



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>Sunday November 4th 8:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Fall Birding at Presqu'ile Jerry Ball will lead us on a trip to Presqu'ile Provincial Park for some fall birding. Bring a lunch, binoculars and rubber boots (may or may not need them). Meet at the Country Style at the junction of Old Keene Road and Highway 7 at 8am.</p>
<p>Wednesday Nov 14th 7:30 pm Ptbo Public Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: "The Return of the Southern Ontario Bald Eagle" The Southern Ontario Bald Eagle Monitoring Program has yielded significant results over the past 20 years. In this presentation, Jody Allair of Bird Studies Canada will highlight successes in the recovery of Bald Eagles along the lower Great Lakes, and will discuss preliminary results from the Destination Eagle satellite tracking initiative. The talk will also cover Bald Eagles in the Peterborough area, and some of the questions BSC is hoping to answer locally in the coming year.</p>
<p>Sunday December 2nd 6:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Birding at Hamilton and Niagara Tony Bigg will lead an outing to Hamilton and Niagara to see waterfowl, gulls and other specialties of the region. Please bring a lunch, carpooling gas money and binoculars. Dress for the weather! Meet at 6:00 a.m. at Tim Horton's in the Canadian Tire Plaza on Landsdowne Street.</p>

NOTE: For anyone submitting sightings to Tony for the Orchid Diary, please take note of his new e-mail address (tanddbigg@sympatico.ca)

COMING EVENTS continued

Wednesday Dec 12th 7:30 pm Ptbo Public Library	PFN Monthly Meeting: "Annual Members Slide Show" It's time again for our December regular meeting. We will once again be asking members to come with nature-related slides presentations and stories to share with fellow club members. To make things even sweeter, please bring along some holiday baking to enhance the festivities. <u>Note:</u> if you are interested in making an informal slide presentation and/or talk, please contact Roger Jones at 742-0132.
Sunday December 16 th	Peterborough Christmas Bird Count The 56 th Peterborough Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 16 th . Watch for more information in the December Orchid or contact Tony Bigg (705-652-7541, tanddbigg@sympatico.ca) for further details.

JUNIOR FIELD NATURALISTS

Sunday November 18 th 2:00 p.m. Camp Kawartha	The Art of Pinhole Photography This month we are going to look at the natural world through the lens of a camera for some nature photography and the work of Andy Goldsworthy. We won't be using any fancy digital cameras but a good old fashion tin can camera. Yes it really works! Come to Camp Kawartha on Nov 18th 2:00pm and meet Amanda Kennedy, an outdoor teacher who will show us the art of pinhole photography. See you then!...Neil
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The PFN Annual Family Potluck Picnic is being planned for next May!

Cheryl and Wayne Covert have graciously offered to host the PFN Picnic at their farm (Circle "C" Farms) in Cavan next May (instead of the traditional fall picnic). We are planning a day full of exploring the 100 acres of farmland and forest. We will plan for a morning bird walk, for those keen to see the sites and migrating birds before the picnic, a potluck picnic at 11:30, and then a walk through property to see the amazing habitat found in the woods, along the stream and around the barn. We look forward to having your family join us next May for this exciting event.

As a bit of a teaser, Cheryl and Wayne have put together a description of the farm:

¡We have a very long laneway that ensures a quiet environment. Our fence lines are wooded and act as connecting flyways attracting Brown Thrashers, Orioles, Woodpeckers and Warblers. A small stream, that crosses the property, flows year round. The stream and springs feed four ponds. For environmental reasons, and our interest in edible wilds, we have let the area around the stream and the ponds grow naturally. These areas attract a wide variety of bird species from Ducks, Geese, Herons and a Bittern to King Fishers. The barns are a natural attraction for swallows and flycatchers and our bird feeders attract Rose breasted Grosbeaks, Gold Finches and Nut Hatches, to name a few.

GANARASKA HIKING TRAIL ASSOCIATION

The Ganaraska Hiking Trail extends from Port Hope to Glen Huron, with two branches to Midland and Wasaga Beach for a total of 500 kms. There are nine clubs along the length of the trail that make up the Association. For more information about all the clubs please see our website: www.ganaraska-hiking-trail.ca

The Kawartha Club includes members from Campbellford, Keene, Peterborough, Lindsay, Millbrook, Fenelon Falls and many points in between. The Kawartha section of trail travels from just west of Omemee, north 76.7 kms to Moore Falls. The trail travels on railtrail, country lanes and forest trails as it meanders through the gently rolling countryside, through the towns of Lindsay and Fenelon Falls to the hamlet of Burnt River. North of Burnt River, the trail continues in more rugged terrain, crossing many beaver dams and running parallel to beautiful Corben Lake, a great lunch spot! We usually hike the length of our section in five hikes, three in the spring and two in the fall along with numerous other hikes in the area and beyond.

The Kawartha Club offers Wednesday Walks which are easy, slower paced walks about 1.5 to 2 hrs in length and are usually within a 20 km radius of Peterborough.

There is an outing every weekend, either Saturday or Sunday, and these hikes are between 10 and 18 kms with various degrees of difficulty. They are usually within a 45 minute drive of Peterborough and most times there is a meeting place to carpool. The outings include hiking, biking, skiing and snowshoeing. On a normal hike, we would hike until noon (about 2 hours), have lunch then hike another 1 to 2 hours, finishing between 2:30 and 3:00 pm. Spring and fall, we like to eat on the trail, finding a nice spot under

the shade of a tree or beside a stream to eat and socialize. In winter, due to the colder weather, the walks are shorter and we try to find a lunch spot indoors, either a restaurant, someone's home (usually delicious hot soup being provided by the host/hostess) or in the case of skiing or snowshoeing, a warm-up hut.

There is no cost to join us on our outings, just bring a lunch, some water and a good pair of walking or hiking shoes (depending on the hike). If we carpool, the passengers are expected to give the driver a few dollars to cover the gas, depending on the distance. Also, if the outing is in a park with a day use fee, we share the cost. For those who wish to join the club as a member, the cost is \$20.00/year and includes a newsletter three times a year with the events schedules for all nine clubs, which anyone can attend. We are a not-for-profit organization and the membership fees cover our insurance and newsletter costs. There are no paid employees, just many volunteers.

Our outings are a great way to meet people, see some beautiful scenery and get lots of fresh air and exercise. We're a very social club having potlucks, a garden party, BBQs after a hike at a member's home, picnic at a lake, etc. throughout the year. We also have a few joint outings with our sister club to the south, Pine Ridge Club, based in Port Hope. More great people!

So, come out and have some fun!

See page 4 for a list of hikes planned for November and December.

For more information please contact:

Rose Millett, President, Kawartha Club
rmillett@primus.ca
705-639-2431 (evenings, weekends)

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER HIKES

Sunday, Nov 4 (10:00 am) Moderate
Northumberland Forest. 14 km.
Meet at Beagles' Club Rd parking lot north of Cobourg or at the carpool lot across from Burnham Mansion at 9:00 am to carpool.
Contact: Lyn or Linda 705-778-7842

Wednesday, Nov 7 (1:00 pm) Easy
Mystery Walk. Meet at 951 Hilliard St. Contact: Jill 705-745-9713

Saturday, Nov 10 (9:30 am) Easy/Moderate
Warsaw Caves. Hike on trails in the Warsaw Conservation Area. Optional longer hike after lunch. Meet at the Riverview Park and Zoo to carpool or at the Park gates at 10:00 am.
Entrance fee

Wednesday, Nov 14 (1:00 pm) Easy
Trent's Trails. Hike on the University Trails. Meet in north end parking lot. Enter right at flashing light at Water St & Woodland Dr. intersection, just N. of Nassau Mills Rd. lights. Easy, with Drumlin optional. Contact Betty 705-742-5048.

Saturday Nov 17 (10:00 am) Easy/Moderate
Omeme Area.
A meandering walk along rail trails, country roads and around the village, stopping at a local restaurant for lunch along the way. **Contact: Phil 705-328-2318**

Sunday, Nov 25 (8:45 am) Moderate
Long Sault Conservation Area.
EARLY START. Joint Hike with Pine Ridge Club. 14 km on various terrain.
Meet at Lansdowne St. Canadian Tire parking lot, south end, at 8:45 am to carpool. Contact: Rose 705-639-2431 or rmillett@primus.ca

Sunday, Dec 2 (9:00 am) Easy
Metro Toronto Zoo. Meet at Lansdowne St. Canadian Tire parking lot, south end, to carpool for a day at the zoo. Bring a lunch or purchase lunch there. Contact: Tony 705-755-0815

Saturday Dec 8 (10:00) Easy/Moderate
Ken Reid Conservation Area.
Hike the meandering trails of this beautiful conservation area to a picnic shelter for lunch. There are optional trails to explore after lunch as well. Contact: Mel 705-887-3215

Sunday, Dec 16 (6:00pm) Easy
Christmas Lights Tour - Old Scugog Rd Area. Meet at Lansdowne St. Canadian Tire parking lot, south end, at 6:00 pm to carpool. Contact: Rose 705-639-2431 or rmillett@primus.ca

Tuesday Jan 1 (11:45 am) Easy
Members New Year's Day Potluck. Potluck lunch and walk in the area afterwards. Meet at 951 Hilliard St. **Call to confirm Jill 705-745-9713.**

PFN Officers, Directors and Volunteers			
Officers & Directors			
President	John Bottomley	johnbottomley@sympatico.ca	742-1524
Treasurer	Jim Young	jbyoung@sympatico.ca	745-1398
Secretary	Emily Pettypiece	donem.pettypiece@sympatico.ca	750-1145
Membership	Don Pettypiece	donem.pettypiece@sympatico.ca	750-1145
Newletter Editor	Rebecca Zeran	rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca	292-9022
Program (indoor)	Roger Jones	rjones@trentu.ca	742-0132
Program (outdoor)	Laura Kucey	lkucey@yahoo.com	750-0803
Jr. Naturalists	Judy Hyland	jdhyland@nexicom.net	652-8473
Special Projects	Mike McMurtry	michael.mcmurtry@sympatico.ca	748-5353
Webmaster	Chris Gooderham	webmaster@peterboroughnature.org	740-2081
Other Volunteers			
Stewardship	David Swales	dswales@sympatico.ca	743-7213
Book Sales	Anne Storey		743-0345
FON Rep	Rhea Bringeman		742-1035
Orchid Diary	Tony Bigg	tanddbigg@sympatico.ca	652-7541



A Message from our President: Update on the Trent Severn Waterway

Many of you may be aware that Parks Canada has recently held a number of Panel Hearings seeking input into future directions for the Trent Severn Waterway. I made a submission to the Panel on behalf of the Committee and the Club.

Many special interest groups are concerned with the future development of the Waterway. Among these are:

- recreation and tourism operators,
- business and urban development groups in communities adjacent to the waterway,
- property owners with residences or non-residential land adjacent to the waterway,
- property developers, and
- hydro-electric generating utilities.

Everyone it seems wants his or her share of the waterway.

The waterway is a major tourist and recreation resource. Over 40,000 boats are located on the waterway. There are over 400 marinas and resorts, 7000 campsites and 130,000 lockages per year. There are 1.5M land visits a year. 60% of visitors are from Central Ontario.

132,000 private properties abut the waterway. The population of settlements on or very close to the waterway is in the order of 350,000.

All the above have significant environmental impacts in the watersheds of the Trent-Severn Waterway system. We contend that whatever management structures, development objectives, water management regimes, etc., are recommended by the Panel, it is of paramount importance that the ecological

integrity of the Trent-Severn Waterway and its associated lakes and watersheds be the primary objective. Recreational, tourism, residential and urban activities and developments cannot be allowed to further threaten what are already ecosystems under stress. **If the ecological health of the system is not the driver of system management and development planning, we risk killing the goose that lays the golden egg.** All current and future recreational, tourism and residential activity in the Trent-Severn Waterway area is, and will continue to be, dependent on the maintenance of healthy lakes and rivers. Sound ecological management is, thus, essential for both the ecological health and continued economic well-being of the entire Trent-Severn Waterway corridor.

Our position in summary is as follows:

1. The current economic viability and future sustainable development of the Trent-Severn Waterway depend absolutely on the health of its constituent ecosystems.
2. Waterway ecosystems are currently under significant stress from wetland loss, shoreline development, habitat loss and fragmentation, and increasing numbers of invasive species. Further development and usage of the waterway will increase levels of environmental stress.
3. Climate change will exacerbate developmental stresses.
4. The maintenance of the ecological health of the waterway system must drive whatever management arrangements and development goals are established by the Panel for the Trent-Severn Waterway.

*John Bottomley, President,
Peterborough Field Naturalists*

Report on Ontario Nature's 76th Annual General Meeting and Conference, June 8-10, 2007, hosted by the Peterborough Field Naturalists

- submitted by Roger Jones

The Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) and Ontario Nature (ON) mounted a very successful 76th Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Conference from June 8th to the 10th, 2007 at Trent University. The theme of the Conference was "*The Kawarthas: Landscapes of Transition*".

The success of the conference was due to the tremendous number of hours of effort put in by volunteers from the PFN and by the staff of Ontario Nature over an 18 month period prior to and during the actual meetings. We also had excellent co-operation from the Conference Centre at Trent University, beginning with Mr. Ashe Kaushak and Brittany Cadence and then Lorrie Johnston.

The organizing committee for the Conference was a blend of PFN members who had helped with previous conferences hosted by the PFN and newcomers to this experience. The first organizing meeting was held in February 7th 2006 and the last meeting in May 29th 2007. In between these dates a further 19 meetings were held. Mia Frankl was our excellent secretary. A representative from Ontario Nature attended many of the meetings. Initially it was Jennifer Baker but later the ON representative was Barbara MacKenzie-Wynia. The August meeting was attended by Rosemary Speirs, President of ON and Caroline Schultz, ON Executive Director. In addition, there were 10 sub-committees reporting to the organizing committee. These sub-committees were responsible for organizing the speaking program, field trips, displays and exhibits, facilities, budget,

brochure, registration, website, fundraising and advertising.

Including speakers, workshop leaders, field trip leaders, PFN volunteers, ON staff and other volunteers, approximately 100 individuals were involved in organizing and running the Annual General Meeting and Conference. Some PFN members in addition to helping organize also led field trips. Drew Monkman wrote a column about the upcoming Conference in the Peterborough Examiner.

The AGM and Conference covered three days. Friday, June 8th was Provincial Issues Day with the theme of "*Making Green Connections, Creating Partnerships and Providing Tools for Greenways*". The featured speaker, Dr. Reed Noss from the U. S., gave a most interesting and informative presentation titled "*Greenways and Ecological Connectivity in Urban Landscapes and Beyond*". This was followed by a series of concurrent workshops relating to Greenways. The ON AGM was held from 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm. Following a wine and cheese reception and a barbecue dinner, Ontario Nature Conservation awards were made. Several local field trips occurred in the afternoon and evening, including an Evening Amphibian Walk.

The PFN part of the weekend activities began on Saturday morning with early morning birdwalks and a welcome by Jeff Leal, Parliamentary Assistant to the Ontario Minister of the Environment. This was followed by the Plenary Session which featured Ron Reid of the Couchiching Conservancy who discussed lessons to learn from changing landscapes. The concurrent sessions and workshops began at 10:30 am and carried on until 5:00 pm. Several field trips were held during the afternoon. The evening banquet featured an excellent slide show, films and talk by Kevin Callan. Kevin

is an author and avid canoeist and humourist. In a letter thanking all the Peterborough Field Naturalists for organizing such a successful conference, Caroline Schultz wrote in connection with Kevin's presentation that "it is nice to have a good laugh when we are so serious about much of what we do".

Sunday was devoted to field trips, some half day and others full day trips. A popular field trip was the one to the Kawartha Highlands Park.

About 250 persons registered for the Provincial Issues Day and/or the weekend.

PFN Conference Income for the 3 days exceeded expenses by \$5002.00. All in all, it was a most successful weekend due to the considerable efforts of all of the individuals involved as organizers, speakers, field trip and workshop leaders, and helpers. Also to be commended and thanked are the sponsors (the Government of Ontario, Ontario Power Generation, LMS Prolink Ltd, Niblett Environmental Associates Inc., General Electric, and Ducks Unlimited Canada), those who submitted displays and exhibits, and donors for the silent auction. Special thanks are due to Michael Dumas for providing the artwork for the conference brochure.

Pileated Woodpeckers and....Cars?

Don and Emily Pettypiece were about to eat supper when they noticed an interesting visitor on their property. A Pileated Woodpecker was observed using their new car as a perch to check itself out in the car's windshield. Both Don and Emily grabbed their cameras and took photos of the bird through their house windows. Don notes that this is the first Pileated Woodpecker he's observed on his property in 8 years.



Peterborough Field Naturalists and Kawartha Heritage Conservancy Map Trails on Conservation Property

- Melissa Straus and Mike McMurtry

On October 13th, Mike and Peter McMurtry and Melissa Straus (PFN members) and Debbie Mack from the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy were led by Peter Dance around the property he grew up on. The property is northwest of Lakefield and includes portions of the Moore Lake provincially significant wetland and Lakefield Crevasse Fillings Area of Natural and Scientific Interest.

The goal of the outing was to assist with mapping the existing trails and noting natural features and areas of interest. We were equipped with a hand-held Global Positioning System unit to record our route through the property. Although the weather was cold and rainy, we explored a diversity of habitats from open fields to cedar swamps to marsh and mixed forest. Peter's dog kept us all amused by occasionally growling and attacking branches of trees and then shaking them with all his might. A Ruffed Grouse startled the group near a seasonal stream on the property and a Belted Kingfisher was observed perched on a dead tree in the wetland. There were impressive examples of old American Basswood, White Pine and Sugar Maple trees. Some of the areas that were cleared long ago are now growing in with Ironwood, Sugar Maple and White Pine.

Numerous ferns were seen including Bulbet Fern, Sensitive Fern, Crested Fern, Spinulose Wood Fern, Intermediate Wood Fern, Marsh Fern and Bracken. The fall colours were near their peak, especially the blazing red of Staghorn Sumac.

Adam Yacura of the PFN assisted Carol Andrews of KHC to put up a sign that acknowledges the generous donation of the property by Alice Sharpe and the stewardship role of KHC. Craig Onafrychuk of KHC will be using the digital data that PFN club members contributed to prepare a trail map over a digital aerial photograph base.

We thank the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy and the Sharpe and Dance families for welcoming us and hope that there will be more opportunities coming up for PFN members to take part in outdoor activities on the property.



Melissa Straus and Peter McMurtry scout-out trails on a KHC conservation property.



ORCHID SUBMISSIONS WANTED!



Please send in your stories, pictures, poetry, artwork, articles, reviews or PFN outing write-ups. This is your newsletter and we need your help to make it great!

Deadline for submissions for the December issue: Friday, October 23rd, 2007

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

Northern Shrike at Cheryl and Wayne Covert's Farm

Text and Photos by Don Pettypiece

Following the regular Sunday birding trip on October 21st - on which we were unable to locate the (elusive) Northern Shrike - one of our fellow travelers, Cheryl Covert, invited Emily and myself back to her home (farm) for a 'look around'. It was a very pleasant day - so why not?.

Well...the Northern Shrike not so elusive after all! - it (they?) appeared many times during our visit 2 hr visit - as did a flock of about 20 Eastern Bluebirds --- among many other birds.



Cheryl and Wayne have 3 ponds, many fence rows, plenty of trees and much seclusion. With the pleasant lighting, I focused on photographing the fall colours (cattails don't tend to fly away when you approach, and lighting and backgrounds can be 'selected').

Thanks Cheryl for the invitation!



Note: the annual PFN potluck picnic will be held at Cheryl and Wayne's farm in May - see page 2 for more information



Winter Finch Forecast 2007-2008

by Ron Pittaway

GENERAL FINCH FORECAST 2007-2008

This winter's theme is "finches going in three directions" depending on the species. Some finches have gone east and west or both, while others will come south. Most coniferous and deciduous trees have very poor seed crops in much of Ontario and western Quebec. The exception is northwestern Ontario such as Quetico Provincial Park, Dryden and Lake of the Woods, where there are good crops on some species. However, north of a line from the top of Lake Nipigon to Manitoba the crops are generally low in the boreal forest. This will be a quiet winter for most (not all) winter finches in Algonquin Provincial Park, in contrast to last winter's bumper seed crops and abundance of finches. Most of last winter's White-winged Crossbills and Pine Siskins departed Ontario this past summer. They probably went either to eastern or western Canada or both where there are bumper cone crops. Type 3 Red Crossbills, which were abundant in Ontario last winter, have probably returned to their core range in western North America. White-winged and Red Crossbills and Pine Siskins will not be irrupting south out of Ontario as they do in some flight years, because most have already gone east and/or west. However, other winter finches such as Pine Grosbeaks, Evening Grosbeaks, Purple Finches and redpolls are irrupting or will irrupt southward out of northern Ontario. See individual species accounts for details. In addition I comment on other irruptive passerines, such as the Red-breasted Nuthatch,

whose movements are linked to cone crops. Also included is a comment on northern owls.

INDIVIDUAL FINCH FORECASTS

Pine Grosbeak: This grosbeak will irrupt south of the breeding range because crops on native mountain-ashes (rowan berries) are generally poor in northeastern Ontario and across the boreal forest. However, crops are good in northwestern Ontario west of Lake Superior. Pine Grosbeaks should wander south to Lake Ontario and perhaps farther in search of crabapples and planted European mountain-ash berries, which have average crops in southern Ontario. Watch for them at feeders where they prefer sunflower seeds. After irruptions, Pine Grosbeaks return north earlier than other northern finches. Most are gone by late March. Buds form a larger part of their winter diet when mountain-ash crops are poor.

Purple Finch: Most Purple Finches will migrate out of Ontario this fall in response to the low seed crops. Currently, Purple Finches are migrating south through southern Ontario. Very few or none will stay behind at feeders in southern Ontario.

Red Crossbill: The Red Crossbill complex comprises 9 sibling Types, possibly full species, which have different call notes, and different bill sizes related to cone preferences. At least three Types occur in Ontario. Type 3 (smallest bill) prefers small hemlock cones (and spruce cones) in Ontario. The hemlock Type 3 was abundant last winter, but is presumed absent now from the

province because hemlock produced few or no cones in 2007. Type 2 (medium sized bill) is adapted to white pine cones. White pine cone crops are fair to good (but spotty) in northern Ontario. Currently, small numbers of Type 2 Red Crossbills are present on the "east side" of Algonquin Park (heavy crop on white pine) and probably elsewhere with extensive white pine forest. Algonquin's east side pine forest is accessible from Highway 17 west of Pembroke. South of Algonquin white pine crops are poor to none.

White-winged Crossbill: This crossbill moves back and forth across northern coniferous forests searching for new cone crops. Most White-winged Crossbills left Ontario this past summer. They will be scarce or absent in Ontario this winter. They presumably went either west to bumper spruce and fir cone crops in Alberta and British Columbia, and/or to Atlantic Canada, which has large cone crops on spruce and balsam fir, particularly in Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia. White-winged Crossbills are currently common in Newfoundland and western Canada.

Common and Hoary Redpolls: There will be a big flight of redpolls into southern Ontario and bordering United States. Seed crops on white birch, yellow birch and alder are very poor in most of Ontario. Expect redpolls at bird feeders this winter. Far northwestern Ontario has a good white birch crop so redpolls may be common there.

Pine Siskin: Similar to the White-winged Crossbill, most Pine Siskins departed Ontario this past summer, presumably attracted to huge spruce and fir cone crops in Alberta and British Columbia and/or to big spruce and balsam fir cone crops in Newfoundland and Cape Breton Island and probably elsewhere in the Atlantic Provinces. Some of the very few siskins that remained in Ontario are now wandering south with sightings of usually only ones and twos in southern Ontario. Large southward irruptions occur when cone crop failures span much of Canada. Very few siskins will visit feeders this

winter in southern Ontario.

Evening Grosbeak: This grosbeak will irrupt south of the boreal forest this fall because tree seed crops are generally very poor in northeastern Ontario and western Quebec. In recent weeks scattered birds have visited feeders in southern Ontario. Beginning in the early 1980s the Evening Grosbeak declined significantly as large outbreaks of spruce budworm subsided. The larvae and pupae are eaten by adults and fed to nestlings. Expect Evening Grosbeaks at bird feeders in southern Ontario and northern United States, but not in the large numbers seen during the 1970s.

OTHER IRRUPTIVE PASSERINES

Red-breasted Nuthatch: They have been moving south since mid-June presumably because of the poor cone crop in central Canada. Almost all Red-breasted Nuthatches will depart Ontario's boreal forest by late fall and left the province. Some will be at feeders in southern Ontario, but they will be very scarce in Algonquin Park. Algonquin Christmas Bird Counts (32 years) show a biennial (every two years) high and low pattern, with some exceptions.

Bohemian Waxwing: The poor crop of native mountain-ash (rowan berries) in much of northern Ontario will cause Bohemians Waxwings to wander south and east this winter. Watch for them eating buckthorn berries and crabapples in southern Ontario. The mountain-ash crop is better west of Lake Superior with a big crop around Kenora at Lake of the Woods.

Blue Jay: A strong flight is expected this fall. The bechnut crop is zero and the acorn crop on red oak is only fair to good (aborted in some areas) in central Ontario. Soon thousands of jays will be migrating southwest along the shorelines of Lakes Ontario and Erie, exiting Ontario south of Windsor. This winter there will be far fewer Blue Jays in Algonquin Park and at feeders in central Ontario.

Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee: They are moving in northeastern Quebec east of Tadoussac along the north shore of the St. Lawrence River. These movements could extend to southern Ontario and northeastern states.

NORTHERN OWLS

Small mammal populations were abundant this summer in northern Ontario, presumably increasing after the big seed/berry/fruit crops in 2006. However, crops this year are very poor in much of the north, partly caused by cold weather and snow in late spring that froze the buds and flowers of many plants. In early August, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources biologists on aerial surveys noted many raptors near James Bay including 15-20 Great Gray Owls, Short-eared Owls (common), Northern Harriers (common) and scattered Rough-legged Hawks. If small mammal populations crash this fall, then Great Gray Owls, Northern Hawk Owls and Boreal Owls will move, possibly southward into areas accessible by birders. Northern Saw-whet Owl numbers are linked to red-backed voles (a forest vole) in Ontario. There is the possibility that this vole could decline soon because it often cycles with deer mice. The huge population of deer mice in central Ontario is declining rapidly now because of poor seed crops this summer, particularly sugar maple samaras, which they store for the winter. If red-backed vole numbers decline as they often do in association with deer mice, there will be a strong flight of Northern Saw-whet Owls this fall.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank staff of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and birders whose reports allow me to make predictions about finches. They are Ken Abraham (OMNR Hudson Bay Lowlands), Dennis Barry (Durham Region and Haliburton County), Kevin Clute (Algonquin Park), Shirley Davidson (OMNR Minden), Bruce Di Labio (Eastern Ontario), Carrolle Eady (Dryden), Dave Elder (Atikokan), Bruce Falls

(Brodie Club, Toronto), Brian Fox (OMNR Timmins to Chapleau), Marcel Gahbauer (Labrador, Alberta, British Columbia), Michel Gosselin (Gatineau, Quebec), Charity Hendry (OMNR Ontario Tree Seed Plant), Leo Heyens (OMNR Kenora), Tyler Hoar (central Ontario and southern Quebec), Peter Hynard (Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia), Jean Iron (Toronto and northeastern Quebec), Christine Kerrigan and Peter Nevin (Parry Sound District), Barry Kinch (Timiskaming), Bob Knudsen (Ontario Parks, Algoma), Bruce Mactavish (Newfoundland), Scott McPherson (OMNR Northeast Region), Brian Naylor (OMNR North Bay), Marty Obbard (OMNR Peterborough), Justin Peter (Algonquin Park), Janet Pineau (Arrowhead Provincial Park), Fred Pinto (OMNR North Bay), Gordon Ross (OMNR Moosonee), Rick Salmon (OMNR Lake Nipigon), Don Sutherland (OMNR Hudson Bay Lowlands), Doug Tozer (Algonquin Park), Ron Tozer (Algonquin Park and Muskoka), Declan Troy (Alaska), Mike Turner (OMNR Brancroft District), Stan Vasiliauskas (OMNR Northeast Region), Mike Walsh (OMNR Muskoka and Parry Sound), John White (OMNR Ontario Tree Seed Plant) and Alan Wormington (Point Pelee). I thank Michel Gosselin, Jean Iron and Ron Tozer for reviewing the forecast. Ron Tozer also provided information from his upcoming book on The Birds of Algonquin Provincial Park.

PREVIOUS FINCH FORECASTS ARCHIVED

Larry Neily has archived previous finch forecasts at

<http://ca.geocities.com/larry.neily@rogers.com/pittaway05.htm>

Ron Pittaway
Ontario Field Ornithologists
Minden, Ontario
15 September 2007

Sunday Birdwalks are Back! A Report on the October 7th Birdwalk

- John Bottomley

A group of thirteen hardy souls met at the Zoo at eight o'clock on the Sunday of Thanksgiving to go and look for birds. We drove up the east side of the river, stopping at Locks 22 and 23, before turning on Duoro 9th Line to park at the rail trail. We walked in and out on the trail to the north of the road. This is an area that often provides a number of sparrows and other scrub birds. Birds were hard to find, with the exception of American Robins, but we managed to see a few things of interest. Once through with the trail we headed to the sewage lagoons at Lakefield where we saw a few waterfowl as well as a variety of sparrows. All-in-all we saw twenty-six species of which we identified twenty-five. The 'one that got away' was a raptor that provided us a very short glimpse before it disappeared behind trees at the sewage lagoons. It was most likely a Red-tailed Hawk but no-one was prepared to go any further than 'it was not a Turkey Vulture'.

SPECIES LIST:

Double-crested Cormorant	Feral Pigeon	Chipping Sparrow
Great Blue-Heron	Downy Woodpecker	White-throated Sparrow
Canada Goose	American Crow	White-crowned Sparrow
Mallard	Black-capped Chickadee	Song Sparrow
Lesser Scaup	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Red-winged Blackbird
Common Merganser	Yellow-rumped Warbler	American Goldfinch
Turkey Vulture	American Robin	Raptor (sp)
Ring-billed Gull	European Starling	
Mourning Dove	American Tree-Sparrow	



The ORCHID DIARY for 27 Sept - 25 Oct 2007

Compiled by Tony Bigg, 652-7541, tanddbigg@sympatico.ca

- Oct 03 Myles Falconer and the Trent Ornithology class birded the campus and up to the Old Young's Point Rd finding 27 species including **Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Downy & Hairy Woodpeckers, Blue-headed Vireo, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Palm Warbler, White-throated & White-crowned Sparrows, Dark-eyed Junco** and **Pine Siskin**.
- Oct 13 Al Brunger saw four **Sandhill Cranes**, this day and the three previous days, on the Smith 12th Line one km west of Selwyn.
- Oct 14 Up to 23 **Pine Siskins** were showing up at Myles Falconer's feeders just north of Lakefield. Eleanor Proctor also has **Pine Siskins** at her feeder south of Lakefield. Scott McKinlay had **Evening Grosbeaks** at his feeder in Cavan. Tony Bigg led a party of PFN members on a morning bird trip from Lakefield out to the Warsaw Caves with the highlight birds being **Eastern Bluebirds, American Tree Sparrows, Pileated Woodpecker, 19 Wild Turkeys, Bufflehead** and **Lesser Scaup** (the latter two on the Lakefield Sewage Lagoons).
- Oct 15 Jerry Ball found a **Merlin** on Syer Line and 100 **Rusty Blackbirds** on Beardsmore Rd
- Oct 16 Tony Bigg reported a **Snow Goose** amongst a hundred or so Canada Geese above Lock 23 on the Otonabee River. Jerry Ball saw an early **Rough-legged Hawk** on Hannah Rd east of Bailieboro.
- Oct 17 The **Snow Goose** was seen again by both Al Blewett and Tony Bigg
- Oct 18 On a day's trip around the county Jerry Ball found a **Northern Shrike** at Nelson Rd and Base Line, a **Snow Bunting** on Dillon Rd, three **Hooded Mergansers** at Sawyers Creek on Lynch's Rock Rd, a **Pied-billed Grebe** at Mallards Landing, two **American Wigeon** and an **Osprey** at Gannon's Narrows. He also heard Spring Peepers calling 'everywhere'.
- Oct 21 Jerry Ball led a party of PFN members on a morning bird trip from south of Peterborough with the highlight birds being **Wilson's Snipe, 20 Killdeer, Snow Bunting, Ruby-crowned Kinglet** and **Eastern Phoebe**.

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 (2007) – 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 _____