

# TRAIL & LANDSCAPE



*A Publication Concerned With  
Natural History and Conservation*

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

# TRAIL & LANDSCAPE

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## The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

— Founded 1879 —

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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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Views expressed in *Trail & Landscape* are not necessarily those of the OFNC

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# Welcome New Members

## Ottawa Area

Josee Archambault  
Steve Begin & Family  
Elizabeth Boileau  
Mary-Anne Borris  
Kathy L. Bowen & Family  
Sarah Bradford  
Carole A. Brown & Family  
Sharon E. Calvin & Family  
Jamic J. & Eddie Carmichael  
Simon Carter & Family  
Susan SVC Chiasson  
Fred A. & Joan P. Darby  
Stephen D. Derraugh & Family  
Nancy Girard Begin & Family  
Susan Goulding & Family  
Marta M. Haley

Fran & John Harding  
Rosanne Iland & Family  
Harry Kerr & Family  
Kim S. Laroeque  
Sean & Sarah Leslie  
Elizabeth P. Moore  
Lorraine Parent  
Michael Peterson & Family  
Jason P. Pitre  
Clavles J. Saso  
Ross Shan  
Charlie Sobeov  
Robbie & Jaek Stewart  
Deborah Welch/Michael Payne  
Erwin & Linda Wiens  
Adamo Young

## Ontario

Michael J. Moore  
Jo Saunders

## Quebec

Derek Lynch

Henry Steger  
Chair, Membership Committee  
May 2009

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# Conservation Matters

*Ken Young*

## **The NCC's Review of the Greenbelt**

The National Capital Commission is conducting a review of the Greenbelt. A coalition of like-minded organizations has been created to present the environmental and recreational benefits of the Greenbelt, and press for their enhancement. In particular, the coalition will seek legal protection of the Greenbelt boundaries under a Federal Act of Parliament.

There are nine non-governmental and five municipally-sponsored groups in the Greenbelt Coalition, which could increase over time. The OFNC is one of the partners and, through the Conservation Committee, participates in its activities.

Currently the Coalition is developing position papers, creating a web site and similar activities in preparation for the public debate which will occur over the two-year span of the NCC review.

Public support for preserving the Greenbelt appears to be very strong, and the Coalition's initial meetings with NCC staff and municipal politicians have been positive. However, we can also expect that the development industry will be urging that some parts of the Greenbelt be made available for building. They will probably be supported in that by the City of Ottawa planning staff. The Conservation Committee has previously alerted OFNC members to the faulty analyses of the Greenbelt that have been made by city planners. One of the main dangers to the Greenbelt is "death by a thousand cuts" which when considered individually, may seem reasonable to the general public. Hence the objective of legal protection for the Greenbelt boundaries.

## **Larose Forest**

A member of the conservation committee (Christine Hanrahan) continues to represent the OFNC at meetings of the Prescott-Russell Forest Advisory Committee. Prospects for preserving the Larose Forest have greatly improved as a result of the efforts of this committee. It brought local people with a wide range of interests together with representatives of other organizations and staff of the United Counties of Prescott-Russell. Working together, the committee is able to resolve conflicts that may arise over differing uses of the forest. This is a model for how local residents, assisted by experts from organizations like the OFNC, can conserve natural places

for posterity.

### **South March Highlands Management Plan**

Members of the Conservation Committee (Stan Rosenbaum and Christine Hanrahan) are monitoring developments. They attended a public meeting in Kanata hosted by city environmental planner David Miller. One of the problems being addressed is conflicting demands related to trail use.

### **Environmental Items in the Federal Budget**

We sent emails to members of the Senate concerning items in Part 7 of Bill C-10 (the federal budget) that remove the need for or fast-track environmental assessments, and various protections under the Navigable Waters Protection Act. Four senators replied saying that they are referring non-stimulus subject matters to senate committees. They felt compelled not to defeat Bill C-10, but aim to prevent some changes from taking effect.

### **Water Chestnut (*Trapa Natans*) Control Project**

This project began last year, and the MNR is planning to continue it this year using motorized methods in high infestation areas, and volunteer workers elsewhere. The Conservation Committee will consider the possibility of participation again this summer by OFNC volunteers.

### **Gatineau Park Coalition**

The OFNC continues to be a member of this coalition group. Its main aim is to achieve legal protection of the park boundaries, so that no lands could be removed from the park without approval of Parliament.

### **Contribution to the Nature Conservancy of Canada Purchases**

The Conservation Committee had previously recommended that the OFNC make a contribution towards the Conservancy's purchase of the 1,000-acre Elbow Lake property. A donation of \$100,000 was made. Later in 2008, the committee recommended a further contribution to the Nature Conservancy towards the purchase of property at Wolf Grove. As a result, a donation amount of \$23,000 will be made to the Conservancy this year. These donations were possible as a result of two recent bequests from former OFNC members.

### **Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park**

A letter was sent opposing the proposed expansion of hunting, especially since it would allow hunting of various species including Snapping Turtles, for which there was no analysis of possible effect on this slow-to-reproduce species. The Ministry disallowed most of the proposals but did extend the bear hunting season to include Labour Day weekend. We suspect that was their intention, and included the other things to give an impression that they listened to us.



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## The 2009 Soirée and the Awards for 2008

*Karen McLachlan Hamilton*

The soirée of 2009 will be hard to forget. There was a wind storm the evening of April 25 which caused isolated blackouts and led to, I believe, the first soirée in Club history to be done by flashlight. Electricity was non-existent when I arrived, but with the emergency lighting and an ample supply of flashlights (trust a bunch of naturalists), there was enough light to visit the Macoun Field Club exhibits, check out the art and photography, and bid on the silent auction or buy books. I must say OFNC members are a very resourceful lot. I found a little refreshment. I talked with a few members, and was able to take in many of the Macoun projects.

The Macoun Field Club was well represented this year. There were 12 members and eight projects. As always, their hard work should be commended. They put a lot of effort into their projects; you never leave without learning something new.

Dawn chose to research Chickadees because, as she put it, "They are common birds, people see every day, so they tend to get ignored." I am inclined to agree with her, and maybe that is why they are my favourite bird.

Julien and



*Dawn receiving her award from Jeff Skevington.*



*Jeff with Julien and Patrick.*

Patrick's project was on flight. Their knowledge of exactly what birds must do in order to get off the ground and fly long distances was impressive (it looks so simple, but the mechanics behind it is so complex). I certainly learned something from them. Francis looked specifically at hummingbirds. I was amazed at the footage he had of a hummingbird feeding.

Robbie looked at hematophagus, or blood

feeding animals. He discussed the vampire bats, ticks, and the infamous Candiru. If you have not heard of this fish, then I suggest you look it up. It is one of the more fascinating creatures.

There were two projects on Ontario frogs this year. Courtney and Ellen's focus was on the life cycles of different species. Their presentation included a vast array of illustrations. Nathan and Jordan' also looked at the life cycles, but included some of the food webs and predators. Now, if you need any good frog jokes, just ask Nathan or Jordan. I hear they are still finding new ones and are willing to share them.



*Jeff and Francis.*

Ian and Michael did a lot of work on





Yellow Perch. They discussed where they are the most likely to be found, why they fall victim to Northern Pike, and the difference between them and Ocean Perch. Their display included an interview with an avid angler.

Gabriel, a regular soirée contributor, chose reptiles for his 2009 project. Gabriel included all the major groups, describing some of the rarest, and the most venomous. He also discussed different reproductive strategies. Part of Gabriel's passion for reptiles lie in his belief that these fascinating creatures do not get the respect they deserve.

As the evening progressed, it was time to begin the formal portion before we went into complete darkness. Ken Allison, President, started with a presentation to the Wild Bird Care Centre (WBCC) in memory of Kathy Nihei. The OFNC wanted to recognize Kathy's passion for birds and compassion for the injured by contributing \$500 to the centre. Deborah Haas, Director of the WBCC graciously accepted the donation. Hopefully, Kathy's legacy will continue for years to come.

Seven OFNC awards were also presented.

Christine Hanrahan became the newest Ottawa Honorary Member. Christine's contributions over the last two decades are voluminous. She has spent countless hours on four committees (often at the same time), represented the Club at local hearings, organized bioblitzes, written over 60 articles for *Trail and Landscape*, and was the Regional Coordinator for both Ontario Breeding Bird Atlases. Her love for natural areas, and the protection of them, is clearly evident in everything she does. As the official citation states, "Christine is truly an amazing field naturalist."



Member of the Year was presented to Diane Lepage. Diane is an active member of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden group and has been the driving force in revamping the Butterfly Meadow. She has created a list of existing plants, drafted plans, and coordinated a team of volunteers to work on this garden every Wednesday, from spring to fall. The garden has been transformed into an insect haven that extends well into the fall. Diane was also involved in creating the OFNC



waiver and sign-up sheets, maintaining the FWG brochures/information sheets, is the Club's Ontario Nature representative, and the list goes on.

The OFNC chose Otto Loesel for the 2008 Anne Hanes Natural History Award for his years of study of the rotting fungi. His years of independent study of fungi (particularly the Polyporales) in Gatineau Park, the NCC Greenbelt, and Larose Forest, has led to a list 106 species. Also, his discovery of *Trametes gibbosa*, commonly found in Europe, was a new record for Canada. Otto has contributed greatly to the Club by leading a Macoun field trip, giving informal workshops at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and giving an impromptu talk at a monthly

meeting when the speaker was unable to be there.



Stan Rosenbaum received the 2008 Conservation Award (member) for his dedication and service to the Conservation Committee. Stan represented the OFNC at open houses dealing with issues such as the expansion of the Nortel property and the Ontario Parks legislation review, as well as at many coalitions and working groups. He is continuously writing letters to all levels of



government on a wide variety of issues. The Leitrim Wetlands, the Carden and Braeside Alvars, and the provincial Species at Risk Act are just some of the issues he has addressed. Stan's hard work maintains the Club's high credibility when it comes to conservation issues.

Ask any former or present Macoun Field Club member who should receive the Mary Stuart Education



award, and I believe the answer would be Robert E. Lee. Rob, a former Macouner himself, has led this youth club for the last 16 years. He allows members to learn like he does, by observing things for themselves, by figuring out what they have seen, and by being resourceful in finding the answers to things they do not know. His natural curiosity is infectious, and often leads to extraordinary discoveries. Mary would have been proud to see Rob receiving her award.

The Conservation Award (non-member) was given to Ken McRae for his efforts in protecting the wetlands, shorelines and watercourses within the National Capital region. Ken may be considered a watch-dog, as he works hard at ensuring governments follow current laws, bylaws and policies which protects the natural environments.

If violations occur, Ken requested the people/ organizations involved be held accountable for their actions. Issues he has tackled include the environmental practices of golf courses and quarries, the City of Ottawa's failure to include Goulbourn's provincially significant wetlands in its official plan, and issues pertaining to the Drainage Act.



Issues he has tackled include the environmental practices of golf courses and quarries, the City of Ottawa's failure to include Goulbourn's provincially significant wetlands in its official plan, and issues pertaining to the Drainage Act.

Philip Jeffreys was a great candidate for the George McGee Service Award. Anyone participating in the excursions probably knows Phil. He is a very active member of the Excursions & Lectures Committee and has now become synonymous with the Soirée. He is in charge of securing the venue, setting up, taking down, and



sometimes building exhibit structures. He organizes the photographers, sound equipment and dish rental—everything that makes the event run smoothly. Phil is also the person who hires the motor coaches and makes the hotel bookings for the longer excursions.



There were enough ballots submitted for the art and

photography displays, so it was possible to award prizes to the more popular pieces. This year's winning photographs were Gord Belyea's Least Bittern and Dianc Lepage's White-winged Crossbill. The most popular artwork was Ruth Allison's Cottontail.

Since there was no sign of the electricity being restored, and the church's emergency lighting was beginning to fade, it was thought best to end the evening before the desserts and live auction. As we dogged broken tree limbs still lying on the road and avoided unlit intersections, we agreed, it was certainly an evening to remember . . .











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# The 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Ottawa Regional Science Fair – OFNC Awards

*Jeff Skevington<sup>1</sup> and Carolyn Callaghan<sup>2</sup>*

This year, the Ottawa Regional Science Fair was held on April 4 at Carleton University. Students in grades 7-12 submitted 206 projects to the Fair this year. This is always a fabulous showcase of projects and ideas by our next generation of scientists.

Every year the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club presents three awards to students that present excellent projects related to natural history or to Club ideals. There are typically very few eligible projects in this field, but this year was somewhat better and we judged about 15 projects. If you know any students in this age group, please encourage them to conduct natural history research projects for future Science Fairs. If you need help with ideas for projects, we will be happy to assist.

The following three students each won an award of \$100 and an OFNC membership.



<sup>1</sup> [jeffrey.skevington@agr.gc.ca](mailto:jeffrey.skevington@agr.gc.ca), <sup>2</sup> [naturechelsea@gmail.com](mailto:naturechelsea@gmail.com)



**Sarah Bradford:** Brood Parasitism and Its Effects on the Songbird Population. Notre Dame High School. Sarah collected data on Brown-headed Cowbird parasitism rates from the internet and analysed the data for patterns. She discovered that host populations declined in a control group and did not decline in a treatment group following removal of cowbirds. She concluded that brood parasitism is a potentially important factor in the decline of songbird populations.

**Charlie Sobcov:** Saving the Birds, One Window at a Time. Turnbull School. Charlie used the knowledge that birds can see ultraviolet light and developed clear, UV reflective silhouettes of birds to stick on windows. He arranged for 30



people to each apply three of these decals to their windows and compared bird window strikes before and after the application. There was a 90% reduction in window impacts as a result of applying the decals. This project has attracted a lot of attention from the media. You may have seen articles in the newspaper or heard Charlie interviewed on the radio about his project. Charlie was selected to take his project to Winnipeg to compete in the Canada Wide Science Fair. He has a patent pending on his design and is now collaborating with scientists at Cornell University on this and related projects.

**Adamo Young:** Biological Detection of Soil Toxins. Turnbull School. Adamo set up an interesting experiment to test the use of earth-worms for detection of soil salinity and acidity. A container was divided into compartments, each of which was filled with soil. Two compartments served as controls, two had the acidity modified using





lemon juice, two were modified by adding boric acid, and two were modified by adding salty water. Each soil compartment had two access doors opening off a central chamber and was

connected similarly to adjacent chambers. Earthworms were placed into the central chamber without soil and Adamo then recorded their movements as well as the chamber that they ultimately stayed in. The worms did not enter the saline soil and in the first test, mostly avoided the acidic soil. Although the worms did not avoid the boric acid soil, their activity level was reduced. In a second test, they preferred the acidic soil, possibly because he had not changed the soil and mould (i.e. food) was growing on the surface of the lemon juice plots. He thus demonstrated that, particularly in the case of salt, earthworms are excellent environmental indicators.

*Right: Judges Carolyn Callaghan with Madeline, and Jeff Skevington.*



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## The Person Behind the Poems: Robert Nero

As editor, I receive various items of interest. One person who is responsible for contributing some of the poems you see in *Trail and Landscape* is Robert Nero. As many of you already know, there are several people who contribute poems, but Robert is a little different. He sends them from well beyond the 50 K. I became curious about the man who lives so far away in Winnipeg, but is a regular contributor to our local publication. Here is what I discovered.

Dr. Nero was a wildlife biologist for the Manitoba government for more than 20 years. His work involved conservation, especially of rare and endangered species. He may be best known, by Manitobans at least, as "the owl man." Why? Robert had rescued an injured Great Grey Owl chick, and due to its injuries was unable to be released. So he took it upon himself to look after this bird for over 21 years. It is said that this owl, Lady Gray'l, was the inspiration of many of his poems

Together they began travelling around the province, educating people about birds of prey and the importance of habitat protection. They managed to make the Great Grey Owl Manitoba's official bird and to establish a fund used for research, conservation and education related to owls and other wildlife. If anyone is interested in learning more about, Robert Nero, Lady Gray'l or the Lady Gray'l Fund, I suggest you check out: [www.naturenorth.com/Gray\\_Owl/Gray\\_Owl.html#grayl](http://www.naturenorth.com/Gray_Owl/Gray_Owl.html#grayl).

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## Notice: Fabulous Fall Fungi

Discover the wonderful world of mushrooms and other fungi in this 2½ day workshop. All experience levels welcome. Hands-on identification, plus discussions on ecology, uses and etymology.

**Dates:** Sept 29 to Oct 2, 2009.

**Cost:** \$295; includes tuition, meals, accommodation, use of lab space & microscopes.

**Location:** Queen's University Biological Station.

**Instructor:** Richard Aaron ([natureteacher1@gmail.com](mailto:natureteacher1@gmail.com)).

**Details:** [www.queensu.ca/biology/qubs/events.html](http://www.queensu.ca/biology/qubs/events.html).

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# American Snout butterfly at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden

*Christine Hanrahan*



On August 1, 2008, while looking for birds at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG), my eye was caught by a lepidopteran fluttering by at eye level. In flight it looked very moth-like, flying in a zig-zag pattern, and a quick mental run-through of all the butterflies expected at that time of year, didn't yield anything that fit the brief glimpse I'd had. As I tried to relocate it, another flew by in the same direction. After a few minutes of searching, I found both of them at the top of a tall Glossy Buckthorn shrub (*Rhamnus frangula*).

They were quite active at first, moving constantly, but eventually I got a good look and to my astonishment saw that they were very fresh-looking American Snouts (*Libytheana carinenta bachmanii*). The extended or elongated palpi, the "snout" was very noticeable, making identification easy. They settled down to nectaring on the buckthorn flowers and I watched them for about 45 minutes before leaving. The next day I, and several others, tried to relocate them, but despite hours of searching through the garden and the Arboretum, didn't see them again. Fortunately, I was able to get some photographs.

There has been only one previous record of American Snout from Ottawa, dating from September 8, 1984 when Ross Layberry found one mud-puddling with several

other butterflies on Goulburn Forced Road in Kanata (Layberry 2007).

Their habitat is described as thickets, the edges of open woodlands, but usually near their host plant, which is Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*) (Cech 2005). Interestingly, there is a large Hackberry at the FWG not more than a few hundred metres from where I saw the snouts.



How did two American Snout butterflies both arrive at the FWG at the same time? It is not entirely impossible that a migrating female found her way to FWG's lone *Celtis occidentalis* and laid her eggs, and two offspring survived. Ross Layberry tells me that there were 11 reports of snouts in Ontario in 2008, which is more than usual (*pers. communication*). Therefore, it is possible that a female might have wandered this far north and laid eggs. While the FWG has only one Hackberry, there are several mature *Celtis occidentalis* trees in the adjacent Arboretum.

The American Snout occurs commonly in the southern United States, and is reported as often abundant in the southwestern US and Mexico. This very distinctive butterfly is in the Nymphalid family (Brush-footed butterflies), subfamily Libytheinae. According to Layberry *et al* (1998), this subfamily "contains only 12 species, with one found in North America." It is rare in Ontario, but does occasionally breed at Point Pelee, where it is thought to be triple-brooded (Ibid). It has been found as a rare migrant on Manitoulin Island and in Ottawa, but does not appear to overwinter in Canada (Ibid)

**Acknowledgements:** I thank Ross Layberry for reviewing this article and offering very pertinent comments and suggestions.

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Images by Christine Hanrahan.

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## Cormorants

*Murray Citron*

Drab flapping signboards, potholes, sidewalks cracked,  
Hinges and squealing motors starved of grease,  
And there are shabby, oh yes, shabby trees,  
Romantic in the sunlight's passing gleam.  
The street is the province of the artifact,  
Its costly infrastructure wearing out.  
My muse is pushing me to think about  
Man's place in nature, an ironic theme.  
Consider the Double-crested Cormorant.  
The species nest in colonies, in trees.  
They feed their nestlings, and do right. Once fed,  
What in the course of nature do they want?  
To drop their loads of guano, if you please.  
In seven to ten years' time, the trees are dead.



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# Birds of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and Vicinity: Update 2009

*Christine Hanrahan*



*White-breasted Nuthatch at Back Yard Garden feeder.*

## **Introduction**

Twelve years ago, when I first wrote about birds and birding at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden (FWG) (Hanrahan 1997), the bird list stood at 105 species. At that time, we were also just beginning to collect breeding evidence for the garden. A meagre eight species were listed as breeding at the site, while another 11 species were considered to be probable breeders. In the intervening years, things have changed considerably and an update is due.

Birders were also fairly rare at FWG back then, but are now frequently observed.



Some of the new additions to the list are thanks to them.

### **Description of the FWG**

For those OFNC members who have not visited the garden before, or who are new to the area, a brief outline of the site follows. The garden is approximately six hectares in size, therefore, as greenspaces go, not overly large. It is heavily vegetated with thickets, woodlots, and hedges, but also has a small, marsh-bordered pond, and open, grassy areas full of wildflowers and grasses. Most importantly, it provides a real oasis for birds (and other wildlife), and the more the site comes to resemble a chunk of countryside set down in the city, the more we find increasing numbers of birds and animals appearing. Most of the birds we see are passing through during migration and it is clear that the garden is an important stopover point for resting and feeding before they continue their great northward and southbound journeys. We also see good numbers of overwintering birds. When species such as Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, and Bohemian Waxwing appear in the region, we usually find them at FWG too, which was not always the case in the early days.

We have identified seven habitats at FWG, although the term "habitat" may not be quite appropriate for some of the sites: Amphibian Pond, New Woods, Hedgerow, Butterfly Meadow, Old Field, Ash Woods, and Ravine. The Pond, Hedgerow, New Woods and Butterfly Meadow are all man-made, that is, we have created them over time. The Ash Woods and Ravine were already on site when we took over in the early 1990s, and the Old Field, formerly cultivated for crops, we mow every 5-6 years to keep in the early successional stage. A more detailed description of the garden is available on our website at: [www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/habitats/index.php](http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/habitats/index.php). We also have a virtual tour of the garden on our Pbase galleries at: [www.pbase.com/fwg/around\\_the\\_fwg](http://www.pbase.com/fwg/around_the_fwg).

### **Changes in the garden**

When I look at photos of the FWG from the period of about 1996 to 2000, and compare them to what the site looks like now, more than a decade later, the difference is striking and in some cases, dramatically so. Back then, the New Woods still looked more like a field with a few small trees rather than a woodlot. The Amphibian Pond, although ringed with cattails, was still only modestly vegetated. Other sections of the garden which fit into no discernible "habitat type" have also evolved. The field on the NW side of the Ash Woods is now full of Red-osier Dogwood, many of the shrubs a significant size. Back in those earlier days, the dogwoods were only just beginning to spread, and now they are well used by various nesting species. The Birch Grove has since lost its "mother tree" but the saplings are currently taller than the original. The "semi-circle" on the west side of the Ash Woods was almost devoid of shrubbery and is now full of viburnums, Manitoba Maples, dogwoods, and other species.



*Bohemian Waxwing.*

Changes to the site continue, and will continue. Some are natural evolutions, as witness the spread of the dogwoods. Others are the result of our ongoing management of the site, usually to remove invasive species. An example of the latter includes the recent removal of large buckthorns in the Ravine in late summer of 2008. This resulted in an exceptionally large bare area on the Ravine's south side. Replacement planting began in the fall, and will continue both this

year and beyond, although it will be some years before the tall tree cover is replaced. An area of grass, Dog-strangling Vine, and raspberry thickets, is now well on its way to becoming an extension of the original Butterfly Meadow as volunteers plant butterfly-friendly plants there. And so the changes continue.

It is these changes in habitat that affect the numbers and species of birds we see at the garden. When the site was more open and less heavily vegetated, it was unattractive to many species of birds. Now, the dense thickets, the areas of tall grass and raspberry, the cattails in the pond, are all used by nesting birds. If the garden was already an oasis for birds in 1998, it has become much more so during the last decade. However, this is not to say that bird numbers there only increase, sometimes they decrease.

### Changes to the FWG bird list

The FWG bird list was initiated by Bill Holland who began an inventory of birds in the early days of 1990, and continued until he passed away in late 1993. Typically, bird lists contain species found within the area being inventoried as well as birds seen flying over that area (fly-bys). This is what Bill did when compiling his list, and we've continued this counting of fly-bys. The FWG list therefore contains some unusual, for the location, species; birds such as Pied-billed Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, Brant, etc.. I would have included in that "fly-by" list American Bittern (which was on the list, courtesy of Bill), but in August 2008, one turned up in the Amphibian Pond and stayed for several days. Other birds, such as the Spotted Sandpiper and Solitary Sandpiper, appear briefly, if at all, in migration. Some birds no longer exist around the garden (or the Experimental Farm) as far as we know, birds such as Gray Partridge which were certainly present in small numbers 18 years ago.

In 1998, I reported that 105 species had been observed at the garden. The list now stands at 146 species with the addition of 41 new records. Even more impressive, the number of breeding species has shot up from 8 to 30. We suspect that an additional four species nest but have not yet been able to find confirmation of this.

Some of the additions are impressive. From only one species of owl (Great Horned Owl), we now have five on the list, although this by no means indicates that all species are to be found regularly. Some are likely to be an occasional occurrence, such as the Great Gray Owl found several times during the winter of 2004/2005, but not since. On the other hand, Northern Saw-whet Owls were first reported in 2005 and have been found almost every year. Long-eared Owls were noted in spring 2008 when up to four individuals frequented the garden over several days, and the species was noted again, briefly, in 2009. Barred Owls have become an almost regular November visitor since the first one was seen in 2005, but generally never stick around for more than a few days.

Ten species of warblers have been added in the last decade for a total of 23 species. Given the 'oasis factor' of the garden, it is not unreasonable to assume that some of the rarities on the Ottawa checklist might occasionally turn up at the garden. Keep your eyes peeled!

A few other interesting additions to the FWG list include Gyrfalcon (noted circling briefly, over the Interpretive Centre), Solitary Sandpiper, Virginia Rail, and Hooded Merganser (in the Amphibian Pond), a Ruffed Grouse in the Old Field, a Wild Turkey in the New Woods, and a Northern Mockingbird seen sporadically at various locations. Three new thrush species have also been added: Eastern Bluebird, Swainson's Thrush and Wood Thrush.

For a more in-depth account of birds at FWG, pick up a copy of our bird brochures, available in both French and English from the Interpretive Centre or the Kiosk near the parking lot.

### **Changes to the number of breeding species**

The number of species breeding in any given year at the garden fluctuates. Some birds have not nested at the garden for awhile and may or may not nest there again. In the 1998 list, the eight breeding species included American Kestrel which was regularly using the nest box on the barn. A pair continued using the box, with only one year off, until two years ago. Sightings of kestrels around the garden have since become much more infrequent. Whether they will ever nest again at FWG remains to be seen. I think we need to replace the old nest box with a new one, but to do so we must find someone with a head for heights to get up there, remove the old one and replace with a new one. Green Herons, on the other hand, were not known to breed in the garden until 2002 when they nested in a large buckthorn. They have nested almost every year since, and we try to keep the nest location a secret until after the young have fledged.

Some of the birds identified as nesting at FWG have done so only once or twice. A Killdeer scraped out a nest at a busy corner of the baseball diamond. She laid an egg which we reluctantly removed to discourage her from laying more at this dangerous (for her) location. The Brown Thrasher and Great Crested Flycatcher are two other species that have only nested once, so far as we know. Barn Swallows nested at the Interpretive Centre for several years until the building began to get busy, at which point they stopped.

Some species have only recently begun nesting at FWG and it remains to be seen whether they will continue: Common Yellowthroat, Chipping Sparrow and American Redstart. Chipping Sparrows are common nesters in the adjacent Arboretum, but only occasionally nest at FWG.

Most of the species which had a question mark next to their name in 1998, are now known to breed. These include Black-capped Chickadee (3-5 pairs), Mourning Dove (several pairs), Downy Woodpecker (one pair), Eastern Kingbird (nested three years in a row in the same hawthorn, in the same nest which was refurbished each spring, until the nest was removed; doesn't nest every year now), Gray Catbird (usually three pairs), Song Sparrow (4-6 pairs, but fewer in recent years), Red-winged Blackbird (one year we had eight pairs nesting at the pond, but changes to cattail growth mean that at present we have 4-5 pairs), Brown-headed Cowbird (Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows regularly found feeding cowbird young), House Finches (several pairs) and American Goldfinches (as many as seven pairs some years).



Of course, other species have also nested at the garden in addition to those just mentioned (see below for complete list). Yellow Warblers began nesting when more shrubby growth evolved. From one pair in about 1999, to four pairs a few years ago, we're now back to one or two pairs. They generally nest in the Red-osier Dogwood shrubs and the raspberry thickets, although they have been found nesting in several other shrubs too. Unfortunately, the success of the garden means that we get far more human traffic than we did a decade ago. People like to wander off the paths and through the Old Field and the thickets, particularly in spring and summer, just when birds such as Yellow Warblers are nesting. Because these birds (as do Song Sparrows) nest low to the ground, their nests are easily disturbed and even destroyed. We've had to erect signs asking people to stay on the trails, but it doesn't seem to do much good. Although I don't know for sure, I can't help thinking that the decrease in nesting by birds such as Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows is because of this.

Another change has occurred with both Tree Swallows and House Sparrows. Tree Swallow numbers at the garden have decreased over the last five years, and the number of nesting pairs has correspondingly declined. And of those that do nest, not all do so successfully. Part of this may be due to the changes in habitat. The area south of the Amphibian Pond was once quite open with only small saplings present. However, with the growth of those trees, the area has changed substantially. We kept intending to move the trees but now they are far too big for that and the only solution is to cut them down, something we've been reluctant to do. As well, surveys have shown all swallow species declining across their range. The decrease in swallows at our location may be due to both reduced numbers and loss of suitable habitat.



*Tree Swallow.*

Another species that has really declined at the garden is the House Sparrow. I mention this because people frequently ask whether they compete with swallows for

nest boxes. That has never been the case. At most we've had perhaps five nest boxes used by House Sparrows. That number has declined to the point where last year no House Sparrows nested at FWG. We've also noticed a considerable decrease in the numbers of wintering House Sparrows at the garden. A decade ago we'd see 80 or more birds, mostly congregated in the cedar hedges between the Arboretum and the parking lot, with 20 or more at a time making forays to the BYG bird feeder. Now we may see 20 to 30 birds in the hedges in winter, and perhaps 6-8 at the feeders. House Sparrows have been reported as declining in many areas, and while some folk may applaud the loss of this non-native species, we need to remember that what impacts on one species may have a detrimental impact on many other (native) species.

Speaking of non-native, I've been intrigued by the use made of the very invasive Dog-strangling Vine in nest-building. Some species have used small amounts of the stem fibre, others have included quantities of the seed 'fluff', and some have incorporated the dry seed pods into their nest (Hanrahan 2006). It speaks to the ingenuity and adaptability of birds who have taken a very common plant and used it for their nests. One Baltimore Oriole nest made entirely of DSV fibres was unbelievably strong!

**BIRD LIST FOR THE FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN.** The following is a list of the 146 species observed at the garden and in the immediate area.

**Breeding evidence:** Confirmed breeding denoted by an asterisk (\*). Species for which breeding is suspected are indicated by an asterisk and a question mark (\*?).

Pied-billed Grebe	Wild Turkey	Herring Gull
Double-crested Cormorant	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Glaucous Gull
American Bittern	Cooper's Hawk	Great black-backed Gull
Great Blue Heron	Red-shouldered Hawk	Rock Pigeon
Green Heron*	Red-tailed Hawk	Mourning Dove*
Turkey Vulture	Rough-legged Hawk	Black-billed Cuckoo
Canada Goose	American Kestrel*	Great Horned Owl
Brant	Mérlin	Barred Owl
Wood Duck	Peregrine Falcon	Northern Saw-whet Owl
American Black Duck	Gyr Falcon	Great Gray Owl
Mallard*	Virginia Rail	Long-eared Owl
Blue-winged Teal	Killdeer*	Common Nighthawk
Hooded Merganser	Spotted Sandpiper	Chimney Swift
Common Merganser	Solitary Sandpiper	Ruby-throated
Gray Partridge	American Woodcock	Hummingbird
Ruffed Grouse	Ring-billed Gull	Belted Kingfisher



Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Swainson's Thrush	Scarlet Tanager
Downy Woodpecker*	Hermit Thrush	Eastern Towhee
Hairy Woodpecker	Wood Thrush	American Tree Sparrow
Northern Flicker*?	American Robin*	Chipping Sparrow*
Pileated Woodpecker	Gray Catbird*	Field Sparrow
Eastern Wood Pewee	Northern Mockingbird	Savannah Sparrow
Least Flycatcher*?	Brown Thrasher*	Fox Sparrow
Eastern Phoebe	European Starling*	Song Sparrow*
Great crested Flycatcher*	Water Pipit	Lincoln's Sparrow
Eastern Kingbird*	Bohemian Waxwing	Swamp Sparrow
Northern Shrike	Cedar Waxwing*	White-throated Sparrow
Blue-headed Vireo	Tennessee Warbler	White-crowned Sparrow
Warbling Vireo*	Orange-crowned Warbler	Dark-eyed Junco
Red-eyed Vireo*	Nashville Warbler	(including Oregon form)
Blue Jay	Northern Parula	Snow Bunting
American Crow*	Yellow Warbler*	Northern Cardinal*
Common Raven	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Purple Martin	Magnolia Warbler	Indigo Bunting
Tree Swallow*	Cape May Warbler	Bobolink
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Black-throated Blue Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird*
Cliff Swallow	Yellow-rumped Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Barn Swallow*	Black-throated Green	Rusty Blackbird
Black-capped Chickadee*	Blackburnian Warbler	Common Grackle*?
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Pine Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird*
White-breasted Nuthatch*?	Bay-breasted Warbler	Baltimore Oriole*
Brown Creeper	Blackpoll Warbler	Pine Grosbeak
House Wren	Palm Warbler	Purple Finch
Winter Wren	Black-and-white Warbler	House Finch*
Golden-crowned Kinglet	American Redstart*	Common Redpoll
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Ovenbird	Pine Siskin
Eastern Bluebird	Mourning Warbler	American Goldfinch*
Veery	Common Yellowthroat*	Evening Grosbeak
Gray-cheeked Thrush	Wilson's Warbler	House Sparrow*
	Canada Warbler	

#### References:

- Hanrahan, Christine. 1997. Birds of the Fletcher Wildlife Garden and Vicinity. *T&L* (31)3:124-129.
- Hanrahan, Christine. 2006. Use of the Invasive pale Swallowwort by Birds and Small Mammals. *T&L* (40)3:155-157.

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# OFNC Bird Records Subcommittee Activities January 2008 – February 2009

*Chris Lewis*

The Bird Records Sub-committee (BRSC) is responsible for the integrity of the occurrence data maintained and disseminated by the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club (OFNC). The BRSC actively solicits reports for this purpose, reviews such reports and votes on whether occurrences are sufficiently documented and merit being included in "A Birder's Checklist of Ottawa" (1993) and "Ottawa District Bird Checklist" (2002) which are published by OFNC.

The BRSC encourages documentation of any sighting, within a 50 km radius of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, of a bird species not on the checklists. Although the checklists require revision and updating (a future project for the BRSC) they remain excellent resources for the occurrence of birds in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. Bird sightings which fall outside the 50 km are also of interest, and it is recommended that such observations be reported to the Bird Status Line at 613-860-9000, or by email to [sightings@ofnc.ca](mailto:sightings@ofnc.ca) or [rarebirds@ofnc.ca](mailto:rarebirds@ofnc.ca). Additionally, documentation is desired for many out-of-season sightings.

A recent trend towards submission of only photographic evidence, with little or no written information, becomes a problem when reviewing reports. Details and circumstances associated with an observation, such as behaviours, vocalizations, and comparisons with other birds, cannot be determined from photos alone. Furthermore, even the best close-up photograph does not reveal information to support the actual location of the bird. We therefore urge reporters to submit written reports with their images.

A very comprehensive article providing guidance on how to prepare a rare bird report, as well as an online report form, is available on the Club web site at [www.ofnc.ca/birding/bird-reports/rare\\_bird.php](http://www.ofnc.ca/birding/bird-reports/rare_bird.php). Otherwise, written reports and photographs may be sent by mail to:

The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club  
Attention: Bird Records Subcommittee

PO Box 35069, Westgate P.O.  
Ottawa, ON  
K1Z 1A2

### **Membership 2008-2009**

The BRSC members for 2008 were:

Gordon Pringle—Chair  
Chris Lewis—Recording Secretary  
Daniel St-Hilaire  
Jacques Bouvier  
Jeff Skevington  
Larry Neily  
David Britton  
Bev McBride  
Bernie Ladouceur (alternate)  
Chris Traynor (alternate; Birds Committee Chair)

In 2009, Daniel St-Hilaire and Jacques Bouvier retired from the Committee; Daniel Toussaint was voted in as a new voting member, Bernie Ladouceur as voting member from alternate, and Mike Tate as alternate. The slate of members was approved by Birds Committee in January 2009.

### **Brief Summation of BRSC Activities for January 2008 - February 2009**

The BRSC held two meetings in 2008 (January and November) and one in February 2009. The January meeting was held to review the Christmas Bird Count data prior to release. The subsequent meetings were held mainly to review Rare Bird Reports, and to revise the Subcommittee Terms of Reference (TOR). The new TOR were approved by Birds Committee in January 2009. In February we also discussed reports and correspondence/communications that are not submitted as formal reports, but would enhance or reinforce any record. All correspondence, photographic evidence, etc. are retained in a database maintained by the BRSC Chair, and are forwarded to the Ontario Bird Records Subcommittee (OBRC).

### **Rare Bird Reports**

The BRSC has made every effort to verify documentation prior to the acceptance and publication of a record but there are still possibilities of errors or omissions. Therefore, the Subcommittee welcomes written communications which would correct or reinforce the records. These can be forwarded to the Chair at the addresses above.

Reports are arranged by English and scientific names following the Seventh Edition

of the American Ornithologists' Union Checklist of North American Birds (AOU 1998) and its 48<sup>th</sup> supplement (AOU 2007). The date of first observation is provided although some birds may have lingered for several days or weeks. The names of contributors of documentation are listed; the discoverer(s) of the bird are *italicized* and the person(s) who submitted the report are underlined. When possible, acknowledgements of receipt and results of reviews are sent to all contributors of the reports.

## ACCEPTED REPORTS

### Ross's Goose *Chen rossii*

2008 - April 22, Ontario, Navan, Bear Brook; *Robert Cermak*, Chris Lewis, multiple observers (m. obs.).

### Trumpeter Swan *Cygnus buccinator*

2007 - November 13, Ontario, Richmond, Richmond lagoons; Tony Beck, *Richard Collins*; photo available.

### American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*

2007 - June 3, Ontario, Ottawa, Shirleys Bay; Bill Petrie, m. obs.

2008 - August 12, Ontario, Ottawa, Moodie Dr. quarry pond; *Tony Beck*, Chris Lewis, m. obs.; photo available.

### Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

2007 - October 8, Ontario, Alfred, Alfred sewage lagoons; Jacques Bouvier, m. obs.; photos available.

### Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea*

2007 - April 9, Ontario, Ottawa, Central Experimental Farm Arboretum; Michele Rodrick.

### Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri*

2004 - May 18, Quebec, Gatineau, Sabourin Marsh; John Dubois.

### Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

2008 - May 11, Quebec, Gatineau, Marais des Laiches (est); Jacques Savard; photo available.

### California Gull *Larus californicus*

2007 - November 6, Ontario, Ottawa, Moodie Dr. quarry pond; Tony Beck.

- Sabine's Gull** *Xema sabini*  
 2007 - September 13, Ontario, Ottawa, Deschênes Rapids; *Tony Beck*,  
David Britton, m. obs.; photos available.
- Black-legged Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla*  
 2008 - August 5, Ontario, Ottawa, Moodie Dr. quarry pond; *Gerard Phillips*,  
Larry Neily, Chris Lewis, m. obs.; photos available.
- Boreal Owl** *Aegolius funereus*  
 2009 - January 26, Ontario, Constance Bay; Kelly Johnson; photo  
 available. (NOTE: while this species does not require a Rare Bird  
 Report, a formal report was submitted, therefore the BRSC is  
 obligated to process it.).
- Fork-tailed Flycatcher** *Tyrannus savana*  
 1989 - October 21, Ontario, Kanata; R.J. Thomas Maxwell.  
 (NOTE: This report was reviewed several times in various  
 incarnations of the BRSC since it was first submitted in 1989. In  
 light of recent occurrences in fall in Ontario, it was brought forth  
 for review again and was accepted—*first record for Ottawa*).
- Tufted Titmouse** *Baeolophus bicolor*  
 2007 - December 22, Ontario, Embrun, Forest Park; Jean-Pierre Cheff,  
Chris Lewis, m. obs..  
 2008 - February 23, Ontario, Constance Bay; Jeff Skevington; wav.file  
 recording available.
- Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*  
 2006 - October 19, Ontario, Ottawa, Dick Bell Park; *Robert Cermak*  
Chris Lewis, m. obs.,
- Townsend's Solitaire** *Myadestes townsendi*  
 2007 - December 21, Ontario, Ottawa, Parkwood Hills; *Francine Strecting*,  
Chris Lewis, m. obs.; photo available.
- Wilson's Warbler** *Wilsonia pusilla* (out-of-season record)  
 2008 - November 22, Quebec, Aylmer; Lawrence Newman; photo  
 available.
- Louisiana Waterthrush** *Seiurus motacilla*  
 2004 - May 13, Quebec, Gatineau Park; Donald Dallaire, David Britton,  
 m. obs. (NOTE: breeding activity).



**Yellow-breasted Chat** *Icteria virens*

2000 - May 27, Quebec, Gatineau Park, Gamelin Blvd; Frederic Bedard,  
m. obs..

**Le Conte's Sparrow** *Ammodramus leconteii*

2008 - September 26, Ontario, Carp, Diamondview Rd.; Peter Hall.

**Dark-eyed Junco "Oregon" race** *Junco hyemalis*

2007 - November 12, Ontario, Ottawa Fletcher Wildlife Garden; Bev McBride, m. obs.; photos available.

**Painted Bunting** *Passerina ciris*

2003 - May 12, Ontario, Ashton; *James Akers, Patricia Akers*; photo available—*first record for Ottawa*.

**ACCEPTED REPORTS – Species correct; origin uncertain**

**Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

1984 - April 19, Ontario, Ottawa, Shirleys Bay; *Ray Holland*; photo available

2006 - May 6, Ontario, Navan, Trim Rd.; Normand Larche; photos available

**NOTE re: Status of Barnacle Goose in Ontario:** In the fall of 2005 a Barnacle Goose banded in Great Britain, was shot by a hunter near Hawkesbury, ON. This was not a formal report; however, since then reports of Barnacle Geese particularly in eastern Ontario have been revisited by the OBRC with regard to an established pattern of vagrancy and its status as a "wild" vs. "escaped" species. In 2009, OBRC decided to accept this species for the Ontario list. Consequently, BRSC is in the process of reviewing local reports and additional documentation.

**ACCEPTED REPORTS – Identified to genus only**

**Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

1988 - October 30, Ontario, Stony Swamp, Barry Burns Court; *Wendy Palmer, Bob Gorman*; **ACCEPTED** as *Cygnus species*

## NOT ACCEPTED REPORTS

### Identification uncertain

Documentation submitted for the following reports was found not to contain enough detail to rule out another species of bird. In many cases, the species involved are readily identifiable and there is every probability that the correct identification was made. However, when reporting a rare bird, it is important to remember that no bird is unmistakable! Please also remember that the purpose of the Rare Bird Report is to document the occurrence for the future. In any case, reports that are not accepted are maintained on file and if additional information is received these reports will be revisited.

### Whooping Crane *Grus americana*

2008 - March 30, Ontario, Navan.

### Archival Work

Several species on the Ottawa checklist did not have a corresponding report on file, which causes confusion when working with the records database and files. With the cooperation of Michel Gosselin at the Canadian Museum of Nature, Colin Bowen was able to obtain digital photos of bird specimens including their labels. Therefore, the following species are now documented and accepted for the records:

Audubon's Shearwater

Wilson's Storm-Petrel

Band-rumped Storm-Petrel

Swainson's Hawk

Barn Owl

Western Meadowlark

Work continues on researching older records from past OFNC publications.

## NEEDED REPORTS

The following birds were reported to the Bird Status Line or came to the attention of the BRSC in other ways, but have not been documented. Any information (field notes, photographs, etc.) regarding any of the following would be very useful for our files:

Pomarine Jaeger	September 30, 2006, Andrew Haydon Park.
White-tailed Kite	August 13, 2008, Lamoureux St., Deschênes (Aylmer).
Trumpeter Swan	March 6-16, 2009, Carleton Place.
Mute Swan	April 12-14, 2009, Marais des Laiches (Gatineau).

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# Coming Events

arranged by the Excursions & Lectures Committee.

For further information,  
call the Club number (613-722-3050).

*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 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 Box 35069, Westgate P.O., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 1A2, at least ten days in advance. Include your name, address, telephone number and the name of the outing. Your cooperation is appreciated by the Committee so that we do not have to wait to the last moment to decide whether a trip should be cancelled due to low registration. In order for the Club to offer a bus trip, we need just over 33 people to register. If fewer than 30 register, we have the option of cancelling the trip or increasing the cost. Such decisions must be done a week in advance so we encourage anyone who is interested in any bus trip to register as early as possible. We also wish to discourage postponing the actual payment of bus fees until the day of the event.*

**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. Monthly meetings are held in The Discovery Zone Theatre on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. Attendees may have to pay \$5 parking per vehicle.*

**BIRD STATUS LINE:** *Phone 613-860-9000 to learn of recent sightings or birding potential in the Ottawa area. To report recent sightings use the 613-860-9000 number and stay on the line. This service is run on behalf of the Birds Committee and is available to members and non-members.*

Please note that our **September 15** and **October 13** monthly meetings will be held in the **K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue**. Parking is available in a lot just east of this building.

We return to the **Canadian Museum of Nature**, Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB), in **The Discovery Zone Theatre on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor** for our **November, December, January, February, and March** meetings. The entrance to the museum is on McLeod Street.

The VMMB is a heritage building and is undergoing preventative maintenance, renovation and emergency repair. The Museum will ensure a safe passage within the building and to and from the parking areas but makes no other warranties as to the aesthetic appearance due to construction materials being on hand or structures being erected on the premises (i.e. scaffolding, temporary walls, temporary signage, etc.). There is usually a \$5 parking charge in the Museum parking lot per vehicle.

**Saturday**  
**4 July**  
**8:30 am.**

### **THIRD ANNUAL OTTAWA AREA BUTTERFLY COUNT**

**Leaders:** Jeff Skevington (613-832-1970) and Peter Hall.

**Meet:** Parking lot at intersection of Dwyer Hill Rd. and March Rd. (NE of Almonte). Specific questions about the trip can be directed to Jeff; if in doubt about the weather call Jeff between 6 pm and 9 pm Friday night.

**(rain date:**  
**Sunday**  
**5 July)**

The North American Butterfly Association has coordinated butterfly counts following the same format as Christmas Bird Counts (CBCs) for many years. These counts are published as part of an ongoing program of NABA to census the butterflies of North America (see <http://www.naba.org/counts.html> for more information). Volunteer participants' focus on a 24 km diameter circle and conduct a one-day census of all butterflies sighted within that circle. As with CBCs, there is a \$4.00 charge to participants to support the publication of the results (not obligatory, but encouraged; children under 12 are free). This is the third year that OFNC will sponsor a count. The count area will be centred at the same place as in the past,

Manion Corners (SW of Ottawa). It includes several important butterfly areas such as the Long Swamp and the Burnt Lands alvar. It is an all day event so bring your lunch. No experience is necessary! We will put teams together on site and match up people so that everyone has a chance to learn from the experts. If you have binoculars and a butterfly net, bring them along. Butterflies may be captured and brought to the count compilation alive for identification and release.

In the count of 2008, 23 participants found 3181 butterflies of 55 species—making our count one of the most diverse in the province. Come out this year to see if we can break the 60 species barrier. If you would like to receive an excel spreadsheet summarizing the 2008 count, contact Jeff Skevington at [jhskevington@gmail.com](mailto:jhskevington@gmail.com).

After the count, we will meet at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden for a pot luck dinner and count compilation.

**Tuesday**  
**7 July**  
**9:30 a.m.**

**(Rain date:**  
**Thursday**  
**July 9)**

#### **BUTTERFLIES OF LAROSE FOREST**

**Leaders:** Peter Hall and Christine Hanrahan.

**Meet:** Fletcher Wildlife Garden at 9:30 a.m.

Larose Forest, 40 minutes east of Ottawa, has a tremendous variety of butterflies. In recent years, Delaware, Dion, and Broad-winged Skippers have been found, as well as many other species. Join Peter Hall, co-author of the Butterflies of Canada, for a leisurely stroll along some of the forest trails that have proven especially good for butterflies. Bring insect repellent, lunch, and water. The trip will last approx. 3 hours.. The trip is limited to 15 participants. Please register with the Club number.

**Car pooling on excursions** is very much encouraged and that is why we usually try to meet at a convenient bus stop with a good place to leave a car unattended for a few hours. Please chip in for gas.



**Sunday**

**19 July**

**1:00 p.m.**

**to about**

**4:00 p.m.**

### **CREEPY CRAWLEYS IN AND AROUND THE WATER**

**Leader:** Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054).

**Meet:** Stony Swamp, Moodie Drive, Beaver Trail, Parking lot No. 8 (near the hydro lines).

This event is geared to kids who don't mind picking up (carefully) and looking at anything that moves. We shall hike along the trails to one or more boardwalks that span open shallow water or marshy areas. Fenja will bring her insect and dip nets for people to use as well as viewing pans and magnifiers, and perhaps a microscope for studying what we find. Kids will be shown how to handle these animals with respect and to carefully put them back where they belong before we leave. Those who have them, please bring your nets, field guides, magnifying glasses or hand lens. Rubber boots and a hat are recommended as well as insect repellent, sun screen and drinking water. (Adults without kids are also welcome.)

**Wednesday**

**29 July**

**6:30 p.m.**

**to about**

**8:30 p.m.**

### **GENERAL INTEREST WALK IN MONAGHAN FOREST, NEPEAN**

**Leader:** Connie Clark (613-729-1815).

**Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of parking lot near Pizza Pizza.

Located less than 15 minutes from Lincoln Fields, this forest contains a number of different habitats. The forest is a treasure house of plants in spring, summer and fall. Many insects are found there, and butterflies frequent the hydro line cut in summer. The forest also contains poison ivy along some paths, and at times some areas are muddy following heavy rains, so dress appropriately. For more information check out the article on Monaghan Forest in *T&L*, 2005, vol. 39, no. 4, Oct-Dec. The trip will be cancelled if it rains on this day.

**Saturday**

**22 August**

**7:30 a.m.**

### **FALL MIGRATION ALONG THE OTTAWA RIVER**

**Leader:** Ken Allison (613-831-7585).

**Meet:** Entrance to Britannia Filtration Plant grounds on Cassels Street.

This half-day outing will start at Britannia Conservation Area. We shall be looking for warblers and other early fall migrants. This will be an opportunity to sort out some of those "confusing fall warblers." We will check out shorebird habitat along the river and probably finish up at Shirleys Bay at about noon. The exact itinerary will depend on water levels. Bring binoculars and, if you have one, a spotting scope.

**Thursday**  
**27 August**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
**to**  
**noon**

**rain date**  
**Friday**  
**28 August**

**COME AND CANOE WITH THE SOUTH NATION  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY!**

**Leaders:** Michelle Scheerder and Bill Greaves (South Nation  
Conservation Authority  
613-984-2948 ext. 310 (Michelle); ext. 304 (Bill)  
mscheerder@nation.on.ca; wgreaves@nation.on.ca

**Meet:** Spencerville Mill

We will get in the water at the Mill and paddle upstream to the Weir Road Marsh and back. The trip will be approximately 3 hours and during this time you are encouraged to take photographs of anything of interest. We will pass specific sites where we'll have our turtle traps set up to demonstrate the work that we do for the species at risk turtles. We will also discuss some of the interesting wildlife in the area as well as native and invasive flora. Participants are asked to bring a canoe and paddles (two canoes & paddles are available - call to reserve). Also bring life jackets, hats, sun screen, bug spray, closed-toe shoes, drinking water, and of course your cameras. Please feel free to contact us for more information and we would appreciate a call if you plan to go.

**Saturday**  
**29 August**  
**8:00 a.m.**

**WETLANDS AND MUTANT SHAGBARKS IN  
WILDERNESS LANARK**

**Leader:** Jim Ronson, Perth (613-264-1937).

**Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of parking lot by Pizza Pizza (Christine Wong, trip coordinator, 613-739-8246) **Or** at 9:00 a.m. at the General Store in Hopetown, north of Perth.

The rugged hills, partly covered with thin soil, supports about 1000 specimens of Shagbark Hickory. These trees may be the farthest north Shags in all of Ontario; winters here would seem to be too long for their survival. Experts believe that these Shags may be a mutant strain. Do you? We shall take a rolling bush road that winds through them. Then, we shall walk through a mature hardwood forest to a complex pattern of wetlands and we shall bush wack the margins of the water. Next, we go through a cedar and hemlock wilderness. Cougars have been seen here and the beech tree we shall pass has bear claw marks. This is a place to explore carefully. Lanark County owns and manages this land as one of its Model Forests. Boots and a hat are necessary. Bring plenty to drink and eat. Rain probably will not cancel this trip.

Tuesday  
15 September  
7:00 p.m.  
Social &  
Club business

**OFNC MONTHLY MEETING  
MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHY NIGHT AND  
SHOWCASE OF CLUB ACTIVITIES**

Location: K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue. Parking is available in a lot just east of this building.

7:30 p.m.  
Formal  
Program

Many of us take pictures on Club outings or on our own, and this is our opportunity to share some special natural history shots with fellow members. The mix of different topics and different voices makes for an enjoyable evening. Contributions may be up to 15 images and may include anything related to natural history. We can handle conventional slides as well as most digital presentations, but check with us first about whether you might need to bring your own laptop (e.g., Macintosh users) or whether a CD (most IBM users) would suffice. We would like you to speak briefly about your images, but that is not a requirement. Please contact Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054) so that we can organize the evening's presentations. This evening will also showcase the various activities happening in our Club such as Conservation, Birding, Fletcher Wildlife Garden, Peregrine Falcon Watch and Publications.

Please note that due to construction at the Victoria Memorial Museum, this meeting and the October 13 monthly meeting will be held in the K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue. Parking is available in a lot just east of this building.

We return to the Canadian Museum of Nature, Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB), in The Discovery Zone Theatre on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor for our November, December, January, February, and March meetings. The entrance to the museum is on McLeod Street.

The VMMB is a heritage building and is undergoing preventative maintenance, renovation and emergency repair. The Museum will ensure a safe passage within the building and to and from the parking areas but makes no other warranties as to the aesthetic appearance due to construction materials being on hand or structures being erected on the premises (i.e. scaffolding, temporary walls, temporary signage, etc.).

There is usually a \$5 parking charge in the Museum parking lot per vehicle.

**Thursday**  
**17 September**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
to  
**mid-afternoon**

**GENERAL INTEREST WALK - LIMERICK FOREST  
AND MERRICKVILLE SAND HILLS**

**Leader:** Stew Hamill and Eleanor Thomson.

**Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, NE corner of parking lot by Pizza Pizza, coordinator Fenja Brodo (613-723-2054).

On the southern edge of Merrickville is an area of sand hills, partly lying within the Limerick Forest. On a 4-km (return) hike from the outskirts of Merrickville, we will explore this area.

Our goal will be to find late summer birds and wild flowers.

Wear hiking gear, and bring lunch, field guides, and binoculars.

Call or e-mail Stew Hamill (613-269-3415, [shamill@ripnet.com](mailto:shamill@ripnet.com)) if you wish to meet the group in Merrickville.

**Saturday**  
**26 September**  
**8:00 a.m.**  
to  
**noon**

**FALL BIRDING IN THE WEST END**

**Leader:** Roy John (613-748-9963).

**Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking to lot, near Pizza Pizza.

We will likely go to Mud Lake, Shirleys Bay, and Moodie Pits.

The exact route will be decided the day before the walk. We

suggest that you bring a snack, and if you have one, a telescope.

**Saturday**  
**3 October**  
**8:30 a.m.**

**FUNGAL TRIP**

**Leader:** George White.

**Meet:** Lincoln Fields Shopping Centre, northeast corner of the parking lot, near Pizza Pizza at 8:30 a.m., or meet George ([gwhite@lincsat.com](mailto:gwhite@lincsat.com)) at 9:30 a.m. at the 5-span bridge in Pakenham by the waterfalls.

This will be a joint outing with the Mcnamara Field Club. We shall visit the Spicer property near Pakenham to look for all kinds of macro and micro fungi including Myxomycetes (slime molds), Discomycetes, Ascomycetes, coral fungi, jelly fungi, puffballs and other kinds of mushrooms. It will be a well

rounded fungus foray. A hand lens or magnifying glass would be handy. Photographers will want to bring their macro lenses.

Wear hiking boots and bring a lunch.

**Tuesday**

**13 October**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Social & Club  
business**

**7:30 p.m.**

**Formal  
Program**

**OFNC MONTHLY MEETING**

**BIRD BANDING: A Tool for Migratory Bird Research and Conservation.**

**Speaker:** Lesley Howes

**Location:** K.W. Neatby Building, Salon B, Central Experimental Farm, 960 Carling Avenue. Parking is available in a lot just east of this building.

Lesley will speak about the Canadian Bird Banding program and its importance as a tool for research, monitoring and conservation. She will provide information on what data are collected while a bird is in the hand and will mention specific indicators for ageing and sexing birds and determining their reproductive condition. Lesley is the Bird Banding Biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service.

**Thursday**

**13 May**

**to**

**Sunday**

**16 May**

**2010**

**POINTE PELEE NATIONAL PARK**

The Club's bi-annual trip to Pointe Pelee will take place during the spring migration next May. Accommodation for three nights, will be at the Comfort Inn in Leamington. We are recommending participants share rooms to minimize costs. The package cost, including bus transportation, hotel and taxes, will be approximately \$450 per person, based on double occupancy. This early announcement is to facilitate vacation planning.

Note location of October's monthly meeting is at 960 Carling Ave.

We return to the **Canadian Museum of Nature**, Victoria Memorial Museum Building (VMMB), in **The Discovery Zone Theatre on the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor** for our **November, December, January, February, and March** meetings. The entrance to the museum is on McLeod Street.

*DEADLINE: Material intended for the April- June issue must be in the editor's hands by August 1, 2009. Mail your manuscripts to:*

**Karen McLachlan Hamilton,**

**2980 Moodie Drive, Nepean, ON, K2J 4S7**

**H: (613) 838-4943; email: [hamilton@storm.ca](mailto:hamilton@storm.ca)**

**ANY ARTICLE OR TRAIL & LANDSCAPE**

Have you been on an interesting field trip or made some unusual observations? Write up your thoughts and send them to Trail & Landscape. We accept email, disk or CD, or submissions in traditional to go-typed, written, or printed.

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