

Happy New Year! It's not too late to say that, each day is the beginning of a new year.

As you know, the Sanctuary, like Wisteria Mood, is outgrowing its skin. A shed is being readied to serve as a class-meeting room. All Fall busy hands stapled insulation to walls and roof, cracks were stuffed, paint brushes flew, cement was mixed and poured as a base for a Strawberry Bank fireplace (made in Little Compton, R. I.), greens were hung, and all was ready for the christening of The Education Shed — although an awful lot of work still needs to be done. The Advisory Committee met to honour Admiral Eccles. He retired as Chairman after years of devotion and work for the Sanctuary. What can one say to a person who has given of himself, his time and knowledge, to bring the Sanctuary to the goodly state it now is in? Admiral and Mrs. Eccles were among the early birds who clipped cat briar to make the trails — over 22 years of active service to our Sanctuary! Can we simply say "Thank you"? The only way to say it and mean it, is to see that work started so well, continues well.

✓ In November, a series of lunch-lectures were held. Great success — see "April Coming Events". We started with 11 paying guests and peaked at 49. Raised \$238.00 for reading program. (Cooky almost had nervous collapse changing fish stew for 30 into chowder for 50 — reservations will have to be made in advance!) On the last Wednesday — young people released from schools early because of approaching Feast Day — beelined it to the Sanctuary before the lecture was over. The influence of the Sanctuary on the young must never be underestimated. What a great place for them to convene!

✓ In November there were cowbirds, pansies, roses, azaleas — in the snow. Tree swallows flocked over the marshes, 27 snow geese down on Grey Craig Pond, an estimated 25,000 Canadian geese on Easton's. There was a Bird Walk on Second Beach. Fingers were frozen, but laughter was not. In Vermont a 65' fir was cut for Xmas in Rockefeller Plaza. In such an artificial place wouldn't a plastic tree do as well? Or should deprived NY children see a real tree die?

✓ In December and January we waited for a good freeze to skate on both natural and manmade ponds, but no decent freeze. Only a smidgeon of snow, enough for one giant snow bunny to be built. In December we had two full moons — December 3 and 31, and in between we saw the old moon in the arms of the new. Swans have not really left us. In January Canadian geese started flocking north. Truly a gentle winter for us, that may be warming up its pitching arm for a few knockout blows.

At Christmas time there were lots of parties in the Ed Shed. During the holidays the young people gave a dinner there for 22 people — only 7 adults. It was a magnificent meal, from cocktails for grownups to marshmallow toasting for the young. Well planned, cooked and served. The Hope Of The Nation knows how to cook! And wash dishes.

Olde tyme Boston had two families of similar sounding names. They referred to them as "The One Eyed Gardiners" and "The Blind Gardners". At NBS we should do the same. Our Director belongs to "The Blind Gardner" group, while the pond takes its name from the family of Benjamin Gardiner Esq. who owned our land at the turn of the century 17-1800. Those One Eyed Gardiners are buried in Historical Cemetery #27, to the east of the Woodcock Trail.

Now we are worried about hexachlorophene. In the 1950's we were worried about Strontium 90! It is well to be aware of dangers but not to be hysterical. One of the most monstrously poisonous poisons we all have — or wish we had — around



our houses is daffodil bulbs. The only way to combat this evil is to bury all daffy bulbs 6" deep in the ground!

A posh NY store sells sleep sound machines. They offer a choice of 3 sounds at \$30.00 per sound. They have rain and surf sounds, and a white sound to knock out other sounds while you sleep. Just think of the money we Islanders save by opening our windows! True we have white sound only on moonlit, snowy or foggy nights. We also have fog horn sounds, bell buoy sounds, sounds of fox-in-pheasant-nests, crickets, crushed-ice-on-moving-tides, screech owls, and angry robins. Then we have smells to sleep by, from wandering skunk to honeysuckle — all free.

Scientists have built a Garden of Eden for 4000 mice. It is a perfect mouse environment. Four males and four females were placed in this Paradise. After exploring their New World, they set about normal mouse activities. Nests were built, food garnered, families raised territory defended. When the population was only 700 signs of social unrest were seen. At 2200, all home life was over, females aborted or abandoned the young, males turned to homosexuality and murder. The population now numbers 580. Scientists believe the colony will let itself die. What is missing in this Mouse Heaven? The normal struggle for daily bread is missing, all hazards of life are gone, there are no enemies, no want, no discomforts, no desires unfulfilled. Mouse dreams did not exceed mouse grasp!

For a few brief hours he was with us — a lifetime would have been perfection! He stood 12" tall and weighed 30 grams (454 grams = 1 lb.) Nature had given him hollow bones so his flight would rival the flight of an arrow, but he never flew over the Sanctuary. Someone had poisoned a bird — a tiresome pigeon perhaps — he ate the sick bird and died. He was a peregrin falcon, son of one of 17 known nesting pairs in our country. How nice it would be if man stopped upsetting nature's balance! So many pigeons, so few falcons. So many deer to be shot "for their own good" because man has killed off the natural balancers — wolves, lynx, bobcats, etc. Nature had a balance. We have upset it.

The hardest substance known to man is diamond. The second hardest is tooth enamel! Enamel is cracked by the acid excretions of bacteria which grow in colonies called "plaque" — even as lichen cracks the softer substance, granite. Lichen helps mankind and animals. The manna from Heaven in the Old Testament is believed to have been desert lichen. Across the vast arctic tundra lichen provides food for animals — for man, even today, they provide vivid colours for dyes (Harris Tweeds etc.) All plaque does for man is to provide toothaches. Science-fiction writers should adore lichen—it is a fungus algae. The Success Twins of the World.

When Admiral Perry went to Japan, the Japanese were using soft squares of paper, which they dropped into their kimono sleeves after attending to Oriental noses. Our men were wiping their noses on the sleeves of their uniforms, as was the custom in those days! Still, our newsmen traveling in Japan today are pleasantly surprised to find "Kleenex" in the hotel rooms — the snobs! Now that we Americans have stopped using our sleeves and started using "Kleenex" for our noses, what do we do with these soft squares of paper after using them? There are ever-blooming Kleenex bushes on both sides of every road across our land. Will it take us 200 years to learn to take them home?

In Scotland, for generations, barley mash has been dumped into the sea. Ecologists protested and a law was passed forbidding mash dumping. The Scots arose as one man — their lobsters were the bonniest, fattest and sweetest in all the waters of Great Britain! Law was rescinded. Man drinks whisky, lobsters eat mash, man eats lobsters. No waste.



## COMING EVENTS

### February

Wildlife Walks: every Sunday 10 a.m. in rain, snow or freezy weather. We'll go off the trails & explore seldom seen parts of Sanctuary. Back to fireplace for coffee, doughnuts etc.

Owl Watch February 9 & 16 8 p.m.

4-H every Saturday as usual: open to all between 9-19

### MARCH

This is the month to watch the emergence of Spring. Twixt snow, rain and blowy cold we will watch the Woodcock Nuptial Flights March 15, 17, 20, 22; 6 p.m. meet at Barn. The weather will be cold and miserable: dress that you shall not be cold and miserable. On March 22 we shall try to spot & band woodcock.

Barn Owl Search March 23, 24 dusk to 8 p.m. — these are not walks — we shall try to call the owls to us. If they call us it is a sound you will not soon forget!

Sunday afternoon: every Sunday — slide shows, films and nature walks.

### 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.

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 of 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 and 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 and 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 office 846-2577 for further information, and reservations.

Look for coastal storms in February due to sun-spots.

"I haven't time to walk" or "It's too cold" are constant comments from those who do not walk. We all find time to do whatever it is we want to do! As to cold — this is not an Island in the Grand Bahamas. Dress for cold weather. Next windy day, do a trail — no wind unless you seek the Ridges. Wear something with pockets for your castoff mittens, earmuffs & scarves. If you have arthritis ask your doctor "Should I walk?" Listen to his answer and DO IT. Ancient Arab proverb says, "You have two doctors — your right leg and your left."