



TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 341, September, 1981



Swiftly it goes?

See page 29.

President's Report

In accordance with the objectives of the Toronto Field Naturalists which are to encourage the study of natural history and the preservation of our natural heritage, the Board of Directors is pleased to submit the following summary of TFN activities for the 1980-81 season:

Regular Activities - 9 monthly general meetings, 6 Bird Group meetings, 6 Botany Group meetings, 7 Environmental Group meetings, 8 Junior Club meetings, 1 TBO meeting, 150 outings, 8 newsletters, 2 issues of The Ontario Field Biologist, 5 Audubon Wildlife Films.

Organization Projects - changed financial year-end from March 31 to June 30 to correspond with TFN activities; deposited early records, minutes, publications in Archives of Ontario for permanent storage and reference purposes; collected and deposited complete sets of TFN newsletters in four libraries as well as the Archives of Ontario; prepared and published newsletter indexes for 1938-1978, 1979, 1980; arranged for temporary storage of unsold publications and display material (in Royal Canadian Institute building); established nucleus of a natural-history library; started newsletter-exchange program with other natural history clubs throughout the province; expanded photo collection for use by students, other conservation groups and our own members; reorganized and expanded Ontario Field Biologist editorial committee.

Promotion and Public-Education Activities - participated in CNE, CNSS, Scout Conference, Environment Week; provided a weekly Nature Note and announcements of our activities to John Bradshaw of CFRB; produced half-hour TV shows for Rogers Cable in East York--Saving Woodlots and Heritage Trees; talked about TFN for 5 minutes on CBC's From Now On TV program; showed activities of JFN and TBO on CBC TV Just Ask; prepared articles and photographs about TFN for Toronto Star and Bloor West Villager; mounted display unit in East York's Thorncliffe Library and North York libraries; presented one-hour slide show and talk on Conservation to the Women's Council of the National Association of Czechoslovak; showed Toronto the Green slide show to Swansea Ratepayers, a Scout Group, North York Environmental Control Group; showed slides of ravines to City of Toronto Planning Board, City of Toronto Land Use Committee, Rosedale Ratepayers Group; assisted with article on destruction of North York ravines for North York section of the Toronto Star.

Environmental Issues Addressed -

City of Toronto - participated in activities of Ravine Preservation Committee by attending monthly meetings, writing submissions, visiting sites with planners, showing slides to Planning Board, Land Use Committee, rate-payers' groups, attending outings and meetings in connection with Park Drive Ravine restoration by Ontario Hydro; assisted Waterfront Planning Committee by making submissions reinforcing City's position on Port Development, STOL.

East York - objected to destruction of woodlot off Beth Neilson Drive by writing letters, speaking to Council, making TV show; objected to high-density development of Gray Ghost lands by writing letters, leading a hike, appearing on a 40-minute TV interview, speaking at OMB, sending petition to Ontario Cabinet, writing Premier Davis following reversal of OMB decision; objected to further destruction of Taylor Creek lands in letters and by speaking to Council; objected to proposal to build in ravine at O'Connor and Curity by speaking to Planning Board, visiting site with politicians and owners.

Etobicoke - took part in Sam Bois Smith Environmental Assessment Hearing
 North York - responded to Official Plan recommendations; prepared report on
 the natural values of Torryork Ravine for planners; objected to a proposed
 rezoning of valleylands from open space, in letters and in a speech to
 Planning Board; made a presentation on request to the Environmental Control
 Committee about ravine by-laws; visited North York site at Yonge and York
 Mills for photos for article on destruction of ravine lands in North York
 Scarborough - sent letters including publications about Rouge to Planning
 Staff, Planning Board, and Environment Committee
 York - wrote letters and spoke to planners about ravine by-laws
 Metro -
 Heritage Tree program activities included visiting all parks departments
 in Metro and consulting with Deer Park ratepayers, on Vaughan property,
 on Heinzman property
 Ontario Hydro - established program for determining significant natural
 areas on Ontario Hydro lands by writing letters, attending meetings,
 going on field trips -- Lambton Park, Taylor Creek (submitted ravine
 study), Etobicoke Creek, Gattineau corridor bike trail, East York ravine,
 restoration of Park Drive ravine (submitted ravine study)
 MTRCA - commented on new Watershed Plan, agreed to participate in ESA
 program in Metro
 Metro Planning - commented on draft report of "An Environmental Appraisal
 of the Lower Rouge"
 Acres - expressed our concerns about Keating Channel dredging project
 Ivan Lorant study of flooding in Keating Channel - expressed our concerns
 Spadina Expressway - consulted by FON on how to submit study by TFN members
 Province of Ontario
 Backus Woods - sent letters to MNR, FON, CNF
 Highway 89 Environmental Assessment Hearing - sent letters and spoke at
 hearing
 York Region - commented on new Official Plan in letters and at meetings
 Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority - submitted publications, attended
 meetings concerning ESA program
 Niagara Escarpment Commission Hearings - spoke at hearings
 National -
 Garrison Diversion - sent letters to Federal Government, CNF, FON
 Point Pelee National Park - submitted comments on Master Plan

What amazes me when I read the list is that I hardly remember the time and
 effort so many of us spent in writing letters and attending meetings. What
 I do remember are the outings -- the delight of shared discoveries and the
 enthusiasm, memories, knowledge, and concern of TFN members for our beautiful
 valleys, ravines, and lakeshore, and the incredible variety and resilience of
 the flora and fauna inhabiting this largely urban area.

Helen Juhola (924-5806)

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 Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1B3

When grass is blooming,
 For that brief hour, to be there
 Is a privilege.

(haiku by Diana Banville)

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

- September BIRD BANDING - MUGG'S ISLAND, TORONTO BIRD OBSERVATORY
If interested call the Toronto Bird Observatory (Dave Broughton) 489-7444

Wednesday LAKESHORE NATURAL HISTORY (9) - Cudia Park

Sept. 2 Leader: Volunteer required

10.00 a.m. Meet in the parking lot. (Scarborough #86 bus from Kennedy subway station. Get off at Faircroft Road, walk south to Meadowcliffe.)

Saturday LAMBTON PARK - Prairie Vegetation

Sept. 5 Leader: Steve Varga

10.00 a.m. Meet at the park entrance on the north side of Dundas just east of the Humber River. (Note: This is not Lambton Woods.) (Lambton #30 bus between High Park and Kipling subway stations. Get off at the bridge.) Morning only.

Sunday ETOBICOKE CREEK - Nature Walk

Sept. 6 Leader: Kirsten Burling

2.00 p.m. Meet at the bus stop in Sherway Mall at Evans Avenue entrance, behind Sheridan Nurseries. (Evans #15 bus from Islington station.)

Thursday WILKET CREEK PARK - Skywatch

Sept. 10 Leader: Cathy Drake

8.30 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. Last chance to observe Jupiter and Saturn with the group.

Saturday HIGH PARK - Art

Sept. 12 Leader: Mary Cumming

10.00 a.m. Meet at the first parking lot on West Road, on your right as you enter the park from Bloor Street opposite High Park Avenue. (Subway to High Park station.)

Sunday MORNINGSIDE PARK - Nature Walk

Sept. 13 Leader: John Lowe-Wylde

10.00 a.m. Meet in the first parking lot immediately west of Morningside Avenue by the pavilion. (Eglinton East #34 bus.)

Cars. Take 401 east to Exit 61, then go south on Morningside one mile.

- Wednesday LAKESHORE NATURAL HISTORY (10) - Guildwood
 Sept. 16 Leader: Volunteer required
 10.00 a.m. Meet at Guildwood Park (walk-in entrance) west of Guild Inn. (Eglinton East #34B bus from Eglinton subway station to Guildwood Parkway. Get off at the first stop east of Livingston Road. Or Scarborough #86 bus from Kennedy subway station to Kingston Road and Eglinton. Transfer to Eglinton East #34B.) Parking on streets nearby.
- Saturday HIGH PARK - Asters and Goldenrods
 Sept. 19 Leader: Emily Hamilton
 9.00 a.m. Meet at the same place as for the September 12 outing.
- Sunday EARL BALES PARK - Birds and Botany
 Sept. 20 Leaders: Joan Foote and Maureen Altain
 2.00 p.m. Meet at the Park and Recreation Centre. Enter off Bathurst (north entrance) and turn left. (Bathurst #7 or #7A bus from St. Clair subway station.) Members of the Czechoslovak community are being specially invited to this outing. See page 30.
- Saturday HIGH PARK - Mushrooms
 Sept. 26 Leader: Al Valiunas
 10.00 a.m. Meet at the same place as for the September 12 outing.
- Sunday LESLIE STREET SPIT - Birding for Beginners
 Sept. 27 Leader: Hugh Currie
 1.00 p.m. Meet in the parking area just inside the gates at the south end of Leslie Street. Call Toronto Harbour Commission 863-2035 for information about special buses.
- Wednesday EAST DON, Finch to Steeles - Nature Walk
 Sept. 30 Leader: Diana Sagness
 10.00 a.m. Meet on the north side of Finch East in the shopping plaza between Bayview and Leslie (opposite the valley). We will be walking north. Lunch optional. (Finch East #39 bus from Finch subway station.)
- Saturday HUMBER BAY PARK - Nature Walk
 Oct. 3 Leader: Roger Powley
 10.00 a.m. Meet in the parking lot in the eastern half of the park. (#507 Long Branch car from Humber Loop to Park Lawn Road. Walk in to the parking lot on the east side of Mimico Creek.)
Cars. Drive in from the foot of Park Lawn Road at Lakeshore Blvd.)
- Sunday MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - Trees and Shrubs
 Oct. 4 Leader: Mary Smith
 2.00 p.m. Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge Street a short distance north of St. Clair Avenue.

Ask for a copy of the TTC Ride Guide at your local subway station. It's free!

 ADDITIONAL NOMINATION FOR VICE-PRESIDENT

I wish to nominate MARY SMITH for the office of VICE-PRESIDENT of the T.F.N. As many club members are aware, Mary has been extremely active in our organization. She initiated our Heritage Tree Programme, has served 3 years on our Board, has been the Outings Committee Chairman from 1978 to date (150 outings for the 1980-81 season), has submitted numerous articles and reviews for our newsletter and has assisted in the preparation and erection of several of our displays. In addition, Mary has been the T.F.N. representative on the City of Toronto Ravine Preservation Committee, at the Sam Smith Environmental Assessment Hearings (which she attended every day for 6 weeks!!), at the Highway 89 Environmental Assessment Hearings, and for the new M.T.R.C.A. Watershed Plan. Mary also attended meetings concerning the York Region Official Plan and submitted lengthy and detailed recommendations to the Region concerning this Plan. I did the typing for this particular endeavour and must say that I was most impressed with the amount of time and effort put in by Mary. If all this isn't enough, I would like to add that I have found Mary to be particularly helpful on outings. I am a neophyte naturalist and on several occasions have asked very elementary questions. Mary has always answered my questions fully and enthusiastically without ever making me feel stupid! A person such as this is an asset to any organization and we must ensure that Mary's knowledge and talents are not wasted. These are just some of the reasons why Mary would be an excellent vice-president.

I had no problem finding seconders for this nomination for as soon as I mentioned casually that I felt Mary should be our next vice-president, Jean Macdonald, a member of our Board, and Helen Juhola, our President, enthusiastically seconded my nomination. Obviously she works well with others.

PROPOSER: "Muriel Miville" SECONDED BY:

"Jean Macdonald"

"Helen Juhola"

While serving on the Board of Directors I have worked with others trying to ensure that healthy habitats flourish for ourselves and all other living things and we are finding that protection is becoming crucial. I would like to continue to work for the T.F.N. because our voice is often the only one which represents the long term public interest for our area. Therefore I am pleased to accept this nomination.

"Mary Smith"

Checking its image
 In the lake, the pine tree sheds
 A needle, stands tall.

(haiku by Joy Pocklington)

SOME BUTTERFLIES OF TORONTO

The following is based on a report prepared for Ontario Hydro. Since it represents a liberal sampling of the 60 or more butterfly species of Toronto, we thought it would be of interest to TFN readers:

LAMBTON MILLS

The 39 butterfly species listed below were observed in Lambton Mills area from 1960 to 1980 and represent about 27 per cent of the butterflies recorded in the entire Province of Ontario. Most of the observations were from late June to late July. I'm sure additional species would be encountered during the spring and autumn seasons. (Collecting site between Lambton Park and Lambton Golf and Country Club, from heights above Humber River on the west to Scarlett Road in the east).

1. <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch
2. <i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	Blue-eyed Grayling
3. <i>Coenonympha inornata</i>	Inornate Ringlet*
4. <i>Euptychia cymela</i>	Little Wood Satyr
5. <i>Lethe eurydice</i>	Eyed Brown*
6. <i>Limenitis arthemis arthemis</i>	White Admiral or Banded Purple
7. <i>Limenitis arthemis astyanax</i>	Red-spotted Purple
8. <i>Limenitis archippus</i>	Viceroy
9. <i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	Pearl Crescent
10. <i>Chlosyne nycteis</i>	Silvery Checkerspot
11. <i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	Question-mark
12. <i>Vanessa (Cynthia) atalanta</i>	Red Admiral
13. <i>Vanessa (Cynthia) cardui</i>	Painted Lady
14. <i>Vanessa (Cynthia) virginiensis</i>	American Painted Lady or Painted Beauty
15. <i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	Mourning Cloak
16. <i>Speyeria cybele</i>	Great Spangled Fritillary
17. <i>Harkenclenus titus</i>	Coral Hairstreak*
18. <i>Satyrium liparops</i>	Striped Hairstreak*
19. <i>Satyrium calanus falacer</i>	Banded Hairstreak*
20. <i>Satyrium edwardsii</i>	Edwards' Hairstreak*
21. <i>Satyrium acadica</i>	Acadian Hairstreak*
22. <i>Celastrina argiolus</i>	Spring Azure
23. <i>Everes comyntas</i>	Eastern Tailed Blue*
24. <i>Colias philodice</i>	Common or Clouded Sulphur
25. <i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Orange Sulphur or Alfalfa Butterfly
26. <i>Pieris rapae</i>	European Cabbage Butterfly
27. <i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	Black Swallowtail
28. <i>Papilio glaucus</i>	Tiger Swallowtail
29. <i>Euphyes vestris metacomet</i>	Dun Skipper**
30. <i>Atrytone delaware</i>	Delaware Skipper**
31. <i>Wallengrenia egeremet</i>	Broken Dash**
32. <i>Polites coras</i>	Peck's Skipper**

* - see additional notes

** - skippers

33. <i>Polites themistocles</i>	Tawny-edged Skipper**
34. <i>Polites origines</i>	Cross-line Skipper**
35. <i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	European Skipper**
36. <i>Ancyloxipha numitor</i>	Least Skipper**
37. <i>Pholisora catullus</i>	Common Sooty Wing**
38. <i>Thorybes pylades</i>	Northern Cloudy Wing**
39. <i>Epargyreus clarus</i>	Silver Spotted Skipper**

* Additional Notes:

All five species of hairstreaks breed in this area. There are only about four other species of hairstreaks in the Province (excluding the elfins). These four are uncommon to very rare. (For article on mated pair of *Satyrrium edwardsii* (male) and *S. acadica* (female), see TFN (340)9, Ma 81). The only record of *Lethe eurydice* is a single faded female on July 15, 1968. This was probably a stray from the marshes along the Humber River. I doubt if it breeds in the site proper. I have only two records of *Coenonympha inornata* for the area: August 11, 1974, and June 29, 1975. I did not see this species in the 1950s in Toronto. Scattered records gradually appeared, mainly from the northern fringes of Metro. I am basing the record of *Everes comyntas* on Roger Powley's article TFN (333) 12, S80; the eastern tailed blue is also found in High Park.

Polites origines and *Atrytone delaware* are the best "catches" of the 11 species of skippers. The Delaware Skipper, as far as I know, is found in only one other location in Metro Toronto, i.e. marsh at Finch and Bayview. I have some black and white photos of the Lambton site taken on July 29, 1961. One area in particular, which supported a small colony of the Delaware Skipper, has been completely altered. It was a depression below the C.P.R. tracks which contained a small clump of butterfly milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) and a few clumps of New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americana*). Many dozens of bees, wasps and butterflies are usually found feeding on the *Ceanothus* blossoms in early July. The area was filled in with shale and other rock and recently tennis courts were built at the edge of the golf course.

MARSH AREA EAST OF BAYVIEW AND FINCH

Important butterfly species in this area include the following:

1. <i>Euphydryas phaeton</i>	Baltimore Checkerspot
2. <i>Lycaena hyllus</i> (or <i>L. thoe</i> in Klots)	Bronze Copper
3. <i>Euphyes dion</i>	Dion Skipper
4. <i>Euphyes bimacula</i>	Two-spotted Skipper
5. <i>Atrytone delaware</i>	Delaware Skipper
6. <i>Poanes viator</i>	Broad-winged Skipper (to be confirmed)

A species of skipper that is still found in Toronto (and possibly in Lambton) in late May to mid-June, in clearings is *Poanes hobomok*. The Hobomok skipper was more common in the Don Valley in the 1950s and early 1960s. The specimen depicted on Plate 86 of Howe's book was one caught some years ago in Taylor's Bush Park, one of a number of butterflies traded with J.R. Heintzman, the noted American collector.

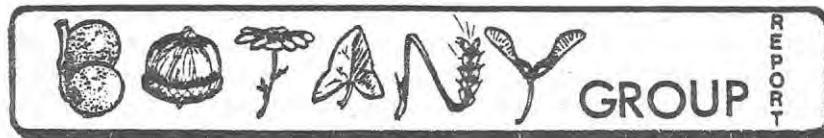
** - skippers

Bill Edmonds

References:

Nomenclature and organization follow The Butterflies of North America by Wm.H. Howe, 1975, Doubleday & Company. Common names are based mainly on A Field Guide to the Butterflies by A.B. Klots, 1951, Houghton Mifflin Co.

For further reading: "Collecting *Poanes hobomok pocahontas...*" by Douglas A. Watkins, Ontario Field Biologist, 1958, No. 12, p. 28.



The last meeting of the season was held on April 21 with our Chairperson Isobel Smaller presiding.

The speaker of the evening, Mary Ferguson, is the internationally known wildlife photographer and co-author with Dr. Richard Saunders of the beautiful book, Canadian Wildflowers. She was introduced by Helen Ricker, the sister of our Chairperson.

The subject was "Life on a three-acre Island". This is island number 180 in Georgian Bay which has been in the speaker's family for many years. The delightful talk was illustrated with beautiful slides of plants, insects, birds, frogs, and snakes, as well as many portrayals of island life. The speaker was thanked by Al Hanners.

The auxiliary projector featured slides by Charles Young on the theme, "Flowers Disappearing from Lambton Woods".

Isobel already has lined up speakers for next fall when the meetings will be changed from Tuesdays to Thursdays.

On Thursday, October 15, the speaker will be Dr. David Malloch, Associate Professor of Botany at the University of Toronto. His subject will be "Natural History of Mushrooms". Members are requested to bring slides of mushrooms to this meeting for identification.

On Thursday, November 19, the speaker will be Mr. Arthur Boissoneau who is with the Centre for Remote Sensing of the Ministry of Natural Resources of Ontario. His subject will be, "Wetlands of the Hudson Bay Lowlands".

Isobel wishes to thank John Harris who looked after the care and operation of the projector during the year and the many others who assisted in making the Botany Group meetings so successful.

Charlie Crosgrey

A NATURALIST RE-DISCOVERS THE HUMBER VALLEY

Sheppard to Albion

On the morning of July 16, 1980, the sun loomed like a red ball of fire on the eastern horizon as I left my home near Orillia for Toronto to take part in a series of walks along the Humber River. I had made an early start so I could search out once familiar landmarks, study my Toronto map, and perhaps form some mental picture of the chain of green which now extends along the Humber from the northern limit of Metropolitan Toronto at Steeles Avenue southward to Lake Ontario. Made up of numerous links which have survived urban development, it had its beginning early in the twentieth century with the formation of the Weston and Lambton Golf and Country Clubs and the acquisition of the Home Smith development property - several thousand acres (on both sides of the river) extending north from the Bloor Street area to what is now Eglinton Avenue.

The previous walk had ended at Weston Road and Sheppard. Standing there, before a stately mansion now belonging to the Basilian Fathers, I recalled its construction many years ago at what was then the intersection of the Sixth Concession and Rogers sideroad (named for early settlers, my grandparents). Fewer than one hundred meters from there (on the north side of the sideroad) had stood my grandparents' farm house. There had been a spring-fed pond between the house and the road and, at the roadside, a huge boulder, a drop-out from the ice age, and the only one of such huge proportions in the vicinity. The house, the pond and the boulder had all disappeared from the landscape; yet strange as it may seem, amidst the concrete maze (formerly Welsh's bush) stood one lone, gnarled old beech tree which I recognized from childhood days. As I listened to the roar of traffic, I could hardly comprehend that, right here, the gobble of the wild Turkey, the gentle cooing of the Passenger Pigeon, and the call of the Bobwhite Quail had once been familiar sounds to my grandparents - and even to my parents.

It was now 10:00 A.M. and our group had assembled on Weston Road, eagerly awaiting take-off for the walk along the east side of the river to Albion Road. Our path took us along an open greenbelt, its border heavily fringed with dwellings. Directly across the river was the Humber Valley Golf Course, formerly the Usher farm, now a commercial sanctuary to its paying guests and out-of-bounds to all others.

I had learned from past experience that, among a group of naturalists of mixed interests, it is virtually impossible to conduct a diligent search of any one branch of natural history. Because I was particularly interested in the existing flora of the Humber Valley, I thought it expedient simply to list the colourful and familiar plants along the way and, according to the law of averages, I would be sure to stumble upon some rare or exotic plants, a rich reward for so delightful a task.

The first kilometer of our walk took us over open sandy wasteland, the

natural habitat of the rugged and colourful composite family, of which we listed twenty species. Some familiar examples were Philadelphia fleabane (*Erigeron philadelphicus*), pussytoes (*Antennaria spp.*) and orange hawkweed (*Hieracium aurantiacum*). Also recorded was nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*). The mustard family, too, was well represented as we noted - among others - dame's rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*) and sicklepod (*Arabis canadensis*). We were able to list several species belonging to the pink family - the well-known bladder campion (*Silene cucubalus*), bouncing bet (*Saponaria officinalis*), and last, but not least, the exquisite little Deptford pink (*Dianthus armeria*). As we entered a wooded section, we came upon two garden escapes of the lily family - the orange day-lily (*Hemerocallis fulva*) and the yellow day-lily (*H. flava*).



At the edge of the woods, the flora changed with the habitat. Two climbers were abundant - nightshade bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*), a relative of the potato and tomato, and wild cucumber (*Echinocystis lobata*). Near these we found yet another climber, a colony of Canada moonseed (*Menispermum canadense*) - one of two species, the other occurring in east Asia. These plants with their panicles of whitish-green flowers were in full bloom; otherwise we might have passed them by. The poisonous fruits, black when ripe, resemble a bunch of grapes, and the plant was once used medicinally as a diuretic. Late in the season its drupes become crescent-shaped, which explains its fanciful name "moonseed." In little sun-bathed clearings in the woods we noted clumps of common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) and its close relative Indian hemp (*Apocynum cannabinum*).



The remainder of our walk took us along well-worn footpaths at the river's edge and through dense woods where the ash-leaved maple reigned supreme. In the less shady areas we encountered poison ivy (*Rhus radicans*), enchanter's nightshade (*Circaea quadrisulcata*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus sp.*) and a wood nettle (*Laportea canadensis*), the last species for the day.

The group gathered by the roadside where we discussed the morning's events. All seemed delighted with what they had seen. Those of us who had come by car were disappointed that we could not return to our starting point at Sheppard Avenue along the other side of the river. The golf course was our obstacle. Instead we walked back along Weston Road to our long-awaited sandwiches and hot tea.

On my return drive, I had ample time to reflect on my observations. I wondered how many species of birds and plants had been removed by urban development and how many plant species had moved in and adapted to the present man-made environment. I was puzzled by the preponderance of the ash-leaved maple. Although these trees were growing in their natural river-bottom habitat, they had certainly been far from abundant along this part of the river from my recollection. Then the willows had been the dominant trees of the riverbank, with the elms running a close second. Was it because the Dutch elm disease had slowly brought about the demise of the white elm (*Ulmus americana*) that the ash-leaved maples were able to move in to fill the gap? Whatever the reason, it was a reality - an interesting major change had taken place in the Humber Valley.

- Bill Cattley

(Illustrations opposite: Wildflowers sketched on the Humber, August 1980).

<p>YOU TOO CAN BE A SCIENTIST (It's not hard)</p>

Anyone doubting the value of the contribution of the amateur naturalist has only to glance over the March, 1981, issue of the Directory to Cooperative Naturalists' Projects in Ontario, published by the Long Point Bird Observatory; it becomes very clear that without the help of such volunteers very little can be accomplished in the field.

Many of the studies of interest to Torontonians are listed again this year. You can still report your birdwatching observations, seek out beached birds, count hawks, keep track of birds at your feeder, note down ravine conditions, band birds, list plant and animal species in ravines, report window-killed birds, take a bird-population census, report colour-marked shore-birds, assess populations of declining bird-species, nest-watch (carefully), and transcribe nest-records. Additional projects are under way as well. Now you can rescue waterfowl (from oil-slicks), collect seeds or specimens of certain rare woody plants, donate records or specimens of flora and fauna of Ajax-Pickering area, count loons migrating through Toronto, report any sightings of the Golden Eagle in Ontario, contribute titles of check-lists and accounts of Ontario bird-species, report location of fine trees in Toronto for protection purposes, count migrating shorebirds, report sightings of endangered species (Bald Eagle, Golden Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Piping Plover) and those "of special concern" (Cooper's Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Least Bittern, King Rail, Barn Owl, Great Gray Owl, Loggerhead Shrike, Prothonotary Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow). Also, for new projects listed in the Toronto Bird Observatory Newsletter, you can count, band and/or colour-mark birds and you can contribute lists of birds you've observed on Toronto Island.

You can spend many pleasant hours in the field, or just take enough time to write a letter or make a phone-call, to make a contribution to natural science. For information on whom to contact, phone 690-1963.

NOTES ON THE SHORT-TAILED SHREW

A light snow fell, adding to the tranquility of an early morning in January. As I moved through a small wooded park near my home, I was well into the dream-like state of mind that many runners experience in which time, distance, and surroundings pass unnoticed. Slowly I realized that something had emerged from the snow in the distance and was moving towards me. I bent down as it approached, putting out my hand; hesitantly the small mammal climbed on. It sniffed and twitched nervously; then, a few seconds later, jumped off my hand and disappeared into the snow.

I was lucky that morning, for in my hand I had held "a ravening beast, feigning itself gentle and tame, but, being touched, it biteth deep, and poisoneth deadly." That is how the Reverend Topsell, a 17th century naturalist, described the short-tailed shrew (*Blairina brevicauda*). One of the few mammals with poisonous saliva, the short-tailed shrew is common in Eastern Canada. It has a dark gray pelage and is about 125 mm long. Its eyes and ears are inconspicuous and, of course, its tail is short.

The pugnacious short-tailed shrew is driven by an insatiable appetite and will often consume about half its 20-gram weight over a 24-hour period. Though practically blind, *la grandemusaraigne* uses acute hearing and well-developed senses of smell and touch to find food. Insects and other invertebrates form about three-quarters of its diet, while vertebrates - mostly mice and voles - and plant material make up the rest. The poison in its saliva, a dilute cobra-like neurotoxin which impairs the functions of the victim's nervous system, enables the short-tailed shrew to overcome animals much larger than itself. (Although *extremely* painful, its bite is fortunately not fatal to humans.) Taking into account the quantity of insects and 'varmint' it can consume in a year, this shrew is an economic asset to man.

Because of well-developed flank-glands which emit a pungent odour, the short-tailed shrew is not a popular item on the menu of many predators; it is preyed upon, however, by some owls, hawks and weasels. Its normal life-span is about eighteen months. Mating usually starts in March, and 21 or 22 days later an average litter of five to seven pups arrives. There are generally two litters per year, and the first-born of the year produce their own litters before the breeding season ends in September.

These small mammals are diurnal in habit and I have spotted them during the early morning and in bright afternoon sunlight. Their dark colour contrasts nicely on snow, but at other times of the year they are more difficult to spot. Sit quietly, ideally in an area with moist, leafy ground-cover, and munch on something "smelly" - like peanut butter. Such an alluring smell should attract one of these "ravelling beasts." You may even survive the encounter and live to boast about it.



Jeff Gibson

Short-tailed Shrew, actual size after sketches made from dead specimen, Taylor Creek Park, May, 1980 (Velvety fur, general effect slate-grey; tail and snout pink, lightly haired; feet pink; ears and eyes hard to detect - even with a hand-lens)

OUTINGS REPORT

 SPRING 1981

Dynamic - enthusiastic - concerned - curious -- we all have slightly different reasons for attending an outing. The energy of the TFN is shown in the fact that we averaged one outing every other day from the first of March to the end of May. This spring's outings were carefully planned to ensure a variety of topics and a variety of locations.

The progress of spring can be traced through the observations and comments found in the reports of the bird outings (with additional comments from other outings). Two Harlequin Ducks were the highlights of the wintering waterfowl outing at Humber Bay on March 14. On March 15 it was noted that "the starlings were changing coloration for spring" (Nordheimer Ravine). It appears that the annual outing to Long Point should be held earlier in the month since "only stragglers were left" when two busloads of our members arrived on March 28. This was compensated for by the viewing of 1000 swans at Aylmer.

April 4 presented an example of the unexpected at Chine Drive when "at the far end of the ravine a Northern Waterthrush was spotted; it stayed near the small brook as we all had a good sighting from the bank by the roadway" - an exceptionally early record. Another early arrival was a Red-headed Woodpecker at High Park on April 11. Even though April 12 was windy and cold, 40 people showed up at the Eastern Headland where a pair of Surf Scoters was observed. A Blue-grey Gnatcatcher was a good find on the botany outing at Moatfield on April 30.

Early May didn't provide the best birding conditions. At Glen Stewart on May 5 there was "medium to heavy rain throughout but 30 soaked and bedraggled people stayed to the end. Bad light, steamed-up binoculars, silent birds provided just about the worst possible birding conditions." The highlight of the outing at the Eastern Headland on May 17 was "70 Brant in a flock, seen by all in party."

Birds are only one of the features of the outings; botany attracts an equal amount of attention and the leaders are always willing to be sidetracked by anything that comes along. This was excitingly demonstrated just at dusk on the Moatfield outing (April 30) when a Red Fox was spotted on the opposite side of the Don River. "It was walking along a path and then sat down and watched us watching it - everyone had a good look with the binoculars, but since it was so close these weren't necessary." Spring flowers were the focal point of the Guildwood outing on May 10, "several individual carpets of trilliums, forget-me-nots and marsh marigolds were spectacular. Patches of large-flowered bellwort were in evidence. Many other plants such as sarsaparilla, blue and yellow violets, toothworts, etc. helped to make the title 'spring flowers' live up to its name."

Since the details of two outings on the West Humber provide excellent examples of our club's interests, activities and enthusiasm,

they are included here in the words of the outing leaders:

West Humber #1 - May 6, 1981

"The weather leading up to and following the first of our spring and summer '81 Wednesday walks was rainy. Fortunately, Wednesday itself was sunny, if somewhat cold and windy, when 13 enthusiastic nature lovers met near Humber College for a ramble along the banks of the river behind the College.

We began by wandering through the Humber Arboretum, but were glad to reach the shelter of the woods where we found much to interest us including cutleaf toothwort, trillium, marsh marigold, wild leeks and masses of yellow trout lily. Further along the pathway, closer to the river, we discovered a lovely patch of white trout lily - locally rare. As we proceeded along the north bank of the river in the direction of Claireville, we spotted some beautiful birds including a redstart, black-throated green warbler and some cedar waxwings. Right beside the river we found two different types of clam shells and wheel snails, indicating that the water condition is still quite reasonable. We returned by much the same route, wandering off the track occasionally in search of interesting finds, and came across some chimney crayfish "holes" amongst the red-osier dogwood.

All the way Isabel was excitedly searching for 'first blooms of the season' and added several to her list. Helen was looking for some nationally-rare twinleaf she recalled seeing along the West Humber a previous year, but didn't have any luck this time. Aarne did find a discarded telephone receiver, however, and we all had a good laugh when he shouted ahead to one of our group that there was a long distance 'phone call for her. Rather than return through the arboretum, we kept along beside the river as far as the College's equine centre and this proved extremely rewarding for our avid bird-watchers. In a warm and well-protected spot among the trees were birds of all descriptions, flying back and forth and singing joyfully - rose-breasted grosbeaks, scarlet tanagers, robins, magnolia warblers, goldfinches, red-winged blackbirds, and more.

All in all, it was a very pleasant walk and less muddy than we had expected so early in the season. Last year we had perfect weather for every one of our Wednesday walks and I'm keeping my fingers crossed that we will be just as lucky this year."

Diana Sagness

May Nature Walk on the West Humber, May 13, 1981

"Despite what may have been considered a poor beginning, our nature walk of the West Humber was an exciting and eventful outing. The day was overcast with a sharp wind as we assembled at our meeting point near Humber College. To begin our walk we crossed a busy highway and walked down a steep slope towards the river. The first impression of this location was not good. On one side of us were the steep banks at the back of the Etobicoke General

Hospital. The banks here are bare of vegetation. On the other side at the river's edge, in an attempt perhaps to prevent further erosion, are great heaps of unsightly grey stones lining the banks.

As we walked further downstream the view softened. The sun came out, the wind died down, the river sparkled and the soft green of spring surrounded us on all sides. Barn Swallows and Bank Swallows were swooping overhead and darting and gliding over the water. Some of them swung so close we felt as if we stretched a bit we might almost touch them. Wild strawberry blossoms sprinkled the ground overpowered by the glorious dandelion in the height of its season. The scent of balsam poplar was in the air and we rubbed our hands over its glossy leaves. As our walk progressed we were accompanied by the songs of birds (interspersed it must be admitted by the all-too-often roar of airplanes). We were able to identify a Baltimore oriole, yellow warbler, meadowlark, goldfinch, song sparrow and bluejay, as well as a mourning dove, crow, and numerous red-winged blackbirds. For the botany buffs, Helen Juhola was reconnoitering the woods in search of a patch of twinleaf she had discovered several years previously. It wasn't long before we heard hoots of joy and jubilation as this long lost treasure was rediscovered and found to be flourishing in great numbers on both sides of a little path which led into the woods. We counted hundreds and hundreds of these graceful twin-leafed plants with their delightful seed pods held on a tall stem.

As we followed this path further into the woods in search of more twinleaf, we noticed a few dainty spring beauties peeking out at us from under the roots of a large hemlock. On closer observation we noticed there were two types here. One was the uncommon (for these parts) Carolina spring beauty! What a find. What a day. What more could one ask for of a nature walk? Good company, good weather, the sights, sounds and scents of spring along the banks of the West Humber. We had it all."

Denise Willep

"SOME CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS"

Several TFN Members visited the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library in March and April of this year to see the display of books, papers and pictures tracing the origins of ornithology in Canada. Of special appeal was the featured collection of Jim Baillie with additional material about his life and times, in all of which his enthusiasm came through still very much alive. If you want to know about Champlain, the naturalist; or who was the first Ontario naturalist; or find out the basic story about those famous names that keep cropping up - like Seton and McIlwraith and Macoun - we have a booklet about this exhibition in TFN Library (690-1963), as well as one briefly describing The Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, with a short guide to each of their fascinating collections.

The following list shows the date, location, and leader of the spring TFN outings, with the number of participants in brackets:

March	1	Woodbine Bridge - East	Steven Price (22)
	8	Woodbine Bridge - West	Kathy Kersey (25)
	11	Allen Gardens	Peggy Love (20)
	11	Wilket Creek Park	Cathy Drake
	14	Humber Bay Park	Roger Powley (25)
	15	Nordheimer Ravine	Wally Platts (19)
	22	Mt. Pleasant Cemetery	Emily Hamilton (31)
	28	Long Point	Eric and Ruth Lewis (94)
April	1	Humber Sewage Plant	Laura Greer (12)
	4	Chine Drive Ravine	George Comper (26)
	8	Wilket Creek Park	Cathy Drake (4)
	11	High Park	Roger Powley (50)
	12	Eastern Headland	Steven Price (40)
	15	Dufferin Incinerator	Laura Greer
	18	UofT Herbarium	Steven Varga
	19	Morningside Park	Terry Carleton (30)
	20	Rowntree Mills Park	Billie Bridgman (25)
	25	Highland Creek	Steven Taylor (11)
	26	Wilket Creek Park	Roger Powley (5)
	28	Humber Marshes	Patti Staite (28)
	29	Recycling Plant	Helen Juhola (7)
	30	Moatfield	Bruce Parker (6)
May	2	Morningside Park	Betty Greenacre (22)
	3	Etobicoke Creek	Kirsten Burling
	5	Glen Stewart Ravine	Fred Bodsworth (30)
	5	Wilket Creek Park	Cathy Drake
	6	West Humber (1)	Diana Sagness (13)
	6	High Park	Roger Powley (25)
	7	Todmorden Mills	Elna Whiteside (12)
	9	Vivian Forest	Ed Franks (16)
	10	Guildwood	Chas. Crosgrey (23)
	12	Cedarvale Ravine	Hugh Currie (11)
	13	West Humber (2)	Denise Villep (12)
	13	High Park	Roger Powley (13)
	14	Glendon Hall	Eileen and Geoff Chopping (3)
	17	Eastern Headland	Roger Powley (46)
	18	Toronto Islands	George Fairfield (40)
	19	Little Etobicoke Creek	Kirsten Burling
	20	West Humber (3)	Billie Bridgman (9)
	20	High Park	Roger Powley (20)
	21	Taylor Creek	Kathy Kersey (18)
	23	Glendon Campus	Molly Campbell
	24	Walmsley Brook	Wally Platts
	26	Cedarvale Ravine	Donna Knauber (17)
	27	Black Creek (1)	Eileen Chopping (12)
	28	Morningside Park	Emily Hamilton (13)
	30	Bronte Prov. Park	Emily Hamilton (18)
	31	Magwood Park	Bob Yukich (40)
	27	High Park	Roger Powley (4)

TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS, MARCH - MAY, 1981Exceptional Records

Whooper Swan: One which appeared at Cranberry Marsh on February 28 (PH) was last noted at the Whitby Hospital marsh on March 7 (PL, DR). This was probably one of the birds which spent January and February at Oakville. These are considered as escaped rather than wild birds by the Ontario Records Committee.

Sandhill Crane: The individual which spent the winter at the Metro Zoo was noted daily until at least March 9 (WR).

Townsend's Solitaire: The latest report of this bird which was first found in mid-February (see TFN (340) 12, Ma 81), was April 12 (VT).

Kentucky Warbler: A documented report of one found at High Park on May 12 was received. The same bird was present on the TOC Spring Roundup on May 16 (RP).

Blue Grosbeak: Photographs of one which visited the feeder of Joyce Given (Meadowcrest, Etobicoke) were passed on to the Royal Ontario Museum. The bird was present from May 4 to 18 and was seen by many observers.

As many as 450 Common Loons were counted in the early morning at Ajax on May 2 (RN). This is in contrast to the very light migration at the Humber Bay Park where less than 10 individuals were noted on most mornings. Red-necked Grebes appeared on Lake Ontario in the area of Cranberry Marsh on March 7 (DR) and built up to a peak of 400 on April 5 (DR). The only report of any numbers of Horned Grebes was that of 30 at the Eastern Headland on April 5 (MK, JS). Double-crested Cormorant reports included one at Ajax on April 18 (RN, JSa), one at the Eastern Headland on May 3 (HC), six at Thickson's Point on May 12 (DR), and 30 on the TOC Spring Roundup on May 16 (including one inland in King Twp.). The first Black-crowned Night Heron returned to Mugg's Island on March 28 (RS) and as many as 150 were there to the end of May (TBO). The only Least Bittern reported this spring was one at Palgrave on May 10 (WM).

The exceptionally early and heavy flight of Whistling Swans which started in late February continued into March. On March 1 there were reports of 67 at Whitby (HC), 58 at Cranberry Marsh (JMS), 35 at Corner Marsh (DR), 300 in seven flocks at the Toronto Islands (AM, VH), 27 at the Boulevard Club (HH), 61 flying over Black Creek Pioneer Village (MB) and 30 at Bronte (JK). No others were reported until March 28 and 29 when there were two flocks of 34 and 15 at Whitby (DF), 15 at Rexdale (MK) on the 28th and 8 at Whitby (HK), 14 at Ajax (RW), 22 at Cranberry Marsh (GB) and 32 at the Eastern Headland (EB). Many people reported Brant at the Eastern Headland during late May, the largest count being 120 on May 16 (JK). Some high duck counts included 1,000 Mallards at Corner Marsh on March 1 (DR), 135 Gadwall on the TOC Roundup (May 16), 36 Northern Shoveler (April 5) and 300 American Wigeon and 200 Ring-necked Duck at Cranberry Marsh on April 6 (DR), 1,904 Oldsquaw on the TOC Roundup and 350 Red-breasted Mergansers at the Scarborough Bluffs on April 1 (BG). Pairs of Harlequin Ducks were at the Humber Bay Park throughout March (many observers) and on the lake off Cranberry Marsh from April 19 (DR) to April 30 (LH).

Some early shorebirds were an Upland Sandpiper at Teston on April 4 (GB), Spotted Sandpiper at Scarborough Bluffs on April 11 (BG), Greater Yellowlegs at Corner

Marsh on March 24 (MW, LW), Lesser Yellowlegs at Whitby on April 7 (DR) and Pectoral Sandpiper at the Eastern Headland on March 29 (JM). A concentration of shorebirds at the Humber Bay Park on May 21 included 400 Dunlin and 21 Short-billed Dowitchers (JK,WM) and a Stilt Sandpiper (WM). As many as five Wilson's Phalaropes were at the Humber Bay Park during the last week of May (JK).

The extremely high count of 72,790 Ring-Billed Gulls on the TOC Roundup of May 16 included the more than 30,000 nesting pairs at the Eastern Headland. Little Gull reports were of two at the Scarborough Bluffs on April 12 (BG) and two on the TOC Roundup (Whitby area). Escaped Ringed Turtle Doves were reported from Mississauga (WM), Chatsworth (JGr) and the Lawrence-Victoria Park area. The only Short-eared Owl of the spring was one at the Eastern Headland on April 5 (MK, JS). Two Saw-whet Owls were banded on Mugg's Island during the evening of March 28-29 (TBO, RC). A high count of Chimney Swifts was 3,000 near Queen's Park at dusk on May 11 (HJ). On April 18 a Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker was reported at Richmond Hill (HK).

White-breasted (20) were outnumbered 2 to 1 by Red-breasted Nuthatches (44) on the TOC Roundup on May 16. Two Mockingbirds were reported, one in the O'Connor-St. Clair area on March 2 (EB) and one at Woodbridge on April 21 (TH). Six Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were reported during late April and early May (as well as 6 others on the TOC Roundup).

Some of the more unusual warbler reports were a Prothonotary Warbler on May 19 (Bloor at Humber River (HS), a Worm-eating Warbler on May 9 at Thicksen's (MB, DR), an early Pine Warbler at Brookbanks on April 10 (BP), a Prairie Warbler on April 27 (Thicksen's DR), an early Northern Waterthrush on a TFN outing at Chine Drive on April 4 (GC), a Yellow-breasted Chat on May 17 (Centre Island, VH,AM) and Hooded Warblers on May 9 (Thicksen's, MB,DR) and May 16 (TOC Roundup). The only House Finches of the spring were a male at Brookbanks Ravine on May 2 and 6 (BP) and a pair visiting a feeder in Willowdale (Cotswold Crescent) throughout May (JS,MS). Pine Siskins remained in many localities throughout May, the last Common Redpolls to be reported were two at the Eastern Headland on March 29 (JM). A Clay-coloured Sparrow was banded on Mugg's Island on May 3 (TBO, DB).

Contributors: Margaret Bain, Eleanor Beard, Gordon Bellerby, Gerry Bennett, Dave Broughton, George Comper, R. Cubitt, Hugh Currie, Dave Fewster, Brian Gibson, Joyce Given, Jacques Gravel, Peter Hamel, Heather Harris, Verna Higgins, Tom Hilditch, Les Homans, Helen Juhola, John Kelley, Harry Kerr, Mark Kubisz, P. Lehman, Anne Macdonald, William Mansell, John McLean, Rob Nisbet, Bruce Parker, Roger Powley, William Rapley, Dave Ruch, John Sabian, Helen Smith, June Smith, Mac Smith, J.M. Speirs, Rudi Strange, Jeff Stewart, V. Trojek, Linda Weseloh, Margaret Wilson, Reid Wilson, Toronto Bird Observatory, Toronto Ornithological Club.

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 Woods Road, Don Mills, M3A 2R8, or phone 449-0994.

Note: Documentation of Rare Species

For the past year and a half this column has served as a means of placing local bird observations on record. The observations reported during this period have been included at the discretion of the writer. Many of the birds which have been reported during the first half of 1981 are of such provincial rarity that

they require documentation if they are to stand the test of time. In the not-too-distant past the only acceptable documentation was the preserving of a specimen. Present forms of documentation include photographs and written reports. Often a short description of the bird as seen will be sufficient. In order for the "Toronto Region Bird Records" to reach a high degree of credibility the proposal outlined in the Newsletter ((286) 11, N74) that the Bird Migration Chart serve as the guide for determining which birds should be documented will be adopted, with some modifications.

From now on, therefore, the following birds should be documented:

1. Any species not listed in the Bird Migration Chart, except Mute Swan
2. Any species not represented with a light or a heavy solid line
3. Any species which is exceptionally early or late.

The introduction of documentation is not intended to discourage anyone from contributing; this column is only possible through the interest and cooperation of our members. If you have any comments concerning the usefulness of a column such as this, its format or content, please send them to any member of the Newsletter editorial committee.

B.D.P.

MARKED BRANTS - Now that Brants are appearing off Leslie Street Headland, we should be looking for colour-marked or banded individuals. If you see one - anywhere in Canada or U. S. - record the date, location, colour of dye (if any) and on what part of body; yellow band (if any), on which leg, and letters engraved - and report to: Austin Reed, Canadian Wildlife Service, P. O. Box 10,100, Ste. Foy, Que. G1V 4H5. Include any remarks on flock size, habitat &c.

THE BAILLIE BIRDATHON - ONE MAN'S "SUCCESS STORY"

Wally Platts really captured our imagination this year with his "carless count" - using public transit, bicycle and shank's mare. He sent out a letter to his sponsors. "Knowing I had all that money on my back," said Wally, "spurred me on, and I surprised myself to get 92 species in fair Toronto...The incentive riding with me, as well as raising money for bird studies and related programs, was to prove that fine lists can be done without using cars and tearing around to remote locales. We have some very exotic locales right in our own city, and on May 9 the warblers were practically knocking each other out of the trees." Wally included a list of the species he saw - among them Parula Warbler, Cerulean Warbler and Solitary Vireo. His letter concluded, "Perhaps you can imagine what a great time I had!"

Keeping in touch . . .

Dear Readers:

Here are some excerpts from a letter received from our Ottawa member, Christine Hanrahan, which we'd like to share with you. She and her husband, Tom, visited Florida this past winter, and we're sure you will find their observations most interesting...

"Florida was enjoyable in many ways, though the Everglades was far more crowded than we could have wished. However, we did see numerous birds, primarily egrets, spoonbills, herons, pelicans, and laughing gulls. We also saw...two bobcats, one in the Everglades. We were up at 5:30 almost every morning of the trip and on this particular morning we were walking along a trail around a pond just as dawn was breaking. Everything was very still, few birds were stirring and I was walking ahead of Tom. I rounded a curve in the trail and there, coming towards me, was a bobcat! He looked at me and kept coming, loping along quite unconcerned, and then as he passed me he turned and disappeared into the undergrowth. Tom caught a glimpse of him. The second one we saw running across a road during the day. I tell you, seeing that bobcat was the highlight of the trip and one of the biggest thrills of my life.

"Down in the keys we were fortunate enough to see the small key deer, a subspecies of our white-tailed deer and identical in everything but size. Whereas ours can weigh up to 300 lbs., the key deer rarely gets above 80 lbs.

"We saw a number of alligators, of course, but the interesting part this time was seeing 15 baby 'gators all jumbled around in a little mud pond with Mama keeping a wary eye on them and us.

"The weather was reasonably warm in the south, about 65° F, but the natives, of course, were complaining because it wasn't the usual 80°. Further north we ran into much colder weather and in Gainesville where we went looking for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, we encountered our first rain. However, we plodded out into the woods getting soaked from the waist down in pursuit of the elusive bird and we were lucky enough to see two. Five years ago there were 60 birds, this year (early January) there had been only one, until we happened to see two together, which caused great excitement at the local nature centre which had been keeping tabs on the bird(s) for years now. Loss of habitat is the usual explanation for decline in this species..."

Dear Christine: Don't forget to include this excellent report in the newsletter index for 1981.

Editorial Committee

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Jan. 22/81

Dear Diana -

This is to tell you that I have enjoyed the recent issue of the newsletter and to congratulate you and the committee on your efforts. You are turning out a very smooth publication. I like the mix of notices, reports, information, letters, articles on policy, lightened with a bit of poetry and art work...

Sincerely, Laura Greer

KEEPING IN TOUCH - continued

Dear Diana,

....I was interested to see, in the list of April outings, 3 with the title 'Facts of Urban Living.' I think Laura Greer and the TFN should be commended for including these. It is unfortunate that such tours as these cannot be conducted on Saturdays when attendance could be higher.

I was not a participant in any of these tours but I have toured all these facilities with various groups of my environmental studies students on previous occasions.

The people of the Metro Works Dept. which operate the sewage treatment plant are proud of how they handle domestic waste water treatment. On such tours they describe how well they carry out their duties. They deserve credit for what they accomplish; however, tours would provide an opportune time to discuss problems they face during sewage overloads during storms or peak hours of the day. The facilities are able to handle all sorts of waste materials but could work more efficiently if homeowners were more careful to avoid putting various materials down their drains, e.g. oils, paint thinners. On such tours, the visitors seldom ask the right questions and emerge feeling that all is being taken care of by the powers that be and the facilities that exist.

Metro Works also operates the Dufferin Incinerator to handle solid waste. Its mandate is to dispose of waste, not make judgement on the waste which is generated by our citizens. At the Dufferin Incinerator, visitors won't ever see great amounts of garbage because the number of trucks dumping there is strictly controlled. Only what the plant can handle is brought there; any extra is taken elsewhere. It is not the facility that ought to be questioned. After observing the types of garbage dumped there, visitors ought to question the wasteful habits of both citizens and industries who could easily recycle much of their so-called refuse. Visitors also seldom realize the amount of 'crud' that still has to be handled after the incineration process. The particulates scrubbed by water from the smoke stacks settle out and form a sludge which has to be trucked away. In addition, the ashes from the furnaces form a larger volume than we think, and this also has to be trucked away to landfill sites. One question which haunts me is why Metro has not altered its main incinerators so that the heat generated could be sold to neighbouring buildings instead of just going up the stack.

The slick tour offered by the Ministry of the Environment of its Resource Recovery Plant leads visitors to believe that the solid waste problem has been solved. This is far from the truth! The operation in Downsview has been plagued with structural, mechanical and labour problems ever since it opened. If visitors do not listen closely to the introductory tape they will miss the major point that much of the garbage coming into the plant goes straight out the other side of the plant to a landfill site. A small portion gets shredded, sorted and separated. It appears that the process is highly mechanized (colour coded, yet). Questions reveal that most of the important sorting is done manually. The displays of what can happen to the various separated fractions are very interesting. Indeed, it could happen, but doesn't. Buyers are simply hard to find. Potential buyers have found that the materials are

not free of contaminants and that the volume is not dependable. The biggest problem is that citizens don't want to worry about their garbage ... "after all, that's what we pay taxes for." They are all too willing to accept, without question, the Resource Recovery concept. Citizens must face the facts and accept the responsibility for their own waste. They ought to take part in the various recycling programs offered in the City and, more important, waste less in the first place. (Call the Toronto Recycling Action Committee, 367-7850, answering service to request details about the recycling programs or suggestions for wasting less).

Some TFN members might feel that these topics have little to do with natural history; however, it was my appreciation of animals and plants and my concern about what's happening to their habitats that has prompted me to become more aware and active in the area of solid waste management.

Sincerely,

Janice Palmer.

Dear Helen:

I am writing to you, President of TFN, to tell you of my thoughts about last year's TFN meetings - which, personally, I enjoyed.

For almost as long as I can remember, I have been a naturalist - particularly a "birder", with flowers and trees as close seconds! In many years of past TFN meetings, we have had excellent talks, slides and films of birds, flowers, trees, scenery, etc., of various kinds and I have loved these programmes. This last year, the emphasis has shifted to environmental issues. At this point I support this shift very strongly - feeling that none of us can afford to be ignorant of the environmental issues of our day - for if we are ignorant and do not act to protect and preserve our natural areas, I feel we will have nowhere to go in the future to see the birds, flowers and trees etc., which I, for one, treasure so dearly.

I sincerely hope environmental issues will remain an important part of the TFN's future meetings and activities.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Edwardes-Evans

To the wonderful people who organized such a super summer program of outings from May to September - a big thank-you. At last - a club that doesn't fold up in the summer when nature is buzzing and blossoming so enthusiastically and many people are forced or choose to remain "city-bound".

Sincerely,

Jeannine Dykstra

<p>This hot afternoon You too have sensed the stillness, Silent mourning dove.</p>
--

"SCALING THE DEPTHS"Geologic Time-scale Terms
- Part III

There are many more rungs in the Phanerozoic time-scale interspersed between those shown in Part I; they represent the "periods" or "systems" into which the eras are divided and those of the "epochs" into which the periods, in turn, are divided.

Each of the epochs in the Cenozoic has the suffix "cene" to tell us it is (comparatively) recent.

THE QUATERNARY PERIOD (which started a million years ago or thereabouts) embraced these epochs:

THE HOLOCENE EPOCH (a European term) meaning "wholly recent" - the last 10,000 years or so with man dominating - usually called simply "recent" or "historic" times.

THE PLEISTOCENE EPOCH - "most recent". (Greek "pleistos" means "most" - at least both words have "st".)

THE TERTIARY PERIOD (which started about 63 million years ago) included:

THE PLIOCENE EPOCH - "more recent". (Greek "pleion" means "more" - think of French "plus".)

THE MIOCENE EPOCH - "less recent". (Greek "meion" means "less" - think of French "moins".)

THE OLIGOCENE EPOCH - "slightly recent". (Greek "oligos" means "few" or "little" - think of "oligarchy" - meaning government of the few.)

THE EOCENE EPOCH - "dawn-recent". ("Eos" is Greek for "dawn".)

THE PALEOCENE EPOCH - "ancient-recent".

Each of the three periods of the Mesozoic is named for the place or type of rock of the early work on these strata. The epochs are described simply as LATE, MIDDLE and EARLY. (See Note 1.)

THE CRETACEOUS PERIOD started about 130 million years ago and was named for the chalk. (Think of a chalk "crayon".)

THE JURASSIC PERIOD started about 175 million years ago, named for the Jura Mountains between France and Switzerland with their limestone.

THE TRIASSIC PERIOD started about 225 million years ago, named for the "trias" which is "the third red sandstone".

Each of the seven periods of the Paleozoic is named for the place where the early work on these strata was done. The epochs are described as LATE, MIDDLE and EARLY. (See Note 1.)

THE PERMIAN PERIOD started about 280 million years ago, named for Permian (or Perma) in Russia with "the new red sandstone".

THE PENNSYLVANIAN PERIOD started about 320 million years ago and

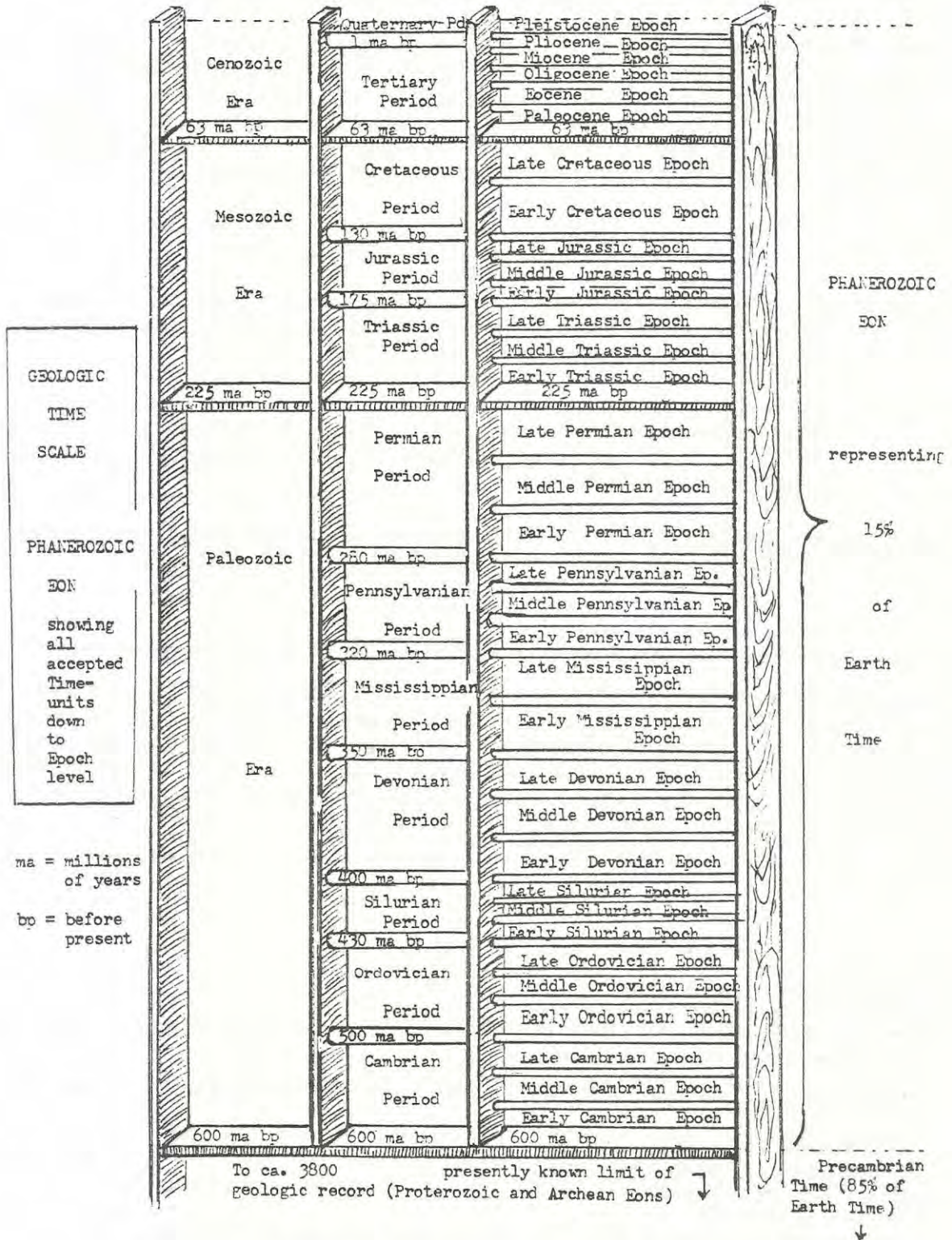
THE MISSISSIPPIAN PERIOD about 350 million years ago. These two, outside of North America are known as "The Late and Early Carboniferous Periods". They're named for the carbon (coal) deposits in these states.

THE DEVONIAN PERIOD started about 400 million years ago, named for Devon in England with "the old red sandstone".

THE SILURIAN PERIOD started about 430 million years ago, named for the Silures tribe of South Wales.

THE ORDOVICIAN PERIOD started about 500 million years ago, named for the Ordovices tribe of North Wales.

THE CAMERIAN PERIOD started about 600 million years ago, named for Cambria, old name for Wales.



In case you hadn't noticed, here we are again at the bottom of the Phanerozoic Eon. (It's obvious from that last entry why the term "Precambrian time" is used to denote the time preceding it, which was described in Part II.)

Most of the finer divisions of the epochs are recognizable only within certain continents or regions. "Stages" (or ages - See Note 2), "zones" and "chrons" are finer categories sometimes resorted to. Of course, there's nothing to stop writers from talking about the "Early Miocene" or even the "Early-Middle Devonian". But if they'll only avoid talking about the "Early-Middle-Late Triassic", maybe we'll not completely bog down in the morass of time.

Diana Banville

Note 1: Dr. Lumbers of ROM tells us that the terms "Upper" and "Lower", which are often used, are rock-stratigraphic terms; in time nomenclature, "Late" and "Early" are correct.

Note 2: It would have been preferable had I not used the word "age" in Part I when attempting to "translate" the names of the eras; as it turns out the word "age" has a specific application, though it's often used in a general sense too.

Reference: Geologic Time by Don L. Eicher, U. of Colorado, 1968, Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. (ROM Library).

TFN LIBRARY GROWS

Donations are coming in thick and fast to TFN Library from members and publishers. We still intend to publish a list of titles and shall be running reviews of many of the books and periodicals. In the meantime, we heartily thank the donors of our most recent acquisitions - Charlie Crosgrey, Mildred Easto, Peggy Love, Red Mason, Tayojira Sera and Anne R. Thompson. For information about Library material, call 690-1963.

NEARBY NATURALISTS' CLUBS

The following clubs are just beyond the fringe of Metro Toronto. Some of our members may be interested.

Durham Region Field Naturalists (Formerly Oshawa Naturalists). Box 354, Oshawa, Ontario L1H 7L3

Pickering Naturalists. Box 304, Pickering, Ontario L1V 2R6

Richmond Hill Naturalists Club. Box 285, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 4Y2

South Peel Naturalists Club. Box 91, Port Credit Postal Station, Mississauga L5G 1K5

Hamilton Naturalists Club. P.O. Box 5182, Station E, Hamilton L8S 4L3

West Humber Naturalists. Mr. Art Rusnell, Box 257, Kleinberg LOJ 1C0

THE WILD ONES

Every now and then we pick up a newspaper and read of people being attacked by bears - like the three boys in Algonquin a while back. We read stories or watch a movie where the hero is attacked by a savage pack of wolves, bent on having him for the main dinner course. It sells books and movies and even newspapers but after some ten years of travelling through wilderness country I have yet to meet these savage beasts - have never even lost a food pack, though I have had some petty thievery from the smaller critters. I must live a charmed life.

Bear attacks on humans are extremely rare but not impossible, particularly in our parks where they become used to seeing people. Some, thanks to careless campers, have even learned to associate campers with food, and here you have what could be a dangerous situation for both humans and the bear. He becomes 'spoiled' abandoning his normal eating habits for the easier pickings of campsites. When this happens the bear's fate is almost certain death at the hands of a ranger. Before then it may mean the death or injury of a camper who underestimates the bear and tries to take back a food pack. Away from our parks and careless campers the black bear is nobody's hero. He'll try to bluff his way out of a situation, take to his heels if that doesn't work, but rarely attack a human. As long as there's that risk, though, he should be given respect and carefully avoided.

For all his great size, a bear can move so quietly you won't know he's about. We have come out of our tents in the morning to find all the rocks turned over, up to within feet of our tent. Obviously a bear had been through, searching for ants or other insects, but we had heard nothing. Another time I was awake when a bear came sniffing around the tent; it was the last straw when he snorted in my ear, through the tent wall. I deliberately coughed - and he was gone. If I had gone out of the tent I would have forced the bear into a confrontation, a possible attack. Stay in your tent, out of sight, unless he is really trying to move in with you. He won't if you have obeyed the rule about no food in the tents. On a trip this year we met a bear as we paddled through a rocky narrows. Because of the nature of the high, rocky shore neither of us could see the other but he could smell us. It brought on a bluff that made us aware of his presence - a huff-huff-huff keeping up for just a few minutes. I could imagine him, shaking his massive head, uttering the threats, and completely confused by something his nose told him was there but he couldn't see. He bolted. Another time I was in the Algonquin woods alone, cutting down a dead tree for firewood. I sensed the bear's presence before I saw him. You probably know the feeling. Your neck hairs seem to be standing on end. I stopped working with the axe long enough to spot the bear, blending in with the forest and about a hundred yards from me. He looked curious but showed no threat and I continued work on the tree, keeping one eye on him. When I dragged off the fallen tree the bear went the other way.

Little Red Riding Hood notwithstanding, wolves have been more a source of delight to us than any possible threat. Not really showing fear of us, they always managed to avoid contact - until last August, when one came into our camp at night. I heard him bark several times near our tent, through a sleepy haze - thinking I had dreamed it. I hadn't. A few hours later we heard his bark mingled with the excited yaps of young pups, on the other side of the French River. He was clearly a hunter returning to the pack and had ignored our presence just long enough to let them know he was back. Another time, in Algonquin, we tried a "howl" on a night with a full moon. Excited barking, from across the narrow lake, followed our howl - then was picked up by more wolves further down the lake. A long howl sounded from the hill across our bay and was picked up by another wolf, up behind our camp. We have had responses since then but none that compared with that night. Such responses are usually limited to barking.

Every winter I have snowshoed along the old railway bed of Cache Lake, Algonquin, we've seen the tracks of a pair of wolves. Never more than two and never less, so that I'm inclined to think they are mates. Sooner or later we were bound to meet on that trail - and we did, a few years ago. Our group was following the same railway bed west from the park museum, along the shore of Source Lake, and noticed the wolf tracks. The texture of the snow made it hard to guess at their age and even when the tracks veered off the trail we had no idea the wolves had veered off to pass us by. One of our girls had got out in front of the group and we were more or less following her tracks when we saw the wolf tracks - on top of hers. A wolf had gone down on each side of the railway bed to avoid her, then one had crossed behind her to join the other - pausing to leave a yellow stain of urine in the middle of her track, perhaps a polite way of informing us this trail was their territory. On our return to my car in the museum parking lot, we found the two sets of wolf tracks circling the car, then heading off across Cache Lake. No doubt they recognized our scent as coming from it.

If you know anything about wolves, you know they are well equipped to tear any human to pieces - jaws so strong they can chomp through the leg of a moose in one bite. Why don't they attack humans? A lot of us would like to know the answer to that question but we can only speculate. As you can see above, there's little fear of us - just a careful avoidance of an actual confrontation. As to wolves reared in captivity, they have shown more affection to their owners than many a dog.

The above gives you some idea of what we have encountered over my ten years of canoe tripping and hiking the wilderness country - but it barely scrapes the surface. We have met them all - moose, deer, bear, wolves, otter, weasel, beaver, muskrat, martin, hawks and herons and owls, snakes and turtles and songbirds too numerous to name here. Every meeting - every intimate experience - has been special and remembered long years after it happened. I've no regrets for any of the time I have spent in "God's Country" - just

regret that I waited so late in life to begin. If we suffered a few small hardships with weather and portages and did without a few of the luxuries of life along the way, it was a small price to pay for what we gained. As long as I can lift a canoe paddle or put one foot in front of the other, I intend to continue this life.

Ed O'Connor

THIS MONTH'S COVER

"The Fleeting Wolf" - by Paul Harpley.

The artist recently studied and sketched the Gray or Timber Wolf (*Canis lupus*) in Algonquin Park. He pictures it running - we hope not from our lives, as the status of this species in southern Ontario (ie south of latitude 46°) is cause for concern. The wolf's gait, Paul tells us, differs from that of a dog - and this is the first thing one notices about it when encountered in the wild; it streaks along, maintaining the same body level, with no visible bobbing motion. Before European Man arrived in southern Ontario, this large wolf (70 to 120 lbs.) ranged over the entire province to the southernmost tip. Now, in the southern part of its former range, only an occasional straggler is seen, usually a young animal. (In 1966 a Gray Wolf pup was killed near London, Ontario.)

The most common southern Ontario wolf is the Brush Wolf or Coyote (*Canis latrans*). There have been a few recent sightings as close as Thornhill and parts of the Don Valley. Certainly it is to be found in Newmarket and Maple areas. The Brush Wolf will become established in any brushy habitat that is not too crowded with people. Compared to the Gray Wolf, it is small (20 to 50 lbs.). This smaller size, along with its courage and tenacity, has possibly contributed to the relative stability of its status in southern Ontario. This species is, of course, on the checklist for the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve.

An intermediate wolf is now recognized, apparently a hybrid between the Gray and the Brush Wolves. It is known as "The Lindsay-Tweed Wolf" and has characteristics of both species. George Kolenosky of the Wildlife Branch, Ministry of Natural Resources in Maple (who gave us much of the foregoing data on the status of the wolf in southern Ontario) was involved in experiments in which Gray and Brush Wolves were interbred; individuals produced were very similar to the Lindsay-Tweed Wolf.

For more information on the wolf in southern Ontario, you may borrow from TFN Library (690-1963): Mammals of the Great Lakes Region by William H. Burt (246 pp), U. of Michigan Press, and Wolves and Coyotes in Ontario by Ministry of Natural Resources (14 pp). The Peterson guide, A Field Guide to the Mammals, also by W. H. Burt (284 pp), published by Houghton Mifflin, is available from book stores.

OUR (NON) BOOTH AT THE C.N.E.

Although we invited members to look for our booth at the C.N.E. we decided after the Newsletter deadline to discontinue this type of public relations. Mounting a display of this kind takes many hours of work, indeed many days and weeks, and there was not enough volunteer help proffered to encourage us to go ahead.

NEW PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAMME

We are embarking upon a continuing programme of reaching the public. At present this will go in two directions. The first is using our Gingerbread display panel in libraries and other places to illustrate our activities and explain our philosophy of, appreciation of, conservation of and learning about the world of nature. The second is a plan to reach out to the ethnic groups in Toronto. We will approach the foreign-language papers to publish a story about the TFN and will encourage them to print our calendar of monthly outings. Over the next few months we will issue a special invitation to one of our outings to a special group each month, through their paper.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Parlez-vous français?
Parla italiano?

Sprechen Sie deutsch?
Another language?

We would appreciate it if any members speaking a language other than English would volunteer to be present on the outing for their special group. If any of the guests, whose English may be limited want information, they can be helped in their own language.

You may also be able to help us to get in touch with the paper of your language or to make other contacts. Call Helen Juhola 924-5806.

Because of the interest of TFN member Jirina Jelinowicz, members of the Czechoslovak community will be invited to our outing on September 20.

AT LAST THE ATLAS!

For a long time we've been wondering when and how our region would become involved in the world-wide Breeding Bird Atlas. On April 9th an article appeared in the Globe & Mail, recreation page, stating that the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Long Point Bird Observatory were commencing work on the Ontario portion. Then a notice appeared in the April issue of the Toronto Bird Observatory Newsletter as well as in the Directory to Co-Operative Naturalists' Projects in Ontario dated March/81 published by the LPBO. On May 12th we received a newsletter from the FON giving a brief history of atlassing, explanation of the Ontario atlas, what an atlasser must do and how to become an atlasser, as well as maps and lists of regions and regional co-ordinators. All of this information was received too late for our May issue but plan now if you want to become involved next season; contact the co-ordinator for our area, Dave Broughton, 489-7444. Would you like a copy of the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas newsletter? If so, call the Editorial Committee. Maybe you're interested in atlassing your summer cottage area?

 CONFUSING FALL SHOREBIRDS

The best book on the market for accurate drawings of shorebirds is Godfrey's The Birds of Canada. Often when out in the field I am unsure of a bird's identity and feel it does not look quite like the picture in my small fieldguide. When this happens I always refer to Godfrey's book later, and find that the bird in question is pictured exactly as I saw it in the field. Of course, it is not practical to carry such a large and expensive book but one can refer to it on returning home.

I use both the Golden Guide, Birds of North America, and the Peterson Guide, A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies. These are both fairly good guides. Birds of North America gives one the opportunity to become familiar with western birds - for easier identification of accidentals here in the east. The Peterson guide has a better identification system and I prefer it for the beginner.

When you are trying to learn fall shorebirds, the drawings you are looking at must be precise, as the differences in these birds are sometimes minute. In the Golden Guide the shorebirds are pictured with their heads tucked down into their shoulders, a position rarely seen in the field, and the colours in some copies are much too pale. All the birds on page 129 look like winter Sanderlings in the whiteness of their breasts, except the Pectoral, Rock and Purple Sandpipers. Compare the length of the bill to the width of the skull on the birds pictured in the Golden Guide and you will see that they are as much as 25% off. This could cause much confusion. This book is good for identifying obvious species but lacking when there is room for confusion.

Peterson's new guide is very good for proportions and colour but his drawings are not consistent. The winter Baird's Sandpiper has a curve in its bill like the Western Sandpiper. However, I prefer this guide to the Golden Guide. Peterson was smart enough to picture species that look alike side-by-side, so that comparisons can be made easily.

Three shorebirds which are readily confused in the field are pictured on page 129 of the Peterson Guide. These are the Lesser Yellowlegs, Wilson's Phalarope and Stilt Sandpiper. In the spring they are easy to separate but the drab fall colours make experts look twice. The phalarope jumps a lot (at flying insects) and the Stilt Sandpiper usually is found with dowitchers. The Lesser Yellowlegs associates with anyone and is much more common than the other two.

The "peeps" are probably the most difficult to sort out. Fortunately they are gregarious, which enables one to compare different species when they are side-by-side. One would have to be quite an expert to identify a Baird's Sandpiper that was all alone. The most common "peep" is the Semipalmated Sandpiper. The Least Sandpiper is similar, but is smaller and its colour is a richer brown.

You cannot expect to learn these birds in a short time, as they are so similar. They must be in a good light, at close range, for even an expert to separate them.

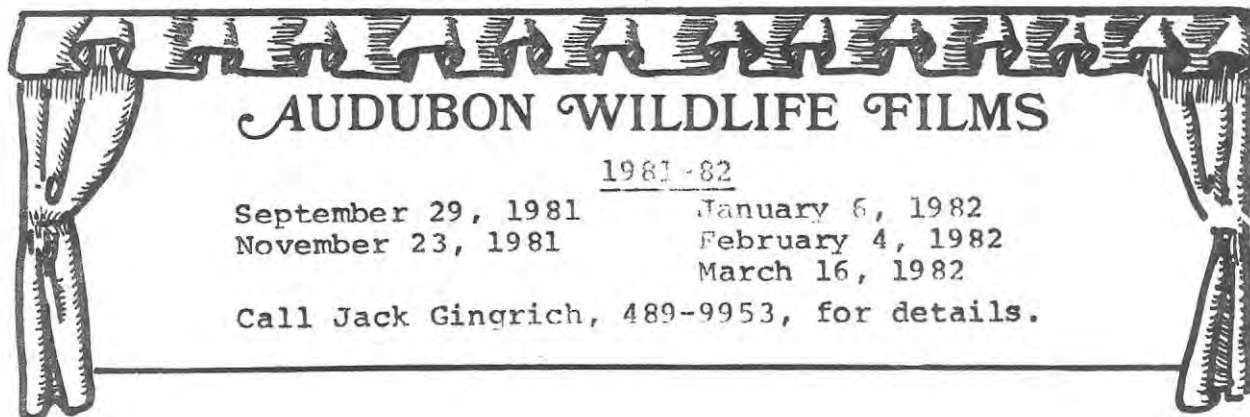
Two other fall shorebirds which can be confusing are the Red Knot and the Black-bellied Plover. The plaintive call of the black-belly is a giveaway; otherwise the bill-length has to be estimated. The Red Knot's bill is a little longer than the head (from the base of the bill to the back of the head). The Black-bellied Plover's bill is a little shorter than the head. The fall Golden Plover can also be mistaken for the black-belly. The Golden Plover is a slimmer-looking bird with a longer neck and is a little browner-looking. If fall shorebirds confuse you, don't feel inferior. Just about everyone is in the same boat.

Roger Powley

NOTE: Though criticizing these guides, I (who cannot draw well) appreciate the quality of the artwork and recognize how much easier it is to refer to illustrations than to follow detailed descriptions as our grandparents had to do. R.P.

FENCE - WEST BANK OF GRENADIER POND

Roger Powley made inquiries as to the legality of the fencing to the water's edge at No. 2 Grenadier Ravine Drive. He has received an answer in the form of a letter dated March 24, 1981, from his Alderman, David White, Ward 1, enclosing copy of a letter from Ivan B. Forrest, City of Toronto Commissioner of Works and Recreation, dated March 10, 1981, indicating that the east limit of the property in question is, in fact, the water's edge and that, therefore, the owner has the right to fence right to the water's edge. No. 2 Grenadier Ravine Drive is not, like some other properties, subject to a right-of-way nor to any unopened-road allowances. Roger comments that, since the owner is perfectly within his rights to fence his property, we should all respect his rights.



AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

1981-82

September 29, 1981	January 6, 1982
November 23, 1981	February 4, 1982
	March 16, 1982

Call Jack Gingrich, 489-9953, for details.

WE CATCH A BUS, HAWKS CATCH A THERMAL

Every fall hundreds of bird-watchers visit Hawk Mountain in Pennsylvania to climb the peaks and watch the fall migration of hawks, and, I might add, to sample the Pennsylvania cooking and hospitality. People are very friendly on Bake Oven Knob and other peaks; it is possible to become mesmerised up there and not want to come down off the mountain and down to earth, so to speak.

But here in Ontario we have a cliff where it is possible to see even more hawks; it is at Hawk Cliff Conservation Area near Port Stanley on Lake Erie. The formula for seeing the hawks is - First wait until September, then after the weather has been very bad for two or three days and then cleared, and the wind has veered to the north west at a moderate speed, head for Port Stanley. Just before reaching Port Stanley take a left turn, then the first left. A little way along this road, opposite a converted schoolhouse, you will find Hawk Cliff Conservation Area on the right, marked by a sign with a hawk on it near the gate. Drive in and you will find that several other people have arrived before you as the place is becoming famous.

Evidently the hawks coming down from the north reach the lake and, rather than cross water, fly along the lake edge, staying over land until they reach Detroit. Thermals (warm air currents) are rising from the lake, and the broadwings and other hawks are able to catch these and rise to great heights, and drift along the lake edge without flapping a wing. It is said that by drifting from one thermal to the next the hawks can travel the whole length of the lake without a flap. We look up and see them circling higher and higher, sometimes about a hundred in one "kettle" often less.

Meanwhile the female Marsh Hawks glide along the edge of the cliff a few feet from the ground (the males migrate later). Sharp-shinned Hawks dash through, chasing small birds, and Kestrels chasing insects.

The Ministry of the Environment bird banders trap the hawks by two different methods, and on two weekends show the hawks to the enthusiastic bird-watchers before releasing them. Seeing a Sharp-shinned Hawk at close range was fascinating; it had flashing yellow eyes and was uttering wild cries. I must say it was more beautiful than any textbook could convey.

Hawk Cliff is a lovely place to be in the fall, even without hawks. Beautiful monarch butterflies and sulphurs settle on purple New England asters and yellow goldenrods. The place is noisy with crickets and grasshoppers. Many birds other than hawks are around as well as *herds* of flies, wasps, woolly-bears, and spiders. One small, boggy area contains masses of small fringed gentian, grass of Parnassus, and bog goldenrod. On a good day in September it is possible to see 20,000 hawks; an average day 1,000; a poor day 100.

Joy Pocklington

COMING EVENTS

COMING EVENTS

Civic Garden Centre

The following courses and workshops will be offered at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. E., at Leslie. Further information may be obtained by telephoning the Centre, 445-1552.

Your Garden in Fall -- 2-week course, commencing Wednesday, September 16, 8.00 p.m.

Botanical Art -- 6-week course, commencing Monday, September 21, 10.00 a.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Terrariums -- Workshop, Saturday, September 26, 10.00 a.m.

Bird Watching in Fall -- 4-week course with 2 field trips, commencing Thursday, October 1, 2.00 p.m. and 8.00 p.m.

Royal Ontario Museum

ROMbus Tour, LIVING WATERS, LIVING INSECTS--all-day trip conducted by Dr. David Barr and members of Entomology Department; an introduction to the rich variety of insect life found in fields and streams. Collecting equipment will be provided.

Saturday, September 26, 9.00 a.m. from ROM.

Cost, including lunch, \$25.00 for adults; \$5.00 for children.

For further information and reservations, call ROM 978-4291.

Federation of Ontario Naturalists

Ontario Wetlands Conference, September 18-19, at Mordell Learning Resource Centre, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto.

Cost of full conference \$40.00.

For further information and reservations, call FON, 444-8419.

The Continuing Education Division, Sheridan College, Oakville Campus, will offer a 12-week evening course on Bird Study, conducted by Rosemary Gaymer, commencing Wednesday, September 23, 7.30 p.m. Cost \$45.00. For further information and registration, call 845-9430 (Oakville), 823-9730 (Clarkson), 632-7081 (Burlington).

THANK YOU - NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS

Interesting material keeps coming in - material which demonstrates what astute observers many TFN members are. We have a number of delightful articles on hand. Don't be dismayed if you don't see your favourite contribution in print right away. Maybe we're just waiting for the right "spot" for it; maybe we have plans for it in some future issue with a special theme. So many factors enter into when we use a particular contribution - even we are perplexed at times. We want to say to you - Keep writing! We like your voices - the great variety of style and outlook which comes through in your work, which give a newsletter a certain freshness, a conversational quality, a note of intimacy, and a decided lack of "slickness". We hope we shall never edit out that stimulating individuality of yours. That's what our newsletter is all about.

TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST
Editorial Committee

TFN MEETINGS



GENERAL MEETINGS

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

Tuesday, September 8, 1981, at 8.15 p.m. (Note date)

Annual Business Meeting and Election (See page 6)

COPING WITH DANGEROUS WILDLIFE -- A slide presentation.

Man-bear incidents have risen over the past several years.

Particularly tragic were the twin killings in Glacier National Park in 1967 and Algonquin Park's triple deaths in 1978. The circumstances leading to these incidents and the reaction of parks officials to them will be explored. Included as well will be a look at man's relationship with other park wildlife that has come into conflict with him.

Speaker--Mr. J. David Taylor, professional free-lance wildlife photographer and writer; a teacher, specialising in Outdoor Education and Nature Photography; a naturalist, lecturer and artist. Mr. Taylor's work has appeared in Ontario Out of Doors, Seasons, Macleans, as well as other magazines, books, calendars, postcards.

October meeting - Monday, October 5, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.

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GROUP MEETINGS

Bird Group

No September meeting.

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Botany Group

No September meeting. See page 9 for fall program.

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Environmental Group

Thur. Sep. 24 An Update on Environmentally Significant Areas
7.30 p.m. Study. Members involved in ESA studies are requested to bring slides and reports made this summer. All TFN members are invited to participate and to bring descriptive or inventory information on areas in their neighbourhood and environmental problems of which they are aware.

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

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Junior Club

Sat. Sept. 12 Call Brian Gray, 481-3918 or
10.00 a.m. Kathy Drake, 463-6939 for program details.

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

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Toronto Bird Observatory..... 489-7444 (eve.)
Ontario Field Biologist..... 481-3918

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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 November issue, material must be received by a member of the Editorial Committee by September 15.

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