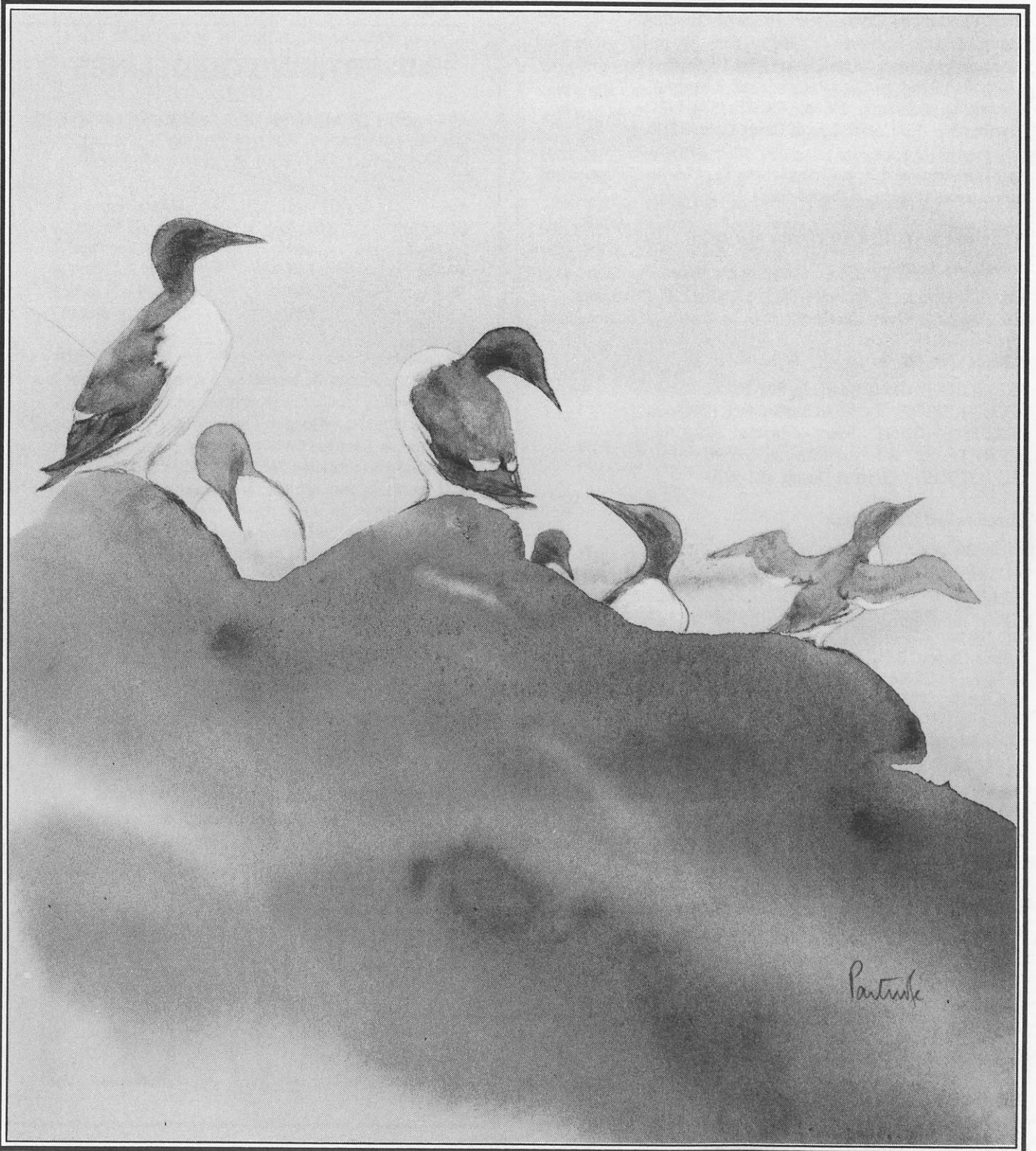


The Victoria NATURALIST

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Remember, the New Year means time to renew your membership, if you haven't already done so!



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Murres in the mist

Artist Rosemary Partridge can watch seabirds from the window of her small studio apartment on Beach Drive, and that turns out to be something of a perk for all of us. The picture on our cover was done in acrylic and pastels, and measures 14" x 17" in the framed original. The "model" for the painting, Rosemary explained, was a little winter murre resting on the rocks, which she sketched from the studio window.

"Drawing from life brings with it a sense of kinship and protective affection in which each — the artist and the subject, one consciously and one not — acts as an ambassador between our worlds."

Rosemary works in acrylic, pastel, scraperboard, silver point, and pen and ink. Her preferred subject matter is wildlife ("wintering birds particularly"), landscapes, and pets, but she is also a talented and versatile illustrator whose work appears in a number of local publications. She is a full-time artist and (of course!) a member of the VNHS.

Letters

"If we're not part of the solution ..."

Dear Board of Directors:

Yes! It is important that "the Society take a leadership role by being an advocate for the protection, enhancement and even restoration of habitats important to living creatures" (*The Naturalist* Vol. 46.3, p. 4). We should be as active and vocal as possible, and encourage all other B.C. Natural History Societies to join us. Each voice counts.

We, as individuals, can express our concerns in writing. The Society as a whole will have a greater impact as a representative of hundreds of concerned people. Some of the things the Society might do are: submit (to appropriate leaders in industry and government) well-documented briefs on existing or potential environmental problems; raise and circulate petitions; organize public information sessions; organize a school poster contest to increase awareness among the younger generation; develop posters and advertisements to emphasize that the protection of the environment starts at home, and that every individual can make a tremendous difference by being a discriminating and responsible consumer; endorse nature programs (e.g. on T.V.) that show the interdependence of all living creatures and Nature; and organize working parties to help with the clean-up of polluted habitats.

Sincerely,
 Mrs. Truus Bakker, Saanichton

In defence of mistletoes

by Job Kuijt

Mistletoes have a curiously ambivalent status in our part of the world. On the one hand, we know mistletoe from Druidical traditions and Christmas customs as a nearly sacred plant associated with love and eternal life—traditions that come to us from both the British Isles and the European continent. On the other hand, many people are aware of the serious losses to timber production in the Pacific Northwest that are directly due to our own native mistletoes. What few people realize is that these two groups are only the 'tip of the iceberg' as far as the fascinating and diverse mistletoe world is concerned.

The mystique of mistletoe takes us back at least two millennia. We know that Theophrastus, who lived in the beginning of the third century B.C., gave an unmistakable, brief description of mistletoes in the ancient Greek world. Better known is the account of Plinius Secundus, who lived about four hundred years later and who, among other things, reports on the Druidical ceremonies in Gaul. It is very doubtful that a

historical connection exists between those uses and our modern Christmas traditions. In medieval times and later, mistletoe was used for innumerable medicinal purposes, and also was a symbol of fecundity and immortality. Our modern Christmas traditions, however, seem to go back no further than the seventeenth century.

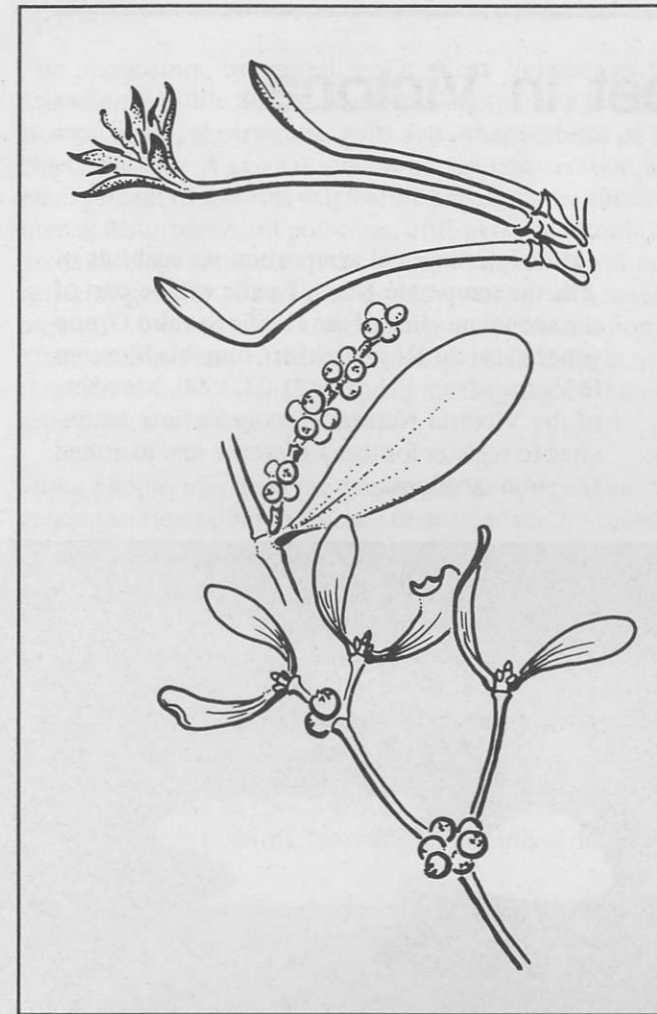
Brushing aside some taxonomic niceties, the mistletoes of the world belong to four families and number perhaps 1600-1800 species, mostly in the tropics and subtropics. Two small families are strictly American, while the two larger families occur on all continents.

All mistletoes are obligately parasitic, but nevertheless have chlorophyll. A couple of species are trees, reaching several metres in height, and we have to dig out the roots from the soil to demonstrate that they do, indeed, have parasitic organs connecting them to the roots of neighbouring plants. Even though this is not true for our own species, mistletoes elsewhere are often not at all picky about the kind of tree parasitized; in fact, many cases of self-parasitism have been reported. Palms, bamboos, and other large tropical monocots are only very rarely attacked. Even large cacti occasionally serve as hosts to some species, especially the spectacular leafless mistletoe which produces large masses of brilliant, red flowers on tall cacti in the foothills of the Chilean Andes near Santiago.

All but two genera are strictly bird-disseminated. The fleshy berry is eaten but only some outer tissues are digested, and the seed, surrounded by an exceedingly sticky but slippery tissue, passes through the digestive tract quickly and, if lucky, ends up on a young branch of a susceptible tree (or, in some cases, the seed is wiped off the bill onto a branch). There the seedling germinates, its radicle applying against the host a disk from which penetration takes place.

But there are two groups of mistletoes that make no use of birds. Our own dwarf mistletoes have truly emancipated themselves from birds, and can shoot off their sticky, bullet-shaped seeds ten metres or more away from the parent plants. Germination and establishment thus needs no animal vector. There are three dwarf mistletoe species in B.C., the coastal one predominantly on hemlock. Others parasitize mostly Douglas fir, larch, and lodgepole pine in the Interior. Curiously, there is a small population of hemlock mistletoe parasitic on lodgepole pine on top of Mt. Finlayson, and similar, self-perpetuating populations can be found elsewhere on Vancouver Island. The other mistletoe group not dependent upon birds for dissemination is limited to southern Argentina and Chile. The sterile stamens of the female flower develop into enormously long, slender, feather-like structures. Not surprisingly, these mistletoes are wind-dispersed. The plants of this group, when in fruit, look like silvery-white beards hanging from tree branches, gently swaying in the wind.

It has become clear that many mistletoe species still await discovery. In the last couple of years, well over 100



Three mistletoes: a red-flowered species (Colombia, top); the American mistletoes of the Christmas trade (middle), and the European mistletoe of Druid fame (below). Illustration by the author, a semi-retired botanist now doing research at the University of Victoria.

undescribed species have been reported from the rapidly disappearing forests of tropical America, and more are being described continually.

Mistletoes, being dependent upon host trees, are among the most endangered groups in the tropics; their seeds must become attached to the host quickly or establishment cannot take place. While some have small and drab flowers, others are among the most beautiful sights in a tropical forest. I shall never forget an Ecuadorian species with slender, pendent flowers nearly a foot in length, brilliantly red with golden yellow petal tips. To see the pollinator—a hummingbird with a bill of 9.5 cm long—visit this longest of all known flowers is an exotic sight never to be forgotten. This mistletoe, and many others, will almost certainly be extinct within a few years. Conservation via cultivation is an impossible task, for trees are required as hosts, and little is known about host preferences and other ecological factors. Anyway, they are parasites, aren't they? And who needs parasites?

On Tuesday Pond

by Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve

On November 28, Terry Morrison, the manager of Swan Lake-Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary, invited the Tuesday Group to visit the Sanctuary. We were all interested to see the pond that had been excavated with money raised by our rummage sale in August.

Terry told us that pamphlets had been circulated to neighbouring houses requesting that toxic materials not be poured into the storm drains. Fishes will also be painted on the drains as an extra reminder.

Willie MacGillivray, the site technician, enthusiastically told us of his tree planting plans, and of the new idea for viewing the birds (as the present wooden blind is subject to vandalism).

We were asked to give the pond a name. The response was unanimous: "The Tuesday Pond." So, when you visit Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary just follow the sign posts and see how our project is developing.

The Following Publications May be Ordered through VNHS:

The Naturalist's Guide to the Victoria Region
(a VNHS publication)
Members' price \$10.50
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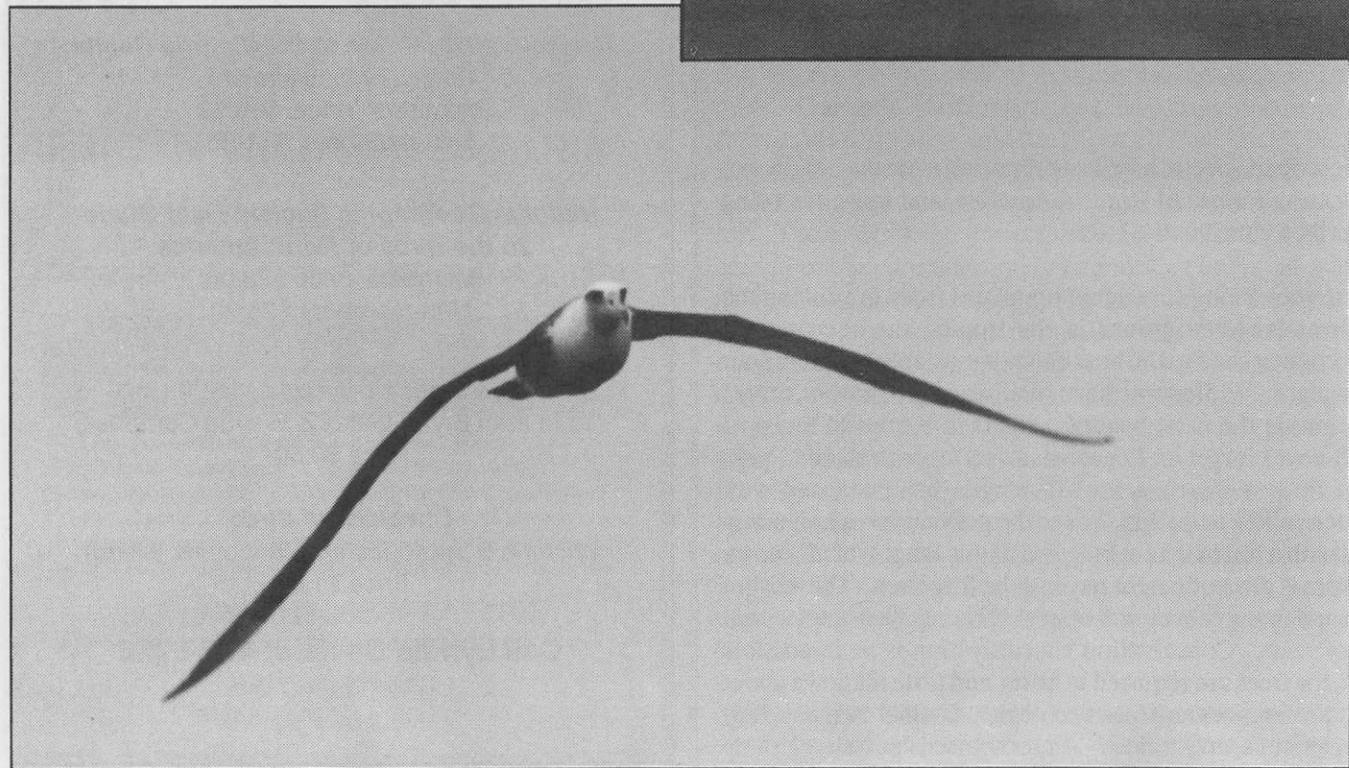
by Alan E. Burger



An international symposium on seabirds of the temperate North Pacific will be part of the annual meeting of the Pacific Seabird Group to be held at the Royal British Columbia Museum in Victoria from February 21-24, 1990. Members of the Victoria Natural History Society are invited to register for the conference and to attend the public sessions.



Black-legged Kittiwakes (above and at right) nest in Alaska and the Atlantic. They visit B.C. in the fall and winter. Photos by Alan Burger. Below: A Laysan Albatross photographed in Kauai, Hawaiian Islands, by G.F. Houston.



The symposium, organized by Dr. Kees Vermeer of the Canadian Wildlife Service, includes 30 papers on the albatrosses, alcids, shearwaters, gulls and other seabirds of the North Pacific. A special session on the conservation and management of seabirds will feature papers on the effects of human disturbance, oil pollution, drift-nets and introduced predators. In addition to the symposium, there will be a series of general papers and posters dealing with seabird biology. A workshop on the biology and conservation of Marbled Murrelets will be held. This species is thought to be threatened in parts of its range by the logging of the old-growth forests in which it nests.

Some people may find the papers in the symposium and general session rather technical. In order to reach a broader audience, organizers have set aside the evening of February 22 for a panel presentation that will be open to the public as part of the museum's Newcombe Program. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. in the Newcombe Theatre. Four leading seabird biologists will give brief illustrated talks on major issues concerning seabirds, and then lead an open discussion on these topics.

Dr. Tony Gaston of the Canadian Wildlife Service will discuss the value of seabirds, focussing on seabirds of the Queen

Charlotte Islands and on the creation of a National Park Reserve on South Moresby. Dr. John Piatt of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage, Alaska, will discuss the effects on seabirds of the "Exxon Valdez" oil spill and other pollution, while his colleague Dr. Tony De Gange will outline the problems with offshore drift-nets and inshore gill-nets. Dr. Craig Harrison, formerly a seabird researcher from Hawaii but now a lawyer in a Washington D.C. law firm, will explain some of the legal problems in getting protection for seabirds at sea and in their colonies.

Other seabird experts from Canada, the U.S., the Soviet Union, Japan, and Britain will also be on hand to answer questions and contribute to the discussion. This promises to be an informative and stimulating evening for anyone interested in birds or concerned about the value and conservation of marine animals.

The conference is being sponsored by the Pacific Seabird Group, the Royal British Columbia Museum, the British Columbia Ministry of Environment (Wildlife Branch), and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The registration fee, which includes a reception, is \$25. Contact Elaine Gibb at the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4 (387-2149) for further details and a registration form.



Common Murres with chicks on Triangle Island.

Photo by R.Wayne Campbell.

Friends of Ecological Reserves

Committed to preserving singular biogeoclimatic examples in British Columbia

by Trudy Chatwin

Let your mind wander through the seasons and to some of the special places in British Columbia. Imagine summer in Robson Bight when the killer whales congregate; spring and the profusion of wild flowers on Mt. Tzouhalem; stone sheep rutting in the heart of Spatsizi above Gladys Lake; a foggy summer night on Triangle Island when half a million pairs of seabirds return to their nest sites; slack tide in the underwater paradise of Race Rocks; a cool summer night in Canada's only pocket desert at Hayne's Lease in the Okanagan; or nesting time for White-throated Swifts on Doc English Bluff above the Fraser River.

Then think of the more ordinary and representative undisturbed ecosystems in British Columbia. Due to development of one sort or another, these are becoming not so ordinary.

This time, think about a mature riverine forest with towering cedar, spruce, fir, and hemlock at the south end of Chilliwack Lake; native grasslands with wild flowers at McQueen Creek near Kamloops; Garry oak parklands on Saltspring Island; a stand of mature western larch in the East Kootenays; or an undisturbed coastal watershed near the Nass Valley.

These places are all Ecological Reserves – important biological areas set aside by the province of B.C. Since 1971 a total of 125 have been established.

The objectives and benefits of Ecological Reserves are many, but their main purpose is to permanently preserve natural ecosystems, species, and phenomena. Ecological Reserves are either unique or representative samples of ecosystems.



The Khutzeymateen Valley Estuary.

Photo by Friends of Ecological Reserves.

They are primarily of interest to scientists, but they are very important to all of us and have real long-term benefits to society. Here are a few:

Ecological Reserves keep the options open for research into natural ecological processes. They serve as permanent outdoor research laboratories for scientific study. Research in Ecological Reserves can have many practical applications. Studies of successful natural tree stands can save a lot of trial and error research in reforestation; research on seabirds can help to measure the health of the ocean; the study of natural, biological disease control in unsprayed forests provides information about population dynamics in these ecological systems.

They help to preserve "banks" of genetic material. As people continue to modify the surface of the earth, species of plants and animals may become extinct or rare before they are even known to science, let alone known for their value in horticulture, medicine, or forest science.

They provide benchmark areas against which our modification of the rest of the province can be measured. Ecological Reserves are becoming islands of naturalness in a sea of change. They are needed as natural control areas to assess the long-term environmental impact of land uses.

Ecological Reserves provide a variety of outdoor classrooms. By visiting them, students, as well as members of the public under permit, may learn about the natural environment.

We can be proud that British Columbia has the oldest and most established series of protected Ecological Reserves in Canada. However, at present there is only one full-time staff member organizing the planning, establishment and management of these special areas in B.C. As well, there are many outstanding Ecological Reserve proposals that should be moved through the bureaucratic system, and some that are stalled on a cabinet minister's desk only awaiting cabinet approval.

All kinds of industrial and residential developments threaten both established reserves and areas of ecological significance around the province. Feral and domestic animals graze in many reserves, destroying many indigenous flowers and plants. Industry and uninformed members of the public violate the reserve regulations and oppose the creation of new reserves. Government officials are reluctant to fund the Ecological Reserves program or to support the creation of new reserves.

This is where Friends of Ecological Reserves come in. The "Friends" began in 1982 in response to a need for non-government support of the Ecological Reserves Program. Fund-raising was initiated and a newsletter on Ecological Reserves for the Volunteer Wardens was produced. By 1983 we were incorporated as a non-profit society. We have approximately 350 members, including all the Ecological Reserve Volunteer Wardens.



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Since beginning, our objectives have expanded considerably. The main ones are: 1) to provide support for the province's Ecological Reserve program by providing funding for the management of established reserves through fencing initiatives and provision of Volunteer Warden expenses; 2) to support research in proposed or existing Ecological Reserves; and 3) to encourage conservation through education. The Friends host numerous educational programs at the Newcombe Theatre. We have interesting and informative field trips to reserves and areas of ecological significance, plus we offer slide shows to groups and schools. Our newsletter (and articles such as this one) help raise public awareness of Ecological Reserves.

Perhaps our most significant venture is the promotion of the Khutzeymateen Valley Ecological Reserve Proposal. In fact, over the past five years the majority of our efforts have been directed towards the protection of the Khutzeymateen Valley in northern British Columbia. This valley is an intact watershed with exceptional wildlife and forest values. Of prime concern is the population of grizzly bear in the valley; however, the combination of the pristine estuary, the magnificent old-growth rainforest, the salmon habitat, and use by wildlife give the Khutzeymateen outstanding value as a reserve. Although the area is Crown Land, forest companies have applied to log in the Khutzeymateen.

We have raised more than \$100,000 for wildlife and forestry

research in the valley. As well, we have produced information, posters, videos, and slide shows informing the public about the value of protecting this natural area. In 1988 our efforts were recognized; the Government of British Columbia announced a three-year study on the Khutzeymateen to assess the options of protection, limited logging, and large-scale logging. Although we would like to see immediate protection for the valley, we view the study as a step in the right direction, and a direct result of our work.

Friends of Ecological Reserves started some new projects in 1989. Concern over the Nestucca oil spill last January and its impact on Marine Ecological Reserves on the west coast of Vancouver Island was a major impetus for supporting Jane Watson's research in Checleset Bay Ecological Reserve. Jane is studying the relationships of sea otters to their environment. Part of her research includes an annual census of the endangered sea otters, critical to determining the oil spill's impact on the sensitive creatures.

We have also supported Dr. Tom Reimchen's evolutionary and predator-prey research in Drizzle Lake Ecological Reserve in the Queen Charlotte Islands. We are planning to set up an annual research grant to promote research in Ecological Reserves.

1990 promises to be another busy year for the Friends. We are directing our efforts towards two very threatened areas on Vancouver Island: Robson Bight on the east coast, and the Tahsish Ecological Reserve Proposal near Kyuquot on the west coast. MacMillan Bloedel has applied to log in Robson Bight and their road is less than two miles away from this critical killer whale habitat. The lower Tahsish River is important Roosevelt elk range and contains impressive and representative old-growth forest stands, rivalling Carmanah's giants. Douglas-fir grows near the northern limit of its coastal range along the Tahsish River. Logging practices in the surrounding area have been devastating, and we want to save the Tahsish from this fate. Watch for slide shows on both Robson Bight and the West Coast of Vancouver Island this spring. We are also sponsoring a summer field camp to Kyuquot that promises to be both fun and enlightening for participants.

Although the Friends of Ecological Reserves is not the largest conservation organization, our directors loom large on the conservation scene. Vicky Husband, our past president, has been a driving force behind fund-raising, the Khutzeymateen effort, and indeed many conservation issues in this province. She was the recipient of a United Nations Global 500 award in 1987 for her environmental work in South Moresby and the Khutzeymateen.

Our current president, Dr. Bristol Foster, is well known for his work as (former) director of the Royal B.C. Museum and the Ecological Reserves Program. He is committed to conservation and the goals of the Friends.

Other directors include Trudy Chatwin, vice-president, newsletter editor, and field trip coordinator; Gwen Walter, secretary; Wilf Medd, membership; Steve Ruttan; and Peggy Frank.

If any of our projects interest you, give us a call to see what you can do to help. We are looking for new and active members to help organize field trips, raise funds, and write letters. You may phone us at 386-8644 or 592-3559, or you may write to Friends of Ecological Reserves, Box 1721, Postal Station E, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y1. We would love to have you as a Friend!



Book Auction

Following the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, March 13 (see Calendar), a giant book auction will be held to sell extra books from our VNHS library. This will be an exciting event, and books may be previewed just before and after the meeting. Some of the more valuable books will have a reserve price that is just below fair market value to encourage bidding. If the starting price is not surpassed, these books will be sold through booksellers. The proceeds from the auction are earmarked for library uses. Books are available for prior viewing at Swan Lake. Ask directions to the VNHS section and note the marked section of bookshelf that indicates which books are being sold. Come one, come all to bid on these natural history books and miscellaneous treasures. Some of the available titles are listed below:

Title	Author	Reserve Price
In Nature's Realm	Abbott	\$25
Home Life of the Tern	Bickerton	\$20
The Book of the Naturalist	Beebe	\$5
Serengeti Shall Not Die	Bernhard	
Bird Neighbours	Blanchan	
Life & Adventures of John James Audubon	Buchanan	\$10
The Heart of a Bird	Collett	\$5
The Human Side of Birds	Dixon	\$10
Taming the Wildings	Durant	\$5
The Cowbirds - A Study	Fiedmand	\$10
The Living Land	Haig-Brown	\$75
Adventures of a Biologist	Haldane	\$10
Animal Safari	Heck	
The Lure of Bird Watching	Hendy	
The Student's Flora and Fauna	Hooker	\$30
Territory in Bird Life	Howard	\$20
Birds' Nests, Eggs and Eyes	Kearton	\$15
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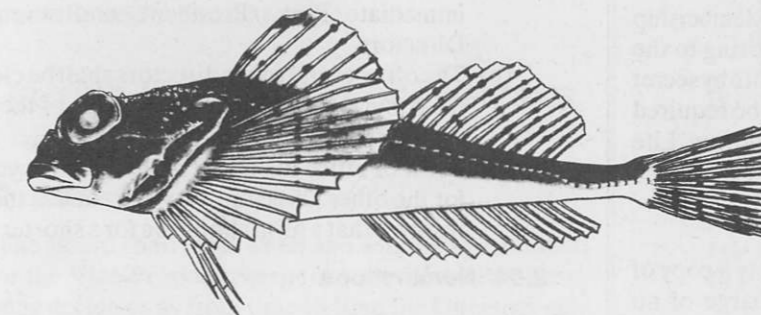
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Notice to members

The Board of Directors has reviewed and revised the bylaws of the Society. You will be asked for your approval at the Annual General Meeting in March 1990. It has been seven years since the last revision. The changes are minor and are being made in order to simplify the language and clarify its meaning. The only major changes are:

- 1.01(a), age changed from 18 to 16;
- 1.02(b), selection of Life Member simplified;
- 2.03(c), term of Officers established at one year;
- 4.03(b), number required to call a special meeting changed from 10 per cent of membership to 25 members.

Please bring these proposed bylaws to the Annual General Meeting in March 1990.

Proposed bylaws – to be approved

1.00 MEMBERSHIP

1.01 Classes of Membership

There shall be six classes of membership:

- (a) Individual - for any person over the age of 16 years;
- (b) Family - for husband and wife and/or parent(s) and dependent children (each person shall be classed as an individual or junior member);
- (c) Golden Age - for any person aged sixty-five or over;
- (d) Junior - for any person under the age of 16 years who has paid the membership dues, and the dependent children within a family membership;
- (e) Sustaining - for any person eligible for membership who pays a minimum of three times the annual dues based on the individual membership;
- (f) Honorary Life - any person who has rendered outstanding service to the Society by increasing knowledge of and interest in natural history may be made an honorary life member.

1.02 Terms of Admission

- (a) Membership shall be established on payment of the appropriate dues by persons eligible for membership.
- (b) Recommendations for Honorary Life Membership shall be made by three members in writing to the Board of Directors. The Board shall vote by secret ballot and a two-thirds majority shall be required for election of the nominee to Honorary Life Membership.

1.03 Rights and Obligations of Members

- (a) A member may obtain from the Society a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws at a charge of no more than \$1.00.

- (b) Every member shall be entitled to receive from the Society a copy of any magazine or newsletter which the Society may from time to time publish. Family members shall receive one copy per family.
- (c) Every member over 16 years of age shall have one vote at any regular or special meeting of the Society and shall be eligible to hold office in the Society.
- (d) Every member shall uphold the Constitution and comply with these Bylaws.

1.04 Cessation of Membership and Expulsion

- (a) Resignation: A member wishing to resign shall give notice in writing to the secretary.
- (b) Non-payment of Dues: A member ceases to be in good standing and membership ceases if dues are not paid within three months of the beginning of the fiscal year.
- (c) Expulsion: Any member may be expelled from membership for any reason which is deemed to be prejudicial to the best interests of the Society by a vote of at least nine members of the Board of Directors. Prior to the vote being taken, the person proposed for expulsion shall be given twenty-one days' notice in writing of the proposed resolution and shall be afforded an opportunity to explain or justify his position to the Board, and no persons other than Directors and the person proposed for expulsion shall be present.

1.05 Membership Dues

Dues for each class of membership shall be proposed by the Board of Directors and approved at a general meeting of the Society.

2.00 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

2.01 Business of the Society

The business of the Society shall be managed by a Board of twelve Directors ["the Board"] who shall serve in an honorary capacity.

2.02 Officers

The officers of the Society shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. The officers are directors.

2.03 Board of Directors

- (a) The Board shall be composed of the Officers, immediate Past President, and seven other Directors.
- (b) The officers and other directors shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by the members of the Society present and entitled to vote.
- (c) Term of office for Officers shall be one year, and for the other Directors, two years unless the Board resolves that a term should be for a shorter period.

2.04 Nominations

The Board shall appoint a Nominating Committee

not later than two months before the Annual Meeting of the Society. A member of the Board who shall not be a candidate shall be Chairman of the Nominating Committee. The Committee shall make and receive nominations. All nominations shall be in writing, signed by two members of the Society in good standing, and by the nominee showing consent to the nomination. Further nominations, in writing as above, may be made from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

2.05 Elections

The election of Officers and Directors at the Annual Meeting shall be conducted by the Chairman of the Nominating Committee. Voting shall be by secret ballot cast by members in good standing present in person. The Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall appoint scrutineers to oversee the distribution, collection, counting and subsequent destruction of ballots. The Chairman shall announce the result of the election and shall immediately install the new officers and other Directors.

2.06 Vacancies on the Board of Directors

- (a) If, for any reason, the President ceases to hold office, the Vice-President shall assume the office of President until the next Annual Meeting.
- (b) If, for any reason, the Vice-President ceases to hold office, the Board shall appoint one of its members to the office until the next Annual Meeting.
- (c) If, for any reason, the immediate Past President ceases to hold office, the Board shall appoint one of the other past presidents of the Society to the vacancy on the Board.
- (d) If, for any reason, the Secretary or the Treasurer ceases to hold office, the Board shall appoint a member of the Society to the office until the next Annual Meeting.
- (e) The Board shall fill any vacancy on the Board within sixty days of its occurring. Any person filling the vacancy holds office until the next Annual Meeting.
- (f) Any Director who is absent from regular Board meetings on three consecutive occasions may be deemed by the Board to have retired.

2.07 Removal from Office

The Society may remove from office any Director pursuant to a special resolution, and may appoint another Director by ordinary resolution to hold office until the next Annual Meeting.

3.00 DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS AND OTHER DIRECTORS

3.01 General

The Board shall meet when and where the President, or the Vice-President in the absence of the President, may decide or as from time to time the Directors may

agree to be expedient. The Board shall have charge of the general conduct of the affairs of the Society. At the Annual Meeting of the Society, the Board shall make a full report concerning its proceedings for the previous year, the report to be presented by the President and to incorporate recommendations for the future conduct of the Society.

3.02 Executive Committee

The Officers of the Society shall comprise the Executive Committee and decisions made at their meetings shall be subject to ratification by the Board at its next meeting.

3.03 President

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, the Board, and of the Executive Committee, to have a general care of the interests of the Society and to ensure that the several provisions of the Bylaws are observed. The President shall not vote except in the case of a tie and shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees. If any discussion requires the President to vacate the Chair, then the Vice-President shall take the chair for the duration of the topic requiring the President to vacate the chair.

3.04 Vice President

In the absence of the President, the Vice-President shall perform the duties of President, and in the absence of both the President and Vice-President, a chairman pro tem shall be appointed by the Board.

3.05 Secretary

The Secretary shall attend and keep an accurate record of all Society and Board meetings where Society business is transacted and conduct correspondence required by the Board.

3.06 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall

- (a) receive all dues and other monies to which the Society is entitled and give the Society's receipt for the same
- (b) keep an accurate record of the monies received and disbursed
- (c) make all necessary expenditures as authorized by the Board
- (d) keep all funds of the Society in one or more bank accounts in either or both a chartered bank or trust company chosen by the Board or in investments approved under the Trustee Act
- (e) submit an audited financial statement for the previous year and a proposed budget for the ensuing year at the Annual Meeting
- (f) prepare a statement of income and expenditure at such time or times as may be required by the Board
- (g) have custody of the seal (if any)
- (h) have an accurate record of the names and addresses of all members of the Society.

3.07 Signing Officers

The signing officers of the Society shall be any two of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, provided one of the signatories be either the President or the Vice-President.

4.00 MEETINGS OF THE SOCIETY

4.01 Annual Meeting

The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting before the end of March at a time and place to be decided by the Board. The Annual Meeting shall include the report of the Board, presentation of the audited financial statements, election of officers and other directors and other business requiring discussion and decision by the Society.

4.02 Society Meetings

Meetings shall be held monthly from September to May, or as the Board from time to time may determine.

4.03 Additional Meetings

- (a) Special meetings may be called by the President.
- (b) Twenty-five of the voting members in good standing may request in writing that a meeting occur, indicating the reason and subject matter to be discussed. The Board shall then convene a meeting of the Society within 30 days of receiving the request.

4.04 Notice of Meetings

At least eight days' notice of meetings of the Society shall be given in printed form or in writing to each member.

4.05 Quorum

- (a) At a meeting of the Board, seven members shall constitute a quorum.
- (b) At a meeting of the Society, forty members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

4.06 Committees

- (a) The Board may establish committees and appoint members as need arises from time to time. Each committee of the Society shall have as one of its members a director whose responsibility it is to report to the Board.
- (b) The Board shall provide instructions for the guidance of each committee and shall require from time to time reports from the chairmen of committees.

4.07 Voting by Chairmen

The person presiding at any meeting shall not have a vote except in the case of a tie.

5.00 GENERAL

5.01 Seal

The Board may provide for a seal of the Society. It shall

be used when required for execution of documents pursuant to a resolution of the Board and in accordance with the terms of resolutions recorded from time to time in the minutes of the proceedings of the Board and of the Society.

5.02 Borrowing Power

For the purpose of carrying out the objects of the Society, the Board may borrow or raise to secure payment of money in such manner as it thinks fit either at one time or from time to time; subject to the provisions of the Society Act of the Province of British Columbia; and provided that the power conferred by this section shall not be exercised without prior approval of a meeting of the Society.

5.03 Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Society shall end on December 31st of each year.

5.04 Auditor

An auditor shall be appointed by the Society at the Annual Meeting held in each year. It shall be the duty of the auditor to audit the books of account of the Society and to prepare for the Annual Meeting financial statements clearly and accurately showing the financial position of the Society.

5.05 Solicitor

A solicitor or firm of solicitors may be appointed by the Board.

5.06 Special Resolution

A special resolution may be passed at a meeting of the Society by a majority of not less than 75% of members present at the meeting. Not less than fourteen days' notice shall be given of the intention to propose a special resolution.

5.07 Amendments to Constitution and Bylaws

The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at the pleasure of the Society by Special Resolution subject to the provisions of the Society Act of the Province of British Columbia.

5.08 Inspection of Books

Any member in good standing shall have the right to inspect the books and records of the Society upon giving reasonable notice of such intention.

5.09 Rules of Order

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Board and of all meetings of the Society, in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Society.

sightings

The cat kept its cool

by Betty Mundy

Our first encounter with a cougar occurred on Friday, June 30, 1989. Four of us were travelling east on the south coast of Vancouver Island from Point No Point to Victoria. Now and again I joked with our daughter and friend visiting from Ontario, saying, "You're in Cougar Country now, so keep your eyes open!"

We decided to visit French Beach Park and pulled into the empty parking lot. As we were about to walk onto the curving forest trail leading to the picnic clearing and beach area, a woman appeared and said, "I wouldn't go down there if I were you—I've just seen a cougar cross the path!" She seemed quite alarmed, having retreated up the path alone.

The four of us looked at each other with strange gazes. Could this be true? A cougar so near! Should or shouldn't we try to see it? Our daughter Frances walked slowly down the path with Patrick and we decided to follow. As we came into the clearing ahead of the beach, Frances said simply "It's there!"

The cougar was 40 yards away by the edge of the forest. It was being harassed by a bunch of noisy crows and it was staring straight at the four of us. The tip of its long tail was slightly curled and swinging from side to side near the ground.

We had expected at the most a fleeting glance of a disappearing cougar. However this was not to be the case. The animal continued to stare at us. I had binoculars so was able to examine it in detail. It was in good condition, with chunky legs, a healthy coat and interesting dark facial markings. We guessed its weight to be about 85-90 pounds.

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Another man came into the clearing. He decided to walk towards the cougar. We were not happy about this but we didn't say so. When the man was about halfway, the cougar turned sideways, walked with dignity a short way along the clearing and then turned into the forest. All this time, the tip of its tail was swinging and the noisy crows were above it.

We moved slowly towards the beach whilst the cougar moved slowly away from the beach in the edge of the trees. We looked once more towards the noisy crows and were surprised and rewarded with the reappearance of the cougar! It came out fully into the clearing and looked straight at us. We stared back—somewhat in awe and with a trace of apprehension, I think.

By this time there were seven people in the clearing. Suddenly a woman appeared dressed all in white: shoes, slacks, top and hat. This seemed to spook the animal. It turned its head sharply towards her, swung around and loped unhurriedly away from us into the forest, with the tip of its long tail still moving from side to side and the complaining crows still with it. We heard the crows retreating into the distance.

We felt privileged and humbled to have been able to experience such an excellent and somewhat prolonged sighting of our beautiful North American cougar.



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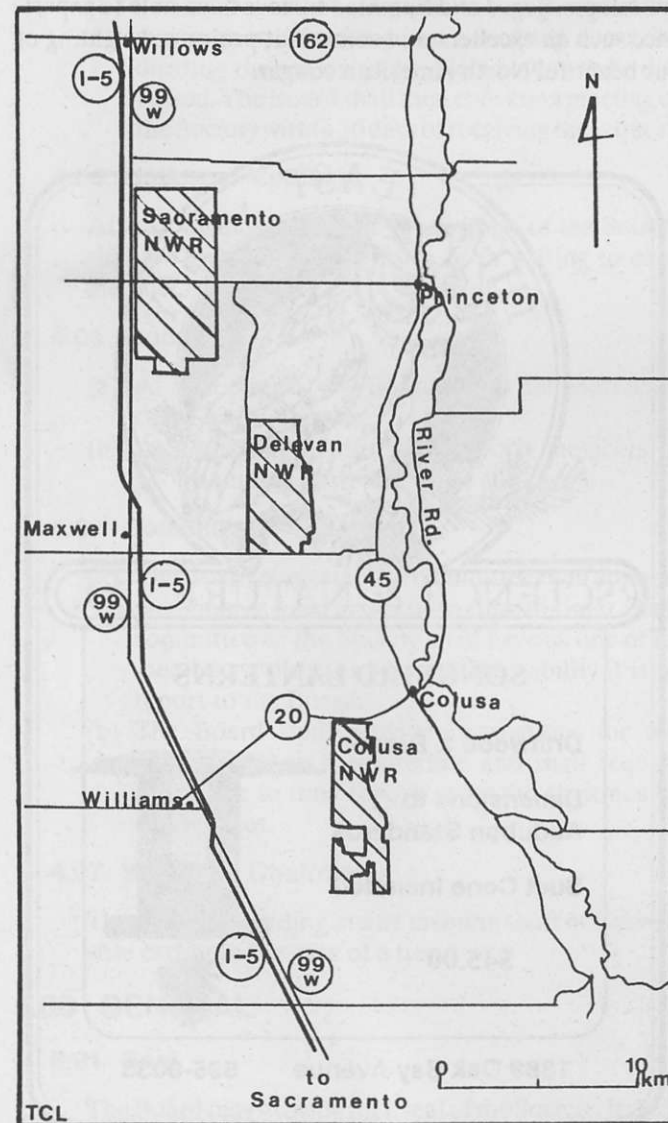
1889 Oak Bay Avenue 595-0033

Sacramento Valley wildlife sanctuaries

by Thelma Landon

Is there a car trip to California in your plans? Thelma Landon, a Victoria free-lance writer and a member of the Naturalist's editorial team, made a trip there this fall and found that California's National Wildlife Refuges were well worth a few short side-trips off of Interstate-5.

Immense V-shaped flights of honking wildfowl often tempt the eyes of birders who drive the busy freeways of northern California. They are especially noticeable in the skies above Interstate-5 north of Sacramento, for this is the Pacific Flyway—a route the migrating flocks were taking for thousands of years before people began altering the landscape with crops and concrete.



Freeways usually mean frustration to the traveller who wishes to see and savour something besides pavement and vehicles. But birders are in luck in the Sacramento Valley, where they can stop off at National Wildlife Refuges that lie close to the major highways.

Freeways plus farms often mean serious problems for migrating waterfowl, as their traditional stopover and wintering sites are replaced by highways and croplands. The refuges have played a vital role in assuring that appropriate habitats and food are available for the millions of birds that pass through the area each year.

Closest to Interstate-5 and easiest to find (see map) are the **Sacramento, Delevan and Colusa National Wildlife Refuges**, which occupy a total of more than 20,000 acres. All are man-made, carefully managed sites, where the goal is to recreate and maintain optimum natural habitats for seasonal and resident wildlife by imitating nature's annual cycle as closely as possible. This is done by a complex system of permanent ponds, seasonal marshes and grasslands, plus food production lands where grains such as rice and barley are planted to discourage waterfowl from feeding on commercial crops.

The **Sacramento NWR**, with almost 11,000 acres, is headquarters for this north valley refuge complex (the 16 National Wildlife Refuges in California extend from here to Kern NWR near Bakersfield). To visit it, exit Interstate-5 at Willows and go south on old Highway 99W about six miles to the refuge entrance, or exit I-5 at the Norman-Princeton Road and go north on 99W for about a mile and a half. At the headquarters building there are exhibits, brochures, bird and wildlife checklists, and information about the six-mile self-guided auto tour. A walking tour was redesigned in 1989 to provide more trails for those who prefer to explore the refuge on foot.

To reach the **Delevan NWR**, exit Interstate-5 at the Maxwell-Colusa Road and drive about five miles east. There are no public roads or trails into the site, but there is good viewing from Four Mile Road on the western boundary and from Maxwell Road on the south.

The **Colusa NWR** entrance is off highway 20 between Williams and Colusa. Here a three-mile auto tour winds through the marshes and ponds and across the meandering Colusa Trough.

Public hunting of geese, ducks, coots and pheasant is permitted in certain areas of each refuge, carefully regulated and

supervised by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game. Hunting areas are clearly separated from bird-watching areas.

All the refuges are open year-round from dawn to dusk, and all add an interesting dimension to a monotonous drive.

Given the location and nature of the land, great numbers and varieties of waterfowl will be seen, especially in fall and winter when a strident symphony of quacking and honking fills the air. Many other birds find sanctuary here also, including shorebirds, raptors, and passerines, and there are at least 30 species of mammals as well as reptiles, amphibians, and fishes. The visitor might see clouds of swarming waterfowl on one side and a lone grebe or heron in a still pond on the other, hear a great chorus of Red-winged Blackbirds from creekside, see a Northern Harrier swoop down on his unlucky prey, or catch a brief glimpse of huge jack rabbits bounding away like long-eared kangaroos. These are truly remarkable oases, so close yet so far from the hypnotic hurry of Interstate-5.

More information on the refuges can be obtained from: Sacramento NWR, Rt. 1, Box 311, Willows, CA 95988.



Migrating waterfowl at the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge (November 1989). Photo by Thelma Landon.



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A handbook and a half

The Birder's Handbook: a Field Guide to the Natural History of North American Birds

Paul R. Ehrlich, David S. Dobkin & Darryl Wheye.
Published in 1988 by Simon and Schuster.

ISBN 0-671-65989-8. \$22.50 paperback. 785 pp.

Once in a while a book is published that changes the study of natural history. Roger Tory Peterson's first field guide did that in 1934, to begin the era of modern birding. In *The Birder's Handbook* by Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye we have another milestone book, one that should greatly enhance every naturalist's appreciation of birds and become as essential as binoculars and a field guide.

The authors of *The Birder's Handbook* assume that you already have a field guide to identify birds. They set out to introduce you to the biology of the bird you see at your feeder or in the field. This is actually two books in one, and for the price it is a double bargain. On the left-hand pages are species accounts for the 650 species that breed

in North America. On the right-hand pages are short essays dealing with a vast range of topics. The species accounts summarize information on the breeding habitat, nest, eggs, mating system, chicks, displays, incubation, chick-rearing, diet, foraging techniques, conservation and so forth for the species in question. Through clever use of symbols, sketches and abbreviations, an immense amount of information has been crammed into the half page allocated to each species. The symbols are consistently used, easy to understand and are summarized on the inside cover for easy reference.

Do you want to know where a Wood Duck nests? What is the

mating system of a Red-winged Blackbird? How many eggs does a Killdeer lay? Where do the Rufous Hummingbirds go in the winter? The answers are at your fingertips. If you'd like to know more, there are cross-references to essays within the book, and to other published works on the species. Where gaps exist in the body of knowledge about a given species they are clearly identified, and the authors tell us how to report new findings to fill these gaps. Amateur naturalists can still make a big contribution to the science of ornithology.

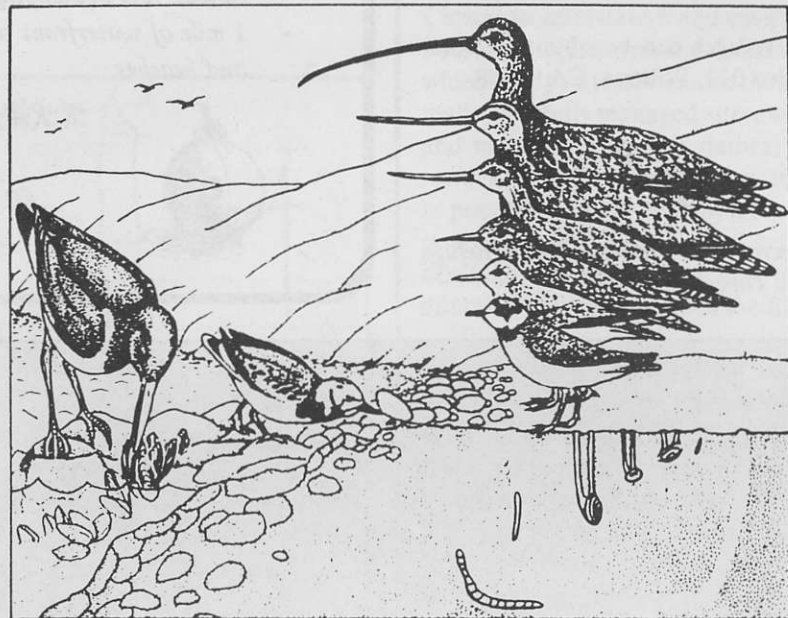
There are more than 200 essays in the book. Most are brief—a page or less—and easy to read. The topics cover just about every aspect of bird life and will give every birder, novice or expert, something to appreciate. Hummingbirds at your feeder might stimulate you to turn to essays on "Hummingbird foraging bouts," "Optimal foraging hummers" or "Hummingbirds, nectar and water."

There are essays on basic bird biology, such as how birds fly and how owls hunt in the dark, as well as essays on noted ornithologists, the origins of birds' names, and much more. Did you know that even though birds have hollow bones, their skeletons are not proportionately lighter than those of mammals?

The essays are listed in a separate index and are usually placed opposite relevant species accounts. So, after visiting Beacon Hill Park, you could read some of the duck species accounts and encounter essays on "Duck displays," "Dabblers vs. divers" and "Parasitized ducks" on the adjacent pages.

Both the species accounts and the essays include references to relevant publications. The bibliography at the end of the book contains 1600 references and this alone makes the book worth buying. The authors have done a superb job of combining the literature, including very recent publications, and summarizing the important material.

Ornithology involves considerable give and take between professionals and amateurs, but often it seems that professionals take more than they give. Few of them go out of their way to channel their findings back to amateur naturalists. Ehrlich, Dobkin and Wheye have made an impressive contribution to



Left: American Oystercatcher opening mussels. Centre: Ruddy Turnstone foraging under rocks. Right, bottom to top: Semipalmated Plover (searches surface); probing species that forage at different depths—Sanderling, Red Knot, Greater Yellowlegs, Marbled Godwit, Long-billed Curlew. (Illustration from *The Birder's Handbook*.)

change this situation, and their book has condensed an immense amount of modern science into a form that is accessible to birders and naturalists, and readily understandable. For example, the essays on "Birds, DNA and evolutionary convergence," or "Island biogeography" deal with topics that are seldom considered, except in universities or museums. But here they are discussed in straight-forward terms to show how important they are in the lives of birds.

Consider the problem of hybridization in gulls. Hybrid gulls are not uncommon and are the bane of many birders, but no naturalist without a biology degree would make much headway in the scientific writing on this topic. In *The Birder's Handbook*, however, the essay on "Hybridization" is readily understood, non-technical, tells you that there are problems still to be solved and shows you where to look for additional information. Did you know that about 10 percent of North American birds hybridize with other species? This creates problems in deciding what is or isn't a true species. You can then go on to read about this in the essays on "Species and Speciation" and "Natural Selection."

Some minor problems. The paperback book seems rather flimsily bound, and might not tolerate the heavy use that I expect it will receive. The species accounts deal only with birds that breed in North America, so some important migrant seabirds, such as shearwaters and albatrosses, are not given species accounts, although there is a lengthy essay on "Pelagic seabirds."

The Birder's Handbook will become a classic, and every naturalist and professional ornithologist should have a copy. The book offers hours of fascinating reading, loads of facts, excellent references, and is accurate and up-to-date. It will give birders access to a wealth of material hidden in the more technical biological literature, and hopefully turn more of the skilled birders into contributing naturalists rather than simply listers of bird species.

Reviewed by Alan E. Burger



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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

- Sept. 27 Mrs. Sylvia Austin, of Dallas Road. Interested in birds, flowers, hiking, marine invertebrates.
- Sept. 29 Marleane Shaler, of McKenzie Avenue.
- Oct. 2 Debbie Maloff, of McBriar Avenue.
- Oct. 3 Marie O'Shaughnessy, of Central Avenue.
- Oct. 3 Karen Meikle, of Doncaster Drive. A scholarship member.
- Oct. 6 Dr. George Mackie, of the Biology Department, University of Victoria. A long-standing Friend of Swan Lake. Walks often at Swan Lake. A marine biologist and former editor of the *Canadian Journal of Zoology*.
- Oct. 10 The Robert Barron-Ford family, of Trutch Street. Interests: preservation of forest and wildlife habitats; learning more about edible wild plants; hiking to see and enjoy the wonders of nature; outings with young children (5 and 6 years old).
- Oct. 10 William and Eva Dawkins, of Fulton Road.
- Oct. 10 Catherine Hayward, of Beach Drive. A scholarship member.
- Oct. 10 Holly Clermont, of Saanichton. A scholarship member.
- Oct. 16 Mrs. Beverley Ashforth, of Seawood Terrace.
- Oct. 18 Michael Tripp and Mindy Richter, of Westdowne Road. From San Francisco and "looking forward to becoming acquainted with this beautiful area." Interested in natural history of all kinds; especially enjoy birding.
- Oct. 20 Wayne Diakow, of Richmond. Brother of present member Brent Diakow.
- Oct. 23 Teresa and Robert Hehn, of Pheasantwood Place.
- Oct. 24 Mrs. E. Middleton, of Carnarvon Street.
- Oct. 24 Paul Nicklen, of University of Victoria. Interests: cetaceans, seals, sharks, invertebrates, birds.
- Oct. 25 Tony and Nonie Embleton, of Victor Street. Interested in birding and field trips.
- Oct. 25 R. Warren Drinnan, of Saanichton.
- Oct. 25 Karel Sars, of Princess Avenue. Particular interests: birds, waterfowl.
- Oct. 25 Ernie and Elizabeth Chatfield, of Oak Bay. Particular interest: birds.
- Oct. 25 Edith and Wilson Hunsberger, of Bristol Road. Interested in birding and botany.
- Oct. 26 Donald Drolet, of Saturna Island. Would like to share his knowledge as a fish and wildlife technician of the eastern part of Canada.
- Oct. 26 Moira and Ernest Beauchesne, of Mill Bay. Interests: birding, hiking, anything do to with the outdoors and nature preservation.

- Oct. 27 Dr. Bryan Bass, of Conard Street.
- Nov. 1 Susan Kilpatrick, of Sidney.
- Nov. 7 Alan and Lola Mehlenbacher, of Topaz Avenue. Interested in birds, plants, geology.
- Nov. 9 Karen Stanley, of Shelbourne Street. Interested in botany.
- Nov. 10 Mrs. E.J. McNamee, of Calgary. Gift membership from present member Rita Dickson.
- Nov. 10 Mrs. George Whitley, of Summerland. Another gift membership from Rita Dickson.
- Nov. 14 Mrs. Charlotte Robson and family of Island Highway. Gift membership from present member Gladyce Craig.
- Nov. 14 Trudy Hadley, of Laval Avenue. Another gift membership from Gladyce Craig.
- Nov. 14 Mr. and Mrs. Lou Ray, of Fir Tree Glen. Interested in wildlife and hiking.
- Nov. 14 Beverley Glover, of Torquay Drive. Particular interests: anything that flies, moves, or grows out of the ground.
- Nov. 15 A. Leitch, of Saanich Road. Gift membership from present members Garry and Julie Boyd.
- Nov. 17 Job Kuijt, of Lost Lake Road. Recently moved here from Alberta.
- Nov. 21 Doreen Sookocheff, of San Juan Avenue. Gift membership from John and Frances Wood.
- Nov. 21 Chris Sandham, of Queens Avenue. Gift subscription from Jerry and Gladys Anderson.

— compiled by Ed Coffin

Members! Don't miss these

IMPORTANT VNHS EVENTS

**Annual Banquet, Tuesday, February 13
6 p.m., Princess Mary Restaurant Vessel**

**Annual General Meeting and Book Auction
Tuesday, March 13, 8 p.m., Begbie 159, UVic**


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BULLETIN BOARD

Items for the Bulletin Board should be submitted to the editor by two weeks prior to the publication date. We cannot guarantee inclusion after that point.

 Nominations for Federation of B.C. Naturalist Awards should be submitted to any member of the VNHS Board of Directors before **February 6, 1990**.

 The Friends of Beacon Hill Park would like to invite participation in a Nature Centre Subcommittee in order to develop a plan for a permanent nature centre in Beacon Hill Park. We need volunteers to work on the available options and produce a detailed plan to present to the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. There will be a **general meeting of the Friends of Beacon Hill Park at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 17**, at the James Bay Community School (Meeting Room #2), 140 Oswego. We hope to get everyone who is interested together and invite input into an operational plan for programs, nature centre, and a native plant rehabilitation program for 1990. Please phone Dannie Carsen at 384-4924 or Ann Fletcher at 389-9038 for details.

Annual Print Specials

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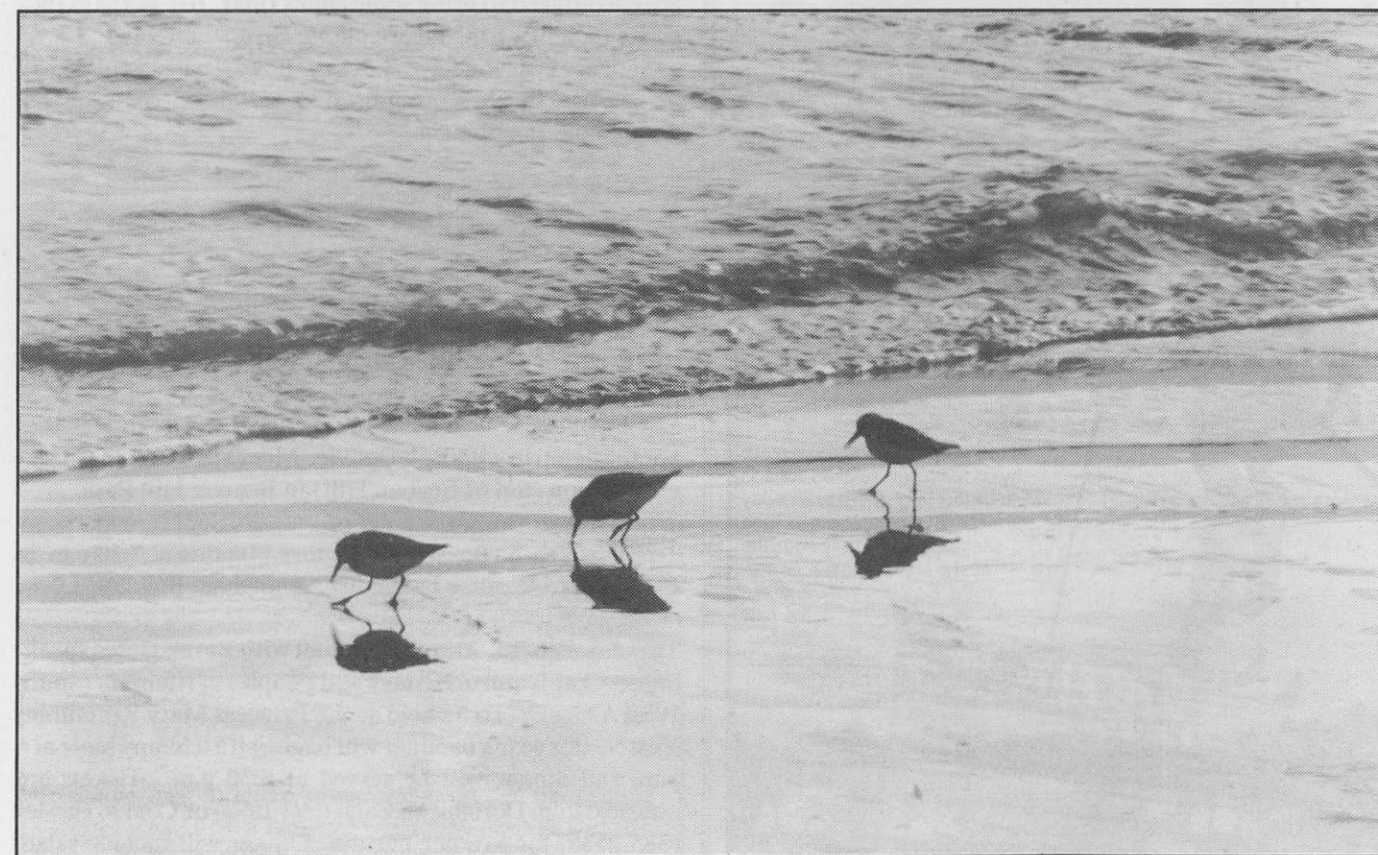
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Sandpipers on Pachena Beach near Bamfield.

Photo by Lynn Thompson, Union Bay.

CALENDAR

Regular meetings are held as follows: Board of Directors meetings the first Tuesday of each month (but note exception for January); general meetings the second Tuesday of each month; Botany Night the third Tuesday, and Birders' Night the fourth Wednesday of each month. Locations are given in the calendar listings.

Field Trips: Please meet at the location indicated for each trip and **BRING A LUNCH**. Be equipped for changes in the weather, with hat, rain gear and boots if necessary. **Always phone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 before a trip** to get further details or find out about changes in plans. On VNHS trips participants usually pool vehicles to reduce parking problems and costs. The Board suggests that fuel costs be shared with the driver.

JANUARY EVENTS

Saturday, January 6. Brackendale Eagles Trip with Peter Axhorn. Meet on the 9 a.m. Horseshoe Bay Ferry out of Nanaimo to bird the dykes of Brackendale, North of Squamish, the winter home of Bald Eagles. Lunch at the Brackendale Art Gallery. Cost \$8 plus ferry and meals. Register with Edward Milne Community School by phoning 642-6371.

Tuesday, Jan. 9. Board of Directors Meeting at 7 p.m. in Begbie 159, UVic, preceding general meeting.



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Tuesday, Jan. 9. General Meeting and Program: "Planning for Provincial Parks in B.C.--Some Critical Issues in Parks Management and Conservation Programs." Derek Thompson, Director of Planning and Conservation at the Ministry of Parks, will use examples such as Robson Bight and Strathcona Park while outlining the role of the Ministry of Parks and how it is proceeding with parks management in B.C. Derek will field questions about parks management and some of the critical issues currently of concern to conservationists. Meeting begins at 8 p.m. in Begbie 159, UVic, with the presentation to follow.

Saturday, Jan. 13. Birding at Goldstream Park. Meet Jerry and Gladys Anderson in the Goldstream Park parking lot at 10 a.m. to bird along the stream and around the flats of the estuary. Wear rubber boots, as it could be wet underfoot.

Tuesday, Jan. 16. Botany Night. Unusual fruits will be the topic of a program with Oluna and Adolf Ceska, 7:30 p.m. at the Royal British Columbia Museum, in the classroom (meet in front of the museum main door near the bell to be let in).

Thursday, Jan. 18. Annual General Meeting of the Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association, 8 p.m. at Christ Church Cathedral Auditorium. Ted Underhill will give a talk entitled "A Warm Tropical Evening."

Wednesday, Jan. 24. Birders' Night. Meet at 7:30 p.m. in Begbie 159, UVic. As part of the evening program, members are encouraged to bring some slides (max. 10), perhaps on a single theme or trip. Please phone Bryan Gates at 598-7789 by January 17 if you have slides to show. Tea and coffee will be served. Further program details will be given on the events tape at 479-2054.

FEBRUARY EVENTS

Saturday, Feb. 3. Birding at Blenkinsop Lake with Art Durkee. Join Art at 9:30 a.m. at Lochside Drive (off Blenkinsop Road) and bird along the trail and on the lake.

Sunday, Feb. 4. Winter Annuals and Evergreen Herbs, a botany fieldtrip with Bob Ogilvie. Meet at 10 a.m. in Checkers Pavilion (top of Beacon Hill) in Beacon Hill Park.

Tuesday, Feb. 6. Board of Directors Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in Clifford Carl Reading Room in Cunningham Building, UVic.

Tuesday, Feb. 13. Annual Banquet with Bryan Gates speaking on "The Natural History and Peoples of Namibia (South West Africa)." To be held at the Princess Mary Restaurant Vessel, this year's banquet will begin with a happy hour at 6 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are available from Dorothy McCann (592-1992) or Connie Hawley (385-2535) for \$16 per person. Dinner will include salad, rolls, choice of three entrees, and strawberry pie for dessert. Please buy your tickets early, as only 120 are available.

Thursday, Feb. 15. General Meeting of the Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association, 8 p.m. at Christ Church Cathedral Auditorium. Gerry Allen of the UVic Biology Department will speak on "California Wildflowers."

Saturday, Feb. 17. Mosses and Liverworts in Goldstream Park, a botany field trip with Judy and Geoff Godfrey. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Helmcken Park & Ride or 9:45 a.m. at Goldstream Park in the main parking lot.

Sunday, Feb. 18. Pelagic Birding Trip Aboard the Bastion City out of Nanaimo. Dave Stirling will lead this three-hour trip to see a concentration of eagles, sea lions, and sea birds feeding on the herring that congregate in the channels around the islands near Nanaimo. The boat leaves at 10 a.m. from the Public Market, beside the B.C. Ferry Dock at Departure Bay in Nanaimo. There is lots of parking. **Leave Victoria no later than 8 a.m.** in order to have time to board. Coffee and a goodie included in the cost of \$13 per person (\$9 for children under 15). Contact Lyndis Davis at 477-9952 to register and arrange car pools.

Tuesday, Feb. 20. Botany Night. Unusual vegetables is the program, with Oluna and Adolf Ceska, 7:30 p.m. in the Royal B.C. Museum classroom. Gather in front of the museum main doors to be let in.

Thursday, Feb. 22. Panel presentation on seabirds, 7:30 p.m. at the Newcombe Theatre (see p. 7 for details).

Wednesday, Feb. 28. Birders' Night. "Winged Wanderers--Birds of the Open Ocean." Alan Burger, formerly with the Bamfield Marine Station, will give a talk on pelagic birds found in the waters off British Columbia. Using study skins and slides, he will discuss the identification, foraging habits and adaptations of these birds which spend most of their lives at sea. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. in Begbie 159, UVic, with the presentation to follow.

MARCH EVENTS

Tuesday, Mar. 13. Annual General Meeting and Book Auction. This meeting is very important since we will be approving revisions to our bylaws as well as electing a new executive. The meeting commences at 8 p.m. in Begbie 159 at UVic, with an auction to follow of the extra, non-essential books from the VNHS library. Our library committee worked hard to streamline our library, and the extra books will be offered by auction to give the membership first opportunity to buy. (See page 11 for a list of some of the books being auctioned.)

fun with feathers

The highest number of feathers recorded on a single bird is 25,216 on a Tundra Swan (80% of those were on the head and neck!). The lowest number recorded is 940 on a Ruby-throated Hummingbird.

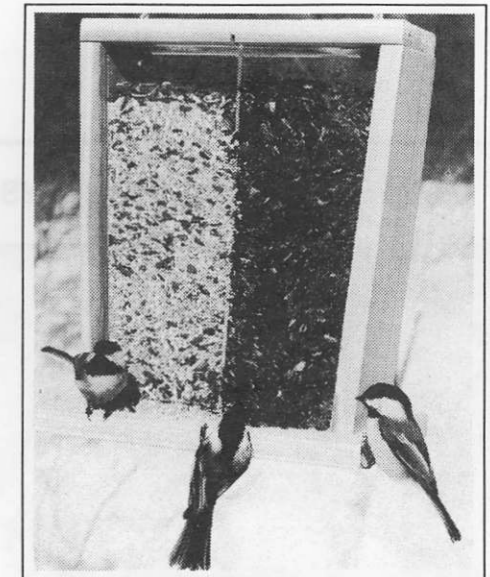
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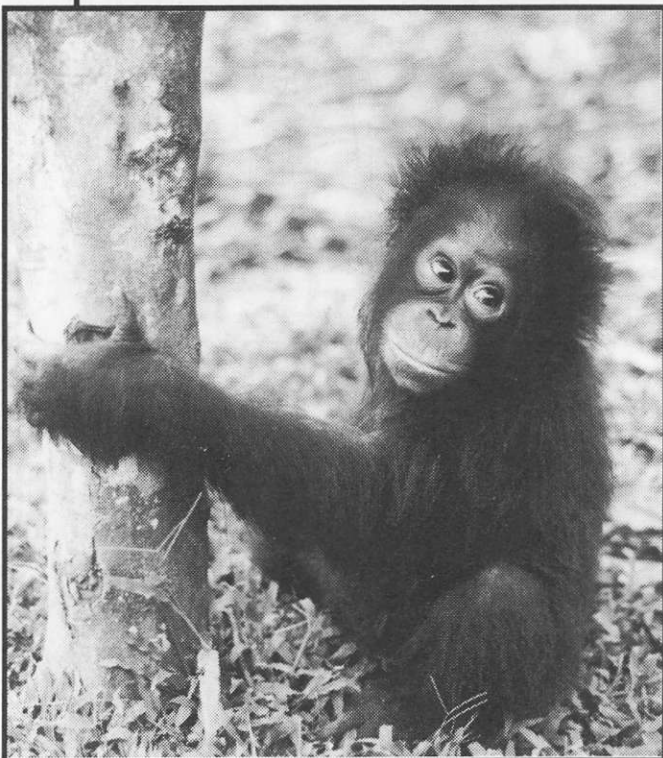
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