

Running errands around the region, I sometimes pass a particularly well-groomed expanse of low-lying lawn.

This narrow, but long, piece of property on which every blade of grass is neatly trimmed for long, swooping stretches runs through a small valley. Through the center of it, a small, natural-flowing stream meanders. Every foot of stream side bank, right down to the water's edge, is as flawlessly groomed as the lawn. Not a weed in sight. No invading cattails or hint of thistles or random rootings of multiflora rose.

Representing a lot of sweat and manhours for some dedicated lawn guardian. Still, each time I go by, something puzzles me. Where do the frogs live?

The meadow below our house, with several small ponds and its tiny brook running through, looks incredibly scruffy by comparison. Paths we use get an occasional drive-by mowing, so we can wander through without wondering what we might step in — or on. Heifers in the adjoining pasture keep everything up to, and slightly beyond, the fence, neatly nibbled down. Otherwise, it somewhat resembles a weed patch run amuck. But an amazing amount of interesting and pretty plant growth thrives, some purposefully planted, others put there by Mother Nature. Mowing would mess up the effect.

Most beautiful are the water lilies, now at peak bloom with wide, waxy flowers in pinks and white. Iris opened earlier, large clumps of a powder-blue-flow-

ered Siberian type, a few whites, and one yellow which aggravatingly refuses to reproduce itself beyond the single cluster.

A wildflower mix tossed on a bank a couple of years ago has left some annual red and orange poppies which re-seed themselves. Clumps of cattails squat in the shallow edges of the ponds and the inevitable multiflora roses hang their briary stems over the surface, providing shade and impenetrable cover for both fish and fowl. Assorted grasses, spear-mint tea, miscellaneous damp-loving wildflowers all happily bloom, unattended, in the meadow.

Intended specifically for attracting and providing for wildlife, the meadow abounds with critters we love to watch. Canada geese are the most noticeable at the moment, nearly two dozen of the big birds, including this year's hatch of seven, now grown, goslings.

Keeping company with them are four wild mallard ducks, a mother and three youngsters, all feathered in the subtle, somber brown shadings of the female of the species. A more colorfully-feathered male occasionally drops by, but none keeps regular company with this little family. While geese parents are both dedicated to "childcare," duckling raising appears to be solely a mom's responsibility in the mallard world.

A family of red-winged blackbirds lives nearby, the fledglings now perfecting their takeoff and landing techniques among the

Turkey Lovers' Month Joins Line-Up Of June Celebrations

June is traditionally the month of brides, grads and dads, but turkey lovers across the country have gobbled up the entire month

for a celebration of their own. November, when turkey is the star attraction at the Thanksgiving dinner table, may seem a more appropriate choice for National Turkey Lovers' Month, but the June celebration emphasizes the year-round popularity of this versatile, healthful and delicious meat.

less turkey breast contains 26 grams of protein, 45 milligrams of sodium, 1 gram of fat and only 120 calories.

People have discovered that turkey fits easily into their busy lifestyles and they are eating more of it every year. Over the past 25 years, the amount eaten has more than doubled. In 1970, per capita consumption was 8.1 pounds; it has risen to nearly 18 pounds. People no longer save this savory bird especially for holiday fare. In 1970, 50 percent of all turkey consumed was eaten during the holidays; today only 32 percent of the total is eaten during the holiday season.

Turkey offers much to celebrate every day of the year. Foremost is outstanding taste. The distinctive flavor of turkey can stand alone or duet beautifully with herbs, spicgs, sauces, rubs or marinades. It comes in a wide variety of cuts and products including whole birds, quick-cooking cutlets, ground turkey, sausage, tenderloins and deli meats. It is adaptable to cooking methods from stovetop and microwave to oven and grill and can substitute for higher-fat meats in spaghetti sauce, pizza, quiche, meatballs or burgers.

On the health front, turkey is a nutrient-dense, low-fat, high-protein food that has less than one-fourth of the maximum daily recommended intake of cholesterol and is naturally low in sodium. A 3-ounce serving of roasted, skin-

Since 1975, turkey production in the U.S. has increased from approximately 124 million birds to an estimated 276 million in 2000. Virginia accounts for about seven percent of the 2000 total and ranks fourth in the nation for the number of turkeys raised. Rockingham is the top turkey producing county in the nation.



thick growth of plants on the stream banks. With unending maternal devotion, the mother bird keeps vigil from the top of the first tall tree in the fence row near the stream. When the cats follow us on a walk through the area, she flutters about the tree and shrieks nasty, anti-cat sentiments.

Hérons are regular visitors, including the resident great blue heron, which is growing old gorging on our fish. A silent, solitary giant, the great blue heron can often be seen gliding in from farther away in the meadow. Unless you see it land and know exactly where to look, Big Blue is near impossible to spot as it waits, motionless for long minutes, blending in with the weeds and grasses water side. Sometimes, its reflection in the water is actually more noticeable than the bird itself.

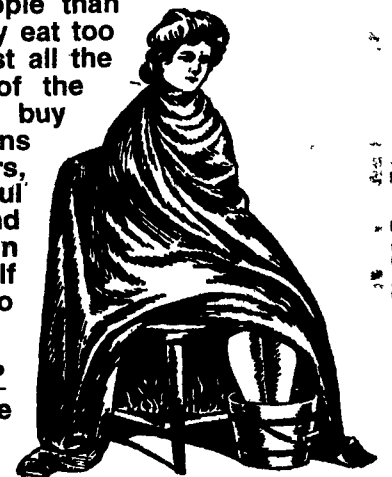
Two night herons — perhaps a pair — have also returned to the pond, to hang out in the willows and elbow the space of the kingfisher for squatters' rights to the best fishing branch bending down out over the water.

Occasionally, a fox is spotted poking around the meadow and the muskrats continue to thrive among the grassy banks and plentiful food supply. And, walks around the ponds on a summer evening are punctuated with distinct splashy "plops," as the frogs leap from hiding in the grassy edges to watery safety.

We don't have to wonder where the frogs live here. All over the place.

Why Be Sick And Tired?

America has more sick people than most countries, because they eat too much cooked food which lost all the enzymes and up to 80% of the nutrition. Most food you buy contains harmful toxins because they use weed killers, insecticides and many harmful chemicals in growing it, and then more chemicals in processing to increase shelf life. But there is a solution to the problem.



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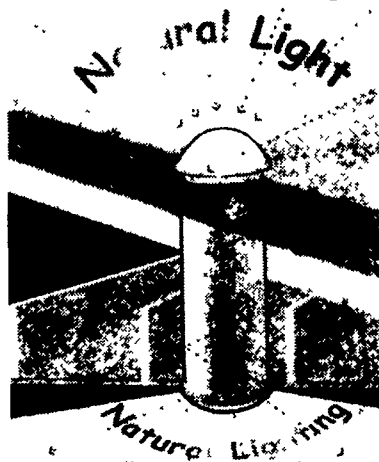
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