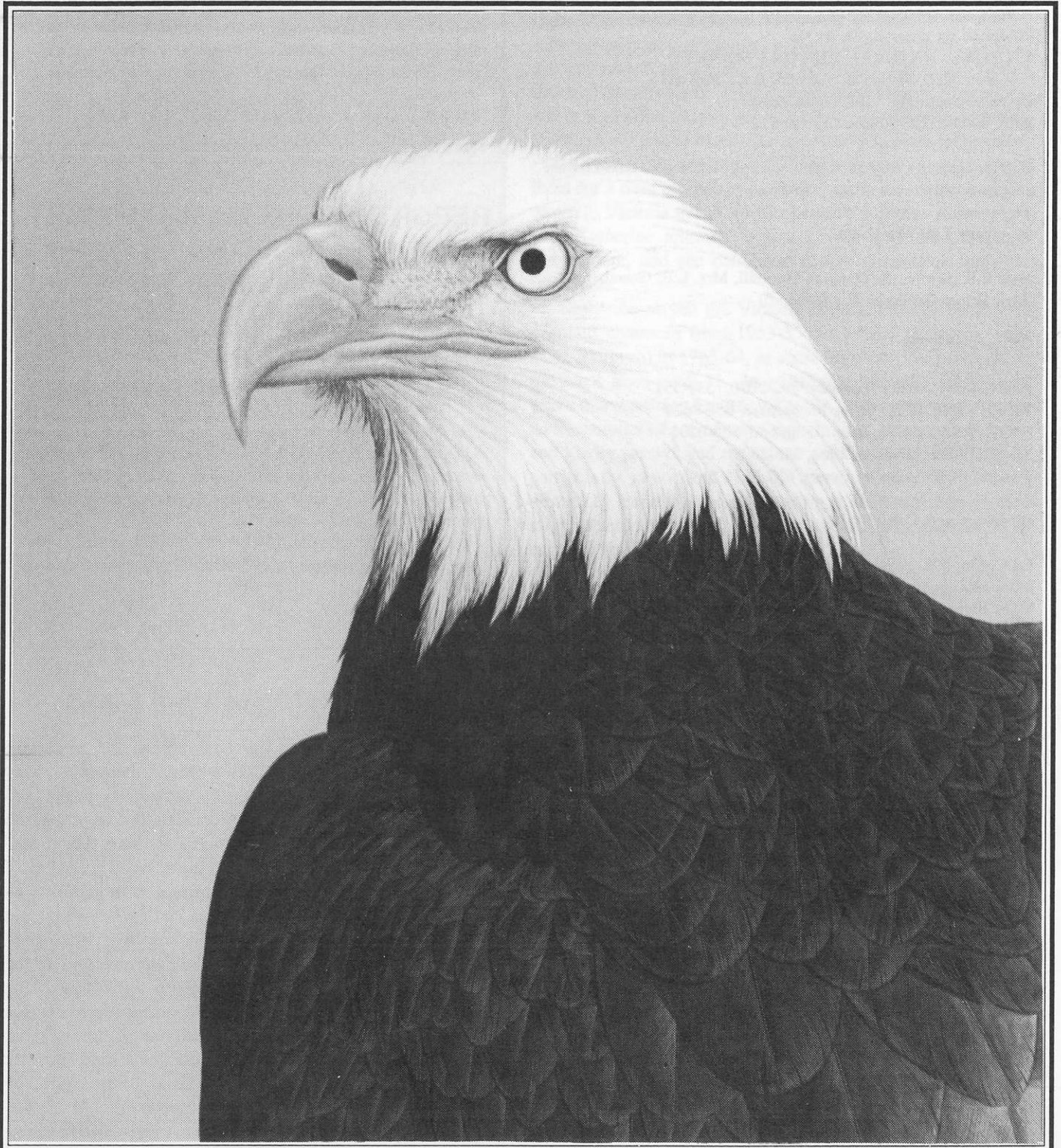


# The Victoria NATURALIST

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VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



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**Our Cover: A Touch of Class**

THE VICTORIA NATURALIST has always been the product of many of our members' efforts. However, without in any way belittling the work of these volunteers, there can be no doubt in anyone's mind that it is our past editor, Mark Nyhof, who made the NATURALIST the outstanding journal it is today. His imagination, diligence and sheer hard work have turned it into one of the most attractive and respected publications in its field.

As most of us know, Mark is not only a first-rate editor, but also a talented and successful artist. His sensitive paintings of birds quickly collect red stickers within minutes after the opening of his shows at the Marshall Gallery. In a fitting tribute to our departing editor we are proud to present one of his fine paintings on our cover this month. Mark has graciously given us permission to reproduce this "portrait" of a Bald Eagle as the first of what is hoped will be a series of art covers by different local wildlife painters and sculptors. **J.d.B.**

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**Katherine M. Sherman, 1904-1989**

by Douglas Turnbull

After a lengthy illness, which she bore with great fortitude, Katherine Sherman passed away on February 24. Predeceased by her husband Fred in 1978, she is survived by sisters Anna McClury in England and Ruth Lash in Victoria, and by numerous nieces and nephews.

Born Katherine Maxwell Harris, she was educated in England and received a B.Sc. degree (concentrating on botany) and a social service diploma from the Bedford College for Women at the University of London. Following graduation she worked for social service agencies in London for several years. In 1936 she emigrated to Canada with her sister Ruth and Ruth's husband Stanley Lash. They eventually arrived in Vancouver, where Katherine found a job in the social welfare department. She was later sent to Duncan to open a new welfare office there.

In 1944 Katherine and Fred Sherman were married. They lived for a time on Saltspring Island, until it was necessary to return to Victoria to care for Katherine's parents. A few years later Katherine returned to social work with the provincial government, and she continued in this occupation until her retirement.

Katherine served the Victoria Natural History Society as program chairman from 1953-55; as botany chairman (with M.C. Melbum) in 1963-64; as secretary from 1965-69; and as president from 1969-71. In addition to her other duties, she wrote many articles for THE VICTORIA NATURALIST and organized a number of out-of-town expeditions. She was a friendly and kindly person, and one of her principles was that people, particularly new people, should receive a friendly greeting when they came to a society meeting or field trip. She greeted many strangers herself, and for a time was successful in organizing a group of "greeters."

Although her first love was botany, Katherine became an accomplished birder and combined her birding and her 'botanizing'. She also enjoyed participating in the activities of the Oak Bay Seniors, particularly the creative writing group, the drama group, and the garden group.

Over a period of many years Katherine made a significant contribution to the Victoria Natural History Society, and it was fitting that she be named the first recipient of its distinguished service award.

**Erratum**

In Barbara Begg's Skylark article in the March/April issue of the NATURALIST, the first sentence, second paragraph, p. 16, should read, "The Skylark population grew to close to 1,000 birds by March 1962 (D. Stirling, R.Y. Edwards), and to 1,100 according to a year-end estimate by Stirling in 1966." As well, the following reference should have been included on p. 18: Weber, W.C. 1977. "A Skylark sighting on the B.C. mainland, with a review of the species' status in B.C. and Washington." *Discovery*, Vol. 6, No. 2.

## Notes from Schooner Cove

by Brenda Trotter

The sound of the waves, the calls of the gulls, the ever varying patterns of light, from bright sunshine to "socked in" with gloomy fog. Flat calm or pounding surf. The constantly changing scenery. A view of the Strait of Georgia right from my kitchen table! I may be in heaven—birder heaven, at any rate.

I have had the fantastic chance to rent a house right on the waterfront near Schooner Cove, around the bend from Nanoose Bay, Vancouver Island. The folks who own it run a bed and breakfast for most of the year but head south for a few months in the winter. They like to have someone in the house while they are away, so I'm in residence. The place comes complete with everything, including a guard dog courtesy of a neighbour who is generally absent.

Situated on a bluff well above the sea, the house is surrounded by huge arbutus and Douglas fir trees. One arbutus, growing near the porch, is a metre in diameter at the base.



The beach in front changes from large masses of solid bedrock through all sizes of rounded rocks to tiny pebbles that make up a very coarse sand. The sand looks dark brown, but on close inspection turns out to be a combination of tiny black and tiny red stones. The shore crabs, when I find them, are *Hemigrapsus nudus*, which prefer rocky over shady shores.

Directly in front are Gerald and Amelia Islands, with one of the Ballenas group in the background. Amelia is an elongate chunk of solid rock with some scrub trees, mainly arbutus, on it. Gerald, a little larger, has bigger trees and more vegetation. Both are about a kilometre off shore. The coastal mountains are visible on clear days, along with some islands I have yet to identify.

As I write, a harbour seal, *Phoca vitulina richardi*, has its head poked above the surface and is looking around down by the large rock in front. It's a small one. There could be hundreds of individuals out there, but I can tell there are at least

two, because sometimes the head that pokes up is quite a bit larger. That seal had better take care, as my friend saw some killer whales at Rath Trevor Beach the other day.

This has been a wonderful January for birding. As a rule, being more than a little cold-blooded, I am reluctant to brave the elements, and when I do get out I just sort of note the species and get back where it's warm. To be able to sit in a warm house with the fire blazing and watch the birds going about their business completely unaware of my existence is just wonderful. When I need a closer look I don my coat and step onto the balcony where my telescope is set up.

In early January the water along this rough section of coast was mainly used by fishing birds and except for a pair of Red-Necked Grebes that appeared to be permanent fixtures, floating just offshore with heads buried in their backs, they all passed through rather quickly. The grebes must be extremely efficient fishermen, as they seem to spend most of the day just lolling about, occasionally interrupting their siesta to sit up and flap their wings.

Throughout January, Common Mergansers were regular visitors, either singly or in groups of up to 20. They use a number of different fishing methods, I guess, depending upon what the food source is up to. They may swim along quickly with heads up, then down, piercing the water with their bills to have a look below. If in a group they will keep their heads under much longer than if they are alone. I don't know if one bird is actually the designated lookout, but one is generally watching above while all the others swim along with eyes below the surface. They quickly dive and may stay under some time. Another method used by Common Mergansers is stop-and-wait. A female Common Merganser was fishing in one spot, just off the rock in front, diving occasionally, for about an hour one day. A group of half a dozen fellow Common Mergansers passed by one

way and some time later passed by the other way and she didn't budge.

Along the shore to the left at high tide there is a long rocky ledge. One day, when there was a lot of surf action against these rocks, I was able to observe a third fishing method. There were about 20 Common Mergansers, each about two metres apart and just out from the rock ledge in the white surf, spread out along the shore. A Great Blue Heron and a number of gulls were standing on the rocky ledge. My guess is that fish or shrimp were caught up in the wave action and were stunned by crashing against the rocks or simply could not swim in the strong surf, thus making them easy prey.

It was interesting to watch a Common Loon preening one day. It was turned on its side in the water and, although it was early in January, seemed to be in the process of molting. With its bill it was vigorously scratching the breast area, which appeared to have a dark patch along the ventral median line.

Like a child scratching chicken pox it could not seem to leave it alone and worked at those breast feathers for over an hour.

Horned Grebes are regular visitors. They appear tiny, bobbing on the surface. Early in January a Pied-Billed Grebe was around the rock, but it was never seen again.

Barrow's Goldeneyes are something new to me. They are often around here in a flock of about 30. One day the tide was high so that there was a surf-filled channel between the rocks in front. The large flock divided, with one group passing through the channel and the other going around the sea side. Immediately upon passing through the narrow channel the ducks began to dive vigorously. Glancing to the sea side of the rock, I was amazed to find the other group doing exactly the same thing in the surf. They must have been after something caught in the fast water and the surf.

Just at the end of a day as the light was fading I noticed a strange ripple on the water. I watched for some time, completely baffled, until I realized it was a Common Loon. Surfacing, dolphin-like and without seeming to pause or raise its head, it was under again. Then suddenly I thought, "Yikes, it's jet propelled!" as seconds later it reappeared some distance away. A few more minutes passed before I realized that there were two of them. These two loons must have been working a school of small fish. It was only mid-January, but it could have been some early herring. I realize now that by keeping such a low profile the loons can escape the attention of the gulls. Finally a Glaucous-winged Gull did spot them and moved in, calling his buddies, and at that the loons simply evaporated.

The Glaucous-winged Gulls work on the principle that stealing beats actually going out and working for a living. They sit on rocks or out on the water and whenever a fishing bird should happen along they move closer. Should the bird catch a fish, they attach or force it to dive. The gulls must recognize individual birds too. One attacked a female Barrow's Goldeneye and made her dive repeatedly until she had swallowed whatever she had caught. It did not bother with any of the other females; keeping after the same one, no matter where she surfaced. They all looked alike to me, but that gull knew which was which. The loons are too smart for the gulls, though. They either dive and stay under so long, or go such a distance, that the gull does not see them surface, or they keep low in the water so they are not visible over the waves.

The Common Loons appear to get a sort of mischievous pleasure out of startling grebes and mergansers. Suddenly the grebe will fly some distance ahead and a loon will surface where it had just been. This happens over and over, so it cannot be just by chance.

January 30 was a very windy day. The wind was south by south west, forming cat's paws on the water. Mergansers and loons had their tails pointed straight up, apparently to maintain a heading into the wind. When the wind touched the surface near the Horned Grebes, they would quickly dive. I guess it's safer under water than to be buffeted by the wind, especially if you are small.

As the tides in the daylight hours became lower in early February, a few dabblers such as Mallard and American Widgeon began to show up. A group of pairs of Ring-necked Ducks stayed around in the bay for a few days. None stay long, as this rough shore has little to offer non-fishing birds.

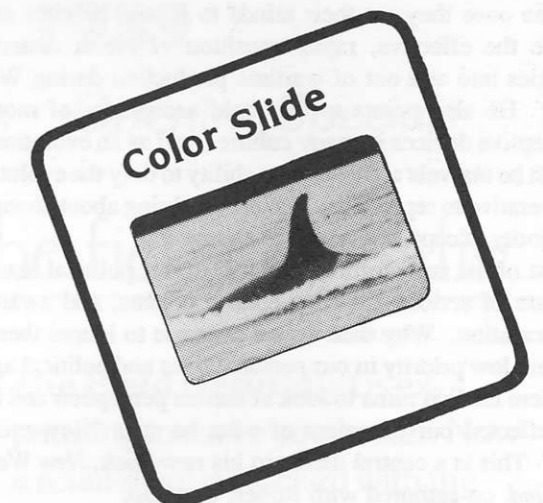
The occasional small drama unfolds here. The two Glaucous-winged Gulls, who seem to reside on the rock in front, are presumably a mother and her young of the past year, as the juvenile often begs for food. One day the adult was in the water just off the rock. She plunged in head first with wings open and reappeared with a bright orange sun starfish the size of a large hand. Up on the rock the adult was spied by the young and a game of keep-away began. The adult puts down starfish, young moves in, adult picks up starfish and walks away. This continues for about 20 minutes, over rocks, down the beach out of sight, then back. Finally, the adult is able to get a couple of legs off and swallowed. The dance continues until a leg falls off and the young gets it. Apparently it is not to its liking, as it immediately flies off. Quickly the adult wumps back the centre disk in one swallow. The young bird returns too late for any more.

I see more fish-eating birds, as well as Steller Sea Lions, *Eumetopias jubata*, these days. The bull sea lions at the beginning of January were seen individually or in pairs but are now seen in groups of 10. I never see any cows.

The gulls and cormorants caught my eye. They were working a large ball of fish. I spied a couple of eagles, and following one with my 'scope I was amazed to see that what I had thought was snow was actually bald head after bald head! There were 12 adults and two immature Bald Eagles sitting on the rocks and trees of Amelia Island. What a sight.

The days have passed and it's mid-February. I can see the "eaters" are gathering. I'm eagerly awaiting the herring run!

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## Paul Ehrlich in Victoria

by Alan Burger

Several years ago, Paul Ehrlich's name was associated with "gloom and doom" warnings of the effects of human overpopulation and environmental degradation. Ehrlich is a leading population ecologist, with a strong background of research and teaching at Stanford University. He and his wife Anne have been very effective, through their publications, in making many people aware of the dangers of exponential population growth and the escalating misuse of the earth and its resources.

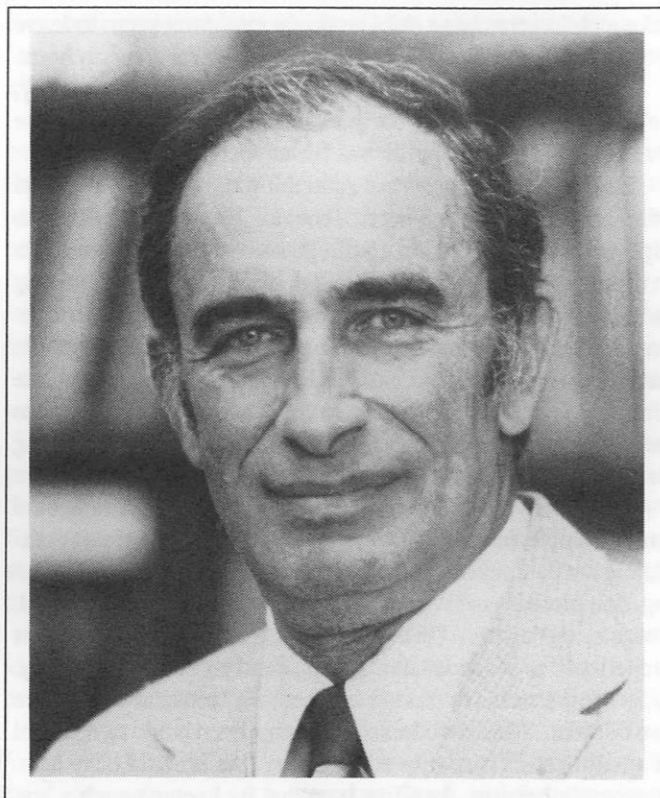
Ehrlich was in Victoria on March 17 to deliver a lecture in the Royal British Columbia Museum's Super Series, and I was fortunate to be part of a small group that accompanied him birding by boat off Oak Bay. It was rewarding to find that a man with his international reputation still finds great delight in watching birds and adding new species (Northwest Crow, Pigeon Guillemot and Rock Sandpiper) to his life-list. Paul Ehrlich is enthusiastic about biology in all its forms, and while he is realistic and forthright about the nasty fate of many of the world's natural ecosystems, he does not fill one with gloom.

This impression was reinforced that evening while I listened to his lecture. His talk was intense and covered a wide range of topics, including current environmental and sociological problems. He pulls no punches, uses hard facts and figures, and leaves no doubt that the world is rapidly approaching several interrelated environmental crunches. These include global warming, acid precipitation, ozone depletion, problems of food production and distribution, loss of biological diversity, deforestation, overfishing, misuse of pesticides, and soil degradation.

Just listing these topics is enough to fill one with a sense of gloom and despair; Ehrlich, however, does leave room for hope. He points out that humans are very good at solving problems once they set their minds to it, and he cites as an example the effective, rapid transition of North American economies into and out of wartime production during World War II. He also points to the rapid acceptance of modern contraceptive devices in many cultures, and as an evolutionary biologist he marvels at this human ability to defy the evolutionary imperative to reproduce. Society can bring about change if the majority accepts the need for change.

Most of us, and presumably most of our political leaders, are aware of serious environmental problems, and aware of their escalation. Why then do we continue to ignore them or give them low priority in our personal lives and political agendas? Here Ehrlich turns to look at human perception and how it has affected our treatment of what he calls "slow-motion crises." This is a central theme in his new book, *New World! New Mind*, co-authored with Robert Ornstein.

The problem, says Ehrlich, is that our sensory systems have evolved to ignore most of the stimuli they receive. Our brain responds to only one-billionth of the incoming stimuli. We react to immediate events, and "tune-out" or habituate to slow, background changes. This has gone on for millions of years during our evolution, and has contributed to our survival. We have responded immediately to the arrival of dangerous predators, but have not been consciously aware of changes in



Paul Ehrlich

vegetation over periods of several years.

We are still much the same today. The information carried in our news media is selected to catch our attention, but most of it is of trivial importance in the long term. The really serious "slow-motion" problems such as overpopulation and habitat degradation seldom grab our attention, even if we are concerned about them. We react to plane crashes but ignore the chronic malnourishment of billions of people. The poisoning of two grapes from Chile is big news, but the dangerous reductions in soil fertility around the world virtually never make the front page. Ehrlich's comments made me think of the way the forests in British Columbia have been treated. Would we still be so complacent about the effects of poor forestry practices in our province if all the clear-cutting, soil erosion and siltation of streams had occurred overnight, instead of over many decades?

One major concern of biologists that is beginning to be discussed in the popular media is the increasing loss of biological diversity. A species is the end product of millions of years of evolution but can become extinct very easily, sometimes before it is even identified and named by scientists. Even species now protected in reserves may face extinction. Reserves are ecological islands in a sea of rapid change. If climatic change alters the habitat in the reserve and the protected species cannot shift its range, extinction may be inevitable.

What is the value of biodiversity? Why should we be concerned about the loss of species? Ehrlich shows that the loss of species is bad news for humans. Not only are we losing organisms of great aesthetic value, but it's going to hit us in our pocketbooks and lead to degradation of our own environment. The genetic library contained in living things is largely unexplored and will yield huge rewards in new crops, natural pesticides and drugs. We are realizing that the maintenance of eco-


system surfaces is good economics. Our survival and economic success depends directly on the quality of the gases, water, soil and living organisms that make up our environment. By degrading these ecosystem surfaces, we are merely passing the costs on to future generations.

Ehrlich believes there are solutions to the approaching environmental crunches. In most cases, we already know what the solutions are, but need to find ways to implement them. He believes that if we do not succeed, within the next year and a half, in bringing about a world-wide ban on chloro-fluorocarbons (CFCs) to prevent further erosion of the earth's ozone layer, then we really are in trouble. The news media should find ways to make the real problems newsworthy. Why not, he asks, publish daily graphs showing the changes in environmental criteria in the same way that newspapers now publish trivial information such as the Dow Jones index?

What can we as concerned individuals do? Several things, says Ehrlich. Become educated about at least one environmental or societal problem. Pay a tithe to your society by putting at least 10% of your time toward solving one of society's problems. Realize that politicians don't lead, they are pushed. Realize that Canada, along with every other country in the world, is already overpopulated, because we are living well beyond the means of our natural resources.

The hope that is expressed in Paul Ehrlich's message is that people around the world will begin to look carefully at the loss of habitability of our planet, and force changes—soon.


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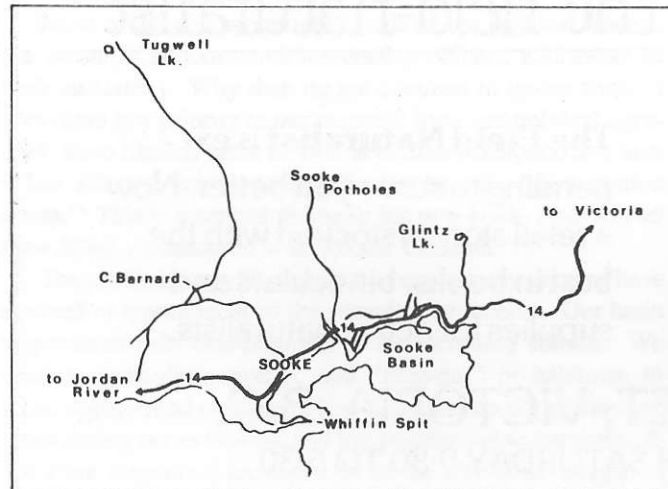
## Bird Finding on Vancouver Island

### Part 4: Sooke to Tugwell Lake

by Keith Taylor

Sooke lies in the extreme southwest parameter of the southeast coastal lowlands. For the first time in this series we will be venturing into the east coast biogeoclimatic zone, leaving southeast coastal lowland species below us at lower elevations.

We start our trip at the corner of Highways 1 and 14 west of Victoria. Turn onto Highway 14 through Colwood. Our first stop will be Glintz Lake Road (right at 19.1 km). A drive up this road at night or at twilight could produce Northern Pygmy Owl, especially just before reaching the boy scout camp (1.1 km). One has been heard and seen regularly of late (October to mid-May). It may be resident. This "mountain owl" is most prevalent at higher elevations. Western Screech Owl and Great Horned Owls may also be encountered. Dawn will find most "rainforest" species here. Our second stop is made at Goodridge Road, Sassenos, reached after driving an additional 13.2 km. (left). Just before turning you will pass over a small bridge. Along this creek are American Dippers in the fall and winter. Drive down Goodridge Road to the peninsula (.5 km). This general area is certainly the best area for finding wintering Spotted Sandpipers on southern Vancouver Island. A thorough check will produce one in a mild winter. Barrow's Goldeneye are common in the area, especially behind the mill (private property). Use the peninsula as a vantage point for scoping Sooke Basin for waterfowl. Many Red-throated Loons will be seen here. Common Murre and Marbled Murrelets are offshore. Check the log booms at the marina for wintering shorebirds—Black Turnstones, Surfbirds, and Black-bellied Plover. All three species of cormorant will be found on log booms. A Terek Sandpiper was found here in July 1987. Return to Highway 14 and turn left. At Sassenos, access can be made to an abandoned railway track which closely parallels Highway 14. You may turn right at either Woodland Drive or Harbour View for 1 km. A walk along here offers good fall and winter birding.



The following species may be found (\*winter, +all year):

California Quail +  
Downy Woodpecker +  
Northern Flicker +  
Steller's Jay \*  
Northwestern Crow +  
Chestnut-backed Chickadee +  
Bushtit +  
Red-breasted Nuthatch +  
Brown Creeper +  
Bewick's Wren +  
Winter Wren +  
Golden-crowned Kinglet \*  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet \*  
Hermit Thrush (uncommon) \*  
American Robin +  
Varied Thrush \*  
Cedar Waxwing (rare in winter) +  
Northern Shrike (rare in winter) +  
Rufous-sided Towhee +  
Fox Sparrow \*  
Song Sparrow +  
Golden-crowned Sparrow \*  
White-crowned Sparrow (uncommon) +  
Dark-eyed Junco \*  
Purple Finch +  
House Finch +  
Red Crossbill (erratic) \*  
Pine Siskin +  
American Goldfinch +  
Evening Grosbeak \*  
House Sparrow +

#### SUMMER:

Rufous Hummingbird  
Western Flycatcher  
Swainson's Thrush  
Warbling Vireo  
Orange-crowned Warbler  
MacGillivray's Warbler  
Wilson's Warbler

After an additional 2 km, turn left onto Idlemore Road (at the gravel pit). After 8 km turn right on Kaltasin Road for .1 km, straight through on the dirt trail under the trees at the corner of Billings Road. Beyond lies the Sooke River Estuary, an important wintering area for waterfowl and migrating shorebirds. Most species of dabbling ducks are represented, including Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveller (rare), Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon (uncommon), American Wigeon, Canvasback (uncommon), Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup (uncommon) and Hooded and Common Mergansers. Most sea ducks will be found in other areas of the basin: Oldsquaw, Black Scoter (rare), Surf and White-winged Scoters, Common and Barrow's Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Red-breasted Merganser. All three loons are represented, with the Yellow-billed seen on rare occasions. All grebes are found here, with Eared rare. A few pairs of Mute Swans inhabit the

basin. Check the gulls in winter for Mew, Thayer's, Glaucous-winged, with the occasional Western, Herring, and Glaucous (rare). An old record of King Eider and a recent record of Emperor Goose show the possibilities of finding rare waterfowl.

The spring shorebird migration brings Semipalmated Plover and regularly Ruddy Turnstones (late April to mid-May). This is the only regular stop for this species in spring on southern Vancouver Island. It is best looked for May 5-15. Many Black Turnstones use this estuary as a spring stopover in early May. Fall migration brings the usual southern Vancouver Island species. The "speciality" here is the Caspian Tern. This is the best location on eastern Vancouver Island to find this summer transient. In early May through early August (particularly mid-May to early June) this large tern is found resting on the mud flats. A low or flooding tide is best for locating them. I have seen them on 50% of trips (see Bob Hay's article on the Sooke River Estuary, the NATURALIST Vol. 43.4.).

A drive or walk to the foot of Billings Road (.1 km) will give access to scoping other areas of the basin and Billings Spit. Check any feeders in the area in winter (a Brambling was found here in November 1983). A walk along the beach could produce Spotted Sandpiper. The general neighborhood is good in winter for later warblers. Sooke and Sassenos are particularly good areas for finding Evening Grosbeaks in winter months; they are found reliably feeding in the maples here. Red-breasted Sapsuckers, too, are fairly reliable. Check the fruit trees and cedars in the winter months.

Return to Highway 14 and turn left toward Sooke. After driving an additional 1.3 km you will see Sooke River Road on the right. If you wish to see American Dippers, drive the 6 km to the Sooke Potholes, where they are resident. In summer months the birds retreat a short way upstream. Continue to downtown Sooke and Otterpoint Road (2.9 km) from Idlemore Road. All amenities are to be found (I recommend Mom's Restaurant).

For the next stop at Tugwell Lake, be sure to check your spare tire and gas up. Roads are gravel but in good shape. **Travel is only allowed on weekends.** Traffic is moderate, so if help is needed one need not feel isolated.

Turn right at the lights onto Otterpoint Road north and west for 8.2 km to Young Lake Road; turn right (north) for 1 km and turn right at Camp Barnard. You are now on Butler Main Logging Road. Along Young Lake Road, .1 km back from Butler Main in the stand of Douglas Fir, is a small colony of Hammond's Flycatchers (late April to September). Black-throated Gray Warblers are to be found in the mixed deciduous areas along the length of Otterpoint Road, as well as other common species found in this habitat. Stay on Butler Main, watching for the mile marks on the side of the road. Between mile marker nine and ten (16.2 km) is an access road on the left marked with a yellow gate. Here, at 2,500-3,000 feet, you have entered another biogeoclimatic zone: the east coast. The east coast is generally at higher elevation, with fewer settlements than that of the southeast coastal lowlands (the exception being the lowlands at Port Hardy-Port McNeil). Most (some are restricted) of the species found on the southeast coastal lowlands are to be found in fewer numbers, but not as thinly distributed as on the west coast. At the higher elevations spring


arrives later, and in winter months few species are present. The Hammond's Flycatcher is one common species found throughout, almost restricted to this zone, with some overlap on the western edge of the southeast coastal lowlands (Alberni Lowlands). In fact, the Hammond's Flycatcher largely replaces the Western Flycatcher in this zone.

Several transects through the division line of the east-west coast have proven how accurate this division is in the distribution of Vancouver Island species. There are no species of birds restricted to the east coast, a "gray" area between the southeast coastal lowlands and the west coast. The "specialities" for Tugwell Lake include Blue Grouse, Ruffed Grouse, Red-breasted Sapsucker, and Gray Jay. Yellow-rumped Warblers (Audubon's) are common summer residents.

The Gray Jay is found uncommonly on walks in this area, but extensive driving, especially during the winter months, will find one. Blue Grouse will be heard booming everywhere immediately after leaving the car (April to September). Ruffed Grouse should be heard drumming in willowy and alder areas in spring or flushed along the numerous trails. Red-breasted Sapsuckers' Morse code drumming should be heard April to June. They may be difficult to find (uncommon) due to their secretive nature. Look and listen between mile markers 7.5 and 10.5. In the many dead standing trees riddled with nesting holes, one may find Western Bluebirds (rare), and if lucky, a Northern Pygmy Owl may call during the day. Hairy Woodpeckers are the dominant Picoides woodpecker in the area.

Finding Tugwell Lake itself is rather difficult. Walk past the

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the yellow gate following the main road until you reach the main river crossing of Tugwell Creek (approximately 1.5 km). Here you will find Willow Flycatchers. Then retrace your steps to the first trails on your right. The lake is .5 km away. To reach Butler Main, continue past the lake on a very steep and rough wash-out to the road (.5 km). You should then walk to the left to your vehicles.

Other passerines occurring here in summer include: Common Nighthawk, Rufous Hummingbird, Olive-sided, Western, and Willow Flycatchers, Rufous-sided Towhee (uncommon), Townsend's Solitaire (rare), Swainson's Thrush, American Robin, Solitary Vireo, Hutton's Vireo (rare), Warbling Vireo, and Orange-crowned, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, Common Yellowthroat, Townsend's and MacGillivray's Warblers. Wilson's Warblers are found more commonly at lower elevations along Butler Main and Otterpoint Road. Residents include: Steller's Jay, Chestnut-backed Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch (uncommon), Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Varied Thrush, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Purple Finch, Pine Siskin, and Red Crossbill.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet is mainly a migrant (vagrant in summer). The bog near the gate has Common Yellowthroats and nesting Hooded Mergansers. Occasionally one will find Yellow Warblers and Willow Flycatchers. A singing male Magnolia Warbler was found here in June 1983, and a nesting pair of Red-breasted x Red-naped Sapsuckers, showing that rare birds may be found in the most unlikely places.

Our last stop is just beyond Sooke. Return to downtown Sooke and continue on Highway 14 west, turning right at the stoplights. Drive for 1.7 km to Whiffin Spit Road, turn left and continue to its end (1.5 km). Park your car and walk the spit. Unfortunately the outer end can only be reached during lower tides (wash-out). The spit is good for scoping yet another area of Sooke Basin and the outer ocean. Most Common Terns reach their westerly limits here (some to Orveas Bay). Check through the gulls, as Westerns are prevalent here, especially in August. The more common alcids will be found offshore. Shorebirding can be fair here, with Lesser Golden-Plover (uncommon) most years. Black Scoter used to winter here, but have been scarce lately. Snow Buntings and Lapland Longspurs are regular (both uncommon) in the fall months. A wagtail species was seen here in May of 1980.

The Sooke district is certainly a very interesting birding area, with Tugwell Lake allowing one to escape to solitude. The area has certainly shown the potential for finding great rarities, usually Eurasian. Good birding.

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## Ichthyological Notes The Northern Clingfish

by Graham E. Gillespie

The northern clingfish, *Gobiesox meandricus* (Girard 1858), is a small and inconspicuous member of the intertidal and shallow subtidal communities. It is one of the largest members of the Family Gobiesocidae, a group of about 100 extant species inhabiting shallow tropical and temperate waters throughout the world. Though there are seven species on the Pacific coast of North America, the only other Gobiesocid that ranges north of California is the small kelp clingfish, *Rimicola muscarum*. Northern clingfish range from southern California to southeastern Alaska, and are particularly abundant in Georgia Strait.

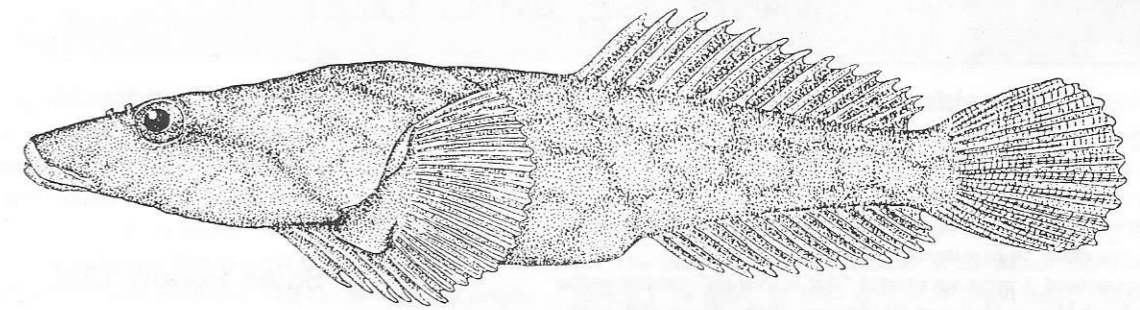
Viewed from above, the northern clingfish resembles a tadpole or a frying pan. The head is wide and flat, having a pair of double nostrils between the small eyes and a large, forward-directed mouth. The tail tapers sharply behind the pectoral fins. They range in color from pale olive-brown to dark cherry red, and are reticulated over the upper body with brownish orange. There is a pale brown bar between the eyes, and another running backwards across the gill cover from each eye. They are occasionally barred or spotted with black. There are no scales, and no lateral line.

The dorsal and anal fins are both single, consisting of only soft rays. The pectoral fins are rounded in profile. The pelvic fins are small, but are united both in front and in back by broad flaps of skin to form a large adhesive disk. It is with this disk that the clingfish grips the rocks and plants it lives on, earning its name.

Other groups of fish have their fins modified to form adhesive disks. These may be divided into two groups; those in which the disk is a homologous structure to that of the clingfish, and those in which the disk is an analogous structure. The concept of homology refers to structures that serve the same purpose, and are derived from the same parts of an organism. The snailfishes and lumpsuckers (Family Liparidae) have a ventral sucking disk that is derived from the pelvic fins, and thus is a homologous structure to the disk of the clingfish. It should be noted, however, that snailfishes and clingfishes are by no means closely related, the snailfish being in the Order Scorpaeniformes, along with the rockfishes, poachers and scuplins, and the clingfishes forming their own order, the Gobiesociformes. When two animals are not closely related, but display similar structures in response to similar ecological situations, they are said to have developed by convergent evolution.

Analogous structures are those which serve a common purpose, but are derived from differing body parts. The manacled sculpin *Synchirus gilli* (Family Cottidae) likewise has fins adapted for adhesion, but it is the pectoral fins that are joined together, and allow the sculpin to cling to the blades of kelp among which it lives. Thus the fins of the manacled sculpin are adaptively analogous structures to those of the clingfishes.

The northern clingfish was first given scientific names by



Girard in 1854 when he described specimens from San Luis Obispo, California, as a new species, *Lepadogaster reticulatus*. The specific name was already occupied by another fish within the genus, however, so Girard re-described it in 1858 as *Lepadogaster meandricus*. Subsequent reorganization of the family placed the northern clingfish first into the genus *Caularchus*, and finally into *Gobiesox*. The modern generic name is formed from the fish names *goby* and *Esox*, the pike. The use of the first likely refers to the ventral sucking disk, an adaptation found in both the clingfishes and the gobies. The reference to the pike, however, is vague. The original generic name is from the Greek roots *lepos*, meaning 'limpet', and *gaster*, meaning 'belly', and refers to the adhesive disk. The specific names both refer to the chain-like pattern on the body of the fish, meaning reticulated and meandering respectively. The northern clingfish has also been called the flathead clingfish, common clingfish, and suckfish.

The northern clingfish was first recorded in British Columbia waters by W.H. Osgood in 1901 from the Queen Charlotte Islands, under the name *Caularchus meandricus*. Bean and Weed recorded several specimens under the same name in 1901, which were collected at Comox in 1893 by Mr. J. Macoun. Also in 1901, Steindachner recorded several specimens taken in 1896 and 1897 at Bare Island, near Victoria, as *Gobiesox meandricus*.

Clingfish breed in the spring, when males guard masses of yellow eggs, which are attached to the underside of rocks in the intertidal zone. The eggs hatch within a few weeks. The species is polygynous, i.e. the male will breed with more than one female in a season.

In a project carried out at the University of Victoria in 1983, Cliff Robertson and I examined the stomach contents of 81 clingfish collected from the Victoria and Sooke regions. All were collected at low tides above the water line, usually occurring one to a rock, but several were found under the same rock in areas where cover was scarce. We were careful to return rocks to their original position, to restore the habitat of those animals and plants we left behind.

Clingfish possess a short, straight gut, consisting only of a muscular stomach and a thin-walled intestine. The stomach contents were packaged into distinct boli, wrapped in a mucus-like material presumed to be secreted by the stomach (food items found at the origin of the stomach had no such covering). On only one occasion was more than one bolus found in a single individual.

Food types recorded included: isopods, amphipods, eu-

phausiids, shrimps, small pagurid, cancrinid, and majid crabs, ostracods, copepods, limpets, small clams, chitons, snails and small fish. The size of the prey items covaried with the size of the fish, with the smaller fish eating only the smallest items, and the larger fish adding larger prey types or larger individual prey items. When several limpets had been consumed, they were stacked in the gut with the convex surface of one shell nested in the concave surface of the next, the body masses having been digested away. Whenever fish remains were identifiable, they were smaller clingfish. The absence of plant material in the diet was predictable, as the low gut length to body length ratio (well under 1.0) is more indicative of a predator than a grazer.

The purpose of the mucus wrapping the food is apparent when one considers the thin-walled intestine, and the sharp spines and legs, or sharp-edged shells, possessed by their prey items. The wrapping protects the gut from punctures which might be caused by these structures. We were unable to ascertain whether the food was digested first, and then the remains wrapped, or whether the food was digested through the wrapping.

In addition to allowing the clingfish to remain stable during the wave action associated with an advancing or receding tide, the ventral adhesive disc may also serve as an anchor allowing the fish to pry limpets, snails or chitons from the substrate. There may also be an advantage to hiding on the under-surface of rocks when the tide is out, perhaps avoiding crabs or other predators that may search the substrate for food.

We concluded that the clingfish is a generalized predator whose diet has a wide range (determined in part by the surrounding community), and that it feeds opportunistically on any suitable items it comes across.

The clingfish is a small fish, not often observed, and, because of its non-economic status, more rarely studied. It is, however, one of the fishes that has fascinated me from my first encounter with it.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

### President's Report

#### Betty Kennedy

1988 was a busy year that saw many changes and new developments in our club. A few items are summarized here.

We sponsored a most successful "Art in Nature" exhibit at the Freeman King Nature House at Goldstream Park. Many club members served as hosts, and thousands of people saw the exhibition. The sale of raffle tickets netted approximately \$1000 for our scholarship fund.

In the fall we were forced, largely for financial reasons, to move our monthly meetings from the Newcombe Auditorium. The University of Victoria graciously consented to provide us with meeting space and has put us under the sponsorship of the Department of Extension. Birders night moved in September to the beautiful new Swan Lake Nature House. Attendance has increased dramatically, and so in February of 1989, the birders also moved to the university. The society wishes to thank UVic's president, Dr. Petch, who is himself a member of the society and an avid birder, for his help and support, which have made these moves possible. We also wish to thank the Royal British Columbia Museum for its support and help for so many years.

The society library has been transferred to Swan Lake and is being sorted and catalogued. Davey Davidson had cared for it for many, many years.

Early in 1989, three long-time members of the society passed away: Davey Davidson, Katherine Sherman, and Jack Hutchings. All of them gave outstanding service to the society for many years, and they will be greatly missed.

The March-April issue of THE VICTORIA NATURALIST was the last for our distinguished editor Mark Nyhof. He has done an outstanding job and we thank him most sincerely. The task of producing and distributing the magazine will now be handled by a team of volunteers headed by John de Bondt as managing editor. John comes to us from the east and has had wide experience in editing.

Any organization is only as strong as its members. Our Society is blessed with many outstanding members—people who give unstintingly of themselves, their time, and their expertise. Among those deserving mention in this regard are Lyndis Davis, Anne Adamson, Mark Nyhof, Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve, Bryan Gates, Adolf and Oluna Ceska, Anne Knowles, Jaclyn Dorsey, Kay Goodall, Keith Taylor, Doug Turnbull, Leah Ramsay, and Wilf Medd. We also extend special thanks to retiring board members Robin Baird, Dave Fraser (who has done an outstanding job as program coordinator), Connie Hawley, Harold Pollock (the bluebird man), and John Hunter, our outstanding treasurer.

### Nominating Committee Report

#### Mary Richmond

At the Annual General Meeting on March 14 the following members were nominated and elected by acclamation to form the 1989 executive: Betty Kennedy, president (re-elected); Mike McGrenere, vice-president; Reuben Ware, secretary; Gordon Devey, treasurer. The following were elected to serve as members of the

board: Richard Ring and Ann Scarfe, for a two-year term; Dannie Carsen and Margaret MacKenzie-Grieve, for a one-year term. Bruce Whittington, Ed Coffin, Bob Nixon and Mary Richmond are continuing on the board and will be due for re-election next year.

### Sales Report 1988

#### Lyndis Davis

<i>National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America</i>	57
<i>The Naturalist's Guide to the Victoria Region</i>	478
Canadian Nature Federation cards	90
Canadian Nature Federation diaries	6
Canadian Nature Federation calendars	6

### Publications Committee Report

#### Bruce Whittington

The literary voice of the society, THE VICTORIA NATURALIST, has become the pride of the organization with its new format, increased use of photographs, and high quality of editorial content and production. It is a lot to expect of a volunteer staff.

In 1988, six issues were produced, as usual. But some of the other statistics warrant closer scrutiny. 126 pages were typed, edited, and laid out. In excess of 4000 magazines were labelled, sorted, and delivered to Canada Post, or otherwise distributed.

Over 35 authors contributed material for publication in the magazine, and photographs by many talented society members added to the scope and quality of the NATURALIST.

The sale of advertising has provided a service appreciated by the membership, but, more importantly, has enabled the staff to produce a magazine of higher quality than the society's budget would otherwise have allowed. Credit here goes to Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve, who sold over \$2000 in advertising.

And now, we have some bad news and some good news. The bad news is that we are losing the people who so ably produced our magazine. Because of pressures of work, family, and birding, Mark Nyhof has stepped down as editor. Jaclyn Dorsey, who edited copy so well, has taken a break also. Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve is slowly releasing her grip on the advertisers.

But there is good news too. From the ranks of our membership we have assembled a new NATURALIST staff; they are well-qualified, and eager to produce an even better product. Dannie Carsen will be looking after advertising, while Alan Burger and Leah Ramsay will be in charge of photography. Brenda Robson takes over as copy editor, and Bob Nixon is working on computerizing the production process. The new editor is John de Bondt, who has a wealth of experience in publishing. Ed Coffin and Lyndis Davis will continue to handle distribution.

I want personally to thank the outgoing staff for their fine work, and to welcome the new crew, who came forward so enthusiastically. Our society is full of capable and willing people; THE VICTORIA NATURALIST proves it.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### Membership Report

#### Ed Coffin

First the good news: on December 31 our membership stood at an all-time high of 678, and in the first two and a half months of 1989 we had a rapid influx of 37 new members. The bad news is that despite this influx, our total number of members on March 14, 1989 was only 547, which is down 131 from the end of December. Why? Because there seems to be an unusual resistance toward membership renewal. One hundred and sixty-eight of last year's members had not renewed by mid-March. At the same time last year, only 82 members had not renewed—less than half of this year's number. This loss has occurred despite three types of reminders: first, the renewal form inserted in the November-December journal; second, the orange circle sticker on page 5 of the March-April journal; and third, the mailing of individual bills, with reply envelopes, which was carried out in March.

All will agree that our journal has become something to be very proud of. But it has also become very expensive, and we desperately need the dues revenue to pay for it. So let's get out our cheque books!

### Report on Bird Habitat Protection

#### Harold Pollock

The plight of the Western Bluebird has been well documented and the results of our efforts on the Gulf Islands and on the southern part of Vancouver Island has received more than adequate coverage by the local press. For the record, however, a summary of the results of the 1988 nesting season is in order.

Last year we had 16 breeding pairs which produced 70 fledglings. All but one of the bluebird families were on mountains, and most of these were on the Gulf Islands. This represents an eight-fold increase in adults and a 10-fold increase in young birds since Charlie Trotter put up his first nest box in 1982.

A recent letter to the editor of the *Journal of the San Juan Islands* describing our bluebird program put me in touch with naturalists in that region. One of them wrote that a bird census carried out in January 1960 on Orcas Island revealed the presence of 146 Western Bluebirds. Another wrote that except for the odd migrant, no bluebirds have been seen on these islands for the last 20 years. What a disaster man has wrought by his introduction of the House Sparrow, the European Starling, and chemical insecticides to this continent.

There are two areas on Vancouver Island where Purple Martins are presently known to breed. One is in the Cowichan Estuary, the other in Esquimalt Harbour. Two of our members have been striving to build up the population in these areas. Bryan Gates is involved in the estuary, and Calvor Palmateer in the Harbour.

In the 1985 breeding season Bryan saw one and possibly two pairs using natural cavities in old pilings. The following spring he installed 12 nest boxes on pilings in the estuary and two were claimed by martins, while a third pair used a natural cavity.

In 1987, 13 more boxes were built and installed, for a total of 25. That spring five breeding pairs took up housekeeping in the nest boxes

and it is believed that 14 juveniles fledged. Unfortunately, due to illness, no records were kept in 1988, so Bryan is awaiting the return of the martins this spring with unusual interest, as are many of his friends. The score, then, is two pairs in '85, three in '86, and five in '87. At this rate of increase the future looks promising indeed.

The history of Purple Martins in Esquimalt Harbour covers a shorter time span. In 1987 they were found nesting in large metal tubes that are used to discharge bilge water from the sides of a decommissioned destroyer—the *Chaudiere*. Two such nests on the seaward side of the vessel were deserted when another ship was tied up alongside. In late September Calvor removed these abandoned nests with their eggs and presented them to the Royal B.C. Museum. It was considered a valuable acquisition, as only one other similar collection from this province had been received by the museum, and that years ago. Only three other breeding pairs and no young were seen in that area that year.

One summer day in 1987 the *Chaudiere* was moved across the harbour a distance of about a mile and brought back to the original anchorage before sundown. The dutiful parents carried on, following the ship all day just as if it was all part of their regular routine.

In 1988 four single nest boxes were installed on a plywood platform fastened to piles. A juvenile pair raised three young in one of these, while six other mature pairs continued to use the destroyer plumbing. The total number of fledglings could not be determined accurately, but Calvor counted 19 young flying around one day in late August.

Since last summer the *Chaudiere* has been moved out of the area, so this year's returning flock will find their floating home missing. Will they move into another vessel with similar bilge pipes, or will they finally accept the housing that has been built to meet their somewhat unusual requirements?

The grant from the Public Conservation Assistance Fund for Western Bluebird and Purple Martin restoration, received in August 1987, has made life much easier for us. It pays for nest box materials and ferry transportation, as well as the rental of a four-wheel drive truck needed to negotiate the rough mountain logging roads. We are deeply grateful for this assistance.

### Awards and Recognition Committee

#### Harold Pollock

This year the board instituted the Distinguished Service Award, which is given to members who have contributed in some outstanding way to the aims and objectives of the society. It consists of a framed certificate, beautifully designed by one of our members—Karen Uldall-Ekman—who is a talented artist. The first winners of this award, presented at the annual dinner February 7, were: Lyndis Davis, David Stirling, and the late Katherine Sherman. Those who know of their work for the society will agree that they are most worthy of the honour.

## Birding Committee Report

### Mike McGrenere

The committee was formed in April 1988 to organize and carry out the birding-related functions of the society. These responsibilities include the bird alert tape, birder's night meetings, birding field trips, the Christmas bird count, the quarterly bird report for *American Birds* publication, updating the Victoria bird checklist, bird habitat, and other birding related activities.

The birding committee is comprised of seven members, including one board member and six other members who are elected at birder's night. The members of the committee during the past year have been Mike McGrenere (board member), Lyndis Davis, Dave Fraser, Bryan Gates, Alex Mills, Ken Morgan, and Bruce Whittington.

Three highlights of this year's birding activities have been the high attendance at birder's night meetings, the Christmas bird count and the initiation of a new checklist for Victoria. Birder's night meetings moved in September 1988 from the Royal British Columbia Museum to the new nature house at Swan Lake. This location proved to be very popular as the meeting room filled to capacity for our fall meetings. In January, attendance reached 85 people, which was well over the capacity for Swan Lake. The February meeting was moved to the Cornett Building at the University of Victoria and was attended by over 80 people. The following meeting in March attracted almost 100 birders.

This year's Christmas count was the most successful count held

by the society. We established a new Canadian record for most species seen on a Christmas count and we also had the greatest participation on a Victoria Christmas bird count. A summary of the Christmas count as well as area-by-area results are provided in this issue.

A new bird checklist for the Victoria birding area is being coordinated by Bryan Gates. The checklist will be in the form of a bar graph for each species and is expected to be ready for the FBCN general meeting in May.

A word of appreciation should go to the volunteers who have lead field trips, assisted in the preparation of reports, and helped with other birding functions, making this a most successful year for the birding activities of the society.

## Report on Bursaries and Scholarships

### Harold Pollock

For a number of years the society has funded two scholarships and two bursaries for University of Victoria undergraduate students in the Life Sciences program. The financial strain on many university students today is severe, and, judging by their letters, the recipients of these awards are most appreciative of the assistance.

The VNHS scholarship was instituted in 1970 and has been increased in value several times since then. This year the board decided that it was time for another increase and raised it from \$400 to \$500. The two \$400 Samuel Simcoe bursaries were also increased by the same amount. Both changes were effective for the 1988-89 session.

## VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY STATEMENTS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1988

1987	GENERAL ACCOUNT	1988	1987	NEHRING ACCOUNT	1988
	<u>Income</u>			<u>Income</u>	
\$ 5,778	Membership dues and donations	\$ 8,016	\$ 6,626	Interest	\$ 6,553
1,237	Publications	535			
439	Interest	727			
<u>7,454</u>		<u>9,278</u>	<u>6,626</u>		<u>6,553</u>
	<u>Expenditure</u>			<u>Expenditure</u>	
4,425	Naturalist-production & mailing	3,718	578	Bird alert system	780
658	Cost of meetings	1,141	589	Donations	-
1,239	Postage and stationery	1,365	105	Equipment	-
25	Affiliation fees	2,381			
100	Audit and accountancy	100			
451	Miscellaneous	118			
<u>6,898</u>		<u>8,823</u>	<u>1,272</u>		<u>780</u>
556	EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	455	5,354	EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	5,773
6,566	Funds on hand at beginning of year	7,122	76,265	Funds on hand at beginning of year	79,119
			(2,500)	Transfer to Conservation Project	(2,500)
<u>\$ 7,122</u>	FUNDS ON HAND AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 7,577</u>	<u>\$79,119</u>	FUNDS ON HAND AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$82,392</u>

1987	CONSERVATION PROJECT	1988	1987	SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT	1988
\$ 1,103	Funds on hand at beginning of year	\$ 723	\$ 1,283	<u>Income</u>	
2,500	Add transfer from Nehring account	2,500	1,100	Interest	\$ 1,308
				Donations	1,649
<u>3,603</u>		<u>3,223</u>	<u>2,383</u>		<u>2,957</u>
	<u>Deduct</u>			<u>Expenditure</u>	
2,600	Donations (Swan Lake and FBCN)	2,600	1,200	Scholarships and Bursaries	1,300
280	Development expenses	44	1,183	EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE	1,657
			16,033	Funds on hand at beginning of year	17,216
<u>\$ 723</u>	FUNDS ON HAND AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 579</u>	<u>\$17,216</u>	FUNDS ON HAND AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$18,873</u>

#### Notes:

- 1) Interest is recorded on a cash-received basis.
- 2) It is the policy of the Society that:
  - i) The General Account shall be self-sustaining.
  - ii) The Nehring and Scholarship accounts shall be retained as endowment funds.

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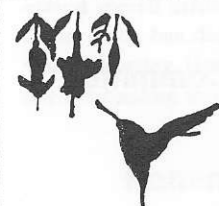


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## Victoria Natural History Society

### Budget 1989

	INCOME	EXPENDITURE
Membership Fees	\$10,300.00 *	
Interest	700.00	
Publications	800.00	
<i>Victoria Naturalist</i>		\$6,500.00
Advertising	1,500.00	
Meetings		400.00
Telephone Swan Lake		480.00
Post and Stationery		1,200.00
Miscellaneous		600.00
Audit		100.00
Affiliation Fees		2,740.00 **
<hr/>		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$13,300.00</b>	<b>\$12,020.00</b>

Projected income over expenditure — \$1280.

Total members December 31, 1988 — 678.

\*\* Charged by FBCN @ \$4 = \$2712 affiliation fees.

\* Projected 100 @ \$22, 269 @ \$17, 220 @ \$16

### VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 1988

TOTAL DEC 1987		TOTAL DEC 1988	GENERAL ACCOUNT	NEHRING ACCOUNT	CONSERVATION PROJECT	SCHOLARSHIP ACCOUNT
	<b>ASSETS</b>					
\$ 10,711	Cash at bank and on deposit	\$ 22,627	\$ 2,977	\$14,134	\$ 579	\$ 4,937
1,068	Accounts receivable	-	-	-	-	-
1,178	Payments in advance	-	-	-	-	-
11,694	Stock of books	8,248	8,248	-	-	-
	Investments at cost					
	(market value 1988: \$76,497;					
	1987: \$74,329)	82,522	291	68,295	-	13,936
<u>\$107,173</u>		<u>\$113,397</u>	<u>\$11,516</u>	<u>\$82,429</u>	<u>\$ 579</u>	<u>\$18,873</u>
	<b>LIABILITIES</b>					
\$ 134	Accounts payable	\$ 148	\$ 111	\$ 37	-	-
2,859	Memberships paid in advance	3,828	3,828	-	-	-
<u>104,180</u>	<b>FUND BALANCES</b>	<u>109,421</u>	<u>7,577</u>	<u>82,392</u>	<u>579</u>	<u>18,873</u>
<u>\$107,173</u>		<u>\$113,397</u>	<u>\$11,516</u>	<u>\$82,429</u>	<u>\$ 579</u>	<u>\$18,873</u>

### REPORT OF THE AUDITOR TO THE MEMBERS

I have examined the Balance Sheet of the Victoria Natural History Society as at 31 December 1988 and the Statements of Income and Expenditure for the year ended on that date. My examination included a general review of the accounting procedures and such tests of accounting records and other supporting evidence as I considered necessary in the circumstances, except that in the case of revenue it was not practicable to extend my examination beyond accounting for receipts as reported by the Society.

In my opinion, except for the effect of any adjustments that might have been required had I been able to carry out a verification of revenue (see preceding paragraph), the accompanying statements present fairly the results of the Victoria Natural History Society for the year ended 31 December 1988.

Victoria  
23 January 1989

BRIAN H. ATWELL  
Chartered Accountant

## Scouler's Corydalis—One of Canada's Rare and Beautiful Plants

by Leon E. Pavlick

In May and June, Scouler's Corydalis (*Corydalis scouleri* Hook.), a member of the Fumitory Family, blooms in western Vancouver Island's Nitinat Valley. The range of this species is west of the Cascade Mountains from northwestern Oregon to Vancouver Island (Ownbey, 1947; Hitchcock *et al.*, 1964). In Canada its known range is largely confined to the Nitinat River watershed; here it is sporadic in distribution, as are its required habitats. Where its needs are met it is locally abundant.

Scouler's Corydalis is a perennial plant with thick rhizomes and erect, hollow stems up to 3 or 4 feet tall. Both its foliage and its flowers are strikingly beautiful. Large, dissected leaves, usually three in number, form a delicate, green canopy for each plant. In dense stands, neighbouring canopies intermingle forming a raised carpet of foliage about three feet above the forest floor. In May and June long racemes of pink flowers extend upward from the canopies; the flowers are spurred and may be an inch or more long. In June the flowers are replaced by somewhat pear-shaped capsules which elastically split when ripe. Should one touch such ripe capsules they explosively dihisce, casting their seeds away.

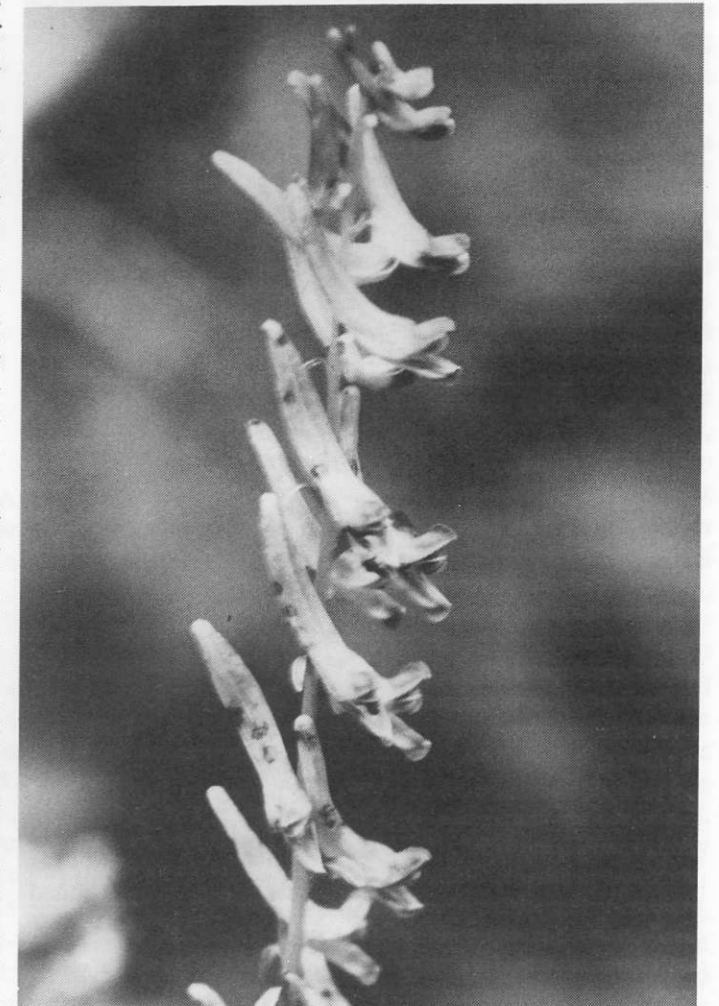
In 1987 I became interested in Scouler's Corydalis and began a study of it. I examined available herbarium specimens, and for two such specimens—both from the Nitinat watershed—I was able to relocate the sites in which they were collected. I searched the Nitinat Valley and found several more sites with stands of this Corydalis. With further searching, I found several specimens in the Cowichan watershed just across the divide from the headwaters of the Nitinat drainage basin. I searched along streams parallel to the Nitinat, e.g. the Gordon River, San Juan River, and Klanawa River, but I have not as yet found it in these drainages.

All the stands of Scouler's Corydalis that I have examined to date have been associated with watercourses—from large rivers to their small tributary streams (Ownbey (1947) also noted such an association). Floodplains of these streams have some deposits of fine sediments including silts. Corydalis stands often occur in silty soil but have also been found where such fine-grained soil was interspersed with deposits of river-rounded rocks. This species often occurs in Salmonberry thickets within forests of Broadleaf Maple, Sitka Spruce and/or Red Alder. Some other associate plants are Lady-fern, Western Swordfern, Palmate Coltsfoot, Cow Parsnip, False Bugbane and Pacific Bleedingheart.

Szczawinski and Harrison (1973) reported one collection of Scouler's Corydalis from Old West Saanich Road on the Saanich Peninsula. I have examined what I think to be the specimen in question and reidentified it to another species. The possibility remains that Scouler's Corydalis could occur in southwestern British Columbia in areas other than the Nitinat. For my ongoing study I would appreciate a communication from anyone having knowledge of other Scouler's Corydalis sites on Vancouver Island or the Lower Mainland (phone 387-2469).

### References

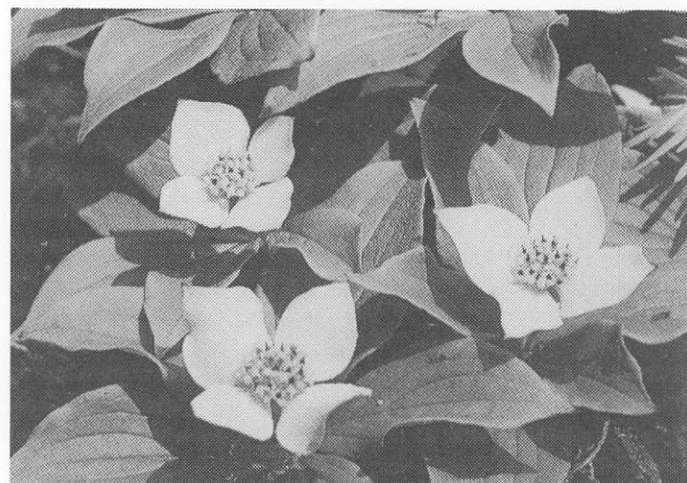
- Hitchcock, C.L., A. Cronquist, M. Ownbey, and J.W. Thompson. 1964. Vascular plants of the Pacific Northwest. Part 2: *Salicaceae* to *Saxifragaceae*. University of Washington Press, Seattle.
- Ownbey, G.B. 1947. Monograph of the North American species of *Corydalis*. *Annals of the Missouri Botanical Garden* 34: 187-259.
- Szczawinski, A. and A.S. Harrison. 1973. Flora of the Saanich Peninsula. *Occasional Papers of the British Columbia Provincial Museum* No. 16. Victoria.



## Growing Native

### Growing Bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis* L.) in the Garden

by David F. Fraser



Bunchberry flowers

Here's a terrific groundcover for a shady spot in the garden, under conifers, deciduous trees, or in the rhododendron bed. Its dwarf stature (3-5" high) is most un-dogwood like, but the flowers are immediately recognizable as dogwoods when they appear. With five cream bracts they look like inch-wide versions of our familiar Pacific dogwood (*Cornus nuttallii*). Like that species, bunchberry flowers are followed by red fruits (drupes) that are as showy as the flowers, and last well into the winter. During the winter months the leaves turn an attractive purple-bronze, which serves as a perfect foil for the clusters of bright red berries. Clark (1976) describes this as one of the "treasure plants" for the garden because of the year-round beauty that it gives.

Bunchberry spreads by underground runners through the leaf litter. Commercially the species is grown in a peat/sawdust mixture augmented with the addition of some slow-release fertilizer. In the garden pick a shady or semi-shady spot with a lot of organic matter in the soil, or grow it in straight coarse peat.

Seeds germinate slowly, germinating best after a warm period of 70-80 days, followed by a cold period of four or five months at just above freezing (Brinkman 1974).

Newly divided plants reestablish slowly and they're best established in the garden from container-grown material.

Eventually bunchberry carpets great swathes of ground with its hundreds of circles of leaves, each crowned with a single five-bracted inflorescence—a picture that Kruckeberg (1972) describes as "pure delight."

#### References:

- Kruckeberg, A.R. Gardening with Native Plants of the Pacific Northwest: An Illustrated Guide. Douglas and McIntyre, Vancouver, B.C. 252 p.
- Clark, L.J. 1976. Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest—from Alaska to Northern California. Edited by John Trelawny. Grays Publishing Co., Sidney, B.C. 604 p.
- Brinkman, K.A. 1974. *Cornus* L. Dogwood. in *Silvics of forest trees of the United States*. Edited by C.S. Shopenmeyer. U.S. Dep. Agric. Agriculture Handbook 271. pp. 336-342.

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## Summary

### Vancouver Island Fall Bird Report

1 August - 30 November, 1988

by David Fraser and Bruce Whittington

This report is a summary of the fall bird report for 1988 that was compiled from sightings sent to the bird report committee. These reports are only as complete as the sightings that we receive. If you see a species that is uncommon, rare or accidental, we would like to know. We are also looking for unusual numbers (high or low), your first sighting of the season, and the last sighting of the season.

Sighting cards can be dropped off/mailed to: David F. Fraser, 5836 Old West Saanich Road, RR #7, Victoria, V8X 3X3; the Swiftsure Tours Office in downtown Victoria; or at Barbara Begg's, 9350 Cresswell Road, North Saanich, V8L 3S1.

This report was compiled by Jerry and Gladys Anderson, Bruce Whittington, Barbara Begg and Lyndis Davis. Report coordination was done by Bruce Whittington.

#### Loons through Ducks

Three Yellow-billed Loon sightings were received. A single bird was seen by R. Kluake on 1 and 12 Oct., Island View Beach, Central Saanich, and one at Mill Bay, Saanich Inlet, on 21 Oct. by S. & E. Watts. Ten Northern Fulmars, a Sooty Shearwater, and a Fork-tailed and a Leach's Storm-Petrel were seen in Juan de Fuca Strait on 27 Nov. (Keith Taylor et al.). Other sightings of Storm-Petrels were in Johnstone Strait in late August and Sept. (BB, DFF, Leah Ramsay). A Laysan Albatross was seen during the first week of October by Ken Morgan at about 80 km off the west coast of Vancouver Island.

An American Bittern was found at Swan Lake on 24 Nov. (BW). Jeremy Tatum saw a Green-Backed Heron on 1 Sept. at Martindale Reservoir, Central Saanich. Other reports of this species came from Trent River (M. Marr), Fanny Bay (Chris Cook), Comox Harbour (J & GA), and Putledge River, Courtenay (Barbara Sedgewick et al.), showing that the species is far more common in the central portion of the east coast of Vancouver Island. Three Tundra Swans wintered with Trumpeters, first found on 20 Nov., Martindale Flats (R. Satterfield). Trumpeter Swans were first reported on 2 Nov. at Martindale Flats (J & GA). An above-average number of Snow Geese were seen this year, with the first reports on 20 Oct. of one at Esquimalt Lagoon. Reports were received of small numbers from Metchosin, C. Saanich, Oyster River, Comox and North Saanich.

We may be down to just one American Black Duck—seen several times at the Harrison Yacht Pond, Victoria (RS, GA). Five reports of Redhead were received, all from southern Vancouver Island, the first at Highway 17 and Island View Road on 13 Oct. (Brent Diakow).

Several reports were sent in of Buffleheads being taken by Glaucous-winged Gulls.

#### Shorebirds through Alcids

Twelve reports of Lesser Golden-Plover were sent in. Of those identified to subspecies, five were "dominica," and five were "fulva." A single Solitary Sandpiper was reported at Sidney Spit on 22 Sept. (J & RS). Six reports of Wandering Tattlers were sent in, all from the Greater Victoria area. Wandering Tattlers were seen through the report period on south Vancouver Island until 1 Nov.: one report from Pacific Rim National Park on 8 Sept. (RS), and one on 4 Oct. at Comox Harbour (D.W. Innes, K. & D. Mulloy). A Marbled Godwit was seen off Mansfield Drive in Courtenay (D.V. Maloff) and one bird was seen at the Victoria Golf Course from 28 Aug. to 6 Sept. (RS, BW). Another was seen at Esquimalt Lagoon on 14 Sept. (RS) and found there until 17 Sept. (BB). Late was a Ruddy Turnstone found at Deep Bay on 24 Oct. (BMS) to 17 Nov. (V.B. Chungranes).

Five reports of Red Knot, with the first on 23 Aug. at Gonzales Point, Victoria (RS). Others were at Sidney Spit (RS), and Esquimalt Lagoon (m.obs.). Last report was one there on 16 Sept. (Jeff Gaskin). The only Semipalmated Sandpipers reported were from Sidney Spit (J & RS). Baird's Sandpipers were well reported this year, with a total of eight reports scattered from Courtenay, Pacific Rim National Park, and the Greater Victoria area. Sharp-tailed Sandpipers were seen at several locations, with the last sighting on 22 Oct. at Dyke Road slough, Courtenay (BMS et al.). Rock Sandpipers continue to be reported in low numbers compared to historical numbers (RS). There were two Buff-breasted Sandpipers seen, one at Clover Point on 24 Aug. and one on 28 Aug. at Sidney Spit (J & RS). A single Ruff was found, an immature on 30 Aug. just off the Victoria Golf Course (RS). Red-necked Phalaropes were reported in small numbers throughout the month of August. Twenty Red Phalaropes were seen off the *M.V. Coho* in Juan de Fuca Strait on 6 Nov. (KT et al.). A single Long-tailed Jaeger was found 83 km offshore on 1 Oct. (KM). Single South Polar Skuas were seen daily during seabird survey 41 to 90 km from land on Oct. 1 through Oct. 4 (KM).

Two Little Gulls were found, one on 10 Sept., Oak Bay (JG, KT) and another from St. Mary's Lake on Saltspring Island on 30 Oct.—the first freshwater sighting of this species (DFF), and the second record from Saltspring Island. The last of the season's Heerman's Gulls was one on 8 Nov., Clover Point, Victoria (J & RS).

Two Xantus' Murrelet reports were received. On 26 August Ken Morgan observed two birds at 130 km offshore that matched the description of this species. Mike Bentley saw two birds that he reported as Xantus' on 31 Oct. at 68 km from shore. Both of these are single-observer reports and undocumented with photographs. Pelagic birders should be aware of the possibility of this species off the shore of Vancouver Island.

Tufted Puffins were seen all during August off the Victoria and Oak Bay waterfronts; last report was one on 14 Sept. BB and S. Rymer reported one from Telegraph Cove.

#### Raptors through Cranes

Osprey did not reneat at Witty's Lagoon, despite erection of

a nest platform to replace their collapsed nest. A late report indicated that a Northern Harrier summered at the Victoria airport (Doug Straub and BB). J & RS found a Swainson's Hawk over Blenkinsop Lake on 10 August. A light phase Rough-legged Hawk was seen by BD at Martindale, Central Saanich, on 19 Oct.—the only report for the season. American Kestrel numbers appeared low at only three reports, including one for Pender Island on 1 Oct. (BB). Sandhill Cranes were reported on the island first near Courtenay, with 30 there (O.K. & N.J. Morton). As usual the high numbers all came from the Courtenay area; the high here was eight over Witty's Lagoon on 25 Sept. (BW). Last report was four on 2 Oct. over Martindale Road (J & RS).

### Doves through Woodpeckers

A total of six Barred Owl reports came in from various points along the east side of the island from UVic north to the Courtenay/Comox area (OK & JNM, PUMC et al.). Ken Morgan found two groups of Black Swifts migrating 79 km and 86 km offshore on Oct. 1!

### Flycatchers through Finches

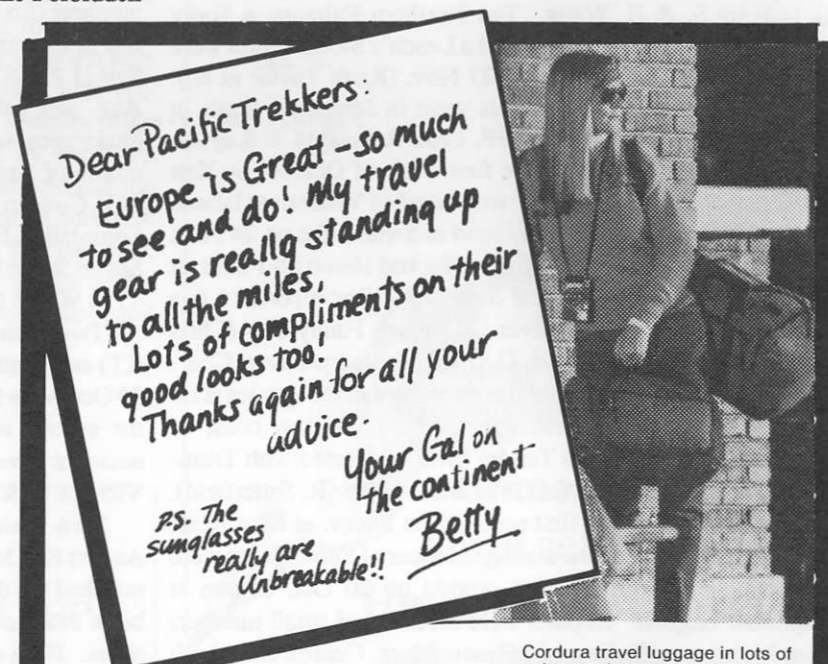
KT found a Western Kingbird at Jordan River on Sept. 11. A July 30 report of a pair of Purple Martins over Sidney Island was encouraging for this troubled species (DFP, LRR). A single Bank Swallow was found at Clover Point (J & RS). As is often the case, the only Grey Jays were from the Forbidden Plateau area. A wagtail species was seen on Sept. 11 at Jordan River; unfortunately not identifiable to species (KT). Cy Hampson reported a single Vesper Sparrow from Van-treight's bulb fields in Central Saanich during the last week of August. Swamp Sparrows, which have only recently become an "expected" species, were represented by two reports, one on Oct. 29 at Jordan River (KT) and one on Oct. 28 at Wellington Road, near West Saanich Road (BB). White-throated Sparrows were found in two locations: one on Oct. 1 and 8 at Jordan River (KT), and one near UVic (LAD). There were five reports of Lap-land Longspurs, with the first on 5 Oct. at Cowichan Bay (BD). Snow Buntings were found in open habitats in late October and early November (RS, BD). A Common Grackle was found in Central Saanich (J & GA, J & RS, m.obs.) for the second record of this species for the Victoria checklist area. Grey-crowned Rosy Finches were found this fall by Calvor Palmateer on the top of Mt. Tuam for the first Saltspring Island record.

## First Jordan River Christmas Count (Unofficial) Compiled by Keith Taylor

December 27, 1988. 4 a.m. - 4 p.m. Center of circle 124°03'-48'28". Cloudy, no wind, 4 degrees C, no precipitation. Three participants. (\*) denotes highlights.

Red-throated Loon 9, Pacific Loon 10, Common Loon 6, Horned Grebe 22, Red-necked Grebe 15, Western Grebe 19, Double-crested Cormorant 25, Brandt's Cormorant 1, Pelagic Cormorant 8, Great-blue Heron 2, Surf Scoter 75, White-winged Scoter 55, Common Goldeneye 16\*, Barrow's Goldeneye 1, Bufflehead 4, Red-breasted Merganser 7, Bald Eagle 3, Sharp-shinned Hawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 4\*, Mew Gull 35, Thayer's Gull 5, California Quail 15 (one flock), Western Gull 2, Glaucous-winged Gull 150, Common Murre 105, Pigeon Guillemot 1, Marbled Murrelet 24, Western Screech Owl 2, Belted Kingfisher 2, Downy Woodpecker 2, Hairy Woodpecker 3, Northern Flicker 6, Steller's Jay 2, Northwestern Crow 102, Common Raven 6, Chestnut-backed Chickadee 85\*, Bushtit 20 (two flocks of 10 each), Brown Creeper 2\*, Bewick's Wren 3, Winter Wren 40, Golden-crowned Kinglet 120, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 23, Hermit Thrush 5, American Robin 3, Varied Thrush 5\*, Northern Shrike 1, European Starling 40, Hutton's Vireo 3\*, Orange-crowned Warbler 2, Rufous-sided Towhee 30, Fox Sparrow 80, Song Sparrow 85\*, Lincoln's Sparrow 1, Golden-crowned Sparrow 10, White-crowned Sparrow 2, Dark-eyed Junco 40\*, Purple Finch 1, Red Crossbill 13, Pine Siskin 400.

Species expected but absent on count day: Greater Scaup, Oldsquaw, Herring Gull.



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## 1988 Christmas Bird Count

### Introduction

by Mike McGrenere

For the second consecutive year, Victoria set a new Canadian record for the highest number of species of birds recorded on a Christmas bird count. A total of 147 species were observed, breaking the previous record of 145 species that we established last year.

This year's count also set a new Victoria record for participation in the CBC, with 164 participants. This number included 145 field observers and 19 feeder watchers.

The count took place on December 17 under clear and calm conditions. For the first time on a Victoria CBC, over 100,000 individual birds were counted, with the final tally being 103,368. This year's count set all-time high totals for 27 species, while 18 species set second highest count totals. Two species, the Palm Warbler and the American Bittern, appeared for only

the second time on a Victoria CBC. No new species were observed on the Victoria count.

A highlight of this year's count, which would be a highlight for any Canadian CBC or any count held north of California, was our five warbler species. Our total included three Orange-crowned Warblers (all-time high), 17 Yellow-rumped Warblers (all-time high), two Townsend's Warblers, one Palm Warbler, and one Wilson's Warbler.

On the down side, Ring-necked Pheasant numbers were at an all-time low of 13, which may be a result of dwindling habitat caused by residential development.

Special thanks should go to Anne Adamson and Kaye Goodall for again organizing a successful post-count gathering at the Windsor Park pavilion.

### PARTICIPANTS

Anne Adamson, Hector Alexander, Gladys & Jerry Anderson, Peter Axhorn, Wendy Beauchamp, Barbara Begg, Mike Bentley, Joanne Bertrand, Gary Boyd, Colleen Bryden, Alan Burger, Giff Calvert, Keith Carr, Dan Carsen, Alice Cassidy, Beth Chatwin, Ed Coffin, Dianne & John Cooper, Joan Crabbe, Sue Cumming, Barb Currie, Helen Currie, Eleanor Davidson, Lyndis Davis, John & Katie Dawson, Barb de Boer, Lois Dellert, Gordon & Jean Devey, Brent Diakow, Phyll Downey, Art Durkee, Don Eastman, Mike Edgell, Yorke Edwards, Dan Farr, Mike Force, David Fraser, Arlene Galloway, Jan Garnett, Jeff Gaskin, Bryan Gates, Tracee Geernaert, Margaret Gillard, C. & T. Gooch, Peggy & Vic Goodwill, Robert Greig, Vera Guernsey, Fran Gundry, Ted Hagmeier, Leah Halsall, Sally Hamill, Andrew Harcombe, Al & Phyllis Henderson, Dorothy Henderson, Joan Hill, Ellen Hodgins, Gordon & Gwennie Hooper, Tracy Hooper, Bob Houston, John Hunter, Rowly Inglis, Alan & Barbara Irwin, Margaret Jeal, Kaye Johannes, Betty Kennedy, Alison & Michael Lafortune, Marilyn Lambert, Ann Laws, Carole Leadem, Tim Leadem, Pat and Peter McAllister, Dorothy McCann, Barb McClintock, Wally Macgregor, Barb & Mike McGrenere, Margaret & Rob Mackenzie-Grieve, Alan MacLeod, Art McPhalen, June Mayall, Alex Mills, Faye Mogensen, Ken Morgan, George Newell, Christian Nielsen, Elizabeth North, Mark Nyhof, David Pearce, Florian Pikula, Jan Pikula, Leah Ramsay, Christine Rushforth, Sheila Rymer, Joy & Ron Satterfield, Anne Scarfe, Bayla Schecter, Lisa Schmidt, Michael Shepard (compiler - 119-645 Fort Street, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1G2), Andy Snyder, Aileen Speedie, Pam Stacey, John Steele, David Stirling, Dennis & Kaye Suttill, Renee Sweeney, Jeremy Tatum, Wendy Teece, Mike Toochin, Brenda Trotter, Margaret Turner, Harry van Oort, Marg & Roy Wainwright, Richard & Sally Wait, Marie & Reuben Ware, Bruce Whittington, Eldred Williams, Tom Williams, Neville Winchester, Lorna Wood, Freda Woodworth, Mark Wynja, Mark Younker. (Victoria Natural History Society).

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## Welcome to New Members Ed Coffin

- Jan. 25 Morgan and David Warren, of Brentwood Bay. Interested in birds and wildflowers.
- Feb. 2 Sheila Gurr, of Brentwood Bay. Particular interest: birds.
- Feb. 8 Hannah Main, of Tudor Avenue. Particular interests: grebes, loons, ducks, shorebirds, gulls and terns.
- Feb. 8 Rod Mitchell, of Leefield Road, Metchosin. Another birder. Likes the newsletter.
- Feb. 9 Andrew Harcombe, of Saanichton. Particular interests: botany, wildlife.
- Feb. 27 Eric Walters and Samantha Statton, of St. Lawrence Street. Marine mammals and birds.
- Mar. 3 Jonathan and Sue Griffin, of Duncan. Members of the Cowichan Valley Naturalists, they are impressed by the quality of THE VICTORIA NATURALIST.
- Mar. 7 Beryl A. Borriss, of Lincoln Road. Particular interests: wildflowers, birds.
- Mar. 9 Sister Betty Janelle, of the Sisters of St. Ann, Queenswood House. Welcome back! It was Sister Betty's suggestion in November of 1986 that produced this "Welcome to New Members" section. She likes marine biology, hiking, rambles, wildflowers.
- Mar. 9 Cindy Spangelo, of Academy Close. Interested in our weekend outings.
- Mar. 13 Vera Pirillo, of Saanichton.
- Mar. 13 Ada M. Hall, of Brentwood Bay. Looking forward to THE VICTORIA NATURALIST.
- Mar. 14 Dr. Kenneth Hargrove, of Houlihan Place. Interested in birds, and wildlife in general.
- Mar. 14 Eileen Haist, of Simcoe Street. Looking forward to news of our field trips and activities.
- Mar. 14 Margaret Hamilton, of Clovelly Terrace. particular interests: bird watching, marine life.
- Mar. 16 Maria Dixon, of Granada Crescent.
- Mar. 20 Frank and June Nemeth, of Eberts Street. Particular interests: All.
- Mar. 22 Tom Gillespie, of Oldfield Road.
- Mar. 22 John and Daphne Rumball, of Wesley Road.
- Mar. 22 Gwen Walter, of Dunsmuir Road.
- Mar. 22 Betty Pidcock, of Kisber Avenue.
- Mar. 22 Paul Fast, of Duncan.

### Photo Credit

The excellent cover photo from the Jan./Feb. issue of the NATURALIST was by George Sirk.

## Upcoming Programs

Please meet at the location indicated for each trip. For field trips **BRING A LUNCH** and be equipped for changes in the weather. Always phone the VNHS Event Tape (479-2054) before a trip to obtain full particulars or details about changes (sometimes unavoidable). On VNHS trips participants usually pool vehicles to reduce parking problems and costs. The board suggests that fuel costs be shared with the driver.

If you would like to lead a field trip, or have an idea for a program or club activity, please phone Lyndis Davis at 477-9952.

### APRIL PROGRAMS

**Saturday, April 29. Birding trip to Calvert's property at 4373 Prospect Lake Road.** Leaders Lyndis Davis and Anne Knowles. Meet at Prospect Lake Park, off West Saanich Road, at 9 a.m. to car pool, as parking is limited at the Calvert's.

**Sunday, April 30. Birding Cowichan Estuary with Bryan Gates.** Meet at Helmcken Park & Ride at 8 a.m. or join group on Cowichan Bay Industrial Dock Road any time after 8:45 a.m. Easy walk and leader will help you to identify shore birds, water fowl, warblers, sparrows, swallows and others. Bring lunch and a novice birder.

### MAY PROGRAMS

#### Welcome Naturalists to the Annual General Meeting

Thursday to Sunday, May 4, 5, 6, 7.  
Federation of B.C. Naturalists Annual  
General Meeting. University of Victoria.  
Phone 477-2402 for details.

**Tuesday, May 9. The Natural History of South Georgia, Antarctica. Slide show with Dr. Richard Ring.** Room 159 Begbie Building, University of Victoria. 8 p.m.

**Saturday, May 13. Birding, Sooke Estuary, lead by Alex Mills.** Meet at 9 a.m. at Edward Milne Community School just before the bridge in Sooke. Phone 642-6371 to pre-register.

**Saturday and Sunday, May 13 and 14. Visit the Gowlland Range with Nancy McMinn and Mike Bocking.** Trip will take place on both days so that the group will not be too big. Meet at Helmcken Park & Ride at 10 a.m. or at the 'meeting place' at 10:30. To get there, take Millstream Road past Lone Tree Hill Park (approximately 3 miles from highway); road

narrows, and after passing a small open farming area with a barn each side of the road, take LEFT hand fork and the road ends in about 200 yards at a turn-around area where you can park and leaders will meet you. Bring lunch to have on Jocelyn Hill with spectacular views of Saanich Inlet and the surrounding mountains.

**Saturday, May 27. Birding trip along the Galloping Goose Regional Park Trail with Barbara Erwin.** Watching for warblers and summer birds. Meet at Helmcken Park & Ride at 8:30 a.m.

### JUNE PROGRAMS

**Saturday, June 10. Birding trip to Francis Park.** Join Alan McLeod for birding for warblers and other summer birds. Meet at 7 a.m. (to catch the early singing) at Francis Park parking lot on Munns Road.

**Sunday, June 11. Field trip to Woodley Range** (open ridge above Ladysmith, possible stops in the arboretum and in Ivy Green Park; easy to moderate hike, variety of spring flowers, favorite place of the Cowichan Valley naturalists). Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Helmcken Park & Ride; return 5 p.m. Leaders Adolf and Oluna Ceska.

**Saturday, June 17. Field trip to Tye Bog near Duncan.** The vegetation of this bog was described in 1905. Participants will try to map extant vegetation and compare it with vegetation 90 years ago (it is not so difficult as it sounds). Bring rubber boots. Possible side trip to Mt. Prevost. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Helmcken Park & Ride; return 5 p.m. Leaders Adolf and Oluna Ceska.

**Sunday, June 25. Birding trip to the Layritz Park area.** Hank Vander Pol will lead the trip to explore a new area through Layritz Park, Quick's Bottom, and the forested area near Glendale Hospital. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at Layritz Park parking lot, which is on Glyn Road off Wilkinson Road (no lunch).

**Wednesday, June 28. Fourth Annual Birders Night Picnic.** 6 p.m. Location to be announced. Phone VNHS event tape (479-2054) for details. Bring \$2.00 (to cover costs), something to BBQ, plate, cutlery, mug. If you have not already signed up (at birder's night), phone Leah at 479-0016. Bring binoculars and your field guide. Car pooling is recommended as parking may be limited.

### JULY PROGRAMS

**Saturday, July 9. Hurricane Ridge wildflower trip.** Once again there is a trip planned to the Olympic Mountains to see the alpine flowers. Cost \$48; discount for VNHS members. Call Swiftsure Tours at 388-4227 for information and reservations.



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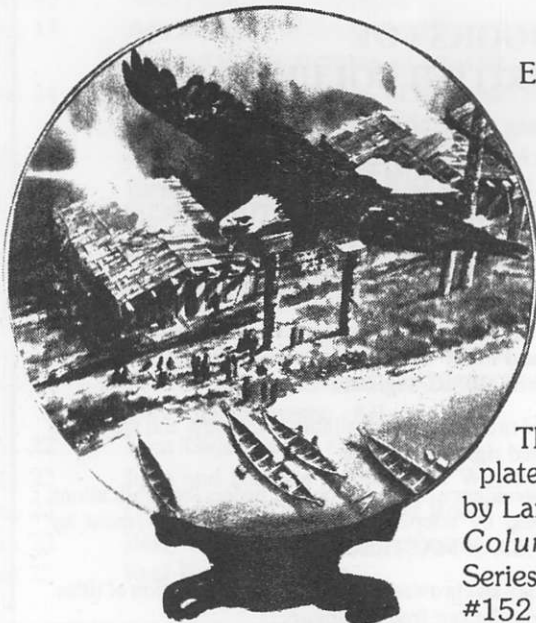
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## Eagle Potlatch

Eagle Potlatch depicts a bald eagle flying over the ancient Haida Indian village of Skedans in the Queen Charlotte Islands of British Columbia as its inhabitants prepare for a potlatch during the old times when eagles were venerated as having supernatural powers. At that time, potlatches had developed into extravagant ritualistic celebrations carried out by various coastal tribes in the Pacific Northwest. As a protected species after nearly being hunted down into extinction, the bald eagle is flourishing, particularly in B.C. and Alaska.

This powerful image is reproduced on an 8-1/2 inch porcelain plate rimmed with a 22-karat gold band. Eagle Potlatch, painted by Lars Belmonte, is produced exclusively for *Beautiful British Columbia Magazine*. This is the first plate in the "Freedom Series". The edition is strictly limited to 21 firing days.

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