



The Orchid

Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists

"Know ♦ Appreciate ♦ Conserve Nature In All Its Forms"

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Reminder to Renew Your PFN Membership!

2012 memberships expired on December 31st. This will be the final Orchid for those who have not yet renewed their membership. Membership renewal may be done by mail using the form on the last page of the Orchid or in person at the March 13 meeting at the Peterborough Library Auditorium.

Welcome New Members!

- Lara & Andrew Griffin
- Donald McLeod & Sandy Macfarlane
- Sheryl & Dan Nimigon
- Bernie Obert & Esthel Locke



Bohemian Waxwing. Photo by Rebecca Zeran

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Coming Events

<p>Wednesday March 13th 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Ptbo Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: “Snake Morphology & Ecology” Ontario is a relatively benign wilderness for herpetologists. Our lone venomous snake, the Massasauga Rattlesnake, is docile and shy with small fangs that don't really stand a chance against a sneaker and long pants. Costa Rica's Atlantic Lowland Wet Rainforest is a completely different story. Research scientists have to watch for venomous snakes in 3 dimensional space when working, reading, resting, or making a trip to the loo! Josh Feltham will give us a multi-media presentation about the trials and tribulations of an ophiophile and his quest to learn more about snakes in the Costa Rican rainforest. You'll learn about ecology, evolution, and natural history of snakes and begin to understand the vital role venomous snakes play in the health and welfare of humans.</p>								
<p>Sunday March 17th 8:00 a.m.</p>	<p>PFN Outing: “Waterfowl at Presqu'ile Provincial Park” A full-day birding trip to Presqu'ile, led by Jerry Ball. Thousands of ducks, geese and swans use this resting spot on their migrations north. Bring a packed lunch, binoculars and a spotting scope, if you have one. We will meet at the Country Style at the junction of Old Keene Road and Highway 7. There is an entry fee for each vehicle entering the park. Contact Jerry Ball (705-745-3272) for more information.</p>								
<p>Sundays April 7th to May 26th</p> <p>8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Start from the Ptbo Zoo parking lot</p>	<p>PFN Outings: “Spring Wildlife Walks” Our popular Spring wildlife walks will commence of Sunday April 7th and continue until May 26th, , unless otherwise advertised. Most walks will start at 8am and we will normally car pool from the parking lot of Peterborough Zoo on Water Street. Outings generally last about three hours. Bring some change to donate towards gas costs and bring binoculars if possible. In most cases the leaders will confirm the destination on the day.</p> <table border="0"><tr><td>7 April - Sean Smith</td><td>5 May – Drew Monkman</td></tr><tr><td>14 April - Jerry Ball</td><td>12 May – to be confirmed</td></tr><tr><td>21 April - Tony Bigg</td><td>19 May – Martin Parker</td></tr><tr><td>28 April - Tony Bigg</td><td>26 May – to be confirmed</td></tr></table>	7 April - Sean Smith	5 May – Drew Monkman	14 April - Jerry Ball	12 May – to be confirmed	21 April - Tony Bigg	19 May – Martin Parker	28 April - Tony Bigg	26 May – to be confirmed
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<p>Wednesday April 10th 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Ptbo Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: “A Journey to the Hawaii Islands” Hawaii is famous for its lush forests and active volcanos. These islands first started forming around 4 million years ago, resulting in an incredibly diverse and specialized avifauna, including the Hawaiian Honeycreepers. More recently the Hawaiian endemics are facing pressures from a variety of introduced species. Join Kristen Martyn as she explores three Hawaiian Islands, Kauai, Hawaii (The Big Island) and Oahu, outlining their unique landscape, geology, birds and wildlife. This presentation is packed full of photos from her most recent trip to Hawaii, and is a must hear for anyone wanting to explore these amazing islands and their famous endemics.</p>								
<p>Saturday April 13th 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p>PFN Outing: “An Evening of Frog Songs: Join Martin Parker in this evening outing to listen to the spring chorus of frogs. The chorus will be dominated by Spring Peepers. We will also be listening for Chorus Frogs, Northern Leopard Frogs, and Wood Frogs. The outing will start from the north parking lot at the Peterborough Zoo, Water Street North, at 8:00 p.m. The main destination will be the Miller Creek Wildlife Area. This outing will last for a couple of hours.</p>								

Coming Events continued

<p>Saturday April 20th 8:00 p.m.</p>	<p>PFN Outing: "The Sky Dance of the Timber-Doodle" A dusk outing to listen to the sky dance of the American Woodcock or Timber-Doodle. This bird has an elaborate courtship display which consists of a distinctive call made while on the ground, followed by the spiral flight into the sky and then a fluttering flight back to the ground. With leader, Martin Parker, we will travel to the Trent University Nature Sanctuary to watch this spring display. Meet in the north parking lot at the Peterborough Zoo on Water Street North at 8:00 p.m. This outing will conclude by 10:00 p.m. Bring a flashlight.</p>
<p>Wednesday May 8th 7:30 p.m. Ptbo Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: "Bird Tracks and Signs in the Kawarthas" Don McLeod is a new member of the Peterborough Field Naturalists and a recently retired Professor from Fleming College. Don will present a slideshow featuring bird tracks and sign from the Kawarthas. While mammal tracks are more frequently observed, being at the right place and time will often snag a bird track photo. Signs of birds include scat, nests, tree cavities, feathers and kill sites. All of these observations add to the naturalist's toolbox in the quest to identify and study birds.</p>

Junior Field Naturalists

Spring Into Spring! @ at the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre

When: Sunday, March 31st, 1:45 p.m.

Participate in a wide variety of games, activities and crafts to celebrate the transition into spring! See you then!...Neil



PFN Officers and Directors

President	Martin Parker	Mparker19@cogeco.ca	745-4750
Vice President	Gina Varrin	gina.varrin@gmail.com	761-7787
Secretary	Sean Smith	Seansmith64@hotmail.com	875-6178
Treasurer	Don Pettypiece	donem.pettypiece@bell.net	750-1145
Membership	Jim Young	jbyoung@persona.ca	292-5444
Program (indoor)	Phil Shaw	pshaw78@hotmail.com	874-1688
Program (outdoor)	Paul Elliott	pauelliott@trentu.ca	740-0501
Webmaster	Chris Gooderham	webmaster@peterboroughnature.org	740-2081
Newsletter Editor	Rebecca Zeran	rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca	743-2660
FON Rep	Ted Vale	tedandmarion@sympatico.ca	741-3641
Special Projects	Kelly Boadway	kjboadway@gmail.com	775-0756
Special Projects	Lynn Smith	smithfam@nexicom.net	944-5599

Other Volunteers

Bird Feeders	Sean Smith & Don Finigan	
Orchid Diary	Tony Bigg	652-7541
Orchid Mailout	TBD	
Jr. Naturalists	Neil Fortin	292-6185
Local Planning Committees	Jim Cashmore	



Other Events of Interest

Presqu'ile Waterfowl Viewing Weekend **March 16th & 17th, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

Presqu'ile will be hosting their 37th waterfowl viewing weekend, where nature enthusiasts can come and appreciate one of the great natural spectacles on earth – the return of migrating waterfowl to their staging areas along the lower Great Lakes. Presqu'ile is well situated to experience this phenomenon with close viewing and a good variety of species. Seeing 20 different species of waterfowl in a day is not unusual and 25+ species are usually tallied during the season. During the viewing weekend, volunteers with scopes are situated at key areas to help visitors find and ID the different species. The Lighthouse Centre featuring “ducky” displays and children’s activities is open 10am to 4pm. The Friends of Presqu'ile will also be there with a BBQ starting at 11am, and the Gift Store will be open. **There is a park admission fee of \$8.00/vehicle.**

If you want to come learn about ducks this is a great opportunity. If you are interested in coming out and helping with duck ID or in the Lighthouse Centre the organizer would be more than happy to hear from you. For more information on the event or on volunteering please contact David Bree at 613 475-4324 ext. 225 or david.bree@ontario.ca.

The Ontario Nature Spring Regional Meeting for the Lake Ontario North district will be held on **SATURDAY APRIL 6, 2013**, at the **Oak Ridges Community Centre, 12895 Bayview Ave., Richmond Hill ON**. The meeting will be hosted by the **York Region Environmental Alliance**. Enjoy a day with members of many naturalist and environmental clubs. Discover the issues that Ontario Nature is involved in. There’s a lot to learn!

The Peterborough Horticultural Society, the Peterborough & Area Master Gardeners, and the Northumberland Master Gardeners invite you to the **2013 Peterborough Garden Show**. Come celebrate Spring with us!

The show will take at the **Evinrude Centre**, 911 Monaghan Road, Peterborough
Friday, April 12, 5 p.m. - 9 p.m.
Saturday, April 13, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sunday, April 14, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Admission is \$6.00 per person (children 12 and under are free). The coat check is free. Parking is available at the Evinrude Centre and across the street at the Canadian Canoe Museum. A small donation will be collected by the Rotary Club of Peterborough. Additional free parking is available at the Kinsmen Centre, Sherbooke St. and Clonsilla Ave. There will be a free shuttle bus every 15 minutes to take people to the Evinrude Centre and return.

This year's show will include: Many Garden-Related Vendors and Exhibitors; Speakers on Saturday and Sunday; Informative Demonstrations; Garden Displays; a Garden Advice Clinic; a Floral Design Competition; the Little Green Thumbs Children's Garden and NEW this year – a Celebrity Challenge on Friday, April 12th

In Memory of Bob

-by Don Pettypiece

Starting in 2007, the Orchid added a table to the Director Information -- 'Other Volunteers'. On that list was a 'position' of ORCHID MAILOUT and it was filled by Bob Quinn.

Bob Quinn passed away in December 2012.

So who was Bob?

I knew Bob only through his activities with the PFN. My job as Membership Chairman, was to create the mailing labels for the ORCHID mailing and to prepare the Canada Post documentation for each mailing.

Bob had go to Trent University to pick up the freshly printed ORCHID, then take them home and stuff and label the envelopes and insert the occasional receipts, and finally deliver all to the Post Office Terminal.

Bob had no internet service --- so we talked. Bob had a feel for when the ORCHID may be sent to printing and would call me for the latest update. (Trent was to call him when they were ready – it didn't always happen) After a while - and I had call display – I wouldn't answer with 'hello' but with 'Hi Bob'. He caught on and instead of him saying 'hi it's Bob', he would say 'it's me'. We would laugh – he would enquire of my health and ask if I was still singing. I would check up on his wife and helper Noreen.

Bob would come to the regular monthly Wednesday meeting with a cash register receipt for the printing (Bob paid Trent – we paid Bob). When I became treasurer, it was I whom he was looking for. The same conversation ensued.

To those who went to the monthly meetings Bob was the big, ruddy complexioned gentleman who sat near the back on the far side. In the past he had a 'side kick' Del Burke as company – my recollection is that Del and Bob shared the bird feeding program at Ecology Park prior to Bob volunteering 'to do his bit' with the PFN as ORCHID stuffer.

At the PFN's Annual General Meeting in January 2012, Bob and Noreen Quinn were recognized for their 'work in the background' over the years with the Lola Leach award.

Bob Quinn was one of those 'silent' heroes, that groups like the PFN rely on to function. He was another one of those characters who has enriched my and Emily's (my wife) life. Were privileged to know him

Hinterland Who's Who Celebrates it's 50th Anniversary

It started with black-and-white vignettes about the loon, the moose, the gannet and the beaver, in 1963. Since then, Hinterland Who's Who has proudly been bringing Canada's iconic wildlife directly into homes across Canada. In 2013, HWW will be celebrating and they want everyone to celebrate with them! To participate in their 50th anniversary, you can create your own HWW video showing your favourite Canadian species or ecosystem. Video submissions will be accepted until May 17, 2013 and there are prizes to be won. For more information visit www.hww.ca.

President's Remarks at PFN's 72nd Annual General Meeting

-by Martin Parker, PFN President

I originally joined the Peterborough Field Naturalists, then called the Peterborough Nature Club in September 1963, after moving to Peterborough for the first time. The first annual meeting I attended was on January 10, 1964 – it was at the Empress Hotel in Peterborough and the cost was \$2.25 per person. I do not recall what was on the menu. However the speaker was from the Department of Ornithology at the Royal Ontario Museum. Don Baldwin spoke on the Ontario Nest Records Scheme, a programme I and others in this room have contributed to over the following decades.

I last addressed the Annual Meeting at the end of my second year as President, in 1973... Now forty years later I am again giving a Presidential Statement.

I grew up as a young naturalist in the club. This club has a great tradition of developing a passion in the understanding and love of nature in young people. This continues to this day: King Baker was before me and Doug McRae and Drew Monkman followed me -- they are here tonight and still involved. This tradition continues today with the Junior Field Naturalists and young people like Matthew and Luke. Their knowledge is amazing. This club and its members have to be commended on its role in developing young field naturalists for decades.

The Peterborough Field Naturalists is fortunate in having a continuing participation of young adults in leadership roles in the club. Many organizations are working hard to get young adults involved -- look at our current Board of Directors – it is one with many young adults along with those with more life experiences.

I was very pleased on relocating back to Peterborough to find a strong and healthy Peterborough Field Naturalists – also a club which has maintained its roots by those who originally founded this organization in May 1930. Our objectives: To Know – To Appreciate – To Conserve – Nature In All Its Forms.

In the four decades I have been away, I was involved with a large number of local naturalists clubs and those which have kept the focus on learning about nature continue to thrive. Looking around the room I see a number of people who make a significant contribution to the study of Natural History in the Peterborough Region another tradition of the club. Through 'The Orchid', the 'Orchid Diary', our other publications, Christmas Bird Counts and July Butterfly Count and individual efforts by members we have a shared knowledge of our flora and fauna.

Another attribute of the Peterborough Field Naturalists is the willingness of our members to volunteer to undertake projects, lead trips, give presentations, etc. Virtually everyone assists. A summary of our collective volunteer efforts is listed on the Annual Report. You all deserve a round of applause.

In May 1940 a small group of people founded the Peterborough Nature Club, now the Peterborough Field Naturalists. I hope they are proud about our accomplishments since then. I am, thanks to everyone who assisted last year and/or participated in our activities.

Lily Lake Functional Planning Study

-by Jim Cashmore

Along with the PFN Board, club members have become concerned about the Lily Lake Functional Planning Study which Peterborough City Council voted to receive last December. Drew Monkman wrote a feature article on the subject for the December 13th Peterborough Examiner.

The study begins a process that may eventually see as many as 3,000 new dwellings and more than 8,000 people occupy the area bounded by Lily Lake Road on the north, to almost Fairbairn Street on the east, Jackson Creek and the Trans-Canada Trail on the south and the City boundary with Selwyn Township (formerly Smith-Ennismore-Lakefield) on the west. The wetland known as Lily Lake is west of the study area. Although it may take more than 30 years to fully build out, this truly massive development causes us all concern in many areas, especially because sensitive wetlands adjoin it to the west and south. There is also a wooded ravine with steep slope and riparian habitat along Jackson Creek within the southern limits of the study area. Those concerns include contamination by sewage and storm water run-off, erosion, destruction of habitat, loss of open space and the intrusion of houses overlooking the Trans-Canada Trail.

However, we need not object just because the study area is large. By planning a large area, at one time, the City will be reducing the number of problems that can occur when small subdivisions are added to one another piece by piece. By looking ahead, major infrastructure requirements, such as feeder roads, schools, transportation, **linear parks and trails**, and other major systems, can be planned in a logical manner.

The PFN Board at its meeting on January 9th, formed a four person subcommittee mandated to work with the City's Planning Dept. to find ways to address the above concerns, while providing the residents of the new subdivision with a people friendly natural environment that includes plenty of trails and parks. The committee consists of myself, Jim Cashmore, with Martin Parker, Club President, and Board members Lynn Smith and Jim Young.

On January 29th this committee met with Brad Appleby, the City's Planner responsible for the new development, to exchange ideas and receive information. One concern that we raised involved the issue of intensifying housing in the downtown core. Mr. Appleby handed out brochures that the City uses to encourage downtown property owners to do just that and we acknowledge that there are several successes in this area. The old post office on Charlotte St. was converted to apartments several years ago while the former St. Joseph's Hospital, the old YMCA building, the upper stories of the new Collins Barrow building at the corner of Charlotte and Stewart, the proposed development of the former Albert's scrap yard on Bethune St., and a controversial addition of two floors to the former Toronto Dominion Bank at the SE corner of George and Hunter are all examples of such projects in the making.

We encouraged the City to continue progress in this area where the Province of Ontario will require 40% of new accommodations to be achieved through intensification in the City core starting in 2015.

However, we agree that people cannot be forced to live downtown and that, if developers believe they can sell them, new houses will be built on the perimeter. A lot of time and money has been invested in the Lily Lake project already and it will go ahead in some form, so now our job must be to make sure that, first and foremost, the development proceeds in a way that pays attention to the protection of the wonderful natural areas around it and then be constructed in such a way that it provides the residents with an environment that is more people friendly and natural than the typical dreary conforming subdivisions that we're used to. The City should use this new development to

SHOWCASE what can be achieved in the way of parkland, linear parks and trails.

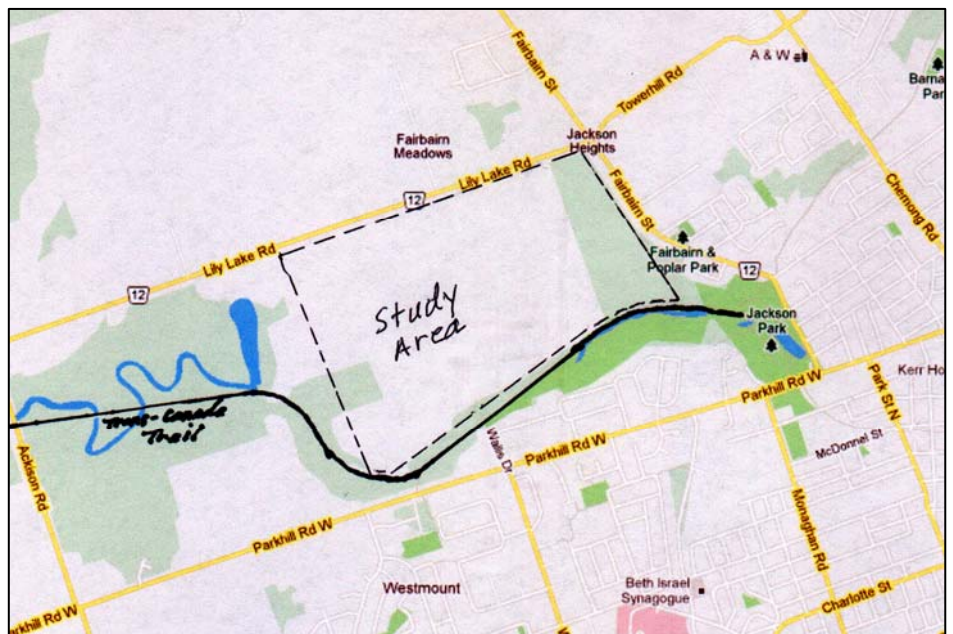
The main points of concern that we took to Mr. Appleby were the following:

- 1) The City increase its efforts to provide intensification of accommodation in the downtown core. and, with regards to the Lily Lake area, the City:
- 2) Require that developers protect the surrounding natural area, for example, by addressing the concerns outlined in the second paragraph.
- 3) Take steps to provide a linear park & trail along the top of the southern ridge, that overlooks Jackson Creek and the Trans-Canada Trail, so that a buffer zone is provided.
- 4) Work with developers to provide one or more linear parks, with trails, to connect the above ridge-top park and the Trans-Canada Trail to Lily Lake Road.
- 5) Consider incorporating the Jackson Creek and Trans-Canada Trail valley, plus the new ridge-top park, as an extension of the existing Jackson Park.

We agreed that the meeting with Mr. Appleby was friendly and positive, and certainly helpful to both sides. Mr. Appleby and his staff also provided us with several excellent maps that will help us develop our approach to the issue. The next stage for the City's Planning Department is to produce a Secondary Plan for the Study Area which Mr. Appleby expects to have ready "sometime this year". This study will establish the conditions which will have to be met before any plan for redevelopment is considered by the city.

The PFN will monitor this process closely! In the meantime we encourage all club members to give this matter some thought and to contact the committee members with questions and any ideas that you may have. Contact information for the three Board members can be found in The Orchid, while I can be reached at 705-742-8644, cashmore1@sympatico.ca.

You can access plenty of information on this topic by going to the City's website, Peterborough.ca, and then following these directions: click on "One Click Away" > "Studies" > "Lily Lake Functional Planning Study". From here go to "Staff Reports" and look at "Report PLPD12-073 Lily Lake Functional Planning Study", which is quite informative, and you can also access some of the consultants reports. The top one, by Bousfields Inc. entitled "Land Use Planning", is particularly informative and **contains several useful maps**. If you do not have access to the Internet you should be able to obtain this material from City Hall.



Global Great Backyard Bird Count Shatters Records

-from Cornell Lab of Ornithology e-news, February 21, 2013

From Antarctica to Afghanistan, bird watchers from **103 countries** made history in the first global Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), February 15–18, 2013. In the largest worldwide bird count ever, bird watchers set new records, counting more than **25.5 million birds on 120,000+ checklists** in four days—and recording **3,144 species**, nearly one-third of the world's total bird species. The data will continue to flow in until March 1.

Building on the success of the GBBC in the United States and Canada for the past 15 years, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Audubon, and Bird Studies Canada opened the count to the rest of the world for the first time this year, powered by eBird, a system that enables people to report birds globally in real-time and explore the results online. Bird watchers are invited to keep counting every day of the year at www.eBird.org.

Cornell Lab director Dr. John Fitzpatrick says:

“This is a milestone for citizen science in so many respects—number of species, diversity of countries involved, total participants, and number of individual birds recorded. We hope this is just the start of something far larger, engaging the whole world in creating a detailed annual snapshot of how all our planet’s birds are faring as the years go by.”

Audubon Chief Scientist Gary Langham:

“People who care about birds can change the world,” said Audubon chief scientist Gary Langham. “That’s why this year’s record-setting global participation is so exciting. Technology has made it possible for people everywhere to unite around a shared love of birds and a commitment to protecting them.”

Other Key Preliminary Findings:

Top 5 Most Reported Species (reported on highest number of checklists): Northern Cardinal; Dark-eyed Junco; Mourning Dove; Downy Woodpecker; House Finch

Top 5 Most Common Birds (most individuals reported): Snow Goose; Canada Goose; Red-winged Blackbird; European Starling; American Coot

Finch Invasion: A massive number of northern finch species moved into the U.S. including the Common Redpoll, reported in a record 36 states. Scientists believe these periodic movements are related to natural fluctuations in crops of conifer cones and other seeds in Canada.

Hurricane Sandy: The weather system that caused Sandy's landfall also blew some European birds to North America and evidence of this is still showing up in GBBC results. The colorful, crested Northern Lapwing was reported in Georgia, New Jersey, and Massachusetts during the GBBC.

GBBC First: A Red-flanked Bluetail has wintered at Queens Park, Vancouver, and was also reported for the GBBC's first record ever. This British Columbia bird has been drawing bird watchers from all over the U.S. and Canada hoping to see this rarity. This little thrush is one of the only birds in the world with a striking blue tail and is native to Asia; the other GBBC report of this species this year was from Japan. For more information, visit www.birdcount.org.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is made possible in part thanks to founding sponsor Wild Birds Unlimited.

Latest on the Trumpeter Swans

-by June Hitchcox, courtesy of the Apsley voice

Firstly, a follow-up on last month's article on the endangered Ontario Trumpeter Swans. The group, headed by Bev Kingdon, met with Burlington City staff, Dillon Consulting Group & Coucillor Rick Craven concerning the fixed wave-break proposal for LaSalle Park Marina & the adverse effects on the over-wintering 200 Trumpeter Swans in the bay off LaSalle Park within Hamilton Bay. The purpose of the meeting was to protect the habitat of the largest concentration of over-wintering Swans in Ontario. With 200 Swans at LaSalle and only 800 total in Ontario, their survival must be carefully watched. The resultsof the meeting? - no construction in 2013 & the wave-break does not have any City approval, budget or time-line AT THIS STAGE. Strong lobby groups win the war so please keep up the emails & letter support. Beverly Kingdon (bev.ki@sympatico.ca); Rick Goldring, Mayor, City Hall, P.O. 5013, Burlington ON, L7R 3Z6. Bev will be at LaSalle Park at 1:00 pm Sunday, February 17th, banding, talking with the public about research etc. The Swans will be up close. For Oakville residents, a free bus leaves Town Hall for the Event. See the internet for lots more on the Trumpeter Swans. Onto another topic - Birds are returning from the south. It is fun to keep a list as you see new species arrive – Crows, Horned larks, Red-winged Blackbirds, Tree Swallows, Phoebes, Bluebirds, Song Sparrows, Meadow Larks, Robins & many more. Hope that you get out & enjoy the beginning of another season.

PFN Outing Report

-report by Sean Smith, photo by Gina Varrin

On a fairly mild Saturday, February 23, sixteen sharp-eyed participants enjoyed a couple of hours looking for wintering birds and signs of spring along on the Otonabee River on the annual Peterborough Field Naturalists' Heritage Week field trip offering. The river has very few open areas from Lakefield to below Lock 19 in Peterborough, but where those open leads are, waterfowl congregate. After meeting at the zoo we trooped downhill to see a beautiful **drake Ring-necked Duck** accompanying a flock of displaying Common Goldeneye. A earlier scouting trip yielded only more goldeneye and Common Mergansers to the north, so we decided to head directly to Beavermead Beach where there remains a drake **Red-breasted Merganser**, at least **four adult Glaucous Gulls** and a pair of Canada Geese, along with a larger flock of "Whistlers". There were Brown Creepers giving good shows at the zoo and Ecology Park, White-breasted Nuthatches, Mourning Doves and Black-capped Chickadees, but little else. South of Lock #19, where Park St. bends into Cameron St. there were two **Black Ducks** accompanying Mallards. We did not see any Bufflehead or Long-tailed Ducks.



Outdoor Cats: Single Greatest Source of Human-caused Mortality for Birds and Mammals, Says New Study

-from an e-posting to abcorgs@npogroups.org by Steve Holmer, Director, Bird Conservation Alliance, January 31, 2013

A new peer-reviewed study authored by scientists from two of the world's leading science and wildlife organizations – the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) – has found that bird and mammal mortality caused by outdoor cats is much higher than has been widely reported, with annual bird mortality now estimated to be 1.4 to 3.7 billion and mammal mortality likely 6.9 – 20.7 billion individuals.

The study, which offers the most comprehensive analysis of information on the issue of outdoor cat predation, was published in the online research journal *Nature Communications* and is based on a review of more than 90 previous studies. The study was authored by Dr. Peter Marra and Scott Loss, research scientists at the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute and by Tom Will from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Migratory Birds. It is available at http://www.abcbirds.org/abcprograms/policy/cats/pdf/Loss_et_al_2013.pdf.

According to Dr. George Fenwick, President of American Bird Conservancy, one of the leading bird conservation organizations in the U.S. and a group that has called for action on this issue for many years, "This study, which employed scientifically rigorous standards for data inclusion, demonstrates that the issue of cat predation on birds and mammals is an even bigger environmental and ecological threat than we thought. No estimates of any other anthropogenic (human-caused) mortality source approach the bird mortality this study calculated for cat predation."

The study's estimate of bird mortality far exceeds any previously estimated U.S. figure for cats. In fact, this magnitude of mortality may exceed all other direct sources of anthropogenic bird and mammal mortality combined. Other bird mortality sources would include collisions with windows, buildings, communication towers, vehicles and pesticide poisoning.

"The very high credibility of this study should finally put to rest the misguided notions that outdoor cats represent some harmless new component to the natural environment. The carnage that outdoor cats inflict is staggering and can no longer be ignored or dismissed. This is a wake-up call for cat owners and communities to get serious about this problem before even more ecological damage occurs," Fenwick said.

The study estimated that the median number of birds killed by cats annually is 2.4 billion and the median number of mammals killed is 12.3 billion. About 69 percent of the bird mortality from cat predation and 89 percent of the mammal mortality was from un-owned cats. Un-owned cats are defined to include farm/barn cats, strays that are fed but not granted access to human habitations, cats in subsidized colonies, and cats that are completely feral.

The study charges that "Despite these harmful effects, policies for management of free-ranging cat populations and regulation of pet ownership behaviors are dictated by animal welfare issues rather than ecological impacts. Projects to manage free-ranging cats, such as Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) colonies, are potentially harmful to wildlife populations, but are implemented across the United States without widespread public knowledge, consideration of scientific evidence or the environmental review processes typically required for actions with harmful environmental consequences."



The **ORCHID DIARY** for **January 7 - March 4, 2013**

Compiled by Tony Bigg, 652-7541, tanddbigg@sympatico.ca

A warm spell early was followed by colder weather with several snowfalls concentrating birds at feeders. The first signs of birds moving north could be observed.

- Jan 07 Penny Pierce has had a **Northern Flicker** coming to her feeder for weeks. It comes to the peanut feeder in the Young's Point to Selwyn area, and it also tries to eat sunflower seeds from the wooden feeders, but seems to scatter more than eat. She hasn't seen it on the suet.
- Jan 11 Marie Adamcryck had a female **Red-bellied Woodpecker** dining at her feeder in Bailieboro. Dorothy Mulders-Langlois had about about fifteen **American Robins** at her home on Tindle Bay Rd this morning feeding on the ground under their Austrian Pines. Karen and Paul Parcels report **Common Redpolls** have taken over their feeder on Adeline St in Peterborough. They have never had them before and now there is a virtual swarm of them numbering over a hundred most days. The other birds are virtually crowded out, except in the absence of the redpolls.
- Jan 12 Drew Monkman saw a 2nd year **Bald Eagle** at the Bensfort Road landfill at about 1 p.m. It was perched in a tree to the west of the dumpsters where residents drop off garbage. While out enjoying the mild temps Tracey Carr heard the shrill call of a **Belted Kingfisher** and then saw him/her flying up and down the wide creek at the edge of their backyard near Stewart Hall, as they do daily in the summer months. Rob McKinlay took a picture of a **Barred Owl**, perched in a cedar. He was in the Bridlewood Park / Harper Park area in Peterborough off Spillsbury Drive.
- Jan 14 A **Woolly Bear** caterpillar was seen by Sean Smith commuting across his backyard just north of TASTewartSS. He also had an **Eastern Chipmunk**, not seen since mid-November, active in the yard.
- Jan 15 A **Cooper's Hawk** was seen by Tony Bigg in the Lakefield campsite.
- Jan 17 On the ice on Little Lake Sean Smith one adult and one first winter **Great Black-backed Gulls**, and one second year **Glaucous Gull**. Rose Rogers and Sandy Brack watched **River Otters** diving into the small streams that are forming through the ice at Gannons Narrows today. When they got out, they shook their heads to get rid of the water, then started munching on the fresh fish just caught.
- Jan 22 Penny Lewis had her first **Red-bellied Woodpecker** at her feeder today. He feasted on the suet for about 10 minutes.
- Jan 23 Jackie Tokarz had a **Red-winged Blackbird** hanging out in her backyard around her bird feeders for the third day running.
- Jan 24 After an absence of almost two months, Luke Berg had one **Pine Siskin** active at his Niger seed feeder on Benson Ave in Peterborough.
- Jan 25 A busy finch day for Luke Berg produced a **Pine Siskin** and ten **Common Redpolls** at his feeder, three **Red Crossbills** in his Cedar trees, a flock of about four **Pine Grosbeaks** flying over, and one sick (mycoplasmal conjunctivitis) **House Finch** coming to his feeder. Sean Smith picked up the carcass of an unfortunate **Eastern Screech-Owl** in Ecology Park today. It was likely killed by a larger owl. Derry Fairweather was just outside getting some wood and noticed a **Bald Eagle** across the lake near the open water on Upper Buckhorn Lake.
- Jan 27 A surprisingly late **Great Blue Heron** was seen by Ken Rumble flying over Millbrook. Brendan Boyd found a large flock of **Common Redpolls** on Lynch's Rock Road this afternoon that contained at least one **Hoary Redpoll**. At Petroglyphs PP he found a **Barred Owl** being mobbed by **Black-capped Chickadees** and **Red-breasted Nuthatches**. He also finally saw one of the **Black-backed Woodpeckers** that have been sighted occasionally since last fall. It was a male working on a Red Pine only a few hundred meters from Northey's Bay Road.
- Jan 31 Sherry Hambley saw a large flock of over 180 **Wild Turkeys** on Sharpe Rd just west of Winslow Quarter Line. Tony Bigg saw an adult **Glaucous Gull** on Little Lake. Catriona Sinclair's husband saw a **Barred Owl** swoop down onto a branch not far from their kitchen in Buckhorn. After sitting there for a while, it flew a short way, closer to another bird feeder. It then flew down and then back up to a nearby tree. Her husband noticed it had caught something, and when she looked through the binoculars, it was eating a junco whole. After that the birds were quite skittish about going to the feeder.
- Feb 03 At a feeder on Nichol's Cove Rd (off Cty Rd 36 between Buckhorn and Bobcaygeon) Joe Knauer found a few **Evening Grosbeaks**.

- Feb 04 Since November, Marie Windover has had two **Gray Jays** coming to her feeder (Cty Rd 507, just south of Mississauga Lake). They were there again today, and she was able to get pictures of them. They also have a number of **Coyotes** in the area which have also been photographed.
- Feb 07 Today at 2 pm, a mature **Bald Eagle** flew into a tree on Christine James's driveway. They are on a farm just south of Norwood. The bird stayed there for over an hour and he got some good photos. It's the first Bald Eagle he has seen in Ontario.
- Feb 14 A **Long-tailed Duck** was seen by Walter Wehtje on the Otonabee River at the Trent University campus in the company of a male **Common Goldeneye**.
- Feb 15 Mike Burrell saw a female **Red-breasted Merganser** on the Otonabee River beside the Little Lake Cemetery. Brendan Boyd saw the male **Long-tailed Duck** on the Otonabee River, just south of Trent University. Jackie Tokarz was fascinated to witness around noon, a **Northern Shrike** chase a House Sparrow right into the window she was observing from! The Northern Shrike dropped to the veranda holding the sparrow down with its claws. It then started to peck away and feast on it! After about a minute of this, the shrike then flew away carrying the sparrow with it in its claws! This is the 4th winter she has had a Northern Shrike hang around her backyard, but the first time she has witnessed an actual catch!
- Feb 16 Besides the usual **Hairy Woodpeckers**, **Downy Woodpeckers**, and a male **Red-bellied Woodpecker**, Scott McKinlay had a female **Northern Flicker** at his feeder in Cavan. Although smaller, the Red-bellied was the more aggressive bird, chasing the Flicker off the one side of the feeder. But, after flying briefly to the ground, the Flicker returned to the opposite side of the feeder and continued feeding on black-oil sunflower while the Red-bellied had its fill of mixed fat.
- Feb 18 Joe Knauer saw two **Bald Eagles** flying high over the Kawartha Nordic Ski Club trails. Sandy Kirkland was amazed to see a **Brown-headed Cowbird** at her feeder in Bailieboro. It was eating her songbird mix. Matthew Tobey saw a male **Hooded Merganser** on the Otonabee River in the south of Peterborough.
- Feb 21 Scott Sargent had a female **Pine Grosbeak** at the bird feeder at the Peterborough West Animal Hospital twice in the last week.
- Feb 22 Tony Bigg saw a dozen **Pine Grosbeaks** feeding in the trees in the Lakefield Campsite beside the marsh. He also saw a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** hunting around Clementi Rd nearby. He noted that the number of **Common Goldeneyes** in and south of Lakefield had been climbing steadily during the week as they gradually inch northwards. Drew Monkman saw three **Evening Grosbeaks** flying over the parking lot at the Kawartha Nordic Ski Club at about 2 p.m. today.
- Feb 23 Leading a PFN filed trip Sean Smith reported seeing a drake **Ring-necked Duck** accompanying a displaying group of **Common Goldeneyes** below the zoo in the Otonabee River. A drake **Red-breasted Merganser** and four adult **Glaucous Gulls** were seen in Little Lake. **Brown Creepers** were seen at both the zoo and Beavermead Park. Two **American Black Ducks** were seen with the **Mallards** south of Lock 19.
- Feb 24 Don Sutherland reports that an adult **Bald Eagle**, presumably the female, could be seen sitting low in the nest on Katchawanooka Lake, and the other adult was flying over the open lead immediately north of the nest. He also saw a **Gadwall** with nineteen **Mallards** in the south cell of the Lakefield sewage lagoons. At least three **Northern Cardinals** were singing lustfully at 8:00 a.m. this morning around Drew Monkman's house on Maple Crescent - all more or less at the same time. This is the most cardinal song he's heard this "pre-spring."
- Feb 28 A **Northern Flicker** was seen by Luke Berg flying over Nassau Mills Rd where it crosses the canal. He also reported that the **Red-breasted Merganser** was still on Little Lake. Joan Chubb was quite surprised this morning to see three **Eastern Bluebirds**, two male and one female, in the grassy area under her neighbour's deck.
- Mar 03 Sherry Hambley photographed a DOR **Fisher** on the west side of Hwy 115 going south between Airport Rd and County Rd 28 exits.



ORCHID SUBMISSIONS WANTED

Deadline for submissions for the April issue: Monday, March 25th, 2013

Please send all submissions to: **Rebecca Zeran, PFN, PO Box 1532, Peterborough, ON, K9J 7H7** or via e-mail to: rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca



PETERBOROUGH FIELD NATURALISTS

www.peterboroughnature.org

membership application form

Memberships may be obtained by mailing completed form and cheque to

Peterborough Field Naturalists
PO Box 1532, Peterborough, ON K9J 7H7

CONTACT

Name (s):		Home Tel:	
		Work Tel:	
Address:		Receive	<input type="radio"/> snail mail
		Orchid by:	<input type="radio"/> e-mail <input type="radio"/> both please
		Email(s):	

MEMBERSHIP TYPE & FEE SCHEDULE

Please make cheques payable to *Peterborough Field Naturalists*

1. Single Adult \$25 2. Single Student \$15 3. Single Child* (age 5-12) \$10

4. Family (couple or family with children*) \$30

*Please give the name(s) and age(s) of the children you wish to be enrolled in the PFN Junior Naturalists

Name	Age*	Name	Age*

MAIN INTERESTS

<input type="radio"/> Birds	<input type="radio"/> Butterflies/insects	<input type="radio"/> Botany (Wildflowers/trees/shrubs)
<input type="radio"/> Astronomy	<input type="radio"/> Aquatic Life	<input type="radio"/> Geology <input type="radio"/> Field Trips
<input type="radio"/> Hiking	<input type="radio"/> Conservation	<input type="radio"/> Other (specify)

I (name _____) am knowledgeable in the following areas _____ and would be prepared to

- lead an outdoor session give a presentation prepare an article for The Orchid

I am interested in the following:

- Joining the PFN Executive Sitting on research or conservation committees Working on field projects
- Helping with refreshments at meetings Please have a member of the executive call me

AGE GROUP

This information helps us to understand the needs of our members. If a family membership, please check for each adult

- Under 20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80< over

DONATIONS

Membership fees cover the general operating costs of the club while other sources of revenue are needed to fund special projects such as ecological restoration. You can assist the club by making a donation to help further our work in such areas. The PFN is a registered charity and issues receipts for income tax purposes. All donations are gratefully received and any member of the executive will be happy to speak to you concerning the use of such funds.

LIABILITY WAIVER

In consideration of the Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) accepting this application, I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever release and discharge the PFN, their officers, directors, servants and agents from any liability whatsoever arising from my participation in PFN activities, whether by reason of negligence of the PFN or its representatives, or otherwise. I affirm that I am in good health, capable of performing the exercise required for field trips or other activities in which I participate, and accept as my personal risk the hazards of such participation. As a member of the PFN and/or as a parent/guardian of a member under 18 years of age, I have read and understood the above, and accept its term on behalf of all of my underage children.

Signature: _____