



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 2nd Wed. of the month in the downstairs auditorium of the Peterborough Public Library at 345 Aylmer Street N.

COMING EVENTS

<p>Wednesday May 10 7:30 pm</p> <p>Ptbo Public Library</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: "Biology and Behaviour of Steller Sea Lions" Steller sea lions range throughout the North Pacific and have experienced an 80% population decline in the past 30 years. Mystery and controversy surround Steller sea lions as the cause of this dramatic decline remains unclear. These large marine mammals are quite skittish and have quite distinctive behavioural traits. Laura Kucey (P.F.N.) will share some of her experiences living and conducting Steller sea lion research observations on remote islands in the North Pacific over the course of summer and winter months.</p>
<p>Sunday May 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th 8:00 am</p>	 <p>Sunday Morning Bird Walks: May 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th, 8:00 am Spring is here, come out and join the Sunday Morning Bird Walk! These 'walks' last about 2 hours and are sure to please novice and expert birders alike with good opportunities to hear and see interesting local birds in different locations each week. 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!</p>
<p>Sunday May 14 8:00 am</p>	<p>Trip to Peter's Wood Lead by Bill McCord, this beautiful walk will be highlighted by spring wildflowers. Please meet at Roger's Cover at 8:00 am. Bring a lunch if you like.</p>

COMING EVENTS continued...

<p>Sunday May 28 7:00 am</p>	<p>Trip to the Carden Plain Important Bird Area (IBA) 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 kilometres from Peterborough, it is home the endangered Loggerhead Shrike, the rare Goldenwing Warbler, Osprey, Black Terns, Sedge Wrens, Yellow Rails, Upland Sandpipers, Blue Birds, Eastern Towhees and Brown Thrashers. For more information on the Carden Plain IBA, visit www.cardenplainimportantbirdarea.com. Meet in the Sobey's parking lot on Lansdowne St. at 7:00 a.m. Bring your binoculars and a lunch.</p>
<p>Wednesday June 14 7:30 pm</p> <p>Ptbo Public Library</p>	<p>Monthly Meeting: Large Woodlands Conservation Cooperative Danielle Tassie, coordinator of the Large Woodlands Conservation Cooperative, will present on the work of this landowner stewardship organization. The LWCC was created to provide stewardship information to local woodlot owners, whose properties make up large forests in and around the Kawarthas. The Peterborough Field Naturalists are a vital partner in this project. Danielle will update the PFN on the history of the group, why it was formed, and how their outreach program is going. There will also be a field trip, to a local woodlot, the following weekend (details TBA).</p>

BAILLIE BIRDATHON

Want to have a lot of fun and help birds and nature at the same time? Do a Birdathon this May! It's challenging, exhilarating, and - beware - addictive! Birdathoners just can't help coming back for more, year after year!



More than 7,000 people from across Canada (and from several countries around the world) participate in and/or sponsor Birdathon in May of every year. During a 24-hour period in May, they attempt to find as many bird species as they can, sponsored at a flat rate, or on a per-species basis. Birders can designate a favourite conservation organization to receive a portion of the funds they raise. Bird observatories can also be designated as recipients of fund raising.

To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Baillie Birdathon, a special commemorative t-shirt was designed by Ron Ridout (Birdathon Coordinator for more than 10 years). While the Baillie Birdathon remains a critical source of funds for bird conservation, the event has always been about people appreciating birds.

To find out more about Birdathon, download this year's Birdathon Participant kit or contact us at Bird Studies Canada at **1-888-448-BIRD(2473)**, e-mail birdathon@bsc-eoc.org. To participate, you can register online or print the Registration Form and fax (519-586-3532) or mail to: Baillie Birdathon, Bird Studies Canada, P.O. Box 160,, Port Rowan, ON NOE 1M0

PFN ACTION ALERT:

Meeting to discuss development pressures on the Harper Park Complex / Byersville Creek System

Where: ORCA Meeting Room, Otonabee Conservation, 250 Milroy Drive

When: May 17th at 7 PM (discussion should run for approx. 1 to 2 hours)

Background:

In the mid- 1990s, the PFN provided leadership for the Peterborough Natural Areas Strategy with the participation and support of a number of community organizations including the Eco-Council, City of Peterborough, Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, ORCA and others. The final report from this initiative was released in October 1996. On page 50 of this report, the Harper Park Complex was declared as: "Easily the most ecologically important natural area in the city, the area contains a variety of features that warrant protection." The Strategy then continued to outline an implementation strategy that today, almost ten years later, has not been fully realized.

To the credit of the City, an extensive area bounded by Harper Road, Sir Sandford Fleming Drive, Spillsbury Drive, and Lansdowne Street is currently zoned as Major Open Space under Schedule M "Lansdowne West Secondary Plan Harper Park/Peterborough Business Park" of the Official Plan. Although this is an appropriate step towards providing protection, it is insufficient if development continues to proceed in the fringes of this area in the usual piecemeal fashion where the emphasis has been on economic development with no consideration for ecological sustainability. One only has to consider the extensive housing and institutional developments that are currently flushing significant volumes of stormwater into this sub-watershed with no retention and treatment. It does not take much to realize that additional development in this area that does not incorporate appropriate design standards and best practices will only further increase pressures on this fragile ecosystem.

It is proposed that the PFN, working with other community organizations, should provide leadership in facilitating action towards developing a Greenspace Plan for the entrance to the City – essentially a vision of how development might proceed while affording adequate protection for the natural areas to ensure their long-term health. Rather than arguing against future development we need the support of the City, local landowners, the economic development and tourism sector, and the public. If there has ever been a time to take positive action, it is now as development continues to encroach upon this fragile system (i.e. Costco re-zoning, Peterborough Visitor's Centre). Refer to the map in Figure 1 for an idea of where this area is located and where the anticipated developments will occur.

The PFN invites all interested members to attend this meeting in order to receive additional information and to further discuss our concerns, interests, and future action in this important natural area. For further information, please contact Heather Smith at 749-0304 or via e-mail at: heatheraesmith@yahoo.ca

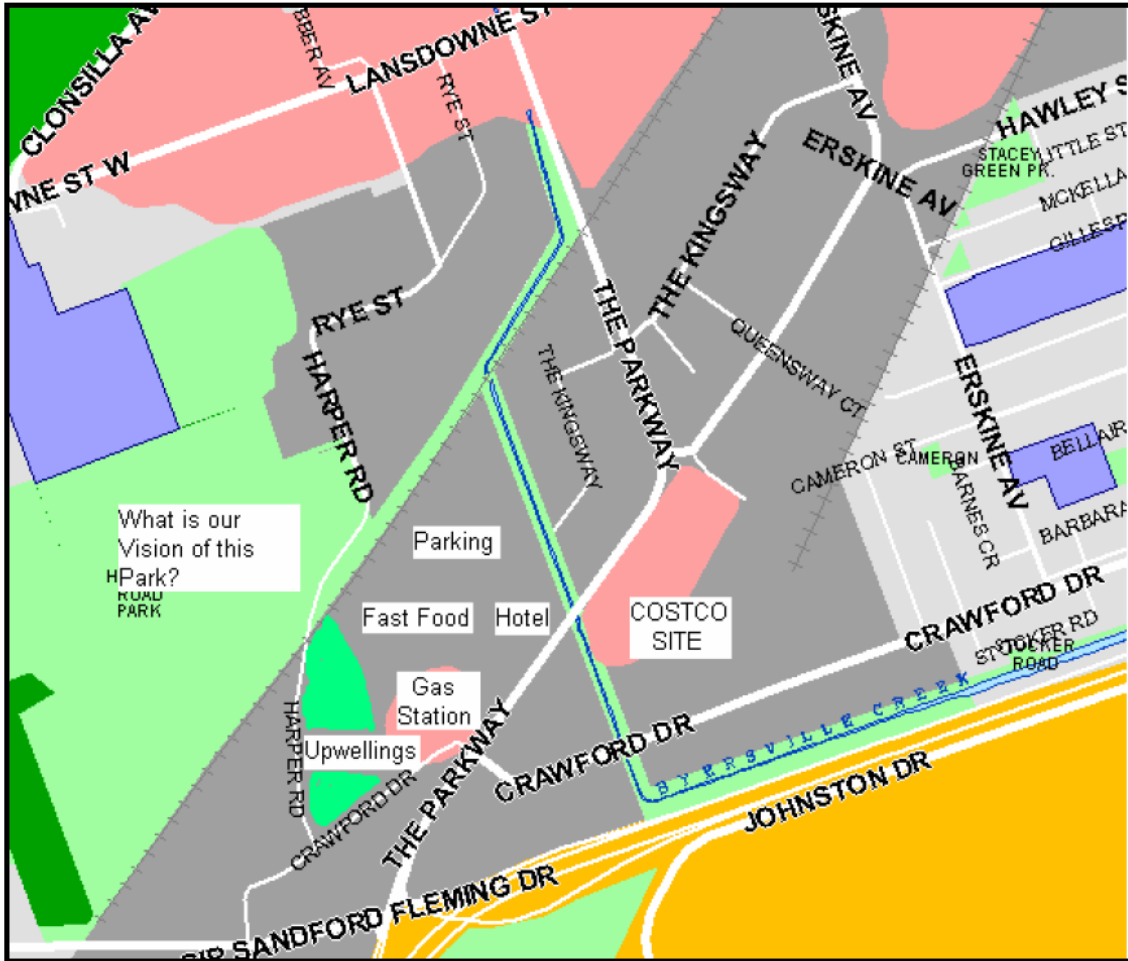


Figure 1: The Parkway Entrance to Peterborough showing expected new developments.

Look for an article in next month's Orchid on last fall's Saw-whet Owl banding program!



Photo by Jerome Petigny

COMMITTEE BUSINESS - PFN Board of Directors Meeting – 5 April 2006

Business Arising: The PFN will donate \$100 to the Peterborough Regional Science Fair this year

Financial: We are in good shape financially at the moment, with \$3900 in our chequing account. The invoice for the insurance payment should be arriving soon.

Membership: We gained 6 new members this month. There were 117 membership mailings for April at a cost of \$33.96.

Projects: The LWCC will have a display at the International Plowing Match near Keene from September 19023, 2006. The LWCC will likely produce promotional fridge magnets. The PFN can also put up a display and the club will ensure that our new brochures are printed in time.

Program: The club will look into organizing a bus trip to Algonquin Park in the fall.

Ontario Nature 2007 AGM: Things are progressing well. It was suggested that each sub-committee present their plans and progress to the larger AGM planning committee, circulating materials via e-mail in advance of the general planning meeting.

Other Business: Proposed developments in the Byersville-Harper Creek Complex were brought to the attention of the board members. The City is considering building a Visitor's Centre at the entrance of the City and allowing the establishment of various commercial developments. A PFN member has raised some concerns related to the integrity of the natural heritage of the area, particularly the wetland and creek system in the area. We will look into the issue further and possibly form a committee of interested PFN members to determine next steps.

LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER

The PFN in association with other partners joined the Peterborough County Stewardship Council in developing the Rainbow Prairie Restoration Site in an attempt to save the tall grass prairie ecosystem in this region. This ecosystem was widespread in this area when the settlers arrived, but had been reduced to less than 1% of it's original area and was in danger of disappearing. The original agreement with the partners was to allow them to obtain seed from the restoration site, at the cost of harvesting, if they wished to develop other restoration sites. The Rainbow Site is now well established and a committee, as per our original agreement, is now needed to oversee the distribution of seed, if requests are received. This committee will be made up of representatives of the original partners. Thus we are looking for a PFN member to join this committee. It will not be an onerous task as it will only meet when seed requests are received. Please contact Peter Mabee at 755-1951 if you are interested.

LARGE WOODLANDS CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE UPDATE

- by Danielle Tassie – Coordinator, Large Woodlands Conservation Cooperative



Winter is the time of year many forestry organizations host their annual general meetings and conferences. One of the benefits of my job as coordinator for the **Large Woodlands Conservation Cooperative** is being able to spend some of February and March traveling to these events, and getting caught up on the work of other organizations. Therefore, my update for this month consists mostly of what others are up to, and what I learned on the forestry conference circuit this year.

The LWCC set up displays at the Lindsay Woodlot Conference, and the Ontario Woodlot Association's (OWA) AGM held in Peterborough. I am always glad for opportunities to meet local woodlot owners face to face, and distribute the outreach materials the LWCC has created and collected over the past year. Then there are the first-rate presentations to enjoy (*and great lunches*).

The day of the Lindsay Woodlot conference brought some nasty icy weather, but it takes more than that to keep hardy foresters at home, and the Moose Lodge was packed. The Ministry of Natural Resource's Ed Czerwinski spoke to a full house about pests and diseases affecting trees in Ontario, and how to identify signs of these problems. Barb Boysen presented on the work of the **Forest Gene Conservation Association**. Barb talked about the importance of planting with native seed, and the process for becoming a **certified seed collector**. (For more information, please see the FGCA's website: www.fgca.net, or call them at (705) 755-3284).

Wade Knight of the Ontario Woodlot Association let woodlot owners know about long awaited changes to the **Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program** (MFTIP). The MFTIP is a tax incentive program that offers a lower tax rate to woodlot owners who have created an ecologically sound forest management plan. You can contact the OWA for more information on this program at (888) 791-1103, www.ont-woodlot-assoc.org.

Wood Turner Martin Groening spoke about using **Burls** as material for his craft "Burls", I learned, are the abnormal growths on trees, resulting from an injury, disease, or sometimes just a genetic irregularity. Members of the **Kawartha Woodturners Guild** had some beautiful examples of "burl art" on display (for photos of these you can visit www.kawarthawoodturners.org). Other topics of the day included the identification and control of invasive species, and rural crime prevention.

Spring was in the air the day of the OWA conference, and the first speaker addressed the economic benefits of conserving our natural ecosystems. The PFN's own Erica Nol talked about her research on **Forest Songbirds**, and how forest fragmentation is having a negative effect on them. Erica is also the co-chair and founding member the LWCC. I learned about Agroforestry (incorporating trees & forestry into farming systems) and the importance of careful logging practices. Biologist Janine Mcleod taught us about **Vernal Pools** (seasonally flooded areas) and the wildlife we can find in them. For more information on this topic, Janine suggests visiting www.ontariovernalpools.org.

The LWCC itself has begun scheduling spring site visits to help recommend and plan restoration and forest management projects with woodlot owners. Our workshop season will soon be up and running. Upcoming workshops topics include **planning and preparing for tree planting**. Keep an eye out in The Orchid for details of events.

Contact the LWCC at: lwcc@trentu.ca; (705)748-1011 ext.5068; www.trentu.ca/org/woodlands

SALAMANDERS OF VERNAL POOLS

- by Janine McLeod

In the last issue I wrote about the definition of Vernal Pools and told you a bit about the Fairy Shrimp and Wood Frogs that need the special habitat that a vernal pool offers. A Vernal Pool acts as the hatchery of the forest. Leaves from the forest plants surrounding the pool provide energy for the ecosystem of the pool as they are a food source for many of the pool inhabitants.

There are 3 species of mole salamanders in this part of Ontario. They all must have access to a temporary woodland pool to be able to breed. They are called mole salamanders because they spend most of their time underground in tunnels and burrows made by small mammals like mice & shrews. They forage for all sorts of invertebrate prey ranging from earthworms and snails and both larval and adult insects. Mole salamanders are secretive and seldom seen but they can make up a huge proportion of the biomass in a forest.

Spotted Salamander



Spotted Salamander, *Ambystoma maculatum*.
Photograph courtesy of Michael J. Oldham, NHIC Archives.

The Spotted Salamander, *Ambystoma maculatum*, is a vernal pool indicator. Like the fairy shrimp, if these are breeding in

your temporary pool then the pool is officially a Vernal Pool. Spotted Salamanders are large, 15 – 20 cm, and have distinct yellow or orange spots, in 2 rows on a dark background. Individual animals can be identified by their unique spot pattern.

On the first warm rainy spring evening the salamanders emerge from the burrows under rocks or logs where they have spent the winter and begin migrating to a vernal pool. They will aim for the pool in which they were born. Some may travel several 100 meters and those that have the greatest distance to travel may take a number nights to get there. The males are the first to begin the trek. The migration begins in mid to late March even when the snow is still on the ground and the vernal pool may still have ice on it. Snow banks, roads and ditches can be tough barriers for them to cross. Some communities close sections of roads on the big migration night.

When the males arrive they enter the water and begin a nuptial dance called a Congress. There may be hundreds of males swimming in elaborate sinuous whorls around each other. The males then deposit pyramid shaped packets of sperm encased in jelly on the pool bottom. These are called spermatophores and they look like little crumbs of white bread on the bottom of the pool. The female will choose a male and pick up his spermatophore by straddling it and taking it up into her cloacal opening or vent. The eggs are fertilized internally. Unused spermatophores will remain littering the pool bottom for several days. Finding these in a vernal pool is good evidence that salamanders are breeding in that location.

The female then lays her eggs in masses surrounded by a jelly. She may produce one to several egg masses each containing a dozen to several hundred eggs. The egg masses are attached to twigs or other supports underwater. After mating has

taken place the adults leave the vernal pool, usually very close to the same location where they entered the a few days earlier.

The time it takes the eggs to hatch is dependent on water temperature. Predation on the embryos can be severe. They are considered food by leeches, caddisfly larvae and spotted turtles.

By late spring larvae are ready to hatch out of the eggs. The salamander larvae are aquatic and have external gills to obtain oxygen from the water. They are voracious predators and begin eating as soon as they hatch. They grow quickly and then undergo metamorphosis to become adult Spotted Salamanders.

Once metamorphosis is complete, (the gills are gone, and they are able to breathe air) the adults will migrate from the Vernal Pool into the surrounding upland woods. This usually takes place in July & August. The emergent salamanders will stay close to the pool and can be found under moist leaves, moss or logs. They continue to grow throughout their adult life although it slows in older animals. Adults can live up to 20 years. After two to five years they will return to the same Vernal Pool to breed, even entering the pool in the very same spot where they left years before. This strong site fidelity can be a big disadvantage if the pool has been destroyed before the next breeding season.

Deciduous forests with Vernal Pools seem to be the optimal habitat for Spotted Salamanders. They like dry, well drained soils with an abundance of leaf litter, woody debris and shrew tunnels.

Blue-spotted Salamander

The Blue-spotted salamander, *Ambystoma laterale*, is smaller than the Spotted, only 10 -13 cm long and a bit chunkier looking. They are marked with flecks of bright blue, grey or white on a dark bluish-black

background. The markings resemble old-fashioned enamel ware. The underside is light grey. These salamanders are explosive breeders, that is, they concentrate their efforts to only a few days, usually in early to mid April in Ontario.



Blue-spotted salamander, *Ambystoma laterale* . Photograph courtesy of Michael J. Oldham, NHIC Archives.

Their mating behavior is different from the Spotted Salamanders. The males will court individual females by mounting and clasping them. They will rub the female with their snout and legs and if she responds he will then step ahead of her and deposit a spermatophore which she will take up into her cloacae.

The eggs are laid in small groups, often in leaf litter at the edge of the pool. The egg mass resembles unset gelatin (the spotted salamander egg mass is much firmer). It takes about 28 days for them to hatch but that depends on the water temperature.

Once the larvae hatch they are eating machines just like the other species. They hover in the pool above the vegetation and feed on many invertebrates including large numbers of mosquito larvae.

Blue-spotted larvae will undergo metamorphosis about 70 days after hatching and will emerge from the pool to

move into the upland forest. They prefer forested areas with well drained soil, lots of available burrows and abundant woody debris. In three to four years they will return to the same pool to breed. Pools with canopy cover and trees close by are the preferred breeding habitat.

Jefferson Salamander

The Jefferson Salamander, *Ambystoma jeffersonianum*, is listed as threatened in Canada and Ontario. It is closely related to the Blue-spotted and the two species often interbreed where their ranges overlap. The Jefferson has less blue flecking than the blue-spotted but hybrids can really become confusing and sometimes only genetic analysis can tell you which is which. Hybrids of these species are always female and, instead of the usual diploid chromosome number, they are often triploid.



Jefferson Salamander, *Ambystoma jeffersonianum*. Photograph courtesy of Michael J. Oldham, NHIC Archives.

Many other amphibian species will use a vernal pool to breed or as a source of food but the Wood Frog, and the salamanders mentioned here will not breed anywhere else. It is important that Vernal Pools are protected from destruction such as being filled in, drained, or having fish introduced. The preservation of Vernal Pools is vital for the biodiversity and the ecological health of our region.

Spring is here! Now is the time to get out and explore the unique life that can be found in a Vernal Pool near you. There is tremendous variation from pool to pool and from year to year. Exploring your vernal pool can be more than just getting your feet wet. It can add a new richness to your enjoyment of the magic & mystery of the natural world that has been placed in our care.

References

- Colburn, E. A. 2004. Vernal Pools Natural History and Conservation
- MacCulloch, R.D. 2002. The ROM field guide to amphibians and reptiles of Ontario
- FrogWatch website <http://www.naturewatch.ca/english/frogwatch/on>
- Ontario Vernal Pool Association <http://www.ontariovernalpools.org/index.html>
- The Vernal Pool Association <http://www.vernalpool.org>





The **ORCHID DIARY** for **25 Mar - 21 Apr 2006**

Compiled by Tony Bigg, 652-7541, TandDBigg@aol.com

The spring bird migration grows, butterflies and frogs awaken and flowers are starting to bloom. For brevity, I have had to omit some reports where a sighting is not the first of the season.

- Mar 25 Jerry Ball (JB) saw an **Eastern Meadowlark** on Duoro 8th Line, and **American Wigeon** on Clear Lake at Young's Point.
- Mar 25 Jeff Balsdon heard his first **Belted Kingfisher** of the year at Parkhill Rd and Water St.
- Mar 27 Andrew Jobs (AJ) and Sue Prentice (SP) saw a **Peregrine Falcon** flying just west of Quaker Oats, and heard a **Belted Kingfisher** flying along the Otonabee River just north of Duoro St.
- Mar 29 JB watched a **Turkey Vulture** flying over Lakefield. Benjamin Walters (BW) reports **Tree Swallows** flying around Trent University.
- Mar 30 JB had twelve **Tree Swallows**, four **Green-winged Teal**, and one **Wood Duck** on the Otonabee River north of Trent University. South of Peterborough he had two **Killdeer** and a **Pied-billed Grebe**. On Rice Lake near Herkimer Point he saw twenty-five **Tundra Swans**.
- Mar 31 Michael Butler with a rare report from Stony Lake at Dunsford's Bay, observed **Canada Geese** (14), **American Wigeon** (3), **Northern Pintail** (2), **American Black Duck** (16), **Mallard** (25), **Wood Duck** (1), **Ring-necked Duck** (22), **Common Goldeneye** (9), **Bufflehead** (65), **Hooded Merganser** (30), **Common Merganser** (75), **Belted Kingfisher** (1), and **Common Loon** (2). Near Wilson Park Community Centre was a flock of **Evening Grosbeaks** and an early, **Pine Warbler**, and at Mt. Julian he had two **Fox Sparrows** and an **Eastern Phoebe**. AJ and SP watched two **Double-crested Cormorants** fly over the MNR building. Working near Cottesloe, Anne Anthony reported **Eastern Phoebes**, **Eastern Meadowlarks**, **Killdeer**, and **American Kestrels**, also an **Osprey** east of Bailieboro. AJ and SP had a **Brown Creeper** on a maple tree in East City. Steve Coombes reports a near miss with an **American Woodcock** on Hwy 115. Rick Stankiewicz saw many frogs on the roads - Carrie Sadowski (CS) heard **Spring Peepers** calling on the 7th Line of Smith, and Drew Monkman saw a lot of **Leopard Frogs** on the road to Lindsay.
- Apr 01 Louis and Anna Chora found two male **Northern Shovelers** and a pair of **Hooded Mergansers** on the Otonabee at the south end of Lock St. Tara ? Reports a **Brown-headed Cowbird** at her house on Sophia Street in Peterborough
- Apr 02 DS, walking through the Petroglyphs PP, observed the following more unusual birds - **Northern Goshawk**, **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Ruffed Grouse**, **Pileated Woodpecker**, **Winter Wren**, **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, **Pine Warbler**, and **Purple Finch**. He also saw a **Mourning Cloak**. AJ and SP saw or heard a pair of **Northern Harriers**, a **Virginia Rail**, a **Ruffed Grouse**, and four **Sandhill Cranes**. They also added a **Brown-headed Cowbird** in their yard.
- Apr 03 Colin Jones (CJ) watched a very dull **Yellow-rumped Warbler** foraging in the crab-apple tree in his yard. Gord Mallory watched **River Otters** playing on the ice of Lily Lake. Mike Oldham (MOI) conducted a one hour amphibian road survey along Division Rd east of Peterborough following heavy rain. He noted 6 species - **Spring Peeper**, **Wood Frog**, **Leopard Frog**, **Chorus Frog**, **Green Frog**, and **American Toad**. He also heard **American Woodcock** on three stops.
- Apr 04 BW saw a **Pied-billed Grebe** on the Otonabee River by Riverview Park, and he also saw a pair of **Northern Pintail** in the wet fields alongside Johnston Drive, south of Hwy 115/7. At the heronry near Sandy Lake, Martyn Obbard (MOB) noted a minimum of eight **Great Blue Herons** sitting on or near their nests. Jane Philpott reports an immature **Bald Eagle** on the ice of Upper Buckhorn Lake, possibly the young from last year's successful nesting. The adults have been around for a couple of weeks. Don Sutherland (DS) heard a single **Chorus Frog** calling north of Trent University.
- Apr 05 A flock of ten **Cedar Waxwings** were observed by Jeff Balsdon on the north side of the Trent campus. A **Fox Sparrow** was also seen by Jeff at feeders on the campus. John Fisher had a **Merlin** flying over East City.

- Apr 06 Whilst walking the trail north of Trent University DS heard **Western Chorus Frogs** (~12), **Spring Peeper** (1), **Wood Frogs** (2-3), and **Northern Leopard Frog** (1). Tony Bigg (TB) woke up to a **Fox Sparrow** singing in his back yard. JB found two **Greater Yellowlegs** at the Briar Hill pond near the junction of Cty Rd 28 and Cty Rd 21. He also had an **Eastern Bluebird** on David Fife Line, and a **Wilson's Snipe** on Centre Rd between Duoro 4th and 5th Lines south of Buckley's Lake.
- Apr 07 Benjamin Walters counted 27 **Midland Painted Turtles** of Beardsmore Rd. near the airport. Mike Oldham observed that the **Ospreys** had returned to their nest by the train bridge in downtown Peterborough. A **Pied-billed Grebe** was present in the Otonabee in the same area, and had been present for several days. TB and Doug Sadler found two **Winter Wrens** on Larmer Line, a flock of about forty **Cedar Waxwings** on Cedar Valley Rd south of Fraserville, a **Lesser Yellowlegs** was in a run-off pond just west of Bailieboro, several ponds held **Green-winged Teal**, and five **Osprey** were counted north of the western end of Rice Lake.
- Apr 09 AJ and SP had a **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** in their backyard in East City. DS walking the Petroglyphs PP reported **Wood Duck**, **Sandhill Crane** (also reported by Benjamin Walters with the Willow Beach Field Naturalists), **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Winter Wren**, **Hermit Thrush**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Pine Warbler**, and **Evening Grosbeak**.
- Apr 11 Ken Rumble (KR) noted a **Double-crested Cormorant** in Little Lake. AJ had a **Pied-billed Grebe** in the Otonabee River behind the MNR building, and heard a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** singing in the East City.
- Apr 12 KR noted a **Pied-billed Grebe** in Little Lake. MOB Spotted a **Blue-spotted Salamander** near his house west of Buckhorn. MOI doing another 'after-rain' amphibian survey also found **Blue-spotted Salamanders**, together with **Yellow-spotted Salamanders**, **Spring Peepers** **Wood Frogs**, **Leopard Frogs**, **American Toads**, **Green Frogs**, **Chorus Frogs**, **Bull Frogs**, and **Mink Frogs**. He also heard **American Woodcock**, **Wilson's Snipe**, and **Winter Wrens**. Mike McMurtry heard an **Eastern Towhee** calling outside the Peterborough Curling Club on Landsdowne west. TB and JB found four species of butterfly along Sandy Lake Rd - **Eastern Comma**, **Mourning Cloak**, **Henry's Elfin**, and **Hoary Elfin**. They also saw three **Wilson's Snipe** in a run-off pond on Anderson Line near Round Lake.
- Apr 13 A pair of **Eastern Bluebirds** and two **Fox Sparrows** were at KR's feeders in Cavan. SP reported a leucistic **American Robin** in East City. AJ watched a **Common Loon** flying north along the Otonabee River.
- Apr 14 John, Victoria, and Margaret Carley observed a **Red-necked Grebe** on Sandy Lake. Steve Coombes spotted two **Northern Flickers** in Cavan.
- Apr 15 Dave Barnim observed two **Whooping Cranes** in flight over Buckhorn Lake. These same birds were also seen near Newmarket and Orillia, and are part of a recovery project intended to re-establish an eastern breeding population. Phil Niblett reports that the pair of **Sandhill Cranes** had returned to the area south of Omemee. Peter Burke (PB) and CJ found a **Eurasian Wigeon** (new for Peterborough County!!) among a large raft of ducks off Serpent Mounds PP. Other ducks in the raft and elsewhere were **Ring-necked Ducks**, **American Wigeon**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Redhead**, **Gadwall**, **Common Merganser**, **Common Goldeneye**, **Bufflehead**, **Greater Scaup**, and one young male **Ruddy Duck**. Two **Lapland Longspurs** flew overhead. DS reported many **Northern Flickers**, **Savannah Sparrows**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** and **Brown Creepers** down towards Rice Lake, and he had a large flock of **Tree Swallows** at Trent containing a number of **Northern Rough-winged Swallows** and **Barn Swallows**.
- Apr 16 Significant sightings by DS in Petroglyphs PP were **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Winter Wrens**, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Yellow-rumped Warblers**, **Pine Warblers**, **Chipping Sparrows**, and a **Purple Finch**. He also the moth, **The Infant**, *Archieris infans*.
- Apr 17 PB refound the **Eurasian Wigeon** at Serpent Mounds PP. He also noted two **Red-necked Grebes**.
- Apr 18 CS was harrassed by her first **mosquitoes** of the season, and she heard her first **American Toads** calling from her garden south of Lakefield.
- Apr 19 JB saw our first **Broad-winged Hawk** and **Hermit Thrush** of the season on or near Sandy Lake Rd. He also saw a **Blanding's Turtle** on FR 84 off Sandy Lake Rd. TB noted **Sharp-lobed Hepatica**, **Leatherwood** and a sedge, *Carex laxiflora*, in bloom in MS Burnham PP. DS saw an **Eastern Kingbird** east of South Dummer, and had an **Americam Bittern** 'pumping' in a marsh also along Sandy Lake Rd. He saw/heard what was probably the same **Blanding's Turtle** as JB, **Midland Painted Turtles**, **Eastern Garter Snakes**, **Eastern Ribbon Snakes** (at Rotten Lake and on Hubble Rd), **Northern Water Snake** (on Sandy Lake Rd), **Chorus Frogs**, **Spring Peepers**, **Wood Frogs**, **Leopard Frogs**, **Green Frogs**, and **Bull Frogs**.

- Apr 20 JB and TB located five species of butterfly in the Sandy Lake Rd. area - **Eastern Comma** (1), **Mourning Cloak** (4), **Olympia Marble** (2), **Hoary Elf** (1), and **Spring Azure** (5). A **Blanding's Turtle** was on The South Rd between Lasswade and The Gut. **Carolina Spring Beauty**, **Trout-Lily** and **Leatherwood** were found in bloom in the area. **Field Sparrows** and an **Eastern Towhee** were calling along Hubble Rd. Three **Field Sparrows** were also heard by Jeff Balsdon on the trail south of Trent
- Apr 21 TB heard an **Upland Sandpiper** calling his 'wolf-whistle' on County Rd 38 just north of Hwy 7, and a **White-throated Sparrow** turned up at his feeder in Lakefield. In Serpent Mounds PP he found the **Eurasian Wigeon** still present (wigeons were almost the only ducks left from the large raft) and a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** calling. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were also reported by AJ. He also noted that the **Manitoba** and **Norway Maples** had bloomed over night.



ORCHID SUBMISSIONS WANTED!

I would like to encourage members to send in stories, pictures, poetry, artwork, articles, reviews or PFN outing write-ups. Please remember that if the submission is not your own work, I need to receive original author and publication information in order to give proper credit for the piece. This is your newsletter and we need your help to make it great!

**Deadline for submissions for the June issue:
Sunday, May 21st, 2006**

Please note – my address has changed. Please send all submissions to:

Rebecca Zeran, P.O. Box 345, Bridgenorth, ON, K0L 1H0

Submissions can still be e-mailed to me at: **rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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MEMBERSHIP

Memberships may be obtained at the monthly meeting from George Maynard or by mailing a copy of the application form below to: George Maynard, 20 Elgeti Dr, RR#11 Peterborough, ON, K9J 6Y3.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Tel. Home _____ Work _____ Email _____

Type of Membership and Fee Schedule (2006) – 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 _____