

Hi! With Spring an on-again, off-again thing, one wonders what the bees that are about can possibly find to eat. Skunk cabbage, pussy willow and a lot of catkins are in bloom, but there are thousands of twigs dripping sap! All winter when we thought the world was asleep, creatures were eating twig ends. Each one means a droplet of sap for a wandering bee! The colours are changing. The vanilla ice cream on the blackberries is melting--all this time it was a waxy coating to protect the canes from icy winter blasts. The berry leaves in the fields that have been mowed, lie on the ground as tho' some giantess had tossed away her garnets. Cardinals seem to be whistling up the Spring, but it is the season that calls up the whistles! Earth, turning on its axis, adds a minute of daylight at either end of each day. This lengthening light stirs everything to action, according to its inner clock. The days have been getting shorter in Argentina which caused the swallows to leave there March 10. They arrived back in Capistrano right on time, March 20. In the Sanct, the gold finches are putting on their summer yellow, splotchy now, but soon to be pure gold. The chick-a-dees songs have changed to "Spring's Here" (Pucker up and whistle a note for 'springs', then drop one note lower for 'Here') Geese are bucking the winds of March, heading northward, and the female redwings are in!

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The first copy of "The Bird" 1970, reported that 180 pupils had been taught at NBS, that summer. In the school year 1972-73--9,000+ were taught! (This year we may touch 12, 510). This tremendous teaching program is due to you members, your dues make it possible. We have a few angels and a staff of 14 volunteer teachers. Fearless Leader can't do it all! He had the bright idea of tapping a goldmine of knowledge--college grads with Masters (or other degrees) in Environmental Education, Zoology, Biology, Anthropology & other kindred sciences. They give their time to attend 2 orientation courses at the Sanct., & then go forth to different schools. They conduct classes in their fields tied in with the Sanct--what the students will see when they arrive, in person, at New England's largest living classroom. The Portsmouth schools sent teachers with cameras. Films were made and shown to their 5-6-7-8th graders before the kids came to NBS. They all started coming April 9 and so it will continue until school is over. Then we start the summer courses!

Without the combination: members, angels & volunteers no such teaching program could be. Do we need to say anything about Fearless Leader? His imaginative, inventive mind, his ability to make us all work like dogs ad love it? His facility to talk to all people on all levels (with no one to talk to him on his level)? No, we won't waste any space on Fearless Leader except to say it was a good day for NBS when he blew in from Turkey. Good for the Sanct. and good for the State now that the tendrils of the Sanct. are reaching out.

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What's going on at the Sanctuary? Lawns have been raked, hedges trimmed, orchard pruned, pot holes clucked over. All displays have been rebuilt that featured wildlife habitats, besides the entirely new displays made. Our books have been indexed & placed on new shelves in Eccles Room. We need an assistant librarian to check them over once a week to keep them in order. Bigger & better cage have been built for our animals when they return from their winter boarding-out. An Astronomy Club of 10 members has been meeting in the Ed Shed, & out doors on fine nights, with a good telescope! Popular Gary Crowder of WADK and John Hopf formed it & conduct the classes.

Instruction in gardening met every Monday night under the URI Extension. The course ended April 21. Eleven gardeners have spoken for land to farm this summer to grow their own vegetables.

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What will be going on at the Sanctuary?

The trim on the buildings will be painted (Trust). 30 acres will be properly fertilized & planted for good hay stock. Farm animals for the kids to learn to care for will be a lamb- Nasturtium is her name!- a piglet and some R.I.Red hens eggs.--from the egg on. They will be incubated as were the eggs of geese & mallards last year. As roosters of the R.I.Red are rare & desired for breeding, let us pray for more than our fair share of boys! Fearless Leader sent to England & got one of those gadgets that use gas from chicken droppings. He plans to run the VW Bus on chicken power instead of gasoline. That bus runs up thousands of miles for NBS!

Marsh and Dump Rehabilitation. Troop 22; St.George's class in Oceanography; Island Ecology; the Portsmouth Conservation Commission & their 8th graders, will work together to clear the marsh of all alien objects and plant a cover crop where the dump used to be.

The Depart. of The Interior is working towards a program in Conservation Education on Sachuest Neck. This will involve the Navy Club & 13 cottages to the south of the Club. The students will be those actively interested in oceanography. The buildings will be used as classrooms & to store gear.

A Conseravtion Work Camp will be held this summer for children between ages of 13 & 15. They will camp out by the week and take trips to other interesting areas, under the eye of a full time instructor. This is a pilot program aimed at kids too young to work and not interested in regular summer camps.

Nature Day Camp will run along as usual, with the kindergarten class that was so successful last year. This is limited in size--very popular--so get reservations in early. Office phone no. is 846-2577.

Wednesday Lunch-Lectures will be held in May. Illustrated lectures of timely interest. \$3 per or \$10 for series of 4--omitting May 29th (5th Wed. in May!)

The R.I.,S.P.C.A has given a grant of \$2500.00 to have our staff conduct classes in public schools on the care of animals. We have done this before & we shall play down the adoption of wild pets! Now is the season to remember, a wild animal may get used to humans but remains a wild animal. "A tiny ball of fluff full growed, will have the genes it's parents sowed".

That's all that's going on at the Sanctuary!

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Whiff has been having a ball all winter. She's been with a family that has a skunk named Flower. They have become such fast friends that when Flower goes on the school route, Whiff will not eat! With time coming for Whiff to return to her new cage, this presents a problem. Would Flower enjoy a summer at the NBS?

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When one looks at the financial statement of the R.I.Audubon Soc., it looks as tho' they are supporting the Norman Bird Sanctuary. Not so! Our bills are processed thru their office, paid by them and then we repay all we owe. You will be happy to know that our accounts have been audited, found in order and that we pay our own bills.

* * *

Seal watchers are wanted. URI plans a seal census next year, but they would like those of us whose houses overlook water, or who walk the shores, to keep a look-out for seals now. Spotting them you are to call, or write: Dr. Winn, Graduate School of Oceanography, Kingston R.I. 792-6251. He will want; your name, address phone; date, time, site & duration of sighting, number of seals, their size, colour & your distance from the seals when seen.

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For years scientists have wondered if there could possibly be any effect on Earth from the solar flares. Now it seems that there is a relationship. Storms

that sweep across US are born in the Gulf of Alaska and seem to appear after a goodly solar flare!

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Hooter slipped her leash one night. She hopped & climbed to a tree top. Dawn came & with it 9 crows bent on doing our Hooter in. She was in peril of her life! Unable to fly she did a low glide down into the field that leads to the forest--followed by 9 crows! Fearless Leader to the rescue. Amid a mass of ruffled feathers, only Hooter's dignity had been hurt. (We all know that crows & Great Horned Owls are mortal enemies?) Other owls have mated & their young hatched by mid-March--alas not Hooter. Birds have their young when their food supply is best. By mid-March mice must forage further, without snow as a protection, so they are available for owl suppers. The last to nest will be goldfinches--they wait until thistle seeds are in great supply, then the feeding of baby finches will be relatively easy.

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In our society we think that kids eat all the time. In pre-War Vienna a good hausfrau spread the table for 5 sit-down meals a day plus coffees etc. Birds, insects & animals spend all their time hunting or eating food. So parents, grin and bear it. When the kids have to pay for their food they'll limit themselves!

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Dreadful to think that wallabies and kangaroos are being killed for pet food! Mostly the pet food is for US pet consumption. Whatever became of table scraps? Or are we humans eating those too? But the slaughter of baby seals goes on. Perhaps you'd like to do something about that? If so, clip, sign and mail the following two items--

Ambassador of Canada
Canadian Embassy 746 Massachusetts Ave., M.W.
Washington D.C. 20036

Your Excellency: Mr Cadieux
Until the inhumane slaughter of seals ceases in Canada, I (we) will not buy Canadian products.

signed:name.....

..address.....

..city.....state.....zip.....

Ambassador of Norway
Norwegian Embassy
Washington D.C. 3400 Massachusetts Ave., N.W. 20007

Your Excellency, Mr. Summerfeldt
Until the inhumane slaughter of seals ceases in Norway, I (we) will not buy Norwegian products.

signed.....name.....

..address.....

..city.....state.....zip.....

With legalized gambling upon us, the only sure way of doubling your money is to fold it before putting it back in your wallet.

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Hyacinth was a Frenchman. He was sainted. The flowers were named after him because his hair was tight and curly just like the flowers of the bulb before they open fully. There is a St. Hyacinth Hotel in Quebec.

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