

Along Came A Spider...

If you were to ask people to make a list of animals that invoke fear, it would inevitably include spiders. This fear is so well known that a unique phobia is associated with spiders: arachnophobia.

Spiders are found in all regions of the world, from the frigid mountaintops of Mount Everest to dry hot deserts of the Sahara as well as in the basements and closets of most people's homes. Worldwide, there are more than 30,000 species of these arachnids.

Spiders are extremely beneficial to our environment because they consume millions of harmful insects. Almost all spiders have venom which is used to kill or paralyze their prey. Spiders will also bite in self defense or to protect their eggs as do many wild animals. Unbeknownst to many, the majority of spiders have mouth parts too small or not powerful enough to pierce human skin and most spider venom is harmless to humans.

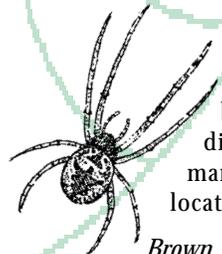
Of all the spiders in the country probably the two most feared are the black widow (*Latrodectus mactans*) and the brown recluse (*Loxosceles reclusa*). Most people think the black widow is found only in the southern US, but its range does include WV, and it can be found throughout the Mountain State. The female can easily be recognized by her coal black color and relatively large bulbous body which is about 1/2 inch long. She also has a distinguishing red hourglass-shaped mark on the underside of her abdomen.

Normally quite shy, secretive and nonaggressive, the female rarely leaves her web and will retreat when disturbed. The exception is when she is guarding her egg sack. Juveniles and males do not bite. The venom from the black widow is a potent neurotoxin affecting the nervous system and is 14 times more toxic than rattlesnake venom. Children, elderly people and people with fragile immune systems are especially sensitive to the bites from this spider.

According to James Arnold, curator of the WV Arachnid Collection at Marshall University, the brown recluse, *Loxosceles reclusa*, has not been found in WV; its closest occurrence has been in neighboring Kentucky. The venom from the recluse is different from the black widow's and causes necrotic lesions which can take months to heal, and there is no known antivenin. Although their range is outside the Mountain State, Arnold says there are sometimes reports of

brown recluse bites in places where the spider is not endemic, but no one has produced the spider causing the incidence.

The recluse is tan to yellowish brown in color and has a body that is approximately 5/8 of an inch long. It too has a distinguishing mark that can be used for identification. This mark is fiddle shaped, pointing to the rear of the spider and is located just behind its eyes. Many people have called this spider a



Brown Recluse

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Black Widow

Message from the Teaming With Wildlife National Committee

The Teaming With Wildlife National Steering Committee (TWWNSC) has affirmed its commitment to continue working for permanent funding for state-based wildlife conservation and wildlife-related education and recreation. Although CARA was not enacted in the 106th congress, several significant achievements were accomplished. They include:

- *\$50 million in Interior Appropriations for wildlife conservation projects;

- *Pending Congressional approval, an additional \$50 million for wildlife;

- *Increases in other conservation programs including the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, Land and Water Conservation Fund, coastal conservation, endangered species conservation, and others;

- *Raised tremendous awareness of the need for state-level wildlife conservation, education and recreation;

- *Built a coalition unprecedented in its size and diversity--5,000 conservation and related organizations and businesses, 50 governors, 1,100 mayors, and numerous editorial boards that represents the support of millions of Americans;

- *Established excellent and ongoing relationships with key Members of Congress that are important for future CARA efforts and other wildlife conservation legislation.

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Inside this issue...

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Trouble Brewing At Backyard Bird Feeders



Talking negatively about feeding birds seems almost blasphemous. But imagine this--millions of well-intentioned backyard birders could be innocently harming the creatures they love to feed. As unimaginable as that seems, researchers are coming up with more cases of bird diseases that can be traced to transmission at feeders. While it is said that birds of a feather flock together, it is also beginning to include those which may have a transmittable disease.

In a recent edition of **Bird Watchers Digest** (December 1999), author Eirik Blom points out that "bird feeding has become very big business. It affects billions of birds. It may have taken a while for serious controversy to emerge, but it is here, and it is serious. A lot of birds are dying because of it."

How is this happening? Researchers are finding that not only are some bird feeders encouraging the transmission of diseases just by attracting unnaturally high groupings of birds, but also, the bird feeder itself, when not taken care of correctly, can cause birds to become ill.

The problems are many. One of the most well-known and widespread diseases is **mycoplasmal conjunctivitis** or what has become known as house finch disease. The disease, which has spread throughout most of the species' eastern range, causes the eyes of an infected bird to become swollen and crusty. This can lead to blindness and death from starvation, as the birds become unable to forage for food.

Although known as house finch disease, it has recently been discovered in goldfinches and downy woodpeckers.

According to the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, conjunctivitis is spread when healthy birds come into contact with an infected bird or an object touched by a diseased bird. An example is the tube feeder which requires the bird to stick its head into a hole in order to extract seeds.

When the eyes of an infected bird come in contact with the opening, the next bird to feed at that perch may pick up the disease.

For this reason, feeders should be cleaned with a solution of one part bleach to 10 parts water every two weeks or so. Nevertheless, the disease probably spreads most rapidly where the birds sleep together in large, crowded roosts, quite often among populations that do not make regular use of birdfeeders, Cornell scientist Andre Dhondt suggests.

Using data collected since 1988 by the Lab's Project Feederwatch (<http://birdsource.cornell.edu/pfw>) and the Audubon Society's over 100 year-old Christmas bird count, Dhondt was able to track the emergence of the disease and compare populations before and after its introduction. While Dhondt believes the disease has now stabilized, there has been a tremendous decrease in the number of house finches in the East from 300 to 180 million birds.

While conjunctivitis may have stabilized, the National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC) in Wisconsin is tracking two other diseases with ties to bird feeders: salmonella and avian pox. Currently, mortality due to salmonellosis has been confirmed as the cause of death in birds in all states except Connecticut and Missouri. The primary species affected are gold-

finches, pine siskins and redpolls. Quite plainly, NWHC researchers explain salmonellosis is a bacterial disease and a common cause of mortality in birds at bird feeders.

Salmonella can be spread from bird to bird through direct contact or through ingestion of food or water contaminated with feces from an infected bird or mammal. Carriers of the organism may appear healthy, but shed the organism periodically in their feces. Sick birds have been observed with ruffled feathers, perching for long periods and having seizures.

To reduce the spread of bacteria, the Center suggests cleaning the feeders with a 10% bleach and water solution, and not putting the feeders back up for one to two weeks so that affected birds won't be concentrated in one location. Rake up waste seeds and droppings below the feeders. Bird feeders with rough surfaces, cracks or crevices are difficult to sanitize and should not be used. When using feeders, the location should be changed at regular intervals. Adding more feeders may reduce crowding

and minimize opportunity for interaction and contamination. Finally, birdseed should be stored in rodent proof containers.

A note of caution:

Strains of salmonella may cause illnesses in humans, so using rubber gloves is recommended as well as cleaning all feeders outside.

The NWHC is reporting that **Avian pox** is infecting a variety of birds worldwide from raptors to songbirds. Caused by a pox virus, the disease is transmitted by direct contact with infected birds, ingestion of food and/or water contaminated by sick birds or carcasses, or contact with the contaminated surfaces such as bird feeders and perches.

The symptoms include wartlike growths occurring around the eyes, beak or unfeathered skin leading to

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A bird feeder itself, when not taken care of correctly, can cause birds to become ill.

Rare Species at a Glance

Allegheny woodrat

Scientific name: *Neotoma magister*

State status: Somewhat common in appropriate habitat, although it appears to be declining in the Eastern Panhandle.

Global status: The Allegheny woodrat is recognized as a "Species of Concern" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This species is declining quickly in the northern part of its range, and is believed to be gone entirely from Connecticut and New York.

General description: This rodent is 15 to 19 inches long, has a long, hairy, bicolored tail, large ears and eyes, and blunt nose. Its soft, silky fur is brownish gray on top, and whitish gray on its belly. Woodrats are also called packrats because of their habit of collecting debris.

Habitat: Rocky areas in or near hardwood forests are the preferred habitat of woodrats. Their living areas may be found in caves or deep crevices, and are usually near mast-producing trees so that they may gather and cache large amounts of food for winter.

Total range: Historically, the Allegheny woodrat was known from southwestern New England, southward

along the Appalachians to northern Alabama, eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, and westward into southern Ohio and Indiana.

State range:

This species is likely found statewide, but its occurrences are locally restricted due to its habitat needs.

Threats to the species: The main causes of the decline of the woodrat are habitat fragmentation, reduced acorn production due to the gypsy moth; and the raccoon roundworm which attacks the woodrat's central nervous system and causes death. Because of the woodrat's rocky habitat, humans are of little threat to this species.

Best time to look: For the most part, the Allegheny woodrat is nocturnal. It may be seen foraging for food during the spring, summer and autumn.

Source: WV Nature Notes - Rare Species Fact Sheet: Allegheny Woodrat. WVDNR 1997.



Illustration by Sue Olcott

White cedar

Scientific name: *Thuja occidentalis*

State status: Uncommon in West Virginia, with only 24 occurrences. Seven of these occurrences are considered historical.

Global status: Secure globally.

General description: White cedar, or arbor-vitae, is a tree or shrub that may grow up to 20 feet tall. It has pale, stringy bark, and very small leaves which appear scale-like on flattened branches.

White cedar can easily be confused with red cedar, but the fruits of white cedar are small cones, whereas red cedar produces blue berry-like fruits.

Habitat:

White cedar prefers dry, rocky

hillsides with limestone.

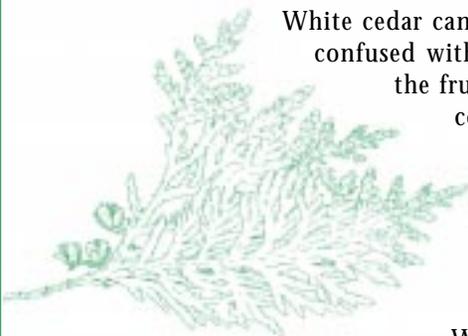
Total range: Quebec, Nova Scotia, Wisconsin and Minnesota, south to New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois; and in the mountains to North Carolina and Tennessee.

State range: White cedar is found mostly in the eastern portion of West Virginia (Berkeley, Grant, Greenbrier, Mercer, Pendleton, Pocahontas and Summers counties); however, there are a few sites from other parts of the state (Gilmer, Hancock and Wyoming counties).

Threats to the species: This species is under little threat since it grows in areas unsuitable to development. White cedar branches have been found in woodrat dens, but this is of little threat to this plant.

Best time to look: Look for white cedar all year.

Sources: Gleason, H. and A. Cronquist. 1991. *Manual of Vascular Plants of Northeastern United States and Adjacent Canada*; Strausbaugh, P.D. and E.L. Core. 1970. *Flora of West Virginia*. Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Program files.



Illustrations by Sam Norris

--Barbara Sargent

Mark Your Calendar!

Nongame Wildlife and Natural Heritage Day at the Lower Capital Rotunda in Charleston

Wednesday, March 14 from 9 am-2 pm.

More Bird Mysteries Solved!

Editor's Note: DNR wildlife biologist Russ McClain has provided answers to some of the most often asked questions about birds in this last installment of a three-part series.

How do you prevent birds from hitting windows?



Unfortunately, birds occasionally strike the windows of our homes, often injuring or even killing themselves. Generally, the reason for this is the reflection of woods or sky in the window. Birds are unable to discern between the window and their habitat. To help prevent this, decals or stickers can be placed on the windows to break up the reflection. Also available are window

films which reduce reflectance. It is also important to carefully place bird feeders. They should be placed 25 or more feet away from windows to reduce window strikes.

If you find a bird that has hit a window, carefully pick it up and put it in a box or large paper bag. Put it in a dark quiet corner of your house for a couple of hours. If the bird recovers, take the box or bag outside and let it go. In the case of raptors, if the bird comes to, but seems injured, call your local wildlife rehabilitation center for help. *(See numbers below.)*

What do I do with an injured bird?

Often birds are hurt by bad weather, predators, accidents, and sometimes, by humans. When observing an injured bird first ask yourself if the bird is actually hurt. Some bird species, such as the killdeer and worm-eating warbler, will give a "broken-wing display" to lead predators away

from their nest. Other species, such as some sparrows, will "crawl" along the ground in thick brush to avoid predators.

It is best to approach an injured bird slowly and quietly. Handle the animal as little as possible and place in a warm environment such as a closed cardboard box with an old towel.

Be aware that larger birds, such as waterfowl and hawks, are quite powerful and can cause injury if not handled properly. You should not try to feed injured birds until the nature of the injury is determined. Often birds can have internal injuries and do not show many outward signs of stress. Professional wildlife rehabilitators should be contacted.

In West Virginia there are three bird rehabilitation centers, The Three Rivers Avian Center in southern WV (1-800-721-5252) and the WV Raptor Rehabilitation Center (1-800-540-6390) and the Oglebay Good Zoo (304-243-4068) in the north.

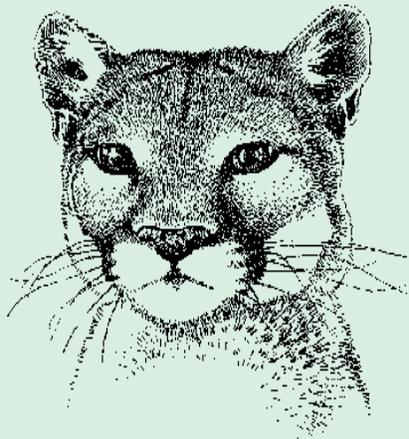


WV Wildlife Viewing Guide Excerpt: WV Wildlife Center

Description: Captive native, introduced and extirpated wildlife of West Virginia can be observed in natural habitat zoological displays. Rooted deep in West Virginia wildlife conservation history, this area was established in 1923 as the French Creek Game Farm to produce game birds and animals for restocking. When the restocking programs were deemed biologically unsound, the state decided to keep wildlife here for educational purposes because the farm was a popular tourist destination.

Completely rebuilt in 1984, the facility was renamed the West Virginia State Wildlife Center. Today the center is a state-of-the-art facility operated by the Wildlife Resources Section of the WVDNR.

Viewing Information: Walk the 1.25-mile loop trail to see wildlife



that once inhabited the Mountain State, including bison, timber wolves and mountain lions, as well as two introduced species: European wild boars and ring-necked pheasants. Other native species include white-

tailed deer, red and gray foxes, bobcats, raccoons, several species of owls and many small mammals. Be sure to visit the impressive river otter display, which give wildlife viewers a rare glimpse into this aquatic mammal's world, from above and below the water.

Directions: At the intersection of WV State Route 4 and WV 20, take WV 20 north 2 miles to the entrance on the east side of WV 20.

Ownership: WVDNR (304) 924-6211

Size: 370 acres

Closest Town: Rock Cave

Editor's Note: The Wildlife Center is open 7 days a week from 9 am-4:30 pm throughout the year. The extensive gift shop may be closed however during the slow season. To find out if the shop is open call 924-5370.

Notes From The Field

As the Snow Flies, Look For Stoneflies

Stoneflies are a group of insects that spend most of their life, up to two years for some, living in the cool mountain streams. Though we often think of insects flying around sometime during late spring and throughout the summer, stoneflies generally emerge as adults from January to July.

You can typically see the adult winter stoneflies crawling around on the snow in the dead of winter. Some of these stoneflies may have even emerged from their nymphal skins under the surface ice. After emerging and mating, eggs are deposited in the stream.

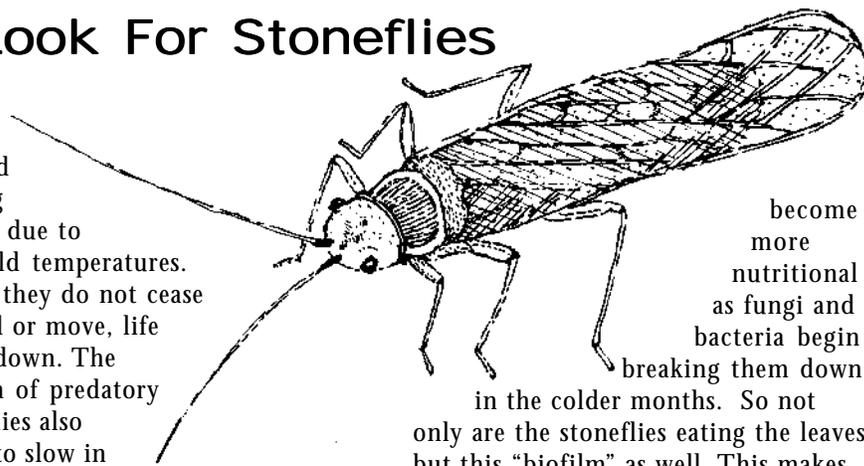
Some eggs may lie dormant for a period before hatching while others hatch within a few days. Upon emerging from the egg they are called nymphs. Many are aware of how the feeding activity and movement of fish

are depressed during winter due to the cold temperatures. While they do not cease to feed or move, life slows down. The growth of predatory stoneflies also tends to slow in winter even though there is abundant food.

In contrast some stoneflies generally grow rapidly in the fall and winter since their growth may be more related to the availability of food rather than water temperature. The shredders, those that eat and break down leaf material, may do so more quickly in the winter. Though we think of leaves falling in autumn, they

become more nutritional as fungi and bacteria begin breaking them down in the colder months. So not only are the stoneflies eating the leaves but this "biofilm" as well. This makes for fascinating bug watching in the misnamed "dead" of winter!

-- Janet L. Clayton



Bird feeders, Continued from Pg.2

difficulty seeing, breathing, feeding, or perching. Growths can also form internally in the mouth, throat, trachea and lungs resulting in difficulty breathing or swallowing. Birds with either symptom may appear weak and emaciated.

This year the WVDNR has received several reports of dead mourning doves. There deaths have been attributed to **Avian trichomoniasis**. This disease principally affects young birds and the infection, caused by a parasite (*T. gallinae*), shows up as small white to yellowish areas in the mouth cavity. Again, transmission can take place at contaminated feeders and water sources.

Different types of feeders have to be monitored carefully. During a two week period this past wet summer, twelve goldfinches were reported dead at feeders in WV. The culprit in these cases was moldy thistle bag feeders.

With all this trouble happening around the bird feeders, are research-

ers suggesting that feeding our feathered friends stop? Not really. Eirik Blom suggests backyard naturalists feed more wisely, and make sure everyone knows there is more to bird feeding than just filling the feeder. He suggests that flyers be handed out and that seed companies include information on their packages on the proper way to maintain feeders.

"The problem is real and is getting worse," he writes. "Millions of birds are going to die and we can do something about it."

To receive the one-page flyer *The Do's and Don'ts of Bird Feeding* log on to www.birdwatchersdigest.com.

Editor's Note: *Some researchers feel that unnatural groupings of species at feeders may facilitate the transmission of avian diseases; providing a backyard habitat with natural food sources may be an alternative. For more information on the WILDYARDS program contact the WVDNR or if you find any diseased birds at your feeder.*

--Nanci Bross-Fregonara

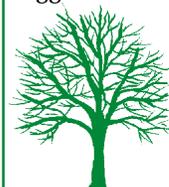
Kid Krafts

Tree bark rubbings

Now that winter is here and people are coming down with cabin fever, here's a fun and simple activity that can get kids of all ages out in the great outdoors even on a cold winter's day.

Material required: Sheets of white paper (tracing paper works the best) and crayons of various colors.

Procedure: Find a tree with interesting looking bark and hold a piece of paper tight on the bark. If you have difficulty holding the paper, get someone to hold it while you do the rubbing or tie the paper to the tree with a piece of string. Take a crayon with the paper removed and rub it sideways on the paper until a pattern appears. Try different colored crayons and different trees to obtain unique pictures. Collect the rubbings and make a book of several trees. What kind of tree gives the best result? Bigger trees will work the best and



remember, do not remove the bark from the trees.

--Jim Fregonara

Plant Lore of the Mountains

Remembrance of Things Past In Herbal Medicine Chest

At this time of year one can walk into any retail drug store or grocery store and see shelves lined with cold and flu remedies. But these days, along with the sniffing, sneezing, get-a-good-night's-sleep medicine, are herbal healing products reminiscent of colonial days.

This vast knowledge fell into the genre of quaint folklore early in this century with the advent of antibiotics and quick-acting synthetic drugs. Only a handful of herbalists coveted the old herbals and kept the "faith alive" throughout the 20th century.

However, all has very much changed. America has embraced the "kinder and gentler" ways of their grandmother's homemade folk remedies.

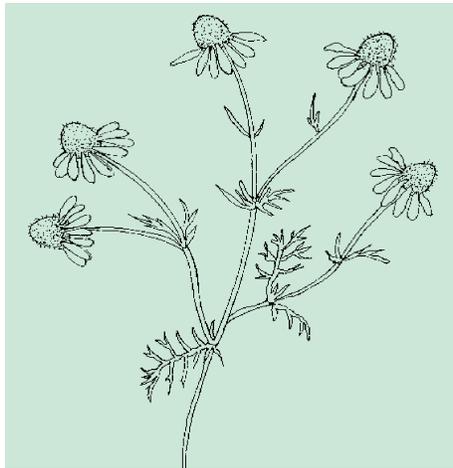
Numerous plants have been used for centuries to treat the symptoms of colds and flu. For example, eating whole blackberries may help ease a sore throat. Blackberry plants are high in tannins which act as an astringent. Thawed, frozen blackberries work as well as fresh. Or drinking a cup or two of blackberry or raspberry tea is believed to also help treat diarrhea.

Meadowsweet (*Spiraea alba*), grows in wetland areas and along streams throughout West Virginia. This plant contains salicin, the building block of acetylsalicylic acid, or aspirin. For thousands of years, people have made teas and tinctures of the herb to treat headaches, arthritis and to help reduce fevers and other causes of inflammation. In 1839, a German scientist isolated salicin from the flower buds of meadowsweet.

During the same period, salicin was also isolated from white willow bark, used as a treatment for the above ailments for thousands of years. Over the next thirty years, German scientists continued to tinker with the chemical until they synthesized acetylsalicylic acid. However, the information remained hidden in a chemical journal until the late 1890's when a German chemist named Felix Hoffman went looking for a treatment for his father's rheumatoid arthritis.

No known medication at the time was

helping him. He discovered the obscure chemical formula and generated a medicine that helped improve his father's condition dramatically. Mr. Hoffman worked for the Bayer Pharmaceutical Company. After a few years of badgering company officials he convinced them to market the product. They figured no one would buy a product with such a long name so they took the "a" from acetyl and "spirin" from *Spiraea* to come up with aspirin.



Echinacea (*Echinacea purpurea*) or purple coneflower is another very common herbal product that people are taking to ward off colds. This species is native to the mid-west prairies and was used by Native American tribes living on the plains to treat colds and other viral diseases.

Modern scientific studies indicate that this plant may help boost immune systems. It does not actually kill viruses or bacteria directly, but increases the generation of white blood cells. Those who take it and swear by its effectiveness say that it is best taken at the first sign of a cold or flu, until the symptoms go away.

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) is a plant that has been naturalized on this continent from Europe. It appears to have similar actions to Echinacea. Some studies have shown that yarrow may live up to its age-old reputation as a wound healer. According to legend, Achilles used the plant to stop the bleeding of his soldiers during the Trojan War.

For thousands of years, it was also used to treat inflammations, infections and as a digestive aid. Modern studies and testimonies of people who take this drug seem to confirm these uses.

Yarrow contains the same chemical found in chamomile, another naturalized plant long used to treat upset stomachs and as a mild sedative. The active chemical, chamazulene, is a volatile oil. So, when steeping a tea of the dried flowers and leaves of these plants, it is important to literally keep a "tight lid" on the pot so that as much of the oil as possible will remain in the tea.

Goldenseal (*Hydrastis canadensis*), a lovely wildflower of the deep-rich woods of the Appalachian Mountains, was used by Native Americans to treat eye infections, sore throats and digestive complaints. They even pounded the yellow roots into a beautiful dye. This plant became so popular as a healing plant that it was collected nearly to extinction in some places.

Today, most of the goldenseal sold in the market is from cultivated sources. It has become a popular remedy as an antibacterial aid. It may also rev-up the immune system by stimulating the production of white blood cells in the body. This species has many advocates in the field of herbal medicine.

However, there are some that would urge more caution with its use. One chemical found in the plant, berberine, may lower blood pressure, while another chemical, hydrastine, can raise blood pressure.

While there are hundreds of native plants that scientists have studied and proven to have active medicinal properties, one has to remember natural remedies are not always safe. But some do recall those gentler times.

--Emily Grafton

Editor's Note: We are not advocating the use of any product, natural or otherwise. Talk with a physician before taking any substance to treat an illness. There is much to learn about what constitutes a safe and effective dose, what part of a plant to use and what possible drug interactions may occur.

One Flew Over the Pigeon Coop

Occasionally we are contacted regarding a peculiar bird sighting. The unknown bird may come out of nowhere and can stay around your property for some time. This mystery bird is similar in looks to a mourning dove but larger, looking like a city pigeon, has a few colored bands attached to its legs and acts very tame. Usually this bird appears to be healthy with no obvious signs of injury. This bird is a racing pigeon or otherwise known as a homing pigeon.

Racing pigeons have been used for thousands of years. Noah, during the great flood, supposedly released a pigeon three times to search for dry land. A message declaring the defeat of Napoleon's army at Waterloo was sent by a pigeon. Pigeons were used during WWI, and during WWII more than 50,000 pigeons were used by the US Army. Pigeons were so important in warfare that a memorial was erected in Brussels to honor these fearless flyers.

A downed bird may have been in a race and could be either lost, blown off course or forced down by severe weather or a predator. They are usually tired, hungry and thirsty. To care for the bird, provide it with water, food and shelter. Fresh water should be given in a small bowl at least one inch deep.

Since pigeons are grain eaters, grains such as popcorn, rice, canary seed or commercial bird food should be offered. Racing pigeons do not eat bread like their cousins in the park and will probably ignore it. Any cage that can hold a cat or



dog or a cardboard box will suffice. Keep the bird dry and warm while it refuels. Once the bird has rested and has eaten, it may simply fly away and continue the race.

These birds usually have leg bands with numbers signifying the racing club and owner. Fortunately, there is a racing pigeon hotline to call to reunite the owner and bird: 1-800-882-1586. If the band has the letters "IF" the owner

belongs to the International Federation of American Homing Pigeons Fanciers, Inc., www.americanhoming.org or (516) 794-3612 which can help reunite the bird and owner. If the band has the letters "AU" it is a member of the American Racing Pigeon Union, Inc., www.pigeon.org or (405) 828-5801. Other letters signify other racing clubs.

Once the owner is contacted, arrangements can be made for the bird's return or release to continue its journey. So the next time you find a tired or confused looking pigeon simply give it food, water and rest and call one of the listed phone numbers. Enjoy your feathered transient friend since it may have a long way yet to go.

--Jim Fregonara

Spiders, Continued From Page 1

"fiddleback." Other spiders also have a similar mark which can make a positive identification difficult.

The brown spider (*L. rufescens*) is in the same genus as the recluse and looks so similar to the recluse that only a trained expert can differentiate between the two. This brown spider is found throughout the world and is not known to bite people. According to Arnold, only a few specimens have been taken in Huntington.

Both the black widow and brown recluse live in dark, cool undisturbed areas and with the advent of window screens and indoor plumbing, bites from these spiders are extremely rare. As much as these spiders are feared, less

than 1% of black widow bites result in deaths and, according to WV Department of Health, Epidemiology Section, there have been no known deaths due to spiders in the last few years.

People desiring more information or who would like to have spiders identified, should contact Dr. Arnold, Marshall University, 304-529-0130, email warnold@marshall.edu. Just remember, spiders are very important to our ecosystem and shouldn't frighten you off your tuffet. They are simply misunderstood.

--Jim Fregonara

Editor's Note: Although the brown recluse spiders are not endemic to WV, they can enter the state through shipments of wood, especially from the South.

Congratulations to our first contest winner, **Daniel Walters of Elkins!** Daniel proved that he is a biologist by correctly answering last issue's question: ***Of all the bat species found in West Virginia, how many species are listed as Federally endangered and what are they?***

The answer is three: the gray bat; Indiana bat and the Virginia big-eared bat.

Daniel will be sent a 2001 WV DNR calendar!

Here's this issue's question:



What is the fastest flying bird that nests in West Virginia?

Hint: (This bird is the fastest flying bird in the world and has been known to reach speeds up to 200 mph in a dive!)

Official Rules:

Clearly print your answer on a postcard along with your name, address and phone number and send it to: WV DNR, Nongame Wildlife & Natural Heritage

Newsletter, P.O. Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241, Attention: trivia contest.

Only one postcard will be accepted per household, per question.

Postcards for this issue's contest question must be postmarked by **Feb 15, 2001** and this issue's winners will be sent the **2001 Wildlife Calendar**.

Please do not call our office and ask for the answers. That would be too easy, but you can visit our website:

www.dnr.state.wv.us and search for clues.

Employees of the WV DNR and the Nongame Wildlife & Natural Heritage Program and their families are ineligible. Only one winner will be chosen for each question. Each winner will be chosen at random from all correct entries received by the postmarked deadline.

Children's Book Reviews

Crickwing By Janell Cannon
Harcourt Brace Publishers

Ages 4-8

Leave it up to Janell Cannon (author of *Stellaluna*) to create an appealing character who just happens to be a cockroach. Crickwing, a roach with a twisted wing, simply wants to be left alone to create his artistic food sculptures. However, larger creatures, such as lizards and ocelots, find him a perfect target and bully him. Crickwing takes his revenge by bullying smaller ants.

As the story progresses, Crickwing and the ants have a crisis of conscience and learn a valuable lesson in compassion. This is great story about the effects of bullying, but it goes even further to illustrate how valuable a small kindness can be in the long run. Cannon's vibrant illustrations and engaging characters compliment this cheeky fable.

The fascinating facts found in "Cockroach Notes" and "Ant Notes" add credence to the cute tale about a lovable creepy critter.

We Are Bears, By Molly Grooms,
Illustrated by Lucia Guarnotta
Crowes Creative Press

Ages 4-8

A mother bear teaches her adorable cubs to be climbers, swimmers, diggers and more. The bears' adventure is one to

be shared with all pre-schoolers as the story offers a kid-friendly approach to a favorite, yet terrifying topic- BEARS!



This excellent bedtime story comes alive through beautifully detailed art. It is an age-appropriate look at natural history and conservation, too.

--Sue Talbott, *Vandalia Educational Services, 1-800-637-0566 or email: vandalia@msys.net.*

CARA, Continued From Page 1

Although disappointed that CARA was not enacted in its entirety, it is phenomenal is that the legislation was actually introduced, passed committees, passed the House by a huge margin, and more than 65 Senators are on record supporting the concept. Finally, the President publicly supported CARA.

The TWWNSC will continue to work for increased funding in the next Congress. In fact they are currently arranging meetings with their Congressional champions and other leaders on the Hill over how best to proceed to meet long-term wildlife funding goals. We wish to thank all of you who spent many hours

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contacting your Congressmen and working on behalf of the state's wildlife and botanical resources.

--Kathy Leo

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