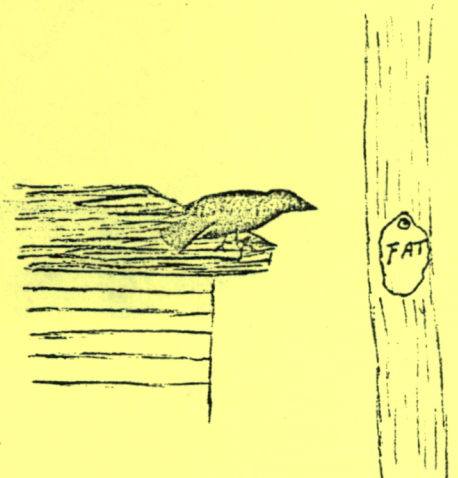


FEB. 24 NATURE WALK. There were only seven of us, including the leader, fellow member Anne Landry of the P. E. I. National Park. We "went out, not knowing whither we went", and experienced the delight of making the circuit of two brand-new trails at Campbell's Pond in the National Park. Snowshoes--we could take them or leave them; for the second trail we left them. On this light overcast, mild and calm Sunday afternoon, one could not wish for better weather. Saturday's light snow made a clean new surface where snowshoe hares, squirrels, a ruffed grouse and a mink left their signatures. Mr. Mink appeared in person, popping in and out of openings in the ice on a creek. For us who were there, there cannot be another first time for those trails; those who missed out can still look forward to their first time.

Margaret E. Mallett

BIRDS USE THEIR BRAINS. This winter, after cooking a pork ham I removed the rind leaving a thick layer of fat on it--for the chickadees, I hoped. Putting a washer under the head of a roofing nail, I nailed the rind to the south side of a tree. A week went by, and the fat remained untouched. Then one afternoon, I saw pesky crows on a porch roof concocting a scheme to get the fat which was about 1 meter beyond their reach. Their solution was to jump across and grab onto the fat just long enough to take two quick pecks before losing their grip. Fortunately, the crows soon ceased their efforts and went away. This activity was not unnoticed by the starlings. **Right away they assembled** on the porch roof. Some copied the crows' method. **Being much smaller, they** got in about four bites before losing their grip. Other starlings hovered in front of the fat like humming birds the most these could get was two bites before losing altitude. The pork rind was pecked clean by evening.



Margaret E. Mallett

MARCH MEETING REPORT. Professor Earl Wonnacott of the Physics Dept. at U.P.E.I. presented a most interesting account of our night skies which included slides of seasonal star maps as well as many beautiful shots of neighbouring planets. He also updated Society members on developments aimed at improving astronomy facilities at the University. The best known of these is the construction of facilities north of the present gym to house the Abegweit Science Centre with its one hundred seat planetarium. This structure, a geodesic dome, will be used for projections of simulated star and constellation patterns onto its interior surface. Perhaps of more interest to amateur astronomers is the observatory being constructed on the roof of the new extension to Memorial Hall. It will feature a Celestron 14-inch reflecting type telescope and is to be used by faculty and students of the Physics Department. Professor Wannacott extended an invitation to the Society to visit the observatory on its completion.

SLIDE CONTEST DEADLINE. Entries to the nature slide contest are to be submitted to Margaret Mallett no later than April 1, 1980 (not April 8 as stated in the last newsletter). Slides must have been taken by a member and not have been entered in any previous Society contest. Up to ten entries per person will be accepted. Slides will be shown at the May meeting, at which time prizes will be awarded to winners.