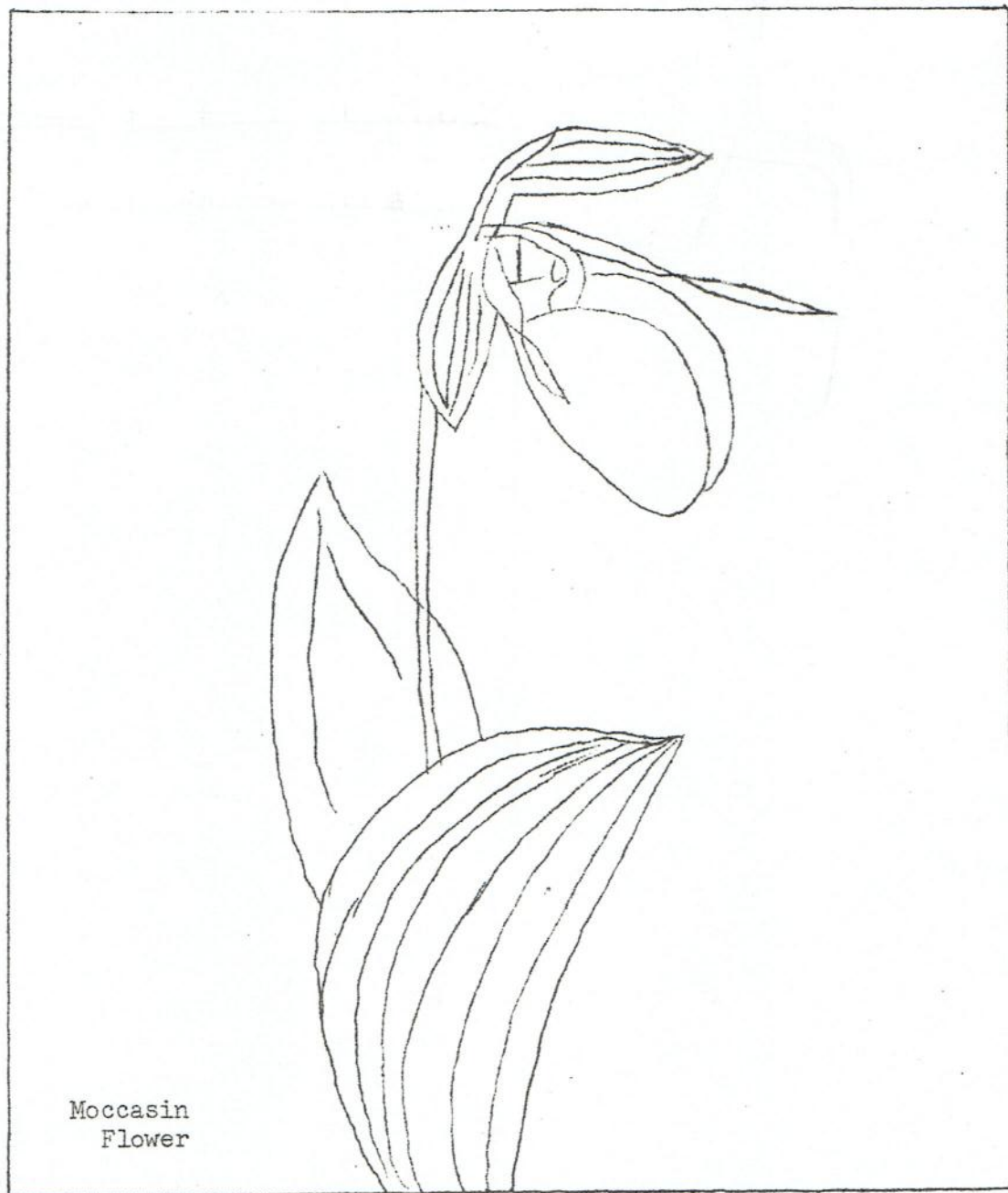


NATURE NEWS



Moccasin
Flower

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

F O R E W O R D

It hardly seems possible that one of these bulletins has been prepared nearly every second month for the past five years. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have contributed notes on their observations of plant and animal life during this time. You have done much to add to the interest of the News and many records which would otherwise have been lost have been preserved. All reports sent in are preserved here whether it is possible to publish them or not.

Nature News is distributed to over six hundred persons. All members of the Museum receive this bulletin and those issued by the other departments as well. In addition Nature News is sent to a considerable number of teachers and schools who have asked for it and to nearly everyone who has contributed any notes on their observations over the last two or three years.

We were very pleased last year that many of those who wished to receive bulletins also became members of the Museum. The Membership Secretary has already invited all members to renew their annual contribution for 1955. You are invited to pass on the membership form which is enclosed to anyone whom you think would be interested in becoming a member of the Museum. The non-resident rate applies if you live more than twenty-five miles from the Museum.

W.A. Squires, Curator.

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This has been decidedly a winter for Pine Grosbeaks in central and southern New Brunswick. In our last number we mentioned reports for late October and November and since that time we have had literally dozens of telephone calls in the Saint John area and a few at Fredericton requesting identification of birds nearly the size of the Robin, with black and white wings and some of them with rosy red on the head, neck and back - a good description of the male Pine Grosbeak. A flock was also reported at Sussex and Mrs. R.G. Thexton reported flocks of 16 to 24 near Fredericton December 28th and 29th.

When I suggested in the September-October number that the Gray Squirrel might soon be reported from the northeastern part of the Province I did not expect an immediate response as Stanley and Moncton were the most northerly records east of the St. John River valley. I was therefore more than surprised when I received a letter dated December 23rd from Mr. Hamilton Gammon, a schoolteacher in Bathurst, reporting a Gray Squirrel in that area. He said it was new there and quite tame, and only one had been seen. It would certainly be interesting to know how it got there. This squirrel seems to prefer settled areas and it would seem doubtful if it would reach Bathurst from the Saint John valley by crossing the hundred miles of wilderness in between but on the other hand our correspondents in Newcastle and Chatham have not reported any Gray Squirrels from there as yet.

Miss Alice Foster of Salisbury saw a flock of Canada Geese January 16th. This appears to be the first January report of Geese that I have ever had. She reported Bluejays quite common, two being seen about daily. She also reported a pair of Gray Squirrels at Salisbury this winter.

Miss Mary Foster reported Juncoes at Harvey Station November 16th and December 2nd and five Evening Grosbeaks December 2nd and 4th. Incidentally as far as I can judge from reports or lack of reports Evening Grosbeaks do not seem to be nearly as common as usual this winter.

My reference in a recent number to the attempts made in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to protect game by Acts of the Legislature proved of interest to several members of the legal profession. Mr. Cyrus F. Inches, Q.C. was moved to look up the statutes and found several Acts with which I was unfamiliar. Perhaps the most interesting is an Act passed in 1821 entitled "An Act for the Preservation of the Red and Fallow Deer." This Act serves to disprove further Abraham Gesner's assertion (1847) that the Deer was unknown in New Brunswick before 1818. Certainly if the first Deer were found in the Province in 1818 the Government would not be passing an Act for their protection within three years. Governments just do not operate that quickly. I have shown elsewhere that Deer were probably here at least 200 years before 1818. It is obvious, however, that little was known about our Deer at that time. The Act may have been written by an Englishman who had come here as a colonial civil servant as the Red Deer and Fallow Deer which are referred to are common species in Great Britain and many parts of Europe but are not native to any part of North America. Gesner (1847) also called our Deer the Fallow Deer. This Act apparently was the start of the curious situation whereby until 1897 there were legally two kinds of Deer (not counting Moose and Caribou) in New Brunswick while scientifically there was only one quite different species, the White-tailed Deer.

The Game Act of 1890 permitted the killing of three Deer and three Red Deer. Our White-tailed Deer even belongs to quite a different genus from the European species named.

Mr. Inches also found "An Act for the Preservation of Partridges" passed in 1814. (Here again our birds are Grouse not Partridges). This Act protected these birds from March 1st. to September 1st. and appealed to Man's baser nature for its enforcement as it provided that the person laying the complaint was to receive the fine which was set at 10 shillings for each bird killed or offered for sale. This Act was still in force unchanged twenty-two years later and it is safe to assume that our Grouse have been protected during part of the year ever since.

We have a very belated report from Mrs. Thexton of Fredericton but it should be put on record. She reports that a male Red-eyed Towhee was seen in the O'Dell Woods at Fredericton for three days in late May 1953. This seems to be only the fifth time this bird has ever been reported in the Province. Its distinctive markings make identification unmistakable.

Many people make some effort to provide food for the birds during the winter. Suet and bits of meat will often attract such birds as Chickadees, Nuthatches and Downy Woodpeckers but they do not need assistance as their food supply, mostly insect eggs and pupae, is easily available. It is the seed-eating birds which often starve to death when there is deep snow. If you live in the country a basketful of hayseed and chaff from the barn floor will often attract Redpolls and Finches. If you have a feeding shelf, a combination of seeds will satisfy most birds. Sunflowers, broken corn, cracked wheat, buckwheat and hulled oats are recommended and are nearly all in the mixed grain available for poultry. In addition the millet (bird seed) available for parakeets will find favor with many species.

N A T U R E N E W S

Vol. VI

March-April 1955

Number 2

F O R E W O R D

The date was inadvertently omitted from the last number. If you are preserving a set you should mark it "January-February 1955."

This spring has come slowly and so have the birds and the early flowers.

I would like to have reports and specimens of spring flowers from as many parts of the Province as possible to write up in the May-June number.

W.A. Squires, Curator

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In some parts of New Brunswick winter has been unusually reluctant to release its grip but at the time of writing the ice has moved out of the Saint John River and there is a decided promise of spring. The accumulated snowfall varied greatly in various districts. St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Saint John and the coastal areas in between were relatively bare all winter. Moncton, we understand had little snow, but Fredericton and central and northern New Brunswick generally had the deepest snow in recent years. More snow fell in several recent winters but it did not remain to such a depth.

Bluejays were reported all winter at Harvey Station, Debec and Jacksonville. They have come regularly for food in all these places.

Miss Arnand reported a flock of 20 Redpolls and several Chickadees at Jacksonville February 22nd and 26th. She reported Crows plentiful there by March 17th.

Starlings appear to be steadily increasing. This has been the first winter that I have seen them present in considerable numbers at Saint John and Fredericton. Miss Arnand reported a flock at Jacksonville before March 17th and incidentally had something to say in favour of this newcomer stating that the starlings helped in the fight against the armyworm last summer.

The Hungarian Partridge had a difficult time where the snow was deep and was fed in many places. Flocks reported at East St. John by Mrs. R.J. Collins and at St. Martins by Mr. Kaare Smith apparently survived.

Many people associate the Robin with spring more perhaps than any other bird. A few Robins can usually be found in southern New Brunswick in winter but as they feed almost exclusively on earthworms, insects and fruits their winter distribution is limited to places where some of the ground is not frozen. This year the larger flocks of Robins were long delayed but a few began to appear in the first week of April. Mrs. McKinney reported both Robins and Grackles at Ingleside April 3rd and Mr. G.G. Murdoch saw the first Robins in his garden on Douglas Avenue, Saint John, April 6th. Mr. DuPlessis saw Robins at Keswick on April 3rd. Miss Arnand reported them at Jacksonville April 4th and said that

the first ones had been seen in Upper Woodstock the last of March. By Good Friday, April 8th, the occasional Robin appeared on the few patches of bare ground showing at Fredericton on that date. Grackles and Juncoes were common there also.

Early in the morning on April 9th I was out watching and listening to the birds at Fredericton. Juncoes and Song Sparrows were busily scratching on the ground, Grackles and Starlings were very noisy in the tree tops, and Robins were hunting for worms, when all of a sudden the noise and chatter ceased and a Sharp-shinned Hawk alighted in a tree close by. Everything remained quiet until it moved on. The Grackles and Starlings which were very conspicuous overhead remained motionless and there were no fatalities.

Mrs. R.G. Thexton of Fredericton reported two pairs of Killdeers and several flocks of Red-winged Blackbirds at Maugerville April 3rd and Black Ducks, American Goldeneyes and one male Bufflehead near Jemseg.

Mr. Bruce DuPlessis reported the first Red-wing at Keswick March 16th and a Red-shouldered Hawk on March 20th. Juncoes and Song-Sparrows were at Keswick in large numbers April 10th and Sparrow Hawks were also seen.

Mr. DuPlessis also reported seeing a large snow white bird in flight on April 9th. Estimated length and wingspread about 6 feet. The wing tips and legs were black and the front of the head reddish. It flew with head and legs outstretched. It was flying high but was studied through high-power binoculars. Some other observer must have seen such a large bird. If so we would like to hear about it. Suggestions for its identity would be welcome. The description, of course, fits the Whooping Crane but the possibility that one of the two dozen remaining members of this species would wander to New Brunswick must be ruled out.

I have not seen any spring wildflowers to date. The Coltsfoot is undoubtedly already in bloom here in Saint John but none of my friends who usually find the earliest one have reported yet. Our next number should devote considerable space to flowers.

For several years now I have included a paragraph about the Deer which travellers on the C.P.R. between Welsford and Fredericton Junction see in the spring of the year. For some reason the Deer congregate in numbers in the woods and fields northeast of the right-of-way. Perhaps the soot from the coal smoke causes the snow to melt more quickly in this area. This year was no exception. On April 1st I saw at least fifty deer in five miles in this area but a week later the herd must have broken up as the snow was gone and so were the Deer.

Are there any enthusiastic fossil collectors among our readers? I haven't paid too much attention to this phase of nature study and would appreciate information on localities throughout the province where fossils can be found. I know, of course, that fossil ferns, lepidodendrons, sigillarias, etc. may be found in a wide area in central New Brunswick and especially in the Minto-Chipman coalfield. Other carboniferous fossils may be found in the Duck Cove area west of Saint John and I have also seen fossil fishes from both Albert and Restigouche Counties and fossiliferous limestone from Hampstead.

NATURE NEWS

Vol. VI

May June

Number 3

FOREWORD

The mailing list of this bulletin is now nearly as large as our limited staff can handle easily so that it may be necessary to revise it. All museum members receive the bulletins automatically and it is also sent to a number of teachers and others interested in nature.

Some addresses may now be obsolete. If your copy is not correctly addressed or if the person named no longer lives at this address please notify us.

The book "The Birds of New Brunswick" published by the Museum two years ago may still be purchased here for \$2.00 plus \$.06 tax if delivered in the province. Make cheques payable at par in Saint John.

W. A. Squires, Curator.

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Some years the spring flowers seem to come into bloom in a leisurely fashion so that it is an easy matter for the teacher who keeps a nature calendar to keep up with them. Other years a host of species burst into bloom in a day or two. This year the weekend of May 21-23 was very hot in much of the Province after an otherwise cold spring. On Friday May 20th, ten days later than 1953, I saw the first blooms on the Shadbush (otherwise known as Bilberry, Juneberry, Indian Pear, etc.) at Douglas, York County, and by Tuesday this beautiful shrub was in full bloom everywhere. Other years the Bird or Pin Cherry has come into bloom about a week later than the Shadbush but this year they blossomed at the same time.

The following were among the flowers which I saw during that weekend at Fredericton - Yellow Rocket, Yellow Violet, False Mitrewort, Twisted Stalk, Bellwort, Cuckoo Flower, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Wood Buttercup and both Red and White Baneberry. Canada Plum, Red-berried Elder, Wild Currant and the Viburnum commonly called Hobblebush or Moosewood were also in bloom at this time. The latter was in bloom near Saint John by May 12th. I saw Rhodora for the first time May 24th in Sunbury County.

Bluets were found at Chipman on May 18th and Red and Painted Trilliums were out during that week. White Violets were reported by Mrs. McKinney at Ingleside May 1st. and Blue Violets were in full bloom a week later. The earliest report I had for the Dog-tooth Violet was May 6th.

I do not have an early date for the Mayflower (Trailing Arbutus) but I found it nearly done blooming in Sunbury County on May 14th. Miss May Armand had it near Woodstock on May 15th.

At this season of the year there seems to be a multitude of weeds with tiny flowers which are difficult to identify. Most of these belong to the Chickweed Family. They are mostly white and are seldom included in a small flower book. They include Sand Spurrey, Pearlwort, Sandwort, Starwort and various Chickweeds and Stitchworts. Even the Shepherd's Purse may prove difficult to identify before the "purses" develop.

Eyebright with minute purple and white blooms is another small but very distinctive flower.

Mr. A.P. Hetherington of Cross Creek reported *Hepatica* near Stanley about May 15th. He also reported that it had been found near Nashwaak Bridge. My experience has been that this flower is local and rare in this Province. I have only found it in one place at Douglas, York County. In the Museum Herbarium there are specimens from Keswick Ridge and Douglas, and from Belleisle, Kings County. Last year I had a report from near Canterbury. If I have had other reports I have not recorded them. This plant has several peculiarities. The colored parts are sepals not petals. These are usually bluish-lavender but there are forms deep-purple, rosy-pink and white. The leaves are green throughout the winter and the blossoms appear before the new leaves. In some parts of its range the *Hepatica* is known as Mayflower or Spring Beauty, names which refer to quite different plants in New Brunswick.

Miss Ethel Duffy of Nauwigewauk brought in a Spring Beauty on May 24th with one of the largest blossoms I have seen, nearly one inch across. The five-petalled flowers are white or pale pink with lines of deeper pink. This plant also seems to be local and rather scarce in this province, but where it is found the growth may be very dense. Last spring I saw it growing in profusion over a considerable area at Keswick Ridge. No one in that area would be tempted to call it scarce or rare.

Small-flowered Anemone, the earliest Anemone in New Brunswick, was found at Ingleside by Mrs. McKinney May 3rd and at Woodstock by Miss Arnand on May 20th. I did not have an opportunity to visit a place near Fredericton where I have found it other years.

By the time this number is distributed the Lady's Slippers should be in bloom. Both the Yellow and the Pink were reported June 4th in 1953.

Bird migration has of course continued throughout May and into June. Individuals of the same species may continue to arrive or pass through the province for six weeks or longer. Thus most years Hermit and Olive-backed Thrushes may be seen as early as April 6th but observers on the south coast and the Bay of Fundy islands may recognize obviously fresh arrivals from the south until the middle of May. Mrs. McKinney noted both species at Ingleside, Kings County on May 6th for the first time. Other miscellaneous arrivals at Ingleside were Phoebe and Purple Martin April 20th, White-throated Sparrow May 4th, Hummingbird May 16th, Whippoorwill June 1st. The Frogs and Toads were singing at Saint John April 25th and at Ingleside May 3rd, and the Bittern was "booming" at Ingleside May 9th.

On May 27th Mrs. May Lister reported an unusual gathering of Hummingbirds, twelve on a flowering currant in her garden at Fredericton.

A western bird never before recorded in New Brunswick has been reported twice this spring - the American Magpie. Mrs. Fred Nutter reported seeing one once at St. Andrews April 19th and on April 20th Mrs. James Bradshaw of St. Martins reported that her husband saw a strange black and white bird with a flock of grackles. A very detailed description made it as certain as a sight record can be that the bird was a Magpie.

Mrs. Nutter recorded the Phoebe at St. Andrews April 9th, Tree Swallows April 11th, Cliff Swallows May 1st, Barn Swallows May 16th and Chimney Swifts May 22nd. She also reported the first Mourning Cloak Butterfly April 19th.

NATURE NEWS

Vol.VI.

July - August

Number 4

F O R E W O R D

This is the season when more people get closer to Nature than at any other time of year. The more we know about the world around us the more pleasant this contact can be for Nature is not necessarily friendly.

The many cases of water accidents and usually less serious sunburning are as a rule not due so much to ignorance as to gross carelessness. The many instances where people suffer from contact with Poison Ivy are all due to ignorance and everyone should become familiar with this widespread plant.

There are many other plants of which the fruit or the stems or roots are poisonous if eaten but very seldom are there cases of poisoning from these. In this case ignorance and fear of being poisoned causes people to neglect many valuable sources of wild food.

W.A. Squires, Curator

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In our last number we mentioned many spring flowers. Since it was written the Adult Nature Group studied all the flowers which could be found on June 13th. A record number of 60 species were identified. Bog Rosemary proved to be of much interest and unknown to nearly all present. Lance-leafed Violet was another curiosity and Tall Lungwort, if correctly identified, is apparently a new record for the province. Now at the end of July the flowers in bloom are mostly different. The Evening Primrose is coming into bloom, escaped Day Lilies have appeared along the roadside, Vetch and Beach Pea, Mustard in the oat-fields and Milkweed starting to show colour in the roadside ditches. Even Joe-Pye-Weed and Goldenrod are out in some parts of the Province.

On a visit to York and Carleton Counties on July 24th I was impressed by the profusion of Black-eyed Susans in the Upper St. John Valley.

By the roadside the two species of Elder could often be seen side by side - the Red-berried Elder with berries already ripe and the Common or Sweet Elder just coming into bloom.

Chicory is a tall weed with its bloom a beautiful shade of blue. It is scarce in the south of the Province but Miss May Armand reported it at Hartland July 16th and I saw it in profusion there and elsewhere in the Upper St. John Valley on July 24th.

July is an in-between season for bird study when only the summer residents can be found. I did see a flock of Greater Yellowlegs at the Red Head marsh on July 20th as the very first of the fall migrants are moving by the end of the month but the great flood of northern summering species will appear later. However, some very interesting observations can be seen in our own gardens.

An observer in Fredericton had an interesting experience with a Downy Woodpecker. While spraying her garden on an extremely hot dry evening she saw the Downy on a low branch of a tree and turned the spray on him. Instead of flying away as she expected he called in his mate and five young and they all sat in a row and enjoyed the shower.

There has been a surprising sequel to the report of Magpies seen at St. Andrews and St. Martins in April published in our last number. The Bulletin of the Maine Audubon Society has reported a series of April and one May report for Maine and suggests that several Magpies said to have been released in Vermont in the fall of 1954 had wandered to the south-east.

It is not at all unusual to see a Bald Eagle in New Brunswick but there is a special thrill when one sees an individual in adult plumage in flight with the sun glinting on the white head and tail as I did on the afternoon of July 24th near Woodstock.

Baltimore Orioles appear to be getting commoner. I have seen them many times in the central St. John valley this year. Miss Armand reported a pair and four young at Upper Woodstock July 16th.

A pair of Scarlet Tanagers were reported nesting in Fredericton - the first breeding report I have had in many years.

A belated report of an Evening Grosbeak found dead at Carroll's Crossing, Northumberland County, on May 26th should be recorded. As described to me this was a male. This record suggests breeding which, if confirmed, would extend considerably the known breeding range of this Grosbeak in northern New Brunswick.

Mr. Arnold Kee of Saint John reports an experience which should make him envied by all bird lovers. This summer a pair of Hummingbirds built a nest in the shrubbery by his summer home and at last report two tiny young had been hatched.

We have not often referred to butterflies in this bulletin and it may be a surprise to many of our readers to know that there are at least 70 species and a number of subspecies found in this Province. Miss May Armand reported the Tiger Swallowtail, Spring Azure, Cabbage, and one species of Sulphur butterflies at Stickney, Carleton County on June 18th.

We would be much interested to learn more about the distribution of turtles in this Province. There is much confusion about the use of the terms "turtle" and "tortoise". While in common practice these terms have become almost interchangeable it is proper American scientific usage to call all species found in New Brunswick turtles. Our commonest species is the Wood Turtle. Because of the bright colors on the edge of the carapace and on the plastron this is often miscalled the Painted Turtle, a rarer species. The two can easily be told apart as the upper surface of the Wood Turtle is very rough with distinct growth rings while the Painted Turtle is smooth. Two specimens of the huge Snapping Turtle found in York and Sunbury Counties were reported in this bulletin last year. It is also suggested that the Box Turtle and Blanding's Turtle may occur here but we have no records.

NATURE NEWS

Vol. VI

September - October 1955

Number 5

F O R E W O R D

The title of this bulletin makes anything in the realm of nature legitimate subject matter. I try to introduce a new branch of nature from time to time in hopes of finding someone already interested in it or of persuading someone to take an interest. Shells are introduced for, I think, the first time in this number.

There were actually more reports from readers than I could use this time but keep them coming in. All information received is kept on file and in six years quite an imposing file has accumulated.

W.A. Squires, Curator.

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Two reports received during the summer are outstanding. Mrs. A.B. Williston of Newcastle wrote that on June 12th a pair of Evening Grosbeaks alighted on her lawn and she witnessed the "nuptial dance", something I have read about but never seen. She also reported that Evening Grosbeaks had been seen at Newcastle on May 24th.

Miss Gillett of Andover reported that while she was reading the last number of "Nature News" on August 14th two males and one female Evening Grosbeak appeared at her bird bath. They were seen again on the 15th and 16th, the date of the letter.

A dead male Evening Grosbeak with a band on it was found at Andover early in September by Miss Kathy Wylie. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service informs us that this bird was banded at Berlin, New Hampshire, on November 15, 1954.

Miss Gillett also reported Killdeer numerous at Andover this summer. The increase in Killdeer reported in the last ten years has been spectacular. The first breeding record was at St. Andrews in 1946 and the first report from Victoria County was a specimen from Nictau on the Tobique River in May 1947.

Mrs. Alliston reported Warblers very plentiful this past summer. I think this must have been the experience of many observers. I have seen literally thousands of Myrtle Warblers since the middle of August. Often flocks of ten to twenty would fly up from the roadside. Miss Mary Foster reported a Bay-breasted Warbler at Salisbury on August 10th.

I have had many inquiries about a bird usually seen on a lawn and often described as marked like a partridge or a woodcock but with red on the head and a black spot on the breast. All of these reports must refer to Flickers. The confusion must arise because many people knowing that the Flicker is a woodpecker do not expect to see it on the ground. The Flicker probably gets more food on the ground than it does from trees as it is very fond of ants. Look for a large white patch at the base of the tail as it flies away from you.

The Bluejays seem to be more numerous than usual this fall. Miss Alice Foster heard one at Salisbury in late August and saw one September 2nd. Throughout August and September I saw Bluejays everywhere I went in the Province and found them equally abundant in northern New England.

It is possible that we could assemble some useful data on the distribution of our wild animals by keeping accurate records of those seen alive or dead along our highways. On one night trip between Fredericton and Woodstock in September I saw three Raccoons and one Porcupine and a passenger saw a Skunk all alive by the roadside. We did not pay much attention to the number dead on the road.

Probably most of our mammals would appear on the highways sooner or later but those which suffer the heaviest mortality are the Porcupine, Skunk, Rabbit, Raccoon, Chipmunk, Red Squirrel and Groundhog. I have seen Deer on the highway many times and have had reports of Bears, Panthers and, of course, Moose disputing the right of way with the motor car.

An albino Robin has attracted a lot of attention in the Rothesay and Renforth area since the middle of September.

Mrs. McKinney reported a small flock of White-winged Crossbills at Ingleside for a week in mid-September.

A young lady from Maine, Miss Payne of Portland, during a six-day visit to southern New Brunswick August 22-27, identified some sixty species of birds and in addition made a collection of shells from the Bay of Fundy beaches. The latter was of special interest to me as so few local people have made a study of them. In this brief visit and at only three beaches she collected 19 species which she identified as follows: Black Clam, Chestnut Astarte, Wavy Astarte, Northern Cardita, Iceland Cockle, Little Cockle, Razor Clam, Tortoise-shell Limpet, Moon Shell, Cup-and-Saucer Limpet, Slipper Shell, Flat Slipper, Common Periwinkle, Rock Purple, Waved Whelk, Stimpson's Whelk, Baltic Macoma, Little Surf Clam and Delicate Tellin.

There are a number of fine books, well illustrated, now available for studying and identifying shells and I should be glad to refer anyone to them.

Prof. Stallworthy of Mount Allison University, Sackville reports that a pair of crabs brought to him from Cape Tormentine on Northumberland Strait proved to be Lady Crabs, Ovalipes ocellatus. As far as we can learn Lady Crabs have not previously been reported north of Massachusetts. If anyone has further information on their occurrence here we would like to hear about it. The Northumberland Strait and Gulf of St. Lawrence coast of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia is famous for a number of marine forms which are absent or extremely scarce along the Atlantic coast for several hundred miles to the south. The Oyster and the Quahog Clam are two of these.

NATURE NEWS

Vol. VI

November - December 1955

Number 6

F O R E W O R D

At this time of year there is not as good an opportunity for a varied nature programme as there is in summer but there are several special activities.

Preparing Christmas bird lists occupies thousands of our fellow North Americans between December 25th and January 2nd. The Audubon Society publishes an annual book made up exclusively of these lists.

If you have a suitable situation, put out food for the winter birds or better still keep a feeding tray. But don't be so swayed by sentiment that you feed English Sparrows, Starlings or Pigeons.

W.A. Squires, Curator

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A further note on Magpies seems to be called for. We have already reported one seen in St. Andrews and St. Martins in April, and in July we quoted the Bulletin of the Maine Audubon Society which gave a number of magpie reports for April and May in Maine and attributed them to seven of these western birds released in Vermont in September 1954.

In October I heard of one of these Magpies which had been in Grand Manan for some time and early in November received a specimen in the flesh from Keith Ingersoll which had been taken at White Head by Carl Small. What is more significant is that Elmer Wilcox reported seeing three in a tree at Deep Cove at about the same time. If all of the Magpie reports come from the seven liberated in Vermont in September 1954 it would appear that some of them must have bred in 1955 as it is very unlikely that three out of the original seven would still be together fourteen months later. From all accounts this is a bird that we could well do without and it is to be hoped that it has not become established.

Mrs. R.G. Thexton of Fredericton sent me a list of birds observed from April to October. Several records require special mention. On August 12th she saw a flock of fourteen Evening Grosbeaks at Fredericton. Although these birds have been breeding in northern New Brunswick for at least fifteen years this is the first summer report as far south as Fredericton. A flock of 10 or 12 Rose-Breasted Grosbeaks on September 11th is also unusual as these are so scarce in New Brunswick that seldom more than a family group is seen. I was glad to see a report of one Bluebird June 9th and eight September 23rd as the Audubon Society has reported them seriously down in numbers in the northeast.

Evening Grosbeaks are now being reported more frequently in the south of the Province. I heard of a flock near Westfield early in December and about December 15th Mrs. Chester Whittier reported 25 feeding on frozen apples near St. Stephen. Mrs. Whittier also reported Barn Swallows on November 10th and a few days after. Every few years a few swallows are reported long after they should have migrated.

Confirming our report of the great abundance of Myrtle Warblers both Mrs. Thexton and Miss May Arnand of Jacksonville refer to great numbers of this species in September and early October. The latter did not identify them but described the "yellow rump" which gave this species the now obsolete name of Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Miss Arnand sent us some interesting notes on sea shells which she had seen and collected around the world. She also mentioned fresh water clams or mussels but like all the rest of us was not able to name many individual species. She called to mind how often we used to see large tropical conchs used for door stops in New Brunswick homes. Large corals such as the Brain Coral were also used as household decorations.

Mr. Peter Landry of Port Hope, Ontario, wrote me describing a Dickcissel which he saw at Seal Cove, Grand Manan, on August 18th. It was seen at 50 feet with a 30 power scope. In my "Birds of New Brunswick" 1952 this species was included in an addenda as hypothetical on the basis of two sight records at Machias Seal Island. It was also reported at St. Andrews, September 21st, 1952.

Mr. & Mrs. Donald MacPhail of Sackville reported four Horned Larks at Fort Beausejour on October 8th, a male Cowbird at Sackville on November 27th, and more than 25 Pheasants near Aulac on November 26th, several weeks after the season for hunting them had closed. This is the latest date on which I have ever had Cowbirds reported but last year there were large numbers of them at Halifax at Christmas.

I believe that the end of Westmorland County towards Nova Scotia has a large population of Horned Larks in late fall and early spring. Any readers in Memramcook, Sackville or Amherst should be on the lookout for them. I saw my first Horned Larks on the Tantramar marsh near Upper Sackville and Reid McManus reported hundreds at Memramcook in the early 1930s in February. These birds seem to migrate slowly, feeding by the wayside and I surmise, without any proof, that much of the summer population of eastern New Brunswick, Gaspé and perhaps farther north move through the Isthmus of Chignecto in November and December and spend a couple of months in Nova Scotia before starting north again.

Miss May Arnand reported on wild flowers in bloom at Jacksonville on October 30th - Dandelion, Shepherd's Purse, Hemp Nettle, Buttercup and two species of Mustard - not a very choice lot but flowering plants just the same. On the next day, October 31st she reported Pansies, Phlox, Alyssum and Chrysanthemums in the flower garden. Mrs. Chester Whittier found Strawberry blossoms near St. Stephen on November 13th.

There have been quite a few more sight records of the Eastern Panther in the Province in recent months but even with the great mass of evidence including photographs proving that it is in the Province there are still a few sceptics in every audience who will not be convinced until they see one themselves. I have had a voluminous correspondence with a gentleman in New Hampshire who is trying to alert the Game Division in his state to the occurrence of the Panther there. The pattern there is the same as in many reports of long-tailed cats but no recent specimens, except that here none of us are now well satisfied that the Panther occurs