

TRAIL & *Landscape*

A PUBLICATION CONCERNED WITH
NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION



TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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Objectives of the Club: To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

Club Publications: *THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST*, devoted to publishing research in natural history. *TRAIL & LANDSCAPE*, a non-technical publication of general interest to local naturalists.

Field Trips, Lectures and other natural history activities are arranged for local members.
See inside back cover.

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OFNC Late Fall Program - inside back cover	

The panel discussion arranged by George Neville for the Club's first fall monthly meeting was extremely useful in focussing on the question: should the OFNC buy land for a nature reserve? The five invited panelists expressed a range of views from a positive YES to an emphatic NO, in all cases based on extensive experience of other organizations. The speakers also opened our awareness to other means of ensuring protection of natural areas than through exclusive ownership. The diversity of views within the panel was reflected back later in questions and comments from the audience of three dozen; consensus on this issue is a long way off.

Several panelists stressed the positive values of owning land, yet disagreement emerged as to the prime consideration: preservation of an area of greatest biological merit; or recreation and education on land of general interest. Ottawa's abundant public land, suitable for the latter purpose, is subject to uncertainty of management policy and future development (e.g. Gatineau Park is without protective legislation). A panelist's suggestion that we work to have the best natural areas set aside via the Official Plan route was met with a reminder that the first test in Ottawa-Carleton (Niven's Woods) pointed up the ineffectiveness of this form of protection. But owning a fragile area brings nothing but management headaches, one speaker averred with vivid examples; there are better ways to ensure preservation. It is possible for a club to buy land in partnership with a Conservation Authority which would manage it, no development being allowed without the club's consent. One panelist emphasized that land close to the city would be more useable, hence more valuable to us, than a remote area. Prices would put it out of reach for purchase but if we found a tract of public land suited to our purposes we might lease it, as the Kiwanis Club of Ottawa did the 100 acres of Greenbelt which became the Ottawa Carleton Conservation Centre Incorporated.

The Club owes a debt of gratitude to the guests, who gave their time to share thoughtful and thought-provoking views on a controversial subject. (A.H.)

THE DINOSAUR STONE NEAR KAZABAZUA

Bill Dore

An unusual feature of the bushland along the highway west of Kazabazua, Quebec, is a large upright stone, almost white in colour and of spectacular shape. It is shown in the photograph taken on 13 May 1976, looking down toward the highway on the left (= south); during the summertime it is obscured by foliage.



We called this rock "The Dinosaur Stone" as boys, because it was then that we thrilled to Dr. Charles (Dinosaur) Sternberg's lectures at The Museum and imagined we had discovered the bulging distal end of the femur of some gigantic antediluvian monster right there in the bush. Roughly, the stone stands solidly erect about 13 feet high on the down-slope side and 8 feet on the other. At its narrowest point it is only 5 feet through in one direction (as in view shown) and about 8 feet in the other - not perfectly cylindrical, but as a femur bone should be. It seems to be a projection of the bedrock below but this fact is hard to discern because of the deep talus which is piled up around its base which one does not wish to disturb.

The general matrix of the stone is like coarse salt, of white or pinkish crystals loosely conglomerated together. This material could be calcite or quartzite; it does not scratch with a knife and it does not fizz in acid, so it must be quartzite - it is not a petrified femur! The individual crystals are quite large indicating slow cooling from the molten state. The crystals are continually being eroded from the surface by the elements of weather so the concave sides of the stone are kept quite raw except for minute lichens. Unfortunately, the side toward the road is pocked with a dozen or more shallow conical depressions as if made by high-powered bullets. You bet - it would make a dandy target for the frustrated moose-hunter in the fall. The scars can be identified as made in different years and by different calibers of bullet.

Besides being a convenient target, the stone is also conveniently located, fortunately, for study by the sincere naturalist. It is on a high-speed but little used highway with a wide shoulder on which to draw off and park. However, it is hard to see the stone only a few hundred paces up the slope on the north because of the low branches of some huge pines on the edge of the bush. So, if you wish to visit it be sure to follow the directions given below - and watch out for the poison ivy! A geological interpretation of the stone has not yet been sought; we also need an expert census of its intimate flora and fauna. It is still in good shape for study, so come and assess the facts and contemplate the existence of this oddity of nature. It is on the unfenced Kirshaw Property and cannot be removed, damaged, purchased or fenced-off.

Location: about 10 miles outside the Ottawa District radius, 55 miles due north of the Parliament Buildings via highway No.11*. At Kazabazua turn west on No. 301 Sud and, after setting your indicator, proceed 5.60 miles; if you miss it and go on another 1.25 miles to the Pontiac-Gatineau County boundary or 1.65 miles to Danford Lake corners, you can get it on the way back.

*The highway is marked either No. 5 or No. 501 and the sign at No. 301 Sud indicates Otter Lake which is due west, that is after you pass through Danford Lake which is better known - and just to confuse you more, there is no lake at Danford Lake, it is somewhere else!

A few tufts of the Canada columbine, Aquilegia canadensis, seem to be the only seed-plants existing on the Dinosaur Stone; they are vigorous and bloom every spring, and one wonders how they get their moisture and nutrients. The dwarf black mosses, all Grimmia I think, hold a bit of organic soil in the shallow pockets between the lobes on top. (A labelled specimen of the columbine, with photographs, has already been made for permanent preservation in the herbarium of Canada Agriculture, Ottawa.) The rock itself is shaded by red oaks and ironwoods, and is surrounded by shrubbery of beaked hazelnut, dogwood (likely Cornus rugosa), and a species of Amelanchier. At a little distance is a patch of hepaticas and these are Hepatica americana, the rarer of the two species in Ottawa District, the common one farther south in the States. Down the road a few yards from where you parked are three well-spaced clumps of trailing arbutus, Epigaea repens, all the same size and all unisexual females, fancy that! Besides, they are established on a road shoulder graded a few years ago, and the woods alongside seems to lack them; where did they come from?

I counted 95 rings in the red oak stump cut at about breast-height (add 5 years) and no rotting (add 7 years) in the opening on the shallow rock a few steps over from the stone. That means that the oak tree must have started about 107 years ago, perhaps after The Great Fire of 1867 (exact date to be checked); the fire-scarred bark of the stump, however, dates from the ground-fire of 8 years ago which killed the tree and necessitated cutting it down. This same stump had old-fashioned looking wire embedded in it as though it may have marked a property line or kept cattle in - but why and when? There is no lot here and the old McConnell farmhouse far over the ridge by a lovely ice-block lake had plenty of flat pastureland closer around it.

Is the Dinosaur Stone really a projection of the bedrock? If so, how did it resist the tremendous thrust of a glacier which smoothed off the hard granite all around? Or, is it a stray erratic, stood on end about 5000 BP when the terrain was lashed by the icy waters of "Kazabazua Lake" (proposed name) which deposited the deep sands of the Kazabazua Blueberry Plains? You figure it all out!



Butler

James Fletcher

"FATHER OF THE O F N C"

Joyce Reddoch

"Seeing what a field there was to work, and knowing how much could be accomplished by united efforts, our worthy ex-President conceived the idea of the Club; his energy carried it into effect, and his contagious zeal and activity have maintained its successful career. During one year as Vice-President, and three successive years as President, the bulk of the labour fell on his shoulders, not only the arduous duties of managing, but also the more valuable work of directing the various branches of natural history, for there is hardly a branch in which there is not some student who can trace a fondness for nature to his assistance and enthusiasm. The result of his efforts is such as he can look at with pride, and were nothing further accomplished he has done enough to have his name for ever associated with the development of our local natural resources...."

(from the Inaugural Address of the President (H. Beaumont Small, M.D.), December 6, 1883)



James Fletcher addressing members of the Club and Normal School students during an outing to MacKay's Grove, May 1901. H.M. Ami Collection/G.C. Bayly print

← DR. JAMES FLETCHER (1852-1908), OFNC PRESIDENT 1880-1883
Photograph from 1904 - Public Archives Canada (Topley #96620C)

James Fletcher came to Canada from his native England in April, 1874, as a clerk of the Bank of British North America. He worked one year in Montreal before being posted to Ottawa. After two years in Ottawa he found a more agreeable position in the Library of Parliament. During those early years, he spent all his spare time collecting and studying the plants and insects of the Ottawa area, sometimes with another young enthusiast, Robert B. Whyte. Together they originated the idea of a club where they could study natural history in the company of people with similar interests. Thus, in 1879, the Ottawa Field Naturalists Club came into being. In addition to being Vice President and President, James Fletcher served in many other positions during the Club's formative years.

As a basis for the Club's knowledge of botany, Fletcher contributed his Flora Ottawaensis, a list of almost 700 species of plants he had collected in 1879 around Ottawa. He published a more complete and detailed list a decade later. He defined his Ottawa study area as a circle whose radius was equal to the distance one could walk from the city and return in one day on a collecting trip - 12 miles.



James Fletcher collecting shells on the shore of the Ottawa River below Rockcliffe.

H.M. Ami Collection/G.C. Bayly print

Fletcher's self-taught knowledge of natural history was sufficient to gain him the position of Entomologist in the Dominion Department of Agriculture in 1884. On establishment of the Dominion Experimental Farm in 1887, he was appointed Entomologist and Botanist, the position he held until his death on November 8, 1908, at the age of 56. In recognition of his contributions to agricultural science, Queen's University awarded Fletcher an honorary doctorate in 1896.

James Fletcher was the first of the Club's founders to die. In his memory, the January 1909 issue of The Ottawa Naturalist was published as a tribute to his life and work.

The loss of their eloquent teacher and friend moved Club members to prepare a permanent memorial to "the devoted affection in which they held him". In fact, two memorials were commissioned because the Memorial Fund was over-subscribed.

The Memorial Fountain, costing \$1,500, consisted of a granite shaft featuring a bronze medallion by R. Tait McKenzie. The fountain was erected beside the



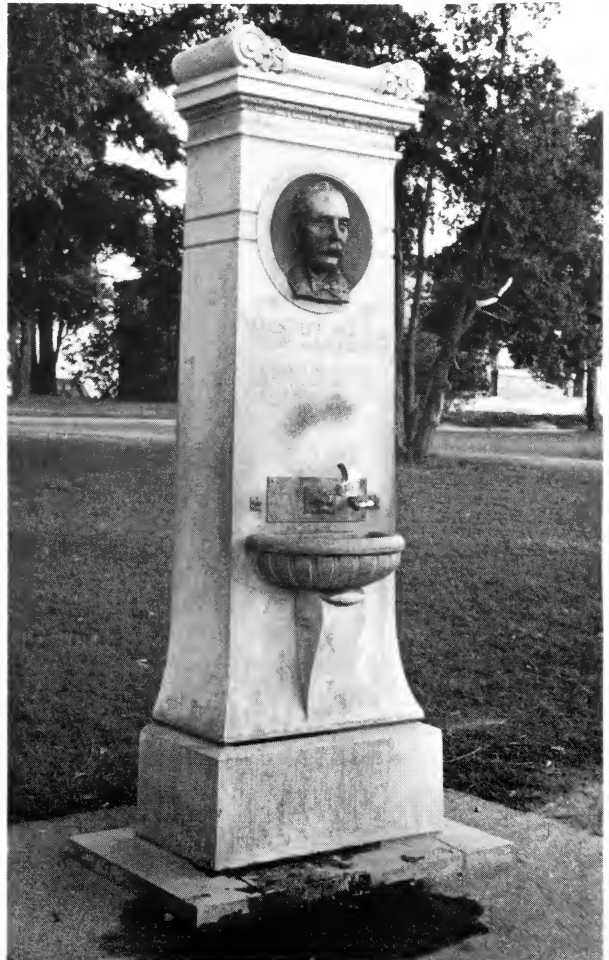
James Fletcher (second from right) in company with Dr. A.H. McKay, Halifax, N.S.; Prof. G.V. Hay, Saint John, N.B.; and Prof. James Fowler, Queen's University.

H.M. Ami Collection/G.C. Bayly print



Driveway in the Experimental Farm and was unveiled on July 19, 1910, at a ceremony attended by several hundred people. Over the years, various Club members have made sure that the fountain has been maintained in working order; today we see it as a modernized drinking fountain much used by Farm visitors.

With \$225 left in the Memorial Fund, the Club commissioned a portrait of James Fletcher by Franklin Brownell, R.C.A. The portrait was unveiled at an evening meeting of the Club on January 19, 1912, and was regarded as an excellent likeness. It was hung in the Carnegie Library on February 28 of that year. At present, the Ottawa Public Library is still looking for the portrait in the large amount of material sent into storage before the demolition of the old building.



The James Fletcher
Memorial Fountain

A TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION
FROM THE OTTAWA FIELD
NATURALISTS CLUB AND
HIS MANY FRIENDS

← in 1910

in 1976 →

Bird Walk

Bonus



Jo Ann Murray

The Ovenbird lay quiet but alert, on its back, in Rick Poulin's hand, and was soon released. The Nashville Warbler was equally unresisting. The Lesser Yellowlegs, however, was another matter, and it squawked repeatedly as Rick carefully fixed the small aluminum band around its leg just above the tarsus. One of the boys asked why the band was placed so high on the leg of the bird; Rick explained that the band lasts longer if worn high on a shorebird's leg. The band would rapidly deteriorate in salt water if placed in the usual position above the bird's foot.

The group was having a rare treat. The occasion was the August 28, 1976 "Fall Migrants at Shirley's Bay" bird outing, with Tony Erskine and Hue MacKenzie leading. Nine people turned out early on that hazy Saturday morning. The mudflats at the bay were dotted with shorebirds of various sizes. The most numerous "peeps" were Semi-palmated and Least Sandpipers. There were many Snipe; also several Greater Yellowlegs and a Lesser. Careful spotting also revealed Solitary and Stilt Sandpipers -- one of each. Ducks included Wood, Shoveler and Scaup! Great Blue Herons were almost invisible as they stood motionless beyond the mudflats. They did not seem to notice the Bittern that flew over them. Two Savannah Sparrows warily kept just ahead of the watchers as we walked along the dike. Barn and Tree Swallows gracefully hawked for insects over the water. High overhead, Bobolinks chattered noisily.

After Shirley's Bay, the group moved on to Watt's Creek where Rick had set up banding operations. Most of the outing participants had never before had an opportunity to watch bird banding and were interested in every aspect. The Ovenbird was the individual that Rick was working on when we arrived.

Carrying several small cloth bags, Rick led us to three of the mist nets being used that day. Near the

bottom of each net, we could see two or three birds, entangled in the soft folds of the fine black netting. The netting was so fine that the birds could not see it, flew into it, and dropped into a "pocket" of soft netting between the taut supports. A few struggled; the rest waited quietly. We watched as Rick gently untangled each bird (release the feet first and hold them firmly but gently while unsnarling the rest of the bird) and carefully slipped it into a cloth bag. Once "bagged", a bird removed from the net could be set down, would remain quiet (almost) and not injure itself while awaiting banding and release. When the nets had been cleared, the bagged birds were gathered up and banding procedures began.

Each bird in turn was weighed (in a weighing bag), examined, and had the small aluminum band closed around its leg. Rick entered on his log sheets the necessary information: place and date of banding, species, age and sex (if known), weight, and the number stamped on the outside of the band. The number becomes the bird's official identification. The inside of the small-size band is stamped "Advise Bird Banding Washington DC USA" so that anyone finding the bird dead later knows what to do with the band. Larger-size bands have both number and instructions on the outside. Rick sometimes retraps birds he banded a year before, and some banded by others. It is these "returns" on banded birds, dead or alive, that provide valuable information on migration habits, breeding ranges, population, etc.

Other birds we saw banded were Semipalmated Sandpiper, Song Sparrow, and a noisy Veery. When these were released, the group departed, enthusiastic over the unusual bonus for the morning's outing.

FOR HELP RECEIVED

The Editors again thank Dr. Lemieux, Director of the National Museum of Natural Sciences, Mrs. Dorothea Freeborn, and Mrs. Heather Shannon, for kind assistance. Special thanks also to Mr. G.C. Bayly for preparing black and white prints from slides.

from: FISHES OF CANADA'S NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
by D. E. McAllister and B. W. Coad

COMMON SHINER *Notropis cornutus* (Mitchill)

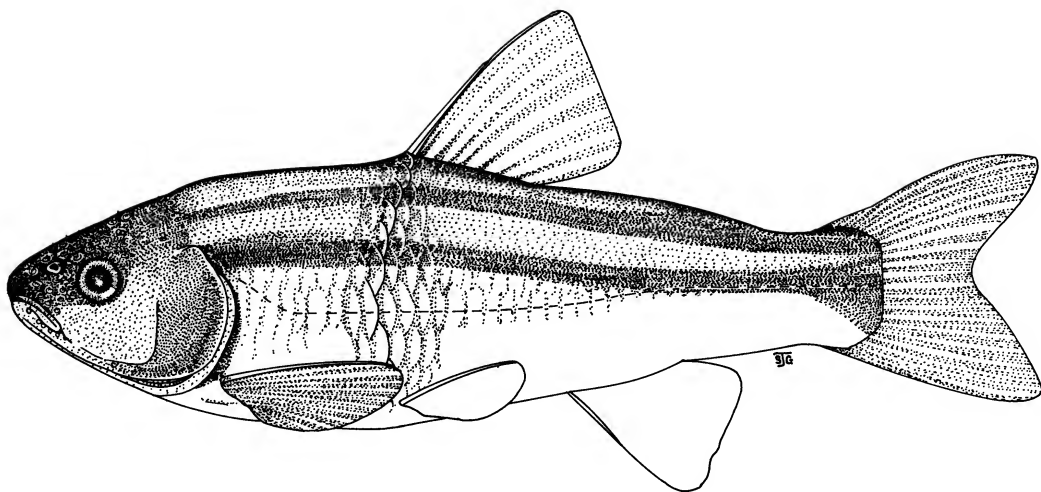
Distinguishing features The common shiner bears high scales on the anterior sides of the body (2 or 3 times their exposed width), lateral line is slightly decurved, body is stout and compressed and there are only 9-11 anal fin rays.

Description Upper jaw large, reaches back to level with eye. Head length enters standard length 3.5-4.4, body depth enters 3.6-4.7 times. Ten dorsal fin rays. Dorsal fin begins over front of pelvic fins. There are 38-43 scales along lateral line. Short gill rakers number 9 or 10. Pharyngeal tooth count 2.4-4.2 but may vary. Back olive-green, sides silvery, and belly whitish. Purple stripe on back extends to surround dorsal fin base. Adults may have bronze tints which younger fish lack. Body cavity lining dark brown to black. Breeding males are red on head, sides, and outer parts of fins. Golden stripe on each side of mid-dorsal stripe. Males bear breeding tubercles on head, the back, on each lower jaw, and pectoral fin rays. Tubercle scars were noted on region specimens caught July 25. Our largest specimen was 6.2 inches total length, elsewhere reported to 7.9 inches. Described from 20 specimens.

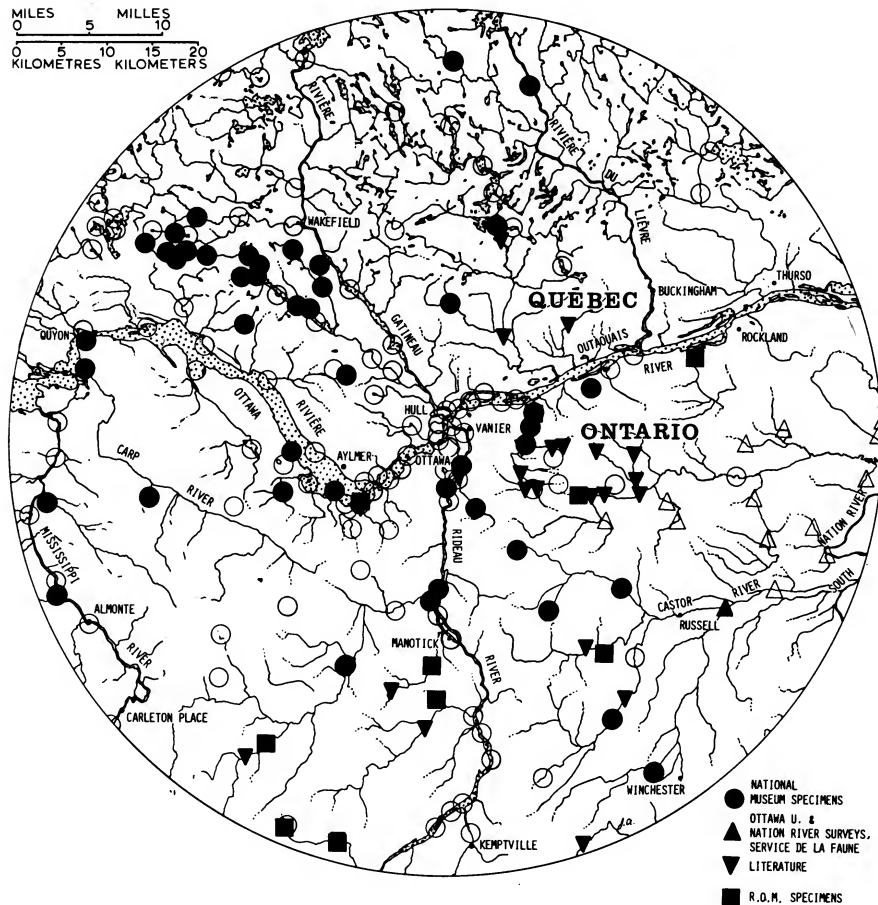
Origin Common shiners may have invaded the region from a Mississippian or Atlantic refugium.

Biology The common shiner is found in streams, marshes, or shore areas of lakes. Water may be clear or cloudy with some vegetation. Current varies from still to medium and the bottom ranges from boulders to mud, silt, and detritus. Temperature of 17°C May 15 and 23°C June 20 have been recorded where common shiners were caught. Shallow gravel nests may be excavated or nests of other species may be used. Females, squeezed by males over the nest, release about 50 adhesive eggs into the gravel. Eggs from region specimens measured 0.9 mm May 1. Food items include aquatic insects, protozoans, desmids, small fishes, algae, and higher plants. (B.W.C.)

Source: The National Museum of Natural Sciences of the National Museums of Canada. Reproduced by permission of Information Canada and N.M.N.S.



MILES 0 5 10
 KILOMÈTRES 0 5 10 15 20



WINTER CAMPING

part
one

A BEGINNER'S EXPERIENCE

Sally Pawley

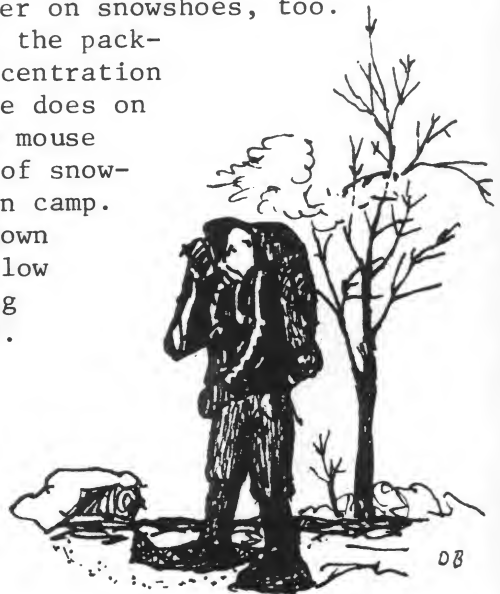
It wasn't so long ago that the 'sport' of winter camping was left to the rugged fur traders or to the odd explorer. It was a means to an end.

Today, though, winter camping is 'in'. It had to be tried.

Disregarding the opportunity to take a multitude of courses on this new approach to fun, I decided the best way to learn was to do it. So, one glorious sunny winter's day, armed with some basic equipment and the novice's great optimistic spirit, my sister and I struck out to 'do it'.

Happily, we had chosen snowshoes as our mode of transport, and as we cheerfully trudged along identifying trees and guessing at animal tracks, we were glad of our choice. The slow pace of snowshoes enables one to see so much more than if on skis. Following animal tracks in the woods is easier on snowshoes, too. We've since discovered that the pack-laden skier spends more concentration on balance and route than he does on the saucy woodpecker or the mouse tracks. Another advantage of snowshoes is their usefulness in camp. They are good for packing down snow, for digging out a hollow for the fire and for sitting on around the fire at night.

drawings: David Beddoe



The morning was pleasant. We loved the crisp cold air and the lovely silence peculiar to a winter woods. We identified thirteen trees and several birds, and saw five different types of animal tracks but could identify none. Here we learned lesson number one: on a cold winter's day one doesn't enjoy poking through field guides for identification purposes. Better to take along some stiff cardboard and a pencil for note-taking. Field guides are perhaps better suited to a warm fire-side study at the end of the trip. Without them packs are lighter too, and that is important!

Well, ours was a fine list of observations for beginners and we were pleased, but hungry. Time for a relaxing lunch. Lesson number two: one doesn't enjoy a nice relaxing lunch on a cold winter's day. A warm body soon cools off while sitting, and bare hands trying to put sandwiches together soon become numb. And a sandwich makes an icy mouthful, rather hard on the morale. Better to take along some good solid rye bread, chunks of cheese and some raisins; they can be gobbled down quickly and the hike continued. Shivers may be a good warming device but they don't do much for the digestion.

Four o'clock came quickly that day. Hurriedly we located a suitable low and protected area for camp. It is dark by five in January and, reader, it takes more than an hour for a couple of novices to set up a winter campsite! Indeed, one can double the time it normally takes to make a comfortable summer camp.

Despair is the worst emotion to deal with in this sort of situation. Knowing this we both chattered bravely pretending perfect ease with the darkening scene, but all the while observing each other's clumsiness at wood collecting, tenting routines and general organization. The normally simple chores we were so familiar with were most difficult and slow. Consider stringing up a tent at one minute intervals, the in-between minutes being used to warm up frozen fingers. Consider the painful beginnings to that dear old tepee fire. Those twigs just don't cooperate under hugely mittened hands. And consider that persistent fear that we, too, would meet the unfortunate end of the frozen. I rather regretted having read The Legend of John Hornby, just before the trip.



But the tent was up, the fire laid, a dry log was there to sit on, and we were ready to cook. Our spirits soared. We were not defeated. Just a lighted match away and a roaring fire would be ours to enjoy.

Several lessons were learned in rapid succession. Leaves don't replace birchbark for lighting fires - they burn like kleenex. We had to rebuild the fire, and collecting longer-burning grasses in the dark was rather like 'Mission Impossible'.

Snow melts under a hot fire. One look at our precious blaze gobbling up our carefully collected wood as it sank slowly out of view sent us galloping back into the dark woods to saw down more trees. We didn't make it in time. We had to rebuild the fire - again.

By the end of the evening we had burned seven (dead) good-sized maple saplings, and had originally only counted on using three. The fire used all of its heat energy to burn about 14 inches down to solid ground before it relaxed and threw some warmth up to us - two cold, hungry and exhausted girls peering miserably down its perfect tunnel.

Aspiring winter campers: Do dig out an area in the snow for the fire and for you, too!

Cheered by the warmth of the fire at last, and a promise of food, we filled our pots with snow. It takes a long time to melt snow in a pot but once some liquid accumulates the process speeds up. Eventually, the water was boiling. We dumped in our freeze-dried food and before long we were, less than triumphantly, swallowing our meal. It wasn't good and it cooled quickly, but the food gave us new life and soon we were contentedly sipping our warm coffee and congratulating each other heartily for having succeeded in so great an achievement - making a meal. We even lingered around the fire that night for a good while, enjoying the warmth, the silence, the moon, the owl - the accomplishment. It really seemed worthwhile.

The last was the hardest lesson to learn; come prepared. Our rented sleeping bags were good to minus 15 degrees Celsius. It went down to a record low: -22°C . Except for about 20 minutes of sleep we passed a long and rather hysterical night, bodies shaking both from the cold and from laughter of reviews of the day's events. To face a -25° morning after a night like that wasn't fun.



TRACKS IN THE SNOW...

Although we had the fire and cooking techniques down pat, we were exhausted from the cold, lack of sleep and lack of food energy. It is a good idea to roast pieces of steak or other meat over an evening fire. The protein would help a body fight the cold and would give it lasting energy for the next day. Proper sleeping bags, down-filled, are a must, and insu-mats are a real help.

Well, our 'trip' was just an overnight but I guess we learned more in two short days and one long night than one would on a week-long course. But take our advice - invite along an experienced winter camper for first efforts in this fun. In retrospect ours was a grand adventure, but more recent winter camping trips have taught us that 'adventure' is far from the high point for winter campers, or should be.

It is exciting and awe-inspiring to meet winter on its own terms, and one really can be comfortable. Once comfortable in this situation one can look around and enjoy the purpose of being there - really being a part of winter.

An article in the next issue of T&L will describe just what a naturalist might see and hear in winter as reward for just 'being part of it'.

THE HARLEQUIN DUCK IN THE OTTAWA VALLEY

D. F. Brunton

One of the most spectacular of all Canadian waterfowl, the Harlequin Duck, is familiar to birders on both sea coasts. To birders of the interior, however, the Harlequin is a very rare visitor.

There have been two records in the Ottawa-Hull District, and these also constitute two of the only three records for the Ottawa Valley. The Harlequin's occurrence here is strange in that (a) it happened at all, and (b) both records are from the same location and under similar circumstances. The following describes them in more detail.

First Record

Observing from the Remic Rapids Lookout on the Ontario side of the Ottawa River on November 20, 1971, Rick Poulin, Paul Pratt (then of Sombra, Ontario) and the writer spotted a single immature male Harlequin in the fast water of the Little Chaudiere Rapids, very near the Quebec shore at Val Tetreau (Brebeuf Park). For the rest of the fall and winter of 1971-72, the bird remained in the area (at the nearby Remic Rapids), almost always being found on the Quebec side. An immature male Harlequin seen several miles west at the foot of Deschenes Rapids (e.g. December 23, 1971, R.J. Pittaway), was considered to be the same bird.

As winter wore on, the bird's plumage changed, showing signs of developing the magnificent adult male plumage for which the species is famous. By the time it was last seen in March, however, it was still essentially in immature plumage.

Second Record

Ron Tozer, Ron Pittaway, Dan Strickland and this writer, all of Algonquin Park, Ontario, found a single immature female Harlequin on November 5, 1975, in the fast water of the Little Chaudiere Rapids off Val Tetreau, Quebec -- within one hundred yards of where the first bird was initially found exactly four years previously! Being an immature it was obviously a different bird from our first record (i.e. it was not a case of a "return visit"). This 1975 bird, like its predecessor, was seen on the Christmas bird census. It was last observed on January 17, 1976.

Discussion

The similarities between the two records strongly suggest that continued searching of the large rapids along the Ottawa River in late fall will produce additional records of the Harlequin Duck in the area. Perhaps with luck, some off-route young male might become a regular, returning each year to add a spectacular dash of colour amongst the Goldeneyes and Mergansers which normally winter here. At any rate, the Little Chaudiere Rapids would obviously be a good place to begin looking for Harlequin this fall.

HENRY

by Trudy Bedford



The ring of the doorbell was quickly followed by, "Hey, Dad, there are some kids here with a bird." The "kids" were four small girls; the bird a tiny grey nestling, huddled in the corner of a box which had been thoughtfully lined with mud and decorated with grass. The girls had found him on a lawn and, their parents objecting to housing him, appealed to us to help. From the gaping yellow beak there came an unbelievable din. Whether it was the pleading of four pairs of eyes or the sight of that cold mud, we don't know, but we found ourselves quickly agreeing to keep him.

The family moved into action. A laundry basket with a covered hot water bottle provided a warm nest. (Such warmth, we have learned, is an important provision for young or injured birds.) A large towel cover subdued the light and calmed the frightened bird, but he still complained bitterly until stuffed with the earthworms the girls had provided. After some initial disagreement as to how a feeding should be conducted, there were no more problems in this department. Later soggy bread mixed with hamburger was added to the diet by placing it on the end of a finger and literally stuffing it down his throat.

When the clamour subsided, we took stock. We had undertaken to hand raise a baby bird, to wit, a baby Starling. Ron and I both believed Starlings to be useful birds, in spite of some bad habits. We had barely reiterated these convictions when the squalling began again; I headed for a digging fork and Ron to his library. By the time it was again quiet, we knew that young Starlings were fed largely on insects - commonly

caterpillars, cutworms, and the white grub of the May beetle. In one observed nest 390 feedings (of 3 or 4 cutworms or equivalent) were reported in 9 days. Young Starlings stay in the nest from 2 to 3 weeks and on leaving can fly well and feed themselves. The adult birds assist in feeding for some time, but may not roost with them.

Next morning the squawking began at 5 a.m. By breakfast time Henry (the name came to me as we spent those pre-dawn moments together) had eaten 18 worms with predictable results. I decided to use something more disposable for the bottom of his basket. We replaced the hot water bottle with a heating pad (at "low" setting), covered with a stack of newspaper circles. As these proved too slippery for Henry we added paper towelling.

The worm population of the neighbourhood decreased rapidly as the week progressed and Henry grew by leaps and bounds. He was probably four days old when he came to us on May 24th. On this his 5th day by this reckoning he could almost stand and that night slept through, as he did from then on, until 7:30 a.m. The average time between feedings was now half an hour, slightly less in the afternoon. It usually took 3 or 4 small worms to satisfy him.

The 6th day he began shaking off a dandruff-like scale and spent most of his time preening his rapidly developing feathers. The scale was mostly gone in 3 days - he emerged in juvenile plumage, soft grey with lighter throat and lightly streaked breast. The ludicrously short tail and wings were lightly barred. Each wing had one almost white feather which seemed stubbornly determined to be out of place.

The next day (and from then on) he spent the warm daylight hours in the gazebo. He now punctuated his squawking with starling-like chirps and sneezes and fluttered against the side of the basket. A perch was provided and he sat on this to preen. Late in the 8th day he found his way out of the basket and explored the gazebo on foot, retreating under the nearest chair when startled. Henry obviously enjoyed company. When the back door closed he squawked for attention whether or not it was feeding time. While we enjoyed our

evening coffee, Henry investigated shoelaces and pant-legs but his attempts to pick up objects were hopelessly uncoordinated. By the 9th day his short flutters usually took him where he wanted to go - he managed the top of the coffee table on the second try.

The next evening we invited Henry to join us on the lawn. He followed me bravely, tripping over blades of grass and stopping to capture -- a twig!?? Henry! Although his manners were much improved, he did insist on perching on the tea tray and disgraced himself on the chaise-longue. To be out was now IN. He seemed impatient to be free, yet followed me closely as I worked in the garden. He was not much help, usually being right in front of, or on whichever foot I planned to move next, twittering impatiently between worms.

About the 12th day, Henry discovered the joys of the bath in his drinking dish. His enthusiasm for water was boundless and provided as much enjoyment for spectators as for Henry. We provided a proper bath (a plant saucer) and he thanked us by emerging dripping and sharing the water with us. When a friend joined Henry and me for tea, she was enchanted by his quiet good manners. Her comment echoed that of many who met Henry: "I never dreamed a Starling could be such an appealing creature."

Early on the 13th day a family of Starlings landed next door. According to plan, I carried Henry on my open hand to join them. He took one look and retreated to the back yard. "We'll try again", thought I, and carried him to where he would be sure to see and hear that these were his own kind. When I released him, he broke his previous record back to his "own" territory. That evening he fluttered into a neighbour's tree and we lost track of him. I spent a good deal of time in the yard the next day, but no Henry. That evening a boy from the next street came to ask if we knew of anyone who had lost a bird. Henry had been in his yard that morning and followed him around "like a puppy". Sure the bird was injured, he had taken it to a bird-loving neighbour who, on the point of leaving for work, fed him and secured him in a warm box. There was nothing wrong with Henry except temper when she returned that evening. The search for someone who had lost a Starling soon had Henry back in his old home.

Not discouraged by this adventure, he set forth the following day to explore the neighbourhood, returning frequently to be fed. He joined the children with enthusiasm as they ran through the sprinkler, perching later on a nearby stone to shake out his wings. We wondered whether he would realize the danger from cats or dogs that he had met only through a screen, so we were all concerned when he failed to appear for dinner. The next morning the familiar squawking from the backyard was a welcome sound. It was Saturday; sunny and warm, and drop-in day for the teenage gang. Henry enjoyed their company, and they his. His appetite caused comment even in this group of endless eaters and his antics in the bath had an appreciative (and envious) gallery.

Sunday we missed the familiar clarion call. It seems Henry decided to perch on our neighbour's window sill. The family dog took exception to this invasion of privacy and raised such a rumpus they were sure the house was being robbed, or at least on fire! Fortunately they have a sense of humour, even at 7:30 in the morning. Nest day Henry's visits were few and only long enough to be fed. I decided there was a real danger of his becoming too dependent on us, and, although his pick-up skills were not fully developed, ignored his call next morning. I was out all day and he has not called on us since. A new Starling family left their nest in a nearby tree that day. We hope he has joined them. If he has we can consider ourselves successful foster parents.

Although we have no way of making a comparison, it seems reasonable that Henry would be stronger at the same age than a nestling because he exercised his abilities as they developed. We are amazed that a fledgling leaves the nest as well developed as Henry. It may prove that Henry will not be competitive enough to "make it" on his own. As an individual he is a gentle bird, quiet except when hungry, and after the first week, certainly much cleaner than we expected.

Was it worth it? Raising ANOTHER Starling? We think so. We were able to watch a bird develop stage by stage in a very personal way. We learned to appreciate the intelligence and adaptability of this species - which undoubtedly accounts for their numbers. Henry also helped break down a prejudice in a good many people - a worthwhile accomplishment for a few grams of feather and appetite.



A LARGE PURPLE FRINGED-ORCHID growing amongst ostrich, sensitive and lady ferns under a partial canopy of sugar maple, white birch and American elm (dead). There is a European skipper perched on top of the flowering head.

All photographs were taken at the Champlain Lookout site.

LARGE PURPLE FRINGED-ORCHID: A NEW - OLD SPECIES

Joyce Reddoch

Don Lafontaine first found the Large Purple Fringed-Orchid in his slide box. He was prompted to look there in 1972 after reading Ed Greenwood's memo to members of the Club's Native Orchid Location Survey on recent work by W. P. Stoutamire* which established Large Purple Fringed-Orchid as a definable species - Habenaria (or Platanthera) grandiflora. Although this species was first described in 1824, it was sufficiently similar to the other purple fringed-orchid, Small Purple Fringed-Orchid or Butterfly Orchid (Habenaria psycodes), to be often confused with it, or considered a variety of it (as has been the practice in recent years). Since 1881, when its discovery was recorded in the Transactions of the Club, sixteen collections of this species have been made on both sides of the Ottawa River. In 1893, James Fletcher, in his updated Flora Ottawaensis, included the species with the comment that it was rare. He reported that it grew in bogs and swamps at Eastman's Springs (Carlsbad Springs), Kingsmere, (both his own observations) and along the Blanche River at Templeton (H. M. Ami's find). Fletcher noted that the blooming period was the first week of July, which was two weeks earlier than for H. psycodes.

Don's photograph, taken in 1971, was of a robust plant about 90 cm high, 27 cm of which was raceme (flowering head). The plant was growing with others of the same species in a damp, grassy, partially-shaded stream edge near an old plank bridge east of the Eardley-Masham Road in Gatineau Park. There are a number of stations of particularly robust H. psycodes in the same area. By the time I looked for this site in early July, 1975, the bridge had been replaced by an efficient culvert, and new fill had completely obliterated the original habitat and plants. (Another example of the N.C.C.'s witless eradication of important orchid sites!) No other extant stations of H. grandiflora are known in that end of Gatineau Park.

* W. P. Stoutamire, Brittonia 26:42 (1974)



LARGE PURPLE FRINGED-ORCHID
(Habenaria grandiflora)
July 15, 1976



SMALL PURPLE FRINGED-ORCHID
(Habenaria psycodes)
July 23, 1976, by which time
all grandiflora flowers had
withered completely.

Stoutamire's paper describes in detail the structural differences in the flowers which separate the two species. These structural differences are thought to reflect the adaptation of each species to different insect pollinators.

Then I looked through my own slides and found the picture of a plant with the characteristics of H. grandiflora taken in 1969 just east of the Champlain Lookout in Gatineau Park. I went up there and, sure enough, found six plants of H. grandiflora growing with five plants of H. psycodes in a ferny hollow under fairly mature deciduous trees. (In 1976 the same number of each species flowered - not necessarily any of the same plants which flowered in 1975.) And I confirmed Fletcher's observation that H. grandiflora flowers two weeks earlier than H. psycodes at the same site.

In 1975 also, Mike Shchepanek, David White and Albert Dugal found about two dozen plants of H. grandiflora and H. psycodes growing together on the grassy flood-plain of the Picanoc River near Kazabazua, Que.

No new sites of H. grandiflora were discovered this year despite considerable searching, especially south of the Ottawa River. However 1976 was a poor year for many flowering plants including orchids, probably as a result of the severe drought in the summer of 1975. Stoutamire includes the Ottawa area on his distribution map for H. grandiflora. The species has been collected from Newfoundland, the Maritimes, New England, New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio, and southwest along the Appalachians to North Carolina. There are no records from other parts of Ontario.

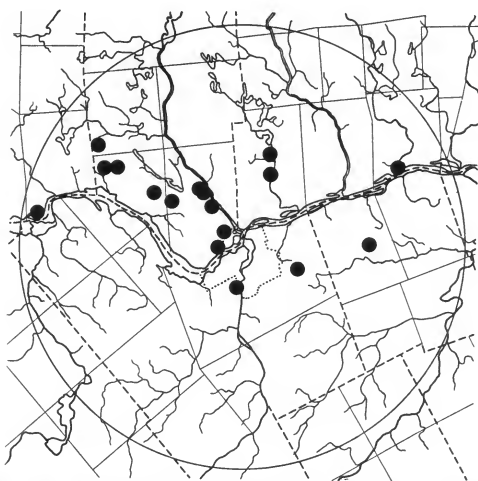
Here is what we have learned about H. grandiflora in the Ottawa area from the few sites we have observed. First, the species can be considered rare. It grows, often with H. psycodes, in two related types of habitat, both damp. One habitat is a partially-shaded woodland depression or stream edge, and the other is a more open, grassy stream margin.

In height the plants of H. grandiflora and H. psycodes do not differ markedly. (At the Champlain Lookout site in 1976, the average heights of the six grandiflora plants and the five psycodes plants were 61 cm and 66 cm respectively.) However, the size and number of their flowers are noticeably different. Habenaria grandiflora has larger flowers (almost twice as large) in wider racemes, and there are fewer flowers on each raceme. Both species have pink-purple flowers with white centers. In



A European skipper sitting on flowers of H. grandiflora with three pollinia stuck to its eyes.

Photo by Allan Reddoch



DISTRIBUTION OF *HABENARIA GRANDIFLORA* IN THE OTTAWA AREA showing collection sites dating from 1880. Specimens are in the National Herbarium of Canada (CAN) or the herbarium of the Department of Agriculture (DAO). Included are the two sites in Gatineau Park described in this article from which no collections have been made.

both species the shade of colour varies from deep purple to almost white; however, on the average, the flowers of H. grandiflora appear to be paler than those of H. psycodes. Albino forms have been reported for both species, but no pure white flowers have been found in the Ottawa area in recent years. Habenaria grandiflora flowers from the third week of June to the second week of July, whereas H. psycodes flowers from the first week of July to the first week of August at different locations in the study area.

At the Champlain Lookout site, a European skipper, Adopaea lineola, was sitting on a raceme of one of the plants of H. grandiflora with three grandiflora pollinia stuck to its eyes. Evidently the skipper had visited some grandiflora flowers in search of nectar and had picked up the pollinia while doing so. This is the first step in fertilizing an orchid flower. The second step requires that the skipper visit another flower and deposit some pollen on the sticky stigmatic surface of that flower to fertilize it. Whether or not the European skipper is carrying out the whole fertilization mechanism successfully has not been proven; however, the majority of the grandiflora flowers did get fertilized.

The European skipper was introduced to this continent in 1908 at London, Ontario. Since then it has spread slowly into the rest of Ontario and adjacent states. It arrived in Ottawa 10 years ago and is now very common. It may become an important pollinator of H. grandiflora, supplementing the activities of the native pollinators, possibly some species of swallowtail butterflies and clearwing moths which have been reported as pollinators of H. grandiflora elsewhere.

A short distance away, I observed another European skipper visiting flowers of H. psycodes. The skipper had one psycodes pollinium attached at the base of its proboscis. Stoutamire observed another skipper, the Long Dash (Polites mystic), as well as a clearwing moth, visiting psycodes flowers in Michigan. The European skipper should be added to the list of probable pollinators of H. psycodes as well.

In closing, I want to thank Anne Hanes for confirming the identity of the European skipper, and Don Lafontaine and David White for many helpful discussions.

Summer Birds 1976

Brian Morin

Have you noticed that weather is a topic frequently discussed in the opening lines of the bird reports in T&L? It's no coincidence. Weather plays a significant role in the bird world, particularly in relation to migration patterns. Wind velocity and direction, air pressure, precipitation, temperature and cloud cover all influence, to differing degrees, daily migration movements. This, of course, is well known. What is new, is that variations from the climatic norm of the last few decades (actually an abnormally stable period) are now occurring on a regular basis. Well-defined seasons are no longer the rule, but rather the exception, and superlatives are the order of the day.

This summer was very cold and wet throughout much of June and July. No doubt populations of insect-eating species such as swallows and flycatchers fared poorly during these periods, particularly the young, and who knows how many nests of other species were flooded out. Now that fall migration is in full swing, it will be interesting to see what the climate has in store for the migrants in the season ahead.

Loons - Herons: Both Common Loons and Pied-billed Grebes were reported infrequently during the summer, probably a reflection, in part, on the amount of observation time spent around lake and marsh environments during the breeding season. A few lingering Cormorants were seen in the first week of June, another July 28. Several Black-crowned Night Herons were reported, 4 in June and 3 in August. There were also 5 reports of Least Bittern, all from June. The season's highlight was a Snowy Egret observed flying across the Ottawa River from Britannia on June 2.

Waterfowl: Of the local breeding species of ducks, Blacks and Blue-winged Teal seemed to fare pretty well, with large numbers, particularly of teal, observed in August along the Ottawa River. Most of the other reports were of late spring stragglers or early fall migrants - one

Gadwall June 19; 1 each of Redhead and Canvasback June 3; several Widgeon throughout the period; a female Ruddy Duck from June 24 to July 4 at Shirley's Bay, all 3 Mergansers, and 3 Common Goldeneyes June 27. Undoubtedly, a few Goldeneyes nest in our region, as I can recall a few years ago watching one fly over Meach Lake in mid June only to see it veer off over land and disappear into the forest, no doubt to its nest, high in a tree.

Hawks: Turkey Vultures were reported with regularity on the western fringe of the Ottawa region, particularly around Almonte, an encouraging sign that these masters of the air are continuing their advance into our area. Sharp-shinned Hawks were noted periodically throughout the summer and there were 4 reports of Red-shouldered Hawks, 2 each in June and July. This summer there were at least 3 known nesting sites of the Osprey, but the species' breeding success is not known. Fall movements began in late August with a Merlin, seen August 22, the most noteworthy record. Several reports of immature Peregrines at the end of August probably relate to 4 birds that were released in this area as part of a nationwide program to reintroduce this endangered species to some of its former haunts. Here's to their success.

Cranes - Rails: The Sandhill Crane (or Cranes) was seen around Kanata-Glen Cairn until at least early July but was generally very difficult to locate. The Yellow Rails at Richmond Marsh were not recorded after June 10 due to a lack of birding activity in the area.

Shorebirds: In addition to the normal millrun species, there were reports of Short-billed Dowitcher in all 3 months, a Stilt Sandpiper in August and a total of 11 Northern Phalaropes, 6 on June 1 and 2 at Britannia, and 5 throughout August generally. The only outstanding sighting of the entire period was 2 Western Sandpipers, one at Constance Bay August 29 and another at Watt's Creek August 25.

Gull - Terns: There was a bit of excitement stirred up June 2 as 3 Arctic Terns put in a brief appearance at Shirley's Bay, with an immature Little Gull turning up the same day at Britannia and a Great Black-backed Gull appearing elsewhere on the river. Another immature Little Gull was sighted at Shirley's Bay July 28.



Cuckoos - Flycatchers: Yellow-billed Cuckoos were reported four times, all in June, and the only owl noted for the period was Great Horned. As the migration progressed in late August, flocks of Nighthawks became conspicuous with flights of up to 120 observed. Only one pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers nested, this one at Hazeldean. The locally uncommon Yellow-bellied, Willow and Olive-sided Flycatchers were seen in several localities and a colony of Yellow-bellieds was found near Dwyer Hill.

Swallows - Wrens: The cold wet summer undoubtedly took its toll of young swallow and martins as parent birds would have had a difficult time finding sufficient food for their offspring, and at times, even for themselves. All the same, large flocks were gathering throughout August as successful young grouped with the adults for their flight south. Short-billed Marsh Wrens experienced a population explosion of sorts as observers commented that they were "everywhere" this summer.

Mimids - Waxwings: There were several reports of Mockingbirds locally, with resident birds at Glen Cairn and Blossom Park. One juvenile was observed in Glen Cairn later in the summer. For reasons unknown (perhaps related to the weather) Robin and Bluebird numbers seemed to be down somewhat, and the population of Loggerhead Shrikes continues to exist at a level below previous norms.

Vireos - Warblers: The colony of Golden-winged Warblers discovered at Lac Philippe this spring was observed throughout June, with a high of 8 individuals June 5. Unfortunately, no nests were located. There were the usual late spring reports, including a Cape May and Bay-breasted June 13 and a straggling Blackpoll July 11. Rarity of the season was a Yellow-breasted Chat found near Metcalfe in July. Fall migrants began appearing around the middle of the second week of August. Of note were 2 Yellow-throated Vireos.

Blackbirds - Finches: The usual fall concentrations of Starlings and Redwings began to appear nightly in August at key roosting spots such as Ramsayville and the Champlain Bridge. Estimates of 5-10,000 individuals were a regularity. The only news of Cardinal is from the Quebec side, in Aylmer and at the Country Club on the Aylmer Road but there were no reports of young. Two Red Crossbills, one June 13 and one July 30 were the only individuals of the species reported.

Sparrows: The colony of Grasshopper and Clay-colored Sparrows behind the airport continues to thrive. Additional colonies of each species as well as Henslow's Sparrows were noted elsewhere in the area, the latter in Kars.

* * * *

NOTE

I wish to thank Dr. Jim Neelin for taking the time to point out an error in my article "The First Year". (Vol 10, No 4 of Trail & Landscape). In 1857 the American Association for the Advancement of Science met in Montreal rather than in Ottawa as the article stated.

S.P.

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Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

LATE FALL PROGRAM

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee
Roger Taylor (731-9270), Chairman

Tuesday
9 November

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
THE FOUR SEASONS AT LES ESCOUMINS

Speaker: Andy MacFarlane
Meet: Activity Centre, National Museum
of Man, Metcalfe and MacLeod
Time: 8:00 p.m.

A presentation of slides depicting the north shore of the St. Lawrence River and featuring shots of whales.

Tuesday
14 December

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING
"FOUL AND LOATHSOME" CREATURES

Speaker: Harold J. Parsons
Meet: Activity Centre, National Museum
of Man, Metcalfe and MacLeod
Time: 8:00 p.m.

A presentation illustrated with colour slides and live examples of our rare and endangered herptiles (amphibians and reptiles).

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