

MINUTES OF THE 923rd MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB
Sept. 16, 1997

The meeting was held in Room 107, Ramsay Wright Building,
University of Toronto

Chair: Janet Cooper Secretary: David Fowle

Attendance: 12 members and two guests
Erin Hannah guest of Bodsworth
Yvonne Bendell guest of Bendell

Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted without amendment.

BUSINESS: It was decided to delay the election of officers to a future meeting where there was a larger attendance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Members were reminded of the memorial service for Dr. Savage to be held in Trinity College Chapel on Sept. 27. Carrick volunteered to represent the Club and to make a brief statement about Dr. Savage's contribution. Members were encouraged to attend the service.

PROGRAM: Since the meeting had been designated as "Members' Night", contributions were solicited by the Chair.

The first speaker was NORMA MARTIN, who described a visit to Kesagami Lodge on Kesagami Lake, a large shallow lake drained by the Kesagami River into Hannah Bay at the south end of James Bay. The presence of layered peat at the shoreline suggests that the lake was once a bog which has become flooded. It is now included in a provincial park. The lodge is an example of a remote tourism enterprise featuring catch-release fishing for walleye. Some estimates suggest that the economics of tourism in northern Ontario now rivals the economics of the forest industries, particularly in terms of employment.

A major objective of the visit was to inspect the bottomland black spruce forest surrounding Kesagami Lake. This forest type was illustrated by some excellent slides showing seemingly endless stands of black spruce about 160 years old, averaging 10 inches in diameter with a ground cover of Sphagnum and feather mosses. The data collected will be used for comparison with other bottomland spruce stands further south.

The second speaker was JIM BENDELL who reported on a trip earlier this year to Yucatan sponsored by the Eastern Ontario Model Forest. The group identified 160 species of birds, examined relics of the ancient Maya civilization, and compared forest management in Central America and Ontario.

He next brought the Club up-to-date on his studies of habitat selection by ruffed and spruce grouse on his study area near Gogama. He is also analyzing the data from several years of observation of hand-reared blue grouse held in an aviary in the former north wing of the Borden Building. While recognizing the

limitations of behaviour studies with captive birds, he pointed to a number of important observations which will assist in the interpretation of field observations, particularly in relation to population regulation and breeding success.

ANNE FALLS reported on an encounter with a rattlesnake near the Falls' cottage on Go Home Lake. This was the second one seen in the vicinity in 38 years.

She also drew attention to a beaver dam and pond on the east Don near the intersection of Leslie Street and Sheppard Avenue. Herons and a number of other bird species had been sighted there.

JENNIFER YOUNG asked for identification of mysterious night sounds in the wooded area near her home. Her description suggested they were made by young great horned owls following adults and begging for food.

MICHAEL BOYER reported that he and Michael Belanger had completed their compendium of the "Genera of Boletes in the North-east". He also has a draft of a similar summary on agaric mushrooms. He is now considering a compendium on forest mosses as an aid to identification for non-specialists.

He further commented on the nesting activities of tree swallows and martins in houses at his Muskoka cottage and on the prompt response of snapping turtles in exploiting the roadside gravel at the side of a new road for nesting sites.

FRED BODSWORTH had undertaken a three-week Alaskan adventure, travelling with other naturalists first to the Anchorage area and then on to Mt. McKinley Park and westward to Nome and finally to St Lawrence Island in the Bering Sea. On the island he spent some time at New Gambel Cape, almost on the international date line and within 75 kms of Siberia. Here he encountered numerous seabirds. Eurasian species, such as bristle-thighed curlew, bluethroat and wagtails, were seen. During the trip he saw 159 bird species, 12 of which were "new".

BILL CARRICK reported that the trumpeter swan program was progressing well. This year it was decided to allow parent pairs to raise their own cygnets instead of collecting eggs for artificial incubation. The results had been encouraging. The project has received some funding to expand the breeding program in the Sudbury area. There was some discussion of the "Canada goose problem" in the Metro area. There was a general objection of exporting them to other states and provinces. Discouraging feeding by people and tolerance of the birds may be the best policy.

The meeting ADJOURNED at 10:15 p.m.