

The wilderness is their classroom

At this time of year, I shudder even to mention income tax. With a new year just around the bend, it's only a matter of time before the men on the hill start looking for their share of our pocket money. As sure as the sun rises, so do our taxes. However, take some consolation in the knowledge that a few of our hard-earned, deflated dollars are making their way to the outdoors—and I don't mean in the form of smoke.

Ever since the Midland-Penetanguishene Field Naturalists were founded in 1961, they have undertaken various projects throughout the area. But it wasn't until 1979 that members realized that government grants were available to help offset the cost of major projects.

In 1979, the group received a Young Canada Works Grant. The new-found money kept seven young Canadians working from June to September educating over 200 youngsters about the outdoors. The wilderness was their classroom. Hiking trips gave the kids first-hand experience in the appreciation and identification of wildlife and plants, not to mention a lot of fun. Camping skills were taught to ensure future camping trips would see well-prepared Canadians heading afield. Such a program sure beats a summer spent playing pinball!

After one successful year, the club was eager to keep the string going, and in 1980, a federal grant from Youth Employment

helped with the funding of a project to map the Wye River from its headwaters to Georgian Bay. But that was only part of the project! After spending a few days each week on the river, the four students hired returned to the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre to spend the remaining days in their work week teaching children all about wildlife.

1981 saw a grant from the Canada Community Development Program under Employment and Immigration supply the much-needed capital for a stream-improvement program on the Sturgeon River.

From its headwaters in Copeland Forest to Georgian Bay, every centimetre of the Sturgeon River was mapped. This year's foursome kept a close eye out for trouble spots along the river, noting areas migrating fish would have problems overcoming.

Improvements were made with approval from the Ministry of Natural Resources in Midhurst. As silting is one of the main problems with most rivers, areas where the shoring of banks would stop silt from entering the river and covering spawning beds were given priority on the work list.

An inventory of bank plant life and, when possible, wildlife was kept, and data on water temperature and flow rate were gathered. All too soon the summer came to an end, and the students spent hours

poring over their gathered information, preparing a final summary of their summer's work on the Sturgeon.

The 60-member Midland-Penetanguishene Field Naturalists' Club has shown over the past years that a group's size need not limit the size or success of its projects. And I know the children who attended the summer classes would agree!

Ministry puts its foot down

After two years of requesting that deer hunters voluntarily bring in their kill for examination by Ministry of Natural Resources' personnel, the ministry will enforce stronger regulations in the 1981 deer hunt.

In 1980, Huronia's controlled deer hunt saw almost 60 percent of hunters report with their animals to check stations or at least notify the ministry of their success.

But the MNR feels this is a poor showing and is looking for a better return on deer harvested. This year, each hunter who is successful in his application for a permit to hunt in a controlled hunt in southern Ontario must answer and return a short MNR questionnaire, whether or not he actually took part in the hunt. By November 12, questionnaires had better be sitting in a MNR office—or at least in a post office.

Courtesy of "Outdoor Canada"
Nov / Dec. '81

Blood donors

Cont'd from pg. 8

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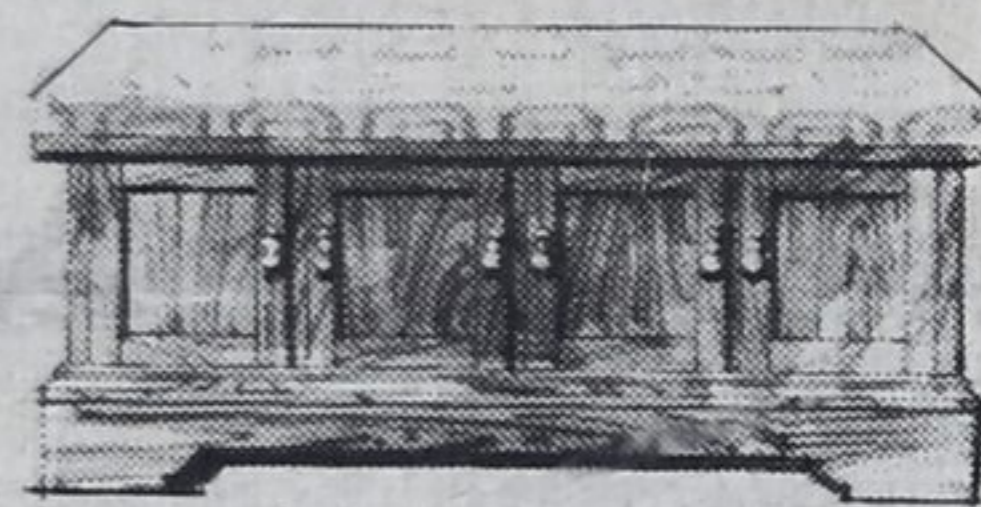
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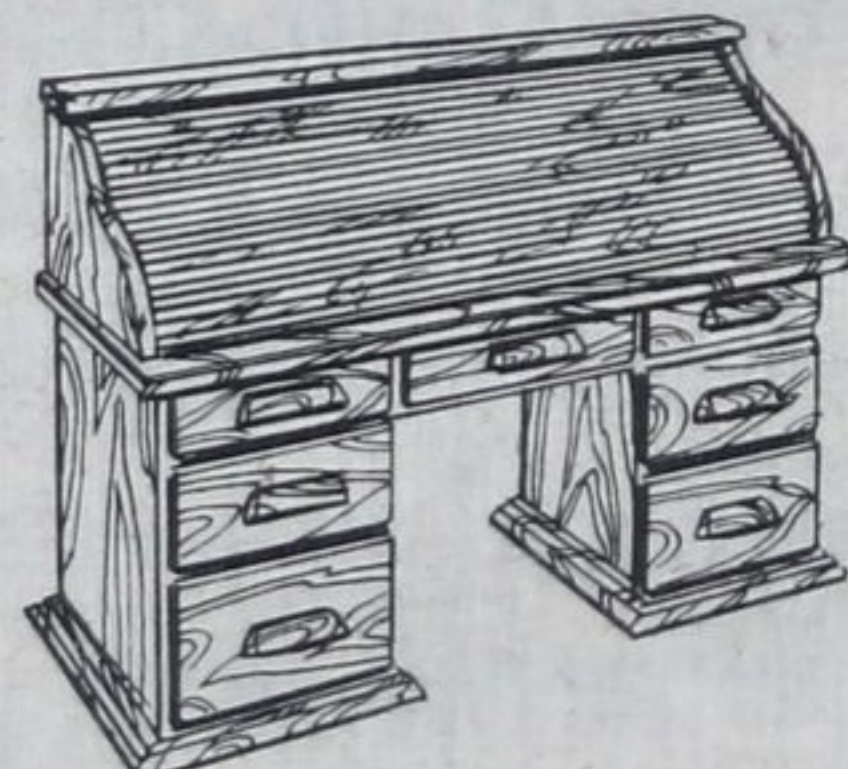
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