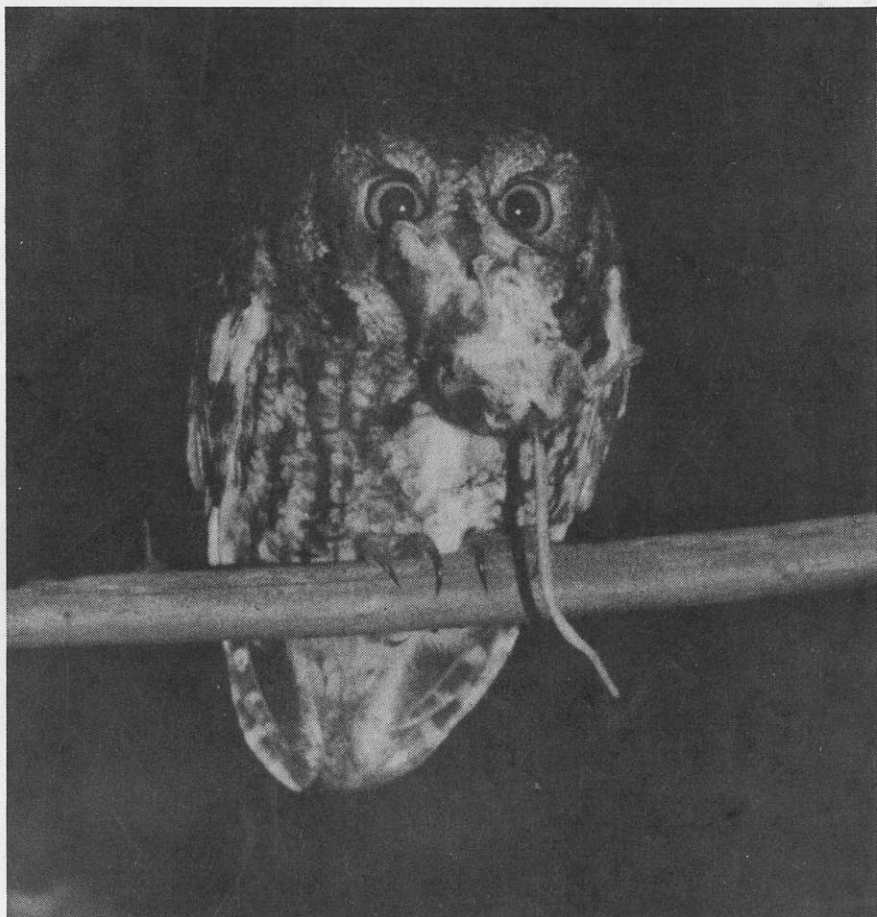


Editor



The VICTORIA NATURALIST

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VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1747, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y1

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Annual Dues — including "The Victoria Naturalist" - Juniors: \$2.50 - Regular: \$10.00
Golden Age: \$9.00 - Family: \$14.00 - Sustaining: \$30.00

Financial Year — May 1st to April 30th
Members joining Jan. 1st to April 30th - half dues

RARE BIRD ALERT - 478-8534

COVER: by Mark Nyhof

SCREECH OWL AND DEER MOUSE

The photograph was taken in the woods beside Camosun College, off Foul Bay Road. The owl in question, which has already appeared once on our cover (January-February, 1979), was observed there by Mark Nyhof over a number of years; a pair nested there for at least four summers, 1978-1981. They did not nest there this year, and in fact none has been seen since this spring, as far as we know. Moreover, the Cooper's Hawk often observed here has been missing of late.

Can this be connected with the controversial extension of the car park?



SOCIETY LOGO

We are wanting ideas for a LOGO for the VNHS. It needs to be something simple that lends itself to outline reproduction, preferably in two colours.

PLEASE have your ideas in to either Ed Coffin or Lyndis Davis, c/o the Box #, by December 31st, 1982.

If you want more information, contact Ed or Lyndis.

1982 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Mark your calendar! This year's count will take place on Saturday 18 December: if you would like to take part, please come to Birders' Night on Wednesday 24 November, or call Mike Shepard, 658-5850 or (work) 388-4227, after 28 November. Everyone welcome.

BIRDERS' NIGHT

This winter a programme of informal gatherings is scheduled. There will be a meeting on the fourth Wednesday of each month except December; naturalists are urged to come and share their knowledge of B.C. birds, and to bring a few slides.

Special presentations on bird-feeding and optical equipment are being prepared.

For meeting times and places, please consult the Programme section of the 'Naturalist' or phone the Rare Bird Alert, 478-8534.

BLINKINSOP LAKE BIRD BLIND

Sincere thanks are due to the team responsible for the building of the new bird blind now in place overlooking Blinkinsop Lake: the builders, led by Roland Inglis, were Charlie Trotter, Wilf Medd, Dr. Harold Pollock, Doug Ross; and the painters, Vera Guernsey, Dorothy McCann, Myrtle Dyer and Alf Porcher.

We deeply appreciate the generosity of Jane Seaborne, who funded the project as a memorial to her late husband Kenneth; a plaque is to be put up in commemoration.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE YEAR 1981-82
BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

AT THE ANNUAL MEETING, MAY 20, 1982

It is my duty to report to you on behalf of the Board of Directors on the various affairs of the Society:

Membership:

Our membership has remained very stable; the number of new members has replaced the number who have resigned. There are 436 memberships with approximately 600 individual members. The membership convenor, Jean McInnes, has with dedication collected the fees, which involved attending most meetings.

Victoria Naturalist Distribution:

Phoebe and Walter Williamson have efficiently managed the magazine distribution. This has involved collating the mailing list, delivering the magazine to the mailers (Mrs. Rita Dickson; Mrs. J.H. Doughty-Davies; Mrs. Gwen Hughes; Mrs. Alan Gregory; Miss Betty Lothian; Mrs. Dorothy McCann; and Mrs. W.G. Hill); arranging for enclosures, and purchasing stamps, together with the necessary bookkeeping. Besides those going to the members, copies were sent to seventeen institutions, ten exchange copies went to other magazines or institutions, and twenty-two free copies to various natural history societies and other institutions. Between 545 and 589 magazines were distributed.

Programme:

We have had a rich and varied programme, thanks to the hard-working team on the Program Committee -- Charlie Trotter and Harry Davidson. The activities have included 15 birding trips, 9 botany, 2 geology, 4 marine biology, 1 mushroom, and 1 reptile field trip. Birders' Nights were organized by Mike Shepard, and the spring botany nights organized by Steve Mitchell. Both the general meeting programmes and the field trips have been excellent and with topics of interest for all.

Junior Naturalists:

The Junior Naturalists, under the able leadership of Margaret Wainwright and Marilyn Hewgill, have had a very full and successful year. They had seventeen outings. The attendance ranged from three children on

one stormy day to twenty-four plus parents. Parents were along on all programmes making them family expeditions. The Juniors are an important part of the Victoria Natural History Society because it is with them that the future of the environment lies.

Audubon Committee:

Under the able direction of Anne Adamson, the Audubon Committee has had another successful programme and profitable year. The six programmes have been interesting and well-attended (with three full houses).

Scholarships:

The Scholarship Committee under the direction of Doug Turnbull has studied carefully the scholarships, and has brought about the following changes: that the FBCN would make the selection and presentation of the Barbara Chapman Award but that the Victoria Natural History Society would be the trustee of the Award; and that we would increase the Victoria Natural History Society Scholarship at the University of Victoria to \$400.00. There have also been awarded two bursaries of \$400.00 (Samuel Simco), and one endowment scholarship (Freeman King) of \$650 at this university. The recipients of the awards were: Victoria Natural History Society - Annette Walker; Freeman King - Arthur Ian Emtage; Samuel Simco Bursaries - Colleen Bryden and Sheilagh Phillips.

Federation of British Columbia Naturalists:

Our directors for the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists, Douglas Turnbull, Bill Barkley, and Winston Mair have represented the Society at the meetings. Douglas Turnbull attended the annual meeting at Naramata. In July 1981, the Marmot Committee became part of the FBCN Endangered Species Committee. Doug Turnbull organized the September meeting of the FBCN directors in Victoria. Our directors have served us ably and well.

Our representatives on the various organizations (Greta Hutchings with the Board of the Friends of the British Columbia Provincial Museum; Giff Calvert with the Swan Lake - Christmas Hill Nature Centre and the Colquitz Linear Park Committee; Gail Mitchell, Stanley Lash, Roy Wainwright, and Giff Calvert with the Francis King Park Advisory Committee) attended meetings and presented reports to the Board of Directors and thus have served us well and also contributed to other organizations.

A study is now under way to look into the possible publication of a new Naturalist Guide. This project was initiated by Anne Knowles and researched by Alice Elston.

Conservation Committee:

The Conservation Committee under the direction of Wilford Medd has been active in many areas. The committee has studied problems and passed on to our Board of Directors precise and judicious recommendations on the following: Rithet's Bog, King's Pond, Cowichan and Millstream Estuaries, Quick's Bottom Park, and others.

Letters were sent concerning the Garrison Diversion and Raccoon Dogs on behalf of ourselves and the Canadian Nature Federation. Letters were sent to the Provincial Government concerning logging on Meares Island and the purchase of lands required for Pacific Rim Park. Permission has been received from the Saanich Municipality to build a bird blind at Blenkinsop Lake. Field trips to study possible ecological reserves at Trial Island and the Wildflower Reserve at Sutton Creek have been made by our members.

Letters have been sent to the various municipalities and the Capital Regional District urging them to reserve land for sewage purposes. We were also instrumental in having Saanich pass a by-law controlling dog fouling. Harry Davidson is on the committee arranging celebrations for the 100th Anniversary of Beacon Hill Park. We hope to take some role in these celebrations.

Conservation Project:

Our Conservation Project Committee under the direction of Mike Shepard has made several grants: \$2500 to Witty's Lagoon Park for supporting a naturalist programme during the summer of 1981; \$2000 to Francis King Park for naturalist services; \$5000 to Swan Lake - Christmas Hill Nature Centre (\$2500 was for 1980-81) for site development and maintenance. Under the leadership of Charlie Trotter the Committee built, placed, and are supervising 39 bluebird boxes in the Metchosin and Sooke area. Charlie Trotter built nineteen of these boxes himself.

We had a memorial fund for Stuart Reid during the year and we agreed to pass these monies on to the Friends of the Provincial Museum for use in obtaining outside artwork for the Atlas of British Columbia Vertebrates.

The Editor of the Victoria Naturalist, Marjorie Elston, has with great dedication given us the past six delightful publications. It is not easy to get the articles and other items together and to meet publishing deadlines which she has been able to do. Many thanks to Marjorie Elston. The Naturalist has now sixteen pages and approximately 600 copies are printed for each issue.

Publications:

Barbara Whately took over the sale of publications from Margaret Cloake in January.

Annual Dinner:

This affair was very capably convened by Mary Richmond. The talk by Yorke Edwards set a warm atmosphere, and the friendship and excellent food made it a socially and financially successful affair.

Financial Report:

From the Financial Report which was printed in the July-August issue, you will see that our financial affairs are in good order.

Other Acknowledgements:

The Board of Directors extends sincere thanks to all members who have willingly given of their time and thoughts to help make our Society function so successfully in 1981-82.

We would also like to give our warm thanks to the retiring Directors, Anne Knowles, and Charlie Trotter, for their time and dedication. Also many thanks specially to Giff Calvert who acted as president during the president's absence and to Alice Elston for her dedicated and conscientious work as secretary.

Mary Lou E. Florian,
President.

BARBARA CHAPMAN AWARD 1982

by Douglas Turnbull

The Barbara Chapman Award is a prize of about one hundred dollars, given each year to an outstanding young naturalist in British Columbia chosen by the Federation of B.C. Naturalists from nominations made by member clubs. The award is supported by a fund subscribed by friends of Barbara Chapman and by the Victoria Natural History Society, the trustees.

The 1982 award was made to Mark K. Daly of North Vancouver, who chose a tripod as his prize. Mark, who is now 17 years old, is an enthusiastic birder and photographer who has discovered a number of birds rare in his area such as Bobolink, Alder Flycatcher and Chestnut-collared Longspur. He keeps excellent field notes and has submitted notes and sketches on twenty unusual birds seen in the Vancouver area. He has also submitted several photographs to the B.C. Museum photo duplicate file. Mark regularly contributes to a column on bird sightings and to the Vancouver area seasonal reports for American Birds. He delivers papers before school and has used the savings from his paper route to buy a spotting scope and camera equipment. Mark is an excellent student at high school and is hoping to study biology at university. We all wish him success in his birding and in his career.

THE CURLEW AND THE WHIMBREL

Said the whimbrel to the curlew: "Shall we play a little game
To see if birders know that we're alike but not the same?
Let's each, in turn, 'go public' on the campus of U-Vic
And when the first has been observed and they have made their pick
In naming his identity, we'll do a moon-light switch
And see if they continue to be certain which is which.
Perhaps we'll fool the experts who believe they can define
The features that distinguish your identity from mine,
For instance, curlew, if I may talk frankly of such things,
That rather gaudy plumage that you wear beneath your wings ..."

"It is a pity, whimbrel" said the curlew in reply
"Your vision's so distorted by that line across your eye,
But let us not be personal: I like your little plan,
Although I'm sure our difference is obvious to Man.
I have a shrewd suspicion that the thing you really crave is
A little borrowed glory, since I am the rarer avis,
But though you must admit it is unfitting and absurd
That I should play the role of half a schizophrenic bird
I'll join in this charade if I go first and we decide
I'll be the feathered Dr. Jekyll, you the Mr. Hyde."

The plot at first succeeded quite beyond the whimbrel's hopes:
A bird was seen; the word was spread; binoculars and 'scopes
Borne by alerted birders, thronged the academic purlieu
Whereon, authentic beyond doubt, they saw a long-billed curlew ...
Days passed; the birds remained, and then an ornithologist,
Stopping to see this visitor he earlier had missed,
Cried in a misremembered line: "Curlew thou never wert"
And sent a message: "It's a whimbrel!" to the Bird Alert.

But bird or man could not confuse that pool of expertise;
The seeming contradiction it accounted for with ease
And, armed with facts and photographs, it broadcast the solution:
It was a rare but simple case of bird-brained substitution.

But all were happy in the end: the curlew kept his pride,
The whimbrel felt he'd still acquired some kudos on the side,
The ornithologists had proved their powers of observation,
The Bird Alert gained stature as a source of information, -
And only a few birders from that period in between
Wondered ... was it the curlew or the whimbrel they had seen?

Rare Birds of the West Coast of North America by Don Roberson.
Woodcock Publications, Pacific Grove, California.
Cost: \$ 25.00 U.S.

Have you ever seen an unusual bird in the field, but been stymied because it did not fit the descriptions in the standard field guides? Have you ever wished for a thorough discussion on field identification of Calidris sandpipers or Empidonax flycatchers? Have you ever searched field guides and reference works for the bird that matches your field notes, only to give up because you either could find nothing or else had not noted the particular mark that may have identified a rare bird? If so, then Rare Birds of the West Coast will be of interest to you.

Rare Birds offers a complete list (up to 1980) of accepted records of stragglers and accidentals for Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. Each region is treated as a separate entity so that birds that are rarities (occurring less than four times a year) in British Columbia are discussed, even though they may be commonplace in California (for example, the Willet). Each species account includes a note on general distribution, detailed notes on West Coast occurrences, maps, graphs on seasonal status, and a discussion on identification, field marks, and similar species. There are numerous black-and-white photographs, ten colour plates by five different artists, and one plate of colour photographs. The plates illustrate many species not found in the standard guides, although the quality of the drawings is quite variable. The artwork could have been greatly improved by portraying the rarities in a more systematic fashion, by showing different views, and by having close-up illustrations of notable field marks.

The hallmark of Rare Birds is its stress on the importance of photographic records, especially in this era when the shotgun is no longer an acceptable tool of the ornithologist or field naturalist. The essential use of photographic data was demonstrated here in B.C. over the past two years. In 1981 there was the outbreak of "stint fever" at Iona Island and then the subsequent rejection of these stint records by the regional editors of American Birds. 1982 saw a turnabout and the vindication of Vancouver area birders as both the Long-toed Stint and Temminck's Stint were successfully photographed at Reifel Refuge. Although many of the photographs in Rare Birds are of poor quality, careful study of most will reveal significant field marks. It would have been useful to caption these marginal photographs noting identification marks and other salient points. Still, Rare Birds' case for photographic records is well made.

Another important feature of Rare Birds is that the species accounts and the discussions of similar species are based on recent advances in field identification. Indeed the book is dedicated to two California observers who have been leaders in pushing back the frontiers of field identification. Rare Birds is a compendium of the state of the art -- as it existed in 1980. Although the species accounts and comparative discussions are not exhaustive and at times seem to fall short, birders will find them very useful and necessary supplements to the standard guides. An excellent bibliography will take the more serious birder even further. Hopefully, frequent use of Rare Birds will prepare birders for unusual sightings, make them more careful in their observations of more common species, and expand our knowledge of bird distribution. So remember -- good birding, have your cameras at the ready, and let's see who will find B.C.'s first Red-throated Pipit.

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

AUGUST

<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Area Seen</u>	<u>Observer</u>
1	Barn Owl	8	Duncan	Keith Taylor
1	Barred Owl	11	Piedmont Drive	T & M Shepard
1	Semipalmated Sandpiper	14	Metchosin Lagoon	Keith Taylor
1	Lesser Golden-Plover	19	Victoria Golf Course	J & R Satterfield
1	Marbled Godwit	20	Discovery Island	T & M Shepard
1	Stilt Sandpiper	21	Metchosin Lagoon	Keith Taylor
1	Franklin's Gull	24	Ogden Point	Keith Taylor
1	Bank Swallow	24	Quick's Bottom	J & R Satterfield
1	Long-billed Curlew	27	UVic Campus	J.B. Tatum
1	Little Gull	29	Metchosin Lagoon	Keith Taylor

SEPTMBER

No.	Species	Date	Area Seen	Observer
1	Long-tailed Jaeger	2	Esquimalt Lagoon	J & R Satterfield
1	Say's Phoebe	2	Gonzales Point	J & R Satterfield
1	Hutton's Vireo	12	Metchosin Lagoon	Dave Stirling
1	Red Knot	13	Oak Bay Beach	Keith Taylor
1	White-throated Sparrow	18	517 Witty Beach Rd.	M & V Goodwill
1	Long-toed Stint	19	Cordova Spit	Bob Hay & Keith Taylor
5	Sooty Shearwaters	20	Trial Island area	M. Shepard
1	Rough-legged Hawk	22	Mount Douglas	John Pratt
6	Western Bluebirds	22	Dupree Drive	Leila Roberts
1	Black-billed Magpie	25	Long Harbour	Dave Fraser
1	Pomarine Jaeger	26	Race Rocks area	Keith Taylor
1	Dickcissel	26	1456 Courtland Ave.	Tim Zurowski
1	Long-toed Stint	27	Saanichton Spit	Bob Hay & Keith Taylor

A Bristle-thighed Curlew was seen and photographed at Cox Bay, near Tofino, on 1 September 1982 by Ralph Fryer. This appears to be the second record for British Columbia and Canada.

Three Black-capped Chickadees were seen at Mesachie Lake Research Forest on 26 September by Dave Fraser: this is only the second record for Vancouver Island.



JUNIOR NATURALISTS

PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 6

Day trip to Reifel Refuge near Ladner to see the fall-winter birds, including the flocks of Snow Geese. Transportation will be arranged so that we can board the ferry on foot and be met at Tsawwassen. Meet aboard the 9:00 A.M. ferry. Bring lunch and binoculars if you have them.

NOVEMBER 20

Bone Detectives! Mystery Skeletons! A programme in the Provincial Museum with Rick Kool of the Education Dept. 10:00 - 12:00. Meet at the Museum entrance at 10:00.

DECEMBER 4

National Film Board films relating to the natural world and outdoor experiences. 10:00 - 12:00. Meet at 3250 Exeter Road.

PLEASE PAY YOUR 1982-83 FEES, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO, TO THE VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, AT P.O. BOX 1747, VICTORIA, B.C., V8W 2Y1.

JUNIORS: \$2.50

FAMILY: \$14.00

A REMINDER: Wear or bring in a light pack suitable clothing to all outings, including a warm sweater and rain jacket or a lined jacket.

If you wish any information, or are a new member, please call me or my new partner:

MARGARET WAINWRIGHT 592-1310

MORWYN MARSHALL 384-1961

PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

PLEASE NOTE: Changes or cancellations are sometimes necessary. These are announced, along with 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. NOV. 6 Quick's Bottom Insects. *385-3708*
Leader: Rob Cannings.
Meet Mayfair Lanes, 10:00 a.m.

TUES. NOV. 9 General Meeting -- Newcombe Auditorium of the Provincial Museum at 8:00 p.m.
Speakers: Wayne Campbell and David Stirling.
Topic: Wild Life Atlases and Naturalists.

THURS. NOV. 18 Thetis Park Sanctuary Association, Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Mary Winstone.
Topic: Film entitled, "Overview of China".

SAT. NOV. 20 Trip to Dungeness Spit. Leave 9:30 a.m., Nov. 20 on ferry
& to Port Angeles for overnight stop. Return 2:00 p.m. ferry
SUN. NOV. 21 on November 21st. Plans are under way to visit some of the sights in this area as well as birding on the Dungeness Spit. Individuals participating are requested to make their own arrangements for accommodation. Leader will be announced later. Further information available from either Lyndis Davis (592-1341) or Alice Elston (592-1400). We would like to form car pools, if possible.

FRI. NOV. 26 Audubon Film: This earth, this realm, this England -
& by C.F. (Chess) Lyons. Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial
SAT. NOV. 27 Museum, 8:00 p.m.

SAT. DEC. 4 Birding at Blue Heron Basin, Sidney.
Leader: Harry Davidson.
Meet Mayfair Lanes at 9:00 a.m.

TUES. DEC. 7 General Meeting -- Newcombe Auditorium of the Provincial Museum at 8:00 p.m.
Speaker: Helen Vieser.
Topic: Colour Films "The Underwater Experience".

SAT. DEC. 11 Pre-Count for Audubon Christmas Bird Count.

SAT. DEC. 18 Christmas Bird Count.
Post-Count Party and Reporting at St. Luke's Parish Hall.
Time and cost to be announced later.



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

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

FINAL DEADLINE for submissions to the Magazine for the January/February issue is ~~26 November, 1982~~. ~~Articles and field trip reports are, as always, badly needed.~~ *28 January 1983.*

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