



The Tribune

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Editorials

New columns start

We don't know if you, our readers were getting tired of the same old stuff every week on the editorial page but we were, so we have instituted some changes.

If you look almost directly below this space you will see a column entitled Kid's Corner. This is the third week this new column has run and it will be a regular feature in the paper from now on.

We started the column because it became obvious to us that although we have lots of material about local children there was still nothing in the paper specifically for children to read (and also because reporter Annetreg Lamure insisted on it).

The column will include regular how-to-craft items, jokes, mystery photographs and, we hope, creative stories and poems written by children in the community. We are now in the process of contacting the various schools in our coverage area and as can be seen below we have already had some success in this endeavour.

If you would glance immediately to your right you will see the column by our outdoor writer, Art Briggs-Jude. This is nothing new, you might well say, as the column has been appearing in this paper for some time but the difference is it will appear every second week instead of at irregular intervals.

This will give Art an opportunity to advise our readers on what to watch for in nature during the various seasons.

Mr. Briggs-Jude is an outdoorsman of vast experience and is knowledgeable about hunting, fishing and the gentler outdoor sports such as birdwatching and nature identification.

Alternating with the Window on Wildlife column will be articles on natural living by Kathleen O'Bannon.

Natural Living, as its name implies, is about, uh, well-living naturally.

This is not a "woman's," column but is written for anybody interested in improving their health. Kathleen will give out health food recipes, do movie and book reviews, dispense exercise plans (Yoga and other more conventional programs), diets and, as Kathleen promised us, "a bit of everything."

One of the best things about our new editorial page format, in our not particularly humble opinion, is that it relies entirely on local writers. Annetreg is on staff, Art is a Gormley resident, Kathleen lives at Goodwood and of course your children live at home.

We hope with these additions there will be something for everyone to read in The Tribune.

Vandals getting out of hand Hallowe'en should be banned

Although there was no serious damage in Stouffville last Monday night that was Hallowe'en for those of you who have managed to block the event from your minds, the performance put on by our young people was pretty disgraceful.

As well as fouling the streets with noxious substances ranging from spray paint to rotten eggs, to bags of blood from an abattoir the little darlings terrorized Main St. for several hours.

Also a good part of the effort put into the Boy Scout paper drive literally went up in smoke when some idiot set fire to the newspaper bin down south of the park.

We have a solution to the problem, actually two solutions, the most straightforward approach would be to simply ban Hallowe'en and perhaps enforce a curfew for that evening.

The other approach, although more complex, would go considerably toward satisfying those primal instincts that impell the rowdies to go out on the streets and challenge the police.

Since every year Hallowe'en gets more like a pitched battle between teenagers and police our answer to the problem is to officially make the confrontations official.

York Regional Police could send out teams and the local rowdies could form teams and meet at some pre-arranged spot, preferably in a farmer's field, well outside of town.

Each side would be given an equal number of projectiles (pumpkins and eggs), with council acting as referees, then they could then really have at each other.

If the police decline to get involved then perhaps communities could form their own teams, form a league and play one against the other.

Although Claremont and Box Grove both have formidable reputations in this regard we can safely say from Stouffville's performance this year that we have a real bunch of comers.

This could all go on without disturbing the citizenry and if things got too tame the rowdies could always set each others cars on fire.



WINDOW ON WILDLIFE Start feeding wild birds now

By ART BRIGGS-JUDE

Autumn is always a busy time around most households. It signals the demise of summer, and with the changing seasons gives us an opportunity to prepare for the cold weather months ahead. What with pickling and preserving in the kitchen, and raking and harvesting in the garden, there doesn't seem to be enough available hours to complete all these priorities.

One item however, that should be at the top of our list of things to do during the next weeks, is to get the bird feeder in operation. And whether you buy a ready-made unit or build one yourself the important thing is to get it out and seeded up now. For many bird migrants have already passed through this area and if we hope to entice a good variety of overwintering species food must be available when they come looking.

So while some fall days often border on the balmy, the birds are busy preparing for the snow and cold of winter. Many have shed their lighter and brighter coats of summer for more conservative autumn colors. Some have come from as far away as the fringes of northern forests, while other species simply move from a nearby woodlot or brushy ravine.

But whether they come from near or far, all of these feathered creatures that have any inclination to remain have one thing at the top of their list; food. And that's what they're doing these days as we see them flitting about in our backyards and gardens. In effect they are busy taking inventory of any available food supply.

Of course birds primarily seek out natural sources of nourishment. Trees and shrubs like

Mountain ash and Elderberry, Box Elder (soft Maple) and the Junipers, all have an abundance of fairly persistent fruits that attract birds at this season.

But these initial discoveries are often introductions to your own handouts, if you have your feeding station set up. For over the past years, the feeding of wild birds in winter has become a popular cold weather pastime. And this mushrooming pleasure has not gone unnoticed by the feathered recipients. Successive broods of young birds fortified from backyard feeders have fought the rigors of winter in previous seasons. Now these same flyers or their offspring know what to look for and recognize a seed tray or suet bag when they see one.

Then too, the old adage "Birds of a feather flock together" is very much in evidence in the world of nature. Often one bird or small flock will see another enjoying a feast and will come over to share the treats. This is where the lowly house sparrow, hanging around our premises all summer serves at least some useful purpose. In many instances they have broken down the natural caution of any new object by the time the migrants arrive. In effect then they decoy birds that might ordinarily pass on.

Now that your feeding station is up and stocked, you might begin to wonder, especially if you're a beginner, what birds to expect. Depending on the location and types of feeders offered, you should count on about a dozen different species accepting your offerings. As mentioned, the house sparrow will be there, and if you feed bread or table tidbits, the starlings will show up.

These two aliens are not the prime reason for maintaining a winter feeding program however. Its birds like the noisy yet inquisitive bluejay, or the bright red beautiful cardinal that get the nod. These and many other feathered folk give people the most pleasure during the bleak days of winter. The flocks of evening grosbeaks with their stout bills, resembling in many ways king-size canaries. The flashing flight of the slate-colored juncos, who look for all the world like some unseen hand had pushed them part way into a nearby snowdrift.

Add to these winter jewels the upside down bird, or white-breasted nuthatch, and the friendly little black-capped chickadee, and your list begins to grow. And while speaking of lists, it's a good idea to start writing down the different birds, as they arrive. For after a few seasons you can compare these notes and have a better idea of what to expect and when. Then too if there are younger people in the family they might like to check their lists with those of their friends.

Among the more interesting birds that come to backyard feeding stations are the woodpeckers. Trusting, trunk-hugging carpenters that greet your entry into the blustery daylight with a tapping staccato on the nearest limb. Actually there are two look alike woodpeckers common to this area during the winter. Both have black wings, flecked with white, black and white striped heads, white breasts, and a white strip down their backs. The males only sport the red patch on the back of their heads. The smaller climbers are the Downy woodpeckers, while the bigger birds with the larger bills are the Hairy woodpeckers.

Along with the other avian guests, you may notice some with reddish crowns (Redpolls) and others stained on the heads and backs with a wine coloration (Purple Finches). A nearby grove of evergreens may bring you some wandering crossbills whose scissor-like action on sunflower seeds is something to behold.

It's a good idea as the birds begin to congregate, to carefully look them over with the binoculars. On more than one occasion I've discovered a strange sparrow in the midst of the regular flock. Tree sparrows with their stickpin chest mark or heavily striped song sparrows are often first noticed in this way. Sometimes even a white-crowned or white-throated sparrow will winter in your yard and go unnoticed unless you check them out.

For the past few seasons we've had Goldfinches as regular winter visitors. No longer resplendent in their striking yellow plumage, these sociable birds now take on a greenish-brown hue but still retain their black and white wing and tail markings. At times a pine siskin or two will accompany these wild canaries and of course this is an added bonus.

These then are basically the birds you can expect at your feeder. However what makes this pastime so interesting is the excitement generated when a new or rare bird arrives. It may be only a wintering Myrtle warbler or common robin, but the sight of it in the middle of January, stirs something inside. I've shared this feeling with others many times when bluebirds, yellow bellied sapsuckers, and Carolina wrens have appeared at feeders during the cold-weather months. I've had letters and calls from interested people who have had mockingbirds, tufted titmice, and flickers accepting their handouts and know their reaction.

Looking out at the feeder today, I wonder what the winter snows will bring. Maybe it will be a special bonus. Like the season a few years ago, when a towhee arrived and stayed on to cheer and entertain us.

Kids' stuff

Bleach bottle bird feeder

Bottle-feed the birds? It sounds crazy, but makes a lot of sense if you build a bleach bottle bird feeder.

All you need is a well-washed bleach or other fair sized plastic bottle, a sharp knife or scissors, some wire or string, a hockey or other strong tape (optional).

Before you start cutting the openings in the bottle, it's a good idea to mark where you're going to cut. A felt tipped pen or a dark crayon will work on the plastic.

You can make the openings any shape, but we thought arches were nice. And because of the shape of the bottle, the rounded openings were much easier to cut, especially with scissors.

You can cut two, three or more openings, but keep them at least an inch or two above the bottom, so the seeds won't spill out.

It's easy to make a mistake and cut too far down. If the knife slips and cuts too low you can wrap tape around the bottom of the bottle

to re-enforce the cut edges. If you use colourful tape this even looks nice and gives the bird a better foothold when they perch on the edge.

When the feeder is finished you can decorate it with acrylic paints or strips of tape. Wild designs will startle the birds at first, but they soon get used to them.



Written for Armistice Day

The war was started years ago
 Against a very mighty foe
 He wanted to be sure we lost
 But it was at a costly cost
 The cost was millions of peoples' lives
 And all the men had to part with their wives.
 At the end of the war mighty Hitler was dead
 And almost all of the soldiers lay in their bed
 For most of the soldiers laying in Flanders Field
 God gave us the power and the mighty shield.
 Nelson Wilson, age 9.

30 years ago this week

Excerpts from the October 30, 1947 issue of The Tribune.

United Schools
 The Markham and Stouffville Boards of Education went on record Monday evening approving of the recommendation of the Dept. of Education to unite the Stouffville school area and the Markham school area into one district. The schools at both Markham and Stouffville would both be operated as at present, excepting that one school might specialize in academic courses, while the other school would develop the shop, science and domestic science courses.

After hearing an address by Stanley Rendell from the department, the two boards, meeting in Stouffville High School, conferred, and as a result of the deliberations, they arrived at the decision to request amalgamation under one Board operating two schools.

Good Lighting
 Merchants who light their windows in the evenings during the closed hours from six to 10, do themselves and the town a good service. There are many people in town at this time, who love to window shop, which is quite aside

from the improved appearance that window light adds to the business section. Too many merchants spend too little in advertising — and window lighting is a form of valuable advertising.

Uxbridge sewers
 There are 189 property owners in Uxbridge who want the \$175,000 sewer system recommended by town council, 115 don't want it, and 286 who evidently just do not care, as they didn't bother to turn out and vote for or against it on Monday, and the council are now empowered to go ahead with the installation of the system.

For a bylaw involving such a great amount of money the lack of interest was remarkable. During the three weeks time from the first publication of the bylaw we never heard more than two or three even ask about it, and those who did so in a most perfunctory way. However, if the project is proceeded with Uxbridge will have an up-to-date sewer disposal system to hitch up with their already fine domestic water system, which is proving more and more useful every day.