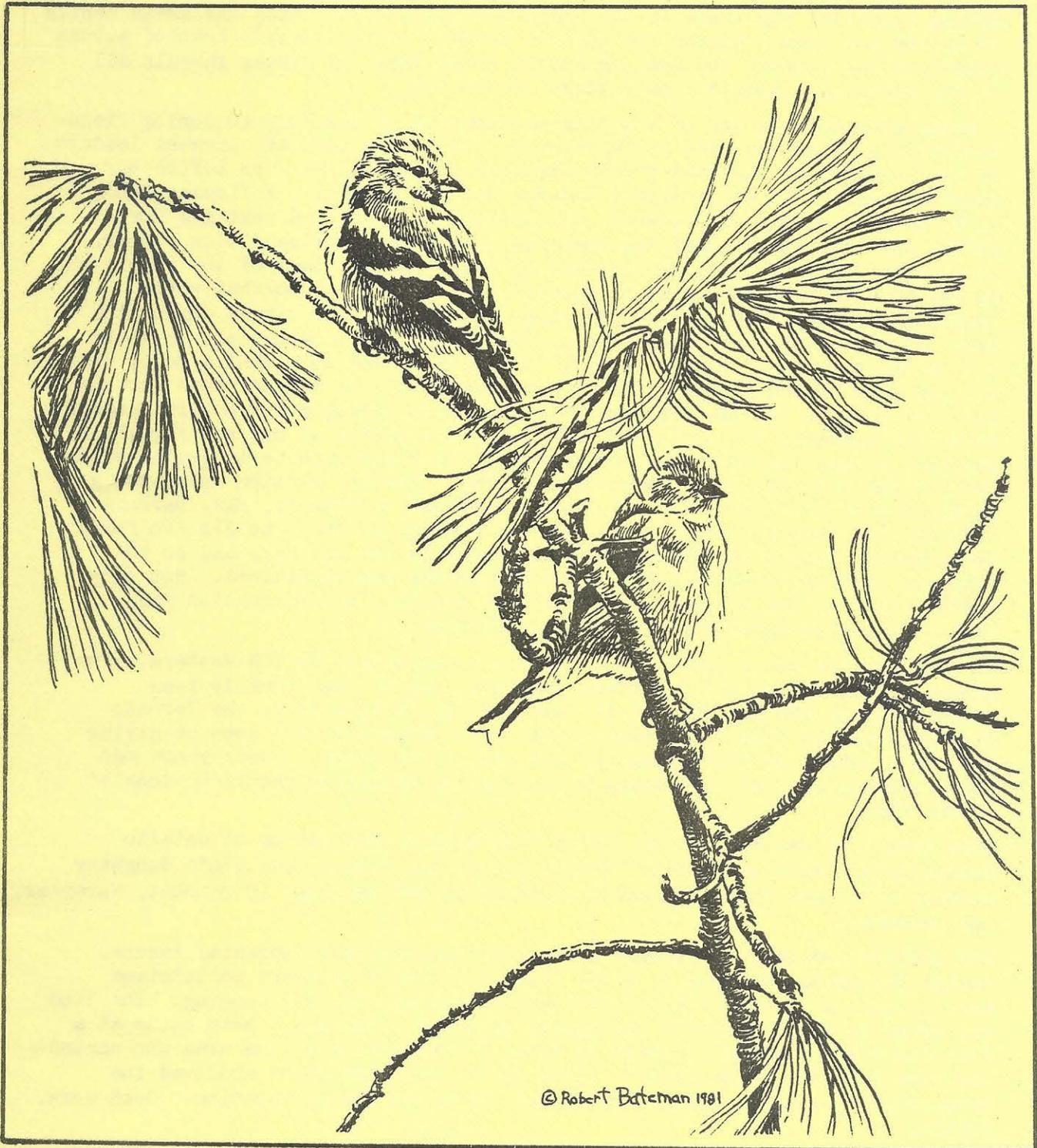


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 345, February, 1982



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Golden Anniversary Birds

See page 6.

## President's Report

Since my last report to members in November, much has happened. I spent a Christmas in Northern Ontario where I had time to ponder on the incongruity of the bird which is, to me, the symbol of wilderness -- that loud-voiced, black bird -- the raven, which does so much to enliven the white, silent northland during the winter season. I also had time on a day-long and familiar bus ride to ponder on how much winter is a season of long shadows and silhouettes. Having travelled the route in all seasons I realized how much the green mantle of spring and summer covers the earth's scars, how the Jacob's coat of autumn disguises her wounds, and how the stark, white dress of winter reveals all -- her curves and angles, the pattern of the land.

A successful celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Toronto Junior Field Naturalists' Club was held on December 7. To honour past and present leaders of the Juniors, an informal reunion/reception was held at 7 pm before our December meeting at which Robert Bateman was the speaker. Following Bob's talk, the 500 people who attended the meeting were invited upstairs for coffee and cake and to meet the honoured guests who included Colin Farmer, president of TFN in 1931, and founder of the Juniors. Some of the people who worked hard to make this evening special were Marjorie Blackshaw whose research resulted in a list of more than 350 leaders who served during the past 50 years. She also found the addresses and sent invitations to about 200 of these people. Muriel Miville typed the invitation; Sheila McCoy did all the work on the displays; Laura Greer made all the arrangements for the food and flowers for the evening; Beth Jefferson arranged for Robert Bateman to be the speaker; the Globe and Mail printed a notice of our meeting which included a photo of Bob; and John Bradshaw did a nine-minute interview with Bob for his Saturday 10 am broadcast on CFRB. Special mention must also go to His Honour John Aird, the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Mrs. Barbara Jaquith, and George Francis whose letters told us so much; to Jim Woodford and Rosemary Gaymer for introducing and thanking the speaker; and to the Archives of Ontario where TFN's historic records are maintained. Not only did the staff of the Archives help Marjorie extract the information she needed, but also taped Robert Bateman's address.

So much for the money spent. Now for the money raised by TFN members. The amount raised by the Baillie Birdathon held last May has finally been calculated and TFN has donated its share which is \$534.24 to the Toronto Bird Observatory (TBO). We expect that Dave Broughton will soon be giving us a full report of TBO activities and use of the money. Three years ago Board members decided that money raised by the Birdathon should be donated to the TBO.

More than \$100 was raised for TFN through sale of Federation of Ontario Naturalists' Christmas cards. Sheila McCoy, Ida Hanson, and Ida's daughter Dorothy sold more than \$400 worth of cards at TFN meetings in October, November, and December.

TFN members continue to express their concern about environmental issues. Sheila Brueggeman alerted me to an issue in North York where politicians were proposing to sell 2 acres of forested valley edge for housing. The land was owned by North York and designated parkland. She and I both spoke at a Planning Board meeting attended by about 200 residents of the area who wanted the area retained as parkland. Although the Planning Board approved the development proposal, North York Council rejected the application. Good work, Sheila.

Congratulations also to Emily Hamilton, May Staples, and Edith Cosens. Last spring and summer Emily and May spent much time identifying and mapping trees and shrubs in Mount Pleasant Cemetery. While doing this they discovered that much of the vegetation and even many of the stones were being damaged by careless maintenance practices. Because TFN members have for many years enjoyed nature walks in the cemetery which is recognized as one of the finest arboretums in Eastern Canada, a letter reporting their findings was sent from TFN to the Toronto General Burying Grounds who maintain the property. Edith Cosens also sent a letter and photographs illustrating some of their complaints. TFN received a letter thanking us for our interest and concern and reporting that measures are already underway to rectify some of the more damaging practices.

Remember, if you have a project or concern, do contact us. It is amazing how much more can be done when we share our ideas.

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

## A Naturalist's Code of Ethics

### RECYCLING

The following suggestions for cutting down on the amount of waste we produce are taken from a pamphlet published by the Toronto Recycling Action Committee (TRAC). Further information about any of these items may be obtained by telephoning TRAC, 367-7850.

Whenever possible, avoid buying goods that have been over-packaged.

Avoid disposable products such as paper plates and cups, paper diapers, and disposable razors; alternatives are available.

Save and reuse such things as wrapping paper, string, rubber bands, plastic containers, and bags.

Buy beverages in refillable containers.

Repair items that are repairable, rather than discard them.

Donate used furniture, appliances, clothes, etc., to one of several charitable organizations which will gladly pick them up from your home.

Compost your food and garden wastes.

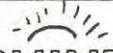
Put your bundled newspapers out for pick-up at the appropriate time in your particular neighbourhood.

Take your bottles and cans to the nearest recycling depot.

(If you have a suggestion for "A Naturalist's Code of Ethics", contact Florence Preston, Editorial Committee.)

Here animal tracks,  
They give me a clear story  
Walking side by side.

haiku by Mary Cumming

	Upcoming <b>OUTINGS</b>	TFN 
<b>RAIN</b> <small>☁️</small>	or  <b>SHINE</b>	<b>Everybody Welcome!</b>

- February 1    TFN General Meeting (See page 32.)
- February 3    Audubon Wildlife Film (See page 33.)
- February 6    Juniors' Meeting (See page 33.)
- Saturday  
February 6    Bird-Art Inning  
10.00 a.m.    Leader: Diana Banville  
The group will examine techniques, bird-representation in a variety of media. Call 690-1963; first ten to call can be accomodated. Meet at Victoria Park subway station. (The group will work indoors, but Taylor Creek Park is close by for those who want to walk afterwards.)
- Sunday  
February 7    High Park - Nature Walk  
2 p.m.        Leader: Roger Powley  
Meet at the main entrance of Keele subway station. Members of the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian, and Swedish communities are being specially invited to this outing. Note. We would appreciate volunteers from any members who speak these languages.
- Febr. 8-13    Time to reserve your place on the bus for the outing to Kortright Centre on February 27 by phoning Emily Hamilton at 484-0487. Confirm by sending your cheque for \$12.00 payable to "Toronto Field Naturalists Outing" to Miss Emily Hamilton, Apt. 407, 3110 Yonge St., Toronto M4N 2K6. Cheques must be received by Feb. 18. This amount covers bus fare and entry to the park and art collection.
- Wednesday  
February 10    Toronto - Underground Flora and Fauna  
10.00 a.m.    Leader: to be appointed  
Meet beside the clock on the main floor of Union Station. We will walk north to Dundas Street with only two open air street crossings.
- Saturday  
February 13    Pickering- Birds  
9.00 a.m.     Leader: Jim Richards  
Meet at Pickering GO station at 9.00 a.m.
- Sunday  
February 14    Black Creek Exploration (4) - Downsview Dells  
2.00 p.m.     Leader: John Harris  
Meet on Sheppard Ave. at Black Creek (west of Keele, east of Jane). Take Sheppard West #84 bus.
- February 15    Toronto Mycological Society Meeting, 155 College St. Auditorium, 8 p.m.
- February 18    Botany Group Meeting (See page 32.)
- Saturday  
February 20    Lakeshore - Waterfowl  
8.30 a.m.     Leader: to be announced  
Meet at Bathurst and Lakeshore Blvd.
- Sunday  
February 21    Glendon Campus - passerines  
2.00 p.m.     Leader: Jim Woodford  
Meet at Bayview and Lawrence at gates to Glendon College.

## OUTINGS - Continued

- Wednesday Centennial Greenhouses - Etobicoke (exotic plants and owls)  
 February 24 Leaders: Billie Bridgman, Roger Powley  
 10.00 a.m. Meet at greenhouses. (Anglesey bus from Royal York subway station to the corner of Rathburn and Elmcrest.) Walk north on Elmcrest to the greenhouses.
- February 24 Bird Group Meeting (See page 32.)
- February 25 Environmental Group Meeting (See page 32.)
- Saturday Kortright Centre for Conservation - Nature Walk and Art Gallery  
 February 27 Leaders: Beth Jefferson and Mary Cumming  
 10.00 a.m. You must have reserved a place on the bus between Feb. 8 and 13.  
BUS OUTING The bus will leave at 10.00 a.m. from the York Mills subway station (northeast corner of Yonge and York Mills), and will arrive back about 4 p.m. Bring lunch. This outing is for outdoor walks and also to see the McMichael Canadian Art Collection.
- Sunday Black Creek Exploration (5) - south from Eglinton  
 February 28 Leader: Isabel Smith  
 2.00 p.m. Meet on Eglinton Ave. West at Black Creek (Eglinton West bus #32 to Black Creek, just west of Keele St.)
- March 1 TFN General Meeting (See page 32.)
- Saturday Lambton Woods - Birds  
 March 6 Leader: to be announced  
 10.00 a.m. Meet in parking lot of James Gardens.

A NATIONAL PARK ON "THE BRUCE" ?

The Honourable John Roberts, Minister of the Environment, recently announced that public consultations will begin shortly to determine the feasibility of establishing a new national park on the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula. Such a park is consistent with the objectives of the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

If public consultation indicates support for the establishment of a park, Parks Canada would work closely with local people, the interested public and the Province of Ontario to prepare detailed plans, including recommended boundaries, for the consideration of the federal and provincial governments. Every effort will be made to ensure that interested groups and individuals have ample opportunity to express their views.

A large proportion of the areas suitable for a national park is already publicly owned. The acquisition of any private lands would be on the basis of voluntary sale.

Anyone interested may write for a pamphlet containing information, or may address specific questions to Mr. Robert Day, Superintendent, Georgian Bay Islands National Park, P.O. Box 189, Tobermory, Ontario NOH 2R0, or phone Zenith 54140.

## This Month's Cover

"Winter Goldfinches on Pine Bough" by Robert Bateman.

This cover-drawing by the well-known nature-artist marks the Golden Jubilee in 1981 of the Toronto Junior Field Naturalists' Club. It is appropriate for more than one reason. First of all, the artist attributes the great motivation of his life as a naturalist to the inspiration he received as a member of the junior club in the forties; later he became a leader of a junior group, in his turn.

And what more appropriate subject for a golden anniversary than golden birds? Those who call our goldfinch "the wild canary" are not too far wrong since both canaries and goldfinches are included in the subfamily Carduelinae. In Ontario this group is easy to distinguish since all members are winter finches here: "The goldies" (sporting yellow) and "the rosies" (washed with rose). Thus it includes the redpolls (which have recently been moved into the same genus as the goldfinches and siskins), the crossbills, Purple Finch, Pine Grosbeak, and Evening Grosbeak. (But the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Cardinal, buntings, and all our "brownies" belong to different finch subfamilies).

The scientific name for the American Goldfinch is Carduelis tristis. "Carduus" in Latin means "thistle". In fact, "thistlebird" is another popular English name for the bird, and its association with thistles is also reflected in the official French name, "Chardonneret Jaune". It nests in summer when thistle-down, ideal for nest-lining, becomes available. It also is fond of thistle-seeds as food. The goldfinch is popular with everyone because it tends to confine its diet to wild seeds and fruits - a great variety of them - and has not been labelled as "crop-robber". Besides devouring seeds of unpopular plants such as ragweed and dandelion, it also takes insects harmful to crops. "Tristis", its specific name, means "sad" and no doubt has to do with the tone of its flight-call which to me sounds like a plaintive "tee-hee-hee". And yet "ecstatic" is the word often used to describe its song, especially when rendered in flight, which we've all heard to our delight.

Some recent studies have pointed to an increase of goldfinches in winter in urban areas - attributed to the growing number of bird-feeding stations. Bruce Parker, however, believes that there is really not sufficient evidence at present on which to base such a conclusion. It may be more a question of an increase in observers and greater interest in records. For years the goldfinch has been in the top ten passerines listed on the Toronto Census.

DB

The sun on the snow.  
This morning the heat and cold  
Dwell in harmony.

haiku by Diana Banville

# OUTINGS REPORT

Summer, 1981

For the first time in its 58 years, TFN had a full range of summer outings. Despite a 6-week mail-strike which complicated the task of getting reports and ribbons to and from leaders, we have been able to piece together the following information about the summer's activities...

## REPORT ON NATURE ART GROUP - SPRING AND SUMMER OUTINGS

Three extra outings, not scheduled in the newsletter, were announced at the May meeting. These took place on Saturdays - May 23, at Glendon Hall; July 4 at Alexander Muir Gardens; and August 22 at Harbourfront. These three very different locations gave the group a variety of subject-matter - from river-scapes and trees, through roses at their height of bloom to expanses of water with nautical focal-points. Joyce Cave started her garden outing with a few words on the history of botanical art and Mary Cumming, at Harbourfront, brought along reproductions of sea-shore treatments of an American artist, Winslow Homer, and a Canadian, Arthur Lismer. We had fine-to-hazy weather for all three outings and found it hard to tear ourselves away after lunch and discussion of work. Lingerers found themselves sketching people enjoying the Scottish festival at Harbourfront and/or having tea with a well-known artist, Langley Donges, in his Yonge Street apartment-studio.

May 23 - Glendon Hall - leader Diana Banville - 9 attended

July 4 - Alexander Muir

Gardens - leader Joyce Cave - 10 attended

Aug.22 - Harbourfront - leader Mary Cumming - 7 attended

DB

## EVENING WALKS

July 7 Jeannie Coulthard led 10 members through the Moore Park Ravine; July 16 Muriel Miville led 13 people through Park Drive Ravine and David Balfour Park. What I will always remember about that walk was the haunting song of a wood thrush calling as we entered the valley via Milkman's Road, a green tunnel at that time of year. The walk through Rosedale Ravine on July 21 was led by Jeff Nadir and 13 participants discovered 2 new plant species for the Toronto region: The pignut hickory described in our October newsletter and a new mustard, narrow-leaved bittercress (*Cardamine impatiens*). While the preceding walks all started out from the Castle Frank Subway Station, the next three began at the corner of Eglinton and Leslie. On July 30 Harold Taylor led 11 people through Wilket Creek Park; on August 4, some members who started out for Serena Gundy Park, including the leader, were prevented from arriving there by a violent thunderstorm. Still, rumour has it that several hardy individuals waited at the starting-point in the rain. On August 13, Melanie Milanich, with the assistance of Reta McWhinnie and Charles Sauriol, and 15 members enjoyed an evening in Ernest Thompson Seton Park.

## WEEKEND OUTINGS

On July 18, George Comper showed 34 people the delights of the Chine Drive Ravine area which includes an excellent view of Bluffers Park as well as many heritage trees along the streets. Birds observed included a yellowthroat and a great crested flycatcher; plants included a red poppy blooming on the

## OUTINGS REPORT - continued

face of the bluffs and, for me, two new plants: Love-in-a-mist and maiden pink. A young red-tailed hawk which had apparently escaped from a falconer gave the birders something unusual to study. On July 28 Steve Varga led 30 people to look for rare marsh plants at the mouth of the Rouge River. As well as finding many species of rare plants, participants had a good look at a great blue heron and a beaver. August 1, Emily Hamilton led 28 people through Lambton Woods where they were introduced to more plants than most realized grew in our region. As well as meeting 8 species of ferns, members observed a juvenile cowbird being fed by a red-eyed vireo. Although August 18 was a morning of alternating sunshine and rain, Reg Smith led 20 people through Taylor Creek Park to the old Massey Estate. They learned about the history of the area, and met a friendly cicada. As usual on summer outings, insects stole the show from the birds. August 15 saw 12 people set out for Holland Landing with Steve Varga in pouring rain. The reward was a wonderful day looking at bogs and fens and a great number of new entries for Isabel Smith's list of flowering plants. And finally, on August 29, Steve Varga once again led a group, of 20 this time, to Toronto Islands, where he showed them many more rare wildflowers in bloom.

Helen Juhola

(Lakeshore outings report to follow)

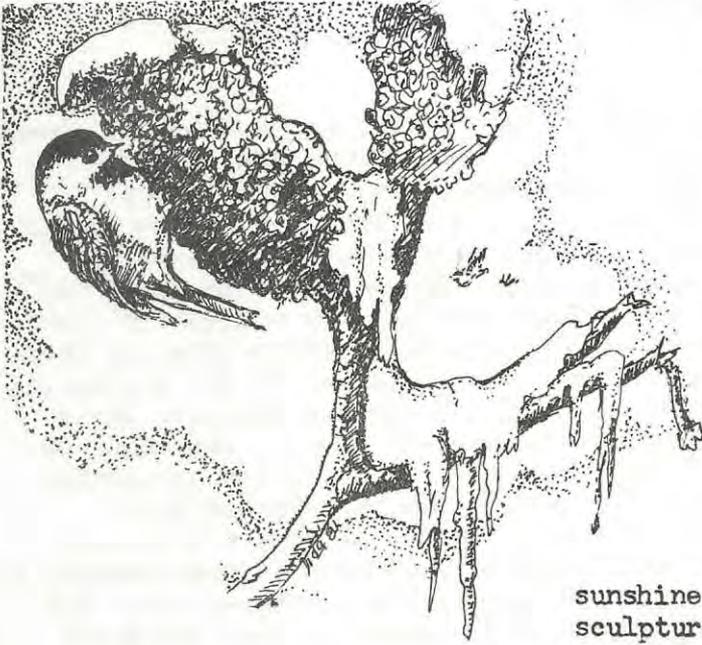
September, 1981

During September TFN explored many parts of our city. We started the month looking at prairie habitats in Lambton Park (Sept. 5) where we saw many plants which are also found in High Park. The following Thursday, Cathy Drake showed us how to locate Cassiopeia and the Andromeda Galaxy on a late-night star watch in Wilket Creek Park (Sept. 10).

Seven people attended Mary Cumming's sketching outing in High Park on a mild and sunny day (Sept. 12). The group also looked at prints of J.W. Beatty. An early Rough-legged Hawk was spotted in Morningside Park by John Lowe-Wylde's group (Sept. 13). Thirty people saw Red-shouldered, Broad-winged and Sharp-shinned Hawks. A praying mantis and a garter snake were also found.

The next week (Sept. 19) TFN members went to High Park where Emily Hamilton helped the group to identify asters and goldenrods. We also went to see the nationally rare fern-leaved foxglove there. Joan Foote and Maureen Allain led a large group of 41 people through Earl Bales Park the next day. This was a special outing for Czechoslovakian guests (Sept. 20). Joan had seen an Upland Sandpiper there a few weeks earlier but it had moved on. One of the highlights of the month was the mushroom-identifying session in High Park, led by Al Valiunas (Sept. 26). We found stinkhorns and three kinds of amanitas. All but the smallest fungi were identified and we were told a lot of interesting "trivia" about the mushrooms. The Leslie Street Spit is always a popular spot and a "mob" of 44 members attended, with Hugh Currie leading. Some of those on the outing had the thrill of seeing a Peregrine Falcon and seven species of shorebirds - which had all but disappeared everywhere else.

Roger Powley



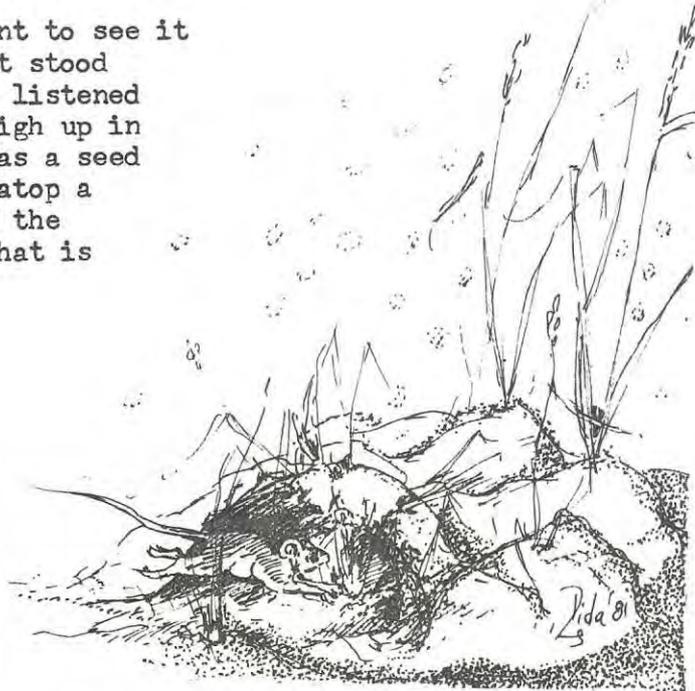
## AS FOR WINTER...

who can say it is a bleak, forsaken period of the year, with nothing of beauty, of sympathy of spirit, without a feeling of tranquility, or of the explosive unexpected - or of sudden adventure?

It can be cold, bitter and unrelenting, yes, with even the trees outlined with a stark, forbidding aura of gloom, but then comes a shaft of cheerful sunshine which highlights the snow sculptures on rocky ridge, on tree bough, on drift high-piled, in deep depression, or on frozen lake.

There is colour in winter, with the varied hues of the evergreens, the shadings of the bark of trees and bushes, the changing blues and grays of the sky, the whiteness of cloud as compared with that of the snow - colour, for instance, in the tiny rainbows formed when icicles melt and drip from cattails or low marsh plants, when the Blue Jay suddenly flashes from pine to hemlock, or when the gay, friendly little chickadee appears on a branch overhead.

There is life for those who want to see it and hear it. I have often just stood quietly, deep in the bush, and listened to the faint whisper of wind high up in the trees, to the slight sigh as a seed or two fall near my feet from atop a lofty spruce, or to the cry of the handsome Pileated Woodpecker that is about to get his meal from an adjacent grub-infested birch. I have caught many a quick glimpse of a scurrying mouse scooting into one of his snowy runways, and observed the tunnel-like ridges in the snow marking a shrew's passing. Then, too, there is the deep booming of the ice on the lakes - one wonders if the underworld spirits are preparing for a curling bonspiel beneath the level of the lake... Winter? Yes, thank you!



Ruth Tovell

# Keeping in touch . . .

Ottawa, Nov. 2/81

Dear Helen,

Many thanks for your letter...The index is progressing again after the summer hiatus....We've been birding regularly at the usual Ottawa hot spots: Shirley's Bay, Britannia Woods, Green Creek Sewage Lagoon (birder's go to some awfully funny places!) and Ottawa Beach. A White-fronted Goose turned up at the latter place last weekend - the 5th record for Ottawa...On the Labour Day weekend we drove to the Gaspé...the purpose was to take the ferry across from Trois Pistoles to the North Shore and look for whales and sea-birds. Plans didn't go according to schedule since everybody else had the same idea and had been smart enough to make reservations. We did eventually get on the ferry but not until Monday morning. We saw one Humpback Whale (enormous!) but later, where the Saguenay River meets the St. Lawrence, we saw a school (pod?) of Belugas and Minke Whales. Between Saturday morning and Monday morning we drove to Gaspé Provincial Park and climbed Mount Albert (8 km. up we raced to finish it in two hours - we didn't have much time to waste!) On top we found a small herd of caribou and later watched a Golden Eagle fly overhead. Saw pipits and large numbers of kestrels. The habitat on top of Mount Albert is unique - it is closer to what one would find in the far north - tundra, in fact, and the plants one finds are those associated with the tundra areas. It is breathtaking up there - words cannot adequately describe the sensations experienced. It was somewhat akin to being suddenly transported to Baffin Island. Found bog laurel, cotton-grass, harebell, Labrador tea, etc. In 1975 we had hiked to the top but so shrouded in mist was it that we saw nothing...

Sincerely, Christine  
(Harrahan)

Downsview, Sept. 1, 1981

Dear Mrs. Hanson:

... How would I go about nominating a heritage tree? There is a lovely old elm tree in our ... property. Amazing, I think. And we have a lovely mulberry tree on our property. It is almost thirty years old. The winter past was very hard on it, but it has come back remarkably. We have a lovely privet hedge, white pines, spruces, forsythias and Japanese quince which the migrating birds love ...

Lois Owen

Dear Mrs. Owen:

All those beautiful trees and shrubs! We need them - especially the white pines; it's nice to know that someone is preserving some of them. Don't be deflated if they don't quite "qualify" as "Heritage Trees." That's a special category based on the meaning of the word "heritage"- something which has been around for a long time - before any of us were born - and which, given a chance, will endure for many more generations. But all our trees are valued. Your letter has inspired Mary Smith's article on page 27 of this issue. We hope you will continue to enjoy your trees for many years to come, and all the wildlife they attract.

TFN Editorial Committee

Dear Readers: We asked for it. Hope you're ready for this...

Dear Madame Banville, Editor.

In your last newsletter you requested assistance from your readers. I believe I am qualified to provide it as my doctoral thesis at the University of Budapest was on haiku and during my research I became familiar with the closely associated lowkoo.

As you well know, haiku developed in Japan in the twelfth century. Haiku's growth in popularity was slow for many years until late in the fourteenth century it captured the imagination of the teenagers and experienced an almost overnight explosion in popularity. Haiku was chalked on all available wall space, both inside and out, it was carved into tree trunks, written on all paper litter and even on each fallen leaf, on both sides yet.

But the peak was reached when a wooden sandal manufacturer convinced one of the most popular poets Ru Ning Shu, who had a yen for money, to go commercial. From that time on, haiku were carved in relief on the sole of each sandal so that with each step a haiku was printed on the ground. For example;

Right passes me  
But I am left  
Bereft

I am right  
Right is might  
Delight

At this point lowkoo was born. It was a protest against haiku pollution, for you couldn't go for a walk without stepping into haiku with each step. Basically lowkoo was anti-haiku, with each line lining up at the end of the line, each line beginning with a lower case letter and ending with a capital letter. For example;

on the trees  
are not all  
the nuts

Quite understandably lowkoo quickly became popular with adults and as it was closely related to haiku and popular with adults the teenagers immediately turned against both forms of koo. Both forms then almost disappeared for centuries until revived fairly recently by North Americans, probably occidently.

I was surprised that you were not familiar with lowkoo since any serious writer of haiku is aware of it. I could have understood if you had not known of the third form since its relationship to the other two forms is difficult to recognize. It is one line written along the right hand margin of the page. It is called edgekoo.

Yours educationally,

Dr. Poola Uleg PhD.

## KEEPING IN TOUCH - continued

Dear Helen;

Orillia, Oct, 1/81

I was delighted to read of your fascinating outing of May 13, 1981, and your re-discovery of such a large colony of the rare twinleaf, and also the two species of *Claytonia*. It was a well-written and descriptive article by Denise Viilep outlining the highlights of a memorable outing, and just another example of how the membership at large is kept up-to-date of current events in your excellent TFN newsletter.

We had a rewarding season botanically spread over a fairly wide segment of the Province and last week we spent four days with a small local group upon the Bruce Peninsula, and the fringed gentians were a sight to behold, along with the majestic splendour of the myriads of autumn plants.

Last year someone requested (and the name escapes me) a copy of our newly-formed Orillia Club's activities. The 1981-2 list has just been compiled (copy enclosed). Also, as an item of interest, I am enclosing a copy of our "Nature Corner" published once a week in our local daily paper, which gives excellent publicity to the club's activities. Last week we had an excellent response to our first Junior Naturalists' meeting led by Julie Hawke, our Nature Corner artist.

I am also enclosing a group of slides of random shots along the Humber July and August, 1980, and perhaps they will be of interest to you. You may have them on a 99-year lease basis, and should I require them back for referral I shall borrow them from you.

I trust you and yours have had an enjoyable summer and made many new and exciting discoveries in the wonderful realm of Nature. Kind regards,

Bill Cattley.

P.S. I noticed in the September issue of TFN re my Humber Valley article, that the name *Hemerocallis lilio-asphodelus* had been changed to the old name of *H. flava*, and in the words of E.G. Voss, an illegitimate name, page 409 *Michigan Flora*, E.G. Voss. Perhaps not too many readers are aware of the update of 1972, and the change will go unnoticed. WEC

Dear Bill:

Thank you for the slides, the Orillia Club's activity list and "Nature Corner." Congratulations on the progress of the new Club and the Juniors too! Our apologies for changing *Hemerocallis lilio-asphodelus* to *H. flava*. We were going by our northeastern North America manuals (Britton & Brown, Gray's, and Gleason & Cronquist) all of which are older than your *Michigan Flora*. We found both names are very old, and both marked "L." - attributable to Linnaeus (but *H. flava* was being used at the time our manuals were published.) Emily Hamilton did some searching as a result of your letter. The *Michigan Flora* at the Metro Library is older than yours too (1966) and called it *H. flava* at that time. Encyclopaedia Britannica mentions that before Linnaeus the yellow day-lily was called *Asphodelus luteus liliflorus* - from 1570 until 1762 when

Keeping in Touch ... continued

Linnaeus called it *H. flava*. You will enjoy Emily's joke ... she checked the *Flora of the British Isles* by Clapham, Tutin & Warburg, 1961. It listed:

*H. liliasphodelus* L. (*H. flava* (L.)L).

Commenting on all the L's, Emily added " ... a bit confusing, but those three guys are considered the authorities."

TFN Editorial Committee

Ed. note:

Any member who wishes to borrow the Orillia club's newsletter, call Bruce Parker, 449-0994.

ATTENTION WALLY PLATTS, CALGARY ...

Hi, Wally! We've just been reading in *The Sun* about Alberta's official bird. Have you seen it? It's the Overhead Crane.

(We'll be awaiting with interest suggestions from Albertans as to suitable candidates for Ontario's bird ....)

"TO ATLAS" - A NEW VERB - FUN, TOO

We're beginning to get used to all this talk of "atlassing". There's a regular publication out now, too - the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Newsletter. It's very interesting and presumably you will receive it if you are registered as an "atlasser". Issue Number 2, November/81, includes information on contributions to the Ontario atlas, upcoming projects, "how-to" ideas, atlassing elsewhere, and personnel involved. The weekend of July 1-4 there will be an atlassing "blitz" on Algonquin Park - this would be a good way for a busy person to participate on a one-time basis. Some good birding hints are offered - for example, "How to Atlas for Owls" (intriguing are the descriptions of the calls of each species). Funds are even available for those who wish to atlas beyond 200 km of their homes. Also, from time to time, there are temporary staff positions available. If you are interested in contributing any information or time, contact the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas, FON Conservation Centre, 355 Lesmill Rd., Don Mills, Ont. M3B 2W8. (Phone: 444-8419). Also, don't forget Bruce Parker is gathering information on mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Contact him at 449-0994, if you have any observations to report. (We note that in Britain many categories of animal life have been covered in atlas form - not only birds.)

DB

Toronto, Nov. 23, 1981

Hi, Jean:

At Billie Bear this year we each had to present something the last night. We were to do something to show that we had used some of the books in the library. ...you may get a laugh out of it...

### A BOTANICAL LIFE-HISTORY

Life began with ADAM AND EVE (putty-root orchid). To produce this botanical life we need a MOTHERwort. Being a mother involves a BIRTHwort (wild ginger family). A life begins with a NAKED broomrape BABY's breath and possibly TWINflower. Development includes CREEPING snowberry, WALKING fern and PUBESCENCE.

A body needs a ram's HEAD orchid; a head is made up of SKULL-cap, HAIRy-cap moss, blue-EYEd grass, mouse-EAR chickweed, NOSEbleed (yarrow), adder's-MOUTH orchid, tuLIPS, hart's-TONGUE fern, TOOTHwort and possibly goat'sBEARD.

A body needs BONEset, RIBgrass, bleeding-HEART, BLOODroot, and a PULSE (clover family). To function properly, the body needs a LIVERwort, SPLEENwort, GALL bladder, KIDNEY-leaf buttercup - which produces (pardon the expression) the PEA stored in the BLADDERwort. Though it isn't a well-known fact, there is also a catTAIL.

The extremities may have FIVE FINGERS (cinquefoil) and lady's-THUMB, as well as SHINleaf pyrola, coltsFOOT, and pussyTOES which sometimes have a squirrel-CORN.

This body may be TALL white bog-orchid, DWARF iris, ROUND-leafed pyrola, or BROAD beech fern. It may be a LADY fern, MALE fern, BACHELOR-button or a VIRGIN's bower, and may be called creeping CHARLIE, sweet-WILLIAM, HERB ROBERT, JACK-in-the-pulpit, JACOB's ladder, JOE Pye weed, JOHNNY jump-up, LILY, LAUREL, ROSEMARY, PANSY, VIOLET, black-eyed SUSAN, sweet CICELY, or ox-eye DAISY.

No doubt during this life-history there will be afflictions such as LOUSEwort, WORMwood, POISON-ivy causing URTICA (nettles), AGUEweed, or PLEURISY-root (butterfly-weed). These afflictions may necessitate the use of BEDstraw, black MEDIC, HEAL-all, bee-BALM, and if the affliction is infectious it may be necessary to TOUCH-ME-NOT; perhaps a cure would be simply SOAPwort.

A MAIDENhair fern may don Queen Anne's LACE, BLUE BONNET, lady SLIPPERS, and JEWELweed when she walks her DOGBane, ALSATIAN clover or CATbrier. There will be times when a friend and counsellor will be needed such as a CARDINAL-flower or BISHOP's-cap.

Finally, the body will become an ELDERberry and one knows it cannot LIVE-FOREVER (sedum). Two choices bring to a close this botanical life-history. These choices will be to become an ANGELica or a DEVIL's paint-brush.

Ethel Day

#### TNU Learning Centre

If you're interested in a course in "The Identification and Ecology of Ontario Lichens" or on "Evolution and Other Creation Stories", call right away the TNU Learning Centre at 968-1444. Located at 252 Bloor West, "TNU" stands for "The New University".

**THE RING-BILLED GULL IS NOT SUCH A BAD BIRD**

Recently the Ring-billed Gull has been getting all kinds of bad publicity. Some people are really upset over all the birds hanging around City Hall.

I'd like to say something in defense of these birds as no one else is sticking up for them. First of all, I think we're very fortunate to have them in Toronto. On the Great Lakes, this City has the only gull colony in which the population of ringbills is increasing. If it were not for the Leslie Street Landfill Spit nesting colonies, this bird would be in grave danger. First-year birds have a very high mortality rate and are migratory, so they are abundant for only a few months at the end of the breeding season after the immature birds can fly.

Secondly, the gulls come to City Hall only because some people enjoy feeding them. The problem is not a biological but a human one.

The media try to scare the public with hints of health-hazards and disease from the birds' droppings; they don't mention the health-hazard which humans have created in the ringbills' habitat, Lake Ontario. As humans, we have polluted the birds' feeding-grounds so badly that no one will swim in the water. We won't even eat more than a few fish a week out of the Lake, yet such fish are the ringbills' main food-source.

Remember, too, if the gulls were not around to clean up all the food that we throw around, we'd probably have a big increase in the number of Norway Rats running about. Which would you rather have around - rats or birds?

At the present time, we have a very large colony of birds breeding on the Spit. This colony will eventually dwindle as more and more predators make their homes there. If we leave the Spit alone, the forest will grow and provide habitat for raccoons and foxes, they will keep the bird-populations in check naturally.

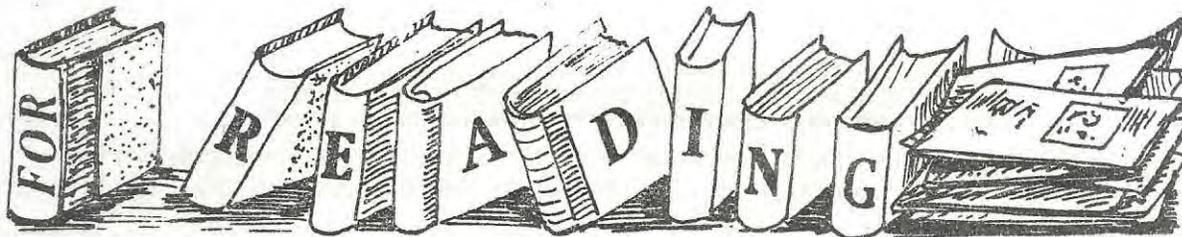
I keep wondering why the gulls are getting such bad coverage in the media. Is it possible that a gull has given a media person some unwanted "coverage"? Or is it influenced by some elected representative who's been doing a lot of "whitewashing" lately? The birds may be just returning the favour. Let's just be thankful that we don't have that many Great Blue Herons hanging around town.

Roger Powley

Excerpt from a letter received  
by Aarne & Helen Juhola:

"Nature event of past week: As a male mallard was landing in our backyard Thursday morning, he lost a feather which wafted prettily in the breeze - but before it could reach the ground a female house sparrow had taken it for her nest. Should have had a movie camera!"

Ellen Hull  
Williamsville, N.Y.



\**The Squirrels of Canada* by S.E. Woods Jr., National Museums of Canada 1980; 208 pages; hard cover 205 x 240 mm, 73 plates and drawings, \$29.95.

This book describes the twenty-two species of the family Sciuridae found across Canada (eight occur in Ontario). Each species is described under headings: Common names; Description; Range (maps); Behaviour; Habitat; Personality; Feeding habits; Life-cycle; Natural enemies; Relations with humans; Where to observe. The author has succeeded in presenting a factual account of each animal in layman's terms in an easy-to-use format. There are many facts and some figures, lots of lore and a few legends. A cover illustration by Jan Sharkey Thomas, line drawings by Dwayne Harty and photographic colour plates for each species make this an appealing as well as an informative book. A worthwhile addition to any naturalist's collection.

John Lowe-Wylde

Ed. note - The reviewer drew our attention to the appropriate stamp on his submission. It was a fine representation of *Marmota vancouverensis*, the Vancouver Island Marmot, of the squirrel family, on a 17¢ stamp - one of the Endangered Wildlife Series of Canada Post. The release from the post office states it is one of the few mammals unique to Canada, living only on Vancouver Island. Disturbed and hunted, only 50 to 100 survive today. But as for the stamps, there are 21,500,000 of those around.

\**The Art of Glen Loates*, edited by Paul Duval, Cerebus Publishing Co. Ltd., Prentice Hall of Canada, Scarboro, Ont., 1977; 189 pages, 133 colour plates, Size: 14" x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (a coffee-table book).

Paul Duval picks out the highlights of the life of Glen Loates as he grew up in Toronto, taking an interest in sketching animals and plants, and developing his skill in working with their details. In some studies this detailed excellence has been overdone, to create an all-over pattern at the expense of a centre-of-interest. He does interpret in a lively way the position of the fishes, birds and other animals in their natural habitat. Pencil sketches of the Canada Goose, Grizzly Bear, Cottontail and Red Squirrel show more vitality than the finished watercolour work. His pencil drawings of his wife Sally are of a quality that expresses his interest in and love of life. The subject of mountains in Tucson in 1973 shows a sensitive mastery of the watercolour medium. Mammal forms take on a more sculptured look where he has used a toned background - rather than, as in the studies of Porcupine, Bobcat and Grey Squirrel, a white paper background. His animals show his consistent striving for detail to reach perfection. They are more effective in those cases where he has achieved a definite connection of the subject to its setting at ground level.

The book is an excellent visual record of plants and animals in our Canadian wild areas.

Mary Cumming

\*Available from TFN Library, 690-1963.

Extinction - the Causes and Consequences of the Disappearance of Species,  
by Paul and Anne Ehrlich. Random House, 305 pages. 1981.

Paul and Anne Ehrlich, members of Stanford University's Department of Biological Sciences, explain the alarm in allowing endangered plants and animals to die out, presenting their strategy for the prevention of further extinctions, including our own. They believe that the existing rate of extinctions will increase greatly from now on. They give several reasons why species should be preserved, the first of which is simple compassion; their beauty is another reason; also many species provide man with direct benefits; and lastly because all species are part of the chain of life which should not be interfered with. This book presents evidence that should help readers to understand how, by obliterating other forms of life, man may be destroying himself.

M.E.

\* Pods. Wildflowers and weeds in their final beauty - a visual guide from flower to pod to dried arrangement by Jane Emberton; photography by Jay M. Conrader. Published by Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York. 186 pages.

In this little book which covers the Great Lakes Region, Northwestern United States and Canada, the term "pod" refers to the final stage of the plant, be it pod, capsule, flower head, cup, bur, fruit or nut. The book begins with a separate text which explains how to collect and preserve the pods, and when to pick. It includes some "do's and don't's" about conservation. For convenience, the plants are classified into five sections: sun, woods, wetlands, grasses, sedges and rushes, and "winter skeletons". There are three lovely colour photographs on each page, of the flower, the pod, and of an arrangement using the pod along with others in an interesting container. There is a short description of each.

Most of us have, at some time, gathered teasel, milkweed, cat-tails or pearly everlasting. But have you considered wispy pennycress or garlic mustard, bamboo-like horsetail, lambs'-quarters, the "wishbones" of spreading dogbane, or even the goldenrod galls? There are just 143 plants listed; one is inspired to add to the list. This book, along with Weeds in Winter by Lauren Brown (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston) will surely add interest to winter walks.

Billie Bridgman

Historic Guelph, Vol. XVII. A publication of the Guelph Historical Society and available from them at Box 1503, Guelph, Ontario N1H 6N9 for \$1.50.

Covers events in the life of John Galt and the demise of the Passenger Pigeon.

Recommended by Vera Irving

Birdfinding in Canada. All enthusiastic birders will be interested in this new publication to be issued bi-monthly for the purpose of exchanging information among birders and increasing enjoyment of their hobby across Canada.

Subscription is \$10.00 a year and may be obtained from G. Bennett, R.R.2, 10780 Pine Valley Drive, Woodbridge, Ontario L4L 1A6.

THE MISCELLANY . . .

(Clippings, Releases, Pamphlets recently received by TFN Library. Call 690-1963 if you wish to borrow any of them).

Discovery March 1981 (Seniors magazine, 2 College St.) clipping "What? ... Our Robins" by Fern Oxley. Amusing article about effects of hollyberries on migrating robins. (Contributed by Vera Irving).

City, Provincial Grants Help Homeowners Pestered by Termites, City of Toronto Press Release, October 23/81. As well as procedure on treatment of buildings, the life cycle of the termite is explained - and how to avoid the problem when building.

Le Jardin Botanique de Montreal--in English et en français. Literature about the gardens.

Les Cercles des Jeunes Naturalistes--tout en français. All about the Province-wide organization for francophone children in Quebec - like our Toronto Junior Field Naturalists, it was established in 1931. Included in the package of literature are lists of titles of leaflets on over 200 subjects, available in French for 15¢ to 35¢ each.

Historique du Mont-Royal--en français. Leaflet with map about Mount-Royal, in Montreal, history of ownership and public interest in the "mountain." Tres intéressante.

Too Many Geese? by John Madson, from Outdoor Life, 1981. Clipping. A hunter's view of the goose "population problem." Some quotes: "Is management increasing waterfowl beyond the limits of normal disease losses and pushing the birds past the point of diminishing returns?" ... "We're in danger of losing sight of the wild goose as a great trophy ... "

- submitted by Charles R. Howe, Newmarket

ROM wasn't built in a day by Sheila White, from Topical (Ontario Civil Service newspaper). Picture-story in black-and-white about progress on Royal Ontario Museum expansion and projected opening July 1, 1982. Expansion will continue after the opening for a decade, it is thought.

- submitted by Mary Cumming

PUBLICATIONS

NORTHERN PERSPECTIVES - published by The Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (a non-profit organization), 46 Elgin Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5K6. Free of charge, but donations welcomed, which are tax-deductible. Published on an irregular basis. Especially interesting at present because of the oil exploration in the Beaufort Sea.

EQUINOX - The Magazine of Canadian Discovery - published six times each year by Equinox Publishing, 7 Queen Victoria Road, Camden East, Ontario, K0K 1J0. \$14.75 per year. New. Articles include discussions of Robert Bateman's art, the architecture of Cumberland, barren-ground Caribou, arthropods, climbing Everest.

**people**

Dr. RICHARD SAUNDERS, former President of TFN  
and Newsletter Editor

Dr. Saunders has been an ardent supporter of TFN since the 1930's, and participated in the activities of the club in various capacities, including speaker, writer, leader of hikes, member of Board of Directors and President. For some 25 years he wrote the monthly Newsletter, and his enthusiastic reports of the sighting of a rare bird or the discovery of an unusual wild flower are remembered by many members.

Dr. Saunders has always been anxious to learn more about nature and to instil a love and appreciation of nature in others and to share his knowledge. He has written two books, FLASHING WINGS and CAROLINA QUEST, and is co-author of CANADIAN WILDFLOWERS.

FP

PLANT COLLECTION AVAILABLE

Jim Simon has a large collection of pressed, unmounted plants which he would like to dispose of.

- Would anyone, or any organization be interested in the collection "as is"?
- Would anyone be interested in mounting the collection which might then be of use to someone else.

Call Jim to discuss this at 251-0485

TFN LIBRARY

You will notice that, in our book reviews, we're marking with an asterisk titles in the TFN Library. Whenever you're looking for something to read, you can always examine (in the TFN Index) the list of books which have been reviewed in newsletter issues; if you see one listed which you'd like to read, you can find the issue in which the review appeared and determine if it is "starred" as a TFN Library book. There may be some books not available at your public library which you could borrow from TFN (690-1963). Books and periodicals are still arriving. This month we wish to thank Mary Cumming, Betty McCrimmon and Margaret Cook for their contributions to our shelves.

We don't have to look around for good natural history jokes. The serious journals unwittingly provide ample material for our amusement. How about this one? ....

*"The species was described from a series of ten skins,  
two skeletons and three alcoholics."*

# Toronto Region BIRD RECORDS

October to early December, 1981

## Exceptional Records:

GREEN HERON. This small heron was a bonus to winter listers when it was discovered in Richmond Hill in early December. It was reported on Dec. 5(HK) and on Dec. 6 (GB, AD) but could not be located on or after Dec. 7. There are only two previous winter records for Ontario.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER. This woodpecker is slowly but steadily increasing in the area south and west of London (the only area in Canada where it regularly nests). In the Toronto Region there are about 50 records, three in the late 1800's and the remainder from 1950 to 1980, one or two have been reported almost every year since 1956. No less than four were reported during December 1981; individuals were at Snelgrove Dec.6(GB, AD), near Huttonville on Dec. 13(FK), near Balsam on Dec. 13 (HK) and at Richmond Hill on Dec. 14.

LICHTENSTEIN'S ORIOLE. Bad news for bird listers, good news for the bird! This oriole which was reported last month as a new bird for Canada has now been removed from the list and the little tick mark made beside the bird's name by the 50 or so birders who saw it in Scarborough during the first week of November has had to be erased. When captured for banding the bird was found to have clipped toe nails and showed signs that it had been kept in a cage. Concern for the bird, which preferred eating oranges at a feeder, increased as the weather became colder and it was recaptured in mid-November and given to the Metro Zoo.

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Only a few Common Loons and no Red-necked Grebes were reported; Horned Grebes were scarce again this fall and the only Double-crested Cormorant was one at the Eastern Headland on Nov. 7(JM). Six Great Blue Herons were still present at the E. Headland on Nov. 11(MK); a late Green Heron was found at Jack Darling Park on Oct. 19(WM) and the last Black-crw. Night Heron at Mugg's Island was on Oct. 16(TB)). Whistling Swans are infrequently reported in the fall; 10 were at Appleby Line on Nov. 22(DF). October and November are good months to see waterfowl along the lakeshore; there was a Snow Goose at the E. Headland on Oct. 24 (BY), a Brant which spent about a month at Marie Curtis Park was photographed in November(BJ); 50 Northern Shovelers at Grenadier Pond on Nov. 7(JK); two Harlequin Ducks which returned to Humber Bay Park on Nov. 8 were joined by a third on Dec. 13(JK); a King Eider was at the E. Headland on Nov. 1(JS ST); an estimate of 10,000 Oldsquaw at Humber Bay was independently made by two observers (MK, Rk); a Black Scoter was at Humber Bay on Oct. 28, and 8 Surf Scoters were there on Nov. 8(BY); as many as 50 Hooded Mergansers were at Cranberry Marsh on Nov. 2(HK). A Ruddy Shelduck, first found in early November (BY) at Sunnyside and still present at the end of the month, was undoubtedly an escapee.

Goshawks continued to be reported during November, the last Red-shouldered Hawk was one at Melville on Nov. 1(WM) and the first Rough-legged Hawk was one on the TFN outing at the Toronto Islands on Oct. 12(GF). Shorebirds continued to be scarce due to lack of suitable habitat. Two Lesser Yellow-legs which lingered to late November in King Township could not be found on Dec. 1. Spotted Sandpipers at Jack Darling Park on Oct. 23(WM) and at Humber Bay on Nov. 7(JK) were late. Both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were found at Britannia and Port Credit on Dec. 12 and 13(DF). The status of the Lesser Black-backed Gull, our most recent stray from Europe, is not clear in the Toronto Region. One was seen and described (a black-backed gull, smaller than a Great Black-backed Gull and with yellow legs) at Humber Bay Park on Oct. 28(BY).

A total of 92 Saw-whet Owls were banded at Mugg's Island during October (TBO). One of these owls, which was banded on Oct. 2 and was retrapped at Prince Edward Point on Oct. 18, had apparently migrated in the wrong direction. A Short-eared Owl which was first found on the E. Headland on Nov. 11 (MK, CS) was still present in early December. Snowy Owls first appeared at the E. Headland on Nov. 7 (HK) and two or three remained throughout the month at the E. Headland and at Humber Bay. Late Red-headed Woodpeckers were one at Etobicoke Creek on Oct. 11 (MM) and one at a Don Mills feeder on Nov. 8 (SB). An exceptionally late Purple Martin was found at Mugg's Island on Oct. 3, a Mockingbird and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher were also at Mugg's on the same day (TBO). Some other late dates for the Mugg's Island banding station were a Gray Catbird and a Swainson's Thrush on Oct. 31, Gray-cheeked Thrush on Oct. 8, Solitary Vireo on Oct. 17, 10 Orange-crowned Warblers and 15 Nashville Warblers on Oct. 7, Magnolia and Wilson's Warblers on Oct. 11 and an American Red-start on Oct. 17 (TBO). As many as 350 Yellow-rumped Warblers moved through Mugg's Island on Oct. 7 (TBO).

The minor invasion of Boreal Chickadees which began in late October continued to mid-November with individuals being reported at the Eastern Headland (Nov. 1, BW) and Nov. 11, MK), Lambton (Nov. 7, JK) and rumours of four or five others later in November. Coinciding with the movement of Boreal Chickadees was an influx of Northern Shrikes which began on Oct. 24 with one at the E. Headland (LY) and individuals being found daily during early November throughout the region. At Fine Point there was a late Gray Catbird on Nov. 30 (MK) and the last report of Water Pipits was on Nov. 7 at the E. headland (JM). A Palm Warbler at Humber Bay on Dec. 14 (AW) was probably an exceptionally late migrant. Winter finches which continued to be reported throughout the region during November included Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls from Nov. 7, a Red Crossbill at Glendon from Nov. 5 (BP) as well as Pine Siskins. Among the reports of Evening Grosbeaks were three visiting a Schomberg feeder on Nov. 22 (EJ). One and sometimes two Fox Sparrows were daily visitors at a Willowdale feeder from Oct. 25 to Nov. 6 (IH).

Contributors: Susan Brown, George Fairfield, Wayne Ferguson, Ida Hanson, Edith James, Beth Jefferson, John Kelley, F. Keim, Harry Kerr, Mark Kubisz, W.C. Mansell, John McLean, Toronto Bird Observatory, Bruce Parker, Don Lerks, Roger Powley, Chris Sbytz, Jeff Stewart, Sharon Thurston, Bruce White, Alan Wormington, Bob Yukich, Gerry Bennett, Arnold Dawe.

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

Bruce D. Parker

*A starry flower nods with grace;  
 The snowflake-patterns scatter seed,  
 Its lovely name is Queen Anne's lace -  
 A dainty, fragile, wayside weed.*

Denise Villep

# IN EXCHANGE

The TFN is receiving newsletters from many of the naturalists' clubs in Canada in exchange for our Toronto Field Naturalist. If any member would like to borrow any of these please contact Bruce D. Parker at 449-0994.

## Prince Edward Island Natural History Society Newsletter.

The total of 1715 active Great Blue Heron nests reported in 1981 far exceeded the 900 nests counted in 1980 in Prince Edward Island (The 1981 Great Blue Heron Census, Oct. 1981). Much of this increase may be due to improved survey techniques. Nine active colonies, ranging in size from 20 to 380 nests, were found in the province. It is estimated that the total post-fledging population of Great Blue Herons in Prince Edward Island is 7546. A similar census of heron colonies in Ontario is conducted by the Long Point Bird Observatory.

In 1981 the Breeding Bird Atlas project for Ontario was started, in October 1981 a meeting was held in New Brunswick to begin preparations for a similar project in the Maritimes (Breeding Bird Atlas, Nov. 1981).

## The Latest Word from the Nova Scotia Museum, July 1981.

A step forward in Nova Scotia is the enactment of the 'Special Places Protection Act.' "Recently proclaimed is the Act to Provide for the Preservation, Regulation and Study of Archaeological and Historical Remains and Archaeological Sites, to be known as the Special Places Protection Act. Its purpose is to provide for the preservation and protection of archaeological and historical remains and palaeontological sites which are considered to be important parts of the natural or human heritage of the province; to protect and preserve ecological sites that are suitable for research and educational purposes, represent natural ecosystems that contain rare or endangered native plants or animals in their natural habitats; and to promote understanding and appreciation among the people of the province of the scientific, educational and cultural values represented by the establishment of Special Places."

## The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds Newsletter, May 1981.

McGill University's Macdonald Raptor Research Centre (MRRRC) under the direction of Dr. D.M. Bird, and the Owl Rehabilitation Research Foundation (ORRF) affiliated with Brock University and headed by Kay and Larry McKeever have a common goal ... the preservation of birds of prey. Operating professional programmes consisting of research, public awareness and rehabilitation, MRRRC and ORRF are concentrating their efforts on diurnal and nocturnal raptors, respectively.

The Hawk and Owl Trust has been established:

1. To disseminate information concerning birds of prey, focussing mainly on Canadian raptor research activities.
2. To mobilize support for the MRRRC and ORRF programmes.

For more information contact THE HAWK AND OWL TRUST, P.O. Box 400, Macdonald Campus of McGill University, Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, H9X1C0.

Bruce D. Parker

### WHAT'S A LOW-KOO?

It's a sound  
Made by a mourning-dove  
With a sore throat.

Aarne Juhola

## issues---

THE CASE OF THE SLUMPING FILL

If the politicians and planners in Metro's more complacent municipalities require an illustration of the deleterious consequences of inadequate ravine protection policies, I would recommend a look at North York's Wigmore Park Ravine in which the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (MTRCA) is carrying out some major modifications to a slope behind Sulkara Court. I would recommend a look at this situation, not because it is a catastrophe (many of our ravines including Wigmore itself have recovered from far worse), or even because the present politicians could have done anything to prevent it (the cause goes back almost a generation), but because the situation exemplifies a problem that could become more frequent in the next 10-15 years and which isn't considered in the usual arguments against Valley Impact Zones.

Our story begins about 20 years ago when developers dumped fill to extend level tableland on the crest of the slope, allowing them to fit more valuable ravine lots on to the cul-de-sac. Some homeowners subsequently further modified their lots, as with backyard swimming pools; but, by and large, the next two decades were quiet ones for the slope. Then, recently, the owners of two of the houses, one with a pool and one with a tiny garden retained by a timber wall began to notice with alarm that things were beginning to slump. The word went out to MTRCA which dispatched some engineering staff to assess the situation. The problem was not obvious on casual inspection. The slope itself was quite stable, wooded with a mature all-age stand of Sugar Maple and White Ash. Nevertheless, around the swimming pool the massive retaining structures - huge timbers and gabions anchored with concrete posts as big around as your thigh, and further buttressed by the young poplars growing against the down-slope side - were beginning to buckle and sag, although all seemed secure next door. The verdict of the Authority staff was that the fill was indeed subsiding and that if nothing was done to remedy the situation, the pool, backyards, and even the houses themselves would eventually be endangered. The longer the situation existed, the more difficult the problem, which stemmed from the original construction on the site, would be to fix.

The solution proposed was to build a temporary access road to the base of the slope, clear the May-apple-carpetted, sumac thicket along the base, clear the forest off the slope, replace the fill, install drains and other contrivances to stabilize the bank, regrade the slope to 2°, and then replant the whole area with grass and trees. This proposal had to go through the Watershed, General, and Executive Committees of the MTRCA, but on such routine matters, the Committees generally act on staff recommendation, approving in order of (staff-assessed) priority, as many projects as the budget allows.

The total budget for this project comes to \$170,000, \$5,000 paid by each of the homeowners involved, and the rest - 94% - paid by MTRCA out of public funds. The total cost to the public also includes damage to public parkland and the reduction of "amenity value". The nearest vehicular access to the valley from Wynford Drive is separated from the slope in question by the East Don River and the CNR embankment. The MTRCA road crosses the river on a temporary culvert, cuts across the bottomland back to the river at the other side of the meander, passes under the railway trestle, and hooks back across the old apple orchard invaded by hawthorn, raspberry, elm, ash, pine and maple, to the base of the slope. Along the way, it damages the roots of several mature trees, obliterates a patch of ostrich fern and Jack-in-the-pulpit, and destroys a fair bit of second growth. All this is in addition to the 40-metre-wide swath cleared on

the privately-owned slope. Just luckily, no specially significant habitats happened to be in the way.

To-day, Metroplan policies would, presumably, restrict the sort of ill-advised slope-crest construction that set in motion this train of events in Wigmore, but only along major valleys. Smaller ravines are not under Metro jurisdiction and have not been granted similar protection by the boroughs. North York planner Steve Hiley, for instance, maintained in a recent Star interview (Kenna, 1981) that his city's ravines policy (or lack thereof) has worked well enough because owners would not do something that would damage their own property. But, as we have seen, unwise construction on the edge of a ravine may give rise to damage that will not appear for 20 years or more. Because much of the construction along Metro's ravines has taken place within the past 20 years it is too early to say that the laissez-faire policy has "worked". Moreover the insidiousness of the process means that self-interest is less of a safeguard to slope proper-ties than Hiley suggests. An ignorant or unscrupulous developer can create future costs for an unsuspecting homeowner, and a property-owner might unwittingly set the stage for future wastage with a less-than-obviously-destructive alteration. In the case of the Sulkara properties, it would be unfair to require the present home-owners to pay the full cost, and unfeasible to collect from the developers after all these years, so the public ends up heavily subsidizing the destruction of its own natural heritage. When it is so difficult to assign and recover costs it is entirely appropriate and justified to prevent activities which would cause future problems.

There are two positive aspects to be considered with respect to ravine manage-ment. Because privately-owned ravine slopes are ecologically and aesthetically integral parts of the public parks system, property owners who maintain their slopes in a natural state are providing an unpaid public benefit. On a province-wide basis, lands maintained in a natural condition, especially those in or abutting Environmentally Significant Areas and public parkland ought, accordingly, to be very lightly taxed. While such a tax policy would provide little incentive for a developer to forego a potentially lucrative project, it would facilitate preservation by means of acquisition (Singleton, 1980).

To return to the more local and immediate issue of protecting small ravines, it seems clear to me that they should have extended to them the same protection the Metroplan affords the major valleys - a restriction on filling, excavation, and vegetation removal within the valley and from a "valley impact zone" of 10 metres from the crest. After all, narrow, natural-bottomed ravines such as Vyner, Burke and the East York "pocket" ravines would be far more drastically affected by a slope-recontouring approach to erosion control than Wigmore will be. Also, it would be most welcome if engineers could develop a technique for controlling fill-slumpage and slope erosion that would be reasonable in cost and have far less environmental impact than that presently employed.

- Allan Greenbaum

#### References:

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Note: Source on MTRCA activity and procedure - Personal communication - Jim Tucker (MTRCA staff), and NY Alderman Betty Sutherland (MTRCA Don Watershed Committee)

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If you would like to contribute additions or corrections to this list, please call me.

Ralph Baehre  
663-2163 (evenings)  
667-2526 (days or evenings)

## Looking ahead...

### SPRING FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW, April 21-25, 1982

The TFN will be at the Spring Flower and Garden Show of the Garden Club of Toronto which will take place April 21 to 25. The theme is "Flowers, Naturally!" Our Gingerbread display will tell our message and we will conduct short nature walks in Wilket Creek Park. Members are invited to contribute ideas or volunteer to assist. Call Jean Macdonald at 425-6596.

### FON ANNUAL MEETING - May 28-30, 1982

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists will hold its 51st Annual Meeting in Kingston, Ontario.

We have been asked to provide a display. We would like to set up our "Gingerbread" unit, but as usual, we need HELP. Would anyone accept the responsibility of taking the display to Kingston, setting it up, then dismantling it and bringing it back to Toronto? A fairly large car is required. Call Jean Macdonald at 425-6596.

### NATURE FESTIVAL - late June, 1982

Plans are being made for an all-day festival which will offer displays, nature art, and conducted mini-walks. Plan to participate! Have you a craft? a collection? art? featuring nature themes which you could exhibit?

Watch the newsletter for more information. The festival is an undertaking of the TFN Nature Art Group of which Mary Cumming has been appointed chairperson.

MORE ABOUT HERITAGE TREES

A recent letter from Lois Owen (see page 10 ) brought to light the fact that no explanatory articles on Heritage Trees had been published in the newsletter since (1) *Give Your Trees the Heritage Hug* in 1977 and (2) *Heritage Trees in Metro Toronto* in 1979. Types of trees with most suitable candidates (hard maples, oaks, beech, nut-trees, cherry and planetrees) were stressed, but little has been said about types which are not likely to qualify.

A Heritage Tree must be capable of growing over twenty feet high - not of shrub-size as are forsythia, quince and privet. It should be over 100 years old and capable of living at least another 100 years. <sup>(1)</sup> Exceptions to this basic rule are: Rare in Metro; largest of its species in Metro; beyond its normal range here in Metro; of some historic interest; unusual feature; particularly good form. <sup>(2)</sup>

Some trees that are rare in Metro are shagbark hickory and cucumber-tree; extremely rare (fewer than three) are sweet chestnut, pignut hickory and hackberry. A native Ontario tree still unknown in Metro is red mulberry. If it were found, it would be of "heritage" status at any size. (A mulberry with red hairs in tufts, at the junctions of veins on the backs of the leaves, is red mulberry.)

White mulberry, a common exotic tree propagated by birds, is not usually eligible for "heritage" status - but, if it were so large that two people would have trouble reaching around it, then it would qualify. The same would apply to white pine. Seldom does a single white pine (or a spruce) reach the required age. However, a stand of healthy pines could be designated a Heritage Woodland. We need to keep at least one example of each kind of tableland and ravine woodland for its educational value alone. Tableland woodlands are rare in Metro. Each municipality should protect its own resources.

Quick-growing and short-lived native poplars and birches may qualify as Heritage Woodlands. These are pioneer species and could conceivably last a long time in Metro, as a woodland, cut off from other woodlands containing competing species. Some individual eastern cottonwoods and yellow birches may reach the required age to be Heritage Trees in their own right. Some of the introduced poplars which multiply easily by suckers and seeding, and grow well in disturbed situations, are not likely to qualify.

Health is required if we are to hope for the long life of a tree. Obviously an unhealthy one cannot, therefore, be considered a Heritage Tree candidate. An American elm may be a beautiful, large tree, but we never know when Dutch elm disease may strike it; thus it cannot be expected to live a long time. A tree growing in a recently disturbed area cannot be given "heritage" status until enough time has elapsed to determine the effects on the tree. This may take twenty years or more, depending on the kind of tree and the extent of the disturbance. A schoolyard tree is an example of an unlikely candidate, because the soil around it is constantly trampled; a lawn tree, when the products used to dress the lawn are harmful to the tree, is another. However, if a tree is extremely rare in Metro, even if it is unhealthy, there is still good reason for giving it "heritage" status ... to give the species a chance at survival here. An example is the sweet chestnut at Echo Valley.

If you know of a tree which you think is a candidate, give it the "heritage hug." Let us know the circumference, location, and the reason why you think it qualifies. If it's a woodland you have in mind, let us know the species present. You can call me - or any member of the Editorial Committee,

Mary Smith  
(231-5302)

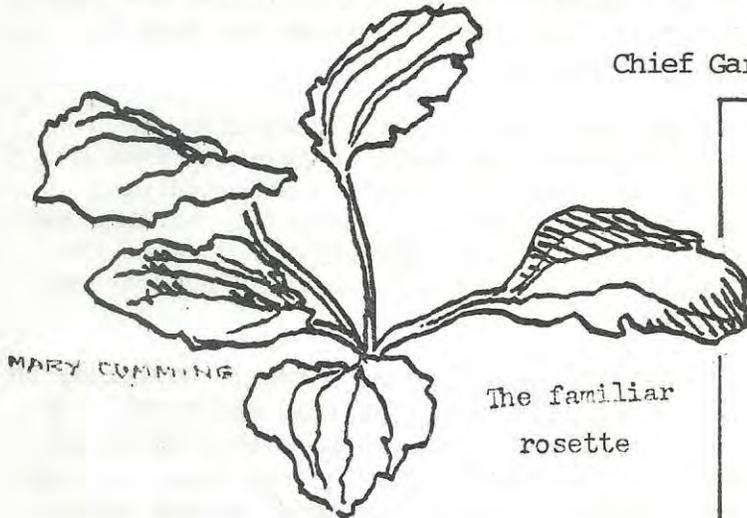
- (1) TFN (307) 12-13, A77 - by Mary Smith - gives circumferences of some likely trees at 100 years, identification information, etc.
- (2) TFN (328) 13-15, D79 - by Helen Juhola - gives explanation of categories and a list of heritage trees, etc.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

TFN (123) 7 M54

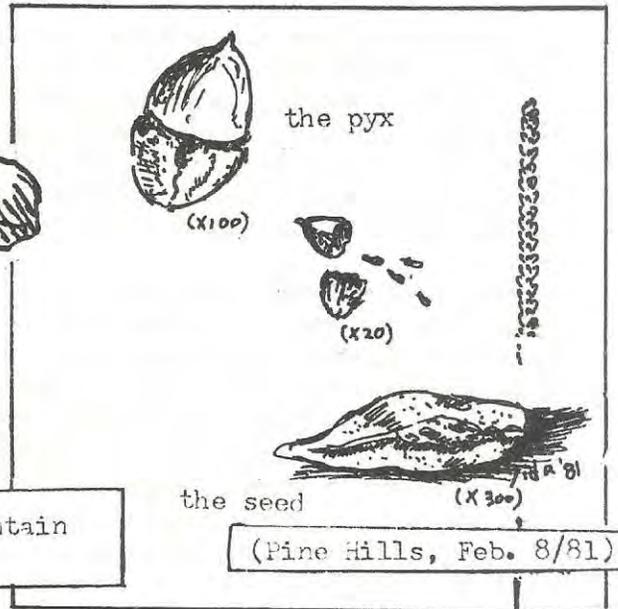
In the spring you may entice the crossbills down to your feeding station by scattering some germinated millet on the ground. To germinate the seed spread some thinly on a wet newspaper in a warm spot in the basement. It will germinate in a few days. My visiting crossbills also eat the germinating seeds of the large-leaved plantain, a plant which we have in quantity and quality at Glendon Hall nowadays, coming down on the lawn to get them. As you know they are very tame birds, being unacquainted with civilized man.

Jim Mackintosh  
Chief Gardener, Glendon Hall Estate 1954



The familiar  
rosette

Common or Large-leaved Plantain  
(*Plantago major*)



(Pine Hills, Feb. 8/81)

## A SURVEY OF ONTARIO BIRD LITERATURE - part 10

## SHOREBIRDS

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Bruce D. Parker

BIRD LADY OF OAKVILLE

(REPORT ON ILLUSTRATED LECTURE - OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING)

Our guest speaker, Mrs. Pat Smith, has been caring for sick birds for almost thirty years. After retirement, it occurred to her, "A rose-garden without birds is like going to a dance without an orchestra". But in the late fall she was delighted to find that her rose-hips were indeed attracting birds - and so began her plans for a bird-garden and her trips to buy sunflower-seeds from the late Roy Ivor of Mississauga. Roy quickly perceived Pat's awareness and concern and asked her to take home several injured birds, on each of her visits, with instructions on how to care for them. As news of Pat's success with injured birds grew, so did the number of people bringing them to her. Encouraged and sponsored by Red Mason and Dr. Donald Gunn, she applied for an Environment Canada Wildlife Permit for caring for injured wild birds. This she received in 1954. Each December she is required to give a report on the number of injured birds taken in, fatalities, and recovery and release of those surviving. RCMP wildlife officers make a yearly inspection. A typical report reads like a bird-guide - in 1979 Pat received 871 injured birds; 179 died; 692 recovered and were released - a remarkable success-story. Among these were 3 Great Blue Herons, 3 Virginia Rails, 5 American Bitterns, 5 cuckoos, 3 Mute Swans, and 4 White-winged Crossbills. October residents included hawks, owls, crows, doves (and a raven brought from North Bay). A blind immature Great Horned Owl was to be operated on by a veterinarian at the McCormack Animal Clinic, who - with Dr. J. F. Laraya of Oakville - assists Pat when X-rays and bone-setting are needed, free of charge. Birds are brought from near and far; for instance, many office-workers have driven from downtown Toronto to Oakville in their lunch-hours, bringing birds that have flown into their office-buildings.

Pat's presentation started with a delightful film, "Goodbye Red" (Quinney Productions). A farmer who lives on the Niagara Escarpment found a Red-tailed Hawk with a fractured wing and asked Pat to care for it. After ten months of diligent, loving care, "Red" was ready to make his own way in the world again. We witnessed the sadness and joy when he was set free by Pat, to soar the skies and lead a normal life. We also saw Pat on regular visits to a high ledge on Rattlesnake Point, from which she watched, in the tree-tops, the progress of a nest of Red-tailed Hawks, until fledging.

You are invited to visit Pat and her birds in her lovely garden which runs down to the shore of Lake Ontario. You can watch with her the replacement of embankment swept into Lake Ontario during a severe storm in 1972; Pat hopes to replenish this new area (100' x 70') with saplings and shrubs for the feeding, shelter and nesting of even more birds. She can already see encouraging signs as gulls, ducks and geese return to the bottom of her garden and swim in the bay which has been created. As your reporter, I think it would be a nice gesture to take Pat's birds a treat when you visit...maybe a shrub, sapling, or bird-seed. (Her birds eat about 150 pounds of seed a month.) It is a heart-warming experience to share her enthusiasm and join in her plans for the care of the birds we love so well.

June Hooley, Oakville

(Pat Smith lives at "Tralee", 176 Brookfield Crescent, Oakville. (845-2043). Take QEW to Trafalgar Rd. South; S to Lakeshore Rd.; E 1.2 kms. to Brookfield Crescent which goes south to the lake.)

Ed. Note: Some of Pat Smith's recommendations, offered on this occasion, will appear in future issues.

# TFN MEETINGS



## GENERAL MEETINGS

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

Monday, February 1, 1982, 8.15 p.m.

Hawk Migration Around the Great Lakes

- Dave Copeland, Account Executive CKOC Radio (former Business Development Manager, The Spectator), Hamilton
- Barry Cheriére, Hamilton Naturalist's Club

Dave Copeland has been co-ordinator of the Grimsby Hawk Watch since 1975. He was formerly Continental Reports Editor, Hawk Migration Association North America, Eastern Great Lakes Editor, H.M.A.N.A. He sits on Fish and Wildlife Advisory Board, Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, and F.O.N. Raptor Conservation Committee.

Mr. Copeland will present slides with a commentary about spring and fall hawk routes, and the relative abundance of hawk species. He will also give information concerning the time to look for various species, hawk identification, weather-related factors and hot spots to visit.

Monday, March 1, 1982, 8.15 p.m.

Baja - A Fragile Paradox

- Barry Ranford, Teacher, Humber College, and Commercial Photographer

\* \* \* \* \*

## GROUP MEETINGS

Bird Group

Wed. Feb. 24 Owl Watching in Toronto - How, When, Where  
8.00 p.m. and Why - J.E. "Red" Mason

Location: Education Centre Auditorium, 155 College Street,  
1 block west of University Avenue.

: : : : : : : : : : :

Botany Group

Thur. Feb. 18 Olympic National Park in the State of Washington.  
8.00 p.m. This park includes temperate rain forest, alpine  
and seashore vegetation. - Steve Varga, Resource  
Counsellor for Botany Group; Grad. student, U. of T.

Location: Room 3, Hodgson Public School  
Davisville Avenue, just east of Mt. Pleasant Road.

: : : : : : : : : : :

Environmental Group

Thur. Feb. 25 Highland Creek and the Scarborough Bluffs  
7.30 p.m. - Steve Taylor

Members are invited to bring photographs and  
information about these areas.

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

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MEETINGS - Continued.Junior Club

Sat. Feb. 6 Orchids - Dr. Ron Tasker, Long Point Bird  
10.00 a.m. Observatory

Location: Planetarium Auditorium, immediately south of  
Royal Ontario Museum

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## COMING EVENTS

## COMING EVENTS

Civic Garden Centre

The following courses will be offered at the Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Avenue East, at Leslie. Call the Centre, 445-1552, for further information.

Botanical Art - Six-week course commencing Monday, March 1,  
10.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Birdwatching in Spring - Four-week course commencing Thursday,  
April 1, 2.00 p.m. and 7.30 p.m.

Royal Ontario Museum

From February 5 to May 30, the McLaughlin Planetarium Star Theatre show will explore the fascinating subject of ringed planets.

Showtimes: Tuesday to Friday - 3.00 and 7.45 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday - 12.30, 1.45, 3.00, 7.45 p.m.

ROYAL CANADIAN INSTITUTE

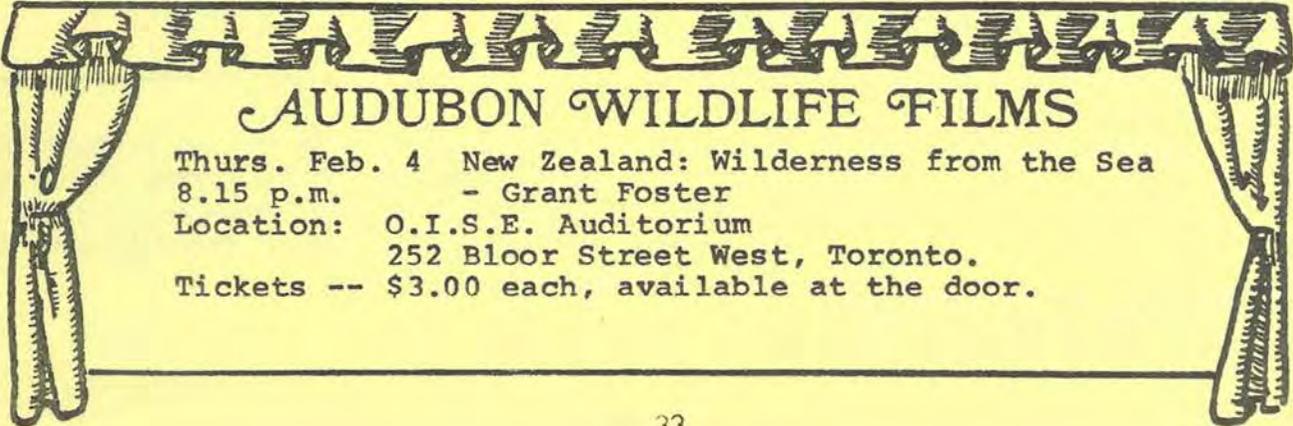
Sun. Feb. 7 Art and Nature  
- Robert Bateman (check time, evening lecture)

Sun. Feb. 14 Photography, An Art Form  
- Steven Moore, Photographer

Sun. Feb. 21 Canada's Stake in the Nuclear Arms Race  
- Dr. George Ignatieff, Chancellor, UofT

Sun. Feb. 28 Missing Solar Neutrinos - Do We Understand  
the Sun? - Professor Dick Azuma, UofT

Location: Medical Science Auditorium, University of Toronto  
at 3.15 p.m.



### AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

Thurs. Feb. 4 New Zealand: Wilderness from the Sea  
8.15 p.m. - Grant Foster

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

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

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Toronto Bird Observatory..... 489-7444 (eve.)  
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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 April issue, material must be received by a member of the Editorial Committee by February 15, 1982.

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

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\$8.00 for 2 in same family, \$12.00 for 3 in same family;  
LIFE: \$150.00; CORPORATE \$150.00.

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