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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 1982

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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Financial Year — May 1st to April 30th
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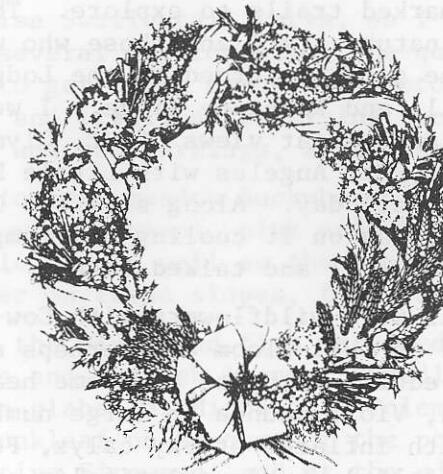
RARE BIRD ALERT - 478-8534

COVER: SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

by Mark Nyhof

"BAND-TAILED PIDGEON"

Band-tailed Pidgeon incubating a single egg on a loosely constructed stick-nest, 30 feet up in a Douglas Fir.



EDITOR'S NOTES

by Marjorie E. Elston

By the time you receive this issue, I will be on the Leslie St. Spit pursuing Caspian Terns and other forms of wildlife east of the Lakehead. The magazine desperately needs someone to help out, so if you can spare any time, please call Mike Shepard at 658-5850.

The revised Audubon schedule has been reprinted in this issue; a film by Brent Cooke of the Provincial Museum has been added. He photographed the charming little clip on Sea Otters in the Natural History gallery of the Museum.

We started a new feature in our May/June issue where Harold Hosford has graciously agreed to answer any weird and wonderful questions about birds and their behaviour. Please send in your questions for the Naturalist, care of our post office box.

A final thanks for all your kind remarks to me about my brief time as Editor; I will miss both the Naturalist and the people.

HURRICANE RIDGE

with JESSIE WOOLLETT

Here it is, the day we have been looking forward to -- Hurricane Ridge Day! Should we take warm coats, slickers, long johns? None of these were needed -- it was a glorious day. How lucky we were, for the previous day had been foggy and cold.

The view of the mountain tops is magnificent in all directions and there are several well-marked trails to explore. The bus took us to the start of Hurricane Hill nature trail and those who wished to, got off here, and the rest of the group returned to the Lodge to explore the trails nearby, Alpine Hill and Klahanee Ridge. I went the Hurricane Ridge Trail myself with such great views of Mt. Olympus and Mt. Carrie snowfields. On the right, Mt. Angeles with Little River Cirque filled with fog that moved about all day. Along side the Cirque many snow banks, one with a big marmot sitting on it cooling his rump, I guess. When someone whistled, he stood tall and talked back.

All along this trail were wildflowers with Cow-parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) rising tall and in full bloom and perhaps next in height, the Indian thistle (*Cirsium edule*) with its handsome heads of rose-purple. Right down on the ground, *Viola adunca* in large numbers, Olympic onion, catchfly, pinky-white with inflated sticky calyx, Fescue sandwort, Bluebells (*Campanula rotundifolia*), *Lupinus latifolia* and *lyalli*, with *Lathyrus nevadensis*, representing the legume family.

Pearly everlasting (*anaphalis*) and close relative Pink Pussytoes, both with woolly leaves to cut down evaporation, noticeable, as well as the aromatic Yarrow, in both pink and white form. Another woolly leaf seen was *Eriophyllum lanatum* in clumps of bright yellow flowers.

Yellow *Arnica latifolia* was blooming along with another sunflower species, *Senecio triangularis*, to confuse us. Other bright yellow flowers were the common dandelion and its cousins, *Agoseris villosa* and at least two hawkweeds.

Along the receding snow banks were Avalanche lilies (*E. montanum*), yellow glacier lilies (*E. grandiflorum*), Lance-leaf Spring Beauty, intermingled with alpine buttercups - the very essence of spring in the mountains.

The Figwort family is well represented among mountain flowers. In among the grouseberry were Cusick's *Veronica* with its shining blue eyes, the Penstemons, *procerus* and *nemorosus*, *Pedicularis bracteosa*, the purple one, and the "paint-brushes" (*Castilleja*) both the scarlet and the unique "magenta of the Olympics". We must look closely to find the flowers hidden by the showy bracts, and the same applies to *Orthocarpus imbricatus* (owlslover).

Silky phacelia and the white variety were nearly finished flowering. Larkspur along with the tall *Potentilla* (buttercup) were looking great, as were the dozens of orange Columbia lilies. Splashes of pink on the rocky hillside called our attention to Smooth *Douglasia* (a primrose), along with spreading *Phlox*. The yellow on the hillside was *Lomatium martendalei* with its parsley-like leaves. On one plant we found the parasite *Orabanche uniflora*, with its beautiful velvety purple flowers.

Across the path, *Lomatium nudicaule* was flourishing. This is the food plant of the Anise Swallowtail larva, so I began looking for butterflies. I saw several swallowtails, one quite pale in color, but it was not possible to get close enough to photograph. There were several small blues, and fritillaries flying about, and a beautiful white one with black and red markings, a *Parnassia*, I think.

Mountain Wall flowers, meadow Buckwheat (*Bistort*), Sitka Valerian, *Geum triflorum* (3-flowered Avens), pink and white Fleabane were noticeable on the grassy slopes, as well as the Nootka Rose. Perhaps where it was a little wetter on these slopes, the green *Habenaria* appeared.

In the shade of the pines and firs were *Pedicularis racemosa*, with white twisted flowers and reddish leaves, Broadleaf Sandwort, Wood Anemone, yellow *Viola glabella*, Mitrewort, *Polemonium* sometimes called Jacob's ladder or Skunkleaf on account of the potent smell; Strawberry, Willow herb and relative Fireweed, and at the edge was *Luetkia pectinata* or Partridge-foot.

At the lower level several shrubs were in flower, such as Mountain Ash, Serviceberry, tall Huckleberry (*Vaccinium*) and at ground level, the mat-like "deliciosum" huckleberry, the *Lonicera Utahensis* (red twinberry), Red Elderberry, and the white *Rhododendron* with *Aquilegia formosa* (Columbine) dancing in the wind through its branches.

While sitting on a log having my snack, I was joined by a delightful striped chipmunk and my red head was buzzed several times by rufous hummingbirds (what fun!) A ground squirrel was rustling around among the leaves looking for goodies.

There are many black-tail deer in the area but I only saw one fawn. The Olympic Marmot was seen in several places and I understand a good number of adult and young were in the usual "Marmot Hollow".

Those going to the top of Hurricane Hill reported seeing several Mountain Goats with some young. It is interesting to note that the half-dozen Canadian goats introduced into Olympic National Park in the 1920's have increased so greatly in number that the Parks System is transferring many of them to other national parks where they still will be protected.

I asked Ron Satterfield to compile a list of the sightings of the Birders on the trip and he came through with quite a list, especially those seen on the water between here and Port Angeles.

Leaving the Harbour Pelagic Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Black Oyster Catcher and Glaucous-winged gull were seen. Off the Breakwater were California gull, Mew gull, Bonaparte gull and Heermann gull. South of the Pilotage Buoy were White-wing Scoters and 8 Northern Phalarope feeding on the water.

While still in Canadian waters, Common Murre and Rhinoceros Auklets, and these were common off Ediz Hook along with Bonaparte and Heermann's gulls.

In mid-Straits, someone saw a hummingbird zipping by, and a Porpoise was seen too. I know it is not a bird!

In the Harbour at Port Angeles, mallard, scoter and Pigeon Guillemot were seen.

Up on Hurricane Ridge Red-tail Hawk, Kestrel, Rufous Hummingbird, pair of Horned Lark with five young, Robin, Common Red-poll, Pine Siskin, Oregon Junco, Snow Bunting, Red-Breasted Nuthatch, Evening Grosbeak, W. Pipit, were seen in various locations, and of course around picnic areas, the Raven and Grey Jay. Some with distinctive voices, such as Red-shafted flicker, Varied thrush, and pileated woodpecker, and blue grouse, were recognized by voices.

It was a great day and we all returned happy and pleasingly tired.

Many thanks to Lyndis Davis for organizing the trip so well!

1984 A.B.A. CONFERENCE
COMING TO VANCOUVER

by David Stirling

The American Birding Association, an international organization devoted to the sport of birding with headquarters in Austin, Texas, will hold its bi-yearly conference in the Vancouver area in 1984. The A.B.A. membership was invited to Vancouver by David Stirling at the May, 1982 conference in Plantation, Florida. This will be the seventh A.B.A. Conference and the second held in Canada. We can expect between 300 and 500 persons to attend. It will likely be held sometime between late June and late August. This might appear to be the worst time of year for West Coast birding, but we want to allow A.B.A. members who are teachers, students and parents to attend. Other

major considerations are that this will be a good time for seeing shore-birds (for which Vancouver has an international reputation) and pelagics.

The purpose of this announcement is not only to inform interested persons but also to establish a roster of people who would like to volunteer their services. We will need some experienced field trip leaders and also a few volunteers for a number of essential jobs such as selling bar tickets, helping with book sales, staffing the information desk, etc. The rewards for these tasks will be the opportunity to meet other birders, (including some of the big names), the pleasure of showing birds to others, and hopefully, lots of good fun. Material rewards will be accommodation for out-of-town trip leaders and meals for local volunteers.

Although the A.B.A. is an organization devoted to the sport of finding and listing birds, they are also concerned with the welfare of wildlife and the preservation of the environment as the "Code of Ethics" from a recent issue of BIRDING illustrates.

If you think you would like to participate, please get in touch with me, stating your areas of expertise or what you would like to do. Thanks.

David Stirling
330-1870 McKenzie Avenue
Victoria, B.C., V8N 4X3
Home: 477-0625; Bus.: 387-5044

WILDLIFE ANECDOTES FROM A PRAIRIE VACATION

by Lois Clark

In the middle of June, the Saskatchewan Natural History Society hosted a wildlife outing in Moose Mountain Park, a fairly large provincial park in southeastern Saskatchewan. There are an amazing number of lakes in the Park, and although the mountain wasn't quite up to B.C. standards, someone did see a moose. Over 150 people registered at the Recreational Centre on the Friday night, several of these from southern Manitoba as well as Saskatchewan. Slides were shown of the park facilities and native wildlife, followed by refreshments.

There was a choice of activities next morning, with most people electing to visit an ancient Indian medicine wheel. This was on a high point of land outside the Park on a farmer's ranch. As the public is not freely admitted to this area, the farmer had arranged transportation for the group.

A fourteen vehicle cavalcade of vans, jeeps, and pick-up trucks laboriously transported us over the rough terrain to the top where there was an arrangement of stones somewhat like a large wheel (hub and spokes). Unfortunately, information on the origin and purpose of the wheel was somewhat sketchy. But the wildflowers were beautiful, and you could see for miles in all directions.

For the afternoon we chose a 3.6 km. nature walk around one of the lakes. We had 'passed' on the 6:00 a.m. birding hike, but still heard and saw quite an assortment in the afternoon. An eastern king bird and a redstart were new ones for me. A common loon with a chick on its back was on the lake, while many yellow-headed blackbirds and red-wing blackbirds were busy in the bulrushes at water's edge. The redstart and a red-eyed vireo seemed to be in musical competition. We found two nests of least flycatchers and a songsparrow's nest. Back at camp Baltimore orioles sang lustily and constantly from the treetops, somewhat like our robins sing, and everyone was more than ready for the sumptuous banquet that had been prepared for us.

The following week I spent at Eastend, Sask. Eastend, a former RCMP outpost, is at the east end of the Cypress Hills. When looking out across the seemingly empty prairies, one does not expect to see much wildlife, but in an evening's drive through the hills, we saw thirteen white-tailed deer, one antelope, a porcupine, a few gophers, four hawks (Swainson's and Marsh), many magpies and one Great Horned Owl with three young ones, fully feathered but somewhat unsure of their flying ability. One afternoon we drove out to a coulee where it was known there was a Peregrine Falcon's nest. The photographer amongst us clambered down the steep incline to take a picture of the four young falcons in the nest on a hidden rocky ledge, while the parent birds circling overhead screeched their dismay.

Because of the extra moisture from a late spring snowstorm this year, (there was still snow in some coulees), the hills were looking especially lush and green with a profusion of wildflowers.

Never let it be said "there's nothing to see on the Prairies".



AUDUBON SCHEDULE

OCTOBER 1982 TO APRIL 1983

<u>OCTOBER 1 & 2</u>	ROAMING CALIFORNIA'S COAST RANGE by Albert Wool
<u>OCTOBER 29 & 30</u>	QUEBEC'S WHALES AND LABRADOR TALES by Tom Sterling
<u>NOVEMBER 26 & 27</u>	THIS EARTH, THIS REALM, THIS ENGLAND by C.P. (Chess) Lyons
<u>JANUARY 21 & 22</u>	ROMANCE OF THE WEST (PRAIRIES) by Allan King
<u>MARCH 4 & 5</u>	BENEATH THE LOWEST TIDES by Brent Cooke, of the Provincial Museum
<u>APRIL 8 & 9</u>	KIWI COUNTRY by Fran Hall

All are at the Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum at 8:00 P.M.
There is free parking beside and behind the Museum for Audubon film patrons.

SEASON TICKETS are available during September from:

Gift Shop, Provincial Museum
Borogrove Bookshop, 10 Centennial Square
Dogwood Gift Shoppe, 2180 Oak Bay Avenue
Bolen Books, Hillside Shopping Centre
Woodwards Book Store, Mayfair Shopping Centre
Read 'N Rite, James Bay Mall
Cadbore Fayre, 3826 Cadboro Bay Rd.

Season Tickets: Adults	\$14.00
Golden Age & Student	\$12.00
Single - Adult Admission	\$ 3.00
- Golden Age & Student	\$ 2.50

For information, please call: 598-1623

Seats NOT HELD for Season Ticket Holders after 7:45 p.m.

Audubon Wildlife Films are presented by the Victoria Natural History Society and the B.C. Provincial Museum.

QUESTION PERIOD

by Harold Hosford

As to how eagles know when or where food is available, I must begin by saying I don't know. On the other hand, I'm not above making a couple of educated guesses.

I assume "the large food supply" you speak of at Qualicum and Squamish is fish - salmon or herring. If so, I can begin by saying eagles aren't dumb. They not only have memories but they also learn from experience. And, like us, their experiences are stored in their memory bank and the information retrieved when needed. From this they "know" when to be at Squamish for salmon and when to be at Qualicum for herring.

They also spend a lot of time watching other birds, and other eagles, which can often lead to a meal.

On this business of "two, separate and distinct sizes of crows on Vancouver Island" being all one species, this assumes that there are "two, separate and distinct sizes of crows on Vancouver Island", and that's something that has escaped me - so far.

This whole question of crows - "little" Northwestern Crows and "big" Common Crows - is, so to speak, up in the air. In the scientific community there is strong support for lumping the two species and equally strong support for keeping them as they are. But this skir-mishing should be of no concern to us here on Vancouver Island because, to the best of my knowledge, all our crows are "little" ones.

Again, on the question of Rockland birds eating the larvae of winter moths while those of Oak Bay do not, I think it's a matter of observation. I'd be very surprised if the birds of Oak Bay are not eating the larvae of winter moths. On the other hand, because there are still winter moths there, they may not be eating enough of them.

If the question rests on the presumed ability of birds to bring an infestation of winter moths under control - which, I guess, is a euphemism for wiping them out - the assumption being that they are apparently under control in Rockland because the birds are eating them and not under control in Oak Bay because the birds there aren't doing their job, it's a false assumption.

First, there are parts of Fairfield - where the birds are busy eating all they can - that have more than their share of winter moth larvae. Second, predators - in this case, birds - rarely adversely affect the numbers of their prey - in this case the caterpillars - they simply take advantage of the food while it is there. Only internal population controls - disease and parasites - plus adverse environmental conditions - are likely to control the larvae and, so far, none of these have been up to the job.

Names please. I like to know who I'm talking to.

HH

*Apologies, Harold. I got the questions from my father.
Thank you, Marjorie E. Elston.*

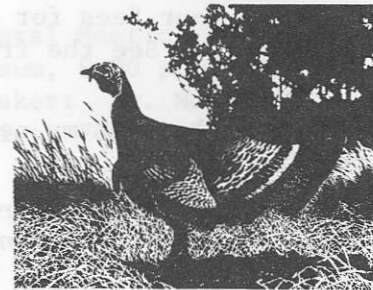
BIRD OBSERVATIONS

JUNE

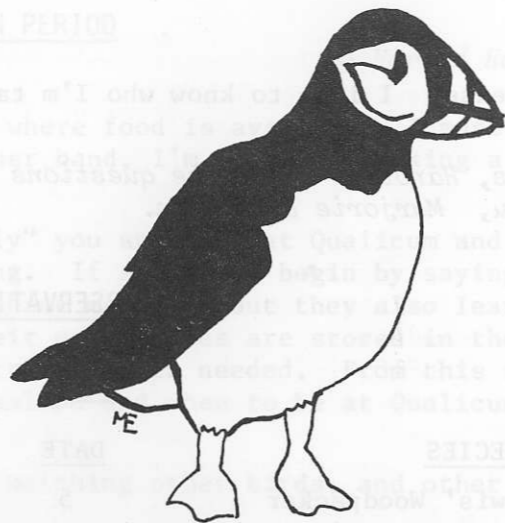
NO.	SPECIES	DATE	AREA SEEN	OBSERVER
1	Lewis' Woodpecker	5	Dalhousie St.	E.&W. Campbell
1	Yellow-headed Blackbird	6	Martindale Rd.	Alan MacLeod
1	American Golden Plover	10	Victoria Golf Cse.	Ron Satterfield
1	Western Kingbird	21	4251 Blenkinsop	Nancy Lovett
5	Gray Jay	23	Spectacle Lake	Anne Knowles
2	Red-eyed Vireo	24	Lochside Park	Keith Taylor

JULY

1	Semipalmated Sandpiper	1	Metchosin Lagoon	Keith Taylor
1	Short-eared Owl	15	4233 Blenkinsop	Nancy Lovett
1	Great Horned Owl	18	" "	" "
1	Solitary Sandpiper	18	Quick's Bottom	Keith Taylor
1	Barn Owl	19	Del Monte at Claremont	M. Gillard
1	Barred Owl	24	Piedmont Drive	Mike Shepard
31	Common Nighthawk	24	6587 W. Saanich Rd.	Bruce Whittington



JUNIORS
PROGRAMME



Welcome back, everyone. And welcome to newcomers.

SEPT. 18 Caving, near the Kerry Joy's home on Millstream Road.
9:30 A.M. - 12:30 P.M.
Meet at Mayfair Bowling at 9:30 or at the corner of Millstream and the Trans-Canada Hwy. at 10:00. Wear your oldest clothes. Bring a flashlight and lunch. After exploring the cave, we will go for a hike.

OCT. 2 Hike up Mt. Work and scavenger hunt at the top.
10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
Meet at 10:00 at the Mt. Work parking lot at the far end of Durrance Lake. Bring lunch and a plastic bag.

OCT. 16 Mushroom Foray with Dr. Funk.
9:30 - 12:30.
Meet at the entrance to Goldstream Campground (west of the Trans-Canada Hwy.) at 9:30 A.M. Bring lunch and a basket with a handle or a plastic bag, to put your mushrooms in.

JUNIORS:

A copy of the September-December programme will be sent to all of you at the end of the summer. Please pay your fees for the 1982-83 season to the Victoria Natural History Society. See the front cover for amounts and address.

If you wish any information, please call me or my new partner, Mrs. Morwyn Marshall. See you in the Fall.

Margaret Wainwright 592-1310
Morwyn Marshall 384-1961

PROGRAM

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

PLEASE NOTE:

Changes or Cancellations are sometimes necessary. These are announced, along with any further information about the outings or club activities, on the Bird Alert, phone 478-8534. You will hear a tape about recent bird observations; any announcements will be toward the end of the tape.

- SAT. SEPT. 11 Bird Trip to Esquimalt Lagoon.
Leader: Alf Porcher.
Meet Mayfair Lanes 9:00 a.m.
- TUES. SEPT. 14 General Meeting--Location to be announced on Bird Alert Tape.
Speaker: Miss Marjorie Hinds
Topic: Arctic Slides (photographs).
- SAT. SEPT. 18 Autumn Botany.
Leader: Dr. Leon Pavelic (387-3215).
Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m.
- WED. SEPT. 22 Birders Night, 7:30 at Band Room, Cedar Hill Jr. Secondary School, on Cedar Hill Rd. between Mackenzie and Cedar Hill X Rd.
- SAT. SEPT. 25 Bird Trip to Witty's Lagoon.
Leader: Ed Coffin (592-0964).
Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m.
- SAT. OCT. 9 Bird Trip, Gulf Islands.
Leader: Roy Prior.
Leave Gulf Islands Ferry, 9:00 a.m.
(Check Bird Alert Tape for more details close to trip date)
- TUES. OCT. 12 General Meeting, Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Dr. McMinn.
Topic: Forest Trails.

SAT. OCT. 16

Mushroom Hunt.

Leader: Dr. A. Funk (388-3811).

Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m.

THURS. OCT. 21Thetis Park Sanctuary Association, Newcombe Auditorium,
Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.

Speaker: Miss Peggy Price.

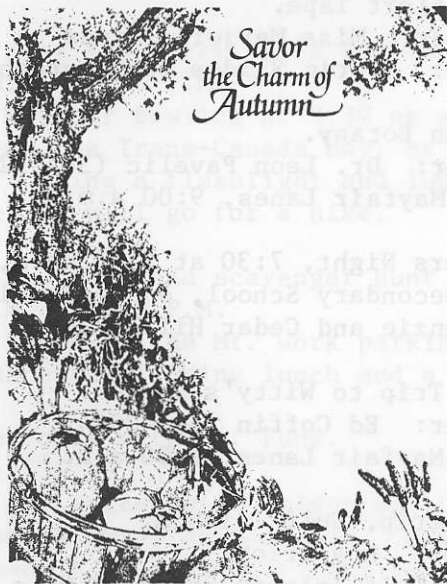
Topic: The Mountains Speak Peace.

SAT. OCT. 23

Bird Trip to Whiffen Spit.

Leader: Harry Davidson (479-1286).

Meet Mayfair Lanes, 9:00 a.m.

WED. OCT. 27Birders Night, Band Room, Cedar Hill Jr. Secondary
School, 7:30 p.m.

MAYFAIR LANES is at the corner of Oak and Roderick, by Bowling Alley.

ALWAYS take a lunch, and if wet, gumboots or strong shoes.