

NANAIMO DISTRICT NATURALISTS

Published by the Nanaimo Natural History Society

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OUR SPRING PROGRAM
OF MEETINGS AND FIELD TRIPS
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SERIES # 1-2-1 1974



Nanaimo
District
Naturalists

OUR SPRING PROGRAM

- MARCH 22, 1974 - (Friday) MEETING at 8:00 P.M., Room 108, Malaspina College. Mr. Stan Levereaux, education officer for the Fish and Wildlife Branch, will be speaking to us about "Our Provincial Fish & Wildlife Branch's Concern for Naturalists." See you there.
- MARCH 23, 1974 - (Saturday) Bird outing to Nanaimo River Estuary. We will be meeting at the Cedar Bridge, on the road to Harmac, at 9:00 A.M. It should end about noon.
- APRIL 7, 1974 - (Sunday) Trip to Marshall Farm at Little Qualicum. Meet at the Log Cabin, Northbrook Mall, at 1:00 P.M.
- APRIL 20, 1974 - (Saturday) On this date we are planning a trip to the Vancouver Public Aquarium. Please let A. van Kerkoerle or M. Kerriage know as soon as possible if you are coming in order that arrangements may be made for a group rate. Meet at the C.P.K. Ferry dock at 7:30 A.M. and we will return on the 8:00 P.M. sailing the same day. Return ferry trip will cost \$4.00.
- APRIL 26, 1974 - (Friday) MEETING at 8:00 P.M., Room 108, Malaspina College. Kathy Mounce and Tom Hutton will be presenting an illustrated lecture on the "Marine Life of British Columbia". Hope you can attend.
- APRIL 28, 1974 - (Sunday) Expedition to Gordon River and Skutz Falls. Meet at 10:00 A.M. on the south side of the Harbour Park parking lot. Bring your lunch. This trip should be especially rewarding for the pink easter lilies and other wild flowers to be seen at this time.
- MAY 10, 1974 - (Friday) Local trip to the late Dr. Berkeley's Garden. Meet at the Log Cabin, Northbrook at 7:00 P.M. This unique garden includes plants from around the world.
- MAY 25 & 26, 1974 - (Saturday & Sunday) Overnight camping trip to Miracle Beach Park. This is a developed park with campsite facilities, nature house, and marine beach. There is an excellent low tide on this weekend. Please let Marg Kerriage or Aneka van Kerkoerle know if you can attend beforehand. We will be leaving the Log Cabin, Northbrook at 9:00 A.M. Saturday.
- JUNE 8, 1974 - (Saturday) Rhododendron Lake trip. We will be leaving the Log Cabin at 12:30 P.M. Bring your cameras. Hopefully this relatively rare species of pink rhododendron should be at its photogenic best.
- JUNE 9, 1974 - (Sunday) Our Second Annual Barbeque. It will be held at the home of the van Kerkoerle's who have graciously donated their home for this event. It will begin 4:30 P.M. Further details will be sent closer to the event.

HERE COME THE NATURALISTS

Robert W. Hero, Manitoba Dept of Mines, Resources, & Environmental Management.

Once upon a time the little old lady with the binoculars around her neck and a sweet penchant for watching Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers was a comic strip character. But things have changed. That little old lady is now speaking out with a voice that is heard and listened to.

Not only has the wave of concern for the environment carried her to the crest of popular support, but it turns out she spends more money annually on her hobby than do the angler or hunter---both of whom have long been respected users of the outdoors. Industry has even started using the information gathered by nature enthusiasts, turning bits of lore into ways of protecting the environment---and thereby all of us.

For instance, when a plane hits a bird, the plane is in danger. In fact, bird strikes cause about \$2 million worth of damages to planes every year in Canada alone. A smart industry now makes use of birds of prey trained by falconers to drive gulls away from airfields, thus reducing the hazards of bird strikes.

Studies of the natural history of small and economically unimportant fishes have led to techniques for assessing stream pollution. Records of nesting success of songbirds have provided an important measure of the effects of pesticides on wildlife.

Yes, naturalists are playing an important role in our way of life. And they are starting to recognize that their role is important. A measure of this was the recent full page membership advertisement by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists taken in Time magazine.

But while this is important, industry and governments---and indeed, naturalists themselves---should recognize two facts: there are an awful lot of naturalists; and on the whole they spend more money on their activities than do hunters and anglers. This is the sort of thing that gets attention.

How much money do naturalists spend on their hobby? Some tentative answer to this question have been provided by Professor M. Timothy Myres, Biology Department, University of Calgary.

In 1968 Dr. Myres published the results of "A sample survey of the expenditures of naturalists" in the January-February issue of Canadian Audubon magazine. His study was based on detailed questionnaires returned from 35 members of the Calgary Bird Club, listing personal expenses for 1966. Estimates of expenditures were thought to be conservative "since many of the most active members of the Club did not contribute to the survey, and a number of the more unusual (and large) expenditures reported were omitted from the calculations..."

It turns out that "birdwatching and hiking in the wilderness do involve considerable background expenditures on equipment and supplies, and considerable expenditures on travelling..." Dr. Myres' survey revealed that the individual average expenditure per year on equipment and supplies for the study of natural history was \$199. This breaks down to approximately \$32 per year on books, \$10 per year on subscriptions, and \$4 per year on bird-feeders and nest boxes---all of which are probably annually recurring expenses. Only \$16 was spent on binoculars and telescopes, on the average, but the amount spent for photographic equipment was \$98, and an additional \$20 was spent on films. Clothes and footwear averaged \$14.

The minimum annual figure for travelling expenses was estimated at \$168. Prairie naturalists frequently make long trips to indulge in their hobbies but the largest amount of travelling is done locally by car. Local field trips were made especially during the spring, summer and fall months. Expenditures for local travelling amounted to about \$114, a large proportion of the total expenses.

In summary, naturalists spend \$199 on equipment and supplies, and \$168 on travelling expenses---a total average annual expenditure of \$367. According to a survey published in 1967 by L.A. Benson of the Canadian Wildlife Service, the average amount spent in Canada in 1961 by all fishermen and hunters was \$180 per person. The average spent by hunters was even less--\$110 each, of which \$50 was spent on equipment, \$23 on travel, and \$37 on supplies, and accommodation.

At first glance this seems surprising, but remember that naturalists travel farther and spend more time in the field.

Their use of the wildlife resource being made over 365 days of the year is compared to a relatively restricted period for hunting and fishing.

Dr. Myres has estimated the number of naturalists in Canada to be at least 800,000. On the basis of his figures, Manitoba, with a population of about 1,000,000 should contain 40,000 naturalists. That's a lot of people spending a lot of money on their hobby. If these people were organized, they could provide a major force in Canada. Many persons interested in nature, however, don't think of themselves as naturalists. Birdwatchers, wildflower photographers, hikers, campers, etc., should realize that they are naturalists.

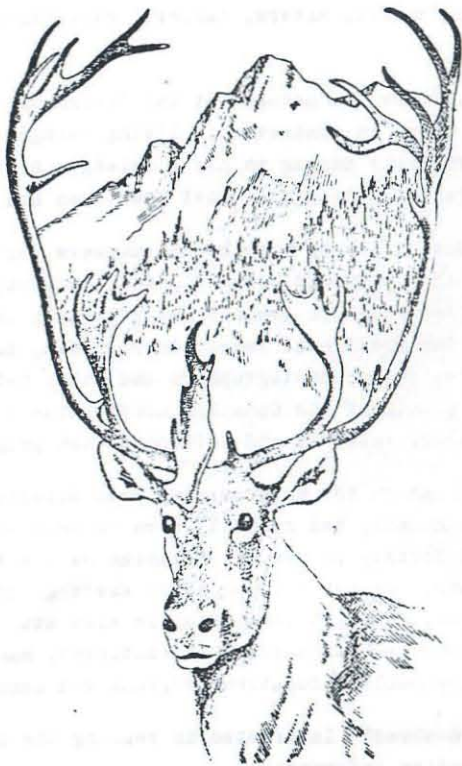
According to Dr. Myers, a naturalist is: "...anyone who obtains pleasure and interest in being in contact with living things in a natural environment, and is gradually adding to his knowledge of them over a period of time..." By this definition even most sportsmen are also naturalists.

Dr. Myres concludes that in view of the numbers of naturalists and the amount of money they spend in pursuit of their hobby"...It would seem that there are good economic grounds for a greatly increased expenditure, particularly at the Provincial level, on providing increased opportunities for these 'birdwatchers, photographers and other nature lovers' to enjoy the animals and plants of the Canadian countryside through establishment of additional parks, reserves and interpretation programs."

A national organization for naturalists, with directors and representative from across the country has recently been formed---what was formerly the Canadian Audubon Society is now the Canadian Nature Federation. Headquarters are in Ottawa, where it is hoped to exert a strong influence on the Federal government. This national body is also attempting to coordinate the efforts of local groups across the continent, many of which are carrying out impressive public education programs and conservation activities.

Want to become involved? Interested in reading the latest natural history news and conservation information?

Looking for an outlet for your nature photos and observations? Anxious to help protect the natural environment? Then join the movement now by supporting one or more of the organizations in this field. They need you—and you need them!



OUR CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Peter van Kerkoerle

Our second Christmas bird count was a success; no doubt about that. The enthusiasm of the many participating club members and the welcome help of our friendly neighbour club from Cowichan made this possible. The weather was good, partly sunny. The only unfavourable factor was the cold, strong wind which made the small land birds harder to find.

I have been asked, "What happens to our notes?". This is a good question. Our notes are entered on special forms provided by the National Audubon Society in the U.S.A. There they are computerized and filed. They then will become available to schools, universities, ornithologists and other science people to be used in their particular studies.

I have heard some university graduates scoff at the way our notes are collected---completely unscientific they say. They wondered how a number of amateurs could collect proper field data useful for scientific studies. Some don't even know their birds. I say, the results have proven them wrong. It has been the trend of our fast changing times that the scientist had to become more and more specialized with each one becoming more and more isolated. Many scientists have lost the necessary contact with others working in closely related fields of study or lost contact with nature where all basic knowledge comes from.

Lately, there is an increasing need for basic field data for many studies. Take for instance global studies such as the influence of DDT on the environment or decline of animal populations through change of habitat. Here one scientist cannot do much. This is a tremendous wide and complicated field of study. Here thoroughness of scientist and technician are needed. And here also the amateur might find his place. Recently he has been more appreciated than ever before. He is found to be reliable, willing to go through great discomforts, he is gifted with a lifetime enthusiasm in his field of interest and very importantly, he will work for nothing and still feel happy.

The National Audubon Society has collected enormous amounts of field data since 1900 and every year there are new naturalists clubs being formed and new counts made. Undoubtedly each club is doing its best to keep the data honest and let rivalry be a thing to wet the appetite and spur the enthusiasm, but not to destroy the needed accuracy, which is basic to all useful information.

It should be understood that our area forms only a very small part of the North American Continent over which the bird counts are held and our data forms likewise a very tiny bit of information. However; I believe it was very much worth the effort.

The day ended with a very enjoyable dinner at Dave and Marg Kerridge's house. I would like to say thanks to everyone involved in making our count the success it was.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT STATISTICS

SPECIES			SPECIES		
	1972	1973		1972	1973
1. Common loon	7	16	34. Sharp shinned hawk		1
2. Arctic loon	17	27	35. Cooper's hawk	5	1
3. Red throated loon	2	13	36. Red tailed hawk	3	2
4. Red necked grebe	19	25	37. Bald eagle	13	32
5. Horned grebe	20	17	38. Marsh hawk	5	1
6. Eared grebe		1	39. Merlin	1	5
7. Western grebe	205	905	40. Am. kestrel		1
8. Pied billed grebe		6	41. Ruffed grouse	2	2
9. Double crested cormorant	20	17	42. Ring necked pheasant	26	3
10. Brandt's cormorant	7	28	43. Am. Coot	26	95
11. Pelagic cormorant	10	36	44. Black oyster c'r	14	2
12. Great blue heron	12	14	45. Killdeer	14	7
13. Trumpeter swan	23	14	46. Black Turnstone	44	9
14. Canada goose	5	4	47. Common snipe	11	5
15. Mallard	197	100	48. Lunlin		280
16. Pintail		396	49. Glaucus W. gull	3542	3492
17. Green winged teal	32	77	50. Herring gull	4	1
18. American wigeon	50	618	51. Kew gull	15	331
19. Ring necked duck	3	38	52. Pigeon guillemot		6
20. Greater scaup		265	53. Marbled murrelet	6	6
21. Lesser scaup	155	234	54. Band tailed pigeon	14	13
22. Common goldeneye	65	70	55. Rock dove		172
23. Barrow's goldeneye	9	42	56. Short eared owl	5	3
24. Buffle head	82	230	57. Belted kingfisher	5	6
25. Harlequin duck	20	17	58. Common red shafted flicker	20	52
26. White W. scoter	23	18	59. Pileated woodpecker	6	1
27. Surf scoter	16	142	60. Hairy woodpecker		1
28. Black scoter	35	9	61. Downy woodpecker	1	1
29. Ruddy duck		8	62. Steller's jay	8	22
30. Hooded merganser	3	4	63. Common raven	21	48
31. Common merganser	19	15	64. North W. crow	797	1597
32. Red Br. merganser	15	27	65. Chestnut backed chickadee	112	192
33. Goshawk		1			
		8			

COOKING

CORNER

Mollie Byrne

OREGON GRAPE JELLY

- Simmer "grapes" with minimum amount of water.
- When they are well cooked you may need to break them up with a potato masher.
- Strain through cheese cloth or an old nylon stocking with feet cut off and top knotted to make a bag is a good strainer.
- For each cup of liquid use one cup of sugar, or a bit less if preferred.
- Bring to a boil and boil until any standard "jelling" test is positive.

This is a tart jelly that can be used on toast etc., or with meat.



SPECIES	1972	1973
66. Red breasted nuthatch		2
67. Brown creeper	6	4
68. Winter wren	18	20
69. Bewick's wren	6	9
70. Long billed marsh wren	6	1
71. American robin	631	840
72. Varied thrush	15	15
73. Golden crowned kinglet	24	90
74. Ruby crowned kinglet	10	25
75. Northern shrike	2	1
76. Starling	1133	749
77. House sparrow		35
78. Red winged blackbird	26	48
79. Brewer's blackbird		201
80. Evening grosbeak	82	62
81. Purple finch	66	67
82. House finch	1	19
83. Pine grosbeak		15
84. American goldfinch	165	1
85. Red crossbill		26
86. Rufous sided towhee	24	33
87. Lark eyed junco		1
88. Oregon junco	234	428
89. White crowned sparrow		1
90. Golden crowned sparrow	1	4
91. Fox sparrow	12	1
92. Song sparrow	30	43
93. Wood duck	3	
94. Peregrine falcon	1	
95. Virginia rail	1	
96. Ring billed gull	1	
97. Common murre	10	
98. Common bushtit	16	

1972

80 species
8,963 individuals

1973

92 species + 1 race
13,178 individuals

AN ADMIRAL SIPS IN STYLE

Elizabeth F. MacDonald

The Red Admiral butterfly - *Vanessa atalanta* - with its striking wing bands of red or orange accenting black tips, flecked with white, once added its colour combination to those of other species, whose graceful movements become a part of Spring and Summer activities. Now, they too, seem to have joined the ranks of disappearing "kungs" in the Ladder of Life, and entomologists are questioning the status of this creature's existence.

One warm September day, in 1965, I had an interesting experience with one of these butterflies - as a matter of fact, it was the only one I had seen that year, while none were sighted the following year.

The insect was flying at the back of the house, landing on sunny areas, where it gently "fanned" the wings up and down, to catch the full benefit of the warming rays. There is something fascinating about the deliberate manner in which butterflies move their wings - so unhurried, so rhythmically.

I dampened a finger, spread some brown sugar along it and carefully approached the butterfly with the ready-made sweet. The proboscis was immediately extended, and I gently touched the legs, causing the creature to climb upon the finger, as it moved away from this unknown contact.

It was quite interesting to watch the insect absorb the nectar. The tip of the proboscis, which was of a reddish hue, was not pointed straight down, like the stinger of a mosquito, for example, but was laid along the finger in a curve, somewhat reminiscent of a hockey stick. In this manner, the liquid was taken up - I think butterflies were the first inventors of the drinking straw! Many times, the curved tip swept back and forth in search of more nectar. I stood for some minutes with him balanced on the finger, then made a small pool of sugar and water on the table and gently lowered the finger tip into the fresh solution. After it had fed for about 15 minutes, I tried to induce the butterfly to leave the finger and settle onto the table, but it flew off. By that time, its "sufficiently must have been sufficed" - quite frankly, I was glad to change my position!

During the period the butterfly fed, I was greatly intrigued by the hairy covering along the lower thorax, above the legs. It had a fur-like appearance and the similarity was heightened by the gentle breeze which constantly ruffled its surface.

This was certainly one way of making the casual acquaintance of an Admiral - who professed no formal relationship with any navy!

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Cliff Williams - The former son of the first Labour MLA in the province of British Columbia and charter member of the Nanaimo District Naturalists will sorrowfully be missed. His avid interest in photography and the geology and fossils of the Nanaimo area was apparent to all who knew him. May his infectious talks about the natural history of our area be remembered by the school children of the Yellow Point region.

Dr. Lewis J. Clark - He was probably the foremost authority on B.C. wild flowers. The publication of his book last September titled "Wild Flowers of British Columbia" won wide acclaim and to date has sold over 9,000 copies. As the result of a lifelong study his book has been described a successful combination of historical background, folklore, and poetry. Dr. Clark, an avid outdoorsman, climbed the Matterhorn in Switzerland in 1962 and several peaks in the Rockies.

*He was also guest speaker at the
Nanaimo District Naturalists
Oct 20/73 meeting.*

WINTER NOTES

Congratulations to Gordon and Denise Webb. They are the proud parents of a seven pound baby boy born March 13, 1974. He has been named Christopher.

A youth wing to the Nanaimo District Naturalists is now being formed. They now have two successful field trips under their belt and are planning an expedition to the west coast in the near future. If you happen to know of any young people who might be interested in participating contact Juanita Russell, Youth Director.

Signs of Spring - Marg Kerridge has seen swallows in the Stephenson Pt. area on March 18th---can spring be far behind?

Mollie Byrne would like to know if anyone knows of a record of Paeonia brownii being found in the Nanaimo area. If you can help please contact her.

If you haven't yet paid your 1974 membership fees remember they are now due and payable to our clubs Secretary/Treasurer.

EDITORS THANKS

Thanks to Peter M. Press, Editor of Manitoba Nature, for permission to reprint the excellent article by Robert W. Hero of the Manitoba Department of Mines, Resources, and Environmental Management titled 'Here Come the Naturalists' and first published in 'Conservation Comment'. Thankyou also to Elizabeth F. MacDonald for her interesting article on the Admiral butterfly. We hope that we will receive future articles from you.

Our current membership list obtained from our clubs Secretary/Treasurer should hopefully serve to facilitate greater communication between members for informal field trips during the year in addition to being a gentle reminder for those of us who have unintentionally let our memberships lapse.

In closing, I wish to remind you not to miss reading the list of our organizations roster of spring meetings and field trips printed on page 1 and happy naturalizing...

NANAIMO NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
EXECUTIVE OFFICERS 1973/74

President	Mr. D.C. Kerridge	758-9727
Plant Director	Miss M. Byrne	758-9773
Rock Director	Mrs. W. Espitalier	758-7606
	Mrs. B. Graves	390-4750
	Mr. A. Hawryzki	758-9355
Secretary/Treasurer	Mrs. M. Kerridge	758-9727
Youth Director	Miss J. Russell	390-4110
Bird Directors	Mr. & Mrs. P. van Kerkoerle	245-2530
Convener	Miss E. Waddell	758-7485

MEMBERSHIPS

There are three types of memberships available in the Nanaimo Natural History Society:

\$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 this years paid up memberships to date:

Miss Mollie Byrne	758-9773
Mr. L. Denis	245-3064
Mrs. Elaine Loskotch	245-3289
Mrs. W. Espitalier	758-7606
Mr. & Mrs. A. Flett	390-4331
Mrs. D. Galus	758-6847
Mrs. Irma Grew	
Mr. A. Hawryzki	758-9355
Mr. & Mrs. G.B. Helem	468-7475
Mr. & Mrs. Elvin Isaak	245-2972
Mr. & Mrs. A. Johnston	245-2344
Mr. & Mrs. L. Kerridge	758-9727
Mr. & Mrs. I.T.C. Larnder	754-2520
Mr. & Mrs. D. Macrae	758-6779
Mrs. Helen M. Matheson	
Mr. & Mrs. D. Lounce	754-2460
Mrs. J. Murdoch	753-2917
Mr. & Mrs. R. Nicks	754-9419
Mr. J. Petershofer	245-2603
Mr. & Mrs. R. Koy	754-9247
Mr. H.J. Russell	390-4110
Miss Kathy Soames	753-1470
Mr. Ivor Tucker	753-5728
Mr. & Mrs. P. van Kerkoerle	245-2530
Miss E. Waddell	758-7485
Mrs. Ena Young	
Mrs. Hilda Rabanser	245-4460
Mrs. Bob Green	390-4750
Mrs. Gordon Webb	758-6585
Mrs. Jean Williams	754-6598

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