



The Victoria NATURALIST

MAY
JUNE
1996
VOL 52.6

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 © 1996 as credited.
 ISSN 0049—612X Printed in Canada

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Desktop Publishing: Frances Hunter, 479-1956
Distribution: Lyndis Davis, Connie Hawley, Tom Gillespie
Printing: Fotoprint, 382-8218

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

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Regular	\$25.00	Golden Age	\$24.00
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Annual Subscription Rate, Victoria Naturalist \$17.00

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Deadline for next issue: May 27, 1996

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Guidelines for Submissions

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

VNHS MEMBERSHIP

For membership information and renewal, please contact Dodie Clark at 477-5158, or write to Membership Committee c/o The Victoria Natural History Society, Box 5220, Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4.

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OUR COVER AND BACK PAGE

The cover photograph is one of the White Easter Lily (*Erythronium oregonum*), by Doug Cowell, a photographer and writer with Beacon Hill Communications Group. Doug has previously had photos in *Canadian Wildlife*, the children's magazine *Wild* and *Beautiful British Columbia Magazine*.

Those participating in the *Big Day* contest on Sunday, May 26 may encounter one of several mouse species in the check list area, such as the one shown on our back cover. The drawing is by Phil Lambert who is also been the key person responsible for organizing the Marine Night activities for the Victoria Natural History Society.

Readers should note that most of the regular meetings of the VNHS are not held during the summer months. The Natural History Presentations are now finished but will continue again in September. The last Birders' Night and Marine Night meetings will be held in May but will return in September. Botany Night will be held in May and June before the summer break.



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H.A.T. Tricks

By Jan Garnett

Lots of enthusiastic things have been said about the *Hats Off For Habitat* concert, which took place February 24th at the Prospect Lake Community Hall. It was sold out several days beforehand and no bunch of performers *ever* had such a warm audience as attended that evening. Every laugh seemed to build on the last into a monumental good time. We should all be proud of the amount of talent and energy in our Victoria natural history arena, and those of us who organized the evening would like to thank the performers for giving everyone much more than their money's worth. The Hon. Andrew Petter's unforeseen and brave offer to sing (in spite of having a cold) and recite some animal-related poetry was another gift of the evening.

From the wonderful food for sale, all donated, to the well-stocked bar, to the absolutely incredible table centre-pieces, each one a beautiful representation of one of our local ecosystems, the volunteer effort was nothing short of inspirational. What a team! A friend summed it up for me when she was reminiscing about the concert and mused that she had never felt such a sense of community in her life. I think that was a shared reaction of most people who were there, raising the roof until well after midnight and then cleaning out the hall completely within half an hour.

The evening ended with an adaptation of the old song, *This Land is Your Land*, given a new set of words through another group effort and the aid of a number of government

and private E-mail facilities and fax machines. We thought that those of you who were unable to attend the concert might enjoy having a copy of the H.A.T. song. Try it out in the bathtub with a good beat. But there is no way you can imagine the way it was roared out that night, with the thrum of the double bass, six guitars, percussion and roughly two hundred voices!

Official recognition and thank-you's for organizing the evening, donating goods or services, and/or performing in the concert go to:

Bruce Whittington, Jan Garnett, Leah Ramsay, David Fraser, Rhonda Korol, Eric Lofroth, Claudia Copley, Darren Copley, Jason Jones, Bryon Thompson, Marilyn Lambert, Andrew MacDonald, Carolyn MacDonald, Maureen Funk, Kelly Ness, Colleen O'Brien, Lyndis Davis, Enid Lemon, Bill Howie, Suzanna Solecki, Robert Anderson, Susan Ellenton, Andy MacKinnon, Rick Kool, Mike Fenger, Sherry Kirkvold, Michael Shepard, Dean Solomon, Aziza Cooper, Syd Cannings, Liz Taylor, Hannah Nadel, Pat Thompson, Maureen Campbell, Andrew Petter, Phil Lambert, Rob Cannings, Cairo Coffee, Prospect Lake Community Association, Peninsula Country Market, Seaker Adventure Tours, Mark Nyhof, The Field Naturalist store, Lone Pine Books, Coastal Connections and Arenaria Research and Interpretation. Thanks also go out to everyone who pitched in with the cleanup or donated the food.



Hats Off For Habitat concert. Photo: Bruce Whittington

We're looking forward to the Arizona birding trip leaving April 26th, with the tour profit to go to H.A.T. Marilyn Lambert has organized this, and will be leading it along with David Stirling and Bruce Whittington.

Circle the last Sunday in May on your calendar because the next H.A.T. fundraiser will be taking place that day in the form of a Vertebratathon (a Birding Big Day that has evolved to include greater biodiversity). Look for further information from Darren Copley in this issue and get signed up for another great time for a good cause.

On the business end of things, H.A.T. is in the midst of the legal formative phase and looks forward to the day when the Board is in place, the Constitution registered and initiatives can officially begin. The Directors of the Victoria Natural History Society (VNHS) voted April 9th to approve the establishment of a related Foundation to house H.A.T. Formal registration of the name, and working through the details of the Constitution, are the next steps. It would be simpler and faster to establish H.A.T. as its own society but the committee feels that the long-term benefits of direct VNHS affiliation are worth the longer process. After it is established the Habitat Acquisition Trust Foundation will operate independently for the most part, the link with VNHS being through the appointment or approval of H.A.T. Directors.

The search for a logo, design of a brochure, and liaison with other community groups, is ongoing. H.A.T. Tricks will keep you posted of progress during the process.

HATS OFF TO BIODIVERSITY (To the tune of *This Land is Your Land*)

*This land is your land, this land is wild land
From the Oak Bay Islands, to the Gowlland Highlands
From Jordan River to Cabbage Island
HATs off to biodiversity*

*As we develop this tiny Island
Let's save some meadows and rocky highlands
Some ancient forest, filled with spring chorus
HATs off to biodiversity*

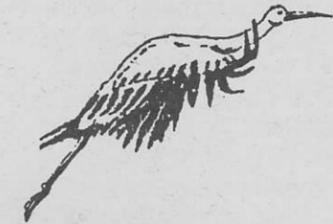
*In springtime's sun and gentle showers
We'll still have carpets of bright spring flowers
A sea of Camas, and waves of shooting stars
HATs off to biodiversity*

*For swans and ducks in flooded farmlands
For native dune grass in shifting beach sands
For salmon spawning in rivers to the sea
HATs off to biodiversity*

*So much has gone now, we know the story
We'll save the remnants of former glory
Cut back the broom and turn back the bulldozers
HATs off to biodiversity*

*As we went walking, we detected
A sign that told us "This land's protected"
Looks like our trust fund is really working
HATs off to biodiversity*

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Annual Reports

President's 1996 Annual General Meeting Report

Your VNHS Directors and committee members have been hard at work on a variety of projects over the past year. With so many projects and activities on the go, we all need to work together to keep all of these events successful. These individuals need and deserve our continued support and encouragement.

I would like to have a few moments to acknowledge the work of your individual board members: Tony Embleton's dedication to conservation and environmental issues has been revealed by his service as our Federation of British Columbia Naturalists representative — helping to keep us informed of province-wide environmental news. Dodie Clark has nicely organized and revitalized our Membership committee. Marilyn Lambert has done an excellent job coordinating field trip leaders, and events such as the Arizona birding trip. Bev Glover does a lot for our society with publicity; participating and manning a VNHS booth at a number of exhibits, trade shows, and conferences. Audrey Copping has organized the body of hard workers who make social events like the Christmas Bird Count post-count, the Annual Banquet, and our regular meetings a success. Mike Ryan has done a masterful job gathering interesting program speakers for our general natural history evenings. Jeff Stone, our Conservation Chair, brings pressing local conservation issues to the attention of board members, and is helping to shape the structure and format of the newly formed Habitat Acquisition Trust (H.A.T.). Wally Macgregor, our past-President, combines his experience and wisdom with humour and good sense in helping us come to decisions. My acknowledgement also goes out to our new treasurer Gordon Hart for taking on that important role. Last but not least, I wanted to emphasize and let you all know of a man who spends a lot of his time *behind* the scenes, practically running the Society single-handedly! Over the past two years Tom Gillespie has served as vice-president, but since last year he has also helped our society by keeping our finances afloat as we went through some difficult times without a treasurer, and of late has even served ably as our secretary at board meetings. Welcome to David Pearce and Hank vanderPol who have recently filled empty director's positions.

This past year saw many conservation goals fulfilled with the creation of H.A.T., and the recent "Hats off for Habitat" entertainment fund-raiser was a great success. A number of individuals should be recognized for their galvanizing role in the creation of H.A.T., namely Jan Garnett, Bruce Whittington, Leah Ramsay, David Fraser and Jeff Stone. Much remains to be done for H.A.T and other conservation efforts locally, and you are all urged to do your part to keep the environment to Greater Victoria viable both for the naturalist to enjoy and for nature itself to continue.

Swan Lake/Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary received \$4000 from the VNHS as part of an ongoing commitment to assist with their operations, in particular their young naturalist and education programs.

Once again, our society has provided many scholarships and bursaries through the University of Victoria and Camosun College. These awards included the Alice Hay, the Samuel Simcoe, and Freeman King scholarships to the University of Victoria, and a bursary for the environmental Engineering program at Camosun.

Gordon Devey our former treasurer was presented with the VNHS Distinguished Service Award for the past efforts with the financial state of the Society.

Our small army of social events helpers too often stand in the background avoiding recognition, and they deserve our thanks and appreciation. A great turnout and wonderful spread at the Annual Banquet and the coffee and tea we receive at each meeting is thanks to: Katie Dawson, Dodie Clark, Audrey Copping, Beth Chatwyn, Freda Woodsworth, Dorothy Anderson, and Joan Gowan.

Bryan Gates, with help from Bruce Whittington and Hank vanderPol, is to be thanked for the excellent work keeping the birding community informed with our Rare Bird Alert tape and monthly Birder's Night. David Pearce is to be acknowledged for the work he puts into coordination both the Spring and Christmas Bird Counts. Once again, Victoria held on to its position as the highest CBC in Canada with 148 species tallied (in spite of a quirky television host in tow!). In 1995, Andy Stewart of the Ministry of Environment with the help of other VNHS members began an interesting study of the nesting habits of our urban Cooper's Hawks.

Camas Day 1995 was once again a success celebrating wildflowers, Garry Oak meadow habitat, aboriginal customs and traditions, and other natural history topics at Beacon Hill Park. VNHS members Peggy Price, Helen Oldershaw and Connie Hawley are to be thanked for their hard work in co-organizing this event. The semi-annual Goldstream Art Show was a smashing success, with record attendance of over 15,000 visitors, and our thanks to the co-sponsor BC Parks and in particular the efforts of Leah Ramsay.

Adolph Ceska is to be congratulated for his continued work organizing botanical field trips and Botany Night. Phil Lambert is also to be applauded for his enthusiasm and efforts to create the new Marine Biology sub-group with many popular field trips and guest speakers. In a field rapidly gaining popularity, the monthly Butterfly Counts have been ably co-oriented by Jeff Gaskin from April to October. Lyndis Davis also helps out so much with VNHS publication sales.

Finally, Warren Drinnan, Dalia Hull, Pamela Thuringer and Lynton Burger are to be thanked for the excellent job

they do editing and preparing our *Victoria Naturalist* magazine. Frances Hunter is our new desktop publisher. We also acknowledge Robert Allington for his past six years as our publisher and wish him the best with the new projects he is working on.

I am proud to be associated with this organization and we have a lot to be thankful for but we also should not take any of it for granted. I thank you all for supporting our efforts to make the VNHS better and stronger. There remains much to be done and I know that with continued teamwork and camaraderie we can achieve so much more in the future.

David Allinson, *President*
March 12, 1996

Parks and Conservation Committee 1995 Annual Report

The Parks and Conservation Committee (PCC) provides a forum for VNHS members to exchange information about, and to collectively act upon, conservation issues in Greater Victoria.

The PCC meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at the Swan Lake Nature House. Members of the Committee bring their diverse backgrounds and information from a variety of sources to the table for discussion. From the meetings collective action may be taken. In many cases, action may be in the form of contacting (directly or by letter) government agencies about our concerns. In other cases, we may take on a larger project.

In the past year we have taken action on such diverse topics as:

- Blenkinsop Lake and the connection of the cycling route;
- Lack of regulation of recreation algae and seaweed harvest;
- Ineffectiveness of pleasure boat effluent discharge regulations;
- Greater Victoria Water District non-catchment lands.

Larger projects have included updating and computerizing our database of ecologically sensitive areas (as identified by members). From this database we distributed summary reports to all municipalities and to the CRD for their information and feedback.

Meetings are not for everyone. The PCC attracts others to participate in conservation activities through individual projects and through programs such as our Observer Program. The Observer Program involves over 40 individuals who regularly walk an area. If the observer identifies an environmental problem they or the PCC can seed a solution.

The coming year should be exciting and encouraging within the VNHS and within Greater Victoria. Major initiatives of the past year, such as the Habitat Acquisition

Trust (H.A.T.) of the VNHS, the Greenways Program of the Provincial Capital Commission, a local land stewardship program by Land for Nature of the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, and the Greenspaces strategy of the Capital Regional District, will start to make observable differences. And hopefully we will also see some positive conservation-oriented decisions made on local areas (e.g., Greater Victoria Water District non-catchment lands and Blenkinsop Lake).

I would like to thank all members of the Parks and Conservation Committee over the past year. Involvement, no matter how small, contributes to the committee, to the VNHS, and most importantly, to our environment. These members include: Doris Brix, Bev Bullen, Mike Carson, Mey Critchlow, Philip Critchlow, Brent Diakow, Tony Embleton, Tom Gillespie, Lynn Husted, Warren Lee, Wally Macgregor, Sheila Mosher, Colleen O'Brien, Cathy Reader and Jackie Wrinch.

I would like to thank Jan Garnett, Bruce Whittington, Leah Ramsey and all others involved with the Habitat Acquisition Trust. This fund will be an exciting new avenue for the VNHS.

I would also like to thank all the members of the Society who, as individuals, have contributed to helping conserve Victoria's natural history and who, by through membership support, have enabled the VNHS to have a prominent voice on conservation issues.

Respectively submitted,
Jeff Stone

Report of the Auditor to the Members

I have examined the Balance Sheet of the Victoria Natural History Society as at December 31, 1995 and the Statements of Income and Expenditure for the year ended on that date. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Directors of the Society. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements.

My examination included a general review of the accounting procedures and such tests of accounting records and other supporting evidence as I considered necessary in the circumstances.

In my opinion, these statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at December 31, 1995 and the results of its operations for the year ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Victoria, March 1 1996

J.B. Phillips, B. Comm.
(original letter is signed)

**Victoria Natural History Society
Balance Sheet as at December 31, 1995**

	General Account	Conservation Account	Scholarship Account	Total	Total
	1995	1995	1995	1995	1994
Assets					
Cash at bank	\$6,995			\$6,995	\$3,986
Term deposits	7,061	\$3,660	\$3,279	14,000	6,308
Mutual Fund investments		54,002		54,002	114,830
Market Value 1995	\$54,002				
Market Value 1994	\$47,098				
Accounts receivable	798			798	736
Inventory of publications	7,273			7,273	7,553
Long term investments		86,562	51,138	137,700	77,051
	\$22,127	\$144,224	\$54,417	\$220,768	\$210,464
Liabilities					
Accounts payable (Goldstream viewing tower)	\$7,863			\$7,863	\$7,382
memberships and subscriptions paid in advance	2,035			2,035	2,081
Scholarships unpaid for 1995			\$3,000	3,000	
Fund balances	12,229	\$144,224	51,417	207,870	201,001
Totals	\$22,127	\$144,224	\$54,417	\$220,768	\$210,464

It is the policy of the Society that:

- i) The General Account shall be self sustaining;
- ii) The Conservation and Scholarship Funds be maintained as Separate Funds;
- iii) Accounting shall be performed on an accrual basis;
- iv) Insofar as it is appropriate, the first charge on income shall be to provide for the protection of the capital of the Conservation and Scholarship Funds from erosion of value due to inflation during the year.

Approved on behalf of the Board of Directors
David Allinson *Director*
Gordon Hart *Director/Treasurer*

**Victoria Natural History Society
Statement of Income and Expenditures for the year ending December 31, 1995**

	1995	1994
GENERAL ACCOUNT		
Income		
Membership dues (balanced with prepaid dues)	\$13,794	\$13,564
Donations	547	
Publications (net of costs)	1,485	740
Government grant (for bird checklists)	1,200	
Interest on accounts	327	517
Miscellaneous (\$57 Banquet, \$325 Speaker's Fund, \$340 GST recoverable, \$150 duck signs)	872	
Totals	\$18,225	\$14,821
Expenditures		
"Naturalist" production & mailing	\$7,147	6,382
Meetings costs	181	250
Postage and office supplies	992	663
Affiliation fees	5,940	6,100
Telephone-bird alert & events tape	1,102	932
Miscellaneous (\$285 annual dues paid, \$50 refunds paid, \$25 filing fees, \$400 insurance, \$102 accounting fees, \$23 Publicity committee, \$102 Awards committee)	987	2,338
Totals	\$16,349	\$16,665
Excess of income over expenditure	\$1,876	(-\$1,844)
Funds on hand at beginning of year	10,353	12,197
Funds on hand at end of year	12,229	10,353
CONSERVATION FUND		
Income		
Interest	9.083	10,417
Expenditures		
Donation to Swan Lake Nature Center	4,000	2,500
Miscellaneous	369	856
Excess of income over expenditures	4,712	7,061
Funds on hand at beginning of year	139,510	132,449
Funds on hand at end of year	144,224	139,510
SCHOLARSHIP FUND		
Income		
Interest	3,329	3,488
Expenditures		
Scholarships and bursaries (\$3,000 still owing for 1995)	3,050	3,050
Excess of income over expenditure (after paying for 1995 scholarships)	279	438
Funds on hand at beginning of year	51,138	45,700
Funds on hand at end of year	51,417	51,138
HABITAT ACQUISITION TRUST FUND		
Income		
	0	
Expenditures		
	-271.20	
GOLDSTREAM VIEWING TOWER FUND		
Income		
Interest	481	
Expenditures		
	0	
Balance on hand at start of year	7,382	
Balance on hand at end of year	7,863	

Cape Flattery Hawk Watch

By David Pearce

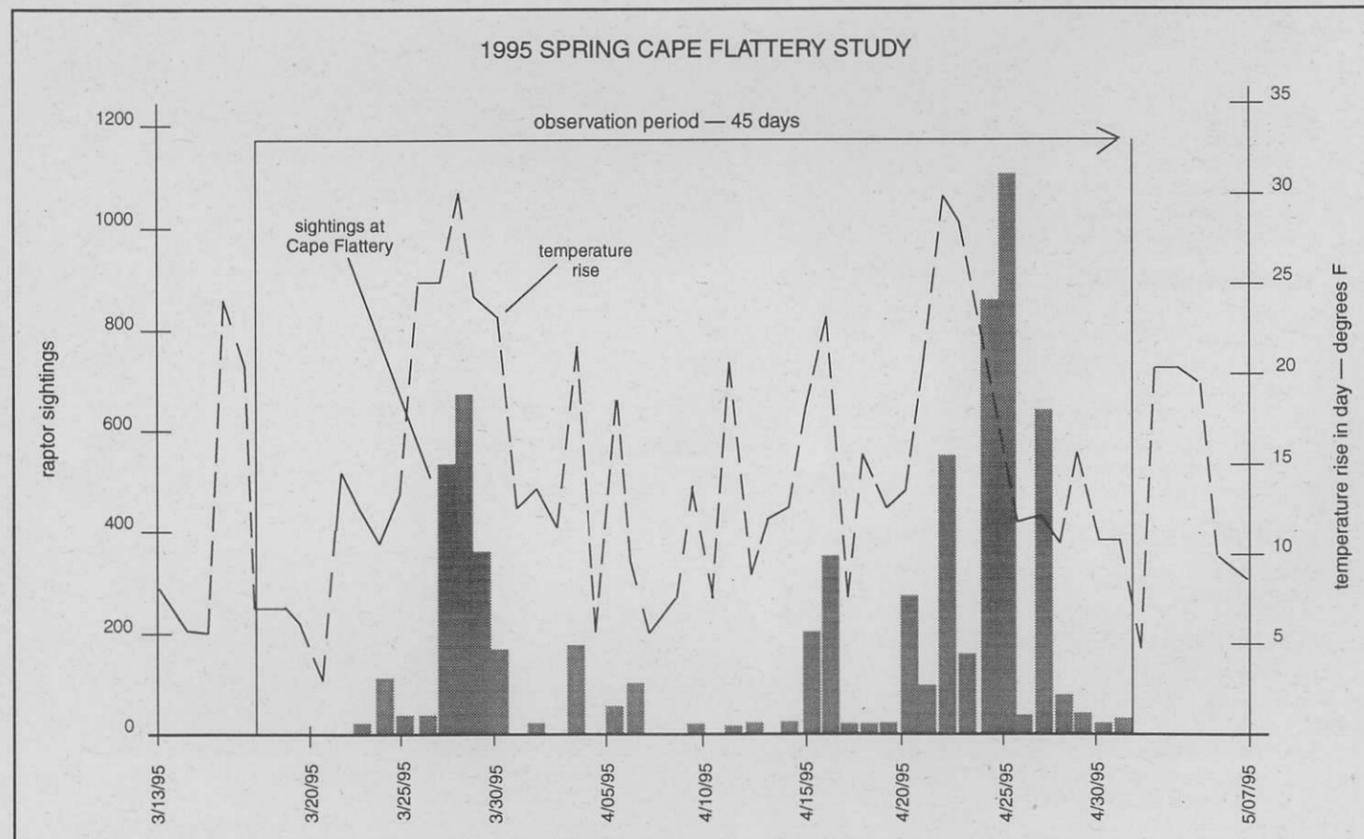
We have discovered, over the past several years, that there is a major raptor migration taking place in the autumn over the southernmost point of Vancouver Island at East Sooke Park and Rocky Point. However, very few raptors migrate north in the spring at these points. Instead, they seem to go north via Cape Flattery in the north west corner of Washington State. Looking at a map of these locations the obvious conclusion is that the raptors fly as far south as they can over land in the autumn before attempting to cross the Strait of Juan de Fuca and as far north as they can in the spring.

For the past several years a group of observers have been stationed at Cape Flattery between March 15 and May 3 watching the spring hawk migration take place. Since 1990 they have recorded over 8,000 raptors and flocks of over 500 Sandhill Cranes per year heading north. However, they are lacking data as to where the hawks come from and where they go.

The attached chart, provided by Virginia and Welden Clark, shows the number of sightings by day in 1995 and the relationship between the daily rise in temperature and the number of migrating raptors. As can be seen from the figures it is difficult to forecast when the peak migrations occur but

there are definitely two peaks, one in late March early April and another toward the end of April. Seventy percent of the raptors are Red-tailed Hawks and it has been discovered that the adults migrate north at the end of March and the immatures migrate at the end of April.

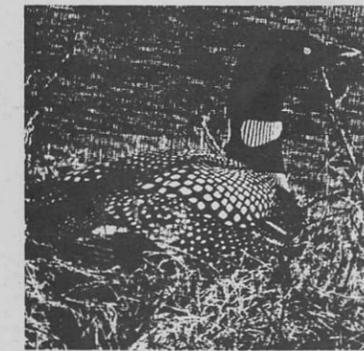
In an attempt to find out where they cross on the Vancouver Island, a survey was organized at four locations along the south west coast on March 30. The locations were at Point-No-Point, Jordan River, Sombrio Point and Port Renfrew. Although excellent views were obtained of Cape Flattery, the wind was out of the north and no raptors migrated. The first peak occurred on April 4 when 665 Red-tail Hawks, 134 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 10 Bald Eagles, 1 American Kestrel, 1 Merlin, 1 Northern Harrier, 1 Osprey, 123 Turkey Vulture and 500 Sandhill Cranes migrated north but we didn't have any observers out that day to see them arrive. Looking at the map, it appears as if the most likely migration route is northwest of Port Renfrew over the West Coast Trail and Carmannah Valley but it would be difficult to station observers there for 6 weeks. If anyone on Vancouver Island sees large groups of migrating raptors heading north in the spring, it would be appreciated if they could please contact me at 658-0295.



Loon Watchers Wanted

The loon is a symbol of wilderness and holds a special place in the hearts of Canadians. However, loons are suffering from human activities. Concern about the effects of acid rain and human disturbance on loons led to the creation of the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey (CLLS).

The CLLS is a long-term project designed to monitor the numbers and breeding success of loons on lakes across Canada. Loons depend on their nesting lakes for resources to sustain themselves and raise their young, and are vulnerable to anything affecting water quality. Recent survey results suggest that loons are having difficulty raising young on acidic lakes. On severely affected lakes, loon chicks may starve because of the reduction or absence of fish. Acid water



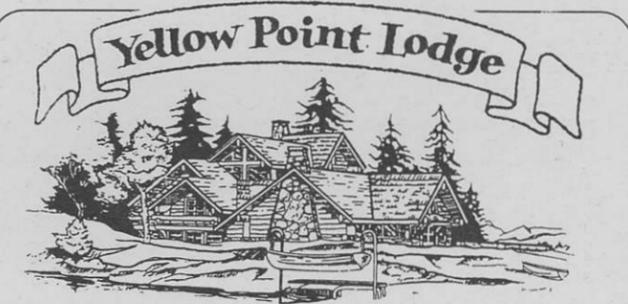
also leaches mercury and other toxic metals from rocks and soil. These metals enter the aquatic food chain and may reach toxic levels in loons.

However, lake acidity and pollutants are not the only problems loons have to contend with in Canada. The legs of

loons are placed far back on the body, making loons powerful swimmers but almost helpless on land. Nests are typically built right at the water's edge for ease of access and to provide a quick escape from perceived danger. Cottages built close to the shore displace loons from their traditional nesting sites. Damming for flood control or hydroelectric power causes water level changes that swamp nests or leave them stranded high out of the water and unreachable. Power boaters often unknowingly run down buoyant loon chicks, panic parents and disrupt care and feeding of young, or create wakes that wash loon eggs out of nests.

Thousands of volunteers are already surveying lakes across Canada, collecting vital information on the effects of pollution, development and other human disturbances on survival of loon adults and chicks. The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey needs help from people who can visit lakes at least three times during the summer — June to watch for resident adults, July to look for newly hatched chicks, and August to record the number of chicks that have survived the summer. Information is needed from every type of lake — from pristine wilderness retreats to busy cottage waterways. Even surveys of lakes without loons provide valuable information, as we hope to discover those factors that exclude loons from an area.

Anyone wishing to survey a lake is requested to register with the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey Bird Studies Canada, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario, NOE 1M0. A \$12.00 tax-credited fee is now being asked of surveyors to offset costs of producing and distribution survey kits and newsletters, and maintaining the Survey. A survey kit with instructions will be forwarded to volunteers in May, and all participants receive the annual CLLS Newsletter each fall. The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey is funded by Northern Reflections, the Canadian Wildlife Service, and charitable contributions of CLLS participants.



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1996 Spring Bird Count

Introduction by David Pearce

For the first time we will be holding our Spring Bird Count in June in an attempt to obtain a survey of breeding birds. The count day will be on Saturday, June 8, from dawn until noon with a post-count gathering at Swan Lake Nature Centre from 12:00 -2:00 pm (bring a lunch). The format will be the same as for the other spring and Christmas counts, using the Victoria Christmas Bird

Count Circle areas. The only slight difference will be that we want to record birds seen in each sub-area so that we can narrow down the actual breeding locations. Also, some of the areas will stray a little outside the circle, like Island View Beach Park and the whole of Witty's Lagoon. The areas and sub-areas will be as follows:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. BUTCHART'S GARDENS/
NORTHERN HIGHLANDS
Central Saanich
Northern Highlands | 8. ESQUIMALT HARBOUR
Esquimalt Harbour | 15. GORDON HEAD/
MT. DOUGLAS
Gordon Head
Mt. Douglas |
| 2. CENTRAL HIGHLANDS
Francis King Park
Gowlland Range | 9. PORTAGE INLET/
THE GORGE
Portage Inlet
The Gorge | 16. SWAN LAKE/
CEDAR HILL
Cedar Hill
Swan Lake |
| 3. GOLDSTREAM/
FINLAYSON ARM
Goldstream Park
Mt. Finlayson | 10. VICTORIA HARBOUR
Victoria Harbour | 17. BLENKINSOP LAKE/
PANAMA FLATS
Blenkinsop Lake
Panama Flats |
| 4. THETIS LAKE/
HASTINGS FLATS
Hastings/Courtlands Flats
Thetis Lake | 11. BEACON HILL PARK
Beacon Hill Park
Clover Point/Ross Bay
Victoria City | 18. ELK LAKE/
CORDOVA BAY
Cordova Bay
Elk Lake |
| 5. LANGFORD LAKE
Florence Lake
Langford Lake | 12. OAK BAY
Anderson Hill/
Oak Bay South
Uplands Park/
Oak Bay North | 19. PROSPECT LAKE/
QUICK'S BOTTOM
Observatory Hill
Prospect Lake
Quick's Bottom
Viaduct Flats |
| 6. ALBERT HEAD/
TRIANGLE MOUNTAIN
Albert Head
Triangle Mountain
Witty's Lagoon | 13. UNIVERSITY/
CADBORO BAY
Cadboro Bay
Mt. Tolmie
University of Victoria | 20. MARTINDALE/BEAR HILL
Bear Hill
Island View Beach
Martindale Flats |
| 7. ESQUIMALT LAGOON/
MILL HILL
Colwood Creek
Esquimalt Lagoon
Mill Hill | 14. TEN MILE POINT/
ARBUTUS ROAD
Arbutus Road
Ten Mile Point | 21. OAK BAY ISLANDS
Oak Bay Islands |

The official count time is midnight to noon but most will likely start at dawn. The same leaders and participants from previous Spring and Christmas Counts will be contacted. If you are not on these lists and would like to participate, contact David Pearce (658-0295).

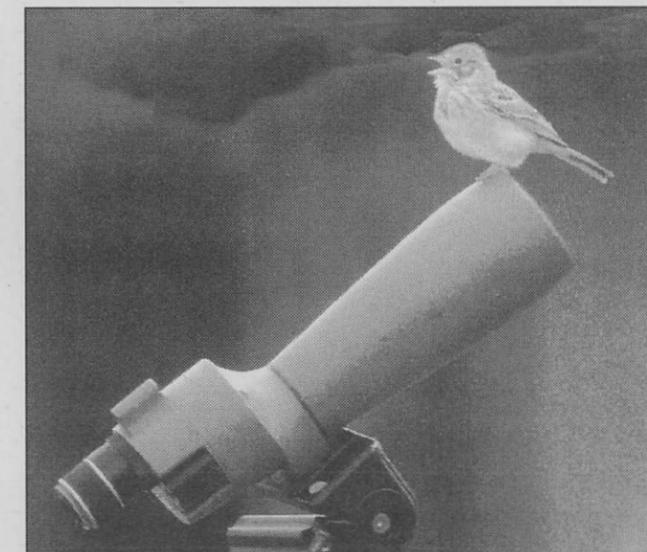
A Really Big Day

By Darren Copley

Big Days are for the birds! Really Big Days are *much, much* more!! Join us on May 26, 1996 in a search for the highest number of **vertebrate** species that you can see in a 10 hour period: 5 a.m. to 3 p.m. Your searches must be conducted in the Victoria Checklist area. One of the goals of this event is to increase people's awareness of the faunal diversity on Southern Vancouver Island and to encourage a broader interest in natural history (yes, there are other things to look at besides birds!).

Categories include **Open, Beginner, Green Team** and "**The Big Sit**". The Open Category is defined as your basic free-for-all; if you think you are up to the competition from experienced teams, go for it! The Beginner Category is for people just starting out in their natural history explorations. Traditionally, big days are hard on our natural resources, so we have added two new categories. The Green Team Category is for those teams who can figure out a bus schedule, ride a bike, ride a skateboard, etc. No private motorized vehicles allowed! The Big Sit Category is designed for those people who understand the phrase *location, location, location!* How many species can you see while sitting in one spot all day? Each species will be given a point value and the team with the highest point total in their category wins. Teams that find at least one representative of each of the groups of vertebrates — amphibians, birds, fish, mammals, and reptiles — will have a distinct advantage. Hint, hint!!! The Really Big Day is a purely **fund-raising event**.

Each team will be given a form with which they must collect donations and/or pledges (e.g. \$1.50 per species). Contributions will be accepted through the Victoria Natural History Society and will support the Habitat Acquisition Trust (H.A.T.) and the Purple Martin conservation effort.



A Vesper Sparrow — ready for the big day
Photo: David Fraser

A REALLY BIG DAY

May 26

Registration fee: \$15.00 per participant

Each team may consist of 3 to 5 people (minimum of 2 for the Big Sit).

Registration forms can be picked up from:

the Field Naturalist ■ Freeman King Visitor Centre at Goldstream Provincial Park

or by calling **479-6622**

Registration deadline: May 19, 1996

Groups that register will receive a *Really Big Day* information package, which will include pledge forms, rules, maps, and a Really Big Day T-shirt/checklist.

Register soon!

Nomination for Distinguished Service Award

Gordon Devey has served with distinction as Treasurer and financial manager for the VNHS from 1989 to 1995. His advice and guidance in our financial affairs has been invaluable. He has kept our Society in a sound financial condition.

He has been a valuable member of the Board of Directors and has prepared various financial documents for the Society.

Gordon is an avid sailor but always found time to keep our financial house in good order.

Gordon is a worthy recipient of our Distinguished Service Award.

Scholarships and Bursaries

The Natural History Society sponsors scholarships and Bursaries for both graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Victoria who are specializing in the area of species or habitat conservation.

These are the Alice M. Hay Scholarship and Samuel Simcoe Bursary for graduate students and the Samuel Simcoe Bursary and the Victoria Natural History Scholarship is awarded to a student entering fourth year biology preparing for a career in natural history.

The Society also sponsor a bursary for a student enrolled in the Environmental Technology Program at Camosun College.

Pacific Octopus



By Pamela Thuringer

A spectacular shore-based diving adventure can be experienced by travellers to Saltery Bay Provincial Park on the Sunshine coast. This park borders the waters of Jervis Inlet, one of a number of the mainland coastal inlets carved by glaciers as they spilled off the land into the sea, creating steep bedrock cliffs along the way. Access to this fjord ecosystem starts from a gear-up spot a few meters from a diverse biotic community in an intertidal bay and adjacent reef. Enroute to the subtidal, some of the most notable invertebrate species encountered at low tide may include the brilliant purple sea star, *Pisaster ochraceus*, or the shore crab *Hemigrapsus nudis*, although you may only catch a glimpse of this small decapod scurrying from under a rock or diatom mat.

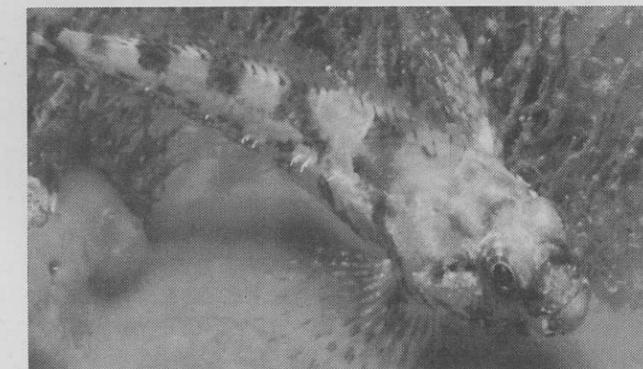
Guided by the marker buoy demarking the location of the infamous eight-foot bronze mermaid, the decent into the deeper waters begins. Nestled in the thick mat of Japanese weed, *Sargassum muticum*, or on the bedrock amongst the diverse filamentous red algal complexes of the shallow subtidal, you may find one or many black-eyed gobies or small schools of surf-perches weaving throughout the algal communities. Depending on the time of year, it is very likely you may encounter a school of young-of-the-year rockfish, hovering in the water column or within the hull of an old wooden boat hull, located in deeper water approximately 30 m north of the mermaid. Descending over cliffs and bedrock platforms colonized by the brown kelps of *Agarum fimbriatum* or *Laminaria saccharina*, it may be easy to overlook a variety of smaller flora and fauna such as encrusting bryozoans, hydroids or solitary ascidians amongst the more visible orange finger sponge, *Neoesperiopsis digitata*.

At the base of a final cliff before reaching the mermaid, the soft bottom substrate between the bedrock houses a population of the tube dwelling anemone, *Pachycerianthus fimbriatus*, which will retract rapidly if a diver gets too close. At a depth of approximately 60 ft, the diver will experience what many dream of as a mythical encounter with a mermaid. It is around the rock that supports the mermaid that a diver may notice a number of adult quillback rockfish and lingcod and may be treated to the sight of one couched in the outstretched hand of the mermaid.

The mermaid rock is colonized by both the orange and white phase of the striking plumose anemone, *Metridium senile*. Just beyond the mermaid, in moments where a divers thoughts of wonderment and awe seem to be peaked, an almost vertical bedrock wall begins, plummeting into the cold dark waters of a true fjord. Swimming over the lip of the cliff, a divers field of view will be filled with boot sponges of varying size classes, with the larger individuals often inhabited by a quillback rockfish. At first glance it may appear as if juvenile boot sponges are quite dense amongst the larger 20-50 cm

sponges. For those aware that the growth rates of these glass sponges have been documented at two cm/year, it is truly awesome to realize that a sponge of 50 cm, growing at depths greater than 80 ft, may be as old as 100 years! Other inhabitants of this bedrock cliff will include the typical fjord species such as the crinoid, *Florometra serratissima*, the anemone *Cribrinopsis fernaldi* and the small orange cup coral, *Balanophyllia elegans*. At deeper depths of 95 ft, another hexactinellid sponge, the cloud sponge can be observed colonizing the cliff.

The eastern section of the park, with its steep bedrock cliffs, may not be to everyone's liking. An alternative is diving in the western section of the park, also very accessible



Northern Sculpin (*Icelinus borealis*). Photo: A. Fedoruk

as a shore dive. Entry from a bedrock shoreline, or from the gently sloping pebble and cobble beach, leads to a subtidal sand habitat providing opportunities to view sea whips at depths not usually accessible to the shore diver. An added attraction in this area is a collection of boulders in the predominantly sand subtidal locally known as "Octopus City", as it houses the dens of a number of octopi. Lingcod, quillback rockfish and kelp greenling are but a few of the fish species inhabiting this boulder habitat. The fleshy sea pen, *Ptilosarcus gurneyi*, can be found in its vicinity, along with the orange sea peach, *Halocynthia aurantia*, and the plumose anemone found colonizing the boulders. Daytime diving could easily be supplemented by a night dive at either location; the presence of the nocturnal ratfish on the sand substrate near Octopus City is almost guaranteed. The appearance of the prawn, *Pandalus platyceros*, migrating up from the deep bedrock cliffs below, are another likely sighting although this may also depend on the time of year.

Whether you enjoy the deeper cliff diving to observe the spectacular boot and cloud sponge communities in the eastern section of the park or enjoy the biological diversity of the mid subtidal, or whether you hope to catch a glimpse of an octopus or experience the bioluminescence of the orange sea pen at night, diving in the protected fjord waters of Jervis Inlet via Saltery Bay Provincial park definitely provides an undeniably unique and fulfilling diving adventure.

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

Welcome to New Members

FEBRUARY

Naomi Mackay
of Grainger Road, Victoria
interests include conservation,
birding and hiking

Christine Barnett
of Head Street
is interested in marine natural
history, geology and flora and
fauna

Stephen Ruttan
of Sooke

Elaine Bell
of Albina Street
likes birding

Marilyn Berry
of Musgrave Street

Liz Boettcher
of McKenzie Avenue
is a new birder who enjoys
hiking, forests, trees and
flowers

Christian Engelstoft
of Powderly Avenue

Zane Lewis
of Glasgow Avenue
enjoys plants and birds

Colleen Long
of Albert Head Road
is interested in all areas of
natural history

Heather Seguin
of Fort Street
studies geology and wild
flowers

MARCH

Alison and George Kermack
of Arbutus Road

Florence Weekes
of Victoria
enjoys all outdoors, nature
writing and walking. She
has done extensive studies
of the Bald Eagle in
Ontario in the early 1970's.

Peter Wiegand
of Queens Avenue

Shirley Montgomery
of Bushby Street
is a birder

Kelly Ness
of Wordsworth Street
is interested in botany and
birding

Larry and Irene Booth
of Saanichton

Erik Grundmann
of Lee Avenue

Ardelle and Pat Holden
of Old West Saanich Road
interests include geology, birds
and flora

Bill Metcalfe
of Quadra Street
is concerned with habitat
conservation, especially at
Blenkinsop Lake

John McClarnon
of Fernhill Road
is interested in plants

Barbara McDougall
of Duke Road
enjoys field trips, birds, plants,
lectures and slide shows

Brent Schmor and family
of Pine Street
are interested in hiking,
camping and birdwatching

Alison and Jim Prentice
of Crescent Road

Elena Hind
of Beach Drive
is a birdwatcher

Marilyn Nicolls
of Cedar Hill Cross Road
enjoys birding around
Victoria

Linda and Andy Guest
of Cadillac Avenue
are interested in birding,
hiking, marine studies and
wild flowers

Shiona Rodger and family
of Arbutus Road
are birders

Norman Clark
of Lotus Street
supports habitat
preservation and protection
of the Gorge Waterway in
particular

Silva Johansson
of Collinson Street
interests include interpreta-
tion, birds, marine life and
bears

John Clowater
of Chaucer Street

**Rosemary Wooldridge
and family**
of Maddison Street

Arizona Snows and Texas Hails

By Keith Taylor

This is the second part of a two-part article of a vacation to southern Arizona and Big Bend National Park in Texas.

Part 2

The sun's rays were just beginning to evaporate the night's dew as we began our drive back to Arizona. Passing through El Paso a hostile sand storm began to blow ugly beige dust across the highway obscuring the road ahead. Unceasing, the wind and repulsive cloud persevered as we drove into Las Cruces, New Mexico early in the afternoon. Unhurried, we terminated our day's drive and continued our journey early the next day.

Back in Sierra Vista, we awoke early to an unseasonably cloudy and cold day. Working on a "Grand Slam" breakfast at Denny's we overheard the word snow in a conversation from a neighbouring booth. Snow? Where? Certainly not here? Unbelievably, as we approached the higher elevations of Ramsey Canyon a light snow had dusted the fallen oak leaves. Once again unprecedented weather had found us—the first snowfall in recorded history in southern Arizona during May! Shivering with the inclement temperatures of this winter wonderland, we hiked the Hamburg Trail toward the Eared Trogon site. As we progressed uphill, pure-white flakes drifted down from the leaden skies, the snow eventually accumulating to a depth of two or three inches.

Returning to a milder elevation, we checked into the charming Ramsey Canyon Inn. By afternoon the balmy temperatures had returned, melting the snow. Several attempts to find the rare and elusive Eared Trogon at the spring near the junctions of the Hamburg, Pat Scott Canyon and Wisconsin Canyon trails, were unsuccessful. One morning we began our decent to the trogon site via Carr Canyon along the Wisconsin Canyon Trail. This scenario soon became a catastrophe on reaching a sector of the trail that knifed across a precipitous hillside. The sheer bluff caused Pat to experience vertigo and we turned back hand in hand. Relaxing at the inn, the hummingbirds were a never-ending delight as they aggressively fed at the feeders. All of the common species were represented: Magnificent, Broad-tailed, Broad-billed, Black-chinned, as well as the local Blue-throated. The daily antics of an amusing tom turkey provided tireless

entertainment as he strutted and gobbled down the road. The southwestern form of Whip-poor-will (a possible split) is extremely common around the inn. I had often heard the call, and in the beam of my flashlight, one was finally *seen* as it sung from an overhead telephone wire.

During a conversation at the Mile High Reserve we were informed that a pair of Black-throated Magpie-Jays had overwintered at a Nogales feeder. Although presumed to be escapes, we decided on the short drive to "tick" them in case of future acceptance by the records committee. Distant views

were obtained of the two adults and their recent offspring in a mesquite-filled wash behind the residential area. These huge Mexican Jays, with their extremely long sweeping tails and great pointed crests, were unmistakable at any range. Returning through Patagonia we perused the local art gallery and had supper at the hotel, which has a decor reminiscent of the old west. Dining on a delicious chicken burrito, my thoughts returned to a previous January trip when we lodged at the hotel during a chase to record the Crescent-chested Warbler, a very rare Mexican vagrant.

Regrettably, we checked out of the delightful bed and breakfast,

and with the image of a pleasant town of Sierra Vista reflected in our rear view mirror, drove off towards Tucson. Passing through Patagonia, we stopped briefly to visit the Paton's feeder to admire their dependable Violet-crowned Hummingbirds. Fulfilling my wife's pursuits, we spent a few hours shopping in Tubac. This reconstructed ghost town is certainly a worthwhile resting place to view the quality art displayed in the galleries and artisan's shops. North of Tubac we had a fantastic outdoor luncheon at a combination tea room and craft shop. This charming oasis, with its rustic interior, was filled with child-like delights. Stuffed dolls decorated with chantilly lace, gossamer-winged angels, calico rabbits, dried flowers and countless other earthy crafts enchanted Pat.

Madera Canyon is a birders paradise! Driving into the canyon the habitats change quickly with elevation — an

Madera Canyon is a birders paradise!... the habitats change quickly with elevation — an excellent illustration of altitudinal zonation of vegetation and accompanying segregation of bird species.

excellent illustration of the altitudinal zonation of vegetation and accompanying segregation of bird species. Madera embraces many habitats ranging from arid desert scrub and grassland through pines and maples at the highest zone. This diversity of habitats produces an unusual richness in the canyon's avifauna. At the live oak belt we checked into one of the many rooms provided by the Santa Rita Lodge. Although it has seen better days, the convenient, motel-like lodge remains popular among birders. Relaxing in the shade, dozens of noisy Gray-breasted Jays, Acorn Woodpeckers, White-breasted Nuthatches and Yellow-eyed Juncos associated at the seed feeders.

During our stay, the Rare Bird Alerts reported that a hybrid male Flame-colored x Western Tanager had appeared at Bog Springs. Unfortunately, I decided to forego the easy one mile hike from lower Madera to observe the uncountable hybrid. On returning home, NARBA announced that a pure female Flame-colored Tanager (and possibly a male as well) had joined the hybrid. The date of this announcement was to coincide with the day of our leaving Arizona. Could the tanagers have been present during our stay in the canyon?

The following nights were spent at the recommended Motel 6 situated at the Ina exit along Interstate 10 just west of Tucson. Although more expensive than other motels of the chain in Tucson (US\$37 double occupancy) it is a larger, more modern unit with a pool and several excellent restaurants within walking distance. The convenient location guarantees easy access to various birding sites and to the Desert Museum. Costa's Hummingbirds are attracted to the blooming agaves each spring in the Sonoran Desert surrounding the museum. Always a favourite, we spent a day viewing the museum's natural history exhibits and had lunch at their excellent outdoor cafeteria.

It was Thursday, the only day of the week that the Arizona Rare Bird Alert is changed. The tape operator announced that an unreliable male Lucifer Hummingbird had recently been seen visiting a feeder at the Portal General Store, while at a nearby private residence there were two predictable males and a female. As the Rare Bird alert was not specific as to the locality of the private residence it was assumed to be Stuart Healy's home; Stuart has Lucifer's every spring, but this information is not given freely. Unfortunately, returning from Big Bend we had driven past the road that leads to Portal, thus a 420-mile round-trip was necessary in a single day to stay on schedule. Apprehensively, I communicated the unpleasant news to my wife awaiting her reprisal! Gratefully she agreed to the ordeal and I prayed for the miles to pass quickly. Our anxiety ceased as we pulled into Portal around noon and proceeded to the end

of the short, dead-end road past the general store. Stuart directed us to the backyard where a plethora of feeders hung; the air was full of the sounds of tiny, multi-coloured aerodynamic wings. Soon, point-blank views were obtained as both sexes of the long-tailed Lucifer's probed their decurved bills into the feeders suspended before our eyes.

We broke the day's fast devouring the best Spanish omelette in the world at one of the few tables that constitute the tiny restaurant in the back room of the Portal General Store. Across the room sat a tall, lanky cowboy rolling his own cigarette, complete with stetson, bandanna and chaps. This absorbing and memorable character could easily have been an actor in an old western movie and could certainly have carried the handle of "Slim".

The drive back to Tucson was nonchalant and early the next morning we drove off towards Phoenix. The goal that day was to proceed through Phoenix to the Mazatzal Mountains to search for the Gray Vireo. The site most often visited is the Slate Creek Divide, a pass along Highway 87 between the hamlet of Sunflower and the town of Payson. Four-tenths of a mile beyond the pass is a four-wheel road on the left that leads to a pinyon-juniper dotted hillside where the vireos are easily found in the dry brush. Although it was around noon, we had no trouble finding three singing individuals. We spent most of the next day at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum, a favourite place of ours not far from Phoenix. Strolling through the gardens we admired the world-wide collection of exotic plants, cactus and majestic trees. As we passed through the enclosure of hackberry and Chinese Pistachio trees, vivid memories of the previous December returned. We had visited the arboretum to observe my first A.B.A. Rufous-backed Robin that spent the winter feeding on the berries of these trees.

Only a few miles away, a pair of Streak-backed Orioles had returned for the second year to Dudleyville, along the Rio San Pedro. As the orioles had returned to nest on private land, their presence was often cloaked by silence, and as they were present for an extended time, they were becoming blasé with the locals and not mentioned on the hot lines. This was to be the second visit to the nearby arboretum when the orioles were to go unrecorded on my A.B.A. list because of poor communication.

Early the next day we were aboard a jet on our way home.

KEITH TAYLOR is a regular contributor to The Victoria Naturalist. He has published several books on birding in Costa Rica and British Columbia.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

REGULAR MEETINGS are generally held on the following days. **Board of Directors:** the first Tuesday of each month. **Natural History Presentations** (Formally known as the General Members Meeting): the second Tuesday of each month. **Botany Night:** the third Tuesday of each Month. **Birders' Night:** the fourth Wednesday of each month. **Marine Night:** the last Monday of each month. Locations are given in the calendar listings. Telephone the VNHS Events Tape at 479-2054 for further information and updates. **NOTE:** The monthly **Natural History Presentations** are not held from May to August; they will begin again in September. The last **Marine Night** and **Birders' Night** presentations will be held in May but will begin again in September. There will be no **Botany Night** meetings in July or August.

MAY EVENTS

Sunday, May 5

Life on the Rocks

Another fine day at the beach. This is an excellent low tide day. If you want to know who's who in the tide pools, then this is the program for you! Meet the CRD Naturalist at the Tower Point parking lot on Olympic View Drive in Metchosin at 10:30 a.m., the talk will last until 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7

Board of Directors' Meeting

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

Sunday, May 12

Birding at Witty's Lagoon

Join David Stirling (477-0625) for a pleasant morning's birding through the forest and down to the sea at Witty's Lagoon Regional Park. Meet in the parking lot (off Metchosin Road) at 8:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 12

Up Above and at Your Feet on Mayne Island

Join a naturalist from the Mayne Island Naturalist Club at Mount Parke Regional Park (Mayne Island) for a hike up Mount Parke to enjoy wildflowers and birds. The hike is steep in parts, so wear sturdy hiking shoes. Meet in the parking lot at the end of Montrose Road at 1:30 p.m. (lasts until 3:30 p.m.).

Sunday, May 12

Wildflower Walk

Mount Tolmie Park, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Meet at the summit viewpoint. Sponsor: Mount Tolmie Conservancy Association.

Sunday, May 19

Intertidal Investigation

Phil Lambert (477-5922) leads a trip to explore the fascinating world of the intertidal zone at Whiffen Spit. Carpool at Helmcken Park and Ride at 9:00 a.m. or meet Phil at the parking lot at the end of Whiffen Spit Road at 10:00 a.m. Don't forget your rubber boots.

Sunday, May 19

Home Improvements

Join guest naturalist Andrew MacDonald who'll lead you through Thetis Lake Regional Park looking for signs of new housing for the birds. Bring binoculars if you have them. A spotting scope is provided. Meet at the Woollett Info Centre, by the main parking lot at 9:00 a.m. (lasts until 11:00 a.m.).

Monday, May 20

Lake Loop around Elk/Beaver Lake Regional Park

A CRD Parks Naturalist will provide natural and cultural history tidbits along the way on this entertaining and relaxing 4-hour hike. Bring a picnic lunch and wear sturdy shoes. Meet at the info kiosk at Hamsterley Beach parking lot off Brookleigh Road at 10:00 a.m. (lasts until 2:30 p.m.).

Tuesday, May 21

Botany Night

Don't Be Afraid of the Grasses. Matt Fairbairns will hold a simple workshop on the identification of grasses. Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22

Birders' Night

Room 159, Begbie Building, University of Victoria, 7:30 p.m. This will be the last Birders' Night until September. Program to be announced. Check the VNHS Events tape at 479-2054.

Sunday, May 26

Sidney Island Birding

Spend the day with David Allinson on this delightful island searching for shorebirds, waterfowl and songbirds. Meet at the ferry dock at the foot of Beacon Avenue in Sidney in time for the 9:00 a.m. sailing. There is limited space on this little ferry so please call David (380-8233) to reserve your place. Bring lunch, drinks and \$7.00 ferry fare.

Sunday, May 26

A Really Big Day!

Join in the fund-raising event for the Habitat Acquisition Fund (H.A.T.) in the search for the highest number of vertebrate species in the Victoria check list area. See article this issue for further information. Registration forms can be picked up from the Field Naturalist, Goldstream Provincial Park Visitor Centre or by calling 479-6622. The deadline for registration is May 19.

Sunday, May 26

Mysteries of the Midden

Join a CRD Naturalist at Witty's Lagoon Regional Park to learn about the native Indian middens in the park. Meet at the Info Kiosk in the main parking lot on Metchosin Road at 1:30 p.m. (lasts until 3:00 p.m.).

Sunday, May 26

Wildflower Walk

Mount Tolmie Park, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Meet at the summit viewpoint. Sponsor: Mount Tolmie Conservancy Assoc.

Monday, May 27

Marine Night

Yogi Carolsfeld, a graduate student at the University of Victoria, will speak on his research: *The Elusive Elixir: Herring Pheronomes*. He will describe his work to discover a way of stimulating herring to spawn on command through the application of natural chemicals. Swan Lake Nature Centre, 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

JUNE EVENTS

Saturday, June 1

Birding by Ear

Join Hank vanderPol (658-1924) and learn to identify the songs of the dawn chorus. This four hour walk will take us up Broadcast Hill and down to Viaduct Flats. Bring a snack, water and meet Hank at 6:00 a.m. at Layritz Park (off Glyn Road which is off Wilkinson Road).

Sunday, June 2

Wildflower Walk

Mount Tolmie Park, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Meet at the summit viewpoint. Sponsor: Mount Tolmie Conservancy Assoc.

Tuesday, June 4

Board of Directors' Meeting

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

Gorge Waterway Action Society

The Gorge Waterway Action Society is a non-profit society dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of the Gorge Waterway, a unique and priceless geographic feature of natural beauty. Help us to ensure the water quality and wildlife habitat of the Gorge is preserved and that the Waterway is developed as a scenic area for the use and pleasure of everyone. New members are welcome. For membership information, a copy of our March newsletter, or for details of our Annual General Meeting on May 4th at Sawmill Point please contact Norman Clark at 383-7190.

VNHS Conservation Volunteers Wanted

Are you concerned about the future of Greater Victoria's natural heritage? Want to do something to help? The VNHS Parks and Conservation Committee would like to know about your concerns. We are also interested in members who would like to be involved with the VNHS Parks and Conservation Committee or to volunteer time on specific projects. To voice your concerns or to volunteer your time, please contact Jeff Stone at 370-2449.

Volunteer Needed

The Parks and Conservation Society has a small project for a willing volunteer. Someone is needed to gather information and fill out an application for a grant proposal for money to complete work on projects such as our inventory of Sensitive Areas. If this interests you, contact Tony Embleton at 595-6812.

Reminder!

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

Saturday, June 8

Spring Bird Count

If you are interested in participating in the 6th annual Spring Count, contact David Pearce (658-0295). There will be a post count gathering at 12:30 p.m. at the Swan Lake Nature Centre.

Sunday, June 16

More Intertidal Investigation

Explore the rocky intertidal zone at Macauley Point with Phil Lambert (477-5922). Meet at the Esquimalt Anglers Association parking lot at the foot of Lampson Street at 9:00 a.m. Don't forget your rubber boots.

Sunday June 16

Wildflower Walk

Mount Tolmie Park, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Meet at the summit viewpoint. Sponsor: Mount Tolmie Conservancy Assoc.

Tuesday, June 18

Botany Night

Joel Ussery will present a talk titled *CRD Parks and the Concept of Greenspace*. Swan Lake Nature House, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday June 23

Wildflower Walk

Mount Tolmie Park, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m., rain or shine. Meet at the summit viewpoint. Sponsor: Mount Tolmie Conservancy Assoc.

BULLETIN BOARD

Birders Wanted

Share your birding knowledge and enthusiasm. Be a part of a volunteer team to lead bird walks on Sunday mornings at Swan Lake Nature Sanctuary. Birders are invited to sign up for one or more days per month. These popular Sunday events are held between 9 and 11 a.m. and usually have six to twelve participants of all levels. For more details contact Joan at the Nature House (479-0211) or FAX 479-0132.

Announcement!

BEN — Botanical Electronic News — is an electronic botanical newsletter distributed on Internet by Adolf Ceska in about bi-weekly intervals. To subscribe to BEN send a message to: <aceska@freenet.victoria.bc.ca>.

For Sale

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

Back Issues of the Victoria Naturalist

Copies of back issues and indices of the *Victoria Naturalist* are available from Tom Gillespie (361-1694).

Garry Oak Meadow Society Membership

The Garry Oak Meadow Society aims to promote, conserve and restore our native oak meadow lands. For further information contact Tom Gillespie at 361-1694.



The Victoria NATURALIST

P.O. Box 5220, Stn. B.,
Victoria, B.C., V8R 6N4
Publications Mail Reg. 6428

expire: 31-12-96

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