TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 342, October, 1981

The mystery of Castle Frank...

See page 11.

- October — BIRD BANDING - MUGG'S ISLAND, TORONTO BIRD OBSERVATORY
  If interested call Sheila Heaton, 481-2197 between 8 and 9 p.m. Monday to Friday, to arrange a time.

Saturday Oct. 3 10.00 a.m.
HUMBER BAY PARK - Nature Walk
Leader: Roger Powley
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 Oct. 4 2.00 p.m.
MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY - Trees and Shrubs
Leader: Mary Smith
Meet at the entrance on the east side of Yonge Street a short distance north of St. Clair Avenue.

Sunday Oct. 11 2.00 p.m.
HUMBER VALLEY - Nature Walk
Leaders: Howard Klien and Shirley Johnson
Meet at the corner of Finch and Islington to walk south. (Finch West #36 bus from Finch subway station or Islington #37 bus from Islington subway station.)

Monday Oct. 12 9.00 a.m. (Thanksgiving)
TORONTO ISLAND - Birds
Leader: George Fairfield
Meet at the Island Ferry Terminal at the foot of Bay Street at 9.00 a.m. to take the next available ferry. Bring your membership card and a lunch to carry.

Wednesday Oct. 14 10.00 a.m.
EAST DON - Finch to Sheppard - Nature Walk
Leader: Kathy Heynes
Meet on the north side of Finch East in the shopping plaza between Bayview and Leslie (opposite the valley). We will be walking south. Lunch optional. (Finch East #39 bus from Finch subway station.)

Saturday Oct. 17 10.00 a.m.
NORTHWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE AND PARK (Black Creek) - Sketching
Leader: Joyce Cave
Meet on the north side of Sheppard Avenue opposite the entrance to Downsview Dells (half way between Keele and Jane at the bottom of the hill). (Sheppard West #84 bus from Sheppard subway station or Faywood #104 or 104A bus north from Wilson station and transfer to Sheppard West bus at Sheppard.) Bring a folding stool and lunch. Hot water will be provided. Note: We are starting to plan a show. Bring some of your work if possible.

Outings - Continued

Sunday
Oct. 18
2.00 p.m.

DON VALLEY - Nature Walk
Leader: Pat McCaw
Meet at Todmorden Mills sign. (Broadview #8 bus from Broadview subway station, or Mortimer #62 bus between Broadview and Main subway stations.) Get off at Mortimer and Broadview and walk down Pottery Road.
Cars. Pottery Road from Broadview or the Bayview Extension. Turn into the site at the Todmorden Mills sign and continue on to the parking lot. Walk back.

• October 18

Anyone wishing to help with maintenance at the Jim Baillie Reserve call John Lowe-Wylde at 284-5628. See report page 20.

Wednesday
Oct. 21
8.00 p.m.

WILKET CREEK PARK - Skywatch
Leader: Cathy Drake
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. A chance to observe Orionid meteors.

Saturday
Oct. 24
9.00 a.m.

LESLIE STREET SPIT - Birds
Leader: Dave Broughton
Meet in the parking area just inside the gates at the south end of Leslie Street. (#501 Queen car to Leslie Street. Walk south about a mile.) Bring lunch.

Sunday
Oct. 25
10.00 a.m.

HUMBER VALLEY - Marshes south of Bloor Street - Nature Walk
Leader: John Harris
Meet at the Old Mill subway station. Bring lunch.

Wednesday
Oct. 28
10.00 a.m.

EAST DON - Sheppard to York Mills - Nature Walk.
Leader: Volunteer requested
Meet at the southeast corner of York Mills and Leslie. (Leslie #51 bus from Eglinton subway station or Sheppard East #85 bus from Sheppard station.) Lunch optional.

Saturday
Oct. 31
9.00 a.m.

WEST DON, Glendon - Birds
Leader: Jim Woodford
Meet at the gates of Glendon College at Bayview and Lawrence. (Davisville #28B bus between Davisville subway station and Lawrence subway station, or Bayview #11 bus from Lawrence station to Bayview.)

Sunday
Nov. 1
2.00 p.m.

EARL BALES PARK - Birds and Botany
Leaders: To be appointed
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.) French speaking people in Metro Toronto are being specially invited to this outing.

Outings - Continued

- Nov. 11 All day trip to Niagara area to observe water birds with Clive Goodwin. $16.00. Send your cheque to C. E. Goodwin, 11 Westbank Crescent, Weston, Ontario M9P 1S4.

SEPTEMBER Tag-a-longs. These items didn't get to us in time for the September Newsletter. Some of you may get your October Newsletter in time to participate.

Sept. 20 (1) Anyone wishing to help at the Jim Baillie Reserve (maintenance) call John Lowe-Wylde at 284-5628.
(2) Anyone who would like to canoe on Uxbridge Brook from Leaskdale Bridge to Jim Baillie Reserve call John Lowe-Wylde at 284-5628.

Sept. 21 Fungi Fair at the Civic Garden Centre from 10.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m. Fungi collected by the Toronto Mycological Society displayed and named for your instruction and entertainment.

News from the Toronto Bird Observatory

A strong note of thanks is extended to everyone who took the time and interest to assist in the banding activities on Mugg's Island. This spring 50 people assisted on the 31 days the station was in operation from late March to the end of May. Special thanks are also extended to the TFN Juniors for building and putting up nesting boxes for Tree Swallows. Many of these were occupied this summer.

Two programmes are carried out simultaneously on the Island, banding and migration-monitoring. This spring 1244 birds of 77 species were banded including two Saw-whet Owls and a Clay-coloured Sparrow. Migration-monitoring, including a daily census, provides a record of the changing status of each species throughout the season. Two of the more unusual birds among the 125 species found this spring were a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and a Blue-winged Warbler.

During the summer the TBO banded about 2600 Ring-billed Gulls and a few Black-Crowned Night Herons in their nesting colonies on Mugg's Island and the Eastern Headland. By mid-August fall migration was under way and the fall banding and monitoring programmes were started.

If you would like to assist in the banding and migration-monitoring at Mugg's Island please phone Sheila Heaton, 481-2197 Monday to Friday between 8 and 9 p.m. to arrange a time.

- Bruce D. Parker

THE ANTS CAME MARCHING . . . . .

Have you ever watched those wondrous little creatures .... they run hither and thither scouting for food, they rush to protect their eggs when the security of their stone is moved, they love picnics, and sparrows love <u>them</u> . . . . ANTS. They come in all shapes, sizes and colours; occasionally they fight each other but on the whole their main business is seeking food and passing the word on where to find it.

Well, personally I find ants quite fascinating to observe and am amazed at the varieties my garden has to offer. However it appears I too am quite popular as they all came to visit me in my house. From then on my attitude changed substantially - they were intruding upon my domain.

We had just moved a carpet and some new furniture into a spare room, and that same spare room was also housing the laundry basket with a ton of unironed clothes - aah that's it, they'd taken a ride in at the bottom of the basket. I scrunched up the couple that were running around and then went on with my business. A while later I noticed more ants - this time about eight or nine - this was not just your occasional free-loading visitor - the battle of wits was on.

How do you find out where they are coming from and going to? It seems they come from everywhere and go to everywhere - to spray randomly was a waste of spray and just sent them scattering. Since I was about to do battle with a rather small but very clever creature, I had to use what few brains I had, because I had to win the war.

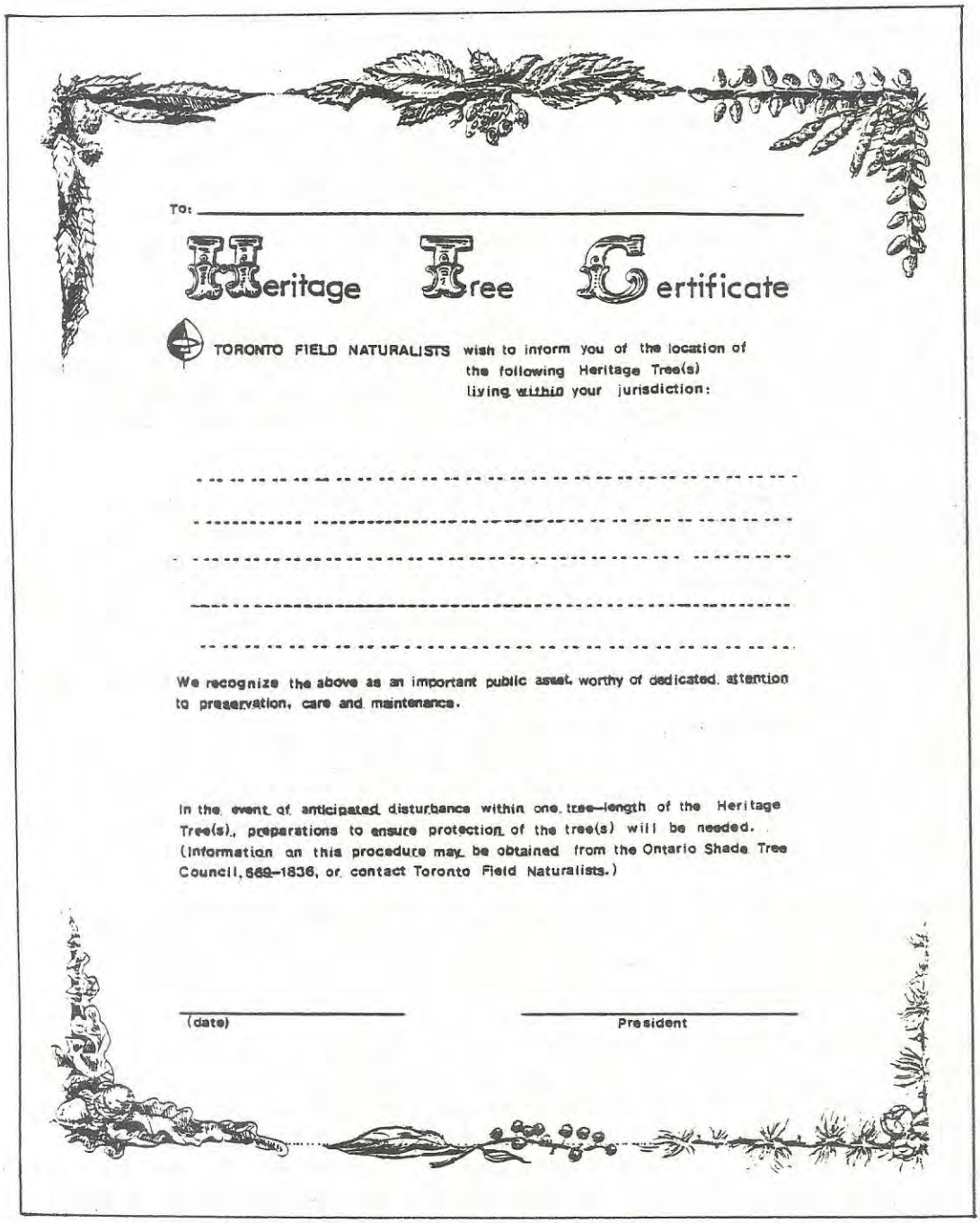
I sprinkled sugar and a drop of water on to some silver-foil and placed it in the most accessible spot - it worked, they flocked to the nectar (they knew they'd find something in this building to make their visit worthwhile).

The word spread; within half an hour I had a steady ant-trail - backwards and forwards - the Thin Brown Line. My husband and I traced them to the exact spot where they were entering the room (it was nowhere near the spot where we thought they were entering). We rushed outside the house to trace the line - it seemed to be below-grade, certainly not visible in the basement; so we trailed a thin line of sugar from the wall to the edge of the pathway, a real diversion.

Inside the house we sprayed the entrance they were using and I reluctantly had to crush the ones left behind. The trick seems to have worked, the ants soon appeared on the pathway following the trail of sugar to nowhere.

I really was a dreadful host for their visiting relatives, BUT, they can't live in my house, eat for free and not pay rent; my regulations left me no choice but to remove them promptly. I wonder if their attitude toward me changes substantially when I move their protective rock or accidentally dig into their nests - even though I try to repair my error?

Sheila McCoy



To: _____

Heritage Tree Certificate

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS wish to inform you of the location of the following Heritage Tree(s) living within your jurisdiction:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

We recognize the above as an important public asset, worthy of dedicated attention to preservation, care and maintenance.

In the event of anticipated disturbance within one tree-length of the Heritage Tree(s), preparations to ensure protection of the tree(s) will be needed. (Information on this procedure may be obtained from the Ontario Shade Tree Council, 669-1836, or contact Toronto Field Naturalists.)

_____ (date)

_____ President

This is a miniature of the certificate which TFN will be presenting to owners or custodians of heritage trees. If you own or know of a tree you would like to nominate as a heritage tree, contact Mary Smith, 231-5302.

COMPOUND INTEREST

Squirrels DEPOSIT acorns
In grassy BANKS.
DIVIDEND: Oak trees.

Joy Pocklington.

OAK HERITAGE

Oaks are the most frequently nominated species on our Heritage Tree list. That makes the oaks survivor species. The elm was our best survivor but it has all but disappeared from our landscape. The elm alone of all our native trees could stand almost anything we did on a construction site—anything, that is, except waterproofing (preventing water from reaching the roots). Oaks are tough, but not that tough. They can easily be damaged by allowing traffic under the canopy when the ground is soft; for example, I have seen heavy trucks lower the ground-level by a foot on a single pass, thus effectively strangling tree roots. The older the oak, the more easily it is damaged—sixty years being about the critical point.

Many landowners do not realize that the small trees they cut down to make room for work in progress are the only ones with a good chance of surviving. The large trees that are chosen to remain can't stand the changes and, since the small trees have been removed, a new canopy cannot be formed and the whole forest will be gone in a year or two. An oak forest with enough vigorous young trees to form a canopy is one of the very few forests which can survive development. Trees affect real estate values; thus when young oaks have survived to be old, giving the neighbourhood a well-furnished appearance, we find addresses like The Kingsway and North Drive becoming the haunts of the rich.

From one end of Metro to the other, new developments have been built in woodlands. Where the plan of subdivision requires fully-serviced dwellings on regular-sized lots, not one tree can be expected to be surviving after five years. Also, the usual carelessness and lack of supervision, unattended by expensive penalties, makes non-destructive development impossible in or near woodlands.

The obvious lesson to be learned from the Metro experience is for the Regions to preserve good woodlots together with buffer areas. Metro has found that Valley Impact Zones are necessary around valleys, and Halton and Waterloo have found that uses of land adjacent to environmentally sensitive areas must be compatible.

Two areas in Metro that show the appreciation Torontonians have for trees are Queen's Park and Prospect Cemetery. Both native and exotic trees are grown. Prospect Cemetery sports the only mature turkey oak in Metro, and Queen's Park the only mature pedunculate oak. Both trees are good sources of seeds. (Keep acorns damp and plant at once. Acorns, if allowed to dry out, may die.) Estates such as Graydon Hall in North York sometimes have trees that are especially valuable because they are rare for the region. The pin oaks there belong in this rare oak category.

The largest white oaks we have found are located on vacant lots on Clarendon Crescent just above the old Lake Iroquois shoreline. These best specimens in Metro are of regional importance and should be protected and cared for as a valued part of our heritage. Some sites should have special care and protection—such as High Park where black oak is at the northern limit of its distribution. It is suspected that "grooming" may be the cause of the decline of the oaks in High Park. The drain of nutrients resulting from the continual raking and tidying has probably caused progressive malnutrition. Could we put up with a little shagginess for the sake of tree-vigour? Would unmowed native grasses, sedges and herbs cause less competition with the trees? Should the mowed lawn area be more restricted?

Still to be found are the best red, bur and swamp white oaks. Perhaps white oak specimens exist that are better than those we have listed so far. When we visit an old oak such as Mrs. Simcoe's tree in the park opposite the Castle Frank subway station, we gain a feeling for its age and strength by remembering that it was probably a full-grown tree

when the Simcoes arrived here in the 1790's.

When we look at oak trees, we try to pick out recognizable characteristics. All oaks have bunched buds (and bunched twigs that grow from them) and most oaks hold at least a few leaves over the winter. Though many different leaf-shapes occur on one tree, native oaks have a family resemblance and can be recognized as oaks even at a great distance. A bur oak has stipules at the base of some of the leaf-stems; a black oak has fuzzy buds. The corkscrew growth-pattern of the European pedunculate oak, coupled with its large size, is diagnostic. The Carolinian shingle oak is just hardy here.

Of the three survivor species in southern Ontario—oak, hickory and hawthorn—oak is the most important as far as urban forests are concerned. Hawthorn is not often tolerated in an urban area and there are very few hickories.

What is it about the oak that makes it a survivor? Oaks have both shallow roots and a very strong, deep root-system. They are able to withstand drought and even grow new roots when damage occurs. Oaks also have strong wood and bark—strong enough to withstand both lawnmowers and climbers, even when the trees are still young. And, so far, they have had no epidemic diseases in the Metro area. I keep my fingers crossed, for oak-wilt is on the horizon.

Can we keep our oaks? If we want to, it will mean keeping them in vigorous growing condition so that diseases are not likely to damage them. It will mean refraining from digging trenches, from using biocides or soil sterilants, from waterproofing the ground or altering soil contours near trees. It will also mean using more earthworms, more humus, more air, more water and more care.

Treasure the oaks! They have the best chance of all the species in this region of surviving in good condition near people. They are difficult to kill. An oak will survive for a few hundred years if we let it.

Mary Smith

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Tuesday, Sept. 29 - SERENGETI LIONS - Jeannette Hanby & David Bygott

Mon., Nov. 23 - QUEBEC WHALES AND LABRADOR TALES - Tom Sterling

Wed., Jan. 6/82 - GIFTS OF AN EAGLE - Kent Durden

Thurs., Feb. 4/82 - NEW ZEALAND: WILDERNESS FROM THE SEA - Grant Foster

Tues., March 16/82 - LAND OF THE SHORTGRASS PRAIRIE - Lorne Wallace

Season tickets $12.00. Send cheque payable to Toronto Field Naturalists to Jack Gingrich, 225 Coldstream Avenue, Toronto M5N 1Y4 or obtain your tickets at the first film-showing. Single tickets $3.00 at the door.

RAVINE CLEAN-UP PROJECT A BIG SUCCESS

At the north end of Dacre Crescent near High Park is a small enclosed ravine about ten acres in size. About half of the ravine-floor is wet, with watercress and cattails growing in it; the other half is dry, with brambles, Manitoba maples, goldenrods, and birch trees. The west slope consists of the terraced gardens of private homes. The north slope is sand-fill and mostly covered with quack-grass, riverbank grape, and Japanese knotweed. On the east slope are old beech and oak trees. The slopes are very steep, so have been relatively undisturbed.

By any description, you can imagine a beautiful scene, and so it is - but until recently the opposite was true. It was a place for litter to accumulate. Anything that would roll had been shoved over the brink, and paper covered about half the total area of the north slope. As far back as I can remember, this slope had been littered. I often went birding there after High Park became over-crowded, and found it very peaceful and quiet, with a view of Grenadier Pond and Lake Ontario. The only problem was the litter. I made a conscious decision to try to get the place cleaned up.

My first thought was to get financial help from the people in the neighbourhood, as I knew they would be concerned. I thought about getting Boy Scouts to collect pledges as they do for a walk-a-thon or bike-a-thon. My thinking was that, if people would give a donation to a kid to ride his bike around in circles, they would surely give funds for someone to beautify their neighbourhood. I talked to the Boy Scouts of Canada about the pledge-collecting idea to pay for cleaning up the ravine. They liked my idea but thought it would be easier to get some of their own boys to volunteer time to pick up the litter. I told them it was not a good idea as the slopes were unstable, easily eroded, and very steep; there was too much chance of someone falling and being injured. Also, all those kids running up and down the hills would surely cause problems. Furthermore, we might get charged with trespassing, for I didn't even know who owned the land. I discussed all this with a junior executive of the Boy Scouts and I'm sure that is as far as it got.

It occurred to me that perhaps I was going about this the wrong way. The work and expense involved in printing forms, obtaining pledges, and collecting money would require many man-hours which could be utilized in a more practical way. Possibly the owners would clean up voluntarily. How could I find out who owned the land? The most logical source of such information, I thought, would be the City Hall. I went to the Information Attendant at the entrance and she directed me about twenty feet to my right, to the Assessment Department. The staff there will tell you who owns any property in Toronto. I was told the land was leased by Loblaws Ltd. and some of it was public. This led to a letter to the President of Loblaws Ltd. stating my concerns and offering

my services at minimum wage. A short time later I was contacted by a Mr. Bennett of the Maintenance Department who was willing to negotiate with me. I spoke to the gentleman and quoted him a price. At first he refused my offer, saying my price was too low and that he would rather pay more to get the job completed in a short time with more workers than just myself. Fortunately Mark Kubisz mentioned to me that he would gladly help me for $4.00 an hour. The contracts were signed and Loblaws even took care of delivering the container.

Today the slope looks green and beautiful. Mark and I hauled out car-doors, lumber, shopping-buggies, drums, and fifteen tires, as well as bags and bags of paper and plastic. We ended up with a thirty-cubic-yard container half full of junk.

Sometimes, if you complain to the right people, much can be accomplished. In this case, I succeeded in supplying myself with some much-needed work, in giving a job to Mark for spending-money, and in making happy everyone in the neighbourhood, including myself. While we were cleaning up the mess, the birds were definitely singing a little louder than usual. I wonder if they realized what was happening?

Roger Powley

Geological Highway Map, Northern Ontario, 1980: Ontario Geological Survey Map 2440. Price $1.00 plus tax. Available from Ontario Government Book Shop, 880 Bay Street.

For those who wonder about what's under them as they drive along our highways, this recently published map and the one for Southern Ontario, published several years ago, are a must to carry in the glove-compartment. This map is beautifully coloured and has all explanations in both French and English.

Helen Juhola

ALL THOSE GULLS EVERYONE IS TALKING ABOUT . . . .

The City Hall Property Department is stringing fishing line about at the pool at City Hall and they claim there are now fewer gulls in that area, but the pigeons are not discouraged, and in fact may be more numerous since people feed them instead of the gulls. We hear that people with high balconies are using fishing line to keep off the pigeons, to good effect. Can you suggest other methods to discourage gulls and pigeons? We would be interested in hearing of them.

M.E.

THIS MONTH'S COVER

"Group of Nut-trees", drawn by Mary Cumming, August 23, 1981

Pignut Hickories - that's what we are calling them until we get an identification from their flowers next spring.

The three trees in a close circle were discovered by our members on one of the outings, on the steep slope below Castle Frank School. They certainly are hickories, but their features do not tally with the other two hickories familiar in this region. The bark is deeply furrowed into diamond-shapes with very smooth bark between the fissures - just as pictured and described for the Pignut Hickory (Carya glabra). The leaves, alternate on the twigs, have five to seven leaflets along the petiole, the three end ones being of equal size, and the lowest pair much smaller. The fruits are small, up to 1¼" (30 mm), egg-shaped with green, shiny husks which split half-way down to reveal the nut inside. The shell of the nut is thick, as shown to us by a hungry squirrel who had left us an empty shell. When the trees were re-examined late in August the winter-buds were formed - small and brown, with the end-buds still bearing the long-pointed outer scales.

So all-in-all the trees fall into the descriptions for pignuts (not a very nice name!) - but how did they get to Castle Frank when their range only just reaches Niagara from the south? Did Frankie Simcoe have the nut among his treasures from his forays at Niagara? Mrs. Simcoe in her diary for April 20, 1796, written at the half-finished house of "Castle Frank", says... "Francis is busy in planting currant bushes and peach trees".

...who knows what else a five-year-old boy might plant!

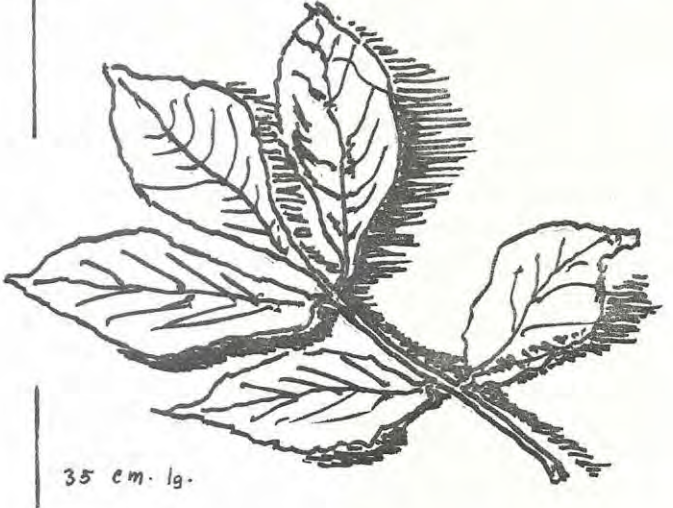
Emily Hamilton

References:

Native Trees of Canada. R.C.Hosie

Peterson guide, A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs. G.A.Petrides

Mrs. Simcoe's Diary. edited by M.Q.Innis



actual size of shrivelled nuts - dull brown - August/81

HIGH PARK: THE PLANT COMMUNITIES OF SPRING ROAD RAVINE

In contrast with the prairies and dry oak woodlands surrounding it, Spring Road Ravine contains a variety of moist and wet habitats. The lower slopes, with their thickets, contain a number of northern plants found nowhere else in High Park, and at the bottom, wet meadows and a marsh flourish. Seven regionally rare plant species, one of which is also provincially and nationally rare, are contained in the few acres of this ravine. Deep and relatively narrow, it tends to trap the heavier and colder air which drains into it from the surrounding uplands; hence it has a more abundant water supply and a cooler microclimate. It is coolest on the east-facing slope which is in shade most of the afternoon. Underlying the sandy substrate of the uplands is a layer of clay which forces water, percolating downward through the sand, to travel laterally, thus providing a ready supply of water where it seeps out at numerous sites along the lower slopes of the ravine.

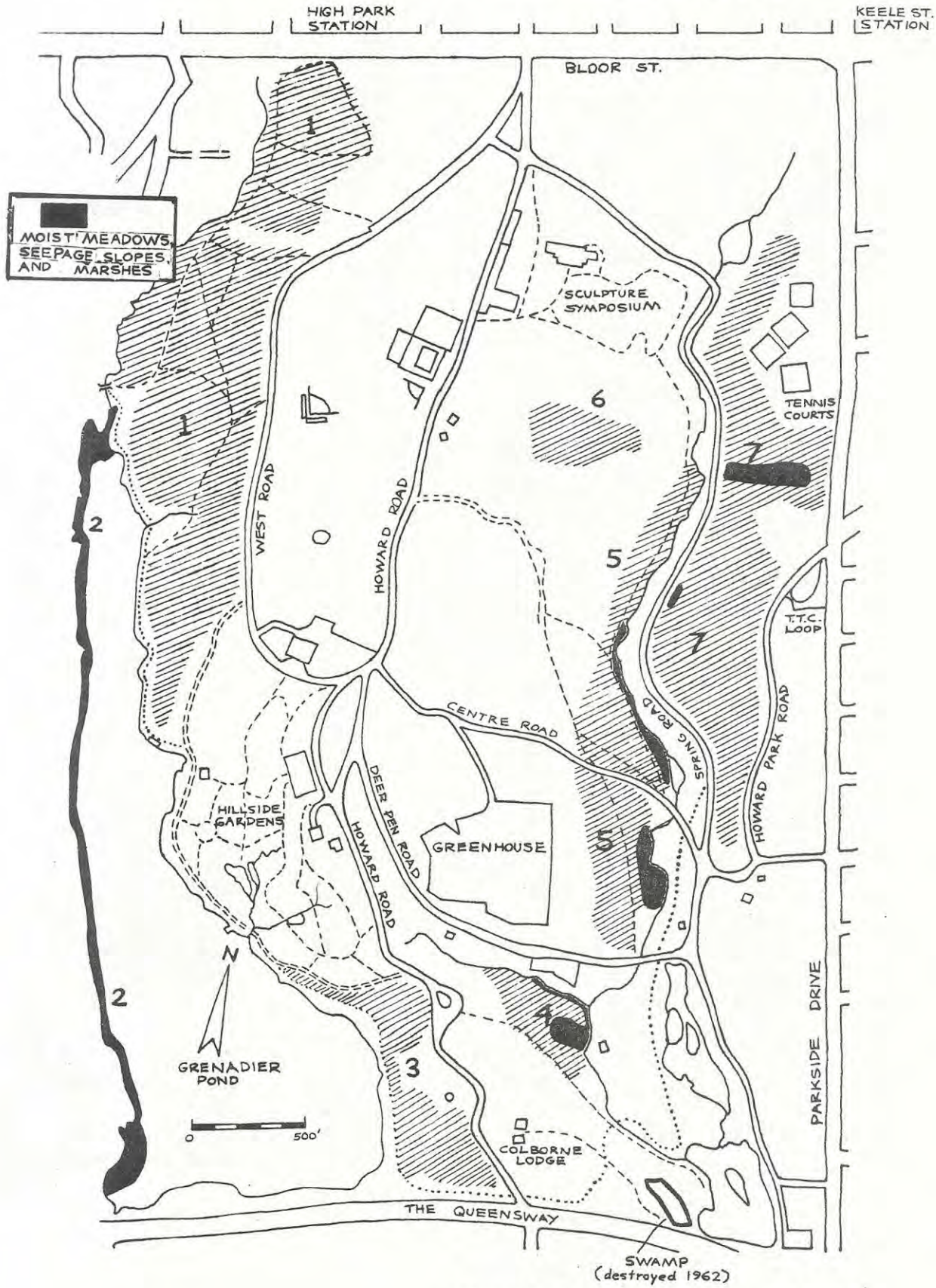
A prime example of a forest with dense understory in Spring Road Ravine occurs along an east-facing slope north of Centre Road (eastern part of ESA 5, see map on page 13). The lowest north-south footpath on this slope winds through a forest of red oak with a scattering of white birch, yellow birch, and red maple. A dense layer of tall shrubs is formed by round-leaved dogwood (*Cornus rugosa*), red osier dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*), beaked hazel (*Corylus cornuta*), speckled alder (*Alnus rugosa*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), and mountain maple (*Acer spicatum*). (The shrubby mountain maple - see illustration No. 1 (C) - is concentrated towards the moister base of the slope.)

In sharp contrast with the dry upland forest of black and red oak, within which only low shrubs and dry-ground summer-flowering herbs can be sustained, these seepage slopes support a number of spring-flowering herbs typical of moist woodlands. Included are such species as white trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), false Solomon's seal(*Smilacina racemosa*), *Carex pedunculata* (a sedge), and wood anemone (*Anemone quinquefolia*).

The cooling factors described produce the right microclimate for trailing arbutus, goldthread, bluebead lily and rose twisted-stalk, all typical of the boreal and mixed forest region. (See illustration No. 1 on page 14.) These species are completely absent from extreme southwestern Ontario. Mid-May is the optimum time to see most of them in flower.

Single clumps of trailing arbutus (*Epigea repens*) (I), and goldthread (*Coptis trifolia*) (G), both regionally rare plants once common in the park, are to be found at the start of the footpath just north of Centre Road. Goldthread is restricted to this one location in the park. A member of the buttercup family, its distinguishing features are its five- to seven-petalled white flowers, three evergreen leaflets, and fruits on long stalks. In Metropolitan Toronto it is known also to occur in a cedar swamp in the valley of the East Don River southeast of Finch and Bayview Avenues, and in a swamp in Morningside Park in the valley of Highland Creek. Trailing arbutus, a showy species with pink flowers and evergreen leaves (flowering as early as mid-April), was removed in great numbers by gardeners for transplanting into rockeries. A second clump occurs on the east side of Spring Road Ravine (ESA 7) in association with bunchberry. It is also known to occur in Glen Stewart Ravine but is unknown elsewhere in York County and Metropolitan Toronto.

Candidate Environmentally Significant Areas in High Park



adapted from Wainio, et. al (1976)

ILLUSTRATION NO.1

Farther north on this footpath, several large patches of bluebead lily (*Clintonia borealis*) (E), and bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*) (H) can be found. An uncommon species in our region, bluebead lily has large, fleshy leaves and, in fruit, its dark blue berries are distinctive. The four large, white "petals" of bunchberry are in fact bracts surrounding a cluster of minute flowers which, in the summer, develop into a dense cluster of red berries. A regionally rare species, it is also known to occur in Lambton Woods and in the Morningside swamp. Among the yellow and white flowers of these two plants, the red bell-shaped flowers of rose twisted-stalk (*Streptotopus roseus*) (A) can be seen frequently. An uncommon species in Metropolitan Toronto, it is typically found on cool hemlock and cedar slopes in our region.

In addition to the common woodland herbs and boreal species, one can also find along the footpath a few plant species typical of moist, slightly acidic sites. Indian cucumber-root (*Medeola virginiana*), with its two whorls of leaves, is a good example. It is usually found in slightly acidic woodlands in the mixed and southern deciduous forest regions of Ontario.

Below the footpath, foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*) (D) grows profusely in seepage areas along the slope's base. On the slightly drier slopes above the footpath, the yellow, five-petalled flowers of barren strawberry (*Waldsteinea fragarioides*) (F) are readily apparent in the spring. While not found in the boreal forest, this species is largely confined to the mixed forest region, being absent in southwestern Ontario.

An example of a forest with dense understory also occurs on a north-facing slope of a small ravine at the northern edge of ESA 4. Less diverse in plant-life, this area contains Indian cucumber-root, bunchberry and bluebead lily.

(continued on next page)

On the bottomlands of Spring Road Ravine, permanently-wet seepage areas are dominated by cutgrass (*Leersia oryzoides*), blue-joint grass(*Calamagrostis canadensis*), spotted touch-me-not (*Impatiens biflora*) and various sedges such as *Carex tribuloides* and *Carex pseudo-cyperus*. Once common in Spring Road Ravine, a large number of these wet meadows have been filled in and converted into formal parkland. Wet meadows are now restricted to the northern part of ESA 4, the central part of ESA 7, and the eastern side of ESA 5, especially south of Centre Road. On the third site mentioned, one can discover the regionally rare *Carex aquatilis* (See illustration 2, **this page**). A common sedge in northern Ontario, it becomes increasingly rare south of the Canadian Shield. As in all members of the *Carex* genus, the female flower is completely enclosed in a sac-like structure called the perigynium, while the male flower simply consists of a scale and stamens. In this species the perigynium is flattened and nerveless, with flowering stems arising centrally from tussocks of the dried-up bases of the previous year's leaves. Male and female flowers are on separate spikelets, with usually two or more male spikelets. Other regional localities for *Carex aquatilis* include the Toronto Islands and the Leslie Street Spit. Another sedge, *Carex laevivaginata*, a provincially and nationally rare species, is scattered throughout the wet meadow of ESA 7. In this sedge, the flowers are all concentrated on a dense terminal spike composed of numerous spikelets. Male flowers terminate each spikelet, while the long, narrow perigynia of the female flowers occur below. It is distinguished from the closely related *Carex stipata* by its smooth leaf-sheaths which are thickened and slightly concave at the distal end.

A depression in the centre of ESA 4 contains the only marsh in Spring Road Ravine. Yellow iris (*Iris pseudocorus*) grows here in abundance in association with cutgrass, water plantain (*Alisma lantago-aquatica*) and arrowhead (*Sagittaria latifolia*).

The destruction of a large number of High Park's wetter habitats makes it even more urgent that we preserve the few remaining examples. As recently as 1962 Spring Road Ravine had also a densely thicketed swamp - the only known site in Metropolitan Toronto for creeping snowberry (*Gaultheria*

ILLUSTRATION NO.2

hispidula) and royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*). Since then the swamp has been filled in to make way for a lawn with picnic tables.

Steve Varga

Reference:
Wainio, A., Barrie, J., Roswell J., and McIntosh, K.(1976). An Ecological Study of Grenadier Pond and the Surrounding Areas of High Park, Toronto. General Foods Limited

PETERSON'S BIRD-NAMES (AND THE A.O.U.)

Those who have the new Peterson A Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies may be perplexed by his use of American Birding Association English names, in some cases not the same as the American Ornithologists' Union "official" name as published in their checklist and addenda. (See TFN (334) 22-23,0 80.) We have been corresponding with the A.O.U. to try to establish which of the names in question have been adopted by A.O.U. Mr. Richard C. Banks of the A.O.U. Committee on Classification and Nomenclature has listed for us his "best guess" as to the name-changes which he expects to be adopted at their March, 1982, meeting after which the revised A.O.U. checklist will, it is hoped, go to press. (Publication projected for spring of 1983.)

Marked "O.K." are: American White Pelican, Northern Gannet, Masked Booby, American Black Duck, Eurasian Wigeon, Snail Kite, Northern Goshawk, Crested Caracara, Great Skua, South Polar Skua, Brown Noddy and Black Noddy (leaving out the word "tern" for a shorter name), Common Ground Dove, Greater Road Runner, Common Screech Owl, American Crow, Marsh Wren (not Long-billed), Sedge Wren (instead of Short-billed Marsh Wren - A.O.U. favours shorter names), Northern Mockingbird, Northern Wheatear, Eurasian Tree Sparrow, American Tree Sparrow. (Some decisions may be reversed.)

Names which probably will not change are Anhinga (not American), Common Murre (not Thin-billed), Eastern Wood-Pewee, Northern Parula (not adding the word "Warbler"), Dark-eyed Junco (not Northern), Great Black-backed Gull (not Greater), Common Raven (not Northern).

Names that probably will change - but not exactly as listed in Peterson are: Northern Pintail (not Common), Common Turkey (not Wild), Spot-breasted Oriole (not Spotted). (Northern Harrier vs Marsh Hawk not listed - my oversight.)

Still debatable are Lesser Golden Plover, Atlantic Puffin (vs Common), Little Tern (vs Least), European Starling, Northern Cardinal.

Appearing in our popular field-guides for the first time, Cahow will probably retain its former A.O.U. name, Bermuda Petrel.

Mr. Banks stresses that A.O.U. English bird-names are chosen as a standard for reference and are no more "correct" than any others.

Diana Banville

OUTINGS REPORT

June 1981

Ours to discover, that's what we've found this summer. The tradition of not having outings during the summer has been broken (19 outings were held in June). Four outings along the Black Creek discovered two colonies of Bank Swallows (June 3), two large stands of the locally rare Cup Plant (June 17, 24) and witnessed the emergence of robber flies from pupae (June 10). Some of the botanical discoveries on the High Park outings included wild lupines (June 4), Solomon's Seal in great profusion (June 10) and a White Spruce reforestation project (June 17). One of our latest spring migrants, an Olive-sided Flycatcher, was found in the park on June 3.

The outing of June 6 enabled a busload of our members to discover Sibbald's Point Provincial Park. It was a perfect day, warm, sunny, cool lake breezes and no mosquitoes. Highlights of the day included about 50 species of birds, a generous assortment of heritage trees (a 130 year-old European Weeping Ash, an immense White Pine, and Ontario's largest Austrian Pine and Norway Spruce), a small patch of Sweet Flag, and a visit to St. George's church and the graves of Stephen Leacock and Mazo de la Roche.

Numerous discoveries are made on every outing. On June 13 (Humber Marshes) an impressive 70 species of plants and 20 birds were reported, on June 20 (East Don) adults were feeding young in a Northern Oriole's nest on the ground (the nest had blown down a day or so previously), heritage trees on June 7 (Rosedale) and insects on June 20 (Lambton Woods) - excerpts from the latter two reports give a picture of the variety of discoveries made this summer.

June 7 - "We explored the area bounded by Moore Park Ravine, the old Lake Iroquois shoreline, Mt. Pleasant Road and Moore Avenue. We saw many examples of old white and red oaks - mostly less than 100 years - and two examples of American Beech over 100 years old. The highlight was a 200 year Bittermut Hickory. We were looking at healthy trees older than 100 years, old rare healthy trees - e.g. the hickory, trees of historic interest, and trees of particularly good form or unusual form."

June 20 - "Visited Lambton Woods and Lambton Park (contrasting habitats). With the use of many books and much discussion we identified insects, trees, mammals (muskrat), reptiles (garter snake), wildflowers (Frostweed), birds (a Mallard with seven ducklings). Galls were of particular interest, as well we looked at various beetles, flies, true bugs, bees, a grasshopper and butterflies. A request was made for more insect outings! A wonderful day of good companionship, shared interest and enthusiasm and fine weather in a gorgeous outdoor setting!"

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

June 2	Nordheimer Ravine	Herb. Elliott	(20)
June 3	Black Creek (2)	Liz Knight	(10)
June 3	High Park	Roger Powley	(20)
June 4	High Park	Isabel Smith	(9)
June 6	Sibbald's Point	Bruce Parker	(45)
June 7	Rosedale	Helen Juhola	(31)
June 9	Vale of Avoca	Howard Battae	(21)

June 10	Black Creek (3)	Jirina Jelinowicz	(13)
June 10	High Park	Ross Davidson	(12)
June 11	Crother's Woods	Patricia McCaw	(16)
June 13	Humber Marshes	John Harris	(21)
June 14	G. Ross Lord Dam	John ten Bruggenkate	(11)
June 17	Black Creek (4)	Isabel Smith, Helen Smith	(21)
June 17	High Park	Ross Davidson	(7)
June 20	Lambton Woods	Helen Juhola	(10)
June 21	East Don	Jack Cranmer-Byng	(20)
June 24	Black Creek (5)	Diana Park	(16)
June 24	High Park	Joyce Cave	-
June 27	Backus Woods	Steve Varga	-

Bruce D. Parker

THE EYE
One of Mother Nature's Most Astonishing Creations

The human eye is one of the most efficient in nature; it has 'cones' for color, center, and acute vision, and 'rods' for dim light-conditions and side-vision.

BATS have 'rods' only, thus allowing them to see in the dark.
CHICKENS have 'cones' only, and can only see in daytime.
EAGLES can spot a fish two miles away.
FROGS are entirely short sighted.
BEES have twelve thousand eyes!

TEARS, like a windshield-washer fluid, keep eyes moist and clean.
EYELIDS, like windshield-wipers, wash eyes.
EYELASHES prevent dust and other particles from entering eyes.
EYE-BROWS stop rain and perspiration from entering eyes.

THE PUPIL regulates the amount of light entering the eye — it opens wide in the dark and closes up in bright light.
THE IRIS, the colored part, contains a little muscle which changes the size of the pupil automatically.
THE CORNEA is like the crystal of a watch; it protects the inside of the eye and lets you see clearly.
THE LENS focusses the light which passes through the eye.
THE RETINA is like the film in a camera -- it lines the back of the eye and contains the rods and cones.

As in a camera, the picture is received by THE RETINA upside-down ... then in a millionth of a second the brain turns it right-side-up again.

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR EYES ... BECAUSE THEY LOOK OUT FOR YOU.

--Courtesy Canadian National Institute for the Blind in co-operation with the publishers, Colour Picture Prospecting Services Limited and Walt Disney Productions.

JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE REPORT

Here are some more excerpts from my journal on the reserve:

March 29, 1981. A call from Arthur Winnington-Ball who lives close to the reserve, reporting a grass fire approaching the reserve from the southwest; the Uxbridge fire department had been notified. One hour later when I arrived, the fire was out, it had crossed the reserve fence just south of the parking lot and had damaged a few small trees. Many thanks to Arthur Winnington-Ball and the fire department for their prompt action. I spoke to our western neighbour on whose property the blaze started; apparently a grass-burning had got out of control. It was a gusty day, southwest winds and very dry conditions; not a wise day for fires. While I was up there I made contact with our other neighbours, Brian and Brenda Moore to the west along sideroad, and Mr. and Mrs. Duedney, new owners of what was once the Mukatoo Farm, our neighbours to the south. Exchanged 'phone numbers and presented complimentary copies of the nature reserve guidebook for their information, which lets them know what the reserve is all about.

April 18, 1981. Easter Sunday. Met J. McLean at the bridge while I was checking the signs along the sideroad. The bridge is always a good spot for swallows. I found the reserve sign down for the second time, replaced it temporarily - no more "good" trees left. Vandals or winds? Also removed fallen trees at the blue rectangle and white trapezoid trails junction, the high water table and shifting streams in this location probably account for the high frequency of downed trees. The open section between the parking lot and the entrance to the Ingrid and white circle trails is very wet, ankle deep in parts. It will require lots of reinforcing. I use cedar logs, 24" long, cut from fallen trees throughout the property. The trees have to be located, trunks cleared, moved to sawing area, and cut logs stockpiled prior to placement in wet areas. This is strenuous work and I will need lots of help. If you will be able to assist on September 20 or October 18, please call me. I'll probably rent a chain-saw for the day.

May 31, 1981. Too many bugs in the bush so most work done on the open sections. Many flowers out; foamflowers, bunchberry, goldthread, blue-eyed grass and strawberry. Thick growth on trails means hard work. Two lady members checked sideroad fencing and signs. Mudhole on sideroad where the cement truck overturned last year is still treacherous - had to pull my son's friend out quickly as he was in above his knees in no time!

July 4, 1981. Met Mr. Church at reserve. I worked on the red trails along the river. Heavy rain and thunderstorms most of the afternoon and early evening. Bullfrogs my only company. Some of the heaviest growth occurs along here. Patch of poison ivy at W1000 - N1600.

Anyone fancy a late September canoe trip on the Uxbridge Brook from the Leaskdale bridge to the reserve? If sufficient interest I will try to arrange one. Call me.

John Lowe-Wylde
284 - 5628

A Naturalist's Code of Ethics

BEATITUDES FOR BOTANISTS

Blessed are they who arrange to have their leader mid-way on the path, to ensure everyone can hear about the plant under study. Discussions in the field are always welcome.

Blessed are they who have the kit habit (flower guide-book, magnifying glass, pencil and paper) for notes made in the field are invaluable references when back at home base.

Blessed are the photographers who take their shots after the group has gone ahead, so as not to hinder its progress.

Blessed are they who keep to the path, lest some special plant be denied its chance to grow because of a BIG FOOT EPIDEMIC.

Blessed are they who leave the flowers for others to enjoy. As the jewelweed says, 'TOUCH ME NOT'.

Blessed are they who set a goal and meet the challenge of learning a new plant on every outing. Why not start a life-list of plants?

Blessed are they who take to the trail often - for by this practice they will surely have more than NODDING acquaintance with the orchids - and find it BELLWORT their time. Even the lowly WEED is not to be SNEEZED at.

May Staples

PRAYER OF THE WOODS

I am the heat of your hearth on the cold winter nights, the friendly shade softening you from the summer sun, and my fruit are refreshing draughts quenching your thirst as you journey on. I am the beam that holds your house, the board of your table, the bed on which you lie, and the timber which builds your boat, I am the handle of your hoe, the door of your homestead, the wood of your cradle, and the shell of your coffin. I am the bread of kindness and the flower of beauty. Ye who pass by, listen to my prayer. "Harm me not."

observed at the start of a nature trail in the southern USA by
Elna and Mel Whiteside, February 1981

people

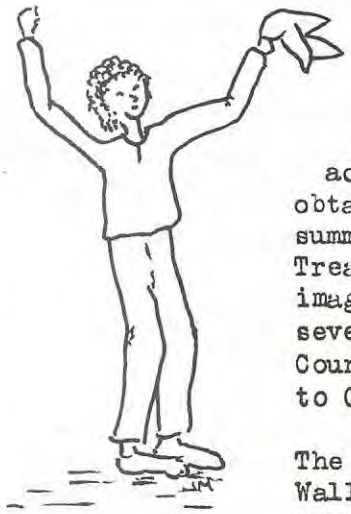
CLIVE GOODWIN, Former President of TFN

Clive Goodwin is an ardent naturalist who came to Canada from England several years ago. He has conducted bird-watching expeditions and written many articles and pamphlets on birds, including A Bird Finding Guide to the Toronto Region. He served as executive director of the Conservation Council of Ontario for thirteen years and is currently Ontario Editor of American Birds.

For the past four years, Clive has been Director of the Civic Garden Centre and is now launching out as a free-lance naturalist - conducting courses, leading tours, writing articles and photographing nature subjects. We wish him well in this new phase of his life.

F.P.

AU REVOIR and THANK YOU



Two of our most active working members have been wafted away. LINDA CARDINI has been a member of the Board of Directors and acted as the Board's Secretary for some of the time. She has also been active in environmental issues. As Linda's husband obtained a job in Florida, the family moved there this summer. WALLACE PLATTS has been our very efficient Treasurer for the past year and a half. He made some imaginative suggestions regarding outings and led several for the TFN. He also did his own "Carless Count" for the Birdathon. Wally has been transferred to Calgary by his company.

The TFN appreciates the contribution made by Linda and Wally and wishes them happiness and success in their new homes and exciting naturalist activities.

UPDATE
CHICKADEES NESTING IN CITY
(TFN (336) 6-7, D 80)

Moore Avenue...1981

May 8,	... Chickadees seen sitting on nest
May 18	... 4 eggs observed in nest
May 31	... 6 eggs in nest
June 3	... 4 young have been hatched
June 6	... all 6 young have been hatched
June 18	... 6 young left nest while Mrs. Thompson was out for lunch.
May 10	... While the chickadees were nesting in the sweet cherry, blue jays were nesting in white spruce, robins in Norway spruce and house sparrows in the eaves.

Helen Juhola

A SURVEY OF ONTARIO BIRD LITERATURE - Part 7

BUTEOS to OSPREY

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Golden Eagle - continued

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Bruce D. Parker

A NATURALIST RE-DISCOVERS THE HUMBER VALLEY

Albion Road to Lawrence Avenue

It had rained intermittently during the night and I was awakened by the ominous rumbling of thunder in the west. This was July 23, the day of one of the TFN's weekly nature walks along the Humber River. Although the weather was doing very little for my enthusiasm, I was consoled by the thought that it could be entirely different some 130 kilometers to the south.

Fortified with an appetizing breakfast prepared by Marion, I packed my lunch once again. On my way to Toronto I drove through several torrential downpours, and it was not until I had reached Holland Marsh that a definite clearing trend became evident. We were to meet where Albion Road crosses the Humber River. In searching for a parking place, I headed for the intersection of Wilson Avenue and Weston Road (the site of my boyhood home and the focal point of my early activities as a naturalist). Amidst the deafening roar of the traffic and the blaring of car horns, I stopped, started, turned, and swerved in my attempt to find the Wilson Avenue turn-off. Finally I found refuge in the parking lot of a small shopping centre. Although I was aware that my parents' home had been demolished to make way for the construction of the 401, it was not until this moment that I discovered - upon referral to my street map - that a portion of Wilson Avenue had been completely obliterated. At the site of the former intersection stood a shopping centre and other buildings.

Engulfed in the maelstrom of humanity, I thought about the incredible complexities of the human mind, especially the ability to recreate at will a mental image of the past; a panorama was slowly taking shape. From my vantage point in the parking lot, I visualized the long snake-rail fence of some sixty years ago. It had bounded the old Albion Road (Weston Road) and meadows where cattle peacefully grazed and Bobolinks poured forth their liquid melodies from the fence-tops. The picket fence in front of our home had stood directly across the road. Often on a long summer's evening I had stood there with my brothers studying the stars or listening to the sound of an occasional oncoming car. We could usually identify its make and model by the peculiar engine sound - unforgettable in an era when roaring aircraft had not yet invaded the skies. I remembered our rural mail box to which, for a number of years, our mail was delivered by horse and buggy. The box itself was mounted at the site of a former toll-gate (so my grandfather informed me). It had been constructed to help finance the maintenance of the original corduroy-and-plank road that ran through the Town of Weston and followed the course of the present Albion Road to Thistletown and Claireville. Beyond the fence stood our house and property, flanked by pasture fields and, here and there, a stately elm tree. The hillside behind the house overlooked the Stevens farm and the beautiful Humber Valley. A portion of this had become an extension of the Weston Golf Course during the 1914-18 world war. Now all this had been totally tranformed into the 401 highway. A winding path led down our hillside to the river. On the opposite bank grew a giant buttonwood tree *(Platanus occidentalis)*. Two smaller specimens were to be found in the bordering woods. A short distance

upstream I once discovered a colony of white trout lilies *(Erythronium albidum)*. I also found a strange-looking plant growing among a colony of bloodroots *(Sanguinaria canadensis)*. Its general appearance suggested bloodroot but its leaves were quite different in form. I looked for a picture in our Schuyler Mathews Field Book (of 1908) but with no success. Half a century later on April 28, 1973, about 3 kms. downstream, and in a similar habitat, I rediscovered my mystery plant - the rare twinleaf *(Jeffersonia diphylla)*, a close relative of the bloodroot. It gave me great satisfaction to know that it was growing in a well-protected spot; I hoped it would be spared the fate of its sisters which, like those other Carolinian species, the white trout lilies and the buttonwoods, had eventually been extirpated from the area which had once been my home.

I hurried to join my fellow naturalists as they approached the river from Weston Road at the 401. At the entrance to the river valley, I could picture the long swing-bridge which had spanned the river, giving access from Albion Road to the Stevens farm on the Etobicoke side. Several hundred meters downstream we followed a terrace on the floodplain which had for many years supported a number of dwellings, all totally demolished with great loss of life as a result of Hurricane Hazel on the disastrous night of October 15, 1954. Three times I saw this valley flooded, twice with loss of life. History reveals that it had happened many times before and common sense should warn us that it could happen again.

The land formation suddenly changed to high shale cliffs which, as children, we had foolishly scaled in search of fossils. As a result of a very wet season, the water level of the river was higher than usual. So, rather than attempt to walk along the foot of the cliff, our leader had planned a somewhat circuitous route away from the river. We followed Fairglen Crescent back up to Weston Road. On this higher ground, the heavily populated area from Fairglen Crescent to Dee Avenue, had stood a mixed forest with white pine *(Pinus strobus)* the dominant species. Somewhere along the present Fairglen Crescent had been a little spring, its route to the river now probably enclosed in a sewer. We walked south along Weston Road through an old section of Weston where only minor changes had taken place, the most notable being the disappearance of a grove of tamarack *(Larix laricina)*, presumably removed to make way for the construction of a factory. At St. Phillips Road we re-entered the valley. On the west side of the river, some 150 meters north of the bridge, had stood the Wadsworth sawmill and the dam which had made it possible to float logs down to the mill from several miles upstream. Some of them, Mr. Welsh had once told us, originated in his woods on Rogers sideroad (now Sheppard Avenue). This was also the dam where he and my grandfather, lifelong friends, had for many years filled their horse-drawn wagons with salmon which each year came up the river to spawn. And it was during my boyhood, long after the dam and the mill had been dismantled, that the site became the town's favourite swimming hole.

We scrambled down the steep bank at the edge of the bridge. On a wedge of land just across the river was the location, in the late 1700s, of the original Hamlet of Weston. It had consisted of Wadsworth's grist mill, a store, several small shops, and about a dozen dwellings which had survived

a number of floods before being completely demolished in a disastrous flood in about 1850. The mill was rebuilt and for many years prospered. I can recall the horse-drawn mill-wagons passing us on the main street as we made our way to school in Weston.

We proceeded south to Cruikshank Park. Above us on the cliff-top - once the site of a quiet main street with modest homes and gardens - high-rise apartments towered. At one place it was rather frightening to see a structural steel beam projecting into space from the top of the cliff where softer sedimentary substances were slowly eroding. As we followed the river's edge I searched for some sign of the Cruikshank dam and mill-race, but all traces of this landmark had disappeared.

When our walk ended at Lawrence Avenue, we had added to our plant list only two species, both early-blooming goldenrods *(Solidago juncea and S. graminifolia)*. I must confess I had observed the many changes in this section of the historical Humber - once so luxuriant and beautiful - with bewilderment.

- Bill Cattley

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MELON SEEDS

Is there no end to the list of things that "I used to throw away but now have to use carefully?" Of all things, my book on bird feeding lists melon seeds as a favorite of cardinals. And only last year I was prevailed on to try melon seed milk as a summer cooler. It turned out to be great, because it contains enough protein to circumvent the "I'm too hot to be bothered" syndrome, and besides, it is delicious. If I ever get a tasteless melon, though, I might think of those cardinals and see if it is true that they have acquired a taste for melon seeds. Squash, pumpkin and pepper seeds are worth trying too.

Mary Smith

Wanted BACK COPIES OF ONTARIO FIELD BIOLOGIST...

TFN would like to assemble some complete sets of the Ontario Field Biologist. If you have copies to donate, please contact Bruce Parker, 449-0994 (or any member of the Editorial Committee).

TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS, JUNE-JULY, 1981

Common Loons were heard calling offshore east of "The Beaches" during July (LG) and at least four or five summered off Cranberry Marsh and one was at the Eastern Headland on July 26 (BP). No unusual herons were reported but at Cranberry Marsh Great Blue Herons showed the post-breeding dispersal which is typical of the family - only six were present on July 12; their numbers increased to 88 on July 24 and to 120 on July 31 (BP). The colony of Black-crowned Night Herons on Mugg's Island consisted of about 110 pairs this summer (TBO, DB) and a few pair also nested on the Eastern Headland.

Mute Swans continue to increase, a total of 31 found at Whitby and Cranberry Marsh on July 12 included four family groups (BP). Cranberry Marsh is by far the best place in the region to see summering waterfowl: Gadwall, Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, American Widgeon and Wood Duck were all present in early July. Blue-winged Teal numbers increased by the end of the month and at least 300 were present at Cranberry on July 31 (BP). Diving ducks, which also prefer this area included a Common Golden-eye, an Oldsquaw, a Hooded Merganser and a few Common and Red-breasted Mergansers (BP). A small flock of Greater and Lesser Scaup summered at the Humber Bay Park (JK).

Shorebirds began to migrate early in July and by the middle of the month the list of arrivals included Ruddy Turnstone, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, Pectoral Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Least and Semipalmated Sandpiper (AD, JK).

Ring-billed Gulls were so numerous throughout the city that they were being labelled as a "nuisance" in some shopping plazas and parks. The colony on the Eastern Headland has now grown into one of the largest in North America, this summer 75,000 pairs nested on the spit. The first Toronto region nesting of Ring-billed Gulls was on Mugg's Island in 1962, about 1973 they began to nest on the Eastern Headland.

Most of the passerines which were reported resulted from field work done in connection with the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas project. Twenty-four Cliff Swallow nests were found under the Etobicoke Creek Bridge at Eglinton Avenue in late June (CG). Two reports of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were received, the first was a pair in the Don River Valley south of Finch Avenue on June 12 (BP) and the second was of a family of four in the Rouge River Valley on June 24 (JC). A Warbling Vireo's nest was found at Cranberry Marsh on May 24 (AH, RH, BW). Warblers presented a mixed image of a family with late migrants in early June (a Magnolia and a Connecticut Warbler at Pine Hills Cemetery on June 1 (BP)), summering and possibly breeding birds (Black-and-white and Mourning Warblers in the Rouge Valley (JC), and a pair of Cerulean Warblers at Pine Hills Cemetery on June 1 (BP), and early migrants (a Tennessee Warbler in the Rouge Valley on July 18 (JC) and another at Edwards Gardens later in the month (CG) and a Northern Waterthrush along the lakeshore at Whitby on July 31 (BP). Breeding was suggested when the female House Finch which had been visiting a Willowdale feeder stopped coming even though the male continued to visit regularly at least to mid-June (MS, JS, BP). A singing male House Finch was found in Cedarvale Ravine on July 2 (JC). The last of the lingering Pine Siskins were one or two which remained until early June in Mississauga (WM).

No documentation has yet been received on the summer's most interesting nesting reports - a pair of Mockingbirds in Ajax (RN) and a pair of Orchard Orioles in Etobicoke (RN, DB).

Contributors: Dave Broughton, Jack Cranmer-Byng, Arnold Dawe, Clive Goodwin, Laura Greer, Anne Hansen, Robert Hansen, John Kelley, Rob Nisbet, Bruce Parker, June Smith, Mac Smith, Bill Wilson, Toronto Bird Observatory.

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.

Bruce D. Parker

PERENNIALS AND PHEASANT MANURE

Establishing a perennial bed has been very difficult. First, the delphinium stems were broken twenty centimetres from the ground, although the plants were not eaten. Since they had a reputation for being difficult to grow, I replaced them with Oriental Poppies, but they, too, were decimated. The nearby Maltese Cross(es) were similarly attacked. In addition, there was a strange depression in the soil near the plants. No such symptoms were described in the pests section of the gardening books. Would I ever become an intermediate gardener? I seemed destined to be a perennial novice or an annual-grower.

Then one July day I spied a groundhog in the clover near the perennial bed. Had I finally discovered the culprit? As it casually nibbled on a green salad, under my close scrutiny, a pheasant strutted past, and proceeded directly to the garden. To my amazement the pheasant began to have a dust bath in the garden soil, scratching earth and showering it about while pecking constantly and flapping its wings. This abandoned frenzy continued until our neighbour came whistling along with his German Shepherd; whereupon the pheasant prudently retreated into the shrubbery. Having just returned from a backpacking expedition covered with black fly and no-see-um bites, I could sympathize with the pheasant's behaviour. Besides, it's not every gardener that can boast a pheasant-wallow.

This winter another incident involving a pheasant occurred which further tried our patience. Ron came home from work and found a pheasant in our bedroom, squawking and running frantically about. It had flown through the double window, and it took two people to catch it and fling it back out. Smithereens of glass were all over the room, and the shag rug was well fertilized. The insurance policy was the standard one hundred dollars deductible to replace the window, so it was a costly visit. Ron threatened in his haste to stop feeding the birds -- but then the Varied Thrush appeared.

Joan O'Donnell

*The Great American Forest by Rutherford Platt, published by Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1965, 271 pp. Illustrations: B&W Photos 31; Block-prints 19.

This is a new way to look at each strand in the web of life, as it relates to the forest and to us. Chapter-titles such as "Wilderness Traces", "The First Forests", "The Deciduous Idea", "River of Sap", "The Tallest, The Oldest, The Strangest..." will give you some idea of the intriguing content. Reads like a story. A very interesting synthesis of ideas about trees.

Mary Smith

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*The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation by John A. Livingston, published by McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto 1981. 117 pages, $14.95.

"The tiger is already an integral part of me and his fate is mine". "You and the pigeon pulse as one, you always did". Until all of us reach this level of acceptance of the non-human world we will continue to look for reasons for preserving wildlife.

In beautifully orchestrated English, John Livingston discusses the many arguments we use for preserving wildlife and then shows how theyultimately flounder because of the way we think about our role on earth.

The book cannot be read lightly because of the detail in its tapestry, but should be a must for all who are concerned about wildlife conservation.

J.M.

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* Bird Banding in Canada, published by CWS. A new folder available free from: Distribution Section, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa K1A 0E7. Describes history and methods of bird-banding in Canada, particularly the operations of CWS, with reading list.

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Note: If you would like to review a book you have read or select something from TFN Library to review, please call 690-1963. You will note we often review books which are not new. This is because they are in our library and we hope to review as many as possible.

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A Field Guide to the Trees of Britain and Northern Europe by Alan Mitchell, published by Collins, 1974. Recommended by Roger Powley.

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*Available from TFN Library, 690-1963.

THE OAKS OF THE TORONTO REGION

POINTED LOBES:

RED OAK (Quercus rubra) - This is the most common oak in Toronto as it is a native and is also used in landscaping. It takes much practice to separate this tree from the less common black oak. If acorns are available, the red oak fruit is very large comparatively. Fine samples of red oak grow in the Beaches area.

BLACK OAK (Quercus velutina) - High Park is the best place in the city to see these native trees. This is the dominant oak on the high ground in the park just south of Bloor Street. The buds are generally white and larger than those of the red oak.

PIN OAK (Quercus palustris) - One fine example of this oak is on Glendon campus just off bayview Avenue. The deeply-cut sinuses extend nearly to the midrib. This tree does not grow this far north normally but can survive in sheltered locations.

SCARLET OAK (Quercus coccinea) - The leaves look similar to those of the black oak but the bark of a mature tree is much smoother. If fruit is available, the acorns have a shallow large-scaled cap. Mature trees are uncommon in the city. The only specimens have been planted, such as those at Graydon Hall.

ROUNDED LOBES:

WHITE OAK (Quercus alba) - This is another common native oak in the city. Acorns are large. See "Oak Heritage" in this issue, page 7. Stands in Glen Stewart ravine, Sherwood Park.

BUR OAK (Quercus macrocarpa) - Leaves are usually longer than those of the white oak and have a "waisted" middle. The bark of the twigs is very rough and corky - a good feature for identification. Mary Smith identified a specimen in Prospect Cemetery - across the roadway from the Turkish Oak. It occurs in the Humber Valley.

SWAMP WHITE OAK (Quercus bicolor) - This is not a common tree in Toronto, which is within the northern part of its range. The leaves are wavy-edged to lobed and the acorns have longer stalks than the leaf petioles. (If any reader knows of a typical specimen within Metro Toronto, please let us know the location.)

ENGLISH OAK (Quercus robur) - This oak is becoming a common tree in landscaped gardens around Toronto. The leaves are smaller than those of the white oak and remain on the branches during winter. A few specimens of a popular form (Q. r. fastigiata) are growing in James Gardens on the Humber. Another form known as "pedunculate oak" (Q. r. pedunculata) was identified by Mary Smith at the Legislative Buildings, Queen's Park. Typical of English oak is the subcordate leaf-base and long-stalked acorn.

UNLOBED:

SHINGLE OAK (Quercus imbricaria) - This oak does not normally grow this far north. It is growing as a hedge around the property of Sheridan Nurseries beside Sherway Gardens. It is a very unusual tree and is worth a trip out to the nursery just to see it. Though the leaves are not lobed like our familiar oaks, one can tell it is an oak by the twigs and bark. Leaves remain on branches during winter.

CHINQUAPIN OAK (Quercus prinoides) - I have not found this tree in the city but a dwarf form grows at Bronte Creek just west of Toronto. Mary Smith reports a specimen of the large form (formerly Q. muehlenbergii) at Dundas, Ontario, at the bottom of a hill on the west side of Highway #8. It has no acorns.

MIXED LOBES:

TURKISH OAK (Quercus cerris) - Lobes have characteristics of both red and white groups. Acorns have bristly cups. Mary Smith has identified a large specimen in Prospect Cemetery and a newly-planted, very small specimen at the Necropolis.

Roger Powley
535 - 4740

(For illustrations of leaves of native oaks see cover, TFN (326) October, 1979.)

COMING EVENTS

- COURSE - BIRD-WATCHING IN FALL - 4 weeks commencing October 1 at 2 pm & 8 pm
  Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. West at Leslie St. 445-1552

- LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY - FALL MEETING, TORONTO - Oct. 29, 7:30 pm
  Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. West at Leslie St.
  Program to include: Ontario Atlas of Breeding Birds (Michael Cadman); Ontario Bird Feeder Survey (Erica Dunn); The Arctic - or alternative subject (Robert Bateman); Draw for Bateman painting and prints (Birdathon prizes.)

- INTERNATIONAL BALD EAGLE/OSPREY SYMPOSIUM - Oct. 28-29, 1981 - AND...
- RAPTOR RESEARCH FOUNDATION CONFERENCE - Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 1981
  For further information contact: Dr. David M. Bird, Macdonald Raptor Research Centre, Macdonald Campus of McGill University, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, P.Q. H9X 1C0.

Not only the maple,
The sumac too,
Scarlet against the hills.

haiku by Christine Hanrahan

TFN MEETINGS

VISITORS WELCOME

GENERAL MEETINGS

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

Monday, October 5, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.
"STRICTLY FOR THE BIRDS" -- Mrs. Pat Smith, Oakville.

Mrs. Smith has spent 30 years caring for injured birds so that they can be released into the wild. She has frequently been interviewed on TV and radio and has often spoken at schools and libraries, trying to encourage the protection of birds. A movie "Goodbye Red", the story of one of her injured hawks, will be shown at the meeting. Mrs. Smith will also give an informal presentation about what to grow in your garden to attract birds, illustrating her talk with slides.

Monday, November 2, 1981, at 8.15 p.m.
Slide-tape presentation on Ogoki-Albany Wilderness Area of Ontario --Ron Reid, FON, and Janet Grand, Parks Canada.

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GROUP MEETINGS

Botany Group
Thu. Oct. 15
8:00 pm

"Natural History of Mushrooms" - Dr. David Malloch, Associate Professor of Botany, U. of T.
Members invited to bring slides of mushrooms.
Location: Hodgson Public School
Davisville Avenue, just east of Mount Pleasant Road

Bird Group
Wed. Oct. 28
8:00 pm

"A Birding Tour of Southern Mexico" - Terry and Paul Pratt
a talk with slide show on the birds of the cloud forest to those of the rain forest.
Location: 155 College Street, 1 block west of University Ave. in the Auditorium.

Environmental Group
Thur. Oct. 22
7:30 pm

The group will continue the series of updates on ESA studies with a discussion of sites in the Humber Valley. Members will show slides and describe the natural areas they have been studying (including the Humber marshes and the Thistletown section of the Humber). If you have any information or slides of interesting places in the Humber Valley, please come and share them at the meeting.
Location: Huron Street Public School, 541 Huron St., 1 block west of St. George subway station.

Junior Club
Sat. Oct. 3
10:00 am

Program for children between the ages of 8 and 16 years.
Location: Planetarium Auditorium (immediately south of Royal Ontario Museum).

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TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST, Number 342, October, 1981

published by: Toronto Field Naturalists
83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ontario, M5M 2T4

Phone Nos.: Membership and publication sales information... 488-7304
Toronto Junior Field Naturalists' Club..... 755-5671 (eve.)
Toronto Bird Observatory..... 489-7444 (eve.)
Ontario Field Biologist..... 481-3918

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

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

MEMBERSHIP FEES: FAMILY (husband & wife) $14.00; SINGLE $10.00; STUDENT $6.00; SENIOR FAMILY (husband & wife 65+) $8.50; SENIOR SINGLE $6.00; JUNIOR (8-16 years of age, Junior Newsletter only) $5.00 - or $8.00 for 2 in same family, $12.00 for 3 in same family; LIFE $150.00; CORPORATE $150.00.