X

TRAIL & Landscape

A PUBLICATION CONCERNED WITH
NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE Vol.12 No.1 p.1-28 Ottawa, Jan.-Feb.1978

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Editors: Anne Hanes
18 Briarcliffe Drive,
Ottawa, Ont. K1J 6E4
Sharon Godkin
Joyce Reddoch

Production Staff:
Marjorie Bond
Leone Brown
Dorothy Greene
Eileen Evans

Business and Production Manager: Harry A. Thomson

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB
- Founded 1879 -

President: Dr. Roger Foxall, 587 Duff Crescent, Ottawa
Corr. Secretary: S. Armstrong, Box 3264, Stn. C, Ottawa

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.

Membership Fees:

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP:	(per year)	$10.00
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP:	(per year)	$12.00
SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP	(per year)	$25.00
LIFE MEMBERSHIP:	(one payment)	$200.00

Libraries and other institutions may subscribe to Trail & Landscape at the rate of $10.00 per year. (Vol.)

Apply for Membership to:

THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE,
Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club,
Box 3264, Postal Station "C",
Ottawa, Canada K1Y 4J5

Second Class Mail - Registration #2777

Vol 12 No 1

TRAIL & Landscape ©

Published by
THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB
Box 3264 Postal Station C
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 4J5

"LET US NOW PRAISE FAMOUS MEN"

** excerpted from an article in The Canadian Field-Naturalist written by Herbert Groh, President 1936-1937, on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the Club in 1955. (JMR)*

In 75 years an institution like the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club is bound to have gathered about it some history. Those who were with it from the first have passed on, although it was not until as lately as 1949 that Dr. Small, the last of the founding group, was lost to us. At least three close links with those founders remain in the persons of Dr. Gibson, Mr. White and Mr. Attwood.

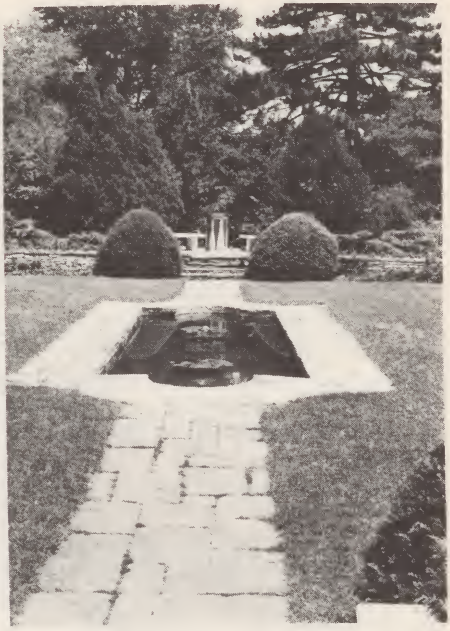
My own membership began just before the first break by death in the original ranks. James Fletcher, who had been a prime moving spirit among those early enthusiasts, was the first to go. This was on November 8, 1908, a few months after he had enticed me to come to his slender staff. Through the years Dr. Fletcher had contributed much of the dynamic behind the Club's amazing progress. Although my association with him was so brief, I had already learned to appreciate his sterling qualities. His stature as an inspiring leader is preserved to us in a memorial issue of the Naturalist for January, 1909, in which are addresses by representative members delivered at a gathering in his memory. A fountain, the work of his sculptor friend, Tait McKenzie, also stands at the Experimental Farm.

Dr. H. Beaumont Small, already named above, reached the advanced age of 94, had been a prominent physician and the third President. As late as 1936 he showed his continuing interest in the Club by appearing at a meeting in the Carnegie Library lecture room at which I was the speaker, and joined in the discussion following. Earlier, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Club's founding, when eleven surviving members of that period were invited as dinner guests, he was one of two to be there.

The first President for one year before Dr. Fletcher held the post for three years was Lt. Col. William White. I remember him in advanced years, and his sons George R. and E.F.G. White, both keen observers and collectors of birds, particularly waterfowl. George was a member of Council at the time of his death in 1927, and his brother also until, for health reasons, he removed to the Pacific Coast. When the Club observed its fiftieth birthday, the latter was drafted for a year as President in recognition of his father's first incumbency.

Hoyes Lloyd has reported once asking George White how boys so long ago became interested in natural history and was told "We had a good father". Apropos to this, it was at a Council meeting in the White home that I once proposed some provision for the encouragement of such junior naturalists. Years afterwards "Bill" Baldwin, a product of such encouragement elsewhere, made a similar proposal and, what is more, did something about it - witness the Macoun Field Club of today.

W.T. MACOUN 1869 - 1933
President 1903 - 1905
Dominion Horticulturalist
1898 - 1933
photo: Public Archives Canada



W.T. MACOUN MEMORIAL GARDEN
at the Experimental Farm.
Sundial erected to his memory
is in center background.
photo: Joyce Reddoch

The Macoun Club was named in honour of Prof. John Macoun, the fifth President of the senior body, who, with his sons James M. and William T., were another notable trio. James was a botanist along with his father and a former Editor of the Naturalist. William was a Treasurer and then President, 1903 to 1905. (For many years) the Professor was giving a set time each day to bringing to near completion a Flora of the Ottawa District, enlarging upon Fletcher's Flora Ottawaensis which had run through early issues of the Club publication. He enlisted my help to provide citations from the collections in our custody at the Farm. This monumental work, alas, is still unpublished.

I came to know all three Macouns in Council meetings and in the old Botanical Branch of the Club which gathered regularly in the homes of members. At the latter, particularly, the Professor contributed zest to the discussions. He was positive in his opinions and in his expression of them. He had a faculty, being Irish I suppose, for finding his way to the contrary side of any issue.

R.B. Whyte, the first Secretary of the new society and its sixth President, continued still as one of its most earnest members and Councillors down to my time. He worked closely with Fletcher in botany and horticulture, which fascinated both. He had large business interests which continue under the firm name

James G. Whyte & Son (he being the son) to the fourth generation now. These cares were not however allowed to monopolize his time. Ottawa and provincial horticultural organizations received his counsel and honoured him with office. One of his later contributions was through a district Boys' Potato Growing Contest. He was the originator of the well-known Herbert raspberry. At one of the Botanical Branch sessions held at his home, in November 1909, we were so absorbed in his experiments with seedling gooseberries that little else was discussed. I am not aware that these repeated for him the success of his famous raspberry.

A colourful figure among the fathers of the Club was Dr. H.M. Ami, President in 1899-1901. He had been on the Geological Survey staff but when I knew him was working independently, having private means. He conducted expeditions to southern France in exploration of cave remains of early man. In his last years he set up an exhibit of his finds in an up-town building to which I was invited to come but failed to do so at the time of his death.

A long-time member who was on the Council was Dr. Mark G. McElhinney. Older members will recall his familiar advertisement in the Naturalist as, "Dentist to certain of the Cognoscenti", by which was meant, I believe, Vice-Royalty among others. He was a motor-boat enthusiast on the Rideau, his last vessel being so fitted out with every convenience that he lived in it often the year round. One of his delights was to take a party of Field-Naturalists aboard for a trip to Black Rapids. At the age of 71, while occupying his houseboat on Dow's Lake, along with his brother, he was found drowned nearby.

A.G. Kingston, Treasurer about 1890-1896, from the beginning an active leader in Ornithology, was an officer in the Public Works Department with over 60 years' service at retirement. He served on the Council until his death in 1934, and was long one of the auditors. He was esteemed for his constant and unassuming helpfulness.

Not of the original coterie, but by some ten years antedating me, was Arthur Gibson. Gibson was Treasurer of the Club for some years until that office was turned over to me to release him for duty as Editor of the Naturalist (a task he carried for many years.) In the Club he served a term as President (in 1914-1916) and until recently remained on the Reserve Fund Committee. Having removed from Ottawa he is not as well known to recent members as he should be.

The officers during my first year in Ottawa (1908) were already a stage removed from pioneer days but include names which are already becoming memories. As President, A.E. Attwood, Principal of Osgoode St. School, did the honours acceptably. He still lives here, long retired but with an active mind keeping check of what goes on. His Vice-President, Andrew Halkett, stepped up when the time came but for one year only. He was a capable and conscientious student of Ichthyology, but less at ease in the Chair. We have had few more earnest leaders on excursions. The Second Vice-President was Rev. G. Eifrig, Lutheran Minister and, in his time, one also of our leading authorities on the Ottawa birds.

At that time the Club boasted a Librarian and something of a library. The office was held by Chas. H. Young, an Entomologist of rare skill in the collecting, rearing and mounting of micro-lepidoptera. After 1906 he worked closely with Macoun in collecting and preparing zoological and other specimens. Deafness was a handicap to social intercourse but it did not spoil his humour and cheerfulness among friends.

James Macoun, retiring as Editor about this time, had a distinguished corps of Associate Editors, i.e. Dr. H.M. Ami, Geology; Dr. J.F. Whiteaves, Palaeontology; Dr. James Fletcher, Botany and Nature Study; Hon. F.R. Latchford, Conchology; Mr. W.H. Harrington, Entomology; Rev. G. Eifrig, Ornithology; Prof. E.E. Prince, Zoology; Dr. Otto Klotz, Meteorology. Since Dr. Klotz, then Dominion Astronomer, there appears to have been but little emphasis on matters astronomical.

A sidelight on the membership of the time is shed by letters received by me as 1910 Treasurer. Included are those of Hon. Sydney A. Fisher, as the Minister of Agriculture my ultimate Chief; Hon. Chas. Fitzpatrick, Cabinet Minister and later Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec; George Harcourt, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Alberta; Hon. F.R. Latchford, Chief Justice, Ontario Supreme Court; (and many more).

One is tempted at times to envy the drawing power of the Club in those days, forgetting that names now accepted as a matter of course may be glamorous too for the members of another generation. There has never been, nor is there now, any lack of good executive and field leadership. Then, as now, some names may have been chiefly window-dressing, but they probably did represent real interest and good will.

In the past there had been in the Club a degree of social conformity somewhat slipping now. Many members had been in the staid old Arts and Letters Club, where public meetings were held with officers in formal dress. This was also true here up to my time, and I confess that my immediate predecessor, Dr. Morley Wilson, in that regalia looked the part. When it came my turn thus to appear at an annual meeting, I had qualms, but my Mentor in the matter was adamant; it could not be otherwise. So for the first time in his life this "rube" donned the "duds" - and lived through it. The thing that has continued to rankle in my mind is the thought that I was the last President thus to conform. True, under the patronage and presence of Vice-Royalty, dress is still imperative. It was my fate to undergo this ordeal too, tails and all when, in my second year, together with the Secretary, Miss Peggy Whitehurst, Lord Tweedsmuir had to be met at the door and engaged in conversation until the lecture commenced. With the help of his kindly understanding it passed off pleasantly enough. My earlier initiation undoubtedly helped too. Nonetheless I could have coveted the distinction which remained to my successor, P.A. Taverner, of being the instrument to end the era of formal finery at annual meetings.

Fall Birds 1977

Colin Griffiths

The months of September and October are a period of great activity amongst birdwatchers. The period begins with the fall migration in full swing as warblers and vireos pour out of their boreal breeding grounds. The hawk migration continues through September and October as they pursue their prey south, to be followed by the influx of winter finches to our area.

This is a time when birds can be found far away from their normal range as they follow their urge to migrate mistakenly in the wrong direction. This fall has proved to be no exception with the appearance of Buff-breasted Sandpipers on the Experimental Farm, wanderers from the northwest; a Barn Owl, off-course somewhat; a reported Prothonotary Warbler from the south or southwest; and a Laughing Gull, probably in from the east coast. Both of these last two birds are firsts for the Ottawa area. The Laughing Gull, found at the Richmond sewage lagoons, was a second year bird, while the Prothonotary Warbler (if accepted by the records committee) was an exceptionally young bird showing partial juvenile plumage, normally lost in the first month or so after fledging.

September was wet, while October gave us an exceptional Indian summer. Unlike this spring, when good weather enabled most species to fly straight over Ottawa and birding was poor, this fall large numbers of birds of many species turned up in the area. So many, in fact, that both Ottawa's active banders (Rick Poulin and myself) have had record years. This spring and early summer weather may have contributed to this too, enabling better than normal breeding success. Certainly at Britannia there were large numbers of Myrtle Warblers (I refuse to call them undignified Yellow-rumps!) and unparalleled passages of Scarlet Tanagers and Tennessee Warblers.

Loons to Herons: Common Loons and grebes were less common than last year though present throughout the period. A single Red-throated Loon was reported early in October. A high count of 140 Horned Grebes was made on October 18th, however. A few Cormorants were seen late in September and early in October, with 4 found together on the 4th. Marsh birds were not reported much, perhaps because of the weather, but two Least Bitterns were found in September on the 6th and 19th at Shirleys Bay.

Waterfowl: Small numbers of Snow Geese were reported in October along with the usual, larger numbers of honkers. The puddle ducks were present in average numbers, while all 3 scoter species and Common Goldeneye built up to reasonable numbers. Along with

Old Squaws, all the northern ducks were late in appearing or passed straight through. A Barrow's Goldeneye was first seen on October 17th, possibly the same individual that has been here for the last few winters -- quite a regular.

Hawks: September, as usual, was a good month for hawk sightings, while in October their numbers were better than normal. Eleven Turkey Vultures were recorded in September and one late on the 30th of October. Reports of Rough-legged Hawks in October were higher than usual, equalling the numbers of Red-tailed Hawks seen. Two Bald Eagles were reported on the Quebec side of the river on October 24th and 28th.

Shorebirds: Wader numbers were kept down through September by high river levels. The last flocks of shorebirds were seen on October 16th, just as the Indian summer began; thereafter only single birds were found. A third Buff-breasted Sandpiper showed up in September on the Experimental Farm (two others were found earlier in August), while the party of 11 Red Phalaropes found at Richmond on September 21st is the largest ever found in Ontario. Several Red Knots occurred up to the last report on October 16th.

Jaegers, Gulls and Terns: With the closure of the Ottawa dump, and the greater distance to the active dumps in Nepean and Huntley, no Thayer's Gulls were reported this fall. Bonaparte's Gulls were significantly down in numbers. In September a Sabine's Gull was noted on the 22nd at Constance Bay, and on the 25th the Laughing Gull was found. The winter white-winged gulls, Iceland and Glaucous, began to appear on time at the end of October. Three Caspian Terns were sighted, one on September 29th at Britannia and two at Wychwood on October 2nd.

Owls: The Ottawa owl sightings were normal, except for the brief appearance of a rare Barn Owl in Alta Vista for a few days from September 30th. An overnight attempt to catch Saw-whet Owls in the Shirleys Bay area was unsuccessful, resulting only in the netting of a flying squirrel! This despite the exceptional passage being recorded just south of us at Prince Edward Point, where over 500 birds of this species have been banded this fall. Evidence of strange and little charted migration pathways.

Goatsuckers to Flycatchers: The last Whip-poor-will was heard on September 25th, two days after the last Common Nighthawk was seen, while the last Ruby-throated Hummingbird was reported on October 5th. Flycatchers left earlier than usual, possible washed south, none being recorded after the middle of September. Before that, though, single Yellow-throated Flycatchers were found at Britannia on the 7th and 11th.

Larks to Shrikes: The highlight of this group is a Carolina Wren found near Ottawa Beach, on September 18th. At last report this bird was still there at the end of October. Swallows were largely gone by the middle of September, as were Wood and Swainson's

Thrushes. Two Gray-checked Thrushes were banded at Britannia, one on the 18th and a second on the 8th of October, with the last Gray-cheek being seen on the 14th of October. Eastern Bluebirds were recorded through September, with Hermit Thrushes arriving late in the month, to stay till the freeze-up. American Robins were around in numbers till late October, becoming increasingly restive. Two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers were recorded on September 5th, and another very late on October 2nd, all at Britannia. Kinglets continued to show by their small numbers the harshness of previous winters. Northern Shrikes began to appear late in October, one on the 30th causing early termination of a banding session at a feeder in Stittsville.

Vireos and Warblers: If banding is any kind of guide (and it is subject to more severe weather constraints than watching), then this year was a successful one for many vireo and warbler species. Red-eyed Vireos, Tennessee, Myrtle, Bay-breasted, Blackpoll, Nashville, Magnolia and Canada Warblers were caught in large numbers compared to other years. Other species were absent or low in banding records and in sightings, such as Northern Waterthrush, Black-throated Blue and Orange-crowned Warblers. A single Golden Swamp Warbler (a better name by far than Prothonotary, don't you think?) was reported on September 4th as noted earlier. Last sightings of many of the warblers were made in the first two weeks of October, with Myrtles naturally the last and still around at the end of the month. A Solitary Vireo was seen late on October 18th, as was a reported Yellow-throated Vireo on the same date.

Blackbirds and Tanagers: Blackbirds flocked and flighted at dusk and dawn to the annoyance of area farmers as usual. The excitement of the period was a Northern Oriole surprisingly found in Hazeldean on October 30th, very late for this species.

Finches and Sparrows: Nothing exceptional in the normal way, with the summer sparrows departing, the boreal sparrows passing through and the winter longspurs and buntings arriving, all more or less on schedule. There were perhaps more than usual numbers of Dark-eyed Juncos and Evening Grosbeaks, and fewer than usual Purple Finches and Song Sparrows. Three Cardinals were found on the fall count and during October at least six individuals were recorded. In the abnormal way, following last year's first sighting in ten years, two Sharp-tailed Sparrows were found in October with one on the 18th on Haycock Island and the second on the 20th at Ottawa Beach. A single Henslow's Sparrow was reported on October 6th at Shirleys Bay.

With the passage of the fall, the variety of birds in the area goes. Next comes the question of the winter count in December. Will we be able to surpass our record species total of 70 or so, small beer compared to the spring and fall excesses of 200+ species? Will the banders report any exciting recoveries? Good searching to all of you, watcher and bander alike!

LOOKING AT SNOW SURFACES

Isabel Bayly

Carleton University, Ottawa

When you walk through the purity of soft, new-fallen snow, it is hard to imagine that the surfaces will ever be sullied. But you have to be out very early after the snow storm to see a completely trackless unmarred drift, because during the winter months, many events occur on those snow surfaces, the result of activity by many living organisms. Learning to read the significance of the events from the materials and marks on the snow, is one of the enjoyable pastimes of the winter, from which you can determine and confirm events of ecological and behavioural importance.

All through the winter, recognizable artifacts of the living world are constantly being deposited on snow surfaces. Unfortunately, there are few books to help you on this subject, and often you have to delve into your summer memories to dredge up the answer to what you are seeing on the snow. For winter activities, due to the dearth of practical information, your best tools are a good retentive memory for past observations, plus an eye for detail, for the artifacts on the snow are rarely large, and close observation is needed to recognize them at all.

Animal tracks are of course well-documented, and books on the subject are readily available. The only catch here is that the track drawings in the books are idealized made, so to speak, under perfect conditions, as though the animal had simply stepped lightly but firmly over soft concrete. Notice that in the diagrams the animals are usually at a sedate walk -- never leaping, cavorting, chasing their tails or other animals, or rolling over in the snow, or any of the many things you know that animals are capable of doing. Further, in snow, as soon as the track is made, evaporation tends to widen and blur the pattern, so that the track may be larger than the paw or hoof that made it. Never be discouraged by this. A great deal can still be learned with a good

track book, a little time on weekends, some luck and a certain amount of patience. Wherever you get a chance to see the actual animal, you can sketch the tracks for your own reference, making notes about what the activity was at the time, and thus, despite the idealized track books, build up your own store of natural history information. If you are really lucky, perhaps your first "catch" will be the track of a deermouse, showing the marks of the tiny feet plus the trailing tail (1).

1

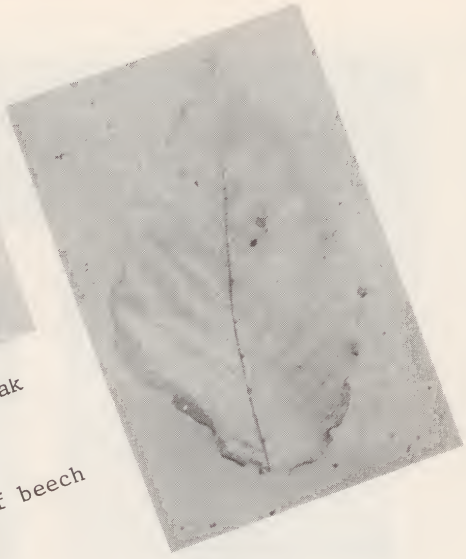
Track of deermouse on fresh snow

Of course there are more animal events on snow than simply tracks. Scats or droppings are quite characteristic of the animal that makes them (provided of course they are healthy animals) and what could be more recognizable or characteristic than the droppings of the varying hare (2)? Since the pellets are at blood heat when dropped, they sink into the snow until they approach snow temperature. Feathers (3) are also a fairly common sight on the snow. They act as mute evidence of the passing of the various winter birds. To recognize them you must know quite a lot about the various species, and quite a lot about feathers. Fortunately since the number of winter birds in the area is limited, this is an endeavour which is not time-consuming, and which yields positive results in snow surface watching. Occasionally, you will catch the multiple delicate etching of the feather tips made as a bird lands, brushing the snow with the wing tips; or you may come upon a sort of "explosion depression" left in the snow following the rapid take-off of a Ruffed Grouse from its overnight sleeping place under the snow.

2

Dropping of varying hare

3 Wing feather of Evening Grosbeak



4 Leaf of beech

If animals show their continued winter presence by marks, scats, tracks and feathers, the plants are even more emphatic about their contributions. Probably least, though largest, are the branches lost in the winter storms. I call winter winds the "Great Pruners", because they serve to remove unsound branches from otherwise sound trees. They are ecologically important, removing deadwood at a time when fungus infections are least likely to occur. Identifying branches is usually simply a matter of glancing up and finding the nearest tree, since heavy branches rarely sail with the wind. Of course, most of the deciduous trees have long since shed their dead leaves, with the exception of the oaks and beeches (4), which retain some of their leaves (usually) until spring. Thus the few deciduous leaves on snow surfaces almost invariably belong to these two, and even then, they are few. The conifers are the great contributors to the rain of debris onto the snow (5,6). They continuously drop vegetative parts all year round, and between snowfalls, the snow surfaces are littered with small, interesting fragments of hemlock, pine, balsam fir and spruce, all easily recognizable using common manuals.

5 Fascicle of white pine needles

6 Hemlock branchlet

7 Bract of yellow birch

8 Key of red maple

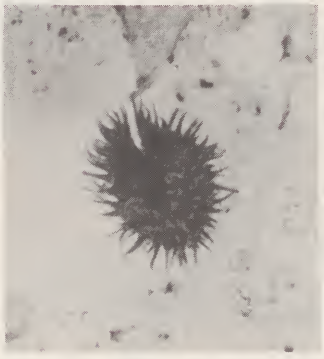
In addition to the many vegetative fragments shed by trees, many parts shed in late fall and early winter are important to dispersal (7 - 12). These lie on the surface or concealed by later snowfalls, until the spring melts place the seeds or fruit on the ground where they germinate in the thick, well-watered litter of the forest floor. These positive events are of course possible only if the ubiquitous red squirrels and the ever-hungry winter birds do not find the fallen fruits and make them part of their winter survival rations.

To get a picture of the incredible amount of material deposited during the winter, it is a simple matter to lay out a metre-square quadrat at intervals during the winter months (or if you're lazy, do only a few before the snow disappears in the spring), skim off the material and weigh it. A simple calculation will give you the weight in kilograms per hectare (or acres if you desire), and you can see for yourself, in cold figures, what a prodigious amount of material falls on the snow during the course of a winter. All this of course contributes to soil fertility and the important relationships between soil and the living organism.

9 Bract of ironwood (Ostrya virginiana)

Large or small, the artifacts of the living world tell a story. It is a story of life and death and re-birth, told in wing flash on snow, rabbit track or a single seed lying dormant on the snow surface. Together they form the story of the ecological relationships of the winter months, and they wait for your recognition, reading and understanding.

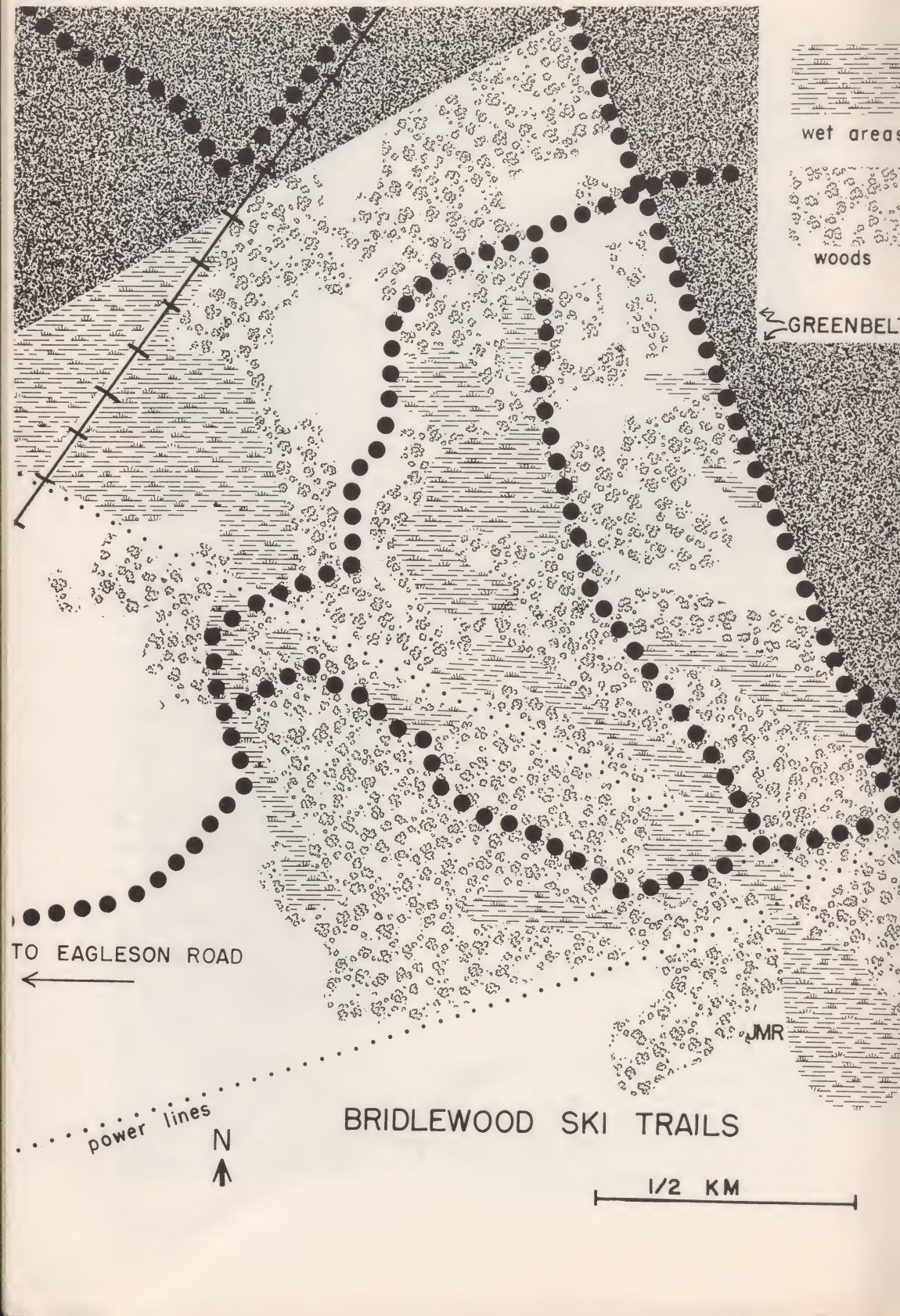
10 Cone of balsam fir



11 Fruit husk of beech

12 Cone of white pine

REQUEST FOR WINTER ACTIVITY PICTURES: Isabel Bayly would be very grateful for the loan of photographs, either colour or black-and-white, of snow tracks, winter dens, etc., for use, converted to line drawings, in a snow surface interpretation outline for high school students. If you have such prizes, please phone her at 827-2369 or 231-3836 (office).


wet areas
woods
GREENBELT
TO EAGLESON ROAD
JMR
power lines
N
BRIDLEWOOD SKI TRAILS
1/2 KM

BRIDLEWOOD FOR CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

"Bridlewood" has come to mean a region of varied landscapes, great for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing in winter and for botanical rambles in summer. It is tucked into a corner of the Greenbelt in Nepean Township adjacent to Stony Swamp.

Originally the area was cleared for farming, but shallow soil, rocky ridges and many wet spots caused the farms to be abandoned. And so, the old fields are being reclaimed by sumacs and pines, and the wooded sections are flourishing. The landscape is different around every bend, from old fields to white pine-white spruce-white cedar groves, to mixed woods and deciduous woods of varying ages.

Two biological studies have been done in Bridlewood in the past few years, the first a resource inventory by members of the Interpretation Section of the National Capital Commission. The second study was a plant inventory by Clary and Enid Frankton and Joyce Reddoch. The studies found that Bridlewood is important as a water resource, as wildlife habitat, as a haven for unusual (and some rare) plants, and as a potential recreation area.

In the Official Plan of the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, much of the area has been designated as a buffer zone to help protect Stony Swamp against over-use from new urban development to the west; however the studies show that it has its own intrinsic merits as a natural area.

Nepean Township has capitalized on its recreation potential to develop cross-country ski trails there, connecting with the trail system through Stony Swamp in the adjacent Greenbelt.

Nepean appreciates that cross-country skiing is an activity carried out "in and with nature". It hopes that each skier will enjoy the beauty of the area, while preserving and protecting this sensitive environment. Nepean asks that skiers stay on designated trails to prevent vegetation damage and wildlife disturbance.

Parking is provided close to Bridlewood on the Eagleson Road south of the railway tracks. Look for the Nepean trailer on the east side of the road. For further information on Bridlewood trails and on other trails in Nepean Township, telephone the Parks and Recreation Department at 825-5151.

Information and maps on the cross-country ski trails in the Greenbelt and in Gatineau Park are available from the National Capital Commission, 48 Rideau Street, telephone 992-4231.

For background, read Stewart Hamill's article on Environmental Management in the Stony Swamp in T & L 10(2): 28 (1976).

Joyce Reddoch

THE LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP

by Hue MacKenzie

Lively and wide-ranging discussion of leadership characteristics, planning and problems took place at the leaders' workshop held on October 5th.

The many aspects touched upon included the leaders' responsibility for preparation, degree of expertise involved, proper communication with the participants, control, leader and participant etiquette, safety factors, transportation problems, feedback with participants, and field leadership techniques.

The Excursions and Lectures Committee, working with the results of the workshop, will be taking a number of steps in the near future:

1 An article will be prepared for publication in Trail & Landscape on the responsibilities of outing participants and group etiquette suggestions for all members involved in club outings.

2 A guide for leaders will be produced to assist both new and experienced leaders in planning and conducting future outings.

3 Apprentice leaders will be given the opportunity to assist experienced leaders before taking groups on their own.

4 The Committee will be taking suggestions, put forth at the meeting, into account in planning future field activities.

5 It is also expected that another workshop will be arranged to discuss the techniques of actually leading a group in the field.

Members wishing to offer suggestions on the field trip program should direct their ideas to the chairman, Excursions and Lectures Committee (see inside back cover). Anyone desiring to become a leader should phone Ellaine Dickson at 729-1554.

A NEW O F N C BIRD FEEDER

Throughout the winter of 1976-77 the OFNC operated three bird feeders, located off Pink Road north of Aylmer, Quebec; off Moodie Drive in the west end; and off Davidson Road to the south-east of Ottawa. All of these have proven to be very successful in attracting both interesting birds and interested birdwatchers. For this reason a fourth feeder has been added to the list,and this one is located at the Geomagnetic Laboratory on Anderson Road to the east of Ottawa. The club will operate the feeder for one season and, if no problems develop, this operation will continue.

The Geomagnetic Laboratory is located on the east side of Anderson Road, close to the Dolman Ridge Road, and roughly half way between Innes Road to the north, and Highway 417 to the south. Its location should be familiar to any who have been on the Ramsayville bird walks in the spring.

The Director of the Laboratory has given permission for club members to park their cars in the visitors' parking lot and to visit the feeder. This is located a short distance into the woods northwest of the parking lot.

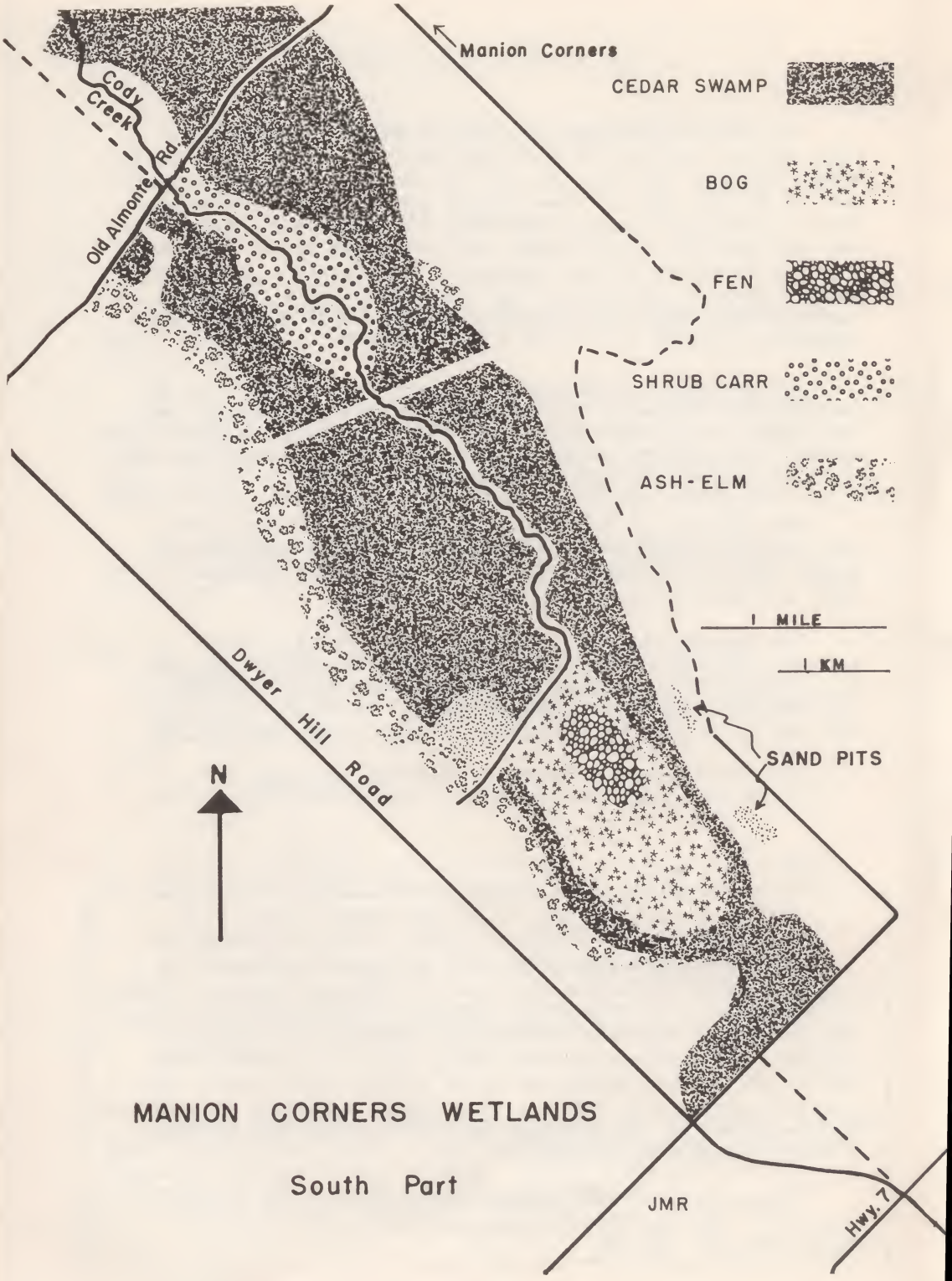
The Anderson Road is a well-known spot for good bird-watching and with the likelihood (at the time of writing) that this will be a great winter for finches, the feeder should be an excellent spot for viewing winter birds. So if you are in the east end of Ottawa, don't hesitate to drop in and have a look.

Roger Taylor

Request for Information: LEAF-FALL DATES 1950 to 1976

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources is involved in a long-term study of white-tailed deer in northern Frontenac County. Part of this study concerns the effects of autumn weather including leaf-fall. In order to supplement existing records, any information regarding leaf-fall dates (80% of deciduous leaves fallen) for eastern Ontario would be greatly appreciated. For each year please give date(s), location(s), and other observations such as principal tree species, and whether leaf-fall had been relatively sudden or gradual.

Please contact Peter Smith, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife Research Branch, P.O. Box 50, Maple, Ontario L0J 1E0.



MANION CORNERS WETLANDS

South Part

THE LONG SWAMP NEAR MANION CORNERS

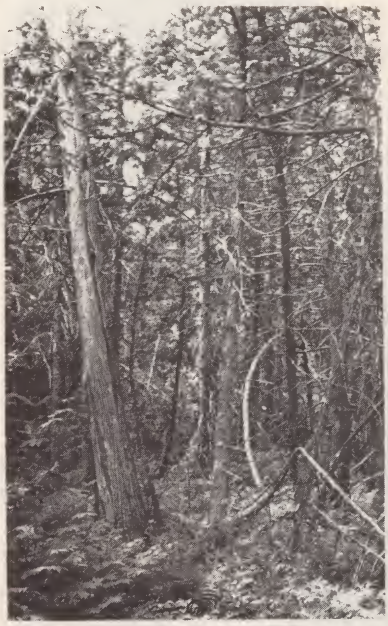
Joyce Reddoch

In August of 1976, Don Lafontaine and David White came back from two visits into the wetlands near Manion Corners with exciting accounts of a beautiful, undisturbed bog and fen complex. They had found hundreds of plants of three (and possibly four) of our rarest orchids, and four other rate plants, two of which were, in fact, new records for the Ottawa District*.

Monty Brigham had gone into the wetlands first, looking for birds. But his descriptions of the habitats, and the specimens he brought back, prompted Don and David to explore further. The rest of us had to wait for the next flowering season (1977) to see the treasures for ourselves. As a result of these activities, we can put together a picture, still very incomplete, of the several distinct habitats within the southern part of The Long Swamp. It is these areas, and the interesting and rare plants in them, that I want to tell you about.

The Long Swamp lies in the southern corner of West Carleton Township, at the headwaters of Cody Creek. Over the centuries, the wetlands in the poorly-drained creek valley have developed to the complex we see today. Most of the basin has grown in with cedar swamp, bordered in places where the ground is somewhat less wet, by Black Ash-American Elm swamp. Towards the centre, at the source of the natural channel of Cody Creek, is a quaking sphagnum bog which is thinly treed with White Cedar, Black Spruce and Tamarack. The centre of the bog opens up into a system of sedgy, grassy fen clearings. Further north along Cody Creek is another opening, this time covered with shrubs, which is classified as a shrub carr.

**The Ottawa District is the area within the thirty-mile circle centered on the Peace Tower. New records refer to this area; other comparisons are made within the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, which has designated the Swamp and surrounding lands as a Conservation Area.*



THE CEDAR SWAMP

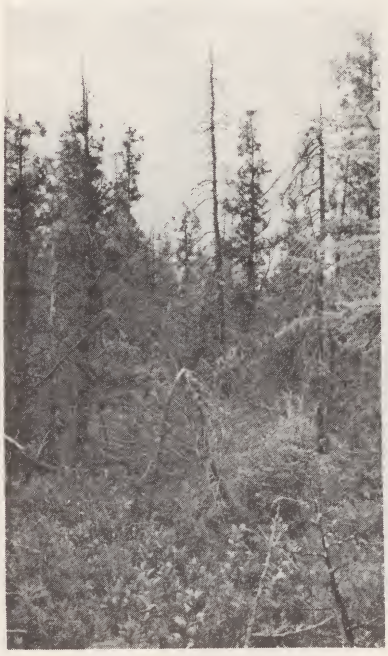
Before 1976, Club members thought of The Long Swamp mostly for the eight species of orchids which grow in the cedar swamp along the Old Almonte Road. One of these orchids, Large Round-leaved Orchid, is known from only one other place in Ottawa-Carleton, yet here it grows in abundance.

Beneath the canopy of White Cedar, White Spruce, Black Ash, Quaking Aspen, and Red Maple, the swamp floor lies less than twenty cm above the water table. The ground is cushioned in mosses like Shaggy Moss and Stair-step Moss, with the occasional spot of Sphagnum. Ferns are abundant; Fragile, Oak, Cinnamon, Sensitive, Rattlesnake, and Crested Ferns are well-represented.

Along with the ferns there is a select number of wild flowers: Clintonia, Starry False Solomon's-seal, Three-leaved Solomon's-seal, Canada Mayflower, Goldthread, Wild Sarsaparilla, Bunchberry, Labrador-tea, Starflower, Naked Miterwort, and Twinflower. Three-leaved Solomon's-seal is rare in Ottawa-Carleton; it had been found only in the Mer Bleue and in the Bridlewood-Stony Swamp area previous to its discovery here.

The orchids one expects to find (but doesn't always find) in any good cool, damp cedar swamp are all present: Early Coral-root, Pink Lady's-slipper, both large and small varieties of Yellow Lady's-slipper, Showy Lady's-slipper, White Adder's-mouth, Blunt-leaf Orchid and Tall Northern Bog-orchid. In addition, there are the uncommon Ram's-head Lady's-slipper and the rare Hooded Ladies'-tresses. The latter orchid has been recorded only from Mud Pond (near Constance Lake) and from the Larose Forest in recent years.

THE BOG



The transition between cedar swamp and bog is gradual. The trees open up and change into a White Cedar-Black Spruce-Tamarack mix. The Sphagnum Moss becomes deeper and deeper until it forms thick mounds among the clumps of trees.

Bog scenery is quite unique. Bright green Sphagnum Moss carpets the ground, ankle deep; dull green Cedars and lacy, light green Tamaracks fill in the middle distance; and dark green spires of Black Spruce provide a backdrop. Because of the restricted conditions under which they live, many of the trees are small and distorted. Wild flowers provide the only touches of colour.

Typical bog flowers which thrive in the acidic environment are Pitcher-plant, Round-leaved Sundew, Labrador-tea, Bog Rosemary, Sheep Laurel, and Creeping Snowberry. Wild Calla, Blue Flag and Buckbean cram small pools left in the moss. Other wild flowers in the Manion Corners Bog include the uncommon Grove Sandwort, Seneca Snakeroot, Round-leaved Pyrola, Bedstraw Bellflower, Brook Lobelia, and both blue and white Violets.

Most of the orchids that are in the cedar swamp are also in the bog. The important additional orchid is Arethusa, a very rare species in the Ottawa District. Arethusa had not been seen in Ottawa-Carleton since it was collected in the Mer Bleue before the great fires of 1912 to 1915 destroyed much of the original habitat. Altogether, at Manion Corners, we found about sixty plants scattered very thinly through the small section of bog we explored in early June (the time the magenta flowers make the plants easy to spot). If distribution is consistent throughout the whole bog, there must be many hundreds of plants.

THE FEN

Beyond the bog, the tangle gives way to a group of open, grassy lenses, varying in length from ten to a hundred metres. A few of the bog plants remain, like Labrador-tea, Pitcher-plant, Buckbean, Three-leaved Solomon's-seal, and Tall Northern Bog-orchid, but mostly the terrain is a squishy expanse of grasses and sedges - dotted with rare plants!

Two plants discovered here by Don and David are first records for the Ottawa District. Both are plants associated with wet, calcareous environments; both are so little known that they have no common names. One plant is a sedge, Carex livida. The other is a moss, Scorpidium scorpioides, whose closest previous collection was Hastings County. It lives in rich fens among sedges, in shallow water at the margins of pools.

Two rare wetland dwellers, which were known only from old collections prior to 1976, were found that year both in this fen and in the Richmond Swamp. They are Arrow-grass and Lesser Bladderwort. The latter may be more overlooked than rare because it does not seem to flower at this latitude and is thus hard to find as the rest of the plant is under water.

And now, the orchids! Many hundreds of flowers of the magenta Grass Pink and the pink Rose Pogonia dot the sedge mat in July. Before their discovery here, these species were known only from the Mer Bleue and from Mud Pond. But the crowning discovery was Tall White Bog-orchid - about a hundred columns of dainty white flowers of an orchid which had not been found in Ottawa-Carleton for a century. Truly this fen is rich and irreplaceable.

SHRUB CARR

The term describes a wet, heterogeneous area which has a common cover of shrubs like Sweet Gale and the sparse Hoary Willow. There are small acidic (boggy) patches of Sphagnum Moss, Sundew, Pitcher-plant, and Heath plants. The scarce Large Cranberry grows in these patches, and so does the orchid, Loesel's Twayblade. Other sections of the carr are more neutral. They are composed of grasses and sedges, including the huge Great Bullrush. The floodplain beside Cody Creek is crammed with horsetails. It was here that David found the unusual Grove Sandwort which we had discovered in the bog. Another unusual find was the tiny, unfern-like Adder's-tongue Fern.

The Long Swamp is one of those places we are happy to know is there, but which we should not expect to be tramping through all the time. To begin with, the land is all private property. Also, the terrain is fragile and will not withstand the trampling of many feet. And the place is certainly not suited to gentle strolls nor even to systematic hiking; it is just too much of a tangle. So let us hope that this important natural area - one of the most important in Ottawa-Carleton - is recognized for its unique values and is protected from detrimental uses.

SOURCES USED FOR THE COMMON NAMES OF PLANTS:

Peterson, R.T. and M. McKenney FIELD GUIDE TO WILDFLOWERS
Cobb, B. FIELD GUIDE TO THE FERNS
Crum, H. MOSSES OF THE GREAT LAKES FOREST
Reddoch, J. NATIVE ORCHID LOCATION SURVEY, T & L 11(2), 48 (1977)
Fernald, M.L. GRAY'S MANUAL OF BOTANY, eighth edition

IN THE FEN the author is comparing Tall White Bog-orchid with its close relative, Tall Northern Bog-orchid.

BREEDING BIRD EXCURSION TO MANION CORNERS CONSERVATION AREA

June 12, 1977 by Roger Taylor

The time was 5:00 a.m. and the place the Carlingwood Shopping Centre, as about a dozen intrepid souls met in the pre-dawn darkness to embark on a breeding bird census. The destination was a sand pit near Manion Corners, west of Stittsville, just off the Dwyer Hill Road between Highway 7 and the Old Almonte Road. As we left the Carlingwood parking lot, dawn was already breaking, and driving along the highway we were treated to a marvellous sunrise, a great bonus for any early morning birdwatcher. At the sand pit beside The Long Swamp, the expedition's leader, Monty Brigham, divided us into two groups, one to be led by himself and the other by Roger Taylor. The latter group was ordered to plunge off into the marvellous cedar-sphagnum bog bordering the sand pit and extending up to Old Almonte Road, whilst the others set off further east down the road from the sand pit to inspect the fringes of the bog.

In the sand pit itself Bank Swallows were very much in evidence zooming in, out and around the characteristic nest holes just below the top of the bank at the edge of the pit. This led us to speculate about the possible survival rate of the nestlings in the event that further excavations were carried out. The trees bordering the grassy edges of the pit were full of bird activity. Flickers, Eastern Kingbirds, Crested Flycatchers, Northern Orioles, Scarlet Tanagers, Indigo Buntings and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were very much in evidence, as were many other species. With some reluctance we left this post-dawn chorus, pleasing both to the eye and to the ear, and set off into the woods along a trail at the edge of the bog. It was quieter there, but we could still hear the occasional Red-eyed Vireo as well as a number of warblers, a total of ten species being recorded on the excursion.

It was very pleasant walking along the woodland trail, through the maples and birches, but finally we decided to move into the bog itself. The sun had by this time clouded over and the day promised to be fairly moderate in temperature. With no sun to guide us we had to navigate entirely by compass and topographical map, absolute essentials in such terrain. Here the bird song became even less obvious and the actual sightings of birds became very few and far between. We rapidly established that the dominant species in the bog were Hermit Thrush, Nashville Warbler and Common Yellowthroat. A small group of Black-capped Chickadees was encountered on one occasion, a Canada Warbler and a Purple Finch were heard, and a small hawk was briefly sighted. Quite possible this was the Sharp-shinned Hawk seen later by Monty Brigham from the Old Almonte Road. Otherwise there were no other birds to be found, and there was a complete absence of some of the more northern species, such as Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, which we had hoped to find. So, without any hesitation, Joyce Reddoch and Anne Hanes turned the excursion into a fascinating orchid walk. Underfoot was a carpet of sphagnum moss.

As we maneuvered our way around deadfalls and the odd treacherous-looking hole, there were frequent exclamations as some new treasure was discovered. Almost certainly the most exciting feature of the excursion was the extraordinary abundance of Arethusa. Over thirty individuals were found. Previous to its discovery by the Reddochs and Haneses in the same bog a week before, only a single record of this species existed in the Ottawa area. As we continued on, finding many Showy Lady's-slippers and the odd Yellow Lady's-slipper, a running commentary was kept up on the number of orchids trampled into oblivion by the leader.

Another interesting observation was the presence of moose tracks. On one occasion these tracks led up to a point where we had to push our way through a mess of dead cedar branches, breaking some in the process, to get through. There were the moose tracks on the other side with no evidence that this huge animal had pushed its way through these same branches that we had! At the other end of the size scale, we also came across a chorus frog and a red-bellied snake.

Ultimately we emerged from the bog, back precisely at our starting point, more to the leader's amazement than anybody else's! Just as we got clear of the trees, one of the two Red-tailed Hawks on the day's list was spotted, hunting over an adjacent field.

There being no sign of the Brigham group returning, it was decided that we should investigate the area on the other (north) side of the Old Almonte Road. We followed a trail bordered by alder thickets into an abandoned farm. It was from one of these alder thickets that a Golden-winged Warbler was heard calling infrequently and somewhat faintly. The trail eventually took us past the edge of a beaver pond, where we turned around. The beaver pond was created by the construction of an immensely long dam, about a quarter of a mile long and quite unlike any normal beaver construction.

Upon returning to the sand pit, we compared notes with the others and verified that no one had got lost. A total of 73 species of birds was found by both parties combined, all of these species presumably breeding in the area. A particularly interesting sighting by the other group was a Grasshopper Sparrow in the grass in the sand pit area.

To summarize, the interior of the bog itself is absolutely fascinating from a botanical point of view, but the variety of species of birds to be found there is not at all large. However, along the edges, the birds are very active, and many interesting ones can easily be found. The botanical features alone clearly make the Manion Corners Conservation Area an important natural history area, and the birds certainly add to it. When one considers that very little was known about this place before 1977, it is clear that we should continue to seek out unexplored areas (unexplored from a natural history point of view). Who knows what treasures they might yield? Certainly it is great fun investigating these types of places.

NOT ALL MIDNIGHT WHISTLERS ARE TAPE PLAYBACKS!

One midnight in early June, I parked at the meters outside the main entrance to the airport, and, whilst contemplating the lack of quarters for the meter and the temporary absence of the meter patroller, I was astonished to hear a torrent -- the only description which fitted -- of song coming from the bushes fifteen feet away. Quarters forgotten, I listened to an incredible variety of song which continued above the noise of the planes taking off and the loud speaker blaring. I remember having heard the nightingales singing unceasingly on Dartford Heath during the London blitz -- but this was a nightingale which could imitate a Blue Jay; a prima donna who occasionally let fall a Cockney expletive.

When my husband came off the plane -- weary from Washington -- the singing was still as loud and clear as before. "Oh that!" says he, "That's a device to attract other birds away from the runway; let's see where the speaker is." We didn't trip over a wire but we were greeted with a 'chuck-chuck' as we neared the spruce trees. Hmmm, must be a Hermit Thrush!

A succession of taking and meeting jean-clad, backpacked family members flying 'stand-by' at all hours of the day and night, fortunately gave me plenty of time to listen to and watch this bird -- always in the same tree top, just 15 feet from the parking meter, and always (12:45 a.m., 5:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m.) singing, the notes of each phrase repeated about three times, but each phrase different, in an unending stream.

It was -- is -- a Northern Mockingbird, seen fairly rarely in the Ottawa area. What a song!

June Roots

BEGINNER'S LUCK

Attracted by the movement on the grass,
I stop the car, set the lights a-flashing
and peer through my field glasses,
unperturbed by the windshield wipers'
battle with the rain-washed panes.

The baffling creature hops nearer.
Dark brown back, heavy streaks on breast,
eye-stripe; larger than a House Sparrow.

Feeling good, feeling expert,
I note its rufous throat.

Minutes later, bird-book thumbed,
I stick my head out of the window
(permanent wave curling, frizzling)
and stare again -- through pouring rain.

Brows knitted, I think, "females".
Hands clenched, I think, "sparrows".

Then the revelation comes
as I wind up the window,
rivulets inside my collar,
rain-soaked rats' tails round my face.

That bird has no sense of direction
or it wouldn't be
in Eastern North America.

And no brains
or it wouldn't be
wasting itself
on a beginner
like me!

Linda Jeays

CENTENIAL REPORT

by Hue MacKenzie

At its September meeting the Council approved publication of two works which will be of great interest to our members. Both will be released in Centennial year.

Dr. J.M. Gillett has been working on an "INDEX TO THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB AND THE OTTAWA NATURALIST" for some ten years. The Index, which will cover the 39 volumes of what subsequently became "The Canadian Field-Naturalist" will be invaluable to both individuals and institutions. Topics covered will include scientific and common names, titles of articles, authors, societies, etc.

"ORCHIDS OF THE OTTAWA AREA", authored by Drs. J. and A. Reddoch, will provide enthusiasts with much information about the species which occur in our district. Distribution maps, illustrations, blooming data, average height and colony size, and relative abundance will be given for each species. In addition to physical features, habitats and background information will appear. The book will also contain an introduction covering briefly the history of orchid studies in Ottawa, ecology of the area, conservation and ecology of orchids, keys and other useful and interesting facts.

Notice: Everyone with Membership Application forms please change FEES to read:
Individual $10
Family $12

OFNC EVENTS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

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

Tuesday 10 January

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AND
MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHIC EVENING
Meet: Auditorium, Victoria Museum
Metcalfe and McLeod Sts.
Time: 8:00 p.m.

Members are invited to bring their favourite slides on natural history, to be shown as time permits after the business meeting. Refreshments will be served.

Sunday 5 February

WINTER LANDSCAPE INTERPRETATION
Leader: Isabel Bayly (231-3886 office or 827-2369 home)
Time: 10:00 a.m.

This excursion promises to be a fascinating study of natural history in the winter. It will be of 2 to 2½ hours duration. All persons wishing to go on the outing must contact Isabel Bayly early for full details concerning meeting places etc. If there is sufficient demand there will be a repeat of the excursion on the following weekend. Snowshoes are essential. Dress very warmly (peelable). Bring a snack.

Tuesday 14 February

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING - WATER ILLUSTRATIONS
Speaker: Silviya Ulmanis, National Museum of Natural Sciences
Meet: Auditorium, Victoria Museum
Time: 8:00 p.m.

A one-screen dissolve slide show with music exploring the many images of our most important natural resources.

Sunday 19 February

FIELD TRIP - WINTER BIRDS (A Bus Excursion)
Leader: to be determined
Meet: Loblaw's, Carlingwood Shopping Centre
Carling at Woodroffe
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Cost: $2.50 per person, $5.00 per family
Half-day trip; bring a snack.

ISSN 0041-0748

TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

published by

THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB

Second Class Mail - Registration Number 2777
Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and undeliverable Copies:
Box 3264 Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ont.
K1Y 4J5
Return postage guaranteed

Lithographed by
John Marquardt, Printer