

✓ We're slipping into Spring! Winter wasn't so drab a time after all. Red maples have shown crimson in bud, flower leaf or stem the year round. They cause the rosy fog effect around the ridges all winter. In colourless winter the evergreens stand green-black, casting amethyst shadows on rose colour snow at sunset. There were slashes of orange where rabbits had eaten bark from fruit trees—rainbows in icicles at noon—the gleaming eyes of rabbits in ritual dances in the moonlight, reflecting lights from the house. There were cross-bred pheasants, ringnecks to NY birds, ringnecks to goldens, all with different markings and with dignity ruined by snow on their tails! Brooks ran with bubbles of air under ice; the bubbles caught, then moving on. Some redwings, robins, ducks and swans wintered with us all season. With winter over there is still plenty of food for them left. We've marvelled at tiny Niagaras formed by threads of rain seeping through rocks and freezing. Even with earmuffs on, the song sparrows were heard warming up their throats for Spring. The Great Horned Owl nested in the Sanctuary while pusseywillows gleamed in February moonlight. In sun one could see that some are pink under their silver "fur". By mid-March peepers were peeping in the marshes as the nuptial flights of woodcock took place at sunset. Down under ice all winter fresh green watercress and horse-tails grew and one could see snail eggs and polliwogs. In late March, black alders began to drip their pollenladen tassels—later these seed pods will look like pine cones of microscopic size. Cinnamon ferns started to unroll their fiddleheads & under dead grass there are tiny tender growing clover. Dandelions always find a warm spot—battered and blooming! They get their name from the French who thought the leaves resembled lions teeth "Dentes des lions." In early April the spice bushes near the Pond are yellow with blooms. The Spring Azure butterfly will flutter by in mid-April. In the woods the Mourning Cloak, a taupe coloured butterfly with dots of sapphire and edges of gold, will be out of it's cocoon when wood anemonies and trout lillies are in bloom. By then we'll be slipping into summer.!

April is dues month for members. Those of you who "joined" the Friends of the Sanctuary half way through the year paid half dues. This made for a monumental bookkeeping mess. We have to get organized sometime. This is the moment of truth. We are unhappy to send out two appeals at one time. We know a Madison Avenue type PR man would have a breakdown over the approach. We also know our friends! They know that a spice bush leaf will not replace an .08 cent stamp, nor can a Spring Azure carry the mail. They know how their dues are used! One other thing you can do to help—when you have decided what you will give for the Matching Dollar Fund—please make out two checks, one marked "Fund" and the other "Dues"—otherwise we may weep! All checks made out to the Norman Bird Sanctuary are tax deductible.

Bess Myerson of NY's Consumer Protection says there is more organic food sold than is grown. A word to the wise—you can buy the same food for less in your local market!

There's a shortage of honey in the world. Due in part to weather, in part to urbanization but mostly due to insecticides.

✓ How have rocks served you today? Did you use a powder with talcum in it? If so, it was made of talc, the softest rock of Earth. You used a pencil—made of carbon—a soft rock too. You scrubbed a stain with a scouring powder—made of powdered lava. We have lava in the NBS! Or perhaps you enjoyed water softened by borax, a desert rock.

✓ Our use of words is interesting. We allow a child to be "aborted" and deer to be "cropped", but we "kill" wolves. We just don't like to think that a baby has been killed, or a soft eyed doe. Thus we do a snow job on ourselves and rest in a state of passivity while blood flows rich and red.

✓ A survey shows that children watch TV 900 hours a year—that is 80 twelve hour days a year! Surely such boob tube gazing is the death of inventiveness and imagination.

✓ Oysters have been on Earth for 600 million years. In all that time they have not changed, nor have they changed the world. Man has been here as long as it takes to wink an eye-relatively. Just look at what man has done to Earth!

✓ It has been said "If you want to change your life completely—Get a Horse". The Bird knows a lady whose life has been made a whistly laughing thing by a bird. She found a naked fledgeling of unknown family. Despite somber warning that it might not live, she faithfully followed the advice given by the Sanctuary. Bird grew into a starling. Lady's life is a riot of laughter. Truly starlings are nature's clowns.

✓ Your membership dues have bought $\frac{1}{2}$ of a second hand tractor! The Trustees wilted and gave the other half. After 19 years of beseeching and begging, a tractor is now at The Barn. A shed will act as Tractor Port to shelter it. It has a plow, a mower, scrapper et al. Just think, we can scrape and fill our very own potholes! Bet we have loads of volunteers now to cut brush! Anyone for mowing a field—fun! We'll now mow our own alfalfa, do our own trails and plow acres for the 4H to garden this summer. The rest of your dues have been accounted for in detail, except for the sums spent on teaching. More than 50% have been so used and will continue to be used for teaching—that is our reason for existing. The Advisory Committee, whose names appear on the other letter enclosed, hope to give Mr. Gardner a "raise" by picking up the tab for Blue Cross, Workman's Compensation and Retirement Fund. WE NEED MORE MEMBERS. Try, each one of you, to bring in one new member. Help us grow.

✓ AND: wherever you go TALK SANCTUARY. If you should find some unenlightened soul who downgrades the NBS tell them that if we keep one child only, from drugs, from jail, from unhappiness; if we put the feet of only one on a good path in Life, we are worthwhile. (We have done that, and much more!) At the NBS now there are two seniors from high schools filling their spring term off-campus projects by working. They will get full credits at school. Added to the other programs for the spring, a class in the care of pets has been scheduled for school children. At the Sanctuary there are no idle hands for the Devil to use!

COMING EVENTS

APRIL

April is Membership renewal month. Dues are due.

Memberships: \$5.00 single \$10.00 family \$25 (you get a lovely book on the NBS) and on up to \$500.00 where you get a choice of chairs to sit on in the office.

Easter Day: the Sanctuary will be open free to all visitors all day for a program with real wolves — 3:00 p.m.

Wednesdays every one of them, lunch - lectures in Ed Shed 12-2 p.m., \$3.00 per or \$10.00 for the series. Bring your own soup bowl, plate and coffee cup. If you want to eat, call 847-4967 by Tuesday a.m. — or not one crumb will you get.

Saturdays, bird banding & watching 8-10 a.m. This is cold work, starts at dawn each day in April and May, but on Saturdays we set the nets and go bird. All are invited to assist in this international bird banding project.

April 22: Earth Day plus 2. Clean Up & Fix Up Day at NBS. Members are urged to exercise their muscles with rakes, shovels, saws, squeegees, etc. Refreshments for those who work to the end.

Sunday afternoons we will look for signs for Spring, 2 p.m. Walks

April 30: after dark — if it rains it will be better, we'll go "On The Trail Of The Amphibians" — bring a flashlight and dress to stay dry — we'll search for illusive salamanders, toads, frogs and ?

May It matters not that April is gone for this is MAY

Four Courses will be offered for all those interested in some part of Nature

Ornithology Mondays and Wednesdays at 4:30 & 7:30 p.m. \$20.00
for members \$15.00

Ecology Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30 & 7:30 p.m. also \$20.00
for members \$15.00

Geology Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. \$10.00 — for members \$8.00

Wildflowers/Plants Fridays 4:30 & 7:30 p.m. \$10.00 — for members \$8.00

Registration must be in by last week in April. Classes limited to 15.

Every Sunday Afternoon — Nature Walks and Banding 2:00 p.m.

Every Saturday 8 a.m. Bird Walks thru Sanctuary.

Those who are interested in their physical well-being — every Saturday is a work afternoon, come chop down a tree or cut up fireplace wood — paint windows — all good exercise! Feel free to come!

Nature Day Camp for Summer. Still only \$10.00 a week for members. Starts last week of June — classes limited — get reservation in early. Call officer 846-2577 for further information, and reservation.