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VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
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COVER PHOTO: by Tim Zurowski
 SOOTY SHEARWATER - see story on P. 55

OSPREY REPORT

by Kim Gage

My interest in finding Osprey nesting sites began essentially as a treasure hunt. On discovering that the familiar Beaver Lake and Thetis Lake sites had come down over the past winter, I was curious as to how many sites remained in the Lower Island area and their locations. Most of my information was gathered in April and May, with other people contributing updates.

At that time I observed activity (usually only the female Osprey as it was early) at or near the following sites: Elk Lake Boat Ramp, Beaver Lake Riding Ring; Metchosin Lagoon; Oliphant Lake; Port Renfrew; Pedder Bay; and Swartz Bay. According to one informant, the Swartz Bay pair did not stay around after I observed one fishing there twice this season. The Goodwills informed me that the Humpback Reservoir nest came into use after my original visits there. After Charlie Trotter reported an Osprey near his Shawnigan Lake home, we located the nest behind the provincial park on the west shore. The Pedder Bay nest sites were interesting because the easterly one was occupied by a pair of Canada Geese!

On numerous visits to Cowichan Bay in the summer, Bev Cox and I had often found an Osprey on the pilings at the head of CNR Dock Rd. Believing that they were probably nesting nearby, we explored Khenipsen Rd. on the north side of the Bay. When I heard one Osprey calling from above, I mimicked its call for some moments, until four Osprey were soaring overhead, searching for us! We did eventually find one nest on the back side of Mt. Tzouhalem, overlooking Genoa Bay. This nest we "adopted", visiting it regularly, and are happy to say that two young were successfully raised. From the Goodwills we know that three young were raised at the Metchosin Lagoon nest.

I would be interested to hear of any other nests, suspected sites, or observations of Osprey. If you enjoy these birds, do consider "adopting" a nest and keeping an eye on it occasionally. Then we will all have a better idea of how many young are being raised, and where to observe them.

Editor's Note: I feel we ought to observe all Osprey nests regularly throughout the summer, and note if possible which are active and how many young are raised. I therefore propose that, as suggested above, each nest be "adopted" by someone, or some group, who would transmit information to Kim Gage or myself, for publication in the Victoria Naturalist. If you would like to do this, please contact me.

SAPROPHYTES IN LITTLE QUALICUM RIVER FALLS PARK

We have spent pleasant days in Little Qualicum River Falls Park, seeking out Saprophytes and photographing them. Saprophytes are plants without green leaves - that is without chlorophyll which through photosynthesis uses the sun's energy to turn carbon dioxide and water into carbohydrates. They, then, being unable to manufacture their own food, must draw their nourishment from decaying organic matter. Most of the plants described here belong to the Indian-pipe family which is a close relative of the wintergreens and heaths. The one exception is the Ground-cone which is a member of the broomrape family related to the snapdragon family.

Saprophytic nutrition is complicated. Many of these plants are nourished by a fungus mycelium which encloses their roots. And in some cases, such as the Indian-pipe, the fungus in turn is parasitizing the roots of trees. The ground-cone is again different in being directly parasitic on the roots of salal.

The Indian-pipe is the most common. The ghostly white pipes push up through the leafmould looking almost translucent like fine porcelain. Crowded into a solid mass, they grow to six or eight inches tall, the pipe-bowl blossoms turned downward. Soon the tips of the petals and bracts turn black and finally the whole plant becomes silvery-grey. The bell now turns upward and opens to disclose the seed-pod developing within.

We found these at their most beautiful stage freshly emerged in the first week in July, and again in seed two weeks later.

The Ground-cone is very plentiful but often goes unnoticed. It stands upright at the foot of a tree (fir in this park), looking just like a cone fallen from the tree. It is a parasite on the roots of salal. The scales, tight and tidy at first, later spread to disclose pretty little orchid-like blossoms. These are red and about 1/4-inch across. The entire plant at this stage is about two inches long and one-and-one-half inches across. The scales continue to spread as pea-like seed-pods form, yellow or white at first, darkening to brown and finally falling out. The cone still stands, a sad ragged effigy of itself, and can be found the next year among the new crop. We found these in blossom in May and with seeds fully formed in July.

Nearby was the Candy Stick, looking exactly like a peppermint candy, with neat pink and white spiral stripes. It grows to twelve or fourteen inches tall, then, miraculously, little white blossoms break out between the stripes and the plant changes to a popcorn stick. These blossoms, 1/4-inch across, look like tiny orchids and I am reminded that many orchids are saprophytes too, but are not at all related to these plants.

We found the Candy Stick newly emerged in May, in bloom in late June and seeding in early July.

In a shady hollow the Pine Drops grow, the tall stately red stem bearing its tiny white lamps, each 1/4-inch across, hanging from its individual pedicel, the whole a beautiful chandelier up to six feet tall. The seedpods which hang as the blossoms had done are little red cushions growing to 1/2-inch or more across. Finally they turn brown and release their seed, but still stand stiffly, growing darker and more brittle, to be seen among the new plants the following season. We found these in bloom in late June and in seed in late July.

In a deeper, shadier hollow, tiny pink or yellow pea-sized balls push up through the moss, one here, two there, three or four together. We saw them first in June and were puzzled. In July they had expanded and in the center of one a blossom had opened, 1/2-inch across, five pointed petals, yellow or pink like the rest of the plant and having a yellow center. More buds surrounded the open blossom. When we came again two weeks later, we found only yellowish chaff where they had been. These were the elusive Gnome Plant.

Then, after seeking out our old friends and admiring these new ones, we found in a picture I had taken in May 1978, a many-headed pipe like yellow Indian-pipes on one stem. We now believe this was the Pinesap and we will not rest easy through another spring until we find it again.

THE SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (CALIDRIS PUSILLA) ON THE SAANICH PENINSULA IN 1983

By Keith Taylor

In 1983, in the Victoria area, no fewer than twenty-seven Semipalmated Sandpipers were recorded by the author alone. The first was recorded on July 3, an adult, followed by fourteen more adults, till the 23rd July when passage of adults ended. On the 16th July, juveniles appeared, and between this date and August 9, 9 birds were seen. On August 13, a lone straggling adult was seen in total winter plumage. On August 20th, juvenile Semipalmated Sandpipers had attained first autumn plumage, and three more were seen between then and September 5th. Peak migration occurs in the last 3 weeks of July when the birds were common (up to nine in one day); this also corresponds with the migration in Vancouver.

Have these birds been overlooked in other years or was 1983 an exceptional year?

This species seems to prefer sandy areas on the east side of the Peninsula, with eight birds at Cadboro Bay and Loon Bay, and seven at Cordova Spit. However, eleven birds were seen at Witty's Lagoon, where the proportion was small compared with the density of "peeps". Only one bird was seen at Esquimalt Lagoon.

Identification:

Adult passage corresponds with adult passage of Western and Least Sandpipers. There are no juvenile Western at this season to confuse them with.

Adult Western Sandpipers' plumage has very distinctive streaks on the breast, made up of solid dark little arrowheads, and all show various amounts of bright chestnut on scapulars, crown and cheeks. If the bird is in very heavy moult, some (at least) of the arrowheads remain on the breast until they have migrated south of Victoria.

Semipalmated Sandpiper adults are in heavy moult passing through Victoria. The plumage is in various stages showing breeding feathers (dark) with fringes worn to show some buff and chestnut edges (very indistinct) and various amounts of winter feathers, very steel-gray. The breast is only lightly marked with check-marks -- grey or buff. Physically, the bird is typically intermediate in size between Western and Least, has a more rounded head than Western and has, in comparison, shorter legs. The bill is typically short and blunt. Both possess partial webbing between toes.

Juvenile Semipalmated Sandpipers differ from juvenile Western in that scapulars and mantle fringes are a buff-brown; some observers say grey-brown, but to my eyes there is a tinge of yellow in the colour. There is a broad half-collar of white below the cheeks, and a wash of buff-brown with slight streaks in front of the wing on the breast. The upper two rows of scapulars are slightly orange. Juvenile Westerns are very variable but most show a bright chestnut horizontal line on the top rows of scapulars and peach-coloured collar when the plumage is fresh. Others are quite grey, not brown-buff, and almost always show chestnut on the tertials. Semi-palmated tertials are edged brown-buff.

As the season progresses, Semipalmated Sandpiper juveniles become even more buffy-looking and lose the orange colour on the top rows of the scapulars. This is called first autumn plumage and remains for one year.

Calls: (Usual)

Semipalmated Sandpiper: "Cherk" low in pitch.

Western Sandpiper: "Cheet" or "Jeet", short, very high-pitched.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS AND COWBIRDS

by A.R. Davidson

Taking a bird census at the finish of each year has become very popular. The first to be conducted by the National Audubon Society was in 1900 with 27 observers, while the one conducted in December of 1981 had 34,800, and the book the Audubon Society issues giving all the details has 400 pages, which take some studying.

I was always interested in the fact that most birds coloured black, such as Grackles, Red-winged Blackbirds, Cowbirds and Starlings have increased their numbers prodigiously while the small birds have declined.

Here are a few figures from the 1981 Count compared with ten years ago:

COWBIRDS	in 1970/71	127,875
	in 1981/82	5,950,192

These are the highest counts taken in one area in North America, the Cowbird roost being in Pine Prairie in Louisiana. It's almost unbelievable.

Few of us are endeared of parasites of any description, whether human or birds, and the damage Cowbirds do to breeding small birds is incalculable.

The most prominent writer in the earlier part of this century on the western birds was W. Leon Dawson with three volumes on the birds of Washington State and three on the birds of California to his credit. (Well worth reading, if you can find them.) In the "Birds of California", his comments on the Cowbird are very pungent. Here are a few extracts:

"This bird is a demi-rep, a ne'er do well, a slattern, a shirk, a harpy, a traitor and an anarchist."

"This bird is the unchaste mother of a race, gone wrong, an enemy of bird society, the victim of an unfortunate heredity. The Cowbird stock is indeed polluted, dumped at birth into a strange cradle; an unblest and pitiless bastard."

How's that for language? - and I agree wholeheartedly! If any birder has seen a Golden-crowned Kinglet trying to feed a young cowbird four times as big as itself, as we have, I think they would agree with Leon Dawson's strictures. Since arriving here about 1950, they have considerably reduced the number of most of the small birds, and there is nothing we can do about it. One of nature's errors, indeed.

SOME REMARKS ON GULL IDENTIFICATION

by K. Taylor

In the past few years, various Christmas counts in both Washington and Oregon have recorded hybrid Glaucous-Winged and Western Gulls. I believe those with the experience should be recording these birds on the Victoria counts as well, as these birds in fact outnumber pure Western Gulls.

Thayer's Gulls and Herring Gulls still seem to be a problem of identification. Observers must be informed that Thayer's Gulls may often have pale eyes. All adult brown-eyed gulls' eyes become paler with age, so that Glaucous-winged Gulls, Mew Gulls, Thayer's Gulls, etc. become very pale gray-green with small brown flecks. Adult Herring Gulls' eyes are yellowish-white. Do not identify these gulls by pale eye-tone without seeing the actual colour.

Other distinguishing features are: Herring Gulls' head shape is more angular with a flatter head and longer neck than Thayer's Gulls. The head becomes streaked sooner than Thayer's and is more darkly marked in winter than Thayer's. The primaries of Herring Gulls are black with even-shaped "windows". Thayer's' primaries are not jet black and have elongated "mirrors" and the undersides of the primaries are whitish. The bill of the Herring Gull is longer than that of Thayer's.

Both birds are noticeably smaller than Glaucous-winged and Hybrids of this and Western. Unworn juvenile Thayer's are like a smaller juvenile Glaucous-winged Gull but warmer brown with the fringes of the mantle paler, giving them a more mottled appearance. The undersides of the primaries are whitish. Plumage of worn birds resembles that of juvenile Glaucous-winged Gulls. Juvenile Herring Gulls can only be confused with juvenile Western Gulls which are larger, and hybrids which are also larger. Juvenile California Gulls have pale-based bills.

Immature plumages are too confusing to be dealt with here.

It is my experience that in migration, Thayer's Gulls outnumber Herring Gulls 50 to 1 or more, and that most Herring Gulls can be found at the Hood Lane sewer outlet and the city dump, the only places they can be considered to be easily found. Adult Herring Gulls far outnumber juveniles.

For further information, see Seabirds: An Identification Guide by Harrison.

PHOTOGRAPHING A SHEARWATER

by Tim Zurowski

With this year's influx of shearwaters along our coastline, being an avid bird photographer I pondered over how I would photograph either a Short-tailed or Sooty Shearwater. I could have waited at Clover Point for a rare occasion when one or more birds would put down close to shore; however, that would call for extreme patience and a lot of luck, and still would not produce satisfactory results. Even a bird the size of a shearwater must be photographed from within 20 to 30 feet to obtain decent results. So I decided that if they would not come to me, I would go to them.

With two large bags of puffed rice, my camera gear in a neoprene bag and my 17-foot kayak, I paddled between 2 and 4 miles out from Macaulay Point where, with the help of information from Keith Taylor, I found a huge congregation of gulls. This area seemed to be a favourite afternoon feeding ground for gulls, Common Murres, Ancient Murrelets, Rhinoceros Auklets, and shearwaters. I sat quietly amongst the gulls and watched dozens of Sooty Shearwaters fly in from Race Rocks, soaring low through the gulls looking for a "ball up". With the puffed rice I was able to create my own "ball up" and therefore draw in whatever shearwaters were in the vicinity. Once a shearwater landed on the water, I paddled very quickly towards it, making sure the sun was at my back. When I was within approximately 50 feet, I stopped paddling and used my rudder to steer towards the bird; this way I was able to coast within 10 or 15 feet without moving and disturbing the bird. After using this technique on several birds, I accumulated about 50 good photographs.

I found shearwaters, because they are not used to man's presence, to be quite unafraid; they really paid little attention to me. I had hoped to get pictures of Short-tailed Shearwaters, but unfortunately the only one I saw never landed within range.

FIELD TRIPS

Esquimalt Lagoon - November 5th
Leader: Rob McKenzie-Grieve

by Elizabeth North

About 35 avid birders joined Rob at Esquimalt Lagoon this cold, grey and windy morning in pursuit primarily of the Harris' Sparrow - which eluded us - and to welcome the migrants returning to our shores. Gulls were the most plentiful, chiefly our resident Glaucous-winged Gulls; the next were scaup (53 counted), a female Pintail, 4 varieties of grebe, 2 Canvasbacks, mergansers, etc.

We slowly made our way towards the far end of the peninsula, noting some smaller birds en route, when we were attracted to the ocean side by the barking of sea lions and seals, 15 or more buffeting their way close to the shoreline. Further out to sea we could see the squarerigger training ship Belle Blonde as she rode at anchor while she furled her sails in an almost gale-force wind - a lovely sight.

As the waves lashed the shore, we were fascinated watching the Black Turnstones shaking the seaweed left by the receding tide, searching for choice morsels to eat. Four Western Meadowlarks rose from the grassy bank, one pausing long enough on a log for all to view.

Taking the road to the right, we followed it round until we came to the old Pendray estate (the mansion now being used, the notice at the gate stated, as a Human Development Project). We observed more small birds - sparrows, siskins, etc. and a Peregrine Falcon. We enjoyed the beauty of the woodland around the house in its autumn foliage, in spite of the dullness of the day. By the shore, 2 Common Snipe were seen in flight and a third flushed out from the marsh nearby. A Belted Kingfisher alighted on a fence-post.

Returning to the cars by now in the rain, we made our way to Fort Rodd where we lunched at the picnic tables in the company of a little black rabbit who greedily nibbled offerings of food from our hands and seemed loath to see us depart.

A most rewarding and enjoyable morning; though no extraordinary or rare sightings were made, we were happy with the count of 52 species to our credit.

To sum up, a quote from Harold's 'Colonist' article is very fitting: "*Nothing puts the black dog of melancholy to flight more quickly than a conscientious bout of birdwatching ...*" - I add, with the good fellowship of the group and an excellent leader.

Cowichan Bay, 20th November

by Roy Prior

With exquisite timing, the rain stopped on this Sunday morning and allowed eleven birders to enjoy a pleasant trip. Highlights: 25 Barrow's Goldeneye; 150 Dunlin; 15 Trumpeter Swans; hundreds of Common Mergansers on Quamichan Lake; and a Wood Duck on Duncan sewage pond. Total of about 50 species.

Goldstream Park, 3rd December

Leader: Ron Satterfield

Weather: overcast, cool, dry. Eleven participants. Highlights: a first-winter Glaucous Gull, seven American Dippers and a Merlin.

Lower Mainland, Sunday 27th November

Leader: Anne Knowles

Eleven keen birders journeyed to the Lower Mainland on an overcast but otherwise fine day. We visited Iona Island and Reifel Refuge, and had good views of Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks, Northern Harriers, Northern Shrikes, a family of Whistling Tundra Swans, and hundreds of Mallards with a smattering of widgeon, Shovelers, Pintails, and Green-winged Teal.

The highlights were the 3 Short-eared Owls seen at close range, and the thousands of Snow Geese seen from the high observation tower at Reifel. There was a constant gabbling which rose in pitch as the flock rose when a Bald Eagle flew over them.

A total of 62 species was seen and all agreed it was a very worthwhile day.

NOTICES

Report on By-Laws

At the General Meeting in October, the revised By-laws were adopted as circulated with the addition of the following:

At the end of Section 1 i. insert:

"Life members existing as of May '83 will be recognized".

The new by-laws have been accepted and registered with the registrar of companies.

As the Year-End of the Society is now December 31st, members who have paid for the year ending April 30th, 1984 will, on renewal, pay the following dues for 1984: Regular - \$7.00; Golden Age - \$6.00; Family - \$10.00. Dues for new members remain as at present:

Juniors: \$2.50; Regular: \$10.00; Golden Age: \$9.00; Family: \$14.00; Sustaining: \$30.00.

NOTICES

The B.C. Section of the Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal Society (publisher of the Murrelet) will hold its annual meeting at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver on January 14, 1984. A scientific paper session will begin at 1:00 p.m. in Room 2449 of the Biological Sciences Building at the University of B.C.; a break for supper will be followed by an evening entertainment feature (film or slide programme).

On Sunday, January 15, a field trip to Westham Island and other areas of the Fraser Delta is scheduled. The general public is cordially invited to both the meeting and field trip. For further details, please phone Wayne Weber at (604) 576-2911 (office) or (604) 421-2020 (home), or write him at the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 17720 57th Avenue, Surrey, B.C., V3S 4P9.

The Annual Meeting of Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association, including the election of officers for the coming year, followed by the Birthday Party, will again be held in the Douglas Building Cafeteria, behind the Newcombe Auditorium, at 8:00 p.m. on January 19th, 1984. A donation of \$2.00 or more per person is suggested to help meet the expenses of the party.

On February 16th, 1984, Mr. Bob Lang will show his slides of "Hiking in the Colorado Rockies" at the Newcombe Auditorium at 8:00 p.m., after the General Meeting of the Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association.

A Request for Assistance from the Ministry of Environment

The Fish and Wildlife Branch is compiling a listing of Vancouver Island marmot sightings for the 1983 season. They are very interested in hearing of any actual sightings of marmots and/or marmot signs from members of your organization. Blank marmot report forms are available from the editor of the Victoria Naturalist.

Logo

A logo for the Society has finally been chosen. The design, by Lyndis Davis, is shown here; it is intended that it shall be in blue and white. It will be used on our stationery, and possibly, in the future, we may have T-shirts made featuring this symbol.



The Animals Film, which has aroused so much admiration and controversy, will be shown again by the Animal Rights Society of the University of Victoria, at Cinecenta, on Tuesday February 21st at 7:00 P.M.

NOTES

Hooded Merganser Roost

by Roy Prior

The pond on Kingsberry Crescent is once more home to a large number of Hooded Mergansers (see previous report in VN, May-June 1983, p. 90).

At 5:00 p.m. on the evening of 20 November, 176 of them had already come in for the night. This seems to indicate that very nearly the entire local population roosts there; the total number of this species, local and on the Victoria area Christmas Count last year, was 205.

What's a Naturalist?

by Ruth Lash

On a recent coach tour in Yugoslavia, the guide remarked that a large impressive building across the bay was a hotel for naturalists only. Whilst I was trying to figure out just how and why so many naturalists would gather there, she added - "No one is allowed to wear clothes there; only the manager, to distinguish him for the convenience of guests, wears a hat and tie, but nothing else."

1983 BIRD OBSERVATIONS

		<u>October</u>		
<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Area Seen</u>	<u>Observer</u>
1	Leech's Storm-Petrel	1	Race Rocks	Keith Taylor
1	Red Knot	1	Mary Tod Island	Tim Zurowski
1	Western Kingbird	1	Matheson Lake Park Rd.	Jack Collins
1	Vaux Swift	6	Gonzales Hill	Jack Bowling
1	American Bittern	8	Quick's Bottom	Tim Zurowski
1	Lewis' Woodpecker	8	Cordova Spit	Dave Fraser
3	Snow Geese	13	764 Piedmont Dr.	Mike Shepard
5	Brown Pelican	16	Clover Pt.-Trial Isl.	Keith Taylor & Fred Bender
1	Western Screech-Owl	16	4233 Blenkinsop Rd.	Nancy Lovett
1	Common Barn Owl	16	Holland Avenue	Roy Prior
30	Sooty Shearwater	21	Clover Point	Keith Taylor
2	Short-tailed Shearwater	22	Clover Point	Keith Taylor
1	Fork-tailed Storm-Petrel	22	M.V. "COHO"-Canadian	Keith Taylor et al
1	Gray Jay	22	1456 Courtland Ave.	Tim Zurowski
9	Northern Fulmar	23	M.V. "COHO"	Keith Taylor et al
1	Rusty Blackbird	24	Martindale Rd.	Keith Taylor
1	Ruff	24	Head of Cowichan Bay	Mary & Bob Hooper
2	Elegant Tern	25	R.V.Y. Club	Dave Stirling
1	Common Black-headed Gull	27	McMicking Point	Keith Taylor

October (cont'd)

No.	Species	Date	Area Seen	Observer
1	Sabine's Gull	29	Becher Bay	Mike Shepard
1	Black-legged Kittiwake	29	Becher Bay	Mike Shepard
5	Cassin's Auklet	29	Becher Bay	Mike Shepard
5	Red Phalarope	29	Clover Point	Ron Satterfield
1	Short-eared Owl	29	Victoria Golf Course	Ron Satterfield
1	Swamp Sparrow	30	Dooley Rd. at Lochside	Mike Shepard & Ray Williams
1	Little Gull	30	William Head	Mike Shepard & Keith Taylor
2	Great Horned Owl	31	517 Witty Beach Rd.	M.E. Goodwill
<u>November</u>				
1	Townsend's Solitaire	5	Mount Douglas	Aaron Drabitt & Scott Fowler
4	* "Black" Brant	5	Clover Point	Mike Shepard
1	Glaucous Gull	5	Royal Roads	Ray Williams
1	Gyr Falcon	6	Martindale Rd.	Alan MacLeod et al
1	Turkey Vulture	9	1496 Admirals Rd.	Ellen Myers
1	"Whistling" Tundra Swan	9	Panama Flats	Giff Calvert
1	Harris' Sparrow	9	McHugh Rd.	John Aldcroft
1	Cattle Egret	11	Victoria Int. Airport	Ron Satterfield
4	Mountain Bluebirds	12	Victoria Golf Course	Ron Satterfield & Keith Taylor
1	Redhead	12	McIntyre Reservoir	M.E. & V. Goodwill
1	Yellow-billed Loon	16	Cadboro Point	Don Hanson
1	Long-eared Owl	18	4131 San Mateo Place	Aaron Drabitt & Scott Fowler
1	Brambling	20	1909 Billings Road	Keith Taylor
1	Snow Bunting	20	Clover Point	Alf Porcher
1	Nashville Warbler	20	1959 Kaltasin Road	Tim Zurowski
1	Hutton's Vireo	21	764 Piedmont Drive	Mike Shepard
1	Rustic Bunting	25	Jordan River	M.E. & V. Goodwill
1	Palm Warbler	26	Jordan River	Keith Taylor

* "Black" Brant are extremely rare in Fall.

Editor's Note: The above list gives only a faint indication of the extraordinary nature of this period for local birders, with the appearance of species that are rare, or very rare, or downright incredible. We hope to comment on this in a future issue of the Victoria Naturalist.

PROGRAMME -- JANUARY & FEBRUARY, 1984

Please meet at the location specified for each trip - if no location given field trips will meet at Mayfair Lanes, corner of Oak and Roderick - at the specified time. No cars can be left at Mayfair Lanes. Always take a lunch and dress according to the weather. If you have any problems, please contact Alice Elston (592-1400) or Harry Davidson (479-1286). Always phone the Rare Bird Alert (478-8534) the week before a trip that you anticipate taking in order to obtain full particulars or details of any changes that may have been made. Changes cannot be avoided.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7

Birding Field Trip - details to be announced.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10

Come to hear Jake Masselink, Director of Visitor's Services for British Columbia Parks, tell us about specific uses that naturalists can make of our parks. General Meeting of the Society at the Newcombe Auditorium at 8:00 p.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY

JANUARY 13 & 14

The Wildlife Series event this month is Audubon lecturer, Clint Denn, who will tell us and show us slides of "The Golden Sea of Cortez". The Sea of Cortez or Gulf of California lies between the Baja Peninsula and the mainland of Mexico.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

Birding at Elk Lake. Leader: Dave Fraser. Meet at Beaver Lake Parking Lot at 8:30 a.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Birding. Join Ed Coffin at 9:30 a.m. at the Ogden Point Breakwater for a journey around the waterfront to Ten Mile Point. This will be for a study of the waterfowl wintering off Victoria's shores.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Dr. Bob McMinn will walk along parts of the proposed trail system in Greater Victoria with the Conservation Committee and anybody else who would care to join him. Please meet at Mayfair Lanes at 9:30 a.m.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY

FEBRUARY 10 & 11

The Wildlife Series will present Ruth Kirk, who is well known to many in Victoria from her previous films and books. She will present slides and talk about Japan, Scotland and Vancouver. Don't miss an enjoyable evening.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

Don't miss the Annual Dinner to be held at the Faculty Club at the University of Victoria at 7:00 p.m. (No-host bar at 6:00 p.m.) Richard Kool will speak on "Sleuthing with Bones". Price \$16.00. Tickets available from Dorothy McCann 592-1992, and Betty Lothian, 477-2345.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

Birding with Lyndis Davis. Visit the various bays on the Saanich Peninsula. Meet Mayfair Lanes 9:30 a.m.

JUNIOR NATURALIST PROGRAMME

Now that the Christmas holiday is over, it's time to start thinking about the Junior Naturalist Programme for this spring. That sounds strange, because I am writing this note before Christmas in order to send it in for printing. In fact, today is the day we all went orienteering at Francis Park. It was one of the biggest turnouts of the year so far and everyone seemed to have fun racing through the Park following maps. We owe a big thank you to Mr. Dennis Fedoruk who filled in on short notice and devoted so much of his time to setting up the course.

The Spring 1984 Programme looks as if it will be just as much fun as the one in the Fall. The listing below shows what we will be doing in January and February. Please notice where the dates have been changed from the usual every-other-Sunday. There is an orienteering clinic at the University of Victoria on January 22 that parents may wish to attend (for more information, call U.Vic. 721-8373), so that weekend has been left open.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

1:00 P.M. Nature Diaries for 1984.

To start the year off right, we will be preparing nature diaries for the whole year. These will help us to keep those resolutions to observe more in nature and write down the facts. Mr. Mike Bocking will be leading this Program which will be held at Francis Park. Meet at the Nature House.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29

1:00 P.M. Ecology Field Trip. Ms. Cathy Carr will be leading this Programme which will be held at Francis Park. She will be describing the ecological changes that occur during succession. Don't you know what that means? Well then, come along and find out. You will be down on your hands and knees looking at small plants and so on, so be prepared! WEAR CLOTHES THAT CAN GET DIRTY!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5

1:00 P.M. Bird Behaviour. Learn about bird behaviour during this outing on the Saanich Peninsula. Meet the Leader, Mr. Bruce Whittington, at Island View Beach. To get there, turn off the Pat Bay Hwy. at Island View Road and follow it down to the beach. Bring binoculars and wear boots.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19

1:00 P.M. Edible Plants. We will again meet at Francis Park where Mrs. Nancy Turner will describe the variety of wild plants that can be eaten.

If you have any questions or wish to suggest programme topics for later in the year, please give us a call at 477-4947. Volunteers to lead programme events are especially welcome.

NANCY AND RAY ADDISON