

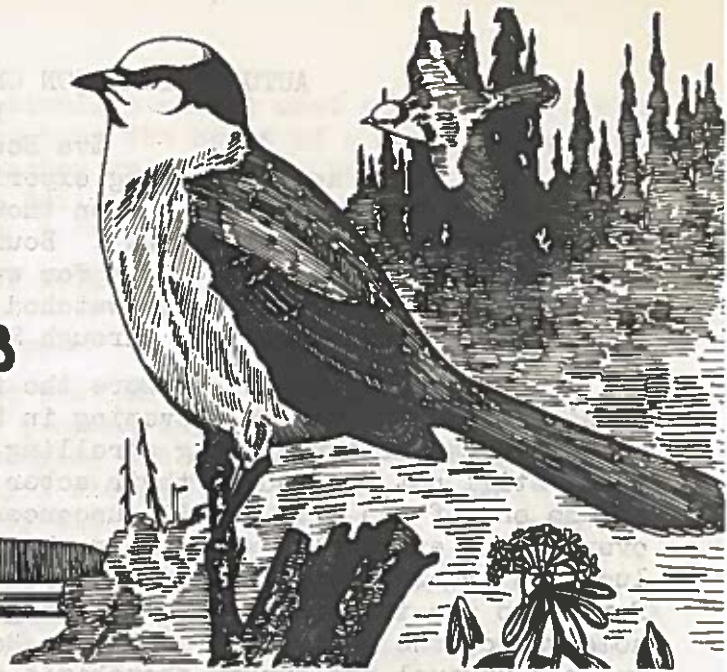
NEWS LETTER

OF THE

THUNDER BAY

FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

PORT ARTHUR - FORT WILLIAM



April 6th, 1963,
Volume XVII, No. 2.

317 Morse Street,
Port Arthur, Ont.

Dear Fellow-Naturalists:

Our Annual Dinner Meeting will be held May 3rd in the Nor-Shor Motor Hotel at 6.30 p.m. Our Guest Speaker will be Milton Stenlund of Grand Rapids, Minnesota. His topic will be "Timber wolf and deer in the Superior National Forest", and it will be illustrated by coloured slides.

Milt Stenlund is a Regional Game Manager with the Minnesota Department of Conservation. He has a keen interest in his work. "A Field Study of the Timber Wolf" was the result of many hours in the field during 1946 and on to 1953. He has also written about the White-tailed Deer of Minnesota, and presently is studying the moose population of the forest area just across our common border waters. Mr. Stenlund has addressed many audiences and we have been advised that his material and presentation are outstanding.

Bring your friends with you to the Annual Dinner. The telephone committee will be calling you within a week of the event but you can make reservations earlier if you wish by phoning Mrs. Tom Perrons - MA 2-1556.

Yours very truly,
Mrs. W. M. Knowles, President.

A THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH -

A magnificent temple is a laudable monument of national taste and religion, and the enthusiast who entered the dome of St. Sophia might be tempted to suppose that it was the residence, or even the workmanship, of the Diety. Yet how dull is the artifice, how insignificant is the labour, if it be compared with the formation of the vilest insect that crawls upon the surface of the temple.

The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire

Edward Gibbon

AUTUMN MIGRATION ON THE ATLANTIC COAST

by
Eva Beckett

It is an interesting experience to be on Canada's east coast during the weeks of autumn migration when thousands of Arctic-nesting shorebirds are pouring down the Atlantic flyway. Bound for winter haunts in the sunny south, these birds feed and rest, often for weeks at a time, on beaches and tidal flats of our maritime provinces. We watched them with a great deal of interest and enjoyment at many places all through September, 1962.

Ruddy turnstones were the first shorebirds we spotted. We saw these amusing birds on our first evening in New Brunswick, (Labour Day, Sept. 3), when we joined the holiday throng strolling on the pier in Richibucto Harbour. Ten of them, still not moulted to their sober winter plumage, raced about a muddy beach at the end of the pier. Quite unconcerned by our nearness to them, they flipped over stones and shells with their sharp up-tilted bills and hurriedly swallowed luckless invertebrates hiding underneath. It was almost like meeting old friends for us to see turnstones at close range again. We had known them well when our home was on the west coast of Hudson Bay. For, during spring migration there, it was not unusual for hungry shorebirds to quit the icy beaches and join the host of snow buntings, horned larks and Lapland longspurs feeding on seeds strewn for them in our dooryard.

With the turnstones that September evening we noted several least sandpipers and, standing ankle-deep in a pool nearby, two lesser yellowlegs. But it was the gulls overhead that claimed our attention most of all. Clouds of them followed each dory into the harbour as, one after another, local fishermen returned with the day's catch of lobsters. What a raucous din these birds made while the lobsters were being taken ashore, weighed, packed in ice and hurried off in waiting lorries for the next day's market in many cities! The majority were herring gulls, but among them were also great black-backed gulls and an occasional common tern. Great black-backed gulls, we found, are fairly numerous on the east coast.

By the middle of September, shorebirds in great number had arrived from the Arctic. We saw these to best advantage on the tidal flats at Point de Chene, a pleasant little village on the south-east coast of New Brunswick. During our four-day stay there, the morning tide ran out fairly early. By the time breakfast was over, we could walk across an enormous broad tidal flat of hard packed sand that extended out a mile or more beyond the normal shoreline. As soon as the tide ran out, thousands of shorebirds assembled on this flat to feast on the abundance of small sea-life left behind the receding water. They were not easily disturbed, so by moving quietly we could take our field-glasses and watch them at close range for hours at a time. Standing in shallow water at the outer edge of the flats, there was always a long thin line of blue herons. These stately birds seemed to prefer food caught fresh from the sea.

When in Prince Edward Island later in September, we had an interesting afternoon at the Harvey Moore Wildfowl Sanctuary which is somewhat like the Jack Minor Sanctuary at Kingsville, Ontario. It is situated on a picturesque lake near Milltown Cross, P.E.I., and is named in honour of its founder who was widely recognized as an outstanding naturalist. Since his death in 1960, his wife and sons have been carrying on the work he began. In this they have the assistance of the Canadian Wildlife Service and of the Department of Natural Resources of their province. It was too early in the season to see anything like the full number of wildfowl that normally come to the Sanctuary during migration. But when Mrs. Moore took a pailful of corn down to the lakeshore and sent a yodeling call out over the water, Canada geese and wild ducks came swimming and flying from every direction. Most of the ducks there at the time were black ducks and mallards.

As well as the abundance of birdlife on the east coast in September, there is also plant life sufficient to enchant the heart of a field naturalist. Many of the plants of dunes and upper beaches are at their best at this time; and saline marshes are redolent with the delicate bloom of sea lavender.

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COYOTE COUNTRY NOTE

by
Doug McKillop

Driving toward Banff from the west on the first of March I saw what I first thought was two police dogs playing on the road. As I came closer they were two coyotes and they weren't playing but fighting for keeps. All park animals are tame, I suppose. Anyway I stopped and they just moved off to the side of the road and carried on. They did not growl or snarl and fought a very open fight completely lacking in the type of clinches that dogs go into - used their feet very little and stuck to biting around the head and neck. I watched for about three minutes when a bigger coyote came running up and chased them away - but they still ran side by side, biting at each other as they ran.

There is the usual quite tame game in the park, including elk, deer and mountain sheep - and one bear up in Rogers Pass that probably wasn't a garbage dump moocher.

There is the least snow in the mountains that there has been for many, many years; and none at all from Banff right thru to Swift Current. Very little from there to Regina. This is rather frightening to many who think there is a relationship between the depth of snow in the mountains and the rainfall over the prairies during the following summer. I don't know if there is a scientific basis for this.

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VANCOUVER ISLAND VACATION

by
Norman Denis

Two nights ago by the light of the moon we went to the beach near Ladysmith and picked oysters. At low tide we gathered three quart jars full - oh, my aching back; and was it cold! Coral held the light and Dave and I did the picking - he got two to my one. Followed this with an oyster feast - and today - oysterburgers. The weather is cold and the fishing poor... Jan.11/63

Here is a list of the birds seen between Ladysmith and Victoria:

Red-throated Loon	8	Canvasback	4	Red-tailed Hawk	1
Red-necked Grebe	14	Greater Scaup	common	Bald Eagle	1
Horned Grebe	8	Lesser Scaup	common	Coot	very common
Western Grebe	25+	Common Goldeneye	"	Glaucous-winged Gull	
Pied-billed Grebe	2	Bufflehead	"	Western Gull	
Brown Pelican	1	Old Squaw	6	Herring Gull	
Northwestern Coast Heron	(1)	Harlequin Duck	1	California Gull	
Canada Goose	2	White-winged Scoter	many	Belted Kingfisher	3
Mallard - very common		Surf Scoter	common	Flicker	1
Baldpate - very common		Common Scoter	very few	Canada Jay	
Shoveller	6	Hooded Merganser	common	Steller's Jay	
Wood Duck	3	Red-breasted Merganser	"	American Raven	
				Winter Wren	

Swan, a trumpeter, reported at Victoria on the Christmas census, was missed but in addition to the common crow I noted a small crow I believe is the Northwestern Crow. The chickadees I saw resembled our black-capped; and the cormorants like our Double-crested. Brighter days and a scope would have increased the length of the list.

THE YOUNG EAGLE

By
Shirley Peruniak

Marmion Lako is six miles north of Atikokan and is known locally as the "Floodwaters". In 1920 the water level was raised 27 feet (approx.) in this 35 mile lako of many long bays. It is famous pickerel water and the land is not available for sale, just tenting.

The Edmonstones of Steep Rock Mines had told us of an eagle's nest near their island. Last year there were two young. This year we visited them on August 14 on Upper Seino Bay. This is about eight miles south of the District of Kenora. We had just started to pitch our tent when we heard the squawking of the young eagle but could not see it. Later we were able to make him out in the nest as his brown feathering shone in the morning sun. His squawking increased until at 5.25 p.m. the adult brought a fish and there was silence. The adult perched near the top of the white pine and did not move until 8.00 p.m. when it flew north. I quote the next days from my note book:

Aug. 15. The young eagle was squawking at 10.00 a.m. and used its wings to manoeuvre out on a branch beside the nest. It stayed briefly and flapped and felt its way back to the nest. Later the adult flew away and the young squawked, flapped, but stayed in the nest. The tree is fifteen feet from the water and the nest is above the level of the surrounding spruce and poplar. Only one adult has been seen for some time now. (Does this mean the end of this nest?)

Aug. 16. The young eagle flew and soared a five minute stretch just above the tree, then back to the nest.

Aug. 17. It was windy, so we stayed on the island all day. About 4.00 p.m. I happened to see the young eagle fall from the branch, open its wings and soar around the area above and beside the nest tree. This lasted almost ten minutes and then it came in downwind in an attempt to land. Of course this got the eagle into difficulty. It clasped the branch, overshot, and hung upside down on the branch beside the nest. It was a sight. The men out fishing saw the whole show. It hung there obviously not sure what had happened. The trial and error feeling of the winds had not taught it to use winds as a brake and to come in upwind. After fifteen minutes of hanging on and occasionally flapping helplessly, the eagle let go, turned over and landed on a low poplar. Much later I saw it fly in with a side wind and land directly in the nest - no more fooling around with branches.

Aug. 18. We noted the adult on two occasions near the tree.

Aug. 19. The young eagle flew well to-day, but I did not see it land.

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Within 30-mile radius		HAWK OWLS	Outside usual birding area	
Oct. 20	Oliver Twp. A. E. Allin		Oct. 24	Martin, Ont. Tom Perrons
21	Lybster " "		Nov. 18	Mineral Centre The Allins
Nov. 2	Port Arthur (2) Tom Perrons		19	Niblock, Ont. Tom Perrons
3	Port Arthur (2) Paul Gillespie		25	Mineral Centre, Minnesota, (Cook Co.) The Hogarths.
28	Port Arthur (2) Tom Perrons			
Dec. 22	Chippowa Park The Allins		Dec. 6	Revel River, Kenora Dist. K.D.
Feb. 10	Neebing Twp. " "		Feb. 12	Cook, St. Louis Co., Minn. K.D.
	Paipoonge Twp " "		+ Dec. 30	Port Arthur Dr. E. N. Wright
15	Port Arthur Edythe Denis		Mar. 6	Paipoonge Twp. Mrs. Knowles
17	Paipoonge Twp The Muries		10	Vickers Heights, Mrs. Rydholm
Mar. 3	Neebing Twp. Mrs. Knowles		30	McGregor Twp. Mrs. H. Plunkett
	Finmark The Allins		31	McGregor Twp. Jack Lowcock
Page 16			Apr. 1	McGregor Twp. Mrs. W.P. Hogarth

BOOK NOTES

STALKING THE WILD ASPARAGUS by Ewell Gibbons. David McKay Co. Inc. New York. A 303 page cook book for field-naturalists; it is delightful, with its touch of humour and hints on foraging for uncultivated foods. After reading from "Some Thoughts on Wild Foods" to the last chapter "The Proof of the Pudding", this menu of local wild foods was formulated. Wild Fruit Juices, Mushroom Soup, Roast Ruffed Grouse, Pin Cherry Jelly, Boiled Duck Potato, Wild Rice, Juneberry Muffins, Dandelion Coffee.

ANIMAL GEOGRAPHY by Wilma George. Heinemann, Toronto, 1962. 142 pages. The main distribution patterns of mammals and other land vertebrates in the six main zoogeographical regions of the world are described briefly but clearly. The Nearctic colonization is of special interest to us and the author clarifies some problems. Well worth reading.

LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN WILD FOWL by A. C. Bent. 2 volumes.
LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN SHORE BIRDS by A. C. Bent. 2 volumes.
LIFE HISTORIES OF NORTH AMERICAN BIRDS OF PREY by A. C. Bent. 2 volumes. Dover Publications, Inc., 180 Varick St., New York 14, N. Y. Long out of print and available only at very high prices these reprints will be welcomed. Paperbound, 2 volume set - \$4.70, these are uncut and unaltered republications of the originals.

INTRODUCING THE INSECT by F. A. Urquhart. Clarke Irwin & Company Ltd., Toronto. An introduction to entomology addressed to the layman and designed for the beginner, by the Director and Curator of Entomology, Royal Ontario Museum. Photographs in full colour and drawings by E.B.S. Logier. \$5.00

THE FROGS, TOADS AND SALAMANDERS OF EASTERN CANADA by E. B. S. Logier. Clarke, Irwin & Company, Ltd., Toronto. \$3.75.

BATS by Glover M. Allen. Dover Publications, Inc. N.Y. x + 368pp. Paperbound A wealth of fascinating material. \$2.00

THE MURRES by L. M. Tuck. Queen's Printer, Ottawa. 260 pages. \$4.00. A study of the distribution, population and biology of this seabird.

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DRYDEN AREA CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS

Taken Dec. 29, 1962; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Clear in a.m. with bright sunshine; cloudy by mid-afternoon; wind NE 15 m.p.h.; not much snow on ground, no open water although some wet spots along logging roads. Eight observers in 3 parties. Total party-hours 19(5 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles about 44. Covered the east, north and south portions within a 15-mile diameter circle with corner of Duke and Van Horne as centre. Part of the territory was open field and pasture, part mixed wooded area, some swamp and marsh and the rest town.

Hairy Woodpecker . 10	Black-capped Chickadee . 63	Brewer's Blackbird 2
Downy Woodpecker . . . 5	Red-breasted Nuthatch . 4	Evening Grosbeak 121
Canada Jay 2	Bohemian Waxwing 6	Pine Grosbeak 6
Blue Jay 13	Starling 12	Redpoll 13
Raven 117	House Sparrow 125	Red Crossbill 10

Total 15 species; 509 individuals. Seen in area during count period but not on count day: Ruffed Grouse, Sharp-tailed Grouse, Boreal Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Pileated Woodpecker, Snow Bunting.

Observers: Laura Howe (compiler), Trudy Krahn, Meins Vermeer, Randi Nielson, J. H. Godden, Norman Howe.

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F. O. N. News - The fire last November made problems galore for the F. O. N. Temporary quarters were provided and volunteers assisted in reorganizing files, etc. Now more permanent office space has been obtained and the new address is: FEDERATION OF ONTARIO NATURALISTS, 170 The Donway West, DON MILLS, Ontario.

THUNDER BAY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

SPRING OUTINGS - 1963

DATE	PLACE	LEADERS
April 20	Meet at CHIPPEWA PARK Chippewa Park parking lot - 8.00 a.m.	Keith Denis
Saturday April 27	Meet at BLACK BAY BRIDGE the bridge - - 8.00 a.m.	Claude Garton
Sunday April 28	Meet at CHAPPLE'S FARM entrance to farm - 8.00 a.m.	Dorothy Smith
Saturday May 4	Meet at SLATE RIVER BRIDGE AREA Mrs. Knowles, Rosslyn Road - 8.00 a.m.	Evolyn Knowles
Sunday May 5	Meet at LAKEHEAD WATERFRONT Empire Elevator area - 8.00 a.m.	Joan Hebden
Saturday May 11	Meet at WHITEFISH LAKE Public Park at east end of lake at 10.30 a.m. Bring a lunch.	Robert Robb Sinclair Robb
Sunday May 12	Meet at VICKER'S HEIGHTS Bus Stop #5 - 7.45 a.m.	Hilja Rydholm
Saturday May 18	Meet at STANLEY AREA Rosslyn Village Service Station - at 7.45 a.m.	Eva Beckett
Sunday May 19	Meet at CHIPPEWA PARK Chippewa Park parking lot - 7.30 a.m.	David Story
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Saturday May 25	Meet at ANNUAL SPRING FIELD DAY Dorion Bible Camp - 2.00 p.m. Bring a lunch and a beverage This is a good area for warblers and shore birds.	Bessie Plunkett C. E. Garton K. Denis
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Saturday June 15	Meet at FLOWER FIELD DAY Crystal Lake Herb's Place - 2.00 p.m. Bring a lunch and a beverage	Eva Beckett C. E. Garton Sinclair Robb
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Saturday August 3	Meet at SUMMER FIELD TRIP Pigeon River Middle Falls Park - 2.00 p.m. Bring a lunch and a beverage.	Marion Smith Margaret Hogarth Eva Beckett

Bring your friends on these outings. Everyone is welcome. Especially Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and others seeking Nature badges. Be prepared to walk in wet and muddy places at times. Field glasses, note books, and bird, flower, tree and shrub, and other guide books add to the enjoyment.

If you need a ride, or if you have room in your auto for another person or so, and want to give someone a ride, please telephone

Margaret Porrons - MA 2-1556; Joan Hebden - MA 3-6582; Keith Denis - MU 3-8815