



THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

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SHAGPOLL, SOMETIMES OF THE SEA

While assembling these paragraphs to accompany this month's cover -- a drake Hooded Merganser photographed this fall on Fountain Lake in Beacon Hill Park during a courtship (?) display (note his swollen neck) -- a visit to the library was necessary. There Bent and Kortwright were sought out and their accounts were found to contain much of interest. For example, the translation of the scientific name, *Lophodytes cucullatus*: *Lophodytes*, from Greek *lophos*, meaning a crest, and *dutes*, meaning a diver; *cucullatus*, Latin, meaning wearing a hood.

Also found were a number of equally apt colloquial names: hairy-crown or hairy-head (names it shares with the Red-breasted Merganser), shagpoll, cottonhead, pickaxe sheldrake, bec-scie de cypière (anyone read French? this one must be used down in Louisiana's bayou country), water pheasant, etc. Condensed local information has been made available to all of us in the Annual Bird Reports.

The Hooded Merganser, one of our resident birds, winters here in numbers on both fresh and salt water, but is found less frequently during the summer months. Recent breeding records come from Thetis Island, Crofton and Pike Lake. Generally the nest is in a tree cavity, but Bent says that occasionally the open hollowed top of a stump or a fallen hollow log are used, and sometimes even a hole in the ground is occupied. The nest cavity may be as far as half a mile from water when there are no closer nest sites. In such cases the downy young must learn to walk long before they learn to swim.

Apparently this area offers the Hooded Merganser the optimum winter habitat. During last year's Christmas count

190 were tallied, the highest count in Canada. This year we counted 235, rivaling last year's highest count for all of North America -- 250 at Linesville, Pa. However, this year's total is not exceptional, representing only half the birds found two years ago when 472 were counted (most of these on Elk Lake), Victoria's all-time high.

Local observers may take exception to Kortwright's statement that the Hooded Merganser is a freshwater duck, seldom if ever visiting the seacoasts. Bent allowed a little leeway with the assertion that the Hooded Merganser lives and feeds almost exclusively on and in fresh water. But, further on he too wrote that they are seldom if ever seen on salt water, referring, however, to their principal winter home, the states bordering on the Gulf of Mexico. It would be interesting to compile all local salt water records and learn just how often these birds do use salt water areas here. "Seldom if ever" seems too seldom; the "if ever" has got to go with regard to Victoria's saltwater shagpolls.

Bent, A.C. (1923) 1962. Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl, Part I. Dover Publications, New York.
Kortwright, F.H. 1943. The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America. The American Wildlife Institute, Washington, D.C.

--Story by Stuart Johnston
Cover photo by Harold Hosford

CHRISTMAS COUNT 1972

Full details of the birds seen on the Victoria Christmas Count begin on Page 60.

Also seen in the 14-day Count period were: Peregrine Falcon, Ruffed Grouse, Rhinoceros Auklet, Savannah Sparrow.

Note: The letters to the right of some species totals in the Count tables have the following meanings:
H or H = : highest or equal to highest ever.
L or L = : lowest or equal to lowest ever.
F : first record for count day.

The average numbers of species and individuals for the previous 14 years are 120 and 48,355 respectively. Fifty-six observers took part, one more than last year. A total of 430 party-miles (71 on foot, 352 by car, 7 by boat)

was covered in 147 party-hours (91 on foot, 52 by car, 4 by boat). These figures are very close indeed to those of last year. The Christmas Count subcommittee of the Records Committee felt that in the case of a very few rare and difficult species, while the birds might well be in the area, this had not been established beyond all reasonable doubt on the basis of the written field-notes received. We hope that disappointed observers will bear with the records committee in their very difficult task of ensuring the greatest possible reliability of records from Victoria.

Participants were:

Area A: Prospect Lake--Durrance Lake: R.C. Mackenzie-Grieve, A. Peden, H. Vance.

Area B: Florence Lake--Goldstream: Mr and Mrs T. Briggs, R. Hay, Michael and Mark Shepard, Leila Roberts, Mary Winstone

Area C: Esquimalt Lagoon--Witty's: Enid Lemon, Miss M. Hampton, C. Hewson, M. Miller, A. Muir.

Area D: Portage Inlet--Thetis Lake: S. Johnston, Jennifer Clark, D. Suttill, Terese Todd, G. Zamzow.

Area E: Beacon Hill Park--Esquimalt: R. Fryer, Mr and Mrs J. Doughty-Davies, Leah Halsall, H. Hosford.

Area F: Clover Point--Oak Bay: D. Stirling, Miss M.C. Melburn, Lucy Parris, S. Reid, Pat Swift.

Area G: University--Cadboro Bay: Mr and Mrs A.R. Davidson, Anne Adamson, Mary Clark, Phyl Downey, N. Fatt, Mrs D. Macfarland, R. Satterfield, Dr and Mrs D. Sparling.

Area H: Swan Lake--Panama Flats: Mr and Mrs V. Goodwill.

Area I: Blenkinsop--Elk Lake: Mr and Mrs G.N. Hooper, Wendy Hooper, Ruth and Barbara McIntock, Mr and Mrs D. Suttill.

Area J: Burnside--Quick's Pond: J.B. Tatum, Kay Dickieson.

Area K: Martindale--Island View: Ruth Stirling, C.P. Lyons, G.F. Houston.

Area L: Chain, Trial, Chatham Islands: J. Rennie, A. James.

The Compiler, J.B. Tatum, would like to thank everyone who took part in the Count, especially leaders whose careful and prompt attention to detail were of inestimable help in the daunting task of organizing an army of birdwatchers and preparing the material for publication. High spot of the day was the great party in the evening, and all of us thank Anne Adamson most heartily for her role as hostess at this most enjoyable occasion.

-- J.B. Tatum.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

SPECIES	A	B	C	D
COMMON LOON	0	0	13	0
YELLOW-BILLED LOON	0	0	0	0
ARCTIC LOON	0	0	0	0
RED-THROATED LOON	0	0	2	1
RED-NECKED GREBE	0	7	2	0
HORNED GREBE	0	13	78	4
EARED GREBE	0	0	1	0
WESTERN GREBE	0	3	406	3
PIED-BILLED GREBE	4	0	1	4
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	0	9	27	48
BRANDT'S CORMORANT	0	0	0	0
PELAGIC CORMORANT	0	3	17	2
GREAT BLUE HERON	0	7	8	3
MUTE SWAN	0	2	2	13
CANADA GOOSE	15	0	0	13
MALLARD	242	126	54	60
PINTAIL	5	1	10	0
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	49	4	5	0
EUROPEAN WIDGEON	0	1	0	1
AMERICAN WIDGEON	524	439	89	21
SHOVELER	0	2	0	2
RING-NECKED DUCK	40	13	0	0
CANVASBACK	1	0	28	14
GREATER SCAUP	0	2	127	352
LESSER SCAUP	4	0	0	57
COMMON GOLDENEYE	4	39	67	10
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	0	0	1	0
BUFFLEHEAD	12	71	442	183
OLDSQUAW	0	0	28	0
HARLEQUIN DUCK	0	0	4	0
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	0	0	66	8
SURF SCOTER	0	0	78	0
RUDDY DUCK	1	0	48	0
HOODED MERGANSER	5	8	29	23
COMMON MERGANSER	10	24	2	15
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER	2	0	52	2
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	0	2	1	0
COOPER'S HAWK	0	0	1	0
RED-TAILED HAWK	1	1	0	0

VICTORIA, B.C., DECEMBER 26, 1972

E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
4	1	22	0	4	0	4	2	50
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 H=
1	2	13	0	1	0	0	0	17
2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	8 L
19	8	14	0	0	0	1	1	52
79	118	169	0	46	0	2	34	543
7	6	7	0	2	0	0	0	23 L
47	30	40	0	0	0	0	6	535
8	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	19
49	1	3	2	8	0	0	22	169
0	33	114	0	0	0	0	0	147
25	63	1	0	13	0	0	175	299
8	0	3	2	3	2	1	19	56
10	0	0	3	26	0	0	0	56
0	0	0	0	0	34	1	0	63
191	61	93	1050	812	330	540	0	3559
0	12	0	465	9	71	30	0	603
0	0	0	99	0	159	0	0	316
0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	6
281	164	9	750	309	559	3657	0	6802
0	4	0	22	4	7	10	0	51 L
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	54
4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	48
15	50	46	0	12	0	10	0	614 L
17	850	0	14	0	0	0	0	942 H
16	54	43	3	15	0	3	38	292
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
67	420	156	29	49	13	30	110	1582
9	22	30	0	21	0	7	2	119
9	47	43	0	0	0	0	108	211
47	34	62	0	5	0	7	23	252
1	13	62	0	217	0	30	45	446
0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	57
37	0	1	16	94	0	2	20	235
25	0	3	28	233	0	0	0	340
32	7	27	0	0	0	0	8	130
0	1	2	1	2	0	1	0	10
0	2	3	1	0	0	1	0	8
0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	6

SPECIES	A	B	C	D
GOLDEN EAGLE	0	0	0	0
BALD EAGLE	0	2	4	0
PIGEON HAWK	0	0	0	0
SPARROW HAWK	0	0	0	0
CALIFORNIA QUAIL	0	0	0	0
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	2	3	2	0
VIRGINIA RAIL	0	0	0	0
AMERICAN COOT	9	21	293	47
BLACK OYSTERCATCHER	0	0	3	0
KILLDEER	0	25	7	0
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER	0	0	1	0
SURFBIRD	0	0	0	0
BLACK TURNSTONE	0	0	20	0
COMMON SNIBE	0	3	20	0
SPOTTED SANDPIPER	0	0	0	0
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	0	0	0	0
ROCK SANDPIPER	0	0	0	0
DUNLIN	0	0	13	0
SANDERLING	0	0	0	0
GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL	275	332	433	73
HERRING GULL	0	3	1	0
CALIFORNIA GULL	0	0	0	0
NEW GULL	21	435	62	5
BONAPARTE'S GULL	0	0	0	0
COMMON MURRE	0	0	10	0
PIGEON GUILLEMOT	0	0	7	0
MARbled MURRELET	0	0	0	0
ANCIENT MURRELET	0	0	0	0
BAND-TAILED PIGEON	0	0	20	3
ROCK DOVE	0	5	0	22
MOURNING DOVE	0	0	0	0
SCREECH OWL	0	0	0	0
GREAT HORNED OWL	0	0	0	0
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD	0	0	0	0
BELTED KINGFISHER	0	2	5	3
YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER	1	0	0	0
RED-SHAFTED FLICKER	12	17	14	4
PILEATED WOODPECKER	1	1	0	1
YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	0	0	0	0
HAIRY WOODPECKER	1	3	0	0
DOWNY WOODPECKER	0	10	0	1
SKYLARK	0	0	0	0
STELLER'S JAY	0	0	0	1
COMMON RAVEN	27	42	23	3

	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	0	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	10
	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	3 ^{H=}
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	8	9	68	2	36	5	15	0	143 ^L
	6	6	10	12	14	4	4	0	63
	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
	4	3	30	17	246	8	1	5	684
	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
	4	0	0	20	1	0	0	0	57 ^L
	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	2	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
	51	55	12	0	0	0	0	0	138
	0	0	25	1	3	7	0	0	59
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	0	0	0	3	35	0	0	0	38
	1	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	17
	0	21	0	0	0	0	2	0	36 ^L
	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	257	519	620	149	466	92	50	65	3331
	1	15	0	0	0	1	0	0	21
	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	466	584	310	739	420	283	150	18	3493
	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	1	3	8	0	0	0	0	1	23
	1	10	11	0	0	0	1	14	44
	4	2	0	0	5	0	0	9	20
	1	0	450	0	0	0	0	0	451 ^H
	0	363	31	0	0	0	0	0	417 ^H
	290	45	4	99	20	0	10	0	495
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2 ^H
	9	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	23
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	10	24	42	11	6	3	5	0	148
	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	6
	5	1	4	1	1	0	1	0	24
	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	4 ^L
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	4	2	3	0	18	4	3	0	129 ^H

SPECIES	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
NORTHWESTERN CROW	75	249	198	49	294	1206	600	190	1584	142	131	2	4720
CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE	5	115	78	43	25	16	49	0	91	19	12	0	453
COMMON BUSHTIT	0	2	0	0	0	20	25	6	0	2	0	0	55
RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	0	7	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	11
BROWN CREEPER	0	9	1	3	7	0	0	0	1	3	0	0	24
DIPPER	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
WINTER WREN	1	18	2	13	3	0	7	1	4	10	0	0	59
BEWICK'S WREN	5	9	4	3	5	9	13	3	8	5	3	0	67
LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3 ^{H=}
ROBIN	40	47	13	23	306	307	900	41	679	61	60	0	2477
VARIED THRUSH	8	5	1	1	17	8	16	0	1	0	0	0	57
HERMIT THRUSH	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2 ^{H=}
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	9	45	34	55	5	4	45	0	95	29	8	0	329
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	2	20	6	3	2	3	3	0	1	4	0	0	44
WATER PIPIT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	0	0	19
CEDAR WAXWING	0	0	0	0	30	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	35
NORTHERN SHRIKE	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5 ^{H=}
STARLING	104	139	18	5	341	905	1400	380	774	270	1306	0	5642
HOUSE SPARROW	0	23	12	25	54	95	60	22	4	1	0	0	296
WESTERN MEADOWLARK	0	0	3	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	7	0	15
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	0	24	0	0	1	0	16	92	1	0	0	0	134
RUSTY BLACKBIRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1 ^F
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	315	19	6	300	0	644
BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
EVENING GROSBEAK	0	9	96	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	127 ^H
PURPLE FINCH	13	17	3	1	30	18	23	4	15	6	1	0	131
HOUSE FINCH	0	60	37	1	22	48	65	18	0	3	27	0	281
PINE SISKIN	0	23	4	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	40 ^L
AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
RUFUS-SIDED TOWHEE	10	34	10	3	21	5	30	11	21	8	9	0	162
SLATE-COLOURED JUNCO	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
OREGON JUNCO	34	192	165	22	68	79	105	1	118	19	40	0	843
HARRIS' SPARROW	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	4 ^H
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	0	1	1	3	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	15
GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW	7	28	15	1	10	13	16	0	0	6	2	0	98
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 ^{H=}
FOX SPARROW	3	10	0	1	7	4	14	3	2	1	3	0	48
LINCOLN'S SPARROW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
SONG SPARROW	5	16	21	7	13	13	38	5	13	8	15	0	154
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	1590	2787	3351	1266	3418	6493	6058	4654	6618	2192	6519	727	45673
TOTAL SPECIES	41	63	71	54	81	72	70	52	60	41	50	22	123

JUNIOR JOTTINGS

On Jan. 13, eighteen lively juniors tunned out for an outing to the north end of Thetis Lake. Hiking up the fire trail, these junior naturalists did well in identifying some of the common shrubs and trees -- Salal, Oregon grape, Western Red Cedar, Douglas Fir, Grand Fir and Red Alder. One 10-year-old old-timer knew how Soapberry could be used and showed a newcomer how to rub the berries between his palms. It was noted that these berries are not edible and are to be avoided other than to use in the manner described.

At the lakeshore a rock outcrop offered a large unique assortment of plants -- Stonecrop (Sedum sp.) and Licorice Fern (Polypodium sp.) being the most obvious. Along the shore of Upper Thetis we found a pine, (Pinus Contorta) and noticed the two-needle bundles. A pine cone was an exciting addition to the collection of a girl. This young naturalist told the story of the Douglas Fir cone's three-pronged bract.

The jelly fungus is a favorite find. A Chestnut-backed Chickadee was recognized by several members, and of course the ice, which was still about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, was popular. Why are there 1-inch diameter melt holes randomly dispersed in the ice? An unanswered question like that is a common occurrence with such an eager group. I think that is a good thing!

Details of February junior program will be found on Page 72.

--Gail Mitchell

JANUARY BIRD TRIP

Twenty-two keen birdwatchers met at Beaver Lake Park Jan. 12 for a hike through the woods to Elk Lake. The weather was perfect -- warm and sunny.

At first it seemed that it was going to be a birdless day for we trudged along for some time without even hearing a twitter. By lunch time, however, the group had 'ticked' 24 species. The list included most small forest birds -- Hairy and Downy Woodpecker, Cooper's Hawk, and at Elk Lake Common and Hooded Mergansers and a pair of Ruddy Ducks. The highlight of the day for some of the luckier members was a very brief sighting of a River Otter.

--Ruth Stirling

ANOTHER HONOUR FOR FREEMAN KING

On Friday, Jan. 12, a full Council Chamber at Saanich Municipal Hall testified to the high esteem in which Cictorians hold Freeman King. Freedom of Saanich was granted to Skipper in recognition of his lifelong work as conservationist, naturalist and his many years of work with Victoria's young people. Mayor Hugh Curtis presented Freeman with a cheque for \$1,000, a silver plate and a scroll proclaiming him "Freeman of Saanich" -- no pun on the name intended. Mrs. King received a bouquet of flowers.

Edward Ward-Harris spoke of King's many accomplishments and said that it is largely because of him that we have McDonald Park, Francis Park and Eves Park.

The Freedom of Saanich, the highest honour that a municipality can bestow, has been granted to only two other people.

After signing the register, Skipper said that working with young people and for conservation was what he believed in.

Congratulations, Skipper, from all your friends in the Natural History Society!

--Ruth Stirling

VANCOUVER BIRDS

I have recently received the 1970 and 1971 bird reports for the Vancouver area. The 1970 report is in the form of a reprint of a paper from the journal Syesis, entitled Status of Birds in the Vancouver Area in 1970, and it costs \$1.00. The 1971 report is, like our own bird report, published privately, by the Vancouver Natural History Society. It is called Vancouver Birds in 1971, and it costs \$1.50.

Detailed reviews will appear in the 1972 Annual Bird Report for Southern Vancouver Island; suffice it to say here that our Vancouver colleagues, especially the report editors, Wayne Campbell, Mike Shepard, Rudi Drent, and Wayne Weber, have done a superb job. Both reports are typeset, and the 1971 report contains 13 excellent photographs.

The Vancouver birdwatchers have helped greatly with the sale of the Victoria reports on the mainland. Let us

see if we can be equally helpful to our Vancouver colleagues by publicizing the Vancouver reports here. Certainly all active birdwatchers in Victoria should own both the 1970 and 1971 Vancouver reports. They will be available at meetings of our Society, or by mail from me (postage 15 cents extra) at 305-1680 Poplar Avenue, Victoria, or from Wayne Campbell at 2511 Kilgory Place, Victoria.

-- J.B. Tatum

TWO BOOK REVIEWS

- I. NATURE RAMBLES WITH FREEMAN KING. By Freeman King; collected and edited by John Shaw. Published by Victoria Press Ltd.

Reviewed by Gail Mitchell

Of course I am prejudiced, but most likely anyone interested in the out-of-doors would be in the same position because Freeman King is such a well-known person to us all, and his weekly column in the Victoria Times is a standby. Happily, some of these weekly writings have been collected and published under the title Nature Rambles with Freeman King. What can be said of this little gem?

John Shaw has done an admirable job of collecting and arranging these writings. The first chapter entitled "Environment" contains philosophical views on parks and a description of the land changes as seen on a flight from Vancouver to a large city in eastern Canada.

The Victoria area offers a wealth of marine communities for study, and the next group of articles, entitled "Seashore," explores various beaches and the fascinations that they hold.

The remainder of the book is grouped in the seasons, beginning, appropriately, with Spring. Different habitats are visited and described; details such as a specific plant or insect are contemplated and related to the total environment, giving the reader a depth of understanding which can not be gained from innumerable works on ecology or biology. Bob Wilson's designs (an eye-catching cover!) and Bill Halkett's photos enhance and complement the book.

Skipper's familiar style makes very relaxed reading. One can open at any page and be taken on a ramble, then close the book, refreshed and a little wiser.

It's fine to keep this book beside your favorite armchair, but I think Skipper would like it to be used as a starting point for real rambles of the reader's own. Do as he suggests -- take a hand lens to the beach and look at the sand grains. Get out to the local parks and learn about your environment. I cannot recommend this book too highly especially for anyone who considers the natural environment important.

- II. HIKING TRAILS, Victoria and Southern Vancouver Island. Prepared by the Outdoors Club of Victoria. Price \$1.00.

Reviewed by Roy Wainwright

This new guidebook gives brief descriptions of 18 trails suitable for day hikes, and for which the starting points can all be reached within two hours driving time from Victoria. The region covered extends from the tip of the Saanich peninsula around to Port Renfrew and up the Malahat to Spectacle Lake Park. As a sort of afterthought, a small park on the Koksilah River near Cowichan Station has been included.

Maps are provided for each of the trails and these will prove useful to anyone using the book. In the table of contents the trails are numbered and listed in a logical order, but in the description of the trails, no attempt is made to follow either the order or the system of numbering. Perhaps the purchaser of the book will be able to sort out the confusion for himself.

The authors promise a revised edition of this little guidebook if it proves popular. If they wish to appeal to the general public, they will have to organize the trail maps and descriptions in a more professional manner, and would be well advised to consult some of the many trail guides available to see how this can be done. Above all, they should not try to preach to their readers about how the users of the trail should behave. The two pages of "hints and cautions" could be condensed into 10 lines. It would also be a good idea to omit such obvious advice as "rocks

on beach can be very slippery," and "after wet weather there can be great rivulets and puddles on the trail."##

THE STRANGE BEHAVIOUR OF A HERON

Queenswood Drive has two outlets to the sea, one of them being the scene of this episode. Offshore here, about 200 yards out, is a group of rocky islets, the haunt of harlequin, cormorants, gulls and seals the year round.

One day last spring a Golden Eagle attacked a heron nearby and brought it down with a broken leg and possibly other injuries on one of these rocks. The eagle left, without inflicting further damage, and shortly afterwards another heron flew down to the rock and patiently stood beside its injured mate, which seemingly could neither stand nor fly.

For a long time they stayed together, the new arrival unable to help the other which was lying on the rock. Then the uninjured heron, believed to be the male, appeared to hold the other's head under the water until it drowned.

The survivor raised the two young, as they were all three seen together on the rocks on several occasions that summer.

This incident was related to me by a Queenswood resident who takes a great interest in the birds, and who was fortunate enough to witness the whole drama through his binoculars from start to finish.

--A.R. Davidson

CONFESSIONS OF A NUTHATCH AVOIDER

--Ogden Nash

Birdwatchers top my honours list,
I aimed to be one, but I missed.
Since I'm both myopic and astigmatic,
My aim turned out to be erratic,
And I, bespectacled and binocular
Exposed myself to comment jocular.
That's why I sit here, growing old by inches,
Watching the clock instead of finches.
But sometimes I visualize in my gin
The Audubon I audubin.

BIRDS REPORTED

Whistling Swan	(3)	Dec 2	Somenos Lake R. Satterfield
Band-tailed Pigeon	(100)	Dec 22	Runnymede
American Goldfinch	(35)	Dec 24	Brighton Ave. A.R. Davidson
White-winged Crossbill	(25)	Dec 26	Ash Road W.A. Shearing
Black Brant	(1)	Dec 30	Gordon Head
Anna's Hummingbird	(1)	Dec 30	Hollydene Road A.R. Davidson
Dipper	(1)	Dec 31	Kelvin Creek R. McLintock
Gadwall	(2)	Jan 3	Elk Lake C. Hewson
Clark's Nutcracker	(1)	Jan 4	Glasgow Street B. McLintock
White-crowned Sparrow	(1)	Jan 6	Sasseenos A.R. Davidson
Harris' Sparrow	(3)	Jan 12	Witty's Lagoon L. Roberts

ADDENDA

The holiday season was highlighted by two sightings of Blue Jays (same bird?) -- one by W.A. Shearing on Dec 11 at Ash Road and one by S. Jefferson on Jan 7 at Bissenden Place. And Mr and Mrs Vic Goodwill have had good luck spying Peregrine Falcons -- no less than four birds seen during late December and early January.

Your Birds Reported compilers migrated to Hawaii for the holidays. We saw lots of other migrants in bright plumage, but no birds of interest except for a sandpiper(?) silhouetted at dusk on the roof of a restaurant in busy Waikiki.

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

PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY 1973

- Executive Meeting: 8 p.m. Board Room 104M
 Tuesday, Feb. 6 Provincial Museum
- AUDUBON Wildlife Film: Robert Fultz, "Galpagos"
 Fri., Feb. 9 and Sat., 8 p.m. both days, 2:30 p.m. Sat.
 Feb. 10 Newcombe Auditorium
- General Meeting: John Harris will give an illus-
 Tuesday, Feb. 13 trated talk on forest insects.
- Bird Field Trip Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Mayfair
 Saturday, Feb. 10 Lanes parking lot (north side,
 corner of Roderick and Oak) or
 at 10 a.m. at Martindale Road.
 Leader: Ruth Stirling
- BOTANY Field Trip: Meet at Mayfair Lanes parking
 Saturday, Feb. 17 lot at 9:30 a.m. or at Francis
 Park at 10 a.m. for trip to Free-
 man King park to study mosses.
 This trip is for the morning
 only. Bring hand lens and hand
 book.

JUNIOR PROGRAM

- Feb. 10 Juniors. Quick's Pond Drivers: Reid, Murray.
 Feb. 17 Intermediates. Quick's Pond Drivers: Emery,
 Foster.
 Feb. 24 Juniors Smuggler's Cove Drivers: Ralph,
 Pollard.
 March 3 Intermediates. Turner's Gravel Pit Drivers:
 Neilson, Allen.

All outings begin from Mayfair Lanes parking lot
 at 1:30 p.m. Drivers are asked to inform Gail Mitchell
 at 477-9248 if unable to drive when scheduled.

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