



The VICTORIA NATURALIST



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PUBLISHED BY THE
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
VICTORIA, B.C.

ISSN 0049-612X

MAY - JUN. 1980

VOL. 36, NO. 6

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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

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**Rare Bird Alert
478-8534**

Published by

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THE WHITE ADMIRAL BUTTERFLY

By Bertha Gow

Recording on film the emerging of a butterfly is truly a thrill. This is not easy, as Nature has devised many evasive techniques to keep such a momentous event secret. Their larva blends with the habitat coloration, or appears like a bird dropping, making them hard to detect.

The chrysalis or pupa stage may look like another leaf on a twig, and varies in color from greens and beiges through to browns. Finally, the emerging of beautiful butterflies seem to happen in the dark hours, I expect, again for protection until the wings have expanded and dried ready for flight.

The larva of the butterfly on the cover was given to me before it cemented the tail to the twig, and shed its last larva coat, to hang in the pupa stage through the winter until the next season. Observed daily, when once there is a color change and the shell becomes transparent enough to see wing markings, one is aware it is preparing to emerge. This happens in seconds, the head end of the chrysalis splits and a butterfly simply walks out with wings crinkled and folded. It will now hang for an hour or more to let them expand and dry before attempting flight.

This is when the cover photograph was taken.

The markings of the antennae are clearly visible on the now empty, almost transparent, chrysalis. Beautiful as butterflies are in the outdoors, one realizes the elements cause some color change, as when newly emerged the vivid color and texture is striking.

I always return my creatures to their natural habitat, to begin again the life cycle that gave me joy in observing and recording.

COVER

WHITE ADMIRAL BUTTERFLY on CHRYSALIS

By Bertha McHaffie-Gow

BIRDING IN MARCH*by Charles Trotter*

Birders are a hardy lot. The quote from the Post Office motto could well apply to them - "Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night, stays these couriers (birders) from the completion of their appointed rounds".

Saturday, March 15, saw over 30 stalwarts, led by Vera Guernsey, brave unpredictable weather to travel to Whiffen Spit, Sooke, for an interesting outing. The storm first hit us as we drove through the snow-clad Sooke Hills, deluging us with wave after wave of sleet and snow for most of the morning.

Although small birds were conspicuous by their absence, the shore on both sides of the Spit yielded a good harvest of water birds. Most notable were Black Scoter, Pigeon Guillemot and a surprising number of Barrow's Goldeneye.

Our call at the mouth of the Sooke River on Kaltasin Road was cut short by another wave of sleet but a couple of Bald Eagle were seen.

We cut across through the snow-covered forest of Kangaroo Road to the parking lot at Witty's Lagoon, where we lunched and waited for others from town to join us. The weather continued to plague us, but with a little less snow and more rain beating from the south-west in persistent squalls. We slithered down the clayey trails on the south side of Witty's, noting Hooded and Red-breasted Mergansers, but the only waders in evidence were Yellowlegs. But for the ten or so people who persisted as far as the beach came the prize - la pièce de resistance - the icing on the cake - BLUEBIRDS!! - four of them - the males decked out in that vivid blue of Spring.

As we headed home to thaw out and dry out, we totted up the soggy list to find a total of 45 bird species.

Thank you, Vera, for a great day.

REV. DOUGLAS BROOKS SPARLING D.D.1894 - 1980

The Victoria Natural History Society lost one of its long-time and distinguished members when Doug Sparling died suddenly on March 20th.

Doug and his wife Reita came to Victoria in 1959 from Manitoba where both had been active members of the Manitoba Natural History Society. They were introduced to VNHS by an old friend, Professor Lowe, and they both soon became deeply involved in its activities.

Doug was elected to the Board of Directors in 1965, and served as Editor of the Victoria Naturalist 1965-67; President 1967-69; and Past President 1969-71.

Doug represented VNHS in the formation of the Friends of the Provincial Museum; served on its Board of Directors 1971-73; and was Chairman of its committee which raised a substantial sum of money to create a Memorial to Clifford Carl. He represented VNHS on the Parks Board of Thomas Francis and Freeman King Parks 1975-77. His advice and help were greatly appreciated on many nominating and other committees.

Both keen birders and botanists, Doug and Reita were regular attendants at Meetings and at field trips, frequently being called upon to act as leaders. Their friendly welcome was greatly appreciated by new members at many gatherings. At the "Tuesday Group" Doug will long be remembered as the man who so often urged the Group to action with his resounding "Toot-toot". He was an excellent photographer and delighted many gatherings with his slide shows of birds, flowers and fungi.

When we lose such an outstanding member we look back over his years of service and think of the impact he has had on the life and development of our Society. In his quiet and friendly way, Doug Sparling provided sound advice and guidance and played an important part in making us what we are today. Let us hope that we can continue to find similarly dedicated people to follow in Doug's footsteps.

A.D. Turnbull

A. DOUGLAS TURNBULL

Doug Turnbull first joined the Victoria Natural History Society as far back as 1950 when he was Minister of Health and Welfare in the Coalition Government. We hope that during those two years' residence in Victoria he was occasionally able to relax from the strains and pressures of political life and indulge in his favourite hobby of bird watching.

Doug's professional life was spent as metallurgical engineer with Cominco at Trail, B. C. Retiring to Victoria in 1966, Doug and Elsie promptly rejoined the Society, and still recollect being welcomed back at their first meeting by one of our beloved members, Helen Matheson.

For about a year, Doug and Elsie were allowed to enjoy the various activities of the Society without responsibilities. But such excellent executive potential could not be allowed to go to waste. In 1968 Doug was elected Program Chairman, and for the next three years was responsible for arranging a speaker at each of our General Meetings, and also for co-ordinating all Field Trips. In 1970 he was given the additional position of Vice-Chairman.

During these years, Doug was also extremely active in helping to organize the newly formed Friends of the Provincial Museum, now a large and flourishing organization. In 1975, he was elected President of the Society, and from that time on we can truthfully say he has immersed himself in its affairs.

Over the years we have been blessed with many fine Presidents; Doug maintained the high tradition, and during his two year term, conducted meetings with efficiency and brevity, and in a manner so that, afterwards, even the hard-of-hearing could remark they "hadn't missed a word". In 1978, our succeeding President was forced to resign through ill-health, and no-one could be found willing and able to take over. Although Doug could hardly have wanted to resume the arduous job of President, he nobly volunteered to serve for the 1978-79 season. He is still on the Board of Directors as Immediate Past President.

This should be sufficient involvement for any one member, but Doug has been active in many allied groups. Through his work with the Friends of the Museum, he is responsible for the excellent relationship now existing between the Museum and the Society. In 1975, Doug was elected Provincial Director for British Columbia in the Canadian Nature Federation, serving his two year term. He has also been very much part and parcel of our own Federation of B.C. Naturalists, attending meetings all over the Province as our representative. Nearer home we can cite the preservation of two of our favourite bird haunts, King's Pond at Ascot Road and Quick's Bottom on Markham Road, as being largely due to Doug's repeated presentations to Saanich Municipality.

Over the years, Doug has given us so much; leading Field Trips, revising Constitutions, dealing with the complications of the Nehring Estate, and in fact involving himself in all matters affecting the welfare of the Society.

We are proud to nominate Doug Turnbull for the highest honour the Society can bestow, namely, Honorary Life Membership.

Katherine Sherman

FORMAL NOTICE is given herewith that a recommendation has been received proposing A. Douglas Turnbull for Honorary Life Membership in the Society. Approval will be sought for this recommendation at the Annual General Meeting on May 29th, when election by secret ballot will take place.

Extract from Constitution:

"Recommendation for Honorary Life Membership shall be made by three members in writing to the President. The Society shall be notified of such recommendation at least one month before the Annual Meeting, at which it will be presented for approval. A secret ballot shall be taken and a simple majority shall be required for election to Honorary Life Membership."

* * * * *

THREATENED SPECIES AND HABITATS

(of B.C. and the Yukon)

By W. Winston Mair

It was my good fortune to take part in a symposium on the above topic the weekend of March 8-9 at Richmond, B.C. The symposium was sponsored by the F.B.C.N.; and was well organized, well run and well attended. Indeed, more people turned up the first day than could be accommodated.

The first four sessions covered 23 plant, animal, and habitat topics, yet came to a close only a half-hour behind schedule - a tribute to both organizers and speakers. The fifth session covered "Other Considerations", being about peripheral species, subspecies, the role of non-governmental organizations and the federal-provincial committee on threatened species. The sixth and final session just before noon on Sunday was a wrap-up by the five chairmen of the earlier sessions. This consisted largely of recommendations of the conference to governments. Hopefully a listing of these should be available shortly.

All the presentations were good, but three points bear special mention. First, Dr. Ian McTaggart Cowan gave an excellent and thought-provoking after-dinner address, during which he pointed out that we really do not understand the principles involved when species decline or become extinct. Hence there are severe limitations on our ability to deal with the problem with assured success. Second, the paper by Bill Munro on the Fish and Wildlife Branch on their recently published "Preliminary Plan for the Designation of Threatened and Endangered Species" raised the most contentious topic of the conference. It was felt that the plan is too narrow and is also not action-oriented. Incidentally, only five species have been designated as endangered in the province by the Plan, and only four of these were given the legal status by the recent Order-in-Council (4 March 80). The four are the Vancouver Island Marmot, the White Pelican, the Burrowing Owl and the Sea Otter.

Third and finally, the best paper presented, in my opinion, was by a self-styled amateur, Wilma Robinson, who spoke on Greater Sandhill Cranes and has spear-headed a movement for their protection in the Lower Mainland for some years. Her presentation was a model for all speakers at such conferences, and her dedication to the preservation of species could serve as a lesson to all of us.

FROM SEINING TO SALAMANDERS

By Ruth Lash

It was great fun to go fishing in Colquitz Creek, there was such a surprising quantity of small creatures living there. Some 24 members watched Dr. Alex Peden and his assistant biologist Gordon Green as they waded into the Creek with a seine net stretched between them on two poles. The recent heavy rains had swelled the Creek into a torrent, picturesque but not very convenient for seining.

A number of very lively Freshwater Crayfish were caught, 2½ to 3 inches long. These creatures resemble small brown lobsters and are edible but not prized for that purpose here. With a battery strapped to his back, Alex waded into the water again and was able to stun some Sculpin and Sticklebacks with a small electric shock. When these were emptied into a pail of water, they swam around at once, none the worse, except for one sculpin, who was in process of swallowing an Earth Worm for his breakfast. This delicious meal was lost, but maybe the Sculpin's loss was the Stickleback's gain!

These Freshwater Sculpins feel rough and prickly when touched along their backs and have a number of spines which protrude from their cheeks. They are brown, and have a large, flattish head, total length about 2½ inches. The Stickleback is a lively, slender, streamlined fish about 1½ inches long. As the light caught his scales they shone and sparkled like silver.

We then left the turbulent Colquitz Creek for the quiet water of Durrance Lake. On the way, we were stopped by a sentry on Durrance Road because of rifle

practice at Heal's Rifle Range. (Surely he was the youngest sentry ever to be on duty - he may have reached 12 years!) But he did enjoy his job, and after he was given permission over his phone, let us proceed on our way.

Alex had put out overnight some baited wire minnow traps in the water to catch salamanders.

Durrance Lake abounds in salamanders and we were shown 2 different species. The larger one, some 3 inches long, with reddish underparts, is the Pacific Coast Newt (*Taricha granulosa*). The males of this species spend all their lives in the water, but the females migrate up the bank every Spring and return to the water in the Fall, when they are ready for the males to fertilize their eggs. The young are born in the water and have gills in the early stages of their lives. Why this migration of the females? The cause is unknown. Doubtless they have done this for thousands, perhaps millions, of years. Unfortunately they have to cross Durrance Road, since it was made across their route. They choose a dark rainy night but there are still casualties, as we could plainly see.

A smaller, slimmer salamander, the Western Red-backed Salamander, (*Plethodon vehiculum*) named because of the red stripe down its spine, never enters the water. We found them under damp moss-covered rocks by the stream which drains the lake through a deep gorge. At first they were torpid with cold, but after a few moments in our hands they showed themselves lithe and very wriggly. There were various sizes of these salamanders, from very small to adult, all with orangey underparts.

The Sticklebacks that were caught in the traps are a slightly different variety from the Colquitz Creek ones. Perhaps isolation in Durrance Lake has brought this about. Unfortunately for the Lake Sticklebacks, the Sunfish have multiplied there recently, and this will in future cause a decrease in the stickleback population. In some lakes where this has occurred the sticklebacks have been wiped out.

(It is advisable to bring a lunch and stout boots or shoes on all Field Trips. If wet, bring gumboots.)

GREAT BLUE HERON PLUMAGE

R. L. Kothenheutel, writing in "Pacific Northwest", gave this description of the Great Blue Heron's breeding plumage.

"I was struck by the gaudiness of their plumage. From a distance, Gt. Blue Herons look like large, dark-gray birds. At close range during breeding season, however, they are indeed a striking sight. Besides a cluster of streaming black plumes on the backs of their heads, they are graced with a number of white plumes along their necks and gray ones down their backs. The colors themselves are very subtle - it is the arrangements of these colors that creates the magnificent effect of these beautiful birds. Herons begin to lose their breeding plumage in mid-summer; by late summer the molt is complete, with the plumage to return again next year."

A GARDEN EPISODE

By A. R. Davidson

Our local gull, the Glaucus-wing, is part of the Victoria scene; always with us, always immaculately dressed, and always on the alert for anything edible.

It is estimated there are about 3,000 pair nesting within 10 miles of the city. They are, on the whole, a well mannered bird too. We have seen them being fed by people, surrounded by crows, mallards, and even the rock doves, all eating fairly peacefully together. Which makes the following observation by Mrs. Kaye Wood very unusual, as she saw this gull in her garden with a small bird, possibly a junco, or House sparrow, in its beak, half swallowed, with a wing and the feet still visible. Normally, these gulls do not attack small birds, unless perchance a mallard has the temerity to take its brood of baby young to the open sea; then the wee ducklings gradually disappear, presumably providing a gull's meal.

If any of our local birders have recorded a similar happening, I would be very interested to hear about it.

WINTER IDENTIFICATION

By Jean McInnis

Dr. Chris Brayshaw led a small party of enthusiastic members out to Beaver Lake on January 26th for a lesson on identifying deciduous trees and shrubs.

This is possible by knowledge of twigs and bark. Also location and physiology of the tree. The moist areas round Beaver Lake are favoured by the following species seen there:

Red Alder (*Alnus rubus*)

Common entire coast of B.C., and is the largest alder in Canada, reaching 40 to 80 feet in full growth. The trunk is straight and usually clear of branches for most of its height.

Bark is thin, more or less smooth, and grey in colour. Twigs are slender, shiny, often hairy and reddish in colour.

Buds are alternate, and reddish in colour. Terminal bud is stalked. Last year's catkins seen together with the new catkins of Spring.

Black Cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*)

This tree grows up to 125 feet; is straight, with short branches.

Bark is smooth, greenish yellow in colour.

Twigs are moderately slender, round, and red-brown.

Buds are alternate, pointed, resinous, and orange colour. The terminal bud is longer than lateral buds and is curved. When buds open in Spring they exude a pleasing fragrance, thus the term "Balm of Gilead".

Pacific Dogwood (*Cornus nuttalli*)

This tree bears our B.C. Flower Emblem. It is a small tree, growing 20 to 40 feet in height.

Bark is smooth, usually, dark grey.

Twigs are smooth and reddish brown.

The pointed flower bracts are formed in Autumn, stay dormant during the winter, and usually there are 6 of these bracts round the flower cluster.

Flowers bloom in Spring and often again in early Fall. These winter flower bracts were visible on trees that we examined.

Red Osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*)

This second species of Dogwood found here is shrub-like, easily identified in Winter by its shiny, bright red bark, thin stems, and symmetrically arranged branches. In early summer, the round heads of dainty white flowers appear, followed by lead-white berries in August.

Broadleaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

This is the largest species of Maple found in B.C. and common only to our Coast and Islands. It varies in size and shape. The trunk usually breaks a short distance from the ground into several large limbs, spreading out to form a head crown.

Bark is smooth and grey-brown.

Twigs are stout, smooth, greenish to dark red.

Buds are opposite, the terminal bud blunt and larger than the lateral buds. All dark green to dark red in colour. Later, in April/May, the tree has long, drooping greenish-yellow blooms, with the typical enormous-sized leaves appearing at about the same time.

Cascara (*Rhamnus purshiana*)

This is a small tree, seldom more than 20 feet in height. The trunk is short, forming a crown of numerous stout branches at the top. This species is found only in B.C. Bark is thin, brownish, smooth or scaly.

Twigs are slender, smooth or downy, yellowish-green to reddish-brown, with a bitter taste.

Buds are alternate, small, smooth, greyish and hairy. There is no terminal bud.

This tree has greenish flowers in June, with blueish-black berries in August and September. The bitter bark is used to make Cascara Sagrada, that "favourite" laxative of our mothers and physicians.

Dr. Brayshaw pointed out the interesting feature that the young trees retain their green leaves all winter.

Pacific Willow (*Salix lasiandra*) is the largest Willow on the Pacific Coast and the only one reaching tree-size. All are irregular in shape.

Bark is bitter to taste, dark grey in colour.

Twigs are slender, brittle, greyish-yellow, with no true terminal bud.

Buds are alternate, have a capsulated scale, and are pressed closely to the twig, curved, and usually twisted to one side. The buds were starting to open, to produce "Pussy Willows", so welcome in late winter to bring into our living-rooms.

Two smaller species of Willows examined were Scoulers (*Salix scouleriana*) which prefers a drier ground and is the first to bloom in Spring. The second is the Sitka (*S. sitchensis*) which prefers wet ground, even having its feet in water. These two willows are smaller in most respects and are almost shrub-like.

Black Hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*) is a shrub-sized tree, many branched, with sharp thorns.

Twigs grow in a somewhat zigzag fashion, often covered with lichen. This species found only in B. C.

Pacific Crabapple (*Malus fuscus*)

This fairly large tree is native to Canada, found in wet areas.

Bark is very fissured, scaly and patchy in older trees. Has numerous sharp spurs which are not true thorns.

Native Bitter Cherry (*Prunus emarginata*)

This variety, common in southern B.C., has greyish-brown bark and is lightly roughened. Is distinguished by the clustered terminal buds. There are hybrid forms crossed with domestic and other wild cherries, making identification difficult.

Of the smaller shrubs, we were able to identify:

Thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*) Smooth branches.

Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) Prickly branches.

Twinberry (*Lonicera involucrata*)

Snowberry (*Gaulthera hispidula*)

Indian Plum (*Osmaronia cerastiformis*)

Hardhack (*Spiraea douglasii*)

Rosa *gymnocarpa* and *nutkana*.

(Native roses have all twigs red)

Red Huckleberry (*Vaccinium parvifolium*) which has a mass of thin twigs.

Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) which has straight, not tangled twigs, and *Rubus lasiniata*, the blackberry imported from Europe. Very cut-leaved. Used as grafting stock for boysenberries.

Many thanks to the Leader, who led our small group in one of the coldest days this winter, but kept us so interested that we forgot our frozen fingers and toes.

EDITORIAL

There seems to have been some misunderstanding about the "Naturalist" issues in the future. "Bi-monthly" does not mean twice monthly but two monthly, meaning 6 issues per year, as at present.

May will be a busy month, with Nanoose Camp 4 to 10; Members' Dinner on 13th; Oregon Bus Trip 15 to 28; and the Annual General Meeting on THURSDAY 29th (Please note change of date from the usual Tuesday). The F.B.C.N. General Meeting on 16, 17, 18, at Selkirk College, in Castlegar.

Botanists - have you made a note of "BOTANY 80" at U.B.C. on July 11 to 16? Information from Dr. I.E.P. Taylor, Dept. of Botany, U.B.C. Vancouver, B.C. V6T 2B1.

Telephone numbers of Field Trip Leaders, or the Co-ordinator of Sections, are on the inside front cover of the "Naturalist". Please contact THEM about Field Trips and NOT the President or Program Co-ordinator.

The President and Doug Turnbull have set up a Nominations Committee. Voting will take place at the May Meeting to replace Directors due to retire. Permission of the nominees must be obtained prior to the Meeting.

Many members received their "Naturalists" late in March. If you do not get your copy by the middle of the current month, phone Mr. or Miss Williamson (598-1019) and report this. The Editor and Idealetter do their best to have the magazine ready a full week before the 1st of the month (alternate months) to allow for delay in mailing and delivery. Late delivery is beyond our control.

In conclusion, as I quit my job as Editor, I should like to express my gratitude to all who have helped me in the past three years. To those who nominated me, for I have enjoyed myself; to Jill Burbank and Joan Inglis for all the typing they did; to Bertha Gow for her photographs; to Linda at Idealetter for advice; to contributors of reports and articles, and to those who gave kind criticism and encouragement - all of you have made the "Naturalist" what it is. Thank you.

VANCOUVER ISLAND REGION F.B.C.N.

By Douglas Turnbull

The Spring Meeting of the Vancouver Island Region FBCN was held in Parksville March 1 at 11 a.m. The host club was the Arrowsmith Natural History Society. Regional Vice-President David Routledge was in the chair and about 15 representatives from 8 clubs were in attendance, with about 20 observers. The Parksville club provided delicious refreshments throughout the meeting.

The chairman reported that, in response to his appeal, several clubs had contributed \$1 per member to the regional treasury. A grant of \$200 from the FBCN for travelling and other expenses of the Regional Vice-President had been received, and after some discussion it was accepted. In reply to a question the chairman reported that no financial statement had been prepared for 1979 and no budget had been prepared for 1980. He undertook to see that this was done.

There was considerable discussion about the new constitution and by-laws proposed for the FBCN and what this would mean for the Region. I explained that the Region could continue to meet as in the past but they would not have a direct representative on the Board of Directors of the FBCN, and probably not receive financial support since the FBCN was itself in financial difficulties. A motion was passed affirming the desire of the Region to function in the future as nearly as possible as it had in the past.

A number of suggestions for amendments to the Hunting Regulations of the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch was accepted.

Mike Miller distributed copies of the report of the Vancouver Island Marmot Committee and presented the recommendations of the Committee. These recommendations were endorsed by the meeting.

A presentation was made by Trudy Carson of the B.C. Ecological Reserves staff concerning the proposed warden system for the protection of ecological reserves.

A presentation on "The Wolf Management Program for Vancouver Island" was made by Darryl Hebert, Regional Biologist of the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Service. This lengthy presentation covered logging practices, forest management and the effects of wolves on the deer population of Vancouver Island. A great deal of detailed work has been done which tends to show that wolves have a significant effect on the deer population but no definite conclusions have been reached as yet, and there are no recommendations for action.

(Douglas Turnbull and Wilford Medd represent our Society at Vancouver Island Regional Meetings of the F.B.C.N.)

THE 1979 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

By A.R. Davidson

Just a few comments on our exertions on December 15th last. There were 86 of us, divided into 12 groups, and we battled high winds and a starting temperature 34F.

The 130 species seen was a good average and we were glad to see some decline in the Starling population, our count being 3489 against 10458 in 1961. They must prefer Vancouver as 62543 were seen there. That's all right with us.

The few Robins listed made us wonder where they were or what had happened to them. 1137 was a poor showing, as in 1966 the count was 12187. And then, their cousins the Varied Thrush - their decline followed the robins example, as our hard-working birders could only find 25 - the top number 15 years ago being 1243.

Another bird we regret to see disappearing is the Meadow Lark. On the count in 1958, with only 22 birders in the field, the number seen was 126, and this time, with 86 participants, they could only locate 6.

I could go on, but figures are boring, and we have proved that the numbers of species are here, though many of their numbers are declining.

Would the Society consider a Spring Bird Count, say about the middle of May, and make it an annual feature, as so many other natural history societies are doing?

REGIONAL PARKS GRANTS

The Regional Parks Act, under which grants are made, was passed in 1965 to help regional districts to provide areas of natural beauty in urban and near urban situations. To date, 48 regional parks containing about 6,000 hectares have been established by 11 regional districts.

A further 30 sites have been identified by participating regional districts for possible acquisition and development in the next few years. This includes sites in the Columbia-Shuswap, North Okanagan, Okanagan-Similkameen, Peace River-Liard and Sunshine Coast Regional Districts, which so far have not received grants under this program.

Between January 1st and September 30th, 1979, the following regional districts received grants:

Capital Region District.
Central Okanagan Regional District.
Cowichan Valley Regional District.
Dewdney-Alouette Regional District.
East Kootenay Regional District.
Fraser-Fort George Regional District.
Greater Victoria Regional District.

Altogether about \$9 million has been spent by the province on regional park acquisition and development since the program's inception in 1965.

CONSERVATION

Dr. Doug Ross, Chairman of the VNHS Conservation Committee, has attended several meetings in this connexion, among them being:

(1) King's Pond, Ascot Road, which Saanich Municipality has agreed to make a "Sanctuary".

(2) Recreational Master Plan for the Greater Victoria Area. At a meeting with John Gurban, Professional Environmental and Recreation Consultants Ltd., Dr. Ross indicated our desire to maintain what local "wetlands" are left to us.

SNIPPETS

A Wildlife Reserve has been established at Beaver Cove, near Alert Bay. 33 acres of Crown foreshore at the estuary of the Kokish River will be managed by the Ministry of Environment, with its Fish and Wildlife Branch carrying out enhancement studies in the area.

The Minister of Environment, Stephen Rogers, has put out a 5½ page explanation for the use of certain pesticides for predator control, where no other method of control has proved effective.

This announcement came shortly after the Pesticide Control Appeal Board rejected a previous permit issued to the Fish and Wildlife Branch by the Pesticide Control Branch - a rejection, according to the Minister, based on a legal technicality.

The appointment of 6 members of the B.C. Humane Trap Committee has been announced; and will soon start to administer the \$100,000 fund established to encourage the development of more humane traps. Chairman W. Winston Mair.

The Sierra Club has opened an Environmentalist's Book Store at 536A Yates.

James Vardaman just failed to get his 700th bird species (of North America) by 31st December, 1979.

Many of Britain's flowering plants—some 600 species out of 2000—can be found on roadside verges. And among this luxuriant flora an unexpectedly wide range of animal species live and breed. According to the Nature Conservancy they include 20 species of mammals, 40 species of birds, 6 reptiles, 25 butterflies, and even 8 species of bees.

Roadside verges cover more than 500,000 acres of Britain, or twice the area of all the nation's 128 national nature reserves.

SPRING FLOWERS ON MILL HILL

by Rita Dickson

The last Sunday in March was full of sunshine. Stephen Mitchell, our U.Vic botanist, conducted 25 naturalists up Mill Hill to view the spring flowers.

Common Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*) was the first plant along the trail. Leaves of Western Buttercup, (*Ranunculus occidentalis*), and later, some blooms, were seen. (Did you know there are 30 species of buttercups in B.C.?) Steve showed us the Red Alder catkins, with male and female on the same branch. Indian Plum was in full flower.

Scattered all through the woods were the white lilies (*Erythronium oregonus*) - a joy to behold. Shooting Stars (*Dodecatheon hendersonii*) were full out but not so plentiful. The new green leaves of many plants covered the ground, promising April and May blooms. Later, we found *Dodecatheon pauciflorum* (or *pulchellum*).

Huge moss-covered rocks provided a home for the lovely *Sedum* (*spathulifolium*), red-tinted by frost. Spring Gold (*Lomatium utriculatum*) was abundant. Sea Blush, (*Plectritis congesta*) had many buds and a few flowers. One *Calypso* (*bulbosa*) in bloom and clumps of *Satinflovers* (*Syserinchium grandiflorum*). A Rein Orchid (*Habenaria obtusata*) and a few Broad-leaved Sandwort (*Arenaria macrophylla*) were seen, also foliage of Larkspur and Brodiaea. Two *Saxafrages* (*S. occidentalis* and *S. integrifolia*) and a profusion of Blue-eyed Mary (*Collinsia grandiflora*) were added to our list, and one Chocolate Lily in bud (*Fritillaria lanceolata*).

False Box (*Pachistina myrsinites*) displayed tiny orange flowers and Manzanita (hybridized with *Kinnikinnick*) was hung with its "Lily-of-the-Valley" flowers. A cluster of Fringecup (*Tellima parviflora*) and a glade of yellow Violets (*Viola glabella*) delighted everyone, and then two *Trilliums* in flower (*T. ovatum*).

Steve gave us a wonderful morning and we ended up having our lunch in the sunshine.

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HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES YET?

PROGRAM NOTESANNUAL DINNER, Tuesday, May 13.

Tickets are still available from:

Mrs. Katherine Sherman 2168 Guernsey Street, Victoria, B.C. V8X 2P6 Phone: (598-3237)	Mrs. Rita Dickson 301-2065 Oak Bay Avenue, Victoria, B.C. V8R 1E6 Phone: (592-1862)
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If you wish tickets mailed to you, please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your cheque, which should be made out to: "Victoria Natural History Society".

The speaker will be Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, Chancellor of the University of Victoria. Topic- "Birds of the Sea", illustrated by slides.

AQUATIC BOTANY/ENTOMOLOGY: June 14-15.

Camping facilities at Fairy Lake (B.C. Forest Products) and 2 motels listed for Port Renfrew:

Renfrew Beach Hotel, Port Renfrew, VOS 1K0 (647-5437)	Elliott's Cabins Port Renfrew, VOS 1K0 (647-5405)
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Queries to Dr. Bob Ogilvie (658-8937)

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

By Peggie Goodwill

<u>NO.</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>AREA SEEN</u>	<u>OBSERVER</u>
		<u>Feb.</u>		
2	Western Bluebird	13	777 Winfall Rd.	Mrs. M. Tipton
1	Redhead	15	Prospect Lake	Vic Goodwill
1	Harris Sparrow	19	Welch Road	R. McK-Grieve
2	Townsend Solitaire	19	Mount Tolmie	Jim Fyles
1	Black Duck	21	Goodacre Lake	Tom Pendray
10	Red Crossbill	25	Alpine Cresc.	Anne Knowles
		<u>March</u>		
15	Tree Swallow	15	Quick's Bottom	Jim Wilson
85	Violet Green Sw.	16	Quick's Bottom	Jim Wilson
1	Barred Owl	17	Piedmont Drive	T&M Shepard
1	Barn Swallow	21	Cecilia Street	R. Satterfield
1	Turkey Vulture	21	Wm. Head Road	Beryl Holt
1	Gyr Falcon	22	Martindale Rd.	R. Satterfield
1	Barn Owl	23	Interurban- Courtland Flats	H. Hosford

SENIOR PROGRAMMAY

- SAT. 3 BOTANY at Thetis Park. Leader Katherine Sherman.
Meet Mayfair Lanes 8:30 a.m.
- SAT. 10 BIRDING at Francis Park. Leader Merle Harvey
(with help). Meet Mayfair Lanes 8:30 a.m.
- TUES. 13 DINNER at Tundra Room, University of Victoria.
Cocktails 7:00 p.m. Dinner 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan.
Subject: "Birds and the Sea".
- SAT. 24 BIRDING at John Dean Park. Leader Rob McKenzie-
Grieve. Meet Mayfair Lanes 8:30 a.m.
- SAT. 31 MARMOTS: Leader David Routledge.

JUNE

- SUN. 1 Details later from Bill Barkley (477-3253).
- SUN. 8 BIRDING at Spectacle Lake. Leader Anne Knowles.
Meet Mayfair Lanes 8:30 a.m.
- SAT. 14 AQUATIC BOTANY/ENTOMOLOGY at Botanical Beach,
SUN. 15 Port Renfrew. (4 hours drive from Victoria.)
Details later from Dr. Chris Brayshaw (386-6475)
Description of Shore Vegetation by R.T. Ogilvie
can be found in issue of Nov/Dec. 1979).

JULY

- SAT. 19 HURRICANE RIDGE a possibility.
Details in next issue.

Bring lunch and stout shoes to all Field Trips.
Mayfair Lanes is at corner of Oak and Roderick.

In view of increase in gasoline prices, it
would be helpful to offer your driver a
contribution for expenses.

Any last minute changes will be on the
Rare Bird Alert (478-8534).

*478-9715
where rare birds to be
found.*

JUNIOR PROGRAMMAY

- SAT. 10 SWAN LAKE - 10:00 - 12:00
-Limnology (Lake Ecology) with Terry Morrison
(work-479-0211)
-Meet Swan Lake at 10:00
-Bring waterproof boots.
- SUN. 11 TEN MILE POINT - 9:30 - 1:00
-Marine Biology with Phil Lambert
(work-387-6515)
-Meet Mayfair Bowling Alley at 9:30 a.m.
-Wear waterproof boots & bring lunch.
-DRIVERS include Clarks, Pattersons and
Watsons.

JUNE

- SAT. 7 MILLSTREAM - 9:00 a.m. (Day trip)
-Spelunking (caving) with Kerry Joy
(478-5093)
-Meet Mayfair Bowling Alley at 9:00 a.m.
-Bring lunch & good solid boots or shoes
for a walk.
-DRIVERS include Williams, Robertsons and
Mannings.
- SAT. 21 PROVINCIAL MUSEUM - 10:00 - 12:00
-Living Land, Living Sea with Mary-Lou
Florian (385-8263)
-Meet at Provincial Museum at 10:00

A member of the Phoning Committee will call you a week in
advance. If you get no call, phone Mrs. Margaret Wain-
wright for information (592-1310). Join the Society if
you wish to be included. Membership available through

The Victoria Natural History Society
P.O. Box 1747, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y1

Programs will STOP for the Summer and resume in September.
If you would like to join trips by Seniors, their Programs
can be found in this and subsequent issues. You will be
very welcome as long as you are accompanied by a responsible
adult.