

# *The Lady's-Slipper*



*Winter 1995*  
*Volume 12, #1*



## PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

by Michael W.P. Runtz

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Aren't we naturalists a lucky lot! We live in a magical world full of amazing and beautiful natural wonders. And while we can cherish these on our own whenever we so choose, as naturalists we also have the rare good fortune, the unique privilege, of being able to share our wonder and our joy with kindred spirits. This shared passion bonds us together in a most uncommon fashion. But within this tightly-knit group, this true family, we occasionally encounter a special individual, one who epitomizes all that we are about; one who touches us profoundly. Adolf Vogg was such a person.

Adolf's love for all things wild was equalled only by his love for sharing his passion and immeasurable knowledge with others. These magnificent attributes were underlined by a genuine humility.

However, this humility was most unjustified, for Adolf excelled in so many areas of natural history. He was particularly respected by his peers for his invaluable contributions to the database of scientific knowledge of this region. Hundreds of plant specimens were contributed to the national collection, many documenting rare species previously unknown from this area. He was also a major contributor to a census of the plant life of Lanark County. Countless hours were dedicated to surveying the reptiles and amphibians of not only the Arnprior area but also across the Ottawa River in Quebec. Adolf was a participant in the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas and a most important part of the Pakenham-Arnprior Christmas Bird Count. Adolf was also widely respected for his knowledge of minerals, and was re-



nowned not just locally but worldwide for his involvement in micromounts. His discovery of a mineral new to science was honoured with the find being named after him. The mineral *Voggite* is a lasting tribute to his dedication to this field.

But apart from his contributions to the scientific community — a community in which he won respect from so many of his peers — Adolf played an important role in the success of our club. A founding member of the Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club and a former member of the executive, Adolf generously gave of his time and knowledge to whomever asked. He led the

Botany Study Group excursions with irrepressible enthusiasm. And we all benefited from his participation in any club event, field trip or monthly meeting alike. His heartfelt joy in being with kindred souls and his contagious sense of humour were virtues that enhanced every moment spent with him. But above and beyond all this was Adolf's unfailing support and encouragement, which he so selflessly and freely gave to all others, regardless of age.

Adolf also demonstrated a strong commitment to the preservation of the wild things that he loved so much. As he so often said to me, "We must keep up the good fight."

Adolf Vogg was more than just a fellow naturalist. He was more than just a friend to us all. His boundless enthusiasm, his inexhaustible energy, his unwearing patience, his vast knowledge, his irrepressible sense of

humour, and his infinite generosity enriched all of our lives.

While Adolf may not be here in the flesh, his spirit lives deep within us all. Every time we come face to face with some wild marvel, every time we savour the beauty of some floral treasure, every time our spirit soars under the spell of some wild symphony, every time we are overcome just by the magnificence of it all, we feel his presence.

Adolf, dear friend, thank you for sharing so much. We will miss you greatly, and we will never forget. □

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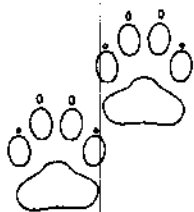
### A Requiem for Adolf Vogg

by Donna Metcalfe on behalf of the Botany Group

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Adolf Vogg. Many wonderful evenings have been enjoyed in the field exploring different habitats in search of our botanical treasures. His patience, tolerance and understanding were unwearing. The admiration and wonder he felt for each blossom or leaf, large or small, was unending.

We had the privilege of sharing his sheer joy of the great outdoors and his boundless enthusiasm, be it rain or shine. One particular outing comes to mind. We were in the Stewartville swamp checking out the orchids when a thunderstorm descended, drenching us to the skin.

Adolf set the group up for outings this summer but had to withdraw because of his health. We have carried on, missing him terribly but always feeling his presence. □



### Remembering Adolf Vogg



Adolf is gone, and the Macnamara Club will never be quite the same. The spirit of a club is a reflection of the spirit of its members, and Adolf was one of the core group of keen naturalists who have earned the Macnamara Club its reputation as one of the most dynamic naturalist history clubs in the province.

Youthful enthusiasm was Adolf's hallmark. This enthusiasm, along with his keen powers of observation, led him to the discovery of rare plants and new animal records, discoveries that have enriched our scientific knowledge of the natural history of the area. He took pleasure in sharing his discoveries, freely and enthusiastically. Field trips with Adolf were always good fun and always rewarding. His never-failing good humour and his infectious sense of excitement added a special dimension to outings where he was present.

He leaves the Macnamara Club immeasurably richer, with years of happy memories. Now that he is gone, we realize just how fortunate we have been to have had Adolf Vogg among us all these years. To his family, Heddy, Gordon, and Susan, we say thank you for sharing a wonderful companion with us. □

by Sheila Thomson

# The Botany Study Group: Recollections

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by Marjorie Boyle

On April 15, 1985, a planning meeting was called by Adolf Vogg to discuss the formation of a botany study group within the club. The group's aims were as follows:

- gain more knowledge of area plants;
- promote conservation and care of properties and good relations with property owners;
- encourage labelling of specimens, pictures, etc., with Latin botanical names;
- practise discretion when collecting, taking heed to consider supply and rarity;
- discourage the transfer of wild plants to home gardens;
- endeavour to keep records, finds and locations; and
- through Adolf Vogg's instruction, make and properly operate a "plant press" (those desiring to take a specimen to the Museum of Natural Sciences must press the specimen according to their instructions).

Our first field trip was scheduled for April 20, 1985, to Nopiming Game Preserve! Our second trip to Nopiming (Keoughs came along to film the rare "showy orchids") was June 7, 1985.

It has been some time since I've recorded anything on paper of interest to club members. Having an excellent motive now, I submit my own tribute to Adolf Vogg, whom I valued as a friend.

Today I accompanied my husband along a local country road as he checked the Blue Bird nesting boxes attached to fenceposts adjacent to the road. I thought of Adolf as we drove from box to box. I noticed that the brilliant strong colours of mid-summer were already softening as nature — cell by cell — changes plant life to the shades and colours of fall. Reds take on a tawny brown appearance;

the strong greens of tree foliage appear as though they had been laundered to a more well-worn and comfortable colour. Green grain fields are now a soft golden colour. The corn fields are producing pale yellow tassles.

There is much beauty along a country road where the plants in ditches have grown wild and free for weeks — an ever-changing panorama of beauty in a three-mile strip.

The array of colour catches your eyes. Tall ripening grasses collecting around the fencepost contrast with the Chicory; displaying those marvellous blue blossoms saucily peeking out from between the foliage of Queen Anne's Lace with its umbels of tiny white blossoms. Or an aging plant curling itself up to resemble a bird's nest. Goldenrod, a Purple Scotch Thistle, the ground covered with ripening Rosehips.

Through an open gateway a farmer's field is aglow with Red Clover blossoms, making a green and rose-patterned carpet for the rolls of hay that lay browning in the sun.

In another field, cattle contentedly feed. I call them our curious cows. For, each time we pass to check the boxes, the cows all lift their heads, turn to face us, and most of them lazily amble toward the fence, curious to see we strange creatures in action.

On the move again — wherever water collects in the ditches in sufficient quantity to create a mini-bog, we see Cattails, beige and chocolate brown making a stately background for my description of Purple Loosestrife (beauty and the beast). Joe-pye occasionally shows its dusty mauve blossom. On drier ground Milkweed pods are ready to eat! Evening Primrose and Blue Vervain stand side by side, and tucked tight against a fence is a healthy but very small chokecherry tree producing lovely red fruit glistening in the sun!

Adolf taught us how to find beauty amid confusion! □

## Recollections

On June 29, 1988, a Botany Group trip was planned to Ashdad bog — mainly to see the extraordinary display of *Plantathera dilatata* (swamp candles) and other flora. My notes provide this information: leader: Sloan Watters; members: Adolf Vogg, Brenda and Trevor Cole and faithful dog, and Edgar and Marjorie Boyle comprised the group that day.

We stopped at Burnstown on the way to the bog and learned about Black Elderberry, proven by the white pith of a cut branch — this area being the north edge of the growing range (Red Elderberry grows further north and shows a brown pith).

At Ashdad, storm clouds rolled in and made necessary all the rain gear we had, as well as the necessity to keep our cameras dry.

I think there is a “my view” account of this trip to the bog (if you have an old *Lady's-Slipper* on hand). We viewed six species of orchids, 14 other plants and some sedges, and had an absolutely marvellous time listening to Sloan, Trevor, and Adolf share their wealth of knowledge.

Our last vision of the bog was a clearing sky and three deer waiting among the cedars — waiting to have their corner of their world all to themselves again.

We remember this as a most remarkable trip. A wonderful learning experience. □

by Marjorie and Edgar Boyle



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### **BORN NAKED: A Review**

by Judy Borer

While reading *Born Naked*, Farley Mowat's latest book, I couldn't help thinking how enjoyable it would be to others with an interest in nature subjects. It came to me that the *Lady's-Slipper* might be a good vehicle to make fellow naturalists aware of it, if they weren't already. So here is a little bit about it:

As the title suggests, it contains the author's earliest memories, and is in the same humorous vein as his well-loved children's books *The Dog Who Wouldn't Be* and *Owls in the Family*. It's an engaging account of the circumstances and experiences that formed him as a naturalist, conservationist and author. As a future naturalist, we see him at a tender age being drawn into “the world of the others” through his encounters with the creatures around him. As a budding author we are treated to excerpts from his boyhood journal and his bird column in which he begins to try to reach a wider audience. We watch as he enters “the world of the others” with a careless abandon that sometimes plays havoc with the ordinary world of humans. Though he presents his parents with many trials and challenges, they remain philosophical. In fact, his parents figure prominently as formative influences. And, as colourful characters in their own right, they help

create the fascinating family dynamics that are a central aspect of the book.

Aside from being a personal and family portrait, the book is also the portrayal of an era. With its well proportioned prose, Mowat transports us through the '20s and '30s, across Canada from Ontario to Saskatchewan to the sub-Arctic. We encounter a time of great disparity. The desperate poverty of the “Dustbowl” in both natural and human terms is set against the seemingly endless riches of the prairie sloughs.

We also enter a time before there is any thought of conservation, a time in fact when exploitation of natural resources is the norm; a time when entire clutches of eggs are taken for “scientific” purposes and eagles and owls are shot as vermin.

Throughout his recollection of these things, Mowat has chosen to take a non-judgmental approach. Unlike *Sea of Slaughter* and *Newfoundland*, in which he shocked us into awareness, he seems here to be appealing to our sensibilities toward nature. In reflecting on his own innocent enjoyment, he reminds us that we too were “born naked” and are part of a kinship with “the world of the others.” Although we cannot afford to let our vigilance in matters of conservation waver, he is telling us that the joy we find in rediscovering our place in nature is perhaps the most compelling reason for preserving it □

# In the Bundu

by Ludmilla Borshevsky

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*Time: two o'clock on a very hot, dusty summer Sunday afternoon.*

*Place: on the Zambesi River, Mana Pools National Park, Zimbabwe, Africa.*

*Action: three canoeists in a canoe.*

**I**t was heavy, green and was said to be "Canadian," but no decent Canadian canoe ever looked like that. It had seats, real seats with seatbacks, and it was as about as manoeuvrable as the Queen Mary on Fish Creek in White Lake. But it was an adventure!

We were three. Naive and inexperienced. Two Germans and one Canadian. The two Germans had very little bush experience (they were from Berlin), and the Canadian was afraid of the water.

We were naive, but prepared — sunhats and bandanas wetted to keep off the heat, a handful of peanuts stuffed into pockets and enough water to keep a gerbil happy in the Namib Desert. We were ready for adventure!

So we put on faded, overstuffed lifejackets (essential to deter the jaws of crocodiles in these infested waters), grabbed oversized ironwood paddles, and off we went. The romantic German took her place in the prow as lookout, the more practical one sat in the front seat with his paddle at the ready and the Canadian was in the stern, of course (the only place to put a Canadian in a "Canadian" canoe).

The mild-mannered Canadian, having been designated team leader, immediately enforced a tight regime of discipline. First rule: Don't rock the boat! Second rule: No trailing fingers in the water (it may look romantic, but it is croc bait and the crocs might rock the boat). And, last rule: All must obey every command barked out by the Canadian (a benevolent dictator, like all stern paddlers).

The sun was high, the water glittered, the current was swift, and the wind smashed against our faces. This narrow side-stream of the great Zambesi wore its way through

sandy islands topped with tall, flowing grasses, crossed innumerable shifting shoals and slid past bright green rafts of water hyacinths (the optimal hideout for opportunistic crocs).

Hats flapping in the stiff breeze, paddles acting like sails and our lookout lounging in the front, we struggled optimistically upriver. We were tough!

Half an hour later, with sore arms, numb bums and cramped legs, we wanted out of that damn "Canadian" canoe. We were in luck! We saw one of the large guesthouses available in the park for those tourists whose idea of roughing it in the African bush means hot showers and a housekeeper. One could stay in these two-storied mini-mansions for a then ridiculously low price of \$2 Canadian per person per night (a grand place for the next moose call or wolf howl). In these guesthouses, one can sleep out on the upper verandah under "holy" mosquito nets and experience the eerie calls of the wall-walking geckos, the splish, splash, plop of the hippos sucking themselves out of the river, the rub of scratching elephants against the stucco walls and the incessant ping, ping, ping, ping, ping, ping of the flying foxes, as one tries to slumber away the night.

But nothing much happens at the guesthouses in the daytime — unless, of course, you have three intrepid canoeists arrive on your front doorstep. As we slowed down (our favourite speed) to land, we spotted, on top of the cliff to our right and on the the other side of the side-stream, an old bull elephant. This creased grey wonder, swaying his trunk and flapping his ears, was only 50 feet (30 feet lengthwise and 20 feet heightwise) away from us! How beautiful! How African!

We tugged the canoe ashore, tugged off our lifejackets and took leisurely sips on our small canteen, savouring each pull. We stood there quietly admiring this enormous, majestic wild bull — only 50 feet away! Wow!

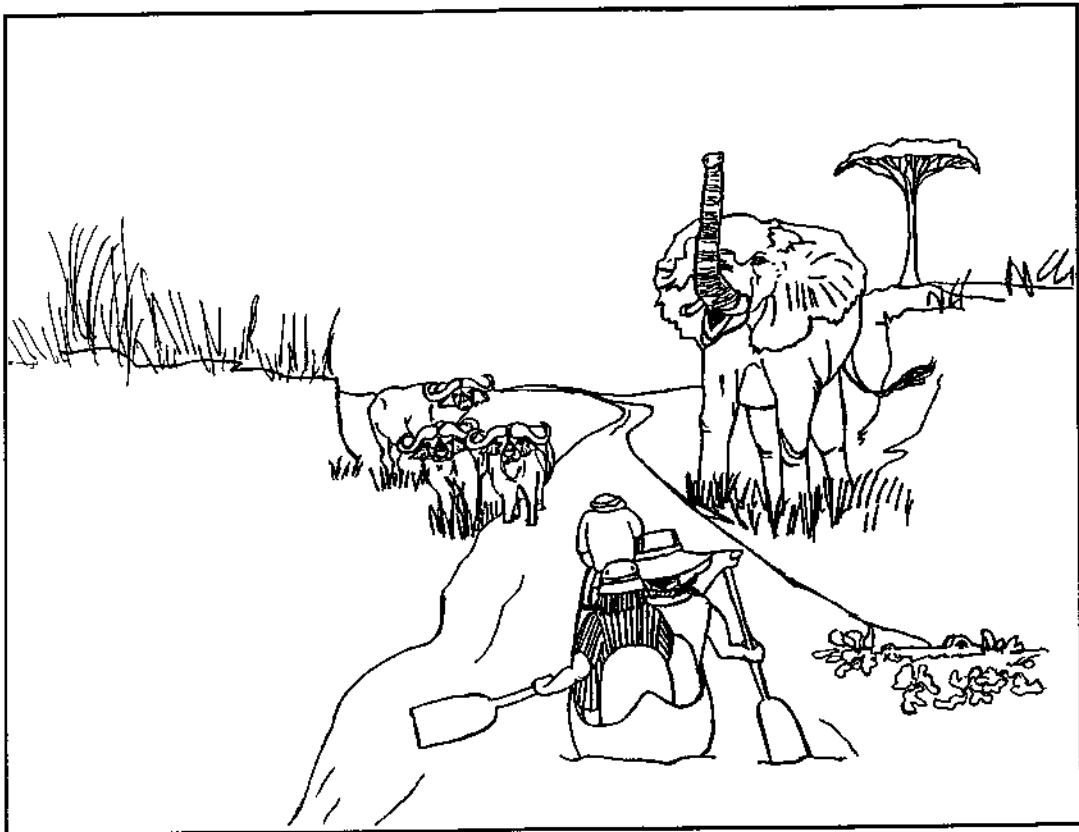
Well, we instantly found out what 50 feet meant to an African elephant — one quick slide down the sandy bank and three giant footsteps across the stream, in 30 seconds!

The canoeists became sprinters on wobbly canoe legs — we got the hell out of there — scrambling, clambering, stumbling and bumbling uphill to the near wall of the guesthouse. Being extremely polite idiots, not wanting to disturb the present occupants of the house, we flattened ourselves against the sub-bleached pink stucco like sun-crazed geckos, hoping the elephant would not see three bright red-, white- and purple-clad humans.

Well, it didn't work. This wrinkled, bored behemoth was not satisfied with scaring the tourists out of their white skins. Taking hostages and laying siege was more his cup of Zimbabwean tea. He didn't stop at the canoe; he kept coming. All four of us were now pressed up tightly against the back wall of the garage. The bull's head poked itself into the entrance, the elephant's very long trunk stretching inward to smell us. We started to sweat. The hairs on the back of our necks stood up and shivered. With popping eyes,

we looked at the bull, our muscles tensed for a ready dash into the house. But politeness kept us in the garage waiting, waiting, waiting, waiting and waiting.

After each time the bull came and went, we stuck our bodies out to test the safety of a run for our canoe. And every time we did, that stubborn bull forced us back into our cave. Once, after an hour of this forced incarceration, we tiptoed towards the river — no bull elephant in sight (hooray!), until we passed the corner of the house — there it was, fast-pacing itself towards us. Back into the garage we shot. And so the game went on. We were getting hot, cranky, thirsty and hungry, but that bull was enjoying himself too much — evident by those twinkles in his beady elephant eyes. He knew exactly what he was doing to us. The house servant told us that this old bachelor had played tourist-tag before and had even taken care of a few canoes by testing them out. We just hoped he left ours alone. It was quite a long, elephant-infested walk back to the campsite (a rather dangerous stroll unless smeared with a thick coat of fresh, aromatic elephant dung). And so we waited.

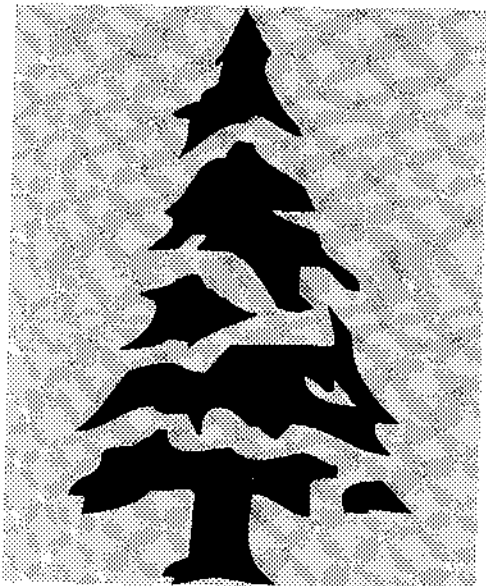


Three hours later, bored with his game, the bull **finally** left. We were free! Free at last! We scrambled back into our canoe and headed downstream. And there he was again! That same Proboscidea was up on the near cliff only 20 yards away. Would he or wouldn't he? Thoughts of a raging bullcharging down the cliff towards us flashed inside our brains. We paddled like demons to put distance between him and us. But the game truly was at an end for him. He took one look at us, shook his head and walked away from the river.

**G**reat! Now for a relaxing, dreamy, lazy drift back to camp. With the wind at our backs and the current going our way, the lookout went back to sunning herself as we tried to get our nerves back on track. What a life! Canoeing in the African bundu! What an adventure!

Little did we know what lurked around the bend of an African river in the land of the unpredictable. At the narrowest part of this meandering side-stream (a scant 10 yards in width) stood our destiny. On the left bank were three African water buffalo (notorious for their fickle, top-boiling tempers) and on the right bank, directly across the river from them, towered another bull elephant. **All** looking our way.

The water buffalo moved closer to the water, and our hearts fibrillated. The



elephant moved closer to the water, and our hearts stopped. The lookout buried her face in her hands. The Canadian barked: "Paddle for your life." And we did, as our hearts started beating an African drum roll in our chests. Would we make it through? We dared not look at either bank. We stared straight ahead, watching for any movement from out of the corners of our eyes. The paddles sliced ferociously through the waters. The canoe slugged ahead. Stroke after stroke, it slowly gained speed.

The lookout uncovered her eyes, wiped the sweat from her brow and gave a nervous giggle. My canoeing partner and I just looked at each other, stopped the canoe and looked back. We had made it! What an adventure!

Four hours after having started out that noon, three hot, sweaty, dusty, dirty, weary, hungry and sun-burnt travellers dragged a heavy, green "Canadian" canoe up the bank. And then dragged themselves back to their campsite, as heartbeats slowly returned to normal. □

## finch lunch

potato chip ... potato chip ...  
heralds the call  
crisp, yellow flights of fancy  
appear suddenly  
a sighting for my wanting ways  
oval yellow crisp  
potato chip ... potato chip  
he flutters by my empty plate  
i was waiting for something  
for something, shall we say,  
more substantial  
but i'm not a fussy birder  
potato chip ... potato chip ...  
a fast snack on a slow day  
suits me fine sometimes  
one isn't always choosy  
about what's in the bag  
it's the bagging that counts  
potato chip ... potato chip ...  
if only i could get them  
to fly just a little bit  
closer ... for better confirmation of course ...  
oval ... yellow ... crisp.

*Jeff Jenkins*



# A Field of Knowledge and Adventure (and a Lot of Fun Too!)

by Greg Chateauvert

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A membership in the Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club is a passport to unlimited knowledge and adventure. The fact that you have a lot of fun in the process is an added bonus.

The proximity of Arnprior to Ottawa gives the MFNC access to some of the most respected names in Canada in the various fields of natural history. The generosity of these people in donating their time to further the awareness of others to the wonders of nature is an indication as to their passion to preserve these wonders. We, as a club, are also blessed with a number of very knowledgeable members who are equally as generous with their knowledge and time. To all these people I would like to say thank you for all their help and guidance over the last two years.

So, what did we do over the last two years. Surely you remember the eagles of Mountain Chute. How about the argument Mike had with the Timber Wolf. The world got very aggressive. Perhaps you recall the numerous discoveries of rare plants that were made right here in the area. You must recall Bill Birken's leaving an impression of his nose on a pine tree while cross-country skiing at Thomson's hideaway. The many and varied descriptions of animal scat by the noted authority Michael W.P. Runtz always held me spellbound. Then there was the great eye-glasses search that occurred while canoeing on Lake Clear. This was prompted by a macho display of cliff diving by yours truly. And who would have thought that a slippery salamander or a peeping frog the size of the end of your thumb would drag people into a swamp right out of the Black Lagoon movies. Well, they did. Herps are cool.

The past two years, members of the club have been awakened at 5:30 a.m., kept up till 11 or 12 p.m. (mostly by the same person),

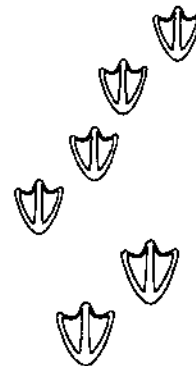
and I have yet to hear a complaint. Our resident Dr. Doolittle made these odd hours more than bearable by getting the owls to hoot, the wolves to call, and the rutting moose to make us (him) a little nervous.

The diverse interests of the club took members over rocky ground with the learned geologist Jack Gill. Jack's ability to take what seems to be an unexciting piece of rock and transform it into a vital cross-section of the earth's metamorphoses is the act of a talented academic. Our varied interests also extend to the extraterrestrial, proven by the entertaining nights we had star gazing at the Indian River Observatory.

I guess I should touch on the perceived singular interests of a naturalist: bird watching and tree hugging. We do love our birds. But I find hugging certain types of trees gives me a facial rash.

My final words are for a human being who sparked fires of interest within me whenever we were together. I have known a true renaissance man, Adolph Vogg.

Please support your club in any way you can. □



# Masters of the Night

by Michael Runtz

Everyone loves owls. Their unusual calls stir our souls. Their big solemn eyes and round faces endow them with a wise appearance. And wise they must be, for their world is usually devoid of human activity. Most owls become active only after the sun has vanished for the day and most humans have withdrawn into their world of artificial light. Naturally, any animal that is night-active must be well endowed with special features to overcome the limitations imposed by the dark. Indeed, owls exhibit a number of adaptations that make them true masters of the night.

Owls have two main features that enable them to hunt in dense woods illuminated solely by the faintest of stars. Both their eyesight and their hearing put our muted senses to shame once the sun sets. Owls' eyes are large to capture the faintest of light and are packed with rods, sensory cells that respond to the slightest amount of light. Reflective cells behind the retina throw any light missed on the first pass through the net of rods back into the eye again, doubling the chances that it will hit a sensory cell.

While their eyesight is quite good in the dim, their hearing is exceptional. Owls have large ear openings on the side of their heads. The asymmetrical shape of these slits and their offset positioning is by no means an accident. The differences in shape and position enable the owl to receive a sound in each ear at a slightly different time. Only a few thousandths of a second difference is all that is needed for an owl to accurately pinpoint the faint rustling of a vole scurrying in the leaves. Skin flaps surrounding the ear slits act in much the same way as the external ears of a mammal, being turned toward a sound to aid in its capture.

But the ear openings and skin flaps are not the only features that make an owl's hearing so acute. Amazingly, even their faces help to sensitize their hearing. The flat face structure helps to act like a parabolic dish in cap-

turing sounds. And the distinctive rings on an owl's face are composed of hard feather endings that deflect the incoming sound towards the ear openings.

While these features help owls locate their prey, a number of adaptations enable them to approach their food without making a noise. Silent flight is provided by their feathers in several ways. All feathers are broad with a soft, fringed edge. The wings are large for the body size and weight, so they carry a light load in flight. And an amazing fringe on the leading flight feathers disrupts the air flowing over the wing, providing for a silent glide free of the whistle that accompanies a hard-edged wing.

As a species, we have been fascinated with owls for many millennia. Their haunting calls continue to add an element of mystery to the night. Their wise appearance still appeals to our poetic soul. And, although biological study has finally unmasked many of the secrets that enable them to hunt and come and go in the night with nary a sound, we still so seldom encounter them. It is largely this elusiveness that makes owls one of the most intriguing groups of birds that inhabit this region. □



**PAKENHAM-ARNPRIOR CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT**  
**26 DECEMBER 1994**

While many of you were sleeping away the early hours of Boxing Day, a group of dedicated people were out trudging through the woods, swamps, and fields of this area. These were the bird counters for the annual Pakenham-Arnprior Christmas Bird Count day. An amazing tally was due to unusually warm weather this fall/winter coupled with an abundant food supply. Near-perfect birdwatching conditions on count day allowed the 38 observers to find the birds quite readily, resulting in the count being a record both in the total different types of birds encountered as well as in the total number of individual birds tallied. Highlights included record-high numbers of Blue Jays, Black-capped Chickadees, both types of Nuthatches, Hairy Woodpeckers, Northern Cardinals, and American Goldfinch. Unusual birds included a White-crowned Sparrow, a Belted Kingfisher, an American Robin, and four Bald Eagles (two at Arnprior, one at White Lake, and one near Blakeney). Because of all the Meadow Voles in our local fields, large numbers of Rough-legged and Red-tailed Hawks were recorded. Behind the Arnprior Airport on Van Dusen Drive, two Snowy Owls and six Short-eared Owls were watched hunting mice at 4:30 in the afternoon.

Thanks to all the club members and other participants who made this past year's count a success. I look forward to seeing you all again on this year's venture.

<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
WOOD DUCK	1	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	*1655
MALLARD	3	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH	*210
COMMON GOLDENEYE	2	WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	*167
COMMON MERGANSER	2	BROWN CREEPER	13
<b>BALD EAGLE</b>	<b>*4</b>	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET	39
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK	2	<b>AMERICAN ROBIN</b>	1
COOPER'S HAWK	1	BOHEMIAN WAXWING	7
NORTHERN GOSHAWK	2	CEDAR WAXWING	9
RED-TAILED HAWK	*23	NORTHERN SHRIKE	2
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK	36	EUROPEAN STARLING	*856
AMERICAN KESTREL	3	NORTHERN CARDINAL	*22
RUFFED GROUSE	39	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW	*468
ROCK DOVE	655	SONG SPARROW	2
MOURNING DOVE	*191	<b>WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW</b>	1
<b>HERRING GULL</b>	<b>*3</b>	DARK-EYED JUNCO	116
GREAT HORNED OWL	3	SNOW BUNTING	356
SNOWY OWL	2	PINE GROSBEEK	5
<b>SHORT-EARED OWL</b>	<b>*6</b>	PURPLE FINCH	159
<b>BELTED KINGFISHER</b>	1	HOUSE FINCH	*400
DOWNY WOODPECKER	78	RED CROSSBILL	18
HAIRY WOODPECKER	*95	WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL	92
<b>THREE-TOED WOODPECKER</b>	2	COMMON REDPOLL	8
BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER	1	PINE SISKIN	95
PILEATED WOODPECKER	*35	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH	*1162
BLUE JAY	*728	EVENING GROSBEEK	554
AMERICAN CROW	*291	HOUSE SPARROW	1266
COMMON RAVEN	*78		

**LEGEND**

Underlined and BOLD = NEW SPECIES FOR COUNT  
 Asterisk \* = NEW HIGH COUNT  
Underlined number = TIES HIGH COUNT  
**BOLD** = RARE SPECIES

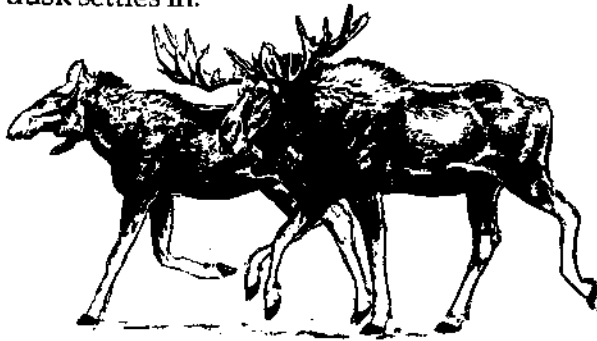
**TOTAL SPECIES: 53 (TIES RECORD) / TOTAL INDIVIDUALS: 9,970 (NEW RECORD)**  
**SEEN COUNT WEEK BUT NOT COUNT DAY: CANADA GOOSE, GRAY PARTRIDGE, GRAY CATBIRD**

# Wolf Howl and Moose Call '95

by Donna M.A. Metcalfe

Brilliant leaves of flame and gold suffuse the Algonquin landscape. Embraced by the autumnal season, this touchstone of a once wild continent greets us with waves of solitude and endless moments of beauty.

It is a gorgeous Friday afternoon. Many have arrived earlier than usual and get their tents set up. Much later, some go for a stroll and find a large male moose engaged in the rutting ritual in the water on the far shore of Whitefish Lake. A female is munching on water plants farther down the shoreline. We have a chance to view these magnificent creatures before the wine-coloured sky pales and dusk settles in.



Michael's wolf howl scouting trip late this evening has turned into a full-scale outing as we all pile into cars determined not to miss a thing. We are in luck. A pack of wolves is down Highway 60 at the west end of the park. They are engaged in a "howl" with another group. Michael gets a response as well, and we leave hoping they will respond again the next night.

The evening campfire beckons, and most of us gather around for a fireside chat. The moon is shining brightly in a cloudless sky, and a warm October wind whispers through the pines. Eventually, folks wander off to their sleeping bags. The occasional sound of a violin drifts in the night air.

Michael has brought an alarm clock with huge bells. But, eager beavers that some of us are, we beat the clock and are standing around the campfire waiting for fellow

campers to rise and shine. Jane treats us to some of her marvellous scones before we leave.

The dreamy mists of an early morning find us listening intently as Michael gives the moose call. When there is no response in this location, we travel further down the Rock Lake Road to an abandoned gravel pit. No moose appears, but the scenery at Rock Lake is spectacular. We set off down the Opeongo Road and see a young male moose browsing in the beaver meadow. Everyone is excited as we can hear other moose in the woods nearby.

We go back to the campsite for a late breakfast and other camp duties before going hiking on the Centennial Ridge in the afternoon. The day is very warm, and I had neglected to bring lighter clothing. We reach the top after a leisurely climb. Everyone is enthralled by the exhilarating expanse below us.

A few of us take a side trip to another area near the Whitefish campgrounds and see the tracks of many woodland dwellers on the paths. A wolf spider has dug a remarkable den in a gravel pit area with a little ring of stones arranged around the entranceway. This pale, fawn-coloured creature seems too small and fragile to have undertaken such a task.

After a quick shower, a few games of cards and some chats, we attend to our supper chores, then rush out for the wolf howl. Our luck holds.

We go down Highway 60 to the west side of the park, and Michael has success calling.

We are standing on a bridge over a little stream (sound carries farther into the woods along these open areas). Michael howls and waits for a response.

A warm October breeze moves restlessly through the forest, whispering softly. The cloudless sky is twinkling brightly with millions of heavenly bodies. Moonbeams dance and wink as they swirl to age-old rhythms on the surface of the rushing waters. As the

stream winds its way, black and luminous through the shadows, it disappears around the bend into the mysterious night beyond.

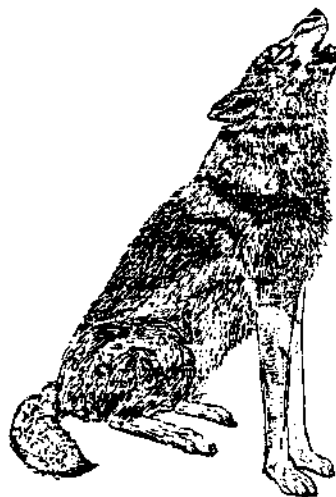
Michael howls again. A howl rises in the distance; long and eerie. More wolves join in and then become silent again. Branches wave gently as they whisper in the wind, and the night is redolant with ancient emotion.

The flickering campfire offers warmth, and folks join for a chat before crawling into inviting sleeping bags.

Early morning arrives, and again many of us have beaten 'Big Ben'. Jane brings out some of her delicious scones, and we munch hungrily. Michael leads the way down the Opeongo Road and calls out a huge male moose. This large-antlered fellow is accompanied by a few other younger satellite males. The roadside is soon lined with eager photographers.

Michael is sporting a few stings, which he acquired when he ran into a hornet's nest.

Breakfast awaits, and when chores are done, we rush off to see the Animal Art



Show at the Old Museum. The talent of these artists is amazing.

We leave for our campsites once again. The Algonquin sun captivates the blazing hardwoods. Many photographers have stopped along the wayside to hopefully capture this breathtaking view on film.

It has been a fabulous weekend. On the return trip, Michael has a group shot or two taken. It is discovered that 58 folks showed up and around 55 shared the same campsite. □

## The Macnamara Trail

by Michael W.P. Runtz

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Our club will be kicking off an exciting new project early this coming spring. The Macnamara Field Naturalists' Club is the recipient of a \$20,000 grant from the K.M. Hunter Foundation. The funds are to be used to construct a nature/interpretation trail that, due to the kind consent of BASF, will be constructed in the Nopiming Game Preserve. The location is particularly appropriate for this trail as Charles Macnamara, after whom the club is named, spent all his time exploring this area and was responsible for its designation as a Game Sanctuary in 1920.

The trail will visit several habitats, including a marsh, and will have several sections of short boardwalks and a lookout tower. There

will be interpretation along the trail, either in the form of a pocket guide or signage. The human history of the area, including an old lime kiln that the trail will visit, will also be interpreted.

The Macnamara Club is extremely grateful to the K.M. Hunter Foundation for considering this project to be worthy of their support, and to BASF for allowing our club to construct the trail on their property. Construction will begin this spring, and the trail should be open by late summer. □



# The Call of the Wild

by Michael W.P. Runtz

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To me, only one thing is more satisfying than encountering a wild animal. That one thing is to encounter a wild animal that I have attracted by imitating its calls. Perhaps you feel that calling is something that should be left to "the experts," or requires the use of a tape recorder and playbacks. Well, from someone who possesses no special skills, believe me when I say that calling most animals is a really easy feat. It is only a matter of trying the right calls at the right time.

In my repertoire of calls, there are some that work on specific animals and others that are rather "generic" in their function. For animals like wolves, a call imitating the long, rising, then dropping howl of an adult works best. While I always try to give the longest howl I can when leading a group, in reality a short call works just as well. But I feel that just in case the wolves don't respond, the people I'm leading should leave with something to talk about!

Most specific calls just require a bit of practice using the real animals as the judges. By imitating Barred Owls over a number of years (too many to count with the limited number of digits I possess) and observing their responses, I have been able to refine my call to a point where I feel it approximates the bona-fide call fairly well. The same holds true for my moose call. However, unlike the "champion" callers, I don't use a birch bark horn nor do I paint my face and underwear with camouflage patterns. And unlike the champions, I don't have a panel of hunters as my judges. I have always let the bull moose let me know if I am doing a reasonable job or not. It is important to use the animal's feedback as a way to refine your calls.

Some calls are much more generic and elicit responses from a variety of animals, and usually don't require years of refinement. Small birds can be easily enticed to approach by "pishing." This sound is easily produced by making the sound "sshhhh" (as if you were trying to make someone quiet down) and adding

a "p" to the front of it. The resulting "psshhhh" should be produced in a short series. Birds respond like magic, for they believe that they are hearing the alarm calls of some other bird, and readily come in to investigate.

Another easily produced generic call attracts almost any type of hunter. "Squeaking" simulates the distress screams of an injured animal, possibly a hare or rabbit. Because most predators are opportunists, an injured animal presents an easier meal and they respond quickly to its cries. Squeaking is done by noisily kissing the knuckles of your index and middle fingers of one hand as they are squeezed together. By licking the knuckles first (after making sure that they don't contain any contaminated material picked up from handling scats or hidden parts of your body), and varying the angle of your lips pressed against them as you give them a big smacker, you can achieve a particularly loud and prolonged squeal. Owls, hawks (especially Northern Goshawks), shrikes, foxes, weasels (all types except River Otters), Lynx, Coyotes, and even Timber Wolves are drawn in by this just like steel pins to a magnet.

As you master these calls, be sure to think about the animal's well-being. During the nesting season, do not keep birds engaged for long periods of time. When calling wolves, one or two responses is all you will need to keep the memory intact forever. And if you do attract a bull moose in, make sure that you stop calling before it tramples over you. It is of utmost importance to respect the well-being of the animals that you are attracting.

I cannot finish off without one word of warning concerning the use of calls, however. Whenever you are making calls within earshot of someone not versed in the fine art of animal communication (such as a jogger, golfer, or politician), inevitably he or she will shout out "what are you doing over there?" Be sure you respond with "just calling animals" and never with "just pishing," for fear of being misunderstood! □



## DID YOU KNOW?

- the Indian Atlas moth has a wing span of 30 centimetres?
- the largest spider in the world has a 25-1/2 centimetre leg span?
- a shark can detect a drop of blood in the water 200 metres away?
- a snake can have up to 300 pairs of ribs?
- Australian earthworms can grow up to 3 metres long?
- the queen termite can live for nearly 50 years?
- the chameleon cannot only change colour to match its surroundings, but can also focus its eyes in different directions simultaneously?
- an Albatross can stay in the air for several days, often without flapping its wings for long periods as it glides?
- the nest of the bee hummingbird — the smallest bird in the world — is about the size of a thimble?
- it is possible to see a rainbow as a complete circle from an airplane?

Here is a lovely poem about our beautiful fringed gentian, by William Cullen Bryant:

### To the Fringed Gentian

Thou blossom bright with autumn dew  
And coloured with the heaven's own blue  
That openest when the quiet light  
Succeeds the keen and frosty night.

Thou comest not when violets lean  
O'er wandering brooks and springs unseen,  
Or columbines, in purple dressed,  
Nod o'er the ground-bird's hidden nest.

Thou waitest late and com'st alone  
When woods are bare and birds are flown  
And frosts and shortening days portend

The aged year is near his end.

Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye  
Look through its fringes to the sky,  
Blue — blue — as if that sky let fall  
A flower from its cerulean wall.

I would that thus, when I shall see  
The hour of death draw near to me,  
Hope, blossoming within my heart,  
May look to heaven as I depart.

*Pamela Griffin*

