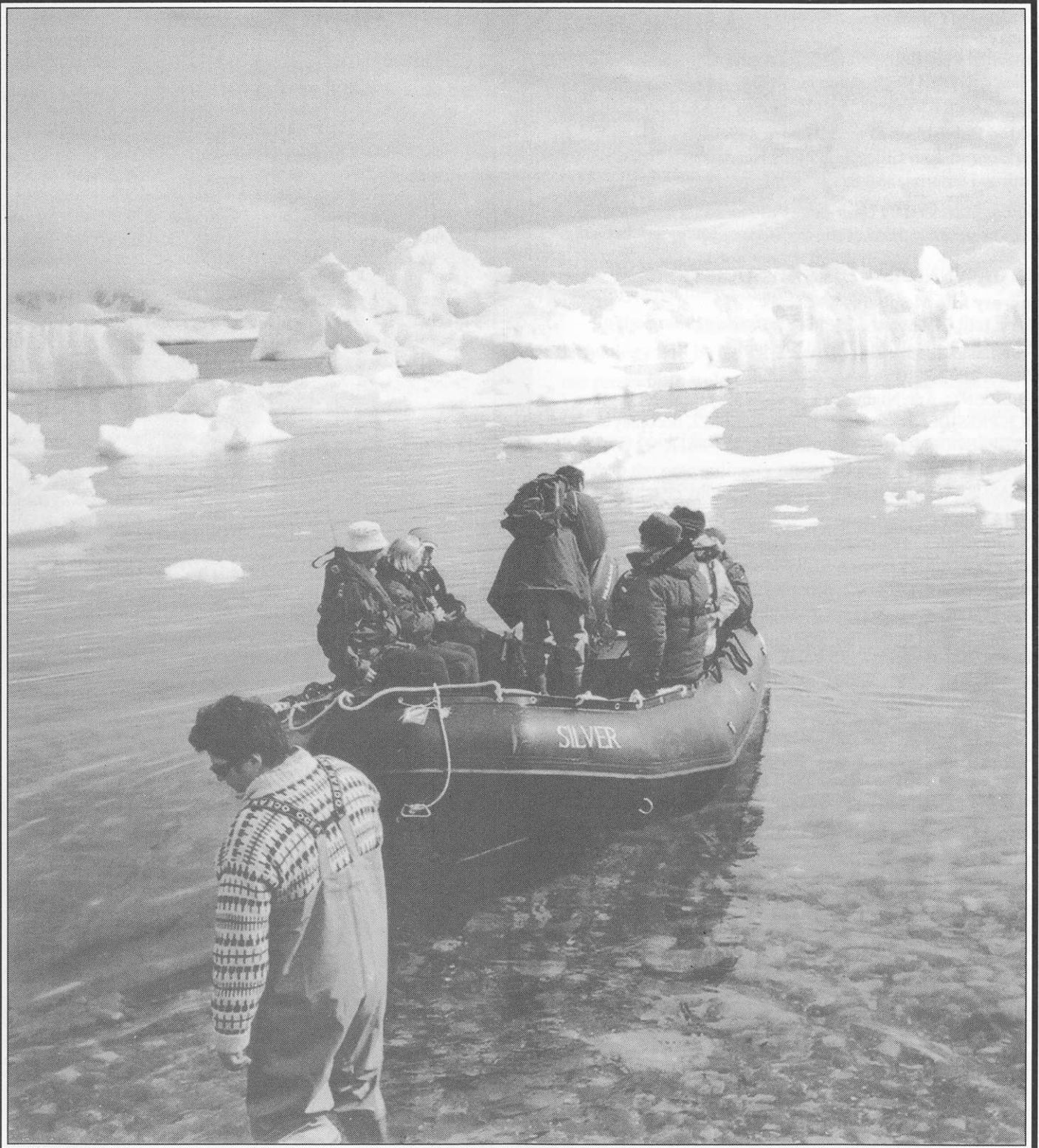




The Victoria NATURALIST

JULY
AUGUST
2003
VOL 60.1

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 © 2003 as credited.
ISSN 0049-612X Printed in Canada

The *Victoria Naturalist* acknowledges the financial support of the
Government of Canada through the Publications Assistance Program
towards our mailing costs.

Publication Mail Commercial Sales Agreement Number 40045722
Publications Mail Registration No. 09841

Editor: Marilyn and Ross Archibald, 384-3063
Desktop Publishing: Frances Hunter, 479-1956
Distribution: Tom Gillespie, Phyllis Henderson
Printing: Fotoprint, 382-8218

Opinions expressed by contributors to *The Victoria Naturalist*
are not necessarily those of the Society.

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Honorary Life Members

Mrs. L.E. Chambers, Mrs. Peggy Goodwill,
Mr. Vic Goodwill, Mr. David Stirling

Officers: 2002-2003

PRESIDENT: Ann Nightingale, 652-6450, motmot@shaw.ca
VICE-PRESIDENT: Claudia Copley, 479-6622, dccopley@island.net
PAST-PRESIDENT: Bruce Whittington, 477-8611,
fieldnat@pacificcoast.net
TREASURER: Gordon Hart, 721-1264, gordh19@telus.net

Directors and Committees

Claudia Copley, 479-6622, dccopley@island.net (*Programs*)
Isobel Dawson, 721-0232, idawson@uvic.ca (*Secretary*)
Darren Copley, 479-6622, dccopley@island.net (*Membership*)
Rick Schortinghuis, 652-3326, shylo@islandnet.com
(*Events, Trips and Programs*)
Marie O'Shaughnessy, 598-9680, isis_mosh@shaw.ca (*Publicity*)
Ross Archibald, 384-3063, rossarch@islandnet.com (*Publications*)
John Henigman, henigman@pacificcoast.net
Ed Pellizon, edlps@t0elus.net

Other Functions

Birder's Night: Bryan Gates, 598-7789
Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary: Dannie Carsen, 595-2773

Annual Dues, Victoria Natural History Society

Includes *The Victoria Naturalist* and *B.C. Naturalist*

Regular	\$30.00	Golden Age	\$25.00
Family	\$35.00	Junior Subscriber	\$20.00

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

Annual Subscription Rate, *Victoria Naturalist* \$20.00

RARE BIRD ALERT: 592-3381 VNHS EVENTS TAPE: 479-2054

VNHS Website: www.VicNHS.bc.ca

SUBMISSIONS

Deadline for next issue: August 1, 2003

Send to: Marilyn and Ross Archibald, Editors
208 Linden Avenue, Victoria, BC V8V 4E4
Phone: 250-384-3063 (no calls after 9:00 p.m. please)
Fax: call to arrange. e-mail: rossarch@islandnet.com

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 in an IBM compatible word processing file on diskette, or by e-mail. 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 Editors, Marilyn and Ross Archibald, at 384-3063 (before 9:00 p.m.), or save the text in ASCII format. Photos and slides, and diskettes submitted will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is included with the material. Because many digital image files do not reproduce well in our print format due to low resolution, we would prefer not to receive digital images at this time.

VNHS MEMBERSHIP

For membership information and renewal, please contact Darren Copley, 479-6622, or write to Membership Committee c/o The Victoria Natural History Society, Box 5220, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4.

ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

We do our best to ensure your ad is produced accurately. Should we make an error, please contact us and a correction can be printed in the next issue. A charge is levied for typesetting. Minor alterations to existing ads cost \$10.00. Add \$15 per photo for PMT. Advertising fees are due and payable when copy is submitted. Please submit a cheque payable to The Victoria Naturalist.

Ad Size	Price	Dimensions (in inches)
Back page	\$120	7.5" width x 8" height
Full page, inside	\$100	7.5" width x 9.5" height
1/2 page, horizontal	\$80	7.5" width x 4.75" height
1/2 page, vertical	\$80	3.5" width x 9.5" height
1/3 page horizontal	\$50	7.5" width x 3.25" height
1/3 page, vertical	\$50	3.5" width x 6.5" height
1/4 page, horizontal	\$40	7.5" width x 2.25" height
1/4 page, vertical	\$40	3.5" width x 4.75" height
1/8 page, horizontal	\$25	3.5" width x 2.25" height

Rates as of February, 1994. May be subject to change.

Submit advertising to:

The Victoria Naturalist, P.O. Box 5220,
Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8R 6N4

or phone Marilyn or Ross Archibald at 250-384-3063

Thank you for your patronage.

Contents

Antarctic Adventure	
By Cora E. Shaw	4
A Talking Macaw	8
Conservation Park Opened in Viaduct Flats	
Wetland Area	9
Red-breasted Rascals	
By Donna Ross	11
Birding on Maui	
By Bob Kensett	12
Nuthatch Convergence	
By Bill Merilees	13
Green Spaces Project Wins Award	15
Vancouver Island Marmots	
By Doug Carrick	15
President's Message	16
Queen's Jubilee Medal	16
HAT Tricks	17
Welcome to New Members	17
Calendar of Events	18
Bulletin Board	19

COVER PHOTO:

Leaving Cuverville Island, Antarctica by
Cora E. Shaw

Life is fragile!

While we were trying to put this issue together, we were interrupted by having to take our older son to the hospital in the early hours of the morning.

Then, while waiting for results from the blood tests, CT scan, and MRI scan the doctors ordered, we walked a tightrope of anxiety as we worried about possible outcomes to the life we had brought into the world. It was hard to understand why it was taking modern science so long to determine what was making an otherwise healthy young man exhibit such severe symptoms.

Now that things have settled down and the fever has subsided, we pause to think, not so much about the wonders of modern science, but how difficult it was to determine precisely what the problem was.

In the grander scheme of things, we are told that technology will be our saviour, and that we can continue our present life style without regard for future negative consequences. On the other hand, Bill McKibben argues in his latest book, *Enough*, that the time has come for humans to grasp the precautionary principle (do not do it if you do not know the consequences) and to stop the self-interest groups promoting globalization and biological tinkering as inevitable before they wreak havoc Earth's life support systems that cannot be repaired.

If we continue to expect economic growth at the expense of the biosphere, humans will likely be among the first to suffer. The biotechnologists envision a post-human society where human-made creations will have none of the perceived limitations of the human species and will be able to self-replicate without human input. The problem with both these abstract views is that they contain the seeds of our destruction and the destruction of the natural world we hold so dear, in the all too human desire for more!

The good news, according to McKibben, however, is that societies can, as they have done in the past, exercise their free will to say ENOUGH! The message in his book is that the time has come for the majority of humans to say "Enough," before there is no choice.

Life on earth is fragile!

Marilyn and Ross

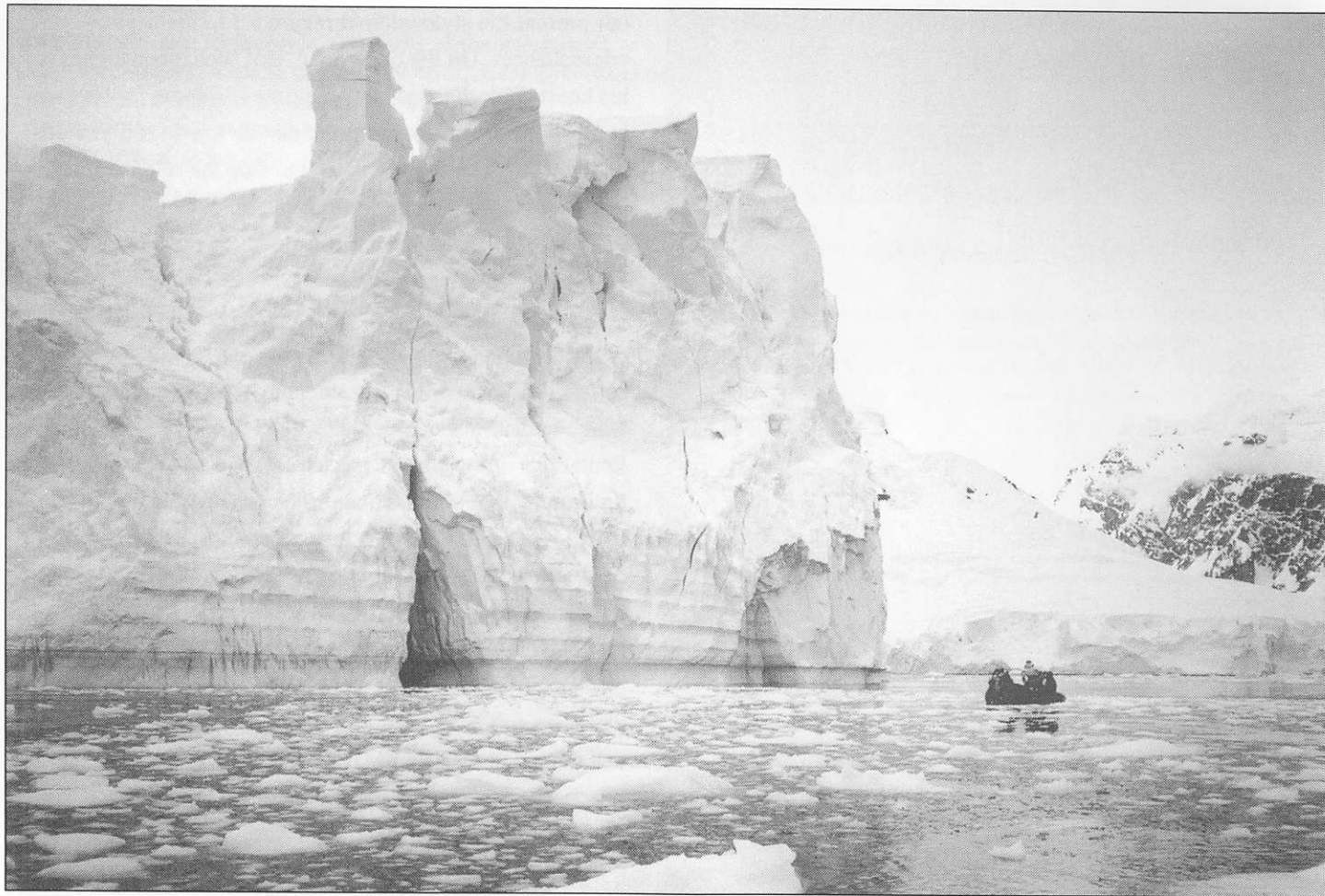
Antarctic Adventure

By Cora E. Shaw

My Antarctic adventure began in December 2002 with a fourteen hour flight from Toronto to Buenos Aires. A three hour flight took us to Ushuaia, the capital of the province of Tierra del Fuego and the embarkation port for cruises to the Antarctic continent.

I joined a group of forty-five adventurers and five expedition staff ranging in age from 28 to 80 for an 11-day cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands. The forty-five adventurers were from twelve different countries — 12 from the U. K., 11 from the U. S., 9 from Belgium and from 1 to 3 from the other European countries, and the Far East. I was the only one from Canada. Everyone spoke English!

Our home for the next 11 days was the Professor Molchanov, a 1753 ton ship built in Finland for polar and oceanographic research, and subsequently converted for expedition cruising. The ship was manned by a Russian crew.



Paradise Bay. Photos: Cora E. Shaw

The cabins were small with comfortable beds; not bunks. The meals were excellent. Everyday at lunch and dinner we had a choice of a fish, meat, or vegetarian entrée preceded by soup, salad or an appetizer. Menus for the day were posted outside the dining rooms and we were asked to indicate our choices for both meals to prevent food wastage.

After we left Ushuaia, with flocks of pintado petrels and Wilson's storm petrels wheeling around in the ship's wake, we spent the better part of the next two days crossing the infamous Drake Passage. One of the crew members remarked that it was the smoothest crossing he had ever experienced. Although those who suffered from "mal de mer" were not convinced that it was a smooth crossing.

On our first day at sea we had the usual mandatory lifeboat drill. This was a real drill, not like the ones on the large cruise liners where one merely lines up beside the lifeboat. We actually had to climb into and be seated in the

enclosed lifeboats while we received instructions on what to expect and do in an emergency.

After we had crossed the Drake Passage, we made our first landing by zodiac on Penguin Island at the north end of the Antarctic Peninsula in a snowstorm and a brisk, biting wind. Subsequent landings proved to modify my first impression of the Antarctic. The weather from then on was for the most part sunny and cold with outside temperatures ranging from 32°F (0°C) to a high of 45°F (7°C) on our last day at sea and in the Beagle Channel. Wind velocities ranged from 0 knots (nautical miles per hour) to 25 knots.

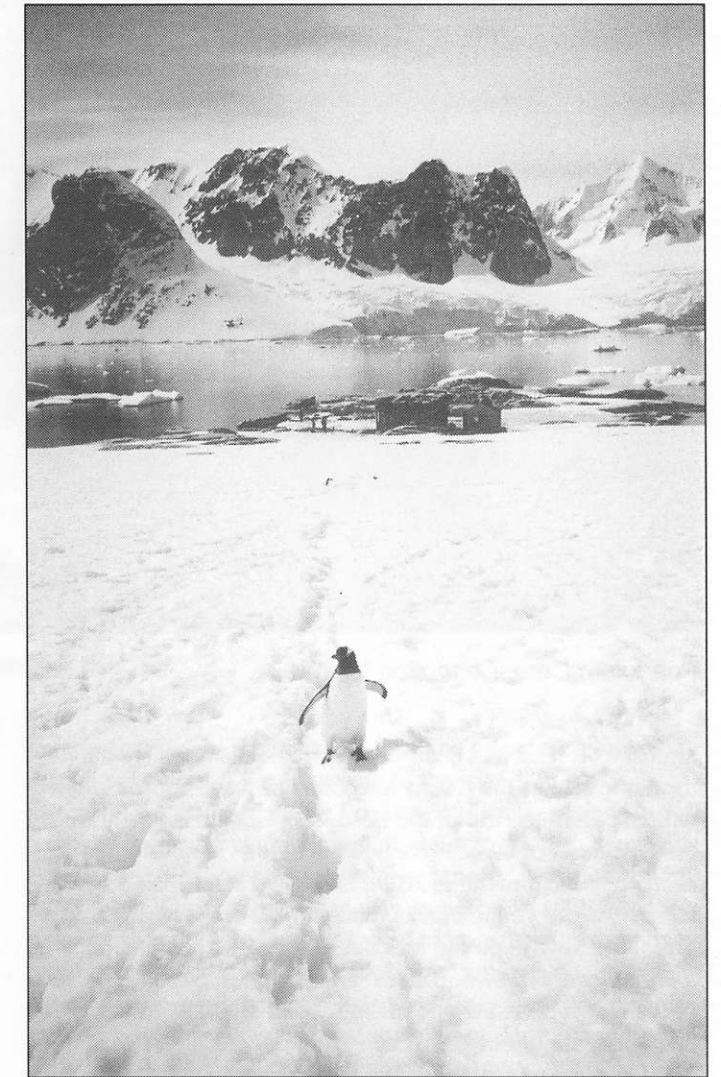
Penguin Island is aptly named, for it is home to a rookery of 3,000 Adelie and 7,500 Chinstrap penguins. These are two of the four species we saw. There are 17 species altogether, but not all live in the Antarctic (the Galapagos penguin lives near the equator). The Chinstrap is easily recognized by its black *necklace* under the chin, and the Adelie by the white around the eye (often portrayed in the comic strips). Both penguins were about 21" (53 cm) tall.

We were reminded that we must not leave behind any bits of kleenex or cigarette butts, etc., nor walk on the penguin paths because we, being so much heavier, would make deep holes in the snow into which the penguins could fall. The paths, which usually led from the shore to much higher ground were easy to spot because they had a pinkish cast. The penguins feed almost exclusively on krill, small pink crustaceans about 2" long, which had the obvious effect on their excrement.

After our visit to Penguin Island, we made our first continent landing at Brown Bluff on the Antarctic Peninsula. It was not snowing here, but there was plenty under foot. I found it difficult trying to climb a steep slope and sinking in the snow up to mid-calf with every step. I finally gave up halfway up the hill and elected to slide down on my behind. It was easier and faster too. Those energetic souls who made it to the top looked down upon a large Adelie rookery that stretched at least a kilometre across the hillside. Unfortunately, on the way up we disturbed some kelp gulls that were nesting and let us know, in no uncertain terms, they did not want us around.

Following our visit to Brown Bluff, we continued on through the Antarctic Sound (Iceberg Alley) for an anticipated landing on sea ice (ice that forms in the winter and melts in the summer). The captain tried to manoeuvre the ship so that we could step down by way of the gangplank. After several attempts, he gave up and we landed by zodiac. A couple of staff members went on the ice first to make sure it was safe to walk on. Some members of the group had a snowball fight while others built a couple of snowmen.

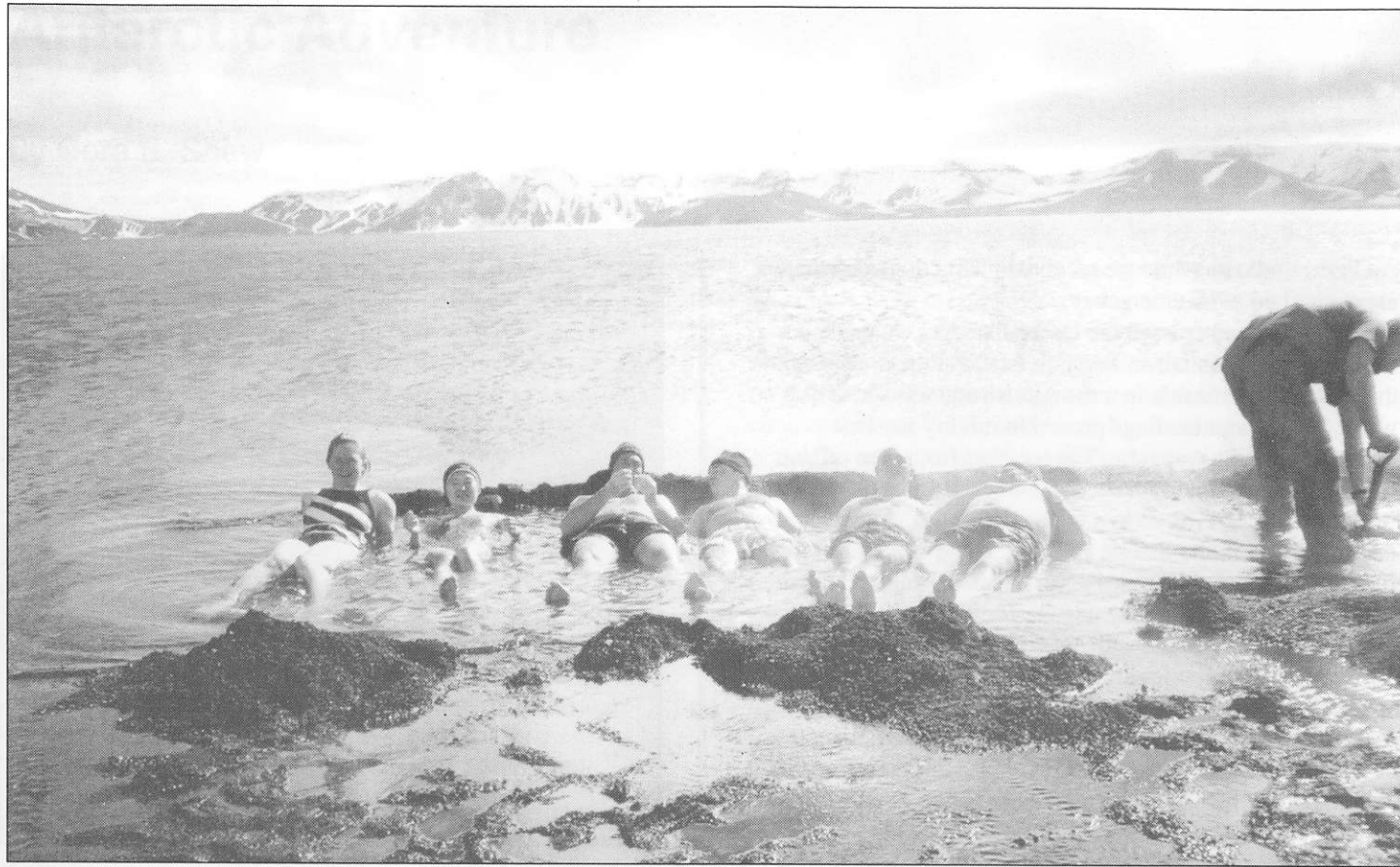
While we were all behaving as if we were in our second



Gentoo penguin on Peterman Island.

childhood, the ship had to reposition because an enormous iceberg suddenly started coasting towards us at a speed of 2 knots. The visible portion of this glacial iceberg was almost as tall as our ship and broader. It was quite menacing. On the morning of the 22nd, we had an interesting stop on Livingston Island. There was no snow here; bare brown land with a bit of lichen on the rocks, moss beds, and grasses under foot. While I did not see them, Antarctica's two species of flowering plants: *Deschampsia Antarctica* and *Colobanthus quitensis* are found here.

We saw Chinstrap, Gentoo, and a couple of Macaroni penguins on this island. The Macaroni have long orange feathers, which stick up individually on the top of the head



Pendulum Cove, Deception Island.

almost as if they had been starved. The Gentoos are about the same size as the Adelie and Chinstrap and sport a small white spot on the top of the head. The Gentoos were sitting on their nests of stone. When the penguins are building their nests they are quite aggressive and try to steal each other's stones. As the young chicks hatch the skuas (large predatory birds) are always on the lookout for one that is unattended by a parent and will swoop down and snatch it. Skuas are also scavengers and I saw one make several attempts to pull a dead penguin out of the frozen ground.

On this same island we saw a number of southern elephant seals snuggled up to each other, moulting and releasing air from both ends of their bodies. The male elephant seals grow up to 20 feet in length and can weigh as much as four tons. According to a brochure we were given, a tightly packed elephant seal wallow is an extraordinary sight. It was! The sight, sounds and smells were unforgettable.

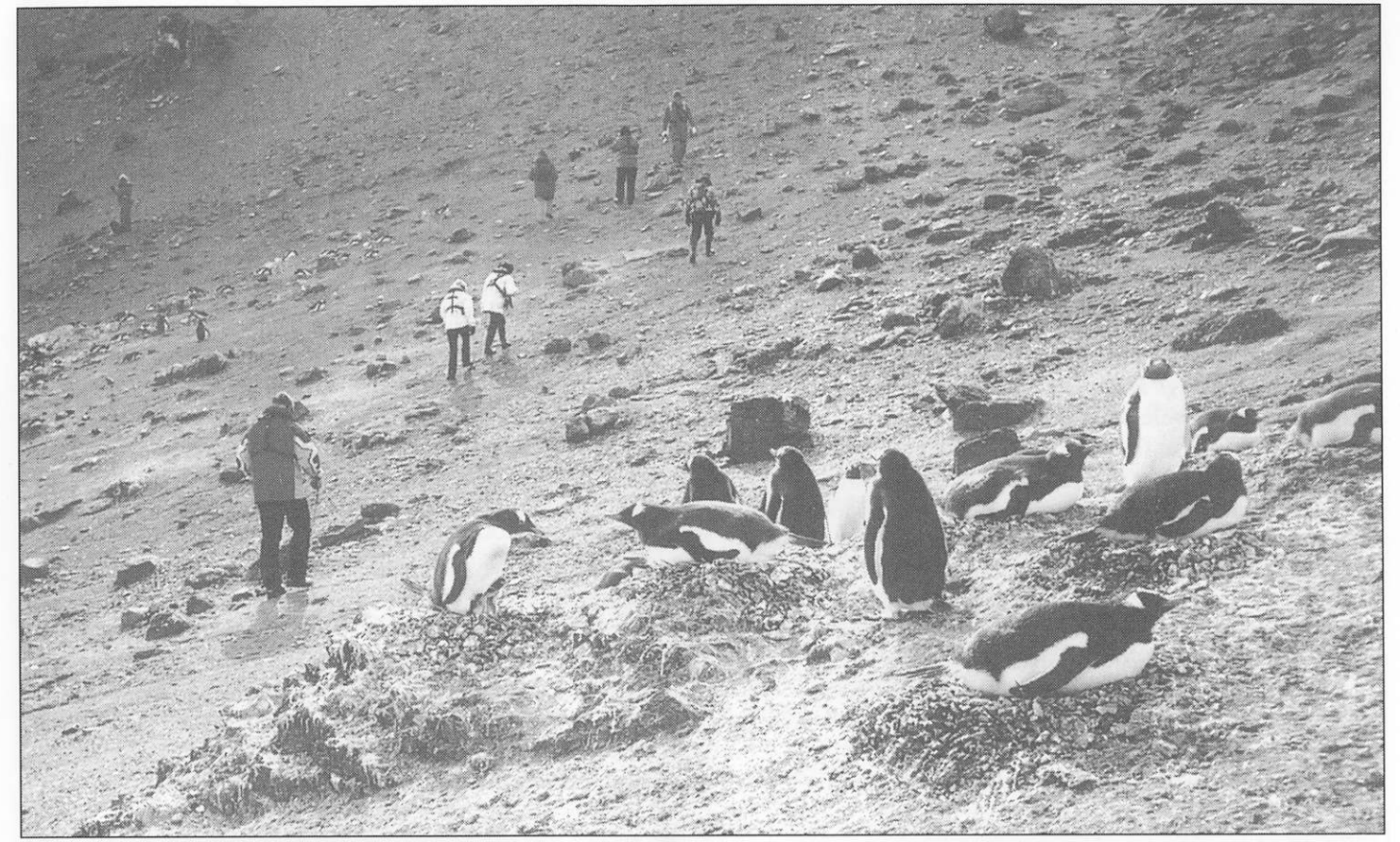
In the afternoon we cruised through Neptune's Bellows and around the caldera of Deception Island. We had two landings here; the first at Whaler's Bay and the second at Pendulum Cove. The water was as calm as a millpond and a beautiful turquoise blue. We walked around an abandoned Norwegian whaling station and an old hangar with a dilapidated plane parked outside. This station was evacuated in 1967 after a volcanic eruption destroyed the buildings and the enormous boilers. According to a sign near the boilers

3,600,000 barrels of oil were extracted from whale meat and bones in 1931.

From this point we cruised along the shore to Pendulum Cove where a Chilean research station had also been destroyed by a volcano. There was more "entertainment" at the water's edge. Seventeen hardy souls took a dip in the ocean and dashed out to bask in a thermal pool. After warming up in the pool, they ran up the beach to dry off, get dressed, and brush the sand off their feet before donning their gumboots to return to the ship. (We always wore gumboots because we stepped off the zodiac into water and had to wash the boots off upon our return to the ship to make sure we did not transfer any dirt from one landing to the next).

On our cruise through the Errera and Lemaire Channels, also referred to as iceberg alleys, we saw some spectacular formations of icebergs — gorgeous shades of turquoise blue. These glacial icebergs are blue because the oxygen was squeezed out when the ice was compressed, while tabular icebergs which are flat on top, are broken off from ice formed next to the land. We went through these channels at a snail's pace dodging the large icebergs and crushing the small ones.

On December 23rd we anchored off Cuverville Island, home to approximately 5,000 breeding pairs of Gentoos penguins. While there, we had a zodiac tour of the icebergs.



Livingstone Island. Gentoo Penguins — one to the right of us has a chick.

One in particular reminded me of the statues at Abu Simbel in Egypt and another of a cluster of peanut shells. In the afternoon we made our second continent landing at the Almirante Brown Argentinean research station which is now closed. This station is in Paradise Bay, so named by the whalers because it is a safe protected anchorage. We took a side excursion in the Skontorp Cove along the foot of the Petzval Glacier. Here we saw several ice caves and the towering pinnacles of the glacier. We sat in our zodiacs for a few minutes with the engines turned off, not chatting, just admiring the gorgeous shades of turquoise blue in the caves. Apart from the intermittent cracking of the ice, it was unbelievably quiet and calm until a large chunk of ice crashed down in front of one of the zodiacs. We did not wait around to see anymore; but did hear the loud cracking and splashing as other chunks of ice hit the water.

Before we left though, we saw Weddell seals and a crabeater seal basking in the sun on ice floes. Nobody knew why the latter is called a "crabeater seal", especially since they do not eat crabs. In the morning of the 24th we sailed through the Lemaire Channel on our way to Peterman Island — our furthest position south at 65°1 0.7" S., 64° 07.9" W. This is home to the southernmost breeding colony of Gentoos penguins (about 750 pairs).

A couple of Russian researchers from the Vernadskiy Station in the Argentine Islands were staying in the Argentine

Refuge Station studying the Gentoos and also the colony of Adelie penguins on the other side of the island. In the afternoon we stopped at Port Lockroy on Goudier Island, now a British research station. Originally built in 1944 to report enemy activities and provide weather reports, it was closed in 1962 and fell in disrepair, then was reopened in 1996. Visitors may not visit the other half of the island because the three researchers are studying the effect, if any, human contact might have on the penguins. It seemed to me when I saw the nesting Gentoos penguins gathered outside the front door that these penguins were more like pets than wild birds.

In the evening, according to European tradition, we had our Christmas dinner — roast turkey with all the trimmings. The three researchers were delighted to be included and to take advantage of hot showers. Christmas Day was a glorious day and we had brunch at 10:00 a.m. on the after deck. However, before this we set off for Neko Harbour for our last continent landing. This harbour is named after a floating whale factory ship and home to 250 breeding pairs of Gentoos penguins. Kelp gulls and skuas also call this area home. In the afternoon we had our final zodiac cruise in the Melchior Archipelago in rather rough seas. We spotted a leopard seal basking in the wind on one of the floes. The driver manoeuvred the zodiac so that we could get close enough to take photos of the seal. He was completely oblivious of our presence. Then on the 26th we headed back to Ushuaia

through the Errera Channel and Melchior Archipelago for the two day trip via the Drake Passage, somewhat rough this time much to the dismay of some of the passengers who still had not got their sea legs.

As we approached Cape Horn we saw several species of birds, such as Blue-eyed Shags (cormorants), Sooty Shearwaters, Giant Petrels, Cape and Storm Petrels, Black-browed and Grey-headed Albatross, terns, and prions.

We had seen Wandering Albatross earlier with their 3.5 m wingspan. Further away from the Horn, we had seen whales porpoising. One thing I found rather interesting about the birds was their lack of colour, except for the Blue-eyed Shag, with blue rings around the eyes. The rest were all shades of grey or were black and white. Not one colourful one among them like the birds in Costa Rica for example. I suppose there is some scientific explanation for this. This short cruise was far more interesting because there was always someone saying "quick, come and look there, I saw a whale" or "there's an albatross", or "the penguins are porpoising." I also found the nightly recap of the day's activities and wildlife seen given by the expedition leader, the biologist, and the historian most interesting.

According to the biographical information we were given about the biologist and the historian, the former had recently graduated with a PhD on the foraging activity of Antarctic fur seals at the remote sub-Antarctic island of

Kerguelen. Prior to this she had spent seven research seasons in the sub-Antarctic studying southern elephant seals and Royal and Rock hopper penguins. She has been awarded a research grant so after a visit to her home in Australia she will be heading for northern B. C. and Alaska where she will study the behaviour of Steller sea lions.

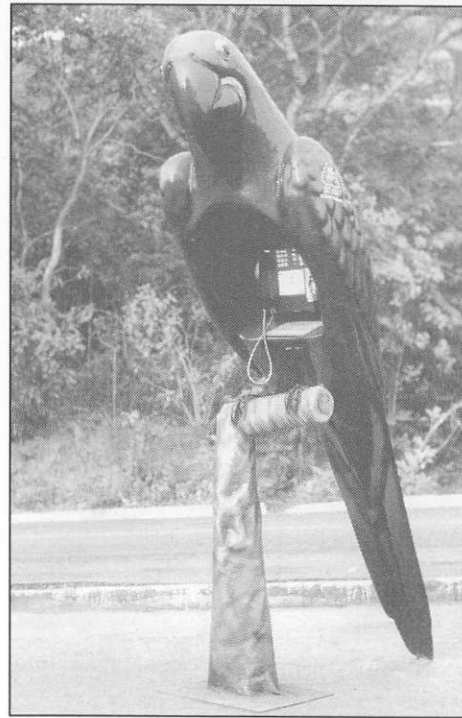
The historian had sailed single-handed in a small yacht around the Atlantic islands of Madiera, the Canaries, and the Azores, and had crossed the Bering Strait from Alaska to Siberia in a single seat kayak. (The first and only recorded such expedition). He is also the only person to have repeated Shackleton's famous rescue mission from Elephant Island at the north end of the Antarctic Peninsula to South Georgia in a replica of the James Caird. In February 2001 he returned to South Georgia to complete Shackleton's rescue mission, when he crossed the mountain ranges from Haakon Bay to Stromness. Truly a remarkable man and a very modest one.

Neither the biologist nor the historian dwelt on their past accomplishments. While I have travelled to many interesting sites in Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America I really feel that this cruise to the Antarctic Peninsula and the South Shetland Islands was the trip of my lifetime. Possibly because, for the most part, the places we visited were still in their natural state and we were able to get so close to so much wildlife without apparently disturbing them.

A Talking Macaw

Photo by David Stirling

In south-western Brazil, the Trans-Patana Highway, a one hundred and fifty kilometre, mostly gravel and dirt adventure road, runs down from the frontier town of Cuiaba, through a vast seasonally flooded land of marshes and prairies. This sparsely populated ranching country is teeming with wildlife, especially birds. One of these birds is the huge, raucous, endangered Hyacinth Macaw. Here, a hard plastic public telephone helps to keep the species in the eye residents and visitors alike.



Conservation Park Opened in Viaduct Flats Wetlands Area

On Friday, April 11, the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific (HCP) officially opened their 38-hectare (94-acre) Conservation Park. The park includes the 16-hectare Viaduct Flats covenant area that has been a popular site for local birders for many years.

Ruby Littlepage and Hoke Holcomb of the HCP were joined by MLA Susan Brice, Saanich Mayor Frank Leonard and John McKinnon of the Provincial Capital Commission in cutting the ribbon to a newly created conservation park in Saanich. Trail development in the conservation park shows a new face of the Horticulture Centre, which has been known primarily for its demonstration gardens, horticultural college and special events such as "Artists in a Country Garden."

The Conservation Park occupies about 90% of the 42 hectare (103 acre) HCP site. The new trails are part of the developing Glendale Lands trail system that also includes the Vancouver Island Technology Park, the Interurban Campus of Camosun College and the Municipality of

Saanich's Layritz Park. The lands contain endangered wetland and Garry oak habitat.

A core concept in the development of the HCP Conservation Park is providing the public with viewing access to endangered habitat while preventing physical access to these areas. In this situation, the places people want to go and the places restoration biologists want them to stay away from are the same. People want to go to the top of the thin-soiled, sensitive Garry oak knolls and to get as close to the edge of the water as possible.

The use of trails, signage, barriers to restricted areas, and a user awareness program are coordinated in an attempt to walk the fine line between conservation and public access. In spite of the restrictions, bicyclists, horseback riders, birders and dog walkers can all find their place in the new park. A key element in ensuring proper use of the trails is for park users to keep one another informed about restrictions.



Viaduct Flats wetlands. Photo: Hoke Holcomb

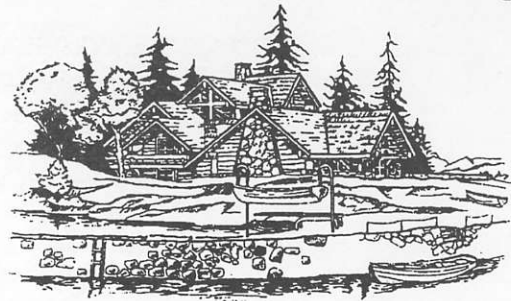
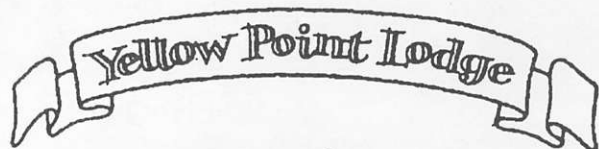
Greenspace Development at the HCP

Although the HCP site has been known to birders for many years, there was no habitat restoration or conservation program at the HCP prior to 1993. In that year, an agriculture lease expired on a parcel of low land known as Viaduct Flats that was used for growing potatoes. That winter a beaver dammed Viaduct Creek, and the resulting year-round water transformed the area into a significant migratory waterfowl habitat. This, in turn, led to assuring that the 16-hectare Viaduct Flats area was set-aside in a protective covenant agreement. VNHS members were active in getting the area set aside for protection and in developing the management plan for conservation.

Completion of the trails and viewing stations marks the completion of the second phase of the park development. Phase one of the park development involved habitat restoration work. This was funded by the Province's Terrestrial Habitat Restoration Program and was conducted from the fall of 2000 through the spring of 2002. Phase three development will involve construction of a dam (the beaver has apparently died), and development of a wheelchair accessible viewing station off of Interurban Road. Ducks Unlimited has committed funds for the dam, and funding is being sought for the viewing station.

Regional Significance

The entire Colquitz watershed system, of which this is part,



R.R. 3, Ladysmith, B.C. V0R 2E0
(250) 245-7422

was on the verge of losing its salmonid capacity. This capacity is now increasing thanks to a regional effort that has been going on for a number of years. The riparian restoration efforts at the HCP are a significant part of this conservation effort.

The HCP Conservation Park is the first tier of a three tiered conservation effort in the area. This tier is a multiyear effort with the objective of restoring about 38 ha of the 42 ha HCP site to a functioning, coastal Douglas-fir forest. The project involves forest restoration, riparian restoration, construction of a "look but don't touch" trail system and viewing stations, restoration activities for community volunteers, and education programs involving local schools and community members

The second tier is the Glendale Lands Contiguous Forest Project that will involve restoring about 45% of the 130 ha Glendale Land's site (including the 38 ha of HCP land) to a functioning forest within which occur business, educational and recreational activities. This project is in early stages of development; the first meeting of stakeholders was held in January 2002, and an *ad hoc* committee has been formed to advance the project.

On the third tier, the Glendale Lands are part of the 650 ha Goward Spring Creek drainage. About 35% of this is either second growth Douglas-fir forest or open areas that have good potential for being restored to and maintained as greenspace. The land is owned by hundreds of private landowners and several levels of government. There is a vision of developing a community organization where many of the landowners are committed to managing their land in a way that restores and preserves the forested nature and riparian characteristics of the area.

The HCP Conservation Park is linked directly to Quick's Bottom and is located roughly equidistant from four other preserved coastal Douglas-fir forests in the area (Mt. Douglas, Thetis Lake, Elk Lake and Swan Lake). The trails proposed for the park are part of a major east-west system that will eventually run from Mt. Douglas to Thetis Lake and a minor east-west system that includes Laritz Park and the Vancouver Island Technological Park (VITP). It is also part of a proposed north-south linkage that will go from Colquitz Creek Park to Wallace Drive.

The Horticulture Centre of the Pacific is a non-profit organization founded in 1979. The society has a 45-year lease on 42 hectares (103 acres) of land located within the Glendale Lands in the Municipality of Saanich. The Province of British Columbia and the Municipality of Saanich provide ongoing support to the HCP. Trail and viewing station construction was made possible by a Provincial Capital Commission Greenways Grant. Materials for the bridge constructed by volunteers were purchased through the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund.

Red-breasted Rascals

By Donna Ross

In the spring of 1998, we were visited in Shirley, by a strikingly beautiful red-breasted sapsucker. Perched on the CB radio tower, he kept us guessing for a few moments as to the source of a strange metallic drumming coming from 40 feet above us. Then one morning, about 6 am, right outside the bedroom window, a loud rapping came from the fascia board of our house. Startling from sleep, we saw our friend of a few weeks, brazenly peering at us around the corner — seemingly quite unafraid.

That year, he and his mate raised a single baby that they taught to feed on our prized mountain ash. Over the past 5 years, they have raised a family each year, and each year they spend most of their time on the mountain ash. The sapsuckers nest in tree holes but we have never found this pair's nest. They make holes in the bark in neat rows that soon become larger and larger until the entire trunk or branch is involved. The babies are introduced to the ash as soon as they fledge and they spend all day close by. They have drilled holes more recently in two cherry trees and a pear tree, but obviously favour the ash as damage to the others is minimal.

This spring they are back. They are bolder than ever. Perched on the side of the chicken house wall, or on the fascia boards of our house, they begin in the early morning tapping us all awake. We await the fledging of this year's progeny. The entire main trunk of the mountain ash is completely dead half way up, but the tree has put up many side branches from the lower main trunk and it is fuller now and lush with spring growth and blooms.

In past years I have been upset with the destruction of our tree, but love our yearly visitors so much that have come to view it in much the same way as putting out sunflower seeds for the goldfinches and siskins. Our ash seems to be surviving; it is the mainstay of many generations of sapsuckers and I am perfectly content that it be so.



Damage caused to a mountain ash by Red-breasted sapsuckers. Photos: Donna Ross



Birding on Maui

By Bob Kensett

Before my holiday in Maui began, I had bought a field guide to the birds of Hawaii and the Tropical Pacific. I also talked to birders who had been there. One of them told me that many birds were at higher altitudes up the mountains but did not state why. I was full of hope that I would see a large variety of birds I had not seen before. But, such was not to be the case.

On arrival, I first noted the birds I saw flying about from my condo balcony. One in particular was distinct and proved to be a Common Mynah. As the days passed it became evident that there were very few species at sea level. As well as the Mynah there were Zebra Doves, Spotted Doves, Cardinals, House Sparrows, Starlings, Grey Francolins, and that was about it. Apparently they were all at higher levels as I had been told.

Some years before a virus had been brought to the island and the bird population had been decimated. Over 75% of the different species were on the endangered list. In one species, the poo-uli, a honeycreeper, only three birds remain alive and naturalists are trying to capture them to breed them in captivity. Many of the birds had indeed taken refuge up the mountains, so I set out to explore where I had been told they might be found.

There are two mountains on Maui, the Mountain of the Sun, Mount Haleakala, and the Mountain of the Moon, Mount Halemahina. The Mountain of the Moon has no road built but there is a highway running up to the top of the Mountain of the Sun, over 10,000 feet high. At the 7,000-foot level I came to the entrance to the park and the road that led to the crater. Just inside the entrance was a road to one side leading to Hosmer Grove. In the early 1900's Mr. Hosmer planted a couple of hundred acres of trees (bamboo and evergreens) that were not endemic to the island. I had been told that this was a good birding spot.

A short trail ran through the woods in a circle and was about half a mile long. It was very rough, not very flat or well marked and you had to watch where you were putting your feet all the time. After half an hour I had seen no birds whatsoever but finally in a clearing a red bird flew over and landed in a tree in plain view. It was easily identified as an I'WI [pronounced EE-EE-VEE], a member of the honeycreeper species. The bird had a red head and body with black wings and a long downward curved bill like a hummingbird's.

My next stop on the way back down the mountain was at the Floral Gardens. Surely there would be a lot of birds there. These gardens contained hundreds of species of flowers and plants. However it was winter in Maui and while warm, there were few flowers to be seen. In an hour all I saw was two birds flying over so swiftly I could not identify them. The

The state bird of Hawaii is the NeNe... a type of goose that is believed to have developed from the Canada goose over a long period of time. The bird no longer spends any time in water, as does the Canada Goose so the webbing on its feet has slowly adapted to walking on sharp lava, rocks and cinders as well as rough vegetation.

gardens were at the 6,000-foot level and the clouds began to form on the mountainside so that I was soon walking in a fine mist. I did not have much to show for a few hours of birding!

Kanaka Pond, another spot near the airport, had a few very small islands in it and covered several acres. I took my scope on this trip and it proved to be a much better spot to see some different birds. I visited the pond twice and saw Black Necked Stilts, an Hawaiian Short Eared Owl, Hawaiian Coots, Hawaiian Ducks as well as well known birds such as the Black Capped Night Heron and Cattle Egrets.

Each morning when I opened the door to my balcony, I heard raucous cries coming from undeveloped land to the rear of the condo complex. They were Francolins but I could never spot one. Finally after a week or so I saw a couple walking in Kameole Beach. These were Grey Francolins one of three types of Francolins.

The state bird of Hawaii is the NeNe. It is a type of goose that is believed to have developed from the Canada goose over a long period of time. The bird and its eggs were preyed upon by mongoose, rats and feral pigs and took shelter at very high altitudes where predators were uncommon. It is smaller than a Canada goose, has a black cap and face, orange cheeks, a white neck with vertical black stripes, a black ring around the throat and oddly webbed feet.

The bird no longer spends any time in water, as does the Canada Goose so the webbing on its feet has slowly adapted to walking on sharp lava, rocks and cinders as well as rough

vegetation. There are about 250 of these birds on Mount Haleakala and they are almost all at the 9,000-foot level or higher. You are warned about them running across the road so I thought there was a good chance of seeing one.

I drove up to the top of the mountain, a two-hour drive from the base, in second gear along the twisting, turning highway. It was an interesting drive and the views from the top of the mountain, above a cloud layer, were spectacular but I saw no NeNe. I had been told that they were often seen at the head of the Halemau'u trail, which was on the

highway below the summit. I stopped there on the way down. There, a young lady in the parking lot, assured me there were a lot around a cabin — ten miles down the trail! The trail was an extremely tough trail to hike and I would never had made it to the cabin and back in a full day let alone a couple of hours. I never did see a NeNe!

All in all, I added 11 new birds to my life list in my three-week stay and I enjoyed the outings. As it turned out there were many other activities to be enjoyed on Maui and my holiday was packed with interesting times.

Nuthatch Convergence

By Bill Merilees

This story begins with a walk in the woods — a short stroll through a South American Beech forest at the southern terminus of the Pan American Highway. Here on the shore of the Beagle Channel (named for Fitzroy's ship on which Charles Darwin sailed) lies Argentina's Terra del Fuego National Park.

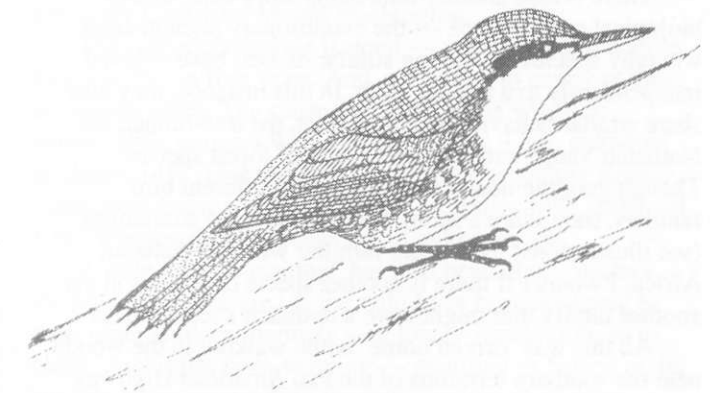
A small bird singing in the canopy responded quickly to my pishing. Dropping directly to a tree bole, it sized up the source of my sounds and then with nuthatch moves, began spiralling up the trunk, creeper fashion. In all appearances, aside from going up rather than down, it resembled a largish nuthatch. A terse note in my field book reads:

Nuthatch like, 5-6" [12 - 15 cm], dark cap, white throat, dark eye-line, with stout pointed 'nuthatch' bill.

Not a nuthatch nor a creeper, but a White-throated Treerunner — the only member of the genus *Pygarrichas*, in the Ovenbird. Yes, the Ovenbird family!

A year earlier, in Madagascar, I came across the 'coral-billed nuthatch' now properly known as the Nuthatch Vanga (*Hypositta corallirostris*), again a monotypic genus in the Vanga Family. At one time it was placed in a family, all on its own, the *Hyposittidae*!

For those who have birded Australia, the sittellas, of the family *Neosittidae* are again a monotypic genus, of five rather distinct races. Their genus is *Daphoenositta*. The



White-throated Treerunner

remarkable physical and behavioural resemblance of these species to 'our' nuthatches (family *Sittidae*) is remarkable. The nuthatches, with 24 relatively colourful species, have a circumpolar, northern hemisphere distribution. Nowhere does this range come close to the tree runner, the vanga or the sittella. These species have evolved quite independently, well isolated from their northern 'look-a-likes'.

The origin and meaning (etymology) of nuthatch and *Sitta* are worth looking at, as these names provide a thread linking the above species that share common traits. At least

one other genus, (and there might well be more), that includes 'sitta' in its name is Geositta, the South American 'miners' who excavate their nesting cavities in earth banks or caves (again in the Ovenbird family).

Ogden Nash once wrote in his poem — "Confessions of a Nuthatch Avoider":

There is nothing more obscure,
than ornithological literature

Thanks to *Words for Birds*, a lexicon by Edward Gruson, it was easy, rather than obscure, to find the following:

About Nuthatch: This is a corruption of, "nuthack", the common practice by nuthatches of jamming small nuts and large seeds in crevices and then hammering (hacking) them apart with their bills.

About Sitta: From sitte, used by no less than Aristotle as the name for a bird, (quite possibly the 'European' Nuthatch) that pecked at the bark of trees.

So, what is the story or lesson to be gained from these observations? Well, perhaps it is the fact that both *Nuthatch* and *Sitta* are habits or behaviours. As such, as opposed to colours (i.e. Green-winged teal), patterns (Pied Wagtail), shapes (Long-billed Curlew) or geography (Northwestern Crow), those who first put these names into scientific or common use, must have had first hand field knowledge of these species. Those who followed, acknowledging similarities, permitted a pattern to emerge.

There is also another interesting story here, that of biological convergence — the evolutionary phenomenon whereby species occupying similar niches, have evolved independently to a similar form. In this instance, they also share similar behaviours. Nuthatches, the tree-runner, the Nuthatch Vanga and the sittella, are all forest species. Though geographically isolated and in different bird families, they share a set of easily observable similarities (see illustrations). Not being familiar with sub-Saharan Africa, I wonder if there is another specie or species in yet another family that might have a nuthatch's resemblance?

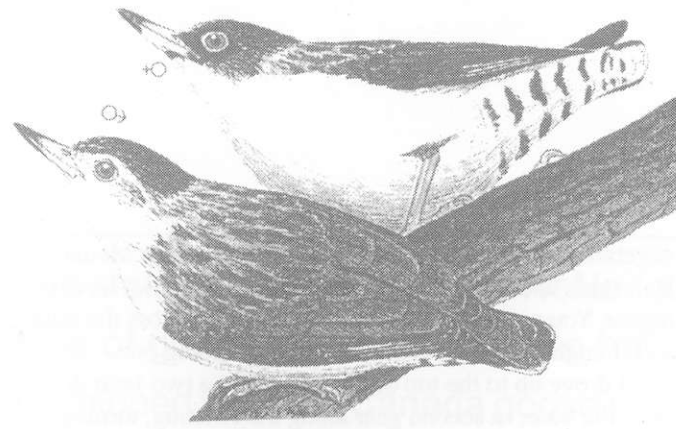
All this was 'driven home' while walking in the woods near the southern terminus of the Pan American Highway.

Acknowledgements:

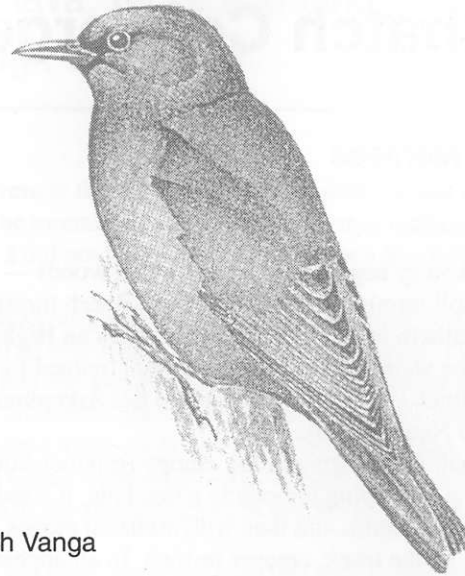
I would like to thank David Stirling for his comments and the authors listed below for the use of the material used in this article.

References:

Araya, B. and S. Chester, 1993: *The Birds of Chile*. (drawings by Mariano Bernal) Latour, Santiago, Chile.
Clements, J. F. 1974: *Birds of the World: a Check List*. Ibis Publishing, California.



Varied Stittella



Nuthatch Vanga

Gruson, E. 1972: *Words for Birds: A lexicon of North American Birds with Biographical Notes*. Quadrangle Books.

Langrand, O. 1990: *Guide to the Birds of Madagascar*. (Illustrated by Vincent Bretagnolle). Yale University Press.

Simpson, K. G. and N. Day 1999: *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* (sixth edition) (Illustrations by Nicholas Day). Viking.

Green Spaces Project Wins Award

On June 9th, the Victoria Natural History Society Green Spaces Project was awarded the Environmental Achievement Volunteer Organizational Award by Saanich municipality. The Society and its Directors congratulate the tireless efforts of all the volunteers who have participated in the Green Spaces Project.

The Green Spaces Project is a special project of the Victoria Natural History Society, driven entirely by the volunteer efforts of a committed group of VNHS members and volunteers. Since its inception in 1997, the project has recognized the importance of identifying and protecting green spaces in the community. Working with the goals and guidelines of the Capital Regional District's Green/Blue Spaces Strategy, the Project has undertaken inventories of hundreds of ecologically significant properties to document their importance.

In Saanich, the Green Spaces Project has worked closely with the municipality in its inventories of almost 500 rights of way. Of these, more than half have been shown to have values as greenways; 22 municipal parks have been surveyed as well. These inventories are available to all, an invaluable record of the natural values of these areas. With a prior knowledge of what ecological resources exist in these areas, residents, planners, and developers may make better decisions about how these special places are to be managed, and how their benefits to the community can be maximized.

Each inventory consists of a thorough on-the-ground survey of all plants, animals, and cultural elements on the property. Significant elements are identified and located using GPS systems. The Project maintains records of all surveys, and will provide free copies on request. The locations of all inventoried sites are indicated on the CRD's Natural Areas Atlas website.

The Green Spaces Project has also made many presentations to the public and to municipal and community groups to help disseminate its findings, and make recommendations about future actions if requested.

These surveys by competent amateur naturalists represent many hundreds of hours of volunteer effort, and have produced detailed and careful results. In the normal process of producing such a report, a staff person or consultant would have to complete the work in a short time, during one season only, and at considerable cost, so the economic value of these surveys to the community is immeasurable.

But for these volunteers, the value of their work is not measured in dollars. They do it because of the intrinsic importance of our native ecosystems, and recognition that our species has an obligation, not to overwhelm our environment, but to live as a part of it.

Vancouver Island Marmots

By Doug Carrick

*How much wood would a woodchuck chuck,
if a woodchuck could chuck wood?*

The name "marmot" means mountain mouse — "mar" for mouse and "mot" for mont or mountain. As suggested by their name, marmots are found on the mountains of Vancouver Island. They are, however, larger than mice — more the size of a large house cat. In eastern Canada they are called groundhogs or woodchucks.

The Vancouver Island Marmots were isolated from other marmots throughout the Ice Age and have taken on distinctive characteristics. They are one of 14 species in the world — the only one listed as endangered. Once inhabiting all the mountains of Vancouver Island they are now only found on four mountains west of Nanaimo and on Mount Washington. Their numbers have dwindled from 300 in 1984 to 100 today.

To prevent extinction, a "captive breeding program" was started in 1997 with 6 marmots being sent to the Toronto Zoo. More were sent to the Calgary Zoo and to the Mountain View Breeding Centre in Fort Langley. They are now being introduced to the recently completed Marmot Recovery Centre on Mount Washington.

The reproduction rate is good — a rate that will double their number in five years. And, of course, in captivity there are no predators. The causes of death in the wild are: wolves 38%, cougars 9.5%, golden eagles 9.5%, unknown predators 14% (probably one of the three predators already mentioned, but not proven), winter mortality 14%, dispersal 10% (wandered out of range?) and unknown 5%.

A little "match-making" has also been done. Solitary marmots from one area in the wild have been relocated to meet other solitary marmots — a lonely-hearts club, so to speak. And it has been working — resulting in 5 pups in the last two years — equaling the reproduction of all other marmots in the wild.

Similar things are being done at the Mount Washington Recovery Centre. "Jack" was captured in June and introduced to "Gemini" but she beat him up so badly they had to be separated. They were re-introduced in August and have grown fond of each other. Next summer we may hear the results.

Marmot status at December 31, 2002

Wild Marmots	36
Toronto Zoo	16 (including 4 pups)
Calgary Zoo	16 (including 4 pups)
Mountain View	16 (including 5 pups)
Mount Washington	15 (too early for pups)

President's Message

By Ann Nightingale

I am not a lawyer, and have never wanted to be one. However, it seems that more and more, in our professional, private and community lives, we have to be aware of the laws of the land and the implications for our actions. Many things that were taken for granted or trusted to common sense in the past now require formal documentation.

VNHS is no exception to this. The VNHS Board has been struggling with three legal issues which may "complicate" our relationships with our members: liability, privacy legislation, and copyright.

For the past several months, the Board has been discussing our legal responsibilities and liabilities with regard to our members and guests when involved in VNHS activities. While we carry liability insurance, many clubs and organizations are now requiring participants on field trips and outings to sign liability waivers. If you have children in school, you have probably seen lengthy documents as well as "sign off" forms for pretty much every activity. It may well be that you will be asked to sign such a form to participate in field trips in the future. While we appreciate that you may find this cumbersome or even unnecessary, the advice that we are receiving from our legal contacts is that it is

important for us to do. Please be assured that we will try to keep it as unobtrusive as possible.

Privacy legislation which will go into effect in January will also require us to modify some of our practices as well. For instance, we have usually included a list of new members in *The Naturalist*, along with their street and interests, if provided on their membership form. In the future, we will need to get permission to do this. We will also need specific permission from our members to use their contact information to advise them of issues that are not directly related to being VNHS members.

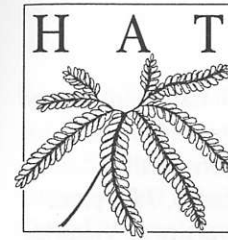
At its May meeting, the Board passed a motion to ensure that copyright on future publications of VNHS committees will belong to VNHS so that we will be able to distribute the information freely.

While on one hand, these laws may seem to make our lives more difficult, we have to remember that laws are also working for us by preventing pollution, preserving habitat, and protecting individual rights. Although adherence might be an imposition at first, we seem to very adaptable and adjust to the changes fairly quickly. Thank you for bearing with us while we make these changes.



VNHS Life Member Honoured with Jubilee Medal

David Stirling with the Queen's Jubilee medal presented to him and ten other B.C. naturalists at a ceremony held at VanDusen Garden in Vancouver. (See the May/June *Naturalist*). Photos: Bruce Whittington



HAT Tricks

By Eric Kopetski

Salmon, Kids, and Cash: How HAT is Working to Ensure Affordable Environmental Education

Citizens of Victoria are lucky to be able to experience one of nature's most spectacular and important natural phenomenon — the annual salmon run. Salmon have been a vital part of the natural and cultural history of our area, and remain very important to plants, animals, and humans alike. Prior to April of 2002, elementary school students were able to take part in educational programs at Goldstream Provincial Park free of charge through government funding. Arenaria Research and Interpretation, the company delivering the programs, now charges a minimum of \$100 a class to make up for the cutbacks, a fee which many classes are unable to afford. This is a tremendous loss to those children, as in many cases they are from low-income areas, and do not get the chance to experience a wilderness setting outside of school trips.

Habitat Acquisition Trust is coordinating an effort to restore funding to the salmon programs. We hope to enlist the support of local, community-oriented businesses that will provide financial backing to the program, giving all children the opportunity to take part in the programs.

I am a UVic student on a Geography co-op workterm, and will be working to gain corporate support for the

programs at Goldstream Park. I grew up in Quesnel B.C., and have lived in Victoria for the past two years, during which time I learned about the programs at Goldstream Park. I believe they are an extremely valuable resource for students. It is very rare to be able to combine a world-class salmon run, magnificent trees, and trained naturalists in a park so close to an urban centre. I believe that these programs are too special and too important to let slip away, and I look forward to encouraging businesses in the Victoria area to get involved with environmental education at Goldstream Park!

Residents, visitors and even other non-profits have all already shown their support for these programs: for example, the Victoria Natural History Society gave HAT \$4,000 last year! Thank you!

If you are interested in helping with this project, or have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please contact HAT by phone (995-2428), email (hatmail@hat.bc.ca) or fax (920-7975).

ERIC KOPETSKI is the Corporate Outreach Officer at Habitat Acquisition Trust.

Welcome to New Members

Mitch Fumalle
Maplegrave Place

Joan Miller
Fairfield Road

Karen Nuernberger
Wilson Street

Katy and Carol Madsen
Cedarglen Road
birds, botany, reptiles, insects etc.

H. L. and Eleanor Rayner
Stewart Mountain Road
hiking, wildlife, conservation

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month (directors' meetings are held at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary); **Natural History Presentations** (formally known as the General Members Meeting): the second Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., in Murray and Anne Fraser 159, University of Victoria; **Botany Night:** the third Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre; **Parks and Conservation Committee Meeting:** the third Wednesday, 7:00 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre; **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., Murray and Anne Fraser 159, University of Victoria. **Marine Night:** the last Monday, 7:30 p.m., Swan Lake Nature Centre. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Telephone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 for further information and updates. The VNHS Calendar also appears on the Internet at: <http://www.vicNHS.bc.ca>.

JULY

Saturday, July 5

Butterflies and Dragonflies

Join **Derrick Marvin** in searching for butterflies and dragonflies in the Duncan area. Meet at Helmcken Park and Ride at 8:00 a.m., or meet on York Street in Duncan (by the Driving Range, off Beverly Street) at 9:00 a.m. Call Derrick at 250-748-8504 for more information.

Sunday, July 13

Birding Mandarte Island and Sidney Island

We will travel by chartered boat to the large seabird-nesting colony on Mandarte Island. Glaucous-winged Gulls, Pigeon Guillemots, Pelagic and Double-crested Cormorants can be found nesting here. The boat drops us off at Sidney Island to take in the first southbound shorebirds. You can return on any scheduled Sidney Island Ferry sailing. Bring a lunch and something to drink. Cost is \$19.00 per person (includes the return ferry fare from Sidney Island). Meet at the ferry dock at the foot of Beacon Avenue in Sidney at 8:00 a.m. sharp. Reserve your spot by calling Claudia at the HAT office at 995-2428. Leader TBA.

Saturday, July 19

Purple Loosetrife Pull

Feeling frustrated? Have some energy to burn? Come out and relieve those tensions at Viaduct Flats wetland. The invasive alien, Purple Loosetrife, is destined to take over the marsh without some active removal. Last year's effort was very satisfying, and this year promises more of the same good feelings! If you ever bird the area then you know its value for wildlife is worth preserving. Parking is along Interurban Avenue or up Viaduct Avenue (not in the bus turnaround!). We will start at 9 a.m., so bring your tools, a travel mug for coffee or juice (provided) and an appetite for bagels (also provided).

Sunday, July 20

Hurricane Ridge

This trip, a VNHS tradition, is timed to catch the summer alpine flowers on Hurricane Ridge in Washington's Olympic National Park. Bird from the ferry, and look for high elevation species in the mountains. There are facilities in the park but a lunch and something to drink is suggested. Be prepared for cold temperatures and/or rain; also wear sturdy hiking boots. Meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal in the Inner Harbour before 6:00 a.m. (allow time to park) for the 6:10 sailing of the M.V. Coho. Ferry cost is \$17.00 (US) return. You will require two pieces of ID (one with a picture)

for going through customs. Cost of the charter bus and entry to the park is \$30.00 (CDN). We will return on the 5:15 sailing (90 minute crossing time). There is room for 38 participants plus the 2 leaders. These trips always fill, so reserve your spot early by calling Claudia at the HAT office at 995-2428. VNHS members will be given priority. Leaders TBA.

Saturday, July 19 and Sunday, July 20

Victoria Butterfly Count

We are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers so get out your field guide! **Jeff Gaskin** is the count coordinator; give him a call at 381-7248

Sunday, July 27

Insect Exploration

You never know what we will find in the grass, in the ponds, or cruising by! Join UVic graduate student **James Miskelly**, and **Darren and Claudia Copley** as they hunt for six-legged fauna at the Beaver Lake Retriever ponds. Butterflies, dragonflies, ...snakeflies?... Really! Meet at the info kiosk in the park at 10:00 a.m. Bring a net if you have one, containers for viewing, and cross your fingers for sunny weather.

AUGUST

Saturday, August 16

Tufted Puffins and Archaeological Museum

Join us for a field trip on the Olympic Peninsula to Cape Flattery and the First Nations Cultural Center. Cape Flattery is the most northern point in the continental United States and is one of the closest locations where you will see Tufted Puffins. Islands off the point are also home to thousands of seabirds throughout the year. In 1970 tidal erosion uncovered an ancient whaling village at Ozette, parts of which had been covered by a mudslide hundreds of years ago. The artifacts that were subsequently found have now classified Ozette as one of the most significant archaeological discoveries ever made in North America! In 1979 the Cultural and Research Center opened to the public in order to share this great archaeological find. Meet at the Black Ball Ferry terminal before 6:00a.m. (allow time to park) for the 6:10 sailing of the M.V. Coho. Ferry cost \$17.00 (US) return. You will require two pieces of ID (one with a picture) for going through customs. Cost of the charter bus and entry to the museum is \$35.00 (CDN). We will return on the 9:30p.m. sailing (90 minute crossing time). Bring a lunch; we will have dinner in Port Angeles. There is room for 38 participants plus the 2 leaders. These trips always fill, so reserve your spot early by calling Claudia at the HAT office at 995-2428. VNHS members

will be given priority. Leaders are **Rick Schortinghuis** and one other TBA.

Sunday, August 17

Ice Cream Sunday!

A fun-filled afternoon at the Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre, perfect for all ages! Locally produced all-natural Shady Creek Ice Cream comes in a fabulous selection of flavours and each is delicious! Come out and try them all! Activities/festivities will begin at 1 p.m.: nature walks, talks, face painting, and more.

BULLETIN BOARD

Nature Writer's Panel

Hosted by Briony Penn. 7 to 9 p.m., Wednesday, July 2

David Strong Auditorium, University of Victoria

Tickets at the door only: \$10

The Nature Writers Panel will be a feature pre-conference presentation of "The Leading Edge" — Canada's national conference on Stewardship and Conservation in July 2003, in Victoria, British Columbia. The panel will feature four high-profile nature writers, who will provide their perspective on the affinity between people and nature and offer new ways to create a deeper, more dynamic and creative understanding of our relationship with the natural world. Writers will also give a reading from their books. Our feature writers include **Sharon Butala**, whose non-fiction "The Perfection of the Morning" was over a year on the Canadian bestseller list, **Jan Zwicky**, winner of the Governor General's Award for "Songs for Relinquishing the Earth", **Brian Brett**, poet and novelist from Saltspring Island and **Gordon de Frane**, a Salish storyteller and writer. Come join us for a night of ideas, language and imagination with these compelling personalities as they unfold their passion for nature.

The Goldstream Art Show Request for Volunteers

Goldstream Provincial Park, Habitat Acquisition Trust, and the Victoria Natural History Society are once again co-sponsoring a show of nature-inspired art from September 19 to October 13, 2003. 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 school programs at Goldstream, we need volunteers to help staff the centre. If you have volunteered in the past, you will be getting a phone call. Please call **Claudia Copley** at 479-6622 if you would like to be on the volunteer list. Volunteers will be invited to participate in the opening wine and cheese and have an opportunity to meet the artists.

Join us for this free event. A portion of the ice cream sales will be donated to Habitat Acquisition Trust to help keep the visitor centre open.

Saturday, August 16 and Sunday, August 17

Victoria Butterfly Count

We are always looking for keen-eyed volunteers so get out your field guide! **Jeff Gaskin** is the count coordinator; give him a call at 381-7248

NPSBC Annual General Meeting 2003

The AGM of the Native Plant Society of B.C. (NPSBC) will be held on Galiano Island on September 13, 2003. The Galiano Conservancy Association (member of NPSBC) has graciously agreed to provide us with a variety of guided tours of their spectacular little island. There are a tremendous range of choices, both for the somewhat adventurous, and for those of us looking for a leisurely stroll.

Watch for further details on the NPSBC web site (www.npsbc.org/) for details as they are confirmed. This will include travel information, accommodation (for those wishing to make it a Gulf Island get-away weekend) and a taste of some of the sites planned in the guided tours. Keep checking for information.

Non-members are most welcome. Come and see what the NPSBC is doing and see how you can become involved. If you are not connected to the Internet, please call **Susan Bastin** at 250-361-3122 for further information.

BC Hydro Fish and Wildlife Bridge Coastal Restoration Program

The Bridge Coastal Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program (BCRP) funds projects to restore fish and wildlife populations and habitat in watersheds impacted by the construction of hydroelectric generation facilities in BC Hydro's Bridge River/Coastal Generation Area. These 15 watersheds are located throughout the Fraser Valley, Vancouver Island, Coastal, Bridge River and Shuswap areas.

The BCRP will provide \$1.5 million in annual funding to support eligible fish and wildlife projects within these watersheds. Contact Janice Doane at 1-800-663-1377 or go to <http://www.bchydro.com/bcrp>. Deadline October 1, 2003.



The Victoria NATURALIST

P.O. Box 5220, Stn. B.,
Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4

Renewal date: Aug--03 X

Barrie Bird
3820 Epsom Drive
VICTORIA BC V8P 3S7