# THE BLUE BILL

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***Celebrating our 50th Anniversary***

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The **Blue Bill** is the Quarterly Bulletin of the Kingston Field Naturalists,
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Send submissions to the Editor by the 15th of the month prior to the publication date (March, June, September, December) to the address above, by fax to (613) 533-2499 to the attention of Sharon David, or by e-mail to davids@psyc.queensu.ca. The editor uses WordPerfect 7, but submissions are accepted in most formats from most programs, IBM or MacIntosh. Please include a printed copy in case of disk error. Photographs, articles, and drawings can be scanned by the editor.

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*The Blue Bill*
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# President's Page

*Paul Mackenzie*

We continue to celebrate the Kingston Field Naturalists' 50th Anniversary. The FON 99 Conference in late May kept many of our members very busy and is now history. We received many compliments from the attendees, and thanks from the FON. The attendance, though slightly lower than predicted, was enough to prevent a deficit. The small profit was split 50/50 with the FON as agreed to in the contract. The many sessions and Provincial Issues Day were educational and stimulating. The exhibit hall was well laid out and full of colourful displays. The Photo salon was another highlight of the event, with a well-deserved award for Linda Baker. The weather co-operated for the many field trips. Thanks once again to the Planning Committee under Laurie Wright and Mike Evans and to all the volunteers who really made the event a success.

In June we had a special breakfast at the Sanctuary which is described on page 89. Those at this event will long recall the taste of those special pancakes.

The September meeting is our 50th Birthday celebration. Bob Stewart will be the speaker and will recall for us the history of the club. At this celebration Bob Stewart will be named Honorary President of the KFN. Our previous Honorary President was Helen Quilliam, and since her death the position has been vacant. The executive is unanimous in recommending that Bob become our Honorary President. He is a founding member and has been an active member ever since. He was president twice, 1954-55 and 1969-71, and has been on many club committees. Whenever issues of significance for conservation arise, Bob has been a stalwart source of information, advice and action. Congratulations to Bob for this well deserved honour!

In this issue you will find that our members have been very active in the field as well. The observations and data on natural history in our area accumulated and published in *Blue Bill* over the years are a tribute to the interest shown by our members, and a valuable resource to anyone seeking such information.

Recently there has been an increase in special donations and bequests to the KFN and also an increase in the number of properties that are being offered for protection locally by private owners. An ad hoc committee chaired by Anne Robertson is looking into how our Habitat Preservation Fund should best be used. Input from members is always welcome. We are discussing with the Nature Conservancy of Canada our role as a naturalist club in monitoring properties in our area for them. As I said at the FON banquet: what is past is prologue. We have a great future and an important responsibility as a club in the next 50 years.

# Kingston Field Naturalists Annual Report 1998-1999

*Paul Mackenzie*

This has been another active year for the Kingston Field Naturalists. The preparations for hosting the Federation of Ontario Naturalists Conference May 28-30 and for celebrating our 50th Birthday have involved the time and effort of many members. Considerable effort was put into responses to the Provincial Government's "Lands for Life" initiative, including a letter-writing campaign led by Bob Stewart and Anne Robertson. The gratifying result is that the current proposal doubles the protected areas to 12.1 % of the areas in question.

During the year 10 regular meetings were held, including the May dinner meeting. Ten executive meetings were held, generally at the homes of executive members.

As the club grows and becomes more complex, the executive has found a need to keep track of more information. Our president Paul Mackenzie compiled job descriptions from each executive member into a document of executive responsibilities. Our recording secretary Rose-Marie Burke prepared minutes of all regular and executive meetings, and developed a resource list of KFN contact persons and organizations. Our membership secretary Alexandra Simmons provided a package of information to each new member and kept the membership list up to date. Our treasurer Larry McCurdy prepared monthly financial statements and the annual budget. He is also preparing a list of KFN possessions. Our vice-president Bud Rowe prepared the Newsletter, the book auction, and has undertaken coordination of our many projects. And our past-president Anne Robertson who coordinates the Junior and Teens programs, and the Rambles, has also done so much networking and problem solving that the president remains in awe. Many other activities of our executive are described under the appropriate headings below.

A revised club logo still using the Greater Scaup as centerpiece has been designed and incorporated into our brochures and displays. Our revised constitution has been printed. Letters of recognition and KFN memberships have been given to Stuart Millar who owns part of the owl woods on Amherst Island, and Ken Bartlett on whose Loughborough Lake property KFN erected an Osprey platform. A contribution of $1000 was provided to help preserve a tract of old forest in Arnprior called Gillies Grove.

**Conservation Committee** *Alan Campeau*

Alan Campeau has been very active this year with the Wetlands Working Group that brings together several interested organizations to preserve and improve wetland habitat. He has been successful in obtaining funds from many donor organizations. The first major project involves habitat improvement in the Little Cataraqui Marsh and adjacent prison farm property.

**Education Committee** *Diane Lawrence*

The Education Committee loans resource materials such as books, teaching kits, slides and videos to area educators on request. With the implementation of the new science curriculum documents by the Ontario Ministry of Education, a working group of KFN members has been formed to review and match the documents with potential "hands-on" resources which can be provided by the KFN. Through numerous talks and walks led by KFN members, school and community groups increase their knowledge and interest in natural history and conservation issues. In April the KFN provided judges and prizes for natural history projects at the Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Regional Science Fair.

**Field Trips Committee** *Kurt Hennige*

A full program of 13 regular field trips was organized this year. In addition for the public there were 9 bird walks in May and 3 in September. The bird "Round-ups" continued in spring (203 species and 64 participants) and fall (125 species and 53 participants). Joel and Marion Ellis again provided their home for hospitality after the Round-ups. Field

Study Trips are a new feature begun by Kurt Hennige in 1999 to provide an opportunity to concentrate on identification of specific bird groups. The first was on hawks and owls on Amherst Island in January, and the second on waterfowl on Wolfe Island in March.

**Rambles** *Anne Robertson*

The mid-week Rambles to notice nature organized by Anne Robertson have been very popular. Ninety people have taken part. Rambles have visited a wide variety of interesting sites. Attendance at the 21 Rambles has varied from 8 to 36 with an average of 18 participants.

**Bird Records Committee** *Ron Weir*

The Bird Records Committee chaired by Ron Weir reviews reports of rare birds and revises the bird checklist every few years. Joel Ellis continues to keep the bird records. The system of using cards for each species each year was developed by Helen Quilliam. In 1998 there were 284 bird species recorded in the Kingston area. The cumulative total is 360 with the addition of Black-necked Stilt in 1998.

**Kingston Junior Naturalists** *Anne Robertson*

This year there were again 80 registered junior members (6-12 years), our limit for numbers. Assistance from Diane Lawrence (since 1981) with running the programme was very much appreciated. The eight other leaders from KFN and Queens Biosciences included Marjorie Bousfield (2 years), Nicole Bellamy, Tracie Donald, Liz Evans, Joanne Little (2 years), Celeste McPhee, Kim Neill and Anya Thompson (3 years). We thank them all for the time and effort put in to making this such a popular programme.

Meetings continue to be held on the second and fourth Thursday evenings each month at McArthur Hall from September to May with field trips usually on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Topics covered this year include Odonata (Damsels and Dragons), Skeletons, Invasive Aliens, Birds of Prey, Gymnosperms, Meteorology, Artiodactyla, Fossils, Pollination, Earth Day activities (this year a mural and postcards to P. M. Chretien urging effective endangered species legislation) and the usual Yuletide Activities, May Bird Walk and Wild Food Picnic. Seven Field Trips were organised. In October we visited Sandbanks Provincial Park and learned some dune ecology with Yvette Bree and then planted Marram Grass to stabilise a dune area. In November we visited Kit Chubb (this was connected to our Birds of Prey meeting). We then went to the Depot Lakes Conservation Area for "Naturalists Notice Nature" games. The January trip was spent learning about tracks and signs at the Hewlitt Packard Property. In February we compared habitats on the Crown land near Joyceville and in March hunted for Fossils on Amherst Island. Our annual roadside cleanup at the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary took place in April together with a wildflower walk. Our final outing was the Bio-blitz where we concentrated on insects of field and stream.

The Stirrett Scholarship was not awarded in 1998. The Annual Roland Beschel Prize for a summer project was won by Matt MacIntyre for a project on Fossils. Our Christmas collection this year raised close to $100.00 which was used to adopt 2 banded birds through Project Recovery, a programme of Bird Studies Canada and Long Point Bird Observatory for documenting changes in migrant bird populations. Our Yellow Warbler is band number 2100.65442 and the Cedar Waxwing is number 1461.38378, both banded in 1998. Thanks to our generous donors.

**Kingston Teen Naturalists** *Anne Robertson*

Twenty-one Teen Naturalists (13 to 16 years) were registered this year – the same number as last year. This continues to be a challenging group ready for lots of fun. Providing resources and resource people to meet their interests is always stimulating. Ten outings took place between September and June.

In September we visited Presqu'ile Provincial Park for a demonstration of Monarch Butterfly tagging with Don Davis (*Blue Bill,* 1998, Vol. 45(4):128). In October we went down to New York State to hunt for Herkimer Diamonds (*Blue Bill,* 1998, Vol. 45(4):127). Floyd Connor taught us about Geographic positioning in November as we

recorded some trails in the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary. We also collected a deer skeleton for use with the Juniors (*Blue Bill*, 1998, Vol 45(4):137). We had a rather wet cross country ski trip in January in the Frontenac Park area (*Blue Bill*, 1999, Vol. 46(1):2) and in February Sharon David did a bird identification workshop for us. George Vance helped us clean out Wood duck nesting boxes in the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary in March and in April John Hanes taught us about the Geology of the Kingston Area. We planted Red Oak Seedlings at Lemoine point in May. Under the supervision of Larry McCurdy we planted 55 trees – a good effort. In June we first helped with the Bio Blitz learning about small mammal trapping with Floyd Connor and then about attracting moths with Gary Ure and Rose Marie Burke. Our final trip of the year was a canoe trip from the cottage of Bud Rowe who also showed us a Heronry and an Osprey nest.

We are proud of Andrew Cirtwill and Philina English who took themselves to Long Point for the Baillie Birdathon in May. They achieved a creditable 133 and 131 species respectively and had a great time. Donations for their efforts may still be made to Baillie Birdathon and sent to Andrew at 515 Roosevelt Dr., Kingston, K7M 5Y2 or Philina at RR#2, Odessa, K0H 2H0. These two teens also helped with the FON Conference Workshop for which we thank them. Andrew has been accepted to work at Presqu'ile Provincial Park as an entry level naturalist this summer. Congratulations Andrew!

Our thanks go to the many people who helped with this programme as drivers and leaders. We couldn't manage without you! Once again Diane Lawrence has been a consistent leader for this group. We all thank her.

**Nature Reserves Committee** *George Vance*

This position requires both mental and physical work, and George Vance gets it done. The provincial government now requires a long-term management plan for eligibility for property tax reductions for protected land. The Committee has now prepared these plans, but as we missed the notice last year, the taxes were higher this year.

Our nature reserves are the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary at Otter Lake north of Sydenham and the KFN property at the eastern end of Amherst Island with habitat improvement by Ducks Unlimited. At the Sanctuary, trail maintenance is done each April. On Amherst Island, a ten-year contract with the drover is under preparation. In April 1999, a new latrine was set up by George Vance on the Amherst property, and a number of new nesting boxes for bluebirds and tree swallows were donated and erected by member Chris Lyons from Port Hope.

KFN also has agreements with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to monitor some other properties in our area. The most recent is a beautiful wooded property near Frontenac Provincial Park recently donated to the Nature Conservancy by Ross Sutherland and Nancy Bayly. As you can see from the financial reports, our Habitat Preservation Fund is now over $9000.

During 1998, Prince Edward Point was recognized by BirdLife International as an "Important Bird Area" (*Blue Bill*, 1998, Vol 45(2):48). This resulted in favorable local publicity. George Vance is an observer on the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory Board under which the current bird-banding program is conducted at the Point.

**Publicity** *Basia Lodzinski*

Publicity for KFN events was provided through newspaper and cable TV. The brochure was revised with the new logo. New KFN displays were developed by Rose-Marie Burke for use at FON 99.

**Phone Info Line** (549-8023) *Bob Sachs*

The phone line was quite active and the message was revised weekly or as needed. Total calls numbered 1705. Of the 216 messages left, many were about birds, others were about membership and some about KGH business. The total cost was $440.00. Calls per week average about 32, and cost about $8.00, or $0.25 per call.

**Web Site** *Sharon David*
http://psyc.queensu.ca/~davids/kfn.html

Here is the address of our KFN web site that was developed and is kept current by Sharon David. It quickly won an award for best nature site. It

provides information about the KFN, and good links to other related sites. A page was also prepared for FON 99.

**Blue Bill** *Sharon David*

Our editor Sharon David continues do to a masterful job with our quarterly. All four issues were full of interest, on time and carefully edited. Each issue was illustrated with a wonderful assortment of illustrations and line drawings, and our new logo now decorates the cover. Thanks to all who contributed. A special thank you to Norma Graham for her continued help in distributing the *Blue Bill* at the monthly meetings, stuffing them into envelopes and getting them mailed off to us all.

**KFN Newsletter** *Bud Rowe*

The executive decided to issue seven Newsletters this year. Bud Rowe prepared these informative pages on his computer, Ron Weir made the copies, and Alexandra Simmons did the mailings. Included are all the announcements and news that can be fitted into the available space, arranged and highlighted as clearly as possible. The idea of including advertising was discussed and rejected by the executive.

**FON Representative and Speakers** *Mike Evans*

Mike Evans as our KFN representative attended the regional meetings of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) in Perth in October and April. He kept the executive informed on provincial matters. He also organized the sale of FON Christmas cards including some stock from the previous year.

**Speakers** *Mike Evans*

Mike Evans was also responsible for selecting the excellent speakers listed below. Outside speakers were invited to dinner and each speaker was introduced and thanked at the meeting.

May: dinner meeting: *Peter Trueman* on Canadian Parks
Sept.: *Stephan Fuller* on FON History
Oct.: *John and Mary Theberge* on Wolves of Algonquin Park
Nov.: *Bob Lemon* on American Redstarts
Dec.: members night
Jan.: *Todd Norris* on Habitat Fragmentation
Feb.: *Martin Damus* on the Evolution of Honeybees
March: *Martin Edwards* on East Africa
April: *Linda Baker* on Creative Photography

**Projects** *Bud Rowe*

Bud Rowe agreed to act as coordinator for the many projects involving KFN participatants. His KFN Birthday project is a videotape of birds of the Kingston area, bringing together shots from other members along with many of his own. The first tape was shown at FON 99. He is also revising the maps provided to new members. Bud also took charge of the book auction at the May dinner that raised over $700 for our Habitat Preservation Fund.

KFN members are involved with many field observation activities. Jessie Deslauriers accepted calls from feeder watchers for the Christmas census, and for the Great Backyard Bird Count in winter. Surveys were made of waterfowl and Bald Eagles in January, Red-shouldered Hawks, Woodcocks and Loons in April, Cerulean Warblers and Black Terns in June. Breeding Bird Surveys in June were continued on established routes by Peter Good, Ron Weir and Joel Ellis. Zoe Finkle and Gary Ure were involved with marsh monitoring and amphibian surveys. Nest boxes were provided for Wood Ducks, Bluebirds, and a Screech Owl. A new Osprey platform was erected in March 1999 on Loughborough Lake.

Chris Grooms continued monitoring Loggerhead Shrikes. He won FON best picture award for his Shrike photo (published in *Seasons* and shown on members' night).

Anne Robertson was a prime mover for Kingston's first Bio-blitz in June 1998 with support from KFN, the Wetlands Working Group and the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (*Blue Bill*, 1998, Vol. 45(3):89). She also organized a raffle for paintings that were donated by a club member. The Sanctuary trails have been mapped by GPS and a more accurate map will be produced from this data.

**FON 99** *Laurie Wright/Mike Evans*

The Committee organizing this event met regularly all year. Chairpersons are Laurie Wright and Mike Evans. Other members included:

| | |
|---|---|
| Marion Watkins: | secretary, registration desk |
| Diane Lawrence: | brochure, workshops, liaison with Queens |
| Anne Robertson: | coordinating volunteers, social activities |
| Bud Rowe: | finances |
| Martin Edwards: | photo contest |
| Ron Weir: | field trips |
| Sharon David: | Blue Bill issue |
| Bob Stewart: | speakers |
| Mike Evans: | registration |

There were many other volunteers, including Keith Chapman for exhibits. Thank you to all who helped make FON 99 memorable.

## Presidents of the Kingston Field Naturalists

*Ron Weir*

| Year | Name |
|---|---|
| 1998-2000 | Paul Mackenzie |
| 1996-1998 | Anne Robertson |
| 1993-1996 | Bill Cutfield |
| 1992-1993 | Tony Empey |
| 1990-1992 | George Vance |
| 1988-1990 | Diane Lawrence |
| 1986-1988 | Ron Black |
| 1984-1986 | Joel Ellis |
| 1982-1984 | Laurie Wright |
| 1980-1982 | Ron Wypkema |
| 1978-1980 | Faith Avis |
| 1976-1978 | Mike Evans |
| 1975-1976 | Fred Cooke |
| 1973-1975 | Ron Weir |
| 1971-1973 | Pip Nation |
| 1969-1971 | Bob Stewart |
| 1967-1969 | Fred Cooke |
| 1965-1967 | Jim McCowan |
| 1964-1965 | Gilbert Hill |
| 1962-1964 | Helen Quilliam |
| 1961-1962 | Lew Lowther |
| 1960-1961 | Ann Hutchinson |
| 1959-1960 | Walter Lamb |
| 1958-1959 | Al Warren |
| 1956-1958 | Martin Edwards |
| 1955-1956 | Alden Strong |
| 1954-1955 | Bob Stewart |
| 1953-1954 | Ken Edwards |
| 1952-1953 | Art Hyde |
| 1951-1952 | Art Bell |
| 1949-1951 | George Stirrett |

In completing the special FON99 (June 1999) issue of *Blue Bill* the editor omitted a few important things, and wishes to bring them to your attention and to apologize for their omission. Faith Avis was invaluable in her help as co-Editor and helped solicit articles from people and see that they were received by me on time. Thanks!!

Many photographs that adorned that issue were provided by KFN members Rose-Marie Burke, Bob Stewart, Anne Robertson, Chris Grooms and Ron Weir. I hope that I have not forgotten anyone else and apologize if I have!

# FON Conference – Protected Areas

*Pat Scott*

The speakers at the annual FON Conference provided much food for thought. The following is a partial report on some of the more salient.

Several addressed regional issues. Leo Durocher told us how Alfred Bog, which was originally 20,000 acres, has been reduced to 9,000 which have been classified as Class 1 Wetlands. Although the Nature Conservancy purchased 4,000 acres in 1982, dozens of small peat harvesters are digging away at the perimeter. Most of that peat is shipped to Quebec where peat harvesting is strictly regulated. In Ontario, there are no regulations as peat is not covered under either mining or agriculture.

While the diggers promise to restore the site by flooding it and planting it with cattails, it would take at least 10,000 years to recover. Both financial help, as well as legislation is required to save the bog.

Stan Rosenbaum spoke of threats to ecologically sensitive areas around Ottawa. The unique ecologies of Petrie Island in the east and Shirley's Bay in the west will be endangered if the Region goes ahead with its plans to build bridges there. Seven hundred acres of wetlands in Leitrim are threatened by a housing development.

***Presqu'ile Provincial Park***

Doug McRae gave an emotional account of the misinformation campaign being conducted by hunters and anglers in Brighton. They, with the help of the local media, have misrepresented the intentions of the agreement.

For example, the Management Plan says fires (ie: forest fires) will be suppressed. That has been misrepresented to mean that camp fires will not be allowed. Intimidation techniques are being used and naturalists are being threatened. A petition against the Plan was signed by over 2000 people, the town council voted against an ecotourism event even though it would be worth approximately $10 million a year to the area, store owners are displaying "Stranger Go Home" signs in their windows, vigilantes threaten to exterminate the birds particularly Cormorants, Blue Herons, and other fish eating birds. Bags of dead birds have been left on some lawns. The Premier and the Minister are derailing the process. If the province backs down in the face of opposition, it will set a dangerous precedent. Should our parks be governed by locals; should the people of Whitney be allowed to dictate policy in Algonquin or the people of Atikokan manage Quetico?

It was suggested that anyone interested in birding or visiting in the area phone or write the Brighton Town Council and/or the Chamber of Commerce (Janet Sanos, K0K 1H0) to ask for the names of birder-friendly businesses.

Also from Brighton – It seems that the Dombind issue has not been resolved. Christine Greasley spoke of the intimidation tactics utilized by Norampac to force the local townships to petition **FOR** its continued use. The argument has been made that local governments should use local products or risk losing the industry. Environmentalists are being threatened (more Dombind information on page 75).

Eva Ligeti, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, was the luncheon speaker on Provincial Issues Day. She remarked that not only must we struggle for the basics – clean air and water, freedom from toxic substances – but now there were new harms such as ozone depletion, climate change, and endocrine disruptors. Ms. Ligeti argues that the chief threats to the environment are excessive use of automobiles and urban sprawl. Government should protect agriculture with high development charges. The government has narrowed its role, moving away from environmental protection and does not uphold its values or commitments. Ontario has weakened the energy efficiency building code and phased out funding for public transit (the Minister has stated that people are too reliant on public transit). There have been such massive cuts in MNR, MOE and Transport that the remaining employees are unable to fulfil their mandates and have become demoralised. They have downloaded responsibilities to municipalities

without any regulations or monitoring. (The consequences of this can be gleaned from the previous 2 items).

There have been some successes with the EBR. The citizens of the Algoma Highlands reported that the forest industry was not complying with regulations and after a MNR investigation, the company was fined.

***Keynote Speaker: Jim Thorsell, Senior Advisor, Natural Heritage IUCN***

Jim Thorsell outlined the criteria for listing sites on the World Heritage List which includes both natural and historical sites. About 6 million square kilometres of land (an area about 6 times the size of Ontario) have been designated as UNESCO Parks and Reserves and 15 are World Heritage Endangered Sites. This designation does not preclude human activity or ensure protection of the sites which may be threatened by civil unrest (eg: Rwanda), poaching, mining (eg: Irian Jaya, Indonesia), draining of wetlands (eg: the Everglades), introduced species and development and an increase in tourism.

What must be done:

- to define Nature's last lines of defence,
- to strengthen stewardship of the sites,
- to fund poorer countries to enable them to manage their sites.

John Lounds, Nature Conservancy of Ontario, the Plenary Speaker, echoed Jim Thorsell's observation on the need for more funding. He told how they endeavoured to get "the most bang for the buck" (ironic choice of wording) by forming alliances with such groups as WWF and Ducks Unlimited.

The next FON Conference will be held May 26-28, 2000 at Wye Marsh Conservation Centre in Midland. Guests will include Mary and John Theberge speaking on the Algonquin Wolf Project and Terrence Dickinson, Canada's leading astronomer. There will be a pow wow and a visit to Ste. Marie Among the Hurons.

[Reprinted from *The Wannigan Quarterly*, 1999, 1(2): 5-6]

## New Parks to be Opened to Hunters, Mineral Exploration

Ontario is preparing to expand hunting by allowing the sport in each of the province's 378 new parks. And, although technically the parks are supposed to be protected, mineral exploration will soon be permitted within their confines, a practice that is currently outlawed. Government officials say they are simply honouring an agreement made with hunting enthusiasts and mining companies to keep huge swaths of Ontario Crown land flexible and economically viable. The new parks are to be scattered through Crown land from Peterborough in the south to James Bay in the north. The expansion comes after 2 years of public consultations through *Lands for Life*. Currently, hunting is allowed in half of Ontario's existing 220 parks. The ministry decides which parks will be open to hunters after consulting local environmentalists, anglers and hunters. That process will continue in the existing parks. But soon, hunting will be allowed without consultation in each of the almost 400 new parks opening in Ontario. As for the decision to allow mineral exploration in all parks and protected areas, the law of averages would suggest few actual mine sites will result. [What about] the definition of protected land – areas where hydro-electric development, forestry and mining are not supposed to be allowed?

[Extracted from an article in the *Globe and Mail*, July 23, 1999]

# No End in Sight for Toxic Dust Suppressant – Dombind

*Sierra Legal Defence Fund*

***Ministry order meant to end Dombind use within 2 years fails to do so – and sets no limits on highly toxic dioxin***

May 27, 1999: Naturalists, cottagers and residents of eastern Ontario are seeking to appeal an order of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) that permits the Norampac Inc. cardboard mill in Trenton to continue the use of its toxic waste as the dust suppressant known as Dombind. The order has no deadline for ending Dombind use, despite environment minister Norm Sterling's public commitment to get it off the roads within 2 years.

The Sierra Legal Defence Fund (SLDF) has filed the application with the Environment Appeal Board on behalf of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, the Federation of Ontario Cottager's Associations, Quinte Watershed Cleanup and seven residents of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties. The order, issued to Norampac, Inc. on April 29, was supposed to impose strict controls on the composition and use of Dombind during the 2-year period during which the company was to develop alternative means of handling this waste. But not only does the order fail to end the use of Dombind within 2 years, it is also silent on the allowable limits of the many toxic compounds known to be in it, including the most toxic substance known – dioxins. The community and environmental groups and individuals are entitled to seek permission to appeal the order under the *Environmental Bill of Rights*.

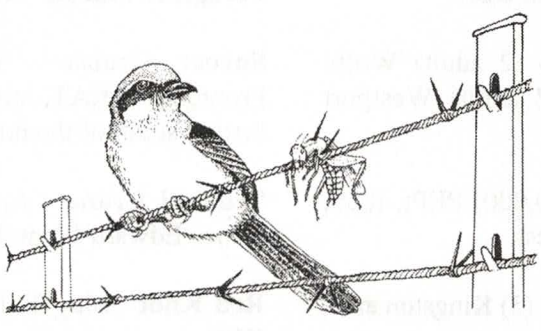
"This order falls utterly to uphold the public commitment of the minister, and to protect the people and wildlife in rural areas from the toxins contained in Dombind," said Elizabeth Christie, the SLDF lawyer handling the case. "These community and environmental groups and individuals are asking the Environment Appeal Board to give them a chance to appeal the order to ensure an end to Dombind use within 2 years, and to ensure adequate protection of the environment in the meantime.

Among the grounds for the appeal set out in the 40-page application are that:

- The order fails to set any limit on the dioxin content of Dombind. The international scientific community, the Government of Canada and even the Ontario Government have all agreed that *no detectable amount* of dioxin should be discharged into the environment.
- The order allows the use of Dombind without a certificate of approval from the MOE – permission that is beyond the authority of ministry staff.
- The order fails to ensure proper training of the people applying Dombind and adequate enforcement of application guidelines.

"If the minister really wants Dombind off the roads, he is going to have to give clear instructions to the company," said Ric Symmes, executive director of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. "This order contains no such clear instructions."

The Ministry of the Environment has ten days to respond to the application and the Environmental Appeal Board can issue a decision in as few as 30 days. If the appeal is permitted, the applicants will have an opportunity to appear before the Board to explain exactly how the order should be changed and why. While recognizing the need for dust suppressants for unpaved roads in Ontario, the applicants will stress that there are alternatives to Dombind that have far fewer environmental and health impacts.



*The Endangered Loggerhead Shrike is one species affected by Dombind use.*

[See previous *Blue Bill* articles on Dombind in March (1999) Vol 46(1):2 and September (1998) Vol 45(3):100-103]

# Spring Season: 1 March - 31 May 1999

*Ron D. Weir*

Spring 1999 was marked by very dry and warmer than normal conditions. The results of this gentle weather for the songbirds were fewer groundings and more overflights with a number of the first arrivals singing on territory north of Kingston before they were first recorded at our traditional migration lookouts. The waterfowl passage was more dispersed as the ice disappeared early thereby leaving lots of selection of habitat for their return.

Rarities during the period included Red-throated Loon, Great Cormorant, Ferruginous Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Acadian Flycatcher, White-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Yellow-throated Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

**Record Early Arrival**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Nighthawk | May 2 (1) | Kingston | JHE, RDW | 1977 May 2 |

**Record Late Departure**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Snow Goose | May 23 (2) | Kingston | KFN | 1978 May 20 |

**Species Accounts:**

**Red-throated Loon** - May 22 (2) Amherst Island, VPM *et al.*

**Horned Grebe** - peaks April 23 (35), 25 (50) Prince Edward Point, KFN.

**Red-necked Grebe** - April 9 to May 8, peaks April 23 (60), 25 (25) Prince Edward Point, KFN.

**Great Cormorant** - April 25 (1) PEPt, RDW.

**Great Egret** - April 21 (1) Kingston, E Batella, April 26 (1) Prince Edward Point, RBS.

**Trumpeter Swan** - March 24 (2 adult) Wolfe Island, JHE, MTE; April 1 (2 adult) Westport Leeds, JHE, BM.

**Oldsquaw** - peak April 30 (120,000) PEPt, RBS, migrating birds heading northwest.

**Bald Eagle** - March 20 to May 1 (5) Kingston area, KFN.

**Red-shouldered Hawk** - April 18 (25!) Kingston, JHE, RDW. One of the breeding survey routes.

**Ferruginous Hawk** - March 14 (1) Amherst Island, N. Murr, S. Bajurny; April 3 to May 21 (1 im) PEPt, JHE, RDW *et al.* This is probably the same bird and is the first for the Kingston area.

**Rough-legged Hawk** - peak number of passage birds March 30 (30) Wolfe Island, KFN.

**Merlin** - March 15 (1), April 15 (1), May 23 (1) Kingston, KFN.

**Peregrine Falcon** - April 30 (1) PEPt, RBS.

**Spruce Grouse** - March 21 (1) Tamworth Frontenac S&AT, noteworthy for its extension further south of the normal range.

**Sandhill Crane** - April 5 to May 31 (5 in all) Prince Edward Point, Kingston, KFN.

**Red Knot** - May 27 (2), 30 (15) Amherst Island, KFN.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** - May 8 (1) Amherst Island, JHE, RDW.

**Little Gull** - April 18 (3) Amherst Island, VPM, BR, KH; April 23 (4) PEPt, RKE, KFE, MCE.

**Bonaparte's Gull** - peak April 18 (2500) Amherst Island, KH, BR, VPM.

**Iceland Gull** - last one March 24 (1) Amherst Island, RKE, KFE, MCE.

**Forster's Tern** - April 9-10 (1) Kingston, RKE, MCE, KFE.

**Barred Owl** - April 10 (9), 24 (18!) Canoe Lake Road, C Grooms.

**Ruby-throated Hummingbird** - peak May 22 (100) Prince Edward Point, RKE, KFE.

**Red-headed Woodpecker** - May 15 (1) Adolphustown, EE, MJE, and 7 others.

**Acadian Flycatcher** - May 23 (1 male) PEPt, KFN.

**Brown Creeper** - migrants March 31 to May 8; peaks April 3 (40), 15 (30) PEPt, KFN.

**Carolina Wren** - April 7 (1), May 22 (1) Prince Edward Point, May 8 (1) Amherst Island, May 15-31 (2) Kingston, KFN.

**Golden-crowned Kinglet** - peaks April 23 (2000), 3 (500) Prince Edward Point, KFN.

**Bohemian Waxwing** - last ones March 7 (50), 14 (70) Kingston, S&AT.

**White-eyed Vireo** - May 4 (1) Prince Edward Point, KFE, RKE, MCE.

**Blue-winged Warbler** - May 3 (1), 16 (1), 22 (1), 23 (2) Prince Edward Point, KFN

**Yellow-rumped Warbler** - peaks May 7 (2000), 10 (500) Prince Edward Point, KFN.

**Black-throated Gray Warbler** - May 12 (1) PEPt, D&L Williston, 1st ever.

**Yellow-throated Warbler** - May 10 (1) Prince Edward Point, HK, JJ, LP, DR.

**Prairie Warbler** - May 8 (1) onwards, Opinicon Lake Road, VPM.

**Hooded Warbler** - May 10-22 (4 in all) Prince Edward Point, KFN.

**Yellow-breasted Chat** - May 7 (1) Prince Edward Point, KFE, RKE, MCE.

**Clay-coloured Sparrow** - May 22/23 (8) Spring Roundup, KFN, high number.

**Grasshopper sparrow** - May 22/23 (29) Spring Roundup, KFN, high number.

**Fox Sparrow** - May 23 (1) PEPt, HM, late.

**Snow Bunting** - last birds March 21 (2000) Syndenham S&AT, 28 (2) Wolfe I., JHE, RDW.

**Western Meadowlark** - April 30 (1) Amherst Island, RKE.

**Orchard Oriole** - May 10-31 (14 in all) PEPt, KFN, higher number than is usual, also a nest PEPt.

**Contributors:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| K.F. Edwards | M.C. Edwards | R.K. Edwards |
| J.H. Ellis | M.T. Ellis | E. Evans |
| M.J. Evans | K. Hennige | J. Joe |
| H. Kelly | Kingston Field Naturalists (3+) | |
| V.P. Mackenzie | B. Maybank | H. Mouritsen |
| L. Paul | D. Reavey | B. Rowe |
| R.B. Stewart | S. & A. Treganza | |
| R.D. Weir | | |

# Presqu'ile Provincial Park's Waterfowl Weekends

*Philina English*

Andrew Cirtwill and I went to Presqu'ile Provincial Park to help with their Waterfowl Weekends March 27-28 and April 2-4. It was great to be 'behind the scenes' in a park like that. When we first got there on Friday night, Phil, (a staff member) took us out and we played tapes for Owls but didn't find any. We also used a scope to look at some stars. Afterwards, we helped with lettering and signs for the kids "Magical Migration Tour" until about midnight.

The next morning we went around and checked out what ducks were at each of the viewing stations before going to the main office for briefing. Andrew and I were sent to the "Calf Pasture Duck Truck" where we spent the day showing people the different kinds of ducks. It was really neat to be able to show people the beautiful ducks, and now I think I'm pretty good at identifying ducks. After supper that night we chased after the Woodcocks. They were everywhere displaying but although we could hear them really close we never saw any because it was dark. The chorus frogs had started singing and we heard a few.

Sunday morning we went for a walk in an area of forested sand dunes. It was like a boreal forest on the dunes and parts of it were really pretty. Afterwards we spent the day looking at ducks again.

**April 2-4:**

I had another fun and exhausting weekend. Andrew and I went down Friday morning and were stationed all day at the lighthouse. The wind was bitterly cold and I froze all day, even though I was wearing three coats. The ducks were way out and few and far between. To make things worse the little black dots, ducks, would vanish behind every in-coming wave and regularly dive out of sight. If we stood outside the blind, in the wind, we could pick out some distant Buffleheads and at times I had 3 Red-breasted Mergansers and some Common Goldeneye. Once in a while some Oldsquaw would fly by but they rarely stuck around. It was almost pointless to try to show the people anything, so we sent most of them on to the other blinds where ducks were much more plentiful. At lunch time two other volunteer's brought us lunch and stayed for the afternoon. Matt, a friend from Long Point, brought new enthusiasm to the cold and helped us spot three White-winged Scoters, a Common Loon, and a flock of 11 beautiful Tundra Swans on a fly-by. At four o'clock sharp, we headed for the staff house to warm up.

At about 8:30pm, after we'd warmed up and had supper, Matt suggested we go for a walk. So the 5 of us high school aged people went out and started walking. We tried calling for owls but didn't have any success. We walked from the Staff house to just past beach #3 and back, as well as taking a side trip out on to beach #4, a distance of about 15km. We watched a beaver cross the road and head into the woods and when we got back there were 2 raccoons in a cedar tree in front of the Staff house. We heard Chorus Frogs, Spring Peepers, and another kind of frog that we couldn't identify. We didn't hear any Woodcocks which was the reason for the walk in the first place. About half way back we met Don Tireman on his way home and he offered to give us a ride back but we decided to keep walking. By the time we got back at 11:00pm our feet and legs were killing us but it was well worth it.

We went to sleep at around 3am and were up at 7 to go birding. We walked along a paved path just across from the staff house and then went off on one of the ski trails. We saw a lot of Kinglets, heard a possible Winter Wren, and saw about 5 deer. When we got back we grabbed a quick snack / breakfast and then went to the Fingers with Phil. He led us along the dunes and through the bush. The deer tracks were everywhere. We saw some good birds including a Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Caspian Tern.

This time we were sent to Calf Pasture and the ducks there were really good. The best sighting was a female Ruddy Duck that Matt found and 3 Snow Geese that flew over. Andrew had to leave around 4 and we were supposed to meet Don and a bunch of other people and go look for ducks in

some local fields. Don was late but finally we all got going. We saw some ducks and got a few more birds for Matt's list... he was aiming for 70 species but we only made it to 59.

We checked out the beach and the Camp Office Blind on the way back so we were late. It was the night of the volunteer party and the theme was trees. We had a big pancake supper and did a maple syrup taste testing contest and played tree charades. Our team, the fledglings, lost so we got stuck doing the dishes. We didn't sleep till after 2 am (the new time).

The alarm went off at 6:45am but I jumped off my bed, still in my sleeping bag, and hit snooze – we finally got up a little after 7. We ate a really quick breakfast then went out with a bunch of other volunteers and checked out the beach and the blinds. It was bitter cold!! We froze but didn't see much. Matt and I were at the Camp Office Duck Blind. There were Green-winged Teal, Pied-billed Grebe, Harrier, and Caspian Tern. Today, we got lunch on time and then later I got a ride back home with Bob Sachs and Faith Avis.

**Species seen and/or heard on the Waterfowl Weekends:**

| Species | March 27-28 | Apr. 2 | Apr. 3 | Apr. 4 | Species | March 27-28 | Apr. 2 | Apr. 3 | Apr. 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Common Loon | 1 | 1 | √ | | Common Merganser | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Pied-billed Grebe | 2 | 2 | √ | √ | Red-br. Merganser | | √ | | |
| Horned Grebe | 1 | | | | Ruddy Duck | | | 1 | |
| Double-c. Cormorant | √ | | √ | √ | Northern Harrier | √ | | 2 | 1 |
| Great Blue Heron | | | >8 | √ | Sharp-sh. Hawk | | | 1 | |
| Mute Swan | 1 | √ | √ | √ | American Kestrel | | | √* | 1 |
| Tundra Swan | | 11 | 1 | >7 | American Coot | | √ | √ | √ |
| Snow Goose | 1 | | 3 | | Killdeer | | | 2 | |
| Canada Goose | √ | √ | √ | √ | Woodcock | √ | | | |
| Wood Duck | | | 3 | | Ring-billed Gull | | | √ | |
| Green-winged Teal | | √ | | >1 | Herring Gull | | | √ | √ |
| Am. Black Duck | √ | √ | √ | √ | Great-bl. Back. Gull | | | √ | |
| Mallard | √ | √ | √ | √ | Gull Species | √ | | | |
| Northern Pintail | √ | | √* | 2 | Caspian Tern | | | 1 | 4 |
| Northern Shoveler | | 2 | 7 | | Tern Species | | | >10 | |
| Gadwall | √ | | | | Yellow-b. Sapsucker | | | | 1 |
| American Wigeon | √ | √ | | √ | Downy Woodpecker | | | 2 | |
| Canvasback | √ | | √ | √ | Hairy Woodpecker | | | 1 | √ |
| Redhead | √ | √ | √ | | Northern Flicker | | | | 1 |
| Ring-necked Duck | √ | √ | | √ | Rock Dove | | | √* | |
| Greater Scaup | √ | √ | √ | | Mourning Dove | √ | | √ | √ |
| Lesser Scaup | √ | √ | √ | | Eastern Phoebe | | | √ | √ |
| Oldsquaw | √ | √ | √ | | Tree Swallow | | | >15 | 1 |
| White-winged Scoter | | 3 | | | Blue Jay | √ | | √ | |
| Common Goldeneye | √ | √ | √ | | American Crow | √ | | √ | √ |
| Bufflehead | √ | √ | √ | √ | Black-c. Chickadee | √ | | √ | √ |
| Hooded Merganser | √ | √ | √ | | Red-br. Nuthatch | √ | | | |

**Species seen and/or heard on the Waterfowl Weekends continued:**

| Species | March 27-28 | Apr. 2 | Apr. 3 | Apr. 4 | Species | March 27-28 | Apr. 2 | Apr. 3 | Apr. 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| White-br. Nuthatch | | | 1 | 1 | E. Meadowlark | √ | | 5 | 1 |
| Winter Wren | | | 1 | | Red-w. Blackbird | √ | | √ | √ |
| Golden-cr. Kinglet | | | √ | | Common Grackle | | | √ | √ |
| American Robin | | | √ | √ | Brown-h. Cowbird | | | √ | |
| Cedar Waxwing | | | >12* | | Purple Finch | | | | 1 |
| Northern Shrike | √ | | | | House Finch | | | √ | |
| European Starling | | | √ | | Am. Goldfinch | √ | | √ | |
| Northern Cardinal | √ | | √ | √ | House Sparrow | | | √* | |
| Song Sparrow | √ | | √ | √ | Species Total/Date | 36 | 22 | 61 | |
| Dark-eyed Junco | | | √ | | **Species Total = 65** | | | | |

## Great Horned Owl Nesting in a Cormorant Colony

*Chip Weseloh and Jamie Reid*

On 14 May 1998, we visited West Brothers Island and, among the tree nesting cormorants, we found a Great Horned Owl nest in a large willow tree at the west end of the island. It was occupied by an adult and two young owls; the adult flushed and the two young were plainly visible from our boat 75m from the island. We visited the island again on 18 June to census the cormorant nests and again observed an adult and two young Great Horned Owls on the ground and in the low shrubs/trees at the east end of the island. All three birds flew off to the west end of the island on our approach.

Great Horned Owls seldom build their own nests – they usually usurp an old crow or hawk nest. It is probably somewhat unusual for them, however, to use a nest within a bird colony where many other nests exist. Owls nest early – adults are usually incubating eggs by February or March. In this case, the cormorants do not return to the Kingston area until late March-early April, so the owl would have had ample opportunity to establish itself at this nest before the rightful occupants would have returned. In her most recent newsletter, Kit Chubb (via Marge Vanderwerf) describes a Great Horned Owl that had usurped a Great Blue Heron nest within an active heron colony (Notes & Anecdotes, Spring-Summer 1998, p. 4 and also see this issue page 97).

By way of interest, on 14 May we counted 9 Herring Gull nests and 9 Black-crowned Night-Heron (BCNH) nests throughout the island, including the small, slightly isolated island at the very west end of West Brothers Island; all the nests contained eggs. On 18 June we tallied 177 cormorant nests, all in trees, and observed at least 16 adult BCNHs. At least 2 BCNH nests had young.

Our first record of Double-crested Cormorants nesting on West Brothers Island occurred in 1993 when we tallied 156 nests. That is a large number of nests for a first year colony, so we suspect they may have first nested there in 1992 or earlier. They have nested there each year since then and we have recorded the following number of nests: 1994 - 135, 1995 -114, 1996 - 136 and 1997 - 158. Since 1993, the number of cormorant nests on the 18 Lake Ontario cormorant colonies has increased from 10,508 to 18,831 in 1998 (CWS, unpublished data).

# Spring Round-up 1999

*Ron D. Weir*

The KFN's 42nd Spring Round-up took place from 1500h Saturday 22 May 1999 to 1500h Sunday 23 May 1999. Weather conditions were partly cloudy Saturday afternoon without wind and 22°C. Sunday was mostly cloudy and moderate NE winds developed just around 0100h, which remained steady all day with dry conditions at 24°C.

The final tally of species was 209, above the 26 year (1973-1998) average of 200. Areas visited included Amherst Island, Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, Camden East, Camden Lake, Canoe Lake Road and surrounding areas, Collins Bay and Creek, Gould Lake, Hay Bay areas, Kingston City areas (to include Abbey Dawn, Belle I., Squaw Point, Lemoines Point, Little Cataraqui Creek), Jones Falls, Morton, Newburgh, Opinicon Road, Perch River, Perth Road, Prince Edward Point, Wellesley I., Sydenham area, and Wilton Creek.

No new species were added to the cumulative total that stands at 279 species. For a complete tally of the Spring Round-ups from 1960-1991, see *Blue Bill* 39:28-36 (1992), For 1992 to 1997, see *Blue Bill* 39:44-49 (1992), 40:125-131 (1993), 41:48-53 (1994), 42:63-70 (1995), 43:70-74 (1996) and 44: 60-66 (1997), 45:49-54 (1998) respectively.

Species unique to a party include the following:

Party #1 - Hooded Warbler;

Party #2 - Trumpeter Swan;

Party #4 - Horned Grebe;

Party #5 - Merlin, Brown Creeper;

Party #6 - Red-throated Loon, Snow Goose;

Party #7 - Black Scoter, Carolina Wren;

Party #8 - Common Goldeneye, Northern Goshawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Rusty Blackbird, Pine Siskin;

Party #9 - Cooper's Hawk;

Party #12 - Bufflehead, Glaucous Gull, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Sedge Wren, Orange-crowned Warbler, Palm Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Fox Sparrow.

Other noteworthy statistics for the 42nd Round-up include the 14th Orchard Oriole and 16th Hooded Warbler on a spring Round-up.

Participants were invited to the home of Marian and Joel Ellis for the potluck supper and the species tabulation. Thanks are due to Marian and Joel for being such kind hosts.

Party #1 Miscellaneous: Eric Machell and 4 banders at Prince Edward Point.

Party #2 Marg Hendrick, Winnie Smith, Dave Williston, and Lillian Williston.

Party #3 Lynn Bell, Joe Percy.

Party #4 Alex and Janet Scott.

Party #5 Alexandra Batalla, Erwin Batalla.

Party #6 Barb Frewin, Rob Frewin, Ken Kingdon, Paul Mackenzie, Shirley Paul, Gerald Paul.

Party #7 Ken, Kenneth, Mary Edwards.

Party #8 Kurt Hennige, Jean Jeffrey, Bud Rowe, Bob Sachs.

Party #9 John McLaughlin, Sean McLaughlin.

Party #10 Shirley Treganza, Al Treganza.

Party #11 Elizabeth Evans, Mike Evans.

Party #12 Martin Edwards, Joel Ellis, Peter Good, Jay McMahon, Henrik Mouritsen, Ron Weir

The Art Bell Trophy was won by Party #12 for the highest species total of 166. This award was inaugurated in 1992 to commemorate the memory of Art Bell, who was a life-long member of the KFN and a keen participant in the Spring and Fall Round-ups since their inception. The Purple Vulture Award, that very ugly papier maché model representing no living creature currently on this earth, was won by the runner up party #8 with its 146 species.

The totals in the following table have had known duplications removed so that the total individuals for a species may not equal the sum of the contributions from each party.

| SPECIES | PARTY NUMBERS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | TOT |
| Red-throated Loon | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Common Loon | x | 3 | x | x | x | 7 | 6 | 3 | x | 5 | x | 31 | 55 |
| Pied-billed Grebe | - | 7 | - | x | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 12 |
| Horned Grebe | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Double-crested Cormorant | x | 12 | x | x | x | 2000 | x | 200 | x | 104 | x | 2000 | 4000 |
| American Bittern | - | 3 | x | x | x | 2 | 2 | 4 | x | - | - | 5 | 20 |
| Least Bittern | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | x | - | - | - | 2 |
| Great Blue Heron | x | 24 | x | x | x | 40 | 4 | 4 | x | 18 | x | 15 | 105 |
| Green Heron | - | - | x | - | x | 3 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 9 |
| Black-cr. Night Heron | - | - | - | x | x | - | - | 7 | - | - | - | - | 9 |
| Mute Swan | - | 11 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| Trumpeter Swan | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Snow Goose | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Brant | - | - | x | x | - | 25 | 100 | 75 | - | 9 | - | 535 | 750 |
| Canada Goose | x | 62 | x | x | x | 60 | x | 20 | x | 101 | x | 350 | 600 |
| Wood Duck | - | 12 | x | x | x | 4 | 3 | 1 | - | - | x | 9 | 33 |
| Green-winged Teal | - | - | - | x | x | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 10 |
| American Black Duck | - | - | x | - | - | - | 2 | 2 | - | 8 | - | 3 | 16 |
| Mallard | x | 18 | x | x | x | 30 | x | 10 | x | 62 | - | 125 | 250 |
| Northern Pintail | - | - | - | x | x | 2 | 2 | 2 | - | 4 | - | 10 | 22 |
| Blue-winged Teal | - | 2 | x | - | x | 4 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | - | 4 | 16 |
| Northern Shoveler | - | - | x | x | x | 6 | 3 | 10 | - | 3 | - | 14 | 39 |
| Gadwall | x | 20 | x | x | x | 20 | x | 4 | x | 8 | - | 30 | 90 |
| American Wigeon | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | x | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Canvasback | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Greater Scaup | - | - | x | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Lesser Scaup | - | - | - | x | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 8 |
| Oldsquaw | x | - | x | - | - | 4 | 30 | 8 | - | - | - | - | 44 |
| Black Scoter | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Surf Scoter | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| White-winged Scoter | - | - | - | - | - | 800 | 75 | 10 | x | - | - | 100 | 985 |
| Common Goldeneye | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Bufflehead | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 |
| Hooded Merganser | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| Common Merganser | - | - | x | x | - | - | 6 | 3 | - | 1 | x | 4 | 17 |
| Red-breasted Merganser | x | - | - | - | - | 6 | 100 | 8 | x | - | - | 40 | 160 |
| Turkey Vulture | x | 12 | x | 1 | x | 12 | 3 | x | x | 36 | x | 15 | 85 |
| Osprey | - | 8 | x | 2 | - | 3 | 2 | 2 | x | 3 | - | - | 22 |
| Northern Harrier | - | 1 | x | x | x | 3 | - | 1 | x | - | - | 6 | 15 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 4 |
| Cooper's Hawk | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 |
| Northern Goshawk | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |

| SPECIES | PARTY NUMBERS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | TOT |
| Red-shouldered Hawk | - | 4 | x | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 7 |
| Broad-winged Hawk | - | 1 | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Red-tailed Hawk | x | 3 | x | x | x | 5 | 1 | 2 | x | 2 | x | 6 | 25 |
| American Kestrel | - | - | x | x | - | 1 | - | 1 | x | 1 | x | 2 | 10 |
| Merlin | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Ring-necked Pheasant | - | - | x | x | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 5 |
| Ruffed Grouse | x | 3 | x | - | x | 3 | 1 | 1 | x | 2 | - | 1 | 15 |
| Wild Turkey | - | - | - | - | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | 5 |
| Virginia Rail | - | 1 | x | x | x | 3 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 6 | 15 |
| Sora | - | - | - | x | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | 6 |
| Common Moorhen | - | 8 | - | x | x | 3 | 1 | x | - | - | - | 7 | 22 |
| Black-bellied Plover | - | - | - | x | 3 | 1 | 1 | - | x | 1 | - | 3 | 11 |
| Semipalmated Plover | - | - | x | x | 3 | 7 | 4 | 4 | x | 4 | - | 12 | 37 |
| Killdeer | x | 15 | x | x | x | 30 | x | 7 | x | 47 | - | 70 | 175 |
| Greater Yellowlegs | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Lesser Yellowlegs | - | - | - | x | 2 | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 |
| Solitary Sandpiper | - | - | x | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 6 |
| Spotted Sandpiper | - | - | x | x | x | 20 | x | 12 | x | 20 | x | 60 | 118 |
| Upland Sandpiper | - | 1 | x | x | x | 8 | 3 | 2 | x | 1 | x | 35 | 55 |
| Ruddy Turnstone | - | - | x | 7 | x | 12 | 2 | 4 | - | - | - | - | 27 |
| Semipalmated Sandpiper | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 7 | 1 | - | - | - | 10 |
| Least Sandpiper | - | - | - | 12 | x | 6 | 6 | 8 | - | 13 | - | 25 | 71 |
| White-rumped Sandpiper | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Pectoral Sandpiper | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | 3 |
| Dunlin | - | - | - | x | x | 3 | 4 | 5 | x | - | - | 7 | 22 |
| Short-billed Dowitcher | - | - | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | - | 3 | - | 3 | 6 |
| Common Snipe | x | 4 | x | x | x | 13 | 1 | 6 | x | 5 | x | 20 | 55 |
| American Woodcock | - | 5 | x | x | x | 7 | x | 4 | x | 2 | - | 2 | 25 |
| Wilson's Phalarope | - | - | x | x | x | 3 | 12 | 4 | x | 2 | - | 15 | 25 |
| Bonaparte's Gull | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 14 |
| Ring-billed Gull | x | 22 | x | x | x | 50 | x | 10 | x | 52 | x | 15000 | 16000 |
| Herring Gull | x | 2 | x | x | x | 20 | x | 10 | x | 2 | x | 520 | 560 |
| Glaucous Gull | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Great Black-backed Gull | x | - | x | x | x | 8 | x | 4 | x | 6 | - | 15 | 44 |
| Caspian Tern | x | 7 | x | x | x | 30 | x | 20 | x | 40 | - | 60 | 170 |
| Common Tern | - | - | 1 | x | - | - | 3 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 5 |
| Black Tern | - | 15 | x | x | x | 12 | 23 | 2 | 2 | 50 | - | 45 | 110 |
| Rock Dove | x | 18 | x | x | x | 1 | x | 4 | x | 40 | - | 20 | 85 |
| Mourning Dove | x | 15 | x | x | x | 30 | x | 8 | x | 106 | x | 70 | 235 |
| Black-billed Cuckoo | x | - | x | x | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 1 | x | 1 | 8 |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Eastern Screech Owl | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 4 |
| Great Horned Owl | - | - | x | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | 8 |
| Common Nighthawk | - | 4 | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 6 |
| Whip-poor-will | - | 12 | x | - | - | 1 | x | 1 | - | 1 | - | 3 | 20 |
| Chimney Swift | - | 4 | - | - | x | 3 | - | 6 | - | 5 | x | 10 | 30 |
| Ruby-thr. Hummingbird | x | 4 | x | x | x | 4 | 100 | x | x | 4 | x | 10 | 130 |
| Belted Kingfisher | - | 4 | x | x | x | 5 | 2 | 2 | x | 3 | x | 2 | 23 |
| Red-headed Woodpecker | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | x | - | - | - | 4 |

| SPECIES | PARTY NUMBERS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | TOT |
| Downy Woodpecker | x | 2 | - | x | x | - | 2 | 1 | x | 3 | - | 2 | 14 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | x | 2 | x | x | x | 1 | 1 | 2 | x | 2 | - | 2 | 15 |
| Northern Flicker | x | 2 | x | x | x | 4 | 1 | 4 | x | - | x | 11 | 30 |
| Pileated Woodpecker | - | 3 | x | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | - | 10 |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 |
| Eastern Wood Pewee | x | 7 | x | x | x | 1 | 10 | 3 | - | 4 | x | 10 | 40 |
| Yellow-bellied Flycatcher | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 8 |
| Acadian Flycatcher | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Alder Flycatcher | x | - | - | x | - | 4 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 10 |
| Willow Flycatcher | - | - | x | x | x | - | 1 | 4 | - | 1 | - | 6 | 15 |
| Least Flycatcher | x | 4 | x | x | - | 8 | 25 | 10 | x | 2 | x | 15 | 70 |
| Eastern Phoebe | x | 11 | x | x | x | 14 | 4 | 8 | x | 9 | x | 10 | 62 |
| Great-crested Flycatcher | x | 21 | x | x | x | 14 | x | x | x | 15 | x | 17 | 75 |
| Eastern Kingbird | x | 11 | x | x | x | 40 | x | 3 | x | 54 | x | 80 | 195 |
| Horned Lark | - | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | - | 2 | x | 20 | 32 |
| Purple Martin | - | 4 | x | x | x | 20 | x | 2 | x | 210 | x | 80 | 325 |
| Tree Swallow | x | 16 | x | x | x | 100 | x | 20 | x | - | x | 80 | 325 |
| N. Rough-winged Swallow | x | - | x | x | x | 20 | x | 20 | x | - | x | 80 | 180 |
| Bank Swallow | - | 5 | - | - | - | 5 | 1 | 20 | x | - | - | 10 | 42 |
| Cliff Swallow | x | 4 | x | x | - | 50 | x | 50 | x | 20 | x | 75 | 205 |
| Barn Swallow | x | 40 | x | x | x | 100 | x | 10 | x | 260 | x | 60 | 470 |
| Blue Jay | x | 7 | x | x | x | 5 | 20 | 1 | x | 21 | x | 14 | 75 |
| American Crow | x | 55 | x | x | x | 5 | x | 10 | x | 20 | x | 55 | 150 |
| Common Raven | - | - | - | - | x | 1 | - | 1 | - | 20 | - | - | 23 |
| Black-capped Chickadee | x | 7 | x | x | x | 6 | x | 3 | x | 8 | x | 7 | 38 |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| White-breasted Nuthatch | - | 3 | x | x | - | 1 | 1 | - | x | 2 | - | 1 | 11 |
| Brown Creeper | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Carolina Wren | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| House Wren | x | 11 | x | x | x | 9 | x | 6 | x | 9 | x | 23 | 65 |
| Winter Wren | - | - | x | - | x | 2 | - | 4 | - | - | - | 1 | 9 |
| Sedge Wren | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 2 |
| Marsh Wren | - | 18 | - | x | x | 4 | - | 2 | x | 1 | - | 12 | 40 |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | x | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | x | 1 | - | - | x | 15 | 23 |
| Eastern Bluebird | - | 3 | - | - | x | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | x | 1 | 8 |
| Veery | - | 2 | x | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 6 | x | 3 | 17 |
| Gray-cheeked Thrush | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 6 |
| Swainson's Thrush | x | 1 | x | x | - | - | 8 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 15 |
| Hermit Thrush | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Wood Thrush | - | 13 | x | x | x | 6 | 1 | 5 | x | 5 | - | 6 | 40 |
| American Robin | x | 25 | x | x | x | 200 | x | 20 | x | 300 | x | 200 | 800 |
| Gray Catbird | x | 15 | x | x | x | 20 | x | 5 | x | 5 | x | 50 | 110 |
| Northern Mockingbird | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Brown Thrasher | x | 4 | x | x | x | 2 | x | 6 | x | 1 | x | 25 | 45 |
| American Pipit | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 3 |
| Cedar Waxwing | x | 16 | x | - | x | 12 | 150 | 10 | x | 30 | x | 35 | 260 |
| Loggerhead Shrike | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| European Starling | x | 19 | x | x | x | 150 | x | 20 | x | 500 | x | 300 | 1100 |
| Blue-headed Vireo | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3 |
| Yellow-throated Vireo | - | 1 | x | - | - | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 5 |

| SPECIES | PARTY NUMBERS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | TOT |
| Warbling Vireo | x | 36 | x | x | x | 12 | x | 2 | x | 15 | - | 25 | 95 |
| Philadelphia Vireo | - | - | - | - | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | - | 3 | 9 |
| Red-eyed Vireo | x | 31 | x | x | x | 43 | 150 | 1 | x | 23 | x | 15 | 255 |
| Blue-winged Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Golden-winged Warbler | - | 11 | x | - | - | 10 | - | 10 | - | 1 | - | 1 | 35 |
| Tennessee Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | 3 |
| Orange-crowned Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Nashville Warbler | - | 3 | - | x | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | 10 |
| Northern Parula | - | - | x | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Yellow Warbler | x | 145 | x | x | x | 60 | x | 5 | x | 56 | x | 550 | 900 |
| Chestnut-sided Warbler | x | 1 | x | x | - | 1 | 6 | 1 | - | 1 | x | 25 | 40 |
| Magnolia Warbler | - | - | - | x | - | 1 | 8 | 1 | x | - | - | 20 | 32 |
| Cape May Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 2 |
| Black-thr. Blue Warbler | - | 1 | x | - | - | - | 3 | 1 | - | - | x | 10 | 17 |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler | - | 4 | x | - | - | 4 | 4 | 1 | x | - | - | 1 | 16 |
| Black-thr. Green Warbler | - | 5 | x | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | x | - | x | 5 | 17 |
| Blackburnian Warbler | - | 3 | x | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 2 | 8 |
| Pine Warbler | - | 5 | x | - | - | 6 | - | 1 | - | 2 | - | 1 | 16 |
| Prairie Warbler | - | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 |
| Palm Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Bay-breasted Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | 5 | 7 |
| Blackpoll Warbler | x | 1 | x | - | - | 15 | 80 | 1 | - | - | x | 51 | 150 |
| Cerulean Warbler | - | 6 | x | - | - | 8 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | 17 |
| Black-and-White Warbler | - | 18 | x | - | x | 7 | - | 8 | x | 2 | - | 7 | 45 |
| American Redstart | x | 21 | x | - | x | 24 | x | 1 | x | 1 | x | 35 | 90 |
| Ovenbird | - | 20 | x | - | x | 10 | 1 | 1 | x | 5 | - | 5 | 56 |
| Northern Waterthrush | - | 10 | x | - | x | 16 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | 4 | 35 |
| Louisiana Waterthrush | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 3 |
| Mourning Warbler | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Common Yellowthroat | x | 28 | x | - | x | 23 | x | 1 | x | 18 | x | 40 | 115 |
| Hooded Warbler | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Wilson's Warbler | - | - | x | - | - | 1 | 6 | - | x | - | x | 2 | 12 |
| Canada Warbler | - | - | x | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 7 |
| Scarlet Tanager | x | 13 | x | x | - | 12 | x | 1 | - | - | - | 3 | 33 |
| Northern Cardinal | - | 6 | - | x | x | 2 | x | 1 | x | - | x | 9 | 23 |
| Rose-breasted Grosbeak | x | 14 | x | x | x | x | 10 | 1 | x | 1 | x | 30 | 63 |
| Indigo Bunting | - | 25 | x | 1 | x | 16 | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 50 |
| Eastern Towhee | - | 20 | x | x | x | 8 | x | 1 | x | 3 | x | 25 | 63 |
| Chipping Sparrow | x | 21 | x | - | x | 30 | x | 1 | x | 24 | x | 105 | 187 |
| Clay-colored Sparrow | x | - | x | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 8 |
| Field Sparrow | x | 6 | x | x | x | 8 | x | 1 | x | 8 | x | 31 | 61 |
| Vesper Sparrow | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | 2 | x | 5 | 11 |
| Savannah Sparrow | x | 15 | x | x | x | 14 | x | 10 | x | 12 | - | 40 | 97 |
| Grasshopper Sparrow | - | 1 | x | 12 | - | 1 | 4 | 4 | - | - | x | 5 | 29 |
| Henslow's Sparrow | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 3 |
| Fox Sparrow | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 1 |
| Song Sparrow | x | 17 | x | 100 | x | 38 | x | 1 | x | 42 | x | 60 | 165 |
| Lincoln's Sparrow | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 1 | - | - | - | 2 | 5 |
| Swamp Sparrow | x | 4 | x | x | x | 9 | x | 1 | x | 3 | - | 90 | 123 |
| White-throated Sparrow | x | 4 | - | x | - | 3 | 1 | 1 | x | - | - | 9 | 20 |
| White-crowned Sparrow | - | - | x | - | - | - | 6 | 1 | x | 1 | - | 9 | 20 |

| SPECIES | PARTY NUMBERS | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | #1 | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 | #11 | #12 | TOT |
| Dark-eyed Junco | x | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 1 |
| Bobolink | x | 41 | x | x | x | 30 | x | 8 | x | 70 | x | 70 | 225 |
| Red-winged Blackbird | x | 53 | x | x | x | 200 | x | x | x | 500 | x | 800 | 1600 |
| Eastern Meadowlark | x | 31 | x | x | - | 16 | x | 4 | x | 20 | x | 60 | 137 |
| Rusty Blackbird | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| Common Grackle | x | 26 | x | x | x | 20 | x | x | x | 500 | x | 200 | 750 |
| Brown-headed Cowbird | x | 25 | x | x | x | 8 | x | x | x | 100 | x | 110 | 250 |
| Orchard Oriole | x | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | 2 | - | - | 4 | 7 |
| Baltimore Oriole | x | 31 | x | x | x | 18 | x | x | x | 22 | x | 60 | 140 |
| Purple Finch | - | 2 | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 4 |
| House Finch | - | 7 | x | x | x | 2 | x | 1 | x | 12 | - | 6 | 33 |
| Pine Siskin | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| American Goldfinch | x | 19 | x | x | x | 50 | x | x | x | 40 | x | 80 | 200 |
| House Sparrow | x | 11 | x | x | x | 10 | x | 4 | x | 45 | x | 20 | 100 |
| **TOTAL SPECIES** | xxx | 111 | 127 | 110 | 102 | 136 | 137 | 146 | 100 | 100 | 70 | 166 | 209 |
| **PARTICIPANTS** | xxx | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 34 |

## Federation of Ontario Naturalists Young Naturalists Camp 1999

*Eve Lake* (Stirrett Scholarship Award Winner)

This summer I had the enormous pleasure of going to the Young Naturalists Summer Camp. First I would like to thank everyone who helped me get there. Secondly I would like to thank all the people who organized the camp for children like me to enjoy and learn from.

I especially enjoyed the limited number of participants at the camp which meant that each of us could get special attention when we needed it. The location in Haliburton at the Leslie M. Frost Center was beautiful and practical. It was close to lakes, old growth forest, and wildlife, and perfectly suited to lots of naturalist activities and explorations.

*Gray Tree Frog*

Some of my favorite things at the camp were looking for animals along the shoreline and catching insects in nets at the quarry. Of course I also enjoyed all the swimming, canoeing and hiking. It was really interesting and exciting for me when we found a Gray Tree Frog because I didn't know there were tree frogs in Ontario!

It was great to meet other Junior Naturalists from other locations in Ontario and I will look forward to seeing them and the counsellors again another year and learning more about our fascinating environment.

# Baillie Birdathon 1999

*Philina English*

This May I got to go to the Long Point area for the Baillie Birdathon. Our team consisted of Andrew Cirtwill, fellow teen KFN member, and Long Point locals Matt and Adam Timpf with their father as a birding chauffeur. We took the train down on Friday the 14th and when we arrived at around 7pm, took off in search of a Harris' Sparrow which had been spotted that day at St. Williams. After about two hours we all finally saw it, black chin and all. It was a life bird for all of us. What a way to start the weekend! At about 9:30pm we got back to the farm and heard Woodcock, which sadly were not heard the next night so we missed them for the Birdathon. That night I got only an hour and a half of sleep before the alarm went off at 5am. Our big day had begun!!!!!

By a quarter to six we were out walking the Timpf's farm and got almost 40 species before setting out for other areas. We stopped at a well known Prairie Warbler location and got spectacular views of the male singing quite close to the road. At another spot by a bridge there were Swainson's Thrush, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Sandhill Cranes calling. Sometime around 8:30am we started for Long Point. Along the causeway we got a few shorebirds and some Forster's Terns but not much in the way of ducks. We stopped at Old Cut to check the sightings board and then went to Long Point Provincial Park and walked most of it. We started at the end of the road and walked back to Old Cut. We found about 13 species of warblers there and many other birds including a Mockingbird, Red-headed Woodpecker, Sedge Wren, and White-eyed Vireo. I got great views of about 6 life birds. On the way back along the causeway we got a Horned Grebe as well as a few other types of ducks on the lake side behind some houses.

Then we moved on and visited Turkey Point lookout and Townsen Sewage Lagoons among other sites. At the lagoons we got five more species of waterbirds (I'd say waterfowl except one was a Pied-billed Grebe). At this point we were still trying to find a Kestrel and I was given the job of watching the telephone wires. It was almost impossible to concentrate because I was so tired that my mind kept wandering and before I knew it my eyes would close. Eventually Matt's dad spotted one on a wire.

We tried for the Harris' Sparrow but it had not been seen since Friday night so we moved on and got a Blue-winged Warbler on Troyer Road. Then we went down and walked Rowan Woods. Matt was able to find a Hooded Warbler and a beautiful male Scarlet Tanager for us. We heard lots of other birds but couldn't see or identify most of them. Then after checking out a few more spots we headed for the Big Creek Marsh dyke. Here a King Rail had been seen but we didn't really expect to see it. Aren't rails supposed to be secretive birds? Within a minute of walking along the dyke we came to a group of people and suddenly this rail started calling loudly right next to the path. It ran through the marsh grasses calling loudly then came right out into the open and stood there only a couple metres away. It was a King Rail! I tried taking pictures but the sun had already gone down and there wasn't enough light... just enough to make a spectacular sunset as a backdrop to the scene. We watched it for about 10 minutes before moving on and as we left we could still hear it calling loudly. What an amazing bird! Along the dyke that night we also heard Marsh Wren and American Bittern, and saw Tundra Swans, Black-crowned Night Heron, Coot, and Green-winged Teal. We tried for Virginia Rail unsuccessfully but I'll admit that is partly due to the fact that Matt was the only one still birding seriously – we were too tired and were laughing too hard at a huge June Bug buzzing around our heads.

By this time it was around 10pm so we went back to Concession A and heard a Screech Owl in the distance. Our final stop was Backus Woods where we heard a Barred Owl. We didn't hear a Whip-poor-will or Woodcock like we were hoping to but our list was already 134 (mine was only 131 because I missed a of couple birds) and we were planning on going out again in the morning for some last minute birds. So we went back to the farm and ate and got almost 5 hours of sleep before the alarm went off at 5:30am... hit snooze, it went

off again a few minutes later... pulled the plug! We all woke up around seven. So much for getting last minute birds before our 24 hours was up.

That morning we went along the Wilson Tract dirt road and found 2 male Cerulean Warblers in the tree tops. We got wonderful views and one even flipped up-side-down for a moment and showed it's beautiful blue back. Then we stopped at the dyke hoping to get the King Rail in daylight but didn't. Finally we visited the place of a guy who sponsors Matt for the birdathon each year. We sat on chairs on his back porch watching some bird baths... and got 12 species of warblers and many others!!!! There were beautiful views of all the warblers and I saw my first Wilson's Warbler. In this guys yard we had more birds than on most of our walk through L.P.P.P. It was amazing!!! Afterwards we visited Old Cut again but didn't get anything new. Now thoroughly exhausted but happy we headed for the train station and eventually home. It was a wonderful weekend!!!!! Thanks to all the Timpfs and all those who supported us as sponsors!!!

## Shorebirds at Presqu'ile Provincial Park, August 28th, 1999

*Bob Sachs*

Faith Avis and I were at the Park from 8am to 1pm. It was a very quiet day for passerines at Presqu'ile. We saw a total of three warblers, a couple of Red-eyed Vireos and Red-breasted Nuthatches, Kingbirds and Chickadees so we had a rather disappointing time of it until 10 o'clock when we got to Owen Point. Owen Point can be reached by a trail running south from Beach 4, or by walking west along the beach from the extreme west end of the camping area. The sand beaches of Owen Point provide good habitat for sandpipers and plover and because of the low water levels in the Lake, a wide gravel bar extends across to Gull Island with only two shallow watery interruptions.

We spent about an hour from 10 to 11 a.m. at the end of Owen Point. Some Peeps and both Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs were on the sandy beach close by. We were able to get close looks at the Baird's Sandpipers recognizable immediately due to their greater size in comparison with the accompanying Least and Semipalmated Sandpipers and the Baird s wing tips extending well beyond the tail. They also displayed fine striping and a buff wash across the upper breast and buff cheeks. The most interesting action was on the gravel bar and was far enough away to require a telescope. Nearby on the closest small island of the gravel bar a small flock of about 12 Sanderlings were scurrying around and 4 Short-billed Dowitchers waded, poking in the shallows. Black-bellied and Semipalmated Plover were scattered about the gravel bar and one very large gray shorebird could be made out sitting on the gravel at about 200m. It had a fairly long bill and occasionally showed a lot of white on the rump. We decided it had to be a Willet, which was readily apparent later when it stood up and showed us its long gray legs.

Other observers told us that Red Knots and Buff-breasted Sandpipers were also seen on the bar. We checked the margins of the vegetation growing about 100m away and saw two Buff-breasted Sandpipers hunting among the pebbles with heads down and tails up and walking with a bobbing motion of their heads. Shortly after they disappeared into the vegetation someone saw a Red Knot fly to a small point on the bar about 100 m. distant and we had a good two minutes to examine it before it disappeared. The head and back were a light gray with lighter gray under-parts and the wing tips and beak were a contrasting black.

A Ruddy Turnstone appeared briefly on the same little spit that the Knot had used, and a Pectoral Sandpiper was picked out farther up the bar. Adding in the few Spotted Sandpipers and Killdeer mixed in with the above, brought the hour's total to 16 shorebird species. Certainly this was the best shorebird day we have encountered this year. One cannot help wonder what other goodies were among the birds we could see that were too far away or hidden behind the gravel mounds. We will be compelled to keep going back.

## KFN 50th Anniversary Field Trip and Breakfast, June 13, 1999

*Paul Mackenzie*

The first field trip of the KFN was 50 years ago. This field trip was organized as part of KFN's 50th anniversary celebrations, and followed by a breakfast in remembrance of the many breakfasts organized in past years by Art Bell after the "dawn song patrols". Many of us remember getting up before dawn and visiting marshes and forests with Art to listen to the dawn bird songs which are at their best in early June. The field trip with 11 participants led by Peter Good started at 6:00 am along the Canoe Lake Road. About 40 people attended the breakfast at the "gravel pit" in the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary.

The field trip participants used 4 vehicles, led by Peter Good, on a breezy warm clear day along the Canoe Lake Road, stopping to listen and look frequently. Highlights included good views of area specialties such as Yellow-throated Vireo, Pine, Golden-winged and Cerulean Warblers. The good views of two Cerulean Warblers were especially pleasing as this canopy species is often hard to see when the leaves are out. Overhead raptors included Sharp-shinned, Broad-winged, and Red-shouldered Hawks and Turkey Vultures. A family of Ravens with young was another highlight as the young were giving their own distinctive calls. Also seen were Pileated Woodpecker, Bluebird, and Indigo Bunting. We enjoyed the songs of Winter Wren, Scarlet Tanager, Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Black-and-White, Black-throated Green, and Black-throated Blue Warblers. About 60 species were recorded. An unusual finding was a large Map Turtle crossing the road at Snug Harbour. Ken Kingdon rescued it from the threat of being squashed by passing vehicles by putting it in the creek. Several White Admiral Butterflies were also observed.

The breakfast was organized by George Vance and Joe Percy, who brought in tables and cook-stoves, to create a picnic banquet atmosphere. The highlight of the breakfast were the pancakes made from freshly ground whole wheat flour from Saskatchewan, provided and mixed by Floyd Connor, and cooked to perfection by Marilyn Vance, Diane Lawrence, and others. The pancakes were topped with home-made blueberry jam from Anne Robertson and maple syrup and accompanied by well cooked sausages and strawberries.

Although it was quite hot, a keen group joined Anne Robertson for a walk along the Betty Hughes trail after the breakfast. A few blueberries were already ripe, and Spring Peeper and a Garter Snake were seen along the path. A patch of Royal Fern with fruiting bodies was also noted.

The whole event was a very enjoyable occasion.

## Globe and Mail Columnist Peter Whelan Dies

For those who have missed the weekly birding column in the *Globe and Mail* since June of this year, you will be saddened to hear that its author Peter Whelan died August 14 of cancer at his home in Toronto.

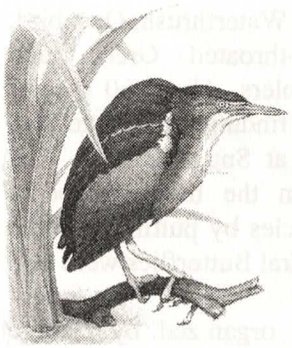
The "Birds" column was a fixture in the *Globe and Mail* for over 20 years. Mr. Whelan was a much-respected voice in the birding community and reported with authority on rare bird sightings, environmental threats to wildlife and the behaviour of birders who seem to risk their lives in their efforts to spot an unusual species.

He and his column will be missed.

[Extracted from *Globe and Mail*, August 16, 1999]

# Least Bitterns Nesting at the Lennox Marsh

*Chip Weseloh, Cynthia Pekarik and Jamie Reid*



On 29 July 1998, while systematically searching for young, flightless Black Terns in the softstem bulrushes at the marsh at the Lennox Generating Station (at Bath), we discovered two Least Bittern nests. These appear to be only the third and fourth Least Bittern nests found in the Kingston area during the last 70 years! Herein we report some of the details of the nests and the hatching success of the eggs.

The two nests contained 5 and 6 eggs, respectively; one of the eggs in the 6 egg clutch was pipping. All eggs floated high in water indicating that incubation was well advanced. The nests were 4.4 m apart in the bulrushes. The bottoms of the two nests (the 5 egg and 6 egg nests, respectively) were 510 and 430 mm above the water surface and the water depth at each nest was 444 and 434 mm. The bottom of the marsh was firm. In terms of dimensions, the nests were 190 and 210 mm high and 90 and 80 mm in diameter. The nest cup of the 6 egg nest measured 600 mm in diameter and 130 mm deep (the other nest cup had deteriorated too far when the measurements were taken); measurements were made on 18 August, after the young had left the nests, to keep disturbance to a minimum. The nests were 104 and 100 m from shore and both nests were 98 m from the nearest open water; though the bulrushes were not very dense. In each nest some of the bulrushes extended above the nest and were woven into a crude canopy-like structure. The nests seemed typical for the species: they are usually described as 150-760 mm above water 80-960 mm deep, 300-600 mm in height, 100-255 mm deep and usually scattered evenly throughout habitat but may be as close as 10m apart (Weller 1961, Peck and James 1985, Gibbs *et al.* 1992); ours were less than half that distance apart.

We visited the nests again on 4 August and found 5 young Least Bitterns in the first nest and 5 young and an addled egg in the second. Hatching success for the 11 eggs was 91%. The young had fluffy yellowish down with cinnamon colouring on their backs. Three of the 5 young in the first nest began climbing out of the nest on our approach while the 5 young from the second nest all remained in the nest cup. Given only one egg was pipping on 29 July and that all viable eggs had hatched 6 days later, when the young were mobile, we would estimate that hatching probably took place about 30-31 July. Back dating for an incubation period of 17-20 days, incubation must have begun between 10-14 July. In Least Bitterns, incubations starts with the first or second egg and eggs are usually laid at one day intervals (Gibbs *et al.* 1992), so clutch initiation for these two nests was probably between 8-13 July.

Peck and James (1983) give clutch sizes and egg dates for Least Bitterns in Ontario: clutch sizes ranged from 1-11 eggs with 27.5 % of 196 nests reporting a 5 egg clutch and 5.6 % showing a 6 egg clutch. Egg dates ranged from 15 May to 2 August with 50% of egg dates occurring during 6-21 June. Thus, our egg dates are approximately 3 weeks (17-22 days) later than most Least Bitterns for Ontario. Double-brooding is not definitely known for Least Bitterns but it may occur (Weller 1961); our birds could have been raising second broods.

On 11 August, we saw 2 young within 6 m of the nests. They were walking through the bulrushes, straddling the vegetation. On 18 August only one young was seen near the nests and it walked away immediately.

Although Least Bitterns are recorded in the Kingston area each year (see back issues of the *Blue Bill*), and they are reported calling during the breeding season in suitable breeding habitat (Weir 1989). Quilliam (1973) reported no nests had actually been located in the Kingston area since the time of Beaupre (last nest found in 1918). From the KFN observational files, a 4-egg clutch was reported from Squaw Point on 1 June 1974 and a 5-egg clutch was found on Wolfe Island on 17 June 1984. Our nests appear to be the first ones reported since 1984 and only the third and fourth in the last

70 years!

We thank Ontario Hydro and Dave Ebsary for allowing us access to the marsh and to carry out our work there. Ron Weir searched the KFN observational files for us and commented on an earlier version of this report. The work was supported through Environment Canada's Great Lakes 2000 Program.

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## Bio-Blitz 1999

*Anne Robertson*

Biodiversity is the incredible variety of life on earth. It includes every species that exists from tiny bacteria to giant Redwood trees, from minute invertebrates to Blue Whales, from microscopic fungi to plants in your garden – it's all biodiversity. It also includes the genetic material making up every living being and the habitats in which they live.

There are between 10 and 25 million species alive on earth. Every year at least 27,000 of them become extinct – lost forever. Over 99% of these extinctions are caused by humans. Canada is home to an estimated 140,000 species of plants, animals, microorganisms and fungi. Only about one half of these species have been reported and described by science. An estimated 8,000 species are currently at risk in Canada.

Our second annual Great Canadian Bio-Blitz was held Friday June 11th to Saturday June 12th, 1999, during National Environment week. The aim was to list as many species as possible, the biodiversity, in the defined area as well as to bring together scientists, amateurs and the general public to learn about and share the knowledge of wildlife in our own backyard. Without a data base (which is kept by the Canadian Biodiversity Institute) we might have no record of new or endangered species.

The area of concern was the same as last year, near a portion of the Little Cataraqui Creek south of highway 401. Organisation was once again by the Wetlands Working Group (of which KFN is a member), The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority and the KFN. Scientists from Queens University were involved as were KFN members, The Kingston Junior Naturalists and Teen Naturalist Group. This year six army cadets from The Princess of Wales' Own Regiment helped set up and take down the equipment and displays and were on hand to help on Saturday.

The public was invited to the Discovery tent on Saturday afternoon to view displays on biodiversity as well as bird and mammal skins and skulls, a terrarium of field insects and an aquarium of pond species. Guided hikes were again offered to those wishing to learn about the biodiversity of the area.

This year the tally forms were modified to exclude the area on the west side of the creek and to include the habitat in which each species was seen (rather than site number), that is, pond, disturbed upland, forest, open field or wetland as shown on a map provided to recorders. The weather this year

had been hotter and drier and in addition the Bio-Blitz was held a week later. This may have some bearing on the species seen or not seen in particular herpetiles and plants.

The total additional species this year was 103. Added to the 262 species recorded in 1998 this provides a list of 365 species for the area (Table 1). Table 2 through 6 lists the species added in 1999. For a full listing of species seen in 1998 please see *Blue Bill* Vol. 45(3):89-98.

We would like to thank the Humane Society for their cooperation and for allowing us to set up the Discovery tent on their property. Thanks also go to The City of Kingston and Homestead Land Holdings. The Wetland Working Group provided the tent and the Conservation Authority the equipment and photocopying. KFN provided much of the manpower and we could not have managed without our Queens scientists. This exploration of the biodiversity of our area by a diverse range of people of varying skills allows for learning, investigation and fun in our community. Thank you to all who participated.

**Table 1**: Summary totals for 1998 and 1999 Bio-blitz.

| | 1998 | 1999 | 1998 and 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Invertebrates | 58 | 73 | 100 |
| Plants | 121 | 136 | 168 |
| Birds | 55 | 48 | 62 |
| Fish | 8 | 7 | 11 |
| Mammals | 12 | 5 | 15 |
| Herps | 8 | 7 | 9 |
| **Total** | **262** | **276** | **365** |

**Table 2**: Plant species that were added to the cumulative list from 1998 (Identified by Chris Eckert, Dale Kristensen, Jane Burkingham, Winifred Smith)

| Class | Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spermatophyta - Angiospermae, Monocotyledons | Typhaceae | Typha angustifolia | Narrow-leaved Cattail | x |
| | Gramineae | Poa palustris | Marsh Fowl Grass | x |
| | | Calamagrostis canadensis | Canada Bluejoint | x |
| | | Festuca rubra | Redtop Fescue | x |
| | | Agropyron repens | Quack Grass | x |
| | | Elymus virginicus | Wild Rye | x |
| | | Phleum pratense | Timothy | x |
| | Cyperaceae | Carex atherodes | | x |
| | | Eleocharis acicularis | Needle Rush | x |
| | Salicaceae | Salix bebbiana | Bebb's Willow | x |
| | Ulmaceae | Ulmus thomasii | Rock Elm | x |
| | Polygonaceae | Polygonum spp. | | x |
| | Ranunculaceae | Ranunculus acris | Tall Buttercup | x |
| | | Thalictrum polyganum | Tall Meadow -rue | x |

| Class | Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Spermatophyta - Angiospermae, Monocotyledons | Rosaceae | Amelanchier spp. | | x |
| | | Crataegus punctata | Dotted Hawthorn | x |
| | | Potentilla argentea | Silvery Cinquefoil | x |
| | | Rosa blanda | Smooth Rose | x |
| | | Rosa nitida | Shining Rose | x |
| | | Rosa acicularis | | x |
| | | Rubus idaeus | Red Raspberry | x |
| | | Rubus pubescens | Dwarf Raspberry | x |
| | | Spiraea tomentosa | Steeplebush | x |
| | Leguminosae | Lathyrus pratensis | Yellow Vetchling | x |
| | | Trifolium procumlunus | Low Hop Clover | x |
| | | T. aureum | | x |
| | | T. pratense | Red clover | x |
| | | T. hybridium | Alsike Clover | x |
| | Umbelliferae | Cicuta bulbifera | Water Hemlock | x |
| | Asclepiadaceae | Asclepias incarnata | Swamp Milkweed | x |
| | Rubiaceae | Galium asperellium | Rough Bedstraw | x |
| | Caprifoliaceae | Sambucus canadensis | Common Elderberry | x |
| | Compositae | Achillea millefolium | Yarrow | x |
| | | Cirsus spp. | | x |
| | | Eupatorium perfoliatum | Boneset | x |
| | | Eupatorium spp. | Joe-Pye-weed | x |
| | | Hieracium flagellare | Mouse-ear Hawkweed | x |
| | | H. auranticum | Orange hawkweed | x |
| | | Inula helenium | Elecampane | x |
| | | Solidago spp. | Goldenrod | x |
| | | Tragopogon pratensis | Yellow Goat's-beard | x |
| | | Tussilago farfara | Colt's Foot | x |
| | | Scirpus atrovirens | Blackish Bulrush | x |
| | | S. validus | Soft stem Bulrush | x |
| | Cruciferae | Hesperis matronalis | Dame's Rocket | x |
| | ?Fabaceae | Lotus corniculatus | Birds-foot Trefoil | x |
| | Ceratophyllaceae | Ceratophyllum demersum | Coontail | x |

**Table 3: Birds** (Identified by Bud Rowe, Peter, Lorraine and Matthew McIntyre, Margo McMurray)

| Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accipitridae | Buteo jamaicensus | Red-tailed Hawk | x |
| Scolopacidae | Scolopax minor | American Woodcock | x |
| Tyrannidae | Sayornis phoebe | Eastern Phoebe | x |
| Troglodytidae | Cistothorus palustris | Marsh Wren | x |
| Emberizidae | Spizella arborea | American Tree Sparrow | x |
| | Spizella passerina | Chipping Sparrow | x |
| Fringillidae | Carpodacus mexicanus | House Finch | x |

**Table 4: Fish** (Identified by Rob Snetsinger)

| Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|
| *Umbra limi* | Central Mudminnow | x |
| *Pimephales notatus* | Bluntnose Minnow | x |
| *Culaea inconstans* | Brook Stickleback | x |

The fish were not abundant this year, generally would expect more, perhaps the low water levels are having an effect.

**Table 5: Mammals**

| Order | Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Carnivora | Canidae | Canus latrans | Coyote | x |
| Lagomorpha | Leporidae | Lepus americanus | Snowshoe Hare | x |

**Table 6: Insects** (Identified by:Blatt,Rosemarie Burke,Joanne Little, Kim Neill, Joe Bennett, Emma Bredsen)

| Order | Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Insecta Subclass Pterygota* | | | | |
| Odonota: Suborder Anisoptera | Libellulidae | Sympetrum sp. | Skimmer | x |
| Suborder Zygoptera | | Enallagma spp. | Bluet | x |
| | | Ishnuva veticalis | Eastern Forktail | x |
| | Aeschnidae | Anax junius | Green Darner | x |
| | Libelullidae | Plathemis lydia | White Tail | x |
| | Libelullidae | Libelulla pulchella | Twelve-spot Skimmer | x |
| Hemiptera: Suborder Homoptera | Aphididae | ? | | x |
| | Aphididae | ? | | x |

| Order | Family | Species | Common Name | 1999 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coleoptera Suborder Polyphaga | Chysomelidea | Trirhadba spp. (larvae) | Goldenrod Beetle | x |
| | Cantharidae | ? | | x |
| | Scarabeidae | ? | | x |
| | Dyctisa | | | x |
| Lepidoptera Butterflies | | Basilarchia archippus | Viceroy Butterfly | x |
| | | Phyciodes spp. | Crescent Spot | x |
| | | Euphrydryas spp. | Baltimore | x |
| | Hesperiidae | | Painted Lady Butterfly | x |
| | | | Common Sulfur Butterfly | x |
| | | | Cabbage White Butterfly | x |
| | | | Monarch Butterfly | x |
| | Geometridae | | | x |
| Moths | | Dichorda iridaria | Showy Emerald | x |
| | | Euclea delphinii | Spiny Oak-Slug Moth | x |
| Diptera Suborder Nematocera | Chironomidae | | Midge sp. | x |
| Suborder Brachycera | | Chrysops spp. | Deer Fly | x |
| | Simuliidae | | | x |
| | | Tetamocera spp. | Marsh Fly | x |
| | Culicidae | Cutex pipiens | Mosquito | x |
| Hymenoptera | Chalcidoidea | | Parasitic Hymenoptera | x |
| Suborder Apocrita | Sphecidae | Ammophila spp. | Thread-waisted Wasp | x |
| | Apoideae | Apis melloidae | Honey Bee | x |
| | Corixidae | Corixa spp. | Water Boatmen | x |
| | | | Diving Beetle | x |
| | | | Giant Water Bug | x |
| Plecoptera | | | Stonefly | x |
| Coleoptera | Scarabaeidae | Phyllophaga spp. | June Beetle | x |
| | | | Sow Bug | x |
| Mantodea | Mantidae | Mantis religiosa | Praying Mantis | x |
| Trichoptera | | | | x |
| Class Polychaeta | Hydracarina | | Water Mite | x |
| Suborder Amphipoda | Amphipoda | | Scud | x |
| | ? | Gammara pulex | | x |
| Others | | | Leech | x |
| | | | Earthworm | x |

# Summer Season: 1 June - 31 July 1999

*Ron D. Weir*

The 6 breeding bird surveys (40 km routes with stops every 800 m) done in the Kingston area, which include some submitted to the CWS, show strong results for the third consecutive year. An especially good showing was noted for Least and Willow Flycatchers, Wood Thrush, Yellow-throated, Red-eyed, and Warbling Vireos. Lower numbers were found for both species of cuckoos, whose numbers vary depending on caterpillar infestations.

Southbound waders were evident from early July onwards with first arrivals as follows: Greater and Lesser Yellowlegs, Solitary and Least Sandpipers all July 7; Stilt Sandpiper July 16; Short-billed Dowitcher July 19; Semipalmated Sandpiper and Dunlin July 21; Semipalmated Plover July 25; Baird's Sandpiper July 31, KFN.

Rarities included Sandhill Crane, Curlew Sandpiper (3rd ever), Long-billed Dowitcher, and Acadian Flycatcher.

**Species Accounts:**

**Common Goldeneye** - July 21-25 (1 immature) Amherst Island, KFN.

**Ruddy Duck** - June 1-6 (1 immature male) Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, KFE, RDW.

**Osprey** - The pair on the KFN land, Amherst Island fledged two young.

**Bald Eagle** - One nest in the Kingston area fledged one young, KFN.

**Sandhill Crane** - June 13 (1), Perth Road Breeding Bird Survey, RDW.

**Upland Sandpiper** - Numbers staging for migration July 25 (30), 31 (50) Amherst Island (KFN land), KFN.

**Curlew Sandpiper** - June 6 (1 winter plumage) Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, KFE,RDW *et al.*; previous records 29 July 1974, 20 July 1997.

**Stilt Sandpiper** - July 16 (4), 17 (3), 21 (2), 25 (1) Amherstview Sewage Lagoon and Amherst Island, VPM, KFN.

**Long-billed Dowitcher** - July 19 (1) Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, VPM.

**Acadian Flycatcher** - June 2 (1) Amherst I., AS.

**Loggerhead Shrike** - June and July (about 37 nesting pairs) Kingston area, 100+ young fledged, C. Grooms, higher numbers.

**Blue-winged Warbler** - June 5 (1), 12 (1), 13 (1) Breeding Bird Surveys, Abbey Dawn, Roblin, Perth Road, RDW.

**Evening Grosbeak** - July 29 (1), 30 (1) Kingston feeders, JHE *et al.*

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# Observations of a Great Blue Heron Colony

*Marge Vanderwerf*

Some years ago a couple of herons decided to build their nests on our neighbour's property. What started with three nests has now grown to a heronry of 34 nests in a time span of about four years.

All the nests are in dead trees that stand in the middle of a swamp.

I found this all very interesting and tried to make a map of all the nests with the idea then to record the activities in each nest, how many baby herons, etc. I also gave each nest a number (Figure 1). However I did run into an annoying problem. I could not see all the nests from one view point, they were over a stretch of a couple of kilometres. With the result that when I started walking farther down, the location of the nests looked all different, sometimes they even appeared to be in another tree. Some of the nests overlapped, some disappeared from view altogether. I struggled with that for quite some time and even tried to take pictures at different viewpoints.

Till my friend and encourager (Kit Chubb), advised me to choose some viewpoints and stick with them. Never mind what happened elsewhere in the heronry.

So this season I set out to create three different viewpoints, make maps of what I saw at each place, give the place a group number and name. Now I can go to Group #1, which I call the Road nests because they are closest to the road. Group #2 I call the Field nests because I have to cross a big field. Group #3 I call Owl's corner because last year a Great Horned Owl decided to rent a heron nest and raise two babies there.

At group #3 I also made a blind of dead branches that I piled up. Then I put a piece of plastic on the ground behind it, weighed down with rocks, so that I did not have to sit in the middle of Poison Ivy.

Now each time I go out I take three dated maps with me on which I then write my observations (Figure 2).

*Observations of Heron activity by date of occurence:*

April 1997: At least 10 nests occupied.

End of May: Noticed several nestlings standing up in some of the nests.

End of June: The nestlings have grown much. When a parent comes with food the nest looks like a battleground, there is much yelling and striking out at each other. However I am not sure if they even hit each other during this activity, or if it is just some rough-housing in their excitement over the coming meal.

*Chicks being fed a muskrat (centre). Photo: Sharon David*

As parents we are sometimes concerned when our children seemingly do not get along, but watching the activity between nestlings at feeding time, do make our children look like angels, believe me.

I find it surprising that I have never seen nestlings fall overboard during this time.

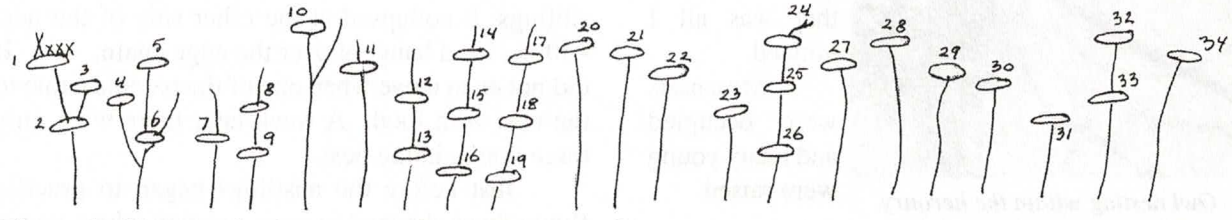



*Figure 1: Nest numbering system (Large X on nest #1 represents adult heron, and small x are #chicks).*

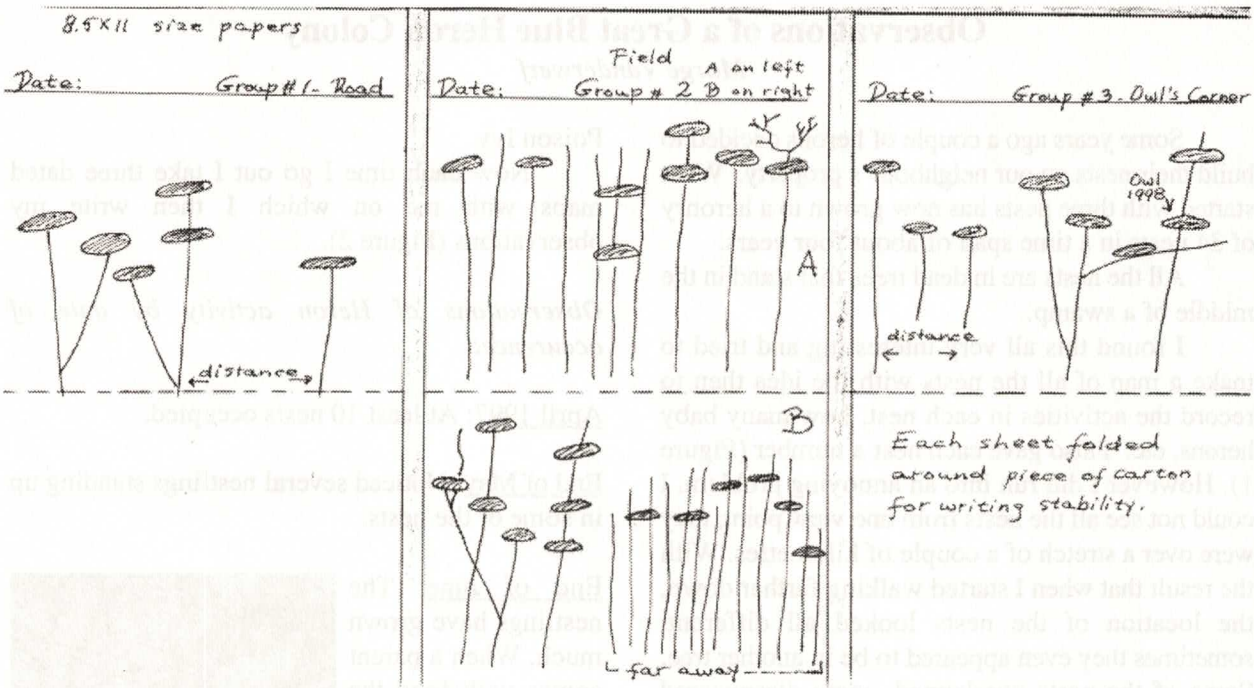
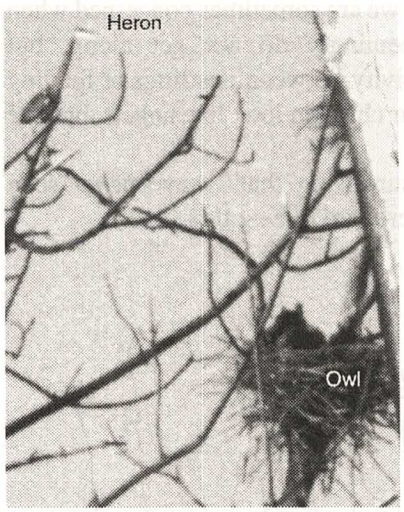



*Figure 2: Field sheets for recording group observations.*

Mid July: Some nestlings are now flying. I have seen a fledgling returning to the nest, being denied access to it by the other siblings. So it would fly another circle and try again with the same result. Is this their way of playing or is it part of growing up?

End of July: Saw a young heron grab the beak of an adult that had just arrived on the nest. It did this several times till the parent regurgitated a big fish.




*Owl nesting within the heronry.*
*Photo: Marge Vanderwerf.*

May 1998: A Great Horned Owl occupied a heron nest and raised 2 chicks. The Herons and Owl seemed to keep an eye on each other, but that was all I noticed.

Most nests were occupied and many young were raised.

March 1999: Saw the first 2 herons fly by. By the end of the month 14 nests were occupied with herons.

At one time something startled them and 14 herons were flying around. I think the herons are more nervous at the beginning of their time back, probably before egg laying. Once they sit on eggs or are feeding young they seem to be less nervous, not less watchful though.

End of May: Saw many nests with young. There was a heron who would fly to an unoccupied nest near by, take a branch from it to his own nest. His or her mate would then tuck this branch somewhere in the nest. This was done several times.

June: There was a nest with four young, but one of them dangled its head over the edge for a long time. When it got up it looked as if it was attacked by its siblings. It collapsed at the other side of the nest with its head hanging over the edge again. It did not even move when one of the parents came to the nest with food. A week later there were only three young in the nest.

Just before the nestlings began to practise flying I was shocked to see a raccoon take a young heron from a nest high above the ground. There

was a lot of screaming from the nests, in a different pitch than I had heard during feeding time, with most herons facing the nest. After the raccoon had taken the heron from the nest, it dropped it and followed quickly after it. Up above it became quiet again, with one young less to feed.

It is interesting to note that, without me being aware of it, the day before a young heron was brought to the Avian Care and Research Foundation of Kit Chubb. A couple had heard it fall to the ground while they were hiking. The heron had many little wounds in its neck that looked like teeth marks and was bleeding badly.

*Raccoon climbing down after killing a chick. Photo: Marge Vanderwerf*

One morning a young heron landed in our front yard were it started to toss a dead leaf around, then walked to a puddle on the drive-way and poked at the pebbles. Was it playing, practising or just plain curious? A less humorous surprise was when I saw a dead heron hanging over a branch under one of the nests. Then some days after that a dead heron halfway hanging out of another nest. Both nests were still occupied.

This year I noticed many nests that remained empty and I noticed several casualties, which I had never seen before. I don't know the reason for this, but perhaps I am learning to watch more carefully.

By August 1999 the heron nests were all empty and another exciting season had gone by.

*Some other observations I made during my time out at one of the groups:*

The Great horned owl that raised 2 young in a heron nest in 1998 did not come back to the same nest. Instead a heron occupied it, though for a short time only. What a surprise to see a Great Egret fly over, I saw her on two more occasions. Then there were Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals, Hooded Mergansers, Wood Ducks, Kingbirds, Swallows, Green Herons. A couple of Canada Geese with eight young. Two Ospreys were sitting in one of the heron nests, but only for about 30 minutes.

While sitting at the edge of the swamp at different times, I also observed a weasel and otters feeding, or searching for food or playing. A muskrat that was carrying branches to the same spot over and over again, another one that was feeding.

What a marvellous way to spend some free time.

## Art Briggs-Jude and Edna the Dancing Crane

*Kathy Cook*

A Sandhill Crane raised as part of an experiment to save its cousin the Whooping Crane from extinction has developed an embarrassing crush on humanity. Edna, a metre-tall bird with spindly legs and a red head, was raised on a farm in Port Perry, Ontario, by Bill Lishman, the subject of the Hollywood film *Fly Away Home*. But these days the long-legged bird can be seen doing spiral acrobatics in the air while Art Briggs-Jude, who has a 300-acre wildlife sanctuary near Westport, dances beside her. "She follows me everywhere," says Mr. Briggs-Jude, although he draws the line at inside the house.

When he planted red scarlet runner beans she stood next to him and ate the worms when he turned over the soil. She

eats sunflowers out of his hand and picks off ants from the woodpile. As a morning greeting, she excitedly jumps half a metre in the air. She greets visitors in the same way.

According to Mr. Lishman's plan, Edna and the other Sandhill Cranes were to teach their human handlers how to persuade them to migrate before the experiment is repeated with rare Whooping Cranes. About 750,000 Sandhill Cranes exist in North America, but only two flocks of the Whooping Cranes – one a migratory flock that divides its time between Alberta and Texas, and a recently established colony in Florida. But the plan didn't take the cranes' fascination with humans into account. Although they did migrate south and returned on their own the next spring, enroute they decided that they loved human company.

It's a love that Edna can't shake. She has pressed her affections on almost every human who crosses her path. A woman walking down the highway at Bedford Mills in the Rideau Lakes area was astonished when the gangly bird landed next to her. Slightly frightened, the woman walked away. Edna followed. Not sure what to do about the avian stalker, the woman called naturalist and outdoors writer Mr. Briggs-Jude. Told of Edna's stalking incident in Westport, Mr. Lishman's partner, Joe Duff, joked, "We're denying everything."

Edna and about two dozen other Sandhill Cranes were raised in isolation at an American wildlife propagation centre. The cranes' human caretakers wore large bags over their bodies and held puppet masks so the birds wouldn't "imprint" on them as surrogate mothers. At about 40 days of age the cranes were transported to Mr. Lishman's marsh near Toronto. Mr. Duff and the other trainers dressed in the same bag costumes and got the chicks to follow them. Then they climbed into an ultralight plane convinced the birds that the plane was simply an extension of themselves. In October 1997, Edna and six others followed the plane almost 1,000 kilometres to Airlie, Virginia. All arrived safely. Six months later, they returned to Port Perry on their own. But Edna decided to strike out on her own, settling at Scugog Island, 10 kilometres away from the farm.

Mr. Lishman and Mr. Duff fed the other returning cranes and tried to persuade them to stay by erecting a costumed dummy deep in the marsh. The cranes soon wandered into nearby communities. The Canadian Wildlife Service worried that the birds could cause an accident.

Operation Migration collected the cranes and sent them to captivity. For a few months Edna stayed by herself, although she did visit a boat launch every day. Soon she started visiting cottages. The final straw was when she showed up at the police station.

Mr. Lishman brought her home. Through the late summer and early fall she stayed in the yard of his earth-dome house, even though she was free to fly away.

But as soon as the nights cooled and the days shortened, Edna grew anxious. She honked and often ran around, signs she wanted to migrate. Mr. Duff and Mr. Lishman decided to enter the second stage of the experiment. Would the crane migrate on her own?

It was too much to expect a crane to try to migrate solo. So they retrieved Frank, the most dominant of the other Sandhill Cranes. Cranes don't mate until they're at least 4 years old, but the two did bond. Edna and Frank flew as far as Kingston, then stopped. After a large snowstorm, Mr. Lishman collected the birds, fearing they would starve. Frank went back to captivity, while Edna stayed with Mr. Lishman.

In April, Edna disappeared, sensing that it was time to do something. "What exactly she wasn't sure, so she went wandering," says Mr. Duff. That journey ultimately led her to Mr. Briggs-Jude's homestead. While Edna does fly around, so far she has always come back.

"She's quite safe here," says Mr. Briggs-Jude. "We have 300 acres, six ponds, some creeks and marsh land."

Another group of Sandhill Cranes were raised last year with stricter no-human contact. Those birds have migrated and show no interest in humans, say Mr. Duff. Operation Migration hopes to begin working with young Whooping Cranes next year. For more information on the project, see http://fathergoose.durham.net.

[Reprinted from *Forestry Forum*, July 1999, Vol. 2 (26):1]

*Art Briggs-Jude reports that Edna is still living at his wildlife sanctuary, free to come and go as she*

*pleases.*

## Notes on Natural History: No. 101, Sept. 18, 1961

*Helen Quilliam*

During the late summer and autumn we begin to notice that many birds are no longer appearing singly but are gathering into flocks. From mid-July onwards large flocks of swallows perch on telephone lines. That they are social birds once the nesting season is over is shown by the fact that there may be miles of unoccupied lines but that other wires may be crowded with hundreds of swallows.

Often, as individuals join the flock, it can be noticed that they try to find a perch near the centre rather than at the ends of the lines where there is plenty of room. Other birds show this tendency to take a central or leading position.

In winter, watch a flock of Snow Buntings. As the flock moves feeding along a shore or in a field those birds at the end of the flock will often rise and fly ahead of the group. Then the ones which have been made last by this movement will go to the front and so there is a continuous leap-frog movement going on almost as though no bird wanted to be last or to be in danger of being left behind. Shorebirds can also at times be seen doing the same thing.

Gathering into flocks prepatory to the journey to the south is common to many families of birds. As there are many differences in habits among birds so are there different degrees of flocking.

Flocking gives birds certain advantage both in foraging for food and in escaping predators. Avian predators, for instance, commonly pick off stragglers but ignore the flock as a whole. There is also an obvious advantage in having older birds in a flock to lead the way. The family or families of Canada Geese with an old gander at its head is an example. Why some species of birds form flocks and others do not is a complex and interesting phenomenon and one which the amateur bird-watcher could study and find of interest.

Some birds form flocks only of their own kind and others travel in mixed flocks. Birds which travel in unmixed flocks are usually those whose habits are so specialized that they would not attract other travelling companions to them. The Nighthawks travel in the daytime, feeding as they go and so travel alone.

The Chimney Swifts, although they have the same daytime flight habits, still would not mix with a flock of Nighthawks because of their dissimilar sizes and roosting habits.

On the other hand swallows, which are also diurnal travellers, congregate and fly in mixed flocks with as many as three or four kinds of swallows together. Blue Jays are seldom seen flying with any other kind of bird.

For many days in the autumn small flocks of Blue Jays range about the countryside calling, and as autumn deepens you will notice that these flocks gradually become larger and larger as they gather other Blue Jays in from widely separated areas.

Enormous flocks of blackbirds of several kinds collect together in the autumn. Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Cowbirds make up these flocks and often they are joined also by large numbers of Starlings. Their feeding habits are very similar, as are their roosting habits, and it is not common at this time of year to find recently harvested fields black with these birds as they go about gleaning what the farmer has left.

Different kinds of shorebirds migrate together and can be seen feeding in mixed flocks. It is also interesting to see them near the sea when the tide is high. They then often regroup in tight bunches of one species only, resting and sleeping just above the high tide mark. Many of the finches and sparrows also travel in mixed flocks.

On mornings after the passing of a cold front there are many small warblers, flycatchers and thrushes about. On a night of good flying conditions many types and kinds of birds will have been flying all night. Many of these fly singly rather than in flocks and are uniformly distributed across the sky. Since they cannot see well at night and are moving under protection of darkness, there is no special advantage to be gained from flocking. However, on a still night they can be heard passing

overhead and their calls may serve to keep them loosely together.

In many migrating flocks there will be birds of only one age. During the fall migration very often the first flocks of certain species contain mainly, if not entirely, immature birds. The adults, perhaps delayed by renesting or moulting, follow in flocks days or weeks later. In the spring the male adults of a species such as Red-winged Blackbirds are the first to fly north and are not followed by the females for another two weeks or more.

## Sugaring Off – Gray Squirrel Style

*George M. Fairfield*

In the June, 1996 *Blue Bill* the writer described watching a Red Squirrel (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) tapping a Sugar Maple tree along the Rideau Trail. On the afternoon of March 28, 1999 I watched similar behaviour from a Gray Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*).

The Gray Squirrel was on a large old Silver Maple on the lawn at 41 Mackenzie Crescent in Kingston. Looking out the window I saw the squirrel hanging on the underside of a four centimetre diameter branch three metres above the ground apparently drinking sap which was dripping from the branch. The branch sloped gently downward toward the main trunk and while most of the sap was dripping to the ground some was flowing along the underside of the branch and evaporating on the bark of the trunk.

In my earlier report on the Red Squirrel I had come to the conclusion that the squirrel was licking the maple "taffy" which resulted from the evaporation of the sap, rather than drinking the sap itself. This confirmed Heinrich's (1992) observations of Red Squirrels in western Maine.

In the present case it appeared that the squirrel was drinking from a fresh supply of sap which was flowing plentifully from the branch and dripping to the ground, rather than licking the maple taffy on the main trunk of the tree.

The following morning I took a ladder and examined the branch. The tapping of the tree was different than that done by the Red Squirrel. The Red Squirrel had tapped the upper side of the branch making "cuts ...about 20mm long by 2 mm wide ... just penetrating the outer bark". The cuts were about 30cm or more apart.

The Gray Squirrel had made the cuts on the side of the branch apparently using a single penetrating stab of the incisors through the bark. This left a flap of bark still attached to the branch like a little trap door capable of being closed back over the cut. The cuts were much closer together than those of the Red Squirrel, there being seven within one metre. The sap was still running freely from the cuts.

The tapping of trees must be common Gray Squirrel behaviour during the "sugaring-off" period of the year. It is therefore amazing to me that this is the first time I have observed it in over 60 years of casual squirrel watching. It is not a thing you can easily miss. It is a surprising sight to see a squirrel hanging by its four feet beneath a branch with the sap dripping all around it! Perhaps readers of the *Blue Bill* can report similar observations. Mail them to the *Blue Bill* and/or to G. Fairfield, c/o Mary Beacock, 41 Mackenzie Crescent, Kingston ON, K7M 2S2.

**References:**

Fairfield, G. (1996). Sugaring Off - Red Squirrel Style. *Blue Bill*, Vol. 43(2):90.

Heinrich, B. (1992). Maple Sugaring by Red Squirrels. *Journal of Mammology*, Vol. 73(1).

# KINGSTON FIELD NATURALISTS
## INCOME STATEMENT
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1999

**REVENUE**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| DONATIONS RECEIVED | 2,074.62 | |
| GRAZING - AMHERST ISLAND | 1,900.00 | |
| INTEREST INCOME | 5,828.18 | |
| MAY DINNER MEETING | 1,660.00 | |
| MEMBERSHIPS | 8,626.30 | |
| OTHER INCOME | 80.00 | |
| SALES | 1,822.72 | |
| TAX REBATES | 164.76 | |
| TOTAL REVENUES | | 22,156.58 |

**EXPENSES**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ADMINISTRATION | 355.67 | |
| AWARDS | 76.77 | |
| BANK CHARGES | 20.74 | |
| BLUE BILL | 3,208.26 | |
| DONATIONS | 1,200.00 | |
| INSURANCE | 755.00 | |
| INVENTORY PURCHASE | 848.76 | |
| JUNIORS | 762.97 | |
| MAY DINNER MEETING | 1,587.50 | |
| MEMBERSHIP EXPENSES | 829.47 | |
| PUBLICITY | 84.23 | |
| RENT - MEETING ROOMS | 839.42 | |
| SPEAKERS | 40.23 | |
| SUBSCRIPTIONS/MEMBERSHIPS | 297.00 | |
| TAX-PROPERTY | 3,723.20 | |
| TELEPHONE LINE | 403.92 | |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | | 15,033.14 |
| SURPLUS | | 7,123.44 |

## KINGSTON FIELD NATURALISTS
## BALANCE SHEET
## FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 1999

**ASSETS**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BANK ACCOUNT | 9,331.67 * | |
| WOOD GUNDY ACCT | 361.36 | |
| ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE | 799.50 | |
| FEDERAL GOV'T BOND | 12,999.42 | |
| ONTARIO HYDRO BOND | 39,999.68 | |
| GMAC BOND | 27,638.64 | |
| PROPERTY | 120,800.00 | |
| EQUIPMENT | 1,144.99 | |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 213,075.26 |

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| EQUITY | | |
| MARION WEBB FUND | 28,000.00 | |
| HABITAT PRESERVATION FUND | 9,232.00 | |
| MEMBERS' EQUITY | 175,843.26 | |
| TOTAL EQUITY | | 213,075.26 ** |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY** | | 213,075.26 |

**NOTES**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| * | Bank Balance - March 31, 1998 | 9,500.57 |
| | Deposits | + 16,893.45 |
| | Withdrawals | - 17,062.35 |
| | Bank Balance - March 31, 1999 | 9,331.67 |
| ** | Total Equity - March 31, 1998 | 205,951.82 |
| | Surplus on 1998-1999 operations | 7,123.44 |
| | Total Equity - March 31, 1999 | 213,075.26 |

We have reviewed the bank statements together with the supporting documents. We find the above statements accurately reflect the financial position of the Kingston Field Naturalists for the year ended March 31, 1999.

Jacqueline Maria Bartnik

Jacqueline Bartnik

Karen J. Stinson

Karen Stinson