

# Bourne Conservation Trust

NEWSLETTER Number 29

Late Fall 1998

## Holidays on the Pond

Around Easter an osprey couple just back from a winter's fishing in Peru circle the Pond, ravenous alewives in from the sea roil the Pond's shallows, a feral snapper up from a winter's slumber emerges out of the mud and a mother swan leads a cluster of recently-hatched cygnets in search of something to eat. Her wings arched gracefully over her back, she pilots her mini-flotilla along a lee shore, the cygnets clustering so close as to appear to coalesce.



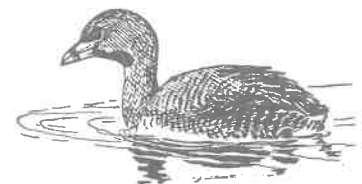
On Memorial Day a muskrat is determinedly plowing a V into the Pond's placid surface, two whopping snappers are locked in a slow-motion territorial struggle, and an edgy kingfisher, perched atop a twisted scrub oak, catapults himself downward, chattering like a toy machine gun. Out on the open water the cygnets are discernible--six swimming furiously in their mother's wake, a seventh enjoying a piggy-back ride nestled between her folded wings.

After daybreak on Independence Day, a night heron alights on the kingfisher's lookout post and hunkers down, a salt-laden cormorant skids in from Buzzards Bay and splashes itself salt-free, and shortly an echelon of damselflies and dragonflies glinting green or blue or orange, will resume their day-long circling of the Pond. Bracketed by their parents-- father leading, mother bringing up the rear-- five mottled gray cygnets waddle ashore, one of them flexing stubby, useless wings.



By Labor Day the swamp roses have withered, bullfrogs have ceased jog-o'-rumming the night away, mother mallards no longer conduct their almost fully-fledged broods on daily tails-up quests in the shallows, swallows have swooped their graceful way through yet another sudden line squall and the harsh screeching of a restless squadron of southbound kittiwakes ricochets across the water. For most of the day, three adolescent cygnets watched a brutal battle between their puffed-up, hissing parents and a determined invading couple bent on driving them off the Pond. By late afternoon, exhausted and half-drowned, the invaders struggle ashore to rest before flying off to the southwest.

The early mist of Columbus Day lifts off the deserted Pond--ospreys, kingbirds, red-winged blackbirds have left for Peru, for Bolivia, for Mexico. A solitary pied bill grebe surfaces, shrugs, sinks. From the northeast shallows comes the syncopated rhythm of a swan's



takeoff-- the *smack-smack-* of wingtips hitting water, the double-time *whap-whap-whap-whap-* of huge sprinting feet. In their father's wake-- wings flailing, feet paddling-- the two cygnets try to follow him up into the air. They fail.

By noon Veterans Day, flurries of scarlet and yellow swamp maple leaves are settling on the water. Chickadees, titmice and finches materialize, basking painter turtles crane their necks sluggishly while a gang of intrusive, yawping Canada geese is handily dispatched by the male swan who plows after them like a gunboat, then resumes the cygnets' flying lesson. They face the wind and with an echoing clatter of feet and wings, achieve lift-off.



On Thanksgiving morning a heavy southwest wind carries the moan of the Cleveland Ledge horn across the Pond, the season's first buffleheads, a trio, skim the whitecaps and come to a skidding halt while aloft there's a skirr of whistling wings from the swan family-- mother, father, two cygnets-- on their daily once-around of the Pond. Soon after set-down, as one cygnet is feeding tail-up, its father sidles up behind and nips sharply at its tail.

At noon on Christmas Day the northwest wind is churning the melt-water that glazes the punky ice pan where a restless herring gull army stands and waits while at its edge a half-dozen foraging mergansers, their orange eyes submerged, plow the open water. On their own, the nearly white cygnets dispatch some encroaching Canada geese, then paddle back to be with their mother, staying well clear of their father who puffs up and hisses if they come too near him.



On New Years Day the Pond is iced over except for one narrow stretch of open water from which both puffed-up adult swans bar the cygnets but allow buffleheads to pass through their blockade. Whenever the cygnets draw too close, their father takes to the air and drives them away. Before the week is out, they will be gone for good.



Just after dawn on Martin Luther King Day, a great blue heron settles unsteadily on a leafless oak branch to take solace in the sun's early rays. From the kingfisher's perch across the Pond, a red-tailed hawk peers down as a wayward otter flips out of the water-- a yellow perch locked in its jaw-- rolls over and eats its breakfast. Nearby the swan couple are taking a guarded head-under-wing nap.

A light overnight snowfall on the eve of Presidents Day has dusted the ice-covered Pond leaving it all but deserted. Now and then, a mallard or a swan bestirs itself to a comical waddle on the ice and an anomalous jet black crow hip-hops across the pristine white ice. In a matter of weeks the buffleheads will leave for the Arctic, the ospreys arrive from Peru while the swans remain on the pond and start rebuilding their nest.

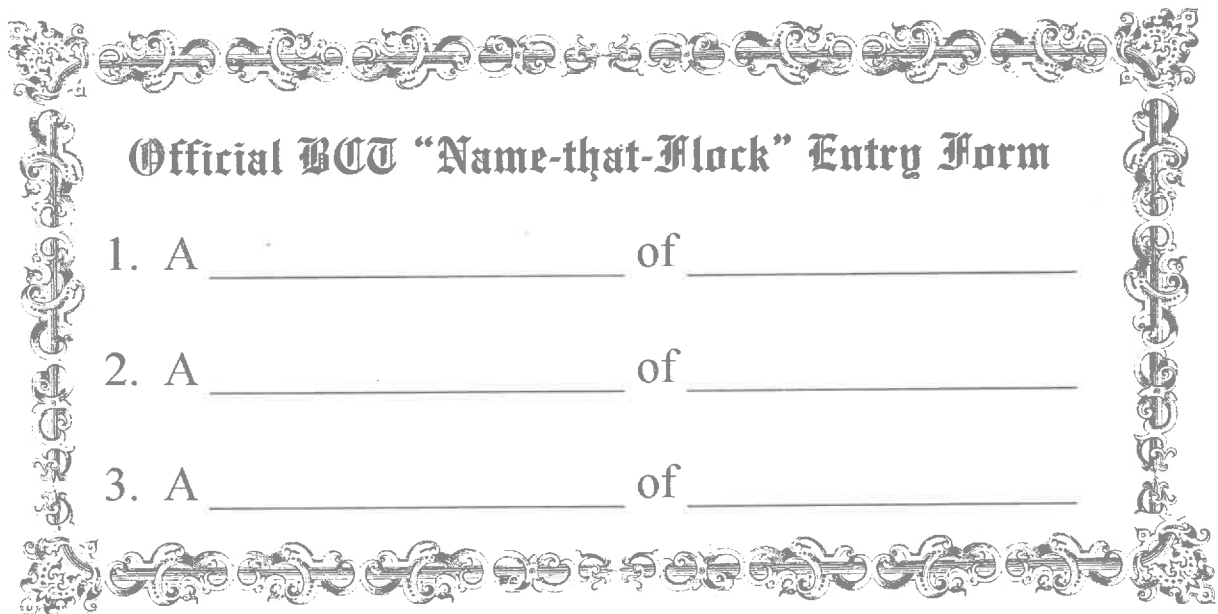
# A Cawcus of Crows

*An arcanum of benefactors has agreed to donate \$10.00 for each partially or fully filled out "Name that Flock" entry form submitted to the BCT in the accompanying envelope. (\$\$\$ Helpful but not Necessary \$\$\$.)*

In November a solitary pied-billed grebe stopped by to sample the Pond's food supply. During his three-day visit he made only a few halfhearted stabs at cozying up to the flocks of mallards, pintails and buffleheads, because at heart a grebe is a loner. Unlike him, the resident kingfisher pair that patrol the Pond year-round, fishing together and forever rattling messages back and forth, form an inseparable couple.

Living on and around the Pond alongside this exclusive loner and ubiquitous couple are resident and visiting groups of birds: flocks, covey and gaggles of gulls, quail and geese. "Flock" and "covey" are pale words lacking the vividness and punch found in a word as robust and audible as "gaggle" so what's needed is a spanking new "gerund" of imaginative and descriptive collective nouns. For starters, how about "a skitter of buffleheads" or "a yawp of Canada geese" or "a hover of terns"?

These gregarious birds seen on or around Red Brook Pond need their own imaginative and descriptive group names: herons (great blue, green or night), mergansers, cormorants, pintails, mallards, buffleheads, swallows, quail, red-winged blackbirds, kittiwakes, purple grackles, golden eyes, chickadees, blue jays, nuthatches, woodpeckers, robins, wrens, king birds and ospreys.



**Official BCT "Name-that-Flock" Entry Form**

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

2. A \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

3. A \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

## GIFT PACKAGING

Gifts to the Bourne Conservation Trust are charitable contributions with resulting tax benefits. The amount of the benefit depends on the kind and size of the gift. A well-planned gift can combine financial and charitable objectives by providing tax benefits thereby meeting personal and charitable goals.

**CASH:** Cash donations provide immediate funds for use by the BCT and can result in tax savings for the donor.

**REAL ESTATE:** Real estate can be given as an outright gift. Such donations have both real estate and income tax benefits.

**BARGAIN SALE:** By special arrangement, you may sell your property to the BCT for less than its fair market value (a bargain sale) and the difference is considered a charitable gift.

**LIFE INSURANCE:** The Bourne Conservation Trust can be named as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy.

**SECURITIES:** Gifts of appreciated securities may save on capital gains taxes.

**WILL:** Naming the BCT in your will creates a gift and can reduce or eliminate federal estate taxes.

**LIFE INCOME GIFTS:** The transfer of cash, securities, or other property to a charitable trust will provide a life income to the donor, donor's spouse, or other beneficiaries. After the death of the last named beneficiary, the principal becomes available for use by the BCT. Current tax deductions and eventual estate tax deductions provide a double benefit.

**CHARITABLE LEAD TRUST:** Cash or securities can be placed in a charitable trust for a specified period of time, with the income directed to the BCT. At the end of the trust period, the principal reverts to the donor or some other beneficiary.

The BCT is tax exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Within IRS guidelines contributions may be deductible from your taxable income. (ID number: 04 2767827) Donors should consult their own tax advisor for financial and legal advice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
Please call (508) 563-2800 or write to the Bourne Conservation Trust, Box 203, Cataumet, MA 02534-0203



## Confused about Christmas? Join the Ockhamites!!

No, the Ockhamites are not some monastic order, chanting one of the Top Ten Great Gregorian Hits of 1389 from the "Big Ben" era.

Back in the 14th century, one William of Ockham constructed what became known as his "razor". In brief, he stated that if given a number of solutions to a problem, the simplest solution is probably the best.

We suggest that you apply an Ockhamite razor to the problems of the holiday season; surely, shaving away the fluff of Christmas holds particular appeal.

We're hearing the first of the Christmas Carols. We're experiencing the first anxiety twinges about:

... the gift getting,



... the wrapping,

... the mailing, and that final frustration,

... the returning.

So, let your "razor" be a donation to the Bourne Conservation Trust in the name of a designated friend or relative. We will inform that remembered person of your generosity with a suitable card.

... We will thank you,

... your community will thank you, and

... so will William of Ockham, wherever he is.

### Merry Christmas!!



**Please send gift notification to:**

**From:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

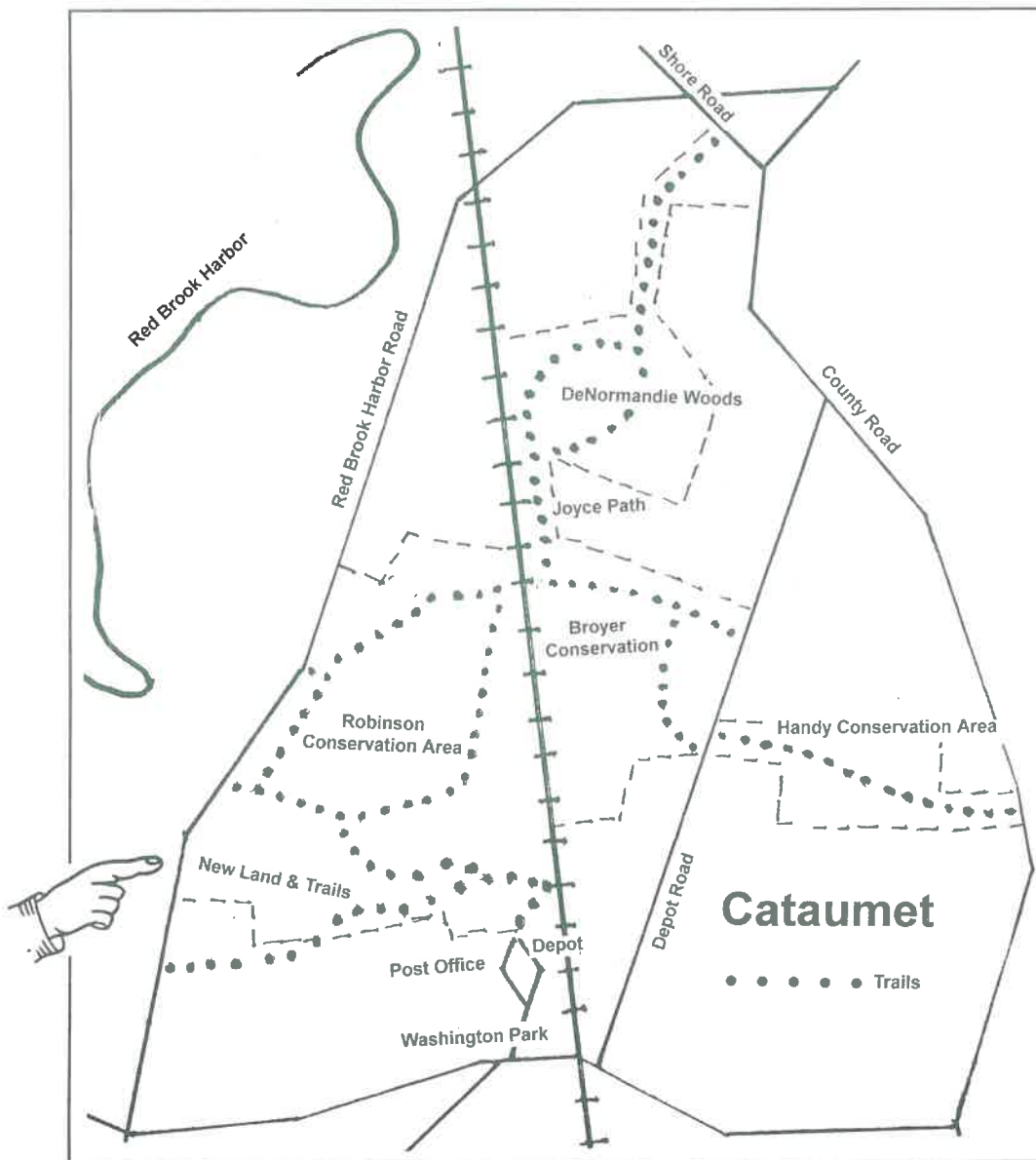
City, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Bourne Conservation Trust (Box 203, Cataumet, MA 02534)

## Happy Trails to You

Although we have lost Roy Rogers (or was it Gene Autry?) who warbled that wish to us, the BCT is still carrying the tune. As anyone who has thrashed through the underbrush seeking solitude knows, the happiest trails are those that are cleared and marked.

And so we thank Don Mears for the new trails on the newly acquired 11 acres on Red Brook Harbor Road.



Those of you who find the Appalachian trail a bit forbidding may find our local version more user-friendly. The BCT trail guide to all of our holdings is being updated and should be available this winter. Use the enclosed envelope to request a copy.

## Money Matters



Yes, Money does matter and here are our current concerns:

\*The final payment is due in January to Larry Dubois for the Pocasset Park Property. This fund-raising has been completed.

\*In April a \$25,000 loan payment will be due. This loan was for the purchase of the Kingman property.

## Conservation Tip

“As a conservation trust, our interest is not contained to preserving only land, but land as habitat. Clarita Bright reminds us that when people clear their land of all underbrush, the quail population is denied food and shelter. Protecting their habitat is the only way that we will be able to continue the privilege of hearing our gallinaceous friends.”

*The above Conservation Tip appeared in our second Newsletter (March, 1986). We thought it was worth repeating. If you have a conservation tip, please send it to us at Box 203, Cataumet, MA 02534.*



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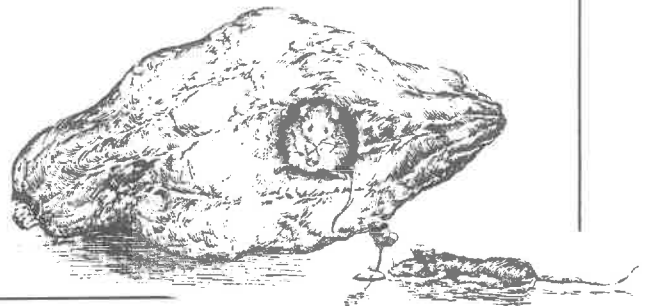


## BCT Mini-Doc

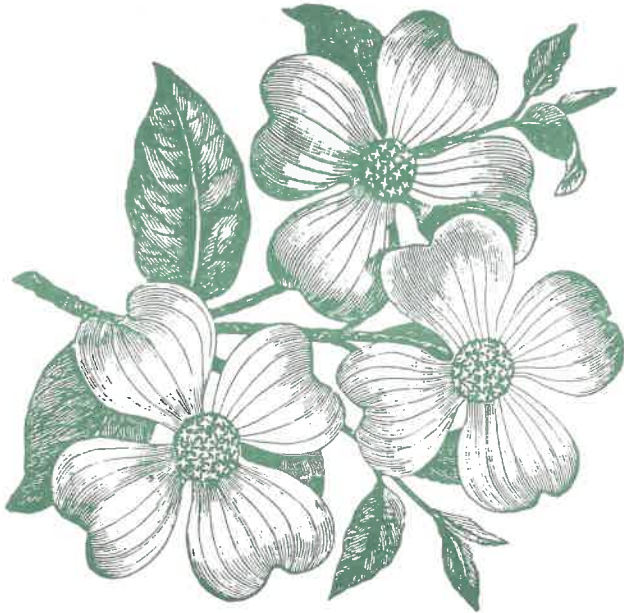
Still available is the Bourne Conservation Trust film which includes shots of BCT properties-- Lawrence Island, several wooded areas, marshes and fields, and Red Brook Pond--and glimpses of local bird, animal and plant life. Copies of the locally-produced 10-minute VHS cassette are on sale for \$18.00 and can be ordered by calling (508-563-2800) or writing (Box 203, Cataumet MA 02534) the BCT.

## Tempus Fugit

Perhaps you can't recall when you made your last donation to the BCT? Check the mailing label on this newsletter. The number in the upper right corner represents the date of your last donation--first the year, then the month. For example, "9802" means February 1998. No number? We hope you will send us a donation soon.



## Blossoms In Memory



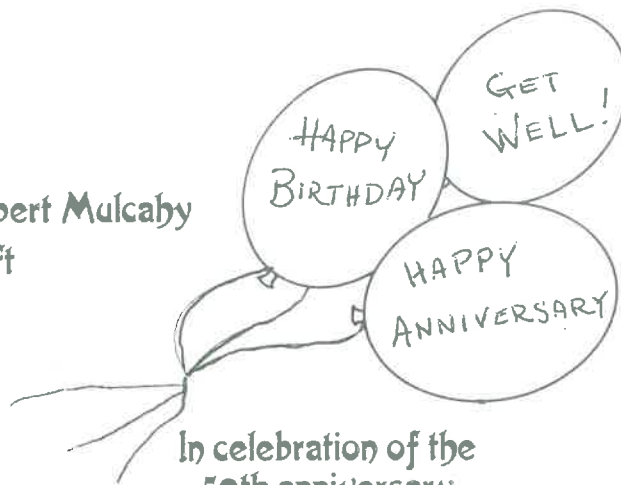
Come spring the startling white blossoms of a Kousa Dogwood will grace the BCT triangle formed by Shore, County and Red Brook Harbor roads in Cataumet. The flowering tree was won at last year's Armchair Auction by David and Emily Beal who have donated it to the memory of Louise Alden whose daughter, Ann Ware, helped to plant it.

## Special Donations

A speedy recovery, Mr. Robert Mulcahy  
--Louis & Edythe Kraft

In celebration of  
Mr & Mrs. Donald Fuller's  
50th wedding anniversary  
--Joan Bolton

In honor of  
Jody Bolton's Birthday  
--Heidi Lewitt



In celebration of the  
50th anniversary  
of Parker's Boat Yard  
--Joan Bolton

In celebration of our grandchildren  
--Donald & Judith Manthei



## Memorial Donations

In memory of Louise Alden  
Drs. Henry & Marie Cote  
Elizabeth Dubuque  
In memory of Virginia Alden  
Ann & Peter Torilli  
In memory of Anne Austill  
Drs. Henry & Marie Cote  
Elizabeth Dubuque  
In memory of Dr. & Mrs. Maxwell Beal



In memory of Virginia Blakeman  
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In memory of Francis Butler  
Lawrie & Janice Butler  
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In memory of Elsie DeNormandie  
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Mr. & Mrs. John Carpenter  
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Memorial donation received after 11/15 will  
appear in the next newsletter.

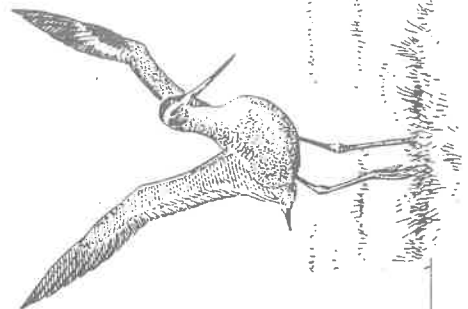
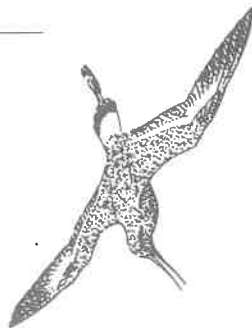
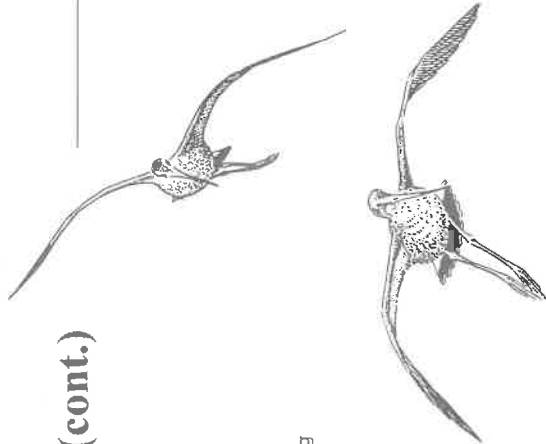


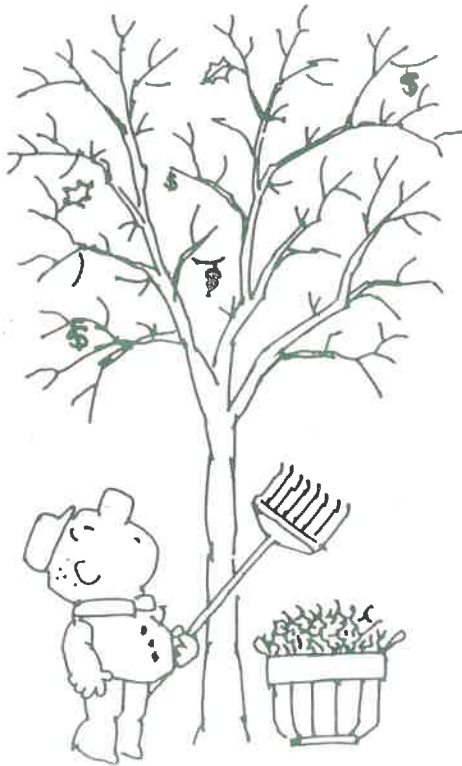
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Plant flowers  
Maintain the Depot  
Write grant proposals  
Write, edit, type, mail and label  
the Newsletter  
Acknowledge your donations  
Speak to groups on BCT's behalf  
Handle BCT correspondence

The donation of volunteers' work helps your  
donations go farther.

**Thank you, Volunteers!**

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