

The  **Orchid**

April 2024
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Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists

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Know • Appreciate • Conserve Nature in All Its Forms



An unusual Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye hybrid visited the area recently.
Photo by Marilyn Hubley.

Inside: April Nature Almanac
Book Review: Where the Falcon Flies
Book Sampler: Martha's Yukon Flowers
How to Help Wildlife
Coltsfoot: The Little Ray of Spring Sunshine

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Welcome new PFN members!

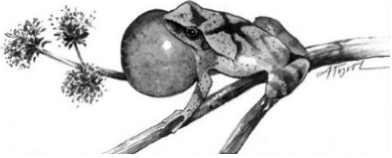
- Jennifer Elchuk
- Lindsey Waterworth
- Sandy Turk & Adam Smith
- Laura Peers
- Jennifer Moon & Christian Fransky
- Brad Braderson







Clockwise from top: Barred Owl (Cathy Douglas). Two male Hooded Mergansers trying to get the attention of a female (Ken Morrison). A Virginia opossum in backyard (Linda Unrau). A view of a sun dog from car window (Lorraine Topping).

| PFN Coming Events | |
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| <p>Sunday, Apr. 7 3:30 to 5:00 p.m Camp Kawartha Environment Centre, 2505 Pioneer Road, Peterborough</p> | <p>For the PFN Junior Naturalists: Welcome Spring with NATURE PUPPETS!</p> <p>Design and make your own Nature Sock Puppet using materials inspired by nature and then bring your puppets to life with professional puppetry techniques. The workshop will be led by Shelley King; puppeteer, arts educator and nature lover!</p> <p>Registration: Contact Shelley King at juniors@peterboroughnature.org. Children must be accompanied by an adult. The workshop is FREE to PFN members.</p> |
| <p>Choice of two dates: April 13 <i>or</i> May 4 1 to 4 p.m. 15 participants</p> | <p>The Fascinating World of a Vernal Pool</p> <p>In the spring forest when vernal pools melt and fill with rain, life returns to these ephemeral wetlands. As soon as water appears, fairy shrimp hatch and are soon joined by hundreds of other organisms. These are the breeding grounds of wood frogs, spotted and blue-spotted salamanders and numerous other creatures. The salamanders migrate to the pools on the first warm, rainy night above 8 °C and generally stay in the pond a few weeks to mate.. We will be checking a pool for the eggs of wood frogs, spotted and blue-spotted salamanders and for some of the many organisms that live and breed in these unique woodland ponds.</p> <p>Mark Williamson, of Trent University will be bringing nets and trays for us to have a closer look at some of the invertebrates that are part of this fascinating ecosystem. We will also be listening for calling frogs and identifying some early spring wildflowers. Dress according to the weather and consider wearing rubber boots. To register for just one date and for more information on location, contact Sue at sueparadis@hotmail.com or call 705-559-2061. Accessibility: Moderate with walking around woodland ponds.</p>  |
| <p>Thursday, Apr. 11 Doors open 7 p.m. Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Hybrid meeting Camp Kawartha 2505 Pioneer Road</p> | <p>Monthly Meeting: Trent Grant Recipient Student Presentations</p> <p>This month the PFN will continue its annual tradition of hosting Trent University students who were recipients of the PFN's Legacy Grant. They will be providing presentations on their research projects at this meeting. This year there are four students presenting. Alexander Robertson will be presenting his research on the Northern Dog-Day cicada. Beck Bugeya's project is on the endangered Small-mouthed Salamander and the effect of the invasive White River Crayfish on Pelee Island. Jade Gorman's research involves the investigation of local stormwater management ponds to determine if they are biodiversity hotspots for freshwater benthic macroinvertebrates (benthos). Mia Bohbot's research project will determine the extent to which nocturnal mammals in urban areas are selecting processed food over natural foods.</p> |
| <p>Sunday, Apr. 14 1 to 4 p.m.</p> | <p>Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas - Year 4 Kickoff Meeting</p> <p>See ad on page 6 for details and how to register. For new and experienced atlasers.</p> |

PFN Coming Events

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| <p>Saturday, Apr. 20 7 to 9 p.m. 20 participants</p> | <p>Sounds of Spring</p> <p>The evening air of spring carries the mating songs of various species of frogs and the sky dance of the American Woodcock (a.k.a. Timberdoodle). On this two-hour evening walk, we will distinguish between the different species of calling frogs and listen to the courtship flights of the American Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe in the provincially significant Cavan Swamp wetland. Contact Sue at sueparadisis@hotmail.com or 705-559-2061 to register and for further information.</p> <p>Accessibility: Easy, walking along a closed roadway</p> |  |
| <p>*New Date* Saturday, Apr. 20 8 to 11 a.m. 20 participants</p> | <p>Lang-Hastings Rail Trail - Part 1</p> <p>The Lang-Hastings Trail offers many chances to see nature up close and enjoy great views of the countryside south of Peterborough. Steve Paul will lead this walk on the section between Heritage Line and Nelson Road, which crosses Indian River and runs alongside a pine forest and through meadow habitat. There will be opportunities to see and hear some returning spring birds including Eastern Meadowlark, Killdeer, Wilson's Snipe and maybe even the local Ospreys returning to their nesting platform. Carpooling will be encouraged to reduce our footprint driving to the trail start location. Be sure to bring your binoculars and dress for the weather of the day. Register by e-mail to stevepaul70@gmail.com. Details on the meeting place will be sent when Steve confirms your spot.</p> <p>Accessibility: Easy 2.8 kms on a flat rail trail.</p> | |
| <p>Sunday, April 21 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. 20 participants</p> | <p>Nephton Mine Hawkwatch</p> <p>Join Cathy Douglas and Dave Milsom on a hawkwatch at Nephton Mine in North Kawartha Township. There's a possibility of seeing various hawks, eagles, cranes, and many duck and geese species as they make their way north. Our vehicles will be parked at the gate to the mine where we will be greeted by Covia Canada staff. Participants will board a school bus and be taken to three overlook sites within the mine, where we will sit and watch the northern migration of the various species. If migration is slow we will be walking around near the overlooks in order to search for other passerines. Things to bring include your lunch, a chair, binoculars, your scope (if you have one), and rubber boots as the site can be very muddy. Dress according to the weather. Please note there are no washroom facilities at the various overlooks. To register email Cathy after April 6 at cddouglas77@gmail.com</p> <p>Accessibility: easy to moderate.</p> | |
| <p>Sunday, Apr. 28 1 to 4 p.m. 15 participants</p> | <p>Spring Ephemerals and the Sprint Against Time</p> <p>Early spring is the time of ephemerals, the wildflowers which take first advantage of the warming soil and full sun to push through the previous year's leaf litter towards the life-giving light. Their colors bear sharp contrast to the austerity of</p> | |

| PFN Coming Events | |
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| | <p>the winter months. Beautiful they may be, but these wildflowers will only be with us a short while. Their existence is an annual sprint against time. They have only a handful of weeks to take full advantage of the ample spring sunlight hitting the forest floor to photosynthesize, flower, and produce the seeds to continue their species. It all must happen before the deciduous trees that tower above them grow their leaves and block as much as 97% of the available sunlight from reaching the forest floor. Join us Sunday, April 28 at 1 p.m. at Kawartha Land Trust's picturesque John Earle Chase Memorial Park on the shores of Buckhorn and Pigeon Lakes as we search for the earliest ephemerals and learn about their fascinating wintering, growth, and pollination strategies. For further details on where to meet, carpooling and to register, contact outing leader Lou Smyrlis after April 6 at lousmyrlis@icloud.com. Accessibility: Easy to moderate.</p> |
| <p>Saturday, May 4 1 to 4 p.m. 15 participants</p> | <p>The Fascinating World of a Vernal Pool</p> <p>This is the second of two dates to visit the vernal pool. See description above for April 13. To register for this date and for more information on location, contact Sue at sueparadis@hotmai.com or call 705-559-2061. Accessibility: Moderate with walking around woodland ponds.</p>  |
| <p>June 24 to 27 Silent Lake P.P.</p> | <p>PFN's Second Annual Camping Trip</p> <p>Please be advised that this year's camping trip is now full.</p>  |
| <p>Note: Most recordings of past PFN Zoom meetings can be viewed on PFN's YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAgbbqgr4ujZ16qba23LTQQ under the playlist menu.</p> | |

| Other Events of Interest | |
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| <p>Various Dates in April in The Land Between</p> | <p>Knowledge Circles</p> <p>As part of our ongoing commitment to a collaborative, community-rooted approach to conservation in The Land Between, we will be hosting 'Knowledge Circles' about Species and Spaces at Risk. The schedule for Knowledge Circles is as follows:</p> <p>Flyers / insects & aerial insectivores / April 3 / Curve Lake Herptiles / reptiles & amphibians / April 11 / Washago Forests, alvars, grasslands, and terrestrial mammals / terrestrial ecosystems / April 18 / Bobcaygeon Swimmers, Lakes & wetlands / aquatic ecosystems / April 27 / Curve Lake</p> <p>To register, go to: https://www.thelandbetween.ca/events/</p>  |
| <p>Saturday, Apr. 13 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.</p> | <p>Ontario Nature Lake Ontario North Spring Regional Meeting</p> <p>Save the date! The meeting will be hosted in Toronto by the High Park Nature Centre and it will be held at their</p>  |

| Other Events of Interest | |
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| High Park Nature Centre, Toronto | facility at 375 Colborne Lodge Drive, High Park, Toronto. The meeting will start at 10 a.m., with the venue open for coffee and mingling at 9:30 am. Bring your lunch to eat on site and then go on a walk/hike in the afternoon to see some of the features of the park. The entire event should end around 2:30 or 3 p.m. The meeting is open to all PFN members. Registration to attend is required. For those not able to attend in person, there are plans to host the indoor presentations portion via Zoom. An agenda, Zoom link for virtual attendees, request for RSVP and other information will be available closer to that date. |
| April 26 to 28 | City Nature Challenge. Please see article below for details. |

City Nature Challenge 2024

Submitted by Sue Paradisis



The second City Nature Challenge will be bigger and better in 2024. Ecology Park and Beavermead have been chosen as the host site. Activities for the whole family are being planned. Organizers met at the park with kawarthaNOW reporter, Megan Gallant who wrote the article in the following link: <https://kawarthanow.com/2024/03/21/peterborough-city-nature-challenge-encourages-citizen-scientists-to-document-local-biodiversity/>

Excerpt from kawarthaNOW article:

This spring, the City of Peterborough is encouraging residents and visitors to get outside and discover the abundance of biodiversity that exists within their own backyards through participation in the four-day City Nature Challenge.

On Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27, the challenge will launch with a community bio-blitz at Peterborough GreenUP’s Ecology Park and neighbouring areas including Beavermead Park and Farmcrest Park. Both days between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., volunteers from the Peterborough Field Naturalists will be on-site to share knowledge, help with species identification, and host educational walks led by local experts.

Throughout the weekend and until Monday, April 29, all data collected within the city’s boundaries and uploaded to the “City Nature Challenge 2024: Peterborough” project on the iNaturalist app or website will count towards Peterborough’s official submission to the competition.

If any of you are available on April 26 or 27 to help with our booth at Ecology Park, please contact sueparadisis@hotmail.com. There are some very interesting guided walks planned as described in the article. If you can’t make it to the event, you can still participate by entering your nature sightings on iNaturalist to the City Nature Challenge Peterborough 2024 project.

President's Message

Greetings from your President.

Nearly a year has passed since I became President of the Peterborough Field Naturalists. I have had the privilege to work with a dedicated team on the Board of Directors who have put in countless hours to keep our Club strong. I can't thank them enough. I also wish to thank all the other volunteers that contribute to our success.

After the struggle to keep things going through Covid, we saw a return to all our core programming in 2023. We were again able to offer In-person members' meetings but in a hybrid format to be more inclusive. The Junior Naturalists are active again while outings are going strong. Thankfully, The Orchid kept us connected through the worst times. I hope you will take the time to read our Annual Report*. A lot has been accomplished.

With the PFN only months away from being 84 years old, it was appropriate for the Board to initiate our first Strategic Plan in 2023. We were gratified with the positive response from you the members. Within the next couple of months, we will be able to share it with you. The work of implementing it will then begin and for our 85th anniversary next year, we will have a clear vision of how to involve our membership with renewed purpose while staying true to the original values that are as relevant today as they were in 1940.

Finally, by attending meetings and outings, I had the pleasure to meet and welcome many of our new members and become reacquainted with long-time friends. I have frequently heard how much people enjoy spending time with other like-minded people in the PFN. I know I certainly do.

~Sue Paradisis, President

* *Editor's Note: This year, the annual report was combined with the financial report in the stand-alone "Business Report", which was sent as a link in the AGM invitation that was e-mailed to members. It and the rest of the AGM documents can be found here: <https://peterboroughnature.org/about/annual-general-meeting/>*



PFN President, Sue Paradisis. Photo by Vicky Paradisis Gaudreau

Coltsfoot: The Little Ray of Spring Sunshine

Submitted by Jason & Lou Smyrlis

For the more than quarter century we've called the Kawarthas home, one plant has served as the true signal of spring. It's a low growing, often misidentified, easy to miss flower which provides the first dab of color on the palette of the post-winter landscape. It flowers in early to mid-April most years before the last of the snowbanks in our driveway and shadier parts of our woods have melted.

To the farmer, this denizen of country roadside ditches is a nuisance, spreading by seed or rhizome (the part of the stem growing underground) into adjacent fields. To the naturalist, its bright flowers are a food source for early wakening bees. To the mystic, its sun-like face marks it as optimal for use in springtime rituals welcoming the return of the sun.

The musings of farmers, naturalists and mystics alike, of course, are of no consequence to the growth of the plant. It is what it is: an immigrant from



This often misidentified, easy-to-miss flower provides the first dab of color on the palette of the post-winter landscape. Photo by Lou Smyrlis

Eurasia whose versatile nature has enabled it to gain a foothold across the land since its introduction into Canada about a century ago. It's capable of growing in a wide variety of soils – clays, silts, sands, fertile and infertile grounds. It prefers moist conditions but can also grow in drier areas, in partial shade or full sun. It's most frequently found in disturbed areas such as roadsides but can also be found in forest edges, old farmers' fields and deeper in the woods if there has been a disturbance.

Low growing (it reaches about 20 cm/8 inches high), it has only a short time to take advantage of the ample spring sunlight covering the ground before taller wildflowers and deciduous trees with their new leaves shade it out. Its survival strategy is to plan a year ahead. The food that propels the emergence of its flowers is stored as starch in its rhizomes from the previous summer so its flowers can appear before this year's leaves begin photosynthesizing. One of its many names, Son-before-Father, is a reference to the fact its flowers appear before the leaves.

When its toothed, slightly lobed leaves finally do emerge they will continue to grow in number and size for several weeks, their canopy reaching full density in late June to mid-July and producing starches for next year's flower growth. The leaf surface is smooth, almost waxy in appearance but the underneath is covered in white wool-like hairs. Leaf veins are purple in color.

A member of the aster family, it's often confused with its more prevalent and conspicuous cousin, the well-known dandelion. But its yellow flowers are slightly smaller and its white, fluffy seed heads, also similar to a dandelion's, will mature by the time the first dandelions are coming into bloom.

Adding to the plant's inconspicuous nature, its flowers close at night and take a few hours in the morning to become obvious again. Even a cluster of them is easy to miss if you're walking by them in the early afternoon or morning.

This versatile, often-misidentified flower of many names is best known as coltsfoot because the shape of its leaves resembles a horse's hoof. But to us it's the little ray of spring sunshine.

Outing Report for March 10: Returning Waterfowl on the Otonabee

Submitted by Steve Paul

Six enthusiastic PFN members joined Laurie and me on Sunday, March 10 for a chilly, breezy, and, at times, snowy outing along the Otonabee River looking for waterfowl and other early returning spring migrants. The highlight was seeing Ring-necked Ducks in Lakefield Marsh. We had a chance of seeing Trumpeter Swans, Mute Swans, Gadwall, Bohemian Waxwings and Pine Grosbeaks, which were seen around there in days prior to our outing, but the very stiff breeze hitting Hague Point probably didn't make hanging out there that day very attractive to the birds – or to us!

We stopped at seven different locations and saw a total of 24 species on this outing, including: Canada Goose, Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Black-Capped Chickadee, European Starling, American Robin, American Goldfinch, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-Eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Northern Cardinal.



Photo: Steve Paul



FLUTTERING THINGS - Poems About Birds. Well known Ontario birder and author, Richard Pope, has condensed his life-long fascination with the beauty, the lives, and the behaviours of his favourites, from water birds to birds of the forests and grasslands. Common birds and rarities are woven into this collection of vividly observed poems, each richly illustrated with stunning photographs and original artwork.

All proceeds go to Thickson's Woods Land Trust and Matt Holder Environmental Research Fund.

Order online from Hawk Owl Publishing or arrange to pick up a copy from Richard at Cobourg: email Richard at rpope@yorku.ca

Help Wildlife

From Sandy Pines Website: sandypineswildlife.org

Photos from SPWC's Winter 2023 "On the Wild Side" newsletter

1. Window Strikes

The number one injury to birds is striking windows. It is such a problem that we have devoted a whole section to it. Check out the Bird Saver article! (<https://sandypineswildlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Bird-Saver-article.pdf>)

2. Handle antifreeze safely

Antifreeze is toxic to wildlife as well as domestic pets. It has a very sweet scent and taste so many animals are tempted to sample it. Dispose of antifreeze safely at your local recycling plant. If you must use it, wrap the bottle in an airtight container (e.g., Tupperware or glass) to avoid leaks, and store it on a high shelf in your garage or basement.

3. Look for nests and dens before pruning trees

If a tree must be removed, watch and listen for activity in and around the tree to ensure that it is void of occupants before cutting it down. Whenever possible, avoid removing trees and shrubs in spring and summer, which are the prime nesting and denning seasons. If possible, wait until fall when the nests and dens are no longer in use. Dead trees with cavities are home to many types of wildlife species throughout the year, and are valuable to the ecosystem if left standing.

4. Supervise dogs and cats

Don't let your dogs and cats run free without being supervised. Most cats carry a bacterium in their saliva called *Pasteurella multocida*. This bacterium spreads quickly through a wild animal's system, often causing infection and death within 48 hours. A wild animal that has been bitten by a cat must receive medical attention immediately if it is to survive. It is best to keep cats indoors at all times, for their sake and for wildlife.



A porcupine being cared for at SPWC

5. Get the lead out!

Hunters and anglers can easily prevent lead poisoning. Ecologically sound alternatives, such as tin, bismuth, copper, steel, and tungsten-nickel alloy, are available. When lead fishing sinkers are lost through broken line or other means, water birds can inadvertently ingest them. Birds of prey and raptors get lead poisoning second hand by eating ducks and mammals. When lead ammunition is used in the hunting of large game, and gut piles are left behind or the animal is wounded and dies later, raptors such as eagles can swallow a piece of shrapnel as they scavenge on the remains of the dead animal.

6. Gather fishing line, kite string, and outdoor nets

Prevent accidental injury by retrieving broken mono-filament fishing line and kite string. Wading birds, ducks and geese often are injured every year getting tangled in mono-filament line that is left behind. Birds can fly into soccer and volleyball nets, or kite string left in trees, and become entangled. Accidental injury may be prevented by lowering nets after each use and removing them during the off-season.

7. Install a chimney screen

Prevent your chimney or attic from becoming a nest site. To avoid unwanted visitors and prevent their injury, install a screen over your chimney opening, attic ventilation openings, vent pipes and window fans. Chimneys and attics are often used as nest or den sites by nesting birds. The wire will prevent wildlife from entering your home.

8. Keep bird feeders clean

Keep feeders clean to prevent spread of disease. Keep seed dry and remove old seeds on the ground around your feeder. Seed that becomes wet can become a host for mold and bacteria that can cause birds to become sick.

9. Proper use of pesticides

Spraying lawns with fertilizers and pesticides result in wildlife poisonings every year. Try not to spray at all, and especially not in areas where bird feeders are located. Seeds falling from the feeder may become contaminated from the fertilizers and pesticides. If you have a rodent problem in your building, consider using traps instead of poisons. Many wildlife species can become poisoned if they capture and eat a mouse or rat that has eaten poison. Many thousands of wild animals and pets die a slow, painful death each year due to cosmetic use of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, and biocides. The only sensible solution is to use none of these products for residential purposes. Buy organically grown and produced products whenever possible.

10. Don't litter on the road

Every year thousands of raptors and other wild animals are killed by vehicles. Food scraps thrown from your vehicle attracts rodents and other animals. To minimize rodents and road kill please do not throw food from your vehicle while driving.

11. Leave them in peace

Provincial and federal laws try to protect all wild animals. Teach children that we must share this planet with wildlife. Healthy wild animals should be left alone in the wild, including baby animals. Usually, their parent is close by or will soon return. It is never a good idea to raise baby wild animals by yourself; not only is it illegal, but the proper diet and development of social and survival skills is necessary. Please see our section on what to do if you find injured or orphaned wildlife.



A litter of Virginia opossums

12. Pay attention while driving

Hitting a wild animal with your car can usually be avoided by simply paying attention. Roads that have woods or shrubs growing near the shoulder are dangerous places for animals, since they may not realize the road is so close. As well, in the winter, many birds flock to roadsides to ingest gravel (to aid in their natural digestion), since other sources of gravel are covered up. Scan the roadside for standing birds and for movement in roadside shrubs that might indicate an animal preparing to emerge. At night, look for the “eye shine” of nocturnal animals near the roadside. One of the best ways to avoid collisions also seems to be the hardest for people when driving cars: Obey the posted speed limit! Speed limits are calculated to allow for reaction time in an emergency situation. Go any faster and you risk not having any time to react. Speeding even a little bit costs the lives of millions of wild animals every year.



Great-horned Owl

13. Swimming Pools

Swimming pools can easily trap baby ducks, geese, reptiles, and amphibians. A low fence around the pool will prevent animals and even children from falling into the pool. Keep the pools cover on when you're not using the pool to prevent any flying and climbing animals from getting trapped.

Did you know that injured wild animals do not belong at a humane society or animal control but stand their best chances with a licenced wildlife rescue? Find out more about wildlife rescues and find one close to you at Ontario Wildlife Rescue. Visit: www.ontariowildliferescue.ca

Nature Almanac for April - Frog Song and Sky Dancers

By Drew Monkman

“Every spring is the only spring – a perpetual astonishment.” – Ellis Peters

April's identity comes down to one thing – SONG. Be it the courtship hammering of yellow-bellied sapsuckers or the chorus of robins, cardinals, and mourning doves that awaken you at 6 a.m., April is very much a month of the sounds of birds advertising their presence to potential mates. Ruffed grouse drum intermittently all day long as northward-bound geese call like barking dogs from high overhead. When evening comes, the nasal “beent” of the woodcock is joined by the incessant calling of spring peepers, wood frogs, and leopard frogs. Learning nature's myriad sounds greatly enhances one's enjoyment of the changing seasons.



Spring Peeper. Photo: John Urquhart

1. Local wetlands will soon awaken to the calls of chorus frogs and spring peepers. The former sounds like someone running a thumb over the teeth of a comb, while the latter sings a short, loud “peep” which is repeated once a second.
2. Migrating waterfowl continue to migrate through the Kawarthas. Check out Little Lake, the Otonabee River, Lake Katchewanooka, Rice Lake and Buckhorn Lake for species such as ring-necked ducks, buffleheads, mergansers, scaup, and goldeneye.
3. Silver maples, a common city tree, will be putting on quite a show. Dense clusters of flowers in tinges of red, yellow and green festoon the twigs. The winged samaras (keys) will appear in June.

4. If you want to see salamanders, wait for a mild, rainy night in early to mid-April when the first frogs are calling. Drive slowly along back roads that pass through low woodlands with nearby swampy areas or flooded ditches. Be careful, however, so as not to run over any of these beautiful amphibians crossing the road. You should be able to see both the spotted and blue-spotted salamanders making their way to breeding ponds.
5. Watch for the yellow, dandelion-like flowers of coltsfoot growing along roadsides. Later in the month, the white, fluffy seed heads also resemble those of dandelions. Coltsfoot initially produce only flowers; the leaves won't appear until later in the spring.
6. Don't be too surprised if a half-crazed robin or cardinal starts pecking at or flying up against one of your windows at this time of year. Being very territorial birds, they instinctively attack other individuals of the same species – in this case, their reflection! Both male and females are known to do this. The banging can start at dawn and last until dusk – for weeks on end! The simplest solution to this problem is to tape a piece of cardboard over the section of the outside of the window where the bird is pecking.
7. In the evening, look for the beautiful yellow-orange star, Arcturus, in the eastern sky. This time-honoured harbinger of spring is the second brightest star visible from northern latitudes. Arcturus is believed to be one of the first stars named by ancient observers. Its name is translated as “Guardian of the Bear”, a reference to nearby Ursa Major.
8. After their late-winter mating season, cottontail rabbits are giving birth. The young, naked and blind, are usually found in a fur-lined depression under a shrub. They grow so fast that they are ready to live on their own after only a month.
9. Now is a good time to learn the songs of early spring birds like the chickadee, robin, cardinal, mourning dove, grackle, starling, house finch, and song sparrow. I find the best way to remember each song is to use a mnemonic or memory aid. For example, the American robin seems to say: “cheer-up, cheer-a-lee, cheer-ee-o”.
10. Close to 30 species of local birds are already nesting this month. Among these is the American robin. The female (the one with the dull orange breast) selects the nest site and does most of the nest building. Robins have two and even three clutches of eggs each year. The same nest is sometimes used for multiple clutches. The male actively defends the territory around the nest through all clutches. You can often see him aggressively pursuing another male that has intruded onto the territory.
11. Up until the early 2000s, there were usually several days in mid-April when tens of thousands of migrating tree swallows could be seen flying over the Otonabee River and adjacent roads and fields. Now we're lucky to see more than several hundred. Some biologists believe that the decline in swallows is related to a decline in the number of flying insects as a result of pesticide use.
12. April sees the return of our only migratory woodpecker – the yellow-bellied sapsucker. It loves to hammer on resonant surfaces such as street signs to advertise ownership of territory. Butterflies, as well as other bird species, feed at the shallow holes the sapsucker makes in trees in order to get sap. For this reason, it is considered a “keystone” species, namely a species that has a larger impact on its community or ecosystem than would be expected from its relatively small numbers.
13. Along shorelines and the edges of wetlands, alder trees are now producing male catkins that grow into long, hanging, caterpillar-like structures that shed puffs of bright yellow pollen when touched.



Walleye spawning at night. Photo: Matthew Garvin

14. Eastern bluebirds are nesting now. Thanks to the success of well-designed bluebird boxes, this species is once again relatively common. Weather is now the biggest factor influencing bluebird population fluctuations, especially cold, wet springs which cause nest failures.
15. April is a very busy time for feeders. Northward-bound tree sparrows and dark-eyed juncos move through the Kawarthas in large numbers. Listen for male juncos singing their even, musical trill. The song is quite similar to that of the chipping sparrow.
16. When water temperatures reach 7 °C, walleye begin to spawn. Along with white suckers, they can sometimes be seen spawning at night at Lock 19 in Peterborough or below the pedestrian bridge in Young's Point. Take along a strong-beamed flashlight.
17. Hepatica are usually the first woodland wildflowers to bloom in the spring. The flowers can be pink, white or bluish in colour. Look for them on south-facing forest hillsides or right at the base of a large tree. The name hepatica comes from the fact that the three-lobed leaves reminded early naturalists (who were often also physicians) of the lobes of the human liver.
18. The courtship flight of the American woodcock provides nightly entertainment in damp, open field habitats such as some of the fields near the Peterborough Airport. Listen for their nasal "peent" call which begins when it's almost dark. When the male launches itself into the air, listen for the twittering of the wings in flight.
19. On average, most local lakes are ice-free by this date. This year, however, the ice has already gone out on most lakes.
20. The ruby-crowned kinglet is a common but little-known April migrant. Smaller than a chickadee, this hyper-active gray bird has a distinctive white eye ring and a long, boisterous call that would seem to come from a much larger bird.
21. White-throated sparrows are passing through and are easily attracted to feeders if you put seed on the ground. They're also a great entree into the world of birdsong, since the wavering whistle of their "Oh-sweet-Canada-Canada-Canada" song is one of the easiest to learn.
22. Elm trees are now in flower and look like they are covered with myriad brown raindrops. The small, wind-pollinated flowers are clustered in tassels.
23. Tonight is the full moon. If you happen to be out enjoying the moonlight and hear a snoring sound coming from the marsh, it's probably the call of the leopard frog.
24. Otonabee Conservation and the Otonabee Conservation Foundation invite community volunteers most years for their Annual Jackson Creek Clean Up. For information call 705-745-5791.
25. The muffled drumming of the ruffed grouse is one of the most characteristic sounds of April. The birds drum to advertise territorial claims and to attract a female. After mating, the male has nothing more to do with reproduction; the female raises the young alone.
26. Bloodroot joins the wildflower parade about now. Eight large white petals make it stand out, as do the large, deeply cut leaves. The juice from the root was used as a body paint and dye by Native Americans.
27. After a winter in the southern United States, yellow-rumped warblers return to the Kawarthas. The male is quite stunning in his blue-gray back feathers, black breast and yellow patches on the rump, sides and crown. These birds usually show up in flocks in spring. Listen for a loud "check" call note.
28. Watch for early butterflies such as the mourning cloak, eastern comma and, by month's end, the dainty spring azure. It is all blue.
29. The first tropical migrants are arriving back from Central and South America. Among those to be expected right now are northern waterthrush, broad-winged hawk, and chimney swift.



American Woodcock. Photo: Robert Pratten

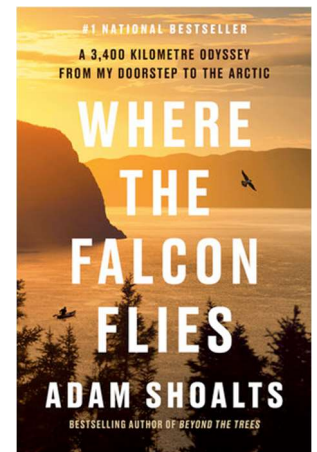
30. Northward-bound loons fly over Peterborough on late April mornings. Even if you don't see the bird, you may hear its yodelling call which is often given on the wing.

Book Review: Where the Falcon Flies by Adam Shoalts

Submitted by Lucie Blouin

Back in December, my son and I had the good fortune of seeing Adam Shoalts present his most recent book, *Where the Falcon Flies*, at a Folk Under the Clock concert with the legendary musician Ian Tamblyn.

Some of you may remember Adam Shoalts' name from a previous book review I did in the October 2020 issue of *The Orchid* on another book that he wrote, *Beyond the Trees*, which told of his canoe trip across the Arctic above the treeline. My son read that book and recommended it to me. We were both intrigued to meet the adventurer in person and to hear about his latest – “a 3,400-kilometer odyssey from my doorstep to the Arctic.” He did not disappoint. It was fun to put a face and voice to the Westaway Explorer-in-Residence of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, who on the book jacket cover is described as an historian, archaeologist, and geographer. Certainly, we see all these skills demonstrated in the book, although I would say the maps in the book did not provide as much detail as I would have liked.



The idea for this adventure came to Adam when one early spring morning he spotted a peregrine falcon from the porch window of his home in the little village of St. Williams, on the north shore of Lake Erie. He considered the route this bird would fly north to reach one of its favourite nesting spots high on the inaccessible cliffs of the remote and windswept Torngat Mountains, located at the tip of Labrador and eastern Quebec. He decided he would follow a route that would take him from the lush Carolinian forests of southernmost Ontario, through the mixed Great Lakes forest, to the more northern boreal forest, and then onwards through the subarctic lands of small, stunted trees and eventually to the tundra and permafrost of the Arctic. His adventure was delayed by the arrival of COVID-19. When the pandemic seemed to be settling down two years later and, amazingly, with the agreement of his wife (despite the interim arrival of their first child!), he set off in late April from Long Point on Lake Erie.

What follows is an incredible tale of yet another solo journey by this young man. This time his mode of transport is not only by canoe - which he navigates through Lakes Erie and Ontario, portaging around Niagara Falls, passing Toronto and Kingston and then up the St. Lawrence River past Montreal and Quebec City. It also includes a long stretch of hiking from the north shore of the St. Lawrence River through Quebec and on to Labrador City. He then acquires another canoe and continues northward to Ungava Bay, through a myriad of lakes and challenging white-water (solo!). Fortunately, he manages to locate a nest of peregrine falcons after hiking up into the Torngat Mountains.

The parts I found the most interesting were his experiences passing through “civilization” or the highly populated areas of southern and eastern Ontario and lower Quebec. One example was his canoe down the Niagara River to where he disembarked to portage around the falls on an early morning before the tourists were out and about. He also had to shelter during the derecho that passed while he was canoeing the St. Lawrence just below Trois-Rivieres.

Once in the remote Quebec and Labrador areas, the trip and his experiences were quite similar to those recounted in the *Beyond the Trees* book: plenty of mosquitoes and blackflies, lots of wind and rain, and barely sufficient food to meet his caloric needs (as a physician I shudder at his diet...) Interestingly, fewer pages are dedicated to this section despite the vast number of kilometers.

All in all, I felt reading this book was time well spent. The book was easy to read, engaging and witty at times, and contained some historical and facts about the natural landscape. If you enjoyed *Beyond the Trees*, I think you would enjoy this book. And if you haven't read either, consider reading one or the other or both!

Martha's Yukon Flowers

Submitted by Enid Mallory

Following is an abridged version of the latest book by long-time PFN member, Enid Mallory.

In 1899, a petite woman struggles over the top of the Chilkoot Pass. Exhausted, pregnant, in pain from a gash in her leg. A bitter wind assails her at the top. She and her husband parted ways in Seattle when he decided he would rather go to Hawaii, so she is travelling to the Klondike Gold Rush with her brother and four other men. Tonight their party will sleep in a hay stack.

But while they wait for a boat to be built to carry them down the Yukon River to Dawson, the sun warms the earth, the air is intoxicating, the mountains majestic, the valleys full of flowers, and Martha falls in love with the Yukon and its flowers.

In the long and dark Dawson City winter, Martha fell into depression, lonely for two sons left with her parents in Kansas, terrified of having a baby alone. Then little Lyman, born in January, introduced her to the kindness of the miners as they welcomed him with gifts and talked about their children far away. As spring came, her brother and the other men looked after Lyman so she could search hills and valleys for wildflowers.



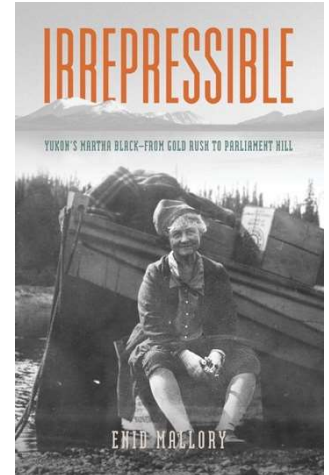
"Pasque Flower" by Martha Louise Black. Photomechanical print, 1955. (e011154530)

She cooked in a mining camp, ran a sawmill and then married a young lawyer-politician named George Black. Martha entertained his Conservative friends with food and flowers found on the mountains, plateaus and swamps around Dawson. In one year, she gathered, pressed, mounted and classified 464 varieties of flowers and ferns. When the Yukon government ran a contest for the most artistic flower arrangement, Martha won. Her arrangements went to the Dominion Herbarium in Ottawa.

By 1909, the population of Dawson had dwindled and the Blacks moved to Vancouver so George could take the British Columbia law exams. Here Martha met Mrs. Hayter Reed, wife of the general manager of Canadian Pacific Hotels who invited her to travel through the Rocky Mountains to gather flowers and make arrangements to beautify the C.P.R. grand hotels.

In 1911, George was named Commissioner of the Yukon. With delight, they moved back to Dawson City to live in Government House. She renovated the house, surrounded it with flowers and entertained the entire community. Here she reigned as chatelaine for four wonderful years before war broke out.

George and her three sons were going to war so Martha was determined to go too. She made her way to Halifax and talked the Officer Commanding Transportation into letting her go on the troop ship with 2000 soldiers. In London, she worked for the Red Cross and became "Mother" to all the Yukon soldiers serving in the war.



Back in Canada after the war, Conservatives asked George to run in the federal election. He won and became Speaker of the House which made Martha chatelaine of Ottawa's social scene. She entertained foreign guests, planned official dinners and decorated tables with exquisite flower arrangements.

When George became ill with what we would now call PTSD, Martha was asked to run in his place. With no radio coverage in the Yukon, she had to campaign by car, boat and even on foot. "But often in the rugged beauty and quiet of that wonderful country, I forgot all about politics and searched for wildflowers." In spite of a Liberal landslide across the country, she became the second woman elected to parliament.

In the 1930s, she wrote magazine articles and pamphlets describing the Yukon and its flowers, luring tourists to see the land she loved. She chose the purple crocus or pasque flower (*Anemone nuttalliana*) to be the emblem of the Yukon. This was a problem because it was already Manitoba's emblem. Out of respect for Martha, the duplication was allowed. After her death, Yukon's flower would be changed to fireweed.

When Martha died in 1957, newspapers said that all Canada looked to the Yukon with a bow. Today, visitors to the restored Government House in Dawson City may feel Martha's presence in the beautiful rooms graced with Yukon flowers.

(*Irrepressible: Yukon's Martha Black* will be available in bookstores or from Hancock House Publishers on April 1.)

Grey Day for a Great Grey Owl

It was a grey, misty morning to search for a Great Grey Owl,
 But we hoped to be accepted by this ghost-like, camouflaged fowl.
 Mist and snowfall dampen and distort sound, making it less clear,
 But Time has refined the sensitivity of this owl's asymmetrical ears.
 We were close to the lake where that February day was mild.
 One has to scour treed openings to find this revered spirit of the wild.
 Then we spied a bulky, large-headed bird with deep-set yellow eyes.
 What would our reluctant presence cause the perched raptor to visualize?
 Could what follows represent this silent, stoic owl's state of mind?
 I, Vole Terror, from Northern Forest, made spruce bog home.
 Hunt at night, sometimes daytime. Food scarce, southward I roam.
 Hunt mostly voles and mice, hear chewing, squeaking under snow.
 Wings make almost no sound; feathers rub when wind disturbs air flow.
 Perch on young pine to listen and watch for prey moving afield.
 Furry food scurries through tunnels, over snow - its fate now sealed!
 Keep alert for Great Horned Owl, other dangers in these strange grounds.
 Take cover when not hunting - car-struck birds lie still, make no sounds.

Murray Arthur Palmer, 2023

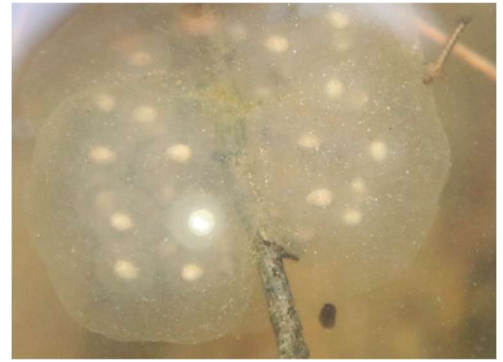


Photo of Great Grey Owl by
 Murray Palmer

Solar Powered Salamander Eggs

Submitted by Marilyn Freeman

In the spring, spotted salamanders emerge from underground to find a mate and lay their eggs in vernal pools. These egg capsules have a surprise in them: inside lives an algae known as *Oophila amblystomatis*. Under regular circumstances, the salamander's immune system would destroy this foreign species but, instead, a remarkable symbiosis takes place. When the egg mass is struck by sunlight, the *Oophila* starts photosynthesizing producing oxygen and carbohydrates. This becomes survival food for the salamander embryos. Embryos with these algae die less frequently than those without and are larger upon hatching. But what does *Oophila* get out of the deal? It appears that the algae benefit from the nitrogenous waste produced by the salamander cells.



Spotted salamander eggs. Photo: Jasmine Barrick

Put a human lens on this and some interesting ideas pop up. Could understanding how the salamander's immune system tolerates beneficial foreign cells lead to new treatments that manage immune responses in people? Could this symbiosis suggest designs that incorporate biological elements for energy production, air purification or waste management? Could "living" buildings create self-sufficient and environmentally friendly urban spaces? Above all, paying close attention to natural synergies could lead to better and more harmonious interactions within ecosystems. Could this lead to a future in which human innovation is in sync with ecological sustainability? One can but hope.

For more details see: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-solar-salamander/>

From the Archives - Historic PFN Publications

Prepared by Martin Parker

The PFN Archives, since its creation in about 1970, contains a variety of documents and reports dealing with various aspects of nature in the Peterborough Region. The following is a summary of the reports on file which deal with the natural areas in the City of Peterborough, Peterborough County and adjacent areas.

An Introduction to Some of The Areas Around Peterborough Which Are of Interest to Naturalists. Compiled by Dudley Hewitt and Gordon Berry around 1972.

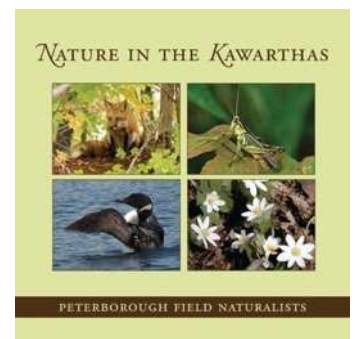
Peterborough: Woodlots, Water, Wildlife and Wilderness. Undated but late 1970s. Edited by Gordon Berry and B.F. Higgins and published by Peterborough Field Naturalists.

Kawartha Nature, 1992. Compiled by the Peterborough Field Naturalists and published by Boston Mills Press. Chapters written by members and supporters of the PFN.

Field Trip to the Dummer Moraine, F.A. Heilingbrunner, 2011. A detailed guide for a road trip to key locations in the Dummer Moraine. He was President of the PFN in the early 1960s.

Nature in the Kawarthas, 2011. Edited by Gordon Berry, John Bottomley and Rebecca Zeran. Chapters written by members and supporters of the PFN.

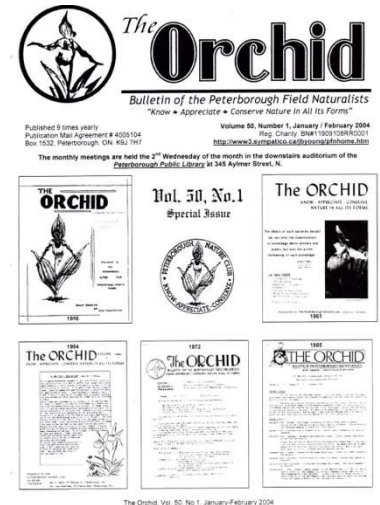
Collectively these publications provide valuable information on the natural areas of our region. The late Gordon S. Berry was involved in a number of these publications.



The Orchid Over the Years

In the January/February 2004 issue of *The Orchid*, a prior *Orchid* Editor, Jon Oldham (of the Peterborough Museum & Archives) wrote an article on the history of *The Orchid* based on his research. *The Orchid* was 50 years old...

Former Club President, the late J.L. McKeever, wrote: "This is the first of what I hope will be a series of newsletters to be issued perhaps two or three times a year. It seems worthwhile to have such a vehicle to inform members of decisions taken by their Executive, and to discuss topics of general interest. In this way perhaps we can stimulate interest in our Club and keep our members in closer touch between meetings and outings. As your President, I am undertaking this first issue myself, with the kind cooperation of Mr. McKone in typing and reproducing. It is hoped that any member will feel free to contribute paragraphs to future issues. Comments, criticisms and suggestions are invited."



Spring Songs

The ducks are back (they nest in the shrubbery here)
 Quack, quack, quack, quack;
 The Canadas too, (Geese that is)
 Such a hullabaloo;
 The gulls screech
 And in the lull
 The robin comes along
 And sings a sweeter song;

The grackles hope to make a nest
 They like the evergreen cedars best,
 So now the 'hes' squeak and wheeze
 Trying to attract the 'shes.'
 (Below my window I see it all from courting to fledging)

At night the chattering starlings roost in flocks
 in the trees beside the locks;
 The sparrows twitter
 Round the feeder (outside by the parking lot);
 The mourning doves (which have been in evidence all winter)
 Are suddenly gone, so no more of that cooing, which I do not love;
 The crow, that clever bird,
 Is occasionally heard.
 New noises to replace the snow plough sound
 And the scraping of the shovels along the ground.

~Heather Wheat



The Orchid Diary



A summary of noteworthy observations by PFN members and others in Peterborough County. Information compiled from eBird's rare bird sightings, Drew Monkman's Sightings website and individual submissions. Please submit your interesting observations to orchiddiary@peterboroughnature.org

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| Feb. 19 | A flock of 20 Tundra Swans was seen by Ken Trevelyan flying over Cavan. |
| Feb. 22 | Linda Unrau had an unusual visitor on her patio today. A Virginia Opossum was snuffling around eating the birdseed she had spread. It ran away when seen, not to be spotted again! |
| Feb. 23 | <p>Three American Wigeon were seen by Kim Bennett and Mike Coyne on the Trent River at the River Road Lookout.</p> <p>Don Sutherland noted a Red-breasted Merganser at Birdsall Wharf, Rice Lake.</p> <p>Jeff Stewart continued to spot Pipy, the Eastern Towhee, feeding under the feeder in his Millbrook yard. This bird continued to be seen until March 2 but has not been reported since.</p> <p>Red-winged Blackbirds were being seen with increasing frequency now, with single males being seen by Laurie Healey on Keene Rd, by Marilyn Hubley on Eagleson Line, Cavan, and by Ken Fulsang in his backyard, while a flock of 8 was noted by Dave Milsom on Scollard Drive, Peterborough.</p> <p>Marilyn Freeman observed a flock of approximately 100 Snow Buntings fly over Hilliard St.</p> |
| Feb. 24 | <p>Don Sutherland observed a pair of Redheads, 6 Ring-necked Ducks and 3 female Red-breasted Mergansers on the Trent River at 5th Line Asphodel.</p> <p>Three more Red-breasted Mergansers were seen on Little Lake by Jake Nafziger, where they continued to be seen by many observers through the winter.</p> <p>Saw-whet owls were heard by Jake Nafziger and Trevor MacLaurin at the Harold Town Conservation Area and on Drummond Rd.</p> |
| Feb. 25 | <p>The Carolina Wren observed all winter continues on Mill St, Keene, as noted by Chris Risley and Erica Nol.</p> <p>Eastern Bluebirds continue to enjoy the mild winter. Chris Risley saw 2 at the Mather's Corners meltwater pond, Don Sutherland saw a flock of 5 on Dummer Asphodel Line near Cty Rd 40, and Mike Burrell had one in his Douro yard.</p> |
| Feb. 26 | <p>Scott Gibson spotted a Turkey Vulture over the storm ponds near Armour Rd.</p> <p>A Saw-whet Owl was heard by Angela Matos on Douro 4th Line.</p> <p>An American Goshawk was spotted by Patrick Kramer on the Rotary Park trail.</p> |
| Feb. 27 | <p>A blue morph Snow Goose was spotted by Jake Nafziger on Little Lake, which was subsequently seen by many others.</p> <p>Scott Gibson saw 4 Cackling Geese amongst the Canada Geese at Meadowvale Park.</p> |

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| | <p>Cathy Douglas noted a female Wood Duck at the Lakefield Marsh and a male on the Otonabee River south of Lakefield.</p> <p>A Lesser Scaup and an American Goshawk were amongst Kale Worman's sightings at Trent University's Promise Rock Nature Area.</p> <p>Turkey Vultures were seen by Luke Berg in downtown Peterborough and by Marilyn Freeman in the Chemong Rd area. From this point onward, they continued to be seen returning almost daily.</p> <p>Winter Wrens were seen by Mike Burrell in his Douro backyard, Steve Paul on the Lang Hastings Trail at Technology Dr, by Jake Nafziger from a trail near Television Rd and by Iain Rayner in Lakefield. Each of these birds continued through the winter.</p> <p>Three male Brown-headed Cowbirds were seen by Don Sutherland at the Lakefield Sewage Lagoons.</p> |
| Feb. 28 | <p>Flocks of Tundra Swans were seen flying high over Peterborough in the morning by Mike Burrell, Luke Berg and Leo Weiskittel. A larger flock was later spotted by Iain Rayner over Lakefield Marsh.</p> |
| Feb. 29 | <p>A Cackling Goose was seen by Don Sutherland on the Otonabee River south of Lakefield.</p> |
| Mar. 2 | <p>Iain Rayner spotted an American Wigeon at the Lakefield Marsh and 3 Redheads on Katchewanooka Lake off Stenner Rd.</p> <p>Don Sutherland observed another Redhead on Pigeon Lake from the Causeway.</p> |
| Mar. 3 | <p>Brown-headed Cowbirds began showing up in earnest, including 1 in Warsaw by Josh Nelson, 2 by Don Sutherland on Buckhorn Rd, 3 by Dave Milsom on Hwy 2 and several by Laurie Healey on Keene Rd.</p> <p>Steve Paul noted 4 Rusty Blackbirds on the Lang-Hastings Trail near Technology Dr. and Laurie Healey heard 1 on Keene Rd.</p> |
| Mar. 4 | <p>Luke Berg noted 2 white morph Snow Geese flying with a flock of Canada Geese on the Lang-Hastings Trail near Humphries Line and Don Sutherland saw a single bird in a flock of Canada Geese at Hall Landing, Rice Lake.</p> <p>Larger flocks of Tundra Swans were noted by several including Laurie Healey on Keene Rd, Luke Berg on the Lang Hastings trail near Technology Dr, and Jake Nafziger at Hall Landing, Rice Lake. Many more flocks and pairs continued to be seen as the winter progressed.</p> <p>Jake Nafziger reported 4 Redheads in Little Lake at the Mark Street boat launch.</p> <p>Angela Mattos noted 2 Sandhill Cranes flying over her Douro yard. In the subsequent weeks, many more sightings of these birds were reported.</p> <p>Several people have been hearing American Woodcocks including Andrew Brown in Ennismore, Ken Fulsang and Jeff Stewart in their Peterborough yards, Kale Worman at the Camp Kawartha Environment Centre.</p> |

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| | <p>Eastern Meadowlarks were popping up in several places including at the Douro 8th Ln Hydro Lines by Dave Milsom, Scriven Rd and Hwy 2 by Jake Nafziger, and near Woodland Acres by Carol B.</p> <p>Luke Berg observed an adult Golden Eagle along the Trent River at 5th Line Asphodel.</p> |
| Mar. 5 | <p>American Wigeon and Gadwalls are being spotted regularly now, including 4 Gadwall by Pam Martin near Hope Mill and 2 by Laurie Healey at Campbelltown Landing, and 4 American Wigeon on Pigeon Lake by Don Sutherland and 5 in Rice Lake near Bolin Rd, by Dave Milsom.</p> |
| Mar. 6 | <p>A Northern Mockingbird was observed by Kale Worman on Douro Eighth Ln. A couple of days later, Laurie Healey observed one in her Keene Rd backyard as well!</p> <p>Rusty Blackbirds continue to show up, including at Pigeon Lake as seen by Don Sutherland and on Duncan's Ln by Laurie Healey.</p> |
| Mar. 7 | <p>Marilyn Hubley and Sue Paradisis noted a Greater White-fronted Goose in a field on Cty Rd 42 east of Norwood, which was observed by many others.</p> <p>An early Turkey Vulture was seen by Laurie Healey from her backyard. Sightings became quite frequent after this.</p> |
| Mar. 8 | <p>Martin Parker spotted an early Double-crested Cormorant on the Otonabee River south of Lakefield.</p> <p>The Red-headed Woodpecker previously noted at a feeder in Ennismore continues to come daily to the feeder.</p> <p>A Hermit Thrush was observed at the Otonabee Gravel Pits by Cathy Douglas.</p> |
| Mar. 10 | <p>Patrick Kramer spotted 3 Northern Pintails on Lower Chemong Lake.</p> <p>A Red-shouldered Hawk was seen by Ian Sturdee on Cordova Lake; this bird continued over the week.</p> |
| Mar. 11 | <p>Marilyn Freeman noticed a very early Little Copper butterfly on 6 Ln south of the Airport.</p> |
| Mar. 12 | <p>Angela Mattos spotted another Red-shouldered Hawk in her Douro yard and a second one joined it later in the week. Another was seen by Don Sutherland at Pigeon Lake, Blind Channel.</p> <p>A male Northern Shoveller was seen by Laurie Healey on Rice Lake at Duncan's Line.</p> |
| Mar. 13 | <p>Coltsfoot was observed blooming on Thorne Rd near Matchett Rd, by Marilyn Freeman.</p> <p>Luke Berg saw an Eastern Towhee on the Lang Hastings trail at Humphries Line.</p> |
| Mar. 14 | <p>A Wilson's Snipe was heard winnowing by Angela Mattos over her Douro yard.</p> <p>Kale Worman saw a group of 4 Tree Swallows foraging over the Otonabee River near Trent. A single Tree Swallow was seen by Leo Weiskittel on Pigeon Lake at Kerry Ln.</p> <p>Another Rusty Blackbird was seen by Chris Risley and Leo Weiskittel at Squirrel Creek.</p> |

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| | Laurie Healey observed at least 5 Pine Grosbeaks at Lakefield Marsh. |
| Mar. 15 | Don Sutherland saw and confirmed a Bufflehead x Common Goldeneye hybrid, amongst a small group of Buffleheads , at Lakefield Sewage Lagoons. This unusual bird continued in this location and has been observed by many others, subsequently. A Ruddy Duck was spotted by Jake Nafziger on South Chemong Lake from Frank Hill Rd. Another Winter Wren was heard by Scott McKinlay in Cavan Woods. |
| Mar. 17 | A single Western Chorus Frog was heard singing on Indian River Ln north of Hwy 7 by Marilyn Hublely, Laurie Healey and Sue Paradisis. Kathryn Sheridan spotted an early Osprey checking out a nesting platform near Hiawatha Ln on Cty Rd 2. Ian Sturdee's Winter Wren has returned to its usual location, on Cordova Lk. Another Rusty Blackbird was heard and seen by Kim Bennett on Centre Rd, Dummer-Douro. |
| Mar. 21 | Ben Taylor spotted a Common Loon on Little Lake. |




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Orchid submissions are encouraged!

The submission deadline for the next issue is Monday, April 22.
 Submissions can be articles, photos, anecdotes, nature book reviews, poems, outing reports, nature news, recommendations, interesting things you've learned or observed about nature etc.
 Please send submissions to Kathryn Sheridan at orchid@peterboroughnature.org
 or mail submissions via post to: PFN, PO Box 1532, Peterborough ON K9J 7H7





Junior Naturalist News

peterboroughnature.org

email: juniors@peterboroughnature.org

March/April 2024

Welcome Spring
with

NATURE PUPPETS!

Design & make your own **Nature Sock Puppet** using materials inspired by nature. Bring your puppets to life with professional puppetry techniques and then introduce them to the other participants with some fun puppet improv to welcome spring!

The workshop will be led by Shelley King; puppeteer, arts educator & nature lover!

DATE: Sunday, April 7th

TIME: 3:30pm to 5:00pm

LOCATION: Camp Kawartha Environment Centre, 2505 Pioneer Road, Peterborough

REGISTRATION:

Contact Shelley King at juniors@peterboroughnature.org. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Mark Your Calendar for a fun & informative workshop dissecting **OWL PELLETS!**

Saturday, May 25th from 1 to 2:30pm.

More information to follow soon!

Early Signs of Spring Challenge

March & April are magical months of transition from winter to spring. There is so much to do and see as the natural world comes to life.

Our challenge to you, is to explore 1 new nature area you've never visited before, during the month of March. There are so many to choose from!

Grab your nature journal, pens & pencils, water bottle, rubber boots, trail snack, and binoculars (if you have some) and enjoy exploring all that March has to offer!

Membership Application Form

Memberships may be obtained by mailing this completed form to:

Peterborough Field Naturalists
PO Box 1532
Peterborough Ontario K9J 7H7



PETERBOROUGH FIELD NATURALISTS

Contact Information:

Name(s):

Phone(s):

Address:

Email(s):

I would like to receive The Orchid by (pick one): Mail Delivery Email Both

Membership type and fee schedule:

Notice: Membership fees provide only a small part of the funds required to operate the Peterborough Field Naturalists. Donations from members like you help us offer a diverse range of programming for everyone. Please consider including a donation with your membership so that we can continue to serve you and the Peterborough community. **Please make cheques payable to Peterborough Field Naturalists.** For E-Transfer go to <https://peterboroughnature.org/membership/join-online/>

I have included a donation with my membership fees:

Yes or No

If yes, amount: \$ _____

1. Single Adult \$30

2. Single Student or Youth \$15

3. Family \$40*

* Please give the names and ages of children wishing to enroll in the Junior Field Naturalists:

| Name | Age | Name | Age |
|------|-----|------|-----|
| | | | |
| | | | |

◀◀◀ New Member Information ▶▶▶

Main interests:

Natural Environment

Reptiles and Amphibians

Botany

Birds

Aquatic Life

Geology

Insects

Astronomy

Mammals

Other: _____

How do you hope to participate?

Outings

Citizen Science

Meetings

Junior Naturalists

Volunteers are always needed. Are you interested in any of these activities?

Join the PFN Board

Sit on research or conservation committees

Lead an outing

Assist with meetings

Work on field projects

Help with the Orchid publication

Help the junior naturalists

Give a presentation

Liability Waiver (New and Returning Members):

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 my underage children.

Signature: _____

Date: _____