

OCT 15 1991

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 4 PAGES 109-164 OCTOBER - DECEMBER 1991

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# TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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*A Publication Concerned With  
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

# TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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**Objectives of the Club:** To promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage; to encourage investigation and publish the results of research in all fields of natural history and to diffuse the information on these fields as widely as possible; to support and co-operate with organizations engaged in preserving, maintaining or restoring environments of high quality for living things.

**Club Publications:** THE CANADIAN FIELD-NATURALIST, a quarterly devoted to reporting research in all fields of natural history relevant to Canada, and TRAIL & LANDSCAPE, a quarterly providing articles on the natural history of the Ottawa Valley and on club activities.

**Field Trips, Lectures** and other natural history activities are arranged for local members; see "Coming Events" in this issue.

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Family (yearly) \$25      Life (one payment) \$500

Subscriptions to *Trail & Landscape*: (libraries and institutions): \$23  
per year (volume)

Single copies of recent issues: \$6.00 each postpaid

Index to Volumes 1 - 20: \$8.00 + \$2.00 postage and handling

**Membership application, correspondence :**  
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# TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

Published by  
The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club  
Box 3264, Station C  
Ottawa, Ont.  
K1Y 4J5

Editorial Address:  
Fenja Brodo, Editor  
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# Welcome, New Members

## Ottawa Area

Georgiana Butler  
Joseph E. Dafoe & Family  
Andree Dubois  
Marie-Nelie Elien  
Dr. C. Gardell & Family  
Anthony L. Halliday & Family  
Mr. & Mrs. J. Harding  
E. A. Warren Lacoste  
Jean P. Lee  
Raymond H. Lees & Family  
John W. Lorimer  
Laven I. Mikoleit  
Isabel H. Nicol  
Wendy Noad

Grace K. O'Farrell  
Barbara Phillips  
Susan L. Potter  
Anne G. Ritchie  
Denis H. G. Rowden & Family  
Patricia A. Salberg  
Daen Schutta  
William D. Smythe & Family  
Kim Taylor  
Janice A. Traynor  
Dr. John & Betty Valberg  
Alex I. Wandeler & Family  
Caroline A. Whaley

## Other Areas

Robin W. Baird & Pam J. Stacey  
Victoria, B.C.  
Riley Stephen O'Donnell  
9 lbs. 15 oz.  
Sundridge, Ont.

Richard N. Riddell  
Calgary, Alberta  
Lisa L. White  
Mobile, Alabama



Doreen Watler, Chairman  
Membership Committee  
September, 1991

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**DEADLINE:** *Material intended for the January - March 1992 issue must be in the editor's hands before November 15, 1991. Mail your manuscripts to:*

Fenja Brodo  
Editor, *Trail & Landscape*  
28 Benson Street  
Nepean, Ontario, K2E 5J5  
H: (613) 225-7081; W: (613) 990-6443; Fax: (613) 990-6451.

## Call for Nominations for OFNC Council

The Nominating Committee is responsible for filling the positions of officers and other Council members.

We would like to remind club members that all may nominate candidates for the Council. Nominations require the signatures of the nominator and seconder and a statement of willingness to serve in the specified position by the nominee. Some relevant background information would be helpful.

The committee will also consider any suggestions for nominations that members wish to submit.

Nominations and other data must be sent to the Nominating Committee, The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, Box 3264, Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 4J5, to arrive no later than November 15th, 1991.

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## OFNC Awards

Nominations are requested from club members for the following awards:

**Honorary Membership**

**Member of the Year**

**Service**

**Conservation**

**Anne Hanes Natural History Award**

Descriptions of these awards appeared in *Trail & Landscape* 22(4):188(1988). With the exception of Honorary Membership, all nominees must be members in good standing. Honorary members do not have to be members of the club.

Nominations and supporting information must be received no later than December 15th, 1991. Submit them directly to Enid Frankton, 2297 Fox Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario, K2B 7K5. □

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## Can You Help?

We need someone with desktop publishing skills, especially someone familiar with Ventura or a similar desktop program, to help assemble (not type) the camera ready copy for *Trail & Landscape*.

If interested, please call the editor, Fenja Brodo at 225-7081 (H) or 990-6443.(W)

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# Garden Spider as a House Guest

*Jack Holliday.*



*Typical orb web  
photo by A.L. Turnbull*

Last Summer (1990) I noticed a small orb-web spider had “erected” a web on a plant which was growing in a planter in my living-room. The orb-web making spiders are usually encountered outside. The spiders which live in our houses and make these unsightly cob-webs in the corners are usually adapted to living in houses. Often they belong to *Theridion* or *Tegenaria*. The orb-web weavers are usually *Araneus*. The one in my planter was probably *Araneus diadematus*, the cross spider (so-called because of cross-like markings on the abdomen).

She had made a small 15 cm diameter web and caught the insects which were attracted to the centre of the planter. When captures were few, I presented her with the occasional insect to “keep her going.” She grew, and moulted twice into a larger exoskeleton, about 2 cm long with an abdomen the size of a small bean. I convinced my wife of the importance (to me) of not having the spider vacuumed up.

As autumn, and then winter arrived food was not available naturally for *diadematus*, so I hunted down flies, earwigs and other food. Once I dropped a house spider into her web, which she quickly wrapped-up and dispatched. As a last resort, when insects became frozen in early December, I found some small earthworms under boards in the garden and fed her 1 cm pieces which she quickly accepted.

Her method was usually the same. When vibrations of the web informed her that she had a capture, she hurried to the scene, at the same time shaking the web to bring more sticky threads in contact with the prey. She stopped within 2 or 3 cm or so of the prey, and then seemed to "cast" some silk toward her catch. Then she rolled it in a 3 mm wide band of silk. When the catch was securely wrapped she bit it and then carried it to her lair among leaves of the plant.

It was February and winter was firmly entrenched. Food for *diadematus* was hard to find. One of my daughters brought me two flies and later a fly and two sow bugs from her basement. I doled out the flies. Then a few days later I removed the larger of the sow bugs from a storage jar and carefully placed it in the web. It hung there motionless for minutes. I stole a straw from the broom and using it gently agitated the sow bug. After several moments the spider very slowly approached. She didn't shake the web or "run" as is usual. With her two long front legs she fumbled with the sow bug until it dropped from the web. I thought perhaps she was weak from hunger? She retreated to her lair and I scrambled after the escaping sow bug.

Again I entangled it in the web, and since it didn't try to escape, had to poke at it with the broom straw to gain the spider's attention. Once more she strolled down to investigate. Very gingerly she handled the sow bug with her long legs, and once again it dropped free from the web and escaped. Obviously she didn't find the sow bug edible. I suspect it had sent a signal either by some subtle vibration of the web or more probably by a scent.

The spider, because of her cautious approach and subsequent actions "knew" she didn't want the sow bug. I recall feeding her a couple of sow bugs in the fall, which she accepted and ate so perhaps only certain species are not edible?

Finally I introduced the last sow bug to the web. It hung motionless. I agitated the web with a straw. The spider approached half-way and stopped. I agitated the web three more times. The spider approached until she caught the thread on which the bug hung. She reeled in the thread. She examined it slowly rotating it with her feet and ending up with a silvery-white ball about 5 mm diameter. Then, she dropped it from the web and wearily climbed back to her lair. No more fooling around with that pest. It was gone for good.

Sorry *diadematus*, that was the only food I had left. You'll have to await spring.

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# Goldenrods

*John Gillett*

*Curator Emeritus, Botany Division, Canadian Museum of Nature*

Most of the golden yellow flowers appearing in late summer and throughout the fall in our area are goldenrods. In addition to these familiar yellow flowered species are two other species which are white flowered. Goldenrods form an important and incredibly beautiful part of our local fall flora.

Goldenrods are members of the Family Asteraceae, or the older alternate name Compositae. When you look at a "flower" of these plants you are actually looking at a cluster of literally hundreds of flowers. You will have to look closely to see that the individual flowers are tiny little things (called florets - meaning little flowers) only a few millimeters in diameter. Individual flowers are usually grouped into larger aggregates called, appropriately, heads. Heads are grouped into still larger structures called inflorescences.

Two kinds of flowers are found in the heads of most members of the Asteraceae. The flowers at the inner portion of the head have a symmetrical set of petals (corolla) and these are the disc flowers; the flowers at the margin have an asymmetrical corolla or set of petals which are modified so that they are strap-shaped and are called ray flowers.

Many of the goldenrods can be distinguished merely by looking at the way they are put together. The patterns for many species are quite distinctive.

Goldenrods are often falsely blamed for causing hay fever. The error is made because of the flowering time which is about the same as that of the real culprit - ragweed. Goldenrods have sticky heavy pollen and are pollinated by insects. It is unlikely that this pollen can be air borne to any extent. Ragweed, on the other hand, has very light pollen grains and is wind-pollinated.

The best book on goldenrods is that by John Semple and Gordon Ringius, called "Goldenrods of Ontario." Although it purports to cater to the amateur as well as the scientific worker, it strikes me as a trifle too technical for most people. Of more importance is the number of species included. There are twenty-nine species of goldenrods in Ontario. We have fourteen goldenrods in the Ottawa District and there are about thirty-two in Canada.



**Key to the Two Genera and the Species of our Region:**

1. Stem leaves grass-like with several parallel veins; heads of flowers in compact clusters, these arranged in a flat-topped structure .....  
.....*Euthamia graminifolia*
1. Stem leaves broader, not grass-like, with one main vein; heads in clusters but if forming a flat-topped structure then the flowers white rather than yellow .....2
2. Heads borne in a flat-topped structure; flowers white somewhat like an Aster .....*Solidago ptarmicoides*
2. Heads borne in some other pattern .....3
3. Clusters of flowers borne along the stems in the axils of leaves or on short side branches ..... 4
3. Clusters of flowers borne at the top of the stem on usually downward-curved long side branches ..... 9
4. Leaves and stems very rough to the touch; groups of flowers borne all along the stem, flowers may be white or yellow.....*Solidago bicolor*
4. Leaves and stems smooth or only slightly roughened ..... 5
5. Bracts (little leafy structures found around the individual heads) with recurved tips; lower leaves broad, almost egg-shaped with nearly rounded tips ..... *Solidago squarrosa*
5. Bracts not recurved but flat ..... 6
6. Clumps of flowers borne at the base of the leaves along the stems; woodland species ..... 7
6. Clumps of flowers borne at the top of the stem on short branches ..... 8
7. Leaves not very wide, certainly no more than 3 cm, lance-shaped; bracts 2-5 mm long; usually a bloom on the straight stem. *Solidago caesia*
7. Leaves 6-7 cm wide, with coarse teeth, somewhat egg-shaped, and with long pointed tips; bracts 4-6 mm long; zigzag stems without a bloom..... *Solidago flexicaulis*
8. Stems finely roughened at least in the area of the flowers; plants of fields and forests ..... *Solidago puberula*
8. Stems smooth, without hairs; plants mainly of bogs or fens .....  
.....*Solidago uliginosa*
9. Terminal clusters of flowers usually turned to one side. *Solidago nemoralis*
9. Terminal clusters of flowers with long branches that tend to curve downwards ..... 10

10. Basal leaves present during flowering; stems and leaves hairless; leaf margins with fine hairs ..... *Solidago juncea*
10. Basal leaves withered at time of flowering; stems hairy, at least below the flower clusters ..... 11
11. Underside of the leaves with a central vein and several alternate, curved, lateral veins; hairy along the veins; middle leaves about 1/3 as broad as long and coarsely toothed ..... *Solidago rugosa*
11. Underside of the leaves with a central vein and two almost parallel veins on either side arising from near the base; leaves much longer than wide, almost strap-shaped and finely toothed ..... 12
12. Stems smooth, without hairs below the flower clusters, usually whitened with a bloom..... *Solidago gigantea*
12. Stems short-hairy or rough at least above the middle ..... 13
13. Leaves thin, without hairs or only slightly roughened on the veins, sharply toothed; stems sparingly hairy, hairless or becoming so below the middle; small bracts below the flowers 2 to 3 mm long .....  
..... *Solidago canadensis*
13. Leaves firm, densely rough hairy below with spreading hairs; without teeth or if teeth present, widely spaced; stems densely short-hairy below the middle; bracts below the flowers 3 to 4.5 mm long .....  
..... *Solidago altissima*

*Euthamia graminifolia* (L.) Nuttall — Narrow-leaved Goldenrod, Povertyweed; Verge d'or graminifoliée

Distinctive by its slender leaves and flat-topped inflorescence (corymb). Narrow-leaved Goldenrod is a familiar sight along streams, on beaches, in meadows and in damp soil in open fields. Flowering takes place mid-July until mid-September. A very attractive plant and one of my favourite plants.

*Solidago altissima* L. — Tall Goldenrod; Verge d'or très élevée

This species occurs in open fields, clearings and along margins of woods. It is relatively common and can be recognized most readily by its densely hairy lower stem, stiff leaves and its greyish cast in the field. Flowering is in August and September.

*Solidago bicolor* L. — Silverrod, Silverweed, Pale Goldenrod; Verge d'or bicolore

Semple includes most of our plants under the name *S. hispida* Muhl. and indicates that *S. hispida* and *S. bicolor* are almost the same thing. As they differ only by the yellow versus white ray flowers, the two phases are considered as

two varieties by many authors. The relationship between them is not at all clear. So I am putting them together under the older name. It is found in rocky places, along riverbanks and about cliffs. It is rather sparse in this area. Flowering is from July to August. It is in fruit until mid-September.

*Solidago caesia* L. — Blue-stemmed Goldenrod; Verge d'or bleuâtre  
The arching stems with heads borne at the base of each stem leaf, and the slender tapering leaves are quite distinctive. This is a woodland species flowering from mid-August until late September. Fruiting is in October.

*Solidago canadensis* L. — Canada Goldenrod; Verge d'or du Canada,  
Bouquets jaunes  
Abundant in open fields, often forming dense stands. Flowering is from late July throughout August. This species has thinner and more flexible leaves than *S. altissima*. The stems are sparingly hairy, without hairs at all or becoming hairy below the middle. Difficulty may be experienced in separating these two species.

*Solidago flexicaulis* L. — Zigzag Goldenrod, Broad-leaved Goldenrod;  
Verge d'or à tige zigzagante  
This mixed woods and glade species is distinctive by its tapered, egg-shaped to elliptical, sharply toothed leaves and often elongate flower clusters borne in the axils of the leaves, and its zigzag stem. Flowering is in August and September; fruiting from September onwards.

*Solidago gigantea* Aiton — Giant Goldenrod, Late Goldenrod;  
Verge d'or géante  
Giant Goldenrod is a plant of rivershores, thickets, woods and open fields. Flowering is from late July and throughout August.

*Solidago juncea* Aiton — Early Goldenrod; Verge d'or junciforme  
As the common name indicates this is the first goldenrod to come into flower. It can be easily recognized by its broad hairless leaves. Early Goldenrod normally occurs in open meadows and well-drained places. Flowering is from June until October.

*Solidago nemoralis* Aiton — Grey Goldenrod, Wood Goldenrod;  
Verge d'or des bois  
One of my favorite goldenrods (really, all of the goldenrods are my favourites!), this species occupies dry habitats, often forming solid stands in fields. It is very similar to *S. puberula* but that species is restricted in occurrence. Flowering takes place from August to October.

*Solidago ptarmicoides* (Nees) Boivin

For many years this species was included among the Asters where it received the name *Aster ptarmicoides* (Nees) Torrey & Gray. It is called "Upland White Aster" but as it is now considered to be a Goldenrod, perhaps it should be called "Upland White Goldenrod" and "Verge faux-ptarmica" but these are only suggestions as "Verge d'or" does not seem right for a white-flowered species. This goldenrod is found in gravel areas and on alvars (which are bare limestone or dolomite pavements with only a small cover of soil). Flowering is from July to September.

*Solidago puberula* Michaux — Downy Goldenrod; Verge d'or pubérulente  
Known only from the Mer Bleue area in Ontario but is found occasionally in rocky places and at the edge of woods throughout western Quebec. Flowering is from July to September.

*Solidago rugosa* Miller — Rough Goldenrod; Verge d'or rugueuse  
Often forming clumps at margins of woods, this species may occur in fields also. Distinctive by the hairy stems, venation and number of leaves. Flowering is during August and September.

*Solidago squarrosa* Mühlenberg — Stout or Rugged Goldenrod;  
Verge d'or squarreuse  
The strongly recurved green-tipped bracts surrounding the heads set this species apart. Common in rocky places and in open woods. Flowering is from July to September.

*Solidago uliginosa* Nuttall — Bog or Marsh Goldenrod; Verge d'or des marais  
Restricted to bogs and fens. It is distinctive by the elongate clusters of flowers with stiff branches. Flowering is in July and August.

*References*

- Gillett, John M. Flora of Gatineau Park. ca. 500 pp. + 79 plates (unpublished).  
Semple, John C. & Gordon S. Ringius, 1983. Goldenrods of Ontario, *Solidago* and *Euthamia*. Univ. Waterloo Biol. Ser. 26. 84 pages + illus.

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The units indicated on the figures represent centimeters.  
No illustrations are provided for *Solidago gigantea* and *S. altissima* because they are separable only on rather technical characters which cannot be demonstrated on drawings at this reduced size.

The illustrations were done by Sally Gadd for my unpublished manuscript,  
"Flora of Gatineau Park."



*Euthania graminifolia*



*Solidago bicolor*



*S. canadensis*



*S. altissima*  
*S. canadensis*  
*S. gigantea*



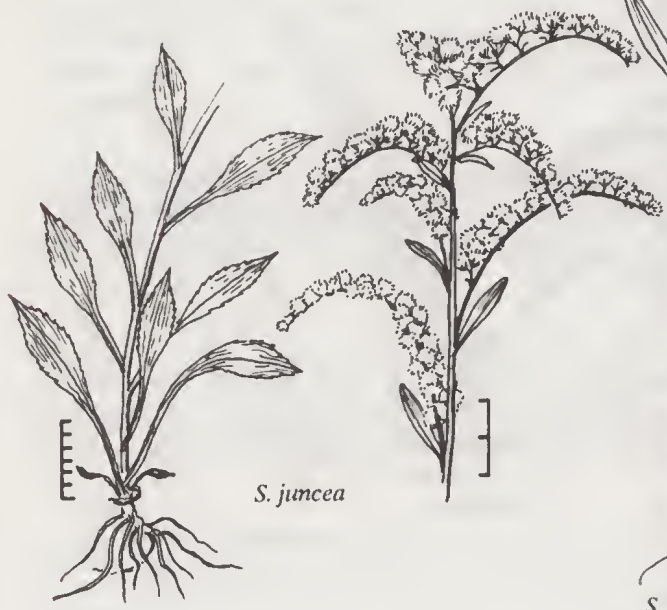
*S. rugosa*



*S. flexicaulis*



*S. caesia*



*S. juncea*



*S. ptarmicoides*



*S. nemoralis*



*S. squarrosa*



*S. puberula*



*S. uliginosa*

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# Point Pelee, 1991

*Roger Taylor*

Point Pelee National Park. Those four words evoke wonderful visions of avian delights, not only for the hard core birder but also for the beginner eager to see in the flesh (feather?) those exotic creatures illustrated in the field guide and to experience the magic of the birdwatcher's Mecca. So, not surprisingly, the OFNC's biennial migration to Pelee was once again over-subscribed and a full bus load of 42 tour participants and three leaders set off at 6:00 am on Thursday, May 8, 1991 bound for Leamington 800 kilometres away on the shores of Lake Erie.

The trip was, as usual, magnificently organized by Colin Gaskell who with great skill resolutely kept everyone to schedule, arranged the accommodation, breakfasts and lunches and still took a third of the responsibility for leading excursions. The other leaders were OFNC President, Roy John, and Roger Taylor, both of whom have been leading OFNC trips for more years than either will admit to. The weather was magnificent, warm and sunny each day, so that all returned on Sunday, May 11 distinctly browner than they left.

Each day we were roused by a wake-up call at 4:30 am and shoed onto the bus by the relentless Colin so that we could leave at 5:00 am from our motel, The Journey's End, to partake of the early morning birders' buffet breakfast at the Pelee Motor Inn just a short distance from the park. It is amazing that people actually pay to do that and then claim to have enjoyed doing it!

Our first day was principally a travel day but, even with stops for coffee and lunch, we managed to arrive by mid-afternoon at our first birding stop, Stoney Point, on the southern shore of Lake St. Clair, about a half hour's drive north of Leamington. Just before we got to Stoney Point we spotted our first important bird, a Great Egret, standing at the edge of a field close to the road. Little did we know that that would be the only egret of the trip. Where were all the others? We don't know, but it was a surprise not to find any others in an area where we have become accustomed to seeing Great Egrets with ease.

Our principal reason for visiting Stoney Point was to see if any members of the nearby colony of Yellow-headed Blackbirds would deign to show themselves. We were not disappointed as two immaculate males showed up in the marsh and let everyone ogle them through the telescopes. There we also had our first views of Forster's Terns and were able to compare them to a couple of Common Terns and learn how to tell them apart. Black Terns were abundant both over the marsh as well as the adjacent sewage lagoons. Also in the sewage lagoons were a flock of 60 Dunlins, many in full breeding plumage, some immaculately marked Pectoral Sandpipers as well as Least Sandpipers and Lesser



Yellowlegs. A most co-operative Solitary Sandpiper obligingly showed off the prominent barring on its tail for all to see. Also co-operative were several Palm Warblers as well as a few Cape Mays and a single Golden-winged Warbler. There we also got our only Black-crowned Night Heron, another surprise as we expected to see several of those during the trip. We finally set off for our motel in Leamington shortly before 6:00. Counting the birds seen from the bus and at the lunch stop we finished with 78 species for the day.

On Friday, well stuffed with breakfast, we entered Point Pelee National Park at about 6:00 am, and drove straight to the Visitor Centre where we embarked on the tram to take us the three kilometres or so to the Tip, the southernmost point of mainland Canada. As we got off the tram we were greeted by the wonderful joyous song of the Orchard Oriole, a bird very rarely seen in Ottawa but, happily, easily found at Pelee. Northern Orioles, Cardinals, Carolina and House Wrens all joined in the chorus almost overwhelming us with the richness of their songs. Before we completed the short walk from the tram to the Tip we were distracted by one of the premier birds of the trip, a male Hooded Warbler. This gorgeous yellow bird with its black hood delighted us all as it foraged actively, often at eye level, in and out of the vines that draped several of the trees. The Tip itself was a disappointment as the only birds in view were a few Red-breasted Mergansers. The rest of the morning was spent making our way slowly back to the Visitor Centre scooping up various woodland birds on the way, the highlight being some good views of a Blue-winged Warbler.

For lunch we moved up to Sleepy Hollow, still within the park, where we were treated to a very nice bonus, an Eastern Screech-Owl roosting near the top of a red cedar. An after lunch walk produced a fine view of a Red-shouldered Hawk as well as some glimpses of Indigo Buntings. Then it was off to Hillman's Marsh which, with one exception, was rather disappointing - no egrets, hardly any ducks and in fact very little to generate interest. The exception though made up for it, a Bald Eagle's nest with one eagle on the nest and her mate keeping watch in a nearby tree. Everyone enjoyed a fine view of these birds through the assembled battery of telescopes before heading back for dinner in Leamington. The day's tally was 123 species, including 6 vireos and 22 warblers. The warblers were unfortunately not abundant and were generally seen only in ones or twos. The sight of warblers "dripping" from the trees at Pelee in the Spring may now be a phenomenon of the past.

On Saturday we avoided the anticipated large weekend crowd in Pelee and headed off to Rondeau Provincial Park, a delightful place which attracts surprisingly few birders. There we were treated to great views of both Red-headed and Red-bellied Woodpeckers. Both species were calling vociferously making it possible for us to compare the very similar sounding calls. Where the Red-bellied sounds very much like our familiar Grey Tree-Frog, the Red-headed is more strident, calls to listen for in Ottawa where the Red-headed occurs in small numbers and the Red-bellied is rare.

As expected, Rondeau had very few people in the park and we were able to wander at our leisure along the loop trail down to the southern tip and back up to our bus, all the time admiring the mature Carolinian forest and adding several exciting birds to our list. The best of these had to be the exotic Prothonotary Warbler which breeds in Rondeau, the only known regular site in Canada. The Prothonotary is Rondeau's bird and with patience we managed to see at least four different males and one female. The male Prothonotary is a truly brilliant intense orange yellow with blue-grey wings and is a gorgeous sight as it flits low over the water of a pond from site to site. On one occasion some of us could see a male Prothonotary Warbler at the base of a tree and then with a slight shift of the binoculars a male Scarlet Tanager sitting quietly in the sunlight, the whole scene taking on a distinctly tropical appearance. On another occasion a male Prothonotary was perfectly reflected in the water as it perched on a low twig in bright sunlight, a sight that I shall remember for a long time.

Another rewarding bird in Rondeau was the Yellow-breasted Chat, two of which finally co-operated and let us enjoy excellent views of that strikingly beautiful warbler. We saw many other woodland song birds including 20 species of warbler and then just to keep us on our toes two accipiters swooped over the tree tops. Those who got a good look at them were treated to a great comparison of the distinguishing field marks of both the Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks.

After lunch in Rondeau we drove back to Pelee for an hour's walk round the nature trail behind the Visitor Centre and then a late afternoon tour of the famous marsh boardwalk. It was surprisingly quiet in the marsh with comparatively small numbers of Red-winged Blackbirds advertising their presence. The Swamp Sparrows and Common Yellowthroats put on a good show but only a few Marsh Wrens called and none deigned to show off for us. So it was back to the motel with a day's tally of 107 species.

We returned to Pelee on Sunday for an early morning tour of the Nature Trail to see what might have come in overnight. There seemed to be more warblers present, but no new species for our list, lots of Scarlet Tanagers and several Indigo Buntings affording everyone a good look at this exotic little jewel. But the highlight of that excursion was the sight of a Common Nighthawk roosting along a branch of a tree just outside the Visitor Centre.

We bid adieu to Pelee and headed north to Port Lambton on the St. Clair River just north of Lake St Clair. We were seeking a White-winged Tern, a Eurasian species which is most easily found around the Black Sea and points further east. This was Ontario's first record and was an exciting bird to chase. It had been seen at the local sewage lagoons (where else?) and we turned up there with high expectations. Those who hurried off the bus and walked swiftly the kilometre or so to the nearest lagoon were treated to an excellent view of the White-winged Tern as it swooped with its close relatives, a flock of Black Terns, over the lagoon. I lagged behind at the bus to make sure that everyone was

headed in the right direction. Then some instinct told me to hustle down the track as fast as I could go. Consequently I was the last person in the group to get a brief definitive glimpse of the bird just before it disappeared behind some trees and then headed over the fields not to return whilst we were there. Several people had to settle for a distant speck winging its way resolutely in the wrong direction. We guessed that it might have gone over to the sewage lagoons at Sombra several kilometres away but it was impractical to chase it with a bus load of people. Moral: The early birder gets the bird.

But there was another reward at the Port Lambton sewage lagoons, a pair of immature Little Gulls, another Eurasian species which now breeds in small numbers around the Great Lakes. These tiny gulls looked small in flight even compared to the Black Terns whose wing span is much larger. They are well-named.

Port Lambton was our last birding spot. With Colin peering at his watch and cracking the whip we hustled back onto the bus at about 11:00 and headed for home arriving at Carlingwood at 8:15 pm, right on schedule.

The four day tally of birds was 161, the White-winged Tern certainly ranking highest in that lot. But I have saved the best species for last. Late Saturday afternoon found several of us peering hopefully through telescopes and binoculars from the observation tower at the end of the boardwalk and in the centre of Pelee marsh. Then one of the leaders, whose name will not be mentioned, announced in stentorian Welsh tones that he could see an egret bobbing up and down in the marsh. Some of the group had the temerity to suggest that he might be looking at the white paddle blades of a kayaker out in the water beyond the cattails. "No, this bird is in the middle of the cattails, not out there!" And sure enough, as we peered into the heat haze through our telescopes, we could see what was possibly a white egret head moving up and down in the reeds. Then, as we watched, the egret began to move forward and to our astonishment began to show an astonishing resemblance to a kayak paddle moving up and down. All lingering doubts about our discovery promptly vanished. We had discovered a new species previously unknown to man, the Paddle Egret (*Egretta Royjohnia*). This is such an important discovery that clearly we must return to seek more information. Already the OFNC is making plans for another expedition to the depths of Pelee marsh in two years time. The National Geographic is rumoured to be negotiating exclusive rights to the story. Make sure you book early and join us in our hunt for the rare and elusive Paddle Egret. ☐

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## All Terrain Wheelchairs along the Rideau

*from the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority News Sheet*

An exciting new vehicle called the "All-Terrain Wheelchair" is now available for off-road use at conservation areas in the Rideau Valley.

The chair is very comfortable and secure and is pushed from behind like a conventional wheelchair. The major difference is the presence of three knobby balloon tires which can ride over most obstacles on a nature trail or field excursion. The light weight tubular metal frame makes the chair easy to handle.

The chair, called the "Adventurer," allows handicapped youngsters to fully participate in the outdoor education classes at school and youth group meetings.

Foley Mountain area supervisor Barry McQuay says, "The chairs will be very useful in our conservation classes and nature studies. Up until now, we've had to tell teachers that the terrain was just not suitable for handicapped kids."

One size fits all with these vehicles. They can carry children or adults, allowing anyone who has difficulty walking to get out in the woods and fields and off the beaten track.

The conservation authority now owns four "Adventurers" and is pleased to make these available for use by visitors to conservation areas at no charge, on a first come, first served basis.

Teachers, youth leaders and individuals who want to use the all-terrain wheelchairs are asked to call well ahead to Charles Billington to make sure they are available. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority will make every reasonable effort to move the chairs to the appropriate locations on the required days.

For use of these chairs, or for more information call:

Charles Billington at 1-800-267-3504

or Manotick local 692-3571.

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

P.O. Box 599, Manotick, Ontario

K0A 2N0

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# Spring Bird Sightings March - May 1991

*V. Bernard Ladouceur*



*Mute Swan*

*— more exciting than our own "Royal Swans" was this first record of a Mute Swan at Munster Sewage Lagoon, May 3, 1991. Photo by Bruce Di Labio*

The trend of few highlights continued into the spring of 1991. The largest factor was probably a lack of birder activity. Interest in Ottawa birding appears to be at a twenty-five year low. Very little woodland birding is being done with the exception of people checking Clyde Woods for owls, Britannia for warblers, and Champlain Lookout for breeding species. Even Shirleys Bay isn't getting much attention. With this in mind, here are the highlights of Spring 1991.

A **Red-throated Loon** in winter/immature plumage was seen at Quyon May 26. It was a great spring for swans. A **Tundra Swan** was near Bourget April 3-5. Two **Mute Swans** were seen. One, probably an immature, was near Osgoode April 10 and a second (adult) was at Munster May 1-3. The only previous report of this species was that of two adults in the autumn of 1989.

**Snow Goose** reports from Bourget March 29 - April 5 included a high count of 2400+ on April 3. A single bird was found at Embrun, May 19, and was seen subsequently.

Puddle duck numbers and **Common Moorhen** numbers were down at lagoons, and **American Coots** were almost non-existent - even at Thurso Marsh. A male **Ruddy Duck** was at Shirleys Bay, April 15 and May 25. **Barrow's Goldeneyes** were present along the Ottawa River until at least April 15, including two females and one male at Deschênes, March 3. As is the pattern every year, the last sightings came from Shirleys Bay (1 male, 1 female, April 15 - almost certainly the same birds that were seen earlier at Deschênes.

**Bald Eagle** sightings included an adult and an immature along the Masham-Eardley Road near Ramsay Lake, March 10, and an adult at Steel Line Road, March 16 & 29, and at Deschênes March 17.

A **Merlin** seen at Britannia, March 10, was probably an overwintering bird. An adult **Peregrine Falcon** was present throughout the period. Perhaps the highlight of this Spring was a very pale, immature **Gyr Falcon** offering numerous sightings between March 10 and April 23, from Aylmer, Deschênes, but mostly from the Central Experimental Farm. This was perhaps the same bird as was seen December 1990-January 1991.

**Yellow Rails** were reported from the Richmond Fen, May 26. Three adult **Sandhill Cranes** were at Carlsbad Springs, March 28-29. Another was seen at Black Bay near Thurso on May 5.

There was a **Lesser Golden Plover** at Winchester, May 5. This species is very rare in spring. Two **Ruffs** (Reeves) were found. The first sighting was at Twin Elms, May 2, and the second was at Embrun, May 29. There were single **Red-necked Phalarope** sightings at both Embrun and Casselman, May 27. **Wilson's Phalaropes** first appeared at Embrun on April 12, and no fewer than 20 were there May 27.

Gulls continue to be big news in Ottawa. The first recorded nesting of the **Herring Gull** was observed at Nepean Bay, May 23, and a fledged downy young was discovered May 27. On May 31 there was no sign of the young bird and the pair was seen building a new nest. Four different **Thayer's Gulls** (three adults, one 1st year) were observed at the Nepean Dump between April 26 and May 26. **Iceland Gulls** were seen between March 19 and May 1 (high count of six on three different days). **Glaucous Gulls** were present March 19 - May 10 with a high of 18 on March 28 and numbers steadily declining to just one on May 10. No fewer than 10 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** (mostly adults, with one 3rd year bird and one 1st year bird) observed between March 19 and May 26. **Great Black-backed Gulls** continue to increase too; 110+ were present March 19 and 26 and were still here on May 27. An immature **Little Gull** along with 24 **Bonaparte's** and 14 **Arctic Terns** were at Deschênes May 26. The next day the **Little Gull** was seen at Ottawa Beach and there was a 2nd year **Franklin's Gull** at Deschênes. On May 31 there were seven **Arctic Terns** along the Ottawa River. A **Forster's Tern** seen at Shirleys Bay, May 12, was the first reported in several years. Another sighting came from Munster later in the month.

There was a migrant **Snowy Owl** seen April 5 at Shirleys Bay. At least one of the two **Great Gray Owls** found in February along Timm Drive was present until March 10. Others were observed at Ashton and near Carp, March 16, and near Base Line and Greenbank Roads, March 17. There were no **Northern Hawk-Owl** reports in March. Owl reports from Clyde Woods included a **Barred** (March 16-17), eight **Northern Saw-whet** (March 28 - April 23), 13 **Long-eared** (March 28 - April 28, including 3 on March 28), and one **Great Horned** (April 24). The highlight of the Spring was the appearance of a **Burrowing Owl** at Arnprior, just outside the Ottawa District. It was observed from April 19-24.

There was a **Three-toed Woodpecker** along Timm Drive, March 2, and another in southwest Kanata, April 12-13. **Bohemian Waxwings** lingered into late April (27 on April 28). A pair of **Loggerhead Shrikes** were observed to have returned to their Almonte location on April 14. Two singing **Yellow-throated Vireos** were along Trail No. 1 at Champlain Lookout, May 11, and were present for the breeding season. This is truly an amazing area - see next issue of *T. & L.* Finally, a spectacular flock of over 1,000 **Lapland Longspurs** were observed May 9 (was there a **Smith's Longspur** among them?). About 100 were still present on May 15. ☐

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## Grackles Go Fishing

*H.M. (Mike) Street*

On June 30, while observing birds from the blind at The Conservation Centre, Stony Swamp, Pond #1, I noticed Common Grackles hopping from one to another of the many limbs protruding from the water. As one bird came close to me, I could see that it had a minnow in its beak and was having trouble swallowing it.

The bird eventually got the morsel down, then went in search of more food. I continued to watch, expecting to see it tiptoe close to the water and snatch another from just below the surface. Much to my surprise the bird suddenly flew up, flapped its wings wildly, in apparent imitation of a hummingbird, then dipped its beak in the water and pulled out another minnow!

Never having seen this sort of behaviour before, I continued to observe the grackles, hoping to see this manoeuvre again. Sure enough, a few minutes later another bird started to hover. This time, however, instead of dipping its beak delicately, the bird did a shallow belly-flop into the water, stuck its head below the surface and came up with a minnow and flew away!!

Belted Kingfishers have nothing to fear from the grackles, but it sure made for an interesting morning. ☐

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# The Ottawa Valley Spring Roundup 1991

*Daniel Perrier*



*Arctic Tern*  
17 were seen between Remic and Britannia Rapids  
photo by Tony Beck

The end of May is the time of year that birders yearn for, and accordingly, the OFNC holds its Spring Roundup at that time. Finding participants for this important occasion should be an easy task but sadly, the rarest specimen on Sunday, May 26 was the elusive "*Humanoidus Birdus*". This may explain why the total number of species observed (169) was one of the lowest since we began the spring count.

The day began with sunny skies but later clouds rolled in and showers occurred on and off throughout the afternoon. The southwest sector, led by Bob Bracken, surpassed all others with 147 species sighted. Highlights for the area included one Red-throated Loon seen on the Ottawa River as well as two Least Bitterns, one Merlin and three Yellow Rails heard at the Richmond Fen. Other noteworthy sightings were an adult Thayer's Gull and an immature Lesser Black-backed Gull at the Nepean Dump, one first summer plumage Little Gull and



seventeen Arctic Terns between Remic Rapids and Britannia Rapids. A total of eighteen species of Warblers were observed.

The group covering the northeast area was lead by Jim Harris and had 133 species. There were some interesting waterbird sightings including the only Ring-necked Duck and a female Common Golden-eye with eight downy young. This species is a scarce nester in the northern part of the district. Also seen in this sector were the only Accipiters of the day - three Sharp-shinned and one Cooper's Hawk. Two Yellow-throated Vireos were seen in the northeast sector.

The northwest and southeast sectors suffered from too few participants, yet still managed to observe over 100 species each. These areas gave us our only Semi-palmated Sandpiper, one Long-eared Owl (in the Larose Forest), and Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers.

I would like to thank the four sector leaders and the 20 or so field observers for their efforts. I would also like to encourage others to participate in future OFNC-sponsored counts. We would appreciate your participation and continued interest.

Species	Number of individuals				
	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Red-throated Loon		1		1	1*
Common Loon	5	1		2	8
Pied-billed Grebe	34	1		8	43
Double-crested Cormorant	2	5		14	21
American Bittern	7	3		6	16
Least Bittern	2			2	4
Great Blue Heron	65	3	7	32	107
Green-backed Heron	5	1	1	5	12
Canada Goose	36		1	45	82
Wood Duck	25	6	1	28	60
Green-winged Teal	4		5	2	11
American Black Duck	77	18	5	12	112
Mallard	75	18	275	62	430
Northern Pintail	2		4	2	8
Blue-winged Teal	20		13	12	45
Northern Shoveler	4		7	4	15
Gadwall	6		8	6	20
American Wigeon	3	2	4	2	11
Ring-necked Duck	1				1
Greater Scaup				1	1
Lesser Scaup			1	2	3
Common Goldeneye	9				9
Hooded Merganser	1			3	4
Common Merganser	11	2		3	16
Turkey Vulture	14	17		3	34
Osprey	3				3
Northern Harrier	4		2	5	11
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3				3
Cooper's Hawk	1				1
Red-shouldered Hawk	1			2	3

	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Broad-winged Hawk	2	1		2	5
Red-tailed Hawk				4	4
American Kestrel	7	1	1	3	12
Merlin				1	1
Gray Partridge	2			4	6
Ruffed Grouse	12	4	1	6	23
Yellow Rail				3	3
Virginia Rail	3	1		7	11
Sora	1			2	3
Common Moorhen	75			2	77
Semipalmated Plover			10		10
Killdeer	83	12	53	80	228
Lesser Yellowlegs	1		1		2
Solitary Sandpiper			1	2	3
Spotted Sandpiper	14	11	24	24	73
Upland Sandpiper	3	1	1	4	9
Ruddy Turnstone				1	1
Semipalmated Sandpiper			2		2
Least Sandpiper	3		91	5	99
Dunlin				1	1
Short-billed Dowitcher				6	6
Common Snipe	41	8	6	20	75
American Woodcock	6		1	33	40
Wilson's Phalarope			20		20
Little Gull		1		1	1*
Bonaparte's Gull		14		24	24*
Ring-billed Gull	73	1,267	66	3,299	4,705
Herring Gull	1	45	1	83	130
Thayer's Gull				1	1
Lesser Black-backed Gull				1	1
Great Black-backed Gull		2	1	14	17
Common Tern				4	4
Arctic Tern		14		17	17*
Black Tern	150		2	1	153
Rock Dove	119	31	44	160	354
Mourning Dove	60	18	31	60	169
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	1	1	2	5
Great Horned Owl	1			6	7
Barred Owl				2	2
Long-eared Owl			1		1
Common Nighthawk			1	3	4
Whip-poor-will	2		12	1	15
Chimney Swift	18	2	12	77	109
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	18	2	1	15	36
Belted Kingfisher	11	4	2	6	23
Red-headed Woodpecker		1	1		2
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	14	3		2	19
Downy Woodpecker	6	6	2	4	18
Hairy Woodpecker	5	3	2	5	15
Northern Flicker	29	8	11	20	68
Pileated Woodpecker	6		1	3	10
Eastern Wood-Pewee	23	11	3	24	61
Alder Flycatcher	29	17	31	18	95

	NE	NW	SE	SW	Total
Willow Flycatcher	2			7	9
Least Flycatcher	79	13	12	28	132
Eastern Phoebe	45	5	1	33	84
Great Crested Flycatcher	75	28	22	47	172
Eastern Kingbird	108	52	55	117	332
Horned Lark	1		4	25	30
Purple Martin	2	42	9	127	180
Tree Swallow	479	245	173	644	1,541
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	3	3	6	22	34
Bank Swallow	67	105	35	101	308
Cliff Swallow	21	2	10	62	95
Barn Swallow	392	86	62	195	735
Blue Jay	54	12	18	21	105
American Crow	125	81	61	84	351
Common Raven	11	7		4	22
Black-capped Chickadee	123	21	27	39	210
Red-breasted Nuthatch	10		1	4	15
White-breasted Nuthatch	2	2		8	12
Brown Creeper		2	3	2	7
House Wren	6	4		5	15
Winter Wren	10			4	14
Sedge Wren				12	12
Marsh Wren	50		4	4	58
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3		2		5
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2				2
Eastern Bluebird	8	2	1	10	21
Veery	125	17	16	35	193
Swainson's Thrush	3		1		4
Hermit Thrush	21	11	6		38
Wood Thrush	19	6	2	7	34
American Robin	481	81	111	196	869
Gray Catbird	17	9	4	45	75
Brown Thrasher	2	4	2	15	23
Water Pipit				11	11
Cedar Waxwing	97	207	2	241	547
European Starling	500	154	191	288	1,133
Yellow-throated Vireo	2				2
Warbling Vireo	62	19	17	52	150
Philadelphia Vireo		1			1
Red-eyed Vireo	109	39	12	44	204
Golden-winged Warbler	8	1		3	12
Tennessee Warbler	1			1	2
Nashville Warbler	26	8	15	6	55
Yellow Warbler	134	113	25	261	533
Chestnut-sided Warbler	75	11	15	99	200
Magnolia Warbler	13	3	10	4	30
Cape May Warbler		1	1		2
Black-throated Blue Warbler	17	1			18
Yellow-rumped Warbler	18	5	15	2	40
Black-throated Green Warbler	27	10		8	45
Blackburnian Warbler	21	2	5	3	31
Pine Warbler	2	1	1	3	7
Bay-breasted Warbler		1	1		2
Blackpoll Warbler	7	5		3	15
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# Review Papers on the Ottawa District

*The Ottawa District is the area within a circle of 50 km radius and centred on the Peace Tower.*

## Birds

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- The Ruddy Duck in eastern Ontario with specific reference to the Ottawa District, by Christine Hanrahan. 21(1):32(1987).
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- Checklist of the fishes of the Ottawa District, by Brian W. Coad. 21(1):40(1987).
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- Butterflies of the Ottawa District 1986 update, by Peter Hall. 21(3):138(1987).
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## Plants

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- Goldenrods, by John Gillett. 25(4):114(1991).
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- The Ragged Fringed-orchid in the Ottawa District, by Joyce M. Reddoch and Allan H. Reddoch. 21(3):130(1987).
- The three "pink" peatland orchids, by Joyce M. Reddoch and Allan H. Reddoch. 21(4):196(1987).
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- Rare Canadian vascular plants and their occurrence in the Ottawa District, by Albert Dugal. 25(3):79(1991).
- Sand-spurry in the Ottawa District, by Stephen J. Darbyshire. 21(5):244(1987).
- Sea-spurry (*Spergularia* spp.) in the Ottawa District, More on, by Daniel F. Brunton. 24(2):52(1990).
- Skunk Cabbage, New records of, for the Ottawa District, by Albert W. Dugal and Michael J. Shchepanek. 22(2):37(1988).
- South Gloucester study area update 1978-1988, by Albert W. Dugal. 23(1):4(1989).
- Spring-beauty, The other, by Ruth Partridge. 21(3):126(1987).
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# Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions and Lectures Committee  
For further information,  
call the Club number, 722-3050 (after 10 a.m.)

*Times stated for excursions are departure times. Please arrive earlier; leaders start promptly. If you need a ride, don't hesitate to ask the leader. Restricted trips will be open to non-members only after the indicated deadlines.*

***ALL OUTINGS:** Please bring a lunch on full-day trips and dress according to the weather forecast and the activity. Binoculars and/or spotting scopes are essential on all birding trips. Unless otherwise stated, transportation will be by car pool.*

***REGISTERED BUS TRIPS:** Make your reservation for Club bus excursions by sending a cheque or money order (payable to The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club) to Ellaine Dickson, 2037 Honeywell Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K2A 0P7, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing.*

***EVENTS AT THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE:** The Club is grateful to the Museum for their cooperation and thanks the Museum for the use of these excellent facilities. Club members must show their membership cards to gain access for Club functions after regular museum hours. There is a charge for parking in the museum lot.*

Friday  
4 October  
or  
Saturday  
5 October

6 p.m to  
approx.  
9 p.m.

## VISIT TO THE INDIAN RIVER OBSERVATORY, ALMONTE

Leaders: Philip Martin (729-3218) and Hilderick Brown  
Meet: Neatby Building, front entrance, off Carling Ave.,  
Central Experimental Farm.

Members of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada have kindly offered to show us some of the current night-time attractions. Bring warm clothing and a hot beverage! If weather is unfavourable, the visit will be rescheduled. Please register with the club number, 722-3050 (after 10 a.m.). A map will be provided at the meeting place.



<b>Tuesday</b> <b>8 October</b> <b>8 p.m.</b>	<b>OFNC MONTHLY MEETING</b> <b>BEARS</b> Speaker: Dick Russell Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets. Dick Russell is with the Canadian Wildlife Service. He has virtually spent a life-time studying bears and has worked with his father, Andy Russell, the well-known bear expert. This should be a most interesting evening.
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**Sunday**  
**20 October**  
**10 a.m.**

**14th ANNUAL JOINT OUTING**  
**WITH THE OTTAWA RIDEAU TRAIL CLUB**  
Meet: Booth and Albert Streets, southwest corner of the parking lot.  
This will be a general interest walk on the Old School House Loop of the Rideau Trail off the North Gower - Smith Falls Road. There are loops of different lengths through mixed forest and abandoned farmland. The Rideau Trail Club has the use of the old school house with a stove if it is cold. Bring a snack and something to cook around a bonfire after the walk.  
Wear suitable clothing and footwear.  
For further information telephone Eileen Evans (741-0789).

**Wednesday**  
**23 October**  
**8 a.m.**

**WATERFOWL ALONG THE OTTAWA**  
Leader: Bruce Di Labio  
Meet: Ottawa Beach  
A half-day trip to look for migrating waterfowl along the river.

**Saturday**  
**26 October**  
**8 a.m.**

**LATE FALL BIRDING**  
Leader: Roy John  
Meet: Britannia Drive-in Theatre, Carling Ave.  
Participants will spend the morning looking for land and water migrants. Dress warmly.

**Saturday**  
**2 November**  
**9 a.m.**                    **LATE FALL RAMBLE IN THE GATINEAU**  
Leader: Philip Martin  
Meet: Supreme Court Building, front entrance, Wellington St.  
A general interest walk to see what we can find: nuts, fruit,  
seeds, fungi, and so forth. Maybe even a bird! Bring a lunch  
and dress warmly.

**Saturday**  
**9 November**  
**9 a.m.**                    **GENERAL INTEREST WALK IN THE**  
**DUNROBIN AREA**  
Leaders: Ellaine Dickson and Bruce Summers  
Meet: Lincoln Heights Galleria, northeast corner of parking  
lot, Richmond and Assaly Roads.  
Bring a snack and dress warmly for this long half-day outing.

<b>Tuesday</b> <b>12 November</b> <b>8 p.m.</b>	<b>OFNC MONTHLY MEETING</b> <b>CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES</b> Speakers: Lynda Maltby and other members of the Conservation Committee. Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe and McLeod Streets. The chairman and other members of the Conservation Committee will present a series of talks on topical environmental issues of local interest.
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**Sunday**  
**1 December**  
**8 a.m.**                    **LATE FALL AND EARLY WINTER BIRDS**  
Leader: Tony Beck  
Meet: Westgate Shopping Centre, Carling Ave., southeast  
corner of parking lot.  
This is a half-day trip to local areas. Dress warmly and bring  
binoculars.

Tuesday  
10 December  
8 p.m.

OFNC MONTHLY MEETING  
THE SUPER-ABUNDANT RING-BILLED GULLS  
AND UNCOMMON COMMON TERNS  
Speaker: Hans Blokpoel  
Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe  
and McLeod Streets.  
Hans, who is a Research Scientist with The Canadian  
Wildlife Service, will review the problems caused by the  
super abundance of Ring-billed Gulls, including their take  
over of the Common Tern habitats.

Tuesday  
14 January  
8 p.m.

OFNC 113TH ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
Meet: Auditorium, Canadian Museum of Nature, Metcalfe  
and McLeod Streets.  
At this meeting we elect our Council for 1992, introduce the  
members who make this Club work, and report on the  
activities of the various committees, as well as the Club's  
financial position. This is an opportunity for you, as  
members, to participate with any questions and suggestions.

Saturday  
18 January  
8:15 a.m.

VISIT TO THE HERPETOLOGY LABORATORY OF  
THE CANADIAN MUSEUM OF NATURE  
Leader: Francis Cook  
Meet: Scar's, Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Carling and  
Woodroffe Avenues.  
This visit to the new Herpetology Laboratory at 1770 Pink  
Road near Aylmer, will be combined with a visit to the Pink  
Road Bird Feeder guided by Colin Gaskell. We will spend  
about 45 minutes at the feeder and reach the lab around 10  
a.m. where we will spend about two hours. The number of  
visitors to the lab will be limited so please register for this  
trip by calling the Club number, 722-3050 (after 10 a.m.). □

Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations recently? Is there a colony of rare plants or a nesting site that needs protection? Write up your thoughts and send them in to *Trail & Landscape*. If you have access to an IBM or IBM-compatible computer using 5.25 Inch diskettes, all the better. If you don't, we will happily receive submissions in any form -- typed, written, printed or painted!

ISSN 0041-0748

**TRAIL & LANDSCAPE**

published by

**THE OTTAWA FIELD-NATURALISTS' CLUB**

Second Class Mail - Registration Number 2777

Postage paid in cash at Ottawa

Change of Address Notices and Undeliverable Copies:

Box 3264 Postal Station C, Ottawa, Ont.

K1Y 4J5

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MUSEE CANADIEN DE LA NATURE  
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Printed by  
LOMOR PRINTERS LTD.

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# The GREEN LINE



Since ancient times, societies have struggled with the question of how to involve citizens in decision-making. In early Athens, the home of democracy, all citizens were obliged to participate in the daily business of government. Runners would dash through the marketplace, lashing a rope wet with red paint, to mark those not yet assembled in the forum. Fines were levied on those with tell-tale marks on their robes for failing to discharge their civic duty.

In Imperial Rome, Augustus Caesar developed a constitution and a body of civil law, based on democratic principles, which govern us still. Ever since, government institutions have been administered by professional staff directed by political masters, each bearing a measure of contempt for the other. Reforms to limit abuse of power by those in whom it is invested have been forthcoming as required, such as the Magna Carta of 1215.

Western democracies range between two different models: democratic and republican, differing by how those

elected to power respond to their electorate between elections. In the republican model, once elected, politicians feel free to discharge their responsibility as they see fit, unhampered by changing opinion held by those who vested power in them. In the democratic model, politicians continuously monitor the views of their electorate and represent those views in all decisions made in office. In either system, elected power must be renewed periodically. Politicians are re-elected or are not re-elected, based on their performance in office. No one seems sure which system we Canadians are favoured with. Our current Prime Minister would seem to be a republican.

Although you may not believe municipal elections to be as important as provincial or federal elections, consider that your choice of mayor (or reeve), councillor or trustee has more influence on the quality of life in your neighbourhood than your choice for Prime Minister.

On November 12th, you must be prepared to make these choices in

municipalities all across Ontario. Be sure you are registered to vote. Note that you will have the opportunity, for the first time, to vote for Regional Chairman.

To help you make a wise choice from the range of candidates, both incumbent and untried, the local environmental group ECOVISION has produced two useful documents. The first is a report listing the voting records of councillors from the City of Ottawa and the RMOC on a range of environmental issues during the past three years, which will give you some idea of how an incumbent politician may perform in future. The second document is a survey of all candidates for municipal councillor, mayor and regional chair on a list of 29 environmental initiatives and how strongly the candidate would support them. This timely information will soon be available, and is to be published as an insert in the Peace & Environment News for November.

Please, on November 12th, know your candidates and cast your vote...

## THE SHORT STORY...

### Leitrim Wetland

Tartan Homes has produced a Master Drainage Study as part of a Plan of Subdivision application which will soon be submitted to the City of Gloucester. Naturalist groups, including the OFNC, have commented on the report and, although some changes were made to accommodate their concerns, a housing development is still proposed for the northern third of the wetland. The naturalists will have an opportunity to comment on the Fisheries Compensation Agreement, before it is signed. The Canada Fisheries Act applies since the wetland complex includes Findley Creek, believed to be the last trout stream in the region.

### Constance Creek

The OFNC has been an ally of the groups and individuals who opposed and defeated a heavy-handed developer and a narrow-minded municipality at the Eagle Creek Golf

Course OMB hearing. To help defray their expenses and in recognition of their achievement, the OFNC Council formally awarded a cheque for \$ 1,546.57 to Phil Reilly of the Wetlands Preservation Group along with his OFNC Conservation Award for 1990. Please show your support for this effective act of Council by sending your donations to the OFNC to recover the cost of this assistance.

### Let's Pave Trillium Woods!

This regionally-significant mixed beech/maple forest, part of the Natural Environment Area, also has a picturesque brook. Mayor Des Adam of Kanata decided to put a bicycle path through the NEA and a 30 meter bridge over Shirley's Brook. In his haste to approve the project, he forgot to consult the CNR before routing the bicycle path over their tracks and they fenced off the path and posted "No Trespassing" signs. Kanata has now posted their own signs, "Use at your own risk". Trains pass either 4 times daily or 4 times weekly, but Kanata staff aren't sure which. Mayor Des Adam could not be reached for comment.

# WILDLIFE GARDEN ACTIVITIES

by Jeff Harrison

The Club's Wildlife Garden Committee is continuing its efforts to enhance an 18 acre site for wildlife in the Arboretum of the Central Experimental Farm. This is an ambitious project which requires a great deal of planning and organization. More than 50 club members so far have volunteered their time.

A Steering Committee, consisting of Trevor Cole, Curator of the Dominion Arboretum, Peter Elliot, Manager of Friends of the Central Experimental Farm, and Jeff Harrison, Chair of the Wildlife Garden Committee is overseeing the activities of the volunteers at the wildlife garden site.

Because of the large amount of work involved, the Wildlife Garden Committee applied for, and received, funding for a co-ordinator from the Ontario Environmental Youth Corps.

In August, Elise Stevenson, a recent BSc graduate in Biology from the University of Ottawa, was hired for a seven month period.

Elise brings a variety of valuable experience to the position. She is now working in the offices of the Friends of the Farm and can be reached at 230-3276. Elise will manage the day to day activities of the Committee and the garden.

Two upcoming activities are outlined below:

## "Leaf-In"

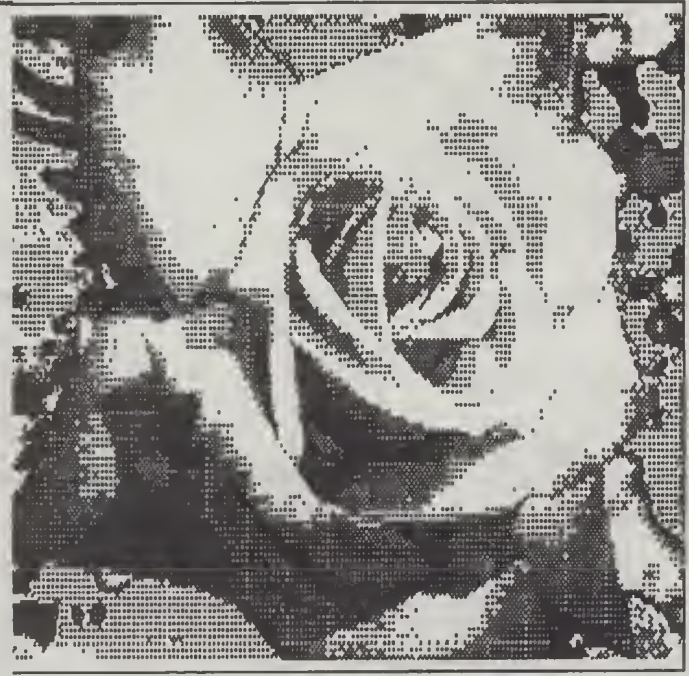
The Committee is organizing a "Leaf-In" at the Wildlife Garden site on Sunday October 27 from 2-4 pm. Please save your leaves (and your neighbours') and bring them to our leaf stockpile! The leaves will be composted to provide soil in areas of the garden where we are creating forest floor conditions. To reach the site, turn off Prince of Wales Drive at the large barn about half way between the traffic circle and the lights close to Hartwell Locks. Club volunteers will be on hand to assist.

For anyone wishing to drop their leaves off after October 27, the site will be open. Just place the leaves inside the snow fence sign-posted "OFNC Leaf Dump". The dump is a few hundred yards in from Prince of Wales Drive.

## Birdhouse Building Workshop

A birdhouse building workshop, led by Jim Wickware, will be conducted on a weekend in late November. We plan to build boxes for bluebirds, tree swallows, house wrens, kestrels etc. Please bring hammers, drills and hole saws. Wood, nails and plans will be provided. The workshop will be held in the Friends of the Farm building on the Farm. As you enter the Arboretum, off the traffic circle, turn left, the building is the second on the left.

If you would like more information about the "Leaf-In" or wish to take part in the workshop, please call Elise at 230-3276.



The GREEN LINE  
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