

Toronto Field Naturalists' Club

MAY MEETING

Monday, May 7, 1951 at 8.15 p.m.

at the

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

Annual Meeting

Speaker - Mr. Lister Sinclair

Mr. Sinclair, who is well known to radio audiences as dramatist, poet, actor and critic, will speak on

"Birds in Books"

ROTUNDA DISPLAY

A display of historical documents relative to the organization of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.

A display of nature photography by Dalton Muir.

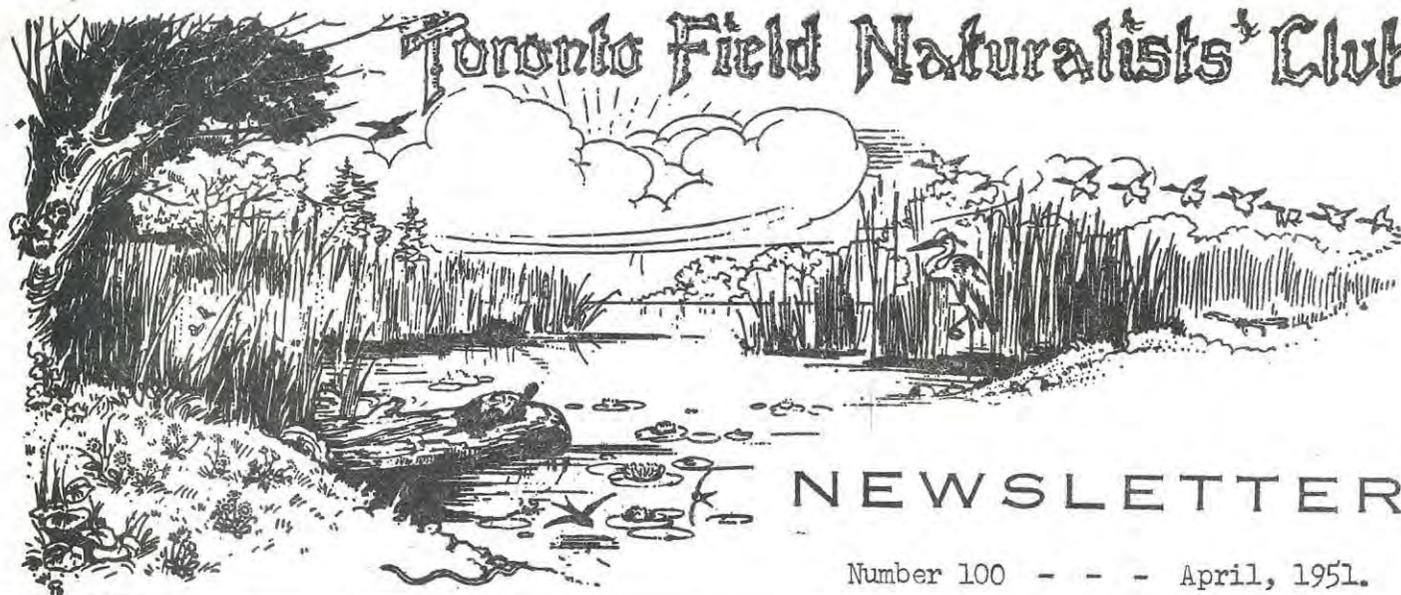
How well do you know your trees? There will be a contest held in the rotunda before the meeting, in which you will be asked to identify a number of specimens of leaves. A first and second prize, kindly donated by Mr. A. Cameron, will be awarded to the successful contestants. Please bring a pencil with you.

MAY OUTINGS

For a list of the May outings please consult your Spring Outing folder.

Secretary: Mrs. J.B. Stewart, 21 Millwood Road - Hy. 5052

Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.



NEWSLETTER

Number 100 - - - April, 1951.

About the first of June, 1923, two friends met at the corner of Church and Colborne Streets in Toronto. They were Mr. Will F. Gregory, a business man (at present a teacher) and Dr. Lyman B. Jackes, then Director of Visual Aid, Department of Education. As they were both keen naturalists, their conversation soon turned to recent observations and experiences in the realm of nature. From this they progressed to a discussion of the need for an organization in Toronto which would provide opportunities for people like themselves who were interested in nature to meet together, to make field trips, to exchange observations, hear lectures, and increase their knowledge of subjects of natural history. Mr. Gregory suggested that he would interview several men who would be most likely to cooperate in the forming of such a society. With that the two friends parted.

Mr. Gregory first went to see Prof. R.B. Thomson of the Department of Botany at the University of Toronto. The plan of organizing a society for naturalists, young and old, experienced and inexperienced, received his warm approval. He suggested a list of men with whom the subject should be discussed. Mr. Gregory then called on Prof. E. M. Walker of the Department of Biology and received his hearty endorsement of the plan.

Editor's Note: As this is the one hundredth issue of the Newsletter it has been thought appropriate to devote this number to an historical appraisal of the Club. The ease with which records are destroyed and memories fade makes it desirable to put down the essential facts of the story of the club in a place where they may be better preserved. In the preparation of this account both the Club's records and the memories of original members have been utilised. The editor wishes to offer here his thanks for the ready co-operation of all those who have supplied necessary information.

After this auspicious beginning, Mr. Gregory interviewed the men suggested by Prof. Thomson and reported to him the willingness of each one to co-operate. The date of June 12, 1923, was set for the organization meeting at the Central Y.M.C.A.

This meeting was duly held with the following people being present: W.F. Gregory, Dr. L.B. Jackes, Prof. R.B. Thomson, Prof. E.M. Walker, F.H. Brigden, Dr. W.A. Clemens, Dr. A. Cousens, R.G. Dingman, Prof. J.R. Dymond, R. Ferris, Magistrate Jones, Shelley Lozier, C.W. Nash, Taylor Statten, Stuart Thompson and Lockie Wilson. The group proved very much in favour of immediate action. They voted at once to establish a natural history society that should be called The Toronto Field Naturalists Club. They thus became the founders of the club. A scheme of organization was approved but the matter of fees could not be decided since it was intended that a subscription to the "Canadian Field Naturalist" publication of the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club should be included with the membership in the new club, and a satisfactory arrangement for this had yet to be worked out.

At the next meeting of the group on June 19th, Will Gregory and Stuart Thompson were designated to draw up a set of by-laws for the club. This constitution, considerably modified and amended, remains still the basis of the club's organization. At the same meeting, a list of officers was presented and accepted. Prof. R.B. Thomson became the first president, and Mr. Will Gregory the first secretary.

After careful preparation the Toronto Field Naturalists Club was launched upon a public career on October 29, 1923. Two meetings were held that day, one in the afternoon, for "school teachers and senior pupils", one in the evening "with the addition of music" for the general public. Both meetings were in Foresters' Hall, 22 College Street. Prof. E.M. Walker was chairman at the public meeting. The Program consisted of songs by Mr. Tom Mead and Miss Edith B. Champion, and a lecture entitled "Illustrated Nature Story", by Dr. Lyman Jackes. The moving pictures and "dissolving views" shown in the lecture were all made by members of the new club.

In the folder which was distributed at the initial meeting, the aims of the club are set forth as being these:

- "To develop appreciation of the wonders and beauties of Nature and so add to the resources of our lives.
- To give opportunity for Nature Lovers to meet together, exchange observations and increase their knowledge of natural objects and processes.
- To give the public opportunities to hear authorities on subjects of natural history.
- To conduct field excursions with a view to acquiring greater knowledge of the natural history of the Toronto district.

- To co-operate with Governments in the protection of wild life, the preparation of exhibits and the compilation of natural history records.
- To encourage the establishment of wild life sanctuaries.
- To publish field notes and other data in an Annual Report.
- To broadcast field observations periodically in a Toronto paper.
- To develop a junior organization, offer prizes for bird houses, photographs, essays on wild life preservation, etc."

Once under way, the regular meeting place for the club became the theatre of the Biological Building at the University of Toronto. There the meetings continued to be held except for special occasions, and for a brief sojourn at the Humane Society's auditorium on St. Alban's Street, until the transfer to the Royal Ontario Museum in October 1936.

The members of the club were circularized with a questionnaire, to determine the variety of interests and talents represented among them. The questions asked were as follows: (1) What form of nature study are you interested in? Birds, flowers, etc. (2) Have you given talks or written articles on nature? (3) Do you preserve wild life? feed birds, plant wild flowers, etc. (4) What collections have you made? (5) Do you belong to a nature study club? * The questionnaire ended with an invitation to suggest several subjects for the meetings to come.

On the basis of the suggestions received, and of their own ideas, the executive council drew up a program for the season. That it was one to command respect and to arouse interest may be known from a list of the speakers and subjects. After Dr. Jackes, there came in this order: Mark Robinson speaking about "Algonquin Park" of which he was superintendent; Stuart Thompson ("Our Winter Birds"); W.E. Saunders of London, ("Bird Music") Harrison F. Lewis of Ottawa ("Our Bird Friends and How We May Protect Them"); Francis J.A. Morris of Peterboro ("W.H. Hudson, Field Naturalist"); Norman Criddle of Ottawa ("Wild Life in Manitoba") Prof. Klugh of Queen's University ("Our Spring Flora"). There was also a members' meeting when Mr. Stuart Thompson, Dr. H.B. Sifton, Dr. E.M. Walker, Prof. J.R. Dymond, Mr. Shelley Lozier, and Mr. Russell Dingman spoke and showed exhibits.

The first year's program was brought to a close by two field trips, the first of which was held on April 26, 1924. This first field trip was organized by Stuart Thompson. The route followed was from the end of the College Street carline in High Park to the lakeshore, thence up the Humber. The group split into two parts at the Humber,

To this last question there could be for most people only a negative answer, for there was no active nature study club in existence in Toronto that was open to the public. The only such group, the Brodie Club, was a closed body with a small limited membership. The antecedent public society, the Canadian Society for the Protection of Birds, had fallen to pieces some years before. It was in part the vacuum left by the failure of that society which prompted the conversation between Mr. Gregory and Dr. Jackes.

so that both banks of the river could be explored, but the whole group reassembled at the Old Mill where reports of observations were given by party leaders. An ornithologist, a botanist and an entomologist "so far as possible" had been assigned to each of the two groups as leaders. The other field trip of this season was held at Armour Heights on May 31.

If the reader's experience in the field goes back a dozen years or more, he may remember seeing old linen placards attached to trees in sundry parts of the Toronto region. These signs read "SPARE THE FLOWERS. Don't pull them up by the roots. Don't pick many of them. Don't take the rare kinds at all. YOU CAN DO YOUR PART. Save our native wild flowers from destruction. Help to preserve them for future years. Help to keep Canada beautiful." At the bottom in bold print was "Toronto Field Naturalists' Club". The plan for putting out these placards was another of the achievements of the first year's executive council, successfully carried out with the permission of the municipal authorities. This was seemingly the first direct action taken by the club in behalf of conservation.

At the end of the first year the club had prospered so well that there were 162 members in the register. It was of great interest to discover, and somewhat astonishing, that twenty-six of that original membership are still active members of the club to-day!

By 1926, thanks to the enthusiasm and good planning of the founders, to the effective leadership of the first two presidents, Prof. R.B. Thomson and Prof. E.M. Walker, and to the loyal support of the members, the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club was a well-established and going organization.

A pattern of activities, centering upon a series of lectures during the fall and winter, and upon field trips in the spring, had been created. Both local and outside talent was called upon in making out the program for each year. A number of distinguished names appear among the lists of speakers in the early years. Some of them have acquired distinction in the years since, others were well known at that time. Worthy of special note in the latter group is Prof. A.P. Coleman, Honorary President of the club, and Canada's most distinguished geologist. Throughout the remainder of his life Prof. Coleman was always a hearty friend and supporter, always ready to give his time and help when needed.

In effect the activities which were characteristic of the club at that time are still the core of its annual program. There have been changes in emphasis from time to time, but the club functions to-day essentially as its creators planned it. One plan, however, never took hold. In the list of officers for 1926 we find both an Honorary Librarian and a Librarian. Evidently it was the intention to found a club library and to make it a continuing part of the organization. For some reason, perhaps lack of financial support

and of housing, this dream never came to fruition. These officials soon disappear from the annual list of officers.

The list of 1926 reveals another difference between the present organization and that of earlier years. In the past the club was much more clearly built around special groups representing particular interests. For instance, in 1926, there were seven such groups, each with a chairman and secretary as follows: Bird group, Stuart Thompson and J.L. Baillie; Mammal group, Prof. J.R. Dymond and L.L. Snyder; Flower group, Prof. R.B. Thomson and Miss E.R.L. Reed; Insect group, Prof. E.M. Walker and Dr. Norma Ford; Fish, reptile and amphibian group, E.B.S. Logier and T.B. Kurata; Geological group, Dr. A. Maclean and Jack Satterley; a group for wild life preservation, R.G. Dingman and Dr. J.N. McKinley. * Such specialized organization apparently did not prove feasible to maintain for it fades away very soon except in connection with field trips, though unsuccessful efforts have been made to revive it. Until 1939 leaders for these and other special interests were selected to take charge of field trips. Also field trips were customarily arranged to meet the requirements of a number of special groups. With the war leaders became scarcer and the system began to give way. Field trips tended to become more general in character or to emphasize birds and flowers, the most favoured subjects, though as many leaders as were available were provided for other interests. Since the war this tendency has continued. It should be noted that some of the special interests have not succeeded in commanding sufficient support among the members of the club, so that field trips can reasonably be devoted to them. The policy of the club, however, remains unchanged in principle; it has always been and still remains the aim of the executive to provide to the extent of its ability, both through lectures and in field trips, for the stimulus and satisfaction of as many diverse nature interests as exist among the club members. That general and direct concern with nature is after all what makes the club distinctively a field naturalists' club.

The year 1926 also saw the first use of the beautiful engraving which graces this Newsletter, and all the official paper of the club. This replaces the photograph of a song sparrow feeding young which headed the original club note paper. Nothing could have been happier than the artist's choice of a marsh scene with a woodland verge. It not only enabled him to suggest the plentitude of life that is open to the nature lover who has eyes that can see and ears that can hear, but also something of the wonderful mystery inherent in it all. The sun radiating its beams from behind mounting clouds is a sure and

* With the exception of Miss Reed, a visitor from Australia, all these leaders are on the original list of leaders for 1923-24, though a special geological group was lacking then.

subtle touch. Few societies can have as fine a symbol of their faith and aims as this one. All the generations of Toronto Field Naturalists owe a deep debt of gratitude to Dr. E.M. Walker, then president of the club, who conceived and drew the first sketch of this constant reminder of all that for which we stand, and caused it to be produced in its finished form by a professional engraver.

During the next two years, 1927-28, the club, under the guidance of Stuart Thompson, successfully pursued an even course of development. The outstanding event of this period was the visit of Ernest Thompson Seton, the famous naturalist, an uncle of Stuart Thompson, came back to Toronto, the site of so many of his early experiences with nature, at the joint invitation of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club and the Y.M.C.A. He gave two lectures "Voices of the Night" and "Wild Animals I Have Known", which were received with great applause, in the auditorium of the Central Y.M.C.A. This was the first occasion when the club ventured upon so ambitious a lecture project. Success made it a precedent for further such ventures, a long series of which has culminated these latter years in the conjoint action of this club and the Royal Canadian Institute in the bringing of the Audubon Screen Tours to Toronto.

At an executive council meeting on November 22, 1929, the even tenor of events was disturbed. A minute of that meeting states cryptically, "Question of cats mentioned". There is nothing more, no explanation, no elaboration. Apparently the question arose as the result of a discussion of the possibility of the establishment of a nature trail in the city. Yet who could find a "question" about cats in such a connection? Is it perhaps relevant that at that meeting only five men were present? Some one of these five, I warrant, had doubts about cats. Only thus could a "question" arise. Perhaps it is as well that no lady was present. The club might have been hopelessly divided then and there on this grave issue, "The Question of Cats". It is significant that never again does this matter appear in the minutes of the council.

The broaching of this dangerous question indicates that the executive council was ready to face risks. Consequently we are not surprised to find them embarking upon a new lecture adventure involving great "financial risk". This was the bringing of Captain C.W.R. Knight to talk and to show his masterly motion picture "The Filming of the Golden Eagle". The most careful planning and preparation went into this venture. Admission was limited to members of the club, but the lecture was used as a means of increasing the number of members so that membership was offered at reduced rates for the next half year in connection with the sale of tickets. The immediate success of this scheme was tremendous. Capt. Knight, with his eagle, "Mr. Ramshaw" made two appearances at Hygia Hall on March 7 and 8, 1930. Never before had any undertaking of the club received such publicity. Favourable news accounts came out under the following headlines: "Audience soars with golden eagle as movie is shown"; "Eagles good or bad like men and women". "Mr. Ramshaw, new film star, enjoys sun on top of hotel", "Eagle's little

ways interest naturalists". The membership of the club jumped to well over a thousand for the purposes of this lecture. A truer picture of the lasting result is given in the President's annual report where it is stated that the club membership increased during the year from 200 to 250 in round numbers, and that "most of this increase was due to the Knight lecture". The members of the council who had put so much labour into this enterprise could congratulate themselves not only that their effort had been crowned with financial success, but also that the Field Naturalists' Club was now known to the Toronto public to an extent it had never been previously.

The spectacular triumph of the Knight lecture should not, however, be allowed to overshadow the fact that it was the everyday ordinary achievements of the club which, though less likely to draw public attention, were the real foundation for the club's continued growth and for its hold upon its members. The regular lectures, the field trips and its growing educational work were the surest bases for future development. These regular activities were outlined in an appeal for the renewal of membership in the fall of 1930 as the following: (1) Monthly meetings from September to May, addressed by outstanding Naturalists; (2) Spring and autumn field rambles; (3) Placing nature trails in public parks; (4) Provision of prizes for bird house building contests in schools; (5) Placing bird houses in public parks; (6) Featuring a campaign for the conservation of wild flowers, birds and other forms of wild life. With this list it was pointed out that "Our club is almost the only organization in the city which stands for the conservation of our wild life and of the beauties of nature for their own sake."

"We believe that the club deserves the support of every lover of nature; without their support our work is seriously hampered." A gradual steady growth on the basis of the appeal of these activities and aims was what was desired, and what was regarded as the most substantial guarantee of progress for the club. It is, indeed, what took place.

From the beginning the club was concerned to arouse interest in nature among children. The first constitution holds a provision for junior members and steps were taken at intervals in the first few years to stimulate an active concern for the aims of the club among the youth of Toronto. The first really effective step seems to have been taken when the club began to co-operate with Mr. Arnott Patterson, Principal of the Toronto Normal School, in a bird-house building contest. The idea of such a contest had been suggested by Mr. Russell Dingman during the first year of the club's existence. This contest was initiated in the session of 1929-30. Special prizes were offered by the club and the houses entered in the contest became the property of the club. They were later erected in High Park and Sunnybrook Park, where some of them may be seen to-day. This project was carried on until 1935. In 1932 one-half the bird houses were donated to Bolton Camp and one half to the Humane Society.

Another very important step, taken this same year, to arouse

greater interest in nature among young and old was the founding of a nature trail in Sunnybrook Park. A special field day was held there on June 7, 1930, for the purpose of opening the new trail, believed to be the first city nature trail opened in Canada. The idea of creating such a trail originated with Mr. Colin Farmer, who had read of similar trails in some of the New York State Parks, and who made a trip especially to study some of their trails. With the permission of the Parks Department of the city a proper situation at Sunnybrook was selected and the trail laid out. Various species of trees were labelled to start. During the next summer in 1931, a member of the club, Mr. L.T. Owens, expert on trees and botany, served as nature guide in Sunnybrook Park. He extended the trail, labelled more trees and many flowering plants, set up a little field museum, and conducted parties of visitors over the trail. The regular fall hike of the club was held in the park so that the members could see how this club project had prospered. Unfortunately this marked the peak of interest in a very worthwhile undertaking. The nature trail at Sunnybrook Park continued to be a subject of discussion and planning in the executive council until the park was taken over as the site of the present military hospital, but well before that time it had been found impossible to keep up the trail. The last effort of the club to make Sunnybrook Park a centre of interest to naturalists was made in 1935, when on May 10 a group of fourteen trees were planted in celebration of the Jubilee of King George V.

The establishment of the Nature Trail and the appointment of Mr. Owens as Nature Guide were parts of a program of co-operation between the Field Naturalists Club and the Parks Department of the City of Toronto. In addition to these measures the club urged that the marsh areas remaining in city parks be preserved, that efforts be made to attract birds to the parks by encouraging the growth of thickets for nesting, the placing of more nesting boxes, the planting of berry-bearing shrubs, and the provision of winter food. The setting aside of suitable areas in Sunnybrook Park and High Park to be kept under natural conditions, and the fixing of labels along Exhibition Park waterfront indicating the waterfowl that frequent that area were also proposed. A very friendly reply was received from Mr. Chambers, The Commissioner of Parks, and on most of the proposals favourable action was taken.

The above proposals concern not only public education and the arousal of interest in nature study, but also the principle of conservation. During the presidency of Prof. J.R. Dymond, 1929-1931, the Club became very seriously associated with efforts to make conservation a living issue to its members and to the public. In particular, the Club joined in a drive to get better protection for "eagles, pelicans, herons and cormorants", and later for all hawks and owls. It can thus be said to have had some part in having eagles placed on the list of protected birds in Ontario, though that was chiefly a victory achieved by the late W.E. Saunders of London. Since then the winning of protection for hawks and owls has become a fixed aim of the Club. The Council has made repeated attempts to interest the Provincial Government in this matter in recent years, especially with reference

to the snowy owl, so far without appreciable success.

The Club also enquired in 1931 into the situation at Point Pelee with regard to the maintaining of natural conditions. This matter was later taken up by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and others, with the result that a part of the park area at Point Pelee was fenced in, to be left permanently in its natural state as a wild life sanctuary.

Conservation was again very much in the minds of the executive council when they requested and received permission from the Toronto Board of Education to conduct a prize essay contest in the public schools during the spring of 1931, on the subject "The Conservation of Wild Flowers". Here again was an idea originally proposed by Mr. Dingman in 1924. To assist this campaign, the club circulated two essays, written for the occasion, one by the well-known painter of flowers, Mr. Robert Holmes, in which he inveighs against the "bunch habit", the stupidity of the indiscriminate picking of wild flowers, and one by Prof. H.B. Sifton who stresses "the perilous position of our wild flowers". The holding of such school essay contests has been conducted by the club on other occasions, the most successful being in 1941 when Miss Grace Malkin was in charge of the contest. Some forty essays were submitted in that year from about thirty different schools.

Work with children figured prominently during the year 1930-31, for though there had been junior members from the beginning, regular meetings for juniors only became a reality at this time. Such meetings were held on one Saturday of each month at the Humane Society Auditorium. Attendance usually ran between 75 and 100 children. The organizing of these junior meetings was very largely the work of Mr. Colin Farmer, who succeeded Prof. Dymond as President of the T.F.N.C. in 1931. These meetings may be counted the effective prelude of the existing Junior Club which only gradually assumed its present form. A plan of organization was worked out during 1933, and in 1934 Murray Speirs became the first president of the Club as we now know it. Little by little the work of the Junior Club was expanded, and under Mrs. A.R. Whittemore's lead it assumed an autonomous relationship to the parent senior club which continued to give it financial and spiritual support. Another great step forward was taken when in 1940 under Miss Grace Malkin's leadership a program of having the children work on projects in the newly opened Children's Room in the Royal Ontario Museum was commenced. What that has meant may be best typified by the example of one of the projects, namely, Frank Smith's creative initiation of dozens of children into the art of carving birds in wood. Of no part of its creation is the T.F.N.C. prouder than of the Junior Club, which it regards as of paramount importance in the furtherance of its basic objectives. It is impossible here to mention all those who have guided the destinies of the Junior Club, though special note must be made of the work of Mrs. L.E. Jaquith and Mrs. Joseph Barfoot, who successively guided the Junior Club's activities for almost ten years. From its inception, indeed, the Juniors have had the inestimable benefit of a series of loyal, unselfish and imaginatively intelligent presidents and associate leaders. No

better proof of the appeal which the Junior Club makes to the youngsters of Toronto can be offered than that the existing limit of 200 members, a limit fixed by the effective use of present facilities, is constantly being overreached. Here certainly is a vital, fruitful, worthwhile group. *

The T. F. N. C. found its expanding activities carrying it well beyond Toronto in its associations by the autumn of 1931. The McIlwraith Ornithological Club of London, and the Hamilton Bird Protection Society, were consulted at the time of organization in 1923. Affiliation with the Ottawa Field Naturalists' Club started in the first year. But it was the establishment of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists in 1931 which made the naturalist connections of the T.F.N.C. province-wide. Several members of the Toronto club, especially Prof. J.R. Dymond, were prominent in the organization of the F.O.N., and the T.F.N.C. has always been the largest and most influential constituent club in the Federation. By association with the nature clubs throughout Ontario, it has been possible for all these clubs together to make their influence felt in a way which would be impossible for any one club, even one as large as the T.F.N.C. In this sense the creation of the F.O.N. represented an extension of the original aims and objectives of the T.F.N.C. and the linking up with others in the Province who hold similar aims and ideals.

Doubtless the most important result of the affiliation of the T.F.N.C. with the F.O.N. has been the founding of the Summer Nature School by the F.O.N. in 1939. This school, which has moved about from place to place in Ontario, has drawn almost wholly upon personnel of the T.F.N.C. for its leaders. No one, for instance, has contributed more to the creation and sound establishment of the Nature School than Dr. and Mrs. L.E. Jaquith, who gave lavishly of their time and energy over many years. At the present time the Nature School still carries on under leaders well-known to members of the T.F.N.C., namely, Profs. A.F. Coventry and T.F. McIlwraith, and Mrs. Ruth Stewart, secretary of this Club. The Summer Nature School is a great contribution to the development of an interest in nature in this Province and in Canada. The T.F.N.C. may well be gratified that its own members have had so prominent a role in the rise of this school. Not only has this club provided leaders for the Nature School, it has also given financial aid in the form of a scholarship, the first recipient of which was George Francis in 1948. The next year, 1949, two scholarships were given, one being known as the Lilian Payne Memorial Scholarship, in memory of one of the most efficient secretaries the T.F.N.C. ever had. It was a fitting memorial for Miss Payne was very enthusiastic about the work of arousing wide interest in and of training leaders in nature study, being done at the Nature School. These two scholarships are still being allotted.

* From young people who had had training and experience in the Junior Club, and from others connected with the Senior Club, came the chief inspiration for the founding of the Intermediate Field Naturalists' Club which, though it has no official connection with the T.F.N.C., owes much to it historically.

A further result of the association of the T.F.N.C. with the F.O.N. was an increase in the number of club field days and the going farther afield on hikes. No doubt the increasing use of automobiles had much to do with such expansion, too, but the decision of the F.O.N. to hold regional field days provided a decided impetus. On April 21, 1934, several members of this club attended the first regional field day at Puslinch Lake. Since that time regional field days have played an important part in our club program. They have provided an opportunity for our members to meet naturalists from outside Toronto and to see good natural history sites beyond the confines of the Toronto region.

A steady increase in the number of local hikes sponsored by the club also took place during the 1930's. In this respect the club was meeting the growing demand from a growing membership. By 1938 the customary four field trips a year of the earlier period had become 37. The largest increase came in that year with the beginning of the Wednesday morning spring bird hikes, an innovation designed to enable busy naturalists to have an hour's outing before going to their daily work. To these were added, in 1944, a regular monthly hike on the second Saturday afternoon of each month, except in the summer, and in 1945 Saturday morning spring hikes equivalent to the Wednesday morning hikes. The peak was reached in that session, 1944-45, when 75 field trips were organized by the club. This was found to be over-ambitious, and the program of hikes now (1950-51) stands at 27. The present number and distribution of field trips seems to be a fair balancing of demands upon leaders and of the interest of club members.

Attendance at hikes has varied considerably and will, of course, continue to do so. Nonetheless it is proper to say that during the first ten years a successful general hike saw around a hundred people in the field. In the second decade there was a sharp increase in attendance at such hikes. Two hundred, three hundred and on one memorable occasion at Erindale, an unmanageable four hundred people turned out. Since the war two hundred has been closer to the figure for a popular general field trip. On the whole, the most favoured field trips have been the annual fall field day in September, the Sunday morning walks in High Park in the spring, and the F.O.N. regional field days held by the T.F.N.C. but outside the city. Winter field trips have varied in attendance more than any others, indicating a more pronounced response to weather conditions at that season. There have been as few as eight present, and as many as one hundred and fifty, but the average in the winter has been between forty and sixty. On the Wednesday morning hikes, which are designed for smaller groups, the attendance has been as low as five and as high as seventy. The most favoured areas usually have been twenty and thirty people. In general, attendance at field trips has been dropping in the third decade of the club's existence. There are a number of reasons for this. When crowds at field trips became too large, many people found that they did not get the benefits they hoped for or had previously enjoyed, so they ceased to come. On the other hand, the club has, over the years, succeeded in introducing so

many naturalists to each other, and in educating so many others to a point where they can go afield profitably on their own, that many members go out in small groups by themselves, rather than come to large field trips. The fact that this happens is a tribute to the influence and effectiveness of the club. It is true now as never before that as one goes abroad on a fine day in this region, one finds individuals and small groups of people looking at birds, seeking flowers, enjoying nature. They may or may not be members of this club, but they all have in some way felt the influence and benefitted from the work of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club.

Always connected with going afield has been the Newsletter which came into the Club's life in 1938. The original suggestion that there should be a newsletter was made by Mrs. Harvey Agnew with the support of Mr. Russell Dingman and Dr. Norma Ford. An editorial committee consisting of Mrs. Agnew and Dr. R.M. Saunders was formed. The first number of the Newsletter, two pages in length, appeared in September, 1938. It contained an account of a variety of observations made during the previous summer by several members of the Club, and, in addition, proffered a recipe for "chickadee pudding" to be used on feeding trays in winter. The Newsletter met with an enthusiastic reception at once. It was clear that a real need was being met. After one or two issues it was evident that such a project could best be handled by a single editor, rather than a committee, so that Dr. Saunders took full charge. He has remained the editor to the present time. It has been gratifying to the editor, and, no doubt, to the members of the club to see the Newsletter grow in size and circulation even though that has meant increasing labour and the placing of the mechanical part of its production on a commercial basis. Many members of the club may not know that the Newsletter now reaches far beyond the membership of the club by reception in libraries, by exchange with other clubs, and by the good old method of "handing it on". It goes as far afield as the United States, Great Britain, South Africa and Australia. Possibly the clearest indication that the Newsletter filled a real need is to be found in the fact that other Nature Clubs in the Province have since the start of this club's publication commenced similar newsletters of their own. Inasmuch as club publications were planned for in the first year, here again in the creation of the Newsletter one of the hopes of the Club's founders was being realized.

The Club's services to its members were further enlarged and enriched when the practice of having exhibits in the rotunda of the Museum became a regular feature of the monthly meetings. Exhibitions of specimens, photographs, and other material began with the earliest meetings of the Club. Sometimes they reached exciting proportions, as when on November 9, 1931, Messrs. W. LeRay and Shelley Logier put on a display of living snakes, other reptiles, amphibians and small mammals native to Ontario. Exhibits were infrequent, however, until Mrs. L.E. Jaquith, in 1938, undertook the responsibility of maintaining a regular series of exhibits in conjunction with the indoor meetings. This valuable addition to club activities has been carried on ever since and is highly appreciated by the members.

When the war broke out in 1939, the Club, like other societies, began to feel the impact at once. In the first executive meeting after the outbreak of hostilities, some time was given to the "difficulties" encountered by several members of the Club -- they had been intercepted by the police while observing birds. It was voted that a warning be given members at the next regular meeting "not to use binoculars near hydro stations or other guarded areas". Some of the activities of the Club had to be cut out temporarily. A poster contest in the schools was eliminated. Certain places were debarred to field trips, either because of war use or gasoline rationing. Men leaving for service reduced the number of leaders available for field trips. At one time the Wartime Prices and Trade Board enquired seriously into the right of the Club to continue publication of the Newsletter. After proper investigation, though, permission to continue issue was granted "provided the amount of paper for any one issue does not exceed four tons." Happily, this still left us a little leeway. As a matter of fact, the Club was able to use the Newsletter to help its members who were abroad to keep in touch with home, by sending copies to them and other interested naturalists who were on active service. Letters from these men, relating nature observations made near military camps and at the front also found their way into the pages of the Newsletter. For those at home, the Club in pursuing its traditional aims and activities provided a welcome and necessary relaxation from wartime anxieties. That people felt the need of relief and valued it is indicated by the fact that the membership of the Club and the Club's activities steadily increased in the war years.

Since the war, starting with the season of 1946-47, the most important new development has been the joint action of the T.F.N.C. and the Royal Canadian Institute in bringing the Audubon Screen Tours to Toronto. The holding of these fine movie-talks in Eaton Auditorium has made it possible to reach the largest public audience in Toronto which the naturalists have ever enjoyed. Although this enterprise appeared at first to be a risky venture from the financial point of view, it has in fact proven very profitable for both of the co-operating societies. The financial success has in turn enabled the two societies to extend the usefulness of the Audubon speakers by having them repeat their talks in the city schools, the cost of this being defrayed out of the profits. By this means the Field Naturalists' Club has been given a chance to develop further the program of nature education for children which has always been one of its dearest aims.

We come now to the end of the story. From its origin in a conversation on a street corner twenty-eight years ago, the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club has grown to a large, highly-organized and influential society. It is indeed a major factor in the cultural life of the City of Toronto. Nor is its influence without importance in the Province of Ontario, and even beyond provincial borders. A dream has come true. It has done so because the founders planned well and worked hard, because a long line of others have striven intelligently, given freely of themselves, and laboured loyally together through the years. To the men and women who have created the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club and who are still creating it, we give salute.

APPENDIX - OFFICERS OF TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

<u>Years</u>	<u>President</u>	<u>Secretary</u>	<u>President, Junior Club</u>
1923-24	R. B. Thomson	W. Gregory	
1924-25			
1925-26	E. M. Walker	J. R. Dymond	
1926-27	E. M. Walker	(W. J. K. Harkness (S. L. Thompson Colin Farmer	
1927-28	S. L. Thompson		
1928-29			
1929-30	J. R. Dymond	F. P. Ide	
1930-31			
1931-32	C. S. Farmer	C. G. Brennand	
1932-33			
1933-34	A. M. Patterson	J. G. Oughton	
1934-35		H. M. Halliday	Murray Speirs
1935-36			Mrs. A.R. Whittemore
1936-37	F. P. Ide		Wesley J. Baxter
1937-38			
1938-39	F. C. Hurst	Mrs. L.E. Jaquith	Miss Grace Malkin
1939-40			
1940-41	R. M. Saunders	(Miss Grace Anderson (Miss Edna Boissonneau	
1941-42			Mrs. L.E. Jaquith
1942-43		Mrs. Edna Boissonneau Prince	
1943-44	T. F. McIlwraith	Miss Lilian Payne	
1944-45			
1945-46	C. A. Walkinshaw		Mrs. J.D. Barfoot
1946-47		E.C. Macdonald	
1947-48		Mrs. Ruth Stewart	
1948-49	A. J. V. Lehmann		
1949-50			
1950-51	A. A. Outram		(Mrs. Murray Speirs (Mrs. L.E. Jaquith

Great American Nature Writing - Selected and with commentary
by Joseph Wood Krutch. George J. McLeod, Ltd.
Toronto, 1950, Pp. 444. Price -- \$6.75

Very often anthologies are queer patchwork quilts with a flash of colour here and a startling gleam there and yards of dull strips holding the whole together. This book is no such deception as that. It has a glow and a thrill and a pattern that carries you on from beginning to end. That is because Joseph Wood Krutch is dealing with writers and writing that he knows, that he has known a lifetime and loved. A sure knowledge bred of love and sympathy has made it possible for him to pick the beautiful, the sensitive, the lovably humorous passages from his beloved authors with undeniable assurance. Because he has chosen in a spirit of love he has chosen surely for himself. Not alone for himself but for all.

In this selection we begin with Henry David Thoreau telling us of some of the experiences of his boyhood, join John Muir on his first summer in the Sierras of California, ponder with John Burroughs on the gospel of nature. Then we "escape from the commonplace" with Louis J. Halle who examines the signs of spring in Washington, and Edwin Way Teale who studies natural history in Times Square, Lewis Gannet who takes us into the "weekend world" which is "a modern invention". We shudder with Richard E. Byrd analyzing the loneliness he felt in the Antarctic. Another section is devoted to "Lives of the Hunted" and it begins with Ernest Thompson Seton's famous "Johnny Bear", leading us by way of Frank Conibear and J.L. Blundell, Alan Devoe and Will Cuppy, to another section called "Small Deer". This starts with a rich essay by Gustav Eckstein entitled "Seven Cats" from which I must quote to you the first paragraph: "A cat followed Joe up the path and round the road and to the back of the building, and Joe fed her and drove her away. Next day she followed again, was fed again, was driven again, was harder to drive, and harder still on the day after that. It worried Joe. A medical college is no place for a cat. So he took to walking to the other side of the dump to feed her there, but she followed just the same. He tried chasing her with his dog, the dog having plain directions to chase the cat, but not to harm her -- and the cat understood the directions. Finally, exasperated, he came to me, and the upshot was that I had the cat. She was the alley kind, gaunt, young, looking middle-aged." Now before you start clamouring for me to tell you the rest of that amusing tale, let me go on to say that there is nearly half a book more of these delightful selections, ending with William Beebe's "Yard of Jungle", Donald Culross Peattie's "An Almanac for Moderns" and William Morton Wheeler's satirical "The Organization of Research".

If you want to read this anthology just for sheer enjoyment, just to let your tongue roll around the choicest morsels, to guffaw with the hilarious, to be drawn out of yourself by the beautiful and the tender -- do so. It is your right, and it can be done with greatest relish. But if you want to think about the pattern into which the editor of this work feels that all these selections rightfully fit, then join him in his thoughtful, penetrating historical introduction, where, in five less than a hundred pages he gives one of the most

stimulating, thought-provoking essays in the history of ideas that I have ever seen. Whatever you do, don't miss this book. If you do and some day you pick it up on your neighbour's library desk, you'll be really sorry you didn't have it before.

(R. M. S.)

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THE NATURE OF NATURAL HISTORY

by Marston Bates

Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1950. Pp. 309. Price \$4.75

Have you ever wondered just what natural history is? Who is qualified to be called a naturalist? How can one become a better naturalist? How to acquire a general background that helps to make sense of casual observations? Do you encounter such terms as biotic communities, Linnaean system, genus, species, succession, habitat, niche, symbiosis, tropism and ecology in your reading and then become bewildered when you try to find the answers in biology text books? "The Nature of Natural History" by Marston Bates will be very helpful to you.

This stimulating, easily-read book is like a guide-book to the whole broad expanse of Biology. It gives the layman a general survey of the whole field and at the end of the book gives an excellent list of references for further reading in fields of special interest.

We find that "Naturalists are the causative organisms of natural history. One might, in fact, view natural history as a sort of secretion of naturalists - science as a secretion of scientists." The more naturalists study life around them, the more knowledge is acquired, the more natural history is available for naturalists to study.

"Natural History is the study of life at the level of the individual -- of what plants and animals do, how they react to each other and their environment, how they are organized into larger groupings like populations and communities."

"Man, inescapably is an animal, a part of the biosphere, a member of the complex of organisms that carry on the living process on the surface of our planet. To get perspective on his own problems, to find the significance of his own feelings, reactions and behavior, man must first achieve an understanding of the living universe as a whole and of the interrelations of its parts. With this background, he stands a better chance of determining his own goal, of finding methods of achieving it and of measuring his progress."

This is a good book to read.

B.E.J.

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