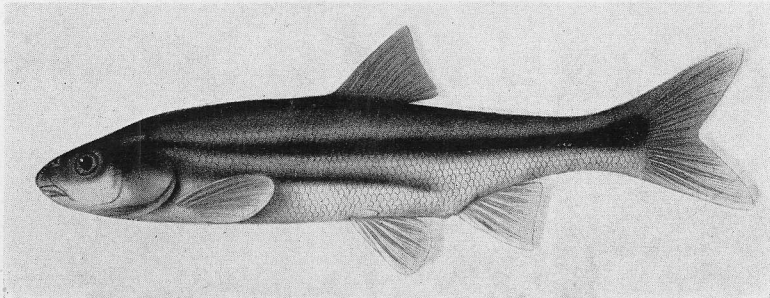


The
**VICTORIA
NATURALIST**

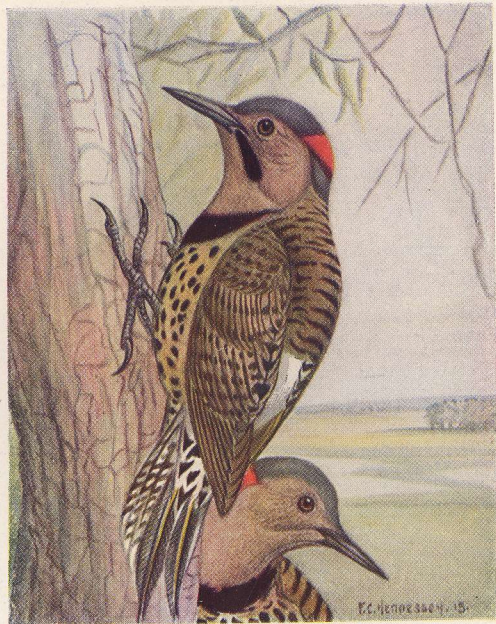
Vol. 11, No. 6

December, 1954



Chub or peamouth (*Mylocheilus caurinus*).

Published by the
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Victoria, B.C.



A. Yellow-shafted Flicker; scale, $\frac{1}{4}$
Male
Female



B. Pileated Woodpecker; scale, $\frac{1}{7}$
Female Male

THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

Published by
THE VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Vol. 11, No. 6

DECEMBER 1954

CHUB OR PEAMOUTH

This member of the minnow family which attains a length of 10 inches is commonly distributed throughout lakes and streams in the Columbia, Fraser and Skeena systems in British Columbia. Chub are also present in Holden Lake and Quennell Lake near Nanaimo and in Kennedy Lake and Cecilia Lake on the west coast of Vancouver Island.

While most minnows are entirely restricted to fresh water this particular species seems to be able to enter salt water occasionally or for short periods which may explain its presence on Vancouver Island.

In Washington and Oregon chub are of some importance as food but they are rarely used in British Columbia.

G. C. Carl.

A LATE FLIGHT OF TERMITES

On October 15th an unusual flight of termites was observed while travelling by car along the Island Highway. Throughout the length of the road from Parksville south to Langford these flying insects were seen in numbers except while passing through the business sections of the urban areas. Along the roadway through cut-over areas and particularly over the Malahat they were especially abundant. The weather was fair and relatively warm; the time of day was the period 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Normally these insects are seen in greatest numbers in late August and early September and their hour of greatest flight is at sundown.

G. C. Carl.

FOR THE BIRDS

Many have tried to explain this pastime of bird watching. A friend of mine in Wisconsin, Joseph Hickey, says that bird watching is regarded by some as a mild paralysis of the central nervous system, which can be cured only by rising at dawn and sitting in a bog. --Roger Peterson, famous American artist and ornithologist.

THE FOSSIL TRIGONIA

By W. MacKay Draycot, North Vancouver, B.C.

"What's this?" That question is often asked by the "souvenir" hunter returning from a vacation. "A species of Trigonia!" answers the informed naturalist. "I'll take your word for it," states the enquirer who tells of finding it on one of the Gulf Islands, imbedded in sandstone. It also occurs in the Nanaimo area.

Among the many fossil forms of mollusca occurring in the Upper Cretaceous sediments the Trigonia vies for first place, numerically, with the bivalve Glycimeris.

Viewed laterally a local species---Trigonia evansana Meek--resembles a partly-full moon, or a section of orange after peeling. Ribs, or costae, adorn the escutcheon and are separated by a dorsal ridge extending from the beak to the posterior extremity; that is, from front to back. Near the underside of the beak is a small wedge-shaped opening whereas the narrowed posterior extremity possesses an elongated slit terminating in an orifice. The inner, or underside of the shell, displays two partly-concaved sections divided in the centre by slightly raised ridge, from which rays of ribs extend toward the fringe of the shell. The margin, or fringe, bears small cross-bars close together. In a good specimen the fossil is delightfully sculptured and the ribs meticulously placed. Almost all fossils are found incomplete. They flourished, and possibly enjoyed life, about 80 million years ago.

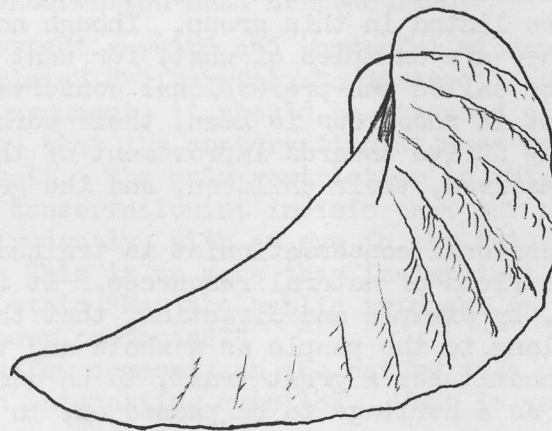
The genus Trigonia includes a large number of species and the most prominent one in our locality is T. evansana. Another local species, T. trioniana Gabb, was reported by Whiteaves (Mesozoic Fossils, Vol.I, p.161) at Northwest Bay, Vancouver Island, and four other different species on Queen Charlotte Island. Though they were extremely prolific during the Cretaceous Period they, unfortunately, left no descendants to amuse us.

That wonderful country Australia has the distinction of possessing the only living descendant of the genus Trigonia, by name Trigonia margaritacea Lamarck---the Pearly Trigonia. According to the Australian Museum Magazine, of 1939, "It was regarded as extinct until, in 1802, Peron, naturalist on the French exploring vessel Geographe, found a dead valve on the beach at King Island, Bass Strait. Later, Quoy

and Gaimard, of the French vessel Uranie, discovered living specimens in southern Tasmania. The Uranie was wrecked on the Falkland Islands in 1820, and it related that Quoy risked his life in returning to his cabin to salvage these precious specimens. He declared that he would rather be drowned than return to France without his Trigonia.

"This living fossil still exists in Port Jackson, where it was first discovered by Samuel Stutchbury, once a Trustee of the Australian Museum. He had dredged up three specimens, which he placed on the seat of his boat. Having allowed his attention to wander, he heard an ominous click, followed by another, and to his chagrin he found that two of the active little creatures had hopped overboard, and presently the third followed suit---and many days elapsed before another was captured."

Now we know what we have missed ---a hopping bivalve! Among the wide variety of fossils collected by the writer only one of the larger specimens has succeeded in retaining its calcium shell, in part. The specimens are casts, or impressions. An exception is the Cretaceous oyster whose thick shells measure up to two inches; more shell than meat!



Trigonia evansana Meek

CONSERVATIONIST?

By D.B. Turner, Director of Conservation,
B.C. Lands Service.

Every person is partly or wholly a conservationist, for his own good and the welfare of others. The boy who uses but does not abuse his toys and who shares them with others is a conservationist. So is the man or woman who abhors waste, turns out unnecessary lights, plans meals to avoid leftovers or discards, weeds the garden, prevents unsightliness on boulevard or city parks, and generally behaves as a good citizen. Such people, members of your family or mine, would stare and likely be amused if called conservationists. Nevertheless, they are just that whether aware or not that the philosophy of conservation is part of them. Such individuals could be called amateur conservationists.

One man may earn his living working in the field of resource administration while another may cultivate a strong avocational interest in his natural environment. In either case the conservation attitude is apparent both in what is done and the manner in which activities are performed. Again, however, these individuals likely would not deliberately classify themselves as conservationists. Members of natural history societies and many civil servants could be listed in this group. Though not technically-trained they are examples of what, for want of a better term, could be called sub-professional conservationists. Their interest in resources is keen, their work is conscientious and they strive towards improvement of the environment for themselves, their children, and the generations to follow.

The professional conservationist is trained to a high degree in the field of natural resources. It is his function to show, by example and direction, that the riches of the earth belong to the people as a whole and that their management constitutes a great trust, to be administered scrupulously as a heritage to be passed on, in as unimpaired a condition as present need will permit, to the generations of the future.

Conservationists, like other categories of humans such as writers or sailors, are a variable lot. They range the gamut from super-sentimentalists to hard-headed business leaders. Yet again, as is characteristic of other groups,

there are common denominators which distinguish the conservationist. He is intensely aware of the world about him, for example, and understands the natural relations which occur between environmental factors. Further, the more he understands nature's interrelations, that is, the more he evaluates and judges them in terms of reason rather than emotion, the sounder conservationist he is. In other words, the conservationist accepts the facts about food-chains, prey-predator connections, and the multitude of other relations which keep nature dynamic rather than static.

The core of the conservationist is as definite as that of any other professional and based upon well-established principles. Some of the maxims he endorses are worth listing.

1. The unity of Nature is a fundamental truth, i.e. natural resources cannot be considered as entities but must be considered as parts of a whole.
2. Conservation is based on accurately-determined knowledge.
3. The handling of renewable resources must be coordinated.
4. Scientific planning and management are the bases for the maintenance of our resources.
5. Conservation means cooperation.
6. Conservation must be practised.

To correct a weird and wonderful misconception, sometimes employed deliberately to discredit opposition or ridicule argument, it should be stressed clearly, forcibly and often, that the conservationist does not oppose use but advocates it. The only restriction in this attitude is that the conservationist insists that our natural resources be used prudently, with an eye to the future as well as the present. This is no more than is implicit in the Swedish national ethic "Has the public interest in all its resources been protected?"

These few comments on the nature of a conservationist raises an interesting question. What is your self-rating as such?

CHRONOLOGICAL PLANT LIST

This list of the flowering dates of Victoria's herbs, trees and shrubs compiled by Miss M. C. Melburn, a member of our Society, was commenced in the May issue, and will be continued in the January number.

1954

| <u>Flowering Date:</u> | <u>Family</u> | <u>Scientific Name</u> | <u>Common Name</u> | <u>Location</u> |
|------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| June 8 | Rosaceae | Physocarpus opulifolius | ninebark | Queenswood |
| " | Ericaceae | Pyrola bracteata | wintergreen | Saanich |
| " | Compositae | Sonchus asper | spiny sowthistle | 10 M. Pt. |
| " | Rosaceae | Spiraea Douglasii | hardhack | " |
| " 9 | " | " discolor | ocean spray | Humber Wd. |
| " " | Juncaginaceae | Triglochin maritima | seaside arrow grass | " |
| " " | Caprifoliaceae | Symphoricarpos albus | snowberry | " |
| " " | Leguminosae | Trifolium fimbriatum | perennial clover | " |
| " " | " | Hosackia denticulata | bird-foot clover | " |
| " " | Crassulaceae | Sedum stenopetalum | stone-crop | " |
| " " | Orobanchaceae | Orobanche comosa | cancer-root | " |
| | | | (parasitic on stone-crop) | " |
| " 10 | Umbelliferae | Conium maculatum | poison hemlock | Reynolds |
| " " | Gramineae | Elymus Vancouverensis | wild rye-grass | Saan. Spit |
| " " | Cyperaceae | Carex macrocephala | big-headed sedge | " |
| " " | Polygonaceae | Polygonum paronychia | beach buckwheat | " |
| " " | Chenopodiaceae | Atriplex patula var. littoralis | orach | " |
| " " | Caryophyllaceae | Spergularia macrotheca | beach sand spurrey | Saan. Spit |
| " " | " | " canadensis (?) | - | " |
| " " | Cruciferae | Lepidium menziesii | pepper-grass | " |
| " " | Leguminosae | Lathyrus littoralis | silky beach pea | " |
| " " | " | Vicia villosa | hairy cow vetch | " |
| ----- | | | | |
| " " | Umbelliferae | Glehnia littoralis | beach silver-top | " |
| " " | Convolvulaceae | Convolvulus Soldanella | beach morning-glory | " |
| " " | Scrophulariaceae | Linaria Dalmatica | Dalmatian butter-and- eggs | " |
| " " | Onagraceae | Epilobium adenocaulon | willow herb sp. | " |
| " " | Compositae | Crepis capillaris | hawk's beard | " |
| " 11 | Euphorbiaceae | Euphorbia Peplus | spurge | garden weed |
| " " | Cruciferae | Thlaspi arvensis | stinkweed | " |
| " 12 | Ericaceae | Chimaphila umbellata | prince's pine | Bedford Rd. |
| " 13 | Umbelliferae | Oenanthe sarmentosa | water parsnip | Uplands |
| " " | Rosaceae | Potentilla glandulosa(?) | five-fingers | " |
| " " | " | " gracilis | " | " |
| " " | Rubiaceae | Galium boreale | northern bedstraw | " |
| " " | Ranunculaceae | Ranunculus alismaefolius | buttercup sp. | " |
| " " | Labiatae | Prunella vulgaris | self-heal | " |
| " " | Cruciferae | Raphanus raphanistrum | jointed charlock | " |
| " " | Leguminosae | Lupinus polyphyllus (?) | lupine sp. | " |
| " 16 | Caprifoliaceae | Linnaea borealis | twin-flower | Mt. Douglas |
| " 18 | Compositae | Adenocaulon bicolor | silver-green | " |
| " " | " | Chrysanthemum parthenium | feverfew | Swan Lake |
| " " | Cruciferae | Erysimum cheiranthoides | wormseed mustard | " |
| " " | Polygonaceae | Polygonum Persicaria | lady's thumb | " |
| " 21 | Onagraceae | Godetia caurina | godetia | Mt. Douglas |
| " " | Compositae | Artemisia absinthium | wormwood | " |
| " " | " | Madia racemosa (?) | tarweed | " |

A WELCOME VISITOR

During September of this year a party from the Hydrographic ship the "Wm. J. Stewart", were ashore at Echo Bay, which is on Gilford Island, not many miles from Alert Bay, where they were taking a transit of a channel, when a small bird came up to the group of men, so close that one of them called out to the transit man to be careful and not step backwards. The bird, however, hopped up on to the instrument and then on to the man's shoulder. It stayed with the party until they entered their small power boat to return to the ship. The bird followed them into the boat where it flew to the prow, remaining there until nearing the ship, which was anchored nearly three miles out. Once, when a wave hit the boat, it lost its footing and slipped overboard, managing however after an intense struggle and without actually falling into the sea, to get into the boat again, panting heavily and looking at the men as much as to say 'That was a near go, wasn't it?'. Nearing the ship the bird flew aboard, ahead of the working party, and stayed on deck until they also arrived, when it flew around them, and then explored the ship. The bird was quite unafraid and remained aboard for several days, the men feeding it and giving it considerable attention.

From the description given by the narrator, Mr. Ralph Wills, who is a cartographer for the survey, the bird was either an adult song sparrow or a fox sparrow.

A similar incident is related by Capt. W. Redford in the December 1952 issue, in an article entitled 'A Friendly Bird'. In this instance, the bird was a song sparrow and came aboard his ship, the F. P. C. 'Laurier' in Hecate Channel, and stayed several days.

A.R.D.

BIRD GROUP MEETING

On Wednesday, November 4th, three hours were spent in watching birds at Esquimalt Lagoon. This is a protected area. In spite of chilly weather, damp and with poor visibility, a good number of species were identified and watched by some sixteen members.

At noon the party drove on to Witty's Lagoon, where three more hours were spent. Witty's Lagoon is a fine area. By all means it should be procured for a public park and

wild life reserve.

The following list of 38 species was made at the two lagoons. Other species were noted en route by enthusiasts. These, however, have not been included in the list.

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Loon, common | Hawk, sharp-shinned |
| Grebe, Holboell | Coot |
| " horned | Turnstone, black |
| " western | Sandpiper, spotted |
| Cormorant, double-crested | " red-backed |
| " Baird | Gull, glaucous winged |
| Heron, north-west coast | " California |
| Mallard | " short-billed |
| Baldpate | " Bonaparte |
| Pintail | Guillemot, pigeon |
| Scaup, greater | Kingfisher |
| Bufflehead | Flicker, north-western |
| Old Squaw | Raven |
| Scoter, white-winged | Crow, north-western |
| " surf | Chickadee, chestnut-back |
| Ruddy duck | Nuthatch, red-breasted |
| Merganser, hooded | Wren, winter |
| " red-breasted | Kinglet, golden-crowned |
| Hawk, duck | Sparrow, savannah. |

J.O.C.

NOT TOO LATE

All July the proud delphinium
Flaunted its tall spikes,
Dozens of lucent flowering rods
The hummingbird likes.

Provident bees worked overtime
And flew their perfumed freight
Homeward on sagging lines of gravity
From early sun till late.

August found each spire tonsured.
Only a fringe of blue
Showed the hummer the sweet dregs,
Enough for him too.

Marie L. Weldon

YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER

A few specimens of this bird have found their way to the Coast and even perhaps to Vancouver Island. Much interbreeding takes place with the red-shafted flicker of the interior valleys east of the Cascades. The yellow-shafted is the flicker of northern British Columbia. Its wide range is north and east across North America.

Flickers of several sub-species are alike in voice and habit. At home in city, suburb and countryside, feeding on fruits cultivated and wild; more at home in semi-open farmlands, logged and burned-over areas where ants and other insects are numerous.

Smaller birds such as purple martins, bluebirds, wrens and the chickadees enjoy the use of abandoned flicker holes for nesting purposes. In this capacity alone flickers are valuable assets in Nature's scheme of things.

J.O.C.

THE PILEATED WOODPECKER

On this continent four sub-species are found of this handsome black and white woodpecker adorned with the bright red crest. Already civilization in some areas is responsible for its scarcity. Primarily from the felling of great forest trees, secondarily from wanton destruction by trigger-happy sportsmen, farm hands or children.

Our western bird is common enough still, even in the suburbs of our larger cities, but inevitably the species must retire with the cutting of the bigger timber.

Larger than our Northwestern crow, energetic and powerful in flight, voluble and musical in sound, it is readily noticed as it crosses large clearings or is surprised in the woods whilst busily engaged in chiselling its quarry from ageing timber.

Throughout our Province and in Alberta our bird is found from sea coast up to timberline. The loud call and intermittent tapping are familiar sounds in the big woods.

In spring the mating call is tattooed loudly upon some familiar hollow snag. This sound can carry a considerable distance - a sound as typical of the wilder places as is the wail of the loon or the pumping of the bittern.

By all means this handsome bird should be given all the protection that is possible. Much can be done through the schools, clubs or government departments to conserve a species that is so well worth preserving.

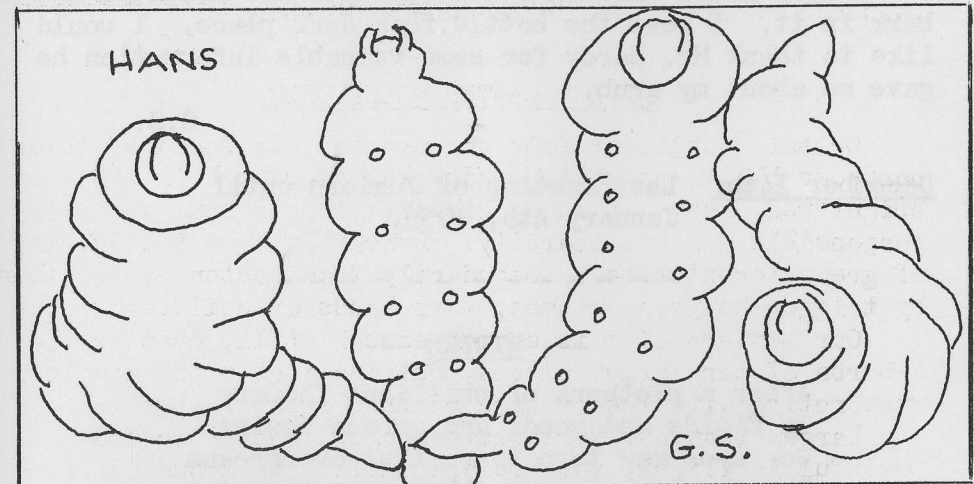
J.O.C.

JUNIOR NATURAL HISTORY PAGE

Editor: Gerry Skinner

I have a pet in the basement. I don't think he'd be a very popular pet with most people. He is a grub, and looks like a fat piece of rotted pork with a little black bead for a head and the cutest pincers you ever saw. I call him Hans. Mr. Hardy, the Museum entomologist, gave me this accordion-like specimen.

California prionus (that is the name of the species) is usually found in old stumps or rotting wood in the summer. The full-grown female prionus (its a beetle) lays its eggs on any rotting wood then flies away. After



a period the eggs hatch, exposing tiny little grubs and the grubs grow to three or four inches long and stay in that state for about three years, but on occasion some stay as long as fifteen to twenty years in the worm or larva stage.

Sometimes furniture is made out of wood which some grub had wandered into. Then it is sold to someone who is terrified of insects. After it has been sold, on some fine bright day, our hero (the worm) will twist its way to the surface of the wood. Imagine the feeling of the person seeing the worm's head twisting in an alluring way

(continued on page 72)

NOTICE OF MEETING

1954

Tuesday

December 14:

GENERAL MEETING: Provincial Museum, 8 p.m.

Dr. Wm. Newton, Officer-in-Charge,
Plant Pathology Laboratory, Saanich-
ton, will speak on "THE BATTLE
AGAINST VIRUS DISEASE OF PLANTS".

Continued from page 71:

out of a chair! These grubs are known to be able to gnaw through someone's hand. Another oddity is that some natives in Africa eat the prionus relations.

I look after mine in a bottle which has moisture and bark in it. I keep the bottle in a dark place. I would like to thank Mr. Hardy for some valuable information he gave me about my grub.

G.S.

December 14th: Last meeting of Juniors until
January 4th, 1955.

--- WINTER ---

After a plethora of brilliant flowers
In fields and woods and garden bowers
Our eyes may turn to restful evergreens
The shrubs and trees that warm the winter scenes.

The maple and spirea leaves are gone
Those of the Garry oak, so brown, hang on.
The bracken slumps, long grasses fall to earth
But broom and arbutus, holly and fern
Join with the tall hemlock cedar and fir
To keep fresh their colour through frost and storm.

When days are short and nights are cold and long
'Tis time to read and write, to sing a song,
And to enjoy the company of friends.
Before you know it the shy snowdrop blooms.

A.O. Hayes.

Victoria Natural History Society

OFFICERS, 1954-55

Honorary Presidents:

HON. R. W. BONNER,
Minister of Education.

J. W. EASTHAM,
Former Provincial Plant Pathologist.

J. A. MUNRO,
Former Dominion Wildlife Officer.

President:

C. W. LOWE,
1826 Hollywood Crescent,
Telephone 3-7037.

Editors:

A. R. DAVIDSON,
2545 Killarney Road, Telephone 7-2404.

G. CLIFFORD CARL,
Telephone 3-8524.

H. D. R. STEWART,
Telephone 2-6458.

Secretary:

MISS HELEN BAIRD,
754 Richmond Avenue,
Telephone 3-4791.

Treasurer:

MRS. GLADYS E. SOULSBY,
209 St. Lawrence Street,
Telephone 4-7411.

Chairmen of Groups:

Programme: MRS. F. A. SHERMAN,
662 Niagara Street, Telephone 4-9482.

Botany: C. W. LOWE,
Telephone 3-7037.

Ornithology: J. O. CLAY,
Telephone 3-3101.

Marine: J. A. CUNNINGHAM,
Telephone 4-3897.

Zoology: G. CLIFFORD CARL,
Telephone 3-8524.

Geology: A. H. MARRION,
Telephone 4-1983.

Conservation: DAVID B. TURNER,
Telephone 2-4975.

Audubon: MISS LENORA PANTON,
Telephone 2-4450.

Juniors:

Chairman: BRUCE COLVIN.

Secretary: MARIE BARR.

Vice-Chairman: GERRY SKINNER.

Editor: ROGER PORTER.

Annual dues, including subscription: Single, \$2; Family, \$3; Junior, \$1.

To Mr & Mrs James A Bland
1049 Richmond Ave
City