



QUARTERLY

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 EDITORIAL

When Henry David Thoreau "went to the woods" a century ago he expressed a fundamental need. His purpose was to escape to the reality of the forest so that he might measure himself as a human being. Man as a species was born a creature of the forest. Therefore, deep within his psyche there exists a fundamental need to maintain contact with it.

Mr. Thoreau was not the first to recognize and express this fact, nor was he the last. As long as there are men on earth, we suspect, the need will persist. And while we are deeply sympathetic and are, indeed, dedicated to the very values Mr. Thoreau expressed, we cannot refrain from musing in the clamor, concrete and artificiality of the seventh decade of the twentieth century that he found it necessary to retreat to Walden from Concord, intellectual hotbed though it was. Let it at least be noted that many of us would be lucky, indeed, if we were but able to escape to Concord today.

That the need for contact with the natural world persists is evidenced by the hundreds of thousands of people who stream into our national parks and forests. Campsites, picnicking places and beaches are overflowing. City parks suffer from overuse; the sheer compaction of soil around tree roots caused by countless tramping feet is a relatively new problem and is simply a product of numbers of people. The irony and tragedy is that when all of us go to the woods—for the very same reasons as did Mr. Thoreau—we endanger the very things we seek and need so desperately. If, in the end, we destroy the woods we will destroy ourselves.

What, then, is the answer? Obviously, it is to provide more woods. They do not have to be dark primeval forests or even esoteric Edens. Any contact with plants—the green living stuff of the forest—will do. A pot of ivy on a windowsill, a window-box filled with petunias, gardens, parks—all represent the forest reshaped and refined. This is not to say that these can replace forest in a biological sense but rather in a psychological one, the point here being man's mental, not physical, well being.

Yet, as we look about, in cities and towns everywhere, we see so many opportunities lost, so many places where trees could be planted and gardens created, where we could bring pieces of the forest back into our everyday experience. And it is not only the public spaces—streets, shopping areas, squares and parks—but private as well.

It often has been stated that the backyard is one of the most unused of America's natural resources. Perhaps, if our own backyards were green oases—and it is possible to create oases of some sort anywhere and everywhere—there would be less need to forever be speeding off to other places. While it must be recognized that we all require a change of scene once in a while, perhaps the time has come to also recognize that mobility is not necessarily good. In terms of environmental quality the price for such freedom may, in the end, be too great for value received.

We have read of ecology "action" groups which have proposed, among other things, blowing holes in highways to plant trees. Such histrionics are unnecessary. Better that each and every one of us plant a tree, create a garden, bring back the forest.

C.B.L.

HERE'S GRUB IN YOUR PIE!

"These are the best fish bait you can get, put them in the refrigerator and they will remain dormant until needed", said Grandmother Owen to her grandson and myself who were avid summer fishermen.

But with winter coming on it was suggested to us by an old weathered fisherman that we try our skill at ice fishing. A trip was immediately planned.

During the trip's planning stage the grubs spent their time in the refrigerator under constant observation from eager young eyes with dreams of the giant blue gills they would bring in.

After considerable thought and examination of storebought ice fishing boxes, it was decided by our parents that we should build our own.

Progressing steadily, a top heavy box took shape. We made periodic checks on the refrigerator to see that the grubs had their meal of orange peel. The fateful day was approaching.

On hand were great quantities of winter clothing, new poles and fancy weighted hooks and an abundance of enthusiasm for the coming weekend.

With anticipation running high, I made one more check on the grubs and set the lid back on in a hurried manner not noticing that they were not dormant as had been assured by Grandmother Owen.

Sharing the shelf with the grubs was a full sugar-cream pie. I quickly closed the refrigerator anticipating the delicious surprise.

The grubs, no longer content in their jar and being the adventurous creatures they are, soon found their way out of the jar and into the pie. This was shortly before dinner and Mother had a delicious meal and announced a surprise for dessert! Sugar Cream Pie!

Moments after it was cut we were greeted by the glutinous smiles of the grubs. The pie had been invaded!

During a well placed shriek from Mother and odd foreign words from Dad (sugar cream pie being his favorite) the pie was disposed of, the worms included, along with our plans for the fishing trip - - - soon, I should add, replaced by another adventure.



Pat Bolman



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QUARTERLY COVER ARTIST is Mrs. Florence Covell of Angola, long time ACRES member. Florence is a retired art teacher and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and Columbia University.

Of Bogs And Logs

If You Watch, Birds Can Brighten Winter Days

By JOHN W. KLOTZ
Professor Of Biology
Concordia Senior College

Bird watching has its thrills. There's nothing more exciting than seeing a brilliant red cardinal on a bright winter day when the rest of the world is covered with white or watching a flock of cedar waxwings feeding on a tree or shrub. We see these all year

'round even in winter when other birds have left us for a warmer climate, and instinctively we appreciate their willingness to brighten our winter days for us.

Another attractive bird which stays here all year round is the goldfinch or yellow bird. He's also known as the wild canary, the thistle bird, the catnip bird, the shiner, the lettuce bird, and the salad bird. Actually he isn't quite as attractive in winter as he is in summer: in the warmer months he's the only small yellow bird with black wings and can easily be identified in this way. In winter he keeps his jet black wings and his yellow shoulder patches but otherwise he's a sort of dull olive yellow and looks very much like

his mate in her summer plumage. In either season he can be recognized by his stout finch bill which is typical of the group.

The common goldfinch is slightly smaller than the house sparrow and measures about 5 or 5½ inches in length. The flight is extremely undulating and the birds are quite gregarious, tending to form flocks. Sometimes other finches join them. The goldfinch likes weedy fields and scattered woody growth where he can find nesting sites. During the winter he feeds chiefly on the seeds of birch, alder, and the different conifers. He also eats weed seeds such as those of grasses and ragweeds.

The goldfinch is a late nester: these birds are found in flocks until well into the mid-summer. The nest is usually in the upright fork of a tree or bush from five to 25 feet up.

It's made of grass, bark strips and plant fibers closely woven and lined with plant down. Nests are usually found after July 1. The female lays five unspotted, very pale blue eggs. Eggs may be found in nests in August and even into September.

The young are fed on weed seeds which the mother regurgitates in a partially digested condition. The goldfinch will also eat buds, succulent vegetation, and even some insects in the spring, but its basic diet is weed seeds. During the spring, summer and fall it will feast on the seeds of dandelion, burdock, and mullein.

The common goldfinch has a cousin in the east. He's not a native there: he's the European goldfinch which has been introduced from the eastern hemisphere. The European goldfinch is slightly larger than our native goldfinch. He's a tawny brown with a bright red patch about the base of the bill and a broad yellow

band crossing the wing. In the European goldfinch the two sexes are similar: they do not show the sexual dimorphism we find in the common goldfinch.

The European goldfinch was introduced into St. Louis in 1870 and into New York City in 1878. It has died out in St. Louis but has become adapted to Long Island. In Europe it is migratory but in the United States it is not. The European goldfinch likes the hedgerows of open farming country and thickets and weed

patches on abandoned land. Like its American cousin, it feeds chiefly on weed seeds, adding a few insects in the spring and summer.

Young European goldfinches are grey and brown above and whitish below, variably spotted and streaked with brown. They lack the red and black head markings of the adult, but have the distinctive yellow wing areas. Goldfinches deserve to be encouraged. They have a hard time of it in the winter: because of their small size and high



GOLDFINCH

rate of metabolism their fuel requirements are quite high, and they are at a real disadvantage when heavy snows cover the weeds on which they normally feed. Under these circumstances they really appreciate the bird seed you put out for them.

Birds such as the goldfinch also need habitat. They need a quiet place where they can nest undisturbed, and they need a natural area from which they can gather the necessary nesting materials. That's one of the purposes of ACRES in setting aside natural areas. We'd like to provide what is necessary to keep these birds around on our Fort Wayne landscape.

Winter '72

Jan. 21

Friday Evening - 7:30 PM
Concordia Senior College, North Classroom Building
Room 201.

Walt Disney True-Life-Adventure, WHITE WILDERNESS
A visit to the mysterious Arctic with polar bear,
grey wolf, musk ox, wolverine, caribou, whale and
reindeer.
Bring the children!

Feb. 19

Saturday Evening - 7:45 PM
Shoaff Park River Lodge

Wildlife "flicks". Several TV documentaries are
scheduled and there will be time to "share-a-slide"
too. Bring an artistic favorite or one that has
a special story to share with the rest of us.
Refreshments!

Mar. 10

Friday Evening - 8:00 PM
Concordia Senior College, North Classroom Building
Room 201.

Dr. William R. Eberly, Manchester College - How
a detailed look at area geology and ecology
helps locate representative samples of habitat
for natural area preservation.

- Also -

Wildlife documentary - "Say Goodbye"

MARCH 4

Saturday - Field Trip and Hike.
Merry Lea Environmental Center near Wolf Lake, Indiana

Mr. Austin Fergusson, Merry Lea Director will take us
on an in-the-field "Study of Succession". We will hike
before lunch and after, visiting various points of inter-
est in this large area, among them a 20-30 acre lake
bottom now re-establishing a prairie.

Dress warmly for hiking. We can eat indoors.

BRING: Sack lunch and drink.

MEET: Fortmeyers Tire Center (SW corner US 33 and
Washington Center Road.)

MEETING TIME: 9:30 AM



CHESTER E. HOGAN, director of
the Los Angeles Zoo, recently spoke
out against people who buy or cap-
ture wild animals thinking to make
pets of them. Wild animals do not
make good pets.

"After all," says Hogan, "it took
man thousands of years to domes-
ticate the wild horse or pig, it stands
to reason that he won't be able to
change the nature of a jaguar in a
few short months."

"However, every year thousands
purchase animals or bring young
wild creatures home from vacations.
They very soon discover that a coy-
ote, raccoon, or cougar can be far
more difficult to care for than the
most temperamental dog or cat.

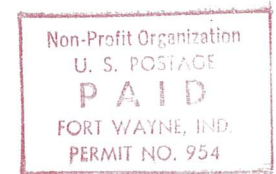
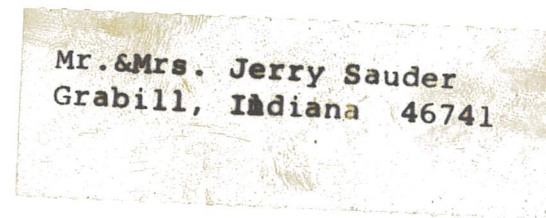
Too soon the owners are trying
to figure out how to get rid of the
unmanageable creatures. And the
zoo is the first place they head for.

But, the zoo is generally unable
to handle the animals. Hogan re-
ports that in one month 73 wild
mammals, 43 reptiles, and 36 birds
were brought to the Los Angeles
Zoo — among them were such un-
suitable "pets" as pythons, foxes,
baboons, tigers, and leopards.

"Only a thoroughly aroused pub-
lic can remedy this appalling situa-
tion," says Hogan. "Wild animals
should be left in the wild.

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