



The Victoria NATURALIST

SEPTEMBER
OCTOBER
1997
VOL 54.2

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Published six times a year by the
VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
 P.O. Box 5220, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N4
 Contents © 1997 as credited.
 ISSN 0049—612X Printed in Canada

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Associate Editors: Dalia Hull and Pamela Thuringer
Desktop Publishing: Frances Hunter, 479-1956
Distribution: Lyndis Davis, Connie Hawley, Tom Gillespie,
 Tony and Nonie Embleton
Printing: Fotoprint, 382-8218

Opinions expressed by contributors to *The Victoria Naturalist*
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Regular	\$25.00	Golden Age	\$24.00
Family	\$30.00	Junior Subscriber	\$7.00

(Any donation in excess of the above fees is income tax deductible)

Annual Subscription Rate, Victoria Naturalist \$17.00

RARE BIRD ALERT: 592-3381

VNHS EVENTS TAPE: 479-2054

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Deadline for next issue: September 26, 1997

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Guidelines for Submissions

Members are encouraged to submit articles, field trip reports, birding and botany notes, and book reviews with photographs or illustrations if possible. Photographs of natural history are appreciated along with documentation of location, species names and a date. Please label your submission with your name, address, and phone number and provide a title. We will accept and use copy in almost any legible form but we encourage submission of typed, double-spaced copy or an IBM compatible word processing file on any size diskette, plus printed output. Having copy submitted on diskette saves a lot of time and work for the publications group and we really appreciate the help. If you have an obscure or very old word processing program, call the Editor, Warren Drinnan, at 361-3543, or save the text in ASCII format. Blank diskettes may be obtained from the editor and we will return any of your own diskettes submitted. Photos and slides submitted may be picked up at the Field-Naturalist, 1126 Blanshard Street, or will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included with the material.

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For membership information and renewal, please contact Arlene Yaworsky at 385-9629 (evenings only), or write to Membership Committee c/o The Victoria Natural History Society, Box 5220, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4.

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OUR COVER

Our cover is an acrylic painting by Lissa Calvert entitled *Sacred Water*. The painting has been reproduced on a poster as part of the Goldstream Art Show, *The Nature of Island Artists*, and will be available for \$5.00.

Lissa Calvert has been painting and drawing wildlife from an early age. At seventeen she was illustrating books and has had many illustrations published. Her work has been commissioned for plates and figurines by the world famous Goebel of Germany. She has worked as an art director for film and television, and has had her work tour museums and public galleries from coast to coast.

Lissa's work hangs in museums and galleries internationally and she has had numerous exhibits. However, she has maintained a fascination with nature that draws her to portray its complexity and harmony from first-hand experience. Lissa considers the intimate experience of actually sighting the animal she is painting as an important aspect of her work.

The Goldstream Art Show runs from September 20 to October 12, 1997 at the Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre. The show is sponsored by the Goldstream Provincial Park, the Victoria Natural History Society, HAT and Arenaria Research and Interpretation and a portion of the proceeds will go to the Habitat Acquisition Trust.



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Ayum Creek — An Update

By Valerie Gruno

Earlier this year Jeff Stone, President of VNHS Habitat Acquisition Trust Foundation (HAT), provided an excellent overview of Ayum Creek to *Victoria Naturalist* readers, indicating clearly why HAT had set the acquisition of these lands as its conservancy priority. We, at the Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek (SPAC), are bringing you up to date on the activities which promote both the acquisition and stewardship of the creek.

Cleanup of Creek Lands

SPAC has contracted with South Island Streams to provide a clean-up crew to fill perc-test holes, install a gate and remove waste materials from the site. This clean-up has resulted in a total of 18,999 kilograms (41,798 lbs) of scrap metal now recycled. Many truckloads of household garbage, discarded furniture, broken glass and rubber tires have also been removed from the area.

The next phase of SPAC's restoration plan will occur on **Sunday, September 28th at Ayum Creek Day**, A BC Rivers Day event. Rain or shine, HAT's Andy MacKinnon will direct a Scotch Broom Bash that day, to clear space for native plant species to thrive. Many volunteers are needed for this project and a hearty lunch will be provided. Several activities are planned for children, including a scavenger hunt and other **fun and fishy frolics!**



Ayum Creek (Photo: Roger Foley).

Education

Volunteers from SPAC and HAT have been hosting tours of Ayum Creek every other Sunday. Many visitors from Greater Victoria, as well as residents of Sooke, have enjoyed hearing the history of the Ayum Creek Lands and learning about the estuary and the different species of plant and animal life supported there. SPAC's Stewardship program has brought more than 200 schoolchildren to participate in educational activities at the creek. The students of Journey Middle School took action on their concerns for Ayum Creek by donating \$500 to SPAC. The children earned this money through hot-dog, pop and chip sales. In September, 1997, SPAC's "Stream Team" partnership with Edward Milne Community School is to be established, to involve high school science students into a more advanced stewardship program. With Ayum Creek as the focus, interest in nature studies, as well as actual stewardship, will be enhanced and expanded. In the fall, SPAC volunteers will be working with many Sooke residents to document their memories of Ayum Creek.

Acquisition of the Land

A great deal of activity and energy has been directed toward raising the funds necessary to purchase the Ayum Creek Lands. By the end of July, close to \$275,000 has been raised in cash and pledged donations. Included in that total is a commitment from the Capital Regional District for \$150,000. The corporate sector has just begun to respond with a \$30,000 commitment from Mountain Equipment Co-op. To safeguard the Ayum Creek Lands we need to continue to ask individuals, small businesses and the corporate sector to pledge their support to this important project. As part of this fund-raising campaign, HAT and SPAC will be hosting a **Celebrity Dinner on September 19th** at the world famous Sooke Harbour House with guest speaker Robert Bateman. If readers are interested in attending this event some tickets are still available.

The Ayum Creek estuary is the southern terminus of the Sea-to-Sea Greenbelt. The waters of the creek support coho, chum, cutthroat, steelhead and many invertebrates. This is a rare and personal opportunity for people to help protect a natural area that they can visit now and in the future, and to bring their children and their grandchildren and tell them, "This natural park exists because we cared enough to act."

For further information on Ayum Creek and upcoming events please contact SPAC at 642-7278 or HAT at 995-2428.

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND

the 2nd Annual

AYUM CREEK DAY

(A CELEBRATION OF BC RIVERS DAY)



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1997

Come to the Ayum Creek Lands and help restore habitat for salmon and other wildlife.

'Broom Bash' and 'Fun and Fishy Frolics' begin at 11 am until 4 pm, **rain or shine**, so please dress for the weather. Bring a lunch, and lopping or pruning shears if you can help us rid this beautiful nature park-site of the dreaded scourge of Scotch Broom! At this **free event**, families are very welcome, but please leave your dog at home. Light refreshments will be provided.

More information: **(250) 642-7278.**

(Follow Highway 14 through the Sooke Hills to Saseenos, about 5 km east of Sooke. Plenty of free parking on Sooke Road, just past the Shell Station, between Laidlaw and Goodridge.

Watch for the SPAC sign by the concrete bridge!)

Sponsored by Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek (SPAC), in conjunction with the VNHS Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT)

Ayum Creek Lands Acquisition Project.

Help Protect Endangered Habitat

We can see the results of doing bird inventories (such as Michael Carson's) in the preservation of Rithet's Bog and Viaduct Flats. Previous work with ecologically sensitive areas was a good start. Now time is becoming short. It is essential to identify floral and faunal values in areas remaining unprotected. **Protect them now** if we want to continue observing birds, animals and native plants in the coming decades.

A special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Victoria Natural History Society was called to confirm the urgency of protecting endangered habitat. Directors of the VNHS discussed and approved the Society's role in actively preserving local wildlife habitat at the Board meeting of July 22, 1997. The first motion passed was to support "the identification, inventory and preservation of natural areas and greenspace in the Victoria region". The general feeling of the Board was that the long-range vision of the VNHS should include inventory work for sensitive wildlife habitat.

The second motion passed by the Board supported the 'VNHS Greenways Inventory Project'. The project involves the inventory of green spaces of local significance in the Greater Victoria region through detailed site studies to objectively determine significant values. This project is waiting for Treasury Board approval for funding by the Provincial Capital Commission. A complete Project Plan is in place and we are now asking for volunteers from the VNHS.

The general goal of the Inventory Project is to examine endangered sites and determine why each site is worth protecting. The time frame of the project is September 1997 to September 1998.

The main intent is to protect the habitat which supports wildlife. This inventory will link the wildlife to the habitat and provide an understanding of why species are using the site. A contractor with the qualifications to undertake field research such as wildlife inventories will be hired for five months.

Victoria Natural History Society Greenways Inventory Project

Volunteers are required to:

1. Train and assist volunteers (with the contractor's help) to fill in forms and do the inventory.
2. Nominate new ecologically sensitive areas and greenspace for consideration.
3. Lead inventory teams once site selection is finished and training is complete.
4. Conduct the inventory of wildlife in sites selected.

Volunteers should have skills in one of the following areas:

1. Identifying birds, mammals, insects, plants or habitat types.
2. Mapping, management, or leadership.
3. Enthusiastic support of inventory teams by driving, recording or other help.

This project is critically important in establishing the VNHS as an organization capable of identifying and preserving wildlife habitat. In this way the Inventory Project may serve as a model for a series of subsequent projects by the VNHS.

Please contact Tony Embleton at 595-6812 or Norman Mogensen at 477-9114 for more information about how you can help.

Hat Tricks

A Report on the VNHS Habitat Acquisition Trust Foundation (HAT)

The sunshine finally did arrive this summer and with it, two larger financial partners for our Ayum Creek project. The Capital Regional District has pledged \$150,000 towards the purchase and has indicated an interest in the future management of the property as a natural area park. Mountain Equipment Co-op has made a generous pledge of \$30,000. And we are particularly thankful to the individuals who have contributed with pledges or direct donations. It is these individual donations that demonstrate our community's support for protecting our local habitats.

With over \$270,000 pledged or donated as of July 30th, we are still shy of our goal of \$625,000 for the purchase plus related expenses. However, we are on our original schedule to meet this goal. September will be a very busy period for fund-raising and related events. On the evening of Friday September 19th, a benefit dinner will be held at the Sooke Harbour House with guest speaker Robert Bateman. The Goldstream Art Show will run September 20 to October 12, 1997. And to increase awareness of the value of rivers, our Ayum Creek partner, the Society for the Protection of Ayum Creek (SPAC), will be hosting an open house/broom bash at

the property on BC Rivers Day, Sunday September 28th. Information on all the events can be found within the *Naturalist* as well as a SPAC update on Ayum Creek.

While fund-raising for Ayum Creek has been our major focus, we have also been making steps in other areas of our mandate. Jan Garnett has continued to work on finalizing several conservation covenants that will ensure the protection of valuable local habitat. Later this fall, our desire to help individuals and other organizations with their land stewardship resource needs will get a big boost as we expect to open a land stewardship office (more details in the next issue of the *Naturalist*).

And finally, as mentioned in the July/August issue of the *Naturalist*, please do not be shy in offering any help, whether financially or through volunteering your time. It is only through the desires and actions of individuals like yourself that we can ensure that the natural values of this region will be shared with future generations.

HAT can be contacted at: VNHS Habitat Acquisition Trust Foundation, P.O. Box 8552, Victoria BC V8W 3S2
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Field Trips to Hurricane Ridge, Olympic National Park

southeast of lodge parking lot
= marmot colony

By Bev Glover and Dannie Carsen

On a Saturday (July 12, 1997) and again the following morning (July 13), a group of 25 people boarded the 6:20 Coho ferry to Port Angeles for a day's excursion to Hurricane Ridge. The weather could not have been better. The ocean was fairly calm as we cruised out of the harbour with views of Black Oystercatchers, Pigeon Guillemots, Common Murres, cormorants and a few Pacific Loon. Red-necked Phalarope and Northern Fulmars were highlights. We glimpsed Harbour Porpoise and Harbour Seals during the Coho crossing on Saturday.

Over on the Olympic Peninsula we had a great driver and guide to bus us up to the ridge each day. Glenn Larson was full of information about landforms, habitat zones, the wonderful show of flowers and the location of bears seen on the ridge. At the beginning of Olympic National Park he pointed out the local peaks and Dungeness Spit from one of the lookouts. As we drove on, the Red Cedar-Western Hemlock coastal lowland forest gave way to montane Douglas Fir. Turkey Vulture and Vaux's Swift were seen here on both days and a Rough-legged Hawk on Sunday. Finally, we reached the subalpine zone where Subalpine Fir, Yellow Cedar and Mountain Hemlock predominated. When the trees stopped we were in the alpine.

Spring arrived late this year to the high country of Olympic National Park. The early spring flowers were still present and the summer display was just beginning. This made for an amazing array of flowers that kept the botany types busy all day. The Victoria Rock and Alpine Society and a Washington State Wildflower Society were also on the ridge on the Saturday. A checklist of the flora of Hurricane Ridge was obtained from Roy Gelott of Port Angeles. By the end of each day there was very little on that checklist that we did not see in flower! *Erythronium* displays and the magenta paintbrushes were highlights for many.

The birders and the hikers had perfect walking weather and a good workout climbing to the top of the ridge. From the top, it was a bit too cloudy to get full views across the Strait of Juan de Fuca but we sure got good views of the local mountains. We hiked up a paved path (along with kids in wagons and strollers and big parties of sightseers) and enjoyed the wonderful late spring flowers. Since the temperature each day was pleasant but not very hot, the animals of the park were active all day long. There was a Douglas Squirrel near the upper parking lot and nearer the top of the ridge we saw family groups of Olympic Marmot (nicknamed Olympic Cougars because they were so big). Very tame and inquisitive Black-tailed Deer scouted us for tidbits and we also saw Olympic Chipmunks, Showshoe Hare and Black

Bears. The bird highlights were views of a singing Hermit Warbler, an American Kestrel seen by Jim Fliczuk, and a group of Gray Jays near the picnic area.

Each day was a success and we had wonderful company to share the bounteous carpet of flowers and clear mountain air. The birders expanded their abilities identifying the flowers and the botany group looked up to see the birds. Let's do it all over again next year!

The combined list of species was compiled by numerous participants. Thank you for all your help. The lists for Sunday arrived via Marilyn Lambert, Heather Maher and David Pearce.

Plants seen in Olympic National Park

(114 species, combined list for both Saturday and Sunday trips)

<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Subalpine Fir
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Common Yarrow
<i>Allium crenulatum</i>	Scalloped Onion
<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Serviceberry
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	Pearly Everlasting
<i>Anemone multifida</i>	Pacific Anemone
<i>Antennaria lanata</i>	Woolly Pussytoes
<i>Antennaria rosea</i>	Rosy Pussytoes
<i>Aquilegia formosa</i>	Sitka Columbine
<i>Arabis</i> sp.	Rockcress
<i>Arenaria capillaris</i>	Threadleaf Sandwort
<i>Arnica latifolia</i>	Broad-leaf Arnica
<i>Arnica mollis</i>	Hairy Arnica
<i>Aruncus dioicus</i>	Goat's Beard
<i>Carex mertensii</i>	Merten's Sedge
<i>Carex nigricans</i>	Black Alpine Sedge
<i>Castilleja hispida</i>	Harsh Paintbrush
<i>Castilleja miniata</i>	Scarlet Paintbrush
<i>Castilleja parviflora</i>	Magenta Paintbrush
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	Field Chickweed
<i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis</i>	Yellow Cedar
<i>Chimaphila umbellata</i>	Little pipsissewa
<i>Cirsium edule</i>	Edible Thistle
<i>Clatonia lanceolata</i>	Lance-leaved Spring Beauty
<i>Collinsia parviflora</i>	Small-flowered Blue-eyed Mary
<i>Cornus canadensis</i>	Bunchberry
<i>Delphinium glareosum</i>	Rockslide Larkspur
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Common Foxglove
<i>Dodecatheon pulchellum</i>	Shooting star
<i>Douglasia leavigata</i>	Smooth Douglasia
<i>Elmera rascemosa</i>	Alumroot
<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>	Fireweed
<i>Epilobium glaberrimum</i>	Smooth Willowherb
<i>Erigeron</i> spp.	Fleabanes
<i>Eriogonum ovalifolium</i>	Mountain Buckwheat (not quite in flower)
<i>Erysimum capitatum</i>	Western Wallflower
<i>Erythronium grandiflorum</i>	Glacier Lilly
<i>Erythronium montanum</i>	Avalanche Lilly

Fragaria virginiana
Fritillaria affinis
Galium trifolium
Gaultheria shallon
Geum triflorum
Heracleum lanatum
Hieracium aurantiacum
Hieracium gracile
Holodiscus discolor
Hydrophyllum fendleri
Leucanthemum vulgare
Lillium columbianum
Linnaea borealis
Lomatium martindalei
Lomatium nudicaule
Lonicera involucrata
Luetkea pectinata
Luina hypoleuca
Lupinus latifolius
Mitella breweri
Oplopanax horridus
Orobanche uniflora
Orthocarpus imbricatus
Osmorhiza occidentalis
Oxytropis monticola
Pedicularis bracteosa
Pedicularis groenlandica
Pedicularis racemosa
Penstemon procerus
Phacelia leptosepala
Phacelia sericea
Phleum alpinum
Phlox diffusa
Phyllodoce empetriformis
Pinus monticola
Piperia unalascensis
Platanthera dilatata
Poleminium pulcherrimum
Polygonum bistortoides
Potentilla flabellifolia
Potentilla diversifolia
Prunella vulgaris
Pseudotsuga menzeisii
Pusiilla occidentalis
Ranunculus sp.
Rhododendron albiflorum

Ribes laxiflorum
Rosa gymnocarpa
Rubus lasiococcus
Rubus parviflorus
Rubus spectabilis
Rumex acetosella
Sambucus racemosa
Saxifraga bronchialis
Saxifraga cespitosa
Sedum sp.
Sorbus sitchensis
Smilacina stellata
Spirea splendens
Taraxicum officinale
Thalictrum occidentale
Thuja plicata
Tiarella trifoliata
Trifolium longipes
Trifolium pratense
Trifolium repens
Tsuga hererophylla
Tsuga mertensiana
Vaccinium delciosum
Vaccinium membranaceum
Valeriana sitchensis

Common Strawberry
Mission Bells
Fragrant Bedstraw
Salal
Old Man's Whiskers
Cow-parsnip
Orange Hawkweed
Slender Hawkweed
Ocean Spray
Fendler's Waterleaf
Oxeye Daisy
Columbia Lily
Twinflower
Martindale's Lomatium
Pestle Parsnip
Black Twinberry
Partridgefoot
Silverback Luina
Subalpine Lupine
Brewer's Mitrewort
Devil's club
Naked Broomrape
Mountain Owl-clover
Western Sweet-cicely
Mountain Oxytropis
Bracted Lousewort
Elephant's Head
Sickletop Lousewort
Small-flowered Penstemon
Narrow-sepaled Phycelia
Silky Phacelia
Alpine Timothy
Spreading Phlox
Red Mountain Heather
Western White Pine
Unalaska Rein-orchid
White Bog Orchid
Showy Polemonium
American Bistort
Fan-leaf Cinquefoil
Varied-leaf Cinquefoil
Self-heal
Douglas Fir
Western Pasqueflower
buttercups
White Rhododendron
(not quite in flower)
Trailing Black Current
Baldhip Rose
Dwarf Bramble
Thimbleberry
Salmonberry
Sheep Sorrel
Red Elderberry
Spotted Saxifrage
Tufted Saxifage
Stonecrop
Gray's Sitka Mountain Ash
Starry False Solomon's Seal
Subalpine Spirea (not quite in flower)
Common Dandelion
Meadowrue (not quite in flower)
Western Red Cedar
Foam flower
Long-stalked Clover
Red Clover
White clover
Western Hemlock
Mountain Hemlock
Blue-leaved Huckleberry
Thin-leaved Huckleberry
Sitka Valerian

Veratrum viride
Veronica cusickii
Vicia americana
Viola adunca
Viola glabella

Green False Hellebore
(not quite in flower)
Cusick's Speedwell
American Vetch
Hook Violet
Yellow Violet

Birds seen in Olympic National Park

(55 species Saturday and 59 species Sunday; combined total was 71 species)

Pacific Loon	Vaux's Swift
Red-necked Grebe	Purple Martin
Double-crested Cormorant	Violet-green Swallow
Brandt's Cormorant	Barn Swallow
Pelagic Cormorant	Gray Jay
Great Blue Heron	Steller's Jay
Canada Goose	Common Raven
Mallard	Northwestern Crow
Surf Scoter	Golden-crowned Kinglet
Harlequin Duck	Bushtit
Turkey Vulture	Black-capped Chickadee
Red-tailed Hawk	Chestnut-backed Chickadee
Rough-legged Hawk	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Osprey	Winter Wren
American Kestrel	Swainson's Thrush
Blue Grouse	Hermit Thrush
Black Oystercatcher	Varied Thrush
Red-necked Phalarope	Townsend's Solitaire
Dunlin	American Robin
Western Sandpiper	American Pipit
Least Sandpiper	Pacific Slope Flycatcher
Heerman's Gull	European Starling
California Gull	Hermit Warbler
Glaucous-winged Gull	Orange-crowned Warbler
Bonaparte's Gull	Yellow-rumped Warbler
Common Murre	Brown-headed Cowbird
Pigeon Guillemot	Red-winged Blackbird
Marbled Murrelet	Song Sparrow
Cassin's Auklet	Chipping Sparrow
Rhinoceros Auklet	White-crowned Sparrow
Rock Dove	Dark-eyed Junco
Band-tailed Pigeon	House Finch
Rufous Hummingbird	Pine Siskin
Belted Kingfisher	Red Crossbill
Pileated Woodpecker	House Sparrow
Northern Flicker	

Other sightings

Olympic Chipmunk
Douglas Squirrel
Snowshoe Hare
Olympic Marmot
Black-tailed Deer
Black Bear
Harbour Porpoise
Harbour Seal
Checkerspot Butterfly
Anises Butterfly
Cabbage White Butterfly
Sara Orangetip Butterfly
Spring Azure Butterfly
Yellow Orbweaver spider
Numerous Lady bugs of various species

Watch for Colour Banded Cooper's Hawks

Over 100 Cooper's Hawks in the Greater Victoria area were banded with red or black coloured bands in 1997. This is the second year of this colour-banding program and is part of a study on the breeding ecology of Cooper's Hawks in the urban landscape of Greater Victoria. Naturalists can greatly assist this study by watching for, and reporting, these banded hawks.

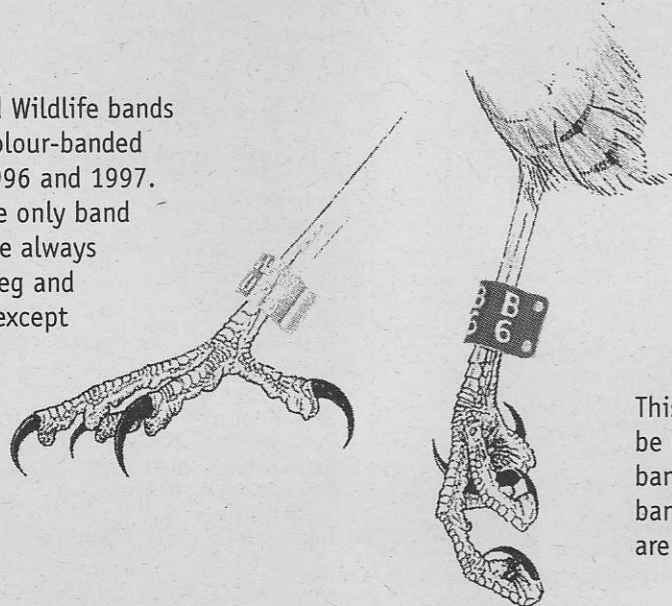
Colour-bands are uniquely coded with two vertical alpha-numeric characters (i.e., number over number, number over letter, etc.) and were placed on the left leg (see illustration). These codes are repeated three times around the band to provide good visibility from all angles. Band codes can easily be read with a spotting scope up to a distance of about 75 m or with binoculars if within about 20 m. If you observe one of these colour-banded hawks, please record and report the band colour and code, date and time, and an accurate location. If you are unable to read the code but can determine the band colour, please report this information as this is also useful data. Red bands signify that the hawk is a female and black signifies that it is a male. All colour-banded hawks were also banded with a standard aluminum US Fish and Wildlife band on the right leg. Cooper's Hawks observed with only a standard aluminum band on the right leg (no colour-band on the left leg) were banded in 1995 and should also be reported.

More than 60 sightings of colour-banded Cooper's Hawks were reported from the banding program in 1996. Most observations were made in the Greater Victoria area but several sightings were made from as far away as Chemainus on Vancouver Island and Boundary Bay on the mainland coast. Although the Cooper's Hawk is our most abundant year-round bird of prey in the Greater Victoria area, it is very secretive in behaviour and easy to miss. The Cooper's Hawk can be seen in highly urbanized areas of the city but is most frequently observed in urban areas, especially near backyard bird feeders.

Please report banded Cooper's Hawks to:

Andy Stewart
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
780 Blanchard Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4
Phone: (250) 387-9780

Standard US Fish and Wildlife bands were placed on all colour-banded Cooper's Hawks in 1996 and 1997. In 1995, this was the only band used. These bands are always placed on the right leg and are difficult to read except when in hand.



This example colour-band would be recorded as "B over 6". Red bands are on females and black bands are on males. These bands are always on the left leg.

The Okanagan Valley in May

By Marilyn Miller

We're off! No birding allowed until we're on the ferry!" That was the cry when we started our trip to the Okanagan Valley in May, 1997. In the car were Dodie Clark, Sheila South and the driver, Marilyn Miller. We left Thursday, May 22, in weather which was cloudy but not cold, although we all had our trusty GoreTex jackets with us. While we were birding on the ferry we were treated to a sighting of two Orcas just as the ferry was leaving Active Pass; in the Pass we counted 13 Bald Eagles.

Our first stop was Manning Park Lodge for lunch. There we saw our first Clark's Nutcracker, Grey Jay, Brown-headed Cowbird and American Crow. There were also lots of ground squirrels. We then continued on Hwy 3 through the mountains. Luckily, the traffic was very light because there were many cries of "Bird on a Wire!" or "Stop! Over there!" My reversing got better and better as we went on. About 18 km from Osoyoos, we found a pond down the hill from the highway with lots of good birds, including Barrow's Goldeneye, Ring-billed Gull, Ring-necked Duck, Ruddy Duck, Yellow-headed Blackbird and Western Kingbird. We found our first Mountain Bluebird there as well.

We based ourselves in Oliver, at Gallagher Lake, where we found a super unit at a very reasonable price at the Gallagher Lake lodge. The next day, armed with Keith Taylor's book, *Birder's Guide to B.C.*, maps and information from a friend, we set off to see what we could find. We started at River Road, which is close to Gallagher Lake, and as soon as we got out of the car we found a Yellow-breasted Chat on a phone wire, with a Western Bluebird sitting close by, then almost immediately, a Gray Catbird. What a start! We continued along River Road, finding many new species. River Road joins on to Seacrest Road and then goes uphill into different habitat along Fairview/White Lake Road, eventually coming to the Radio Observatory. Unfortunately, it started to rain and it became very chilly along this road, although we picked up some good birds — Eastern Kingbird, White-crowned Sparrow, American Wigeon, Bullock's Oriole, to name a few. That evening Sheila and I went to Vaseax Lake and found a Canyon Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, more orioles, White-throated Swift and other birds. At the Gallagher Lake Lodge we had heard a Golden-crowned Sparrow but on checking found that it shouldn't really be there at that time of the year so we had discounted it. However, Dodie actually saw the bird while Sheila and I were at Vaseax Lake so we were able to include it in our list. The Lodge is right on the lake and we picked up our first Spotted Sandpiper as it flew across the lake.

Friday, May 24, found us headed out early to check out the famous No. 22 Road. Just before reaching the road there is a small Provincial Park, with a pond, so we paused there.

We had one of our highlights at this little pond — Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper and Wilson's Phalarope in the scope at one time! We also found a Redhead. A lucky stop. Then we hit No. 22 Road. As soon as we stopped the car and got out we saw Bobolinks all around. We also puzzled over a bird which behaved like a Harrier, had a white rump like a Harrier, but which was a very odd pale colour. We decided it must be a Harrier and this was confirmed later by people from the Central Okanagan Naturalist's Club. We were also treated to the sight of an Osprey on its nest and, a little further along the road, to a Cinnamon Teal and a Say's Phoebe. The phoebe was right where Keith's book said it should be — a very cooperative bird. There were also many other birds in the area.

From there we drove up Mckinney Road, another hot spot from Keith's book. By this time it was a little late in the morning and birding was tailing off. We also wanted to get to Harpur's Ranch in the afternoon so could not give Mckinney the attention that it deserved. Highlights there were a porcupine, followed shortly by a moose strolling across the road. From there we drove to Harpur's. We remembered the Ranch as being a very special place and we were not disappointed. Have you ever seen a Red-tailed Hawk actually hover like a Kestrel? We also saw the female Red-tail on her nest and an immature Golden Eagle soaring in the wind. A sight to remember. The Black Terns were not in evidence while we were there — maybe we were too early. But there were lots of Eastern Kingbirds, Mountain Bluebirds, several Canvasbacks and Bonaparte's Gulls. We felt that we would have liked to spend more time but we had to leave.

Saturday, May 25, found us at Inkaneep Provincial Park, searching for the American Redstart, supposedly reliable there. Not for us, although we did find a lot of birds including Wilson's Warbler, Downy Woodpecker, Western Wood

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Peewee, Warbling Vireo and a Northern Oriole, which was busy building a nest. We then carried on to Vaseux Lake, which was a little disappointing as the water was very high. That made following the water's edge impossible. There were also a lot of people fishing, which meant that any ducks were far out in the lake.

On the way to Kelowna we stopped at the north site of the Okanagan Lake Provincial Park for lunch. While there, an older gentleman, who was roller-blading (yes, really!), asked if we had seen the owls. Following his directions we found a fledgling Great Horned Owl, one of a family of five, two adults and three young, which were nesting in the park. We also found a flock of Evening Grosbeaks and caught a glimpse of a mystery bird. The impression was of a red-headed, white-fronted woodpecker type. We thought it was a

Red-headed Woodpecker but the checklist said it had only been seen once, so it has to remain a mystery. Carrying on in the afternoon we picked up a Pied-billed Grebe before we reached Kelowna. We arrived at the Lake Okanagan Resort where we joined several other people from the Victoria area for Nature '97, a three-day event of birding, botany walks and history walks. But that's another story to be reported on by someone else.

Our total species count for the group for the three days was 113. My personal count was 103. All in all, an excellent outing and one I would certainly like to repeat. One other highlight was in Inkaneep Park, where we watched at close range a pair of Cedar Waxwings pass a berry back and forth, presumably a courtship display.

NATURAL HISTORY PRESENTATIONS

For those who attend the monthly Natural History Presentations a wonderful opportunity exists for members of the VNHS to learn a great deal more about nature and natural habitat. An outstanding program will be presented on the second Tuesday of each month by our learned speakers. Here is a partial example:

SEPTEMBER 9, **David Fraser's** illustrated subject will be *Biodiversity — Scary News from World Research*.

OCTOBER 14, **Bill Merilees'** illustrated topic is to be *Birds and Other Fauna of the Falkland Islands and Antartica*.

NOVEMBER 11, **David Stirling** will draw on his many years of birding and nature travels to talk to us.

These gentlemen are all Registered Professional Biologists with many years' teaching experience. So come, learn, and expand your mind — bring your most puzzling questions to pose to these experts! More exciting programmes will follow — we promise! And it's all FREE if you've paid your membership! If you haven't, our membership convenor will be there to gladly take your money!

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"CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF THE FEATHERED KIND"



A Slide Presentation By Internationally Renowned
Photographer Jonathan Grant

Friday, September 12, 1997
7:00 pm

David Lam Auditorium
The MacLaurin Building
University of Victoria

Tickets \$10.00

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The McFadden Creek Heronry is located on Salt Spring Island. The 12 acre forested property contain 118 heron nests, making it the largest unprotected heronry known in the Georgia Basin area.

The Islands Trust Fund and the Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia are partnering with the Salt Spring Island Water Bird Watch Collective to raise \$260,000 to purchase and protect the property as a nature sanctuary.

Point Pelee in the Spring

By Dale Geils

Early to mid-May is the peak bird-watching time in southern Ontario and this year (1997), though delayed because of colder than usual weather, many birders visiting Point Pelee enjoyed an unforgettable experience. Thousands of birds pass through this area each spring and this includes over 40 different American wood warblers. These are the species most birders desire to add to their checklist at this time of year.

These migrant birds usually arrive in waves, due to weather conditions. Often a warm front coming in from the south or southwest will meet a cold front from the north. This results in the migrating birds descending, sometimes in an exhausted state, to the first points of land to be found on Lake Erie. One of the most accessible is Point Pelee.

Upon arriving at the park the first time, we were greeted by the call of the Northern Cardinal and, looking up, he could be seen, high in a tree to the right. This brilliant and noisy red bird was the first to be marked on my checklist. From then on, and during the next few days, I was to record a total of 88 species, including 24 different warblers.

There are several distinct areas within the park, each with its own diversity and interest.

The Tip. A shuttle train is available from the Visitor's Centre and this provides frequent service down to the Tip. This place is a "must" for early morning birders, where Common Terns, Herring, Ring-billed and Bonaparte's Gulls, Dunlins and Sandpipers can be seen. The one day we didn't go down there a Caspian Tern was spotted. The Tip itself is roped off for about 100 feet, out of bounds to birders. A scope can be very useful here.

The Marsh Area. A boardwalk and observation tower overlooks 11 km² of marsh and open stretches of water. The day we were there was cold and windy and the only birdlife observed was a Great Blue Heron in amongst the reeds, an American Coot and a few Red-winged Blackbirds.

Tilden's Woods. One of the most popular places, with boardwalks, trails and ponds attracting many species. This is where we saw most of the warblers.

DeLaurier History Trail. Named for the DeLaurier family who were among the first white settlers, and where the house, with some sheds, still stands. A Summer Tanager was often seen near these old buildings. In addition, there are several



Coffee at the Visitors Centre, Point Pelee. (Photo: Dale Geils).

picnic areas, connected by trails, which can be excellent birding terrain.

Woodland Nature Trail. This trail starts at the Visitor's Centre and encompasses an area of woods, swamplands and small ponds and is where I saw my first Indigo Bunting, the vivid blue colouring unmistakable in the bush beside the trail.

After the first day we established a routine which we followed fairly consistently. We'd arrive at the Tip before 7:00 a.m., where we would scan the area thoroughly for any new, and hopefully rare, arrivals. Then the eastern side would be covered along with some of the intersecting trails where many birds, including warblers, could be spotted. Then we would return to the Visitor's Centre on the shuttle.

From there our choice was generally Tilden's Woods, to see the latest newcomer in the bird world. The mornings were cool and often small birds would shelter beneath the Broad-leaved Mayapple, a low-growing plant found in the woodland areas of the park. Later, when the air became warmer, the warblers would be seen more frequently, including numerous Black and White, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Blue and many other species.

My favourite was the Prothonotary Warbler and this bird could not be mistaken. Apart from its brilliant golden colour, he would put on such a show each time I saw him — always at Tilden's Pond. This was certainly one of the highlights of my visit, as I would watch this bird each day, fascinated by his personality! Seemingly aware of all the avid birders in his audience, he would flit from branch to branch, low over the water. Sometimes hanging sideways and admiring his reflection for a while, he would then fly over to another tree and try another angle from which to view himself. This show could continue for ten minutes or so, enabling the professional photographers with their bulky zoom lenses to obtain some good shots.

Most days by 11:00 a.m. we were ready to return to the Visitor's Centre for coffee and muffins, served by the "Friends of Point Pelee", a volunteer group raising funds for certain projects within the park. This was often a good chance to talk to other birders and catch up on the latest sightings.

Then we'd be off again to another place, depending on what we had heard or to try somewhere new, such as the DeLaurier Trail. There were more open spaces here, along with marshy places with boardwalks. Here we heard the Sora calling many times but were not able to spot this bird among the thick reeds and grasses. There were many croaking frogs and toads and we also saw numerous large (about six inches) turtles in the water sites.

Near to lunch time we'd try one of the many picnic places where there were shelters in case of rain (one day it did!). While birding along some connecting trails after lunch one day, a flock of Baltimore Orioles went by, stopping to feed now and then, their bright orange colour like small flames in the branches.

One of the most memorable aspects of my visit to "The Point", as the locals call it, was the friendliness of the people. We were all fellow birders with this common interest and

most were willing to pass on news of a new warbler or another rarity in the vicinity.

A prime example of this happened one day in the late afternoon and after a long day of birding (up at 5:00 a.m., start before 7:00 a.m.). We were on the Woodlands Nature Trail coming up to the Visitor's Centre. On this particular day we had been searching and following up leads on the Blue-winged Warbler. By this time we were discouraged and ready to call it quits but as we passed a small group on the trail I stopped to ask one lady if they'd seen anything interesting. When she said the Blue-winged had been there just a few minutes ago, I could hardly believe it and told her that was the one warbler we had been searching for ALL DAY, missing it in each place we'd been. This elusive bird had been tantalizing us by the near misses everywhere we went and here, once more, we had missed it!

After chatting for awhile, I continued wearily on up to the Visitor's centre and stood at the door discussing this latest turn of events. Just as we were about to enter the building, I happened to turn around and saw this woman - hair flying - dashing madly up the trail and beckoning frantically to us, yelling that "it" was back! Well, it's a wonder she didn't start a "birder stampede". All tiredness forgotten, we rushed down the trail and there a vision to behold! This small, yellow bird with its delicately blue wings, was flitting between the trees and moving to the left, so we were able to observe the Blue-winged Warbler for some time. Later, I derived great satisfaction from adding this to my list and that was a fitting end to my brief visit to Point Pelee. Two days after I left, a migration wave came through The Point. Birds arrived in their hundreds and as many as a dozen warblers could be seen in one tree. What a sight this would have been!

List of Warblers Seen: Point Pelee, May 12-16, 1997.

Blue-winged Warbler
Golden-winged Warbler
Orange-crowned Warbler
Nashville Warbler
Northern Parula
Yellow Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
Magnolia Warbler
Cape May Warbler
Black-throated Blue Warbler
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black-throated Green Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Palm Warbler
Bay-breasted Warbler
Blackpoll Warbler
Black and White Warbler
American Redstart
Prothonotary Warbler
Northern Waterthrush
Common Yellowthroat
Wilson's Warbler
Canada Warbler

Larks in London, Morocco and Spain

By Barbara Begg

It is always a thrill for me to see or hear a familiar bird when visiting another part of the world, especially when it is one of my favourite species.

On recent spring birding trips to Morocco and Spain, via London, England, I saw and heard singing Skylarks in all three countries. In Morocco we were fortunate to see one in farmland after leaving the Middle Atlas mountains, heading south toward more arid country. Once into the scrubby semi-desert, the family *Alaudidae* really came into its own. It was in this type of habitat that we recorded ten of the fourteen species of lark we were to see in Morocco. Of the ten, the Crested and the Thekla Larks were the most wide-spread, making our list almost daily, from just south of Rabat, near the Atlantic coast, to Erfoud, near the Sahara Desert. Greater and Lesser Short-toed Larks were very numerous, but not quite so widely spread.

The Crested, Thekla and Lesser Short-toed are similar to our introduced Skylark but the Lesser has no crest and the other two have very obvious crests. The Greater Short-toed Lark has no crest and lacks distinct streaking on the underparts. Temminck's Lark has the facial and crown markings of our Horned Lark but the yellow areas are replaced with white and the back and wings are much paler and unstreaked.

One of the most unusual looking larks was also among these semi-desert birds — the Thick-billed Lark. As its name suggests, it has a massive bill, larger and more bulbous than an Evening Grosbeak's. It has black facial markings, very heavily streaked underparts, pale back, a tail band and an elaborate wing pattern. The Dupont's Lark has more lark-like plumage but has a long, slim, decurved bill. This bird was most memorable for the hard time it gave us, singing all around us but staying out of sight until after more than an hour, when it finally perched in the open for all to see well. The last three arid-country larks were all seen in the desert with mountainous sand dunes as a backdrop. The Desert and Bar-tailed Larks are crestless and very pale, to match their surroundings. The last bird, the Greater Hoopoe-Lark, is the most un-lark like. It is large and long-legged, and has a very long, decurved bill. Any camouflage effect of the sand-coloured back is quickly lost when the bird flies, revealing its strikingly marked black and white wings.

The other three lark species we saw were Shore (Horned) Lark, which we found high in the middle and High Altas ranges; Calandra Lark, which was in cultivated farmland; and, Wood Lark, in a small tree beside a lake in the Middle Atlas.

These fourteen lark species breed in Morocco and constitute all of the larks likely to be seen in that country.

During an eight-day trip in southern Spain, following Morocco, we saw six of the above species — Calandra, Greater Short-toed, Crested, Thekla and Wood Larks, as well as the Skylark. Again, we only once found the Skylark, singing long and lustily on high.

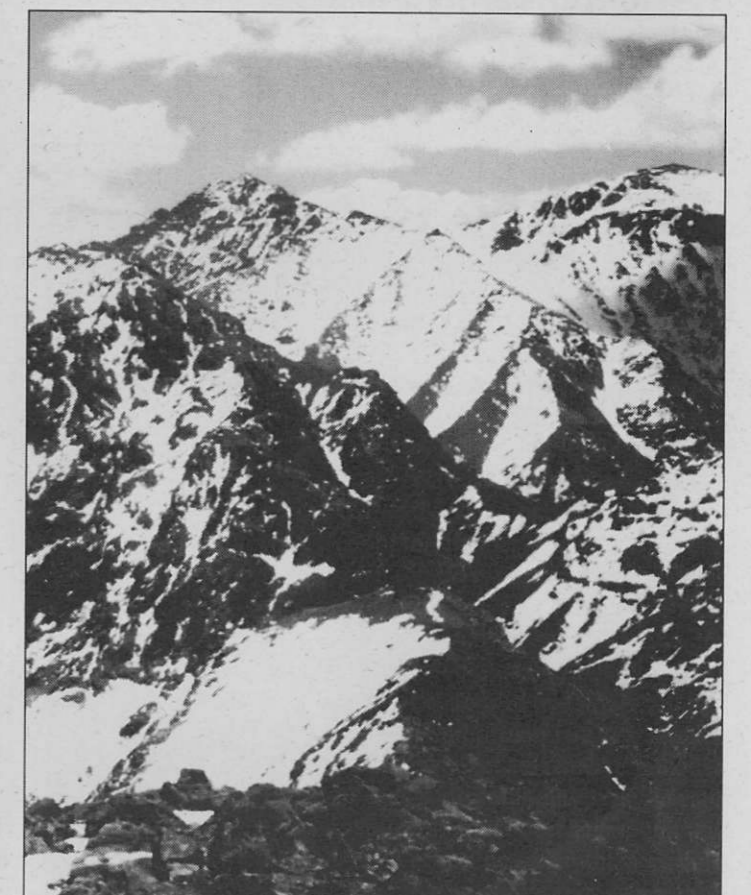
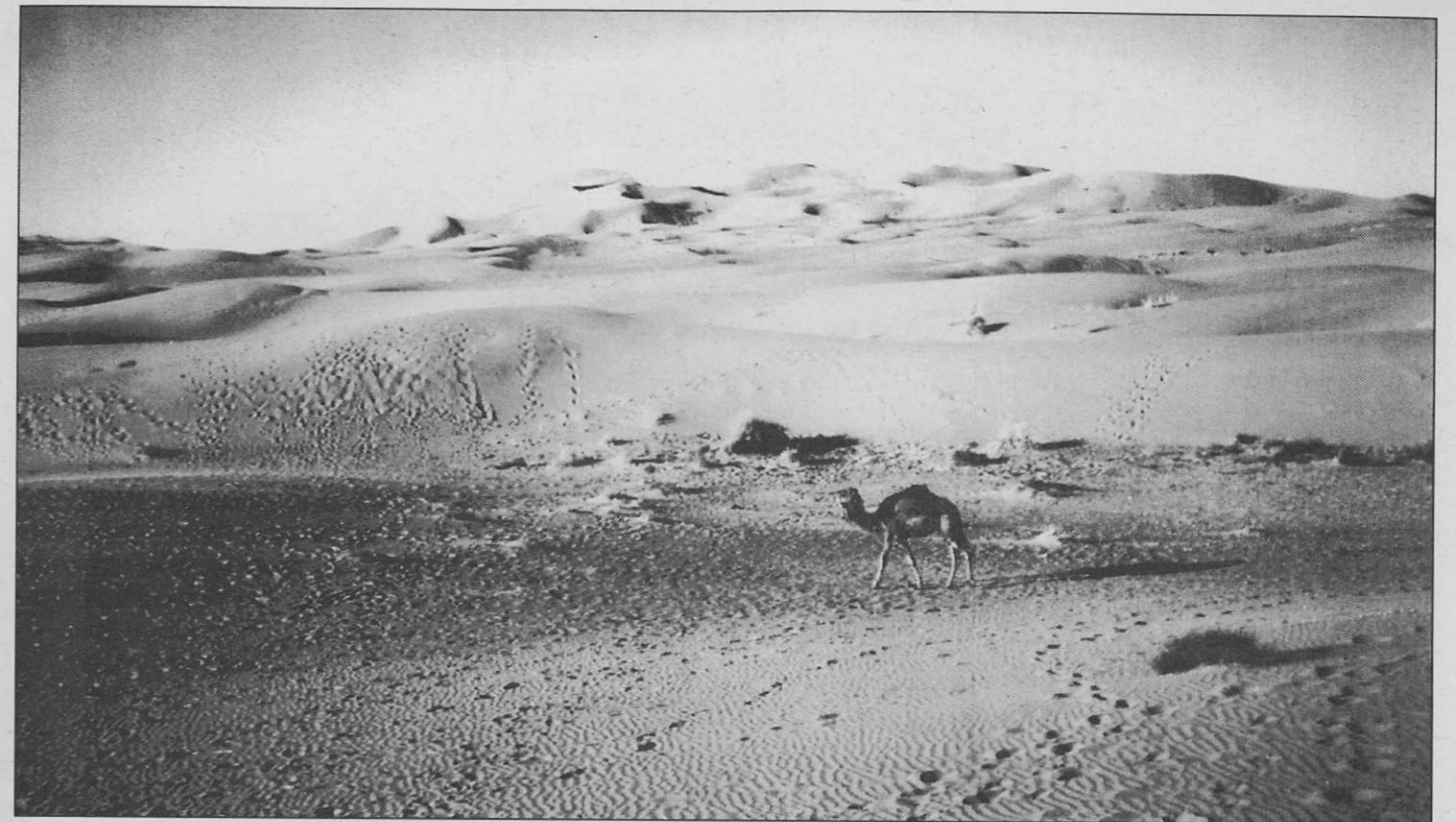
My last encounter with *Alauda arvensis* was near Heathrow Airport in London. Having a few hours to wait for my flight home, I went for a long walk in the vicinity of my airport hotel. There were some very large fields nearby and I was hardly out of the hotel grounds when I heard a Skylark singing and eventually saw it and others in flight. As I had been told by a British birder that I probably wouldn't see a Skylark there, I was doubly surprised and pleased. It was a great finale to a successful birding trip.

Lark Species Recorded:

Bar-tailed Lark	<i>Ammonanes cincturus</i>
Desert Lark	<i>A. deserti</i>
Greater Hoopoe-Lark	<i>Alaemon alaudipes</i>
Thick-billed Lark	<i>Ramphocoris clotbey</i>
Calandra Lark	<i>Melanocorypha calandra</i>
Greater Short-toed Lark	<i>Calandrella brachydactyla</i>
Lesser Short-toed Lark	<i>C. rufescens</i>
Dupont's Lark	<i>Chersophilus duponti</i>
Crested Lark	<i>Galerida cristata</i>
Thekla Lark	<i>G. theklae</i>
Wood Lark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Horned Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>
Temminck's Lark	<i>E. bilpha</i>

All of the larks mentioned in this article are shown in field guides to birds of Europe and North Africa, such as *The Birds of Britain and Europe*, by Heinzel, Fitter and Parslow, and *Birds of the Middle East and North Africa*, by Hollom, Porter, Christensen and Willis.

BARBARA BEGG has provided several articles to the *Victoria Naturalist* on birding and the Skylarks of Vancouver Island.



Top: Greater Hoopoe-Lark, Desert and Bar-tailed Lark habitat, Merzouga, Morocco. Bottom, L: One type of Crested Lark habitat, Villanueva de los Infantes, Spain. Right: Horned Lark habitat, Atlas Mts, Oukaimeden, Morocco. (Photos: Barbara Begg).

HORTICULTURE CENTRE OF THE PACIFIC
FALL SERIES OF LECTURES

General Topic: *Preparing for Winter as a Prelude to Spring*

Weekly talks will be held at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP) on Saturdays, starting September 27 (excluding October 18th) and ending on November 22nd, starting at 10:00 a.m. and going to about 12:00 noon.

Cost of a single lecture is free to HCP members; \$8.00 to non-members. The series of eight lectures is free to HCP members and \$45.00 for non-members. (Why not become a member?)

All lectures will be held at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road. Additional information on the individual talks is given in the Calender section of this issue of *The Victoria Naturalist*.

Please pre-register at the office. Telephone Ann Widdowson at 479-6162 for further information.

Welcome to New Members

JUNE

Leanna Barlott and Colin Young
of McKenzie Avenue
are interested in conservation, wildlife management and forestry issues.

Carole Carver
of Admirals Road

Suzanne Caskenette and family
of Fell Street
enjoy botany and mammalogy.

Margaret Hunter
of Waring Place.

Noel and Maureen Russell
of Surrey, B.C.
include birds and flowers among their interests.

Diana and Rod Sargent
of Harrison Street
are interested in edible and medicinal plants but also enjoy birds and tracking.

Sally Steeves
of Despard Avenue.

JULY

Barbara and Jim McDavid
of Wende Road

Helen Mansfield
of Old West Saanich Road
enjoys birding and outdoor walks.

Annette Moen and Family
of Portsmouth Drive

Cedric and Valerie Park
of Wallace Drive
are particularly interested in birds.

Lon and Lorrie Wood
of St. Charles Street
are avid birders.

Pacific Octopus

By Pamela Thuringer



As the summer daytime low tide window slowly draws to a close, I find myself unwinding in a bed and breakfast, mulling over the adventures of the day. To most, collecting intertidal information would seem a straight forward endeavor, make your way down to the water and start recording. Perched on a cliff overlooking Gillies Bay on the western shores of Texada Island, I can only hope to convey how untrue this notion really can be.

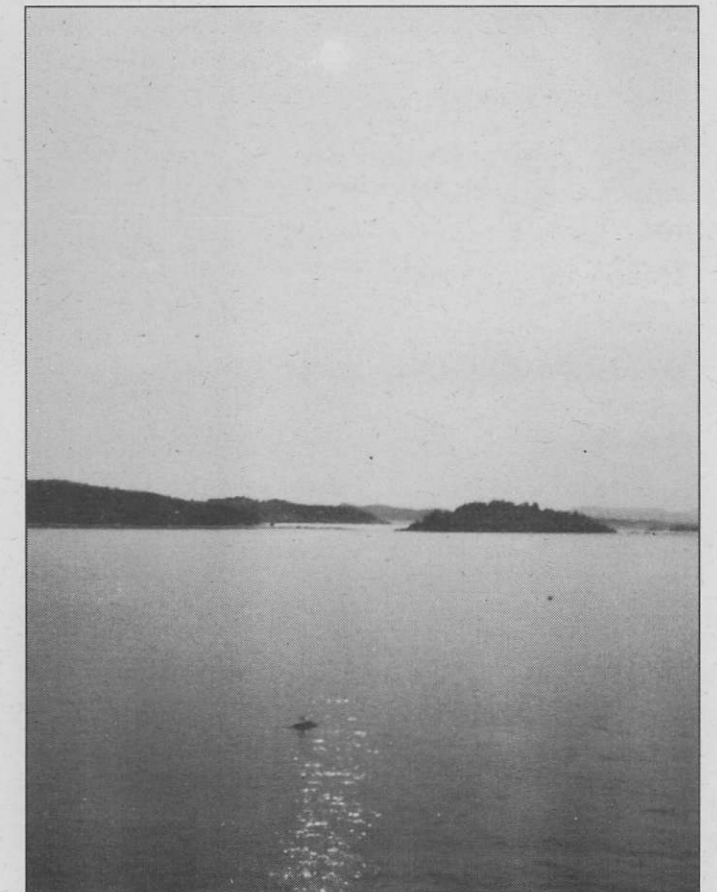
Logistically, travelling from Victoria to Texada Island should be as direct as two scheduled ferry sailings. The first departure was from Little River, just north of CFB Comox, where we cross the Strait of Georgia to Powell River. While F14 fighter jets blazed through the air directly above us, we embarked on a journey across the Strait that should have foreshadowed what lay ahead. Fierce northwest winds produced an eight-foot chop, pounding the port side of the ferry which made the initial crossing quite rough. Once safe passage to the Sunshine Coast at Powell River was achieved, we had to pivot 180 degrees and head southwest to Blubber Bay, on the northern tip of Texada Island. As we approached the boarding booth, just before loading commenced, one of the ferry person-nel remarked, with a carnival style inflection, "welcome to the ride of your life". If not quite concerned enough, the sight of the steel ferry ramp as it heaved and crashed on the ferry deck only made matters worse. Upon waiting for the instruction to hastily drive on at the appropriate moment, a guess at a lull in the heavy wave action was made. With great trepidation, our 36-foot entourage of van with boat in tow, lurched onto the ferry as it thrashed against the loading dolphins.

Docking on Texada Island was incident free and we proceeded onto this piece of land that rose from the sea, a post-glacial retreat. Full of minerals such as copper, iron, lead, gold and zinc, Texada Island boomed at the turn of the century with mining, whaling and an illegal distillery on the eastern shores, driving the settlements at Blubber, Marble and Pocahontas Bay. Mining has continued to this day, as Texada remains the principle supplier of limestone throughout the Pacific Northwest. The logging industry also flourishes on Texada, which eventually provided us shore access via the many logging roads throughout most of the island, an option we were forced to resort to upon our next discovery.

Eager to launch our boat with the intent to visit as many intertidal sites as possible during our two hour low tide window of the day, we were momentarily stopped in our tracks to realize that with our van, we would only be able to launch at high tide. With time ticking, a decision to forge on, utilizing the many existing logging roads of unknown condition, was our only option. Leaving the boat and trailer behind in Shelter Bay, we set out to areas marked on a map with a final destination of access to the intertidal shores.

Faced with steep road grades, loose substrate and washed out sections of logging roads of varying widths and repair, there were more than a few moments of genuine concern as to whether or not we would be able to accomplish our goal in our rear wheel drive Dodge van. With credit to the experience and determination of our two-person field crew, we managed to overcome what seemed to be an endless number of obstacles and complete our intertidal shore station survey. Although it had felt like we had been on Texada Island for weeks, we ended our two day sojourn to this unique place onto itself with a incredible stop at the carved and eroded intertidal limestone formations of the nearby town of Van Anda. Having recorded the occurrence and distribution of a variety of biota occupying the various niches of the intertidal, my thoughts were, and still remain, that simply looking at the data in the final presentation of a database, will never quite capture the essence of our journey to arrive at that final end point.

PAMELA THURINGER is a marine biologist working with a local environmental consulting firm.



Shelter Point, Texada Island (Photo: Pamela Thuringer).

Poems

By Roy Prior

Sonnet for Birders

bird
flying
where
gone

size, about, yes,

colour shape
wing flight
tail
right
ah

right.

ah

what?

poem.

Birding by ear

wilson's warbler
says

I am a wilson's warbler

languidly

bewick's wren
says

I am not a wilson's warbler

indignantly;

orange-crowned warbler says he's
far too
weary to

Tableau

Rites of spring equivocal
In one small tree

Song sparrows
Mating love

House finch
Nesting twig

And a male
And a female

Cowbird.

When

does the bird become
conscious
of the swelling egg
preconscious

has turned
for the nest
thoughtlessly
and then

but not
all
at once

Body Language

Why are the gulls
Not screaming at the eagle
Today?
Yesterday...

He's flying straight.

Yesterday
He was loitering
With intent
To commit a felony.

The black-bellied plover

that depressed-looking plover
has nothing on its mind

an enormous doubt
for such a shore-

bird.

The Beacon Hill Park mob

street corner boys the crows
vigilantes cosa nostra
clamour

Luftwaffe squadron out on strafe
Stuka divers
raptor cops

collectively intelligence
no lab research can measure

Don't get in their black books.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month; **Natural History Presentations** (formally known as the General Members Meeting): the second Tuesday of each month; **Botany Night:** the third Tuesday of each month (**NOTE:** No Botany Night in September); **Parks and Conservation Committee Meeting:** the third Wednesday of each month; **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday of each month; **Marine Night:** the last Monday of each month. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Telephone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 for further information and updates.

NOTICE: We would like to encourage everyone to attend those meetings which are of interest to them but especially the **Natural History Presentations**. The volunteers and speakers at these meetings work hard to provide an entertaining and informative evening and we should all show our appreciation by coming to as many as possible.

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Tuesday, September 2

Board of Directors' Meeting

Clifford Carl Reading Room, Cunningham Building, University of Victoria at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 6

Birding at Witty's Lagoon

Join **Dannie Carsen** (727-0155) for a view of visiting shorebirds and a chance for other fall migrants at a favourite regional park. Meet at 8 a.m. at Helmcken Park and Ride or at 8:45 a.m. at Witty's Lagoon parking lot. This trip will be a good opportunity to study fall shorebirds on the mudflats of the lagoon.

Saturday, September 6

CRD Parks — Sunrise Seekers Canoeing

Paddle through early morning mist, searching for elusive birds and other lakeshore life on Elk/Beaver Lake, 7:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Pre-registration and fee. \$12 per person 15 or older; \$6.50 per person 14 and under. Phone 478-3344. CRD family event.

Tuesday, September 9

VNHS Natural History Presentation

David Fraser will present a slide-illustrated talk: *Biodiversity — Scary News from World Research*. Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria, 7:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. Bring your coffee cup and a friend.

Friday, September 12

Close Encounters of the Feathered Kind

A slide presentation by internationally published wildlife photographer, **Jonathan Grant**, will take place at 7:00 p.m., David Lam Auditorium, MacLaurin Building, University of Victoria. Music by Lisa Maxx. Tickets are \$10.00, available at the Field Naturalist Store on Blanshard. Proceeds go to the McFadden Creek Heronry, Saltspring Island.

Saturday, September 13

CRD Parks — Sunrise Seekers Canoeing

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park. See September 6 for details.

Wednesday, September 17

Parks and Conservation Committee

7:00 p.m., Swan Lake Nature House. All VNHS members are welcome to join in discussions and express their concerns about local conservation issues. Contact **Jeff Stone** at 370-2449 for further information.

Friday, September 19

Ayum Creek Benefit Dinner

Wildlife artist **Robert Bateman** will be the guest speaker at a benefit dinner to be held at the Sooke Harbour House, 6:30 p.m. 120 tickets are available at \$150.00 each. For further information and tickets telephone the HAT office at 995-2428.

Saturday, September 20

CRD Parks — Sunrise Seekers Canoeing,

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park. See September 6 for details.

Sunday, September 21

Birding at Martindale Flats

Join **Brent Diakow** (656-3190) for a tour of the open fields and ponds of Martindale Flats and the Central Saanich bulb fields to find some of those 10,000 American Pipits migrating through the area. Meet at the Red Barn on Island View road at 8:00 a.m. There have been occurrences of Lapland Longspur, Golden Plovers, Yellow Wagtail and Red-throated Pipit during this peak migration time.

Wednesday, September 24

Birders' Night

Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria, 7:30 p.m. Program details were not available at the time of publishing. For details contact the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054. Bring a friend and your coffee cup.

Saturday, September 27

East Sooke Park Hawk Watch

David Pearce (658-0295) will be your host to Victoria's raptor spectacle with over 13 species expected. This annual migration of masses of Turkey Vultures and Red-tailed Hawks soaring over Beechey Head is always enjoyable. Meet at Helmcken Park and Ride at 9 a.m., or in the Aylard Park entrance at the end of Becher Bay Road at 10 a.m. Bring a lunch and a jacket for the occasional fog or fall breezes.

Saturday, September 27

Horticulture Centre of the Pacific Lecture — Rhododendrons

Mr. Norman Todd will present a slide-illustrated talk on Rhododendrons which he has been growing for 25 years. Currently, Norman and his wife Jean grow 400 species as well as 600 to 700 hybrids. Norman is an enthusiastic speaker, and was the principal founder of

the Victoria Rhododendron Society 17 years ago. There will also be a demonstration and everyone may take cuttings to try rooting them at home. Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road, 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information telephone Ann Widdowson at 469-6162.

Saturday, September 27

CRD Parks — Sunrise Seekers Canoeing

Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park. See September 6 for details.

Saturday, September 27

The Spectacular Spider Show

Spider tales, spider jokes. Come along and learn what these crawling critters are all about in a fun family evening complete with spider juice to drink. Donations appreciated. Meet at the Nature House off Munns Road, 7:00 p.m. CRD Parks family event.

Sunday, September 28

Pelagic Birding on the Coho

Hank vanderPol (658-3482) will lead a series of trips on board the M.V. Coho. The crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and there is the possibility of seeing shearwaters, alcids and phalaropes. We will be birding from the bow of the boat, so dress warmly. Bring proof of citizenship and \$17.70 return ferry fare. Meet at the Coho Ferry Terminal at 10 a.m. The ferry arrives back in Victoria around 2:15 p.m.

Sunday, September 28

Ayum Creek Day

Rain or shine, HAT's **Andy MacKinnon** will direct a Scotch Broom Bash at Ayum Creek to clear space for native plant species to thrive. Several activities are planned for children and a hearty lunch will be provided for volunteers. 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Meet at the Hwy 14 bridge on the Sooke Highway (just past the Shell gas station). For more information contact **Joanne Manley**. (See also ad and article in this issue).

Sunday, September 28

Hawk Watch

The *raptor spectacular* is underway. At least 13 species of predatory and scavenging birds have been seen catching the thermals at this time of year. Try your eye at spotting turkey vultures, various hawks, and eagles gliding over East Sooke Park. Resource people with spotting scopes will be on hand at the viewpoint above Beechey Head between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Bring your binoculars. Carpooling would be appreciated as parking is limited. Aylard Farm parking lot off Beecher Bay Road in East Sooke. CRD Parks family event.

Monday, September 29

Marine Night

If you have eaten sushi wrapped in seaweed, or even if you have not, and would like to know more about how it is produced, be sure to attend our first evening of the new season and hear **Dr. Mel Goldstein**, a retired professor from McGill University who will speak on: *The life cycle, cultivation and utilization of the sea vegetable, Porphyra (Nori) in Japan*. To get wrapped up in this subject, see you at Swan Lake Nature Centre. 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

OCTOBER EVENTS

Saturday, October 4

Art Auction and Exhibit

Internationally famous wildlife artist **Robert Bateman** will be speaking at the McFadden Creek Heronry fund-raising auction and art exhibit on Saltspring Island. Complimentary refreshments, lots of door prizes, including an overnight stay and gourmet dinner for two at Hastings House. Tickets are \$12.00, available from the Field-Naturalist Store on Blanshard. 7:00 p.m., Mahon Hall, 114 Rainbow Road, Saltspring Island. Preview and silent auction begins Saturday, September 27 until Friday, October 3.

Saturday, October 4

Horticulture Centre of the Pacific Lecture — Pest Management

Mr. Gary Roke is a plant pathologist, who works at the Canadian Forest Service laboratory in Victoria. He is involved in integrated pest management and brings both a scientific understanding and considerable enthusiasm to this subject. Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road, 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information telephone Ann Widdowson at 469-6162.

Sunday, October 5

Fungus Among Us

Some fungi help build forests. Other fungi do trees no good. Still others are off marrying algae (well sort of). Want to know more about mushrooms? Learn more about these amazing organisms on a walk with a CRD Parks Naturalist. Meet at the Pike Road parking lot off East Sooke Road, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00. CRD Parks family event.

Tuesday, October 7

Board of Directors' Meeting

Clifford Carl Reading Room, Cunningham Building, University of Victoria at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 11

Horticulture Centre of the Pacific Lecture

Join **Bev Glover** on a talk and walk on *Learning and Caring for your Wintering Birds — Waterfowl and Perching Birds*. Ms. Glover is a senior laboratory instructor in Biology at the University of Victoria and has been birding in Ontario, B.C. and Australia for over 15 years. Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road, 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information telephone Ann Widdowson at 469-6162.

Tuesday, October 14

VNHS Natural History Presentation

Bill Merilees' slide illustrated topic will be *Birds and Other Fauna of the Falkland Islands and Antarctica*. Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria, 7:30 p.m. Everyone welcome. Bring your coffee cup and a friend.

Wednesday, October 15

Parks and Conservation Committee

Swan Lake Nature House at 7:00 p.m. All VNHS members are welcome to join in discussions and express their concerns about local conservation issues. Contact **Jeff Stone** at 370-2449 for further information.

Saturday, October 18

Owling at Francis Park and other locations

Join **Darren Copley** for a nighttime ramble to find Great Horned, Western Screech, Northern Pygmy and Barred Owls in their favourite haunts around Victoria. Please register with Darren at 479-6622 so we can keep the group under 15 people. Warm jackets and a thermos of hot liquid are always a good idea. Meet in the parking lot at Francis Park at 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, October 19

Twist Harvest and Halloween

As the plant world dies back and nature prepares for winter, humans have long celebrated with Harvest festivals. On this hike we'll observe the changes on the land and examine how First Nations and settlers have honoured this cycle. Meet at the Witty's Lagoon Information Centre off Metchosin Road, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. CRD Parks adult event.

Tuesday, October 21

Botany Night

Evelyn Hamilton will present a slide-illustrated talk titled: *A Botanist in Bolivia and Adjacent Parts of South America*. Swan Lake Nature Centre, 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Victoria Natural History Society and the Native Plant Society of British Columbia.

Wednesday, October 22

Birders' Night

Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria, 7:30 p.m. Program details were not available at the time of publishing. For details contact the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054. Bring a friend and your coffee cup.

Saturday, October 25.

Horticulture Centre of the Pacific Lecture

Hugh Daubeny will present a slide-illustrated talk on *Preparing Berry Crops for the Coastal Winter*. Dr. Daubeny is a plant breeder, who has produced most of the important strawberry and raspberry varieties in B.C. His 40 years of work has been recognized by

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numerous Canadian and American scientific societies and he is recognized as an international authority on the breeding and cultivation of berries. Horticulture Centre of the Pacific, 505 Quayle Road, 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon. For further information telephone Ann Widdowson at 469-6162.

Sunday, October 26

Pelagic Birding on the Coho

See September 28 for details.

Sunday, October 26

Attracting Birds To Your Backyard

Invite the birds for a meal! This is a drop-in affair where you can build your own bird feeder. Bring your kids, enthusiasm, and a hammer. There'll be tips on bird houses, feeders, and more. Prize draw and refreshments. Donations appreciated. Nature House and Forester's Cabin off Munn Road, 12 noon - 4:00 p.m. CRD Parks family event.

Monday, October 27

Marine Night

Rick Harbo, Senior Marine Biologist, Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans has recently published an important new book on mollusks of B.C. called *Shells and Shellfish of the Pacific Northwest*. He is an avid diver and underwater photographer and has previously written several other books on marine life. He has kindly agreed to present an illustrated talk called — *Mysteries of Shells: Curiosities and uses of shellfish*. He will also bring along a collection of cannery labels, stamps and coins depicting shells. No need to "shell out" for this talk, its free. Swan Lake Nature Centre. 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Sunday November 2

Pelagic Birding on the Coho

See September 28 for details.

Request for Volunteers

Volunteer Naturalists are needed at Swan Lake-Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary for school programs beginning in September. All that is required is an understanding of local natural history and an interest in working with children. Training is provided. Contact Joan at 479-0211.

Reminder!

The Swan Lake Nature Centre holds birding walks regularly on Wednesdays and Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Everyone is welcome to join in.

For Sale

National Geographic's *Field Guide to Birds; the Naturalist Guide to the Victoria Region; Birds of Victoria; the Victoria Area Bird Checklist*; and, the Victoria Natural History Society's Window Decals are for sale, contact Lyndis Davis at 744-5750.

expire: 31-12-97

Claudia and Darren Copley
657 Beaver Lake Road
VICTORIA BC V8Z 5N9



The Nature of Island Artists

SEPTEMBER 20 - OCTOBER 12, 1997

**GOLDSTREAM PROVINCIAL PARK VISITOR CENTRE
VICTORIA, B.C.**

FOR INFORMATION: 479-9414

*Sponsored by: BC Parks, Arenaria Research and Interpretation,
Victoria Natural History Society and HAT*