

## MINUTES OF THE 865th MEETING

The 865th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB was held in the Faunal Lab, Borden Building, University of Toronto on 19 February 1991, commencing at 8:00 P.M.

There were 15 members and one guest in addition to the speaker present. Margaret Bodsworth was the guest of Fred Bodsworth. Crins was Chairman; McNicholl served as Recording Secretary.

MINUTES OF THE 864th MEETING: The minutes of the 864th meeting were read by Carrick, who thanked Crins for providing a summary of his talk on tarweeds. ~~Three~~ corrections were noted: The Chairman was Norma Martin, not Norman Martin; Boissoneau's playbacks of recorded calls were restricted to Eastern Screech-Owls. The cave from which Savage reported a Pika bone was Elba, not Alba. The minutes were approved as corrected.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: McNicholl announced that the annual meeting of the Ontario Bird Banding Association, to which all interested are invited, will be held at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton on Saturday, 9 March.

Bodsworth reported that he had received a letter from Don Baldwin, who now operates a guest house for naturalists on Grand Manan Island, New Brunswick. Members travelling to the Maritimes should contact Bodsworth for details and the address.

Norman Martin announced that the annual general meeting of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists will be held at Geneva Park, Orillia from 17 to 19 May. Norma Martin commented that members wishing to attend should register early because of limited accomodation.

SPEAKER: Carrick introduced the speaker, Corresponding Member Dr. Ed Crossman, of the Royal Ontario Museum.

Dr. Crossman's topic was "Building the Fish Collection at the Royal Ontario Museum," based on a paper presented to the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists.

The speaker began his talk with a few comments on his pleasure at addressing a club in which a number of his colleagues and friends had been active, notably his Professor and colleague, J. R. Dymond.

Crossman divided his talk into four phases of development of the Royal Ontario Museum, the first of which covered events from colonial days through to the actual founding of the museum, which was opened in 1914.

The first known museum in Ontario was the private collection of Charles Fothergill, who urged the Legislative Assembly to establish a lyceum in 1833. Unfortunately, the proposed collection was not established, and Fothergill's private collection was destroyed in a fire.

About 90 years after Fothergill's attempt, the collection that later provided the core of ROM's zoological collection was started. This collection was developed in the Biology Department at University College by William Hincks, a relative of the Premier, who was appointed the College's first Professor of Natural History in 1853. Thomas Huxley was among the unsuccessful applicants for the job.

Hincks' successor, Ramsay Wright, built the University Museum's collection into the finest of its kind in Canada during his term as Head of the Department of Biology from 1874 to 1912. Wright was very interested in fish, and published the first (1892) "Fishes of Ontario." Among his contributions to ichthyology was the coining of the term "neuromast" for the nervous receptors of the lateral-line system. He was also instrumental in initiating systematic marine biological investigation in Canada. During Wright's tenure, several other important collections were acquired by the museum, and the museum was moved into larger quarters.

B. A. Bensley succeeded Ramsay Wright as Head of the Department of Biology at the university in 1912, and became the first Director of the Royal Ontario Museum of Zoology in 1913, when ROMZ was established as the last of the constituent museums of the ROM. Much of the university's collection was transferred to ROMZ, but this was a gradual process involving several years.

Another important collection acquired by ROMZ was that of the old Provincial Museum in the Toronto Norman School. This museum was closed in 1933, after the death of Provincial Biologist C. W. Nash a few years earlier. Nash's 1908 checklist of Ontario's fishes was the earliest province-wide treatment of the fish fauna.

Crossman termed the second phase of museum history as the Provincial Phase from 1913 until 1939. During this time, the museum began to undertake field work, initially in association with the Ontario Fisheries Research Laboratory on Georgian Bay. Museum staff worked closely with university and provincial government researchers, a tradition of co-operation that continues today. ROMZ expeditions in the two decade period stretching from 1919 until 1939 totalled 54 in Ontario, 17 of which yielded fish specimens and 12 elsewhere, of which half yielded fish. This was a period of major surveys of Ontario's large lakes, the collections from which now serve as important archival material for comparison with contaminant levels of more modern times.

Several of these surveys were undertaken by J. R. Dymond, the prime "mover and shaker" at the museum for many years. Dymond became Secretary of ROMZ in 1922 and served as Director from 1934 until 1949. During this period and after retirement he was also one of the driving forces in numerous naturalist, hunting and fishing, and scientific organizations.

From about 1940 to about 1960, the museum's Ichthyology Department entered a more national phase, expanding on a national role it had begun to develop earlier. During this period, W. B. Scott succeeded Dymond as Director and there were two Curators of Ichthyology (Scott and Crossman) for the first time. In addition to continuing research

within Ontario, expeditions were mounted to British Columbia, the Yukon, the prairies, the Maritimes and insular Newfoundland. The collections from eastern Canada were especially important in providing much of the material on which "The Fishes of Eastern Canada" by Scott and Crossman is based. This period also saw an increase in emphasis on studying the biology of fish.

The fourth phase in the build-up of ROM's ichthyology collection began about 1960, with a shift to international exploration and collection. This phase had already begun earlier, with collecting trips to North Carolina and Trinidad, but began in earnest in the 1960s, partly because the appointment of Don McAllister to the National Museum of Canada had resulted in less need of a national emphasis at the ROM and partly because of increased opportunities for international work. ROM staff participated in government research on ocean-going vessels of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada. During this period, the ROM briefly employed three curators in ichthyology at the same time, one of whom (Alan Emory) is now Director of the Canadian Museum of Nature. The international phase, which is still ongoing, is reflected in the recent appointment to the staff of Richard Winterbottom, an expert in gobies and reef fishes, especially of the Philippines and Indian Ocean. From 1961 through 1990, ROM's fish department participated in 29 expeditions within Ontario, 24 to other parts of Canada, and 38 outside the country.

Crossman's review of the development of ROM's fish collection took us from a collection of 28 fish in 1891 to about 900,000 fish of over 5000 species in 287 families in 1989, including 37 primary types specimens and 108 secondary types. The speaker's talk stimulated a wide variety of questions concerning introduced species, declines in some species, pollution, habitat deterioration, and ballast. Crossman answered each question thoroughly and authoritatively. Bendell thanked the speaker and led the audience in enthusiastic applause.

#### MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS:

SAVAGE: Displayed several skulls recently acquired from Metro Zoo.

MC NICHOLL: Commented that the relationship of William Hincks to Premier Francis Hincks was that of an older brother.

BODSWORTH: Commented on the plight of cormorants in the Persian Gulf, with LUMSDEN elaborating on the species affected.

BOISSONEAU: Reported observations of Peregrine Falcons at two locations, and a sighting of Bohemian Waxwings among a flock of Cedar Waxwings. RILEY noted that one of the Peregrines, at Leslie Street Spit, was a bird that had been released at Aurora.

CARRICK: Reported that Trumpeter Swan populations in western Canada were stated to be increasing at a healthy rate by attendees at a recent conference in Utah. The Canadian Wildlife Service has recently permitted him to re-apply for his permit to keep this species in captivity.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT: at 9:56 p.m.