



Cape May Warbler

Setophaga tigrina

Photo courtesy of Jennifer Howard

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Jennifer Howard

A Message from your Editor

Kia ora, folks,

That's your standard Māori language greeting from the other side of the world.

A greeting which has now entered New Zealand English. It literally means "be well/healthy" and is translated as an informal "Hi".

I was fortunate enough to spend part of this winter in warmer surroundings. And, would like to share some significant and relevant findings, which really come as little surprise.

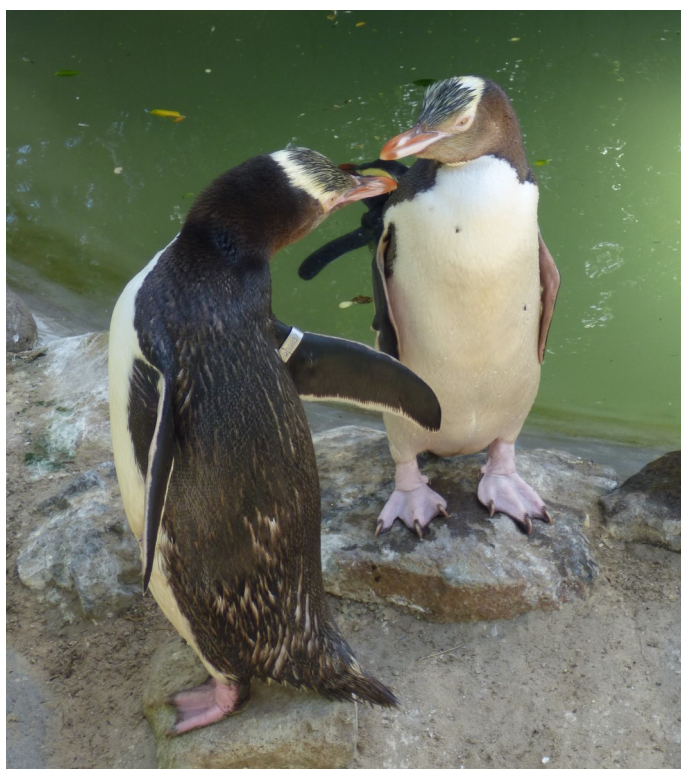
The folks in the southern regions are struggling with the same issues of climate change, wildlife decimation, invasive plant life and predator control. However, one of their solutions seems a little radical to an outsider but then you have to realise their situation is different. The Islands of New Zealand were predator free in times gone by. Their birds flourished in this environment, where they had nothing to fear. Hence, no need to fly. Then along came the introduced species, rats, stoats, weasels, cats & dogs and it was game over for them. The Moa succumbed to man's appetite, the kiwi had no neck protection and could not outrun their foes and the penguins lost their habitat. The solution, it appears is to poison the foreign invaders. Every part of the island has been baited with diphacinone (an anticoagulant) in bait traps and the predator free areas are then fenced off. Then, there is also an ongoing concern over a chemical pellet (1080 sodium monofluoroacetate) being dropped over vast tracts of uninhabited areas. This appears to be widely protested by some groups, due to its potential to harm native wildlife (killing Tomtits & Robins) and to contaminate water supplies. It remains to be seen how this will impact the future.

Now, getting back to Barrie, to where events and outings are being planned. It's shaping up to be an exciting year ahead.

Both Phyllis & Pat are looking for volunteers for the Swiftwatch and Bluebird programs. This is a great opportunity to learn from the best about these two species. There are many outings planned for you to enjoy & all led by our very knowledgeable members. (pg.4) And, a photo competition to capture a Chimney Swift entering a chimney backwards. (pg.10) Ontario Nature is holding their 85th annual general meeting at Little

However, to add a little humour to our discoveries... Not only does New Zealand have some strange birds. It also lays claim to the longest & strangest official place name in the world.

Taumatawhakatangihangakoauauotamatea-turipukakapikimaunga-horonukupokaiwhenuakitanatahu (85 letters), which in Translation means: "The summit where Tamatea, the man with the big knees, the climber of mountains, the land-swallower who travelled about, played his nose flute to his loved one".



Yellow-eyed Penguins (Hoiho) Megadyptes antipodes

Red Bay, South Bruce Peninsula. (pg.12) Tiny Marsh is hosting it's 2nd Bioblitz June 25 (pg.13) Or you can get out and plant trees with LSRCA on May 14.

Something for everyone, so I hope to see many of you out and about once the warm weather arrives.

Please feel free to email me with any reports, ideas or photos that you wish to be included in the next Blue Heron.

Until then, enjoy the summer,

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 May 2016 - Sept 2016

MEETINGS are held at the NORTH WEST BARRIE UNITED CHURCH (NWBUC) 464 Ferndale Drive North on scheduled, 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

At time of press we currently have no meetings scheduled. Next meeting will be in September. Please check the website for date & time of this event.

There are, however, many field trips planned for your enjoyment. Check out the schedule below to find your favourite outing.

Coming Events - Field Trips April 2016 – Sept 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

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 behaviour. Bring RUBBER BOOTS, BUG REPELLANT & FLASHLIGHT

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

April 23 Saturday North Simcoe Rail Trail Cleanup

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 10:00 am

Peter Simons/ Lisa Levez-Bordeleau 705-329-7059

Alternative meeting location at Minesing Station Park Pavilion on Hwy.26 (400m West of Golf Course Rd. at NSRT crossing) at 10:15 am.

Celebrate Earth Day, Spring and Migration, while cleaning up the Rail Trail. A hot dog BBQ treat will be waiting at the end!

Students will have the opportunity to earn high school community service hours.

Easy walking on flat trail. Ends at noon.

Coming Events - Field Trips (Cont.) May - Sept. 2016

May 4 Wednesday (evening) The Gables

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 6:00pm.

Leader: Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580

Alternative meeting spot at the Gables parking lot at 6:20pm

This 43 acre urban wilderness park, within the City of Barrie, has many attractive features, including a forested shoreline on Kempenfelt Bay, a hardwood forest, pine plantations, native wildflowers and naturalized spring bulbs such as Yellow Anemones and spring Squill. It also a great spot that attracts spring migrant birds.

Easy walk on trails. Ends by 8:00pm.

May 7 Saturday Oro-Medonte Rail Trail Spring Migrants

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 6:00am.

Leader: Jim Coey 705-543-1866

Alternative meeting location at Woodland Drive, Orillia and the Rail Trail at 6:30am.

Look for migrant birds, on this walk, along a very interesting section of the Orillia Rail Trail, bordered by large areas of higher dry ground. This type of landscape usually yields a very productive mix of spring migrating birds that are passing through our area, on their way to their nesting grounds in the Boreal Forests.

Easy walking. Bring a snack & water. Ends at noon.

May 12 Thursday Little Lake Area

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:00am.

Leader: Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580

This will be a two part walk in the 600+acres of city parkland around Little Lake

We will spend about 45mins. birding in the South portion of the park, near the parking lot. Then we will drive to the North side of the lake, for a 2 1/2-3hr. hike to observe mid-spring wildflowers and forest birds.

Medium difficulty walking. Ends by noon.

May 14 Saturday Spring migration at Tiny Marsh

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 7:00am.

Leader: Don Scanlon 705-726-6591

Tiny Marsh Important Bird Area, in Tiny Township, might be the richest spot for birds in Simcoe County.

The marsh is a giant wetland with a great diversity of migrating and nesting birds. Surrounding the marsh are various swamps & woods and these too host may birds like warblers, vireos, flycatchers and waterfowl.

Migration peaks in mid-May and this is a great chance to see many species.

Easy walking. Ends by noon.

“The earth has music for those who listen”

George Santayana

Coming Events - Field Trips (Cont.) May–Sept. 2016

May 21 Saturday Copeland Forest

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:00am.

Leader: Dave Lord 705-835-6642

Alternative meeting area at Copeland Forest parking area off Ingram Rd. (first parking lot east of Hwy.93) at 8:45am.

Birds will be active at this time of the year and birding will be an integral part of this trip. It's also a great time to observe spring flowers.

Moderate difficulty forest walking. Ends by noon.

May 26 Thursday (evening) Swift Night Out

Location: Parking lot on Mulcaster St., S. of Collier St.

Time: 8:15pm.

Leader: Inga Brinckmann
705-727-9071



Each spring Chimney Swifts return from the Andes to nest in suitable Barrie chimneys. Like many "aerial insectivores" Chimney Swifts have seriously declined in numbers. Our club has undertaken a monitoring role in Barrie. To learn more about Chimney Swifts, join Inga for an hour's worth of evening surveying and watch as the birds select, then plummet into chimneys.

In town, easy walk and standing

May 28 Saturday Spring at Matchedash Bay

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 7:30am.

Leader: Dave Lord 705-835-6642

Alternative meeting location at the commuter parking lot at the intersection of exit 137 Hwy.400 to Coldwater and Hwy12. at 8:00am.

At Matchedash Bay, north meets south. This massive wetland contributes to the diversity of things to see. Celebrate the coming of spring by looking for waterfowl, wetland birds and songbirds.

Wear solid, waterproof footwear. Sunscreen and bug repellent are recommended.

Pack a lunch and drink. Moderate to heavy walking.

June 4 Saturday Oro-Medonte Rail Trail Flora and Fauna

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 8:30am.

Leaders: Brian & Lynne Gibbon 705-721-4599

Join Brian & Lynne for one of their delightful Lake Country Oro-Medonte rail trail strolls. Breeding birds are in their territories and the first dragonfly and butterflies are just making their appearance.

Easy walking, bring a snack and water. Ends 1-2:00pm.

June 11 Saturday Birding in the Carden Alvar

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 7:30am.

Leaders: Brian Gibbon 705-721-4599
Jim Spruce 705-728-3884

Alternative meeting area at Tim Hortons at the SW corner of Memorial Dr. & Hwy12, Orillia at 8:00am.

Alvars are a rare kind of landscape, places where limestone flats are near the surface creating conditions for a specialized flora and wonderful bird habitat. Carden Alvar Important Bird Area (about an hour's drive from Barrie) is a great place to view a rich diversity of birds.

Driving and easy walking. Bring lunch & drinks.

Ends at 3-4:00pm.

June 4 /2016 Saturday Celebrate Barrie



Celebrate Barrie

...Our Community Festival

The City presents the 17th annual Celebrate Barrie Festival 2016 on Saturday June 4th at Centennial Park.

This annual celebration features free fun for all ages, educational displays, live entertainment and so much more.

Over 50 community groups will be providing hands-on activities The Brereton Group will be having a booth at this event. Please drop by to see our display or better still, lend a hand to help out, please see Lisa Levez-Bordeleau, if you are able to volunteer.

Trip Reports

Feb. 6 /2016 Horned Larks & Pancakes - Brian Gibbon



Photo credit to Chris Evans (above) and Bruce Wilson (left-via facebook)

Feb. 10 /2016 Family Day at Tiffin - Lisa Levez-Bordeleau

The Family Day Nature Festival at the Tiffin Centre, hosted by the NVCA, was a busy place to be, on Feb 10th. This family-friendly festival featured a series of workshops on favourite outdoor winter activities. From 10 am to 1 pm, local experts led hands-on sessions on birding, outdoor photography, winter shelter building, ice fishing and more. Families could bring their skates and helmets and take a spin on Papa Bear Pond or try traditional winter activities like snowshoeing and kick-sledding.

There were sleds available for travelling around the Centre and a gorgeous Harris Hawk named Gracey, inside the Learning Centre, where Brereton had a display case for visitors to view.

If you missed it this year, definitely an event I would try to attend next year! More information about NVCA events may be found at:

<http://www.nvca.on.ca/events-education>

April 2 /2016 Minesing Floodplains Spring Migrants - Chris Evans

A mainly cloudy, very brisk (-1 C felt like -7C wind chill from 24 km/h WNW gusting to 34!), spring morning challenged 21 intrepid naturalists (and supporters) including 15 Members + 1 new Member and 5 not-yet-Members on this outing. Our first meeting place was the usual Little Lake Park parking lot at 8:30 AM and we left fairly promptly. We then convoyed to McKinnon Road, Essa Twp. Where we met four more vehicles, for a total caravan of eleven. McKinnon Road was flooded 500 m beyond the Hydro One right-of-way, so we focused on the flooded fields to the west where the gravel road starts. Here we were treated to some decent views of Northern Shovelers, Northern Pintails, American Wigeon, Mallards, Wood Ducks and many Canada Geese. We had distant views of a few Ring-necked Ducks, a pair of Green-winged Teal, a Turkey Vulture and 15 Wild Turkeys. A subadult Bald Eagle was observed soaring several hundred meters directly above us, too high for me to age. An Eastern Phoebe made a brief appearance on the East side of the road.

The next stop was Concession 6 Sunnidale, east of CR10. A pair of Common Ravens were cavorting in the gusty winds around the first barn on the north side giving us a good show of their aerobatic skills. When we crested the hill, some of us saw a Juvenile or Female Northern Harrier flying buoyantly just above the road and ditches ahead of us. We stopped at the corner of Sideroad 15/16 and saw a distant eagle sp., thought to be a Bald Eagle, soaring to the SSE. The Bald Eagle nest may have had an adult brooding on it, but at over 3.5 km away, who could tell for sure?

We stopped next at the corner of Concession 7 and Sideroad 18/19 Sunnidale and observed a male Northern Harrier apparently eating prey. We observed a distant eagle perched in a tall tree in the vicinity of Concession 7 Sunnidale. It was very dark with some golden plumage. While too distant to positively ID, even with spotting scopes due to thermal shimmer, it appeared to be a Golden Eagle. Another eagle sp. flew by this one, again, too far to ID, possibly the same one observed soaring earlier from Conc. Rd 6. Several Turkey Vultures were rocking and rolling to the SSE in the same vicinity. There were thousands of Canada Geese and Northern Pintails in the air along with many other wa-

terfowl and blackbirds. Many gulls, mainly Ring-billed, were in the flooded fields to the east of Sideroad 18/19, two Killdeer and several American Black Ducks. A pair each of diminutive Green-winged Teal and the larger American Wigeon were barely identifiable to a trained eye.

A pair of Sandhill Cranes was spotted flying west of 18/19 SR Sunnidale just north of 7th Conc. Sunnidale, but didn't offer any satisfying views or photographs.

Glengarry Landing and Ronald Road fields were significantly flooded, yet there weren't the usual large rafts of waterfowl there, though there were a few Buffleheads, American Black Ducks and both Herring Gulls and Ring-billed Gulls. We said farewell at 12:00 PM and went our separate ways.



Birds:40 species

Canada Goose, Trumpeter Swan, Wood Duck, Northern Pintail, Am. Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Am.Black Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Wild Turkey, Turkey Vulture, Northern Harrier, Rough-legged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Sandhill Crane, Killdeer, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Downy & Pileated Woodpecker, Am. Kestrel, Eastern Phoebe, Blue Jay, C.Raven, Am. Crow, Am. Robin, Starling, Song & Am. Tree Sparrow, C. Grackle, Red-winged Blackbird, C. Redpoll, Pine Siskin.

Monitoring Reports

Barrie SwiftWatch 2016—Phyllis Tremblay



Barrie SwiftWatch 2016

Brereton Field Naturalists' Club (BFNC) objective for 2016, as participants in the Ontario SwiftWatch Project, is "to continue building our knowledge of active nest and roost chimneys within the province and ramp up efforts to educate landowners and encourage the protection of high priority sites for chimney swifts".

Bird Studies Canada's (BSC) priority for 2016:

Participate in the National Population Roost Monitoring Blitz May 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, June 2 & 6, especially at the key roost sites.

In addition, BSC recommends:

Reporting first and last sightings of the season.

Spot-checking previously identified chimneys to determine if they are still active by swifts.

Conducting Presence/Absence Surveys* for new nest/roost chimneys.

Keeping an eye out for potential natural habitat sites (old hollow trees with a 50 cm diameter at breast height or larger), and nesting sites in barns if the opportunity arises.

Holding a "Swift Night Out" to educate and engage others in the community.

Submitting all data from both new and past identified chimneys to BSC.

April 23 - May 5 Observe & report chimney swift (CHSW) sightings anywhere in Barrie.

May 13, 17, 21, 25, 29, June 2 & 6 National Population Roost Monitoring Blitz


May 26 Swift Night Out! (Scheduled BFNC Field Trip)

Every Wednesday Evening Starting June 8, Barrie SwiftWatchers plan to spot-check previously occupied chimneys, monitor roosts & potential chimneys.

*Presence/Absence Surveys are conducted during various stages of the chimney swifts' seasonal behaviour. Just before sunset, participants find and track nesting/roosting locations and count the numbers of chimney swifts dropping into the chimneys to nest or roost for the night.

For more information and to volunteer:

www.bfnclub.org




National Population Roost Monitoring Blitz

Count Chimney Swifts entering chimneys

May 13, 17, 21, 25, 29 & June 2 & 6

Before and after sunset 8:15 - 9:30 P.M.

Barrie Sites contact: Phyllis petremblay@rogers.com
PH: 705 737 2580



<http://bfnclub.org/>

Brereton Field Naturalists Chimney Swift Photo Contest



To generate interest and appreciation for Chimney Swifts, a Species at Risk, the BFNC is sponsoring a photo contest to capture a good detailed photo of Chimney Swift(s) Dropping into a Barrie Chimney “Tail First”.

Prize: The winner who submits the best photo will receive a two-year complimentary membership to BFNC

When: Any evening during the 2016 SwiftWatch season: May 1 to September 7.

Time: 1/2 hour before sunset - 1/2 hour after sunset.

Location Information: To learn more about Chimney Swifts, meet the Barrie SwiftWatch team for Swift Night Out on Thursday, May 26 at 8:15 pm in the parking lot on Mulcaster St., south of Collier St.

OR

Barrie Central Collegiate, 125 Dunlop Street, West; Barrie City Jail, 14 Worsley Street any pleasant evening around sunset.

OR

Call Inga Brinckmann 705-727-9071 or Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580 for more information about the best locations and times.



Contest Rules:

- Open to all photographers, both BFNC members and non-members.
- Submit one 11 x 14 printed photo per contestant. Digital copy may be required.
- Please remember to respect both public and private property.
- Submit photos by September 15, 2016 to:
Brereton Field Naturalists' Club of Barrie
PO Box 1084, Barrie, ON L4M 5E1
- BFNC and the SwiftWatch Committee will have the right to use submitted photos for education and promotion of SwiftWatch activities.



Nature Notes

Understanding the Role of the Conservation Committee—Al McNair

Submitted by Al McNair, Conservation Committee Chair, January 2016

The Conservation Committee promotes the stated aims of the BFNC, which are:

To acquire and disseminate knowledge of natural history;

To protect and preserve wildlife; and

To stimulate public interest in nature and its preservation.

We do this by several means, including reviewing local, provincial and federal government policies regarding land use, long-term planning and growth management, endangered species, global warming, energy efficiency, sustainability and many other environmentally-related issues. This work frequently includes attending public meetings and forums, speaking with municipal staff, Councillors and consultants, and preparing written comments or submissions to municipal Councils, provincial ministries and various public agencies.

The Chair of the Conservation Committee coordinates these activities, consults with other Committee members and arranges for the preparation and presentation of the BFNC's responses to particular issues. In the past, the Committee has sometimes met as a group to discuss particular issues, or has assigned a member or members (depending on timing and who is available, knowledgeable and interested) to carry the load of representing the BFNC on an issue.

BFNC submissions have included topics such as:

Park Master Plans for Little Lake, Sunnidale and The Gables Parks in Barrie

Waterfront and Marina Strategic Plan

Northshore Trail Plan and Pollinator Pathway

Reservoir, water main, highways and other infrastructure projects in environmentally sensitive areas and public parks

Development proposals such as those near the Ferndale Drive Eco-Park, Miller and Edgehill Drives, Harmony Village next to Bunkers Creek Eco-Park, etc.

Impact of proposed Downtown Barrie evening parking charges on CHSW citizen science project

Barrie Council Strategic Directions 2007-2010

Simcoe County Growth Management Study

Proposed Highway 400 widening and crossings, as well as Highway 427 extension

Endorsement of Simcoe County Greenbelt Coalition submission to Greenbelt Review panel

Endorsement of NVCA-led projects for rehabilitation of Minesing Wetlands using Federal funding for Nottawasaga River/Lake Simcoe environmental program

One of the ongoing challenges is deciding which issues BFNC should speak out on, since there are always more things going on than we have resources to research and present a solid opinion on.

More members would be welcome to participate in this Committee.

May 14 LSRCA Creeks project – Gwen Petreman

Please circle Saturday, May 14th. on your calendar! for " the Creeks Project ". Tree planting will take place from 10am to 12 noon.

The BFNC is a community partner of LSRCA 's "the Creeks Project".

The location will be a return to the Loon Avenue watershed at 99 Loon Avenue.

Gloves, shovels, water, and snacks will be provided.

LSRCA is currently working out the details in requesting a service club to provide a barbecue lunch.

REMEMBER: Trees are the most effective and least expensive way to mitigate the devastating effects of climate change!

Please Contact Gwen Petreman for more details

*Check out this fun quiz from Audubon
Which Migratory Bird are you?*

....http://www.audubonaction.org/site/Survey?ACTION_REQUIRED=URI_ACTION_USER_REQUESTS&SURVEY_ID=21110

Nature Notes

June 3-5 The Bruce Beckons - Ontario Nature's Annual Gathering

The Bruce Beckons: Ontario Nature's 85th Annual Gathering is scheduled for June 3-5, 2016 at Evergreen Resort on the south Bruce Peninsula, the gathering will celebrate 85 incredible years of protecting wild species and wild spaces in Ontario.

Join fellow nature lovers to explore local ecological treasures and a great diversity of habitats.

The deadline for registration is May 9, 2016 so don't delay.

The Keynote Presentation will be from Dr. Laurence Packer, The Importance of Bees: Ecology, Behaviour and Conservation followed by Stargazing with Ian Wheelband (weather dependent)

Highlights of the weekend include inspiring speakers, expert-led nature workshops and guided field trips to some incredible natural areas. It's the perfect opportunity to connect with fellow nature lovers and have a weekend of fun in the outdoors.

You can also join them, in celebrating recent shared conservation successes and discuss the vision for the year ahead.



Concurrent Nature Workshops will be running both morning & afternoon on Saturday.

You can register to attend any of the following:

Herpetofauna of the South Bruce Peninsula with Megan Anevich, Ontario Nature

Hunters, Fishers & Trappers: Getting to Know Ontario Spiders with Dan Schneider, Grand River C.A.

Exploring Red Bay's Forests and Wildflowers with Erin Mallon, Ontario Nature

Introduction to Visual Astronomy with Ian Wheelband, Royal Astronomical Society of Canada

The Rise and Fall of Lake Iroquois with Mark Stabb, Nature Conservancy of Canada

Gulls and Herons: Red Bay String Island Pontoon Boat Tour with Deborah & Mike Bennet, Evergreen Resort

Sunday Field Trips include:

The Massassauga Rattlesnakes of Bruce Alvar Nature Reserve led by Erin Mallon, Ontario Nature

Exploring Malcolm Bluff Shores Nature Reserve led by Adam Brylowski, Bruce Trail Conservancy

An Interpretive Tour of Singing Sands Park led by a Naturalist from Bruce Peninsula National Park

The Wildflowers of Petrel Point Nature Reserve and the Oliphant Fen led by Walter Muma, Naturalist & Megan Anevich, Ontario Nature

Sustainable Farming in Bruce County led by Keith Reid

Please go to the Ontario Nature website for the complete schedule.

<http://www.ontarionature.org/connect/blog/event/the-bruce-beckons-ontario-natures-85th-annual-gathering/>



Tiny Marsh Events And Bioblitz

Tiny Marsh BioBlitz Saturday June 25, 2016

The second annual Tiny Marsh BioBlitz will be held on Saturday June 25 from 6am to 11pm. Once again, there will be several walks scheduled throughout the day, ranging from a children's walk, a short and easy stroll to 2 ½ - 3 hour hikes. For all the walks, there will be a group of experts with knowledge on birds, butterflies, insects, odonata and plants. With the decline of bee population being of special interest and getting quite a bit of news coverage, pollinators will also be highlighted.

The cost for this event is \$10 per person, \$25 for a family of four, which includes a t-shirt and a BBQ lunch.

Details and times of the walks are (at the time of printing) still to be confirmed. Visit mtmconservation.org for the schedule of events and to register, or contact Anne McArthur at aemcarth@rogers.com or Ellen Hartwick at 705-527-0568. Early registration is advised to be sure of getting a t-shirt.

Hope to see you all there!

Waterfowl Viewing Day Saturday April 23.

There will be one or more guided walks in the morning. More detailed info. can be found on their website <http://www.mtmconservation.org>

Big Pull - garlic mustard control Saturday & Sunday May 28/29

Do you weed at home? This is way more important, because an ecosystem is at stake. So come weed with us, 9 am-noon. it's fun and just one person can clear a huge area in three hours. Just let Kate Harries know (705-322-2545) and she'll assign you an area.

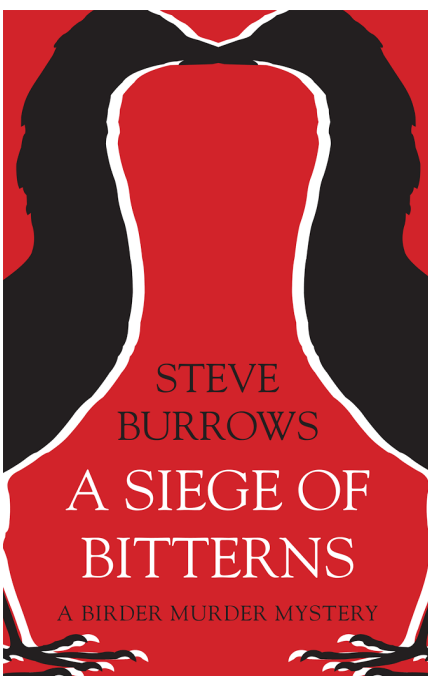


Would you like to know more about Wild Flowers?

An excellent & interesting list of shade loving, bird friendly shrubs with berries can be found on this site from the Ottawa Field Ornithologists.

<http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/flora-fauna/wildflowers/database/Shrubs.php>

Book Review A Siege of Bitterns by Steve Burrows



In this well written book by Steve Burrows, Inspector Jejeune's success has made him a poster boy for the U.K. police service. The problem is Jejeune, who is originally from Canada, doesn't really want to be a detective at all; he much prefers watching birds.

Recently reassigned to the small Norfolk town of Saltmarsh, located in the heart of Britain's premier birding country, Jejeune's two worlds collide when he investigates the grisly murder of a prominent ecological activist. His ambitious police superintendent foresees a blaze of welcome publicity, but she begins to have her doubts when Jejeune's most promising theory involves a feud over birdwatching lists. A second murder only complicates matters. To unravel this mystery, Jejeune must deal with unwelcome public acclaim, the mistrust of colleagues, and his own insecurities. In the case of the Saltmarsh birder murders, the victims may not be the only casualties.

Steve Burrows has pursued his birdwatching hobby on five continents. He holds degrees from York, Dalhousie, and the University of Hong Kong, and is the author of a number of articles on environmental issues. He has infused the story line with a great number of unusual birding facts. In all, an entertaining read for any nature lover.

Leucism & Albinism

Leucism

In leucistic birds, affected plumage lacks melanin pigment due to the cells responsible for melanin production being absent. This results in white feathers, unless the normal plumage colour also comprises carotenoids (e.g. yellows), which remain unaffected by the condition.

Although leucism is inherited, the extent and positioning of the white colouration can vary between adults and their young, and can also skip generations if leucistic genes are recessive.

The reduction of pigment in leucistic birds causes feathers to weaken and be more prone to wear. In some situations this can hinder flight.

'Dilution' is another condition that can be grouped under the category 'leucism'. Plumage colour often appears 'washed out' (i.e. 'diluted'). In dilution, melanin cells are present (unlike leucistic birds) but produce less pigment than normal. White feathers can also be caused by chromatophore (pigment cell) defects, rather than an absence of melanin-producing cells.

Albinism

Albinism also results in white feathers but true albinos are thought to be rare in the wild. Albinism is caused a genetic mutation causing an absence of tyrosinase in pigment cells. An albino individual is unable to produce melanin pigments. This leads to a good diagnostic feature with which to distinguish leucistic and albino individuals – the colour of the eye.

Albinos have pink eyes while the iris pigmentation of leucistic birds remains dark.

Most albino birds die soon after fledging, primarily as a consequence of their poor eyesight, and albino birds are not thought to progress to adulthood in the wild.



Curious Critters - Fishflies



Photo credit to Yvonne Metcalfe

Fishfly - (*Chauliodes pectinicornis*)

Fishflies are members of the subfamily Chauliodinae, belonging to the megalopteran family Corydalidae, which is part of the Alderfly and Dobsonfly group of winged insects.

Fishflies are quite large, their wing span being from 2.5 to 3". These wings, which are as long or longer than their bodies, fold tightly, one over the other, when closed. Veins cover the entire wings, as well as splotches of coloration. They are generally noticed because of this large size, color and their seemingly un-coordinated flight approach. They have jaws with saw like teeth and long feathery antennae and are usually found hanging around vegetation near moving water. Adults can be found resting on dwellings nearby.

Activity is mostly seen at night during late spring and throughout the summer as the adults are drawn to light. They may live up to seven days as adults. They will eat aquatic plants as well as smallish animals including vertebrates like minnows and tadpoles, worms, small bivalves and algae. Adult Fishflies are also able to pull aquatic insects like naiads and water beetles etc., out of the water and eat them.

Males use their jaws to fight over the females. Females lay hundreds of fertilized eggs above the water on low hanging branches or plants. The larvae then hatch and drop into the water, where they remain for approx. 1-5 years.

Condensed from Insectidentification.org

Members Photo Gallery



Pintails photo credit to Marilyn Murray



Purple Finch photo credit to Paul Forde



After the Ice Storm
photo credit to Jennifer Howard



Sharp-shinned Hawk
photo credit to Marilyn Murray



Snowy Owl - Tiffin Pancake Trip
photo credit to Chris Evans

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