

1971

# THE NORMAN BIRD

## A FLYER (No. 2)

NORMAN BIRD SANCTUARY  
A Wildlife Refuge  
Third Beach Road  
Middletown, Rhode Island 02840

Well Hello there! Surprised to see me? Not half as surprised as I am to be flying again and so soon! My debut was greeted by such pleasant comments that my wings are uplifted — I'm flying again! "I" am the result of the combined efforts of many friends of the Sanctuary — my writing, my printing, addressing and stamps are given: so despite the rising cost of everything I come to you twice as free as before.

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The precedent of the Norman Bird has been to name no people-names, but, as it is not an everyday happening the name of "our" Boy Scout is hereby spelled out with pride — J-O-H-N S-I-L-V-I-A. John has worked at the Sanctuary for 4 years and earned his Eagle Scout Award here. He was selected "Regional Scout of the Year" and, at the present writing, he is in Washington competing for National Honours — whatever the outcome, our hearts are with him. John is Scout Master to young scouts who meet at the Barn. We are very, very proud of John.

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V.I.A. (Volunteers In Action) have provided the names of 5 young ladies who will assist the Director in leading the field trips for the Spring School Programs. The volunteers will receive extensive training to prepare them for the trip — thus they will become "teachers." Mrs. Cerio, our original benefactress, specifically mentioned education in her will — so, by teaching, we are fulfilling her wishes. Even if she had not had the wisdom to specify education, deep in our hearts we know education is the answer to many of the ills of this world. Ecology is not a fad to rise and die in a decade. Ecology — "the study of the linkage between all living things" — must be taught, so that man will not render our world a lifeless place. Man has been called "The Plague of the Planet." We must teach and teach and teach. We must even teach teachers, and we do! Cars full of teachers arrive at the Barn and are instructed in various aspects of ecology, conservation and nature studies, then, they in turn, teach their pupils in Schools all over the State. When the big yellow school buses roll in the gates, how we love to see them! Dozens of children spill out, running and jumping across the driveway on their way to our open air classroom. The birds, the swamps, marshes, trees, nuts, leaves, roots, feathers, shells, nests, rocks, water, sand and mud — all are free — these "visual aids" are ours to use in teaching. But heat for the Barn is not free. In cold weather suspended animation sets in — a tragic waste of time, a waste of space, talent, teachers, visual aids and all. In cold weather teaching at the Sanctuary stops. A venerable ancient once said "All one needs for teaching is a teacher — the classroom can be the shade of a tree." Mercy Me — with the wind-chill factor at a minus six below zero at high noon?! That gent must have lived in the temperate clime of a Greek Isle — he certainly did not live in R. I. as a year round resident. It was so cold the pipes in the Barn burst (again) and we had a perfect indoor skating rink.

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Guided tours began again this Spring on March 14 at 6 p.m. to observe the Woodcock Nuptial Flights. Tours will take place every Sunday thereafter, see ads in local paper. Of course, we can not guarantee nuptial flights on Sundays but if you've never seen a woodcock courtship it is worth the effort. Wear waterproof boots.

The Flyer does not advertise shops, but if you can't afford good binoculars, a needle craft shop in Aquidneck Shopping Center sells some Japanese Opera glasses for \$2.50 that are remarkably fine. They fold up like a case for cigarets (naughty word).

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Mocking birds, catbirds and thrashers all winter? Whatever is happening to our world? One expects winter birds in winter and summer birds in summer, but summer ones in winter? Well, one has to invest in apples, raisins, peanut butter on bread; and enjoy!

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General farming on Sanctuary land has been discontinued. Ten years of corn have taken their toll from the soil. A model Organic Garden will be planted and maintained by Island Ecology. The fields will be kept as open fields, they will be mowed. An all out attack has been launched against arrow wood brush, which had taken over nearly 30 acres. Anyone wishing physical exercise is welcome to come anytime and help out. We have only 10 acres left to clear!

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Our banding records have been completed. In two months of banding 620 birds were recorded -- catbirds led the field. The annual Christmas count showed us to be living with 123 species of birds, the rarest seen was the Northern Shrike.

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From mid-October to mid-January all the programs at the Sanctuary ran along (later, when things were frozen, nothing ran.) Ten organizations met at the Barn; 36 School classes were taught; fifteen talks were given to the public; the first Newsletter (me!) came out. We explored every conceivable Foundation for possible funds and we failed to qualify for any of them. Even under H.E.W., where money is available for education, our building failed - no heat, inadequate water, etc. Never-the-less the classes were held; the Boy Scouts, 4 H's and the T. V. programs continued successfully. There were 15,000 visitors to the Sanctuary in 1970. Yup, fifteen thousand visitors! Seems like an awfully big crowd, but it comes down to 41.9 people a day scattered over 400 plus acres -- still room to flex one's muscles.

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Racquelle Raccoon has not left us yet! Despite the fact that she may leave at any time, and she is big and healthy - still she does not go! Could it be that The Soft Life, security plus chicken necks, lollipops, eggs and sweet talk has so beguiled our Racquelle that she chooses not to venture out? Spring is coming and surely some masked gentleman will lure her out to life and motherhood! (You don't suppose that he'll move in with her, do you?)



Little Tarzan died. Tarzan was a squirrel. Early last summer his mother built a nest high in a tree where, her instinct told her, Tarzan and his twin would be safe. Along came the Plague of the Planet and chopped the tree down. Twin did not survive the crash, but with tender, loving care Tarzan lived. He was too small to be a bottle baby, he was an eye dropper baby, until he graduated to a more adult manner of eating. By the time his tail was a glorious silvery 5" long, his teeth had grown too. He needed hard shelled nuts to chew on, really hard-like walnuts. Food pellets offered as much resistance to his teeth as cooked spaghetti does to human incisors. Local markets offered only peanuts - no help at all. What to do? An unauthorized safari swept across a neighbouring estate where 'twas known black walnuts grew. Alas, the crop had already been harvested. Heads were put together "The Epicure's Club in N.Y.C. has unshelled nuts", For \$7.95 a sack!" "It will take 2 weeks to get them here!" Two weeks of teeth growing is a lot of growing if the teeth are squirrel teeth. There was the real danger of Tarzan's teeth getting so long he'd not be able to eat at all. Then a knowledgeable gentleman cut the teeth! Tarzan was delighted with the result of this operation. With a glick of his gorgeous tail, chittering and chattering he was off and away, driven by curiosity, up and down trouser legs, in and out of sleeves, from pocket to ear via pigtail - an enchanting quick-silver warmth. He was less than 4 months old when the deadly paralysis that often afflicts wild creatures in captivity, struck. Before the sun set Tarzan was dead.

There is an old Spanish proverb that says, "When you were born you cried, but everyone around you smiled. Live your life so that when you die, you may smile and everyone around you will cry." Whenever anyone saw Tarzan there were smiles and laughter. When he died everyone around him cried. His brief little life, which he could not have had at all without human help, brought much happiness - his death brought sorrow and many tears. Dear Tarzan

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Last spring some ponderosa pines were started from seed. In time these beautiful trees will soar 100 feet in the sky. At the moment they stand 3 inches tall - a beginning. Just one year ago each seed was a microcosm of a giant.

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The recurring question about Flyer #1 was "Why didn't you ask for members?" "Why didn't you ask for dues?" That is easier said than done! A committee had to decide just what benefits a member would garner in exchange for his dues, after all everything has been open and free at the Sanctuary anyway. Of course, being a member does give one a good feeling that one's dues are helping a worthwhile cause, but members of a club always have certain privileges. After much cognition it was decided to have five membership categories -- all categories to receive without charge: Entrance to the Sanctuary and Museum. (Remember those 15,000 visitors in 1970? They came in free. In 1971, non-member adults will be charged \$1.00 - children free, but must be accompanied by an adult). All members will receive without charge: Field trips, Nature Tours, Nature Films, Newsletter and other publications, and Nature programs (except for the Summer Nature Camps.)

Individual Membership - \$5.00 annually  
Family Membership \$10.00 annually



Sustaining (& Business) - \$25.00

This membership receives all of the above mentioned goodies plus a copy of a book written about our Sanctuary and beautifully illustrated. In time this book will be A Collector's Item - limited edition, and there is no way to get a handsome copy unless your membership starts here.

Patron Membership - \$50.00

A Patron will receive everything mentioned above and a vote on the Executive Committee. Also, after much serious thought it was determined that a Patron, when visiting the office in the Barn, could have a choice of chairs therein. If it rains, an umbrella will be provided to shelter Patron on way to car - if dark, a flashlight will light the way.

Super Patron - \$500.00 and up.

The Polish expression for wishful thinking is that such thoughts are "The dreams of a severed head. Super Patrons are NOT severed head dreams. Such people DO exist - we have only to find them. And the benefits a Super Patron would receive? The Norman Bird will tear itself to shreds and form a carpet for your feet to walk upon, and as you walk the rustling sound will softly say "Thank you. Thank you."

If you decide to become a member and the single membership is what you wish, do you not hear a gentle "Thank you. Thank you" coming from this Flyer?

Individual (single)-----	\$ 5.00	Sustaining-----	\$ 25.00
Family-----	10.00	Patron-----	50.00
Super Patron-----		\$500.00 +	

Check made payable to "The Norman Bird Sanctuary" are tax deductible.