

White-tailed Deer

Odocoileus virginianus

Photo credit to Jim Charlebois



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A Message from your Editor

The temperature is climbing. Spring is on its way and our thoughts turn once again to the “great outdoors”. The garden awaits. Leaves are still bundled up in their icy casings. Branches have snapped and the mountain of discarded bird seed hulls under the feeder is growing.

Lots of people decide to rake or even completely de-thatch their lawns just as soon as the snow is gone in March or early April. The problem with this practice is that the lawn is still in its winter dormancy (it’s brown), and it is tough to tell which parts are dead and matted and which parts are just still dormant. When de-thatching too early, you end up ripping up lots of your healthy turf. It is a good practice to wait until later in April when your lawn is naturally waking up and turning green. Once this happens, you can easily see the areas of the lawn that are not recovering, and those are the spots you will rake out.

As for the mountain of leaves that have blown in since fall. That’s another story. Most of your garden allies, the insects which are pollinating your flowers and veggies are still sleeping quietly in all that debris. They have overwintered there, tucked up under that nice warm blanket and inside hollowed out stems. Give them a chance to wake up and feel the warmth in the sun. Your garden will thank you for your patience.

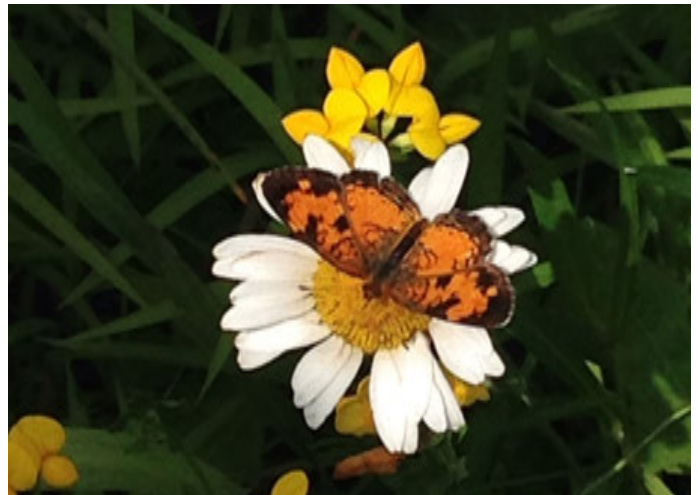
If you are thinking about replacing some of your perennials, planting a tree or growing from seeds, think native species rather than exotics. You will have a healthier garden and save a bundle of money too. However, it’s fine to fill in spaces with multi coloured annuals to add a vibrant splash. Butterflies will visit for the nectar they provide but it’s the natives they need to feed their young caterpillar’s appetite.



There are literally hundreds of sites on the web about native gardening, if you are interested in going this route. You may like to visit the nursery of Kate Harries in Elmvale. She is a wonderful resource on this topic. Visit her website www.returnofthenative.ca for hours and a plant list.

Frequently people ask for recommendations for plants to grow in specific locations. A good resource is the Native Plant Catalogue, plantsON2.pdf. This catalogue isn't based on an individual opinion but on many knowledgeable sources. Also, it is completely searchable so you can search for "sandy", "clayey", "wet", "dry", etc. Take a look at it and I think you'll like what you see. Native Plants all the way!

So if you're not too busy having fun and searching for new additions to the garden, why not come out on one of our many spring walks? The club has once again, organized many outings for your enjoyment. Something for every one, the birders, the generalists and the plant folks.



We still have a great need for volunteers. If you have time to help out with promoting the club or planting a tree. I have mentioned these opportunities throughout this edition, along with the contact info. for those folks who would love to have you join them. I hope to see you all out and about.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Blue Heron.

If you would like to contribute an article or share your photos, don't hesitate to contact me.

clareholden5@gmail.com

Coming Events - Meetings *April 2019 - Sept 2019*

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.

Becoming a member will 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.naturebarrie.com

or Nature Barrie Facebook Group Events and Discussion sections.

April 26 Friday 2019 Annual General Meeting

Location: North West Barrie United Church (NWBUC)

464 Ferndale Drive North, Barrie

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

To show pictures, please contact:

Alex Mills at 705-739-1094

For potluck queries, please contact:

Christine Beggs at 705-721-6842

Once a year we have our general meeting where we celebrate the year past, where we plan for the year ahead, and where we celebrate spring as it returns to Simcoe County. The evening features a tasty pot luck dinner, and usually several members deliver mini-presentations of a memorable natural history theme. Bring a dish for our "most delicious" Potluck supper & share with your friends.

The business portion of the meeting will take place after dinner.

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

There are no more meetings scheduled until September.

Please check our website for dates & times of our next seasons meetings

Coming Events & Field Trips *April 2019– Sept 2019*

FIELD TRIPS The Meeting point for all FIELD TRIPS will be Little Lake Parking lot (LLPL) at the far (east) end of Little Lake Road. Take Duckworth St. Northbound to just past Hwy. 400. 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. **It would be most appropriate to offer your driver recompense for the fuel expenses.**

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.naturebarrie.com You may wish to phone the trip leader for details regarding length, terrain, lunch etc. Please note that on some of our outings biting insects could be a problem. In particular we need to be concerned about ticks and **Lyme disease**.

Please check out the following site for tips on prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/features/lymedisease/>

Coming Events & Field Trips (cont.) April 2019 – Sept 2019

OFO YOUNG BIRDERS:

OFO Young Birders field trips and workshops are for birders age 9 -19. The only prerequisites are enthusiasm and curiosity about birds. Nature Barrie supports this initiative and Brian Gibbon will host Young Birders on some of his outings. That having been said young birders and naturalists are welcome to join in all Nature Barrie activities. Parents or guardians are expected to attend with their younger boys and girls.

NOTICE TO FIELD TRIP LEADERS It is expected that you will file a report of your field trip with the Editor of the Blue Heron, Clare Holden and with the Field trip co-coordinator, Jim Coey. This creates a historical record of bird and plant populations in Simcoe County and documents increases or decreases in species.

It would be appreciated if the leaders please announce the next Nature Barrie event at the conclusion of their trip.

April 17 Wednesday Evening 2019 American Woodcocks

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 7:30 pm.

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.

Wear waterproof boots, and bring bug repellent and a flashlight.

Note departure time, Moderate difficulty walking conditions

May 1 Wednesday Evening 2019 The Gables

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: 6:00pm. at LLP

or meet at the Gables parking lot at 6:20pm.

250 Tollendal Mill Road at Hurst Drive

Leader: Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580

This 43 acre natural park within the City of Barrie has many attractive features—forested shoreline on Kempenfelt Bay, hardwood forests, pine plantations, native wildflowers and naturalized spring bulbs such as yellow anemones and spring squill. It is also a spot that attracts migrant birds.

Easy walk on maintained trails.

May 4 Saturday 2019 Copeland Forest

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 8:00 a.m.

Please note second meeting place:

Copeland Forest parking area off Ingram Rd, first parking lot east of Highway 93 at 8:30 a.m.

Leader: Dave Lord 705-835-6642

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

This event will end about noon.

Moderate difficulty walking conditions.. Bug Spray, long pants, snacks and water.



Coming Events & Field Trips (cont.) April 2019 – Sept 2019

May 5 Sunday 2019 Washago Wanderings

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 6:30 a.m. from LLPL

Leader: Alex Mills 705-739-1094

In early May spring migration is in full swing. Birds are returning to the province in huge numbers, many having flown 1000's of miles to get here. Some are just moving through, others have found prime nesting habitat and are settling down to find a mate and establish a territory. Birders all over Ontario are out in force to witness this awe-inspiring spectacle.

Why not join Alex Mills on a trip to Washago (30 minute drive) to witness this annual ritual?

This will be an approximately 3km. walk.

Long pants, water and snacks. Finished by 11.00am

May 11 Saturday 2019 Spring Migration at Tiny Marsh

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 7:00 a.m. from LLPL

Leader: Don Scanlan 705-726-6591

Tiny Marsh might be the richest spot for birds in Simcoe County. It's in Tiny Township, and it's a giant wetland with a great diversity of nesting birds. Surrounding the marshes are various swamps and woods, and these too, host many birds, especially migrants like warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. Migration peaks in mid-May, and this is a great chance to see many species.

Pack a lunch. Easy walk. Bug spray, long pants.

May 11 Saturday 2019 Tree Planting

Location: Sandy Hollow

Disc Golf, Barrie

Time: 10am. – 12 noon

Leader: Gwen Petremen
705-722-5377



Nature Barrie in partnership with Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority will be involved in a tree planting project on Saturday, May 11 from 10-12. Rain or shine. Shovels, gloves, snacks, and drinks will be provided. Final location will most likely most likely Sandy Hollow, Disc Golf Barrie. Please call Gwen if you plan to attend & to verify location.

May 15 Wednesday 2019 Little Lake area

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 8:00 a.m. from LLPL

Leader: Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580

This will be a 2 part walk. We will spend about 45 minutes birding the park surrounding our meeting place, and then we will drive to the north side of the lake for a 2 1/2 - 3 hour hike observing mid-spring wildflowers and forest birds. This will be a sampling of a small part of the 600 + acres of city parkland around Little Lake.

Medium walking difficulty. Bug spray, long pants, snacks and water.

Coming Events & Field Trips (cont.) April 2019 – Sept 2019

May 25 Saturday 2019 Birding Barrie

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 8:00 a.m. from LLPL

Leader: Jim Coey 705- 543- 1866

Barrie is now a sizable city with lots of woods, parks, open country, and wetlands, and Kempenfelt Bay. We will celebrate the biodiversity of the city by visiting a few of these spots, visiting various habitats to maximize our findings. We will watch for breeding birds and migrants, as well as other interesting flora and fauna.

Wear solid footwear and bring sunscreen and bug repellent, snacks and water.

May 28 Tuesday evening 2019 Swift Night Out with Wild Birds Unlimited

Location: Wild Birds Unlimited Store

515 Bryne Drive, Barrie

Time: 7:15pm.

Leaders: Phyllis Tremblay 705-737-2580

Inga Brinckmann

Kirsten Martyn 705-726-7600

Chimney Swifts return to Barrie each spring from their winter range in the Andes, with the intention of nesting in suitable chimneys. Like many “aerial insectivores” Chimney Swifts have seriously declined in Canada, and our club has undertaken a monitoring role in town. Join Phyllis and Inga for an hour’s worth of evening surveying, as the birds select roosts for the night.

In town easy walking.

June 1 Saturday 2019 Celebrate Barrie

Location: TBD

Time: 9:30 am. to 5pm.

Leader: Gwen Petremen 705-722-5377

Volunteers Needed

Nature Barrie has the opportunity to apply to have a display highlighting our Club’s mission and many activities. However, we need to have confirmed volunteers to attend and interact with residents, help set up at 9:30 am and dismantle at 5 pm. The date for Celebrate Barrie is usually on the first Saturday in June

June 2 Sunday 2019 Oro Rail Trail Flora & Fauna

Location: Departs from LLPL

Time: Depart 8:30 a.m.

Leaders: Brian & Lynne Gibbon 705-721-4599

This trip has been chosen to support OFO’s Young Birders initiative.

Join Brian and Lynne for one of their delightful rail trail strolls. Breeding birds are on territories and the first dragonfly and butterflies are just making their appearance.

Easy walking, snack & water, ends 1-2:00 pm



Coming Events & Field Trips (cont.) *April 2019 – Sept 2019*

June 5 Wednesday 2019 Eastern Bluebird Nest Box Trail

Location: Departs from Barrie Hill Farms area

Meet at the mailbox parking lot at the corner of Seadon Rd and Barrie Hill Rd.

Time: 7:00 pm.

Leader: Lane Henderson 905-960-3238

Examine the Eastern Bluebird nest boxes with the Nature Barrie monitoring team, to see what eggs and chicks have been created, and to hear our stories!

Eastern Bluebirds and Tree swallow chicks are usually there! Great photo opportunities with the adult Bluebirds as we feed them mealworms.

Wear good foot wear and tick protection clothing as we will be walking from the parking lot in long and mown grass, for a km or more.

Driving the route is also possible.

June 8 Saturday 2019 Birding Cardan Alvar

Location: Depart from Little Lake Parking Lot

Time: 7:30 am. to 4pm.

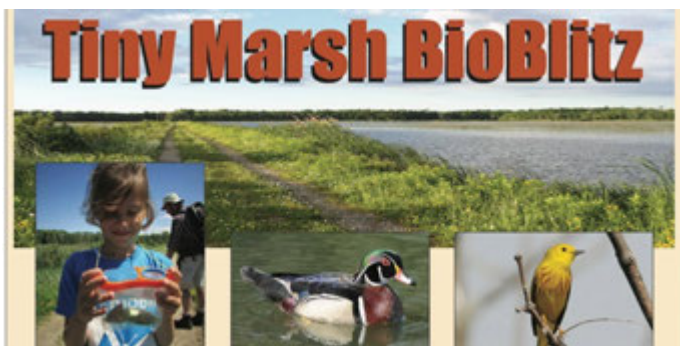
Leader: Brian Gibbon 705-721-4599

This trip has been chosen to support OFO's Young Birders initiative.

Alvars are a rare landscape, places where limestone flats are near the surface, creating conditions for a specialized flora and wonderful bird habitat. Cardan Alvar (about an hour's drive from Barrie) is a great place to view a rich diversity of birds, some of which are very difficult to find elsewhere.

Vehicle and easy walking, bring lunch & drinks or enjoy local restaurant. Ends 3-4:00 pm

June 21 Friday - June 22 Saturday 2019 Matchedash Bay/Tiny Marsh BioBlitz



Friday June 21 at 3:00pm

until Saturday June 22 at 3:00pm

Tiny Marsh Provincial Wildlife Area

500 Tiny Flos Townline

A planned 24-hour BioBlitz in 2019!
to be spread over two Provincial Wildlife Areas.

The Friday BioBlitz at Matchedash Bay will be more naturalist-oriented with teams & individuals covering different areas, with flexibility on how late to stay out. The Saturday BioBlitz at Tiny Marsh (the 5th annual) will be family- and novice-friendly,.

It will follow the format of previous years with 2- to 3-hour outings led by specialists and will be running from 6am to 3 pm.

More details can be found on Page 10.

It will be free to all participants this year

Contact: Kate Harries 705-322-2545

Check Eventbrite for more information.

Trip Reports

2019 6th. Annual CBC4K—Chris Evans

The 6th Annual Barrie Christmas Bird Count for kids was hosted by the NVCA at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation and was a huge success. The weather was much friendlier this year (we had to cancel the 5th Annual due to extreme cold) with the temperature steady at 1° C, wind 6 km/h from many directions and overcast. The NVCA staff had done their usual excellent job organizing the event and feeding the birds in the weeks leading up to it so there were plenty of birds for all to identify and record. The Great Room in the Jose building was made warm and cozy with a wonderful fire and the energy of all the participants.



Photos credit to Ruth Noland-Flores

45 participants attended, 22 adults and 23 kids (most under 12), plus 5 experienced birder Nature Barrie volunteers, NVCA volunteer + NVCA staff. The field observers were 51 in total divided into 4 parties. The largest party was 18 people, an enthusiastic group from the Barrie District Hunters & Anglers Conservation Club.

The four parties essentially covered the same routes and distances with some deviations, so the distance reported was the longest distance, 2.5 km + plus an allowance for differences, 0.5 km = 3.0 km total for the distance effort. The time duration reported in eBird was the sum of the times of the four parties 4 hours. Since all groups covered virtually the same routes and bird feeders, it was assumed each group would be observing essentially the same birds with a few different birds being observed due to timing and route differences. So, in general for a given species the maximum number reported by one of the 4 parties was recorded

in eBird, with some allowances for the route differences and for location of the observation or sexes of the individuals observed. The habitats covered ranged from feeders near the Jose building to feeders in the Red Pine plantation to mature mixed forest to swamp to frozen pond to power line corridor. Very few birds were observed in the open forest and Red Pine Plantation. The majority of birds were observed at or near the bird feeders.

All tallied, there were 71 birds from 12 species recorded by 4 parties as follows:

Red-tailed Hawk 1, Herring Gull 7, Mourning Dove 3
Downy Woodpecker 5, Hairy Woodpecker 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 2, Black-capped Chickadee 39, White-breasted Nuthatch 5, Red-breasted Nuthatch 1, Brown Creeper 1, Blue Jay 4, American Crow 1
Mammals observed and recorded included Porcupine, Red Squirrel, Eastern Gray Squirrel 3 (1 grey morph & 2 black morph) and Coyote tracks.

Of course, the hot chocolate and crafts were enjoyed by many and all had a great morning learning or teaching birding skills and using them to connect with our fine feathered friends in the great outdoors while gathering and contributing data to the longest running and largest citizen science project in the world, the 119th Annual Christmas Bird Count, on World Migratory Bird Day, which is celebrated on January 5th every year!

Thank you to all of the participants who came out to explore nature and contribute to citizen science. Your observations have been submitted to the CBC4KCanada via eBird.

A big thank you to the NVCA for hosting this event, especially Heather and Kyra for organizing the event, crafts, pre-registration, hot chocolate, and for feeding the birds!

Thank you to all of the wonderful Nature Barrie volunteers who led the teams and helped the children and their families find, identify and record the birds, generously lending their binoculars, field guides, enthusiasm and expert guidance. They were: Chris Evans, Ruth Noland-Flores, Pirmin (PJ) Jäger, Hannah Stockford and Dave Knowles.

Thank you to Ruth and Tuija for doing registrations at the door.

Trip Reports

2019 6th. Annual CBC4K—Chris Evans (cont.)

Thank you PJ for tweaking and delivering the introduction to bird identification and counting.

Thank you to the partners and sponsors, NVCA, Nature Barrie, Bird Studies Canada and to [Wild Birds Unlimited](#) for providing bird seed throughout the year, and to Brian Gibbon who donated bird seed for this event.

Finally, special thanks to Kyra Howes for getting the ball rolling, doing nearly all of the work setting up and organizing this year's CBC4Kids with her three children and for initiating the 1st Annual CBC4kids!

For eBird users, this full report is available as a checklist on eBird at...

<https://ebird.org/canada/view/checklist/S51385922>



Photo credit to Ruth Noland-Flores

Minesing Floodplain Spring Migrants – Chris Evans

Weather was cool but decent. 2 C to 7 C, wind NNE 7 to 15 km/h mainly overcast with a welcome, though brief, sunny break along McKinnon Road.

After a meet and greet at 7:45 AM we distributed radios and arranged carpooling. Sixteen of us set out in 7 vehicles from Little Lake Park at 8:00 AM for McKinnon Road.



Photos courtesy of Ruth Noland-Flores

When we got to McKinnon Road, some of the people who were meeting us there had moved on down the road. Others coming later joined us at the start of the gravel road where the flooded sod fields are.

Ultimately we became a convoy of 15 vehicles and 28 participants. We enjoyed good views of a few close birds such as the aristocratic Northern Pintails and,

thanks to those who brought scopes, good views of a variety of birds which were further back in the fields, such as Wild Turkeys, Gadwalls, American Wigeon and Wood Ducks. One Redhead was seen by some here. Several Great Blue Herons and a Merlin flew by us. Birds were coming and going keeping us well entertained. We proceeded north on McKinnon Road to the end, gathering up a few early birders as we went, turned around and spent some time at Ervin's feeders. The feeders weren't too active, but there were some passerines like Northern Cardinal and Mourning Dove. The excitement rose as there were many swans staging to the NNW just barely visible through the trees. A family of five Trumpeter Swans came along trumpeting majestically, closely followed by a pair of silent Tundra Swans allowing for a nice comparison between these two related species. The Trumpeters will be nesting somewhere in the Georgian Bay region, while the Tundras are heading for the ... tundra ... perhaps along the shores of Hudson's Bay or even the arctic. A Merlin, perhaps the same one seen earlier, gave us a closer, slightly longer fly-by than previously. Though its fast, direct flight left most viewers unsatisfied, it provoked their interest in this small, fast falcon. Then a Golden Eagle made a rare and exciting appearance to the west of us at a fairly close range of 150 meters flying south through the trees. The relatively small, golden head, dark wing linings and dark primaries with lighter bases left no mistake about its identity,

Minesing Floodland Spring Migrants – Chris Evans (cont.)

and a magnificent impression upon observers. This sighting was quickly followed by an immature Bald eagle coming in from the south and to within 100 meters allowing us to compare its larger head, light wing linings and light belly in distinct contrast to the Golden Eagle. Not to be left out, this was soon followed by a small phalanx of 6 Tundra Swans flying to within 100 meters giving us a good opportunity to get a feel for their smaller heads, shorter, more curved bills and slightly smaller overall size than the Trumpeter Swans. As a grand finale for this spot, Dave Knowler spotted an adult Bald Eagle which gave us good views as it flew by from the north. It had no rectrices (tail feathers), but had no trouble flying along without them. I have seen an adult Bald Eagle with no rectrices in this area on at least 8 occasions over the past few years. I'm not sure if this is a normal moulting phenomenon or if this is a bird with an unusual condition.

Rough-legged Hawk
Chris Evans



Minesing Wetlands C.A.--McKinnon Road,

39 species <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54874683>

Canada Goose 26, Trumpeter Swan 7, Tundra Swan 27, Wood Duck 2, Northern Shoveler 6, Gadwall 3, American Wigeon 6, Mallard 15, Northern Pintail 30, Green-winged Teal 4, Redhead 1, Ring-necked Duck 8, Bufflehead 4 (3 males), Common Goldeneye 2 (pair), Common Merganser 1, (male), Wild Turkey 43, Pied-billed Grebe 1, Great Blue Heron 4, Golden Eagle 1, (adult Eagle seen well flying by below treetops for 10 seconds, golden nape, head and bill relatively smaller than bald eagle's in proportion to body and tail, dark wing linings, lighter bases of primaries). Bald Eagle 2, (one immature and one adult, which had no rectrices), Red-tailed Hawk 1, Rough-legged Hawk 1, Red-bellied Woodpeck-

er 1, (heard), Downy Woodpecker 1, Merlin 1, Blue Jay 6, American Crow 5, Tree Swallow 3, Black-capped Chickadee 1, White-breasted Nuthatch 1, American Robin 10, European Starling 5, American Goldfinch 1, Song Sparrow 1, Northern Cardinal 1, Red-winged Blackbird 8, Rusty Blackbird 6, Common Grackle 34.

We then moved on to just south of the intersection of the flooded Sunnidale Concession 2 to observe the waterfowl there. The Adult Bald Eagle without rectrices was perched in a tree near the road to the west. A larger phalanx of twenty-five Tundra Swans emerged from the wetlands to the north and bugled their way southwest providing us with an excellent rendition of their voices which, in concert, resemble the Sandhill Crane's long, rolling bugle. Et voilà, a pair of Sandhill Cranes appeared, foraging on the east side of McKinnon! The sun made a brief appearance making viewing more dazzling, particularly for the small crew of Northern Shovelers we could observe here as they used their long, broad bills to dabble in the marsh. It requires a lot of dabbling to refuel on their long migration north from the tropics to Hudson's Bay. This was our cue to head to the queue for the head for a bio break and refueling ourselves at McDonald's or Tim Hortons in Angus. Off we went.

Minesing Wetlands C.A.--Strongville Road,

13 species <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54874699>

Canada Goose 200, Tundra Swan 8, American Black Duck 2, Mallard 25, Green-winged Teal 8, Hooded Merganser 2, Turkey Vulture 4, Buteo sp. 2, American Kestrel 1 (female), Sandhill Crane 450, Killdeer 2, Mourning Dove 2, American Robin 1, Common Grackle 1.



Sandhill Cranes by Chris Evans

We regrouped on the 7th Concession of Sunnidale, hailing some wayward members of our cohort who had found themselves at our usual rendezvous spot on the 6th Concession. I had announced a last minute decision

Minesing Floodland Spring Migrants – Chris Evans (cont.)

to change our rendezvous because the 6th Conc. and the 15/16 Sideroad were very muddy and rough and because the Bald Eagle nest which we usually viewed from the end of the 6th has now blown down. We were anticipating Sandhill Cranes and, lo, north of the intersection of the 7th Conc. and 15/16 SDRD were a small troop of about fifteen Sandhill Cranes. We stopped here and had a good look as insurance and then proceeded to the flooded fields at 18/19 SDRD.

There were numerous waterfowl here, but they were quite distant as the floodwaters had receded significantly. A few Hooded Mergansers were seen here among the other usual suspects. We did have a minor incident here as one vehicle of our convoy was leaving early to head home, they tarried beside the convoy briefly. A local vehicle was, thus, momentarily delayed and vented their frustration by spraying gravel from their spinning wheels. This incident highlights the importance of being very diligent and aware of other vehi-



cles and not blocking the road.

We then proceeded to Strongville Road and some got glimpses of a shy female American Kestrel which wasn't comfortable with us driving beside its power line in convoy. This is usual behaviour for American Kestrels and makes it difficult to observe their beauty in this setting.

We stopped along Strongville Road just south of the 9th Concession to view the large flock of about 430 (count thanks to Lev Frid) Sandhill Cranes on the less traveled portion of Strongville Road for safety and in consideration of the heavier traffic on Strongville Road north of the 9th. We got good views of some of the cranes about 400 meters to the east and took time to observe their behaviour. We then stopped again very briefly north of the 9th to observe some of the cranes within 200 meters, but did not get out of our vehicles.

Then on to Ronald Road!

Again, the floodwaters were receding and the birds were over 700 meters away to the south, but there were lots of them. Among the hundreds of Canada Geese, two white birds stood out.

Thanks again to those with spotting scopes, we could identify the two as Snow Geese. There were other waterfowl we could identify with the scopes such as Gadwall, Wood Duck, Mallard and American Wigeon. On to our next bio break and refuel at Four Cedars Café and Convenience, with thanks to them for their hospitality! Onward to our last stop, the NVCA canoe corral at Willow Creek on George Johnston Road.

Minesing Wetlands C.A.--Ronald Road at Glengarry Rd, 11 species <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54876009>

Snow Goose 2, Canada Goose 250, Trumpeter Swan 2, Wood Duck 5, Gadwall 1, Mallard 26, Rock Pigeon 8, Ring-billed Gull 25, Herring Gull 4, American Crow 6, Common Raven 1

The flooded fields east of the road could be viewed safely and comfortably from the parking lot. Caution, the entrance to the parking lot is deeply rutted. The fields offered us good views of Herring and Ring-billed Gulls in their crisp white, grey and black breeding plumages. The Ring-billed now sport a bright red orbital ring and gape, whereas the Herring have a more subdued orange-yellow orbital ring and a yellow gape. To cap off our trip nicely an Eastern Phoebe was characteristically pumping its tail in a tree beside the creek near the bridge, under which it will likely build a nest in the coming weeks.

All-in-all a delightful spring tour was enjoyed by all.

Mammals

Eastern Cottontail	1	(Roadkill)
Muskrat	1	
Porcupine	1	
Eastern Gray Squirrel	1	

Minesing Wetlands C.A.--Regional Rd. 28

6 Species <https://ebird.org/view/checklist/S54874729>

Ring-billed Gull 25, Herring Gull 4, Eastern Phoebe 1, Song Sparrow 3, Red-winged Blackbird 2, Common Grackle 1.

Monitoring Reports

2018 Christmas Bird Count Data

SPECIES	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	All Team	Prev Year	Change
DUCKS, GEESE & SWANS												
Snow Goose												
Brant												
Cackling Goose												
Canada Goose	88		695		9	4		650	263	1,709	642	1,067
Canada Goose (small races)												
Trumpeter Swan	19		2					13	1	35	3	32
Tundra Swan												
Wood Duck												
Gadwall												
American Wigeon											1	-1
American Black Duck	10		10					54	20	94	82	12
Mallard	856	2	640					200	240	1,938	1,871	67
<i>Black Duck/Mallard</i>											2	-2
Blue-winged Teal												
Northern Shoveler												
Northern Pintail												
Green-winged Teal								2		2	3	-1
<i>domestic duck sp.</i>												
Canvasback												
Redhead											1	-1
Ring-necked Duck											2	-2
Greater Scaup								4		4	12	-8
Lesser Scaup												
<i>scaup species</i>												
Common Eider												
Harlequin Duck												
Surf Scoter												
White-winged Scoter											1	-1
Black Scoter												
<i>scoter species</i>												
Long-tailed Duck	1		1					7	6	15	17	-2
Bufflehead	2		2					55	16	75	18	57
Common Goldeneye	31		8					60	296	395	272	123
Hooded Merganser	2		3					35	13	53	46	7
Common Merganser	684		1,175					90	86	2,035	935	1,100
Red-breasted Merganser									1	1	2	-1
Ruddy Duck												
<i>duck sp.</i>	1	5								6	4	2
GROUSE & TURKEYS												
Ring-necked Pheasant												
Ruffed Grouse		6			4					10	2	8
Spruce Grouse												
Wild Turkey	28		115	10	78	25	93			349	221	128



Monitoring Reports

2018 Christmas Bird Count Data

LOONS										
Red-throated Loon										
Common Loon			2					2	5	-3
GREBES										
Pied-billed Grebe									1	-1
Horned Grebe								CW		
Red-necked Grebe	55		1			4	5	65	3	62
<i>grebe sp.</i>									1	-1
CORMORANTS										
Double-crested Cormorant			3				1	4	3	1
HERONS & BITTERNS										
Great Blue Heron					1	1			2	1
VULTURES										
Black Vulture										
Turkey Vulture										
HAWKS & EAGLES										
Golden Eagle										
Northern Harrier										
Sharp-shinned Hawk								2	2	
Cooper's Hawk	1		2				3	2	8	6
Northern Goshawk										
<i>accipiter sp.</i>									1	-1
Bald Eagle					1				1	9
Red-shouldered Hawk									1	-1
Broad-winged Hawk										
Red-tailed Hawk			1	7	6	1	4	7	4	30
Rough-legged Hawk					3				3	2
<i>bufo sp.</i>										
<i>hawk sp.</i>										
RAILS & COOTS										
Virginia Rail										
American Coot									2	-2
PLOVERS										
Killdeer										
SANDPIPERS										
Wilson's/Common Snipe									1	-1
GULLS & TERNS										
Bonaparte's Gull	10		10						20	20
Little Gull										
Ring-billed Gull	75		80			1	9	3	71	239
Herring Gull	77	2	310			16	3	111	155	674
Thayer's Gull										
Iceland Gull			3						2	5
Lesser Black-backed Gull										5
Glaucous Gull			5					2	4	11

Monitoring Reports

2018 Christmas Bird Count Data

<i>white-winged gull sp.</i>												
Great Black-backed Gull	3		20			1	3	17	43	87	52	35
<i>gull sp.</i>	7	92	71	1			6			177	52	125
PIGEONS & DOVES												
Rock Pigeon	104	300	456	7	31	63	35	36	14	1,046	436	610
Mourning Dove	23	54	50	10	163	153	198	78	68	797	697	100
OWLS												
Barn Owl												
Eastern Screech-Owl						2		1	2	5	4	1
Great Horned Owl												
Snowy Owl							1	3		4		4
Barred Owl	1 CW		1							2	2	
Great Gray Owl												
Long-eared Owl												
Short-eared Owl												
Northern Saw-whet Owl												
<i>owl sp.</i>												
KINGFISHERS												
Belted Kingfisher	2		1		1					4	1	3
<i>kingfisher sp.</i>												
WOODPECKERS												
Red-headed Woodpecker												
Red-bellied Woodpecker		1			3	1	3	2	5	15	18	-3
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker												
Downy Woodpecker	7	17	8	6	1	31	5	5	10	90	109	-19
Hairy Woodpecker	1	14	2	4	4	5	6	1	4	41	36	5
Three-toed Woodpecker												
Black-backed Woodpecker												
Northern Flicker												
Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker		1								1	1	
Pileated Woodpecker		5	2	2	2		1	1	2	15	11	4
<i>woodpecker sp.</i>	2			1						3	3	
FALCONS												
American Kestrel							1			1		1
Merlin												
Gyrfalcon												
Peregrine Falcon												
<i>falcon sp.</i>												
SHRIKES												
Loggerhead Shrike												
Northern Shrike	1				3					4	2	2
<i>shrike sp.</i>												
CROWS & JAYS												
Gray Jay												
Blue Jay	12	34	4	10	26	24	60	16	13	199	197	2
American Crow	19	11	3	3	6	17	31	14	17	121	128	-7
Common Raven		5	4	1	10	7 CW		1		28	22	6



Monitoring Reports

2018 Christmas Bird Count Data

LARKS												
Horned Lark												
CHICKADEES												
Black-capped Chickadee	94	112	60	39	71	103	118	47	182	826	740	86
Boreal Chickadee												
NUTHATCHES & CREEPERS												
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6	7	3	7	1	6	5	2	10	47	30	17
White-breasted Nuthatch	12	18	10	10	11	23	8	12	35	139	68	71
<i>nuthatch sp.</i>												
Brown Creeper		CW	4			3				7	8	-1
WRENS												
Carolina Wren												
Winter Wren			1							1		1
KINGLETS												
Golden-crowned Kinglet			1	2	3	4				10	22	-12
Ruby-crowned Kinglet												
THRUSHES & STARLINGS												
Eastern Bluebird											7	-7
Hermit Thrush									1	1	1	
American Robin	1		1				2		1	5	8	-3
Gray Catbird											1	-1
THRASHERS												
Brown Thrasher												
STARLINGS AND MYNAS												
European Starling	20	90	1,417		20	4	51	198	36	1,836	1,412	424
WAXWINGS												
Bohemian Waxwing												
Cedar Waxwing	95							60		155	284	-129
<i>waxwing sp.</i>												
LONGSPURS & BUNTINGS												
Lapland Longspur												
Snow Bunting						5				5	338	-333
WARBLERS												
Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler												
SPARROWS												
American Tree Sparrow		5	6		15	11	2	3	1	43	152	-109
Chipping Sparrow											1	-1
Field Sparrow												
<i>Dark-eyed Junco sp.</i>												
Dark-eyed (Slate col) Junco	26	21	35	1	11	27	6	15	29	171	370	-199
Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco												
White-crowned Sparrow												
White-throated Sparrow			1			1	1	1	1	5	5	
Le Conte's Sparrow												
Song Sparrow			1			2				3	11	-8

Monitoring Reports

2018 Christmas Bird Count Data

Lincoln's Sparrow													
Swamp Sparrow												2	-2
Eastern Towhee													
<i>sparrow sp.</i>													
CARDINALS													
Northern Cardinal	12	18	10	2	3	16	7	14	11	93	63	30	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak													
BLACKBIRDS AND ORIOLES													
Red-winged Blackbird												2	-2
Eastern Meadowlark													
<i>meadowlark sp.</i>													
Rusty Blackbird													
Common Grackle					1	1				2		2	
Brown-headed Cowbird													
Baltimore Oriole													
<i>blackbird sp.</i>													
FINCHES													
Pine Grosbeak				1		5	5		7	18		18	
House Finch	3	5	5			12		4	12	41	26	15	
Purple Finch		1								1		1	
Red Crossbill													
White-winged Crossbill											2	-2	
<i>crossbill sp.</i>													
Common Redpoll			97		6	16		110		229		229	
Hoary Redpoll													
<i>redpoll sp.</i>													
Pine Siskin											8	-8	
American Goldfinch	13	42	29	5	7	51	26	31	23	227	307	-80	
Evening Grosbeak		CW								CW			
<i>finch sp.</i>				5						5	23	-18	
IMPORTS													
House Sparrow	16	75	47		10	2	14	50	1	215	211	4	

Count	2,420	944	5,424	127	511	649	704	2,022	1,711	14,512	10,452	4,060	
Species	36	25	48	17	30	36	27	43	40	68	76	-8	
From Count Week	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	6	-1	



Many thanks to all those folks who spent hours, leading the teams, compiling this data and diligently editing this information. Special thanks go to Chris Evans for co-ordinating this event and to Brian Backland who was our official recorder

SwiftWatch – Phyllis Tremblay

Barrie SwiftWatchers’ Action Plan: for this coming year:

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

May 16, 22, 26, 30 & June 3 National Population Roost Monitoring Blitz

May 28 “Swift Night Out” Educational Event with Wild Birds Unlimited

Every Tuesday Evening, Starting **June 11**, the Swift-watch team will spot-check previously occupied chimneys, regularly monitor roosts & identify potential chimneys.

Meet up location will be at 75 Mulcaster St. (corner of Mulcaster & McDonald; aka The Courthouse and the parking lot at the “Old City Jail”) unless otherwise informed.

Also, Presence/Absence Surveys will be conducted during various stages of the chimney swifts’ seasonal behaviour. Just before sunset, participants will 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 contact Phyllis Tremblay at petremblay@rogers.com
All necessary training will be given to new volunteers.



Bluebird Monitoring - Clare Holden

The Bluebird team is excited to be starting a new season. We have had a few new team members show interest in monitoring our trails. Preparations will soon begin to revamp, replace and upgrade some of our well worn boxes and feeding trays.

In the not too distant future we will be holding new volunteer training. If there are any members who wish to join our team but are hesitant to commit on a regular basis, there is a need for fill-in monitors during folks vacations. This is always a good way to introduce yourselves to this fun & rewarding Citizen Science project.

We have the dates set for 2 outings this season. The first being on Wednesday June 5th at 7pm. Where we will be visiting the North Barrie Boxes. The second is a joint outing with the folks from Wild Birds Unlimited. This will be an information session at their store, followed by an outing to some of South end boxes.



Nature Notes

June 22 Saturday 2019 Tiny Marsh BioBlitz

Join expert naturalists and discover the amazing diversity of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects, fish and plants that live within this expanse of marsh, forest and field north-west of Elmvale.

A BioBlitz is an intense search for as many species as possible in a given space over a given time period. The search is for variety, not quantity – so each species gets counted only once, no matter how many individuals are seen. For Tiny Marsh Blitzers, the space is the provincial wildlife area's approximately 900 hectares. Tiny Marsh is recognized as an Important Bird Area, a globally significant habitat for the conservation of bird populations.

Come for just one activity, all day, or part of the day. Our children's activities attract more interest every year and we're delighted to help introduce the wonders of nature to the next generation.

Early-bird activities begin at 6:00 am, when the bird groups head out to find waterfowl, songbirds and raptors at the time of day during which they are most active.

Our formal welcome is at 9:45 at the Nature Centre followed by a variety of guided activities beginning at 10:00. We will break for lunch from noon - 1:00.

Please bring your own packed lunch & water.

A second round of guided activities begins at 1:00 pm followed by a sharing circle at 3:00 pm. This year we

will finish the day with a special sunset activity from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm. Check Eventbrite for full the event schedule.

This is a fun day for specialists, amateurs and newcomers to the world of nature. We have found that a 7-year-old is as likely as a seasoned naturalist to spot a rarity. And children delight in the process of discovery and playing a role as part of the team.

Arrive prepared with weather appropriate clothing including a hat, long pants, and closed footwear, sun protection, sufficient water and insect repellent. Bring snacks (especially those participating in the early morning bird walk). This is a rain or shine event!

Please note there is no potable water available at Tiny Marsh so bring enough water for your day especially if warm temperatures are forecast.



Garlic Mustard Pulls in Copeland Forest

Garlic mustard has increased over the last fifteen years in the mature deciduous upland part of the Copeland. Garlic Mustard spreads rapidly, eventually dominating the ecologically rich forest understory.

The garlic mustard root releases toxic chemicals reducing up to 75% of nutrients going to woodland plants, even to maple, oak and black cherry saplings.

The canopy trees may not be replenished and when that leaf habitat disappears, so do the salamanders, snakes, insects, nesting birds and more.

Copeland Forest Friends have completed a study and marked the locations of garlic mustard.

Infestations are manageable, light to medium

Locations are easy to reach on the sides of trails where it has already displaced woodland plants

Spring pulling is best before each plant produces 1000 seeds

Pulling out the entire plant is easy, but must be done properly

No heavy hauling of bags. Compost bins close by in the Forest

Please sign up now and join in this important effort to control garlic mustard.

Register at: garlicmustard@copelandfriends.ca

Ontario Nature Huronia Regional Meeting



Saturday, May 4, 2019 10:00 a.m.

Haliburton Highlands Museum

Glebe Park, 66 Museum Road,

Haliburton, 2nd floor

www.haliburtonhighlandsmuseum

The Haliburton Museum is located west of the Village of Haliburton off Bayshore Road which is accessible from Highway 118 (Approx. 160 km from Barrie 1: 50 minutes).

Please let Dorothy know if you wish Car Pool.

The hosts will be Haliburton Highlands Field Naturalists

The days agenda will include:

10:00 Welcome to Haliburton Highlands Museum, Glebe Park. Glebe Park is home to the Haliburton Highlands Museum, Haliburton Sculpture Forest, Fleming College and Haliburton School of The Arts.

10:10 Club Highlights

11:30 New Provincial Changes to Environmental Policies

12:00 Lunch (bring your own bag lunch and mug)

12:45 Haliburton Highlands Field Naturalists Programs and Projects

1:15 Ontario Nature Board Report – Huronia Regional Director, Dorothy McKeown and Nature Network update by Barbara MacKenzie-Wynia, Regional Coordinator

2:00-4:00 Haliburton Highlands Museum Trail Hike. Glebe Park boasts 175 acres of woodlands and rolling hills within a network of trails for walking and nature interpretation. It’s also a great place to engage with art, culture and heritage. There is an opportunity to enjoy the trails, visit the Haliburton Sculpture Forest and the Museum (1882 Reid House and farmstead)

Ontario Nature North Regional Meeting

Also, if you’re feeling ready for an adventure.....

May 10th to 12th is the Ontario Nature North Regional Conference in Sudbury.

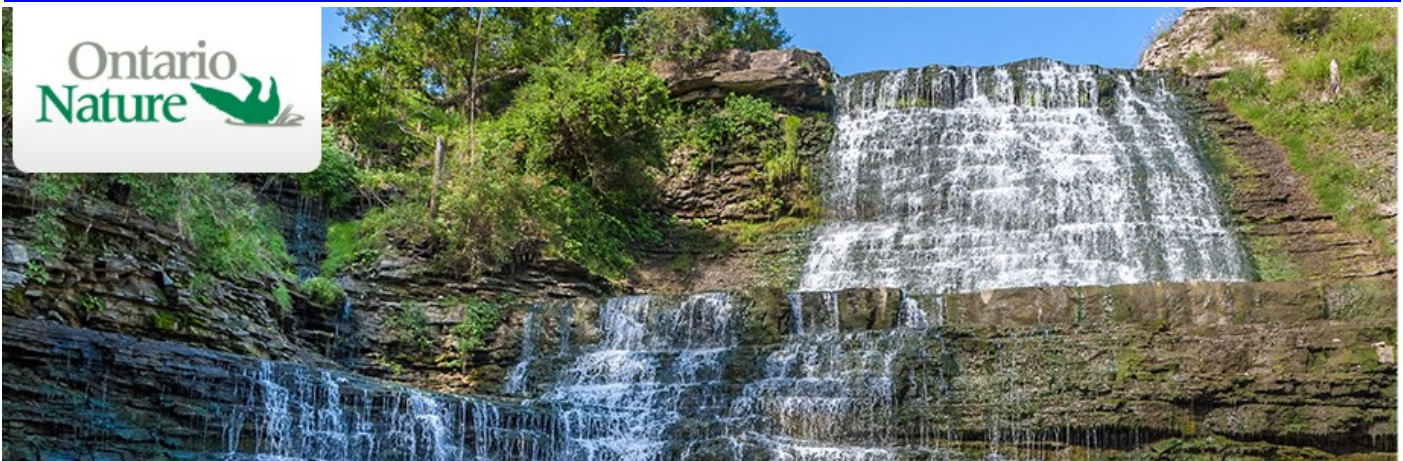
A weekend of great speakers, several field trips and many happy meals with fellow naturalists.

Reasonably priced accommodation is available at the University. Most meals are cooked by volunteers, so economically priced.

Contact Dorothy (dorothy.mckeown@gmail.com) for more details.



Ontario Nature AGM – Be the Change



This year's annual General Meeting will be taking place
May 31st – June 2nd, 2019

at Mohawk College, Hamilton

The format will be the same as previous years. Nature Workshops run twice on Saturday, June 1st, so you will have the opportunity to participate in two workshops. The morning session runs from 10:00 to 11:45 a.m. and the afternoon session runs from 1:15 to 3:00 p.m.

Field trips run on Sunday, June 2nd from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Participants will be picked up and dropped off at Mohawk College.

There will also be two keynote presentations on Saturday, one in the morning and one in the evening

Workshops will be as follows:

1. Conservation Corridors - Increasing Connectivity

This workshop will look at the importance of conservation corridors for maintaining habitat connectivity and protecting natural ecosystems. Climate change has increased the stress on natural ecosystems and has increased habitat loss, making conservation corridors more important than ever.

2. Lyme Disease in Ontario

Since the 90's the incidence of Lyme disease has increased across the province as the populations of black-legged ticks has expanded, especially in Eastern Ontario. In this workshop you will learn about the life history of blacklegged ticks in the province, how Lyme disease has spread across the province, and how to avoid getting a tick bite on your nature excursions so you can

explore your favourite haunts worry-free.

3. What the Carp!

In this workshop we will discuss how the introduction of new species of carp is harming our native fish species. We will learn what Ontario is doing to prevent these unwanted invaders, what needs to be done to prevent further invasions, and how we can restore the natural habitats of Cootes Paradise Marsh.

4. Creating a Pollinator Paradise

Pollinator populations are rapidly declining around the world due to factors such as habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Fortunately all of us can make a difference by creating pollinator-friendly habitats. Join this workshop to learn about fostering pollinators in your own backyard! Learn about the Pollinator Paradise Project run by the Hamilton Naturalists' Club and Environment Hamilton.

FIELD TRIPS will be as follows:

1. Walk the Falls Discover Ontario's Waterfall Capital Join us in a hike to visit Webster Falls and Tew Falls, two impressive Escarpment waterfalls in the Spencer Gorge in Dundas. Webster Falls is known for being a miniature Niagara, and Tew Falls is the tallest ribbon falls in Hamilton. Explore the rich natural ecology, history, and beautiful scenery surrounding the falls. Difficulty level: Easy to intermediate

2. Art and Nature This workshop will focus on making art inspired by the natural world. We will be using art and everyday items to remember and retain your favourite plant specimens. This workshop will use a mix of different art techniques to capture your memories of

Ontario Nature AGM – Be the Change (cont.)

nature exploration so you can remember them in the future!

3. Captivating Karst Explore Karst Topography and Landscapes. This tour will feature a walk to Albion Falls, a beautiful cascade of 21 metres surrounded by the natural amphitheatre of the Red Hill Creek Valley. Next take a brief stroll along the escarpment to adjacent Buttermilk Falls, a smaller but fascinating ribbon falls open to the sky. Visitors can peer down into the deep, round rocky bowl and imagine what the original forested area must have looked like before urbanization was established.

Difficulty level: Easy to intermediate

4. From Monarchs to Chimney Swifts A Visit to the Urquhart Butterfly Garden and Canal Park. Discover a beautiful and relaxing natural oasis of butterflies and moths, plants and flowers in a stroll through the Urquhart Butterfly Garden. This inspiring garden plays a valuable role in educating the public about how to contribute to protecting butterfly populations. Then walk to nearby Canal Park to visit a nesting site for Chimney Swifts in the area and explore the restored wetland, native trees, and meadow habitat along the park pathways.

Difficulty level: Easy

5. Brookies in Bronte Learn about brookies in Courtcliffe Park. Enjoy an easy hike to the confluence of Bronte and Mountsberg Creeks and be inspired by the extensive stream restoration project. A remarkable creek and habitat improvement using natural channel design techniques that include, creating a floodplain wetland, three new span bridges, and more. On this tour learn about the "Brookies in Bronte Forever!" initiative to encourage the return of trout to the park. Difficulty level: Easy

6. Conserving Cootes Paradise Explore Canada's Biodiversity Hotspot. Take a walk along the scenic waterfront Desjardin Trail to the RBG Fishway, where ecologists are at work as they assist migrating fish species to their spawning grounds in Cootes Paradise Marsh. Watch as the fish captured in baskets are sorted and weighed, with undesirable invasive carp being returned to Hamilton Harbour while desirable species are released into the marsh. Cootes Paradise is on its way to recovery thanks in part to the success of the Fishway, an environmental asset that attracts people of all ages. level: Easy to intermediate

The complete schedule of events can be found on the Ontario Nature website.

Area & Surrounds events

May 24th to 27th, May 30th to June 2nd Friends of MacGregor Point, Huron Fringe Birding Festival

This "Huron Fringe" along the Lake Huron coastline offers birders, naturalists and photographers unique opportunities to discover nature in the early spring.

Morning activities are filled with guided hikes concentrating not only on birds but wildflowers, butterflies and insects, in and outside the park. Afternoons feature additional hikes, workshops on bird identification and nature photography, plus other natural interests. Special events include a banquet with a special guest speaker.

See website for details.

<http://friendsofmacgregor.org/page/huron-fringe-birding-festival>

Sunday June 9th . Couchiching Conservancy Nuts for Nature kids event

<http://www.couchichingconserv.ca>

Friends of Presqu'île Park, Monarchs and Migrants Weekend, August 31st to Sept 1st.

Bird-banding, Monarch tagging and guided nature walks celebrate this weekend of fall migration.

www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca/calendar-of-events
NVCA Events:

April 28 - Friends of Minesing Spring Paddle
Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

May 3 - Family Nature Days: Wilderness Survival
Tiffin Centre for Conservation, 10 am to 3 pm

May 11 - Arbour Day Tree Sale

Tiffin Centre for Conservation, 8 am to 12 pm

May 11 - Friends of Minesing Spring Paddle
Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area, 8:30 am to 2:30 pm

For information on any of these events, visit nvca.on.ca or call 705-424-1479.

2018 Christmas Bird Count, Trumpeter Swans and More - Gwen Petreman

On Saturday, December 15, members of Nature Barrie participated with bubbly enthusiasm in the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) which is completed annually and forwarded to the National Audubon Society, a non-profit organization committed to protecting birds and their habitats.

On a single day birders, of all skill levels, come together and count as many different species and individuals within specific areas.

This is year Nature Barrie's total count was 14,512 with 68 different species. Last year the count was 10,452 with 76 different species.

Our group counted many different species including Robins, Loons, Long-tailed ducks, Northern shrike, Juncos, Pileated Woodpeckers and my personal favourite the Trumpeter Swans.. When we counted 8 Trumpeter swans in Kempenfelt Bay my heart soared as I reflected back to their early history.

It's hard to believe that the world's largest water fowl, which boasts an incredible wing span of about 10 feet (around 3 metres), was on the brink of extinction in the early 1900's

Before the settlers arrived in Canada there were over 100, 000 Trumpeter east of the Rockies. The last Trumpeter swan in Ontario was shot by a hunter in 1866.

Swans were easy targets for hunters and there were no laws against shooting migratory birds until 1961.

Trumpeter swans were especially coveted for their gleaming, white feathers which were used for powder puffs, ladies purses, and quill pens.

In 1982, Canada started a restoration program to restore the population of Trumpeter swans to a sustainable population. Here in Ontario, Harry Lumsden, a Conservationist led the project by hatching cygnets from eggs, from Western Canada.

Between 1982 and 2006 Lumsden released 500 swans into 50 wetlands including Wye Marsh, the very first location, then Kirkland Lake and North Bay.

By the year 2000, more than 1, 000 swans have been recorded and it's believed that in 2018 we now have more than 2,000 trumpeter swans.

In 2004, Lumsden was awarded the Order of Canada for all his work in restoring the Trumpeter swans back to Ontario.



Swans raised in breeding programs do not know how to fully migrate. Therefore, Trumpeter swans from Wye Marsh mostly migrate to Burlington, where they use the open shallow waters to get food. They are also fed by a dedicated group of volunteers. These volunteers also tag, & band, as well as identifying nesting and migrating patterns, mates, and longevity. They will rescue swans in poor health and restore them to wellness.

In order for the restoration to be complete swans must be able to migrate to their ancestral homes. A number of swans have learned how to migrate across Lake Ontario but so far none of the volunteers have identified any returns.

Today, La Salle Park in Burlington has the largest concentration of trumpeter swans in the winter.

That is all good news, now for the bad news...

For bird lovers it is disconcerting to discover that 314 species of birds will be seriously threatened by climate change by the end of this century. This is the model agreed upon by respected scientists around the world.

Dramatic climate change such as famine producing droughts, killer floods (worsening year by year), out-of-control forest fires, desertification of fertile lands, acidification of our oceans, melting of the polar caps, soaring record-breaking temperatures, increase in the number of deadly and property destroying weather events such as hurricane, tornadoes, cyclones, massive mud slides, freezing rain, and snow blizzards affect all birds in different ways.

It can greatly affect bird distribution in specific area. It can modify the birds' behaviour.

Their numbers can be dramatically reduced.

2018 Christmas Bird Count, Trumpeter Swans and More - Gwen Petreman (cont.)

And even their genetic composition can be altered.

The timing of year when birds migrate and when they breed can be drastically altered depending on the severity of the change in climate.

Birds are affected directly in a negative way if rainfall is suddenly reduced in a specific area or if there is a dramatic decline or increase in the temperature.

And as the climate changes in significant ways, birds may face increase pressure from parasites, new diseases, and predators to which they have not been able to adapt quickly enough.

Birds will also be increasingly and negatively impacted as more and more forest fires rage out of control for months and months, leaving behind a bare and blackened wasteland. Gone are the towering trees which birds depend on for food, dew, shelter, nesting materials, resting, and observation points.

And to make matters worse, climate change can create a carnage “combo” when it is combined with habitat loss and alien invasive species.

Today birds are one of the best studied groups of organisms. The data is already available clearly showing the devastating effects of climate change on birds

How You Can Help...?

The easiest and most effective way to protect birds and other wildlife is to preserve mature and old growth trees and become actively involved in planting as many trees as possible on your private property and in public spaces.

Here are a few suggestions of how you can make your contributions in your very own community.

1. You can become a member of Nature Barrie for \$30 for family, \$25 for individuals, and \$10 for a student.

<http://www.naturebarrie.com>

You may print the membership form and mail it in.

2. You can buy a membership for a friend for their birthday.

3. If you have friends who are bird lovers, why not make a donation to Nature Barrie in their name for a birthday.

Contact: gwenpetreman@gmail.com for more details.

4. Join Nature Barrie for our spring and Fall Tree Planting with Lake Simcoe Conservation Area and the city of Barrie. Circle your calendar for Saturday, May 11 for our Spring Tree Planting at Sandy Hollow.

Elmvale Maple Syrup Festival

Every year the town of Elmvale explodes in a celebration of Nature’s rites of Spring – the running of liquid gold – Ontario Pure Maple Syrup. The town transforms into a shoppers’ mall. Vendors line the streets with offerings of maple syrup, food galore, book sales, collectible sales and other country treasures. Don’t miss the Sugar Shack information booth where you can get directions, tickets for the bus to sugarbush tours as well as your copy of the Festival Directory. As you approach the Community Hall, you’ll smell the delicious aroma of pancakes and sausages.

As part of this celebration of spring, a few folks from the Tiny Marsh Biodiversity group along with members of Nature Barrie will be hosting a spring flower walk on the property of Tim Lalond. Part of his sugar bush trail runs into a woodlands behind the business area. Many of the early spring Ephemerals may be observed, along with some migrant birds and a few critters that call Elmvale their home.

See the attached poster for details.



Elmvale Maple Syrup Festival features

The Sugar Bush Nature Walk

Saturday April 27 2019
11:20am to noon

Join the naturalists from the Tiny Marsh Biodiversity group on a 40-minute walk through the sugar bush at a time when we are welcoming back many well-loved migrants and enjoying the flowering of our spring ephemerals

(Two photos of white and yellow flowers)

Catch the Sugar Bush bus, departing at 11am from Coffee Time. Or, head directly to Tim Lalonde's, 1355 Flos Rd 8 East, Elmvale, 1 km east of County Rd 27. The walk will leave at 11:20 am. More information: bioblitz@mtmconservation.org

Nature Notes

Our Member in Actions

I am delighted to report that our Nature Barrie Representative for the Active Transportation and Sustainability Committee is **Al McNair**

On December 17, 2018, Barrie City Council approved a Committee Appointment By-law 2018-146 to have a representative from Nature Barrie on the 2018 – 2022 Active Transportation and Sustainability Committee.

The Committee Mandate is as follows:

“To promote and facilitate active transportation initiatives, to promote the protection, maintenance and awareness of the environment within the community and to provide advice concerning environmental policy, planning and sustainability.”

Membership of the Committee comprises:

- Councillor K. Aylwin
- Councillor S. Morales
- 1 Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Rep.
- 1 representative from Nature Barrie Al McNair
- 5 Citizen Members.

Thank you Al for continuing this challenge.

Our publicity rep., Paul Forde, has not only approached the city about putting “birding” on the Tourism Barrie Website but he has also written the article & shared great photos that he has taken around the bay.

A sample of the introduction to this article reads:

“Get out and discover the bird community in Barrie! With a range of environments, there are lots of types of birds to discover. Take in birding by the side of Kempenfelt Bay, a popular hot-spot for rare birds. The Ontario Field Ornithologists (OFO) determined that there are nearly 500 bird species that have been recorded in Ontario on the basis of specimens, photographs, recordings, and documented sight records accepted by the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC).”

Please take the time to read the rest of this article at

www.tourismbarrie.com/things_to_do/birding-in-barrie

Thank you Paul for promoting us as a birding area

Be Green Show - April 20

Gwen Petremen

Nature Barrie will be participating in the

“Be Green Show”

on Saturday, April 20 from 9 am - 6 pm

Location: Holly Meadows Community Center

The “Be Green Show” and the City of Barrie, invites you and the entire Family to attend a fun filled day learning and interacting with the companies and organizations making our great City a greener place. If you can volunteer for a few hours, for the Nature Barrie exhibit, sometime between 8:30 am (set up), and 6 pm, it would be greatly appreciated.

Please contact Gwen at gwenpetreman@gmail.com.

Let her know which hours would be best for you.

Gwen is in the process of creating 3 new displays that are small, portable and light. They will have 3 themes:

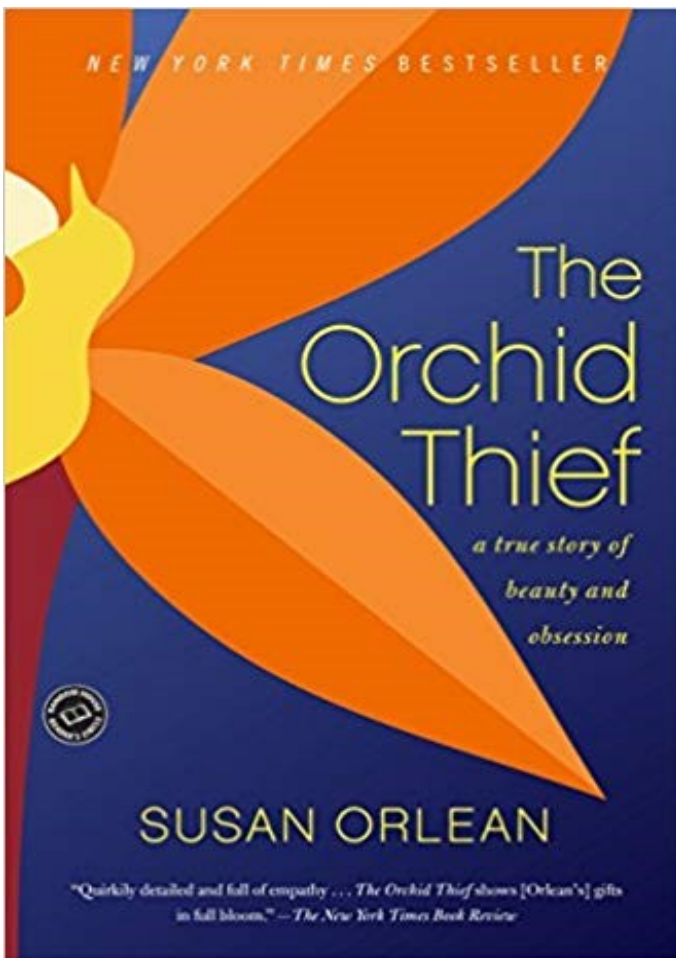
1. Focus on Nature Barrie and other Nature Groups in Ontario

2. Promoting the ecological health of Lake Simcoe.

3. Focus on the important role trees play in preserving the delicate web of life on Earth.



Book Review The Orchid Thief by Susan Orlean



This edition's book review is in two parts. The first review below is directly from Amazon's web site. It gives you a general synopsis of the books content but having read the book myself and met some of the characters, I can tell you that it far from the truth.

So review number one:

A modern classic of personal journalism, *The Orchid Thief* is Susan Orlean's wickedly funny, elegant, and captivating tale of an amazing obsession. Determined to clone an endangered flower, the rare Ghost Orchid *Polyrrhiza lindenii*. A deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean, and the reader, will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion.

So now the second review;

This tale, although based on the truth is far from the truth. It has upset the rangers in the Fakahatchee Swamp, who work tirelessly protecting 85,000 acres of Southern Florida, with a minimal staff of 4 people.

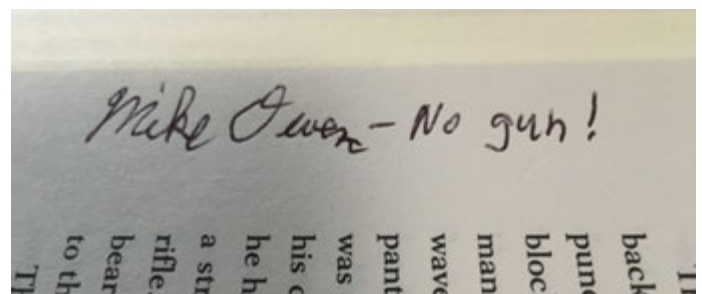
Poaching of Orchids, Bromeliads and other endangered plants, is a big problem to those who try and preserve the beauty and diversity of this fragile ecosystem.

The book is well written and easy to follow. It delves into the big business world of the Orchid industry. I for one had no idea that these plants were so sought after.

It developed from man's desire to possess something rare and valuable. And yes, I said man's because apparently women were not allowed to own or look at Orchids because they were considered too sexy!

Anyway, back to the story. The front cover of the book clearly states that this is a true story. However, that is just the first of many lies.

The ranger Mike Owen in the book is supposed to have taken the author around the abandoned Golden Gate area (think development scam from the 60's, when swampland was being sold to unsuspecting folks, that weren't aware that the land was under water half the year). The area became lawless after the players left, our author said she was guided by a gun wielding Mike Owen, who clearly told me he has never carried a gun.



When he was contacted by Susan Orlean, he set aside the entire day to help her understand the area. At no time did he leave her in the swamp, with or without company.

As for this thief Laroche, he deserves no respect and appears to have sociopathic tendencies.

I urge you to read this book and form your own opinion

Curious Critters - Water Scorpion (*Ranatra Sp.*)

Water scorpions aren't scorpions at all, of course, but their front legs do bear a passing resemblance to the scorpion. The family name, Nepidae, derives from the Latin nepa, meaning scorpion or crab. You don't need to worry about being stung by a water scorpion – it has no stinger.



photo credit to Hazel Galloway

Water scorpions vary in shape. Some are long and slender and these are often described as looking like aquatic walking sticks. Others have large, oval bodies, and look like smaller versions of giant water bugs. Water scorpions breathe by means of a respiratory tube formed from two long cerci that extend to the water's surface. So regardless of the body shape, you can recognize a water scorpion by this long "tail." Inclusive of these respiratory filaments, water scorpions range in size from 1-4 inches long.

Water scorpions capture prey with their raptorial front legs. As in all true bugs, they have piercing, sucking mouthparts. The head is narrow, with large side-facing eyes and although they do have antennae, it's difficult to see them.

Nymphs look much like adult water scorpions, though smaller, of course. The respiratory tube of the nymph is considerably shorter than in the adult. Each water scorpion egg bears two horns, which are actually spiracles that extend to the water's surface and provides oxygen to the developing embryo.

Water scorpions ambush their prey, which includes other aquatic insects, small crustaceans, tadpoles, and even small fish. The water scorpion grasps vegetation with its second and third pairs of legs, just below the water's surface. It sits and waits for a potential meal to swim by, at which point it straightens out its hind legs, pushes itself forward, and grasps the animal tightly with its front legs. The water scorpion pierces its prey with its beak or rostrum, injecting it with digestive enzymes, and then sucks up the meal.

Water scorpions, like other true bugs, undergo incomplete metamorphosis with just three life stages: egg, nymph, and adult. Typically, the mated female attaches her eggs to aquatic vegetation in the spring. The nymphs emerge in early summer and undergo five molts before reaching adulthood.

Because the water scorpion breathes air from the surface, it prefers to stay in shallow waters. Water scorpions regulate their depth using three pairs of special sensors on their bellies.

Water scorpions can be found in slow moving streams or ponds throughout the world. Just a dozen species inhabit the U.S. and Canada, most of which belong to the genus *Ranatra*.

Nuts for Nature - Couching Conservancy

Sunday June 9 th 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

At Carden Recreation Centre

258 Lake Dalrymple Rd, Lake Dalrymple, ON

Registration is not required, but let them know if you are planning to attend the event.

Scheduled Events:

SPEAKING of WILDLIFE: impromptu info sessions all day
10:15am-12 & 12:45pm-2:30 pm: Take a WAGON RIDE to the WATER STUDY

11 am-noon KIM'S KIDS BIRD SAFARI with binos

Snacks and Lunch at Ginny's Café

1pm-2 pm: KIDS TREASURE HUNT

Booths open all day:

Include Fair Glen Nature Centre, Face Painting, Saving Turtles At Risk, Build a Bird House, Sun Telescope Galactic Discoveries, Ramara Historical Covered Wagon, Rope Making Demo, Blue Bird Display, Arts & Crafts, FREE Kawartha Dairy Ice Cream & more!

Members Photo Gallery



Song Sparrow by Claude & Elaine Cox



Northern Shovelers by Paul Forde



Evening Grosbeak by Judy Sharpe



Snow Bunting by Ken MacDonald

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



www.naturebarrie.com

Visit us on our Facebook page! Nature Barrie (public group)

