

CURRENT LITERATURE

ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE PHEASANT ON THE CULTIVATED LANDS OF THE OKANOGAN VALLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA. By Ian McTaggart Cowan. *Prov. B.C. Rept. Prov. Game Commission for 1942, Victoria, pp. M49-M60.*

An investigation, including stomach analysis and field work, into the complex rela-

tionships between the good points of the pheasant, its value as sport, food, in providing the basis for shooting rights to be leased, and as a controller of insect and weed pests; and its bad points in destroying crops. The conclusion is that damage to crops by pheasants is seldom sufficient to merit control, and such instances are local and sporadic.

— A. L. RAND.

POLYPODIUM VIRGINIANUM IN AN
EPIPHYTIC HABITAT^{1, 2}

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IN COMPANY with Mr. E. Chesley Allen, of Halifax, the writer visited the region between Scots Bay and Cape Split (Nova Scotia) on July 9, 1943. Several colonies of a fern, assumed to be *Polypodium virginianum* L., were observed, established in the crotches of old dead snags of *Betula lutea*, at heights varying (by estimate) from 20 to 50 feet above ground level. No collections were made of these aerial ferns at that time.

Some months later, the writer's attention was drawn to Fernald's comments (1) on *Polypodium* in Yarmouth County, "climbing the tree-trunks, the creeping rootstocks ascending in the crevices of the bark to a height of 2 or 3 meters."

It is clear that "climbing" habits may differ in character from the relatively stationary existence of a plant established in an elevated tree-crotch. Nevertheless, Fernald stated (2) that "*P. virginianum*, though very rarely epiphytic, is ordinarily a plant of rock-habitats." It seemed desirable to re-visit the Cape Split area for the purpose of verifying the assumption that the plant observed was *P. virginianum*, to make further observations on the elevation of the epiphytic colonies, and to make some note of the frequency with which the phenomenon occurred.

Accordingly, on June 29, 1944, in company with two agile assistants, the writer went again to Cape Split. The region consists of a narrow peninsula, lying approximately east and west, extending into the Bay of Fundy, four miles long and one mile across, with Cape Split proper at the western extremity. Along the north side, a 300-foot cliff faces Minas Channel. A ridge of some 400 feet elevation runs parallel to the cliff-edge, and only a short distance inland from it. Toward the south, the land slopes gradually to the shore of Scots Bay, dropping at last in a cliff of some twenty to fifty feet. The long southerly slope is covered chiefly with coniferous second-growth forest. Along the ridge, and on the narrow slope between the ridge and the Minas Channel cliff-edge, are the remains of an old hardwood forest, and among these old, mostly dead, trees is an abundant cover of young hardwoods, chiefly birch and maple. The old birch snags provide the habitat for the epiphytic *Polypodium*.

Collections were made at two sites, one elevated 25 feet, the other 40 feet, above ground level. Part of each collection was preserved by drying, and part of each has been potted and grown in the greenhouse. Comparison of Cape Split collections with Fernald's Key to *Polypodium* Species in North America (3) is shown in the accompanying table.

1. —Contribution No. 794 from Division of Botany and Plant Pathology, Science Service, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, Canada.

2. —Received for publication August 25, 1944.



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