

Toronto Field Naturalists' Club

December Meeting

Monday, December 2, 1957 at 8.15 p.m.
at the
ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

<u>MOVIE NIGHT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
<u>Koala Bears</u> - shows the life and habits of these fascinating little animals	10 min.
<u>Bushland Revels</u> - a study of the Australian lyre bird	10 min.
<u>Antarctic Vigil</u> - A report on the work of scientists of the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition. Curious spectators of the scientists' movements are the various species of penguins and big sea elephants. We shall see the type of work the scientists perform, chiefly the transmission of meteorological information to Australia.	11 min.
<u>Exploring Georgian Bay</u> - Records a trip from Owen Sound along the coast of Bruce Peninsula to Tobermory. Contains close-ups of natural life.	10 min.
<u>Spruce Bog</u> - Describes conditions under which a spruce bog is formed.	23 min.
<u>Volcanoes of Hawaii</u> - dramatic photography of volcanoes in eruption.	14 min.

DECEMBER OUTING

Saturday, December 7 - Lingering migrants in Cedarvale Ravine. Meet at the north end of Boulton Drive, at the Ravine entrance at 9.00 a.m. Leader - Dr. R. M. Saunders. Boulton Drive is one short block west of Poplar Plains Road, running north from Cottingham Rd. to Roycroft Dr.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Last call for Christmas cards. We still have a very limited supply of the very attractive F.O.N. Christmas cards. They will be on sale at the December meeting. Price \$1.50 per dozen.

FEES

The time has once more arrived when we must regretfully assume that those of you who have not paid your fees (which were due in September) do not wish to receive any more copies of the Newsletter. The fees are \$2.00 per year, and may be sent to the Secretary.

President - Dr. Walter Tovell

Secretary - Mrs. J.B. Stewart
21 Millwood Road,
Ass't Secretary - Mrs. H. Robson
49 Craighurst Ave.



NEWSLETTER

Number 151

November 1957

In this issue of the Newsletter we have the pleasure of presenting accounts written by three of our most active members of trips taken by them during the past summer. Two of the trips were to Bonaventure Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, one in early July (Margaret Marsh), one in early August (Helen Lawrence). The third trip, in late July and early August, was to the New Brunswick shore, Grand Manan and Machias Seal Islands (Katherine D. Ketchum). The readers of the Newsletter will see how carefully and assiduously their fellow members keep an eye and an ear out for birds and flowers and the world of nature, and will no doubt wish that they had been along to do likewise.

"Bon Adventure"
by
Mrs. Margaret Marsh

Our holiday could be labelled, "So we went to 'Bon Adventure' Island to see the Gannets". While our week at the island was the highlight of our Maritime vacation, the whole trip was beyond all expectation, and was so despite the fact that it rained, anything from a drop to a drizzle and a downpour, for 28 out of 30 days. Only rarely was it kodachrome weather, though the sun did shine and then we could hardly bear the beauty. We lingered along the Gaspe coast two days longer than planned, just for the sort of experience we had at Rivière-au-Renard, where we drove up a steep hill and down again slowly

three times, to imprint the loveliness on our minds forever. Moreover, though it was June, it was springtime there -- early spring. Lilacs were just burgeoning, and tulips were in the bud. Along the road to the Gaspesian National Forest the bird song was unbelievably wonderful. We stopped by the bogs, or by the mountainside, listening to the full chorus of thrushes and warblers, sparrows and wrens. If one disadvantage of this time of year is the uncertain and chilly weather, one great advantage is the volume and variety of the bird song and the recapturing of spring in the verdure of forest and field.

We got our first "lifelister" just beyond Quebec City. On the shore of the St. Lawrence, beyond Lives, we stopped for the night at St. Denis à Kamarouska. Three miles from this village lives Willie LaBrie, an extremely keen and competent ornithologist; you can imagine our delight in meeting this man and in being invited to see his remarkably fine and complete collection of the birds of the area, a small museum in itself. Though our French is lamentable, by gesture and Mr. LaBrie's skill we soon were communicating, amazingly and amusingly well. We met Mr. LaBrie early next morning, and walked out along the springy turf to the edge of the salt marsh. Climbing up on the dike, we were rewarded by the sight of our "lifelister", an Acadian sharp-tailed sparrow. Mr. LaBrie had given us an exact imitation of its notes and of its distinctive flight, and the sparrow accommodatingly followed Mr. LaBrie's imitation perfectly, springing up from the reeds in an erratic flight, tossing its head back as it spluttered its song, then diving back as suddenly, to vanish again.

I was very disappointed that the wind and rain made it impossible to get to the Basque or Razade Islands near Trois Pistoles. However, our compensation came when we saw hundreds of eiders along the river, and flotillas of fluffy young with one or two females at the lovely harbour at Bec, while at St. Flavie we stood within a foot of a company of spectacular eider males, and of ravens, double-crested cormorants, and pigeon guillemots. We noted that along the main highway, or not far down any side road, we could stop and look and listen to such birds as olive-sided flycatchers, vireos and warblers, in a satisfying if sometimes confusing heyday of song.

In retrospect my memories of Bonaventure Island are not first and foremost those of my observation of the colony of gannets. It's true, there were 20,000 of these birds to be seen intimately, some as close as four feet. Sometimes we would find a spot far enough from the stench and the din of the colony, and watch the flight of thousands upon thousands of these great sea birds. What a fascinating pattern it was: gannets above you with the blue sky outlining their wing span; scores of gannets at varying distances out at sea coming nearer and nearer, each landing by its own nest, and then tilting bills in a mating

display; hundreds of gannets making you giddy as they nonchalantly lived out their breeding period on dizzily precipitous cliffs; thousands upon thousands of gannets squawking raucously at all others but their own mate, or at the herring gulls, who try to steal the gannets' fish. The gannets, we found, are belligerent not only to birds but to all comers, including bird observers and photographers. I found myself statistically and factually absorbed by this colony, and I was trigger-happy with my camera, trying to take endless pictures, yet there are many other birds than gannets at Bonaventure, and flowers as well as birds.

We made several trips around the island, for it is only then that you can observe all the cliffs with the sea birds hanging over every yard of the precipices. Once we had the good fortune to go with John Paget, a native son of the island, who is the official game warden. He has a magnetic personality, a remarkable mind and a vast fund of accurate knowledge, so that it is a privilege to go on the expedition with him. Another time we went at dawn with Walter Maloney, a lobster fisherman. This was a trip made in fog and rising sun, when the world was without form and void. Soon we were encircled with countless thousands of sea birds since we were able to cross the still water right up to the rocks which on an ordinary day would wreck a boat. Then we could see murres and auks sliding into the sea like little clowns, and the puffins, of which there were seven pairs, peering from their burrows, as we looked up and up at the colonies of cliff dwellers. We found ourselves living moments of delight watching these birds, as at the spot where we could heave to and watch a family of dapper razor-billed auks in a deep crevasse that penetrated the rocky cliffs, and alongside the auks -- in the same block, so to speak -- some murres, one of which was "spectacled". We cannot but feel affection for birds, and to these we lost our hearts.

An advantage of birdwatching here this early in July is that you can observe murres and auks nesting whereas by August they will have migrated, though, as for gannets, by July 6th we had only seen ten chicks in all that throng. What sad and wobbly creatures they were! The downy and more photogenic young may be observed later in the season.

The trails on Bonaventure gave us unexpected moments of deep delight, for the forest was carpeted with early spring flowers, with bunchberries, ferns and orchids, and the Tennessee warblers were so numerous and insistent with their loud songs that I found myself telling them to be quiet so I could hear the other warblers, the baybreasts, blackpolls and mornings. Indeed the forest throbbed with the calls of the northern woods along all thirteen miles of trail from the dock to the gannet cliffs. There are two other trails of about the same length, one leading up the steep rugged hillside along the coast line, where

at the peak you peer down upon nesting herring gulls and kittiwakes, the other following the path through the local settlement of thirteen families. Nests of pigeon guillemots and cliff swallows dot the rock ledges near the road which leads past John Paget's house to the cove near the gannet colony. There at the cove we had a picnic one day, each of us having a lobster that we had caught earlier in the day.

I loved the tastes, the sights, the smell, the touch and the sounds of Bonaventure Island, an island carved by wind and water. The view from our cabin toward Percé was always lovely -- in fog and rain -- in wave and calm -- at dawn and in moonlight; it was loveliest of all when, after a sudden electrical storm, a double rainbow encircled the island and spilled into the sea. Such are some of my memories of an unforgettable trip.

To Bonaventure Island
by
Helen Lawrence

On the afternoon of August 6th, Isobel Price (from Grimsby) and I stood on the dock at Percé and looked towards Bonaventure Island three miles off shore. We gazed at the rocky cliffs of this spruce covered island which slopes from a height of 400 feet gently southward -- somewhat the shape of a huge, dark whale.

At length, our gear was loaded into Mr. Sydney Maloney's small boat and we departed for the Island Tourist Lodge. Overhead, countless herring gulls screamed hungrily as a fresh catch of cod was unloaded. Double-crested cormorants flew up and down the channel and black guillemots bobbed in the swells. There were several quite well-developed young guillemots as well as adults. As we cruised past the famous pierced rock, we looked upwards to see the nesting grounds of the herring gulls and the cormorants on the top, well over 200 feet above the water. As we approached the Bonaventure dock, we were quite awed by the huge tumbled boulders and the forbidding cliffs of conglomerate and sandstone. Truly this is an island where men have really struggled to establish their dwellings and fish houses, many of which are now boarded up and deserted.

The whole island, with a circumference of about six miles, was ours to explore and to enjoy. The residents, now numbering scarcely more than a dozen, made us feel most welcome and we soon felt ourselves a part of their peaceful, unhurried life. Even the weather was kind, as Mr. Maloney had promised for August, with warm, sunny days, gentle winds and marvelously

fresh clean air. The night temperatures were usually in the low fifties, but that was a good excuse for lighting our little stove and basking in its warmth.

There were great numbers of birds everywhere; in the woods, in the alder thickets, in the grassy meadows and of course on the ledges. I was reminded of Point Pelee in migration time. Unfortunately for us, the season of song was just about over, and although we spent six or seven hours in the field every day, only a dozen actual bird songs were heard. So we had to accept the challenge of chasing the flitting shapes through the dense spruce boughs, resulting in a very slow-growing list. Consequently, we really worked to arrive at a total of 63 species. Many of the young warblers were on their own by this time, and it seemed as if most of them were yellowish green with wing bars and white spots in their tails. However, a few adults were still feeding young, so there were good views of redstarts, black-throated greens, blackpolls, baybreasted, myrtles, magnolias and Tennessees. The woods seemed full of their lisping call notes. Red-breasted nuthatches were busy everywhere, but no white-breasteds were in evidence, nor any chickadees. Our only woodpecker was a flicker!! Crossbills, both red and white-winged, and pine siskins were always busy opening last year's heavy crop of cones. Male pine grosbeaks were lacking, but we did see a few females and heard their calls.

Barn, bank and a few cliff swallows swooped over the fields, but as there are no wires for perching, they rested in the willows or all over the roofs.

The hawks were quite spectacular and didn't seem to mind our close proximity to them. Female and young marsh hawks were there in considerable numbers, gliding low over the meadows and at the edges of the clearings in search of the numerous mice. There was a pair of red-shouldered hawks at the south end of the island, but our most noteworthy experience was when a goshawk darted past almost at arm's length as we stood silently beside some young spruce trees. For quite some time his route seemed to parallel ours, but he kept several trees between us and him. Then, tiring of these human interlopers, he rose to greater heights and flapped and sailed over to the mainland. One day we actually had five large hawks in our binoculars at one time. They seemed to be having some altercation in the tree tops at the edge of a distant clearing.

Of course, the sea birds were of supreme interest. On a beautifully calm day, Mr. Maloney took us around the island in his boat which was small enough to nose right in under the cliffs. At the herring gullery on the north west edge of the island, numerous well-grown dusky young were standing about. The king eiders had finished nesting and we saw only one adult; the harlequin ducks, alas, were not in evidence, but the kittiwakes

still had young in their nests. Murres and razor-billed auks were fairly numerous on the ledges, and we were thrilled to see four puffins. But it was a magnificent sight to see the thousands of gannets on the cliffs, with hundreds of them wheeling in the air against the blue sky, the sun pointing up the contrast of their snowy whiteness and their black wing tips. And to think that when we walked to the ledges at the top, we could stand only a few feet away from these beautiful creatures! We took this 1-3/4 mile walk several times, and never tired of watching the gannets at their nests. It is a fantastic sight to see how they have taken over the field at the top, and have cleared the turf away so that they can nest on the exposed sandstone. The air was full of their guttural "currach currach" and the cackling goose-like sound given when one parent returned from a flight. The greeting ceremony, given by the adults, when they rubbed bills and caressed the length of the creamy necks, was beautiful to see. By this time, the young birds were almost as large as the adults, but still covered with soft white down, and quite photogenic. Some of them would be sprawled quite inelegantly in slumber on the rocks, others would beg for food, or just sit contentedly by the parent bird and watch us intently. One afternoon we surprised a red fox who seemed about to raid a gannet's nest, but he hastily withdrew at sight of us. Apparently foxes and mice are the only mammals resident on the island. The game warden shoots the foxes which are a great menace to the colony of Leach's petrels. Here and there in the woods, we found many petrel wings, -- all that remained after a fox's repast.

Botanically too, Bonaventure Island is very interesting. The spruce trees, draped with usnea lichen were beautiful in themselves, while the ground was a carpet of vegetation. There were mats of the trailing vinelike plants of the twinflower, with even a few blooms left. Starflower, Canada mayflower, enchanter's nightshade, goldthread and Dalibarda were there in profusion. Several varieties of pyrola were at their best, and the little one-flowered pyrola (Moneses uniflora) was common. Indian pipes were pushing through the ground everywhere in the woods. Heart-leaved twayblade was in bloom, as was rattlesnake plantain and the large coral-root. And all of these in quantity! We also found the Habeneria hyperborea and the green adder's mouth orchid.

Bunchberries formed a carpet of red fruit and green leaves, intermingled with the three-leaved cinquefoil (Potentilla tridentata) which was in bloom. In the meadows we were intrigued with the profusion of that member of the lily family, Zygadenus chloranthus. Shrubby cinquefoil was a mass of yellow blossom, and the tiny eyebright dotted the fields. Everywhere we walked through the grasses, we had the accompaniment of the yellow rattles. Cow parsnips reared their coarseness above the vetch, Canada hawkweed, and caraway, and were a typical part of the scenery. Harebells, beach pea and clumps of the common

ox-eye daisy bloomed in the crevices of the reddish rocks, creating a lovely effect.

At the south end of the island, where the spruces and balsams were more stunted and windswept, the ground was a mass of cranberries turning red in the August sunshine and growing in close proximity with the little crowberry (Empetrum nigrum).

Among the ferns, we found oak, bulblet bladder, spinulose shield, long beech, interrupted, and a few nice clumps of holly fern.

Our scheduled week was extended to ten days, but still we were loathe to leave this paradise for naturalists. Here, there is no man-made entertainment. Only the glories of the out-of-doors, the pounding of the surf, the roaring of the wind, the crying of the gulls, the pink and gold of sunsets over Mount St. Anne and the rugged Gaspe coast, topped off, perhaps, by the moon rising over the dark spruces, or the play of the Aurora Borealis in the enormous expanse of sky. But what more could a naturalist desire?

A TRIP TO GRAND MANAN, N.B.

by

Katherine D. Ketchum

After spending the summer of 1956 entirely in Ontario, my husband and I felt the urge to explore new territory in 1957, and on July 22nd we left Toronto by car for the island of Grand Manan in the Bay of Fundy. That day cloudy weather and a strong west wind changed our minds about swimming at Presqu'ile Beach, but we ate our lunch there and watched hundreds of common terns flying over the waves and landing on the beach. Already many were full-grown young with incomplete black caps. There was a great assembly of gulls on an offshore island and a few killdeer and small "peeps" on the sand. During a coffee break in the park at Napanee we saw six or eight cedar waxwings fluttering back and forth over a little waterfall and plunging into bushes on either side. We wondered if they were flycatching, but could see no insects.

We crossed into New York State by the fine Thousand Islands Bridge, pausing to take pictures of the granite isles far below, and spent a restless night in Watertown, with unceasing traffic below our window. By mid-morning on the 23rd, however, we were able to enjoy the beautiful drive through the Adirondacks. Near Lake Placid we turned aside to Chubb Swamp, which Pettingill recommends in his Guide to Bird Finding, and followed a rough trail

through a drowned woodland. Unfortunately, it was mid-afternoon and no birds stirred except a startled parula and a magnolia warbler. The most numerous birds seen from the car that day were cedar waxwings, tree and barn swallows. We spent the night in a charming old inn at Essex, N.Y., on the western shore of Lake Champlain, where hardly a car went by all night.

Next morning we had only to cross the road for a 7 a.m. dip in the warm lake water, and duty bade us seize the chance, though the sky was grey and lowering. Waiting in line for the tiny ferry to Vermont was not tedious, for a house on each side of us was adorned with a nest of cliff swallows. Perhaps the birds were preparing for a second brood, for one was building up the free edge of its semicircular cradle with fresh pellets of mud. This was a new bird for the year, and one we see too seldom in Ontario. From Burlington we traversed Vermont and a narrow bit of New Hampshire, through picturesque mountains, farms, and resort towns. Our only complaint was of a heavy shower that fell just as all our luncheon materials were spread on the grass, but that experience is hardly unique. We tossed everything into the car and tidied up the mess when the sun came out later. So on into Maine, where the mountains continued, but the motels and resorts mysteriously vanished. Rather late we found a somewhat discouraged tourist home, where the clothes cupboard was a metal gym locker, the window blind came away in one's hand, and washing accommodation was at a premium. Without regret I rose at 6.30 on the 25th and had a marvellous walk up a hilly road that ran along a hedge and into a wood. Olivebacked thrushes were singing there, chestnutsided warblers and yellowthroats were feeding their young, an alder flycatcher called "Fitz-hew!" and an indigo bunting, a bluebird, and a Baltimore oriole lent colour to the scene--all birds that one would expect in such a habitat, but pleasant to meet 500 miles from home. Near Bangor we again turned aside to a bog, only to find that heat had roused the mosquitoes and quietened the birds. Later, however, we did see a pair of ravens among the endless wooded hills of northern Maine. After dinner we drove from Calais along the lovely shores of Passamaquoddy Bay to Lancaster, N.B., to be near St. John for next morning's ferry. It was cold, dark, and suddenly very late, for clocks advance an hour when one crosses into New Brunswick. There were rows of motels and every one full, but, after almost despairing, we found a desolate-looking cabin free, and a stove in the cabin, and a kettle on the stove--and a landlady who offered us tea-bags! Warmed and cheerful again, we finally dropped to sleep.

On July 26th we nervously watched our car picked up and swung bodily onto the deck of the Grand Manan III at St. John, and then settled ourselves for the three hour trip. The wind was cool but the sky was clear, and it was pleasant to watch the wooded coast recede as we nosed out into the open. At St. John harbour we saw black-backed gulls, and presumed they were summer residents there. Far out from shore I saw plunging into the water a great white bird with black wing tips. It could only have been a gannet; it was a long way from the present breeding

areas in the St. Lawrence Gulf, though this species does range this far south in summer. Little flocks of terns were fishing here and there; there was a chance that they were Arctic Terns, but we dared not list them yet.

Grand Manan, about 15 miles long by 7 wide, is the largest island of an archipelago which belongs geographically to Maine but politically to New Brunswick. The eastern shore is low and cut by many coves and harbours, while the western side is formed by cliffs rising 50 to 400 feet above high tide mark. Fogs and ocean currents keep the island cool for its latitude, so that it grows twinflowers, bakeapple berries, and forests of spruce. Brown-headed chickadees and ravens are found on land; eider ducks nest nearby, and lead their families to the shores to feed. Moreover, Arctic terns, puffins, and razor-billed auks attain almost their southern breeding limit in this area. Lobster and herring fishing occupy almost the whole population, and one may be fortunate enough to see men "seining a weir" -- using a huge purse net to empty a fish trap of its shimmering hordes.

We lodged at "The Anchorage" with the L'Aventure family of Toronto, who are kind and attentive hosts, keep a wonderful table, and -- most important -- know what birds are about and can direct birdwatchers to them.

Flowering plants seem more vivid in colour by the sea, and evening primroses grew in startling yellow clumps, and wild roses made a pink hedge along the road to the beach as we hurried down after dinner to see if there were any returning shorebirds. A flock of semipalmated sandpipers and flower were running mouselike at the water's edge, and female eider ducks searched for food among the rockweed, their tiny ducklings bobbing after them. We had seen no eiders since our 1952 visit to the Farne Islands, where they nested in St. Cuthbert's shrine.

Warblers had sung and nested on the island, we learned, but by July 27th they were quiet and elusive, though I did see a yellow palm warbler -- and a most decided yellow he was -- in the bushes by a swampy beach. A rough climb up the hill behind our cabin was rewarded with a brown-headed chickadee, another bird I rarely see at home. A red-breasted nuthatch was found near the same spot, while below our cabin whitethroated sparrows scratched and olive-backed thrushes walked daintily on the carpet of spruce needles. The flycatcher family was represented by the alder, living in alder shrubs, also near the beach. We did see ravens in lonely spots, and sought long and earnestly for sharptailed sparrows, but all we could find were innumerable savannahs, more than I had ever seen before. Nearly every fisherman's house fronted on a tiny flower garden and boasted birdhouses -- not one, but six or eight often -- and great numbers of tree and barn swallows flying about. When asked why they had so many birdhouses one practical fisherman replied,

"The birds keep down the flies."

Several times we climbed Willow Hill in search of a goshawk that had nested there, but always drew a blank until the owner of a setter named "Jane" said that she and the dog would find him for us. The hawk, it seemed, could not stand the sight of Jane. We climbed then to a clearing in the spruces, where Jane was released and, sure enough, we soon heard harsh cries and got several glimpses of the huge angry bird as he flew scolding from tree to tree. That day, too, we drove to a little bog where a few sundews, pitcher plants, and Calopogon still bloomed. There we sampled the flavour of some bakeapple berries missed by the islanders when they gathered them for jam.

One fine morning we crossed to the west side of the island, made a breathtaking descent down the gravel road, and found ourselves at Dark Harbour, a quiet stretch of water now landlocked by a gravel bar. Here the islanders come to gather dulse, an edible seaweed nostalgically relished by exiles from the Maritimes. In this habitat we saw a king-fisher and a stiff-winged spotted sandpiper, whilst by the little stream that fell from cliff to sea a hermit thrush accidentally exposed itself to view. The enclosed harbour was warm enough for comfortable swimming, in sharp contrast with the numbing water elsewhere, which we entered rarely and only out of bravado.

That afternoon our hosts had arranged a trip among the nearby islands in the Bonny Queen, skippered by Gleason Green. We threaded our way at high tide through narrow channels which would be dry in a few hours, among fish traps where cormorants dived and black guillemots floated. We landed on Long Island where stood heavily-built wharves, fish houses and barns, all now deserted except for a large tom cat which looked suspiciously sleek. Exploring an old stable we found eight or ten female eiders lying dead on the floor and circles of down that resembled nests. Wondering how they could all have died together I saw the head of the wild cat peering through a crack, and the mystery was all too well explained. We strolled waist deep through the neglected hay pasture and then through a spruce wood to reach the open Bay of Fundy, bright blue in the afternoon sun. On returning we found the tide had fallen and the tug had anchored offshore. Captain Green rowed us out six at a time in his narrow little dory, telling his more nervous passengers: "If she wants to roll, just let her roll." The Anchorage people had brought sandwiches and cakes, and these, with hot tea from the galley, were much enjoyed during the sail home.

For several days heavy fog rather hampered sightseeing, and we feared we would have to leave without making

the trip of all trips for birders -- to Machias Seal Island, 20 miles southwest over the open sea. But luck was with us, and on our last day the fog rolled away, and the sun shone on a glassy smooth sea. We left Grand Harbour at 10 with Captain Green, who today was not only skipper but cook, leaving navigation to his little grandson, while he made a fish chowder that was a food for gods as well as for birders. Hot, thick and savoury, it was ladled out to us on deck when we anchored off Machias Seal, and few could resist extra helpings. "It's the butter that does it," we were told, and there was indeed a film of butter on top, but who could count calories with appetites sharpened by the sea air?

Petrels appeared now and then on the two hour sail, Leach's being the breeding species here, and once a single dark, long-winged bird fluttered low over the sea. "That's a haglin," said the skipper, but we thought it a sooty shearwater. Both these were "lifers" on my list. Black guillemots were frequent, but these we also saw near Grand Manan.

Machias Seal Island is rocky, treeless, and uninhabited except for the lighthouse and fog-signal crews and the nesting seabirds. As we neared it hundreds of terns filled the air and a few puffins buzzed about, their red legs angling comically out behind. Landed from the rolling dory, we scrambled over enormous seaweed-covered boulders to the top of the island. The terns screamed and dived at us, and now we could see that their bills were red to the tip -- they were indeed Arctic terns. We hurried across the islet to see the puffins perching on the rocks. They easily took flight and flew off, but gradually returned to sit with their bills full of fish, all turned crosswise, hanging down like moustaches. A few hundred common terns also nest there, easily identified by their black-tipped bills. Young Richard Calder, son of one of the lighthouse staff, reached deep into a cranny and brought up a dazed young puffin, and later a razor-billed auk, and held them for photographs. He could not find us a Leach's petrel, though many have their burrows here. Some shorebirds, back from the tundra perhaps, added to the day's pleasure: ruddy turnstones, dowitchers, and a few of the usual "peeps".

Next morning, August 3rd, we had to leave for home, having seen 56 species during our week's stay -- fewer than the birdwatchers had tallied in early July, but not too bad for this period. The return trip was marred by mysterious and recurring car trouble over which we may draw a veil. The first repairs kept us half a day at St. Andrews, where we saw on a mud flat two black-bellied plover, one in breeding plumage and the other in pale fall attire. By a meandering stream in New York we caught sight of two green herons. Near Massena we inspected the work on the St. Lawrence seaway -- huge dams and excavations replacing cattail marsh and farm. There we

saw one mourning dove, the only one of the whole trip. When we arrived home we had driven 2143 miles, seen 90 species of birds, 16 of them new for 1957 and two for my life. Perhaps the sharptailed sparrows that we could not find will some day draw us back for another "Trip to Grand Manan."

Much has been spoken and written about the magnificent park system in and around the city of Chicago, and rightly so. The way in which that city has developed its lake front so as to preserve the natural beauty is world famous. Fewer people outside Chicago know about the equally fine Forest Preserves of Cook County that ring the city with a greenbelt. The remarkably intelligent foresight and will that created this greenbelt merits all the praise it gets, and should be used as a model in many other places.

Our readers will be interested to know that in the Forest Preserves the protection and study of nature are given the most earnest attention, with the result that countless people are introduced to wild nature with great success inside or within easy reach of the Chicago Metropolitan Area.

As an example of the work that is being done, we print here, with the gracious consent and cooperation of the Conservation Department of the Cook County Forest Preserve, their Nature Bulletin No. 499, published on September 21, 1957. The Bulletin speaks for itself, and it speaks with a firm voice of what can be done to encourage interest in nature in a heavily urbanized region.

Nature Bulletin No. 499
September 21, 1957

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Daniel Ryan, President

THE LOBELIAS

Floyd Swink
Senior Naturalist

David H. Thompson
Senior Naturalist

In these early fall days before October's killing frosts ring down the curtain on our 1957 wildflower show, it is good to get out in the open and see what blossoms take part in the last act. Not the stars of the performance, and not lost in the massed chorus of color either, the Lobelias play brilliant minor roles.

Colonies of the most vivid of the Lobelias, the cardinal flower, can be seen in some of the wetlands of the Palos forest preserves and in the big swamp at Indiana Dunes State Park. It is a perennial, two feet high or taller, topped by clusters of rich vermillion blossoms. The name is taken from its supposed resemblance in color to the famous hat worn by cardinals of the Roman Catholic Church.

This is one of several common flowers with elongated flower-tubes and orange or red colors attractive to hummingbirds upon which they depend for pollination. Other examples are the columbine, the trumpet honeysuckle, the trumpet creeper, the orange jewelweed, the scarlet sage, and the Oswego tea. In the cardinal flower the stamen tips are united to form a tube around the pistil -- a tube so long that the feathery head of the bird brushes off pollen while probing with its long beak and tongue for the nectar deep inside. Each flower is followed in autumn by a capsule containing innumerable seeds, among the smallest of any native wildflower -- smaller than a mustard seed.

The great blue Lobelia, another late bloomer, is the cardinal flower's twin sister. In the Chicago region it is found frequently in open marshy ground and along moist stream banks. Its numerous tubular flowers, bright blue touched with white, are borne on a long leafy spike. Just as red and orange attract hummingbirds, blue flowers attract bees and, in this case, the bumblebee carries the pollen. Almost 300 years ago this species was taken to England where it has been cultivated and hybridized with other Lobelias to produce several varieties of highly prized garden flowers. Another, the little annual Edging Lobelia is grown in hanging baskets, window boxes and in borders.

The one economically important Lobelia is the Indian Tobacco found in dry field and woods. Its leaves and seeds contain a substance poisonous to livestock, called lobeline, which is chemically similar to nicotine. Because of this similarity it is helpful in controlling the craving for nicotine in people trying to quit the tobacco habit. This substance affects the heart and blood pressure, and is used to relieve bronchitis and asthma -- hence another name, Asthma Weed. The dried leaves, mixed with those of the Jimson weed, are made into cigarettes and smoked by asthma sufferers.

A species with delicate blue flowers, the Bog Lobelia, prefers wet alkaline soils such as the marshes of the Illinois Beach State Park north of Waukegan. While most kinds are associated with the latter half of our blooming season, another species, the little Pale Spiked Lobelia, adds a touch of light blue to the prairies in late spring.

Over the world there are hundreds of species of plants

belonging to the Lobelia family. They are characterized by acrid milky juice, irregular tubular flowers and seeds in pods. Perhaps the most bizarre kind is a tree in the equatorial mountains of Africa, which reaches a height of 25 feet with a flower spike six feet long.

They are named after Matthias de l'Obell, a Flemish herbalist.

BOOK REVIEW - The Bird Watcher's Anthology. By Roger Tory Peterson. (Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1957. In Canada, Longmans, Green and Co., Toronto.) Pp. xv, 401. Price \$8.50.

What is it that makes bird watchers tick? What makes them get up early, travel miles to see another bird? And keep on doing it year after year all their lives. How is it that their enthusiasm for this pursuit is so infectious? Really, it's spreading at a tremendous rate, this fervor of birdwatching, and it's very, very catching. Why so? If you want the answers, dig into this new book by Roger Tory Peterson.

A book for birdwatchers with Peterson's name on the cover, and with Peterson's drawings inside hardly needs any other recommendation, so thoroughly has this author of the birdwatcher's bible established himself in the minds and hearts of birdwatchers everywhere.

This book is an anthology, a selection from the writings of birdwatchers all around the birdwatching world. Peterson has introduced his choices, and the sections of the book with remarks or selections from his own writings, but the whole plan is to let the birdwatchers speak for themselves, answering the questions we raised above, not directly, but with samples of their own enthusiastic pursuit of this fascinating business of watching birds. The whole body of selections has, however, been adroitly organized in such a way as to show how the spark of interest ignites, how it develops through many stages to become a whole-hearted and adventurous introduction, a never-ending introduction into the beauties and secrets of nature. The choice has been made with excellent judgment and taste (and I hope I may not be accused of speaking about myself in saying this, since I was very happy to find that Peterson had been kind enough to include a few pages from one of my own books in the collection). This is the sort of book to have on your library table or beside your bed, to dip into whenever you have the inclination. And, if you don't emerge "infected" I'll be very surprised. Have a look, especially, at Peterson's drawings introducing the sections. They alone convey the idea of the book, the feeling for this wonderful interest

which he shares to the full. Indeed, who embodies it more completely or more intensely today than Roger Tory Peterson?

This is a beautiful book about a vividly interesting subject. Of course, I'm prejudiced, but my reaction is, "Who could fail to be caught up by the beauty and enthusiasm that fills these pages?"

Richard M. Saunders,

Editor.