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## IN DEFENSE OF CROWS

Crows are in trouble again (*BC Naturalist* Page 39, Vol. 32, No. 5). Yes, crows may cause a bit of bother to other birds locally but "more crows and fewer 'songbirds'?" We need a scapegoat for the real or perceived declining songbird numbers. Wolves are blamed for the paucity of ungulates and the Europeans have caught all the codfish. A well-known featherless Crow, Mr. John, retired governor of the Bank of Canada, has been blamed for everything from high interest rates and unemployment to several recessions and the declining dollar.

If you have travelled around B.C. lately you must be dismayed at the pace of "growth" at the expense of the natural landscape. More houses and more house cats, more shopping malls, more tidy parks, more clearcuts, more drainage, more biocides, etcetera. Songbirds haven't a chance.

To quote that lovable swamp-dwelling critter, Pogo, "The enemy is us".

David Stirling  
Victoria

**Editor's Note:** In the December 1985 edition of the *BC Naturalist* there appeared an article entitled **Stone the Crows!** by David Stirling under his regular column heading of **ptarmigan ptracks**. The article is still timely.

JG

**Did you know that all of Canada's eight species of crow, magpie and jay are living and thriving in British Columbia?**

The *Corvidae* - encompassing the typical crows, the magpies and ravens, tree-pies, choughs, nutcrackers and jays - is a world wide family absent only from New Zealand and some other South Pacific islands. True crows are

missing from South America but that continent is home to several species of beautiful jays. In all there are about one hundred and twenty species around the world.

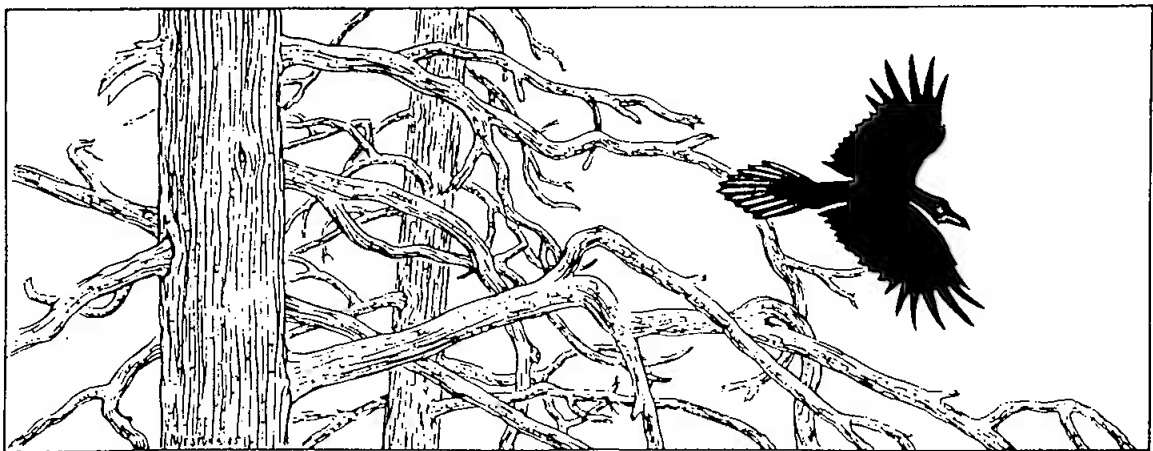
Crows are either black or a mixture of black, white and gray, while jays range from the drab Whiskyjack to the splendid Green Jay and other beauties south of the Rio Grande. In fact, the American jays are among the most colourful of the world's birds.

The crow family is one of my favourite bird groups. Crows are intelligent, lively, adaptable, and mostly successful - the 'people' of the bird world. Perhaps that is why people dislike crows: they are too much like us.

The raven has been considered to be a bird of ill omen by some northern cultures. 'Stone the Crows!' is an old English expression still in use in Australia. In our Pacific Northwest coast cities the abundant Northwestern Crow is blamed for the paucity of 'songbirds' and there is talk of organizing crow shoots. Meanwhile the vacant lots, waste places and remnants of natural woodlands are being converted into condominiums, parking lots and shopping malls. Songbirds are replaced by cats and kids. But "lets blame the crow" - not ourselves. However, do remember the crow, a passerine, is also a songbird!

In my travels around the world I have always been fascinated by crows and jays. Indeed, crows often symbolize memorable places and events. The friendly Whiskeyjack (formally known as the Gray Jay) is often the only bird to be seen on a mid-winter jaunt in the boreal forest. The Common Raven is one of the few birds visible in the icy wastes of the far north. It is like meeting an old friend when the raven appears again, soaring over the sun-scorched hills of Sonora.

Last fall I watched Fan-tailed Ravens practising their unique gliding style over the wilderness of Ein Gedi, on the western shores of the Dead Sea. Perhaps, at this very place 3,000 years ago, David the shepherd boy, after vanquishing the giant Philistine Goliath, watched these



ravens, too, while he hid from the wrath of jealous King Saul: "And David went up from thence and dwelt in the strongholds at Ein Gedi" (I Samuel 24:1).

A short time later I travelled to South Wales to search for the elusive Chough, one of the family which has not been so successful. I was up with the birds, driving west through fields stiff with Rooks and Carrion Crows. An occasional magpie flew over and once or twice I caught a glimpse of a jay in the hedgerows. At the border of the 'National Trust' the cultivation and Rooks disappeared. Now the land was rough pasture, rocks and crags and gorse. The Rooks and Carrion Crows were replaced by Jackdaws along the cliffs and ravens inland on the rocks.

I walked and gassed but no Cloughs. Had they vanished from South Wales? Then my glasses focused on a party of forty Jackdaw-like birds which had just flown up from a pasture behind a stone fence. A slim crow with a decurved red bill - - Choughs! For some time I watched them foraging, flipping over dry cowpies for the beetles

and grubs underneath. These patterns of stone on the landscape told of a site occupied by Stone Age man thousands of years ago. Were Choughs foraging in these pastures when ancient Welshmen watched their flocks?

Well, I could go on about magnificent Green Jays in Benson State Park, Texas; incomparable Tufted Jays in the Montezuma's pines of the Sierra Madre; and three species of gorgeous jays - San Blas, Purplish-backed, and Magpie-Jays, together in a west Mexican ground nut field. You get my point: crows and jays are attractive, worth watching and deserving of our understanding.

In Victoria, November brings gray skies, but these late afternoon skies are animated by long lines and clumps of Northwestern Crows hurrying to their overnight strongholds on offshore islands, and I know that with the strengthening sun of February the ravens will be performing their aerial displays over Mount Work - a sure sign of spring.

## **The Unusual Happenings in Salmon Arm Bay THE WESTERN GREBE STORY**

The unusual, or that beyond the normal, has occurred this summer of '94, it centers around the Western Grebe colony. Spring saw the start of the breeding season as it has done for numerous generations of Grebes, or to be humanly accurate, for as long as we have been keeping a close watch on their activities. The first Western Grebes were seen in a tight group offshore in the bay during the first week in April. Their numbers grew steadily during April until the normal number of around 180 (in breeding pairs) were present at the beginning of May.

Then things began to change from the occurrence of events that we have come to understand as the normal habits of the colony. Their routine of grouping offshore, then as the lake water level rose to reach the fringes of the marsh areas, coming inshore as one group. First to the Nature Area borders, and then about a week later moving to the area close to the bird blind where they have, as a group, performed their elaborate breeding rituals.

This year they neglected these practices, with indications of unusual haste. As the waters reached the marsh growths, they dispersed as individual pairs to the marsh areas around the bay.

This was followed by an unprecedented occurrence of events.

The first families appeared out of the marshes on the 20 June, with a 23 day incubation period, egg laying started on around the 28 May. This was a week earlier than 1993, and two weeks earlier than previous years.

To add to the puzzle was what we witnessed just four days later, when on 24 June we counted a total of 31 families comprising a total of 51 young. This is unusual, for in past years the number of families have increased slowly over a

four week period to reach the maximum we have now witnessed in four days.

We started to question what was going on here to so radically change a well catalogued sequence of events. But this was not the end of this unusual summer. For on our twice weekly survey count numbers kept rising. 27 June saw 38 families of 58 young; 30 June - 43 families of 74 young; and 4 July - 77 families of 113 young.

Bearing in mind that over the past five years during our period of survey the number of young in one season has been between 40 and 55 in about 32 families. So the numbers kept rising until on the 21 July we had a total of 145 young in 86 families. An increase of 131% in the young total, and over 200% in families. Further evidence is the total average adult population, which in previous years showed a steady increase to 240 grebes. This year they totalled 314.

That something unusual has occurred is obvious, but the reason is not so straight forward. We have come up three possible scenarios.

1. The Salmon Arm Bay colony has been steadily increasing in numbers of young over the past five years. These young are now becoming breeding adults. Over the past few years their nesting habitat has increased over 100% in area, thereby making room for them to find space and more suitable nesting sites.
2. There has been an influx of breeding pairs from other B.C. sources. The other colony in Creston, which had troubles last summer, also the smaller numbers down the Okanagan valley.

cont. on page 6 - Grebe

cont. from page 5 - Grebe

3. There has been an influx of breeding pairs from the western United States. Due maybe to adverse weather conditions there.

These, and any other reasons, are being investigated through various channels. At this time all we can say is that with the increased numbers the available habitat does not appear over crowded, and with no apparent stress to the colony. The young have a high survival rate and growing well in large family crèches, located in two sheltered bays. In all, the area is large enough to take the increase of population. We have been watching the larger family groups of three or more young, as a monitor of an adequate food supply. To date there does not appear to be a problem, as the survival rate is very high. We have been

also watching the co-existence with other lake users, and the situation would appear satisfactory. Power boats keeping to the deeper water in the center of the bay with the Western Grebes mainly keeping further inshore, but intermingling is taking place with no sign of harassment.

That we have a problem is obvious, but a happy one, for instead of the doom and gloom of diminishing population, we have witnessed a dramatic rise. The reason, well only the grebes know at the moment. Could it be the natural peaks and dips of a population, with next year finding a dip? Or are there external sources at work here? That we have established space for them to resolve the problem brings satisfaction.

Frank Kime  
Salmon Arm

## SUN SCORPION FOUND IN THE PENTICTON AREA

In the summer of 1993, Brad Gabriel found what he thought was a large spider in the basement of his house, west of Penticton. Out of concern for his children, he showed it to Steve Cannings. Steve's son, Syd, was there, and was able to assure him that it was not dangerous. In fact, it wasn't a spider, but a solpugid or 'sun scorpion', one of the fascinating denizens of the Okanagan's dry grasslands. Steve gave the specimen to me for forwarding to Dr. Rob Holmberg of Athabasca University (Alberta) for further identification.

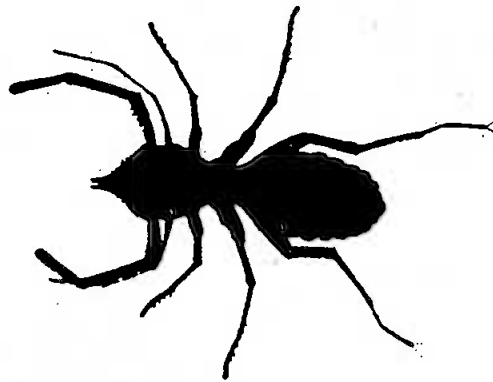
Recently, I heard that it was the second known specimen of *Eremobates canadensis*, a newly-described species of Solpugid. The first had been caught by Syd Cannings in a pan trap near the Haynes Lease Ecological Reserve north of Osoyoos in 1986. In fact, a review of the **Solpugids of Canada** (Muma et al. 1994) has revealed that the Okanagan has not one species, as previously believed, but five - - three of which are new to science!

Sun scorpions are arachnids, but lack the stinging tail and the crab-claw pedipalps of true scorpions. The pedipalps of Solpugids are slender and leg-like, and have a sensory function. Solpugids capture and handle prey with a pair of massive, clawed chelicerae that project from the front of the head. The first pair of legs are,

like the pedipalps, sensitive in function; only the last three pairs of legs are used in walking.

Solpugids are swift and agile, and are excellent climbers. They inhabit dry desert areas and are known by various names. Here, they are known as 'sun scorpions' or 'wind spiders'. The Arabs call them 'wind scorpions', 'wind spiders' or 'camel spiders'; the Spanish call them 'aranas del sol', (sun spiders) and 'mato venado' (deer-killers); the Russians call them 'flangas'; the Dutch of South Africa call them 'jagt spinnekop' (hunting spiders); and the Mexicans call them 'gluvia' or 'genisaro' (hunting spiders).

These animals are nocturnal, and feed on living arachnids, insects and other animals which are taken on the run. They prey is then crushed by the solpugids massive chelicerae for consumption. Should anyone find one, I would be most happy to receive it, and to forward it for identification.



### References

Muma, M.H., R. Holmberg, D.J. Buckle, and G.H. Hilchie. 1994. **The Solpugids of Canada**. Canadian Journal of Zoology. Submitted for publication.

Walter Charles  
Arachnologist  
Summerland

# ASK RAVEN



## CORMORANT BEHAVIOUR

I know the accepted wisdom of cormorants hanging their wings out, is to dry (supposedly) wettable plumage, so it is with some trepidation that I take the liberty of proposing an alternate hypothesis. I hope that this article will stimulate some rebuttals or responses from fellow naturalists.

It is suggested that a more plausible explanation of wing extension might be thermal regulation or 'air conditioning'. Possibly there are other bird species that behave similarly. For example, page 234 of *National Geographic Birds of North America* has the Smooth-billed Ani 'sunning' itself. Again, dissipating body heat by exposing a larger surface area is a simple, effective ventilation system. Perhaps wing extension has a multiple benefit to the cormorant such as muscle toning and drying although I have some difficulty with the notion that cormorants have wettable plumage, for the following reasons.

- I noted water beading and water being repelled in a manner similar to other seabirds, as the cormorant surfaces after a dive.
- They are frequently seen with extended wings in fog and rain.
- They bathe vigorously, driving water through their plumage without concern of becoming waterlogged.
- Wettable plumage could result in a tremendous loss of body heat as human divers can attest if they were to dive without a suit. It is very cold at depth.
- Any old 'salt' will tell you that should their clothing, cushions or upholstery become impregnated with salt water, is extremely difficult to air dry without first rinsing in fresh water. I do not see Pelagic Cormorants making an effort to rinse off in nearby ponds or streams as do gulls.

Cormorants have a body structure to enable it to dive to great depths (up to 180 feet has been recorded). It has taken on ballast in the form of enormous muscles in the thighs and hips enabling it to propel itself at speed to these cold depths. This excess weight is responsible for its poor flight ability and water logged appearance while on the surface of the water. Compared to other diving seabirds which ride high on the water surface, the cormorant appears to be taking on water and in imminent danger of capsizing.

Cormorants are known gluttons whose enormous appetites fuel a very high metabolism driving those muscles and warding off hypothermia. So long as the cormorant remains at sea, the sea water acts as a heat exchanger. However, at rest, out of water, it is likely to become overheated if its internal furnace continues to pump out B.T.U. greater than its surroundings, to which it can only respond by re-submerging or extending its wings until its thermostat gets in sync with its rest area.

There very well may be research papers that B.C.'s field ornithologists can present, to back the field guides claim the wings are extended for drying purposes. I do hope they will submit research as a rebuttal. If not, I have several experiments to suggest.

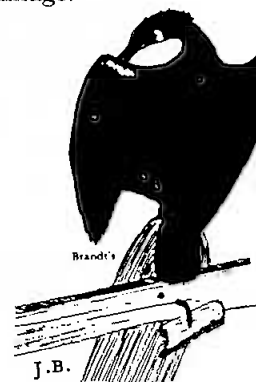
1. a) Take a hand towel, immerse in sea water, wring out excess, hang to dry, note time to dry at various wind speeds and temperatures.  
  
b) Time a cormorant with wings extended at various wind speeds and temperatures. Determine if enough time (as per a) above) has elapsed to enable it to dry its wings before they are again folded (factor in the assistance given by body heat).
2. Take all the plumage of various (dead, naturally) diving birds (loons, gannets, mergansers, grebes, etc.) float plumage upon the surface of sea water and observe which (if any) become waterlogged over a set time. Compare with cormorant plumage.
3. Surgically implant thermo sensors to determine thermal regulation of cormorants while at work, at sea surface, and at rest ashore. Compare this data to other diving seabirds. Apparently Andrew Bryant and a team of veterinarians are conducting similar research on the rare Vancouver Island Marmot with a mobile alpine operating theatre.

### In Conclusion

Field guides have become naturalists bibles, but are not infallible. Misconceptions can linger for generations if not challenged.

Personally I have difficulty believing a bird would be so stupid as to expect wings to dry in fog and rain, and that it had not evolved a mechanism to transfer water proofing throughout its plumage.

Bob Holden  
Vancouver



## FAT WADDLING CANADA GOOSE

© 1994

Your light and dark feathers are strikingly smart,  
Inspiring, no doubt, some good art;  
But such comments from us are to you of no use,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

We find yours to be a predictable mood,  
For a handout of trashy free food:  
To pretend that you need us, this is an excuse,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

You stare at us with some surprise at the lack  
In our hands of a rubbishy snack - -  
Just a white plastic bag starts your digestive juices,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

Every day of the year you our handouts bolt down,  
So you lazily stay in our town - -  
What privations some day might migration induce,  
Fat waddling Canada goose?

You have pecked at a mallard and bullied a coot,  
To get more than your share of the loot:  
With glaucous-winged gulls it is more of a truce,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

Oh, Canada goose, google google, we gush,  
As if birds might appreciate mush:  
To you this is just one more cackle abstruse,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

Your fetching brown eyes have an innocence mild,  
Like those of a substitute child:  
To us you appear to be just as obtuse,  
Fat waddling Canada goose!

Quoth a parkgoing bagtoting breadgiving matron,  
Who fancied herself their good patron,  
"Who will clear up the mess from you geese running loose,  
Fat waddling Canada goose?"

Roger Ashton  
Vancouver



photo:  
Al Grass

## ATTENTION

*Naturalists, Biologists, Outdoor Enthusiasts*

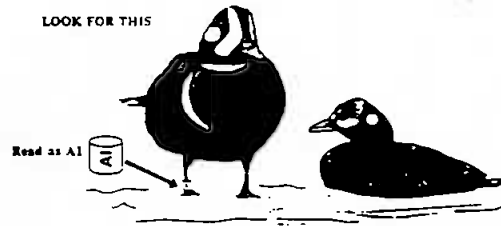
### Looking For Banded Harlequin Ducks

Hundred of Harlequin Ducks have now been marked with coloured leg bands with have a 2 digit code bearing any combination of the following symbols.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNPRSTUVXYZ
0123456789

For example  
AB, CD, AI, E2, 12, 33 etc.

LOOK FOR THIS



#### From resightings we can:

- connect the breeding and coastal areas;
- determine the prevalence of site fidelity;
- estimate population sizes; and
- monitor survival rates of banded individuals.

Harlequin Ducks frequently haul out on rocks. At these times it is possible to read leg bands using a spotting scope.

#### Tips to Successful Band Reading

1. Use a 20 to 60x zoom spotting scope.
2. Note the colour of the band and the digits.
3. Read the band from the foot upward.
4. Find areas where Harlequin Ducks haul out, and set up before they arrive.
5. Visit areas around the high tide cycle.
6. Be patient and await the right opportunity. Too much movement will disturb the birds.
7. Ideal viewing distance is about 40 metres but up to 80 metres is possible.
8. Try to view bands with the sun behind you.

#### Report sightings to:

Canadian Wildlife Service  
Box 340

Delta B.C. V4K 3Y3

Phone: (604) 946 8546

Fax: (604) 946 7022

Attn. Ian Goudie

e-mail

Goudiei@CWSVan.Dots.DOE.Ca

## SNOW-BATHING BEHAVIOUR IN THE GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

Maintenance behaviour in birds, such as bathing, is performed for protection, comfort, and general health (Welty 1975). There are three common types of bathing among birds.

Water-bathing cleans the feathers and activates preening. Warblers, for example, will take a leaf bath by fluttering about on the surface of wet leaves in trees and shrubs. The American Robin may take advantage of the spray from lawn sprinklers. Verbeek (1962) observed small song-birds bathing in dew or condensed fog on leaf and grass surfaces. The only instance of water-bathing in the Golden-crowned Kinglet has been reported by Galati (1991). He observed a fledgling bathing in the moisture laden foliage of a cedar branch.

Aerial fliers, like swifts, deliberately expose their plumage to rain for bathing while swallows bathe on the wing, skimming across the water surface of lakes and ponds.

Dust-bathing occurs most commonly in birds of open country, such as the Eurasian Skylark, Vesper and Savannah Sparrow and Horned Lark. Here the bird squats or lies down in a dusty place, or scratches a hollow in the dry, bare earth and with wings flickering action raises dust through its ruffled plumage. Upon rising, and shaking vigorously, it preens to help dislodge ectoparasites (Borchelt 1972). Dust-bathing also absorbs lipids from the plumage which can easily be shaken off (Borchelt and Duncan 1974).

Sun-bathing is the final common method of maintaining the plumage. In this activity the bird exposes its feathers and soft parts of the skin to ultraviolet rays by raising the head feathers, drooping the wings, fluffing the contour feathers, and fanning the tail. As Kennedy (1969) suggests, this function also includes heat absorption into the body, helps dry the plumage, stimulates Vitamin D production, and assists with the movement of ectoparasites which facilitates removal.

Less known, and probably seasonally important to feather maintenance, is snow-bathing. On 22 December 1993 I observed a Golden-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus satrapa*) flutter into an accumulation of soft snow on a western red cedar branch in Nelson, British Columbia. It immediately fluffed its feathers and flicked its wings so that the snow fell onto its back. This activity lasted six to seven seconds and was repeated five to six times on various branches in close proximity to each other. Following this, the kinglet perched near the trunk of a cedar tree and began preening vigorously for about fifty seconds before taking flight.

Since I cannot find this activity recorded in technical literature for the Golden-crowned Kinglet I would be interested to know if other naturalists have observed this behaviourism.

### Literature Cited

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- Borchelt, P. L. and L. Duncan. 1974. **Dust-bathing and Feather Lipid in Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*).** *Condor* 76:471-472.
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- Kennedy, R. J. 1969. **Sun-bathing Behaviour of Birds.** *British Birds* 62:249-258.
- Verbeek, N. A. M. 1962. **On Dew Bathing and Drought in Passerines.** *Auk* 79:719.
- Welty, J. C. 1975. **The Life of Birds.** W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia. 623 pp.

Linda M. Van Damme  
Nelson

### BALD EAGLE CENSUS Lower Mainland 15 January 1994

The Bald Eagle Census in the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley, Squamish and Sunshine Coast will take place on Sunday, 15 January 1995. The FBCN has received Public Conservation Assistance Fund Grants (PCAF) to assist the Ministry of Environment - Wildlife Branch in coordinating and writing up the census results. If you wish to assist on count day please contact Carla Lanihan at the MOE - Surrey (604 582 5200). Please leave your name and number and she will call you back.

### FRONT COVER Bald Eagle drawing by Karen Wiebe

As winter approaches the B.C. coast prepares to welcome large concentrations of Bald Eagles. Viewing becomes an activity for birders and the general public alike with day trips to Squamish, Harrison Bay or the Gulf Islands a must.

This is Karen's fourth cover on the *BC Naturalist* and hopefully there will be more to come.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO NATURALISTS

**Forestopia: A Practical Guide to the New Forest Economy.** Michael M'Gonigle and Ben Parfitt. Harbour Publishing, 1994, 118 pages, \$16.95.

In this groundbreaking work, Michael M'Gonigle and Ben Parfitt examine the question "Must we choose between our forests and the jobs of thousands of British Columbians?" They maintain that there is another option: Forestopia. This newly coined word is based on the premise that the volume forest economy in which huge numbers of trees are cut and sold raw as fast and cheap as possible must make way for the new value economy, in which a variety of small and medium sized value added industries thrive, employing local labour and fetching fair prices for our precious wood. The company towns that we are familiar with would revert to an integrated community, where people control their own lives and resources, nurturing the forest and extracting the most from its bounty.

This book is not a theoretical approach to a new forest economy. The authors maintain that it is already working and that there are scores of dynamic examples from all over the province. Entrepreneurs are opening smaller, more labour intensive mills and factories, small credit unions are investing in new local businesses, and alternative methods of silviculture are being explored and employed. *Forestopia* describes how we can move into the new economy and how we can break the bad habit of volume economy to make room for worker-friendly, forest-friendly endeavours, how the value economy works in the context of the world marketplace, how we are going to manage our forests, and how we are going to pay for it.

In this day and age where the unions and the forest industry are in a power struggle for the maximum share of the profits, it is refreshing to read a book such as this. Many of the citizens of B.C. feel that there must be changes made in the way we manage our forests. It is difficult to imagine a "practical guide" being linked to a topia of any kind, particularly a forestopia. This book succeeds in setting out a formula for those changes. The authors have ample credentials to examine the issue with a minimum of bias. Michael M'Gonigle holds a doctorate in law and political economy, is an environmental activist and is a professor at the School of Resource and Environmental Management at SFU. Ben Parfitt worked as a reporter with the *Vancouver Sun* for seven years, including three years as the *Sun's* forestry reporter. He left the paper in 1993 to pursue a freelance career.

**The Shared Marine Waters of British Columbia and Washington.** Report of the British Columbia/Washington Environmental Cooperation Council, 1994. 119 pages.

The formation of the British Columbia/Washington Environmental Cooperation Council was the outcome of a meeting between Premier Mike Harcourt and then Gov. Booth Gardner in 1992. The body identified water quality in the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound region as a high priority issue requiring immediate and joint attention. As a first step, they organized a scientific symposium, which

was held in Vancouver, B.C. in January, 1994. Presenters at the symposium prepared a series of scientific review papers which formed the basis of this report. To obtain further information, the panel solicited written and oral briefs from a broad range of individuals and groups and this, together with papers in scientific journals and technical reports, was consolidated in the report.

For the region concerned (the Strait of Georgia, Puget Sound and Juan de Fuca Strait) the panel addresses such pertinent questions as: 1) what transport mechanisms exist for transboundary exchange of human-caused contamination? 2) what do we know about the status of the transboundary population of invertebrates, finfish, birds and mammals? 3) to what degree do the biological resources move across the international border? 4) what evidence is there for harm from transboundary pollution to the habitats, aquatic biota, human uses or public health? 5) given forecasts for human population increases and assuming little change to the current level of population control, harvest management and land use management, will the amount and severity of harm from transboundary pollution be greater or less in 20 years? 6) what components of the transboundary marine ecosystem appear to be the most sensitive to harm from human activities? 7) what types of harm appear to be most serious? and 8) what types of human activities need the most management attention?

These important questions were addressed by a Marine Science Panel, chaired by Dr. Andrea Copping, University of Washington, together with three scientists from B. C. and two from Washington State. The panel based its recommendations about conditions in the shared waters and proposed remedial actions on scientific evaluation of actual harm done and on the risks that harm will be done, rather than on popular perceptions or political considerations. The result is a remarkably candid summation, and the conclusions are hard to question. In a perfect world, they should form a blueprint for action by governments on both side of the border. For environmental groups, the report provides an excellent source of information to aid in preparations of briefs and recommendations. At the same time, we would be remiss if we did not congratulate our provincial and state politicians for supporting the compilation of this valuable report.

**The Federation of B.C. Naturalists Resolution Manual.** Laurence C. Brown, Editor, July, 1994, 51 pages.

This is the second edition of the Resolution Manual, the first being published in 1988. This edition covers the period from 1988 up to and including the 1994 A.G.M. It has an alphabetical and a topical index. There have been a number of identical resolutions passed in successive years and, to save space, only the most recent resolution is given, together with a listing of when a similar resolution was previously passed. A copy of the manual has been provided to each member club.

Compiled by Dick Stace-Smith

## HEY THERE!!! IVE MOVED...

Please help our Manager to keep the mailing list up-to-date so that you get your **B.C. Naturalist** on time. Fill in your old and new address and return to the office. Thank you for your prompt notification.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

OLD ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

NEW ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

CLUB AFFILIATION \_\_\_\_\_

(Please list all FBCN clubs you are a member of)

mail to:  
**FBCN - Address Change**  
321-1367 West Broadway,  
Vancouver, B.C. V6H 4A9

## PLANNING A MALL OR LIBRARY DISPLAY?

The FBCN would be pleased to supply your club with FBCN brochures and copies of the **B.C. Naturalist** to assist you with displays, educational workshops etc. The office also has posters and other publications for sale. The FBCN display is also available but should be booked early.

Please write or phone the office well in advance of your event to allow time for mailing or delivery.

.....  
*Share your B.C. Naturalist with friends,  
or... better yet - give them a gift membership!*  
.....

## HELP WANTED Advertising Manager

The **B.C. Naturalist** is looking for an Advertising Manager to take over our current advertiser servicing and to initiate new accounts. For full details on time commitment, reimbursement, etc. please contact Frieda Davidson at the FBCN office (737 3057).

## UP AND COMING

### NOVEMBER

- 14 FBCN Executive Meeting, 1357 West Broadway, Vancouver, 6:15 p.m.
- 15 Deadline for copy and ads for **BC Naturalist** - January 1995.

**Bats of British Columbia.** A slide illustrated presentation by author David Nagorsen. Copies of the book (of the same name) will be on sale as a fund raising project for the local naturalist club. Admission is by donation. All times 7:30 p.m.

- 14 Delta at the South Delta High School. Contact: 943 5275.
- 15 Chilliwack at the District of Chilliwack Municipal Council Chamber. Contact: 795 5108.
- 16 Coquitlam at Centennial High School. Contact: 463 2507.

### DECEMBER

- 3 FBCN Director's Meeting, 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver. 10 am - 4 pm. Bring lunch.

#### Christmas Bird Counts

Please check with the local club for details of when the count will take place. Count period is December 17 to January 2.

- 17 Chilliwack - Annabelle Rempel, 823 6549  
Mackenzie - Derek Connely, 997 4001  
Victoria, & Sunshine Coast
- 18 Vancouver - George Clulow, 438 7639  
Pitt Meadows, Maple Ridge - Wilma Robinson, 465 5297
- 27 Ladner - Jude Grass, 520 3706

### JANUARY

#### CBC cont...

- 2 White Rock & Surrey - Hue MacKenzie 538 1676
- 9 FBCN Executive Meeting, 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver 6:15 p.m.
- 15 Lower Mainland Bald Eagle Census. (page 9)
- 15 Deadline for copy and ads for **BC Naturalist** - March 1995.

## DEADLINE

**JANUARY EDITION  
B.C. NATURALIST**

**NOVEMBER 15, 1995**

A Journal of British Columbia Natural History

# CORDILLERA

The second issue of *Cordillera* should be in your mail box before Christmas.

**- did you send in your subscription?**

(Subscription Form in first issue or the July 1994 *B.C. Naturalist*)

**Calling all writers, photographers, artists.**

*Cordillera* is a Journal by B.C. naturalists about the natural history of this beautiful and varied province of ours. We would love to have more articles, photographs, artwork for consideration. We will be putting together the spring 1995 issue after the New Year, so if you are an aspiring writer, photographer or artist, please send us samples of your work. The latest issue has a Style Guide to help you understand the standards we are trying to achieve.

Send your articles, reports, photos, illustrations, letters to:  
The Editor, *Cordillera*, Box 625 Kamloops, BC, V2C 5L7.



**Wasp or Hornet?**

This remarkable insect is actually a members of a family of brightly coloured, day-flying, wasp-like moths called Clear-Wings (*Aegeriids*). Caterpillars are borers in trees and other plants. Clear-wings cannot bite or sting but by having similar "warning" colours to wasps, they get protection from predators such as birds. L = 20 mm.

Photographed near E.C. Manning Provincial Park, with a 100 mm macro lens and tubes.

Al Grass

# RAVEN TALK

Your Federation in Action: information, committee reports, projects and concerns

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The sun was glinting on the turquoise waters of Kalamalka Lake as we sat in the shade eating lunch and chatting about summer happenings. Some had been on personal trips of exploration, others had been to the North Okanagan Naturalists Club (NONC) camp at the new provincial park at Chilco Lake, and some of the Kelowna folks had travelled to Greece with a group from their Club - talk about exotic field trips! Later as we leisurely walked through the trails at Kalamalka Lake Provincial Park there was lots of discussion about the plants we were passing in the sunshine, the possibility of meeting up with a rattlesnake and the lack of access to lakeshore cottages.

Our walk completed, everyone gathered at a very special bird sanctuary bequeathed to the NONC where we all helped to plant a tree in memory of Peter Legg, long-time NONC member and fondly-remembered hard worker for NONC and the Federation. The tree is an oak, which is particularly appropriate for Peter had the same enduring qualities - strength, persistence and a heart of gold. Another oak tree on the property was planted at the turn of the century and now has branches spreading out as much as fifteen metres - it is good to think that the sapling we all helped to plant might also grow to such a size.

I was at the fall Regional Meeting of the Thompson-Okanagan Clubs of the Federation, both as a member of my own Club and in my capacity as President of the Federation. As usual there was good representation from all the Clubs in the valleys. After the outside activities we retired for a few hours of serious discussion on another wide range of topics before finishing the day with supper at a local restaurant.

Discussions ranged from how the Federation can better serve the Clubs, a suggestion for a Regional concept for Directors' meetings, Land for Nature in each of the Club's areas, the new Young Naturalists program, and a joint project all the Clubs can get involved in. The latter project involves some very unusual and spectacular flower mead-

ows on two Indian Reserves that all the Clubs visit each spring; the Kamloops Naturalists Club is coordinating an effort to get permission to do a scientific inventory of the area with a view to suggesting ways in which they can be protected from increasing damage. All the Clubs will be taking part in the inventory - an example of a real cooperative effort among Federation Clubs.



By the time you read this in November, we will have had our Fall General Meeting on Salt Spring Island with the chance to explore a Gulf Island with local naturalists and give them the benefit of the exchange of ideas and information that happens in those circumstances. We will have caught up with the activities of all our Clubs and I am sure we will all have come away with lots of new ideas for things we can do or new approaches to old problems, both at the Club and Federation levels. I will also have been to Nanaimo for the Vancouver Island Regional Meeting where I am looking forward to meeting more local

Club members and finding out first hand about the CORE Plan, our Land For Nature Project, the Sensitive Ecosystems Inventory Project and Garry Oak ecosystems protection, all of which are keeping many Club members busy.

By this time next year I hope to have been to the Kootenays to attend their spring meeting, and hope I will be able to say I have been to Regional Meetings in the North and the Lower Mainland. These meetings are wonderful opportunities for Clubs to get together without having to travel huge distances to Federation meetings. The exchange of ideas and feelings of mutual understanding about the issues we are facing are only two of the many benefits of working together as a Federation. I look forward to sharing ideas with members in the Kootenays, North and Lower Mainland soon, as we did that day beside Kalamalka Lake.

Give me a call at **372-8607** if you have any questions, comments, suggestions about Federation affairs, or just want to shoot the breeze - but please try to avoid 7-8 pm.

Frances Vyse

## CLUB CHAT

• The **White Rock and Surrey Naturalist's Society** (WRSN) is still deeply concerned about the proposal to build a highway along side of the Serpentine Fen and the suggested alternative route through Burns Bog would be equally disastrous. • As with many other clubs they too are appealing for members to step forward to replace outgoing executive. I know of at least one club where if the executive doesn't say anything they can continue in office for several terms until someone notices that the time for elections is long passed! • The City of Surrey is to have a new Official Community Plan and the WRSN will have a representative on at least three of the committees so that they can endeavour to protect the interests of wildlife and the environment. • This year the club presented a memorial scholarship to Trevor Hennessey of Queen Elizabeth Secondary School. • What a grand poem by Lee Beliveau on the subject of Boots. No room in this column to print it - but maybe in a future edition of *BC Naturalist*?

• The **Langley Field Naturalists Society** (LFN) have a representative on the Langley Environmental Partners Society which has been collecting data for the Salmonid Enhancement Streamkeepers Program. • The LFN will be making a presentation at the upcoming Public Hearing for a new park in the area that has been saved from becoming a gravel pit. • They also had a booth at the Campbell Valley Regional Park - Country Celebration on 1 and 2 October.

• The **Central Valley Naturalists**, like most of us, have found that a botanical field trip does not qualify as an athletic event. It took them two hours to cover a mile, but were rewarded by a great deal of training in plant recognition. Glen Ryder was their leader and they were able to identify a tremendous number of botanical specimens with his help. • Chris Buis has volunteered to start a Streamkeepers Program on Nathan Creek and the Matsqui part of the Salmon River and the Shell Environment Fund is planning to put signs at these locations. • The club has also been busy with their Land for Nature program and with submissions to the Protected Areas Strategy.

• The **Burke Mountain Naturalists** hosted a Fall Walkabout at Colony Farm on Rivers Day in preparation for public meetings that will determine the future use of the site. • The farm is a real hot spot for birders as there is a confirmed nesting pair of Western Kingbirds as well as a nesting pair of Least Flycatchers! This constitutes a first ever breeding record for these species in the Vancouver checklist area. • Club members also participated in the Adopt-a Shoreline birding event (on October 1) in conjunction with a Vancouver Natural History Society project and will be doing quarterly bird surveys of Burrard Inlet. • They are also keeping tabs on the future of Douglas Island with letters to government and with attendance at

Council meetings. • As with most other clubs the BMNer's have not been idle during the long, supposedly, lazy days of summer!

• The **Victoria Natural History Society's** newsletter has photographs of a melanistic white crow taken by Paul Paulson of Chemanius. The male parent evidently mated with a female who had some gray-whitish markings. • The club has decided to change the name of their meeting from General Meetings to Natural History Presentations since there is little real business conducted at these meetings. It will now be a speakers series on a diversity of topics. • Fourteen club members spent a couple of weekend mornings wading in the marshy waters of Viaduct Flats to uproot the bulbs from a recent explosion of loosestrife. I understand that Bogart and Hepburn in the *African Queen* had nothing on Darren and Claudia as their loosestrife laden canoe slowly sank in the duckweed-covered waters of Viaduct Lake.

• **Mitlenatch Field Naturalists Society** member Vivienne Kendrick wrote a fascinating article on her week as a volunteer warden on Mitlenatch Island. Sounds like something we would all like to do if only we had the time. • Another club member Vicki Hansen, helped capture and band flightless Harlequin Ducks in Campbell River. Then Vicki, along with Betty and Allen Brooks, and Lyn Paterson, with the funding help of the FBCN, completed a study of Woodhus Slough. They hope to produce a guide in the near future. • Thanks to a Green-Gold Grant Steve Mooney, Hilary Stewart, David Broadland and many others were able to produce a natural history guide to Morte Lake.

• The **Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society** have been involved in a Stream Stewardship program with ten members participating in walks along Bonsall Creek and in October with the planting of trees and shrubs. • Members turned out for a broom cutting event on Mt. Tzouhalem Ecological Reserve and did a major blitz at the end of September, involving BC Parks, Sierra Club, Scouts Canada and others.

• The **North Okanagan Naturalists Club** was busy, busy, busy during the summer with a display during Environment Week, Annual Field Day and Dinner, annual summer camp at Chilko Lake, a "Wild Tea Party" in September along with the usual business of "keeping an eye on things".

• The **Central Okanagan Naturalist Club's** Muriel Westwood attended the 17th Annual Meeting of the North American Bluebird Society in Boise, Idaho and reports that it was well worth attending. Many speakers and lots of enthusiasm. • Members have been invited to join Golden Eagle Watchers in the Mount Lorette area of

Kananaskis Country near Calgary. • Karin Arkinstall reported on a great birding weekend at Inkaneep, where she saw fourteen "lifers", enjoyed a gourmet potluck supper and great companionship.

- The **Prince George Naturalists Club** spent a busy summer visiting two of their Ecological Reserves. Nancy Muirhead led the two trips and was pleased at the turn out. Everyone enjoyed themselves despite sore, wet feet!
- Nancy reports that the Spring Barbeque was a success as mosquitoes were sparse (that helps!).
- Field Notes by Mark Phinney gave ample evidence that club members were busy keeping their eyes open during the "off" months.

**CHAT FROM THE CLUBS**

Short information items submitted by the clubs or regions about activities in their area.

**From the Kootenay Regional Meeting...**

The Kootenay Naturalist Regional Meeting was held in Nelson, 27 to 29 of May and was a great success. Nearly fifty people participated from the East and West Kootenays. Eighteen intrepid "dawn chows" birders lead by Daphne VanAlstine wandered about Kokanee Creek Provincial Park very early Saturday morning. In the afternoon, Elizabeth Wallace led the trip to Six Mile Lakes and Dave Smith escorted 26 participants to the Old Growth Trail. A delicious dinner at the Vienne Cafe was well-attended. Phil Whitford, Regional Master Planner from BC Parks gave a talk about Protected Areas Strategy and escorted us through some wonderful memories of the caves of our area. The FBCN Club Service Award was passed onto Linda Van Damme of Nelson for her support to the Club and dedication to our Duck Sign program. On Sunday eight people travelled to the Mel DeAnna Trail and were led on this woodland walk by Vi Wilcox from Castlegar. Despite the rain, we had a good time.

The 1995 Meeting will be in Castlegar. Thanks to all organizers and participants for a wonderful weekend.

H. Neville

**From the Nelson Naturalists Club...**

This second year as a federated club has been overflowing with activity and achievement. Many thanks again go to past co-chairperson Linda Van Damme for promoting the waterfront educational sign to completion. The entire club supports here nomination the FBCN Club Service Award. John Carter provided leadership this year to host the Kootenay Naturalists Regional Meeting (see above). That was one fabulous salmon dinner. His book publication **Hiking the West Kootenay** (1993 Kalmia Publishing) has provided the routes for number of club outing. Club Treasurer Derek Claridge has organized the Loon

Project. He has club members canoeing a number of our beautiful pristine lakes checking for Loon nesting success. He has been checking all our Loonies and Loons.

John Neville, programme co-ordinator, has been working on the CD of Kootenay Bird Songs in conjunction with Cornell University Library of Natural Sounds. Watch for production after January 1995.

Many thanks also need to be expressed to two executive members, Elaine Moore for her work on the newsletter, and Monty Meidreich as a Club representative to the Nelson Waterfront Committee. The Club has established a primary objective for 1995 to support Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area.

All executive and thirty-nine active members of the Nelson Naturalists have grown and come together to know the outdoors and to keep it worth knowing.

**Editor's Note:** Congratulations to the Club on a job well done.

H. Neville

**From the North Okanagan Naturalists Club...  
About Elsie Nykyfork**

The North Okanagan Naturalist Club has a one woman dynamo who single handedly organized and gave a kick start to what had long been a faltering bluebird box program. Her name is Elsie Nykyfork. She has taken up the challenge of bringing bluebirds back to Vernon and in two short years has done just that. Now I can go for a drive on the Commonage south of town and see four or five pairs without getting out my car, thanks to Elsie's efforts. She also encourages anyone who will listen to start their own bluebird trail and many have done just that. Furthermore, she teaches them how to fill out nest record cards. She has made the personnel at Predator Ridge Golf Course very wildlife conscious, and very proud of their bluebirds and other critters. I could go on and on, but I will just mention a newspaper clipping about Elsie that appeared in **The Province** ... how's that for naturalist p.r.?

Chris Siddle  
Vernon

**RIVERS DEFENCE FUND**

The Rivers Defence Fund (RDF) is looking for financial assistance to pay off legal fees from their court action regarding the Kemano Project. If FBCN members wish to donate to the Rivers Defence Fund (and require a tax-receipt) please make a cheque payable to the FBCN and noting it as a donation to RDF. All donations will be forwarded to the RDF.

Daphne Solecki

**FBCN RESOLUTIONS**  
**FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS**  
**1 MARCH 1995 \*\***

All resolutions received by 1 MARCH 1995 will be circulated in mid March to all clubs and FBCN Directors, (and individual members on request). All resolutions will be dated and numbered by the Administrative Manager on their arrival and will be discussed in that order.

Resolutions received after 1 MARCH 1995 will be treated as resolutions from the floor.

Resolutions from the floor at the Annual General Meeting will be handled ONLY if time allows and providing there are two copies available for the Resolutions Chairperson and the Recording Secretary. If there is not time for discussion they will be presented at the first regular Director's Meeting following the AGM.

**Resolution Format**

An attempt should be made to follow this format:

1. To whom is it addressed? (This can be more than once agency, person etc.)
2. Body of Resolution - clear and concise.
3. Comments - information to provide background data. (Additional news items, briefs, etc. may be attached.)
4. Club name - if applicable, individual members may submit - but need a seconder.
5. Mover/Secunder - these people need not necessarily be at the Annual General Meeting BUT there should be someone delegated to speak to the resolution at the AGM.

The Resolutions Committee consists of Chair Dick Stace-Smith and two assistants.

The Resolutions Committee will screen the resolutions upon arrival at the Federation office and then give them back to the Administrative Manager for distribution. Those returned to the originator for more information, rewriting, etc., must be resubmitted - and will be renumbered - and must still meet the 1 MARCH deadline.

JFG

**\*\* Please note that the Annual General Meeting is Saturday, 29 April 1995 at Penticton.**

**FBCN AWARDS**

The Federation of British Columbia Naturalist gives a number of awards each year, to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of the individuals or groups in the area of natural history. Please help us to recognize these people - take a few minutes to consider who you think is deserving and nominate them!

Nominations may be made by any member of the FBCN or its member clubs. Each nomination must be accompanied by an outline or resumé giving the reasons why the candidate is being proposed. **Nominations must be received by 1 March 1995.**

The awards will be presented at the FBCN's Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 29 April 1995.

**The Elton Anderson Award**

The purpose of this award is to recognize the service of a member of the FBCN who has served the Federation and who has emulated to a profound degree the dedication, devotion and energy exhibited by former President Elton Anderson, to further the Federation across the province.

**Club Service Award**

The purpose of this award is to recognize outstanding service at a local level by a person or persons belonging to an affiliated member club of the Federation.

**Recognition Award**

Presented to a person or persons from outside the Federation or its affiliates who has made an outstanding contribution to the understanding and appreciation of the natural history of B.C. (e.g. authors, teachers, administrators, media personalities).

**Barbara Chapman Award**

This award is made to a young naturalist under the age of 18 years who has shown an interest in, and has made a contribution to, the appreciation and understanding of the natural environment. This award was established in memory of a member of the Victoria Natural History Society who was killed by a bear while working in Glacier National Park.

**The "Knowing Nature" Award**

This award is given to an individual or club which has participated in a project that has added to the knowledge of the natural history of the province. Previous winners have completed plant studies, a perennial calendar, and a nature trail project. The deadline for nominations is 1 September 1995 and the award is presented at the Fall General Meetings.

Please send nominations to the Awards Chair: Mike Chappell, 2050 Fisher Road, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 2H2 phone: 604 763 1437

## CONSERVATION REPORT

On 15 July I represented the FBCN at a lunch given by Mr. Moe Sihota, Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks to celebrate **BC Parks Day**. All those invited were from naturalist and outdoor recreation groups. Mr. Sihota reviewed his government's record in creating 53 additions to provincial parks (total area approximately 1.3 million hectares), increasing the percentage of land protected by parks from 6% to almost 8%. He asked for our support to continue the land use planning process. All those present had an opportunity to speak to the minister about their concerns. He seemed to be very well briefed on all topics and mentioned that he never signed a letter without personally reviewing the background documents.

Also on behalf of the FBCN I went on a tour organized by the **Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust** to view some of the many agriculture and wildlife conservation projects the Trust is undertaking with the assistance of Wildlife Habitat Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service and Green Plan for Agriculture, among other partners. The results of these projects, encompassing set-asides, soils drainage, cover crops, field margins (ditches, hedges, grass strips), and the preservation of ponds, wetlands, trees, yards and barns will be useful to other areas of the province where the needs of agriculture, wildlife and urban development overlap.

At this time, the Ministry of the Environment, Lands and Parks is seeking input for planned amendments to the **Park Act and the Ecological Reserves Act** to be legislated at the next sitting. Areas of concern in the Park Act are: the balance of priority between Conservation and Recreation; bringing regulations and penalties in line with Protected Areas Strategy and Forest Practices Code; hunting; permits; and, the importance of management plans. For Ecological Reserves the concerns are: purpose and uses; providing enforcement capabilities and penalties; legislating boundaries; management; and, right to create reserves on privately held land.

Organizationally, as mentioned earlier this year, I am trying to create a '**conservation network**' within the FBCN. From this I hope a working and regionally representative committee can evolve. I earlier wrote to clubs asking for names of their members involved in any kind of public participation process. I received responses from about half the clubs and Stephen Connolly is helping me to create a database. I shall be soliciting responses from the rest of the clubs and as soon as I can, I shall put these into a reference pamphlet for use by clubs and others.

We also need FBCN members who can review and comment on a number of issues such as rangeland, marine (i.e. driftnets, wildlife, protected areas), mining and energy matters. If there are any members with the necessary background and experience who would volunteer to do this, or are interested in any other conservation concerns,

please contact me.

We are planning a **Conservation/Education Day** for March 1995. Some suggestions about topics and format have already been received. Ideas and volunteers for a sub-committee are needed to organize this event.

**East Kootenay CORE** - Greg Ross has been at the table as a representative of the Outdoor Recreation sector (non-motorized) and has been sending regular reports regarding his activities and recommendation. He now reports that the final meeting was held on 11 July to ratify a "letter of transmittal" to Stephen Owen. This letter stated that over the last eighteen months stakeholders have been working to develop a land use plan which contained four major components:

1. a land use map with land use designations, management guidelines, and impact analysis;
2. a transition strategy;
3. recommendations on land use policies; and
4. recommendations for implementation and monitoring.

How does he feel about the process? What does he hope will come out of the whole thing?

1. The CORE process has essentially been a very good thing for the East Kootenays and that if used in the entire province, would be beneficial to all concerned (This reflects similar opinions from those engaged in the other CORE tables).
2. Inability to reach consensus on all areas of dissension was due mainly to lack of time; this possibly could have been avoided if less time had been wasted on table processes.
3. His hope for the future is that Stephen Owen will grant their request for a local process that will be able to work in conjunction Land For Nature to glean out the smaller areas of significant environmental value and provide protection and coordination for such areas.

**Wolf Kill** - A summary of letter received from the Premier in response to stated concerns about the wolf population in B.C.

1. There has not been a wolf control program for several years and there are no plans for a program.
2. Wolf management is carried out in extreme cases only when there is clear evidence that wolves have killed, mauled or harassed domestic animals and are a definite threat to livestock. If poor animal husbandry or lack of vigilance by landowners are creating the problem, assistance may be refused.
3. There are no "sweeping poisoning campaigns designed to wipe out whole predator populations" and no automatic killing of wolves in agricultural areas.

cont. on page 18

cont. from page 17

Poison is only used if trapping and shooting are not practical. The substance used is 1080 because it is more humane than alternatives, less hazardous to other animals, does not constitute a hazard to the environment. No more than one-quarter of an ounce of 1080 may be used in total for all baits in the province for an entire year.

The letter concludes with references to the Wolf Working Group and the Provincial Problem Wildlife Management Advisory Committee, and assurances that the government first priority is to ensure the existence of healthy and abundant wildlife populations.

Daphne Solecki  
Conservation Chair

**FBCN RESOLUTIONS**

All new resolutions which are passed, responses when received, and information regarding tabled motions etc. will be summarized in the *BC Naturalist* as they are available.

(Note: The 1994 FBCN AGM resolutions responses will be summarized in the January 1995 edition of *BC Naturalist*.)

Resolutions can be presented to any Director's Meeting providing the President/or Administrative Manager have been notified in advance.

**FBCN AWARDS**

The following awards were presented at the Fall General Meeting of the FBCN at Salt Spring Island.

**Recognition Award**

**Stephen Owen** - Chairman of CORE process for guiding new land use policies in British Columbia based on input from all aspects of the community.

**Club Service Award**

**Kathy Reimer** - of the Salt Spring Island Trail and Nature Club for her long-standing efforts on behalf of the club.

**Knowing Nature Award**

**Terri Martin** of the Arrowsmith Naturalists.

The award is in recognition of the excellent work that members of the club (Arrowsmith Naturalists), headed by Terri Martin, did in putting together an inventory of plants, trees, shrubs and grasses in Marks Park, Parksville; and in preparing an interpretive brochure of the park that is available at the Information Centre in Parksville.

Mike Chappell  
Awards Chair

**B .C. NATURALIST  
.. LOOKING FOR MATERIAL**

Your *B.C. Naturalist* is looking for articles on:  
    natural history subjects  
    educational projects  
    conservation issues

contributions of:  
    poems  
    drawings  
    photographs

items for, about and by:  
    children

**Please send material to the Editor Jude Grass,  
103-7065 Stride Ave. Burnaby, B.C. V3N 1T3  
phone: 520 3706 fax: 432 6296**

*GRASS CLIPPINGS*

*Comments from the Editor*

**Ok, Ok, I can hear it now !!!**

Yes, I know there is a flock of "bird stuff" in this edition - but it seems that only Birders want to share their experiences with others, ask questions and speculate on natural wonders.

In order to have botany, geology, marine life, and even mosses and lichens (Trevor - please note!) I need to get articles. Observational types of articles, that are short, descriptive and raise questions, are fine. Perhaps you have suggestions for topics and even who might author it. We will do the rest.

This is **your** newsletter and you are part of the staff - so get out there and start recruiting material on subjects that interest you. Thank you and good reading (and writing).

JFG

**ABOUT THE...**

**SOMENOS MARSH  
WILDLIFE SOCIETY**

The Ancients who once walked this land, ancestors of the Cowichan Tribes People, would have regarded it as a Sacred place - a place of great spiritual power and beauty, a place of sustenance for the body, mind and soul, a place of healing and a place of strength.

No other place in the land of these First Nations ancestors would have been as rich a source as the Somenos Marsh and its surrounding lakes, streams, forests and meadows. In its natural state it was a place of great wealth. It was a sacred place. Ancients were buried here.

Their remains have recently been uncovered - through the actions of construction/destruction.

Today others walk this land and many look to the marsh land for a different sort of wealth - development. This unique, bio-diverse group of ecosystems is threatened on all sides. Situated just outside the City of Duncan, adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway, the marsh is highly accessible. Much of the habitat has already been lost. There are no Ancients to speak for it.

The Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society speaks for it today - for its 600 acres of habitats, its 230 species of birds, its mammals, reptiles and amphibians, salmon and other fish species. The Society also speaks for people dedicated to the preservation of the marsh and its wildlife.

A man sifts through the dawn mist each morning, binoculars in hand, a gentle dog at his side, to commune with the birds. A woman writes a weekly article informing the community of the wonders of the marsh life. A man rallies, encourages, invites members and non-members alike to fight the loss of this treasure. A woman initiates an invaluable study describing the unique vulnerability of the wetlands - this is what the politicians require. Politicians have set aside a fraction of the ecosystem for preservation - it is not enough, but a start. Hundreds of community members speak out time and again at public hearings and through letters against habitat-destroying development.

*A man remembers how it used to be. A woman remembers how it used to be.*

*On the other hand, a man fills the marsh with refuse of concrete and asphalt chunks.*

*A man develops a sensitive Garry Oak ecosystem adjoining the marsh.*

*Politicians allow them to do it.*

*Politicians plan a road through the heart of the Somenos Marsh.*

The Ancients knew better.

The Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society is committed to opposing a road through the marsh, to land acquisition for preservation, to the restriction of destructive recreational use, to public awareness through interpretive programs, to open communication with the community and levels of government, and to the protection of wildlife and its habitat.

The Pacific Flyway has been identified as one of the world's major migration routes. Somenos Marsh is one of the vital feeding and resting stops. It is an irreplaceable, life-giving re-fuelling station.

It was so in the time of the Ancients. It must remain so.

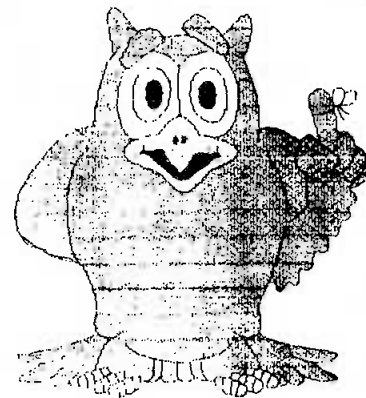
For further information regarding the Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society write to Box 711, Duncan, B.C. V9L 3Y1 or phone 748-3372.

Mac Newton

**FBCN A.G.M - PENTICTON**

**Host: South Okanagan Naturalist Club**

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**APRIL 27 - 30  
1995**

### **PUBLIC CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE FUND (PCAF) ASSISTS 15 VOLUNTEER CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

The BC Government is granting, through the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Park, more than \$40,000 to support fifteen fish and wildlife volunteer conservation projects throughout the province.

The grants, from the Public Conservation Assistance Fund, go to groups or individuals who match the funding with the equivalent value of volunteer labour, materials and money. At least half of the contribution must be in the form of volunteer labour.

Since the PCAF began in 1974, the government has provided up to \$50,000 per year in supporting more than 200 projects in B.C.

#### **1994 Projects and Sponsors**

- Repair Barn Owl nest site in Saanich, (Stanlake and Obee);
- Create brochure to increase awareness about Pender Island's local resources, fish and wildlife habitat, (Pender Island Conservancy Association);
- Monitoring Vancouver Island lakes to gather long-term information on fisheries, water chemistry, habitat and limnological data, (BC Wildlife Federation);
- Enhance the Strathcona Community Garden in Vancouver and offer education about creating a "backyard wildlife habitat" in an urban setting, (Environmental Youth Alliance);
- Remove log debris to restore marsh habitat for fish and wildlife on Woods Island in Fraser River Estuary, (BC Conservation Foundation);
- Develop a handbook to encourage volunteer involvement in conservation projects, (BC Wild);
- Clear stream and construct spawning platforms for rainbow trout at Cedar Creek near Salmon Arm, (Salmon Arm Fish and Game Club);
- Construct artificial spawning channel on Lac des Roches (near Kamloops) to improve spawning of rainbow trout, (Grizzly Anglers);
- Transplant sheep to re-establish a herd in the Seton Lake area, (Wild Sheep Society of B.C.);
- Construct birdhouses and Osprey poles and plant trees and shrubs in the Kaminski Wildlife Reserve at Swan Lake in Vernon, (North Okanagan Naturalists Club);
- Monitor population of Sharp-tailed Grouse in Lac du Bois grasslands, (NorKam Resource Management Program, School District #24);

- Increase spawning habitat for rainbow trout and kokanee at the mouth of Murphy Creek on the Columbia River, (Trail Wildlife Association); and
- Construct bear and deer pens at a wildlife shelter in Smithers, (Northern Lights Wildlife Shelter).

### **HABITAT CONSERVATION FUND AWARDS \$3.1 MILLION FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROJECTS**

A record \$3.1 million is being provided for habitat protection projects this year through the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) of the Ministry of Environment, Land and Parks. The funds will support 108 projects to improve fish and wildlife habitat throughout the province.

The HCF is funded primarily through surcharges on angling, hunting, trapping and guiding licenses as well as through donations and bequests. The B.C. government recently announced increases to angling license fees to raise an additional \$2 million a year for HCF.

Since it was established in 1981, the HCF has provided approximately \$21 million to fund more than 1,200 projects.

For a list of project funded or on information on applying for grants please contact Maureen Wayne, Enhancement Funds Coordinator, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Victoria. Phone: 604 387 1159

### **THE PAINT CARE PROGRAM**

Information on the Paint Care Program is now available through a special toll-free phone line. By dialing 1-800-505-0139, British Columbians now receive the latest information on what to do with their leftover paint. During a scheduled phase-in period, the newly-formed Paint Care Association of BC will initiate a mobile collection system whereby used paint is collected in various communities for recycling. Collections will take place in central locations like parking lots and shopping centres throughout the province. Information on specific sites is available on the toll-free line.

Call the BC Recycling Hotline for information on government programs and for copies of the Waste Reduction Commission's reports.

**1-800-667-4321**

## RON ERICKSON WINS PRESIDENT'S CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

L. Ron Erickson, Executive Director of the Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC) has won the President's Conservation Achievement Award, presented by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This is an award which has been given annually by The Nature Conservancy since 1984 for "exceptional support by an individual, government or non-government organization which have worked in partnership with TNC to advance biodiversity protection". Ron is the first Canadian recipient.

Ron was central to the establishment of the British Columbia Conservation Data Centre (CDC). In 1988, he visited the Washington State Heritage Program to see for himself if the CDC methodology could help the NTBC establish conservation priorities. Upon his return, Ron organized and funded a conference establishing priorities in the Okanagan region of British Columbia. He invited the Washington Heritage staff to lead a workshop and produce a "scorecard" of priority sites. The NTBC has since protected several of those sites.

Ron is Chairman of the Pacific Coast Estuary Conservation Program, bringing together seven agencies and twelve million dollars to protect key Pacific wetlands. He is also the originator of a very ambitious proposal to protect what remains of the grassland habitats of British Columbia. Under Ron's leadership, the NTBC has become especially skilled as a conservation "banker", attracting, pooling, and managing funds, and then directing them toward conservation priorities such as the Vancouver Island Marmot Recovery Program.

The Nature Conservancy  
Arlington, Virginia

## PROVINCE INTRODUCES COMMERCIAL BACKCOUNTRY RECREATION POLICY

An interim policy regulating commercial recreation activities in British Columbia's backcountry has been endorsed by the government.

There are currently over 250 businesses operating on Crown lands which need to be legalized or who want to expand, and approximately 150 more that wish to start operations.

The new policy is designed to accomplish the following by:

- protecting the backcountry environment by regula-

tion of commercial activities;

- providing measures to avoid conflict with resource users, local interests, and First Nations;
- ensuring unrestricted public access to Crown land;
- providing more information to assist in making over-all land use decisions;
- giving more security to backcountry operators, to foster business investments and contribute to rural economic growth; and
- providing for local involvement in the review of applications.

Although the province has long had policies in place for traditional sport hunting, fishing, and heli-skiing, in recent years British Columbia has experienced rapid growth in other commercial backcountry activities. BC Lands initiated work on the Commercial Backcountry Recreation (CBR) Policy in 1990 to manage those other backcountry enterprises, and once it is established, existing policies for hunting, fishing, and heli-skiing will be incorporated into the CBR policy.

Mark Stefanson  
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks



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## NATURAL HISTORY PROGRAMS

### FIELD TRIPS

- Bald Eagles; Alice Cassidy; Sat. Jan. 14; all day
- Hawks, Eagles and Owls; Alice Cassidy; Sat. Jan. 28; a.m.
- Victoria Birding Weekend; Alice Cassidy; Feb. 25 & 26
- Carmanah Valley Weekend; Trudy Chatwin; Apr. 22 & 23
- Widgeon Creek Natural History Day; Alice Cassidy; May 6
- Gulf Islands Day Cruise; Rob Butler; Sat. March 25

### ILLUSTRATED LECTURES

- Bird Song; Alice Cassidy; Feb. 1 & 8; 7:30-9:30 p.m.
- Reptiles and Amphibians; Brent Matsuda; Feb. 15 & 22; 7:30-9:30 p.m.

### BIRD IDENTIFICATION WORKSHOPS

Co-sponsored by V.N.H.S. Lectures: 7:30-9:30 p.m. Field trips: 4 hours, morning.

- Workshop 1: Gulls; Alvaro Jaramillo; Mar. 21 & 25
- Workshop 2: Waterfowl; Martin Gebauer; April 4 & 8
- Workshop 3: Shorebirds; Alvaro Jaramillo; April 25 & 29
- Workshop 4: Songbirds; Tom Plath, May 2 & 6

### TRAVEL TOURS (1995)

Call Fraser MacLean at 257-2044.

- Belize; Martin Gebauer; Mar. 7-24
- Firth River; Dick Cannings; June 18-28
- Australia; David Stirling; October, 1995

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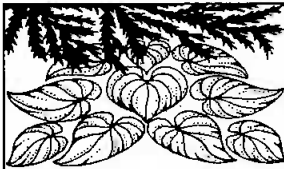


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Allies seem to come from strange places. Take Gary Larson, for example. Who would ever have guessed that a wacky cartoonist would become something of a popular spokesperson for various naturalist interests? In his **Far Side** cartoons, Larson has elevated domesticated animals such as cows and chickens to heights previously unknown, while his cheery presentation of insects has earned him a place with entomologists. In fact, a new species of louse was named after Larson a few years back.

What Larson has done more than anything has been to imbue nature's beasts with benign (and humorous) human qualities, and hence stimulate a more positive view of them. Among the memorable vignettes include: wart hogs and peacocks at single's bars, Mr. and Mrs. Robin at home, ants searching for individual identity, and moose being too settled in front of the TV to answer the phone when the "call of the wild" rings. Ha ha ha. Of course, I doubt that many people truly believe that such scenes could really take place, but it does make us consider such animals in different lights.

As is often the case, comparisons work two ways: not only can we look for the human in our non-human companions, but we can look for the animal in ourselves. Larson, for example, has one cartoon wherein a father, speaking with his son, points out that the singing bird is staking its territorial claim, a trait "common to birds and other lower animals". Where is the father and son? Why, in a suburban backyard surrounded by fences and other fenced back yards.

This concern with the similarities or differences between humans and non-human animals is not new. A famous poet, I am told, once remarked: "For am I not a fly like thee? And art thou not a man like me?" We often try to understand animals based on what we think we know about ourselves, and we often try to understand ourselves based on what we think we know about animals.

One good example of the former involves language. Many people strongly believe that humans are the only animals with the ability to use language. Some, however, have used a detailed analysis of human language to investigate whether primates, cetaceans, or other animals also use language of some sort. Another example involves animal rights activists, who argue that animals do indeed feel pain and suffering just as we do, and are thus entitled to certain basic considerations traditionally accorded to humans.

On the other side of equation -- trying to explain humans, based on non-human investigation -- sits the Larson perspective on territorial claims. Despite what the proponents of humanity as "rational beings" may claim, others argue that there is ample evidence to find within us "animal" drives to satisfy basic needs and stimulate other desires.

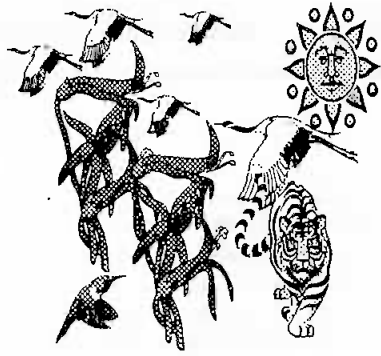
One strong "argument from nature" I have recently run across involves the inevitability of human hierarchical relations. Milk cows, I am told, sort themselves into a pecking order before they march into the barn after a hard day of grazing. They "butt" each other into the right order of rank, which really makes it a butting order, I guess. Are we cows? Do we naturally break into such organizational patterns, too? Do we manifest such bovine nature? If we accept this, do we also accept that, because most mammals are not monogamous, we should dispense with the institution of marriage?

While human societies are definitely not the only examples of social groupings, it is difficult to make absolute parallels. There are a number of social insects, for example, but the question Marx asks may well be relevant here: are people architects or bees? Do we (or should we) construct our world based on our own preconceptions, or mindlessly build whatever we are accustomed to building? Such a question does not say much for the intelligence of the bee (or rather, it says a lot about the perspective on nature taken by Marx).

True to my waffling nature, I would suggest that the truth lies somewhere in the middle. There is little doubt in my mind that animals have some qualities traditionally only recognized in people: animals can (and do) feel pain and suffering, and some may communicate by using a rudimentary "language". Conversely, we people cannot entirely escape our biological nature. However, to make the grand observation that animals are essentially explainable in human terms, or that humans are without peculiarly human traits, is to take an unwarranted extreme.

When all is said and done, though, I think we are still left with one important consideration: both human and non-human species must share this planet, regardless of similarities or differences. Perhaps that has been Larson's greatest contribution: he has helped us to live better with previously unappreciated animals. Love 'em or hate 'em, at least we can have a good chuckle and respect their existence.

PACK  
UP  
YOUR  
THINGS,  
PICK UP  
YOUR  
WINGS



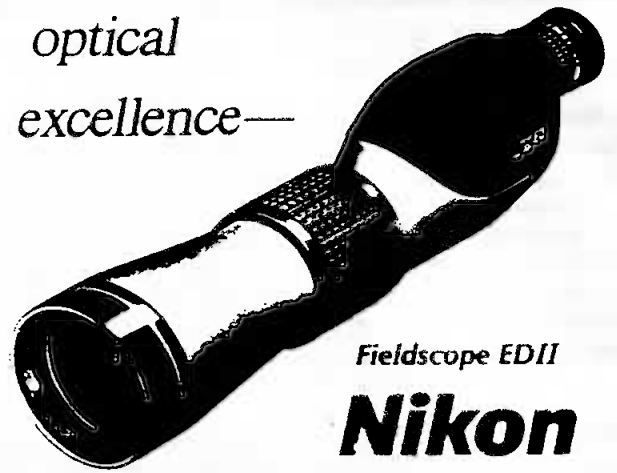
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"One of the 'foolproof four' - The brilliant yellow-orange shelving masses are unmistakable. Actually, nothing is foolproof, but the sulphur shelf is intelligence proof, and I trust that no one reading this book is a fool!"

From: *Mushrooms Demystified* by David Arora

A Western hemlock forest is generally not known for its colourful citizens, being largely composed of shades of green and brown. Fungi are possibly one of the exceptions to this rule, coming as they do in a palette of wonderful hues, including pink, orange and yellow. Surely, one of the most spectacular, in the often dark hemlock forest is the so-called "Chicken-of-the Woods", also known as the "Sulphur Polypore", on account of its yellow pore surface. The fruiting body ("shelf") is said to grow up to 60 cm and can weigh more than 20 kg (Orr, 1979). Apparently, this species thrives from lowland to sub-alpine, and on a wide variety of substrates. In days of yore, oak constructed British Naval vessels were damaged severely by *Laetiporus sulphureus* (Arora 1986). Some authors state that it is a "highly edible" species (young specimens), while other advise caution. Orr and Orr (1979) note, "there is now a toxic strain of *L. sulphureus* on the Pacific Coast". The name "Chicken-of-the-Woods" is apparently from the fact that young fruiting bodies, when fried, have a taste that

"somewhat" resembles chicken. The texture has been compared to "tofu". It has always seemed to me that too many things are said to "taste like chicken" including snake meat, frog legs, tofu dogs and certain kinds of fish. In any case, it seems a shame to pick and eat such a beautiful plant (which is, of course, a no-no in a BC Park!).

Take time to delight in the natural wonder that often we take for granted. Do not be in a hurry - use all your senses. Explore through touch, feel and smell just what a species such as "Chicken-of-the Woods" is all about. Please do not be satisfied with just naming things; try to see how things are inter-related. Where do the fungi fit in to the grand scheme? Take the time...

#### Literature Cited:

Orr, Robert and Dorothy Orr. 1979. *Mushrooms of Western North America*. University of California Press, Berkeley, California.

#### Reference:

Arora, David, 1985. *Mushrooms Demystified*. Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California.



# 1995 Educational Travel

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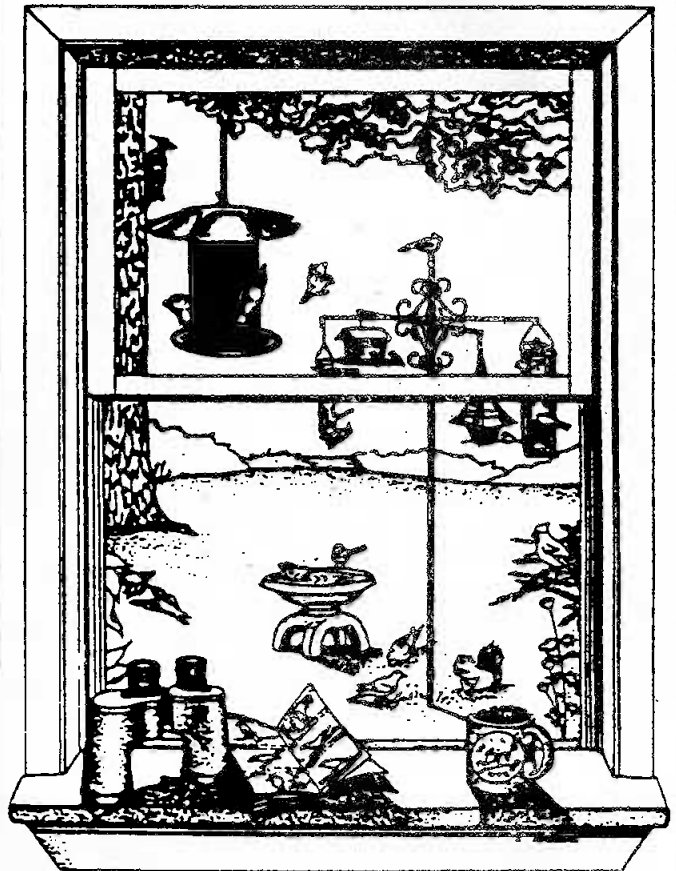
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# Jerry's Rangers

## RUB-A-DUB...LEAF?



After a good warm summer, the days are now getting cooler and shorter. Spiders have spent the summer growing big and fat, and now, their beautiful orb-webs sparkle with morning dew. The air has a clean fresh smell - the smell of Autumn: now it is fall - "fall", because the leaves are falling off some trees, including maple, alder and cottonwood. **Jerry the Moose** says it's wonderful to run through the leaves on the ground and listen to them rustle under your feet. Have you ever picked up a leaf and looked at it closely? It's fun to look at leaf shapes, colours and all the lines (veins). There's a good way of collecting leaves without ever taking them home; that is, to make leaf rubbings. Here's what you will need.

1. Crayons - some good fall colours such as orange and red; black is useful too.
2. Paper - plain white (unlined) is best.
3. Hard surface - on which to put the leaf and paper when you are ready to make your rubbings (like an old book).

Find leaves of various trees including maple, cherry and alder. Lay a leaf down on a hard surface (cardboard is fine). Put the paper on the leaf; take the crayon and rub (not too heavily). Use the crayon sideways (flat) instead of the pointed end for better results; like magic a leaf pattern will appear. Try different colours and different leaves on the same paper. Use your imagination and have fun!

**Jerry** says, "enjoy BC Parks in fall - it is a wonderful time of the year". Each park has something special to offer.

If you need information about BC Parks, please drop a note to:

**Jerry the Moose**  
BC Parks  
1610 Mount Seymour Road  
North Vancouver, B.C. V7G 1L3

Until next time: Keep safety first.

Al Grass  
for **Jerry the Moose**

---

## A TREE FOR LIFE

The giant maple standing wide and tall across the lane  
Stubbornly resists the change of colour in our neighbourhood;  
From very deep, dark green in early spring, its leaves  
Hang on until late October before finally turning to  
gold.

Thick, luxurious, jungle-like foliage during summer  
And most of autumn, provides cover for literally hundreds  
Of birds, and although limbs twitch and quiver as birds  
move  
Among them, our feathered friends are mostly invisible.

Flycatchers, especially, while on their adventurous way  
North in spring, and while on their victorious way  
south  
In autumn, stop off and stay awhile, making the maple  
Tree their oasis during the high noon of their flights.

I have never, ever, become so aware of such a tree  
before;  
Always heavily infested with a variety of insects, it is  
An abundant store of food, ever a place for twittering  
rites  
Staying an avian delight through spring, summer and  
most of autumn.

Last autumn I had just about given up all hope  
That gold would once again appear in that great tree;  
But suddenly, on nearing hallow'een, the sunlight then  
Was seen to shine on golden seams, and though some  
leaves  
Were still light green, the tree as a whole did golden  
gleam.

Harold Craven  
Burnaby

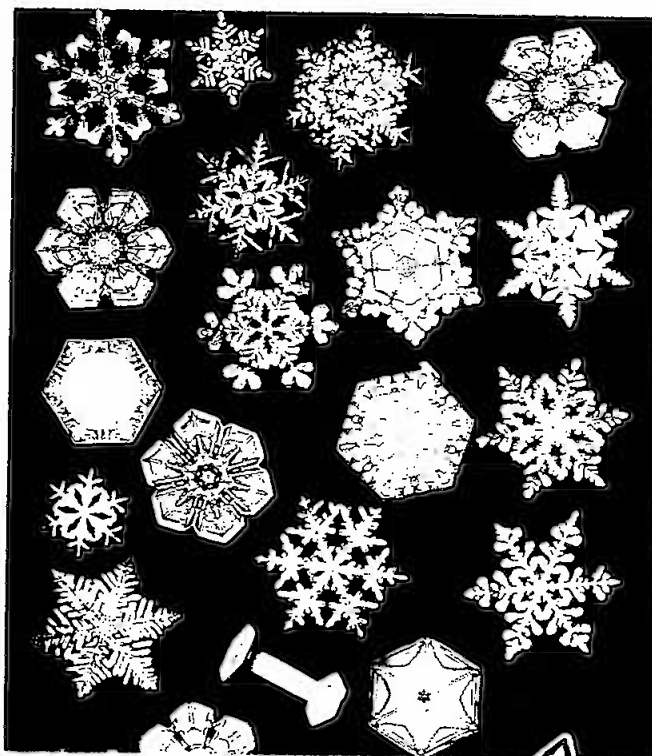
## SNOWFLAKES

Look closely at snow, and try to examine the individual particles. Snowflakes fall as combinations of icy crystals that have grown in the air. They may reach the ground in any of a large variety of forms, just a few of which are illustrated here. Sooner or later ground weather changes the structure and appearance of every snowflake.

Hoar is the ice equivalent of dew and often forms a sparkling jewel-like surface on snow. A close look will reveal hoar crystals to be leafy or plate-like. Surface hoar makes for very fast skiing conditions.

Rime is super-cooled water vapour deposited by wind. Not surprisingly it builds up on the windward side of exposed objects, and often forms beautiful feather-shaped accretions.

From: *The Winter Scene*  
By Al Grass and Des Belton  
BC Parks



## NORTHERN SHRIKE HARASSING A NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL

On 10 February 1994 while cleaning out Wood Duck boxes at the Princeton sewage ponds, I could hear a high pitched nasal alarm calls coming from a group of willow trees approximately one hundred metres away. Closer examination revealed a Northern Pygmy-Owl being harassed by a Northern Shrike. The owl was perched in plain view fifteen feet above the ground and the shrike would perch in the top of the tree and hop through the branches to within approximately one foot of the owl, fluttering its wings and tail while calling loudly. As I approached closer the shrike flew to some nearby cottonwoods from where it made flying passes at the owl, calling only when near the owl. Through all this the owl did not move and only made snapping noises with its bill. This confrontation was observed for over twenty minutes and continued as I left the area.

Northern Pygmy-Owls are common in this area in winter and Northern Shrikes have been recorded on several occasions but this is the first time that I have ever observed this reaction between two similar predators, also no other small birds were seen in the area despite the alarm calls of the shrike.

Jerry Herzig  
Princeton

## GOLDEN EAGLE AEROBATICS ?

There seems to have been a fair amount of discussion recently about the antics of soaring birds. So, I'd like to share with you a startling display of aerobatics that I witnessed a few years ago in the Dezaiko Range of the Rocky Mountains northeast of Prince George.

I was walking along a 2,000 metre alpine ridge on a warm summer day. A Golden Eagle was circling on fast rising thermals in the steep sided valley below me. Reaching a good height, it suddenly folded its wings and dropped like a stone. Attaining terminal velocity, it spread its wings to pull out of the dive and rise vertically until gravity overcame its momentum. At the moment of stall, it flipped over on its side in a perfectly executed manoeuvre known to airshow buffs as a "hammerhead turn". As it went over, it folded its wings, fell and repeated the exact sequence two to three times, each time losing several hundred metres of altitude. Then it sought out a thermal, climbed to its original starting point and began the entire sequence over again. I watched this bird engage in what can only be described as play for more than half an hour.

Was this normal species behaviour that I had witnessed; or was I privileged to see a performance that this one bird had accidentally discovered and was taking obvious joy in repeating? I am interested in other naturalists thoughts on this.

Mike Nash  
Prince George

# OVER THE EDITOR'S DESK

## Brown-headed Cowbirds...

**Editor's Note:** This letter was sent to Mike Chutter (BC Ministry of Environment) who had responded to a letter which appeared in the September 1994 *BC Naturalist* page 29).

For another comment on the "Crow situation" please see page 4 for an article by David Stirling.

As a member of the Gabriola branch of the Nanaimo Field Naturalists I read with interest your response to a letter in the **Over the Editor's Desk...**

The item noted the Brown-headed Cowbird status and your response concluded with the statement that you "intend to watch this species closely..."

I thought you might be interested in knowing of at least one method the cowbird has employed to broaden its range. During a visit to Duncanby, on Rivers Inlet, I witnessed a pair of cowbirds emerge from the hold of the visiting coastal supply freighter which was unloading at the dock at the time. Whether the birds had gone aboard at the ship's origin, in Vancouver, or at some way point is unknown, but it was an obvious example of at least one means of accelerating the spread of this species. The birds appeared to be quite tame, were seen around the dock for couple of days after the ship's departure, then disappeared and have not been seen in the area since.

Perhaps you could post a notice in the area, both at Duncanby and at Dawson's Landing as to the birds' identifying characteristics, etc.

Joan Best  
Gabriola

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## NOISE POLLUTION INFORMATION WANTED

Noise pollution effects upon humans are a well known and well documented concern, however until recently these effects on animals have been either neglected or barely researched. Here on the B.C. coast fish farms are experimenting with underwater high intensity noise to prevent predators from stealing fish from within their net pens. These devices are known as seal scares and emit noises of 195 decibels (dB). 120 dB is equivalent to a jet engine and is the proposed upper limit allowed for underwater transmission in American waters. Further, a study has found that the noise of these seal scares does not drop back to underwater background levels for 40 - 50 km from its source. This obviously impacts not only those animals in the immediate vicinity of the net pens but also the benthic

organisms, both nearby and at considerable distance. Yet there are more than simply physical impacts on animals. Fish such as ling cod and rockfish may be highly territorial and if displaced by intense noise must intrude another animals territory leading to conflict.

Research on the physical impacts of noise on humans are numerous but on animals the information is scant. In analyzing the effect of these high intensity sounds Department of Fisheries and Oceans scientists have extrapolated from these human studies. However, as Dr. Alan Lupin, a Research Affiliate of the Royal BC Museum, has pointed out, human and seal hearing may be similar in air but underwater the seal's ear changes so human results are in all probability inapplicable. When underwater the seal's tissue about the ear canal fills with blood in order to expel air and water from the ear, thus sound travelling through the water does not have to go through the air interfaces but instead passes directly from water to blood filled tissue. This is very different from the human ear in which the state of the ear does not change and the seal's ear is no doubt more sensitive than the human ear underwater. These animals, after all, have to be able to detect the sounds of killer whales at sufficient distance to allow them time to get out of the water to safety.

In addition, kangaroo rats in deserts of the Southwestern States have been found to be bleeding from the ears and are believed to have suffered serious ear damage from the noise generated by nearby motor bike races. This loss of hearing makes the animals much more susceptible to predation by rattlesnakes. Here in B.C. there may be analogous situations in areas of heavy use by motor bikes, all terrain vehicles and snowmobiles.

At present Dr. Lupin is beginning to research, to collect data, and to build a database on these effects. The goal of this research is to mitigate the effects of noise on animals, and to research alternatives which are less harmful methods of deterring seal predation on net pens.

His research includes noise damage in all animals including mammals, birds, reptiles and invertebrates.

As a volunteer assisting Dr. Lupin in this research I am interested in whether anyone, or any of the naturalist clubs, know of other cases of detrimental noise effects on animals, or would be interested in pursuing this issue. I am interested in either cases of detrimental noise or suggestions on alternatives to high intensity sound. If anyone wishes more information or has any knowledge to pass along I may be reached at:

Sean Mitchell  
4010 Century Road  
Victoria, B.C. V8X 2E4  
Phone: 604-721 4921

I appreciate any information regarding this issue.

# ILGACHUZ MOUNTAINS

## THE FBCN EXPEDITIONARY CAMP - 1994

### Week One 31 July to 6 August 1994

After a hearty 5:30 a.m. breakfast at the Dutchman's Restaurant in Anahim, eighteen eager people deposited cars and various piles of gear at Sager's Ranch. The cars were to be secure behind the ranch's gate and the little piles would be loaded onto horses that would pass us enroute to our destined camp at the confluence of Phacelia and Carnlick Creeks. That was the plan - - - but "The best laid schemes o' mice and men Gang aft a-gley". The four hour walk on the 'road of yesteryear' briskly led by Ted Stubbs took us to a hunter's camp where we rested and ate our lunch, while mastering the Australian salute to keep the mosquitoes at bay. Here we met four backpackers from the Valley Outdoor Association who would play a role in our future drama. No horses in sight yet, but a pleasant surprise awaited us. The stately figure of Bob Harris emerged out of the marsh. He had walked down the trail from the camp to meet us. We were informed at this time that the packer had decided his horses would not proceed over the pass to our 'promised land'. Instead the first load of gear including tarps for shelter and biffy were tidily deposited on this side of the pass. At 12:40 p.m. we continued in an orderly manner behind Bob who set a steady and dignified pace over the ridge noting the rounded top of Mount Baldy on our right and as we climbed higher, the meadow we traversed below us.

Soon the top was reached as we could see the pleasant valley of Lessard Creek below. At 2:30 p.m. we arrived at the tidy orange pile and sat down to await the horses. It was cool and windy with a hint of rain threatening. And so we waited, and waited and waited.

At 5:00 p.m. the rain began, a drop or two and then real rain. Twenty people scurried about, motivated by the rain and lack of tents, food, etc. gathering firewood and erecting a temporary shelter. (We still dared to hope the possibility of reaching our 'promised land'.) By 6:00 p.m. we were firmly semi-comfortably ensconced in our shelter, a fire burning in front. Spirits were high as we shared our bits of left-over lunches and the clothing in our day packs. Since Bob, Ted and Pat had their gear brought in the day before, they generously loaned shirts, toques and sweaters for our expected overnight bivouac. Our backpacking friends Bob, Mary, Ann and Rene noticed our plight from their camp further up the valley and arrived in the downpour with a delightfully blackened pot in which they boiled water and shared their cups and hot iced tea as well as more clothing.

At 8:00 p.m. the rain ceased and a floor tarp was laid out. Some claimed their sleeping spots, other eyed places closer to the fire and still others decided to climb the ridge to the west. (Chris was already on the top of the east ridge tracking down an elusive *crepis nana*.) Melda was wrapped contentedly in her space blanket beside the fire - - a

sacrificial foil dinner?

At 8:20 p.m. Vreni looked back up the ridge we'd stared at since arriving and a squeal of delight escaped her throat. It came out - - - "HORSES!!" and echoed throughout the hills. Like a July 1 fireworks, bodies exploded in every direction with cameras and 'palm branches' to welcome our tents, food and warm sleeping bags. Ted, who had gone to bed with the worries of the world on his shoulders bounded out of his tent much relieved. The reason for the delay were as numerous as the horses, but we didn't really care at this point. In a short time horses were unloaded and a little tent city was erected, every semi-flat piece of ground utilized. As we crawled happily into our warm sleeping bags we didn't even mind that we were not in the land of milk and honey. We had our food and shelter - - our basic needs were met.

Our first full day at camp was welcomed with sunshine and the odd moving of house as flatter ground was sought after. Since the shovel and mattox were left behind by the packers the biffy was gallantly dug with John Peck's handy ice axe and tiny trowel. The great orange structure was erected so it was visibly for miles around and dubbed affectionately by Chris as the "Fortune Telling Booth".

At 1:00 p.m. we all followed Bob up to the 'Pass of No Horses' noting a gorgeous field of cotton grass and a few double campanulas. At the pass we gazed down in the intended campsite, Festuca and Carnlick Creeks and familiarized ourselves with the surrounding peaks: Saxifraga Ridge, Far Mountain, Carnlick Mountain, Stonecrop Ridge, the Pipe Organ, Crepis and little Nana squatting in front. A pleasant walk along the ridge to Carnlick Lake rewarded us with treasures of obsidian and jasper. Bob and John Anderson were very informative in their explanations of the geological history surrounding us. After a rest at Carnlick Lake were continued around Go-Around Mountain, as the name invites, with Chris pointing out, among many things, white-bark pine and white mountain sorrel. As we rounded the southern edge of the plateau valley of Anahim and Dean River were laid before us. It was noted how this was once ocean with the coast mountains uplifted to form an island east of Vancouver Island.

On August 2nd several gathered at 9:00 a.m. to go with Bob on his 72nd birthday to Scot Mountain where we spent a pleasant day, viewing the Itcha Mountains, the distant Rainbow Range and Pan Valley, and below us the Sasquatch foot shape of Christensen Lake, the source of the creek we followed from Sager's Ranch. From this point Stan, on his ham radio, made contact with outer space, or more likely an earthling in Prince George who wondered where in the heavens we were. Supper was enjoyed with the company of a little Yellow-crowned Sparrow who was busy nibbling at goodies of her own, unpreturbed by our presence.

On Wednesday we were up early, as were the mosquitoes, to make a 7:00 a.m. start to our journey into and beyond the 'promised land'. Raindrops teased the twelve of us as we followed Bob up the now familiar pass, all loaded with lots of food, water and rain gear for a long day on the trail. We carefully walked down the east side of Carnlick Creek, bushwhacking through the krummholz and sliding on the scree until we crossed to the west side on a wet meadow and stopped at the confluence of the Phacelia and Carnlick where we rested and left a brief note on the newly located backpacker's tents. As we arrived at Festuca Pass the wind became strong and halfway up the pass between Campanula and Heirochloe a blowing rain began in earnest. Thoroughly soaked, we huddled in a line on the south side of the pass with our backs to the storm until the rain passed. The wind continued to blow savagely and dried us as we made our way to the top of Mount Campanula. The views of the Dean River and surrounding peaks were magnificent. Calliope was radiant in it hues of red and orange and nestled below was our destination, a deep blue Arnica Lake. At 1:00 p.m. we ate lunch on the slopes above Arnica Lake but in a half an hour the rain began again with the intent of thoroughly soaking us. After leaving the lake through a narrow pass and following the mini-Grand Canyon of Calliope Creek we slithered and squelched our way to eventually join the trail above Phacelia Creek and back up the west side of Carnlick Creek to our pass and home sweet home by 6:00 p.m. It had been a long day of high adventure but a great day. The other seven had also spent a very wet day, I am told, hiking to the 'promised land' and back.

The next two days were spent with small groups doing various trips including Hump Mountain; Go-Around Peak; the String Bog lookout, where some people spotted a caribou; marmot-searching; a swim or two in the small lake under Hump Ridge; and Bob and Ted valiantly spending a long, hard and wet day somewhere under Crepis and Nana. A few chuckles and groans were all we heard of that adventure, but methinks they have a story somewhere. John Anderson told us all about the origin of "Dougans" and how geology types like to give them a push. You may ask Ruth where her faithful ski-pole is resting and do ask John Peck if he is a believer in pushing the clouds away. Thursday ended with an enjoyable sing-along accompanied by Vreni on the recorder. At 4:00 p.m. Friday the horses filed in to assure us we'd be able to get our gear out the next morning. The fog rolled down the curtain on our final day as we slipped quietly into bed.

Our final day dawned cold and crisp with ice in the water buckets, frost on the tents and the odd person scampering about with stoves that were too cold to start. With backs, legs and feet sore and creaking from our week's enjoyment we thought it fitting to transform the "Fortune Tellers Booth" into a massage parlour, but left it for the next group to use as they saw fit.

At 9:55 a.m. all were packed and we left the horses to carry out our gear, the weight of food exchanged for precious rocks. We waved good-bye to Bob, hoping he'd find a day of rest, and followed the taped route to the hunter's camp, then plodded the long 'road of yesteryear' finally emerged at Sager's Ranch between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. The horses

kept their promise and arrived at 5:30 p.m. Some of us followed Stan's advise and went to the Dutchman's for supper before we showered. We were happily eating when our intrepid leaders, Ted and Pat, came in smelling like roses and looking lovely. Then the power went out. Not only that - - they missed the special. The dirty ladies ate the last ones.

It was a very enjoyable camp. Twenty folks had a lot of fun, saw an exciting new area and appreciated very much the work and worry of Bob, Ted and Pat to bring it all about. Thanks to you all.

Sharon Jones

## Week Two 7 to 13 August 1994

On August 6 it was a cold and rainy evening at Nimpo Lake when we arrived during a power failure. The next morning is fresh and clear. We enjoy the easy walk through the thin forests interspersed with lush meadows until we reach the volcanic mountains of scree that surround our campsite.

Campers select tent sites with care. Some choose solitude, others sociability; some choose comfort and flatness, other willingly suffer a few bumps and dips for a view; some seek shelter from wind whereas other choose windiness as a deterrent to mosquitoes.

Bob and Ted suggest trips and at first most members decide to go around Go-Around Mountain to look at alpine plants, volcanic rocks, distant views, and Carnlick Lake. In the next days we also explore Scot Mountain, Hump Ridge (with a cold lake to tempt the hardy), and the String Bog. We hiked over Lawrie Pass through scree, willows, and bogs past the 'intended campsite' and up to the Lovely Festuca Pass and Arnica Lake. We contemplate the multicoloured rock slopes and the distant grazing goats.

Back at camp the evenings are friendly and sociable. We listened to a bed time story from one Paul St. Pierre's books. On one night we stay up or get up to watch a predicted shower of meteors, and the night sky does not disappoint us.

On Saturday we take a scenic route out and see creeks, lakes, and meadows that did not exist on the way in. We discuss which way is up and which is down. Nevertheless, we end up on the original trail and trudge out to the ranch, where we reach the end of a delightful and memorable week.

Sylvia Mather

**Editor's Note:** The FBCN held two separate weeklong camps in the Ilgachuz Mountains.

Details on the FBCN's 1995 camps will appear in the January edition of the **BC Naturalist**.

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### Birds of Venezuela – UBC – led by Dick Cannings

The northwestern corner of South America is by far the richest area of bird species diversity in the world. Venezuela's list of 1500 bird species is almost twice as long as North America's and includes ibises, parrots, jacamars, trogons, toucans and almost 100 species of hummingbirds. Areas to be visited will include the Caribbean coast, the northern mountains, the high Andes near Merida and the rich Llanos of Apure province. A highlight of the tour will be the stay at Ilato El Frio, a 200,000 acre ranch located in Apure province where almost 300 species of birds live. Feb. 1 - 15, 1995

### Belize – VCC – led by Martin Gebauer

The small country of Belize (British Honduras) located on the Yucatan Peninsula is one of the last tropical frontiers. Accompanying the diverse habitat of limestone mountains, heavily forested jungles, coastal mangrove swamps and the largest unbroken offshore coral reef in the world, are a startlingly diverse collection of birds and mammals and a fascinating human history of both the Carib and Mayan Indians. Belize has the distinction of having over half of its mainland established as national parks or nature sanctuaries and we shall visit many of these. March 10 - March 25, 1995.

### Firth River Arctic Canada – VCC – led by Dick Cannings

Flowing out of Alaska into the northwesternmost corner of Canada, the Firth River provides one of the best introductions to Arctic wilderness anywhere. Rafting through its valley, you'll watch the last forests dwindle into a single white spruce and to the vast tundra of the Yukon north slope. You'll see Dall's sheep, moose, grizzly bear, caribou, musk-ox, golden eagles and beluga whales and visit fascinating old historical sites. June 18 - 28, 1995.

### Australia

Australia...rainforests with strange and wonderful birds, coral reefs and cays teeming with colourful fish and giant clams, hot savannahs spiked with giant termite mounds, and mangrove swamps and billabongs seething with crocodiles. On this 21 day trip you'll explore the rainforests of the Great Dividing Range, the deserts of the Red Centre, the coral islands of the Great Barrier Reef and the savannahs and rich wetlands of the Top End. First you'll travel from Sydney to Alice Springs, to Ayers Rock and the Olgas then it's on to Darwin to the Kakadu National Park and to Brisbane for Lamington National Park. You'll spend several days on the offshore coral islands before going further north to visit the Atherton Tablelands near Cairns. October 1995.

### Trinidad and Tobago – VCC – led by Nancy Baron & Johnny Mikes

The island nation of Trinidad/Tobago combines South America's rainforests with the spectacular coral reefs and exotic spice of the Caribbean. Trinidad/Tobago offers a remarkable diversity of landscapes in a very small area and abundant bird and animal life including toucans, tufted coquettes, spectacled owls and bellbirds. Based out of two beautiful lodges, we'll explore rainforests, lakes and marshes on Trinidad then relax, snorkel and wander the beautiful beaches of Tobago. Ten day trip. February 1996.

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