



THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

published by the
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Victoria B.C

September 1972
Vol. 29 #1

THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

Published by
THE VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Vol. 29: No. 1September 1972

MILBERT'S TORTOISESHELL

The beautiful little butterfly illustrated on the cover of this month's magazine is widely distributed across Canada and is fairly common in the Victoria area. It is Milbert's Tortoiseshell, Nymphalis milberti (or, as I should prefer, Aglais milberti). It is prettily patterned in orange, yellow and black, with a white spot near the wing-tip. The underside is blackish and cryptic. Like all members of its family, the Nymphalidae, its front legs are reduced and functionless (at least as legs), so that the insect appears to have only four legs. The butterfly often spends the winter as a full-grown insect, sometimes hidden from the wintry weather in some dark recess of our houses. A warm day in mid-winter may sometimes wake it up and we may be surprised to see such a beautiful insect at that season.

The caterpillars are black, spiny and gregarious and they can be found throughout the summer (there are two or three broods) feeding conspicuously on nettles (Urtica sp.). Birds soon learn they are not good to eat, and their food-plant doubtless affords them some protection, though like most caterpillars, they are subject to attack from parasitic flies and wasps.

When they are ready to pupate they hang upside down by their claspers and their skin splits behind the head, peeling off toward the point of suspension. The larval skin is then shed, leaving the pupa suspended from its hooked tail or cremaster. This acrobatic feat has been likened to a man hanging from a bar by one gloved hand, and removing the glove without falling off while he keeps the other hand in his pocket. If you want to understand this miracle, you will have to watch it.

The larvae of several of our more beautiful butterflies, like Milbert's Tortoiseshell, feed only on stinging nettles. Unfortunately, most people regard nettles as unpleasant weeds to be destroyed at every opportunity. If we destroy nettles, we also cut off the food supply of these wonderful insects. I would like to make a plea to those who know the meaning of conservation to spare the nettles and encourage the survival of our beautiful butterflies.

--Photo cover and story
by Jeremy Tatum

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

By Harold Hosford

Accompanying this issue of The Victoria Naturalist is a copy of Dr. Jeremy Tatum's presidential report in full to the society's annual general meeting held on April 9. On reading it you may be either shocked or gladdened, as your particular attitudes dictate, by his remarks concerning hunting and the motives of government game management agencies.

If I interpret these remarks correctly, Dr. Tatum seemed to be advocating a society policy favoring the abolishment of hunting. At the same time he seemed to be impugning the motives of those same agencies.

It is not my intention to defend game control agencies. They have the men and resources to do this job themselves. But I do feel that Dr. Tatum's remarks about these agencies did not indicate the degree of objective consideration of a complex social problem we might expect from a man of his background. Nor can I support his opposition to hunting.

Speaking to the hunting question first, I think we must keep in mind that man the species owes much of his present high degree of intelligence to his ancestral skill and ingenuity as a hunter. From a purely biological standpoint, hunting for food is as essential to a viable species as is reproduction. Therefore it is reasonable to assume that it is more natural for a man to hunt and kill than for him not to.

We should not be condemning men for doing what is an instinctive part of their nature. The problem arises when we try to fit man the hunter into the modern mosaic of man the technologist.

Hunting is not a God-given right. It is not a right of any kind. It is simply a natural expression of a complex animal in terms of its environment.

It is not hunting we should oppose but some hunters. But that is another question.

As to the motives of game management agencies, I feel sure that most of the men involved in the attempts of these agencies to find some rational means of balancing hunting pressure on wildlife with the ability of that wildlife to survive under it, would agree that more than anything else the problem resolves itself into one of controlling people, or hunters, and not game populations.

We all can agree, I think, that controls are necessary. We may not agree on the nature of those controls. Despite the intensive research of recent years, our understanding of the dynamics of wildlife populations is still woefully weak. But one fact continues to stand out in all this confusion; we know that while human populations continue to grow, the wildlife populations do not. So while we try to learn more about wildlife, we also try to limit the effect of hunting on these populations. This is the role of game management agencies. They would more appropriately be called people management agencies.

Rather than expounding what I think are unrealistic policies on hunting, we as a society should be addressing ourselves to the problems of hunter attitudes and education. We should support programs designed to make hunters more knowledgeable about their effect on game and efforts to improve the attitudes of many hunters. Above all, we should be alert to any move to expand hunting into species not now hunted. Not because we think these species should not be killed but because we realize that many kinds of animals just could not adapt to additional pressure on their numbers.

Hunters and naturalists have too much in common to allow their differences to separate them.#

SEPTEMBER BIRD FIELD TRIP

This trip will be held at the best time of year for seeing pelagic species from the Coho ferry, and, in addition, there will be time for interesting shorebird observations in Port Angeles. Meet at the Black Ball ferry terminal, Wharf St., at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, September 16. Bring lunch. The trip will return on the 5:30 p.m. ferry, arriving in Victoria at 7 p.m.

N.B. Please let Rosemary Picozzi (384-4958 or 477-6911, Local 255) know if you intend to go on this trip by September 7. This is important; please don't neglect to do it.

The cost depends on the number who travel and on the number who remember to register with Rosemary before September 7, but it will probably be about \$4.25 return. Cars are \$14.00 return. We shall pack into the minimum number of cars, and passengers will be asked to share the expenses of car transportation.

Canadian citizens are advised to take some form of identification (e.g. driver's licence). Residents who are not Canadian citizens should take their immigration identification card. Visitors to Canada, other than U.S. residents, should take their passports and U.S. entry visas.

1971 ANNUAL BIRD REPORT

The 1971 Annual Bird Report will become available early this month. Like last year, the bird report contains a wealth of information about all birds seen in the Victoria and Duncan districts during the year, including migration dates, census results and breeding records. It is also the official medium for publication of all records of rarities accepted by the Records Committee of Southern Vancouver Island. The number of photographs in the book has been increased this year.

Despite the increasing costs of most items, the price of the A.B.R. has actually decreased this year. It will cost only \$1.35 for Victoria Natural History Society members; \$1.60 for non-members, plus sales tax and postage where applicable.

It will be available at meeting and outings or from Jeremy Tatum, 416-3187 Shelbourne St., Victoria.

INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION MEETING

"If conservation is to succeed, it must become an integral and important part of the planning and development process."

With these words as their rallying cry, conservationists, environmentalists and decision-makers from more than 70 nations will meet in Banff, Alberta in September to discuss the state of the world's environment. The occasion will be the 11th General Assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN).

From September 10 to 16 the delegates will explore a wide range of environmental problems including such topics as "The Evolving Role of International Agencies in the World's Concern with the Environment," "Ecological Multi-disciplinary Approaches to Development," and "The Health of the Oceans."

Pre-registration tours of western Canada are planned for the delegates. Of particular interest to Victoria naturalists is a four-day tour of Vancouver Island which will see the delegates visit Mandarte Island, Cathedral Grove, Tofino and spend a day off-shore on the Pacific, watching the movement of pelagic birds along the British Columbia coast. The visit to this area may provide an opportunity for us to meet some of the people from other nations who share our concern for the environment.

-- Harold Hosford.

A story from Grimsby, Ont. which came over the Canadian Press wire this summer caught our eye: "Emidio Masi of Hamilton picked the wrong field to shoot birds. On the other side was birdwatcher Dr. Harold Axtell of Fort Erie, a PhD in ornithology and teacher of bird identification. He testified later in court he saw Masi kill snow buntings and horned larks. Masi was fined \$100 and his hunting licence was suspended for two years for shooting protected species."

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Last spring members of the Victoria Natural History Society decided against raising the Society's membership dues from \$3.00 to \$5.00 a year. It was a fair and democratic decision, and there can be no complaints about it.

But the unfortunate effects of that decision are now beginning to be felt, particularly on this magazine. Nine issues of The Victoria Naturalist have been traditional for many years, and last year we even managed to produce 10 by adding a June issue.

However, it now appears that this year you may receive only six or seven issues. There just won't be enough money for more.

With dues at \$3.00 a member, the Society is losing money on each and every one of us, just in supplying the basic requirements of monthly magazines and meetings.

The finance subcommittee set up by the executive to look into the Society's financial state believes the Society must maintain a balanced operating budget each year. What it pays out in normal expenses must not exceed with it takes in in dues. The only way it seems this will be possible this year is to cut back on the number of issues of the Naturalist produced.

Your editors do not like this decision, but they recognize it as wise financial policy. We are doing our best to cut costs wherever possible. You will note we have removed the bit of color from the front cover.

We have also begun doing the typing and layout of the magazine ourselves, instead of having our printer do it. (If the quality is not quite as high as you are accustomed to in that regard for an issue or two, we apologize, but we are still feeling our way.)

By cutting a few corners this way, saving a dollar here and 75 cents there, we sincerely hope we will manage to put out seven or eight issues of the Naturalist over the year. But so far we have found no way to see our way clear to the traditional nine.

The Naturalist isn't the only part of the Society's program suffering because of the lack of funds. We will probably be forced to cut back on our memberships in other societies from which we receive valuable information.

And, perhaps worst of all, there is no hope of the V.N.H.S. taking on any new programs of any sort although there are many crying out to be done. There is simply no money.

All we can do now is wait for a year and hope that when the question of a fee increase comes up again near year's end, the members look with more favor on it than they did last spring.

The main reason last year for opposing the fee increase was that some of the members could not afford an increase. This may be so, and would be most regrettable. But the question soon will be whether the Society can continue to operate without one.

--Barbara McLintock

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS, 1972-73

The Audubon Wildlife Films will be shown as usual in the Newcombe Auditorium on Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. and on Saturday afternoons at 2:30 p.m. The price for season tickets will be the same as last year: for evenings, \$4.00, students, \$2.00; for matinees, \$3.50; students, \$1.50.

The year's schedule is:

- Oct. 13 and 14 -- John Taft, "An Ecological Visit."
- Nov. 10 and 11 -- Burdette White, "Gems of Nature, East and West."
- Jan. 12 and 13 -- Robert Fultz, "Sky Island."
- Feb. 9 and 10 -- Martin Bruce, "Galapagos."
- Mar. 23 and 24 -- Tom Sterling, "Twentieth Century Wilderness."

Season tickets are obtainable from the Gift Shop, Provincial Museum, (384-4425); Book Nook, Centennial Square (386-0813); and Dogwood Shop, Oak Bay Avenue (598-3712). There will be a call for ushers and kind people to entertain the speaker on Saturday evenings after the lecture.

--Enid Lemon

WAIKIKI SURPRISE

By Cy Morehen

On a recent visit to Honolulu I was fortunate in having a hotel room facing the ocean at Waikiki Beach with a flat gravel roof adjoining. Noting the odd barred dove searching for food on this roof, I idly tossed a piece of toast to them while breakfasting on my lanai.

As if by magic, birds appeared from every direction. Indian mynas, spotted doves, pure white rock doves, House Sparrows, Cardinals, and Red-crested (Brazilian) cardinals quickly joined the barred doves and me in breakfast. From then on it was morning routine.

On the third morning I was surprised to see a Golden Plover in the feast. The next morning he brought his buddy, partly in breeding plumage. It was most surprising these ground dwellers six stories up playing tug-of-war with House Sparrows over a piece of bread.

Is this a sign of our times? Are the masses of exotic birds, such as the Indian Myna, denuding Hawaii of food necessary for the survival of Golden Plover there? Are the developers filling in marshes and ponds at the expense of native birds? Highrise hotels now stand at Waikiki Beach where there was once a massive marsh. They are talking of filling in Salt Lake (it is fresh water) in Honolulu and turning it into a golf course even though lakes are scarce in Hawaii.

Are we in our lifetime to see the end of the magic of over-water flights by Golden Plover from Alaska to Hawaii? But before we're too quick to condemn what's going on over there, let us stop and consider for a moment what is happening in our own back yard.#

Recently the V.N.H.S. has started scheduling some of its outings for Sundays instead of Saturdays. It's been felt this was fairer to all because some members have to work on Saturdays, but there have been some complaints. The Editors would like to know what you think -- drop us a line.

IVORY-BILLED WOODPECKER

The following appeared in the New York Times over the summer:

"New Orleans -- A flutter of excitement ran through the world of nature enthusiasts after a National Audubon Society publication, American Birds, printed in its October issue the following item, almost hidden in a column of notes on other birds:

"On May 22 (1971) a pair of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers was seen and photographed somewhere in Louisiana. The anonymous observer has been reporting the species for three years but has seldom seen it. The photographs, though taken without high-priced camera equipment, leave no doubt as to the subject's identity. The location was not in virgin timber, long presumed by most people to be necessary for survival of this species."

With that, an old search quickened again. Across the South, from the swamps of the eastern coastal plain to the Big Thicket of eastern Texas, ornithologists and serious bird watchers scanned the high trees with special alertness and longing.

The item in American Birds had been sent in by George H. Lowrey Jr., founder and director of the Museum of Natural Science at Louisiana State University, one of the most respected ornithologists in the United States.

Several times in the last generation, the nation's leading ornithologists have been tempted to assume that the rare and desperately endangered ivory-bill was extinct. It was not seen for long periods. The last report of a live ivory-bill that satisfied virtually all critical scientists was in the early 1950s when a trained ornithologist, Sam Grimes of Jacksonville, Fla., saw one in western Florida.

Hundreds of persons have reported seeing the bird since then, but the Audubon Society, the recognized in these matters, has discounted almost all the reports. Most of the observers have mistaken the Pileated Woodpecker for the ivory-bill.

Audubon's research director, Alexander Sprunt of Tavernier, Fla., considers Dr. Lowery's report convincing evidence that the bird still lives. He agrees with Dr. Lowery that the bird in the photo-

Continued on Page 11

FROM THE EDITORS' CORNER

Unlike Topsy, a magazine such as The Victoria Naturalist doesn't just happen; it's the result of a lot of hard work by many people -- writers, photographers, printers, and, of course, editors. You've got a new team of editors this year and, in at least one respect, they're like all the editors you've had before: they need your help.

Sure they could sit down and probably fill all the pages of The Naturalist with natural history material they've dug up themselves. But you'd soon get tired of that. As a matter of fact, so' would they.

The solution then is for you to sit down and write out your own experiences, opinions and observations, send them in, and make everyone happy. Remember though -- those editors will be doing what they're supposed to be doing, namely editing. So bear with them if they seem to take liberties with your hard won words. It's all in the interest of time and space. Nothing personal. And they'll try to consult you wherever possible before they do any editing. What they'll be looking for are brief, clear, concise articles.

If you feel you're not up to the rigors of writing for publication, remember those same editors stand ready to help you over the first hurdle. Feel free to contact us any time: Barbara McLintock at 383-3097 or 383-4111, Loc. 288; Harold Hosford at 478-5794.

* * * *

A note before we forget to thank Jack Ralph for the photograph of the mosquito larva which appeared on the front cover of the June issue.

* * * *

We read in the Toronto Globe and Mail that the first Rufous Hummingbird ever recorded in Ontario appeared a couple of weeks ago in the back garden of a keen birdwatcher in the Hamilton area.

BIRDS REPORTED

Sandhill Crane	(1)May 16	Sheringham Pt. Mrs. Kerkhoven
Red-eyed Vireo	(1)June 11	UVic, J.B. Tatum
Eastern Kingbird	(1)June 13	Alpine Crescent Mrs. Doris Prout
Arctic Loon	(2)June 22	Mt. Douglas Beach J.B. Tatum
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	(1)June 26	Ten Mile Point Mary Clark
Lazuli Bunting	(1)July 2	Helmcken Road
Mockingbird	(1)July 2	" "
		J.B. Tatum and Stuart Johnston
Blue-winged Teal	(1)July 3	Duncan
Short-billed Dowitcher	(5)July 9	Oak Bay
Caspian Tern	(1)July 11	Witty's Lagoon
Whimbrel	(3)July 11	" "
Semipalmated Plover	(1)July 11	" "
Ancient Murrelet	(1)July 19	Clover Point Mr. and Mrs. Vic Goodwill
Tufted Puffin	(1)July 19	Clover Point Ralph Fryer
Lesser Yellowlegs	(2)Aug. 3	Witty's Lagoon
Green-winged Teal	(1)Aug. 3	" "
		Mr. and Mrs. Vic Goodwill

ADDENDA

Our thanks to those who phoned in reports this summer. To those who did not but perhaps saw birds of interest, please phone before Sept. 12, and we will try to include them in the next issue. We hope all our readers had a good summer, both birdwise and otherwise. Don't forget to put out seed and fat for the migrants as fall approaches.

M. and L. Slocombe
3134 Henderson Road
592-9047

Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Continued from Page 9

graphs is an ivory-bill and that the anonymous Louisianian had no reason to falsify the pictures. He is continuing the search this summer in an attempt to find the pair the informant reported."#

PROGRAM FOR SEPTEMBER 1972

- Executive Meeting: 8 p.m. Board Room 104M
 Tuesday, Sept. 5 Provincial Museum
- General Meeting: 8 p.m. Newcombe Auditorium
 Tuesday, Sept. 12 (south entrance). Mr. A. Ceska presents slides on "Flora of the Pacific Northwest."
- Bird Field Trip: Trip to Port Angeles. Meet at
 Sat., Sept. 16 Black Ball ferry, 814 Wharf St. at 10:30 a.m. Important: See details on page 4. Leader: Ruth Stirling
- Botany Field Trip: Meet at Mayfair Lanes Parking
 Sat., Sept. 23 Lot (north side, corner Oak and Roderick) at 9:30 a.m. for trip to Sooke. "Ferns and Fungi." Bring lunch. Leader: Stephen Mitchell
- Junior Group: Meet every Saturday at 1:30
 p.m. at Mayfair Parking Lot, north side.

Coming up: Scheduled for Oct. 10 general meeting is the National Film Board production, "Death of a Legend" -- a color film produced for the Canadian Wildlife Service, containing excellent footage of the wolf's life cycle and other animals of the Canadian wilderness.

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Honorary Life Members

Freeman F. King, Albert R. Davidson, George E. Winkler,
Miss M.C. Melburn, Miss E.K. Lemon, Mrs. L.E. Chambers, E.E. Bridgen

Officers 1972 - 73

President

Dr. Jeremy Tatum
#416-3187 Shelbourne St.
592-1332

Vice-President

K.R. Beckett
4484 Markham St., R.R.3
479-5548

Immediate Past President

Mrs. F.A. Sherman, 2168 Guernsey St. ----- 598-3237
Recording Secretary: Miss Maureen Collins, 2719 Richmond Rd.-- 598-1875
Corresponding Secretary: Mrs. G.N. Hooper, 2411 Alpine Cres. --- 477-1152
Treasurer: Alex Matheson, 11075 Dunne Road, Sidney ----- 656-1301

Programme Chairman: Dr. Rosemary Picozzi, 11-1595 Rockland -- 384-4958
Audubon Wildlife Films: Miss Enid Lemon, 1226 Roslyn Road --- 598-3517
A.H. Couser, #403-435 Michigan St. ---- 384-0832

Group Leaders

Botany: Stephen Mitchell, 3930 Braefoot Road ----- 477-9248
Entomology: Prof. H.H. Huxley, 510-1701 Cedar Hill X Rd. ----- 477-8905
Ornithology: Ruth Stirling, 3500 Salsbury Way ----- 385-4223
Marine Biology: Freeman F. King, 541 McKenzie Ave. ----- 479-2966
David Stirling, 3500 Salsbury Way ----- 385-4223
Junior Naturalists: Freeman F. King, 541 McKenzie Ave. ----- 479-2966
Gail Mitchell, 3930 Braefoot Rd. ----- 477-9248

Ornithology Records: Dr. Jeremy Tatum, (see address above)
University Liaison: Dr. Rosemary Picozzi (see address above)
Membership: Mrs. A.R. Davidson, 2144 Brighton Ave. ----- 598-3088
Librarian: A.R. Davidson, 2144 Brighton Ave. ----- 598-3088
Federation of B.C. Naturalists: Kerry Joy, Millstream Lake Rd., R.R.6 478-5093
Friends of the Museum: Dr. D.B. Sparling, #9-1354 Beach Dr. --- 598-4262
Publicity: Harold Hosford, 450 Tipton St. ----- 478-5794

"The Victoria Naturalist"

Editor: Barbara McLintock, 3-1006 Tolmie Ave. ----- 383-3097
Assistant Editor: Harold Hosford, (see address above)

Annual Dues, including subscription: Single \$3; Family \$6; Junior \$2
Junior Membership is restricted to those not under 9½ years and not over 18 years.

Financial Year is May 1 to April 30.

New Members joining after January 1 - half fee.

Dues and change of address should be sent to the Treasurer.