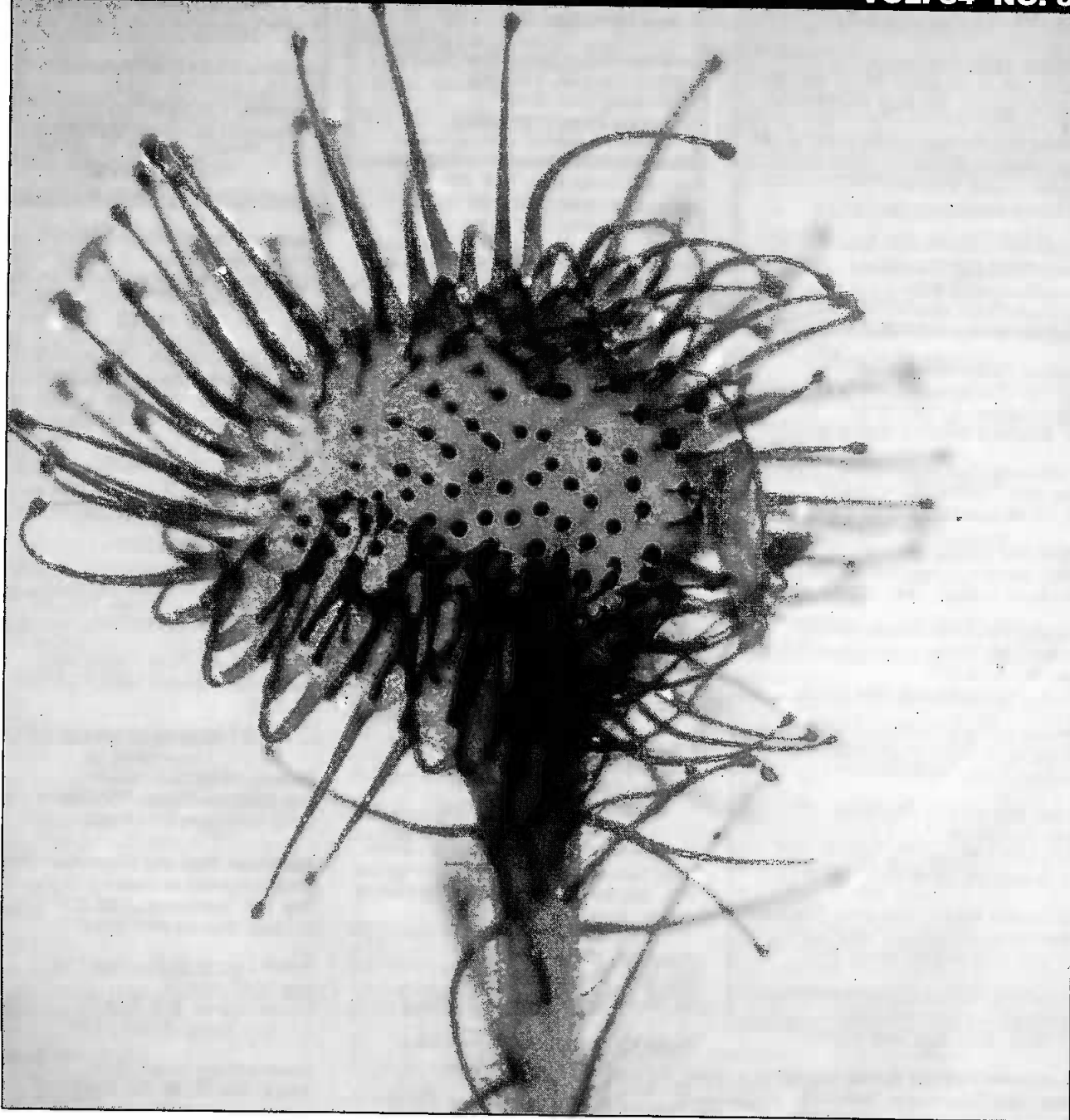




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The Federation of British Columbia Naturalists
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**DEADLINE
 JULY 1996 EDITION
 B.C. NATURALIST
 25 MAY 1996**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORY

Honourary President:
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Editor's Note:
BC Naturalist went to press before the Annual General Meeting on April 27 so does not reflect the new Executive elected at the Director's Meeting. Please contact office following the AGM for names and positions.

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 B.C. Naturalist**

The deadline for submitting articles and advertising is:

EDITION	DEADLINE
January	25 November
March	25 January
May	25 March
July	25 May
September	25 July
November	25 September

The distribution date is the first of the edition month.

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1996 INTERIOR EAGLE COUNT

On January 14, 1996, 72 members of interior naturalist clubs (FBCN affiliates) conducted an eagle count in conjunction with the annual swan count.

164 Bald Eagles (102 adults, 62 sub-adults) were tallied along with 5 adult Golden Eagles. This was an increase of 48 Bald Eagles over the 1995 count. The sub-adult population comprised 38% of the total as opposed to 32% in 1995. As we have increased the geographic coverage of the count area over the years, the total number of birds has also been increasing. As the coverage stabilizes, it will be possible to make comments about trends after a few more years of data, but the Adams River sockeye runs always create an aggregation of birds at that spot. Whether there are really more eagles in the interior during major spawning cycles or we are simply seeing a gathering of a normally dispersed interior population remains to be studied.

AREA DESCRIPTIONS

- A Merritt to Douglas Lake
- B South Thompson River - Kamloops Lake east to Hwy. #5
- C South Thompson River - Hwy. #5 to cement plant
- D South Thompson River - cement plant to Pritchard
- E South Thompson River - Pritchard to Chase
- F Chase to Anglemont - Little & Big Shuswap Lakes
- G Tappen to Sicamous - Shuswap Lake
- H Sicamous to Enderby - Shuswap River, Mara Lake
- I Peachland to Osoyoos & USA border
- J Mabel Lake
- K Enderby to Mabel Lake - Shuswap River
- L Kamloops Lake to Savona
- M Kelowna Area - Okanagan Lake
- N Vernon Area - Okanagan Lake
- O Sterling Creek - Princeton - Allison Lk.
- P Osoyoos - Sterling Ck along Similkameen drainage
- Q Adams Lake
- R Kettle River - Christian Valley
- S Merritt to Spences Bridge

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Vernon Area

Mary Collins, Ken Dennys, Candace Eikerman, Phil Gehlen, Wendy Hooke, Brian Holmes, Doris Holmes,

RESULTS BY AREA

AREA	Bald		Golden		TOTAL ALL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
A	9	9	0	0	18
B	0	1	0	0	0
C	6	0	3	0	9
D	3	0	0	0	3
E	1	0	0	0	1
F	31	22	0	0	53
G	0	0	0	0	0
H	3	0	0	0	3
I	1	3	0	0	4
J	3	1	0	0	4
K	13	2	0	0	15
L	1	0	0	0	1
M	3	3	0	0	6
N	10	3	0	0	13
O	4	5	0	0	9
P	1	2	0	0	3
Q	0	0	0	0	0
R	11	11	2	0	24
S	no count				
TOTAL	102	62	5	0	169

Phil Jones, Terry Lodge, Terri Lodge, Ernie McNaughton, Bob McVicar, Daphne Manning, Peter Mayfield, Hylda Mayfield, Norbert Mertens, Elsie Nykyfork, John Quirk, Shirley Quirk, Pat Schneider, Eleanor Serson, Rod Wark, Dean ?.

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Nicola Valley

Glen Carlson, Margaret Carlson, Murphy Shewchuck, Wayne Weber.

Kettle River

Bruce Morgenstern, Pearl Morgenstern.

Prepared by
Rick Howie
Kamloops

1996 INTERIOR SWAN COUNT

January 14, 1996 marked the 23rd annual Interior Swan count as 72 members of naturalist clubs tallied traditional areas in the Thompson, Shuswap, Okanagan, Nicola and Nicola drainages. The totals were 82 Tundra Swans and 258 Trumpeter Swans for a grand total of 340 birds. This is the fourth lowest count since 1981. Five counts prior to 1981 produced fewer birds than in 1996, but earlier surveys were less intensive in the Okanagan and other drainages.

DISCUSSION

The tally of 82 Tundra Swans was the third lowest with only 1991 & 1993 showing lower totals. Juveniles comprised 19.5% of the population which is within the range of 17-29% that has been recorded over the period of the count. The 10 year average for juveniles during the period 1973-83 was about 26%.

Trumpeter Swans were below last years total of 412 with a total of 258, continuing the second year of a decline since the 1994 peak of 693 birds. Juveniles comprised 20.6 % of the population which is statistically equal to the mean of the last 10 years which was 21%.

The absence of Tundra Swans on the South Thompson River (4 in 1996) was dramatic when one contrasts this with the historic high count of 685 in 1985. Temperatures had been mild throughout December and no ice was in evidence along the entire river. However, water levels had risen to elevations never before recorded in December or January since measurements were initiated in 1911. As evident in the graph, water levels began to rise above normal about mid October 1995, but the increase was slowed by a brief cold spell in early November. After Nov. 11, water levels rose to a peak that remained one metre above average for the first 3 weeks of December before beginning a slow decline. By count day on Jan. 14, water levels were still about 0.6m above normal. (The chart shows water levels above a zero reference point on a set gauge and should not be read as actual water depths which are considerably deeper.)

The increased river depths likely made foraging difficult for the shorter-necked Tundra Swans and forced them into the few shallow areas remaining. Conflict with Trumpeter Swans would have increased and the larger birds may have dominated the limited aquatic foraging sites. The Tundra Swans appeared to have left the area by early December, leaving only Trumpeters behind.

The 65 Tundra Swans on the Shuswap River is 2-3 times historic high counts and during some winters, no birds are found on this system. This suggests that while not necessarily a preferred area, the Shuswap River between Mara Lake and Enderby was able to provide sufficient forage for an enhanced but still small number of birds, despite increased water levels. These birds may have moved from the South Thompson River.

The wintering Tundra Swan population has declined dramatically on 5 occasions during the past 23 years. These low populations have ranged from 40 to 130 birds. The intervals between low populations has decreased from 8 years between the initial two depressions to 5, 2 & 3 years between the successive depressions. In all cases, foraging conditions on the main wintering habitat along the South Thompson River have not been ideal for the smaller Tundra Swans. During 4 of the 5 winters, excessive shore ice has made traditional foraging sites unavailable. During the winter of 1996, it is postulated that excessively deep water hampered foraging for Tundra Swans. Thus, low numbers of Tundra Swans on the South Thompson wintering area appears closely linked to the availability of foraging habitat as opposed to any real fluctuations in the post-breeding populations. A more detailed discussion of the population trends will be available in a summary of the first 23 years of data, currently in preparation.

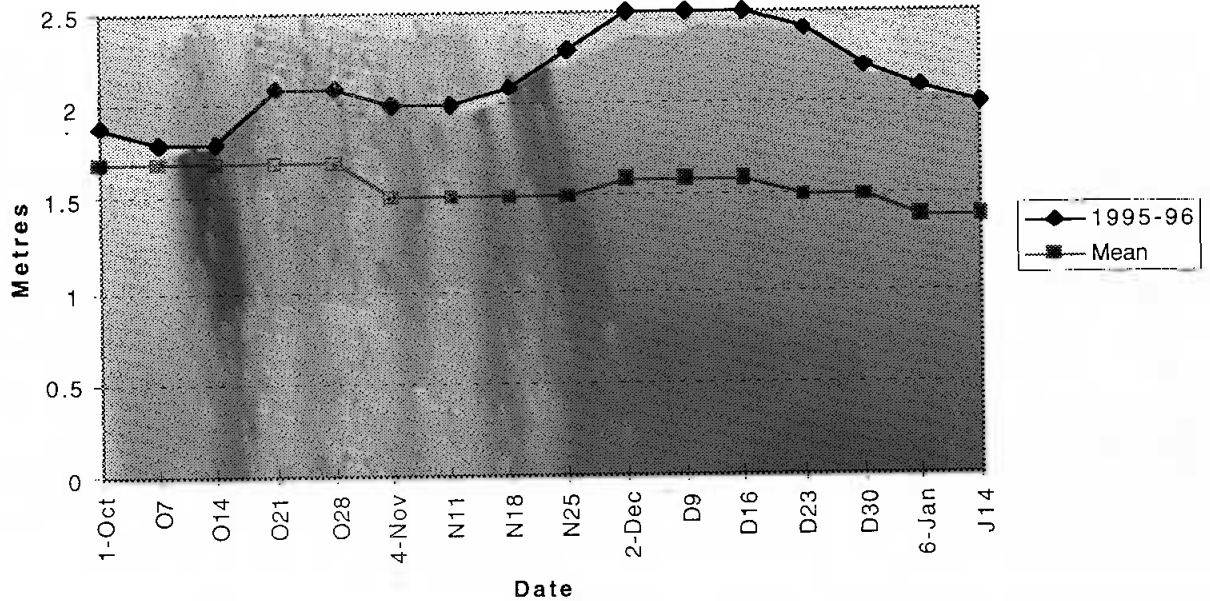
The somewhat less dramatic but nonetheless sharp decline in the wintering Trumpeter population over the past 2 winters is perhaps confounded by the abnormally high water levels of 1996. During other years when habitat availability for Tundra Swans may have been limiting, the Trumpeter populations continued to increase. The author is unsure whether management actions in the United States continue to create circumstances that are resulting in unstable wintering behaviours or whether there are other causative factors. In the aforementioned 23 year summary in preparation, I hope to have further information to aid the discussion about Trumpeter Swans.

RESULTS BY AREA

AREA	TUNDRA		TRUMPETER		TOTAL
	ad	juv	ad	juv	
A	0	0	1	0	1
B	0	0	9	2	11
C	4	0	14	6	24
D	0	0	73	11	84
E	0	0	49	21	70
F	0	0	4	4	8
G	0	0	0	0	0
H	52	13	13	4	82
I	0	0	2	0	2
J	0	0	0	0	0
K	0	0	3	1	4
L	0	0	34	4	38
M	10	3	1	0	14
N	0	0	0	0	0
O	0	0	0	0	0
P	0	0	0	0	0
Q	0	0	2	0	2
R	0	0	0	0	0
S	not counted				
TOTAL	66	16	205	53	340

cont. on page 6

South Thompson River Levels 1995-96



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Vernon Area

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Prepared By:
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MYCOLOGICAL MEMORIES

This past year marked the first time that I began to look at fungi with more than a passing glance. A trip to the Queen Charlotte Islands in a battered VW van meant that I had lots of opportunity to get down on my knees and learn all about mushrooms and toadstools. My travelling partner and I became mycological friends, soon scanning the fields and forest for a flash of gold, red or brown that might mean a new friend, or, at the least, a feast for dinner.

I think I had always assumed that mushrooms looked the same, mostly varying shades of dull brown, barely distinguishable from the soil and dead leaves on the forest floor. But I soon discovered that they are incredibly diverse and even flamboyant. While some are tiny and humble, others are flagrantly ridiculous and extravagant. Who could forget the sight of a fly amanita (*Amanita muscaria*) growing near the base of a conifer, its cap as red as a summer sunset, sprinkled with white flakes and as large as a dinner plate? Small clusters of sulfur tufts (*Naematoloma fasciculare*) are almost fluorescent, with yellow caps and a greenish centre. And what is the practical purpose of the colouration of the violet cort (*Cortinarius violaceus*), a tall and elegant mushroom that is a deep amethyst colour, with a texture like crushed velvet? As completely frivolous as one of Liberace's costumes, but just as unforgettable (some might say unforgivable).

It is easy for anyone who has been bitten by the mycological bug to become addicted to the thrill of finding new species to identify in the woods. My friend and I quickly developed a habit of grabbing compasses, some apples, rubber boots, and our battered guidebook, and tramping off into the nearest stretch of forest. Other campers and hikers thought we were a little crazy, especially because we often went into inhospitable areas in all kinds of weather. One memorable "stroll" was a six hour slog through a mosquito infested swamp, as mossy and oppressive as you could imagine, while another was a scramble up the side of a steep mountain, climbing over fallen logs and boulders, all in the pouring rain. But we loved every minute of it! We were definitely fools...if we hadn't braved the downpour on the mountainside I would have never found a cluster of ruffled black chanterelles, or a toothy *Hydnum repandum* (the hedgehog mushroom).

Our progress was often incredibly slow, especially if you are accustomed to hiking for the purpose of arriving somewhere. On our mushroom jaunts, there was no clear destination. Often, the most amazing specimens are located under your feet, (or hidden under a nearby log). The lessons learned are useful ones; be observant, and peer around and under everything. Perhaps a Zen master could use mycological meandering as a way to illustrate the importance of being keenly aware of the world in the present moment, and not to yearn for a far off summit.

For those who are new to the world of fungi, the good news is that they are very approachable. Even a ramble through a city park or nature reserve can yield some unknown and

wonderful specimens. The Shaggy Mane, an elongated, curly gray wig of a mushroom, pokes its nose through the grass along many country roads, and eventually will disintegrate into a black inky puddle, that can be used to write with if you dip in a paintbrush. Fungi will sit patiently as you poke it gently, peering under its cap and examining the stalk. Binoculars are unnecessary, and you don't have to sneak up on them on tiptoes. They are particularly fun to discover with children, but learning about mushrooms can bring out the kid in anyone. (How dignified can you look when you're on your hands and knees, muttering Latin names under your breath as you thumb through a battered guidebook?)

Of course, as with any outdoor activity, a word of caution must also be offered to the enthusiastic amateur mycologist. Mushrooms, if identified incorrectly and ingested, can be deadly. The warnings we received as children were given for a good reason. Many of the seemingly innocuous brown or white caps growing near home or in the woods are not for human consumption. Eating a poisonous type of fungi can cause a mild reaction (like an upset stomach or vomiting) to severe reactions. Some mushrooms (like the *Amanita ocreata*) are fatal if ingested. The greatest difficulty in gathering edible wild mushrooms is that can be easily confused with the ones that are a definite no-no. Don't go into the forest with a few vague recommendations that may be incorrect: the idea that a poisonous mushroom will turn a silver coin black, for example, is completely false and could lead to a dangerous meal. People have been fooled, and have been made very ill as a result, or have died.

Do use common sense and a healthy dose of respect when looking for fungi. Find a reputable and easy-to-use guidebook, with clear descriptions and illustrations, and never eat a mushroom until the specimen in question matches every characteristic without exception. Take the time to learn about the fungi in your area, and go for a few hikes before attempting to find edible ones. If you have the slightest doubt about a particular mushroom, leave it alone.

A Final Note: One question which emerged for us as we explored the Charlottes was whether deforestation has affected the fungi population. The Haida Gwaii archipelago has already been extensively logged for many decades, and we wondered whether some species of fungi may have been adversely affected, or even made extinct. Also, does the commercial harvesting of chanterelle and matsutake mushrooms have a negative impact upon the forests they live in (for example, trampling of undergrowth, raking of moss, etc.). I do not know if anyone is currently researching any of these questions, but I would be interested in hearing if anyone has any information regarding this.

Cecilia Greyson
Vancouver

IMPORTANT BIRD AREAS

The Canadian debate of the merits of free trade is not over, and conservation remains a key issue. How will economic activity linked to free trade affect the environment? The jury is still out on this question, but there is good news. An environmental commission spawned by North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has sponsored a program to identify and protect North America's most significant bird habitats. And Canadian Nature Federation (CNF) is at the heart of the program.

The program, modestly labelled 'Important Bird Areas' is a global conservation campaign spearheaded by the UK-based BirdLife International (IBA). The IBA program offers a standard approach to identifying key areas of bird habitat around the globe. Conservationists use biologically-based, consistent criteria to evaluate sites and then identify the world's most important bird habitats. The criteria help determine globally-important areas, as well as those important at continental or national scales.

IBA sites can be habitats that each country has a global responsibility to protect. Work to protect these sites, including conservation strategies, monitoring plans and on-the-ground advocacy, then follows.

Partnerships at all levels of the naturalists community is vital to success of this program, and in Canada we are off to a good start. The Canadian Nature Federation and Bird Studies Canada (BSC), the BirdLife co-partners in Canada, launched the program together with start-up funding from the North American Commission on Environmental Cooperation.

Bird Studies Canada (housed at Long Point Bird Observatory) is tackling the technical side, gathering and analysing data to evaluate candidate sites. The Canadian Nature Federation is focussing on national and international advocacy and building provincial partnerships. Provincial nature organizations, working with local clubs, can use the IBA systems to nominate candidate sites and eventually foster their conservation.

Europe embarked on its IBA program in the early 1980s and published a directory to Important Bird Areas in Europe in 1989. The resulting campaign to protect identified sites can claim a number of successes. Several countries, notably Turkey, Poland, Croatia, France, Hungary, Spain, Latvia and Denmark, have improved the protection of IBAs through the establishment of national parks or protected landscapes, expansions of existing protected areas, and other modifications of land use. In 1988, when the European IBA review was completed, only 25 percent of the sites were protected. Effective advocacy doubled the number of sites protected by 1994.

In addition to the well-established European IBA program, a directory of IBAs of the Middle East was published in 1994 and IBA programs are now underway in Africa and Asia.

The strength of the IBA program comes from every participating country contributing to a truly global conservation effort. The world wide network of IBA partners provides a strong united voice advocating protection of habitats - - from influencing international policy down to the vital grass roots action needed to make conservation happen on the ground. Here in North America, the Mexican, American and Canadian BirdLife partner organizations and other bird conservation groups are working together to implement an effective bird conservation plan for the continent. The IBA program is a vital cornerstone of the plan.

Starting in spring 1996, site nominations for Canadian IBAs will be solicited from ornithologists, bird conservationists, birders and naturalists across the country. Bird-watchers will be seeing their work and data from bird atlas projects, monitoring programs and bird-banding being put to use in this effort.

For copies of the IBA criteria or site nomination forms, please write to: Caroline Schultz, Canadian Nature Federation, 1 Nicholas Street, Suite 520, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 7B7.

The World's Most Important Bird Areas

It is fitting that the IBA program was launched in Canada during an Olympic year. Canadian IBA candidates will be advanced and judged, using objective criteria, to see how they measure up to important bird areas around the globe. Bird population data are evaluated in four categories in this 'competition'. Only some related to where you can see the most birds. No medals will be awarded to the sites that rise to the top, but flags will be raised - - red flags that will help focus conservation efforts at their protection.

1. **Habitats of endangered, threatened or vulnerable species.** For example, Diefenbaker Lake in southwest Saskatchewan is likely to be declared a globally-important IBA. It's shores are home to the largest population of Piping Plovers in North America, and sustains close to 5% of the world's population of these globally-threatened shorebirds.
2. **Habitats of species with restricted ranges.** This category covers endemic species, those that live in one geographical area and nowhere else. Many sites in Mexico may be declared globally-important IBAs because of the endemics they support. But Canada may not have any sites in this category.
3. **Habitats of species restricted to a biome or a unique habitat.** This category covers groups of species that, though not endemics, are confined to a unique or highly threatened habitat.

4. **Habitats supporting important congregations of species.** These sites support species that may be vulnerable because they congregate at a limited number of sites when breeding, wintering, or migrating. Most of Canada's IBAs are expected to fall in this category. Lake Erie's Long Point is a good example of a candidate globally-important IBA. It supports up to 10% of the North American population of Redheads and 10-5% of the North American population of Canvasbacks congregate there each year.

Not all areas of significant bird habitat will qualify as IBAs. The goal is to identify and target for conservation the most critical areas which will be internationally-recognized.

**OKANAGAN BIG DAY CHALLENGE
19 MAY 1996**

Contact a Cannings! Dick - 604 496 4019

19 May: Count Day
20 May: Brunch, hot tub and count tally at Naramata.

**OKANAGAN MOUNTAIN PARK
CRITTER COUNT
25 MAY 1996**

Saturday, 25 May is the date for the 4th annual count of flora and fauna (critters!) in Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park. This year, the South Okanagan Naturalist Club is organizing the event with the help of the Central Okanagan Naturalists Club and BC Parks staff.

The count goes most of the day with the count-up and a catered barbecue (about \$7.00 each) at Okanagan Lake Provincial Park north of Summerland starting at 5:00 p.m. Count terrain varies from easy walking to mountain hiking.

If you are interested in taking part (come for the Big Day Challenge the long weekend before and stay over!), call Eileen Dillabough, 604 862 8254, or Brenda Thompson 604 764 4296 for the Kelowna end of the Park and Eva Durance, 604 492 3158, or Laurie Rockwell, 604 494 7558 in Penticton.

**VANCOUVER NATURAL
HISTORY SOCIETY'S BIRD COUNT
25-26 MAY 1996**

This year we hope to involve as many people as possible, so mark it in your calendar and take part in this fun way to raise money for nature! New to birding? What a great way to learn some birds and to meet some people. Come out for an hour or a day, on your own or in a group, by foot, bike, rollerblades or car. Afterwards, join us for a "post count" function, where we'll hand out some drink, food and awards. Contact Jeremy Gordon, VNHS, Box 3021, MPO, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 3X5.

**MOUNT ROBSON BIRD BLITZ
1-2 JUNE 1996**

This year's Blitz will be held at Mount Robson on the weekend of 1-2 June. So bring your canoes, hiking boots and binoculars and join us for a great weekend of birding in the Rocky Mountains.

Contact Gail Ross at 604 565 6378 (Prince George) for further information.

**SKAGIT VALLEY PROVINCIAL PARK
BIRD-A-THON
7, 8 & 9 JUNE 1996**

You are invited to a bird-a-thon and free camp-out in the new Skagit Valley Provincial Park. The group campsite has been reserved from Friday afternoon to Sunday noon. This one day 24 hour bird-a-thon takes place all day Saturday. Organization of birding routes takes place Friday evening. Experienced and beginner birders are welcome!

The Skagit Valley Provincial Park is located at the south end of the Silver Hope Road on a good gravel road (a 50 minute drive). It is a transition zone between the coastal and interior forests with 197 bird species recorded. The event will aid in educating the public as to the wildlife viewing opportunities of the Skagit area and information gathered will aid in the compilation of a bird checklist for the Skagit Valley.

If you would like to attend, reserve your campsite, or receive more information please contact Lee or Denis Knopp at 604 858 5141 or write c/o 47330 Extrom Road, Chilliwack, B.C. V3R 4V1.

**STRATHCONA PROVINCIAL PARK
BIRD SEARCH
8-9 JUNE 1996**

This is a Strathcona Wilderness Institute Annual Event. Birders are needed to record birds in the Park. Your choice of areas - hike, canoe or ski. Camping is available. The Institute is also holding a **workshop on 11-12 May on bird and plant identification** in the Buttle Lake area. For more details contact Betty Brooks, 1630 Seaview Road, Black Creek, B.C. V9J 1J5 or phone 604 337 8180.

**MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK
BIRD BLITZ
14-16 JUNE 1996
SEE PAGE 12**

RIGHT ANSWERS, WRONG QUESTIONS?

We cannot doubt the impact of the human species on Planet Earth - - we have changed, are still changing, the face of the Earth.

Does 'Our' Earth care about our changes? Funny question. Why would she? The Earth is neither 'Our Mother', nor does it have feelings such as love, stress, or suffering... This planet has existed for a long time, it has undergone incredible changes and still keeps turning.

For now, you and I are part of its dominant species, this Planet is ours for the taking? Which restrictions would apply? Purely practical limitations, such as keeping the nest clean, not too much dangerous pushing and shoving? Or, are the limitations of a higher order, do they imply ethics, perhaps rigid morality, fashionable beauty and political correctness?

For most of us, these questions are irrelevant, because traditional answers have been carved in our minds.

In you thinking, what is Nature? An ecosystem without humans, or one invisibly touched by humans? A threatened paradise that could be lost forever? Must we feel responsible for a, our, Nature? Most of us would say Yes, I guess.

Although it might be primitive to think tit for tat, keep in mind that Nature does not necessarily care for living creatures: being in the wrong spot at the wrong time will exchange life for death - - think of tsunamis, blizzards, earth quakes. (And think about mosquitoes with their deadly diseases, about far-away elephants trampling vegetable gardens, deer eating roses, broom crushing native vegetation, sprawling urbanization, overpopulation, are they, we Nature?)

Of course, the question is, if we want to protect Nature, what part of nature and why? (Ever noticed that cuddly Pandas, ferocious Siberian tigers, human-like gorillas and chimps get sympathy, thus, money, while species of tiny critters disappear at best notice only the elite, experts; or that the word 'urban developer' (earth-modifiers) triggers the association 'greed'?)

It seems to me that the concepts Earth and Nature are vague and flexible, they mean what we want them to mean.

At the moment, we humans are still a thriving species with a fascinating power over living cells. I, and perhaps you, have no real idea what that implies.

Making sure that our children continue our privileged life styles here in the Western World, while making sure that the Third World gets better, while at the same time preserving all that is left of 'Nature'? What an incredibly tall and blurred order! (Of course, if there were less people on the planet our problems would be less! I am always amazed that a relatively simple measure of world-wide mandatory birth control in an unacceptable infringement on our rights. You and I are still animals which want their

own personal genes to populate the earth. I, my nearest and dearest, must continue to live, no matter what the cost; only very few people can accept voluntary or 'premature' exists from this earth. Discussion of this subject is so painful and suspect that a balance between emotions and rational thinking still seems light years away.)

Human love to replace questions and problems with answers and solutions. Conservation plans are conceived and implemented. The now politically correct wheels of the green bandwagons roll on, ready to crush the Earth Destroyers, Nature Attackers and Profiteers. We must act now, the end is near, doing anything is better than doing nothing...

Could be envision a world that is openly and totally human-centered? We have already taken the Earth. We have modified it for our human use and enjoyment in such a radical way that we might have hastened the arrival of the only certainty of life - - death. We are beginning to understand that some new danger is surrounding us.

In view of the future, our next step is not so much 'speaking for Nature who cannot speak for itself, but simply working on our own species' survival. A survival that depends on zillions and zillions of other living cells. Unfortunately, we are not exactly sure which. Pandas, mountain gorillas, mosquitoes, deer, broom, urbanization perhaps? (I do not say that 'conservation' as we know it now, is ineffective. I try to say that, perhaps, we need to focus more on 'innovation'.) Instead of standing united against our species' self-inflicted enemies and using all our creativity and compassion, we have founded a diverse three class world order: Nature's Greedies, Nature's Ignorants, and Nature's Protectors.

While busy waging our battles, we can neglect basic questions, since our group's received wisdom provides solutions.

You and I need to think more.

Ingeborg van Driel
Cobble Hill



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RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST TO NATURALISTS

Plants of Langley: A Nature Trail Guide to Campbell Valley Regional Park. Langley Field Naturalists. 113 pages, 1996.

This book will be of interest to anyone interested in identifying and learning about wild plants in Langley. Although intended as a nature trail guide to Campbell Valley Regional Park, many of the plants described are common throughout southwestern BC. The descriptions of selected plants are presented with an emphasis on wildlife use. Each description is accompanied by a life-size photocopy of the plant's leaves. There is also a chart showing the blooming times of wildflowers and a list of all the plants that have been recorded in the park.

Leaving a Living Legacy: Using Conservation Covenants in BC. William J. Andrews and David Loukidelis, West Coast Environmental Law Research Foundation. Vancouver. January 1996. 76 pages.

A Conservation Covenant is a voluntary, written agreement between the owner of land and a conservation organization in which the landowner agrees to protect the land in certain ways. While legislation passed in 1994 technically allows landowners to grant covenant to any person designated by the Minister of Environment, Lands & Parks, this guide focuses exclusively on conservation covenants that are held by conservation organizations. Any of the federated clubs of the FBCN who are considering the possibility of holding a conservation covenant should study this booklet before proceeding. It is of interest to note that the club would not have to be registered as a charitable organization under the federal *Income Tax Act*.

Protection of Aquatic and Riparian Habitat on Private Land: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Covenants in the City of Surrey, 1995. S. D. Inglis, P. A. Thomas and E. Child, Fisheries & Oceans Canada, Vancouver. 1996. 37 pages plus appendices.

This study surveyed the effectiveness of Section 215 covenants for protecting fish habitat in two municipalities in the lower mainland - the City of Surrey and the District of Maple Ridge. It contains information on fish habitat protection, a background on covenants, covenant compliance description, results of field and residential surveys, and evaluation of covenant use. The study found that the overall frequency of encroachment for the covenanted properties was high at 75%, even though 96% of the responsible parties claimed to be concerned about stream habitat. The study indicates that Section 215 covenants alone are not effective in protecting fish habitat in Surrey under the current management regime.

Cassiar Strategic Planning Assessment Project. Elander & Associates; Salasan Associates Inc. January 1996. 31 pages.

This project was commissioned by the Skeena Inter-Agency Management Committee to research and evaluate

factors affecting strategic land use planning for the Cassiar forest district. It is intended as a public document to encourage further discussion concerning strategic planning among both government agencies and interested groups and individuals. Areas identified as being environmentally important include riparian zones and valley bottoms, arid slopes in the Telegraph Creek area with rare plant communities, and valley bottoms used by woodland caribou.

On the Road to Sustainability: A Synopsis of Provincial Sustainability Initiatives. Commission on Resources and Environment, Victoria. February 1996. 140 pages plus appendix 1.

This document contains background papers that were developed to support the Dunsmuir III initiative - a grassroots review of the provincial sustainability strategy. It contains descriptions of 32 different sustainability initiatives that are currently underway in the province. Dunsmuir III was intended as a follow up to Dunsmuir I (1988) and Dunsmuir II (1991) conferences sponsored by 38 organizations interested in the development of a provincial land use strategy. Because of lack of funding it is not possible to proceed with the Dunsmuir III preparatory sessions that were scheduled for Kamloops, Prince George and the Lower Mainland.

Nisga's Treaty Negotiations Agreement-in-Principle. Government of Canada, Province of British Columbia and the Nisga'a Tribal Council. February 15, 1996. 127 pages plus Appendix A to P.

This historic agreement should be studied by every federated club in the FBCN. It will not necessarily have any direct bearing on areas of the province other than the traditional lands of the Nisga'a Nation but the content and wording of this agreement is almost certain to influence the many other treaties that are being, or will be, negotiated in other parts of the province. One would expect that the sections on backcountry recreation tenure, protection of historic sites, parks and ecological reserves, access, fisheries, wildlife and environmental assessment and protection will be addressed in all future agreements. While there may be some aspects of this agreement-in-principle that will not be popular with naturalists, it is important to recognize that there are many competing land use issues at stake. In general, it is an environmentally sensitive document and should be supported by the environmental community.

Lost Streams of the Lower Fraser River. Fisheries & Oceans, Pacific Region. 1996. Poster, Map.

This map illustrates the lost streams of the Lower Mainland as a result of urban, agricultural and industrial land development. The flip side of the map shows how interested citizens can become involved in stewardship of local streams.

compiled by Dick Stace-Smith

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UP AND COMING. . .

MAY

- 25 Deadline for copy and ads for the July **BC Naturalist**.
- 25 Okanagan Mountain Park Critter C (page 9).
- 25-26 Van NHS Bird Count (page 9).

JUNE

- 1-2 Mount Robson Bird Blitz (page 9).
- 2 Fraser River Festival - Deas Island (page 24).
- 7-9 Skagit Valley Bird-a-thon (page 9).
- 8-9 Strathcona Prov. Park Bird Search (page 9).
- 8-10 Regional Director's Meetings. Contact Re-
gional Coordinator for date & details.
- 15 FBCN Lower Mainland Regional Meeting -
Squamish.
- 14-16 Manning Park Bird Blitz (page 12, and BCFO
AGM (page 20).

JULY

- 6 4th Annual Chilliwack Butterfly Count. Con-
tact Lee Larkin at 604 858 5141 for details.
- 28- ffg FBCN Exploratory Camp - Lorna Lake
(page 31).
- ** FBCN Executive Meeting - TBA.

SEPTEMBER

- 8-10 Regional Director's Meetings. Contact Re-
gional Coordinator for date & details.



RAVEN TALK

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, this is supposed to be my swan song, but I'm not much of a singer, and who would call a swan's honking a song anyway? Though I must admit, we were quite entertained with the sounds of a hundred and more chorusing on Tranquille pond last fall as they gathered before deciding which way to go for the winter. Apparently a lot of them chose not to stay on the South Thompson this year - our 23rd annual count of Trumpeters and especially Tundras, was down considerably. The low numbers are being blamed on record high water in the river - making the bottom of the river a lot further down than their necks could stretch. To continue with the analogy, the past two years have flown by - I must have been having fun!

As I was writing this piece, I was mulling over the past two years, and wondering if anyone ever reads the columns I've written, when I had a series of phone calls. I would like to share them with you to show the range of things we get ourselves involved in as naturalists.

The first was in response to a call I had made earlier to talk to the spokespeople of the major provincial environmental organizations about a possible grasslands field seminar in Kamloops. The Canadian Parks And Wilderness Society (CPAWS) called a meeting to see if FBCN and CPAWS could work together on grasslands. We had some concerns about their approach, and have since discovered they are going ahead on their own, and are pushing for a Provincial or National Grasslands Park in the Churn Creek area of the Fraser Canyon (already partially protected under the Cariboo Land Use Plan). At the time of writing we have had some preliminary discussions about our own FBCN Round Table to discuss our position on all aspects of grasslands: the three grasslands communities, grasslands management including ATVs, land stewardship, concerns of the ranching community. We would also discuss a strategy for ensuring critical grasslands are well represented in the 12% protected areas system. If any members are interested in joining us, phone me.

The next call was from an FBCN member who was phoning because she had read my last President's Message. She is a professional photographer and was offering photos for the next poster we produce as her contribution to the cause. We talked about trips we had made to the north of BC and swapped impressions of beautiful Boya Lake Park (- if you haven't discovered it yet, go there, it's well worth the long drive).

The third call was from a member of my local Fish and Game Club. He's retired and spends a lot of time fixing broken boat docks and toilets at a popular local fishing lake. He'd watched a bluebird trying to get into his truck, presumably looking for a nesting place. Could I tell him where he could get a couple of bluebird boxes to put up on an old fence line near the lake? Our Club has ten bluebird routes that have been monitored for the last 14 years or so and have sold countless boxes to people to put up in their backyards or, like this gentleman, on fenceposts out in the grasslands.

The last call was from Iris Griffiths, a past Director from Pender Harbour. Iris wanted to fax me a piece she had written about why Native peoples aren't going to public meetings about protected areas. We discussed it at the Director's Meeting after the AGM in April; your Club Director should have a copy, along with information on how to get involved in the Regional Advisory Committees to the land claims.

That's just a small sample of the activities that we as naturalists are involved in, the people we come into contact with, the things we like to do. Maybe they describe the things you are involved in. I don't think we can afford any more not to become involved, not to get out and stand up for what we think is important. And if you'd like the Federation to help you achieve your goals, just ask, that's what we're here for.

Although my term is up, I'm not leaving altogether. I will be around as Past-President for a year and will continue to push for ATV licensing. I will also continue with what I started on over four years ago, before I was asked to sit on the Executive - and that is working to make *Cordillera* even better than it already is.

Thank you everyone for your support and encouragement, it's been a good two years. Good luck in all your projects whatever they may be. We will all appreciate your efforts to protect our natural heritage, to teach others about it, and to restore places that need restoration.

Since I will no longer be "in charge" by the time you read this, if you call me at 372-8607 with questions, comments, suggestions about Federation affairs, or just want to shoot the breeze - I'll give you the phone number of the new President.

Frances Vyse

CLUB CHAT

Alouette Field Naturalists have been busy helping out the local Provincial Park - Golden Ears - by being a volunteer trail clearing crew. Seems five of them spent a cold sunny day working for five hours on the Alouette Mountain Trail. • They were also instrumental in postponing the cutting down of two historical maple trees, (planted in 1902) by requesting Hydro leave them for another year so that they could gather seeds for an official planting when the area becomes as Heritage Park.

Burke Mountain Naturalists and some Alouette Field Naturalists paid a visit to Maplewood Flats on a foul wintry rainy day and despite the weather spotted a Great Grey Owl, the first for that area! • They also have a library display that makes the round of the local libraries. • Two BMNers noticed that important wintering bird habitat, such as bramble/brush areas and hedgerows, are being cleared through misapplied landscaping practices and brought it to the attention of GVRD Parks as well as an article in the local paper. Hopefully something will be done about this.

Central Valley Naturalists are now represented on the Abbotsford Environmental Advisory Committee, and, of course, by the time this is printed • they will have hosted the FBCN AGM and will be able to get back to their more peaceful pursuits of just naturalizing!

Chilliwack Field Naturalists are keeping an eye on development in the Ryder Lake area and are conducting field trips every two weeks to the area to do research on the birds, plants, wildlife and other land uses in this area.

The **Delta Naturalists' Society** hosted the Regional Meeting (Lower Mainland, that is) in March, starting off with a field trip to Boundary Bay followed by the meeting in the afternoon. Eight out of the thirteen clubs sent Directors.

The **White Rock and Surrey Naturalists** are concerned that, despite monthly meetings held over the past two years, very little progress has been made by the Ministry of Environment to follow up the Public Advisory Committee plan for the Wildlife Management Area at Boundary Bay. It seems that the foreshore is used as a helicopter pilot training landing area and there appears to be no regulation at any level of government to prevent this activity.

The **Comox-Strathcona Natural History Society** are celebrating a major victory with the announcement in February by Environment Minister Sihota that Seal Bay Forest has been designated a protected area and turned over to the Regional District. The 1,800 acre forest is adjacent to Seal Bay Nature Park. • In an article by member Nelson McInnis on "Who Killed Cock Robin?" he tells of the apparently senseless killing of an immature Olive-sided Flycatcher by two crows who had been chasing it, finally caught it on a neighbour's lawn and finished

it off. On another occasion a good friend and his wife were enjoying their morning coffee on their sundeck, watching their resident hummingbird when it was set upon by a couple of starlings, they did him in and left him lying at the foot of a shrub. Other friends whilst watching a Common Loon and her two little ones were witnesses to another 'murder most foul' as they watched a goldeneye drake planed in and landed quietly about 25 feet away from the loons. He was completely harmless. Without any preliminaries the mother loon dived. Whilst they watched, this normally peaceful bird rocketed up through the water and impaled the hapless duck on her sharp powerful bill. The goldeneye keeled over and died. The loon dipped her beak in the water, shook off the blood and returned to her young. For what reason? Who knows?

The **Cowichan Valley Naturalists' Society** is concerned about the cutting down of eagle nesting trees so are going to be inventorying Bald Eagle nests in the local area. They will then let the landowner, conservation office and local government have this information. Then, if a tree is cut down, legal proceedings could be taken against the owner by the MOE. • The club has received funding for the construction of kiosks on the interpretive walk by the Trout Hatchery and they expect to be working on this soon. • They have also been busy these past months clearing broom at Eves Park. • A garage sale is proposed for May to help raise funds for their on-going projects.

Nanaimo field Naturalist Gwen Johnston has been conducting weekly Wednesday walks for 40 years, the last 25 as a member of the Nanaimo Club. Now that is dedication for you! • There are evidently plans for a Botanical Garden in Nanaimo and the club is hoping to be involved as this would make a great home for plants salvaged from in front of the bulldozers. • Bruce Cousens has an interesting article about his resident flickers roosting in his flicker nesting boxes during the winter. As he says, it make more sense for a resident cavity nesting birds to do this than hanging about on exposed tree trunks, tempting predators.

Victoria NHS naturalists have an article about the Brant Festival which has become a really big thing amongst birders. At this years event here was art, carving, and photography on exhibition as well as a craft sale and family events. • The Board of the VicNHS has authorized the formation of the Habitat Acquisition Trust (HAT) and they hope to begin the legal process of forming the foundation within a few months.

Central Okanagan Naturalist Club members are still working away at reporting the 'Wetlands of the Month' and there is a write-up in every newsletter on a different wetland. Their Conservation Committee has a meeting regularly and watch-dogging and investigating concerns in their area.

The **Kamloops Naturalist Club** has done an Interior Eagle Count (as have many of the other clubs) but as their area has increased they cannot say whether the increase in birds is because of this but as the coverage stabilizes they should be able to make comments about trends after a few more years. (**Editor's Note:** See page 4 for article.)

North Okanagan Naturalist Club members are treated to a 'Discovery Table' at their monthly meetings, what a good idea. • The Executive were busy early in January brainstorming. They looked at the purpose and function of the club and set goals and objectives for 1996.

The **Oliver-Osoyoos Naturalists** kindly sent me their Spring-Summer Outings schedule which, as is always the case when it is out of one's own area, looks much more interesting than what we have planned, however, they don't tell me what the club has been up to lately and I'm quite sure they have been as busy as the rest of us fighting the good environmental fight. So please don't hide you light under a bushel and let me know what you are doing.

The **South Okanagan Naturalist Club** are holding an Amateur Photo Contest in May with 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes in seven categories. Winning photos will be displayed at the Penticton Museum during Environment Week 2-7 June.

The **Quesnel Naturalists** are working on producing a newsletter to be published on a regular basis. I am looking forward to receiving it. In the meantime they sent a sheet with the past year's activities listed. Ten hikes, two canoe outings, one evening walk, one evening barbecue, one pot luck supper, one Christmas Bird Count. Monthly meetings were held January to May and September to November. In addition the club hosted the Fall General Meeting of the FBCN, an undertaking that June Wood (now their Club President) attacked with enthusiasm. The result was a venue which enabled the FBCN Executive to conduct business with dispatch and to enjoy ancillary activities; early morning birding, field trips, evening slide shows and the excellent presentation by the Baker Creek Enhancement Society of their plans to rehabilitate Baker Creek, a stream passing through West Quesnel'.

Williams Lake Field Naturalists report that 18 years ago they were asked to take on the project of installing 1,000 Mountain Bluebird nesting boxes in areas of poor condition rangeland in the Chilcotin. The aim was to try and increase the Mountain Bluebird population in the hope that they would control grasshoppers. Presently around 15 nest box routes are being maintained by club members. On some routes bluebirds are nesting in 60% of the boxes on others it is up to 90%. Biological control of grasshoppers seems to be working. Anna Roberts says that to her knowledge no grasshopper spraying has occurred in the Riske Creek area since the nest box project began.

Bulkley Valley Naturalists held a Bat Box Workshop in February and in a sociable few hours seven of their

members assembled 20 boxes. • Also gleaned from their newsletter is the fact that there has been another salmonella outbreak at the feeders this winter. Ground feeding birds like redpolls and grosbeaks seem to be the most affected and they wonder if we are doing the right thing by feeding birds.

West Kootenay Naturalists' Association The first item I saw when I opened the newsletter was that "The moonlight walk to the top of Dove Hill was cancelled due to lack of moonlight". I can sympathize with that although I don't think it is as bad as a whole months outings cancelled due to heavy rain which is what frequently happens down here at the coast. • They had a visit from Dick Cannings for a Dinner Meeting, on Burns Night, I gather.

Somenos Marsh Wildlife Society will be approaching North Cowichan with a request for funds from the Forest Reserve Fund to aid in the construction of more boardwalk and wildlife viewing stands. • They are constructing a booth in the shape of a bird blind with fold down capabilities in order to be easily transported and quickly reassembled for mall displays. What a good idea. • Also the club is hoping to have a Great Blue Heron Festival sometime this fall.

Thetis Park Nature Sanctuary Association. On Sunday 14 April the Association hosted a Flower Appreciation Day in the park. There were a number of information displays and guided tours through the park. • Evidently filming was carried out in the park when it was still under management of the City of Victoria and a helicopter perched on a rock outcropping in a rare and endangered Garry Oak ecosystem within the Nature Sanctuary and the route selected to move equipment and workers resulted in tearing up moss covered rocks - the restoration of which requires decades, and yet could have been avoided. In spite of damage of this kind, the 22 January editorial refers to the film making industry as an 'eventually non polluting industry'. The Presidents letter to the editor reported the damage that resulted from the filming in the Thetis Lake Park and pointed out that as a result of the Association's protest Capital Regional District Parks adopted a policy on filming that requires a security deposit to permit site restoration but also prohibits destruction, collection or trampling of vegetation and work on weekends or statutory holidays.

Duanne van den Berg

FBCN FALL GENERAL MEETING

4-6 OCTOBER 1996

Hosted by North Shuswap Naturalists

Meetings at Celista near the famous Adams River sockeye run. Information and Registration Form in the July Edition of *BC Naturalist*. Mark your calendar now!

JOHN CARTER

A TRIBUTE FROM THE NELSON NATURALISTS

John Carter - a co founder and chairperson of the Nelson Naturalist - was killed in avalanche 26 February in Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park. John had a great passion for life in the wilderness and was dedicated to the preservation of parks and wilderness areas, particularly the Valhalla and Kokanee Provincial Parks. Conservation, preservation and restoration of the natural world was a motto he lived by, always encouraging members to write letters in support of wilderness areas in jeopardy. He led many field trips, giving of his knowledge and love of the outdoors. Sharing with his own children that love; he had vision of a Junior Naturalists group for Nelson. We hope each year to plant a tree in the wilderness in honour of John for he touched our lives in a deep, profound and lasting way.

John was involved in our community in a multitude of ways, from working on survey crews on the High Arrow and Mica Dams after high school to the recent reconstruction of the Silver Spray and Slocan Chief Cabins in Kokanee Glacier Park. He held various contracts with BC Parks and the Forest Service and supervised the building of many cabins and trails, including the Gibson Lake-Kokanee Glacier Trail. He had also worked as a Park Ranger in the Glacier Park, was involved in avalanche management and control and was one of the founding members of the West Kootenay Rescue Groups in the early 1990s and remained active with the group, currently know as the Nelson Search and Rescue Society. He had a long-time involvement with Scouting. He was a serving Trustee of the Robson Community Memorial Church and a co-owner of the Osprey Nest Nature Company, a nature store in Nelson.

His friends have described him as "a legend of the West Kootenays", "well-respected and cared about", "a man of the mountains", with "a spiritual affinity with the wilderness and the protection of the wild. He was a kindred spirit." "His spirit ... is there forever."

John was a deeply devoted father to his sons and a true and dedicated friend to many throughout the Kootenays and beyond. He will be greatly missed.

Elaine Moore
Nelson Naturalists

INTERIOR GRASSLANDS

THE LATEST IN THE FBCN FRAGILE NETWORK POSTER SERIES

Showcasing the Grassland Ecosystem, this colourful addition to our poster collection will be a valuable educational tool.

Covering less than 1% of the province, grasslands nonetheless support many native plant and animal species. To quote from the text on the back of the poster "The ecological systems are unique in our nation and many of their species are rare or threatened with extinction; some have been extirpated and one natural grassland ecosystem, the Peace River grassland has been committed to the plow".

The poster is available from the FBCN office. Please let us know the number of posters you need and where you intend to distribute them.

Land for Nature Initiative

Director: Robert A.B. Phillips, FCSI, MBA

New Project Coordinator: Andrew Bales, MA, Dipl Ed

Lower Mainland Coordinator: Emma Child, MA, BSc (Hon)

Okanagan Resource Coordinator: Kelly Chapman, RPBio, BSc

Okanagan LRMP Coordinator: Leah Hartley, BES, MCIP

Okanagan Development Coordinator: Doreen Olson

Vancouver Island Project Assistant: Steve Watson

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1009 - 207 West Hastings Street

Vancouver, BC V6B 1H7

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internet home page: [http://edie.cprost.](http://edie.cprost.sfu/~jacsen7/land4nature.html)

[sfu/~jacsen7/land4nature.html](http://edie.cprost.sfu/~jacsen7/land4nature.html)

Land for Nature Committee: Allan Brooks - Chair,

Dr. Bert Brink, Dr. Dick Stace-Smith,

Daphne Solecki, Frances Vyse, Nils Hoeg

LAND FOR NATURE

AN INITIATIVE BY THE FEDERATION
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA NATURALISTS

SUNSHINE COAST CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Representatives of 19 local clubs and organizations met 6 March in Sechelt to begin a Sunshine Coast Conservation Strategy. The meeting was a long-awaited response by Land for Nature to requests for assistance on inventory work from the Pender Harbour and District Wildlife Society and a number of environmental groups and community associations on the Sunshine Coast. This new initiative will address the need for inventory and mapping of the important natural sites on the Coast and will provide an overall plan to protect these sites and the environmental resources on the Coast.

In preparation for the meeting, base maps were obtained and Environmentally Important Site nomination forms were sent to groups throughout the Coast. Some participants came prepared with completed forms for sites they wanted to nominate, while others were more interested in a strategy to protect the whole environment, believing the issues facing the Coast to be much broader than can be addressed by an inventory of specific sites. To respond to these differing views, two complementary efforts were begun:

1. Identification of Environmentally Important Sites, and
2. A strategic planning process for protecting the resources of the Coast.

Government representatives noted that without a record of important natural areas they can unwittingly approve development in critical natural areas. It was also noted that without a strategy for conserving natural areas, the considerable volunteer time put in by local naturalist clubs and community groups to identify and take inventory of sites can sit unused by developers and decision makers.

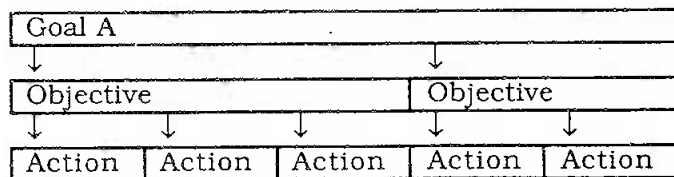
To begin the EIS identification process, completed forms and additional nominations were collected, for a total of 20 initial sites. Land for Nature has begun the task of accumulating in one place all of the existing information on DFO, Ministry of Forest, and Regional District maps. Additional blank forms were distributed and a large base map has since been placed at the Sunshine Coast Regional District office, where participants can mark their nominated site. (Progress will be reviewed at the next meeting, scheduled for 10 April at the Rockwood Lodge, Sechelt.) The information will be used to create an educational map that can be displayed at public places to increase awareness of streams, wetlands, parks and

natural areas on the Sunshine Coast. The information will also be an invaluable resource to local and senior government when reviewing development applications.

To address the need to give the site nomination process a broader context, a strategic planning process was begun. Participants made a list of some 40 issues affecting the environment on the Sunshine Coast, then grouped these into five major issues:

- A. Water
- B. Biodiversity (Preservation)
- C. Urban & Land Development
- D. Pollution
- E. Social

The list has been distributed to participants and other interested parties for discussion at subsequent meetings. The purpose of this process is to create a single plan, a statement of priorities and actions that represents the voice of the environmental groups of the area, and suggest a course that will be beneficial to the whole community. While a number of models are available for a conservation strategy (e.g., the South Okanagan Conservation Strategy) the model being used on the Sunshine Coast is essentially the strategic planning process for local groups as outlined in the Stewardship Series handbook "Community Stewardship". At subsequent meetings, the list of issues will be revisited, and goals, objectives and specific actions will be defined for each issue:



The Sunshine Coast Conservation Strategy has the potential to be a powerful planning vision. The challenge in the upcoming months will be to find common ground amidst the broad cross section of environmental groups represented at the initial meeting and to embrace the interests and viewpoints of people whose livelihood depends on a well-managed resource sector.

Andrew Bales

Land For Nature Directory is on page 16

CONSERVATION REPORT

THE RIVERVIEW LANDS

The land-use study of the Riverview Hospital Lands in Coquitlam began last November. The 244 acre site (formerly known as Essondale) is part of the 1,000 acres originally set aside as Colony Farm, and developed horticulturally by John Davidson, remembered and honoured as the originator of the magnificent plantation of native and exotic trees, as well as the first botany professor at UBC and the founder of the Vancouver Natural History Society.

As government plans call for the eventual down-sizing of the Riverview Mental Hospital, with many patients being placed in the community or directed to two future psychiatric hospital sites elsewhere in the province, the present task is to plan a smaller replacement hospital and determine what should be done with the rest of the sixty-one buildings and the land.

Burke Mountain Naturalists (BMN), along with the Riverview Horticultural Centre Society, has a seat on the thirteen member Advisory Committee set up by BC Buildings Corporation, the "owners" of the property. The study is being directed by Spaxman Consultants, along with a number of sub-consultants.

To date these consultants have conducted a resource assessment and have carried out individual interviews with a number of stakeholders, including the members of the Advisory Committee. A heritage report has recommended that five of the major buildings have heritage value along with the land and trees which surround them. There is a great desire among many stakeholders, including BMN, to retain all of the exotic trees - many people referring to them as the arboretum. From the naturalists' point of view the environmental report of the consultants is excellent, coinciding with the vision expressed by the BMN. The recommendation is to save intact all of the land containing natural habitat: the 'backyard', a treed strip right across the top of the site; the old orchard, a large area of old field and deciduous forest at the southern end; and a smaller area of deciduous forest and shrubbery along the Lougheed Highway. In fact, two species of trout were found on the Riverview side, as well as salmon on the Colony Farm side.

Working for only two or three days, the environmental consultant found on the grounds signs of some species of special interest: a Red-tailed Hawk nest, a Great Blue Heron roost, two Cooper's Hawk nests, and signs of Northern Saw-whet Owl, a Barred Owl, a Western Screech Owl, Ruffed Grouse, Black-tailed Deer and Coyote. Not mentioned were signs of beaver-cut trees that can be seen along the southern entrance to the ground.

In spite of this very favourable environmental report, there is no guarantee that the land will be saved. Many of the stakeholders interviewed stressed the importance of the arboretum and of the heritage aspects of the land, the value of this green oasis in the middle of a growing urban area, the need to retain the green link between Colony Farm and Mundy Park above, and, above all, the necessity of maintaining adequate land and hospital space for the mentally ill, who the first beneficiaries of this land. However, the mandate of BC Buildings Corporation, among other things, is to "provide optimal social and economic return to the provincial taxpayer".

This means that profitable uses must be found for the present buildings if they are to be saved, and does not preclude the sale of some land to developers if necessary. So far a number of uses have been suggested, but upon preliminary investigation there are as yet no firm recommendations. The public is invited to attend Open Houses and Public Information Centre in late April. There is also a Community Information Line (604 878 8990) and comments may be mailed or faxed to Riverview Lands Planning Team, c/o Cornerstone Planning Group, #22 - 1551 Johnston Street, Vancouver, V6H 3R9 Fax: 604 684 6201. Finally if you would like to make a brief presentation at a Public Ideas Forum on 8 May you are asked to pre-register by 2 May by calling 604 687 5896.

Joan Spira
Burke Mountain Naturalists

CYPRESS PROVINCIAL PARK UPDATE

The Cypress Provincial Park Master Plan drama continues with the new Master Plan still not signed as of the end of March. If negotiations between BC Parks and the park's commercial ski operator, Cypress Bowl Recreation (CBR), are not completed by early June, CBR's lawsuit against the government, filed in January 1995, may be heard in court.

But if the proposed Master Plan is approved as it now stands, over 50 acres of the park's old growth may be cut for commercial ski expansion. It is worth noting that the ski season this year at Cypress lasted barely two months, due to insufficient snowpack. Naturalists may wish to write Premier Glen Clark and Parks Minister Moe Sihota, urging them to reconsider the wisdom of allowing the logging of old-growth containing thousand-year old trees - in a park - for a few weeks of skiing per year.

Katharine Steig
Chair, Friends of Cypress Provincial Park

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**Jude Grass, Editor
103-7065 Stride Avenue
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FRONT COVER

ROUND-LEAVED SUNDEW

(*Drosera rotundifolia*)

Glistening droplets of sticky fluid lure and trap insects, which are then digested by the plant. Pojar and MacKinnon (*Plants of Coastal British Columbia*, page 351), comment: "the common name is thought to come from a misspelling of the Saxon work *sin-dew*, which means 'always dewy', which it is.

Photo: Al Grass
Rolley Lake Provincial Park

Grass Clippings

Notes from the Editor...

It is with regret I pass on the news of the resignation of Frieda Davidson as FBCN Administrative Officer.

Frieda was a great supporter of the **BC Naturalist** and never missed an opportunity to "get the Nat" out to public meetings, displays, nature houses, etc. She also filled in most admirably as Ad Manager for a period of time, and following each edition got copies (and bills!) out to our Advertiser and in her 'spare' time managed to find new ads. I even managed to get her to do proof reading when my regular team wasn't available. Her friendly and outgoing manner will be missed throughout the FBCN, along with her extensive knowledge of our clubs, their members and activities.

I wish her well in her new endeavour.

JFG

**1996 COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
LOCAL LEADERSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

A unique educational forum called the Community Development Institute (CDA) will take place this summer in Nelson, BC from 29 July to 2 August. An opportunity to learn practical skills and exchange knowledge and experiences with others. Will feature theme day addressing globalization and BC forests, plus workshops and activities on a wide range of environmental issues. For more information, contact Shannon Daub, Social Planning and Research Council of BC (SPARC), by phone at 604 736 8118 or by fax at 604 736 8697.

RECENT CHANGES IN COMMON AND SCIENTIFIC NAMES OF BIRDS OCCURRING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Every few years a group of professional ornithologists, comprising the Committee on Classification and Nomenclature, review scientific studies of birds in North America. Their findings, which consider differences in morphology, vocalizations, habitat preferences, interbreeding, and migration patterns, result in updates to the official list of North American birds published by the American Ornithologists' Union known as the Check-List of North American Birds. This large book lists changes in scientific names of birds in North America because of generic allocation, changes in common names to conform with international standards, newly described species, changes resulting from splitting from extralimital forms, and corrects spellings for birds.

The last major check-list (sixth edition) appeared in 1983 and the seventh edition is scheduled for publication in 1997. Meanwhile "supplements" are issued frequently to keep us informed of recent changes. As of 1995, the changes that affect birds in British Columbia, include the following nine species:

FORMER NAME	NEW NAME
Great Egret (<u>Casmerodius albus</u>)	Great Egret (<u>Ardea alba</u>)
American Golden Plover (<u>Pluvialis dominica</u>)	American Golden-Plover (<u>Pluvialis dominicus</u>)
Rufous-necked Stint	Red-necked Stint
Common Black-headed Gull	Black-headed Gull
Eurasian Skylark	Sky Lark
Scrub Jay (<u>Aphelocoma coerulescens</u>)	Western Scrub-Jay (<u>Aphelocoma californica</u>)
Rufous-sided Towhee (<u>Pipilo erythrophthalmus</u>)	Spotted Towhee (<u>Pipilo maculatus</u>)
Sharp-tailed Sparrow (<u>Ammodramus caudacutus</u>)	Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow (<u>Ammodramus nelsoni</u>)
Northern Oriole (<u>Icterus galbula</u>)	Baltimore Oriole (ne B.C.) (<u>Icterus galbula</u>) Bullock's Oriole (s B.C.) (<u>Icterus bullockii</u>)

R. Wayne Campbell
Victoria

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIELD ORNITHOLOGIST 6TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 14-16 JUNE 1996 MANNING PARK LODGE MANNING PROVINCIAL PARK, B.C.

Friday 14 June - 7 p.m.

Registration and wine and cheese receptions to be held in the Similkameen Room of the Restaurant Building.

Saturday 15 June

Morning:

AGM participants will take part in the Annual Manning Park Bird Blitz (page 12).

Afternoon:

Guest Speaker and the BCFO Business Meeting.

Evening:

Banquet and Owling Trip.

Sunday 16 June

Field Trips

For more information please contact BCFO President Marian Porter at 604 531 5747 or fax 604 535 9049.




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PREDATION ATTEMPT BY THE NORTHERN PYGMY-OWL AT A BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER NEST SITE IN THE EAST KOOTENAY REGION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

On 13 June 1995, while searching for woodpecker nesting sites in a prescribed burned forest along Fenwick Road north of Cranbrook in the east Kootenay Region of British Columbia, I recording an interesting field observation.

The Northern Pygmy-Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma*), know to nest in abandoned woodpecker cavities, was observed exiting from a hole in a burnt ponderosa pine tree, 94 centemetres from the ground. The owl was observed re-entering the cavity head first and exiting in the same manner. The owl then flew to a nearby branch where the cavity remained within its view. Initially, these observations were interpreted to mean the discovery of a pygmy-owl nesting site. However, once the owl retreated after the second observed entry, loud vocalizations from inside the cavity could be heard up to 152 metres away. Within moments, two adult Black-backed Woodpecker (*Picoides arcticus*) arrived at the site, giving alarm calls and flying at the owl. The young ceased calling and the owl remained motionless during the harassment by the adults, but eventually flew into the forest. The adult woodpeckers remained very agitated for 10-15 minutes before resuming their parental duties of feeding the nestlings. The young resumed their loud vocalizations when the adults left the immediate area.

In British Columbia, the Northern Pygmy-Owl has been recorded with young from early June to late August (Campbell et al. 1990). Although the owl was not observed with prey, it may have been searching for food to feed its young. This owl has varied diet which consists of birds, small mammals, large insects, reptiles, and amphibians (Bent 1961). I would conclude from this observation an attempt at predation on nestling of the Black-backed Woodpecker. It is unknown whether the owl had made a kill in the nest cavity, which measured 5 cm in width and 4.4 centemetres in height.

It is interesting to note that Bent (1964) makes reference to the continuous chattering of young woodpeckers in the nest site. In my own field notes from July 1993, with six hours of observation at a nest site near Nelson, the calls of the young were continuous except when one of the parent birds entered and remained in the cavity or when a Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) approached within 45 centemetres of the entrance. At this nesting location, the calls of the young could be heard up to 305 metres away.

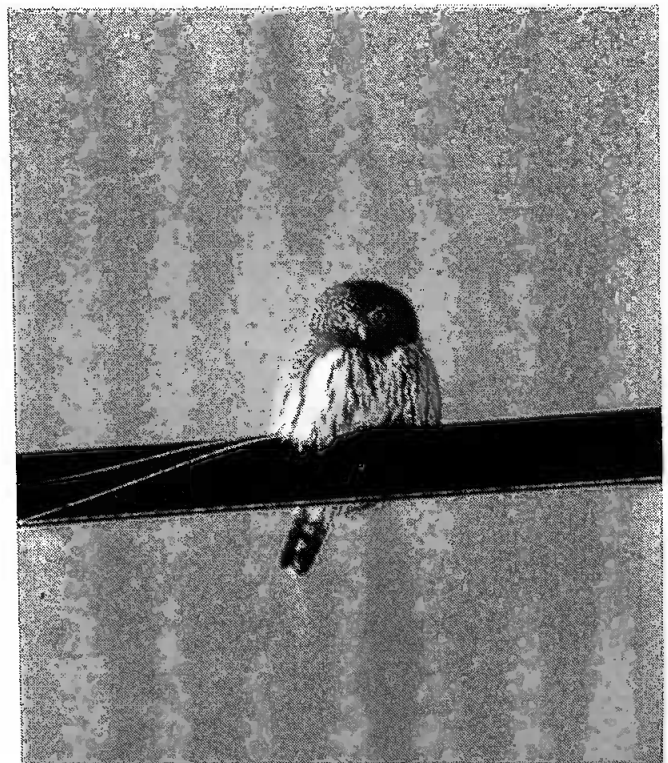
The encounter raises a few interesting questions: are the young, due to their loud vocalization, more easily detected by predators such as the Northern Pygmy-Owl and the Red Squirrel? Do the adults limit their feeding territory to

within the auditory distance of then nestlings' vocalizations? Although it all sounded like shatter, is their a distinct change in the vocalizations of the young that signal alarm and bring the parents speedily and defensively to the nest site?

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Linda M. Van Damme
Nelson





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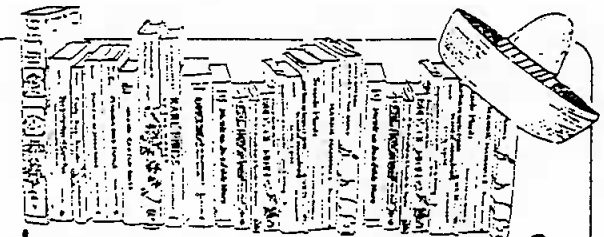
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the field-naturalist

Para las naturalistas

1126 Blanshard St. Victoria, BC V8W 2H6 388-4174

Popular hilarity has it that a distraught hiker once asked the guide, "Are we lost?" The guide replied, "We're not lost, but the trail is." Regular readers of this column - if there should be such creatures - will no doubt recognize that a common theme is how people make sense of or understand the natural world. Being lost is one of the best ways I know to jolt us into realizing that, when we go on trips, nature is not simply there, but part of a broader understanding that we bring with us as we tromp around.

I - or rather, a friend of mine really - has only been truly lost once. A couple of close calls, too, perhaps. Well, okay, this friend of mine has been lost one and a half times if you count the little mix-up on the trails on Burke Mountain, but I hold the trail builders at least partly responsible, and you know who you are!

Anyway, the one true lost session came about as the result of breaking several cardinal 'rules'. Having left the group to explore the old growth forest a little further ahead, my friend decided to take a short-cut to catch up. The first cut across a switch-back, was short and uneventful. If one worked well, two would be even better. I... er, he knew exactly where to go. The problem was, the trail was on the nose of a ridge; so going downhill even slightly in the wrong direction would quickly put one far away from the bottom of switchback.

Not reaching the trail as quickly as supposed, still certain as to where was where, it became worrisome to note a rather large creek (a small river, actually) where one ought not be. Could it be, perhaps, that the internal map was wrong? If that creek was the only one it could be, the trail was very lost indeed!

This situation forced a considerable reconstruction of the mental map of the area, and it was not easy. It meant letting go of the certainty that lead to this spot in the first place. It meant building the understanding because a single piece of compelling evidence didn't fit, and readjusting the interpretation of other evidence. And then this new mental map had to be trusted for a safe return in the drizzle that had begun.

But all's well that ends well. The story had a speedy and happy (if not a touch lucky) resolution. I would guess that others have had similar experiences, too. The immediate lesson is that there is wisdom in sticking to a trail, but the story also illustrates how one's mental map shapes the interpretation of evidence and guides behaviour. Sometimes, though, certain evidence is so compelling that it forces the creation of a new map.

I would argue that this happens in areas other than geography. Sure there are plenty of times when you just want to sit back and enjoy the meadow, or drink in the atmosphere of a magical forest grove. But even contemplators want to reach the next vista or find the way back. Other times, we want to know what bird this is, or whether the valley has been glaciated or not. And sometimes we might wonder whether popular names for lichens are a blessing or a curse. We want to know what's important to notice and how it fits together.

Sometimes it takes a long time to fit things together, or find the right evidence. I was amused to hear that someone finally figured out how a bumblebee could fly, but to most of us it was obvious - explanation followed observation. But yet we send people into wild areas to look for Spotted Owls - observation follows explanation. Our mental map not only tries to organize our observed information, but it also helps us look for certain evidence. Sometimes seeing (or hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling) is believing, but sometimes we find what we are looking for.

Differences are even more noticeable in comparing attitudes toward nature. Some people look at a forest and say, "Ahh, what natural delights!" Others see a load of fence posts and paper fibre. Neither response is the forest itself; each comes from a different way of understanding the forest and selecting different evidence. The question then becomes: which one is better, and how do we decide? Ways of understanding can stay the same for long times, or they can change (for the better, one hopes). I myself subscribe to "progressive conservative" policies: don't change with every little passing tid-bit, but be ready for the inevitable change. Changing mental maps can also be fun - with practice, we can interpret "get lost" as an invitation to expand our understanding.

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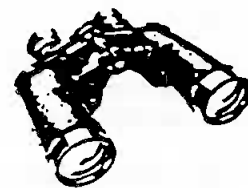
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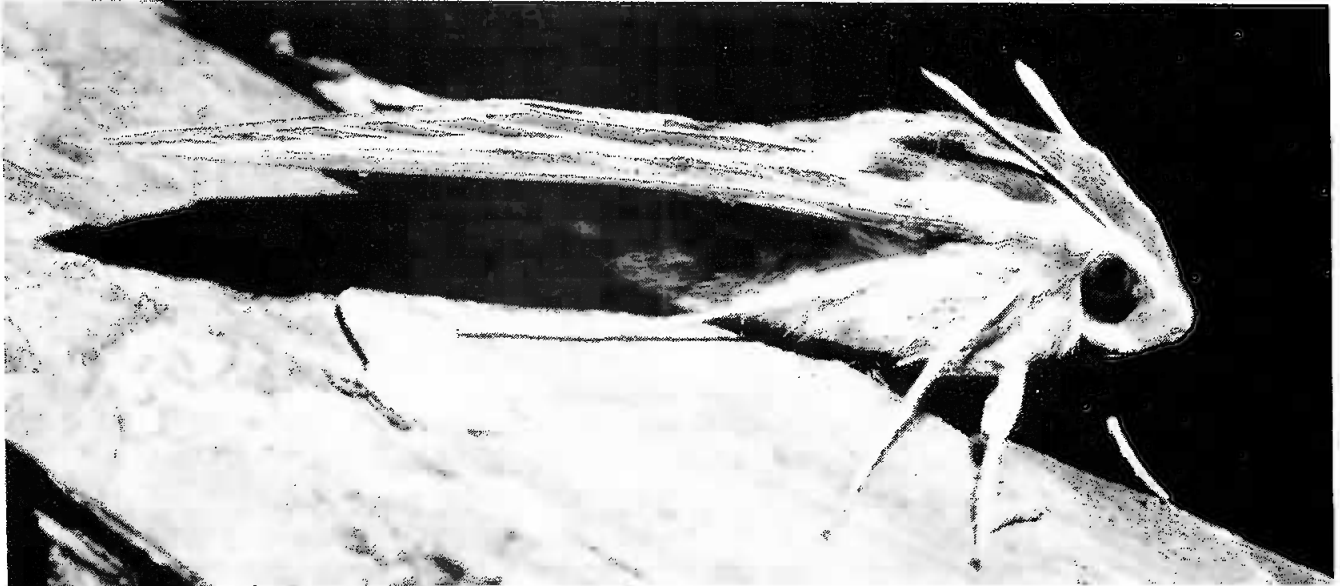
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WHITE-LINED SPHINX (*Hyles lineata*)



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When hawk moths are seen in flight, it is something truly wonderful to behold: with their long coiled 'tongues', they sip nectar of a wide variety of flowers, including Phlox (*Phlox*, sp.), (pers. obs.).

The specimen pictured here was photographed at Mount Seymour Provincial Park, near Vancouver (June).

LITERATURE CITED:

Llewellyn Jones, J.R.J. 1951. An Annotated Check List of the Macrolepidoptera of British Columbia. The Entomological Society of British Columbia, Occasional Paper No. 1.

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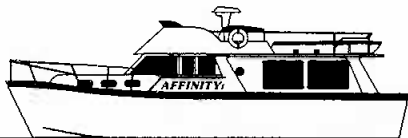
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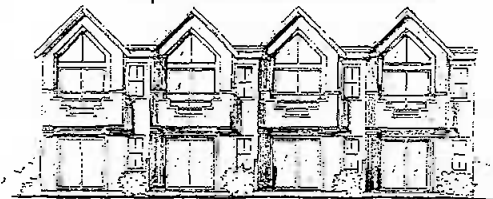
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A TOAD TALE

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The body of a toad is covered with bumps (warts) and this has led some people to believe that if you pick up a toad, you'll get warts. Not true. The skin produces poison that helps protect the toad from being eaten. It's a good idea to wash your hands after you've pick up a toad: then gently put it back where you found it.

The toad that most people find in BC Parks is called the Western Toad (Boreal Toad in some books). It is a sort of greenish/brownish colour with a yellowish stripe down its back. The Boreal Toad lays its strings of eggs in water, but for much of the year it lives in the forest, where it feeds on insects, wood bugs and even slugs. Toads can't leap into the air like frogs, rather they crawl to escape danger. Robert Degraff (*The Book of the Toad*, page 11) gives an interesting explanation for this.

"When a frog and toad were released into a classroom at the same time the frog leapt wildly about and was tired after five minutes, the toad on the other hand was 'slow and steady', showing no signs of tiring. The toads", Mr. Degraff goes on to say, "have a bigger hearts than the frogs and that they are smarter too" (he says they have to because they are 'slower and much more vulnerable").

Did You Know?

Toads can figure out a maze far more quickly than frogs can!

Toad You So!

- Listed as foods for *Bufo boreas*, (the scientific name for our 'big toad) include: sowbugs, spiders, moths, daddy long-legs, ants and earthworms.

- You can find *Bufo* in the sky:

The conspicuous stars in the constellation Bufo are 15 and some are remarkably bright and considerable; in the head there are only two, one is near the extremity of the mouth and is small; the other, which may be called the Toad's eye is a very fine one of the second magnitude.



Toads are sensitive creatures that should be treated with kindness and respect. They are wonderful animals about which there is much to be learned. Why not take up toad watching? Please don't collect toads or anything else from BC Parks.

Did You Know?

Some mushrooms are called "Toadstools"
- find out why.

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NANCY GREENE AND SILVER STAR - OR BLUNT TALK ABOUT NATURAL CONSERVATION

With natural conservation in mind, I was led by the affair at Gustafsen Lake in late 1995 to ask "Can a place be made sacred, even now, and if so, how?", far more being at stake in the confrontation that most would care to guess. That was why I wrote the copyrighted article *Conservation With a Spiritual Basis*, (*BC Naturalist* January 1996), wherein I expressed fears that no conserved area is safe.

Soon after that, a letter to the 17/x/1995 *Province* reported that all national, provincial, and regional parks in the Kootenays had since 1993 been open to deconservation for logging, and that Nancy Greene Provincial Park, north north-east of Rossland, started to be logged in fall 1995 without public consultation or notice. Previously, near Revelstoke, Hamber Provincial Park had gone.

On 22/xii/1995 the *Vancouver Sun* reported that part of the Silver Star Provincial Park, north north-east of Vernon, would be consumed by a golf course. There had been no public consultation or notice.

Donation or prejudiced sale of private land for nature now seems for no good cause. Why should private property be donated or sold or expropriated when later political changes or lack of money or recreation could alienate or ruin the area, letting new owners reap gigantic profits?

Efforts to conserve Burns Bog in Delta could be conservation's acid test. What applies to it, applies elsewhere.

If Burns Bog were expropriated, later money to block drainage would not be found. The bog would dry and die. Local pressure for development is so intense that it would be privately carved up. The present owners will naturally wish to forestall such prospects.

If part of the bog were donated or sold under future cost, money to block drainage on all sides would be needed, unless this were done by roadbeds privately financed for adjacent development. Failing this and suitable municipal plans, drying, airborne fertilizers, and recreational damage, which is already considerable, would bring the conservation to naught. This would give private landowners cause to pave their property with concrete rather than lose it for unsustainable and thus fraudulent conservation.

We see this predicament to be complicated by what in ultimate practical effect is like a conspiracy when we consider the extreme folly of allowing increased commercial use of Cypress Provincial Park. It paves the way to the proposed new ski resort at Brohm Ridge, north north-east

of Squamish, which can hardly be contested environmentally when development is allowed in provincial parks. Brohm Ridge could complicate matters in Cypress Bowl. Suppose party A in park P is restricted in increase of use, so gets a compensating public loan. Suppose, after that, party B starts resort Q on private land nearby and later custom brings success. Party A can then fail loan payment due to diverted custom, unless further expansion in park P brings future added compensating custom. Recreationers and sports shops near and far support party A, so more encroachment on park P follows. Party A's earlier expansion there was not just the thin edge of the wedge, for with parties B's opening of resort Q, it swiftly became the thick edge.

Can the two developments be as separate as they seem? When we find out, will anyone care?

Consider unseen parties who, unconcerned for posterity and future ecological security but full of ingenious foresight for profit, wish to torpedo natural conservation. Deconservation of Nancy Greene and Silver Star Provincial Parks without public consultation or notice dissuades property owners from donating or selling land for nature. If local unions urged this deconservation, or were induced thereto by potential buyers of private property facing conservation needs, who are the villains?

Has anyone save those who profit seen the connections and foreseen the sequence? How soon can conservationists see that by accident or intent, they are outflanked, and develop and coordinate their own equally ingenious tactics?

How many are bothered by this crisis? Are the silent and secret cynics and apathetics who sneak away from militancy making things worse, or were they right, by default, all along?

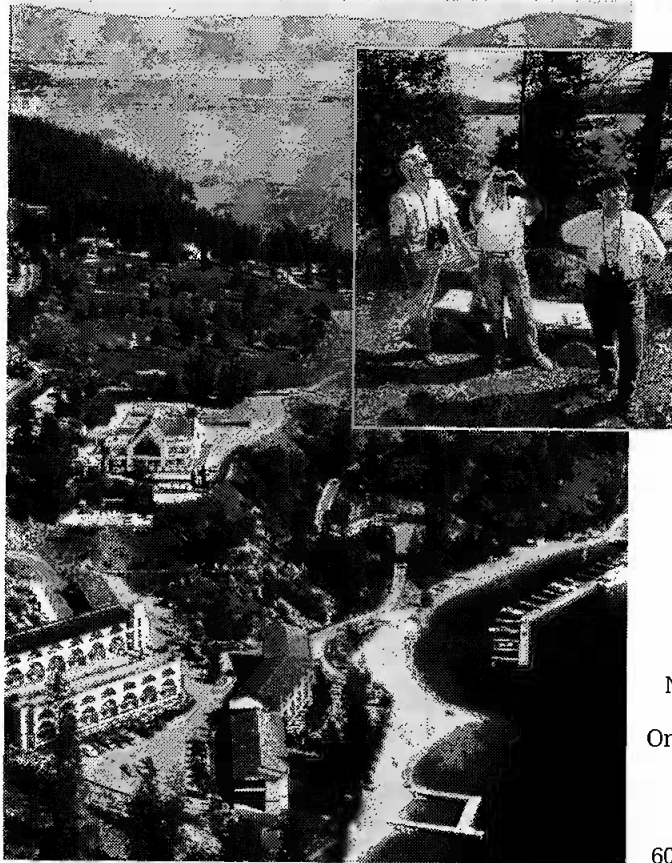
Two *ad hoc* stopgap practical remedies can be tried. One, initiated by Dr. V.C. Brink, is to change the Park Act so that no park may be attacked without legislature debate, which serves as public notice.

The other, which I urge all to pursue, is to call for a law whereby donation or sale or expropriation of land for nature provides for future compensation, no matter how distant, to the former owner or heirs, if the land is deconserved. In helping owners, this will help conservation.

The two stopgaps are only fingers in the dyke. The real struggle is yet to come.

Roger Ashton

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