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**RARE BIRD ALERT - 478-8534**

COVER: by Bertha McHaffie-Gow

"EYE TO EYE WITH A BUSHTIT"

EDITORIAL

This is my first full issue as editor, and of course I begin by repeating what every editor before me has written, namely, that we need contributions from our members, in the form of articles, anecdotes, reports on field trips here and elsewhere, and not least, feedback. We would like to hear members' views on all VNHS activities - field trips, Audubon films, meetings, speakers. And we want to know what you think of your magazine: what you enjoy in it, what you don't like, what sort of features you would like to read. The magazine is the one great link between our members, and should be used as such. To this end, I would like to revive a feature which has not been seen in recent years, "From the Mailbox", in which readers' letters may be quoted, commented on, and answered. To do this, I have to have your co-operation. (Otherwise, I shall be reduced to writing them myself, signing them "Disgruntled, Saanich" and "Weed-lover, Oak Bay".)

I hope also to introduce the occasional new feature, and indeed there is one in this issue. This is a crossword puzzle of a type which may not be familiar to all members; to solve this kind, it is a great advantage to have a taste for anagrams, word play, and in general what are often (and wrongly) considered the lowest kinds of humour, most notably the pun. You are invited to try it and send your solution to the Naturalist - if you manage to finish it!

To change the subject somewhat: I fear that seal-hunt time will soon be with us again, and with it the tiresome problem of trying to convince the rest of the world that not all Canadians spend their time spattering blood and brain matter about as they batter baby seals to death with heavy clubs. It is rapidly becoming a problem in public relations, since it concerns the image of our country that is formed in the minds of people of other countries. Such an image always exists, usually distorted, often ludicrous and unfair; but once formed it is hard to eradicate. Canada's image may have been silly, populated with quaint Eskimos, lumberjacks, grizzly bears and Mounties singing "Rose Marie" as they get their man, but at least the picture was not soaked in blood; and indeed, at one point, a new component entered into it, that of Canada as mediator on the international scene, as peacemaker. But now the seal hunt has been added to the image, with its yearly repeat performance to fix its nastiness ever more certainly in people's minds. It is difficult to try to explain that this murderous tableau in red and white, with the upraised bludgeon and the seal pup bleeding its life into the snow as the blows shatter its skull, is not the typical Canadian scene, and that the Canadian club-wielder is not a characteristic figure. What does one say? Perhaps the most that one can say is that he is less typical than the Canadian who views the matter with total indifference, and far less typical than the one who thinks what a pity it all is, does nothing about it, and would prefer that it not be mentioned.

Reita Sparling died on Friday, October 15, 1982, two and one-half years after the passing of her husband, thus bringing to a close a long association based on mutual love for the world of people and the world of birds. Each had reached the age of 86 years at the time of death and each left the Victoria Natural History Society poorer for their going.

Born in Souris, Manitoba, Reita Bambridge grew up to teach school in Qu'Appelle after graduating from Brandon College with a degree from McMaster University. She then married the Reverend Douglas Sparling and raised two sons, Art and Harry. The Sparlings' life work in the ministry of the United Church led to charges in many Manitoba towns where they soon found relaxation in study of natural life around them. In 1959, they moved to Victoria to serve at Belmont United Church and then at Oak Bay United. Here they became acquainted with the wide-ranging bird life of British Columbia and extended their knowledge by travel to the southern United States and Mexico.

A well-matched pair, they both possessed a quick observant eye, an alert ear and a good memory. Doug took pictures of birds and flowers but Reita was the one who wrote down in diary and notebook all they saw and thought. An inimitable story teller, she often called up from that fund of reminiscence vivid tales of happenstance and incongruity.

Many and varied were her interests. Her first love in natural history was botany and she made a superb collection of Manitoba flora. She collected stamps with bird or flower designs. For a time she contributed a column to the newspaper in Virden, Manitoba and she wrote a history of the town of Rosburn.

A slight fragile figure, she nevertheless had an indomitable spirit which enabled her to face the ups and downs of life with acceptance and understanding. The Birding Group will miss her quick response to song of the Bewick's Wren or warbler hidden in a nearby thicket, her pertinent tale of some former experience, her calm recognition of slowing energy when she cheerfully insisted: "Go on, don't wait for me! I'll catch up!" She has now gone ahead but we will not soon forget her!

#### NOTICES

Call for Bird Feeder and House Designs: A new book, tentatively titled The Audubon Society Handbook for Attracting Birds, will include innovative homemade designs for bird feeders, houses and baths. The author, Stephen W. Kress, is looking for improvements to standard models of feeders and houses and original designs for any homemade bird attracting creations. Novel approaches to repelling squirrels, cats and nuisance birds are also welcome.

In addition to the handbook, some of the submitted material may be selected for articles in the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's new magazine, The Living Bird Quarterly. The designers of selected plans will be acknowledged in the book and articles.

Mail detailed plans with measurements (and photographs if available) to: Dr. Stephen W. Kress, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, New York, 14850, U.S.A.

Call For Bird Lists: In the next issue of the Naturalist, we will be publishing a new set of birders' lists as of December, 1982. Please call Mike Shepard at 658-5850 now to give him your life and '82 totals for the following categories: BRITISH COLUMBIA -- VANCOUVER ISLAND -- VICTORIA CHECKLIST AREA.

V.N.H.S. Logo: Ideas are urgently needed: ring Lyndis Davis, 592-1341.

Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association Programme:

January 20, 1983 - Annual meeting, including the election of officers for the coming year, followed by 26th Birthday party: Douglas Building Cafeteria, behind the Newcombe Auditorium, at 8:00 p.m. A donation of \$2.00 is suggested to help meet the expenses of the party.

February 17, 1983 - Slide show, "Hiking in the Alps", presented by Mr. Bob Lang, Newcombe Auditorium, 8:00 p.m.

Witty's Lagoon Nature House: will be open in future on Sunday afternoons, staffed by student volunteers from Lester Pearson College. It is available on Sunday afternoons, 1:00 - 4:30 p.m., for any group wishing to use it (e.g. Juniors). Anyone wishing to volunteer for this work or as a volunteer Park Warden should contact Robin Hood at 478-3551.

#### OBSERVING SOUTHWEST YUKON FLORA

by Kaye Suttill

In late June, one of my years-long wishes came true: observing plant life in the Yukon. I wanted to see which of the flowers I had known in B.C. High Country were also common to the Yukon, which arctic-alpine rarities around the Great Divide from Jasper to Waterton would be blooming up north, and which new-to-me species were indigenous to the southwest Yukon and contiguous B.C.

The area was a Land of Wildflowers everywhere, along the roadsides, on the hillsides and in the valleys, at lakeshores and around habitations. If you made a flower count it would be high in the hundreds of thousands. Highway sides were usually dominated by one species, mauve Yukon penstemon abruptly changing to miles of mauve-blue Jacob's Ladder or masses of taller hanging blue-and pink-bells, or wild roses or broadleaf fireweed, and sometimes patches of distant-seen magenta, Mackenzie's hedsysarum. The Yukon penstemon, Penstemon gormanii, was new to us, always seeming an incredible

miracle of life in the dry powder earth. The low Jacob's-ladder, Polemonium pulcherrimum, with its fernlike leaves, we had found blooming atop Mt. Kobau near Osoyoos one week earlier and knew it first from Hurricane Ridge; it is also dominant along the Great Divide in the Assiniboine area.

The hanging, blue bells of Mertensia paniculata, omnipresent in the SW Yukon and "weeds" in Atlin gardens, evoked memories of first identifying it near Medicine Lake in Jasper Park where the Summit Lakes were marshing the trail. Mackenzie's hedsarum and broadleaf fireweed are the pink carpet at Berg Lake on Mt. Robson's North Face, more massed than in the Yukon even.

Our first Yukon evening, on the shore of Lake Laberge, gave us a very special welcome, the arctic Stellaria ciliatosepala which we had only seen once before in some high scree in the Rockies; it was just a small white starwort hugging the rock but a delighting second sighting.

The not too common dwarf hawksbeard which we had tracked down first beside Robson Glacier and noted only at a few places above treeline in the Rockies, this Crepis nana was at our feet in glacial outwash off the Haines Road, along with clumps of ground-huddling broadleaf fireweed.

Conversely, the little alpine forget-me-not, Myosotis alpestris, the official State Flower of Alaska, which we've only seen before in high meadows or exposed rock sites, we found in the Yukon at home in a valley bottom meadow, amid more B.C. plants of lower elevations.

Another time an old acquaintance from the Belly River area of Waterton, wild flax, was dancing in the wind on its thin leafscaped stem in the winter range area of the Dall sheep behind Kluane Lake, and also living beside the dusty road near Haines Junction.

Bogs in the Rockies have elephant's head lousewort; in the SW Yukon this niche seems to be taken over by the less showy purple Pedicularis verticillata, and the thickets of mountain misery, Rhododendron albiflorum, high country B.C. bushwhackers' equivalent of coastal salal, are replaced in the Yukon by equally thick bush willow. However, mountain goldenrod, common saxifrage, dwarf dogwood, twin-flower, cut-leaf anemone and others live similarly in the Yukon to S. B.C.

A special surprise habitat in the Yukon was a patch of coniferous woods beside a damp dip in an old road, where the forest floor hosted four members of the orchid family, including the tiny one-leaf orchid, Orchis rotundifolia, with its purple spotted lip, and the showy white sparrow egg Orchid, Cypripedium passerinum, the same species we had photographed some years ago in an open marshy area in the Okanagan.

Even a burnt-to-bare-snags treed area had its blackened forest floor, appropriate niche for golden smoke, Corydalis aurea, and a purple Phacelia like a sibling to SE Oregon's Phacelia linearis, and of course homed the

tall fireweed, emblem of the Yukon, never so beauty-FULL as giving vibrant life to this fire blackened site.

The most fascinating plant habitat to me in the southwest Yukon and contiguous B.C. is where the raw tundra rolls down to 3000 ft. or so and sometimes boulder-strewn streams noise along as you go into the rocky higher land, where plant life has to lie low to survive. The only purple saxifrage, Saxifraga oppositifolia, we saw up north was growing in a rock crevice in the tundra hillside close to the locally dominant yellow Anemone richardsonii. It was in the treeless rock drainage that we found what I most hoped to see in the Yukon, the white rock rose mountain avens in its northern form. Ours "down south" is Dryas octopetala, with crenulated leaves, but the Arctic-into-Yukon Dryas integrifolia has entire leaves. The tundra also homes a new-to-me joying ground cover, the locally called alpine azalea, really a salmon-coloured heath, Loiseleuria procumbens, looking at first glance like a different coloured moss campion. Mats of moss campion also graced the tundra heights, testament to the slowed down fragile alpine clock which rules that moss campion shall not start flowering until the plant is 10 years old and that it shall be 20 before it flowers profusely. After bog-hopping to another high tor, we found it colonized by dwarf shooting-stars, Dodecatheon frigidum, a whole community of them.

The Haines Triangle and Southwest Yukon are a floral paradise, where you greet old friends you knew on high trails in southern B.C., here right beside the roads, and find new magic in the forests, in the marshes and on the windswept tundra ridges. Most unique in arctic-alpine floral beauty to me was the hill crown above Chilkat Pass in the Haines Triangle, a micro-world of reindeer moss masses and dwarf lupine poking up through the lichen, plant life adapting to survive in turbulent tundra habitat.

### FIELD TRIPS

Esquimalt Lagoon, Saturday 11 September

*By Alf Porcher*

How often we feel inclined to forego an outing because the weather is a bit less promising than it has been for a few days, or is expected to improve "tomorrow"? The dampness and fog prevailing in the area to mid-morning may have discouraged a few from turning out, but those present, including a good turnout of young members, were amply rewarded, as the same lack of wind which caused the fog, also made Royal Roads waters glassy smooth, so it was possible to view Arctic and Red-throated Loons; Red-necked, Western & Horned Grebes; Surf and Water scoters and lots of other salt-water birds without the difficulty encountered with waves at most times.

We also enjoyed the co-operation of three Pectoral Sandpipers, which seemed as curious about us as we were about them. They didn't want to come too close, for fear of frightening us off!

A Thayer's Gull was observed by most of the party at close range. Also a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a Northern Harrier.

By noon, the sun seemed quite warm and lunch was enjoyed on the tables at Fort Rodd Hill, after which a small tour of the park gave us a Sharp-shinned Hawk and brought the day's list to fifty birds.

Witty's Lagoon, Saturday September 25th

*by Ed Coffin*

The weather was ideal. There were good selections of shore and sea species.

Unusual, but not entirely unexpected, were: Common Merganser; Turkey Vultures; Osprey, on and near the well-known Witty's Lagoon nest; Least Sandpiper; Ring-billed Gull; Heermann's Gulls; Band-tailed Pigeon; Pileated Woodpecker; Townsend's Warblers.

Of special interest was a very close view of Pectoral Sandpipers, as well as a chance to compare Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs side by side.

Whiffen Spit, Saturday 23 October

*by Roy Prior*

On an unexpectedly dry day, the usual birds of the season were seen, including 3 Red-throated Loons, but the show was stolen by about 40 Harbour Seals lying on a log boom in the harbour and displaying a staggering variety of shades and markings, some so light as to be almost white, some spotted with black; some a furry brown, and others of darker and darker hues ranging to almost black. The total bird species for the day was about 41.

Gulf Islands Ferry, Saturday, 9 October

*by Roy Prior*

Ten birders took the morning ferry on a fine day, and apart from small numbers of the usual marine species, saw the magnificent sight of 200 Arctic Loons scattered about in small groups, 100 between Montague Harbour and Otter Bay, and the rest in the channel leading to Saturna Island.

Late Autumn Insects at Quick's Bottom

*by Rob Cannings*

On Saturday, November 6, a stalwart group of V.N.H.S. members braved the cold rain to explore the shores of Quick's Bottom for insects and other invertebrates. The walk was led by Rob Cannings, Curator of Entomology at the Provincial Museum. November is not a good month for observing a wide variety of terrestrial insects locally, especially on a wet day, so we spent our time examining the mud and dying shoreline vegetation for aquatic species. Even in winter a number of aquatic insects are available to a searcher of Victoria's ponds.

We were able to note the similarity of the two common genera of true bugs (Hemiptera), the backswimmers (Notonecta) and water boatmen (Cenocorixa), all adults at this time of year. Both are predaceous and suck the body

fluids of their prey through a pointed proboscis. Damselfly larvae (Ischnura) were common, as were mayfly (Baetis) larvae. The former have three leaflike gills on the tip of the abdomen which double as swimming fins; the latter have pairs of gills along the sides of the abdominal segments. No larger dragonfly larvae from such genera as Aeshna, Libellula or Sympetrum were found, although adults are common here in the summer. No doubt the larvae have already moved into deeper water for the winter. The larvae of a non-biting midge (Chironomus) were discovered in the mud. These bright red "bloodworms" contain haemoglobin which helps them extract oxygen from their often oxygen-poor environment. It is exactly the same chemical found in our own blood, although in these insects it is not packaged in special blood cells.

Not confining our observations to insects, we noted the difference between the two types of freshwater crustacea in the pond - the amphipods (Hyallela?) and the isopods (Asellus). The amphipods are flattened laterally, the isopods dorso-ventrally.

By the time we were ready to go home for lunch, the sun had appeared from behind the clouds. Despite the rain it had been an interesting morning, and it was good to know that insects are still around even on a wet November day.

TRIP TO MT. WASHINGTON

July 30 - August 2

*by Mary Butler*

On Friday afternoon about 15 members arrived at the Alpine Day Lodge on Mt. Washington. Some set up their beds in the lodge while others set up camp on the parking lot. The weather was damp and foggy.

That evening our leader, Sharon Godkin, showed us slides she had taken in the area a month earlier when there was still snow on the ground.

By Saturday morning our number had grown to 22. We drove to the head of Mt. Albert Edward Trail, left the cars, and immediately were finding woodland flowers along the trail. There was mountain arnica, sitka valerian, fleabane, white rhododendron, green bog orchid, false asphodel, Jeffrey's shooting star, bracted lousewort, partridge foot, leather leaf with its red fruit, dwarf dogwood, northern star flower, white moss heath, the red mountain heath, and false hellebore.

The trail passed through Paradise Meadows and then climbed through yellow cedar, mountain hemlock, and silver fir, with underbrush of several species of blueberry, white rhododendron, false azalea, also oak fern and deer fern. There were broad-leafed twayblades, foam flowers, leafy louseworts, a few stemmed twisted stalks and the branched twisted stalk growing at the edge of a small stream. Also the western teaberry, which is a relative of the well-known salal. Swamp laurel and the evergreen yellow violet were found as well.

The trail wound past Battleship Lake and Helen McKenzie Lake and several small ponds, but the mists hung low so we couldn't see the surrounding terrain. At a snack stop on a rocky knoll we found a beard-tongue, Indian paint brush, blue lupine, rusty saxifrage and the parsley fern.

We made our way up to Croteau Lake in time for lunch. Catherine Sherman told us she and friends had been to this lake in 1941. They rode in on horseback and had met Mr. Croteau. A short walk beyond the lake we found a lovely clump of spreading phlox and here we turned back. The hike back to the cars took us 2-1/2 hours. Everyone was well bitten by no-see-ums and mosquitoes, despite generous applications of repellent.

That evening we walked north of the lodge along a ski run, which is not a pretty sight in the summer, but we were rewarded by finding the alpine mitrewort, mountain bells, one-sided wintergreen, sweet cicely, columbian lily, rattlesnake plantain, and one small pipsissewa.

Sunday morning found us back at Paradise Meadows, which is indeed paradise, even with fog and mist touching the treetops. The meadows are a large, wet, open area between wooded slopes with small ponds and a small stream running through. Here we found buckbean, marsh marigolds in seed, the carnivorous butterwort, white bog orchid, cotton grass, deer cabbage, a relative of the buckbean, marsh violet, black crowberry, alpine veronica, Sitka burnet, dwarf St. John's wort, large wintergreen, cinquefoil, plenty of the heaths, green bog orchids, dwarf raspberry. The most elusive plants of the day which we eventually found were the two species of gold thread and the round leafed sundew. We also found a variety of mosses and lichens and a dwarf willow.

Back at the lodge in the late afternoon, the fog cleared enough for us to see the surrounding snow-capped mountains. The elevation at the lodge is 3200' and Mt. Washington itself is 5200'.

We left Monday morning with one stop on the way down to see a solitary but beautiful fringed grass-of-parnassus. At Point Holmes on the Comox Peninsula we were entertained by about ten good-sized Harbour Seals resting on rocks just offshore, and a mink on a closer rock watching for his breakfast. We saw him slide into the sea, then return to the same rock to eat his catch while the gulls waited for any leftovers.

Our sincere thanks to Sharon for organizing such a wonderful weekend for us.



## THANKS TO THE BIRD ALERT!

*by Alf Porcher*

Usually, I phone the Bird Alert Monday night and/or Tuesday morning before deciding on the locale for the Tuesday outing; but on Monday, 15 November, I had a chance meeting with the Goodwills at Kings' Pond, where in excited tones, they told me about the Tropical Kingbird seen the same day in Colwood. A Tropical Kingbird is a "good" rare bird from the point of view that the chances are it may remain in the vicinity for a few days if seen this late in the year, so, despite the fierce East wind on the Oak Bay coast, we headed for the block on Lagoon Road where it had been observed at the Bruno Becker residence.

After a brief search it was sighted by Rob McKenzie-Grieve and subsequently by our entire group, plus Goodwills, Norm Chesterfield (who holds one of the world's greatest life lists) and a few young birders who were unknown to me. Another happy ending!

## QUESTION PERIOD

*by Harold Hosford*

Tannis Warburton is having trouble with things that whistle in the night. According to what I've been told, Tannis' night caller gave a two-toned whistle, one night last September. Well, Tannis, it's only a guess but one two-toned, night-whistler that comes to mind is the Black-bellied Plover. I'd describe their call as like a soft, "wolf-whistle" -- you know, the kind boys reserve for good-looking girls. If that doesn't fit then I'm as much in the dark as you were when you heard the call.

As for your Crow flights -- Tannis sees these regularly in the evening heading north over her place in Royal Oak -- they're just flights going to roost. There are at least half a dozen crow-roosts around Victoria: Cordova Bay, Discovery Island, Metchosin, and the Highlands are four I can think of. These roosts are used throughout the year but bear their heaviest traffic in late summer and winter. Then, it's hard not to notice the morning and evening flights to and from these roosts. It's interesting to follow the flight lines of the birds. They criss-cross over the city because the nearest birds to a roost are not necessarily the ones that go there. The result is that you may see birds from downtown Victoria heading north for James Island, crossing lines of birds from Esquimalt heading east for their roost on Discovery Island.

While we're on flights, Lyndis Davis wonders how flocks of shorebirds or Starlings, for example, can fly with such precision as they twist and turn, without colliding. Well Lyndis, I couldn't find anything on this in my books but just think for a moment: Birds, in general, are far more alert and quick than man is, and yet we can train ourselves (at least some of us) to fly aircraft with precision equalling birds. Therefore, I'd guess, it isn't too much to expect birds to be at least as good as we are, especially in their element -- the air.

Another thought about precision flying: Watch those flocks closely -- Starlings particularly do not move as much in unison as they seem. As I see it, a manoeuvre actually flows through the flock starting at the front and moving back. Shorebirds, on the other hand, seem to move instantaneously and, so far, I haven't been able to figure out how they do. Consider also, that while the birds in a flock may seem so close that multiple collisions are unavoidable, this is actually an optical illusion. In fact, given their size, birds leave plenty of room between each other to make their intricate and precise formation flying possible.

Lyndis is also having trouble with a two-faced owl -- the Pygmy Owl. Since I've never seen a Pygmy Owl, everything that follows has to be second-hand, but apparently Pygmy Owls are two-faced -- that is, there is a pattern of feathers on the backs of their heads that leave the impression of another pair of eyes and a beak -- a second face. The only explanation I've been able to track down has to do with evolution, that is, there must be some advantage to having the second "face", otherwise why have it? The advantage, if such there is, is that an attacker might not be able to tell when, or if, the owl is looking at him. And most attackers come from the "blind" side, the side of the head without eyes. And since Pygmy Owls have a "face" on the back of their head, they have no "blind" side. 'Nough said?

#### 78-MILLION-YEAR-OLD FLOWER

by Lyndis Davis

I thought that some of you might be interested in an article that appeared in an English magazine in the summer about a flower that is 78 million years old. "This 78 million year old flower 'SCANDIATHUS COSTATUS' is now the earliest of which we have complete three-dimensional knowledge".

Annie Skarby, of Stockholm University, was examining chalk deposits from the upper Cretaceous period which came from a Kaolin quarry in Asen in south-east Sweden. She noticed fragments of charcoal which turned out to be plant material - leaf fragments, flowers, seeds, twigs, mosses, ferns and whole sacs of pollen. A fortunate accident had preserved them - a forest fire sweeping over where they were hidden in the surface litter had turned them to charcoal and then immolation had protected them from attack by bacteria and fungi. They were preserved whole instead of being squashed flat, which is the usual fate of fossils of comparable age.

"The development of flowers is of particular interest because they appeared very recently in evolutionary terms and seem to have evolved and diversified rapidly".

Mrs. Skarby and Else-Marie Friis used a Scanning Electron Microscope to examine the flowers, and eventually they found a contemporary equivalent in 'Vahlia Capensis' which is a rare flower of the open-grass veldt of Africa.

The two flowers are of the 'Saxifragaceae' group of flowers and have 10 out of 11 characteristics in common. The fossil, which is 3mm long, had already reached a relatively advanced stage of evolution and was fertilised in much the same way as its modern descendant, which has not evolved further because it is well adapted to its environment.

If you are interested in seeing the photographs that accompany the article, please get in touch with me at 592-1341.

#### INTERIOR GUMWEED ON LITTLE SAANICH MOUNTAIN

by R. T. Ogilvie

The gumweeds or sticky aster (Grindelia) are bright yellow-headed members of the sunflower family, having a sticky aromatic resin coating the surface of the involucre bracts below the head of flowers. These distinctive features make the genus easily recognisable from other members of this large family. We have two species of gumweed in British Columbia: a coastal species, Grindelia integrifolia, restricted to the seashore; and a Dry Interior species, G. squarrosa, which occurs across the Canadian prairies from Manitoba westward. In the B.C. Interior the latter occurs in the southern Chilcotin, south Thompson, Similkameen, Okanagan, west and east Kootenays, Golden, and Peace River.

Recently I found a plant of the Interior gumweed here on the coast on Little Saanich Mountain. It grows on the roadside near the Dominion Astrophysical Observatory buildings. It appears to be an accidental introduction from eastern B.C., perhaps brought in when observatory equipment was transported here from the Mount Kobau observatory in the southern Okanagan.

The Provincial Museum also has an early collection of Interior gumweed collected from the beach at Oak Bay by Dorothy E. Newtom in June 1928. This suggests that occasionally this plant gets carried to the Coast by human activities, survives briefly, but does not become permanently established. It would be interesting to watch for other Interior and prairie species straying to the coast and becoming established.

The value of documenting introduced species is pointed out in a recent article by Reed Rollins from the Gray Herbarium. Rollins, who is the North American specialist in crucifers, tells of how he was twice mystified by a plant sent to him from the mountains of California, first in 1954 and recently in 1977. On both occasions it took considerable time and effort to determine that it was an alpine species introduced from the Mediterranean Alps by some unknown means. Rollins concludes that all alien plants growing without cultivation should be recorded and made known in some way.

## 1982 BIRD OBSERVATIONS

## OCTOBER

No.	Species	Date	Area Seen	Observer
1	Sooty Shearwater	2	Rum Island	Dave Fraser
1	Red Knot	11	Sidney Island	Bob Hay & Keith Taylor
1	Black-capped Chickadee	12	Francis Park	Jo MacGregor
9	Pine Grosbeaks	15	Orcas Park Terrace	Beryl Holt
1	Gyr Falcon	17	Martindale Road	Jim Wilson & Alan MacLeod
1	Short-eared Owl	17	Martindale Road	" "
3	Snow Buntings	18	Clover Point	Wayne Weber
1	Northern Goshawk	18	Whisky Point Road	Leila Roberts
2	Marbled Godwits	19	Cadboro Bay Beach	Jo MacGregor
1	White-throated Sparrow	20	517 Witty Beach Road	M.&V. Goodwill
1	Bobolink	20	Martindale Road	Roy Prior
1	Cattle Egret	23	2227 Edgelow Road	John McInerny
2	Blue-winged Teal	25	Prospect Lake	Leila Roberts
1	Mountain Bluebird	30	Island View Beach	Harold Hosford
75	Red Phalarope	31	Clover Point	R. Satterfield

## NOVEMBER

2	Lesser Golden-Plover	1	Sidney Spit	Bob Hay
1	Great Horned Owl	2	517 Witty Beach Road	M.E. Goodwill
1	"Red-naped" Sapsucker	4	1764 Orcas Park Terrace	Beryl Holt
1	Lewis' Woodpecker	11	King's Pond	R. Mackenzie- Grieve
1	Redhead	12	Martindale 'L' Reservoir	Vic Goodwill
1	Tropical Kingbird	14	3338 Wickheim Road	Phyllis Becker
1	"Bewick's" Tundra Swan	21	Colquitz River	Roy Prior
1	Glaucous Gull	21	Sooke Basin	Bob Hay
1	Snowy Owl	25	Fulford Valley, S.S.I.	Danny Fraser
1	Harris' Sparrow	27	547 View Royal Ave.	Keith Taylor
1	Brown Pelican	30	Willows Beach	Dr. D. Ross

The Black-capped Chickadee is the first sight record for the Victoria area and the third for Vancouver Island. Is this the forerunner of an invasion similar to that of the Bushtit which was first observed in this area in 1947?

The "Red-naped" Sapsucker is the western race of the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. Now that the Red-breasted Sapsucker has been split from the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and made a separate species, the above observation will retain the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker on the Vancouver Island list. Other observers may have earlier records of the "Red-naped" for this area. If so, they should advise the Vertebrate Zoology Division of the B.C. Provincial Museum.

The Tropical Kingbird is the fourth record for the Victoria area and the seventh for British Columbia.

The Whistling Swan and Bewick's Swan have been "lumped"; the species is now known as the Tundra Swan. The foregoing sight record is apparently the first for the "Bewick's" race in our area.

This last bird is rare: the first record for North America was only eleven years ago, the first western record was in 1975; but since then there have been one more record in the east and about a dozen in the west, two of the latter in Oregon last winter. Dr. M. Edgell of the University of Victoria points out that this phenomenon forms part of the greater pattern evident over the last two decades, in which Eurasian waterfowl have been seen in enormously increasing numbers in North America.

## JUNIOR PROGRAMME

## JANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1983

JAN. 8 Hike around Thetis Lakes. Brave the weather and come for a walk around the two beautiful Thetis Lakes. Bring lunch and wear appropriate clothing. 10:00 - 12:00. Meet at the first parking lot at 10:00 A.M.

JAN. 23 SUNDAY AFTERNOON. Come to Witty's Lagoon Nature House to make marine creature puppets, with students from Pearson College. 1:30 - 3:30. Park in the Witty's Lagoon parking lot off Metchosin Road, walk down the path, bear left (do not cross the stream) and follow the path to the Nature House.

FEB. 5 Hike up Mt. Helmcken and have a campfire and lunch at the top. 10:00 - 12:00. Not a difficult hike. Take the Sooke Rd. to Happy Valley Rd. Turn left and drive 4 km. to Neild Rd. Meet at that corner. Please be on time. Bring lunch.

FEB. 19 SWAN LAKE. Walk with a naturalist around the Lake and have lunch in the Nature House where we can see the live exhibits. 10:00 - 12:00. Meet in the Swan Lake parking lot.

Have you paid your fees to the following address?

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

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 - VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETYJANUARY - FEBRUARY, 1983SATURDAY, JANUARY 8

Dr. T.C. Brayshaw, "Winter Botany". Meet at Mayfair Lanes 9:00 a.m.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 11

General Meeting - Newcombe Auditorium - 8:00 p.m. The speaker will be Geoffrey Waugh, a young naturalist working with B.C. Parks at Fort Langley. He spent some time in the Galapagos Islands, and will show slides taken there.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15

Birding for Beginners. Leaders: Alice Elston and Anne Knowles. Meet at Zoo at Beacon Hill Park, 9:30 a.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21 & SATURDAY, JANUARY 22

Audubon Film: "Romance of the West", (Subject: the Prairies), by Allan J. King. Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 22

Birding Victoria Waterfront. Leader: Roy Prior. Meet at Parking Area near Ogden Point Breakwater, 9:30 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26

Birders' Night - Band Room - Cedar Hill Junior Secondary School, 7:30 p.m.

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8

Annual Dinner - Faculty Club - University of Victoria. Bar opens 6:00 p.m., Dinner at 7:00 p.m. Price: \$15.00. Tickets available from: Lyndis Davis, 592-1341; Dorothy McCann, 595-1992; Betty Lothian, 477-2345; Mary Richmond, 385-0504.

The speaker will be Dr. Nancy Turner, who is a member of our Society. She is an ethnobotanist who graduated from the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia. Nancy commenced her membership in our Society at the age of nine as a Junior Naturalist. She is the daughter of Dr. John Chapman, who was an active member of our Society for many years.

She has written many books and papers about her subject. Her topic will be "Edible Wild Berries".

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12

Geology Trip led by Dr. Brown. Please meet at Mayfair Lanes at 9:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 23

Birders' Night. Band Room - Cedar Hill Junior Secondary School, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Birding at Reifel Waterfowl Sanctuary, Westham Island. Leader will be Ron Satterfield. Please arrange to share cars and to catch the 7:00 a.m. ferry.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 4 & SATURDAY, MARCH 5

Audubon Film, "Beneath the Lowest Tides", by Brent Cooke of the B.C. Provincial Museum. Newcombe Auditorium, Provincial Museum, 8:00 p.m.

*Tickets for Audubon Films are purchased at the door, price \$3.00, senior citizens and students \$2.50.*

*For activities at the B.C. Provincial Museum, free parking is available (outside working hours) at the government employees' parking lot between Michigan and Superior, just behind the Museum.*

*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 MARCH/APRIL issue is January 31, 1983. Articles and field trip reports are, as always, badly needed.*

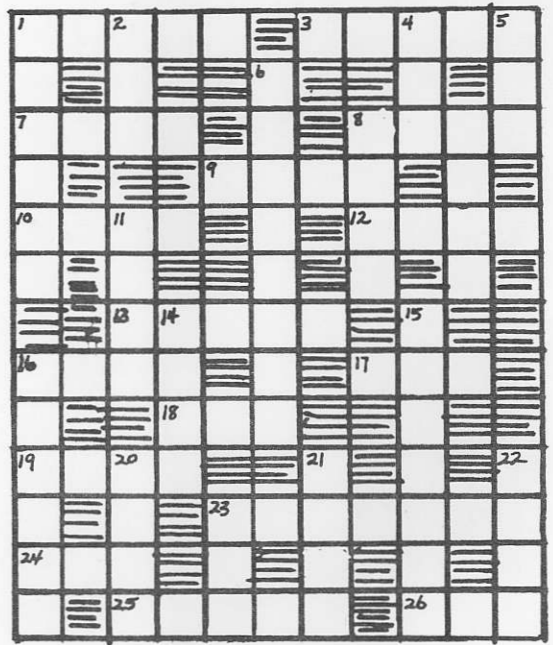
EDITOR'S CRYPTIC CROSSBIRD PUZZLECLUES: ACROSS

1. Fearful bird (5)
3. I'm green, or I've muddled the bird (5)
7. Not the first French bird, but precedes the second (4)
9. May sound like a rooster, but it isn't (4)
10. Bird flown on a leash? (4)
12. A member of the class (4)
13. Brant time (5)

- 16. Is this a means of getting food, or what you pay for it? (4)
- 17. Not one of your vulgar raptors, but an alcid (3)
- 18. Be ill at the end of the trail (3)
- 19. A good one? No, wrong spelling (4)
- 23. Children play with hungry seabird (7)
- 24. Bird giving 'igh-pitched cry of pain? (3)
- 25. Bittern or Sandpiper? Over-modest, in any case (5)
- 26. 23 across, for example (3)

DOWN

- 1, 16 Rapid point before Titania's love for bird haven (6,6)
- 2. I always thought it was a female Lory (3)
- 4. Spanish birds fish here (3)
- 5. Mammals don't brood on such things (3)
- 6. 16 across fitted, it seems, on a brass instrument in the forest (8)
- 8. Shakespearean bird (4)
- 11. This bird, being late, is confused (4)
- 14. Design for 80% of the plant (4)
- 15. But this silly bird ... (4)
- 16. See 1 down
- 20. One species of bird does - to rock music, no doubt (4)
- 21. ... is crazy! (4)
- 22. Once eaten, becomes part of the Osprey (4)
- 23. Habitat (3)



*The sender of the first correct solution opened will receive a valuable prize consisting of two aspirin tablets. Also, his/her name will be published (such is fame!) in our next issue, together with the solution.*

SEE INSIDE BACK COVER (OPPOSITE) FOR GRID.