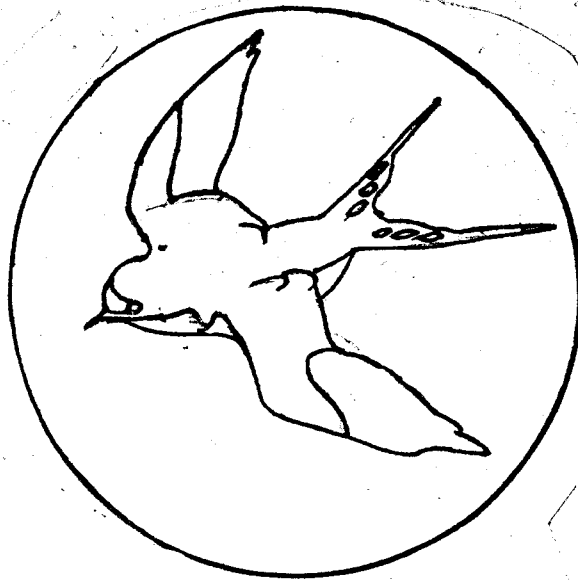


Pembroke & Area
Bird Club



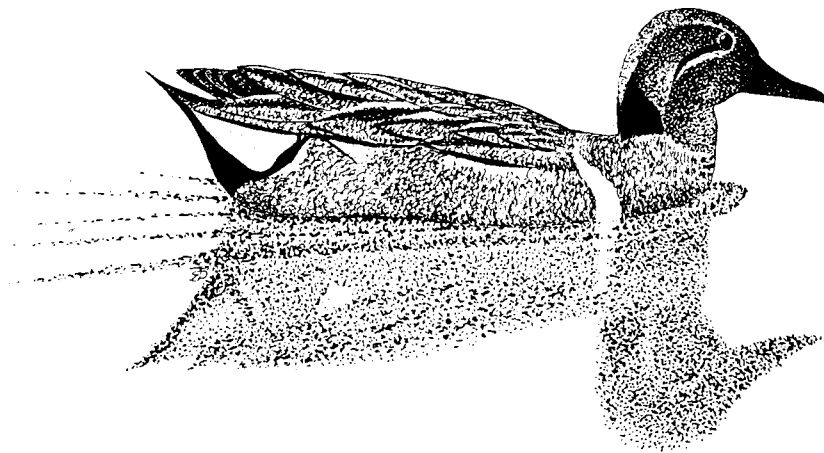
Newsletter ^{Vol. 1} No.1

Winter 1983 Issue

The Pembroke & Area Bird Club

Newsletter #1

Winter 1983 Issue



Editor: Chris Michener, 625-2263
R.R.1, Golden Lake, KOJ 1X0

The Pembroke and Area Bird Club

Executive: President, Jacques Bouvier, 735-0366

Vice-pres., Myron Loback, 735-1278

Secretary, Manson Fleguel, 732-7703

Treasurer, Marie Fick, 732-8349

Committees: Education and Public Awareness, Manson Fleguel.

Bird Study and Management, Jacques Bouvier.

Social Activities, Teresa Frechette, 735-0259

Fund Raising, Marie Fick.

Special Projects, Jacques Bouvier.

Memberships: Family- Jacques & Christine Bouvier, Keith Curry, Harry & Marie Fick, Manson Fleguel, Gerry & Olive Howe, Albert Lambert, Myron & Beth Loback, Chris Michener & Jean Brereton & Tara Smock, Dr. Michael Petrini & Candace Woolley, Karl & Doreen Remus, Don & Jewel Shade, Gordon & Frances Verch, Peter Von Bistram, George Young, Mr. & Mrs. K Hooles.

Individual- Gerry Chant, Teresa Frechette, Art Lemke, Eleanore Rose Marion, Judy Harms-Potter, Robert Pothier, Matthew Desjardins.

If present members know anyone who would like to become members and partake in our club's exciting activities, please refer them to our director of fund-raising, Marie Fick, 732-8349. Fees are: individual-\$5, family-\$8. Seniors-\$3.

President's Address

The Pembroke and Area Bird Club is now a reality thanks to its founding Board of Directors and its founding members!

The Club was created on August 10, 1983, immediately following the dissolution of the informal "Pembroke and Area Birding Group". At that meeting, members of the board of directors were selected, committees created and chairpersons appointed.

Since then, the board has met on August 24, September 7, and on September 14 it organized a successful information night at Algonquin College. On that evening, 23 people joined the club. The board met again on October 12 to finalize plans for "Octobirdfest-the Feed Our Feathered Friends Festival". More than 200 people attended the event (Oct. 23) at Algonquin College. The event was a resounding success.

The board's last meeting was held on November 23, 1983. Its plans are to meet again on January 11 and March 14. During these next two meetings, the directors plan to make arrangements for the Club's first annual meeting to be held, tentatively, on April 11, 1984. If you have any ideas for the annual meeting please mention them to any one of the directors.

The directors are in office mainly to help carry out the following club objectives:

- 1- Promote the hobby of birding,
- 2- Educate the public in the appreciation of birds,
- 3- Contribute to the study of birds in their natural habitat and,
- 4- Encourage the management and protection of all species of birds and their habitat when the need arises.

But to do so effectively, we need a full club effort. If the activities of any of the committees appeal to you, please give the director(s) a call for more information.

Members are encouraged to attend as many of the meetings and activities organised by the five committees and the numerous sub-committees. Be sure to contact the director to find out when and where a meeting will be held. Once the club becomes better established, it is hoped that through this newsletter, everyone will be better informed about coming events.

See you at a meeting or on a field trip! Jacques.

Editor's Notebook

I feel privileged to be able to compile this, the first newsletter of our fledgling club. Our newsletter is, I think, the best way to communicate our news, views, needs and information throughout our club. Maybe not the fastest way; but it does allow for a full exchange. It is a way that everyone can give expression to their ideas and feelings about birds and birding and/or about club activities, and a chance for our committees to report to us about their doings. But, because this journal is everyone's and because it will be seasonal, it would be nice to have input from club members. Poetry, artwork, cartoons, essays, information about birding hotspots, rare sightings, etc., will be deeply appreciated.

The next issue should be out next March. If you have entries, please send them to Chris Michener, R.R. 1, Golden Lake, Ontario KOJ 1X0 by the end of February.

I want to tell you that I love birds. They amuse me, intrigue me and cause me to perform acts that a sane person would think outrageous. I've had to sit with sharp branches sticking in my back so as not to scare sensitive species. I've had soakers and freezing fingers, sunburns, scrapes and bruises, ripped pants and embarrassing moments as onlookers watch while I perform acrobatics and generally make a fool of myself. But I do it for love and that makes almost anything forgivable.

Birding is challenging and enjoyable. Not that we need one, but it does give an excuse for an outing on a beautiful day.

Sometimes it can even be gently competitive as we seek to add new species to our ongoing lists. We try to outdo our last year's effort in the Christmas Bird Count or the Baillie Birdathon.

All things considered, it's almost a perfect pasttime. Almost, that is, except for the bug bites, cramps in the legs, sore muscles, eyestrain, foot blisters

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Our club will be organising this year's Bird Count. On Dec.17, Pembroke's 4th annual, will be one of 1,360 similar counts taken from Hawaii to Labrador, and from Alaska to Venezuela during the period Dec.17 -Jan.2.

This year marks the 84th anniversary of the original Count, taken on Christmas Day, 1899, by an intrepid group of strollers in 25 locations. Since then, the annual event has grown from it's original 25 to it's present 1,360 and the total participants from 27 to an estimated 34,000.

As participants, we will try to identify the largest number of birds in a 15 mile diameter circle around Pembroke. We will be grouped into "parties" each with a section of the circle for birding. Last year we had 40 observers and feeder watchers and this year we want everyone to participate who can set aside Dec.17.

Pembroke recorded 39 species last year and this was a new record for this area.

All the information that is gathered and published in the July issue of American Birds, the National Audubon Society.

Participant observers in Pembroke will find their names in next July's issue! The annual count as well as being a great social event, sheds much light on the early winter distribution of our native species: where they are and in what numbers.

Those wishing to take part in Pembroke's count either as feeder-watchers or field observers should contact Manson Fleguel at 732-7703. Furthermore, people are urged to report as soon as possible any unusual species frequenting their feeders.

THE HIGH COUNT IN CAN-
ADA IN 1980 WAS 133 IN
LADNER, B.C., WHILE IN
THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE
IT WAS 319 SPECIES !

information
ered is edit-
lished in the
American Birds,
the National



FLEGUEL'S FLYER by Manson Fleguel

Have you ever seen a Bald Eagle? Did you know that we have year round residents living within 35 miles of Pembroke? If not, then come out and see for yourself (with luck and weather permitting) on Sunday afternoon, Feb.19, 1984.

We will be going to De Swisha Generating Station where it's usually fairly easy to spot one of these magnificent birds. Of course, the open water lures some hardy ducks as well. If you are interested in the outing, give me a call at 732-7703 and I'll organize the trip, rides, riders, etc.

This is just one of the activities that the Public Education and Awareness Committee is involved in organizing. The major project undertaken so far was "Octo-birdfest", held October 23 at Algonquin College. Thanks to Jacques Bouvier and a few other hardy souls, those that attended were made aware of the activities of our club and the enjoyment that can be derived from bird-related subjects. We enjoyed ourselves and were really pleased with the numbers that attended.

On Sept.14, a public meeting was held at Algonquin College with guest speakers Iola Price and Jim Hunton speaking on Peregrine Falcons and Pembroke Place, respectively. A film was shown to the 30+ people present and our membership increased about 500%. Thanks to all.

This past summer was rather hectic for our committee, as our club had just been formed, but for many residents of Pembroke, it was their first opportunity to ask questions of "knowledgeable"??? birders at the Pembroke Marina about swallows and/or merlins. Members of the club made themselves available for questions and brought along their scopes and books to "show and tell" hordes of curious onlookers all they wanted to know and more, about the birds. This, too, was a rewarding experience for our club, as most members present received a "reward" on their shoulder, hat, hair, etc., which distinguished them as a true Marina Swallow Watcher!

Future activities include the trip to De Swisha (for Bald Eagles), and as spring approaches and migration begins and continues into May, there will be bird walks to identify some of the warblers passing through this area. As well, our newsletter, under the capable hands of Chris Michener will keep you posted on happenings which you won't want to miss!

Bluebird Trail, 1984

The bluebird has long been one of North America's best loved birds, not only because of its beautiful colouring, but also for its gentle disposition and the tender beauty of its voice.

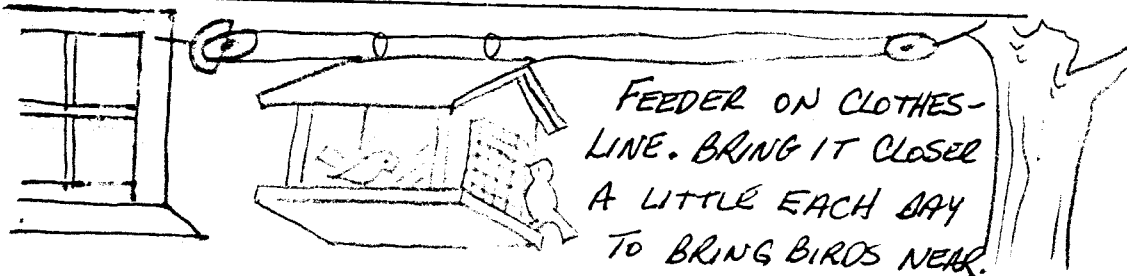
Until a generation or two ago, this beautiful songbird was numerous in southern areas of Canada, usually making its nest in hollow posts or trees and in cavities made by woodpeckers. Then farmers began replacing rail fences with wire, requiring fewer posts and often metal posts. Old decaying trees also disappeared as land was cleared. Nesting cavities have become very scarce and most of those available are occupied by the Starling or House Sparrow.

At present the most urgent need of the bluebird is "Starling-proof" nesting boxes. But for bluebirds to re-establish themselves where their numbers have dwindled, it is desirable to protect the nests as well as we can against enemies of all kinds including racoons and snakes which prey on the eggs.

Perhaps the most significant hope for bluebird survival is the "bluebird trail". Such a trail consists of a number of nesting boxes spaced at least 100 yards apart and located in suitable habitat.

Very early in spring, bluebirds begin nesting in rural localities. They prefer open areas with scattered trees where the ground is not covered with tall grass because they eat grasshoppers, cutworms and other harmful insects. Pastures, golf courses, large lawns and country cemeteries are examples of good locations for bluebird trails. The selection of spots for mounting bluebird nesting boxes is actually more important than the design of the box. Too often a lot of money is spent on the production of excellent boxes only to have them set out where there is little or no prospect that bluebirds will ever use them.

Cont'd...



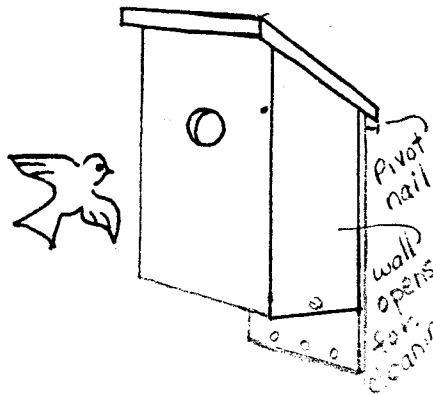
bluebirds cont'd...

The longest existing trail is in Western Canada and is 2,000 miles long. However, a small trail consisting of 3 or 4 boxes arranged around a rural lawn is often quite effective..

The trail we plan to start will have about 100 boxes. I feel this is ambitious enough for the first year. These boxes should be set out this fall or winter in time for the '84 nesting season. Anyone who can contribute in any way is welcome. We need wood,- the longest board is only 18". We also need volunteers to set out boxes, monitor them and clean them out at the end of the season. If you know of suitable habitat let me know.

Monitoring includes checking the boxes during the nesting season to identify the occupants and evict any unwanted species.

Already, 9 boxes have been donated by Albert Lambert, a local birdhouse builder, and Wes Loback has offered to cut out material for us on his saw.



Again, we need volunteers to assemble and possibly paint these boxes. A good project for eager children. I have plans and instructions available.

If properly laid out and maintained, these trails usually succeed in attracting bluebirds and are a great source of satisfaction to the people who operate them. Please join us!

- Myron Loback 735-1278 -

SOME BIRDS SEEN DURING '82 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT:

Red-necked Grebe, Canada Goose, Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon, Glaucous Gull, Mourning Dove, Hawk Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Pileated Woodpecker, Horned Lark, Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted nuthatch, Robin, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Northern Shrike, Cowbird, Pine Siskin, White-winged Crossbill, Purple Finch, Pine Grosbeak, Brown Creeper and others.

Octobirdfest '83

What a success! More than 200 people attended the event. They bought bird seed (2,000lbs. total), enjoyed displays and demonstrations, and participated in contests including The Great Cdn. Sunflower Seed Shelling Contest.

Manson Fleguel led a bird walk in lousy weather and was treated to a rare sighting of a Double-crested Cormorant. Due to the weather, only one walk was held.

Christine Bouvier had viewers spellbound as she gave bird-banding demos. Chickadees were the favorite as they are so cute. We had a chance to hold and release them to their freedom.

150 racing pigeons were released in front of an enthusiastic crowd. We often see small flocks around Pembroke, but the numbers of these specialised birds was impressive.

Winners in seed shelling race in the 7-12 yr. old category were: Shawn Glover, 1st; Scott Holtz, 2nd; Scott Fleguel, 3rd.

In the 13-17 yr. old category: Sheila Douwes, 1st; Paul Shelson, 2nd.

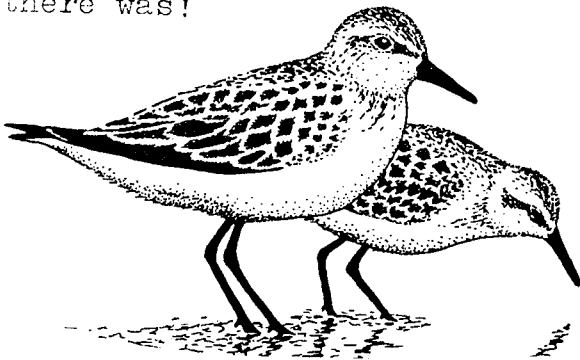
In the 18 and over: Christine Bouvier, 1st; Chris Michener, 2nd; Myron Loback, 3rd.

In the media event: Mike Godin of Cable 12 TV, 1st; Jon Blair of CHRO, 2nd; Jim Badgley of The Advertiser-News, 3rd.

Pat Wolfe of Beachburg won the draw for the one year membership to the Cdn. Nature Federation. Marjorie Levoy of Pembroke won the Seed Spotter Draw.

I think it is appropriate to mention the tremendous amount of organising that Jacques Bouvier put into Octobirdfest. Without Jacques, there wouldn't have been the celebration of our feathered friends that there was!

by Chris Michener



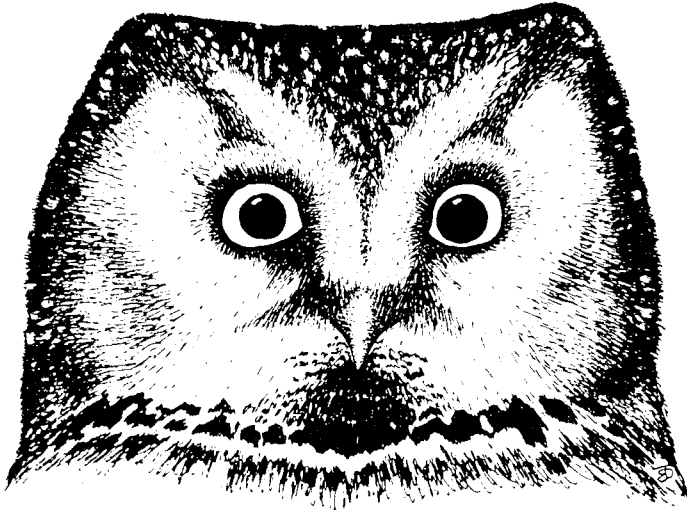
QUICKIES !

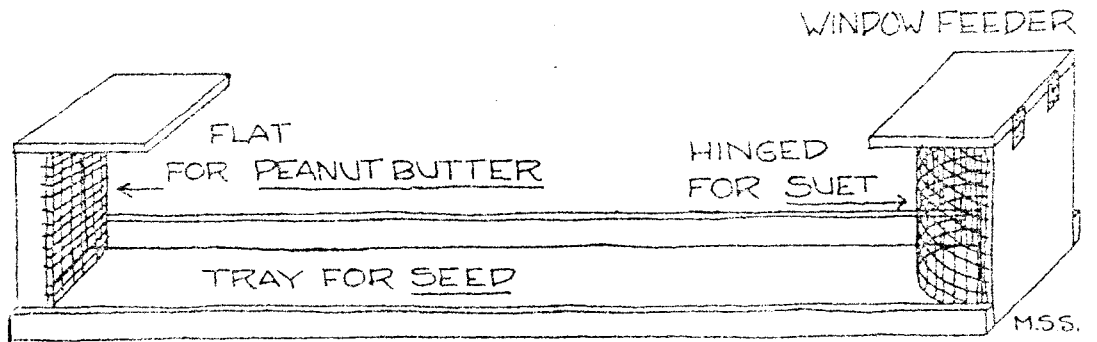
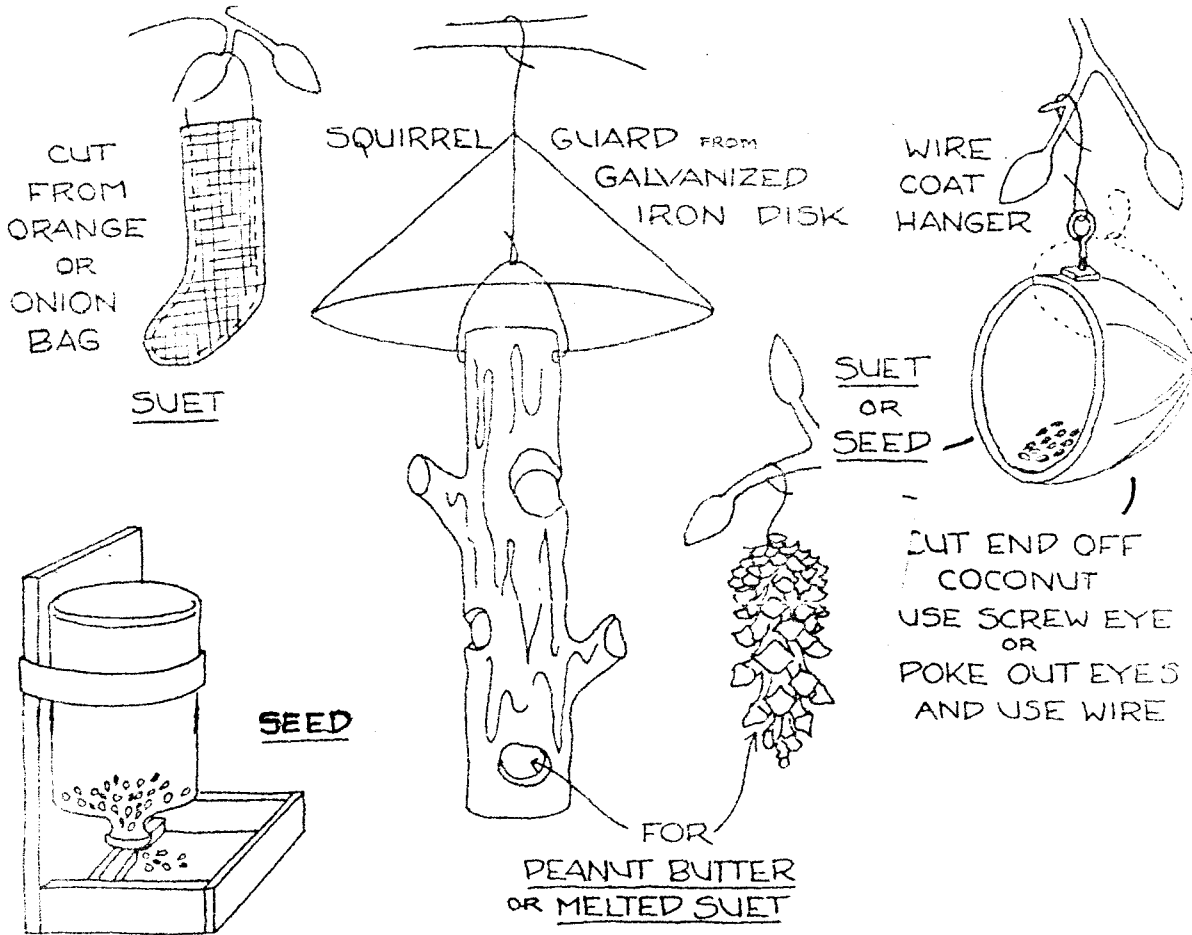
- 62 families of birds breed in North America, but most species are migratory.
- 86 families breed in Central & South America, 31 of them peculiar to that area.
- 67 families breed in Africa(Ethiopian Zone).
- If all the offspring from one pair of Robins lived, after 30 years the original pair would produce 1200 million million million descendants. There would be room for only 1/150,000 of these birds on the entire surface of the earth even though they stood jammed shoulder to shoulder.
- The maximum age that a Blue Jay is known to have lived is 15 years.
- Man has exterminated species both indirectly by modifying their habitats through his cultural changes (including the introduction of competitors and predators), and directly by slaughtering them for food, feathers, or sport.
- The Brown-headed Cowbird lays it's eggs in the nests of over 250 other species of birds and abandons them to their host's care.
- Young Robins can fly when 14-16 days old.
- Eagles are unusually large hawks and thus belong to a family that has 208 species world-wide. Some 50 of these have been classified as eagles.
- A Northern Shrike can recognise a mouse from 240' and spot its own kind from 1,250'.
- The last Passenger Pigeon died in captivity in 1914.
- The last two Eskimo Curlews reported were seen on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts in 1972.
- Contrary to popular belief, female Canada Geese, not the males in a flock, usually take turns at the lead during the long migrations.
- The Black-capped Chickadee while asleep, has a heart rate of about 500 times/minute, but after strenuous exercise this rate is doubled.
- The yellow-billed Cuckoo is able to converge its eyes on objects either in front of or behind its head.

Prof. Birdbrain Squawks Out

I've had a long time question about birds that I haven't been able to answer. We all know that, when flying, gravity works down on birds forcing them to work extra hard to stay aloft. Their body weights must be extra light in order to ensure that the force doesn't drop them in a feathery heap in an embarrassing way.

I have an idea that if birds flew with their backs to the earth, or upside down, the force of gravity would be working from their belly up and thereby would help to keep them aloft. No more fighting against gravity. The force would actually help them look for food on the ground without having to strain their necks as hawks and vultures do, because their eyes would already be pointed at the ground. Do you think we should tell them about it?





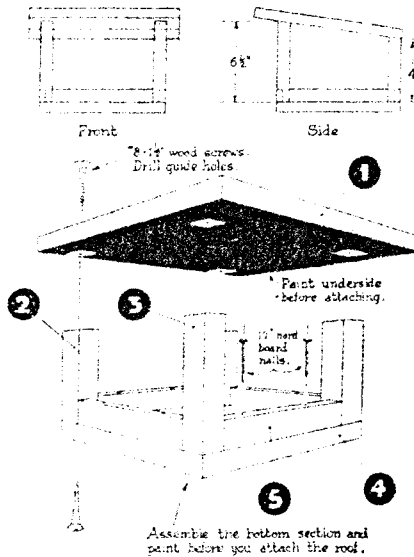
A BIRD FEEDER TO MAKE

Now is the time to start feeding birds. Here is a simple feeder you can make.

You will need—

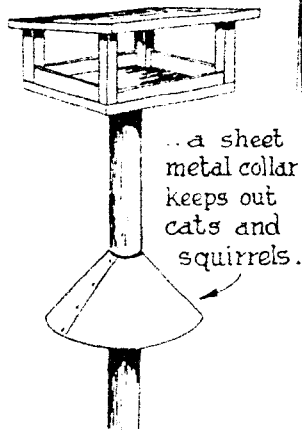
- 1— $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 12" x 12"—White Pine—1 Req.
- 2—1" x 1" x $4\frac{1}{4}$ "—White Pine—2 Req.
- 3—1" x 1" x 6"—White Pine—2 Req.
- 4— $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 10" x 10"—White Pine—1 Req.
- 5— $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 1" (Cut them to fit snugly between the posts.) 4 Req.
- Screws—No. 8 x $1\frac{1}{2}$ "—8 Req. (8 penny screw nails may be substituted.)
- Nails— $1\frac{1}{2}$ " Hardboard nails.
- Drill—To drill guide holes for the screws.
- Paint and brushes—Two coats of floor and deck paint.
- Screwdriver
- Saw
- Miscellaneous hardware for mounting—Screw eyes, angle brackets, supports.

*To get the proper slant to the roof posts, lay out the side view, full size, on a piece of paper. Use the paper pattern to cut the slant.



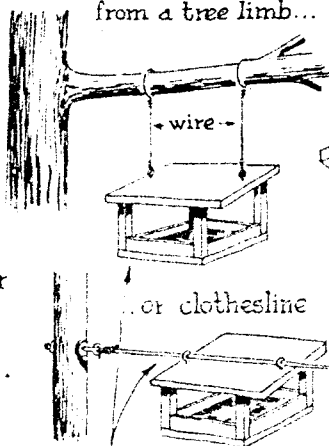
They can be mounted like this:

on a post ...



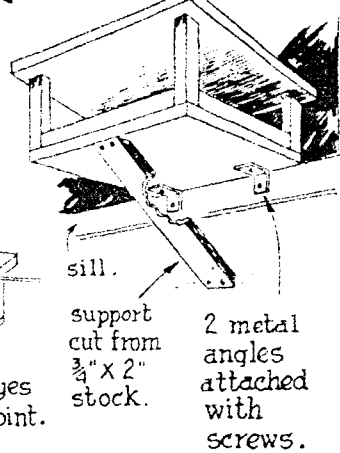
JOHN F. CLARK

from a tree limb...



Use two screw eyes at the balance point.

You can also mount it on a window sill.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE:

The Baillie Birdathon- Myron Loback tells all and everything about the big day in May when intrepid birders accept sponsors for each species seen and take to the field in a gruelling day long attempt to raise money for bird research and preservation and the activities of our club.

The Ontario bird breeding Atlas- A special report by Jacques Bouvier, Pembroke area regional co-ordinator, on the 1984 season and the computer-assisted fact booklet on data from the Pembroke region.

Update on club activities, including specifics of club field trips.

Activities to come:

- Sunday, Dec. 11: Exploratory field trip before Christmas Bird Count. Call Jacques at 735-0366 to participate.

- Wed., Dec. 14 at 7:00P.M., in the meeting room at the Pembroke Library, Manson will lead an organising meeting for all birders interested in taking part in the Christmas Bird Count. Both field observers and feeder watchers are encouraged to come out and help make this year's Count a big success.

- Saturday, Dec. 17: Christmas Bird Count. Call Manson Fleguel at 732-7703.

- Sat. Feb. 4 or Sun. the 5th: Waterfowl Census on the Ottawa River(other winter birds may be seen). In the event of bad weather, move up to the next week-end. Please register beforehand with Jacques Bouvier, 735-0366.

- Sunday, Feb. 19: Trip to see Bald Eagles and other winter birds with Manson Fleguel. Call Manson at 732-7703.

Of Note - November '83, Vol.3 No.6, Birdfinding in Canada, P.O. Box 519, Kleinberg, Ont., L0J 1C0. A guided birding tour of the Trans-Canada Hwy., stops at Pembroke this issue. This is Lap 14 which starts at Richmond, Ont. Next issue continues with Pembroke and goes west. Lots of other info included. Cost: \$10. for 6 issues/yr.