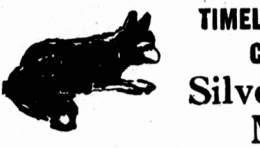


Young People's Camp Sponsored by P. E. I. Christian Churches



Over seventy-five boys from all over the Province attended the Young People's Camp at Canoe Cove, sponsored by the Christian Churches of Prince Edward Island. Dean W. O. Weale was in charge of the camp. —Burke Photo.

TIMELY NOTES ON TOPICS CONNECTED WITH Silver Fox and Mink Farming



Those of us who were present at the International Fur Conference held in Charlottetown two years ago will remember a mighty bundle of energy—Paul L. Reinhardt, who was chairman of the fox advertising committee of the United States. Mr. Reinhardt has a very interesting article in the Black Fox Magazine for June entitled, Promotion of Silver Fox Necessary for a Comeback. We quote: "There can be no doubt that the fox business has struck bottom and is slowly—very slowly—moving upward. There is doubt, however, if the individual fox farmer has seen enough hard times to be ready this time to really make a fresh start. The formation of new associations certainly must not be mistaken for a 'fresh start', nor should the revival of some of the sleeping associations, principally those of a strictly regional character, be mistaken for a 'fresh start'."

The fox business will make a healthy comeback and will remain healthy only if the fox breeder will acknowledge the fact that merchandising is definitely a part of his responsibility. To leave merchandising up to someone else will first hinder a complete comeback, and secondly, will lead to final defeat again. It will not do to believe that fox will become high-priced again of its own power before the fox farmers must undertake its promotion. This was brought home very forcefully only this morning in a long-distance telephone conversation which I had with Mr. Hawkhurst, western manager of Harper's Bazaar. A special promotion, unusually favorable for silver fox, was the subject of our conversation. When I told Mr. Hawkhurst that we fox breeders still haven't any money, his answer was that, money or

not, of itself, no article will come back or come into prominence—that this is the age of promotion and that even daily necessities must be promoted. Only the things that are promoted have a chance of getting a play economically.

Some ranchers are now giving considerable thought to such things as controlling the sale of breeding stock and other problems incidental to the internal operation of an organization. This sort of mental activity is unimportant and therefore wasteful at this time. The industry was laid low by a severe case of marketing indigestion. We're just barely getting over this condition and we shouldn't waste thought on problems relating to production of foxes, but should rather use all our energies in overcoming the indigestion and preparing the market to be good and hungry for the limited quantities of foxes which presently remaining breeders can produce. These relatively small quantities are sufficient to satisfy a luxury trade and it is the luxury trade that will have to turn to silver fox if we are ever to see prosperity again.

It should be noted that luxury trade and scarcity of supply are synonymous. Scarcity of supply and the sale of breeding stock are incompatible. Why, then, should we even think about selling breeding stock? Are we going to invite every Tom, Dick and Harry to get into the fox business again? The live foxes now remaining in the hands of the breeders are the nucleus of the fox industry of tomorrow. Against fearful odds we have stuck it out up to this point. We have gone through the fire together and there is some hope of achieving unity in marketing in the future. If we start a breeding-

stock-selling orgy we will bring a lot of new, strictly promotional elements into play which will contribute nothing whatever to the welfare of the industry, but will lead to quick and final ruin! It is natural, of course, that there will be a mutually beneficial trading of breeding stock between now-existing breeders.

There is yet another reminder that is not yet ready for a new era of prosperity. There are in the hands of some few producers important quantities of silver fox pelts. Some of these skins are getting quite old. The reasoning of these ranchers is to hold the skins till the market picks up and then pocket the increase in value. In a way, I can sympathize with that sort of thinking, for I indulged in it myself up until two years ago. Then the light dawned! Here is our market just barely getting over a stiff dose of indigestion, and we should not expect it to swallow a bunch of stale old fox pelts (which will probably result in the equivalent of pomaine poisoning)—that will cook our goose for sure! If we are sincere in our desire to have everything in readiness for an enthusiastic new reception of silver fox, then we must forego the chance of this possible additional few pieces of silver.

The law of economics involuntarily cleaned house among fox breeders. We all know that a goodly portion of the fox pelts presently traded are used for export to Europe, thus affording us an opportunity to voluntarily clean our own house and dispose of all carry-over merchandise, preferably in foreign markets as is now possible. This applies with equal force to members of the fur trade who are holding foxes for speculation.

All conditions favorable to a full and complete recovery of fox prestige will have been met only when the breeders are convinced of the fallacy of and refrain from mass production, when the fresh goods produced are of the highest quality, when no cheap, trashy leftover merchandise is available, and when the rancher accepts as his responsibility the need for well-calculated merchandising and promotion. All these worthwhile objectives can be accomplished within the framework of presently existing fur farm organizations, and the unity of purpose of all fox farmers is required to bring these changes into effect.

The need of the hour is to meet together and work out in harmony all the problems on which we are in agreement. It is the points we agree on that count; our disagreements help no one. The strength we will gain by working together harmoniously will in the end overshadow the disagreements we may have and make them unimportant. As I have said before, the Mutual Breeders Association and the National Board of Fur Farm Organizations are without par as examples of good, effective fur farm organizations because they did not set out to form an association for the sake of such, but they did organize themselves into an effectively functioning team of cooperation for the benefit of all. It is good that the few remaining fox farmers are giving serious thought to their future, and it is to be hoped that the energy of this present interest can be channeled into existing organizations and thus renew their strength.

The Use and Abuse of Lime

OTTAWA, July 10, 1950 —Most of the soils of Prince Edward Island, formed as they were by the breaking down of soft red sandstone are naturally poor in lime. This has been demonstrated many times by the improvement in crops which follows the application of burnt lime, mussel mud or ground limestone to newly-cleared land. After lime is applied leaching and cropping gradually exhaust the supply and more must be added at regular intervals.

Experiments conducted at the Experimental Station, Charlottetown, have shown that burnt lime is the most rapid in its action and the least lasting. Ground limestone is slow in action but stays in the land much longer. Shells from mussel mud remain in the land for many years and release a small amount of lime each year, as the shells break down. The application of limestone to land in which there is still considerable shell has not shown any beneficial result. The same is true of some areas that have been heavily limed in the past and cropped out. Where this has occurred lime alone will not bring about any improvement, as it is the exhaustion of the supply of humus, nitrogen, phosphoric acid, potash and probably some of the minor elements that have made the land poor.

Though lime is necessary as part of the food required by plants, its value as a soil amendment is of much more importance. It amends or improves the soil by reducing soil acidity, by encouraging the growth of beneficial bacteria, by freeing unavailable plant food through chemical action and, in many cases, by improving the physical condition of the land. The soil may be compared to a factory in which, by the work of bacteria and other low forms of life, and by chemical action in the presence of warmth, air and moisture, raw materials are broken down and changed so that they may be taken up and used as food by the growing plants. In most cases these processes operate best when the soil is only mildly acid. Lime is an active agent in creating this mildly acid condition.

Burnt lime has become too expensive to be used as an economical source of supply and, owing to the labor involved, mussel mud is no longer used. As a result, ground limestone has become the chief source of lime. In the experimental work with limestone at the Charlottetown Station, D. C. Schurman says, the application of one ton per acre, once in each cycle of a five or six year rotation, has given the best results, as indicated by the growth of clover and alfalfa. Working the limestone into the land has been much more effective than applications left on the surface.

In Prince Edward Island, where potatoes are a major crop, the effect of lime as a cause of potato scab is a matter of great importance. Experimental work has indicated that lime is only one way of many factors which may contribute to the prevalence of scab and that the part which lime may play as a cause of scab is so involved that it cannot be discussed in this article.

When lime alone is used without manure or fertilizer, results are deceiving, as lime is thus merely a means of mining the land. The improvement in crops following its application is obtained by making available the fertility already in the soil. If, continued, this removal of fertility by cropping, without the return of plant food in manure, or fertilizer and organic matter, will result in complete impoverishment of the soil.

NEWSY NOTES

By Agricola

THE TREE SWALLOW

This bird was very generally known to the older bird watchers as the White-bellied or the White-breasted Swallow. Francis Bain, in his "Birds of P. E. Island", has much to say about it: "The White-bellied Swallow (Iridoprocne bicolor) is the earliest to arrive. With the first May suns he is here, sweeping the deep field of the gentle spring sky. How buoyant his flight! What a grand spirit of strength, and joy, and freedom he seems as he rushes through the clear heaven over bay and barren field, shouting a cry of gladness on his arrival in his summer home!"

"These birds congregate in vast numbers about mill-ponds or other sheets of water. Their circling and cycling in spiral and maze, their darting and doubling, now skimming the glassy surface, then shooting upward into the blue sky till lost, like fading stars, on its brow, form the most wonderful and beautiful evolutions ever performed by winged wanderers of the air. They nest in hollow stumps in lonely wood-lands. The nests are lined with feathers and contain pure white eggs."

When I came to my present location, about 25 years ago, Tree Swallows were very abundant in the locality. Towards the time of their fall migration long, closely-packed lines of Swallows occupied the telephone wires as far as one could see. Then suddenly, some morning, one would realize that they had gone without an adieu! One never sees such gatherings now. Why?

Tree Swallows are easily attracted to bird-houses, if certain conditions are complied with. Unlike the Purple Martin, this swallow does not care for company. Those experimenters who built "two room bird boxes," find that the only one is occupied. I find that the swallows ever reason that the bird-houses being too close together. After some experimental work, I built three bird-houses, about five years ago, and they have been "put out" every spring since. Here are the inside measurements: depth of "box" 6 inches; diameter, either way, 5 inches; height of entrance hole above the floor, 4 inches; diameter of round entrance hole 1 1/2 inches. This last is of the very greatest importance; if the hole is larger, or square, be sure that sparrows will squeeze in from the front and protected the entrance from rain and sun. I fastened the "houses" to the 10 feet poles by means of metal slips. A better way, perhaps, would be to make the back-piece a trifle longer, top and bottom, which could then be nailed to the pole in the ordinary way.

Cats will attempt to climb the poles, and if they are young and vigorous, will of succeed. With projecting roof they are not likely to catch the birds, but they may frighten them away. The remedy according to a recent writer, is to sheathe a section of the pole with tin in such a fashion that the cat can get no foothold. Lastly, since the old nests must be cleaned out each fall, I made one of the side-pieces detachable by using two smaller "wire nails" to hold it in place till pried off. Some birds seem suspicious of new, or even of painted "houses," hence to begin with put the house out to "weather" before the birds come, or he may cover them with bark well tacked on. The houses, poles and all, should be stored for the winter. Now to get back to the bird itself.

Tree Swallow (or White-bellied S.) AOU, 614 Commonest S., 1916; becoming rarer, 1938. Plumage:

lustrous blue-green above; underparts pure white; tail notched. Length of adults, 5.5 to 6.0 inches

RAILWAY GAUGE ONCE MORE

The other week I endeavored to show how the British railroad gauge had come down through the years from that of the Roman chariot, and that the 4 feet 8 1/2 inches "gauge" was the military "pace" (passus) of the Roman soldier. A visitor drove into the yard soon after the Note appeared, and in the course of our talk I asked if he knew the width of our Island railway tracks. No, he said, but some boys once took the tires off, from an old car, and placed it on the tracks which it fitted perfectly. When he had gone I measured another car, from centre to centre of the tires: it was just 4 ft. 8.5 inches! A truck wagon gave the same measurement.

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY

When the great lawgiver ordained the festival of the Sabbath, he had a double object in view—to remind every faithful Israelite of his God in his two-fold character of Creator and Liberator or Redeemer. (Exodus, 20). So all should rest on that day, because the Creator had rested: the whole nation, as well as the stranger "within its gates", and not forgetting the beasts of burden. There was the intention too, to remind the Israelites of their slavery in Egypt when their only relief from toil was on such festivities. In later times it became a day of instruction in the principles of the law, while all classes met, in social equality and with innocent mirth, at the gates of the city.

Philo, surnamed "Judeus," of Alexandria, Egypt, where there was a great colony of Jews, has left some account of the way his countrymen spent the Sabbath circa A.D. 40. The Sabbath, he says, was a holiday devoted to indulgent hilarity, abstaining from all work or art exercised for gain; giving a truce to all laborious and harassing cares; but not as many do running mad after the theatre, the mimes, and dances, but philosophizing in the highest sense. (The theatre in this case was the arena. The mimes were dramatic actors, while the dances were usually beyond description).

An old sermon has the words: "The Lord's Day was never ordained to give us a pretence for idleness, but only to change our interest from worldly to heavenly; much less that we should have more time free to bestow on our sins." This was the general belief and attitude of the British people till about the middle of last century. By then the "higher criticism" had come into control of men's thinking, and the Bible was discredited. The Day of Rest became a day of frivolous pleasure-seeking for some, and of painful toil for others. So much for Britain, but I am sorry to see Canada taking the same road, with Sunday games and all the rest of it. Nevertheless "God is not dead, nor doth he sleep", and, be assured, he will judge this matter with equity.

A LARGE MOTH

I am indebted to Miss Helen Gudmore, of Oysterbed Bridge, for a large and gaily-marked moth. It is the Cecropia Moth—that is the best I can do in naming it, for it does not appear to have any popular or common name. The Cecropia Moth has a wing-spread of 5 (to 6) inches, and I think, is the largest moth found in the Province. Its body is stout and banded with black, white, and yellow. The greater area of the wings, is gray, but they are margined with bands of various colors, red, black, white and buffy. Each wing has a lunate central spot, and the fore-wings have also an "eye-spot" near the outer angle. There is considerable variation of coloring among individuals.

The Cecropia caterpillar is equally striking in appearance. It is a big green fellow with three pairs of red tubercles on its thorax, two rows of yellow ones down its back, and two rows of blue ones along each side! The caterpillars are usually found on orchard trees, which besides supplying them with food, afford a strong resting place for the cocoon to over-winter on. The cocoon is a big one, 3 or more inches long, rough, and usually pointed at one end.

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This being our sixtieth JUBILEE we would ask for your sincere co-operation in making this the most outstanding year of the show, both in numbers and quality.

Your awards will be placed this year by men who have judged at the Royal Winter Fair and many of the outstanding Class A shows.

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- 4—Pair Dual Purpose Females—2 years and under.
- 5—Female—2 years old and under—Boys and Girls under 15 years of age only.
- 6—Showmanship Contest—Boys and Girls under 15 years of age only.

Bonus paid on trucking expenses 15 miles from Charlottetown and over.

All animals to be shown previously in the regular classes of the Provincial Exhibition.

Entries for above classes to be forwarded before August the 1st to—

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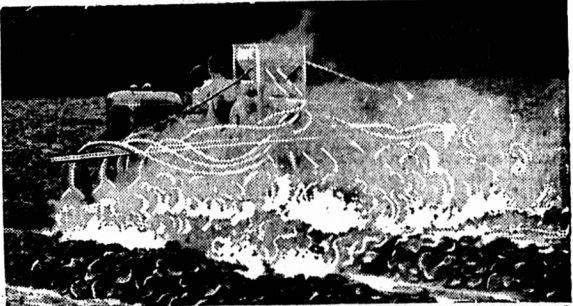
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