

President's Message continued

- 8) Bruce is also managing the Memberships and Email blasts well. May I remind everyone, myself included, that Memberships are now overdue so please renew at the next meeting or download the membership form and mail it in.
- 9) Lynne Gibbon is successfully balancing being an active grandparent with promoting our club in the media and is now posting events on our Facebook page in addition to all of the traditional media.
- 10) Ruth Noland-Flores has lined up an excellent program of speakers for our meetings and is managing this program very well.
- 11) Brian Gibbon continues to serve the club by contributing in many key areas, in addition to his experienced and diligent management of the Field Trips we and the public so enjoy.
- 12) Al McNair is actively engaged with the City of Barrie on conservation issues and has recruited myself, Rob Cook, Dave Lord, Bruce Wilson and Dorothy MacKeown to the Conservation Committee.
- 13) Christine Beggs has made a very smooth transition from Linda Crome and is carrying on the fine traditions of BFNC hospitality. Linda and John are still able to participate occasionally despite John's illness and we enjoyed their company as recently as the CBC potluck.



Christine Beggs



Elaine Forrest

14) Joyce Thompson is enjoying her welcoming duties, enhanced by Bruce's Membership and Dorothy's 50/50 draw and other fundraising efforts at the door.

15) Best for last! Lyn Pope is valiantly fulfilling our Education and Displays program against all odds. While this role garners support and enhancement from virtually all other programs, it, more than any other, needs Member support to flourish and fulfill our mission to "share knowledge ... and to stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation".

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President's Message continued

Unfortunately, our participation at some important events has had to be cancelled due to a lack of volunteers to attend our booth. Please consider rising to the challenge of sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm by volunteering to assist on this committee. You all have the skills required. Many hands make light work. There are 3 ways you can help Lyn fulfill this mission.

- a) Volunteer to serve on the committee to assist Lyn with this job and take over at events when she is not available.
- b) Volunteer to be called upon to set up and take down the booth depending upon your abilities and availability.
- c) Volunteer to be called upon to attend the booth depending upon your availability.
- d) Volunteer when the call goes out and we are in need. It takes effort, but the rewards are more than worth it when you engage and assist others who are interested in nature. You can make a positive difference.

While I admit I am finding the Presidency challenging, working with the support of so many giving, caring people make the challenges a joy to address. I love this club and each of you and give you all my best. Let's enjoy another perfect year in 2015!

Chris Evans
President - Brereton Field Naturalists' Club

Reporting Species

Kathy Jones
Ontario Programs Volunteer Coordinator
(Canadian Lakes Loon Survey)
Bird Studies Canada

What should you do with all those wonderful observations that you are unable to add to our forms?

We recommend the following reporting options:

- Chorus Frogs, Rails, and Bitterns: www.surveymonkey.com/s/OntChorusFrogMarshBirdLctns
- Other bird observations: www.ebird.ca
- Other frog observations www.frogwatch.ca, or look up Provincial Reptile and Amphibians Atlas.
- Other species at risk: in Ontario, ...

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/NHIC/2ColumnSubPage/STDU_138228.html or contact your local natural resources office.

There is also a youtube webinar on eBird at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDKIKzje9bY>



*Ringbill Gull with food off of Wilkins Beach
Photo by Janet Sutton-Brown Sauve*

Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Community Action & Vivian Bell Fund for Youth in Nature

ON nature 

Ontario Nature's fifth annual Youth Summit brought together 91 youth from 45 communities across the province for an inspiring, action-packed weekend. Held September 19-21, 2014 at YMCA Geneva Park, teens had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of outdoor activities and workshops including: • Bee box building, • Nature discovery hike, • Reptile and amphibian ramble, • Creating a pollinator pledge, • How to 'be the change', • Natural body care products, • Pollinator and pesticide debate, • Foraging foods from forests, • Ontario's birds of prey, • DIY terrariums, • Medicinal plants of Ontario, • Wildflower gardening, • Becoming a hero for sustainability.

Other memorable moments included morning activities like canoeing, yoga, bird watching, a swim in Lake Couchiching (for the brave few) and an evening campfire with stories and songs to bring everyone together. The Great Group Challenge had teams facing off in fun challenges and participants learned about how they can take local action at the Community Action Fair.



This year we had the good fortune to send two youths to the summit. Here is Peter Simons' account ...

Dear Chris and other BFNC Board Members,

The experience I had last weekend was one to be remembered for the rest of my life. The eye opening summit can not be put into words. The 91 enthusiastic youth who came to the summit would all say the same thing, "I want to go out there and make a difference!". It was just so cool and refreshing to meet other people my age who were fascinated about nature. There was never a conversation that was awkward and quiet. We were all there for the same thing.

continued...

Youth Summit continued...

One of my really cool experiences was when we were playing icebreaker games (getting to know one another) when you had to say a fact about yourself. When it came to me and I said that "I am a birder.", 3 other people instantly got up and yelled "Me Too!" at that moment I was thinking "Wait I'm not alone?" (at my age, at least). Another amazing moment was when everyone was in an auditorium during a reptile and amphibians show. Everyone was so interested and focused that when the director said there were snacks and beverages, no one moved. Everyone was too enthralled in looking at the Wood Turtles and Fox Snakes.

Wood Turtle

The general experience of being with people who wanted to be the change and to go out there and make a difference in their corner of the world and beyond, was a truly magnificent experience. The workshops and other events were so informative and helpful. I sure did learn a lot. Whether it was from the raptors of Ontario, to medicinal plants, every single one was so cool and they were so hands on and really quite the experience to be so close up to some of the organisms brought in.

By the end we were all recharged and excited about biodiversity and sustainability. Ontario nature really gave us quite the experience and I am sure Vivian would be glad to hear that she provided me with a chance to be part of it. I can not thank you enough also, as it was really all initiated by you.

Thank you. - *Peter Simons*

The following was Chris Evan, BFNC President's response to Peter's email...



Dear Peter,

Your account of your experience at the Ontario Nature Youth Summit, Peter, has brought tears to my eyes.

It is indescribably rewarding to read these words from you and understand the roles we at the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club have each played in facilitating your experience organized by Ontario Nature. I direct special attention and gratitude to the roles of BFNC Members;

1. Alex Mills, who nominated you as an excellent candidate for sponsorship by BFNC to attend the Summit
2. Dorothy McKeown, our Ontario Nature Representative (and one of our newest Board Members), made last minute arrangements to register you and arrange transportation for you through Ontario Nature
3. Gary Bell's timely presentation of his mother's, Vivian Bell, \$500 bequest at the Joint meeting in Carden on September 10th "to support Youth in pursuit of Nature and Conservation" which made funding your \$150 registration fee possible.

continued....

Youth Summit continued ...

I have a feeling that Vivian's consciousness is aware and well pleased that she is still helping youth even after she has passed on. Thank you for this uplifting account and showing us what a wonderful ambassador and advocate you are for our club and for the natural world around us.

You will notice that rather than simply replying to you, I have forwarded this message back to you and on to Gary Bell, Vivian's son, so that he may enjoy it and share it with the rest of Vivian's family, and I cc'ed the BFNC Board so they can appreciate it as well.

With Kindest Regards,

Chris Evans

President BFNC

An Agenda item was added to our subsequent Board meeting and a motion passed creating the "Vivian Bell Fund for Youth in Nature" to be used to assist and promote Youth in their pursuits of Nature. The Fund was seeded with the \$350 remaining from Vivian's \$500 bequest after sponsoring Peter Simons' \$150 registration, plus the \$155 in donations received in memory of Vivian for a total of \$505. The fund may be augmented by further donations if and when they are received. Dorothy McKeown is regularly conducting a 50/50 Draw at our General Meetings to augment this fund. We invite Members to donate to the Fund. Tax receipts may be issued for donations of \$20 or more.

Warblers Warnings



They may be tiny little songbirds, but U.S. researchers have discovered that Golden-winged warblers are also keen weather predictors that know when to fly the coop when a dangerous storm is about to descend. Writing in the journal *Current Biology*, the scientists say they made their finding by accident last April, as they were testing a new way to track the songbirds. Warblers weigh slightly more than a loonie and the researchers were trying out a new lightweight geolocator placed on the backs of 20 of the birds. Nine of the birds kept the geolocators on as they

migrated thousands of kilometres from South America to their breeding grounds in eastern Tennessee. But the researchers were puzzled when the geolocators revealed that the birds had suddenly taken a detour and headed back south.

About a day later, a huge supercell storm system moved in, spawning 84 tornadoes. In all, 35 people were killed in the devastating storms. The evacuation saved the warblers, which were able to return to the breeding ground after the storm passed.

While each bird flew on its own path away from the storm, the most curious thing the researchers noticed is that the birds fled more than 24 hours before the storm arrived. "At the same time that meteorologists on The Weather Channel were telling us this storm was headed in our direction, the birds were apparently already packing their bags and evacuating the area," researcher Henry Streby, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of California, Berkeley, said in a statement.

Warblers Warnings continued ... 

The research team suspects the birds knew the storm was coming because of their keen hearing. They says it's likely the birds could pick up low frequency "infrasounds" coming from the storm that are below the range of human hearing. While it's possible the birds picked up on some other cue, Streby said it's known that tornado storms produce strong infrasound that can travel thousands of kilometres and at exactly the same frequency the birds are most sensitive to hearing.



The researchers say their discovery is evidence that even birds that are programmed by instinct to follow annual migratory routes are capable of making unplanned detours to protect themselves. But the researchers also note that the journey forced the birds to travel a total of 1,500 kilometres in five days, which presumably cost them a great deal of energy that they should have been spending on reproducing.

Read more:

<http://www.ctvnews.ca/sci-tech/birds-sensed-imminent-tornadoes-and-escaped-the-day-before-study-finds-1.2155508#ixzz3MMR7slzj>

The Online C H I R P



Our club Facebook page has over 106 members now and growing! We encourage you to visit this page and check up on all the article links and photos and stories that abound on it. We also keep it up to date with notices on future trips and meetings. So it is definitely a GO-2 place on the net for local naturalists!

Owl Rescue

If anyone should come across an Owl that is orphaned, sick or injured The Owl Foundation can assist with coordinating rescue, transport, rehabilitation a release back to the wild.

Contact info: Web site: <http://www.theowlfoundation.ca/> Phone: (905) 562-5986

Email: owlmail@sympatico.ca

In September 2013, Wildlands League and Ontario Nature sued the Ontario government over its decision to exempt major threats to species at risk from the province's Endangered Species Act (ESA). Ecojustice is providing the two groups with legal counsel. The hearing is scheduled for January 14 - 15, 2015. It should be interesting to see how that goes.

See <http://www.ontarionature.org/protect/campaigns/lawsuit.php>

New Bird Found

A new species of owl has been discovered in America. The bird, which has an unusual scarlet colouration was discovered on the dock of the bay in San Francisco. The common name has yet to be decided upon, but the scientific name for this previously undiscovered species is Otus Redding. *I know most people won't get this....but ya gotta do some research on it. :)*

WADES
WORLD*The Essence of Fall*

I love the fall. In my opinion it's the best time of year. The smells and the colour can't be beat. My woods wandering's increase at this time of year. Fewer bugs and less people out and about make it much more enjoyable. I can just poke along for hours. And most certainly stop and build a fire (not using matches but using a ferro rod to light my fire) to make some tea, and have a snack. If you come to one of my courses I will show you how to do it.

This fall while I was out in my playground, I was very fortunate to find some Chaga. What is Chaga you ask? Chaga (*Inonotus Obliquus*) is a parasitic fungi found on live Birch trees and sometimes on recently dead trees. It is one of the most sought after mushrooms in the world and this is because it is very high in antioxidants.

<http://www.chagamountain.com/health-benefits.html> I am drinking a cup of Chaga tea as I write this article. <http://passthechaga.blogspot.ca/2015/01/what-is-chaga-and-how-do-we-use-it.html> If you like tea I'm very certain that you will like this tea. Wild edibles are another part of Bushcraft that I'm going to focus more on this year. There is so much to learn on this subject.



*Chaga Fungus growing on a Birch tree.
Photos by Wade Hodgson*

When I go for walk in the fall, the woods has a smell that is so refreshing. I breathe it in deeply and think to myself, am I ever lucky to experience this. Then I admire the colors and once again say a little prayer of thanks for being able to enjoy this spectacle of nature.

I'm glad that I have this moment to myself, but also wish more people would get out and enjoy what nature has to offer. And this is why I started North Runner Bushcraft. When people get out in nature and learn to have a respect for it and not be afraid of it. I believe it helps their soul. Nature is a healer because you can't go for a walk in the woods and be in a bad mood. Well I can't anyway.

Welcome to my world.

Wade Hodgson, V.P, B.F.N.C.

ONnature 

Report by Dorothy McKeown
BFNC OnNature Representative

I urge BFNC members to get individual memberships with Ontario Nature. Your fees help in the big issues our club could not afford to take on, to protect the wild species and wild spaces. For example, they provide the resources to help sue the Ont government over its decision to exempt major threats to species at risk from the province's Endangered Species Act (Jan 14-15); urge the province to ban the use of neonics; force GTA tall building managers to use films on windows and lower night light levels to help reduce bird collision fatalities; Ont Reptile and Amphibian Atlas; Edible Wild Plant E-guide for Thunder Bay area; NW Ont campaign against Energy East Pipeline; Nature Guardians (Youth) Program; building Ont Nature Reserves; review of Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, and Niagara Escarpment Plans.



The Huronia Regional spring meeting does not have a date or sponsor yet.

We have a new club in Huronia region, Friends of Nancy Island and Wasaga Beach! They "help ensure the continued success of educational and interpretive programs in the park. Included are Hog-nosed snake research and Piping plover monitoring programs, park displays and exhibits and special events".

The Ont Nature AGM is Sat May 23rd, "A Day on the Grand ", at the ECO Centre in Cambridge. They are always great - fun, speakers and food!

I will be selling 50/50 draw tickets at our meetings, to raise funds to sponsor another local high school student to attend the Ont Nature Youth Summit in the fall. It is a wonderful experience. So please help, 2 tickets for \$2, or an arm slength for \$5. If you know a high school student who may want to attend the Youth Summit, please have them contact me. My email is dorothy.mckeown@gmail.com .



Nominations deadline for Ont Nature Conservation Awards of 2014, is March 31st. There are several categories for individuals, groups, government agencies and corporations. See www.ontarionature.org/awards for forms and details.

continued...

ONnature 

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Recipients of these awards will be honoured at the AGM May 23rd in Cambridge.



Strawberry Island Petition -

Ramara Town Council and staff have received a zoning change request for a new 120 unit development on Strawberry Island in the north east of Lake Simcoe. The developer, Trans America Group from Alberta, wants to build 120 condo units, a recreation hall, a septic system to handle up to 137,282 litres per day of sewage flow and other buildings and facilities across this mere 10 hectare island.



The company has applied to change the rural zoning to a special resort/condominium zoning. With this development, it is possible that 500 people could live on the island at any one time. The land is currently zoned rural (one homestead).

This development will destroy five hectares (12 acres) of forest, half of the island's wetlands, decrease the number of wild species currently on the island, increase phosphorus loading to Lake Simcoe from current levels and does not recognize the important Lake Simcoe lake trout or lake whitefish cold water fishery, nor its requirements.

If you wish to get involved and sign a petition to support Ramara Town Council in keeping its rural designation for this island, you can sign the petition online at Change.org or contact Pam Fulford 705-426-4200.



The Parry Sound Nature Club have consented to host this spring. We will be having our meeting in Killbear Provincial Park on Saturday, April 18, 2015. We have 4 clubs/groups in the Georgian Bay region so we are looking to have all participate in the meeting.

It's a little early for looking for rattlesnakes, but if it's a warm day it's possible. At the very least the Parry Sound Nature club can show the hibernation/gestation areas of the Massasauga Rattlesnake.

Killbear has also recently conducted a study on the eco-passages that would definitely be worth talking about. Other thoughts include the START program (Saving Turtles at Risk Today), our Kids in the Biosphere Program, perhaps a presentation from the Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council....many different opportunities to explore and profile.



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BFNC in the Community

Did you know that our club's aims as stated in our mission statement are to acquire and share knowledge of natural history, to protect wildlife, and to stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation?

Do you ever ask yourself what our club is doing to accomplish our aims?

One of the ways we try to accomplish this is by setting up displays at family friendly events. Our club has participated in events such as The Barrie Farmers' Market, Celebrate Barrie, Community Clubs Event at Painswick Library, The Worm Rodeo at Chappell Farm, and The Friends of Milligan's Pond events.

And how do we make these fun outreach events happen? Volunteers, volunteers, and more volunteers!

2015 will bring lots of opportunities to participate in events like these and more. Will you answer the call and support the club's aim to stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation? No previous experience required, just a willingness to meet the public and enjoy yourself!

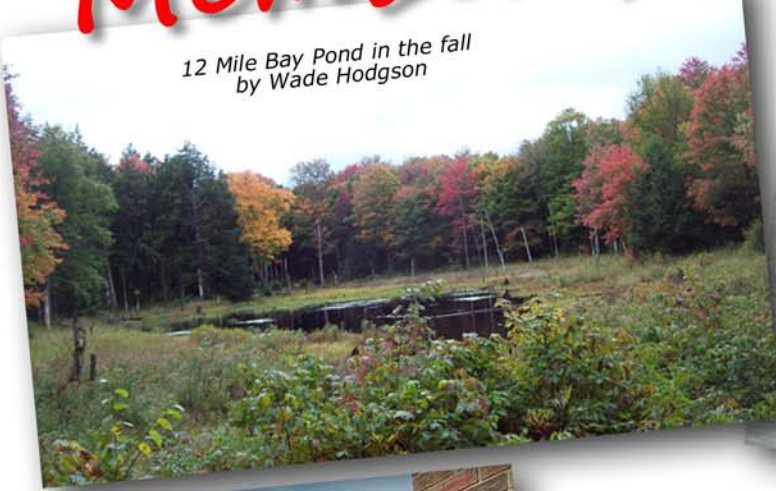
A sincere thank-you to all who have assisted me in making our participation in these fun educational events possible.

Lyn Pope
Education and Displays Director



Member Photographs

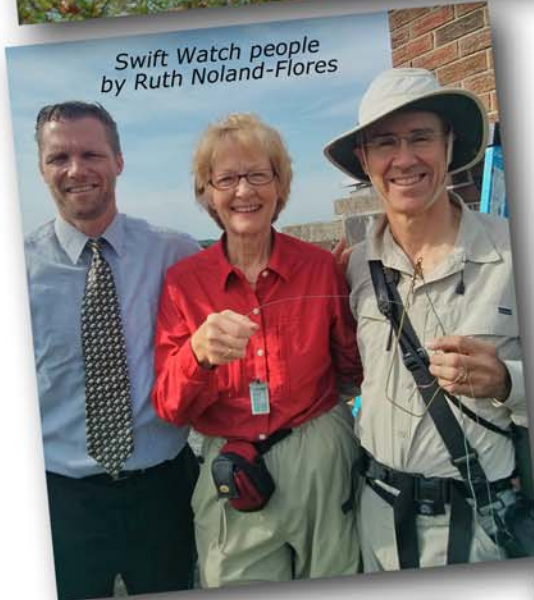
12 Mile Bay Pond in the fall
by Wade Hodgson



Buffleheads taking off on Lake Simcoe
by Paul Forde



Swift Watch people
by Ruth Noland-Flores



Bob Bowles and a very brightly attired Chris Evans at Wasaga Beach, CBC
by Ruth Noland-Flores

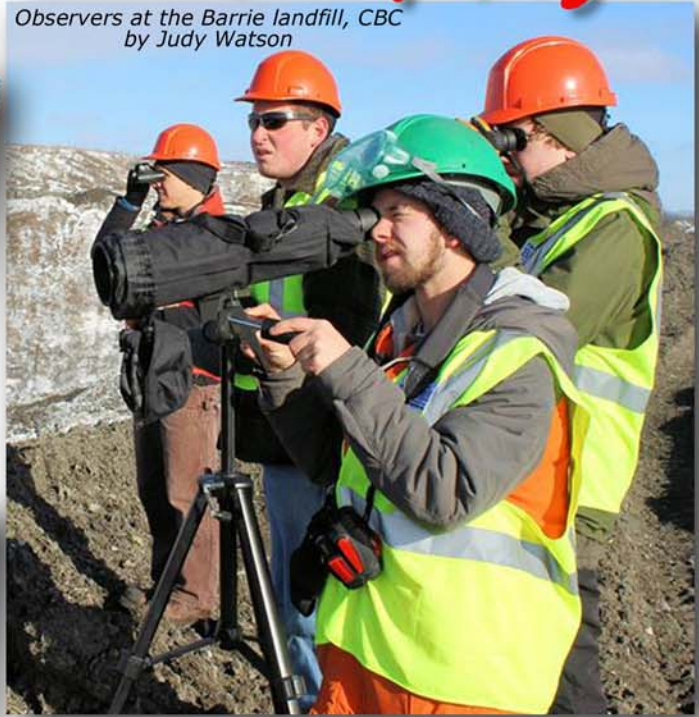


The intrepid Phyllis Tremblay and "Road Runner Legs" Evans working on the Swift Watch Project at Timothy school

Member Photographs



Female Common Merganser and Bonaparte Gull on Lake Simcoe
by Janet Sutton-Brown Sauve



Observers at the Barrie landfill, CBC
by Judy Watson



Mike Burrell, Bird Studies Canada talking on IBAs
by Paul Forde



Trumpeter Swans, Nov. Lake Simcoe
by Paul Forde



Ross's Goose by GO station, Barrie
by Janet Sutton-Brown Sauve



Brown Thrasher, CBC day.
by Chris Evans

Member Photographs



The Tiffin Centre CBC for Kids day
by Ruth Noland-Flores



The CBC crew at the
Barrie landfill
by Judy Watson



The editor observing birds
on Lake Simce
by Susan Murtha

Brereton Field Naturalists Club Membership

Annual fees:

- Family - \$30
- Individual - \$25
- Student - \$10
- Corresponding - \$15

Memberships run from January 1st to December 31st.
Members get into meetings at no charge, are eligible for discounts at local nature stores and have access to "Members Only" content of the web site.

To join the BFNC, please come to one of our meetings or complete **downloadable application form from our website and send with your payment.**

WWW. BFNCLUB.ORG

Visit us on our Facebook page !

