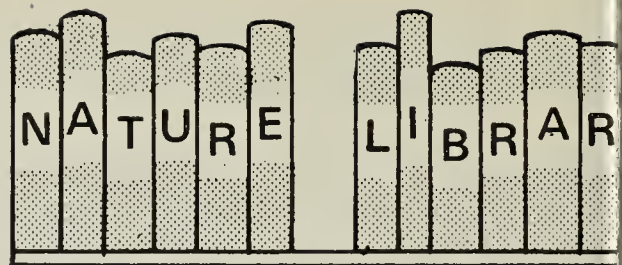


Wauchope reported that two pairs of orioles built nests and then disappeared. "Shortly after this I noticed a kingbird perched beside one of the oriole nests and found that another kingbird was actually inside the nest. There were, however, no eggs in this nest. A few days later we saw the kingbirds at the other nest and found it contained four eggs. These were hatched in due course and I was able to get a series of pictures of the Eastern Kingbird feeding its young in the nest of the Baltimore Oriole" . . . R. C. Mackenzie reported on tapping Manitoba Maples along the Carrot River to collect syrup and make sugar . . . On hibernating frogs: "one spring Mrs. Marion Nixon disturbed an old hot bed, and huddled there at the junction of soil and manure were about twenty small Swamp Tree Frogs. The ground was still partly frozen and some of them were still encased in icy soil — but just as soon as a clod became broken to expose a leg, that leg would start wiggling, flexing rhythmically and slowly, and soon the owner would squirm his whole body free". . . What happens to dead skunks? C. Fehrenbach of Saltcoats wrote that "A few years ago he shot a skunk about six feet from a small culvert. The body lay around for some days and then it too disappeared leaving only a slight depression in the grass where it had lain. But near the opening of the culvert Mr. Fehrenbach noticed that the soil had been disturbed as if some animal had been scratching there, so he looked inside, and there was another skunk, rolling, tossing and throwing his dead friend around. The next day when Mr. Fehrenbach returned to the spot there was "no sight or sound of either animal dead or alive. Has anyone, he asks, ever come across a similar occurrence?" . . . An account of banding done by George H. Lang at Indian Head covers a total of 6,208 birds between 1923 and 1939, including 1,662 Robins, 859 Black-crowned Night Herons and 85 Burrowing Owls . . . Early dates for bats were supplied by J. D. Ritchie of Wallwort: May 14, 1931; May 10, 1932, and May 7, 1934.



SILTON SEASONS

From the Diary of a Countryman
By. R. D. Symons
Published by Doubleday Canada Ltd.
105 Bond Street,
Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1Y3
200 pp. January 1975. \$7.95

No, Mr. Symons, neither your spirit nor your pen has faltered in worthily presenting your observations of a life spent with joy and beauty. (Answer to last paragraph of Preface.)

Many millions of persons have more knowledge, scientific or otherwise, than R. D. Symons, but few more have the gift of wisdom he possesses.

"Silton Seasons" consists of a twelve-month excerpt from Symons' diary, written after retirement from an interesting but hard, rugged life. It carries us through a year, month by month — each chapter a joy to anyone interested in nature whether birds, mammals, plants, trees or the wonder of clean air and glorious skies. Symons' descriptive writing is superb in its simplicity, and his obvious love and knowledge of all things wild and natural will continue to thrill any nature lover, at the same time creating awareness in those whose thoughts have not yet awakened to the joy and beauty surrounding us.

However, "Silton Seasons" is more than a nature book. Each chapter displays a wealth of prairie history actually experienced by the author. Nostalgia for the old days is ever present yet he is sufficiently wise to realize that time cannot stand still — machinery displaces the horse, populations grow, methods of travel have changed the whole world. Although all these things have to a great extent contributed to spoiling the land he loved, he seldom shows bitter-

ss, but often one feels his scorn for the stupidity of man in his disregard for the wild creatures and the environment — the misuse of snowmobiles being one infuriating fact which brings forth a torrent of scathing words.

Mr. Symons had great respect for the early settlers, knowing first hand the terrific hardships and steady back-breaking work they experienced. He discusses them at length throughout the book, mentioning the many traditionalities of these people and the harmony which eventually grew between them — helping one another, saving one another, and enjoying "home-made" entertainment in the off-season leisure time (leisure which is mighty short by our standards). Symons' tremendous respect for the Indians and their old way of life — his

regret and sorrow for their present plight shows up in most of his writing and is certainly strongly put forth in "Silton Seasons".

Symons was a well read man, a philosopher, historian, nature lover and artist with both brush and words. The only fault I find in this book is the dearth of his delightful drawings, but this is understandable since it was published after his death. I strongly recommend "Silton Seasons" to all readers except the "skimmers". One should read this book slowly and in a reasonably quiet atmosphere in order to absorb the deep thoughts and descriptions therein. It is a beautiful and thought provoking book.

Gloria in excelsis — quote p. 176. — Pat O'Neil, 1125 Elliott Street, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

READING ABOUT PLANTS AND WILD FLOWERS

by DIANE SARICH*

Plants have a very practical value as well as being beautiful. Life could not exist without them. Public libraries have many books on plants but the following is a list of general books which would provide a basic introduction to the study of plants. (Call letters are for the Saskatoon Public Library.)

OLD, Harold. *The plant kingdom*. 2nd ed. 1964. 118 p. The basic biological similarities of plants as shown through a comparison of their reproduction and structure.

580 B687.

ODLONG, Ware. *Performing plants*. 1969. 106 p. Peculiarities of particular plants such as the response of some to certain stimuli, plants that heal, plants that eat insects, and other unusual behavior.

Y 581 B927.

ORNER, Edred. *The life of plants*. 1964. 106 p. The evolution of plant life — how plants have modified their structures and functions to meet the challenge of a new environment.

581 C815.

GABB, Michael. *The world of plants*. 1966. 160 p. The life processes of plants in general, the structure and life cycle of flowering plants, and the classification of plants.

Y 581 G112.

MILNE, Louis. *The nature of plants*. 1971. 106 p. An introduction to the plant kingdom emphasizing the many individual types of plants, their reproduction, genetics, and their relationship to the larger world around them.

Y 581 M659n.

NORTHEN, Henry. *Ingenious kingdom: the remarkable world of plants*. 1970. 274 p. The classification, evolution, ecology and behavior of plants.

581 N874.

RAVEN, Peter. *Biology of plants*. 1970. 706 p. An excellent introduction to the study of plants including sections on plant development, soil and water relationships, genetics and ecology.

581 R253.

Saskatoon Public Library,
1st St. and 4th Ave.,
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

- TOMPKINS, Peter. *The secret life of plants*. 1973. 402 p. The world of plants and their relation to mankind as revealed by the latest discoveries of scientists of many disciplines.
581 T662.
- TRIBE, Ian. *The plant kingdom*. 1970. 159 p. Distinctive specimens from the 300,000 members of the plant family describing the outstanding characteristics of the major groups.
581 T821.
- VALLIN, Jean. *The plant world*. 1967. 108 p. The structure, vegetative system and life of representatives of many of the major plant groups.
581 V188.
- WIT, Hendrik. *Plants of the world*. 1966-67. 2 vol. A two volume series which describes 261 plant families, represented by some 4,500 species.
R 581 W819.
- The world of plants*. 1965. 158 p. A comprehensive picture of man's attempts to understand, control, and use the fascinating world of plants.
581 W927.
- NOVAK, Frantisek. *The pictorial encyclopedia of plants and flowers*. 1966. 589 p. The fantastic variety of plants as revealed through 1,120 photographs.
- EDLIN, Herbert. *Atlas of plant life*. 1973. 128 p. A continent-by-continent review of the world's wild and cultivated plants.
581.9 E23 (Another copy in reference).
- CALDWELL, Robert. *Guide to Saskatchewan marsh plants*. 1962. 77 p. An aid in identifying some of the aquatic plants of Saskatchewan and neighbouring provinces.
R 581.92971 C147.
- Saskatchewan Museum of Natural History, Regina. *Common marsh plants of Saskat-*
- chewan*. 40 p. Some of the most conspicuous and typical aquatic, semi-aquatic and damp soil terrestrial wild flowers of Saskatchewan.
R 581.92971 S25
- MONTGOMERY, Frederick. *Native wild plants of eastern Canada and the adjacent northeastern United States*. 1962. 193 p. Accurate details about all the more common species of wild flowers and plants of the region.
R 581.971 M78
- MONTGOMERY, Frederick. *Plants from sea to sea*. 1966. 453 p. A practical and authoritative guide to over 1500 species of plants found coast to coast in Canada.
581.971 M787p (also ref)
- MOSS, Ezra. *Flora of Alberta*. 1959. 546 p. A complete manual of native flowering plants, conifers, ferns and fern allies found in Alberta.
581.971 M913 (Another copy in reference)
- BOIVIN, Bernard. *Flora of the Prairie Provinces*. 1967. A handbook to the flora of the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.
R 581.9712 B68
- Canada National Museum. *Illustrated flora of the Canadian Arctic archipelago*. 1967. 218 p. A guide to the 340 species and major geographical races of flowering plants and ferns of this area.
R 581.97122 C21
- NELSON, Ruth. *Handbook of Rocky Mountain plants*. 1969. 331 p. How to identify the plants of this region in simple botanical terms.
581.973 N42
- FERNALD, Merritt. (ed.) *Gray's manual of botany*. 1959. 1632 p. A handbook of the flowering plants and ferns of the central and northeastern United States and adjacent Canada.
R 582 G7

One small group of plants which are very plentiful at this time of year are wildflowers. The following books provide general information on wildflowers as well as detailed descriptions of those found in this area.

- CARMICHAEL, Lloyd T. *Prairie wildflowers*. 1961. 186 p. The endless variety of wildflowers found in the Canadian Prairies arranged according to when they bloom.
582.13 C287 (Another copy in reference).
- CRAIGHEAD, John. *A field guide to Rocky Mountain wildflowers from northern Arizona and New Mexico to British Columbia*. 1963. 277 p. An identification guide to over 590 of the species of flowering plants found in the Rocky Mountain region.
582.13 C886.
- STRINGER, Michael. *Wild flowers*. 1961. 61 p. Sixty species of wild flowers with world distribution are illustrated with detailed full-colour drawing and a brief descriptive text.
- SPERKA, Marie. *Growing wildflowers a gardener's guide*. 1973. 277 p. Detailed instructions on the planting and propagation of more than 200 species of wildflowers.
635.9676 S7

ERARD, Barbara. *Wild flowers of the world*. 1970. 432 p. The special features of the major botanical regions of the world illustrated by some distinctive characteristic, or otherwise interesting plants.

582.13 E93.

MMON, Robert. *Wildflowers of North America in full colour*. 1961. 180 p. How to identify and appreciate the lore associated with hundreds of typical wildflowers selected from five natural growing areas of North America.

582.13 L554 (Another copy in reference).

ANNING, Stanley. *Systematic guide to flowering plants of the world*. 1965. 302 p. Organized under orders and families, contains but adequate details of nearly 400 species forming a representative cross-section of the world's flowering plants.

R 582.13 M284

TERSON, Roger. *A field guide to wildflowers of northeastern and northcentral North America*. 1968. 420 p. A visual approach to almost 1300 species of wildflowers arranged by colour, form and habitat.

582.13097 P485.

Canada. Department of Agriculture. *Wild plants of the Canadian prairies*. 1964. 519 p. A easily understood guide to approximately 1200 wild plants of the Prairie Provinces.

R 582.130971 C212.

Canada, Department of Agriculture. *A key to plants of the farming and ranching areas of the Canadian prairies*. 1953. 339 p. A field reference book to approximately 1,200 species of native plants of the Canadian prairies.

R 582.130971 C212K.

MILL, Catherine. *Canadian wild flowers*. 1922. 86 p. A reprint of the 1868 edition. The text is spiced with quaint botanical terminology and frequent quotations from nature poetry.

582.13 T766 (Another copy in reference).

Wild Flowers: Banff, Jasper, Kootenay, Yoho National Parks. 1972. 72 p. How to identify shrubs and wild flowers most common in all four National Parks.

R 582.1309711 W668.



White-headed Blackbird

Angus Shortt, Ducks Unlimited

TENENBAUM, Frances. *Gardening with wildflowers*. 1973. 224 p. Clear, easy-to-follow directions for creating a natural effect using native plants.

MACKENZIE, Katherine. *Wild flowers of Eastern Canada*. 1973. Unpaged. Simple, non-technical information about the wildflowers of Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic Provinces.

582.1309713 M156.

PARSONS, Frances. *How to know the wild flowers*. 1963. 418 p. A guide to the names, habitats, and habits of some common wild flowers.

R 582.130973 P267.

Letters

CURIOUS BROWNIE

The first indication that bears were living on or near our farm near Medstead, Saskatchewan, was when we went for a walk and noticed logs that had been rolled over. We also began to see where ant hills had been scratched open, probably for a delicious meal. Then one day when I went out to pick blueberries, I discovered a large bear track in the center of a destroyed ant hill.

One Sunday evening we were standing out in the yard and, to our surprise, saw a large brown bear sauntering across the road in plain view of the house.

One evening in October, on glancing out of a window, we saw a brown bear lying in a small pile of spilled barley licking up big mouthfuls of the delicious grain. He was fat and sleek and seemed to be quite relaxed, lying there like a big dog. When all the grain was gone, he sat up on his haunches and looked around. Then he got up and wandered along the yard fence and down the road. Later in the evening we heard the screen door at the back slam, but decided it was the wind.