



CONSERVATION



NEWSY NOTES

A Resourceful Motorist
 A resourceful motorist has been given credit for his preference for swampy ground, for it does not resemble the Alder at all. When the shrub is dropped off in the fall, the shrub is seen to be profusely covered with red or scarlet oval berries. This is a deciduous, unarmed re-reader of the English Holly, and so is our Mountain Holly (Nemopanthus mucronata) which is found in damp cool places. I found it growing near Mermaid Lake, some years ago. The light red berries are few-fingered, and each hangs solitary on a slender stalk. In fact its botanical name means "thread-stalk flower." I shall conclude this installment with a brief notice of a few Rowan-trees (Fyrus americana) which is known by its lanceolate leaves tapering to a point. The fruit is a scarlet berry, and also small, from 4 to 6 mm. in diameter. I have present written up on record a second species, the Large-fruited Mountain Ash (P. sitchensis) which is a very common tree in the area. The leaves are rounded at the tips, and taper-pointed; and the berry is about 1 cm. in diameter. However, I am not sure if it is a hybrid. I take to be intermediate forms.

Berries, red and yellow
 The red tint in berries has two functions: it is a sign that the berries have reached maturity and are in condition to be eaten, it is not by humans, by birds. The "Ladies" Arum of Britain for instance produces a pretty scarlet cluster of acid berries, which the snail-eaters and blackbirds are very fond of; but which would cause intolerable pain to the tongue and throat of the person incautious enough to eat them.

The second useful property of the tint is that it is easily discerned against the setting of greenery; no matter how swift the flight of the bird, the red berry coming in the first "here is food!" And the bird in return carries the enclosed seed to other places and ensures the dispersal of the species.

Several plants, trees or shrubs, which typically bear red berries, have forms or strains with yellow berries. Thus, there is a variety of English Holly with yellow berries, which however is neither as common nor as popular as the red-berried kind. Some of the Thorns (Crataegus) of this continent have yellow-fruited varieties.

The only yellow-fruited species that I can recall as native to the Island is the Cloudberry (or "Bake-apple" as it is called on the Labrador coast). This is the Rubus Chamaemorus, found on the north shore of Prince County. Incidentally I mention that as a schoolboy in 1892 I had a party of friends from the sides of Cross Fell, a fairly high mountain in Cumberland, (2,862 feet). The Cloudberry grows in the bogs and swamps.

When it comes to red, scarlet or crimson berries, we have a greater choice. Personally I have examined many of the kinds, and there may be some that are not yet acquainted with. One must make a commencement somewhere, and our list may as well start now. If readers find any red berries which shall be glad to have a record of them.

The Red Baneberry (Actaea rubra) is not unlike the White Baneberry (A. alba) already mentioned in a former issue, but the berries have a different hue.

The Bunchberry (Cornus canadensis) is in bloom just now, a low plant with (apparently) white four-petaled flower. This will be succeeded later by a close cluster of scarlet berries, with little "fleshy" appendages, which are eaten by the birds. I was told this was the "Pigeon-berry"; perhaps the name goes back to the old days when the Passenger Pigeon was plentiful in the land. Then there are the two thorns (one native and one European) which provide food for the migrant robins and other birds. The British Hawthorn or "May" (Crataegus Oxycantha) has also a yellow-berried variety, never seen here; its berry is commonly a deep red, the native thorn is a less desirable hedge-plant since it spreads from the roots and soon covers large areas of ground. It has long thorns and larger, dark scarlet berries. The older lists, but I have never been able to sell this produce above the cost of production; most of the time I never had so little been earned by so many. No matter whether one followed up, the story was

STILL MORE HOGS WANTED

We appreciate the co-operation of the increased number of farmers, who either bring or send their hogs to us. We trust, in fact feel sure that this has resulted to your advantage. We need still more hogs to employ our help here, utilize the plant and equipment and supply regular customers with P. E. I. Pork Products.

A further word; the supply of Pork Products for the next three months is going to be short. We would, therefore, recommend to all farmers to feed freely and market every hog possible during July, August and September. Present prices are good and will hold until October at least.

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CONSERVATION

A WEEKLY COLUMN OF PRACTICAL OPINIONS OF THE VITAL ISSUES AFFECTING THE USES AND ABUSES OF NATURAL RESOURCES BY MR. LUDLOW JENKINS

THE SENTRY OF THE SHALLOWS

By Ben Hur Lammpan

The patience of Job is fixed in proverb, yet even he was not required to stand in still water for a long hour waiting his dinner. Gray and motionless, sharply carved against the green of the pond, as silent as its own shadow, it is so that the great blue heron waits. He is patient, epitomized, as he is the very spirit of the shallows.

Let him take his station where the saffron sand spit thrusts into the Columbia, give to the spacious river an elegantly fringed surface which is so like the beauty of a demesned blade, order that the sun's shall fire the clouds above the dimness that is Lady Island, and the blue heron becomes the central figure of a Japanese print. Yet I think I like him best in his setting of cottonwoods, at morning when the patches of meadow are bright with dew, and his pond breathes a faint vapor to the returning day. The lean old pigan, rigid beyond the rustler, why Pan himself could ask no more of such a picture.

It is shattered. Flashingly the sky head strikes and the sharp beak has found its target, the golden carp that swam too near the margin, the fingerling bass that saw no more than a drab snag rising from the lake, or the motiled frog that lifted his solemn visage in that perilous water. This is the toll the heron takes. And he drifts out of the setting, at sight of you, as grayly as the mist itself, as silently. The cottonwoods are weaving to the river wind. The mists are rising from the water, and the element is pressed the spear of the heron, the sentry of the shallows.

The yellow eyes of the heron, that have speared so many fishes rising from the lake, are not as the eyes of other birds; they are set somewhat beneath, on the sloping sides of the head, so that without muscular effort the fisherman's area at his feet, as fixedly as a bashful boy in company. No least movement is needed to focus the heron's eyes upon that space of water which, soon or late, must afford him his target and yield him his dinner. Such is the efficiency of Nature, yet I cannot but believe that every heron, in the days when the nobles went hawking, must have witnessed—as his docm was upon him—for such vision as

the same. I recollect a case where a farmer took a basket of ripe tomatoes to town and could get only 2 cents a pound for them. He sold them and left the basket. On calling for it later, he saw his tomatoes in the window marked 8 cents. Potatoes at 6 cents a bushel, and pork at 4 cents a pound. The picture of a prosperous rural economy. Just now, it is true, farmers are making more money in one year than formerly they did in three, but let us not forget that the relief is only temporary; the causes that depressed agriculture before the war have not been removed. The situation calls for study, and now is the time to do it.

Turning to the figures in Miss Charles's paper, the statement that P. E. Island has a population of 92,913, must be a slip; the official figures are 92,919. There appears to be a slow but ominous drift to the urban districts. In 1931 92 percent of the population were on the farms; in 1926 this had fallen to 78.5 percent; and five years later to 77 percent. I have not got the total percentage for the last Census but the figures for Prince County show a further increase in the urban centres. Since the prosperity of the Island is bound up with its sole industry, Agriculture, any further urbanization threatens to become "a burden too grievous to be borne."

They didn't understand why the levee broke before a lesser stage of the river than many they could remember. It seemed a curious freak of nature for any trusted laborer to be killed in a crushed muck tub. And they chewed much tobacco in that memorable discussion, without once changing upon the truth. And the truth was, as certain "discovery" discovered, that when the herons were scarce the crawfish multiplied, and when the crawfish had multiplied sufficiently, the command "turn back" of the levee so

GAY'S PLANTS

This year we have planned to discontinue sending plants by mail, but have decided to this extent—that we will not accept any order for mailing for less than \$1.00. So please observe this rule.

The following Annual Bedding Flower Plants at from the aster, Stocks, Petunias, Snapdragon, Verbena, Salvia, Annual Larkspur, Dwarf Lobelia, Trailing Lobelia, Argemone, Zinnia, Lupinus, Marigold, Salpiglossis, Alyssum, Carpet of Snow, Alyssum, Violet Queen, etc. Seedling Fanias 40c dozen, Kochia 50c dozen, Seedling Delphinium and Foxglove 60c dozen, All Double Petunia 50c dozen, 5c each. The above mailed postage prepaid.

Extra early Cabbage and Cauliflower 20c dozen, 100 \$1.40, by mail \$1.50. Extra Early Tomato 40c dozen, Late Chicago 30c dozen, For Fall and Winter use 30c per 100, by mail 40c.

Pansy and Daisy in bloom, Canterbury Bell, Sweet William, 10c each, by mail 15c.

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wheat land, and, indeed, even hopeful that when he returned home he would find the wheat in a better condition. Scarcely had the grain from sight when this strange bird, this fellow in the parlor, had come to them daily, all order, flying low over the young wheat. And then, mister, what do you suppose? I give you many a guess. You cannot find a splendor of plumage and still dignity the great blue heron dropped into his very barnyard, among the geese and chickens, and stalked idly about as though it suited him well. But that wasn't all, that certain hired man—oh, heaven would see to him!—had gaped but a moment at the miracle before he ran for the shotgun, which stood in the kitchen corner, loaded for duck. No, the heron had not seemed afraid. He had watched the hired man as he plumed toward it, the bird had not taken flight. And when the black powder smoke drifted aside, there it was, quite dead among the geese and chickens, scattering with justified alarm. Quite dead. Now such a thing as this, as any sane human would know, could not possibly happen again in a man's lifetime. He rose and walked into the parlor, to run a calloused hand over crest and back, and the plumes lay long and soft and sullen. Not again in a man's lifetime.

What of this heron that was not afraid? I am sure—I cannot tell you the answer to this. Individualism is as marked among birds as among men. If our dull eyes could see the evidence. And now and then some wild creature does not conform to the inherent fears or prejudices of his kind, but stands out from the flock or the pack or the herd, individual, different, strangely personified. Perhaps this heron was such a one. But I have liked to think, at times, that somewhere he had found friendship, and I have put the thought aside, for to entertain it is to speculate upon another betrayal. For is not life like this with man yet far to go before he really knows his true friends?

And here is an odd story of the great blue heron, that often I have puzzled over, without discovering an answer. It was in northern North Dakota that the incident occurred, and there were few of the birds to be found in that particular area. My heart was light, these were young birds, with their lesson yet to learn, for the fact is that on seeing the fisherman they did not stare away, but curved their necks toward me and passed within casting distance—starting with evident curiosity, and I would swear it, actually looking at me. These were the birds on the bank of a thousand herons I have seen, when in that favorite country of theirs, they seemed free from the common fear.

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TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH

Silver Fox Farming

Last week witnessed unusual heat conditions for the month of June, the temperature rising to 90 on Friday and it was even reported up to 94 in some sections. This caused some trouble in ranches located in the open, particularly those on high elevations and quite a number of fox deaths from heat prostration were noted throughout the Province. In nearly all cases it was the pups which succumbed. This week the swing is to a colder temperature, the nights being really chilly with more or less equable temperature during the day. We have not heard of any untoward happenings this week.

Another trouble that has visited quite a number of ranches is a sort of paralysis of the hind parts—dragging of the hind legs, as it were. In the U. S. this would be called Chastek Paralysis, and is ascribed to a deficiency of Vitamin B. It was noticed particularly in ranches where they fed fresh fish from inland waters. The trouble here cannot be from that source but in the writer's opinion is probably due to cutting out the cod liver oil, and a lack of minerals. In our ranch where we had a few cases of it, we moved the pups from a dark damp shed they were in to one having more sunlight and increase the quantity of cod liver oil, feeding about 1-4 of a teaspoonful per pup and mineral. The mineral we used was miracle pig mineral, and the amount was four pounds for 1,630 foxes, equal to about a pound for 400 foxes. This seemed to correct our troubles. We intend continuing the cod liver oil until July and the mineral and brewers yeast flakes throughout the summer and fall.

Pur Markets—The fur markets are in a state of chaos due to the price ceiling imposed by the United States government with prices as in London, 1942. We intend to suspend all over the country, the latest to be postponed being the Winnipeg Fur Auction for General Furs, the date of which is now set for August 1st. We intend a sale of muskrats and minks, continuing the cod liver oil until July and the mineral and brewers yeast flakes throughout the summer and fall.

In President Lowell Hancock's report he stressed the necessity of keeping clear-colored silver foxes from the meat ticket of most fox farmers. The writer pointed out to him that we should also endeavor to keep a few of our very finest half and three-quarter silver males, those having very clear-colored black—blue black if possible—and bright silver, with good formaton, brush and tip. When this war is over there will be a big demand for fox furs from Paris and London, and the buyers there prefer in the aggregate, the black necks—many have been going so far as to profit from the medium silvers. By keeping a few polygamous males we will be in a position to get back to the darker color phases if we see the trend of the market operating in that direction.

One of the interesting features of the Silver Fox Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association meeting held last Tuesday afternoon was the address of the Hon. W. H. Dennis, Minister of Agriculture, in which he stressed the importance of the fur industry to the government, particularly the need for the fur industry to be as self-sufficient as possible. He stressed how hard it is to please everyone and that notwithstanding you used your best efforts and worked your heart out, you do fail to meet the exacting demands of certain parties.

He then went on to tell about a feed experiment that came under his own observation. It was many years ago, back in 1916. Frank Metherral of West Cape, owned a large and particularly fine heavy horse which unfortunately stepped into a hole and broke its leg in the shoulder. Nothing could be done to help the injured member so he was killed, and then the problem was how to preserve such a large carcass of meat for the foxes. It was solved by Mrs. Metherral canning it in first class fashion.

The Metherrals had at that time a beautiful large fox that he intended to pelt. It was a black fox with a long, rangy body. They decided to feed the fox, which was in shades grey, the canned horse meat, and still the summer and fall right up to pelt time the fox formed its only diet. The fox just loved it—never missed a meal, evidencing by his eager appetite his appreciation of Mrs. Metherral's culinary skill.

Early in December, it being a particularly cool fall, Mr. Metherral pelled Reynard. He made a good job of skinning him carefully and finally cleaning him with hard wood sawdust and clean snow. One look at the pelt was enough to convince him that he had something very much out of the ordinary. In fact, though a foxman and familiar

with good foxes, of which there were a large number in the neighborhood, that being the pioneer section where the Daltons, Outlines, Tuplins and others were in their glory, he never remembered seeing anything like it.

He decided to market it through the Fur Sales Board and brought it and another pelt in to W. Chester S. McClure, who was the Manager. Mr. McClure was quick to recognize that he was dealing with a specimen pelt. "As I recall it," said Mr. McClure yesterday, "it was a very large pelt with very long guard fur particularly over the neck and shoulders. The color was blue black and there wasn't the faintest suspicion of brownish tinge in any part of it. The underfur was slate blue and the only silver on it was a few very bright hairs on each side of the rump. The brush was large, clear, blue black and a beautiful white tip finished off what was without doubt the finest blue black pelt I have ever seen, and probably one of the world's best. I sold it in New York and Mr. Metherral, if I remember correctly, received a cheque for \$1,000.00."

Fox farmers once in a while do show appreciation of the efforts of others to help along the industry. At the meeting of the Silver Fox Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association votes of thanks were unanimously tendered to Lowell W. Hancock, President for the past two or three years, and Walter R. Shaw, Secretary since the inception of the Association. Both deserved every word of praise that was given them. They have been faithful and untiring in looking after the interests of the members.

Incidentally the writer would like to impress on all that the maintenance of this association is very necessary to the well-being of our industry here. It is truly our mouthpiece to the powers that be and its fostering of the industry, and its pelt, has done incomparable good in advertising our province and our foxes throughout America. To secure the best benefits of the Association one should be a breeder of registered foxes, and I would like to point out to those who are producing good foxes and are not registered that there is still time—and this is the time—to come back again into the fold. Just write Secretary Tom Carruthers, Canadian National Silver Fox Breeders' Association, Summerside, and give him an outline of your farm. I am sure you will find he will co-operate with you to the fullest.

6-17-42



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Apply to E. A. Smith, Park Superintendent.

HOLSTEIN MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Prince Edward Island Branch of the Holstein Friesian Association will be held on Tuesday, June 23rd, beginning at 10:30 A. M. in the beautiful Ball Room Basement of Prince of Wales College, entrance from Grafton Street.

Luncheon will be served in the Blue Room at Old Spain at 12:30 and Certificates of Superior Production will be presented at this time. New as well as old breeders are cordially invited to the meeting and luncheon.

CECIL J. STEWART, Secretary.