

**Annual Report – 2020**

**MEMBERSHIP SERVICES**

**80th Anniversary**

The PFN was founded on May 20, 1940 and unfortunately activities planned to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the founding could not be held due to Covid-19. Special collector pins to celebrate the 80th Anniversary were produced and are still available.

**Memberships – Jim Young**

At the end of 2020 there were 176 memberships (down from 187) representing 275 individuals (down from 302).  Online membership application and fee/donation payment was implemented.

**Members Meetings – Marie Duchesneau**

Even as we had to change from in-person meetings to zoom meetings we continued to benefit from the expertise of our guest speakers. We joined the world's longest insect migration with the Monarch Ultra Marathon and hiked Canada's Great Trail. We discovered Western Australia's unique flora and the diversity of our Arctic fish population. We were warned about the introduction into nature of wild pigs and of the challenges facing the North Atlantic Right Whales. We looked at the anthropogenic debris brought to their nests by Double-Crested Cormorants and spied on the lives of a local population of Wild Turkeys. We learned the latest methods to follow the migration routes of individual songbirds and the threats they encounter during their travels.

**Outings – Sue Paradisis**

2020 started out so well with a First Day Hike on January 1st to Silent Lake Provincial Park. Nineteen members attended and enjoyed an afternoon of fresh air, exercise, camaraderie and spectacular views of a winter wonderland of fresh snow. Twelve outings took place before Covid forced us to shut everything down from mid-March until September. Another eleven outings took place in the fall with reduced numbers and pre-registration. In spite of Covid we were able to offer 23 outings and had 265 participants, a far cry from the numbers of previous years. Sadly 2020 ended.s with a return to lockdown but hopefully we will be able to safely resume outings before too long.

**The Orchid – Kathryn Sheridan**

The publishing of PFN's newsletter, *The Orchid*, continued unabated throughout 2020.  There were fewer outing reports than usual due to the pandemic, but some new contributors stepped up to the plate to help keep PFN members informed.  New article contributors included: Matthew Tobey (Yellow-crowned Night-Heron)), Maxwell Matchim (ROM visit), Lucie Blouin (book review), Karen Vanderwolf (bat boxes), Steve Paul (swan sightings, squirrel-free bird feeders), Matt Garvin (Magnificent Frigatebird), Mary Kate Whibbs (freshwater mussels), Roger Jones (dogs, people and wildlife), Carrie Sadowski (Saw-whet Owl banding report), Anda Rungis (outing report), Jay Fitzsimmons (PFN Juniors' art event), Enid Mallory (Lily Lake update), Sue Paradisis (Burnham Woods, flower diary), Gemma Arvin via Caroline Tennant (student connections with nature), Susan Weaver (wacky squirrel behaviour), and Anria Loubser via Phil Shaw (polyphemus silk moth).  Many thanks to all who submitted photos and articles to share with other members in *The Orchid*.  It was nice to have this means to stay connected during this challenging time.

**Junior Field Naturalists – Jay Fitzsimmons, Erica Barkley, Stephanie Collins, Lara Griffin**

Once the pandemic hit, the Juniors did not do any events.

Before the pandemic, in what feels like another era, we had two really nice events.

1. In January we partnered with the Art Gallery of Peterborough for a nature-based craft event.  The gallery has “Family Sundays“ every month, where families can come for free to visit the gallery and make some art.  For this Family Sunday, our organizations teamed up for kids to decorate wood pendants with pressed flowers and leaves.  Dozens of kids and their families came, some parents learning about one group or the other for the first time.  A video crew from Chex News also showed up, which was a nice surprise.  We'd been talking with the gallery about doing more such events in the future.  Hopefully that time will come again.

2. On Saturday February 22, PFN hosted the Junior Field Naturalists' annual Children's Christmas Bird Count that had been rescheduled due to poor weather conditions. Martin Parker gave a presentation on CBCs and participants broke into smaller groups led by volunteer guides. After each group had completed their bird count, numbers of each species were compiled. Kawartha Wildlife Centre gave a presentation about the Kawartha Wildlife Centre and the animals they help, as well as how to make a wildlife friendly property.

We don't know what we'll do in 2021, but we'll take it as it comes and see what's possible.  Thank you to all of the parents who have been understanding of the lack of events given the circumstances.

**Digital Communication – Marilyn Hubley**

The PFN Facebook following has gone from 1,272 in January 2020 to 2,458 as of Jan 18, 2021 up 1,186. Instagram has gone from 304 Jan 2020 to 580 up 276 and Twitter has gone from 2,196 to 2,319 up 123. Website is updated periodically as additional material becomes available.

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Ontario Nature Representative – Steve Paul**

PFN is one of over 150 conservation groups that make up Ontario Nature’s “Nature Network”, and part of 28 groups that make up the Lake Ontario North region. Becoming the Ontario Nature Rep – I looked forward to attending the in-person meetings in both the spring and fall, to learn what other groups are doing, and to share best practices with our membership.

As Covid-19 swept into our lives in March, everything changed as we moved to a more virtual form of communication. The spring event hosted by Lands Over Landings on May 2nd was cancelled, and replaced by a phone conference on April 30th. The fall event was held on Zoom on October 28th. There were great presentations and information shared on both dates. The Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership also went thru a dramatic change, moving from a traditional, single-day in person format, to a series of virtual livestreams over a five-week period between August and September. It was also very successful, filled with cross-cultural learning and knowledge sharing.

Our club supported multiple advocacy submissions of Ontario Nature, opposing both the reintroduction of the spring bear hunt and the fall Double-Crested Cormorant hunt; endorsed a letter addressing the use of Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZOs) to over-ride policy protections for provincially significant wetlands; endorsed a letter regarding the Ontario Government’s proposal to remove the prohibition on aggregate extraction in the habitat of threatened and endangered species in the regional Natural Heritage System of the Greater Golden Horseshoe; and endorsed removing Schedule 6 from Bill 229, which was proposed to allow the Minister of Natural Resources hold majority decision making on new developments while allowing developers the ability to appeal decisions made by conservation authorities to the ministry.

**Club Sales – Marie Duchesneau and Cathy Douglas**

Sales of PFN publications continued. Books were available for purchase at club meetings, from two local businesses and from another organization. Several copies were presented in recognition of special efforts. An additional stock of ‘Nature in the Kawarthas’ was purchased. The book is still being sold commercially by Dundurn Press and the PFN still receives a royalty from these sales.

80th Anniversary Pins were produced are still available for purchase.

**Archives – Martin Parker**

Regular maintenance of the PFN Archives continued during the year.

**PFN Legacy Fund -- Martin Parker**

The annual grant to the PFN from the PFN Legacy Fund (an endowed fund managed by the Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough) was $2,230. These funds were used for the following special initiatives of the PFN: PFN Awards and Support of the Peterborough Regional Science Fair, registration fees for the participants of the Petroglyphs & Fenelon Falls Butterfly Counts, costs for organizing the Peterborough Christmas Bird Count, PFN Research Grants to Peter Andreas and Bradley Howell at Trent University, and donations to Kawartha Land Trust and Nature Conservancy of Canada for land purchases.

Sponsorship to a student to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit was planned however the in person summit was postponed due to Covid.

**CITIZEN-SCIENCE – NATURE STUDY**

The principle Citizen-science or nature studies projects conducted by PFN were the annual Peterborough Christmas Bird Count, Petroglyphs Bird Count, Petroglyphs Butterfly Count, continuing documentation of flora and fauna of Harper Park, and Orchid Diary. This year the PFN co-sponsored the Fenelon Falls Butterfly Count in cooperation with the Kawartha Field Naturalists.

Two students enrolled in the Conservation Biology Course at Trent University undertook placements with the PFN as part of their course requirements. Karina Bissonnette is preparing a summary of the reptiles and amphibians of the County and Shelby Cohen is updating information on mammals of Peterborough.

**COMMUNITIY INITATIVES**

**The Harper Park Stewardship – Lynn Smith**

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

Some 2020 highlights:

* The first Harper Creek Subwatershed Study (SWS) meeting was held and members from the PFN attended. The purpose of the SWS is to create a detailed inventory of the water resource system, including the natural heritage features, functions and cultural values of the Harper Creek Subwatershed. The SWS will recommend a land use plan, detailed management strategy, and stormwater management strategy that will satisfy the policy direction of the Provincial Policy statement, the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and the city of Peterborough Official Plan. Further meetings will continue in 2021 with a couple of events to inform the Public.
* Jacob Bowman, a student at Trent University, and active naturalist and researcher in the Harper Creek watershed reported Harper Creek’s first Northern Spring Amphipod, Gammarus pseudolimnaeus.
* Congratulations to Jacob Bowman for his success at the Youth Science Canada Online Fair for his research project on climate change implications for the urban brook trout in Harper Creek.
* To date 141 species of birds were reported to ebird.org and 320 species of flora & fauna were reported to iNaturalist.org. We encourage members to continue to inventory in Harper Park. The data is valuable as the City begins to develop a management plan for the Harper Creek watershed.

**Ecology Park Bird Feeders -- JB Jaboor, Kathryn Sheridan**

The three bird feeders at Ecology Park were filled weekly by PFN volunteers with Black Oilseed for the months of January to March, November and December.

**Municipal Planning Issues**

The PFN participated on two committees involved in the new City of Peterborough Official Plan and have two representatives on the Harper Creek Subwatershed Study. The PFN participated in the Trent University Lands Study including meeting with the consultants. The PFN supported initiatives taken by Ontario Nature and others to object to Provincial reduction of protection of Natural Areas.

**PROMOTION**

Unfortunately the normal shows and displays attended by PFN were not held in 2020 due to Covid-19. Plans to upgrade the PFN display boards were initiated. The PFN was mentioned periodically in the ‘Northcrest’ and ‘Changing Seasons’ columns in the Peterborough Examiner along with other articles in the newspaper.

**PFN AWARDS**

The Lola Leach Award was awarded to Paul Elliott at the 2020 Annual Meeting. Certificates of Appreciation were also awarded to Jacob Bowman, Dr. James Schaefer, McLean Smith, Lesley Hale, Matthew Tobey, Monica Fromberger, Milda Bax and Susan Chow.

**2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

President – Dylan Radcliffe (Jan to March)

Rene Gareau (March to December)

Vice –President -- Rene Gareau (Jan to March)

Past President – Ted Vale

Secretary – Martin Parker

Treasurer – Ted Vale

Directors – Philip Shaw, Reem Ali, Sue Paradisis, Marie Duchesneau, Steve Paul, Cathy Douglas, Lynn Smith, Marilyn Hubley

**VOLUNTEERS**

**Members Meetings**

Coordinator – Marie Duchesneau & Philip Shaw

Speakers – Noel Alfonso, Erin Keon, Ed Addison, Rodney Fuentes, Sonya Richmond, Sean Morton, Jennifer Baici, Cathy Merriman.

Zoom Coordination -- Reem Ali

**Outings**

Coordinator – Sue Paradisis

Leaders – Donald McLeod, Sue Paradisis, Martin Parker, Steve Paul, Cathy Douglas, Matthew Tobey, Brian Wales, Sonya Richmond, Sean Morton, Kathy Parker, Lynn Smith, Patricia Wilson, Chris Risley.

**The Orchid**

Editor – Kathryn Sheridan

Contributors: Steve Paul, Sue Paradisis, Jim Young, Rene Gareau,, Ontario Nature, Marilyn Hubley, Ken McKeen, Martin Parker, Reem Ali, Basil Conlin, Jay Fitzsimmons, Blake Shaw, Patricia Swales, Colin Jones, Anda Rungis, Drew Monkman, Carrie Sadowski, Dave Ellis, Sheena Symington, Murray Arthur Palmer, Marilyn Freeman, Ken Lyon, Enid Mallory, Donald McLeod, Susan Weaver, Philip Shaw, Cathy Douglas, Roger Jones, Dave Milsom, Heidi St. Thomas, Matthew Tobey, Lynn Smith, Maxwell Matchim, Dylan Radcliffe, Marie Duchesneau, Marla Williams, Kathryn Sheridan, Gemma Arvin, Jerry Ball, Daniel Swales, Paul Elliott, Birha Farooqi, Ruth Davenport, Mary Kate Whibbs, Ted Vale, Joanne Sutherland, Karina Bissonnette, Victoria Reimer, Steve Kerr, Karen Vanderwolf, Jim Cashmore, Jacey Moore, Aimee O’Reilly.

Orchid Mailing – Mary Thomas, James Young

**Junior Field Naturalists**

Coordinator – Jay Fitzsimmons, Lara Griffin, Erica Barkley, and Stephanie Collins

**Digital Communications**

Webmaster -- Marilyn Hubley and Chris Gooderham

Blog and Facebook Postings – Marilyn Hubley

**Nature Studies**

Orchid Diary – Martin Parker and many contributors.

Peterborough Christmas Bird Count – Martin Parker, compiler and 96 participants.

Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count – Colin Jones, compiler and 36 participants.

Petroglyphs Butterfly Count – Jerry Ball, compiler and 20 observers

Fenelon Falls Butterfly Count -- Martin Parker, compiler and 14 observers

Bird Feeders at Ecology Park – JB Jaboor, Kathryn Sheridan

Harper Park Inventory and Monitoring – many members

**Community Advocacy**

City of Peterborough Official Plan Committee – Martin Parker

Kawartha Naturally Connected – vacant

**Promotion (Display & Book Sales)**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the shows and displays normally attended by the PFN were cancelled.

**Partnerships**

Ontario Nature Spring and Fall Regional Meetings -- Steve Paul

Kawartha Land Trust – field outing destinations and donation towards the purchase of Christie Bentham Property

Nature Conservancy of Canada -- donation towards purchase of Cedarhurst Alvar within the Carden Alvar

Kawartha Naturally Connected -- participating organization

Bird Friendly Peterborough Initiative -- Reem Ali. A collaborative initiative of several local organizations

Camp Kawartha – use of facilities for PFN members and Board meeting, Junior PFN events and the Sadler Memorial Library

Ecology Park, Peterborough Green-up – bird feeders location

Peterborough Regional Science Fair – awards and support

Trent University – newsletter reproduction, student projects and grants, published paper

FMZ17 Fisheries Advisory Council – Lynn Smith and Phil Shaw

Peterborough Stewardship Council – Phil Shaw

Community Foundation of Greater Peterborough – management of PFN Legacy and PFN Investment Funds

Kawartha Wildlife Centre - donation to gala fundraiser (unfortunately postponed due to Covid)

The Wildlife Society - support for conference (unfortunately postponed due to Covid)

**Donors**

Many members gave a donation to the Club through the year including items for the bucket draw and the silent auction at the Annual Meeting. The PFN activated its Canada Helps portal for accepting donation and purchase of annual meeting tickets and memberships in November 2019 with 2020 being the first full year this site was active.