



## At night, birds flock together

**I**N WINTER, all the birds found in southeastern Michigan are active during the day — except most of the owls. Woodpeckers, nuthatches, juncos, sparrows — all search for food during the day. At night they group together in dense shrubbery.

Pine, spruce, and hemlock trees provide dense foliage that protects birds from predators and harsh weather. Smaller birds — such as sparrows, chickadees and doves — can find suitable perches among the branches.

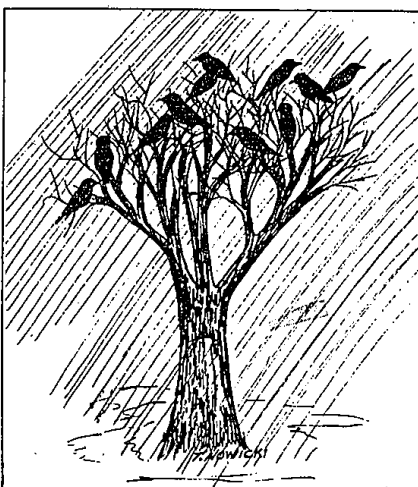
Even birds that have solitary habits during the day group together at night. Chickadees, titmice and brown creepers huddle together in tree cavities to conserve heat. Studies have shown that even birds that roost close together on branches of a pine tree conserve heat on cold winter nights.

FROM A DISTANCE, birds are completely hidden while roosting in a dense spruce. But if you should approach too close to a roosting flock, do not be surprised how many birds will flush upon your approach.

Last winter I walked too close to a roost, and doves flew out in all directions. Even when I thought they were all gone, the timid ones began to flush one by one.

Driving down Eight Mile Road one day at dusk, I saw two groups of starlings circling above the road. Each group had about 250-300 birds. Circling behavior like this is a prelude to roosting for the night. It may serve to alert birds in the neighborhood that it is time to gather and retire for the night.

Large birds, like crows, that are



A group of about 30 crows roosts in a leafless tree in front of Beaumont Hospital. Though less protected as in a spruce tree, their numbers will still help detect a predator more readily.

winter residents in southeast Michigan, may find it difficult to roost in a pine or spruce tree.

LAST WINTER and this winter, I have seen a group of about 30 crows roosting in the leafless trees in front of Beaumont Hospital near 13 Mile Road.

Lights from the parking lot illuminated them so I could identify them. Large black objects, in an otherwise naked tree, stood out in stark contrast. Though they may not be as protected from the weather as in a spruce tree, their numbers will still help detect a predator more readily.

Timothy Nowicki will be teaching two evening classes on nature study at Schoolcraft College starting March 18. For information on registration, for either Nature Afield or A Day Afield, call 591-6400, Ext. 410.

## Business index up

In January, the Detroit Area Business Activity Index rose two points to a level of 145, compared with 143 in December, according to Manufacturers Bank economist David Littmann.

It was the third consecutive monthly gain for the local economic index. "It suggests that the regional economy may be the beneficiary of more carry-over strength from 1986 than previously supposed," Littmann said.

"During January, there was reduced motor vehicle output, but it appears that auto sales locally continued at a healthy clip."

# Misusing household cleaners poses risks

**Q.** Are household cleaners as hazardous as my son claims? He attended one of your school programs and says most cleaning products are hazardous. Is that true?

Detroit

**A.** Because of your questions and a recent incident where a woman nearly died when she accidentally mixed two household cleaners, some information about household products would be helpful.

Many products we commonly use in our homes contain chemicals that fit the description of a hazardous and/or toxic substance. These products include: pesticides, adhesives, paint products, cleaners, auto products. Some of their chemicals are known or suspected human carcinogens.

In most cases, the amount of chemical contained in the product is low enough to be "safe." However, the potential for accidents does exist as in the case above.

FOUR MAIN causes of exposure



Terry Alb

to hazardous chemicals found in household products.

1. The most common reason for exposure is "misuse" of the product. Not reading the label and/or following the directions causes much of the misuse.

2. Home energy conservation measures while reducing energy use also reduce air exchange between indoors and out. Chemicals used in an air-tight home have no way to escape or be diffused into new air.

3. Inadequate labeling of these products can cause misuse or accidents. Two areas of inadequate labeling are:

• Inert ingredients are not re-

quired to be listed by name.

• Vague or confusing terms may be used on labels.

4. The chemical components of these products has increased. There are more chemicals in the average home today than there were in most laboratories 100 years ago. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish between these vast numbers of chemicals.

**CHEMICAL EXPOSURE** exists, so we must practice ways to reduce exposure to these common household chemicals.

1. Read and follow directions exactly. Use only the amount you need.
2. Keep the product in the original container.
3. Do not over-use the product.
4. Do not leave the containers open or unattended.
5. Never mix chemicals.
6. Clean up immediately when you're finished using these chemicals.

## Tape Grandma's tales

Dear Jo:

To V.M., who wrote to you about finding his grandmother's stories so exciting and wanted to keep them for years to come, I have a few suggestions.

He should take a tape recorder with him when he visits, so that when she speaks of her fascinating times, he can record them "live."

Later, and with his grandmother's permission, he can write down her accounts and perhaps obtain pictures and letters from her) and make a book of his own on her life.

I know many people who have used this method when their relatives were hesitant about recording their memories. I agree with you when you said that these memories should not go unrecorded.

Edith R. Victoria,

Dear Jo:

Every winter I take extra vitamin



A. Jolayne Farrell

C as I feel it helps me ward off the common cold. For some reason, I find that it upsets my stomach this year.

Could you list some common foods that are high in vitamin C so I can take it the natural way.

Mrs. T.T., Detroit,

Dear Mrs. T.:

The recommended dietary allowance for vitamin C is 60 milligrams daily. It is easily obtained from foods you eat every day. Examples of some of their vitamin C content are:

- Green pepper, 1 large (95 mg)
- Strawberries, 1 cup raw (88 mg)
- Brussels sprouts, 5 cooked (85 mg)
- Grapefruit, 1 cup sections (78 mg)
- Broccoli, 1/2 cup (75 mg)
- Cauliflower, 1 cup (69 mg)
- Cantaloupe, (69 mg)
- Oranges, 1 medium (66 mg)
- Potatoes, 2 medium, baked (62 mg)
- Orange juice, 4 ounces (60 mg)
- Tomatoes, 2 whole (60 mg)
- Tomato juice, 13 ounces (60 mg)

You are wise to increase the vitamin C in your diet during the winter months as a preventative measure for the common cold. Taking it the natural way is more pleasant, and it won't upset your stomach.

Others who should increase their daily dietary intake of vitamin C are persons who smoke a pack of cigarettes a day, those who take large doses of aspirin daily and anyone recovering from surgery or an injury.

## WINTER Specials

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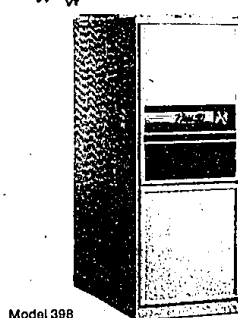
\*Individual results may vary.

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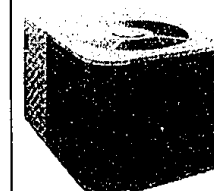
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