



# THE VICTORIA NATURALIST

published by the  
**VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
Victoria B.C

March, 1974  
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### THE CAMBERWELL BEAUTY

Everyone will recognize the insect on this month's cover, for it is one of the best known butterflies in North America, the Mourning Cloak, Nymphalis antiopa. It is very familiar to naturalists because it is widely distributed and common in a variety of habitats across almost the entire North American continent, and the adult insect is very long lived and can be found in any month of the year. It is not unusual to find it sunning itself on a snow patch on a crisp winter's day. It is common in Victoria, where I obtained the cover photograph. The ground colour is a deep purple contrasting sharply with the broad cream marginal band and the blue submarginal spots.

The insect is closely related to Milbert's Tortoiseshell described in the September 1972 issue of the Victoria Naturalist. The caterpillar is black and spiny with a row of dark red spots along the back. It feeds on willow or elm and its method of pupation is similar to that described for Milbert's Tortoiseshell.

It also occurs in Europe, but in the British Isles it is only a rare fall migrant from Scandinavia. Indeed, when Moses Harris wrote about it in the late eighteenth century, he described it as "one of the scarcest flies of any known in England", a statement which, if giving a somewhat unflattering description of a beautiful insect, is still true today.

The first time these insects were recorded in England was in 1748, when two were found in the village of Camberwell (now a London suburb). The spectacular appearance was so exciting that the butterfly was promptly dubbed the Camberwell Beauty, by which name it is still known in Britain today.

... Jeremy Tatum

A. H. NEHRING ESTATE

As was announced in the September issue of The Victoria Naturalist, our Society was left the residue of the estate of Mr. A.H. Nehring of 5118 Old West Saanich Road. This bequest included the house and five acre property.

Pending a final decision as to what the Society will do with the property, a tenant is now installed in the house at a monthly rental of \$230. The tenancy is being handled for us by Canada Trust, who were also the executors of the estate.

Would members please note that, while a tenant is in occupancy, we are not free to visit the property other than by express invitation of the tenant.

A committee of the Society (Stephen Mitchell, chairman, Frank Neate, Rosemary Picozzi, Katherine Sherman, Gilbert Calvert, Kerry Joy, Nancy Turner, and initially also including Eric Counsell) has been working in detail on the possible alternatives we might follow. The two main possibilities - of opening the grounds as a nature centre, or of selling in order to purchase desirable habitat - were mentioned in the September announcement. Later this year the committee will report to the Executive on its findings, and the Executive will then make a recommendation to the Society. The members of the Society will then be asked to make a decision. Advance notice of the meeting at which this will take place will be given. Comments and suggestions are of course welcome at any time and should be made in writing either to the President or to Stephen Mitchell.

*Jeremy B. Tatum*  
*President*

Following is a consolidation of the financial statement received from Canada Trust showing receipts and disbursements while under their administration. This report was prepared by Mrs. Hooper and checked by Dr. Tatum and Miss Collins.

NEHRING ESTATE

POSITION AT NOVEMBER 30, 1973

PER STATEMENT OF THE CANADA TRUST COMPANY

	Real Estate and Furnishings	Bonds	Cash	Total
<u>RECEIPTS</u>				
House and 4.87 acres at 5118 Old West Saanich Rd.	35,000.00			
Furnishings and effects - Sold			804.50	
Unsold	720.50			
Insurance policies			3,097.66	
Cash on hand and in banks			15,191.00	
Bonds and interest		4,392.50	214.38	
Car (Mercedes-Benz)			6,300.00	
Miscellaneous			263.75	
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	<u>35,720.50</u>	<u>4,392.50</u>	<u>25,871.29</u>	65,984.29
<u>DISBURSEMENTS</u>				
Succession duties			11,158.04	
Loan repaid			2,000.00	
Funeral expenses			719.95	
Property taxes			769.47	
Solicitors' fees			610.00	
Appraisal fees, auction- eers' commission and expenses			706.11	
Sundry debts			518.41	
Miscellaneous			213.77	
<u>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</u>			<u>16,695.75</u>	16,695.75
Position as per Canada Trust Statement as at November 30, 1973	35,720.50	4,392.50	9,175.54	49,288.54
Canada Trust - fee			2,644.60	2,644.60
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>35,720.50</u>	<u>4,392.50</u>	<u>6,530.94</u>	<u>46,643.94</u>

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DUES

Annual fees are due on April 30, 1974, the end of the Society's financial year. The last "Naturalist" to be mailed for this current year will be in June. Memberships that lapse as of the September General Meeting will be \$3.00 plus 50¢ per issue if back copies are requested. With this month's magazine your postal code has been used, if there is any discrepancy, please let me know.

*Treasurer*

BIRDS REPORTED

Pygmy Owl	Jan. 2	Goldstream Pat Swift
Spotted Sandpiper (1)	Jan. 19	Whiffin Spit, V. Goodwill & R. Satterfield
Short-eared Owl (1)	Jan. 23	Cowichan Vic Goodwill
Rough-legged Hawk (1)	Jan. 29	Martindale Rd.
Harris' Sparrow (1)	Jan. 29	Saanich
Rusty Blackbird (1)	Jan. 31	Witty's Lagoon Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Red-breasted Sapsucker (1)	Feb. 1	Goldstream
Rhinoceros Auklet (1)	Feb. 1	Clover Point Vic Goodwill
Yellow-rumped Warbler (1)	Feb. 4	Prevost Hill
Long-billed Marsh Wren (1)	Feb. 4	Swan Lake
Ruffed Grouse (1)	Feb. 5	Highland Road Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Skylark (11)	Feb. 6	Wallace Drive Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Davidson
Wood Duck (1 pair)	Feb. 6	Duncan Sewage Pond Vic Goodwill
Townsend's Solitaire (3)	Feb. 6	Mt. Finlayson, Leila Roberts and Rosa Wood
Great-horned Owl (1)	Feb. 7	Prevost Hill Vic & Mrs. Goodwill
Marsh Hawk (1)	Feb. 9	Cowichan Bay, V. Goodwill & R. Satterfield
Northern Shrike (1)	Feb. 9	St. Patrick St. Grace Bell

ADDENDA

Anna's Hummingbirds are still being seen in several areas. One pair is even anticipating Spring - Mr. Alexander witnessed a male in courtship flight with female present on Feb. 8th. As of this date (Feb. 13th) they were still there. Anna's have also been spotted in January and February by the Copps, Rob MacKenzie-Grieve, Betty Lothian and Ron Satterfield.

The Goodwills have been generous contributors this month as can be seen by the above list. Along with Ron Satterfield they have also found a total of seven Red-heads at Elk and Beaver Lakes and Duncan, and two Gyrfalcons - one Jan. 26 at Island View Rd., and one on Feb. 9th at Mill Bay. To top their excellent finds they spotted no less than five more Gyrfalcons in various areas and Vic Goodwill saw one carrying a crow - the falcon could barely stay airborne!

Apart from Grace Bell's Shrike, three others have been spotted in our area. Mrs. Bell recounted to us the incident a few years ago when a Shrike got into her large feeding enclosure. She went after it with a butterfly net but not before it had decapitated a House Finch did she capture it. She kept it covered and quiet and drove it well out into the country - it was back in her yard almost before she was!

We just returned on the 8th from a week in Los Angeles where we were seeing our daughter, Linda, off on a round-the-world study-as-you-go University cruise. As she is an ardent birder and helps edit Birds Reported she took along her binoculars and promised to report on avian activity on the high seas. While in L.A. we were really too busy to spot much other than California Gulls and House Finches plus a few exotic "birds" in the hotel lobby! But we did watch six large black birds soaring over the hotel area - their flight pattern was so strange we have asked Mr. Davidson to do some research for us and we will hopefully have more to add on that in a future issue.

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

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Most Poisonous Toadstool: The yellowish-olive death cap (*Amanita phalloides*) is regarded as the world's most poisonous fungus. From six to fifteen hours after tasting, the effects are vomiting, delerium, collapse and death. Among its victims was Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, Pope Clement VII (1478-1534)

BIRD FIELD TRIP TO BEAVER AND ELK LAKE

On Saturday, January 19, 1974, under a sky that threatened rain, a group of thirty enthusiastic bird watchers expertly led by Ruth Stirling was greeted at Beaver Lake by a waterfowl population which included several Mute Swans amongst an abundance of Common Mergansers, and to a lesser extent, Hooded Mergansers, Glaucous-winged Gulls and Mallards. The stillness that prevailed during most of the walk along the trail leading to Elk Lake was interrupted only by occasional sounds of Golden-crowned Kinglets and Common Flickers, and by brief appearances from some of the year-round residents -- a Varied Thrush, two Bald Eagles, a Downy Woodpecker, Pine Siskins and Bushtits, a Great Blue Heron and Chestnut-backed Chickadees. A short distance from the path two Red-tailed Hawks were spotted who patiently remained perched in the treetops long enough for everyone to re-assemble and observe them through telescopes.

At Elk Lake, Redheads and Ring-necked Ducks were unexpected citizens of a crowded community composed mostly of Double-crested Cormorants, scaups and American Coots. Later, while we were returning to the parking lot, a rather ragged-looking Sharpshinned Hawk with several feathers missing was observed flying overhead.

After a pleasant lunch and under sunny skies, a trip to Quick's Pond added reinforcements to the variety of different species already seen -- European Wigeons, Canada Geese, Green-wing Teals, Gadwalls and more Ring-necked Ducks -- bringing the first bird outing of the New Year to a very successful end.

... V. Vilkos

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The Stegosaurus ("plated reptile") which measured up to 30 feet in length, 8 feet in height at the hips and weighed up to 2 tons, had a plum-sized brain weighing only two and one half ounces. It roamed widely across the Northern Hemisphere about 150,000,000 years ago, trying to remember where it had been.

BOOK REVIEWHIKING TRAILS - SOUTHEASTERN VANCOUVER ISLAND

Prepared by "The Outdoor Club of Victoria", 1973, pp48

Price \$1.25

The second volume of "Hiking Trails" is now obtainable from book shops all over the Island. It is a joy to find a well-mapped, simple-to-follow booklet on many of the short and longer trails, some easy and others steep, that are to be found on the Southeastern portion of Vancouver Island. The area covered is from Duncan to Qualicum Beach.

The "Hints and Cautions" section is full of much useful information - so read it carefully before setting off.

... Erid Lemon

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PICKING THE PAPERBACKS

A Field Guide to Identification  
SEASHELLS OF NORTH AMERICA

by R. Tucker Abbott. Illustrated by George F. Sandstrom.  
Price \$3.95

This Golden Press paperback is the answer to an amateur conchologist's prayers. Easy to carry to the beach, it contains not only superb illustrations (over a thousand) and excellent descriptions but several chapters dealing with every aspect of shells - their grouping, locations, structure, collecting and storing techniques etc. etc. This reviewer was a shell buff some years ago and if I had had this one book it would have saved me more time and money than I care to think about.

Although it deals with all of North America, our local area is well covered. It has my highest recommendation.

... M. Slocombe

## FEBRUARY BIRD TRIP

Driving along beyond Cordova Bay to rendezvous at Martindale Road for the start of the February 16, 1974, Bird Field Trip became a mini convoy of GO and STOP - LOOK - LISTEN. We were all rewarded by a Shoveler prodding around a rain pond. Others who had come from Pat Bay Highway up Martindale reported Meadowlarks and Golden Crowned Sparrows.

It looked like a raingear day, as 25 of us joined our leader, Ruth Stirling, on Martindale and raised binocs and positioned scopes. But Ruth maybe worked her golden magic, and the Day responded in opening up into sunlight "better and better all the time."

Doesn't it seem providential how at Martindale the wet areas of winter change to the soils of summer and the potatoes grow when the main population of Birds has migrated. But the increasing threat of "development" does make one feel concern for this habitat, where we all watched two Canvasback Ducks foraging in the wetlands along with the Widgeons and Mallards and omnipresent Glaucous-winged Gulls.

Red-winged Blackbirds chimed out as we threaded across the fields, HOPING the wind would blow from a different quarter as we strained to view some Killdeers right in the angle of a liquid-manure spray!

Plodding up the water-filled ground of a hillside slope we joyed to the sight and music of a Bewick's Wren nearby, and wished one didn't have to look DOWN when one was looking UP to "binocularate" a Hairy Woodpecker beautifully STILL for an instant than winging us on. Quail darted across in front of us and a red-shafted Flicker turned his white rump for some privacy as we neared his tree stand. Yes, the trees up there were easier for spotting the Robins than the Housefinches! And Guineafowl scanning the field reminded me of their wild brothers we knew in Africa and I wished they were a rare immigrant like the Cattle Egret instead of being domestic imports running wild now.

By the time we left Martindale we had added a Rufous-sided Towhee and some sparrows in one bush hedge, and Golden-crowned and White-crowned Sparrows beside the road, while a Ring-necked Pheasant whirred overhead. All our concentrated STARING unfortunately could not make a distant snag BE what it mimicked so skillfully - a Hawk that was but wasn't!

Then we drove over to Island View Beach for our Bird Watching Lunch, our leader having timed things so exactly to High Noon when we opened the car doors there. It wouldn't be Bird Watchers Lunch, would it, without the instant interruptions of must get up and look - this time at a Bald Eagle soaring aloft, and wings beating across the Strait which our Leader decided belonged to an immature Golden Eagle. More Strait watching after lunch through Binoculars and Scopes added an Arctic Loon, Common Loons, Murre, Murrelets, Old Squaw, Buffleheads, Lesser Scaup, Surf Scoters, Horned Grebe, Pelagic Cormorant, and a Her and Him Harlequin close in.

A swing south showed a recent landslide into the Strait from off Cowichan Head. And as we bent back and came down the road above, a Song Sparrow serenaded us. Then a Red-tailed hawk harassing a Bald Eagle had everyone trying for eyes on top of their heads to better view it. Coming across toward the cars, several Green-winged Teal were sighted, swimming along with the Widgeons in a mirror winter mini lake, which was trying to capture the sky in it.

So we do thank You, Ruth, for a gift of Spring in February, good birding, good company, and a very much enjoyed Good Day!

... Kay Suttill

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### AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILMS

On MARCH 15th and 16th, 1974, Mr. John D. Bulger will present his film "Wild Tennessee". To quote from the pamphlet: "Within this one state thrive nearly every variety of wildlife that may be found from the Gulf of Mexico to Canada - a unique collection which serves as subject of John Bulger's latest film."

KEEPING WHITE!!

Last November 12, four snowy owls arrived on Trial Island, and remained there for about a month. Then three of them took off for parts unknown, leaving in sole possession one magnificent bird, which judging by his snow white plumage, must be a mature specimen. At the time of writing, (January 20) he can still be found there during daylight hours, perched on his favourite rock. He shows no fear of the few humans who inhabit the island, and even tolerates the two lively dogs - both well trained to leave wildlife in peace.

Examination of the area around his rock discloses many rubbery feet of one of the smaller grebes, and also some carcasses where the breast only has been eaten. And, in case you don't know it, snowy owls do like baths; one day our friend was observed having a good dip in the duck pond. A snap was taken of him and if it turns out well, we have been promised a copy.

*As told to Katherine Sherman by Dorothy Horne,  
wife of Trial Island Lighthouse keeper.*

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A NOTE FROM THE OUTDOOR NEWS BULLETIN, WASH. D.C.

An agreement to improve polar bear management has been signed by the U.S., Norway, Denmark, and Canada, the Wildlife Management Institute reports. The fifth polar nation, Russia, is expected to sign soon.

The agreement calls for increased research, habitat protection, and exchange of scientific information among member countries. Scientists attending the negotiations emphasized that the polar bear is not an endangered species. What is needed, they said, is habitat protection and accelerated research to gain more understanding of the great white bear. Only with such knowledge can a satisfactory management program be devised and implemented.

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MARCH PROGRAM

- Tuesday, March 5 Executive Meeting, 7.30 p.m.  
Room 402, Elliot Bldg., U-Vic.
- Tuesday, March 12 General Meeting, 8:00 p.m.  
Newcombe Auditorium, Prov. Museum  
Speaker: Ken Northcote (Dept. of  
Mines and Petroleum Resources).  
Title: Geology of East Sooke Park.
- Saturday, March 16 Bird trip: Clover Point - meet at  
Mayfair Lanes at 9:30 a.m. or  
Clover Point at 10 a.m.  
Leader: Ruth Stirling
- Saturday, March 23 Botany trip: Freeman King Park and  
Knocken Hill. Bring lunch.  
Leave Mayfair Lanes 9:30 a.m.  
Leader: Stephen Mitchell.

WHAT AN APPETITE!

Your Editor was up early enough recently to catch the Today Show on television. Being interviewed was Peter Benchley, grandson of the well known writer and comedian. Mr. Benchley has just published a novel entitled "Jaws" which deals with Sharks. He is quite an authority on the subject and we were intrigued with his description of the great white Shark. Apparently these sharks attain lengths of 36 feet and perhaps more and they will attack and eat absolutely anything. One tried to take a bite out of an outboard motor. Another, whose stomach was examined, had dined on human bone, a whole pig, several bottles and a bed sheet!

... M. Slocombe

JUNIOR PROGRAM

			<u>Drivers</u>
March 2	Intermediates	Matheson Lake	Singleton Walsh
March 9	Juniors	Witty's Lagoon	Dennison Reid
March 16	No outing - Audubon 2:30 p.m. at Newcombe Auditorium		
March 23	Intermediates	Francis Park	Pollard Suttill
April 6	Juniors	Mill Hill	Graham Murray

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

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GOLF COURSES CAUSING CONTROVERSY IN JAPAN

Japanese ecologists have expressed concern over the current boom in golf courses. According to a recent survey, 0.96% of Japan's total acreage has been brought up by golf course groups, who say that the demand for the courses is still great. Environmentalists fear that there will be little wild forest land left in Japan if the boom continues.

*Japan Times - 11 Apr. 1973*

GEOLOGISTS PROPOSE TOWING ICEBERGS FOR WATER SUPPLY

Geology engineers Wilford Weeks and William Campbell of the US say the idea of towing icebergs from polar regions as a source of fresh water may be feasible after all. They say a "super-tug" with 2/3 the power of the nuclear carrier Enterprise could tow an iceberg with enough water to irrigate more than 6,000 sq. miles of land. Such an iceberg could be worth \$1 million, they say.

*Science News 26 May 1973*



# 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

President	Vice-President
Dr. Jeremy Tatum	Mrs. G.N. Hooper
305 - 1680 Poplar Ave.	2411 Alpine Cres.
477-1089	477-1152

## Immediate Past President

Mrs. F.A. Sherman, 2168 Guernsey St. -----	598-3237
Secretary: Mrs. J.L. Rimmington, 3372 Henderson Rd.-----	592-6037
Treasurer: Miss Maureen Collins, 2719 Richmond Rd. -----	598-1875
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
University Liaison: Dr. Rosemary Picozzi, 11-1595 Rockland -----	384-4958
Federation of B.C. Naturalists:	
Kerry Joy, Millstream Lake Rd., R.R.6 -----	478-5093

## OTHER OFFICERS

Audubon Wildlife Films: Miss Anne Adamson, 1587 Clive Dr. -----	598-1623
A.H. Couser, 403-435 Michigan St.-----	384-0832
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.*