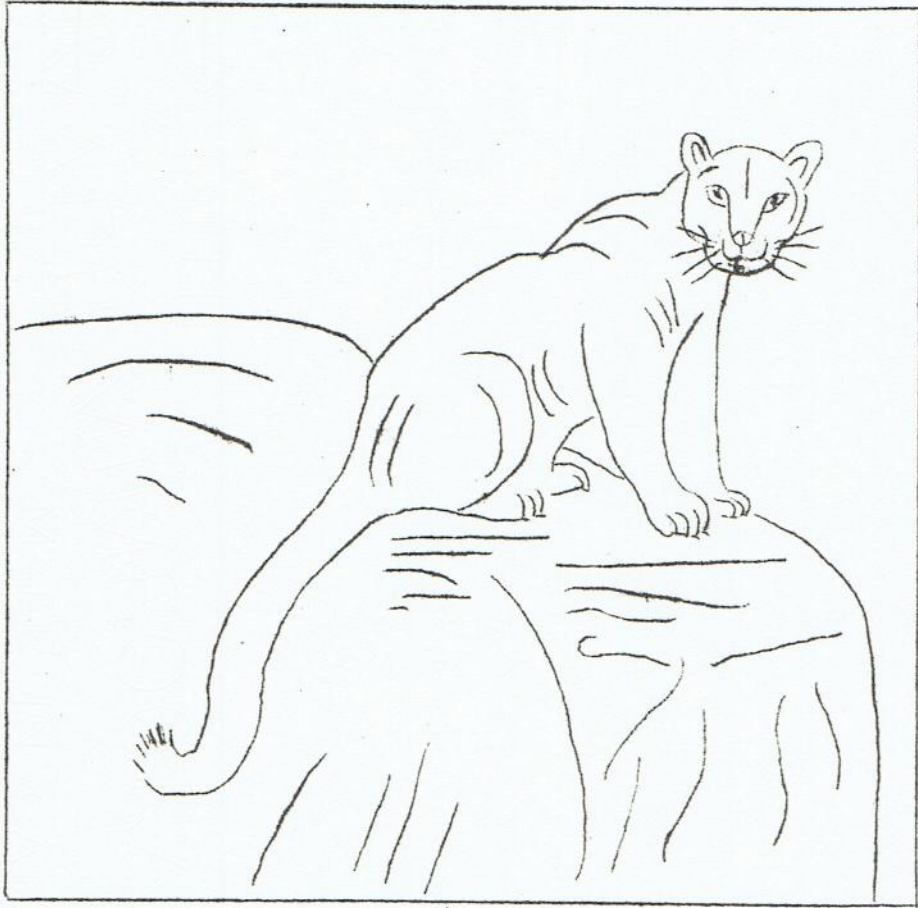


NATURE NEWS



Issued by
The Natural Science Department
of
THE NEW BRUNSWICK MUSEUM
Saint John, N. B.

NATURE NEWS

Vol. II

January, 1951

Number 1

FOREWORD

With this number we begin the second year of the "News". The many words and letters of appreciation and the increasing number of requests for a place on the mailing list have pretty well convinced us of the worth of this effort. Moreover many records of scientific interest have come in and readers are urged to forward more of these. The unique record of the Mourning Dove given below nearly escaped us and most certainly would have if it had occurred in any other locality.

It has been suggested that this department of the Museum sponsor a study group for Nature Study for adults somewhat similar to the Nature Club for boys now being conducted. We will be glad to do this if a sufficient number of persons in the Saint John area express their interest and are willing to pledge their support for monthly meetings. If you are interested let us know.

W. A. SQUIRES, CURATOR.

In our last issue we mentioned that the Mountain Ash berries were still abundant at Saint John late in November. As soon as the snow covered the ground in December great flocks of Starlings began to congregato and in a very few days the berries were gone. Then presumably most of the Starlings went south, although a few stay all winter at Saint John. No wonder we see so few Pine Grosbeaks now. They used to feed on these berries all winter before these newcomers arrived.

Henrik Deichmann reported a Great Blue Heron in the Little River Marsh at East Saint John on December 15, 1950. This is the latest record for this species in New Brunswick, but I have two old reports from Grand Manan for December. This bird fishes where the water is not too deep to wade and there is little to prevent it spending a mild winter near the Bay of Fundy shore.

On December 5th, I had two Dovekies reported to me which had been found, one alive and the other dead, near Saint John. As usual these must be regarded as strays driven in by storms from the great flocks found at this time of the year nearer the open Atlantic. If we had any reports from Grand Manan we would undoubtedly have had records of large flocks there at this time.

A Fisher, Martes pennanti, taken near Juniper was mounted and presented to the Museum collection by the Game Division of the Department of Lands and Mines. This large member of the weasel family is a valuable furbearer, but very scarce, with an estimated population of 10,000 in Canada of which very few are in New Brunswick. It is about the size of a Fox but spends most of its time in trees.

If our mild winter has made you hopeful that palm trees should be growing here in a year or two you will be interested to know that there have been many mild winters in the past. There was practically no snow at Saint John in 1768-69 and 1770-71. In 1807 the river was still open at Woodstock January 8th, and on February 19th heavy rain took away the snow and the ice ran out. There were heavy rains and floods at Norton in February 1824. On Christmas Day 1829 the grass was reported very green at Norton and the ferry at Hampton was used nearly all winter. The winter of 1830-31 was still milder. The winters of 1839-40 and 1847-48 were also extremely mild. Again in 1905-06 people were asking, as now, "Why is the winter so mild?"

I have received copies of "Evening Grosbeak Survey News" published by a group in New England studying the movements of this bird. I would like to have reports of its occurrence especially if any with coloured bands on the legs are seen. Each colour combination refers to a different region. If anyone is banding them in Maine or the Maritimes a green band is called for.

In casual observation of our great gull flocks at Saint John this winter, I have so far identified only the two common species - Herring Gull and Black-backed Gull. The more northerly white species, the Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, should be on our coasts now. The Kittiwake which is usually common at Grand Manan is seldom found up the Bay, and to see an Ivory Gull this far south is an event.

The prize record for this season to date is a Mourning Dove first seen alive and later found dead just before Christmas near Saint John. It was brought to the Museum for identification by C. H. Foss. This is a common game bird of the central and southern states and is a rare but regular summer resident in New Brunswick. It should be hardy enough to winter here where it can get enough food as a few winter regularly in Maine.

A Compton Tortoise-shell butterfly brought in to the Museum alive on January 3rd seemed something remarkable to the person who brought it but actually was nothing extraordinary as this species hibernates and comes out to lay eggs in the spring. Any warm spell in winter may start it flying.

I have had reports of several strange birds which the person who saw them either could not identify or suspected to be some species that had wandered far from home. Usually such birds if found dead and shown to an expert turn out to be a not uncommon species although sometimes in an unfamiliar plumage. I always think of a story told me by Hoyes Lloyd, veteran ornithologist of Ottawa; a strange bird was described to him with yellow patches on it where no known bird had yellow. He just didn't believe the story until someone later found the bird dead and brought it to him. It turned out to be a Purple Finch in which much of the purple had been replaced with yellow. I might add that such changes in plumage are unbelievably rare.

A Herring Gull was reported along the St. John River at Woodstock December 2nd to 8th. This must be nearly a record for that locality.

A report of a Gray Squirrel at Woodstock December 2nd makes me wonder how common it is in that area. It is quite common in Fredericton but although reported from Rothesay I have not heard of it being seen in Saint John. The Gray Squirrel reaches the northeastern limit of its range in New Brunswick. A report which I had from Petitcodiac a few years ago is my farthest east record and Woodstock the farthest north. This squirrel looks several times the size of the common Red Squirrel. I would like to hear about its abundance in various districts and any records further east or north.

We continue to get reports from the Saint John district on the Hungarian Partridge which was introduced in southern New Brunswick twenty years ago. Where else are they now found and are they increasing or decreasing?

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Vol. II

March 1951

Number 2

FOREWORD

The spring migration of birds has already started; the sap has been running in the sugar maples for some time; in southern New Brunswick the grass is growing in sheltered corners; even the casual naturalist is aware of a reawakening Nature.

Nature News was mentioned recently in the Educational Review and since then many teachers have requested copies. I would appreciate any comments, suggestions or useful information these teachers may have to offer after reading a copy or two.

Our next number should appear about the middle of May and I would like reports on flowers, birds, etc. seen in various parts of the province before that date.

The Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*) is undoubtedly the earliest flowering plant in this region but perhaps our last year's record of March 31st can be bettered.

W. A. SQUIRES, CURATOR.

I consider the Crow the true harbinger of spring in southern New Brunswick. A few remain all winter but they are on the whole quiet birds with a very meek "caw". Then some morning in March there is a new urgency in their voice and there also seems to have been a sudden increase in numbers. I noticed this phenomenon this year at Saint John and Fredericton March 10-12.

A flock of twenty Juncos appeared at Fredericton March 9th, an unusually early date for so large a number.

But there are several reports to make for winter before we become engrossed with signs of spring.

Miss MacCoubrey writes about a trip from Grand Manan to St. Andrews, January 25th. Between Campobello and Deer Islands there were thousands of Dovekies, and about a hundred Razor-billed Auks. Previously on December 12th, 1950, between L'Etete and Deer Island she had seen several flocks of Murres and two Puffins. On January 30th there was a very large flock of Eider Ducks and also a few Old-squaws near Deer Island.

Mrs. A. L. Stockwell of Fairvale, St. John County, tells what can happen when food is put out for the birds. On February 2nd she was feeding Black-capped Chickadees, Acadian Chickadees, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, a Song Sparrow, Tree Sparrows, Golden-crowned Kinglets and a Junco. Four Ruffed Grouse were also interested.

Did you ever see a black patch on the March snow in the woods and all of a sudden realize that it was alive -- made up of countless tiny insects? These are Springtails and belong to the very primitive Collenbola but are usually called Snow Fleas. They do not jump with their legs. A tail-like appendage is folded under the abdomen and this is used as a spring to give locomotion. They are common in the woods at all times but are only really noticeable when seen against white snow.

Response to my request for records of the Gray Squirrel indicate that it occurs quite generally in southwestern New Brunswick but does not extend the limits of its known range here. Thanks to all who wrote in about it.

My first report of Evening Grosbeaks near Saint John this winter was for seven seen about March 15th. Small flocks were seen at St. Andrews December 19th and January 18th; twenty were counted at Fredericton March 10th and forty-two with others in the neighborhood March 17th. The latter is the largest flock I have ever had reported.

Some correspondents seem to consider the Pine Siskin (Pine Finch) uncommon. This is not the case. They occur in large flocks but usually alight in the tree tops. I heard this species at Fredericton on March 17th and then suddenly they were on the ground close to me -- hundreds beyond counting.

Northern Bald Eagles are seen rarely in winter. There is even an ancient breeding record for Grand Manan when eggs were found frozen in a nest in February. They are seen occasionally at Saint John and about March 5th one in adult plumage, with white head and tail, was reported preying on American Golden-eyes (Whistlers) on the St. John River at Land's End opposite Westfield. It would swoop down and seize the ducks and then carry them to a tree for lunch.

Canada Geese appear in the lower St. John valley regularly every spring and feed in the fields for several weeks before moving northward. I have had reports of them at many points from the lower Kingston peninsula to Jemseg. This year they appeared at Grassy Island near Oak Point on March 15th and may have been in the vicinity as early as March 11th. They will often permit close approach at this season.

Stanley Gorham reported a flock of about twenty Robins in flight at Oak Point March 15th. It is of course impossible to say whether these were very early spring migrants or a group which had wintered in the province.

There is still much to learn about the Bobcat or Wildcat, Lynx rufus, which is so common in this province. Mammal books tell us that this species is thirty-two to forty-two inches long (nose to the end of the short tail) and weighs usually fifteen to twenty-five pounds and possibly up to forty pounds. We hear many rumors but have no actual data of much larger Bobcats killed here. The Nova Scotia Bobcat Lynx rufus or Lynx rufus rufus is reportedly much larger than the typical Bobcat Lynx rufus rufus. There are one thousand or more Bobcats killed in New Brunswick every year. If we could get the accurate measurements and weights of only a few of these we might determine whether there is one or two subspecies of the Bobcat in the province. Skulls would be very useful in this study.

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Vol. II

May, 1951

Number 3

FOREWORD

Former numbers of Nature News have perhaps been top heavy with bird notes so I am taking advantage of the spring season to refer to many of the early flowers at this time.

Two of my most faithful correspondents, Miss May Arnard of Jacksonville and Miss Willa MacCoubrey of St. Andrews have made many valued contributions from their respective districts.

W. A. SQUIRES
CURATOR

The past winter saw possibly the greatest incursion ever of the Evening Grosbeak in central New Brunswick. In the March "News" I reported a flock of forty-two on March 17th at Fredericton, the largest ever brought to my attention. A week later a flock of seventy-five by actual count was recorded. A small flock was reported at Upper Woodstock, April 20th.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Moore of Andover saw a Meadowlark in Carleton County on March 27th. Reports of this bird, rare in this province, are on the increase and the bird itself may also be increasing here. It has been seen in summer and on a few occasions in winter at Woodstock, Keswick, Barker's Point, Lincoln and many times in the Sussex area. The Meadowlark belongs to the Blackbird family and like the Blackbirds is an early migrant, being due in late March. This species must not be confused with the Horned Lark which belongs to the Lark family and is very abundant in some districts of the province in late winter and spring. The latter was seen at St. Andrews, March 7th and 18th and at Jacksonville, April 19th.

I did not get any reports on Coltsfoot earlier than March 31st when it was in bloom last year, but saw a railway embankment yellow with it here at Saint John on April 6th and it was seen at St. Andrews, April 8th. It continues to be confused with the Dandelion even by our local radio commentators. The Dandelion seldom blooms before the last week of April.

The spring flowers all seemed to come out at once in central New Brunswick. The Red Trillium, Dog Tooth Violet and Blue Violet were in full bloom at Fredericton by the last of April. On May 20th I found the Painted Trillium, Sessile-leaved Bellwort and Purple Twisted Stalk blooming in profusion in the University of New Brunswick Forest. The Yellow Violet was out at Fredericton on the same day and was reported at Jacksonville along with Foamflower.

On May 24th I made a trip to the flats along the Nashwaak River where Fiddleheads grow in abundance. These coiled fronds of the Ostrich fern, so popular in New Brunswick as a spring green, were already unfolding and much further advanced than they had been in the same place on June 12, 1950. Here the Small-flowered Anemone was already dropping its petals on May 24th and the Cuckoo Flower (Cardamine pratensis) was in full bloom.

The most striking spring-flowering shrub in southern New Brunswick and in much of eastern North America is the Shadbush -- known colloquially in southern N. B. as Bilberry; in Nova Scotia as Indian Pear; in Quebec as Poirier or Petites Poires; in the west as Saskatoon Berry; and generally as Juneberry, Serviceberry

and Sugar Plum. There are at least three species of the Shadbush in the province ranging in size from three foot shrubs to thirty foot trees. The Shadbush blooms just as its leaves are unfolding. I saw a few blooms coming out at Welsford on May 11th and by the 20th it was in full bloom everywhere.

The Red Cherry also known as Bird Cherry, Pin Cherry, and Cerise d'été blossoms just a little later and is often confused with the Shadbush. Both have five white petals but in the Shadbush these are long and slender while in the Cherry they are short and nearly round. This Cherry was just blossoming at Rothesay on May 20th and by May 28th was to be seen throughout southern N. B. Both shrubs were reported in bloom at Jacksonville on May 20th.

Mrs. Marshall, teacher at Upper Dayside, Charlotte County, reported Tree Swallows there on April 14th and Bluebirds April 16th. Bluebirds have nested in bird houses there for several seasons rearing two broods each year. One Bluebird was seen at Jacksonville on April 11th. Being a close relative of the Robin it arrives about the same time often during the last week of March.

Miss Vivien Fowler has had specimens of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Brown Creeper, Blackburnian Warbler, and Olive-backed Thrush brought into the schoolroom at Fairville recently, all migration casualties.

Miss Willa MacCoubrey reports seeing the rather rare Brown Creeper at St. Andrews six or seven times since March 31st.

A flock of Cedar Waxwings was reported at St. Andrews from the middle of March to the middle of April and another flock (twenty-six) at Woodstock, April 20th.

The Brant, the small Goose which nearly died out in the 1930's after the failure of marine eelgrass, its chief food, appears to have increased substantially. Large flocks were reported at Grand Manan on March 20th. This species migrating north along the coast of New Brunswick has a number of favorite stopping places where it may be studied in April and early May -- Maces Bay, Tabusintac lagoon and the Bay of Chaleur. The Brant flocks this spring, especially on the North Shore, were reported greatly increased over recent years but nothing like the many thousands of the 1920's.

After a recent lecture at which I mentioned the hibernating habit of our snakes I was much interested when a member of the audience told me about digging up a mixed group of Garter Snakes, Green Snakes and Red-bellied Snakes all dormant. I would have expected the various species to hibernate separately.

In a recent publication on "The Orchids of Maine" which has just come to my desk I note that the Ran's Head Lady's Slipper which has never been recorded in New Brunswick has been found at Mars Hill, Aroostook County, close to the N. B. border. If anyone knows of the occurrence of this orchid or of the Large Yellow Lady's Slipper, Small Yellow Lady's Slipper or the very large Showy Lady's Slipper I would appreciate records of them. I believe that some of these are much commoner in this province than our records would indicate.

The White-tailed Deer apparently wintered very well. In early April travelers on the C.P.R. between Welsford and MacAdam saw many of them feeding near the tracks apparently indifferent to the passing trains. One railway man counted twenty-five in the six miles between Wirral and Hoyt.

FOREWORD

The holiday season has delayed this number of the News and it will probably be August before it goes in the mail.

I had numerous replies to my questions in the May "News" about Lady's Slippers and conclude that the Yellow Lady's Slipper is not uncommon in many districts and that the Showy Lady's Slipper, although rare, is widely distributed at least in southern and western New Brunswick.

If your summer adventurings disclose any birds or flowers, minerals or animals of more than passing interest let us know about it to add spice to our September number.

W. A. Squires, Curator.

Do you find yellow the predominating wild flower colour in New Brunswick in summer or does it just seem that way to me? I have travelled many miles of provincial roads during the past month and thinking back I see Yellow Clover, the tiny Sedum sometimes called Golden Moss, several Hawkwoods, -- Devil's Paintbrush, King Devil, and Canada - August Dandelion which starts blooming in June, Black-eyed Susan, and Goldenrod in ever increasing profusion, to name only a few.

Yellow is of course not the only colour. The mauve bloom of Joe Pye Weed -- not to be confused with the closely related white Boneset -- is very conspicuous in swampy places, and Bluebell although brought to the province as a garden flower is found in great clumps by the roadside in many places. White Asters are already appearing and the blue and purple species so typical of fall will not be far behind.

If you want to know which Goldenrod you have, you have a real problem to solve as we have no less than 20 different kinds. The same thing applies to Asters but if you are really curious I shall be glad to identify species of either.

If you have noticed the profusion of Elder along our New Brunswick roads you will have noted that while some have great clusters of scarlet berries other bushes are still covered with white blooms. Actually we have two species -- Red-berried Elder, also called Stinking Elder and Snake-berry, which blooms in early June and has bright red berries all the rest of the summer, and the so-called Common Elder, which blossoms in late July and early August and produces purple or black, rarely scarlet, berries in early fall. I do not find the "Common" Elder nearly as common in this province as the name suggests but it is in bloom along miles of highway in the Sheffield - Jemseg area. It is found commonly much farther south in the United States than the first named species.

Most of our birds have nested and reared their young since our last issue. Some species are now busy with second broods.

Miss MacGoubrey of St. Andrews writes of surprising a Woodcock in May, which flew up carrying a young one between its feet. This is said to be a common habit of the Woodcock but it is not often noted by observers. She also saw her first Golden-crowned Kinglet's nest on July 17th. at Lake Utopia.

On July 1st James Bond of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, called on me in Fredericton and took me to Lower Burton where he had seen a Short-billed Marsh Wren earlier in the day. We again located it and as it perched on tall grass in a swampy place it sang vociferously. This species was first recorded in New Brunswick near Midgie, Westmorland County, in July 1949. Lower Burton, Sunbury County, is the second locality where it has been found. As only one individual was seen it is too soon to say that there is a colony here.

At last I have seen a Meadowlark, in fact two at once, in this province. Several observers have reported this member of the Blackbird family with the conspicuous yellow and white markings to me from Sussex, Keswick, etc., but on July 11th I found it myself at Fredericton, my first record since I saw it in the United States in 1930.

James Bond visited the islands of Miscou and Shippegan on July 7th and 8th and, among fifty-five species of birds found there, reported Horned Larks common. On July 1st we saw and heard several Horned Larks on the Fredericton Air Port at Lincoln. These were all presumably the Prairie Horned Lark.

Mr. Bond also reported Black-crowned Night Herons at Shippegan and Pokemouche. It is interesting to note that records of 70 years ago reported these Herons nesting at Tracadie and River Charlo in this same general region.

Reports of several Gray Squirrels seen at Summerfield north of Florenceville some years ago extend the range of this animal in New Brunswick as I know it, nearly 20 miles farther north.

There are numerous reports of Moose in some districts in southern New Brunswick. I even saw a Cow Moose myself in Queens County on June 24th. However when anyone suggests that there are enough Moose for an open hunting season it should be realized that the total number of Moose in New Brunswick is undoubtedly still considerably less than the number of deer shot every year. One open season if pursued vigorously could decimate the Moose population.

Dr. J.C. Medcof of the Atlantic Biological Station, St. Andrews, recently sent me the shells of several quahogs, or round clams, a colony of which has been found within 10 miles of the Station. This clam is common from Florida to Massachusetts and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence but, except for a few isolated colonies, is unknown in between in the cold waters on the coast of Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. To explain this interrupted range it is argued that in geologically recent times the North Atlantic shore of New Brunswick and Maine was much warmer than it is at present and that quahogs, oysters, etc., occurred throughout.

NATURE NEWS

Vol. 11

September 1951

Number 5

FORWARD

We like to select material for this Bulletin with as wide an appeal as possible. If there is any natural science subject or question you would like included please write me. You will notice that few of the following notes came from readers. Send in your records on birds, mammals, insects, plants, etc., and let me decide whether I can use them or not.

It is proposed to experiment with a Nature Study Group at the Museum with the first meeting to be held probably at 8.30 PM November 5th. If you are interested send in your name or call the Museum office and a notice will be sent you when final plans are made.

W. A. Squires, Curator

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I had a recent inquiry from the Wildlife Service about relative numbers of Cedar Waxwings. Apparently there has been a suspicion that DDT sprays have been killing off this species. If anyone has seen large flocks this summer I should appreciate hearing about them.

Mr. Frederick A. Saunders of South Hadley, Mass. wrote me that he saw a Black Tern near Dalhousie on July 12. Although there is a small breeding colony near Lakeville Corner, Sunbury County, this species is extremely rare here and this is our first record for the north of the province. Mr. Glen Woolfenden of Westfield, New Jersey, saw one at Machias Seal Island south of Grand Manan June 21, 1950, and another August 25 and 26, 1951.

Mr. Woolfenden also reported finding a dead Yellow-breasted Chat on Machias Seal June 11, 1950, where it had been killed at the lighthouse some time previously and another flew in from the north and alighted on the seaweed near him August 23, 1951. These are the fifth and sixth records and the third specimen found in the province. Curiously enough this species was found in Grand Manan and St. Andrews in December 1941 and 1942 when it should have been in Central America.

At Saint John a couple of weeks ago a number of dead Starlings found at the base of an electric power tower were credited with causing a short circuit which cut off the power to one section of the city and also electrocuted the Starlings.

When we read in the press that approximately 22,000 deer were killed in 1950 it is hard to realize that deer were formerly very scarce in this province. In the 1850s and 1860s the deer were restricted to Charlotte County and their numbers were kept down by the wolves. Since the wolves have been exterminated here the deer have increased greatly. Just over 2,000 were estimated as the legal kill in 1914 and 1933 was the only year reporting over 20,000 before 1950.

When hunting licenses were introduced in 1890 the authorities thought we had

two species of white-tailed deer as the hunter was allowed one moose, two caribou three deer, and three red deer. The law restricted the number anyone could kill in a year to this figure but only non-residents had to have a license. The season was September to May

The predominant yellow of our summer roadside flowers mentioned in our last number seems to have give way in many places to the beautiful blue of the Common Blue Aster.

We all realize that nuts are nutritious food and make use of all those on sale in the stores but do we know how many native nut-bearing trees there are in the province?

I have watched large flocks of Bluejays and Grackles feasting on the abundant crop of Beechnuts in the Fredericton area this fall. Hunters like to see a good crop of Beechnuts as the deer fatten on them.

The Hazelnut, Corylus cornuta, is familiar to every country boy who vies with the squirrels in collecting this crop and gets his fingers filled with spines by plucking the nuts too soon. The Hazelnut is a shrub seldom over 15 feet high and it is often abundant in neglected fence rows.

The Butternut, Juglans cinerea, also called White Walnut as it belongs to the same genus as the commercial Walnut, is very common in the Saint John River valley. I was surprised to find that this tree was not listed in Roland's recent "Flora of Nova Scotia" but I find that Gray's Manual gives its northeastern limit as western New Brunswick. The chief reason why this nut is not grown commercially is the fact that it is very difficult to open but the reward is well worth the efforts.

The acorns are also nuts as any squirrel could tell us. Those produced by our common Northern Red Oak are not very edible by human standards but I do not know about the rarer Bur Oak.

The Bald Eagle should be permitted to sue the Daily Gleaner in Fredericton for libel. On September 28th or 29th this daily pictured two men and a boy at MacDonald's Corner holding up a poor dead Eagle and underneath it was accused of chicken stealing. The picture should have had a black border as the Eagle is a very rare bird (we see them because they are large) and it has never been convicted of chicken stealing whatever other crimes it may commit. Miss Mary Foster wrote me early in September about another Eagle being shot at Mace's Bay, the first seen in years. It is a wonder there are any left.

On the other side of the ledger Bruce Wright reports a pair of young Eagles almost ready to fly in Sunbury County in August. This is the first successful breeding reported in Central New Brunswick.

The Bald Eagle is protected by law in all the American States and in many parts of Canada. I believe that killing it calls for a \$50.00 fine in Ontario. Let us hope someone does not propose a bounty in New Brunswick.

I beleive there is an increase in the number of Mourning Doves reported to me this season. Mr. Woolfenden saw two on Machias Seal August 24th; I saw one at Kingsclear August 28th; and Miss MacCoubrey reported a juvenile at St. Andrews September 10th.

Miss Alice Foster of Salisbury saw a Flicker apparently just out of the nest on August 20th. This would mean that the egg could have been laid as late as July 15th a very late date unless this was a second brood.

FOREWORD

More than twenty-five requests for Nature News have been received from teachers and others interested in Nature since our September number was released. Included were two on the letterhead of Departments of Education of Quebec and Nova Scotia.

My book "Birds of New Brunswick" is at last being printed and should be available early in 1952. This supplies the New Brunswick chapter in the story of North American birds and contains detailed information on the species and subspecies found here together with a historical account and quite a complete bibliography. To anyone studying birds in this province it should be used as a companion to any of the popular field guides. This book will be sold through the business office of the Museum. The price has not yet been set but should not exceed two dollars.

W. A. Squires, Curator.



If anyone disagreed with my note in the last issue about the rarity of the Bald Eagle and the advisability of protecting it they should read the December number of the Reader's Digest.

I have learned that this eagle is protected in Quebec as well as Ontario but would like to learn its status in the other provinces. I have heard that British Columbia pays a fifty cent bounty. If so this is regrettable as only rigorous protection can save it from ultimate extinction. It feeds chiefly on dead or dying fish being a poor fisherman. Evidence of damage to commercial or game species is so slight that no bounty can be justified. It is practically harmless and a scavenger.

A great movement of Chickadees has taken place in the northeast of the continent this fall. This was noted especially in southern Ontario where great numbers of both Black-capped and Brown-headed were seen in late October and early November. I saw great numbers of Black-caps in central and southern New Brunswick at about the same time. What did you see and are there any around now? The Chickadees are not considered migratory so this is an unusual movement.

Our inquiry about Cedar Waxwings brought the information that great numbers of this species were present at Newcastle and elsewhere in Northumberland County and also near Codys in Queens County during the past summer.

Henrik Deichmann of Moss Glen, Kings County, has supplied a number of interesting records. On October 2nd he reports a Northern Phalarope on the Kennebecasis River; on the 28th he saw a Mourning Dove; and on November 1st 30 Horned Larks arrived there.

Dr. J. C. Medcof of the Atlantic Biological Station at St. Andrews recently sent several shells of the Iceland Scallop, Pecten islandicus, to the Museum. These were found in the Bay of Fundy near Digby by fishermen getting the Common Scallop, Pecten grandis. It is very scarce in comparison to the latter.

I visited Grand Manan on October 17th when the Moses collection of birds was presented to the Grand Manan High School. This island is noted for the birds seen during migration and although the season was late and the weather unfavorable an Olive-backed Thrush dropped out of the thick fog to the main deck of the Grand Manan III just before we docked at North Head.

June and August are probably the best months to study birds there but some of the sea birds which intrigue the visitor from inland may be seen at any season. Of special interest to me were the American Eiders seen at many places.

After visiting Grand Manan we are inclined to agree with the Wildlife Service which advocates various measures to curb the steadily increasing population of Herring and Black-backed Gulls which now are found in countless numbers in the Bay of Fundy and well down the New England coast. These gulls drive out or destroy breeding colonies of rarer sea birds and many a migrating land bird that drops exhausted on the shore is immediately devoured by the gulls.

In the Moses collection referred to above is a mounted Lobster which, if I remember correctly, was 42 inches over all length. This must have weighed 25 or 30 pounds. I wish we had a similar one in the New Brunswick Museum. These "Junbo" Lobsters are too big to get into the commercial traps but are sometimes found clinging to the outside. I have heard that the record Maritime Lobster weighed about 35 pounds.

Around Saint John there has been a very poor crop of Mountain Ash (Rowan) berries this fall and the Starlings have not gathered in as great flocks as usual. Has this scarcity of berries been general?

The Evening Grosbeaks appeared early this fall in southern New Brunswick. W. S. Nelson reported them near Saint John on November 3rd or 4th.

Mrs. A. B. Williston of Newcastle has supplied some rather interesting data on the birds which used Tent Caterpillars for food last summer. She saw Robins, Grackles, Starlings, and Cowbirds eating the caterpillars and Grackles opening the cocoons to get at the pupae. She does not mention the Cuckoo which is noted for following up Tent Caterpillar outbreaks for easy living. Even the trout were gorged on the caterpillars.

Statistics show us that we should not become too concerned over the occasional bird found dead or killed by cats or other predators. In most cases all that is desirable is that the population be maintained from year to year. Any great increase in one species, as mentioned for the gulls above, means that one or more other species must decrease. If a pair of Robins, for example, nests three times in the summer they will start with at least 12 young - including the parents 14 individuals of which only two need survive the winter to maintain the population.

Much more serious are storms during migration which occasionally destroy the whole species population from one region or disease such as botulism which in one year destroyed more ducks in the Prairie Provinces than all the hunters in North America shot that year.