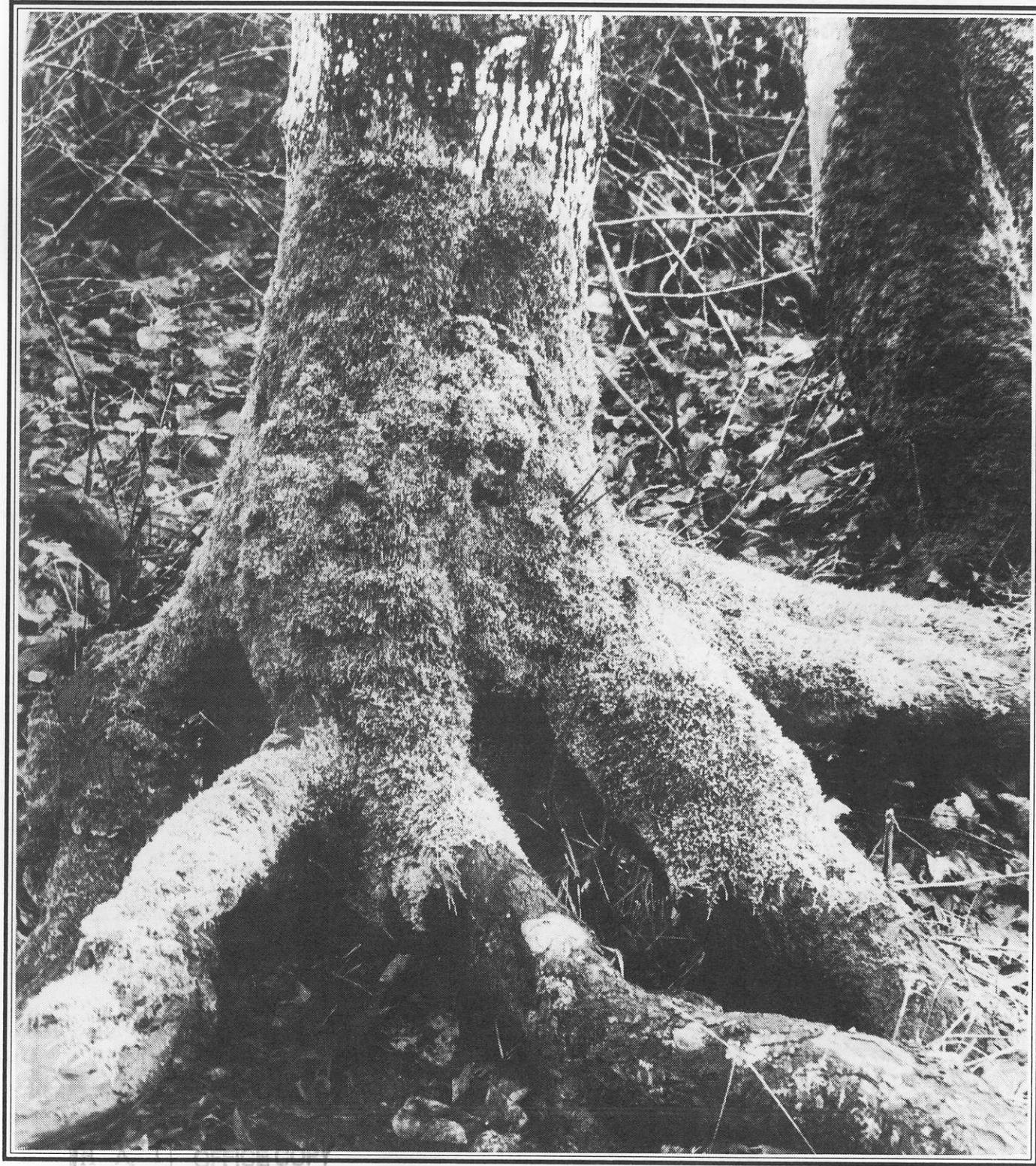


# The Victoria NATURALIST

NOVEMBER  
DECEMBER  
1988

VOL. 45.3

VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Bertha McHaffie-Gow



DO NOT REMOVE

**VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**
**Honorary Life Members**

Albert R. Davidson, Miss E.K. Lemon,  
A. Douglas Turnbull, Mrs. L.E. Chambers,  
Mrs. Peggy Goodwill, Vic Goodwill

**Officers and Directors 1988**
*Officers and Committees*

PRESIDENT Betty Kennedy, 592-2070  
VICE-PRESIDENT Dave Fraser, 479-0016, (Program)  
PAST PRESIDENT Mary Richmond, 385-0504 (Swan Lk.)  
TREASURER John Hunter, 479-4903 (Finance)  
SECRETARY Bob Nixon, 727-6630

*Directors and Committees*

Robin W. Baird, 380-1925  
Ed Coffin, 592-0964 (Membership)  
Constance Hawley, 385-2535  
Mike McGrenere, 658-8624 (Birding)  
Harold Pollock, 386-4449 (Scholarships and Bird Habitat Protection)  
Rueben Ware, 385-2803  
Bruce Whittington, 652-1529 (Publications Committee)

**Other Functions**

FBCN: W. Medd, R. Ware, R. Baird  
Friends of the Provincial Museum: Mary Richmond  
Librarian: A.R. Davidson, 598-3088

Birding Field Trips: A. Knowles, 477-3684  
L. Davis, 477-9952

Birders Night Contact: Mike McGrenere, 658-8624  
Bird Habitat: Charlie Trotter, Calver Palmateer

**RARE BIRD ALERT:** 592-3381

*The Victoria Naturalist*

Managing Editor: Mark Nyhof, 595-0232  
Advertising: Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve, 477-2402  
Copy Editor: Jaclyn Dorsey  
Distribution: Ed Coffin, Lyndis Davis

Annual Dues, including The Victoria Naturalist and the B.C. Naturalist:  
Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 1989

Regular	\$17.00	Family	\$22.00
Golden Age	\$16.00	Sustaining	\$30.00

Published every two months by the  
**VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**  
P.O. Box 5220, Station B, Victoria, B.C. V8R 6N4  
Contents Copyright © 1988 as credited  
ISSN 0049-612X Printed in Canada

## DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:

### Friday, Dec. 2

Send to:  
Mark Nyhof, 220 Beechwood Avenue, Victoria, B.C.  
V8S 3W7

### REPORT MARINE MAMMAL SIGHTINGS AND STRANDINGS TO:

**477-1818, 380-1925** in the Victoria area  
**1-800-334-8832 toll-free** anywhere in B.C.

All sightings, no matter how old, are useful for research purposes, and are put into a computer data base. Records are available to all researchers. When current local sightings of killer whales, or any unusual species, are reported promptly, researchers will try to respond to them. Please report date, time, location, a description of the animals, and number and direction of travel, as well as your name and phone number in case further information is required.

**ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES** are invited for display space in *The Victoria Naturalist*. Here is a special opportunity to reach hundreds of active outdoors people who are particular about the quality of their equipment, clothing, accessories, and recreational experiences. Our reasonable rates enable you to inform the membership about your commitment to providing superior products and services. Contact Margaret Mackenzie-Grieve at **477-2402** for details, rates, and upcoming deadlines.

For membership information and renewal please contact Ed Coffin (592-0964) or write V.N.H.S., Box 5220, Station B, Victoria, B.C.

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

**The Victoria Naturalist Layout & Lasersetting by DESKTOP PUBLISHING LTD., Victoria, B.C.**

## CONTENTS

**Two Other Centenarians**  
By A. R. Davidson ..... 4

**Household Special Wastes Disposal** ..... 4

**Little Hooter**  
By B. McHaffie-Gow ..... 5

**Ichthyological Notes**  
The Grunt Sculpin  
By Graham Gillespie ..... 6

**Carmanah Valley** ..... 7

**Northern Mockingbird on Vancouver Island**  
By Keith Taylor ..... 8

**Point Roberts Heron Colony Threatened** ..... 9

**Some Notes from Davey**  
By A. R. Davidson ..... 11

**Beneficiaries of Harold's Hospitality**  
By Katherine Sherman ..... 12

**Birding on Triangle Mountain**  
By Jeff Gaskin ..... 13

**The Wind and the Tree**  
By Tom Williams ..... 13

**Analysis of Wildlife Admissions into a Veterinary Hospital**  
By Ken Langelier ..... 14

**The Siskin**  
By Alf Porcher ..... 17

**Upcoming Programs** ..... 18

## Letters

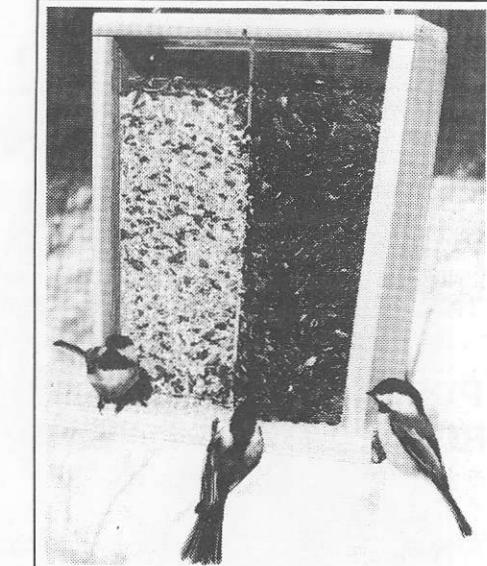
Dear Mrs. Kennedy:

July 16 - August 1, 1988, was the most successful summer program in the Goldstream Park Visitor Centre's history. The Society's program was crucial to the success of "Nature Art and Natural Areas" and I want to express our sincere appreciation.

In that 15-day period, more than 16,000 people viewed the work of more than 60 artists, some of them members of the VNHS. In any case, the exhibition simply would not have been possible without the incredible energy and cooperation of the 230 volunteers from the Victoria Natural History Society.

I would ask that you pass along our most sincere thanks to the membership for your support. It was absolutely wonderful!

Catherine L. Mackin  
Visitor Services Coordinator  
B.C. Parks, Malahat District



Bird Feeders, Blask Oil Sunflower, Jumbo, Large, Bird Preferred Sunflower, Chick Scratch, Plus Many More.

*Seasons Greetings  
from*

**Borden  
Mercantile**

3960 Borden Street Victoria, B.C. V8P 3H8  
479-2084 479-3414  
Agricultural, Industrial, Garden, Pet Supplies

## Two Other Centenarians

By A. R. Davidson

I do thank all those kind friends who wrote such nice things about me in the last *Naturalist*, and I'm grateful that I am still able to read what my friends have written.

Two other Society members also reached their centenary, the first being George Winkler, who was 104 when he died in May 1978. He was a prospector and a poet, a geologist and a writer, a former honorary member and a contributor to this magazine.

Another member who celebrated his hundredth birthday a few months ago is John Palmer of Colwood. It was in his garden on August 26, 1958, that the *Anna's Hummingbird* was first identified. He was watching a hummer and realised that its flight pattern was different from that of the *Rufous*. It would fly very high and then flash vertically down and at the end of its trajectory would make a loud squeak. He phoned what he had seen and a party of us went out to investigate, including Charlie Guiguet, the Museum biologist, and its identity as an Anna's was officially established. John Palmer is still living in his old home.

### THE FOLLOWING PUBLICATIONS MAY BE ORDERED THROUGH VNHS:

#### *The Naturalist's Guide to the Victoria Region*

(a VNHS publication).  
Members' price \$10.50,  
Non-members \$11.95.

#### *National Geographic Society Field Guide to the Birds of North America.*

\$23.00

Call Lyndis Davis, 477-9952  
(5-7 pm is best)

## Household Special Wastes Disposal

Bulletin from the Ministry of Environment

1. A storage depot is established in the Victoria area to receive and segregate special wastes. These wastes are periodically shipped away to chemical disposal companies for treatment/destruction.
2. The depot is open approximately one day per month for residents to bring in their special wastes. To obtain information regarding date and time of the next scheduled day, call 727-2141.
3. The following is a list of typical household wastes that can be disposed of via this system:
  - Old fuels, oils, solvents
  - Pesticides
  - Moth balls
  - PCB-containing fluorescent ballasts
  - Photographic chemicals (unmixed)
  - Solvent-based cleaners (furniture and metal polishes)
  - Old swimming pool chemicals
  - Old paints (unused) and paint strippers.
4. The following is a list of typical household wastes that can be poured down a kitchen or bathroom drain with plenty of water:
  - Bathroom and kitchen cleaners (drains, ovens, disinfectants, etc.)
  - Latex paint wastes
  - Dilute (mixed) photographic chemicals.
5. Partial cans of old paints can be hardened up by mixing with sawdust or sand prior to disposing with household garbage. Small amounts of paint solvents can be evaporated to dryness and any residues disposed of with household garbage.

## Classified Advertising

is available for V.N.H.S. Members at \$5 per ad.  
Write your own ad — it will appear exactly as you submit it. Text only (no graphics or photos).

Limit 35 words.

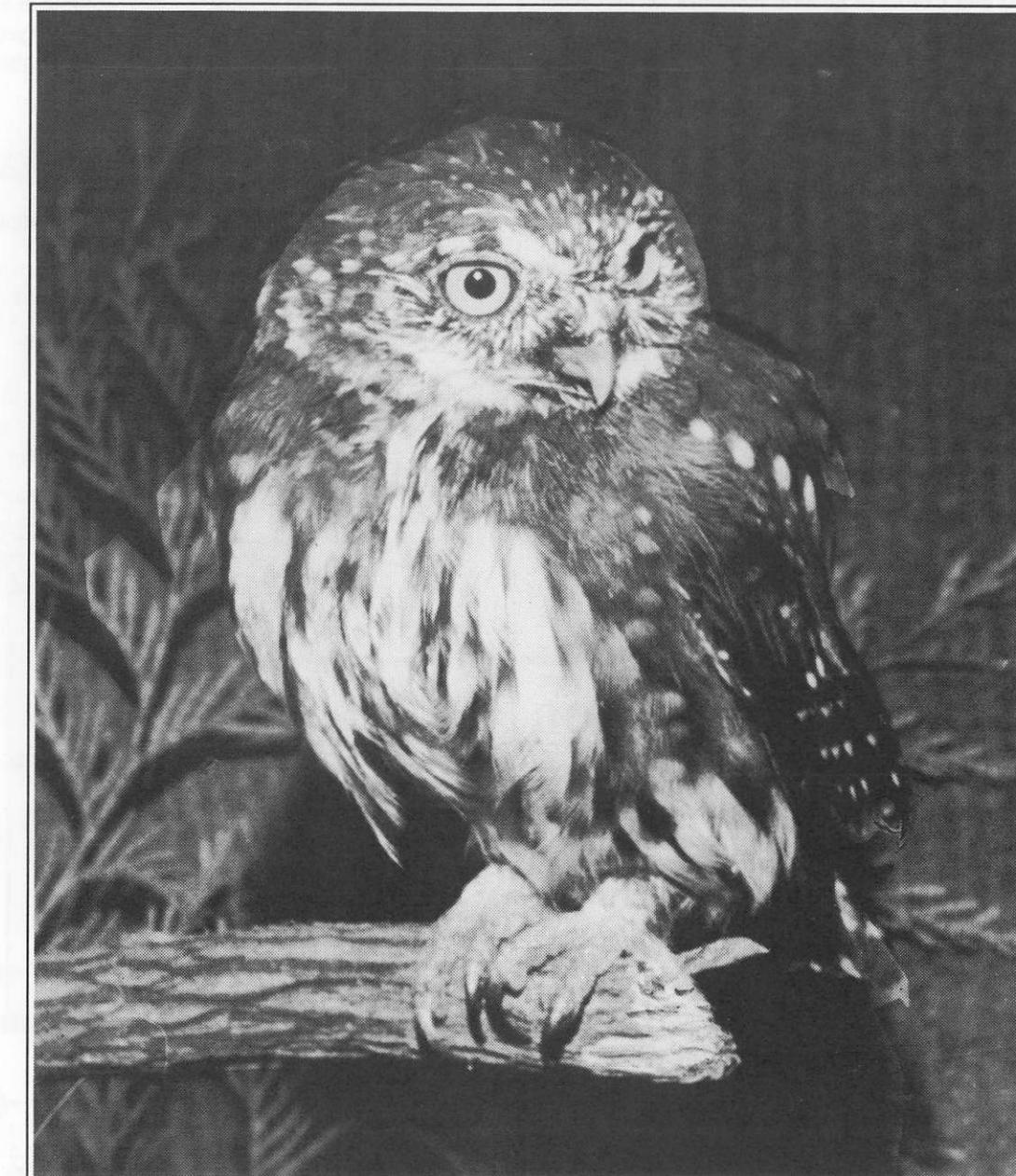
## Little Hooter

By Bertha McHaffie-Gow

A Pygmy Owl, wet, cold and injured, was picked up on Humpback Road on Sunday evening, September 18. Taken home, it was dried off and warmed up and given water from an eye dropper. Raw shrimp was manually placed in its beak. It slowly recovered, and by Thursday, September 22, it looked healthy, could fly about the living room and seemed to have no fear of humans. It was happy to be alive and when offered a piece of raw shrimp reached out with the left little claw to take and hold the offering and then proceeded to pull out on the meat and feed.

Photos were taken of this tiny owl, about the size of a fine china tea cup. The book gives its measurements as six inches. A distinguishing feature are two dark marks like eyes in the feathers at the nape of the neck.

All credit for the survival of this feathered friend goes to the thoughtful young couple who gave Little Hooter so much TLC. The evening of the day they took the photos, they took the little owl to the area where it had been found and released it, making sure it could fly well enough to be on its own. Their three-year-old son did not want Hooter to go. But I'm sure another caring naturalist is in the making, with the dedicated example his parents give him, and he now has his own picture of Little Hooter to remember it by.



Bertha McHaffie-Gow

## Ichthyological Notes

By Graham E. Gillespie

### The Grunt Sculpin

One of the more intriguing fishes of the waters of British Columbia is the grunt sculpin, *Rhamphocottus richardsoni*. It was first recorded from British Columbia by H.M.S. *Plumper* at Fort Rupert (near Port Hardy, Vancouver Island), and the specimen was purchased by the British Museum. The specimen was examined and described as the type for a new genus and species in 1874 by Albert Günther. The scientific names are from the Greek roots *rhamphos* (meaning snout) and *Cottus* (a generic name for certain sculpins), and from John Richardson, a naturalist and explorer in the northeast Pacific area in the mid-1800's.

The common name of grunt sculpin or gruntfish comes from the noise made by the fish when removed from the water or handled in water. The noise is described alternately as a grunting or hissing, and is detectable as a vibration felt by the hands when touching the fish underwater. Other names which have been applied to this creature are Richardson's sculpin, pigfish, and northern sea horse.

The grunt sculpin has a body form unique among local fishes. It has a short, deep body and a large, flat head which makes up about half of its body length. It has two long, blunt, rounded ridges on the front of its head, which give it the appearance of a very high forehead. Its mouth is small, thick-lipped, and placed at the end of a short, round snout reminiscent of that of a hog (hence the name pigfish). The fins are all short and rounded on their edges, with the rays of all except the first dorsal fin being orange to red in colour. The first dorsal fin is clear, with black spots on the rays, and the rays of the second dorsal fin are marked with one spot each, near the base. The body is a light cream to tan colour, with dark brown streaks running obliquely across the body and through the eye. There is a bright orange-red patch at the base of the tail. The maximum recorded size is three and a half inches.

The fish is amazing to watch in the water. The lower pectoral fins are free of the membrane, and are used like fingers to crawl around the bottom, as the sculpin appears to jump from ledge to ledge. The short body appears stiff, and it swims with only its pectoral fins, hovering like a hummingbird in the water. This may be the reason for the name northern sea horse, as this hovering locomotion is used by the stiff-bodied sea horses as well. Its eyes work independently, scanning in two different directions at the same time, watchful of predators or in search of prey. It eats mainly small items, the young feeding on smaller larvae of crabs, barnacles and fish, and the adults concentrating on small crustaceans.

Grunt sculpin are found all along the Pacific coast from Santa Barbara, California, to the Bering Sea, in rocky and sandy areas, among pilings under wharfs, and rarely in tidepools.

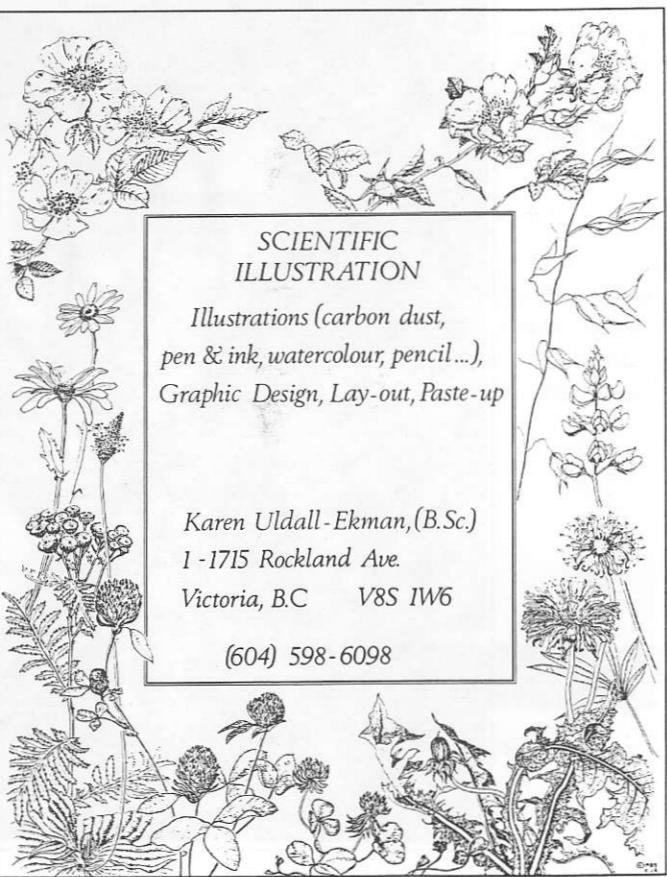
They have been observed in the abandoned shells of large barnacles, sitting in the cavity with only their heads exposed. The resemblance between the shapes of their heads and the closed shells of the former residents is remarkable. There are also reports that they reverse themselves in the shell, and by waving their red tails out of the shell, resemble a barnacle's extended feeding appendages, filtering microscopic food from the water. If there are not enough of these natural homes available, the grunt sculpins will take up residence in discarded bottles, cans or other containers.

They mate in the winter, and aquarium observations reveal that the female chases the male about the area until he is trapped in a crevice in the rocks, and then does not allow his escape until her yellow-orange eggs have been laid and fertilised.

Though you will only rarely find a grunt sculpin in a tidepool or under a wharf, and are not likely to see one at all unless you snorkel or scuba dive, they are regularly displayed at the Vancouver Public Aquarium, and one should take the opportunity to see these enchanting and unique fishes.

#### References:

- Clemens, W.A. and G.V. Wilby. 1961. Fishes of the Pacific Coast of Canada. Fisheries Research Board of Canada Bulletin 68. 2nd Ed. 443 p.  
Eschmeyer, W.N., E.S. Herald, and H. Hammann. 1983. A Field Guide to Pacific Coast Fishes of North America. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston. 336 p.  
Hart, J.L. 1973. Pacific Fishes of Canada. Fisheries Research Board of Canada Bulletin 180. 740 p.  
Lamb, A. and P. Edgell. 1986. Coastal Fishes of the Pacific Northwest. Harbour Publishing Co. Ltd., Madiera Park, Canada. 224 p.



## THE WORLD'S TALLEST SITKA SPRUCE DESERVE PROTECTION

Western Canada Wilderness Committee Education Report

### A MOST SPECTACULAR FOREST HIKE

WCWC began construction of hiking trails in Carmanah Valley in May 1988. By the end of July, more than 500 people had already hiked the trails to visit this spectacular valley.

The trail south from Camp Heaven, is under construction and WCWC does not recommend that hikers use this portion before it is finished. The trail route is scouted above the canyon which is phenomenally grand and awe inspiring for its size. The trail then will descend down to the 95 metre tall Carmanah Giant, Canada's tallest known tree. WCWC will not build the trail further but eventually hopes that Parks Canada will connect it to the West Coast Trail in Pacific Rim National Park, only 1.5 km away.

Details on how to get to the trail head through the maze of public logging roads, and drive safely on them are available from the Wilderness Committee's office upon request.

Even if you are unable to visit the valley personally, letters to political leaders and newspaper editors expressing your opinion will help you share in the magical spirit of Carmanah.

### How you can help

Yes, I believe that Canada's tallest trees must be protected by expanding Pacific Rim National Park to include the entire 7000 ha (27 square miles) Carmanah Valley.

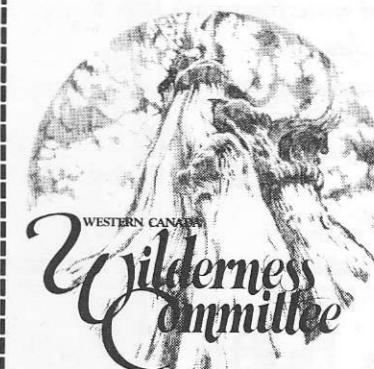
Please let me help save this natural heritage treasure. Here is my tax deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to your Carmanah Valley preservation campaign.

Enclosed is \$10 to purchase a 26" by 39" full color poster of Carmanah's giant Sitka spruces. Price includes postage, handling and B.C. tax where applicable. All proceeds go to help save Carmanah.

Here is \$12 to buy a copy of your 30 minute VHS video on Carmanah Valley. Price includes postage, handling and tax.

COUNT ME IN. I want to become a member of Western Canada Wilderness Committee. Enclosed is my \$20 annual membership fee.

Please return to Western Canada Wilderness Committee, 103-1520 West 6th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1R2 Canada



### THIS FALL AT BOLEN BOOKS

#### CANADA A Natural History

With Photographs by  
Tim Fitzharris

\$50.00



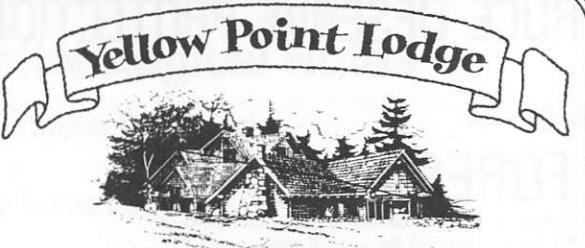
#### Coming This October: British Columbia

#### RECREATIONAL Atlas

\$19.95

Come in and See Our Wide Selection of Nature Calendars

HILLSIDE CENTRE • 16 - 1644 • HILLSIDE AVENUE • VICTORIA • B.C. • V8T 2C5 • PHONE 595-4232



## A place apart...

- 180 acres of natural, oceanfront parkland.
- Relaxed country hospitality.
- Fine home cooking.
- Beach sauna and hot tub.
- Salt water swimming pool.
- 5 miles of walking and jogging trails.
- Tennis courts, volleyball, badminton, canoes, row boats, ping-pong.
- 1 mile of waterfront with secluded coves and beaches.

R.R.#3, Ladysmith, B.C.  
V0R 2E0  
604 • 245 • 7422



## NEW BOOKS

Birds of Nova Scotia Revised	Tufts	cloth 29.95
Birds of Hawaii & the Tropical Pacific	Pratt et al	paper 26.95
Birds of the Indian Subcontinent	Ali & Ripley	cloth 26.95
Checklist of N.A. Birds	DeSante & Pyle	cloth 41.00
Butterflies of Costa Rica	DeVries	cloth 81.00
Flowers of Greece and the Balkans	Polunin	paper 38.95
Botanical Latin	Stern	paper 35.00

And there are many more! Write for details, or call Bruce Whittington. Complete catalogue \$1.00.

## the field-naturalist

Special order book service for naturalists

P.O. Box 161, Brentwood Bay, B.C.  
V0S 1A0 Telephone 652-1529

## The Northern Mockingbird on Vancouver Island

By K. Taylor

The Northern Mockingbird is a rare vagrant to Vancouver Island. The closest breeding range is southwestern Oregon.

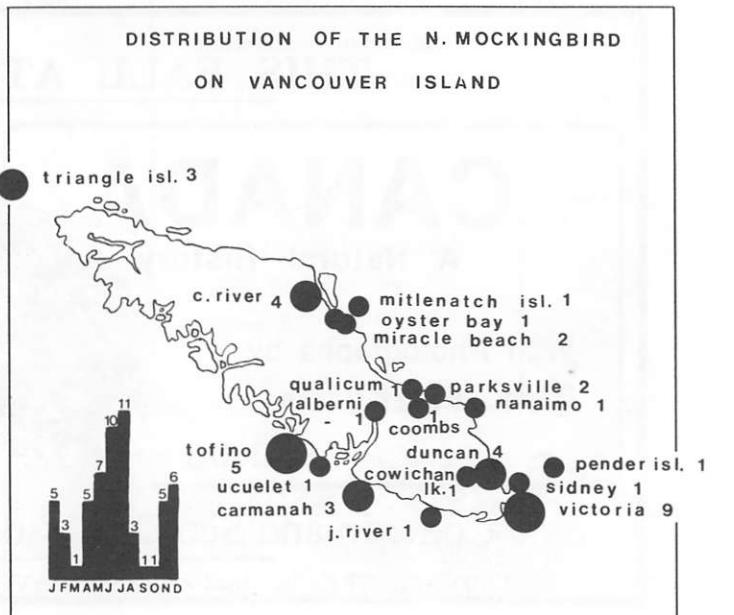
The first Northern Mockingbird was recorded on Vancouver Island at Port Alberni on June 7, 1931. Since that first sighting there have been 42 more sightings, in 1940, 48, 50, 59, 60, 67, 69-78 and 81-88. Peak years for observations were from 1974 to 76, with eleven sightings. All have been of single individuals.

There is one unsuccessful nesting record from Ten Mile Point, Saanich (June 27 to July 7, 1967).

Most records of the Northern Mockingbird occur on the southeast coastal lowlands, where mockingbird habitat is best represented: rural thickets, woodland edges, towns and suburbs. There are, however, ten records for the west coast and three for Triangle Island. The number of individual sightings of Mockingbirds may correspond with numbers of observers present rather than birds present.

The seasonal status is represented by the graph on the map. It shows two peaks. There is a winter peak from November to February, when many individuals have overwintered. The longest stay has been in Colwood, with one there from November 1974 through May 2, 1975. Most Northern Mockingbirds, however, are found on Vancouver Island in April through July, peaking in June to July with half of all occurrences. Summer stays are usually very brief.

Recent records would indicate that at least one Northern Mockingbird passes through southern Vancouver Island annually in June-July.



## Point Roberts Heron Colony Threatened

The Point Roberts Great Blue Heron colony, the largest and most important heron colony in British Columbia and adjacent Washington, is threatened by residential development.

With over 650 birds and 338 nests, this crucial parent colony provides recruits and genetic variability for many smaller, less stable Pacific Northwest rookeries. Point Roberts is the last site in the southeastern Georgia Strait with a stand of trees capable of housing such numbers of these huge birds, and the

colony thrives because of plentiful nearby food sources and the absence of environmental contamination.

Urbanization has eliminated most local heron populations, and if this colony is destroyed, numbers in the entire Northwest are projected to decline dramatically. To speak for the herons, please write to:

Council-at-Large  
Whatcom County Council  
311 Grand Avenue  
Bellingham, Wash. 98225,

expressing support for the Department of Wildlife's proposed acquisition of the nest site and a scientifically recommended 660-foot radial buffer zone around it. Send copies of your letter to:

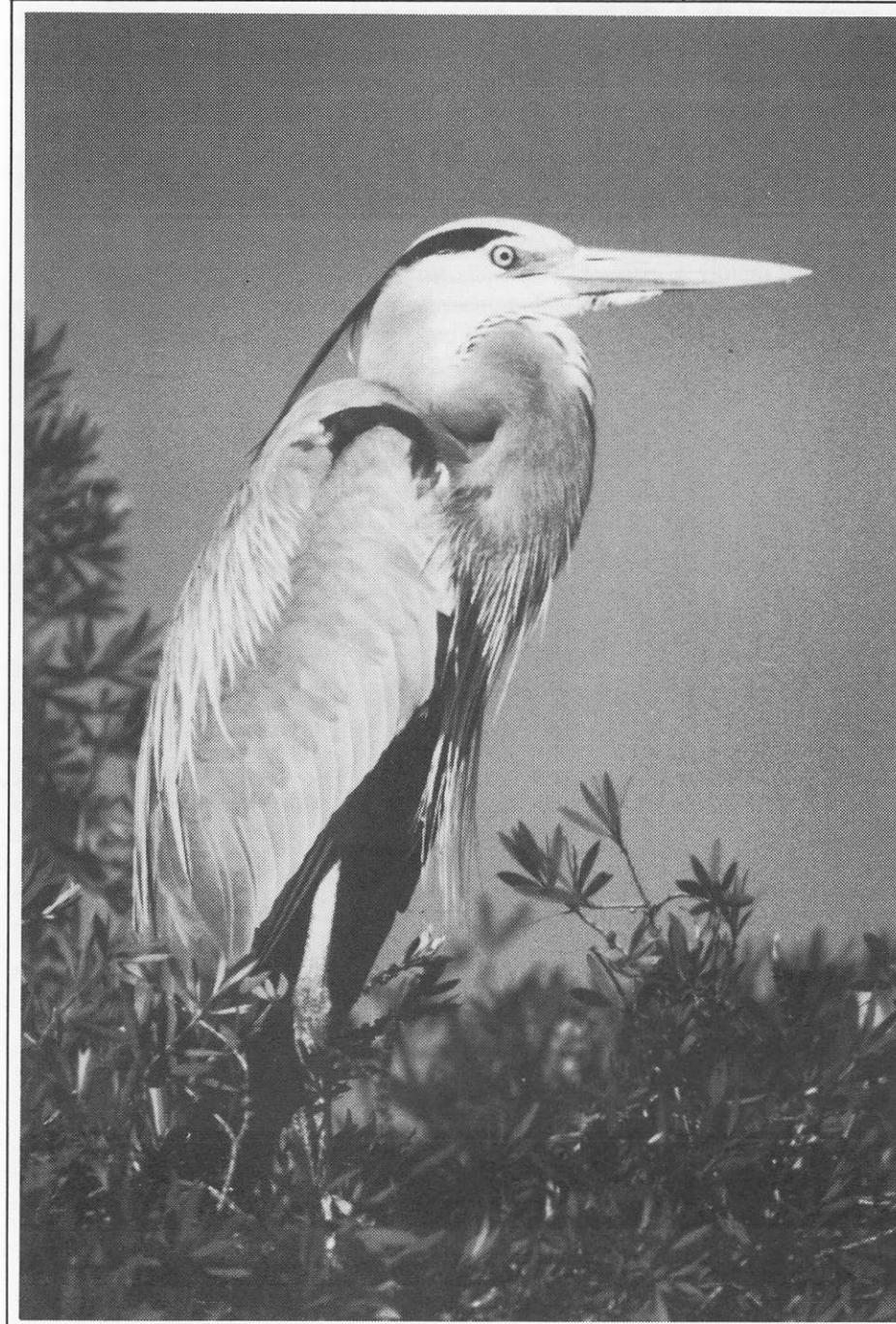
Mr. Curt Smitch, Director  
Washington Wildlife Dept.  
600 North Capital Way  
Olympia, Wash. 98054,

Senator Ann Anderson  
2718 McCloud Avenue  
Bellingham, Wash. 98226,

Congressman Al Swift  
Federal Building  
West 104 Magnolia  
Bellingham, Wash. 98225,  
and

Pt. Robert Heron  
Preservation Ctee.  
P.O. Box 1441, Station A  
Delta, B.C. V4M 3Y8.

The herons of Point Roberts thank you.



## New Location for General Meetings

By Betty Kennedy

We are moving! At the general meeting held at the Newcombe Auditorium on Tuesday, September 13, 1988, the members present voted unanimously in favour of moving the general meetings from the Newcombe to the University of Victoria. Starting in November, those meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month will be at UVic.

Your Board and I think most members have valued our long association with the Museum. So many members of the Museum staff have been active in the VNHS and have given generously of their time and expertise. We will always need their help, and hope that they will continue to be interested in the Society.

The move has become advisable mainly for two reasons. First, many members have had considerable difficulty in finding parking without paying the substantial fee. Second, the costs of holding our meetings at the Newcombe have escalated rapidly

over the past year and now stand at approximately \$120.00 for each meeting: a total of \$1000 for the year. As you know, we have been trying to keep our membership fees as low as possible, and our budget simply will not cover this amount. The cost at the University will be much lower (\$200 for the year), and ample free parking is available in the evening.

Please see the map in this issue showing the University buildings and parking lots. Upcoming Programs give details regarding the time and place of the meetings. The University is served by buses 4, and 14 and 26 in the evenings.

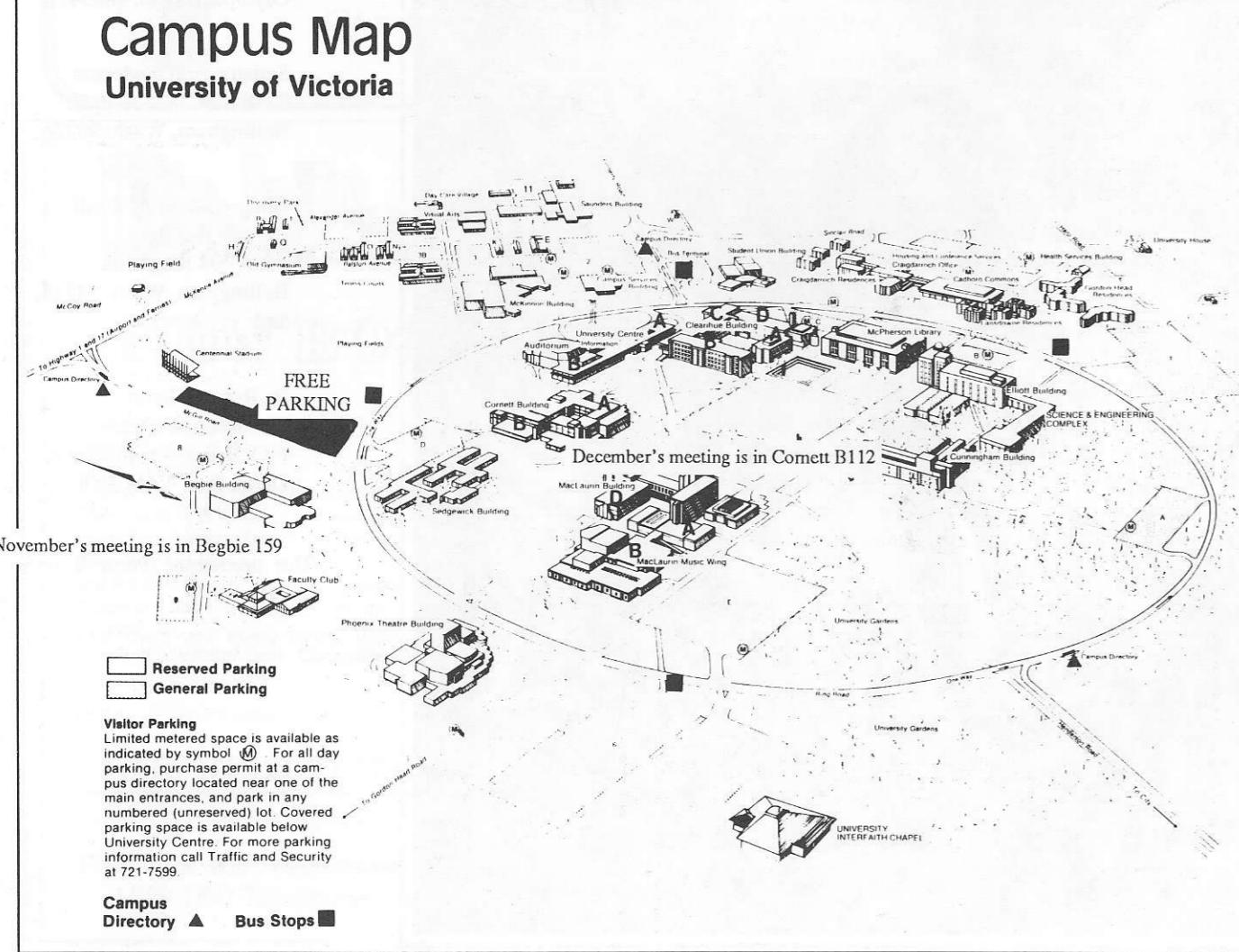
We look forward to seeing you at the University and to welcoming an increased number of students. If you need transportation, please call Mary Richmond, 385-0504, or Betty Kennedy, 592-2070, and we will try to arrange it for you.

The Board would like to thank the President of the University, Dr. H.E. Petch, for the interest he has taken in the Society and for making it possible for us to meet at UVic.

November's meeting is in Begbie 159

December's meeting is in Comett B112

January to April meetings are in Begbie 159.



## Some Notes from Davey

By A. R. Davidson

### Save the Birds

We have in our possession a book entitled *Adventures in Cooking*, issued by the B.C. Women's Institute in 1958.

Under the heading "Wild Fowl and Game" are listed Snow Birds, Mud Hens, and Plover. I presume snow birds means Juncos. Mud Hens baffle me as we do not have moorhens here, but maybe Coot are meant. Plover would cover the shore birds. Hard to believe, isn't it?

Also on the list are instruction on how to prepare porcupine and bear for the table. The dear ladies surely had a wide range; the word "adventure" is appropriate.

### A Drop in Numbers

I have been keeping bird records since 1954 and some of the changes in bird numbers are remarkable and somewhat alarming.

About this time of year (August and September) the Phalarope went through, with masses of them stretching for about a hundred yards, probably about a thousand birds. I found one entry in my tattered bird record book of 2000 - plus or minus - at Hood Lane. Also around this time of year were the Pipits. Our estimate of some of these flocks was a minimum of a thousand. Island View Beach was always a favorite territory for their migration, and we have records of a thousand or more there, while flocks of five thousand or so were not uncommon.

Take the Brant, for instance. One day in the spring of 1942 or 1943 Mr. Theed Pearse took me with him to count Brant from Comox Spit to North Qualicum. There were around 30,000.

It seems to me that all the shore birds have suffered. I have a record of 10,000 Dunlin on Royston Beach. The flocks of 100 and more Black Turnstone and Surfbirds were quite regular.

Ground feeding birds are also in trouble - Meadowlarks, Blackbirds and Skylarks - while the Starlings have thrived in spite of agricultural sprays. I could go on but will refrain. It is my opinion that lack of insects such as aphids, gnats and ladybird beetles is part of the reason why birds are so many fewer.

### Our Reward

We sowed a bed of curly kale;  
Twas but a feast for hungry quail.

Our peas shot bravely through the ground,  
But failed to grow with birds around.

The pheasants came one dewy morn  
And pulled our pretty seedling corn.

The robins swooped with cries of glee  
And robbed our only cherry tree.

A saucy coon sneaked in to steal;  
Our bantam rooster was his meal.

And yet 'tis very plain to see,  
Those things must eat, like you and me.

Small is our loss; we shall not want;  
Grub can be bought, but wildlife can't.

James Berry

\*James Berry was an active Society member way back. I found this piece while looking for something else. We loved him and all he stood for, and thought this sample of his versified philosophy might be acceptable. It was in *The Naturalist* of October 1961.

 **BOOKS FOR BRITISH COLUMBIANS**

ROYAL BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUM PUBLICATIONS:

\*CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATURAL SCIENCE  
\*CULTURAL RECOVERY PAPERS  
\*HERITAGE RECORDS

We carry Ministry publications on Forestry, Mining, Environment and many others. As well we are the exclusive distributor of all B.C. legislation.

All this and much more is available in our new and attractive store located right downtown.

For the convenience of our customers, orders for publications are accepted by telephone or mail with pre-payment by cheque, VISA or MASTERCARD.

Stop in today and browse through our large selection of titles. Call or write for our free catalogue.

 **Crown Publications Inc.**  
(formerly the Queen's Printer Publications)  
546 Yates Street Victoria, B.C., V8W 1K8  
TEL: (604) 386-4636 FAX: (604) 386-0221

## Beneficiaries of Harold's Hospitality

By Katherine Sherman

We all know about Harold Pollock's Bluebird nesting boxes. He is too modest to tell us the exact number of boxes he has made and erected, but it stands well over 100.

In 1986 I was presented with one of these boxes, which was duly erected in a leafy environment above the carport. I hardly hoped for Bluebirds, but was gratified when the following spring a pair of Bewick's Wrens tenanted the box and successfully raised a family. The box was cleaned out in the fall, but although the Bewick's were all around again this spring they ignored the box.

Then one day I noticed wasps going in and out. I let them be, hoping that they would clean up on my black aphids. Glancing at the box a little later, I noticed it was overflowing, and before long the box was completely enveloped in a thick blanket of wasp "paper," except for the slot which had become a small round hole. A week or so later the blanket began to disintegrate, and by mid-September it had reverted to being a typical Pollock Bluebird box with no sign of life. On opening the box we found five strata of finely constructed honeycomb.

I am looking forward to next year's tenants.



Harold Pollock

After years in the making it's time has come — See back cover.

## Birding on Triangle Mountain

By Jeff Gaskin

After living for nearly 10 years on this mountain, I feel it is necessary to write a few words about my experiences birdwatching in this part of the country.

It all began in 1977 when I was just a young lad and my family bought a house on Fulton Road, near the top of Triangle Mountain. I quickly made myself familiar with the many birds resident in that area.

Triangle Mountain is in Colwood. It is that piece of land bordered by Sooke Road, Happy Valley Road, Latoria Road and Wishart Road.

I will not discuss all the species of birds that one can find here but only the ones that have been most interesting to me.

All eight species of the common warblers may be found here, with Townsend's and Orange-crowned being the most common. On good days a birder could probably find as many as 25 to 30 of both species during the spring migrations. Yellow-rumped, MacGillivray's and Wilson's are also quite common but in lesser numbers, while Yellow and Black-throated Gray are very uncommon, since suitable habitat for these birds just isn't there. Common Yellow-throated may be found in a couple of swampy areas along Latoria Road.

I have encountered all four species of Vireos at this elevation, with Warbling Vireo being the most common. As many as a dozen Warbling Vireos may be spotted in lush green alder trees along Wishart, Latoria and Walfred Roads. Solitary Vireos can be generally found in the many Douglas Firs along Walfred, with 3 or 4 pairs usually present. Hutton's Vireo is uncommon, while Red-eyed Vireo is very rare.

Of all the thrushes that can be found here, perhaps the most sought after is the Townsend's Solitaire. I have spotted at least one solitaire in every year from 1983 to 1985 and again in 1987. You really have to look to find one, since they are not always present, and they usually can be found only in ones and twos.

Perhaps the best bird I ever located at Triangle Mountain was the Northern Water Thrush. It proved to be only the third record for southern Vancouver Island, and was located at a small pond at the corner of Fulton Road and Sunheights Drive, which is always a hot spot for warblers during the fall migration.

Other birds that I'm sure all birders would be interested in seeing when visiting Triangle Mountain include: Western Tanager, which can be looked for in both conifers and deciduous trees along Latoria and Walfred Roads; Olive-sided Flycatchers, in dead trees along Cuaulta Crescent; Blue Grouse, which can generally be heard hooting not far from the pond where I saw the Northern Water Thrush; and a pair of Anna's Hummingbirds which have been visiting a feeder on Betula Place for the past five years.

I would have to say that a visit to Triangle Mountain, especially during the spring migration, is very worthwhile.

## The Wind and the Tree

By Tom Williams, Aged 9

*There once was a tree. This tree lived in a forest.  
He had a friend named the wind. The wind was  
very strong and so was the tree. They both in  
their own way provided many things.*

*Many of the tree's friends were dying because  
the loggers cut the trees down. But people  
need the trees alive, because they need them  
to breathe. And the animals and insects  
have homes in trees.*

*So one day the wind said,  
"Since this is happening, we must stop it."  
The next day the loggers came, but in the forest  
all the living creatures made the wilderness sing.  
When the loggers heard what wind and trees can do,  
they stopped.*

**EXCLUSIVE**

**DAVID SKILLAN'S AFRICAN WILDLIFE SAFARIS**

**KENYA SAFARI \$4875.00 per person**

**Departures: OCT. 2, 1989 & JAN. 1, 1990**  
**22 exciting days**

**KENYA/TANZANIA SAFARI \$4985.00 per person**

**Departure: FEB. 4, 1990**

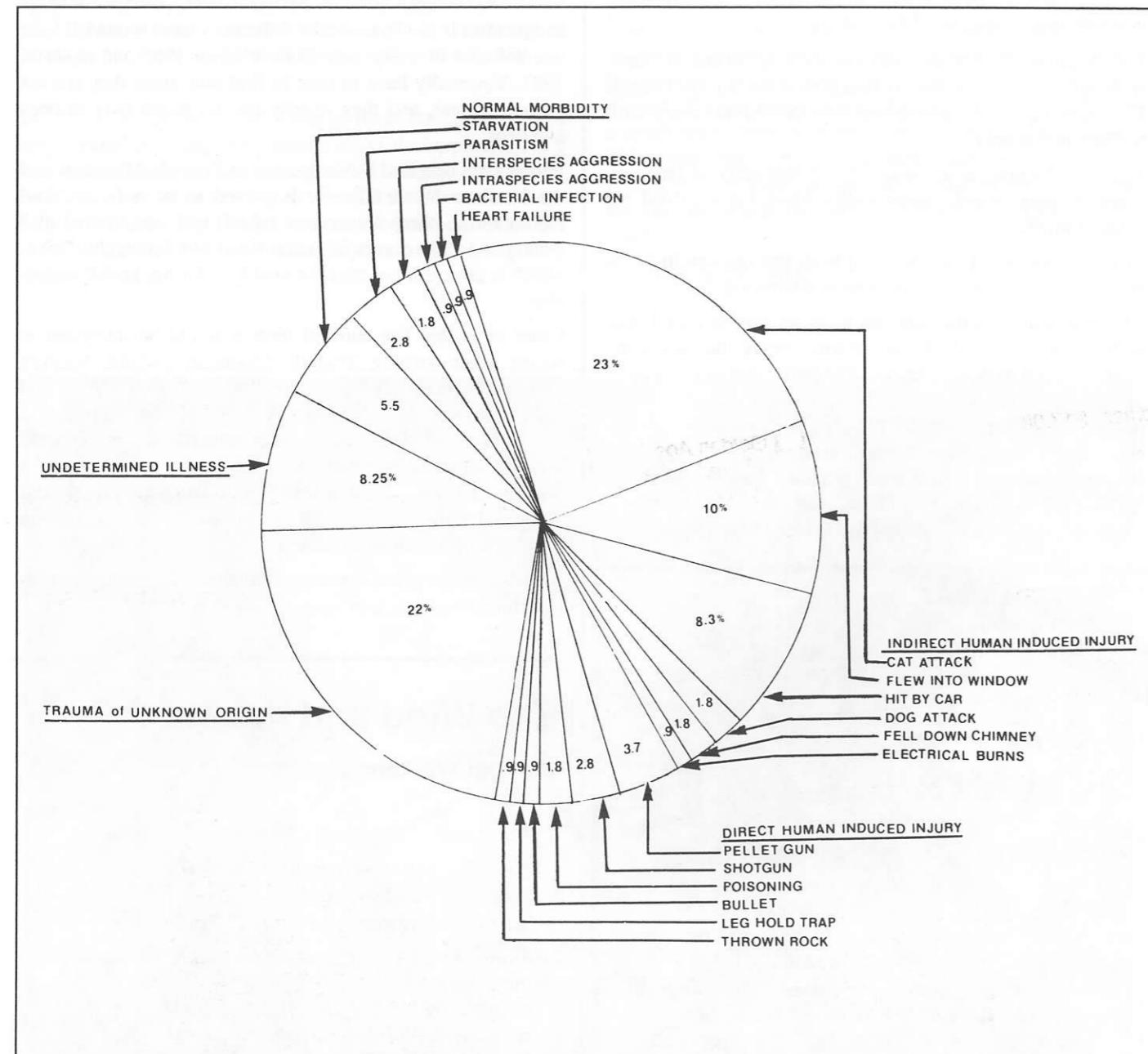
Our first class, fully escorted Wildlife Safaris include 'Close-ups' of Big Game and exotic birdlife; encounters with colourful friendly people in a superb climate with magnificent scenery, sumptuous meals and some of the finest lodges and hotels in Africa — an exceptionally rewarding and memorable tour personally escorted by safari specialist and former resident of East Africa, David Skillan.

**SKILLAN'S TOURS & SAFARIS**  
**181, WEST BROADWAY VANCOUVER, B.C.**  
**TEL: (604) 879-9377**  
*"The Finest Tours & Safaris"*

# Analysis of Wildlife Admissions into a Veterinary Hospital

By Ken Langelier

Reprinted from the *British Columbia Medical Association Wildlife Veterinary Report Vol. 1 No. 1, Spring 1988.*



By keeping records of wildlife admissions, information regarding success with medical and surgical treatment of wildlife can be derived. The above graph depicts a breakdown of reasons wildlife are admitted into a veterinary hospital. The graph represents 120 admissions in a 9 1/2 month period from January to October 1987. The graph does not include "healthy" animals, fledglings and unweaned animals, or dead animals presented for necropsy.

Admissions have been grouped into five major categories including normal morbidity (i.e. natural causes), indirect and direct human-induced injury, trauma of unknown origin, and undetermined illness. Normal morbidity is represented by starvation, parasitism, inter- and intraspecies aggression, infection and heart failure. Starvation appeared most commonly in fledglings and immature top predators such as eagles, herons and

Veterinary - Continued from page 14

owls. Parasitism often overlapped starvation. For example, a heavy mite infestation may cause debilitation leading to starvation. Other causes of parasitism were more straight-forward, such as severe lungworm in harbour seals. Intraspecies aggression includes animals defending territory or battling over potential mates. Interspecies aggression includes predator-prey relationships. Other instances of normal morbidity include bacterial infection and cardiac disease.

Indirect human-induced injury includes unintentional injury to wildlife. Cat attacks accounted for almost 1/4 of all wildlife admissions. Educating the cats' owners can help decrease this. Cats which are known for hunting can have double bells hung from their collars (a single bell is less effective to warn birds). If there is a nest box or a nest in a tree, metal or plastic cones below it will prevent cats (and raccoons) from climbing up to the nest.

One client brought in several birds his cat had brought home, so he decided to follow it one day. The cat walked over to his neighbor's bird feeder and hid underneath it. When he heard a bird in the feeder, he would leap out and grab it. The simple remedy was to raise the bird feeder and eliminate the hiding place.

Flying into windows is another frequent cause of injury. Prevention can be achieved with the use of a hawk or falcon silhouette in windows that are a problem, and by keeping bird feeders, especially hummingbird feeders, away from window.

Being hit by a car is the cause of 8.3% of injuries. Many of these are birds of prey that are scavenging on road kills. Some

are rabbits and deer that are blinded by car lights at night. Small birds that are hit by cars are often the tail end of a flock that make a sudden dash across the road. One American study found that 6% of people driving will actually swerve out of their way to hit small wildlife on the road.

A northern flicker was hit by a car and admitted with severe head injuries. The bird's head was directed vertically upwards and the eyes showed a continuous nystagmus. The flicker was treated with dexamethasone and tube fed. One week later the flicker was able to eat on its own but was unable to fly. Loss of flight despite the absence of clinical or radiological reasons is common. Some birds regain the ability to fly and others do not, depending on the degree of neurological damage. Over a period of a month the flicker slowly regained its flight and was eventually moved to a flight cage. When it was felt that the flicker could fly adequately, the cage door was left open and food was left in the cage. The bird left but, interestingly, returned 5 days later. The flicker, realizing a good food source, stayed inside the cage another five days, even though the door was left wide open.

Dog attacks on wildlife are less frequent than cat attacks, dogs being less adept at solitary hunting. Mammals such as raccoons and rabbits are more commonly injured than are birds.

Screech owls, starlings and pigeons are the species that fall down chimneys most commonly.

Gulls, crows and raptors are most likely to be brought in with electrical burns from power lines.

Veterinary - Continued page 16



The author, Dr. Langelier treating Bald Eagles found suffering from barbiturate poisoning last January near Nanaimo.

John Nolan

With man's encroachment on nature, a clash with wildlife is inevitable. Intentional human-induced injury is a frequent occurrence. Pellet gun injuries often involve songbirds, crows and gulls. Many injuries involve severe tissue damage, and are of a considerable duration before presentation. Euthanasia is common. Proper supervision and education of children in the use of pellet guns is essential.

*One American study found 6% of people driving will actually swerve out of their way to hit small wildlife on the road."*

Raptors seem to be common targets for shootings because they are large impressive targets.

Crows and gulls are often shot or trapped because they have become pests. One crow was obviously the target of a lot of hatred. After being trapped in a leg-hold trap, its leg was badly fractured and haemorrhaging. A plastic shopping bag was then tied around its neck and it was hung up in a tree to die a slow death. The leg was amputated and the crow was released.

Poisoning is often seen from intentional control of crows and pigeons, or secondarily, such as lead shot poisoning in waterfowl.

Trauma of unknown origin refers to the trauma case where the cause of injury could not be determined.

Illness of undetermined origin includes animals dying after presentation, but with no obvious gross post mortem lesions. Some have obvious pathology but one could not confidently consider it to be the cause of death.

With the majority of wildlife admissions being directly or indirectly caused by man, veterinarians and wildlife rehabilitators are constantly trying to correct injustices against wildlife. Public education, law enforcement, and identifying problem areas may help to decrease the numbers of cases presented.

\* Anyone interested in helping with wildlife rehabilitation or wishing to join the Wildlife Veterinary Association should contact: Dr. Ken Langelier, Veterinary Wildlife Report, Site 60, C-19, R.R. #2, Lantzville, B.C. V0R 2H0.

**VICTORIA  
Christmas  
Bird Count**  
contact Mike McGrenere for more information 658-8624

**precise color processors ltd.**  
747 DISCOVERY ST. VICTORIA, B.C. V8T 1H1 385-5512  
Supplying Quality Photofinishing

Seasons Greetings From  
all our staff to our customers

New Ltd. Edition Serigraph entitled "Keepers of the Lake"  
by Artist Rick Beaver

**MIDLAND  
DOHERTY**

Compliments of the Season  
H.R. (HARRY) LEPP  
Financial Advisor

**Midland Doherty Limited**  
Suite 300  
International House  
880 Douglas Street  
Victoria, B.C.  
Canada V8W 2B7

Bus.: (604) 388-6411  
Res.: (604) 477-9386

## PASSPORT ~ to COMFORT



Name: Marcel

Birthdate: Nov. 1, 1925

Birthplace: Duncan, B.C.

Eyes: Br. Hair: Silver

Destination: to the mailbox, evening strolls, to Victoria on Weekends.

### NOW!

'Victoria's Perfect  
Jacket'

**GORE-TEX**

Many styles, colours &  
sizes for women & men



HILLSIDE SHOPPING CENTRE  
592-7429  
MAYFAIR SHOPPING CENTRE  
384-2052

## THE NATURALIST'S GUIDE TO THE VICTORIA REGION

Edited, with Contributions by  
**Jim Weston & David Stirling**  
Sponsored by  
**VICTORIA NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Designed to assist both residents and visitors in exploring our area, this 6" x 9", 200-page guide includes field stop descriptions, over 160 black and white photographs emphasizing habitats, and 28 full-colour photographs on the deluxe, double soft cover.

The first printing will be limited, so reserve your copies now at the V.N.H.S. members' price — \$10.50. Add \$1.25 per copy for shipping, or pick up your copies at the General Meeting in The Newcombe.

Send orders to: **Naturalists' Guide**  
Victoria Natural History Society  
P.O. Box 5220, Stn. B  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8R 6N4

### The Siskin

On May 25th, walking by Thetis Lake, I spied a Siskin on a shady portion of the partly-sunlit pavement. I was eight metres from the bird. I could see it was carrying nesting material in its beak, when it flew into the brush. About 100 meters further along the trail I met a similar bird. I approached it slowly until I was within 4 metres. It watched me with one eye, giving me a view of its profile and I observed it intently after looking at my watch: Exactly 11:00 a.m. After a long time I heard a jogger approaching at my back. Unfortunately the bird flew as the jogger passed. It was 11:07. I had to wonder how long we might have watched each other if that jogger had not arrived?

Alf Porcher

## Upcoming Programs

Please meet at the location indicated for each trip. For field trips **BRING A LUNCH** and be equipped for changes in the weather. Always phone the rate bird alert: 592-3381 the week before a trip you plan to take in order to obtain full particulars or details about changes (sometimes unavoidable) that have been made. On VNHS trips, participants usually pool vehicles to reduce parking problems and costs. A considerable fuel bill can be run up on a trip, consuming 5 to 10 cents a km. The Board suggests that these costs be shared with the driver. Contact Lyndis Davis at 477-9952 if you want to borrow the Society scope for a scheduled trip.

If you would like to lead a field trip, or have an idea for a program or club activity, please phone Dave Fraser at 479-0016.

### NOVEMBER PROGRAMS

**Wednesday, November 2. Trumpet, Roar and Song.** Naturalists Alka and Vivek Talwar present the exotic wildlife, parks and sanctuaries of their native India in a slide lecture. Co-sponsored by the Newcombe Museum and UVic's Environmental Studies Program. \$3.00; FORM and students \$2.00; 12 and under \$1.00. Newcombe Theatre, RBCM, 7:30 p.m.

**Sunday, November 6. Shark Callers of Kontu.** For centuries people from the village of Kontu in Papua, New Guinea, went to sea in fragile outrigger canoes to call, trap and kill sharks by hand. This unforgettable film records these last few men who still understand the magic of shark-calling. Newcombe Theatre, RBCM, 2 p.m. \$2.00; FORM \$1.00; 12 and under free.

**Tuesday, November 8. Talking to Owls.** A slide show with tape recordings. Speaker, Dave Fraser. Meeting of the Victoria Natural History Society. Free - bring a friend. Begbie Building, Room 159, University of Victoria, 8 p.m. NOTE NEW LOCATION FOR VNHS MEETINGS.

**Saturday, November 12. Birding at Esquimalt Lagoon with Jeff Gaskin.** Meet at 9 a.m. at the Helmcken Park & Ride or 9:30 at the bridge at Esquimalt Lagoon.

**Tuesday, November 15. Botany Night - Fruits and Vegetables.** Ever see a fruit or a vegetable in a grocery store or in Chinatown that you've always wondered about? Well, grab one and bring it along for this interesting night of learning about unusual fruits and vegetables. Adolf and Oluna Ceska will try to tell you what it is, where it is from and how it

is prepared. Meet at the front doors of the Royal B.C. Museum exhibit building at 7:30. Leaders Adolf and Oluna Ceska. All welcome; come along and bring a friend - and a vegetable if you like!

**Saturday, November 19. Field Trip to see Spawning Salmon, with Alex Peden.** Preregister by phoning 387-5745. Cost \$10.00 (9:30 til noon.)

**Wednesday, November 23. Birder's Night at Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary Nature House.** Meet at 7:30 p.m. Sign up for the Christmas Bird Count at this meeting.

**Wednesday, November 23. Nature Conservation in the USSR.** A slide show of superb photography. Lithuanian naturalist Algida Knystautus dispels the myth that the USSR is a land of bleak steppe and cold pine forest. This program with the noted author, photographer and ornithologist will last about 1 1/2 hrs. \$5.00 FORM; 3.00 children 12 and under. Newcombe Theatre, RBCM.

### DECEMBER PROGRAMS

**NOTE THAT THERE ARE NO BOTANY OR BIRDERS NIGHTS IN DECEMBER.**

**Saturday, December 3. Gull Identification Trip.** Meet in front of the washroom at the Goldstream Provincial Park picnic ground. Christmas Bird Count area leaders are urged to attend, but trip is open to anyone who wants a few tips on gull i.d.

**Friday, December 9. The Voyager: One World, One Flight.** Through film and slides, copilots Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager relive their staggering mission that made aviation history - to be the first people to fly around the world without stopping or refueling. Reserve seat tickets from McPherson Box Office (386-6121), Hillside Ticket Centre, and the University Centre Box Office (721-8480). \$14.00; \$11.00 FORM, students and seniors; 8.00 children 12 and under. Newcombe Theatre, RBCM.

**Tuesday, December 13. The Biology of Dragons with Dr. C. Lindsey.** Come and hear this noted ichthyologist speak about his second area of expertise - the origins and taxonomy of dragons. Bring the whole family. VNHS meeting. Free. University of Victoria, Cornett Building B112. NOTE LOCATION OF THIS VNHS MEETING.

**Saturday, December 17. Victoria Christmas Bird Count.** Contact Mike McGrenere for more information, 658-8624.

**Saturday, December 17. Post Christmas Bird Count Gathering** at the Windsor Park Pavilion, Oak Bay. 6:30 for 7:00 p.m. dinner start. Warm up at this evening supper and find out how we did on this year's Christmas Bird Count. Ask your area leader for more details. Leaders are encouraged to attend or send in a report of area highlights. Let Anne Adamson at 598-1623 or Kay Goodall at 382-1935 know if you can contribute to the food; chili, casserole, goodies and salads are needed. Bring your own plate and cutlery. A great way to finish the day and start the Christmas Season.

### SOME UPCOMING PROGRAMS

**Tuesday, January 10. The Wildlife Photography of Ken Toy.** Come and see some of the photographs of National Geographic photographer Ken Toy, and listen to some of his experiences in photographing wildlife around the world. VNHS meeting, 8:00 p.m. Begbie Building, University of Victoria, Room 159. Free.

**Saturday, January 21. Winter Annuals and Herbaceous Perennials.** Botany field trip with Bob Ogilvie. Meet at the parking lot at Cattle Point at 10:00 a.m.

**Tuesday, February 7. VNHS Annual Banquet.** Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan will speak on Shipboard Encounters with Marine Mammals. Contact Dorothy McKaan for information on tickets (592-1192). If you are looking for a Christmas present for a nature lover or a whale enthusiast, how about a dinner out? Note that the program is on the first Tuesday of February instead of the second, which avoids Valentine's Day conflicts.

## Welcome to New Members

Aug. 2	Audrey Fawcett, of Wellington Avenue. Interested in Birding.
Aug. 2	Jean Guthrie, of Moss Street. Interested in Birding.
Aug. 3	Mrs. Joan South, of Ashley Road. Her interests are general (especially plants.) She is willing to volunteer for one-shot spot activities.
Aug. 3	Todd and Denise Manning, of Cedar Hill Road. Moved here from Alberta during the past year. They have enjoyed our meetings and slide/lecture presentations.
Aug. 4	Elizabeth Gray and Louise Waterhouse, of Parker Avenue. Both graduates in Biology.
Aug. 5	Anne Cooper, of May Street. Particular interest: Birding.
Aug. 5	Robert, Shelley and Benjamin Pack, of Saanichton. Wildlife artist and enthusiasts. Also interested in Birding group.
Aug. 5	Agnes Lynn, of Woodhaven Terrace.
Aug. 5	Jo Hewlett, of Rockland Avenue
Aug. 8	J. Howard Standing, of Malahat. Interested in Birds of Prey.
Aug. 11	Brenda Lee Warner, of Brentwood Bay. Particular interest: Bird watching.
Aug. 23	Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Ferguson, of Houlihan Court.
Aug. 28	Lorna Green, of Faircliff Lane. Interested in birding.
Sep. 2	Mary Stewart, of Blanshard Street. She recently moved back to Victoria.
Sep. 6	Warren and Renee Sweeney, of Blair Avenue. Interested in Birding, Nature walks, and marine exploration.
Sep. 6	Dr. and Mrs. Adolf Ceska. Welcome back!
Sep. 6	Aileen Larsen, of Sooke Lake Road.
Sep. 18	Maarten, Nadine, Trevor and Troy Schaddelee, of Vantreight Drive. Interested in Whales and Forests.
Sep. 28	Dr. C.L. Alton North, of Dallas Road. Particular interest: Birding.
Sep. 28	Margaret Gillard, of Del Monte Avenue. Particular interest: Birding.
Sep. 28	Dolena MacCuish, of Interurban Road. Particular interest: Birding.
Sep. 28	Gordon and Jean Devey, of Welch Road. Interest general at this time.
Sep. 28	Brian Baker, of Shakespeare Street. Interests: Birding, Photography, Bird Carving.

### CLASSIFIED

is available for V.N.H.S. Members at \$5 per ad. Write your own ad — it will appear exactly as you submit it. Text only (no graphics or photos).

Limit 35 words.

**Common or Rare Used Books:** all titles of interest to naturalists. We find the book — you name the price. Call 474-6227 or write **The Wells**, 958 Page Ave., Victoria, V9B 2M6.

**FOR SALE:** Bushnell scope, 2 lenses, zoom 20-45X, 20X; Tripod; \$300.00. 592-2673

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

Anne Cooper  
#3 - 1120 May Street  
VICTORIA, B C V8V 2S5

---

# The Birds of British Columbia

---

**Volume I, Parts 1 and 2: Introduction, Ornithological History,  
The Environment and Species Accounts—Loons through Woodpeckers**

by R. WAYNE CAMPBELL, NEIL K. DAWE, IAN McTAGGART-COWAN, JOHN M. COOPER,  
GARY W. KAISER, and MICHAEL C. E. McNALL

*Published by the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, B.C.,  
Canada in cooperation with the Canadian Wildlife Service*

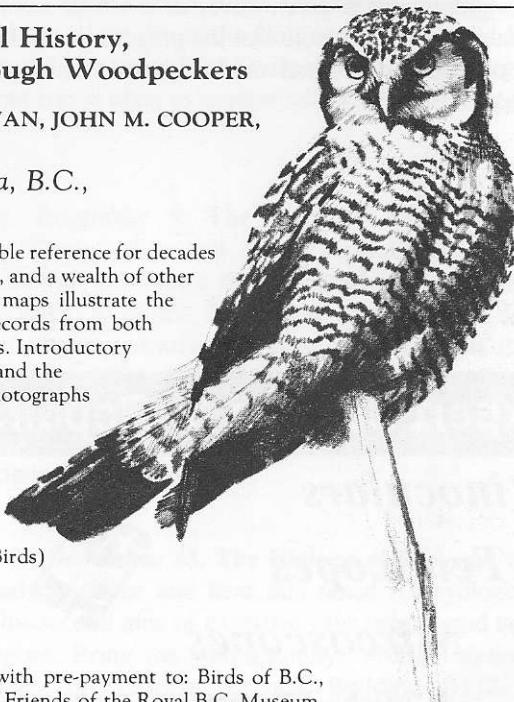
This long-awaited treatment of the Province's birds will be the standard, indispensable reference for decades to come. Seasonal status, habitat preferences, migration patterns, breeding biology, and a wealth of other life-history information are discussed for the 266 species recorded. Coloured maps illustrate the distribution and status of each species. The authors examined over a million records from both historical and modern sources, representing the efforts of over 4,000 contributors. Introductory chapters outline ornithological history, conservation and management activities, and the environment. Included are hundreds of tables, graphs, maps, and black-and-white photographs of birds and their habitats.

**PRE-PUBLICATION SALE**

In order to finance the printing of this large and important work, a pre-publication sale is underway. Until June 30, 1989, the two hardcover books comprising Volume I will be sold at \$49.95 for the set; after this, the price will be \$59.95. Publication will be in mid-1989. Volume II (Perching Birds) is scheduled for publication in mid-1992; the price is yet to be determined.

Those ordering at the pre-publication price will receive, by return mail, a card describing the book. This card acts as a receipt and can also serve as an attractive announcement to the recipient if the books are to be given as gifts. As soon as the books are printed, they will be shipped to the purchaser.

Volume I, two book set, approx. 1000 pages in total;  
illustrated, 9"×12" hardcover \$49.95 CAN pre-publication.



Please send orders with pre-payment to: Birds of B.C.,  
c/o Jennifer Buscall, Friends of the Royal B.C. Museum,  
675 Belleville St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8V 1X4.  
Include \$2.00 for handling. VISA and Mastercard are welcome;  
please include number and expiry date.