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To receive the Alberta Naturalist regularly, send a subscribing membership fee of only 200 cents (but preferably in larger denominations) to our esteemed treasurer, at 2630 22nd. Avenue in Lethbridge. Any copy destined for the next issue should be directed to the editor with speed, please, as he has the rash ambition of completing volume 3 part 1 before his extended(?) Christmas vacation in the old world. All copy, whether contributions to existing series, other features, letters, etc. all welcome. Preferably (though not vitally, typed ready for use. Please note FAN now has a permanent address, which should be used for all matters not directly concerning treasurer and editor. Just think where Christmas would be without natural history. No birds or mammals to eat, no holly or ivy to make out of plastic, no juniper berries to flavour the gin, or even yeasts to ferment the alcohol. If you send in correspondence, please mention your postal code. It drives us wild, but the Post Office likes it. This publication is guaranteed to be the only one in Canada not discussing the Federal election.

EDITORIAL : If Parks are for Bears, then campsites are for people

Bears have been much in the news this summer, though most attention has been given to attacks by Grizzly Bears on wanderers in the wilds. The humble Black or Garbage Bear, is however a more important part of the park experience for most people, and perhaps deserves more attention than it is getting.

During one week in the north end of Banff Park this summer, a distressingly large number of incidents met the eyes of one observer. One campground, (Cirrus Mountain), had an adolescent bear as a permanent resident, which knew the daily visitor cycle and toured the garbage cans after each cycle. He roosted in a tree over one of the campsites, was unafraid of any visitor, and even treated a large dog with contempt. A sow with two cubs also paid intermittent visits; one of the latter entered a tent and tore open a suitcase even when food was completely absent.

Not far away, in Rampart Creek campground, another sow with cubs chased a family off their breakfast, and was seen to tear open a tent and enter it several times, bringing out various items, but not apparently finding anything edible.

These experiences are not enjoyable for the visitor who is used to bears, particularly when every care is taken to keep food away from sleeping quarters. To the visitor ~~from~~ further afield, it is clearly even less enjoyable - one couple from Ontario enjoying their first visit to the Rockies were ready to head for home after their first contact of this sort.

Is this the park experience we are striving to preserve for future generations? The possibility of an encounter with a large, even a dangerous animal is something many people are prepared to accept on a trail, even perhaps to the extent of enjoying the possibility as a reminder that man is not supreme everywhere. But continual harassment by a large, potentially dangerous beast, lured into dangerous proximity by untidy housekeeping is surely a different matter. Solving the bear problem will improve both the park experience and the habitat for wild bears.

Equally clearly, the National Parks are not at the moment able to handle the problem adequately. Bears had apparently been shipped out of both the above campgrounds the week before the above incidents were observed, so that was no cure. Restrictions on bear feeding by visitors are not apparently enforced, and advice to the unwary tourist is not given unless it is sought. This is not to criticise further the overworked and harassed park personnel, who are less likely to be bitten by bears than by public and politicians. But they must be given the support needed to do the job.

There is no lack of possible solutions. Bear-proof garbage containers are already used in some campgrounds - why not all? A leaflet handed to every visitor entering the parks, combined with on the spot fines for bear feeders (and for the tour operators that encourage them) would drastically reduce the number of bears dependent on handouts. Possibilities of bear proof campsites and repellent sprays are worth investigating. An increase in research on this important species would provide much needed data. Lastly, a solid educational campaign outside the parks is needed to inform people about bears. The perpetrators of the comic strips seem to have a monopoly on public information in this field, and the cartoons featuring bears as lovable, cuddly, kind-to-children creatures must be responsible for quite a few nasty surprises each year to their innocent readers confronted with the real thing.

THE SECOND YEAR OF THE FEDERATION OF ALBERTA NATURALISTS

President's Report to the second annual meeting, 30 September 1972

My report is one of fairly steady progress, though things have not always moved as fast as we could wish. However, for a new organization, with a small membership scattered over a large province, I think we have done fairly well.

Members

We end our second year with the same six member clubs that we began with two years ago - one of the areas in which our progress has been disappointing. However, a new club has been formed in Rocky Mountain House (independently of our efforts), another may start in Stettler this fall, and we have contacts in Jasper, Barrhead and Medicine Hat that may develop into new clubs.

Our numbers of supporting and subscribing members have also slowly increased, despite a turnover in membership.

Meetings

The initial pattern of meetings has been continued with three director's meetings during the year, two of which are weekend meetings which can be attended by members of our member clubs. Meetings in 1972 were Calgary in February, Banff in June, and this September meeting again in Calgary. All members have now hosted a full scale meeting, and FAN's thanks are due for their efforts.

Directors

Our second year has continued with essentially the same elected directors as we started with. This has provided valuable continuity from our initial year, and I am very grateful for the assistance received from directors, and particularly from those who have served as officers and chairmen of committees. We hope that those directors now retiring will continue to be available to FAN to assist in other ways.

We have lost two appointed directors, Bill Stilwell and Art Rupp, during the year. Our thanks and good wishes go with both of them. Three new appointed directors, John Powell, Charles Bird and Joy Finlay, have joined us, and provided invaluable assistance.

Committees

In the work of committees we must recognize the main potential for directed progress of FAN. Aileen Harmon as Chairman of Parks, Wilderness and natural areas has worked extremely hard with a large 'portfolio'. I have had to double as Publications chairman, and thus not made as much progress as I had hoped. Hugh Campbell took on Publicity just before a serious illness, from which he is fortunately now much recovered. Joy Finlay is Chairman of our new Environmental Education committee, and is already making her presence felt. We have not, unfortunately, been able to obtain a finance chairman.

I took over the editorship of our quarterly periodical from the last President, as part of the president's role, and have been able to produce four issues, more or less quarterly. With the commencement of the second volume in 1972, the newsletter was renamed the Alberta Naturalist, and it has had a uniform 15 page size. An increasing amount of material is being made available by members, and I hope to see this increase steadily.

The need to move towards a better publication has led us into discussions with the producers of the Alberta Conservationist, which may lead to a closer link between that publication and FAN. We have also talked informally with the Saskatchewan Natural History Society about the possibility of closer links with 'Blue Jay'.

#### Other Publications

The original proposal for a guide to bird finding in Alberta has grown into a broader plan for a naturalists guide to Alberta. Quite a lot of groundwork has been done by members of some clubs, and more time only is needed to get this off the ground.

#### Funding

Due to the lack of a finance chairman, there has been no one with the time to investigate possible sources of support. We are at present paying our way, but are at the moment no nearer to the full-time assistance that is badly needed. One outside source of assistance that may be available in co-operation with other groups is currently being investigated.

FAN has also been registered as a charitable organization, enabling donors to get income tax relief.

#### Environment Conservation Authority

As your representative on the Public Advisory Committee of the Environment Conservation Authority, I have served as chairman of the Environmental Protection Study Group, and as its chairman on the PAC co-ordinating committee. I have had the opportunity to present several issues concerning FAN through this body. FAN has also presented briefs on surface mining problems to the ECA, and is well ahead on its briefs on other public issues on which hearings are planned.

#### Canadian Nature Federation

As your appointed Director on the Canadian Nature Federation board, I have been able to participate in an exciting year of national developments. Alberta has been well represented in the activities of CNF during the year, notably through its artists in both Canadian Nature Art exhibitions, and in the new magazine Nature Canada, which has surpassed all our expectations. One of our member organizations, the Edmonton Natural History Club, with support from FAN, invited CNF to hold its second conference in Edmonton, and FAN and its other member clubs were able to play a part in arranging the conference and its associated field trips. The conference itself was an exciting experience for those who participated, and has done much to make naturalists across Canada aware of Alberta's recent progress.

My appointment at the meeting as one of CNF's four vice-presidents is a great compliment to FAN, but is the cause of my resignation from the presidency of FAN at this time.

### Public Concerns

In addition to representation at ECA hearings, FAN has been actively involved in all major issues affecting Alberta's natural history during the year.

We have directed the attention of the Provincial Government to our views on mineral exploration in wilderness areas, the Kananaskis highway, the Wild Kakwa proposal, and popular publications by the Government. We have also supported the Alberta Wilderness Association on its Milk River proposal.

To the Federal Government we have presented a brief on the Village Lake Louise proposals, and have expressed our concerns about the future of Wood Buffalo National Park. We have also supported attempts by the Consumer's Association of Canada to prohibit commercial import into Canada of skins of endangered species.

Your president also presented a brief to the task force collecting background information for the Canadian Mission to the Stockholm conference.

In order to avoid a public program of 'fire-brigade' actions we have started work on an overall policy so that we can initiate actions in areas agreed to be important. Initially, we have started a campaign to have a provincial bird selected.

### Environmental Education

There is a growing involvement of the Federation in this important area. Several members attended two conferences on Outdoor Education called by the Department of Culture, Youth and Recreation. Our Environmental Education Chairman is representing the Federation on a CYR committee on Trails in Alberta. Your President (although not representing FAN in this instance) is a member of the Environmental Education Advisory Committee to the ECA, and has been able to present the 'unofficial' educational role of societies.

### Relations with other Groups

During the year we have developed valuable contacts with other organizations with related interests. We have supported several initiatives of the Alberta Wilderness Association and are currently acting in concert with the Edmonton branch of the NPPAC on a park issue.

We were represented at the recent IUCN meeting in Banff by our Parks chairman, and other members were present for all or part of the meeting.

We are also in contact with a number of specialist outdoor groups in the province.

### The Future

We can look to the near future to continue our growth in these various directions. We can anticipate (if we work for it) a growth in membership, through the formation of new clubs and an increase in individual membership. Our meetings, if they cannot increase in number can continue to increase in quality and attendance, and I would personally like to see the spring meeting held in an area of natural history interest rather than in a city in the future.

The immediate strength of FAN rests in its Directors, and although we cannot direct member clubs, I would like to ask them to bear in mind the desirability of appointing as one of the two directors one who has no other responsibility

to their member club than to be a FAN director, and is thus available to undertake FAN projects.

We can anticipate all the committees becoming fully active, with assistance from all the member clubs. I would like to see at least one additional committee, to deal specifically with threatened species.

To spread the load on these individuals we have been seeking help from the member clubs. Several people have been nominated to the various committees, and we hope each club will name a suitable person in each area.

We can hope for an improved publication, carrying our name and views to an ever wider group of readers. We can also hope to get our "Naturalists Guide" well off the ground in another year or two. The immediate need is to separate the editor's job from the President's, to enable each to be given adequate attention.

Through the ECA and its published reports we can hope to make our views known to Government and to a wider audience. A strong C.N.F. which can develop in the next two or three years will help to present the naturalists voice at Federal level, as well as winning many more people to our cause through its splendid magazine. Closer relationships with other groups in the province will enable us to represent a unified voice on major issues wherever possible, while minimising effort on dissension within the environmental movement.

An increasing role in Environmental Education is the long-term goal that is perhaps the most important. Only by helping our fellows in increasing numbers to gain something of the pleasure we find in the natural world can we hope to pass on our natural heritage to our successors.

David A. E. Spalding

#### MEETINGS FOR 1973

Please mark these in your diaries, calendars and sundials.

##### Ninth regular director's meeting

Calgary, February 17th. (Directors only) Hosts, Calgary FNS

##### Tenth Regular Director's meeting and Spring Field Meeting

Buffalo Lake area, Stettler, June 2 & 3 1973.

The meeting should help to stimulate support in the Stettler area, and local arrangements will be made by Alberta NHS

##### Eleventh Regular Director's Meeting, Third Annual General Meeting and Fall Field Meeting

Edmonton, September 29 and 30, 1973. Hosts, EBC and ENHC

Club field secretaries should particularly note these, and include them in their club field programs if at all possible, and arrange for the best attendance from each club. Member clubs are particularly asked to refrain from arranging local activities on these dates.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DIRECTOR'S MEETING, CALGARY - by John M. Powell

The eighth regular meeting and second annual general meeting of the Board of Directors of the Federation was held September 30th, 1972, at the University of Calgary, with Directors present from all Corporate Members except the Edmonton Bird Club.

Reports were given by the President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chairmen of Standing Committees. The President's report is published in detail elsewhere in this issue. The total number of members in the Federation stands at 135, an increase of 15 over the previous year, although this total includes some 64 new members. A further appeal is to be made to the 49 lapsed members to consider renewing their membership. The Alberta Naturalist is now taken by 9 libraries; we exchange publications with 14 organizations and send complimentary copies to 15 other organizations or individuals. The present balance of the Federation stood at \$450.03. The Federation is now registered as a charitable organization under the Income Tax Act, thus any donations in excess of the basic membership amount can be credited as tax deductible.

The Wilderness, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee report included mention of our efforts in regard to the Lake Louise Village Hearings, the proposed Milk River Prairie Park, Wood Buffalo National Park, ecological impact on the Suffield Military Area, the road development in the Kananaskis Valley, the Wild Kakwa area, our views on the proposed autonomy for Banff and Jasper townsites, and preliminary investigations in the Bow Valley Corridor. Mention was also made of our support for proposals in British Columbia--the St. Mary's River Wilderness Area near Kimberley, the proposed extension to Hamber Park, and an "Earth Day" to be held at Golden on November 4 and 5.

The Publications Committee Report centred on "the Alberta Naturalist", and the discussions our Editor had with the Editors of the "Blue Jay" and the "Alberta Conservationist" concerning developing a closer liaison with these important naturalist publications covering the Alberta scene. There has also been correspondence with Dr. Warrack, Minister of Lands and Forests, on whether the Government intends to re-enter the natural history publication field with a popular magazine on the lines of the former "Alberta, Lands, Forests, Parks, Wildlife". They have not reached a decision yet.

The Environmental Education Committee report mentioned the two Outdoor Education Conferences held earlier in the year, and the on-going Committee established at the last Conference to coordinate Outdoor Education in the Province. Also there is presently much interest in "a trail system for Alberta", and Joy Finlay the Committee Chairman, would welcome any views members have on trails, conflicts of their multi-use, need for legislation, management, maintenance, designation of areas and other problems related to trails.

Reports were given of the activities of the Canadian Nature Federation. Much credit was due the Edmonton Natural History Club and other local Edmonton societies, including representatives from the Edmonton Bird Club, who worked so hard to make the Second Annual Conference of the Canadian Nature Federation held in Edmonton such a success. Our out-going President, Dave Spalding was elected the Regional Vice-President of CNF, another Director, Aileen Harmon of the Bow Valley Naturalists, remains the Provincial elected Director, and two Federation members, Dr. M. T. Myres (our first President) of Calgary and Dr. G. W. Scotter of Edmonton were elected National Directors.

Dave Spalding, our representative on the Public Advisory Committee of the Environment Conservation Authority reported on the work of the Authority, which he feels has great potential as a means of gathering and giving broadly based advice to Government on complex environmental issues. The Federation has prepared a brief on "The Environmental Effects of the Operation of Sulphur Extraction Gas Plants" in which four recommendations are made.

Reports were also given of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature Meetings in Banff, attended by three of our Directors.

Concern was expressed about the present status and condition of the Gaetz Lake Bird Sanctuary near Red Deer, and we hope to follow this up further with the help of the local Society.

Our Library, under the custody of Garry McKay of Calgary continues to expand, and we hope to publish a list of our present holdings at the end of the year. Donations to the library are always welcome, for we are looking ahead to the day when the Federation will have a permanent office in which to house a small library.

We do have a permanent address, P. O. Box 1472, Edmonton, Alberta T5J2N5, so in future please send all enquiries to this address.

Dr. John M. Powell was elected the new President, Miss Aileen Harmon became the new Vice-President, and Mrs. Helen C. Schuler continues as Treasurer. The appointment of a new Secretary still has to be confirmed. Dr. Charles D. Bird, Mrs. Joy Finlay and Dr. John M. Powell were all reappointed as Appointed Directors of the Board. All other members of the Board are Elected Directors appointed by the Corporate Member Clubs or Societies. Mr. Dave A. E. Spalding continues as Editor and FAN representative to the Canadian Nature Federation. Dr. C. D. Bird is FAN's new representative to the Public Advisory Committee of the Environment Conservation Authority. The following were elected Chairmen of Standing Committees:- Miss Aileen Harmon (Wilderness, Parks and Natural Areas), Mr. Dave A. E. Spalding (Publications), Mrs. Joy Finlay (Environmental Education), Mr. W. Gordon Kerr (Endangered Species), Mrs. Frances Schultz (Publicity), Mr. J. Cam Finlay (Finance), and Dr. John M. Powell (By-Laws and Resolutions).



Special thanks are due to the following retiring Elected Directors, Mr. Ian A. R. Halladay (Vice-President 1971-72, Secretary 1970-71) and Mr. W. Garry McKay (who remains Custodian of the Library) of the Calgary Field Naturalists' Society, and Mr. Hugh Campbell and Mr. Al Karvonen of the Edmonton Bird Club, for their assistance in promoting the work of the Federation.

In association with the Director's Meeting, a field trip was held to the Inglewood Bird Sanctuary and Nature Centre on Saturday afternoon. A Saturday evening meeting was held when interesting nature slides and some slides of the Calgary Natural Areas Study by the CFNS were shown. On Sunday there was a day trip to Frank Lake, with other interesting stops at points south of Calgary, concluding a successful weekend, hosted by the Calgary Field Naturalists' Society.

ADDITIONS TO LIBRARY

(Members are reminded that the librarian is Garry McKay, 62 Westview Drive, Calgary 5)

Provincial Museum & Archives of Alberta, Natural History Division  
Information No. 11 Reference Lists ( 1-100 ) revised August 1972  
" " 31 " " ( 101-150 ) " " " "  
Reference List No. 3 Local Mammal Faunas in Alberta rev. May 1972  
" " 10 Natural History of Elk Island National Park  
" " " " 3rd. revision August 1972  
" " 33 Biology of the Coyote 2nd. revision May 1972  
" " 45 Biology of the Grizzly Bear 1st. rev. May 1972  
" " 51 Hibernation 1st. revision May 1972  
" " 64 Fossil Bison 1st. revision June 1972  
" " 65 ~~Leeches~~ 1st. revision May 1972  
" " 135 White Pelican June 1972  
" " 136 Double-Crested Cormorant June 1972  
" " 137 Greater Prairie Chicken April 1972  
" " 138 Sage Grouse June 1972  
" " 139 Piping Plover June 1972  
" " 140 Barred Owl June 1972  
" " 141 Spiders in Alberta June 1972  
" " 142 Edible Native Plants April 1972  
" " 143 Medicinal Native Plants April 1972  
" " 144 Poisonous Native Plants April 1972

Village Lake Louise prospectus  
Environment Conservation Authority, Report and Prospectus on Hearings  
On Archaeological and Historical Resources.  
ECA Summary of Public Hearings on Cooking Lake.  
Environment News April 1972  
Regional Consultations for the UN conference on the Human Environment.

FIELD TRIP TO FRANK LAKE

Ian Halladay.

On October 1st a field trip of the C.F.N.S., held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Federation of Alberta Naturalists, led by Ian Halladay, set off from the Chinook Shopping Centre at 8:00 a.m. and headed in the direction of Frank Lake. Sixteen adults, three children and one dog all packed into six vehicles made up the group on this clear and warm Indian Summer day.

The first stop was at the narrow slough immediately west of the junction of Highways 2 and 22. This stop produced Eared and Horned Grebes, a variety of waterfowl including Green and Blue-winged Teal, Killdeer and Lesser Yellow-legs.

At a stop at the easternmost bridge over the Highwood River we observed a dozen Red-tailed Hawks move slowly southeastward, soaring in the updraughts on the north side of the river.

A Prairie Falcon swept past and Common Mergansers and a Great Blue Heron were seen along the river.

A stop at Blizzard Lake produced an immature Bald Eagle which circled low over the lake heading southeastward. The majority of the waterfowl on the lake were Coots but Mallards, Pintails, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Baldpates, Shovellers, Gadwalls, Redheads, Canvasbacks, Lesser Scaups and Ruddy Ducks were in evidence as well. Flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds including a few Yellow-headed Blackbirds were moving southward through the area.

The avian highlight of the day came at Frank Lake when many of those on the trip were able to view a Sabine's Gull in good light and at relatively close range. This species is an irregular wanderer to Alberta and was a new bird for almost all those present. The gull was in full summer plumage and displayed well its striking black, grey and white wing pattern, grey head with black collar and forked tail.

Other birds seen at Frank Lake which were anticlimatic after the Sabine's Gull, were Western Grebe, Sparrow Hawk, Franklin's, Bonaparte's, California, Ring-billed and Herring Gulls, Lesser Yellow-legs, Western Meadowlark and Savannah Sparrows. Large numbers of waterfowl were resting on the lake, many towards the southern end.

Members of the Alberta Natural History Society enjoyed a field trip to an area east of Red Deer on August 27th., 1972.

A stop was made by the ski area to view the slumping hillside caused by the building of the access road before commencing our hike along the Hogsback. The Hogsback falls away sharply at both sides affording a beautiful view of the Red Deer Valley. A large variety of plant life was seen in this area ranging from grassland to heavy woodland species. Several species of birds were spotted, including the Blue Jay, and a week later a Belted Kingfisher was observed fishing in the same area. At this time of year large runs of goldeye are present in the river and can be seen rising to the surface.

The afternoon was spent exploring Buffalo Springs. As the cars drove into the valley two Blue Herons flew up from the stream bed. Numerous pieces of petrified wood have been exposed by erosion in the valley (some of considerable size). The valley is cool and sheltered. White Spruce is the dominant tree and is in sharp contrast with the surrounding cultivated grasslands. The stream is used as a breeding place by amphibians, and young frogs and toads were abundant. These were the probable attractions for the herons seen earlier. A number of large freshwater sponges were found growing on rocks. Large clusters of water striders could be observed attacking grasshoppers which had the misfortune to fall in the water. The terrestrial insects appeared to be the principal diet of these voracious bugs.

The last stop of the day was at an open pit coal mine down river from Red Deer. In large mined out areas the clay parent material was left exposed, and numerous legumes were beginning to invade these areas. These nitrogen fixers were the pioneer stage of the long process of rebuilding of soil in the areas where it had been destroyed.

An earlier August meeting (date?) was conducted by Mr. Fred Schutz, from Rimbey on north of the Bluffton area. The party visited the museum at Rimbey. The town was named after one of the first families in the area, from Kansas. The museum includes several buildings in a planned park-like setting. The town office was built in 1912, and at the beginning of the project was used for the first museum. The Church of England built in 1907-8 of upright logs and a large log school house built in 1902 are also on display. Trees have been planted in the area, and a pool made, and recently a large new museum building has been erected. Many antiques of the early settlers are on display.

The party then headed for Medicine Lake for lunch, then on to photograph an osprey's nest containing two fledgelings and then southward to Alder Flats, with a study of flora of the deep forest en route. Twayblade orchid, three species of ferns, moonwort (Botrychium lunaria) and many other species were seen. A visit was paid to the petrified springs, which rush down a steep hill side among tufa deposits with 'petrified' leaves.

The last call was at Aspen Creek Dam, which forms a lovely small lake. A delicious chicken (Gallus domesticus) supper brought to a conclusion a very interesting field trip.

( Sorry, I couldn't resist that - Ed. ( Homo precipitans ) )

Note to clubs - news for this page welcomed - I will lift items from newsletters when I can, but specific items addressed to other FAN members like the above are much preferred.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

Environment Conservation Authority

First, an apology. Our assertions in the last AN that FAN's brief had been omitted from the report on the Surface Mining hearings was based on some confusion between the full report ( in which the brief does appear ), and the summary of the hearings which was published earlier ( and in which FAN's brief does not appear - our fault because of late submission ). So we apologise to the ECA, but hope they continue to read the AN assiduously in case we make a further error.

The annual meeting of the public advisory committee to the ECA was held in October, in conjunction with the Edmonton workshop of the Man and Resources program. It was a somewhat stormy meeting, and considerable concern was expressed about changes in the Authority and its status, and the slow publication of its recommendations. A letter addressed to Mr. Yurko was drafted by the committee, expressing concerns, and asking for removal of some of the restrictions on the Authority and its activities. Mr. Yurko has since tabled the report of the first hearings (Cooking Lake) in the house, so the recommendations on this issue are now public knowledge. Copies of these, and all other publications of the Authority can be obtained from the Environment Conservation Authority, at 9912-107 St., Edmonton. Many are free, though a nominal charge is made for the larger reports. They will be basic documents in Alberta conservation for many years to come, and should not be missed by anyone interested.

At the annual meeting FAN was represented by our new member, Dr. Bird, as well as your retiring representative. Dr. Bird spearheaded the work on our brief on the recent sulphur extraction hearings, which will appear in the AN on another page. (held over to next issue)

Know your Grizzly Bears

The Department of Extension at the U of A is putting on a four week course on Grizzly Bears, to be given by Dr. Arthur Pearson of the Canadian Wildlife Service. Fee is 12 dollars, and further information is available from the Dept. at Corbett Hall, 82nd. Ave and 112 St, Edmonton. Dr. Pearson has given excellent talks to the CNF conference and to the Edmonton Natural History Club recently on this subject, and the course should be well worth while.

Poster Contest for Students

Too late for entries, but still of interest, is the poster contest for students in Alberta schools. The theme is 'what the individual can do to protect the environment', and judging by some of the posters seen lately in schools, the judges will have a hard time.

Fourth Habitat Group at PMAA

The Provincial Museum and Archives now has on exhibition its fourth habitat group, showing a family of coyotes in the middle sandhills of Alberta. This joins the existing groups on pronghorn, white-tailed deer and moose. Groups now in preparation include mountain goat, cougar, and shorebirds at Beaverhill Lake.

NATIONAL NEWS

(Editor's note ; Nature Canada is now off and running, with two issues out and a third expected any time. The national news section here will therefore be limited to special comment on any national matters that particularly affect Alberta. I assume any naturalist interested in what is going on nationally is reading Nature Canada - only six bucks for a year's subscription from the Canadian Nature Federation, 46 Elgin Street, Ottawa)

Canadian Nature Federation Conference

Those who were there know how good it was - those who missed it will never catch up by reading a report of it. There will be one in the next Nature Canada anyway, so it will not be dwelt upon here. Suffieient to say that Alberta has done its bit to give CNF a boost, and a very exciting conference was held in Edmonton in August. Next year it will be in Nova Scotia.

Canadian Nature Art '72

Alberta artists continued their domination of the Canadian Nature Art show on its second appearance, this time in Edmonton. Some very fine work was exhibited, and we hope to see this show go from strength to strength. A fuller report will appear in Nature Canada, and a list of the works exhibited may be obtained from the Provincial Museum and Archives.

Byways and Special Places

A glossy publication under the above title was issued by the National and Historic Parks Branch shortly before the election. An attractive idea, but rather ill thought out in detail, is presented to preserve natural and historic landmarks of national significance across the country, and develop a network of canoe trails, footpaths, and parkways for the rubbernecking driver. Alberta proposals are very vaguely marked on a national map, but seem to include only the Athabasca River and one or two historic trails. Thought we were worth more than that.

Saskatoon Environmental Society Publications

A useful series of leaflets has been published by the Saskatoon Environmental Society, assisted by the University Biology Department and the Department of the Environment. Titles include Environmental Information, Environmental Films (both of which include much natural history material), Environmental Legislation, Automobiles and the Environment, Recycling, and Water Pollution.

The Society can be reached at P.O.Box 1372, Saskatoon. Prices are not indicated.

OVERHEARD (13)

"Our system encourages and rewards fragmentation of knowledge, but not synthesis.....We do not encourage too much those studies which cross disciplines, ....the result of subject orientation.....reward for early..publication, has led to a flood of rather one-sided papers in wildlife biology.....Regard the scarcity of major monographs on our big game animals. Research has not been taken seriously enough....this can be seen in the large amount of unpublished research found in university libraries...and in government organizations..... "

Dr. Val Geist, Calgary, in Park News8(4):11-12

FAN PROJECTS

A PROVINCIAL BIRD (3)

David A.E.Spalding

One further list is now in hand; from the Edmonton Natural History Club. (I must apologise, though, to the Bow Valley Naturalists, whose list was handed to me at a meeting, and has not yet come to light in my many papers)

The BNHC list, in order of priority, is :

- Ring-billed Gull
- Black-billed Magpie
- Ruff-breasted Sandpiper
- Western Meadowlark
- Horned Lark
- Prairie Falcon
- Red-winged Blackbird
- American Avocet
- Snow Bunting
- Mountain Bluebird

This leaves only one species mentioned on four lists, the Red-winged Blackbird. Black-capped Chickadee, Western Meadowlark, and Mountain Bluebird appear on three. The runners up, each on two lists, are Great Horned Owl, Killdeer, Cedar Waxwing, Black-billed Magpie, and Prairie Falcon.

So far, then, there is a short list of nine, with two club reports still to be included.

I now have a list of all the U.S. state birds (courtesy of Joy Finlay), from which it is possible to note that no state has selected our interim front runner, though each of our next three have been chosen by several states as their avian emblem. Those of nearby states are;

- |              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Washington   | American Goldfinch |
| Idaho        | Mountain Bluebird  |
| Montana      | Western Meadowlark |
| North Dakota | Western Meadowlark |

A volunteer to take over co-ordination of this project would still be welcome.

A NATURALISTS GUIDE TO ALBERTA (3)

David A.E.Spalding

Reports on the various projects are included when they can be written - as long as your editor is doing the writing this will be slowly. The last report on this project was in AN 2(1):6, but interest is continuing, and I hope to get more input this winter.

Based on initial submissions, and various similar publications, the following list of headings is suggested as a foundation for a standard approach to individual sections of a guide. Comments, suggestions etc. will be welcome from all members interested in participating ( an offer to take over some of the co-ordination would be also welcomed)

- 1) Name of area
- 2) Status (park, wilderness, etc.) It is assumed that all areas to be included are on public land. Any restrictions on access should be stated.
- 3) Location - distance and direction from nearest large city or town.
- 4) Itinerary - route from nearest access point (town, etc.), via highways to area. Itinerary within area if it is large.

- 5) Natural Features of the area - a broad idea of the topography and ecology of the area
- 6) Notable Natural History Features - the plants, birds or whatever that make the area of interest. Good times to visit ( spring migration or summer flowers, etc.)
- 7) Conservation - special warnings about vulnerable species, etc.
- 8) Special Facilities - interpretive centres and programs, nature trails, campsites, etc.
- 9) Special problems or precautions - cliffs, rattlesnakes, road impassable during summer, etc.
- 10) References to published work on the area ( including special maps where appropriate.
- 11) Sketch map
- 12) Author(s), club, institution, etc.

Perhaps those interested in the various local clubs would like to prepare a draft along those lines for one of the areas they have suggested, (where this has not already been done), and send them in with any general suggestions on the above format. Expect further reports in due course. Even if we did not manage any guides for CNF 1972, we shall have it done by the time CNF comes again!

ADOPT A SPECIES ( 2 )

me again

Having been overwhelmed by the rush of offers to get involved in this project..... well, not quite. Perhaps some further comments and suggestions are needed.

One starting point is the series of articles written by Canadian authorities for the Canadian Field-Naturalist two years ago. These deal with the various species of rare or endangered birds, mammals, fishes, reptiles and amphibians, as seen at that time by the authors. These of course, survey the scene from a national point of view; a provincial list may well have different emphasis as species common elsewhere in Canada may well be rare here.

To take the birds as a starting point, Dr. Godfrey's article deals with some of the species that he regards as actually or potentially endangered. Each is summarised by a paragraph of information about status, and some of the factors known to be affecting the survival of the species.

The Alberta examples from his list are :

Bald Eagle

Osprey

Prairie Falcon ) These two species already have an enthusiastic champion

Peregrine Falcon ) in Alberta - Dick Dekker of Edmonton

Pigeon Hawk Richardson's ( the prairie race)

Greater Prairie Chicken

Whooping Crane

Sandhill Crane

Eskimo Curlew May perhaps still cross the prairies

To this basic list of threatened Canadian birds, quite a number of Alberta species could be added. Some of these (like the white Pelican), appear on the 'Blue List' which was recently published in 'American Birds', which is intended to serve as an 'early warning system' of potentially vulnerable birds.

Each of these species needs a champion - someone interested in finding out about them, in determining the factors affecting their future, and in agitating for reserves, detailed research, or whatever is most necessary to protect them.

FAN now has a committee to consider threatened species, so offers of assistance will be timely. To the editor, or to the Chairman, Gordon Kerr, of Calgary

NATURALIST'S NOTEBOOK NO. 3.

Bird Listening - a new and exciting hobby

Moira English

The hobby of bird watching has long been popular with millions of adults and children, but of this number, probably only a small percentage have formed the habit of listening to birds with other than casual enjoyment. Yet the songs and calls of birds can be as useful in identifying them as can a careful visual scrutiny with binoculars. Birds at a distance can often be recognised by voice, as can small, hard-to-identify sparrows, vireos, warblers and others, especially when hidden by a canopy of leaves.

Once you become interested in bird listening, you will probably be amazed to discover how little most people use their ears. (No doubt this is self-protection against the noise pollution of the city). You will become very conscious of the missing dimension when viewing exhibits of bird specimens, and even when viewing nature films and travel movies with only "canned" music as a background. You will also discover a deeper enjoyment of the natural world.

May and June are undoubtedly the best months for bird listening, but interesting nature sounds are available at any time of the year. I became interested in recording bird songs in the spring of last year, when I purchased a Sony cassette recorder (a light-weight, reasonably-priced model) and a sound parabola. Any reasonably good tape recorder would serve the purpose. The parabola, acquired through the Canadian Audubon Society (now the Canadian Nature Federation) was rather expensive, and I have heard of crafty types who have manufactured their own.

To begin with, I had only a vague knowledge of birds, so I learned to recognize quite a number by song before I knew them by sight. Did you know that birds have dialects, like people? It is not just a question of purchasing or borrowing some bird recordings and learning the songs. Where the recording was made can be significant, since the same species can sound quite different in another area. Also the songs of individual birds can vary considerably. As an example, note the variations in the performance of different song sparrows. Then again, some birds have quite a repertoire of songs and calls, while others are extremely repetitious. The volume of the voice often bears little relation to the size of the singer. Just compare the high "peeps" of the mighty bald eagle with the rich solos of the tiny ruby-crowned kinglet or the house wren (Did you ever notice that the deep bass in a barbershop quartet is often a little fellow, the high tenor part being sung by a six-footer?).

In early May, the familiar frogs' and red-winged blackbirds chorus may be enjoyed beside any slough. The cries of the killdeer and the common snipe (also the interesting wing sound of the latter) will often be heard nearby. The voices of various ducks, grebes, the lesser yellowlegs and the marbled godwit are among the interesting water birds I have heard in the country just west of Edmonton. The ethereal solos of song and vesper sparrows issue from bushes and trees along the roadside. Very soon there will be the songs of orioles, vireos, wrens, flycatchers and warblers. And not to be ignored are the cheerful bubbling renderings of the familiar robin and the purple finch.

Recording songs is not difficult technically, and it is truly a fascinating hobby. All one needs, to produce tapes for the enjoyment and interest of family and friends, is an appreciation of nature's music and a fair portion of patience. I used to become very annoyed at interruptions, for example, airplanes droning overhead at the critical moment (I never realized before how many airplanes there are over Edmonton), cars zooming by, enveloping me in dust, and so on. I would hear a gorgeous song, leap out of the car, and the bird would either fly off or



clam up, evidently deciding he was not going to sing with that strange plastic disc pointed at him! At the beginning I was inclined to run around after the singer, but now I realise how much better it is to wait quietly for birds to appear. Recording bird song is not the kind of thing one can do in a hurry! Moving around impatiently just produces a lot of static on the tape. One of the problems I haven't succeeded in solving is this: how can a bird listener remain motionless, surrounded by a swarm of hungry mosquitoes.

### CLUB CORNER (3)

#### A Brief History of the Bow Valley Naturalists

Aileen Harmon

This must be brief, since we haven't been going very long. However, we consider that we are going fairly well, with increased interest and membership.

Some of us had recognised the need for a natural history organisation in the park for some time. I think it would have happened anyway, but at the psychological moment (guess who) Tim Myres pushed me into doing something. We advertised a public meeting that was well attended, and the club was organised then and there: March 22nd., 1967. Our first president was Hugh Green. Since then Muriel Gratz, Lorne Cooley, and Gerry Wilkie have held the chair.

We have had monthly meetings during the winter with some interesting programs and club study panels. We have been helped by local speakers and by kind friends at the University of Calgary, Geological Surveys Branch, Canadian Wildlife Service, Canadian Forestry Service and Provincial Museum: John Marsh, Helen Belyea, Nat Rutter, Steve Herrero, Sam Nelson, Ron Fetocz, Roy Shepherd, George Scotter, Dave Spalding, Julie Hrapko and Elmer Peterson.

During the summer we have bird walks, flower walks, hikes to unique areas, usually in Banff and adjacent National Parks or in nearby regions of Alberta and British Columbia. Our trips are generally twice a month.

Last year we took part in Earth Day by sponsoring a public forum which was attended by some three hundred citizens and students: speakers included our M.P. Alan Sulatyckv, Bob Seace from the University of Calgary, Dr. Ian Wilson and John Gow of Banff, and Dave Thomae and Bruce Gordon from the office of the park naturalist. Last spring Jon Whyte prepared our brief and presented it at the hearings on the preliminary master plans for Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Yoho Parks. In July we took part in the litter blitz organised by the National and Provincial Parks Association's Calgary chapter.

The Bow Valley Naturalists are a corporate member of the Federation of Alberta Naturalists. Our members are of all ages from 8 to 80, and we now have over 100 members.

( Editorial note : despite a little editing, the above account still reveals that it was first written some time ago. The original plan was to deal with the clubs in chronological order of their formation, but accounts are now being included as they are available)

To end on an old fashioned note -

A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR READERS !