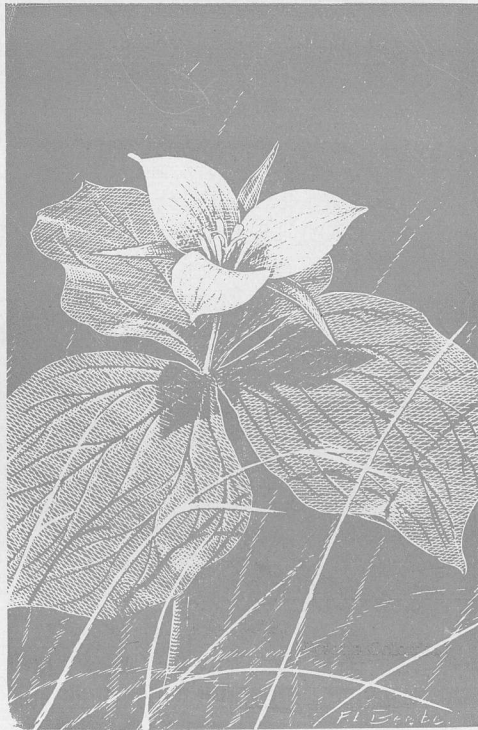


The
**VICTORIA
NATURALIST**

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APRIL 1955

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1954 - 1955

It was an honour and great privilege to me to be elected as your President for the year now ending. I am afraid that I may not have come up to your expectations but I do know that it has given me much pleasure to do what I could for the Society. This would not have been possible had I not received the very loyal support of all other members of the executive and particularly that of the programme secretary, Mrs. F. A. Sherman, and the immediate Past-President, Professor J.A. Cunningham. Dr. Clifford Carl was a willing helper and adviser at all times. The Society is also indebted to Dr. Carl for allowing us to meet in the museum and the executive to use his office. He took much of the responsibility of projecting the films at the Audubon lectures.

Our esteemed treasurer Mrs. G. E. Soulsby was taken seriously ill while on a vacation last fall and was unable to resume her duties until about a month ago. We are delighted to see her with us again and trust that she will soon be fully restored in health.

The editors of the Victoria Naturalist, Mr. A.R. Davidson, Mr. H.D.R. Stewart, and Dr. Carl, together with the contributors again have made it worthy of notice in many places outside Victoria.

The Audubon Screen Tours which the Society sponsors were of the usual high standard and were very well attended. Miss Lenora Panton has continued to look after the Audubon funds and the making of the reports to the Amusement Tax branch of the Provincial Government. Our thanks are due to Miss Panton, and to Mr. J.H. Whitehouse for taking charge of the ticket-selling at each lecture, and to those who acted as ushers.

In conclusion I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Stewart, the Misses Goodeve, the Misses Baird, and the Misses Panton for entertaining the Audubon speakers in their homes after the lectures.

C. W. Lowe.

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1954-55

This is the end of the eleventh year of the Victoria Natural History Society. We now have a membership of 109.

Since our last annual meeting we have had eight executive meetings and eight general meetings at which the speakers and their topics were as follows:

April - Mr. W. A. Hubbard	Many Berries Range Station
May - Social Meeting	
September - Dr. Clifford Carl	Backyard Exploration
October - Mr. Robert Golding	The B.C. Forest Service
November - Dr. Lewis J. Clark	Plants of Various Habitats
December - Dr. William Newton	Battle against Virus Disease of Plants
January - Dr. Frank G. Roe	North American Buffalo
February - Dr. Ferris Neave	Voyage to the Northwest Passage.

Field trips and group lectures are also an important part of our work and will be reported on separately.

We continue to receive as exchange publications The Gull from Berkeley, California; The Blue Jay from Regina; The Wood Duck from the Hamilton Nature Club; and Country-Side from England. Country-Side is the Journal of the British Naturalists' Association, and is a more substantial publication than the others. These are all available to members through the Secretary.

The Audubon Screen Tours were sponsored by our Society again last year and were again held in the Oak Bay Junior High School. The auditorium was filled to capacity each time.

The Junior Group has been meeting as usual under the direction of Miss Betty Newton of the Museum staff and now has 29 members. The regular leaders are Dr. Carl, Mr. Duff and Mr. Hubbard, and in addition we are grateful to the following for special services:

Miss M. Melburn, for two botanical field trips
Mr. J.A. Cunningham, for two talks on biology.
Mr. C.F. Sheppard, for a talk on the Formation of Rocks
Mr. A.E. Maxwell, for a talk on Guns and how they work
Imperial Oil Company, Vancouver, for the use of their film, Proud Land.

H.C. Baird,
Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 1954-1955 --INCOME:

Bank Balance from previous year - - - - -	\$330.05
Membership fees - Senior - - - - -	250.00
" " - Junior - - - - -	23.50
Receipts from Social Evening - - - - -	11.95
Bank Interest - - - - -	6.39
From Audubon Acct. for Advertising in "NATURALIST"	40.00
Bank corrected their mistake of Nov.6 - - - - -	5.38
	<u>\$667.27</u>

EXPENDITURE:

Monks Multigraph Letter Service -	
"Naturalist" and Index - - - - -	322.99
Executive meeting notices - - - - -	3.47
Petty Cash for Treasurer - - - - -	10.00
A.R. Davidson - Expenses "Naturalist" - - - - -	5.00
Social evening expenses \$12.40-45¢ from Petty Cash	11.95
Victoria Photo Supply . Screen for Prof. Clarke's Lecture - - -	3.50
Gifts of Flowers - - - - -	8.20
	<u>301.96</u>
	<u>\$667.27</u>

Audited and found correct "H.D.R. Stewart"
"J.H. Whitehouse"

March 1, 1955.

Total paid members 109
Previous year - - 129
Decrease of 20 from last year.
Our membership comprises as follows:
Family 34
Single 75
Juniors 29

All of which is respectfully submitted

Gladys E. Soulsby

Treasurer.

The Botanical Group had three field trips during the summer season. The first was to Mount Douglas Park on April 24th, when twenty members gathered at the top of Mount Douglas for a study of the spring flowers. A chilly wind made it necessary to stay on the sheltered side or among the trees. More than 24 species were identified.

On June 5th an excursion was made to John Dean Park. It was another chilly day but 25 members were present; all were enthusiastic and enjoyed the climb to the top. Many late spring flowers were still in bloom and a fair number of early summer flowers were seen. Around the pools in the lower areas a quantify of the regular marsh plants were nearing the flowering state while in the water true aquatic plants showed only the early stages of development. One interesting amphibian was found - the beautiful Pacific Tree Toad, Hyla regilla.

The last of the field trips was to Thetis Lake on September 25th. The weather in late August had been ideal for promoting an early growth of the fall fungi so that day became the eleventh annual fungus foray. We were fortunate in having Mr. G.A. Hardy to lead us again. It was also one of the finest days of the year and 35 members and guests attended. Altogether 41 species of fungi were collected. These are listed in the Victoria Naturalist for November.

The winter group meetings alternated monthly with those of the marine biology group. The first was on November 30th when Miss M.C. Melburn gave a very instructive talk "Collecting Plant Material" with demonstrations.

The February meeting was taken by the group chairman who gave brief history, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and some of its more important economic achievements.

The congratulations of the whole Society and especially the Botanical group are due to Miss M.C. Melburn for the exceedingly useful chronological list of flowering plants of Victoria and the surrounding district. This list occupies two or more pages in each of seven parts of the current volume of the Victoria Naturalist. This was a big task to undertake and Miss Melburn has earned the most sincere thanks of all members of our Society and other people interested in our local flora.

C. W. L.

The Annual Meeting this year was held at the Museum on Tuesday, March 8th. The President, Mr. C.W. Lowe, called the meeting to order, and the minutes of the last annual meeting were read and adopted.

The slate of officers for the ensuing year was presented and it was moved and adopted that the officers as selected by the nominating committee be accepted. The names of the officers and chairmen of groups will be found on the cover.

The reports of the President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer, also the reports for the year of the Chairmen of the different groups will be found in this issue.

At this meeting the members were privileged to have with them Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dreany of Cowichan Lake, who made a special trip to Victoria to give an address on a visit to Della Falls. Mr. Dreany showed many beautiful colored photos taken in the area, while Mrs. Dreany gave a most interesting commentary on the slides and gave details of their arduous, somewhat dangerous, but fascinating excursion into this very rough and tumble part of Vancouver Island's Strathcona Park.

The following particulars are taken from the notes which Mrs. Dreany kindly mailed to the editor:

Della Falls are the highest known falls in Canada, their entire height being 1443 feet, descending from Della Lake, which is situated high on Big Interior Mountain (6107 feet) down the precipitous slopes to empty into the Drinkwater River to be borne down to Great Central Lake, eleven miles distant.

To get to the falls, they had to take a boat 23 miles to the head of Great Central Lake, then to travel five miles by truck over a rough and most perilous road, the balance of the journey being on foot. This trip, taken in the middle of July, found deep snow everywhere, even though they were only 1500 above sea level, but there were compensations - to quote from Mrs. Dreany's notes:-

"We shall never forget our first glimpse of Della Falls. We had been stumbling up the tortuous trail, which was a washed-out grade, when suddenly we reached the brow of a little rise, and behold! There in the distance was the Falls, with Big Interior Mountain rising like a guardian above and challenging us to hasten to enjoy its beauty more intimately".

In mid-July the lakes in this region, Della and Love Lakes, were still frozen over, the ice being six feet thick.

The only birds seen were the winter wren, which was in full song, and the dipper. No mammals were encountered, but signs of cougar were seen, and two timber wolves were heard howling far up on Mount Septimus.

Among the 137 different flowers and flowering shrubs noted, were the exquisite blooms of the alpine wallflower, several varieties of pentstemon, yellow wood violets, ginger root, spring beauty, red elderberry, columbine, magenta and yellow mimulas, and the interesting nine bark, with its white snowball blossom and bright red seed pods appearing at the same time.

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REPORT ON THE BIRD GROUP MEETINGS

The field meetings held during the year were as follows:-

- May 8th: Smugglers Cove and Ten Mile Point
- May 29: Swan Lake and adjacent marsh lands.
- June 26: Boat trip to Ballingall Islands, which are situated in Trincomali Channel, between Galiano and Salt Spring Islands.
- Sept. 11: Sidney, Resthaven, Shoal Harbour, etc.
- Nov. 3: Esquimalt Lagoon and Witty's Lagoon.
- Feb. 12: Queenswood and the waterfront at Shoal Bay, etc.

All these field trips have been reported in the 'Naturalist' with the exception of the one on February 12th, details of which are as follows:-

Eighteen members attended this meeting, held on Saturday, February 12th, and covered the Queenswood area in the morning and the Shoal Bay and adjacent sea fronts in the afternoon. Conditions were favorable, the weather being mild, cloudy and without wind. Forty species of birds were identified, as follows:- Common loon, horned and eared grebe, western grebe, Baird's cormorant, baldpate, mallard, shoveller, greater scaup, American goldeneye, bufflehead, old squaw, harlequin, white-winged scoter, surf scoter, red-breasted merganser, coot, oyster catcher, surf bird, black turnstone, Hudsonian curlew, Aleutian sandpiper, red-backed sandpiper, glaucous-winged gull, short-billed gull, pigeon guillemot, north-west flicker, downy woodpecker, crow, chestnut-backed chickadee, winter wren, Seattle wren, hermit thrush, robin, varied thrush, golden-crowned kinglet, ruby-crowned kinglet, towhee, junco, fox sparrow and song sparrow.

J.O. Clay.

REPORT OF THE GEOLOGY GROUP

Eight meetings were held - five in the Museum, and three field trips. The Group Chairman, Mr. A.H. Marrion, gave the talks and directed the outings. A very satisfactory attendance was proof of the interest taken by the members. All meetings were held on the fourth Tuesday, with the field trip on the following Saturday. The general topic "Backyard Geology" was taken up under the following headings, each one of which was discussed under such sub-headings as origin, agents of production, methods of transportation, types and economical uses thereof, effects on landscape scenery, where the materials had become consolidated, the causes, such as pressure, and infiltration of cements were also discussed.

Topic one, Clays. Clays were fully explained and illustrated with specimens, pictures and manufactured products. Mrs. H.M. Jones and Mrs. McMoran showed well-made samples of pottery made from local clays. Clay bed areas of the interglacial and postglacial periods with type of fossil shells found were described. About twenty-five members attended.

For the field trip nineteen members met at the Baker brickyards, where erratics, nodules and fossils were sought. Striae on the base rocks were noted. Mr. Graham, the superintendent, conducted the party through the factory, explaining the pressure forming process for drain tile and flower pot manufacture, and the drying and kiln firing of these articles. On leaving, each member was presented with a small souvenir flower pot.

Topic two, Sands. Samples of different kinds of sands and their commercial use followed a talk on production of sand by nature - chemically and mechanically. Pictures illustrating the latter showed result of frost action, glacial, stream, wave and wind abrasion on both igneous and upheaved consolidated ancient sand deposits. Local sources of sand and method of screening for size were described.

The 'follow-up' field trip took nineteen members to the McIntyre and Harding sand-gravel pits on Cordova Bay Road. Much interest was shown in the current bedded deposits and the large area covered by the glacial outwash.

Topic three, Gravels. The general line of discussion for gravels was much the same as for clays and sands. Some effects produced by glaciers were mentioned: viz. moraines, eskers, kames; striated and soled stones, stream production of 'fore set' and 'top set' beds. The tremendous amount of gravel removed from the glacial river deltas since post glacial uplift

was illustrated by pictures. Pictures of mastodon and elephant types of animals, and specimens of molars and tusks seen in the museum added interest to the subject, as well as samples of cut and polished pebbles.

A second field trip to the McIntyre-Harding pit was undertaken by about eight members, who spent their time looking for interesting stones, interest being based on color effects, structure or composition. No one located a fossil such as an elephant molar or tusk.

The fourth talk dealt with the consolidated forms of clay. Specimens of soft clays were placed near the hardened derivatives found as argillites, shales, slates and schists. The formation of these by vertical and horizontal pressure, volcanic heat, circulating waters, acting as solvents or conveyors of cements was explained, as well as the differences in their structure. The possibility of fossil survival was mentioned and local fossil beds indicated. About twenty members were present.

The outing to Goldstream to see contorted shales of this area was postponed due to weather.

The consolidated form of sand to form sandstone was the topic for our last talk. Specimens and pictures were the basis for the discussion. Origin of sand beds was reviewed and the later cementing of the grains by lime, iron or silica explained. Types of sandstones such as flag tones, grits, quartzites, arkose, graywackes, breccia, tuff, coral, orlites, greensand, nodules, etc. were mentioned. How structure and weathering affected local scenery was explained, and localities having fossils indicated. Sixteen members attended.

A second and third attempt to go to Goldstream was defeated by the wintry weather.

The thanks of the chairman is extended to those who by their attendance, interest and helpful discussion led to the success of the meetings.

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BIRD NOTES

A male European widgeon was seen at Beacon Hill Park on February 23rd by B. Pattenden, and about a week later Mrs. Blackden also saw one on Miss Lees' pond on Arbutus Road at Cadboro Bay.

(cont'd on page 12)

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN, MARINE BIOLOGY SECTION, 1954-55

During the year the Marine Biology Section held three indoor meetings - in the Biology Laboratory of Victoria College - and three field trips.

The first meeting, March 23rd, dealt with "Tide-pool Ecology". It was pointed out that the tide-pool, when isolated from the sea at times of low water, is a microcosm in which the temperature, salinity, oxygen content, pH and alkaline reserve, etc., of the water are greatly modified during this period of isolation. On the whole, therefore, tide-pool life is subject to great extremes. Among the plants, some of the algae (e.g., Corallines, Odonthalia, etc.) and the false eel-grass (Phyllospadix) are the same species as those living in a similar vertical range along shore, i.e., are species tolerant of extremes; others (e.g., Rhodomela larix, the dwarf form of Prionitis Lyallii) seem to require these extremes, and are not found elsewhere; and others again, cannot tolerate extreme conditions - Fucus, for example, although often abundant at the very edge of tide-pools, never grows in them. Tide-pool animals, on the other hand, are apparently of the same species as those found in the corresponding zone outside the pool - but this requires further observation and checking.

On May 19th a trip was made to Island View Beach. Here we hoped to find the sand-dwelling sea-anemone (Herenactis), but were disappointed, since the 1.5 foot tide was not low enough. The day was beautiful - and observation of the eel-grass (Zostera) in flower, sand-lances and blennies, the marvellous worm population of the beach, specimens of the teredo (Bankia) in a water-logged tree-trunk, the absence of the common purple-star (Pisaster) and its replacement by the grayish Evasterias - all followed by a comforting lunch, made the trip worth-while.

On June 2nd the Breakwater at Ogden Point was visited. This, an area where conditions approach those found on rocky shores facing the open ocean, yields a variety of species much greater than to be found elsewhere close to the city. The only unusual find was several specimens of the really beautiful purple top-shell (Calliostoma annulatum). The Breakwater is the only area where one may be certain of obtaining pectens, brachiopods, the "hairy" Oregon triton (Argobuccinum), and the black abalone - providing the sea is

calm and the tide really low (0.2 ft. on this occasion). I am fairly sure that on a previous trip a specimen of the red top-shell (*Astrea inequalis*) was found, and very much wish to substantiate this, if possible. It was the thick, ivory-like opercula of these shells that the Haida Indians used to decorate their storage boxes.

On June 16th a trip was made to "Patullo's Beach". The weather, at first cold, turned out to be sunny and enjoyable. An effort was made to gain a general idea of the zonation of species, working upward from low tide (1.3 ft.) where large brown algae, brachiopods, etc., are found; through the higher levels where among the plants, *Ulva*, *Bangia*, *Porphyra* and *Fucus* and among the animals, rock-oysters, chitons, sponges, whelks and barnacles, etc., flourish; to the region of the highest tides (10.5 ft.) where the red alga *Endocladia*, Littorines, and the tiny "finger limpet" (*Acmaea digitalis*) are able to persist in spite of almost continuous exposure to the air.

The second indoor meeting of the year, October 19th, dealt with the horse-clam (*Schizothaerus*). The structures for digging, opening and closing the valves of the shell, for the circulation of water, and for conveying food were demonstrated by dissections projected with the epidiascope. Something of the life history, and the modifications undergone in development from the hypothetical ancestral mollusc (*Phorhipidoglossum*) were described. A future meeting will consider other clams, as well as other common bivalves - mussels, pectens, oysters, etc.

In the last meeting, January 18th, the lamp-shells (brachiopods) were considered. These are found locally at extreme low water on open rocky shores (Breakwater, Patullo's Beach, Brentwood, etc.). Since the shell consists of two valves, the brachiopods are commonly mistaken to be bivalve molluscs. It was shown, by diagrams and dissections, how very different the structure is from that of a bivalve. The importance to the geologist of brachiopods as "horizon markers" was emphasized, and fossils of several species serving this purpose were exhibited.

Jeffree A. Cunningham.

JUNIOR NATURAL HISTORY PAGE
Gerry Skinner, ---- Editor

When I feed our birds, (chickens) a variety of birds come down. Some birds are seagulls, sparrows, juncos and chickadees. In the early summer we get hummingbirds, robins, crows and other kinds. Just a few days ago I saw a hawk and a flock of birds hovering over the roof.

When I go to the park in the winter time, I go to feed the ducks. They just flock around you. There are lots of different birds in the park. They have a peacock, chickens and a crane in the park cage.

By Joyce Choqe.

My Grandfather used to have a 'pet' song-sparrow. It wasn't exactly a pet, because he didn't keep it in a cage, and he didn't tame it, but the sparrow used to sing in his garden. On this particular day the golden shafts of sunlight left sunny patches on the ground. He had placed some crumbs for the little songster. As it was eating, a slowly circling gull came down to share the sparrow's lunch. Our hero, the sparrow, didn't approve of this idea, so it kept getting in the gull's way. The gull got tired of this, so he swallowed the sparrow in one gulp!

Don't feel badly, the hero will win next time.

Gerry Skinner.



The Museum Movie last Saturday showed the California gull. It is around here sometimes but in small numbers, is large and has yellowish legs instead of flesh-colour like the glaucous-winged gull. It nests in Saskatchewan and Alberta and north, also on a lake-island in the American Rockies shown in the film. Look on your map and see how many miles they fly from the coast to their nesting ground.

Hope to see you on the 19th, 3:30 p.m., and try to send in a story for this page before the 18th of April.

NOTICES OF MEETINGS

1955

- Tuesday
April 11: GENERAL MEETING: Professor E.H.Strickland, formerly Head of the Entomology Department, University of Alberta, will speak on DO BIRDS CONTROL INSECTS? Provincial Museum at 8 p.m.
- Friday
April 15: GEOLOGY LECTURE: Provincial Museum 8 p.m.
STRUCTURE OF THE MOUNTAIN RANGES OF B.C.
Dr.A. Sutherland-Brown, B.C.Dept. of Mines.
- Tuesday
April 26: GEOLOGY GROUP: Mr. George E.Winkler will give a talk on PROSPECTING. There will also be a discussion on the programme for the new season. Museum at 8 p.m.
- Friday
April 29: AUDUBON LECTURE: TIP OF THE MITTEN: by Olin Sewall Pettingill. Oak Bay Junior High School Auditorium at 8 p.m. Admission 50¢ Students 30¢
- Saturday
April 30: BOTANY GROUP: Field trip to Mount Douglas.
Meet at junction of Blenkinsop Road and Cedar Hill Cross Road at 1:30 p.m. (Cook-Maplewood bus leaves Coach Lines Depot at 1:05 p.m.)
Leader Miss M.C. Melburn.
Members are reminded that the Social Evening will be held on May 10th.

May we again remind our members that the financial year ends on March 31st and that dues for the ensuing year are payable at this time.

Continued from page 8: BIRD NOTES:

Mr. F.S.Martin of 860 Falkland Rd., reported a white-headed robin feeding on apples in his garden during the cold spell, (March 7). This robin had the regular orange breast and natural coloring on the back etc., but its head was a pure white, which made the large black eye quite outstanding.

On Saturday, March 12, a flock of about fifty swallows were seen flying over the water in a corner of Elk Lake. At the time of observation snow was falling very heavily, and it was quite impossible to say whether they were tree or violet-greens. On the following Tuesday, there were at least 150 violet-green swallows flying over the flooded fields on Martindale Road, Saanich.

A.R.D.

Victoria Natural History Society

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To