

The Orchid



April 2020

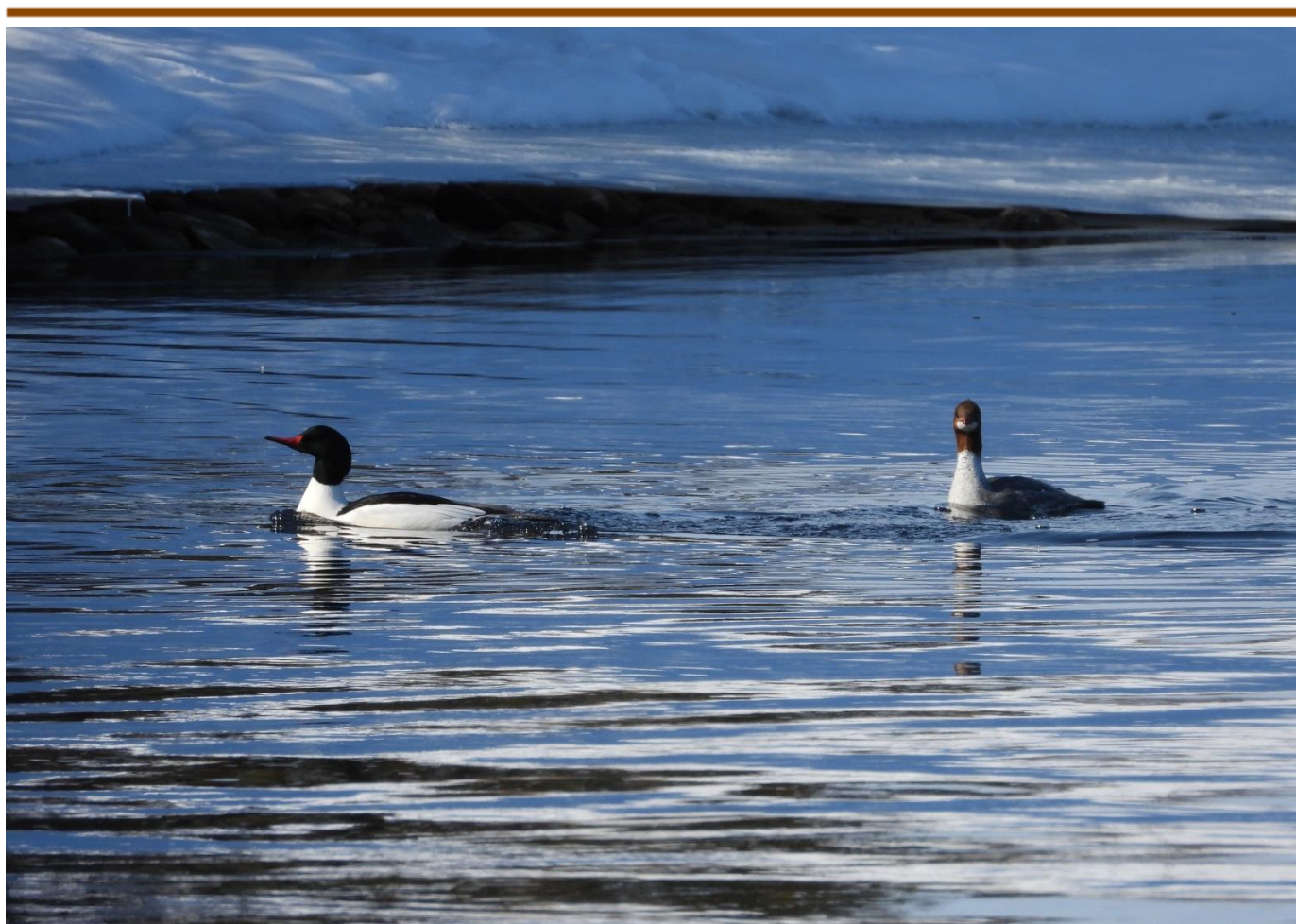
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Know • Appreciate • Conserve Nature in All Its Forms



Spring Visitors to the Kawarthas: A Pair of Common Mergansers. Photo: Don McLeod

Inside:

Book Review: The Lost Words

Juniors' Christmas Bird Count

Waterfowl and Owl Outing Reports

Drew Monkman's Early Spring Nature Almanac

Dogs, People and Wildlife in the Trent U Nature Areas

In this Issue:

PFN Coming Events	3
PFN Junior Field Naturalists.....	3
PFN Juniors Christmas Bird Count.....	4
Outing Report for Jan. 19: Wintering Waterbirds and Ice Formations	5
Outing Report for Mar. 1: Returning Waterfowl on the Otonabee	5
Outing Report for Mar. 7: Hooters at Amherst Island	7
Spring Nature Almanac for the Kawarthas	7
Dogs, People and Wildlife	9
Muddy Raccoon Tracks	10
Book Review: The Lost Words.....	11
Found an Animal? Who to Call	12
From the Archives: J. Larry McKeever	12
Poem: Once Upon A Foggy Morning	13
PFN Publication <i>Nature in the Kawarthas</i>	13
The Orchid Diary	15
PFN Membership Application.....	18

Top: A Pileated Woodpecker that has been frequenting East City lately (Susan Weaver). Susan wrote, "It flew right past me and landed on a pole by the trail and posed for pictures."

Middle: Two Mourning Doves (Reem Ali). Reem noted that they weren't practising social distancing.

Bottom: The famous Adam and Eve rocks of Buckhorn (Ken McKeen). Ken wrote, "These glacial rocks are remnants of the last ice age. In geological terms, these rocks are called erratics. Similar rocks are found around the area. Early settlers named these the Adam and Eve Rocks. Folklore legend has it, that if two lovers hold hands and each touch one of the rocks, their lives will be blessed."



Welcome new PFN members!

- Joanne Sutherland
- Judith Amsbury
- Karen Hartley & Ed Heuvel

PFN Coming Events

Due to concerns over COVID-19, all upcoming events have been cancelled. Be sure to take care of each other and stay healthy" ~ From the Board of Directors

~~Monday, May 18~~

PFN 80th Anniversary Party - Outings all day leading up to a BBQ in the afternoon. Stay tuned for further details. **Postponed.**

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

Please note that as of the publication date of April's Orchid, the events advertised below are still on. Those interested should refer to the organizers' websites for the latest information about possible cancellations.

~~Apr. 16~~
Nov. 4

Kawartha Wildlife Centre Annual Fundraiser Gala. The gala, which was originally scheduled for April 16, has been postponed until November 4.

May 22 to 24
Friday to Sunday
South Bruce
Peninsula

Bruce Peninsula Nature Weekend

Limestone cliffs and sand beaches, hardwood forests and cedar swamps, fens and alvars – this variety of ecosystems on the Bruce Peninsula makes it a special place for naturalists.

South Peel Naturalists' Club extends an invitation to join them to explore the Bruce Peninsula. This annual weekend event provides the opportunity to see the best of the Bruce with expert leaders and in the company of fellow naturalists.

The cost per person for the weekend is \$20 registration fee to cover cost of bucket raffle prizes and lodging for volunteer leaders plus \$253.76 (+ 13% taxes) for two nights' accommodation at Evergreen Resort (evergreenresortredbay.ca) near Red Bay (includes all meals and snacks). Book rooms in advance by calling 519-534-1868. To register for the weekend, send e-mail to mail@spnc.ca or contact Donna at 905-815-0933 or Audrey at 905-820-2571.

Other Events of Interest

<p>June 5 to 7</p> <p>Evergreen Resort, South Saugeen- Bruce Peninsula</p>	<p>Ontario Nature Annual Gathering</p> <p>Registration is now open for Ontario Nature's 2020 Annual Gathering on the fabulous South Bruce Peninsula. Join friends old and new on the weekend of June 5 to 7 to celebrate the spaces and species you love. The gathering will feature a suite of expert-led workshops, field trips to local natural areas and numerous opportunities to connect with fellow nature lovers and colleagues. Spots are first-come, first-served so reserve yours now! Visit Ontario Nature's event webpage for more information or to register. We look forward to seeing you on The Bruce this June! https://ontarionature.org/events/annual-gathering/</p>
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Selwyn Township declared a State of Emergency on March 25 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. As a result, the Lakefield Sewage Lagoons are now closed to ALL birding/nature activities until further notice. We appreciate your cooperation during this challenging time to ensure that the PFN maintains a positive working relationship with Selwyn Township.

PFN Juniors Christmas Bird Count

Submitted by Philip Shaw

On Saturday, February 22, my daughter and I went to the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre on Pioneer Road to participate in the Junior Field Naturalists' annual Children's Christmas Bird Count that had been rescheduled from its original date in December due to poor weather conditions.

Martin Parker provided a brief orientation about birds and information about the annual Christmas bird inventories conducted by the Peterborough Field Naturalists and the Junior Naturalist club. The children and parents then broke up into smaller groups led by volunteer guides from the PFN. By doing this, we were able to cover more of the area surrounding the Environment Centre. The weather was beautiful and sunny that day, which improved visibility and made the outing very enjoyable for the families who were new to this type of activity. After each group had completed their bird count, we reconvened at the Environment Centre, to compile the numbers of each species we encountered.

Thom Luloff, from the Kawartha Wildlife Centre, offered an informative presentation to families about the Kawartha Wildlife Centre and the animals they assist there. In addition, Thom provided some advice about things we can do to our property to make it more "wildlife friendly" and he explained how better designed bird feeders can prevent the spread of pathogens and protect the birds that use the feeders. My daughter is now interested in visiting the Kawartha Wildlife Centre sometime!

As a member of the PFN Board of Directors, I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the PFN, Camp Kawartha, all the volunteers, and the Kawartha Wildlife Centre for making the PFN Juniors' Christmas Bird Count extra special this year despite the fact that the event was delayed and later in the season.



Blue Jay. Photo: Cathy Douglas

Outing Report for Jan. 19: Wintering Waterbirds and Ice Formations

Submitted by Martin Parker

A small group of PFN members visited various locations along the shoreline of Lake Ontario from Port Hope to Cobourg looking for wintering waterbirds and ice formations. The waterbirds cooperated, with eleven species of waterfowl being observed. The initial stop was at the Port Hope harbour where the harbour basin was filled with an estimated 1,000 Canada Geese along with a few Common Goldeneye and Common Mergansers. At the harbour entrance, the group added Long-tailed Duck and Red-breasted Merganser.

The highlight at Port Hope was the observation of two Peregrine Falcons. A Peregrine has been present for most of the winter on the buildings of the Cameco Plant. The group spotted the Peregrine on its usual perch and then spotted a second bird on an adjacent ladder - a memorable observation.

The group travelled on to Cobourg harbour which was filled with waterfowl. Two species of swans swam by (1 Tundra and 2 Mute) permitting close examination of the distinctions between the two species. The group visited several other locations eastward to Chub Point.

The warm conditions this winter resulted in a lack of massive ice formations, but the shoreline was rimmed with ice.

Outing Report for Mar. 1: Returning Waterfowl on the Otonabee

Submitted by Steve Paul

On Sunday, March 1, Cathy Douglas and I met a group of 21 Peterborough Field Naturalist (PFN) members and their guests at the Riverview Zoo Parking Lot, to start an adventure that would take us on a drive along the Otonabee River between Peterborough and Lakefield, and end at the open waters near Young's Point. The final group total grew to 26 as we had three more people join us along the way.



Photo: Don McLeod

Our first stop was near Trent University overlooking the waters near the Trent Rowing Club. Everyone got their first looks at several Common Goldeneye off the point, and almost 50 Herring Gulls resting on the ice. Unfortunately no uncommon species like Iceland or Glaucous Gulls were seen, but it was a good start.



Northern River Otter. Photo: Don McLeod

As we made our way up the river, the group stopped between Lock 23 and 24 to see more Common Goldeneyes, and the first Common Mergansers of the day. Between Lock 24 and 25, the group was treated to some amazing views of a Northern River Otter on the ice, and Don McLeod with his keen eyes pointed to several otter slides along the riverbank. Just North of Lock 25, along with a smattering of Common Goldeneye on the water, there were some Herring Gulls dining on a carp carcass left out on the ice by the resident Bald Eagles (unfortunately not there at the time). Cathy used her scope to allow members to scan all along the river, and an American Mink trail was seen along the creek west of the road.

At this point, I shared a story with the group: On February 24, a lone male Trumpeter Swan cob, tagged "R39," arrived on the Otonabee River near Trent University. I saw him on the river several times the week before this outing, and thru research found out he was hatched in 2014, tagged in 2016, and was yet to be named. I reached out to the Ontario Trumpeter Swan group and recommended he be named "Trent", and they agreed. The official records have since been changed, which is VERY exciting as he will forever be tied to our area! Cathy was able to show him resting on the distant ice through the scope.

After a pit-stop at the Lakefield Tim Horton's, the group walked down to the Lakefield waterfront, where we had the best views of the day. Not only did everyone get to see 14 Trumpeter Swans (a group of five near the island, a group of eight off the Lakefield Beach, plus a single swan that flew in as we were leaving), but we had three Eastern Coyotes cross a frozen section of the river south of Lake Katchewanooka. They were quite a ways off but still cool to see through binoculars!



Juvenile Trumpeter Swans. Photo: Don McLeod



Bald Eagle, Herring Gull and Carp. Photo: Reem Ali

Making our way up the Young's Point Rd, we stopped to see the Bald Eagle's nest (empty), counting several species of waterfowl, a number of Robins and hearing a Pileated Woodpecker drumming in the distance. Our final stop was Young's Point, at the open water south of Highway 28 near Lock 27. There were a few species of waterfowl to be seen here as well, but highlights at this location were a distant Bald Eagle, and another set of American Mink tracks close to the shore.

On the way back to Peterborough, several vehicles saw an adult and a juvenile Bald Eagle coming in to dine on the carp carcass at Lock 25. What a way to end the day - wish the whole group got to see it. Overall, our final species total

of the day was 17 including American Crow (8), American Robin (16), Bald Eagle (1), Black-Capped Chickadee (7), Blue Jay (2), Bufflehead (1), Canada Goose (18), Common Goldeneye (79), Common Merganser (28), European Starling (3), Herring Gull (51), Hooded Merganser (2), Mallard (60), Northern Cardinal (2), Pileated Woodpecker (1), Rock Pigeon (2), Trumpeter Swan (15).

Orchid submissions are encouraged!

The submission deadline for the next issue is Friday, April 24

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

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

Solo outing/sighting reports of up to 300 words would be appreciated for the next Orchid.



Outing Report for Mar. 7: Hooters at Amherst Island

Submitted by Don McLeod



Snowy Owl at Amherst Island.
Photo: Don McLeod

Close to 30 members and guests of the Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) made the big trip to Amherst Island for birding and nature observation. Our leaders for the trip were Brian Wales and Matthew Tobey. Owls were hoped for but it was known that this was not as good a year as previous years. We did manage to find a Barred Owl and a couple of Snowy Owls. Other large birds of note included Bald Eagle, Rough-legged Hawk and Red-tailed Hawk. While difficult to pick out, there was one Cackling Goose among a larger flock of Canada Goose. There were plenty of friendly Black-capped Chickadees along the trail through Owl Woods. Several other bird species were either heard or seen. Mammals included White-tailed Deer and a Meadow Vole Carcass. Part of the memorable experience was taking the ferry from the mainland to island and back. The presence of many large wind turbines in a small area was also a different experience for many folks.

Spring Nature Almanac for the Kawarthas

Excerpts from an article by Drew Monkman from March 17, 2016

For most anyone who enjoys the unfolding of a new season, spring stands head and shoulders above any other time of year. The greening of the landscape and explosion of animal life never fails to amaze. Spring is a season that regales all of the senses. Our ears reawaken to the chorus of bird and amphibian love song; our eyes delight in the return of leaves and flowers; our noses are tickled by the smell of lilac and balsam poplar; our taste buds are charmed by the first asparagus and strawberries; and our skin is enlivened by the first warm rains.



Spring Peeper. Photo: John Urquhart

As spring advances, the Earth's axis tilts increasingly toward the Sun. This results in a huge increase in the amount of heating of the northern hemisphere. The more direct solar radiation greatly accelerates photosynthesis and causes new plant growth to "spring forth" – hence the name of the new season. The green bounty fuels the entire food chain from caterpillars to songbirds.

As a reminder of what to watch for in nature, I'm offering some mileposts of the spring months. If the unseasonable warmth continues, however, many of these events are likely to occur earlier than usual. Regardless of what the weather throws at us, the order of the events, which are listed chronologically, should remain the same.

Late March

The buds of shrubs and trees like lilac, red-berried elder, red maple, and silver maple swell noticeably this month.

Temperate zone migrants that overwintered in the U.S. are returning. In the city, the most notable new arrivals are robins and grackles. In rural areas, watch for red-winged blackbirds perched high in wetland trees. Listen, too, for the long, clear whistle of the eastern meadowlark and, in some areas, the rattling,

bugle-like call of the sandhill crane. Wherever you are, keep an eye skyward for turkey vultures soaring northward.

For anyone paying attention, the increase in bird song is hard to miss. If you don't already know the voices of common songsters like the American robin and the song sparrow, this is a great time to start learning them. Go to allaboutbirds.org, enter the name of the species, and click on the Sound tab.

Migrating waterfowl numbers are peaking early this year. With a bit of work, you should be able to find a dozen or more species. For mostly diving ducks, some hotspots include Little Lake, the Otonabee River, Lake Katchewanooka, Gannon Narrows, and Clear Lake at Young's Point. Ring-necked ducks, buffleheads, lesser scaup, common goldeneye, and both common and hooded mergansers dominate. Puddle ducks such as northern pintails, American black ducks, green-winged teal and American wigeon often congregate in flooded fields such as the meltwater pond that forms each year at Mather's Corners, located at the junction of County Road 2 and Drummond Line.

The spring equinox occurs on March 19 as the sun shines directly on the equator. Both the moon and sun rise due east and set due west, and day and night are nearly equal in duration.

April

April is a busy time for feeders. American tree sparrows and dark-eyed juncos move north through the Kawarthas in large numbers, sometimes accompanied by the beautiful, thrush-like fox sparrow. All of these species will occasionally break into song.

The yellow, dandelion-like flowers we see growing in roadside ditches in early April are a non-native species known as coltsfoot.

Close to 30 species of birds will be nesting this month. Among these are the Canada goose, mallard, bald eagle, red-tailed hawk, killdeer, American crow, blue jay, mourning dove, American robin, European starling, common grackle, northern cardinal, house finch, and house sparrow.

For many rural residents, the return of the yellow-bellied sapsucker is hard to miss. This migratory woodpecker loves to hammer on resonant objects such as stovepipes to advertise ownership of territory and to attract a mate.

If the weather is mild, local wetlands come alive in early April with the clamorous calls of countless frogs. The first voice usually heard is that of the chorus frog, which sounds like someone running their thumb over the teeth of a comb. Within a few days, wood frogs, spring peepers, and leopard frogs add their voices to the symphony. To learn amphibian calls, go to www.naturenorth.com. Scroll down to near the bottom of the page and click on "Amphibians of Manitoba."

If you want to see and photograph beautiful spotted and blue-spotted salamanders, wait for a mild, rainy night when the first frogs are calling. Drive slowly along back roads that pass through low woodlands with nearby swamps or flooded ditches. Keep a close eye on the pavement or gravel for salamanders. Stop and walk with flashlights when you start seeing them.

When water temperatures reach 7 °C, walleye begin to spawn. Along with white suckers, they can sometimes be seen spawning at night at Lock 19 in Peterborough.

Hepaticas are usually the first woodland wildflowers to bloom in the spring. The flowers can be pink, white or bluish in colour. Bloodroot will join the wildflower parade soon after.



Hepatica. Photo: Drew Monkman

White-throated sparrows are passing through by late April. They are easily attracted to feeders, as long as you scatter millet or finch mix on the ground. Listen for their high-pitched, whistled "Oh sweet Canada" song.

Elm trees are in flower and look like they are covered with myriad brown raindrops. The small, wind-pollinated flowers are clustered in tassels.

The courtship flight of the American woodcock provides nightly entertainment in damp, open field habitats such as fields at the Trent Wildlife Sanctuary.

By month's end, the first migrants from the tropics arrive. Listen for the boisterous song of the northern waterthrush in shrubby swamps. It's one of the easiest warbler songs to learn.

Dogs, People and Wildlife

Roger Jones, Retired Biology Professor, Trent University

An inappropriate location for allowing leashed and unleashed dogs in Peterborough is the Trent University Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Area (WSNA) off University Road. This campus land was set aside as a wildlife sanctuary in 1974 for biological and geographical research and teaching purposes and for recreational activities. Unfortunately, this wildlife sanctuary has become the domain of dog walkers, many of whom let their dogs run free and do not pick up their dog's faeces. Several weeks ago, after a particularly heavy snowfall, I visited the WSNA and the Canal Nature Area (CANNA). The parking lot area and the trails leading from it were in a disgusting state, having been contaminated with numerous deposits of mostly large dog poop. There were at least 55 deposits, representing approximately 20 kg of dog faeces, on and near the 150 m of trail leading down to the first bridge. Goodness only knows how many kilograms were beneath the freshly fallen snow! Poop that was close to waste disposal containers was not even being picked up. Many dogs are immediately let off-leash upon arrival in the parking area despite By-Law notices stating that dogs must be leashed



White-tailed Deer. Photo: Don McLeod

The Stewardship Plan for the University Nature Areas (published online on Trent's website) was submitted to the Board of Governors in 2006 and detailed many of the adverse impacts of leashed and off-leash dogs on visitors and wildlife (see page 87 "Inappropriate Recreational Activities" and page 212 "Management Issues in the Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Areas") Apart from unsightliness, there is the possibility of diseases being spread in dog excrement and soiling of footwear, cross-country skis and snowshoes. These issues can detract from the pleasure of hikers and visitors coming to enjoy the natural surroundings of nature areas. "Googling" ProtectNatureTO will bring up many more articles and research studies on these subjects. Furthermore, it is my understanding that leashed and off-leash dogs can cause fear and disrupt activities of children attending the Camp Kawartha Environmental Centre and even affect University staff working in the Nature Areas.

For all these many reasons, the recommendation in The Stewardship Plan is that dogs be banned from Trent's Nature Areas.

In the 1970s and 1980s, trails were created and cedar boardwalks were constructed in the WSNA for year-round university and community recreational activities. However, by the mid-1990s, the boardwalks had become hazardous and trails were becoming overgrown. Consequently, funds were raised to initiate a program in the WSNA, the CANNA and the Lady Eaton Drumlin NA to replace hazardous boardwalks, create new ones and to clear new trails and install benches. Much of the work was undertaken in week-long

projects between 1997 and 2006 by fee-paying volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and from Ontario Nature. PFN and local volunteers pitched in, too.



Eastern Screech Owl in Trent
University Nature Area on March 7.
Photo: Dave Milsom

There were about 40 British and Ontario volunteers. Each Briton's cost was \$1,500 to \$2,000 while each Ontario Nature member paid several hundred dollars. These volunteers likely would not have come to work at Trent had they known that their efforts have mostly benefitted dog walkers. For the same reason, Trent faculty and graduate students involved would not have undertaken the work necessary to organize these projects. It is also worth noting that donations of \$95,000 given to Trent for the above improvements in the Nature Areas were not intended for these lands to become dog-walking parks - nor was the levy for the Nature Areas voted for by the student body in 1996 which cumulatively, over the years, has provided some \$200,000 for use in these areas.

The argument is raised that "No Dogs" signs would not be enforceable. It is my understanding when the Kawartha Nordic Ski Trails at Haultain, near Apsely, were created that problems arose when some skiers were accompanied by dogs that caused detriment to the trails. This problem was solved by posting "No Dogs" signs which then were pointed out to offenders by other skiers. There is reason to believe that the same procedure would happen in Trent's

Nature Areas if "No Dogs" signs and an explanatory message were to be posted.

If you support a "No dog" policy for Trent University Nature Areas so that these areas become family, visitor and wildlife-friendly places again, rather than continuing as dog friendly parks, then please email the University Nature Areas Committee expressing your views. The email address is natureareas@trentu.ca

Muddy Raccoon Tracks

Submitted by Don McLeod

While out for a shoreline walk along lower Chemong Lake on March 11, I found some muddy footprints on the ice. These were Raccoon tracks found near small areas of open water surrounded by ice. The open areas exist due to groundwater seeps and springs which lead to earlier ice-out compared to surrounding areas. Mud is present because of lake drawdown. The Raccoon was hunting for food in these muddy areas. Upon leaving the mud hole, the Raccoon's legs and feet were covered in mud which dripped onto the ice as it walked away. There was sufficient mud on the legs and feet to contribute to a trail at least 50 feet long! The trail made a detour over to some scat. At first I was puzzled at the Raccoon depositing scat out on the ice - not a normal location. But then I realized that the scat was not fresh and it had plenty of fish and crayfish parts. The scat was deposited earlier by Northern River Otter and the Raccoon had walked over to investigate. Some nearby Canada Geese had no desire to fly away. Two of them had leg bands.



Raccoon tracks. Photo: Don McLeod

Book Review: The Lost Words by Robert Macfarlane & Jackie Norris

Submitted by Marilyn Freeman

Alert: if you are a parent, a grandparent, an admirer of beautiful watercolours, a lover of wordplay based on nature or any or all of these, then this book will captivate you.

"Once upon a time, words began to vanish from the language of children. They disappeared so quietly that at first almost no one noticed – like water on stone. The words were those that children used to name the natural world around them: acorn, adder, bluebell, bramble, conker – gone!"

So begins a remarkable large format book that was inspired by the Oxford Junior Dictionary, a dictionary widely used in schools around the world, dropping 40 common words concerning nature. The words replacing them were attachment, blog, voice-mail, broadband and so on.

Author Macfarlane and artist Norris decided to create a "spellbook" that would summon up 20 of the 40 missing words. The reader (or the person being read to) needs all their senses to enjoy this book. It is meant to be read aloud. It is meant to be a puzzle in which the word is embedded in the art. It is a watercolour nature feast for the eyes.

Here is a short sample:

'Newt, oh newt, you are too cute!'

Emoted the coot to the too-cute newt,

'With your frilly back and your shiny suit and your spotted skin so unhirsute!'

'Too cute?!' roared the newt to the unastute coot. 'With all this careless talk of cute you bring me into disrepute, for newts aren't cute: we're kings of the pond, lions of the duckweed, dragons of the water; albeit, it's true,' – he paused – 'minute.'

The book is organized alphabetically starting with acorn and ending with wren. The word in question is worked into a simple nature scene on the first double page. The word play in which the word itself can be read vertically is on the second page faced by a watercolour. The next double page is a stunning watercolour based on the theme.

Some of the poems are a little bit of silly fun, others simply beautiful, while all appeal to the imagination. "You hold in your hands a spellbook for conjuring back these lost words...spells of many kinds that might just, by the old, strong magic of being spoken aloud, unfold dreams and songs, and summon lost words back into the mouth and the mind's eye."

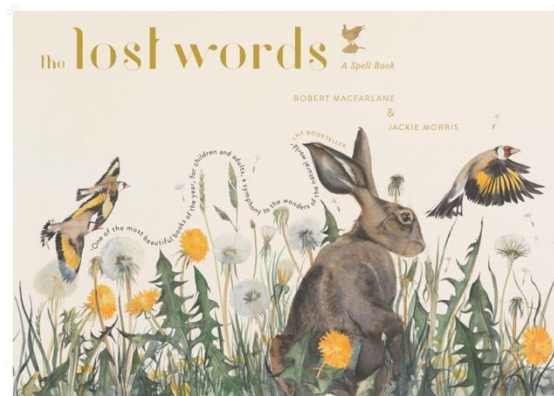
I mentioned that this is a large format book. It measures 28 cm x 38 cm (11" x 15"). Its size enhances its beauty. It also comes with a link to a free "Explorer's Guide to The Lost Words", intended especially but not only for use by teachers. You can get an idea of the artwork by visiting this site and clicking on "poster". (but only an idea as the book is way better!). www.johnmuirtrust.org/initiatives/the-lost-words

Sadly, this book is not in the Peterborough library but I suspect one would want to own a copy – forever. It would make a very special gift.

The publisher is House of Anansi Press.

ISBN: 978-1-4870-0538-2 (hardcover)

Available through Amazon, Hunter St. Books, and Indigo



Found an Animal?

From <https://www.kawarthawildlifecentre.ca/>

Before you lend a hand, please make sure the animal actually needs your help. What you are witnessing may be perfectly normal behaviour.



Removing a wild animal from its natural habitat might actually do more harm than good, so before you “rescue” any wild animal, please make sure they actually need your help. If you’ve found a wild animal in distress, please contact a wildlife rehabilitation centre near you.

Contact us for wildlife advice, education and inquiries at 705-292-9211.

Editor’s Note: During the COVID-19 crisis, KWC has closed the centre to the public and has requested that people reach them via e-mail at: info@kawarthawildlifecentre.ca

Other wildlife rehabilitation centres in the area include:

Shades of Hope Wildlife Refuge

87 Routley Ave, Pefferlaw, ph: 705-437-4654, shadesofhope.ca

Woodlands Wildlife Sanctuary

2146 Duck Lake Rd, Minden, ph: 705-286-1133, woodlandswildlifesanctuary.ca

Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (turtles only)

1434 Chemong Rd #4, Peterborough, ph: 705-741-5000, ontarioturtle.ca

From the Archives: J. Larry McKeever

Submitted by Martin Parker, Based on e-mail from Gord Mallory with information from Doug Sadler

The following is an extract about J. Larry McKeever from an address given to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (now Ontario Nature) Convention at Trent University, Peterborough on May 17, 1995 by Doug Sadler. It is titled ‘Peterborough’s Naturalists Through the Years’.

J. Larry McKeever was a CGE engineer and early nature enthusiast, who was instrumental in starting Christmas Bird Counts in 1955 (10 mile radius from City Hall), but they were unofficial for a few years until some of us insisted they become a useful source of bird information and added to the National Audubon counts already going since 1900. McKeever prepared and the club published its first annotated bird checklist. Data was quite scarce at that time, but later work by Sadler brought it together in 1983 in *Our Heritage of Birds*. Larry McKeever, Frank Pammett and Doug Sadler were early club members to join FON. Pammett became a member of the FON Board as Club President. The others joined voluntarily afterwards and were ex officio FON Board members in their turn.

McKeever was chair of the first FON Executive Committee when the first full-time FON Manager, David Webster, was taken on with many financial misgivings.

After his first wife died, Larry married an old friend, Kay, who was nuts about owls, and between them they built the world-famous Owl Research and Rehabilitation Foundation in Vineland. It specialized in rehabilitation and research.

Larry and Kay were recognized as Honorary Life Members of the PFN in 1971 in recognition of their efforts with the PFN and the Foundation. They were also awarded honorary doctorates by McMaster University.

Once Upon A Foggy Morning

What a boomin' rodent retreat I hear from the top o' this pine!
 Back home around the bog last spring the voles had declined.
 Being wise owls, we laid fewer eggs; some raised no young at all.
 Some owls left their territories early, and wandered here last fall.
 This land's diff'rent than ours; what are those strange-lookin' beasts?
 They move on two legs or in rollin' spaces, killin' two of us at least.
 Sun's higher in the sky now, but's too early to return to boreal bliss;
 I fear the Great Horned Owl, but so's not to starve I'll take this.
 Perched silently in this wooded clearing, I gaze this way 'n' that,
 And listen for the chewin' or squeakin' of a hidden vole or rat.
 With my huge ruff and offset ears, prey perhaps two feet under
 At two hundred feet I snatch from snowy lairs smashed asunder.
 I hover, and plunge face-first into the snow to the concealed sound.
 My legs follow right behind, talons piercing bodies soft and round.
 My talons are weak, so I catch mostly voles, rarely taking fowl.
 I'm the Phantom of the North, the irruptive Great Grey Owl.



Great Grey Owl. Photo: Murray Palmer

Murray Arthur Palmer, 2019

PFN Publication *Nature in the Kawarthas*

Information from the Amazon.ca website

Reviews

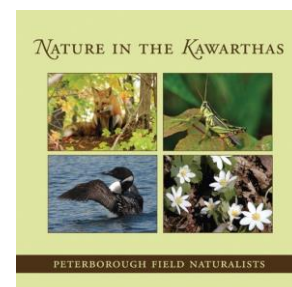
Reading *Nature in the Kawarthas* will whet the appetite of any budding naturalist and it also serves as a great trip planner with helpful maps and a detailed listing of nature reserves, public parks and trails, along with conservation areas and canoe routes. (EMC.com Almonte/Carleton Place 2012-01-12)

It is a wonderful alternative to the traditional field guide because it covers the flora and fauna that can be seen in this area. Lavishly illustrated with wonderful colour photographs that can be appreciated by young and old alike and would be a useful addition to any naturalist's collection. (Lindsay Post 2012-01-13)

Product Description

Here you will find a wealth of information on the fauna, flora, and natural wonders of the Kawarthas.

The Kawarthas sit astride the Canadian Shield and fertile lands to the south. This is cottage country, a place where people are closer to nature and where children and adults remark on the sightings of animals, birds, and butterflies from windows and lakeside chairs and ask questions about what they see. This book is a valuable asset and will answer many of these questions. It offers an alternative to a shelf of field guides and deals with what can be expected in a relatively small but uniquely rich environment close to home. *Nature in the Kawarthas* presents a wealth of information about the birds, mammals, insects, flowers, reptiles, and amphibians that inhabit this special area. It discusses rare habitats and the behaviours of animals ranging from frogs to birds of prey. A "Places to Go" section recommends the best areas to visit to explore the natural wonders of this amazing region and its treasure of wild biodiversity. It is a true layman's guide to nature in the Kawarthas.

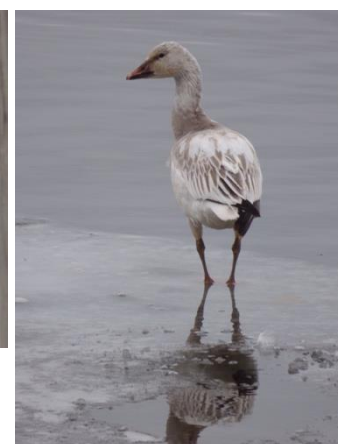
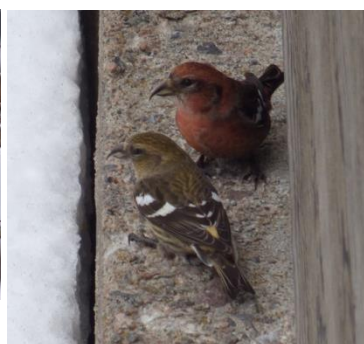


The Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) is a registered charity and active club in Peterborough, Ontario, that dates back to 1940. The authors include knowledgeable naturalists, teachers, and university and ministry [MNR] professionals in a wide variety of wildlife fields. Their goal is to know, appreciate, and conserve nature in all its forms.

Purchase Arrangements

Nature in the Kawarthas is available for purchase at the club's indoor meetings at a special price for members at \$30.00. It is also available at the GreenUp Store, Avante-Garden and Hunter Street Books at full list price (\$32.99)

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



Birds seen this past winter by Cathy Douglas:
Eastern Bluebird, Canada Jay, White-winged Crossbills and Snow Goose



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

Migrations commenced -- On Feb. 22, a total of 50 species of birds had been reported to the eBird database for the year. By March 22, the total number of species increased to 105.	
Feb. 20	Scott Gibson had 8 Eastern Bluebirds on Centre Line, Asphodel-Norwood Twp. Lots of additional reports through the region during the reporting period.
Feb. 21	Northern Pintail still present with Mallards along river in the Millennium Park area.
Feb. 22	Iain Rayner had two Northern Saw-whet Owls (FOY) calling near his residence near Lakefield. They continued calling throughout the period. Donald Sutherland found a Hermit Thrush in the area of Bensford Rd and 3 rd Line. He also had 2 Horned Larks (FOY) at the Peterborough Airport.
Feb. 23	Bill Crins found a Lesser Black-backed Gull with the gulls off Del Crary Park -- other gulls were 221 Herring , 13 Ring-billed , 1 Glaucous & 1 Great Black-backed . Ian Sturdee had a Northern Goshawk in the Cordova Lake area. Mike V.A. Burrell had a Northern Saw-whet Owl calling in his yard east of the City.
Feb. 25	Cathy Dueck found a Red-winged Blackbird (FOY) at the feeders on Assumption Road. Cathy Douglas located 1 Snow Goose on Little Lake (seen by others). Colin Jones had a Red-breasted Merganser on Little Lake (observed by others). A Northern Saw-whet Owl was heard calling in the Buckhorn area by Martyn Obbard.
Feb. 26	Ben Taylor, Chris Risley & Cathy Dueck had an Eastern Chipmunk gathering seeds under the feeders on Assumption Road. Bill Snowden had a Red-winged Blackbird arrive at his feeders on the south end of Buckhorn Lake. Olivia Mallet & Andrew Brown heard a Northern Saw-whet Owl along the Trent Rotary Trail.
Feb. 29	Luke Berg located a Gray Catbird , probably a wintering individual, and a Northern Saw-whet Owl along the trail in the Trent U. Nature Area.
Mar. 1	On the PFN outing led by Cathy Douglas & Steve Paul, besides the winter birds, the group observed a River Otter from the Lakefield Marina and 3 Coyotes crossing the ice on Katchawanooka Lake. They also found a Trumpeter Swan at Trent University with wing tag R39, which was subsequently named Trent. Steve Paul located American Wigeon , Ring-necked Duck & Redhead on Little Lake.
	Northern Saw-whet Owl : Numerous reports in the first half of March on eBird --- singing birds
Mar. 3	Warren Dunlop & Janet Kelly had a Hermit Thrush foraging with American Robins .
Mar. 5	The influx of migrating waterfowl commenced with lots of reports of waterfowl. Ben Taylor had 14 Ring-necked Ducks and 3 American Wigeon off Beavermead Park. Jeff Stewart had a Turkey Vulture (FOY) off County Road 10.
Mar. 6	Luke Berg had a Wood Duck (FOY) and a Redhead (FOY). Kathryn Sheridan had 1 Sandhill Crane (FOY) at Lakefield. On Pigeon Lake, Don McLeod spotted 17 Trumpeter Swans and 1 Mink .
Mar. 7	Donald Sutherland found a Carolina Wren in the area of Ouse River & Asphodel 3 rd Line Janet Kelly & Warren Dunlop located a Canvasback on the Trent River off River Road.

	Along the Otonabee River, Marilyn Freeman had a Bald Eagle , 2 Ospreys , 1 Bufflehead , and two groups of Common Goldeneye . Rene Gareau & others spotted a Barred Owl along Highway 28 near Bailieboro.
Mar. 8	Another day with lots of new arrivals. Mike V.A. Burrell had a Long-tailed Duck (FOY) on Little Lake -- observed by others. Eastern Meadowlark by Matthew Gavin in the eastern part of the city. Lesser Scaup by Matthew Tobey on the Trent River off 6 th Line of Asphodel. Killdeer by Luke Berg along Lang-Hasting Trail between Redmond and Drummond. 3 Green-winged Teal by Iain Rayner on Katchewanooka Lake off Stenner Rd. Redhead on Little Lake by David Britton -- seen by many other observers. Pine Siskin in the Cordova Lake area by Ian Sturdee. A member at the PFN meeting reported a Beaver at Lock 19 and a Coyote in the Wallis Drive area. Marie Duchesneau observed a beautiful Red Fox preening and then taking a two-hour nap by her neighbour's house.
Mar. 9	Cackling Geese Cathy Douglas had 2 individuals east of Bailieboro. Mathew Tobey & Dave Milsom had 15 in the same area. Luke Berg had 9 flying over the Lang Hasting Trail between Drummond Line & Redmond Road -- they were flying within flocks of Canada Geese. Tobey & Milsom had 1 on the Trent River off Asphodel Beach. Numerous reports since this date from locations southeast of the City.
Mar. 9	American Wigeon arrived on Little Lake - seen by many observers -- up to 11 individuals were present -- present until March 18. Tobey & Milsom had a Canvasback on the Trent River off 3 rd Line of Asphodel Luke Berg had Sandhill Cranes at several locations along the northern eastern shore of Rice Lake
Mar. 10	Don McLeod had a Red Fox and Raccoon at Chemong Lake.
Mar. 11	Jeff Stewart had FOY American Woodcock .
Mar. 11	At the members' meeting, many reported having Red-winged Blackbirds , Common Grackles and American Robins for a few days. Luke Berg had 1 Rusty Blackbird on the Lang-Hasting Trail at Redmond Road. Ed Addison reported observing a Striped Skunk in the Wallis/Parkhill Road area earlier. Randy Beacler reported a Coyote on Johnson Drive (no date).
Mar. 12	Jeff Stewart had 2 Northern Shovelers (FOY) and 1 Pied-billed Grebe .
Mar. 13	Randy Beacler had an Eastern Screech Owl in the Kinmount area.
Mar. 14	Steve Paul had a flock of an estimated 500 blackbirds off Cty Road 35. Donald Sutherland had an Osprey near Keene. New arrivals were 11 Tundra Swans by Steve Paul at the Mather's Corners Meltwater Pond -- seen by many observers until March 19.
Mar. 15	Donald Sutherland travelled the West Eel's Lake Road, Apsley area and located a Northern Goshawk , Black-backed Woodpecker and 2 Pine Siskins .
Mar. 17	Luke Berg had a Hermit Thrush in the Baillieboro area
Mar. 19	A Carolina Wren was located in the Pinehill Road area by Glenn Desay and observed multiple times by many others. Scott Gibson had a Great Blue Heron in the Armour Road area.
Mar. 20	Chris Risley had a Tree Swallow over Little Lake.



Photos of Red-tailed Hawk by Reem Ali

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:

- | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Reptiles and Amphibians | <input type="checkbox"/> Botany |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds | <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Life | <input type="checkbox"/> Geology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insects | <input type="checkbox"/> Astronomy | <input type="checkbox"/> 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:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Join the PFN board | <input type="checkbox"/> Sit on research or conservation committees | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with the Orchid publication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Work on field projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Lead an outing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help the Junior Naturalists | <input type="checkbox"/> 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:** _____