



# THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

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CYCLING RAILROAD CORRIDORS -  
A NEW PROVINCIAL PARK CONSIDERATION

At the turn of the century the popularity of the bicycle in North America declined drastically with the advent of the automobile as the standard form of transportation. Not only were the mechanical innovations of the bicycle successfully transferred to the production of automobiles, but streets and roads were hastily re-dedicated for the convenience of the horseless-carriage. In recent years, however, we have experienced a dramatic revival of the bicycle. Over the last three years more bicycles than cars have annually been sold in the U.S. (1972 sales figures were 13,700,000 bicycles and 11,000,000 cars.) But in the intervening 50 year bicycle lull, the public transportation bureaucracies have focussed on the needs of the automobile to such a degree that the present bicycle explosion is interpreted as no more than a traffic nuisance and at best a passing fad.

In the U.S. the current bicycle population is estimated at 100,000,000. Although no up-to-date figures are available for Canada it can be firmly stated that we have experienced an almost identical trend in cycling popularity. In B.C. this is well illustrated in the remarkable jump in bicycling participation rates from 9% of the population in 1969 to 43% in 1971. And a 1973 University of Victoria recreation survey determined the number of bicycles for the Greater Victoria area to be 100,000.

Accompanying the bicycle explosion in the U.S. are numerous publicly funded programs to supply appropriate bicycle routes for both the recreationist and the commuter. New York and Wisconsin, for example, are

successfully converting many sections of abandoned railway lines for hiking and cycling. California, Oregon and Washington states have legislation committing the appropriate public agencies to supply cycle routes for commuter and recreation purposes. And although 75% of all U.S. bicycle paths are located in the mountainous western states, this public facility mysteriously stops at the Canadian border.

Historically many U.S. cultural and technological innovations have been applied to the Canadian scene after mystifying time-lags. The North American conservation movement which spawned our present environmental consciousness is an example of this. These traditional application delays accompanying new U.S. concepts have, in some instances, conveniently helped us to avoid their misapplication. Presumably the bicycle route concept is experiencing a similar purification process before appearing on the Canadian landscape as a fundamental social requisite. It would seem, however, that the flourishing trend in bicycle sales in Canada over the last four years may now be accelerating this process.

Ottawa is leading the nation in the construction and maintenance of bicycle paths. The National Capital Commission has 36 miles completed and another 20 under construction. To date British Columbia has provided very little for the cyclist apart from one or two token efforts by the city of Vancouver. No doubt the appropriate municipal and provincial governments will be responding to this increasing demand in the near future. Or will they?

Recently the provincial Parks Branch initiated a feasibility study to convert the 82-mile Victoria-Cowichan CNR line to a non-motorized Provincial Parkway for hiking and cycling. The CNR is proposing to abandon the 56 mile section from Victoria to Deerholm (near Duncan) immediately. The remaining 25 mile section along the Cowichan River and 1.5 mile section in Victoria are still used for freight transport. Nevertheless, the Parks Branch study will include the entire CNR line on Vancouver Island.

Parks Branch planners have often been criticized for selecting and developing parks for that segment of society who are both physically and financially well off. The suggested non-motorized parkway complete with a paved path and easy grades of no more than 2% would appeal to cyclists and hikers of all ages and walks of life. I dare say it would appeal to our handicapped citizens in wheelchairs as well.

The conversion of this railway corridor would effectively connect the many and varied recreational land and seascapes of Southern Vancouver Island in a linear park system and conveniently project them into our urban centers. The recreational sites so connected would include: Thetis Lake Park, Fort Rodd Hill National Historic Park, Witty's Lagoon, Matheson Lake Provincial Park, East Sooke Regional Park, the beautiful Sooke River, historic Leechtown, Shawnigan Lake, Koksilah River, the entire length of the scenic Cowichan River and the north-east shores of Cowichan Lake. Complete with small picnic sites and campgrounds, this non-motorized parkway would be a novel and attractive addition to our provincial park system which presently has no facilities for bicycling.

Besides the inherent recreational potentialities of this railway line, its conversion to a cycling-hiking parkway would provide a safe commuter route for a relatively large part of the Greater Victoria area. Over 8000 schoolchildren would directly benefit from it as a safe route to schools and recreation centres. And who knows how an attractive parkway would stimulate adults to bicycle to work?

As might have been expected, this parkway proposal is competitively beset with a number of alternative uses that could be applied to this old CNR line. In the interest of increased water supply and maintenance of water purity, the Greater Victoria Water Board wishes to convert that section of the line connecting Sooke with Leechtown into a highway in an attempt to overcome the existing road and railway obstacles to the planned raising of Sooke Lake by 1990. The Municipal Affairs Department's Bureau of Transit together with the

Capital Regional Planners are reviewing the possibility of using a 15-20 mile section of the line for light rapid transit commuter service to serve an anticipated population of 60,000 in the Colwood-Sooke area by the year 2001. The Victoria Pacific Railway Company wishes to extend its present 4 mile tourist steam train run further up the line. And the Department of Highways has recognized the convenient location of many sections of the line adjacent to roads and highways that require widening.

Many arguments could and will be conjured up in favour of each of these alternative uses of the line. At the outset, however, all are faced with the problem of rationalizing the cost of acquiring the line, or portions of it, from the CNR. The Railway Company has already hinted that it will recommend the sale of its holdings at real estate prices IF abandonment of the line is approved by Ottawa. Although individual project costs may be carefully determined, the final decision as to what use will be made of the line will be a political value judgment. The Parks Branch feasibility study of this line will, in any event, focus public attention on other near-abandoned railway rights-of-way in the province as potential recreation corridors. Hopefully, it will also focus greater municipal, regional and provincial political attention to the dire need for proper facilities for our burgeoning bicycle population.

- *J.N. Masselink*  
*Co-ordinator of Park System Planning*  
*B.C. Parks Branch*  
*3860 Haro Road*  
*Victoria, B.C. 477-4844*

Editor's Note:

We feel this proposed bike-hike trail would be a terrific plus for the Island. If you feel the same way please drop a line to that effect to:

HON. JACK RADFORD  
 MINISTER OF RECREATION & CONSERVATION  
 PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS  
 VICTORIA, B.C.

VANCOUVER BIRDERS VISIT TO VICTORIA

*by Allen Poynter*

For the Vancouver Birder a trip to Victoria can be considered a success if only one Black Oystercatcher or a few Surfbirds are seen. On Sunday, 23rd September our visit was definitely in that category as we wracked up a total of eighty-seven species before returning to Tsawwassen Terminal at six in the evening. A hearty vote of thanks goes to all of the Victoria drivers and the organizers who gave of their time to join fourteen of the Vancouver N.H.S. Birders for the day, and a special thanks for whoever it is that arranges the weather.

The open water crossing was quiet except for a few gulls, terns and an occasional flock of high-flying ducks. A few birders were buried deep in their bacon and eggs when the first of three Parasitic Jaegers was seen but they all got their bird in Active Pass as an adult light phase bird passed by quite close to the ferry.

Just a month later and this Pass would have been filled almost to capacity with several pelagic species but on this crossing it was all very quiet, five Arctic Loons flew out of the west end of the pass as we entered proving to be the total for the day. Only two adult Bald Eagles were seen perching in the treetops, indicative of a dearth of herring or salmon in the area and almost no alcids showed until we were east of Active Pass when Common Murres appeared in small numbers.

*Brachyramphus marmoratum* only showed as the M.V. "Queen of Victoria" swung in a graceful curve to dock stern first at the Swartz Bay Terminal.

Surely the huge flock of Red-breasted Nuthatches that filled the tree-tops at the southeastern corner of Beaver Lake was a very noteworthy record even for Victoria, a quick ear detected the absence of the Black-capped Chickadee amongst the many Chestnut-backed as

well as the subtle fall notes of the migrant Western Tanagers moving deep in the forest.

A quick trip to the Sacred Sewer at Clover Point and we enjoyed the closeness of the many shore birds as well as the abundant Heermann's Gull, a species that is almost never seen within the confines of Vancouver Harbour or adjacent bays.

Lunch at Island View Beach with a few birds and pleasant company added much to the day which was brought to a close all too soon with a side trip to John Dean Park. Soaring high in the sky two Turkey Vultures lent an air of majesty to that hilltop of ancient trees and quiet paths.

Thank you all again birders and we would like to reciprocate anytime.

#### FOOTNOTE:

The Writer picked up a copy of the 1972 Annual Bird Report and would like to point out that this is a superb publication, unparalleled in Canada and possibly North America. It has improved greatly over three years and can serve as a model for any other group contemplating such a work. I would emphasize that the future of this great combined effort depends on the contribution of ALL local records and deserves the full support of birders both amateur and professional in the Southern Vancouver Island area.

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#### V.N.H.S. SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

At the General Meeting held on September 11th, members of the Society were pleased to meet Trevor Dawson, this year's winner of the Annual V.N.H.S. scholarship. Trevor told us about his academic plans, and we all wish him well as he continues his studies at the University of Victoria.

R. Picozzi

### GENERAL ACCOUNT

Proposed Budget for the Year Ending  
April 30, 1974

<u>Actual</u> <u>1972-73</u>		<u>Proposed</u> <u>Budget</u>
	<u>Income</u>	
\$1,305.	Membership dues	\$1,273.
20.	Sale of bird checklists	20.
20.	Donations	4.
59.	Bank interest	55.
31.	Miscellaneous	62.
<u>\$1,435.</u>		<u>\$1,414.</u>
	<u>Expenditures</u>	
\$ 961.	Naturalist	\$1,494.
185.	Cost of meetings	200.
90.	Postage and Stationery	80.
24.	Bird count	23.
220.	B.C.Federation dues & expenses	275.
26.	Affiliation fees	16.
81.	Miscellaneous	20.
<u>\$1,587.</u>		<u>\$2,108.</u>
\$ 152.	EXCESS OF EXPENDITURES OVER INCOME	\$ 694.
<u>1,704.</u>	Funds on hand at beginning of year	<u>1,552.</u>
<u>\$1,552.</u>	FUNDS ON HAND AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 858.</u>

Above is the estimated budget for this year. Such financing can only continue for a very short time - before long, expenditures will exceed income. If you have any recommendations please write to the Executive.

... Treasurer.

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The August 6th issue of the New Yorker contains the most fascinating, comprehensive book-length article on whales by Faith McNulty. We feel every member would enjoy reading it so it is being put in the Natural History Club library at the home of Mr. A.R. Davidson at 2144 Brighton Ave.

... Editor

## A MOUNTAIN LAKE

McGillivray Lake is a small mountain lake two miles long and half a mile wide. It is situated 24 miles east of Kamloops at the 5200 foot level. To approach it we crossed the Thompson River at Chase and wound up a wide but dusty road. One travels here at one's own risk as it is a logging road, and at any time a loaded truck may come barreling down.

Like most mountain lakes, the trees descend to the edge of the water. Here there was Black spruce and some alder. There was no beach, but marsh grasses, reeds and yellow water lilies made a good wildfowl cover. The lake's irregular shoreline curved into protected bays. At the southern end two small islands lay separated by a narrow channel of water.

My friend and I and the food were put ashore on one of the islands and left to explore, while the men fished. It was delightfully quiet after the constant roar of traffic on the highway. Mountain chickadees and Audubon warblers were numerous, as were toads along the shore. There were also a couple of squirrels and a weasel, and we spied a magnificent loon.

We settled ourselves near a large beaver lodge. The owner was rather annoyed that we were there, and patrolled up and down, about fifty feet out in the water, every now and then giving the water a mighty slap with his tail. He kept this up the whole time we were there and once, as he drifted by, he yawned! The signs of his endeavours - canals, trails and "logging operations" - were all around the edge of the island.

Most of the flowers were over but in cool shaded places we found lupine and Indian paintbrush. As the sun went down the lake became even more beautiful. The trees, with a golden light on them, were reflected in the mirror-still water which was broken only by the jumping of fish.

Canoeing back to the landing the last sound we heard was the haunting call of the loon. So ended our wilderness interlude.

... Anne Knowles

## RED-TAILED HAWK

That robust, powerful, fan-tailed, broad-winged hawk seen soaring lazily as it catches the thermal up-drafts is the Western Red-tailed Hawk - our only resident buteo. With its six races it is the most widely distributed of all North American hawks and ranges from Alaska to southern Florida, and even as far as Cuba.

Unlike many hawks the Red-tail or "mouse hawk" is not very selective in its feeding habits. They prey upon shrews, gophers, squirrels and mice and also a variety of other creatures such as grasshoppers, snakes, frogs and lizards.

Being resident birds the Red-tailed Hawks occupy their territory the whole year round, but will not commence breeding until they are at least two years old. They remain mated for life unless one of the pair dies and then the remaining hawk will take another partner.

Last year we observed a nest that was in a new location, perhaps indicating the first nesting of a young pair or a new site for an older breeding pair. The nest was large, bulky and of very sturdy construction. The heavy sticks which formed the base appeared to be about half an inch thick and up to two feet in length. The centre depression which was to hold the two or three dingy white eggs was probably lined with strips of cedar bark and grass. The shaping of the depression had been carefully attended to by the beak, feet and breast of the female. With the Red-tailed Hawk the time from nest completion to egg laying may take several weeks. When the final touches are added (such as green sprigs of cedar) the whole affair will measure about 30 inches across. The nest we observed was built 50 feet up in an old burnt out Douglas fir. Fortunately we were able to erect the blind on a rocky knoll which was higher than the base of the tree, giving us a vantage point some 30 feet away from the nest.

As far as we know, two eggs were laid. These were incubated for approximately thirty days. In this instance we only saw the hen bird attending to the incubation, with the cock bird bringing her food. During

this period we observed the nest at very infrequent intervals and then only through binoculars to ensure a successful hatch. Once the chicks were hatched it became clear, through many hours spent in the blind, that the Red-tailed Hawk is a very suspicious customer. This can be accounted for, perhaps, by their very sharp vision which is both monocular and binocular. The binocular field of view covers roughly 50 degrees, considerably less than the flat-eyed birds such as pigeons etc. The latter may require the broader view to detect more numerous enemies. The hawk's eye, however, can adjust very rapidly from distant to close view. A very necessary adaptation for its type of food gathering.

Although a bird's hearing is inferior to that of most mammals, we feel convinced it is well developed in the hawks. Any sound we made as we sat in the blind was immediately registered by the hawks and triggered off the anxiety call.

Two young were duly hatched and we did not visit the nest again until they were two weeks old. When first hatched, young hawks become easily chilled and are highly susceptible to pneumonia. The natal down is soft and silky, and greyish white in colour. At two to three weeks the main flight feathers, the primaries and secondaries, burst their sheaths.

These youngsters stayed in the nest for six to seven weeks. During the last week much wing exercising took place. Remember it is a "one-shot" take-off! After their initial "fly off" these youngsters returned to the nest off and on for another week.

Like all young birds, hawklets are quite feeble when first hatched. The head appears too big for the body and thus it takes the chick a few days before it can hold its head up for any length of time. The hen does all the feeding of the young. She is very gentle and shows much patience and care, particularly when changing her position on the nest. We never saw the cock bird anywhere near the nest once the young had hatched. We were sure of this fact as there was no mistaking the hen who was missing two primaries on the left wing.

The hawklets grew very rapidly and at about two and

a half weeks started walking about their nest. This exercise nearly ended in tragedy for one of the chicks. It was a case of one more step and "junior" would have been out over the edge. Next stop was 50 feet straight down! Fortunately the chick decided at the last moment that caution was the sensible approach to life. There is one account in A.C. Bent's "Life Histories of North American Birds of Prey" of a Red-tailed Hawk carrying a fallen youngster back to the nest. This I could understand if the nest were situated in a cactus which is a common nesting site in Arizona. In this case the hawklet would only have to fall about ten or twelve feet and land on fairly soft ground. Our youngster would have been less fortunate - rock was everywhere.

After leaving the nest the young hawks had much to learn in a very short time. Although the young hunt and kill by instinct, they still have to learn by experience how to catch their prey.

During one six hour stint we observed the young being fed a total of one grass snake and two alligator lizards - all this accompanied by the buzzing of flies all around the nest. We hated to think how much decaying matter there must have been in the nest.

Watching from a blind can be very tiring (a sure way to turn legs into "pretzels") but it had been a wonderful experience looking "eyeball to eyeball" at a Red-tailed Hawk.

It is to be hoped that the hawks we watched for so many hours will help to replace those that did not make it through to the next breeding season. There are still those trigger-happy people who have to shoot every hawk on sight, regardless of the fact that all hawks and eagles are protected in British Columbia. Man, unfortunately, is not only responsible for shooting the hawks, but is also doing a first class job of removing their habitat for concrete jungles. It will be a sad day for mankind when this magnificent bird with a wing span of some fifty inches is no longer on the birdwatcher's list.

... Enid Lemon



SOME FALL BOTANY NOTES

After such a dry season as we have had this year it is not too easy for the Botany-minded to find fruitful hunting grounds. However, in August and September there are interesting plants to observe; locally in the damp areas of the Spit at Esquimalt Lagoon; the low wet portion of the spring pond at the north end of Queensbury Avenue (adjacent to the Cedar Hill Golf Course); and the marginal strips at Swan Lake.

Further afield, the low, partially submerged ground at the south end of Shawnigan Lake is well worth hunting over. As late as August 8th one could find there among many other species, water lobelia (*Lobelia dortmanna*) and eye bright (*Euphrasia arctica*).

And on August 21st at the Queensbury Pond there was still a good show of purple loosetrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), bartsia (*Parentucellia viscosa*) and two species of bur marigold (*Bidens amplissima* and *Bidens carnua*), as well as an abundance of water plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*).

Later on, i.e. September 11th, two of us listed 50 plants in a strip approximately 100 yards in length just above water-line along the south-east shore of Elk Lake. There were no unusual species but an extremely lush growth for that time of year. Sedges, rushes, three species of grasses (*Alopecurus aequalis*, *Descampsia elongata* and *Phalaris arundinacea*); three polygonums (*P. amphibium*, *P. lapathifolium* and *P. persicaria*); two species of mimulus (*M. guttatus* and *M. moschatus*); four members of the Rose family, three of the Mustard family and nine Composites. The most surprising "find" was on a vine of deadly nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*) where there were the usual deep purple flowers and red fruit, but also several new twigs bearing groups of white flowers.

In summary, there were 22 families represented by the 50 species listed that day.

It was very disconcerting to learn September 18th that our entire 100 yards of growth had been bulldozed out and replaced with sand to extend the bathing-grounds. However, a 'phone call to Saanich Parks' Department gave the assurance that the Lake margin to the immediate west would be cleared of obstacles to permit a single-file trail and that most, or all, of the plants lost would be found further along.

That remains to be verified.

... M.C. Melburn

BIRDS REPORTED

Green Heron (1)	Sept. 13	Cowichan River Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Davidson
Red Crossbill (2)	Sept. 20	Lochavon Drive Kaye & Dennis Suttill
Rough-legged Hawk (1)	Sept. 22	Elk Lake
Lapland Longspur (2)	Sept. 22	Clover Point Dr. G. Houston
Slate Junco (1)	Sept. 26	Mrs. Grace Bell 742 St. Patrick St.
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1)	Oct. 5	Beacon Hill Vic Goodwill
Wandering Tattler (1)	Oct. 7	Hood Lane
Wood Duck (1)	Oct. 7	Oak Bay
Franklin's Gull (1)	Oct. 7	Clover Point
Northern Phalarope (8)	Oct. 7	" "
American Bittern (1)	Oct. 7	Ron Satterfield Michigan St. Murray Foubister

ADDENDA

Enid Lemon tells us that a female Marsh Hawk has been using the Blenkinsop Valley as a hunting ground for at least two weeks prior to press time. Both the Goodwills and the Davidsons report sighting a Parasitic Jaeger at Clover Point on Sept. 13, and Oct. 7 respectively. On Sept. 25 the Davidsons had the good luck to spot no less than 3 Hermit Thrush, 200 Audubon Warblers, between 200 and 300 Cedar Waxwings and 10 Vaux Swifts in Lover's Lane at Beacon Hill Park. They also report spying 2 Sandhill Cranes flying over Cattle Point on Oct. 6th.

On one of those snow-white, bone-chilling days last winter I noticed that our wire fat feeder was empty. I picked up a handful of fat scraps, opened the back door, felt the cold blast of wind, had an instant attack of cowardice and flinging the scraps on the seed tray, bolted back inside. Our seed tray is only three feet from the kitchen window. I don't know what I expected but it certainly wasn't what I got. Within minutes who should land on the tray but "Woody", our resident Pileated. With nothing to get a grip on he slipped and



slithered around the tray trying to push a fat scrap into a corner where he could peck at it. He finally succeeded but not before he had pecked a hole almost completely through the metal tray and scattered seeds to the four winds. A gull followed him but was a bit smarter - he just swooped down, grabbed some fat and took off. But that was definitely a let down after Woody's antics.

... M. & L. Slocombe, 3134 Henderson Rd.  
Phone 592-9047

### CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1973

The following Christmas Bird Counts are arranged for this year:

1. Pender Islands, Saturday December 15th. Compilers - Mr. & Mrs. A.C. Brooks, South Pender Island (629-3248)
2. Duncan, date to be announced. Compiler - John Comer, R.R.1, Duncan. (748-9560)
3. Victoria, Sunday, December 30th. Provisional organizer - J.B. Tatum. (477-1089)

Birdwatchers who wish to participate in these Counts must register in advance (if possible before December 10) with the compiler or area leader. The participation fee is one dollar - payable to the compiler or area leader on the day of the count. (Subject to executive approval, a discount for Victoria N.H.S. members in the Victoria count may be possible.) The fee goes towards partially defraying the cost of publication of the counts by the National Audubon Society in American Birds. Your compiler or area leader will give you information on this publication, which is described in the Annual Bird Report for Southern Vancouver Island for 1970.

Those who cannot take part in the Victoria count are urged very strongly to contact the Duncan and Pender Islands compilers and take part in the counts there. These areas are very short-staffed and they very much need more participants.

The compilers regret that discussion or correspondence concerning the dates of the counts is not possible.

... Jeremy Tatum

### "I THOUGHT THAT WAS A SEED"

On a recent outing, the 'seeds' of the wooly sunflower (*Eriophyllum*) provoked a discussion as to what constituted a fruit. Apples, plums, raspberries and tomatoes are familiar types of fruit. Beyond the ken of daily nutrition; however, a vast array of fruit types develop which may be puzzling at first sight.

The main feature of flowering plants (angiosperms) is that the seed is enclosed in a fruit, as opposed to the conifers (gymnosperms) where the seed is born naked on a scale. A fruit is a ripened ovary with its contents (seeds) and any additional floral or vegetative parts which adhere to it.

Consider first those plants in which the fruit is derived from a single ovary. For convenience these are usually classified as dry fruits and fleshy fruits. The carpets of Easter lilies, camas and shooting stars, so apparent in the spring, are recognized now by capsules at the top of stalks bereft of leaves. A capsule is the product of a single ovary, and the seeds, which are borne in one or more compartments (locules), are released when the capsule splits open along sutures (e.g. Erythronium) or across the top (e.g. Dodecatheon).

A legume, commonly referred to as a pod, is the typical fruit of Vicia (vetch), Cytisus (broom) or Lathyrus (wild pea). This fruit bears seeds in a single locule and opens along two sutures running lengthwise. On a hot summer day this opening is violent and is accompanied by an audible crack.

A third dry fruit is the achene which is common to many genera. An achene contains only one seed which is quite tightly enveloped by the ovary wall. The wall is broken down by microbial action prior to seed germination. Examples of achenes are seen in Ranunculus (buttercup), Rumex (dock), Geum (avens), and all members of the aster family.

Fleshy fruits derived from a single ovary include the berry drupe and pome. A berry is of rather homogeneous texture throughout with the seeds embedded within. Tomatoes are an excellent example of this fruit type. True berries are found in Vaccinium (blueberry or huckle-

berry), Lonicera (honeysuckle) and Streptopus (twisted stalk) to name but a few.

The stone fruits are drupes, in which the outer layers are fleshy and the inner seed-containing part is bony. Peaches, plums, cherries, apricots (all Prunus), and the fruit of Osmaronia (Indian plum) are examples of drupes.

The pome (apple, pear) is radically different from the berry and drupe in that the fleshy part is derived from a fusion of petals and sepals. The remains of the ovary and the seeds are to be found in the core.

The last type of fruit to be considered here is the aggregate fruit which is the product of several ovaries in one flower. Members of the genus Rubus (raspberries and blackberries) produce this fruit which, at maturity, consists of numerous fused drupelets (tiny drupes). A variation of an aggregate fruit is found in Fragaria (strawberry), where the cluster of achenes is embedded in fleshy material derived from the receptacle (tip of the flower bearing stalk).

These few lines do not cover all types of fruit found in this region. Any short excursion will reveal more. The presence of fruit long after flowering is over provides considerable food for thought and occasionally for eating.

... *Stephen Mitchell*

"A ROSE IS A ROSE IS A ROSE ....."

THE ROSE FAMILY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA by T.M.C. Taylor;  
British Columbia Provincial Series, No. 30; 223 pages,  
\$1.00

*Reviewed by J. Ward-Harris.*

This book, like others in the series, is intended for those members of the public who have or wish to acquire an interest in the plant life of this Province. Potential readers may be accomplished amateur botanists or complete tyros.

Ignoring this, Dr. Taylor of UBC has written in (and for) the rarified atmosphere of professional circles, thus failing in the purpose for which the book was published.

I read the introduction as a newcomer might and not as a keen student (which I am). By the middle of the second paragraph I was ready to shut the book for good.

Are you conversant with such terms as 'endosperm', 'perianth', 'caducous', 'torus', and 'epi-, hypo' and 'perigynous'? None appears in the glossary, provided, says Dr. Taylor, "...to assist the understanding of those not too familiar with the meaning of technical words."

Captions to a series of sectional flower drawings are extremely technical, and since the glossary omits the key words the would-be student is stumped unless he happens to have a working knowledge of Greek.

Remorseless use of technical terms at the outset of the work must discourage the tyro. Botanical language is obviously necessary to avoid confusion (as with medicine etc.) but it, like medical language, can and should be simplified for the layman.

It is assumed in this book that readers know what named parts of plants look like. Many don't, yet there are no illustrations to help identify say, a pistil or a stamen.

Amazingly, there is no mention of common names, although I understand this is to be remedied by an insert, (which will fall out and get lost). Even the highly technical Vascular Plants of the Pacific Northwest and the later condensation thereof, list common names. As did Dr. Taylor in his book on ferns, (#12).

The distribution maps require a magnifying glass before they can be read and there are gross inaccuracies in them and in the text. The author is at pains to acknowledge "Flora of the Queen Charlotte Islands" (Calder & Taylor), yet at least six species therein are described in The Rose Family of British Columbia but are not shown on the distribution maps; these include: Aruncus sylvester, Crataegus douglasii, Geum macrophyllum, Potentilla pacifica, and, most astounding omission of all, Rubus parviflorus, which is not only common but almost a staple food of the Haida Indians. On the other hand, Prunus emarginata, notable for its absence from the Queen Charlottes, is clearly marked on the distribution map as being present.

Lastly, the binding. My copy if already falling to pieces. Any reference work, however cheap, deserves better than this; it is a working book and should withstand reasonable handling.

The proposed insertion of a sheet of common names shows the book up for what it is - hurriedly written, without care. It is a discredit to the series and should be withdrawn and re-done - by someone else.

\* \* \* \* \*

Editor's Note: The book above was reviewed in the October issue of this magazine but as there appears to be some conflicting opinion about the manual we feel another view might be of interest.

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### "THEY ARE NOT JUST BLUBBER AND GUTS"

Farley Mowat is at it again. We caught him being interviewed on the C.B.C. recently and the gist of his remarks are as follows:

Churchill, Manitoba, has been for years the scene of the slaughter of great numbers of Beluga whales. Not only has it been a whaling centre, but finding its economy in poor shape has apparently had in mind the idea of encouraging wealthy hunters to visit the town and get their kicks from shooting Belugas - and for the sole purpose of the kill itself - they don't want to eat them, and they would certainly have a hard time getting them mounted. To the hunter they are just another quarry. To Mr. Mowat they are more than just "blubber and guts" as he put it. So he has launched "Project Jonah", a scheme not only to protect the whales but to bring in tourists and give them a chance to see at first hand not only the whales (which he feels will become much less wary once they are protected) but all the other wealth of arctic wildlife around Churchill. He feels the project would have a twofold result - the whales would suffer nothing more than being photographed and the tourist money would fatten the town's coffers. Right on, Farley! as the younger generation would say.

... M. Slocombe, Editor.

### JUNIOR JOTTINGS

On September 15th a total of thirty-one juniors (including 2 leaders and 3 parents) journeyed to Riefel Refuge Bird Sanctuary near Ladner. We met at our usual place at 7:00 AM and headed for the 8:00 AM ferry. On the ferry we divided into four groups and explored all accessible parts of the ship until our arrival at Tswawssen. Bird watching is very exciting with one pair of glasses for every dozen individuals!

However, we found binoculars were not at all required at the Sanctuary. We were transported to Riefel Refuge by Vancouver representatives and there joined with another good size group of junior naturalists.

Three groups were formed, each headed by a naturalist and a pre-lunch tour of the sanctuary was underway. Undoubtedly the Victoria youngsters met more birds than ever before: ducks, geese, swans at close range (a Canada goose at very close range!) and Marsh Hawks within easy viewing distance. How many have been lucky enough to see a Peregrine Falcon fly overhead? Our juniors did that day! Smaller birds: wrens, warblers, chickadees and finches were identified by ear or eye if one was lucky enough to catch a glimpse flitting through the cover surrounding the ponds.

Not only birds were experienced that day. We learned about certain insects, plants, small mammals and even watched stickleback in one of the ponds. But - most important - we were shown glimpses of the wholeness of a community - interdependency - relationships: Owls and voles ... "Look at these tunnels and compartments buried in the grass." or "These are good blackberries - birds like them too - look at the seeds in these droppings; if these seeds were planted and the seeds from an uneaten blackberry also planted, which might germinate and grow into a blackberry bush more readily?" ... "What's happened here?" "A bird has had a dust bath." "Why do they dust themselves?" ... "Look somebody has roosted above - probably a Great Blue Heron!" "Listen, how many sounds can you hear?" ... and on and on it went with another walk after a lunch provided by the Vancouver group. On the way back to the 4:00 PM ferry we stopped to see an obliging Barn Owl, who flew off only after everyone had had a good look at him.

It was a great day! Many thanks to parents who participated as drivers and the three mothers who accompanied us.

... Gail Mitchell

NOVEMBER PROGRAM

Tuesday November 6th Executive Meeting. 7:30 pm  
Room 402, Elliot Bldg. U-Vic

Tuesday November 13th General Meeting. 8:00 pm  
Newcombe Auditorium,  
Provincial Museum  
Speaker: Yvonne Green (Mrs.)  
Title: West Coast Trail and  
San Josef.

Sunday November 11th Bird Trip to East Sooke Park  
Meet at Mayfair Lanes.  
8:45 am or Pike Rd. Parking  
Lot. 9:30 am.  
Bring lunch and rain gear.  
Leader: Jeremy Tatum.

Sunday November 18th Botany Trip Seymour Hill  
(Thetis Lake). Lichens,  
ferns, pre-winter gleanings.  
Meet at Mayfair Lanes. 9:30 am  
or Thetis Lake 10:00 am.  
Morning only.  
Leader: Stephen Mitchell.

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JUNIOR OUTINGS - NOVEMBER

			<u>Drivers</u>
Nov. 10	Intermediates	Thetis Lake	Walsh Johanson
Nov. 17	NO OUTING - AUDUBON, NEWCOMBE AUDITORIUM AT 2:30		
Nov. 24	Juniors	Prior Lake	Dennison Bryant
Dec. 1	Intermediates	Francis Park	Brigham Singleton.

All outings meet at 1:30 pm at Mayfair Lanes. If drivers are unable to participate, please inform Gail (477-9248) as soon as possible.

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# 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

## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 1973 - 74

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Dr. Jeremy Tatum	Mrs. G.N. Hooper
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477-1089	477-1152

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Programme Chairman: Stephen Mitchell, 4321 Majestic Dr. -----	477-9248

## Group Leaders

Botany: Stephen Mitchell, (see address above)	
Ornithology: Mrs. Ruth Stirling, 3500 Salsbury Way -----	385-4223
Marine Biology: David Stirling, 3500 Salsbury Way -----	385-4223
Junior Naturalists: Freeman F. King, 541 McKenzie Ave. -----	479-2966
Editor - "The Victoria Naturalist": Maeford Slocombe, 3134 Henderson Rd. -----	592-9047
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Asst. Junior Naturalists: Mrs. Gail Mitchell, 4321 Majestic -----	477-9248
Librarian: A.R. Davidson, 2144 Brighton Ave. -----	598-3088
Friends of the Museum: Dr. D.B. Sparling, 9-1354 Beach Dr. -----	598-4262

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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.  
Sustaining Membership \$25

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.*