

THE BLUE HERON



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BRERETON FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

Fall Issue 2015

www.bfnclub.org

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American Mink

Neovison vison



A Message from your Editor

With the fall colours momentarily blazing and then falling, it brings about a time of reflection. They are like a trusted, loyal friend. Dependable. They are there for us when you need them. Deeply missed when they are gone.

Our forests are often overlooked but they are places that we are drawn to when we head outdoors.

Whether, it's a great place to mountain bike, walk the dog, cross country ski or simply to hike, they are there to welcome us, whatever the season.

The trouble is, many Canadians don't realise how valuable our forested areas are. With urban sprawl threatening from our ever increasing population and the introduction of invasive species, the number of untouched wooded tracts are dwindling. So, I'm really glad to report that one of our members, Dave Lord and a group of fellow like-minded citizens have taken on the task of forming the new "Friends of Copeland Forest". We all wish this new group well. *(Read about their inaugural meeting on p16)*



Photo credit to Judy Watson

On another note, we played host to the Ontario Nature Regional meeting this fall. Kristyn Richardson from Bird Studies Canada gave a very informative talk about the Chimney Swift population and the decline of insectivores in general. Dana Buchbinder introduced the new updates relating to the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas. And, last but not least, a special thanks to all those who took time out of their busy lives to organize the event. Especially Dorothy Mckeown & Christine Beggs who went all out to make this a fantastic success. Well, done team! *(Read about this event on p15)*



Just as our Squirrel & Chipmunk families have been scurrying around collecting up the acorns, to prepare for the winter, so too, have our fellow club members been busily promoting the club & activities at various events around the area. Be sure to read the coverage of these events in the Nature Notes section of this newsletter.

However, unlike our furred friends, our members do not intend to sleep the winter out. There are loads of activities planned & meetings to enjoy.



(Check out the schedule, under upcoming events p4)

I hope to see you all out & enjoying the winter,

Your Editor Clare Holden clareholden5@gmail.com

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Aims of the Club

To acquire and disseminate knowledge of natural history
 To protect and preserve wildlife
 To stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation
For membership details see back page

Coming Events - Meetings *Jan. 2016-May 2016*

MEETINGS Are held at the NORTH WEST BARRIE UNITED CHURCH (NWBUC) 464 Ferndale Drive North on Friday nights unless otherwise stated. **Please bring your own coffee mug to help reduce garbage.**

NON MEMBERS Are welcome to participate in our activities. However there is a nominal charge of \$5. By becoming a member you will receive The Blue Heron Newsletter and support club activities and Ontario Nature through our Federation club status.

Please note that if you have questions regarding any outing or event, check the website. www.bfnclub.org

Jan. 15 Friday 2016 The Trails of Simcoe County

Location: North West Barrie United Church (NWBUC)

464 Ferndale Drive North

Time: 7:30 pm.

Speaker: Frieda Baldwin

Frieda will give us an in-depth look at the many and varied Simcoe County Trails. The discussion will centre on how best to use and stay safe while on the trails.

Feb. 2 Tuesday 2016 Joint Meeting with Barrie's Garden Club

Location: South Shore Community Centre

205 Lakeshore Drive, Barrie.

Time: 7:00 pm.

Speaker: Andee Pelan

Meter Parking fee or Resident Parking Pass in effect

Andee Pelan, from the Lake Simcoe Regional Conservation Authority, will present "The State of the Watershed in Simcoe County: Protection and Restoration" Andee has been working for the LSRCA since 2007 and has been working in the field of environmental education and natural resource management for 20 years. She has a background in forestry, cultural anthropology and ecosystem restoration.

March 18 Friday 2016 Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program

Location: North West Barrie United Church (NWBUC)

464 Ferndale Drive North

Time: 7:30 pm.

Speaker: Dr. Doug Tozer

The Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program and the special Nottawasaga Valley/ Lake Simcoe marsh birds and frog project will be presented by Dr. Doug Tozer from Bird Studies Canada. He will discuss the results and the importance of over 20 years of data collection from these programs and how it pertains to our present day situation.

April 15 Friday 2016 Annual General Meeting and Potluck

Location: North West Barrie United Church (NWBUC)

464 Ferndale Drive North

Time: 6:00 pm. Eat at 6:30pm.

To show pictures, please contact:

Ruth Noland Flores 705-728-5438

For potluck queries, please contact:

Christine Beggs at 705-721-6842

Bring a dish for our "most delicious" Potluck supper & share with your friends. Help provide a table full of interesting delights.

If you are able to contribute an item for our silent auction, it would be most welcome.

Please bring your own plates and cutlery. Don't forget to "Lug-a-Mug"

Coming Events - Field Trips

Jan. 2016-April 2016

FIELD TRIPS The Meeting point for all FIELD TRIPS will be Little Lake Parking lot (LLPL) Take Duckworth St. North-bound to just past Hwy. 400 where there is currently a lot of confusing construction. Make a right hand turn onto J.C.Massie Way after the lights. (if coming along Cundles then make a left turn) This becomes Little Lake Road. (see web site for map).

NO pets please on these outings. Dress for the weather, bring sunscreen & bug repellent. Pack a lunch & water. On many trips, it is advisable to carpool to the rally point. This makes it easier for site parking & for the leaders to keep track of the participants. FOR ALL OUTINGS PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR CANCELLATIONS OR CHANGES!

NON MEMBERS are welcome to participate in our activities.

Please note that if you have questions regarding any outing or event, please call the trip leader or check the website. www.bfnclub.org

Feb. 6 Saturday 2016 Minesing Raptors

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:30am.

Leader: Brian Gibbon 705-721-4599

Take a trip through the flats around Minesing to look for Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, Northern Shrikes, and other raptors, as well as flocks of Snow Buntings.

Driving outing usually ends by 1:30 pm, snack & drink.

March 12 Saturday 2016 Horned Larks and Pancakes

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:30am.

Leader: Brian Gibbon 705-721-4599

There is a small charge for this event, to cover our costs. Please bring your own dishes & cutlery.

Search the Minesing Flats for Horned Larks, our first songbird to return from migration, Snowy Owls and Snow Buntings. End this great morning with Pancakes & Sausage for lunch at a location to yet be confirmed.

Driving and standing. Usually ends by 2-2:30pm.

April 2 Saturday 2016 Spring Birds in the Minesing Floodlands

Location: Departs from LLPL or Bradford Greenhouses East parking lot, Hwy 90 at 9:00 am.

Time: 8:45am. at LLPL or 9:00 at 2nd. location

Leader: Chris Evans 705-722-1136

The Extensive spring flooding in Minesing Wetlands makes it a magnet for migrating waterfowl. Northern Pintail, Tundra Swans, and Sandhill Cranes are likely sightings, along with a few early songbirds, such as Tree Swallows. BRING RUBBER BOOTS.

Driving and standing. Usually ends by 1:00pm.

April 13 Wednesday (evening) 2016 American Woodcocks

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:00pm.

Leader: Ian Cook 705-727-4004

Displaying American Woodcocks at dawn and dusk are one of the earliest signs of spring in Simcoe County. Join Ian Cook to learn more about their calls and behavior. Bring RUBBER BOOTS, BUG REPELLANT & FLASHLIGHT

Moderate difficulty walking conditions, ends by 9:30pm.

Trip Reports

Sept 26/2015 Wilkins walk/Hewitt's Creek Ravine Trail - Paul Forde

About 16 people turned up on this fine, sunny fall morning. We were pleased to meet a new 15 year old birder named Hannah and her dad who came out for the first time to one of our club trips. Before most people got there, she had scoped out a Blue-headed Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet and a Red-bellied Woodpecker at the very beginning of the trail by the marsh.

The Hewitt Creek runs through the south shore area of Barrie and is part of the watershed of Lake Simcoe. This creek provides a high quality, cold-water temperature habitat that is critical for the diverse habitat conditions along its route and thus is home to a fair number of concentrated populations of wildlife including fish, amphibians, small mammals, waterfowl, shorebirds, wood land and marsh birds. (Source: *Barrie Creeks, Lovers Creek, and Hewitt's Creek Subwatershed Plan 2012*) As well, the mouth of the Hewitt at Lake Simcoe and the shallow bay just off shore is quite busy in both the spring and fall with very large populations of these migrating waterfowl.

We were a bit early in the season to see the large flocks of migrating birds in the bay at the mouth but everyone seemed to find some special bird along the walking trail as we made our way. The trees were busy with birds and luckily the birds were warm enough to be moving about to allow us to see them. Everyone seemed quite

pleased with this trip route and it was the first time our club had ever had an outing here. It's definitely a multi-season well maintained trail. You know you're in the city limits, but often you feel like you're out in the country.

BirdList: American Crow x6, American Goldfinch x19, American Robin x2, Belted Kingfisher x1, Black-capped Chickadee x2, Blue Jay x11, Blue-headed Vireo x1, Bonaparte's Gull x5, Brown Creeper x1, Canada Goose x44, Common Loon x5, Double-crested Cormorant x51, Downy Woodpecker x2, Eastern Phoebe x2, European Starling x5, Golden-crowned Kinglet x5, Great Black-backed Gull x1, Hairy Woodpecker x1, Herring Gull x1, Little Gull x1, Mallard x7, Mourning Dove x3, Northern Flicker x3, Pileated Woodpecker x2, Red-bellied Woodpecker x3, Red-breasted Nuthatch x1, Red-eyed Vireo x1, Red-tailed Hawk x1, Ring-billed Gull x5, Rock Pigeon x3, Rusty Blackbird x10, Turkey Vulture x1, White-breasted Nuthatch x3, White-throated Sparrow x6

Butterfly: Monarch x1

Dragonfly: Shadow Darner {umbrosa} x1

Mammal: Eastern Chipmunk x1, Red Squirrel x2

Plant: Bulblet Fern x1, Climbing Bittersweet x1, Dwarf Scouring-rush x1, Marginal Wood Fern x1,

Photo & article supplied by Paul Forde



Oct. 11/2015 North Simcoe Rail Trail - Brian & Lynne Gibbon

Four of us took a pleasant stroll along the trail from Hwy 26 west past Vespra Valley Rd. and about half way to George Johnston Rd. We thought that we were going to be out of luck sighting any Rusty Blackbirds but finally saw some on our way back to the parking lot. We had stopped to rest at the viewing platform and while there a Merlin flew across the marsh at eye level in front of everyone affording a good look.

Birds – Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Red-winged Blackbird, Sandhill Cranes (flock observed by Beryl at Hwy 26 and Strongville Rd), Canada Geese, European Starlings, Amer. Crow, Amer. Goldfinch, Rock Doves, Turkey Vultures, White-throated Sparrow, Great Blue Heron, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Merlin, Rusty Blackbirds, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker and a flock of Turkeys in a field on the way home.

Weather – Overcast but cleared around noon, temp. 15C/60F, light wind.



Yellow-rumped Warbler –John Wright

Book Review - A Walk in the Woods by Bill Bryson



Reviewed & submitted by Dorothy McKeown

It was recently made into a movie, with Robert Redford and Nick Nolte. But I read it because I had recently devoured his Notes from a Big Country, short articles about many topics, upon his return to the US after many years living in his wife's native England. He is an author, whom I will read everything he writes.

A Walk is about his hiking the Appalachian Trail, mainly with his out of shape buddy Katz. Bryson is hilarious, informative, and down to earth. You learn a lot about the history of the trail, Parks and Forest Services, and every area he passes through. His description of gear buying and then trying to pack it may have you laughing out loud. Anyone who has ever camped will chuckle over his descriptions of nights on the trail.

*Some see a weed
Some see a wish*



Oct. 17/2015 Lake Simcoe Migrants- Chris Evans

We started to wrap up the Ontario Nature Huronia Region Fall meeting about 2:15 pm and left from Inniswood Baptist Church about 2:35 pm, arriving at Minet's Point about 2:45 pm. We were greeted by strong NW winds 24 km/h gusting to 34 km/h under sunny skies and chilly 4C temperatures. It was worth the brief chill as there was a beautiful white morph Snow Goose amongst a large flock of Canada Geese at fairly close range, about a dozen of the world's largest gulls, the Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus* and a few Bonaparte's Gulls. There were the usual Mallards, American Black Ducks, Ring-billed Gulls and a pair of Common Mergansers.

The cold wind off the water soon drove us to Centennial Beach where the wind was less severe and at our backs with the sun warming us and lighting our avian subjects. Here we quickly spotted two of the world's smallest gulls, the Little Gull *Hydrocoloeus minutus*, actively feeding on schools of Emerald Shiners. Several dozen Bonaparte's Gulls, Common Loons, Ring-billed Gulls, a few Double-crested Cormorants, one Long-tailed Duck and a Pied-billed Grebe were also enjoying the abundant banquet of Emerald Shiners. There were about 25 Herring Gulls loafing on the water a few hundred meters off shore. A few Canada Geese and Mallards rounded out the scene.



We then proceeded to the Barrie Marina and observed large schools of small Emerald Shiners at close range. Interestingly, there weren't many birds here actively feeding. We speculated that these were very small shiners and that perhaps the larger more appetizing ones were out in the bay where the gulls were feeding.

We moved on to Kempenfelt Drive to see if, perhaps, some winter migrant ducks were rafting in the lee of the shore. There were some more Bonaparte's Gulls and Common Loons, but nothing new. So we bid our guests farewell and sent them on their merry way. Some, I know, were keen to watch Blue Jays playing baseball.



All photos on this page are by courtesy of Jennifer Howard

Dec 19 Saturday 2015

44th. BARRIE'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT & POTLUCK SUPPER

The 116th annual Christmas Bird Count (CBC) began on Dec. 11 and will run until Jan.5. More than 14,000 people across Canada — and more than 70,000 continent-wide — will volunteer for the world's longest-running citizen science wildlife census. The results of this crucial program help Audubon, Bird Studies Canada and other organizations assess the health of bird populations and guide conservation action.

Our own CBC was conducted on Saturday Dec.19th this year, with about 60 Barrie volunteers. The count tallied 19,464 birds, up almost 50 percent from last year's count of 13,759. The count area covers a circle centred at Bradford Greenhouses and stretches to Minesing in the north, Angus to the west, just beyond Barrie city limits to the east and to just south of Thornton.

Mild December weather, had many birds skipping migration, which is a huge factor in the increase of reported numbers. Last year 133 Ring-billed Gulls were spotted at the frozen Kempenfelt Bay but this year there were 3,264 at the open water. Rare gulls were among those documented, including Little Gulls, the smallest gull in the world, Thayer's Gulls, and Black-



backed Gulls.

The most unusual reported sighting was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, not yet verified, common here during migration but may have stuck around due to the warm weather.

The days events were capped off with a well attended pot-luck followed by some story telling & data comparison.

The results for these two events are published on pages 10 thru 12

Dec.27 Saturday 3rd. Annual CBC4Kids



The third annual Christmas Bird Count for Kids took place at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation in Utopia on Sunday Dec.27th. It was an opportunity to take in a workshop on bird identification and then take a guided

tour through the Tiffin forest of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. The bird-counting event was as much about gathering information, as it was about instilling respect and love for nature

Our own Chris Evans, led the workshop, which included nearly 50 people.

"It was really rewarding to see everyone, young and old, with families, making contributions and connecting with nature. With just a limited knowledge, they are able to make a valuable contribution to science." he said.

In keeping with all good events, the kids were rewarded with hot chocolate, as they shared the results with the group. Even the local news channel was in on the festivities, recording the highlights for their evening broadcast.

SPECIES	TEAM NUMBER									All Count	Previous Year		
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9		Count	Change	
DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS													
Cackling Goose											3	-3	
Canada Goose	355	79	79	37	60	5	284	307	321	1,527	1,690	-163	
Trumpeter Swan		4						2		6		6	
American Wigeon								1	2	3		3	
American Black Duck	52	6	39					60	61	218	152	66	
Mallard	713	6	642	3			4	217	335	1,920	3,237	-1,317	
Black Duck/Mallard			2						21	23	4	19	
Canvasback		1								1		1	
Redhead											3	-3	
Ring-necked Duck		CW								CW			
Greater Scaup								10	7	17		17	
Lesser Scaup											3	-3	
Scaup species											61	-61	
White-winged Scoter											2	-2	
Long-tailed Duck											1	-1	
Bufflehead	17	1	6					56	52	132	13	119	
Common Goldeneye	94	19	20					113	245	491	133	358	
Hooded Merganser	90	6	19					100	75	290	25	265	
Common Merganser	218	4	326					115	271	934	659	275	
Red-breasted Merganser								4	6	10	2	8	
duck sp.		1								1		1	
GROUSE & TURKEYS													
Ruffed Grouse	CW			6		2			1	9	1	8	
Wild Turkey		CW	10	30	23		50	13	42	168	158	10	
GREBES													
Horned Grebe	4									4		4	
Red-necked Grebe	97							70	36	203	2	201	
CORMORANTS													
Double-cres. Cormorant			11							6	17	10	7
HERONS & BITTERNS													
Great Blue Heron					1	1				2	1	1	
HAWKS & EAGLES													
Bald Eagle	2[1A,1J]			1[A]						3		3	
Northern Harrier								1		1		1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk		CW								CW	2	-2	
Cooper's Hawk				1						1	5	-4	
Accipiter sp.			1							1	1		
Red-tailed Hawk		1	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	18	34	-16	
Rough-legged Hawk				2	1					3		3	
Bueto sp.				1						1	1		
hawk sp.							1		1	2	1	1	
FALCONS													
Merlin				1						1		1	
GULLS & TERNS													
Little Gull	1		2							3		3	
Bonaparte's Gull	499		750						1	1,250		1,250	
Ring-billed Gull	760	1	2,106		3	3	135	11	245	3,264	133	3,131	
Herring Gull	692	1	2,040	4		319	4	95	231	3,386	1,439	1,947	
Thayer's Gull	1		2					1		4		4	
Iceland Gull	2		1							3	2	1	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1		1					2		4		4	
Glaucous Gull	2		2			3				7	3	4	
Great Black-backed Gull	12		45					7	21	85	97	-12	
gull sp.	8	32	130	15	5		4	50	5	249	20	229	

PIGEONS & DOVES	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9			
Rock Pigeon	266	52	20		2	14	19	13	4	390	456	-66
Mourning Dove	8	46	13	5	42	18	19	29	13	193	508	-315
OWLS												
Eastern Screech-Owl						1			1	2	4	-2
Great Horned Owl											6	-6
Snowy Owl											3	-3
Barred Owl											2	-2
KINGFISHERS												
Belted Kingfisher											2	-2
WOODPECKERS												
Red-bellied Woodpecker				1	1		2	1	1	6	9	-3
Downy Woodpecker	4	20	9	11	3	11	6	16	6	86	127	-41
Hairy Woodpecker		6	4	3	1	12	4	3	1	34	59	-25
Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker											14	-14
Pileated Woodpecker		2		1		1	3			7		7
SHRIKES												
Northern Shrike											4	-4
CROWS & JAYS												
Blue Jay	4	25	4	23	20	8	74	12	8	178	326	-148
American Crow	49	30	32	20	20	18	54	25	29	277	196	81
Common Raven		1		1	3	1	2			8	5	3
CHICKADEES												
Black-capped Chickadee	137	148	73	78	22	165	152	112	82	969	1,094	-125
NUTHATCHES & CREEPERS												
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	7	4	7	3	1	2	6	8	39	48	-9
White-breasted Nuthatch	7	15	6	8	1	11	5	9	9	71	117	-46
Brown Creeper		1		3		3			1	8	5	3
WRENS												
Winter Wren											1	-1
KINGLETS												
Golden-crowned Kinglet						4				4	7	-3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet							1			1		1
THRUSHES & STARLINGS												
American Robin		1	1					14		16	2	14
THRASHERS												
Brown Thrasher											1	-1
STARLINGS AND MYNAS												
European Starling	42	90	935	15	25	28	94	36	7	1,272	1,317	-45
WAXWINGS												
Bohemian Waxwing											2	-2
Cedar Waxwing								8		8	22	-14
waxwing sp.	15									15		15
SPARROWS												
American Tree Sparrow		19	11	2	1	3	44	1	1	82	131	-49
Chipping Sparrow											1	-1
Song Sparrow											3	-3
Swamp Sparrow											1	-1
White-throated Sparrow		1								1	4	-3
sparrow sp.		2								2	4	-2
Snow Bunting						187	100	8		295	140	155

CARDINALS	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9			
Northern Cardinal	8	7	4		2	13	6	14	7	61	69	-8
BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES												
Red-winged Blackbird					2					2	1	1
Rusty Blackbird					1					1		1
Common Grackle											2	-2
FINCHES												
Purple Finch		11	6				1			18	10	8
House Finch		9				2		5		16	45	-29
Common Redpoll						6		5		11	184	-173
Pine Siskin				1		131	6			138	12	126
American Goldfinch	36	169	23	19	102	68	62	111	3	593	432	161
Evening Grosbeak											25	-25
finch sp.		4								4		4
IMPORTS												
House Sparrow	32	7	5			12	23	139	1	219	239	-20

TOTALS												
Count	4,241	884	7,396	318	351	1,067	1,178	1,859	2,173	19,467	13,759	5,708
Species	32	34	36	27	24	31	28	41	37	65	69	-4
From Count Week	1	3								4	2	2

Christmas Bird Count for Kids 2015 Results

SPECIES	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3	Team 4	Team 5	Team 6	Team 7	Gross Total	Net Total
GEESE, SWANS & DUCKS									
American Black Duck	2							2	2
Mallard							2	2	2
GULLS									
gull sp.	16	4	15	22	23	4	16	100	61
PIGEONS & DOVES									
Mourning Dove	1		3		2		2	8	3
KINGFISHERS									
Belted Kingfisher	1		1		1	1		4	1
WOODPECKERS									
Downy Woodpecker		1	2	1	1			5	2
CROWS & JAYS									
Blue Jay							1	1	1
American Crow	4	1	1	2		2	1	11	4
Common Raven		1	1	1		2	1	6	2
CHICKADEES									
Black-capped Chickadee	13	6	35	5	31	12	23	125	35
NUTHATCHES & CREEPERS									
Red-breasted Nuthatch	4		1	1	1			7	4
White-breasted Nuthatch	7	1	3	1	7	1	1	21	7
Brown Creeper		1		1				2	1
FINCHES									
American Goldfinch	1					3		4	4
TOTAL # of Birds	49	15	62	34	69	24	45	298	129
# of Species	9	7	9	8	8	7	7	14	14

Monitoring Reports

2015 Updated Barrie SwiftWatch Report



The SwiftWatch Team made 133 visits to chimneys to monitor for the presence/absence of chimney swift activity. Spot-checks were conducted in 2 other communities identifying one active site each in Elmvale and Minesing.

A notable observation was the use of the chimney at Barrie Central Collegiate as a roost during spring and fall migrations and for nesting during the summer. The last chimney swift of the season was observed here on

September 7th.

This was the first spring that large numbers of chimney swifts were observed entering The Jail chimney during spring migration. Now, this chimney is identified as a spring and fall roost and used by a breeding pair during the summer.

During the local fall migration, starting from August 16 to September 7, the SwiftWatch Team conducted counts at the 6 Barrie roosts.

Three of our SwiftWatch team made a presentation at the York Simcoe Naturalists' meeting in Holland Landing on April 14th.

All data has been submitted to Bird Studies Canada and Inga Brinckmann has prepared a spreadsheet for the BFNC files.

Results of 2015 Chimney Monitoring

Previously Occupied Barrie Chimneys	Previously Occupied Chimneys Non-active in 2015	Additional Chimneys identified, but Non-active in 2015	Total Barrie Chimneys Moni-
23	10	3	36

Results of 2015 National Population Roost Monitoring Blitz Counts

Chimneys	May 20	May 24	May 28	June 1
Main Roost (A)	15	85	68	73
Roost B	1	2	1	2
Roost C	0	0	0	---
Barrie Central Collegiate	0	2	2	4
Unity Christian High School	2	2	2	1
The Jail	1	2	1	2

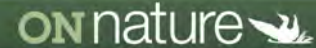
numbers refer to the number of chimney swifts entering chimneys on each date

I share my name with an aerobatic bird that can whiz across a whole summer sky in seconds. A swift is so equipped for speed that it can scarcely cope with being stationary.

Graham Swift

Nature Notes

May 23 Ontario Nature Youth Summit



Ontario Nature's sixth annual Youth Summit brought together 95 youth from 57 communities across the province for an inspiring, action-packed weekend. Held September 25-27, 2015 at YMCA Geneva Park, teens had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of outdoor activities and workshops including: Pollinators and Wildflowers, Nature Discovery Hike, Salamander Survey, Fun with Fly Fishing, How to be "The Change", Climate Reality, Debate on Genetically Modified Organisms, First Nations way of Knowing, Birds of Prey, Sustainable Gardening, Medicinal Plants and Youth Leadership to name but a few.

Other memorable moments included morning activities like canoeing, yoga, bird watching, swimming in Lake Couchiching, and an evening campfire with stories and songs to bring everyone together

Our Brereton group, sponsored 2 students to attend this event; Peter Simons for a second year and Maddison Wilson. They both have sent thank you letters to our club.



This year again I was sponsored by the Brereton Field Naturalist Club, and once again I was amazed by the entire experience of the summit.

During the summer I was working at Algonquin provincial Park as a junior naturalist. My time at Algonquin was truly spectacular and I learned a large amount about natural heritage education and flora and fauna. When that contract ended and my grade 12 year was on the doorstep I mourned the loss of summer more than I had ever before. remembering that I was sponsored to go to the summit was a very hopeful thing. When I drove to Geneva park I was filled with great memories of the past year when I was there. I was slightly nervous for the fact that maybe it would be a repeat of those very same memories that I was thinking about. But through out the summit I was blown away by what I was learning about. last years summit I learned that I was not the only 16 year old who loved nature, I also learned a lot about conservation. This year was a whole different story. I took several workshops that focused on leadership and community involvement, this is where the summit impacted me the most. One of the work shops was on action plans, they had various topics you could pick from, like fresh water, endangered species, up scaling, and healthy diets. The action plan I picked was on how to start a club. This inspired along with the rest of the summit to start a club at the high school that I attend. I have wanted to start a club for awhile but I was much to uncertain to start one. The nature summit gave me that confidence that I lacked and was also a lot of fun as I again was refreshed by the positive attitude to the idea of the environment and how to help the conservation of it. Over all I had a absolute blast meeting lots of new people and making a ton of friends. I cannot thank you enough again for the experience that you have given me again. I am constantly thankful for the club and the impact it has had on my life. Thank-you again for your time and your generosity,

-Peter Simons

Hello!

I just wanted to write and say that I had an amazing time at the Youth Summit! I learned a lot of useful information and I also met so many great people. Thanks again for giving me that opportunity!

- Maddison Wilson

Oct. 10/2015 Chappell Farms Fall Festival - Lisa Levez Bordeleau

The Brereton Field Naturalists' Club was invited to set up an educational display with family oriented games at Chappell Farm's Fall Festival on Saturday October 10th. a very busy Thanksgiving weekend. The Chappell Farm's was incredibly busy and helpful with set up and take down and activities for families were phenomenal! Noha, my 14 month old son and I signed up to man the booth for the day. A big part of the fun was promoting the upcoming BFNC events and sharing experiences of past events. We engaged with a lot of families, promoted the new event tri-fold brochure for this year as well as played nature games and had a colouring bonanza! Thank you to Clare, her daughter & grandchildren for coming to help set up and unexpectedly stayed for the morning and also jumped in to help entertain Noha.

Thank you to Barb who stayed for the entire afternoon and then helped take down the displays, also unexpectedly. We had a wonderful time.



Oct. 17/2015 Ontario Nature Huronia Regional meeting



Regional meetings are a great opportunity to meet other groups in your area, share ideas, hear from guest speakers and learn more about Ontario Nature's programs. The Ontario Nature Huronia fall regional meeting took place on Oct 17 at Inniswood Baptist Church, here in Barrie. Many thanks to Dorothy McKeown & Christine Beggs for all their organizing & co-ordination abilities. The meeting was well attended by local naturalist clubs, with representatives from Orillia, Midland-Penetanguishene, Carden, York region and Wasaga Beach. All clubs gave a brief description of their current activities.

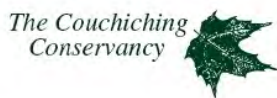
Our club presented our Chimney Swift and Eastern Bluebird programs. Followed by our first guest speaker, Kristyn Richardson of Bird Studies Canada, who shared the research BSC is conducting to fill key knowledge gaps in our understanding of Chimney Swift, Bank and Barn Swallow habitat use, including the results of artificial nesting structures and radio-tracking. Then Dana Buchbinder, Ontario Nature Citizen Science Researcher updated us on the Reptile and Amphibian Atlas and the new apps. At 2:30pm. Chris Evans led a driving and walking hike to observe our migrating water birds. (See pg.8 for this trip report)



Photo credit to Ruth Noland-Flores



Oct3/2015 Copeland Forest Friends Association Official Launch



At 4,400 acres (1,760 hectares), the Copeland Forest is an ideal example of deep woods habitat. Nestled on the edge of the Oro Moraine, it contains the highest quality of mature upland deciduous forest in the region, as it undulates and eventually drops 55 metres to a complex of wetlands containing the headwaters of three major watersheds that all drain into Georgian Bay

Every year, thousands of visits are made to the Copeland by people from all over southern Ontario and beyond. The appeal is that it is the largest naturalized upland forest within commuting distance of the GTA, and is free from the usual provincial park rules of usage and fees. Because there are over 22 active entrances to the forest, even a rough estimate of how many thousands visit is complicated and expensive to calculate. Through surveys and public meetings, and extensive conversations with forest users, we have learned that the following human activities are known to take place in Copeland Forest: Hunting and trapping (for turkey, deer, rabbit, squirrel, grouse and duck), Mushroom picking, Hiking, Orienteering, Geo-caching, Nature walks and photography, Outdoor Education, Mountain biking, Bird studies and bird watching, Cross-country

skiing, Research (Acid Rain, Snow station), Horseback riding, Target practice, Trail running, Commercial bait fishing, Trail building and maintenance, Retriever dog training, Snowshoeing, Search and Rescue Training and Dog sledding to name a few.

It is time to begin taking care of the Forest and you can help by becoming a member, (A membership only costs \$25), of the newly formed

“Copeland Forest Friends Association”.

The Copeland Forest Friends Association are had their official launch at the Horseshoe Resort on Sat. Oct 3.



Oct. 3/2015 Copeland Forest Nature Walk Dave Lord & Pat Woodford

Who are the Friends?

The Copeland Forest Friends Association are a group of individuals with many diverse interests, including Horseshoe Valley Resort. (See p.16)

These people share a common love of the forest and are interested in it's survival for future generations. Over three years of extensive meetings the "Copeland Forest Friends Association" has evolved. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed with the Ministry of Natural Resources, for a caring partnership for this spectacular forest which will be shared with MNR together with the community, the link being "the Friends".

Pat Woodford from the Orillia Naturalists' Club and Dave Lord led a one hour nature walk around trails in the southern part of the forest. Although there were practically gale force easterly winds we were able to take advantage of Pat's skills and identify many interesting ferns. Nancy Ironside from the Orillia Naturalists'

identified some interesting fungi and mushrooms for the group which exceeded 30 people. A list of the ferns follows: Lady Fern, Bracken, Sensitive Fern, Marginal Shield Fern, Intermediate Wood Fern, Spinulose Wood Fern, Ostrich Fern & Christmas Fern.

Bird species were few, in view of the windy and cool weather but Blue Jays, Crows, Downy Woodpeckers, Chickadees and a possible Golden-crowned Kinglet and Yellow-rumped Warbler were seen and/or heard.



Curious Critters

The critter this issue is *Craspedacusta sowerbii* a freshwater jellyfish. Found by local youngsters, while playing in shallow water off a beach at Beausoleil Island, Georgian Bay.

Originally from the Yangtze basin in China, *the jellyfish* is an invasive species now found throughout the world in bodies of fresh water.

C. sowerbii medusae are about 20 mm. (approximately 1 in.) in diameter, and very delicate, when fully grown.

They have a whorl of up to 400 tentacles tightly packed around the bell margin. Hanging down from the center of the inside of the bell is a large stomach structure called a manubrium, with a mouth-opening with four frilly lips. Circulation of nutrients is facilitated by four radial canals which originate at the edges of the stomach. Most of the body is transparent or translucent, with a whitish or greenish tinge. Four large flat sex organs are attached to the four radial canals, and are usually opaque white.

Just like salt water jellyfish they do have stinging cells. However, these cells are used for paralyzing very tiny prey and have not been proven to have the capacity to pierce human skin.

C. sowerbii begins life as a tiny polyp, which lives in colonies attached to underwater vegetation, rocks, or tree stumps, feeding and asexually reproducing during spring and summer. During the cold winter months, polyps contract and enter dormancy as resting bodies called podocysts. It is believed that podocysts are transported by aquatic plants or animals to other bodies of water. Once conditions become favorable, they develop into polyps again.

Info Source: www.freshwaterjellyfish.org/canada



FRESHWATER JELLYFISH *Craspedacusta sowerbii* .

Photo credit to Jennifer Howard

Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition

On Saturday, November 21 the newly formed Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition (SCGC) met to further solidify organizations across Simcoe County to have our water sources, farmland and natural heritage better protected via the Greenbelt Act. Currently, the provincial government is looking for areas to expand the Greenbelt and is relying on local support to make its final recommendations. Thus, it is important for the SCGC to align as many organizations as possible with varying perspectives under this mission.

Over 20 organizations were represented at their last meeting and included a mixture of environmental organizations, ratepayer associations, farming associations as well as provincial organizations such as Ontario Nature and the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance.

The Brereton Field Naturalists' Club has agreed to become a member of the SCGC. Membership does not require any fees or limit our group's activities. Below is the pledge that was drafted collaboratively by those in attendance at this meeting.

Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition Pledge for Members

A healthy environment is critical to our communities' future. Farmland, water and natural heritage are key components of a healthy environment and thriving economy, and need better protection.

Thus, we pledge to support the expansion of the Greenbelt in Simcoe County, so that current and future generations can benefit from clean water, local food and green spaces.



The Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership and the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance have proposed Ontario's Greenbelt expansion to include almost 300,000 hectares in Simcoe County. The proposed area is shown in dark green and includes Lake Simcoe, the Oro Moraine, the Nottawasaga River Watershed and the Minesing Wetlands.

Dec.5/2015 Saturday Barrie Waterfront OFO trip – Jim Coey

39 people took part in the second Annual OFO Barrie waterfront field trip. Billed as Gulls, waterfowl and winter finches. The gulls and waterfowl did not disappoint. However there were no winter finches.

At the start of the trip, by the Barrie docks, participants were treated to a veritable blizzard of gulls and waterfowl of many species, at very close quarters. The birds were feeding on a small bait fish called Emerald Shiners, seemingly occurring in the millions. Among the large numbers of Bonaparte’s Gulls were at least 2 adult and 2 first winter Little Gulls. Common Loons and Double-crested Cormorants were also foraging on the shiners. There were several unusually large concentrations of Common Mallards. A couple of Long-tailed Ducks were notable.



Many thanks are due to Jean Iron and Ron Pittaway and Burke Korol for their patient sharing of their expertise and to Chris Evans, president of the Brereton Field Naturalists’ Club of Barrie for his logistical support and thanks to all the participants who made it a fun outing.



Photo credit to Judy Watson

The morning started off quite foggy which soon dissipated and we were treated to a beautiful sunny day with a high of 12 degrees. Lake Simcoe was very calm and at Minets Point we were presented with the spectacle of 100’s of loafing gulls on the shore and swimming close to the shore. Ideal conditions for studying the various plumages and delighting both veterans and new birders alike. Here we had a Glaucous Gull, a Thayer’s Gull, Kumlien’s Iceland Gull and a very pale second winter Iceland Gull. There were also numerous Red-necked Grebes and a single White-winged Scoter off shore.

Also present was the “Appledore” Great Black-backed Gull. This gull was banded on Appledore Island of the coast of Maine in 2011 as an adult bird. It has been showing up on the Barrie waterfront each November since then which makes it at least 8 years old. For a photograph of this bird and a complete list for the day contact me personally at jcoey@rogers.com



Photos courtesy of Ruth Noland Flores

2015 Helen Emery Award

The Helen Emery Award of \$500 is given each year to a student entering the third year of the Environmental Studies program at Georgian College.

The student must demonstrate an interest in protecting the environment and reflect the Clubs mission which is to acquire and share knowledge of natural history, to protect wildlife, and to stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation.

Helen willed the BFN \$10,000. After much discussion, the executive decided to strike a committee, led by Lynne Gibbon, to set up an award through the Georgian College Foundation with the above criteria. The time was fortuitous, because the province would meet any donation made; therefore, the BFN has \$20,000 invested in this award. Last year the award had accumulated enough interest to increase the award to \$1000. Students apply in January, the applicants are submitted to the BFN executive, who then decide on the best candidate and the award is presented at the fall graduation ceremony.

On December 1st. Lynne Gibbon will be presenting the 2015 Helen Emery Award of \$1000 to a very deserving third year Georgian College Environmental Technology student, **Sarah Robbins**.

On June 14th, 2015 Sarah wrote:

"I would like to take this opportunity to send you my sincere and heartfelt thanks for awarding me with the Brereton Field Naturalists' Club Helen Emery Award. This award means so much to me as it demonstrates that you have recognized my hard work and dedication to the Environmental Technology program at Georgian College. This will enable me some comfort while I continue to study what makes the natural environment so vital to our society. It will also show future employers that others have acknowledged my passion for learning.

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart for awarding me with this honor. I wish you a happy and wonderful summer."

Tiny Marsh 2016 Bioblitz

Advance notice of a great, not to be missed event.

More details to follow in the Spring Edition

Once again, Tiny Marsh will host a BioBlitz on Saturday June 25, 2016. Last year, in its inaugural event, over 130 people came out to participate in a variety of walks to record all the species of birds, plants, dragonflies, reptiles and amphibians, butterflies and mammals they could find within the marsh.

For those unfamiliar with what a BioBlitz is, it is an event where in a given time frame, groups of people go out and count all the species they come across. The idea was formulated by the Royal Ontario Museum to involve people to discover, and record, the health of such spaces. Experts are on hand to help those who want to participate and be involved in learning about the natural world.

This coming June, we have 8 walks planned – 4 in the morning starting at 7am including a children's walk and a short and easy stroll. After a provided BBQ lunch at noon, 4 more walks will take place in the afternoon and the plan (weather permitting) is to include a moth night where with a white sheet and bright light, a variety of moths will be seen. The cost is \$10 per person or \$25 per family that includes going on as many walks as you

would like, a BBQ lunch and a tee shirt.

This is a great event for families to come out and enjoy the natural beauty of Tiny Marsh. Stay tuned for more information with details to follow including registration. Mark your calendars for a day of fun with others interested in the biodiversity at Tiny Marsh.

Submitted by Anne McArthur

Photo credit to Barb Crawford



One Swans Story (edited for this paper) by Jennifer Howard

I don't know anyone who hasn't been mesmerized by a trumpeter swan family peacefully drifting on a lake or in a wetland. One can get hooked very quickly on their beauty. Especially, the heart they form as they bob their heads up and down, in excitement, at breeding time. Trumpeters are the largest of our waterfowl species, that are native to North America and are protected. A quote from Kyna Intini of the Trumpeter Swan Restoration Program states:

The North American population including the Ontario Trumpeter Swans was decimated by hunting for the fur trade in the 1700 to late 1800's, with the last recorded bird in Ontario shot at Long Point in 1886. The Ontario population was extirpated for almost 100 years, until in 1982 the restoration program was begun by retired MNR biologist Harry Lumsden. His objective was, "to restore the species to as much of its former range as possible." It has been a long road since then, but in a recent 2015 survey, the southern Ontario population stands at 1000 birds.

A Swan is a very large bird weighing approximately 21 to 30 pounds & cannot be mistaken for anything else. About 50% of swan cygnets make it through their first year of life. They can live upwards to 30 years.

The swan I am going to tell you about today was 9 years old. Lonesome was his name. He hatched in 2006, banded as an adult male on January 9th 2008 at La Salle in Burlington and was adopted by someone through the Wye Marsh adopt a swan program. No Known mate. Unfortunately, Lonesomes' life was shortened by a careless hunter. He was spotted in the tall grass of Tiny Marsh, hiding & injured. The swan was excessively preening, a sign of stress. The Toronto Wildlife Center was called in for a rescue on Friday December 11th at 11:30. A beautiful day, mild, no snow. Perfect weather for a very difficult, yet successful canoe rescue. Lonesome was not very strong and gave in to their big net, after a small chase in the water. Then, he was wrapped in a sheet and tucked gently but firmly between the rescuers legs. They loaded Lonesome, who now put up no fight, on board the rescue truck and headed to Toronto, where veterinarians were awaiting the arrival. Director of Toronto Wildlife Center Nathalie Karvonen told me:

"It's so awful to think of how this swan suffered as a result of being shot. I'm glad our rescue team was able to help capture the swan, but sorry that the injuries were so severe that the swan could not be saved. Our

medical team was standing by and ready to help if they could have."

The swan named Lonesome had to be euthanized. A total waste of life. This incident was reported to MNRF. The volunteers of Tiny Marsh, watch over the area, carefully, on their journeys. We will watch over it closer now. Someone shot this swan. People need to be aware, to report things, to help an animal/bird in need. There is help out there for animals in distress. A swan is a protected species. Charges can be laid and equipment seized. If people had reported this bird earlier, it would not have suffered so long. Look up your local wildlife rehabilitation numbers and write them down. Carry them on you or in your car. Get involved. Report to MNRF. In this case, contacting MTM and reporting the incident would have got action. Go online and find the information you may need one day. It could save a life. At least, it could save a life from horrible suffering. Donations are still going into Toronto Wildlife Center for this rescue. You can send money in or donate online to help this wildlife center or others in your area to make sure they are there when you need them. They are not funded by government. They depend on us. Don't let this swans' loss of life be in vain. Be aware & speak up! Thanks to Andrew & Stacey of the TWC, Lonesome passed peacefully in warmth with loving hands surrounding him. He will no longer suffer. A BIG thank you to the Toronto Wildlife Center, MTM Conservation and all the volunteers who helped monitor this swan.

Photo & article supplied by Jennifer Howard



Members Photo Gallery



White-tailed Deer - John Wright



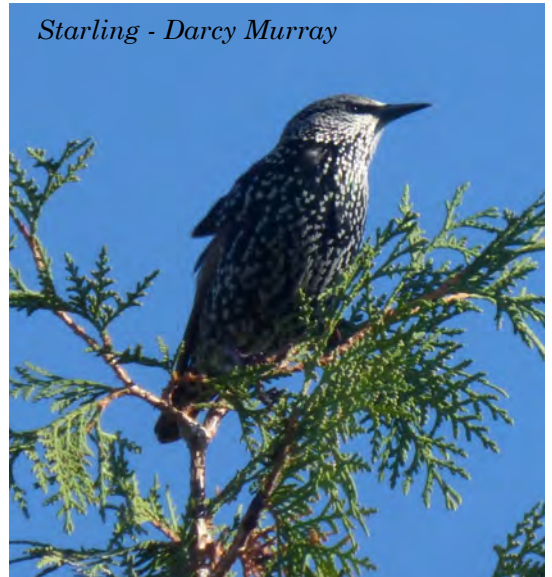
Song Sparrow - Janet Sauve



Hewitts Creek Trip - Paul Forde



Honey Bee - Judy Watson



Starling - Darcy Murray



Garter Snake - Marilyn Murray

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 !

