



# The Orchid

**Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists**

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

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Regular monthly meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wed. of the month in the downstairs auditorium of the Peterborough Public Library at 345 Aylmer Street N.

## COMING EVENTS

<p>Wednesday          April          2<sup>nd</sup></p> <p>7 - 9 p.m.</p> <p>Ptbo Public          Library</p>	<p><b>Peterborough Green-Up's Urban Forestry Program Speaker Series:          "Sustaining the Urban Forest: Starting a Neighbourhood Urban Forest Stewardship Program"</b></p> <p>Andy Kenney from the University of Toronto Forestry Dept. will provide a local look at community initiatives and urban forestry policies. As a series sponsor, the Peterborough Field Naturalists will participate in this panel discussion.</p> <p>Location: Peterborough Public Library</p> <p><b>Note: this session will replace the PFN Monthly Meeting for April - please be aware that there will <u>not</u> be a PFN members meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>.</b></p>
<p>Sunday          April          6<sup>th</sup></p> <p>2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Trent          University          (north lot)</p>	<p><b>Otonabee River-bank Forest and Woodland - Trent Nature Areas Walk</b></p> <p>Stroll along the west bank of the Otonabee River between the dams at lock 22 and 23. See the 150 year old sugar maples, beech and black cherry trees in a setting that is reminiscent of the "interminable forest" that Susanna Moodie walked through to get from Peterborough to Dummer ("the last clearing in the world"). Learn to identify trees and shrubs in their winter condition. Bring magnifying glass. Wear footwear appropriate for the weather conditions. The walk will last from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Trip Leader: Roger Jones.</p> <p>Meeting Location: Meet at 2.30 pm. at the North Parking Lot, west bank Symons Campus, Trent University, at the east end of Woodland Drive.</p>
<p>Saturday          April          12<sup>th</sup></p> <p>9:30 a.m. -          12:00 noon</p> <p>Marshland          Centre</p>	<p><b>Marsh Monitoring Program Workshop</b></p> <p>This workshop is being held as a follow-up to the March 12<sup>th</sup> PFN talk.</p> <p><u>Location:</u> Marshland Centre (indoor session), Imagine the Marsh (outdoor session)</p> <p>For those who have signed up to participate in this program, the workshop will include where to set up a survey route, how to use the field forms, tips on identifying the birds and frogs, when and how to do the surveys and help with GPS units and maps. The location for the workshop is to be determined but will be a combination of an indoor workshop and outdoor marsh exercise. The outdoor portion will run through an actual survey station protocol and will clarify the type of marsh habitat required for a survey.</p> <p>Contact Meredith (<a href="mailto:mcarter@otonabee.com">mcarter@otonabee.com</a>) or Chris Ellingwood (<a href="mailto:jce@niblettenvironmental.on.ca">jce@niblettenvironmental.on.ca</a>) for more details.</p>

## COMING EVENTS continued

<p>April 13th to June 15th</p> <p>8:00 a.m.</p> <p>Ptbo Zoo Parking Lot</p> 	<p><b>Spring Sunday Morning Bird Walks</b></p> <p>Sunday morning bird walks return for another season! These “walks” last about 2 hours and will be held every Sunday from April 13<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup>. From novice to expert, these outings are sure to please anyone interested in seeing, hearing and learning about local birds. Meet in the parking lot of the Peterborough Zoo on Water Street at 8:00 am and we will carpool from there. Bring some change to contribute for gas and don't forget your binoculars! The scheduled bird walk leaders are:</p> <p><b>April 13</b> – Jerry Ball                      <b>April 20</b> – Tony Bigg <b>April 27</b> – TBD                                <b>May 4</b> – Tony Bigg <b>May 11</b> – TBD                                 <b>May 18</b> – Martha Allen and Michael Butler <b>May 25</b> – Jerry Ball – SPECIAL OUTING TO CARDEN PLAIN see below for details (Tentative date: date will be confirmed in the next Orchid) <b>June 1</b> – Drew Monkman <b>June 8</b> – John Bottomley – morning bird walk, followed by the <b>PFN Potluck Picnic</b> More information about the PFN Potluck Picnic will be included in the next Orchid. <b>June 15</b> – <b>Peterborough Museum Property Breeding Bird Survey</b> – Mike McMurtry The focus of this outing will be on birds; however, we may also list some plants and other fauna. More information about this survey will be included in the next Orchid.</p>
<p>Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup></p> <p>7:30 p.m.</p> <p>Ptbo Public Library</p>	<p><b>PFN Monthly Meeting: Intrigue in Natural History</b></p> <p>Dr. Tom Hutchinson will talk about intrigue in natural history. In particular, he will discuss the Rhum Affair, a case of botanical fraud, which reads like a modern detective thriller. The detective is Peter Raven, a noted Classics Scholar at Cambridge University with a passion for the British Flora and the villain, a noted British Professor of Botany who allegedly arranged evidence by planting living plants out of place to support his theory about the last glaciation in Europe. Hang on to your seats!</p>
<p>Tentative Date: May 25<sup>th</sup></p> <p>7:00 a.m.</p> <p>Sobey's parking lot by Canadian Tire, Lansdowne St.</p>	<p><b>Carden Plain Important Bird Area (IBA)</b></p> <p>Guided by Jerry Ball, we will head out to the Carden Plain, a rare alvar habitat that supports an abundance of rare grassland birds. The Carden Plain is a popular destination for bird, butterfly, and plant watchers alike. At only 65 km from Peterborough, it offers globally rare alvar habitat supporting an abundance of grassland birds, including the endangered Loggerhead Shrike and the rare Golden-wing Warbler plus Osprey, Black Terns, Sedge Wrens, Yellow Rails, Upland Sandpipers, Blues Birds, Eastern Towhees, and Brown Thrashers. This is an all day trip, please bring a lunch, water and your binoculars! Meet at Sobey's parking lot on Lansdowne Street at 7am on May 25th.</p>

## JUNIOR FIELD NATURALISTS

<p>Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup></p> <p>2:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Learn About Alternative Energy</b></p> <p>Guest speaker Sheri Owens will talk to us about alternative energy. We'll make nachos using a solar powered cooker and maybe race electric cars. Meet at Camp Kawartha April 17<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm. Skis can be provided if you don't have your own. See you then! ...Neil</p>
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## OTHER EVENTS of INTEREST

<p>April 1 - 12</p>	<p><b>Stargazing:</b> The Buckhorn Observatory presents "When Galaxies Collide" on clear nights at 8 and 10 p.m. at the Observatory (254 County Rd. 507). Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. Reservations are required. For more information or to reserve, call (705) 657-7718 to reserve a spot.</p>
<p>Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup>  Sunday April 6<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Maplefest:</b> The Norwood Lions Club presents its 7th Annual Maplefest from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Linlor Farm (4th line of Asphodel, south of Cty Rd. 2 between Hastings and Keene). Guests can enjoy pancakes and sausage smothered in fresh maple syrup, taffy, tours, wagon rides, hiking, entertainment, craft demos, hiking trails, and outdoor activities and games. Tickets are \$3; free for those under 12. Food costs extra. For more information (a "sap report" and more,) call (705) 696-3511.</p>
<p>Tuesday April 8<sup>th</sup></p>	<p>The <b>Lakefield and District Horticultural Society</b> hosts its monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Lakefield Marshland Centre (Deyncourt St., Hague Point, Lakefield). Peter Green of the Greenhouse by the River will speak on container gardening. Peter and his staff are responsible for the hanging baskets along the streets of Lakefield. For more information call Norma Walker at (705) 877-1082 or Brenda Ibey at (705) 748-0046.</p>
<p>Saturday April 19<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Community Clean-Up:</b> The Otonabee Conservation Foundation hosts an Earth Day clean-up of Jackson Creek from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. meeting at the Main Entrance / Parking Lot to Jackson Park (Parkhill Rd. and Monaghan Rd., Peterborough). All are welcome to help clean up Jackson Park, the Trans Canada Trail and surrounding areas. Gloves and bags will be provided but participants are asked to bring their own if possible. This vents runs rain or shine. For more information, call (705) 745-5791.</p>
<p>Sunday April 20<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Earth Week Event:</b> The City of Peterborough presents a clean up of Millennium Park and Little Lake from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. meeting at Millennium Park (Water St., Peterborough). Volunteers are invited to help out, and the search is on for qualified scuba divers to join the Adventure Divers team in the Little Lake clean up. For more information call (705) 748-9706.</p>
<p>Saturday April 26<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Green EXPO:</b> The 5th Annual Green EXPO runs 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at the Evinrude Centre (911 Monaghan Rd., Peterborough). The Expo will include exhibits, presenters, wine tasting, and a children's area. Keynote speaker Michael Stadtländer, one of the world's most accomplished chefs, will present on the ardent promotion of local food. The event will also include a School Challenge showcasing what area schools are doing to green their schools, and workshops on greening businesses. Tickets are \$5; free for children under 12. For more information email <a href="mailto:info@greenexpo.ca">info@greenexpo.ca</a> or call (705) 652-5159.</p>
<p>Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Music Day:</b> The Whetung Ojibwa Arts and Crafts Centre hosts a Music Day from 1 - 4 p.m. at the Centre (Curve Lake Reserve, Ontario). All are invited to "shake it up!" at a day set aside for wonderful musical entertainment. Native music ranging from traditional instrumental to contemporary tunes with a native twist will be performed. This is a free event. For more information call (705) 657-3661.</p>

## OTHER EVENTS of INTEREST

<p style="text-align: center;">Ganaraska Hiking Club</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Outings in April</p> <p>Bring a lunch and drink for all weekend hikes unless otherwise noted.</p> <p><a href="http://www.ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca">www.ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca</a></p>	<p><b><u>Saturday, April 5, 8:00am</u> Moderate Hike</b> The Ganaraska Hiking Club hosts an outing to Egan Chutes Provincial Park, meeting at 8 a.m. (note early start) at Riverview Park &amp; Zoo to carpool the approx. 1.5 hr drive. The group plans to hike 3-4 hrs to the spectacular Egan Chutes and Farm along a bush road. There is no fee, and no facilities, at this park. Participants will need boots, lunch, drinks and a camera. For more information call Barry at (705) 743-8163.</p> <p><b><u>Wednesday, April 9, 10:00 am</u> Easy Hike (Kawartha Club)</b> 1.5 - 2 hour walk. Call for details at least one day prior. Contact: Terry 705-799-6941</p> <p><b><u>Sunday, April 13, 10:00 am</u> Moderate Hike (Kawartha Club)</b> Country Roads - A 16 km loop on rail trail and country roads northeast of Omemee. To carpool from Peterborough, meet in parking lot behind A&amp;P, Portage Place Mall at 9:30 am or at 46 Riverview Dr., Omemee at 10:00 am (call for directions). Contact: Terry 705-799-6941</p> <p><b><u>Wednesday, April 16, 10:00 am</u> Easy Hike (Kawartha Club)</b> 1.5 - 2 hour walk. Call for details at least one day prior. Contact: John &amp; Carole 705-295-6543</p> <p><b><u>Wednesday, April 23, 10:00 am</u> Easy Hike (Kawartha Club)</b> 1.5 - 2 hour walk. Call for details at least one day prior. Contact: Doreen 705-742-3268</p> <p><b><u>Sunday, April 27, 10:00 am</u> Moderate Hike (Kawartha &amp; Pine Ridge Clubs)</b> Enniskillen CA &amp; Orono Crown Forest Lands. A morning hike in beautiful Enniskillen CA, then after lunch, drive to Orono Crown Forest Lands for an afternoon hike. To carpool from Peterborough, meet at Canadian Tire parking lot, Landsdowne St. (under sign) at 8:45 am. To carpool from Port Hope, meet at Gilmer's Home Hardware at 9:15 am or meet at Enniskillen CA main parking lot at 10:00 am. Kawartha contact: Rose 705-639-2431. Pine Ridge contact: Michelle 905-579-3925</p> <p><b><u>Wednesday, April 30, 10:00 am</u> Easy Hike (Kawartha Club)</b> 1.5 - 2 hour walk. Call for details at least one day prior. Contact: Lyn or Linda 705-778-7842</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">May 10<sup>th</sup></p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 am - 3 pm</p>	<p><b>North American Native Plant Society (NANPS) Wildflower Sale</b> 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Hwy 7 at Warden, Markham, ON, L3R 9W3 There will be hundreds of native plant species to buy including flowers, shrubs, trees, ferns, vines, grasses and sedges. All plants come from ethical growers approved by NANPS. Also there will be books, free speakers and a green expo. Species list available to view at <a href="http://www.nanps.org">www.nanps.org</a>, members may order in advance. For more information please call 416.631-4438 or e-mail: <a href="mailto:nanps@nanps.org">nanps@nanps.org</a>.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">June 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Carden Nature Festival</b> <i>"Extreme Biodiversity on Your Doorstep"</i> Visit <a href="http://www.CardenGuide.com/Festival">www.CardenGuide.com/Festival</a> for more information.</p>

## Peterborough's Green EXPO, April 26<sup>th</sup>



Peterborough's Green EXPO is celebrating five years of showcasing eco-friendly options for building and everyday living to Peterborough, the county, Central Ontario and beyond. From its beginnings with 22 exhibitors at the Lions Club in East City to filling a hockey pad at the Evinrude Centre, for what will be the third year, the event continues to grow each year in both attendance and participants. Growth from a little over 700 attendees in 2004 to an anticipated 1500 in 2008 demonstrates the public's need for information, services and products that enable them to create a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle for both themselves and future generations.

The types of exhibits that are on display include clothing, building products, diaper services, native plant nurseries, renewable energy technologies, organic food, energy efficient appliances and others.

In addition to the exhibits, scheduled presentations, that take place throughout the day, are sure to offer something for everyone; whatever their interest. Authors and experts in the 'green' field speak to a number of different topics. Talks this year include "green and healthy renovations", "purchasing decisions that reflect our desires for a better, kinder, healthier world", "a youth's take on global warming after seeing first hand the beauty of the far north and why this needs to be protected". Highlighting the day is the Keynote Speaker, Michael Stadtländer, who is an ardent promoter of eating locally grown organic produce. Signing autographs following their talks will be, Leslie Garrett, author of "The Virtuous Consumer" and Michael Stadtländer, author of "The Heaven on Earth Project".

This year will feature an environmental fashion show showcasing companies that are creating beautiful, fashionable clothing using bamboo, organic cotton, hemp or recycled fabrics. Wine and beer sampling will once again be a popular feature of the show. Two new aspects will be Greening your Business Workshops, offered through the Rural Youth Partnership Initiative through COIN, and the Green EXPO School Challenge with displays created by area students depicting what they are doing to green their school or community.

The 5th Annual Green EXPO will take place on Saturday, April 26th from 10 am until 4 pm at the Evinrude Centre, 911 Monaghan Road, Peterborough. For more info, please visit [www.greenexpo.ca](http://www.greenexpo.ca).

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*Pine Grosbeaks, Evening Grosbeaks, and Hairy Woodpecker at a feeder in the Township of North Kawartha. Photograph by Martha Allen, March 9, 2008.*

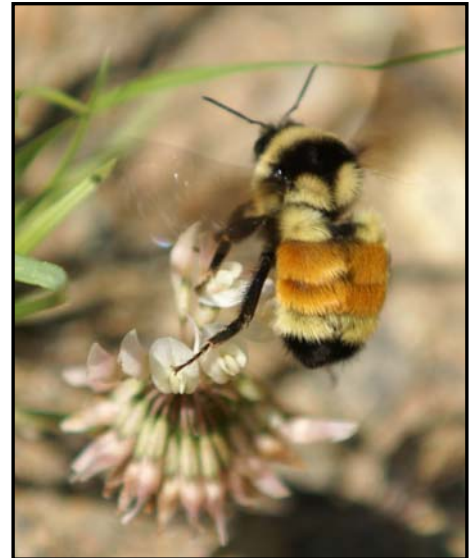
## National Wildlife Week - April 6 to 12, 2008

National Wildlife Week is a program of the Canadian Wildlife Federation, sponsored in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, the Canadian Museum of Nature, Environment Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Parks Canada and Scouts Canada.

NWW is celebrated each year during the week surrounding April 10th, the birthday of Jack Miner, one of the founders of Canada's conservation movement. Proclaimed an act of Parliament in 1947, NWW is a time to celebrate Canada's natural heritage and play an active role in conservation.

This year's theme is:

***Pollinators – from flowers to food to our future***



*Bumblebee on clover. Photo by R. Zeran*

Listen carefully. It can happen under the cover of night or in broad daylight. It can happen in the deep, dark forest or wide, open fields. It is one of the most important biological processes on our planet, yet it remains a mystery to many. Now it's time to expose one of the great secrets in the private lives of plants ... pollination!

Join the Canadian Wildlife Federation and its partners during National Wildlife Week, April 6 to 12, 2008, to pay homage to the age-old process of pollination, and to the pollinators – the host of insects, birds and other wildlife species – that make it happen.

Visit <http://www.nationalwildlifeweek.ca/> for more information about National Wildlife Week, to learn more about this year's theme, to obtain resources for teacher's and students, to find out what you can do to help pollinators, and much more!



*Images from the March 16th JFN outing at Camp Kawartha where Junior Naturalists got a chance to tap maple trees. Photos courtesy of Judy Hyland.*

## Some "Inconvenient Truths" About The Hydroelectric Project on the Otonabee River at Trent University.

by Roger Jones

You may have seen the press release on March 20th, 2008 indicating that Canada's Environment Minister, John Baird will issue an interim licence to Trent Rapids Power Corporation (TRPC) to begin construction of a new eight-megawatt hydroelectric power-generating station along the Trent-Severn Waterway (see [www.trentrapidspowercorp.ca](http://www.trentrapidspowercorp.ca) for details). It will be in the north end of the city. It is a massive project that will cause brutal damage to the environment. The Peterborough Lift-Lock project involved excavating 50,000 cubic metres of rock, shale and overburden. The TRPC project will involve excavating three times as much, 150,000 cubic metres of similar material to create the 1.1 km long canal and powerhouse. More than 6,000 truck loads of excavated material will be taken off site (over 6,000 return-trips for the trucks).

Unbelievably, City Council is not getting involved in the decision making process for this project because the square footage of the power station is less than the amount that triggers the need for their approval of a site plan. All that is needed for this massive project to go ahead is a City planner's acceptance of the Site Plan.

However TRPC has warned that their project threatens the long-term health of the Otonabee River. Amazingly though, and an interim licence for TRPC to divert water into a power canal that will bypass the section of the river between the dams at Locks 22 and 23 is likely to be issued by the Federal Ministry of the Environment.

This project is not the usual run-of-the-river hydroelectric generating project where water passes through a power station and then immediately back into the river so that there is very little, if any impact on the river. This project is highly unusual in that it involves diverting water around two dams leaving a 1 km long

stretch of river in which the natural river flow is much reduced. TRPC does not discuss any similar hydroelectric projects to justify this design for their project.

The environmental consultants for TRPC, Niblett Environmental Associates Inc., warn that:

*"A decrease in water velocity will likely lead to an increase in primary production in this section of the river resulting in more algae and aquatic macrophytes"* (EASR Appendix J 4.3 Effects on Fish and Fish Habitat p. 47)

Additionally they warn that::

*"The slower flows may allow gulls, Canada geese and mallards to occupy this area during summer months"* (EASR Appendix J 4.4.6 -Other Wildlife page 61).

Then the dire warning to TRPC from the environmental consultant is that:

*"The main longer term concern for water quality relates to the potential for increases in noxious populations of algae and benthos in the area between the dams at Locks 22 and 23 and the monitoring of Chlorophyll-a is recommended"* (EASR Appendix J, part 5.0 Mitigation and Monitoring Section 5.1 Aquatic - Water Quality pages 73-74)

The inference from these warnings is that the combination of the slower flow in the reach of the river, along with increased nutrient input from gulls, Canada geese and mallards will support the potential for increases in noxious populations of algae and benthos.

The environmental consultants warning to TRPC refers to planktonic blue-green algae and to blue-green algae that grow attached to rocks and the river bottom where suitable habitat exists i.e a rocky bottom - provided there is enough light for growth, as for example in shallow areas of the reach of the Otonabee River between the Lock 22 and 23 dams.

TRPC and Peterborough Utilities Inc (PUI, 50% owner of TRPC), and the City of Peterborough (the only shareholder of PUI), Trent University (who is leasing the land to TRPC), Trent-Severn Waterway and the Federal Government, MPP Jeff Leal and the Liberal Government cannot be oblivious to the threat to the Otonabee River. The warning by environmental consultants specifically hired by TRPC is that the growth of noxious blue-green algae populations is a concern resulting from excavating a 1.1 km long power canal. Why would TRPC ignore the dire warning of their consultants? Is this concern an "Inconvenient Truth" that threatens the huge subsidy to be gathered from us taxpayers - the only reason according to the proponents that the project is profitable? Moreover, surely the first priority of the Trent-Severn Water Authorities, the Government agencies and Trent University should be the long-term health of the Otonabee River not profit for private corporations. Apparently not.

TRPC has not addressed in a plausible way the warning of the long-term threat to the Otonabee River. Instead TRPC is being allowed to undertake, without any scientific justification, a monitoring program. We will tell you if a problem develops, but oops, there is no way that we can fix it.

Monitoring is definitely not MITIGATION.

The only suggestion for mitigation is to flush this section of the river. Flushing would carry these noxious blue-green algae into the heart of Peterborough and into Little Lake, where they would thrive and cause a huge problem to the water quality, to water based recreation and to sport fishing. These noxious algae would also be carried into the Trent Severn Canal leading down to the Lift Lock as well as being carried downstream of Peterborough. Do we really want this to happen?

The municipal water treatment plant may be able to remove toxins produced by these noxious algae from the water supply - but tough luck for other users of water from the Otonabee River. Pets drinking water contaminated with noxious algae

have been known to die. Recreational activities associated with the River would be detrimentally impacted, perhaps banned. Warning signs would have to be posted.

Where is the Precautionary Principle in this issue? Or will the Law of Unintended Consequences prevail? Undoubtedly the private corporation will argue, if this debacle pans out, that it warned the City Council and all involved government agencies that it is not the private corporation's fault. A relatively pristine stretch of river will be lost for the for-seeable future and blue-green algal scums on and around little lake. No a pretty picture.

To top it all, TRPC will be generating just a minimal amount of electrical energy in projected long hot summers when power will really be needed for cooling and refrigerating purposes. Cool off in the river? Not very likely because of contaminated beaches and green scums on the water.

A 2005 press release from the Ministry of Natural Resources states that: "the Ontario Government does not believe that every water power site in the province should be developed for energy purposes". The Ontario Government also says that some undeveloped water power sites should remain undeveloped to meet environmental, natural resource and recreational requirements. This prime, 1.1 km long relatively undisturbed wooded riverside bank of the Otonabee River meets these requirements.

What do our local experts, ORCA, have to say about the EASR project (Appendix L on the TRPC website)? ORCA included as a response to comments from PRPC on Nov 9, 2007:

*"It would also be of benefit to have a "PEER REVIEW" of an updated Assessment to provide checks and balances on some of the interpreted impacts/non-impacts of the proposed development".*

ORCA also went on to say that it had other concerns that included "flooding, erosion, wetlands, channel/watercourse alteration or the conservation of



land".

There is an alternative to excavating a 1.1 km long canal and that is to have a power station associated with each dam. The combined output would be 6.8 Kw, only 1.2 Kw less than the TRPC preferred option of 8 Kw but at tremendously less damage to the terrestrial environment and little, if any impact on the Otonabee River. TRPC will not provide a detailed estimate of the two-power-station costs. Initially TRPC said it would cost 50% more than their preferred option of digging a canal. Now they allege it would be 75% more. Meanwhile, the cost of the 1.1 km long canal option has escalated from \$18 million to \$29 million and is still rising.

If you believe that the number one priority is the long term health of the Otonabee River and if you are concerned about the threat of "potential increases in noxious populations of algae and benthos" to water quality in the Otonabee River, as are the environmental consultants for this project, and agree that an

independent, objective, review by experts of the proposed TRPC project is required then please let the following, or some of the following, know of your concerns. Please copy your email to [RJones@427.cogeco.ca](mailto:RJones@427.cogeco.ca)

Federal Minister of the Environment, John Baird, [bairdj@parl.gc.ca](mailto:bairdj@parl.gc.ca) our local federal MP, Dean del Mastro at [delmad@parl.gc.ca](mailto:delmad@parl.gc.ca), our MPP, Jeff Leal at [jleal.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:jleal.mpp@liberal.ola.org), President BM Patterson, Trent University, [bmpatterson@trentu.ca](mailto:bmpatterson@trentu.ca), the Board of Governors of Trent University, specify that your email is be sent to all member of the Board [secretariat@trentu.ca](mailto:secretariat@trentu.ca), the Mayor of Peterborough and Council Members [mayor@city.peterborough.on.ca](mailto:mayor@city.peterborough.on.ca), [letters@peterboroughexaminer.com](mailto:letters@peterboroughexaminer.com), Peterborough this Week [ltuffin@mykawartha.com](mailto:ltuffin@mykawartha.com), Chancellor of Trent University, Roberta Bondar [info@robertabondar.com](mailto:info@robertabondar.com), Ontario Minister of the Environment [lbrotten.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org](mailto:lbrotten.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org), Ontario Minister of Natural Resources [dcansfield.mpp@liberal.ola.org](mailto:dcansfield.mpp@liberal.ola.org).



*A few fantastic photographs of a Great Grey Owl taken by Don Pettypiece this month! The owl was perched outside of a residential home in the Peterborough area. This is what amateur bird photographers dream about!*



## PETERBOROUGH FIELD NATURALISTS

· P.O. Box 1532 · Peterborough, Ontario · K9J 7H7 ·

Mayor and Members of City Council  
City of Peterborough, City Hall  
500 George St. N., Peterborough, ON, K9H-3R9

12 March 2008

Re: Trent Rapids Hydroelectric Generating Station Project. Need for City Council involvement

Dear Sir or Madam

I read in the *Examiner* that City staff are of the opinion that there will be no need for this project to be considered by City Council as the scale of the building proposed is modest. **I urge you to reject this advice, or position,** and encourage you to become familiar with the project and to become involved in the decision of whether or not to allow it to go forward.

**The reason for this is simple. This project is the largest infrastructure project proposed for this City for many, many, years and quite possibly ever. It is not a project of modest scale as implied by planning staff. The powerhouse proposed is indeed not a large building. The overall project however is massive. A project of this scale requires Council involvement.**

If the canal to be constructed through the woodlot on the west side of the Otonabee were in the City it would stretch from Parkhill Road to City Hall. Its excavation requires moving 150,000 cubic meters of soil and rock. This is three times the amount excavated to construct the Lift-Lock. It is the equivalent of 16,666 large ten-wheel dumper trucks of material. Of this 60,000 cubic meters, 6,666 truck loads, is to be hauled offsite along Woodland Drive and the Lakefield Road. Of the remaining 90,000 cubic meters 40,000 is to be used to construct grassy berms along the canal and 50,000 made into a 100 meter by 100 meter by 5 meter high pile to be left on site.

I note in passing (a) that this project is to take place on lands set aside in current City plans as being for recreation purposes and urban open space and (b) that grassy berms adjacent to water are a paradise for Canada Geese.

There are reasons other than scale why Council needs pay attention to this project. I raise the following.

The first matter concerns the almost **total lack of consideration** in the Environmental Assessment Screening Report (EASR) of the **medium and long-term effects of climate change**. Environment Canada's medium term projection for climate change in the Kawartha Lakes is for shorter, wetter winters and longer, drier summers. Shorter, wetter winters and longer, drier summers will result in a changed flow regime for the Otonabee River. There will be higher than current average flows in late winter and spring followed by a long summer period in which flows are lower than the current average. This situation will impact the proposed development in two ways. Both in our judgment threaten the ongoing viability of the project as proposed.

**The first impact is an enhanced likelihood of the growth of benthic blue-green algae (Cyanophyta) in the by-passed reach between dams 22 and 23.** Increased river water temperatures, increasing river nutrient loads and intermittent but intense summer rainfall events that flush high levels of nutrients into water bodies and large amounts of goose excrement are a perfect storm for the development of benthic algae. In our view such potential impacts to the aquatic ecosystem have not been adequately addressed by the proponents even though a minimum summer flow of 10 cubic meters per second (cm/s) over dam 23 is proposed for the summer months. This I note is not much above half of the lowest summer flows yet recorded.

Benthic algae produce toxins that make water unpotable for both humans and wildlife. As the Peterborough water supply is taken from the Otonabee River three kilometers downstream from Dam 22 we feel the City's water supply is potentially at risk. So too would be wildlife, including fish, pets and persons recreating in the river in the reach between dams 22 and 23 and further downstream at least as far as Little Lake in central Peterborough. Also affected would be the canal section linking the river from above Lock 23 with Little Lake. This section incorporates the historic lift lock, a key hub for TSW tourist activity. Expensive activated carbon filtration would make extracted water potable. Nothing however could be done to get toxins out of the river and canal.

The risk of such events is acknowledged in the EASR. No mitigation measures are proposed. In fact no mitigation is possible for the river in the case of benthic algae blooms which result in the river bed being covered by a thick layer of firmly attached algal mats. Rather the report recommends a five year monitoring program. That such outbreaks are not uncommon is demonstrated by events in the Province of Québec. Cyanophyta outbreaks posed a serious threat to Québec's lakes and rivers in 2007 with over 170 outbreaks; up from just over 40 in 2004. For example the 12,000 residents and businesses of Cowansville could not use the municipal water supply for several weeks during the past summer. The only way to ensure such events do not occur is to allow for the full flow of the river to by-pass the power canal in periods where the risks of outbreaks are high. This of course will result in reduced annual power output throwing into question the viability of the proposed development.

**City Council should not play a game of Russian Roulette with the river.**

**The second impact of a changed flow regime concerns the amount of water that will be available for power generation in the five dry 'summer' months.** Current average flows in these five months range from a low of 33cm/s to 58cm/s. Historic low flows for these months range from 16cm/s to 19cm/s. Given the expectation of drier summers and the requirement to have a minimum flow of 10cm/s in the river during the dry season there will be little if any water available for power generation in the summer months whether or not there is a high risk of an algae outbreak. This at the time of year when power demand is at its highest! Given the marginal economics of the project under more more generous flow assumptions we question the long-term economic viability of the project.

We note in passing that the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority (ORCA) expressed, on 09 November 2007, concern with the findings of the EASR in the following terms.

"These are ORCA's natural heritage comments and should not be construed as ORCA's only concerns which include flooding, erosion, wetlands, channel/watercourse alteration or the conservation of land "

Their concern was such that they recommended the following.

"It would also be of benefit to have a "Peer Review" of an updated Assessment to provide checks and balances on some of the interpreted impacts/non-impacts of the proposed development".

Such a vetting is no longer possible. ORCA's position does indicate however a concern with the adequacy of the EASR. We would have been far happier had a full Environmental Assessment been conducted rather than the much less rigorous Screening Report.

To close we wish to suggest that no decision regarding the development be made by City Council until the Federal Government receive the recommendations of the Panel on the Future of Trent Severn Waterway (TSW). These we believe will be in the hand of Minister Baird early next month. We strongly suggest that any decision by Council regarding approval be consistent with the directions recommended by this panel. We also suggest that any decision be supportive of the Species at Risk (SAR) initiative of the TSW.

As a postscript we draw your attention to the recently constituted Source Water Protection Committee for the Trent Conservation Coalition Source Protection Region. This operates under Provincial jurisdiction. This Committee, as you maybe aware, is charged with identifying potential risks to water quality and supply in the Peterborough region. We strongly recommend that an opportunity be provided this Committee to consider the consequences for the City's water supply, both short and long-term, of the proposed TRPC project before Council makes its decision?

With regard to the above initiatives we believe the public expects all levels of government to work together to ensure the continued ecological integrity and productive use of the Otonabee River in particular and the TSW in general.

We look forward to your decisions on the above matter.

Yours Sincerely



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cc. Paul Ayotte, Mayor, City of Peterborough  
Dean DelMastro M.P.  
Jacques Haché, Director, Real Property, MoE  
Jeff Leal M.P.P.  
Terry Low, Chair, Board of Directors, ORCA  
Caroline Schultz, Executive Director, Ontario Nature



*The* **ORCHID DIARY** for 25 February - 29 March 2008

Compiled by Tony Bigg, 652-7541, [tanddbigg@sympatico.ca](mailto:tanddbigg@sympatico.ca)

Despite the heavy snow cover the spring migration has begun

- Feb 25 Jerry Ball saw an adult **Bald Eagle** at Lock 25 and an immature **Bald Eagle** near the 'bus barns' on the Otonabee River. He also had a female **Bufflehead** above Lock 25.
- Feb 29 Little Lake produced five male **Redheads** and a **Great Black-backed Gull** for Jerry Ball. Above lock 24 he saw two more immature **Bald Eagles**.
- Mar 02 Maureen Smith had a **Golden-crowned Kinglet** at her house in Warsaw. Forty-eight **Bohemian Waxwings** at Lock 23 and a **River Otter** at Lock 25 were seen by Jerry Ball
- Mar 03 Jerry Ball found a **Cooper's Hawk** on the 5th Line of Smith, an adult **Bald Eagle** on Lake Katchewanooka at the bottom of Stenner Rd, and five **Redheads** on Little Lake. The latter were also reported by Ken Rumble.
- Mar 04 Erica Nol watched four male and four female **Common Goldeneyes** on the Otonabee River by the Trent University campus. Everett Hanna listened to his first calling **Mourning Doves** of the year.
- Mar 06 A total of sixteen **Horned Larks** were seen by Jerry Ball in four small flocks on Cty Rd 2, along with about a hundred **Snow Buntings** in two flocks. By the 'bus barns' on the Otonabee River Jerry also had two male **Wood Ducks** and one immature **Bald Eagle**.
- Mar 07 Scott McKinlay had an early male **Red-winged Blackbird** at his feeder in Cavan, and four or five **American Robins** were calling in the vicinity of his house. As he watched, a group of 12 **Bohemian Waxwings** joined some of the Robins in a crabapple tree. Tony Bigg watched a **Pied-billed Grebe** on the Otonabee River just below Lock 25.
- Mar 11 On Young's Street in the Youngstown subdivision in Ennismore, Marilyn Emery watched an **Eastern Screech Owl** catch a **Northern Cardinal** in mid-air and bring it to her back deck and start to consume the bird. Not wishing to watch she chased the owl into a nearby cedar hedge where it continued its meal.
- Mar 13 About 250 **Bohemian Waxwings** were seen by Tony Bigg just south of the bridge in Lakefield. He also saw a **Pied-billed Grebe** below and a sub-adult **Bald Eagle** (head turning white) above Lock 24.
- Mar 14 Jerry Ball had two **Horned Grebes** and a **Pied-billed Grebe** on Little Lake, a pair of **Hooded Mergansers** at Campbelltown near Rice Lake, and 23 **Bohemian Waxwings** on Atchinson Rd south of the airport. Ken Rumble added many **Hooded Mergansers and Common Goldeneyes, a Greater Scaup** and two **Buffleheads** to Jerry's sightings on Little Lake. He also had a **Pileated Woodpecker** and **American Crows** carrying nesting material.
- Mar 15 Erica Nol heard a **Merlin** calling from the trees along Gilmour Street in Peterborough. There was also a strange looking (leucositic) **Northern Cardinal** visiting her feeder. It was generally pale white/grey over most of its body but had a deep red bill, black face/bib, olive wings and pink/red wash on the head and breast. It tried repeatedly to sing and feed in the yard only to be chased away by the resident male. Jerry Ball reports a **Red-winged Blackbird** on River Rd north of Trent University, and a **Ring-necked Duck** on Little Lake
- Mar 16 Ken Rumble saw a **Northern Shrike** by Gannons Narrows and two **Bald Eagles** in Buckhorn. The number of **Ring-necked Ducks**, seen by Jerry Ball on Little Lake, increased to eight
- Mar 17 Little Lake produced 15 **Ring-necked Ducks** and a **Greater Scaup** for Jerry Ball. The year's first **Turkey Vulture** was reported from Edgewood Drive in the west end of Peterborough, roosting in a row of Norway spruces.
- Mar 18 Ben Walters reports his first **Turkey Vulture** for this year, hovering very low in a hail storm over the Hwy 115/Asburnham Rd junction. Toni Sinclair had five **American Robins** in Ennismore.
- Mar 20 Toni Sinclair saw her first **Turkey Vulture** in Ennismore.
- Mar 22 The resident **Merlin** has returned to 6 Foot Bay Rd, Upper Buckhorn Lake reports Toni Sinclair
- Mar 23 Drew Monkman saw two **Common Grackles** on Wallis Drive and another on George Street. In Little Lake Cemetery he heard a **Song Sparrow** singing. Tony Bigg had three **Common Grackles** fly over the road in Lakefield.

- Mar 24 Ken Rumble saw **Ring-necked Ducks, Common Mergansers, Buffleheads, Hooded Mergansers** and **Common Goldeneyes** on Little Lake. He also had a **Turkey Vulture** in Cavan. Ben Walters was surprised to find a road-killed **Ring-necked Pheasant** (escapée?) on Hwy 28 south of South Monaghan at Squirrel Creek. He also found a **Glaucous Gull** on the ice below the Bensfort Bridge, and further south on Cty Rd 2 he saw a male **American Kestrel** and a female **Northern Harrier**. Erica Nol was alerted by mobbing chickadees to the presence of a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** on Gilmour St in Peterborough. Tony Bigg had two **Common Redpolls** at his feeder.
- Mar 25 Tony Bigg saw a **Great Blue Heron** and a **Northern Shrike** flying alongside the Lakefield Marsh. **Red-winged Blackbirds** were spread out all around the marsh giving their territorial calls. At his feeder in Lakefield he had a mixed flock of **Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles** and **Brown-headed Cowbirds**.
- Mar 26 Martha and Michael Butler have about 30 **Evening Grosbeaks** visiting their feeders in the company of **Red-winged Blackbirds** and **Common Grackles**. They also found a **Red-shouldered Hawk** within a known breeding territory, and a **Turkey Vulture** flying over Burleigh Falls. Drew Monkman reports a **Great Gray Owl** present on Burnham Line near the Old Norwood Rd. It has been around for at least five days, and is probably the first reported in the Kawarthas this winter/spring.
- Mar 27 Chris Risley saw a **Killdeer** and a **Turkey Vulture** in the west end of Peterborough. Tony Bigg also saw a **Killdeer** from the Old Norwood Rd just east of Burnham Line. He and Jerry Ball also had two **American Woodcocks** heard and seen flying around the junction of the above roads at dusk. Tony also had two **Ruffed Grouse** budding in the tops of poplar trees along Burnham Line, and 15 **Wild Turkeys** in a garden on the same road. The males were displaying. He also saw a pair of **American Wigeon** and three **Pied-billed Grebes** on the Otonabee River below Lakefield. On Yankee Line west of Bridgenorth, Robin McKinley had a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** in a spruce tree by her window, three **Red-shouldered Hawks** in a tree at the back of her yard, a **Red-bellied Woodpecker** coming to her suet, and to top it all off, has had a **Gray Wolf** in her yard. Ben Walters saw two **Eastern Meadowlarks** in the snow on Bartlett Rd off Hwy 28. Two **American Kestrels** were in the vicinity.
- Mar 28 Ken Rumble saw a **Beaver** in Little Lake, and had an **American Kestrel** and a **Northern Harrier** on Moncrief Line near Hwy 28. Tony Bigg found a freshly killed **Eastern Screech Owl** on Division Rd just east of Hwy 28. He also saw a **River Otter** on the ice by Lock 23, an immature **Bald Eagle** by Lock 25, and another in a white pine on the island behind the Beer Store in Lakefield.
- Mar 29 Myles Falconer heard a **Song Sparrow** singing on the Trent University campus by River Rd. Drew Monkman reported particularly high numbers of ducks on Little Lake, at least 150 **Hooded Mergansers**, 150 **Ring-necked Ducks**, 100 **Common Mergansers**, 50 **Common Goldeneyes**, and 30 **Buffleheads**.

**Deadline for submissions for the May Orchid: Friday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

Send all submissions to: Rebecca Zeran, P.O. Box 345, Bridgenorth, ON, K0L 1H0,  
or via e-mail to: [rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca](mailto:rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca)



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Book Sales	Anne Storey		743-0345
FON Rep	Rhea Bringeman		742-1035
Orchid Diary	Tony Bigg	tanddbigg@sympatico.ca	652-7541
Orchid Mailout	Bob Quinn		
JFN Trip Leader	Neil Fortin		



*Eastern Screech Owl outside a window in Ennismore on February 29<sup>th</sup>. Photo courtesy of Marilyn Emery.*

# MEMBERSHIP

Memberships may be obtained at the monthly meeting or by mailing a copy of the application form below to:  
Don Pettypiece, 18 Parkview Dr, Peterborough, Ontario, K9H 5M6

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Type of Membership and Fee Schedule (2008) – Please make cheques payable to: Peterborough Field Naturalists**

- 1. ( ) Student (September through to April) \$15
- 2. ( ) Single (1 adult or 1 child\*) \$25

\*Membership in the PFN automatically includes membership in the Junior Naturalists

- 3. ( ) Family (couple or family with children) \$30



Please give the names and ages of the children you wish to be enrolled in PFN Junior Naturalists programs:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ age \_\_\_\_\_

**Main Interests** (Tick only 3):

- (a) Birds \_\_\_\_\_ (b) Butterflies/Insects \_\_\_\_\_ (c) Wildflowers/Trees/ Shrubs \_\_\_\_\_ (d) Astronomy \_\_\_\_\_ (e) Aquatic Life \_\_\_\_\_
- (f) Geology \_\_\_\_\_ (g) Field Trips \_\_\_\_\_ (h) Hiking \_\_\_\_\_ (i) Conservation \_\_\_\_\_
- (j) Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

I (name \_\_\_\_\_) am knowledgeable in the following area(s) \_\_\_\_\_ and would be prepared to: ( ) lead an outdoor session, ( ) give an indoor presentation, ( ) prepare an article for *The Orchid*

I am interested in the following:

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

**Age groups**

This information is optional but helps us to understand the needs of our membership. If yours is a family membership, please check for each adult. Under 20 ( ), 20-24 ( ), 25-29 ( ), 30-34 ( ), 35-39 ( ), 40-44 ( ), 45-49 ( ), 50-54 ( ), 55-59 ( ), 60-64 ( ), 65-69 ( ), 70-79 ( ), 80 & over ( ).

**Comments**

We are always looking for ways to improve the club. Please attach a separate sheet listing any ideas that you may have.

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

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_