

The Orchid



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Know • Appreciate • Conserve Nature in All Its Forms



Halloween Pennant Dragonfly in July. Photo: Don McLeod

Inside: Winter Finch Forecast
Outing Reports for Presqu'île and Stoney Lake
Squirrel-free Bird Feeder Plan
Book Reviews: Braiding Sweetgrass and Beyond the Trees
Account of a Magnificent Frigatebird Sighting

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Welcome new PFN members!

- Margaret & Bryan Lake
- Jennifer & Rod MacIsaac
- Megan Kilgour & junior Paige Kilgour
- S. McCormick



Clockwise from top: A female and two male Baltimore Orioles at feeder (Dave Milsom), Milkweed Tussock Moth larvae on leaves of a Common Milkweed (Rene Gareau), and migrating Sanderlings at Presqu'île Provincial Park in September (Cathy Douglas)

PFN Coming Events	
<p>Sunday Oct. 4 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 5 participants Leader: Lynn Smith</p>	<p>Change is Underfoot in Millbrook</p> <p>The former Millbrook Correctional Centre property has become very popular with local naturalists who are hoping, with the help of Kawartha Land Trust, to preserve the land as open space. The actual site of the demolished buildings is disturbed but there are nice areas of natural cover. Data is being collected on the flora and fauna and logged to eBird and iNaturalist. Join Lynn Smith in exploring this space and learn how to use both eBird and iNaturalist.</p> <p>This outing is now full.</p>
<p>Sunday, Oct. 18 1 to 4 p.m. 15 participants Leaders: Martin Parker and Bruce Kidd</p>	<p>Fall Nature on the Farm</p> <p>PFN member Bruce Kidd invites other members to join him and Martin Parker in an exploration of the fields and woodlands of his farm property in Douro-Dummer Township. This outing will provide an opportunity to kick leaves, look at late blooming flowers, discover migrating birds and sample different types of 'wild apples' tasting the range in their flavours. On past outings to the Kidd farm, members have been treated to views of White-tailed Deer and finding Giant Puffballs.</p> <p>Please wear clothing suitable for the day of the outing and sturdy footwear for uneven ground. Bring binoculars and camera if you have them.</p> <p>Members wishing to participate should register with Martin Parker at mparker19@cogeco.ca or (705) 745-4750 after October 6. Details on reaching the farm will be provided to registered participants.</p> <p>Accessibility: Moderate. There will be some walking through bush and across fields</p> 
<p>Thursday, Oct. 22 7:30 p.m. Virtual meeting on Zoom Invitations e-mailed to members</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: Double-Crested Cormorants and the Incorporation of Anthropogenic Debris in Their Nests</p> <p>Research indicates that wildlife can confuse anthropogenic debris for food or natural nesting material, which can then cause a negative effect through entanglement and ingestion. This presentation will cover an introduction to plastic pollution, its effects on wildlife, and the incorporation of human-made debris into double-crested cormorants' nests in Toronto.</p> <p>Melina Damian is Ontario Nature's communications coordinator. She has an MES degree from York University and a graduate diploma in environmental education. As part of her graduate research, Melina was part of a study that sampled cormorant nests on the ground for presence and type of debris at the Leslie Street Spit, a human built peninsula in Toronto.</p>

PFN Coming Events

<p>Thursday, Dec. 3</p> <p>Details to follow</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: Member's Slideshow Night</p> <p>Mark the date, December 3, on your calendar! The annual members' slideshow is happening - of course with some modification. It's time to peruse your pictures and prepare your PowerPoint! Perhaps "show & tell" a trip, a nature moment or a wildlife encounter. We just ask that your presentation is 10 minutes only, leaving an additional 5 minutes for questions and answers.</p> <p>The finer details will follow in the November Orchid. Stay tuned. In the meantime, pull together those pictures!</p>
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President's Message

Although we have continued to hold our monthly members' meetings through the use of Zoom sessions this year, many of the PFN outings and other activities originally planned for our members (including our 80th anniversary events) unfortunately had to be cancelled as a result of restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. A limited number of outings have been scheduled under new guidelines outlined earlier in the Orchid. As a result of this situation, the PFN board of directors have passed a motion automatically extending all of the current paid-up 2020 PFN memberships by one full year, through to December, 2021. However, for those of you who may wish to make a separate charitable donation to the PFN, this can be done by accessing the link on our PFN website at peterboroughnature.org/donate or by mailing a cheque payable to Peterborough Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 1532, Peterborough, Ontario K7J 7H7.



Rene Gareau, President

Trent University Conservation Biology Placements

Submitted by Rene Gareau, Martin Parker and Reem Ali

Two Trent University students applied for a placement with the Peterborough Field Naturalists in order to complete their 4th year Conservation Biology course. The two students met separately with PFN directors Martin Parker, Reem Ali and Rene Gareau via Zoom sessions, and we reviewed with them a draft list of several potential projects that they could choose from.

As a result, we are pleased to report that Karina Bissonnette will be preparing a summary of the reptiles and amphibians of Peterborough County, and will also prepare related material for the PFN website. Karina will also be consulting with PFN members who have field experience with reptiles and amphibians. Existing databases and reports will also be reviewed. Karina grew up in the Peterborough area and has always had an interest in reptiles and amphibians.

Shelby Cohen is our other Conservation Biology placement student. She will be preparing a summary of the mammals of Peterborough County. The PFN published a book on the topic in 1986 and an update at this time would be very beneficial. Shelby will prepare related material for the PFN website and will also be consulting with PFN members and reviewing existing databases. She has prior work experience as a registered veterinary technician.

Both students have been provided with a copy of the relevant section from the 1998 Peterborough County Natural History Summary, a joint publication of the PFN, the Natural Heritage Information Centre, and

Trent University. The Conservation Biology course is a full-year course which runs from now until the end of March. Martin, Reem and Rene will be meeting with the students regularly to provide assistance and guidance, and to monitor the progress of their work. They have also been invited to attend our members' meetings. We will be inviting them to some of our board meetings as well so that they can gain a better understanding of our organization. The two students will also be invited to share updates on their projects with our membership through one of the Orchid editions early next year.

Outing Report for September 12: Early Fall Migrants at Presqu'île

Submitted by Martin and Kathy Parker

The initial outing of the fall season after the suspension of trips due to the COVID-19 pandemic was held on a sunny Saturday, September 12. This outing to Presqu'île Provincial Park was led by Martin and Kathy Parker. Eighteen members of the PFN gathered in the Beach 1 parking lot in the park and then walked out onto the broad expanse of beach. The beach was much wider than last year when the level of Lake Ontario was at near record levels. The area was dry and the usual small pools which normally host a variety of shorebirds were not present. The participants



Semipalmated Plovers at Presqu'île. Photo: Cathy Douglas

proceeded down the beach and were treated to close views of Semipalmated Plovers, Sanderlings, Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers. The Sanderlings and Semipalmated Plovers seemed to pose for photos. According to other birders in the park there were other species of shorebirds on Gull Island, but the group did not wade across to the island to see them.

The swale, which was wet and contained lots of shorebirds last year, was dry and full of blooming wildflowers. Large numbers of butterflies, including 76 Monarchs, were feeding on the flowers. From the beach the group proceeded to lunch in a sunny picnic area and then on to Owen Point where we viewed the birds on Gull Island. The final stop in the park was the Calf Pasture Area where a Pied-billed Grebe was feeding with a group of Mallards. The remaining participants left the park and stopped at the Colborne

Street Boat Ramp area for Common Gallinule and other birds. The final stop was at the Brighton Sewage Lagoon where Wood Ducks, Northern Shovelers and a Bonaparte's Gull were added to the day's list.



A Cabbage White butterfly and Green Sweat Bee both heading to the same flower. Photo: Ken Morrison

Member Ken Morrison recorded seven species of butterflies (Monarch, Red Admiral, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Cabbage White, Eastern Tailed-Blue and Viceroy) along with 8 species of dragonflies and damselflies (Autumn Meadowhawk, Black Saddlebags, Common Green Darner, Lance-tipped Darner, Cherry-faced Meadowhawk, Eastern Forktail, Tule Blue and Band-winged Meadowhawk).

Member Cathy Douglas recorded the birds observed and submitted three checklists to eBird. A total of 44 species were noted by one or more participants.

Outing Report for September 20: Fall Forest Birding on the Canadian Shield

Submitted by Lucie Blouin

On a cool and crisp Sunday morning, five members of the PFN joined our leader Cathy Douglas at the Reid Road parking lot of the Kawartha Land Trust's Ingleton Wells Property near Viamede Resort. This is part of KLT's Stony Lake Trails system. We set out on this beautiful sunny, almost-fall day walking through the mixed hardwood forest and abandoned farm property. One of the first sightings was a Scarlet Tanager which was spotted again at the end of our hike. In between, many different bird species were seen. Cathy was able to tally up 31 different ones, including the Broad-winged Hawk, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Swainson's Thrush, as well as Nashville, Blackburnian, Black-throated Green and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Some species were not seen as much as heard, such as the Ruffed Grouse. As we passed through the former farm, some of us sampled a variety of apples from the orchard – an unexpected but much enjoyed snack!



Giant Puffball mushroom at Stony Lake.
Photo: Cathy Douglas



Gray Treefrog at Stony Lake.
Photo: Cathy Douglas

This was the second PFN outing of the season. The guidelines developed by the PFN board were followed, including no arranged carpooling, limited group size, physical distancing and masks when physical distancing not possible. None of these measures required by COVID-19 interfered with the enjoyment of the outing and, hopefully, going forward we will be able to continue with outings.

For those interested in exploring the Stony Lake trails further, there is a downloadable map available from the KLT website: www.kawarthalandtrust.org. On this outing we followed the yellow trail and small sections of the blue and red.

Steve's Swan Sightings

Submitted by Steve Paul

First off, I want to say "thank you" to the PFN members who have reached out to me with their sightings over the last month. Please continue to send me information and photos at stevepaul70@gmail.com. There have been minimal sightings of Trumpeter Swans around Lindsay, Omemee, Peterborough, Lakefield and Havelock over the last several weeks. Adults have gone through their molt. Cygnets are strong enough to start flying, and will be leaving their home ponds for their wintering grounds very soon.



Many Trumpeter Swans over-winter in Ontario in areas where food is plentiful and water doesn't freeze up. Around Southern Ontario, Trumpeter Swans congregate in the largest numbers in LaSalle Park in Burlington, Bluffers Park in Toronto, and Wye

Trumpeter Swans at Lakefield Marsh on March 24, 2018.
Photo: Steve Paul

Marsh near Georgian Bay. Smaller numbers can be found along various spots along Lake Ontario, including Tommy Thompson Park, High Park, Frenchman's Bay and Whitby Harbour. Some overwinter on the Crowe River in Marmora.

Book Review: Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants

Submitted by Marilyn Freeman

Three years ago, I had the great privilege of auditing a Trent University course called "Anishnaabemowin on the Land". Camping for a week at Bon Echo Provincial Park, elders and not-so-elders had us look at the world through a different lens, a way expressed through a language so completely different from English. It was here that I learned of *Braiding Sweetgrass*, often referred to as the "bible" of the Indigenous students in this course.

Braiding Sweetgrass was published in 2013 and, through word of mouth, recently made it to the New York Times bestseller list after selling 500,000 in nine languages. Sales are continuing because Kimmerer is telling a timely and timeless story in language that is accessible to all readers.

She succeeds in combining economics, natural science, history, philosophy and the culture of gratitude, reciprocity and responsibility with a long series of stories, both personal and traditionally indigenous, that teach the reader to observe, learn and act.

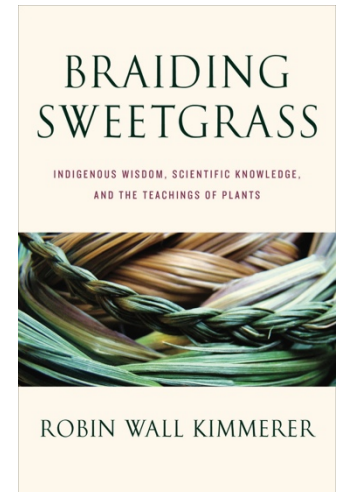
Kimmerer lives rurally in upstate New York near Lake Onondaga. Behind her house is an algae-filled pond. In deciding to clear the pond and turn it into a swimming hole for her daughters, she encompasses a whole world of give and take. The raked and dried cladophora and spirogyra become compost that turns into garden carrots. The pruned willow branches at the edge become browse for the cottontails and get redistributed far and wide as rabbit droppings. Mint harvested from the edge becomes a cup of mint tea. But finding a yellow warbler nest with eggs in the willows makes her realize that "restoring" a habitat produces casualties – especially when we humans are the sole arbiters what is good.

Balance is a moving target. It takes work balancing the giving and the taking. She worked on the pond, and the pond worked on her in ways material and spiritual. "The outlet from my pond runs downhill to my good neighbor's pond. What I do here matters. Everybody lives downstream."

In *Braiding Sweetgrass*, we read of Kimmerer's own stories and we read of Indigenous history through her own family's stories involving residential schools and their destruction of language and culture. Balancing this are stories of present-day renewal through language learning, traditional teachings and knowledge.

As she says, "Science can be a language of distance which reduces a being to its working parts; it is a language of objects. The language scientists speak, however precise, is based on a profound error in grammar, an omission, a grave loss in translation from the native languages of these shores." She uses the Anishnaabemowin word Puhpowee as an example. It's translated as "the force which causes mushrooms to push up from the earth overnight." As a biologist, Kimmerer was stunned to learn this word because "in all its technical vocabulary, Western science has no such term, no words to hold this mystery...in scientific language, our terminology is used to define the boundaries of our knowing. What lies beyond our grasp remains unnamed."

This book is so rich in stories and facts. All of the nature observations and appreciations are beautifully tied together at the end in a story of how to defeat the overconsuming, selfish Wendigo evil of rampant capitalism. It's poetry. It's a book to be savoured and returned to over and over again.



In a recent interview with the Guardian during the COVID-19 lockdown (May 23/20), Kimmerer reflects on what is necessary to regain a balanced world. "A contagion of gratitude," she marvels, speaking the words slowly. "I'm just trying to think about what that would be like. Acting out of gratitude, as a pandemic. I can see it."

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I Photographed My 200th Species in Peterborough... and It Was Magnificent

Submitted by Matt Garvin

When Martin asked me to do this writeup, this is what my inner-birder wishes that I could've written:

"I had been tracking the recent hurricane activity along the Gulf Coast and subsequent observations of vagrant seabirds with interest. I closely monitored the weather forecast, awaiting the perfect window to provide maximum likelihood of mega-rarities in Peterborough. Based on the radar, I determined that the south of Chemong Lake would provide the ideal vantage-point and conditions to observe and document what would later turn out to be..."

when, in fact, this is how it played out:

I had planned on going to Presqu'île Provincial Park on Sunday, September 13. There had been some interesting shorebirds kicking around down there and I usually take time to get down at least once in the fall to take some photos. The weather looked miserable though. There was a big front coming through that day and it was going to be far from ideal photography conditions. Instead, the family and I went out to visit my in-laws on Chemong Lake. It turns out the forecast was accurate, and it poured rain all morning. Those of you with young kids will sympathize that by hour three in a small cottage, fueled by pancakes and high-test maple syrup, my kids were starting to go bananas and I was starting to think that standing in the rain at Presqu'île might have been the better option. Finally, at around 11:30, the rain stopped so I grabbed my camera and headed out the door, hoping to get some shots of fall warblers.

It was actually turning into a decent day, with only a mist of drizzle left and a steady, warm southeast wind blowing in. I hadn't even taken my lens cap off when I heard a sound I can only describe as "out of place" come from above me. I looked up expecting to see the usual assemblage of osprey, turkey vultures and ring-billed gulls that ride the updraft that gets forced up the hill on that side of the lake on a south wind. There were ring-bills all right, but they were circling a G-D Magnificent Frigatebird! It was no more than 30 metres above me, head into the south breeze, just holding steady.

I've seen Magnificent Frigatebirds in tropical locations but out of context it seemed ridiculous: overall black colouration which increases its somewhat ominous look, incredibly long pointed wings and long forked tail that trailed out behind it and a long, light-coloured bill that ended in a yellowish hooked tip. This one had extensive white across the breast and, based on my Sibley guide after the fact, I believe it was an adult female. The entire time I saw it, it never flapped, just kept gliding west, wings outstretched in classic frigatebird profile.

The ring-bills that were circling seemed as confused about it as I was. I muttered a couple expletives as I fumbled to get my lens cap off as it started to drift off. I managed a couple of horrifically underexposed shots before it glided out of view. Unfortunately, they're all the same "quartering away" perspective.



Magnificent Frigatebird. Photo: Matt Garvin

I hustled down to the dock to see if I could reacquire it, but no luck. I frantically posted to Discord hoping that someone else could intercept and corroborate what is certainly my most ridiculous sighting in Peterborough. I followed up with a couple photos and an eBird report, but it never came back and I haven't heard of anyone else that saw it drifting around the Kawarthas. I found out later that there have been a couple of other sightings of a Magnificent Frigatebird in September this year in Ontario (one in Durham and another on Lake Huron). But, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first ever record of this species in Peterborough and possibly inland Ontario as a whole.

Squirrel-free Bird Feeder Plan

Submitted by Steve Paul

Through social media, I continually see problems people have with squirrels raiding backyard bird feeders. I used to have similar problems too, but less than two years ago I made a simple switch and have not had a single issue since. Now squirrels and chipmunks coexist with our backyard birds and play a great role in ground clean-up. I wanted to share this simple, low-cost plan here with our members. This is a project that can be done over two days, but not less than two days because of the time it takes to dig a hole and cement the post into place.

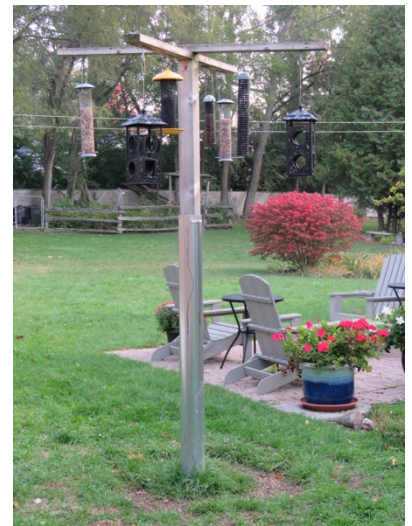
Here is the list of materials:

- 1 x 10 ft 4"x4" post
- 1 x 8 ft 2"x4"
- 1x 5 ft stove pipe - 4" diameter
- 1 or 2 bags of concrete
- Eyebolts and spikes

The total cost is \$50 to \$100 depending on if you prefer to use cedar or pressure-treated wood.

We dug a hole between 2 ft and 3 ft deep to get below the frost line and then cemented the 10 ft post in place. It now stands at 7 ft high and we never had to cut it. After the concrete had cured overnight and after backfilling the hole, we slid the stove pipe over the post - again, no cuts required - it just slid down to ground level. With the 8 ft 2"x4", we just cut it in half to create two 2" x 4" pieces and, as you can see in the photo, they formed a cross. We used 6" spikes to hammer them in place into the main post. In regards to where to place eyebolts or hooks, the preference is up to you but we put in eight total. We change up what feeders we put out, but we always have eight feeders out at the same time. Black-oil sunflower seeds and peanuts are out year-round, and nyger seeds and suet feeders are put out based on the season.

If you have any questions at all, please let me know. I am happy to help. You can email me at stevepaul70@gmail.com



Steve's bird feeder. Photo: Steve Paul

Orchid submissions are encouraged!

The submission deadline for the next issue is Thursday, October 22

Send submissions to Kathryn Sheridan via email: orchid@peterboroughnature.org
or post mail to: PFN, PO Box 1532, Peterborough ON K9J 7H7



A Nature Almanac for October

By Drew Monkman

Don't miss the spectacular Harvest Moon, which occurs on October 1. It rises at 7:15 p.m. For several nights before and after this date, the moon comes up at almost the same time.

As the goldenrods quickly fade away, asters dominate - and conclude - the wildflower parade for another year. The generally white flowers of heath and calico asters, along with the purple or mauve blossoms of New England and Purple-stemmed asters, seem to be everywhere. Go to ontariowildflowers.com for excellent tips on identifying asters.

On an average year, fall colours in the Kawarthas reach their height at, or just before, Thanksgiving (October 12). For a great colour drive, go east from Apsley along County Road 504 through Lasswade and Glen Alda. Turn west at Glen Alda on County Road 604 to return to Highway 28.

A tide of yellow spreads across the landscape in mid- through late October. The colour is supplied courtesy of trembling and bigtooth aspens, balsam poplar, silver maple, white birch and, at month's end, tamarack.

October is a great time to find salamanders. Red-backed Salamanders, which are almost worm-like in appearance, are usually the most common. However, you may also find both the Spotted and Blue-spotted Salamanders. Look carefully under flat rocks, old boards, and logs in damp wooded areas and around cottages.

The signature constellation of fall is Pegasus and its asterism, the Great Square. Adjacent to the square is the Andromeda galaxy, our closest galactic neighbour. It appears through binoculars like a faint oval of fuzzy light - light that left the galaxy two million years ago! For detailed steps to finding this galaxy, go to Google and enter: [wikihow Andromeda](http://wikihow.com/Andromeda).

Sparrow migration takes centre stage this month, making October one of the busiest times of the year for backyard feeders. Scatter millet or finch mix on the ground to attract dark-eyed juncos and both white-throated and white-crowned sparrows.

Watch and listen for mixed flocks of golden-crowned and ruby-crowned kinglets, brown creepers, dark-eyed juncos, white-throated sparrows, and yellow-rumped warblers.

On balmy October days, ruffed grouse can sometimes be heard drumming. Early fall is also the grouse's "crazy season." Young birds disperse from their parent's territory and often end up colliding with all manner of objects.

Migrating diving ducks such as goldeneyes, buffleheads, scaups, and mergansers stop over on our larger lakes such as Pigeon and Rice. Often the best viewing, however, is at the Lakefield Sewage Lagoons. They are located about a half-kilometre east of the intersection of County Roads 32 and 33.

The first northern finches often turn up in late October.



Migrating Black-crowned Night Heron at Rotary Park on September 16. Photo: Steve Paul



Coral tooth mushroom at Burnham Woods in September. Photo: Sue Paradisis

Winter Finch Forecast 2020-2021

By Tyler Hoar

GENERAL FORECAST: It looks to be a flight year for several species in the East. Most cone crops average poor to fair from Lake Superior eastward with Eastern White Pine being the exception. Spruce crops increase west from Lake Superior from fair to excellent in Western Canada and Alaska. White-winged Crossbills and often Pine Siskins prefer to move east or west rather than go south in search of cone crops. Many crossbills and siskins may have already relocated to Northwestern Ontario and across the boreal forest to Alaska where spruce cone crops are abundant. White Birch crops are poor to fair across most of the boreal forest implying a flight of redpolls south. Extensive spruce budworm outbreaks in Quebec and scattered smaller outbreaks westward through the Great Lakes and Manitoba appear to be providing Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches with an abundant food source during breeding season. Purple Finches and Red-breasted Nuthatches in the east are currently moving south in numbers. See individual forecasts for other finches and further details.



Purple Finch at Algonquin Park. Photo: Mark Peck

INDIVIDUAL FORECASTS: Forecasts apply mainly to Ontario and adjacent provinces and states. Three irruptive non-finch passerines whose movements are often linked to finches are also discussed. Follow finch wanderings this fall and winter on eBird.

PINE GROSBEAK: There should not be a flight of Pine Grosbeak south this winter. There is a good crop of Mountain Ash across the boreal forest. However, the crop appears to be a mosaic of poor to bumper crops scattered across the whole boreal forest. Small movements of grosbeaks wandering from areas with a poor crop in search of areas of better berry crop may provide birders with small numbers of the species outside the boreal forest. Individuals wandering southward will look for European Mountain-ash berries and small ornamental crabapples. At feeders they prefer black oil sunflower seeds.

PURPLE FINCH: The worst kept secret: most Purple Finches will migrate south out of Eastern Canada this winter. Reports of early movement of this species into the border states have been occurring for weeks. At the same time, one of our regular contributors reported abnormally high numbers of Purple Finches in Northeastern Ontario. While east at Tadoussac Quebec, good movements of Purple Finches southwestward are being observed. With Spruce Budworm outbreaks becoming widespread in the eastern boreal forest, the Purple Finches appear to be benefiting from an abundant food source during breeding season.

RED CROSSBILL: Red Crossbills are currently fairly widespread in Central Ontario to southern Maritimes and northeastern states mainly feeding in areas of heavy white pine crop. Red Crossbills should shift southward some as the white pine crop is depleted. Don't expect to see much in the way of any irruption from the west, but expect to continue to see some numbers of Type 10 and very small numbers of types 1, 2 and 3 mixed in here and there. Types 2, and perhaps 4, should be a bit more common in the western Great Lakes States. The types are usually impossible to identify without recordings of their flight calls. Recordings can be made with a smartphone and identified to type. Matt Young (may6@cornell.edu or info@finchnetwork.org) will identify types if you email him your recordings or upload them to an eBird checklist. Recordings uploaded to eBird checklists are deposited in the Macaulay Library.

See Matt Young's guide to Red Crossbill call types in the links below. I'm happy to announce that Matt and his team (myself included) have launched a new non-profit organization dedicated to the study and conservation of finches: Finch Research Network (FiRN) – <https://finchnetwork.org/>

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: The Crossbill Pendulum has swung west for the winter of 2020-21. An excellent crop of White and Black Spruce from northwestern Ontario to Alaska should contain the majority of White-winged Crossbills this winter. Throughout the boreal forest from Lake Superior, eastward spruce crops are mostly poor with areas of patchy fair crops and widespread fair Tamarack crops. Crossbills remaining in the East may move south of the boreal and areas with cone-laden spruces (all species) should be watched.

COMMON AND HOARY REDPOLLS: Common and Hoary Redpoll information has been affected by the pandemic. With travel to the north highly restricted due to the pandemic, widespread information on the extent of the Swamp Birch crop is limited. The little information that was gathered was of a heavy crop in northeastern Ontario. This birch crop could stop the redpolls' movement south if it is extensive. The good news is the White and Yellow Birch crop is poor to fair throughout most of the boreal and southern Canadian forests. If the redpolls move on from the Swamp Birch crop, expect a moderate to good flight south out of the boreal forest. Watch for redpolls on birches, in weedy fields and at bird feeders offering nyger and black oil sunflower seeds. Watch for Hoaries in flocks of Common Redpolls. See link below for photos and identification marks of Common and Hoary Redpoll subspecies

PINE SISKIN: Large numbers of siskins are currently being reported in areas with excellent spruce crops in the western boreal forest. The siskins likely will remain concentrated in Western Canada with its heavy spruce cone crops for the winter. The smaller numbers remaining in the eastern boreal forest should move southward looking for food. At feeders they prefer nyger seeds in silo feeders.

EVENING GROSBEAK: This spectacular winter finch appears to be on the move this winter. Its breeding population appears to be increasing in Eastern Canada westward to Manitoba due to increasing outbreaks of spruce budworm with large severe outbreaks in eastern Quebec. Visual count observations by Tadoussac Bird Observatory in Quebec of grosbeaks moving primarily towards the southwest are reported to be the highest early fall numbers recorded in 25 years. Expect flights of Evening Grosbeaks into southern Ontario, southern Quebec, Maritime Provinces, New York and New England States, with some finches going farther south into the United States. At feeders they prefer black oil sunflower seeds. Away from feeders Evening Grosbeaks will look for maple and ash trees still holding keys. See link below for Evening Grosbeak Call Types.

THREE IRRUPTIVE PASSERINES: Movements of these three passerines are often linked to the boreal finches.

BLUE JAY: This will be an average to good flight along the north shorelines of Lakes Ontario and Erie. Beechnut and hazelnut crops are poor. The acorn crop is widespread ranging from poor to good in volume, with areas of the Adirondacks and Algonquin Park reporting a good crop of acorns.

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: This species has been irrupting south since mid-August and continues as this forecast is written. Individuals have made it as far as Oklahoma and Alabama. With cone crops in the eastern boreal forest mostly poor, expect this species to continue to move southward. At feeders, this species prefers black oil seeds, suet, and peanuts.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: Most Bohemians will likely stay in the north because native Mountain-ash berry crops are good and other berry crops range from fair to good across the boreal forest. In recent winters, however, Bohemians have been coming south to forage on reliable annual crops of abundant Buckthorn (*Rhamnus*) berries. This species will also forage on planted European Mountain-ash berries and ornamental crabapples. Small numbers will probably arrive mid to late winter in traditional areas from Central Ontario eastward into the Maritime Provinces and northern New England.

For acknowledgement of the numerous contributors and for more information including additional websites, go to finchnetwork.org/winter-finch-forecast-20.

Book Review: *Beyond the Trees* by Adam Shoalts

Submitted by Lucie Blouin

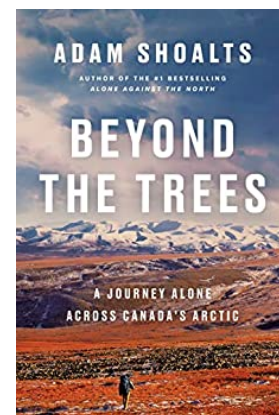
On September 6, I finished reading Adam Shoalts' latest book *Beyond the Trees* – three years to the date that Adam finished his epic 4,000 km, almost four-month journey across the Arctic. This was a solo canoe journey starting in Eagle Plains, Yukon Territory and ending at Baker Lake, Nunavut. Yes, you read that correctly: a SOLO CANOE journey across the ARCTIC.

This summer I was fortunate to take three canoe trips all within a couple hours' radius of Peterborough, the longest lasting three nights and none with fewer than two companions. To imagine Adam's journey was mind boggling. My son had read the book and shared some details with us on those short canoe trips. As I was hanging my newly purchased gravity water filter, my son shared that Adam's handheld water purifier had broken irreparably early in the trip and he had decided to drink his water unpurified for the duration. Fortunately, Adam did not fall ill with giardia. That would have been the end for him – at the very least, the end of his journey...

On another canoe trip, my son soloed his canoe against heavy winds that my daughter and I found challenging with two of us paddling. My son also found the wind daunting but recounted that Adam had paddled solo the whole 4,000 kilometers, at times against gale force winds and at times upstream against the current of such mammoth rivers of the North as the Mackenzie and the Coppermine. (He actually often used other techniques to navigate in these circumstances such as poling and dragging his canoe tethered to a rope behind him or while clambering onshore.) On my canoe trips, we experienced wildlife encounters such as beavers, loons and barred owls. Adam regularly encountered grizzly bears, muskoxen, wolves and snow geese. Whereas we feasted on woodfire-cooked homemade pizzas, turkey chili and pasta (and even steak and shrimp... 😊), Adam was fuelled by energy bars and freeze-dried meals with the occasional hot cup of tea and fresh cloudberries. Adam endured weeks of torment by blackflies, mosquitoes and other flying insects compared to the single day of misery I experienced on an overnight backpacking trip. Of course, it is ridiculous to even make any comparison, but it was my puny experiences with canoe tripping and backpacking that made this book such an intriguing and worthwhile read.

Besides descriptions of the jaw dropping physical feats of the journey, the book also contains descriptions of the Arctic landscape, its flora, fauna and weather as well as historical tidbits about those explorers who journeyed before him. There are a few photographs included in the book. I only wish there were more, but that would have meant adding photographic equipment to his already burdensome load which he was required to carry four times across every portage!

The book has been criticized for lack of introspection by the adventurer. When asked why he undertook such a journey, Adam explained to Atlantic Books Today, "I wanted to see the wilderness while it still exists," citing concerns over the impact of climate change. He undertook his journey in the year of Canada's sesquicentennial. He also explained why he decided to do the journey solo. (You can discover why when you read the book!) During the few and far between encounters with other humans, he kept them brief (maximum less than ½ hour!) due to his concern over the need to get going and cover as much ground as possible to ensure that he completed his journey before winter set in. He didn't appear to be lonely during this long solo journey but would talk to his canoe and tent especially during stressful times! There may not have been pages or paragraphs dedicated to introspection, but I believe the book provides insights directly and indirectly into what made this young man decide to undertake such a journey and what makes him "tick."



Full disclosure: I “read” this book on audiobook - a loan from Cloud Library (digital Peterborough Library). I enjoyed it so much that afterwards I bought the paperback so that I could see the photos and share the book with others. I also watched a TVO video clip on YouTube of Adam being interviewed by Steve Paikin.

The publisher is Penguin Random House (Canada)

ISBN 9480735236851 (softcover)

From the Archives: A Past PFN Fall Event

Submitted by Martin Parker

Annual Picnic by Jim Cashmore, *The Orchid*, Vol 46, No. 7, October 2001

On Sunday, September 16, just over 20 members attended the club’s annual picnic again held at Trent University’s ‘Oliver Property’ on Pigeon Lake. Activities began shortly after 2 p.m. when Drew Monkman, Bill McCord and others led a short nature walk in the area around the cottage, which was to be the base for the afternoon.

Around 3:30 p.m., Sheena and Eric Sager, Trent’s site coordinators, took us on a much longer hike to see the recently installed canopy walkway. This consists of five platforms atop 76 ft. high hydro poles with cables strung between each pair. The facility will allow Trent researchers to reach the forest canopy where a variety of studies can be undertaken in an environment not usually accessible.

The day ended with a BBQ where participants grilled their own meat and enjoyed the great pot-luck salads and desserts. We departed with renewed appreciation for this large and varied piece of property which was donated to Trent University by the Oliver family.

Thanks to Sheena and Eric for their assistance and to all the club members who helped make this event a success.

Archivist’s Note: An interesting club event to consider for next fall.

Lifeforms on Goldenrod

Submitted by Kathryn Sheridan

Many people have life lists for birds. I wonder how many people have life lists for goldenrod. I have started one, specifically for the wildlife I see on the goldenrod in my backyard. A little patch started growing just a couple of years ago and has grown into its own little ecosystem of sorts. I am so pleased with it. I go out a couple of times a day to check on the goings on. One hears people talk about planting native plants for the wildlife and planting native flowering plants for the pollinators, but one doesn’t necessarily hear about the benefits these plants have to oneself unless, of course, they have medicinal properties or can be eaten. For the purpose of this short article, I’m particularly thinking about how they can provide a source of interest and amusement. Observing goldenrod is a fascinating thing to do. This is something that can easily be done with the naked eye if one has good eyesight. I need to use my reading glasses at a bare minimum.

This little backyard hobby of mine started a few years ago when I purchased a pair of close-focussing binoculars for observing butterflies. I soon figured out that the binoculars were good for other things, too,



An assassin bug nymph on a goldenrod inflorescence. Photo: Kathryn Sheridan

such as observing flowers. This quickly led to an awareness of the rich variety of insects that visit flowers. Having a pair of close-focussing binoculars is a bit like walking around with a microscope. Almost anywhere in nature that you direct your close-up binocular gaze, you will see something that you had no idea was there before: from snow fleas hopping around on snow in February to the tiniest of insects visiting a wildflower. Drew Monkman has written about all the different kinds of insects you can find on goldenrod in *Nature's Year*, and I can tell you first hand: He wasn't kidding!

My list below is nascent and artless. I present it only to show the wide variety of organisms that benefit from native plants (goldenrod in this instance) and to show how such an activity can lead to so much more (a refreshing, deep dive into entomology or botany, for instance). Next year I plan to use iNaturalist to find out what the species of insects are and to learn a bit more about their habits such as why some bees, wasps and flies remain affixed to the flowers overnight, still alive but hardly able to move.

- Common Eastern Bumble bees
- Yellowjackets
- Various types of flies
- Various types of spiders (more at nighttime)
- Locust borers (long-horned beetle; wasp mimic)
- A tiny black beetle built like an old VW Bug
- Various other beetles
- Ambush bug (a predatory insect in a disguise)
- Assassin bug nymphs
- Green stink bug
- Various types of ants
- Various types of moths (mostly at night)
- Earwigs
- Grasshoppers
- A female cardinal one morning in September. It might have been sampling the overnight guests.
- A chickadee grazing on the seeds one day last winter.

Wilderness on Wings

I like the shapes of older trees set against cloudy, blue skies.
In this older neighbourhood the plant diversity brings pleasure to my eyes,
But there is something missing here; there are no birds outside my door.
Since childhood I watched birds at bird feeders; now I'm bird-poor.

I set a large lid on the ground, added rocks, water, and waited ...
One mid-October morning I saw a Chipping Sparrow close to it - I was elated.
The sparrow used the hop-scratch method to feed from a flattened weed.
For me, to watch and photograph wild birds is a deep-seated need.

I don't need to identify every bird I find since I am not a birder.
I'm more interested in what makes a bird a bird of almost any order.
Wilderness on wings is what this five and a half inch-long bird represents;
Through my apartment window can a bird cast its magical influence.

Murray Arthur Palmer, 2018



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

The COVID-19 pandemic eliminated outings and meetings and reduced the sharing of information on our natural heritage.	
July 25	Brian Bailey reported 4 Wilson's Warblers in the Long Lake area, North Kawartha in a mixed flock of small birds. A Black-crowned Night Heron was observed by Brody Crosby, Connor Thompson & Rebecca Taylor along the river in the area of Rotary Park in the city. Sightings at this location continued to the end of the period
Red-headed Woodpecker	
July 28 -- Olivia Maillet & Andrew Brown had an individual in the O'Connor Dr area of Ennismore. July 28 -- Cathy Douglas had one on the eastern shore of Pigeon Lake. July 31 -- Dave Milsom had one on Duncan Line where one was observed by Drew Monkman in the spring -- He suspected it may have nested in the area. On Aug. 23, 2 adults and 1 juvenile were seen at this location by Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom. Aug 1 -- Luke Berg had an individual in the Trent Nature area -- present throughout the period. Aug 11 -- Dennis & Lynn Johnson had 1 adult & 2 juveniles visiting their feeder on Northey's Bay Rd Aug 14 & 18 -- Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom had one in the Sandy Point area, northern Pigeon Lake -- continued to be seen at this location during the month. In the fall 2020 newsletter of the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society, it was reported that the population of this species appears to be stabilizing and possibly increasing. This year the number of observations in the Peterborough area has been increasing.	
Aug 2	Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom had a Clay-coloured Sparrow on the Dummer Alvar -- present in this area during the nesting season.
Aug 3	Andrew Brown & Olivia Maillet had 2 Redheads at the Lakefield Lagoon -- fall migrants. Seen by others over the next few days.
Aug 5	Andrew Brown & Olivia Maillet had a Great Egret at Keene. Seen by others later. Matthew Tobey had a hatch-year Clay-coloured Sparrow along the rail line off Airport Road -- was present with hatch-year White-throated Sparrow . Jerry Ball had an American Bittern on Baseline at Bensfort Rd; and along Nicholson Road he had an immature Bobolink and two Sandhill Cranes .
Aug 7	Jerry Ball with Ken Morrison & Martin Parker spotted 14 Giant Swallowtails (butterflies) in the Havelock area -- nine in one overgrown field. They also found near Sandy Lake Road 3 Leonard's Skippers & 1 Gray Hairstreak . The Leonard's Skipper was Jerry Ball's 79 th species of butterfly in Peterborough County this year.
Aug 8	A Least Bittern was feeding in the pond off Television Road by Mitchell Gardiner.
Aug 9	Bill Snowden photographed a juvenile Red-bellied Woodpecker on the southern shore of Buckhorn Lake. He noted it had been visiting his hummingbird feeder and the sunflower seed feeder.
Aug 10	Tim Dyson had five Common Nighthawks 'hawking for insects' in the Hall's Glen area.
Aug 13	Matthew Tobey had a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in the woods along Mervin Line -- continued through month by Matthew Tobey and others.
Aug 14	Sarah Bonnett & Gill Homes had an early fall migrating Bufflehead on the Lakefield Lagoon. Seen by others on day after.

	Matthew Tobey had a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in Sandy Point area, northern Pigeon Lake. Also present on Aug. 18
Aug 17	Jon Scholey had a Great Egret at Emerald Isle, Buckhorn Lake Dave Milsom and Matthew Tobey had a Common Tern on Pigeon Lake, off Sandy Point.
Aug 18	Dave Milsom & Matthew Tobey had fall migrating Greater Scaup on the Lakefield Lagoon. Seen later by others. Matthew Garvin had a Least Bittern at the Lakefield Lagoon. Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom had a Philadelphia Vireo on the Sandy Lake area, northern Pigeon Lake.
Aug 19	Iain Rayner had a Great Egret at the north end of Chemong Lake.
Aug 23	On Dodworth Island in Stoney Lake, Rob Welsh had a Pine Siskin visiting his feeder.
Aug 24	John Carley had a Ruby-crowned Kinglet at Sandy Lake, Buckhorn.
Aug 28	Dave Milsom had a fall migrating Orange-crowned Warbler in the Thompson Bay area of the city.
Aug 30	Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom had a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Herkimer Point.
Aug 31	Matthew Tobey & Dave Milsom had 3 Bank Swallows at Sandy Point, Pigeon Lake.
Sept 1	Stephanie Armstrong reported on Monkman Sightings that the Snapping Turtle nest she has been protecting since June 19 produced on this day a hatch of 42 young turtles from a clutch of 43 eggs -- one egg was infertile. The hatching was earlier than normal and may be a reflection of the hot, dry summer.
Sept 3	Travis Cameron had a Least Bittern at the Lakefield Lagoon.
Sept 5	Travis Cameron had 3 late-departing Eastern Kingbirds in the Lakefield area.
Sept 6	Late-departing Eastern Kingbirds were spotted in a number of locations including Peterborough airport by Dave Milsom & Matthew Tobey, Briar Hill Sanctuary by Mathew Tobey and Scriven Road by Iain Rayner
Sept 7	A Great Egret was in the University Drive wetland by Andrew Brown & Olivia Maillet. Matthew Tobey had a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher in the Trent U. Nature Sanctuary. Dan Williams had 13 late-departing Barn Swallows at the Lakefield Lagoon.
Least Bittern	
Joan & George Sims saw a Least Bittern in the Cunningham Storm Water Pond on Sept 7. Continued to be observed during period by number of other birders until Sept 23. On Sept 23, Matthew Gavin had two Least Bitterns at that location.	
Sept 8	Jerry Ball had 4 Sandhill Cranes along Hannah Road. Becca Keitel photographed a Red-necked Phalarope on the river at Lock 25.
Sept 10	Dave Milsom located 6 Red-necked Phalaropes on the Lakefield Lagoon. Seen later in the day by many other observers.
Sept 13	Magnificent Frigatebird --- an individual was observed and photographed by Matthew Gavin soaring in the southwestern part of Chemong Lake. First record for the County and an amazing observation. See separate article and photos in this issue.
Sept 16	At the Peterborough Airport, a Black-bellied Plover & Baird's Sandpiper were seen by many. Dave Milsom had 6 Barn Swallows & 1 Bank Swallow at the Lakefield Lagoon. Bill Crins had a late-departing Yellow Warbler in Beavermead Park. King Baker found a road-killed Fisher on Hwy 28 at Two-headed Calf Corner, north of Young's Point.
Sept 17	Dan Luckman had a Northern Waterthrush in Beavermead Park. Luke Berg had a late-departing Bobolink in the Trent Nature Area. Andrew Brown & Olivia Maillet had a late-departing Great Crested Flycatcher in the Harold Town Conservation Area.

Sept 19	2 Black-bellied Plovers still present at Peterborough Airport by David Britton. Luke Berg had an Orange-crowned Warbler in the Trent Nature Area.
Sept 20	Luke Berg had a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher on the Lang-Hastings Trail between Villers and Blezard. Iain Rayner had a late-departing Golden-winged Warbler near Lakefield. Tony Barrett had a Clay-coloured Sparrow along Whitfield Rd. Present the next day.
Sept 21	Dave Milsom had a Solitary Sandpiper at the Lakefield Lagoon. Ben Taylor, Chris Risley & Drew Monkman had 4 Lesser Yellowlegs in the Otonabee Gravel Pits Conservation Area. Luke Berg had a Solitary Sandpiper within the city.
Sept 22	Jerry Ball had 2 Blue-headed Vireos on the Lang-Hastings Trail between Cameron and Cty Road 38. In the Otonabee Gravel Pits CA, several area birders observed 4 Lesser Yellowlegs , 1 Solitary Sandpiper , & 1 Least Sandpiper . Matthew Gavin had a Sora in the Cunningham Storm Water Pond. Kathy Parker noted that over the past few days, Eastern Gray Squirrels have been crossing a telephone cable multiple times during the day carrying walnuts in their mouths.
Sept 23	Luke Berg had a late-departing Ruby-throated Hummingbird & Least Flycatcher in the Trent Nature Area. A Great Crested Flycatcher was observed in the Harold Town Conservation Area by Rebekah Persad, Connor Thompson, Anne Blondin & Brody Crosby.

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



Here are some photos that Rene Gareau and wife Antje took of a monarch butterfly that emerged from its chrysalis at their cottage on Stoney Lake. They noticed the jade green and gold chrysalis attached to their cottage sometime around August 22. The monarch wing colours became clearly visible through the chrysalis on September 4 and the new monarch butterfly emerged later the same day.

More Cute Young Bird Photos:



Clockwise from top: House wren nestling and adult feeding nestling (Ken McKeen), fledged male Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Ken McKeen), and Northern Cardinal fledgling in early September (Don Pettypiece). On the subject of cardinals, Don humourously wrote: "We seem to be swimming in cardinals this year - at least 2 pair and their offspring. Now this creature shows up. 2nd batch is what we were thinking. Can't be grandchild!"

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: _____