

# THE THRUSH

Published by the Nanaimo District Naturalists

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## MERRY CHRISTMAS

### ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

DECEMBER 28TH, 1974 (Saturday)

You should have already received notice about this event but, if you have forgotten to contact us telephone:

Marg Kerridge  
758-9727

or

Anaka van Kerkoerle  
245-2530

to register for the count.

**I M M E D I A T E L Y**

(A party is being planned for the evening, later that same day for all participants).



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Nanaimo  
District  
Naturalists

# TREASURERS REPORT

Marg Kerridge

Balance as of November 15th, 1973 \$ 84.99

## CREDITS

Dues Received	\$ 145.00	
Christmas Cards	31.25	
Bird Count Dues Received	22.00	
Silver Collection	6.63	
Bank Interest	1.79	206.67
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>\$ 291.66</b>

## DEBITS

Audubon Society		
Christmas Bird Count	\$ 58.49	
Barbeque	30.00	
Bulletin		
Cover Paper	37.64	
Printing of Covers	7.60	
Copying of Bulletin	12.50	
Concerned Citizens - Telegram	8.00	
Coffee Supplies	8.22	
Stamps	1.44	
Federation of B.C. Naturalists		
Dues	16.00	
Service Charges (Bank)	.60	
<b>Total Debits</b>		<b>180.49</b>

Cash on Hand November 20th, 1974 \$ 111.17

# PRESIDENTS 3RD ANNUAL REPORT

David C. Kerridge

This is our second full year of activity. The club is now 2 1/2 years old. At our last Annual Meeting, we received the first issue of our quarterly bulletin. Since that time we have received three other editions and a fourth is due within the next week or so. Our quarterly bulletin has certainly been one of our biggest successes as we have received nothing but praise concerning it. It has also given us the opportunity to share some of our experiences and knowledge with others of like interest.

Our last Annual Meeting was brought to a climax with members showing their favourite natural history slides. It was delightful to see these and hear of some of the exciting trips taken by various members of our club.

The month of December gave us our Annual Bird Count followed by a buffet dinner at the President's home. After dinner we tallied the day's score. We had a great count - 92 species and over 13,000 individuals. The turnout for this was the reason for our success --- 27 persons participated.

Our indoor meetings this past spring and fall were held at Malaspina College on the fourth Friday of each month. In January we had Mr. Potts give us a talk and slides on local flowers. Dave Stirling took us on a tour of Australia in February. Stan Levereaux told us about some of the interesting projects various groups (including the Fish & Wildlife Branch) are doing to increase waterfowl populations. Our own Kathy Mounce gave us a grand introduction to seashore creatures in April. The fall program began with an enlightening introduction to local native artifacts and their original uses by Graham Beard. The October meeting saw us heading across the glaciers of Kluane National Park with George MacKenzie-Grieve. Our indoor meetings are generally well attended with an exception or two.

Probably our best turn-out as a club has been to the annual barbeque. Our second one was held this last June at the van Kerkoerles and was a terrific success with lots of food, lots of wine, lots of gaiety, and lots of people ---- over 60. A good time was had by all!

One area that has definitely not had the response of the membership has been our outings. We have called for outings to Rhododendron Lake, Marshall Farms, the Vancouver Aquarium, Nanaimo Estuary (bird oriented), Gabriola Island, Mt. Arrowsmith, Rosewall Creek, Green Mountain, the shale pits and several others. The outing to Miracle Beach was our second attempt at an overnigher -- a complete washout.

As mentioned the response has been poor (to say the least) with no response to some and between two and eight for most others. Our first attempt at leaving the Island saw ten adults and eight children visit the Vancouver Aquarium---most enjoyable and interesting. However, the usual response to these trips being as poor as it has been has left us wondering whether or not these should be reduced in frequency or abandoned completely.

Our membership has remained steady this year with thirty-three paid up memberships, mostly families -- down two from last year. This is probably due to our lack of publicity -- we have not attempted to publicize our meetings or make our club known to the community in any way. This is one area that definitely needs future attention.

As president I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members of the executive that have put so much into making this another good year for the group. They are:

Mollie Byrne  
Mrs. Winnie Espitalier  
Mrs. Barbara Graves  
Mrs. Margaret Kerridge  
Mrs. Anneke van Kerkoerle  
Elaine Waddell  
Allan Jayryzki  
Peter van Kerkoerle

As far as the future is concerned, who knows? We need new ideas and new blood in the executive to help in moving the club ahead to the next plateau in its development. It is always good to have fresh ideas, fresh enthusiasm. Members at large should pass suggestions and ideas on to the executive to aid them in developing the programs -- of particular need is suggested speakers for our indoor meetings.

Of importance in the near future is our Christmas Bird Count. We gained twelve species this past year over the 1972 count and hope to give our neighbour to the south (Luncan) a run-for-their-money. We need your support to do this. This year we will have a boat at our disposal which should help.

All-in-all it has been a reasonably successful year and we hope for many more. I have enjoyed the position of president and have certainly received much support from both the executive and membership. I would like to thank you for this opportunity and wish you every success in the years ahead.

*David C. Kerridge.*

## SUDDENLY, LAST SUMMER

Mollie Byrne

..... an unexpected opportunity came along and I was given the chance to go on a plant collecting trip for the Botanical Garden at U.B.C. So, late in July I set out on a journey to collect seeds and seedlings as well as take cuttings from trees and shrubs in the different "biogeoclimatic zones" of British Columbia. To ensure effective coverage of a number of zones with the minimum of mileage I used a map drawn up by Dr. V.J. Krajina, a B.C. ecologist. If you are interested in variations in vegetational patterns throughout the province this is a fascinating map and I will bring it to a future meeting. Copies may be obtained from the Department of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, Victoria, B.C.

I started working in the "Cariboo-Aspen" zone and moved east to the "Interior Douglas Fir" area in the Rocky Mountain Trench. On the return journey via a Southern Trans-Provincial route I was able to revisit most of the zones but in slightly different areas. After cuttings were collected they were bundled in moist sphagnum moss, wrapped in freezer paper and stored in an insulated cooler. For each type of plant there was a label to attach and a form to fill out, so my evenings were busy. Provincial campsites were ideal offices. I backed my station wagon up to the table, opened up its back door and worked out of it onto the table. Towards the end of August it was always a race between myself and the waning light. I usually won. Whenever I came within range of an airport I would fill a cardboard box with my bundles of cuttings and airfreight it back to Vancouver. The seeds and seedlings stayed with me and the car got fuller and fuller while the space for me got less and less. We just made it back.

The plant which pleased me most was Silverberry, a shrub that grows by water courses in the dry interior. Its leaves look as if they have been dusted with fine white silt and its berries resemble small silver-frosted green olives. I must have driven by it many times before, but never stopped to look.

The place that I liked best was Corbett Lake Country Inn, ten miles above Merrit, in country that looks like the Cariboo, but which is really in the "Ponderosa-pine-bunchgrass" zone. This is a big log lodge by a small lake in a prairie full of flowers. In winter there is skating and cross-country skiing. I must go again.

All-in-all I had a wonderful time and learned a great deal. Perhaps one day I shall see some of my cuttings, grown up and taking their places in the native garden areas of the new and developing U.B.C. Botanical Garden.

The first field trip of our 1974-75 season was held at Rosewall Creek Provincial Park on September 21st. Summer was stretching into a glorious "Indian Summer" this year and few people turned up due to their still being on "vacation". Not that they were not interested, but there just seems to be so many things to do on a given weekend, and this is more and more your field trip planner's problem. Anyway.. ten of us took the path up the river in the morning and spent a leisurely time looking at a variety of flora, including yew and cottonwood. The river was at a record low this year and we crossed back and forth looking for specimens of "dallasite", a rock favoured by lapidaries.

Rosewall Creek flows out of an area with classic pillow lava structures. It is the alteration of interspheroidal material from this formation which is the source of this ornamental rock. Years ago someone picked up pebbles of this material on a beach below Dallas Road in Victoria. Not knowing what it was they just called it "dallasite".

In our geological history Island volcanoes erupted, or flows occurred under sea water. Certain lavas were erupted in just the right quantities to maintain the right balance between cooling and onward flow to give rise to sort of bulbous budding which was caused by the rapid chilling action of the water on the highly fluid lava. This chilling would cause spalling off of glass fragments from the outer crusts of the pillows and these partially filled the inter-spheroidal spaces with breccia when these spaces existed due to the failure of growing pillows to fit perfectly together. Occasionally one of these pillows would crack during expansion, and a portion of its liquid contents would be spilled into these spaces. All this contributed to the varied patterns we find today in these river worn and beach tumbled cobbles.

Spaces which remain unfilled become the home of crystallized materials. It is not uncommon to pick up one of these stones and note a "pocket" or vug which contains terminated crystals, usually quartz, damaged by years of beating about in the river. Up in the "source area" you find excellent examples of these containing nice quartz, calcite, zeolite, prehnite and epidote crystals in euhedral form, if you are lucky enough to find recent road building or are in company of a muscular, hammer wielding rockhound.

Further petrological discussion will be too scientific for this

report, but is of great interest to the student.

An attempt to visit the fish hatchery near the mouth of Rosewall did not materialize due to the fact that there was a locked gate, and it was such a fine, hot day. Most of the people wished to visit the beaches in the area or go elsewhere instead. I returned to the Creek to hunt for more rocks and feast on the salal berries which were plentiful along the trail.





## GABRIOLA ISLAND

Winnie Helem

On Saturday, October 26th at 1:00 P.M., ten members of the Nanaimo District Naturalists met at the Gabriola Ferry landing for a trip to the Island. On reaching Gabriola Island we first followed a faint trail on the top of the high cliffs above Northumberland Channel. We had a good view of Harmac across the water. As we all found out, you need good walking shoes for this area. It is heavily wooded with second growth fir and arbutus. The undergrowth is a thicket of salal.

Coming back to the car we proceeded to the Malaspina Galleries; those odd formations in the rocks produced by wave action on the sandstone.

Our next stop was Pilot Bay where the early freighters picked up a pilot to escort them into Nanaimo Harbour. Crossing a short neck of land we saw Taylor Bay with its nice sandy beach and summer cottages.

Then some of us explored the beaches of the northeast coast until we were abeam of Entrance Island Lighthouse. Unfortunately, the tide was fairly high. At low tide one can walk the sandstone beach all the way from Pilot Bay to the area opposite Entrance Island.

As a birding expedition it could not be called a huge success, as many of the waterfowl did not seem to have migrated yet. However, it was quite an enjoyable outing with many things of general interest.

## NANAIMO RIVER ESTUARY

Anaka van Kerkoerle

It was raining, with everything very grey looking. On our way to our meeting place at the Nanaimo River bridge, we spotted 5 trumpeter swans sleeping in a flooded farm field.

Later on when we stopped along the Nanaimo River in order to look at a flock of golden eye ducks. We were surprised by a touching display of the same 5 trumpeter swans flying right over our heads.

With six naturalists we next headed to the dikes on the flats. Although the weather was not too cooperative we noticed many ducks in the morning. There were a lot of golden eyes of both sexes, a few buffle heads and a flock of pin tails.

We saw several king fishers hanging in the air looking for food, and were really lucky in spotting six snow buntings at the end of the marsh; not a very common site on the island.

## COOKING

### CORNER

#### OAT SQUARES

4 cups oats  
1 1/4 cup brown sugar  
1 cup margarine  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2 teaspoons baking powder

Mix oats, brown sugar and baking powder. Add melted margarine and vanilla.

Spread - 4 8" x 8" tins  
Bake - at 375° for about 12 minutes  
Cool - in pans for five minutes  
Cut - squares while warm

## BOOK

### REVIEW

through. For three years they lived in a remote part of this northern wilderness, thirty miles from the nearest Indian village and over two hundred miles from the nearest road, railroad or telephone. Daily living was an adventure in itself; the violence of a cow-moose fighting off Indian dogs, the timber wolf encountered face to face, nights filled with the unearthly beauty of wolves howling, or the raw terror of an approaching forest fire. As winter approached, their isolation was increased by storms and deep snow and forty-below zero weather. But they accepted the conditions of life in this valley.

In return they were able to come to know and love a "hostile" land and its inhabitants, human and animal, as few have known any part of the earth.

This book is a good study of nature north of the Takla Lake area.

(Courtesy of the  
Langley Field Naturalist)

## FALL

### NOTES

A Thick-billed Kingbird was authentically identified approximately a month ago in the Qualicum area. This bird is also very rare and is most commonly found in the Arizona-New Mexico regions of North America.

## DRIFTWOOD VALLEY

by Theodore Stanwell Fletcher

One hundred years after the West had been pioneered, a remarkable team, a naturalist and her trapper-husband penetrated a totally new frontier to the north. They were not just passing

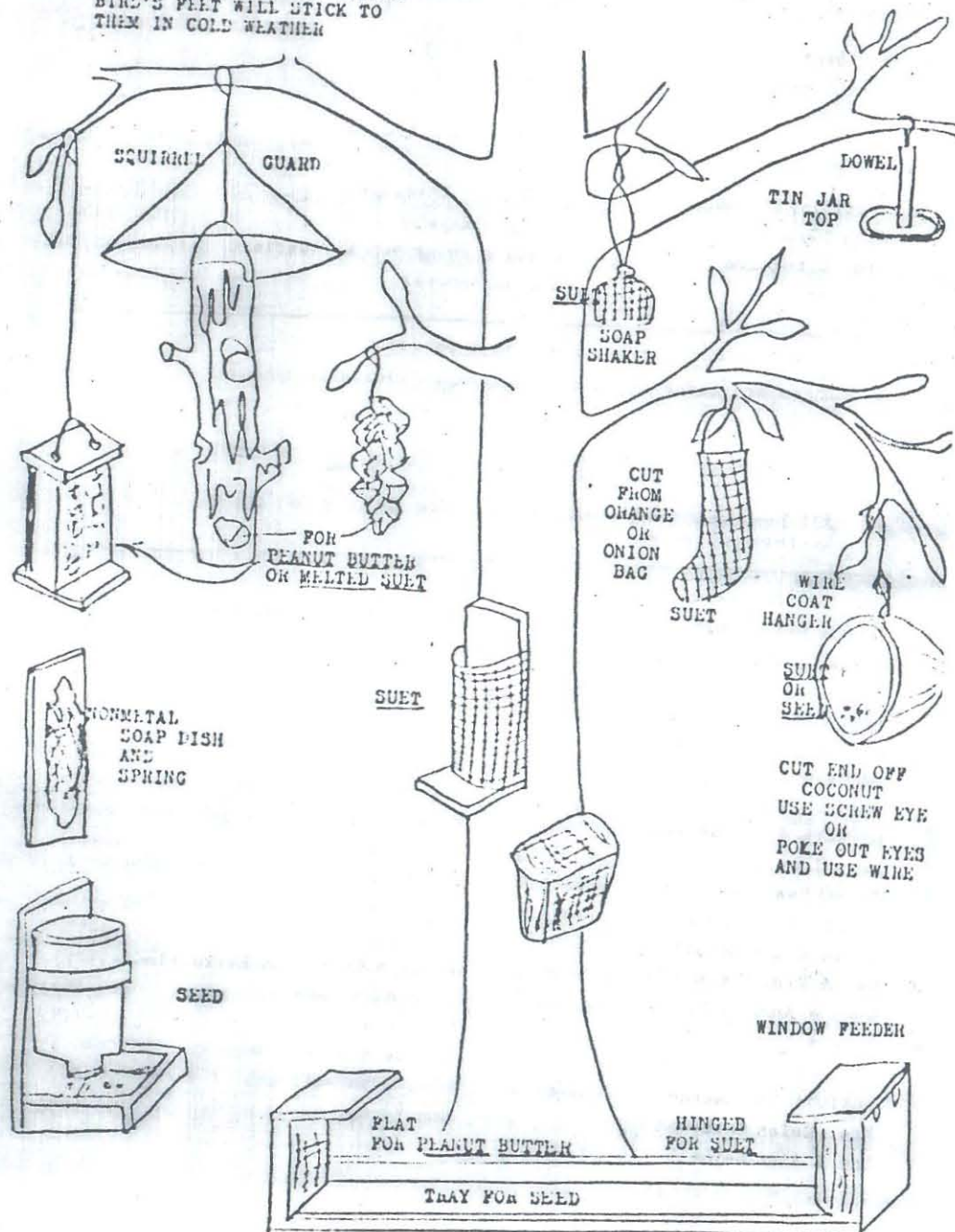
### EXTREMELY RARE BIRD SIGHTED

On Sunday, December 5th, a Cattle Egret was sighted in the Brickyard road area, near Lantzville.

This species only recently naturalized to North America is a native of the Old World, and is most likely found in pasture areas feeding on insects. Please report any sightings of this bird in your area to the Provincial Museum in Victoria.

## SIMPLE FEEDERS YOU CAN MAKE

DO NOT USE ANY METAL PARTS:  
BIRD'S FEET WILL STICK TO  
THEM IN COLD WEATHER



NANAIMO DISTRICT NATURALISTS  
RETIRING EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President	David Kerridge	758-9727
Plant Director	Mollie Byrne	758-9773
Rock Director	Mrs. Winnie Lupitalier	758-7606
	Mrs. Barbara Graves	390-4750
Editor	Allan Hawryzki	758-9355
Secretary/Treasurer	Mrs. Marg Kerridge	758-9727
Youth Director	Kathy Soumes	753-1470
Bird Directors	Anaka & Peter van Kerkoerle	245-2930
Convener	Elaine Waddell	758-7485

MEMBERSHIPS

There are three types of memberships available in the Nanaimo District Naturalists:

- \$5.00/year = Family
- 4.00/year = Single
- 2.00/year = Students & Old Age Pensioners

All new memberships and renewals are payable to the Secretary/Treasurer.

The following is a complete list of our paid up members:

Jean & Neil Bourne	758-5156	Frances & John Morrison	468-7472
Mollie Byrne	758-9773	Kathy & Lon Kounce	754-2460
Carol & David Denis	245-3064	Mrs. Phyllis Mardoch	754-2007
Mrs. Elaine Donkotch	245-3289	Jean & Bob Hicks	754-2419
Mrs. Winnie Lupitalier	758-7606	Joseph Petershofer	245-2683
Agnus & Alf Plett	390-4331	David Richards	753-0295
Mrs. Dorothy Gailus	758-6847	Marion & Bill Hicker	758-5003
Barbara & Bob Graves	390-4750	John & May Roy	754-2247
Mrs. Irma Grew	245-2876	John Russell	390-4110
Allan Hawryzki	758-9355	Kathy Soumes	753-1470
Winnie & George Halem	468-7475	John Suxer	390-4604
Greta & Rex Hendrie	758-7949	Ivor Tucker	753-2728
Mr. & Mrs. Elvin Isauk	245-2972	Anaka & Peter van Kerkoerle	245-2930
Gwen & Angus Johnston	245-2344	At & Hank Vansen	245-4603
Mary & Lave Kerridge	758-9727	Elaine Waddell	758-7485
Kitty & Ivan Larnder	754-2520	Lenise & Gordon Webb	758-6185
Betty & Ion Macrae	758-6779	Mrs. Jean Williams	754-6578
Mrs. Helen Matheson		Ern Young	754-6933
Una & Alan Meynell	246-9103		