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VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1747, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y1

All correspondence, including membership applications and renewals, should be sent to this address.

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Rare Bird Alert
478-8534

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THE FLYING SQUIRREL

by A.R. Davidson

One day last June, a tree fell in the Shuswap Lake Provincial Park and a nest with three baby Flying Squirrels was brought to the ground. The parents disappeared and the babies were taken to the Nature House, where our friend and fellow-member, Cy Morehen, was in charge. He took the little, naked animals to his camper, improvised a cage, found they could eat anything, being omnivorous, and was successful in raising all three. One was left at the campsite when the season was over and Cy returned to Victoria in his camper, and came to see us with the squirrels in his wool sweater pocket, quite comfortable and perfectly tame.

Now being four months old, they were fully grown and really most attractive little animals with soft thick fur and large black eyes. They have a loosely fitting fur-lined skin extended in a broad fold between the forelegs and the hind right to the ankle, and can fly or plane among the trees for considerable distances. They are strictly nocturnal and are found over most parts of the mainland of B.C. but not on the islands. We have never seen them before in all our travels on the Lower Mainland.

The next day we took them to Bertha Gow, who is an artist in photography, and she was delighted to have the opportunity of taking their pictures, and set up a small tree trunk in her garden on which the two squirrels were placed, then took pictures in black-and-white and colour as they climbed round the tree, one of which is reproduced on our front cover, thanks to Bertha.

COVER

TWO FLYING SQUIRRELS

By Bertha McHaffie-Gow

WHIDBEY ISLAND*By Charles A. Trotter*

Take the ingredients of good friends, an interesting hobby, beautiful scenery, and near-perfect weather; combine them for a period of three days and you have as a result a very pleasant time. Thus it was when seventeen people left Victoria and took the Anacortes Ferry from Sidney at 12:30 on Saturday, 6 October.

The San Juan Islands are always beautiful, but with the Fall sun beaming down on blue waters and tree-clad shores, they were super. From the ship the binoculars picked up the usual complement of sea birds with, perhaps, the most interesting, 3 Parasitic Jaegers.

From Anacortes we drove south, stopping at Deception Pass to view the spectacular gorge and the bridge over it. We turned to the right into the State Park to bird between Cranberry Lake and the sea. Many Western and a few grebes were in evidence but the only unusual sight was a flock of about sixty Heermann's Gulls.

Those birders using motels moved on to Oak Harbour while the campers stayed. Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. we rendezvoused at the park and birded for an hour before moving on to Dugualla Bay on the west side of Whidbey. Fog covered everything for a while but soon the sun broke through, providing near-perfect lighting conditions. Ruddy Ducks were prominent in large numbers as were also Pintails, and scores of Western Sandpipers were all along the beach. One keen-eyed member spied an unusually large Birds Nest Fungus hidden in the grass, while botanists found time to scan the shore vegetation occasionally.

After lunch at the roadside, we drove on to Kennedy Marsh and spotted there what appeared to be both Greater and many Lesser Yellowlegs as well as a Black Turnstone. Then, beside the ferry terminal in Keystone, we found a Semi-palmated Plover and a handful of Pectoral Sandpipers. The ferry trip across to the historic city of Port Townsend was somewhat delayed, but who cared when the weather was superb and the company pleasant?

After our overnight stop in Port Townsend, we awoke to heavy fog which failed to dissipate until we got as far west as Sequim Bay. There with the Steller's Jay calling in the background, we took time to sort out the seabirds on the mud flats in front of us. Here was the usual parade but with added features of Green-winged Teal and unusually large numbers of Ring-billed Gulls. It was at this point that someone remarked on the large population of Great Blue Herons which we had seen at every one of our stops.

After the usual rush to catch the ferry at Port Angeles, we had a most pleasant crossing under sunny skies, with perfectly calm water. With temperatures so high, we were out on deck birding all the way. Heermann's Gulls dominated the scene as we left harbour and many Alcids all the way over, while a pod of Killer Whales added to the show.

Four of the party stayed a second night on Whidbey, which gave time to wander along sideroads and find small birds in the hedge-rows, busily eating berries. A walk along Ala Spit in the evening light added 4 Common Terns and an Eared Grebe to our list, but we looked in vain for the Great Grey Owl that had been reported seen in the area. This group returned by Anacortes and got a better view of the islands in sunshine than on the foggy outward journey. A herd of goats grazing on Spieden Island was an unusual sight and 4 Pigeon Guillemots flying past brought the weekend total to 71 species of birds seen.

* * * * *

HUNTER HOT LINE

Enforcement officers from Fisheries and Environment Canada, working in conjunction with the Fish and Wildlife Branch, have set up an office where persons can report violations of fish or game laws. The office can be reached by dialing the operator and asking for Zenith 2235.

* * * * *

VANCOUVER BIRD ALERT number has been changed; Doug Kragh has taken over and new number is 734-4554.

URBAN FORESTS FIELD TRIP

By Margery Ketcham

On Saturday, October 13, 21 of our enthusiastic members and 3 visitors were met at 9:00 a.m. at Mayfair Lanes by Dr. Robert McMinn, well-known forest ecologist, who was to be our leader for the day. Forming car-pools we drove to Dr. McMinn's lovely mountain home in the Highland forests on Millstream Lake Road.

On arrival, we were greeted by Dr. McMinn's charming wife Nancy, who invited us all in for hot tea/coffee and a delicious snack. We sat around a warm crackling fire-place in the dining and living-room, which had large picture windows overlooking Lake Mitchell - an artist's paradise.

We had to wait for the fog to lift before starting our lecture and hike up the mountain trail, so, in the comfort of his home, our leader gave us a most informative talk on the idea of a Capital City Forest, of which the area of the Highland District would be a major part. Dr. McMinn stressed the economic benefits of a green belt, for Victoria's tourist industry as well as for recreational opportunities for local residents. He felt private wooded areas could and should be enjoyed by more than just "Sunday Drivers", who find their only access to such areas on big asphalt roads.

Of the 15,000 forested acres in the Highlands, 3,000 acres are reserved only for future urban use. He further discussed the pros and cons of both large and small acreage minimums, large minimums making for better green belts or trails, and smaller areas set up where there is financial hardship to owners. He told of the 12 beautiful privately owned lakes in the area where trespassing is prohibited. He felt that before the area is split up and sold into smaller lots by owners and developers, that a City Greenbelt can be set aside and developed, using youth employment for cutting and preparing the trails at a minimum cost to the City and Capital Regional District.

Dr. McMinn felt that the 45-acre limit of property development should be re-instated until planning is completed. He told of the many well-known city forests used in Europe, California, etc., in areas such as Victoria.

A 1978 study pointed out that outdoor recreation is entirely dependent on the availability of forest area, that are fast diminishing in Victoria and Vancouver.

As the fog lifted, we left the cosiness of a good fire and good discussion, and took to the open trail (privately owned and marked for guests) to climb to the top of beautiful Lone Tree Mountain, 900 feet above sea level. It was an exciting 1-1/2 hour climb. When we all reached the top, we sat on bare protruding lava rock and enjoyed the majestic views, partly cloud - and fog - shrouded in colourful Fall beauty.

While resting, Dr. McMinn told of the Indians' use of the uplands many years ago. How they would periodically set fire to the area to clear it of underbrush for easier and better deer hunting. Thus it is that the top of the mountain has been slow to regenerate trees, and so we have the high meadows, also the shallow soil. Many years of sheep-grazing hindered regrowth of trees, along with some man-made fires.

Dr. McMinn could not recall any fires caused by lightning. He said the area is provided with fire protection by the Forest Service, which uses water bombers.

The high meadows are a haven for spring flora such as Shooting Star, Camas, Easter Lily, and Wood Violets, these being the most common. Oregon Grape, Red Honey-suckle, Wild Rose, blanket the forest floor. Translucent pads of wet spiders' webs and dew seemed like fairy breath along the trail. Fallen logs were covered with velvety mosses and lichens. The Sword Ferns were profusely growing as though carefully set out by an experienced landscape artist.

We also saw Turkey Vultures, Raven, Robins, Flicker, Downy Woodpecker and more. The Pacific N/W Slug greeted us often on our way along the lower forest floors. Old Man's Beard hung heavily from the trees.

On the upper forest slopes, the Arbutus trees were large and colourful because the area was void of the thick stands of cedar and fir below, thus they had plentiful sun which they need. There were few maples, but many oaks.

Our leader, Dr. Robert McMinn, is a graduate of the University of B.C. and Washington State University. He has been for 26 years in forestry research at the Pacific Forest Research Centre for the Government of Canada, in Victoria. He is a well-known authority on regeneration research, recognized for his research on the environmental factors related to forest diseases.

All agreed it was super field trip, with a super group and super leader; and our thanks go to both Dr. and Mrs. McMinn.

MARINE FOSSILS AT SOOKE

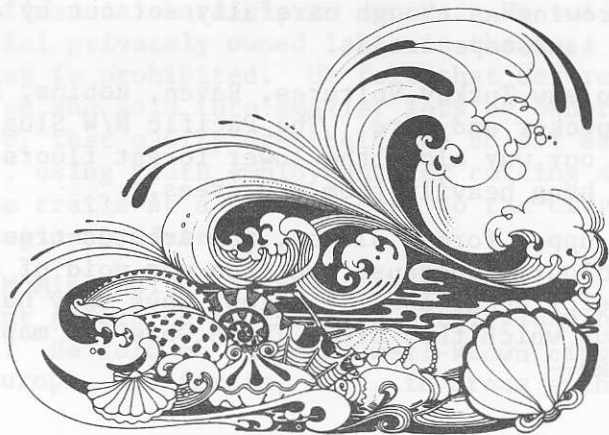
By Jean McInnis

The sandstone cliffs at Muir Creek have harboured welks, clams, moonsnails, barnacles and mussels for 30,000,000 years. These shells and pieces of fossilized or carbonized wood are what 20 members of our group saw on our fossil trip to Muir Creek, with Rick Kool of the Provincial Museum as leader, on November 17th.

There are an amazing lot of shells to be seen where the sandstone has fallen in large boulders over the centuries.

This is a new interest for the Victoria Natural History Society. I hope we can go to other areas to see different types of fossils, later on.

Many thanks to Rick Kool for widening our interest and knowledge of this fascinating subject. I wonder what else is in those sandstone cliffs?



EDITORIAL

Several Changes to Note:

There is a NEW PHONE NUMBER for the RARE BIRD ALERT TAPE, not 383-0211 but 478-8534, and except for EMERGENCY notices, only bird news will be taped.

Peggy and Vic Goodwill have gone to live in Metchosin but have agreed to continue with the Alert. Their personal number, for receiving rare bird news, will be no longer 386-2780, but 478-9715.

The ANNUAL DINNER is to be on 13th MAY and, instead, a General Meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of February (12th) at which the Scholarship and Bursary winners will be introduced. See Program.

At the March meeting, Kaye and Dennis Suttill will show slides taken at Malheur, which will be of special interest to those who are going there on a trip in April, 1980, organized by Charlie Trotter (477-4365).

The Audubon Film in February is about Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park. Ty and Julie Hotchkiss have been drawn back repeatedly to this magnificent park. Twenty years ago, they made their first Audubon Wildlife Film there, and now they have recorded the changes that have taken place, the abundant wildlife still there, and the beauty of the alpine scenery. Not to be missed.

Remember, plenty of free parking space may be had across the road from the Provincial Museum Parking Lot, one house up from Government Street, through a lane.

Wilford Medd has replaced Gordon Alston-Stuart as our representative on the Mt. Douglas Trails Committee, and Margaret Wainwright is taking Greta Hutchings place on the Board of the Friends of the Museum while Greta is in South Africa.

We would like to thank the members who came forward as volunteers. It has eased the burden of sending the "Naturalist" to our enlarged membership.

So we come to the present Society. An organization meeting was held on February 23, 1944, after 65 people had expressed their wish to join; the first meeting being held on March 14, 1944, attended by 35 members. The first president was the Rev. Robert Connell, the vice-president being Dr. Clifford Carl, and the first editor, Mr. A.R. Meugans. The object of the Society was to encourage nature study, publish the results, and issue a monthly magazine.

The growth of the Society was slow. At the end of the fifth year, the membership was 99, and at the end of 10 years was 100. In May, 1963, it had increased to 180 Single, 4 Family and 49 Junior, a total of 275. And to bring the figures up to date, on August 30, 1979, the membership was 184 Single, 103 Family, and 1 Junior, or 287 in all. These numbers are for paid-up PERSONAL membership only, and do not include subscriptions from other societies, libraries, universities, etc. Surely we can do better than that, especially when one considers the influx of people to this area during the previous 25 years! Thousands of retired couples filling up the scores of new apartments and building hundreds of houses. One would have thought that many more people would have taken advantage of belonging to such a society as ours, with the year-round privileges of joining the field trips, the free lectures and films, and the credit of joining a society whose aims are the preservation of areas where our local flora and fauna can be secure and undisturbed.

It was around 1964 that we were registered under the Societies Act as a non-profit, natural history society operating in British Columbia.

An important factor in the growth of our Society has been the Audubon lectures. The National Audubon Society commenced these lectures in Victoria the year our Society was formed, and in 1947 they proposed that we sponsor them, which was done, and a wise decision this proved to be. These lectures still continue, and have represented a steady source of income averaging nearly \$500 per annum from 1947 to the present day.

In this connection, it is good to remember that two of the lecturers were Victorians. Dr. Clifford Carl, the Director of the Provincial Museum, and Mr. C.P. Lyons,

then a member of the Provincial Parks Branch. To give a list of the lectures they gave to the Society would fill pages, and their standard was always high; most of the films shown to us were afterwards presented to audiences across the United States and Canada. Chess Lyons has been a good friend to the Society since its inception. I remember one instance, when our funds were low, he put on a lecture for our benefit which filled the auditorium, and turned the proceeds over to the Society - about \$500, putting us on our feet again.

Another shining light in the Society's history was the advent of Freeman King (Skipper) in 1957. He transformed the Junior Branch from a small apathetic group whose numbers had declined to six, to an enthusiastic 80 girls and boys in a few years. He had befriended Mr. Thomas Francis, who owned a little over a quarter section of original forest on Munn Road, and who wanted someone to assist him in having his land kept intact in perpetuity, and before Tom Francis died, Skipper accomplished this, the area being made into a Provincial Class "C" Park, which ensured it would never be changed. A house was built for the caretaker, Mr. Percy Dumbleton, then a Nature House, a Laboratory and Workshop, and finally a small auditorium. The Juniors, supervised by Skipper, made many good trails throughout the Park which made it a mecca for nature lovers.

Freeman King died in 1975, at 85 years of age, mourned by everyone who knew him. As Yorke Edwards wrote in the "Naturalist":

"He was a spellbinder, in green places, or by a campfire, to people of all ages, but he liked children best, and they loved him as only children can love a grownup who has not outgrown the wonder, the enthusiasm, the sense of adventure that is part of childhood."

As mentioned, the constitution called for a monthly magazine except for June, July and August, and publication never failed all the years, in spite of the fact that the bank balance was occasionally very low. Up to the time of his death, Dr. Carl was always associate editor, and the quality of the magazine's contents were kept high at all times. Some universities requested

complete copies, which as Librarian I was able to do. We exchange natural history magazines with our contemporaries in England, Scotland and many others throughout Canada and the United States. There is no question but that a good magazine is our best asset, and makes us widely known and respected.

In the early days, there were only three natural history societies in B.C., and as the years went by, other societies were formed, and by 1978 these had increased to 35.

Early in 1958, the then president, Mrs. Gladys Soulsby, proposed the formation of a B.C. Naturalists' Federation, and on July 14th of that year, a meeting was held in Vancouver to discuss the matter. This idea became reality on May 11, 1963, when the B.C. Nature Council was created with seven societies co-operating. Bulletins were issued regularly. The movement grew, and more societies were formed. In 1969, the name was changed to the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, and from then on, a printed bulletin was issued quarterly under the vigorous editorship of Elton A. Anderson, who, for many years worked tirelessly to promote interest in natural history and conservation in B.C. Mr. Anderson died on July 9, 1975. To many of us, the name Elton Anderson is synonymous with the creation and development of many natural history clubs in the Province.

In the year 1973, an event took place in our history which made many changes. We came into money. The surface of our peaceful and harmonious Society was ruffled. Many and different were the ideas of how this money could be used. In May of that year, a Mr. Alfred Nehring died and left a considerable portion of his estate to our Society without any restrictions as to its use. This estate consisted mainly of a house and five acres of land on the Old West Road. Mr. Nehring had apparently joined the Society but was known only to one of our members, Rob McKenzie-Grieve, who had worked with him for some years, and taken him to some of our meetings, which must have impressed him.

This property was too far out in the country to be of service for meetings, so eventually it was sold, the net proceeds accruing to the Society as of April, 1979 being nearly \$70,000. Fortunately, we had on our Board

two retired managers, who saw to it this money was securely invested, and it was proposed that this capital be kept intact at the present time and the interest used to benefit the Society and its publications and educational programmes.

Long may societies such as ours continue in their efforts to protect the natural life and its habitat.

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

From Peggy Goodwill

<u>NO.</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AREA SEEN</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>
<u>OCT.</u>				
1	Redhead	5	Esquimalt Lagoon	R. Satterfield
1	Buff-br. Sandpiper	7	Whiffen Spit	L.G. Roberts
1	Snow Goose	7	Ft. of Tudor Rd.	Kaye Suttill
1	Am. Golden Plover	8	Esquimalt Lagoon	R. Satterfield
1	ad. Harris' Sparrow	9	3338 Wilkinson	P. Becker
1	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	13	Martindale Rd.	R. Satterfield
1	House Wren	13	Quick's Bottom	R. Satterfield
7	Bobolinks	16	Island View Rd.	R. Satterfield
1	m. Rufous Hummingbird	17	5133 Wm. Head Rd.	Beryl Holt
pr.	Yellow-headed Blackbirds	18	Island View Rd.	Huber Moore
1	Clarke's Nutcracker	18	Sidney Island	Glen Smith
<u>NOV.</u>				
1	Sandhill Crane	1	Sayward Road	Mary Winstone
1	Skua	3	Clover Point	Harold Hosford
1	Sooty Shearwater	7	nr. Race Rocks	Mike Shepard
1	Short-tailed "	7	nr. Race Rocks	Mike Shepard
2	Cassin's Auklets	7	nr. Race Rocks	Mike Shepard
1	imm. Harris' Sparrow	8	234 Glenairlie	P. Atkinson
1	Palm Warbler	24	166 Robertson St.	R. Satterfield
25	Red Phalaropes	24	Clover Point	R. Satterfield
1	Gyr Falcon	24	Martindale Rd.	Dave Stirling

NOTE: NEW TELEPHONE NUMBERS:

Instead of 383-0211 dial 478-8534.

Instead of 386-2780 dial 478-9715.

OGDEN POINT BREAKWATER

By Betty Parlow

The field trips offered to members of our Society for September/October '79 have run the full gamut from scanning the starry skies at the Observatory, to examining the next layer of our environment on birding trips, and then "terrafirma" botanizing at Island View Beach, and finally, marine and sub-marine exploration at Ogden Point Breakwater.

The cover photograph of the September/October issue of the "Naturalist" (Blood Sea Star captured by Bertha McHaffie-Gow) proved to be a splendid introduction to the Aquatic Zoology Field Trip made possible with the fine co-operation of the divers of the Provincial Museum Staff.

The morning of Sunday, October 21, dawned with a brisk breeze blowing and a threat of dark clouds and rain, with a sudden end to the above-normal temperatures and Indian Summer which we had been enjoying for the past few weeks. However, a good number of stalwart natural history "intrepids" appeared at Ogden Point Breakwater in suitable woollens and waterproofs and were rewarded with a wonderfully varied and colourful display of sea life as collected and described by the divers.

Among the spectacular treasures studied were the starfish, including the huge Sunflower Star, the delicate Brittle Star, and sunstars. Also two Giant Sea Urchins - and contrasting Nudibranches - and a near-transparent shrimp with bright narrow colourful rings. The crab family was represented by the brilliant orange Hermit Crab and the Decorator and Hairy Hermit Crabs.

Other specimens were too numerous to mention in detail, but keen observers enjoyed the huge Gumboot Chiton. (Chitons or sea cradles have been called "living fossils" as the structure of these molluscs has not changed in millions of years.) Also seen were Abalone, Sea Lemon, a large sponge, Keyhole Limpets, a Leafy Hornmouth, snails such as Blue Top, Opalescent Top and Hairy Triton.

In case you were unable to attend this really rewarding trip, perhaps you would like to sit in a comfortable armchair and search for these sea creatures in any of the following books:

- (1) Exploring the Sea Shore in B.C., Washington and Oregon. By Gloria Snively.
- (2) Living Shores of the Pacific Northwest. By Lynwood S. Smith.
- (3) Seashore Life of Puget Sound, the Strait of Georgia and the San Juan Archipelago. By Eugene N. Kozloff.
- (4) Guide to Marine Life of B.C. by G.C. Carl. (B.C. Provincial Museum Handbook No. 21)

and many other reasonably priced handbooks to be had at the Museum.

Our special thanks to the divers of the Provincial Museum Staff, who provided such a wonderful variety of specimens, with most helpful commentary generously supplied. Also a thank you to UVic Marine Biology student Anne Marie Koch who shared her enthusiasm and specialized knowledge with the group.

HISTORICAL NOTE

For those who may be interested in where they planted their feet, on the expedition - Ogden Point Breakwater was built in 1912-14 by the Department of Transport - Federal Government - to protect Victoria Harbour, and is part of the project extending to Fort Rodd Hill and on westward. At a cost of 14 million (1912 dollars!) these granite blocks, weighing 30 to 50 tons each, were quarried at Albert Head and transported to this site on barges. The breakwater is 1/2 a mile long with a base of crushed rock, pyramid-shaped, tapering to a concrete cap 10 feet wide (originally with street lamps and a narrow gauge rail line and was ideal for evening strolls). There are 7 tiers of blocks, 4 extending below water. The construction of this durable landmark reminds one of the engineering feats of the Egyptians building the pyramids.

Data courtesy J. Cosgrove

BIRDING AT WHIFFEN SPIT

By Mary Wainwright

On Saturday, 20 October, a group of 7 of us braved the cold, damp wind out at Whiffen Spit to look at the birds in the area at that time of year. Whiffen Spit provides an added protective barrier to the entrance to Sooke Harbour, thus providing the opportunity to look at the birds on the open waters, the sheltered harbour, and along the shore.

We were first attracted to a group of Gulls, primarily Bonaparte's in winter plumage, chattering and poking among the pebbles for "goodies" brought in by the waves. In the same area were the more sedate Glaucus-winged, Mew, and California Gulls. A group of 7 Killdeer kept just ahead of us and close to shore was a group of Harlequin ducks. Among the waves on the open seaside of the Spit were a few Horned Grebes and 5 Black Scoters, (no other species of scoter was seen), a Red-breasted Merganser, and 3 Common Loons. A great many Double-crested Cormorants were resting on exposed rocks and a few small groups flew over. A Great Blue Heron remained perched on a mass of floating kelp for the duration of our visit. Occasionally, the shiny head of a Harbour Seal would surface and watch with some amusement, I'm sure, as the group of us peered intently at a bird.

In the more sheltered harbour were American Wigeon and 39 Western Grebe. A Pigeon Guillemot and 3 Marbled Murrelets were seen at a distance. Across the bay was a very large mass of gulls which were too far away to identify specifically.

The Spit itself is narrow but has some trees and scrub on top. In this area was a flock of House Finches, about 5 Savannah Sparrows, a Song Sparrow, and perched on a snag, in full view, was a Northern Shrike. A Robin, the occasional Northwestern Crow and a flock of Starlings were also seen. On the way back to the cars, a Belted Kingfisher and an unidentified Hawk flew over. Along the shore we flushed a Common Snipe.

On the way back to Victoria, at Sooke Bridge, we saw 3 Mute Swans, 2 Gadwall and a Belted Kingfisher. At Esquimalt Lagoon were Pied-billed, Red-necked, Horned and

Western Grebes, Pintail and a Green-winged Teal, with a European among the American Wigeon. To end the day on a perfect note, a skein of some 200 chattering Canada Geese flew over on their journey south.

"ONLY ONE PAIR OF HANDS"

This was the title of the photograph that Bertha McHaffie-Gow put in for the competition organised by Eatons and sponsored by Pentax Company and Japanese Airtime.

With competitors from B.C., Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta taking part, we congratulate Bertha in gaining First Prize.

In the past 3 years, Bertha has provided most of the photographs published on the front page of The Victoria Naturalist as her contribution towards the V.N.H.S., for which the editor has been most grateful, and at which we have all enjoyed looking. We wish her a very enjoyable trip. Her prize? Yes, a trip to Japan for two.

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS FOR 1978-79

Victoria Natural History Society Scholarship	\$300.00
Annemarie Koch, Port Hardy, B.C.	
Freeman F. King Scholarship	\$450.00
David Frank Fraser, Ganges, B.C.	
Samuel Simcoe Bursaries	each \$400.00
Jacqueline Margaret Creese, Beaverdell, B.C.	
Susan Jo Lofts, Victoria, B.C.	

These four students will receive memberships for one year in our Society and will be invited to attend our February Meeting to be introduced to our members.

The "Victoria Trees" Trip having been cancelled on November 25th, several members decided to have a Tree Trip of their own, and nine met at the Animal Pens in Beacon Hill Park, books at the ready.

Listed were 37 specimens (hopefully, correctly identified) mainly round Goodacre and Fountain Lakes. Now the 9 are looking forward to next year's Tree Trip to check their identification.

BIRDING IN SAANICH*By Doreen Horne*

On Saturday, 10 November, a most enjoyable trip was attended by approximately 48 bird-watchers - our leader, Mike Shepard, was most informative and very patient. In all, our total count was 75 species.

Our first stop was Swan Lake, where several Wood Duck swam out from the bank to show off their beauty. A Barrow's Goldeneye, and Ruddy Duck sported about, plus several Ring-necked Ducks, Mew Gulls, Coots and Double-crested Cormorants. The two Mute Swans are still in residence, and a Great Blue Heron in its perfect still-ness was reflected in the autumn colouring in the Lake. A Towhee, Marsh and Winter Wrens were seen in the bushes and a Common Snipe flew past. An immature Northern Shrike was clearly seen.

Our next stop was McMorran's at Cordova Bay, where another Heron, Heermann's Gulls, Red-necked and Horned Grebes, White-winged and Surf Scoters, Oldsquaw and Greater Scaup were listed. Then we stopped at North Sayward on Lochside Drive to look for the Sandhill Crane but had no luck, though were rewarded by sighting an Evening Grosbeak and a Sharp-shinned Hawk.

On Martindale Road, we were thrilled to find a European Wigeon whose orange-red head really showed up among the Common Wigeon and Mallards, and among these, a pair of Pintail were spotted. On a tree sat a Bald Eagle. The scope picked up several Canada Geese which could not be seen even with binoculars.

At Island View Beach we saw several Harlequin ducks, Buffleheads, Common and Arctic and Red-throated Loons. A Common Flicker and a Cooper's Hawk were seen on a tree, and just as we were about to have lunch, an immature Merlin flew by.

Returning from Island View Beach, we walked along McHugh Road where we saw Black-bellied Plover, Dunlin, Pintails (same ones as already seen?) and Water Pipits. Rock Doves were feeding with a large flock of Red-winged and Brewers Blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbirds.

We continued to Roberts Bay where Pelagic, Cormorants, Eared, Red-necked, Horned and Pied-billed Grebes; Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, a Belted Kingfisher and Greater Yellowlegs added to our list.

Our last stop was McDonalds Campground where a Brown Creeper showed his ability to climb a tree; and 3 Varied Thrush were in the bushes.

Thank you, Mike, for a very pleasant day.

FUNGUS FORAY AND COOK-OUT, 1980*By Ruth and Archie Morrison*

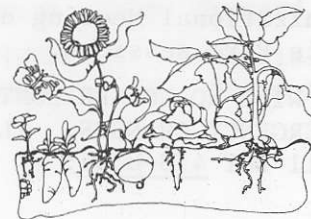
Russula xerampelina, "Shaggy Mane", "Fried Chicken", all are mushrooms, but which is edible? To answer the questions of the 25 people on the 27 October Fungus Foray was Dr. Al Funk. From his patient answers, it was evident that not only book-learning was necessary to identify the fungi that we found in the Goldstream camping ground, but also a keen sense of smell greatly assists the gatherer.

Dr. Funk and Ted Underhill had divided the Campground so that our group and an equally large number of persons from the YM-WM had separate territories. Not only our feathered friends are territorial.

The recent rains had made the fungi pop up, if not in great quantities, then in quite a surprising variety. Your novice scribes feel confident that Al had identified 27 genera for us, and with the species we found a total of 50 different fungi.

For the wary, Dr. Funk demonstrated that there are edible mushrooms. With his camp stove, a cast-iron frypan, and butter, he and Jessie Woollett prepared some of the specimens for the members to taste.

About noon the threatening rain began in earnest and terminated the Cook-out, but we had had a good morning. The Foray was successful, thanks to the expert and patient leadership of Dr. Funk, and the feeling of warm fellowship of the gatherers.



JUNIORS

For the young, and young at heart. EVERYBODY WELCOME.

Headquarters: Francis & Freeman King Parks' Nature House.

Co-ordinator: Johanna Baldwin (478-2290).

Membership Fee: Enthusiasm and interest.

Programme Objectives:

- to provide an opportunity for club members to explore and study nature.
- to share experiences and knowledge with each other and park visitors.
- to gain a greater appreciation and understanding of Nature.
- to provide opportunities for members to improve local park facilities and natural environments.
- and, to enjoy ourselves.

Purpose: To carry on Freeman King's work.

Motto: "Let it be, for others to see."

SUNDAYS: Witty's Lagoon "Community" Nature House, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Interesting and informative displays. Lots of "Freebies". A cozy fire. Refreshments. A horse riding ring. An open access road for the Handicapped. Nature Rambling. Exploring. Birding and Photographing (?). Pets welcomed ON LEASH.

Francis Park - Nature Films: 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

SATURDAYS: Francis Park - Meet at Nature House, 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For display work. Nature study. Films. Slide shows. Bird house building with Naturalist Cy Morehen, commencing January 12. Individual projects. And outdoor skills development.

SAT. FEB. 9 - MT. SEYMOUR FIELD TRIP: Snowshoeing with the Naturalists and two Ferry Trips! 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.

TUES. JAN. 5 - Organizational Meeting during regular Francis Park sessions.

THE RARE BIRD ALERT WILL NO LONGER CONTAIN PROGRAMME ITEMS EXCEPT FOR EMERGENCY CHANGES. PLEASE NOTE NEW NUMBER: NOT 383-0211 BUT 478-8534.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY PROGRAM, 1980

- TUES. JAN. 8 GENERAL MEETING. Newcombe Auditorium, 8:00 p.m. Illustrated Talk by Dave Rutledge on the Vancouver Island Marmot.
- SAT. JAN. 19 BIRD FIELD TRIP: Esquimalt Lagoon. Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m. Leader: Harold Hosford.
- TUES. JAN. 22 BIRDERS' NIGHT: 7:30 Boardroom, Provincial Museum. Mike Shepard. Bring some slides.
- THURS. JAN. 24 ENTOMOLOGY: 8:00 p.m., Provincial Museum. Room 112, Dr. Brian Ainscough.
- SAT. JAN. 26 BOTANY FIELD TRIP: Winter Identification. Leader: Chris Brayshaw.
- WED. JAN. 30 MICROSCOPIC MARINE LIFE: Dr. Alex Peden. Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.
- THURS. FEB. 7 MICROSCOPIC BOTANY: Field Identification of Wood. Provincial Museum, Room 112, 8:00 p.m. Mary Lou Florian.
- FRI. FEB. 8 AUDUBON FILM: Newcombe Auditorium, 8:00 pm.
- SAT. FEB. 9 "Return to the Tetons", Charles Hotchkiss.
- TUES. FEB. 12 GENERAL MEETING: Newcombe Auditorium. 8:00 p.m. "Tanker Bomb". Illustrated Talk on tanker traffic on the West Coast. Speaker: Dave Suzuki. (Social Break mid-film.)
- SUN. FEB. 17 BIRD FIELD TRIP: Martindale. Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m. Leader: Hank Van Der Pol. (479-3383).
- WED. FEB. 20 UNUSUAL FISH: Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m. Room 112. Dr. Alex Peden.
- TUES. FEB. 26 BIRDERS' NIGHT: 7:30 Boardroom, Provincial Museum. Mike Shepard. Bring some slides.
- THURS. FEB. 28 ENTOMOLOGY. Provincial Museum. Room 112. 8:00 p.m. Dr. Brian Ainscough.