



The
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EASTER LILY

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SATIN FLOWER

A Foreword:

It is with the heartiest pleasure I address the members of the new Natural History Society in the first copy of the Magazine. May it be the precursor of a long line;

The need of an association of all who are interested in the study and enjoyment of nature has been felt by many of late years, and I have often been asked by new-comers for the whereabouts of our Natural History Society and heard them express surprise that none existed. But the need has not been confined to them. Most of us seek the companionship of common interest and helpful intercourse and are pleased to find it in an organization whose members find release from the pressure of a mechanical world in the observation and study of our natural and aboriginal environment. And indeed in these days of private and public pressure there is a genuine and thoroughly defensible relief in the observation of wild life in its various forms.

I am sure I speak for all our members when I say we look forward to many happy and profitable hours both out-doors and in-doors in our particular group or groups and in the larger forum of the Society. Our success depends on the enthusiasm of each flowing into the common stream. We have about us a beautiful countryside and a varied shoreline to delight the hearts of naturalists. We hope to learn to know these better ourselves and to share our learning with many others.

Robert Connell,
 President.

Our First Meeting:

To those of us who were originally responsible for calling this first meeting of the Society it has been a great pleasure to note the response received. By the number that attended the meeting in the Museum and by their enthusiasm, it is evident that a Society of this type has long been needed in this district.

Dr. Clifford Carl gave a very interesting address on "Wildlife and Man", (a synopsis appears on the following page) and the thanks of the Society are also due to Mr. C. D. Ferris for the two excellent films depicting animals preying on one another, and curious forms of marine life, which were shown.

The meeting passed the draft Constitution with few minor alterations. It is not necessary here to give the full text of the Constitution, but for the benefit of those who were absent, a few of the major points might be given:

It was decided to have one regular meeting monthly, except in the holiday months of June, July and August; (when possible, on the second Tuesday of the month.)

The Annual Meeting to be in March of each year, when Officers for the ensuing year will be appointed.

The Executive of the Society to consist of the elected officers together with the Chairmen of the various Groups.

At present the Groups consist of the following,- Botany, Entomology, Geology, Marine Biology, Zoology, Any member can join one or more Groups in which he is interested. It is the intention to hold field days and meetings of these Groups, apart from the regular monthly meetings. Some of these Groups have already met to arrange future activities.

WILDLIFE AND MAN

Summary of address given at the meeting of the Society, March 14th, 1944.

The wild creatures which are found in nature do not live in peace as is sometimes popularly supposed. On the contrary, in order to survive they must constantly struggle against conditions within their environment or against other living organisms which may be either competitors or predators. The result is that the association and relationships between animals and plants in any one community are very complex and it is only by piecing together a multitude of apparently disconnected observations that a pattern finally becomes visible.

One type of association is the form of a "food chain" which begins with plants, the basic source of all food, and progresses through the herbivores to the carnivores and ends with the larger flesh-eating mammals or birds. In such an association the organisms at the beginning of the "chain" are small and exist in large numbers; toward the end of the chain the size of the individuals in each group increases while the numbers decrease. Many such food chains exist in each community and all may be interconnected.

Each species of living thing tends to increase and is held in check by various forces such as climatic conditions, supply of food and presence or absence of enemies. As a result, the number of any species is constantly changing and in turn the numbers of animals or plants associated with it in the food chain fluctuate with it. Therefore, there is no such thing as "balance of nature"; the associations between animals and plants are not static, as implied by the word "balance" but rather are dynamic. The chief characteristic of life is constant change.

Man interferes greatly with the complex associations that exist in nature by clearing extensive areas of land, by killing off large numbers of animals for food and by the indiscriminate slaughtering of predators. In order to prevent certain extermination of some species and serious depletion in others it is necessary to carry out some sort of government control.

In this conservation work, organizations such as this newly formed Society can play an important part. Our activities can be directed along three main lines. First, we can act as collectors of information concerning the wildlife of our Province, information which may be of use later to officials in formulating their policies of control. Second, we can function in an advisory capacity in matters concerning the intelligent use of our wildlife. Third, we can aid in educating the public, by lectures, demonstrations and informative articles both for school children and adults so that they will come to appreciate the value which exists in the world of nature around them.

I feel that we in this district are indeed fortunate in having such a wealth of natural history material round about us and that we will derive much pleasure in its study. At the same time we have before us unlimited opportunities of putting knowledge so gained to some useful purpose. In many ways the activities of our Society are commencing at an opportune time.

G. Clifford Carl.

Illustration

Front Cover.

EASTER LILY

Erythronium oregonum - Applegate

Each of our outstanding spring flowers is a matchless peer of its realm; to compare is to fail utterly to see the individual character that will bear no comparison. So with the regal Easter Lily to give it its most appropriate local designation. The snowy candelabra of its pendant bells upon a background of brown mottled dark green leaves, as they gaily bedeck an open woodland glade is a sight to bring joy and gladness to all who behold.

At one time abundant everywhere in our vicinity they are now confined to secluded areas beyond reach of the too familiarly inclined who perhaps unwittingly destroy what should be left for others to enjoy also.

The Easter Lily arises from a deep-seated bulb which takes from 5 to 7 years to reach the flowering stage. A wealth of seed is produced which if allowed to ripen will take care of future needs in the way of flowers, so that loss from aging bulbs is replaced by vigorous young stock. The bulbs at one time afforded food for the Indians in their efforts to obtain substance from their surroundings, fortunately for the lilies this is not necessary now-a-days.

The Easter Lily as specified does not have a wide distribution in B. C., chiefly on Vancouver Island and the lower west coast of the mainland.

Other species of the genus occur over much wider territory; in these the flowers are yellow and not white.

Illustration (Page 2).

SATIN FLOWER:

Olsynium grandiflorum (Douge) Raf.

The very word satin suggests a softness and smoothness that well fits into the springtime scheme of nature in contrast to the harsh days of winter.

As with most of our early blooms the Satin Flower gets its initial energy from the stored up food in the tiny bulbs that have lain dormant since the preceding summer days.

First to appear are the tell-tale clump of rush-like leaves, soon to be followed by the nodding buds that anon will burst into the rich purple garb of the expanded flower; telling all and sundry that spring has indeed arrived. It delights to grow on the ledges and terraces of steep rocky outcrops and hillsides as if luring us to fill our lungs with the fresh spring air of its haunts.

"Quickly come and quickly go" is the rule of its flowering, for the bloom once expanded soon withers and shrinks, only to be replaced the next day by another fast-maturing bud.

Few of its contemporaries can surpass its lissom airiness as it swings and flutters in the breeze.

The Satin Flower is a West Coast species and is to be found from B.C. - California and Nevada.

(These descriptions of the Illustrations are by Mr. G. A. Hardy.)

Illustration (Page 11).

FALSE LADY'S SLIPPER

Calypso bulbosa (L) Oakes

One of our most charming spring flowers, it will soon be appearing with the dainty grace in the cool mossy forests of its choice.

It was originally dedicated to the goddess Calypso whose elusiveness baffled all human eyes, and with the name of borealis or "Nymph of the North."

Since the days of Linnaeus its affinities with the genus *Cypripedium* - the true Lady's Slipper, has undergone revision in keeping with more detailed studies, thereby losing some of the romantic implications of its first christening.

Nevertheless its appealing beauty is as great as ever, not a little emphasized by the silent solitudes of its woodland haunts. There, from an ivory-like bulb cradled in mossy seclusion it puts forth its single leaf blade of richest green and softest texture, followed by the single exquisite bloom that has few rivals in uniqueness of form, delicacy of coloration, and inimitable fragrance. A combination of characters alas, that often results in the wanton destruction of a floral treasure whose only fault has been to make us happy.

The False Lady's Slipper doubly merits our solicitude for its welfare, for it is a love wanderer from its nearest of kin in the East Indies, an alien, almost in our midst but a widely travelled one, for it occurs in northern Europe, to Lapland, Russia and across our own continent, where ever the condition exists for its successful growth, and where if given the opportunity, it expresses its appreciation by a lavish display of its charms.

Next Monthly Meeting, ----- 11th April, 1944 -----

This meeting will be held in the Reading Room of the Provincial Library, when an address will be given by Mr. W. H. Mathews, of the Dept. of Mines, on "glaciation in South-western British Columbia." This should prove of great interest.

Any member who has any ideas or suggestions for the improvement of the Society is cordially invited to bring them before the meeting. This is your Society and only by your co-operation can its success be assured.

This also applies to this Magazine. We hope this first issue will meet with your approval, any contributions or material to make it more attractive would be greatly appreciated by the editor.

Note: The annual subscription is now due and should be paid to the Secretary-Treasurer:-
Mrs. Kenneth Watson,
42 Linden Avenue,
Victoria, B.C.

It is very necessary that these dues be paid promptly as the Society and Magazine are entirely dependent on them for support.

In closing -- A hearty invitation is extended to new members; we would like to see a number at this next meeting. So, to present members, try and get others interested.

Editor.



LADY SLIPPER

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NOTICE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Society will be held in
READING ROOM OF PROVINCIAL LIBRARY, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
at 8 p.m. on Tuesday the 11th April, 1944