



THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

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THE HUDSONIAN GODWIT

Early Tuesday morning, September 4th, John and I walked along the beach from Bowker Ave. toward Cattle Point. I noticed a long-legged shore bird, which I took to be a Greater Yellowlegs. However, as we came closer and made use of our binoculars I saw it had dark legs, a long, slightly up-turned bill, an eye-line and a lightish coloured breast. It obligingly stood facing us on one leg (stork fashion), so we had an excellent view of it.

On returning to Bowker Avenue to join our Tuesday group we looked it up in the book, and were almost certain it was a Hudsonian Godwit. However, not knowing it was a rarity in these parts we almost forgot to mention it. I gave one of our party, Mr. Douglas Turnbull, what must have been a reasonably good description, for he immediately said "a Godwit". So Mr. Davidson, the leader, decided we should all go and have a look. Fortunately it was still there feeding in the shallow water. Eventually the entire group arrived and viewed the bird from various angles along the beach and from the rocks. After a great deal of discussion, and having seen it in flight, (when the black tail and white band at the base were observed) we came to the conclusion we had indeed found a Hudsonian Godwit, which is, as far as we can find out, a new bird for Vancouver Island.

Needless to say, this was the highlight of the day for the Tuesday birders, but the remainder of the morning, which was spent on the beautiful Beaver Lake Trail, was also most enjoyable.

*Cover story by John & Edith Davies
Cover photo by Ralph Fryer*

THE ADMIRALS' NEW ARSENAL

Man has used and abused animals since the first stone age hunter fashioned a crude spear. Elephants, under man's direction, terrorized opposing armies as they charged into battle fitted with spikes and the overwhelming strength nature gave them. They belong to the same exploited group of unwitting "allies" as the horses at the battle of Agincourt, the police dogs sharing shot and shell in recent wars and the carrier pigeon winging its way over hazardous fields of battle, ignorant of the urgency of its mission.

Much as we may deplore the use of animals in warfare, up until now they have been of the domesticated variety and, unhappily for them, easily replenished. But man's ingenuity seems to extend more devilishly and more cleverly into the field of weapons than anywhere else. Our latest underwater "ally", or "weapon" is the whale and the porpoise. They are "blessed" with the intelligence to be readily trained - in this case for warfare. And they have woefully few defenders. They can't dodge the draft! Using a system of reward and punishment, they are being trained at this moment to extend man's weapon capability underwater. Porpoises, with knives strapped to their snouts are being trained to kill "enemy" frogmen on signal. Whales, with specially equipped harnesses have been trained to recover objects such as torpedoes lost at sea. Explosive devices could easily replace knives and harnesses and "enemy" men or craft, as well as the animal "soldiers", could be demolished.

Without being in the least anthropomorphic one cannot imagine these animals "choosing sides" and so it is a case of what you catch and train is automatically your weapon. It may be pure speculation, but carried to its extreme, man may find it in the interest of "national security" to destroy whatever whales and porpoises he finds so that they do not fall into the hands of the "enemy". If this happened man would not only lose one of his planet's most intelligent inhabitants but would seriously upset the ecological balance of the oceans.

Man was not the creator of this earth and has very little knowledge as yet of the checks and balances of the earth's total systems, and if we persist in having ultimate weapons we may find we are the first victims of the "boomerangs" we insist on throwing.

M. Slocombe, Editor.

FLORA OF THE SAANICH PENINSULA
ANNOTATED LIST OF VASCULAR PLANTS

This 114-page publication by Adam F. Szczawinski and Antony S. Harrison is strongly recommended to Society members for themselves or their botanically-minded friends. Priced at \$1.00, this good-sized paperback is obtainable at the General Office of the Provincial Museum and at the Museum's gift shop. Inexpensive and easy-to-mail it would make an enjoyable Christmas gift or souvenir.

One of the maps shows the grid system used and the 126.8 square mile area covered. The eleven well-reproduced black and white photographs include Garry oak, skunk cabbage, Easter lily, trillium, yellow sand verben, cow parsnip and orange honeysuckle. (Acknowledgements give credit to Cecil Clark of Victoria for his excellent pictures. But don't miss number 5 of the mature Garry oak stand in the Uplands, Victoria. This was taken by C.F. Newcombe in 1892).

Members should not miss the section "Early Contributors to the Flora of the Saanich Peninsula." It is interesting to read of those involved. To quote directly: "One of the most outstanding present day collectors is Miss M.C. Melburn of Victoria. The Melburn herbarium, started in 1953, is a large private collection pertaining to the flora of the Saanich Peninsula. This collection had contributed many new records and we were indeed fortunate to have unlimited access to this fine herbarium."

The Annotated list mentions 102 families including 691 indigenous species and 333 introduced ones. An asterisk marks the introduced species. In the case of rare species, the year of collection and general area are usually given. For instance - *Allotropia Virgata* (Candy-stick is one of its common names) is described as "Humus soil in coniferous forest; rare; first collected by J.R. Anderson in the Highland district in 1898; recently collected in Goldstream by M.C. Melburn in 1966 and 1967." (Was Candy-stick still safe in 1973 in the crowded and often chaotic conditions of Goldstream camp-site?) Members may recall that the May, 1969 issue of the *Victoria Naturalist* had Jessie Woollett's cover and

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cover story of *Allotropia virgata*.

Flora of the Saanich Peninsula does a fine job for the vegetation in this part of Canada's most westerly dry belt.

... *Ruth Chambers*.

PROGRAM FOR OCTOBER 1973

- EXECUTIVE MEETING ... Tuesday, October 2nd - 8:00 p.m.
Room 402, Elliot Building, U Vic.
- GENERAL MEETING ... Tuesday, October 9th - 8:00 p.m.
Newcombe Auditorium, Prov. Museum
Speaker: John Colby
Title: Killer Whales
- BIRD FIELD TRIP ... Saturday, October 20th
Meet at Mayfair Lanes Parking Lot
at 9:30 a.m. or Island View Beach
at 10:00 a.m.
Bring lunch.
Leader: Ruth Stirling
- FUNGUS FORAY ... Sunday October 28th
Meet at Mayfair Lanes Parking Lot
at 9:30 a.m. or Wittys' Lagoon
Park (horse ring) at 10:15 a.m.
Leader: Stephen Mitchell

The largest egg of any living animal is that of the whale-shark (*Rhincodon typus*). The only one ever recorded was picked up in 186 feet of water off the Mexican coast in 1953. It was eleven inches long and five inches wide. The shell was very thick and the egg contained an infant whale-shark 13 inches long.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

The Twenty-Eighth Season of Audubon Wildlife Films opens here on October 19th and 20th when Mr. Walter H. Berlet will present in person his colour film, "West Side Story - Mexico to Alaska" at the Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum, at 8:00 p.m., with a matinee on Saturday at 2:30 p.m.

Mr. Berlet has photographed such interesting fauna as the jaguar, the Military Macaw, sea otters and sea lions and with a telephoto lens captured on film the hatching of a Whimbrel and a Long-tailed Jaeger enduring a hail storm as she protects her young from the pelting ice.

Other speakers to appear later in the season are:

- November 16 and 17 - David Stirling, with "High Country"
- January 11 and 12 - Frank Heimans, "What Have You
(1974) Done With My Country?"
- February 15 and 16 - Charles T. Hotchkiss, with
"Exploring Big Bend"
- March 15 and 16 - John D. Bulger, with "Wild
Tennessee"

The Audubon Wildlife Films are sponsored by the Victoria Natural History Society. Season tickets for the evenings or Saturday matinee may be obtained from the Provincial Museum Gift Shop, the Dogwood Gift Shop, 2224 Oak Bay Avenue, and the Book Nook, 10 Centennial Square. Proceeds from the series will be used for local conservation work.

Pamphlets regarding The Victoria Natural History Society will be available at the Audubon films. If you have a friend who might be interested, this would be the time to pick one up.

THE BIRDS OF LOVER'S LANE

Most birdwatchers have their own particular interests. Some of us are quite content to be out in the quiet countryside, absorbing the beauty of our surroundings, but always on the alert for the birds. Others are keen after rare or unusual species, and there are our sharp-eyed birders who have an uncanny ability to locate nests. These latter include the photographers, who like to have visible evidence to confirm their identifications, while others concentrate on finding as many birds as possible, to add to their important life-list.

Our own particular thrill is to find ourselves suddenly in the midst of an excited group of migrating small birds, and this is the time of year when this can occur.

On a quiet sunny morning on August 29th we went to Lover's Lane in Beacon Hill Park, for it is our opinion, based on many years of regular observations, that here is the place where the migrating warblers, etc. gather before taking the flight over the Straits of Juan de Fuca to the mainland.

We were fortunate, as all the trees and shrubs around us were alive with birds. Some of them on the topmost twigs of the high conifers, others at eye level, and even groups of them on the ground, where the park workers had left pools of water on the road, which is now a pedestrian walk only.

To count them, or even identify them all, was impossible, but we estimated that in our immediate vicinity there were not less than two hundred birds, constantly on the move, and evidently finding a rich harvest of insects and caterpillars.

The majority were orange-crowned, and an estimate of the others were roughly twenty each of Townsend warblers, yellow and black-caps. There were also a fair number of McGillivrays and four black-throated grey. With them were wood peewees, flycatchers, warbling vireos and western tanagers. Enjoying their company for a while were the resident birds; nuthatches, chickadees, bushtits, creepers, towhees, song sparrows, winter and Bewick wrens.

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Our records show these migrations in normal years commence early in August and continue through September, the last migrants being the Audubon and myrtle warblers.

Although we had business downtown that morning, this was infinitely more important, so we stayed there for well over an hour and were very reluctant to leave.

... Eleanore & Albert
Davidson.

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JUNIOR PROGRAM

All outings start from Mayfair Lanes Parking Lot at 1:30 p.m. If drivers are unable to participate, please inform Gail (477-9248) as soon as possible.

			<u>Drivers</u>
Oct. 6	Juniors	Beaver Lake	Gibson Reid
Oct. 13	Intermediates	Central Saanich	Nielson Smith
Oct. 20	No outing	(Audubon at 2:30 at Newcombe Auditorium)	
Oct. 27	Intermediates	Mount Finlayson	Rimmington Suttill
Nov. 3	Juniors	Matheson Lake	Walsh Pollard

* * * * *

The longest-lived Chelonian is believed to be the Royal Tongan tortoise named "Tu'imalila" which was presented to the King of Tonga by Captain James Cook on October 22, 1773 and died on May 19, 1966, thus indicating a possible age of about 200 years.

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SUMMER AT FRANCIS PARK

Fewer people came to visit the park this summer, and they weren't as generous with their donations as they were in previous years, but we had a successful two months anyway.

In addition to hosting the regional judging of the Bluebird nest-box competition, in mid-August we were visited by delegates from twenty-two different nations who were attending the International Parks Association conference, and we worked into the wee hours of the morning of the big day to have the Nature House and the park ready for them. They didn't stay very long, but we were glad to hear later that they enjoyed what they saw of the park. And, fortunately, the plague of wasps that have been constantly harassing tourists everywhere had enough manners to leave our foreign visitors in peace.

A more natural but nevertheless foreign visitor which we saw more frequently than ever before in the park this summer was the rabbit. After a short but wild chase we caught a full-grown specimen of originally domestic stock and put him in a cage to try and establish the types and quantities of natural foods they are consuming. We discovered that the range and quantity of what they will eat is enormous. They do have certain preferences, however, such as dandelions and clover, and the leaves and young stems, but not the older stems, of the wall lettuce plant. We concluded that in small numbers the rabbits do no great harm to the park, but unfortunately rabbits are notorious for their prolific traits.

We were very happy to see another visitor to the park - the Steller's jay. Although this bird is considered common, few have been seen around the park in recent years. Hopefully, the pair we saw signal the start of a comeback.

For reasons still uncertain, for two weeks we had two or three ospreys circling above the park. Since there is virtually no open water, it is unlikely they were looking for any of their usual foods. Why, then, were they here? It is the opportunities for questions like this to arise,

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and the things we learn from direct contact with nature that make our work at Francis Park so enjoyable. And if we are able to impart what we have learned to the public, then our job has meaning. Since I feel that we have to some extent helped the public to understand nature by being at the park to talk to them, guide them, and teach them through nature house displays, I consider that for this summer, our job has been completed successfully, and I wish to thank all those people who helped us financially and morally to do our job.

... Robin Marles.

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PICKING THE PAPERBACKS

Zoo Doctor by Oliver Graham-Jones

After a rather slow beginning this book becomes absolutely fascinating. Dr. Graham-Jones is first and foremost a doctor and looks at the animal world strictly from a medical viewpoint. There is nothing "cute" in this book. One is gripped, rather, by the drama of the surgery at the London Zoo and the behind-the-scenes running of that Zoo. Not that the book is devoid of high adventure - the doctor not only gets cornered by two enraged elephants but has to deal with a large male ape suddenly waking up in the middle of an operation! One is also given the inside story of the abortive attempts of a few years ago to mate An An and Chi Chi - the Russian and English Panda bears. Over all this is an excellent book.

... M. Slocombe.

The most intransigent weed is the mat-forming water weed *Salvinia auriculata*, found in Africa. Detected on the filling of Kariba Lake in May 1959, it had within eleven months, choked an area of 77 square miles. By 1962 the figure rose to 250 square miles.

The 1973 Conference of the Canadian Nature Federation was attended by about 275 delegates at Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, August 22-26, at the invitation of the Nova Scotia Bird Society. I hoped I would be the most distant delegate, but, with others from the Yukon and from Djakarta, I was hardly in the running for that title.

The meeting was a very pleasant blend of natural history and business, and, appropriately for a Maritime Province, there was much emphasis on the natural history of the sea. The bird-listers were there in force, of course, and there was a pre-conference birding tour of Newfoundland. A good story going the rounds was that during a pelagic trip in a small boat an enormous Fin Whale surfaced close by and, in a spectacular plunge, dived right under the boat. While this was going on, an incorrigible birder, faithful to the end, and apparently oblivious to the whale, was heard to cry: "Look, there's a Common Puffin!"

I can only briefly summarize a small fraction of the activities. After welcoming addresses by the Minister of Lands and Forests and by the Academic Vice-president of Acadia University, there was a series of talks on "The Imprint of the Past", "Life on the Seashore", "Life of Sea Islands", "Birds of the Sea" and "Mammals of the Sea". After learning about the well-marked zonation of a rocky seashore, there was a field trip a few days later so that we could observe for ourselves how the different species of winkles, barnacles, algae, etc., were adapted by their structure, physiology and life-history to live with different degrees of tidal exposure according to the zone they occupy on the seashore. It is hoped that our own marine group will offer us some more outings to study this fascinating subject on our own coast. The ecologies of Sable, Seal and Brier Islands were described; each would merit a separate article. We saw a film on Sable Island produced by Dalhousie University.

In the discussion on seabirds we learned that one species alone, the Gannet, was worth \$100,000 to the tourist trade. We learned a lot about the migrations of seabirds through the PRIOP scheme of seabird counts, and the tracking of

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oil slicks relative to seabird concentrations, a subject on which our own wildlife authorities, in spite of repeated representation, are woefully behindhand.

During the talk on sea mammals we saw slides of almost all the seals, sea-lions and cetaceans that are likely to occur in Canadian waters.

That evening, all the delegates were invited to study the Common Lobster *Homaris vulgaris*. These animals require a certain skill and experience to deal with adequately, but once mastered, I found this to be one of the most delectable parts of the Conference.

Next day there were more sessions on various aspects of marine natural history, including a fascinating study, followed by a field trip, of saltmarsh ecology, where the land meets the sea. I saw clearly then the great value of our own Metchosin Lagoon, the most extensive area of this type of habitat on Southern Vancouver Island.

On the Saturday afternoon, the Annual General Meeting was held, as well as various discussion groups on marine environmental issues. The A.G.M. went on for longer than scheduled, so I had little opportunity of attending the discussion groups. I did, however, briefly attend one group which was discussing how to conserve and cut down upon the use of electrical energy so as to obviate the necessity of constructing more power stations. Although it was brilliantly sunny outside, this group had all the drapes drawn and were using 40 100-watt electrical bulbs, equivalent to a power consumption of 4 kilowatts.

The results of elections were made known during the A.G.M. The new President is Dr. Ian McLaren of Dalhousie University, whom some of you met when he was birdwatching here during the summer, and David Stirling was re-elected Provincial Director for B.C. Because of some difficulties concerning Resolutions at the 1972 meeting, the Board had decided not to entertain Resolutions in 1973. This was somewhat perturbing, because it was not clear what mechanisms were available for clubs to raise matters of concern with the Federation. Our own Society had prepared two well-documented and researched Resolutions concerning the importation of cat pelts into Canada and the trapping of songbirds in Belgium. I brought these

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matters up and they are to be referred to the Board for action.

Somewhat to my surprise I learned that there was an item on the Agenda of the Board Meeting proposing to censure me for allegedly publicly revealing the activities of some of the more notorious falconers in Canada. However, pressure of other business apparently did not allow time for this point to be adequately dealt with.

One of the most important matters to arise at the Conference was the re-organization, under the leadership of Dr. Timothy Myres, whom the Ornithology Group will remember, of the Canadian National Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation. I was elected, subject to ratification by the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, Second Vice-chairman of the Canadian National Section. It is intended to raise the matter of the future of the "Ipswich" form of the Savannah Sparrow at the forthcoming World Conference in Australia in 1974. It is to be hoped that the International Council maintains its firm stand against the use of Peregrine Falcons for any purpose.

In addition to formal meetings, I had many useful informal discussions with a number of people, including some discussions with the Executive Director, Dr. Theodore Mosquin, concerning the arrangements for next year's C.N.F. Conference.

I have reported largely on business, and, because of space limitations, I have not been able to describe adequately all the natural history and the field trips, nor have I conveyed the atmosphere of friendliness, optimism and vigour of this rapidly-growing Federation. If there is one message I want to bring home to you it is this - do join the Canadian Nature Federation. It is the greatest thing that has ever happened for naturalists in Canada.

(Enquiries to D. Stirling, 385-4223.)

... Jeremy B. Tatum

President.

BIRDS REPORTED

Brown Pelican (2)	Aug. 12	Clover Pt. (flying north) Ralph Fryer
Black Swift (20)	Aug. 17	Oak Bay Golf Course - R. Satterfield, Vic & Mrs. Goodwill.
Long-billed Marsh Wren	Aug. 18	Swan Lake Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Green Heron (2)	Aug. 20	Millstream Road Dr. T.M.C. Taylor
Vaux Swift (4)	Aug. 21	Goldstream Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Bank Swallow (5)	Aug. 21	Martindale Road Bob Hay, Keith Taylor
American Golden Plover (1)	Aug. 25	Clover Point Stuart Johnston
Yellow-headed Blackbird (1)	Aug. 26	North Saanich - R. Satter- field, Stuart Johnston & V. Goodwill
Vesper Sparrow (1)	Aug. 26	Martindale Road R. Satterfield
Red Knot (1)	Aug. 30	Clover Point R. Fryer, Keith Taylor
Lincoln Sparrow (3)	Aug. 30	Lobrunner Road Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Gadwall (1)	Sept. 1	Hyacinth Park - J. Tatum
Parasitic Jaeger (1)	Sept. 1	Clover Point R. Satterfield Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Solitary Sandpiper (1)	Sept. 3	Old West Road - J. Tatum
Hudsonian Godwit (1)	Sept. 4	Willows Beach John & Edith Davies
Whimbrel (1)	Sept. 7	Island View
Marsh Hawk (1)	Sept. 7	Island View
Thayer's Gull (1)	Sept. 7	Clover Point Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Western Gull (1)	Sept. 7	Clover Point Keith Taylor & Peggy Goodwill
Anna's Hummingbird (1)	Sept. 9	2600 Penrhyn R. MacKenzie-Grieve

(Bob MacKenzie-Grieve also spotted 2 Eastern Kingbirds in his garden in June)

... M. & L. Slocombe
2134 Henderson Rd.
Phone 592-9047

A NEW BOOK FOR THE LIBRARY

A lovely book entitled The Shell (500 million years of inspired design) has been kindly donated recently to the Society's library by Mrs. Ruth McLintock. The authors are Hugh & Marguerite Stix and R. Tucker Abbott. The photographs are by H. Landshoff. This is one of the most beautifully illustrated books on shells I have come across. Not only the malacologist but all who enjoy nature's beautiful creations will enjoy this volume. The authors do not attempt to deal specifically with each and every of the world's shells (an herculean task) but have, instead, concentrated on the main families, giving both the scientific and popular names for several species of shell within each family. They note the average length of the shells and the location where they live. The introduction deals with the history and use of shells from money to art and architecture and include a very interesting chapter on the shell in the twentieth century. This is a book that is well put together and, as we have noted, illustrated with over a hundred exquisite photographs.

... M. Slocombe.

ANNUAL BIRD REPORT 1972

The 1972 Annual Bird Report for Southern Vancouver Island has now been published. 1972 was a remarkable year for birdwatchers in this area. Among the memorable birds that showed up were Costa's Hummingbird, Tropical Kingbird, Snowy and Common Egrets, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Little Gull. Full details of all of these and of another 240 species are described in the Report. It may be obtained at meetings, or by mail from the undersigned. The reduced price for members is \$1.38 plus 7¢ tax = \$1.45. Postage is 15¢ extra.

... Jeremy B. Tatum.

BOOKS BOTANICAL

Amateur and professional botanists will be pleased with three new publications which have appeared this summer. These are a museum handbook, an illustrated manual and a checklist (for this latter book see book review by Ruth Chambers in this issue).

The Rose Family of British Columbia by T.M.C. Taylor is the latest in the Provincial Museum handbook series. This is a very welcome publication as the Rosaceae are a large, showy family in B.C. and people have no trouble finding some genera in the wild. With ten species of *Potentilla* and nine species of *Rubus* on Vancouver Island how can one miss! The keys utilize fruit characteristics extensively so one must delve into the glossary, but that is the case with any identification. Hang in there gang! It's the most reliable way to handle plants. If keys prove too awesome, study the excellent illustrations. To misquote: "a rose by any other name might be a saxifrage".

Any serious botanist will undoubtedly want a copy of Flora of the Pacific Northwest: An Illustrated Manual by C. Leo Hitchcock and Arthur Cronquist. This University of Washington Press (Seattle) publication is a gem at \$25.00. It is a condensation of the five volume work, Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest by C. Leo Hitchcock et al, into 730 pages. Families are distinguished by a synoptical key based on flower parts, and an artificial key embracing such features as growth habit, leaf shape and flower parts. Genera within families are arranged alphabetically. Each family and genus is described. Keys for species are accompanied by excellent illustrations in the margin. The species descriptions are pared down considerably from the larger work. Common names are given for all genera and genuine or contrived common names are available for most species. Synonymy of scientific names is minimal but can be found in the previous work. This book is the closest thing to a field manual for this region.

Good botanizing!

... Stephen Mitchell

p.s. Lewis Clark's book is out, but more on that later.

A SATURDAY BIRD OUTING

Twenty-two of us met at Clover Point on Saturday, August 18th, with Ron Satterfield as leader. Besides the various gulls which make up the community there, we saw Black Turnstones, Oyster-catchers, and Surfbirds on the rocks, and some distance out, Harlequins and a Pigeon Guillemot. A Great Blue Heron was trying to swallow a wriggling eel-like fish, which he finally managed to do after about fifteen minutes of careful manipulation. One Greater Yellowlegs was spotted on the rocky shoreline.

Driving on to Hollywood Place, we saw the gull's nest on the roof of the house at the eastern end of Ross Bay. Two large baby gulls were waddling about on the roof with agitated parents close by.

At Hood Lane and Radcliffe we could see from the shore some fifteen to twenty seals basking on Trial Island. One mother seal with her baby was in the water not far from us. Then our leader pointed out a mink on the rocks in the sunshine. Rhinoceros Auklets were discovered out to sea, also Pigeon Guillemots, Mew Gulls and a California Gull.

Lunch time found us at Willows Beach, during which period some sandpipers flew up and down to entertain us. On the raft nearby were thirty to forty Terns. Ron Satterfield saw an Eared Grebe - the first any of us had seen this season.

From Willows we drove to Cattle Point, where we saw another Pigeon Guillemot, Cormorants, three Greater Yellowlegs, Surfbirds and Black Turnstones. Walking through the trails in Uplands Park woods several interesting birds were observed - an Orange-crowned Warbler, a small flock of Cedar Waxwings, Traill's Flycatchers, Chickadees, Towhees, Goldfinches, Cowbirds and Bewick Wrens. As we emerged from the woods, a dozen Band-tailed Pigeons flew up.

As we returned to the car at Cattle Point, a Turkey Vulture was seen high overhead, and later a Cooper's Hawk - a spectacular finish to a very good day. Ron is an excellent leader, helpful and patient. In all we saw about thirty species of birds.

... Rita Dickson.

A GARDEN OF NATIVE PLANTS

by T.C. Brayshaw

Many of us who keep gardens have a way of putting 'garden flowers' and 'wild flowers' in separate compartments in our minds, with no overlap between them.

Most of our garden plants are commercially bred stock of Eurasian (and ultimately, wild) origins; and the number of species native to British Columbia that is available from nurseries is disappointingly small. Many native plants are suitable for growing in gardens, but little is known about their ornamental possibilities.

As part of the Provincial Museum's overall object of presenting its visitors with an essence of British Columbia, the landscaping of the grounds around the Museum and the Provincial Archives is being developed almost entirely with species native to this province. In this way it is hoped that the ornamental potentialities of our native flora can be demonstrated to gardeners and others interested in the subject.

To date, over 200 species have been introduced into these gardens, with more or less success.

Credit for the success must be given to Mr. Vern W. Ahier, who has collected and prepared most of the plants, and supervises their planting and care, and to the gardeners of the Department of Public Works, who carry out this work in a very unconventional field.

So few of our native plants are used by the nursery trade here that most of those in the garden have been introduced directly from the wild state; and since no information on their culture is available, planting of these species is a very experimental affair.

Plants have been brought from all across the province. As might be expected, those originating on

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Vancouver Island and the lower mainland, being already adapted to the local climate and soils, have done the best on the average; while those from the interior and the north, being adapted to greatly differing conditions, are of uncertain response.

Of the species tried so far, apart from the dozen or so available commercially, a few species that have been outstandingly successful here deserve to be mentioned. These include:

<u>Pentstemon fruticosus</u>	<u>P. davidsonii</u>
<u>P. serrulatus</u>	<u>Campanula rotundifolia</u>
<u>Ceanothus velutinus</u>	<u>Eriophyllum lanatum</u>
<u>Lupinus arcticus</u>	<u>Lupinus polyphyllus</u>

and the local species of Erythronium.

Most of our larger ferns are easy subjects in shady areas.

Alpine plants and others of low growth habit are planted in the rockery in the sunken garden, while shade-loving woodland species are put into the shaded areas on the north sides of the Provincial Archives and the Douglas Building.

At present the garden is primarily a spring garden, with a few summer-flowering species, but as new plants are added every year, it is hoped that more late-blooming species can be introduced to spread out the garden's flowering period through the summer into autumn.

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A SCOTTISH EXAMPLE

Anne Adamson brought to our attention a recent article in the Vancouver Sun which describes some of the measures the Scots are taking to preserve their natural riches. Always a thrifty people, this thrift extends equally to their trees, water and wildlife. And, as they see the future care of these treasures will be in the hands of their children they are taking steps now to en-

sure these young Scots will mature into adulthood knowledgeable about and capable of preserving their heritage.

In Glasgow this year some ten thousand eight year old trees are being planted by school children. The project is called "Plant a tree in 1973." As well as planting trees the children are being educated in all areas of conservation. This ambitious project reaches no less than all of Glasgow's 200,000 students. Much of this instruction is conducted in appropriate settings such as farms, forest and nature preserves.

In the hills and glens of Scotland over three million acres of trees have been planted in recent years and with the increasing numbers of sanctuaries for wild life, more and more rare birds and animals are returning and, at the same time, remarkably, the public has a freer access than ever before.

Surely this should give us pause for thought. Perhaps the very size and richness of our surrounding natural areas lulls us into a sense of security. Maybe we should heed the old adage - a stitch in time saves nine - and make an effort now to educate our school children in their natural heritage.

... M. Slocombe, Editor.

DINNER IS SERVED

On a recent visit to Butchart Gardens we got a bonus by way of a barn swallow's nest tightly packed with four young nearly ready to be launched. The nest was a mere seven feet above the floor of the verandah where we were waiting for a table in the dining room. Undeterred by the number of spectators the parent swallows swooped in and out feeding one hungry mouth after another. It was amusing to watch the four little faces - and they certainly had loge seats for watching us! When one of the babies somehow managed to turn around to politely excrete over the edge of the nest it had the devil's own time maneuvering back again into the row so that it could be face front and ready for the next "meals on wings."

... M. and L. Slocombe.

SOARING

We are lucky to have a number of birds of prey in our area and many opportunities to watch them "strolling" on high, as it were. These birds have three distinct types of soaring flight. When gliding at great speed they bend their wings at the elbow and wrist joints. When gliding lazily in still air, the wings are held straight out. But when circling in soarable air they bring their wings forward and spread the primary feathers at the tips of the wings so that they separate from one another over about one fifth of the length of the wing. This gives the bird maximum lift at low speeds without loss of control. Vultures have even been observed to extend the alula or bastard wing (formed by the first digit) so as to form a slot which further delays stalling at slow speeds.

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IN MEMORY

Gore Park, situated at the end of Grieg Road in the Brentwood area, is small and little known. In Spring there is no place more brightly carpeted with flowers. At all times peace and beauty can be found there. The park contains one picnic table, solidly built and set in concrete. A tablet set in the concrete catches the eye:

IN MEMORY OF W.D. "BILL" REITH
NATURALIST AND HUMANITARIAN
1919 - 1967

Bill Reith was a fine member of our Society and was in fact Editor of the Naturalist when death came at the untimely age of forty-seven. Some of us will remember his outstandingly beautiful photography. An article of his entitled "Silence" which appeared in the May, 1965 edition of the Naturalist deserves to be reprinted, reread and inwardly digested by all of us.

We are glad Bill Reith has been remembered.

... Katherine Sherman.

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