



# Successful bid

As the field season draws to a close, the attentions of the Island Nature Trust focus on the administrative functions of land acquisition, management and associated fundraising. Our latest acquisition is not finalized at the time of writing but should be by the time you read this newsletter. On Aug. 15th, the Island Nature Trust was the successful bidder on a 31 acre portion of Courtin Island (sometimes called Bunbury Island) in a mortgage sale. Like all off-shore islands, this is an important site for wildlife. Although it is not on our property, there is a large Great Blue Heron rookery.

The Trust will be taking orders until late January 1987 for copies of of Canada's second Wildlife Habitat Conservation Stamp and Print. One of Canada's top artists, J. Fenwick Lansdowne, has painted a pair of canvas-backs in a beautiful springtime setting. The limited edition print can be purchased for \$195.00, the print and signed stamp for \$201.00, poster for \$20.00 and lapel pin for \$7.50. They make great Christmas gifts. At the October Natural History Society meeting, I'll have samples and order forms. the majority of the funds that are raised by the Trust's sales will go into habitat projects here. So you are doing something good for wildlife in addition to getting a valuable piece of artwork for your own pleasure.

- DIANE GRIFFIN

(In case you get this newsletter after the October meeting, or you miss the meeting, you can place orders by calling Diane at 892-7513.)

# Whoopers on the rise

An aerial count of whooping cranes, which took place in March at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in southern Texas, shows that there are 12 more birds than at the same time last year. According to a press release from Environment Minister Tom McMillan, there were 96 cranes, including 16 juveniles, that successfully made the 4,000 km annual migration from Wood Buffalo National Park on the Alberta-Northwest Territories border.

The number of long-legged, graceful cranes, which began to decline in 1938 and reached an all-time low of 15 in 1941, has been climbing slowly since people around the world first became aware that the cranes were on the brink of total extinction. The Canadian Wildlife Service expects that the breeding population will amount to as many as 40 pairs by 1990, a total population of 150 birds.

The 16 chicks were colour-banded in Wood Buffalo National Park by the Wildlife Service last August 8 - the largest flock of chicks ever recorded. The successful migration is the first time that all family groups, each consisting of two adults and a single offspring, have completed the migration without any losses. This is attributed to the excellent condition of the birds as the result of good habitat; the health of the chicks at the time they were banded, and, possibly, the fact that the birds migrated rapidly and were able to avoid dangerous obstacles.