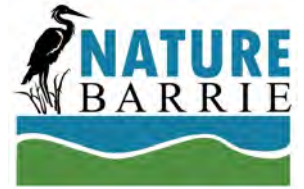


THE BLUE HERON

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Kirtland's Warbler
(*Septophaga kirtlandii*)



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Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Photo by Paul Forde



Mourning Warbler (*Geothlypis philadelphia*)

Photo by Bruce Missen

The Endangered Kirtland's Warbler Found Near Barrie

O. E. Devitt in his book *The Birds of Simcoe County* (1967) listed the Kirtland's Warbler as "An accidental visitant". He reported that on May 16, 1964 Mrs. J. L. Westman found one singing near Midhurst in a Scots Pine plantation. She later confirmed this with a photo that was sent to the ROM. A week later it was gone. She gave an account of her sighting in the October issue of *The Blue Heron*. Another sighting was made on May 19, 1967 near Little Lake but no others were seen in the area after this date. In 1985 a single male was encountered north of Orillia in the former Matchedash Twp. This bird stayed for a short while and was never seen in the area again. With so few sightings, to say the KIWA is rare in Ontario is an understatement. In fact KIWA is classified as an endangered species in both Canada and Ontario. Fifty years ago KIWA almost did become extinct but multiple habitat restoration efforts around the Great Lakes region and in their Bahamian wintering grounds have increased the population to about 5000 individuals.

Breeding evidence in Ontario has been limited to only 2 known sites in eastern Ontario. On May 31, 2022 the story of the KIWA took a very exciting turn. One singing male was heard and seen at the Simcoe County Forest Packard Tract in Essa Township west of Barrie. Then on June 9 experts found 3-4 singing males. KIWA is a habitat specialist. It breeds only on the ground under low branches in young pine forests. In 2019 a group of partners including Simcoe County went about attempting to restore the Packard Tract habitat to entice KIWA. (Alex Mills wrote a note in "The Blue Heron – Winter Issue 2017" describing the recovery plan for KIWA in Ontario. He also provided a list of more recent KIWA Ontario records). Through the removal of non-native trees such as Scots Pine and Norway Spruce, a controlled burn, and the planting of 35,000 native trees, shrubs, and other wild plants potential KIWA habitat was created. In 2017 another site north of Barrie known as the Museum Tract was prepared in hopes of attracting KIWA (see A. Mills note). These are the only 2 KIWA habitat projects in Canada.

The Packard Tract quickly became popular for a chance to see and hear KIWA. Birders came from as far away as London and Ottawa. Through June 2022 the Ontario Field Ornithologists assisted by Nature Barrie members manned the entrance to the Packard Tract to ensure that all visitors were aware of and followed the strict set of guidelines established to protect the potentially breeding birds.

Interesting Facts (from "All About Birds" The Cornell Lab)

1. Although KIWA was described in 1853 the first nest was not found until 1903.
2. Females are more selective in their choice of habitat than males and the best habitat attracts more females than males (A female has been reported at the Packard site. Let's hope they breed there this year.). As a forest tract ages beyond the point where KIWA will use it, the residents will be unmated males.
3. The KIWA is named after Jared P. Kirtland, the father-in-law of Charles Pease on whose farm near Cleveland, Ohio where the first specimen was collected.
4. The oldest known recorded KIWA was a male at least 9 years old when it was recaptured by a bander in Michigan.

Thanks to Dave Knowler for his great cover photo.

President's Ramblings – Bruce Wilson

Here it is July already and another half year has somehow gotten behind us. Hopefully the rest of the year will be more or less normal for all of us and we can get the pandemic firmly in the rear view mirror. It has been a trying time for all of us.

Jim Coey has gotten our field trips program back on track and has organized some old favourites and new trips for Nature Barrie members. And Jean Wilson has put together an interesting slate of speakers for our meetings. Details of the trips and meetings are in this newsletter. Also watch our Facebook page and website for additional information closer to the time of the events.

Thanks to Robin for getting this newsletter out for us to enjoy. If you have anything of interest please send it to Robin as, like any editor, he can only publish what you send in.

The big news for our area has to be the sightings of multiple Kirtland's Warblers at the Simcoe County Packard Tract on the 9th Line between Barrie and Angus. You might be lucky to see one of two of these rare birds in your lifetime but to have 5 or 6 males being seen and heard in our area is absolutely amazing. Several club members acted as OFO Rare Bird Ambassadors to help others enjoy this find. I do hope many club members were able to see these birds. The last word I had was some birds were still there as of the end of June. The Kirtland's Warbler team will be checking the site for evidence of breeding in the coming weeks so fingers crossed.

I hope everyone has a great summer and please continues to post your photos to our Facebook page. We have many talented photographers in this group and thanks for sharing your work. See you at the joint nature club meeting in September.





Nature Barrie Board

2022-23 Club Executive, Directors, Committee Chairs & Representatives

Position	Name	Home	Mobile	email
President	Bruce Wilson			wilsonbrucea@gmail.com
Vice-President	Darren MacTavish			dareen.mactavish@rogers.com
Past President	Dorothy McKeown	705-735-0767	705-817-9572	dorothy.mckeown@gmail.com
Secretary	Jim Coey	705-252-0277	705-543-1866	jamescoey37@gmail.com
Treasurer	Brian Gibbon	705-721-4599		bwgibbon@gmail.com
<u>Directors</u>				
Conservation	Currently Vacant			
Education and Displays	Gwen Petreman	705-722-5377		gwenpetreman@gmail.com
Field Trip Coordinator	Jim Coey	705-252-0277	705-543-1866	jamescoey37@gmail.com
Meetings Program	Jean Wilson		705-220-6728	jeanwilson9359@gmail.com
Membership	Treena MacTavish		705-220-6728	
Newsletter Editor	Robin Craig	705-722-7237	705 737-7645	robin.craig@bell.net
Ontario Nature	Currently Vacant			
<u>Committee & Project Chairs</u>				
Publicity	Paul Forde	705-725-0750		58Forde@gmail.com
Social	Christine Beggs	705-721-6842		christinecarterbeggs@gmail.com
Welcoming	Claude Cox	705-737-2272		c.cox@sympatico.ca
Project Swift Watch	Stephanie Sabean		705-305-2224	Steph.Sabean@hotmail.com
Bluebird Trails	Lane Henderson	905-960-3238	705-722-6447	lane.henderson@yahoo.ca
Christmas Bird Count	Bruce Wilson			wilsonbrucea@gmail.com
<u>Club Reps & Liaisons</u>				
LSRCA & Barrie Creeks Project	Gwen Petreman	705-722-5377		gwenpetreman@gmail.com
Rescue Lake Simcoe	Anne Macarthur			aemcarth@rogers.com
MTM Conservation/IBA				
North Simcoe Rail Trail	Lisa Levez Bordeleau		705-309-1528	theearthshiring@gmail.com
Helen Emery Award/ Georgian College	Lynne Gibbon	705-721-4599		lgibbon@sympatico.ca
Bird Friendly City Project	Phyllis Tremblay/ Dorothy McKeown	705-737-2580	705-817-9572	petremblay@rogers.com dorothy.mckeown@gmail.com

AIMS OF NATURE BARRIE

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

Upcoming Meetings Sept 2022 – April 2023

MEETINGS: Beginning in September meetings will be held in person. The first meeting will be in Midland and all others will be at the North West Barrie United Church 464 Ferndale Drive North. Covid 19 protocols may be followed at the meetings but this is subject to pandemic conditions at the time. Updates will be provided as soon as they become available. Jean Wilson, Meetings Program Director, has arranged for some interesting and informative presentations for the months ahead.

Please note that if you have questions regarding any meeting, outing or other event, check the website www.naturebarrie.com or Nature Barrie Facebook Events and Discussion.

Thursday September 15, 2022 7:30 pm Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre

This will be a joint meeting with the Midland-Penetanguishene Field Naturalists Club and will be held at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre in Midland. Details to be provided closer to the meeting date.

Friday October 21, 2022 7:30 pm Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas

Speaker; Alex Mills

Alex is a long-time Nature Barrie member. He has had a life-long and passionate fascination with birds. He went so far as to earn a PhD in ornithology. He is now a Biology professor at York University, where he teaches a variety of subjects and is involved in research. He has recently been engaged in a study of tracking nocturnal bird migration using GPS tags. One of his ongoing interests is the promotion of citizen science projects. In particular, he has been involved with all three versions of the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas about which he will be speaking.

Atlas-3 is a partnership between the same five organizations as Atlas-2: Birds Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment and Climate Change Canada), Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry – Government of Ontario, Ontario Field Ornithologists (OFO), and Ontario Nature

The goal of the Atlas is to map the distribution and relative abundance of Ontario's approximately 300 species of breeding birds – from as far south as Middle Island in Lake Erie, to Hudson Bay in the north.

The data collected over five years provides essential information for researchers, scientists, government officials and conservation professionals. It will guide environmental policies and conservation strategies for years to come

Friday November 18, 2022 7:30 pm Binoculars - The Essential Birding Tool

Speaker; Jim Mackiewicz

Jim Mackiewicz and his partner Lynda own and operate a Wild Birds Unlimited store in Toronto and have done so since 2001. They sell nine brands and over sixty models of binoculars, five brands and over thirty models of spotting scopes, four tripod brands and other optics accessories. Jim and Lynda are both long time birders and sub permitted bird banders involved in ornithological research at the Tommy Thompson Park Bird Research Station (a Canadian Migration Monitoring Station) and are also members of Simcoe County Raptor Research Group.

The goal of Jim's presentation is to help the novice buy a first pair of binoculars or help an experienced birder looking to upgrade. He will review the different styles available and provide the pros and cons of each. He will ensure we have an understanding of the technical numbers and how they can affect a binocular buying decision. Most importantly he will recommend the steps to be taken to ensure the purchase of binoculars will make the buyer happy during future birding adventures.

Friday December 17, 2022 5:30 pm Christmas Bird Count Data Sharing, Potluck Dinner and Wrap-up

Moderator; Bruce Wilson

Friday January 23, 2023 7:30 pm Couchiching Conservancy

Speaker; Tanya Clark

Tanya Clark is the Fundraising & Engagement Manager at The Couchiching Conservancy (TCC). She graduated from Lakehead University, lives in Orillia and of course, gets outside to enjoy nature as much as possible. Tanya is the granddaughter of Fred Noakes, one of the founders of the Orillia Naturalists Club

She will provide an update on land protection efforts in the Lake Couchiching region. TCC is working urgently to protect as much land as possible. With support from the community, the Conservancy helps protect over 14,000 acres of wild lands. This will be a great chance to learn about local trails to explore, ask questions and get connected.



Friday February 17, 2023 7:30 pm West Coast is Best? Or Is It East?**Speaker: Paul Forde**

Paul Forde will give a presentation from either his east coast trip or his west coast trip. Both are fabulous and full of strong fantastic images and videos and whimsical stories of his travel as a 'Beginner Birder'

Friday March 17, 2023, 7:30 pm. Broad-winged Hawks - A Study**Speaker; Malcolm Wilson**

Malcolm Wilson is originally from London England, and has lived in Africa for 27 years in both Uganda (7) and South Africa (20). He has been coming to Canada for the past 8 years for winter, spring and fall bird migration seasons. For the past 27 years he has also operated a tour company called African Affinity and that specializes in bird banding expeditions as well as general wildlife safaris and specialized safaris (such as to see mountain Gorillas) in both Uganda and Rwanda. He is a bird-guide trainer and has worked in Uganda, Rwanda, the Congo, Mozambique, Kenya, Botswana, Namibia, Malawi and Ethiopia. He is a qualified British Trust for Ornithology Bird banding trainer as well as a qualified South African bird banding trainer. Malcolm has ringed/banded over 1000 species of birds.

Malcolm Wilson and Charlotte England caught and banded their first Broad-winged Hawk (BWHA) in the spring of 2017. The next year they began earnestly trapping BWHA's and to date they have caught 396 birds. They expect to up that number this coming fall.

Malcolm will tell us how he first met Charlotte, an interesting story, and how he came to be in Canada. He will also provide us with information on their BWHA trapping experiences and why they are doing it which is to get more information about birds returning to their breeding grounds and the stability of these particular habitats.

Friday April 23, 2023, 6:00 pm. Annual General Meeting and Potluck



Nature Barrie General News

WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

Nature Barrie organized 6 different bird watching outings in and around Barrie to celebrate Migratory Bird Day. The outings were organized by Jim Coey and led by NB volunteers, expert birders everyone. Barrie residents and club members were able to see many bird species around the city. Unfortunately 2 outings were canceled because of lack of sign ups but the 23 people who did participate in the 4 other outings enjoyed themselves in spite of the high heat.

Bear Creek Outing – led by Dave Cowl

There were 6 participants and they observed 21 bird species. They also saw some local turtles and were very interested in the invasive plants that Dave pointed out such as Coltsfoot, Garlic Mustard and Phragmites.

North Shore Outing – led by Dave Knowler

There was lots of camaraderie among the 5 participants and many sightings were made that were new to the group. A total of 27 species were seen but the favorites were the male American Redstart and the Great Crested Flycatcher.

Sandy Hollow Outing – led by Jim Coey

There were 12 participants and they saw 22 bird species as well as Spring Azure and Cabbage White butterflies. CTV Barrie interviewed Jim and several members of the group who highlighted the Bird Friendly City project. The interview can be seen at <http://barrie-ctvnews-bird-watchers-celebrate-world-migratory-day-1.5903630>.

A special thanks to Jim Coey for organizing the outings and to NB members Paul Forde, Dave Knowler, Dave Cowl, Chris Evans and Ian Cook for volunteering to lead the various groups.



Lark Sparrow
(*Chondestes grammacus*)

Ken Mac Donald Photo

This Lark Sparrow is a vagrant from the west that was also present at the Packard Tract this past Spring.

Bird Friendly Cities - a Nature Canada Program

On June 16, 2022 Nature Canada announced that Barrie had become the 15th municipality in Canada to become certified as a “Bird Friendly City”. Saving bird lives starts with local action! Across Canada, more people are becoming involved to make their cities bird friendly.

Bird Friendly City is a community where:

- Key threats to birds are effectively mitigated;
- Nature is restored so native bird populations can thrive;
Residents are actively engaged in admiring and monitoring local bird populations;
- Organizations are creating events to protect birds;
- Progressive municipal policies are created to protect urban bird populations and
- A Bird Team has been created to oversee and lead these initiatives.

Nature Canada has developed a rigorous set of criteria that a city must meet to become certified.

Thanks to a dedicated team led by NB members Phyllis Tremblay and Dorothy McKeown the detailed road to certification was successfully navigated.

A big thank you to the entire Bird Friendly City Team.



Field Outings 2022 - 2023

Jim Coey has organized an interesting and varied program of club field trips to some great outdoor adventure locations in and around Barrie for the next year. The leaders will be determined later and details will be provided prior to each outing.

Sunday September 4, 2022 NORTH SIMCOE RAILTRAIL

Saturday September 10, 2022 EXPLORING SPRINGWATER PROVINCIAL PARK

Saturday September 24, 2022 EXPLORING GRANT'S WOODS

Saturday October 8, 2022 BIRDING SIMCOE SHORES

Saturday December 03, 2022 BARRIE LAKESHORE

Saturday December 17, 2022 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS and POTLUCK SUPPER

Saturday February 11, 2023 MINESING RAPTORS

Saturday March 12, 2023 HORNED LARKS and other harbingers of spring

Saturday April 22, 2023 ALGONQUIN PARK

Saturday April 29, 2023 COPELAND FOREST

Wednesday May 6, 2023 THE GABLES

Wednesday May 13, 2023 LITTLE LAKE AREA

Wednesday May 17, 2023 CHURCH WOODS

Sunday May 27, 2023 ORO-MEDONTE RAIL-TRAIL FLORA & FAUNA

Saturday June 3, 2023 BIRDING CARDEN ALVAR

Saturday June 10, 2023 PACKARD TRACT

Wednesday June 10, 2023 EASTERN BLUEBIRD NEST BOX TRAIL

Bird Monitoring Programs for 2022

Barrie Swift Watch

Phyllis Tremblay has stepped down as coordinator of the Barrie Swift Watch Project but the project will continue because Stephanie Sabeau has come forward as the new project coordinator. Steph has been working with the able crew of Nature Barrie swift watch volunteers to monitor the Barrie roosting sites through the 2022 field season. Results will be presented in the next bulletin.

Thank you Phyllis for making this project such a huge success in Barrie and thank you Stephanie for taking over.

Bluebird Nest Box Project

Clare Holden and Lane Henderson are again coordinating this field project. The birds are actively nesting and raising young. A complete report of this year's results will be presented in the next bulletin.



Phyllis Tremblay inspecting a downtown Barrie chimney for Chimney Swift (*Chaetura pelagica*) nests

Photo by Brian Backland



White eggs of the Eastern Bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) found in a nest box along the Old Second South Bluebird trail

Photo by Robin Craig

Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas III – Year 2

By Ian Cook, Atlas Coordinator for Region 13, Simcoe County

By the time you are reading this we will be well into the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas' second field season. So far the response has been excellent, particularly in our region (Simcoe Co).

The goal of the Atlas is to map the distribution and relative abundance of Ontario's approximately 300 species of breeding birds – from as far south as Middle Island in Lake Erie, to Hudson Bay in the north.

The data collected over five years provides essential information for researchers, scientists, government officials and conservation professionals. It will guide environmental policies and conservation strategies for years to come.

Data collection for the two previous Ontario atlases ran from 1981-1985 and 2001-2005, followed by the publication of books summarizing the results. The two previous projects were enormous (and successful!). But we're hoping Atlas-3 will be the best one yet – providing an unprecedented understanding of the status, distribution and abundance of the province's birds and a huge database of information that can be used for bird conservation purposes well into the future.

As of June 1st, 129 volunteers in Simcoe County had submitted almost 3,000 checklists and over 23,000 individual records.

Atlassing puts a very different spin on birding. Rather than chasing down rarities, satisfaction comes from observing birds perhaps a little more closely with the intention of finding evidence that the birds are breeding in the area. There have already been so many highlights: photos of a Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher nest-building, a stunning Blue-headed Vireo sitting on a nest just a few kms outside of Barrie, Goshawk nests, fledged young Long-eared Owl, active Bald Eagle nests in 15 squares, and so much more.

In addition, many volunteers have conducted point counts in the field, where one navigates to pre-determined points in the county and record the individual birds seen and heard in a 5 minute period. This vitally important data allows researchers to determine the relative abundance of our resident birds, and to compare with the results obtained twenty years ago.

Making one's hobby an important contribution to an ambitious research project is very rewarding. The atlas can always use more volunteers and it's never too late to sign up. If this interests you, go to the OBBA website at <https://www.birdsontario.org/> for more information. You can register here: <https://www.birdscanada.org/naturecounts/onatlas/register.jsp> . You can also contact me for more information at simcoe@birdsontario.org

Reader's Picks Birding Books by Claude Cox

My kids get me birding books as gifts. They are not necessarily new books; as often as not, they have come from a used book store. Here I offer not one but two outstanding titles, with some annotation. In my book they are both five-star choices, because they are not only packed with information but also, quite simply, so interesting that you feel, “Wow, that’s amazing!” So, here they are.

Jennifer Ackerman. *The Genius of Birds*. New York: Penguin Books, 2017. 340 pages, paperback. Endnotes and index. The cover says it was a New York Times bestseller. My copy is inscribed, “To Janice from Alex. May, 2017.” Chapter two, for example, is “The Bird Way. The Avian Brain Revisited.” If you like chickadees, they appear several times in the chapter, starting with a story about their acrobatics. Here’s one quotation from the chapter: “Brain size is also correlated with how long a bird stays in its nest to apprentice with its parents after fledging; the longer the juvenile period, the bigger the brain, perhaps so that a bird can store all it learns. Most intelligent animal species have long childhoods.” (Page 49) Chapter five is on the vocal virtuosity of birds, and begins with a story about Thomas Jefferson’s pet mockingbird. Birds *learn* to sing from their parents and others of their species: a sequestered mockingbird grew up to replicate the birds it heard from its indoor home, such as a downy woodpecker. (pp. 149–150). Now I know why our jenny wrens are always nattering away, teaching the kids how to do it!

Erica H. Dunn and Liane L. Tessaglia-Hymes. *Birds at Your Feeder. A Guide to Feeding Habits, Behavior, Distribution, and Abundance*. Illustrations by Peter Burke. Abundance maps by Jeffrey Price. Summarizing data from Project FeederWatch, a continent-wide survey sponsored by Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Bird Studies Canada, National Audubon Society, and the Canadian Nature Federation. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1999. 418 pages. Bibliography and index.

The info on the title page says it all. Note the Canadian component. Since I’m most of all a backyard bird watcher, this book appealed to me. It’s arranged by types of birds, Pileated Woodpecker, Pine Warbler, Brown Creeper, and so on. There’s a generous amount of information about each type of bird, distribution, behaviour, maps of feeder visit frequencies across North America, preferred feeder foods and so on. Bits of fascinating stuff: the Ruby-throated Hummingbird is, in fact, pretty hardy, and seems more dependent on food sources than warm weather: they withstood two Wisconsin snowstorms and minus 12° F temperatures with the aid of a bird feeder. (p. 61). The entry for the Black-capped Chickadee tells us about the “pecking order” in the backyard. “Each flock is composed of a resident pair ... (that) dominates all other flock members.” Pairs that have nested successfully usually stay together for future breeding seasons ... (p. 137) I didn’t know that!

There’s no space to say more. These titles are readily available on the internet—no need to leave the backyard!



Wild Turkey with young
(*Meleagris gallopavo*)

Nature Barrie Club Membership



Annual Fees:

Family—\$30 Individual— \$25

Student—free with current student ID card 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 our meetings or complete the downloadable application form from our website and send with your payment.

To make paying dues and donating easier we hope to be able to accept e-transfer soon.

Visit us at our web site www.naturebarrie.com and/or our Facebook page - Nature Barrie