

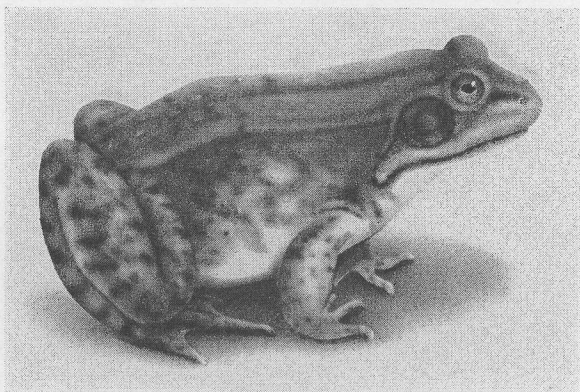
*The*  
**VICTORIA**  
**NATURALIST**

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Vol. 11, No. 8

February, 1955

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Green Frog.

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THE VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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The green frog (pictured on the cover) was accidentally introduced to British Columbia and has subsequently become established in the Victoria area and in the Fraser Valley near Hope. Originally it was an animal of eastern North America, occurring from the Hudson Bay south to the Gulf of Mexico. It is easily recognized by its very large ear membranes, green mask on the face and by the yellow throat in the case of males. These frogs measure from two to four inches in length.

C. J. G.

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NOTES ON THE 1954 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

This Christmas Bird Count constitutes a high water mark for the Victoria district; partly on account of the fact that Mr. Clay was able to get fourteen keen bird watchers in the field, and also because the day was fine and quiet, ideal weather for bird identification.

Last year with a count of 83 species and a total of 7716 individual birds, we were quite pleased, but this year's total of 90 species and 10706 birds really shows the possibilities of this area.

Among the more uncommon birds identified were the white-crowned sparrow, blue-winged teal, lesser yellowlegs, western bluebird and hermit thrush.

The 392 European starlings on the list can only be deplored. As far as I know, this is the largest invasion of these birds ever to come in to this district. Hitherto, only three or four starlings at a time have found their way here.

A. R. D.

## CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. January 2nd, 1955

- A. City and east to Gonzales Bay: H.D.R.Stewart,  
J.J.Whitehouse  
B. Shoal Bay to Spoon Bay: J.O.Clay, Wm.Adams, Philip Symonds.  
C. Humber Road to Telegraph Bay Road: Mrs.H.M.S.Bell,  
Mrs.J.R.Inglis.  
D. Cedar Hill Crossroad, Finnerty Road, Sinclair Rd.,  
Queenswood and Ten Mile Point: A.R.Davidson, B.R.Pettenden,  
Wm. Savale.  
E. Lost Lake: George A. Hardy.  
F. Swan Lake, Panama Flats: K.E.Christensen.  
G. Saanich, Centering on Elk Lake: J.O.Clay, Wm.Adams,  
Mr. & Mrs. J.A.Berry, P. Symonds.  
H. Sidney and North Saanich: Miss M.C.Melburn, Miss Leila G.  
Roberts.  
I. St.Patrick Street. Mrs. H.M.S.Bell, Mrs. J.R.Inglis.  
J. Sooke District: No estimate.  
K. Esquimalt and Witty's Lagoons: No estimate.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
Loon, common	1	3		1				6		11
red-throat			1							1
Grebe, Holboell		2		1						3
horned	9	35	19	8				35		106
eared		4		4				5		13
Western	12	52		12				13		89
Guillemot. Pigeon		1		1				2		4
Cormorant. D.Crested	35	5								40
Baird		39	3	43				16		101
Heron, northwest coast			1	1	3			3		8
Goose. Canada					2		16			18
Mallard	269	116	30	9	100	253	14	2		793
Baldpate	460	132	50	89	300	720	133	193		2077
Pintail						17	20			37
Teal, Green-wing			2	23	25			160		210
Blue-wing						18				18
Shoveller	10	73	1	4				34		122
Wood duck	4									4
Mandarin, Chinese	4									4
Canvasback	9		2					39		50
Scaup. Greater	360	260	19	11				234		884
Goldeneye. American	2	14	1	4				31		52
Bufflehead	62	37	12	12	4		14	37		178
Old Squaw		6	6	1				5		18

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
Harlequin	6	23	4	18						51
Scoter. White-winged		9	21	3				34		67
Surf	5	13	3	12				32		65
American	5							3		8
Ruddy duck			3		2		1	34		40
Merganser. Hooded	1		4	1				1		7
American	2				2					4
Red-breasted		4	11	2				21		38
Hawk. Cooper		1		1						2
redtail				2				2		4
Eagle, bald				1						1
Hawk. Peregrin				1				1		2
pigeon								1		1
sparrow			2							2
Grouse. willow							1			1
Partridge. Hungarian				10						10
Quail. California				51						51
Pheasant				1			4			5
Coot		14	48	28	10	68		28		196
Oyster catcher								3		3
Killdeer				27	5		2	22		56
Surf bird								15		15
Turnstone. Black	11	71		10				15		107
Snipe					6					6
Curlew, Hudsonia		1								1
Yellowlegs. L								2		2
Sandpiper. Aleutian		25								25
Gull: glaucous-wing	635	80	49	130	6		62	122		1084
herring	1			1						2
short-bill		140	12		2					154
California								12		12
Bonaparte								5		5
Kingfisher								1		1
Flicker, North-western			2	33	2		3	13	3	56
Woodpecker. pileated								1		1
downy			2							2
Skylark. European				12						12
Raven								2		2
Crow. Northwest	4		19	20			118	733	18	912
Chickadee. Chestnut-backed			5	79				27	2	113
Bushtit			15		10					25
Nuthatch, red-breasted			1	1				2		4

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	Total
Creeper, brown				2				2		4
Wren, winter	1		1	6	4		1	5		18
Seattle		2	3	9	4			2		20
Robin, north-western				80	12		9	72	1	174
Thrush. Pacific										
varied				44						44
hermit				2						2
Bluebird, western				5						5
Kinglet, golden-crowned			15	101	1			18		135
ruby-crowned			1	9				10	1	21
Waxwing, cedar							1			1
Starling, European				142				250		392
Sparrow, house			10	15			12	46	60	143
Meadowlark, western								15		15
Blackbird, red-wing								50		50
Brewers								25		25
Finch. purple				7			2			9
Finch. house									50	50
Siskin			200	600			50	420		1270
Towhee, Oregon		3	3	12	2		5	11	2	38
Junco. Oregon	3	4		100			40	50	20	217
Sparrow, puget sound							1			1
golden-crowned				2			1	7	4	14
fox		3		4	4		1		2	14
song.	4	6	4	7	5		6	12	4	48

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1915 1178 585 1755 511 1076 517 2942 167 10706

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A total of 90 varieties and 10706 individuals.

Weather clear and cold.

Temperature 38 degrees.

North-east wind  
5 m.p.h.

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### WILD BIRDS AND THE LAW

The Victoria Daily Colonist carried the following item in one of their December issues:-

#### BRITISH BIRDS GET OWN 'MAGNA CARTA'

This is a big week for Britain's birds. Their 'Magna Carta' - piloted lovingly through the House of Commons by a nobleman becomes law. Henceforth nearly every bird in the United Kingdom will be entitled to protection by 'due process of law' and heaven help anyone who shoots him out of turn.

The only exception are a few 'evildoers' like the sparrow hawk and the carrion crow, whose habits staid Britains regard as distinctly improper. The story behind it is the story of the switch from bird shooting to bird watching.

Bird watching is now a British national pastime. Thousands of tweed-suited men and plump matrons in slacks go out every week-end to slog through the bogs and lie in the fields watching their 'feathered friends' through field glasses."

It may be of interest to record that this act was successfully carried through the Commons by Lady Tweedsmuir. Actually there is a 'black list of seventeen species in England and Wales and twenty in Scotland, but even they may only be killed by an authorised person... There is even a fine of up to £5 for any egg taken from any nest, and the sale of all wild birds' eggs is now illegal.

L. G. Roberts.

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1954

## CHRONOLOGICAL PLANT LIST

Flowering Date:	Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
July 5	Scrophulariaceae	<i>Linaria minor</i>	-	Blenkinsop Rd.
" 6	Polygonaceae	<i>Polygonum convolvulus</i>	wild buckwheat	roadside
" "	Fumariaceae	<i>Fumaria officinalis</i>	fumitory	Killarney Rd.
" 10	Malvaceae	<i>Malva rotundifolia</i>	common mallow	Cowichan
" "	Scrophulariaceae	<i>Verbascum Thapsus</i>	common mullein	J.D.Park Rd.
" "	Crassulaceae	<i>Sedum obtusatum</i>	stonecrop sp.	garden
" 15	Onagraceae	<i>Boisduvilia densiflora</i>	--	Cattle Pt.
" "	Labiatae	<i>Mentha arvensis</i> var. <i>canadensis</i>	Canada mint	Cadboro Bay
" "	"	<i>Mentha spicata</i>	spearmint	"
" 23	Boraginaceae	<i>Amsinckia lycopoides</i>	fiddleneck	Whiffin Spit
" "	Onagraceae	<i>Oenothera biennis</i>	yellow evening primrose	Sooke
" "	Compositae	<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	pearly everlast- ing	"
" "	Polygonaceae	<i>Rumex accidentalis</i>	western dock	Uplands
" "	Convolvulaceae	<i>Cuscuta salina</i>	dodder	Whiffin Spit
" "	Chenopodiaceae	<i>Salicornia ambigua</i>	glasswort	"
" "	Cruciferae	<i>Cakile edentula</i>	sea rocket	"
" "	Caryophyllaceae	<i>Arenaria peploides</i>	sea purslane	"
" 28	Compositae	<i>Lactuca scariola</i>	prickly lettuce	Humber Road
" 29	"	<i>Gnaphalium micro-</i> <i>cephalum</i>	cudweed	John Dean Pk.
" "	"	<i>Madia madioides</i>	tarweed	"
" "	Orchidaceae	<i>Habenaria Michaeli</i>	Michaeli's rein orchid	" "
" "	Campanulaceae	<i>Campanula Scouleri</i>	Scouler's harebell	" "
" 31	Malvaceae	<i>Sphaeralcea coccinea</i>	false mallow	Cowichan
Aug. 2	Compositae	<i>Solidago lepida</i>	golden-rod	Pat Bay Hy.
" 4	Compositae	<i>Arctium minus</i>	common burdock	Clover Pt.
" "	Orchidaceae	<i>Habenaria unalas-</i> <i>censis</i>	rein orchid sp.	Ten Mile Pt.
" 5	Compositae	<i>Aster Douglasii</i>	Douglas aster	"
" 5	"	<i>Grindelia stricta</i> var. <i>autumnalis</i>	gumweed sp.	John Dean Pk.
" 5	Orchidaceae	<i>Peramium decipiens</i>	rattlesnake plantain	"
" 11	Compositae	<i>Aster occidentalis</i>	western aster	Ivy Green Pk.
" "	Compositae	<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	tansy	Ladysmith
" "	Malvaceae	<i>Sidalcea Hendersonii</i>	marsh hollyhock	Comox Spit
" "	"	<i>Malva moschatus</i>	musk mallow	"
" "	Scrophulariaceae	<i>Linaria vulgare</i>	toad-flax	"
" "	Compositae	<i>Artemisia campestris</i> sub-sp. <i>pacifica</i>	wormwood	"
" 12	"	<i>Luina hypoleuca</i>	creamy ragwort	(Englishman's River
" "	"	<i>Erigeron ramosus</i>	fleabane	( Falls' Park
" "	"	<i>Gnaphalium uliginosum</i>	cudweed	(
" "	"	<i>Lactuca spicata</i>	tall lettuce	Cameron Lake
" "	Ranunculaceae	<i>Anemone globosa</i>	windflower	"
" "	Hypericaceae	<i>Hypericum Scouleri</i>	Scouler's St. John's wort	" "
" "	Polemoniaceae	<i>Gilia heterophylla</i>	gilia sp.	" "
" "	Onagraceae	<i>Epilobium paniculatum</i>	willow herb sp.	" "
" "	Saxifragaceae	<i>Boykinia occidentalis</i> var. <i>Vancouverensis</i>	kidney saxifrage	Englishman's River Falls' Park
" "	Compositae	<i>Helianthus</i> sp.	sunflower sp.	"
" "	Scrophulariaceae	<i>Penstemon Lyallii</i>	Lyallii	"
" "	Leguminosae	<i>Lupinus</i> sp.	lupine sp.	Parksville
" 19	Liliaceae	<i>Allium Geyeri</i>	onion sp.	Cattle Pt.
" "	Umbelliferae	<i>Carum Gairdneri</i>	caraway or "yamp"	"
" 29	Compositae	<i>Bidens cernua</i>	bur-marigold	Blenkinsop Rd.
" "	Caryophyllaceae	<i>Silene Scouleri</i>	Scouler's pink	Oak Bay Golf C'rse
" "	Polygonaceae	<i>Polygonum spergulariaeforme.</i>	fall knotweed	"

## CHRONOLOGICAL PLANT LIST Cont'd

Flowering Date:	Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Sept. 1	Rosaceae	Rubus laciniatus	evergreen blackberry	Rd. to John Dean Park
"	Caryophyllaceae	Dianthus Armeria	Deptford pink	"
" 2	Compositae	Jaumea carnosae	yellow jaumea	Resthaven
"	Labiatae	Marrubium vulgare	horehound	Cowichan
"	"	Lycopus americana	bugle weed	Sproat Lake
" 10	Compositae	Helenium autumnale	sneezeweed	Cattle Point
Nov. 1	Compositae	Cotula caronopifolia	mud-disk	Goldstream

The list of the flowering dates of Victoria's herbs, trees and shrubs, given above, was compiled by Miss M. C. Melburn, a member of our Society, and completes this series. This list was commenced in the May 1954 issue and comprises a total of 360 varieties of plants, and is a tribute to Miss Melburn's knowledge of her subject, and capacity for taking trouble, and also indicates what a paradise this area is for visiting botanists.

Editor.

INTERESTING BIRDS SEEN RECENTLY

A Humming-bird was seen on January 1st at 919 St. Patrick Street by Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Donald, and Miss Mary Mackenzie-Grieve.

During a walk taken on Martingdale Road, Saanich, Sunday, January 16th, a flock of forty golden-crowned sparrows and seven greater yellowlegs were noticed.

DESTRUCTION OF SEA BIRDS BY OIL

During the recent accidental oiling of sea-bird life around Victoria the writer decided to write to the Ministry of Transport, Ottawa, and find out what hope there is of preventing shipping from emptying their bilges at sea (deliberate oiling).

I have now received a reply from the Minister as follows:

"The subject of the prevention of pollution of the sea by oil from ships was taken up at an international conference held in London, England, this year, and a convention containing measures providing for the mitigation of this nuisance was drawn up. Canada was represented at this conference and it is expected that in due course legislation will be passed implementing the terms of the convention with respect to pollution in our territorial waters."

"Consideration is now being given to the setting up of a Canadian national committee to keep the subject under constant review, and to recommend from time to time preventative measures that may be found desirable."

B. R. Pattenden.

At the general meeting in January a talk was given by Dr. Frank G. Roe on the NORTH AMERICAN BUFFALO.

Dr. Roe can be regarded as the outstanding authority on this subject; his intensive researches over many years having culminated in a volume of nearly a thousand pages recently issued by the Toronto University Press.

In his talk he propounded and answered the following questions:-

Which are they - Buffalo or Bison?

Where did they come from?

Who first discovered them?

How far did they range?

Were they all the same?

Migrations?

How many were they?

What was the biggest herd ever seen?

And, finally, what killed them off?

Dr. Roe presented his subject in a most interesting manner, and having answered various questions put to him by members, he was given a hearty vote of thanks by Mr. J.O.Clay.

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#### BIRDWATCHING AT HOME

Our house overlooks what is known as 'The Glen' at Cadboro Bay, this glen being a heavily wooded and steeply shelving property with innumerable springs oozing out of the ground at the lower levels, which produce a prodigious growth of swamp ferns, skunk cabbage, etc., as well as some of the tallest alder trees in this district. The garden, therefore, being on the fringe of this woodland, is an excellent place for the observation of birds, as the following account will show.

On one of the warm evenings we had in May I was watching a group of Wilson warblers playing and gyrating among the undergrowth on the edge of the glen. Last year a pair of these warblers raised their brood of four here, and presumably the birds I was watching were some of the same family returning from their southern sojourn. Their light-hearted playing was very pleasant to watch, and apparently I was not alone in thinking so, as I noticed a western flycatcher unobtrusively move down through the trees until he was about a foot from the ground right in the centre of the warblers, and there he stayed. They now attracted another bird, a female Townsend warbler, who also came right down amongst them; then a pair of warbling vireos, the most gentle birds in the woods, with their soft pearl grey colouring. Now a pair of chipping sparrows entered the scene, and with them four golden-crowned sparrows, all very busy pecking away at something on the ground that attracted their fancy. Another bird showed up, and it was some time before I recognized it as a Lincoln sparrow, looking very fierce with its brown and black crest raised. I had noticed this bird before in the garden in the company of the golden-crowned sparrows. The last bird to appear on this woodland stage was a very grey looking russet-back thrush, the first I had seen this spring. All of these birds were quite silent save for an occasional quiet zip from the Wilson warblers and the whirr of their wings as they made their little vertical flights. All this time the robins were dashing madly from one tree to another, very busy giving their nestlings their last feed of the day, and the violet-green swallows seemed to fill the air overhead with their musical twitterings.

A.R.D.

#### JUNIOR NATURAL HISTORY PAGE

Gerry Skinner, --- editor

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It is now the time of the year when our little Songbird friends have a hard time finding food. You can help them by putting up a feeding station for them. Here is what to feed them:

Titmice:	Suet, cracked nuts, peanut butter
Chickadees:	Sunflower seeds, bread crumbs.
Nuthatches:	Sunflower seeds, bread crumbs.
Catbirds:	Cut apples, cut oranges.
Thrashers:	Currants, raisins.
Thrushes:	Currants, raisins, breadcrumbs.
Robins:	Currants, raisins, breadcrumbs.
Blackbirds:	Sunflower seeds, corn, shelled.
Towhees:	broken peanuts, scratch feed.
Finches:	Scratch feed, millet, wheat,
Juncos:	small seed mixtures, bread
Sparrows:	crumbs.
Woodpeckers:	Suet, cracked nuts, corn.

by George Merrick of Portland, U.S.A.

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#### Guinea-pigs

These animals are used for the study of germ diseases and, because they are clean and easily cared for, as pets for children. There are three kinds; the Assyrian, Peruvian and the English short hair guinea pigs. I have all three kinds though I strongly suspect that I have a bit of one breed in the other one. One thing I find hard to do and that is get them used to me, for indeed they are very timid. They have short little legs which have four toes or in this case claws on the front feet and three on the back. You might think that they can't run very fast; not a bit of it, they can run as fast or almost as fast as I can. Whenever I come down to feed them they always scuttle into the cage from the run Dad built them. A Guinea-pig is not in fact a pig at all but a cavy cavy; that is, an animal resembling in some respects rats and rabbits.

Bruce Crawford.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS

1955

Tuesday  
February  
8th:

GENERAL MEETING: Dr. Ferris Neave, of the Pacific Biological Station, Departure Bay, will speak on VOYAGE TO THE NORTHWEST PASSAGE. Provincial Museum at 8pm

Friday  
February  
11th:

GEOLOGY GROUP: The Provincial Museum has arranged for a series of free lectures on Technical subjects. Mr. Hugh Nasmith of the Department of Mines will talk on GLACIATION AND POST-GLACIATION CHANGES IN B.C. Museum at 8 p.m.

Saturday  
February  
12th:

BIRD GROUP: Meet at junction of Hobbs and Arbutus, Cadboro Bay, at 10 a.m. Or meet at Shoal Bay 1:15 p.m. Those wanting to attend both sessions, bring lunch. Leader, Mr. J. O. Clay.

Tuesday  
Feb.15:

BOTANY GROUP: Meet at Museum 8 p.m.  
HISTORY OF KEW GARDENS.  
Prof. C. W. Lowe.

Tuesday  
Feb.22:

GEOLOGY GROUP: BACKYARD GEOLOGY CONT:  
CONGLOMERATES AND LIMESTONES:  
Provincial Museum 8 p.m.  
Speaker: Mr. A.H. Marrion.

Saturday  
Feb.26:

GEOLOGY GROUP: It is hoped that the twice cancelled trip to Goldstream will really take place. Meet at Monterey Cafe 1:30 p.m. Leader Mr. A.H.Marrion.

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