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# THE VICTORIA NATURALIST



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## COVER PICTURE

by Ralph Fryer

Here is pictured a gathering of brant, which Ralph Fryer caught one morning in April at the foot of Bowker Avenue, where they feed close to the shore and, as can be seen, make excellent photographic subjects, being unafraid and thus enabling one to get quite close to them without disturbance.

This year they were first reported by Ron Satterfield on March 7th at Bowker and Cattle Point, nine in number, and the flocks will increase until about the third week in April, when their migration is generally at its height, though some will linger around the good feeding grounds until a month later.

When I lived in Courtenay between the years 1936 and 1947 I used to accompany Mr. Theed Pearse, the veteran birder of Comox, on his census-taking trip down the coast from Comox to Parksville. My records are regrettably lost, but 30,000 between those points for one day in April was a fair average. On a recent trip to Courtenay in this month our estimate was 2,200.

A good project would be for some enthusiastic birder to cover the beaches between here and Royston about the middle of April and estimate their number. It would be very interesting to know to what extent the brant is immune to the various pollutants which contaminate so many of the beaches on the Island, to say nothing of those further south.

Fortunately the brant is found in suitable habitats throughout the northern hemisphere - Europe, Asia and North America, and all nest in the arctic, wintering on the Pacific Coast as far south as Baja, California.

A.R. Davidson

BLITHE SPIRIT

Readers will be aware that the western meadowlark and savannah sparrow are probably now extinct as breeding species on the University campus and that the last few remaining skylarks are in imminent danger. This is the result of the inevitable destruction of habitat that must accompany the growth of a large organization. However, there are still skylarks there and there is still some suitable habitat, and, by correct management, it should be possible to continue to develop the University and to retain a few breeding pairs on campus. To this end, a study is being made of the present territorial areas of the species there and it is hoped that it will be possible to recommend a specific area which should be left undisturbed.

In the meantime, readers might like to know of the views of some University staff and Faculty on the subject.

Mr. F.A. Fairclough, Interim Director of Information Services of the University, issued the following statement in a letter to the Victoria Daily Times of March 11:

"If one were to investigate the circumstances, one would find that the home of this cheerful little fellow was not destroyed, in fact, it had not been disturbed. It was the adjoining field that had been ploughed, from which he gathers fresh worms to feed his young...If a skylark was seen sauntering through the field...he was a visitor from the mainland...."

The following views were given by Dr. R. Reid, Assistant Professor of Biology, in the Cougar City Gazette of March 13:

"(The Teach-in) was fortunate enough to escape the attentions of the lunatic fringe groups who have always tended to turn people off by their haverings about our feathered friends, etc., though Humphry Davy...tied the whole thing together with a headline lamenting Uvic's cavalier treatment of the poor old sky-lark. It would be difficult to pick a more footling example to contrast with the threat to the well-being and existence of man, which was the theme of the teach-in".

The University authorities would doubtless be glad of as much information as possible to guide their policies in this matter, and to this end it would be invaluable if as many Members as possible would write now to President Partridge of the University of Victoria,

expressing their concern about the probable extinction of the skylark on campus (in addition to the other species mentioned above), and saying to what extent they agree with the views so clearly expressed by these University experts.

Jeremy Tatum

THE FEBRUARY BIRD TRIP

Saturday, February 21st, was an ideal day for bird-watchers, if not for birds. The day started bright, cool and refreshing, and kept everyone on their toes. As the day wore on the pace became slower, consequently lunch was on the late side.

We started the day at Beaver Lake to the calling of Canada geese. What a great way to start a winter morning! As we left the lakeside the call of the Canada geese was taken over by the powerful voice of the pileated woodpecker and the mysterious croak of the raven.

At the lake all three mergansers were present, also ringnecks, widgeon, green-winged teal and the ever present mallard. As we entered the woods along the lake, bushtits, chickadees, song sparrows, pine siskins, ruby-crowned kinglets, red crossbills and purple finches seemed to shower around us. Overhead the ominous Cooper's hawk and sharp-shinned hawks swing in small moving circles.

A nuthatch yanked nearby and a greater yellowlegs and a killdeer were busy by the lakeside. Someone looked up and claimed to have seen a swallow. This was later confirmed as a tree swallow flying high in a cloudless sky. An immature red-tailed hawk posed for all amateurs to identify and admire. But where were the redhead ducks?

Passing on to Elk Lake we had to wake up the whistling-trumpeter swans, three in number, to be admired and photographed. They were on the shore sound asleep.

The mighty bald eagle, head shining in the sun, watched us from the west side of the lake, and a lone canvasback dived off shore.

Leaving the south end of the lake we drove to the north end and picnicked on the logs and picnic tables. Some walked round in search of warblers. None were found. A satisfactory lunch saw us leaving for the west edge of the Martindale fields in search of the white-throated

sparrow. Although it posed for pictures earlier that day it defied our searching binoculars by remaining hidden.

The skylarks did not disappoint us as they hovered over the dead grass of winter. Meadowlarks and cackling pheasants completed the picture as hundreds of ducks hung in the sky above.

Thirty-nine birders in all enjoyed this winter panorama of nature, a few of us retiring to the Suttill's for tea and coffee and talks.

Here is a list of those attending: Doris Armstrong, Bill Adams, Tom Bell, Dianne Bersea; Helen Bray, Frances Druce, Mr. D.B. Fatt, Joan Groves, Leah Halsall, Gordon, Gwen and Wendy Hooper, Ivy Jarvie, Eileen Knapper, Mr. and Mrs. MacKenzie-Grieve, Doctor Mitchell, Mr. and Mrs. Muirhead, Cy Morehen (leader), Miss Phillips, Miss Parlow, Lucy Parris, Colonel Seymour, Ron Satterfield, Denis and Kay Suttill, Doctor and Mrs. Sparling, Harry and Gladys Soulsby, Jeremy Tatum, Mr. and Mrs. Doug Turnbull, Terese Todd, Betty Trimmer, Edith Valens.

Cy Morehen

#### JULY FLOWERS IN CHURCHILL, MANITOBA

Lying at a latitude of 58'46' Churchill is on the edge of the Barren Lands. To the south is the taiga where the land is covered with spruce and tamarac forest, white spruce growing on the ridges and black in the hollows. The thick undergrowth consists of dwarf willow and birch, soapalallie, gooseberry and Labrador tea bushes. A few miles northward the trees disappear and the land stretches to the horizon in a vast flat tundra. Underfoot, the spongy resilient muskeg is covered with wild grasses, moss, creeping shrubs and the miniscule flowers of the sub-arctic.

We journeyed by boat around Eskimo Point and along Button Bay to Seahorse Gully from which we could glimpse the beginning of the Barren Lands. In earlier days Seahorse Gully was under water but now it is a watery depression between two ridges of tumbled blocks of gray limestone. In the rocky crevices pyrola, dwarf cranberry, stellaria and heather bloom in a cascading fall. As we clambered over the rocks a shower of rain pelted down but gave no relief from blackflies and mosquitoes. So bad were they that our boatman lit a fire on the beach but we still could not escape the insects until we cast off from the stony beach.

Along the shoreline of Hudson's Bay an occasional sandy beach replaces the usual boulder-strewn coarse gravel. Great spines of rock spill toward the water. Smooth as satin and rounded like balls of dough, the slabs of glaciated limestone (known as the Churchill formation) have been laid down in fantastic ridges. They are covered by lichens, some pitch black, some orange red, some bleached skeleton white. In the folds, water is caught and held in tiny limpid tarns. Every nook and cranny bears flowers, colorful against black or red lichens. There are thick clumps of creamy white Mountain Avens (*Dryas integrifolia*), patches of the white as well as the rosy red Baked Apple (*Rubus chamaemorus*), pink bells of dwarf cranberry, tiny white bells of the bearberry (*Arctostaphylos*) and a purple carpet of the small native rhododendron (*Rhododendron lapponicum*). White arabis or rock cress, yellow buttercups, yellow lousewort (*Pedicularis*), wheel-shaped stellaria, lavender vetch (*Astragalus*) are all much smaller than their families in southern climates. Indian Paintbrush is about six inches tall and a deep red color while three-inch high pyrolas bear waxy pink blooms on a thick stem.

Muskeg country is rich in flowers - saxifrage, pink-belled bog rosemary and rosy-cupped bog laurel. A miniature purple bloom resembling our violet is the *Pinguicula vulgaris* which is insectivorous, rising from basal leaves that curl over and hold captive any unwary fly. The common false asphodel (*Tofieldia borealis*) is known as the Lily of the North. It stands on a stem about three inches high and is a beadlike cluster of white starflowers. Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*) grows everywhere and its white cluster blooms were starting to come out. Later the thick leathery leaves curl up and were once used as a substitute for tea. A sandy beach was dotted with glowing green circles which were clumps of *Arenaria* bearing white star flowers. Spreading on the ground like a wheel *Mertensia maritima* had sky-blue trumpet flowers and olive-green leaves.

All over the whole countryside mosquitoes and black-flies swarm, biting and sucking blood and driving everyone frantic. The wise botanist or birder wears loose-fitting clothes which are tight at wrist, ankle and neck. He carries insect repellent to rub on hands, face and neck but also seeks protection by means of a hat with a netting which can be dropped over his face.

Elsie G. Turnbull

CROSSBILLS IN VICTORIA

At about 4:00 p.m. on March 2nd, I received an excited phone call from Marie van Maurik to hurry to Beach Drive at Bowker, where there was a flock of about two hundred sparrow-sized birds, brightly coloured and very tame. Seizing my bird book I dashed off. The excitement had been well justified. The birds, which proved to be red crossbills, were a truly beautiful sight as the sun caught the reds, rusts and oranges of the males, the yellows and greens of the females and juveniles.

Taverner, in 'Birds of Canada' describes them well when he says they present 'a bewildering array of different shades and tints'.

Softly chattering as they fed in and below a row of Austrian pines, they showed no fear of anyone, and were even somewhat reluctant to move when a large dog bounced toward them. The tragedy was that they also had no fear of the traffic and several lay crushed on the road while others were killed as we watched.

The small boys coming out of Glenlyon School were tremendously interested. 'Call the S.P.C.A.' said one as he held an injured bird in his hands. 'Call the police and get them to stop all traffic' said another. The boys agreed to take the dead ones they had collected to the Provincial Museum.

The crossbills were still in the same area the next morning when they were greatly enjoyed by the Tuesday group and many others.

According to one of our bird group there is no previous record of such a large flock (cautiously estimated at between one-hundred and twenty and one-hundred-and-fifty) of red crossbills in this area. Apparently in 1969 the Douglas firs, on which the birds mainly depend, did not seed, hence the invasion of these pines.

Katherine Sherman

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THE NIGHT SHIFT AT VIEW ROYAL  
or  
THE EARLY BIRD SNAFFLES THE WORM

One morning recently I was awakened at an unseemly hour and after due consideration I looked to see if perchance the morning paper had arrived. Too early, it had not. In the east the first indications of a new day were showing, but on the ground it was still as dark as midnight.

Across the way there is a street light which sheds a pool of light on the grass next door. Some movement here caught my eye, and I found a flock of robins, two or three dozen of them, shoulder to shoulder, prospecting for worms. It was the usual sequence; two or three rapid steps, stance, listen, pounce, tug, pull and take up the slack, tug again, and down the hatch and repeat. Mom and Pop robin were both there, not just Pop stopping for a snack on the way home with the milkman, or is Mom in that category too, these days.

I watched for a while, and then went around all the windows, but nary a robin except under the street light, so I padded back to the electric blanket and left the robins to their worms and the worms to their unhappy landings.

I suggest no solution. I always thought worms had no sight, so would not be sensitive to light, and why robins working only in the pool of light under the street lamp, anybody know?

By the way, has anyone ever seen a robin break a worm in the extracting process? I have seen the last tug topple them over, but never a worm pulled apart. Perhaps they taste better in the entire, but not being addicted to worms as a diet I wouldn't know.

Roy Wellwood

HARBOUR SEALS

There has been considerable controversy about the killing of our harbour seals (*Phoca vitulina richardi*), which animal is also known as the "earless" or hair seal.

The adults weigh from 128 to 300 pounds, and their distribution is along the shores of British Columbia. It lives mainly in the sea, but rarely going further than ten miles from land. It also inhabits the estuaries of the larger rivers, such as the Skeena and the Stikine.

At one time there was a bounty on this animal, but it has been withdrawn for some years, and as at present the value of the pelt is very low, there is very little incentive for hunters, although they are not protected.

At times seals will get entangled in the nets of the salmon fishermen and cause several thousands of dollars damage. There is then no doubt that the fishermen will kill them. They do at times, especially at the salmon run time, take a quantity of these fish, but their diet is mainly the coarse and bottom fish that are not at present used by man.

As far as local conditions are concerned the use of firearms in and around the greater Victoria area and Saanich is controlled by the municipalities, and in most cases it is against the law to fire at anything in the waters off shore as well as on land.

It is thought by the federal fisheries authorities that the population remains static, and the fisheries department do not encourage any indiscriminating killing of these animals. The greatest predator is the killer whale and they seem to be able to keep them in check, or they could become over-populated and so increasingly cause more damage and eat more of our food supply from the sea such as the salmon and the cod.

There has been much written about these animals and the museum publication 'The Mammals of British Columbia' by I. McT, Cowan and C.J. Guiguet will give a lot of information. Other sources of information can be obtained from the Biological Station at Nanaimo.

From the information that I have received I do not think we have too much to worry about the killing of these seals, though there are always some trigger-happy people who sail amongst the islands and in the gulf - and not all of these are fishermen - who will shoot not only at the seals, but anything else that seems to take their fancy, and that includes our sea birds.

Education is the best method of informing the public, and I feel sure it should be in the schools, not only for the ecological effect of the wildlife but of the use and handling of all firearms.

Freeman King

### A LESSON IN PERSISTENCE

Because I have only recently taken a real interest in the birds I was not sure whether this incident was a common occurrence among the bird families or not, but my wife and I found it most interesting. I would like to share it with other bird lovers.

The winter of 1968-69 was very severe, and our birds really needed an assist with their feeding, so we, like many others, put out feeding stations.

We also put out two bird houses, and from early summer last year they were both used by one family of house sparrows who zealously guarded both houses even when they were only using the one. They raised three families in one house and then moved into the other and raised two more. After the last family had left the box the parent birds evidently decided that was enough for one year, so raised no objection when a pair of violet-green swallow took over. The sparrows and several of their young stayed around, as the feeders were regularly replenished.

One afternoon when the young swallows had reached the stage where they were poking their heads out of the house, I noticed a female sparrow taking a great interest in the young swallows. The parent swallows did not like this at all and did everything they could to discourage the sparrows.

A couple of days later I noticed the sparrow back again sitting on the roost of the bird house. All of a sudden one of the swallows dive-bombed the sparrow and they both fell, still fighting, into a bush below. I naturally thought this would discourage the sparrow for good, but much to my surprise a day or so later I witnessed the sparrow feeding the young swallows with no objections from the parent swallows at all. This arrangement carried on for some time even after the young swallows had left the nest and were still being fed by their parents. I watched, and brought my wife to witness two young swallows sitting on our clothesline being fed by the sparrow and the parent swallows, all in perfect harmony.

I could not see for certain what the sparrow was feeding the young swallows but believe it was spiders which were very plentiful in the grass of our back garden.

I was very impressed with the persistence of this motherly sparrow over the resistance of the swallows until she was finally accepted as a voluntary aid or as one of the family.

Jack Rennie

#### BIRD WATCHING

On Sunday afternoon, February 22nd, we were walking through the Bedford Woods at Ten Mile Point bemoaning the lack of birds when we heard one sing from a dense clump of bushes. We thought of a fox sparrow, one of our more celebrated songsters, but it didn't quite fit. However, we were there for the purpose of finding the hummingbird which would seem to have been in the area since December 10th.

The first indication we had of its presence was a loud buzzing, an almost insect-like noise, and there on the topmost twig of a willow, was the bird.

He, (undoubtedly a male) was in a particularly belligerent mood, as he chased every bird nearby, making a Bewick wren seek cover in a low bush, and a towhee fly for its life. He then flew to an oak where three downy woodpeckers were dodging each other around the branches, but as they showed no signs of flying away, he just sat there and watched them. Then a robin flew past, and he was away, compelling the robin to exert itself to the utmost, but easily keeping on its tail until they were both out of sight. Back he came to the willow, and from there flew straight up, his needle-like bill pointing to the sky. At the top of his flight he poised motionless and then swooped down on us, and rose again with a sharp little note like the yap of a small dog. This he did several times, showing plenty of energy, so apparently he is able to find sufficient food to more than sustain him.

We examined him from all angles, and he gave every evidence of being an Anna. His back was bright metallic green down to the tail, a scarlet throat (or black, depending on the light) with a light band beneath, the underparts being very dark. We could not see the red on the forehead, which just showed dark, almost black.

We were there for about an hour and enjoyed every minute. The warm sun appeared, and standing quietly there, we could hear the calls of many birds - winter and Bewick

wrens, towhees, songsparrows, flickers and the robins, also the hammering of pileated woodpeckers, two of which flew close by and, as a climax, the bird with the beautiful song finally flew from its cover and resolved itself into a hermit thrush - a rare bird this winter - as none were seen on the Christmas count day and neither have we seen any since October.

Real bird-watching.

Eleanore Davidson

#### BUTTERFLY HIBERNATION

During the sunny months of summer, many butterflies can be seen flitting around the flower gardens of Victoria. What happens to them when the cold days of fall and winter arrive once more? They do not have the energy to fly south with the birds each year, since their wings become battered and useless.

Butterflies have four distinctive and successive stages of existence - the egg, caterpillar, pupa and adult. Many would believe that the adult was far too fragile a creature to survive the rigours of the winter months. However, several local species do pass the winter as adults, usually hidden under some loose bark, in a hollow tree, under a bridge, or in someone's woodpile. Perhaps the one most commonly observed is the Mourning Cloak, a butterfly with a three-inch wingspan and chocolate-brown wings with ochreous borders often spotted with blue. If one sees one come out from its wintry retreat, these borders are extremely pale, often even white. As with all true hibernators, the insect is in a period of suspended animation, with all its vital processes reduced to a very low level. They are extremely sensitive to changes in temperature, and a series of warm days or a heated room calls them forth again. All the anglewing group, such as commas and painted ladies, also pass the winter as adult butterflies. The comma will often hide among dead leaves and is more exposed than the others if the weather gets extremely cold.

The pupa would seem to be the hardiest form, and most likely to survive. The chrysalids are suspended at an angle in a loop of silk, without which a hanging chrysalis would have no protection against dashing rain and winds. Remaining on the damp ground would lead to fungus growth,

such as mold. The swallowtails are the best known group using this stage during hibernation. Very few species pass the winter in the egg stage.

The most popular form for most butterflies is to remain as caterpillars, a very definite hibernating stage. Some of these will be newly hatched, others half grown, and the rest fully mature. The cold weather stops all feeding, and the larvae seek out the lower leaves of bushy plants for protection.

The observant naturalist could find several species of butterflies, in some life stage, even in the dead of winter, but due to complete inactivity, are usually found only by accident.

Andrew Harcombe

#### THE PHILATELIC NATURALIST

##### Part Two

To see some beautiful birds you have to look at the stamps of some of the tropical countries. Perhaps the best known of these is the great bird of paradise (*Paradisaea apoda*) shown on the stamp of the Belgian Congo. A spectacular bird which inhabits wet lowland swampy jungles, it is cinnamon and fawn, yellow on the neck and back of head and with yellow trailing flank feathers. It has an emerald green throat and golden-whitish plumes cascading over the back from the sides of the breast. During courtship this golden spray is spread out over the head, making a fantastic display.

From beauty you may go to the grotesque and look at a stamp of Uganda which shows a shoe-billed stork (*Balaeniceps rex*) an inhabitant of the papyrus marshes of the White Nile and its tributaries. On a stubby neck it carries a head with an enormous swollen bill shaped like an inverted wooden shoe. This bill is equipped with a ridge which terminates in a strong nail-like hook used for digging out lungfish and turtles from the mud of the river bottom in the shallow waters of swamps remote from man.

In ancient civilizations birds were symbols often raised to the rank of deity. The Egyptians had at least two birds they held in reverence, and one of these was the sacred ibis (*Threskiornis aethiopioides*), which Uganda

shows on one of its stamps. The Egyptians portrayed Thoth, their god of wisdom and learning, as Ibis-headed. As the scribe of Osiris (god of the dead) Thoth was charged with recording the deeds of the dead. Thus it was that no respectable pharaoh would permit himself to be mummified without a sacred ibis by his side. Today many Egyptian tombs which have been excavated testify to this custom by containing mummified ibis.

Because of the vast amount of publicity the whooping crane (*Grus americana*) has received in the past few years people everywhere have come to think of them as symbols of conservation. It is fitting therefore that Canada in 1955 issued a stamp for the National Wild Life Week showing two of these majestic birds flying, as if on migration. It was not until 1954 that their nesting grounds were discovered in a large swampy area of a national park in northern Alberta.

On November 21st 1969 the newspapers published a report that fifty-five of these big birds had completed their 2400 miles migration from their nesting grounds to their winter quarters in Texas. The most encouraging part of the report was that seven of these birds were young of the year.

These are just a few of the interesting items brought out by a little research into these bird stamps and we give them here not only to interest 'birders' in stamp collecting, but to perhaps interest stamp collectors in birds.

J.M. Barnett

#### THE CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

These detailed bird counts, taken over all North America, south to the border of Mexico and as far north as Alaska and the Northwest Territories, have become an important factor in our knowledge of birds, their numbers and their whereabouts.

Some of these counts are taken under very adverse conditions. As an example, at Oxford House, Manitoba, four men walked fifteen miles in thirty below zero weather to find five species and a total of thirty-six birds, while at San Diego, where the largest count was taken, sixty-eight observers identified 217 species with a total of 106,943 birds under much more comfortable circumstances.



It is significant of something that black birds are in the greatest numbers. For instance: at Rome in Georgia the estimate of rusty blackbirds was 60,000 and starlings 1,500,000, while a million Brewer blackbirds were listed at Roswell in New Mexico. At York, Pennsylvania there were 700,000 cowbirds. The estimate at Little Rock, Arkansas, sounds incredible, 12,300,000 red-winged blackbirds and 2,700,000 common grackles. The crows couldn't compete with the smaller species of black birds, the highest number, 72,000, being found at Reading, Pa. Victoria listed the highest number of red-necked grebe, harlequin, pigeon guillemot, northwest crows and, of course, skylarks, there being none anywhere else on the continent.

Most people are interested in the long travels made by some birds between their nesting grounds and where they spend the winter. Take our smallest bird, the rufous hummingbird as an example. None were seen on the North American count except here, which means they had gone further south. Most of the warblers, too, fly to south of the Mexican border.

These Christmas bird counts were inaugurated by the National Audubon Society in a small way in 1900, and have now increased to 853 counts last year.

A.R.D.

#### NATURE'S RESPONSE

Our mild winter enabled some of our native plants to show bloom very early. The Easter lily (*Erythronium*) in full bloom on February 21st was remarkable, while the satin flower (*Sisyrinchium*) was a week earlier than that. The red-flowering currant was also in full bloom before February ended, while the woodland flower toothwort (*Dentaria*) was showing its bright pink flowers during the first week in March. It helped the birds too, those which should have gone south but didn't. A lutescent warbler stayed all winter, as did two Townsend warblers and three Audubon warblers were seen during the second week in March. In fact, we all enjoyed the mild winter.

A.R.D.

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#### BIRDS FOR THE RECORD

- by G.N. and G. Hooper, 2411 Alpine Crescent (477-1152)
- Turkey vulture (2) - Coopers Cove, Sooke - Feb. 1 -  
Betty Gibson
- (This is an unusual winter sighting, not  
an early spring migration)
- American bittern (1) - Rithets - Feb.16 -  
Ralph Fryer
- Yellow-billed loon (1) - Finnerty Cove - Feb.22 -  
Keith Taylor, David Stirling and others
- Anna's hummingbird (1) - Bedford Woods - Feb.22 -  
A.R. and Eleanore Davidson
- (This is thought to be the bird previously  
reported as a Rufous hummingbird on Feb.3)
- Common teal (1) - S. of Swartz Bay - Feb.28 -  
Keith Taylor, Jeremy Tatum and others
- Tree sparrow (1) - Alpine Crescent - Feb.28 -  
Gordon and Gwennie Hooper, Jeremy Tatum and others
- (The only other authenticated record of this bird  
in our area was in 1896. The 1970 bird is still  
with us [Mar.10] and has been photographed)
- Red crossbill (100-200) - Bowker and Beach Drive -Mar. 1 -  
Maria van Maurik
- (Feeding in Austrian pines and on road.  
Several killed)
- Audubon Warblers (2) - Macdonald Park - Mar.12 -  
Ralph Fryer
- Audubon Warbler (1) - Ten Mile Point - Mar.15 -  
R. MacKenzie-Grieve
- Pipits (20) - Lost Lake - Mar.14 -  
A.R. and Eleanore Davidson
- Migrants and summer residents:
- Black brant (Bowker 4, Cattle Pt.5) (RS) - Mar. 7
- Violet-green swallow(150) - Elk and Prospect
- Tree swallow ) Lakes (ARD) - Feb.28
- (First swallow, species unknown, Feb.9)
- Audubon warbler (1) - Sidney (RF) - Mar. 7
- We have had reports of two bushtits' nests found completed on March 8. The last week in March is more usual. One of the nests made use of kapok from an abandoned boat cushion.

PROGRAM FOR APRIL 1970

- Audubon Wildlife Film Harry Pederson presents  
"Village Beneath the Sea"  
Thurs., Fri., Sat. 8:00 p.m. Newcombe Auditorium,  
April 2, 3, 4 Provincial Museum(South Entrance)
- Botany Field Trip Meet at Douglas and Hillside  
10:00 a.m. for trip to Thetis  
Saturday April 4 Lake Park. Bring lunch.  
Leader: Miss M.C. Melburn -  
592-2069
- Executive Meeting 8:00 p.m. at home of Mrs. S.Prior  
Tuesday April 7 1903 Shotbolt Road
- General Meeting 8:00 p.m. Douglas Building Cafe-  
teria - Ralph Fryer presents:  
Tuesday April 14 "Ducks, Geese and Swans"
- Tide Pool Explorations Meet at Douglas and Hillside  
9:30 a.m. or Smugglers' Cove  
Thursday April 23 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch.  
Leader: Freeman King - 479-2966
- Bird Field Trip Meet at Douglas and Hillside  
9:30 a.m. or Thomas Francis Park  
Saturday April 25 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch.  
Leader: Douglas Turnbull -  
592-6025
- Junior Group Meet each Saturday at Douglas  
and Hillside for field trip.  
Leader: Freeman King - 479-2966

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To look for in April: Osprey, possibly Bonaparte's and  
California gulls, whimbrel,  
spotted, least and western sandpipers, s-b dowitcher,  
rough-winged swallow, purple martin, vireos and  
warblers.

# VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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