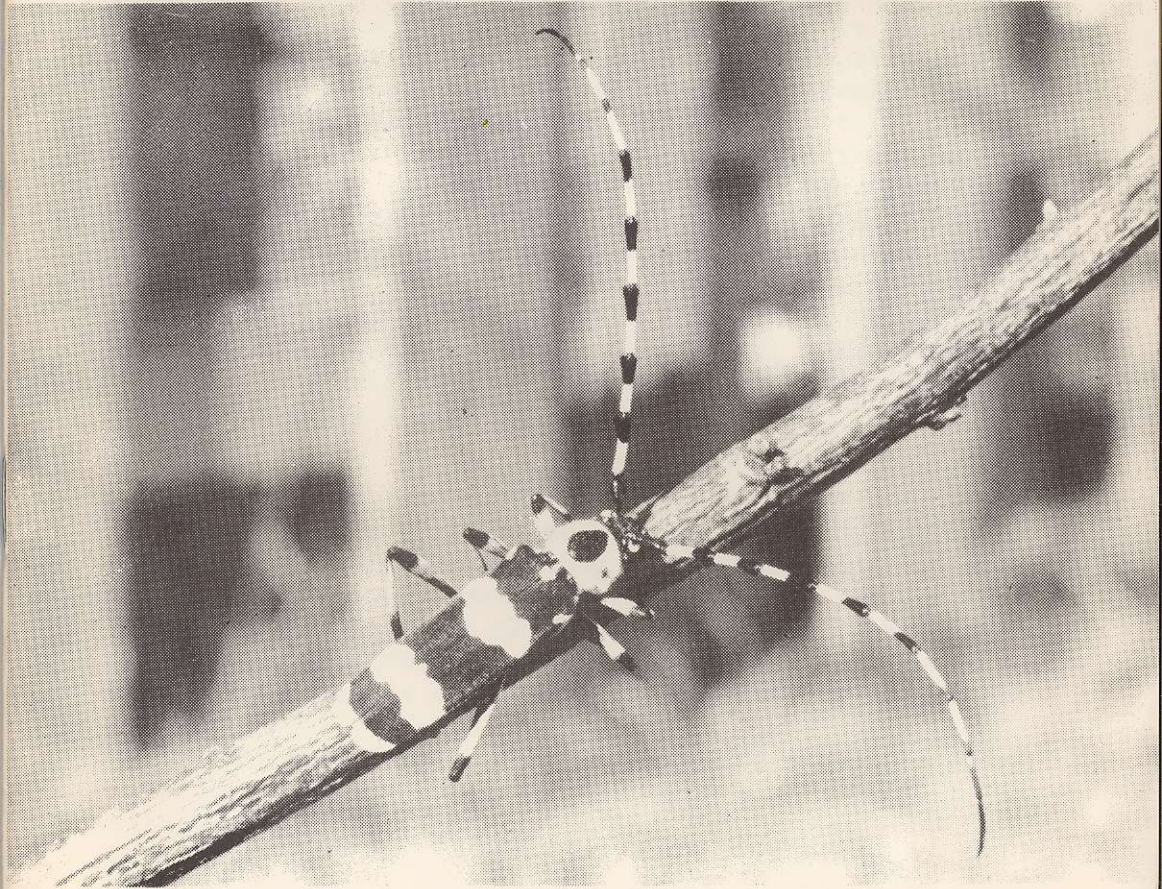


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THE BANDED ALDER-BORER

by John A. Chapman
Photo by G.Allen Poynter

The banded alder-borer, Rosalia funebris Mots., is a member of the Cerambycidae, a large family of wood-boring beetles. The larvae tunnel in the trunks or main stems of various plant species, particularly in dead or dying trees. The name 'sawyer', applied to some western species derives from this way of life. The tunnels are packed with frass and uningested strips of wood. Pupation occurs within the wood and the adults leave through round emergence holes which they chew to the surface.

Members of this family are often large (for insects) and are commonly called longicorn or 'long-horn' beetles because of the characteristically long antennae. Many species are attractively coloured as is the species illustrated. Rosalia funebris ranges through western North America from Alaska to California and bores in alder, ash, willow and California laurel. The adults, which occur in Victoria, are active during mid-summer and occasionally are attracted by lights at night.

NIGHT BIRDS

At about ten o'clock one evening Mrs. Lucy Parris and a friend were walking along Beach Drive in front of the Rudyard Kipling apartments. Here one of the powerful street lights shines on the beach below, and looking over they saw a flock of twenty-five to thirty dunlins very busy at the water's edge searching for food in the circle of light.

When, Mrs. Parris asked me, do birds sleep?

A.R.D.

ON BLACK OYSTER CATCHERS 'CATCHING' OYSTERS

by Wayne Campbell

In the Provincial Museum Handbook No.8, The Shorebirds, Mr. Guiguet, regarding the feeding habits of the black oyster catcher, mentions "We have no records of them 'catching' oysters". While working on Mitlenatch Island Nature Park (lat. 49 57'N, long. 125 00'W) as a park naturalist during the summers of 1964 and 1965 I had the enjoyable experience of regularly observing and recording this bird 'catching' oysters. The following is an account of a typical record from one such observation.

An extensive oyster bed is found on Mitlenatch and it is here the black oyster catcher frequently comes to feed. The best feeding time for oysters seems to be just behind the ebbing tide although I have observed birds 'catching' oysters well up into the inter-tidal zone.

The oyster catcher moves about in the oyster bed quickly but confidently, continually on the alert for slightly open oyster valves. Once such a victim is located the tip of the bill is quickly and securely inserted, the angle depending upon the position of the oyster. The bird then immediately braces itself with its legs and the battle begins. With successive thrusts by the head, neck and help from the entire body the bill is gradually inserted deeper and deeper into the oyster. Because the bird's bill is higher than it is wide each successive thrust gradually opens the valves. Once the entire bill has been inserted, either the powerful adductor muscle of the oyster is severed by the tip of the bird's bill or it has become exhausted and thus relaxes to expose the "meat" of the oyster. The former assumption seems more logical. The small scraps of "meat" are easily swallowed, however large chunks have to be worked down the bill to the throat by a series of head tosses before they can be swallowed. I have observed one bird 'catching' and swallowing the contents of five oysters within a half hour. It should be noted that many attempts are made before a bird successfully 'catches' an oyster.

On Mitlenatch oysters are not considered the chief food source for oyster catchers. They seem to prefer mussels, limpets, chitons and barnacles. I have also recorded them eating shrimps, rock-oysters, gastropods and various marine worms.

PARASITISM

by A. Dehen

(continued from the Sept. issue.)

Parasitism is an old habit among animals but necessarily a secondary or acquired one as it is obvious that there must be a host before there can be a parasite to exploit it.

As a way of life parasitism is often looked upon as being unmoral or at least less respectable than the free or independent way of living, but when one considers that there are many more parasites than free living animals, one must concede that in Nature it is a normal and accepted way of life.

When beginning the study of parasites the one thing above all others that impresses one most is the astonishing numbers in which they occur and the infinite variety of ways in which they pursue their living.

For a start we can divide them into endo and ecto parasites, erratic, facultative, incidental, obligatory and periodic parasites. There are also permanent, temporary and pathogenic parasites. Each of these groups forms a large subject of study by itself. In addition there are many subdivisions and gradations. So much for the variations and different types of parasites and parasitism.

Another way to look at it is that while we often read articles or hear talks about mammals, birds, fishes, insects and in such places as Victoria, shore animals including snails and clams these represent only a fraction of the total number of animal forms.

Mammals, birds and fishes are part of the Phylum Chordata. Insects and many shore animals form part of the Phylum Arthropoda, while the snails and clams form their own Phylum: Mollusca. These more popular and better known groups then represent only 3 out of the 15 Phyla leaving 12 we do not hear so much about. Most of the Phyla have their parasitic members, some are nearly entirely parasitic. While more numerous in the lower Phyla, even the highest, i.e. Chordata has a few parasites among its members.

It is seen then that, while the bulk of the parasites is necessarily smaller, the number exceeds by far that of the free-living animals. It is a mode of life that, in

order to be successful requires a marked adaptation to the host. Some parasites live in closely related hosts but mostly they can only develop in a specific one.

While a carnivorous animal kills its prey outright in order to feed, it is to the parasites advantage to do as little harm as possible to its host as, should the host die, the parasite, at least the internal one, also dies. These forms do not only depend for their own living but also their propagation on a reasonably healthy host.

When the relationship is in harmony i.e. the parasite adapted to the host and the latter developing a certain amount of tolerance for the former, little harm is done. However should the parasite not be properly adapted to the host the latter may suffer great harm and if the host does not tolerate the parasite it will throw up defences against the parasite. This takes, mostly, the form of encapsulation which puts the parasite out of action in many instances but even here there are some ingenious parasites which turn this to advantage. Other parasites, however, are not so considerate of the wellbeing of their host and just keep him alive as long as he is of use to them. This depends on the parasite's particular phase of development. Again there are endless variations of methods employed.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRDS

by Roberta and Ray Beckett

Our little four-acre farm on Markham Street immediately west of Quick's Pond is proving to be an ideal spot for the observation of cowbirds, Molothrus ater; and, since we have one fine Ayrshire cow (her name is Cleopatra), we have seen from two to ten of these parasitic nesters in her company from May through to the latter part of July. This was an increase for cowbirds in our yard as very few were seen in the two previous years. Consequently, we were expecting some of the small nesters here to be victimized, i.e., yellow and lutescent warblers or chipping and song sparrows.

Eventually, at the turn of August, we first became aware of cowbird offspring when our younger daughter, Terry, rescued one from a cat, only to have the bird die that night. Then we were truly surprised to find not one or two, but six more of these fledglings, down near our barn. They kept pretty well to a group and were in the company of,

and apparently getting pointers on foraging from, about thirty house sparrows. The only species detected feeding one of those hungry mouths was the song sparrow, and for all we could make out only one of them at that. At no time were any other species seen attending them during their short stay - they suddenly disappeared by mid-August.

At the time of writing, September 18, neither adult nor immature cowbirds have been noticed here for over a month. A few individuals, however, were seen on North Douglas in the second week of September.

Obviously, seven of these young birds could not have been raised by the three or four suitable nesters in our yard. Could it be, then, that these fledglings sometimes congregate while in the transitional stage of leaving foster parents and becoming self-sufficient, as they must do, in order to journey southward?

Most of us are well aware of this strange cowbird trait of depositing their eggs in other, and mostly smaller, birds' nests; and then leaving the incubation of same, and the rearing of their young entirely up to those unfortunates. Having finally learned to accept this as part of the complex plan of nature, we now leave these small black-birds as well as the house sparrows and starlings to their own affairs about our property.

Next year, if the cowbirds return, they will bear closer study along with our small nesting friends, the warblers and indigenous sparrows.

BUILDING STONES OF THE NEW MUSEUM (Part 1)

by A. H. Marrison

Haddington Island Stone

This material was originally described as a sandstone - a collection of particles of rock minerals of various sizes and of various kinds cemented together by iron oxide or carbonate of lime or silica. However, the Haddington Island stone to be used for the outside of the new museum is derived from an ancient lava. Some years ago Archdeacon Robert Connell ground a flake of it so thin that it was fairly transparent. Under a microscope using reflected light many black specks were seen, chiefly crystals of magnetic iron. There were also a large number of small lath-shaped crystals often grouped together in fanlike bundles in a fine grained mass, with little patches of brownish hornblende. The latter as seen by the naked eye

gives the rock its porphyritic character, while the former are crystals of clear fresh feldspar and of quartz. From this information the rock is recognized as of volcanic origin of a type called andesite. Because of the presence of quartz it is called quartz andesite or dacite.

Since this lava has invaded the coal measures in the Cumberland area its age is later than Upper Cretaceous and has been assigned to the early Oligocene which is again later than the Metchosin volcanics at Albert Head.

In the Haddington Island quarry are seen the results of forces pressing from the north-east, causing the lavas and the cretaceous sediments to be compressed into close folds with some overthrusting. The quarry beds dip steeply northwards.

The colour of the rock varies from a light yellow to a greyish tone. It is very uniform in grain and is easily shaped; its chiselled form has a quality of beauty as well as durability.

Our Legislative Building, the Library addition, and the Empress Hotel were early structures using this stone. Many buildings in Vancouver have also been constructed of the same material.

Haddington Island is located off the east coast of Vancouver Island near Alert Bay.

References: Building Stones of Canada (B.C.) and an article by the late Archdeacon Connell, Victoria Times.

SEEN FROM A HOSPITAL WINDOW----BATS !

by L.G. Saunders

Anyone who has frequented hospitals knows that a nurse's day is completely ruined if she doesn't throw up the blinds and get her patients washed and brushed at least two hours before breakfast. It was on October 2nd after this untimely service that I was sleepily watching sparrows slip out of the ivy on the South Wing, headed purposefully for breakfast. Gradually I realized that I was seeing bats, too, following their highly individualistic and erratic course in search of supper before hanging up for the day. I thought little of it, except that there seemed to be rather more than I remembered seeing in Victoria before.

The next morning they were about again, and suddenly a flight of perhaps 8-12 bats flew up in close, fluttering formation, did a perfect loop against the pale morning sky, and disappeared again in front of the dark building. Well, I have never seen a concerted flight of bats before, except the big fruit-eating "flying foxes" of the tropics, so I watched closely for the next few mornings. But, alas, no bats doing anything appeared any more.

Thinking of the robins still to be seen flocking in preparation for migration, it occurred to me that perhaps bats, too, seek a better way of life in the south, insensible to the much advertised amenities of Victoria. Our authority in matters mammalian, Dr. Carl, assures me that bats do go south, but nothing much is known about their manner of migration. So now, putting it tentatively, we may suggest the possibility that bats tend to form flights during migration.

BIRD SONGS

by Adrian Paul Kleena Kleene, B.C.

Most people are familiar with the robin singing from a treetop. He and other members of the thrush family tend to have a favorite perch, and their singing usually takes place on each birds' breeding territory. But birds' songs are used in other ways too. For instance I once observed a flock of white-crowned sparrows which had just that afternoon arrived on the Interior Plateau after making their way through the canyons of the Coast Mountains. They were seemingly registering their delight at arriving back in their summer home by all singing at once. The sound was so infectious that a purple finch perched on the fence was impelled to join in.

One of the earliest migrants here are redwing blackbirds. They arrived this year as usual the middle of March and signalled their arrival by several of them singing from one tree; a happy and contented sound, which a musical neighbour repeated for me; and a few days later I received a letter from a young friend forty miles north which stated "I already hear birds are singing, they sing nice softly tune". I knew what they were. When the redwing seizes a breeding territory for his several wives his voice seems to be harsher, certainly louder.

Warblers behave somewhat differently when singing in

their breeding territory. They "warble while they work", or perhaps "sing while they search" for food, usually amongst the branches of deciduous trees and bushes. Like most other species they are seemingly polite, while one sings the others listen, regardless of the species.

Most birds throw their heads up to sing, the first note coming instantly like a "gun-slinger's" first shot. So if you are hearing several species singing you can tell which is which by watching one at a time.

About the time the breeders are mostly mated there may be surplus males which are venturesome enough to go beyond the usual breeding range of their species. Such a bird may be detected by his song. He will arrive in an area of say forty acres of suitable habitat and move about in it for a day, or several days, singing. Presumably if a female hears him they will go into business together, but more often he will have to give up and try elsewhere.

After the first brood is fledged many male birds do a little more singing, which sometimes merely shows that they are no longer busy; at other times is followed by a second brood.

NOTICE

Scale of Dues proposed to become effective at the commencement of the fiscal year 1967-1968, approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting of September 6th, 1966.

Regular members	\$ 3.00 per annum
Family membership	5.00 per annum
Junior members	2.00 per annum
Life members	Single \$ 50.00
	Husband & wife \$75.00

Regular and Junior members joining after January 1st to pay 50% of the per annum amount for the balance of the year.

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

Proposed changes and Amendments

<u>Section & Item</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Amended to read</u>
Membership		
1 (a)	Persons over sixteen years of age who have paid their dues.	Persons of eighteen years of age and over who have paid their dues.
(c)	Persons under sixteen years of age.	Persons less than eighteen years of age.
(d)	On the payment of thirty dollars (\$30.00) any regular member may become a life member.	On payment of Life membership fee any person may become a life member.
Dues		
2 (a)	Each regular member shall pay annually two dollars (\$2.00) due at the time of the annual meeting.	Membership fees for each class specified in Section 1 shall be determined by the Executive and approved by a General Meeting of the Society. Changes or amendments may be made as provided by Section 8 - Amendments - of these By-Laws.
(b)	Family membership shall be three dollars(\$3.00).	Delete.
(c)	Junior members shall pay dues of one dollar(\$1.00) except in the case of family membership.	Delete.
(d)	New regular members who join after January 1st shall pay one dollar (\$1.00) and new junior members fifty cents(.50) for the balance of the year.	Renumbered as (b) and to read: New regular or junior members who join after January 1st shall pay only 50% of the annual fees applicable, for the balance of that year.

Existing

- (e)
- (f)

Officers

3(a) The officers
Editors:

(f) The Treasurer shall keep a list of all members; shall receive all dues and gifts; and keep monies in a bank or banks to the credit of the Society

(h) The Editors.

Elections

4(a) A nomination committee appointed by the President at the meeting preceding the annual meeting shall present a slate of nominations for officers at the annual meeting. Further nominations may be made from the floor.

(b) Voting shall be by ballot at the annual meeting.

(c) Tellers for the annual election of officers shall be appointed by the President at the annual meeting.

Amended to read

- Renumbered as (c)
- Renumbered as (d)

The officers
Editor:

The Treasurer shall keep a list of all members; shall receive all dues and gifts; and keep monies in a bank, banks or Trust Company approved by the Executive Committee and at any general meeting of the Society, to the credit of the Society

The Editor

Add "in which case voting shall be by ballot."

Delete.

Renumber as "b".
Tellers for the annual election of officers shall be appointed by the President at the annual meeting when a ballot is taken.

Existing

Meetings

6(f) The Executive Committee shall meet at the direction of the President. Six members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

Fiscal Year

7 The Fiscal year of the Society and of the magazine ends with the annual meeting in May.

Audit of Accounts

9 The books and records of the Society shall be audited by a chartered accountant

Investments

11

Amended to read

The Executive Committee shall meet at the direction of the President. A quorum of the Executive Committee shall consist of one member more than 50% of the elected members of the Executive Committee for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Executive Committee.

The fiscal year of the Society and of the magazine ends at April 30th of each year. At the annual meeting held in May (Section 6(a) audited accounts and financial statements shall be presented.

Delete the words "by a chartered accountant".

New section to be added:-
Funds of the Society may be invested in such securities as may be approved by the Executive Committee and by a general meeting of the Society.

MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPSEXECUTIVE MEETING:

Tues. November 1

Dr. Carl's Office, 8 p.m.
Provincial MuseumBOTANY FIELD TRIP:

Sat. November 5

Meet at Monterey Parking Lot,
1:30 p.m. for a Fungus Foray
to Francis Park. Bring Tea.
Leader: Miss M. C. Melburn.AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM:Friday and Saturday,
November 4 and 5Oak Bay Junior Highschool
Auditorium, 8 p.m.
"The Vanishing Sea" a story
about Great Salt Lake by
Robert W. Davison.GENERAL MEETING:

Tuesday, November 8

Douglas Building Cafeteria,
8 p.m. Dr. John McInerney,
University of Victoria, will
give an illustrated talk
"Baby-sitting sticklebacks".BIRD FIELD TRIP:

Saturday, November 19

Meet at Monterey Parking Lot
at 9:30 a.m. or Esquimalt
Lagoon at 10:00 a.m.
Leader: Murray Matheson.ORNITHOLOGY MEETING:

Tuesday, November 22

Provincial Museum at 8 p.m.
Subject to be announced at
November General Meeting.JUNIOR GROUPmeet every Saturday at
Monterey Parking Lot, Douglas
at Hillside 1:30 p.m. for
field trips.

Leader: Freeman King -

Phone 479-2966.

***** * * *****

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Annual Dues, including subscription:

Single, \$2.00; Family, \$3.00; Junior, \$1.00; Life Membership, \$30.00;
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