



The Blue Bill

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1 President's Page

by Anthony Kaduck

As we head into the summer break it is traditional for the President to reflect on the "State of the Union" of our club. From my perspective things are going rather well. Unlike many of the field naturalist clubs in Ontario we are continuing to attract new members in growing numbers. We have a strong program of rambles, field trips and monthly speakers. Our bird walks in the month of May have been drawing large numbers of attendees, many of whom will go on to join the KFN.

On the habitat preservation mandate, the club has made significant contributions that have helped the Nature Conservancy and the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington acquire new conservation properties. And of course we completed the transfer of the Sylvester-Gallagher property to the KFN, considerably expanding the size of the land set aside for wildlife on Amherst Island.

Many organizations such as ours struggle to find volunteers to carry out the business side of the club. We are lucky to have a strong group of volunteers that serve on the executive, keeping our finances in order, publicizing our activities, keeping tabs on development proposals that could affect wildlife, maintaining a social media presence, publishing the newsletter, updating the web page, educating the public, tracking the membership rolls, growing a new generation of Junior and Teen naturalists, and maintaining bird records. But we are also lucky to have numerous members who are willing to lead field trips, rambles and bird walks.

And on the topic of volunteers, I would be remiss if I didn't mention our two new members of the executive: Kathy Webb, who has taken over the Membership portfolio so ably held by John Critchley, and Carolyn Bonta, who has succeeded Gaye Beckwith as Field Trip Coordinator.

So, on balance, I think the KFN is healthy and headed in a good direction. Not bad for a 70-year old!

In the coming year the club executive will have two priorities:

- Continue the work to set up the Sylvester-Gallagher property as a nature reserve. On behalf of the membership, a subcommittee led by Kurt Hennige, will be looking after the key issues of fencing and signage, and will make recommendations on how (and if) we develop a trail system.
- Keep up the pressure on our provincial government to ensure that the responsibility to protect the environment is not drowned out by the development-at-any-cost lobby.

And your priorities as a club member?

- Just continue to attend the meetings and activities. Your presence and contributions are what makes this a vital and growing organization.
- If you have a particular specialty, be it birds, turtles, odonates, wildflowers, ... whatever – consider contributing a short article or some photos to the Blue Bill.
- And finally, bearing in mind that we are continually gaining new members, if you see someone at a meeting or activity that looks new, take the time to welcome them into the club.



Figure 1: Participants at first May Bird Walk of 2019. (Richard Brault)

2 Spring Round-Up 2019

by Erwin Batalla

The weather for the 62nd KFN Spring Round-up was very good in an otherwise dreary Spring. To gather a snapshot of the birds in the whole study area (circle with a radius of 50 km centered on Kingston) in migration, small groups and individuals went to a variety of locations to determine the number of birds of different species that were passing through our area this spring. Birds were recorded between noon Friday May 17 and noon Sunday May 19.



Figure 2: Blue-winged Warbler at Landon Bay. (Katherine Webb)

A few loosely formed groups birded together during the weekend. The largest group consisted of Gaye and Betsy Beckwith with cousin John King and nephew Ryan Beckwith with his wife Jane, Richard Brault and Dianne Croteau, Erwin Batalla and Alexandra Simmons, Shelna Paton, Mike Evans and Kenneth Ross. Paul Mackenzie was with Janis Grant, Lynn Bell and James Darling while Kurt Hennige did some birding with Jane Revell, Alan Park, Chris Grooms and Steve Coates. Peter Good and Anthony Kaduck led a field trip to the Napanee Plain IBA while Carolyn Bonta and Michael Johnson did the same in the Frontenac Forests IBA. Stephanie Davison and Chris Heffernan were near Chaffey's Lock while the father and son team of Gregg and Nathan Miler had some great finds on Amherst Island. Closer to Kingston, Kathy Webb and William Depew birded near Gananoque while Ken Robinson and Kevin

Bleeks visited Wolfe Island. A carload of five birders from Ottawa explored the shield habitat along Canoe Lake road on Sunday morning.

On Friday, the count began with a bang when Paul Mackenzie found a Blue-winged Warbler on the Millen property. Paul Martin found 2 Sandhill Cranes on the Queen's Biology Station lands; Chris Grooms, 6 Whip-poor-wills on Unity Road; Gaye Beckwith photographed 6 Common Gallinules in Moll's wetland; Peter Good and Anthony Kaduck found 2 Upland Sandpipers in the Napanee Plain; Janis Grant, James Darling and Paul Mackenzie, 4 Semipalmated Sandpipers near the Waupoos Marina; Ken Robinson and Kevin Bleeks, 3 Great Black-backed Gulls on Wolfe Island; Richard Brault and Dianne Croteau, 8 Black Terns on Camden Lake; Gregg and Nathan Miller, 1 Least Bittern on Amherst Island; Steve Coates, 2 Black-crowned Night-Herons at Hillview Pond; Stephanie Davison and Chris Heffernan, 1 Long-eared Owl near Elgin; Lana Marion, 1 Great-horned Owl at the Cataraqi Cemetery; Jordan Matthews, 1 Red-headed Woodpecker in Cataraqi Woods and John Blaney saw a Peregrine Falcon at Prince Edward Point. Brants were seen migrating in every county and IBAs and Trumpeter Swans, now nesting in our area, were seen by several observers.



Figure 3: Yellow Warbler at Big Sandy Bay. (Katherine Webb)

For the Passerines: Kurt Hennige found an Olive-sided Flycatcher near Lansdowne; Todd Norris, 1 Yellow-bellied Flycatcher at Tree Frog Farm; Paul Mackenzie, 1 Horned Lark on Wolfe Island; Norman Fleury, 1 Tufted Titmouse at Kingston Mills; Gerald Smith located a Carolina Wren in the US portion of the circle; Darren Rayner, 1 Blue-grey Gnatcatcher on Opinicon Road; Margo MacMurray, 1 Northern Mockingbird at Lake Ontario Park; Samreen Munim, 1 Rusty Blackbird at the Queens Biology Station. Kathy Webb and William Depew found 1 Blue-winged Warbler at Landon Bay; Sharon David, 1 Mourning Warbler at Marshlands; Tom Wheatley, 1 Hooded Warbler at Prince Edward Point; Carolyn Bonta and Michael Johnson, 4 Prairie Warblers in Frontenac Park. There were 30 species of warblers recorded and Kathy and Bill saw a remarkable 104 Yellow Warblers at Big Sandy Bay on Wolfe Island. Several Orchard Orioles, a species that seems to be on the increase, were seen throughout the survey area by multiple observers.



Figure 4: Two Trumpeter Swans at Camden Lake. (Dianne Croteau)

Other participants were: Alex Stone, Alice Tremblay, Andrea Kaupinen, Brad Hamilton, Bruce di Labio, Cecile and Morris Yarrow, Chantal Imbeault, Cheryl Anderson, David Kozlovsky, Debbie Milan, Ellen and Michael Lam, Frances

Tackaberry, Francois Lafleche, Gary Ure, James Thompson, Jamie Spence, Janet Hill, Jay Solanki, Jenn Wiggles, Joel Coutu, John Licharson, Karen Stos, Krys Baklinski, Kyle Punch, Lynn Smith, Marlene Krami, Martin Roncetti, Matt Iles, Matthew Francey, Mike Burrell, Peter Blancher, Philip Wright, Raleigh Robertson, Rose-Marie Burke, Scott McKinlay, Sherri Jensen, Vincent Fryson and Wayne Gilmour.



Figure 5: Olive-sided Flycatcher near Lansdowne. (Kurt Hennige)

Over 80 participants took part and a total of 200 species were observed, just above the average of 199. No new species were added to the cumulative list. The table below shows the highest number of each species reported in a single checklist (eBird) for the four counties: Leeds and Grenville (L&G, 28 checklists), Frontenac (120 checklists), Lennox and Addington (L&A, 24 checklists), Prince Edward (PE, 31 checklists). The tallies of the highest count for the Napanee Plain IBA (Nap. IBA) and the Frontenac Forests IBA (Fr. IBA) are also shown.

Table 1: 2019 Spring Round-Up Bird Counts

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Brant	20	80	75	70	75	62
Canada Goose	45	30	60	4	15	2
Mute Swan	4	4	13	2		

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Trumpeter Swan	1	4	5		5	4
Wood Duck	5	5	2		4	5
Blue-winged Teal			2			
Northern Shoveler			1	2		
Gadwall			4			
American Wigeon		2				
Mallard	3	8	7		6	1
American Black Duck		7	2			
Green-winged Teal			2			
Ring-necked Duck		1				1
Greater Scaup	1					
Lesser Scaup		2				
Surf Scoter				6		
White-winged Scoter		2	1	40		
Long-tailed Duck		8	6	60		
Bufflehead				5		
Common Goldeneye		6	8			
Hooded Merganser	2	2				
Common Merganser		6		9		
Red-breasted Merganser		52	35	40		
Ring-necked Pheasant			1			
Ruffed Grouse		1	4	3	1	
Wild Turkey	17	27	1	4	2	
Pied-billed Grebe	1		2	1	1	
Rock Pigeon	3	15	16	4	1	1
Mourning Dove	3	7	1	1	2	3
Yellow-billed Cuckoo		2	1			2
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	3	3			2
Common Nighthawk		2	3	1	3	2
Eastern Whip-poor-will	1	6	1		1	2
Chimney Swift		1	6	1		1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	4	2	1	2		1
Virginia Rail	1	2	1		3	
Sora		1	1	1	1	1
Common Gallinule	1	6	2		2	

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Sandhill Crane		2				2
Black-bellied Plover				1		
Semipalmated Plover				9		
Killdeer	1	12	20	3	2	1
Upland Sandpiper			2		2	
Dunlin			18			
Least Sandpiper		16	20			
White-rumped Sandpiper			1			
Semipalmated Sandpiper		1		4		
Short-billed Dowitcher				3		
American Woodcock	1	1		1		
Wilson's Snipe	2	1	2	1	2	
Wilson's Phalarope			12			
Spotted Sandpiper	1	12	12	1		
Solitary Sandpiper		1	3	1		
Greater Yellowlegs			2			
Lesser Yellowlegs		6	5		1	
Bonaparte Gull	1			10		
Ring-billed Gull		72	3	120		
Herring Gull	2	2	10	21		
Great Black-backed Gull		3				
Caspian Tern	2	19	2	14	4	
Black Tern			8		8	
Common Tern	2	1		4		
Common Loon		1	2	1	2	1
Double-crested Cormorant	50	700	25	1500		
American Bittern	1	2	2	1	2	
Least Bittern			1			
Great Blue Heron	2	6	3	1	2	6
Great Egret		1				
Green Heron	7	5	2	1	2	
Black-crowned Night-heron		2				
Turkey Vulture	8	6	8	12	1	6
Osprey	5	2	6	2	2	1
Northern Harrier			5	2	1	
Sharp-shinned Hawk		1		1		

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Cooper's Hawk		1	1		1	1
Northern Goshawk		1				1
Bald Eagle		1	1		1	
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	4				2
Broad-winged Hawk	1	5		1		4
Red-tailed Hawk	1	1	2		1	
Great-horned Owl		1	1			
Barred Owl		4				4
Long-eared Owl	1					
Belted Kingfisher	1	2	4	1	1	2
Red-headed Woodpecker		1				
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	2	2		2	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	4		2		4
Downy Woodpecker	3	3	6	1	2	1
Hairy Woodpecker	2	2	1			2
Pileated Woodpecker	1	3	2			2
Northern Flicker	5	3	8		1	3
American Kestrel		1		3		
Merlin	1	1				
Peregrine Falcon				1		
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	1				1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	2	2	1	1		2
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher		1				
Willow Flycatcher		1		1		
Least Flycatcher	2	4	8	2	2	4
Eastern Phoebe	4	2	2	1	1	2
Great Crested Flycatcher	1	8	1	3	1	4
Eastern Kingbird	3	6	25	2	4	1
Loggerhead Shrike			1		1	
Yellow-throated Vireo	3	11		2		11
Blue-headed Vireo	3	2		10		1
Philadelphia Vireo		2		6		1
Warbling Vireo	5	12	25	6	2	3
Red-eyed Vireo	14	40	3	7	3	7
Blue Jay	10	30	15	70	3	7
American Crow	6	20	8	3	4	2

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Common Raven	2	3	6	1	1	3
Horned Lark		1				
Northern Rough-winged Swallow		22	10	9		
Purple Martin		8	120			
Tree Swallow	3	46	50	4	3	20
Bank Swallow				5		
Barn Swallow	8	40	20	6	4	5
Cliff Swallow	2		5	20		
Black-capped Chickadee	20	30	8	3	4	8
Tufted Titmouse		1				
Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	5	5	16	1	2
White-breasted Nuthatch	3	4	1			3
Brown Creeper	3	1				1
House Wren	5	13	25	6	2	3
Winter Wren	4					
Marsh Wren	1	4	8		7	4
Carolina wren						
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher		1		1		1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	2				
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	4	2	1		
Eastern Bluebird	1	4		1		4
Veery	2	3				3
Swainson's Thrush	1	1		2		1
Hermit Thrush	1	1	1	1		1
Wood Thrush	3	10	6	1	1	7
American Robin	34	30	25	50	6	8
Gray Catbird	6	19	12	21	4	2
Brown Thrasher	4	3	7	5	7	1
Northern Mockingbird	1	1		1		
European Starling	14	35	24	10	4	2
Cedar Waxwing	1	5	4	38	4	5
House Finch		2	1			
Purple Finch	1	4	1			4
Pine Siskin	2	1	6			1
American Goldfinch	13	19	25	10	3	12

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Grasshopper Sparrow			3		3	
Chipping Sparrow	20	17	7	32	11	17
Clay-colored Sparrow			4		4	
Field Sparrow	2	14	10	5	5	14
White-crowned Sparrow	15	12	20	14	4	5
White-throated Sparrow	10	15	25	15	1	5
Vesper Sparrow			1		1	
Savannah Sparrow	5	1	8	1	2	
Song Sparrow	22	44	10	16	5	22
Lincoln's Sparrow		4	1	1	1	
Swamp Sparrow	6	30	4	1	4	30
Eastern Towhee	6	14	8	12	2	14
Bobolink	6	25	40		5	2
Eastern Meadowlark	6	7	25	5	3	
Orchard Oriole		1	2			1
Baltimore Oriole	5	13	18	6	3	13
Red-winged Blackbird	52	180	50	30	50	50
Brown-headed Cowbird	2	13	12	2	1	2
Rusty Blackbird				1		1
Common Grackle	15	30	30	20	12	14
Ovenbird	12	20	1	1		20
Louisiana Waterthrush		1				1
Northern Waterthrush	1	12	2	1	1	4
Golden-winged Warbler	4	9	11		2	9
Blue-winged Warbler	1	1		1		
Black-and-white Warbler	5	17	1	4	1	17
Tennessee Warbler	1	11	10	15		11
Orange-crowned Warbler	1			1		
Nashville Warbler	2	5	2	21	1	5
Mourning Warbler		1				
Common Yellowthroat	15	40	15	6	6	40
Hooded Warbler				1		
American Redstart	3	18	12	4	1	18
Cape May Warbler		3	2	14		
Cerulean Warbler	1	5		2		5
Northern Parula	2	5	8	8		5

Species	L & G	Frontenac	L & A	PE	Nap. IBA	Fr. IBA
Magnolia Warbler	3	6	6	16	1	5
Bay-breasted Warbler	1	21	4	15	2	1
Blackburnian Warbler	2	8	5	8	1	5
Yellow Warbler	8	104	40	50	12	22
Chestnut-sided Warbler	5	13	10	10	1	13
Blackpoll Warbler		2	2	1		1
Black-throated Blue Warbler	4	6	3	4	1	4
Palm Warbler	1	1	4	5	1	
Pine Warbler	4	16		1		6
Yellow-rumped Warbler	14	15	20	25	3	6
Prairie Warbler		4				4
Black-throated Green Warbler	7	13	1	7		3
Canada Warbler	2	4		1		4
Wilson's Warbler		1	1	3		1
Scarlet Tanager	5	12	6	8	1	12
Northern Cardinal	4	6		3	2	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	7	16	10	15	4	16
Indigo Bunting		6	1	2		6
House Sparrow	2	3	20	2	2	
Region total	123	166	141	129	94	110



Figure 6: Barred Owl on a fence. (Frances Tackaberry)



Figure 7: Barred Owl close-up. (Frances Tackaberry)

3 KFN Annual Reports

3.1 Field Trips

Gaye Beckwith

Field Trips

Since last May we have offered 14 field trips to the following locations. The trips were well attended with usually 10 to 15 people participating. Listed with each location is the leader of the trip who deserves a great deal of thanks for his/her efforts, expertise, and their willingness to lead members out into the region to explore nature in all kinds of weather.

- Bird the Shoreline of Lake Ontario from Oshawa to Prince Edward County May 8-9, 2018. Leaders Gaye Beckwith, Erwin Batalla, Alexandra Simmons
- Opinicon Road Butterflies and Dragonflies, July 7, Leaders: Carol Seymour & Paul Mackenzie
- Murphys Point Provincial Park, 13th July, Leader: Mark Read
- Amherst Island (Martin Edwards Reserve), Aug. 12, Leader: Peter Good
- Fall Birding Around Kingston, Sept. 16, Leader: Paul Mackenzie
- Cataraqui River and Kingston Inner Harbour, Oct. 14, Leader: Ken Robinson
- Wolfe Island, Oct. 28, Leader: Mark D. Read
- Kingston Mills Lock to Chaffey's Lock, Nov. 18, Leader: Erwin Batalla
- Helen Quilliam Sanctuary, Van Luven trail, December 2, Leader: Kip Parker
- Lemoine Point Conservation Area, January 13, Leaders: Dianne Croteau & Richard Brault
- Amherst Island, March 2, Leaders: Janet Scott & Bonnie Livingstone
- Cataraqui River and Kingston Inner Harbour, March 24, Leader: Ken Robinson
- Prince Edward Point, May 5, Leader: Paul Mackenzie
- Lennox Generating Station, 14 April, Leaders: Kurt Hennige & Mike Farrell
- Point Pelee and Southwestern Ontario, 5-11 May, Leader: Anthony Kaduck

Bird Walks at Lemoine Point

Our annual traditions continued with ten May Bird Walks which were open to the public.

May 1	6:30 am	Erwin Batalla / Richard Brault
	6:30 pm	Darren Rayner / Paul Mackenzie
May 8	6:30 am	Sharon David / Jane Revell
	6:30 pm	Chris Grooms / Darren Rayner
May 15	6:30 am	Kathy Webb / Bill Depew
	6:30 pm	Alexandra Simmons / Nancy Spencer
May 22	6:30 am	Richard Brault / Dianne Croteau
	6:30 pm	Anthony Kaduck / Steve Coates
May 29	6:30 am	Paul Mackenzie / Erwin Batalla
	6:30 pm	Janis Grant / Sharon David

Bird Round-Ups

The annual Spring (May 18-20) and Fall (November 2-4) Round-ups were also organized this year. Groups of members spend 24 hours or in the case of the fall round-up's new format, 48 hours searching for bird species in the Kingston Region. This year's events were coordinated by Peter Good and Kurt Hennige with Janis and Alan Grant graciously hosting the follow-up pot lucks.

Special Events

On February 18 (Family Day Event), Erwin Batalla led a group of over 35 participants to Wolfe Island where we were able to see two Snowy Owls.

Christmas Bird Counts 2018 Kingston Area

Many of our members coordinated and participated in 8 Christmas Bird Counts in our region.

December 14	Westport, Wendy Briggs-Jude
December 15	Frontenac, Michael Johnson & Carolyn Bonta
December 15	Prince Edward Point, Pamela Stagg
December 16	Kingston, Kathy Webb & Bill Depew
December 19	Delta, Jim Thompson
December 20	Thousand Islands, Josh Van Wieren
December 22	Napanee, Bonnie Bailey
December 27	Gananoque, Kurt Hennige
January 4	Amherst Island, Janet Scott

3.2 Education

Shirley French

Educational outreach on behalf of the KFN included the following events:

How to be a Birder presentations to kindergarten classes at Sir John A. MacDonald Public School by Anne Robertson and Shirley French in May 2018. Anne Robertson also gave a presentation on insects in April 2018.

Girl Guides Outreach on the topic of birds by Anne Robertson and about plants by Diane Lawrence, May 2018.

Frontenac Park outing and presentation on birds to Loughborough Public School, grades 1 & 2 and grade 7 by Anne Robertson. To grade 2 & 3 group by Shirley French. May 2018.

Sydenham Lakes and Trails Festival in July 2018. KFN had a display at the event with Gaye Beckwith and Shirley French there, on behalf of the KFN.

Anne Robertson gave a workshop on birds to the Eco Adventurers (10 campers) at ELEEC (Elbow Lake) on Aug. 16th.

Winter Light Festival at the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum, December, 2018. Focus was on

woodland creatures so display theme was on animal tracks. Shirley French.

Educational Outreach to Brownies and Girl Guides:

Species at risk presentation on Feb. 25th at Welborne Avenue Public School, by Shirley French.

On March 7th presentation about owls to the Barriefield Brownie pack, by Anthony Kaduck.

The Science Fair (FLASF) took place on March 28th. The KFN judges were Lesley Rudy, Alexandra Simmons and Shirley French. Gift awards for books went to:

- (Primary level) **Nicolas Franklin**, "Plants and the Air We Breathe" (measuring CO2 levels in light and darkness);
- (Junior level) **Eillean Hickey**, "Kingston Cat Count & Study" (relevant to cats as predators of birds);
- (Junior level) **Sydney Soederberg**, "Eye on the Matter" (comparing eyes in 3 groups of animals)

3.3 Rambles

Anne Robertson

A good year for Rambles with 21 Rambles taking place and 58 different participants over the year. An average number of participants was 10 but varying from 3 to 17. These numbers are still gradually increasing over the years.

This year we visited local places including Collins Creek, Invista Waterfront, Catarauqui Cemetery, Rogers Side Road trails, Butternut Creek and Bayview Bog in winter. We went further to our own Helen Quilliam Sanctuary, the Menzel Nature Reserve, Gould Lake CA, Elbow Lake and the Depot Lakes Area. The furthest trip was to Presqu'île in the fall. We also visited Camden East Alvar, Gananoque trails, Sand Beach Wetlands CA on Amherst Island, Marble Rock CA and the Catarauqui Trail at Perth Road Village. We are most grateful to the private land owners who

welcomed us to their properties, Joanna Atherton, Janet Burgess and Tessa Clarke.

Weather varied and reduces the attendance when very cold or wet but no Rambles were cancelled. Janis faithfully recorded the birds seen on rambles and reported to eBird. Occasionally others did this, notably Kathy Webb and Erwin Batalla.

A bit of exercise, a bit of learning and a bit of social time. There are always new things to share, increasing the enjoyment of all.

Many of the Rambles this year have been reported in Blue Bill.

3.4 Nature Reserves

Erwin Batalla

This year, following the big news of the acquisition of the Sylvester-Gallagher Nature Reserve, a management committee consisting of Dale Dilamater, Janet Scott, Paul Mackenzie and Kurt Henige was formed. They have suggested signage and improvement of the fencing of this property on Amherst Island. Lynn Bell is constructing a sign similar to the ones at our other properties. It will be erected soon. Refurbishing of the existing fence on the eastern boundary of the property will also take place this summer.

Helen Quilliam Sanctuary in the Canadian Shield: The sanctuary was the site of our annual Bioblitz in June 2018. Nearly a thousand species were observed there over 24 hours. The annual spring cleanup was well attended (17 KFN members) and the property continues to be used extensively by individual members and on several rambles and field trips. Gaye Beckwith has rescued the Betty Hughes trail sign and given it a second life. It is now reinstalled at the overlook of Rothwell Lake.

Martin Edwards Reserve on Amherst Island: We have an agreement with a drover that allows him to keep a herd of cows on our property. This maintains the reserve as a short grass habitat for nesting birds like Eastern Meadowlarks, Bobolinks and Wilson Phalaropes. The water for the cows is provided by a shore well using a solar-powered

pumping system. The water trough was cleaned twice during the year with the help of Richard Brault, Peter Good, Paul Mackenzie and Gaye Beckwith. During the summer, Alexandra Simmons helped with the maintenance of the system on several occasions.

Monitoring: The Nature Reserves committee also monitors several properties. This year, we visited Evan's Woods near Parham with Anne Robertson, Dianne Croteau, Richard Brault and Erwin Batalla; and Lost Bay near Gananoque with Paul Mackenzie. Reports were submitted to the Nature Conservancy after these visits.

3.5 Kingston Youth Naturalists

Anne Robertson

Juniors

38 Junior members participated in 15 meetings and 5 field trips during the year.

We were regularly and ably assisted by 10 Leaders mostly graduate students. Thank you Amanda Tracey (3 years), Anna McKinney (2 years), Leslie Holmes (2 years), Catherine Dale (2 years) Kristen Siegel, Rachel van Dusen, Jie Yuen Ong, Alyson Van Netto, Amy Forsythe and Sarena Olsen. The absence of Diane Lawrence this year was noticeably missed.

As usual, the twice monthly indoor meetings included Orientation, Seasonal Crafts, an Advocacy meeting, a May Bird Walk and the 35th Wild Food Picnic! Other topics covered were Life of a Milkweed Plant, Fun with Fish, Eyes, Scavengers, Astronomy, Animal Super Heros, Mating Displays, Edible Insects, Grassland Birds and Pollinators.

Field trips went to Camden East Alvar (in recognition of the Junior donation to NCC towards the purchase of this property last year) with Amanda Tracey as leader. In November, we went to the Milburn Creek property of NCC. In January, we went to Frontenac Park in snow and in February, to the Bayview Bog – nicely frozen for good exploration. In March, we travelled to Presqu'île PP for some duck identification and our Annual Cleanup trip this year went to the shoreline of the Martin

Edwards Reserve. We always find lots of treasures on this trip.

T-shirts and sweatshirts with the Junior logo were sold to those requesting them and given to Junior leaders in recognition of their contributions. Purple this year.

The annual coin collection went to the local Land Conservancy for KFLA who are fundraising for a new protected property.

Just two Summer Project prizes this year. Paige Bailey won the Roland Beschel Prize and the photo prize was awarded to Jasmine Handforth. The Nan Yeomans Prize was not awarded. Raiden Hughes accepted a Stirrett Scholarship to the CRCA Nature camp in the summer of 2018.

We began the year with more members than in recent years but numbers attending dropped significantly towards the end. Frequent e-mailed reminders seem to be increasingly required. The high proportion of leaders is very much appreciated allowing for individual attention and occasional absences of leaders. Sharing the load of developing materials for meetings (three leaders per group of about 15 Juniors) makes this volunteer job easier. Assistance with membership tracking by John Critchley over the years has been much appreciated. Our money matters have been carefully looked after as always by Larry McCurdy. We thank all those involved in continuing to run this program.

Teens

Nine enthusiastic Teen Naturalists enjoyed nine outings this year. This is a good increase in members from six last year. We are most grateful to the adults who have helped with driving and running these meetings. The Teens keep field notebooks of each expedition and one Teen each meeting writes a report to be found in Blue Bill.

In September, six Teens enjoyed canoeing from Otter Lake downstream to a big beaver dam. Dave Horne assisted with transportation for this outing. The highlight was finding fresh water jelly fish in North Otter Lake. (The highlight was not finding poison ivy at the lunch spot!) Drawings were

made of the jellyfish and a sizeable species list was made including many water plants including Wild Rice, frogs, turtles and Osprey.

October's trip was to Prince Edward Point for some astronomy and to learn about the Owl Banding program. Leslie Holmes and Shirley French helped with driving. It was partly cloudy but warm. The astronomy was good but unfortunately there was a large crowd of people so the viewing for the Owl banding was limited.

In November, we visited Queens Biological Station and with the help of Adriana Lopez Villalobos learned about the herbarium. Everyone collected and mounted a plant specimen to experience how this is done.

December saw us participating in the Frontenac Christmas Bird Count with leadership from Mike Johnson. After an introduction by Carolyn Bonta in Sydenham we drove Bedford Road with some detour walks for birding, till lunch time. Lunch at Frontenac Provincial Park and then walked the Doe Lake Loop. 17 bird species were counted along with a few mammals.

In January, with temperatures of minus 10 outside, we held our annual bird identification workshop. Shirley French coordinated this for us in Biosciences. The bird collection was worked on, including identification and labelling birds for freeze drying and bagging and labelling birds already preserved. The collection was tidied up and the total number of birds now held for educational purposes is 122 species and over 500 birds.

February was the Wood Duck nest box clean-out trip to Helen Quilliam Sanctuary with Erwin Batalla assisting. We went in through the woods due to cold wind. Eight species of animal tracks and signs were listed and we saw an immature Bald Eagle amongst 6 other birds. We also talked about 4 tree species. One nest box had no wood chips and no sign of use. One box was very close to the water and appeared to be sinking. One box had a lot of White Pine needles. Two boxes had broken shells of Hooded Merganser. Lunch at the pond out of the wind and hot chocolate back at Tim Hortons afterwards.

March found us at Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre for a programme with Emily Verhoek including how animals overwinter and animal tracks followed by how to use GPS and a GPS scavenger hunt. After lunch we snowshoed part of the red trail round the pond and enjoyed studying snow fleas. Shirley French helped with this trip.

In April, we went to Presqu'île Provincial Park with Sharon David to search for duck species and learn how to use a scope. A bonus was seeing a Great Horned Owl on its nest and a good view of Bluebirds around a nest box.

Our last meeting for the year, in May, was a Night Hike to Gould Lake and Frontenac Park with Mike Johnson assisting and eight Teens attending. Toads calling, Woodcock, Porcupine and the Barred Owl amongst other species, made this a memorable trip.

A successful year and we look forward to another good season next year.

3.6 Membership

Kathy Webb

At the end of the membership year (01-Apr-2018 to 31-Mar-2019) there were 343 paid adult memberships: 13 Life, 179 Family, 150 Individual and 1 Young Adult members. Family memberships are comprised of 2 voting members, bringing the count to 522 voting members. There are also 15 complimentary/free memberships which receive newsletters and the Blue Bill. In the past two months, 39 new members have joined: 18 Families, 19 Individuals and 2 Young Adults.

Of no less importance, the 2018/19 membership includes 38 Juniors, 9 Teens and 14 Junior Leaders (4 of whom were only able to help for part of the year).

Membership renewal notices are now mailed separately from the newsletter. Membership cards are also mailed separately or included with a charitable receipt if a donation was made with the membership renewal. The majority of members have been renewing their memberships before the end of the fiscal/membership

year and hopefully the number of reminders along with the increased postage costs will be reduced in the future. New this year is the ability to renew memberships online via PayPal (<https://kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/membership/>).

The Membership Secretary manages the membership database, sends membership renewal notices and reminders, prepares charitable receipts and thank you letters for the Treasurer, distributes the newsletter by email and by post where required, and distributes the email notices for the e-Blue Bill. Norma Graham has been assisting with the mailed copies of The Blue Bill.

A big THANK YOU is extended to John Critchley who has recently stepped down from his position on the executive after 20 years of faithfully serving as the KFN's Membership Secretary. His organization and attention to detail have made the transition to a new Membership Secretary much easier.

3.7 May Dinner

Polly Aiken

Kingston Field Naturalists annual May Dinner was held on May 16th at the Kingston Yacht Club. Ron Weir give a speech on the World of Owls. There were 84 in attendance.

3.8 Conservation

Chris Hargreaves

The Conservation Committee has represented the KFN at many meetings in Kingston over the past twelve months.

We have tried to provide a "voice for nature" at meetings of the City of Kingston Planning Committee, and at public meetings on topics such as the Clogg's Road Secondary Plan.

We have also advocated for natural areas to be included in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the Revised Belle Park Master Plan, and passed on information about surveys being conducted on the City's website.

LOCAL PLANNING APPEAL TRIBUNAL HEARINGS ON KINGSTON'S OFFICIAL PLAN

The KFN applied for and received standing as a Participant in the LPAT hearings, at which five developers appealed about various aspects of the City's Revised Official Plan, including the amount of environmental protection it provides. This would have allowed us to make one "speech" in support of the current level of environmental protection, which evolved as a compromise between what developers wanted, and the public interest in preserving significant natural habitat in and around Kingston.

However, all the appeals were withdrawn before it was time for us to speak. This is good news, as all sections of the Plan, including the environmental protection for the "Ribbon of Life" – the waterfront area within 30 metres of Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence River, the Great Cataraqui River and the Rideau Canal – are now in force.

CHANGES TO PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

The Local Planning Appeal Tribunals had replaced the Ontario Municipal Board in April 2018. The most important change between the LPAT and the OMB was the elimination of the OMB's power to substitute its decision for decisions made by a municipality or its committees. The OMB used to make planning decisions after a hearing, in furtherance of what it considered to be "good planning." Instead of that approach, the LPAT was only allowed to consider whether the decision "does not follow" provincial policies or municipal plans.

Unfortunately, under Bill 108, the Ontario government is bringing back the old Ontario Municipal Board rules!

As a result of public pressure earlier this year, the Ontario Government withdrew Schedule 10 to Bill 66 – The Restoring Ontario's Competitiveness Act. This was the legislation that would have created a new "Open-For-Business Planning By-Law."

It is very uncertain whether the Ontario Government will withdraw their proposed changes to the

Local Planning Appeal Tribunals.

It is also very unclear how the Ontario Government will respond to concerns raised regarding their proposed changes to the Ontario Endangered Species Act.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING WIND TURBINES IN ONTARIO

Since the much publicized announcement to cancel the White Pines Project in July last year, the Ontario Government has made no moves to implement its other election promises regarding wind power, such as revising the setback distances between wind turbines and residences.

There has also been no improvement in the response rate to complaints about turbine noise, and no enforcement actions taken against companies when the noise produced exceeds the levels allowed in their permits.

LOCAL DATA ON BIRDS KILLED BY IMPACT WITH HIGH BUILDINGS

It was very nice to have everyone on the Conservation Committee email list to consult, following a question from a member of the public, as to whether there was data on the number of birds killed by impact with high buildings in Kingston.

It turns out that:

- there is no active monitoring of bird-building collisions in Kingston.
- according to the Safe Wings website, "most bird-window collisions occur at low levels: Residences are responsible for 44% of bird collisions, while low-rises (4 to 11 storeys) account for 55%, and high-rises for fewer than 1%." This is partly because most collisions happen within 5 storeys of the ground, partly because high-rise buildings are less likely to be in natural settings that attract birds, and partly because there are so many more houses and low-rise buildings than big towers.
- there are many anecdotal reports of bird casualties caused by building strikes in

Kingston, particularly around the Biosciences building.

LEMOINE POINT BARN SWALLOW STRUCTURE

We organized an informal monitoring of the Barn Swallow Nesting Structure at the Lemoine Point Conservation Area again this year.

The results turned out to be very similar to last years: there are Barn Swallows around Lemoine Point (usually 5 to 10), but they tend to be near the farm, and none of them showed an interest in the swallow structure.

It's good that the Barn Swallows are around, but a pity that they aren't more interested in the structure.

MANY THANKS TO ALEXANDRA SIMMONS, CAROLYN BONTA, ERWIN BATALLA, JOHN DONIHEE, LESLEY RUDY, PAUL MACKENZIE, AND EVERYBODY ELSE WHO HAS HELPED WITH THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE.

If anybody would like to be added to the email list to receive a copy of the monthly report of the Conservation Committee, just send your email address to hargreavescp@sympatico.ca

3.9 Speakers

Ken Edwards

September 20, 2018

Jeff Bowman

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

A Tail of Two Cats: Lynx and Bobcat Research in Ontario

October 18, 2018

Val Deziel

Nature Conservancy Canada

Tallgrass Awakening: Conservation and Habitat Restoration in the Rice Lake Plains

November 15, 2018

Dawn Bazely

York University

What is habitat recovery, and how should we measure it in Ontario?

December 20, 2018

KFN Members' Presentations

January 17, 2018

Chris Hargreaves

Kingston Field Naturalists

Iceland Old and New

February 21, 2019

Mark Read

Park Naturalist, Murphy's Point Provincial Park

A Quick Guide to Citizen Science

March 21, 2019

Bob Montgomerie

Queen's University

Our Enduring Fascination with Birds' Eggs

April 18, 2019 (Annual General Meeting)

Anthony Kaduck

KFN President

The Great Serengeti Migration

and

Ken Edwards

KFN Vice President

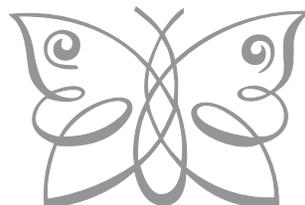
Birding Morocco: from the Roof of Africa to the Sahara Desert

May 16, 2019 (Annual May Dinner)

Ron Weir

KFN Honorary President

The World of Owls



4 Kingston Region Birds – Winter 2018/19 (December 1st – February 28th)

by Mark D. Read

The KFN reporting area is centred on MacDonald Park, Kingston and extends for a radial distance of 50 km. An interactive map showing the KFN circle is available on the website. If errors are noted or significant observations omitted, please contact me and I will update accordingly. We also encourage you to submit all sightings, so that a better understanding of our region's birdlife can be achieved. Members already using eBird can very easily share their sightings with the username 'Kingston FN.' Alternatively, please email or phone me directly with your sightings (markdread@gmail.com / 613-217-1246). Please note that some of the following reports remain unconfirmed until accepted by the Rare Birds Committee.

In total, 136 species of bird were recorded in our region during the reporting period, 7 up on last year's total of 129 species. The vast majority of sightings were obtained from eBird – 30.5% of which were shared with the KFN account. In total, 410 observers logged 3398 checklists, equating to 25,425 sightings. Only a few records were received via phone/email/word of mouth, indicating the popularity of eBird (www.ebird.ca). As usual, an impressive number of individual birds (472,047) were recorded, though many of these were, of course, the same birds seen on subsequent days. A huge thank you goes out to every observer, without whom our understanding of bird distribution would be far more limited. Observers with sightings in the current report are acknowledged below.

The winter of 2018/19 was again very cold but not until January when we were also provided with plenty of snow. However, a cold snap in the early winter did push many of our typically good numbers of waterfowl away, making December a relatively quiet month. Waterways later froze over and no open water was to be found around the islands. It was another good year for voles on Amherst Island, though Wolfe Island didn't fare so well. Long overdue, and a delight for many,

was the movement of grosbeaks – Evening and Pine – into the area, along with good numbers of redpolls and to a lesser extent, Pine Siskins. Unlike last year, there was just a single crossbill sighting. Ross's Goose, Barrow's Goldeneye, Harlequin Duck, Golden Eagle, Boreal Owl, Black-backed Woodpecker, Gyrfalcon and Boreal Chickadee were other great finds this winter. Here are the highlights of Winter 2018/19:

Snow Goose: It wasn't a great winter for this species with just a handful of sightings. A high count of 9 birds came from Wolfe Island on 5th December (NLB).

Ross's Goose: A single bird was seen and photographed on the front lawn of LaFarge Cement Factory, Bath, on 10th February (MiB).

Greater White-fronted Goose: This was a great find for the Christmas Bird Count (16th December); seen at RMC, Kingston (KSB, DGDR, et al). It stayed until 20th.

Cackling Goose: The majority of this winter's 8 records came from Wolfe Island, from where high counts of 3 birds came on 1st and 8th December (KFN).

Trumpeter Swan: It was another good year for this species due to the extreme cold forcing birds to congregate along the Rideau. A high of 143 was seen at Chaffey's Locks on 21st January (RaR). No banded birds were seen this winter.

Tundra Swan: Although birds were plentiful in December, only a handful continued through January and February. This year's high count came from Pillar Point, NY, where 340 were seen on 15th December (JSB).

Wood Duck: There was just a single record this year, from the Invista pond, Kingston, on 27th December (BER).

Northern Shoveler: Up to 3 birds were present

through to 6th January in the Collin's Bay/Hillview pond area, Kingston (KFN).

Northern Pintail: 1-2 birds were present in Kingston throughout January and February being seen most frequently at the Invista pond, and occasionally at the ferry ramp to Wolfe Island (KFN). Birds were also seen at Bedford Mills (PJB, 19th Feb) and Ivy Lea (MJP, 23rd Feb).

Green-winged Teal: A hardy bird stayed on the river in Sydenham until 8th January (BGB).

Canvasback: Up to 11 birds were present at Catarauqui Bay, Kingston, through to mid-January (KFN).

Harlequin Duck: Two males were seen off Prince Edward Point on 15th December (MiF, TLH).

Surf Scoter: Birds were seen at Waupoos Marina (1), Prince Edward, on 1st December (JPR), and Amherst Island (2) the same day (JJC).

Black Scoter: There were 3 records this winter, all single males from Prince Edward Point, seen on 15th December (MiF, TLH), 10th February (TMW), and 16th February (RKB).

Barrow's Goldeneye: A male was seen on 3 occasions at Ivy Lea, first on 26th January (MaG, MPM), then on 7th February (anon), and finally on 16th February (SLD, CTH).

Ring-necked Pheasant: Other than a couple of records from the states, all birds were seen on Amherst Island (KFN).

Horned Grebe: Birds continued to be seen off Amherst Island until the first week of January (KFN). Another bird was seen at Ivy Lea on 16th February (SLD, CTH).

Red-necked Grebe: Two birds were seen at Sandhurst Shores on 23rd December (BER), with another at Dexter boat launch, NY, on 23rd February (BrM).

Bonaparte's Gull: The last bird of 2018 was seen at Gananoque on 13th December (JET).

Iceland Gull: It was a better year than last with

twice the number of observations (20), though none of the birds was faithful to any particular location (KFN).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: There was just one record of a second year bird on the crossing to Amherst Island on 17th February (FrH, DeT).

Glaucous Gull: There were 18 records this season with a high of 2 birds seen at Violet Dump on 7th January (KJH).

Red-throated Loon: A single bird was seen at Sackets Harbour Battlefield SP, NY, on 5th and 15th December (JSB).

Common Loon: As usual, a number of sightings were received in December. The last bird of the winter was seen off Howe Island on 12th January (PhW).

Double-crested Cormorant: The last record came from Henderson, NY, on 5th January (RiB).

Turkey Vulture: It is increasingly difficult to identify 'resident' birds from genuine migrants, though it appears to be primarily Prince Edward County that has a resident population. The first presumed migrant was seen near Odessa on 19th February (WTD, KAW).

Golden Eagle: The only sighting of the winter came from Perth Road Village where one was seen on 18th February (DGDR).

Northern Goshawk: There were 4 records this winter; 1 at Amherstview on 9th December (DoM); 1 at Point Salubrious, NY, on 4th January (RiB); 1 on Amherst Island on 19th February (GeC, PBH); and 1 near Millhaven on 21st February (KJH).

Red-shouldered Hawk: An overwintering bird was seen on Amherst Island on 26th January (EOB), with another near Gananoque on 7th February (JET).

Eastern Screech-Owl: An improvement over the last few seasons with 14 records this winter, including at least 5 different birds on Wolfe Island on the 16th December Christmas Bird Count.

Snowy Owl: It was yet another good year for this

species with numbers holding steady on Amherst Island over the winter where a high of 42 was counted on 5th January. Conversely, numbers on Wolfe Island were very low.

Long-eared Owl: There were several records from Amherst Island this winter where a high of 15 was recorded on 10th February (MJP).

Short-eared Owl: It was an amazing year for this species on Amherst Island where birders seemed to find this species with ease. An estimated 60-70 were seen at a single roost on 16th February (per BrM).

Boreal Owl: A lone bird was seen and photographed by a single observer at Little Cataraqui Creek CA, Kingston, on 18th December (KrF).

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Up to 10 birds were noted on Amherst Island this winter (KFN), with several of these away from traditional locations.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: There was just the one record this winter, of an immature at Henderson, NY, on 3rd February (LoK).

Red-headed Woodpecker: An immature bird was seen on Wellesley Island, NY, on 19th February (RiB).

Black-backed Woodpecker: There were two birds seen in the area this winter – a female at Bedford Mills on 14th December (MEC), and an unsexed bird on Amherst Island on 30th December (JPP).

Gyr Falcon: There were 8 sightings this winter, mainly in January/February and mainly from Kingston/Wolfe Island, though other sightings came from Howe Island and Loughborough Lake.

Peregrine Falcon: There were 36 observations this winter, from across the Kingston area.

Eastern Phoebe: A late bird was seen at Sackets Harbour, NY, on 15th December (JSB).

Northern Shrike: It was a good year for this species with over 150 observations. A high count of 4 birds came from Amherst Island on 18th January (IaR).

Boreal Chickadee: A single bird was seen at Three Mile Bay, NY, on 5th January (StK, BrS, ChW).

Tufted Titmouse: There were numerous sightings this winter, mainly from 1 location (Millen Bay) just across the border in New York, though others were noted on Wolfe Island, Millhaven, Gananoque, and Charleston Lake.

Winter Wren: There were 2 sightings this winter, both from Amherst Island, the first on 15th December (NLB), and the second on 2nd January (BMDL).

Marsh Wren: Birds were seen at Sackets Harbour, NY, on 15th December (JSB), Kingston Mills on 16th December (AEK), and Little Cataraqui Creek CA, Kingston, on 19th December (SLD, CTH).

Carolina Wren: At least 3 birds were present in Kingston over the winter months (VPM, JCG, anon).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: The last bird of the season was seen at Chaumont Bay, NY, on 5th January (StK, BrS, ChW).

Hermit Thrush: There were several sightings this winter, mainly of a bird that overwintered at Marshlands CA, Kingston.

Brown Thrasher: A single bird was seen on Amherst Island on 19th January (TOC)

Northern Mockingbird: A single bird was seen 3 times on Amherst Island over the winter (BER et al), with another at Point Peninsular, NY, on 3rd February (MaB).

Bohemian Waxwing: There were 9 observations this winter, with a high count of 150 seen at Napanee Limestone Plain IBA on 13th January (TMW).

Evening Grosbeak: It was a good year for this species (77 observations), with several homeowners welcoming small flocks for much of the winter. A high count of 30 birds came from a location near Chaffey's Locks on 4th December (RaR).

Pine Grosbeak: Coming a close second, there were 74 observations from the area this winter. A high count of 17 birds came from Gananoque on 3rd February (JET).

Common Redpoll: It was a great season for this species with over 400 observations. An impressive 1250 were seen at Cape Vincent, NY, on 2nd February. On this side of the border, consistent counts of 250-300 came from Verona (TAN), with other highs of 550 on Amherst Island on 26th January (EOB), 380 on Howe Island on 17th January (GeP), and 350 at Joyceville on 27th December (StH).

Hoary Redpoll: Not unexpected considering the number of Common Redpolls being seen, we had 13 sightings of this species with a high count of 3 birds on Howe Island on 17th January (StH, GeP).

White-winged Crossbill: The single sighting came from Amherst Island where 1 was seen on 2nd January (JeI et al).

Pine Siskin: As with the redpolls, there were several sightings this winter. The high count of 50 came from a location north of Kingston on 5th January (PRM).

Lapland Longspur: A fairly good year for this species with the majority of records coming from Wolfe Island. The high count of 54 birds (on Wolfe Island) was made on 2nd February (LeF).

Snow Bunting: It was an average year for this species with widespread observations, most coming from the islands where 800 were seen on Wolfe on 26th January (MDR).

Chipping Sparrow: A lone bird stayed at a feeder near Brewer's Mills from 1st December to 9th January (WTD, KAW).

Field Sparrow: Three birds were seen this winter; 1 near Prince Edward Point on 2nd December (BER); 1 near Verona on 15th December (TAN); and 1 at Hay Bay on 28th January (BER).

White-crowned Sparrow: There were 3 records this winter: 1, Collin's Bay, Kingston, 2nd/3rd December (CaE); 1, near Crosby, 4th December – 16th January (SLD, CTH); 1, Kingston, 16th December (EDB).

Savannah Sparrow: There was just 1 bird seen this winter at Point Peninsular CA, NY, on 18th January (DeD, DaW).

Swamp Sparrow: Plenty of reports in December but the last came from Amherst Island on 28th January (KJH).

Eastern Towhee: A lone bird was faithful to a property near Millen Bay through to 22nd January (DaM).

Rusty Blackbird: There was just 1 sighting this winter when 1 was seen on Amherst Island on 20th February (KJH).

Orange-crowned Warbler: An overwintering bird was seen on Amherst Island on 18th January (IaR).

Yellow-rumped Warbler: There weren't too many reports this winter (just 6), with birds noted mainly at Prince Edward Point.

Other species observed during the reporting period: Canada Goose, Mute Swan, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Mallard, American Black Duck, Red-head, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Ruffed Grouse, Wild Turkey, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, American Coot, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Barred Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, American Kestrel, Merlin, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Horned Lark, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, American Tree Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Grackle, Northern Cardinal, House Sparrow.

Observers: North Leeds Birders (NLB), Eastern Ontario Birding (EOB), Erwin D. Batalla (EDB), B. Gaye Beckwith (BGB), Peter J. Blancher (PJB),

R. Kyle Blaney (RKB), Kevin S. Bleeks (KSB), Marty Borko (MaB), Michael Brais (MiB), Jeff S. Bolsinger (JSB), Richard Brouse (RiB), Geoff Carpentier (GeC), Mark E. Chojnacki (MEC), Toronto Ornithological Club (TOC), Joël J. Coutu (JJC), Stephanie Davison (SLD), William T. Depew (WTD), Bruce M. Di Labio (BMDL), Deborah Dohne (DeD), Cameron Eckert (CaE), Kristina Fazackerley (KrF), Mike Ferguson (MiF), Lev Frid (LeF), Mark Gawn (MaG), Janis C. Grant (JCG), Stew Hamill (StH), Frederic Hareau (FrH), Chris T. Heffernan (CTH), Kurt J. Hennige (KJH), Tyler L. Hoar (TLH), Peter B. Hogenbirk (PBH), Jean Iron (JeI), Logan Kahle (LoK), Andrew E. Keav-

eney (AEK), Steve Kelling (StK), V. Paul Mackenzie (VPM), Doug McRae (DoM), Michelle and Paul Martin (MPM), Paul R. Martin (PRM), Brian Miller (BrM), Daniel Miller (DaM), Brian Morin (BrM), Kingston Field Naturalists (KFN), Todd A. Norris (TAN), Mark J. Patry (MJP), Gerard Phillips (GeP), John & Patricia Pomeroy (JPP), Iain Rayner (IaR), Darren G. D. Rayner (DGDR), Mark D. Read (MDR), Bruce E. Ripley (BER), Jon P. Ruddy (JPR), Brian Sullivan (BrS), Denis Tetreault (DeT), James E. Thompson (JET), Kathy Webb (KAW), Tom M. Wheatley (TMW), David Wheeler (DaW), Chris Wood (ChW), Philip Wright (PhW).



Figure 8: Black Widow Spider wrapping up her next meal of Forest Tent Caterpillar. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 9: Calla Lily in bloom. (Murray Seymour)

5 Articles

5.1 Ode to Dragonflies

by Carol Seymour

Sex in the Wetlands

I was going to start this article by telling the story of how and why I got interested in dragonflies, you know the one; buying my first guidebook, making my first net, ending up with a collection of photos mostly misidentified and incorrectly named but then I thought, most of you are ornithologists with a splash of botanists and lepidopterists thrown into the mix. Difficult crowd for one who has a passion for dragonflies: no feathers, no leaves and no complete, four-stage metamorphosis!

So, let's talk about sex. By far, the most unusual and interesting aspect of odonata is its reproductive behaviour. The acrobatic manoeuvres dragonflies go through before, during and after mating leaves one breathless. Tantric sex has nothing on them! Over 300 million years of evolution has given them unique physical features that make their strange sexual antics not only possible but necessary.

Made For Each Other: In general, although some damselflies and even fewer dragonflies have what might at a stretch be called courtship, once the male sees a female he wants to mate with, he indelicately ambushes and catches her with the same legs he uses to snare prey. At that point, the couple move into tandem formation. This is carried out by the male using uniquely shaped claspers at the tip of his abdomen – two upper and two lower in damselflies – which fit into grooves (mesostigmal plates) on the female's thorax just behind her head. The male dragonfly fits his single lower clasper onto the front of the female's head and his two upper claspers onto the back, effectively holding her in a vise-like grip. In tandem, the male and female of each species fit together like a lock and key. In dragonflies, so tightly are the amorous couple locked together that sometimes when the female decides there might be greener grass elsewhere or another male tries to abduct her just a little too forcefully, the situation becomes quite

deadly. Bruce Ripley has a photo of the morbid results of one of these tugs-of-war; alas, the female lost her head, literally! The truly macabre fact about this rare event is that due to the fact that the odonata brain is located in ganglia stretching along the length of its thorax and abdomen, the headless body can briefly continue to fly, land and if uneaten, live for a further two hours or more. Dragonfly love is a ferocious affair.



Figure 10: Female head still attached to male Lilypad Clubtail. (Bruce Ripley)

Though it may seem like the female has little choice in this encounter, know this; when, in dragonfly terms, she says no, she means no! If uninspired by the male flying towards her, the female can zig when he zags, avoiding him altogether. Recently, some biologists have noticed female dragonflies, especially darners, a species that oviposit eggs on their own, choose to fall to the ground and play dead to avoid unwanted matings. Though this rare reaction needs to be studied more, biologists surmise this is driven by increased male population. The beleaguered ladies just want to be left alone. Once the female accepts the male as a mating partner, it is still a long way from being a fait accompli. But before I explain further, let me tell you about the somewhat bizarre, physical struc-

tures involved in the completion of this act.

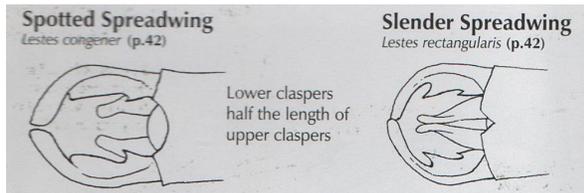


Figure 11: Example of male claspers in different species of spreadwing, from *The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Algonquin Provincial Park and Surrounding Area*. (See attribution at end of article.)

Secondary Genitalia, Oh My!: Though the genitalia in both male dragonflies and damselflies are basically the same, there are some positional and structural differences due to their different evolutionary origins. Here, for the sake of simplicity, I will focus on dragonflies. The male internal genitalia includes paired testes and ducts leading to a sperm reservoir. This opens to the outside on the ninth abdominal segment at a pair of valve-like structures; these represent the primary external genitalia. This is where the story takes a turn towards the twilight zone.

Amongst all insects, male dragonflies and damselflies are alone in their possession of a **secondary set of external genitalia**. In anisopterans, on the lower side of the third abdominal segment, there is a vesicle that forms both a sperm store and a three-jointed penis. A lever (ligula) on the second segment is used to bend the penis posteriorly during copulation. The secondary genitalia, like the claspers, is unique to each species.

I will now surrender the rest of the description of the male dragonflies' secondary genitalia to Peter L. Miller from his book *Dragonflies*, published by The Richmond Publishing Co. Ltd.

During copulation in anisopterans (dragonflies), pressure displaces fluid towards the end of the penis causing it to swell up and unfold. The penis varies in structure in different families. It is most complex among libellulids (skimmers). When the libellulid penis inflates various things may happen: in different species bristly sacs swell up, twisting as they do so; long inflatable arms expand; rigid plates spread outwards and down-

wards; and several types of concealed flagella are uncurled or shot out from sacs. Some flagella are equipped with large hooks which may help to anchor the penis in the female, while others are barbed along their length or reveal hidden rows of barbs only when inflated. Much of this structural diversity is probably connected with sperm competition.

In addition, male anisopterans possess one or two pairs of clothes-peg-like structures, the hamules, lying close to the penis. During copulation they grip a plate on the female just below her genital opening, providing the male with some purchase.

Take a moment. And no, this is not a description of an alien creature, nor torture instruments of the Inquisition. It's just part of the reproductive paraphernalia needed for dragonfly sex.

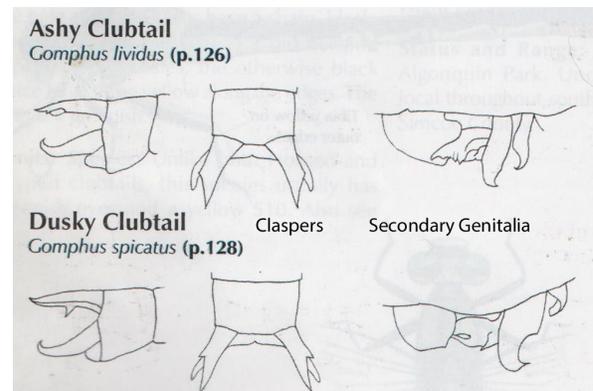


Figure 12: Showing differences between claspers and secondary genitalia in distinct species.

The Gentle Sex: Compared to the complexity of the male genitalia, those of the female are far simpler and less scary. The genital opening is located on the underside of the female's eighth abdominal segment. Only in the more ancient damselflies (Zygoptera) and darners (Aeshnidae family) is there a covering that forms a true ovipositor extending towards and sometimes beyond the tip of the abdomen. In the younger or modern dragonflies (Anisoptera), there is a single or pair of plates called vulvar laminae covering the opening, which like the male's secondary genitalia and claspers are unique to each species. The reproductive organs, internally, extend along much of the length of the abdomen, causing it to be thicker in

females than it is in most males.

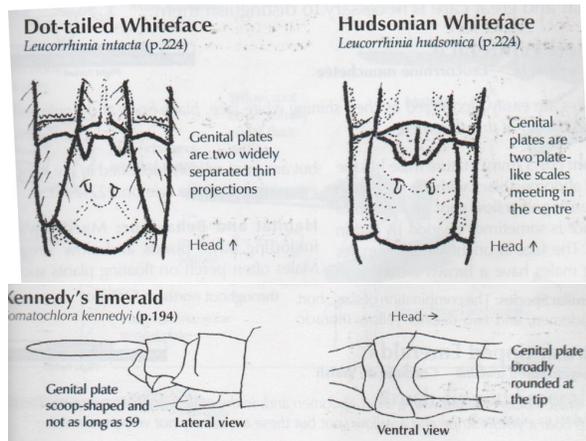


Figure 13: Illustrating differences between female genital plates, from Dragonflies and Damselflies of Algonquin Provincial Park and the Surrounding Area by Colin D. Jones, Andrea Kingsley, Peter Burke and Matt Holder.

Now back to that initial tandem of a male and female dragonfly linked in flight. At this point in the process, the female may choose not to mate with the male. By holding her abdomen straight, she forces the male to release her and continue his search for a more obliging femme fatale. If she indicates willingness to copulate, she will bend the tip of her abdomen up towards the male causing him to quickly translocate sperm from his primary genitalia to his secondary ones by bending the ninth abdominal segment up to the third. Once this action has been completed, the female brings her genitals up to his secondary genitalia to receive his sperm. This puts them into what's called the 'wheel position', though to many it looks more like a heart than a wheel. Usually at this point they land on a plant to initiate the amazing process of creating new life or sometimes they will begin while still in flight. But no soft lights and romantic music just yet.

Last In Gets The Prize: While held in this extreme yoga position, there is still one more step; the male needs to remove any sperm received earlier from a rival male. This is when some of those barbs, bristles or inflatable flagella come into use, to scoop or scrape out the competing sperm, drive it further back into more remote parts of the female's sperm

storage organs, or in some cases, wash it out with a little of his own ejaculate. These various actions are meant to place the most recent male's sperm in the optimum position to fertilize her eggs and, though usually the last one in gets the prize, hold-back on that celebratory cigar a little longer.

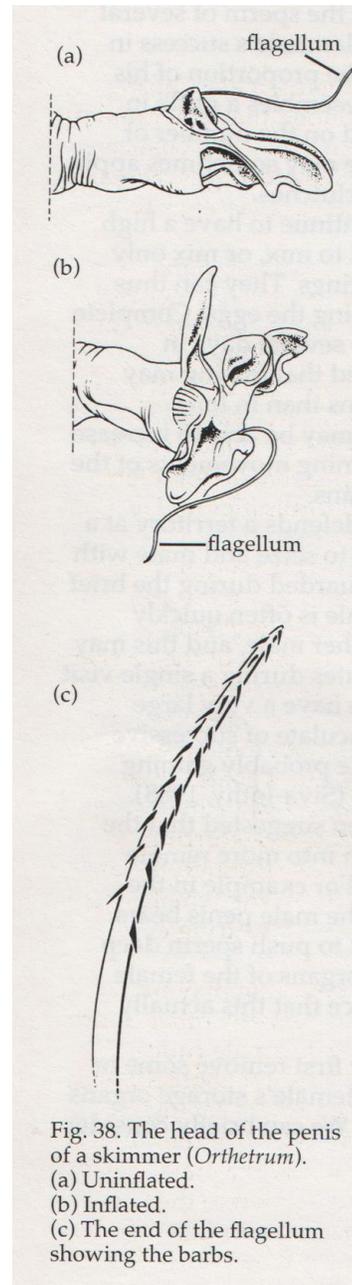


Fig. 38. The head of the penis of a skimmer (*Orthetrum*).
(a) Uninflated.
(b) Inflated.
(c) The end of the flagellum showing the barbs.

Figure 14: Penis of modern dragonfly (skimmer) uninflated and inflated, plus barbs on flagellum, from Dragonflies by Peter L. Miller.

Though the last male to mate with a female may have given her enough sperm to fertilize many egg clutches, possibly for the rest of her life, she will partner with multiple males, insuring that her progeny have a greater genetic variability; this gives them a better chance at surviving and producing future healthy dragonflies.

None-the-less, the last one in gains a precedence of more than 99%. Any competing sperm remaining in the female's reproductive organs begins to mix with the other male's after 24 hours. If that happens, some of the progeny will carry the DNA of a different male. Perhaps a box of cigars would be more equitable.

Upon successful mating, all that's left is for the female to release eggs into her vagina where finally sperm, either a few at a time or the whole package at once (female's choice), can begin the business of fertilization.

So the next time you're out exploring the wetland, fields and woods, searching for birds, butterflies or plants, pause for a moment when one of the 'toothed ones' fly by. Remember to be in awe of this unique creature. Though odonata procreation is a bizarre, challenging and sometimes dangerous process, it has been remarkably successful for a very long time.

Illustrations taken from *Dragonflies* by Peter L. Miller, published by The Richmond Publishing Co. Ltd. and *The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Algonquin Provincial Park and the Surrounding Area* by Colin D. Jones, Andrea Kingsley, Peter Burke and Matt Holder, published by The Friends of Algonquin Park.

5.2 Hosting Ontario Nature (ON) Eastern Regional Meeting

by Jackie Bartnik

As part of KFN 70th anniversary celebration, we hosted the ON Eastern Regional meeting on April 13, 2019. The meeting was held at Bellrock Community Hall in the Verona area. These meetings are held twice a year and during these meetings, representatives of ON member organizations can



Figure 15: Familiar Bluets wheeling. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 16: Rusty Snaketails in wheel position. (Bruce Ripley)

address regional and local concerns and can become informed about any new projects or the results of existing projects from ON. The meeting on April 13 was well attended by 22 members.

The meeting began with acknowledgment of the

indigenous people in the Verona area.

Chris Craig, who was representing the First Nations of Eastern Ontario, reflected on changes to the country landscapes of Canada. In 1903, there were only 178 cars registered in Ontario; however in 1981, the term 'road ecology' was coined. As early as 1925 bird deaths due to roads collisions were observed. Land areas have been divided by major arteries like the 401, Hwy 7, Hwy 2 and the Thousand Island Parkway. In 1958, more changes occurred due to dams. As a result of these major changes in Eastern Ontario, a very well minded group of people and organizations (including the Kingston Field Naturalist) established the Biosphere Reserve. We then prepared the paperwork to apply for the UNESCO Heritage designation and we were successful with our application. In 2010 'A to A' area also received designation as an area of importance due to its special species (example: Three-toed Woodpecker and orchids) in this area.

KFN was represented by John Donihee (our ON representative) and Anthony Kaduck (KFN President). Anthony thanked everyone for attending and John for all his hard work to organize this meeting. Anthony had some exciting news that we are celebrating our 70 anniversary. He reported that KFN has finalized the purchase of the Sylvester property on Amherst Island and that our membership has risen this year. He also thanked ON for bringing to the attention of members their concerns over Bill 66 Schedule 10 and thanked all members for acting so quickly as one voice against this change and protecting our wetlands and watersheds against development.

The next presenter was Barry Melsen from Forest Gene Conservation Association (FGCA) who was very concerned that the provincial government has closed Ontario Tree Seed Plant, effective Sept 2018. The government stated that nurseries can store the seeds and the nurseries said they would only store species they can sell. Barry believes that 94% of original/native forests could be lost, resulting in a genetic bottleneck. Several species are at risk due to climate change, alien species and disease. Right now we are battling Ash trees (Emerald Ash Borer), Butternut and American Beech just

to name a few of the problems. Barry said there are four priorities that we need to be addressed:

Priority 1: to identify species of concern like Butternut, American Beech and Ash and collect seeds. Ferguson Trees in North Grenville/Kempville are willing to collect the nuts, seeds and grafts for 10 years while some will be sent to New Brunswick to the National Tree Centre for storage.

Priority 2: to provide tree seed expertise and create genetic diversity.

Priority 3: to measure climate change and its effect on native species.

Priority 4: to educate next generations so they can make sure native species survive.

After these presentations, a representative from each club gave a summary of their club events.

Friends of Frontenac and a graduate student are involved in a pilot project of identifying wolves and coyote using DNA. Wolf populations are declining and are now identified as endangered.

Ottawa Field Naturalists are sponsoring a plant sale, Jane's Walk and Science fair.

Ottawa Duck Club has been busy cleaning their bird boxes. They had a great loss this year as one of their executive was killed in the Boeing 737 MAX plane disaster in Africa.

Prince Edward County is trying to get the chimneys reopened for the chimney swifts. OMB has been collapsed by the provincial government and that leaves the shoreline and wetlands open to developers.

Friends of Salmon River partners with 'Quinte Watershed Naturalists Shoreline' founded by Trillium Foundation to set up 3 wells with a Queen's graduate who will monitor them.

Quinte Conservation Field Naturalists sent out special invitation to experts who are willing to help identify species and locate them.

Mississippi Valley Naturalists are redoing their natural heritage systems and maps, also they have

invited youth to join in. A second 'Cliff Bennett' scholarship has been given.

Leeds and Grenville is the location of the 'Biosphere Reserve Area'. They are doing work on the Quebec side, near the Ottawa area, increasing conservation and connection with the young generation. It is their 50th anniversary.

Lennox and Addington have created pollinator gardens in 20 schools, are building bird boxes and relocating some of the blue bird boxes.

Leeds and Grenville Stewardship are putting up bat and black rat snake boxes, turtle nests and have partnered to rebuild Dams and reopen ponds.

A to A went to a symposium in the U.S. and are promoting the trails in the Kingston area 2nd week in June and now are working on Stage 2 of the Biosphere Reserve.

Ontario Nature (ON) presented its project which included its reptile and amphibian atlas in 2018. They have found 14500 species. NCC has acquired Stone Road Alvar and this year they will do a

prescribed burn to remove non-native vegetation. Sydenham Restoration Petrel Pt. Nature Reserve boardwalk has been completed. ON is concerned with the Ontario government repealing the Endangered Species Act, and the hunting of Cormorant. The government wants to allow 50 birds to be shot per hunter per day for 9 1/2 months. Earlier in the year, ON sent out an urgent call for us to address Bill 66 Schedule 10 which could affect all our shoreline and wetlands. ON thanked us for speaking in one voice to address this issue and so far the government has listened to us. Nature Guardians Youth Council is celebrating its 10th year and they have voted to have a hard copy of ON magazine. Their summit will be held September 20-22. TD has sponsored their Youth Council for Mother Earth which is the voice of the younger generation, using networking, citizen science and mapping climate changes. ON reminded us of their AGM May 31 to June 2 in Hamilton.

At the end of all the presentations, Anne Robertson led a group of very interested members to Depot Creek Reserve which was very much enjoyed. Many thanks John Donihee, Anne Robertson and Anthony Kaduck for all your hard work.

5.3 Exploring the Backyard

A regular series about the nature close to home

by Carolyn Bonta

The Kingston area is rich in biodiversity, boasting nature "hotspots" such as Lemoine Point, the Dupont lagoons, Wolfe Island, Opinicon Road, and many more. Club members also frequently travel beyond our little part of the world, returning to recount tales of curious and exotic species in far-flung lands. Those who don't have the means to venture far can often be left with the impression that ordinary places closer to home aren't special, or even worth a second glance. But this is far from the truth!

I'm not much of a traveler, although I am interested in exploring every corner of Canada. I tolerate riding in cars, but dislike driving. The bicycle is my primary mode of transportation in most seasons, and I often commute long distances for the

pure enjoyment of riding. Not because I particularly enjoy the work of pedaling a bicycle, but more for the opportunity to hear birds calling, notice roadside wildflowers, and detect newly-hatched turtles and snakes. Being on a bicycle gets me quickly to my destination while allowing me to spend time outdoors. For almost as long as I can remember, I have loved being outside. There is stuff outside! Stuff to see, stuff to do, stuff to discover. While traveling between home and work, or running errands around town, I'm often surprised by some of the species I encounter unexpectedly or in unexpected places. What the average person fails to notice, I have noticed. Canoeing, hiking, and cross-country skiing give me an excuse to poke into places less traveled, although not neces-

sarily places further from home.

Through this regular series, I will be sharing my discoveries and adventures as I explore the nature in my backyard – literally, because a recent backyard naturalization project is reaping enormous rewards, but also nearby favourite haunts and interesting occurrences in ordinary places. My hope is to encourage you to take a closer look at the nature in your own backyard, and appreciate the interesting life and diversity that is out there... waiting to be discovered.



Figure 17: Sedums about to bloom on the LiveRoof of our new carport. What pollinators might this roof attract? (Carolyn Bonta)



Thunderbird!

A poem written in Olden County, Central Frontenac.

by Rick Bortolotti

phoebe is the sound they say it makes,
and makes, and makes, and makes, and makes....

grouse is not so aptly named.

every spring

startled to the core-

Thunderbird!

makes its dazzling disappearance



6 KFN Outings

6.1 Family Day Trip to Wolfe Island (February 18, 2019)

by Erwin Batalla



Figure 18: Looking at a Snowy Owl at the KFN Family Day event. (Richard Brault)

The KFN invited the general public and its members to look for Snowy Owls on Wolfe Island on Family Day. On Monday February 18, more than 40 people gathered at the ferry ramp in Kingston to catch the 9 am boat to the island. Among our guests, there were 3 families with six children in total, one group of three young adults and somebody who had driven from Maryland! The rest of the group did some car pooling and we got on the ferry smoothly. The boat struggled through the ice and we arrived on time at the winter dock where we met another participant. Also, Wolfe Island resident Mark Read had already driven to some of the known locations for the owls and he met us at the terminal. The 15 vehicles proceeded through the village of Marysville, south on HWY 96, then east on Reeds Bay Road and finally arrived on Fifth Line. It was cold, cloudy and windy but Mark was able to spot an owl on a lump west of the road. The bird blended well with the ground so it was very difficult to see even with a telescope. Most participants saw this bird but it left us wanting more. We drove north another 500 meters before a second owl was spotted on a fence to the west. Because it was slightly higher above the ground, this owl was easier to see and everybody enjoyed it immensely. The sun came out to celebrate our success. We started towards the ferry terminal stopping occa-

sionally to look at some Horned Larks along the road. Half of the group returned to the mainland on the 11 am ferry. The rest of the group split into several parties who went in search of Snow Buntings, Lapland Longspurs, American Kestrels and other raptors. Three cars continued looking for Snowy Owls. We were able to find an adult on the Fourth Line. It was very different from the two grey spotted juveniles we had seen previously and only its eyes and mouth could be seen on its pure white body. The gentleman from Maryland was pleased and he promised to come back next year to photograph these majestic birds again. We returned to Kingston on the 12:30 ferry.



Figure 19: Snowy Owl on Wolfe Island. (Richard Brault)

6.2 KTN Trip to Elbow Lake Education Centre (March 9, 2019)

by Elena Vilela



Figure 20: KTN Members snowshoeing on a bridge at Elbow Lake Education Centre. (Shirley French)

On Saturday, March 9, six Kingston Teen Naturalists went to Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre, and we learned about animals hibernating, and what other non-hibernating animals do to survive the winter. We went on a snowshoe hike around the pond, and found plenty of snow fleas (which some of us found really interesting, and some of us did not like much at all). We also learned how to use a compass and GPS, and we had to try to use GPS coordinates that we were given to get to different stations around the Environmental Centre's site.



Figure 21: Snowshoes. (Tristan Risso-Verjovski)

6.3 Ramble to Second Depot Lake (March 19, 2019)

by Jane Revell

On Tuesday March 19th, 11 rambblers headed out to walk the trails of the Second Depot Lake Conservation (Campground) Area. It was a bright sunny day with a starting temperature of -4°C which increased to 5°C by the end of the ramble. We saw a total of 11 tree species which were: white pine, white birch, large-toothed aspen, red pine, blue beech (ironwood), American beech, red oak, white oak and mossy cup oak, white ash and sugar maple. Janis Grant kept track of the birds

we saw and they were 2 Wood Ducks, 4 Wild Turkeys, 1 Red-shouldered Hawk and its nest, 2 Downy Woodpeckers, 2 Blue Jays, 1 American Crow, 3 Common Ravens, 12 Black-capped Chickadees, 7 White-breasted Nuthatches, 1 American Robin and 1 American Goldfinch. We saw some bracket and turkey tail fungus growing on trees. We saw one deer and many of their tracks in the snow. Raccoon, fox and turkey tracks were also observed. We observed porcupine activity: scat

and cut off white pine twigs underneath a large white pine tree. Anne also pointed out woodpecker pellets she found in the snow mixed with



Figure 22: Red-Shouldered Hawk in flight observed at Second Depot Lake Conservation Area. (Peter Waycik)

the wood chips below a woodpecker hole. An enjoyable day for all with many signs of spring.



Figure 23: Signs of spring: rings of melted snow around the trees. (Peter Waycik)

6.4 Inner Harbour Field Trip (March 24, 2019)

by Ken Robinson

Seventeen KFN members participated in this March 24th field trip to Kingston's inner harbour. Lingering ice in the bays and along the shorelines on the west side of the Cataraqui River concentrated waterfowl in the centre channel and closer to the eastern shoreline which was more open.

Viewing conditions were excellent to view a large raft of waterfowl off Woods Landing, (Lilla Burke Park). Among the 16 duck species sighted here,

there were 3 Canvasback, a White-winged Scoter, Northern Pintails, and American Wigeons.

The group also visited 100 Foot Park below Medley Court and McLean Park, north of the Pittsburgh library, where more water birds were concentrated. A Turkey vulture and 2 Bald Eagles were sighted there and some land birds.

A total of 36 species were listed for the morning, all recorded in eBird.



Figure 24: Betsy Beckwith, Shelna Paton and Jane Revell watch carefully for rare waterfowl. (Janis Grant)



Figure 25: Richard Brault, Steve Coates and Ken Robinson work their scopes. (Janis Grant)

6.5 Ramble to Nicholson's Point (April 2, 2019)

by *Rose-Marie Burke*

On April 2, 2019, sixteen KFN members met at the Tim Hortons on Gardiners Road to carpool to a property owned by Rideau Waterways Land Trust at Nicholson's Point for the day's ramble. This property was originally slated for a large development, but fortunately some foresighted person saw an opportunity to purchase this land for natural preservation. This being early spring, most of the snow had melted, excepting the few stubborn patches left over from a winter featuring a snow/thaw/rain/refreeze and repeat cycle. It was cloudy and just above freezing but the weather forecasters promised us warmer temperatures later in the day.

We carpooled to the home of Ros Hanes where we gained access to the property through her backyard. Anne was provided with some maps of the trails running through the property. Ros, a longtime member of KFN, had three children who had gone through the Junior program some years back. Anne fondly remembered how these children brought praying mantis egg cases in to the meetings that they had found while roaming the old field areas out back of their house. Anne encouraged us to look for egg cases during our walk, a brown/grey oval shaped blob that is usually deposited on stems of small shrubs, grass or weeds in the fall.

Throughout our walk, we saw several species of birds and were regaled by the cheerful calls of males from both year-round residents and returning migrants announcing to the world their ownership of the territory that they had staked out. Janis Grant kept a running list of the bird species found during our trek that will be submitted to eBird and will be included at the end of this report.

One of the first things found was a gall on a dried goldenrod stem. Anne borrowed a pocketknife and tried to open the gall, however the stem was old and mushy and did not come apart cleanly. Anne described the different types of gall made on goldenrod plants by either a moth (Elliptical Goldenrod Gall), fly (Goldenrod Ball Gall) or midge

(Goldenrod Bunch Gall), how they insert an egg into the stem and how the plant tries to heal this irritation by forming a roundish mass around it. Chickadees and Downy Woodpeckers will look for these to try to dig out the larva for a snack. If there is a tiny hole, that would be the insect emerging. A larger hole may indicate that a bird has gone after the larva, which looks like a small white hairless caterpillar or grub, good protein for a small bird.

Right nearby was an old apple tree under which we found the remains of a wasp nest with combs that were about 15 cm (six inches for those of us preferring English measures) in diameter. We did not find any of the dead wasps to determine which species had built this nest; there are a few wasps and hornets that create such "paper" nests. Anne told us how the workers die off in winter while the queen goes to find a sheltered place to overwinter. While examining these workings of insects, a discussion arose about the alarming reports from many areas of how insect populations are declining. One anecdotal example mentioned was how many people used to complain of how in certain warm seasons the windshields of motor vehicles would be smeared by the collision of many bugs while driving down the highways, but this has become less of a problem. Certainly the drop in the number of insects is a problem that should be alarming to all of us as the basis of an entire food chain, and plant pollinators for the crops that feed us, are lessened. I personally would lament that mosquitoes and deerflies seem to be as numerous as ever, but have noticed fewer blackflies in recent years. Although the adult female is a nuisance to us humans being targeted for our blood, the larvae of both the black fly and the mosquito provide an important food source for many aquatic creatures. Fortunately on this outing there were no insects flying around trying to bite us, although it is good to be aware that as the weather warms ticks become active.

Much of the property had been farmland decades ago and was now grown over. We continued on

through an area of mostly shrub. Anne pointed out some of the invasive plants growing along the pathways such as Dog Strangling Vine, which is becoming increasingly common in the area, and imported Tartarian Honeysuckle. It had been mentioned at the beginning of the walk that Wild Parsnip has also become more common at this location and pathways through the old fields are mowed wider to help prevent human contact with this plant that can cause skin rashes.

On one of the remaining icy patches on the pathway, springtails, commonly known as snowfleas, peppered the white surface. A magnifying glass was passed around so that we could have a closer look at these tiny little athletic creatures. Being no larger than a flake of pepper these tiny insects can spring 10 cm along. Anne likened this to a human being able to jump 200 metres, a feat that even the finest Cirque du Soleil performers would envy. Going about their business largely unnoticed by humans, their biomass can number in the millions (25 million per hectare), going about the task of cleaning up detritus in their habitat one microscopic bite at a time.



Figure 26: Stopping to look at springtails and tracks on a snow-covered patch of the trail. (Rose-Marie Burke)

Further along the pathway as we walked through some red cedars, Anne pointed out some brown ball-like nodules on the branches, the Cedar Apple Rust. This fungus alternates its life cycle between Red Cedar and apple family trees.



Figure 27: Group looking at cedar-apple rust. (Rose-Marie Burke)



Figure 28: Making our way along a trail through the hardwoods. (Rose-Marie Burke)

We headed through a section of hardwood forest, where a variety of old fungi could be found on dead trees, such as the turkey tail with its decorative variegated patterns. Their woody remains had turned green with algae over the winter months. We were told that there are large patches of spring flowers to be seen here in May, and we saw evidence of hepaticas from the remaining leaves of last year's plants. I always enjoy walking among large hardwood trees, and there were some large mature maple, oak, and shagbark hickory. This must certainly be a colourful place to visit in autumn. Jackie Bartnik made note of some of the

trees and plants that we saw; this list will also be included at the end of the report.

Having reached the far end of the property we crossed the road to visit Lighthouse Park, a very small park on the shore of Lake Ontario that features some large old Red Cedar trees. We paused to see what kind of ducks were resting on the patches of open water on the lake before heading down to the waterfront. There the breaking ice was being pushed into piles against the rocks, and we could see the interesting way that the layers were melting into a stringy pattern - Anne told us this was called candling. The limestone rocks themselves told a story of creatures from long ago, fossils of shells and crinoids could be clearly seen on their surface.



Figure 29: Examining fossils in the limestone. (Rose-Marie Burke)

As we were enjoying the view, Jackie called our attention to a large number of owl pellets on the grass under the cedars. A couple of these were picked apart, and the remains of the owl's meal were revealed. Bones, skull and fur of some small mammal—parts that could not be digested were regurgitated in a dark gray pellet by the owl, probably belonging to a vole or mouse that was caught unawares by the skilled aerial hunter who swoops silently and quickly down to snatch its unsuspecting prey. We fanned out amongst the majestic cedars hoping to spy this wonderful owl that we speculated from the size of the pellets to be a Barred or Great Horned Owl, but we did not find it. On this windy day the owl no doubt sought a

quieter, secluded resting place back in the shelter of the forest.



Figure 30: Examining skulls and bones from small mammals, the contents of an owl pellet. (Rose-Marie Burke)

As we headed along the road towards a path back through the property we found evidence on the roadside of garlic mustard, another invasive plant. Garlic mustard can spread quickly and has the added advantage of being able to put chemicals from its root system into the ground around it, preventing other plants from competing with it. The seeds can remain viable in the ground for up to seven years, making this a difficult invader to eliminate. Alongside the garlic mustard was a small woody stem with a cluster of whitish berries. Lovely to look at, the unwary might be tempted to gather this for an indoor decoration, and then to one's dismay realize, by developing a skin rash, that this is the fruit of poison ivy. The urushiol that causes the rash is contained within all parts of the plant, leaves, stem, roots and fruit, and one is wise not to handle it at any time of the year.

On our return path we came across a few first year mullein plants with their fuzzy leaves with branched hairs, still green and spread out on the ground awaiting the coming summer. In their second year, they shoot up tall stalks with a spiked cluster of bright yellow flowers. Anne told us of how during the Juniors' outings she will rub a bit of a leaf on one cheek of a volunteer stimulating the blood supply and turning the cheek rosy, a form of natural makeup.



Figure 31: A poison ivy plant with berries. (Rose-Marie Burke)

By this time the clouds were thinning and the temperature was rising, a few spiders scurried amongst the grass. Evidence of vole activity was seen in a few places during our walk, tunnels through the flattened down dead grasses, as well as a few neatly chewed hollows here and there showed where they survived during winter. Perhaps some of these had provided a meal for a hungry owl.

Returning to where we had parked, most of us decided to walk down to a neighbourhood beach area before heading back. At a small access point on the lake we looked for ducks on the open water in the distance. As we walked the short distance, grackles flew overhead and we heard the call of redwing blackbirds. We enjoyed a few minutes sitting on some benches, having a chat about various things and admiring the view before returning home. This was certainly a pleasant outing to start the spring season, our only disappointment in not

having found a praying mantis egg case.

Thank you Ros for allowing us access, parking and providing maps as well as joining us for part of the walk.

Janis Grant's roundup of birds:

- 5 Canada Goose
- 1 Long-tailed Duck
- 2 Bufflehead
- 27 Common Goldeneye
- 2 Mourning Dove
- 4 gull sp.
- 1 Double-crested Cormorant
- 1 Downy Woodpecker
- 1 Hairy Woodpecker
- 11 Blue Jay
- 2 White-breasted Nuthatch
- 6 American Robin
- 7 European Starling
- 1 Dark-Eyed junco
- 2 Song Sparrow
- 1 Red-winged Blackbird
- 13 Common Grackle
- 1 Northern Cardinal

Jackie Bartnik's list of plants:

Trees:

- Black Cherry
- Ironwood
- Shagbark Hickory
- American Beech
- Maple species
- Red Cedar
- White Pine

Herbaceous Plants:

Invasive species: Dog Strangling Vine, Garlic Mustard and Periwinkle

Native: Round-leaved Hepatica, Wild Strawberry, Common Mullein, several species of mosses and grasses

Fungi: Turkey Tail and Artist's Conk

6.6 KTN Trip to Presqu'île (April 6, 2019)

by Damon Gee



Figure 32: Teens learned how to set up and use scopes. (Anne Robertson)

On a cloudy April 6, 2019, the Teen Naturalists Ronan, Damon, Austin, Mackenzie and Amélie accompanied Anne and Sharon David to watch ducks at and around Presqu'île Provincial Park. We began by learning to set up and use scopes while making a few stops outside the Park, viewing lots of Ring-necked Ducks, a Pied-billed Grebe and one brave Trumpeter Swan at the first. The second location was loaded with Scaup and Red-head, plus a few gulls including some Bonaparte's.

The next contained over 50 Mute Swans! After lunch in the Park, we observed from the lighthouse and two more locations, spotting Long-tailed Ducks and some Goldeneye courtship rituals. Two short stops outside the park revealed a Great Horned Owl on its nest clearly showing its ear tufts and a pair of Bluebirds working around a nest box. We then sadly had to return to Kingston, learning about identifying features of ducks before ending the trip with hot chocolate at Tim Hortons.

6.7 Field Trip to Lennox Generating Station (April 14, 2019)

by Kurt Hennige



Figure 33: Group at marsh viewing heron nests. (Gaye Beckwith)

Despite 40 mm rain in the forecast, 29 people gathered in the parking lot at Ontario Power Genera-

tion property. Co-leader Mike Farrell, signed us all in and explained the safety regulations to all of us.

While waiting, we watched the pair of Osprey on their nest nearby. Sharp eyes also noticed at least one Northern Rough-winged among some Tree Swallows. Without seeing the resident Peregrine Falcon, we entered the property in the direction of the Wetland.

By carefully approaching the settling ponds, we got great looks of a male Wood Duck, a single American Coot, many Ring-necked Ducks and even more Buffleheads. On the way to the wetlands we observed Field Sparrow, Eastern Towhee and a group of Cedar Waxwings. At the wetland we admired some Great Blue Herons on their nest,

a pair of Northern Pintail, and several calling Pied-billed Grebes. An Eastern Phoebe gave us close looks, while Black Ducks and Mallards were flybys. The pair of Northern Shoveler seen earlier in the morning by Mike Farrell did not appear.

As predicted the rain started too soon and with few ducks visible, the suggestions to walk back to the car and shorten the field trip received no objec-



Figure 34: American Coot in settling pond. (Peter Waycik)

6.8 Topsy Farms Ramble (April 16, 2019)

by Ken Ross

On a gloriously sunny April 16, about 20 people rambled along the hedgerows and the woodlot of Topsy Farms, located on the west end of Amherst Island. We are very grateful to Sally Bowen and Ian Murray for inviting us to ramble on their 380 acre farm. This land has been farmed since the 1800's and the present owners bought it in 1971 and began raising sheep. Approximately 230 acres is used to pasture the sheep and the remaining 150 acres is wooded. On this day there were 10 early lambs frolicking in a paddock near the barn.

Within 5 minutes of starting our walk, 2 Sandhill Cranes made a leisurely fly past over the pastures. 27 species of birds were seen included Harrier, Barn Swallows, House Sparrows, Robins, Blue Jays, American Crows, Common Raven, Song Sparrow, Meadowlark, Northern Flicker, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Mallard, Common Grackles,

tions.

Back at the parking lot, after most had already left the property, the Peregrine Falcon finally decided on a brief flyby. A total of 38 species were found in the less than 2-hour field trip.

Thank you to Mike Farrell for allowing us to visit the OPG property again.



Figure 35: One of several heron nests in marsh. (Peter Waycik)

etc. (plus 14 species were seen between the Farm and the ferry dock).

The hedgerows had many red cedars, some of which had cedar apple rust fungus on them. The brown nodule will burst into small jelly-like fingers (telia) in June and emit spores which will affect the leaves of any member of the apple family which includes hawthorn bushes). Later in the summer, the spots on the leaves will emit more spores which infect red cedars. This alternation of generations is essential for the life cycle of the rust. Neither host is severely damaged by the fungus. Other plant life seen included common mullein; motherwort (of the nettle family); herb Robert, and a spring beauty plant in bud. Invasive plants namely garlic mustard and dog-strangling vine were found.

Trees seen included maples, red and white oak, black cherry, shagbark hickory, and cottonwoods. We were shown the flattened petiole (= leaf stem) of the cottonwood leaf which allows it to easily bend from side to side in the breeze.



Figure 36: Anne instructing Ian in use of magnifying lens. (Kathy Webb)

Some rambles found 4 skulls over the course of our hike. One was identified (with erupting permanent teeth) as a juvenile raccoon, the second (partial) skull was likely from an adult raccoon, the third skull's shape and dentition was consistent with a coyote and the fourth skull had 2 small antlers attached and thus was from a young buck. Other signs of white-tailed deer included fecal pellets (scat) and tufts of hair found on fence wire. Deer have hollow shafted hairs that not only improve the insulating capacity of the coat but also increases the buoyancy of the deer enabling them to be good swimmers.

While we had lunch at an old, non-functional sugar shack, a Mourning Cloak butterfly appeared. This is one of the earliest butterflies to appear each spring having overwintered as an adult under the bark of a tree. At the same location several trees appeared to be favoured roosting trees for one or more owls to regurgitate pellets. Dissection of the pellets revealed skulls and leg bones of small mammals. Vole tunnels were also seen in the more open areas.

Before lunch, a few garter snakes were found and we discussed the differentiation of the body from the tail of the snake. The body has single ventral scales while the tail has two rows of ventral scales.

The vent is the dividing point between body and tail. After lunch the day became warmer and we found a "knot" of garter snakes sunning on a west facing slope. The slope had a small opening which likely led to their hibernaculum. Not to be outdone by reptiles the amphibians in the form of chorus frogs serenaded us from a small wetland.



Figure 37: Knot of garter snakes. (Janet Elliott)

In some standing pools we also identified two Whirligig Beetles and one Water Spider. A black and brown Woolly Bear caterpillar (commonly seen in autumn) was found moving in the grass. This caterpillar will pupate in a cocoon and emerge as an Isabella moth. A very nondescript species of moth.

It was a very enjoyable day weather-wise and a very rewarding day as we observed and discussed the recurring cycle of re-emerging and returning life each spring.

Bird species seen at Topsy Farms

Mallard
 Mourning Dove
 Sandhill Crane
 Turkey Vulture
 Northern Harrier
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
 Red-bellied Woodpecker
 Northern Flicker
 American Kestrel
 Eastern Phoebe
 Blue Jay

American Crow
 Common Raven
 Tree Swallow
 Barn Swallow
 Black-capped Chickadee
 American Robin
 White-throated Sparrow
 Song Sparrow
 Eastern Towhee
 Eastern Meadowlark
 Red-winged Blackbird
 Brown-headed Cowbird
 Common Grackle
 Northern Cardinal
 House Sparrow

Bird species seen between Ferry dock and Topsy Farms

Canada Goose
 Mallard
 Long-tailed Duck
 Bufflehead
 Red-breasted Merganser
 Bonaparte's Gull
 Ring-billed Gull
 Herring Gull
 Common Loon
 Double-crested Cormorant
 Osprey
 European Starling
 Red-winged Blackbird
 Common Grackle

6.9 Helen Quilliam Sanctuary Clean Up (April 27, 2019)

by Erwin Batalla

As we were getting ready to go for the HQS cleanup, we could see snow flakes falling in the city of Kingston. By the time we reached the Sanctuary, conditions had improved to a balmy 5°C. Seventeen members arrived for the clean-up and they were assigned to trails: David McAvoy, Barry Robertson and Mark and Allana to the vanLuven Point; Rose-Marie Burke, Ken Robinson and Nick to the Betty Hughes trail; Paul Mackenzie, Kathy Webb and Bill Depew to the Faith Avis trail; Gaye and Betsy Beckwith and Ken Ross to the Art Bell trail; Anthony Kaduck, Erwin Batalla and Richard Brault to the Roland Beschel trail. Alexandra Simmons dusted up the outhouse and went along the main road collecting some garbage. After a couple of hours work, we gathered to drink some refreshments (tea and coffee) with some muffins prepared by Betsy and Alexandra. Some chain-sawing of fallen trees occurred on a couple of trails but the overall impression was that the trails were in excellent condition. Pine Warblers were somewhat abundant and some Yellow-rumped were also spotted. A Red-shouldered and a Broad-

winged Hawk were observed. An Osprey mingled in a kettle of turkey Vultures. A Winter Wren was singing. Rose-Marie noted a variety of flowers: Dutchman's Breeches and Hepatica among them. The cold weather deterred butterflies, frogs and turtles from showing up but it did not stop our volunteers from helping with the annual maintenance of our reserve in the Canadian Shield.



Figure 38: Art Bell Trail sign. (Kathy Webb)



Figure 39: Dutchman's Breeches was everywhere at the sanctuary but was especially plentiful on the Art Bell Trail. (Kathy Webb)



Figure 40: Winter Wren seen at the southeast corner of the Art Bell Trail. (Kathy Webb)

6.10 Prince Edward Point Field Trip (May 5, 2019)

by Paul Mackenzie

KFN participants had the sunniest, warmest and calmest day so far this cool spring to enjoy Prince Edward Point. We car pooled the geriatric stalwarts and some newer birders into 9 vehicles. Along Babylon Road we started with Eastern Meadowlarks and Field Sparrows, a displaying Wilson's Snipe, and a Kestrel. The fog cleared enough so that along North Shore Road we were able to see three Belted Kingfishers, Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks, as well as Cliff and Barn Swallows nesting at a big barn.

It became apparent as we entered the NWR that this was not a big fallout day. Brown Thrashers and Eastern Towhees were calling but not many warblers. About 09:30, we parked near Point Traverse and spent an hour along the new widened paths there. It was one of those days when there were few enough birds that we paid attention to Yellow-rumped Warblers, and Ruby-crowned Kinglets. A Blue-headed Vireo, and a Black-and-white Warbler gave good views. First Baltimore Orioles of the year for some were seen but staying rather quiet. Erwin Batalla took us to the shore to scope a nice male Surf Scoter. Cecile Yarrow was able to show some of us an early Cape May Warbler. Peter Waycik and James Darling with their sharp eyes found enough to keep their cameras busy. Peter had shots of two Palm Warblers

that I missed. Trying to avoid the muddy trail, I glimpsed a Grasshopper Sparrow but no one else saw it, although Kurt Hennige had reported one as well.



Figure 41: Surf Scoter. (Peter Waycik)

At the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, the new bander Matt Isles showed us some birds in the hand and we commented on the new banding station building which is not yet open.

The leader then tried to "herd the turtles" from the banding station toward the washroom and lighthouse. Some were off chasing an Orchard Oriole found by Peter Good. Sandra Simmons pointed out Nashville and Blackburnian Warblers.

We had lunch at the banding station area where a male Rose-breasted Grosbeak fed on the tray feeder with the Goldfinches and Purple Finches.

Besides about 70 species of birds, we admired some spring ephemerals including Dutchman's Breeches, and a few Red Admiral butterflies. A pair of Water Snakes were copulating close to our



Figure 42: Cliff Swallows enjoying a puddle. (Peter Waycik)

lunch bench.

En route back, we found a Horned Grebe and more Common Loons and then rushed to ingest some ice cream at the Black River Cheese Factory. The 15:00 Glenora Ferry took those of us who were at the back of the line for the 14:30 ferry. A good day was had by all.



Figure 43: Northern Rough-Winged Swallow. (Peter Waycik)

6.11 KFN Field Trip to Southwestern Ontario (May 6-11, 2019)

by Anthony Kaduck

Setting Off

In days of yore the KFN used to conduct field trips to Point Pelee, the birding mecca of southwestern Ontario. Eventually interest waned and these trips were discontinued, but with a new generation of keen birders entering our ranks the time seemed right to renew this tradition. And so it was that on the 6th of May eight members headed down the long road to Leamington in search of spring migrants.

By the time we arrived it was late afternoon, so

there were only a couple of hours of birding time available before we had to check into hotels and find dinner. We decided to patrol the Woodland Trail and amid the usual suspects we managed to find five warbler species, including good views of a Blue-winged Warbler. Just a taste of things to come! We also saw the first of approximately one zillion Red-breasted Nuthatches we were to find during the week – these normally northern forest specialists were everywhere.



Day 1

Tuesday was a dose of the full-on Pelee experience. After the obligatory 05:30 breakfast at Tim Horton's, we birded for eleven hours, pausing only briefly for refreshments. The weather was damp, windy and cool, but the birds were cooperative. We had 49 species before our coffee break, with star billing going to Red-headed Woodpecker, Pine Siskin, Grasshopper Sparrow and thirteen warbler species. The next foray added Black-crowned Night Heron, three species of wren, Veery, three thrushes (Swainson's, Hermit and Wood) and the first Scarlet Tanagers of the trip.



Figure 44: Chillin' at Hillman Marsh. (Janis Grant)

The Friends of Point Pelee NP run a lunch and coffee stand at the Visitor Centre during the birding festival, so we didn't have to leave the park to find food. After a short pause we were back on the trail, finding an array of new birds including the much sought-after Prothonotary Warbler. Richard Brault revealed a heretofore hidden talent for finding creeping ground birds, so we had the first of many good views of Ovenbirds. And another 22 Red-breasted Nuthatches. Then it was off to Leamington for an abstemious and healthy dinner of ribs, fried chicken and local beer at Ray's Ribhouse.



Figure 45: Blue-winged Warbler. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 46: Tilden Woods. Richard Brault, Anthony Kaduck, Janis Grant, Dianne Croteau, John Licharson (missing: Nancy Spencer, Nancy Bayly, Darby Bayly). (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 47: Red-headed Woodpecker. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 48: Black-crowned Night-heron. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 49: Prothonotary Warbler. (Anthony Kaduck)



Day 2

On Wednesday we divided the group, with some people opting to stay in the Pelee area while the majority went east to explore Rondeau Provincial Park. For the latter group the first stop was the Keith Maclean Conservation Area where a Glossy Ibis had been spotted the previous evening. Alas the ibis was not visible so we scooped up a few trip birds (Osprey, Sora, Northern Shoveler) and continued on to Rondeau.

A White-winged Dove has been summering around Rondeau for a couple of years so that seemed like a good place to start. We went to the likely spot and started looking around. The homeowner came out and said that the dove had been there a few minutes ago but had flown off in “that direction.” We looked towards “that direction” and there was the dove, showing nicely. It even gave us a few examples of its call before moving off. So there was a gift-wrapped start to the day, and made up for the missing ibis.

Beyond that Rondeau did not have many new birds to offer. The birds that were there were uncommonly showy, so the photographers among us took advantage of close-up shots of Palm and Cape May Warblers, Blue-headed Vireos and Swainson’s Thrush. But we decided to move on, hop-

ing that the legendary Blenheim Sewage Lagoons would have something in store.

The wind was howling strongly when we arrived at Blenheim, so it looked like we would make a brief stop and then retreat to the cars. Once we topped the berm, though, it was clear that we had work to do. A flock of about 400 swallows was swarming low over the ponds: mostly Tree Swallows but we found a smattering of Northern Rough-winged and Bank Swallows in the mob as well as a few Purple Martins and a lone Cliff Swallow. A pair of Black Terns were also playing but they flew off before we could get a photo.

Scoping across the water we picked out Ruddy Ducks, Gadwall and many Bufflehead, and deep in the murk a small active grebe that looked interesting. After a careful study and comparison with a Horned Grebe in the next pond we concluded that it was indeed an Eared Grebe – a very tough bird to find in Southern Ontario. This was one of the best birds of the trip, and once our eBird checklist was published it created a minor stampede, with over 40 birders trekking to the lagoons to see it over the next few days.

A thorough search of the lagoon complex turned

up a few new additions for our list, including a Forster's Tern. I will gloss over the fact that "certain members of the party" cast doubt on my



Figure 50: Trip Leader surveying his ibis-free domain. (John Licharson)

identification of this bird, and then recanted after checking their reference books. Heavy is the head that wears the crown of KFN trip leader.



Figure 51: White-winged Dove. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 52: Cape May Warbler. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 53: Swainson's Thrush. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 54: Eared Grebe at long range. (John Licharson)



Figure 55: Blenheim Sewage Lagoon. (Richard Brault)



Day 3

Thursday saw another painfully early breakfast and another trip to Point Pelee. Little did we know what lay in store.

To our credit we made a clever decision in choosing to visit Pelee in early May, and we were resolute in deciding to visit the Tip that morning even though the weather was gloomy with predictions of thundershowers. But most of all we were very lucky, because for about an hour that morning we experienced an event that none of those present will ever forget.

A reverse migration happens when birds arrive at a migration spot, decide that there is not enough food or that the weather conditions are adverse, and turn back South to wait for better conditions. On Thursday May 9th there was a reverse migration of epic proportions. We stood at the tip with a hundred other observers as wave after wave of birds worked down to the Tip and then flew off bound for Ohio. Over the period of an hour approximately 4,500 warblers passed by, as well as about 1,000 Baltimore Orioles, 500 Scarlet Tanagers, many hundreds of Red-winged Blackbirds and smaller numbers of a dozen other species. The warblers were mostly working their way along the scrub trying to get a last meal before the flight, so we had great close views them. The biggest problem was deciding where to look next. The photographers experienced the odd phenomenon of having to move away from the birds as many were too close for our long lenses to focus on. It was an amazing experience – I overheard a gentleman saying that he had been coming to Pelee in May for 41 years and had never seen anything like it.

And then it was over, and in a semi-stunned state we headed back to the Visitor Centre to relive the experience over coffee.

By rights the remainder of the day should have been an anticlimax, but there was more birding goodness to come. A stroll down the trails of Tilden Woods allowed us to pile more warblers,

vireos and sparrows onto our trip list. A typically skulking Mourning Warbler drew a crowd, as did a very confiding Kentucky Warbler. Getting away from these mob scenes we found a quiet corner of the trail overlooking a glade and in short order had great views of Canada, Orange-crowned and Wilson's Warblers as well as a few of their more common cousins. We even found the lone Grey-cheeked Thrush of the trip.

Lunch arrived amid buckets of rain so we moped about the Visitor Centre for awhile before heading out into the elements. Birding was a bit slow but we did manage to find a Hooded Warbler for our troubles. Nancy Spencer decided to take a different path, going back to Tilden Woods with the avowed intention of sitting on a bench and waiting to see a cuckoo. The birding gods looked favourably upon her, and I got a text saying that she had found one – and a Yellow-billed one at that.

We agreed to reconvene at Hillman Marsh to close out the day. Usually a great spot for shorebirds, the Marsh was a bit sparse on the day, but we did manage to see a large flock of Short-billed Dowitchers and a lone Sanderling, and added Pine to our already very long warbler list. After an amazing day with close to 100 species seen we treated ourselves to a fish feast and a few well-deserved refreshments.



Figure 56: Warbler Mania at the Tip. (Dianne Croteau)



Figure 57: New species – Bay-breasted Sandpiper. (Dianne Croteau)



Figure 58: Kentucky Warbler. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 59: Friends of the Kentucky Warbler. (Janis Grant)



Figure 60: Hiding from the rain. (Anthony Kaduck)



Day 4

The plan called for us to move on to Long Point on Friday, though John Licharson decided to stay on in Pelee for an additional day (and was rewarded with good views of a Cerulean Warbler). The main group arrived at Long Point Bird Observatory at about 11:00, and we proceeded to thoroughly scour the famous Old Cut – a small patch of trees and scrub that can hold an amazing number of migrants. By now it was getting difficult to add new birds to the trip list but we were able to find a Green Heron, and had stunning views of a

male Hooded Warbler and some very close looks at the plain and dowdy Blackburnian Warbler. In the afternoon we found a few Sandhill Cranes and an American Bittern, and then visited the Long Point Provincial Park, where we bagged a cool 46 bird species in about an hour.

By now, after a hard four days of birding in the cold and wet, we were starting to flag a bit, so we actually knocked off a bit early and returned to Tillsonburg for a feast.



Figure 61: Cerulean Warbler. (John Licharson)



Figure 62: Blackburnian Warbler. (Anthony Kaduck)



Day 5

The original plan for Saturday was to make the long trek up to the Carden Alvar. This would have added about five hours of driving and we had seen many of the target birds, so we decided instead to return to base with a short excursion to Presqu'île Provincial Park enroute. Presqu'île is normally an excellent site for shorebirds but we arrived to find most of the beach area inundated. We forged on through almost knee-deep water but there was not much bird action. Great Egret at long range was a good addition to the list, and we had a very obliging Solitary Sandpiper at the Lighthouse parking lot, but overall there was not much to be seen. Richard and Dianne had to leave early, but our

spirits were lifted when we got a text stating that they had found the continuing Cattle Egret on Huff Road. All other plans were dropped as we sped off to see this rarity, and our good luck continued as it was still in place when we got there.

The egret was bird species #149 for the trip – not bad at all for five-and-a-bit days of birding. We found 27 species of warbler, most of the available ducks, all the expected vireos and a host of other interesting birds. It was hard slogging at times, but the company was good and overall I found the trip very rewarding. Stay tuned for a repeat performance next year!



Figure 63: Presqu'île was a mite damp in spots. (Richard Brault)



Figure 64: Cattle Egret. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 65: Blue-headed Vireo. (Anthony Kaduck)



Figure 66: Canada Warbler. (Diane Croteau)



Figure 67: Bald Eagle. (Frances Tackaberry)



Figure 69: American Kestrel. (Frances Tackaberry)



Figure 68: A committee of vultures. (Frances Tackaberry)



Figure 70: Turkey Vulture. (Frances Tackaberry)

6.12 Ramble to Belle Island (May 7, 2019)

by Chris Cannon

We the believers in weather forecast accuracy assembled at the appointed hour, hoods up to shelter us from the steady rain falling at Belle Park in Kingston. The forecast said it would dissipate shortly, and the rain stopped within five or ten minutes. We set foot in the mud to explore Belle Island (now linked to the Great Cataraqui River shoreline), its vegetation, and its wildlife.

Belle Park is municipally owned, and just opened this day for recreation – pickleball and a golf driving range. Both active recreational facilities are well away from the natural landscape, and offer a clubhouse with washrooms. How nice after three hours of exploring.

The Belle Park landscape features extensive shoreline, open space, woods, and a plantation of poplar designed to collect and retain the minerals that leach out of the old dump site, preventing the minerals from reaching the river. Pathways meander through this variety of landscapes, and after our very wet spring, made high rubber boots a virtual necessity.

Our leader Anne Robertson paused many times to explain vascular plant varieties, while Erwin Batalla and Paul Mackenzie homed in on the warbler invasion, spotting a total of 47 bird species in this very short time window. All of the expected birds were present, including

many Yellow Warblers, White-throated Sparrows, and Yellow-rumped Warblers. Ruby-crowned Kinglets were moving through, together with two Hermit Thrushes, a few White-crowned Sparrows, and both Palm and Pine Warblers. An Osprey was on nest and feeding atop a power pole. We heard Leopard Frogs and a toad calling.

We took a close look at the male and female flowers of the Manitoba Maple, and noted the presence of the Japanese Knotweed invasive, Garlic Mustard, and Wild Parsnip. One observer advised that was his first ramble without seeing Dog Strangling Vine. Dutchmen's Breeches were in flower, and Trout Lily and Early Meadow Rue were in bud.

One of the most interesting sightings happened as we pulled our boots out of deep mud near the shoreline. A fence parallels the shoreline here, and several carp were inland from the fence, possibly trapped in a small pond. With the prolonged rainfall this spring, water levels are high everywhere, and these carp must have snuck under the fence. If the rains continue, they will have to squeeze under the fence to get back to the Great Cataraqui River. It's tempting to return along the same path and see if the carp escaped.

The mud may never dry up, but the sun prevailed, and we left for home in splendid weather. Thank you Anne.



Figure 71: Male flowers of the Manitoba Maple. (Paul Mackenzie)



Figure 72: Female flowers of the Manitoba Maple. (Paul Mackenzie)

6.13 KTN Evening Expedition to Gould Lake and Frontenac Provincial Park (May 11, 2019)

by *Tristan Risso-Verjovsky*

Summary: Explored around Gould Lake and Frontenac Park administration building and Arab Lake parking lot.

On the way to Gould Lake we stopped at a beaver pond and saw a beaver, some frogs and the larva of a water beetle. We also saw a couple of rabbits along the way, as well as a Turkey and a Deer. As we walked to the lake, we saw two Canada Geese. We walked around the lake and caught a small Smallmouth Bass as well as some water beetles and snails.

As the sun started to fall and the light faded, we returned to the Woodcock site where we waited to see if we could get a look at it or if we could hear it. We managed to hear it peenting but it did not fly.

At 8:00 PM, we all went to Frontenac Provincial Park, to see if we could have the opportunity to see a Barred Owl amongst other things.

We went to the administration building, and stopped to get our headlamps to look for some animals at the lake shore, and we managed to catch a millipede, an unidentified minnow and we saw some spiders.

Driving down Big Salmon Lake Road we saw a big porcupine climbing a Pine Tree, we stopped to take some pictures. We advanced about 10 metres and saw another porcupine that disappeared quickly in the darkness of the night.

At the Arab Lake parking lot, we got the chance to hear toads calling. We then played the Barred Owl call and as we stood quietly we heard three Barred Owls. We changed our position and played the sound again. The owl responded to our calling, then a big Barred Owl appeared in front of us and took a good look at us before it flew away.

We returned to the Tim Hortons at 10:15 PM, and wrote in our notebooks what we had done and seen.

6.14 Lemoine Point KFN Bird Walk (May 22, 2019)

by *Richard Brault and Dianne Croteau*



Figure 73: The participants at the KFN May 22 morning walk at Lemoine Point. (Richard Brault)

The early morning greeted us with a clear blue sky, a cool 10°C with virtually no wind. As the last participants arrived, several species were seen or heard from the parking lot. Two Eastern Meadowlarks exchanged calls from each side of the road, a Bobolink sang from the adjacent field, three Brown-headed Cowbirds were perched at the top of a tree while American Goldfinch and Yellow Warblers played in the spruces along the eastern edge.

After a brief welcome and introductions, we all trekked along the southern trail toward the farm. Several people in the party were birding for the first time, and the more experienced were generous with their assistance in locating and describing the species. A very curious male Rose-breasted Grosbeak came to within a few feet of the group, watching us as intently as we watched him. A Pileated Woodpecker called from the trees and flew over the field in full view. Yellow Warblers were abundant in sight and sound, a few American Redstarts appeared along with a Yellow-rumped Warbler, a few others (Chestnut-sided, Black-and-white, Black-throated-green) were heard but sev-

eral other Warbler species seen a week earlier had either moved on or remained hidden.

One of our first-time birders was thrilled to spot a Scarlet Tanager perched on a low branch along the shoreline, remaining still and in full view for everyone to see. Further up along the shore, a pair of Baltimore Orioles were busy foraging in the trees and a White-crowned Sparrow gleaned for food on the path. A male Orchard Oriole was spotted at the very top of a tree on the edge of the bush, while a White-Breasted Nuthatch descended and called below him. As we emerged from the woods into the sunlit clearing, a cacophony of bird song greeted the group, led by four Grey Catbirds, Red-Eyed Vireo, Song Sparrow, Cardinal, Wood Thrush, Yellow Warblers and the deep baritone croak of a distant Common Raven.

Further across the field, a Savannah Sparrow, several Eastern Kingbirds and an Eastern Meadowlark perched conspicuously in the tall grasses. At 8:30, we were back at the parking lot. In total, 52 species were recorded. Thank you to all the participants for a most enjoyable morning.

6.15 Meisel Woods Ramble (June 4, 2019)

by Maureen Sly

The Meisel Woods property (south of Sharbot Lake) was donated to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority by John Meisel and is a beautiful forest with many interesting plants and animals.

Eleven hikers met on a cool sunny morning to explore these woods. These are just some of the flowers we discovered: wild lily-of-the-valley (Canada mayflower), pussytoes (field with one vein in the leaf and plantain-leaved with three veins in the leaf), dog and yellow violets, wild sarsaparilla in bloom, masses of barren strawberry (yellow flowers) and gaywings (rose purple flowers) to name a few. Striped maple was in bloom and maple-leaved viburnum, another woodland shrub, was in bud.

We found several ferns including rock polypody, eastern bracken, marginal, sensitive and royal ferns. Also sweet fern which is not a fern but an

aromatic shrub.

We found two dragonflies: a Hudsonian whiteface (immature) and a chalk-fronted corporal (female). Also a spotted spreadwing (damselfly).

Twenty bird species were seen and heard including a male and female Scarlet Tanager, male and female Indigo Buntings, Wood Peewee, Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireos, Common Yellowthroat and Great Crested Flycatcher.

Other interesting finds included an owl pellet with three small mammal skulls and a small milk snake. A spectacular cinnabar polypore (bracket fungus) was identified and the updated scientific name for pale corydalis noted: *Capinoides sempervirens*.

It was a great day and we left just as the rain started.



Figure 74: Kathy Webb examining Cinnabar polypore (*Pycnoporus cinnibarinus*). (Janet Elliott)



Figure 75: Milk Snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*) and Millipede. (Janet Elliott)



Figure 76: Young Pileated Woodpecker waiting for mum. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 77: Pearly Eye in the shadows. (Murray Seymour)

7 Annual Bird Report 2018

by Mark D. Read

There were 270 species of birds seen within the Kingston Area in 2018, a 50 kilometre radial circle centred on MacDonald Park, Kingston. All records submitted to the Kingston Rare Bird Committee have been reviewed (see below) and no additional species are expected. However, any updates or corrections will be noted in Vol. 67 No. 2. Compared with the 38-year average of 278 (1980-2017), 2018 was a little down on species but better than some of the lows we've seen this decade. Yearly totals for the last 38 years are given in Table 2.

Kingston Rare Bird Committee

The 2018 committee comprised Mark Read as Chair, with Erwin Batalla, Mike Burrell, Ken Edwards, Kurt Hennige, Paul Mackenzie, and Ron Weir as standing members. In total, they were tasked with reviewing 16 records. All members, including the chair, have a vote. For a species to be accepted, 6 or 7 members must vote in favour. The first round of voting is 'closed,' allowing members to cast an unbiased vote. If a second round vote is required, comments and decisions from the first round are circulated. Rounds 1 and 2 are conducted electronically but if a third vote is required, members meet in person. At this stage, if a record is still not confirmed, it is left as 'unconfirmed.'

It is with regret that 2 members of the committee have decided to retire this year. Paul Mackenzie and Ron Weir have both served the committee for many years providing valuable insight and input. Please join me in thanking them both for their efforts. Two new members will join the committee over the next couple of months.

The following records were confirmed by the 2018 committee:

Mountain Bluebird: 18th February 2018, Macalpine Road x Hwy 2, east of Kingston. Jennifer Greer.

Black Vulture: 7th April – 20th May 2018, Prince Edward Point. Nathalie Paquette/Davis Okines. A minimum of 4 birds were involved, possibly 5.

Ones and twos were seen outside the area at Sandbanks and Point Petre through to 18th December.

White-winged Dove: 1st-6th May 2018, Sandhurst Shores. David Edwards and John Hall.

Snowy Egret: 10th-17th May 2018, Kaiser Cross Road, PEC. Tom Wheatley.

Lark Bunting: 17th May 2018, Gravelly Bay Road, PEC. Tina Sawicki.

Lark Sparrow: 16th August 2018, Prince Edward Point. Tom Wheatley.

Western Kingbird: 22nd-23rd September 2018, Long Point Road, PEC. Peter Hogenbirk.

Hooded Warbler: 14th October 2018, Amherst Island. Kurt Hennige.

Boreal Owl: 18th December 2018, Little Cataraqui Creek CA, Kingston. Krista Fazackerley.

A **Northern Bobwhite** seen at Moscow Dump on 27th June was deemed to be an escape. Since the native Ontario population is restricted to Walpole Island, records of this species (unless confirmed breeding) will no longer be reviewed or accepted to the annual list.

There were also several records added to the 2018 list that would normally be reviewed by the Kingston RBC but for which reports went directly to Ontario Birds Rarity Committee (OBRC), were accepted by authorities in New York State, or were accepted by local eBird reviewers. These include:

Parasitic Jaeger (20th October at Tibbetts Point, NY)

Forster's Tern (26th June, Amherst Island)

Pacific Loon (21st October, Chaumont)

American White Pelican (18th August, Thousand Islands)

Swallow-tailed Kite (5th May, Traverse Woods) –

accepted by OBRC

Black-backed Woodpecker (14th December, Bedford Mills)

Black-backed Woodpecker (30th December, Amherst Island)

Henslow's Sparrow - several records from breeding grounds in NY

An analysis of the last 10 years was conducted so that it will now be easier to track which species should be on the review list, and therefore require documentation in any given year. The criterion for this is, "a species that has been recorded 5 or fewer times in the preceding 10 years." This will also allow for a yearly update to the checklist to be produced each spring (though the 2019 version is not yet ready). At any time an eBird reviewer may also ask the Chair to distribute a record that they would prefer to be reviewed by the committee. Long-billed Dowitcher is also a review species due to its tricky identification.

Following a review of records going back to 2008, a number of minor errors were identified:

2009 (BB Vol.57, No.1): **281 species were seen.** This includes a Roseate Spoonbill added to the list the following year (as noted in BB Vol. 58, No. 1). However, the actual list of birds is missing Western Grebe (noted in the preamble), and 5 species were duplicated (Spotted Sandpiper, Up-

land Sandpiper, Whimbrel, Hudsonian Godwit, and Common Tern).

2010 (BB Vol.58, No.1): **281 species were seen** but Great Crested Flycatcher was missed off the list.

2012 (BB Vol.60, No.1): **278 species were seen.** The preamble notes 276 species but the list actually tallied 277. American Bittern was also missed off the list, therefore bringing the final tally to 278. In the following years, an error slipped in to Table 2, showing just 273 species for 2012.

2013 (BB Vol.61, No.1): **266 species were seen.** However, in the preamble the number of species was listed as both 266 and 264. In error, I carried the 264 forward through later editions of Blue Bill.

2017 (BB Vol.65, No.1): **274 species were seen.** Although 274 species were noted in the preamble, only 272 were shown in the list – Red-necked Phalarope was missing. This brings us to 273. It was also noted in this edition that 5 species were still under review. One of those has been accepted (a Western Sandpiper seen by Mark Patry at Kaiser Cross Road, PEC, on 10th September 2017), thereby bringing the list back to 274. Documentation was inconclusive for the other 4 records.

The KFN bird list remains at 381. Good finds, not noted above included Greater White-fronted Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Barrow's Goldeneye, American Golden-Plover, Whimbrel, Little Gull, Golden Eagle, Gyrfalcon, and Nelson's Sparrow.

Table 2: Annual total bird species for the Kingston Area 1980 to 2018

Year	Total	Year	Total	Year	Total	Year	Total
1980	278	1990	279	2000	282	2010	281
1981	277	1991	281	2001	285	2011	277
1982	276	1992	281	2002	287	2012	278
1983	282	1993	293	2003	282	2013	266
1984	285	1994	283	2004	280	2014	272
1985	271	1995	280	2005	278	2015	264
1986	277	1996	285	2006	274	2016	263
1987	279	1997	283	2007	272	2017	274
1988	270	1998	283	2008	272	(2018	270)
1989	273	1999	278	2009	281		
Avg.	277		283		279		272

Table 3: List of bird species seen in the Kingston area during 2018 with date of first sighting and associated observers.

Species	Date	Observer
Snow Goose	12 Feb	AD
Greater White-fronted Goose	23 Mar	JSB
Brant	08 May	GP
Cackling Goose	21 Feb	MDR
Canada Goose	01 Jan	KFN
Mute Swan	01 Jan	KFN
Trumpeter Swan	01 Jan	KFN
Tundra Swan	02 Jan	JSB
Wood Duck	01 Jan	BGB
Blue-winged Teal	21 Mar	NL
Northern Shoveler	21 Feb	KJH
Gadwall	01 Jan	KFN
Eurasian Wigeon	27 Mar	SD, AS, MSM
American Wigeon	21 Feb	KFN
Mallard	01 Jan	KFN
American Black Duck	01 Jan	KFN
Northern Pintail	01 Jan	SLD, CTH
Green-winged Teal	01 Jan	JRB, MDR
Canvasback	25 Feb	MDR
Redhead	01 Jan	KFN
Ring-necked Duck	01 Jan	KFN
Greater Scaup	01 Jan	KFN
Lesser Scaup	09 Jan	NS, TB
Harlequin	08 May	GP
Surf Scoter	20 Apr	KFN
White-winged Scoter	01 Jan	CTH, RR
Black Scoter	21 Mar	NP
Long-tailed Duck	01 Jan	KFN
Bufflehead	01 Jan	KFN
Common Goldeneye	01 Jan	KFN
Barrow's Goldeneye	02 Jan	JSB
Hooded Merganser	01 Jan	KFN
Common Merganser	01 Jan	KFN
Red-breasted Merganser	01 Jan	KFN
Ruddy Duck	23 Apr	BM

Species	Date	Observer
Ring-necked Pheasant	06 Jan	EDB
Ruffed Grouse	03 Jan	NLB
Wild Turkey	01 Jan	KFN
Pied-billed Grebe	27 Feb	JPR
Horned Grebe	11 Jan	EDB
Red-necked Grebe	11 Jan	MDR
Rock Pigeon	01 Jan	KFN
White-winged Dove	01 May	DE, JH
Mourning Dove	01 Jan	KFN
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	15 May	PRM
Black-billed Cuckoo	11 May	PJB
Common Nighthawk	12 May	MAK
Eastern Whip-poor-will	30 Apr	CHB
Chimney Swift	03 May	GU
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	05 May	KFN
Virginia Rail	22 Apr	KFN
Sora	27 Apr	JSB
Common Gallinule	13 Apr	RB
American Coot	02 Jan	MDR
Sandhill Crane	20 Mar	CJG
Black-bellied Plover	12 May	MJP
American Golden-Plover	16 May	MDR
Semipalmated Plover	06 May	JB, RKB
Killdeer	24 Jan	CR
Upland Sandpiper	28 Apr	PB
Whimbrel	25 May	MDR
Ruddy Turnstone	26 May	KFN
Stilt Sandpiper	25 May	VPM
Sanderling	26 May	KFN
Dunlin	25 Apr	AK, RKFE
Purple Sandpiper	20 Oct	LK
Baird's Sandpiper	12 Aug	KFN
Least Sandpiper	05 May	KFN
White-rumped Sandpiper	25 May	KFN
Pectoral Sandpiper	28 Apr	JET
Semipalmated Sandpiper	17 May	Anon
Short-billed Dowitcher	19 May	LB, JCG, VPM

Species	Date	Observer
American Woodcock	28 Feb	MDR
Wilson's Snipe	29 Mar	MDR
Wilson's Phalarope	06 May	KJH, MDR
Spotted Sandpiper	25 Apr	NL
Solitary Sandpiper	27 Apr	KFN
Greater Yellowlegs	13 Apr	JET
Lesser Yellowlegs	22 Apr	SED
Parasitic Jaeger	20 Oct	LK
Bonaparte's Gull	02 Apr	CP
Little Gull	19 Apr	MDR
Ring-billed Gull	01 Jan	KFN
Herring Gull	01 Jan	KFN
Iceland Gull	02 Jan	KJH
Lesser Black-backed Gull	03 Apr	JL
Glaucous Gull	02 Jan	KJH
Great Black-backed Gull	02 Jan	KJH
Caspian Tern	11 Apr	BM
Black Tern	06 May	KFN
Common Tern	24 Apr	JET
Forster's Tern	26 Jun	BDL
Red-throated Loon	18 Oct	KJH
Pacific Loon	21 Oct	NL
Common Loon	28 Jan	RP, OY
Double-crested Cormorant	20 Mar	MDR
American White Pelican	18 Aug	D&PC
American Bittern	17 Apr	GU
Least Bittern	12 May	TAN
Great Blue Heron	10 Jan	CHB, AEK
Great Egret	19 Apr	MDR
Snowy Egret	10 May	TMW
Green Heron	28 Apr	RL
Black-crowned Night-Heron	23 Apr	MVAB, DAS
Black Vulture	07 Apr	NP
Turkey Vulture	28 Feb	NLB
Osprey	27 Mar	NW
Swallow-tailed Kite	05 May	PM, DO
Golden Eagle	09 Mar	CTH

Species	Date	Observer
Northern Harrier	01 Jan	KFN
Sharp-shinned Hawk	02 Jan	MDR
Cooper's Hawk	01 Jan	KFN
Northern Goshawk	06 Jan	DGDR
Bald Eagle	01 Jan	KFN
Red-shouldered Hawk	16 Mar	RB, DC
Broad-winged Hawk	21 Apr	KFN
Red-tailed Hawk	01 Jan	KFN
Rough-legged Hawk	01 Jan	KFN
Eastern Screech-Owl	28 Jan	MDR
Great Horned Owl	06 Jan	KR
Snowy Owl	01 Jan	KFN
Barred Owl	02 Jan	MJR
Great Grey Owl	10 Dec	DG
Long-eared Owl	18 Jan	KFN
Short-eared Owl	01 Jan	JRB, MDR
Boreal Owl	18 Dec	KF
Northern Saw-whet Owl	21 Jan	JPR
Belted Kingfisher	01 Jan	RR
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	04 Jan	WTD, KAW
Red-headed Woodpecker	19 May	DD
Red-bellied Woodpecker	01 Jan	KFN
Black-backed Woodpecker	14 Dec	MEC
Downy Woodpecker	01 Jan	KFN
Hairy Woodpecker	01 Jan	KFN
Pileated Woodpecker	02 Jan	MDR
Northern Flicker	01 Jan	AE, RKFE
American Kestrel	01 Jan	MDR
Merlin	01 Jan	DGDR
Gyr Falcon	17 Jan	RL
Peregrine Falcon	04 Jan	MDR
Olive-sided Flycatcher	12 May	MAK
Eastern Wood-Pewee	05 May	CJG
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	15 May	AE, RKFE
Alder Flycatcher	17 May	JL
Willow Flycatcher	15 May	NAK
Least Flycatcher	02 May	TMW

Species	Date	Observer
Eastern Phoebe	01 Apr	TAN
Great-crested Flycatcher	02 May	JET
Western Kingbird	22 Sep	PH
Eastern Kingbird	27 Apr	JSB
Loggerhead Shrike	02 Apr	BLB
Northern Shrike	01 Jan	KFN
White-eyed Vireo	21 May	DB
Yellow-throated Vireo	05 May	GU
Blue-headed Vireo	23 Apr	RKFE
Philadelphia Vireo	10 May	AE, RKFE
Warbling Vireo	02 May	AE, RKFE
Red-eyed Vireo	05 May	GS
Blue Jay	01 Jan	KFN
American Crow	01 Jan	KFN
Common Raven	01 Jan	KFN
Horned Lark	01 Jan	KFN
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	22 Apr	JPR
Purple Martin	07 Apr	CHB
Tree Swallow	27 Mar	EW
Bank Swallow	24 Apr	RB
Barn Swallow	21 Apr	GP
Cliff Swallow	24 Apr	C&MY
Black-capped Chickadee	01 Jan	KFN
Tufted Titmouse	10 Jan	NLB
Red-breasted Nuthatch	01 Jan	KFN
White-breasted Nuthatch	01 Jan	KFN
Brown Creeper	01 Jan	KFN
House Wren	25 Apr	VPM
Winter Wren	02 Jan	CPR
Sedge Wren	12 Jun	JS, KS
Marsh Wren	24 Apr	MJR
Carolina Wren	07 Jan	BA
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	05 May	RKB
Golden-crowned Kinglet	02 Jan	MJR
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	20 Apr	JET
Eastern Bluebird	01 Jan	BLB
Mountain Bluebird	18 Feb	JG

Species	Date	Observer
Veery	03 May	NAK
Gray-cheeked Thrush	20 May	VPM
Swainson's Thrush	10 May	MDR
Hermit Thrush	23 Apr	RKFE
Wood Thrush	01 May	SLD, CTH
American Robin	01 Jan	KFN
Gray Catbird	30 Apr	MDR
Brown Thrasher	14 Apr	BLB
Northern Mockingbird	01 Jan	JRB, MDR
European Starling	01 Jan	KFN
American Pipit	01 May	JET
Bohemian Waxwing	24 Sep	ST
Cedar Waxwing	01 Jan	KFN
Evening Grosbeak	09 Sep	SLD, CTH
Pine Grosbeak	04 Nov	TAN
House Finch	01 Jan	KFN
Purple Finch	01 Jan	BGB, DLFF
Common Redpoll	20 Jan	TAN
Hoary Redpoll	14 Nov	EOB
Red Crossbill	15 Jan	TAN
White-winged Crossbill	22 Oct	CTH
Pine Siskin	09 Jan	SLD, CTH
American Goldfinch	01 Jan	KFN
Lapland Longspur	01 Jan	MDR
Snow Bunting	01 Jan	KFN
Grasshopper Sparrow	06 May	MDR
Chipping Sparrow	01 Apr	DG
Clay-coloured Sparrow	03 May	TAN
Field Sparrow	10 Apr	CR
Lark Sparrow	16 Aug	TMW
Lark Bunting	17 May	TS
American Tree Sparrow	01 Jan	KFN
Fox Sparrow	01 Jan	KJH
Dark-eyed Junco	01 Jan	KFN
White-crowned Sparrow	14 Apr	SED
White-throated Sparrow	01 Jan	KFN
Vesper Sparrow	20 Apr	VPM

Species	Date	Observer
Nelson's Sparrow	03 Oct	PEPtBO
Savannah Sparrow	10 Apr	JCG, VPM
Henslow's Sparrow	17 May	JW
Song Sparrow	01 Jan	MDR
Lincoln's Sparrow	23 Apr	NAK
Swamp Sparrow	08 Apr	CHB, MAJ
Eastern Towhee	01 Jan	KJH
Bobolink	02 May	AE, RKFE
Eastern Meadowlark	03 Mar	KFN
Orchard Oriole	06 May	MDR
Baltimore Oriole	02 May	TMW
Red-winged Blackbird	01 Jan	KFN
Brown-headed Cowbird	07 Jan	SED
Rusty Blackbird	01 Jan	KJH
Common Grackle	31 Jan	NLB
Ovenbird	02 May	TAN
Louisiana Waterthrush	03 May	TAN
Northern Waterthrush	25 Apr	TAN
Golden-winged Warbler	08 May	AB
Blue-winged Warbler	05 May	MJP
Black-and-white Warbler	01 May	KFN
Tennessee Warbler	05 May	MJP
Orange-crowned Warbler	05 May	MJP
Nashville Warbler	02 May	TMW
Mourning Warbler	15 May	EDB
Common Yellowthroat	04 May	SLD
Hooded Warbler	27 May	MB
American Redstart	03 May	AE, RKFE
Cape May Warbler	02 May	TMW
Cerulean Warbler	09 May	DD
Northern Parula	03 May	AE, RKFE
Magnolia Warbler	02 May	TMW
Bay-breasted Warbler	09 May	KFN
Blackburnian Warbler	05 May	RKB
Yellow Warbler	02 May	TMW
Chestnut-sided Warbler	05 May	KFN
Blackpoll Warbler	15 May	JET

Species	Date	Observer
Black-throated Blue Warbler	03 May	C&MY
Palm Warbler	27 Apr	JSB
Pine Warbler	13 Apr	DGDR
Yellow-rumped Warbler	01 Jan	DS
Prairie Warbler	12 May	GS
Black-throated Green Warbler	01 May	TAN
Canada Warbler	10 May	AE, RKFE
Wilson's Warbler	11 May	GP
Scarlet Tanager	05 May	RB
Northern Cardinal	01 Jan	KFN
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	28 Apr	MDR
Indigo Bunting	08 May	WTD, KAW
House Sparrow	01 Jan	KFN

Contributors for 2018

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EOB – Eastern Ontario Birding

NLB – North Leeds Birders

KFN – more than 3 members of Kingston Field Naturalists

PEPtBO – Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory

8 Clipped Classics

Excerpts from past issues of The Blue Bill

From 50 years ago ...

From an article entitled, "Otter Lake: Work and Fun," by R. E. Beschel from the June, 1969 Blue Bill:

The article summarises several work days in the Otter Lake Sanctuary, now Helen Quilliam Sanctuary.

May 3rd was the great clean-up day. Trash and beer bottles were as eagerly collected as if they had been botanical rarities.... The deep mining pit on the Main Trail received a climbing tree that should make it easier for the moss-watchers to ascend from this bryological Eldorado.... After some hammering, sawing, wiring, swimming and diving, we left the bridge (over the outlet from Sucker Lake) as good as new having given it a complete handrail from shore to shore. Take heart ladies, you can cross our 80 ft bridge now, even in high heeled shoes.

On May 10th between the roots of a basswood, Pak

You Wong spotted a baby porcupine. Gar Garwood held it up for a colour portrait and the successful slide may compensate to some degree for the spines he had to extract. The little creature made it difficult for us to photograph it, even after we tried to calm it by tickling its soft-haired underside. He (we determined its sex too) had already acquired a behaviour pattern we usually ascribe to the ostrich: he scuttled for the nearest cranny and poked his head into it, even if that nook happened to be between our boots.

Our land has already given us many rewards. Let us hope that our efforts will enable other naturalists to enjoy its wild beauty without causing damage.

From 60 years ago ...

From an article entitled, "The Prairie Warbler in Frontenac County," by Alden M. Strong from the June, 1959 Blue Bill:

In June 1950 while canoeing along the northeast shore of Devil Lake in the company of Miss Janet Tett, a strange zee-zee, zee-zee sound came from high on a precipitous ridge adjacent to the water. After climbing laboriously to the top we discovered the source of the call to be a prairie warbler, the first we had seen. On checking it out in Peterson and other literature, we found that we had right on the Tett farm a rather rare (in Ontario) warbler. The species is found breeding at Grand Bend and Wasaga Beach, the only other points in Ontario. After making further enquiries we discovered that Charles Broley had already reported the prairie warblers on Devil Lake some years previously. For several years I searched for a nest but the only real evidence for breeding was several singing males and once in 1951 I watched adults feeding fledglings. Never a nest.

Taking up photography early this year, I decided to try to record this species on film hoping at least for a good shot of a singing male. On my first trip May 10th, I spent about four hours listening to and observing a singing male and at the same time catching fleeting glimpses of another bird I guessed to be the female but could not get either to alight in range of the camera. I was about to give up and had moved slightly up the hill when I saw one bird picking at a caterpillar nest, then flying low down and along the ridge. I got behind the caterpillar nest and the bird flew directly to it again (too close for a shot) but this time I marked the line of flight down along the ridge. Following the line to a point at which the bird seemed to have stopped, I waited for a half-hour till suddenly there was a flash of yellow and a prairie warbler lit withing ten feet on a small ironwood in which was the barest foundation web of a wee nest.

My next visit was one week later. Nest complete; two small light eggs with a circle of speckles round one end and one cowbird egg, which I left after toying with the idea of removing it. Staying half-concealed near the nest I saw a female twice but the male seemed to have either disappeared or moved about 150 yards southwest.

The third visit. Nest full of cowbird eggs, no warbler eggs to be seen and no sign of the prairie warblers except for the same singing about 150 yards along the ridge and higher. Having still not got a good picture of a singing male, I decided to start all

over with this next territory. I found after several hours that the male preferred a certain maple to sing from although he kept quite busy feeding and declaring his territorial rights from other points. I got all set in a shadow, focussed, measured the light and waited for a shot. Suddenly there was a buzz of wings behind me, looking round I saw a female disappear into a low bush. Leaving the camera, I watched the female working on a new nest again using some caterpillar web, but not wanting to disturb this nest in any way, I came away without a picture of the nest which I hope to get shortly, weather and cowbirds permitting.



Figure 78: Sunlight on Yin/Yang Cedar stump. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 80: Bird on the wing of an American Lady. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 79: Snow Bunting in the fall. (Murray Seymour)



Figure 81: Eastern Screech Owl on Howe Island. (Frances Tackaberry)

Kingston Field Naturalists

Objectives

The Kingston Field Naturalists (KFN) is an active, local club of over 500 members interested in a wide variety of natural history. The objectives of the club are:

- to acquire, record and disseminate knowledge of natural history;
- to stimulate public interest in nature and in the protection and preservation of wildlife and natural habitats; and
- to acquire, receive and hold lands for the purpose of preserving their natural flora and fauna, and to encourage and assist other organizations and individuals to do likewise.

Nature Reserves

The KFN owns properties that are designated as nature reserves.

Helen Quilliam Sanctuary at Otter Lake: A 217 hectare (536 acre) property of mixed forest located in the Canadian Shield in the Township of South Frontenac accessible to members through a trail system..

Martin Edwards Nature Reserve: A 100 hectare (247 acre) property of fields and marshland located on the southeast shore of Amherst Island.

Conservation and Education

The KFN actively supports conservation efforts. Issues such as park creation, wildlife and habitat protection, and environmental welfare are of on-going concern. The club also makes natural history resources and knowledge available to the community through education programs which include field courses, talks, awards and a loan library.

Be a Contributor!

This edition of The Blue Bill could have contained your article, anecdote, fantastic photo, nature sketch, report, puzzle, quiz, conundrum, cartoon, or other contribution.



(If it did, many thanks!)

Email The Blue Bill (editor@thebluebill.ca) for more information.



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