

Stacked against us

BY EVELYN MEADER

People interested in the environment know know that April showers bring more than May flowers. Even Ronal Reagan recognizes the problem. Sadly, the raindrops which keep falling on our heads are loaded with sulphuric or nitric acid. This harmful precipitation kills the fish, damages trees, increases farming costs (more limestone needed), pollutes our water, eats buildings, car and trucks and has negative effects on our health. Shakespeare could no longer write of "gentle" falling rain. What falls to earth is a harsh concoction, a product of industrial "progress".

From "Acid News", a Swedish-Nowegian publication, comes a story, "Acid Rain and Dementia". A Vermont scientist, Daniel Perl, has found that aluminum released from the soil by acid rain may be a cause of such illnesses as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease. He has found a high concentration of aluminum in brain cells of victims. He is doing more study on how the aluminum gets into the body and its effect there. It does make a person consider trading in the aluminum pots for stainless steel. But we could be just steeling ourselves for other problems when we cook up food for more than thought.

The annual meeting of the C.C.A.R. was held April 23 in Toronto. This should result in a flood of acid rain bulletins. At least the mails are a fairly safe place for acid rain. It'll take a long time getting to us.

Are you curious about the acidic content of our rainfall? Environment Canada (566-7060) will give you the readings on recent Maritime precipitation. All that sulphur that goes up from the tall stacks must come down. Thus, even the drops are stacked against us!

The Trustees of the James L. Baillie Memorial Fund for Bird Research supported six projects in 1986 for a total of \$2880.00 in 1986. Applications are welcome for funding in 1987. All projects must be conducted in Canada, and although all types of bird research are eligible for consideration, preference will be given to projects conducted by amateur researchers and to those by professionals who use a high level of amateur participation. Thesis projects and others likely to receive support from other agencies are less likely to receive support than similar quality projects with little or no access to other funding.

All applications must be submitted on forms available from the Secretary, and should be postmarked by 31 December 1986 to be guaranteed consideration by the Trustees.

The current board of Trustees consists of Fred Bodsworth (chairman), Robert Curry, Clive E. Goodwin, Dr. David J.T. Hussell, Dr. David M. Scott, Dr. J. Murray Speirs and James Woodford. Application forms, instructions and further information can be obtained from Dr. Martin K. McNicholl, Secretary, c/o Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. NOE 1M0. Donations should be sent to the same address. The chief source of funding is the Jim Baillie Birdathon conducted annually by the Long Point Bird Observatory, but direct donations are welcome and tax deductible. A receipt will be issued.