

Hi! A calm descends on the Sanctuary as Nature Day Camp comes to a close. Gosh, it was almost a riot around here - a controlled riot. Cars and buses spilled children out to spend happy hours with competent teachers, learning the basics of conservation. They covered the beaches, rocks, forest, fields, animals, birds, and this year, gardens and Indian Lore. Tiny little Indians with painted faces stalked the Sanctuary land! By mid July a few scarlet and gold leaves had fallen on the trails to remind us that summer is short -- apples are greening on the boughs and rose hips are reddening. Late summer flowers are in bloom. Maybe the long lovely days of Fall will be less humid!! It was a bad year for gardens -- slugs and earwigs flourished as did weeds. It was hard to hay with all the dampness. But the alfalfa field yielded two crops. Pollee Pond is filling up, while Maple Swamp is so full it is home to a raft of ducks -- ours, the ones we raised from egg. Youth Hostel groups have bed-rolled out in the damp orchard. The Scouts and 4-H'ers have used the Sanctuary as always. Wednesday night movies, never a sell-out were enjoyed by those who came. With summer activities coming to a close we begin to think of the year ahead -- all the teaching to be done!

An Art Critic would dismiss a painting of swans floating around mid water lilies as too "pedestrian" a subject. However The Bird calls your attention to swans and lilies at the spillwater of Big Pond at the Newport-Middletown line. No one can fault the real McCoy.

In July, Skylab flew over the Sanctuary, visible to the naked eye. The new crew took up with them a pocketful of mice; two spiders, Arabella and Anita; some minnows and their eggs, to observe their conduct in weightlessness. Last report said that the minnows were unperturbed, and Arabella had spun a perfect web. The mice unfortunately short-circuited themselves and were electrocuted.

Now it is official. The World Meteorological Society says it WAS a most unusual year. Czechoslovakia recorded the highest water level in the Slana River in 500 years. Spain got 27½ inches of rain, more than in 100 years. In Japan more than that fell in a 24 hour period. Australia had its coldest winter and hottest, driest summer. A violent wind was clocked in East Germany at 150 MPH. There are more icebergs in the North Atlantic than ever. India usually has monsoons at this season, but not this year. There's a drought in Chad & neighbouring countries that may cause the deaths of 6 million humans by October. In our country Agnes was the worst storm in our history -- 122 killed and millions of dollars damage.

The whales of the Earth lost out when the nations met to vote on whether or not to limit their deaths. Japan & Russia were the holdouts. Both those nations have huge whaling fleets, with mother ships that carry spotter planes, sonar, radar, killer boats and processing plants on board. Last year USSR killed 24,600 whales and Japan killed 14,000. That represents only 1% of the protein in the peoples diet. Whale products are used as lubricants and in oleo. There are substitutes that are more plentiful, easier to get and cheaper to use than whale.

For years we have been using cotton seed oil in our oleo and salad oils while the pulp of cotton seed has been used in fertilizers -- too bitter to eat. Modern knowhow has rendered it less bitter. We shall have a new flour higher in protein than wheat. Nice for dieters and allergy sufferers.

Ticks, mosquitos and horseflies come to plague us in warm weather. They should be thought of as being in the food-chain, and therefore, necessary. Somehow, when one's own blood is entering the food-chain all philosophy flies out the window.

The geese are happy in Quarry Pond. In Norman Bull's corral are three sheep -- all different colours, and not all pleasant! Somehow one tends to look with more understanding on the black sheep -- he's expected to be naughty.

The makers of "The Great Gatsby" used 75 white pouter pigeons in a party scene. Forty of them were stolen or perished -- 35 came to roost at NBS. Dispite their strange posture they can straighten out to eat. (Somehow they seem to be out of place in the Sanctuary. We are not used to elegance.) Do get out the poems of Stephen Vincent Benet and reread "The Sparrow".

Car makers have stopped making convertibles. They say that airconditioned cars cut out the noise and smells. Gosh, those city slickers! They're cutting out the noise of surf, bird songs, a lonely seagull crying, the crack of a quahaug as it hits a rock, geese in flight, ducks in fright. How will we ever know that swans are flying unless we hear the soft pumping of their wings? Gone are the frogs of summer, the peepers of spring, the pistol crack of boughs breaking in really cold weather, ice moving on the tide and the fat plop of rain drops as an August storm approaches. And the smells? Away with honeysuckle, white locusts, new mown hay, fresh cut grass, clam flats and red seaweed at low tide -- and exhausts! (The German word for exhaust pipe is 'Aufpuffenstik'. Isn't that lovely?)

Our good friends, Clem and Jethro (timber wolves) are dead. They had just returned from Canada where they had been teaching the plight of wolves on this continent, quietly pressing for legislation to protect their kind. They were asleep, locked in their van, doing harm to no one, when an ignorant woman (who professes to 'love animals') slipped them chicken necks laced with stricknine. The wolves that 3 million school children loved and petted, died in agony. We must take it upon ourselves to see that their lifes work has not been in vain. Please write the Speaker of the House of Representatives Carl Albert to see that HR 1271 (House Bill to require protection of wolves in the USA) and House Joint Resolution 119 (which seeks a Treaty with Canada) are passed without delay. Get the letters out now even though the House is in vacation.

Southern Arizona, long a mecca for those who suffered airborne allergies, has had an ecological upheaval caused by patients who moved there to escape pollens borne on the breezes. They found an arried desert type countryside, not at all like the green hills of home. So they set about making it look like home! They planted Bermuda grass, and flowering trees and shrubs. Now Southern Arizona is a fine place for allergy specialists - they reap a goodly income immunizing patients against pollens. There is no turning back -- airborne pollens produce seeds!

Tucked away in Maine are some settlements that have escaped modernization. The methods they used are no doubt the same our forefathers used in the founding times of our country. What we call "recycling" they practiced out of necessity. As in the use of soot. In Maine, with the first snow fall on the roof, they set fire to the chimneys -- this burns off the resins from green wood and fatty smoke from meats, leaving pure soot. Someone blocks the fire end of a chimney with canvas and a sure footed soul mounts the roof with a large chain. Dropped down inside the chimney and swung around it knocks off chunks of soot. A pine tree is cut and tied on to the chain. It acts like a huge brush, pulled up and down inside the chimney it brushes off the finer particles which fall into the canvas along with the chunks. Outdoors someone has prepared a large barrel with holes near the bottom and set it in a wooden saucer. Into the barrel the soot is dumped and left in the snows of winter. All household fats are saved til spring. As the thaws come the snow melts and runs down thru the soot arriving in the saucer as pure lye. Mixed with the fats and boiled, soap for the year is made. Dio-degradable soap.

Sunday, September 30---our FOURTH ANNUAL BENEFIT COCKTAIL PARTY, in Barn-Museum - 6-8 p.m. Donation \$10.00 per person -- Tax deductible. Save the date! Save your money and COME!

