



# The Orchid

**Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists**

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

Published 9 times yearly  
 Publication Mail Agreement #4005104  
 Box 1532, Peterborough, ON, K9J 7H7

Volume 52, Number 8, November 2006  
 Reg. Charity: BN#119091908RR0001  
<http://www3.sympatico.ca/jbyoung/pfnhome.htm>

**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>Sunday November 5<sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Late Fall Birding at Presqu'ile</b>          Jerry Ball will lead us on a day long trip to Presqu'ile Provincial Park to look for late fall migrants, and hopefully a few Purple Sandpipers. Bring a picnic lunch, rubber boots and, of course, binoculars. Please dress warmly! Park entrance fees may apply. Meet at the Country Style at Hwy 7 and Old Keene Road at 8am. We will carpool and share costs for gas.</p>
<p>Wednesday November 8<sup>th</sup> 7:30 p.m. Ptbo Public Library</p>	<p><b>Monthly Meeting: "Winter in the Kawarthas"</b>          To commemorate the 75th anniversary of Ontario Nature , Drew Monkman will present an illustrated talk (part of the "Doors Open to Ontario Nature" series) at the Peterborough Public Library. The talk will focus on the key events in our flora, fauna, weather and night sky during the winter season in the Kawarthas. From the arrival of bald eagles in December through the appearance of snow fleas in February and the first maple sap of March, the mileposts of winter's progression will be discussed. The talk will be illustrated with a large variety of unique photographs of this exceptional region of Ontario.</p>
<p>Wednesday December 13<sup>th</sup> 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Monthly Meeting: "Annual Members Slide Show"</b>          Be sure to join us for the December regular meeting. Once again we will have an opportunity to share the nature-related slides and stories of fellow club members. Please bring along some holiday baking to enhance the festivities. If you are interested in making an informal slide presentation and/or talk, please contact HeatherSmith at 749-0304.</p>

## CELEBRATE 75 YEARS OF PROTECTING NATURE IN ONTARIO!

Join *Ontario Nature* at the Royal Ontario Museum's Currelly Gallery for Ontario Nature's cocktail gala to celebrate our 75 years of protecting nature.

*Ontario Nature* looks forward to reflecting on our collective accomplishments, paying tribute to our founding clubs and sharing our vision for the future with you at this special gathering.

Entertainment and a silent auction featuring outstanding artwork and unique items – such as Charles Sauriol's walking stick and the signed artist's proof of Roger Tory Peterson's *Puffin* – will highlight the evening. Distinguished speakers include the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources, and the Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of Tourism.

**Tuesday, November 14, 2006**  
**Currelly Gallery, Royal Ontario Museum**  
**100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario**  
**7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.**

**Tickets are \$85**



A limited number of tickets are available. Avoid disappointment - order yours today. Kindly RSVP to Chemayne D'souza at 416-444-8419 / 1-800-440-2366 ext. 271 by *October 20, 2006* (tickets may still be available after this date).

Download an invitation and reply card at: [www.ontarionature.org](http://www.ontarionature.org)



A \$55 charitable receipt will be issued for a portion of the ticket price under Charitable Registration #10737 8952 RR0001.



Hatching year Surf Scoter, Burleigh Township. Stony Lake. 6 October, 2006.  
Photo by Martha L. Allen.



## COMMITTEE BUSINESS - PFN Board of Directors Meeting – 4 Oct 2006

**Financial:** We have a little more income and a little less expenses than forecasted, but we are very close to the original proposed budget for this year.

**Membership:** We had 3 new members this past month. We have 193 members in total. Ten members receive the Orchid via e-mail. George will re-issue tax receipts in December for year 2006 memberships and has asked members to advise him of current mailing addresses.

**Junior Field Naturalists:** There was no JFN program in September. October's JFN outing will feature a trip to observe owl banding at the Oliver Property on Pigeon Lake.

**LWCC Project:** The LWCC now has a new coordinator in place (Dave Pridham). The report to the Trillium Foundation was delayed due to the search for a new coordinator. The International Ploughing Match was a success.

**Ontario Nature AGM:** The next committee meeting will be held Oct 17<sup>th</sup>. The Ontario Nature AGM is now set to be held on the Friday.

**Publicity:** We had 200 PFN brochures printed through Trent for \$110.00. We will distribute them to various areas in the community.

**Other Business:** The Harper Creek Visitor Centre/COSTCO development is still a concern. Development has started with little environmental study having been done. The Natural Areas Advisory Committee is still active and the PFN is to meet with them.



### 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 November issue:  
Friday, November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

Please send all submissions to: **Rebecca Zeran, P.O. Box 345, Bridgenorth, ON, K0L 1H0**  
or via e-mail to: **rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca**

## LARGE WOODLANDS CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE - PROJECT UPDATE

For over a year and a half, the Peterborough Field Naturalists have been the lead organization in the Large Woodlands Conservation Cooperative (LWCC). With funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), this project is implemented by a Project Coordinator working part time from an office in the Environmental Sciences building of Trent University. Other partners include local Stewardship Councils, Conservation Authorities, the Wetland Habitat Fund, MNR, and the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy.

Danielle Tassie, the original Project Coordinator, resigned in May of 2006 and is now working with the Ministry of Natural Resources. Danielle's accomplishments were significant in the development of a solid foundation for this initiative. All landowners (600) owning a portion of 6 large woodland complexes have been contacted, a newsletter sent to each of them, a program brochure printed, maps created, a website established, workshops initiated, and the LWCC now represented on committees such as the Oak Ridges Moraine Stewardship Alliance.

In August, Dave Pridham was hired as the new Project Coordinator. Dave has significant forest management experience, working since 1995 as the Stewardship Coordinator with the Victoria Land and Water Stewardship Council. After 3 months with no employee, the Project Advisory Committee and Dave determined that the immediate priority is to address outstanding project commitments to the OTF. Activities scheduled for this fall and early winter include:

- International Ploughing Match. The LWCC assisted the Peterborough Stewardship Council on the development of the woodlot trail and was responsible for leading three tours scheduled each day. A high number of individuals and school classes walked the trail (with self-guided signs) on their own.
- Two demonstration tree marking projects for fuelwood harvest in large woodlands.
- Two tree planting and plantation management workshops:
  1. Millbrook Community Centre, Thursday evening, October 18th, from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
  2. Tyrone Community Centre, Saturday, October 28th, from 9:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., morning inside and afternoon outside.

These 2 projects are organized in collaboration with local Stewardship Councils and the Oak Ridges Moraine landowner contact program.

- Woodlot tour with the Kawartha Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association, Saturday, October 21st, from 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Rosedale area.
- Natural History Database - compile a database with LWCC members, on natural history information within the general LWCC areas – species, ecosites, land use history. A team of 3rd – year Sir Sandford Fleming College students from the Lindsay Campus will be working on this over their winter semester. PFN members are welcomed to contribute to this database – email your ideas to Dave at [lwcc@trentu.ca](mailto:lwcc@trentu.ca).
- Lindsay Winter Woodlot Conference, Thursday, February 15th, 2007 at the Lindsay Moose Lodge. A 'large woodlands' element will be integrated into the program of this annual 1 day event.
- Update website; landowner newsletter for early 2007.

Peterborough Field Naturalists are encouraged to attend any future events. Contact Dave Pridham for more information – 705-748-1011, ext 5068.



## **DONATED PROPERTY A GREEN LEGACY**

*- from an article in the Lindsay Daily Post, Fri 06 Oct 2006  
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Leaving a legacy for future generations is many people's dream. One man is making it a reality in Scugog Township.

Erast Huculak recently donated 550 acres of undeveloped property in the Township of Scugog to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The Nature Conservancy in turn, transferred title to Kawartha Conservation, who is developing plans to turn the property into a conservation area.

"I am pleased to put this property into the public trust through the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Kawartha Conservation. It gives me great pleasure to know that it will be conserved in a natural state for present and future generations to enjoy," stated Huculak of the donation.

The extensive acreage lies in the East Cross Forest, on the environmentally sensitive Oak Ridges Moraine. The forested area contains a variety of species of plants including prairie grass remnants. It is commonly known as the Emedi property, as Emedi Lumber once operated out of the site.

For many years the vacant property, and properties surrounding it, have been subject to unauthorized motorized vehicle use and other illegal activity, and this heavy traffic has caused considerable environmental damage. Kawartha Conservation is in the process of developing a plan to manage the property that includes restoring and protecting the new conservation area, while at the same time allowing visitor access.

Huculak, has been awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta

for his international humanitarian and philanthropic activities, and his advancement of Ukrainian Studies.

In 2004 Huculak was appointed Honorary Consul of Ukraine in Canada. He is also President and Chairman of Medical Pharmacies Group Inc, the largest provider of pharmacy services to long-term care facilities in Canada. Huculak founded the company in 1957 when he opened his first store in Oshawa. Medical Pharmacies Group now employs over 550 staff and has been recognized as one of the 50 best-managed companies in Canada. He and his wife Yarmila have five children and four grandchildren.

Neighbouring landowners wishing to sell or donate their land may contact Kawartha Conservation or the Nature Conservancy of Canada for more information.

Kawartha Conservation is a watershed-based environmental organization focused on ensuring abundant clean water within a healthy landscape. It is one of 36 conservation authorities in Ontario providing natural resources management. The Kawartha Watershed intersects the municipalities of the City of Kawartha Lakes; Scugog; Brock; Clarington; Cavan-Millbrook-North Monaghan; and Galway-Cavendish & Harvey.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is a non-profit, non-advocacy organization that takes a business-like approach to land conservation and the preservation of biological diversity. Its plan of action involves partnership building and entering into creative conservation solutions with any individual, corporation, community group, conservation organization or government body that shares its passion.

Since 1962, NCC and its supporters have protected more than 1.9 million acres of ecologically significant land nationwide.

## **GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL NEGLECT, WARNS ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER**

*- from Ontario Nature Network News - October 16, 2006*

Ontario's fundamental neglect of the environment will have grave and long-lasting consequences, warned Gord Miller, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO). Miller, who monitors compliance by provincial ministries with the Environmental Bill of Rights, released his 2005/2006 annual report, "Neglecting our Obligations", to the Legislature this morning at the Queen's Park Media Studio.

"In the past year I have come to the discouraging realization that there is just too much left undone in too many areas of environmental protection," said Miller, "When we neglect our obligations to the natural environment, we are also forgetting our responsibilities to future generations. They will be dealing with the consequences of our actions, and especially our inaction, for years into the future."

Miller pointed to this year's report for examples of government inaction in almost every area of environmental management - water and air pollution, waste diversion, landfills, aggregate extraction, and climate change.

Ontario's climate is changing, said Miller, because of the build-up of greenhouse gases, yet the province has not developed a strategy for adapting to the changes. Unpredictable weather in the future, including intense rain storms, heat waves and droughts, will affect not only the built environment - bridges, dams and sewage treatment plants - but will also bring threats to the health or even survival of local plant and animal species. The Environmental Commissioner also urged the government to develop a strategy to reduce the major environmental impacts of the transportation sector, impacts that include degraded waterways, fragmented ecosystems, the massive demand for gravel and sand, and the

contribution of almost one-third of the province's greenhouse gases. The demand for aggregate also means the province is left with thousands of hectares of unrehabilitated pits and quarries, often in areas of significant natural heritage such as the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Rates for diverting waste away from landfills are still far behind the 60% diversion goal set for 2008 by the Ministry of the Environment, especially for apartment buildings and the commercial, institutional and industrial sectors. It's also clear that the ministry lacks the monitoring data needed to assess whether existing landfills pose a risk to the environment or to human health. Moreover, only six years after the Walkerton tragedy, changes to the Nutrient Management regulation may make key aspects of the regulation unenforceable.

The ECO's 2005/2006 report also deals with air issues. While commending the Ministry of the Environment for reforming air quality rules for industry, the ECO cautions that the effectiveness of the reform will depend on the capacity of the ministry to enforce compliance with new regulations. Today, because of reduced resources, the ministry is able to inspect only about 1-2% of industrial facilities a year.

In his report, the Commissioner calls on the government to make the Ministry of Education subject to the Environmental Bill of Rights, including the ministry's decisions about curriculum. "Ontario was once a leader in the field of environmental education, and now we have fallen far behind other provinces and the U.S.," said Commissioner Miller "Education is the key to shaping the values that will lead to a world where humans and other species can survive and flourish."

The full report and support materials can be viewed and downloaded from:  
<http://www.eco.on.ca/english/whatsnew/>

## WILD SPECIES 2005: THE GENERAL STATUS OF SPECIES IN CANADA

The 2005 report of the National General Status Working Group, "Wild Species 2005", was officially released at the joint meeting of the Canadian Council of Resource Ministers (CCRM) and Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006.



The intent of the Wild Species series is to answer the following fundamental questions about wild species in Canada: which species occur in Canada, in which provinces, territories or ocean regions do they occur, and what is their status? To accomplish this goal, Wild Species 2005: The General Status of Species in Canada presents the results of general status assessments for a broad cross-section of Canadian species. General status assessments are made by integrating the best available information on population size, distribution, threats and trends to generate an expert evaluation of the status of each species.

A copy of the "Wild Species 2005" report can be found at <http://www.wildspecies.ca/>.

### Call for raffle prizes for the Annual General Meeting in 2007

Every year at the PFN Annual General Meeting we raffle off prizes donated by members or businesses in Peterborough and surrounding area. This is our first call for folks to donate raffle prizes. Funds raised during the raffle go towards supporting club activities as well as to covering off some of the costs incurred by hosting the AGM. If you have anything you would like to donate, or would like to canvass a local business for support, please contact Heather at 749-0304.

### *It's Up to You*

*When we look up and see above, a sky  
shining blue  
Around us all the grass is green, a truly  
lovely view  
We realize it could be lost, so unsure  
what to do  
We start to make our future plans, to  
pass it on to you  
We try so hard to conquer space, to clear  
pollution too  
But what it all comes down to now: the  
rest is up to you.*

*- Noreen Quinn*





# Winter Finch Forecast

## 2006-2007

Ron Pittaway

Posted 8 September 2006 to Ontbirds and BirdChat. Revised 14 September 2006.

### GENERAL FINCH FORECAST 2006-2007

This is one of those rare years when most conifers (softwoods) and broad-leaved deciduous trees (hardwoods) have synchronized bumper seed crops across much of Eastern Canada and the bordering United States. It will be an excellent winter to see winter finches in northern Ontario and central Ontario (e.g., Algonquin Park). Very few boreal finches will move south of Ontario this fall and winter. Most finches likely will be scarce even in southern Ontario south of the Canadian (Precambrian) Shield this winter despite bumper seed crops on native and ornamental species. There also are bumper cone crops in Quebec, the Maritime Provinces, New York and northern New England States, so finches will be there too, but in what numbers is the question, because excellent crops are so widespread this year. There are good cone crops west of Lake Superior in northwestern Ontario, but cone quality diminishes towards Manitoba because of severe drought conditions this year. Cone crops are generally poor at the continental extremes in Newfoundland and Alaska. Both White-winged and Red Crossbills have been arriving in Ontario since late June in areas with bumper cone crops. In addition to individual finch forecasts, I also comment on other irruptive species, such as the Red-breasted Nuthatch, whose movements are linked to winter finches. I added a new section this year called Finch Notes. It discusses bumper seed crops, speculates on how crossbills find cone crops, when crossbills move to bumper crops, when crossbills nest, road-killed finches, and where to see finches this winter in Ontario.

### INDIVIDUAL FINCH FORECASTS

**Pine Grosbeak:** Most Pine Grosbeaks will stay in northern Ontario because the berry crop on mountain-ash (rowan berries) is excellent to bumper this year. As well, the large seed and berry crops on other trees and shrubs will provide ample buffer food supplies to keep the grosbeaks in the north. A few Pine Grosbeaks may drift as far south as Algonquin Park where they are seen most winters.

**Purple Finch:** The excellent tree seed crops on most coniferous and deciduous trees suggest that most (not all) Purple Finches will spend this winter in northern and central Ontario. Some may drift south in late winter and show up at feeders, which is typical of this species in big seed years as seed supplies diminish in late winter.

**Red Crossbill:** Taxonomy and nomenclature are hopelessly confused. The Red Crossbill complex comprises at least eight types or forms (possibly full species) with different vocalizations and bill sizes related to cone preferences. Two or three forms are regular in Ontario. One prefers hemlock cones and the others are adapted mostly to pines, mainly white pine in Ontario. Red Crossbills have been seen

and heard singing in hemlocks in August suggesting that the small-billed hemlock subspecies *sitkensis* has moved into central Ontario where hemlock cone crops are excellent as in Algonquin Park and the Haliburton Highlands. The hemlock form has the smallest bill of all Red Crossbills, even smaller than the White-winged Crossbill's bill. Road-killed *sitkensis* can be identified by measuring their stubby bills (culmen 13.5-15 mm). White pine cone crops, unlike other conifers, are poor in most of central Ontario such as Algonquin Park. However, some areas of northeastern Ontario have good white pine crops such as Marten River and Timmins. Watch for pine types of Red Crossbills wherever white and red pines have good cone crops. Since spruce cones are so abundant this year, I expect that Red Crossbills will be found feeding in spruce to some extent this winter.

**White-winged Crossbill:** Like a pendulum, White-winged Crossbills move back and forth across the northern coniferous forests from Newfoundland to Alaska searching for cone crops. White-winged Crossbills will be widespread and perhaps common in many areas of northern and central Ontario because of the bumper seed crops on spruces, tamarack, balsam fir and hemlock. I expect that the highest concentrations of White-wings will be in northeastern Ontario between Lake Superior and Quebec where the super bumper crop of white spruce cones is "a 1-in-20-year cyclical phenomenon" making this is a rather rare event in seed production for white spruce (Scott McPherson, pers. comm.). White-winged Crossbills began increasing in northern Ontario in late June and increased during July associated with big cone crops. They are singing and feasting on an abundance of cone seeds and probably nesting. They likely will begin nesting again in early 2007. White-winged Crossbills in Algonquin Park have been widespread in small numbers since July and are singing. Nesting is suggested by two sightings of recently fledged young in August. White-winged Crossbills possibly came from western Canada and Alaska wandering eastward searching for cone crops. One reason why there are no subspecies on this continent versus the eight or more types of Red Crossbills is that White-winged Crossbill populations oscillate east and west across North America, and thus are constantly mixing. This allows outcrossing and gene flow among populations, suppressing the formation of geographical variation.

**Common Redpoll:** This is not a flight year for redpolls in southern Ontario. Most Common and Hoary Redpolls will be in northern Ontario this winter because seed crops on white birch and alder are excellent to bumper there. As well, yellow birch has an excellent crop from southeastern Lake Superior into Quebec. This large crop will stall any redpolls wandering south of the boreal zone. A few redpolls may get as far south as Algonquin Park, but likely no farther.

**Pine Siskin:** Most Pine Siskins will winter in northern and probably central Ontario this winter because cones crops are bumper on spruces, balsam fir, tamarack (larch), cedar and hemlock. Flocks of siskins can be identified at a distance by their distinctive flight formation. They swirl in tight flocks whereas redpolls fly in loose undulating flocks. Siskins should breed early next spring in northern Ontario. Only one subspecies occurs across Canada, indicating that the highly nomadic siskin populations mix from coast to coast, inhibiting the formation of geographical variation.

**Evening Grosbeak:** Evening Grosbeaks will stay in the boreal forest this winter because tree seed crops are excellent on conifers and hardwoods such as black ash. Expect a few in Algonquin Park, particularly around the feeders at the Visitor Centre. The eastern population of Evening Grosbeaks started declining in 1980 as large outbreaks of spruce budworm subsided. The population is probably stable now, but much reduced from the 1970s when Evening Grosbeaks were common at bird feeders.

## OTHER IRRUPTIVE SPECIES

**Blue Jay:** Some Blue Jays move every year, but only a small flight is expected this fall. The good to excellent crop of beechnuts on American beech in most areas of central and southern Ontario should keep many Blue Jays from migrating south this September and October along the shorelines of Lakes Ontario and Erie. Blue Jays are now actively storing beechnuts. Also, there are excellent crops of hazelnuts which will add to the non-migratory tendency of Blue Jays this fall. The red oak acorn crop is poor in most areas of central Ontario, but the lack of acorns should be compensated for by the large mast crops on other deciduous trees and shrubs.

**Red-breasted Nuthatch:** Most Red-breasted Nuthatches will not migrate south this fall. The bumper cone crops across Ontario will hold most Red-breasted Nuthatches close to their northern breeding grounds this winter. When Red-breasted Nuthatches winter in the boreal forest they eat conifer seeds so are closely linked to finches.

**Bohemian Waxwing:** The excellent to bumper crop of mountain-ash (rowan berries) will keep most Bohemians Waxwings close to the boreal forest this winter.

**Boreal Forest Owls:** The widespread abundance of seeds, berries, nuts and fruits (mast) is providing a huge food supply for small mammals such as voles so their numbers should be increasing. Most boreal forest owls (Northern Hawk Owl, Great Gray Owl, Boreal Owl) likely will stay close to breeding territories this winter. Increasing numbers of small mammals will increase owl breeding success next spring and summer.

## FINCH NOTES

**Why Bumper Tree Seed Crops?** One theory of bumper crops is to ensure that adequate seed supplies will germinate above the losses to consumers such as fungi, insects, mammals and birds. Many trees have only moderate seed production in most years followed by periodic bumper crops producing huge surpluses beyond the capacity of seed consumers. Tree species normally synchronize seed crops with members of their own species across hundreds of kilometres/miles and they sometimes synchronize with other species as has happened this year in the Northeast. This year's bumper crops probably resulted from last year's hot and dry stress conditions throughout most of the Northeast. Most plants under stress one year will produce more seed the following year as a form of survival. The size of the seed crop the following year is largely determined by the weather at the time of flowering and pollination. If the weather is too cold or too hot the flower buds will not develop properly. If there is too much rain during pollination and no wind then poor pollination takes place. This year in the Northeast the weather was perfect for most conifer and hardwood species. However, white pine and red oak are two significant species with poor seed crops in 2006 in central Ontario. Why these two species? First, white pine cones take two summers to ripen as opposed to spruce, fir, tamarack, cedar and hemlock which ripen in one summer. Last year white pine grew a drought stressed crop of immature conelets with considerable losses, resulting in a generally poor crop maturing this year. Second, red oak had abundant flowers in May but produced few acorns (some good crops) this year because the weather turned cool and wet just when its flowers were ready to pollinate.

**How Do Crossbills Find Bumper Cone Crops?** Crossbills (and other finches, particularly siskins) can locate big cone crops half a continent or more away. Crossbills have well-developed sensory and nervous systems and the evidence is clear that they respond to external stimuli such as growing seed crops. The ability of crossbills to find bumper cone crops suggests something more than random searching, but we do not know how they do it. Ian Newton (1972) in his classic book on *Finches*

suggested that crossbill populations may move back and forth along a particular migration axis, stopping in different regions in different years. Ian Newton (pers. comm.) said, "Crossbills seem to move every year, so if they accumulated in areas of good crops in one year, they will leave when that crop comes to an end". Newton does not think their searches are random. There is much to learn about nomadic winter finches.

**When Do Crossbills Move To Bumper Seed Crops?** Before big crossbill nestings, they normally begin arriving in summer in areas with developing bumper cone crops. This summer there were reports of crossbills moving in Minnesota (Red Crossbills), northern Michigan, northeastern Ontario (both species), central Ontario (both species in Algonquin Park), northern New York State (Red Crossbills), Quebec (White-winged Crossbills), northern New Hampshire (White-winged Crossbills), Maine (White-winged Crossbills) and New Brunswick (White-winged Crossbills). In years when either Red or White-winged Crossbills nested in late winter and early spring in Algonquin Park, numbers were high in the preceding late summer and fall.

**When Do Crossbills Nest?** The following information is courtesy of Ron Tozer from his draft manuscript for *The Birds of Algonquin Park*. (A) White-winged Crossbills nest during two main periods in Algonquin Park. (1) The main nestings are in late December to mid-March with fledged juveniles seen from late March to late May. (2) July and August nestings produce young seen in early August to mid-October. (B) Red Crossbills also nest during two main periods. (1) Adults with dependent young have been seen in late April to mid-June from nestings in January, February and probably March. (2) Adults with dependent young seen from mid-August to late October are from nestings in June and probably July. Both species nest occasionally outside the core periods described above. Note: The presence of independent streaked young in either species does not necessarily indicate local breeding because the juvenile plumage can be retained for a considerable time.

**Road-killed Finches:** This could be a winter when thousands of winter finches are killed by cars in places such as Algonquin Park and the Haliburton Highlands. Finches are attracted to the salt and sand put on highways. They have little fear of cars. I remember one collision that killed 63 siskins in Algonquin Park. Common Ravens have an easy time patrolling for road kills. When you see finches on the road, slow down, flash lights and tap your horn several times. Finches often do not respond in time. Be careful not to confuse other drivers.

**Where To See Winter Finches:** This should be a good year for a winter trip to Algonquin Park. The park is a three hours drive north of Toronto. White-winged Crossbills and Pine Siskins should be common, although siskins have been absent to date. Red Crossbills, Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks are possible in smaller numbers. A few Pine Grosbeaks are likely, but most will be farther north. Redpolls should stay farther north this winter in the boreal forest. Drive Highway 60 in early morning watching for flocks of finches attracted to the salt and sand put on the highway to reduce accidents. There are feeders at the Visitor Centre, which is open only on weekends in winter. Arrangements can be made to view the feeders on weekdays. For the latest information on finches, call the Visitor Centre at 613-637-2828 or e-mail retired park naturalist Ron Tozer (rtozer@vianet.ca).

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank the many birders and staff of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) whose composite knowledge and reports allowed me to make reasonable predictions about finches in Ontario this fall and winter. They are Dennis Barry (Durham Region), Shirley Davidson (OMNR Minden), Nancy DeWitt (Alaska), Bruce Di Labio (Eastern Ontario), Shelagh Duckett (OMNR Thunder Bay),

Chris Fagyal (Minnesota), Brian Fox (OMNR South Porcupine), Tyler Hoar (Laurentians, Quebec), Michel Gosselin (Gatineau Hills, Quebec), Charity Hendry (Angus Tree Seed Nursery), Leo Heyens (OMNR Kenora), Brandon Holden (Algonquin Park), Peter Hynard (OMNR Haliburton), Jean Iron (Toronto and Temagami), Bob Knudsen (Ontario Parks, Algoma), Scott McPherson (OMNR Northeast Region), John Miles (Selkirk Provincial Park, Lake Erie), Brian Naylor (OMNR North Bay), Larry Neily (Ottawa), Ian Newton (United Kingdom), Janet Pineau (Arrowhead Provincial Park), Fred Pinto (OMNR Sudbury), Rick Salmon (OMNR Lake Nipigon), Ron Tozer (Algonquin Park, Marten River, Moosonee), Declan Troy (Alaska), Mike Turner (OMNR Brancroft District), Stan Vasiliauskas (OMNR Northeast Region), Mike Walsh (OMNR Muskoka and Parry Sound) and Matt Young (upstate New York). Matt Young's posts this summer on New York State listserves have been helpful. I am grateful to Ron Tozer for reviewing this post and for information from his draft manuscript for *The Birds of Algonquin Park*.

### RECENT FINCH FORECASTS ARCHIVED

Larry Neily has archived recent finch forecasts at <http://ca.geocities.com/larry.neily@rogers.com/pittaway05.htm>

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Ron Pittaway  
8 September 2006  
Ontario Field Ornithologists  
Minden and Toronto, Ontario



### COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Vice-President	Vacant		
Treasurer	Jim Young – 1269 Pulpit Rd, Ptbo, K9K 1H4	jbyoung@sympatico.ca	745-1398
Secretary	Emily Pettypiece – 18 Parkview Dr, Ptbo, K9H 5M6	donem.pettypiece@sympatico.ca	750-1145
Membership	George Maynard – 20 Elgeti Dr, RR#11 Ptbo, K9J 6Y3	vgmaynard@nexicom.net	749-1217
Program	Roger Jones – 81 Terraview Height, Ptbo, K9L 1M8	rjones@trentu.ca	742-0132
Program	Laura Kucey – 461 Gilmour St., Ptbo, K9H 2J8	lkucey@yahoo.com	750-0803
Jr. Naturalists	Judy Hyland – 112 Water St., Lakefield, K0L 2H0	jdhyland@nexicom.net	652-8473
Projects	Mike McMurtry – 455 Albertus Ave, Ptbo, K9J 5Z9	michael.mcmurtry@sympatico.ca	748-5353
Projects	Dave Hambly – 123 Creekwood Dr, Ptbo, K9K 2C5	hambly1@cogeco.ca	876-7271
Orchid Editor	Rebecca Zeran – PO Box 345, Bridgenorth, K0L 1H0	rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca	292-9022
Publicity	Don Pettypiece – 18 Parkview Dr, Ptbo, K9H 5M6	donem.pettypiece@sympatico.ca	750-1145
Member at Large	Carrie Sadowski – 2064 Ann Ave, RR4 Ptbo, K9J 6X5	orchid@nexicom.net	652-1767
Stewardship	David Swales – 1574 Westbrook Dr, Ptbo, K9J 6R4	dwswales@sympatico.ca	743-7213
Book Sales	Anne Storey – 1458 Fair Ave, Ptbo, K9J 1G9		743-0345
FON Rep	Rhea Bringeman – RR2, Ptbo, K9J 6X3		742-1035

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_