



The Federation of British Columbia Naturalists

# newsletter

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## ECOLOGICAL RESERVES: UPDATE

Jim Pojar wrote an excellent outline of our Province's Ecological Reserve Program in the June, 1976 Newsletter. Since then there have been developments worth mentioning.

Firstly, Dr. Pojar left the Ecoreserves Unit the spring of 1978 to join the Research Division of the B.C. Forest Service in Smithers. He has been replaced by Dr. Hans Roemer, a plant ecologist who did his Ph.D. thesis on the forest vegetation of the Saanich Peninsula near Victoria. He has had a long experience with the Ecoreserve Program and important issues such as the Tsitika River Valley.

The third member of the Ecoreserve Unit is Trudy Carson. She has been with the Unit since May 1977, full time in the summers only. Her experience and training with birds and plants has been useful in the field while in the office her energies have been chiefly concerned with the complicated procedures of creating reserves from proposals. Her position terminated the end of August; the total staff of the Unit is now two.

While only one reserve was created in 1976, 9 were created in 1977, 10 in 1978, and three so far this year, for a total of 96.

### New Ecological Reserves

Since June 1976, ecoreserves have been created for cottonwood trees on an island in the Fraser River near Chilliwack (76); on land donated to the Crown for ecoreserve purposes by Dr. Hugh Campbell-Brown on Kalamalka Lake, containing yellow pine, *balsamorhiza* and a rattlesnake den (77); a spruce, subalpine fir forest near Vanderhoof (78); a small larch forest near Vanderhoof (79); a large mature spruce forest (1326 ha) near Liard Hotsprings (80); a sub-boreal forest near Houston (81); a black spruce bog near Quesnel (82); white avalanche lilies on San Juan Ridge near Victoria (one of two places in B.C. where *Erythronium montanum* occurs) (83); a sub-boreal forest near Prince George (84); a paper birch forest near Mackenzie (85); two small Kettle lakes near Prince George (86); an aspen forest near Mackenzie (87); superb subalpine flower meadows near Spences Bridge (88); cottonwood stands in the Skagit Valley (89); adder's tongue fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*) reserve near Port Alberni (only known locality for this species in B.C.) (90); lodgepole pine reserve near Williston Lake (91); ponderosa pine — bunchgrass reserve near Lytton (92); a colony of two species of storm petrels on the Queen Charlotte Islands (93); the largest colony of seabirds in the Gulf of Georgia on the Chain Islands near Oak Bay (Victoria) as well as the flora of Jemmy Jones and Alpha Islets (94); the Kerouard Islets at the southern tip of the Queen Charlotte Islands supporting large colonies of nesting seabirds and a large rookery of sea lions (95); and the seabird Islets surrounding Anthony



V. J. KRAJINA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE ON THE NORTHWEST SIDE OF THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE ISLANDS (24,300 HA) SUPPORTS HUGE SITKA SPRUCE, STANDING BOGS (SHOWN), SEABIRD COLONIES, BALD EAGLES AND PEALE'S PEREGRINE FALCONS.



SITKA SPRUCE, MORE THAN 16 FT. IN DIAMETER.

Island on the Queen Charlottes (96). Details are available from the Ecoreserves Unit.

Most of these new reserves are not spectacular in the sense that they generally protect **representative** areas rather than unique. Of course, representative areas tend to become unique as surrounding land becomes altered by man.

It is heartening that some of the above reserves were first proposed by industry (Scott Paper Mills (76, 89) and

MacMillan Bloedel (90)). The Unit looks forward to more such proposals.

### Justification of the Program

In recent years the staff of the Ecological Reserves Unit has had to spend much more of its time justifying and explaining the program. This reflects the state of the econ-



TUFTED PUFFINS ON TRIANGLE ISLAND.



THE RHINOCEROS AUKLET OCCURS IN THE MANY THOUSANDS IN SOME OF B.C.'S ECOLOGICAL RESERVES.

omy wherein jobs are seen by many as the top priority and "the ecology" is an impediment to "progress."

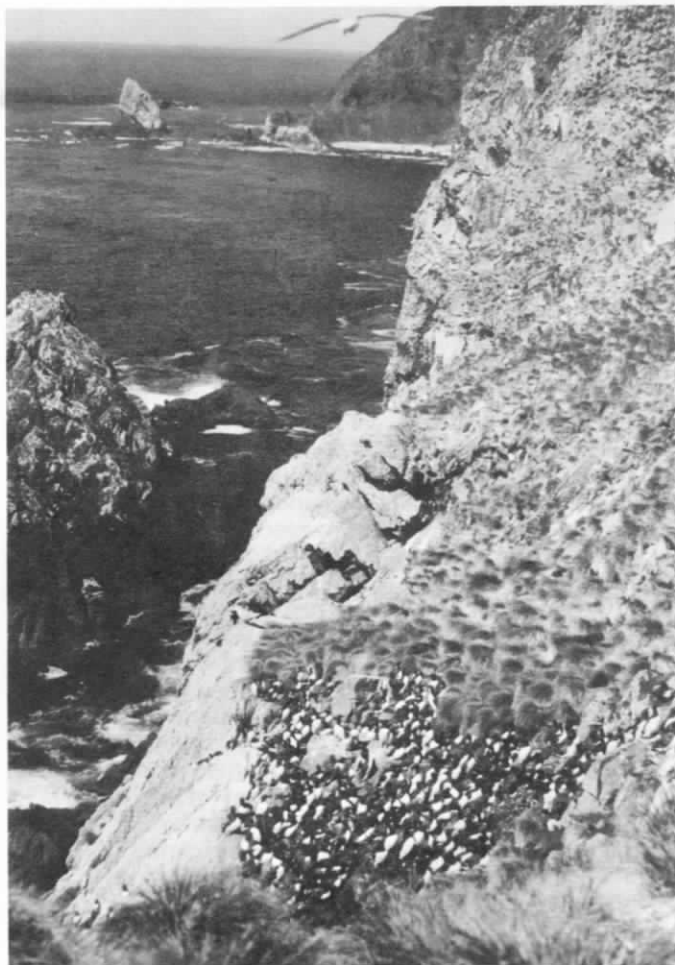
Questions are raised such as: How many reserves do we need? What size? How can we justify "locking up" so many "single use" areas? How can two people manage all reserves in the province? Let us examine some of these points in detail.



HIPPA ISLAND, IN THE V. J. KRAJINA ECOLOGICAL RESERVE.

### How Many Ecological Reserves are Needed?

The Act stated 100 Reserves by 1975 (because when the Act was passed in 1971 it was the Province's centennial year!). We have long missed this deadline due to the extensive review needed before any new proposal can be established as a Reserve. The Unit believes it is impossible to say how many Reserves are needed in order to have an adequate sampling of the natural diversity of the province (in at least duplicates to mitigate against natural disasters). This uncertainty sometimes annoys some planners, en-



TRIANGLE ISLAND ECOLOGICAL RESERVE.

gineers, land managers and other non-biologists.

The point often not realized is that biology is by far the most complicated science far more complicated than either physics or chemistry. If one adds to this that our province is the most biologically (and geologically) diverse in Canada, one can see the impossible task of deciding how many Reserves do we need at this moment or time when our province is so poorly known.

### **How Large Should Reserves Be?**

Many studies show that the smaller the island the fewer the number of species. Most Ecoreserves are islands of naturalness in a sea of growing change. Consequently, a few hundred hectare Reserve carved out of forest — even if it is not subject to blowdown, dessication, etc. — will certainly lose species once able to survive there. From this point of view the larger the Reserve the better. On the other hand, when the Unit acquires a large Reserve it makes it difficult to get more Reserves in the same area. (Provincial Parks have the same problem.) Thus generally the Unit tries to get a sufficiently large area so at least the core will be protected. The ideal is an entire watershed or an entire island.

### **How Can We Justify "Locking Up" So Many "Single Use" Areas?**

The Research Division of the Forest Service points out that we have already lost some kinds of natural forest communities. They have all been logged. This loss makes it very difficult for the forester to know what species should be planted in the logged area, what the growth rate of the trees will be, what the annual allowable cut should be. The Research Division recommends that more productive forest sites should be established for research and not merely marginal areas.

In the spring 1979 issue of *Forestalk*, Grant Ainscough, Vice-President of MacMillan Bloedel notes that "reserves may one day help with mistakes that haven't even been identified yet." Here lies the chief justification for more Reserves: keeping the option open for baseline studies and acquiring genetic material for future generations.

### **Managing Reserves**

The two staff members in the Ecoreserve Unit have a challenge fulfilling their duties of proposing and processing Reserves, managing them, encouraging understanding and research in Reserves over the vast area of our province.

The managing of Reserves has suffered in particular. Many Reserves are in fact "paper Reserves": grazed by cattle, sheep and goats, and ridden over by A.T.V.s. A vigilant and concerned public is the best and cheapest way of protecting Reserves. An attempt is being made to make a "warden system" more effective, wherein volunteer naturalists and others help to keep an eye on Reserves in their area. But this in itself will take a lot of time to get properly organized.

### **Conclusion**

The Ecological Reserves Unit has had a steady progress in establishing new Reserves since the Act was passed in 1971 (about 12 per year). While research has been minimal except for the more intensive work on seabirds, at least the option for research on relatively natural ecosystems is being maintained in most cases. In some cases, however, the ecoreserve staff are unable to manage the Reserve properly and it is being degraded. This can best be rectified by developing a system of volunteer "wardens" a process now begun.

**Bristol Foster**

## **STIKINE WORKSHOP**

The Sierra Club of Western Canada is sponsoring a symposium on the Watershed of the Stikine River in Vancouver on January 25 to 27. Interested individuals and groups can contact the FBCN for further details.

### **A WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA**

By now, most naturalists in the province are aware of the document "Proposed wildlife management plan for British Columbia," which was released for public review and comment in January, 1979. At this time I wish to bring the clubs up to date on the Federation's reaction to the plan and on some of the recent developments in this regard.

A brief on the draft plan was prepared and forwarded to Rafe Mair on July 19. Our brief commented on the systems approach, census and monitoring, primarily land for wildlife, and non-hunting values. I won't attempt to summarize our brief but copies are available at the Federation office.

The Fish and Wildlife Branch should be commended for preparing the proposed wildlife management plan and for their willingness to submit it to public scrutiny. With all of its inadequacies, it still constitutes a necessary first step in developing a plan that may eventually meet the needs and aspirations of the majority of our citizens. Interested individuals and groups were provided ample time to make their views known. This is a good example of public involvement and we hope the effectiveness of the process will be demonstrated by integrating a wide spectrum of public opinion into the final plan.

The development of what might be termed an "official" wildlife management plan will not allay the impression of many naturalists that a disproportionate amount of the branch's effort is being directed toward the management of game species. Historically, those species that have had to endure heavy hunting pressure have demanded the most attention of our wildlife managers. The draft document suggests that those species of hunting significance will continue to receive the most attention.

My impression is that most members of the Federation would prefer to see more attention devoted to (1) the non-game species and (2) for those species that are traditionally considered to be game species, developing objectives for non-hunting recreation. One objective that is included in the management plan for all game species is to designate and manage certain accessible populations primarily for observation. The draft report does not elaborate on this objective, and a cynical naturalist or photographer might suspect that this objective was included as an appeasement to the non-hunter. The more critical question, as to how effective the Branch will be in setting aside populations primarily for observation, remains to be seen. At the present time, most non-hunters look to our parks as accessible areas where wildlife can be viewed, yet many of our parks are also available for hunting purposes. If our wildlife managers are sincere in their objective to provide populations primarily for viewing, perhaps they should initiate steps to phase out hunting in all federal and provincial parks in the province.

The report recognizes that an important facet of wildlife management is the habitat, and that government policies with respect to land use have a marked bearing on this aspect. How successful we are in managing our wildlife pop-

### A.G.M. IN THE KOOTENAYS IN 1980

The Annual General Meeting of the FBCN will be hosted by the West Kootenay Naturalist Association in 1980.

The meeting will be held at Selkirk College, Castlegar, B.C. on May 16, 17 and 18. A full program is being planned and more information will appear in the March Newsletter.

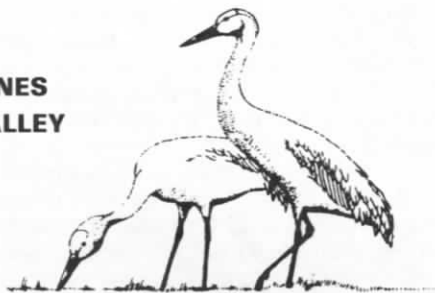
ulations may be determined to a large extent by how successful we are in designating and retaining critical habitats. The Fish and Wildlife Branch is just one of the many government agencies competing for a share of our land base. To many politicians, wildlife values do not deserve as high a priority as other resource values such as hydroelectric power or forestry.

Our opportunity for input into the wildlife management plan continues. The original report contains a relatively brief statement on the management of 28 species or species groups. Each of the species statements will be enlarged and released as a separate entity. To date, detailed species plans have been released on mountain sheep, moose, raptorial birds, threatened and endangered species, brant, grizzly bear, and mountain goat. The remaining 21 species plans will be released at intervals during the fall and it is anticipated that all will be completed and released by the end of the year. Public comment is invited for 3 months following their release, after which they will be revised to provide the basis for a wildlife management program over the next 5 years. Naturalists having knowledge or opinions on the species plans are urged to relay their views to Bill Monro, Fish and Wildlife Branch, Victoria.

**R. Stace-Smith**

### SANDHILL CRANES IN THE PITT VALLEY

DRAWING BY  
BARRY LEACH.

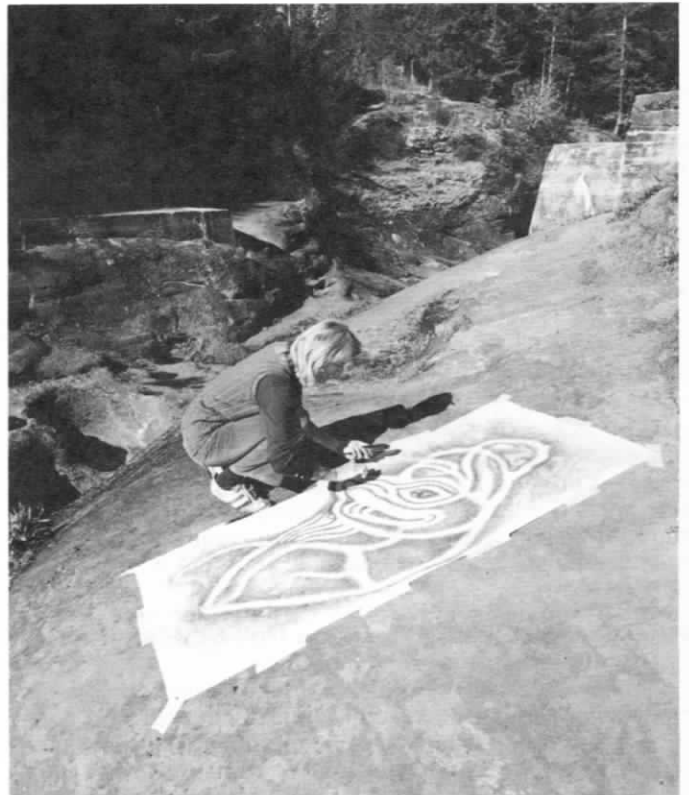


A small flock of greater sandhill cranes still clings precariously to existence in the lower Pitt Valley. This year five mated pairs and three juveniles returned to their nesting areas to find progress relentlessly eating up more and more of their valuable wetlands.

Two of these pairs were discouraged from nesting by reclamation activities as agriculture moved in to burn and drain the marshland. The other three pairs nesting in the Pitt Wildlife Management Area were more successful. One pair nested in the Crane Reserve, hatching two young. The other two pairs nested in unprotected areas of the PWMA and their success is unknown.

One of these unprotected areas was the West Bog, an area local naturalists have been attempting to have added to the Crane Reserve. At the rate the cranes have been losing their other nesting areas to agriculture, this would appear to be a necessary move if cranes are to survive in the Pitt Valley.

**Wilma Robinson**



**JANET RIPPINGALE OF CAMPBELL RIVER TAKES RUBBINGS OF OLD INDIAN ROCK CARVINGS ON THE BANKS OF THE ENGLISHMAN RIVER, NEAR PARKSVILLE ON VANCOUVER ISLAND. THE SCENIC SPOT HAS BEEN DEDICATED AS A PERMANENT PUBLIC PARK, PRESERVED BY THE NATIONAL SECOND CENTURY FUND OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. THE SITE, WITH ACCESS FROM THE ISLAND HIGHWAY ABOUT THREE MILES SOUTH OF PARKSVILLE, WAS A COMBINED CONTRIBUTION OF THE B.C. GOVERNMENT AND MACMILLAN BLOEDEL.**

The petroglyphs are a fascinating piece of British Columbia's native heritage, and the surrounding parcel of forest land provides public access and a pleasant setting.

The three petroglyphs on the site are said to have been carved by a deaf-mute Indian who lived in the area during the 1800's. They are located on a sandstone ledge overlooking a picturesque bend in the river.

The carvings — said to represent the bear, woman and two seals — were covered with moss for years, but were rediscovered in the late 1940's.

The federally-supported National Second Century Fund of B.C. was established in 1971 to identify and preserve ecologically or historically significant sites.

For further information: Pamela Cowtan, Executive Assistant, National Second Century Fund, 909, 100 Park Royal South, West Vancouver, B.C. V7T 1A2. Telephone: (604) 925-1128.

### REMINDER TO CLUBS

All clubs are requested to send in nominations for club service awards, the Elton Anderson award, and the outstanding service to natural history award. Please submit names and supporting documentation as soon as possible.



### CENCHRUS LONGISPINUS, A NEW PEST FOR BRITISH COLUMBIA.

During the month of August, 1979, an amateur botanist, Mr. Huber Moore, collected a sample of the grass, *Cenchrus longispinus* at Oliver, B.C. This species is a potentially serious weed, and poses a possible threat to grazing animals because of the sharp, spiny nature of the inflorescence.

Mr. Moore reported seeing plants at two sites — one within the city limits of Oliver, and another on the rangelands above the town. *Cenchrus longispinus* has been reported as a pest species in eastern Washington state, according to the "Flora of the Pacific Northwest," by Hitchcock and Cronquist, but is not recorded for British Columbia, either by Hitchcock or in "Vascular plants of British Columbia" by Taylor and MacBryde.

The sample has been placed in the Herbarium of the University of British Columbia.

**Terry Taylor**

### SYMPOSIUM



You are invited to attend the "Symposium on Threatened Species and Habitats in British Columbia and the Yukon," on March 8th and 9th. It is sponsored by the FBCN and will be held in conjunction with Douglas College, 5840 Cedarbridge Way, Richmond. The participants will include community groups as well as federal and provincial representatives. Their papers will give a fascinating insight into a wide range of threatened plants and animals as well as bring attention to the rapid rate at which coastal habitats and valley floors are being modified. Dr. Ian McTaggart-Cowan, Honorary President of the FBCN, will be the keynote speaker. Registration is \$25.00 which includes lunch and an evening banquet on Saturday. If you are planning to come, please contact Dr. Paul Joslin, Symposium Coordinator, telephone 536-3168 or write 15226 Victoria Avenue, White Rock, B.C. V4B 1G6.



**MIKE MERNER PRESENTING DAVE ROUTLEDGE WITH \$500 CHECK FOR V.I. MARMOT SURVEY.**

### SEARCH FOR VANCOUVER ISLAND MARMOT NETS NATION-WIDE RESPONSE

The Vancouver Island Region of the Federation of British Columbia Naturalists conducted a search this summer for the almost extinct Vancouver Island marmot, *Marmota vancouverensis*.

Support for this project was most gratifying. Financial assistance was received from the Federal Government, the B.C. Government, Fish and Wildlife Branch, the B.C. Ecological Reserve Department, the B.C. Parks Branch, the Elsa Wild Animal Appeal, Canada, based in Toronto. The Nanaimo Fish and Game Club, the Federation of B.C. Naturalists, the B.C. Wildlife Federation as well as from the various naturalists clubs of Vancouver Island and many concerned individuals.

One such concerned individual was wildlife photographer Kojo Tanaka of Japan, who sent a gift of Vancouver Island marmot photos to be used in a publicity campaign. His letter stated in part, "... these are my present to Canadian people and animals... I hope you will keep beautiful nature and protect wildlife in your country forever."

The naturalists of Vancouver Island feel it is imperative that every effort be made to ensure the survival of this little animal, as it is one of two species of mammal having its entire population within the boundaries of Canada. At the present time, its known population is less than one hundred individuals.

For further information please contact David Routledge, c/o General Delivery, Lanceville, B.C. V0R 2H0.



**VANCOUVER ISLAND MARMOT ADULT FEMALE.**

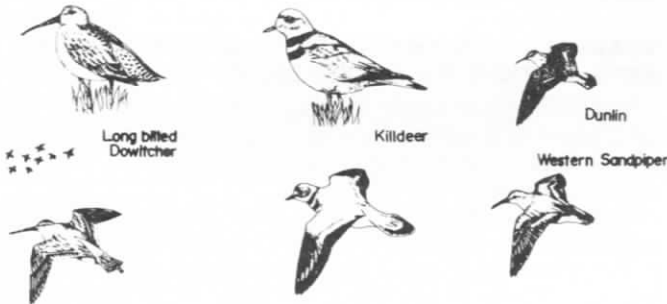
# HUNTERS PLEASE TAKE NOTE!

THE SNIPE IS THE ONLY SHOREBIRD WHICH IS ALSO A GAMEBIRD. NOTE THE STREAKED HEAD AND BACK. THIS BIRD FLIES IN A RAPID ZIG-ZAG AND GENERALLY STAYS CLOSE TO COVER. IT IS USUALLY SEEN ALONE OR IN PAIRS (UNLIKE THE DOWITCHER).



Common Snipe

THE FOLLOWING BIRDS (ALONG WITH ALL OTHER SHOREBIRDS) ARE NOT GAMEBIRDS AND ARE FULLY PROTECTED BY LAW - IT IS QUITE ILLEGAL TO HARM THESE BIRDS.



FOR MORE INFORMATION PHONE YOUR FISH & WILDLIFE BRANCH

THIS INFORMATION SHEET HAS BEEN CONCEIVED BY KEITH HOBSON.

## SHOREBIRDS IN THE PEACE RIVER PARKLANDS

From May until September shorebirds provide the birds of the Fort St. John area with excitement. Unfortunately suitable feeding and breeding habitat is restricted but with either a very wet spring or a dry fall, puddles of stagnant water attract many species.

Common breeding species include Killdeer, Common Snipe, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Spotted Sandpiper. Uncommon or rare breeders are the Wilson's Phalarope and the Upland Sandpiper.

Spring migration can be spectacular when hundreds of Lesser Yellowlegs and Pectoral Sandpiper visit the grassy margins of Cecil Lake.

Although badly damaged by park "improvement," the extreme southern end of Charlie Lake, just north of Fort St. John on the Alaska Highway, still supports a surprising number of migrant species. One to four Stilt Sandpipers usually stop for a few days on the mud where Charlie Lake empties into Stoddart ("Fish") Creek during mid August. This is also a reliable spot for both species of Dowitcher (the Short-bill being the rarer of the two), Semipalmated Plovers, Solitary Sandpipers, peep (Baird's, Least, and Semipalmated Sandpipers) and Pectoral Sandpipers. Northern Phalarope have occurred on the lake and Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, and Black-bellied Plover have been recorded once.

The birder should review his field guides and be prepared for rarities. A "trickle" or fringe migration of birds which normally follow the so-called Central Flyway is a possibility. The annual presence of Stilt Sandpipers may indicate that other unusual species could sparingly occur. In the spring of 1938 Ian McTaggart-Cowan found Hudsonian Godwits and a Wandering Tattler at Swan Lake,

south of Dawson Creek. He also recorded White-rumped Sandpipers. Wayne R. Campbell of the Provincial Museum has informed me that the White-rump is a very rare species in B.C.

On June 6, 1976 I was puzzled by three large peep feeding at the south eastern corner of Charlie Lake. They resembled large Western Sandpipers but lacked the drooped bill. Their dark bills were straight. When flushed, they displayed vivid white rumps. Because they were rather tame, I was able to check all field marks. I was indeed watching three White-rumped Sandpipers, feeding before continuing north to the Arctic.

**Christopher Siddle**

## BLUEBIRD PROJECT

In the year 1978 the Central Okanagan Naturalist Club started a "Bring Back the Bluebird Project" headed by Henry Metke.

The project consists of constructing suitable nest boxes and erecting them in areas suitable for bluebirds.

As bluebirds return early, many reported in early March, many of our boxes were put out too late the first year. In spite of the late start we did manage to count well over 30 young bluebirds fledged and flying the first year.

This year, with not all reports yet in, we have to date, a count of 219 bluebirds, 164 tree swallows, 14 wrens, 15 chickadees, and 3 Western kingbirds, which built their nest on the top of one of our boxes. Tree swallows have the same nesting requirements as bluebirds and compete for the nesting sites. We consider them a very beneficial bird also, and do not mind helping them multiply.

To date we have placed a total of 270 boxes and are looking forward to 1980 with much optimism.

The main reason for the drastic decline in bluebird population is the fault of the white man. He eliminated most of the natural nesting sites, and worse, he brought over the starling and the English sparrow both of which by comparison with the bluebird are aggressive bullies and will fight off any bluebird from nesting sites. Consequently the bluebirds simply were unable to find nesting sites resulting in their near extinction.

There are now numerous organizations and individuals in the USA and Canada who are erecting and maintaining nesting boxes and hopefully in a few more years we will have with us once again in large numbers the "Bluebird of Happiness."

**Henry Metke**



## ALBERTA'S CROWS GO EYELESS

Those Naturalists who have travelled to Alberta on our Southern Transprovincial Highway will have noticed the new Crow's nest motif to the Highway 3 signs. Did they notice that all the Alberta Crows are eyeless?

To comfort these blind crows the Society for the Care and Rehabilitation of Eyeless Crows - known as SCARE-CROWS - has located 'a supply of bionic crow eyes.' These when affixed render "aid and comfort" to the restored crows enabling them, like their B.C. cousins, to fully appreciate the beautiful scenery Highway 3, the Crow's Nest Route, has to offer!!

**William J. Merilees**



### KLUANE OVER DEVELOPMENT

This month the cover story in B.C. Outdoors discussed the imminent danger of Kluane National Park being over developed. It also asked for help to put a stop to it. Dr. John Theberge, the writer had a lot to do with the creation of the park as a wilderness area intended to protect a very fragile ecosystem consisting of the richest diversity of plant and animal life to be found anywhere in the Canadian North. Although the park is the second largest in Canada (22,015 square kilometers), practically all of its ecological riches are limited to a few valleys, most of which are being considered for development.

Theberge points out that plans to construct roads and a tramway are in the works as well as proposals to provide for private motor boats, a shuttle boat service and snowmobiling, despite recommendations to the contrary by a team of scientists contracted by Parks Canada to investigate the area. Don Blood has stressed that if motor boats are used there is considerable likelihood that nesting loons would be disturbed. J. Mathers points out that construction of a road and lift planned for one of the main corridors will create a visual scar. The Canadian Nature Federation and the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada have both stressed that Kluane should have a roadless interior, so as to preserve its wilderness character. The views expressed at the public hearings held in southwest Yukon, Whitehorse, Edmonton, Vancouver and Winnipeg are largely in accordance. According to Theberge, of the 138 questionnaires and letters received by Parks Canada, 58 per cent called for no development while only 13 per cent wanted to see development on the scale being suggested. He points out that there is already 100 kilometers of scenic road abutting the park as well as two adjoining lakes that could be used for motorboating and snowmobiling, which should be sufficient.

Fortunately it is not too late to put the brakes on turning Kluane into a recreational playground. However it is going to require your help along with a great many others. The new national parks policy released in May 1979 requires that any new zoning for tramways, road development, etc., in national parks must require ministerial signature. Please help by writing: Hon. John Fraser, MP, Minister of the Environment, Room 507, Confederation Buildings, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0X2. Recommend, if you will, that there be no development or at most

planned trails, primitive campgrounds and interpretative facilities at the park headquarters — but certainly not roads, tramways and motorboats.

**Paul Joslin**



**KLUANE NATIONAL PARK.**

### LORAN L. GOULDEN MEMORIAL AWARD

Nominations are welcome at any time for the Loran L. Goulden Memorial Award for outstanding work on any aspect of natural history in Alberta. Nominees need not reside in Alberta, but the work recognized must have been conducted in the province, or the province included in studies encompassing broader areas. To be considered for the fifth award (to be awarded in January 1980), nominations must reach the committee by December 1, 1979. Unsuccessful nominations and nominations received later than December 1 will be considered for subsequent awards. Efforts by amateurs and by professionals encouraging amateurs will receive particular favour by the committee, but nominations need not be restricted to these. Nominations should be sent to: Dr. Martin K. McNicholl, c/o Federation of Alberta Naturalists, Box 1472, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2N5.

### NEW HEADQUARTERS FOR NEWSLETTER

Since the death of Elton Anderson in 1975, the F.B.C.N. Newsletter has been edited and printed in Vernon, B.C. This will be the last issue of the Newsletter originating from the Interior. With the March 1980 edition, the Newsletter will be edited and printed in Vancouver, B.C.

I would like to thank all the contributors and individuals who so faithfully and diligently assisted in the publication of this newsletter.

**Frank Paul, Former Editor**

## PROPOSED PARK SITE DESTROYED BY "DEVELOPMENT"

The Lily Point area of Point Roberts, Washington (about 35 km south of Vancouver), once proposed as a site for an international park, has been ravaged by "developers." This area, although located just inside Washington State, has been visited for many years by Vancouver Natural History Society field trips, zoology classes from the University of B.C., and other outdoor-oriented groups. Lily Point features high cliffs with a dramatic view eastward across Boundary Bay and southward toward the San Juan Islands; until recently, it also had the only old-growth forest on Point Roberts. The former owner, the Alaska Packers Co. of Blaine, Washington, has apparently sold the land to a real estate developer, who is presently clearing the land and subdividing it for expensive residential lots.

In 1971, the International Joint Commission, which arbitrates boundary disagreements between Canada and the U.S., was asked to recommend solutions to a number of problems affecting Point Roberts. A special report by the U.S. National Park Service and Parks Canada, prepared for the IJC, recommended establishment of an international park, including the Lily Point area, as a possible solution. Of Lily Point, the report stated: "Here a marvelous geographical relationship exists between forest, high bluffs, and marine waters, providing a great habitat for many varieties of birds and fishes. This special area is worthy of concern, and this concern should emphasize conservation of the area rather than recreational development." Unfortunately, the park proposal, although unanimously endorsed by conservation groups at a 1973 public hearing, was shelved by the IJC because of vocal opposition from a few Point Roberts landowners. Once again, the public good has been sacrificed for the benefit of a few selfish individuals, and another irreplaceable natural area has been lost permanently.

**Wayne C. Weber**

## SUMMER CAMPS - 1980

To date only one camp has been scheduled for the summer of 1980. A F.B.C.N. sponsored camp will be held at Nanoose Bay, May 4 - 10, 1980. The camp fee will be \$70. Because of the many changes and cancellations last year, there will be a non-refundable \$10 portion of the camp fee, for all camps during the 1980 season. The camp will be limited to 75 people and further information about camps will appear in the Newsletter and will also be sent to clubs.

There will be no F.B.C.N. camp at Waterton this next year.

## HEADING OUT?

For Federation members contemplating a break from British Columbia in the next year or so, one of the World-wide Nature Tours conducted by Questers Tours and Travel Inc. might be of interest. While in Guatemala recently, I was able to accompany one of their groups for two days and was most impressed by the quality of their tour and the exceptional knowledge and abilities of the leader. Cost of their tours appear quite reasonable. For a copy of their tour directory write: Questers Tours and Travel Inc., 257 Park Avenue South, New York, N.Y. 10010, U.S.A.

**Bill Merilees**



**NORTHERN FUR SEAL IN BETWEEN BULL NORTHERN SEA LIONS - WINCHELSEA ISLANDS, MARCH 1979.**

## A NORTHERN FUR SEAL ON THE INSIDE

Northern Fur Seals are seldom seen along the inside coastal waters and there are very few records of the species in the Strait of Georgia. The Northern Fur Seal is a pelagic species which migrates south from their rookery islands in the Bering Sea. However, for naturalists who ventured out to the Winchelsea Islands last March 25th on the Nanaimo Naturalists annual Sea Lion Cruise, one Northern Fur Seal was seen at very close range along with many Northern Sea Lions.

The accompanying photograph, was examined by Mike Bigg of the Pacific Biological Station. Dr. Bigg estimated the animal seen was a 4 to 5 year old Male Northern Fur Seal.

Sealions begin their annual haul out on rocks in the Winchelsea Island group, between Parksville and Nanaimo in late December and remain until early May. During this period as many as 400 Sealions have been counted at one time.

Each year, usually in late March the Nanaimo Field Naturalist Club organize their annual charter trip to the Winchelseas. Anyone who would like to accompany the Nanaimo group this year should write Ken Knowles, the trip organizer, 169 Howard St., Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 3R2.

**William J. Merilees**

## GRAY JAY MOUSING

On September 19, 1979, Kootenay Park Naturalist, Larry Halverson, observed a Gray Jay catch and kill a mouse (species?). The following is taken from his field notebook: *Location:* Shore of Floe Lake, 6,700' elevation; *Habitat:* Subalpine Forest; *Weather:* Clearing after rain shower; *Time:* 5:15 p.m.

**Observation:** Three Gray Jays glided towards me, landed on the cabin porch rails, and then flew into a nearby alpine larch. One Jay soon dove to the ground, catching a mouse in its beak. The bird then flew into an alpine fir with the squeaking mouse in its bill. Upon landing the Jay proceeded to tear the mouse apart with its beak while pinning the mouse against a branch with its foot. The Jay made six trips with mouth fulls of hair and flesh into surrounding trees, storing its catch.



PHOTO TAKEN AT NANAIMO JULY 7, 1979.

### NOTES ON THE FIELD MARKS OF THE ANNA'S HUMMINGBIRD

One of the joys of moving into our 'new' house was the inheritance of a male Anna's Hummingbird. When we first noticed it, I immediately guessed what species it was but as all our field guides were packed I had to make notes of the bird's distinctive markings. When the field guides were located I was shocked that my notes and the illustrations in Peterson and the Golden Guide had little resemblance. It was not until I had purchased a copy of the new Audubon "Field Guide to North American Birds (Western Region)" that the photograph of Jack Wilburn suspended my apprehensions.

Aside from the red throat and forehead, I noted a distinct white spot behind the eye, a distinct lighter streak descending obliquely away from the eye and I noted the red gorget to be magenta not ruby red. All good photos I have since located of this species confirm my observation. Neither the illustration by Peterson or Singer (Golden Guide) indicate the existence of the spot and stripe field marks.

During the past six months, one, possibly two, male Anna's Hummingbirds have been at our feeder daily. From these observations and the helpful assistance of Virginia Whitelaw, Dr. and Mrs. McTaggart-Cowan, the staff of the Provincial Museum and photos taken by Enid Lemon, and Bruce McDonald, the following sketches have been prepared.

Briefly the Anna's is a green-backed hummingbird, slightly larger than our other summer resident species. The breast appears 'dirty,' particularly in the male. In both sexes the post eye spot and the descending oblique stripe are characteristic. (Figs. 1 & 2.) In the male, except under

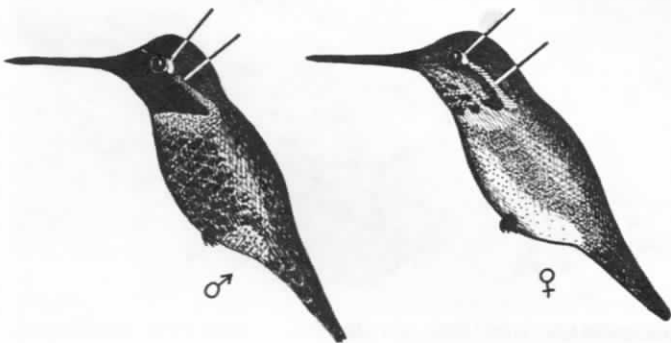
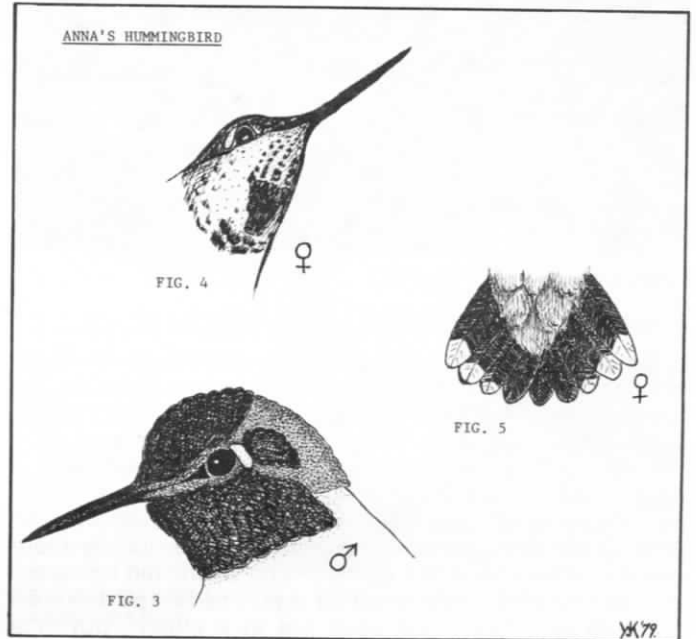


FIG. 1

FIG. 2

good lighting conditions, the three magenta patches (throat, forehead and auricular) appear near black (Fig. 3). The amount of magenta on the throat of the female appears to vary (Fig. 4). The female alone has large white tips on each of the outer three tail feathers (Fig. 5). Juveniles



apparently resemble the female except that the throat may be clear.

Since Virginia Whitelaw's article on the arrival and distribution of the Anna's Hummingbird in British Columbia (Discovery, 1977), Anna's Hummingbirds have been reported at Creston, Revelstoke, New Denver, Prince George and even into Alberta. It is hoped this article will help other naturalists identify this interesting winter and year-round resident.

*Acknowledgements:* Figure 3 was prepared from a photograph taken by Enid Lemon in Victoria. Figures 4 and 5 were adapted from photographs taken by Bruce McDonald in Vancouver.

**Bill Merillees**

#### References:

- Anderson, N., 1978. Little Orphan Annie meets Gladstone and Disraeli. Discovery N.S. Vol. 7 No. 1. Vancouver Natural History Society.
- Peterson, R. T., 1941. A Field Guide to Western Birds. Houghton Mifflin, Boston.
- Robbins, C. S. et al, 1966. Birds of North America, a Guide to Field Identification. Golden Press, New York.
- Udvardy, M. D. F., 1977. The Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Birds Western Region. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
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LOON'S NEST - NIMPO LAKE.

### COMMON LOON'S NEST WITH THREE EGGS

On June 21, 1979, while canoeing around on the North side of an Island at the East end of Nimpo Lake (in the West Chilcotin) a Loon left the shore and began giving alarm calls. We soon found the nest at the end of a V-shaped canal, and on the flattened grass bed were 3 eggs! It was a very shady and secluded spot, made by the up-rooting of a large tree. On July 23rd I returned to photograph the nest as quickly as possible, luckily there was 400 ASA film in the camera. The Loons did not seem unduly disturbed. We returned again to Nimpo Lake on July 5th and found the eggs not in a clutch, but in a straight line and cold. The Q and Q7 Loons were out a ways from the nesting area and did not give alarm calls. The area was checked last on July 18th and all the eggs had been destroyed by a predator, they were still in the yolk stage, and the shells seemed thin. I have sent egg shells, pictures and particulars to R. Wayne Campbell at the Provincial Museum. He had checked over 200 nest record cards for size of Common Loon clutches and found two is the maximum recorded.

**Winifred Bennie**

### FOR THE RECORD

1. Members of the South Okanagan and Similkameen Parks Society, Historical Society and Naturalists presented a petition to the Environment and Land Use Committee of the Provincial Cabinet to protect parts of the historic trails, (of fur trading and gold rush days) which lie, in the main, immediately north of Manning Park. The petition asked that Manning Park be extended or that status similar to that of park be accorded the area crossed by the trails. Norm Pursell and Bert Brink represented support of the Lower Mainland Clubs of the F.B.C.N., the Sierra Club, Save Our Parks Association and many individuals.

2. The F.B.C.N. entered into an alliance with the Sierra Club and S.P.E.C. to place the concerns of our constituents before the Royal Commission on Uranium Mining in B.C. The alliance is assisted in the development of its presentation by the West Coast Environmental Law Association and has asked 'Aspect' an environmental consulting firm to develop a brief which focuses on possible impacts of uranium mining on plants and animals other than man and on biological pathways taken by radioactive elements. The B.C. Medical Association intervenes on human health concerns; churches are intervening on moral and ethical issues; other groups are concerned with business and technical issues. The Commissioners have assigned \$45,000 to the alliance for the preparation of its

case. Jay Lewis, Norm Pursell and Bert Brink watch for the F.B.C.N.

3. A special meeting of province-wide interest is being called by the Vancouver Natural History Society and the F.B.C.N. directorate to examine proposals for logging and mining in the Cunningham Reserve of the Bridge River area, a magnificent recreational area, excellent for rambling, for geology and renowned for its flower meadows and large wildlife populations. The probable date of the meeting — November 27, Vancouver Museum auditorium.

### NOW YOU SEE THEM — NOW YOU DON'T

The meadows seem strangely silent. It's only late August. The days are still hot and sunny. Yet something characteristic of summertime in the high country is missing.

Since May the incessant metallic chirps of Columbian Ground Squirrels have filled the alpine meadows with the sounds of life and activity. All through June and July, visitors to Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks have been entertained by the antics of these small brown and grey rodents. Now, with winter still a month or two away they've disappeared.

From a ground squirrel's point of view late August is time to call it quits and retreat underground. In hibernation chambers beneath the meadows they pass the cold and snowy months in a deep sleep.

Why such an early bedtime? Possibly because they have fattened during the most productive time in the short alpine summer. They now have enough body reserves to sustain them over the winter. If they stayed active in the lean autumn weeks ahead they might lose weight and enter hibernation with little chance of survival.

For some of the ground squirrels — the old, the sick, the ones that went into hibernation undernourished — this year's hibernation will become an endless sleep of death.

The most likely candidates for this tragic ending are those that were unfortunately fed such things as cheezies and potato chips over the summer. People food causes the squirrels to put on the wrong type of fat — low energy blubber which can burn out before the winter is over. It is against park regulations to give handouts to any wild animals — a rule in the best interests of the park wildlife.

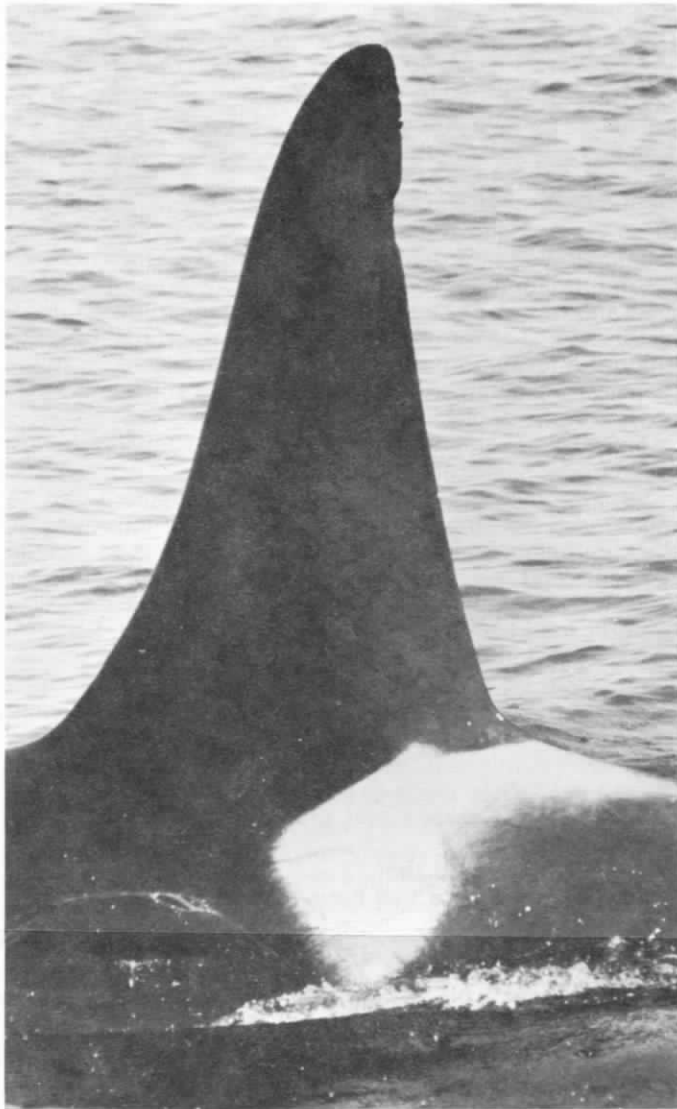
After three-quarters of a year beneath the ground, the survivors will be out chirping away again next May. Curiously, this is a month or so before the snow has completely gone. Some scientists think the early emergence is necessary for mating activities.

The active life of the Columbian Ground Squirrel is a short one. Now you see them — now you don't.

**John Woods**



COLUMBIAN GROUND SQUIRREL — GLACIER NATIONAL PARK.  
J. Woods, Parks Canada photo



**BULL KILLER WHALE L#10 — NOTE HIGH DORSAL FIN WITH ABRADED EDGE.**

### **“FINGER PRINTED” KILLER WHALES**

In 1973, whale biologists on Canada's West Coast began photographing Killer Whales for individual identification. Today, more than 250 Killer Whales in 25 pods can be 'personally' identified. Now systematic data can be gathered on movements, migration, range, pod composition and longevity.

When Killer Whales break the surface to breathe, a goodly portion of their dorsal surface, including the dorsal fin and saddle patch areas arch high out of the water. Using photographs, the size and shape of these features plus scars and other abrasions, enabled biologists to prepare a catalogue of identities. These marks, once recognizable, are nearly as distinctive as human finger prints. Furthermore these 'marks' have remained constant for individual whales during six years of observation.

Occasionally photos taken of Killer Whales before 1973 add pieces of the story puzzle and reveal interesting chapters in a Killer Whale's life. Remember in 1969 when a pod of Killer Whales was corralled near Pender Harbour? Photographs published in the Vancouver Sun identified No. A #14 as one of the whales caught and later released.

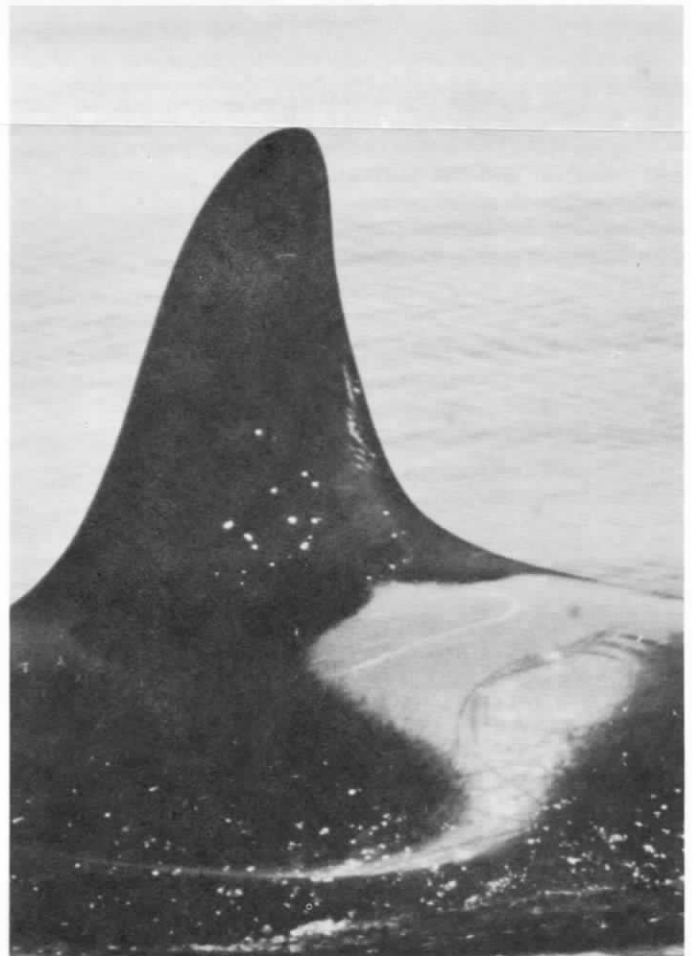
Because numerous photographs exist of Killer Whales,

taken by boating enthusiasts and naturalists in B.C. waters, Mike Bigg of the Pacific Biological Station is anxious to locate and see these. These photographs could help to answer many important questions about the life history of this species. Any person who has, or knows where photographs taken in British Columbia coastal waters of Killer Whales are, should write or phone Dr. Michael Bigg, Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5K6 (Phone 758-5202). Your help would be very much appreciated.

**Bill Merilees**



**COW KILLER WHALE A#14 — NOTE SHAPE OF DORSAL FIN AND SADDLE PATCH.**



**COW KILLER WHALE J#8 — NOTE SHAPE OF DORSAL FIN AND SADDLE WITH SCARRING.**

## THE BOOKSHELF

"*Attracting and Feeding Birds in British Columbia*," by R. Wayne Campbell and Harold Hosford - Museum Methods Manual No. 7. Published by the British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1979. Price \$1.00.

A good publication for anyone interested in birds. Send \$1.00 to the Provincial Museum, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4.

"*Plants in British Columbia Indian Technology*," by Nancy Turner. Handbook No. 38. Published by the British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1979; 304 p. Price \$2.00.

Another excellent book in the Handbook series. Many fine pictures and interesting data about plants used by the Indians of B.C.

"*Exploring the Stein River Valley*," by Roger Freeman and David Thompson. Vancouver, Douglas & McIntyre, 1979.

This book is a major contribution to help the cause of the many conservationists who view the Stein Watershed as a beautiful unspoiled area, which should be allowed to stay that way.

The appeal to help save the Stein is very clearly defined in the book, but in addition it completely fulfills its role as one of the 'Exploring Series' of books. Routes and trails are indexed and described, maps and map keys are included and there are enough excellent colour and black and white photographs to make it worth acquiring as a record of a lovely mountain area of British Columbia.

In addition to the very good trail descriptions, there are several chapters covering history, geology, vegetation, fish, wildlife, hiking hints and a Stein River boating guide.

This book is the result of thousands of hours of hiking and research and the authors are to be commended for producing such an excellent guide. Published by Douglas & McIntyre, bookstore price about \$7.95 but the FBCN may still have some at a lower price.

The message is buy the book and help save the Stein. Royalties are being contributed by the authors to the "Save the Stein Coalition."

**N. Purssell**

## REVIEW:

"*Footloose in the Columbias*" - A Hiker's Guide to Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks - British Columbia. Published by Parks Canada.

This 40 page 103 mm x 155 mm (4" x 6") booklet is a guide to 33 trails in the National Parks of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier. For most, but not all of the trails described, length, hiking times, elevation range, location of the trail head and the appropriate topographic maps are listed followed by a general information section. This general information section includes a few notes on terrain, flora and fauna, place names, features encountered, local history, etc. The introductory pages mention trail tips, additional information and publications available, suitable maps, and a summary of trails which are short and easy, provide views of glaciers, fishing, flower observation, etc.

Three maps, one of each park and one showing the detail of Roger's Pass are included.

Some comments for the Guides improvement can be tendered. First, the maps could be greatly improved as they are unimaginative. Adequate space exists to include the scale and a legend matching trail numbers with their names. Topographic details, indicating trails along valley bottoms from trails along ridges would be helpful. Second, notes and information of interest to naturalists are sparse. For instance no mention is made of the beautiful stands of Devil's Club along the Giant Cedars or the excellent show of subalpine flowers along the Asulkan Trail visible in mid July. With a little extra effort, this 'hikers guide' could be made a naturalists' guide as well. This change would be of benefit to both groups and greatly expand the guide's potential audience.

It should be noted that "*Footloose in the Columbias*" has been issued on a trial basis only and is slated for revision to a permanent guide in 1980.

Parks Canada and the staffs of Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks should be congratulated for producing this booklet. With modification and further input from British Columbia's outdoor enthusiasts the Province will have a guide to the Columbia Mountains of considerable value.

Copies of this guide are available free by writing: The Superintendent, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, P.O. Box 350, Revelstoke, B.C. V0E 2S0.

**Bill Merilees**

## DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER IS FEBRUARY 1, 1980

### THE FEDERATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURALISTS

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**WANTED:** Articles — Observations — Notes on items of interest in the field of Natural History. Type and double space all submissions and mail to the editor before the deadline for the next issue.

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