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THE PIVOT OF THE HEAVENS

by David Stirling

*"Constellations come, and climb the heavens, and go,
And thou dost see them rise,
Star of the Pole! and thou dost see them set.
Alone in thy cold skies,
Thou keep'st thy old unmoving station yet."*

*William Cullen Bryant
Hymn to the North Star*

The Norsemen believed that the universe was created from the bodies of giants killed by the gods and thrown into the World Mill. Then a huge spike was driven through the world, the end resting against the North Star. The great spike was the axle. The earth and all the stars revolved like a huge wheel. This was the explanation Scandinavian mythology gave for the fact that of all the stars only the North Star remained stationary.

The Mongols knew the North Star as the Golden Peg. Like the Norsemen they believed that this was the star that held the heavens together. In India it was called the Pivot of the Planets; in China it was the emperor of the heavens only slightly more divine than their own emperor, the son of heaven.

Polaris is the last star in the tail of the Little Bear or Little Dipper, a rather minor constellation. The Little Bear's tail is even longer than

Cover Photo - young Douglas Fir cones

by

the late W.D. Reith

that of the Great Bear because the Little Bear is being swung around Polaris in a tight circle so stretching its posterior appendage.

To the Greeks, the Little Bear was a hunter who had been transformed into a bear. Another Greek myth says that the two bears were placed in the sky by Jupiter. This was a difficult task even for Jupiter but he managed it by swinging the animals up by their tails. Their great weight has stretched their tails to lengths not seen on any terrestrial bear.

Polaris will not always be the "North Star" nor was it the "North Star" even in historic times. Because earth's north pole describes a slow circle every 25,800 years other stars will become "pole stars" as this wobble, called the "precession of the equinoxes", continues.

The Pole Star has been in its present position since 1000 B.C. It was used by Phoenician and Greek navigators and became known during the days of the European explorers and traders as the Steering Star, the Lodestar, Stella Maris and the Ship Star.

The Arabs seem to have been out of step with the rest of mankind for they thought the North Star was the villain of the skies. He had slain the heavenly hunter who lay in state in the Great Bier or coffin (Big Dipper). Polaris had been ostracised by the other stars and was forced to remain in one spot while the rest of the heavens moved around in a great funeral procession.

Closely associated with the Pole Star and Little Bear is the Great Bear, Ursa Major, Big Dipper or Plough.

It is said that the seven stars in this constellation were first identified with a bear in India. This concept spread westward through the Middle East to Greece and finally to the rest of Europe. The American Indians also knew this con-

stellation as a bear, a fact which usually brings up old speculations regarding Atlantis, the lost world of Mu and even the possibility that the Amerinds are really the lost tribes of Israe. The explanation, however, seems to be that the human mind everywhere reacts in much the same manner to similar visual facts, and so the identification of this constellation in America and in India with a bear probably came about independently, although it is an interesting coincidence. It is possible, too, that Indians brought this idea from Asia via Bering Strait.

The "Bear" of most American Indians did not have a long tail. Instead the three stars of the "tail" became hunters in hot pursuit of their quarry. Only the Iroquois believed the Bear had a tail. They explained the absence of tails on terrestrial bears by the story that once bears had great bushy tails, but the earth bear used his tail for catching fish. Once in winter when the bear was sitting on a hole in the ice his tail became frozen in and when he struggled to his feet only a stump remained.

Babylonians and Assyrians especially revered the seven-starred Dipper because the number seven had special mystical significance to these people.

In England the Great Bear became somehow associated with King Arthur and the knights of the Round Table. A name hardly remembered now is "Arthur's Chariot". In parts of Europe the name Charles' Wain (Wagon) was used, a legendary association with Charlemagne. This name is still used in eastern Europe.

The Dipper is perhaps, the best known constellation. It is familiar even to people who know no other stars. Unlike most other constellations, it never sets even in latitudes as far south as Egypt. This led to the myth that the Bear fears water since it never drops below the ocean horizon as do the other stars.

If you can find the Big Dipper, just follow an

imaginary line from the two bright stars in the end of the bowl to Polaris, "Pivot of the Heavens".

* * * * *

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL - A REVIEW

by Maeford Slocombe

With wit, wisdom and a keen eye for the vagaries of both animal and human behaviour, James Herriot has produced a top-notch book. He traces his career as a veterinarian in the sometimes beautiful, sometimes hostile countryside of Yorkshire, and gives us a vivid picture of the people and animals he comes to know (again, some beautiful, some hostile).

The author has a great love of life and a sense of humour par excellence.

The book has a very gripping opening - and gripping is the word, for we first meet Mr. Herriot as he grapples with a long and difficult calf delivery surrounded by a group of doubting old timers who audibly discuss what they consider to be the failings of the 'new fangled' vet.

Herriot never lets our interest flag as we follow his career with its triumphs, its tragedies, its hilarious incidents and touching moments. The story is to be made into a film - let us hope the movie makers do it justice.

Don't read this book just because you think it deals mainly with animals - its scope is much wider than that. I highly recommend it to all readers whether they be exuberant teenagers or those who must adjust their bifocals before settling down to the pure enjoyment James Herriot has provided.

All Things Bright and Beautiful, Herriot's second book, is coming out shortly and promises to be equally appealing.

SKIPPER SAYS

by Freeman King

Now the days are longer and we get more sunshine, the green living world begins to awaken.

Look at the buds on an old maple and you'll find a miracle has happened while they slept. Take a conical bud and split it with a sharp knife and you'll find an entire embryo flower inside. All that is needed is the warm sun to open the bud and expose the full glory of the beautiful clusters of yellow flowers. They will attract many kinds of insects in search of pollen and nectar. These, in turn, help man in his search for food for the bee takes the pollen and nectar back to the hive to make the honey which we collect and feed to our offspring. And so the food chain carries on.

Now let's take a look at the Salmonberry and see the whitish leaf bud nestled close to the stem. They too will soon burst forth to form the three leaflets that make up the whole leaf.

Now let's look at the Indian Plum. Here you will find that the leaves have already broken their buds and soon the clusters of white flowers will follow to take their turn in attracting the bees.

Now go to a marshy place and you will see spikes of Skunk Cabbage beginning to sprout. This is a definite sign that spring is just around the corner. Soon their golden spikes will appear to say that winter is over, no more need to worry, life goes on and will continue to do so as long as we just leave it alone.

Look under your feet! Brand new grass stems are emerging almost as you watch. Stop and think a bit and you may realize that grasses are the most important of all the plants to mankind for without them we might also become an endangered species.

Now, go out, see, feel, and then maybe you'll understand just what life is all about.

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS COUNT '74

compiled by Jeremy Tatum
and Jack Williams

Despite adverse weather in some areas the 1974 Victoria Christmas Bird Count was quite a success. A total of 62,126 birds were seen, up 3,236 from last year. This increase is somewhat misleading because if it hadn't been for the 16,000 Mew Gulls reported, the highest number ever recorded on a Victoria count, our total would have been down. The 123 species seen was down 8 from 1973 but still close to the long-time average.

Many all-time lows were recorded this year (see accompanying computer list-out) with the highs (amongst the birds) being registered among the raptors and gulls. Two new species for Victoria counts were recorded, a Sandhill Crane and a Black-legged Kittiwake.

Four additional species were seen during the count period but not on the count day. They were a Great Horned Owl, Townsend's Warbler, Swamp Sparrow and Snow Bunting.

Our thanks to all who participated and especially to Mr. and Mrs. Porcher whose hospitality made the après-birding party such a success.

The following were the paid participants:

B. Baldwin, M. Brehaut, Mr. & Mrs. T. Briggs,
D. Campbell, Mr. & Mrs. R.W. Campbell, C. Carrigan,
H. Carter, E. Courtnall, Mr. & Mrs. A.R. Davidson,
K. Dickieson, N. Fatt, J. Fitch, R. Fryer,
G. Gardner, Mr. & Mrs. V. Goodwill, V. Guernsey,
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H. & P. Hosford, Mr. & Mrs. Hutchings, I. Jarvie
A. Knowles, S. Lees, E. Lemon, C. Lyons,

R. McKenzie-Grieve, M. Miller, Mr. & Mrs. R.
Muirhead, L. Monckton, C. Morehen, T. Murphy,
M. Paul, J. Piuze, L. Roberts, J. Roe,
R. Satterfield, L. Slocombe, Mr. & Mrs. D. Stirling,
Mr. & Mrs. D. Suttill, P. Swift, Dr. & Mrs. J. Tatum,
B. Trotter, C. Trotter, J. Tysoe, A. Vey,
Mr. & Mrs. R. Wainwright, C. West,
Mr. & Mrs. J. Williams, M. Winstone and R. Wood.

Key To Areas

Area A Prospect Lake -- Durrance Lake
Area B Florence Lake -- Goldstream
Area C Esquimalt Lagoon -- Witty's Lagoon
Area D Portage Inlet -- Thetis Lake
Area E Beacon Hill Park -- Esquimalt
Area F Clover Point -- Oak Bay
Area G University -- Cadboro Bay
Area H Swan Lake -- Panama Flats
Area I Blenkinsop -- Elk Lake
Area J Burnside -- Quick's Pond
Area K Martindale -- Island View
Area L Chain, Trial, Chatham Islands

Code

H -- Highest, or equal to highest ever
L -- Lowest, or equal to lowest ever
F -- New species for count (a first)

* * * * *

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

SPECIES	A	B	C	D
COMMON LOON	0	1	6	0
ARCTIC LOON	0	0	2	0
RED-THROATED LOON	0	0	0	0
RED-NECKED GREBE	0	1	7	0
HORNED GREBE	0	8	50	9
EARED GREBE	0	0	6	0
WESTERN GREBE	0	0	603	0
PIED-BILLED GREBE	0	6	0	1
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	0	3	7	16
BRANDT'S CORMORANT	0	0	0	0
PELAGIC CORMORANT	0	2	5	0
GREAT BLUE HERON	0	2	12	2
MUTE SWAN	0	0	0	4
WHISTLING SWAN	0	0	0	0
CANADA GOOSE	9	0	8	2
BLACK BRANT	0	0	0	0
WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	0	0	0	0
MALLARD	392	102	80	27
GADWALL	0	0	0	0
PINTAIL	3	0	2	2
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	5	0	0	0
EUROPEAN WIGEON	0	0	1	0
AMERICAN WIGEON	262	119	169	25
NORTHERN SHOVELER	0	4	0	0
RING-NECKED DUCK	6	19	0	0
CANVASBACK	5	0	26	2
GREATER SCAUP	0	0	76	0
LESSER SCAUP	0	0	0	0
SCAUP SP.	0	0	0	44
COMMON GOLDENEYE	1	0	51	16
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	0	1	0	0
BUFFLEHEAD	1	55	507	48
OLDSQUAW	0	0	9	0
HARLEQUIN DUCK	0	0	8	0
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	0	0	46	0
SURF SCOTER	0	0	22	0
HOODED MERGANSER	0	12	37	44
COMMON MERGANSER	9	13	0	12
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER	0	1	15	2
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	2	0	0	1

VICTORIA, B.C., DECEMBER 21, 1974

SPECIES	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
COMMON LOON	0	1	6	0	2	4	17	0	4	0	8	3	45
ARCTIC LOON	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	40	46
RED-THROATED LOON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	4 L
RED-NECKED GREBE	0	1	7	0	22	6	12	0	1	0	8	30	87
HORNED GREBE	0	8	50	9	27	43	273	0	83	0	55	70	618
EARED GREBE	0	0	6	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	10 L
WESTERN GREBE	0	0	603	0	3	17	200	0	0	0	2	1	826
PIED-BILLED GREBE	0	6	0	1	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT	0	3	7	16	32	3	0	0	6	0	1	2	70
BRANDT'S CORMORANT	0	0	0	0	0	47	1	0	0	0	0	100	148
PELAGIC CORMORANT	0	2	5	0	64	95	144	0	17	0	3	225	555
GREAT BLUE HERON	0	2	12	2	6	0	2	2	0	2	2	1	31
MUTE SWAN	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	4	6	0	0	0	16 L
WHISTLING SWAN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
CANADA GOOSE	9	0	8	2	0	0	0	48	0	34	20	0	120
BLACK BRANT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
MALLARD	392	102	80	27	154	6	193	769	687	535	2537	5	5487
GADWALL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	9	0	5
PINTAIL	3	0	2	2	0	0	0	93	0	171	308	0	579
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	5	0	0	0	1	4	0	73	0	113	26	0	222
EUROPEAN WIGEON	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	0	1	1	0	9H=
AMERICAN WIGEON	262	119	169	25	223	89	24	1530	612	366	3976	17	7412
NORTHERN SHOVELER	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	33	0	6	2	0	47
RING-NECKED DUCK	6	19	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	13	4	0	47
CANVASBACK	5	0	26	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39
GREATER SCAUP	0	0	76	0	25	0	0	0	40	0	24	6	171 L
LESSER SCAUP	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4
SCAUP SP.	0	0	0	44	0	326	55	0	0	0	0	0	425
COMMON GOLDENEYE	1	0	51	16	2	25	16	0	6	0	14	12	143 L
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
BUFFLEHEAD	1	55	507	48	53	240	110	9	252	17	254	70	1616
OLDSQUAW	0	0	9	0	2	87	22	0	0	0	32	55	207
HARLEQUIN DUCK	0	0	8	0	6	34	15	0	0	0	2	20	85
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER	0	0	46	0	1	3	44	0	1	0	2	30	127 L
SURF SCOTER	0	0	22	0	11	73	72	0	271	0	39	60	548
HOODED MERGANSER	0	12	37	44	23	9	18	11	29	2	2	5	192
COMMON MERGANSER	9	13	0	12	2	0	0	0	32	0	33	0	101
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER	0	1	15	2	21	19	17	0	1	0	9	9	94 L=
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	2	0	0	1	0	0	4	1	2	3	0	1	14

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
COOPER'S HAWK	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	6
RED-TAILED HAWK	6	4	1	1	0	0	2	2	3	7	6	0	32H
GOLDEN EAGLE	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3H=
BALD EAGLE	6	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	4	2	3	24H
MARSH HAWK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
PEREGRINE FALCON	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
MERLIN	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	4H
AMERICAN KESTREL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
BLUE GROUSE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
CALIFORNIA QUAIL	5	1	0	17	9	44	48	13	26	25	86	0	274
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	4	1	2	1	2	0	8	9	9	12	2	0	50
SANDHILL CRANE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1F
VIRGINIA RAIL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
AMERICAN COOT	1	1	467	0	3	13	12	31	101	10	10	5	654
BLACK OYSTERCATCHER	0	0	0	0	4	12	0	0	0	0	0	4	20
KILLDEER	0	0	23	2	1	4	0	6	0	1	0	0	37L
BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	10
SURFBIRD	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
BLACK TURNSTONE	0	0	1	0	12	26	5	0	0	0	0	10	54
COMMON SNIPE	1	1	0	0	0	6	2	8	5	2	1	0	26
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	0	0	14	0	1	2	0	41	0	1	1	1	61
ROCK SANDPIPER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1L
DUNLIN	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	18	0	48
SANDERLING	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULL	670	261	354	64	844	350	1261	126	830	177	145	1003	6085
HERRING GULL	0	4	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	8L=
THAYER'S GULL	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	4L
CALIFORNIA GULL	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	72	0	0	0	74H
MEW GULL	30	60	301	32	600	1335	145	206	540	6	72	13048	16375H
BONAPARTE'S GULL	0	0	0	0	92	26	0	0	0	0	0	1753	1871H
BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1F
COMMON MURRE	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	473	474
PIGEON GUILLEMOT	0	0	2	0	1	0	10	0	0	0	2	22	37
MARbled MURRELET	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	14	21
RHINOCEROS AUKLET	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
BAND-TAILED PIGEON	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
ROCK DOVE	0	0	2	0	165	16	89	309	21	7	85	1	695H
SCREECH OWL	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
BELTED KINGFISHER	0	1	3	0	4	1	4	0	2	0	1	0	16
COMMON FLICKER	15	8	26	1	4	9	59	13	12	9	10	2	168
PILEATED WOODPECKER	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
HAIRY WOODPECKER	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
DOWNY WOODPECKER	0	4	2	1	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	0	15
SKYLARK	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	36	0	39

	A	B	C	D
STELLER'S JAY	2	6	0	4
COMMON RAVEN	20	26	3	2
NORTHWESTERN CROW	504	88	137	47
CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE	35	55	41	7
BUSHTIT	0	0	0	0
RED-BREADED NUTHATCH	2	4	0	1
BROWN CREEPER	0	1	4	1
DIPPER	0	2	0	0
WINTER WREN	3	4	1	9
BEWICK'S WREN	6	3	2	2
LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN	0	0	0	0
AMERICAN ROBIN	38	17	69	16
VARIED THRUSH	0	0	0	2
HERMIT THRUSH	0	0	0	0
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	8	6	57	37
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	0	0	2	0
CEDAR WAXWING	0	0	0	2
NORTHERN SHRIKE	1	0	0	0
STARLING	70	47	310	25
HUTTON'S VIREO	0	0	0	0
HOUSE SPARROW	0	0	0	14
WESTERN MEADOWLARK	0	0	1	0
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	0	0	0	0
BREWER'S BLACKBIRD	0	0	0	0
EVENING GROSBEAK	0	0	0	7
PURPLE FINCH	1	2	0	0
HOUSE FINCH	1	8	36	0
PINE SISKIN	85	230	40	0
AMERICAN GOLDFICH	0	0	0	0
RED CROSSBILL	0	0	0	0
RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE	7	16	6	3
SAVANNAH SPARROW	0	0	0	0
DARK-EYED JUNCO	47	198	284	14
HARRIS' SPARROW	0	0	0	0
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW	2	0	0	1
GOLDEN-CROWNED SPARROW	13	15	2	0
WHITE-THROATED SPARROW	0	1	0	0
FOX SPARROW	1	5	0	4
SONG SPARROW	8	9	17	3
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	2286	1447	4003	580
TOTAL SPECIES	40	52	60	47

	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	TOTAL
	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	13
	3	0	9	1	10	18	2	0	94
	98	37	240	934	1364	15	410	7	3881
	3	22	67	21	44	8	71	0	374
	8	0	36	40	42	0	0	0	126
	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	9
	1	3	7	0	1	1	1	0	20
	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	1	3	35	3	3	2	1	0	65
	2	3	15	8	14	5	12	0	72
	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
	35	130	493	58	235	42	231	23	1387L
	0	0	10	1	0	4	1	0	18
	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	28	24	154	20	127	21	46	0	528H
	0	0	2	6	3	0	1	0	14L
	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	6
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	84	107	1074	599	143	493	360	20	3332
	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
	25	159	151	10	40	2	26	0	427
	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	6L
	0	2	0	236	52	26	0	0	316
	2	2	72	64	5	19	331	0	495
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	2	3	32	12	28	5	0	0	85
	0	34	46	21	107	0	26	2	281
	3	0	783	75	70	206	0	0	1492
	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	6
	4	5	33	12	20	4	6	0	116
	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	39	41	185	79	71	86	111	0	1155
	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
	0	0	4	6	0	1	41	0	55H
	4	8	35	22	2	6	10	0	117
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	4	9	20	20	6	3	6	0	78
	3	5	58	15	5	8	16	1	148
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	2799	3579	6475	5624	6081	2506	9570	17176	62126
TOTAL SPECIES	69	56	68	56	58	50	73	48	123

CHRISTMAS COUNT '74 DUNCAN STYLE

There may be some significance to the fact that while Victoria's gull population was up on this year's Christmas Bird Count, Duncan's was down. According to John Comer, compiler of the Duncan Count, bird numbers were down from previous years with the drop most noticeable in gulls.

Otherwise the Cowichan Valley birders enjoyed an excellent count carried out on a fine day (Dec. 14) under almost ideal conditions with nearly 21,000 birds being entered into the record.

Seven parties, totalling 14 people, registered among the 107 species seen a Redhead, 6 Trumpeter Swans, 1 Whistling Swan, 7 European Wigeon, an Anna's Hummingbird, 2 Turtle Doves and a Partridge in a pear tree.

John also reported that, except for wigeon, duck numbers were down and that 2 Golden Eagles were seen in the area during the Count Period but not on the Count day.

PENDER ISLANDS CHRISTMAS COUNT

Betty and Allan Brooks, with help from 9 other enthusiasts, recorded more than 4500 birds of 65 species on their December 28 Islands count. They too experienced fine weather with bright sun and mild temperatures in the morning and a little cloud later in the day.

The numbers of Western Grebes, Brandt's Cormorants, and scoters were down and, for the first time since the Islands counts were started, no scaups of any species were seen.

Close scrutiny of the gulls on the rocky islets off Port Washington and Hope Bay revealed that they were largely Thayer's.

Also seen were 18 Bald Eagles - 15 adults and 3 immatures. The total accumulated number of species seen on the Islands on Christmas Bird Counts since 1970, is 94.

Betty and Allan are sure that better coverage of their area could be obtained if the help of birders on such islands as Saturna and Mayne could be enlisted for future counts.

* * * * *



BIRD REPORTS

by Jack Williams

Bird of the Month

Swamp Sparrow (1) Dec. 22 Gillie Rd.
Jeremy Tatum

Also seen by the Goodwills and Ron Satterfield

The Rest

Redhead (a pair)	Dec. 1	Sooke River Jean Piuze
Barrow's Goldeneye (1)	Dec. 4	Island View Ron Satterfield
" " (3)	Dec. 26	Bazan Bay Jack Williams
Black Scoter (2m & 7f)	Dec. 7	Whiffen Spit Ron Satterfield
" " (1 m)	Dec. 15	Island View Jack Williams
" " (2)	Dec. 26	Roberts Point The Goodwills
Ruddy Duck (2)	Dec. 26	Bazan Bay The Goodwills
Turkey Vulture (1)	Dec. 22	Malahat Alan Peterson
Goshawk (1)	Dec. 14	Otter Point Ralph Fryer
Golden Eagle (1 ad.)	Dec. 4	Martindale Ron Satterfield

Peregrine Falcon (1)	Dec. 14	Cowichan Bay Vic Goodwill & Ron Satterfield
American Kestrel (1)	Dec. 1	North Saanich Jack Williams
" " (1)	Dec. 4	Martindale Ron Satterfield
" " (1)	Dec. 22 Vera Walker
Long-billed Dowitcher (2)	Dec. 9	Cowichan Bay Vic Goodwill & Ron Satterfield
Glaucous Gull (1) (2nd year plmg.)	Dec. 7	Billings Spit Ron Satterfield
Western Gull (1)	Dec. 2	Dallas Rd. pond Peggy Goodwill
Barn Owl (1)	Dec. 3	Over View St. Ralph Fryer
Great Horned Owl (1)	Dec. 18	Christmas Hill The Goodwills
Short-eared Owl (1)	Dec. 14	Cowichan Bay Ron Satterfield & Vic Goodwill
Northern Shrike (1)	Dec. 2	Crestview Rd. Florence Galbraith
" " (1)	Dec. 4	Island View Ron Satterfield
Rusty Blackbird (1)	Dec. 23	Cowichan Bay Vic Goodwill
American Goldfinch (30)	Dec. 22	Beacon Hill Ron Satterfield
White-throated Sparrow (1)	Dec. 28	Cordova Bay Mrs. Belford
Lincoln's Sparrow (1)	Dec. 23	Cowichan Ponds Vic Goodwill

A short report this month. Most of the work has gone into the Christmas count, besides not many birders were out due to the wet weather and other seasonal activities.

Wayne Campbell reported a Cattle Egret in the Cowichan District which seems to have died from starvation. Wayne also reported Fox Sparrows at

his feeder which were the lighter colour and more reddish shade of the eastern Fox Sparrow; the writer also saw a bird of this colouration on Lochside Drive near Sayward.

Northern Shrikes seem a lot scarcer this winter, only 2 reported this month, but quite a few hawks seem to be around. In addition to those listed above, Florence Galbraith has seen a Merlin near her home several times in the last month and Ron Satterfield spotted one at Thetis Lake on Dec. 26.

Dr. Harry Carter has been finding lots of White-winged Scoters and Black Oystercatchers from his boat, mainly on the rocks around Chatham I., and Mr. C. Parslow discovered 10 Black Oystercatchers on Whiffen Spit on Dec. 22.

Your compiler hasn't had much luck this month; a hybrid wigeon at Bazan Bay on Dec. 26 was interesting as were the 2 Skylarks at Tulista Park in Sidney on the same day, the first I had seen at that spot.

Let's make 1975 our best birding year yet. The birds are there, all you have to do is find and report them. (656-1484).

* * * * *

AUDUBON FILMS

Friday February 28 and Saturday March 1 will see the last of this year's Audubon Film series and it looks like a grand finale. Take advantage of this opportunity to 'discover' or 'rediscover' the incredible wildlife of Florida through Roy Coy's film Wandering Through Florida.

8:00 p.m. Friday

2:30 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday

Newcombe Auditorium

KIDS COUNTRY

Here's a little word game to test your skill and knowledge. Unscramble these words (they're the names of animals) and when you've got them all, try to guess whether each is a day (diurnal) animal or a night (nocturnal) animal.

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| 1. ACROON | 2. ABRE |
| 3. VERBEA | 4. LAMDALR |
| 5. KUNKS | 6. URESLQIR |
| 7. TAB | 8. KWAH |
| 9. LOW | 10. TIRBAB |

H E H K I D S !

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

- A GAME TO PLAY?

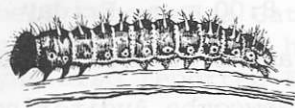
- A PICTURE TO DRAW?

WHY NOT PUT IT HERE?

WE'VE GOT THE SPACE - HOW ABOUT IT?

RIDDLE!

Bird: Why are you going up that tree?
 Caterpillar: To get some leaves to eat.
 Bird: In the middle of February?
 Caterpillar: Well, by the time I get up there it'll be spring.



ACROSS THIS LAND with Chris Walsh (part 4)

After a short stay in Jasper, Chris resumes his journey east. We join him again as he leaves Jasper.

We hit the road at 4 a.m. and within half a mile had to stop to allow a great bull elk to cross the road in full glory. A few minutes later we were stopped again, this time by a cow elk crossing.

There weren't many birds but we did see an Oregon Junco, a Raven, 3 Mallards and a Magpie. And, of course, there was the beautiful Jasper scenery.

On our way to Edmonton we noticed a herd of elk in the woods, six altogether, three of them females. We checked in at the Holiday Inn in Edmonton and that afternoon visited the Alberta Game Farm.

I guess we saw every kind of animal that lives. There was an elephant named Sally and a lynx named Cookie. We saw Snowy Owls, Great Grey Owls, flamingos, trumpeters and whistlers, and many others. There were wolverines, lots of felines -- lions, tigers, bobcats, leopards --- porcupines, mountain animals, tapirs, giraffes, camels, gorillas, rhinos and hippos.



I wandered for hours in amazement.

The next day we set out for Brandon, Manitoba. It was hot and windy crossing the prairies and the scenery wasn't spectacular but I did manage to see a Bobwhite and considered myself lucky in seeing a Bittern. We also saw a muskrat sitting on top of its house.

* * * * *

ADULT PROGRAM

Sat. Feb. 1 Ornithology, Sea Birds. Boat trip, courtesy Dr. H. Carter. Leave Oak Bay Marina 9:00 a.m.; return about 2:00 pm. Advance registration required. Contact Jack Williams (656-1484). Warm clothing and strong stomachs advisable. Leader: Wayne Campbell (477-4221)

Sat. Feb. 15 Repeat of above.

Wed. Feb. 19 General Meeting. 8:00 pm, St. John's Ambulance Auditorium, 941 Pandora. Speakers: Jenny Singleton, Jim Bennett, Bruce Fredericks
Topic: A Park Naturalist's Life Can Be Fun?

Sat. Feb. 22 Botany. Mosses, lichens, woody phanerophytes. Thetis Lake. Morning only. Meet Mayfair Lanes 9:30 am. Leader: Stephen Mitchell.

JUNIOR PROGRAM

Sat. Feb. 8 Margaret's Bay. Drivers - Forbes Whitney

Sat. Feb. 22 John Dean Park. Drivers - Graham Callow

Both outings at 1:30 pm from Mayfair Lanes parking lot, Roderick & Oak. If drivers not available contact Gail Mitchell as soon as possible.

INTERMEDIATE PROGRAM

Sat. Feb. 15 Slide Show: Victoria Birds by Jennifer Fisher (592-0024) at 2224 Hampshire Terrace, Victoria; 7:30 pm.

* * * * *

COORDINATORS

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M.C.N.F.
Vera - Alberto