

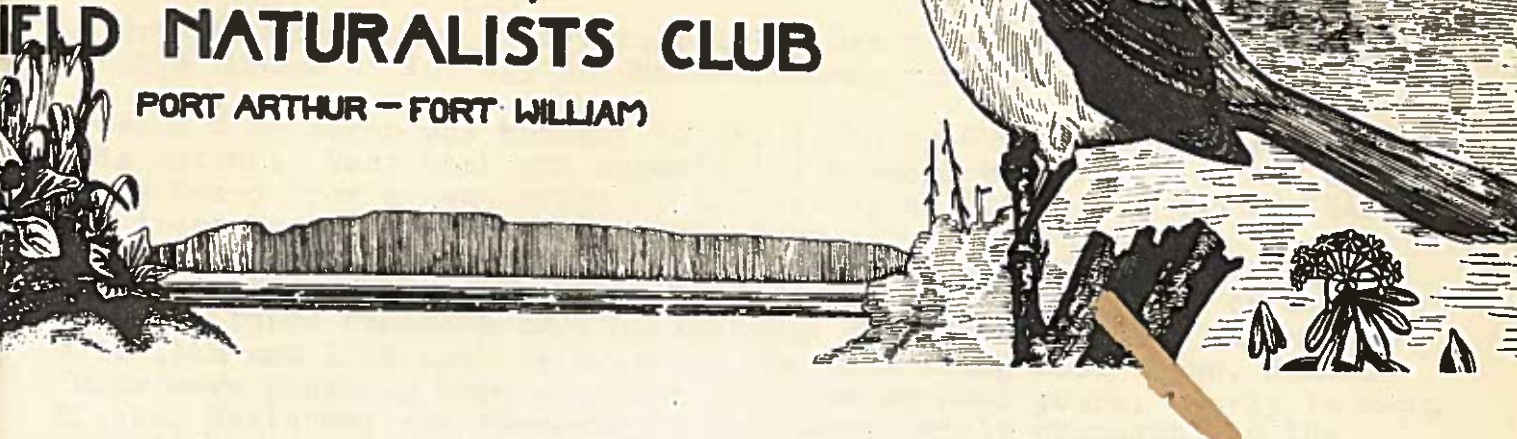
NEWS LETTER

OF THE

THUNDER BAY

FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

PORT ARTHUR - FORT WILLIAM



15th December, 1951
Volume V, No. 6.

P. O. Box 416,
Port Arthur, Ont.

Dear Fellow Naturalists:

The Christmas Bird Census will be taken on Boxing Day, Wednesday, December 26th, weather permitting. If it is necessary to postpone this field day the census will be taken on Sunday, December 30th. All those planning on taking part in this annual event should contact the secretary so there will be no duplication of the areas covered by different groups.

This year we will have to note where observations are made, as we hope to cover our usual Christmas Bird Census area, and also to report on the birds seen in the smaller Audubon Christmas Census area. The latter must be in a $7\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius and on another page you will find a rough map outlining the borders of the Audubon area selected by the executive. Observations in this smaller zone will be reported to the Audubon Society for their field notes; those made in the locations we have usually covered will be sent to the Canadian Field-Naturalist as in the past. The majority of the good birding country is in the new map area which also includes stretches of the district where no observations have been made before.

Keep a record of the number of each species of bird seen, the number of miles travelled on foot and by auto, and phone your list to the secretary 4-1336 as soon as possible afterwards. Last year a total of 1671 birds of 24 species were noted. What will the results be this year? Every observer additional to those who enjoyed the outing last year can make a welcome contribution.

The ANNUAL MEETING will be held in the Fort William Public Library on Tuesday, January 15th, 1952, at 8 P.M. The nominating committee will present its report for your approval, reports for 1950 will be made, and plans for the coming seasons will be discussed. This is an important meeting, an interesting programme has been planned, and it is hoped that every member will be there.

The next AUDUBON SCREEN TOUR speaker is Lucie Palmer, a delver into the deeps, who will present her colour film, "Underwater Kingdom" at the Port Arthur Technical School on Monday, January 21st., 1952.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Yours sincerely,

A. E. Allin, President,

Keith Denis, Editor.

NOTE BOOK

A Whistling Swan spent the summer at Shebandowan Lake; reported by Dr. Quackenbush and Mr. Beda.

An Oregon Junco found dead Oct. 10, 1950, has been identified at the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology as *Junco oreganus montanus*.

A Great Blue Heron was brought to Dr. Allin by Game & Fisheries officials this autumn. Very weak and anaemic its haemoglobin was less than 25% and it suffered from a Leucocytozoon infection, as did one of two similar specimens brought to Dr. Allin last year.

DUCKS & GEESE: Geese moved through the area in large numbers on Sept. 27 but only three Canada's were definitely identified. Heavy flights on Oct. 11th and 12th—many of those of the 12th being Blue Geese. A.E.A. Ducks were possibly more abundant than for several years. Early in Sept. Blacks, Mallards, and Blue-winged Teal were fairly abundant but the majority appeared to have moved south about the middle of the month and few were present during the rest of the season. Dr. Allin did not see a Pintail, Baldpate or a Green-winged Teal this fall. Ring-necks were fairly common by mid-September and their numbers were greatly augmented by migration from the north at the end of the month. However they did not remain at Whitefish Lake in their usual numbers during October and by the month-end were uncommon. Lesser Scaup, present at Whitefish by mid-September, were abundant until the lake froze over on Oct. 30-31st. A male Greater Scaup was noted in full winter plumage on October 20th. Redheads occurred regularly throughout October, and two Canvasbacks were shot at Fort William on Oct. 11th. White-winged Scoters occur in small numbers every fall but more than usual were noted the past season commencing on Sept. 29 when thirty were seen in one flock at Whitefish. Buffleheads were fairly prevalent during the last week of October. Unusual numbers of American Golden-eyes were present along the local waterfront in mid-September, a very early date. During October they were present in the usual numbers.

Hungarian Partridge were introduced locally several years ago and a few coveys are known to exist, particularly about the elevators and immediately adjacent to the Lakehead cities. An open season was declared from Sept. 17-Oct. 8, 1951, despite the protests of your club and the Thunder Bay District Fish and Game Association and the Northwestern Ontario Conservation Federation. These organizations deemed that the birds were too scarce to justify a season and that separating the season from the Ruffed Grouse Season would intensify the hunting pressure. The Thunder Bay District Fish & Game Ass'n, by advertising on the radio and in local newspapers, asked their members to refrain from killing these exotics and it is believed that few coveys were destroyed. This was an unexpected example of sportsmanship. It is unlikely that it will affect the future of the species as a game bird in the area but it may have prevented the elimination of this exotic from our fauna.

The Ruffed Grouse may be at the peak of its cycle locally and is considered to be on the decline in areas of Eastern Ontario. They are still fairly abundant in Minnesota. Their diet consisted of berries and leaves obtained from ground feeding until after the snow storm of Oct. 24th. Subsequently the majority were to be found in the daytime under protecting evergreens and thick deciduous bushes. About 5.30 P.M. they would commence feeding on buds of alders, poplars, white birch and other shrubs.

Spruce Grouse appear to be on the decline in the few local areas where they still occur in fair numbers. An occasional Sharp-tailed Grouse was taken along the Devon Road and near Kaministiquia. The open season for the above three game birds was Oct. 6 to Nov. 3, 1951.

Shore birds have been very scarce. The first returning Lesser Yellowlegs and Solitary Sandpipers were reported on August 19. One Solitary Sandpiper was still present on October 7 in O'Connor Township (Allins). Few Golden Plovers have been observed and no Pectoral Sandpipers were reported this year.

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Please send your lists of observations to the club secretary. Notes or articles on interesting field trips would be very welcome.

FIELD NOTES

- Sept. 16 Mourning Dove, Neebing Twp. A.E.A.
 17 Coot, Redhead, Horned Grebes, Common Tern, Rusty Blackbird; at Whitefish Lake, J. Thompson and A.E. Allin.
 21 Golden Plover, Sora Rail, Horned Lark, Hurkett, A.E. & David Allin
 23 Horned Lark, Fowler Twp., K.D., C.E.G., A. Robinson.
 27 Geese flying over-3 Canada's identified, F.W., Mr. Wywrot
 28 Tree sparrows numerous
 29 White-winged Scoter, Whitefish Lake, A.E. and David Allin
 Oct. 6 Bald Eagle, Redheads, Whitefish Lake, L.S. Dear.
 7 Huge flocks of crows, robins abundant, also slate-coloured juncos
 8 Rusty Blackbirds at Stanley, also 3 flocks of robins, K.D.
 Cowbirds(2) at Stanley, K.D.
 11 Heavy flight geese; on 12th Blue Geese identified at F.W., A.E.A.
 12 Fox Sparrow, McIntyre Twp., C.E. Garton
 13 Northern Shrike, O'Connor Twp., Allins-also seen Oct. 27 & 28th.
 14 Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker, Dorion Twp., C.E. Garton, K. Denis, N. Denis, A. Robinson, D. Bianco. The bat cave at Cavern Lake was visited. 282 bats were counted, 273 in the inner cave and 9 in the lower and outer cave. Of these, 3 in the outer cave were Big Brown Bats and the other 279 were Little Brown Bats. Inspection revealed that 9 wore bands. (On Nov. 11, 1948, 50 bats were banded by A. de Vos.)
 -Hermit Thrushes migrated during the last 2 weeks, to this date.
 Arctic Three-toed Woodpecker, Pardee Twp. A.E.A. Chipmunks seen
 17 Olive-backed Thrush, P.A., C.E.G.
 19 WESTERN GREBE, Whitefish Lake, L.S. Dear-new species for district.
 Pine Grosbeaks, P.A., Mrs. Denis.
 20 Snow Buntings(300), Conmee Twp. A.E.A.
 21 Pine Grosbeaks, Strange Twp., A.E.A. & David E. Allin
 23 Rusty Blackbirds, O'Connor Twp., A.E.A. & D.E.A.
 27 Broad-winged Hawk, Strange Twp., C.E.G. also Fox Sparrow.
 Holboell's Grebe(dead), Whitefish L., Strange Twp., A.E.A. & D.E.A.
 29 American Rough-legged Hawk, Oliver Twp., A.E.A.
 Bronzed Grackles, P. A., Mrs. Denis
 Nov. 3 Snowy Owl, Port Arthur, J. Parkin
 American Rough-legged Hawk, Mrs. Knowles.
 Robins, P.A., K.D.
 4 American Rough-legged Hawk, P.A., A.E.A.
 Broad-winged Hawk, Strange Twp., L.S. Dear(a very late record).
 10 Snowy Owl, Oliver Twp., A.E.A.
 American Rough-legged Hawks-1 in Marks, 1 in O'Connor Twp. A.E.A.
 11 Common Redpolls, P.A., C.E.G.
 18 Common Golden-eyes, Fort William, A.E.A.

BOOK REVIEW

THE SEA AROUND US by Rachel Carson. Published by Oxford University Press New York, 1951. 230 pp. Price \$3.50. For several months this book has topped the list of non-fiction best sellers. To read it is sheer enjoyment. Its lore of the sea, written in delightfully simple and entertaining style, is scientifically accurate and the most up to date available, some of it based on oceanographic studies as recent as 1950. There are chapters, such as the one entitled, The Global Thermostat, that you will read again and again. The whole book is an enthralling combination of scientific information and the eternal beauty of the sea.

Eva Beckett.

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The July-August issue of The Canadian Field Naturalist p. 143 in an article entitled "Additions and annotations to the Flora of Southampton Island, N.W.T., Canada" by W.J. Cody, Division of Botany and Plant Pathology, Science Service, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa, lists a new record made by Mrs. Eva Beckett on 16 Aug. 1949, in the collecting of Saxifraga oppositifolia L. forma albiflora(Lange) Fern., the specimen 4116 in the Herbarium of C.E. Garton, Port Arthur, Ontario.

"Wild Wings over the Tundra" by Eva Beckett, published in the October Canadian Geographic Journal, tells of her experiences in the north, studying the activities of the birds near Churchill.

BOOK REVIEWS

Christmas offers the opportunity to present a field-naturalist with a book to enjoy when the weather keeps one indoors. Fortunately many good books have been published this year and the choice is wide.

NORTH WITH THE SPRING by Edwin Way Teale. Published by Dodd, Mead & Co. New York, 1951. 366pp; 32 pages of photographs. Price \$6.00. Naturalist Teale tells the story of spring-spring advancing an average of 15 miles a day up the continent while he and his wife accompanied it. Starting in the Everglades they travelled 17,000 miles through 23 states to the Canadian border at Lake Champlain. Teale writes in the same enjoyable style that made us read and reread his other books. No wonder he was awarded the John Burroughs Medal for distinguished nature writing. Be sure to read this book. Excellent too are his earlier books-DUNE BOY, THE LOST WOODS, THE GOLDEN THROG, NEAR HORIZONS, GRASSROOTS JUNGLE, and DAYS WITHOUT TIME.

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE BUTTERFLIES of North America East of the Great Plains by Alexander B. Klots. Published by Houghton Mifflin Co. Boston, 1951. 349 pp.xvi. Illustrated with colour paintings of 247 species by Marjorie Statham and 232 photographs by Florence Longworth. \$3.50. This new volume in the Peterson Field Guide Series follows in general the concise identification methods developed by Roger Tory Peterson in his Field Guides. A great amount of general information is contained in the first 60 pages which deal with collecting and preserving specimens, the butterfly and its environment, life histories and classification. Pocket-sized and worth having in the pocket.

CAROLINA QUEST by Richard M. Saunders. Published by the University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1951. Pre-publication price \$3.00 to member of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. Twelve beautiful illustrations by Sylvia Hahn, R.O.M.Z. The record of a trip to South Carolina written in the same appealing style the author used in FLASHING WINGS. One savours Professor Saunder's enjoyment of moments like the one when he saw his first Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Many of the birds seen in the south are rare visitors in Canada.

WILDLIFE IN COLOUR by Roger Tory Peterson. Published by Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, 1951. 191pp. 450 full colour illustrations originally produced as a series of poster stamps by the National Wildlife Federation. Price \$3.50. The text is arranged by wildlife communities and this in itself would make the book worth reading. Birds, mammals, butterflies, reptiles, trees and flowers are brought together in varied habitats.

TREE TRAILS AND HOBBIES by Ruth Cooley Cater. Published by Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y. 324 pp. 32 pages of half-tone illustrations. Price \$4.00. If you enjoy looking at trees you'll enjoy this book. The author describes over 200 species in a manner that holds one's attention.

FEATHERS PREFERRED by W. Austin Peters. McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1951. 198 pp. Price \$4.50. Austin Peters, a past president of the Ont. Federation of Anglers and Hunters, has been interested in conservation for years. He also knows from experience the thrill of hunting, the trials of game propagation, and the joys of studying nature. "A Sportsman's soliloquy" is his term for this interesting journal. Many will agree with his statement that "the common house cat, turned renegade, is the worst predator we have in the settled districts of the country." Hunting experiences and wild life management views of real interest.

HORSES by G.G.Simpson. Oxford U. Press, N.Y. 1951. 247 pp. 111. Price \$7.50. Described as an effort to carry out a 60 year old plan of the Dept. of Mammalian Paleontology at the American Museum of Natural History to give a full history of the horse from the earliest times to the present-with the technical details "rigorously suppressed". Evolution made interesting. Did you know the rhinoceros and the tapir were relatives of the horse?

Keith Denis

Outline Map of AUDUBON FIELD NOTES MAP AREA - 2 miles to 1 inch

7 1/2 miles radius

Points on the boundary of this area include - Bare Point; junction of Strathcona Court and Highway 17 east of Port Arthur, the junction of Hodder Avenue and Black Bay Road; 1/5 mile above Fox Farm bridge; 1 mile north of Kivikoski to McIntyre Creek; Intola Post Office; just past the cross roads, the last before entering Murillo - this cross road goes south to Carter's Corners which is on the border of the map area. Also the Ontario Hospital corner and Chippewa quarry.

