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TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

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Toronto's "Easter Lily"

See page 31.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
&
PUBLICATION SALES
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President's Report

April, the month when taxes are paid, is perhaps a good time to acknowledge the efforts of some of the people whose dedication and contributions make TFN what it is -- a strong voice for the appreciation and respect of our natural heritage.

Of course, we all speak enthusiastically of our interests in natural history and express our concerns in conversations and in letters, but as well there are a number of members who make special contributions. One I am thinking of is Mary Smith who since September has submitted briefs on behalf of TFN to the Region of York's new Official Plan, to the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's new Watershed Plan, and to the City of Toronto Ravine Preservation Committee. As well, she has given illustrated presentations to the City of Toronto Planning Board and a City of Toronto ratepayers' group. Mary, who is a professional landscape architect, gives a great amount of her time, energy, and knowledge to encouraging the preservation of our natural heritage.

Another person who makes an important contribution to TFN is Harold Taylor. He has been writing nature notes and announcements of our meetings on a weekly basis for several years now. These are read by John Bradshaw on his Saturday morning (10 - 11 am) broadcast on CFRB. We appreciate the contribution of both John Bradshaw and CFRB in allowing us this time and important publicity.

Robin Powell, our photo librarian since last spring, has done an excellent job of organizing TFN's photo collection as well as contributing a great many of his own photographs to it. Next to taking politicians and officials on our outings, the best way to illustrate our environmental concerns is to show pictures of what we are talking about. Our collection of photos is becoming an excellent record of changes taking place in our region. Do call Robin if you have slides or photos to contribute.

Fred Barrett and Jack Gingrich must be mentioned for their efforts in organizing the Audubon Wildlife Films this season and making them a success once more. Since 1946 the Audubon films have been a popular part of our efforts to bring information about natural history to the public.

Steve Varga, student, artist, and writer, has given us all something to think about in his illustrated articles in our newsletter. He also represented TFN at the Niagara Escarpment Commission hearings last fall, and has spoken on behalf of TFN to North York on its new Official Plan.

Then there are the people who arrange our monthly programs: Mark Sawyer, our monthly meetings; Isabel Smaller, the Botany Group; Red Mason, the Bird Group; and Melanie Milanich, the Environmental Group.

We must not forget John Lowe-Wylde who has been keeping an eye on our nature reserve north of Uxbridge by visiting the property once a month.

The TFN is fortunate to have so many individuals who are willing to contribute in so many ways, and so many members who are willing to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for natural history and the preservation of our natural heritage.

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

	Upcoming OUTINGS	TFN 
RAIN 	or  SHINE	Everybody Welcome!

- Wednesday HUMBER SEWAGE PLANT - Facts of Urban Living #1
 Apr. 1 Leaders: Laura Greer and Plant staff
 10.00 a.m. Meet in the Diesel Building (largest). (#501 (Queen) car west to the Humber Loop.) Walk up a small hill and through the exit to The Queensway. Walk $\frac{1}{2}$ block west.
- Saturday CHINE DRIVE RAVINE - Birds
 Apr. 4 Leader: George Comper
 10.00 a.m. Meet in front of St. Theresa's Church, Kingston Road and Midland. (Kingston Road #12 bus from Victoria Park subway station to Midland.)
- Sunday COME WALK WITH US - Nature Walk with public invited. Humber Valley beginning at Bloor Street.
 Apr. 5 Leaders: Several for trees, plants, birds, etc.
 2.00 p.m. Meet in the parking lot of Etienne Brule park. (Subway to Old Mill station.) Walk north on Humber Boulevard, east along Old Mill Road, over a little bridge to the parking lot in the park.
Cars follow the same route.
- Wednesday WILKET CREEK PARK - Skywatch #3
 Apr. 8 Leader: Cathy Drake
 8.00 p.m. Meet at the first parking lot inside the south entrance off Leslie Street just north of Eglinton Avenue. (Leslie #51 bus or Lawrence East #54 bus from Eglinton subway station. Get off at the stop immediately after the turn on to Leslie. Or Eglinton East #34 bus from Eglinton subway station to Leslie. Cross the difficult T-intersection with the lights.) Bring binoculars.
- Saturday HIGH PARK and GRENADIER POND - Birds
 Apr. 11 Leader: Roger Powley
 9.00 a.m. Meet in the first parking lot on West Road, on your right as you enter the park from Bloor Street west opposite High Park Avenue. (Subway to High Park station.)
- Sunday LESLIE STREET SPIT - Birds
 Apr. 12 Leader: Steven Price
 10.00 a.m. Meet in the parking lot just inside the gates at the foot of Leslie Street. (#501 (Queen) car to Leslie, walk south about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile.)
- Wednesday DUFFERIN INCINERATOR - Facts of Urban Living #2
 Apr. 15 Leaders: Laura Greer and staff
 10.00 a.m. Meet at the incinerator, 75 Vanley Crescent, North York, west of Finch and Dufferin. (Finch West #36 bus to Chesswood Drive.) Walk south two blocks on Chesswood to Vanley.

Upcoming Outings - Continued

- Saturday U. of T. HERBARIUM - Sketching
 Apr. 18 Leader: Steven Varga
 10.30 a.m. Meet inside the main entrance of the Botany Department of the U. of T. - first building north of College on the west side of Queen's Park, main entrance on the north corner of building. (Yonge-University subway to Queen's Park station or #506 (Carlton) car to University.)
- Saturday DON RIVER DAY (9th Annual) - Annual canoe trip on behalf of the Don
 Apr. 18 River. Meet at Serena Gundy Park. For further information contact
 10.30 a.m. George Luste (home 534-9313).
- Sunday MORNINGSIDE PARK - Mosses
 Apr. 19 Leader: Terry Carleton
 2.00 p.m. Meet in the first parking lot immediately west of Morningside Avenue by the pavilion. (Eglinton East #34B bus.)
 Cars. Take 401 east to Exit 61, then go south on Morningside one mile.
- Monday ROWNTREE MILLS PARK - Birds
 Apr. 20 Leader: Billie Bridgman
 10.00 a.m. Meet at Finch and Islington Avenues. (Finch West #36 or #36B bus from
 (Easter) Finch subway station to Islington, or Islington #37 bus from Islington subway station to Finch.)
- Saturday HIGHLAND CREEK - Ecology
 Apr. 25 Leader: Steven Taylor
 10.00 a.m. Meet at the west end of Lawrence Avenue bridge crossing Highland Creek (approximately 1½ miles east of Kingston Road). (Scarborough #86 bus from Kennedy subway station, to Lawrence. Transfer to any eastbound bus and get off at Beechgrove stop.)
- DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS
- Sunday TAYLOR CREEK PARK - Bikes
 Apr. 26 Leader: Roger Powley
 9.00 a.m. Meet in the first parking lot inside the south entrance of Wilket Creek Park off Leslie Street just north of Eglinton Avenue.
- Tuesday HUMBER MARSHES - Birds
 Apr. 28 Leader: Patti Straite
 6.45 p.m. Meet outside the Old Mill subway station.
- Wednesday RECYCLING PLANT - Facts of Urban Living #3
 Apr. 29 Leaders: Laura Greer and staff.
 10.00 a.m. Meet at the Plant, 4375 Chesswood Drive. (Finch West #36 bus to Chesswood.) Walk to 4375.
 Cars. Drive across the lot.
- Thursday MOATFIELD - Botany
 Apr. 30 Leader: Bruce Parker
 6.45 p.m. Meet at the north-west corner of Don Mills Road and Duncanmill/Graydon Hall (Don Mills #25 bus from Pape subway station.)

KEEPING IN TOUCH ..

Dear Readers:

If you have anything you'd like to say about our articles - pro or con - or should there be anything else you'd like to tell us...do drop a line.

Editorial Committee

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Dear Diana,

I read your article on starlings in the February issue of Toronto Field Naturalist with much interest. You end by saying "what more can I say" and I reply "Much more" and "Starlings are darlings".

Last May on a visit to the clean, charming town of Goderich in Ontario, a friend said to me, "Joy, come and see - there are two of your friends cleaning up the street outside." So we went outside and - you are right - there were two busy starlings removing all the crumbs from the pavement. So I say, Diana, that they are good for street cleaning.

Barbara Bain, President of the McIlwraith Club in London, hails from Montreal, and she says starlings really liven up the winters there, as they have no cardinals.

You didn't mention that as well as producing good fertiliser for the fruit trees, starlings also help spread the seeds.

Last year in May I was with 7 other birdwatchers in Chatham and we held a referendum. The statement was: "In my opinion the clever, attractive, industrious bird Sturnus vulgaris is discriminated against, and I will endeavour to speak well of it and protect it - YES or NO." Well, Diana, after the voting the count was 5 YES and 5 NO. I know there were only 8 of us but I slipped in two YES's to give it a chance. So you can see, Diana, that even birdwatchers are quite prejudiced against this lovely bird.

I think that a myth has grown up against them and has been passed on, which is quite common in general attitudes and it is one of my goals to dispel this myth. You see, Diana, there are people who use them for hate objects. They wake up in the morning in a bad mood ready for a hate session, look out the window; the first thing they see is an industrious starling and so they hate it.

Last August in England I found the attitude much better towards these birds. My sister Angela puts out scraps and a dish of water daily - more for her pet blackbirds, but the starlings are also welcomed. Consequently they are not so shy as the Canadian birds and I could sit just about 8 feet from them and watch their antics. I was impressed at the fast learning of the immature starlings. The mother starling brought them to the water one at a time, and gave them just one demonstration each on how to bathe, and the clever birds caught on straight away and bathed just like her.

Back here in London, Ontario, the local starlings have very red legs in the spring; it must be a regional variation. In spring my Tom cat just has to poke his head out the door and the starlings in the trees above berate him and he darts back in. I don't know what they are saying, but he seems to understand and I'm sure it is quite unrepeatable...

Joy Pocklington
London, Ontario

FINDING THE FIELDFARE -- TWO VIEWS

View 1:

THE FIELDFARE, BIRDERS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS

When some residents of Ireland Court saw a 'different' bird frequenting their neighbourhood they asked Barry McKay if he would have a look at it and confirm its identity. When Barry visited their home he was shown a picture which had been drawn (or painted) which identified the bird as a Fieldfare. Since a resident of the house had been ill Barry was asked not to divulge the exact address of the sighting. Past experiences have taught Barry the problems which may be created when numbers of people converge on an area to search for an unusual bird. With this in mind he cautiously reported the event in his newspaper column (Sunday Star) with the comment that birders must respect the resident's desire not to be disturbed.

Since this bird is an exceptional rarity in North America it didn't take long before birders began to search the area and the best locations for finding the Fieldfare became known. By mid-February an estimated 2500 people had visited the area, most of them being successful in adding the Fieldfare to their North American and Ontario lists. The activity of so many strangers raised a few suspicions in the neighbourhood. The police apparently answered more than one request concerning suspicious-looking people. Once the police were informed of what everyone was up to this situation was resolved.

The Fieldfare has been regularly feeding on mountain ash berries on trees which have been planted throughout the neighbourhood. Because many of these trees are on the front lawns of the houses it was possible to see the bird from the street, reducing the need for searches of back yards. The comments of Tom Hayman express the relationship which developed between birders and residents, "residents appear to be pleased to see birders and have become very interested in the bird" (The London Free Press, Jan. 21).

Red Mason must certainly be commended for his efforts in keeping track of the Fieldfare and literally showing it to hundreds of people. Red's efforts have greatly reduced the amount of time many people spent in searching for the bird.

The TFN has not received any complaints from residents concerning the activities of birders in the area but we have had inquiries about what people were looking for and why they would come from as far as Florida, Mississippi and California just to see a bird.

With the number of birders increasing every year and the lure of a rare bird an irrepressible urge we must all take care when searching residential areas that we consider the residents first and respect their property. With a very few exceptions this has been done in the case of the Islington Fieldfare.

The latest word on the Fieldfare is that Donald Gunn has submitted photos to the Royal Ontario Museum and the Ontario Ornithological Records Committee which will serve as concrete proof of the bird's identity and that the Fieldfare was last seen on February 14, 1981.

Bruce D. Parker

View 2:

WHAT KIND OF BIRDER ARE YOU?

If you are a birding member of this organization, I presume you saw, or entertained hopes of seeing, the fieldfare that was in the Kipling-Eglinton vicinity in January. During your sojourn there (some made several futile trips) I hope your behavior was exemplary and along the lines of the "Leave nothing but footprints; take nothing but pictures" injunction of many parks.

But, in this instance, your footprints should have been left only on public property unless you sought and received permission to enter private grounds.

My wife and I were present on two days and I, alone, on a third. On each visit we were aghast at the boorish behavior of people who, if they act in similar fashion in their homes, must live in a shambles.

A close friend who confined his activities to the street (and yet saw the bird!) reported that no less than 15 people were in one yard at one time. The most I saw enter, or emerge, was about a half dozen, still more than I care to see wandering about my own premises uninvited.

I was aware of only two parties who, like ourselves, requested permission to enter. Inside we found the snow in the main part of the yard trampled flat, with footprints meandering all over, even into adjacent yards. Bits of a spruce were broken off at the point of entry and, conceivably, plants crushed under the flattened snow.

We, and I think, most, went in and out the way we came, but a party of four males wandered all over the area, some coming out where growth hampered movement, some wandering in and out of neighbouring properties. Similar trails and footprints elsewhere in the district testified that properties on other streets were subject to the same callous treatment.

A couple of years ago, I went in search of a solitaire, first asking if I might enter the yard. Then, and in the present instance, I felt my request was received not only with gratification but with surprise at the revelation that one birder had some manners.

My impression, from this incident (from studying a list of donors to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and a membership list of the Canadian Nature Federation) is that most of the vast army of birders care nothing for such organizations which, like the Toronto Field Naturalists, are striving to keep some areas available.

I can only agree with my friend who saw the fifteen transgressors. He said, "If I get a rare bird in my yard, I'll tell nobody!"

William C. Mansell

Killing breeds shy birds. Oh, to win their trust again, To see their beauty!
--

(haiku by Roger Powley)

A Naturalist's Code of Ethics

In connection with our Code of Ethics project, you will be interested in the following "Code of Birding Ethics" compiled by the Sacramento Audubon Society under the leadership of Elmer Aldrich.

Ethic I: Thoughtfulness of Birds

- Be stealthy, quiet. Try to observe birds so they are unaware of your presence, thus providing an opportunity to learn their normal habits. Avoid quick movements, discordant noises, running, continuous chasing of the same birds, throwing things, and "thrashing about". The quiet observer sees more.
- Approaching a nest too closely or repeated flushing may cause abandonment of the eggs and young by the parents and expose the nest to predation. Do not handle eggs or young.
- When photographing a nest or parents at the nest, don't keep it unduly exposed to sun, cold or rain, causing destruction of eggs or young or desertion by parents. Instead of cutting branches or grass near the nest, tie them back. Leave the habitat as you found it.
- Use tape recorders with discretion to prevent driving birds from their territories. Never play recorders in heavily birded areas.
- Divide larger groups of people; individuals or small groups cause less disturbance.
- Avoid "tree-whacking" to arouse cavity dwellers. Undue disturbance may lead to abandonment.

Ethic II: Thoughtfulness of Habitat

- Avoid trampling fragile habitats, especially marshes, grasslands, wildflowers and tangles. Stay on established pathways. Damage to the habitat affects all species in the ecosystem.
- When practical, pool transportation to birding areas to save energy and reduce environmental impact.
- Keep motor vehicles on established roads and parking areas. One set of tracks invites others. In fragile ecosystems tracks may last for decades and severely degrade the habitat value.
- Obtain permission for entry to private lands and when necessary on government lands. Respect the occupant's privacy and property. Don't block rights-of-way; leave gates as you found them.
- Walk single file in fragile areas. Small groups reduce adverse impact on the habitat and require narrower paths and roads, and smaller parking areas.
- Leave no litter.
- Plan restroom stops to avoid pollution of the habitat.
- Be extremely careful with fire. Avoid smoking while walking; press out cigarettes on rocks or mineral soil. Carry butts with you.
- Use discretion in divulging information on nests and rare and endangered birds, especially in fragile habitats.

Ethic III: Thoughtfulness of Birders

Keep down unnecessary talk, noise and disturbance so that all birders in a group have the opportunity to exercise their full faculties of sight and hearing.

Put the interests of the group before your own. Keep the birding group together so that interesting and rare or unusual sightings can be shared until all interests are addressed.

When with a group of mixed birding abilities the leader or better birders should assist others in identification and should point out field marks, habits and ecological relationships.

Avoid excessive use of squeakers and "pishing"; it may reduce their effectiveness and may annoy other birders.

Drive lawfully and use common sense and consideration for other drivers.

Be sensitive to the efforts and energies of fellow birders.

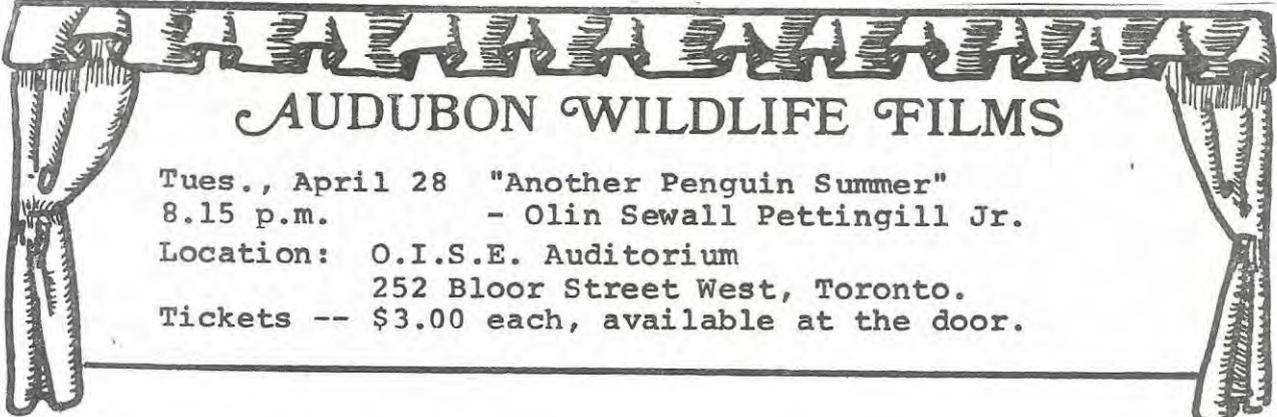
In identifying and reporting the rare and unusual, always err on the side of "over-identification" so there is less chance of wrong identity. Be prepared to justify identifications adequately with good descriptions or photographs to minimize perpetuation of errors in the literature.

Do not put undue weight on published geographic distributions in making identifications, but consider all similar species. When possible take notes in the field, including not only diagnostic markings, but voice and habits to validate identification.

When possible prior to reporting a rare or unusual sighting, have another birder of better or equal ability locate and verify your identification.

When birding at a private home be considerate of your host's time and property.

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AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Tues., April 28 "Another Penguin Summer"
8.15 p.m. - Olin Sewall Pettingill Jr.

Location: O.I.S.E. Auditorium
252 Bloor Street West, Toronto.

Tickets -- \$3.00 each, available at the door.

A NATURALIST RE-DISCOVERS THE HUMBER VALLEY Finch to Lawrence
--

Reading through my May, 1980 issue of the TFN newsletter, an item on a planned series of weekly walks aroused my interest. The route was to be through the Humber Valley from Steeles Avenue to Lake Ontario, and would encompass many of the unforgettable sylvan haunts of my childhood. My home at that time (during the first World War) was on the northern outskirts of Weston at the point then known as the intersection of Albion Road and Chew's sideroad. But who in a normal state of mind would even stop to consider a 260 km drive once a week for TFN Humber Valley outings? No one perhaps except a naturalist. I remembered the old adage, "There's no fool like an old fool." The words seemed to fit. I would do it. Why not? It would be an adventure. Just one major difficulty to surmount - we live in the country and share one car. What would I do for transportation? My wife, Marion, usually needs the car on Wednesday mornings, the day of the Humber outings. Marion must have read my thoughts as she quickly came to my rescue and volunteered to relinquish her share of the family car in the interest of Natural History - but I suspect chiefly from the goodness of her generous heart.

The morning of July 9th found me heading down the highway, Toronto-bound, to participate with TFN in scheduled-outing number two. We were to meet at 10 a.m. at the intersection of Finch and Islington Avenues for our walk southeast to the corner of Weston Road and Sheppard Avenue. As I turned off Highway 400 and proceeded west along Finch, I realized that I was only ten minutes' driving-time away from our meeting place in busy Toronto. I had studied my map and knew exactly where I was, or at least thought I did, but, alas, the heavy morning traffic was bewildering. Gone were the green meadows and woods, my landmarks of bygone days; gone was the little red schoolhouse of the hamlet of Emery; gone were the rows of maple trees my mother and a school chum had planted over one hundred years ago on the edge of the school grounds, now only a memory. I reached Islington Avenue, but where could one park? Spotting a greenbelt with parking facilities on the west side of the street, I parked my car and consulted my map. As I surveyed my immediate surroundings, I became aware that this had been the William Crosson farm which, with the adjoining Rowntree farm, now formed a part of Metropolitan Toronto's greenbelt. The pine trees, hemlocks and deciduous woods had succumbed to industrial expansion and urban development in the march of so-called progress.

My musings on the past had to wait for I was surrounded by naturalists sporting binoculars, field guides, notebooks and artists' sketch pads. I entered the circle and, after a round of introductions and last-minute pleasantries, our leader for the day suggested that we make notes and encouraged us to discuss our observations. I suppose I was still a bit confused from my harrowing experience with the morning traffic but, for whatever reason, I soon realized I could not recall the name of even one individual in our group! Why were people's names so utterly confusing? Why not simple names like Daphne mezereum or Dianthus armeria or, for that matter, Rhus toxicodendron? My problem was solved, at least for the present.

My two immediate partners

of the walk would now become Iris and Heather; how simple! It would merely be a matter of selecting appropriate names for others in the group as the necessity arose. Perhaps, due to my advanced years, I would be readily forgiven.

Ahead of us, several of the naturalists had stopped to look at a large yellow-flowered plant which Iris said had been identified as wild tobacco, although apparently others knew it as flannel plant; still others affirmed it to be common mullein, whereupon Heather whispered to me that down east it was known as white tea plant or bouillon blanc. Here was a glaring example of the confusion encountered in the use of so-called common names. My decision was made. I would adhere strictly to scientific nomenclature in my own sight-record listings. We were walking at much too fast a pace to botanize properly, so the best we could hope for under such circumstances would be to list everything of interest within our immediate range of vision. Perhaps with our combined efforts, using a close-up photo or sketch to accompany the listings of flora or fauna unfamiliar to us, we could assist the experts in positive identification. With this approach in mind, our many-named yellow-flowered plant was listed as Verbascum thapsus. We followed a well-worn footpath through open terrain. The composite family and other sun-loving plants were well represented, many of them naturalized introductions and garden escapes, for example, the sunflower-like elecamp-ane (Inula helenium). Of the bean family, here and there were little colonies of the attractive introduced crown vetch (Coronilla varia) as well as a more recent newcomer to the scene, bird's foot trefoil (Lotus corniculatus).

My problem of the moment was to orient myself to my present unfamiliar surroundings. Surely this was not the Humber Valley I had once known so well. I realized I was somewhere in the vicinity of the Humber oxbow, a crescent-shaped body of water which, through the years, had gradually been cut off from the main stream in its serpentine course. My grandfather's stories about it are indelibly impressed on my memory. He told me of his night-time visits to the oxbow to fish for bullheads and his frightening first encounter with will-o'-the-wisp, a methane-gas-formed ghostly "apparition" which floated about in the awesome silence of the nearby marsh. I well recall the long-awaited day when I set out with him for my first visit to the oxbow. We gained access from the sixth concession, now Weston Road, along Orr's Creek and through their woods; there we entered Grubb's farm and followed the river's edge to the entrance of the heavily wooded oxbow. Both farms, as I so vividly recall, then included mixed forest, a haven for ferns and other shade-loving plants, birds, squirrels and chipmunks. The winding creek was cluttered with watercress; and moss-covered logs in the shallow water concealed the whereabouts of elusive trout. The oxbow itself was a refuge for turtle, muskrat, American bittern, green heron and black-crowned night heron. Although the Great Blues had heronries elsewhere, they came to fish here in July and August after vacating their nests. It was here that a golden eagle found haven one summer, only to be shot by a hunter in a pine woods to the south. Today in this tiny oasis of greenbelt, amidst a modern desert of urban development, the meandering stream, the oxbow and the forests are but a memory.

By the time I awakened from my reverie, the group was some distance ahead of

me. They had discovered a colony of tick-trefoil (Desmodium canadense), of the bean family, as well as a twining vine, reputedly poisonous, which they had identified as black swallow-wort, a close relative of the milkweeds. I had been aware for some time that this introduced Old World plant, once rare in Ontario, was well established along parts of the Humber and I was now able to enter it as a first on my botanical list of vascular plants of the province.

As we emerged from a wooded section farther along the path, a large pond appeared in the distance. Atop the river bank stood a palatial residence, a familiar landmark in an altered landscape. Our path on the floodplain took us to a place I recalled as Goddard's flats; and the pond, I realized, was a man-made feature of more recent years, now well inhabited by geese and ducks. We had reached the end of our nature walk and the site of our picnic lunch. Over the hilltop we could hear the traffic at Weston Road and Sheppard where transportation was available for those who had come by public transit. By this time ravenously hungry, and what with becoming better acquainted and comparing notes of the morning's activities, we were able to spend another busy and enjoyable hour.

After lunch, several in the group volunteered to accompany me back along the river to Rowntree Park where I had left my car at Islington and Finch. We walked around to the opposite side of the pond where one member of our dwindling group was able to photograph a painted turtle, Chrysemys picta. It was during this brief interlude that I solved the mystery of the pond. I recalled that the second owner of the hilltop mansion, built around 1930, had excavated sand and gravel from the river floodplain. The source of the water which filled this reservoir had been a series of springs originating in Welsh's woods on the east side of the concession (now Weston Road). Many times I had beached my canoe to drink the cool, clear and unpolluted water which trickled down to the Humber. The second owner was Jethro Crang - the puzzle of Crang's pond had now been solved.

We continued by a somewhat circuitous route and were able to add interesting plant species to our growing list of site records. Along the river's margin, we discovered several plants of broad-leaved arrowhead (Sagittaria latifolia) with its distinctive lance-shaped leaves; here also was Iris versicolor, mythical goddess of the rainbow; and the closely related blue-eyed grass, Sisyrinchium, a member of a most perplexing but attractive group, and so easily overlooked in cloudy weather. Leaving the shoreline, we found several specimens of a little gem from Europe belonging to the primrose family, scarlet pimpernel, Anagalis arvensis. It is also known as poor man's weather-glass as the flowers open in bright weather and close when decidedly overcast. I had found it only on one other occasion. Proceeding through a scrubby section, we noted Lonicera to be abundant; two species we were able to recognize as fly honeysuckle (Lonicera canadensis) and the familiar garden escape, Tartarian honeysuckle (L. tatarica). Anemone spp. were also noted and on entering another open section, we found Asparagus officinalis, an escape from cultivation.

It was approaching mid-afternoon and, in order to escape momentarily the intense heat and humidity, we decided to enter an adjoining shady wood which

appeared to be in the general direction of our starting point. The woods were predominantly ash-leaf maple (Acer negundo) so much a part of the natural river-bottom habitat. What a relief to escape the direct rays of the July sun, but there was a price to pay; the woods were literally swarming with mosquitoes. At least it was cool and a welcome respite from the glaring sun. Upon nearing the end of the woods, we came to a small clearing bathed in sunshine and, to our utter delight and amazement, we found ourselves standing at the edge of a dense colony of exquisite lilies blooming in majestic splendour! Thus, by enduring the heat and mosquitoes, we were rewarded by the opportunity to stumble, as it were, upon the Michigan lily (Lilium michiganense), to me a rare sighting, my fourth in a lifetime.

We were now within four hundred meters of the car. This was indeed the end of a perfect day shared by naturalists, and the first day of this naturalist's rediscovery of the Humber, a valley, which, despite so many drastic changes, still remained rich in flora and fauna.

Bill Cattley



Michigan Lily,
Humber Valley, August 1980.
by Joyce Cave.

Each time she goes there
She has to find it again -
That one greenbriar.

(Haiku by Diana Barville)

TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS, JANUARY 1981

Hérons to Ducks: The only Great Blue Herons reported were one at Claireville on Jan. 11 and one found frozen in the Humber Marshes on Jan. 31 (H&JH). The Mute Swan population along the lakeshore has increased again this winter with a record high count on the TOC Waterfowl Inventory on Jan. 11. Two Whooper Swans returned to Bronte on Jan. 1 (WA) and have remained throughout the month. This is the third winter which these swans have spent in this area.

Truly the variety of wintering ducks along the Toronto area waterfront is the greatest of any area in Ontario. Over 20 species were reported this month including a Green-winged Teal (Whitby, Jan. 31, DR), a Ring-necked Duck (Ontario Place, Jan. 18, RM), three White-winged Scoters (Sioux Point, Jan. 2, JK and Whitby, Jan. 28, DR), three Surf Scoters (Whitby, Jan. 1, DR) and a Hooded Merganser (Hearne Plant, Jan. 1, RS).

Hawks to Gulls: There was an increase in Goshawk reports during the latter part of Jan. including two at West Hill (Mr. & Mrs. GS) and two in the Islington-Kipling area. The first of four Cooper's Hawks was one in Aurora on Jan. 1 (JT). The only Sharp-shinned Hawk was one reported at Lynde Shores on Jan. 11 and 17 (DR). Individual Red-shouldered Hawks were found in Etobicoke (Jan. 4, WA), Hague Park (Jan. 15, EJ) and Unionville (Jan. 17, CW). A Golden Eagle was reported from north Oakville on Jan. 31 (WA) and a Gyrfalcon was present at Whitby from Jan. 22 to the end of the month (MS, MW).

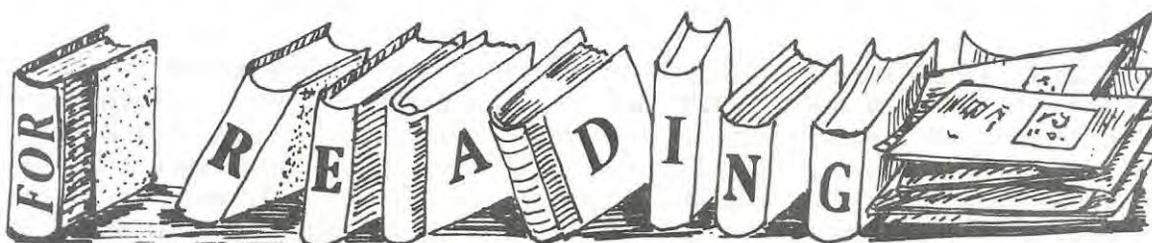
The Sandhill Crane continued to make daily appearances at the Metro zoo throughout January. A Killdeer was found at Sunnybrook on Jan. 2 (HS) and a Common Snipe was at Clarkson on Jan. 25 (JK). Port Credit was 'the' place for gulls this month, there were up to 12 Glaucous Gulls (Jan. 25, JK), 6 Iceland Gulls and a Thayer's Gull on Jan. 20. A Bonaparte's Gull was at Whitby on Jan. 20 and 21 (DR).

Owls to Woodpeckers: Only a few reports of owls were received, these included a Snowy Owl at Mimico (Jan. 6, JK), a Long-eared Owl at Lynde Shores (Jan. 10, DR), a Barred Owl seen and heard in the Bloor St.-Humber area (Jan. 19, 20, HS) and Saw-whet Owls at Hague Park (Jan. 25, EJ) and Bronte (Jan. 22, HK).

On Jan. a Belted Kingfisher was noted along the Scarborough lakeshore (FB, BP). Flickers were reported from Lambton (JK), Rexdale (MT), Brookbanks (BP) and the O'Connor-St. Clair area (EB), and Pileated Woodpeckers were reported from at least four widely separated locations within the Metro boundaries. A Yellow-bellied Sapsucker was in the Sherwood Park area on Jan. 10 (JG).

Larks to Shrikes: A flock of 100 Horned Larks was found in the Borbran Rd.-Bovaird Dr. area on Jan. 1 (JK). Single reports were received of a Tufted Titmouse at the Donalda Golf Course (Jan. 4, IR), a Winter Wren at Lambton (Jan. 1, JK), a Carolina Wren at Pickering (Jan. 1, MS), a Mockingbird at Richmond Hill (Jan. 1, DF), a Brown Thrasher in Pickering throughout the month (MS) and a Ruby-crowned Kinglet in Pickering on Jan. 31 (DR). Robins and Cedar Waxwings were both reported in flocks of up to 100 and it was estimated that as many as 1000 Robins wintered in Metro. The highlight of the year will probably be the Fieldfare which spent the entire month in Islington and was seen by about 2000 people.

Only one Northern Shrike was reported (Jan. 18, Claireville, JK).



Kluane: Pinnacle of the Yukon edited by John Theberge, published by Doubleday Canada Limited, Toronto, October 1980. 175 pages, \$35.00.

This book will make wistful all those who are too old or too poor to visit Kluane. One longs to see the glaciers, discover the 118 species of birds, admire 200 species of alpine plants, and thrill to the animals, large and small that make their homes in this breathtakingly beautiful park. The book is a complex one to review. It is a large-format volume attractively arranged and printed. Illustrations are colour and black-and-white photographs, line drawings, maps and charts. A map of the park forms the end papers. There are three brief preambles, including one by the then Minister for National Parks, Jean Chrétien; two appendices - one of scientific names for all life in the park; notes on the contributors; a list for further reading and an index.

The text is divided into three major sections: The Elements, The Living Things, Man. Contributing authors have written chapters dealing with various aspects of the major topics. All sections are very readable, often fascinating, and contain a great wealth of information both narrative and statistical. The first section covers geology. It includes a very interesting chapter on glaciers, and a chapter on various climates which the author describes as "the supreme ruler". Section two deals with all living things and includes a chapter on Ice-Age Mammals, Glaciers and Man as well as one on Living Waters. Section three covers the influence of man from the prehistoric to the modern aviators and climbers.

The colour photographs grouped in four places throughout the book are for the most part stunning. Black-and-white photographs, although obviously chosen to augment visually the text, are less impressive and vary in quality and interest from adequate to excellent. Line drawings by the editor's wife, Mary Theberge, are delightful and add to the visual appeal of the book. The price may deter some but those who can surmount this hurdle will find Kluane: Pinnacle of the Yukon a valuable and enjoyable addition to their bookshelves.

J.M.

A VISIT TO CANADA'S "GALAPAGOS"?

This summer, a Royal Ontario Museum adventure will be a visit to the Queen Charlotte Islands and five-day cruise in a 45-foot motor-sailboat in the South Moresby archipelago. Abandoned Haida villages, Peregrine Falcon eyries and sea-lions are highlights of this 11-day trip. Participants will visit the Kwakiutl people of Quadra Island and Alert Bay and watch Orca whales on their summer grounds. For further information call Diana MacFeeters at 489-1039 or Richard Meech at 864-1470.

Mushroom Pocket Field Guide by Howard E. Bigelow, published by Collier Macmillan Canada Limited, Paperback edition 1979. 117 pages, \$2.95.

This attractive little guide illustrates and describes possibly 150 of the more common fungi a person might see on his rambles. Each species is shown in a colour photograph. These are mounted either one or two to a page, and opposite is the comment. Photographs are generally excellent. The descriptive paragraphs are comprehensive, and where it is of use, comparisons are made with similar species.

Besides the descriptions the Guide has an illustration of the parts of the mushroom to familiarize the novice with terms such as lamellae and mycelium. There is a diagrammatic illustration of the life cycle of an agaric (a particular genus of fungus) with a written description. In the Introduction there are useful chapters on Collecting, Spore Prints, Preservation of Specimens and Poisonous Fungi. At the end of the book there is a bibliography, a picture glossary to further define terms used, and an index.

This is a good book for the beginner but anyone interested in fungi will find it of value as one can never have too many reference books in this rather difficult field of mushroom identification.

J.M.

North American Birds of Prey. Text by William Mansell, paintings by Gary Low. Gage Publishing Limited, Toronto, 1980. 176 pages, \$29.95.

North American Birds of Prey is an attractive, reasonably priced book devoted to the 27 most widely distributed American species of raptors. The introduction defines birds of prey and gives a general description of them and their place in the food chain. Two sections detail 16 diurnal raptors and 11 owls.

William Mansell has been fascinated by birds almost all his life. That he enjoys them and has studied them well is apparent in his interesting narrative which describes appearance, habit and habitat of each bird, and includes interesting personal experiences with some.

The descriptions are enhanced by the excellent full page paintings by Gary Low. Almost photographic in detail, they show each bird in its natural habitat and colour. Additional smaller paintings show wingspreads and head detail.

Food summaries, a short chapter on falconry and a discussion on the effects of pesticides complete this well-designed book.

- Anne Macdonald

coalition on the niagara escarpment

The Niagara Escarpment is still being buffeted by the threat of large condominium/hotel developments and quarrying for sand, gravel and stone.

If you wish to help contact:

CONE 355 Lesmill Road, Don Mills, Ontario M3B 2W8
Phone (416) 444-8419

Reading (cont'd)

"and some brought flowers"- Plants in a New World
Selected and introduced by Mary Alice Downie and Mary Hamilton
with illustrations by E. J. Revell, published by University of
Toronto Press, 164 pp., 70 illustrations, \$25.00.

"When Martin Frobisher reached the forbidding coast of Labrador
in 1576, he commanded his company, if they could get ashore by
any means, to bring whatsoever they could first find . . . in
token of Christian possession . . . and some brought flowers."

Hence the intriguing title of this interesting book. It deals
with plants, shrubs, trees, even ferns, lichen and fungi, seventy
altogether, arranged alphabetically. For each one there is given
a short technical description, then direct quotes from books and
other writings of early settlers, travellers, and explorers, as
far back as Champlain in the early 1600's, describing encounters
with the plants and their many uses. Only seven are mentioned
solely for their aesthetic value; the rest are described as being
useful for food, drink, medicine, dyes, ropes, nets, laces, and
much more. One appreciates the research which was necessary to
discover all this historical material.

On the page opposite the text for each plant is reproduced a
lovely painted illustration, delicately coloured and gracefully
simple, but quite typical. Who would believe a simple plantain
could look so beautiful! If the reader should grow weary of
historical data, these charming pictures will certainly afford
continual pleasure.

Billie Bridgman

(Available from bookstores and TFN Library (690-1963).)

Additional - PERIODICALS OF INTEREST TO NATURALISTS

Shirley A. Fleming suggests -

INTERNATIONAL OCEANOGRAPHIC FOUNDATION - 3979 Rickenbacker

Causeway, Virginia Key, Miami, Florida, 33149.

This organization produces alternatively two publications,
Sea Secrets, and, Sea Frontiers, both concerned with all sorts
of things to do with the sea, of interest to all age groups.
\$17.00 yearly (US funds). Unreservedly recommended by Shirley.

NATURE CANADA, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa, K1P 6G1

\$15.00 yearly membership; published quarterly.

(With apologies for having omitted this publication in the
original list.)

On the Road with John James Audubon, by Mary Durant and Michael Harwood, Dodd, Mead and Company, 1980, 638 pp. \$24.95.

This book is based on a rather novel idea - that of following in Audubon's footsteps through the United States and Canada with the help of his journals, written between 1803 and 1843, which were detailed and voluminous. The authors write alternatively of their impressions, interspersing quotes from the journals. Both authors are knowledgeable and observant birders; in addition, Mary is a botanist, perhaps this is where her true interest lies. Of course the country has changed greatly since Audubon travelled in his search for birds to hunt and paint, and at times the authors have difficulty in locating exact spots. Perhaps Audubon's travels in Canada were easiest to follow, as he travelled in the Maritimes and to Labrador, where changes in the landscape are fewer. Bird numbers have decreased radically even in our day and it is little wonder they have done so if every hunter killed as many birds in a day as Audubon did. He and his friends killed and ate almost any species they came across though some were preferred to others.

Audubon was an ambitious man who aimed to portray all of the birds of the North American continent, though he apparently did not reach the west coast. Since he had a wife and family to support he taught drawing and painting in private schools from time to time. In the spring of 1826 Audubon, aged forty-one, sailed for England to find an engraver to work on "The Birds of America." He was received as a famous artist and was feted and entertained in wealthy homes. The authors assert that Europe was then experiencing natural history's Golden Age and that even in North America natural history commanded far more attention in progressive academic curricula than it does today. The fame of Audubon is still very much in the minds of Americans, particularly in the south, as shown in the frequency of his name being used in the naming of museums, parks, garages, churches, magazines, societies, inns, and even hosiery mills.

Two criticisms: There are not nearly enough place names on the end paper maps. As an example: Audubon was on the Arkansas River for some time, and so were the authors, but the river is not shown on the maps. Two or three detailed maps would have been helpful. Also, this is a beautiful book with many well chosen illustrations, but surely part of the high cost of books these days is because the books are so large. This book could successfully be cut 25% in length without omitting pertinent details, and would better hold the reader's attention to the end. If the cost of the book could also be reduced 25% would this not be a desirable trend?

M.E.

The sale of Kenilworth Ivy at the March 2 meeting produced \$7.25 which has been donated to the T.F.N.

PERIODICALS OF INTEREST TO NATURALISTSPart 2 - Ontario Naturalists' Club Periodicals

by Bruce D. Parker

The publications in this list are all the result of the efforts of volunteers and are intended to keep the members of the various clubs informed of club activities and of nature related items of concern in the local area. All of these periodicals are received by the Toronto Field Naturalists in exchange for our Newsletter and may be borrowed on request.

1. Barrie, The Blue Heron, published semi-annually by the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club of Barrie.
2. Georgetown, The Esquesing, published monthly (except summer) by the Halton Field Naturalists, 10 Albert St., Georgetown, L7G 2A9.
3. Guelph, The Guelph Field Naturalist, published by the Guelph Field Naturalists, PO Box 1401, Guelph, N1H 6N8.
4. Hamilton, The Wood Duck, published monthly (except summer) by the Hamilton Naturalists' Club, PO Box 5182, Hamilton, L8S 4L3.
5. Huntsville, The Chickadee, published by the Huntsville Nature Club, PO Box 1603, Huntsville, E0A 1K0 (monthly except summer).
6. Kirkland Lake, Peep, published periodically by the Kirkland Nature Club, Box 293, Virginiatown, POK 1X0.
7. London, The Cardinal, published four times annually by the McIlwraith Field Naturalists of London, PO Box 4185, Postal Station C, London, N5W 5H6.
8. Niagara Falls, Bulletin, published monthly (except summer) by the Niagara Falls Nature Club.
9. Oshawa, The Naturalist, published monthly (except summer) by the Durham Region Field Naturalists, PO Box 354, Oshawa, L1H 7L3.
10. Ottawa, Trail and Landscape, published bi-monthly by the Ottawa Field Naturalists', Box 3264, Postal Station C, Ottawa, K1Y 4J5.
11. Peterborough, The Orchid, published monthly (except summer) by the Peterborough Field Naturalists.
12. Pickering, The Pickering Naturalist, published four times annually by the Pickering Naturalists, PO Box 304, Pickering,
13. Sarnia, Earth Ways, published monthly (except summer) by the Lambton Wildlife Inc., PO Box 681, Sarnia, N7T 7J7.
14. Stratford, Newsletter, published monthly (except summer) by the Stratford Field Naturalists.
15. St. Catharines, Peninsula Naturalist, published monthly (except summer) by the Peninsula Field Naturalists, Box 544, St. Catharines, L2R 6W8.
16. Thunder Bay, News Letter, published monthly (except summer) by the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists, PO Box 1073, Thunder Bay, P7C 4X8.
17. South Peel, The Bulletin, published monthly (except summer) by the South Peel Naturalists' Club, Box 91, Port Credit Postal Station, Mississauga, L5G 4L5.
18. Toronto, Toronto Field Naturalist (Newsletter), published monthly (except summer) by the Toronto Field Naturalists, 83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, M5M 2T4.

Tchebec - Annual Report, 1979, 102 pages (may be borrowed from the TFN).

Toronto birders should take a lesson from their peers in Quebec. Every month hundreds of observations on thousands of birds are made by an unknown numbers of birders in the Toronto area; some of these appear in the 'observations' columns of the newsletters of at least six different naturalists' clubs in the area; a few make it to the Ontario Region reports in American Birds; the majority remain in the notebooks of the observers. A real value of the making of notes on the birds which we see is expressed in the Annual Report of "The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds, Inc. - La Societe Quebecoise de Protection des Oiseaux, Inc."

About three-quarters of the Annual Report is devoted to a summary of sightings in the Montreal area during 1979. A summary is given of each species with notes on the number of reports received, first, last and peak migration dates, breeding and current status. Typical of these summaries is that of the Evening Grosbeak (page 71).

"Evening Grosbeak Hesperiphona vespertina

The most well-documented of the Finches, the Evening Grosbeak was both a pleasure and a nuisance at feeders. The first winter report was for 10 January and these birds were present in many areas, mainly outside the city, until late spring. Three females were seen at Mount St. Hilaire on 6 June and 1 on Mount Royal on 14 June. The 2 birds observed in the St. Lazare Finery on 20 July could either have been breeding birds or early fall migrants and there were two other reports from the Hudson area, on 8 and 16 August respectively. From then on numbers built up but the species was less plentiful than usual, with only 104 seen on the Hudson Christmas Bird Count, the lowest number since 1970."

Feature articles included in this report include notes on the documentation of rare or unusual birds, bluebird nesting results, the Red-shouldered Hawks of Vaudreuil County, Peregrines breeding in Southern Quebec, Saw-whet banding, and Christmas bird counts.

Bruce D. Parker

IN EXCHANGE . . .

▷ If any members would like to borrow any of the newsletters which we receive exchange for our Newsletter contact Bruce D. Parker, 449-0994.

Long Point Bird Observatory Newsletter, Vol. 12 No. 2, fall 1980. Bad news from Long Point, no Piping Plovers summered on the point during 1980. This leaves Ontario with only one breeding site for this Provincially endangered species, Lake-of-the-Woods. It appears that after years of gradual reduction the final chapter in the history of Piping Plovers at Long Point may have been a result of the increasing population of Ring-billed Gulls in the lower Great Lakes.

The Wood Duck, Vol. 34, No. 6, Feb. 1981 (Hamilton Nat. Club). A report on the 'Spring Hawk Migration - South Shore Lake Ontario 1980' summarizes the results of almost 2000 hours of hawk watching at Derby Hill and Braddock Bay, New York and at Grimsby and Vinemount. Over 72,000 hawks were counted including 2 Swainson's Hawks, 29 Bald Eagles, 32 Golden Eagles, 1 Gyrfalcon, 3 Peregrine Falcons and 13 Merlins.

A SURVEY OF ONTARIO BIRD LITERATURE - Part 6

HAWKS GENERAL and VULTURES to ACCIPITERS

Hawks, general.

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2. Dear, L.S., 1926. Polygamy among hawks. The Oologist 43(3): 35-38.
3. Duncan, Bruce, 1980. Some unusual hawk behaviour. The Wood Duck 33(8): 123.
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5. Folemabee, Franklin H., 1967. Raptor trapping in the Niagara Peninsula. Bulletin 12: 3-6 (Niag. Falls Nat. Club), reprint from The Prothonotary 32(3): 33-36.
6. McKay, Sheila, 1971. Late winter observations of hawks and owls. Newsletter 259: 7-9 and 260: 5-6 (Toronto Field Naturalists).
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15. Gunn, W., 1954. Hints for hawk watchers. The bulletin 65: 16-19.
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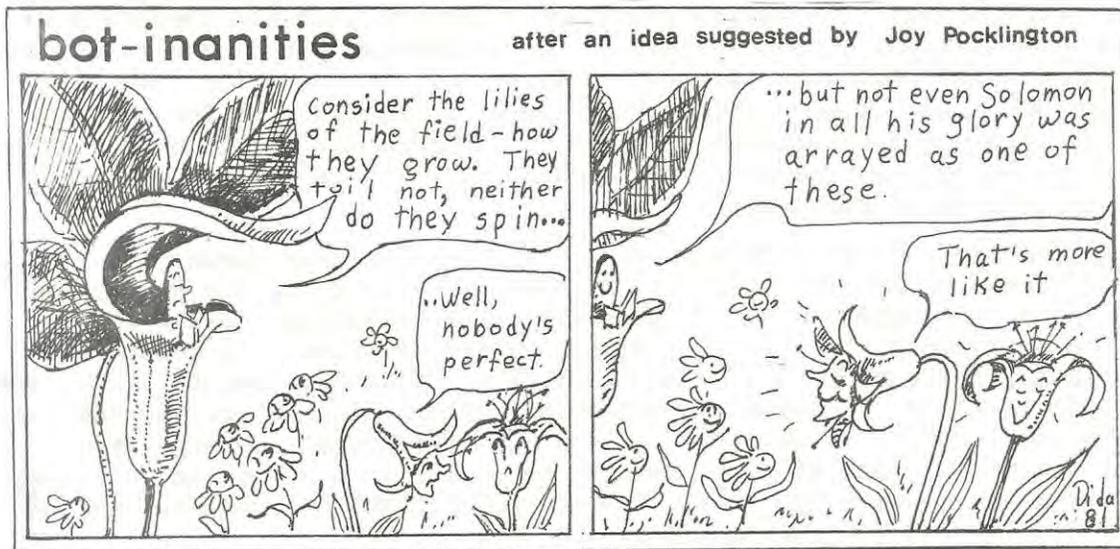
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INTRODUCING THE HUMBER MARSHES

During the centuries since Lake Iroquois dropped some sixty metres to form the present Lake Ontario, the Lower Humber has been well known to Indians, explorers, fur traders, missionaries, soldiers, lumbermen, shipbuilders, pleasure boaters, naturalists, and many others. One of the first naturalists to write about the area was Elizabeth Simcoe, who in 1793 was impressed by the dry and pleasant banks, the large quantities of "hemlock spruce" along the river, and a beautiful species of Polygola she gathered in the vicinity of the present Riverside Drive. In the same year the west side of the river, just by today's Old Mill, was designated the King's Mill Reserve to provide a source of trees for the King's sawmill.

Surveys made in the 1790's show there were eight marshes between the King's Mill and Lake Ontario. These were later numbered 1 to 8 in the Humber Valley Conservation Report (1948), with even numbers 2, 4, 6, and 8 on the west side and odd numbers 1, 3, 5, and 7 on the east. The same numbering was used by Clive Goodwin in A Bird Finding Guide to the Toronto Region published by TFN in 1979.

Although three marshes have been irretrievably lost (1, 6, and 8 on the map), the remaining five contain a variety of bird- and plant-life remarkable in the midst of two million people. Their preservation is partly the result of their inaccessibility, but in large measure to land acquisition policies of MTRCA in the wake of Hurricane Hazel. However, naturalists must remain vigilant to prevent further losses. It is unlikely that potential development such as Rowland Burr's ship canal to Georgian Bay or Etobicoke Township's Brule Lake and regatta course will ever be revived, but there is still a danger that more marshes could be lost to create formal parks, marinas and other public works. One aim of TFN is to have the marshes designated an environmentally significant area. To achieve this it is necessary to gather data on the flora and fauna, especially of the less common species. Preliminary surveys have recorded well over 120 bird species and the same number of plant species. One of the latter is the rare white trout lily (Erythronium albidum)* reported by Isabel and Helen Smith and Steve Varga. It is hoped that this body of information will be greatly expanded as the marshes become better known.

The following paragraphs introduce each marsh in turn, starting from Bloor Street, down the east side of the river and returning from the Queensway up the west side to Bloor Street. There is no continuous path directly linking the marshes, other than that provided by the river ice in winter, but this should not be looked on as a disadvantage because it is one of the reasons for the survival of the remaining marshes. All areas are within easy walking distance of the subway, buses, or streetcars, as shown on the map. Street-parking is also quite convenient.

Marsh 7. The two northerly marshes on the east side of the Humber are linked by a very pleasant path starting only 350 metres east of the Old Mill subway station. The path begins 20 or 30 paces from the south-east corner of the Bloor Street bridge at the top of a flight of rustic steps. It descends fairly steeply for a short way before levelling off on the generally dry, wooded flood plain of Marsh 7. Almost immediately a side trail take off to the left through a small forest of Manitoba maples until it reaches the edge of a pleasant and quite secluded pond, covered by yellow pond lilies in the summer, and bordered on one side by a willow/cottonwood floodplain community and on the other side by the high valley slope.

* See page 31.

Hérons can be seen in the pond or roosting in the trees around the edges, together with Wood Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, and other birds. A Great Horned Owl visits the marsh occasionally in the company of several crows, and Helen Smith has reported a Barred Owl and an Osprey.

Walking farther along the east bank of the lagoon is not recommended, partly because the going gets quite difficult, and partly because it is a favourite haunt of the herons. To return to the river path, it is possible to skirt the northwest corner of the lagoon through an interesting forested wetland. The river-path then continues its shady way through trees and flowers until it reaches the outlet of Marsh 7. Before reaching this point there is an optional detour to the left leading to a vantage-point for obtaining another view of the pond while remaining hidden by purple loosestrife.

Marsh 5. After crossing the Marsh 7 outlet ditch, the sides of which can be very slippery when wet, the path ascends a small knoll interestingly labelled "Indian Wedding" on D.W. Smith's 1798 plan of the area. The knoll consists of thinly soiled outcrops of the Georgian Bay beds, the face of which can be seen at low water on the river side. A surprising variety of plants grows here including bur and other oaks, yellow pimpernel and false Solomon's seal. The grassy patch overlooking the river is ideal for a lunch stop.

On the south side, the path descends sharply to a large but passable area of poison ivy guarding the entrance to Marsh 5. The layout is similar to that of Marsh 7, with a less-used path leading to the near end of the pond. However, to obtain a good view, it is necessary to push on a few metres through the Himalayan jewelweed and cattails until they thin out along the east shore. There is no path continuing farther along this side, and walking along the valley slope is quite strenuous. This pond is even more secluded than that of Marsh 7, and very attractive in summer when covered by fragrant water-lilies. Due to its seclusion and relative lack of visitors, the marsh can be very rewarding for birders.

After returning to the river-path and passing through a jungle of small trees, shrubs, and vines, one can see an eastern cottonwood over 5 feet in diameter on the riverbank just downstream from the public launching ramp on the opposite bank. The path then enters a strip of trees dominated first by cottonwoods and later by willows. Two almost invisible side-paths lead to the western edge of the pond for views of the bird life. At the end of the willows the path continues a short way through dense purple loosestrife and cattails until it reaches the outlet channel. This is usually impassable during the summer months, so it is necessary to return to Bloor Street along the river-path. Access to the marsh from Riverside Trail as suggested in the bird-finding guide is not recommended, except for the more adventurous, because of formidable beds of poison ivy and dense vegetation at the bottom end.

Marsh 3. This is the largest and most inaccessible marsh, yet the most convenient for long-range bird-watching. It consists of a large, shallow pond separated from the river by a narrow strip of cattail-marsh at the lower end and a wider willow/cottonwood community at the upper end. The bird-finding guide says the marsh is one of the best places in Toronto to see Hooded Mergansers and Rusty Blackbirds in migration. It is also a good place to observe shorebirds and gulls in season. The cottonwoods at the north end are a favourite roosting-place for Great Blue Herons, up to twelve of which have been seen at one time.

The marsh can be observed from the high river bank just south of the junction of Riverside Drive and the South Kingsway, next to the small parking lot.

Good binoculars, or preferably a telescope, is an advantage; seats are provided for leisurely viewing. This viewpoint also overlooks Marsh 2 on the west side of the river. A somewhat closer view of Marsh 3 may be obtained from the west side of the river a few steps from the end of Stoneygate Road, as shown on the map.

Access to Marsh 3 from Riverside Drive is not recommended. However, when Lake Ontario is at a low level (see chart on map), the marsh can be reached by the more intrepid from the end of Marsh 5. This route between the two marshes follows the toe of the cliff, and should be used with great caution. Walking along the top of the bank is dangerous (and on private property) and should not be attempted. When arriving at the wooded end of Marsh 3, care should be taken not to disturb the herons usually roosting there.

Marsh 1. This was in the vicinity of Queen Street West. In 1948 it was reported to be polluted, and has since been filled in.

Marsh 2. While crossing the Queensway bridge a good general view of the river and the lower end of Marsh 2 can be obtained. This is a long, narrow marsh which was originally wider, but was partly filled in during construction of the Humber Sewage Treatment Plant. One side is bordered by formal parkland, but much of the marsh is still of interest to naturalists, particularly the north end. A narrow path (see map) runs through the purple loosestrife and cattails beside the river from the north end of the marsh to a group of willows and cottonwoods. From this point one can observe a community of Bank Swallows in the high east bank of the river and much of the upper end of Marsh 2 on the west side of the spit. East of Stoneygate Road is a pleasant grassy knoll -- an excellent point from which to view Marsh 3 across the river.

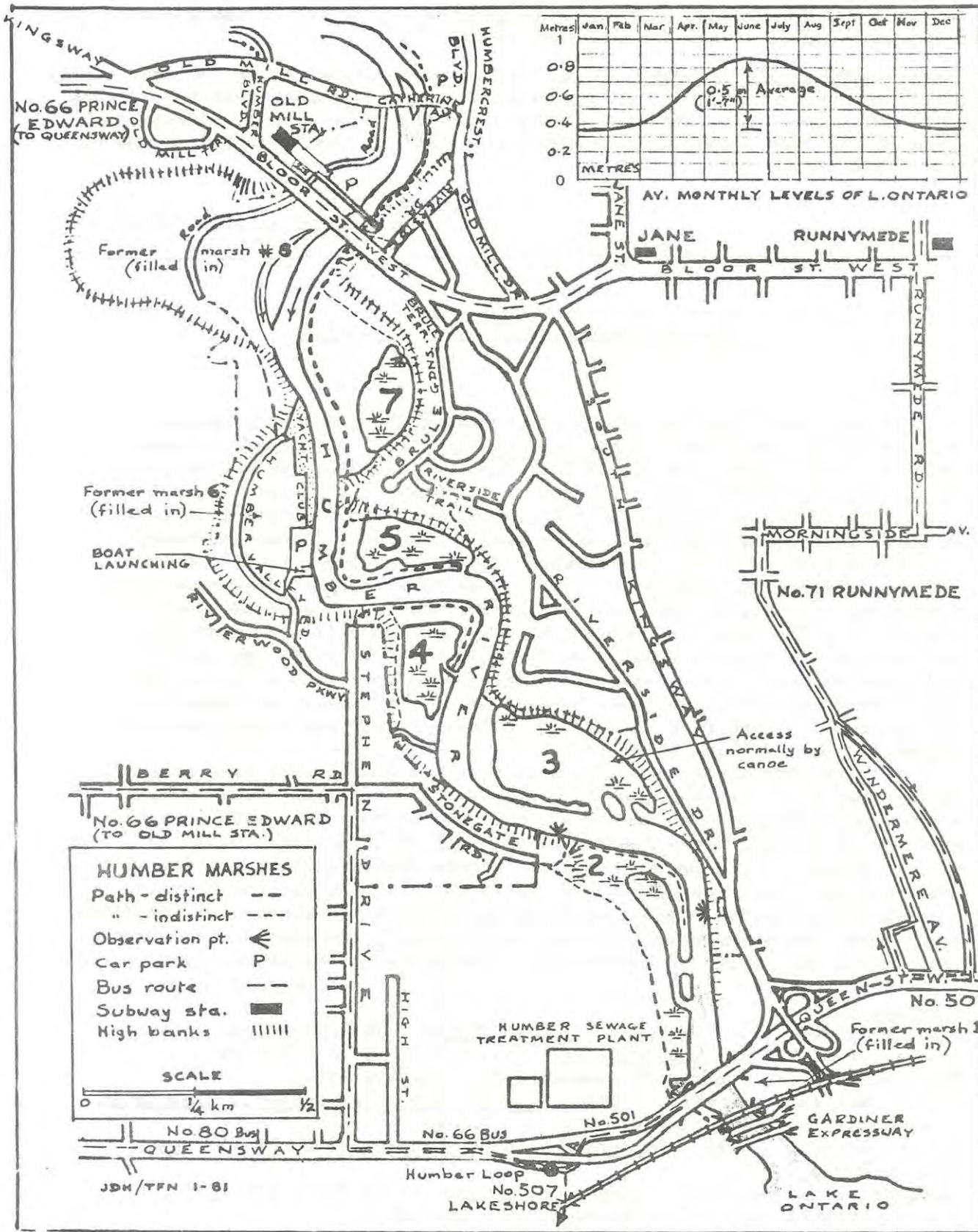
Marsh 4. This is probably the least known of the marshes because of its hidden location behind the Stephen Drive apartments. Despite its proximity to the buildings, it contains an interesting variety of birds and plants. Black-crowned Night Herons can nearly always be seen roosting in the trees surrounding the pond and, in the fall when the water level is low, as many as 34 have been counted dozing on the mudflats and in the trees. At that time of the year many warblers can be seen flitting through the open forest.

The best way to enter the area is to go to the north end of Stephen Drive, walk to the right, across the grassy knoll, and down the steep path to the edge of the river. A side path takes off to the right to the near end of the pond, after which it becomes poorly defined and rough in places as it follows the foot of the valley-slope. However, this path is worth taking as it leads to some interesting wooded and grassy wetlands south of the pond. Waterproof boots are generally needed here.

The main path along the riverbank is pleasant and easy to follow and passes a good observation-point before it ends at the outlet channel.

Marsh 6. This marsh has been completely filled in to form part of King's Mill Park, which includes a yacht club and a public boat-launching ramp. The latter is useful as a setting-off point for canoe explorations of the lower Humber, and is a favourite haunt of Canada Geese, Mallards, and Black Ducks. There is an ample parking lot accessible from Humber Valley Road off Riverwood Parkway.

Marsh 8. This also has been filled in as part of the park. The only significant natural area remaining, other than the wooded valley sides, is the island and old river channel immediately downstream from Bloor Street. There is also a tiny cattail marsh at the foot of the slope between the Bloor Street



and subway bridges. Access by car is from Old Mill Road, and on foot it can be reached from Old Mill Station by descending a long set of steps beside the north-west corner of the Bloor Street Bridge.

Preservation of the Marshes. Designation of the marshes as an Environmentally Significant Area depends to a large extent on assembling an inventory of the plant and animal life present. Contributions would be greatly appreciated. To be useful data should include specific dates and locations and may be for any season of the year.

John Harris
Project Coordinator 231-8147

THE HOUSE FINCH IN THE TORONTO REGION

Sixteen years ago the editor of our Newsletter, Dr. R.M. Saunders, advised us that there was 'A New Bird Coming'. Dr. Saunders' prophecy that "now there appears a possibility that another new bird may be added to our regional bird list" came true in 1978 when the Toronto Region's first House Finch was reported at Donald Gunn's feeder in Oakville on May 5. In 1979 Margaret Bain had a first-year male visit her feeder in Whitby from March 30 to April 3 (photos were taken). Last year (1980) saw a general increase in reports with one at Oakville on April 6 (Donald Gunn); a male and a female at Lauderdale Rd., Willowdale, on April 19 (Jack Cranmer-Byng); a female at Bolland Cres., Ajax, on April 20 (June and Don Hillion); a male in Leaside on April 26 (Hugh Currie); two in the same area on May 2 (Harry Kerr); a singing male in Weston on August 10 (Clive Goodwin); and females at Vernham Crt., Willowdale, on August 29 (Bruce Parker); High Park on October 18 (Harry Kerr); and Aldbury Gardens, Toronto on Dec. 8 (Jack Satterley).

Dr. Saunders' second prophecy that "this is the sort of bird that may well spread into our area and become thoroughly established here" is well on the way to being fulfilled. The increase in reports in 1980 and the presence of nesting House Finches in at least three municipalities in Ontario support a prediction that the Toronto Region's first nesting will occur within a very few years. In the Toronto Region, as elsewhere in eastern North America, the House Finch has shown a preference for residential areas where the yards around houses are generously landscaped with shrubs, small trees and hedges of a mixture of coniferous and deciduous species.

Bruce D. Parker

References:

- Bain, Margaret, 1979. A House Finch at Whitby; The Naturalist 25(4): 2.
 Bridges, Paul, 1979. Observations; The Naturalist 25(4 and 5).
 Goodwin, Clive E., personal communication, January 1981.
 Nisbet, Rob and Don Hillion, 1981. Two new birds for Pickering Township; Pickering Naturalist, Vol. 5 No. 4: 140-142.
 Parker, Bruce D., 1980. Toronto Region Bird Records; TFN (333), (334), (335), (337).
 Saunders, Dr. R.M., 1965. A new bird coming?; TFN (210) 2-3, F 65.
 Toronto Ornithological Club Records, 1979 and 1980.

TORONTO'S 56TH CHRISTMAS CENSUS, 1980

This year's census was held on Sunday, December 28. The customary 28 routes were covered within a 30-mile area bounded by Pottageville, Whitby, Lakeshore and Clarkson. Participants numbered 128.

There was one new species seen this year: a Sandhill Crane which arrived at the duck ponds in the Toronto Zoo a few days prior to our census. However, our previous total of 159 species remains the same because the Painted Bunting, which was counted at the Toronto Island on the 1978 census, has been ruled by the Ornithological Records Committee to be an escapee.

Ninety-five species and 41 276 individuals were recorded. The all-time high count of 99 species was set in 1972, and 45 819 individuals in 1978.

The House Wren found in the Scarborough area is the second to be recorded on our census, and the Eastern Bluebird at Rattray's Marsh is the first since 1955.

The following species were seen in record numbers with the previous high counts in brackets:

Mute Swan	-	43	(	32	in 1978)
Gadwall	-	778	(	191	in 1979)
Harlequin Duck	-	7	(	1	in 1956, 58, 70, 71, 72, 73, 75, 76, 77, 78)
Mourning Dove	-	1 262	(	577	in 1977)
Black-capped Chickadee	-	2 014	(	1 680	in 1968)
American Robin	-	496	(	309	in 1976)
Cedar Waxwing	-	809	(	510	in 1978)
Cardinal	-	396	(	331	in 1979)

The large waves of winter finches passing through our area earlier had thinned to a trickle by census day. Only 4 White-winged Crossbills were spotted and Red Crossbills drew a blank. The 2 770 Canada Geese counted were noticeably down from last year's 3 576 which shows that their trapping and shipping to other areas is working.

The weather on census day was ideal for winter birding with good visibility and sunny skies. Temperatures and conditions ranged from -9°C to $+3^{\circ}\text{C}$; snow 3 cm to 21 cm; lake choppy, completely frozen inside breakwater; ponds and marshes frozen; most streams and rivers frozen.

Once again we wish to thank members of the Toronto Field Naturalists and others who made the count a success.

Species Counted and their Numbers

8 Great Blue Heron	3 Pileated Woodpecker
43 Mute Swan	100 Hairy Woodpecker
2 770 Canada Goose	292 Downy Woodpecker
2 Snow Goose	65 Horned Lark
6 136 Mallard	486 Blue Jay
948 Black Duck	419 Common Crow
778 Gadwall	2 014 Black-capped Chickadee
6 Pintail	248 White-breasted Nuthatch
2 Green-winged Teal	41 Red-breasted Nuthatch

Christmas Census (Continued)

1 Northern Shoveler
 65 American Wigeon
 9 Wood Duck
 234 Redhead
 14 Canvasback
 3 379 Greater Scaup
 10 Lesser Scaup
 375 Common Goldeneye
 290 Bufflehead
 2 083 Oldsquaw
 7 Harlequin Duck
 4 Hooded Merganser
 168 Common Merganser
 6 Red-breasted Merganser
 3 Goshawk
 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk
 3 Cooper's Hawk
 164 Red-tailed Hawk
 31 Rough-legged Hawk
 3 Marsh Hawk
 62 American Kestrel
 7 Ruffed Grouse
 98 Ring-necked Pheasant
 1 Sandhill Crane
 5 American Coot
 9 Glaucous Gull
 14 Iceland Gull
 60 Great Black-backed Gull
 2 005 Herring Gull
 464 Ring-billed Gull
 2 328 Rock Dove
 1 262 Mourning Dove
 3 Screech Owl
 23 Great Horned Owl
 5 Snowy Owl
 20 Long-eared Owl
 2 Saw-whet Owl
 13 Belted Kingfisher
 8 Common Flicker

17 Brown Creeper
 1 House Wren
 1 Winter Wren
 1 Mockingbird
 3 Brown Thrasher
 496 American Robin
 1 Varied Thrush
 3 Hermit Thrush
 1 Eastern Bluebird
 6 Golden-crowned Kinglet
 2 Bohemian Waxwing
 809 Cedar Waxwing
 2 Northern Shrike
 4 843 Starling
 3 159 House Sparrow
 35 Red-winged Blackbird
 1 Rusty Blackbird
 2 Common Grackle
 27 Brown-headed Cowbird
 396 Cardinal
 53 Evening Grosbeak
 3 Purple Finch
 22 Pine Grosbeak
 1 Hoary Redpoll
 920 Common Redpoll
 287 Pine Siskin
 485 American Goldfinch
 4 White-winged Crossbill
 4 Rufous-sided Towhee
 708 Dark-eyed Junco
 628 Tree Sparrow
 3 Field Sparrow
 1 White-crowned Sparrow
 110 White-throated Sparrow
 20 Swamp Sparrow
 166 Song Sparrow
 3 Lapland Longspur
 452 Snow Bunting

Species: 85

Individuals: 41 276

Number of Participants: 128

- Harry Kerr

ANSWERS - "IF YOU'RE SO SMART":

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. wood lily | 4. red trillium | 7. clintonia |
| 2. trout-lily | 5. Solomon's-seal | 8. Indian cucumber-root |
| 3. Canada mayflower | 6. wild leek | 9. rose twisted-stalk |
| | | 10. greenbrier |

(There's an interesting and entertaining description of the lily family in (233) 5-6, F68 - devised by Elmer Talvila.)

*people*LINDA CARDINI, Member of Board of Directors

Linda Cardini grew up in the United States and had heard enthusiastic reports about the TFN even before coming to this country. She made a point of seeking out and joining the TFN soon after her arrival in Toronto, and has been particularly active in connection with environmental issues. She assisted at the OMB hearing protesting development of St. Michael Lands Tableland near the Cedarvale Ravine.

Linda's interest in birds started when she was a youngster, and received added impetus when she was doing graduate studies in Urban Planning. She now takes her young daughter with her on outings whenever possible to encourage a love of nature in her also.

F.P.

SUMMER JOB

A research assistant is required for forest ecology work in Northern Ontario during the summer field season. This is essentially a volunteer position but living expenses and accommodation will be provided. Anyone interested in botany or forestry is invited to apply. Please write to P. Roy, Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, 203 College St., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1, or phone 416-921-8152. Application deadline: April 30, 1981.

THIS MONTH'S COVER

"Trout-lilies of Glendon Hall" - by Diana Banville.

Does this species, Erythronium americanum, qualify as an "Easter lily"? Well, we admit it's not in genus Lilium but it is in the family Liliaceae. What it lacks in size, it makes up in show, as it grows in masses or even carpets. However, it takes seven years for it to develop a flower - which explains those trout-lily carpets from which only leaves emerge - one per plant. When two leaves appear, the plant will bloom. (See "Life Cycle of the Dog-toothed Violet" by Fletcher Sharp, TFN (191) 6, D 62.) Also in its favour as a candidate for "Easter-lily status" is its blooming period, often corresponding to the Easter Season. The name Erythronium comes from Greek "erythros", meaning "red". - for the purplish European representative. Our cover species is, however, bright yellow. Now, if you say an Easter lily should be white, you might consider its (less common) close relative, the white trout-lily (E. albidum) which, according to the Checklist of Four Toronto Parks, may be found in the Humber Valley. Our yellow species is common on wooded ravine slopes. Sometimes called dog-toothed violet (popular misnomer), adder's tongue or fawn-lily, it is, by whatever name, a fitting symbol of renewal this time of year.

Diana Banville

BIRD STUDY WORKSHOP

A four-day session of ornithological training for up to six students aged 14 to 16 will be held at Long Point Bird Observatory, August 22-25. The cost will be \$50.00, including room and board at the Observatory Headquarters.

If interested, send name, address, age, interest and background in bird study, name and address of an adult reference (teacher or naturalist acquaintance) to:

Bird Study Workshop,
Long Point Bird Observatory,
P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan. NOE 1M0.

1981 JUNIOR CONSERVATIONIST AWARD PROGRAM

The Junior Conservationist Award Program (J.C.A.P.) is co-ordinated by the Conservation Authorities and Water Management Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources, for young people aged 16 to 18 years, who have demonstrated an active interest in conservation and resource management. Applications must be post-marked no later than April 1. Full details may be obtained from:

Mrs. S. Court,
Youth Programs Co-ordinator,
Conservation Authorities and Water Management Branch,
Fifth Floor, Whitney Block, Queen's Park,
Toronto. M7A 1W3. Telephone (416) 965-1799

FROM THE ARCHIVES

This intended prose passage
from a 1940 newsletter
converts beautifully into
a poem...

THE PLANETS

Venus
Is by far the largest;
Her colour is bright
Silvery white.

Jupiter,
The next in size,
Is of a clear,
steady,
yellow hue.

Mars is unmistakable
In his ruddy gleam
And Saturn,
About the same size
as Mars,
Is of a dull,
pale,
yellow light.

Stuart L. Thompson

TFN (12) 3, J 40

COMING EVENTS

COMING EVENTS

Civic Garden Centre

The following events will take place at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie. Call the Centre, 445-1552, for further details.

Wed. Apr. 15 Annual Meeting and Horticultural Night -
8.00 p.m. Gardens, Plants and Birds of Western Canada
- Clive Goodwin

Tues.

Apr. 21 and 28 Bird walks in Edwards Gardens and Wilket
8.00 a.m. Creek Park
Meet in Parking lot of Civic Garden Centre

University of Toronto Library

An exhibition illustrating the history of ornithology in Canada with special emphasis on the library and work of the late Jim Baillie will be on display at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto Library, corner of St. George and Harbord Streets, March 15 to April 30. Members of the public are welcome.

MAY EVENTS -- OUT OF TOWN

Pelee Outing

We are exploring the possibility of arranging a two-day bus trip to Pelee in May. The all-inclusive price will be in the neighbourhood of \$80.00. Watch for full details in the May Newsletter.

Canadian Nature Federation Annual Conference

The Guelph Field Naturalists will host the annual conference of the Canadian Nature Federation, May 3-10. Several field trips are planned for this period, and the Symposium program will take place May 7 to 9 at the University of Guelph. Full information may be obtained from:

CNF Conference '81,
Mrs. B. Pattillo,
24 Manor Park Crescent, Guelph. N1G 1A1.

FON Annual Meeting

The FON's 50th anniversary conference will be held at the University of Western Ontario, London, May 22-24. Field trips are planned, and the featured speakers at the conference include Mary Ferguson, John and Janet Foster, Roger Tory Peterson. Full details may be obtained from:

Alan German,
28 Shelby Court, London. N6K 1Z7.

TFN MEETINGS

VISITORS
WELCOME

GENERAL MEETINGS

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

Monday, April 6, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.

CONSERVATION ISSUES IN AMAZONIA

Suzanne Barrett, Lecturer, Faculty of Environmental
Studies, York University

May meeting - Monday, May 4, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.

* * * * *

GROUP MEETINGS

Bird Group

Wed. Apr. 22

8.00 p.m.

For details of program, contact Red Mason 621-3905.

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

: : : : : : : : : : : :

Botany Group

Tue. Apr. 21

8.00 p.m.

Summer

- Dr. Richard Saunders

Members are invited to bring a few slides of
botanical subjects to show at the meeting.

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

: : : : : : : : : : : :

Environmental Group

Thur. Apr. 16

7.30 p.m.

Progress and Problems of ESA studies - a discussion

Come and get involved.

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

: : : : : : : : : : : :

Junior Club

Sat. Apr. 4

10.00 a.m.

For details of program, contact Brian Gray 481-3918.

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

: : : : : : : : : : : :

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Ms. Diana Banville - 690-1963 #710, 7 Crescent Place, Toronto M4C 5L7
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Articles and/or drawings are welcome. Articles may be anywhere from one or
two sentences to 1500 words. To be eligible for inclusion in **SEPTEMBER**
issue, material must be received by member of Editorial Committee by **July 15.**

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