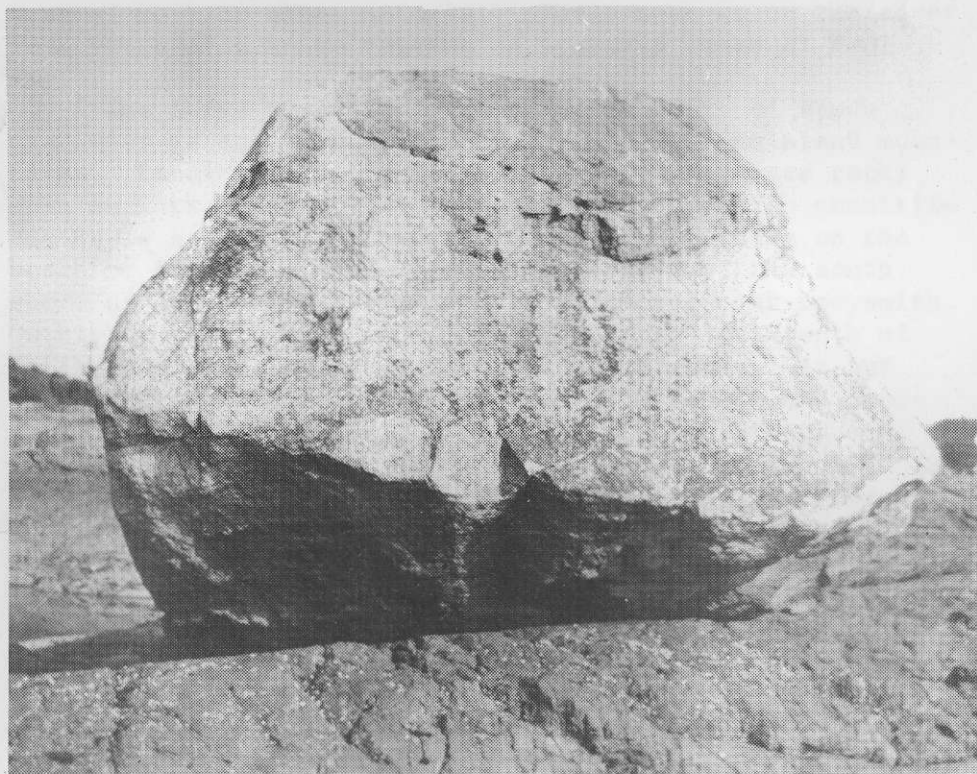


The
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COVER PICTURE AND ARTICLE

by A. H. Marrion

An erratic is a boulder which has been transported by glacial ice from its place of origin to another place, perhaps many miles away, and left, usually on a different type of rock or other material. The one shown on the cover is a block of granite resting on volcanic rocks at Foul Bay.

The large granite boulders on the shore of south Vancouver Island apparently came mainly from mainland mountains. Local erratics were left on different base rocks such as Wark gneiss, Vancouver volcanics, Saanich granite and Sooke sediments. Large specimens can be seen on the beach at Foul Bay, Cordova Bay, Patricia Bay, the south shore of Saltspring Island and at Saltaire, near Ladysmith. On higher land, there is a large round one just south of Haliburton Road, near the Patricia Bay Highway. At one time, there was one at the junction of Cranmore and Hampshire Roads, and one at the crossing of Fort Street and Fernwood Road.

Sedimentary types of boulders, derived from beds of the Nanaimo Series, can also be seen at various places. The larger ones are usually conglomerates and specimens were left on North Pender Island, Patricia Bay, the entrance to Deep Cove and in a field just off the old highway at Cobble Hill. One very large mass lies on the east side of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway at Malahat Station. There are several smaller ones, on each side of the railway, northwards towards Shawnigan Lake.

Large boulders of Vancouver volcanics are not evident because this formation lies, locally, near the waterfront in the southeast part of Oak Bay.

Wark gneiss, however, which lies north of Beacon Hill, provided several large boulders. There is a very interesting one in the cliff till just east of Holland Point. Its exposed underside is smoothed and striated. This was

apparently done by the ice before the block was quarried, moved, and left in the till mixture. Nearby is another block, dropped about the same time, and into the same material. Above, on the sloping landscape or raised beach, there are several more embedded in the ground. For many years, a large granite boulder stood in the gravel pit at Mount Tolmie. It was a fine example of a boulder having been smoothed and striated on two adjacent faces before being left on the outwash gravels.

Further afield, there is a huge basaltic rock, apparently transported by ice from the mainland, and left on the shore just south of Campbell River. It is perhaps the largest of the erratics, is very noticeable and is the target of despoilers who like to use up old paint on its surface.

Erratics give glacial information. The presence of Nanaimo conglomerates, etc., around Victoria indicates a north to south flow of ice. Similar boulders near Jordan River (plus stria direction) denote a turn to the west and to the Pacific Ocean. The ice continued south far down Hood Canal and deposited granite boulders along its shore.

The thickness of the ice flow can be estimated by the elevation of erratics on hillsides; for instance, a granite boulder lies near the top of Mount Tuam (Salt-spring Island), about 700 feet above Satellite Channel; the large conglomerate at Malahat Station was lifted about 1300 feet above Saanich Arm, and there is a granite block on the Olympics, across Juan de Fuca Strait, about 3000 feet above sea level.

Erratics can be objects of real interest and add a great deal to the fascination of geologic studies if the observer knows their places of origin.

BIRDS FOR THE RECORD

- Long-billed marsh wrens (4) - Feb.10 - Patricia Bay Highway & Island View Beach - Ray Becket.
 Audubon's warblers (2) - - Feb.17 - Cordova Bay - Betty Howland.
 Mountain quail (2) - Feb.22 - Munn Road - Ralph Fryer.

AWARD WINNING WILDLIFE FILM

"Valley of The Swans"

Speakers:- B. Atkins (Photographer)
 G. Smith (Biologist)

PREMIERE SHOWING

"Eskimo Arctic"

Speaker:- W.A.Edwards (Photographer)

BOTH AT

Oak Bay Junior High School
 8:00 P.M.

Friday, April 2, 1965

Admission Free

Donations gratefully accepted
 for

Freeman F. King Scholarship Fund

INTERESTING INSECTS FOUND DURING THE OLIVER CAMP

By Ross Storey
 (Junior member)

This summer, during July, I was able to go to the Audubon Nature Camp at Oliver, B. C. As well as numerous other animals, there was a variety of insects.

One of the most numerous and brightly coloured insects was the Milkweed Beetle. They are orange in colour with black spots on their backs; they are about a half-inch long, and when picked up, they make a vibrating, buzzing sound. They feed on the Milkweed plant, and can be found in great numbers on it.

On the edge of a salt marsh, we found a dead giant water bug, or electric light bug. These insects are about two inches long and live in the water. Their forelegs are for holding their prey, from which they suck the juices by means of a beak in their mouth parts. The back legs are for swimming.

Another common and large insect was the prionus beetle. It is about as big as the giant water bug and is reddish brown in colour. It is a member of the wood-boring family of beetles, and has long antennae. It is found in large numbers in areas of burnt out forests. A

friend of mine and I went into a burnt out area behind our camp in search of them.

Under every log there was always one or more "shells" of the beetles with their insides eaten, but hardly any that were alive. After a little while, we found two and went back to camp. At our nightly campfires, two others were caught, which were probably attracted by the light.

Two of the most unusual insects were large green caterpillars, the larval stage of moths and butterflies. They were about three inches long and as big around as your thumb. They were covered with brightly coloured spines and knobs, to frighten away their enemies. They were members of the silk moth family, but we were not sure of the species. They were on a squaw bush and had stripped it clean of leaves, although it was a fairly large shrub!

It was a very interesting camp, and proved a good source of insects and other animals which are different from the animals of the coast. It proved to be an exciting and enjoyable experience.

DEATH OF A WHISTLING SWAN

By Elizabeth I. Browne

As greyness sifted into dawn,
I heard the crying of a swan,
frightened by Death's dimming light
and guilty footsteps seeking flight,
maybe in grief's shattering blow
blindly he slayed that life aglow.
Was he too blind to understand
extinction faced that snowy band?
O brave and suffering bird of sorrow
will you haunt his heart tomorrow?
And we in future learn to borrow
the memory of his passing shadow.

RESOLUTION ON PROVINCIAL PARKS

"Whereas the primary purpose of our Provincial Parks is to provide large tracts of wild land, as well as camps and nature trails accessible to the public, for the present and for the future.

And whereas any industrial development destroys the natural environment to some extent.

Therefore be it resolved that the Department of Recreation and Conservation be urged to maintain our Parks in as near their natural state as possible.

And that there be no further development by private commercial interests allowed.

And that legislation be enacted to provide for full discussion of Park policy in the Legislature, with no more "Order-in-Council" decisions being made."

Passed unanimously by South Pender I. Community Club,
Oct. 1964.

EAGLES AND SEAGULLS

By Eve Smith

A rising crescendo of seagulls calling, attracts my attention and I know that there is either a herring "ball" near the shore, or bald eagles in the vicinity, poaching on seagull fishing rights.

Suddenly, out of the calm there will be first one loud "come on" scream, rapidly followed by two or three more, and in moments seagulls will be flying to the scene, from all directions, near and far, to feast on herring. Any police prowler car with a walkie talkie would be glad to have such rapid means of communication!

It is extraordinary how quickly word gets around that there is a herring ball. Soon, where there were a dozen or so, there are hundreds, swirling around, swooping down, sitting on the water, flying up, with continuous loud squawking and screaming, enjoying the "ball".

Not in the least enjoyable for seagulls, is the other cause for their screams, for as soon as old bald

head shows up they set about him, dive bombing him as he sits on the top of one of the few age old Douglas Firs that escaped the ravages of Hurricane Freida and loggers deprivations. Perhaps only half a dozen gulls will attempt to drive the eagles away, and usually the eagles pay no attention, just sitting, or flying down to the rocks to watch for fish. This enrages the gulls and they become frantic. When the eagles do fly, then the gulls swoop after them until they are off the territory. Then the gulls return and resume their customary activities.

One of the prettiest sights I ever saw was a parent bald eagle teaching the young one (still greyish brown) to fly. The parent (I don't know if it was Mother or Father) left the young one sitting on the top of an old dead tree while it demonstrated flying, swooping, diving, gliding on the air currents, and banking and braking into the wind. Then he'd fly back to the tree top, push the juvenile off and sit there, while the pupil went through precisely the same manoeuvres.

This went on, turn and turn about, for two hours. When a neighbour dropped by and asked me what I'd been doing all morning, I told him "watching eagles". He looked at me in unbelieving bewilderment. "Have you nothing better to do?" he asked. Well, what would you have replied?

SCREECH OWL

By G. M. Bell

To a passerby on foot or in a car, a plainly exposed screech owl - Otus asio, in the knot hole of a tree, is an appealing sight.

There was for long the one on Braefoot Road. It was "local colour" to show visitors - something untrammelled by human involvement - pure nature: a little screech owl 'invisible' in the knot hole of an oak tree by the side of a paved road in a built-up residential area....Then he was no longer there. What happened, we do not know.

Now, be it known, there is another to warm the heart and give again that elusive, softening touch to a passerby on foot or in a car. This one is on Foul Bay

Road; likewise in the knot hole of an oak tree, 'invisible'; yet exposed to view.

Might it be well to publicize again that it is an indictable offence to injure or disturb an owl, and then explain to the young and adventurous that the prevalence of mice and rats is largely controlled by the owl which catches them, thus benefiting the human residents in the area?

From last September to the present time, early February, there has been on Goldstream Avenue in Langford an albino Oregon Junco. It is pure white except for a few brown secondary feathers on each wing. A photographic record has been taken of this unusual bird.

Ever since the cold weather in December, 1964, a Bewick wren has been sleeping in an old hornets' nest which was cut from its original position in a tree and hung in the back porch of the house on Tudor Avenue. The bird increased the size of the hole in the nest and thereby has a very warm and comfortable winter bedroom.

E.K.L.

STORY OF A DUCK

by Adrian Paul,
Kleena Kleene, B.C.

There used to be several duck families, of various species, raised on this small lake yearly. Then one summer it almost dried up, and next winter the frost sank deep into the ground and destroyed most of the ducks' feed, both animal and vegetable. So the ducks nested elsewhere; all except one Barrows goldeneye. She had a favorite nesting place and continued to use the lake, and the drake could be seen waiting for her on the lake as she incubated nearby, until the ducklings arrived, then he said goodbye.

In 1963, she hatched eight young. Sad to tell, because there was little shelter, the ducklings were reduced to one by mid-August.

In 1964 the old duck was there again, but after May there was no drake, so she didn't seem to be interested

in staying on the eggs, if such there were. For awhile, she wandered the lake, but finally departed. Early in October, she visited the lake again. If this was the same duck all the while, and I think it was, she must have been nearly 15 years old.

JUNIOR JOTTINGS

By Nancy Chapman

This past month has been, as usual, a busy and active one for the Junior Group. Although the weather has been cold and wet, the attendance has been as good as ever.

The younger group went on an expedition to the Rith-et's Estate property on the first Saturday of the month. There they collected many different species of mosses and lichens, which thrive during wet winter months. It was interesting to see and study the different generations of Douglas fir trees in this area. There were four distinct age groups, the oldest being hugh granddaddies about 500 years old. They bore the scars of several fires, and had probably parented all other Douglas firs in the area.

The next Saturday was a "workday" up at Francis Park, and both groups turned out in full force, armed with picks, saws, shovels and clippers. All the old trails were cleaned up for spring, and our new Centennial Trail was started. This trail, planned for Canada's hundredth anniversary, will eventually lead right around the Park's perimeter, and should be about three miles in length. It will feature practically all of the Park's various ecology zones, including open swamp, dry rock outcrop, deep forest, and open field.

After our hard work, Skip showed us some wonderful slides of some of the plants and animals on Vancouver Island and the interior. It is surprising what a vast knowledge of nature some of these young people have accumulated in these last few years!

On a trip along the nature trail at Goldstream Park, the older group made a special study of identifying trees and shrubs without their leaves. There are very few botanists who can do this. Every tree and shrub has not only

its own pattern of twig arrangement but growth and bark texture which distinguishes it from any other species. However, these characteristics often vary with the age of the tree and with its environment.

We also made a collection of some of the more outstanding mosses and lichens, particularly those with spore cases and fruiting bodies. In my opinion, these are the most beautiful plants of the forest at this time of the year.

BIOLOGICAL OCEANOGRAPHY AS RELATED TO MARINE BENTHOS

Dr. D. V. Ellis,
Department of Biology,
University of Victoria

March 11.

SEQUOIA GIGANTEA PENDULA, WEEPING GIANT SEQUOIA

By W. H. Warren

There are several of these grotesque "sport" trees around Victoria. They were imported by the late Richard Layritz into his nursery from France, probably at the turn of the century. They are said to have originated in 1963 at Nantes, doubtless from a seedling. It is propagated by grafting. Mr. Layritz had a number of specimen trees in his nursery and his propagator, the late George Watling, drew to my attention that they all tend to grow towards the north.

This can be verified by observing the large specimen transplanted some years ago into the grounds of Paul's Restaurant on Douglas Street at Discovery Street. This tree grew in a northerly direction at the nursery, but was transplanted to face the east. It has now started to grow northward again.

There is another well known specimen growing over Superior Street behind the Parliament Buildings. It

too weeps as it grows to the north. No satisfactory explanation has been offered for this oddity. Perhaps the cells on the south side were stimulated into extra growth in this chance seedling causing the tree to bend to the north.

CORRECTION

Somehow, a serious error crept into the January issue. The co-authors of "1964 Junior Group Birding" should have been shown as Sean Newton and DEREK Lundel, not David Lundel, as printed. Please accept our apologies, Derek.

OBITUARY

On July 18, 1964, with the death of Charles A. "Bert" Harwell, all naturalists, and many others, lost a good friend. Victorians who knew him will be pleased to know that his name will be perpetuated in the Harwell Nature Trail at Audubon Canyon Ranch, California.

SOME OBSERVATIONS OF PREDATION ON INSECTS

By S. F. Condrashoff

Insects serve as food for many different organisms, which may be wholly or partially dependent upon them for their livelihood. They are utilized by fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals among the vertebrates, and by other insects and spiders among invertebrates. Even some plants trap and consume insects. Some animals such as spiders, swallows, shrews, dragonflies and many others are adapted to an insectivorous existence. At the same time many insects are adapted to escape or avoid predators. The kind, number and elaboration of protective features is related to the insect's mode of life, habitat, and behaviour. Vulnerability of insects to predation depends on stage of development and period in life history,

and those ordinarily well protected at one time or situation may be vulnerable in another.

For example, bats fly at night, feeding upon insects they detect with sonar, but some moths react to the high-pitched squeaks by taking evasive flight or settling on the ground. In the daytime these moths may escape detection by birds or other predators by their protective coloration while at rest. Larvae of moths and sawflies feeding on foliate in trees may be eaten by birds, but in the cocoon or pupal stage, often spent in the soil, these insects may be utilized by small mammals.

On several occasions I have observed predation in natural and artificial situations. In autumn 1962, along the Esquimalt Lagoon beach, about two dozen gulls were flying in a tight circle some 20 feet above the ground, with individuals swooping downward at intervals and returning to the flock. This activity continued for over ten minutes. Closer observation revealed that these birds were feeding on winged termites as each emerged from a rotted log. Not one flying insect was overlooked as each took flight, and only after the birds were frightened off did the termites succeed in flying away. These insects live most of their lives in the safety of their enclosed chambers in wood, but are weak fliers and poorly equipped to escape predation during the nuptial flight.

Last summer a situation was encountered involving predation of spiders on weevils in a greenhouse enclosure where an experiment with these insects was in progress. Several times dead weevils were found hanging from a spider's web, tightly bound with silk. Weevils are very hard, armoured creatures, and should be difficult to kill by a spider except by piercing the soft intersegmental membranes on the limbs or other areas of the body. But articulations in these weevils are too broadly overlapping to be accessible to spiders. Eventually a small spider was seen feeding on the labium of the tiny mouth parts at the end of its victim's snout. To determine whether other

(to be continued next month)

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPSEXECUTIVE MEETING:

March 2, 1965 Dr. Carl's Office,
Provincial Museum 8:00 p.m.

GENERAL MEETING:

March 9, 1965 Douglas Building Cafeteria,
Elliot Street - - - - - 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Mr. R. York Edwards
Subject: "Confessions of a
Lazy Gardener" and
a Film.

AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR:

March 19 & 20 Oak Bay Junior High School 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Dr. Clifford Carl,
Film: "Essence of Life"

BOTANY GROUP:

March 23 Provincial Museum - - - - - 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Freeman King,
Subject: "Plant Ecology"

BIRD FIELD TRIP:

March 27 Monterey Parking Lot
(Douglas & Hillside) - - - - - 9:30 a.m.
or Mt. Douglas Park
Picnic Area - - - - - 10:00 a.m.
Leader: Mr. Murray Matheson
Bring lunch.

JUNIORS:

Meet each Saturday at the Monterey
Parking lot, Hillside & Douglas,
at 1:30 p.m.
for field trips.
Leader: Mr. Freeman King, 479-2966.

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