
CORRIGENDA

THE FOX THAT STOLE THE APEX OF PALLISER'S TRIANGLE by James K. Finley, September 2005.

The caption that accompanies the photograph on page 135 of this article should read:

Figure 1. Coyotes have become more abundant in the last decade with a concomitant decrease in foxes. This

individual was photographed at the Luseland sewage lagoon in late October 2002, where it had been feeding heavily on wounded geese. In the third year of a major drought, no sloughs remained in the country, and thousands of geese concentrated on the lagoon. Because of liberal bag limits, many geese were wounded, attracting coyotes closer to town than they would have dared in the old days.

A LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE NEST IN A RUSTING GRAIN BINDER by Robert Warnock, September 2005.

The piece of farm machinery shown on page 155 of this note is a *threshing machine* and not a *grain binder*. This was pointed out by Gary Seib, Anthony Hruska and Len Fisher. Additional information was contributed by Mr. Hruska, who is very familiar with this kind of machinery. Mr. Hruska writes 'A grain binder cuts the grain and ties it into sheaves, which are then stoked. Later, the grain is threshed by the illustrated machine. The only bird to

build a nest in a grain binder is the House Wren, which builds its nest in the twine box. A robin will build its nest under the deck, out of the elements. The part that you have illustrated is the blower, or straw stacker of a threshing machine." Mr. Hruska adds that the nest shown in the photographs is not in the machine but on it, whereas Mr. Seib describes the nest as 'beside the discharge pipe...'

The editors are grateful to the readers who took the time to contact us about these errors and provide interesting, related information.



"Hawks, eagles and falcons live by their eyes, scanning vast distances for prey. Their eyesight is superb, although the usual comparison, that it equals a human's with 8-power binoculars, is misleading. It's not that a hawk enjoys magnified vision, but that its ability to discriminate detail over distance is vastly better than a person's. Thus, a red-tailed hawk kiting 1,500 feet above the ground can spot a rabbit scurrying through the underbrush, where as a human would see only an indistinct jumble of shapes and colors at that range."

Scott Weidensaul, *The Birder's Miscellany*, p. 9.

MYSTERY PHOTO

DECEMBER 2005 MYSTERY PHOTO

The December mystery photo is on the back cover and the caption at the bottom of the inside front cover provides the details.

ANSWER TO THE SEPTEMBER 2005 MYSTERY PHOTO

The powdery white coils suggestive of bird droppings are sawfly larvae (Figure 1). The resemblance to bird dropping is probably not accidental and is even more pronounced in the earlier stages, as shown by the shed skins in Figure 2. Masquerading as bird droppings presumably is a deterrent to being pecked at by birds and occurs in other insects, such as the early instars of swallowtail butterfly caterpillars.

The larvae of this species of sawfly feed on Red Osier Dogwood leaves. They avoid the tough veins and midrib, as can be seen in the photographs. The larvae pictured here resemble those of the Dogwood Sawfly, *Macremphytus tarsatus*, a species of eastern North America that may not occur in western Canada, although other species of the genus do occur here.

To tell a sawfly caterpillar from those of butterflies or moths (Lepidopterans), count the prolegs. Lepidopteran larvae have five pairs; the sawflies have six or

more. Prolegs are the stubby, cylindrical legs on the abdomen behind the three pairs of true legs attached to the thorax. (In spite of being called prolegs, they appear to be in hind leg position!) Lepidopteran prolegs are covered with tiny hooks, like velcro. Sawfly prolegs lack this feature. This difference allows you to distinguish between the two by placing the caterpillar in question on your sleeve and trying to pick it up. If the hind end lifts easily it is a sawfly; if it remains hooked to your sleeve, it is a lepidopteran caterpillar.

Adult sawflies look nothing like butterflies and moths; they resemble wasps and belong to the same order, Hymenoptera.

The moral of the story is that not all dusty piles are bird droppings, and not all caterpillars become butterflies or moths.

The editors thank Cedric Gillott, Keith Roney, Greg Pohl and Ernest Mengersen for the information on sawflies from which the answer was prepared. The photographs were taken by Anna Leighton.

Figure 1



Figure 2

