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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, Glen Moores, at 655-3772, 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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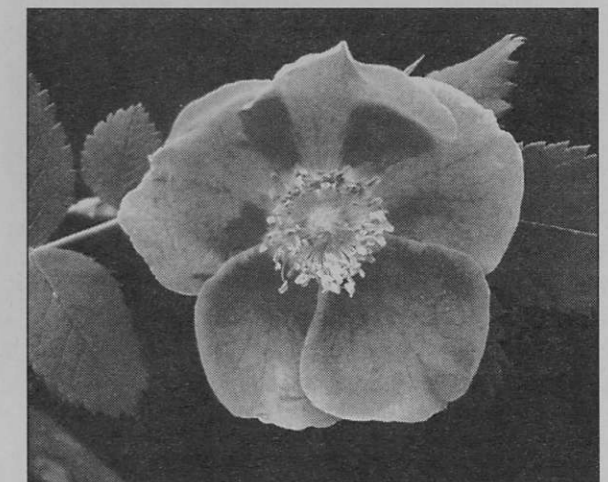
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It is great to welcome a new contributor to *The Naturalist.*, Philip Critchlow with his great photograph of a pileated woodpecker and his article.



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Pileated Woodpeckers

By Philip Critchlow

Although not uncommon, the pileated woodpecker is fairly elusive. Raucouskuk-kuk...calls or the presence of trees with large rectangular excavations are more likely to indicate the presence of this large woodpecker than an actual sighting. It is surprising, then, that we have had two pileated woodpeckers visiting our property in the past three months. The first appeared in March and stayed for a few days attacking a dead fir tree. One afternoon, we watched through a telescope from our dining room as it extensively debarked the lower section of the tree. The technique was intriguing. First it would attempt to prize a piece of bark at the exposed edge using its bill. If this failed, it sidled around the tree, pecked at the bark a few centimeters from the edge in a vertical line before returning to the starting position to prize again. Invariably the piece of bark now dislodged. This bird was an adult male with all its features well-defined – complete red crest, red whisker patches and a jet-black body with white facial stripes and wing linings. It has not returned to the tree since.

The second pileated woodpecker arrived in the middle of May, attracted by a hanging feeder containing a mixture (1 part peanut butter, 2 parts melted suet, 2 parts cornmeal and 4 parts finely cracked corn) intended primarily for chickadees and flickers. In order to obtain more natural photographs, I erected a section of tree trunk with a deep crack into which the mixture was pressed and also a blind some 3-4 meters away. This new feeder soon attracted the pileated woodpecker and other birds. For two weeks the woodpecker visited infrequently but on a regular basis, coming once or twice every second day or so, usually between 9 a.m. and noon. Fortunately it was not shy and it was possible to creep into the blind without disturbing it. This bird was also a male, red whisker patches and crest, but its plumage appeared to be less black than the March visitor, somewhat like that of a female.



Photo: Phillip Critchlow



VNHS Natural History Presentation

Tuesday, October 12, 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria

Pileated Woodpeckers on South-eastern Vancouver Island, Do They Need Old Growth?

Pileated Woodpeckers were once considered dependent on old growth. That was disputed by research in Oregon in 1987, which found that Pileated Woodpeckers foraged in immature forests. Do they need old growth or can they use second-growth forests? Recent research on Vancouver Island has shed some light on the ecological requirements of the Pileated Woodpecker. This research project was supported by the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund as part of a Master of Science degree at the University of Victoria by Carol Hartwig. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

The Trial Islands

By Yorke Edwards

We live near the east end of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. As we look south across it from McMicking Point we see the long majestic wall of the Olympic Mountains decorating the background. The highest peaks are due south, some with snow throughout the year. But scenic as they are, they are only half the show. Just offshore across Enterprise Channel the Trial Islands fill the near view of glacier-smoothed hills of rock, much grassland, and rocky shores often animated by birds and mammals.

The reliable origin of the name "Trial" has so far avoided my search. One casual source says that new or newly repaired ships in test runs out of Victoria's shipyards made their "trial runs" only as far as the Trial Islands before returning to the harbour. My own thought was that the swift tidal waters sweeping around the islands could be "a severe trial" for sailboats trying to get by them.

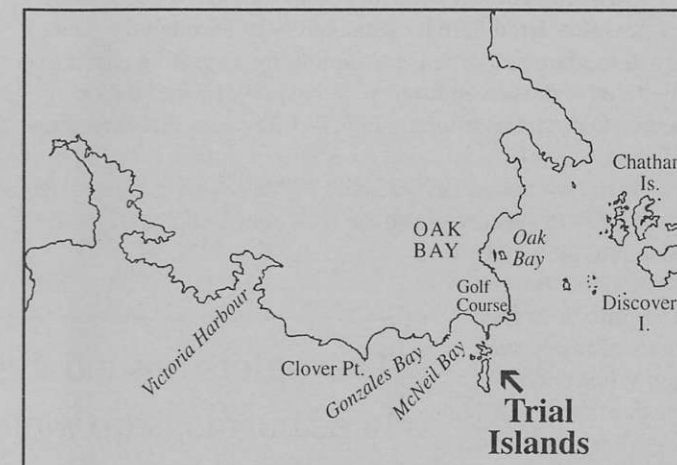
"Trial Island" is the local name because it does seem to be just one island when viewed from Vancouver Island, but any good map shows that they are a cluster of six islands: four tiny, one small, and a large one that is almost 900 meters long and about 300 meters at its widest. They form a narrow cluster extending 1400 meters north to south. Even when knowing this, however, the five islands still appear to be only one island with rocky hills and extensive grassland, the terrain rising to its south end. This makes the terrain face the city as if showing-off the rare vegetation that lives there.

Except for the area needed for a lighthouse on the south end of the largest island, those islands are an Ecological Reserve administered by British Columbia's Parks office. The Trial Islands Ecological Reserve is considered by many botanists to be the most important one of the province's more than a hundred reserves throughout the province.

Adjacent deep waters are not part of the reserve, but it is not clear whether the intertidal areas are part of it. The swift waters around the islands make life in the intertidal unique locally and worth protection.

The Trial Islands preserve a treasure-trove of very rare plants. Where Victoria now sprawls, land with enough soil once grew rare native plants in extensive natural grasslands now covered by buildings, cement, asphalt, and gardens with plants that are mostly foreign. Those dry prairies in the southwest corner of our province, a few still with us, are in strange contrast with our wet west coast rainforests. The recipe for those grassland patches has three main ingredients: dry summers, shallow soils, and strong winds. Only special wild plants can live through our frequent summers with thirsty winds and dry soils.

The Trial Islands, and especially the large one, preserve some of our prehistoric meadowlands. There are no trees.



Blame salty gales for that. Over most of the islands both grass and rock prevail, while some wind-pruned shrubs in thickets are huddled in shelter places, the kinds mainly oak, aspen, wild rose, and snowberry.

Botanists list about twenty-eight species of rare herbaceous plants on the islands, fifteen of them among the rarest in the province. Some in that fifteen are two grasses, two owl-clovers, two lupines, a paintbrush, and of course the famed Macoun's Meadow-foam found in a few parts of our coastal grasslands. It lives only in our dwindling grasslands – nowhere else.

On my few visits to the Trials I have given full time to botanical treasures, but through twenty years of watching from home, using both binoculars and a telescope, I have learned a lot about its mammals and birds. There is no doubt, however, that closer observation will enlarge my lists. Experts have seen the plants, close up. We need to know more about its birds, insects too, and perhaps the life living in the intertidal rims.

The four mammals I have seen from Vancouver Island are River Otters, Harbor Seals, Northern (better called Steller's) Sea Lions and California Sea Lions. All are superb swimmers, all hunt their food in the sea, and when not hunting all spend much time on shore. There are two kinds of ways that those four use the shore. Three of them (seals and the two sea lions) are awkward when moving about on shore, their general appearance always suggesting large well inflated balloons. Otters are in high contrast. When on shore from swimming and fishing they are nimble, seem always to be in smooth motion, and when in a family group they often become a knot of lithe bodies in playful togetherness.

These otters live in fresh water across Canada. In our sheltered inland ocean waters they probably have the conti-

ment's densest population. Even in our city's rugged shores there are miles of otter habitat just right for them. Harbor seals loaf regularly on the islands' northern shore. After hunting and eating they bask for hours near the water. Often there are dozens, at times there are more. My largest count was 161 and other large counts have been over a hundred, but about half the time when I look they have all gone fishing for part of the day, or sometimes for a day or more.

Two kinds of sea lions invade our sheltered ocean waters each winter, lured here by abundant fish. Through the years I saw these large mammals swimming by, migrating east into sheltered waters in autumn, west in spring toward the open ocean. Only males migrate. Females stay near their breeding shores.

In the winters of 1996-7, and 1998-9, a noisy gang of males, a mix of both species, chose the rocky north shores of the Trial Islands as their loafing ground for the first time in twenty years of my watching. When not hunting they all crowded together, day and night, to bark and roar together. They created an uproar that carried several miles north into the

quiet city. The far carrying barking from the black California Sea Lions combined with the rumbling roars from the brown and bigger Northern Sea Lions brought crowds of people to the little Kitty Island Park to enjoy the noisy concert across the channel.

The black Californias swim north from their summer rookeries on southern Californian shores (some also from Mexico) to our inland ocean waters. The bigger brown Northern ones come from unknown areas, their summer rookeries scattered widely from northern California to Alaska, then west into Asian waters almost to Japan. The two species mixed together on Trial Islands' shores, crowding together, rumbling and roaring in loud unison, but there is one interesting behavioural difference. The Californias often float together in the water, a raft of them conspicuous only because some are pointing long black flippers high into the air. One flipper aloft, when unexpected, can be briefly seen as the dorsal fin of a huge shark.

Until the year 1952 mammals on the Trail Islands were only large seagoing swimmers resting on the rocky shores. In that year forest dwelling deer mice arrived on the two largest islands, and probably are still there. The reason for putting them there is for a research experiment, a future study on whether the forest dwellers have changed in size or in other ways in their treeless habitat.

I have not been able to do much exploring on the islands for birds, but have seen much from our property. The most evident species are Crows, Starlings and Red-winged Black-birds crossing the channel back and forth almost daily.

A Bald Eagle, sometimes several, usually perches on the nearest shore for hours, watching for catchable food. In summer other birds crossing are Barn Swallows, House Finches, Cowbirds, and rarely a Raven or two, usually harassed by Crows while crossing the channel.

Heermann's Gulls come as autumn visitors from Mexico to feed and rest on the channel's shores, then leave before winter's storms. A few California Gulls from the prairie appear. Then the winter hundreds to thousands of gulls arrive to whiten the winter shores. In good winter weather many of these gulls rest on the shores and islets beside the Victoria (Oak Bay) Golf Course, easily seen through our windows, or they choose to gather onto the Trial Islands' north shore. When they are battered by strong winds from the west or northeast, as they often are, the white crowd moves to become only partly visible in a sheltered bay facing southeast

from near the island's northeast corner. Through winter by far the most numerous are Thayer's Gulls, tourists from islands in the high Arctic often mixed with Mew and Glaucous-winged Gulls,

both from nesting on our own Pacific shores.

From our windows sometimes the white crowds by the Golf Course are easily identified, but identifying them when on the Trial Islands is another matter. Usually good light is needed when they are on the islands' north shore, and my scope (with 20 or 40 times magnification) works best in the slanting light of a late afternoon sun.

The Victoria Golf Course, just east of our home, once had both Western Meadowlarks and Killdeers nesting in the course's rough edges. Such edges are rare now that golfing has been made so much easier, but both of those birds do at times use the course in winter, especially in snowy weather when the golf course is first to offer bare turf. I have seen both species flying to the Islands in most seasons. Perhaps both nest in the Trials' grassland.

The only small birds heard on the islands when I was there were singing Song Sparrows which, in our balmy climate, seem to stay on or near their territories year-round

Birds seen on the islands' shores all year are noisy Black Oystercatchers, cormorants (Pelagic and Double-crested and sometimes a Brandt's), and often a Great Blue Heron. In winter a dozen or more Black-bellied Plovers visit the north shore, their far carrying plaintive calls often heard, and often seen mixed with a small crowd of Dunlins both when resting and flying and feeding. In some winters they feed on the Golf Course, joining gulls and other birds, all of them attracted to where melting snow has exposed the first patches of grassy turf.

While eagles are on the islands most days, other

The waters around the islands attract numerous birds but most are wintering migrants which rarely use the shores.

predators visit the islands rarely. Some years in late summer or fall a Peregrine Falcon rests on top of a small hill by the shore. Northern Harriers migrating in autumn along our shore have been seen twice hunting low over the islands' meadows, and in several winters conspicuously white Snowy Owls were resting on the meadows and rocks, as many as five at once in the winter of 1987-8.

The waters around the islands attract numerous birds but most are wintering migrants which rarely use the shores. They are loons and grebes, ducks like surf scoters, white-winged scoters and oldsquaws, murres and guillemots, Bonapate's gulls and terns. Rhinoceros Auklets fish off-shore to feed young on an island off the American shore. It is probable that pigeon guillemots nest on the islands since some are in the channel through summer.

Although much may have changed on the islands since 1953, it is interesting that Charles Guiguet, the biologist for decades in the British Columbia Provincial Museum (now the Royal British Columbia Museum), visited the Trial Islands several times through that year. He found nests of Red-winged Blackbirds, and Killdeers with downy young. Meadowlarks were nesting in May. Fifty pairs of Glaucous-winged Gulls were nesting on the big southern island. Song Sparrows and White-crowned Sparrow were nesting in thickets. He saw also three Pheasants, and in August two Sandhill Cranes.

He also saw four garter snakes. There are three species of garter snakes on Vancouver Island, and those he found were probably Western Garter Snake, the largest and most aquatic of the three.

Not only our view of mountains and islands attracts our view, Enterprise Channel is always lapping our shore and is ever changing. Winds change its surface, and often its nearly still waters are turned into a wild rush of tidal flow. The channel also has birds on it like Harlequin Ducks and three species of mergansers, occasionally Killer Whales, at times low traffic of flying gulls and cormorants. Some migrants fly its length in spring, waterfowl like scoters, Brant, and sometimes White-fronted Geese migrating into the east, then in brief confusion before turning north into Georgia Strait.

From an early age islands have bothered me. Perhaps it began in Boyhood, with local myths about burials and ghosts on islands in Ontario lakes; but soon I wondered about how plants and animals got to them, and then why another lot of them failed to get there. All islands are therefore mysterious to me. In my mind I can see Steller's Jays carrying acorns across the strait, but what would carry tiny Macoun's Meadow-foam there? Were the Trial Islands once part of Vancouver Island? How did meadow-foam escape the glacier?

Mysteries galore, and the clues are few. Slowly, perhaps, science will answer such questions.

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Division of Continuing Studies
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA



Feathered Friends

By Marge Crowther

Since 1954 I have kept a record of birds seen on our property, 4718 West Saanich Road, Victoria. Some, sadly, we no longer see. On April 6, 1956, two bluebirds were perched on our clothesline, and on October 14, 1956, we saw four. On March 13, 1958, we noticed two once again, and on September 13, 1958, there were seven. Up until May, 1974, we used to hear skylarks, rising upward signing from nearby. Pheasants with their babies lived in our back field and we would often see 40 quail at one time.

We first noticed orioles on May 1, 1974, then again in May, 1976. They built a nest in May, 1977 in a Lombardy popular, then again in 1981, building a nest and successfully producing young. The last time we had them nest was in 1982 with another successful nest, when they took pieces of string and cotton batting which we put on our back deck. We saw one oriole in 1983, and in 1984 there was one oriole here for around five weeks, then it flew away. On April 17, 1994, we noticed a female oriole in our birdbath, and in June a male was signing in the cottonwood tree, then took off in the direction of Quick's Bottom. We saw them almost every year up to 1997, but they never nested here after 1982.

We're happy to have so many Anna's Hummingbirds, first noticed by us in the winter of 1997. This past winter,

1998, we kept the feeders filled for them, and they built nests and raised young. We watch them feed and think that perhaps it's a young one feeding when the beak is dipped in the syrup, withdrawn, the head tipped back with the beak in the air, and then we see swallowing movements in the throat. Several Anna's come to feed, even more than the Rufous.

My husband has chickadees eating sunflower seeds from his hand, and one day our neighbour was outside with his wife, and pointed at a section of his house. He was very surprised when a chickadee landed on his finger!

One day I was watching a flicker hanging on our wooden paddle where we place chunks of suet inside a wire container. A chickadee flew into view heading for the suet feeder, and landed in the empty "V" space between the flicker's tail feathers that were spread apart. The chickadee moved his head from side to side for a few minutes, then to my astonishment he reached out and pulled the flicker's tail feather. The flicker turned his head and looked over his "shoulder" and if flickers could look surprised, I think he did!

It would be nice if we could return to the birds of the past, but at least the Anna's Hummingbirds are a bonus.

Frigate Birds on the Encantadas

By Robert Kensett

A month ago I spent a few days in the Encantadas, the Galapagos Islands. Straddling the equator this group of islands lies in the Pacific Ocean, 970 km west of the coast of Ecuador. Discovered in 1535 they became more well known from the writing of Charles Darwin, a 23 year old naturalist who visited the islands on *H.M.S. Beagle*, and after studying the various species of finches, 20 years later published his *The Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection*.

The group consists of 6 main islands, 12 smaller islands and over 40 quite small islets. At certain times of the year conflicting ocean currents form mists on the sea and the islands disappear into these mists only to reappear and then disappear again, hence the Spanish name Encantadas, bewitched or enchanted. They were formed by volcanoes and

are relatively new in geological terms being between three and ten million years old. They are not the lush tropical isles you might expect but are arid wastelands in appearance with small bushes, dried grass and generate greener growth except in the rainy season.

There are a number of animals in residence including the famous giant tortoises, marine iguanas and sea lions. The tortoises have shrunk drastically in numbers and the Darwin Research Centre is now raising them and introducing them to the wild in an effort to increase their numbers. A field guide to the birds of the Galapagos lists 140 species of which 60 are resident and the rest are migrants or casuals. Included in the residents are Darwin's finches with 13 species, blue foot, red footed and masked boobies, the Galapagos penguin, the flightless cormorant and most colourful in the breeding

season, the great frigate bird.

Of the 18 large and small islands the frigate bird is found on 5 of the larger islands and 5 of the smaller ones. It has a length of 86 to 100cm and a wingspan of 203 to 230 cm. The male is all black with a greenish sheen to the back while the female is black with a white neck and breast. However in the breeding season the male has a pouch on its breast that it inflates to a very large size to attract females and this pouch is a very bright crimson. Breeding grounds are along the coasts and the nests are poorly constructed of twigs and guano. The breeding season is lengthy and the males gather in clusters of eight or more to display and call, a rattling sound, for a female to join them. After mating, an egg is produced and both the male and female incubate the egg and feed the chick for five months after hatching.

The frigate birds feed well out in the ocean on fish, squid and crustaceans they can take off the surface of the water. However they will also take food from boobies by catching them on the way back to their nests and attacking them in the air forcing them to drop or regurgitate food they are taking back to their own chicks. They are also not adverse to feeding on unattended chicks that cannot defend themselves.

During the breeding season dozens of these birds can be seen swooping, flying and soaring along the coastline near a breeding ground and their wingspan of over seven feet is quite impressive. They are probably the most numerous of the various bird species and while not as famous as the finches they will be the bird you remember when your visits to the Galapagos Islands end.

1999 Spring Bird Count

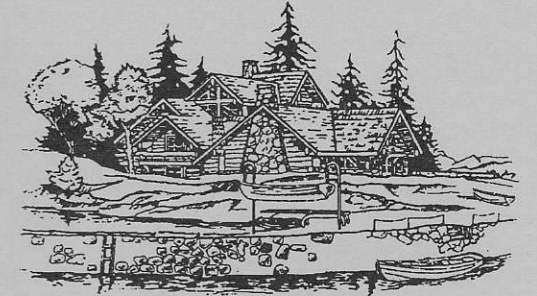
By Marilyn Miller

I would first of all like to thank all of the participants in our Spring Bird Count. The organization was done at the last minute, so extra thanks are due to those leaders who whipped up a team at short notice. Next year's count should be much smoother! We were unable to field teams in four areas - 1, (Butchart Gardens/Northern Highlands), 6, (Albert Head/Triangle Mountain), 12, (Oak Bay), and 21-23, (Oak Bay Islands). The number of species and the total number of birds certainly reflect the loss of these areas.

I leave the interpretation of these statistics to better birders than I am. What I notice is that the cool spring seems to have increased the numbers of winter birds, and has hindered the migration of summer birds.

I have many ideas to improve the organization of the Spring Bird Count, but I have to say thank you to Dave Pearce for running it for so many years. Dave has passed on the software to me, and I'm working on improving my handling of it.

Yellow Point Lodge



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1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. BUTCHART GARDENS/NORTHERN HIGHLANDS | 5. LANGFORD LAKE | 9. PORTAGE INLET - THE GORGE |
| 2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS | 6. ALBERT HEAD - TRIANGLE MOUNTAIN | 10. VICTORIA HARBOUR |
| 3. GOLDSTREAM | 7. ESQUIMALT LAGOON - MILL HILL | 11. BEACON HILL |
| 4. THETIS LAKE/HASTINGS FLATS | 8. ESQUIMALT HABOUR | 12. OAK BAY |

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Pacific Loon							3					
Common Loon			1	1				1		1		
Pied-billed Grebe												
Horned Grebe												
Red-necked Grebe							14	2		3	1	
Western Grebe												
Double-crested Cormorant					1		20	7	15	23	4	
Brandt's Cormorant										4		
Pelagic Cormorant								4		1	2	
Great Blue Heron			1	2	1		9	6	13	3	3	
Mute Swan							7	2				
Brant							6					
Canada Goose		19	15	61	23		23	44	71	12	8	
Wood Duck		2	2	2					2			
Green-winged Teal			3						5			
Mallard		26	2	23	25		39	21	42	13	105	
Northern Pintail							2					
Cinnamon Teal												
Northern Shoveler												
Gadwall												
American Wigeon				7							8	
Ring-necked Duck		4		1	2							
Greater Scaup								15				
Harlequin Duck										7	5	
Oldsquaw												
Surf Scoter							6			10		
White-winged Scoter												
Bufflehead		1			1		1	1	22	5		
Hooded Merganser		2		13			2					
Common Merganser			10	2			2		4			
Red-breasted Merganser							32			1		
Ruddy Duck												
Turkey Vulture		25		4								
Osprey							1	3	1			
Bald Eagle		3	4	3	1		1	2	1	1	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk							1					
Cooper's Hawk				2			1	1	1	1	2	
Red-tailed Hawk		1		3				2	1			
Golden Eagle					1							
American Kestrel												
Merlin		1					1					
Ring-necked Pheasant				8			1					
Blue Grouse				1								

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

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|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY | 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | 21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS |
| 14. 10 MILE POINT | 18. ELK LAKE - CORDOVA BAY | |
| 15. GORDON HEAD - MOUNT DOUGLAS | 19. PROSPECT LAKE - QUICKS BOTTOM | |
| 16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL | 20. MARTINDALE - BEAR HILL | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Pacific Loon	1					4		53		61	
Common Loon		1	3			3		2		13	
Pied-billed Grebe							2			2	
Horned Grebe			1			34		1		36	
Red-necked Grebe	2		2							24	
Western Grebe			2							2	
Double-crested Cormorant	5	7	2	2		1		24		111	
Brandt's Cormorant	35									39	
Pelagic Cormorant	4		1			7		1		20	
Great Blue Heron	2	1	1	3	3	2	5	14		69	
Mute Swan										9	
Brant						4		108		118	
Canada Goose	2	4		8	2	6	43	160		501	
Wood Duck				2		1	4			15	
Green-winged Teal							19			27	
Mallard	30	11	37	106	24	11	46	75		636	
Northern Pintail							3			5	
Cinnamon Teal								2		2	
Northern Shoveler				1		2	6			9	
Gadwall							51			51	
American Wigeon	1		1	1	6		11	6		41	
Ring-necked Duck							5	2		14	
Greater Scaup								6		21	
Harlequin Duck	4	2	7							25	
Oldsquaw			12			41		36		89	
Surf Scoter	4	15	7			75		44		161	
White-winged Scoter			4			13				17	
Bufflehead	11		3			1	6	14		66	
Hooded Merganser						1	2	2		22	
Common Merganser										18	
Red-breasted Merganser				23		76		20		152	
Ruddy Duck				1						1	
Turkey Vulture			5	1			19	4		58	
Osprey										5	
Bald Eagle	2	2	4	1		4	1	5		36	
Sharp-shinned Hawk				2						3	
Cooper's Hawk	2	3	3	2			2	1		21	
Red-tailed Hawk			2		1			7		17	
Golden Eagle										1	
American Kestrel	1									1	
Merlin								1		3	
Ring-necked Pheasant					3	2	5	1		20	
Blue Grouse										1	

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

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|--|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. BUTCHART GARDENS/NORTHERN HIGHLANDS | 5. LANGFORD LAKE | 9. PORTAGE INLET - THE GORGE |
| 2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS | 6. ALBERT HEAD - TRIANGLE MOUNTAIN | 10. VICTORIA HARBOUR |
| 3. GOLDSTREAM | 7. ESQUIMALT LAGOON - MILL HILL | 11. BEACON HILL |
| 4. THETIS LAKE/HASTINGS FLATS | 8. ESQUIMALT HABOUR | 12. OAK BAY |

SPECIES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ruffed Grouse		3										
California Quail		16		11	6		9	6	5	3		
Virginia Rail												
American Coot							1					
Killdeer		4		7	6		1	6		1		
Black Oystercatcher							1	2		8	4	
Greater Yellowlegs								1				
Lesser Yellowlegs												
Spotted Sandpiper					1					2		
Whimbrel												
Black Turnstone										2		
Western Sandpiper				3					14			
Least Sandpiper							1		2			
Dunlin					5							
Common Snipe												
Bonaparte's Gull							10					
Mew Gull							5					
California Gull							2				3	
Thayer's Gull									1			
Western Gull								13				
Glaucous-winged Gull		7	9	20	4		110	143	95	105	454	
Common Murre							2					
Pigeon Guillemot										2	3	
Marbled Murrelet												
Rhinoceros Auklet										1	6	
Rock Dove				2			33	16	24	8	71	
Band-tailed Pigeon		2		7								
Mourning Dove										1		
Great Horned Owl												
Barred Owl												
Anna's Hummingbird					1			1				
Rufous Hummingbird		18	16	9	3		13	1	10			
Belted Kingfisher			1	1				3				
Red-breasted Sapsucker			1				1					
Downy Woodpecker		3		5					4		1	
Hairy Woodpecker		1	2	3								
Northern Flicker		14	2	19	2		7	5	3	1		
Pileated Woodpecker		9	1	1			2					
Hammond's Flycatcher				2								
Pacific Slope Flycatcher		14	2	31			5					
Western Kingbird												
Eurasian Skylark												
Purple Martin												

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY | 17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS | 21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS |
| 14. 10 MILE POINT | 18. ELK LAKE - CORDOVA BAY | |
| 15. GORDON HEAD - MOUNT DOUGLAS | 19. PROSPECT LAKE - QUICKS BOTTOM | |
| 16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL | 20. MARTINDALE - BEAR HILL | |

SPECIES	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS
Ruffed Grouse							1			4	
California Quail		6	4	1	6		17	38		128	
Virginia Rail							1			1	
American Coot						36				37	
Killdeer	1		3		3	1	14	39		86	
Black Oystercatcher										15	
Greater Yellowlegs										1	
Lesser Yellowlegs								1		1	
Spotted Sandpiper					1					4	
Whimbrel								2		2	
Black Turnstone										2	
Western Sandpiper	1					4				22	
Least Sandpiper							15	14		32	
Dunlin										5	
Common Snipe					1			1		2	
Bonaparte's Gull										10	
Mew Gull								3		8	
California Gull										5	
Thayer's Gull					1					1	
Western Gull										13	
Glaucous-winged Gull	78	40	17	103	16	26	22	110		1,359	
Common Murre						1		2		5	
Pigeon Guillemot	5	8	2					8		28	
Marbled Murrelet			2			6				8	
Rhinoceros Auklet	2		2					3		14	
Rock Dove	1			3			9			167	
Band-tailed Pigeon	1					23	4	2		39	
Mourning Dove										1	
Great Horned Owl						2	2			4	
Barred Owl							2			2	
Anna's Hummingbird	8	3	4	8	2	2	2			31	
Rufous Hummingbird			15		5	2	14	14		120	
Belted Kingfisher	1	1					2			9	
Red-breasted Sapsucker										2	
Downy Woodpecker	2	2	1	1	2		5	4		30	
Hairy Woodpecker								2		8	
Northern Flicker			2			3	16	4		78	
Pileated Woodpecker	1		1	1		4	7	3		30	
Hammond's Flycatcher										2	
Pacific Slope Flycatcher		3			1	1	4	9		70	
Western Kingbird			1							1	
Eurasian Skylark								3		3	
Purple Martin						3		7		10	

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

SPECIES	1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Tree Swallow												
Violet-green Swallow		36	6	55	50		21	27	27	32	13	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow					1		1					
Cliff Swallow												
Barn Swallow		3		5	4		7	2	51	4		
Steller's Jay		3	4	2								
Northwestern Crow		7	12	46	2		19	57	140	93	121	
Common Raven		11	2	12	3		7	1	1	2	1	
Chestnut-backed Chickadee		10		35	1		8	17	10	2	29	
Bushtit		6		12	2		7	15	13	15	14	
Red-breasted Nuthatch		9		16	2		10	1	4	2		
Brown Creeper		9		19	1		6		1	1		
Bewick's Wren		7		12	3		2	6	27	8		
House Wren		1		2			1					
Winter Wren		17	8	38	1		9	5	8	1		
Marsh Wren				1								
American Dipper			1									
Golden-crowned Kinglet				38			2					
Ruby-crowned Kinglet												
Townsend's Solitaire		1										
Hermit Thrush		1		4			2		3			
American Robin		92	16	108	19		56	57	110	60	72	
Varied Thrush		15	6	6	2		3					
American Pipit												
Cedar Waxwing												
European Starling		4	3	52	2		24	78	337	76	77	
Solitary Vireo				3								
Hutton's Vireo				1								
Warbling Vireo		2	2	1					2			
Red-eyed Vireo												
Orange-crowned Warbler		19	8	113	8		29	28	52	25	11	
Yellow Warbler		2		1					4			
Yellow-rumped Warbler		13		40	1		39	10	28	1	21	
Black-throated Gray Warbler		2		1							1	
Townsend's Warbler		14		80			2		2		1	
MacGillivray's Warbler		11		2								
Common Yellowthroat		4		12	3				2			
Wilson's Warbler		2		2			2		12		1	
Spotted Towhee		26	2	36	5		11	7	11	2	17	
Chipping Sparrow		11		34	1		20	1	3			
Savannah Sparrow		2			4		27	2	12	1	5	
Fox Sparrow			2	3					2			
Song Sparrow		21	4	36	3		5		14	17	2	

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

SPECIES	1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count											TOTAL	COMMENTS	
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY														
14. 10 MILE POINT														
15. GORDON HEAD - MOUNT DOUGLAS														
16. SWAN LAKE - CEDAR HILL														
17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS														
18. ELK LAKE - CORDOVA BAY														
19. PROSPECT LAKE - QUICKS BOTTOM														
20. MARTINDALE - BEAR HILL														
21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS														
Tree Swallow													85	
Violet-green Swallow													1,145	
Northern Rough-winged Swallow													12	
Cliff Swallow													175	
Barn Swallow													374	
Steller's Jay													10	
Northwestern Crow													959	
Common Raven													84	
Chestnut-backed Chickadee													333	
Bushtit													196	
Red-breasted Nuthatch													91	
Brown Creeper													62	
Bewick's Wren													173	
House Wren													9	
Winter Wren													162	
Marsh Wren													22	
American Dipper													1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet													75	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet													7	
Townsend's Solitaire													2	
Hermit Thrush													21	
American Robin													1,571	
Varied Thrush													53	
American Pipit													267	
Cedar Waxwing													4	
European Starling													1,213	
Solitary Vireo													17	
Hutton's Vireo													6	
Warbling Vireo													17	
Red-eyed Vireo													1	
Orange-crowned Warbler													571	
Yellow Warbler													18	
Yellow-rumped Warbler													324	
Black-throated Gray Warbler													8	
Townsend's Warbler													126	
MacGillivray's Warbler													14	
Common Yellowthroat													96	
Wilson's Warbler													64	
Spotted Towhee													324	
Chipping Sparrow													125	
Savannah Sparrow													575	
Fox Sparrow													15	
Song Sparrow													218	

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

SPECIES	1. BUTCHART GARDENS/NORTHERN HIGHLANDS				5. LANGFORD LAKE				9. PORTAGE INLET - THE GORGE			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Lincoln's Sparrow									3			
White-throated Sparrow					3		4		1			
Golden-crowned Sparrow					2		50	3	48	29	26	
White-crowned Sparrow		24	5	11				14	8	11		
Dark-eyed Junco		36	10	44			15	4	1	1	6	
Red-winged Blackbird		17	4	11	6		13	3	9	11	12	
Western Meadowlark												
Brewer's Blackbird				11	2		6	15			1	
Brown-headed Cowbird		7	2	11	2		2			1		
Western Tanager								2				
Purple Finch		14		13	1		2					
House Finch		1		14	3		24	35	60	27	45	
Red Crossbill		4		6							9	
Pine Siskin		26		96	5		12	2	11	34	16	
American Goldfinch		4		1			2		1	1		
House Sparrow				50			12	41	200	44	52	
TOTAL BIRDS	0	677	178	1,360	225	0	830	729	1,522	767	1,238	
TOTAL SPECIES	0	61	35	74	45	0	71	48	58	51	41	

Where the Forest Meets the Seasons

By Anne Fraser

It seems Mother Nature played a few favourites with the magnificent environment of Vancouver Island. The University of Victoria has a few favourites too and hundreds of people have experienced this unique environment with University of Victoria's Environmental Explorations.

Back in 1986, Anne Fraser, of UVic's Continuing Studies, convinced Marc Bell, the founder of Environmental Studies at the University, and biologist David Fraser, that there was a great opportunity to explore. Lots of adults would jump at the opportunity to connect with Nature and enjoy the knowledge and enthusiasm of people like Marc and Dave. Add to that convivial company, good food, and a great place to stay.

It started with 30 people and two days at Yellow Point Lodge. Everyone wanted more of everything; and since then, there has been exactly that. The program has run three times

a year, from Monday to Friday. Many new features have been added; with absolutely top-notch naturalists:

David Denning for Inter-tidal zone (known from his days at the Bamfield Marine Research Station and his National Film Board film on the inter-tidal zone);

Doug Andrew, the former high school teacher, horse logger, and ethno-botanist;

Darren Copley, another versatile biologist, has carried the lion's share of the bird watching since Dave Fraser joined the provincial government;

Merv Wilkinson always guides the group through his selectively logged forest;

And to the delight of everyone, an evening of piano with Bruce Vogt and Joan Backus from the School of Music at UVic.

Others who have been a part of the program at Yellow Point include Bruce Whittington, Nancy Turner, Grant

1999 Victoria Spring Bird Count

13. UNIVERSITY - CADBORO BAY				17. BLENKINSOP - PANAMA FLATS				21 - 23. OAK BAY ISLANDS			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	TOTAL	COMMENTS	
2			1	3			3		12		
									8		
65	16	6	42	13	8	23	103		461		
2	1	2	3	10	3	36	31		161		
25		6			3	42	20		213		
7	1	6	57	12	49	38	59		315		
							1		1		
4			5			3	14		61		
3			12	16	21	38	30		145		
		1			1	1			5		
		1			2	17	5		55		
55	25	17	46	13	22	43	63		493		
	2								21		
8		4	1		35	71	36		357		
				1		13	12		35		
8	8	32	97	26	17	26	38		651		
782	385	474	1,041	424	1,666	1,829	3,435	0	17,562		
65	42	63	51	44	75	80	91	0	147		

Keddie, Jim Haggarty and several others.

The constants in the picture have been Marc Bell, forester, botanist and a man who speaks to the heart and who can synthesize every aspect of Nature in a way that inspires each one of us. ("Being in the forest with Marc is magical" in the words of a recent participant.)

Anne Fraser has co-ordinated the programs from the beginning with an enthusiasm that reaches over the Rockies from her current home in Calgary. She says: "This program is pure joy for me...I love this environment; it's good for the soul."

The next program at Yellow Point Lodge starts in the fall (see ad, page 7).

Building on the tremendous success of the Yellow Point programs, UVic Continuing Studies launched two additional programs this year; on the shore of the Pacific Ocean around

Pacific Rim National Park and Tofino. "Rustic elegance on Nature's edge" is a line from the brochure of the new Wickaninnish Inn.

The January Storm Watch (January 28-31) is a superb time to experience the rugged coastline, roaring seas, the quiet of the forest and the creature comforts of the Inn.

The spring program coincides with the Whale Festival, the annual northern migration of the grey whales; there will be an opportunity to see them from shore through binoculars and also to go on your own by boat for a closer look at the Leviathans of the sea.

The other spring opportunity in these UVic Programs is a return to the Yellow Point Lodge to celebrate the season, from April 24-28. The program is similar to the October week but, of course, spring has a richness of wildflowers and bird activity that take precedence.



Point Pelee Trip Report

By Marilyn Lambert

During Spring migration in North America, there is no finer place for a birder to be than Southern Ontario. This year's trip to raise funds for the Habitat Acquisition Trust saw thirteen enthusiastic VNHS members exploring the three points of land jutting out into Lake Erie; Pt. Pelee, Rondeau and Long Point.

We spent five days at Pt. Pelee National Park and were treated to many wonders of the natural world. A fallout of warblers in Tilden Woods brought such beauties as American Redstart, Blackburnian Warblers, Black-throated Blue Warblers and Northern Parula into view, right above our heads. On another day, as we were walking out along the Marsh Boardwalk we watched huge thunderhead clouds develop out of a clear blue sky. The big black clouds covered the sky and seemed to be edged with silver. Lightening flashed through the clouds and we made a mad dash back to the cars as the skies opened and the rain came pelting down. Later that evening we witnessed the courtship flights of American Woodcock. We waited and waited, it got darker and darker, then we heard the nasal peent and saw the stubby little bird rise higher and higher, silhouetted against the night sky. Wildflowers were just coming into bloom and Sharon Godkin pointed out Jack's and Jill's in the pulpit and had us peeking under the leaves of May Apples to see their lovely flowers. They say that someday there are more birders than birds at Pt. Pelee. On May 18, I would have believed it. This

was the day after a Ross's Gull had been spotted at the tip. Ross's Gull had never been recorded in the Park before so it was a huge tick for the many birders in the area. We arrived at the tip, early in the morning to join a throng of birders that had already staked out the Gull. The direction given to find the bird in one scope was "look in the distance, between the bellies of two Black-backed Gulls and you can see it's head poking up above the sand bank". I think I saw it but I would need a much better look at the bird before it became a tick on my list. Two Fish Crows were also seen at the tip.

Rondeau Provincial Park is also a hotspot during spring migration. It is not as crowded as Pt. Pelee but has nearly as many species. The target species for us at Rondeau was the Prothonotary Warbler. We were not disappointed as we watched one of these incredibly beautiful birds investigating a nesting cavity and another one admiring it's reflection in a small pond. Red-headed Woodpeckers flashed red, white and black as they darted along the path ahead of us and we were fortunate to come across a well concealed Yellow-crowned Night Heron resting quietly on a snag.

The last day of our tour started with a visit to the bird banding station at Long Point. For nearly 40 years biologists and visitors have studied the birds of this area and have recorded nearly 370 species. We accompanied the biologists on net rounds and watched as they extracted delicate beauties from the very fine mist nets. Back at the banding station the

birds are weighed, measured, banded and then sent on their way, none the worse for wear.

We had covered a lot of ground and had seen some wonderful sights on our ten day tour of this interesting part of Canada. We tallied 177 species, with 27 species of warblers. I would like to thank all the participants for supporting this tour. The profit has been donated to the Habitat Acquisi-

tion Trust and will be used to further the work of habitat conservation on southern Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. A special thanks to David Stirling for donating his time to lead this tour. His experience, expertise, wit and charm was greatly appreciated by everyone.

Plans are underway for the next trip to San Blas, Mexico in February 2000. Phone Marilyn at 477-5922 for information.



A blustery day at Pt. Pelee. *Front:* Maureen Burke. *Middle:* Dorothy Henderson, Edith Hunsberger, Germaine Taylor, Barbara Hanwell. *Back:* Linda Snider, Arnold Adlkirchner, David Stirling, Sharon Godkin, Gwen Nichol, David Pearce, Noel Russel. *Photo:* Marilyn Lambert



Ross's full fever at the tip, Point Pelee. *Photo:* Germaine Taylor



Warbler search in Tilden Woods, Point Pelee. *Photo:* Germaine Taylor

Poems

By Michael VanInsberghe

My brother David and I wrote a poem last winter for Dr. Suzuki after doing a tailed frog project, which describes the world from a tailed frog tadpole's (*Ascaphus truei*) point of view as the land bordering his stream is being developed. This poem reflects the tadpole's world as he sees it.

Clouds of Change

My home is rushing water and quiet pools, separated by huge boulders, which lie on a bed of earth and rock-sprinkled with stones.

The vapor of my stream rises high into the forest and meets with the sun, dancing in circles, drop by drop, touching the canopy above.

The force of my stream, massages my skin and its coolness gives me energy.

I feel drawn to suck hard onto flat plains of rock as I nibble my way through beds of algae and diatom discs.

Swimming in bursts, I move to a quiet pool where I find stillness.

There I rest and nibble on tidbits of insects and sweet pollen.

Clouded water suddenly rushes over me and I quickly escape to a safe place. There is much shaking and the Big One Who Moves Rocks Of Enormous Size moves in.

I let go and swim away as fast as I can, choked by the muddy water.

Feeling very scared; I move downstream and hide in a crevice.

The shaking goes on and on and when it finally quits, I come out of hiding-but there is change.

Feeling very hungry I suck hard onto a rock plain. My food tastes funny; but I eat it anyway.

The burning sun touches me and bakes me weak.

Tired, I return to my hiding place.

Somewhere, deep inside, I have memories of an ancient life, wrapped in my soul.

Things are different now. I see strange rainbows trickle down my stream. My neighbors have either left or have been replaced

My food has also changed.

And WHAT of me now?

Welcome to New Members

JUNE

Gwen Tree
of Faircliff Lane

Pam Murray
of Ocean View Road
Interests – everything – isn't that the point?

JULY

Howard Geddes
of Cordova Bay Road

Mount Tolmie Conservancy Association
of Asquith Street

Heather Ashton and Eric Rome
of Leigh Road
list natural history in Langford area, marine life, birds, plants, conservation/rehabilitation and HAT as interests.

AUGUST

Vanin S. Berghe and family
of Hawthorne Street

Eric Grace
of Niagra Street

Susanne Wilson
of Craigdarroch Road

Criteria for articles submitted for *The Victoria Naturalist*

- All articles are to be prepared on a word processor and be submitted on disk or by attachment to an email. (Word or text files)
- Deadline for submissions of articles is the third Friday of January, March, May, July, September, and November.
- We encourage photographs with the article. (Prints or slides) please provide details of the photographer and location and date.

Articles will be reviewed for the following:

■ Content

Information. Delivers a body of facts. Resources are authoritative. Original-research methods are competent. Opinions are supported by information.

Analysis and interpretation. The facts are organized and examined. Difficult concepts are made manageable.

Balance. Opinions are clearly distinguished from fact. More than one side of an argument is presented or at least acknowledged. The reader has a fair chance to judge the reliability of the information.

Originality. Fresh, innovative, insightful.

■ Readability

Appeal. It intrigues or motivates the reader to go beyond the first paragraph. Promises substantial educational value.

Substance and clarity. It favors the concrete over the abstract. It is free of jargon. It is not inflated, overblown, or pompous rhetoric. It gets to the point. It asserts its point of view. It invites dialogue. It offers concrete points of reader identification. It rings with clarity.

Colour and tone. The voice is conversational but intelligent. It favours active over passive construction, sentences that build on strong verbs. It uses, when

appropriate, examples, anecdotes, contrast, irony and wit. In general, the writing is free of elements that intrude upon the smooth flow of information and ideas to the reader.

■ Impact

Enlightenment. Edifies without preaching. Opens up new channels of action or understanding. Leaves one with a sense of solid benefit. Emotionally as well as intellectually stimulating.

Force. Authoritative and persuasive without heavy-handedness. Intensity of convictions, strengths of logic. Shows an awareness of trends, but does not derive its impact from ephemeral fashions and follies. Durable.

Relevance. The article relates directly to current activities and thoughts of the Victoria Natural History Society.

■ Style

Spelling. Canadian spelling of words is recommended.

References. Use numbered footnotes for quotation references. General footnotes should be used for articles, book periodicals and reports used as background for the article.

Measurements. Use of metric measurements is encouraged.

References. *The Elements of Editing*, Arthur Plotnik and *The Canadian Style*, Secretary of State.

Please submit articles to Glen Moores, 9365 Captain's Walk, Sidney, BC V8L 4G6

Or Glen Moores, C/o The Field-Naturalist, 1126 Blanshard Street, Victoria BC

Or Email: Glen@gmoores.com
Telephone: (250) 655-3772

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; **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.

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, September 5

Birding at Cuthbert Holmes Park

Jeff Gaskin (384-1573) leads this search for migrant songbirds through a variety of habitats in this park which he birds regularly. Meet at the Parkes Arena parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, September 7

VNHS Directors Meeting

7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

Saturday, September 11

Birding at Witty's Lagoon

Join Jim Fliczuk (477-2004) for a view of visiting shorebirds and other fall migrants at this favorite regional park. Meet at Witty's Lagoon parking lot at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, September 14

VNHS Natural History Presentation Chimps, Cheetahs, and Children

During his recent trip to East Africa, Aaron Maxwell had the opportunity to see much of the wildlife in Tanzania. Join us as we look at his trip to the Serengeti plain, Ngorogoro crater, and to see the endangered Red Colobus Monkey. He also did some work with the Jane Goodall Institute, and will share some of his experiences with the chimps and kids of the area. 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Tuesday, September 21

Botany Night Thailand - Land, Forests, and Forest Restoration

with Laura A. Johnson

Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, September 22

Birders' Night

Wolfgang Hackmann of Maple Bay will present a slide-illustrated talk entitled *Birds in the Wilderness*. Mr. Hackmann is a member of the North American Nature Photography Association and is an avid photographer of great skill. You can look forward to many excellent images of birds and other wild things, and will gain valuable tips on outdoor photography. 7:30 p.m., Begbie 159, University of Victoria. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, your binocular and a coffee cup.

Sunday, September 26

Pelagic Birding on the M.V. Coho

David Pearce (658-0295) will lead this trip on the M.V. Coho on a sailing across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and back. The crossing takes 1-1/2 hours and this is the best opportunity to see bird species (Shearwaters, Fulmars, Phalaropes) usually found further out to sea. We will be birding from the bow of the boat so dress warmly. Bring a lunch and meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour at 10:00 a.m. for the 6:10 sailing of the M.V. Coho (allow plenty of time for parking). Ferry cost is \$13.50 (US) return (\$20.00 Can.), and it is a good idea to have some ID with you for customs. We'll return on the 12:45 p.m. sailing.

Monday, September 27

September Marine Night Octopuses on Film

Jim Cosgrove, Chief of Biological Collections, Royal BC Museum will present a selection of films on the Giant Pacific Octopus. Jim has studied the habits of these creatures for over 25 years and brings a wealth of knowledge and stories about these fabled animals. 7:30 p.m. at Swan Lake Nature Centre.

OCTOBER

Saturday, October 2

Migrants on Jocelyn Hill

Rick Schortinghuis (642-3596) shares his knowledge of the Gowlland Range on this walk in search of migrating songbirds and raptors. Wear sturdy footwear and bring a lunch. Be prepared for a 4 to 5 hour hike. Meet at Lone Tree Hill Parking lot on Millstream Rd. at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday, October 3

Hawk Watch: East Sooke Park

Hundreds of Turkey Vultures are joined by a dozen other species of birds of prey in their annual southward migration. Meet at the Aylard Farm parking lot in East Sooke Regional Park, off Becher Bay Rd. at 10:00 a.m., or car pool at Helmcken Park and Ride at 9:20 a.m. Bring a lunch.

Tuesday, October 5

VNHS Directors Meeting

7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary

Saturday, October 9

Birding at Whiffen Spit, Sooke

In recent years Lapland Longspurs, a Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and a Ruff have stopped at this migrant trap in Sooke. Meet your leader Bob Chappell (388-4696) at 9:00 a.m. in the parking lot at the foot of Whiffen Spit Road, or the Cowichan Bay Dock Road at 8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, October 12

VNHS Natural History Presentation

Pileated Woodpeckers on South-eastern Vancouver Island, Do They Need Old Growth?

Pileated Woodpeckers were once considered dependent on old growth. That was disputed by research in Oregon in 1987, which found that Pileated Woodpeckers foraged in immature forests. Do they need old growth or can they use second-growth forests? Recent research on Vancouver Island has shed some light on the ecological requirements of the Pileated Woodpecker. This research project was supported by the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund as part of a Master of Science degree at the University of Victoria by Carol Hartwig. 7:30 p.m., Room 159, Begbie Building, UVic. Bring a coffee mug and a friend; non-members are welcome.

Tuesday, October 19

Botany Night

Adolf and Oluna Ceska: Plants of Bulgaria

Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

The Goldstream Art Show Request for Volunteers

Goldstream Provincial Park and the Victoria Natural History Society are, once again, co-sponsoring (with the Habitat Acquisition Trust) a show of nature-inspired art from September 18 to October 11, 1999. The Nature of Island Artists will be held at the Freeman King Visitor Centre (Goldstream Provincial Park) and will showcase artists from Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands. To successfully operate this show and raise money for the Habitat Acquisition Trust and Goldstream's Eagle Extravaganza, a large team of volunteers are required. If you can help with the show, please contact Marilyn Lambert at 477-5922. Other volunteer duties before the show include: hanging posters, selling raffle tickets, finding sponsors, and many others. Artists, volunteers from the Victoria Natural History Society and the Cowichan Valley Naturalists, BC Parks and Arenaria staff are invited to attend a wine and cheese opening for the show at 7:30 p.m. on September 17 at the Goldstream Visitor Centre.

Green Blue Spaces Strategy Workshop

All interested individuals and organizations are invited to attend the Putting the Green Blue Spaces Strategy Into Action workshop, September 10-11, 1999 (St. Ann's Academy). To register for the workshop, or for more information, please contact the Provincial Capital Commission at 953-8800, or information is also available at the Field-Naturalist Store, 1126 Blanshard Street.

Monday, October 25

Marine Night

Marine Conservation in the Georgia Basin

Parks Canada Senior Planner, Bill Henwood will speak to us about the latest program to conserve the marine environment in the Georgia Basin, an area now highly vulnerable to the pressures of urbanization and development. 7:30 pm Swan Lake Nature Centre.

Wednesday, October 27

Birders' Night

Bryan Gates of Victoria will present a slide-illustrated talk entitled *Chaffinch, Church, Castle and Cathedral - Birding and Bitters in Jolly Old England*. 7:30 PM, Begbie 159, University of Victoria. Everyone is welcome. Bring a friend, your binocular and a coffee cup.

Sunday, October 31

Birding the Pumpkin Patch

Late migrants, winter arrivals and raptors should make for some great birding with Kevin Slagboom (658-0940). Meet at the farm market at the corner of the Pat Bay Highway and Island View Rd at 8:30 a.m. Gumboots are highly recommended!

BULLETIN BOARD

Volunteers are needed to help with school programs at **Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary**. Programs begin in late September and training is provided. For anyone who enjoys children and finds nature fascinating, this is an ideal volunteer position involving only 2 to 3 hours per week. Call **Joan Cowley** at 479-0211 for more details.

There will be a **Wolf Packed** fundraising premiere of the IMAX film *Wolves* on Thursday, September 23, at the Royal British Columbia Museum. This event will feature two special guest speakers, Mr. Lu Carbyn, renowned wolf biologist, and Mr. David Douglas, director of *Wolves*, and a screening of *Wolves*. Tickets are \$25 each and are available at the Royal Museum gift shop or call Sandra de Medeiros (356-0431).

I would like to thank J. Cotton Haggarty for the wonderful letter published in the July/August issue. It is very satisfying to see that the article was enjoyed and that we are not the only ones that appreciate snakes. Thank you from Heather Waye.

Correction

In the last issue of *The Victoria Naturalist* the article on the Dry Tortugas mentioned a price of \$95.00 for the potential trip to the Dry Tortugas on the *Yankee Freedom II*. The price should have been \$495.00 *not* \$95.00.



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September 10 & 11, 1999

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To register for the workshop, or for more information,
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