



# The Blue Bill

Quarterly Journal of the Kingston Field Naturalists

ISSN 0382-5655

---

**Volume 60, No. 2**

**June 2013**

---

## Contents

President's Page	<i>Mark Andrew Conboy</i> .....35
Spring Round-up 2013	<i>Ron D. Weir</i> .....36
KFN Annual Reports May 2012-Apr 2013	<i>various</i> .....42
Mesmerizing Moments on the Napanee River	<i>Terry Sprague</i> .....49
Spring Birding Workshop Led by Sharon David	<i>Shirley French</i> .....51
Kingston Region Birds Spring Season 1March-31May	<i>Mark Andrew Conboy</i> .....52
KFN Trip to Ithaca NY/Cornell University Apr 26-28	<i>Gaye Beckwith</i> .....56
KFN Rambles and Walks March-May 2013	
2Apr Ramble to Presqu'ile PP	<i>Mark Read</i> .....59
5Mar Ramble to Fluhrer Park	<i>Joe Benderavage</i> .....60
Evening May Birdwalks at Lemoine Point	<i>Joe Benderavage</i> .....61

---

## 2013/2014 Officers

**President:** Mark Conboy  
613-329-8068  
mconboy@lakeheadu.ca

**Honorary President** Ron D. Weir  
613-549-5274  
barb.ron1@cogeco.ca

**Vice-President:** Darren Rayner  
613-888-9906  
drayner21@gmail.com

**Past President:** Gaye Beckwith  
613-376-3716  
beckwithb@sympatico.ca

**Treasurer:** Larry McCurdy  
613-389-6427  
larrymcc@kingston.net

**Recording Secretary:** Janic Grant  
613-548-3668  
janis.grant@kos.net

**Membership Secretary:** John Critchley  
613-634-5475  
sharjohn.critchley@sympatico.ca

---

Nature Reserves	Erwin Batalla	613-542-2048	alerwin@xplornet.ca
Conservation	Chris Hargreaves	613-389-8993	hargreavescp@sympatico.ca
<i>Blue Bill</i> Editor	Alex Simmons	613-542-2048	alerwin@xplornet.ca
Junior Naturalists	Anne Robertson	613-389-6742	n8ture.anne@sympatico.ca
Education	Shirley French	613-548-8617	shirleyfrenchka@gmail.com
Field Trips	Kurt Hennige	613-386-1772	khennige@xplornet.com
Bird Sightings	Mark Conboy	613-329-8068	mconboy@lakeheadu.ca
Bird Records	Ron Weir	613-549-5274	barb.ron1@cogeco.ca
Speakers	Gaye Beckwith	613-376-3716	beckwithb@sympatico.ca
Newsletter	Janet Elliott	613-547-2674	daphodilly@hotmail.com
Publicity/Website	Chris Grooms	613-386-7969	groomsc@queensu.ca
Slideshow	Gaye Beckwith	613-376-3716	beckwithb@sympatico.ca
Ontario Nature	Ken Robinson	613-548-3668	janis.grant@kos.net
Member-at-large	John Cartwright	613-766-2896	john.cartwright@rogers.com
Member-at-large	Ken Robinson	613-766-4782	ken.robinson546@gmail.com
Member-at-large	Rose-marie Burke	613-549-7583	rmbehr@istar.ca
Archives	Peter McIntyre	613-548-4738	klamp@cogeco.ca

---

**The Blue Bill** is the quarterly journal (published March, June, September and December) of the **Kingston Field Naturalists**, P.O. Box 831, Kingston, ON (Canada), K7L 4X6.

**Website:** <http://www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org>

Send submissions to the Editor by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the month of publication (i.e. by the 15<sup>th</sup> of February/May/August/November) to the address above, or to the editor via e-mail to: **alerwin@xplornet.ca** Please include contact phone number.

Submissions should be in MS Word format or in "plain text" format (PC or MacIntosh) or unformatted in the body of an e-mail.

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #047128



## President's Page

### *Mark Andrew Conboy*

I'm very happy to be the new president of the Kingston Field Naturalists. My involvement with the club started as a teenager. Under the tutelage of Anne Robertson and Diane Lawrence, I learned there was more to nature than just birds (I, like many a naturalist, got my start with birds). I became fascinated with all aspects of the natural world, developing a passion which has become the overarching theme of my life.

Since my days as a Teen Naturalist I lived off and on in the Kingston area, joining in club activities when I could. I tried to time my Christmas holidays to attend the December general meeting where members show their "best of" photos. Several years ago I moved back to Kingston to pursue a master's degree at Queen's University. Since then, the KFN has again become an integral part of my life. I'm looking forward to working with the membership to ensure the continued success of our club.

The KFN is no small thing. We truly are a remarkable organization, run entirely on volunteer power. Our club, 500+ members strong, makes a big difference when it comes to protecting nature locally and provincially. With our two conservation lands, the Martin Edwards Reserve on Amherst Island and the Helen Quillium Sanctuary on the Frontenac Arch, we protect valuable habitat for thousands of species (not an exaggeration - the biological diversity of the Kingston area is remarkable). In the past our members have been

instrumental in establishing other conservation lands including Queen's University Biological Station, Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area. We continue to battle wind farm development in Important Bird Areas like the south shore of Prince Edward County. Every year our education and outreach initiatives reach thousands of people. Our voice is being heard; let's hope the ears who hear it have some common sense between them!

A major challenge our club may face in coming years is ensuring that enough young people are active in our organization. A glance around the room during a general meeting shows that many of our members are middle-aged or older. That's not to say there are no young people in the club; there are. We have to adapt our organization to remain attractive and relevant to today's budding young naturalists, without alienating our traditional supporters.

The KFN executive had a brainstorming session at our last meeting to address this issue. We have ideas to engage our young members and possibly attract more youths and students to the club. You can expect to see the KFN make the leap into the world of social media in the near future. We are considering holding occasional joint meetings or field trips with clubs such as the Society for Conservation Biology, which shares many of the same goals as the KFN and has a younger demographic.

Other naturalist clubs have suffered from decreased membership in recent years, with some small clubs folding entirely. I don't think that's a danger for the KFN at this point, but it never hurts

to start planning for the future. We want to ensure that we remain a strong voice for nature in the Kingston area for decades to come.

## Spring Round-up 2013

*Ron D. Weir*

The KFN's 56<sup>th</sup> Spring Round-up took place from 1500h May18 to 1500h May19. Saturday afternoon was sunny (20-24)°C with calm conditions that lasted overnight. Dawn at 14°C saw sunshine and a southerly wind. Temperatures rose to the mid20s along Lake Ontario and upper 20s inland.

The final tally of species was 193, below the 40-year (1973-2012) average of 199. The absence of shorebirds accounts for the difference. Areas visited included: Amherst Island; Amherstview Sewage Lagoons; Camden East including Camden Lake; Canoe Lake Rd. and area; Charleston Lake; Florida Rd.; Opinicon Rd. and area; Collins Bay and watershed; Howe Island; Kingston including Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area & Lemoine Pt.; Salmon, Snake, Brother's & Garden Islands; Moscow; Newburgh; Prince Edward Point; Sydenham.

No new species was added to the cumulative total, which remains at 288. For a tally of Spring Round-ups from 1960-2011, see Blue Bill [39](#) 28-36 (1992). For 1992-2009, see Blue Bill [39](#) 44-49 (1992), [40](#) 125-131 (1993), [41](#) 48-53 (1994), [42](#) 63-70 (1995), [43](#) 70-74 (1996), [44](#) 60-66 (1997), [45](#) 49-54 (1998), [46](#) 81-89 (1999), [47](#) 58-63 (2000), [48](#) 52-59 (2001), [49](#) 90-96

(2002), [50](#) 40-44 (2003), [51](#) 47-52 (2004), [52](#) 42-48 (2005), [53](#) 77-82 (2006), [55](#) 37-42 (2008), [55](#) 42-47 (2008), [56](#) 49-54 (2009), [57](#) 48-54 (2010), [58](#) 51-57 (2011), [59](#) 171-177 (2012).

Noteworthy finds are Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hooded Warbler, Clay-colored Sparrows, and Orchard Orioles.

A Red-fronted Serin (sometimes called Fire-fronted Serin) (*Serinus pusillus*) was present at PEPT. This small finch is native to western Asia, especially the mountainous regions of the Caucasus and Turkey. It is a popular caged bird and the individual at PEPT is thought to have escaped from captivity. It resembles a dark Common Redpoll.

On Sunday, Chip Weseloh visited the Brothers (East, Middle, West), Salmon, Snake and Garden Islands. He tallied the following:

West Brothers: DC Cormorant-100+ nests, Mallard-1 nest 10 eggs, Ring-billed Gull-200-300 nests, Herring Gull-55 nests.

Middle Brothers: DC Cormorant-100s of birds, Black-crowned Night Heron-12+ birds 12+ nests, Canada Goose-21 birds 4 goslings, Osprey-1 nest on navigation tower, Ring-billed Gull-50 nests.

East Brothers: DC Cormorant-100s of birds, Canada Goose-4 adults (2 nests 4eggs & 3eggs), Herring Gull-18 nests.

Salmon: DC Cormorant-25 birds, Mallard-4 birds, Herring Gull-95 nests (190 adults), Dunlin-4 birds.

Snake: Herring Gull-73 nests (146 adults), Least Sandpiper-6, Dunlin-18.

Participants went to the home of Marian and Joel Ellis for a potluck supper and the species tabulation. On behalf of the participants, I thank Marian and Joel for being great hosts.

Party #1: Erwin Batalla, Alexandra Simmons, Gaye & Betsy Beckwith, Hugh Evans

Party #2: Kurt Hennige, Chris Grooms, Rob Worona, Gary Ure

Party #3: Paul Mackenzie, Bud Rowe, Lynn Bell, John Cartwright, Mark Read

Party #4: Kenneth & Andrew Edwards, Nils Moller

Party #5: Joel Ellis, Peter Good, Kathy Innes, Jane Revell, Ron Weir

Party #6: Sharon David

Party #7: Chip Weseloh & Weseloh

Party #8: Stéphan Menu, R. T. Sprague, PEPT Observatory staff

Party #9: John Blaney, Hugues Bonin, Kevin Jaansalu, Kristin Topping, Walter Wehtje, Angie Williams.

Totals in the following table estimate numbers of individual birds tallied.

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Common Loon	x	16	5	6	8	3	-	x	-	40
Pied-billed Grebe	-	4	1	-	5	-	-	-	-	10
Red-necked Grebe	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dble-crested Cormorant	x	800	200	x	160	22	478	x	-	1000
American Bittern	1	3	2	2	6	-	-	-	-	14
Least Bittern	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Great Blue Heron	1	20	5	20	8	3	2	x	-	60
Green Heron	1	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	-	5
Bck-crwnd Night-heron	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	5
Turkey Vulture	-	30	6	x	10	3	-	x	-	50
Canada Goose	x	100	x	x	310	6	33	x	-	450
Brant	-	72	7	47	800	-	-	30	40	996
Mute Swan	-	1	6	13	17	1	-	-	2	39
Wood Duck	x	7	3	4	-	1	2	-	-	18
Gadwall	x	2	30	x	42	1	2	-	-	75
American Wigeon	-	6	2	8	4	-	-	-	-	20
American Black Duck	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Mallard	x	50	20	x	60	2	21	x	-	155
Blue-winged Teal	2	5	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	9
Northern Shoveler	6	2	6	9	4	-	-	-	-	27
Green-winged Teal	-	5	3	2	15	-	-	-	-	25
Redhead	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Greater Scaup	-	7	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	7
Lesser Scaup	x	-	8	20	-	-	-	-	-	28
Surf Scoter	-	17	12	2	-	-	-	x	-	32
White-winged Scoter	-	3200	1500	1000	120	-	-	x	-	3200
Long-tailed Duck	-	1200	200	200	210	18	-	x	-	1200
Bufflehead	1	-	1	1	4	-	-	-	-	7
Hooded Merganser	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Common Merganser	-	15	4	4	10	6	-	x	-	40
Red-breasted Merganser	-	500	60	x	165	10	-	x	-	500
Virginia Rail	1	3	2	2	4	-	-	-	-	12
Sora	-	1	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	6
Common Moorhen	-	3	1	1	5	-	-	-	-	10
Sandhill Crane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	2
Osprey	1	6	10	x	9	1	2	-	2	32
Northern Harrier	-	4	1	3	7	-	-	x	-	16
Sharp-shinned Hawk	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Cooper's Hawk	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	4
Broad-winged Hawk	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Red-tailed Hawk	-	1	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	6
American Kestrel	-	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Merlin	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
Peregrine Falcon	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	1	2	2	1	1	-	-	-	7
Ruffed Grouse	1	8	2	2	3	1	-	x	-	18
Wild Turkey	1	10	4	10	12	1	-	x	-	39
Black-bellied Plover	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Semipalmated Plover	1	20	4	6	2	-	-	-	-	33
Killdeer	1	18	8	x	20	2	1	x	-	52
Greater Yellowlegs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	5
Spotted Sandpiper	x	20	10	3	19	-	-	x	-	35
Upland Sandpiper	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Semipalmated Sandpiper	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Least Sandpiper	3	300	50	150	350	13	-	-	-	400
Dunlin	-	17	4	15	70	-	22	-	-	128
Short-billed Dowitchr	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Wilson's Snipe	x	20	6	20	10	1	-	-	-	58
American Woodcock	1	3	1	10	4	-	-	-	-	19
Wilson's Phalarope	-	14	8	15	12	-	-	-	-	15
Bonaparte's Gull	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Ring-billed Gull	x	100	20	x	90	15	606	x	-	800
Herring Gull	-	6	10	x	22	5	495	x	-	540
Great Black-backed Gull	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Caspian Tern	1	15	2	6	6	-	4	-	-	33
Common Tern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Black Tern	-	28	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	35
Rock Pigeon	x	6	x	x	5	-	-	x	-	15
Mourning Dove	x	25	80	x	25	8	1	x	-	140
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Eastern Screech-owl	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Great Horned Owl	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Barred Owl	-	2	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	7
Common Nighthawk	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	x	-	5
Chuck-will's Widow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
Estrn Whip-poor-will	x	3	4	10	-	-	-	-	-	18
Chimney Swift	x	2	5	2	2	-	-	-	-	12
Rby-thrted Hummngbrd	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	x	-	5
Belted Kingfisher	1	3	4	x	4	1	1	x	-	16
Red-bellied Woodpckr	-	1	1	1	1	3	-	x	-	8
Yellow-bellied Sapsuckr	x	2	2	6	-	-	1	-	-	12
Downy Woodpecker	x	4	1	2	1	2	1	x	-	13
Hairy Woodpecker	x	1	2	2	3	3	-	-	-	12
Northern Flicker	1	5	10	x	6	3	3	1	-	30
Pileated Woodpecker	x	3	2	2	-	-	-	2	-	10
Olive-sided Flycatcher	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	3
Eastern. Wood-Pewee	-	5	2	10	-	1	1	-	-	19
Yellow-bellied Flycatchr	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Alder Flycatcher	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	3
Willow Flycatcher	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	x	-	5
Least Flycatcher	-	10	6	10	1	1	-	x	-	29
Eastern Phoebe	x	6	8	x	-	1	1	x	-	19

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Great-crested Flycatcher	x	20	4	x	4	3	-	x	-	34
Eastern Kingbird	x	30	20	x	20	3	1	x	-	77
Loggerhead Shrike	-	4	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	4	2	10	1	-	-	-	-	18
Blue-headed Vireo	-	1	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	8
Warbling Vireo	x	40	10	x	65	2	13	x	-	130
Philadelphia Vireo	-	1	-	1	15	-	-	-	-	17
Red-eyed Vireo	x	30	20	x	25	4	-	x	-	82
Blue Jay	x	10	24	x	24	15	-	x	-	76
American Crow	x	30	20	x	13	5	-	x	-	70
Common Raven	-	4	-	2	2	-	-	x	-	9
Horned Lark	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Purple Martin	x	20	2	1	6	1	-	-	-	31
Tree Swallow	x	40	30	x	70	3	51	x	-	195
Rough-winged Swallow	-	20	12	x	40	-	-	x	-	73
Bank Swallow	-	2	40	2	150	-	-	-	-	194
Cliff Swallow	x	50	30	x	60	-	-	x	-	75
Barn Swallow	x	20	30	x	45	1	10	x	-	106
Black-capped Chickadee	x	10	10	x	15	3	13	x	-	54
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1	1	3	1	-	-	x	-	8
White-breasted Nuthatch	x	1	-	3	1	3	-	x	-	10
Brown Creeper	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
House Wren	x	20	16	x	35	4	10	x	-	88
Winter Wren	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Sedge Wren	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Marsh Wren	x	10	12	10	26	1	-	-	-	60
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	2	2	3	1	-	-	-	-	8
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	-	5	-	6	3	-	-	x	-	15
Eastern Bluebird	x	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
Veery	1	1	3	x	1	-	-	x	-	8
Gray-cheked Thrush	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Swainson's Thrush	-	5	5	10	5	-	1	-	-	26
Hermit Thrush	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	3
Wood Thrush	x	7	6	x	18	4	-	x	-	38
American Robin	x	40	40	x	60	7	22	4	4	179
Gray Catbird	x	12	30	x	21	4	-	x	1	72
Brown Thrasher	-	12	6	x	15	1	-	x	1	37
European Starling	x	20	30	x	30	15	18	x	-	116
Cedar Waxwing	-	-	-	2	4	-	-	-	-	6

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Blue-winged Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	x	-	2
Golden-winged Warblr	1	1	-	1	1	1	-	x	-	6
Tennessee Warbler	-	3	4	10	8	-	-	x	-	26
Orange-crowned Wrblr	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	x	-	3
Nashville Warbler	x	10	1	20	8	-	-	x	-	41
Northern Parula	-	10	3	12	8	-	-	x	-	34
Yellow Warbler	x	80	40	x	165	8	32	x	-	328
Chestnut-sided Wrblr	-	6	5	20	13	-	-	x	-	45
Magnolia Warbler	-	20	15	10	16	-	-	x	-	62
Cape May Warbler	-	6	6	15	6	-	-	x	-	34
Black-thrtd Blue Wrblr	-	4	4	6	5	-	-	x	-	20
Yellow-rumped Wrblr	x	25	40	250	31	2	5	x	-	355
Bck-thrtd Green Wrblr	x	20	2	20	8	-	-	x	-	52
Blackburnian Wrblr	-	8	6	15	6	-	-	x	-	36
Pine Warbler	x	6	4	x	1	-	-	-	-	13
Prairie Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Palm Warbler	-	3	1	2	1	-	-	x	-	8
Bay-breasted Warbler	-	10	6	8	8	-	-	x	-	33
Blackpoll Warbler	-	8	2	15	10	-	-	x	-	36
Cerulean Warbler	x	6	2	1	1	-	-	x	-	12
Black-&-white Wrblr	x	20	4	x	8	-	-	x	-	35
American Redstart	x	25	10	x	18	3	-	x	-	59
Ovenbird	x	8	6	x	4	1	-	x	-	22
Northern Waterthrush	x	4	4	4	1	-	-	x	-	11
Louisiana Waterthrush	x	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Mourning Warbler	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	x	-	2
Common Yellowthroat	x	20	20	x	65	5	3	x	-	116
Hooded Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Wilson's Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Canada Warbler	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	x	-	4
Scarlet Tanager	x	20	8	-	10	-	1	x	-	41
Eastern Towhee	x	30	12	x	28	4	-	x	-	77
Chipping Sparrow	x	30	10	x	18	2	-	x	-	63
Clay-colored Sparrow	-	3	6	1	4	-	-	-	-	14
Field Sparrow	x	20	6	x	10	2	-	x	-	41
Vesper Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Savannah Sparrow	-	15	6	x	18	3	-	x	-	44
Grasshopper Sparrow	-	1	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	7
Song Sparrow	x	40	20	x	65	6	13	x	-	147

SPECIES	PARTY NUMBERS									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Lincoln's Sparrow	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Swamp Sparrow	x	5	4	x	13	2	-	x	-	27
Wht-throated Sparrow	x	10	12	30	6	-	-	x	-	60
Wht-crowned Sparrow	x	15	6	10	10	-	2	x	1	46
Dark-eyed Junco	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	3
Northern Cardinal	x	5	4	10	9	2	1	x	4	37
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	x	25	5	x	40	5	-	x	-	78
Indigo Bunting	x	10	2	x	2	-	-	x	-	17
Bobolink	x	40	30	x	40	15	-	x	-	128
Red-winged Blackbird	x	80	60	x	100	12	48	x	-	303
Eastern Meadowlark	x	20	10	x	30	2	8	x	-	73
Common Grackle	x	100	50	x	25	25	29	x	-	232
Brown-headed Cowbrd	x	6	18	x	11	5	1	x	-	34
Orchard Oriole	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	x	-	5
Baltimore Oriole	x	40	14	x	24	8	15	x	-	104
Purple Finch	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
House Finch	-	-	1	3	12	-	-	x	5	22
Pine Siskin	x	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	5
American Goldfinch	x	25	20	x	24	2	2	x	-	76
House Sparrow	x	20	12	x	15	2	-	x	-	52
<b>Party Species</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>Participants</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2+</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>

### KFN Annual Reports 01May2012-30Apr2013

#### *Membership*      *John Critchley*

KFN has 385 paid adult memberships including 14 Life members and 3 Young Adult members. It is almost evenly split between individual and family memberships, resulting in 560 voting members. There are also 44 junior and 8 teen memberships. Members will notice that their mailing label indicates the type of membership and the expiry date.

The system of sending out personalized renewal notices works well. Renewal notices are sent out with the March Newsletter and reminders, if necessary,

are sent out with the May and June Newsletters. Most members renew their membership before the end of the fiscal/membership year and receive Membership Cards with the May Newsletter. A big thank you to those who renew promptly and don't require further reminders. It is important to return the renewal notices, because they form part of the hardcopy audit trail necessary for tracking payment of membership fees and donations.

John Critchley, Membership Secretary, manages the membership database,

sends up to three renewal reminders, prepares charitable receipts and thank-you letters for the treasurer, sends out e-mail notices for the e-Blue Bill recipients, and prepares mailing labels.

**Thank you to volunteers Janet Elliott and Kathryn Innes who mail the newsletter. Norma Graham mails The Blue Bill and on occasion does double duty for the combined mailing of The Blue Bill and the newsletter.**

#### *Conservation*      *Chris Hargreaves*

The Conservation Committee represents the KFN on local working groups and committees that deal with conservation issues, and monitors City Council and Conservation Authority meetings. We are working with groups trying to assess the potential cumulative impact of all wind turbine projects built, approved, and proposed at the Eastern end of Lake Ontario.

#### **Protecting the EPAs**

We are concerned about applications for new developments that encroach on lands designated as Environmental Protection Areas (EPAs) in the City of Kingston's Official Plan. We are opposing the proposed development at 999 Purdy's Mill Road, east of the Cataraqui Cemetery, which seeks rezoning of the EPA. The EPA is an important part of the greenway between two Conservation Areas: the Little Cataraqui Creek Valley Lands south of Princess Street, and the Little Cataraqui Creek CA north of Highway 401.

We are monitoring several applications in the area of Baxter Farm and the former Queen's University Vivarium,

between Highway 15 and the Cataraqui River south of Highway 401. We are concerned about their impact on the area adjacent to the river, which includes a Provincially-designated Area of Natural and Scientific Interest.

#### **City of Kingston Parkland Dedication By-Law**

The new by-law replaces old Parkland Dedication by-laws from the former City of Kingston, and Kingston and Pittsburgh Townships. They required developers to transfer land to the City for parkland in new developments. The draft new by-law included a provision to allow the transfer of wooded areas and "natural lands" suitable for recreational walking, as well as lands suitable to put playing fields on. However, there was also a provision that "natural lands" could include constrained lands, with features such as contaminants, unstable soil, and unstable slopes. The KFN had reservations about how the constrained lands provision might end up being applied, and met with the Commissioner of Community Services to discuss the draft by-law. Several other people/groups were concerned about this provision, and there was a well-attended public meeting. A revised by-law was drafted, in which the provision to accept Natural Lands instead of parkland was dropped.

#### **Sustainable Kingston**

The KFN is a Community Partner of Sustainable Kingston. The 2nd Annual Sustainable Kingston Community Forum was held on April 20th. The KFN

had a booth at the Forum, to raise the environmental aspects of sustainability.

### Windpower

The KFN approach to windpower is similar to that of the Environmental Commissioner for Ontario. In his 2011/2012 Annual Report, "Losing Our Touch", the Commissioner stated that "there are some significant shortcomings in the guidelines (regarding windpower projects) that continue to put birds and bats at risk":

- Lack of protection for migratory bat species.
- Development in Important Bird Areas is not prohibited.
- No consideration of cumulative effects.

Conservation Committee members attended sessions of the Environmental Review Tribunal hearing regarding the Ostrander Point Windpower project. One basic issue for the Tribunal is whether the project will cause "serious and irreversible harm" to the environment. We have been attending to get a sense of how "serious and irreversible harm" is being defined, predicted, and denied.

One concern is that field studies conducted for developers seem to be shallow, placing a lot of emphasis on previously published field studies. This can lead to an assumption that if something hasn't been reported it doesn't occur, and therefore doesn't have to be considered! A similar approach may be taken for proposed projects in the Kingston area. For example, the Amherst Island

Environmental Impact Study states: "*The Study Area is located along the northern shoreline of Lake Ontario and therefore may contain candidate significant wildlife habitat for migratory butterflies; however, no known records of significant migratory butterfly stopover areas were found.*"

The KFN is involved in projects to create fuller records of local wildlife. Some of these projects are:

- a survey of grassland birds on Amherst Island, particularly Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks, recently designated as potential Species at Risk
- bat monitoring on Amherst Island
- a multi-year survey of Short-eared Owls including Amherst and Wolfe Islands
- visits to Main Duck Island to record nesting and migratory birds
- assisting Bird Studies Canada to locate Purple Martin roosts in the Kingston region
- contacting the Biodiversity Research Institute in Maine, who are analyzing data from NEXRAD weather radar for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The areas they are studying include the Thousand Islands, and the Galloo Ridge of which Main Duck Island is a part.

Many thanks to everybody who helped with one or more of these projects during the year.

**If anyone would like information about Conservation Committee, and/or to help us on these issues or new ones, please call me at 613-389-8993 or email [hargreavescp@sympatico.ca](mailto:hargreavescp@sympatico.ca)**

*Nature Reserves Erwin Batalla*  
**Helen Quilliam Sanctuary**

Gaye Beckwith and Erwin dismantled a hunting platform (found by Anne and Barry Robertson) along the Van Luven trail. A "No Trespassing" sign was nailed on the supporting tree. Use of our properties is limited to members and does not include consumptive activities like wood cutting or hunting.

Anne and Erwin accompanied the Teens on a walk in the south end of the sanctuary. We discovered the remains of a "camp" near the shore of Gould Lake. It may have been a weekend stay which was abandoned precipitously. Any group wishing to visit our reserves must get the permission from the executive.

Nine KFN members helped with the clean-up in April 2013 (Bud Rowe, Mark Read, Paul Mackenzie, Peter Good, Rose-Marie Burke, Hugh Evans, Alexandra Simmons, Erwin and Barry). Thanks to the effort of these volunteers, our sanctuary trails are in good order.

**Amherst Island**

In May 2012, some insulators were replaced on the electric fence and a new alarm box was purchased from Alliance. The well had to be filled eight times after the beginning of July. Peter, Mike Evans and Alexandra helped out. The electric fencer was replaced in June. The watering system was closed in early November 2013 with the help of Gaye and Mike. Continuing maintenance of our electric fence and watering system ensure that the short grass habitat at the Martin Edwards Reserve is preserved.

In August 2012, Kurt Hennige and the Stewardship Rangers removed the garbage collected by the Juniors.

**Monitoring**

Bud, Paul and Cameron Smith monitored the Lost Bay property. Maureen Addis-Martin, Ken Robinson, Erwin and Anne joined Monte Hummel to monitor Meyer (Evans) Woods. These are two of the properties that the KFN monitor to ensure they are managed according to the plans laid for them by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

*Education Shirley French*

Ashley Rudy (one of Anne Robertson's JFN student volunteers, 2012), Chris Hargreaves, and I were at the KFN table for the Queen's Science Rendezvous May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012. I prepared information on the theme 'NATURE NEWS: What birds are landing in the Kingston Region?' to demonstrate KFN contributions to science through the many observations of our members. Extracts from Ron Weir's 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of 'Birds of the Kingston Region' were featured, along with a slide show on the Chimney Swift research that Chris Grooms and others were involved in. The flap bird from Anne Robertson was a popular activity, and the bird skins in the mist net were a great way to get people talking about birds and seeing which ones they recognized.

The FL&A Science Fair took place March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at MacArthur and was judged by Alexandra Simmons, Diane Lawrence and myself. Gift certificates were awarded to Jada Kish, primary level and Erin Dowling, junior level. On

April 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> I attended the Ontario Endangered Species Act Conference in Toronto and brought brochures outlining the work that members of the KFN have been conducting on species at risk. Twenty-one of our brochures were picked up and five business cards

I organized a birding workshop (by Sharon David) and prepared for the 2013 Science Rendezvous.

### **Publicity** *Chris Grooms*

During the 2012-2013 season, the KFN and its Publicity Committee generated or helped with the following publicity for the club:

- 2012 May Bird Walks press release resulting in media coverage.
- Media release for the 2012 BioBlitz resulting in Whig Standard coverage.
- an article published in the Whig Standard's and Kingston This Week's fall activity guides and leisure magazines.
- a print ad in Kingston This Week's and the Whig Standard's 2012 fall activity guides and leisure magazines.
- Wrote a media release on the 2012 Christmas Bird Count, resulting in a story in the Whig Standard.
- Publicity and media coverage resulted from work done by Chris Hargreaves.
- Improvements, updates and additions made to the KFN website.
- Owl Woods: A fencing and signage project was completed with the help of several funders. A Kiosk was designed and built in collaboration

with CRCA. It has yet to be installed and is due to be this spring.

- 10 wood duck boxes were put up in Odessa Lake in collaboration with CRCA and Ducks Unlimited.

### **Newsletter** *Connie Gardiner*

The KFN Newsletter arrives sometime in the third week of the month, with an introduction of the next monthly meeting speaker and news of upcoming club outings. There are various announcements contributed by the Executive and members as well as companion clubs and associations.

460 copies of each of the 10 issues were printed during this past year.

### **The Blue Bill** *Alexandra Simmons*

Four issues of the Blue Bill were printed, 154 pages in total. Twenty authors contributed articles. Information about local species and abundance of birds, butterflies, Odonates, moths, salamanders and *Orthoptera* was presented. Articles describing KFN activities and member trips, as well as interesting local natural sites were published. Conservation topics discussed were wind turbines and the effect of coffee grown by different methods. Two articles appeared in memory of Martin Edward, and two of Martin's early articles were reprinted.

The majority of members receives the e-version of the Blue Bill, reducing the environmental impact of its publication.

**Thank you to John Critchley who maintains mailing lists, prepares labels and sends e-mail notices, to Susie**

**Rance who posts the electronic version on the KFN website, and to Norma Graham, who mails the hardcopy version.**

*Rambles* *Anne Robertson*

Twenty Rambles were held in 2012-2013 with fifty different people attending. This is slightly fewer than last year but the average number of participants increased to 12 from 10.

These slow walks to notice nature draw those beginning to observe the natural world as well as those with information to share on a variety of species, an important part of the trip. We can all learn something new! The social and slow exercise aspects also appeal to those involved.

Participation varied from a low of 4 in September to the K&P trail south of Unity Road, and in the rain in December, to crown land near Joyceville Road. Our maximum of 20 people was to the CRCA property north of Taylor Kidd Blvd at Lost Lake in April. In between we visited provincial parks (Frontenac and Murphy's Point), and private properties. One day we walked all around Parrott's Bay; we also visited Gould Lake Conservation Area. We rambled alongside the Rideau River past the old tannery property. In February we walked the Fairmont Home trails and enjoyed hot snacks afterwards at the tea shop. Amherst Island and Prince Edward Point were also on the list this year.

We explored alvars, wetlands and woodlands and, as usual, were left with

some unanswered questions. We looked at fungi, fossils, frogs and ferns and checked out all we observed from asters to arthropods and much in between.

**Thanks to everyone who shared these adventures and special thanks to those who took the lead on some rambles including Carol and Murray Seymour, Joan Worsfold, Mary Farrar, Tessa Clarke and Kurt Hennige.**

*Youth Report* *Anne Robertson*

**a) Juniors**

Forty-four Junior members were registered in September and January for 2012-2013. Ten leaders volunteered, two moving away in December, and two new ones joining us in January. Nearly all our leaders are Queen's graduate students: **Allison Board (6 years), Lyn Garrah (2.5 years), Sarah Wallace (1.5 years), Tara Zamin, Alexandra Djorjevic, Allyson Parker, Ariel Gittens, Lucas Brehaut, Tegan McWhirter, Kira Langendoen, Cady Moyer (1/2 year) and Megan McMillan (1/2 year).** We thank them for their **commitment to preparing and running three groups of Juniors at indoor meetings. I would like to thank Diane Lawrence (32 years) whose inspiration and enthusiasm benefit us enormously.** She organized T-shirt sales and trading cards for the "Birds to Know in Winter in Kingston", as well as innumerable ideas and backup. This year the Grass meeting was mostly prepared by Diane with a grass collection for each student. **We thank Shirley French who reported on the education initiatives she organized.**

We held 15 meetings this year. Topics included Moths, Grass, Colours in Nature, Save the Salamanders (with Matt Ellerbeck), Seasonal Crafts, Animal Tracks, Animal Noises (visit from Chris Grooms), Geology (visit to Queen's geology museum thanks to Mark Badham), Where are they now? (wintering places), Aerial Insectivores (visit from Philina English), Cosy Places, Advocacy, (focused on changes to the Endangered Species Act. We made a poster which was given to John Gerretson and sent postcards to our Premier). The Bird Walk (at Lemoine Point) and 29th Wild Food Picnic completed the activities. The picnic was a chance to taste 40 wild foods and pull up 6 big bags of garlic mustard!

Six field trips were organized ending with the popular roadside cleanup at Helen Quilliam Sanctuary in April. We went to the Van Luven Trail in the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary for our October field trip and to the Depot Lakes Conservation Area in November. In January we went to the Meyer Woods property of the Land Conservancy for KFLA and in February to Amherst Island with Janet Scott. We went to Presqu'île in March to learn about waterfowl. The number of juniors on these trips (often only 6 to 8) is low, but they are enjoyed by the participants.

Prizes for summer projects were presented in December. The Roland Beschel prizes went to Nolan Hoover, Fiona Young and Louis Grogan. The Nan Yeomans Prize was won by Ephraim Anderson and Photo Competition prizes went to Savannah

Young, Nolan Hoover and Ephraim Anderson. The Stirrett Scholarship was awarded to Milan and Mason Rice for the Eco Adventure camp at Elbow Lake.

Our Christmas collection this year went to Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. We adopted a Saw whet Owl and have our own band number so if our owl is recovered we will find out.

Garden Homes for Wildlife made by Junior Naturalists in 2011 were at last installed in the Pollinator Garden of the Horticultural Society at the Memorial Centre. Toad abodes, Bee condos and Butterfly hibernation boxes were placed in the garden with an explanatory sign.

Another fun filled year with a great deal of learning by everyone!

#### **b) Teens**

Eight teens registered. Older Junior members were invited to join some Teen meetings. Nine meetings were organized; due to poor weather and low participation; three were cancelled.

In September pouring rain changed our canoe trip on Mitchell Creek to a wet walk on the NCC property at Mitchell Creek, reported in Blue Bill (Vol. 59 #4). In October two Teens joined Erwin Batalla to explore the southwest corner of the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary using GPS. (Blue Bill Vol. 59 #4). In November we held our traditional bird identification workshop preparing specimens for freeze-drying to add to the KFN Bird collection. Five teens attended; Diane and Shirley helped enormously. In December three Teens

participated in a pre-Christmas bird count with Erwin Batalla. Twenty-three species and 711 individual birds were seen. The January field trip was cancelled due to lack of support; the February Mudpuppy night was also cancelled due to high and turbid water. Instead we decided to check the Wood Duck boxes which we had failed to do in January. Only one Teen attended (Blue Bill Vol. 60 #1). In March a trip with Teens and adult members to Amherst Island was planned; one Teen attended. The April meeting due to go to Elbow Lake to learn about Marsh monitoring was cancelled due to rain and low participation. In May an evening outing to see Birds About Town

was planned, but with only one participant, was cancelled.

Jake Baer went to the Ontario Nature Youth Summit in September with support from the KFN Stirrett scholarship. In April he organized an Earth Day Tree planting at Lemoine Point as part of an Ontario Nature initiative, but due to a thunderstorm and poor participation the event was cancelled at the last minute.

Maybe the Teen group needs rejuvenation with young enthusiastic role models. It has been a disappointing year, particularly since Christmas, with wet weather and low participation.

---

## Mesmerizing Moments on the Napanee River

*Terry Sprague*

At first, we thought it was a beaver, its movement creating a wake of ripples as it swam under a farm bridge spanning the Napanee River south of Strathcona. From where we sat along a rocky ledge eating our lunch, the animal soon took on a different form. Then there were two, and finally, three, making their way toward us. The otters were curious, their heads popping out of the water simultaneously, and then disappearing, closer to us each time. Giving us the once over one more time, they submerged, and continued downstream.

The river from Napanee to Strathcona snaked along for at least four kilometres to the bridge at Newburgh Road, then straightened somewhat as we made our way past fallen trees and even an

extension ladder strung across an opening where a bridge once existed. Doubtless this ladder won't be long for this world when the rush of water and ice roars down river next spring. Flimsy aluminium is no match for Mother Nature. The power of ice and water left us in awe, and throughout the route we noticed where unforgiving ice had gouged trees at least a metre higher than the current level, and soil and rocks had been eroded away.

The current on this day was imperceptible and only in the shallows could we see evidence of movement as submergents anchored securely to the river bed strained to hang on as the river stretched them to their limits. However, current was definitely present

because we shaved more than 30 minutes off the paddle on the return trip to Napanee.



The stretch that parallels Newburgh Road is quiet and for much of its route meanders through a shallow ravine. While the road is but a field away, the shrubs and trees create a feeling of remoteness, and only through Internet's Google Earth that can we see what lies beyond the banks – agricultural fields and the remnants of the CNR railway bed which becomes the Catarauqui Trail at Strathcona. The path beyond the ladder we came across seems to lead to it. Google Earth also showed us the ledge of limestone rock where we sat and enjoyed our lunches and the performance put on by the otters.

In some respects, this portion of the Napanee River is a bit like the Salmon River we paddle every other year or so, from Roblin to Croydon. There are trees that fall across the river, their root structures weakened by the intensity of the spring rush of water, and shallow areas where rocks kiss the bottom of the kayaks and canoes. Trees that fall are swung out of the way by spring floods.

Under one such white cedar hung over the river, one sharp observer spotted the paper nest of a colony of bald-faced hornets, expertly woven in amongst the cedar boughs. We admired the construction, then gingerly moved on.

Many wildflowers were at their peak including the spikes of pickerelweed, and the delicate flowers and arrow-like leaves of broad-leaved arrowhead. A few trees were netted with wild cucumber, the fine drapery of the miniature clusters of white flowers appreciated more from a distance. I have yet to capture a digital photo that does justice to the showing each fall at this time. I paddled this same stretch of the river in June, when tall meadow-rue was at its peak, and this day a few remnants of powdery blooms still struggled above the jewelweed. It was water-willow, otherwise known as swamp loosestrife, that put on its best stage performance, its long trailing stems arching gracefully and touching the water in lengthy dense forests, a few lavender blooms still evident.

Birds were in fine fettle this day and even without the aid of binoculars, we tallied a list of over 30 species. A lanky great blue heron hop scotched its way almost to Strathcona, settling in some shallows, taking off again as we rounded a corner, before landing once more. A small green heron crossed the river ahead of us, long legs dangling out behind as though not belonging to the bird, but rather accidentally snagged somewhere in its travels that morning. It gave several unmusical squawks in defiance, but upon landing on a stump,

decided in favour of skulking behind shoreline vegetation. Wood pewees whistled their plaintive calls at several locations, and warbling and red-eyed vireos were in full song, despite there being no need to proclaim territory this late in the season. Even a hummingbird hovered for a few seconds as it probed a still blooming jewelweed.



It was difficult to think of my role in this paddle as “work” but that’s what it was,

as I led the small fleet of canoes to our destination, talking about the river and its attributes along the way.

The rain that fell later in the day as we returned to the boat launch at King Street affected no one as it was a warm day and the rain refreshing, and it was expected. Rain is part of Nature, and we embrace it on these events as surely as we do clouds or sunshine. Its patter on the water’s surface, its heady scent as it approaches, and its contribution to the scenery we enjoyed that day, cannot be dismissed. Lightning we avoid, and there were a couple peels of distant thunder, as we loaded our canoes and kayak onto our waiting cars.

It doesn’t get much better than this.

*Terry Sprague is a professional naturalist, free-lance writer and KFN member who lives in Prince Edward County.*

---

## **Spring Birding Workshop led by Sharon David**

### *Shirley French*

Early May is a great time to be watching birds in Kingston! On May 2, Sharon gave a very informative talk on what one can expect to see in our region, from hummingbirds visiting sapsucker holes to Spotted Sandpipers ‘bobbing’ their tails as they move along the shoreline. In addition to a PowerPoint presentation on major bird groups, Sharon brought along numerous bird skins so that we could see many species up close. When you have the bird skins on hand you can see how a cedar

waxwing is quite a bit smaller than a Bohemian waxwing, or, how different bird beaks are in the finches compared to the vireos. There was so much to cover in the 3-hour workshop that it went by too quickly.

Eighteen people attended the workshop, which was followed by a bird walk on May 4. We saw many of the expected birds like the White-throated Sparrow, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown Thrasher, Downy

Woodpecker and Northern Flicker. I shouldn't forget to mention the numerous Yellow-rumped Warblers, holding to their reputation of being the most common wood warbler migrant in our region. Of the more unexpected species, we got a close peek at a Blue-grey Gnatcatcher that Sharon brought in

close when she broadcast its call. To end our walk, a Carolina Wren lingered in the trees by the parking area. It was bigger than a House Wren but smaller than an American Robin. Oh, and of course we saw a Robin and a few other species that we take for granted!

## Kingston Region Birds for the Spring Season: 1March-31May 2013

### *Mark Andrew Conboy*

This spring was a cool wet and cloudy. In contrast to last year, when many species were observed ahead of their expected arrival date, this year few were. Still, there was many an outstanding bird found in the Kingston region. Here are highlights of the 238 species, two hybrids and two escapees.

*Greater White-fronted Goose*: 1 at Narrows Lock (Conboy) 24Mar.

*Snow Goose*: Good numbers passed through our region this spring (KFN).

*Cackling Goose*: 3 at Marshlands CA (Read) 27Mar; 2 at Long Point SP (Kelling) 30Mar; 2 at Wolfe I. (Conboy) 8Apr; 1 at Kingston (Read) 27Mar.

*American Black Duck x Mallard Hybrid*: 2 at McIntyre Rd (Hennige) 4May; 1 at Lemoine Point CA (G. Miller) 14Apr.

*Canvasback*: 1 at the Cataraqui R. (KFN) 10-27Mar; 1 at Grass Point SP (Bolsinger) 10Mar.

*Harlequin Duck*: 4 at Prince Edward Pt. (Mackenzie & Read) 8Apr; 3 at Pr. Edw.

Pt. (Weir) 5May; 1 near Bath (Hennige) 28Mar.

*Black Scoter*: 2 at Prince Edward Pt. (KFN) 28Mar; 1 at Kingston (Read) 6Apr; 1 at Pr. Edw. Pt. (Hennige) 2May.

*Least Bittern*: 1 at Moscow Marsh (Mackenzie) 18May; 1 at Opinicon Rd. (Conboy) 20May.

*Yellow-crowned Night-Heron*: 1 at Amherst I. (Weir) 18May.

*Golden Eagle*: 1 at Opinicon Rd. (Hoedeman) 16Mar; 1 at Perth Road Village (Conboy) 1Mar.

*Rough-legged Hawk*: the last bird reported was 1 at Amherst I. (Kaddie, Scranton & van der Zweep) 2May.

*Sandhill Crane*: widespread sightings of 1-2 birds all spring (KFN).

*Black-bellied Plover*: 5 seen from the Amherst I. ferry (Read) 17Apr were very early. Other observations from 5May on.

*White-rumped sandpiper*: 2 at Amherst I. (Mackenzie & Read) 27May; 1 at Amherst I. (Mackenzie & Read) 23May.

*Pectoral Sandpiper*: 5 at Kaiser Crossroad (KFN) 11-14Apr.

*Little Gull*: 1-9 at Kaiser Crossroad (KFN) 3Mar-4May; 2 at Amherst I. (Mackenzie & Read) 17Apr.

*Iceland Gull*: 3 at the Violet Dump (Mackenzie & Read) 20Mar; 1 at the Violet Dump (Hennige) 22Mar.

*Glaucous Gull*: 1 at the Violet Dump (Hennige) 22Mar.

*Long-eared Owl*: 1 at the Owl Woods (Mackenzie & Read) 17Apr. Very scarce this past winter.

*Short-eared Owl*: 8 at Amherst I. (Hennige) 15Apr; 3 at Amherst I. (M. Miller) 8Mar; 1 at Amherst I. (Mackenzie & Read) 27May.

*Northern Saw-whet Owl*: 1 at Queen's University Biological Station (Conboy) 16Mar; 1 at Grahams Rd (Cooke) 20May.

*Chuck-will's-widow*: 2 at Prince Edward Pt. Bird Observatory (J. Blaney and Wehtje) 20May.

*Blue-fronted Amazon*: 1 at Kingston (Broadhead) 20May. This was a free-flying escapee.

*Red-headed Woodpecker*: 1 at Davis Lock Rd. (Prideaux) 11Mar was not relocated despite extensive playback

searches along the road; 1 at Howe I. (Weir) 23Mar.

*Gyr Falcon*: 1 photographed at Galt Rd. (Hennige) 11Mar; 1 dark morph at Amherst I. (Edwards) 7Apr.

*Olive-sided Flycatcher*: 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Hennige & Patry) 18May; 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Wehtje) 20May.

*Yellow-bellied Flycatcher*: 1 at Amherst I. (Weir) 18May; 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Wehtje) 20May; 3 at Prince Edward Pt. (Hennige, Mackenzie & Read) 21May.

*Loggerhead Shrike*: all sightings in the Newburgh area (KFN).

*Fish Crow*: 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (J. Blaney, Edwards & Hennige).

*Tufted Titmouse*: 1 at Wellesley I. (Bowman) 31May.

*Sedge Wren*: 1 at Rattie Rd. (Willans) 21May; 1 at Ashland Flats Wildlife WMA (Bolsinger) 24May; 3 at Ashland Flats WMA (C. & G. Morien) 26May.

*Carolina Wren*: widespread observations (KFN).

*Varied Thrush*: 1 at Camden East (KFN); a fairly long-staying bird, but the exact dates of its occurrence are uncertain. It was reported 30Mar (Rayner).

*Northern Mockingbird*: most observations were in Prince Edward Cty. Notable was a bird along Opinicon Rd (Conboy, Hennige & Ure) 25May.

*Lapland Longspur*: 9 at Wolfe I. (Mackenzie & Read) 30Mar.

*Worm-eating Warbler*: 1 at Prince Edw. Pt. (K. Blaney and Hamilton) 14May.

*Louisiana Waterthrush*: all reports from Canoe Lake Rd. (KFN).

*Orange-crowned Warbler*: 1 at Marshlands CA (Mackenzie & Read) 16-17May; 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Wehtje & Weir) 18-19May.

*Hooded Warbler*: 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Patry & Wehtje) 18May.

*White-throated Sparrow X White-crowned Sparrow Hybrid*: 1 photographed at Amherst I. (Hennige) 1May. Photos were examined by a number of KFN members and all concluded that the bird was probably a hybrid. This hybrid combination is rarely reported.

*Hoary Redpoll*: This past winter was a good one for hoary redpolls. Birds lingered at feeders into late Mar and the first week of Apr across our area (KFN).

*Fire-throated Serin*: 1 at Prince Edward Pt. (Jaques) 19 May. This was a free-flying escapee.

*Evening Grosbeak*: 3 at Amherst I. (Kaddie, van der Zweep & Scranton) 2May; 1 near Bellrock (Mackenzie) 10May; 1 at Prince Edward Pt (Patry) 25May.

**Other species observed during the reporting period:** Brant, Canada Goose,

Mute Swan, Trumpeter Swan, Tundra Swan, Wood Duck, Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Ring-necked Pheasant, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Double-crested Cormorant, American Bittern, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Green Heron, Black-crowned Night-heron, Turkey Vulture, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Goshawk, Bald Eagle, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Virginia Rail, Sora, Common Gallinule, American Coot, Semipalmated Plover, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Upland Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Short-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Snipe, American Woodcock, Wilson's Phalarope, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Caspian Tern, Black Tern, Common Tern, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-owl, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Barred Owl, Common Nighthawk, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Chimney Swift, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker,

American Kestrel, Merlin, Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Wood-pewee, Alder Flycatcher, Willow Flycatcher, Least Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Northern Shrike, Yellow-throated Vireo, Blue-headed Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, House Wren, Winter Wren, Blue-grey Gnatcatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Veery, Grey-cheeked Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush, Grey Catbird, Brown Thrasher, European Starling, American Pipit, Snow Bunting, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, Blue-winged Warbler, Golden-winged Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Cape May Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Northern Parula, Magnolia Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Prairie Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Canada Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Eastern Towhee, American Tree Sparrow, Chipping Sparrow, Clay-coloured Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Fox Sparrow,

Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Bobolink, Red-winged Blackbird, Eastern Meadowlark, Rusty Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, Orchard Oriole, Baltimore Oriole, Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch, House Finch, White-winged Crossbill, Common Redpoll, Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch and House Sparrow.

**Observers:** John Blaney, Kyle Blaney, Jeffery Bolsinger, Mary Bowman, Marilyn Broadhead, Mark Conboy, John Cooke, Brad Hamilton, Kurt Hennige, Anouk Hoedeman, Michael Jaques, Dave Kaddie, Steve Kelling, Paul Mackenzie, Greg Miller, Martha Miller, Celeste Morien, Gwendolyn Morien, Mark Patry, Cynthia Prideaux, Darren Rayner, Mark Read, Robert Scranton, Gary Ure, Hans van der Zweep, Walter Wehtje, Ron Weir and Jon Willans. When KFN is cited as the observer it means that more than three people reported the bird

## KFN Trip to Ithaca NY/Cornell University Fri April 26-Sun Apr 28 By Gaye Beckwith, photos by Gaye Beckwith and Paul Mackenzie

**Leaders:** Gaye & Betsy Beckwith, Erwin Batalla, Alexandra Simmons

**Participants:** Karen Stinson, Jennifer Prior, Lynn Bell, Bud Rowe, Ken Robinson & Sigrid Dohrendorf Bob & Connie Gardiner, Maureen Sly, Will Irwin, Marg McLeod, Martin McLeod, Hugh Evans, Paul & Nitty Mackenzie, Margaret Henderson.



*"If we hadn't seen anything else the 'backroom' tour of Cornell's Ornithology Lab made the trip worthwhile."*

The Lab tour led by Dr. Scott Taylor, former Queen's student, was a highlight for all of us. Scott, the Lab's Fuller Evolutionary Biology Postdoctoral Fellow examining hybridization between Black-capped Chickadees and Carolina Chickadees, showed us drawers of bird specimens and explained some of the research taking place with birds and other animals, such as fish, from all over the world. Seeing dried specimens of extinct Ivory-Billed Woodpeckers and Passenger Pigeons was a "bittersweet" experience.

Our trip to Ithaca, New York left Kingston at 7:30 a.m. on Friday with everyone fuelled on Timmy's coffee and under perfect weather conditions

although these sunny skies and high teens temperatures were viewed cautiously following a month of foul, cool weather where winter did not give up easily. The itinerary for our adventure was planned through much discussion with Erwin Batalla and Alexandra Simmons, the latter having attended Cornell University in the 90's.

An hour west of Syracuse, near the north end of Cayuga Lake, is the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, where we stopped for lunch and began our search for birds returning north after the winter. At the visitor center we had close-up views of Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Green and Blue-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, and Pied-billed Grebe. We also heard and saw Tufted Titmouse (a lifer for several people), soaring Bald Eagles, Ruddy Ducks, Eastern Bluebirds

and Yellow Warblers. For a complete list of 41 bird species seen during our 2-hour visit, check ebird.



Following Montezuma some of the group walked short sections of trails around ponds at the nearby Seneca Meadows Wetland Preserve, an initiative of the Seneca Meadows Landfill. Nearly 600 acres, it contains wetland, forest, savannah and prairie habitats. Others got lost and headed down the west side of Cayuga Lake where they had already ordered ice cream at the Cayuga Lake Creamery before being rejoined there by the rest of the group. After our treats we stopped at Taughannock Falls State Park for a look at the beautiful falls and gorge.



Early Saturday morning in clear cool conditions, half the group ventured to Sapsucker Woods, surrounding the Cornell Ornithology Lab, to look for local and migrant birds. We weren't disappointed. 31 species included Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron, Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, Brown Creeper, Northern Waterthrush, White-throated Sparrow, Rusty Blackbirds, and American Goldfinch. Following breakfast at the Econolodge where we stayed, we visited Cornell Lab of Ornithology Lab where Scott provided an informative, behind the scenes tour.

Saturday afternoon started with an exploration of the Cornell "Plantations". The arboretum and gardens offer a vast variety of flora. Many plants and trees were in bloom with forsythia and magnolia especially colourful. Early flower gardens and wildflower areas added life to the surroundings.



Pileated Woodpeckers, a Pine Warbler and Crows were seen in the plantations. Saturday's weather was ideal for being outdoors. Our next stop was the Robert H. Treman State Park southwest of Ithaca, where we hiked on the rim of a

gorge and recorded a few new birds including Turkey Vultures, Dark-eyed Junco and Winter Wren. Returning to Ithaca we parked near the 'Commons' and small groups found restaurants to suit their liking.

Sunday morning was sunny, clear and warmer for 12 of us to visit Stewart Park at the south end of Cayuga Lake. 31 species of birds were seen by the group including a Baltimore Oriole, Cardinals, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Chimney Swift, a Warbling Vireo and a Carolina Wren.



Following breakfast and check-out we returned to Sapsucker Woods to explore other trails. Among 30 species seen were Broad-winged Hawk, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Tree Swallow, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pine Siskin, and of course Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers.

Time to head home. We headed northwest and picked up Interstate 81 near Cortland stopping briefly for lunch. To break up the 3-hour journey we exited 81 at Pulaski and traveled along the eastern end of Lake Ontario. Several state parks and conservation areas line

this end of the lake. We stopped at Black Pond for an enjoyable walk along a boardwalk through woods, dunes and ponds to the shore of Lake Ontario.



Besides turtles, frogs, and fish we added Caspian Terns, Palm Warbler and Cedar Waxwings to give us over 100 bird species for the 3 days. Although the water temperature was still very cold, the exceptional weather afforded the opportunity for some beachgoers to walk in the water, a few even taking a dip. They weren't from our group, but they were probably Canadian, eh?

Our convoy of 6 vehicles split up, and everyone headed home after a super weekend of birding, camaraderie, enjoying nature.

*"thank you to all of you for sharing, encouraging, laughing, spotting and for just generally being a fine group of people ..."*

*"Enjoyed the trip. It was well thought out and well coordinated. As new group members we felt welcome. Enjoyed birding with experts who shared their knowledge and scopes. Looking forward to another adventure"*

*"We give thanks to the Ruddy ducks that swam and dove in front of us to show us their stiff tails. Also, we thank the Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs that stood together in the mudflats and showed us their differences. We thank the Red-bellied woodpeckers and Yellow-bellied sapsuckers of the Sapsucker woods who spoke to us in their language. Also, for the Northern waterthrush who sang beautifully and actually let us see him from the boardwalk. Thank you to the Tufted titmouses who repeated their song so clearly and so repeatedly so that we could memorize their*

*greeting. And thanks to the Broad winged hawk who made the flypasts for us, right in front of the Cornell lab building. The Blue-gray gnatcatchers presented themselves in Lewis Park, very accommodating.*

*We give thanks to the many native wildflowers that blossomed in the warm spring sunlight at the Cornell horticultural gardens, just in time for our visit.*

*Oh, and by the way, many thanks to the good folks from KFN who led us through this field trip, bringing us to all these natural wonders, and pointing out to us the fascination of nature."*

---

## KFN Rambles and Walks Mar-May 2013

### *2Apr Ramble Presqu'île Provincial Park Mark D. Read*

Early April 2013 was bitterly cold and, despite signs of spring in late March, the 11 participants on the ramble at Presqu'île PP were not afforded any let-up. Meeting at 9 a.m., we car-pooled for the 1-hour drive to Brighton. Along the way, we picked up a few early migrants: Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle and American Robin. Three Red-tailed Hawks, Turkey Vulture and Sharp-shinned Hawk boosted the raptor count. Stopping at the Street Dock before entering the park we saw the first of our expected waterfowl, with Mute Swans pleasing the crowd and Ring-necked Ducks and Buffleheads providing close views. The only passerines at the dock were a puffed-up pair of American Goldfinches sheltering from the wind in a cedar.

After depositing our fee at the unmanned checkpoint, we entered the

park and headed towards Calf Pasture where the double lure of a bird blind and public facilities awaited us. Large numbers of American Robins (mostly male) and Common Grackles lined the route but the need to stick to schedule kept us going. The blind at Calf Pasture looks north over the bay towards Brighton and usually holds large numbers of waterfowl. Unfortunately it was from this direction (actually NE) that the wind was blowing and with a wind chill of -10°C, none of us were prepared to hang around. The number of wildfowl was low and diversity rather poor, with none of the expected Redheads or possible Canvasbacks. Most of us saw our first Common Loon of the year and many had cracking views of American Wigeon, as well as the more usual Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Greater Scaup and Long-tailed Duck.

Next stop on the 'auto-ramble' was the Lighthouse where we met up with Park Senior Natural Heritage Education

Leader, David Bree who entertained us over lunch (inside the visitor centre) with an audio-visual talk on the history of Presqu'île PP. Refreshed and knowing a bit more about our surroundings, we birded for a few minutes at the lighthouse seeing over 50 Long-tailed Duck, 30 Bufflehead and a pair of Red-breasted Merganser just offshore, as well as an early female Red-winged Blackbird, a couple of very confiding Golden-crowned Kinglet, a Song Sparrow and a pair of Mourning Dove in the surrounding woods. As David was short on time, he suggested we visit Government Dock before heading towards the campsite area, where he hoped for more shelter from the wind. At Government Dock, we added a pair of Common Merganser and three Lesser Scaup to the wildfowl list and a Bald Eagle to the raptor list but the impressive sight of 45 Mute Swans was probably enjoyed most of all.

Driving to the campsite, one carload of sharp-eyed observers picked out a Red Fox patrolling the edge of a wood. At a pond near our destination, we were privileged to see a number of 'new' ducks, spooked by yet another Bald Eagle which appeared to have a Green-winged Teal in its talons. New wildfowl included two pairs of Green-winged Teal, two pairs of Wood Duck and eight Northern Pintail. Being close to the road, the teal and Wood Duck were easily seen by most observers, though Northern Pintail were only seen in flight. The weather wasn't improving, so we abandoned plans to walk and continued to Owen Point, where we took a brief stroll hoping for some last

additions before heading back to Kingston. The only addition was a lone male Brown-headed Cowbird back at the car park, as we loaded up and began the journey home.

Thanks to Anne Robertson for leading an enjoyable trip that, despite the weather, allowed us to experience this birding hotspot. Thanks to David Bree for taking the time to share with us his extensive local knowledge and insight.

*March 5, Ramble at Douglas R. Fluhrer Park*  
*Joe Benderavage*

This ramble attracted fifteen hikers. We gathered behind the Rideaucrest Home and began by listening to a talk about efforts to develop the Great Cataraqui River Trail. For more information about the trail project, check out Youtube, searching the name Great Cataraqui River Trail, or email [InveraryMary@yahoo.com](mailto:InveraryMary@yahoo.com) to join the group's mailing list.

The park is noteworthy for having been developed below highly contaminated land. A tannery once located north of the site used chromium, which leached downward into the soil, jeopardizing the food chain. Lead and silver used by smelting operations may also have contaminated the area. Nearby Orchard Street Marsh (between Cataraqui Street and River Street) is considered the worst in Canada for contamination and a local expert has suggested it may be safest to let the area alone, rather than try to clean it up.

In spite of the alarming history, we sighted a variety of flora and fauna. We noticed a female Sumac, and a few males -- the male is noteworthy for its curly tip. We observed Grey Dogwood -- the inner bark is yellow and it grows in clones -- and a Cottonwood tree with Bark Beetle holes. We spotted Bugloss with its branched hairs; Burdock, a coarse weed found in waste areas known for its bracts; Avens, which has a hooked style; and Mullein, which is home to many creatures.

We identified Wild Carrot, distinguished by its hairy seeds (the seed pod closes when wet and opens when dry) and Wild Parsnip, which does not have hairs. We admired Chicory, which has blue flowers, and wild grapevine. There were also a variety of reed grasses. We looked at Black Knapweed, Manitoba Maple, Ash-leaved Maple, Crucifer (Dames' Rocket), and Japanese Knotweed. Chewed twigs and pellets, were evidence of rabbits eating plants. When a rabbit's urine looks bluish it may be from eating parts of the Buckthorn plant. We saw evidence of a Muskrat, and a Wasp nest nearly a foot high.

Some of the birds we saw and heard included Chickadees with their tweaky spring song, Mallard ducks, Blue-winged and Green-winged Teals, many Crows, a Marsh Wren, a White-breasted Nuthatch, and a Cedar Waxwing flock. We also spotted a Yellow Warbler nest, and a perfectly frozen image left in the snow, evidence of a bird taking off.

### *Evening Birdwalks at Lemoine Point Joe Benderavage*

May 8. On this early evening birdwalk, leader Hugh Evans guided six birders in a circuit towards the waterfront and then westward, before looping back toward the south parking lot.

Along the way we observed Shagbark Hickory, an Ash tree, and an old Warbler nest in a tree, and heard a Tree Frog calling. We enjoyed the company of a Cottontail Rabbit.

Birds we spotted or heard included Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Brown-headed Cowbird, notable for its small bill and brown head. It was seen in a barren treetop. We paid heed to a Common Yellowthroat, Chickadees, Starlings and Robins, and a Yellow Warbler feeding on high in a tree. We sighted a Red-winged Blackbird, a Kingfisher, an Eastern (Rufous-sided) Towhee, male and female Mallards along a path, and Nighthawks. We enjoyed the song of a Savannah Sparrow and of a Song Sparrow in nearby bush.

As we headed back towards our starting point we admired White Violets and Bloodroot, growing near the outdoor restrooms.

May 22. Additional species observed in this walk were evidence of the return of migrants in the two weeks since the one on May 8.

As we gathered for the final Birdwalk of May 2013, leader Darren Rayner listed some of the birds he spotted near the

airport, while waiting for us to arrive: Wilsons Warbler, Magnolia Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Brown Thrasher, and a Flycatcher.

Before we set out, he urged us to tuck trouser ends firmly into our socks, to thwart ticks that could be carrying Lyme's disease. Having taken this precaution, we began our walk but soon stopped to spy on a Northern Harrier some distance away, at ground level. Resuming our stroll, we noted Barn Swallows on fences or swooping above, and several Bobolinks in a grassy field at some distance. Yellow Warblers were spotted in a tree-top, as well as a Baltimore Oriole in an Ash tree.

Goldfinches in flight were heard, as was a Common Yellowthroat (*WICHitee WICHitee, WICHitee*), and a Song Sparrow in a tree. We heard the mewing call of the Gray Catbird, the cooing of a Mourning Dove, the Ovenbird's call (*chur-TEE chur-TEE chur*), another Yellow Warbler, the high-pitched "*pee-a-wee*" of an Eastern Wood-Pee-wee, the bubbly song of a House Wren, the rough call of a Great Crested Flycatcher, the rasping cry of a Common Nighthawk and the very melodic song of what was likely a Wood Thrush.

A Gull flew overhead, and Cormorants were seen, as well as Mallards, in flight, or with ducklings. A Cardinal was spotted on a pathway, and a Cedar Waxwing atop a high tree. Two Great Crested Flycatchers on a branch were admired. We observed an Oriole in flight and several Robins and

Chickadees. A Kingbird was seen atop a fence line.

We stopped by a wood pile to investigate a loud chorus of Tree Frogs and Chorus Frogs. We saw several Kildeer and a White-Tailed Deer. Nearing the airport, a Bobolink was heard as well as a Yellow Warbler and a Least Flycatcher.