

Hello again!

With this issue, the Bird is being sent in two mailings. One for members will contain no appeal for membership. There's nothing more discouraging than to give to some project only to receive, by return mail, an invitation to give again! So we won't mention lucre anymore.

Now that "Ecology" is the "In Thing" everything appertaining to the teaching therefore has skyrocketed. As I promised not to mention money, I won't tell you that insect nets are now \$15.00!! Any old nets or aquariums in cellar, attic or garage, unused? They are needed at the Barn.

As a rule numbers are dull reading. But these may not be. Every month except January and February - 350 children from the surrounding school districts received instruction at the NBS - for free. (Whoops. Almost mentioned it!) That totals 2,490 students we taught last year. We have no count of the numbers in Scouts, 4-H, the colleges, private schools, garden and bird clubs. But anyway if you add them all together with 15,000 visitors to the Sanctuary you understand our pot-hole driveway. The Severed Head Department dreams of a well-bedded drive with crushed stones. No black tops for us.

Two acres of land are covered with concrete an hour, in this, our nation, that is 2,880 a day or one million acres a year, rendered sterile for life in any form.

By the year 2,000 (in 29 years) we Americans will need twice as much water as we now need; one third more food; houses for 100 million more people; roads for three times the cars, and space to dispose daily of one million more tons of solid waste. Unless we mend our ways, and soon.

A battle has been raging at the Barn. Everything here has a name except our Indigo snake. The trails, buildings, people and pets all are named. Poor snake! Without a name she is without personality and identification. Poor snake has every right in this world to ponder the question "Who am I?". Two names were suggested, the battle was on! The Bird does not like controversy and timidly suggests that loads of people have two names so how about settling for both? Wisteria Mood Indigo?

Racquelle, Dominic, Hooter, Wisteria Mood, Peppi, and several others graced the Eastern States Exposition in Massachusetts with their presence. Each student had one animal and delivered a talk on the pet. They were able to keep up a live running show that was very popular with the spectators. Living animals are more appealing than slides! And what excellent experience for the students to appear and speak in public.

Every single evening in May the Barn was spoken for - Scouts, Brownies birthday parties galore! We even had a wedding. The pond was the background setting for the service. The bride, and groom, wore white.

On June 2nd all the 1st Graders from Linden School and 3rd Graders from the Jamestown Schools descended on the NBS - this required our full force of volunteers.

They'll be needed again in July when 200 children from Bristol's Title I group (underprivileged) arrive for a visit. Should the volunteers survive, another group from Bristol, 200 more, will come in August. If anyone should think of it, a carton of coke or beer carried to the Barn, might revive the workers after the buses depart. What would the Sanctuary do without those wonderful volunteers? Fold up completely, that's what. If you have any doubts about the young ones of today, go to the Sanctuary and see our group in action. Doubts will be dispelled.

(One of our teenage helpers has received an appointment to a fine University because of his background of work at the NBS. We are sure work here will help many more young people, in that fashion!)

On June 6th there was an exhibition of sculpture at the Barn, entitled "Beasties and Thingies", it was all made of junk. That day was an open day at the Sanctuary. Hopefully those who came to view the art, in seeing the Sanctuary, might decide to join!

In July all the drawings made to illustrate our book (it's coming along fine, thank you. Please be patient! Rome was not built in a day!) drawings that were not used, will be exhibited in the Barn Museum. Many art classes submitted drawings. They could not all be used. Several imaginative ideas were used and credit will be given.

In May, 10 public lectures were given before various clubs. The TV programs will be rerun—look in TV news for time—Channel 36. Don't forget the bird walks each Sunday at 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays through June 26th at 6:00 a.m. Or the movies in the Barn, July Wednesdays at 8:00 p.m. Nature Day Camp starts June 29th. If you have a young one to enter, better get cracking! This is very popular camp and space is limited. It seems odd to say that with 450 acres! It does rain sometimes and then the Barn must cover all campers.

Just maybe, our water problem has been solved. The house next door had to have some plumbing done, and in back-hoeing around, a mysterious pipe running from the well to the Barn was uncovered! All we need is permission to tie in. If we get it (Pray!) that fierce problem will be solved in relative ease—would that all our problems could be so painlessly resolved! If we get permission, and who could deny a drink of water to a thirsty child?—we'll have "cut offs" and electric heating tape and no indoor skating rinks next winter.

In Japan there was an odd "solution" to a problem of pollution! A factory dumped waste into a stream, and for miles down river the rice paddies were poisoned. The solution? The government ordered all the affected families to move!

In Edwin Way Teale's charming book "Springtime in Britain" (Dodd, Mead) he writes of a report by J. Arthur Thomson of the University of Aberdeen — "The owners of estates, annoyed by injuries inflicted on young trees by squirrels, formed squirrel clubs and set a price on the rodent's head. 'After a period of squirrel slaughter' Thomson wrote, 'a cloud began to rise in the sky. The wood pigeons were multiplying worse than ever, and the farmers, at least, said in no uncertain voice that they preferred the squirrels. An imperfect understanding of the web of life had left out of account the notable fact that squirrels destroy large numbers of young wood pigeons.' This story set in different surroundings and with a different cast of characters, is familiar around the world wherever man has interfered with nature's balance." Mr. Teale kindly gave The Bird permission to quote that tale of woe caused by the Plague of the Planet. Along with his permission he wrote of observing the same woodcock rise in courting flight for 62 consecutive nights. A case of unrequited love!

Racquelle Raccoon has dashed our hopes of being grandparents. First pregnancies are such unpredictable affairs! In mid-May, she had a miscarriage, and there went our plans for grandparenthood. She was so bit-y and witchy after the mishap, that she was taken far off in the Sanctuary, and left. Next morning, bright eyed and bushy tailed, she was back at her cage. Her sore feet added not one whit of sweetness to her disposition. So, until she returns to her old charming self, she is caged when the Sanctuary is open to the public.

Cotton tail rabbits usually live only for one year. In that year they may have up to seven litters. Horrors! If they would only go on a weed diet! However, there is an anti-rabbit dust on the market. It is made of nicotine powder, dried blood and menthol. It is not too expensive and rabbits don't like it. Care must be taken that it does not go up one's own nose.

Nature arranges all things - rabbits to provide food for foxes and humility for gardeners. Nature causes little spurs to start growing in mid-summer, on the sides of the feet of grouse, so by the time snow is on the ground, each grouse is equipped with perfect snowshoes.

This is the season when humans get upset about small birds who seem to have tumbled out of nests. Usually the parents know all about them, and have them under control—sooner or later the adults will get the babies airborne. It is best to tie up the dog and bring in the cat, then let the bird parents cope with their problem children. Sometimes, of course, it is not possible but usually it is best. At The Barn there are quantities of parentless off-spring, being fed tenderly by youthful volunteers. Starlings lead the roster, followed by speckled breasted robins—all consuming endless amounts of canned dog food. The food is served heaped on the end of a match stick and popped into open beaks.

Sparrow hawks are the latest birds to be affected by DDT. Their eggs are too thin to allow the young to hatch. From the news media one learns that humans may eat DDT with impunity. As none of the pesticide eaters has become a parent since starting this epicurean diet, it seems to The Birds that the tests are valueless.

On your calendar don't forget to keep Sunday, September 26, open for our second annual sanctuary cocktail party!

Dear Readers,

As you see from this newsletter, we do a lot of teaching at the Norman Bird Sanctuary. Our school system simply is not set up to teach what we teach, and if it were there would be another hike in our taxes! We teach "ecology," nature subjects and conservation. And we do this without any financial aid from the schools. What better way to use the 450 acres Mrs. Cerio left for the public to use and enjoy? What other school system has such open-air classrooms.

The money Mrs. Cerio left pays one third of the expenses at the Sanctuary, so we need a lot of people like you as members. Won't you join--we love it and you will find great joy in being a member!

A single membership is \$5.00; a family membership is ten, and then the memberships go on up, \$25.00, \$50.00, and \$100.00 and five times that! We want all kinds of memberships, but mostly we want dozens and dozens of family memberships. Do give it some thought and join a most worthwhile project!

A check payable to "The Norman Bird Sanctuary" is tax-deductible.
The address is:

The Norman Bird Sanctuary Telephone 846-2577
Third Beach Road
Middletown, Rhode Island 02840