BIRDS OF A FEATHER by M. Hendrick

It was a great idea! Bill Cutfield and yours truly would take part in the Kingston Field Naturalist's Fall Round-up, a 24 hour bird count beginning at 3:00 p.m. on Nov. 1. We were to be in Ron Weirs group and he intended to bird at Prince Edward Point, near Picton, known to birders as "The Point". This is the location of the lighthouse where the Saw-whet Owl banding project is carried on.

Ron's plan was simple. We would bird until dusk and then unfurl the nets that are used to catch the owls. During the night we would take turns looking listening for owls, and check for and band any captured Saw-whets. Those people not on duty would sleep in the lighthouse.

went well until 6:30 p.m. when it started to pour rain, and the already strong winds became wild sending enormous waves crashing over the shore. Plans had to be changed, for owls should not be banded under such harsh conditions. Ron, never discouraged, took the weatherman's word that the storm would end by midnight. He announced that it was now 7:00 p.m. and time for us to go to bed, for he would get us up at midnight so that we could band owls for the rest of the night. Three

adults meekly went to bed! At midnight conditions were worse - even the lighthouse beacon light had gone out, making us hope that we would not be hit by an

oncoming freighter! Hourly checks yielded no better conditions, and at 3:00 a.m. Bill, muttering

in discomfort, decided to get up. The rest of us felt that a warm bed was preferable to a cold, damp chair.

Suddenly there was a loud thumping and crashing in the next room. We asked Bill what on earth he was doing. "I'm trying to get the rat!" That really woke Unbeknownst up! us a rat had taken up housekeeping in the old stuffed chair, and Bill's efforts to kill it were fruitless: it had managed to return unharmed to its lair.

Sleep now impossible, we arose and had our "delicious" cold breakfast and waited for dawn. Eventually the wind abated and the rain stopped. By 6:00 a.m. we checking the lake were for loons, grebes, ducks, comorants, gulls and, wishfully thinking, jaegars. None of the latter predatory birds appeared. Continuing to the cedar woods we found a solitary Saw-whet Owl sitting close to the trunk of a cedar, clutching a mouse. Further searching turned up a Boreal Chickadee as well as a number of more common birds.

By 10:00 a.m. many hawks were flying and we spent several hours scanning the sky. We saw Sharp-shinned, Coopers, Goshawk, Red-tailed, Red-shouldered Rough-legged Hawks well as a lone Golden Eagle. Lunch was eaten on the run, and when our necks could no longer stand the strain of hawk watching we moved on to search for other birds.

By the time the count ended at 3:00 p.m. we had tallied 84 species of birds. We then headed for Kingston to meet with the other groups to compile results and to enjoy a potluck supper. The sum total of species seen within the prescribed 50 km radius of MacDonald Park in Kingston was 124, two species short of the all time record for this count.

Winona Barker has had a of Great Horned family Owls near her home. Soon the adults will no longer countenance the presence of their young and will force them out to find their own territories.

Evening Grosbeaks have arrived early at many feeders this year, and some people have remarked on the large number of Blue Jays at their feeding stations. John Goodman has been watching the jays as they cram their mouths with corn and take it away to be hidden.

Katherine Sides was fortunate to have a House Finch at her place. Elgin feeder watchers should be on the lookout for this bird which bears a close resemblance to the Purple Finch.

Dick Ussher, who has kept excellent records of his first and last sightings over the years, has provided a list of his latest sightings Ruby-throated Hummingbirds seen in this area. His two latest were on Sept. 24 in 1974 and Sept. 25 in 1972.

Karen Sly was impressed by a hummingbird that appeared to be trying to draw her attention to the fact that it was time to refill the feeder!

A Black-capped Chickadee flew into Mary Carbino's window. It managed to make it to the clothesline where it hung on for a few moments, then toppled upside down, and dangled by one foot. Mary thought it had died and had entangled its foot as it fell. She was waiting for someone to take it down for her when to her amazement it righted itself and flew away.

Frank Phelan, of Queen's Biological Station, mentioned that he had seen Brant Geese flying near Chaffey's Lock. He said that as well as having a different flight pattern from Canada Geese, Brants have more variation in their calls.

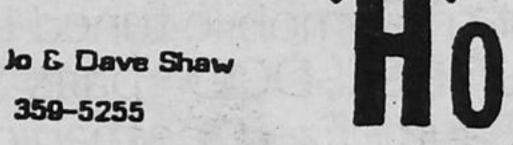
Frank also saw a Common Raven in the same area. Ravens are larger than crows and soar like hawks. They have heavy bills, wedge-shaped tails and throat feathers which appear ruffled. Instead of cawing as crows do, they utter harsh cr-r-ucks or prruks.

Finally, after a slow start, the owl banding programme at "The Point" has been a great success this year with a total of 420 Saw-whet Owls banded thus far.

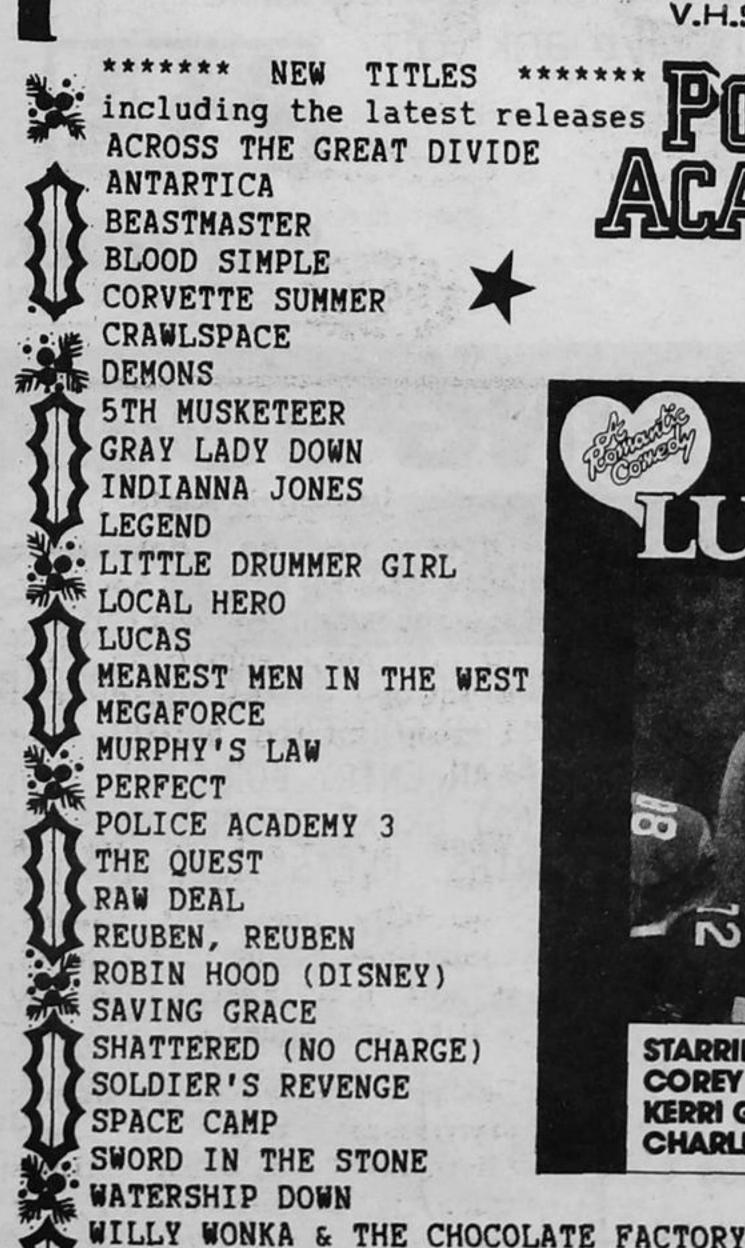
The number to call with your sightings is 359-5178. Until next month GOOD BIRDING.





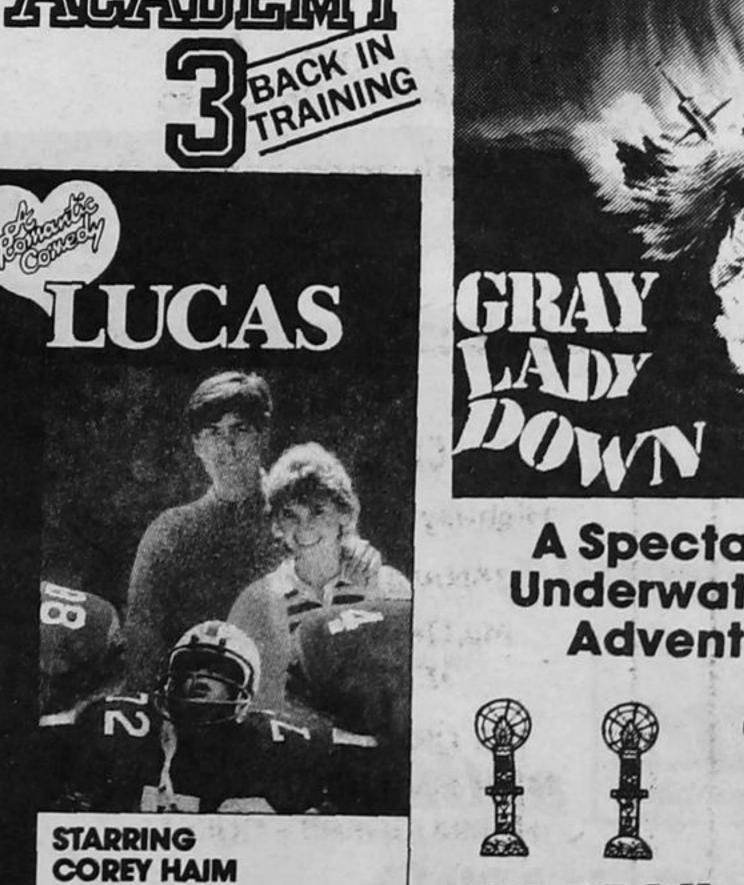


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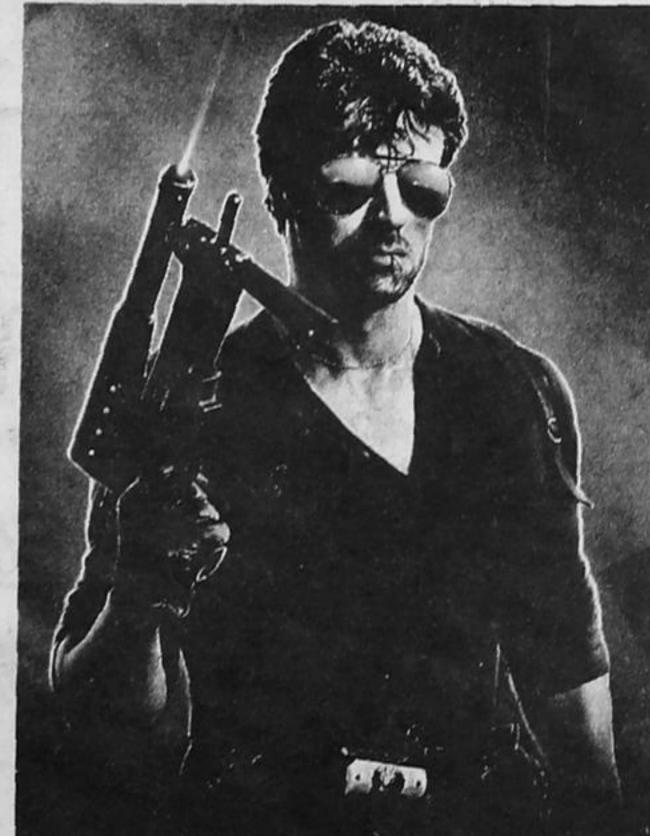
KERRI GREEN

CHARLIE SHEEN



Underwater Sea Adventure.





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDN	ESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
	10-6 22	10-6 2	3 10-6	24	CLOSED 25	Dav.	26 ing Day	10-6	27
1-428	10-629	10-63	0 10-6	31	CLOSED 1	1	2	10-6	3