

*The*  
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MY CHURCH

By Linda Gregg

My church is God's world. His trees, flowers, shrubs, birds, insects, fishes, and animals are all members of the congregation. Towering trees, graced with the grandeur of age, are the arches of my church. Their sweeping branches silently usher me into this sacred place. The floor is soft and cushiony, and here and there are bright spots of color. All varieties of mosses, lichens, and flowers are to be found here. Fern moss grows in the shady areas, and nearby can be seen some pine moss, hugging close to a rock. The glossy leaves of the twinflower shine in the sun and its dainty flowers nod in the slight breeze. Old logs, once fine specimens many years ago, now lie in repose upon the forest floor. They are the pews of my church. Many are gaily decorated with colorful slime-molds, mosses, and some even boast a few flowers.

The walls of my church are stately and varied, here an old cedar, and perhaps over there a young maple, struggling for existence. The choir of my church is a fine one. Robins, finches, sparrows, woodpeckers, and even the low bass of the raven, are all here to sing praise to God. The pulpit is a low, rounded rock, and here all the ministers of God's world gather to preach their sermons. Some come in flocks, like the birds, while others, like the squirrel, come alone. Each one has his own message for me from God, and each delights in telling it to me. Whether it be by the way it sings, or by the way it survives.

And now the final touch to my church, the roof. Blue skies, with swirls of white clouds form the roof. They are the Heavens, reaching far into the infinities of space, and coming back to shelter my church and all its congregation.

BEAUTY IN A BOG

By M.C. Melburn

Ten paces off the road will put you knee-deep into a small, but richly populated sphagnum bog, a delightful spot to explore. This bog is approximately 6 miles east of Port Renfrew at an altitude of about 800 feet.

There, on July 11th, three of us observed, growing in profusion, many familiar plants:- labrador tea, bunchberry, twin-flower, swamp laurel, arctic star-flower, little St. John's wort and buckbean.

But there were many others not so frequently seen such as, false asphodel, green-flowered bog-orchid, bog cranberry, sundew, slender cotton-grass and broad-leaved caltha, a cousin to the marsh marigold.

Three plants we had not previously seen anywhere were northern apargidium, crowberry and gold-thread.

Northern apargidium is a dandelion relative. Its long and very narrow leaves are all basal. The plant has only one head of yellow flowers mounted on a scape twice the length of the leaves and so thin as to curve twice or thrice apparently in an effort to hold up its heavy flower-head.

Crowberry is a small heath-like shrub with thick linear leaves 4-8 mm. long and brownish-purple flowers no more than 3 mm. in length. Black berries, small and round, develop later in the season.

Gold-thread (so named for the colour of its roots) has fern-like leaf-blades of firm texture so smooth as to appear polished. It blossoms from April to May, so we found no flowers and even the seeds had dropped.

Many sedges and rushes grow among these plants; sphagnum moss carpets the whole area and various coniferous trees frame the picture.

REFERENCE LIST:

<u>Family</u>	<u>Genus &amp; Species</u>	<u>Common Name:</u>
Cyperaceae	Eriophorum gracile - - -	slender cotton grass
Liliaceae	Tofieldia glutinosa - - -	false asphodel
Orchidaceae	Habenaria hyperborea - - -	green flowered bog-orchid
Ranunculaceae	Coptis asplenifolia - - -	gold-thread
"	Caltha biflora - - - -	broad-leaved caltha
Empetraceae	Empetrum nigrum - - - -	-crowberry

Reference List, cont'd:

<u>Family</u>	<u>Genus &amp; Species</u>	<u>Common Name:</u>
Droseraceae	Drosera rotundifolia - - -	sundew
Hypericaceae	Hypericum anagalloides - -	little St. John's wort
Ericaceae	Cornus canadensis - - - -	bunchberry
"	Oxycoccus quadripetalus (Vaccinium oxycoccus) - -	bog cranberry
"	Kalmia polifolia - - - -	swamp laurel
"	Ledum groenlandicum - - -	labrador tea
Primulaceae	Trientalis arctica - - - -	arctic star-flower
Gentianaceae	Menyanthes trifoliata - - -	buckbean
Caprifoliaceae	Linnaea borealis - - - -	twin-flower
Compositae	Apargidium boreale - - - -	northern apargidium

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The following bulletin, issued by the Royal Society For The Protection of Birds, came to your editor's attention while on a brief visit to Scotland this summer. Its message is an excellent example of strenuous measures necessary to assure the survival of a living thing when conservation is neglected for almost too long. Perhaps those who feel that conservation is a fine thing, but are a little lukewarm in their support of action, may find a lesson in this story of a struggle to assure the survival of a magnificent bird.

OSPREYS IN SPEYSIDE

The Osprey is unique among British birds of prey in that it feeds almost exclusively on fish -- in Speyside mainly pike -- which it catches by plunging feet first with a great splash into rivers and lochs. It is a large bird with a wing span of five feet. It can be distinguished easily from other birds of prey by its brown upper-parts, white head with a black stripe through the eye, and white under-parts.

It is a summer visitor to its breeding quarters in northern Europe, and spends the winter in Africa. It breeds regularly in Sweden, and is extending its range westwards in Norway. It usually builds its nest right at the top of a tall tree -- the Loch Garten tree is 40 feet high. The nest is composed of large twigs and dead branches carried to the eyrie in the birds' talons, and is about five feet in diameter.

The "Fish-hawk" (as it is often called) has no connection with the so-called "Osprey" plumes which were obtained from Egrets (a species of Heron) slaughtered during the breeding season with much attendant cruelty. The importation of these plumes is now prohibited by law -- the result of representations made to Parliament by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

About a century and a half ago, Ospreys nested in remote parts of the Highlands. With the development of sporting interests, fishing proprietors came to brand the Osprey with other birds of prey as "vermin," and the destruction of these beautiful birds began. Trophy hunters were also on the prowl for stuffed specimens; and the Ospreys became reduced in numbers, the egg collectors scrambled to the scene to get a clutch of "British-taken" Osprey eggs before, with their rapacity, they finally exterminated the last of our native-breeding birds.

The most famous nest site in our area was on the ruined castle on Loch an Eilein where the birds laid eggs for the last time in 1899 -- although the eyrie was visited in successive years up to 1902. This nest used to be raided continually by egg-collectors until the birds finally gave up.

Although Ospreys occurred occasionally in Spring on migration, it was not until shortly after World War II that they began to be seen with increasing regularity in Speyside. They still had to run the gauntlet of game-keepers, some of whom continued to take a toll of the birds. That these birds were continental migrants is shown by the fact that two birds, ringed as young in Sweden, were recovered in May and June in the Highlands.

On 29th August, 1953, three Ospreys were seen on the wing in Speyside -- but there was no proof of nesting. In 1954 it was unofficially reported that a pair had nested and reared two young. In 1955, a pair were seen building an eyrie at the top of a Scots pine on the south shore of Loch Garten on 29th April. The birds were seen mating the next day, but it is not known whether eggs were laid. In any event, by the end of May the site was deserted. It is very probable that this nest was robbed, as the birds later began to build a "frustration" eyrie in the Sluggan Pass. It was then late in the season for success, and the birds soon forsook the area.

In 1956, the Ospreys returned, and this time built an eyrie in the heart of Rothiemurchus forest. Eggs were

laid in early May, but had disappeared by 1st June. Once again, the pair built another "frustration" eyrie -- this time on a dead tree on the south shore of Loch Morlich. The pattern of behaviour was very similar to that of the previous year. Again it was too late in the season for the birds to succeed.

Early in April 1957, a pair of Ospreys returned to the area, but one was shot before nesting began. The other repaired and lined the Loch Garten nest of 1955, but failed to attract a mate.

In 1958, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds made arrangements to safeguard the birds night and day, believing that egg-collectors were the main danger. The birds nested near Loch Garten and the R.S.P.B.'s suspicions were confirmed when a collector climbed the tree under cover of darkness and, on being surprised, dropped the eggs and made his escape; both the smashed eggs were fertile and would have hatched within a fortnight.

In 1959 a larger guard was mounted when the pair again returned to Loch Garten and nested in a new tree to the east of the Loch. Wardens guarding the nest at night had the use of a parabolic-reflector microphone situated below the tree to enable them to detect any suspicious noises. The lower trunk of the tree was also swathed in barbed dannaert wire to prevent anyone climbing it. This time the birds were successful in rearing three chicks. After the eggs had hatched, the R.S.P.B. erected an observation post from which the public could view the birds through powerful binoculars mounted on a tripod. Between 12th June until mid-August, this observation post was visited by over 14,000 people.

Since 1959 a pair of Ospreys has nested successfully every year at the same eyrie. In 1960, two young were reared; and in 1961, three young. The Public Observation Post has been visited by other stray Ospreys, but none of them have settled to nest and were probably only on passage migration. Incubation began on 1st May and it is anticipated that the eggs will hatch on 6th June.

The R.S.P.B. again arranged for their protection -- guarding the nest night and day during the incubation period with a succession of volunteer members of the Society. The public are again invited to view the birds at the eyrie from O.P. which is open between 10:30 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. Outside these hours, the public are not admitted to the Sanctuary. Access is by a peat track

leading eastwards into the Sanctuary from the public road at Loch Garten.

For the fourth year running, the Ospreys have returned safely to Loch Garten and have now become part of the Highland scene to which they belong. They are as yet the only pair known to breed in the whole of the British Isles. Please help us by giving a donation; or better still, become a Member of the Society.

Please ask for a free Prospectus at the Observation Post, or write for details to the Society's Scottish Representative, Mr. George Waterston, R.S.P.B. Scottish Office, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh, 7.

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#### THE TUESDAY GROUP

by J. M. Barnett, Scarborough, Ontario

The 'Friendly Forum', we like to call them - a small group of naturalists who meet every Tuesday morning, rain or shine, and wander along the by-ways of Victoria to enjoy the fresh air, the fauna and flora, and each other's company.

Go with them and you will get to know the haunts of the birds, hear the skylark sing and visit the secret places of the wild flowers.

You will be told the bird calls by one who has had her tape recordings put on records and played by the C. B. C., and have the bird or flower you saw identified by the professor.

Throughout the year many visitors to Victoria join the group and are welcomed. We have heard many flattering remarks from them about Victoria in general and the friendliness of the group in particular.

My own association with the 'Tuesday Group' was the highlight of my stay on the 'Enchanted Isle', and my greatest regret since returning to the big city has been my inability to see these charming people each week.

Maybe some day in the not too distant future, we will be permitted to walk with them again.

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#### BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

For those who have not seen the July 1964 issue of the Newsletter, we present the following excerpts.

A well-attended Annual meeting was held in Penticton

on May 9th and 10th. The South Okanagan Naturalist's Club hosted the meeting and two field trips. Mr. York Edwards of Provincial Parks Branch spoke on "Parks and the Naturalist". Dr. J.E. Armstrong chaired the meeting in the absence of Dr. T.M.C. Taylor, President. Dr. James E. Bendell, University of British Columbia, Department of Zoology, was elected President for 1964-65. Other officers of the Council remain as before.

During the meeting, discussion centred on Provincial Parks. Two resolutions relating to Provincial Parks are to be sent to Hon. Mr. Keirnan, Minister of Recreation and Conservation.

1. "Whereas in recent weeks, much concern has been expressed by many individuals and organizations in British Columbia about the basic purposes and the future of our Provincial Parks, be it resolved, that this Council expresses the conviction that the primary object of the establishment and maintenance of a Provincial Park should be the long term preservation of nature for the education and enjoyment of future generations.
2. "Resolved that this meeting of the British Columbia Nature Council ask the Hon. Minister of Recreation and Conservation to hasten the inventory of recreational and natural features of British Columbia Provincial Parks.

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#### AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS, SEASON 1964-65

The following are the dates and speakers for the coming series:

- Oct. 2 & 3 - Mrs. Patricia Witherspoon "Stepping stones to Australia".  
 Nov. 6 & 7 - Earl L. Hilfiker - - - - "Wildlife of the Eastern Woodlands."  
 Jan. 15 & 16 - Charles T. Hotchkiss - "Wilderness Trails"  
 Feb. 12 & 13 - John D. Bulger - - - - "New England Saga"  
 Mar. 19 & 20 - G. Clifford Carl - - - - "Essence of Life"

The above dates are all Fridays and Saturdays. Unfortunately, owing to increased cost of production, the season tickets and single admission tickets for adults have had to be increased. New prices will be: Season Tickets \$3.50, single admission \$1.00. The price for students remains as before, season tickets \$1.00, single admission 25¢.

It is hoped that every member will introduce a non-member friend to the excellent Audubon Wildlife Film series.

### PARKS FOR NATURALISTS

- Wickaninnish Beach Park -

By R. Y. Edwards

This park is on famous Long Beach, north of Uclulet, and now quite easy to reach via a rough road from Alberni - not so bad a road at low speed. Be prepared for surprises in this park. The forest surrounding the campsites is a bit boggy, and full of stunted cedars, lodgepole pines and hemlocks that have been blasted by sea gales.

The beach is delightful. Look for razor clams, semi-palmated sandpipers, and whales blowing off-shore. In late summer, hundreds of shearwaters are often off-shore also. Some outcrops of rock on the beach support goose barnacles, California mussels and many starfish.

Out at sea are islands festooned with cormorants and sea lions. Here is a new world for naturalists -- only five hours from Victoria.

### FRANCIS PARK

by Freeman King

The Nature House and trails at Francis Park seem to be as popular as ever. During June, over 1,000 visitors enjoyed the beauty of the trails. We were very pleased with public response to our plea to keep the park clean and avoid damaging plants.

Scenes within the park are always changing. No two days are alike. Today a flower blooms; tomorrow the seed develops. An ever-active bird feeds its brood; soon the young will fly. Fascinating activities of red ants teach a lesson in industry.

Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, school classes and many other groups have visited the park to see and learn something of the world of nature. A number of Victoria University students have been using the park as a study area.

Nancy Chapman and Linda Gregg have kept things in order; have changed the Nature House displays as required; have taken visitors on conducted tours of the park trails, and somehow found time to help younger members learn a little more about nature.

Mr. Percy Dumbleton, our caretaker, has kept the parking and service area in top condition and cut the long grass to reduce fire hazard. Thanks are due to Saanich municipal authorities for placing a new sign restricting

the speed of cars passing the parking area.

We welcome to the park board, as secretary-treasurer, Mr. Richard Moyer, who takes the place of Mr. W. Morgan, who recently moved to Nanaimo.

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### JUNIOR JOTTINGS

by Nancy Chapman

At the beginning of July, the Junior Branch held their annual camp at Goldstream Park. Altogether, there were 41 people in camp, 6 staff, and 35 children. Four were juniors from the Duncan group.

Skipper of course was in charge. Mrs. Chapman did the cooking, with the valuable assistance of Mrs. Pite (from Duncan), Mrs. Whitby, and Mrs. Gifford. Mrs. Kaye Osbourne, or "Ozzie", acted as camp mother. We would like to thank these people for making our camp such a success.

Camp activities consisted of nature study, hiking, swimming, games and stunts, and campfire. A survey was made by each work group of the new Nature Trail at the campsite. The trail was divided into ecological zones according to geological structure and plant growth, and outstanding features of the trail were recorded. Results of these surveys were summarized and turned over to Mr. R. York Edwards of the Parks Branch.

One of the highlights of the survey was a visit to a grove of huge trees growing in a glacial pocket at the back of campsites 73 and 74. Skip had found this grove several weeks before and was very thrilled with it. He asked us if we would like to pick a name for it, and we decided it would be appropriate to call it SKIP'S PARADISE. We wrote a letter to the Parks Branch telling them of our decision, and hope to get a sign erected in his honour.

We were very pleased to have some members of the senior group come out and visit us, although we wished more had come.

Besides our own local camp, we are holding this year, for the first time, a provincial camp near Oliver in the Okanagan, again under Skip's leadership. Only four from Victoria are permitted to attend this camp. Those attending are Danny Gifford, Ross Storey, Nancy Pope, and Jan Murphey, as well as Skip and myself.

This camp is ten days long and includes several

out-of-camp expeditions, which should be of real interest, especially to those who have never been to the Okanagan. We hope to conduct a survey of one of the many alkali lakes in that region. The camp should be a big success.

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#### A PLEASANT EXPERIENCE

by A. R. Davidson

If there is one thing more than any other which delights a bird watcher, it is to find a migration of the small birds. Quite often in July and August the woods are apparently destitute of life; there is no singing and everything is quiet.

In the early morning of August 8th, however, we entered the woods on Cedar Hill Cross Road just beyond the riding academy, and found the trees and shrubs alive with birds. Migrants and residents alike were all there, singing and calling and excitedly flying around in all directions, so we stayed there over an hour and did our best to identify them and get some idea of their numbers.

Bushtits and chickadees were there in flocks, and while we were unable to identify them all, we counted twenty-six species, which included the seldom seen black-throated grey warbler, also lutescent, yellow, black-cap and McGillivray warblers; russet-back thrushes and western tanagers; western and olive-sided flycatchers, solitary vireo; mourning doves and band-tailed pigeon, downy woodpeckers, creepers and nuthatches; crossbills, siskins, purple and house finches; also towhees, song sparrows and Bewick wrens.

This is an early date for such a migration, and apparently it was fairly wide-spread, as Mr. Mackenzie-Grieve found many such migrants at his place about a mile away at Cadboro Bay about the same time of day.

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#### FOREST RESEARCH STATION, COWICHAN LAKE, B.C.

by Gail Moyer

On Saturday, June 6th, twelve cars set out for an expedition to the B. C. Forest Service Research Station at Cowichan Lake. This trip was organized as a follow-up to Dr. S.L. Orr-Ewing's lecture on "Forest Tree Breeding in B.C." on January 14th. At Mesachie Lake village we met Mr. Chris Heaman, who was to be our guide on the expedition.

Before going to the Experimental Station, we drove a

short distance up Robertson Valley to see some examples of individual research trees. Most of the trees are chosen for favourable characteristics, as we saw in tree #13. An example of a very poor tree was seen in #19. Although this tree has bad characteristics, such as a very crooked stem and thick droopy branching, it is also being used as a research tree, to discover if these bad characteristics are inherent. These trees are used by Dr. Orr-Ewing for cross-breeding studies. Pollination bags are put on the female strobili early in the spring. When they are receptive, they are pollinated by means of a hypodermic syringe which is inserted through the bag. The pollen used in the cross is collected previously. After pollination, and when the scales of the young cones have closed, the pollination bags are removed and replaced with fine mesh bags until picking time, to protect them from insects and squirrels. By this method of controlled pollination, both parents are known, and the characteristics of the progeny which develop can be related to those of their parents.

The next stop was on the road to the station, to see two examples of plus trees. Here, Mr. Heaman gave an explanation of the propagation of plus trees, and introduced us to such terms as ramet, scion and clone bank. With the aid of a rifle, scions are collected from the top of a plus tree and grafted onto a root-stock. The individual, consisting of a scion and root-stock, is called a ramet. Each row, or clone, consists of ramets with scions from one tree and the clones collectively comprise a clone bank. By this method of vegetative propagation, trees are produced which are genetically identical to the plus trees.

After lunch, we took a shortlook at the seed beds, where seedlings are grown in an artificial mixture of peat and sand. It is important to know how research trees behave as parents, therefore, the germination of their seeds is studied. Some seedlings have developed from very wide crosses; for example -- a female cone on a Cowichan Lake tree was pollinated with pollen from a tree in Oregon. By such widely separated crosses, it is hoped to obtain heterosis or populations which would otherwise not have been combined.

(To be concluded in  
the October issue.)

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPSGENERAL MEETING:

Sept. 8th.

At the Douglas Building Cafeteria  
on Elliot Street, at 8 p.m.

Speaker - Miss Enid Lemon

"See A Moose or Bust".

Fragments of fauna and flora from  
Okanagan to Banff. Illustrated.BIRD FIELD TRIP:

Sept. 19th:

To Island View Beach;

Meet at Monterey Parking Lot,

Hillside & Douglas, 9:30 a.m.,  
or the Black Swan, Elk Lake at 10 a.m.

Leader: Mr. M. Matheson, EV.3-7381.

Bring lunch.

BOTANY MEETING:

Sept. 30th.

At the Provincial Museum at 8 p.m.

Speaker: Mr. J. Cowlin

"Mountain Flowers". Illustrated.

JUNIOR GROUP:Meet each Saturday at the Monterey  
Parking Lot, Hillside & Douglas at  
1:30 p.m. for Field trips.

Leader: Mr. Freeman King.

Anyone who would like to join these  
trips is welcome. Mr. King can be  
contacted at GR.9-2966.AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR:

Oct. 2 &amp; 3.

At the Oak Bay Junior High School  
at 8 p.m.

Speaker: Patricia B. Witherspoon

Subject - "Stepping Stones to Australia"

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# VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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