



1982
THRUSH

THRUSH Volume Two 1982

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cost of \$2.00.

Margaret Holm - Editor.

INTRODUCTION:

Volume Two of Thrush contains a number of articles of interest on the natural history of the Nanaimo area. This 'digest' is an annual 'event' of the Nanaimo Field Naturalists' Club. ALL members are urged to keep a record of their observations and to write up significant records for inclusion in Thrush. Get-with-it people your help is needed.

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CLUB EXECUTIVE 1981 - 1982

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REPORT FROM THE BIRD HOTLINE

758-5162

BY DEREK CONNELLY

"I HAVE A BIRD TO REPORT", ECHOES THE CALL OF THE BIRD NATURALIST PHONING IN NEW SITINGS AND FIRST ARRIVALS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. THIS YEAR WAS A BUSY ONE, AS NEW SITINGS AND NEW BIRDERS KEPT THE BIRD GRAPEVINE ACTIVE.

SEPTEMBER STARTED WITH SITINGS OF SNOW GEESE ON THE NANAIMO RIVER ESTUARY- THE FALL MIGRATION IN FULL SWING. IN NOVEMBER THE TRUMPETER SWANS ARRIVED ON THE ESTUARY TO OVERWINTER, AND AT BUTTERTUBS MARSH A PAIR OF REDHEAD DUCKS MADE ONE OF THEIR UNCOMMON VISITS. A SLATE-COLOURED JUNCO SHOWED UP AT NEIL BOURNE'S FEEDER IN NOVEMBER. THEN WITH THE CHRISTMAS COUNT APPROACHING, AN ADDED ATTRACTION ARRIVED ON THE SCENE AT MALASPINA COLLEGE. THE MOCKINGBIRD, A RESIDENT OF CALIFORNIA, JUST COULDN'T RESIST BEING PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICK IKONA, AND GETTING HIS NAME IN PRINT FOR THE BIG COUNT.

JUST TO MAKE THINGS CONFUSING FOR NOVICE BIRDERS, IN JANUARY A TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE JOINED THE MOCKINGBIRD AT THE COLLEGE. (BOTH BIRDS HAVE WHITE OUTER TAIL FEATHERS.) PETER VAN KERKOELE DOESN'T MISS ON IDENTIFICATION THOUGH!

A COMMON TEAL WAS SITED BY ANN FAWCETT AT BUTTERTUBS MARSH IN FEBRUARY, WHILE A GOLDEN EAGLE FLEW OVER PETER VAN KERKOELE'S HOUSE IN THE SAME MONTH. A RED-BREADED SAPSUCKER MADE APPEARANCES ON ROCK CITY ROAD, AND AT THE BIOLOGICAL STATION DURING THE WINTER MONTHS.

THE SPRING MIGRATION WAS MARKED BY THE EARLY ARRIVAL OF A TREE SWALLOW IN LATE FEBRUARY. BY MARCH, MANY OF THE PASSERINE BIRDS BEGAN TO ARRIVE WITH SITINGS OF YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLERS AND ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLERS, AS WELL AS VIOLET-GREEN SWALLOWS. OTHER INTERESTING SITINGS INCLUDE A WHIMBREL AT PIPER'S LAGOON, A WESTERN TANAGER IN LANTZVILLE AND A PEREGRINE FALCON IN THE NANAIMO RIVER ESTUARY.

THANKS GO TO THE FOURTEEN BIRDERS WHO KEPT THE PHONE BUSY, AND TO DENNIS, KATHY, MARK AND SHANE WHO KEPT THE PHONELINE.

JOKE: A LARGE BIRD SEEN AT MACDONALDS, WAS OVERHEARD ORDERING-
"ONE QUARTER-POUND BIRDER AND A SIDE OF FLIES PLEASE."

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1981

ON DECEMBER 27TH 1981, A TOTAL OF 26 BIRDWATCHERS IN NINE PARTIES WENT OUT BRIGHT AND EARLY TO CHECK OUT THE BIRDS IN THE NANAIMO AREA. THIS WAS OUR 10TH CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT. THE WEATHER WAS GOOD- ABOVE FREEZING, WITH A LIGHT SOUTH-EAST WIND. WHEN I CHECKED THE LIST, I NOTICED THAT WE HAD QUITE A VARIED GROUP OF PEOPLE. THERE WERE PROFESSIONAL PEOPLE, HOUSEWIVES, RETIRED PEOPLE, AND EVEN A FEW YOUNGSTERS, BUT THEY ALL HAD ONE THING IN COMMON - THEY WERE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT BIRD-WATCHING.

BIRDING IS ALWAYS GOOD IN THE MORNING WHEN BIRDS ARE ACTIVELY FEEDING, BUT IN THE AFTERNOON MANY ARE HIDDEN IN BUSHES FOR A SIESTA, AND BIRDING USUALLY BECOMES A LITTLE DULL. BUT ALL THE PARTIES COMPLETED THEIR EIGHT HOURS IN THE FIELD.

WE HAD OUR SECOND HIGHEST NUMBER OF SPECIES FOR A NANAIMO COUNT: 108 (114 IN 1977). HOWEVER THE TOTAL NUMBER OF BIRDS SIGHTED WAS THE SECOND LOWEST: 11,579. WE HAVE HAD UP TO 19,239 BIRDS (1976). WHY DID WE HAVE SUCH A LOW NUMBER OF BIRDS THIS YEAR? WE DON'T KNOW, BUT THERE WAS A LACK OF LARGE FLOCKS OF STARLINGS, CROWS, AND GLAUCOUS-WINGED GULLS. THE WET, MILD WINTER PROBABLY HAD SOME EFFECT ON THE NUMBER OF BIRDS IN THE AREA.

THE SPECIES SEEN FOR THE FIRST TIME ON A CHRISTMAS COUNT:

SNOWGOOSE	1
REDHEAD	1
CANVASBACK	3
BOHEMIAN WAXWING	82
MOCKINGBIRD	1

AFTER THE COUNT, THERE WAS A POTLUCK DINNER AT THE VAN KERKOERLES. THIS IS OFTEN THE BEST PART OF THE DAY, WHEN THE FINAL COUNT IS TALLIED UP. WE ALL THINK WE KNOW THE FINAL COUNT, AND MUCH DISCUSSION IS GIVEN TO WHY SOME COMMON SPECIES HAVE BEEN MISSED. WE ARE GIVEN OVER TO THOUGHTS OF HAVING BETTER LUCK NEXT YEAR, WHEN SUDDENLY THE DOOR OPENS AND IN COMES A LATE BIRDER WITH HIS LIST OF GOODIES. THEN, EXPECTATIONS FLY, AND FINALLY THE COUNT BECOMES QUITE A GOOD ONE. AT THE END OF THE EVENING, EACH BIRDER GOES HOME WITH THAT SATISFIED FEELING THAT CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT DAY WAS ONE OF THE BEST DAYS IN THE YEAR.

PETER VAN KERKOERLE

DANDELIONS AND THE BIOLOGICAL MEASUREMENT OF THE SEASONS

by Bill Merilees

The physical mechanics of Earth's orbit, including her inclination to the sun, permit the accurate determination of our seasons almost to the second. However, though this is true, the biological arrival of a season may vasillate markedly due to incongruities of the weather.

With this said, How does a naturalist measure the natural arrival of a season ? Does a season arrive early or late in a particular year ? and When does Spring actually arrive ? The only way to answer these questions is to record natural observations systematically, year to year and compare the results. Migrant bird arrival dates are helpful and are kept by many people. Flowering dates are kept by only a few. Since birds are mobile, flowering dates provide a more accurate and reliable clock for the seasons.

For Spring, Robert Louis Stevenson wrote:

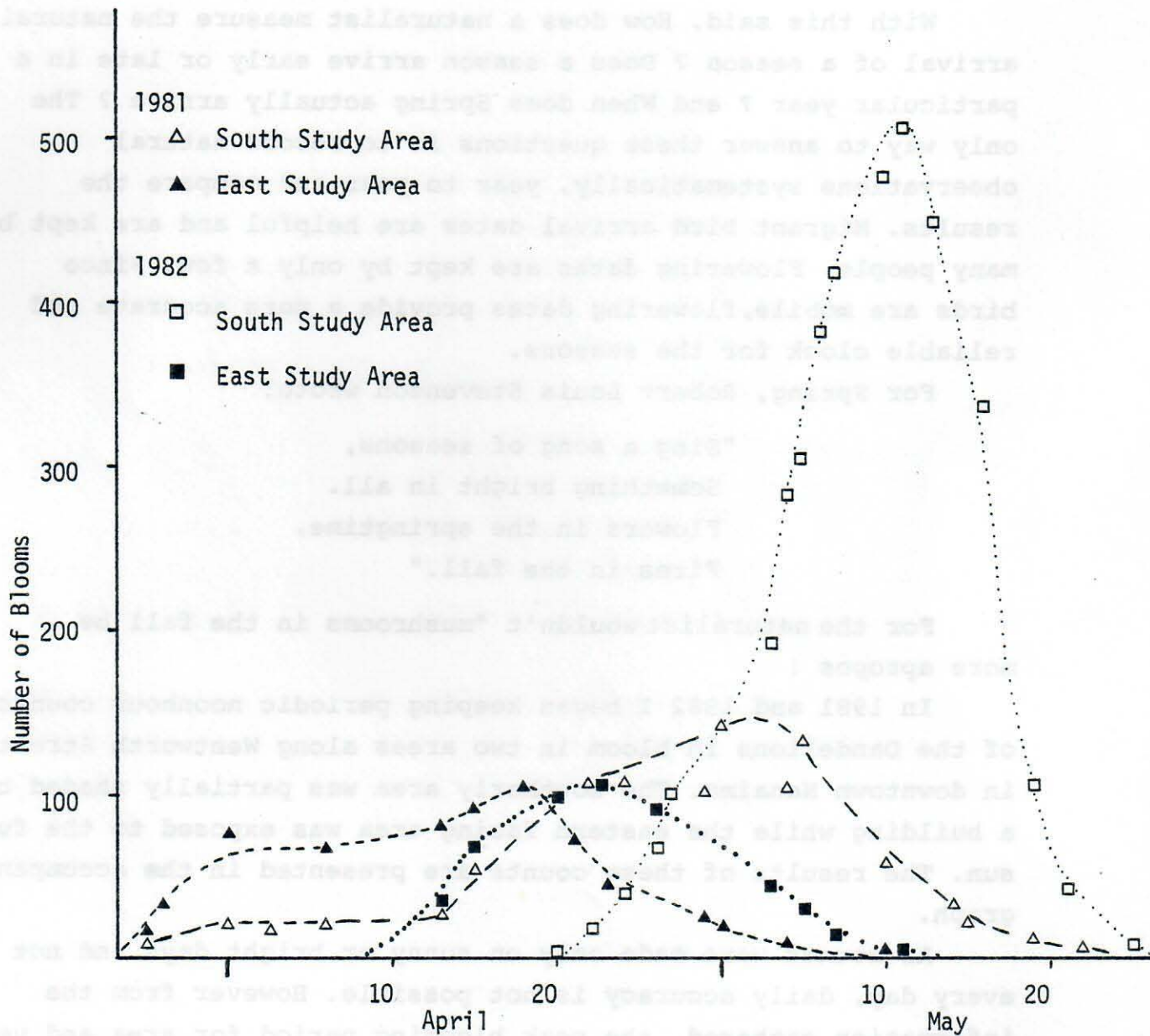
"Sing a song of seasons,
Something bright in all.
Flowers in the springtime,
Fires in the fall."

For the naturalist wouldn't "mushrooms in the fall be more apropos !

In 1981 and 1982 I began keeping periodic noonhour counts of the Dandelions in bloom in two areas along Wentworth Street in downtown Nanaimo. The southerly area was partially shaded by a building while the eastern facing area was exposed to the full sun. The results of these counts are presented in the accompanying graph.

As counts were made only on sunny or bright days and not every day, daily accuracy is not possible. However from the information gathered, the peak blooming period for area and year has been determined approximately as follows;

NANAIMO DANDELION COUNTS - 1981 and 1982



	1981	1982
SOUTH	May 4th	May 11th
EAST	April 18th	April 24th

Conclusions available from this cursory study indicate that:

1. In the Nanaimo area Dandelions have a definite spring flowering period which ceases in early June. (There is a second flowering period in September which is very much reduced.)
2. Aspect of the southerly site, notably being shaded, retarded the peak flowering time by about 16 to 17 days.
3. The 1982 peak flowering period was about 6 to 7 days behind the 1981 peak period at late April early May.

These results present a fairly accurate means of measuring the biological arrival of a period of time in our yearly cycle of the seasons. By extending the study to other flowering plant species it appears a 'yardstick' is available not only to measure the arrival of the seasons but also to compare one area or one region of the province with another, from February until September. This yardstick when in place will probably show that a season's progression is not uniform. Fluctuations from being early or late at one point to the reverse a short while later, all according to the weather, might well be apparent.

Work towards starting a province wide flowering phenology scheme, similar to the B.C. Nest Record Scheme, is in preparation. Meanwhile, the Dandelion Study began in 1981 will continue into 1983 and beyond.

If anyone is interested in participation in this "Measurement of the Seasons" project, please contact me.

Bill Merilees,
758-1801.

A YEAR AT BUTTERTUB MARSH

by Vera Riddell

THE FOLLOWING LIST WAS COMPILED DURING WEEKLY VISITS TO BUTTERTUB MARSH, OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. ALTHOUGH MANY OF THE BIRDS HAVE BEEN SEEN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, THEY ARE MENTIONED ONLY ONCE AT THE TIME OF THE FIRST SIGHTING.

JANUARY: MALLARD

WOOD DUCK
SHOVELLER
BUFFLEHEAD
REDHEAD DUCK
HOODED MERGANSER
AMERICAN COOT
GREAT BLUE HERON
BALD EAGLE
BELTED KINGFISHER
AMERICAN ROBIN
RUFIOUS-SIDED TOWHEE
MARSH WREN
BEWICK'S WREN
PINE SISKIN
GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET
CHESTNUT-BACKED CHICKADEE
SONG SPARROW
KILLDEER

FEBRUARY: CANADA GOOSE COMMON FLICKER

MARCH: AMERICAN WIDGEON COMMON GOLDENEYE BARROW'S GOLDENEYE LESSER SCAUP RAVEN

APRIL: TREE SWALLOW TOWNSEND'S WARBLER YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER SAVANNAH SPARROW

MAY: RING-NECKED PHEASANT DOWNY WOODPECKER COMMON YELLOWTHROAT AMERICAN GOLDFINCH WILSON'S WARBLER

JUNE: PIED-BILLED GREBE GREEN-WINGED TEAL COMMON NIGHTHAWK CEDAR WAXWING WESTERN WOOD PEWEE COMMON BUSHTIT AUDUBON'S WARBLER BREWER'S BLACKBIRD PURPLE FINCH

JULY: LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD BROWN CREEPER

AUGUST: COOPER'S HAWK SHARP-SHINNED HAWK GREATER YELLOWLEGS LESSER YELLOWLEGS MACGILLIVRAY'S WARBLER

SEPTEMBER: AMERICAN KESTREL HERMIT THRUSH STELLER'S JAY

NOVEMBER: PINTAIL RING-NECKED DUCK LINCOLN'S SPARROW

DECEMBER: GOLDEN EAGLE

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

BY BILL MERILEES

Bird watchers are always on the lookout for the unexpected, and each year as sure as summer follows spring, a number of totally unexpected bird species show up in our province.

On Friday evening July 9, 1982, I received a phone call from Gail Wiseman who said that friends from Penticton had visited Hamilton Marsh that day and seen a Chestnut-sided Warbler. I replied, "Are they sure it wasn't a Chestnut-sided Chickadee?". I heard the laughter in the background at my response, and then decided that I had better check this one out.

The bird was seen singing in the afternoon, so shortly after Saturday lunch, my father and I headed to Hamilton Swamp. Finding a warbler in the timber was not that different from finding a needle in a haystack, but if it was singing its call would be our magnet. Following the instructions we headed down the trail listening to kinglets and chickadees. Near the marsh proper a bird began to call with a sound that was similar to a Yellow Warbler. We walked a little farther- the rest is now history. Sure enough the bird was a Chestnut-sided Warbler. It sat in full view long enough for both of us to see it very plainly two or three times, with 7x50 binoculars, at a distance of thirty-five feet. The bird was a male, its plumage exceptionally bright.

I quickly got out my field notebook and recorded the following, "Wood warbler, yellow crown, white throat, black mask to nape, running into chestnut side-stripe, white cheek, two wing-bars, 4 to 5 inch^{long} white breast to under-tail, call four or five notes- sort of chwit, chwit, chwit, cheeo."

The bird was singing in the outer canopy of Red Alder trees, around the edge of a clearing of Hardhack, Wild Rose and Red-osier Dogwood.

To Margaret Harris and Allan Preston goes the discovery of the first Chestnut-sided Warbler on Vancouver Island, and only the third record for this species in Southwestern British Columbia. Dad and I are still chuckling that we could find this most unusual bird so easily. This warbler ordinarily occurs east of the Rockies and in British Columbia occurs regularly in the Peace River Parklands.

OBSERVATIONS OF THREE LOCAL HERONRIES

BY KAREN JACOBS

During the summer of 1982 I located and documented Great Blue Heron colonies in the Nanaimo area. The survey was a result of inquiries made to the Fish and Wildlife Branch, by concerned members of the public, regarding future protection of the heronries.

The largest of the three heronries is situated in a private woodlot on Gabriola Island. All of the nests are in tall (70' +) Red Alder trees, surrounded by maple and fir. The heronry is on relatively flat land, and covers about fifteen acres. A second heronry located in Cedar, is situated in rolling habitat on the edge of a gully. The smallest of the three, in Extension, is characterized by nests situated in tall Douglas Fir. Several years ago this heronry was designated as a protected wildlife area to ensure its safety.

Observations at the heronries were made from March to August. Counts were made primarily when the main breeding contingent was well advanced in nesting at each colony, - in May and June.

Nests are generally saucer-shaped and composed of coarse sticks and twigs. Since Great Blue Heron nests remain from year to year, whether or not the nests are in active use was determined by either: observation of the young, consistent presence of adults at a nest, presence of egg-shells below a nest, and where visibility was obstructed- by sounds from the nest. Presence of excrement on or at the base of the nest tree was also considered indicative of active use. Arrival dates for adults at heronries were observed or estimated, by allowing seventeen days for courtship, nest construction and egg laying (as per Pratt, 1970). Juvenile Great Blue Herons are considered fledged at seven to eight weeks, although parental care can extend beyond this period (Werschkul et.al., 1977).

NESTING ACTIVITY

Location	# of nest trees	Active nests	Inactive nests	Total nests	Tree spp.
Gabriola Is.	58	53	36	89	Red Alder
Cedar	32	33	20	53	
Extension	15	4	11	15	Douglas Fir

These figures suggest that the Gabriola and Cedar heronries support an impressive number of active nests, and probably constitute two of the larger heronries on the Island. The Extension heronry is of average size, but had few active nests this summer.

Colony Fledging Success

Only Gabriola fledglings were counted satisfactorily. Generally, 50.9% of the nests yielded one young, 24.5% produced two young, and 24.5% showed signs of activity with unknown number of young. The Gabriola and Cedar heronries support an impressive number of successful hatches. The Extension heronry had low nesting activity and high mortality, with none of the young observed surviving to fledging stage.

Mortality

Predation has been documented as a minor source of mortality in nesting heron (although no studies have examined the possibility of nocturnal predators), supported by the fact that herons as a group have no antipredator behavior, and generally flee when disturbed (Krebs, 1974).

Carcasses of both juvenile and adult herons found at the base of nest trees had been scavenged, but there were no observations of actual predation. It has been noted in previous studies by W. Campbell, that natural predators such as the Great Horned Owl cause harassment rather than death. Adult herons returning to the heronries at dusk, after feeding on the mudflats, were harassed so that they regurgitated fish which the owls fed on.

Bald Eagles are considered another natural predator, and they have also been noted in other studies, to cause harassment of nests. Groups of juvenile eagles were seen near the Gabriola heronry. Residents living near the Extension heronry suggest that

the increased incidence of Bald Eagles and Turkey Vultures in the area, may have caused a large number of herons to move out of the area.

Competition between brood mates can be considered a factor in fledgling mortality. I frequently observed fledglings nearly pushing each other out of the nests, vying for first grab at the food brought in by an adult. This danger was enhanced when the young moved from the nest to the top of the tree.

Accidental death due to natural conditions such as wind storms is also considered a factor. Such a storm occurred in late May, blowing young from the nests in Gabriola and Cedar. Crows were observed feeding on eight carcasses at the Gabriola heronry. Desertion of nests at the Extension heronry occurred within hours of the wind storm.

W.Campbell has suggested that approximately 70% of heron young, do not survive their first year. Starvation due to unsuccessful hunting is the cause. Adults generally abandon the young once they have left the heronry.

This study was a "pilot" effort. The results should be supported by further examination of these heronries. Hopefully future monitoring of these sites will lead to the protection of the nesting area, from external disturbances.

A BIRD BY ANY OTHER NAME...

SEVERAL TIMES SINCE THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, THE AMERICAN ORNITHOLOGIST'S UNION HAS PUBLISHED A LIST OF THE BIRD SPECIES OF NORTH AMERICA. AN A.O.U. COMMITTEE DECIDES ON THE SEQUENCE, TAXONOMY, AND ENGLISH NAMES OF BIRD SPECIES IN CANADA, UNITED STATES AND HAWAII. BIRD WATCHERS SHOULD MAKE NOTE OF A NUMBER OF NAME CHANGES FOR BIRDS THAT OCCUR IN OUR AREA. NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED IN AN ATTEMPT TO STANDARDIZE THE ENGLISH NAMES OF BIRDS FOUND THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. FOR EXAMPLE; THE BIRD WE CALL "MARSH HAWK" IS SIMILAR TO THE ENGLISH "HEN HARRIER", OUR BIRD WILL NOW BE CALLED NORTHERN HARRIER. "HARRIER" TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THE WORD "HAWK" BECAUSE IT IS A MORE DESCRIPTIVE, ESTABLISHED NAME.

"NORTHERN", "COMMON", AND "AMERICAN" HAVE BEEN TAGGED ONTO SEVERAL SPECIES, TO DISTINGUISH THEM FROM SIMILAR SPECIES THAT OCCUR ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD. LASTLY, SOME SPECIES THAT WERE CONSIDERED DISTINCT, HAVE BEEN LUMPED INTO ONE SPECIES, WHILE OTHER BIRDS HAVE BEEN SPLIT INTO TWO DISTINCT SPECIES.

TAKE OUT YOUR PENS, AND FIELD GUIDES AND MARK IN THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:

GREEN-BACKED HERON	REPLACES	GREEN HERON
TUNDRA SWAN	"	WHISTLER SWAN
GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	"	WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE
NORTHERN PINTAIL	"	PINTAIL
EURASIAN WIGEON	"	EUROPEAN WIGEON
NORTHERN HARRIER	"	MARSH HAWK
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	"	GOSHAWK
AMERICAN BLACK OYSTERCATCHER	"	BLACK OYSTERCATCHER
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE	"	NORTHERN PHALAROPE
COMMON BARN OWL	"	BARN OWL
WESTERN SCREECH OWL	"	SCREECH OWL
EASTERN SCREECH OWL	"	SCREECH OWL
NORTHERN PYGMY OWL	"	PYGMY OWL
NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL	"	SAW-WHET OWL
RED-BREASTED SAPSUCKER	"	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER
YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER	REMAINS	YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER
THREE-TOED WOODPECKER	REPLACES	NORTHERN THREE-TOED W.P.
BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER	"	BLACK-BACKED THREE-TOED W.P.
NORTHERN FLICKER	"	COMMON FLICKER
NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW	"	ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW
AMERICAN CROW	"	COMMON CROW
MARSH WREN	"	LONG-BILLED MARSH WREN
AMERICAN DIPPER	"	DIPPER
ROSY FINCH	"	GRAY-CROWNED ROSY FINCH

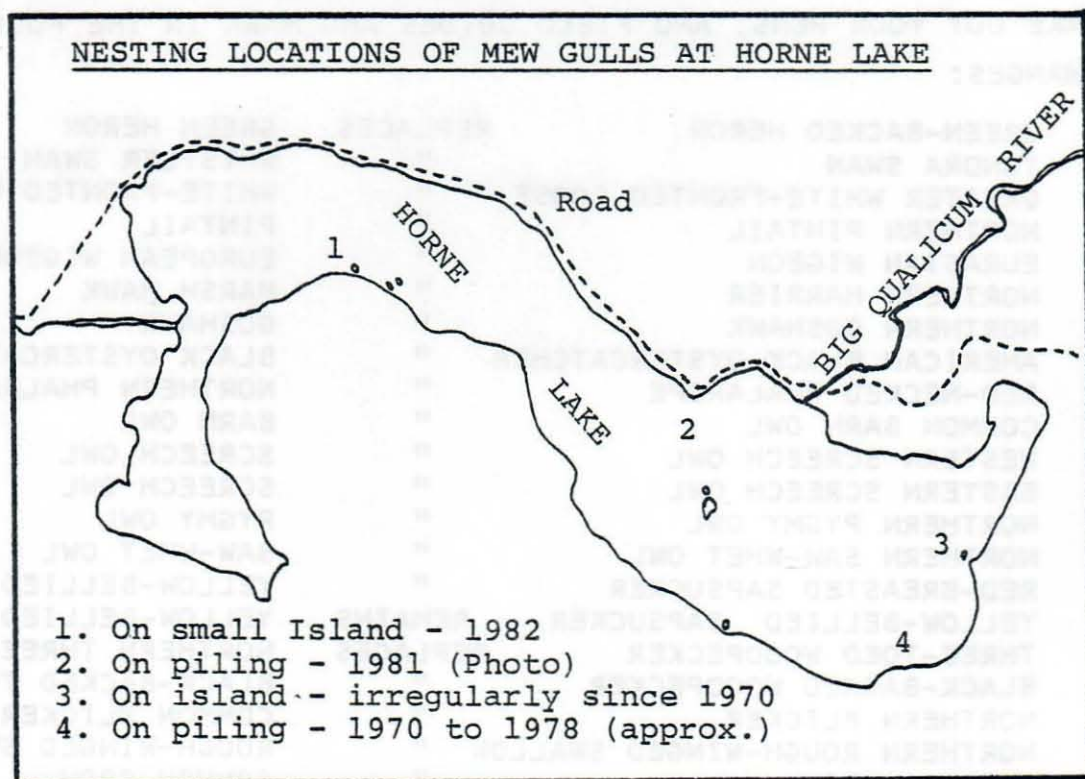
MEW GULLS NESTING AT HORNE LAKE

On Vancouver Island, the Mew Gull is a common winter resident species. During the early summer months small numbers nest on fresh water lakes. In 1970 Wayne Campbell (Syesis Vol. 3:5-14) reported ten known nesting locations in south western British Columbia including Kennedy Lake, Sproat Lake and Cowichan Lake on Vancouver Island. Horne Lake was not mentioned.

Bob Addison of Nanaimo has visited and summer camped at Horne Lake since 1942. He reports gulls being present as far back as he can remember. In 1981 he photographed a Mew Gull nest with two downy young, on a piling in Horne Lake about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the outlet to the Big Qualicum River. To date he has located Mew Gulls nesting at four locations (see accompanying map). In 1982 about eight adults were present.

Mew Gulls are also seen at Spider and Illusion Lakes neadby, but whether they nest at these locations is unknown.

Bill Merilees



"TO SEE A MOCKINGBIRD"

OUR FIRST SITING OF A MOCKINGBIRD IN NANAIMO THIS YEAR, MAY NOT BE A RARE ONE IN THE YEARS AHEAD. AN ARTICLE IN THE JOURNAL "AMERICAN BIRDS"- JULY 1982, LINKS THE NORTHEASTERN EXTENSION OF THE BIRD'S RANGE TO THE SPREAD OF THE PLANT ROSA MULTIFLORA INTRODUCED FROM JAPAN. THE BIRD IS ATTRACTED TO THE BERRIES ON ORNAMENTAL BUSHES, AND WHEN IT OCCURS NORTH OF ITS RANGE, IS FOUND IN URBAN SETTINGS RATHER THAN IN WILD BUSH. MOCKINGBIRDS ARE SLENDER-BILLED, LONG-TAILED BIRDS, GREY ABOVE, GREYISH-WHITE UNDERNEATH, WITH TWO WHITE WING BARS, AND A WIDE WHITE WING PATCH ON THE BLACK WINGS. THEY OFTEN FLICK THEIR LONG BLACK TAILS THAT HAVE DISTINCTIVE WHITE OUTER TAIL FEATHERS.

SIMILAR BIRDS INCLUDE THE NORTHERN SHRIKE, WHICH HAS A BLACK FACE MASK, AND THE TOWNSEND'S SOLITAIRE, WHICH HAS A WHITE EYE-RING AND A DARK GREY BREAST.

THE MOCKINGBIRD IMITATES OTHER BIRD CALLS AND SONGS, USUALLY REPEATING A PHRASE SEVERAL TIMES. MOCKINGBIRDS FEED ON INSECTS AND FRUITS. ITS CLOSEST NESTING RANGE IS NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, ALTHOUGH A FEMALE MOCKINGBIRD BUILT A NEST AND LAID INFERTILE EGGS IN VICTORIA SEVERAL YEARS AGO.

IT IS CONSIDERED A RARE TO CASUAL BIRD IN SOUTHWESTERN B.C. THE LOWER MAINLAND HAS HAD TWENTY SITINGS OVER THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS. THE MOCKINGBIRD CAN MAKE ITS APPEARANCE AT ANY TIME OF THE YEAR, AND MAY STAY SEVERAL MONTHS IN ONE LOCATION. THE BIRD ARRIVED IN DECEMBER AT MALASPINA COLLEGE, AND WAS FIRST IDENTIFIED BY PETER VAN KERKORLE. IT COULD BE FOUND EACH DAY WITHIN A SMALL AREA, FEEDING ON COTONEASTER ROTUNDIFOLIA BERRIES. IT REMAINED UNTIL FEBRUARY, AND WAS PHOTOGRAPHED BY RICK IKONA.

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN THIS WINTER, MAYBE NANAIMO WILL GET ANOTHER SPECIAL VISIT FROM THE MOCKINGBIRD.

DEREK CONNELLY
MARGARET HOLM

HIKING IN THE NANOOSE POINT AREA

BY GAIL WISEMAN

NANOOSE POINT HAS SOME WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIKING AND NATURE WATCHING. THE WHOLE AREA IS A NETWORK OF OLD ROADS AND TRAILS. THE TERRAIN IS INCREDIBLY VARIED: COASTAL BLUFFS AND MEADOWS WITH ARBUTUS AND GARRY OAK, DENSELY WOODED VALLEYS AND DRAWS, LAKES AND LOW LYING SWAMPY AREAS, AND OLD FARM PASTURES AND ROCKY OUTCROPPINGS. ONE CAN SPEND DAYS HERE EXPLORING, BUT THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO SEE.

THE HISTORY OF THE AREA IS VERY INTERESTING, AND HAS BEEN WRITTEN UP IN HISTORY OF NANOOSE BAY, VANCOUVER ISLAND B.C. PUBLISHED FIRST BY THE NANOOSE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE IN 1958, AND THE NANOOSE BAY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT- LADIES AUXILIARY IN 1980. BE SURE TO WATCH FOR THE OLD SITES OF THE BRICKYARD AND POWDER WORKS WHICH WERE ACTIVE IN EARLIER TIMES.

NANOOSE BLUFFS

THE NANOOSE BLUFFS ARE ONE OF THE BEST PLACES I KNOW TO STUDY COASTAL SPRING WILD FLOWERS. THE BLUFFS ARE CLOSE TO NANAIMO AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE BY CAR. THE MEADOWS ARE PERFECT FOR AN AFTERNOON WALK WITH A CHILD, OR AN OUT-OF-TOWN GUEST. TAKE A CAMERA, OR SKETCH BOOK, AND A PICNIC LUNCH FOR THIS IS A PLACE TO LINGER.

FROM MID-MARCH THROUGH JUNE THERE IS AN EVER CHANGING ARRAY OF CAMAS, SHOOTING STAR, SPRING GOLD, MOUSE-EARED CHICKWEED, FRINGE CUP, SAXIFRAGE, DEATH CAMAS, SEA BLUSH, LARKSPUR AND MONKEY FLOWER. TAKE THE HIGHER LEVELS TO FIND CHOCOLATE AND CURLY LILIES AMIDST THE TREES, OR GO LOWER DOWN TO FIND SEA BLUSH, BLUE-EYED MARY AND STONECROP. LISTEN AND LOOK FOR BLUE GROUSE IN MATING PLUMAGE ON THE HEIGHTS OF THE RIDGE. WATCH FOR BLUE HARVEST LILIES (BRODIAEA), WILD HYACINTH AND BOTH HOOKER'S AND NODDING ONIONS, AMIDST THE WOOLLY SUNFLOWERS AND YARROW AS THE GRASSES DRY LATER IN THE SEASON.

ACCESS: THROUGH GARRY OAKS SUBDIVISION.

NANOOSE HILL

THERE ARE ACTUALLY TWO HILLS, BOTH WITH INCREDIBLE VIEWS OF THE WHOLE COAST. BOTH ARE REACHED VIA LINK DRIVE (GARRY OAKS SUBDIVISION). FOR THE HIGHEST OF THE TWO HILLS (855'), TAKE A LITTLE TRAIL OFF TO THE LEFT, JUST PAST THE WATER TOWER. WORK YOUR WAY UP THE HILL ON A TRAIL.

FOR THE OTHER HILL, CONTINUE WELL PAST THE WATER TANK TO THE SUMMIT (5 TO 10 MINUTES), AND THEN TAKE THE RIGHT FORK. (THE LEFT FORK DROPS DOWN INTO THE OLD RANCHPOINT FARM AND BEGINS THE "CIRCUIT" HIKE AROUND THE WHOLE POINT.)

LOOK FOR ONE-FLOWERED CANCER ROOT AND A HOST OF OTHER SPRING FLOWERS ON THE GRASSY SHOULDERS OF THIS HILL.

THE CIRCUIT HIKE

(NANOOSE HILL THROUGH THE OLD FARM TO RICHARD'S AND WALLIS POINT, THEN BACK VIA BRICKYARD BAY AND THE OLD LOGGING AND FARM ROADS.)

ACCESS BY ROAD FROM NANOOSE HILL OR FROM BRICKYARD BAY. FOR THE LATTER TAKE THE ROAD THROUGH SCHOONER COVE AS FAR TO THE END OF THE POINT AS POSSIBLE, THEN JUST BEFORE IT TAKES A SHARP LEFT, PARK AND CONTINUE STRAIGHT TO BRICKYARD BAY, PASSING THROUGH A CLOSED GREY METAL GATE.

ACCESS BY WATER FROM LANTZVILLE TO WALLIS OR RICHARD'S POINT.

YOU CAN DO THE WHOLE CIRCUIT IN A LEISURELY 4 TO 5 HOURS, OR EXPLORE SMALLER TRAIL LOOPS FOR AN HOUR OR SO. SOME OF THE HIKE PASSES THROUGH RESTRICTED AREAS SO WATCH FOR SIGNS.

NANOOSE HILL TO FARM HOUSE

TAKE THE LEFT FORK WHEN THE TRAIL FROM THE WATERTANK REACHES THE HIGH POINT OF NANOOSE HILL. FOLLOW THE TRAIL DOWNHILL THROUGH A WOODED DRAW. AT THE BOTTOM, THE TRAIL OPENS OUT INTO PASTURE LITTERED WITH OLD FARM IMPLEMENTS. STRAIGHT AHEAD IS POWDER POINT ROAD- THE PAVED ROAD WHICH RUNS FROM NORTHWEST BAY ROAD TO THE MILITARY BASE. THE RIGHT FORK GOES TO THE NAVAL

BASE WHICH IS RESTRICTED. THE PAVED ROAD TO THE LEFT WILL RETURN YOU TO YOUR CAR VIA ENOS LAKE.

FARM TO RICHARD'S POINT

TAKE THE LEFT FORK THROUGH THE FARM, AND JUST PAST A COW BARN TAKE ANOTHER FORK TO THE RIGHT. (THE LEFT WILL TAKE YOU ACROSS THE OLD FARM ROADS TO BRICKYARD BAY.) THIS RIGHT FORK HEADS DOWN TO THE MILITARY CAMPSITE AT RICHARD'S POINT. ON THIS ROAD ABOUT HALF WAY ALONG, YOU WILL PASS A WONDERFUL, HUGE OLD STONE STRUCTURE... AN OLD STORAGE BUILDING FROM THE POWDER WORKS.

RICHARD'S POINT TO WALLIS POINT

AT THE BEACH, TAKE A TRAIL TO THE LEFT AND FOLLOW IT ALONG UNTIL IT CLIMBS THE CLIFF. FOLLOW THE TRAIL ALONG THE CLIFF THROUGH THE GARRY OAK AND ARBUTUS TREES TO WALLIS POINT. WALLIS POINT IS CONNECTED TO THE MAINLAND OF NANOOSE POINT AT LOW TIDE, AND IS LOVELY TO EXPLORE. BE SURE TO COME HERE IN EARLY SPRING WHEN THE WHOLE AREA DANCES WITH CURLY LILIES. THE SOUTHERN EXPOSURE HAS A WHOLE FIELD OF LILIES AND SEA BLUSH BLOOMING EARLIER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE I KNOW. BEAUTIFUL!

WALLIS POINT TO BRICKYARD BAY (VIA 2ND BAY)

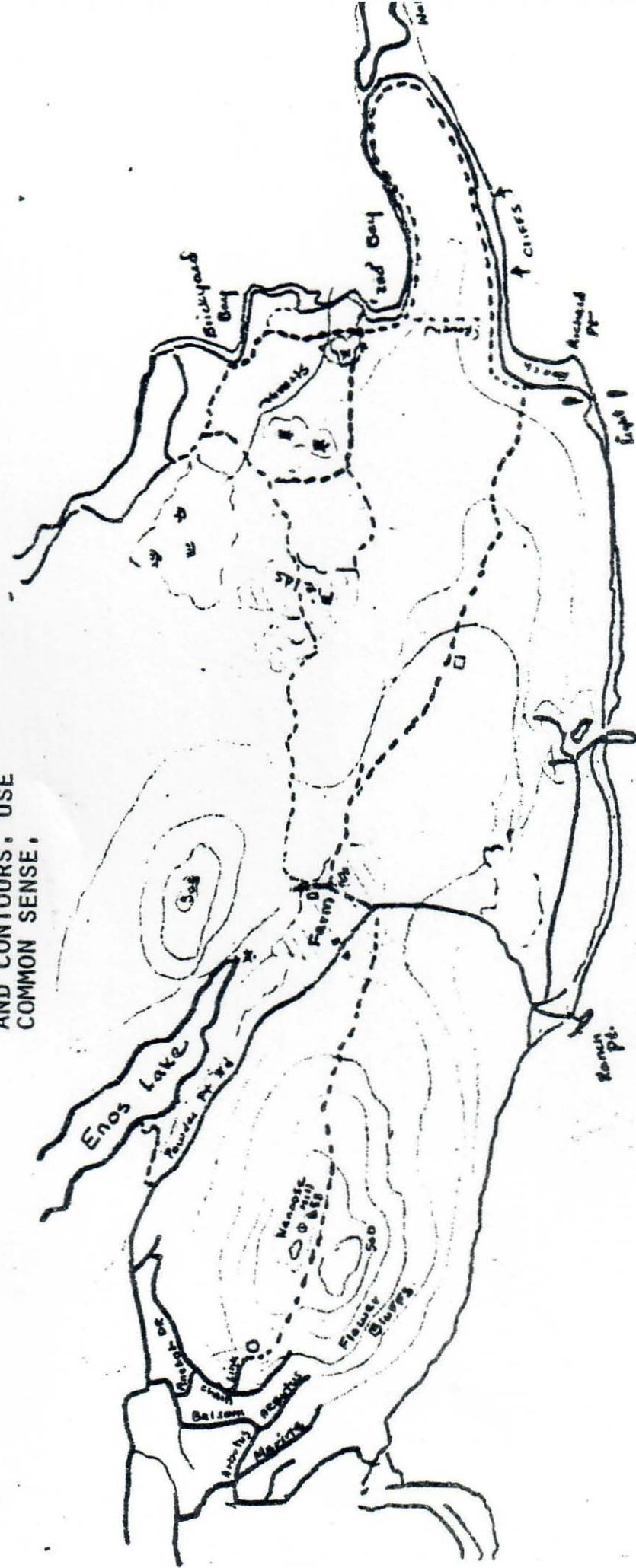
FROM WALLIS POINT FOLLOW THE TRAIL ABOVE THE BEACH ALONG THE COASTLINE. WALK THE BEACH IF YOU LIKE, BUT IT IS HARD GOING AND SLIPPERY, AND IMPASSIBLE AT HIGHTIDE. THE TRAIL TURNS TOWARD THE BEACH HALF WAY ALONG, BUT IF YOU RUMMAGE AROUND YOU WILL FIND A FORK WHICH CONTINUES THROUGH BRUSH, UNTIL YOU ARE WALKING ALONG AT THE HEAD OF THE BAY. EVENTUALLY YOU WILL COME TO A GRASSY LOGGING ROAD. THIS HEADS DOWN TO THE BEACH IN ONE DIRECTION, AND BACK UP TO THE FARM IN THE OTHER DIRECTION. THE FIRST RIGHT WILL TAKE YOU OUT PAST A POND AND ACROSS A CREEK, THEN ROUGHLY ALONG THE COASTLINE TO BRICKYARD BAY. YOU CAN ALSO PICK UP A TRAIL AT THE BEACH TO DO THE SAME THING, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO FIND THE ONE SPOT WHERE THE CREEK CAN BE CROSSED.

ONCE IN BRICKYARD BAY, TAKE THE ROAD UP TOWARDS SCHOONER COVE AND THEN ONTO AN OLD ROAD WHICH ANGLES IN FROM THE LEFT. FOLLOW IT PAST A GATE AND BARRIER, THEN CURVING PAST OLD PASTURES, SWAMPS AND TREES. KEEP TO THE MAIN TRACK UNLESS YOU WANT TO EXPLORE. AT THE ONLY MAJOR FORK, TURN LEFT TO RETURN TO THE OLD FARM.

NANOOSE POINT

-ROUGH MAP OF TRAILS
AND CONTOURS, USE
COMMON SENSE.

Schooner
Cove



NANOOSE HARBOUR

CANADA COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMENT PROGRAM - 1982

SELF GUIDING TOURIST ENRICHMENT

In January the Nanaimo Field Naturalists' Club received funding from the Canada Community Development Program to the amount of \$11,278, to hire four persons to work on a tourist enrichment project in co-operation with the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division in Nanaimo.

In addition to producing the two pamphlets attached, trail mapping was done at Elk Falls, Helliwell, Littel Qualicum, Rath Trevor, MacMillan, Newcastle Island and Hemer Provincial Parks. The purpose of these maps was produce a series of signs for the trails systems indicating their layout and 'You Are Here' locations.

These publications and maps were given to the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Division where they will be printed and produced for use in the appropriate parks.

The four persons hired were Janice Bennett, Kathleen Francis, Colette Daudelin and Lori Warick. From their mapping and field work they then had to write the text, produce the graphics, paste up the layout and have the publications printed, 2000 Newcastle Island and 6000 Macmillan. In this process they learned a lot about the publication production process and the skills required.

Being able to work outdoors for a good part of this work was both enjoyable and educational, especially as they had to identify many plants, animals and birds seen and produce sketches and research these for the brochures.

It is hoped these pamphlets and signs will be upgraded and printed as regular Provincial Parks Branch publications and signs.

This project was supervised by Kim Goldberg and Bill Merilees and ran smoothly. Red tape and pages and pages of information and forms required by all manner of agencies was a real burden.

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