

THE LAST WORD

The dangers to fish stocks around the shores of The County due to an increasing population of Cormorants is well documented, and steps have been taken in spite of some controversy, to reduce the Cormorant flocks. Whether this will have the desired effect in the long run is still not known and the jury is out on the subject.



Now a serious new avian threat has just been discovered and threatens to sever power supplies in parts of the County. Hydro poles are in danger of being destroyed due to the ravaging effects of the beaks of Pileated Woodpeckers, and these have to be replaced at great expense to the consumer. Will talks begin, aimed at approving and commencing a cull of the predator, the Pileated Woodpecker? Will this feathered buzz- saw finally meet its match? Will we see Greenpeace activists patrolling our country roads seeking to protect this creature? Perhaps when pole number 2 meets its fate the ball will have been irretrievably set in motion. Meantime, woodpeckers be warned!

Seriously though, the sight in Japan, displayed on television last week of the flensing of a full-grown whale watched by a large group of schoolchildren, notebooks in hand, was enough to turn the stomach of the stoutest heart. The children stood impassively, almost in a stage-managed way, watching this murder of the most magnificent of sea creatures to produce whale meat for sushi bars across Japan. This slaughter is carried out under the protection of what is termed 'scientific sampling,' which is quazi-gobbledygook

for a governmental cop-out!

According to Greenpeace, "a more than twenty year moratorium on whale hunting has helped to avoid the hunting to extinction of many species, yet the blue whale population of the Antarctic is still less than one per cent of their original abundance despite years of protection. Some populations of whales are recovering but some are not. The West Pacific grey whale population is the most endangered in the world, hovering on the edge of extinction with just over 100 remaining. The number of Antarctic whales is less than 10 per cent of what it was before whaling began.

Solutions:

- A Commercial **whale watching** industry is worth more than a commercial whale killing industry.
- Whale sanctuaries will protect whales in their own waters.

Sad to say that last week everything changed because the International Whaling Commission (IWC) talks in the Caribbean state of St Kitts and Nevis saw the first voting majority for pro-whaling states in more than 20 years, and words of war raging in a body floundering in its own deep divisions. As the 70-nation body wrapped up its turbulent 58th meeting, Greenpeace made a last grab for the headlines, as 10 activists were arrested for storming a beach and trying to plant banners in the sand representing doomed whales.

Here comes the kicker. In the last fifty or more years, human ingenuity and technology has turned fish/whale hunting into a science. Small family-owned boats have been replaced with larger and larger vessels and catches have outmatched the fish/whale population's ability to reproduce. The cod fiasco, the herring obliteration and the virtual elimination of many more species in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans underline our inability to control and moderate the work of large multi-national or national industries whose voice is heard above all else.

My heart asks me if the human race should have the right to do these things; should have the right to eliminate species of any kind from the face of the earth, and all in the cause of satisfying commercial requirements of profit motivated companies. My mind tells me NO, and yet these ecological disasters continue to occur, aided and abetted by national governments abrogating their responsibilities until it is too late.

As I see it, being Mother Earth's dominant species brings with it responsibilities towards the other creatures with whom we share this planet. Their extinction or elimination to satisfy the lusts of a tiny fraction of the world's inhabitants is not acceptable - at any price, whether here in Canada or anywhere else.

- Bill Yates, Friend of The County.

PUZZLE SOLUTION	
<p> E B S S A A P I M M O R T A L S A M P L E P A A A S A E C H A R T R E U S E L A D Y A L G S L G Y S T R A F E H O S T A G E S I P T T M S C O P S T E A M A G H A R R E T O S H R E W I S H D R E A M Y A N N O I E C L O T C O U R T H O U S E L I U S A P I S O C C E R E N T R A N C E W E S S E L K </p>	<p> 18 A - GHA (anag. hag) 20 S - HRE (anag. her) WISH 23 DREAMY (anag. my dear) 24 C- (L) -OT 25 COUR- (THOU) -SE 27 SOC- (C) -ER (anag. score) 28 ENTRANCE </p> <p style="text-align: center;">DOWN</p> <p> 1 EMPHATIC (anag. chap 1 met) 2 SA- (MP) -LE 3 CHART - R 4 S- (LAUGHTER) -HO- (USES) 5 ASSES - S 6 AM - ALGA (anag. gala) -MATE 7 P - L - EDGE 13 A - P - P - RENT - ICE 17 M- (EDIT) -ATE 19 H- OMES (anag. some) -ICK 21 H- (ALL) -OW 22 IN- (C) -URS 26 O - PAL </p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ACROSS</p> <p> 8 IMMOR- (T) -AL 9 SA- (MP) -LE 10 CHART - REUSE 11 LA- (D) -Y 12 STRAFE (anag. faster) 14 HOST - AGES 15 S - COP 16 STEAM (anag. meats) </p>	