

The Orchid



March 2020

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Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists

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Know • Appreciate • Conserve Nature in All Its Forms



Second Thoughts?

This brave, overwintering Merlin will be relieved that spring is finally right around the corner.
Photo taken on January 1 at The Mount by Reem Ali.

Inside: Winter Outing Reports
 The Latest from Lily Lake
 Saw-whet Owl Banding Report
 Results of Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count
 Book Review: Underland - A Deep Time Journey

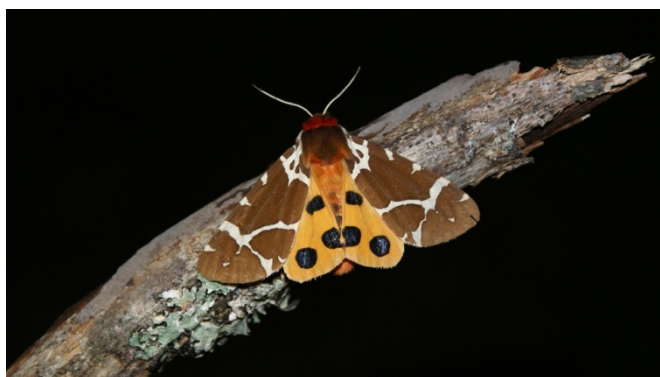
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Notice to members: This will be the last issue of *The Orchid* for those who have not renewed their PFN membership. If uncertain, contact Jim Young as 705-760-9397 or jbyoung559@gmail.com

Welcome new PFN members!

- David Britton
- Natalie Garnett
- Sandra Dimock & Bob Orrett
- J.Murray Jones & Anne Martin Jones
- Jane & Jim Bischoff
- Faye Tan & Robbie Marrotte



Clockwise from top: Beech tree stand on a Trent U property near Woodland Drive, Eastern Screech Owl roosting in a basswood tree in February, and a Great Tiger Moth in Algonquin last August. Photos by Basil Conlin, local moth expert. Incidentally, Basil created an iNaturalist project for butterflies and moths of Peterborough County and it has recorded 1,071 species submitted by 549 observers! <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/lepidoptera-of-peterborough-county>

PFN Coming Events

Planning is well underway for this year's outings. Last year was a lot of fun and I'm excited to see where the leaders will take us this year. As always, the Sunday Morning Birding will take place most of the Sundays during spring and fall migration. To help me plan, it would be good to hear back from you. Was there an outing you would really like to see repeated? Is there a place or topic you would like me to consider? Suggestions for improvement? I welcome your ideas. Send me an email at sueparadis@hotmai.com

Wildlife Tracking Outings

Weather permitting, PFN member, Don McLeod, will lead outings in March focusing on tracks and other wildlife sign. The place and time will be announced by e-mail shortly before each outing. Anyone interested in attending should send an e-mail to Don McLeod at donaldmcleod.com@gmail.com so he can add you to an e-mail distribution list. If you signed up for last year's outings, you will automatically receive an e-mail to confirm.


Accessibility: Moderate to somewhat challenging. These outings will all involve walking in snowy conditions.



<p>Sunday, Mar. 1 1 to 4 p.m. Meet in the parking lot of the Riverview Park and Zoo, Water Street North</p>	<p>Returning Waterfowl on the Otonabee</p> <p>The spring migration gets underway with the lengthened days in March and increased hours of sunlight. This afternoon trip will visit various locations along the Otonabee River to discover the returning waterfowl. It is anticipated there will be Common Goldeneyes and Bufflehead doing their spring courtship rituals. Common Merganser, with the males in their bright spring plumage, will also be present. Other species are also possible. The trip will also make a visit to the Bald Eagle nesting site in the Lakefield area to see if the adults are occupying the nest this year. Steve Paul and Cathy Douglas will be leading this annual late winter outing.</p> <p>Meet at 1:00 p.m. in the parking lot of the Peterborough Zoo. Bring binoculars and telescope if you have one. Dress for the weather forecast for the day of the outing. An afternoon break in Lakefield is planned.</p> <p>Accessibility: Easy</p>
<p>Saturday, Mar. 7 All day Meet at 6:45 a.m. in the Tim Horton's Parking Lot Sobey's/CTC Plaza</p> <p>Please note earlier start time than previously advertised</p>	<p>Hooters of Amherst Island</p> <p>This is the PFN's bi-annual outing to Amherst Island in the eastern end of Lake Ontario near Kingston. We will cross to the island on the ferry and visit various locations to look for wintering owls and the other hawks and eagles which will also be present. Meet in the parking lot adjacent Tim Horton's in the Sobey's/Canadian Tire Plaza on Lansdowne Street at 6:45 a.m. We will carpool from there and catch the 9:30 a.m. ferry to Amherst Island. Matthew Tobey and Brian Wales are the leaders for this outing. Bring a packed lunch, binoculars and telescope if you have one. Wear clothes suitable for the weather forecast on the day of the outing.</p> <p>Accessibility: Easy to moderate depending on snow conditions</p>



PFN Coming Events

<p>Wednesday, Mar. 11 7:30 p.m. Camp Kwartha Environment Centre 2505 Pioneer Road</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: Unique and Diverse Flora of Western Australia</p> <p>Western Australia is designated as having one of the most diverse flora communities in the world. This makes it a very fascinating place to visit. But also of interest is why Western Australia's plants are so different from those we are used to here. Perhaps these very different plants will help us see our native ones in a different light and will garner them more appreciation.</p> <p>Guest speaker Ed Addison has been a member of the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists, the Richmond Hill Field Naturalists and is now, with his wife Rose, a member of the Peterborough Field Naturalists. Ed holds a Ph.D. from the University of Guelph. He worked for the OMNRF in the area of wildlife health. For the last twenty years, these responsibilities took him throughout Ontario on a wide variety of wildlife and ecosystem health matters.</p>	
<p>Sunday, Mar. 15 10:30 a.m. at the Riverview Park and Zoo parking lot</p>	<p>Say Goodbye to Winter at Silent Lake Provincial Park</p> <p>Often in early to mid-March when spring is well underway in Peterborough, a storm goes through that drops a lot of rain. Meanwhile, Silent Lake will get a fresh blanket of snow. That is my cue to head up to The Park for a "goodbye winter" walk along Bonnie's Pond Trail. For those who missed the First Day walk, this is your chance to see how beautiful this landscape can be in winter. The Park closes on March 15 to prepare for summer, so this weather-dependant outing will have to happen by then. If you are interested in attending, send me an email. Should the weather forecast require a change of plans, I can contact you. sueparadisis@hotmail.com</p> <p>Bring binoculars, walking poles, change to share gas and park admission costs and a packed lunch as the outing will last until the middle of the afternoon. Dress for the Apsley weather forecast for the day.</p> <p>We will meet at the Zoo at 10:30 a.m. to arrange car-pooling. We should be back to Peterborough by 4:00. Accessibility: Moderate</p>	
<p>Sunday, Mar. 29 10 a.m. in Coffee Time at Lansdowne (Hwy 7) and Old Keene Road</p>	<p>Mergansers and Friends on Rice Lake</p> <p>This trip to look for spring migrants - primarily waterfowl. We will visit various access points on the north shore of Rice Lake between Keene and Hastings. We will be looking for areas of open water near the edge of the ice in search of concentrations of American Merganser, Common Goldeneye, Buffleheads and other returning waterfowl. Other spring migrants such as American Robins, Song Sparrows, Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles could be found. Some early returning raptors such as Northern Harrier, Osprey and Turkey Vulture may be seen. Martin Parker will be leading this spring outing.</p> <p>Meet at 10 a.m. in the Coffee Time just east of the intersection of Lansdowne Ave East and Hwy 7 and the Old Keene Road. Bring binoculars, telescope if</p>	

PFN Coming Events	
	<p>you have one, and dress for the weather forecast for the day. Bring a packed lunch as the outing will last until the middle of the afternoon.</p> <p>Accessibility: Easy</p>
<p>Saturday, Apr. 4 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Meet in the parking lot of the Tim Horton's in the Sobey's/Canadian Tire Plaza</p>	<p>Migrants at Presqu'île in Early April</p> <p>The PFN have had spring trips to Presqu'île Provincial Park annually since 1956. In the last decade three trips are held annually to view the migrants which concentrate at this Important Bird Area. This year's spring trip will be led by Martin Parker, who initially visited Presqu'île on a PFN outing on May 4, 1964. He is looking forward to sharing with other members the migrants of early April. There should be a good variety of both diving and dabbling ducks, gulls, and land birds. Some early shorebirds may be present. There should be a good chorus of both Spring Peepers and Chorus Frogs.</p> <p>Bring a packed lunch, drinks, binoculars, telescope if you have one. Wear clothes suitable for the weather forecast on the day of the outing. Remember the winds off Lake Ontario will make temperatures cooler. Difficulty is moderate.</p> <p>Meet in the parking lot of the Tim Horton's in the Sobey's/Canadian Tire Plaza at 8:00 a.m. We plan to return to Peterborough about 4 p.m.</p>
<p>Wednesday, Apr. 8 7:30 p.m. Camp Kawartha Environment Centre 2505 Pioneer Road</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: Rodney Fuentes on The Monarch Ultra</p> <p>The Monarch Ultra is a relay run that followed one of the world's longest insect migrations: the migration of the monarch butterflies. On September 21, 2019, the run started in Peterborough, Ontario, and arrived 47 days later in Macheros, Mexico. Rodney will be sharing the story behind the run, his experiences during the trip and what he learned along the way in terms of monarch conservation, habitat loss, and citizen actions to save our pollinators.</p> <p>Rodney Fuentes is a documentary filmmaker with a background in eco-tourism and nature exploration. Rodney has experience exploring the neotropical rainforest and guiding birdwatching tours in his native country, Venezuela. He has worked and/or volunteered for several NGOs including the Venezuelan Audubon Society, Phelps Ornithological Museum, Bird Studies Canada, and the Peterborough Field Naturalist Club. Rodney lives in Peterborough.</p>
<p>Monday, May 18 Victoria Day</p>	<p>PFN 80th Anniversary Party</p> <p>Outings all day leading up to a BBQ in the afternoon. Stay tuned for further details.</p>



Bufflehead photo by Reem Ali

PFN Junior Field Naturalists (ages 5-12)

Junior Field Naturalists' events are led by PFN members and individuals from other organizations in our community who volunteer to share their knowledge and skills with us. We also organize environmental stewardship activities for kids to get involved with and be inspired by. Activities are geared for ages 5 to 12, but kids of all ages are welcome (parents stay and participate).

Junior naturalist families are reminded to check the website (peterboroughnature.org/junior-naturalists) for event listings and to e-mail pfnjuniors@gmail.com if you're not on the members' distribution list for event announcements. Our child memberships are \$10 per year.

Other Events of Interest

<p>Saturday Feb. 29 to Sunday Mar. 1 10 a.m. to 5 a.m. Evinrude Centre, 911 Monaghan Road</p>	<p>The Kawartha Rock & Fossil Club's 27th Annual Show Minerals, Fossils, Rocks, Crystals, Meteorites, Gemstones, Equipment, Books, Faceted stones, Gemstone Jewellery, Beads and more. A large display area is featured with minerals and fossils from members of the Kawartha Club and prominent Ontario collectors. There is also a free Children's Sand Box and the Kawartha Club's Annual Best Collected Specimen Competition. Each day there will be silent auctions for adults and children. If you have any specimens that you need help identifying, bring them to show and Club members will try to find someone who can tell you what it is. Admission is \$4.00, Children under 12 free.</p>
<p>Thursday, Mar.12 7:30 p.m. Gzowski College, Room 114 Trent University</p>	<p>The Cloudy Future of Our Clear Waters – Big Problems, Innovative Research, and Good Solutions You are invited to the 2020 David Schindler Professorship Lecture with Drs. Paul Frost, Marguerite Xenopoulos, and Graham Raby, Trent University. What is the future of our aquatic ecosystems? In this lecture, we will explore the challenges facing our lakes, rivers, and wetlands including climate change, invasive species, pollution, over-fishing, and development of the surrounding lands. For each challenge our waters face, there are socio-economic drivers and a range of effects on aquatic ecosystems. Assessing and understanding these threats is central to sound management now and in the future. New research tools coupled to ecological frameworks are the basis of innovative aquatic research and promise to deepen and expand our understanding of aquatic ecosystems and their sensitivity to human-driven change. Deep understanding of ecosystems can lead to wiser, more effective, and more cost-efficient solutions. Together, we will show the importance of innovative and sound science to addressing the diverse challenges facing our waterbodies.</p>
<p>7 to 8 p.m. 599 Fleming Drive, Fleming College,</p>	<p>Peterborough County Stewardship Speaker Series This is a free event. All are welcome to attend.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday, February 26: Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park • Wednesday, March 25: Algonquin Wolf

Other Events of Interest	
Rm. 205 (Whetung Theatre)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wednesday, April 29: Conversations in the Forest – How Trees Communicate Wednesday, May 27: Once Around Algonquin <p>Peterboroughcountystewardship.org</p>
March 27 to 29 Holiday Inn 150 George St N.	<p>The Wildlife Society - Joint Conference and Annual General Meeting</p> <p>Registration is now open. The theme of the meeting is "Connecting and Building Ontario's Wildlife Profession". The conference will feature a student focused workshop on Friday followed by a student/professional mixer at the Publican House Brewery. Saturday will feature plenary talks from wildlife professionals from the US and Canada, including Dr. Gary White, President of The Wildlife Society; Dr. Justina Ray, President and Senior Scientist of Wildlife Conservation Society Canada; Dr. Darren Sleep, Sustainable Forestry Initiative; Dr. Patrick Hubert, Canadian Wildlife Service; and Dr. Marie Josee-Fortin, University of Toronto. We will also have contributed talks from students and professionals in the afternoon and our banquet will feature a keynote address from Dr. Martyn Obbard entitled "My Life with Bears". We will finish on Sunday with our business meetings, round table discussions, and a professional certification workshop. Please visit octws.ca/conference for more details.</p>
Thursday, Apr. 16 7-10 p.m. The Venue, 286 George St.	<p>Kawartha Wildlife Centre Gala Fundraiser</p> <p>We are excited to present our 3rd annual gala fundraiser! This year we'll be celebrating as Ontario's newest licensed wildlife rehabilitation centre. There will be a silent auction with original art donated by local talent, fabulous gifts and amazing prizes. All proceeds from this year's event will go directly to our 'Return to the Wild' fund designated for husbandry and veterinary care for animals in need. Tickets on sale now online at www.kawarthawildlifecentre.ca/shop or by phone 705-292-9211.</p>
April 24-26 Fleming College 599 Brealey Drive	<p>Peterborough Garden Show</p> <p>We're returning to Fleming College with lots of FREE parking and a \$10, one-price ticket so you can enjoy the show all weekend. We will have two entrances this year; closer parking and more space. Two shuttle buses and bus drop-off right at the door.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speakers include Alexander Reford (Reford Gardens); Sean James (Rain Gardens); Carlotta James (the Monarch Ultra) Thom Luloff (Critters in the Garden) and others TBA Lunch with Alexander Reford in Fleming's on-site restaurant Workshops on pruning, flowers, splitting plants, orchids, ponds, bugs and butterflies and still more. Films and videos: inspiring to all gardeners. The Children's Garden: the most popular space for kids and grownups. ~100 vendors offering almost everything garden-related that you can think of <p>See peterboroughgardenshow.com for tickets, places to stay and more details.</p>

Margaret and Carl Nunn Memorial Camp Scholarship

Every year Ontario Nature awards a scholarship for a youth between the ages of 7 and 14 to attend a four-day nature camp at our very own Camp Kawartha. This camp is especially designed for youth who are interested and knowledgeable about natural history and have potential to develop leadership in this area. The youth must be nominated for the award by a club which is a member of Ontario Nature. Last year we nominated a youth who was the successful candidate and we would like to nominate someone again this year.

The camp session runs from August 23 to August 26. The deadline for the nomination to Ontario Nature is March 27. If you have a youth who is interested, please contact Ted Vale at 705-741-3641 or e-mail tedandmarion@sympatico.ca by March 13 so we have enough time to prepare and submit the nomination.

Information about the award can be found on the Ontario Nature website: www.ontarionature.org. Click on "Take Action" and "Conservation Awards". More information about the camp is available on the Camp Kawartha website: www.campkawartha.ca/ Click on "Summer Camp", "Overnight Camp" and "Nature Camp".

Junior Naturalist Art Event Gets Huge Turnout and Media Coverage

Submitted by Jay Fitzsimmons

The PFN Junior Naturalists teamed up with the Art Gallery of Peterborough for a very popular nature-art event on Sunday, January 5. More than one hundred people participated in the event, and it even got coverage in the local news!

On the first Sunday of every month, the Art Gallery of Peterborough hosts Family Sundays. Families can visit the gallery and do arts and crafts for free.

The Junior Naturalists proposed a joint nature-art activity with the art gallery: the Junior Naturalists would provide nature supplies, and the art gallery would provide art supplies and the venue as one of their Family Sundays.

The activity was wood pendants: kids could paint cross-cuts of European Buckthorn, glue pressed flowers and leaves onto them, and attach strings and keychain rings to make them into necklaces or ornaments. The activity aligned with the gallery's exhibition about finding the beauty of weeds, since the species used are generally considered "weedy" (e.g., clover, chicory, common goldenrods and asters, etc.). Indeed, they were sourced from the lawn of Junior Naturalists co-leader Jay Fitzsimmons, who keeps his suburban lawn wilder than his neighbours would like. 😊

There were more families at the event than for any previous Family Sunday, according to art gallery staff. The kids enjoyed creating beautiful art out of nature, and many adults made pretty pendants too! The CHEX news team was a pleasant surprise, and helped showcase Family Sundays and the Junior Naturalists to a wide audience.

Thanks to Sarah Mackillican and the art gallery team for a great partnership ... perhaps the first of many joint nature-art events to come!

CHEX News segment: <https://globalnews.ca/video/6369228/family-art-day-in-peterborough>
Art Gallery of Peterborough Family Sundays: <https://agp.on.ca/programs/family-sundays/>
PFN Junior Naturalists: <https://peterboroughnature.org/junior-naturalists>



Photo by Jay Fitzsimmons, event coordinator



Annual Report for 2019



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Memberships – Jim Young

At the end of 2019, there were 187 memberships (down from 203) representing 302 individuals (down from 345).

Members Meetings – Marie Duchesneau

Again, at our monthly meetings we had the privilege to hear knowledgeable speakers speaking about different aspects of our natural world, from the beauty of spores and pollen viewed through the microscope to fossils in the geology of our Land Between. We discovered some of Ontario's best birding spots, learned how to identify what we hear when we get there, and we spent a day in the life of a shore bird on a beach in South Carolina. We took a closer look at our pesky biting insects, learned to recognize invasive plants and followed the eastern coyote on our city trails.

Outings – Sue Paradisis

A huge thank you goes out to the nineteen volunteers who shared their time and knowledge to enable PFN to offer such a variety of outings. These trips allowed us to learn while enjoying the outdoors and good companionship. People participated 680 times over the course of the year in both annual events that we look forward to and to new offerings. Although birds were frequently the focus, we also learned about geology, mushrooms, bats, amphibians, wildflowers, ferns, grasses, sedges and rushes. Although most of the forty-five outings were close to home, we also travelled from Algonquin Park to Presqu'île to the Whitby area. Good publicity, particularly on social media by Marilyn Hubley, attracted community members who often joined the PFN. A special thank you to Martin Parker and Jerry Ball who go above and beyond in offering us so many opportunities.

The Orchid – Kathryn Sheridan

PFN's newsletter, The Orchid, continued to be published nine times yearly, informing members of upcoming events, reporting on local nature news, and offering up other nature-oriented items to read. Along with regular features of the Orchid (the "President's Message" (Dylan Radcliffe), "The Orchid Diary" (an account of local nature sightings by Martin Parker) and "From The Archives" (Martin Parker)) were poems by Murray Palmer; book reviews by Marilyn Freeman; outings reports by Don McLeod and others; and results of local bird and butterfly population surveys by Martin Parker with Colin Jones and Jerry Ball. A number of students submitted reports on activities they participated in which were partially funded by the PFN (Maya Taylor on a conservation project in South Africa, and Emma Booth on the 2019 Ontario Nature Youth Summit). Steve Paul, Don McLeod, Rene Gareau, Cathy Douglas and Ken McKeen, among others, contributed to the visual enjoyment of The Orchid, providing photos to amaze and interest Orchid readers and sometimes to make them laugh. Ontario Nature spring and autumn regional meetings were reported on by Lesley Hale. Ontario Nature news appeared more often than usual in this past year's Orchid because now, more than ever, nature needs people to know and care about it. Many thanks to all contributing members for another year of notable newsletters!

Junior Field Naturalists – Jay Fitzsimmons

This was a year of change for the PFN Juniors. Lara Griffin has led the Juniors for years, doing an incredible job coordinating so many events. Now we have a team of four volunteers taking turns leading events: Lara Griffin, Erica Barkley, Jay Fitzsimmons, and Stephanie Collins. We didn't have as many events in 2019 as we'd hoped, but intend to have more events in 2020 now that we've figured things out. A huge thank you

to Lara, for her incredible (and continuing) work helping kids enjoy nature. And thank you to our partners (GreenUp, Creating Space, Otonabee Conservation, and others) for helping us with 2019's events.

2019 Events (with host): April 28: Frog calls along Jackson Park Trail (Lara Griffin), June 1: De-pave paradise at Millennium Park (Lara Griffin), June 9: Leaf press art event with Creating Space (Jay Fitzsimmons), Oct. 5: BioBlitz at Kawartha Heights Park (Jay Fitzsimmons), Oct. 19: Pollinator garden with Otonabee Conservation (Stephanie Collins).

Digital Communication – Dylan Radcliffe, Marilyn Hubley

This year the revision of the website was completed. The PFN social media accounts on Facebook and Twitter were maintained during the year.

ADMINISTRATION

Ontario Nature Representative – Lesley Hale

Peterborough Field Naturalists is a member organization of Ontario Nature. This membership provides us with insurance coverage and the opportunity to participate in all of Ontario Nature's activities. Our club supported a few advocacy submissions of Ontario Nature such as comments on the extension of Rondeau PP cottage leases, the Provincial Policy Statement, changes to the ESA Bill 108 and the Better for People, Smarter for Business Act Bill 132.

For the sixth year, we sponsored youth to attend the Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership. This year we voted to send two delegates: Emma Booth, a student at Adam Scott C.C.I.; and Hannah Grills, a student at Holy Cross Secondary School.

We attended the spring and fall Regional Network Meetings which provided opportunities to learn about other field naturalist clubs' successes and challenges and garner good ideas for club activities.

Club Sales – Marie Duchesneau

Sales of PFN publications continued at some of the regular member's meetings, An additional stock of 'Nature in the Kawarthas' was purchased for resale and it is still being sold commercially by Dundurn Press. The PFN still receives royalties from Dundurn Press.

Archives – Martin Parker

Regular maintenance of the PFN Archives continued during the year.

PFN Legacy Fund

The annual grant to the PFN from the Legacy Fund was \$990. The funds were used for the following special initiatives of the PFN: PFN Awards at the Peterborough Regional Science Fair, Sponsorship of Student to Ontario Nature Youth Summit, registration fees for the participants of the Petroglyphs Butterfly Count, costs for organizing the Peterborough Christmas Bird Count, sponsorship of the Peterborough Pollinator Summit, and assisting a student to attend Project Wallacea.

CITIZEN-SCIENCE – NATURE STUDY

The principle Citizen-science or nature studies projects conducted by PFN were the annual Peterborough Christmas Bird Count, Petroglyphs Bird Count, Petroglyphs Butterfly Count, continuing documentation of flora and fauna of Harper Park, and Orchid Diary. The study by Trent student McLean Smith using data

from 'The Orchid' was published in the Journal of Nature Conservation, 50 (2019). Workshops were conducted on using eBird and iNaturalist electronic data bases to record sightings. Members participated in the BioBlitzes held for the Trent University Symons Campus.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

Harper Park Stewardship – Lynn Smith

Harper Park, considered a 'natural gem in the City' covers 150 acres in the southwest end of Peterborough. It is home to a provincially significant wetland, a cold-water stream, population of brook trout and a high diversity of plants and animals. Some 2019 highlights:

- Peterborough City Council has approved the transfer of funds to complete a sub-watershed plan for Harper Creek. This included identification and analysis of the natural environment and its sensitivity.
- In September, Scott Blair from Trent University defended his MSc thesis on the movement and habitat use of brook trout in Harper Creek. Congratulations, Scott!
- Jeff Bowman, a research scientist in Peterborough reported the first record of a Northern Flying Squirrel in Harper Park.
- Another first...two Blue-Spotted Salamanders were found.
- An Easter Sunday morning walk was enjoyed by 50 people.
- 18 participants took part in the Harper Park Challenge from April to June and increased the eBird list of bird species to 135.

Ecology Park Bird Feeders

The three bird feeders at Ecology Park were filled weekly with black oil sunflower seed for the months of January to March, November and December.

Municipal Planning Issues

The PFN participated on two committees involved in the new City of Peterborough Official Plan and made a submission on the draft Official Plan and participated in the Kawartha Naturally Connected Initiative involved in natural area planning in Peterborough County and City of Kawartha Lakes.

PROMOTION

The PFN had a display at the annual Peterborough Garden Show and the Earth Day event at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and at the Annual Conference of the Ontario Entomology Association. The PFN was mentioned frequently in the Northcrest column in the Peterborough Examiner along with other articles in the newspaper.

PFN AWARDS

The Lola Leach Award was awarded to Lara Griffin at the 2019 Annual Meeting. Certificates of Appreciation were also awarded to Mike Hendren, Kathryn Sheridan, Martin Parker, Paul Elliott, Murray Palmer, Gord and Enid Mallory, Marilyn Freeman, and Basil Conlin.

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President – Ted Vale (1st half) & Dylan Radcliffe (2nd half)

Vice-President -- Dylan Radcliffe (1st half)

Past President – Lynn Smith (1st half), Ted Vale (2nd half)

Secretary – Martin Parker

Treasurer – Dave Heuft

Directors – Philip Shaw, Rene Gareau, Reem Ali, Marie Duchesneau, Lesley Hale, Sue Paradisis, Marilyn Hubley

VOLUNTEERS

Members Meetings

- Coordinators – Marie Duchesneau & Philip Shaw
- Speakers – Annamarie Beckel, Susan Chow, David Beresford, Ernie Jardine, Ellen Jamieson, Vicki Simkovic, Mike V.A. Burrell, Ken Lyon, Stephanie Rutherford
- Quiz Presenters – Martin Parker, Don McLeod, Dylan Radcliffe, and Lynn Smith

Outings

- Coordinator – Sue Paradisis
- Leaders – Don McLeod, Martin Parker, Matthew Tobey, Jerry Ball, Marilyn Hubble, Sue Paradisis, Steve Paul, Jerry Ball, Toby Rowland, Dylan Radcliffe, Drew Monkman, Bryan Hughes, Dave Milsom, Carling Dewar, Kathryn Tishaw, Susan Chow, Paul Elliott, Lynn Smith, Ken Lyon, Al Brunger, Radek Odolczyk, Scott McKinlay

The Orchid

- Editor – Kathryn Sheridan
- Contributors: Toby Rowland, Sue Paradisis, Marie Duchesneau, Lara Griffin, James Young, Rene Gareau, Lynn Smith, Ted Vale, Don McLeod, Jenn Baici, Kathryn Sheridan, Steve Paul, Susan Weaver, Martin Parker, Dave Milsom, Murray Palmer, Marla Williams, Ken McKeen, Marilyn Hubley, Colin Jones, Steve Kerr, Dawn Tower-Dubois, Cathy Douglas, Gina Verrin, Marilyn Freeman, Donna Dubreuil, Kari Gunson, Ken Lyon, Roy Bowles, Maya Taylor, Lesley Hale, Ed Addison, Fenella Hood, Kathy Reid, Parks Canada, Basil Conlin, Kawartha Land Trust, Taryn Lourie, Drew Monkman, Marci Lucas, Scott McKinlay, Anne Bell, Don and Emilie Pettypiece, Bill Snowden, Karen MacDonald, Robert Pratten, Dylan Radcliffe, Edward Kloosterman, Rodney Fuentes, Carlotta James, Ron Pittaway, Laura Mallory, Stephanie Collins, Maxwell Matchim, Bird Studies Canada, Claire McGrath, Brittany Harding, Ryan Brook, Phil Holder, Iain Rayner, Lisa Nisbet.
- Orchid Mailing – Mary Thomas, James Young

Junior Field Naturalists

- Coordinators – Lara Griffin, Erica Barkley, Jay Fitzsimmons, and Stephanie Collins

Website

- Webmasters -- Chris Gooderham and Dylan Radcliffe
- Blog and Facebook Postings – Marilyn Hubley

Nature Studies

- Orchid Diary – Martin Parker and many contributors.
- Peterborough Christmas Bird Count – Martin Parker, compiler and 81 participants.
- Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count – Colin Jones, compiler and 24 participants.
- Petroglyphs Butterfly Count – Jerry Ball, compiler and 17 participants
- Bird Feeders at Ecology Park – JB Jaboor, Kathryn Sheridan
- Harper Park Inventory and Monitoring – many members
- e-Bird Workshop – Martin Parker

- iNaturalist Workshop – Lynn Smith

Community Advocacy

- City of Peterborough Official Plan Committee – Martin Parker and Dylan Radcliffe
- Kawartha Naturally Connected – Dylan Radcliffe

Promotion (Display & Book Sales)

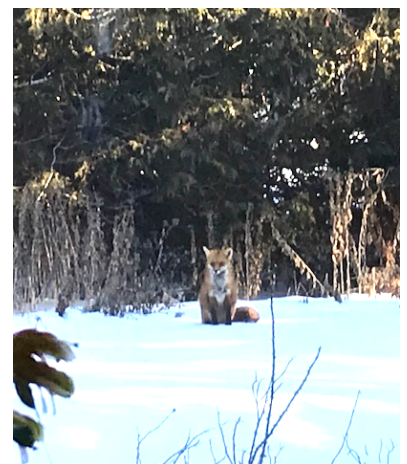
- Peterborough Garden Show (April) – Lynn Smith, Martin Parker, Kathy Parker, Al Sippel, Marie Duchesneau, Anne Heuft, Paul & Anne Elliott, Rene & Antje Gareau, Sue Paradisis
- Earth Day and OMNRF (April) – Dylan Radcliffe, Marilyn Hubley, Lynn Smith, Sue Paradisis
- Entomological Society of Ontario Conference -- Martin Parker

Partnerships

- Ontario Nature Spring and Fall Regional Meetings --- Lesley Hale
- Kawartha Land Trust – field outing destinations
- Kawartha Naturally Connected -- Dylan Radcliffe
- Camp Kawartha – use of facilities for PFN members and Board meeting, Junior PFN events and the Sadler Memorial Library
- Ecology Park, Peterborough Green-up – bird feeders location
- Peterborough Regional Science Fair – awards, judging
- Trent University – newsletter reproduction, student projects and grants, published paper
- FMZ17 Fisheries Advisory Council – Lynn Smith and Phil Shaw
- Peterborough Stewardship Council – Phil Shaw
- Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough – management of PFN Legacy and PFN Investment Funds

Donors

Many members gave donations to the Club through the year including items for the bucket draw and the silent auction at the Annual Meeting.



From left: Bald Eagle flying over Kenner Collegiate (Blake Shaw), Ruffed Grouse near airport (Reem Ali), and Red Fox in backyard (Patricia Swales)

Results of 34th Petroglyphs CBC

By Colin Jones, Count Compiler

The 34th Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count was held on Saturday, January 4 - a day with very pleasant weather. It was an extremely calm day (excellent listening conditions), and the temperature was hovering around zero for most of the day, with mostly overcast skies.

Participants: 36 (above average)

Total species: 29 (below the 10-year average of 32.4 - There were few finch species present and virtually no open water for waterfowl, gulls, etc.)

Total individuals: 3,338 (well above the 10-year average of 2,248)

Notable species and high counts included:

- BARRED OWL: 26 (crushing the previous count high of 11 individuals)
- DOWNY WOODPECKER: 50 (much higher than the 10-year average of 23 and near the count high of 54)
- HAIRY WOODPECKER: 70 (much higher than the 10-year average of 37)
- PILEATED WOODPECKER: 33 (much higher than the 10-year average of 14)
- CANADA JAY: a single bird was seen along the Jack Lake Rd (until 2009 recorded annually but since then only recorded in 2014, during count period in 2016, and in 2017 and 2019)
- BLUE JAY: 652 (much higher than the 10-year average of 239 and nearly tying the count high of 653)
- RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: 278 (much higher than the 10-year average of 81)
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH: 170 (much higher than the 10-year average of 86)
- WINTER WREN: count period only (not Count Day)
- GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET: 108 (much higher than the 10-year average of 31 and near the count high of 120)

Low Counts:

- BALD EAGLE: 2 (10-year average is 6 and count high is 14)

Winter Finches:

- PURPLE FINCH: 115
- RED CROSSBILL: 43 including at least two different types. Type 2 individuals were recorded and confirmed by Matthew Young at Cornell. At least a single Type 3 individual was also heard calling overhead.
- WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: count period only (Petroglyphs Provincial Park)
- PINE SISKIN: 2
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH: 262

Misses.

BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER: although not recorded every year, very likely a scarce resident species within the count circle.

SNOW BUNTING: only missed 5 other times in the 34-year history of the count



Tree Sparrow. Photo: Ken McKeen

Winter Tracking Reports

Submitted by Don McLeod

January 17 at Windy Ridge Conservation Area

Six members of the Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) braved very cold weather conditions to go tracking at Windy Ridge Conservation Area. Tracking was surprisingly good given the cold weather. Snow conditions made it tough for small mammals to stay under snow cover. There were many trails for Masked Shrew and several for Smoky Shrew. The reliable Porcupine did not fail with the usual scat at base of tree den and a trail leading away from the tree. There were many Coyote trails. The highlight of the afternoon were side-by-side trails of Fisher and American Mink. They were traveling in opposite



Fisher tracks and trail on left. Less visible on right is a parallel trail of an American Mink. Photo: Don McLeod



Don McLeod using his hand span to measure the stride of a Coyote trail. Photo: Ken Lyon

directions and likely at different times, but within a 24-hour period. Both were making trails parallel to and near the river. We looked for birds along the way but they were scarce other than the regular Black-capped Chickadees, a Blue Jay and the distant call of a Brown Creeper.

January 22 at Harper Park

Three members went tracking in Harper Park. The many tracks, trails and a den for Eastern Cottontail gave witness to high numbers of this mammal. We also found sign, tracks and a ground level den for a Porcupine. Coyote tracks and trails were common. There was a Ruffed Grouse trail. One small mammal trail also had an extremely small tunnel entrance hole suggesting the ID of Pygmy Shrew.

January 30 in Selwyn Township

Tracking along non-maintained road allowances in Selwyn Township by four members of the Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) documented tracks from 14 wildlife species. At the first location, the species list included the following species: Shrew sp., Red Squirrel, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Eastern Cottontail, Fisher, Raccoon, Coyote, White-tailed Deer, Ruffed Grouse and Wild Turkey. The second location had: Masked Shrew, White-footed Mouse, Red Squirrel, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Eastern Cottontail, European Hare, Ermine, Fisher, Raccoon, Red Fox, Coyote and Ruffed Grouse.

February 17 in Selwyn and at Windy Ridge

Twelve trackers enjoyed a beautiful day on the trail during a PFN outing. Some attended for the morning, others attended the afternoon, and a few spent the whole day looking for tracks and sign of wildlife. The list of species was good during the morning walks in Selwyn township: Wild Turkey, Ruffed Grouse, White-footed Mouse, Shrew sp, Coyote, Eastern Cottontail, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Red Squirrel, Raccoon and White-tailed Deer. The afternoon walk at Windy Ridge Conservation Area was excellent for tracking with a record 17 species observed: Ruffed Grouse, American Crow, Blue Jay, Sparrow sp?, Coyote, Red Fox, Porcupine, Red Squirrel, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Fisher, American Mink, Snowshoe Hare, Eastern Cottontail, Ermine, White-footed Mouse, Masked Shrew and Smoky Shrew.



Porcupine scat and den. Photo: Don McLeod

Outing Report for January 1: Welcoming 2020 with a First Day Hike

Submitted by Anda Rungis

Nineteen Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) members and friends met at Riverview Zoo on the morning of the first day of 2020. The day was bright and the atmosphere festive as folks exchanged New Year's greetings and arranged car pools for the first outing of the PFN's 80th year. Led by Sue Paradisis, PFN Outings Co-ordinator, this event was an invitation to start the new year off right with a hike in Silent Lake Provincial Park.



View from the scenic lookout.
Photo: Murray Palmer.

Loaded with winter gear and packed lunches, the convoy of cars travelled a scenic route through the Kawarthas and arrived at the park by noon. The peaceful ambiance of Silent Lake surrounded us, and we were grateful for the heated "facilities" as we made our preparations for the hike. With snowflakes falling and walking sticks in hand, the group made a unanimous decision to explore the Bonnie's Pond Trail. Bonnie's Pond Trail offers a three kilometer hike and is open year-round. The trail passes through a variety of landscapes including rich hardwood forest which supports ephemeral streams. The first kilometer of the trail took the PFN group along a forested path that led to the edge of Bonnie's Pond. It is said that Bonnie's Pond is named to honor the memory of a workhorse that tragically drowned during the logging era. While contemplating the expansive, snow-carpeted beaver meadow, American mink and red squirrel tracks were spotted along the edge of the pond. On the uphill approaches of the trail, our gaze was swept to the tops of the massive white pine, hemlock and yellow birch trees which, in areas of the park, have been identified to be over 100 years old.

At the halfway point, Bonnie's Pond Trail intersected with the Mountain Bike Trail. Some participants opted to explore the more open Mountain Bike Trail,



Northern River Otter tracks and slide. Photo: Don McLeod

observing North American River Otter tracks at a stream crossing along the route. Those who continued on the Bonnie's Pond Trail added a short trek to the scenic lookout for an incredible view over Silent Lake. Reunited at the trailhead, the PFN group shared highlights and greeted the Park Warden. Bird sighting for this outing included: Blue Jay, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper and American Goldfinch. Three hours passed quickly at Silent Lake Provincial Park. The fresh air, tranquility and spirit of the first day inspired the naturalists, birders and trackers alike. While gathered for a photo opportunity on the wooden bridge over Silent Creek, Sue remarked that she had identified 13 species of fern within the park boundaries. Those with an interest in geology, might seek out the Silent Lake Precambrian Silent Lake Pluton where quartz sillimanite nodules, unique to Southern Ontario, can be observed. I was reminded of the beautiful images that Heidi shared at the December PFN members' slide show night, while exploring the Park by canoe. Inspiration for another day!



Photo: Sue Paradisis

Photo: Sue Paradisis



PFN members enjoying the view along Silent Lake Creek. Photo: Don McLeod

Outing report for February 2: Snowshoeing at Kawartha Nordic Ski Club

Submitted by Drew Monkman

Clement temperatures and excellent snow conditions made for a very successful, first-ever PFN Snowshoe Nature Walk on February 2 at the Kawartha Nordic Ski Trails near Haultain. An impressive 33 people took part, and everyone seemed to love the experience. Led by Drew Monkman, Don McLeod, and Susan Sauvé, the participants saw a good selection of different mammal tracks, birds, lichens, and fungi, as well as a wide selection of trees and shrubs. One of the highlights was watching Snow Fleas catapult themselves over the snow surface. They were first spotted thanks to the eagle eyes of a young girl who took part. Shortly afterwards, a tiny spider was also observed walking over the snow.



Photo: Don McLeod

It was also exciting to see tracks of both a Fisher and a Moose. Don also drew our attention to the tracks of an American Mink, a Snowshoe Hare, a Beaver, an Eastern Coyote, and numerous White-tailed Deer and Red Squirrels. Although the bird list was rather short, it was interesting to watch as Black-capped Chickadees and Red-breasted Nuthatches continually flew in and out of the crowns of Balsam Fir where they were presumably taking seeds from the cones. Fishing also brought in a couple of Golden-crowned Kinglets.

We also spent time going through the identification process to sort out the different conifers along the trail, which included Balsam Fir, White Spruce, Eastern White Cedar, White Pine, Eastern Hemlock, and Tamarack. One of the hemlocks was riddled with thousands of Yellow-bellied Sapsucker drillings. We also saw crustose, foliose, and fruticose lichens growing on the trees, along with different bracket fungi.

At the end of the outing, a number of us gathered in the chalet for some hot chocolate, a bit of lunch, and a recap of what we had seen along the trail. We want to thank the Kawartha Nordic Ski Club for helping to make this event possible. I have a feeling that snowshoeing at Kawartha Nordic will become an annual PFN event.

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A pair of American Kestrels on County Road 2 in February. Photo: Steve Paul

Oliver Property Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding Report, Fall 2019

Submitted by Carrie Sadowski

Every October for the past 20 years (except for 2018), volunteers from Trent University and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, as well as a host of other naturalists and owl enthusiasts, have spent their evenings on the north shore of Pigeon Lake near Bobcaygeon trying to lure migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*). This project is part of a North American bird banding network and is overseen by Dr. Erica Nol, ornithology professor at Trent University. The efforts undertaken both locally and further abroad at other banding stations have been increasing our understanding of the ecology and migration patterns of these secretive owls through live capture and bird-banding.

Northern Saw-whet Owls feed primarily on small rodents like mice and voles; however, being a very small-bodied raptor (only about the size of a robin but with a bigger head) they have trouble hunting in deep snow. This leads them to migrate from their breeding grounds in the southern boreal forest and Great-Lakes St. Lawrence region to areas further south with less snow cover, such as areas in the central Atlantic states. Every fall, Saw-whets migrate through central Ontario with numbers typically peaking in mid-October. As with other migratory birds, avian researchers take advantage of their movement patterns to capture and learn a little bit more about this endearing little raptor species.

Owls are captured using an array of avian mist nets set up in a polygon in a wooded area of Trent University's James McLean Oliver Ecological Centre property, along with an audio lure of the Northern Saw-whet Owl's territorial call. Banders turn on the audio lure and open the mist nets for at least 4 hours after dark each evening, providing that the weather is suitable (i.e., not freezing, rainy or excessively windy), checking them with great anticipation every 10 to 20 minutes. When an owl is caught in the netting, it is gently removed by an experienced bird handler and placed in a small soft bag while it is taken back to the banding station for processing. Measurements of age/sex, wing length and mass are made by a trained bander and recorded for each bird, as well as the date, time, and specific net of each capture. Each "new" owl (i.e., one that has not been caught before) is banded with a size 4 CWS/USFWS aluminum band which gives it a unique ID number for the rest of its life should it be captured again by another banding station or found by someone later in its journey south or in a subsequent year. There are at least 100 other bird banding stations in eastern North America that band Saw-whet Owls annually, thus there is good potential for individual owls to be recaptured.

In 2019, owl-banding took place at the Oliver Property over 33 evenings between October 2 and November 10. During this time, 121 new Saw-whet Owls were captured, measured, banded and released. This total was lower than the 197 owls banded at the Oliver Property in 2017 and the record high of 223 owls in 2007, but higher than our 19-year average (1999 to 2017) of 105 new owls banded annually. Thus, 2019 was considered a "pretty good" banding season. However, these totals are not necessarily indicative of high or low migration years as our capture effort (i.e., the number of nights that banding occurred on and/or the number of open net hours) varied across the 20 years. A thorough analysis of our owl capture numbers in relation to each year's effort would better reflect patterns in migration abundance from year to year, and we hope to analyze the data this way in the near future.

We determined the sex of captured Saw-whets by comparing their wing chord and weight to birds of known sex using a published discriminant function analysis. As is the case in most years, the majority of



A newly banded Northern Saw-whet Owl ready for release. Photo: Dave Ellis.

birds captured this past year were female (~ 90%). This is typical for most banding stations and there are several different hypotheses for why so many more females than males are caught, ranging from differences in the timing or extent of male Saw-whet migration to differential attraction to the audio lure (the species' call that is broadcast repeatedly) between males and females.



Examining the moult pattern on a Saw-whet Owl wing.
Photo: Carrie Sadowski

The age of captured Saw-whet Owls was determined by examining the growth and moult pattern of their flight feathers which were deemed to be either new (2019) or older (prior to 2019) when illuminated under a black light. About one-third (35%) of the individuals caught this past fall had feather moult patterns indicating they were hatched in the spring of 2019 (i.e., "Hatching Year" or juvenile birds) and close to half (42%) were deemed to be "Second Year" birds (i.e., hatched in spring 2018). The rest (23%) were aged as "After Second Year" birds (i.e., hatched 2+ years ago). The proportion of juvenile owls captured this past fall was a bit lower than our long-term average (~45%), suggesting slightly lower than average abundance of Saw-whet Owl prey populations (small mammals such as red-backed voles and deer mice) during last year's breeding season.

Seven Saw-whet Owls that were previously banded by other banding stations were also captured at the Oliver Property in 2019 (7/128 = 5.5%). Two of these owls were originally banded in 2018; two of them were banded in 2016; the banding date details for the other three are currently unknown. The locations where these owls were originally banded ranged from Ontario (1 at Prince Edward Point and 1 near St. Williams) to Quebec (near Montreal) to Ohio, Michigan and Virginia. As well, a Northern Saw-whet banded by our group at the Oliver Property in 2017 was recaptured

this past fall at the McGill Bird Observatory near Montreal. While banding new birds is always exciting, for researchers it is the recaptures such as these that provide the most excitement. From the information we receive each time a banded owl is captured, we gain unique insights about the life span, habitat use and migratory routes of these fascinating little owls. For example, several years ago an owl banded at our station one October night was recaptured 2.5 hours later by bird banders in Port Hope. Assuming a straight-line flight without stopping, this bird would have been flying at a speed of 28 km/h!

In 2019, the capture rate of migrating Saw-whet Owls by date showed an atypical pattern of not reaching a peak until close to the end of October (Fig. 1). Typically, the peak of captures in our region occurs near the middle of October, but this year it wasn't until October 19 when more than 10 owls were caught in a single night. As well, the night with the highest number caught occurred on October 26 when 14 owls were caught and banded. Capture rates continued to be higher through the end of October and into early November than they were in early October, suggesting a later than average migration period for Saw-whet Owls in 2019. However, poor weather curtailed much of our banding effort as we entered November, thus it is difficult to say precisely when the true peak of fall migration occurred this past year.

October nights at the Oliver Property are always interesting whether or not Saw-whets are caught. Often banders will hear coyotes yipping in the distance and nocturnal critters such as raccoons, skunks, white-tailed deer, moths, bats and flying

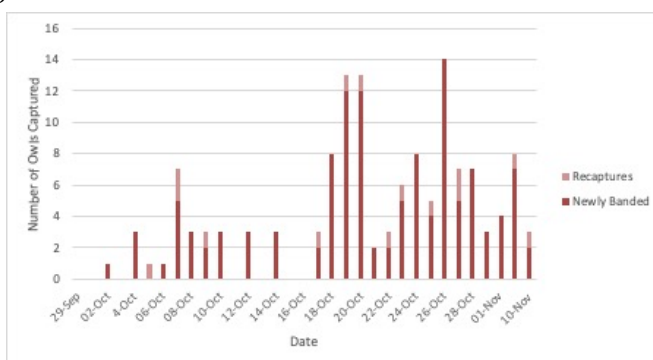


Figure 1: Total Saw-whet Owls capture at the Oliver Property in 2019 by date

squirrels are occasionally seen... not to mention other mysterious movements and noises heard coming from the forest! Saw-whets that are attracted to the property by their territorial call being played over and over again are often very vocal, captivating banders and visitors alike with various screechy, wailing and whining-like calls from the dark woods. However, one unintended consequence of attracting a small creature to an area by its call is that predators may also be attracted to the area. This was indeed the case at the Oliver Property in 2019 as banders frequently heard or saw a Barred Owl in the vicinity of our banding operations and in fact captured one in the mist nets on four different nights! Barred Owls are known predators of Saw-whet Owls, and thus the persistent appearance of one or more of these hunters this past fall forced banders to take extra precautions to prevent a predation event from occurring as a result of our operations. This meant that on several occasions banders had to shut down the nets temporarily or for the remainder of the evening.

In addition to learning more about the Northern Saw-whet Owl's migratory habits, this project aims to increase awareness of owls among local naturalists and the interested public as a part of our natural heritage here in the Kawarthas. The project also aims to increase awareness of the need to conserve habitat



Sam Sager holding a persistent Barred Owl
(Photo: Sheena Symington)

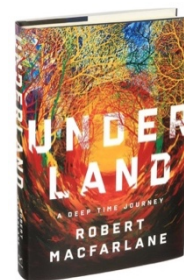
to support these owls for both breeding and migration. As well, this project provides opportunities for volunteering biology students and natural resource professionals to learn about and gain some experience with bird banding operations. This year many undergraduate biology students, as well as many naturalists and owl-lovers both young and old, came out to learn about bird banding methods, owl research and habitat conservation.

All procedures undertaken to attract, capture, handle and band owls were performed under the following authorizations: a Canadian Wildlife Service Master Bird Banding Permit, a Trent University Animal Care Committee Research Permit and a Wildlife Scientific Collector's Permit from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. We wish to thank Dr. Eric Sager of Trent University, property manager of the Oliver Property, for allowing us to use the property for this project again this year. We also thank all the dedicated volunteer banders who helped to make this a successful 20th Saw-whet Owl banding season... it was a hoot!

Underland - A Deep Time Journey by Robert Macfarlane

Reviewed by Marilyn Freeman

I've hiked on glaciers in BC and Alaska. I've been inside mammoth caves in west Texas. I've watched glaciers calve and gazed down into "moulines". I've been diving in the ocean. I've gone into defunct mines in southern Arizona. I've been through the sewers of Paris. But I've never read a book like this: a journey through "deep time" by exploring the world under us.



This book is, in a sense, a claustrophobic thriller that asks us to be aware of those things, both actual and fabled, that move beneath our feet. It also seeks to reconfigure our experience of time, using the vast cycles of geological time while weaving in ancient mythical descents to determine the measure of the Anthropocene era.

Stories of human journeys into the Underworld are as old as literature and mythology itself. But few of them are happy tales. Fears of the underworld are embedded deep in our language where "height is celebrated but depth is despised. To be 'uplifted' is preferable to being 'depressed' or 'pulled down'."

Underland tunnels into biology, history, physics, glaciology, and eco-poetry, among other specialties, as Macfarlane visits with scientists, archaeologists, explorers, and activists at different sites across the Northern Hemisphere.

Some of the people he meets are “nerds” in the best way - folks who are completely entranced by what they do. Merlin Sheldrake is a British plant scientist. His childhood heroes weren’t Marvel characters, they were lichens and fungi. “Fungi and lichens annihilate our categories of gender. They reshape our ideas of community and cooperation....Lichens can crumble rocks into dust with terrifying acids. Fungi can...dissolve soil... They’re world-makers and world-breakers. What’s more superhero than that?”

Under Paris are a series of catacombs much greater than the ones known to the general public. A group of people known as cataphiles explore and map the region, all illegally. Paris sits on Lutetian limestone, an excellent building material used for Notre-Dame and the Louvre. This stone was mined from under the city. There is a network of over 322 km of galleries, rooms and chambers spread under nine arrondissements. There are also human bones in ossuaries. And homeless people, crime and parties.

This beautifully written book, while taking the reader on adventures both below the surface and above, offers a new perspective on the human impact upon our planet.

After Underland won the Wainwright Golden Beer book prize winner in 2019, Macfarlane said, “This year’s prize speaks of the fear and hope that characterize our relations with the natural world in today’s crisis-contexts of climate breakdown, species loss and habitat degradation. The work celebrated by the 2019 prize fuses politics, ethics, pragmatism and poetry -- and shows a centuries-old tradition of literature flexing and responding to contemporary pressures.” (*The Guardian*, Aug 15, 2019)

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Let's Celebrate More of Nature!

The day was cool, and the sky cloudy bright.
The ice lake floated until it melted out of sight.
A brisk wind was blowing, the waves thrown back
From exposed patches of sandstone wet and black.

Boughs of white cedar hung low, catching the rebound;
The rushing water with tinkling ice was a happy sound.
Tiny, thin icicles coated the scaly leaves and gleamed;
These dripping, freezing fingers were festive, it seemed.

Out in the shallow bay swam buffleheads and mergansers;
One could spend hours here watching these aquatic dancers.
The loons were not here yet - no fly-pasts or wailing calls.
Many people were self-imprisoned in homes and malls.

Just because ice-out varies so much with lake location
Doesn't mean natural events aren't cause for celebration.
To love and respect Nature is to learn more about it.
When you feel Nature's beauty, you'll want to tout it.

Murray Arthur Palmer



Photo: Murray Palmer



The Orchid Diary



A summary of noteworthy observations by PFN members and others in the Peterborough region.

Please submit your interesting observations to Martin Parker
at mparker19@cogeco.ca or phone 705-745-4750

Dec. 25	Sue Paradisis reported that instead of looking out over a winter wonderland she watched an American Robin eating crab apples and an Eastern Chipmunk stealing and storing more bird seed. She felt it had enough stored for two winters.
Dec. 29	Dave Milsom observed a Northern Goshawk in the Scollard Drive area. In the last week of December, Ron Egan had two Coyotes in woods off Armour Road.
Dec. 30	Daniel Williams located a female Northern Pintail on the Otonabee River in the Millennium Park area. It was being reported regularly there by many different observers during the report period. On February 14, it was off the boat ramp at the south end of Monaghan Road. Usually with the flock of Mallards present in the area.
Dec. 31	Congratulations to Donald Sutherland who observed 222 species of birds in Peterborough County during 2019, making him the top eBirder for the County. Dave Milsom with 220 and Matthew Tobey with 217 were close behind.
Jan. 1	Many observers were actively birding on the first day of the year with a total of 46 bird species being reported on eBird. Highlights include: Participants of Ontario Field Ornithologists outing in the Peterborough area, led by Matthew Tobey and Dave Milsom, observed 1 Glaucous Gull at Auburn Reach Park, 2 Glaucous Gulls and an Iceland Gull on Little Lake, 7 Trumpeter Swans on river above Lock 25, 5 American Robins & 16 Cedar Waxwings along the river from Trent U. to Lakefield, and 1 Rough-legged Hawk near the landfills site. Ben Taylor had 2 Red Crossbills along the Kawartha Nordic Ski Trail. Martin Parker had a Bufflehead on the lake off Stenner Road and a White-throated Sparrow at his feeder (a daily visitor since late fall until end of period). Steve Paul reported his wife observed a Merlin flush out 20 Mourning Doves from the back of their property. She could not confirm if it caught anything. This is a resident bird that is observed weekly.
Jan. 3	Cathy Douglas located & photographed a Winter Wren at South Bay, Stoney Lake. Mike Burrell had another Winter Wren in his yard at the south end of Douro, 8 th Line. Iain Rayner located 2 Mute Swans at Lakefield Marsh -- seen regularly through the reporting period in same area and off end of Stenner Road by many observers.
Jan. 4	34 th Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count -- 29 species observed. See summary report above. While on the count, Matthew Tobey & Martin Parker observed a male Ruffed Grouse displaying to two female birds -- a sign of early spring. They, along with Kathy Parker and Gillian James, watched 5 Muskrats , 1 Beaver and 1 River Otter in the open water of the outlet for Apsley Lake, off County Road 504, Aspley area. The count participants observed large numbers of Springtails (snow fleas) on the surface of the snow. Matthew Tobey saw a flying insect & a spider drifting by on silk. Don Finigan had a Cooper's Hawk perched on the fence behind his residence on Raymond Street. He noted this is the 4 th time this winter.
Canada Jay	The Canada Jay, which was initially reported on the Petroglyphs CBC has been observed regularly through the period visiting a feeder on the west shore of Jack Lake.

Crossbills	Both Red and White-winged Crossbills have been observed regularly throughout the period along the main road at Petroglyphs Prov. Park during the reporting period by many different observers on many dates.
Jan. 5	Linda Sutherland observed 6 Eastern Bluebirds along the Lang/Hasting Trail between Baseline and David Fife Line.
Jan. 7	Iain Rayner observed a Winter Wren in his yard south of Lakefield. Ken Furlong had a Common Grackle along Lily Lake Road at the rail trail crossing. Chris Risley & Ben Taylor had 6 Eastern Bluebirds along Atchison Road. Donald Sutherland & Mike Burrell had a Northern Flicker on the 16 th Line of Smith (Selwyn)
Jan. 9	Ed Kloosterman photographed a Merlin in his yard on Engleburn Street. Cindy Bartiol had a Northern Flicker at her feeder on Westridge Blvd.
Jan. 11	Dave Milsom observed a Lesser Black-backed Gull at the Trent Rowing Club. Joe Taylor near Keene reported to Monkman Sightings the presence of Dew Worms on his lawn. He noted it was strange to find worms out in the middle of January.
Jan. 12	Luke Berg had a Northern Goshawk fly over West Kosh Road, north of Havelock.
Jan. 13	Matthew Garvin found a Ruby-crowned Kinglet in the area of Rotary Park.
Jan. 16	Cathy Douglas saw 2 Brown-headed Cowbirds visiting a feeder on Drummond Line.
Jan. 19	Luke Berg reported that a Winter Wren was still present under the abandoned boardwalk in the NE section of the Trent Nature Area -- it has been seen periodically at this location by his parents since late November. He noted he has observed this species at this location for the past three winters. A Song Sparrow was also present
Jan. 23	Genie St. Croix observed a flock of 2,000+ Snow Bunting south of Centre Line east of Westwood Cathy Dueck found 3 Eastern Bluebirds along Hannah Road.
Jan. 20	Sue Paradis observed an adult Bald Eagle fly across Ashburnham Drive. It was chasing a Herring Gull. The gull successfully evaded the eagle with some impressive flying. After giving up on the gull, the eagle flew to the east.
Jan. 26	Scott Gibson located 16 Bohemian Waxwings along Stockdale Road.
Jan. 27	Matthew Garvin & Iain Rayner located a female Barrow's Goldeneye on the river off Millennium Park. This is the bird of this winter. It was been observed regularly by multiple observers. The last report on eBird was Feb. 3
Jan. 28	Basil Conlin observed a Snowy Owl at the corner of Parkhill Rd & Brealey Drive.
Jan 29	Blake Shaw photographed an adult Bald Eagle soaring over Kenner Collegiate.
Jan. 31	Hannah Dodington, Hendrique Pacheco & Zach Wile located a male Red-breasted Merganser on Little Lake.
Feb. 1	Mike and Ken Burrell had an Iceland Gull (Thayer's race) on Little Lake off Roger's St. Luke Berg found 3 Winter Wrens (possibly 4) in dense cedar grove along open stream in the Norwood area. Also 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets and 4 Brown Creepers . A Coyote was in Little Caesar's, Chemong Rd parking lot by Matthew Gaskell. Dennis Johnson reported to Drew Monkman that a Red-bellied Woodpecker has been coming to his feeder on the north shore of Stoney Lake since late December.
Feb. 2	Alison Smith had an Eastern Towhee visiting her feeder on McFadden Road, Apsley. On the PFN outing to the Kawartha Nordic Ski Trails, tracks of White-tailed Deer , Moose , Coyote , Fisher , Mink , Snowshoe Hare , Beaver and Red Squirrel were observed. A highlight was watching Springtails (Snow Fleas) catapulting over the snow. A tiny spider was also observed walking on the snow.
Feb. 3	In the Petroglyphs Prov. Park area, Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom observed 3 Northern Goshawks soaring together over a wetland area.
Feb. 4	A Coyote was observed in the area of Benson Ave, & Aberdeen St. by Matthew Gaskell.

Feb. 5	Eastern Bluebirds: 4 on Edmison Road, Selwyn by Cathy Douglas; 7 on Villiers Line south of County Road 2 by Mike Burrell.
Feb. 9	Iain Rayner located a female Canvasback on Katchewanooka Lake off Stenner Rd, Seen by many others until Feb. 12. Donald Sutherland had a Northern Goshawk along Hayes Line. Mark Zippel and others at Harper Park observed a Great Horned Owl & Bald Eagle . Sue Paradisis observed a Cooper's Hawk capture a Mourning Dove in her yard. In the night a Red Fox visited the ground site where the hawk consumed the dove -- looking for scraps?
Feb. 12	Janet Kelly & Warren Dunlop had a Northern Goshawk along Cty Road 5. Martin Parker heard a Northern Cardinal in full song in the City -- spring is coming.
Feb. 12	Member's Meeting Observations Cathy Douglas observed & photographed a Barred Owl outside the Environment Centre prior to the meeting. Philip Shaw reported a Red Fox along Rye Street. Craig Ham saw a Bald Eagle soaring over the Hwy 115 bridges over the river. Marie Duchesneau observed a Coyote in her yard about three weeks prior and recently had an Eastern Chipmunk visiting her feeder for a few days. Claire ?? saw a tree with a flock of about 50 Cedar Waxwings . Bruce Kidd reported the Red-bellied Woodpecker is still visiting his feeder near Douro. Kathryn Sheridan announced she had heard a Song Sparrow singing in East City.
Feb. 14	Patricia Swales photographed a Red Fox in her backyard in the west end of the City. Donald Sutherland located a Black-backed Woodpecker along the West Eel's Lake Road, Apsley area. He had Purple Finch at two locations on the same road. A Northern Saw-whet Owl was located in the Woodland Drive area by Basil Conlin.
Feb. 15	A Red-shouldered Hawk was found by Iain Rayner at the north end of Shriven - first returning migrant. Donald Sutherland had a Hermit Thrush on the 3 rd Line between Nicholson & Cty Rd. 2.
Feb. 16	Daniel Williams had another Red-shouldered Hawk in the Ingleton-Wells Reserve on the north side of Stoney Lake. Lynn Woodcroft reported a Chipping Sparrow has been visiting her feeder in the Buckhorn today and 3 days prior.

City of Peterborough Watershed Planning Study Website

Submitted by Ken Lyon

The City of Peterborough has recently set up a website for its Watershed Planning Study. I am honoured to be a member of the study's Technical Working Group. The study, to be completed by 2021, is designed among other things to help the City make decisions regarding watershed impacts from a growing population and future changes in land use. The City website will be used to post documents and solicit feedback. It currently has a mapping application to identify questions and concerns and a storyboard for people to share insights and history. The website can be accessed at:

<https://www.connectptbo.ca/our-watershed-our-blueprint>

PFN Board of Directors				Other Volunteers	
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Peterborough Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 1532, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 7H7					

From the Archives – Special 20th Anniversary Meeting

Submitted by Martin Parker

From *The Orchid* – Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1960

Saturday, May 15, 1960

Special 20th Anniversary Meeting. A trip to our birthplace, the G. K. Fraser Estate near Burleigh Falls. Bring picnic lunch and a cup (tea and coffee will be provided through the courtesy of our genial hosts Honourable G. K. and Mrs. Fraser). A most interesting programme is being arranged and special guests will be in attendance. Meet at the City Hall, George Street, Peterborough at 2:00 p.m.

Martin's Note: Plans for celebrating the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Peterborough Field Naturalists are being planned for Monday, May 18. Details to be announced later.

Orchid submissions are encouraged!

The submission deadline for the next issue is Friday, March 20.

Send submissions to Kathryn Sheridan via email: orchid@peterboroughnature.org

or post mail to: PFN, PO Box 1532, Peterborough ON K9J 7H7



Lily Lake Nature Update

Submitted by Enid Mallory

A green heron sits on a branch by the Rail Trail and I hear a bittern call in the cattails. I am reminded of the Everglades Anhinga Trail where wildlife congregates because there is water in the dry season.

Construction for two housing developments on Lily Lake Road may be causing a 'dry season' here, with barns and houses, fence rows and trees gone. Billowing black smoke rose in the winter sky as machines knocked down and workers burned the stand of 100-year old pines. (Have they not heard of the climate crisis and wood chippers as an alternative to polluting the air?)

But the Rail Trail remains an oasis for wildlife. Thanks to the persistence of groups like the Peterborough Field Naturalists, a green corridor borders Jackson Creek and the trail. There is life and activity and colour here.

Now, in winter, coyotes and foxes cross Lily Lake every day and sometimes hunt mice in the field that slopes to the lake. The red-tailed hawk still hunts from the wires above Lily Lake Road in defiance of the bustle and noise.

In April, the otters will appear on the lake, breaking through the thin ice to eat their fish or romping along the shore. Geese wait on the ice to claim nesting territory. The northern harrier arrives and does aerial courtship displays over the swamp to impress a mate. Until recently the harrier nested in clumps of vegetation beside Lily Lake and hunted with superb grace over lake and field. But not last year. Have we lost this beautiful sight along with the farm land?

In May, the trail comes alive with returning birds, an airborne parade of warblers passing through, redstarts and gray catbirds and orioles and herons that will stay the summer.

A walk on the rail trail is like a lottery. You never know what you will win. Hearing a rail at the water's edge, peering into the greenery trying to find it, I suddenly saw a black baby Virginia rail run across the water to a small island and disappear. Standing there with my camera, I was too shocked to take the picture.

But photography possibilities are good: the blue heron that poses on an island of purple loosestrife, the red-tailed hawk in a tree above the bridge one day, the green heron on a low branch by the water, the brilliant oriole family learning to fly, the cedar waxwing feeding its baby, the ducks, mergansers and geese sailing along on Jackson Creek. If you are an early-morning walker, you may be lucky enough to see a beaver still at work, dragging branches across the trail, into the water to its house or dam. If you are really lucky you might spot the bittern that moves around the lake emitting its pumping call and camouflaging itself like a cattail.

As in the Everglades, some of the wildlife along the trail seems to become tolerant of human traffic. However, my favourite, the kingfisher that fishes from a branch, remains alert, hyper, always ready to run. He's a bird with attitude, a special challenge.

Sometimes if you stop and listen, less hyper birds will fly in and pose beside you and for a moment you are connected to their lives.

The Rail Trail that passes Lily Lake is a local treasure used and appreciated by runners, hikers, dog-walkers, bird-watchers, photographers, naturalists and dreamers every day. We are lucky to have it.



Belted Kingfisher at Lily Lake. Photo: Enid Mallory



Lily Lake Who's Who. Clockwise from top: Cedar Waxwing feeding young, Red-tailed Hawk, Green Heron, Coyote (or Coy Wolf), White-tailed Deer, and Great Blue Heron standing amongst Purple Loosestrife. Photos by Enid Mallory.

Membership Application Form

Memberships may be obtained by mailing this completed form to:

Peterborough Field Naturalists
PO Box 1532
Peterborough Ontario K9J 7H7



PETERBOROUGH FIELD NATURALISTS

Contact Information:

Name(s):

Phone(s):

Address:

Email(s):

I would like to receive The Orchid by (Pick One): ☐ Mail Delivery ☐ E-Mail ☐ Both

Membership type and fee schedule:

Notice: Membership fees provide only a small part of the funds required to operate the Peterborough Field Naturalists. Donations from members like you help us offer a diverse range of programming for everyone. Please consider including a donation with your membership so that we can continue to serve you and the Peterborough community. **Please make cheques payable to Peterborough Field Naturalists.**

I have included a donation with my membership fees:
☐ Yes or ☐ No

If Yes amount:

\$ _____

1. Single Adult \$25 ☐ 2. Single Student \$15 ☐ 3. Single Child (5 – 12) \$10 ☐ 4. Family \$30* ☐

***Please give the names and ages of children wishing to enroll in the Junior Field Naturalists:**

Name:	Age:	Name:	Age:

◀◀ New Member Information ▶▶

Main interests:

- ☐ Natural Environment ☐ Reptiles and Amphibians ☐ Botany
☐ Birds ☐ Aquatic Life ☐ Geology
☐ Insects ☐ Astronomy ☐ Mammals
Other: _____

How do you hope to participate:

- ☐ Outings
☐ Citizen Science
☐ Meetings
☐ Junior Naturalists

Volunteers are always needed. Do you have interest in any of these activities:

- ☐ Join the PFN board ☐ Sit on research or conservation committees ☐ Help with the Orchid publication
☐ Assist with meetings ☐ Work on field projects ☐ Lead an outing
☐ Help the Junior Naturalists ☐ Give a presentation

Liability Waiver (New and Returning Members):

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 my underage children

Signature: _____ Date: _____