



ADRIAN ALDER stirs his dinner after a long hard day of hiking. The boys covered eight miles before spending the night on farmland in Speyside.

Lesson learned by hiking Scouts

Information given by Scoutmaster John Sharples at the recent Scout equipment seminar was put into action this weekend. Sixteen scouts set out along an eight mile stretch of the Bruce Trail loaded with packs containing all the equipment necessary for an overnight backpacking hike.

The boys and their three leaders left the Scout hall Saturday morning with transportation provided by parents, who dropped them off at the 401 overpass on Appleby line, near Kelso. Following the Bruce Trail up the escarpment the group stopped for lunch at Cox's farm shelter on the trail. The shelter is set up by the Bruce Trail association and is used by hikers.

Travelling in teams of two or three the boys were responsible for carrying their own personal gear, cooking utensils, a shelter, food and a camp stove. The first of the group arrived at their campsite on the 15th sideroad, just east of Speyside on the Robertson farm at 8:15. For the next half an hour the boys arrived at the campsite relieved to remove the packs from their backs after a long hard day.

After cooking their own supper on the small campstoves and playing a few games the boys happily settled in for a good night's sleep.

Sunday the group closed up camp and hiked into Acton from Speyside.

Since many of the boys had new equipment Scoutmaster Mark Rowe felt the equipment seminar helped parents in choosing the proper equipment to buy for their son. Mark said the biggest problem was "mothers packed the packs." Some of the boys were carrying packs that were much too heavy for their weight. The pack should be one-quarter of the boy's weight. Mark said that hopefully the boys will know next time what not to bring.

This hike was designed as preparation for the Explorers hike scheduled for May 12 weekend. Scouts from Limehouse, Glen Williams and Acton will be taking part in the Explorers hike.

Leaders for the backpacking hike were Scoutmaster John Sharples Assistant Scoutmaster Mark Rowe and father and Cub leader Jim Boyle.

Scouts taking part in attending the hike were David Fuller, Calvin Robinson, Greg Cowan, Donnie McDonald, Kevin Hoerig, Darran Edmundson, Tim Garton, John Waskalik, Malcolm McLelland, Steven Inotal, Christopher Luxon, Adrian Alder, Derek Boyle, Tim Height, John Barratt and Jim McVeigh.

The Scouts would like to thank Mr. Robertson for the use of his land for their camp.



JOHN WASKALIK sets up his tent at the Scout overnight hike on the weekend. The boys were responsible for carrying their own gear including their tent or shelter.

Festival celebrates centennial

This year the Guelph Spring Festival, Guelph, will celebrate the 100th birthday of its founder, tenor Edward Johnson.

The festival which runs from April 28 to May 19 will open with a musical tribute to Mr. Johnson, which will include operatic arias, duets and trios by Michele Boucher, Ingemar Korjus, and Jan Pearce, with Derek Brampton at the piano.

The program following will feature Betty Comden and Adolph Green in *A Marvellous Party* (April 28), Schubertlied with the Orford Quartet, Gisela Depkat, Bouchard and Morisset, Paul Grice, Mario Germaine LeBlanc, Derek Brampton, Rosemary Landry, Susan Gudgeon, Janice Taylor and Janet Stubbs (April 30).

A highlight will be the opera premiere, *Psycho Red* (May 6), a dramatic work by Charles Wilson and Eugene Benson, directed by Brian Macdonald.

On May 7 there will be a matinee premiere of *The Cabbagetown Kids* by Dodi Robb and Pat Patterson, produced by the Road Show, Guelph, and an evening with Irene Worth in a one-woman show devoted to the dramatic poetry of Shakespeare.

Les Grands Ballets Canadiens will perform with the Orford Quartet May 13 and again at a matinee on May 14. In the evening there will be a performance of *Lazarus*, an oratorio with Rosemary Landry, Janet Stubbs, Pauline Vaillancourt, Glyn Evans, Alan Crofoot, Ingemar Korjus, accompanied by the Festival Singers and the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony, conducted by Nicholas Goldschmidt.

For a complete program write Box 1718, Guelph N1H 6Z9, Ontario Canada, telephone (519) 821-7570.

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Bluebirds on increase; tree disease "break"?

by Jeff Harvey

There are few words which have been expressed about birds such as the bluebird which have not reflected exclamations of admiration. Regarded as a gentle species, under territorial conditions it is often very aggressive.

The Eastern Bluebird is unquestionably the most beautiful member of the thrush family, and in spring it is one of the earliest arrivals. Despite the fact most move south into the Carolinas to overwinter, there are many records of hardy individuals which have braved a southern Canadian winter. Bluebirds are ideally suited to open country intermingled with scattered thorn trees. Abandoned orchards are quite often excellent homes for these birds, particularly if some of the trees are hollow



Eastern Bluebird

which provide nesting sites. In colonial days the bluebird thrived, and it was one of the most common of our

birds. Stiff competition arrived towards the latter stages of the nineteenth century in the form of the House Sparrow, a European species. Immediately the House Sparrow began to dispossess the bluebird, taking full advantage of nesting areas habitually used by them. Shortly thereafter a second invasion occurred; this time it was the even more aggressive Starling.

As if this wasn't enough, clean farming was becoming the new vogue and the old orchards were pruned, old fenceposts were removed and replaced by metal ones, and the bluebird almost vanished entirely. There were fewer and fewer areas to which they could retreat. Bluebirds are often very susceptible to late winter cold snaps, and in high latitudes many may group together and freeze to death during migration. Ice storms pose an additional hazard. These factors combined to bring the population of the bluebird to an extremely low level only several years ago.

Now something positive may be happening. It may be too early to show over optimism, but it "seems" that the recently imported Dutch elm disease may be giving the bluebird a totally unexpected "break".

Many parts of its range (southern Ontario included) are now filled with many dead trees which attract insects and consequently, woodpeckers. The woodpeckers old homes may be providing the bluebirds with good ideal places to nest. There is also evidence that the Starling and House Sparrow numbers are leveling off. These occurrences

may be constituting a bluebird recovery. Where nesting sites remain rare, the bluebird has often been assisted in many places by the erecting of artificial nest boxes (bird houses). Placed on poles ten or twelve feet above ground, in some

what open areas, these may also be of significant value if they are to make a comeback. (The entrance hole, if you decide to make one, should be a shade over one and three eighths inches wide) In Halton the throaty warble of the bluebirds is

rarely heard, but with a good search they can be seen. I have seen them on three occasions, (1975, 76, and 77) and they indeed are worth seeing.

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CANADIAN CHAMPION AT THE DOOR



LEANNE PRUETER hides under a desk in a hide and seek game at the library. It was just one of the many games that are part of the regular library story hour.

Craft-design open houses

The Sheridan College School of Crafts and Design will hold its 10th annual Open House and Graduate Show Friday, May 12 and Saturday, May 13.

The event will include displays and demonstrations of student work from the five major crafts and design studios—metal, ceramics, glass, furniture and fabrics. Some of the items on display may be purchased.

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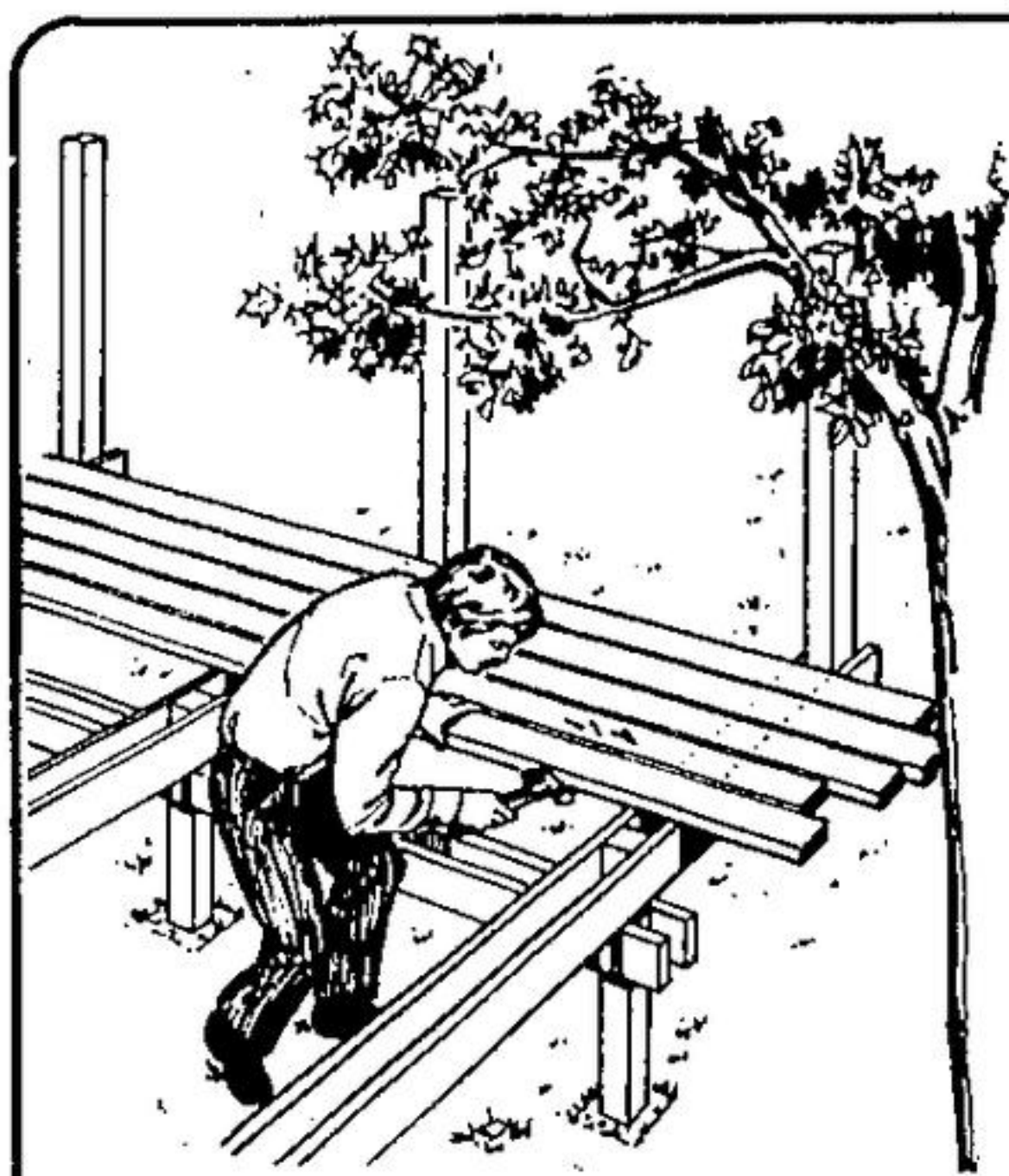
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