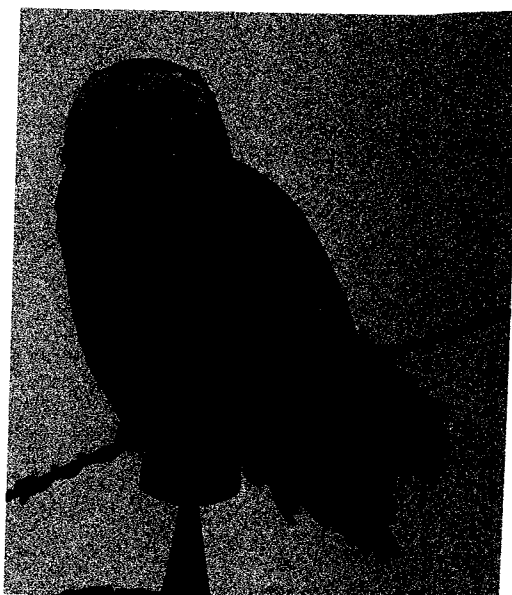
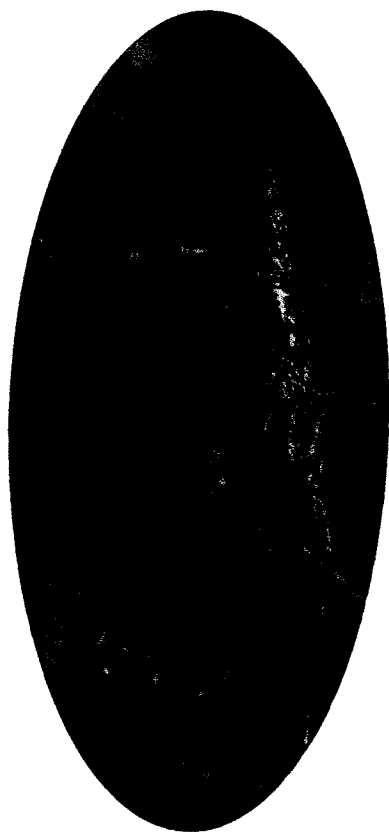
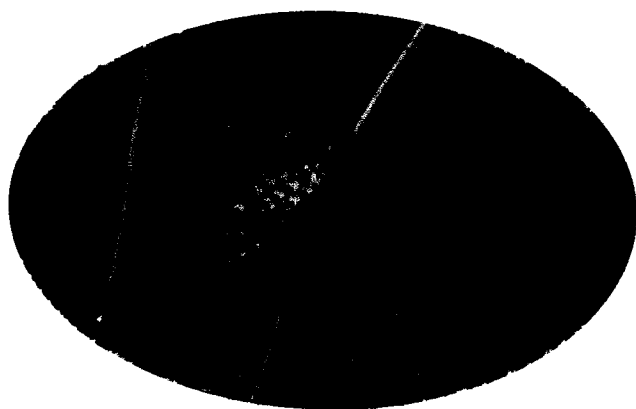


THE BLUE HERON

APRIL 2001 VOLUME 45, No. 2

The Official Publication of the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club of Barrie
Editor – Brian W. Gibbon.

50TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



SPRING ISSUE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*"Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth."*

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

Congratulations, Breretons, on reaching the robust age of fifty years. Realizing we are now halfway to Holmes' age of "feeling and looking queer", I wondered how the founders of our club felt when they were starting up the Breretons 'way back in 1951.

Some sleuthing by our incredible archivist, editor and jack of all trades, Brian Gibbon, led me to spend a recent Sunday afternoon with Dr. Ernie Bilkey at his nearby home on Kempenfelt Drive. He was the original second vice-president of the club, named after Dr. Ewart Lount Brereton, a Barrie dentist, orthodontist and avid naturalist.

Many of the original members were patients and friends of patients of Dr. Brereton, and had gone on birding outings with him. As Ernie recalls, he would often run into other club members in his waiting room, for Ernie worked with Dr. Brereton and took over Brereton's dental practice after the Doc passed away in 1950.

In the time they worked together, Dr. Brereton often took Ernie and his wife Dode out on weekend trips in his car. Ernie recalls the Doc being able to spot a meadowlark while driving at 60 miles per hour. Talk about your drive-by birding!

Dode Bilkey remembers Dr. Brereton as a wonderful man with a great sense of humour, and always very complimentary to the ladies. Mrs. Brereton did not share her husband's outdoor interests, but the Doc found others to inspire, including many of his younger patients. Ernie accompanied the Doc and Ott Devitt into Minesing Swamp with a few others, and attests that Devitt knew everything there was to know about birds. He found Devitt, the author of the original Birds of Simcoe County, to be a typical first child, outgoing, ambitious, and a real striver.

Ernie, who served as club president in 1954/55, was an avid canoeist, particularly keen on Algonquin Park. He always enjoyed the social interaction of the club's potluck dinners and the brown bagging of the field trips. There were lots of grebes to be seen while eating lunch on the rocks in front of the old downtown railway station, as well as many purple martins nesting on rooftops along Dunlop St. The sound of nighthawks calling and whirring through the air lulled the Bilkeys to sleep at night on Kempenfelt Drive.

After a field trip to Point Pelee, Ernie forever referred to it in jest as the Great Zerbonian Bog, much to the consternation of fellow member Fran Westman. Amazing how much these traditions of outdoor education mixed with good food and good fun have carried on for 50 years!

Many of the other "originals" were from the teaching profession. Anastasia Hughes taught at Barrie Central Collegiate, while Bill Bell was principal at Prince of Wales and later Hillcrest Public Schools, where many club meetings were held in the 1950's with excellent speakers from across Ontario and Canada, as well as many interesting presentations by club members.

Another surviving founding member is Mrs. Eva Fisher. Mrs. Fisher and her long time neighbours, Victor and Jean Knox, have recently donated their ravine property on Kidd's Creek, behind Hillcrest Public School, to the Simcoe County District School Board for use as an environmental studies area. The Brereton Field Naturalists' Club was instrumental in arranging this donation, and our club holds a conservation easement on the property to ensure that it is maintained in its natural state.

After 50 years, we can look back with pride at what our members have accomplished and the great enjoyment they have had. We can look forward to overcoming our own challenges as naturalists, and having just as much fun in the process. HAPPY 50TH !!!

April, 2001

Alan McNair

FROM THE EDITOR

I felt that it would only be fitting to mix a few articles from previous issues in with current ones and while I was researching old Blue Herons it struck me how

appropriate the old adage is "the more things change the more they stay the same". Although we may be going to different areas now than in the past we still do a Horned Lark search, a raptor outing, wild flower observations and bird counts just as we have done over the last 50 years. Conservation issues still dominate the Club's agenda

Phyllis Tremblay gave me an article that appeared in the June 20, 1968 Examiner concerning a meeting of the Little Lake Park Development Committee. Our Club was then promoting the natural preservation of Little Lake - "Mrs. Fran Westman, on behalf of the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club of Barrie, told the committee that she considered the 87-acre park site on the north-east shore of the Lake had 'tremendous potential' as a wildlife preserve and bird sanctuary."

There was an article in the October 1967 Blue Heron concerning Little Lake and the Club's feelings concerning the protection of the Lake.

In June of 1999 a group of our members led by then President Alex Mills took a group of City councilors and administrators on an outing to Little Lake to point out the natural heritage that the City owns and encouraged them to work towards it's preservation.

In May 2000 City Council directed the Parks & Recreation Dept. to research a plan for an appropriate public park system complementing the goal of regenerating the natural heritage features of the lands around Little Lake.

We do have a positive impact!

Notes from the October 1966 issue - "To date (October 17) Mrs. Fran Westman has picked up 119 dead birds at the local TV tower. (CKVR) She has classified and weighed these birds and sent them to the Royal Ontario Museum."

"About 18 Club members took part in the September hike led by Mrs. Westman. They visited some ponds on private property on the 8th concession of Essa Twp. with the permission of the owner. Thirty-five species of birds were identified including a Sora Rail. The party also found both fringed and bottle gentian."

In February 1959 Barrie experienced an influx of Bohemian Waxwings. This feathered invasion sparked a human invasion of bird watchers including two gentlemen from Ann Arbor Michigan as well as James L. Baillie, John Livingston and Dr. R. M

Saunders and numerous other luminaries from the birding fraternity.

From the April 1959 Newsletter Fran Westman reported - "One of the delightful things about keeping a feeding tray in winter is the unexpected things, which turn up. Last year it was the Carolina Wren, and this year a beautifully-plumaged male towhee appeared on December 10th and stayed the winter"

The first record in the Blue Heron of the Christmas Bird Count appears for December 29, 1962. We carry on this tradition with the inclusion of the count results from December 2000 in this issue.

I could fill this whole issue with excerpts from our collection of Newsletters starting in April 1956.

A HISTORY OF THE BRERETON FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB.

I am indebted to the work of Betty Hill in compiling several scrapbooks from a collection of clippings and photos donated by Anastasia Hughes. Then Betty and her friends add to it. Without this collection, our history may well have been lost.

On January 28, 1951 a nomination meeting to bring in a slate of officers was set up by a group of interested people who met at the Community House with the aim of forming a field naturalists' club in Barrie. About 15 people attended and it was reported that at least another 20 were interested.

The committee was comprised of William A. Bell, Chairman; Miss Anastasia Hughes, Russell Dingman, and Mrs. Fran Westman.

Mr. Bell pointed out that things to be considered in the formation of the group are a name, objects and aims, membership, officers and meetings.

The constitution and name committee was comprised of Miss Hughes, Dr. E. G. Bilkey, Mr. A. Cockburn, and Mrs. R. S. Carmen.

Harry Morgan suggested that children could be brought in later if they showed an interest in subjects related to nature studies.

February 1951 (the exact date is not recorded other than it was a Thursday) the Brereton Field

Naturalists' Club of Barrie was formed by thirty-five people meeting at the Community House. It was noted "that besides serving hobby and conservation purposes the club would perpetuate the memory and work of the late Dr. E. L. Brereton, distinguished Barrie naturalist, who gave encouragement to many of the members in their pursuit of this interest."

The first officers of the Club were as follows – Hon. President, Major Mark Robinson (long associated with Dr. Brereton and field studies in Algonquin Park)

President – William A. Bell

First Vice-President – Mrs. Fran Westman

2nd Vice-President – Dr. E. G. Bilkey

Secretary-Treasurer – Miss Anastasia Hughes

Directors – Mrs. R. S. Carmen, Mr. A. B. Cockburn, Mr. Russell G. Dingman, Mrs. J. H. Gable, and Mr. Harry Morren.

Meetings were to be held on the fourth Monday of each month. The annual dues were set at \$1.00 per adult and 50 cents for juniors.

It should be noted that Russell Dingman was one of the original twelve founders of the Toronto Field Naturalists' Club

The new executive was quickly off the mark and scheduled the first field trip for Saturday March 24th leaving at 9 a.m. and returning at noon. Members were to meet at Queen's Park, at the intersection of Ross and Toronto Streets.

One regular excursion was to be held each month at 2 p.m. on the Saturday following the fourth Monday of each month.

With that we were up and running and have been for 50 years. Congratulations to all members past and present and an expression of gratitude to those original thirty-five individuals who had the foresight and enthusiasm to launch our organization.

It is interesting to note that on our 25th anniversary a listing of the Charter Members was compiled. They were able to record 25 names of the original 35. They were Wm. A. Bell, Mrs. R. S. Carmen, Alan Carmichael, Mr. & Mrs. A. B. Cockburn, Mrs. Jean Gable, Mrs. Eva Fisher, Miss Anastasia Hughes, Dr. R. E. Ives, Mrs. S. E. Lewis, Alf Mitchener, Mrs. J. Sheppard, Mrs. Fran Westman, Russell G. Dingman, Harry Morren, Dr. E. G. Bilkey, Harold Webb, A. D. Schneider, Miss E. Petch, Frank Munroe, Miss Edna

West, Major Mark Robinson, Mrs. R. S. Rollis, Mr. P. Bingham, and Mr. J. Gilmore.

FIELD TRIPS

Astronomy at Echo Valley

November 6, 2000

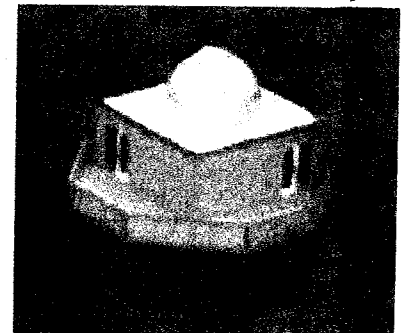
On Monday, November 6, 2000, 16 club members drove north to Grandview Lodge in Huntsville to view the night skies from the new Echo Valley Observatory near this Muskoka resort. After an introduction by staff naturalist Robin Tapley, we drove off along a steep and winding road to reach the wonderfully dark site of the observatory and its 16-inch Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope.

Robin adjusted the computer tracking controls on the telescope to focus on such celestial objects as the rings of Saturn, Jupiter's four largest moons, star clusters like the Pleiades, distant galaxies and the 25 light-year wide Orion Nebula. Viewing moon craters along the terminator line between dark and shadow was a great three-dimensional experience. Meanwhile, assistant naturalist (and Brereton member) Kendra Gervais led us on a tour around the heavens from the outside observation deck, using their ample supply of binoculars and a laser pointer.



More information and great photos can be found on the web at www.naturetrails.on.ca for the Echo Valley Observatory.

I recommend Terry Dickinson's books, especially Nightwatch and Summer Stargazing, both of which are available at the Barrie Public Library, along with magazines Sky News, Astronomy and Sky and Telescope.



Many thanks to Gary Stephey and Carol Williams-Bjorgan for helping me to plan and organize this trip

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after our August star party was wiped out by poor weather.

Al McNair

Minesing Raptors

January 20, 2001

A great turnout for a winter field trip, 23 members and thirteen vehicles, in minus 25C weather.

We reversed the route this year in order to see the Great Grey Owl in Midhurst, which was seen in the same area just up the hill at the house on Russell Road.

We then proceeded through Minesing to Hwy. 26 and South through the Sunnidale concessions and sideroads but could not find any Snowy Owls despite reports of their presence a few weeks earlier. Four Rough Legged Hawks were eventually tallied but raptors in general were scarce on this trip. The most active area was at the feeders at the end of McKinnon Road near Angus where we saw Chickadees, House Sparrow, Blue Jay, Mourning Dove, Crow, and a 'Hairy Woodpecker' with a yellow spot on its head. Putting our heads together after and several phone calls later we concluded that this bird was a Northern Three Toed Woodpecker. Only a few members saw the bird, I was not one of them and that's how close you can get to adding a lifer but missing it.

Two members went to Midland to see the Hawk Owl and were duly rewarded, one member adding this species to his life list.

So it was considered a successful outing on a sunny day despite the early cold temperatures and absence of the raptors. The majesty of the Great Grey Owl and the hope of finding a Snowy Owl is always alluring.

Our tally came to just eleven species with Rock Dove and Starling rounding out the total

Jim Spruce

I would like to thank Jim for taking the time to go with me to Midland and pointing out the Hawk Owl, a lifer for me.

Brian Gibbon

Christmas Bird Count

December 16, 2000

The 2000 Christmas Bird Count took place under grey skies, temperature 0C, wind approximately 15 kl/hr out of the south-east gusting strongly at times.

It threatened rain all morning and finally started about 11:30 a.m. as a light drizzle picking up to full showers, depending where in the count area you happened to be.

The total count broke down as follows – 63 species, 10,786 birds. This was the lowest total number of birds since 1997 (see charts at end of newsletter).

Morris Gervais did an excellent job of organizing, co-ordinating, and tallying this year's count. This was the first year as co-ordinator for Morris and all the participants extend our large THANK YOU Morris for your hard work.

There is a team chart and a comparison chart showing the total by species back to and including 1997 for your information.

Brian Gibbon.

Pancakes & Horned Larks

March 17, 2001

Temperature started out around -5 and rose to +5C with a light but steady wind, the sky was light overcast with sunny intervals.

Twenty seven people in ten cars set out from Minets Point with a brief stop at Milligans Pond to check out the resident duck population and then up Anne St. to Sunnidale Road and out to Barrie Hill Farm Road where we saw our first Horned Larks. We then traveled over to Minesing and then down onto the flats where we had abundant sightings of larks.

Eventually we wound up at the Tiffin Conservation Area and John Doll and Al McNair had a good hot fire going with a load of sausages cooking and Doris Hyne soon had a big bowl of pancake batter ready.

We sighted a total of 23 species and one of the best Horned Lark counts in recent years - 64

Mallards 160, Blacks 40, Hybrids numerous, R. B. Gulls 4, Crows 30-40, Morning Doves 7, Blue Jays 20, Rough Legged Hawk 5, Chickadees 4, House Sparrows 10, Starlings 60, Rock Doves 5, Kestrels 2, Pileated Woodpecker 1, North Shrikes 2, Northern Harrier 1, Cardinal 4, Downey Woodpecker 2, Gold Finch 1, Tree Sparrows 3, Grackle 1, Red Wings Black Bird 1.

Another great outing thanks to all the participants.

Brian Gibbon

LOOKING BACK

The following reports on a count held on the same day in December 11 years prior.

Christmas Bird Count December 16, 1989

The Brereton Field Naturalists' Club held its annual Bird Count on Dec. 16th. It was rather a chilly day with temperatures around the -18C or 0F and we had snow flurries for the most part of the day.

The month of December was the coldest on record for seventy years. The Bay froze over on Dec. 14th, the earliest on record since 1976. Generally it is the last week of December or the first week of January before it is cold enough for the Bay to freeze over.

The census was conducted by 27 members of the Brereton Club and 13 members of the Collingwood Club, along with several observers watching bird feeders. Areas covered included Collingwood and Nottawasaga Township, and areas located in and around the Barrie region.

- Amer. Black Duck - 50, Common Merganser - 4
- Sharp Shinned Hawk - 4, American Kestrel - 5
- Rough-legged Hawk - 17, Ruffed Grouse - 4
- Herring Gull - 620, Gull (species) - 1029
- Mourning Dove - 359, Downy Woodpecker - 81
- Pileated Woodpecker - 2, American Crow - 473
- Red-breasted Nuthatch - 45, Mallard - 367
- Golden-crowned Kinglet - 3, Rock Dove - 658
- Bohemian Wax Wing - 9, House Finch - 221
- European Starling - 589, Dark-eyed Junco - 146
- American Tree Sparrow - 92, Snow Bunting - 305
- Purple Finch - 33, American Goldfinch - 509
- Pine Siskin - 9, White-breasted Nuthatch - 94
- House Sparrow - 893, Black-capped Chickadee - 742
- Northern Harrier - 2, Red Tailed Hawk - 4
- Merlin (Collingwood) - 1, Snowy Owl - 2
- Hawk (species) - 2, Ring-billed Gull - 462,
- Great Black Backed Gull - 1, Blue Jay - 465
- Hairy Woodpecker - 49, Brown Creeper - 2
- Northern Shrike - 2, Northern Cardinal - 42
- Swamp Sparrow - 1, Pine Grosbeak - 100
- Varied Thrush (Innisfil) - 1, Common Red Poll - 13
- Evening Grosbeak - 472
- TOTAL SPECIES COUNTED - 45
- TOTAL BIRDS COUNTED - 8,984

Next Day: White Winged Crossbills - 35

Collingwood had 29 species with a total count of 1,536 birds. Two birds spotted extra from our count were Merlin and Great Black Backed Gull.

Our highlight of the day was a Varied Thrush spotted by Glen Hooper, Harold Hyne and Cliff MacFayden. Other worthwhile mentions are Bohemian Wax Wing, Northern Shrike, Merlin, Snowy Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, and some Golden Crowned Kinglets.

1988 total count was 12,200 birds with 59 species, which has been a record since 1970 with that years count at 10,182 birds and 65 species

Trip Convener - Vivian Bell

BIRD NAME QUIZ

By Beryl Lougher

Guess the proper name for each of the following old/other bird names. They are all Wood-Warbler: (Answers at the end of the following article)

- Autumnal warbler _____
- Birch warbler _____
- Black-capped warbler _____
- Black-headed warbler _____
- Black-throat _____
- Black-masked ground warbler _____
- Black-throated ground warbler _____
- Blue warbler _____
- Blue yellowback _____
- Evergreen warbler _____
- Golden swamp warbler _____
- Hemlock warbler _____
- Jack-pine warbler _____
- Little chocolate-breasted titmouse _____
- Necklaced warbler _____
- Pied creeper _____
- Pine-creeping warbler _____
- Quebec warbler _____
- Spotted warbler _____
- Wagtail warbler _____
- Yellow titmouse _____
- Yellow-crowned warbler _____
- Yellow-tailed warbler _____

Source: "Birds of America"

CURLEWS AT CAERNARFON

The first Curlew I heard was in my native Lancashire on Pendle hill. This area is to the east of the town of Preston some thirty miles north of my birthplace. It is rich in the history of the founding of the county but particularly well known for it's celebration of Halloween Night when a torch light parade ascends the hill to honour the witches of bygone days. This was long before Halloween became popular in the way we know it today.

So what brought me to this rather eerie place as a teenager? It was a leadership course of initiative tests for members of local Boy's Clubs, one of the tests being to have a team of four young men dumped out of a Land Rover with a map and tents and told to meet the Land Rover at 10:30 the next morning. A route had been drawn on a map for us to follow, if we could, but that's a different story. It almost goes without saying that, yes, it was raining. So we pitched camp, lit a fire for cooking, drying out and warmth, then into our sleeping bags. The dawn brought bright sunshine and the sound of Curlews drifting across the moorland. The mental picture remains as bright as that early morning sunlight.

Visiting England these past years it had been my hope to return to Pendle Hill to hear the Curlews which I understand are not as plentiful as in years past. However it was not to be and will have to be visited some other time.

It was in the town of Caernarfon on the coast of North Wales that acquaintance with the Curlews was renewed. You may recall Caernarfon Castle as the one in which Prince Charles was invested as Prince of Wales. It stands on the mouth of the river on a site dating from Norman times, the first built by the Earl of Chester c. 1090.

The tidal mud flats attract many species of birds including Redshank, Oyster



Catcher, Turnstones and Curlews. Common Gulls already in winter plumage in October, wheel overhead with Herring Gulls and over the water, Cormorants.

A walking path leads away from the town on the south side of the river, heading west, bordered by the ever widening river as high tide approached, and agricultural land bordered by a dry stone wall on the other side. There had been two Curlews on the mud flats and it had been a pleasure to feel the same thrill as experienced years earlier. European Robins were flitting in and out of the beech hedges and a Pied Wagtail hopped among the rocks and ran on the diminishing strip of sand. A flock of small birds flew across a field, my efforts to identify them unsuccessful. But what a treasure in that field, Curlews, Curlews, Curlews. Six; no seven, just a minute there are more. Nine of them probing those long beaks into the rain sodden soil. Being upland birds which nest in heather and moorland grasses they may have been local birds from the nearby Welsh Hills

Depletion of the Curlews on Pendle Hill is worrisome of course because the habitat is ideal for nesting. The mouth of the nearby River Ribble and vast sands of Morecombe Bay provide ample feeding opportunity. It may be that the sands have less food or have become polluted. To see Curlews on Pendle Hill may be difficult now but the memory of those early morning calls in the wild elevations of Lancashire cannot be diminished even by a sighting of nine in a field in Caernarfon.

Jim Spruce

ANSWERS TO BIRD NAME QUIZ

Blackpoll, Nashville, Wilson's, Hooded, Black-throated blue, Common yellow throat, Mourning, Cerulean, Northern Parula, Black throated green, Prothonotary, Blackburnian, Kirtlands, Bay breasted, Canada, Black & White, Pine, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Palm, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, American Redstart.

LOOKING BACK

The 1957 membership was 12 family members, 28 individual members and 8 junior members. The annual dues were \$1.00 and the FON dues were \$2.00.

The President was Mr. A. J. Carmichael; Vice-president, Mrs. S. E. Lewis; Past president, Mr. A. B. Cockburn; Honourary President, Dr. R. E. Ives, Secretary- Treasurer, Miss Anastasia Hughes

The Blue Heron – until 1956 the only Club publications were notices of meetings and field trips. In 1956 President Alex Cockburn suggested that the Club put out a larger bulletin for the Annual Meeting on April 25, 1956. The Blue Heron was only an annual publication at first but was soon being published three times a year but due to cost was latter cut back to twice a year.

The name Blue Heron was chosen because of the annual trips to the heronry in the Minesing Swamp.
Archives

From The Examiner, Dec.12/79

The Brereton Field Naturalists' Club is holding its annual winter bird count this Saturday December 15.

This all-day trip offers out-door enthusiasts a challenge to locate and identify as many birds as possible.

Last year 37 observers in 11 parties covered assigned areas in Simcoe County. Forty-six different species of birds were spotted with a total of approximately 8,000 individual birds.

The all time high for species of birds was 65 species in 1970 and for individual birds, 12,000 in 1969

The day concludes with a potluck supper at the Shanty Bay Golf Club. Anyone interest in this outing should contact the convener, Anne Hughes, at 728-4653

The Examiner Monday May 25, 1981

By Bob Boxall

A Cottager's Guide to the Birds of Muskoka and Parry Sound is now available in area bookstores, thanks to 21-year-old author Alex Mills of Barrie.

The 209-page book lists 265 species of birds common to the area and it took Mills approximately 14 months to write

Mills, a third-year University of Guelph biology student, first got interested in birds in 1972 when he joined the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club of Barrie.

"I became very keen about birding around that time and since my parents had a cottage in the Parry-Sound area I did most of my birding there and kept notes," said Mills.

DID RESEARCH

In the fall of 1979 Mills, "after a number of years thinking about it" took a semester off school to research the books.

"This included writing a lot of people, going through old journals, spending six weeks at the Royal Ontario Museum and some time at the Natural Museum in Ottawa" said Mills.

Material was also gathered from the Provincial Ministry of Natural Resources.

The book lists such information as: breeding status; types of natural habitat (pine forest or field); arrival and departure dates from the area; and historical changes.

"Historical changes refers to birds that have either become more common or rarer to the area. For instance a crowned night heron which is quite a southern bird, has been spotted in the port Severn area and the turkey vultures up to about 50 years ago weren't found but since have become fairly common."

DRAWINGS, TOO

The Birds of Muskoka and Parry Sound also contain drawings by Jim Mountjoy, a friend of Mills who works during the summer with the author as a park naturalist at Algonquin Park.

The book is indexed and the birds are listed chronologically from the oldest bird, the loon, to the most recently evolved, the finch family.

Mills, as an Eastview student, wrote a column for The Examiner called Simcoe Nature, which dealt with nature sightings and other things of interest to naturalists.

The book is available in Barrie at the Jai Book Store, Dunlop St. E., for \$9.95

Editors Note:

This was not Alex's first venture as an author, as noted above he wrote a successful column series for The Examiner while in High School (we have several in archives) and he is currently editing and the revised "Birds of Simcoe County"

To the Editor

Sir, you were kind enough last April to publish the results of our Sawhet Owl Study which is continuing. We wish to inform your readers of the discovery of an owl species not previously observed in this area. There have been rumours of its existence in the northern boreal forests but it was believed to be more myth than reality. However there is now

photographic evidence of this owl known as The Great Antlered Grey Owl. Unfortunately this bird swooped into the path of a research vehicle and was killed. This you will appreciate was a most unfortunate incident as it was the only confirmed sighting of the bird.

There has been a reluctance in the research group about the release of information on this species to maintain credibility of our research. After some persuasion it was agreed that information could be publicized through your journal in the hope that your members might be of assistance in locating more of these rare birds and releasing information to us without fear of ridicule. This will be apparent from the enclosed photo which even I have to contend does not look like birds we are familiar with.



Again we thank you for your consideration and ask that anyone sighting one of these owls contact us at our website – who who who dot april 1 dot com. or www.APL1.com

Respectfully W. Albert Ross.

LOOKING BACK

January 11, 1995

Vivian and Ken Bell received recognition from the Ministry of Natural Resources for creating a wildlife sanctuary on their 25-acre property in Oro-Medonte.

It was a labour of love over a twenty-five year period to transforming the empty fields into a haven for birds and wildlife. Some of their visitors and residents are blue birds, wild turkeys, woodpeckers, rabbits and deer.

FIELD TRIP

Oct.14, 1989

A group of 18 people set out for Iroquois Cranberry Growers Marsh at 8:30 Saturday morning. Arriving at the processing plant at approximately 10:30 for a tour of the Harvest of Cranberries. Upon completion of the tour, we departed for Jasper Park on Muskoka Rd. 38 at Bala. The scenic panorama of the lake and the fall colours of the leaves gave lunchtime an added pleasure.

The 5th annual Bala Cranberry Festival was our next stop, where we spent an hour and a half enjoying the local crafts of the Muskoka region. It was later in the afternoon that we set out for our final destination.

Upon arrival at Johnston's Cranberry Marsh, the group set out on a hayride for a demonstration of modern techniques of cranberry harvesting and processing. The trip concluded with everyone going their separate ways before the rain came.

Vivian Bell

MORE HISTORY!!

OUR PRESIDENTS

- 1951. Bill Bell
- 1952. Fran Westman
- 1953. Mrs. R. S. Carman
- 1954. Dr. Ernie Bilkey
- 1955 & 56 Alex B. Cockburn
- 1957. Mr, A. Carmichael
- 1958. Mrs. S. E. Lewis
- 1959. Bill Bell
- 1960, 1961, & 1962 Unknown
- 1963 Mr. R. G. Freeman
- 1964 Mr. G. M. Johns
- 1965 Miss Anastasia Hughes
- 1966 Mr. L. B. Smith
- 1967 Mr. L. J. Westman
- 1968 Mr. W. E. Catley
- 1969 Mr. R. H. Macklem
- 1970 Mr. L. D. Cooper
- 1971 Cliff MacFayden
- 1972 Cliff MacFayden
- 1973 Lloyd Smith
- 1974 W. Allen Fisher
- 1975 Mrs. Grace Leigh
- 1976 " " "
- 1977 Russell Rickwood
- 1978 " "
- 1979 George Donnelly
- 1980 David Newberry
- 1981 " "
- 1982 Wyman Jacques
- 1983 " "

1984	Jo Ann Clark
1985	Betty Hill
1986	“ “
1987	Norm Cramp
1988	“ “
1989	Betty Hill
1990	Mabel Tuckett
1991	John Boos
1992	“ “
1993	Helen Emery
1994	“ “
1995	Brian Gibbon
1996	“ “
1997	Ian Cook
1998	“ “
1999	Alex Mills
2000	“ “
2001	Al McNair

EDITORIAL

It becomes extremely difficult trying to edit a newsletter for our 50th anniversary. First off, what do I put in? Old or new? How much old material? And what material? I know I will be approached over the coming months with the question of “why did you not put in a write up on so-and-so or this or that event?” We will have another Blue Heron in the fall and I welcome any suggestions for it. After all our birthday is all year not just one month.

I would like to take this opportunity to especially thank the following members for their donation of materials and assistance in this production. For photographs lent and donated – John Doll, Jim Spruce, Jim Forrest, Vivian Bell, and Gwen Scott. For materials from the past – Vivian Bell, Betty Hill, and the numerous editors of the Blue Heron. Photo editing and arranging – Robin Wells. Without the assistance of these people and many others that I may have neglected to mention, **THANK YOU.**

I have available bird checklists, bird count statistics, and membership lists as well as articles written by members, about members and about the club. All of the material has been donated by Club Members, without who's help and generosity (and a bit of pack-rat tendency) much of our history would have been lost.

There are many things to make us proud of our Club as I go through the material. One of the things that strike me is the consistency of the Club in its

conservation efforts over the years. This includes campaigns for the protection of Little Lake habitat, interest in the conservation of Bear Creek and it's watershed, to Helen Emery's tree survey of Barrie. The Club has been an active partner with many other like minded groups in the preservation of Tiny Marsh, the establishment of the Tiffin Conservation area and the participation in the fund raising campaign for the Tiffin Centre, the establishment of the North Simcoe Railtrail and preservation work at Mayer's Marsh and the Minesing Swamp. The last two projects we have worked closely with members of The Friends' Of Minesing Swamp, an organization with many joint members.

Through out our history though, we have always been educators. The field trips, monthly meetings, volunteers in the schools etc. We have always tried to put out the word that nature is there to be enjoyed as well as protected.

Many of our members over the years have also joined neighbouring clubs and have participated in them with the same enthusiasm and energy that helped us be the success that we are.

Reading through the old Blue Heron reports on Club activities, individual member's achievements, and the community impact that we have had, one marvels how much has been accomplished by so few. The membership roasters have never been large and at some of our most active times rather small.

I hope that you find some of the history interesting and if you do I may continue to include a “Looking Back” column in future issues.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those individuals, who over the past several years have been such a great help by contributing articles, pictures, and field trip reports. Your kind assistance is greatly appreciated, please continue, there is nothing worse than sitting in front of a blank computer screen trying to come up with ideas for the next Blue Heron.

Brian Gibbon.

Front Page Credits		
Top Left	Hawk Owl	Jim Forest
Top Right	Boreal Owl	Jim Spruce
Lower Left	Great Grey	Jim Forest
Lower Right	Snowy Owl	Jim Forest

