

The
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COVER PICTURE

This issue's cover picture is Morchella angusticeps, a morel mushroom, further excellently described and illustrated in the following article, courtesy of Dr. Adam Szczawinski of the Provincial Museum.

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TRUE MOREL VERSUS FALSE MOREL

By Adam F. Szczawinski

The group of fungi, comprising approximately 80,000 to 100,000 known and unknown species, shows an amazing variety of form, from microscopic unicellular yeasts to giant puffballs. Some of the species are so prevalent and abundant that they must be considered one of the most successful forms of life. Mushrooms, the edible representatives of this group, usually draw the most attention, and in recent years, more and more people have become interested, even enthusiastic, about them. This "mushroom-ophobia" or "mycophobia" starts usually in early spring at the time when the Morel makes its appearance.

Morels are well known to many of us. To some they are the most sought after mushrooms, to others still somewhat of a puzzle and by some they are even considered poisonous. No doubt there is a certain amount of confusion, especially concerning their edibility. This is because some people, especially beginners, do not realize that besides True Morels, there are also False Morels which occur at the same time and frequently in the same place.

False Morels are closely related to the True Morels. They are dangerous and can cause a lot of trouble. Undoubtedly, many people eat False Morels with no ill effect. However, reports of poisoning occur every once in a while and even death has been attributed to them.

Commonly occurring False Morel, Gyromitra esculenta,

has engaged the attention of both European and American mycologists who are still trying to explain its effect on the human organism. Numerous theories have been advanced, but none of them have proved with certainty, the cause of occasional poisoning by this species. We still do not know if this is the result of personal idiosyncrasy, the occurrence of certain poisonous strains of the mushroom or the development of poisonous principles under certain conditions, with age or partial decay of the fungus. The occurrence of poisonous principles under certain conditions seems most logical for the author to accept; most likely, albumins are converted into poisonous substances by the action of bacteria or enzymes involved in the process of decomposition.

In support of this theory, a significant case can be quoted. A family ate part of a collection of False Morels (*Gyromitra esculenta*) with no ill effect, but when they ate the rest of it next day, severe poisoning developed and one member of the family died. This case suggests that the poisonous principles were most likely produced as a result of decomposition, in the lapse of time between the two meals. This short time seems to be sufficient for the action of bacteria or enzymes involved. Whatever the reason may be, any mushroom known to have such potentialities should not be eaten at any time, and those who collect and utilize morels as a food must make sure they can correctly separate True Morels from False Morels.

TRUE MOREL (*Morchella*)
Commonly called Sponge Mushroom.

Identifying features.

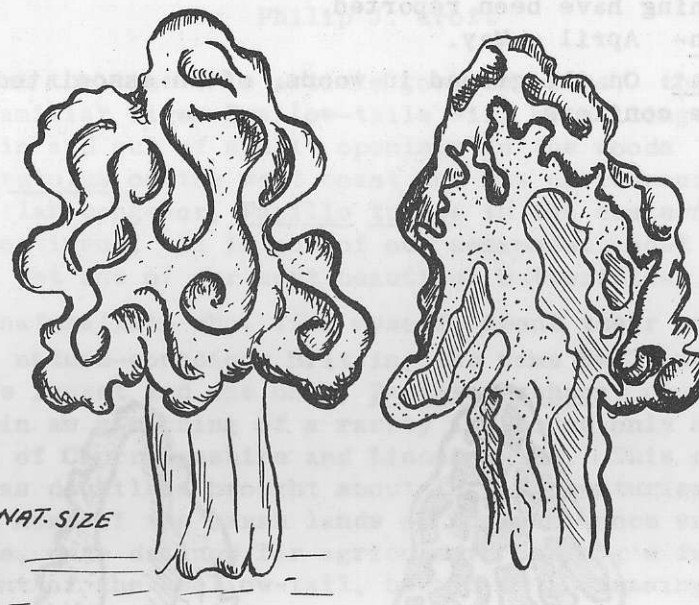
The head (cap) is tan to brown and pitted in characteristic manner that suggests the appearance of a honeycomb or the surface of tripe. The way the pits are arranged varies within the species.

When cut in half, the entire mushroom, from top to base, is hollow.

Edibility. All morels are edible.

Season. March - May.

Habitat. On the ground in old orchards, gardens, waste places, burned-over areas.



LONGITUDINAL SECTION

GYROMITRA **FALSE MOREL**
(*GYROMITRA ESCULENTA*)
CAN BE POISONOUS

FALSE MOREL. (*Gyromitra*)
Commonly called Brain Mushroom.

Identifying features.

The head (cap) is dark reddish-brown to chestnut-red, rounded and folded into many convolutions like the lobes of a brain (not pitted), suggesting the appearance of the brain.

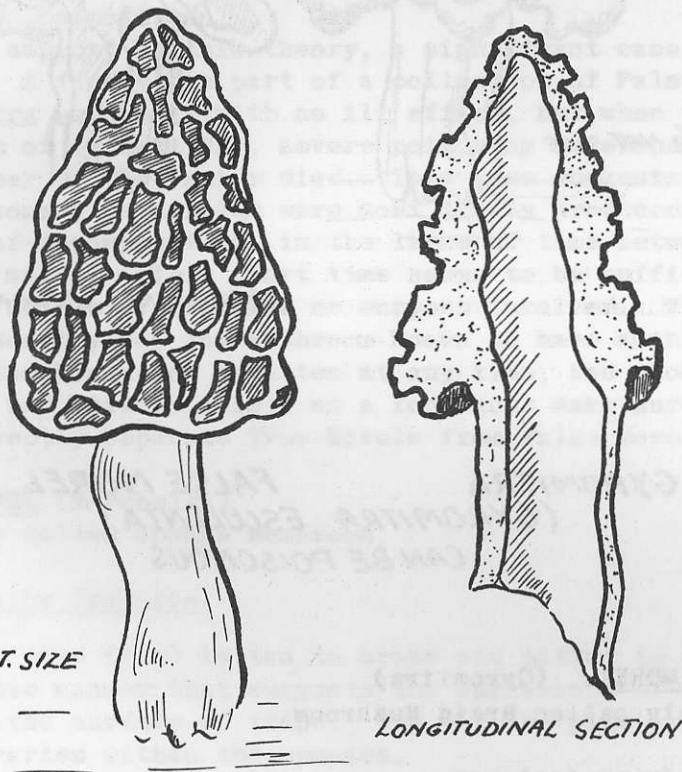
When cut in half, the inside is almost solid, with a number of twisted cavities. It is quite heavy in the hand and breaks easily into pieces.

Edibility. A dangerous mushroom. Many people eat it and

suffer no ill effect, but a number of cases of severe poisoning have been reported.

Season- April - May.

Habitat: On the ground in woods, often associated with mature conifers.



MORCHELLA TRUE MOREL
(MORCHELLA ANGUSTICEPS)
EDIBLE

SWALLOW-TAILS

By Philip J. Croft

About the time this article goes to press, the first of the familiar Tiger Swallow-tails will be sailing majestically in and out of sunlit openings in the woods -- Papilio rutulus on the west coast and its corresponding and very similar congener, Papilio turnus in the eastern part of the continent. It is one of our commonest, most familiar, and yet one of our most beautiful butterflies.

To naturalists who, like myself, spent their boyhood years in nature-conscious Britain, the name Swallow-tail meant one insect and one only, Papilio machaon, considered in Britain as something of a rarity and found only among the fens of Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. This circumstance was doubtless brought about in past centuries as more and more of the marsh lands of England, once very extensive, were drained for agriculture and hog's fennel, food-plant of the swallow-tail, became an increasingly localized herb. The schoolboy collector considered himself fortunate indeed if he numbered a swallow-tail among the specimens in his cigar-box cabinet, especially if he himself had been to the fens and taken it in his own net. None of my friends ever achieved this distinction.

Swallow-tails, so called from the exaggerated prolongation of the second median nervule of the hind wings into a tail-like appendage, are a large and honourable clan in the kingdom of butterflies. The family, Papilionidae, is an enormous one, and numbers among its members some of the world's most gorgeous and spectacular butterflies, including the great bird-wings of Malaysia and Indonesia. The genus Papilio, designating the true-blue swallow-tails, is also large and world-wide and includes many large and beautiful insects.

Canada has seven, or possibly eight, species of swallow-tail butterflies, distributed more or less uniformly across the continent. Here, on the west coast, two are common, the Western Tiger Swallow-tail (P. rutulus) of the coastal woods, and the Mountain Swallow-tail (P. zelicaon) of the upland slopes and alpine meadows. Two other, rather dark forms, P. bairdi and P. indra, are much more scarce and there is a further northern form, P. aliaska, which some writers believe to be a racial variation of P. machaon,

"The" swallow-tail of Britain and northern Europe.

In eastern Canada, likewise two species of swallow-tails are common, the Eastern Tiger Swallow-tail, P. turnus, and Black Swallow-tail, P. asterias (Polyxenes). A somewhat rarer form, the Short-tailed Swallow-tail, P. brevicauda, is found in Newfoundland, Labrador and Cape Breton Island. Some years ago, while visiting with relatives in Hamilton, Ontario, I was surprised and delighted to observe a number of specimens of Papilio philenor, the magnificent iridescent green Pipevine Swallow-tail visiting my mother-in-law's flower garden, and later in the year a number of the great black caterpillars of this species could be seen feeding upon Dutchman's pipe vine which trailed over the fence beside the property. I was never able to determine whether this fine insect had established itself in the area, or survived even a single Canadian winter in any stage of its development. It must certainly have been at the very northernmost limit of its range, for it is an insect of the deep south.

There has been a recent tendency among writers to name the Eastern Tiger Swallow-tail Papilio glaucus, rather than the original name turnus, bestowed by Linnaeus. This seems to me a great mistake, only serving to add confusion to the difficult task of biological classification. Glaucus, a Latin word meaning "sooty grey" refers only to the female of one race of this species which is sooty grey in colour, the male bearing normal yellow and black markings. As this glaucus female is not characteristic of the species as a whole, (and is never found in Canada) the act of naming the whole species from the characteristics of this special female type seems to a Canadian naturalist to be pointless to the degree of folly. However, the distinctions between natural species are not nearly as clear-cut as was once supposed; the systematists have a difficult job to do, and we should perhaps not criticize their efforts too harshly.

In the meantime, the flashing, brilliant wings return each spring to fill with wonder and delight the hearts of those who try to know and understand the complex ways of nature.

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Following is the sixth (and last for this season) in a series of articles describing exotic conifers in Victoria.

AIRY LARCHES OF NORTHERN FORESTS

By David Stirling

Larches are trees of high mountains and cold northern lands. One species occurs to latitude 72 degrees north, in Siberia, well beyond the Arctic circle.

Three species are native to Canada; Eastern larch, Larix laricina, grows with black spruce in the vast muskegs from Newfoundland to the northern Rockies; tall Western larch, L. occidentalis, occurs in the mountains of British Columbia's southern interior; while Lyall's larch, L. lyallii, is found in Canada only on the southern Rockies, and in Manning Park, in the Cascade Range. Good stands of lyallii may be seen within easy walking distance of the lookout road on Blackwall Mountain in the park.

Larches are scarce in Victoria, possibly because these trees require a climate with a definite cold season; only European larch, L. decidua, seems to thrive in mild, moist conditions. Three trees of this species can be seen in Beacon Hill Park at the junction of Dallas Road and Lover's Lane.

Larches are separated from other conifers by reason of their deciduous needles which are borne on short spurs. The needles turn yellow in autumn, giving larch forests a most pleasing appearance.

For quick identification: L. decidua; cones about 1½" long, scales not incurved at apex, 40-50 bracts; seed wings to the edge of the conescale; twigs yellowish; leaves 1½" long.

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THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS OF THE VICTORIA NATURALIST ARE REQUIRED TO FILL A SPECIAL REQUEST ORDER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA. IF YOU CAN SPARE ANY ONE OR MORE OF THE LIST, PLEASE PASS THEM TO MISS ENID LEMON.

Vol. 1, #9; Vol. 3, #2, 3, 5, 6, 7; Vol. 8, #2, 3; Vol. 13, #8, 9; Vol. 14, #1, 2, 3, 6; Vol. 15, #9; Vol. 17, #4, 5, 8, 9; Vol. 18, #1.

THE OLD MAN OF THE SEA

By Jack Barnett
(con't from April)

Glaucous-winged gulls, pigeon guillemots and black oyster-catchers were seen on Imrie Island where we also watched a gull harassing a great blue heron while both flew overhead.

Heading towards Bare Island, we passed a rock on which some hair seals were resting. We turned to get a close look, but they were too shy and dived with considerable splashing as we approached. After that, all we could see were a few heads watching us from among some kelp.

Arriving at Bare Island, and slowly chugging past the rock cliffs, we were impressed by the number of birds nesting there. Gulls, cormorants and guillemots seemed to be more numerous than in past years, much to the benefit of numerous northwestern crows who were waiting patiently nearby to pick up an egg as soon as a nest was vacated.

Our greatest thrill however, came when two tufted puffins flew off the cliff, crossed the bow of the boat with rapid wing-beats, circled back, and when behind the boat they were joined by another bird. The puffins kept circling as the boat drew away and we finally lost them among the maze of birds flying around the area.

We looked up Bent's Life Histories on diving birds and learned that puffins have very rapid wing-beats and that once they are underway, their flight is quite strong. However, they are unable to rise quickly or change direction suddenly and this characteristic is taken advantage of by Aleutian natives to get a supply of meat when the birds are on the nesting ground. Flying around in circles near a boat approaching their nest is also a puffin characteristic, prompted by curiosity.

On our return trip, we saw the puffins again and we were able to approach quite close to get a splendid view of their white and yellow tufts and brilliant orange bills streaked with white. The expression on their faces implied wariness and we wondered if they were going to dive or fly.

Bent mentioned that they came on a large flock of these birds near the Aleutians when the wind was light. The birds were unable to rise off the water and flopped

around helplessly, barely managing to avoid being run down. Only occasionally did they have sense enough to dive, although they are very skillful divers.

The birds we watched finally flew up, no doubt having enough wind to lift them off the water.

On our final run past the island, we spotted one puffin on the cliff, about half way up, preening himself. As he bent his head to get at his breast feathers, or turned to get at his back, his "tufts" stood out like streamers and made him look like a plumed puffin.

These birds with their heavy bodies and small wings have difficulty in taking flight from water to level land in calm weather, and so prefer a cliff or steep hillside from which they can glide downwards for a few feet to give them momentum to get into full flight.

As we drew abreast, the preening bird spread its wings, stood for a moment or two like a poised diver, then, flapping its wings furiously for another moment or two, it dived and after a few feet rose in a gentle curve to gain altitude.

The tufted puffin is a bird of the open ocean and is seldom seen in protected waters. It nests all the way from northern California to the Pribiloffs. For the past couple of years, we have not seen them on our outings to Bare Island and therefore considered ourselves fortunate, not only in seeing four birds, but also in obtaining such splendid views of them flying, swimming and standing on the cliffs.

After nesting, these birds move out to the open ocean where they are seen only by fishermen or those travelling the sea lanes of the Pacific.

Their comical solemnity of face, together with their long snowy locks, tinged with yellow, have suggested the appropriate name by which they are sometimes called "the old man of the sea".

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VANCOUVER'S GAIN, VICTORIA'S LOSS

It was a sad day for Victoria Natural History Society, particularly its ornithology group, when Alan Poynter won a better job in Vancouver.

For several years, he led the ornithology group and was undoubtedly Number One bird man as far as we were concerned. Not only is he an excellent birder, but he was

also the origin of many fine ideas and reports. We will miss him.

Our annual bird count will not be the same without the delightful evening get-together at the house of Helen and Alan while we added up the day's score, hoping to beat the previous year's record.

We wish the Poynter family a great deal of happiness in their new home.

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NOTES ON SWALLOWS

By Adrian Paul
Kleena Kleene, B. C.

All species of British Columbia's Hirundinidae, except the purple martin, may be found nesting in the Chilcotin. In fact, in the breeding season, I have seen as many as five species sitting on a single span of telephone wires.

Tree swallows and violet-greens, though somewhat alike in appearance, are not so alike in habits. On one occasion, when I first put up some bird houses, a tree swallow immediately moved into one and a violet-green into another. Usually, if you want to see tree swallows nesting, you visit woodpecker cavities in aspens, whereas if you want to see violet-greens, you will do better to visit a river-side cliff.

Arrival dates of tree swallows and violet-greens are much the same; about mid-April, with violet-greens leading by a couple of days, Violet-greens spread their nesting over such a long period that it is likely that some raise a second brood. Although tree swallows have ample time, they seldom raise a second brood. After nesting violet-greens form quite large flocks (100-200) about August 1st, and then disappear. Tree swallows form smaller flocks of 20 to 30 and stay around until September.

Two species that in general are most alike are rough-wing and bank swallows; in fact they must be studied closely to note the difference. Not only does their flight differ somewhat, but rough-wings are not only far less plentiful, but also less gregarious. Both species arrived rather late. Bank swallows almost invariably nest in colonies. Rough-wings start and finish nesting a week or two ahead of bank swallows. Neither species is usually seen

in the Chilcotin after the end of July.

Cliff swallows arrive late and leave early; they stay only about three months and are very gregarious. They not only migrate in flocks and build nests in closely packed colonies, but fly in small flocks to gather mud for nest building. It even seems that a lot of them start incubating together.

Barn swallows, although they build mud nests, seem to have most in common with tree swallows. Tree swallows arrive earlier in spring, but in the fall the two species may be seen flocking together. Barn swallows are more likely to raise a second brood than tree swallows, and I have seen barn swallow fledglings as late as the last week of August.

Violet-green swallows, rough-wing and bank swallows may all be found nesting on the same cliff, but in general, their nesting sites come about in different ways. Bank swallows are always in burrows dug by themselves, during the current or past season. Rough-wings sometimes use kingfisher burrows, and are said to use holes in brick walls or natural crannies in rock cliffs. Violet-green swallows do not dig burrows; they use burrows made by other birds, birdhouses and niches or ledges of buildings, and are said to use woodpecker holes.

Although swallows catch perhaps 99 percent of their food on the wing, I have seen four species, all at one time, taking insects that were clinging to grass. The reason appeared to be that a very strong wind had forced the insects to land, so the swallows landed too. I once saw a dozen tree swallows standing on the Cariboo Highway, apparently picking up insects, although there was little or no wind.

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PROFESSOR JEFFREE A. CUNNINGHAM HONOURED

Members of Victoria Natural History Society applaud the great honour to be bestowed on Professor Cunningham, President of the Society during 1952-54, and chairman of its marine biology group for many years.

Professor Cunningham will be the first to receive an Honourary Doctorate of Law from the University of Victoria. In the words of Art Stott of the Victoria Times, "It couldn't happen to a better guy."

BIRDS FOR THE RECORD

Late April and early May are peak times for migrant birds in Victoria area. Some early arrivals already here are: Marsh hawk, March 29; Turkey vulture, April 2 (seen on Denman Island March 24 by W.J.Fitzpatrick); Orange crowned and myrtle warbler, April 5, Yellowthroat, April 9, solitary vireo, April 12, all seen by Tom and Gwen Briggs; Barn swallow and water pipit, April 11, seen by Betty Howland and Gwen Briggs; Lincoln's sparrow, April 9 and mountain bluebird (very rare) April 14, seen by Grace Bell.

In late March and early April, the flocking of thousands of seafoal in pursuit of spawning herring is one of our most outstanding wildlife spectacles. At this time, herring "ball-up" in an attempt to escape fish that attack them from below, and birds that attack from above. At Easter, the Davidson's reported 75,000 waterfowl and gulls of twelve species at one of these "ball-ups", in Buckley Bay.

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THE WATCHER WHO DID NOT

Submitted by Mrs J.I.Davies

With best wishes for the speedy recovery of Edith Ferguson

A little bird sat on a rock,
All alone, not in a flock.
Sitting there, his business minding,
Never thought that there'd be finding
Him, a watcher of a bird.
To him the idea was absurd.

But suddenly, appeared a lady
Creeping stealthily and shady.
Thought she "I'll take a closer look
And then I'll put him in my book."

But, alas, twas not to be
For though she stepped so carefully,
A sudden slip, a fall, a twist,
And worst of all, a broken wrist.
The bird flew off, not knowing he
Had caused a woeful tragedy.

All the watchers gathered near
Fearing the worst that they could fear.
But the victim Irishly,
Gaily refused all sympathy.
"Next time I watch a bird", said she,
"I'll choose one sitting in a tree."

*** * ***

AQUATIC ENTOMOLOGY

By M. D. Atkins
Canada Forestry

Many workers have suggested that insects arose from an aquatic ancestor, probably as far back as the Silurian era 390 million years ago. However, aquatic insects that inhabit the earth today are not direct descendants of that hypothetical ancestor. With the exception of Collembola, all aquatic insects have a tracheal system in some degree of development, and almost all known aquatic insects breathe atmospheric air in some stage of their life history. This tells us that these forms are members of once terrestrial groups that have returned to the water.

Among the oldest of aquatic insects are Mayflies which derive their ordinal name Ephemeroptera from the fact that adults usually live for only a day. These adults are weak fliers and because of their fluted, fan-like wings appear to dance up and down as they fly. Consequently, they often swarm in areas protected from wind.

Mature adults are smooth and shiny and extremely delicate. When collected, they must be handled with great care to avoid damaging their wings and long "tails". They are difficult to pin and should be preserved in alcohol, where, unfortunately, they lose their beauty.

While the adults take no food, the nymphs are among the browsers and grazers of the aquatic ecosystem, feeding entirely on plant tissue. They breathe by means of from four to seven pairs of articulate gills located on the sides of the abdomen. Like the adults, nymphs have two or three long caudal filaments. In some species, the tiny larvae of a chironomid fly live in a symbiotic relationship between the mayfly's gills. These scavengers feed upon the debris that accumulates in that area, and in so doing, clean the gills of the mayfly.

When mayflies emerge from the water, they are

sexually immature and are usually dull and pubescent. This stage is called the subimago. After a short time, usually within a day, an additional molt occurs which results in the formation of the shiny, mature adult or imago. Nowhere else among insects is this extra subimago stage of development known.

When her wings are dry, the female enters a group of swarming males and is mated. She then deposits her eggs over water and dies, often only a few yards from where she emerged. The eggs sink to the bottom and the cycle begins again.

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OUR RESIDENT VIREO

By Eleanore Davidson

You can count on one hand the number of times we have seen a Hutton's vireo -- he is so elusive, but now that spring is here, that loud insistent call of his will positively identify him. He resembles a ruby-crowned kinglet, except in his actions, and on close inspection, his bill is stubby, not thin and sharp like that of a kinglet.

A couple of years ago, my husband and I were exploring the hillside above Lands End Road. That's the road which skirts the end of Saanich Peninsula. There we heard a constant, repetitious, double note that we couldn't identify, nor could we find the owner. It was not like any note we had heard before. Thick underbrush made it impossible to see more than a few feet, and when the call stopped, we looked at each other with dismay -- baffled birdwatchers.

But yesterday the mystery was solved. While showing two teacher friends, from Toronto, some of our untouched country, we were back in the vicinity of that other occasion. We came to an opening, and while the teachers were excitedly admiring their first rufous hummingbird, which was hovering over a red-flowering current, I heard that same call-note again. This time it was quite near -- surely its maker could be found. With four of us looking intently, everywhere, through a fairly thick fir, cedar, arbutus, spiarea combination of foliage, we stood a good chance. Suddenly, a bird popped into view, still making its call note. Now we

all watched it intently, noting its characteristics. It was the teachers' first Hutton's vireo, and the third we'd ever encountered.

Incidentally, it was this vireo, and the bush-tit, that Mr. W. Earl Godfrey, who heads the department of ornithology at the National Museum in Ottawa, came to Vancouver Island to study first-hand for his "Birds of Canada", and that long awaited volume should be in our book stores by this summer.

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FROM TROUBLES OF THE WORLD

The following are extracts from a seven-minute speech given by Mrs. Mary Winstone at the Golden Gavel Speech contest on April 23/64, sponsored by Victoria Toastmaster Clubs.

"Hello, Bruce. Where've you been?"

"Birdwatching."

"Birdwatching?! You mean there really is such a thing. I thought that was something made up by cartoonists. What is birdwatching anyway?"

"It is the sport of amateur ornithology. Birds are fascinating. They can hover, glide, soar and fly -- symbols of freedom to us earthbound creatures. The psalmist sighs, 'Oh for wings like a dove.' Shakespeare bids us 'Hark, hark the lark at Heaven's gate sings.'"

"When you take up the study of birds, you have a source of never-ending delight, because it is a journey into the unknown. Most bird behaviour is still a mystery. Why do Arctic terns fly from pole to pole twice each year, and how do they navigate? Instinct? How do you explain instinct?"

"Speaking of instinct, Mr. Guiguet claims birding gives the pleasure it does because by searching out and tracking down a bird, we are satisfying our 'primitive hunting instinct.'"

"This finding and identifying of birds is completely absorbing. A retreat or escape from pressures of business -- or domesticity."

"From troubles of the world I turn to -- ducks", says the poet Harvey.

Birdwatching means different things to different

people. What aspect would you find most appealing? There is learning to identify birds and listing them. Learning their calls. There is bird photography and the recording of bird songs. There is always congenial company on outings, and friendly competition."

"There is also teasing -- I must be sensitive, because I left birdwatching off my list of hobbies recently -- I thought the Toastmaster might say, 'Hmm -- wonder what her favourite bird is? Mine's roast turkey!'"

"To start -- find your binoculars. You haven't any? Borrow a pair for now -- you've got a birthday coming up!"

"There's a bird! To identify it, you must note: Where it is -- song sparrows like hedges. What it's doing -- towhees scratch in dry leaves. How does it fly -- a goldfinch bounces through the air, singing on the way. What colour is it -- a cowbird looks like a blackbird that has dipped its head in chocolate. What markings does it have -- a flicker's white rump patch looks like an egg carried on its back. With a Victoria check list, find which of 200 or so species it could be. With Peterson's 'Field Guide to Western Birds', find which bird it is. If you're stuck, phone me and I'll give its name -- or the name of someone you can call who will be able to positively identify it."

"Victoria is a wonderful place for year-round bird-watching. On the day of the Christmas Bird Count, 80 people saw 127 different species -- the highest number of species in any one area in Canada!"

"Start your children with books and bird cards. Point out to them the ducks in Beacon Hill Park. Interested parent -- interested child."

"The appeal of nature lasts a lifetime, and adds a new dimension to camping holidays and trips to new places. Local birdwatchers delight in showing you their specialties."

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JUNIOR JOTTINGS

By Nancy Chapman

As usual, the Junior's month has been interesting and busy. The weather, on the whole, has been just beautiful, with plenty of sun and blue sky. Turn-outs were excellent.

Trips up Mt. Newton, in John Dean Park, were enjoyed by all. There, we found the first of the spring flowers in full bloom -- satinflower, blue-eyed Mary, saxifrage, and of course, skunk cabbage. We heard an extremely interesting talk on the history of the park by "Skipper", and we saw where the very first survey post in Saanich Peninsula had been. We also learned about the early Indians of the area and saw a rock where they used to sacrifice slaves.

A profitable expedition was made to Goldstream campsite, where the new nature trail was explored. Goldstream will always be a favourite place because of the good times we have there at camp each summer.

Another "workbee" was held at Francis Park, and the trails were cleared for the expected stream of summer visitors. The leaders have been taking turns going to the park every Sunday, and new displays are put in the Nature House every week.

On Sunday, April 5, a few of our junior leaders went to Duncan to have a cookout at Chemainus River with the junior leaders of the Cowichan Valley Group. We explored gravel beds along the river and found a great variety of rocks, a few fossils and a few concretions. We attempted to pan gold, but failed to "strike it rich". We came across a large school of salmon fry stranded in a tiny pool, several hundred feet from the river. Thousands of fry are stranded every year and die when the pools dry up.

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FRANCIS PARK

By Freeman King

The new laboratory and workshop in Francis Park has been completed, with the exception of a few furnishings, and is being made good use of by members of the Junior Group who are attending Victoria University. These students have a key and are able to use the new facilities whenever they require them.

The Nature House has been re-painted and new display tables made. Over 400 visitors have been in it since it re-opened.

A multitude of spring flowers are blooming in the park and it is looking its best. All the trails have been cleared and a new trail has been surveyed.

The swamp has its chorus of frogs and in the quiet of the evening they fill the air with their many pitches of sound. Ravens have taken up residence in the forest and are a pleasure to watch as they soar and dive. For those who like to hear the buzz of bees, the maple flowers are a-hum with their activity.

Miss Nancy Chapman will have the position of park naturalist during the summer, and if anyone wishes a conducted tour of the park, please phone her at 384-5568.

Our genial caretaker, Percy Dumbleton, is always on the job keeping the parking lot and service area clean and in first class condition.

We would like every member of the Society to take advantage of the park by visiting it to enjoy its beauty and quietness.

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

The "shotgun" or general, overall approach to things seems popular in many aspects of life these days, so perhaps I will be forgiven if I use it on this occasion.

Articles have shown up in my rural mailbox and on my town desk in a really gratifying quantity and quality. I'm grateful for that, and I'm sure all Society members are, because without them, we'd have had no magazine.

Good intentions are a fine thing, and I've had lots of them. When I took on the task of editing your magazine, I had every intention of writing personal notes to people who responded by sending in material for printing. However, what with this and that, the best of intentions fall by the wayside, so this hurried note, on the eve of the last edition for the season, is to say "thankyou" to you all.

Although there have been times when it was a tight squeeze to find time to put the publication together, on the whole, I've enjoyed it, and I've learned a lot from the material I've had to work over. I hope no one has been too dismayed at the result of my cutting and rearranging -- remember, it was all supposed to be for the good of the end product !! Remember too, that it is an editor's privilege to make a mess of things once in a while!

Perhaps you might have had a chuckle now and then

too, had you seen me trying to reconcile my spelling with yours, or witness my scramble through the few technical books I have, to try to confirm the spelling of a botanical name -- then give up and hope that Dr. Carl, or one of his associates, would catch it on the way by, as they invariably do, when the manuscript gets its final check before going to the printer. Miss Monks is to be congratulated too, for her patience with some of my late submissions and alterations.

This is a particularly fat issue -- 20 pages -- because I have "scraped the barrel clean" -- not one story that has been submitted for publication is left. This means of course, that there is no backlog to start off the next issue in September. So as they come to mind, or pen, send your articles along, ready for the first issue of the new season; then there won't be a mad scramble for material at the last moment. There will be a wealth of material in your summer field trips, which I hope will be pleasant and rewarding for you, and I hope you will share them with us in the fall.

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(Cont'd from page 124)

BOTANY GROUP: A Field Trip to Cowichan Lake and Skutz Falls. Meet at Monterey parking lot at 9:30 a.m. Bring lunch. Miss M.C. Melburn will lead. July and August field trips will be announced later.

BIRD FIELD TRIP: East Sooke.
July 25 Meet at Monterey parking lot at 9:30 a.m. or Colwood Plaza at 10 a.m.
Bring lunch.
Leader: Mr. M. Matheson, EV.3-7381

BIRD FIELD TRIP: Cowichan Bay.
August 29 Meet at Monterey parking lot at 9:30 a.m. or Goldstream Picnic site 10 a.m.
Bring lunch.
Leader - Mr. M. Matheson, EV.3-7381

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS

- ANNUAL MEETING: The Annual Meeting of The Victoria Natural History Society will be held at 8 p.m. in the cafeteria of the Douglas Building. Reports will be submitted and officers elected. A film will be shown after the business meeting.
May 12
- BIRD GROUP: Will meet at Monterey parking lot at 9:30 a.m. or at Francis Park at 10 a.m. Tom Briggs will lead. Bring lunch.
May 9
- ANNUAL PICNIC: At Spectacle Lake Park on the Malahat. Turn right off Island Highway at first gravel road on the left past Shawnigan Lake cut-off. Cars will leave Monterey parking lot at 10 a.m. or arrive at the lake when you like in your own car. Bring lunch and/or supper as you wish -- stay as long as you like. Good place for plants, birds, pond life, fishing and swimming. For particulars, phone Freeman King at GR.9-2966.
May 23
- BOTANY GROUP: Meet at Monterey parking lot at 1:30 p.m. for a field trip to Blinkhorne Lake, Metchosin. Miss M.C. Melburn will lead.
May 30
- SPECIAL OUTING: To Cowichan Lake B.C. Forest Service Experimental Station. To see progeny plantations and clone banks in connection with the work of Dr. A. Orr-Ewing. This is a follow-up of the lecture he gave in January. Meet at Monterey parking lot at 9:00 a.m. Bring lunch.
June 6
- BIRD FIELD TRIP: Saltspring Island.
June 6 Meet at Swartz Bay at 10:30 a.m. or at Monterey parking lot 9:30 a.m. - Bring lunch. Phone Mr. M. Matheson at -- EV.3-7381 for further information.

(continued on page 123)

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