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(F. L. Beebe)

Tan-coloured Russula

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TAN COLOURED RUSSULA

The subject of our cover is an example of the distinctive genus *Russula*, characterized by the somewhat thick and fleshy structure of its members most of which are notably dry and brittle.

At this season of the year the russulas enliven the woodland glades and mossy places with their gaily-coloured caps of reds, purples and browns of many shades. They combine an aesthetic and gustatory appeal; these evanescent qualities, however, are merely a passing indication of their true worth in the economy of nature, for the underground mycelium ramifies among the dead vegetation upon which it feeds, thereby not only hastening the conversion of obstructive debris into elements that can be assimilated by future plant generations but, in some cases, combine with the root-hairs of forest trees to their mutual advantage, a fact known to tree-transplanters who add some of the mycelium-containing soil of the original site to the new position.

*Russula* is derived from the latin meaning reddish, a colour possessed by many of the species; *alutacea*, as illustrated, refers to the leathery appearance of the cap.

Most russulas are edible, but some leave a sharp and burning sensation in the mouth, - an indication to either leave well enough alone from a culinary view point, or to cook them in one or more changes of water; most russulas, however, are considered a delicacy by those accustomed to mushroom consumption.

Russulas along with other mushrooms contribute not a little to the social pleasures of mankind by inducing field excursions, as exemplified by our annual fungus forays at a time when the flowers of field and forest have lost their charm.

George A. Hardy.

THE THOMAS FRANCIS PARK

by Freeman King

The Nature House at Francis Park has been visited during the summer by over 2,500 people, many of them from other provinces and from different parts of the United States.

The Nature House was manned by David Gray during the months of July and August. Every Sunday other members of the leader section were also on duty to take conducted parties around the trails and give information.

Displays were changed to match the flowering seasons.

The trails were kept in good order and an addition was made to No.3. Several parties have requested conducted walks.

A first class collection of insects and butterflies has been made and mounted by Dave and John Errington.

Some 170 specimens of flowering plants have been collected, named and mounted for reference by Nancy Chapman.

Mr. Percy Dumbleton, the caretaker, has been very helpful in every way. He has kept the grounds in first class order, which included two heavy jobs of cutting up and clearing away the two large maple trees which fell across the parking area.

We have established a rain station in conjunction with the weather department, and a record has been kept all summer of the precipitation.

We will be operating the Nature House during the winter months, as we feel there will be sufficient material available to keep up the interest, and the park being close to the City, it will be easy for people to take a trip out through the seasons.

Mr. John Davies has installed a window in the caretaker's cabin so that he can at all times observe the grounds.

The Victoria Horticultural Society invited the Junior Branch to put on an exhibit from the park at their Fall Flower Show, which was held on September 14th and 15th at the Curling Rink. The leader section got together and put on an exhibit which was forty feet in length, showing the stages of ecology from the bare rock to the trees. It was a fine effort on the part of these boys and girls and they are to be congratulated.

The certificate of merit was presented to them for their show.

GARNETS AND MOTLEY

by Dorothy Palmer

"Describe for us the red crossbills you've been watching at your bird baths", Davy requests. So, we set the scene. . . . .

Many years ago an arbutus tree, split almost through at the base, fell prone along the ground, creviced side up-permost but still a living tree. Lady ferns (*Athyrium felix-femina*) grow in the crevice and *mimulus* (*M. alsinoides*); and mosses creep out over the lip, velvet green against the burnt umber trunk. On this recumbent form, amongst the fern fronds, are a choice of bird baths. Firs and cedars grow around the arbutus, giving shade and handy perching accommodation. For closer perching driftwood creatures pose themselves over the small pools of water. These arrangements are some twenty feet from a north-west window, the sun when shining being mostly behind watchers at the window.

Red crossbills were around for several weeks before they came down to drink and bathe. In late July and all of August we heard individual crossbills "chit chit chitting", and infrequently during the days one alone would fly by incredibly fast, from north-west to south-east or vice versa; not direct flight but a curving trajectory too quick to have in focus, our attention being attracted by the bird's ceaseless chattering. After several tantalizing weeks pairs of crossbills were seen, and heard, following the same behaviour pattern. In a few days more appeared, whole families in various stages of immaturity and maturity, and for weeks our fir trees were a-chatter with the crossbills' chorus. They are early risers, before the crows, and can be heard chattering "sotto voce" and be seen against ochre skies between the trunks of firs still darkly brown before the day's dawning.

A few days after the red crossbill families arrived they began to investigate the available drinking water. One male tried taking a sip, watched cautiously by his mate. Soon he tried taking a bath, frittering sparkling garnets over the ferns. Later several crossbills, mature and immature, gathered around, gaining confidence. Now they all sip together, though they rarely take a bath; many siskins accompany them, showing their pale yellow wing feathers. One male crossbill spends some time working in the "mouth" of a driftwood creature, - liking a salty cocktail we

deduced (E.H.Forbush confirms this in "Birds of Massachusetts").

The colouring of the adult male red crossbill tones with that of arbutus trees before the current season's bark begins to peel off but the red crossbill is a deeper shade of tangerine tone. Usually described as being brick coloured this attribute is misleading so far as the birds seen here are concerned; when sunshine strikes through the surrounding ferns lighting up the bird, its rich luminosity is a vibrant deep red with undertones of orange - a feast of gorgeous colour. Experts usually describe the female as being olive-grey; those seen here are not olive grey but a speckled fawn and grey, with yellowish rumps. An almost mature male still has his pied-yellow face mask or spectacles. The youngest crossbills which come to the pools are all speckled grey-fawn, slight, neat, alert. Those which are a little older show a suggestion of yellowish masks and body tinting, which becomes more striking as the weeks pass until the reddish hues begin to show. Apparently the odd looking face markings remain long after the body has acquired almost adult colouring.

The very young birds here now, in September, will be a late hatching, since red crossbills are known to be winter nesting birds; many "birders" will remember the pair which nested on Mt. Douglas in March a couple of years ago. In England, in the Brecks of Suffolk and Norfolk a dozen pairs have nested in February each year for the last fifty years. They are now protected by the Forestry Commission and this acceptance by forestry experts would indicate that they are useful birds in the main. These birds were observed nesting with eighteen inches of snow on the ground and the temperature 28 degrees. E.H. Forbush in "Birds of Massachusetts" says that the red crossbill may start nesting in January or in midsummer. Ornithologists suggest that the time chosen for raising fledglings is probably influenced by the supply of coniferous seeds. T.G. Smout finds the red crossbills "busily migrating when one has had a surfeit of summer visitors". Garth Christian in "Down the Long Wind" describes an irruption of crossbills, a phenomenon known to occur in Britain since the thirteenth century; every three to ten years shortages of pine and spruce cones will cause the crossbills to leave Scandinavia and spread across the British Isles and west as far as Iceland and south down to Malta, seeking food.

Our crossbills here may not have nested nearby, since we have not found any tell-tale signs in the neighbouring

woods. The birds are silent at nesting time but partly eaten cones dropped from the trees betray their presence. T. G. Smout writes that the crossbills extract the seeds from the cones without removing the petals, though the petals will be frayed in the process; also that they are wasteful feeders. Squirrels remove the petals to extract the seeds, leaving a stripped cone; the crossbills will leave half-eaten cones with frayed petals still attached.

Crossbills have a kindly disposition, for they permit other small birds such as chickadees, nuthatches, juncoes, siskins, the various warblers, even the towhees, to bath in and sip at the pools with them.

A bird bath, in partial shade and with convenient perches, all strategically placed for watching from a window - say the window over the kitchen sink, as in our case - is one of the most delightful ways of "burning daylight"; it gives sparkling feasts of colour - a jewelled fairyland - comic episodes (trying one foot in at a time or backsides first into the water), scenes of delicate tenderness (twin baby nuthatches pressed close together on a branch over the pools, in plumage miniature replicas of their parents, looking like dainty Dresden figurines). And a wonderful chance to watch a somewhat elusive bird at close quarters and immobile - at last.

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A series of articles is being prepared by Mr. A.H. Marrion on local geology.

The first appears below, and others will follow in consecutive numbers.

#### AROUND OUR WATERFRONT

with A.H. Marrion

##### No.1. Outer Wharf to Holland Point Area. Dallas Road.

The James Bay area has for its rock crust a dark greenish, fine to coarse grained rock, known as the Wark Gneiss. This rock is found each side of the Gorge and throughout Saanich. In Jurassic times, about 165 million years ago, the rock, in a molten condition, rose from the depths below and invaded the older surface rocks, shattering them, invading them, and absorbing fragments of the same, which, in this area was apparently the Vancouver volcanics, which, through millions of years has been eroded away.

At a later time the Wark Gneiss itself was invaded by a related type of rock known as Colquitz Gneiss, outcrops of which are seen in north Victoria and south Saanich. It is a greyish rock of medium grain, whose minerals have more or less parallel arrangements. The rock is easily recognized by its bands of light and dark minerals. Two other intrusions of different rocks will be noted later. The heat of the molten rocks changed the Wark Gneiss and its crystallization at contact points.

On the shore in the 300 block is a mass of rock, whose solid structure was able to resist the pressure of the southward moving ice, which slid up and over it, to produce an excellent example of a "sheep's back", or the rounding of a rock outcrop, with its well developed north-south grooves. Eastward towards Holland Point the cause of the irregular shore line is seen to be the many rock outcrops with their glacial eroded valleys in between, out of which the sea with its forceful waves have been washing away the softer cliff material.

On Holland Point is seen the effect of ice approach - rock smoothing - and on the side of departure a broken rock face, the effect of quarrying. The direction of ice movement is seen also by the chiselling - or the breaking out of wedges of rock through movement and pressure on the north side of a rock crack.

The deposit on the rocks is seen to be a till of fine sand, gravel and boulders, the material used by the glacier to abrade the solid rocks; the ground-up material, the mud or clay usually being carried away to a lake or sea. A small specimen of the shell 'Oregon Triton' was found in the till at this point. A large specimen was also found near Jordan River and at Island View in the cliffs.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

The Toronto Field Naturalist's Club, an affiliate of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and a society devoted to conservation and the increase of knowledge, has its lighter moments, as the following items, filched from its latest newsletter, will testify.

The editor, who has to answer all sorts of questions, conjured up some of his own, together with the answers.

Here are a few:-

- Q. At nature camp last year we saw some beavers. Someone said their skins were used mostly for hats. I say they are used for coats. What would you say beaver skins are used for chiefly?

- A. I'd say to hold the beaver together.
- Q. I'm going to raise tropical fish. What should I put in my aquarium first?
- A. I'd start with water.
- Q. Can you help me? Every time I look out at my garden, the crows are eating my green onions. This makes me furious.
- A. It would me too. I can't stand crows with halitosis.
- Q. We have a pair of owls in our garden. The male keeps yelling all night at the female, but we never hear her answer. Why?
- A. She just doesn't give a hoot.
- Q. Can you think of anything that has a rougher bark than a hickory tree?
- A. Yes, our neighbour's dog, about 11 p.m.
- Q. We know that baby cats are called kittens and baby dogs puppies, but what would you call a baby skunk?
- A. Darn't if I know. How about 'little stinker'?

#### A PLEASANT INTERLUDE

by J. M. Barnett

One morning about the middle of May we drove to the home of Mrs Walker Taylor at Towner Park where we met Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Davidson. We were there at the kind invitation of Mrs. Taylor to accompany her and her guests, Bishop and Mrs. Marsh on a walk through the woods.

Mrs. Marsh was an active member of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Toronto Field Naturalists Club and the Margaret Neice Club of Toronto. The Bishop, whose duties did not leave him much time for the nature club activities, is an ardent naturalist and has a sharp eye for spotting birds.

They were in town on a brief holiday before leaving for White Horse, where he will take up his new post as Bishop of the Yukon.

Around Mrs. Taylor's property we saw several rosettes of the rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera oblongifolia*). Members will remember this plant by the magazine cover of the

May issue and the interesting article about it by Miss Melburn.

Near the entrance as we were going out a towhee flew up to a branch and looked us over. Mrs. Taylor felt sure he had a nest in the immediate neighbourhood, as she had often seen him around there.

Down the road we heard a number of bird songs and soon there was a discussion about the songs as to just what birds were vocalizing. This was probably due to the number of different songs and the listeners. Personally we had no difficulty at all as the only song that we could hear was that of a particularly cheerful robin.

The woods were beautifully fresh and green and as our visitors were from the east, everything was new to them. As no one claimed to be a proficient botanist we had difficulty identifying some of the plants, but we did manage some of the common ones like the Siberian miner's lettuce (*Montia sibirica*), salal (*Gaultheria shallon*), Oregon grape (*Mahonia aquifolium*) one of them about twelve feet in height, and the sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*).

A pair of bandtail pigeon flew and perched on a nearby tree, where we were able to get a good view of one of their distinguishing features, the white ring around the back of the neck.

Soon after, some warblers were heard and we saw a black-cap and a lutescent or orange-crowned.

On the top of a tall fir a purple finch sang, while from the top of another a goldfinch called. Both of these were known to our eastern friends.

We went on to the property of one of the local residents to see a plant which he had in his woods but could not identify. Fortunately we all knew it and were able to tell him it was a coral-root. It was a beautiful specimen about eighteen inches tall with the flowers just coming out.

A little farther down the road a MacGillivray warbler was singing, but we were unable to locate it. Then a California quail stood on a stump and watched us while we admired his beautifully marked plumage.

In the woods here we saw a large group of the calypso orchid which Mr. Lyons refers to in his book "Trees, Shrubs & Flowers" as 'one of the delicately tinted jewels of nature's treasure'.

We heard a raven calling, and on looking around saw a Cooper hawk and three north-western crows circling above us. The Bishop gave us a rendition of a song he knew about 'three black crows' of which each verse ended with 'caw, caw,

caw'. He sang a few verses, but Mrs. Marsh stopped him by saying that the song was endless with each verse more gruesome than the one before. We couldn't pass judgment on the song, but we thought the Bishop's imitation of the crows was perfect, although it was that of the common crow of the east.

Walking through the woods again we found a large clump of chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria lanecolata*). They were the tallest specimens we have seen, but still the flowers were quite inconspicuous owing to their dark brown colour and their tendency to nod.

Before passing out of the woods we saw a female hairy woodpecker working on a dead tree. She was so busy that we were able to pass quite close without disturbing her.

When we returned to the house we sat out on the lovely terrace overlooking Saanich Inlet, with a beautiful view of the Malahat in the background. A large old arbutus tree near the house provided a nesting hole for a pair of chestnut-backed chickadees and, from their activities, we assumed they had a brood of hungry youngsters.

As we sat and ate our lunch we spent considerable time with our glasses, as there were quite a few birds on the water. White-winged and surf scoters were most numerous, but double-crested and Baird's cormorants were there too. Some western grebe were also present and we were delighted to see an eared grebe in full plumage, wearing his high helmet. A common loon was diving around while an osprey came flying overhead. This bird was probably one of a pair that used to have a nest near Canoe Cove which was blown down this year by a spring gale, and so far nobody has located where they are now nesting.

A great blue heron floated in and settled on a rocky islet and seemed to be quite at home there because a low flying amphibian plane passed close by without disturbing him. When we remarked on this Mrs. Taylor informed us that there was a heronry in the neighbourhood, so this bird was accustomed to planes roaring by.

After lunch the Davidsons took themselves off to the beach, and thinking they were off to study some marine biology we followed. It was not long however before we realized that their thoughts were not on scientific enlightenment but were bent on food. Mrs. Davidson had found from past experience that oysters were to be found there. Needless to say they came back with a bag of bivalves.

Birds, botany and marine biology are interesting fields

in which to spend some time, especially when accompanied by congenial companions. The last time we had seen the Bishop and Mrs. Marsh was in July, 1958, on Bonaventure Island and seeing them here at the other end of the continent brought back pleasant memories. It was while on Bonaventure Island we saw them handle a very delicate situation with a couple of the old inhabitants there, and because of this we have every confidence that in his new work in the Yukon, even in the remote districts, he will be able to handle them in the same delicate and gentlemanly way.

They go with our prayers and good wishes, and the hope that we will have the pleasure of seeing them return to Victoria for another visit.

#### AUTRE TEMPS, AUTRES MOEURS

The other day, for some reason or another, I was studying Mrs. Beeton's book on 'Household Management', edition 1869, and found recipes for the cooking of skylarks, wheatears, corncrakes, etc.

We would be horrified now if we heard of anyone partaking of a dish of larks, but at that time it was apparently quite the thing, as in those days Mrs Beeton's book could be found in most good homes, being the guide to cooking, etiquette and deportment.

The following are the instructions on how to cook wheatears (a bird about the size of a house sparrow) .

"After the birds are picked, gutted and cleaned, truse them like larks, put them down to a quick fire and baste well with fresh butter".

The wheatears are annual visitors to England, and, according to Mrs Beeton - "are in season from July to October. They are taken by means of snares and nets and numbers of them are eaten on the spot by the inhabitants. The larger ones are sent to London and potted".

Maybe we have improved in some ways.

A.R.D.

#### NOTES ON THE PORCUPINE

by Adrian Paul, Kleena Kleene, B.C.

On a frosty morning in June I noticed a porky, looking very wet, sitting on a drift log on a patch of gravel in mid river. After half an hour he started to scratch and shake himself, and then explored his island thoroughly. Finally after an hour he started to swim and was immediately swept down river to a small logjam, which he grabbed on to. He spent the day there mostly sleeping in the bright sun-

shine. Next morning he was gone.

The young porky is born about May 1st. During the summer if you are lucky you may see him about a third grown, slate blue in colour and apparently on his own.

The porcupine is supposed to be entirely herbivorous. You can keep him out of your garden by means of wire fencing; he is apparently so busy trying to get through, that it never occurs to him to try to climb over. If you want to keep him away from your property you can beat him with a stick as his best speed is about six miles per hour and he climbs trees at about ten feet per minute. But if you catch up to him he will stop and you will find yourself facing an unsightly mass of quills. And he may come back in a few days.

When the ground is snow-covered and there is nothing better to eat porky will select a lodgepole pine and strip bark off it. One spring before the buds had opened I was surprised to see a porky near the top of a hundred foot cottonwood sitting out near the end of a limb reaching with one hand to get himself buds for breakfast.

Once when riding a bicycle at dusk I nearly ran over one. He took a swipe at my foot with his tail, but missed. If your dog tangles with one you have a job of work on your hands. Also he is not popular with our local cattlemen on account of his effect on inquisitive livestock.

#### A FLIGHT OF TERMITES

by Alan Poynter

When the winged termites leave the darkness of their wood tunnels for their brief nuptial flights, the birds take full advantage of this annual feast.

On a warm and calm evening along Finnerty Road toward the end of August we noticed an unusual number of gulls flying around, so we ('we' being Mr. & Mrs. Davidson, my wife and self), all raised our binoculars to the sky to see what was happening. We found we were in the middle of a major flight of termites.

The gulls, all Bonapartes, and about four hundred of them, were catching these insects as fast as they could, flying into the bright western sky, possibly because they could see them better, then wheeling back and going over the course again. With them were approximately thirty nighthawks doing the same thing, but twisting and turning in their own peculiar but graceful flight. On the branches

of the bare trees were robins and waxwings, flying out to catch the termites and doing back to the trees to eat them.

This went on until the glowing sun disappeared below the Sooke hills. Then the gulls gathered their ranks and flew in close formation toward the sea. The nighthawks climbed higher into the sky and disappeared from sight. The robins and waxwings flew to their roosting quarters among the conifers nearby - all of us having had a good time - except the termites.

#### BIRD IDENTIFICATION

We were at Island View Beach early on the morning of September 8th, watching the varied life of the shore and sea, when we both caught sight of a wader, different from the others, but too far distant to identify. My wife and I slowly approached it at different angles, and got fairly close. It was about the size of a lesser yellowlegs, much the same in colouration, and with the same long thin bill and white rump. Its legs were dark whereas the yellowlegs have bright yellow appendages. It flew away, leaving us still puzzled.

We followed the beach as far as Saanichton Spit, not finding many shore birds, save least and western sandpipers. Rounding the spit we went into the lagoon, now, at low tide, exposing a vast mudflat. There, a little distance away from a small flock of greater and lesser yellowlegs was this same bird, and we were again able to examine it at fairly close range.

On our return to the car we checked the details we had noted with Peterson's Field Guide, and found it was none other than a stilt sandpiper, only the third the writer had been able to identify in many years of birding.

I would like to tell the story of my first acquaintance with this bird. Theed Pearse and I were on the slough at Comox when he caught sight of a stilt. This was some years ago and all the waders looked alike to me. So this is an unusual bird; he followed it up and down the slough, through water, wet reeds, mudholes and shaking bog, with me following faithfully behind. I heard a noise behind me and turned around to see a large herd of wicked looking bulls and cows converging on us. Shaking with fright I called to Mr. Pearse that a lot of wild bulls were after us. He just turned around and said 'quite harmless', and went on chasing the stilt. I couldn't see any birds, only bulls. Finally he was quite sure of his bird and we climbed back on to the

road, both thankfully, but for different reasons.

I might add that our morning excursion at Island View Beach was also made memorable by the large number of pipits seen. The fields on either side of the road were alive with them. They were on the wires, in the trees and bushes and on the road itself. When we got to the beach we flushed them all the way along. We must have seen upwards of a thousand of these migrating pipits that morning, a sight one rarely has the privilege of witnessing.

A.R.D.

#### BIRDWATCHING FOR PLEASURE

The bird group's excursion to Discovery Island on September 15th was taken on one of those days which might have been made to order, inasmuch as the sun shone all day without intermission; it was one of the warmest days of the year, and there was only the lightest of breezes. Naturally, everyone enjoyed themselves immensely.

We must thank Capt. Beaumont for his kindness in providing transportation to and from the island - two double trips, and also Tom Briggs for his expert organization.

This is our second trip to Discovery this year, and our fourth sea trip for the season.

Land birds were few, as they are everywhere this year, but the shore and sea birds gave a good account of themselves, as the number identified totalled over seventy, an excellent count for this area.

Some of the members of the Vancouver Natural History society came over especially to participate in this field meeting.

Mr. Briggs has asked me to add that on the second return trip a binocular case for size 7-50 glasses was left on Capt. Beaumont's launch. Will the owner please phone Mr. Briggs at GR.8-4145.

A.R.D.

#### THE FINNERTY SWAMP

On the newly established Victoria University campus, on Finnerty Road, was a small swamp, which, for some rather unaccountable reason, used to be a favourite spot for birds. It was a stopping-off for migrants, both on their northward and southern flights. Why some places attract birds and others do not, though they look similar to us, is somewhat of a mystery. Possibly in this case because it was open



to the sky, with no bushes or trees near.

For many years now we have 'bird-watched' around here, and have seen the coming and going of many migrants. Every winter came the ducks: mallard, shoveler, green-winged teal, pintail, widgeon, and occasionally scaup and bufflehead. Last winter a European widgeon spent some weeks there.

The fascinating and difficult to identify waders - the shore birds - made this place one of the most interesting in the Victoria district. Twice each year came the least and western sandpipers, the dunlin, black-bellied plover, occasionally dowitchers and pectoral sandpipers. Last April we saw two golden plover in their full nuptial plumage on their way to the arctic.

Always present were the skylarks, and, in their season, the pipits, accompanied by savannah sparrows.

Now the bull dozers are busy there; the swamp has gone, a sacrifice to higher education.

A.R. Davidson

#### A PRIZE SPECIMEN

One of our members, Mrs. Bell-Irving, was walking down the road at Cliffside, Shawnigan Lake, on September 3rd. This was one of the warm days which followed the rains in late August. There she saw a mushroom so large that she took it home and measured it. It was  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches across, 33 inches in circumference and weighed one and a half pounds. The stem was 9 inches around. This was possibly *Agaricus arvensis*, the horse mushroom, very similar to the common edible mushroom, but larger.

#### CORRECTION

Due to a misunderstanding an error appeared in the September Naturalist with respect to the donors of the set of books entitled "The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Animal Life" which was bought for the Nature House at Francis Park.

The full list of donors is as follows:

Vols. 1, 2 & 16: Miss J. Brenton and Miss M.C. Melburn	Vol. 9: Miss Irene Latimer
Vol. 3: Mr. F. King	Vol. 10: Mrs J.J. Cameron
Vol. 4: Miss E.K. Lemon	Vol. 11: Mrs V. Southcott
Vol. 5: Miss E. Valens	Vol. 12: Mrs E.M. Carey and Miss E. Sartain
Vol. 6: Miss Alice Heron	Vol. 13: Mr. & Mrs A.R. Davidson
Vol. 7: Mrs Lilian Dickson	Vol. 14: Mr. T. Briggs
Vol. 8: Dr. Margaret Newton	Vol. 15: Mr. David Stirling

#### JUNIOR NOTES

by Freeman King

The Junior Branch have had an active summer. We have met every week, going on excursions to many places. Included were trips to beaches where some interesting rock formations were found, and various sea creatures were studied.

We held our annual camp at Goldstream Campsite. It was the best week of the season. No rain, but continued sunshine.

Twenty-five boys and girls went into camp. Expeditions out from the camp were made to Niagara Canon falls and to the flats at the mouth of the stream, and explorations were conducted along the E & N Railway tracks. On each one of the trips we found many things of interest to observe.

The outstanding activity of the camp was an ecological survey made of the whole camp area; this was divided into four sections, each under a leader, with two of the oldest as supervisors. Their project was to make a study of the terrain in order to find out the type of soil, its moisture content, and the effect of sunshine on the growth; to find out the number of different plants and trees that were growing there, what type of animals inhabited the place, and what birds were nesting or feeding in the area; to identify if possible the insects and to determine their particular function in regard to forest growth; and to find out what effect the rainfall had on the different slopes of the area.

Traps were set out to catch mice, so that they could be studied. (Many of them were skinned out and mounted to take home). All the information collected was written up by the leader of the groups and the whole compiled. It proved to be most interesting to note the difference of each area, which included the stream to the railway tracks.

The findings of the groups were turned over to Mr. R. Yorke Edwards of the Dept. of Recreation and Conservation, who thought the work done by the boys and girls was very good.

We owe a debt of thanks to Mrs John Chapman, who bore the brunt of the work in camp, namely taking care of the 'eats'. The meals were excellent and ample. (During my many camps this was the first time I have never had to think or worry over the grub question). I would like to express my gratitude to Mrs Chapman for taking care of us and feeding us so well. Mrs. Ernie Osborne, who was camp mother to the girls, seemed to be always in the right place at the right time. Without her help and assistance it would not have been such a successful camp. The campfires in the evenings were lots of fun. There were visitors from other campers in the near sites, who joined us for these sessions. To the boys and girls - It was a pleasure to have you, and I hope when next season rolls around we will be together again in camp.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

1962

- Friday, Oct. 5: AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR  
 Saturday, Speaker: Allan D. Cruickshank  
 October 6th: Subject: The Bear River - a trip across  
 Utah, Wyoming and Idaho.
- Tuesday, GENERAL MEETING at 8 p.m. at the Cafeteria  
 Oct. 9th: on Elliot Street.  
 Speaker: Dr. J. R. Brett of the Biological  
 Station at Departure Bay.  
 Subject: Salmon runs in our streams and  
 lakes.
- Saturday, BIRD FIELD TRIP to Island View Beach.  
 Oct. 13th: Time: 9:30 a.m. at Monterey Parking lot at  
 Hillside & Douglas Sts. or at beach at  
 10 a.m. Bring lunch.  
 Leader: Mr. T. R. Briggs.
- Saturday, ENTOMOLOGY FIELD TRIP  
 Oct. 20th: Time: Monterey Parking lot at 9:30 a.m.  
 Leader: Dr. John A. Chapman  
 Open to Junior Members as well as Seniors.
- Saturday, PACIFIC NORTHWEST BIRD AND MAMMAL SOCIETY  
 Oct. 20th: meets in the Provincial Museum at 2 p.m.  
 Papers will be presented by Dr. Ian McT.  
 Cowan, Dr. Dennis Chitty and Dr. James  
 Hatter.  
 Members of The Victoria Natural History  
 Society are invited to attend.
- Tuesday, BOTANY GROUP  
 Oct. 30th: Time: 8 p.m. at the Provincial Museum.  
 A collection of slides will be shown by  
 Miss Enid Lemon, entitled "Fun with Fungi".  
 Descriptions by Miss M.C. Melburn.  
 Miss Emily Sartain will bring along her  
 Silver Medal collection of paintings of  
 B. C. Fungi.

The Junior Branch will meet every Saturday at the Monterey  
 Parking lot at 1:30 p.m. for field trips.

The leader section will man the Nature House at Francis  
 Park during Sundays throughout the fall season.

Conducted tours can be arranged by phoning Freeman King  
 at GR.9-2966.

# VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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### *Editors*

A. R. DAVIDSON  
825 Monterey Avenue  
Telephone EV 4-9595

G. CLIFFORD CARL  
410 Queen Anne Heights  
Telephone EV 3-8524

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