calcite specimens and fossils were found.

After our October meeting, the Bird Group, led by Hugh Currie, went to the Toronto Bird Observatory on Toronto Island. They arrived at the busiest time of year and the juniors helped spot and untangle the birds in the nets. About one hundred birds from eighteen species were banded during the visit. Also seen were an Osprey and Sanderlings.

The Mammal and Reptile Group, led by Lucy Kyonka and Paul Harpley, visited Moatfield Park Ravine behind the FOM where fox tracks, raccoon scats and various birds' nests were observed.

Roger Powley and I led the eight-and-nine-year-olds to Cherry Street Beach and Leslie Street spit to look for shore birds. We saw hundreds of Monarch butterflies at Cherry Beach as well as Gadwall, Bufflehead, Scaup, Dunlin, a Lesser Yellowlegs, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Fox Sparrows and other birds at the spit.

The Botany Group, under Allan Greenbaum, has been visiting ravines every meeting to study plants, and the Astronomy Group has been busy studying in the Planetarium under Kathy Drake.

There is not enough space to mention all the activities. This year we have been fortunate in getting many parents to come along.

On November 1, 1980, there will be a talk by Ed Freeman on "The Development of Toronto's Landforms".

We can always use additional leaders, especially for the eight-to-ten-year-olds; so if you are interested, please phone me (481-3918).

Brian Gray

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#### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Diana Banville - 690-1963 #710, 7 Crescent Place, Toronto M4C 5L7  
 Miss Mildred Easto - 488-0962 #416, 28 Broadway Ave., Toronto M4P 1T5  
 Miss Jean Macdonald - 425-6596 - 88 Parklea Drive, Toronto M4G 2J8  
 Mr. Bruce D. Parker - 449-0994 TH66, 109 Valley Woods Rd., Don Mills M3A 2R8  
 Miss Florence Preston - 483-9530 #203, 368 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto M4P 1L9

Articles and/or drawings are welcome. Articles may be anywhere from one or two sentences to 1500 words. To be eligible for inclusion in **MARCH** issue, material must be received by member of Editorial Committee by **Jan. 15**

Please contact us before reprinting any material in this issue.  
 In some cases we must obtain permission of the author or artist.

# TFN MEETINGS



## GENERAL MEETINGS

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

Monday, December 1, 1980, at 8.15 p.m.

**FRESH WATER LIFE IN SMALL LAKES**

Professor A. Emery, Ichthyologist, ROM

Monday, January 5, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.

**HUMAN ACTIVITIES, NATURE AND GEOLOGY IN TORONTO**

Mr. Ed Freeman, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

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February meeting -- Monday, February 2, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.

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## GROUP MEETINGS

Bird Group

Wed. Jan. 28 Toronto Bird Observatory

8.00 p.m. - Dave Broughton

Location: Dovercourt Public School, 228 Bartlett Ave. (Dufferin bus north from Dufferin subway station to Hallam; walk 2 short blocks east)

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Botany Group

Tue. Jan. 20 Flora of Killarney Park and LaCloche Mountain

8.00 p.m. - Ian Macdonald, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Location: Hodgson Public School  
 Davisville Avenue, just east of Mt. Pleasant Road

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Environmental Group

Thu. Jan. 15 Study on Environmentally Sensitive Areas in Halton

7.30 p.m. - Ron Reid

Location: Huron Street Public School  
 541 Huron St., 1 block west of St. George subway station

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Junior Club

Sat. Dec. 6 The Winter Sky

10.00 a.m. - Doug Gies, Astronomy Department, U. of T.

Sat. Jan. 10 Botany Talk

10.00 a.m. Botany Dept., U of T

Location: Planetarium Auditorium (immediately south of Royal Ontario Museum)

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