

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 379, April 1986



*River Portage  
July 1965*

COVER TO COVER: PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2 - APRIL OUTINGS 3 - KEEPING IN TOUCH 5  
- TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS 9 - IN EXCHANGE 13 - SNAPPING TURTLES: OURS TO  
SAVE 21 - NIAGARA REGION OAKS 23 - ETOBICOKE CREEK PROJECT REPORT 25 -  
PROJECTS 28 - FOR READING 31 - TFN LIBRARY REPORT 32 - RECENTLY PUBLISHED 33  
- RUSHING THE SEASON 33 - THE WEATHER THIS TIME LAST YEAR 34 - COMING EVENTS 34 -  
TFN MEETINGS 37

# President's Report

January was a very busy month as you could imagine from reading my report in the February Newsletter. There was a pause in February while some of these things percolated. No doubt there will be more activity before long.

Last month you read of some of the mail that comes addressed to me as President of the TFN. Some of this material could be of interest to individual members. Since it cannot be distributed to everyone, I have been bringing it to the general meeting and putting it on the table for your information. This lets members jot down topics, addresses and so on, if they wish to follow up any particular item. Sometimes there are copies which members can take away. Some of you have obtained Seasons, the magazine of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

△ Karen Fawthrop has accepted the task of arranging programmes for next year. We have a file of speakers, but if anyone has a suggestion Karen would be pleased to hear from you. Her number is 267-5125.

I am happy to tell you that I received a call from a volunteer to act as recording secretary for the Board meetings.

Jean Macdonald (425-6596)

□

## This Month's Cover

"Planetrees" - watercolour  
by Lenore Patterson  
Nature Arts Group

Since Lenore works mostly in colour, we wondered when her work would turn up in our black-and-white newsletter. In this watercolour painted in Roehampton Park, though we haven't captured her subtle washes in the photocopy, her values of lights and darks make interesting contrasts.

London planetree is planted a great deal in Toronto; it is considered to be a hybrid of sycamore planetree (of this continent) and the oriental planetree. Typical of the group is the "patchwork" bark, with the outer bark peeling to reveal white and yellow smooth inner bark. The "buttonball" seedheads dangle on slender stems. If they are single, it is a sycamore\*; two or three make it a London plane; up to five, and it is an oriental planetree. More often than not in Toronto we see trees with most stems bearing single seedheads, but some on the same tree bearing two. In such cases we are inclined to say, "Oh, it may be a hybrid, but there's a lot of sycamore in that one!"

DB

\*The name "sycamore" comes from the sycamore of Europe, a maple, not a plane-tree. Another case of early settlers misnaming a species because of certain similarities. The maple in question, which has a somewhat flaky bark too, is sometimes planted in Toronto as well. We get around this by always referring to it as the "sycamore maple".

□



APRIL

Here are a few things to keep your eyes and ears open for, while on April walks. Reptiles and amphibians come to life. Listen especially for spring peepers and American toads calling. Salamanders are starting their migration to wetland breeding areas. The beautiful blooms of golden bells, or forsythia, will be difficult to miss. If you see a tiny blue butterfly fluttering along a woodland path it will be the spring azure. Tortoise shell butterflies, which have an upper wing surface of mostly orange and brown, should also be in evidence by this time. The flowers, or catkins as they are more popularly called, of birch, aspen and cottonwood will add their subtle hues to the spring landscape.

April sees a real explosion in bird migration. Remember that in spring, migrants tend to move with warm southerly winds and are grounded by cold and cool weather. Marshes slowly come back to life with the return of bitterns, great blue herons, pied billed grebes, rails, dabbling ducks and swamp sparrows. Shorelines, mudflats and wet fields should be checked for early shorebirds such as lesser yellowlegs, semipalmated plovers and least and pectoral sandpipers. Yellow-bellied sapsuckers, flickers, golden-crowned kinglets can be found in the ravines with white-throated sparrows and ruby-crowned kinglets turning up later in the month. Hawks are also on the move. Watch for broad-winged, sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks as well as osprey, northern harriers and turkey vultures. Use a scope to scan the lake for loons, grebes and diving ducks. All in all, April should be a good month for birds and naturalists alike.

Phil Joiner

- |                                 |  |                        |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Saturday<br>March 29<br>9 am    | <u>Rouge Valley</u> - BIRDS<br>Leader: Howard Battae<br>Meet at the Zoo entrance. Bring lunch.   | Rouge, Scarborough     |
| Wednesday<br>April 2<br>1:30 pm | <u>Chine Drive Ravine</u> - NATURE WALK<br>Leader: George Comper<br>Meet on the southeast corner of Midland and Kingston Road (beside the church).           | lakeshore, Scarborough |
| Sunday<br>April 6<br>10 am      | <u>Leslie Street Spit</u> - BIRDS<br>Leader: Herb Elliott<br>Meet at the foot of Leslie Street (at Unwin Avenue).  | lakeshore, Toronto     |
| Wednesday<br>April 9<br>1:30 pm | <u>Oakcrest</u> - NATURE WALK<br>Leader: Diana Banville<br>Meet on the southeast corner of Woodbine and Danforth. Walk will end at Main Street and Danforth. | Toronto                |
| Saturday<br>April 12<br>10 am   | <u>Metro Zoo</u> - NATURE ARTS<br>Leader: Mac Brown<br>Meet at the Zoo entrance. Bring sketching material, stool, cameras, etc. Lunch optional.              | Rouge, Scarborough     |

▷



## APRIL OUTINGS (cont'd)

Wednesday Glen Stewart Ravine - BIRDS Toronto  
 April 30 Leader: Fred Bodsworth  
 11 am Meet in the parkette by the nature trail sign on Kingston Road just  
 west of Beech Avenue. Bring lunch. □

## Keeping in touch . . .

Dear Member:

February 14, 1986

Happy Valentines Day!

As you have read in our January newsletter we have been very active protecting the Black Creek in the Town of Vaughan. We were successful in preserving most of the Edgeley Woodlot and much of the valleyland north of Hwy. 7 and will be consulted by the Town about the landscaping to be done in that area.

Now I am pleased to inform you that we were able to negotiate an agreement with the Town of Vaughan and the developer of the Black Creek Industrial Estates and thereby avoid the OMB hearing scheduled for Jan. 30, 1986. The development will proceed, but with added provisions for water quality protection, rainwater infiltration to control runoff, and landscaping to screen the development from the nearby public open spaces. The agreement requires the use of stormwater management methods that we feel should be the standard practice for new development. Our lawyer, Harry Dahme of the David Estrin law office, was very helpful during the negotiation and finalizing of the agreement, and Glenn Harrington of Harrington Hoyle provided valuable advice.

I am also pleased to announce that we are now able to provide donors with income tax receipts through an agreement with Save Our Streams. This should make contributions more attractive for those firms and individuals who would benefit from a charitable donation tax deduction. Donors who would like to have a tax receipt should make the cheque payable to Save Our Streams (Black Creek Project) and send it to our BCP post office box. We need funds to pay legal expenses and costs of materials for rehabilitation projects.

BCP has achieved a great deal to date and the future looks very hopeful for the rehabilitation of Black Creek. But we must maintain a high profile and activity level to achieve results, and we need more active participation from members. Please get involved -- with work days, planning, recruiting new members, writing letters or fundraising -- we need you!

Sincerely,

Sandy Agnew

President, The Black Creek Project  
 Box 324, Station A, Downsview. M3M 3A6

P.S. We are planning a gigantic spring garage sale as a fundraising event, tentatively for April 12 and 13. Set aside some of your favourite junk to contribute.

KEEPING IN TOUCH (cont'd)

Dear Helen,

Feb. 19, 1986

I have been here in the west of England for just over three months now, working in the town of Gloucester, and have recently found permanent accommodation so have taken out membership in all my local naturalist and conservation groups, as well as the national organizations, and am being "put in the picture" fairly rapidly via all the material that now reaches me from them. There is certainly a broad base of support for conservation here and quite a considerable amount of activity is ongoing, but there is still much to be accomplished and, as everywhere, eternal vigilance is the key thing.

It really brings it home to me that I am a long way from Toronto when I read, from a report on a visit to the Scilly Isles last autumn in my local RSPB Members Group Newsletter, that "a number of real rarities have turned up, including a red-eyed vireo, and blackpoll and parula warblers". From my garden, I can report the sighting of chaffinches (our most numerous bird species), collared doves, blackbirds, song thrushes, blackpolls, robins (English ones, that is), greenfinches, wood pigeons and wrens -- and, of course, the English sparrow and starlings. On New Year's Day, I was fortunate to spot a pair of bullfinches, but have not seen them since. It certainly seems strange not to see ring-billed gulls hereabouts, but in their place we have the equally ubiquitous black-headed gulls. Of course, I'm really out in the country here -- just small towns, villages and hamlets dotted about in a largely agricultural landscape devoted to sheep, with some dairy cattle and a few farmers with pigs or goats.

Right up until January it was not unusual to see plants in sheltered sun-facing spots still flowering and, even now in mid-February, things are still very green. It's certainly a very lovely part of England here in the Cotswolds and I'm looking forward to seeing it at its very best in spring and summer. I've discovered the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers which offers a great many working holidays in all parts of the country on a year-round basis at costs which are positively nominal. So, come Easter weekend, I'll be in a wetland nature reserve in the Somerset Levels and in mid-April I'll spend a week in the Pennines learning the art of dry stone walling. For any conservation-oriented Canadian planning a holiday in the UK, the working holiday weeks and weekends are a really inexpensive way to gain another perspective on conservation issues by working with English conservationists with whom they can, I am sure, interact for mutual benefit. If any TFN members are interested in a BTCV working holiday, I'll be happy to arrange for them to receive enough information to incorporate one on a UK visit.

Do hope this finds you and yours all well and thriving, as I am. Do look me up if you are ever over this way.

Janet Illingworth-Cooper

Ed. note: For information about BTCV working holidays, write to the above at  
The Pines, 201 Pirton Lane, Churchdown, Glos. GL3 2SF, England

Dear Editor:

February 23, 1986

Noted in "Toronto Region Bird Records" a belted kingfisher January 12th, Richmond Hill. January 12th we saw one (the same?) in Northwood Park, Downsview. We were thrilled. This was between 4 and 4:30 PM. We should compare notes with H.T. [Harold Taylor].

Joan and Vern de Guerre

KEEPING IN TOUCH (cont'd)

Dear Helen,

February 20, 1986

Further to our telephone conversation, here is a copy (see pages 13 to 15) of the report by Paul Harpley and myself. We hope to continue our survey of the site this spring if possible. However, on February 17 the Durham Land Division Committee approved severance of the property, so development appears imminent. An appeal may be taken to the Ontario Municipal Board.

We produced this report for SRVS because we were quickly impressed by the site's sensitivity and richness. MTRCA probably never knew what it had here (except the dollar value, gained through public funds). The mystery remains as to how, or if, the relative natural merits of the two properties in question were ever evaluated by MTRCA (was it purely a political decision?)

The area residents' group, headed by Gabriel Leofanti, has learned a lesson: that while "authority" is a fitting part of MTRCA's title, "conservation" is less apt. They found that the Authority has grown into a large bureaucracy, and that it is isolated from direct control by the people. An unquestioning trust in the Authority's ability or will to conserve natural lands, is unwarranted. For example, their primary purpose as land-owners in the Rouge Valley is in effect, "to get storm-water as quickly as possible away from new residential areas and down into Lake Ontario". What implications does such a mandate have for a natural river system, with marshes, meanders ... things which tend to moderate water flow?

The Authority began with great ideals, goals, and with visionary people. Indeed it still protects much natural land in the Metro area -- but in almost an accidental or secondary way. That a change has occurred is seen in the ever increasing irony of A.H. Richardson's book, CONSERVATION BY THE PEOPLE: THE HISTORY OF THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT IN ONTARIO TO 1970 (Toronto: 1974). In the epilogue of this book, A.S.L. Barnes sounds a timely warning:

When people contribute directly to an Authority's work, whether in taxes or in a freely given donation of time and service, they take a personal -- and, often, a proprietary -- interest in the projects; the dam becomes "my" dam, the forest becomes "my" forest. If the movement is removed from this close relationship with the people it serves there is danger to the future of the Ontario conservation authorities.

James Garratt

Dear Helen,

March 1986

Just before reaching the "viewing platform" at Cranberry Marsh, I spotted a coyote heading north across the ice. A beautiful, apparently well-fed individual, he was employing that energy-saving, effortless lope typical of wolves and coyotes.

He did not see me, but continued into the slanting snow and vanished into the bordering brush as mysteriously as he appeared.

My rare encounters with *Canis latrans* have been memorable. My first was ten years ago near Finch and Kennedy (before human encroachment).

Is someone keeping a record of coyote sightings around Metro? I'd like to know.

Paul McGaw

P.S. This encounter seemed particularly appropriate since it was Valentine's Day!



"Glendon, West Don Valley" - coloured ink drawing

by Larissa Zviedris

# Toronto Region BIRD RECORDS

for the period Jan. 16 - Feb. 15, 1986.

## CONTRIBUTORS:

-----  
 David Bailey (DaB), Diana Banville, Sandy Cappell (SaC), Mike DeLorey, Ida Hanson, Beth Jefferson, Helen Juhola, Shirley Lisanti, Peter Lowens, William Mansell, Katharine Martyn, Maisie Newby, Norm Murr, Gwen Ormerod, Bruce Parker, Joan Patterson, Don Peuramaki, David Stephenson (Humber Arboretum), Helen Smith, Tao Talavi, Ilmar Talvila, Harold Taylor, John ten Bruggenkate, Anne Thompson, Toronto Field Naturalists' Outing, Toronto Ornithological Club - Records, Peter Whelan, Elna Whiteside, Bruce Wilkinson,  
 many observers:m.ob.

## ABBREVIATIONS:

-----  
 LS:Lake Shore, M:Marsh, R:River, P:Pond, B:Bay, Ck:Creek, Pk:Park, V:Valley, Woods, C:Course, Gdns:Gardens  
 N:North(ern), S:South, E:East, W:West, Am:American, Can:Canada, Europ:European, Tor:Toronto, Et:Etobicoke  
 Gt:Greater, Lr:Lesser, Com:Common, Merg(anser), Sp(arrow), Wood(pecker), Saps(ucker)  
 th(roated), br(easted), cr(owned), wing(ed), tail(ed), neck(ed), belt(ed), bel(ied), back(ed), wh(ite), y(ellow), gold(en)  
 Ld:Last date reported

My appologies for using so many short forms, but I am experimenting with a new computer program--an actual data base, rather than strictly a word processor type and in order to fit all information about each bird on one line, some abbreviating of fairly common terms has been used. We continue to find your comments the most useful and interesting aspect of these reports and hence want to make more space available for this column.

Thank-you for submitting your contributions. These records are being used to update the Toronto Records in which many common species have been under-reported, thus not presenting an accurate picture for future research.

The editors would also like to remind you that the rare birds that you report really should be accompanied by a description of the field marks you observed, this being standard procedure for official records.

REDPOLLS caused the major excitement at feeders this past month, adding colour with their unusual presence and subtle red and pink shades. Feeders and the Lake Ontario shoreline remained the places to find birds during the wintertime. Long-eared Owls are noticeable by their absence, as are Snowies this year. However more resident owls and hawks are being reported as a consequence, which is exciting for our Toronto records.

I noticed an interesting phenomenon with GULLS this month that is probably a daily occurrence but of which I was unaware. Shortly after dawn on fairly calm days 100's of gulls fly past my "dog-walking" park in New Toronto all heading east along the waterfront. Most I presume are going to the Sunnyside area but on fairly windy days some veer inland around 7th St. On close examination of the gulls there appear to be equal numbers of Herring & Ring-billed, with a few rare ones interspersed. Within 2 minutes one morning I had noticed 6 species of gulls

## TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS (cont'd)

flying close together so that size comparison was easy. Great Black-backs were definitely larger than the one Lesser which appeared a little larger than a Ring-billed, but not Herring size. It was also slightly less black, with more grey tones. A huge Glaucous really stood out with its slow wing beat and large size right beside a smaller Iceland--both almost ghostly white all over.

I have been told that gulls will spend the night out on the lake rather than close to land and predators. Owls and hawks do not usually venture out over water. Storm conditions alter this morning flight pattern. With extreme winds this fly-past is not noticed, and one morning they were heading in the opposite direction away from a storm over the city, west into sunlight.

CORRECTION: Dec 21 Lambton Wd: it was really a Northern Shrike chasing a Red-tailed Hawk, not a Sharp-shinned Hawk as reported.

Bird	Date	Place	Observer	Comment
<u>SWANS, GEESE, &amp; DUCKS:</u>				
Tundra Swan	Residents	Humber B & New Tor	m ob	2
Mute Swan	Frequent	W LS	m ob	13-20
Can Goose	Common	LS	m ob	fighting for handouts
Am Black Duck	Common	Open water	m ob	with Mallards, but not as numerous(1:3)
Mallard	Common	Open water	m ob	
N Shoveler	Jan 16	Humber B	DP	
	Jan 27	Grenadier P	HS	
Gadwall	Frequent	LS	m ob	
Am Wigeon	Feb 4	New Tor, 5th St	BJ	12, feeding on lawn with geese
	Feb 12	New Tor	BJ	-using geese for protection?
Canvasback	Jan 16	Humber B	DP	flock of 12
Redhead	Jan 21	New Tor	BJ	2
Gt Scaup	Common	Waterfront	m ob	4
Lr Scaup	Jan 16	Humber B	HS	100s
Oldsquaw	Jan 16	Humber B W	HS	50
Wh-wing Scoter	Jan 17	New Tor	BJ	500, talking
	Jan 26	Spit	BW	4, warmer weather
Com Goldeneye	Common	LS & rushing rivers	m ob	10
Bufflehead	Frequent	LS & GP	m ob	many males displaying
Com Merganser	Frequent	Humber B	m ob	prefer fast moving water, but often like dabblers
	Jan 21	Lambton Wd, Humber R	PL	35+
Ruddy Duck	Frequent	Humber B	m ob	9
				2
<u>HAWKS TO PHEASANTS:</u>				
Bald Eagle	Feb 14	Whitby	TQC	
N Harrier	Jan 18	Humber B	KM	Ld
N Goshawk	Jan 29	Burke Ravine	TFN	
Red-tail Hawk	Daily	Islington	PL	roosts every pm in same tree
	Frequent	Open areas	m ob	
	Resident	W Deane	GG	often chased by crows
	Resident	Glendon	KM	Jan 1, 2 & Feb 3
	Jan 22	Bloor & Pr Edward	GG	chased by crow
	Feb 1	Claireville	IT	2
Gold Eagle	Jan 19 22	James Gdns	TQC	immature
Am Kestrel	Frequent		m ob	many have not migrated
Merlin	Feb 1	Whitby	TQC	
	Feb 12	Whitby	TQC	
Peregrine Falcon	Feb 8	Tor Island	TQC	
R-neck Pheasant	Jan 29	Claireville	BW	
	Feb 9	Serena Gundy Pk	JtB	high in shrubs

▽

## TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS (cont'd)

Bird	Date	Place	Observer	Comment
<b>GULLS TO DOVES:</b>				
Ring-bill Gull	Frequent	Everywhere	m ob	fewer along LS than summer
Herring Gull	Common	LS	m ob	more frequent than summer
Thayer's Gull	Feb 15	Spit	NM	adult observed at 30' with Herring Gs
Iceland Gull	Feb 5	New Tor	BJ	
Lr Black-back G	Feb 5	New Tor	BJ	with a fly-past of 200+ gulls at dawn
Glaucous Gull	Jan 18	Spit	NM	2 adults
	Feb 5	New Tor	BJ	
	Feb 15	Spit	NM	
Gt Black-back G	Frequent	Lake	m ob	6-10
Rock Dove	Frequent	City Sts & Hwys	m ob	
Mourning Dove	Frequent	Feeders	m ob	
<b>OWLS TO WOODPECKERS:</b>				
"E" Screech Owl	Resident	Yonge & York Mills	IH	
	Jan 21	Lambton Wd	PL	resident
Gt Horn Owl	Resident	Claireville	DaB, BW	calling 10:30 am 1/29
	Resident	Lambton Wd	m ob	
	Residents	Spit	NM, BW	27
	Jan 28	Humber M 7	HS	bending low in fierce W wind
	Jan 28	Marie Curtis	m ob	2 in same tree-- a breeding pair?
	Feb 11	Flemington Pk	TT	calling on 20th floor balcony, very cold night
Long-ear Owl	Jan 18	Spit	NM	1
Short-ear Owl	Jan 16	Humber B	HS	
	Jan 26	Humber B	MN	pellet only: 3"x3/4"
	Feb 14	Shoal Pt Rd	TOC	
N Saw-whet Owl	Jan 29	Claireville	BW	seen 2/1 by IT as well
Belt Kingfisher	Jan 19	W Don & Finch	SC	
	Jan 26	Rosedale Golf C	AT	
	Feb 3	Rosedale	AT	same time & place
Y-bel Sapsucker	Feb 9	Lambton Wd	KM	
Downy Wood	Frequent	Woods	m ob	most common of all woodpeckers
Hairy Wood	Jan 21	Broadview/Danforth	EW	
	Feb 13	Humber M 5	MDL	female went into hole in tree--breeding?
	Feb 15	Spit	NM	pair
	Feb 15	Lambton Wd	IT	4
N Flicker	Infrequent	W Deane	GO	feeder
	Feb 8	Lambton Wd	IT	
Pileat Wood	Feb 13	Glendon	MDL	high up in pine tree
<b>JAYS TO CARDINALS:</b>				
Blue Jay	Frequent	many outings	m ob	
Am Crow	Frequent		m ob	chasing hawks & owls
	Jan 26	W Don & Finch	TFN	20
	Feb 9	Davisville	HS	flew into 1 tree
	Feb 12	Mt Pleasant	TFN	sounding like Pileated Woodpecker tapping
Bl-cap Chickadee	Common	Everywhere	m ob	enjoying feeders
Red-br Nuthatch	occasional	Feeders	m ob	storing food under tree bark
Wh-br Nuthatch	Common	Everywhere	m ob	more than R-b Nuts
Brown Creeper	Jan 20	Humber B	HS	
	Feb 6	High Pk	MDL	4
Gold-cr Kinglet	Jan 25	Kortright	TFN	
	Jan 26	Lambton Wd	DaB	6
Brown Thrasher	Throughout	Pickering	TOC	
Hermit Thrush	Daily	Walmer & Spadina	PW	eating suet, corn meal, peanut butter & chopped nuts
Am Robin	Jan 19	Burke Ravine	TFN	25, well-fed & healthy
	Jan 26	Edwards Gdns	KM	15-20
	Feb 2	Glendon	KM	40+, big roost
	Feb 7	Et Ck & Horner	JtB	8
	Feb 15	Lambton Wd	IT	33
Cedar Waxwing	Jan 31	W Deane	GO	14 at feeder
	Feb 15	Windfield Pk	JP	15
N Shrike	end of Jan	Humber B	m ob	1, seen frequently
Europ Starling	Common	City	m ob	
	Jan 27	W Deane	GO	10 at feeder
	Feb 1	W Deane	GO	increased to 26 at feeder
N Cardinal	Frequent		m ob	some singing or whistling
	occasional	W Deane	GO	1-2 at feeder
	Feb 10	W Deane	GO	Mr C feeding Mrs C (a big seed)

## TORONTO REGION BIRD RECORDS (cont'd)

Bird	Date	Place	Observer	Comment
<b>SPARROWS:</b>				
Am Tree Sp	Jan 18	Spit	NM	50+
	Jan 25	Kortright	TFN	few
	Jan 26	Claireville	DaB	
	Feb 9	Serena Gundy Pk	JtB	lots
	Feb 15	Spit	NM	30+ in a mixed flock
Chipping Sp	Throughout	Pickering	TOC	
	Jan 25	Kortright	TFN	few
Song Sp	Frequent	Humber B	m ob	
	Frequent	W Deane	GO	almost daily at feeder
	Jan 18	Spit	NM	2
Wh-th Sp	occasional	W Deane	GO	feeder
	Throughout	Coldstream Ave	KM	3-5 at feeder, eating millet on ground
	occasional			-1 without tail survived 1/25-2/4
	Jan 18	Spit	NM	3 together
	Feb 9	Yonge & York Mills	HJ	
<b>FINDCHES &amp; HOUSE SPARROW:</b>				
Dark-eye Junco	Frequent	Feeders & Lambton W	m ob	
Pine Grosbeak	Feb 15	Windfield Pk	JF	15--in Mountain Ash
Purple Finch	Feb 5	Beltline	JF	
House Finch	Daily	Willowdale	HT	4-5 pairs
	Every am	Leaside	JtB	heard
Com Redpoll	Frequent	Feeders	m ob	singing changing in Feb (PW)
	Throughout	Coldstream Ave	KM	singing in am from 1/11 on
	Jan 16	Rosedale	DF	more than in Nov
	Jan 17	Lambton Wd	MDL, BJ	30 at a feeder
	Jan 20	Don Mills	BW	in white birch
	Jan 26	Spit	BW	dozen
	Feb 7	Willowdale	HT	Feeder -- came in during storm
	Feb 14	Evans & Islington	MDL	-feeding on distleflink & niger seeds
Hoary Redpoll	Feb 15	W Deane	GO	3 at feeder
	Feb 15	Spit	NM	descended on feeder after storm, very hungry
	Jan 26	Don Mills	TOC	50+
	Feb 15	Spit	NM	only 10' away in mixed flock of sparrows & finches
Pine Siskin	Jan 17	Lambton Wd	MDL, BJ	20 at a feeder
	Jan 22	Lambton Wd	BW	
Am Goldfinch	Daily	Willowdale	HT	lots; up from other winters
	Daily	Feeders	m ob	
	Jan 19	Burke Ravine	TFN	3
Eve Grosbeak	Feb 7	Et Ck & Horner	JtB	several
	Feb 6	Lambton Wd	IT	1 at a feeder
House sparrow	Feb 7	Et Ck & Horner	JtB	6, seen several times
	Common	City Sts	m ob	

The next report will cover the period Feb. 16 to Mar. 15. Please send your observations before Mar. 25 to Beth Jefferson, 41 Lake Shore Dr., Apt. 404 New Toronto, Ont., M8V 1Z3, or telephone 251-2998 before 9:30 p.m.

Beth Jefferson

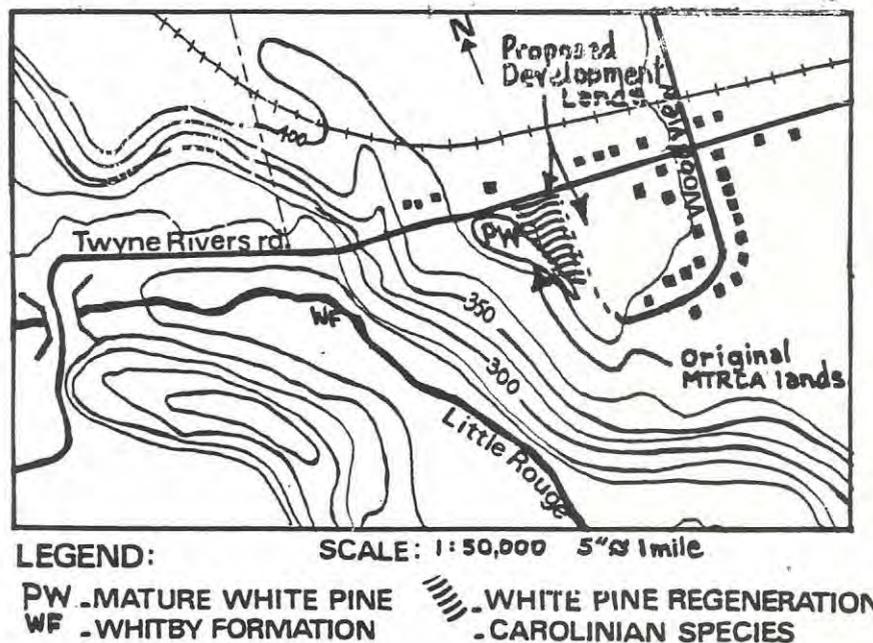
A reed is rustling -  
defiantly! O sedge wren,  
I know it is you.

haiku by Lise Anglin

# IN EXCHANGE

## WOODVIEW FOREST

In December 1985, residents on Woodview Drive in Pickering became aware that a 6-acre section of tableland bordering their neighbourhood and situated along the rim of the Rouge River Valley (the property touches Scarborough's east boundary) had been sold to a private developer by the Metro Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. According to the Authority, this land was sold to provide funds to purchase a property near Frenchman's Bay. However, at a February 6 meeting at Pickering municipal offices, the Authority's representative could not explain why the latter property had been deemed more desirable than the Rouge property. Our own findings have convinced us of the irreplaceable ecologic and aesthetic value of this land within the Rouge Valley system.



**Geology:** The study area is characterized by tableland forest on flat, imperfectly-drained sandy soils. The steep slopes along the area's west edge are stable and well-wooded. The presence of small, intermittent stream valleys separated by east/west interfluvial ridges contribute to slope aspect variation. Some terracing is visible on the lower slopes. The most significant Earth Science feature near the area is located immediately below, at the base of the valley side. This is a very rare "Whitby Formation" exposure; it may be the only upper member site for this formation in the Toronto region (4).

**White pines:** Mature white pines dominate the valley's rim and adjacent to the property and are scattered on the property itself. They are 2 feet dbh, 100 feet in height, and are estimated to be 110 to 120 years old (5, 2). Most significant is the presence of white pine regeneration throughout the northern section of the area. Many age classes are represented among the regenerating pines: 5-year old seedlings, 15-year saplings, and 30-year pole-stage pines. Growth of the young pines appears vigorous, with no sign of weevil or blister rust damage. The freedom from weevil damage may be attributed to the shady

## IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

overstory of red maple and white birch, which tends to produce thinner leaders on the pines and makes them less attractive to the weevils. The absence of blister rust may be due to a lack of currants (*Ribes* spp) within the area. This regeneration, uncommon in the region, helps assure the future of white pine within the Rouge Valley. A full regeneration survey should be carried out in the study area, and management plans formulated.

Carolinian component: Mature and sapling-stage black cherry are found in the area. The saplings in particular are suffering from black knot disease. Hop hornbeam and blue beech occur here also. Blue beech is especially abundant; the authors cannot recall a better Rouge site for this species. Blue beech is doing well even on poorly-drained sections of the property. Unfortunately, survey crews have recently cut down many of these indiscriminately along the area's east side.

Wildlife: To our knowledge, the study area has never had a detailed census for wildlife. However Harpley in 1982 (3) reported sightings of regionally rare ruffed grouse in breeding season on the west-facing slope. During a preliminary reconnaissance on the morning of February 6, 1986, (-10°C, clear sky, northwest breeze, ice on trees from previous freezing rain) the following species were seen: European starling 1, red-breasted nuthatch 1, cardinal 3, black-capped chickadee 15. Old and freshly cut holes in cedars indicated pileated woodpeckers. Many tracks of cottontail rabbits were seen, and also of grey squirrels. Undoubtedly the undisturbed, varied habitat of the area is most significant for wildlife, continuous as it is with the Little Rouge Forest (which MTRCA itself identified as Environmentally Significant Area #8, 1982) (6).

Forestry: The mature white pines in the area will be subject to long-term stress in the event of development. Even if they were left standing, their root systems would be disturbed and the area's drainage patterns altered, leading to rapid decline. And it is the white pine regeneration on this land which, in our opinion, makes the area especially important. No protection could be given to this regeneration during development, except if certain sections were fenced and left "wild".

Geophysical: The area is of strategic geologic importance, located as it is on the edge of the Rouge Valley above the Little Rouge River. The steep slopes here (rising about 120 feet above the river) would likely be susceptible to erosion if the tableland forest were removed and the surface covered with asphalt or concrete. This seems increasingly likely if one considers the often poorly-drained nature of the area. An existing sewer line, now running southwestward into the Little Rouge River, would presumably be used to service any development on the property. The quantity of discharge from this sewer would be increased, and the river's quality degraded. Additionally, increased runoff from the area may have an adverse impact on the rather fragile Whitby Formation exposure located below.

Aesthetics: The white pine, Ontario's official tree, is acknowledged to be one of our most beautiful species. The view looking eastward across the valley and toward the property, is immeasurably enhanced by the mature pines. No signs of human habitation are presently visible. Such a natural skyline is of great recreational value within an urban area (1). Area residents comment also on the beauty of white birches on the property, and the trilliums which cover the tableland in spring.

▷

IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

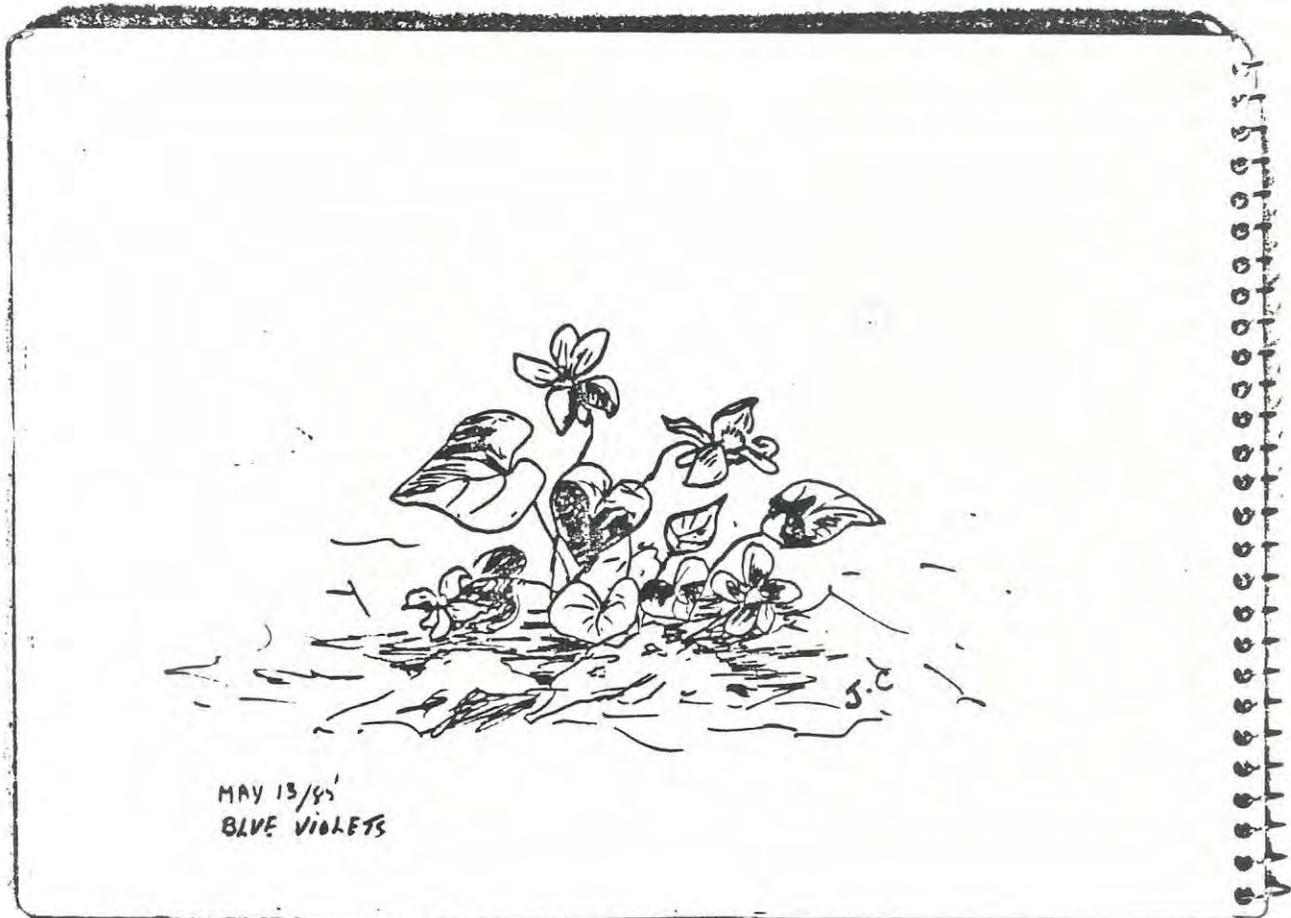
The future: There is concern that this sale could set a precedent. At the February 6 meeting, the Authority could give no assurance that interfluvial tablelands to the west (presently owned by MTRCA) will not be put up for sale also. As one area resident put it, "Will MTRCA quietly sell its non-flood-prone lands whenever it needs money to buy some other property?"

James Garratt and Paul Harpley

Literature cited:

1. Boden, D., Hillis, T., Stokman, R., 1985. RECREATIONAL MASTER PLAN FOR THE ROUGE RIVER VALLEY. SRVS, pp 25, 90
2. Garratt, J., 1984. a count of annual rings on several white pine stumps on the central tableland, giving an average age of 110 years
3. Harpley, P., 1982. TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST #352, page 19
4. Elion, C., Jorgensen, R., 1983. AT LAST COUNT: AN ASSESSMENT OF NATURAL AREAS IN SCARBOROUGH CITY. City of Scarborough Works Dept. Part Two
5. Riley, J., Varga, S., 1980. TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST #329, page 6
6. MTRCA, 1982. ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS STUDY  
from SAVE THE ROUGE VALLEY SYSTEM Vol. 3, No. 1, February 1985

□



From the artist's sketchbook

"Blue Violets" by Joyce Cave

IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

SPARE THAT SNAG

Dead and dying trees play a vital role in our forests that we are only beginning to recognize -- and appreciate.

I am an oak tree. A long time ago, a squirrel buried an acorn and inadvertently "planted" me. I grew healthy and vigorous, my sturdy branches provided sheltered nesting places for a variety of birds. Sought after by forest creatures, my acorns supplied nutritious food.

But now I am dying. People believe I'm not worth much anymore, except possibly for firewood. Foresters tend to look upon me with disfavour. They think that I'm taking up room that could be used by younger, more vigorous trees of higher commercial value. In some ways though, I'm becoming more valuable each day as the process of decay moves along.

Biologists studying aging trees have discovered good reasons for keeping some of us dying trees around. Almost sixty different species of wildlife require dead or dying trees in a forest like this where I'm standing. And that's about twenty percent of all the species in the forest.

The death of a tree is a long, slow process. First some of my topmost branches go. As they become barren of leaves, they provide convenient and essential perches for many large birds, like hawks and owls. Eventually, a pair of ospreys -- birds that rarely nest in living trees -- may construct a nest in my lifeless top.

Insects and fungi gradually invade my sapwood. That's when my importance to wildlife becomes vital, when woodpeckers and their relatives start digging, searching out choice insect morsels. More importantly, they will find my bole and larger limbs a perfect place for excavating a nesting cavity. These "preliminary excavators" initiate the hole-making process, but "secondary users", such as wood ducks, raccoons, and squirrels, continue to use the old woodpecker holes for nesting, hibernating, and cover. There are many dozens of animals that depend on tree cavities for survival in the forest.

At this state I'm called a "hard snag". I have plenty of living tissue and my heartwood is still in good shape. I have numerous dead branches though, and in places my bark has begun to peel. As insects and fungi consume my innermost parts, my branches fall off and the wind may break off my top. My heartwood becomes punky and I become known as a "soft snag", totally dead. But my usefulness has not come to an end -- I have a role to play in the sex-life of woodpeckers. Male woodpeckers will use me for drumming in the spring, a part of their courtship ritual to impress females. Their urgent drumming fills the spring woods with a thousand echoes. The resonance of the sound is determined by the degree of decay in the old snag chosen for this ancient ritual.

Cavities made by woodpeckers are used for many years by nesting birds, an American kestrel or a bluebird in an open area, a pileated woodpecker or barred owl in the deeper woods. So-called bark gleaners, the brown creepers and the nuthatches are frequent visitors. They find a virtual smorgasbord of insects hiding beneath my loose bark.

People seldom realize that insect-eating birds nesting in snags constantly forage throughout the woods, feeding on insect pests that destroy commercial timber. These birds keep insects under control. So if you do away with old snags like me, hole-nesting birds will disappear and the insects may go on a rampage.

▷

## IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

The point is that in a natural, unmanaged forest, there is an abundance of dead and downed trees, more or less in balance with the wildlife community. But in a forest intensively managed for its timber, dead and dying trees are often in short supply. Trees are cut down in the prime of life and then replanted, old dying trees are thinned out to improve the stand for commercial use. So if a diverse and healthy wildlife community is an objective, a special effort must be made to leave selected trees in timber sale areas to serve as snags.

Another thing of deep concern is the recent demand for firewood. People who prefer partly dead trees to heat their homes should be more careful about wiping us out completely. This is a special problem in woodlands near population centers. Birds and mammals that require snags are disappearing from these areas.

Biologists have figured out how many snags are needed, how big they should be, and where they should be in relation to other habitat needs of wildlife. They have determined that if enough snags are provided for the primary excavators, the needs of other snag-dependent wildlife will also be met.

The catch is that trees left for snags must be the right diameter and size. Since the primary excavators are "territorial", snags must be well distributed throughout the forest. The territory of a pileated woodpecker is about 175 acres, while a downy woodpecker defends a territory of only 10 acres.

The proper density of snags also depends on the kind of forest in question, since each forest type has its own population of wildlife using dead or dying trees. The upland hardwoods, for example, support a great diversity of these species. On the other hand, the lowland conifer type has relatively few species. Therefore, the hardwood forest should have more snags per acre than the coniferous forest.

There are also certain places within the forest where snags are especially important, such as near lakes and rivers. There are many species such as wood ducks, flying squirrels and osprey that live near water. Some snags should be left in or near openings in the woods, too. Here there are many snag-dependent species, such as the red-headed woodpecker and the eastern bluebird.

The kinds of trees left for snags should also be carefully selected. Oaks, maples and basswood are first choice, while aspen and birch are last choice. But snags of any size are better than no snags at all!

In parts of Europe, foresters practiced such "clean" forestry that snags were eliminated, and so were many of the insect eating birds. Now they are placing artificial nesting boxes throughout their plantings to attract birds to control insects that are ravaging the trees. This is an expensive and poor substitute for natural cavities that we trees provide.

Someday as my basic structure gives way, I will fall to the ground. Then the decay process will speed up since I will be in contact with the damp forest floor; mosses and lichens will cover me like a blanket.

Many creatures of the forest require downed, decaying logs. Consider the ruffed grouse that may use me for a drumming log (the mating urge again) and the salamanders, red squirrels, weasels, and other animals that will find food and cover within and on me.

Eventually, of course, I will disappear entirely. Nature will turn me into the basic stuff of soil, and my remains will be recycled into living things.



IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

And someday, another squirrel may come scurrying through the woods, carrying another acorn ...

Herman Milke

from the Kawartha Field Naturalists NEWSLETTER, No. 5, Fall/Winter 1985

□

---

MISTER WIGGLETAIL  
(a true story)

---

Not long, long ago or in a galaxy far away but on a hot day last August right in Jackson Creek this event occurred.

My friend Luke S. and I mutually agreed to go fishing in Upper Buckhorn Lake on the afternoon of a very warm day. We knew that the best bait for that time of the year was frogs. The bait shops had none because the recent heavy rains had dispersed the frogs out of the ponds and into the fields.

We decided to stop at Jackson Creek on the way. We landed at the creek on Atchinson Road (formerly Brealey) where it meets the railway tracks. We donned our hip waders and headed west up the creek. The bottom was quite soft. The frogs were very scarce. The only flower that I saw in bloom was the small flowered Gerardia (Gerardia paupercula) trying to show its purple in the heavy grasses. I soon found out that the old saying is true, "Sedges have edges" as they cut up my hands when I was grabbing at a frog.

On approaching a little bay on the south bank I heard a great threshing in the grass and a small plaintive "ork - ork". A small green frog came rushing out of the grass -- right for my rubber boots. I thought this was too good to be true -- having frogs rushing to me. I reached down to nail the frog. Just as I did so a large garter snake emerged out of the grass and grabbed the frog. Was I surprised? I then realized what had caused the threshing noise in the grass.

I grabbed the snake and called to Luke for help. The snake with his jointed jaw and teeth pointing backward had no intention of giving up the frog. Shaking did not help.

Luke said, "I have just the thing in the car to make him let go." He rummaged around in the trunk and came back with a bottle which he claimed was snake medicine.

There was a small opening along the side of the snake's jaw where the frog did not quite fit. We poured a generous portion down this opening. This apparently made the snake relax for a moment and we plucked the frog out of its jaw. The snake soon disappeared into the undergrowth. By this time we felt that we knew the snake and so we dubbed him -- "Mister Wiggletail".

From wading in the soft marl we had worked up a great sweat. We sat on top of the culvert there to rest and cool down.

We had been sitting there for about five minutes when Luke felt a tap at his back. He looked around and was greatly surprised to see Mister Wiggletail lying there holding up another frog in his mouth!!!

Jack Mark

from THE ORCHID, Vol. 32, No. 1, Jan. 1986 (Peterborough Field Naturalists)

□

IN EXCHANGE (cont'd)

A PERILOUS PERCH

Servicing transmission and distribution lines sometimes gives Ontario Hydro workers rather offbeat problems. Ospreys, for instance.

There's nothing this bird likes more than to perch atop a hydro pole near a lake. From this vantage point he has a clear view of the waters below, making a spectacular dive to hit the water at 80 km/hr, feet first, at the sight of a fish.

Hydro poles are so attractive to osprey that they build their two-metre nests of twigs on top of them. This wouldn't matter so much if the osprey wasn't such a big bird, but with their two-metre wingspan a few careless wing-flaps in the wrong direction and several thousand volts of electricity can bring them to an abrupt and undignified end. Not only that, it can plunge customers into darkness and cost Hydro money in terms of repairs and lost revenue.

The osprey is not an endangered species, but is categorized by the Ministry of Natural Resources as "non-game species of special interest" and is, therefore, protected.

The area most heavily affected by osprey are the Kawartha Lakes where some 35 nesting sites have been found.

Sometimes the nests have to be removed, but not until the young are hatched and fledged. The removal operation is carried out by Ontario Hydro linesmen under the supervision of MNR officials.

There are three ways of dealing with the problem. If headroom is not a problem, it's usually simplest to leave the nest where it is and move the conductors well below the nest so they're out of the bird's way. The second method is to cut away the top-most branch of the nearest tall tree and make a flat area. Then a platform is made of 2 X 4's to receive the transferred nest. So far, all ospreys so moved have accepted the new location.

But what if there are no trees beside the power line? In that case, a similar-sized pole, usually a hydro pole, is erected close by and a platform of 2 X 4's is put on top of it and the osprey transferred. The full transfer operation usually takes three employees a full day. If the nest happens to be on private property, permission has to be sought to lop branches off a tree or to erect a nesting pole.

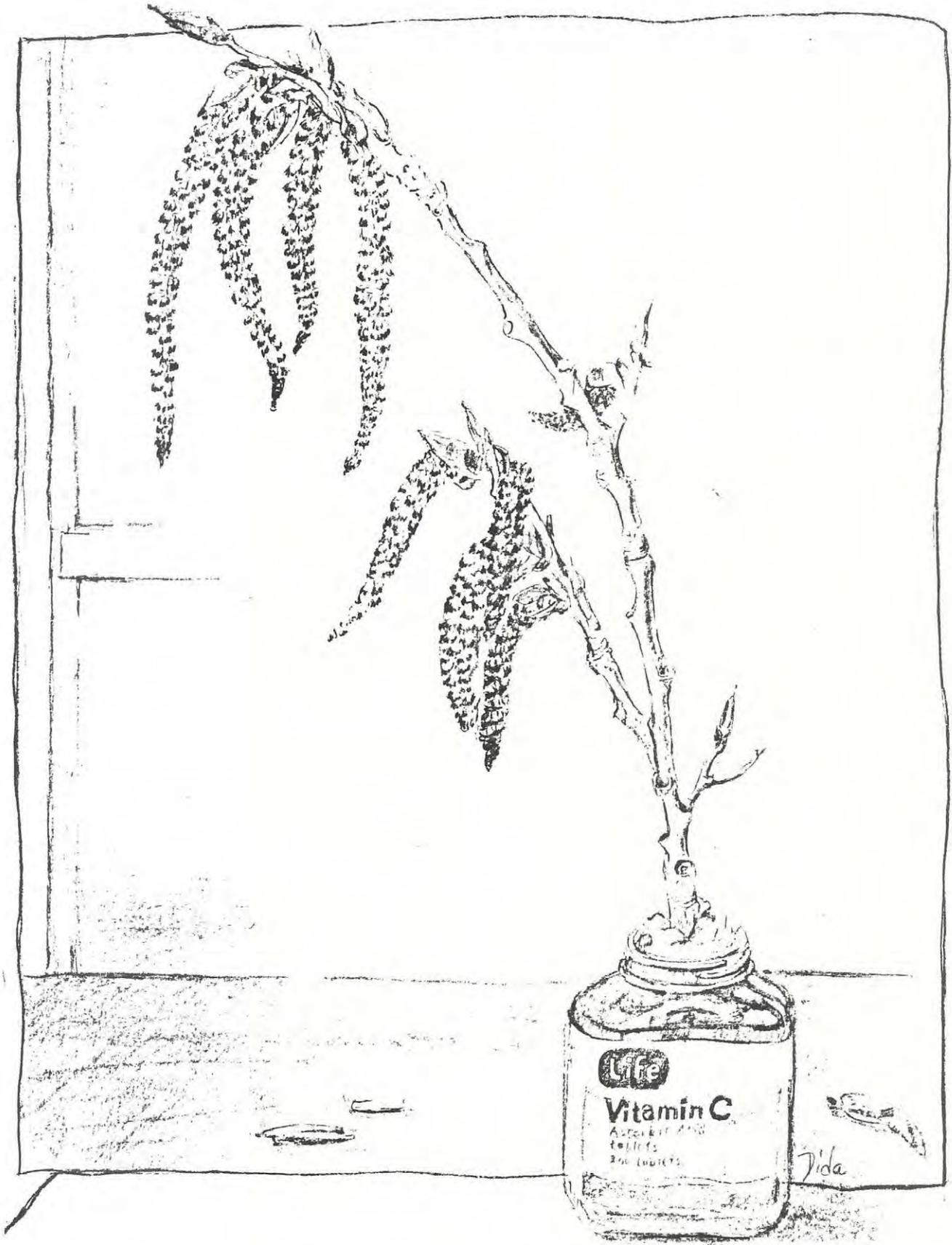
When the transfer operation is completed, a "bird-barrier" is erected on top of the hydro pole to discourage further nestings. This consists of two pieces of wood nailed together on top of the pole in an unfriendly pointed shape.

Although every effort is made to cause as little disturbance to the birds as possible (some nest-moving being done in the winter), sometimes delay could be too costly, as happened recently when a nest was found on a pole carrying a 44,000-volt line supplying electricity to 3,700 customers in Buckhorn and surrounding area.

And if the birds may be a bit confused by the nest-moving, they aren't alone. A conservation officer tells of talking to some fishermen about the nest transfers, and one of them, his eyes opening wide with sudden understanding said, "So that's what's been happening. We were wondering how those birds managed to get 2 X 4's up there."

from PENINSULA NATURALIST, No. 138, Spring 1985 (St. Catherines, Ont.) and adapted from HYDROSCOPE, Dec. 1984

□



Poplar catkins

SNAPPING TURTLES: OURS TO SAVE
--------------------------------

Martyn Obbard, in an article in the CANADIAN AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE CONSERVATION SOCIETY Newsletter (1985, Vol. 23, No. 2), has addressed the problem of establishing criteria for the "harvesting" of snapping turtles in Ontario. Given the view that anything non-human can be treated as a resource (and some would argue that to do so rationalizes our treatment of other so-called disadvantaged humans as resources), Dr. Obbard effectively questions the theory by which the maximum sustainable yield of renewable resources is calculated. "Acceptable" levels of exploitation are established by calculating the maximum possible harvest that will continue to allow the exploited population to maintain its size. To do so it is assumed that more offspring will be produced once the harvest reduces population density. The resulting increase in reproduction is the sustainable yield that can be taken without any corresponding effect on the original population. Indeed, some argue that this surplus would be wasted to natural causes of death if not taken for our use.

The key to this common management tool lies in the belief that all animals are capable of making this shift in reproductive effort. However, for long-lived species, short term increases are not part of their reproductive strategies. They have been successful if, in their lifetimes, one offspring has survived to replace them.

Dr. Obbard's research confirms that the assumptions of this traditional management theory are not applicable to snapping turtle populations. On average, he found that even if he protected clutches of eggs from predators, only 6% hatched. This low hatching rate was primarily due to unforeseen weather conditions. Since much of the development of snapping turtle eggs occurs in the year prior to the one in which they are laid, it is evident that females cannot predict what conditions they must overcome the following year. As a result, he concludes "that snapping turtles would not make density-dependent shifts in reproduction after part of the population was harvested because they are constrained evolutionarily from doing so."

His conclusion is well worth noting and leads to two other comments that I would like to make. The first concerns the predictive nature of ecology and the second will bring us back again to the snapping turtle. Despite a profusion of models by which ecologists simplify complex biological interactions, many of these components are by their nature unpredictable. Ecologists are constantly called upon to predict. Can you predict what our weather will be like next spring? It is no accident that Gavin Miller (see his "The Weather This Time Last Year" - a regular feature of TFN Newsletters) tells us what the weather WAS last year. Without doubt he can make an educated guess based on his accumulated records, but would you make any life and death decisions based on a guess? My point is that ecology is a descriptive science and not a predictive one. We can tell you what has happened, how much destruction followed some environmental problem, but we cannot tell you how much will occur in the next one. To be sure, not all ecologists will agree with this view. Without debating this any further, it may be of value to ask not how much pollution or impact we can allow or tolerate, but to ask whether we should or can tolerate any at all.

▷

## SNAPPING TURTLES (cont'd)

Once again I remind you of the difficulty in predicting consequences when many of the parameters are unpredictable. As I have noted in the annual amphibian and reptile inventory, relatively minor events can have catastrophic effects on amphibians and reptiles because they are so closely attuned to climatic variables. This becomes more consequential in urban areas where migration into habitat from which they have been extirpated is no longer possible. These local extinctions are not predictable and may be man-induced through the lowering of water tables or the result of normal climatic extremes such as drought or colder winters.

Finally, and with the welfare of snapping turtles in mind, I have wanted to comment on the trapping of snapping turtles that occurred last year in Cranberry Marsh. The disappearance of some cygnets was believed to be the result of snapping turtle predation. While the introduction of trumpeter swans is a worthwhile project for the Ministry of Natural Resources, to direct management at the elimination of snapping turtles is a misguided effort. Along with snapping turtles numerous other predators prey upon young birds--skunks, raccoons, dogs, cats, hawks, owls, pike, muskie, snakes, and mink. George Rason, curator of birds at Metro Toronto Zoo, estimates that up to 50% of young birds may be taken by flying predators. And there is no doubt about the effects that large populations of raccoons can have on young birds AND turtles alike. It is unfortunate that the management of one species results in the elimination of another species. It may have been the same vagaries of climate that kills young turtles that, in fact, caused the demise of the cygnets. It is a myth that snapping turtles are responsible for the disappearance of young birds.

The snapping turtle prefers dead and decaying prey. It is the garbage disposal unit of marshes and serves a valuable function. It is also an opportunistic feeder, like most predators, and given the opportunity, would take young birds. If the consequence of this natural event is to trap all snapping turtles, then it follows that ALL predators might have to be removed. This approach to wildlife management was in vogue thirty years ago, but it is no longer acceptable to rationalize our management mandates by seeking out scapegoats. My thanks to Dr. Obbard for tempering the theoretical model with some reality. It is the reality that is of consequence. We can no more harvest snapping turtles than try to manipulate natural predation.

One final note and one that I feel compelled to add. Perhaps it is time we stopped categorizing the rest of the world as "resources". To do so implies worth only in terms of our need. Once accepted, all the rest of the world is ranked according to its utility. In this scheme some seek to differentiate between the good and bad, valuable and worthless. The snapping turtle has worth beyond measure and it lies in its dynamic, balanced interplay with all other things. They are, in part, a reflection and a consequence of all other nature. Most of all, they are simply snapping turtles.

Bob Johnson

□

A BALE OF TURTLES is a whimsical name for turtles in a group, according to an almanac article, donated by Mary Louise Stewart, in which such group-names are listed. The numbers described in Glen Norcliffe's letter (TFN 377:6:FEB) might not fit this modest concept, however. Perhaps the term Bob Johnson used for it in his response (TFN:378:7:MAR) might be more apt - a "shoal" of turtles.

NIAGARA REGION OAKS
---------------------

Following a torrential downpour on Oct. 13, 1985, a small party from the Toronto Field Naturalists set out to see the oaks of the Niagara Region. Once the mist cleared, the day and the colours in the hills were lovely, from the Humber through to the slopes of our beloved Ontario escarpment.

We met George Meyers, our leader for the day, at George's home where the tour began. It is no exaggeration to say that an hour's tour of his suburban front and back yards but scratches the surface. What you see is a collection of native (North American) plants with a smattering of Asiatic species. George's objectives are threefold: to increase the variety of plants found in suburban gardens, to encourage the use of native flora, and to do what he can to save vanishing local flora (when it is threatened in the wild).

You can see all our native oaks, as well as all but two listed in Gray's Manual of Botany. Also growing in his garden are yellow buckeye (*Aesculus octandra*), American sweet chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), four magnolias native to North America (*Magnolia fraseri*, *M. virginiana*, *M. tripetala*, *M. grandiflora*) and three Asiatic species. The list could go on for some time!

Our first stop on the road was at a woodlot on the 9th line in the town of Niagara where we saw a large (30 cm + dbh) sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), pin oak (*Quercus palustris*), pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*), honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*), sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), white oak (*Q. alba*), bur oak (*Q. macrocarpa*), swamp white oak (*Q. bicolor*), shellbark hickory (*Carya laciniosa*), and silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*). The woodlot is not large, but it preserves the best of the Niagara forest (Carolinian) as it once was.

In contrast, a woodlot less than 1 km west on the same road has much less variety --but both types of poison ivy: *Rhus radicans* var. *rydbergii* (shrubby), and *Rhus radicans* var. *radicans* (climbing). It does contain black maple (*Acer nigrum*) and Shumard oaks (*Quercus shumardii*). The latter trees had low branches. Their leaves were turning scarlet, one field mark of these trees.

When trying to identify trees, I find it useful to consider the following:

LEAF -- number of leaflets, colour (summer and fall), hairiness and colour of both surfaces, shine, tothing on the edges, persistence of petioles

TWIG -- colour, hairiness, size, corkiness

BUDS -- terminal and lateral buds, bud scales, colour, hairiness, size

FRUIT -- size, shape, colour, taste, cap or cover, hairiness, length of stalk on the fruit

FLOWER -- size, colour, fragrance

BARK -- colour, ridging, plating, texture, colour of inner bark

BUTTBRESSING -- at the base of the trunk

Looking at these characteristics, one can distinguish a shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*) from a shellbark hickory (*C. laciniosa*), even if the former has seven leaflets; or a bur oak from a swamp white oak. George showed us how to tell a pignut hickory (*C. glabra*) from a sweet pignut or "red" hickory (*C. ovalis*) -- the former has five leaflets and fruits that are fig-shaped with a pointed nut and indehiscent; the latter has seven leaflets and fruits that are rounded (fruit and nut) but which are dehiscent.

## NIAGARA REGION OAKS (cont'd)

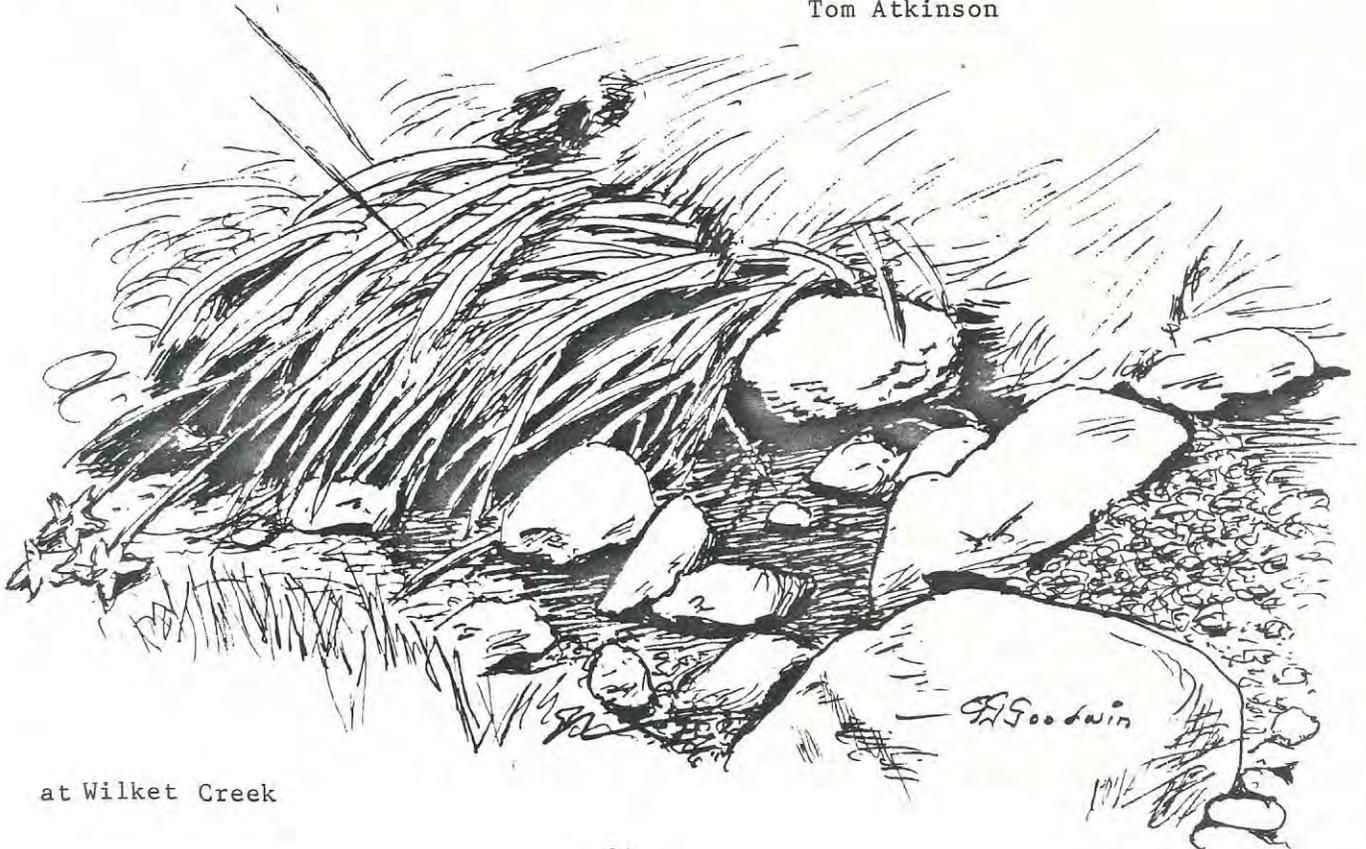
In the Niagara Region there is a type of red oak with the following characteristics:

- buttressed base
- brown buds (According to George Meyers, red and pin oak and their crosses have red buds. Shumard's oak has tan buds when dry. If wet, these buds appear black, due to a very fine pubescence. Of course, this description is good for living material, not dried specimens.)
- large acorns with a shallow cup
- leaves with shiny upper surface; deep sinuses; seven lobes (the uppermost pair often create the broadest part of the leaf (obovate)); lobes are not at 90° to the central vein; turns a bright, and lasting, scarlet colour in the fall

Are these oak characteristics proof that Shumard's red oak exists in the Niagara Region? This oak is a more southerly species. It does exist in disjunct populations in Michigan and in Essex County in Ontario. No academic has yet staked his reputation on identifying these unique Niagara oaks as *Quercus shumardii*. There may have been work done by botanists on the chromosomes, studying how and under what conditions oaks interbreed. Until such work is brought to the fore, I believe that George's statement on these oaks of Niagara should be heeded: "We have, in Niagara, a unique type of red oak. Until we know what it is, we should do our best to protect it, both in its habitat and by growing it in our gardens."

▷ I have several young Niagara Shumard's in my yard. Call me if you are interested in this subject -- after 7 pm at 449-7907.

Tom Atkinson



at Wilket Creek

ETOBICOKE CREEK PROJECT REPORT

Purpose: Beth Jefferson and I wanted an area to explore during the summer of 1985 -- an area that wasn't too large and was fairly close to one of our homes. Etobicoke Creek, being one of Toronto's smaller watersheds, became our choice. Although I had walked the length of it within Metro about 1980 and had visited a few sites on TFN outings, neither of us knew much about it.

Method: Our first task was to determine access points to the valley so we could organize our future visits. Using a Mapart street map of Metro and one for Mississauga, we followed streets adjacent to the valley and noted park entrances. We explored the Toronto side in the spring; the Mississauga side, in the winter. We also checked the Toronto side for the closest TTC stops using a TTC Ride Guide. Starting with a visit to Marie Curtis Park where the creek enters Lake Ontario, we visited the whole valley from south to north and noted plants and animals seen and took photographs. We also arranged a series of TFN outings so that members could visit the whole valley with us. As well, we visited the Conservation offices (MTRCA) and Mississauga City Hall to determine ownership of several of the areas we visited.

Discoveries: Lake Ontario to Lakeshore Blvd.

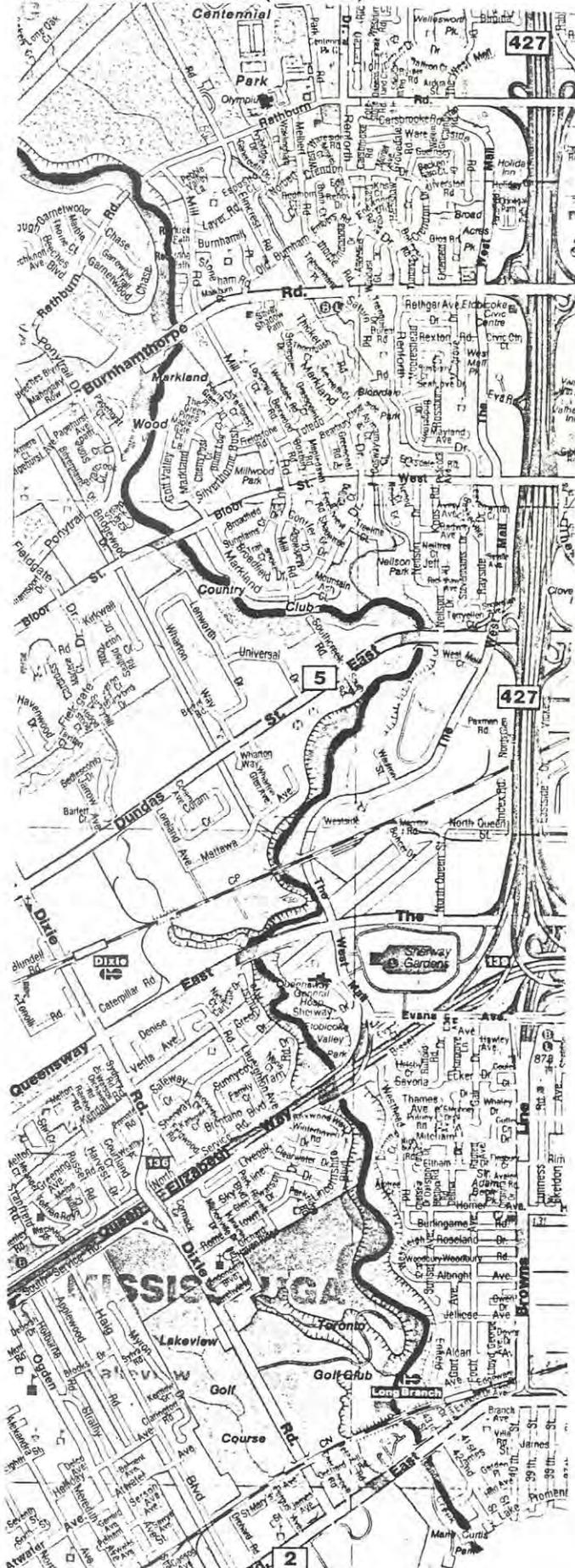
Both sides of the creek from the lakeshore to Lakeshore Boulevard are managed by the Metro Toronto Parks and Property Department and are known as Marie Curtis Park. On the east side of the creek large willows, mown grass, washroom facilities and picnic tables make this a pleasant picnic area. The creek itself is a good place to observe ducks and geese. A bridge midway gives pedestrian access to both sides. The west side of the creek consists of parking lots and lots of mown grass -- on fill placed in the valley after Hurricane Hazel washed away the previous occupants of the area (the 400 residents of Pleasant Valley Trailer City). Now the best part of the west side is the small sandy beach and the adjacent woodlot of oaks, pines and beeches as well as ponds inhabited by frogs and turtles. We hope this area can be protected and maintained in a natural state. Most of it appears to be owned by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment with part of it (well-fenced) leased to Canada Post.

Lakeshore Blvd. to the Queen Elizabeth Way

In a wet area north of the railway bridge we found red-backed salamanders, a rare find in Metro according to Bob Johnson. Just north of this site the valley becomes typically steep-sided. Vertical shale cliffs meant we had to scramble over boulders in one area particularly. On our first visit the creek was clear and splashed and sparkled over pieces of broken shale filled with fossils. In quiet places we saw numerous minnows. Since our first visit, Metro Parks has begun construction of a bike trail through this area which will make it accessible to anyone, but perhaps not as magic an area to visit. Where the valley widens out we found a stand of huge hemlocks and a large shagbark hickory. Despite calls to Metro Parks, the bike trail has been bulldozed among the largest hemlocks. They are not expected to survive. North of Horner is an Etobicoke park containing washrooms and a playing field. The Mississauga side of the valley is also occupied by a small local park opposite Horner. (The creek is the border between Metro Toronto and Mississauga to Eglinton Ave. West.) The golf course shown on maps as occupying the west side is out of sight from the valley -- on the tableland.

▷

ETOBICOKE PROJECT (cont'd)



Access to valley:

- △ Enter valley from west end of Rathburn Road (bus to corner or parking on side streets)
- △ Enter valley from Burnhamthorpe Road (stairs from bridge, bus to bridge or parking on side street)
- △ Enter valley from Dundas Street West (bus to corner)
- △ Enter valley at west end of Sherway Drive (bus to Sherway Gardens or parking on street)  
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACROSS CREEK AT END OF SHERWAY
- △ Enter valley from west end of Horner Avenue (bus to Brown's Line and Horner or parking on side streets)
- △ Enter valley from Lake Shore Blvd. (GO train to Long Branch or street-car to west end of line or parking in park)  
PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACROSS CREEK IN MARIE CURTIS PARK



## ETOBICOKE CREEK PROJECT (cont'd)

## Queen Elizabeth Way to Dundas

It was in this section that we began to appreciate bridges. They aren't just for crossing. As well as the usual graffiti and salt tolerant vegetation, we found swallows (no, not pigeons). Barn swallows and cliff swallows live under them in Etobicoke Valley. At the west end of Sherway Drive is the only bridge in the valley to have survived Hurricane Hazel. It has been designated a heritage bridge by both Mississauga and Etobicoke and was carefully restored during the fall of 1985. If only the natural heritage of this area had been treated with equal respect and expense! Instead, the whole valley from the Queen Elizabeth to Dundas has been degraded by dumping of fill (and garbage) over the edge of the valley to extend the tableland for buildings, roads and parking lots. Wetlands have been filled and wooded slopes destroyed, leaving this area the kingdom of the tansy and teasel. In spite of this, a significant natural area (according to MTRCA) flourishes on the west side of the valley at the confluence of the Etobicoke and Little Etobicoke Creeks. In fact, one of the most pleasant memories we have of the valley is a half-hour spent on a secluded lookout above the river watching crows chase an owl and listening to cicadas buzzing and kingfishers rattling, while above us hung hydro lines and behind us and beside us roads and railway lines carried masses of traffic.

## Dundas to Burnamthorpe

Between Dundas and the confluence of Etobicoke Creek and Renforth Creek, a private developer was found destroying the wooded slopes by dumping fill into the valley. A letter to the Conservation Authority brought denials of this activity. Photographs show otherwise. The rest of the valley in this section is occupied by the Markland Wood Country Club. Access to non-golfers is limited to the non-golfing season. A winter visit determined that the slopes of the valley are wooded and that many homes with bird feeders keep this section from being too barren of life.

## Burnamthorpe to Highway 401

We found this part of the valley the least affected by the surrounding urban development though plans for Centennial Park in Etobicoke and industrial zoning of tablelands adjacent to the valley north of Eglinton (in Mississauga) threaten its present condition. Also the presence of motor bikes and other motorized vehicles (since installation of storm sewers and the construction of the Eglinton bridge in the 1970's) is having a detrimental effect on both the valley and the tableland woodlots that remain.

During two late summer visits to the area north of Eglinton we had an opportunity to see the effect of rain on the creek. One week we were almost able to wade across the creek without getting our feet wet; the next, we found the creek a raging, brown torrent, several feet deeper than on our previous visit. Frogs and minnows were swimming where we had picnicked the week before.

Conclusion: This has become more than a summer project. We have now visited the creek at all times of the year. Next we want to explore the watershed beyond Metro. We hope that by making others aware of the natural resources of Etobicoke Creek, they too will get involved in letting politicians and government employees know our concerns and the great value of having such a relatively natural and publicly accessible watershed within a large urban area.

ETOBICOKE CREEK (cont'd)

What can you do to help preserve the natural heritage of Etobicoke Valley?

1. On your explorations, take notes and photographs. Share them with others.
2. Carry a plastic bag on your outings and remove any litter you find.
3. If you see anyone picking wildflowers, etc., explain to them politely that if each of us did that, nothing would be left for others to enjoy. Also try taking photographs of the offenders. That often makes people leave quickly.
4. If you see anyone dumping garbage, old cars, etc., take the licence number of the vehicle. Again, photographs are valuable evidence. For vehicles in the valley south of Eglinton on the east side of the river, call the Metro police; for those outside Metro, call the Conservation Authority at 661-6600.

Helen Juhola

For further reading:

- FROM FURROW TO BOROUGH by Esther Heyes, Borough of Etobicoke Civic Centre, 1974
- ETOBICOKE CREEK VALLEY AS AN ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREA, 1985, by Randy Romano (unpublished report)
- "Another Centennial!" by Helen Juhola in the TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST 376, Dec. 1985
- "Wild bikes are driving wild animals from valley" by Brian Clark, TORONTO STAR NEIGHBORS WEST, May 1985
- THE ETOBICOKE VALLEY REPORT, 1947, Dept. of Planning and Development, Ontario, Toronto
- THE PHYSIOGRAPHY OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO by L.J. Chapman and D.F. Putnam, 1985 Third Edition, Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario
- ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS STUDY, 1984, Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- "Environmentally Significant Areas in Metro Toronto" by Steve Varga in the TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST 348, May 1982

□

## projects

LONG POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY "PROJECT RECOVERY"

The program has two objectives:

1. to increase recovery rate of birds banded by LPBO,
2. to identify wintering areas in neotropics with a view to protection of these precious habitats.

Supplementary address bands are needed. To pay for these financial support is requested. A tax deductible donation of \$5.00 or more entitles the donor to "adopt" an individual of one of the ten bird species involved. The donor will receive a certificate specifying the banding details of the individual, including age, sex, measurements, time and place of banding, method of capture, etc. If the bird is recovered or retrapped, the donor will be notified of the details. If interested, contact Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O.Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0. (519) 586-2909.

□

## PROJECTS (cont'd)

## TODMORDEN MILLS NATURAL HISTORY

An abandoned village, you say? In the midst of the most urbanized region in Canada?

Yes, tucked into a great bend in the Don Valley and passed every day by thousands of motorists on the Don Valley parkway, Todmorden Mills has become an isolated time capsule of Toronto's history.

Two hundred years ago the Don River with its clear water, plentiful salmon, and fertile floodplain attracted settlement to the area. Soon a sawmill was established to exploit the magnificent forests of the valley and surrounding tablelands. Later, a brewery, a paper mill and a brick factory thrived on the resources. When the river responded to this massive assault on the region by increased flooding, settlement was redirected to the tablelands. By the 1940's the village was reduced to a few dilapidated houses, and goats guarded the remaining pear trees; the former mill had become a riding stable. And for a short period of time, part of the site was occupied by German prisoners of war. Then in the 1950's came the creation of Metropolitan Toronto. In the name of progress, the Don Valley parkway was constructed through the valley; hills were levelled, hollows filled, and the Don River was moved away from the village in 1958.

Since then the buildings of Todmorden, which survived the 200 years of more or less continuous occupation, have been lovingly restored; the brewery has become a museum; and the mill is occupied by a theatre and an art club.

But what of the natural features that made this site so valuable? How have they been treated? How have they responded to the activities they supported? What plants and animals have survived? What plants and animals have been introduced?

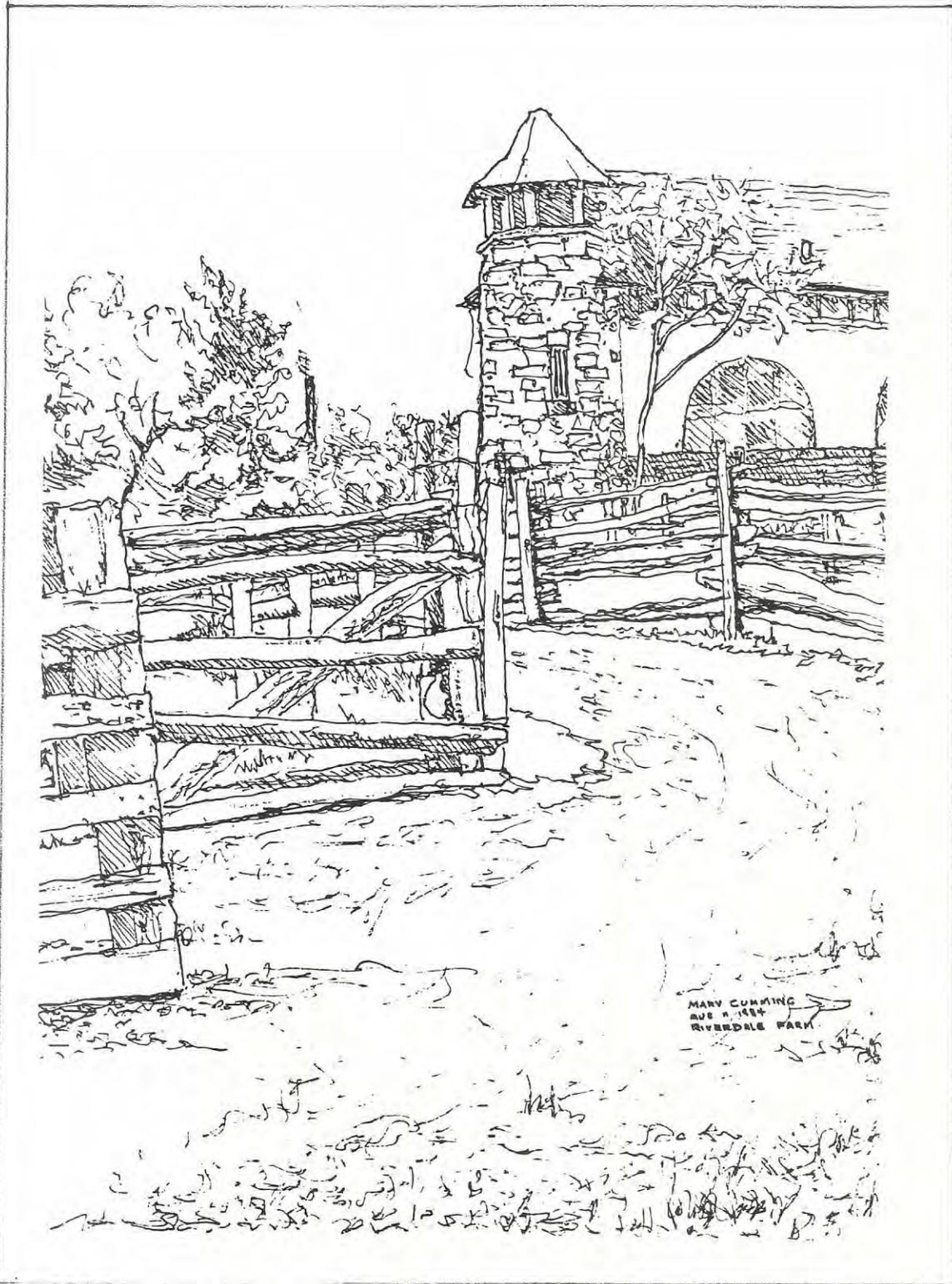
For comparison, we have descriptions of the area by Toronto's best known naturalist/historians: Simcoe, Scadding, Seton, and Sauriol.

Much of the 26-acres set aside as Todmorden Mills Park is "undeveloped" valley. Skunk cabbages and marsh marigolds can still be found blooming each spring in a secluded corner of the property.

On April 19 Toronto Field Naturalist members will have a chance to visit the site and think about how the natural features have been treated. As we inventory the natural resources, we can remove litter and dream about writing a new chapter to this long story -- one which will respect and perhaps enhance the remaining resources. If you have lists of the plants and animals of this area or photographs (old or new) to share, please call Eva Davis (694-8928) or me.

Helen Juhola (924-5806)





Riverdale Animal Farm, August, 1984.

It's a good thing that Mary made this field-drawing on our Nature Arts outing in '84. The building in the picture was demolished in 1985.



THE WONDER OF CANADIAN BIRDS by Candace Savage, Western Producer Prairie Books, Saskatoon, 1985, 178 pages plus 23-page bibliography, and index of English and scientific names, biological subjects and place-names. Over 100 colour photographs.

This colourful and well-researched book consists of short notes on the physiology and life history of one or more typical representatives of each of eighteen orders of birds, illustrated with colour photos and range maps, and in some cases including interesting status notes. Fifty-four individual species are included. The extensive bibliography adds considerable value. Among the multitude of glamorous glossy wildlife books on the market today, this one is "not just another pretty face".

DB

PROCEEDINGS - THE THIRD EAST ASIAN BIRD PROTECTION CONFERENCE - TOKYO May 29-31, 1985, published by The Wild Bird Society of Japan. English edition, 307 pages, charts, maps, photos of participants.

A brief history of the annual East Asian Bird Protection Conference and its secretariat, the Wild Bird Society of Japan, occupies the first few pages of the book, with explanations of the involvement of the Republic of China, Taiwan, India, Bangladesh, and southeast Asian countries in a spirit of cooperation. Remarks, status and action reports, debates, guidelines, and resolutions follow, along with the Asian Bird Protection Agreement.

Included in status reports are checklists and protected species lists, most with English and scientific names. Some shorebirds and raptors, the night heron, green heron, common tern, and barn swallow will sound familiar, but exotic to our ears are the painted stork, crested fire-backed pheasant, crimson-breasted flowerpecker, all the barbets and hornbills, and many other species and families of birds. You will be glad to hear that the red jungle fowl, from which domestic fowl originated, has some degree of protection. Sri Lanka has categories for shooting birds in its legislation, but in fact no licenses are being issued. Many of the parks were established early in the century. Lists of conservation organizations appear in some reports.

Unfortunately there is no index to this book. There is a contents section but this does not help to locate a given species. The lists, however, are systematic which helps. All in all, the report tells a story of dedication. Available from TFN Library 690-1963.

DB

□

An animal's "obligation?"...

In TFN 365:27:SEP84 "IN THE NEWS" - "Charter of Rights Urged for Wildlife", the question of "obligations" was raised to complement the "rights", and whether wildlife would be able to fulfil any obligations. Unlike man, the rest of the animal world is obliged to follow instinct, with no choice in the matter. This could be considered all the more reason to ensure that their rights are not violated - and especially since their rights exist only to ensure that they survive to fulfil their "obligations", which is to say their place in nature.

DB

---

**TFN LIBRARY report**

---

Now that we have completed our book listing in the newsletter, here are

THE AIMS OF TFN LIBRARY:

1. to collect and catalog material of value for the study of natural history and the preservation of our natural heritage, particularly in the Toronto Region;
2. to concentrate on material which may not be obtainable from other libraries;
3. to involve TFN members as much as possible through
  - (a) reports in the newsletter
  - (b) "Library Nights" at general meetings
  - (c) individual loans of reports and reference books;
4. to distribute appropriate material among members, libraries, and schools.

▷ We wish to thank recent donors; an acquisition list will follow in the next report. To arrange to borrow library material, phone 690-1963.

DB

EXCHANGE NEWSLETTERS:

Currently TFN receives "exchange" newsletters from the following:

Black Creek Project, Canadian Nature Federation, Kawartha Field Naturalists (Fenelon Falls), Friends of the Spit, Halton/North Peel Naturalists' Club, Kingston Field Naturalists, Kirkland Lake Nature Club, The McIlwraith Field Naturalists of London, Long Point Bird Observatory, The Orillia Naturalists' Club, Durham Region Field Naturalists (Oshawa), Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club, Prince Edward Island Natural History Society, South Peel Naturalists' Club (Port Credit), Richmond Hill Naturalists, Lambton Wildlife Incorporated (Sarnia), Save the Rouge Valley System, Saugeen Field Naturalists, Peninsula Naturalists (St. Catharines), Saint John Naturalists' Club (New Brunswick), Thunder Bay Field Naturalists, Urban Wilderness Gardeners (Toronto), The Canadian Wildflower Society, Essex County Field Naturalists' Club (Windsor).

▷ Call 924-5806 if you want to borrow any "exchange" newsletters. Back issues have been donated to the Robarts Library (Fisher Rare Book Section).

HJ

TFN NEWSLETTERS:

Complete sets of TFN newsletters with indexes are now filed in the following libraries:

Metro Toronto Reference Library, Robarts Library, Royal Ontario Museum Library, Archives of Ontario, Royal Botanical Gardens Centre Library (Burlington), Civic Garden Centre Library (North York), York University Steacie Science Library, Ministry of Natural Resources Library (Queen's Park), National Library (Ottawa).

HJ

□

---

The Branches send out their tentacles:  
 Catkins and red tufts  
 Groping for summer.

---

from RAIN by Margaret Atwood

Recently published
--------------------

URBAN PARKS IN ONTARIO, PART II, THE PUBLIC PARK MOVEMENT 1860-1914 by J.R. Wright available from Ontario Government Bookstore, 880 Bay St., Toronto, for \$5.00 each (payable to Treasurer of Ontario), 1984

URBAN PARKS IN ONTARIO, PART I: ORIGINS TO 1860 by J.R. Wright, 1984 (same as previous publication for ordering)

ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY: AN EXAMINATION AND A PERSPECTIVE OF CANADIAN-U.S. TRANSBOUNDARY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES by John E. Carroll, John Wiley and Sons Canada Limited, Rexdale, Ont., \$33.50, 1983

NO IMMEDIATE DANGER? PROGNOSIS FOR A RADIOACTIVE EARTH by Dr. Rosalie Bertell, The Women's Press, 229 College St. # 204, Toronto M5T 1L2, \$12.95

NEWBURYPORT BIRDERS' EXCHANGE, 31 Plummer Ave, Newburyport, Mass. 01950, \$10/yr. Four newsletters a year provide up-to-date information on various programs for recording bird records, Christmas Bird Counts, etc. on personal computers.

ROCKS AND MINERALS INFORMATION 1986, Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Ontario, 1986

NATURAL HISTORY INFORMATION BIBLIOGRAPHIES (BOTANY, BIRDS, MAMMALS, etc.), 1986, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Ottawa K1A 0M8

MEDICINE FOR THE OUTDOORS: A GUIDE TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES AND FIRST AID by Paul S. Auerbach, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1986

RUSHING THE SEASON
--------------------

January 20, 1986, was a day when the temperature rose to 0°C. Not a warm day, but a moderate one preceded and followed by much colder ones. Now there was a lot of open water at Humber Bay West whereas earlier in the month there had been ice. I spent some time watching four goldeneyes -- three males and one female. First the little female would toss her head, then one by one, each male would throw back his head, point his beak to the sky, let out a loud "aark!" and then throw back his head even farther so that his beak was almost touching his back. This was repeated many times.

Occasionally these proceedings were interrupted when all four ducks dived under water. However, on surfacing the line-up was re-formed -- the female followed by three males. Each male seemed determined to outdo the other two with the head tossing -- reaching farther and farther back until it seemed necks would snap.

Though I guessed it was a courtship ritual, I examined some bird books when I got home. As I thought, this is a typical courtship display, but what surprised me was that the ducks were performing it so early in the year. Apparently this species breeds in the Arctic in May! I do not know what prompted this rushing of the season. Maybe it helps to pass the time.

Eventually the four birds flew away and I heard very clearly the distinctive "whistling" made by their wings. However, before long they returned after circling the bay and the ritual resumed.

Maisie Newby

THE WEATHER THIS TIME LAST YEAR
---------------------------------

April 1985 had record heat -- even greater than 1957, 1976, 1977!

April 1985 was overall a warm, dry and sunny month. Lester B. Pearson International Airport had a mean temperature of 7.4°C, the warmest since 1981. Toronto City's mean temperature was 8.6°C, warmest since 1977. Precipitation was light in the Toronto area: lowest since 1971. At the airport, 33.1 mm fell; while downtown, 33.8 mm fell. Snowfall was five and a half cm at both locations (not unusual although the most since 1979 at the airport). Toronto City had 205.5 hours of sunshine. 1982 had more sunshine, but any 200+ reading is impressive for April.

April, however, was certainly a changeable month. Despite the dryness, thunderstorms occurred on three occasions. We had a fierce windstorm on the 6th with a gust of 104 km/h reported at Toronto Island (highest since 1979). Blowing dust occurred on the 16th in some places, but nowhere nearly as severe as on the 30th last year. The first 10 to 13 days of the month were actually quite cool. On the 9th, it stayed below freezing all day at L.B. Pearson International Airport (first such day since 1982). Then a major shift towards summer heat occurred and continued (intermittently) right to month's end. On the 22nd the mercury rose above the 30°C mark at L.B. Pearson International Airport. This is a monthly and early-season record. Downtown fared well with 27.7°C. My station at Pickering was affected by the lake breeze that day and hit 20.6°C. But on the 30th it was hot, and 24.2°C was achieved. Growing degree-days were the most since 1977; plant growth was very early as shown by phenological observations\*\*. Pickering is about 4 to 10 days behind downtown.

\*\* April 13. Early tulips start blooming on University of Toronto downtown campus. Also, honeysuckle leaves appearing.

April 19. Horsechestnut leaves at University campus opening.

April 20. Forsythia beginning on campus.

April 22. Woods at Pickering about 1 to 2 km from lake: native shrubs such as elderberry and chokecherry have folded leaves visible; toothwort in full bloom. Trilliums budding. Toads trilling.

April 23. University campus: sugar maple buds swollen, green on the verge; forsythia at peak of bloom; other hardwoods such as oak and linden in same condition as sugar maple. Leaves appearing on Wych elm, crabapple, silver maple, birch. Norway maples blooming; also white ash, late tulips (starting). Early tulips finishing. Even the honey and black locusts now have green buds.

Pickering: early tulips starting; Norway maple buds barely swollen.  
April 26. University of Toronto downtown campus: sugar maple leafing out; ornamental cherries in full bloom.

April 28. Pickering: forsythia at peak of bloom.

April 29. University campus: sugar maple leaves 4 cm long, no flowers (actually extremely inconspicuous and seeming to bloom at this stage) -- leaves still slightly folded. Red oak buds just bursting. Pickering: sugar maple buds just starting to burst.

April 30. University campus: oak leaves tiny but visible -- "squirrel's ear"; Magnolia soulangiana in full bloom; forsythia finishing; mulberry (usually extremely slow) buds bursting, as with locust trees.

Gavin Miller

□

# COMING EVENTS



## 8th ANNUAL NATURALISTS' WORKSHOP, MAY 24-31, 1986

Queen's University Biology Department is offering its 8th annual residential workshop. The purpose of the workshop is to increase participants' skills in field identification and their knowledge of the ecology of plants and animals of south-eastern Ontario. Workshop limited to 20 participants, with an intensive series of field trips led by at least 3 instructors.

The workshops are designed for both amateurs and professionals, and in past years have included students, seniors, interpreters, naturalists, teachers and biologists.

Location: Biological Station on Lake Opinicon, north of Kingston.

Cost: \$300 (undergraduates \$200). This includes accommodation, food, local transport and tuition.

## QUEEN'S ART AND NATURE WORKSHOP, AUGUST 10-16, 1986

A course on the observation and interpretation of nature through drawing and painting.

Instructor: Dr. W.J. Roff

Cost: \$240 (if enrolment fewer than 5, cheque will be returned).

Enquiries on both events: Floyd Connor, 613-359-5629

## ONTARIO HIKING CONFERENCE

The second Ontario Hiking Conference will be held May 16-19, 1986, at the University of Guelph. Indoor and outdoor workshops will be held, with opportunities to hike and socialize. For information contact Mike Curtis, 52 Lynn Ave., Guelph, Ontario. N1H 5C6.

### MNR Wildlife Viewing Days

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will sponsor the following wildlife viewing days:

April 6, 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. - Humber Bay Park East - Waterfowl Watching

April 13, 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. - Rattray Marsh - Migratory Birds

April 20, 7.00 - 11.00 a.m. - Holland Marsh Provincial Wildlife Area -

Breeding and Migrating Waterfowl. One-hour hikes every hour.

### Humber College

Several courses of interest to naturalists will be offered at Humber College during the next few months. For details contact Marg Riley, Community Programming and Facilities Officer, Student Life Centre, Humber College, 675-3111, ext. 4024. Topics include Edible Plants, Wilderness Survival, Backpacking, Ornithology, Nature Photography, Weather Forecasting.

### National Wildlife Week, Guelph

From April 5 to 12, a variety of activities will be held in Guelph in celebration of National Wildlife Week. The programme will include outings and films of interest to naturalists. For details telephone (519) 824-5838.

## COMING EVENTS (cont'd)

Humber Arboretum

Humber Arboretum will present the second annual Wildflower Gardening Symposium, May 10, 9.00 a.m. - 4.30 p.m. at the Inn On The Park. For information call Art Coles, 675-3111, ext. 4445.

Society of Ontario Nut Growers

Spring Auction Saturday, April 12, 1.15-3.15 p.m. at the Civic Garden Centre. For details, contact Mrs. Marion Grimo, R.R. 3, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. L0S 1J0

Royal Botanical Gardens

For details about any of the following events, contact The Royal Botanical Gardens, Box 399, Hamilton, Ontario. L8N 3H8. Telephone (416) 527-1158.

Wildflower Gardening - Apr. 26, 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Register by April 11.

Spring Bird Walk - Apr. 27, 7.00 a.m.

Noon-Hour Nature Walk - April 29, 12.10 p.m.

Basic Botanical Drawing - eight-week course commencing

April 7, 1.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. Register by March 27.

Botanical Drawing and Painting - eight-week course commencing

April 2, 10.00 a.m. or 1.30 p.m. Register by March 21.

Royal Ontario Museum

To April 27 - "Drawn from the Sea: Art in the Service of Ichthyology" - An exhibition of approximately 70 pencil drawings, watercolours, and bookplates of fish from around the world. Telephone 586-5549 for details.

McLaughlin Planetarium

"The Return of Comet Halley" to April 27. For information telephone 586-5736.

Kortright Centre for Conservation

April 26, 27 - Wildflower Walks. The Kortright Centre is on Pine Valley Drive, south of Major Mackenzie Drive, 3 km west of Highway 400. Telephone 661-6600.

George Brown College - Casa Loma Campus

Wildflower Identification by Jim Hodgins, a 5-tweek course on Wednesday evenings starting April 22; includes 2 field trips. Call 947-9914 for details.

## PRESQU'ILE PROVINCIAL PARK

Presqu'ile Provincial Park, just south of Brighton, is a favourite spot for bird watchers, and you are invited to explore it. In early spring, tens of thousands of ducks stop over to feed and rest. Mid-May is alive with all the regular spring migrants such as orioles, warblers, flycatchers, and others, while late May is an excellent time to see Brant and shorebirds.

You can make a day trip or stay longer at campsites or motels or guest houses nearby.

For information about birding at Presqu'ile, contact Mr. Doug McRae, Park Naturalist, Presqu'ile Provincial Park, R.R. #4, Brighton, Ontario. KOK 1H0. Telephone (613) 475-2204.

# TFN MEETINGS

VISITORS  
WELCOME

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Board of Education Centre, 6th Floor Auditorium  
155 College Street, at McCaul

Monday, April 7, 1985, 8.00 p.m. (Coffee at 7.15)

Birding in the South Pacific

- Dr. Verna Higgins, Professor, Department of Botany,  
University of Toronto.

This illustrated talk will be on birds, birdwatching and  
conservation in Australia, Papua, New Guinea and New Zealand.

Monday, May 5, 1985, 8.00 p.m.

Trumpeter Swan Restoration in Ontario

- Harry G. Lumsden, Research Scientist, Wildlife Research  
Section, Ministry of Natural Resources, Maple.

\* \* \* \* \*

## GROUP MEETINGS

### Bird Group

No April meeting.

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

### Botany Group

Thur. Apr. 10 Plant Identification Workshop  
7.30 p.m.

Location: Botany Bldg., Room 207, University of Toronto;  
northwest corner of College and University.

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

### Environmental Group

No April meeting.

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

### Junior Club

Sat. Apr. 5 Monarch Butterfly Migration  
10.00 a.m. - Miss Audrey Wilson

Location: Planetarium Auditorium, immediately south of  
Royal Ontario Museum.

## VACATION PLANNING

If you are thinking of vacations for 1986, you might want to contact any of the  
following organizations:

Canadian Nature Federation, Suite 203, 75 Albert St., Ottawa. K1P 6G1.  
Telephone (613) 238-6154.

Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 355 Lesmill Rd., Don Mills. M3B 2W8.  
Telephone (416) 444-8419.

Clive and Joy Goodwin, 45 LaRose Ave., Apt. 103, Weston. M9P 1A8.  
Telephone (416) 249-9503.

Nature Travel Service, 127A Princess St., Kingston. K7L 1A8.  
Telephone (613) 546-3065.



**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS**

53 Joicey Boulevard  
Toronto, Ontario M5M 2T4

SECOND CLASS MAIL  
Registration Number  
6669



**TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST**

published eight times a year by the Toronto Field Naturalists, a charitable, nonprofit organization, the aims of which are to stimulate public interest in natural history and to encourage the preservation of our natural heritage.

Editorial Committee

Helen Juhola	(924-5806)	#112 - 51 Alexander St., Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1B3
Diana Banville	(690-1963)	#710 - 7 Crescent Place, Toronto, Ont. M4C 5L7
Alexander Cappell	(663-7738)	#109 - 35 Cedarcroft Blvd., Willowdale M2R 2Z4
Eva Davis	(694-8928)	#203 - 1080 Kingston Rd., Scarborough M1W 1N5
Mildred Easto	(488-0962)	#416 - 28 Broadway Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4P 1T5
Florence Preston	(483-9530)	#203 - 368 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto M4P 1L9
Mary-Louise Stewart	(960-9860)	#203 - 221 Russell Hill Road, Toronto M4V 2T3

Members are encouraged to submit notices, reports, articles up to 1,500 words in length and illustrations at least six weeks before the month in which the event is to take place or the material is required to appear.

Other Publications

TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB: ITS HISTORY AND CONSTITUTION by R.M. Saunders, 1965 .....	\$ .50	TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' RAVINE SURVEYS. \$ 2.00 ea. Survey #1-Chatsworth Ravine, 1973 Survey #2-Brookbanks Ravine, 1974 Survey #3-Chapman Valley Ravine, 1975 Survey #4-Wigmore Ravine, 1975 Survey #5-Park Drive Ravine, 1976 Survey #6-Burke Ravine, 1977 Survey #7-Taylor Creek-Woodbine Bridge Ravines, 1977 Survey #8-West Don Valley, 1978	
CHECKLIST OF PLANTS IN FOUR TORONTO PARKS: WILKET CREEK, HIGH PARK, HUMBER VALLEY, LAMBTON WOODS, 1972 .....	.50	INDEX OF TFM NEWSLETTERS (1938-1978) .....	10.00
TORONTO THE GREEN, 1976 Metropolitan Toronto's important natural areas are described and recommendations given for their conservation and manage- ment; includes maps, bibliography and index .....	2.50	ANNUAL TFM INDEX .....	.25 ea.
FIELD CHECKLIST OF PLANTS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO, 1977 ....5/\$1.00 or .....	.25 ea.	AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES OF METRO TORONTO, 1983 .....	2.00
TORONTO REGION VERTEBRATE LIST (fishes, amphibians, reptiles, mammals), 1985 5/\$1.00 or	.25 ea.	TORONTO REGION BIRD CHART, 1983 .....	2.00
TORONTO REGION BIRD LIST, 1985 5/\$1.00 or .	.25 ea.	A GRAPHIC GUIDE TO ONTARIO MOSSES, 1985.	2.00
		GUIDE TO TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' NATURE RESERVE, Leaskdale, Ontario, 1986	2.00

Membership Fees

\$20 Family (2 adults same address)	\$15 Senior Family (2 adults 65+)
\$15 Single	\$10 Single Senior
\$10 Student	Tax receipts issued for donations

Publication orders (add 50¢ per item for postage and handling), membership fees and address changes should be sent to:-

83 Joicey Blvd., Toronto, Ontario M5M 2T4 (488-7304)