

THE BRODIE CLUB

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 20 September 1988, 8.00 p.m.
PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Faunal Lab, South Borden Bldg.
SPEAKER: Dr. Mark Taylor, Dept. of Zoology, U. of T.
TOPIC: The Biology and Conservation of Small Mammalian Carnivores.

Minutes of the 841st meeting of THE BRODIE CLUB,
held May 17, 1988, in the Faunal Lab, University of Toronto.

Bertin was chairman, Bodsworth was recording secretary.

The meeting was called to order shortly after 8 p.m. with roll call and introduction of guests. There were 11 active members present, and four guests. Guests were Jennifer Young, Isabelle Côté, David Hik and Charles Carscallen.

Minutes of the 840th meeting were read by Carrick who had been recording secretary for that meeting. They were approved on a motion by Aird that was seconded by Speakman.

Announcements: Martin announced that the Canadian Wildlife Service was setting up a project to monitor forest bird population trends and was seeking participants. Martin also tabled an announcement regarding a conference on forest decline in Ontario to be held shortly.

Speaker: The speaker was Dr. David L. Euler of the Ministry of Natural Resources who discussed new legislation being prepared to regulate the keeping of native wildlife in captivity by falconers, zoos and game farms.

The speaker was introduced by Savage.

Dr. Euler explained that a 1987 Supreme Court decision had ruled that raptors were not game birds under the Ontario Game and Fish Act. This left raptors no longer protected by law and created a crisis that demanded prompt legislative action. One of the activities affected by the court decision was the keeping of raptors for falconry, and to address the falconry problem it was deemed necessary to revise and improve all legislation relative to the keeping of wildlife in captivity.

He said the proposed new legislation would cover the following four areas: (1) the monitoring and control of people engaged in the care and rehabilitation of injured native wildlife; (2) the establishment of a licensing system for the keeping of native wildlife; (3) the development of good standards of care; (4) the regulation of falconry. These activities are now wide open and there is no legal basis for exercising any control over them.

Much of the address and members' discussion that followed focussed on falconry. The speaker said there were about 100 falconers in Ontario and falconry was legal simply because there was no legislation prohibiting it. The lack of controls has given Ontario a reputation for being a sink hole for easy smuggling of falcons and other wildlife out of North America by air through Toronto.

Dr. Euler revealed that the volume of submissions and letters to the government opposing falconry was much greater than that supporting it, and he said the new legislation would probably be highly restrictive of falconry. It would probably be necessary to go on permitting some falconry, he said, but only with birds already in captivity. It is expected that taking falcons from the wild will be prohibited, although Dr. Euler didn't entirely rule out the possibility of allowing falconers to take limited numbers from nests in the wild. He said whatever course was followed, controls would be strict, with each bird having something like a passport bearing a genetic imprint from the bird's blood that would definitely identify it.

All other provinces allow the use of native species in falconry and permit the taking of a small number from the wild. Most popular species among falconers are gyrfalcons, peregrines and goshawks, in that order. Dr. Euler said the fees for taking a gyrfalcon from a nest in the Northwest Territories was \$5,000 to the Eskimo guide and \$5,000 to the government.

Speakman expressed concern that legalizing falconry, no matter how rigidly controlled, would publicize and popularize it and result in more wild birds being taken--illegally if they could not be taken legally. Some members agreed with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' stand that regulations limiting the take of raptors would be impossible to enforce.

Notes and observations: Speakman reported seeing a boreal owl in a tree hole near his summer home on Lake Simcoe. The hole had previously been used as a roosting site by pileated woodpeckers.

Carrick reported he had four trumpeter swan eggs he was incubating in an incubator.

Aird reported a loon-count with a student on a recent early morning during which they counted 74 loons flying northward over Toronto.

Norma Martin highly recommended a book describing studies in the top of rainforests--Life Above the Jungle Floor by Perry.

Bodsworth reported seeing whitethroated sparrows, a catbird and two ovenbirds in a small parkette at Bay and Queen Streets beside the old city hall.

The club decided to hold its spring field day at Wye Marsh on June 4th.

The meeting adjourned for coffee at 10.15 p.m.

Fred Bodsworth
Acting recording secretary.

Brodie Club Field Outing

The annual Brodie Club field outing was held on Saturday 4 June 1988 at the Wye Marsh, near Midland. Four members (Norm and Norma Martin, Savage and Young) and one guest (Jennifer Young) were present, and greatly enjoyed the weather, marsh surroundings and the company. Other members and guests had had last minute changes in plans.

H. G. S.