



The Blue Bill

Quarterly Journal of the Kingston Field Naturalists

ISSN 0382-5655

Volume 53, No. 4

December 2006

Contents

President's Page	<i>Hugh Evans</i>125
Kingston Field Naturalists 2006 Yearly Summary of Odonata	<i>Kurt Hennige</i>126
15 October 2006 Field Trip to Wolfe Island	<i>Bud Rowe</i>129
Teen Spelunking Trip	<i>Joshua Topper Lockwood</i>130
Butterfly Summary 2006	<i>Bruce Ripley</i>131
<i>The Blue Bill</i> Contents Indexed	<i>Shirley French</i>133
2006 Fall Round-up—4–5 November 2006	<i>Ron D. Weir</i>134
Ferns That Walk	<i>Terry Sprague</i>140
Fungi/Photography Field Trip at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area—24 September 2006	<i>Rose-Marie Burke</i>141
Teen Monarch Tagging Trip	<i>Linden Noble</i>143
Well-Travelled Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Bird Studies Canada</i>143
Autumn Season—1 August–30 November 2006	<i>Ron D. Weir</i>144
Otters, A Pileated Woodpecker, Wild Turkeys, A Dearth of Crows	<i>Terry Fuchs</i>147
Notes on Natural History, No. 345, December 14, 1966	<i>Helen R. Quilliam</i>151

2006/2007 Officers & Committees

President: **Hugh Evans**
230 Collingwood Street
Kingston, ON K7L 3X8
613-546-9145
evans@sno.phy.queensu.ca

Vice-President: **Chris Grooms**
4388 Florida Road, RR #3
Harrowsmith, ON K0H 1V0
613-386-7969
cgrooms@kingston.net

Past President: **Erwin Batalla**
1922 Spooner Road
Elginburg, ON K0H 1M0
613-542-2048
alerwin@kos.net

Treasurer: **George Irwin**
91 Point St. Mark Drive
Kingston, ON K7K 6X8
613-544-3585
gjirwin@kingston.net

Recording Secretary: **Rose-Marie Burke**
2499 Perth Road, Box 44
Glenburnie, ON K0H 1S0
613-549-7583 (winter)
613-353-2463 (summer)
rmbehr@istar.ca

Membership Secretary: **John Critchley**
760 Meadowood Road
Kingston, ON K7M 5G5
613-634-5475
sharjohn.critchley@sympatico.ca

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

KFN Information Line: (613) 389-8338
Website: <http://www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org>

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

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

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement
#047128

Junior Naturalists Coordinator:
Anne Robertson
12 Lakeshore Blvd.
Kingston, ON K7M 4J6
613-389-6742
n8ture.anne@sympatico.ca

Ontario Nature Representative:
Jackie Bartnik
104 Point St. Mark Drive
Kingston, ON K7K 6X8
613-531-3736
thegrump@kos.net

Editor, *The Blue Bill*:
Susie Rance
4388 Florida Road, RR #3
Harrowsmith, ON K0H 1V0
613-386-7969
susie.rance@queensu.ca

Committee Chairpersons

Nature Reserves	Mike Evans	613-542-4845	evans-m@rmc.ca
Education	Shirley French	613-548-8617	french_shirley@hotmail.com
Speakers	Chris Grooms	613-386-7969	cgrooms@kingston.net
Conservation	Elaine Farragher	613-544-9106	elaine@sources.com
Bird Records	Ron Weir	613-549-5274	weirr@rmc.ca
Publicity	John Diemer	613-389-9451	diemer@sympatico.ca
Field Trips	Kurt Hennige	613-386-7048	khennige@allstream.net
Member-at-large	Gaye Beckwith	613-376-3716	beckwith@kingston.net
Member-at-large	Howard Bridger	613-549-1208	howardbridger@yahoo.ca
Member-at-large	Peter McIntyre	613-548-4738	klamp@sympatico.ca



President's Page

Hugh Evans

In the September issue of *The Blue Bill*, I reported on activities to improve the cattle watering system on the KFN property on Amherst Island. Since then, a number of improvements have been implemented. A relay, controlled by the water level switch in the tank, has been installed. The pump is now immersed about a foot above the bottom of the well rather than floating on the surface of the water. These changes have substantially reduced the length of the electrical wiring and increased the efficiency of the system. I would like to thank Jim Whitton, Janet Scott, and Bonnie Livingstone, KFN members residing on Amherst Island, for monitoring the watering system over the past few months. I am happy to report that there have been no problems since early September. By the time you read this report, the tank will have been emptied and drain holes knocked through the side to prevent accumulation of water in the bottom which could cause damage when it freezes.

In October, Chris Grooms and several other members of the KFN met with Earling Armsen and Rick Robb of Ducks Unlimited to inspect the Amherst Island property. There is concern about the condition of the berm that holds back the pond and about the weir that serves to regulate the water levels. Ducks Unlimited wants to bring out equipment to shore up the berm. It is proposed that the weir will be modified by installing valves that would simplify regulation of the water levels. The KFN has agreed to contribute \$500 towards the cost of the valves. The recent rains have raised the water level in the pond to about two feet below the top of the berm, and the discharge through the control structure is quite impressive. The good news is that the berm appears to be holding well.

It is interesting to note that it is 20 years since the 100-hectare Amherst Island property was purchased by the KFN, with financial assistance from Wildlife Habitat Canada. The 30-year agreement with Ducks Unlimited to build and maintain the berm was reached the following year. We are truly indebted to the farsighted members of the KFN who undertook the purchase of the Amherst Island nature reserve.

Substantial progress has been made towards establishing the KFN scholarship fund for undergraduate students working at the Queen's University Biological Station. Donations to the scholarship fund and memorial donations which have been added to the fund amount to about \$4,000. In spite of repeated efforts by Chris Grooms, we have been unable to obtain funding from outside sources. A proposal from the Executive to contribute monies from the general funds to bring the scholarship fund up to \$15,000 was approved at the November general meeting. At an initial meeting with Queen's Advancement personnel, a tentative name and terms of reference for the award have been agreed upon. The name is:

*The Kingston Field Naturalists'
Student Fund for the Queen's University
Biological Station*



Entrance to Queen's University Biological Station
Photo by Adrian Searle for Thomas E. Blood, Architect

The general terms of reference are:

Established in November 2006 by the Kingston Field Naturalists in memory of Dr. Robert Stewart, microbiologist at Queen's University.

Awarded by the Department of Biology to an undergraduate student studying conservation science or natural history at the Queen's University Biology Station.

There is every prospect that the first award from the fund can be made in 2007. This may be the first time a field naturalist club in Ontario has established a post-secondary award.

Hugh Evans

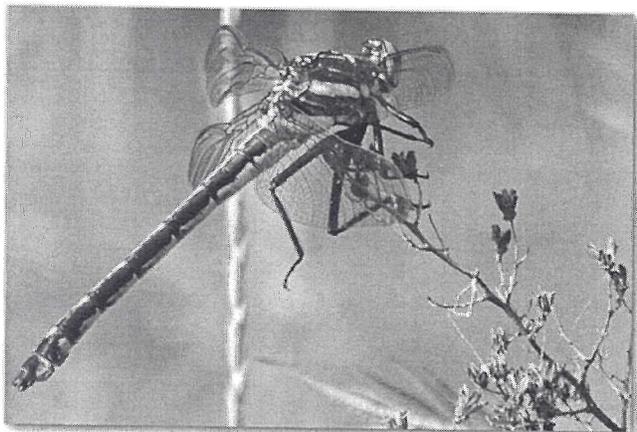
Kingston Field Naturalists 2006 Yearly Summary of Odonata

Kurt Hennige

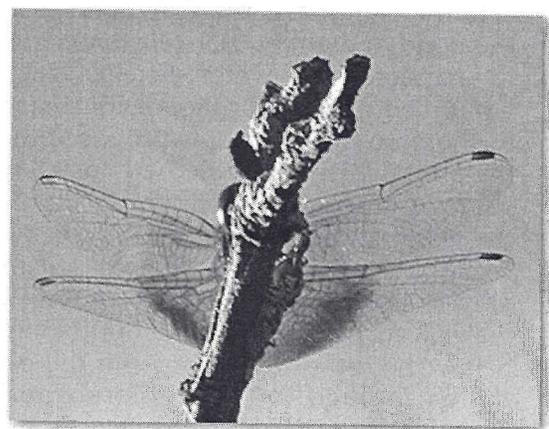
There were 59 species of odonates reported during 2006. Eight species were new to the Kingston area. The area covered for this summary is a semicircle with a radius of 50 kilometres, centred at 44 degrees, 12 minutes north and 76 degrees, 29 minutes west. The northern limit of the circle is located in the Westport area and the southern limit is represented by the international border with the United States. The circle extends from the Rockport area in the east to the Marysville area in the west. The circle contains the southern portions of Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Counties, as well as a portion of south-

western Leeds County, the extreme south-eastern tip of Hastings County and a small portion of eastern Prince Edward County.

The total number of odonates reported for this area increased to 68 species. Large gaps still exist in our knowledge of the diversity and distribution of odonates in the Kingston area. For a list of species suspected to occur in our area, see the checklist for Damselflies and Dragonflies of Kingston, at <http://www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/checklists/dragonflies.pdf>.



Dragonhunter



Band-winged Meadowhawk

Photos by Kurt Hennige

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance	Location(s)
Broad-Winged Damselflies — Family Calopterygidae			
River Jewelwing	<i>Calopteryx aequabilis</i> *	3 records	local on Salmon River
Ebony Jewelwing	<i>Calopteryx maculata</i>	common	widespread on flowing water
Spreadwings — Family Lestidae			
Spotted Spreadwing	<i>Lestes congener</i>	3 records	ASL, HQS,
Northern Spreadwing	<i>Lestes disjunctus disjunctus</i>	3 records	Salmon River, Shield
Emerald Spreadwing	<i>Lestes dryas</i> * (new)	1 record	Amherst Island
Elegant Spreadwing	<i>Lestes inequalis</i>	2 records	HQS, Cranberry Lake
Slender Spreadwing	<i>Lestes rectangularis</i>	2 records	Parrott's Bay, Opinicon Road
Lyre-tipped Spreadwing	<i>Lestes unguiculatus</i> * (new)	2 records	HQS, Piccadilly
Swamp Spreadwing	<i>Lestes vigilax</i> *	2 records	Parrott's Bay
Pond Damselflies — Family Coenagrionidae			
Violet Dancer	<i>Argia fumipennis violacea</i>	common	widespread
Powdered Dancer	<i>Argia moesta</i> *	common	widespread
Taiga Bluet	<i>Coenagrion resolutum</i>	1 record	Lost Lake
Tule Bluet	<i>Enallagma carunculatum</i>	common	Lake Ontario Shoreline
Familiar Blue	<i>Enallagma civile</i> *	common	widespread
Marsh Bluet	<i>Enallagma eribium</i>	common	widespread south of Shield
Stream Bluet	<i>Enallagma exsulans</i>	3 records	Salmon River
Skimming Bluet	<i>Enallagma geminatum</i> *	common	Parrotts Bay, Wiltse Creek
Hagen's Bluet	<i>Enallagma hageni</i>	3 records	Tamworth, Charleston Lake
Orange Bluet	<i>Enallagma signatum</i>	common	Parrott's Bay, Wiltse Creek
Vesper Bluet	<i>Enallagma vesperum</i> *	3 records	Charleston, Loughborough, Salmon Lakes
Fragile Forktail	<i>Ischnura posita</i>	uncommon	Gould Lk, Parrott's Bay, Salmon R.
Eastern Forktail	<i>Ischnura verticali</i>	common	widespread
Sedge Sprite	<i>Nehalennia irene</i>	2 records	Lost Lake
Darners — Family Aeshnidae			
Canada Darner	<i>Aeshna canadensis</i>	common	widespread
Lance-tipped Darner	<i>Aeshna constricta</i>	3 records	Salmon River, Amherst I.
Black-tipped Darner	<i>Aeshna tuberculifera</i> * (new)	1 record	Opinicon Rd. (Pangman Tr.)
Shadow Darner	<i>Aeshna umbrosa</i> * (new)	uncommon	Parrott's Bay, Charleston Lk.
Common Green Darner	<i>Anax junius</i>	common	widespread
Fawn Darner	<i>Boyeria vinosa</i>	uncommon	Napanee & Salmon River
Clubtails — Family Gomphidae			
Black-Shouldered Spinyleg	<i>Dromogomphus spinosus</i>	common	widespread
Lancet Clubtail	<i>Gomphus exilis</i>	common	Depot Lakes, Charleston Lake
Dusky Clubtail	<i>Gomphus spicatus</i>	1 record	Third Depot Lake
Dragonhunter	<i>Hagenius brevistylus</i>	uncommon	Salmon R., Charleston Lake
Eastern Least Clubtail	<i>Stylogomphus albistylus</i> * (new)	3 records	local on Salmon River

Common name	Scientific name	Abundance	Location(s)
Cruisers — Family Macromiidae			
Stream Cruiser	<i>Didymops transversa</i>	1 record	Charleston Lake
Emeralds — Family Corduliidae			
American Emerald	<i>Cordulia shurtleffi</i>	3 records	HQS, Third Depot Lake
Racket-tailed Emerald	<i>Dorocordulia libera</i> *	2 records	Gananoque, Third Depot Lakes
Common Baskettail	<i>Epiheca cynosure</i>	2 records	HQS, Lost Lake
Prince Baskettai	<i>Epiheca prince</i>	uncommon	Charleston Lake, Opinicon Road
Uhler's Sundragon	<i>Helocordulia uhleri</i> *	1 record	Second Depot Lakes Cons. Area
Skimmers — Family Libellulidae			
Calico Pennant	<i>Celithemis elisa</i>	common	widespread
Halloween Pennant	<i>Celithemis eponina</i>	common	widespread
Common Pondhawk	<i>Erythemis simplicicollis</i>	common	widespread
Chalk-fronted Corporal	<i>Ladona (Libellula) Julia</i>	common	widespread
Frosted Whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia frigida</i> *	common	Lost Lake, Depot Lakes
Dot-tailed Whiteface	<i>Leucorrhinia intacta</i>	common	widespread
Slaty Skimmer	<i>Libellula incesta</i>	common	widespread
Widow Skimmer	<i>Libellula luctuosa</i>	common	widespread
Twelve-spotted Skimmer	<i>Libellula pulchella</i>	common	widespread
Four-spotted Skimmer	<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	2 records	Lost Lake, Third Depot Lake
Blue Dasher	<i>Pachydiplax longipennis</i>	common	widespread away from Shield
Wandering Glider	<i>Pantala flavescens</i> (new)	uncommon	Amherst Island, PEPT
Eastern Amberwing	<i>Perithemis tenera</i> * (new)	1 record	Cranberry Lake
Common Whitetail	<i>Plathemis (Libellula) Lydia</i>	common	widespread
Cherry-faced Meadowhawk	<i>Sympetrum internum</i>	1 record	Croyden
White-faced Meadowhawk	<i>Sympetrum obtrusum</i>	common	widespread
Band-winged Meadowhawk	<i>Sympetrum semicinctum</i> * (new)	uncommon	Parrott's Bay, Salmon River
Autumn Meadowhawk	<i>Sympetrum vicinum</i>	common	widespread
Black Saddlebags	<i>Tramea lacerata</i>	uncommon	Amherst Island, PEPT

*considered provincially or regionally rare.

Location abbreviations

ASL—Amherstview Sewage Lagoon;
 HQS—Helen Quilliam Sanctuary;
 PEPT—Prince Edward Point

Contributors

D. Bree, K. Hennige, V.P. Mackenzie, T. Norris, B. Ripley, M. Runtz, C. Seymour, M. Seymour

References

Ontario Odonata Database 2006.

<http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/odonates/atlas.html>

Field guides

Lam, Ed, 2004, *Damselflies of the Northeast*. Forest Hill, New York, Biodiversity Books.

Mead, Kurt, 2003, *Dragonflies of the North Woods*. Duluth, MN, Kollath-Stensaas Publishing.

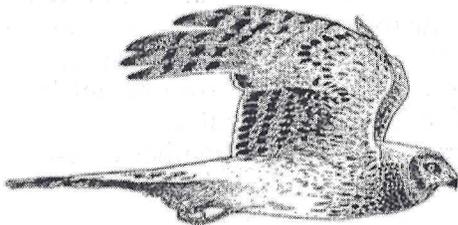
Nikula, Blair, and Sones, Jackie, with Stokes, Donald & Lillian, 2002, *Stokes Beginner Guide to Dragonflies*. Boston, MA, Little, Brown and Company.

15 October 2006 Field Trip to Wolfe Island

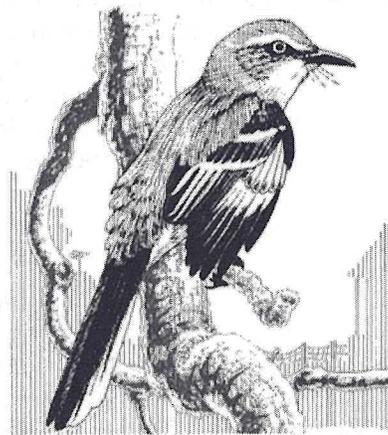
Bud Rowe

Thirteen keen birders took the 0715 ferry to Wolfe Island on a cool Sunday morning (7 to 8 degrees), with light winds and a mix of sun and cloud throughout the day. Birding from the ferry produced our starting list including Common Loons, Double-crested Cormorants, Ring-billed Gulls, Herring Gulls, Red-breasted Mergansers, Greater Scaup and Mallards.

After adjusting passenger loads a bit in Marysville, we headed west along the north shore, pausing now and then to check out small flocks of passerines along the roadside or in the shrubbery, and any waterfowl that we could see when the road came near the lake. Activity was light, but all the "usual suspects" were seen (American Robin, Mourning Dove, European Starling, Rock Pigeon, House Sparrow, American Crow, etc.), with the addition of Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead and Common Merganser. There was nothing to write home about until we approached the end of the highway at Sand Bay Road, where we paused to scan the lake and the adjacent fields, which had a lot of standing water from the recent rains. Some keen eyes picked out some movement in the fields and a number of 'scopes were set up, producing our first shorebirds of the trip: Least Sandpiper, Killdeer and Wilson's Snipe. A short distance further as we headed south on Sand Bay Road, we found thirteen Black-bellied Plovers. (We tried, though in vain, to turn at least one of them into an American Golden Plover.)



Encouraged by this success, we headed for Reed's Bay, picking up a Merlin, Northern Harriers and Red-tailed Hawks en route. Expecting to find more shorebirds, we were disappointed, except for one lone Greater Yellowlegs which flew past, but we also added four Mute Swans to our list.

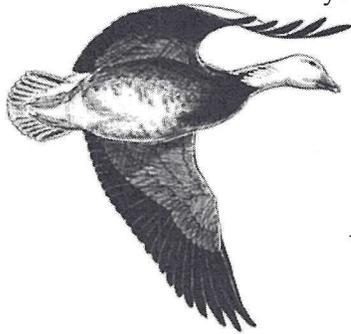


We moved on to the Big Sandy Bay parking area where we were met by Erwin Batalla and Sandra Simmons, who had got separated from our group earlier. They had managed to find a juvenile Northern Mockingbird which we were all able to see as well. The road through the marsh leading to Big Sandy Bay added only a few more species, including both kinglets and a Swamp Sparrow.

Our next main stop was at Button Bay, where we added Pied-billed Grebe and several duck species, including a few Redheads and Canvasbacks among large rafts of Greater Scaup which were staying well away from the shore and hunters' blinds. We had been scanning large flocks of Canada Geese as we travelled along the many fields en route to Button Bay, hoping to find a white goose among them, but were unlucky until sharp-eyed Erwin spotted a small flight of four geese a short distance after leaving Button Bay. One of the four was

smaller, with a white head—a blue morph Snow Goose!

Other places we visited included the Horne's ferry dock, Carpenter Point Road, and the South Shore Road, and, after leaving the island, a few of us visited the Little Catarqui Creek area off King Street to add Ruddy Ducks to our overall total of 73 species for the day. Other species seen but not



mentioned above included Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Gadwall, American Black Duck, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Ring-necked Duck, Lesser Scaup, White-winged Scoter, Am-

erican Coot, accipiter (sp), American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Bonaparte's Gull, Belted Kingfisher, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Phoebe, Blue-headed Vireo, Blue Jay, Common Raven, Tree Swallow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, American Pipit, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Common Yellow-throat, Chipping Sparrow, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Northern Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, and Eastern Meadowlark.

All in all, it was a pretty good day. Thanks to all who participated.

Teen Spelunking Trip

Joshua Topper Lockwood (13)

On October 14th, 2006, the leaders Anne and Diane and the Teen naturalists Fenris, Kenneth, Katie, Amy, Linden, Sarah, and Joshua met at 9:00 by Tim Hortons to go on a trip to learn about karst topography. The weather did not look promising, with a temperature of 8 degrees, cloudy skies, light winds and rain, but everybody had brought proper clothing and the rain did not dampen our spirits. Before departing, we discussed what we would be doing and what a scuttlehole was (a hole in the rock that water passes through). We arrived at 10:30 at the karst. A karst is a land feature where water works its way through limestone, eroding it as it passes. Before exploring the riverbeds, we discussed safety measures. The teens made a list of dangers we encountered. When complete, it looked like this: poison ivy, stinging nettle, thistles, buckthorn, prickly ash, cliffs, loose rocks, overhangs, wet and slippery leaves or rocks, and cracks or holes in the trail. The Teens explored the riverbed, finding various fossils, looking at water passages, and observing various species of birds and plants

while doing so. Half an hour before lunch, the sun came out and blessed us with its warmth while we ate lunch. After lunch, we met up with an experienced spelunker named Gord at a property owned by a farmer. At the property, we went into a solution cave to experience it on the inside. A solution cave is formed by water eroding the rock. We went in two groups. The cave was generally open, though there were a few places where you had to go on hands and knees. We were very careful not to touch any of the unique rock formations or shine our lights at the bats hibernating in the cave. The two highlights of things we saw in the cave were: lava stone and another rock that looked like fool's gold but was actually bacteria growing on the rock. Although the cave continued for kilometres, the naturalists only went in a tiny fraction of that, due to time constraints and so as not to disturb the bats. There was a hailstorm after the second group went into the cave but the storm did not last long. The Teens came out looking tired and very muddy but altogether pleased.

Butterfly Summary 2006

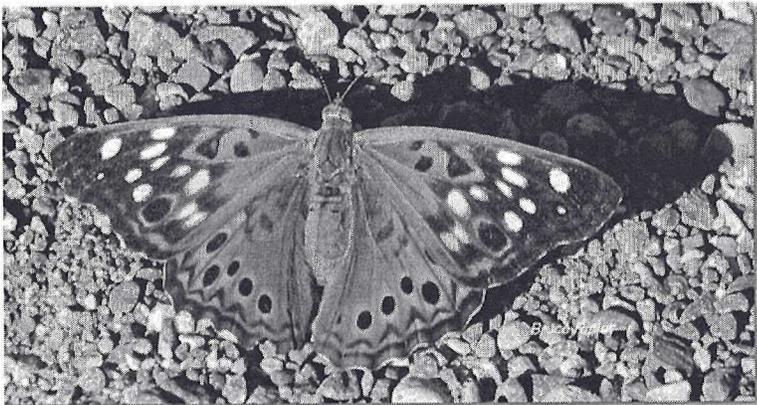
Bruce Ripley

Most people who enjoy observing nature are familiar with the Tiger Swallowtail commonly seen during the spring and early summer. The aptly named Tiger Swallowtail is a very large, conspicuous yellow butterfly with black stripes which many people see at their cottage or sometimes in their city backyard. In Ontario, there are two types of Tiger Swallowtails, the Canadian Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio canadensis*) which is prevalent here in Kingston, and the Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (*Papilio glaucus*). Up until 1991, the two were considered a single species. *Glaucus* is the only one that has a rare black morph female in Ontario. One difficulty with the field identification is that the two species sometimes hybridize in a zone of transition so there can be some variation with field marks with some individuals. Fortunately (or so I thought), the two species in Ontario are easily separated by range, with *glaucus* being found only in southwestern Ontario in the Carolinian zone and *canadensis* being found within the Canadian Shield. A few years ago, when closely examining Tiger Swallowtails along Opinicon Road in late summer, I noticed that some of the swallowtails seemed to have the characteristics of *glaucus*. The width of the black band along the anal margin of the hindwing seemed narrow, and at the lower end of this black band, where it connects with the thin black line from the middle of the hindwing seemed more "U"-shaped rather than "V"-shaped, which are characteristics of *glaucus*. These field marks are well illustrated in

The Butterflies of Canada by Hall, Lafontaine & Layberry. One saving tidbit of information regarding the two species is that *canadensis* is single-brooded with a flight season ending around early to mid-July. *Glaucus* is double-brooded, so one can assume that any Tiger Swallowtail observed from late July onwards is probably *glaucus*. Close examination is required to nail down the identification to exact species, and some individuals might have to be left unidentified even though the vast majority we see in spring are *canadensis*.

For 2006, fifty-four species of butterflies were observed in the Kingston area, with three new species (including Eastern Tiger Swallowtail) added. New sightings for the checklist are Green Comma (*Polygonia faunus*) and Hackberry Emperor (*Asterocampa celtis*). Look for Hackberry Emperors during mid-summer by looking for their host plant, the Hackberry tree (*Celtis occidentalis*), a rare plant in eastern Ontario, usually found along river banks. There are a few groves of Hackberry trees located along the Salmon and Moira Rivers. One of the largest and most elegant species, the Giant Swallowtail (*Papilio cresphontes*) was sighted just a few kilometres outside our 50-kilometre circle, with multiple sightings in Prince Edward County, and it should be looked for in our area. On a final note, Monarchs enjoyed a very successful year across North America as compared to the extremely low numbers of 2004.

For information on butterfly identification or to report sightings, contact me at 613-384-6392 or ripley@kingston.net. A complete checklist of the butterflies of Kingston can be obtained as a PDF file from the KFN website: <http://www.kingstonfielddnaturalists.org/checklists/butterflies.pdf>.



Hackberry Emperor
Photo by Bruce Ripley

Reported Butterfly Sightings For 2006

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number Recorded
<i>Thorybes pylades</i>	Northern Cloudywing	30
<i>Erynnis juvenalis</i>	Juvenal's Duskywing	28
<i>Erynnis lucilius</i>	Columbine Duskywing	11
<i>Ancyloxypha numitor</i>	Least Skipper	50
<i>Thymelicus lineola</i>	European Skipper	>100
<i>Hesperia leonardus</i>	Leonard's Skipper	16
<i>Hesperia sassacus</i>	Indian Skipper	3
<i>Polites themistocles</i>	Tawny-Edged Skipper	6
<i>Polites mystic</i>	Long Dash	13
<i>Wallengrenia egeremet</i>	Northern Broken Dash	18
<i>Poanes hobomok</i>	Hobomok Skipper	8
<i>Poanes viator</i>	Broad-Winged Skipper	2
<i>Anatrytone logan</i>	Delaware Skipper	2
<i>Euphyes vestris</i>	Dun Skipper	25
<i>Papilio polyxenes</i>	Black Swallowtail	>100
<i>Papilio canadensis</i>	Canadian Tiger Swallowtail	9
<i>Pieris oleracea</i>	Mustard White	6
<i>Pieris virginianensis</i>	West Virginia White	13
<i>Pieris rapae</i>	Cabbage White	>100
<i>Euchloe Olympia</i>	Olympia Marble	1
<i>Colias philodice</i>	Clouded Sulphur	>100
<i>Colias eurytheme</i>	Orange Sulphur	58
<i>Feniseca tarquinius</i>	The Harvester	1
<i>Lycaena hyllus</i>	Bronze Copper	15
<i>Satyrium calanus</i>	Banded Hairstreak	1
<i>Satyrium liparops</i>	Striped Hairstreak	3
<i>Callophrys henrici</i>	Henry's Elphin	1
<i>Callophrys niphon</i>	Eastern Pine Elphin	6
<i>Everes comyntas</i>	Eastern Tailed Blue	>100
<i>Celastrina ladon</i>	Spring Azure	14
<i>Celastrina neglecta</i>	Summer Azure	12
<i>Glaucopsyche lygdamus</i>	Silvery Blue	85
<i>Speyeria cybele</i>	Great Spangled Fritillary	8
<i>Boloria bellona</i>	Meadow Fritillary	3
<i>Phyciodes cocyta</i>	Northern Crescent	>100
<i>Phyciodes tharos</i>	Pearl Crescent	3
<i>Polygonia interrogationis</i>	Question Mark	5
<i>Polygonia comma</i>	Eastern Comma	6
<i>Polygonia faunus</i>	Green Comma	1
<i>Polygonia progne</i>	Gray Comma	4
<i>Nymphalis vaualbum</i>	Compton Tortoiseshell	2
<i>Nymphalis antiopa</i>	Mourning Cloak	10
<i>Nymphalis milberti</i>	Milbert's Tortoiseshell	4
<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	Red Admiral	5
<i>Vanessa virginiensis</i>	American Lady	4
<i>Limenitis arthemis</i>	White Admiral	10
<i>Limenitis archippus</i>	Viceroy	15
<i>Asterocampa celtis</i>	Hackberry Emperor	1
<i>Enodia anthedon</i>	Northern Pearly-Eye	4
<i>Satyroides eurydice</i>	Eyed Brown	8
<i>Megisto cymela</i>	Little Wood Satyr	52
<i>Coenonympha tullia</i>	Common Ringlet	>100
<i>Cercyonis pegala</i>	Common Wood-Nymph	>100
<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Monarch	>100

The Blue Bill Contents Indexed

Shirley French

Before departing Canada for a year, I passed the KFN Education files over to Fiona Poland for 2005-2006. On this occasion, I arrived at a typical front doorstep to drop off the files and was surprised when I was welcomed into the Polands' backyard; it was more a nature retreat. Fiona kindly showed me around their garden where we admired the green frog sitting in their pond, the many interesting plants along the pond's edge, and the oak tree their daughter had planted when she was a child. John Poland was saying that their backyard pond had become so popular with amphibians last summer that he's convinced the frogs don't sleep (and perhaps he didn't either).

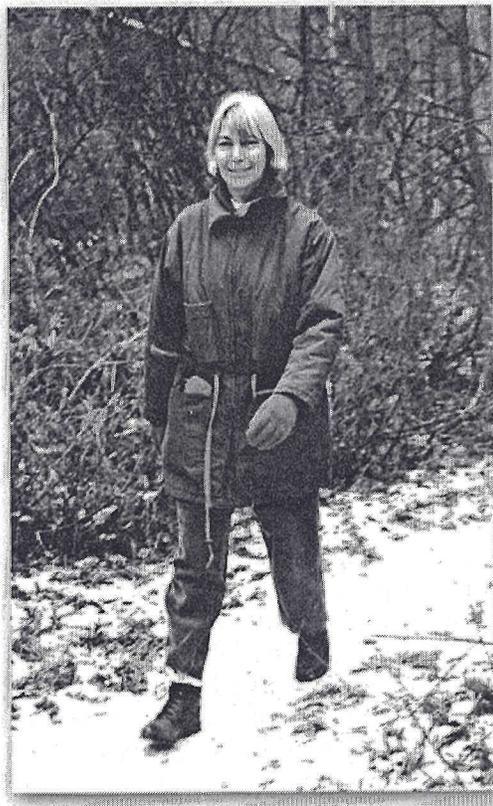
Despite Fiona's struggle with cancer throughout this past year, she was able to go through all of the KFN *Blue Bill* publications and put the titles of all articles into an index in PDF format. We now have a terrific resource which consists of 70 pages of article titles, dating back as far as 1954. John said that Fiona enjoyed reading many of the articles and learned a great deal going through the publications.

To download the index from our website, go to www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org, click the **Publications** link, then the **Index of Blue Bill Articles by Subject** link. The PDF file called **bbi2005.pdf** will be downloaded to your computer, and should open in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Click the Bookmarks tab so that you can navigate through the index easily. You will find a list of subjects that are cross-listed. If the article of interest is about the Deerberry plant in the Thousand Islands, for example, look under the subjects *Botany* and *Flowering Plants*, or under *Places* and *Thousand Islands*. Archived copies of *The Blue Bill* may be found at the Queen's

Engineering and Science Library (1954 to present) and at the Kingston Frontenac Library (1994 to present). They may only be taken out of the public library.

I will continue to update the *Blue Bill* index and forward the additions to Gaye Beckwith who is working on keeping our website current.

The Executive greatly appreciates the work Fiona put into the *Blue Bill* index. Also, we would like to thank John Poland for his help retrieving the *Blue Bill* publications. We are also deeply saddened by John's loss and offer our thoughts.



Fiona Poland

The year through the lens . . . Pileated Woodpeckers in January



Photo by Gaye Beckwith

2006 Fall Round-up— 4–5 November 2006

Ron D. Weir

The 40th Kingston Field Naturalists' Fall Round-up took place between 1400h Saturday, 6 November and 1400h Sunday, 7 November. Participants numbered 25. During Saturday, sun and cloud made the birding very pleasant with brisk NW winds and temperature of 8°C prevailing. The overcast night produced showers that persisted inconsistently throughout Sunday, with temperatures varying from 1°C to 9°C and brisk SW winds.

A total of 127 species was realized, which is above the 36-year 1970–2005 average of 120. One new species, the Eurasian Wigeon, was added to the Count list, the cumulative total of which stands at 237 species. Noteworthy finds included the Pacific Loon (5th record), Lesser Black-backed Gull (4th record), Townsend's Solitaire (2nd record), Black-throated Blue Warbler (4th record), Palm Warbler (5th record), and Brewer's Blackbird (3rd record, last time 1994).

Species unique to parties are as follows:

Party # 1: Merlin, Greater Yellowlegs, Red-bellied Woodpecker

Party # 2: Brant, Eurasian Wigeon, Red-shouldered Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, White-rumped Sandpiper, Dunlin, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Belted Kingfisher, Northern Flicker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Winter Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Palm Warbler, Eastern Towhee, Vesper Sparrow, White-crowned Sparrow, Lapland Longspur, Rusty Blackbird

Party # 3: Northern Mockingbird, Chipping Sparrow

Party # 4: Pacific Loon, Glaucous Gull, Osprey, Townsend's Solitaire, Savannah Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird, Red Crossbill

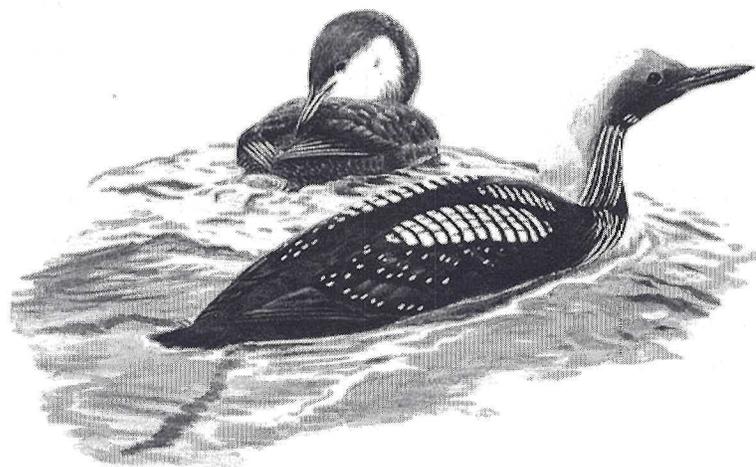
Party # 5: Golden Eagle, Little Gull

A record high number of 640 was tallied for the Tundra Swan.

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

The results provide a reasonable estimate of the numbers of birds found. The composition of the parties and the sites visited are given after the table. Following the 24-hour count, birders met at the home of Marian and Joel Ellis for the potluck supper. Marian and Joel were again great hosts and a warm thank-you is extended for their continued hospitality.

The assembly of the species list after dinner was greeted with fanfare and fun. The Art Bell Trophy, inaugurated in November 1992 for the party with highest species total on a Spring and Fall Round-up, was awarded to Party #2 which tallied 105 species. The runner-up, Party #4 at 89 species, was awarded the coveted Purple Vulture, which is a papier-mâché model of a species that even the latest American Ornithological Union list fails to recognize.



Species	Party Number					Total
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
Red-throated Loon	-	1	-	4	-	5
Pacific Loon	-	-	-	1	-	1
Common Loon	5	20	1	50	-	75
Pied-billed Grebe	2	10	6	15	-	25
Horned Grebe	-	15	-	55	-	80
Red-necked Grebe	-	1	-	2	-	3
Double-crested Cormorant	6	7	5	36	-	54
Great Blue Heron	2	5	1	2	-	10
Turkey Vulture	-	1	-	6	-	7
Snow Goose	-	1	2	-	-	3
Canada Goose	5000	4500	6220	1700	-	12000
Brant	-	1	-	-	-	1
Mute Swan	-	-	1	4	-	5
Tundra Swan	130	215	168	425	26	640
Wood Duck	-	-	-	2	-	2
Gadwall	50	200	84	335	-	500
Eurasian Wigeon	-	1	-	-	-	1
American Wigeon	16	150	397	365	-	800
American Black Duck	10	70	21	25	-	126
Mallard	1000	600	153	250	-	2000
Northern Shoveler	25	120	19	30	-	194
Northern Pintail	8	100	51	20	-	180
Green-winged Teal	1	25	21	12	-	59
Canvasback	-	1	1	1	-	1
Redhead	2000	140	1	85	-	2226
Ring-necked Duck	501	200	3000	300	-	3801
Greater Scaup	2000	5000	610	13650	-	21260
Lesser Scaup	-	210	3275	500	-	3985
Surf Scoter	-	1	2	9	-	12
White-winged Scoter	20	300	12	85	-	417
Black Scoter	-	15	-	4	-	19
Long-tailed Duck	4	1100	4	150	-	1258
Bufflehead	54	30	99	375	-	558
Common Goldeneye	35	10	5	75	-	125
Hooded Merganser	8	-	33	20	-	56
Common Merganser	12	10	22	65	-	109
Red-breasted Merganser	65	200	5	160	-	430

Species	Party Number					Total
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
Ruddy Duck	1	1	10	27	-	27
American Coot	10	30	104	30	-	174
Osprey	-	-	-	1	-	1
Bald Eagle	-	1	-	-	-	1
Northern Harrier	5	19	4	4	14	46
Cooper's Hawk	-	1	-	1	-	2
Red-shouldered Hawk	-	1	-	-	-	1
Red-tailed Hawk	4	1	4	5	5	19
Rough-legged Hawk	-	7	-	-	5	12
Golden Eagle	-	-	-	-	1	1
American Kestrel	-	1	4	-	2	7
Merlin	1	-	-	-	1	2
Ring-necked Pheasant	-	2	4	1	2	9
Ruffed Grouse	-	4	-	1	-	5
Wild Turkey	-	-	20	2	-	22
Killdeer	-	-	3	1	-	4
Greater Yellowlegs	1	-	-	-	-	1
Lesser Yellowlegs	3	-	-	1	-	4
White-rumped Sandpiper	-	1	-	-	-	1
Dunlin	-	21	-	-	1	22
American Woodcock	-	1	-	6	-	7
Little Gull	-	-	-	-	1	1
Bonaparte's Gull	150	220	100	300	-	770
Ring-billed Gull	200	50	205	425	-	885
Herring Gull	6	59	10	20	-	95
Lesser Black-backed Gull	-	1	-	-	-	1
Glaucous Gull	-	-	-	1	-	1
Greater Black-backed Gull	-	17	2	20	-	39
Rock Pigeon	50	120	85	4	-	259
Mourning Dove	12	27	19	80	-	136
Eastern Screech Owl	-	1	-	2	-	3
Great Horned Owl	-	1	-	1	-	2
Barred Owl	-	1	1	-	-	2
Long-eared Owl	1	7	-	-	15	15
Short-eared Owl	1	1	-	-	2	4
Northern Saw-whet Owl	-	1	-	-	3	4
Belted Kingfisher	-	1	-	-	-	1

Species	Party Number					Total
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	-	-	-	-	1
Downy Woodpecker	3	3	2	7	-	15
Hairy Woodpecker	2	5	1	2	-	10
Northern Flicker	-	2	-	-	-	2
Pileated Woodpecker	-	-	1	-	1	2
Eastern Phoebe	1	1	-	-	-	2
Northern Shrike	-	1	2	-	1	4
Blue Jay	5	40	12	32	-	89
American Crow	6	31	20	43	-	100
Common Raven	1	1	27	1	-	30
Horned Lark	20	15	12	-	-	30
Black-capped Chickadee	7	45	22	35	-	109
Red-breasted Nuthatch	-	1	-	-	-	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	4	3	5	8	-	20
Brown Creeper	-	2	-	10	-	12
Winter Wren	-	1	-	-	-	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	-	23	6	75	-	104
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	-	22	-	5	-	27
Townsend's Solitaire	-	-	-	1	-	1
Eastern Bluebird	-	5	-	-	-	5
Hermit Thrush	-	7	-	4	2	13
American Robin	90	2200	4	350	-	2644
Northern Mockingbird	-	-	1	-	-	1
European Starling	80	199	82	450	-	811
American Pipit	1	110	-	-	-	111
Cedar Waxwing	300	2025	2	800	-	3100
Black-throated Blue Warbler	-	-	-	1	-	1
Yellow-rumped Warbler	-	4	-	35	-	39
Palm Warbler	-	1	-	-	-	1
Eastern Towhee	-	1	-	-	-	1
American Tree Sparrow	65	80	26	25	-	196
Chipping Sparrow	-	-	1	-	-	1
Vesper Sparrow	-	1	-	-	-	1
Savannah Sparrow	-	-	-	1	-	1
Fox Sparrow	2	12	-	8	4	26
Song Sparrow	-	1	1	2	-	4
Swamp Sparrow	-	3	1	-	-	4

Species	Party Number					Total
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
White-throated Sparrow	1	5	3	7	-	16
White-crowned Sparrow	1	3	-	-	-	4
Dark-eyed Junco	44	25	18	45	-	132
Lapland Longspur	-	6	-	-	-	6
Snow Bunting	25	35	120	125	-	305
Northern Cardinal	1	7	1	5	-	14
Red-winged Blackbird	70	600	124	10000	-	10800
Rusty Blackbird	-	150	-	-	-	150
Brewer's Blackbird	-	-	-	1	-	1
Common Grackle	-	7	-	50	-	57
Brown-headed Cowbird	-	10	-	100	-	110
Purple Finch	-	8	-	10	-	18
House Finch	24	12	-	-	-	36
Red Crossbill	-	-	-	2	-	2
American Goldfinch	10	5	2	30	-	97
House Sparrow	23	210	70	4	-	307
Total Species	62	105	69	89	15	127
Participants	4	5	7	6	3	25

Participants

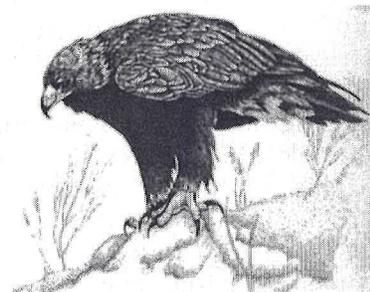
Party #1 Faith Avis, Marg Benson, Bea McMahon, Jay McMahon, (Amherst Island, Kingston area, Wolfe Island, Amherstview Sewage Lagoons)

Party #2 Lynn Bell, Chris Grooms, Kurt Hennige, Bruce Ripley, Mike Runtz (Prince Edward Point, Wolfe Island, Amherst Island, Elevator Bay, Parrott's Bay, Little Cataraqui Creek)

Party #3 Erwin Batalla, Betsy Beckwith, Gaye Beckwith, Hugh Evans, Sandra Simmons, Al Treganza, Shirley Treganza (Elevator Bay, Belle's Island, Wilmer dump & Sydenham, Cataraqui Conservation Area Division Street, Wolfe Island)

Party #4 Martin Edwards, Joel Ellis, Peter Good, Kathy Innes, Bud Rowe, Ron Weir (Prince Edward Point, Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, Kingston area, south shore Hay Bay, Sillsville, Morven Creek)

Party #5 Miscellaneous observers: Bruce DiLabio, Marion Ellis, Terry Sprague



Ferns That Walk

Terry Sprague

Some of us in the Kingston area received over 200 mm of rain in the month of October. This was followed by another 100 mm in November, with one very memorable day, at least to us, anyhow, in our normally drought-stricken area of Prince Edward County, receiving over 70 mm in just one day. But do you remember one year earlier, on November 24th, when a major snowfall blanketed much of the area?

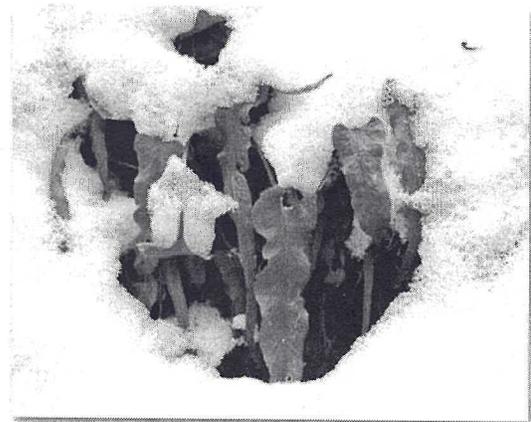
At first, it didn't seem like the most appropriate day to explore the famous Hell Holes north of Napanee. The first major snowfall of the season had left close to 15 cm of snow in the parking lot and we had a three-kilometre hike ahead of us, and the snow was still falling lightly. However, it was difficult to imagine anyone staying indoors on a day like this, with the boughs of the trees draped in snow, and fresh tracks indicating that at least the Cottontail Rabbits agreed with us.

At this location, just southeast of the village of Roblin, there are remnants of a distant past. At Roblin, the Salmon River meanders through a swamp of silver maples, having just travelled through the community of Croydon. But several million years ago, it is believed the Salmon River took a different route, through where we were now exploring, leaving behind a spectacular karst, including one opening that takes you down into a seven-metre-deep cavern. As the water surged through this valley, it swirled and dissolved the limestone into this karst, leaving behind an intricate pattern of rough, scalloped terrain, accented by enormous overhanging ledges, gullies, potholes and sinkholes. We can see something similar to this at the Scuttleholes along the Moira River in the Plainfield area, but not nearly as impressive as what we were now witnessing. Now covered in

snow, it was a challenge to negotiate the gullies and hillsides.

Some plants were still in evidence, the greens of ferns filtering through the layer of snow that covered them. Unlike the Bead or Sensitive Fern that surrenders to the first light frost of the season, these were the so-called evergreen ferns that had not succumbed to the cold snow. Most of us are familiar with at least one of these, the Christmas Fern, which retains its rich, vibrant green leaves through much of the winter.

It is difficult to say whether the ferns we saw are descendants of some of those that grew here when a river ran through the area. Likely not, as many of the early ferns have become extinct. The ancient lineage of ferns, and relatively few numbers of orders, families, genera and species, make them interesting subjects of study. After all, there are only 10,000 species in the entire world! Compare that to over 300,000 species of seed-bearing plants. How long can it take to sort out a few ferns?



Walking Fern in winter

Source: <http://www.ontarioferns.com/main/>

The snow hadn't covered all vegetation. One huge pillar rock, capped in snow, contained a few pieces of vegetation that dangled down along the bare edges. There were mosses, and the dead leaves of unidentifiable plants, and some withering grasses. Then we saw it: the unmistakable leaves of the Walking Fern, a colony so large as to give the impression on the rounded surface of this rock of an ill-fitting hairpiece. Here is an example of a genus containing only two species in the world, and one of those grows in northeastern Asia. Certainly not difficult to identify through the process of elimination.

The Walking Fern is a good example of an evergreen fern, for were it not, we likely wouldn't have spotted its narrow leaves protruding from the snow. While it doesn't walk in the true sense, it does send out rootlets from the tips of the leaves the moment a leaf touches the surface of the rock. From this rooted leaf, more long, narrow, fine-pointed, arching leaves radiate out from their new rootstock, and the plant continues its march along the surface to new territory. It seems to prefer the faces of limestone cliffs, although I have seen it

growing on stone outcroppings at Deroche Lake, east of Thomasburg, but never in such numbers as encountered at the Hell Holes.

This is a fascinating area to explore, and water still drains through the low areas, some of it disappearing into the crevices. It is anyone's guess where this water eventually ends up. I have seen this same phenomenon in a field not far from where we live: torrents of water following a natural valley in the terrain, then turning and disappearing into a narrow rock crevice, with no sign anywhere within walking distance of where it emerges. The Scuttleholes near Plainfield offers the same phenomenon, but we see the water working its way along through the crevices, then coming out again to join the main river.

At the Hell Holes, this same process has been going on for millions of years and the once-swirling waters have left behind a fascinating mosaic of flower pot rocks, potholes and vegetation just waiting to be explored.

Terry Sprague is a naturalist, freelance writer and KFN member who lives in Prince Edward County.

Fungi/Photography Field Trip at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area—September 24th, 2006

Rose-Marie Burke

In spite of dire predictions about rainy weather for Sunday September 24th, the skies began to clear the morning of the field trip led by Barry Hanna at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area with the goal of finding, identifying and photographing fungi. Eight people gathered at the Kingslake Plaza. From there, we car-pooled down to the Conservation Area. Barry, who has sharp eyes for spotting fungi, had scouted out some trails during the week before the field trip. Barry led us from

the Interpretive Centre down Trail 5, across the footbridge over the marsh. In no time at all, we were finding several species of mushrooms on either side of the trail. Recent wet weather had brought out an abundance of fungi. As we wandered in a leisurely way along the trail, six more people caught up with us, bringing the total number of participants to 14. With our field guides in hand (mainly George Barron's *Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada* and the Audubon Society's *Field Guide to*

North American Mushrooms), we set about trying to identify the species of fungi that we were finding. Barry demonstrated how to hold a mirror beneath the mushroom in order to check the gill structures without harming the plants. Jackie Bartnik, the most knowledgeable of the group in plant identification, helped to pinpoint the name of most of the species we observed. For those that we weren't quite sure of, we simply borrowed a term from our fellow birding enthusiasts and classified them as "LBJs" (Little Brown Jobs).

From Trail 5, we meandered off down Trail 1, past the area where the "Bee Tree" grows. In the woods beside the trail in this section, we enjoyed the sight of many very large Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*). Groups of these colourful classically-shaped mushrooms were scattered throughout the woods in all stages of growth, bringing to mind images of Beatrix Potter stories and other childhood fairytales. Further into the woods beside a marsh, we found

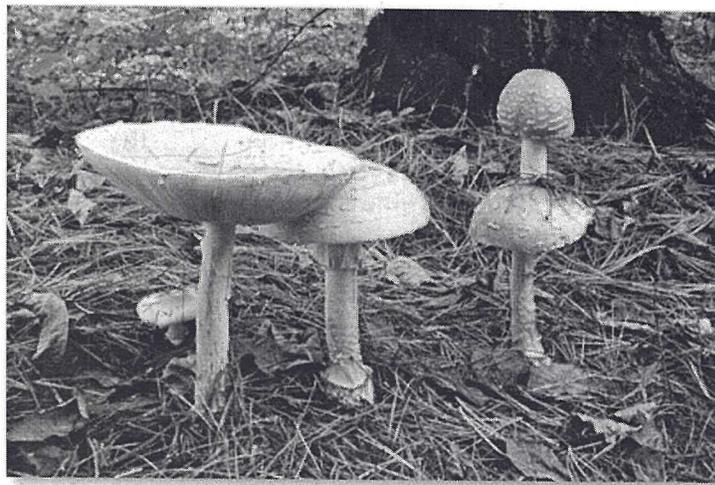
some *Lactarius indigo*, a lovely powder-blue mushroom with deeper blue showing on the inside of a broken piece.

The windy, on-and-off cloudy-to-bright-sun weather conditions didn't provide us with ideal photographic opportunities. Mushrooms tend to grow in shady areas, and are frequently surrounded by other kinds of foliage. This was the case with most of the fungi we were finding, but in spite of the few chances of getting a good clear shot, many of us crouched and knelt on the wet ground and managed to take a few pictures.

Our lunch break was spent at the picnic tables outside the interpretive centre, where we were entertained by the passing parade of families with dogs, all there to take part in a Humane Society event. After lunch, most of us headed off in all directions, some having to leave for other commitments, some wandering off down the trails to search for more fungi or just to enjoy an afternoon walk in the woods.

Species list

White Pine Bolete	<i>Suillus americanus</i>	Fly Agaric	<i>Amanita muscaria</i>
Gilled Bolete	<i>Phylloporus rhodoxanthus</i>	Ornate-stalked Bolete	<i>Boletus ornatipes</i>
Destroying Angel	<i>Amanita virosa</i>	Yellow Patches	<i>Amanita flavoconia</i>
Common Laccaria	<i>Laccaria laccata</i>	Pear-Shaped Puffball	<i>Lycoperdon pyriforme</i>
Orange Jelly	<i>Dacrymyces palmatus</i>	Pestle-Shaped Puffball	<i>Calvatia excipuliformis</i>
Turkey Tail	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	(No common name)	<i>Boletus subglabripes</i>
Slippery Jill	<i>Suillus salmonicolor</i>	Indigo Milky	<i>Lactarius indigo</i>
Blackening Russula	<i>Russula nigricans</i>	Horsehair Mushroom	<i>Marasmius rotula</i>
(No common name)	<i>Russula emetica</i>	Pine Cone Mushroom	<i>Baeospora myosura</i>



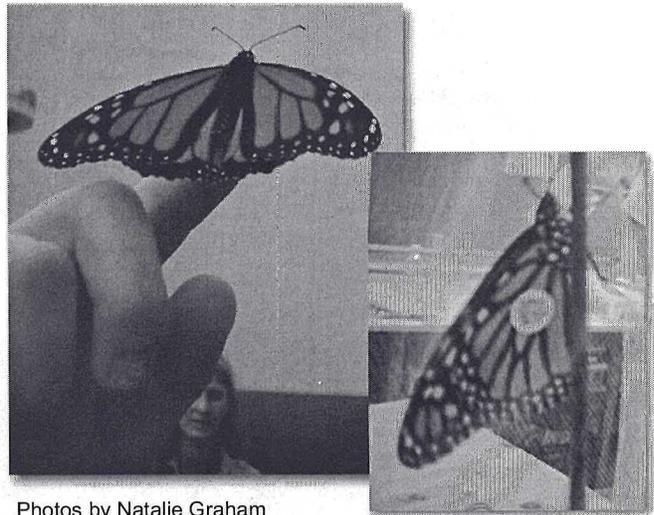
Fly Agaric (*Amanita muscaria*)
Photo by Barry Hanna

Teen Monarch Tagging Trip

Linden Noble (14)

On Saturday, September 9th, the Teen Naturalists group went to the point behind the Dupont factory (now Invista). We went there because it is known that many Monarch butterflies stop to rest and feed there during their migration to Mexico. The Teen group, led by Anne Robertson and Diane Lawrence, went there to catch, tag and learn about Monarch butterflies. The trip was a success and more than forty Monarchs were caught, their information (sex, whether reared or wild and general condition) recorded. Then they were tagged with a small sticker attached to the underside of a hind wing in a special spot before they were released to continue their long, dangerous journey to the warmer areas of Mexico for the winter. You may learn more about the progress and journey of the Monarchs by going to the website <http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/index.htm>.

We then spent some time indoors learning more about the Monarchs, such as how to recognize which of the five instars of caterpillar we had and how to sex the chrysalis.



Photos by Natalie Graham

Right: Tagged monarch (photographed through a butterfly net)

Well-Travelled Northern Saw-whet Owl

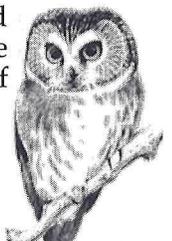
Reprinted with permission from Bird Studies Canada

(<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/organization/bscnews.html>, 1 December 2006)

Northern Saw-whet Owls are commonly banded in eastern and central Canada where several of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network stations have long-term owl monitoring projects. The species' movement in that part of the country is becoming well documented. In the west, however, this is not the case. It is only in the last few years that banders have begun targeting Northern Saw-whet Owls. In 2002, Vancouver Island's Rocky Point Bird Observatory initiated a fall owl monitoring project that now bands 200 to 400 Northern Saw-whet Owls annually. The Rocky Point Project has had a handful of recoveries in Washington State, all of which were within 150 kilometers of the banding site.

Elsewhere, Dan Zazelenchuk has been banding Northern Saw-whet Owls on his

farm near Kyle, Saskatchewan since 2003, and he has worked as a volunteer on Last Mountain Bird Observatory's Saw-whet Owl Monitoring Project. On October 23, Dan made an interesting discovery in his owl nets—a Northern Saw-whet Owl that had been banded September 27, 2003 at Rocky Point Bird Observatory, over 1150 kilometers to the west of his current location. Rocky Point Bird Observatory's Paul Levesque could not believe it. "This is an amazing recovery. In the past three years this owl flew over open ocean to leave Vancouver Island, crossed the Rockies, and was crossing the Great Plains when Dan recaptured it. Band recoveries like this show how little we know about the movement patterns of owls."



The year through the lens . . . Sunrise in February



Photo by Gaye Beckwith

Autumn Season — 1 August–30 November 2006

Ron D. Weir

The period was marked by above-normal temperatures, record-setting rainfall during the latter part of the season, and abnormally high levels along Lake Ontario all season. During August and September, many clear nights saw heavy migration under ideal flying conditions for the birds, and birders saw the fallout on some of the mornings after the flights as the birds were grounded. The first snow appeared during November, but it did not last long on the warm ground, and heavy warm rains fell throughout the month, during which time the American Toad and active Garter Snakes were reported. The very high water levels in Lake Ontario impacted adversely available habitat

for the waders and were probably the reason for a poorer flight than usual. Winter finches had not appeared by the end of November.

Rarities included Pacific Loon, Great Egret, Ross's Goose (3rd ever), Cackling Goose, Eurasian Wigeon, Gyrfalcon, Willet, Purple Sandpiper, Red-necked Phalarope, Parasitic Jaeger, Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Gull, Forster's Tern, Black-backed Woodpecker, Townsend's Solitaire (3rd ever), Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, Brewer's Blackbird.

Latest Ever Departures

Prairie Warbler—Oct 16 (1), PEpt, *fide* RTS, 90, Sep 30.

Species Account

Red-throated Loon—Nov 5 (5), PEPT, 15 (2), Wolfe Island, 16 (1), Millhaven, KFN.

Pacific Loon—Sep 27 (1 im), Nov 5 (1 im), PEPT, KFN.

Common Loon—peaks Nov 10 (100+), Amherst Island, BMD.

Horned Grebe—peaks Nov 5 (80), Kingston, KFN; 10 (42), Amherst Island, BMD; 22 (50), PEPT, RTS; 24 (77), Amherst Island, OW.

Red-necked Grebe—Sep 27 to Nov 5 (6 only), Kingston, KFN.

Great Egret—Aug 8 to Oct 14 (13 in all), Amherst Island, Wolfe Island, Perth Road, Middle Road, Delta, Sillsville, KFN.

Turkey Vulture—peaks Sep 29 (140), Oct 6 (150), 7 (190), 16 (120), PEPT, *fide* RTS.

Snow Goose—Sep 16 (4), Kingston, MJ Evans, to Nov 23 (300), Prinyer's Cove Prince Edward *fide* RTS.

Ross's Goose—Oct 17 to Nov 6, Kingston, B. Ripley *et al.*, photo.

Cackling Goose—Oct 5 (1), Little Cataraqui Creek, VPM.

Mute Swan—Oct 30 (16) Smith Bay, *fide* RTS.

Tundra Swan—Oct 30 onwards, peaks Nov 5 (640), Kingston, KFN; 24 (300), South Bay, OW.

Gadwall—peak Nov 5 (500), Kingston, KFN.

Eurasian Wigeon—Oct 12 to Nov 21 (1 male), Kingston, B. Ripley *et al.*

American Wigeon—peak Nov 2 (800), Kingston, KFN.

Northern Shoveler—peak Nov 5 (194), Kingston, KFN.

Redhead—peak Nov 5 (2226), Kingston, KFN.

Ring-necked Duck—peak Nov 5 (3801), Kingston, KFN.

Greater Scaup—peaks Oct 15 (50000), Wolfe Island, KFN; 5 (21,260), Kingston, KFN.

Lesser Scaup—peak Nov 5 (3985), Kingston, KFN.

Surf Scoter—Sep 29 to Nov 5 (22 in all), Kingston, KFN.

White-winged Scoter—peak Sep 20 onwards, peak Nov 5 (417), Oct 31 (350), PEPT, KFN.

Black Scoter—Oct 27 onwards (32 in all), Kingston area, KFN.

American Coot—peak Oct 15 (200), Greater Cataraqui River, PJG.

Sandhill Crane—Sep 20 (2), Chaffey's Lock; 27 (2), Westport, NLB; Oct 19 (1), Odessa, CG.

Osprey—last sighting Nov 9 (1), Rockport, J. Haig.

Bald Eagle—Aug 11 to Nov 23 (27 in all), Kingston, KFN.

Sharp-shinned Hawk—peak Oct 15 (100), PEPT, RTS.

Northern Goshawk—Sep 27 to Nov 2 (9 in all), weak movement, Kingston area, KFN.

Red-tailed Hawk—peak Oct 25 (350), PEPT, RTS.

Rough-legged Hawk—from Oct 21 (1), Amherst Island, B. Ripley *et al.*

Golden Eagle—Nov 2 (10!!), PEPT, *fide* RTS; 4 (10), Amherst Island, BMD.

Merlin—Aug 25 to Nov 5 (23 in all), Kingston area, KFN.

Gyrfalcon—Nov 1 (1 dark), grounds of Collins Bay penitentiary, CH.

Peregrine Falcon—Sep 7 to Nov 17 (7 in all), Kingston, KFN.

Black-bellied Plover—Aug 13 to Nov 23 (77 in all), Kingston, KFN.

American Golden Plover—Aug 28 to Oct 31 (13 in all), Kingston, KFN.

Semipalmated Plover—Aug to Sep 13 (158 in all), peak Aug 23 (90), Amherst Island, NLB.

Greater Yellowlegs—Aug 13 to Nov 17 (119 in all), peak Aug 25 (50), Amherstview Sewage Lagoons, JHE, BR.

Lesser Yellowlegs—Aug 13 to Nov 5 (594 in all), peaks Aug 20 (160), 25 (200), 27 (150), Amherstview Sewage lagoons, KFN.

Solitary Sandpiper—Aug 13 to Sep 24 (only 6 in all), Kingston, KFN.

Willet—Sep 4 (1), Amherst Island, B. Ripley.

- Hudsonian Godwit**—Aug 27 (1), Sep 24 to Oct 3 (1), Amherst Sewage Lagoons, KFN.
- Ruddy Turnstone**—Aug 31 (2), Pigeon Island, DVW, only record.
- Sanderling**—Aug 25 to Sep 2 (8 in all), Amherst Island, Pigeon Island, PEPT, KFN.
- White-rumped Sandpiper**—Sep 9 to Nov 5 (6 in all), Kingston, KFN.
- Baird's Sandpiper**—Aug 13 to Oct 3 (11 in all), Kingston, KFN.
- Pectoral Sandpiper**—Aug 20 to Oct 31 (only 15 in all), Kingston, KFN.
- Purple Sandpiper**—Nov 22 (1), Wolfe Island, WS, PH, Nov 25 (1), Amherst Island, KFN.
- Dunlin**—light passage Sep 13 to Nov 25 (103 in all), Kingston, KFN.
- Stilt Sandpiper**—good flight Aug 13 to Oct 3 (24 in all), Amherst Island, Amherstview Sewage Lagoons, KFN.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper**—Sep 7 (1), Snake Island, DVW.
- Short-billed Dowitcher**—Aug 13 to Sep 13 (259 in all), peak Aug 25 (150), Amherstview Sewage Lagoons, JHE, BR.
- Long-billed Dowitcher**—Oct 3 (1), Amherst Island, B. Ripley.
- Wilson's Snipe**—Nov 28 (1), Amherst Island, B. Ripley, late.
- Red-necked Phalarope**—Aug 15 (2), Sep 30 (1), Amherst Island, EB, SD.
- Parasitic Jaeger**—Sep 27 (1), PEPT, JHE, BR, VPM.
- Little Gull**—Sep 27 (4), Oct 26 (1), Oct 30 (1), PEPT, Kingston, KFN.
- Lesser Black-backed Gull**—Nov 5 (1), Amherst Island, KH *et al.*
- Black-legged Kittiwake**—Oct 31 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Forster's Tern**—Sep 27-29 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Snowy Owl**—from Nov 17 (1), Simcoe Island, C. Muller.
- Long-eared Owl**—peaks Nov 4 (20), Nov 17 to 30 (25), Amherst Island, KFN.
- Short-eared Owl**—peak Nov 22 (21), Amherst Island, BMD.
- Northern Saw-whet Owl**—peak Oct 20/21 (140), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Common Nighthawk**—peaks Aug 22 (38), Woodbine Road, MC; Aug 22 (50), Elginburg, EB.
- Red-headed Woodpecker**—Oct 13 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Black-backed Woodpecker**—Oct 14 (1 male), Parham, MC *et al.*
- Eastern Phoebe**—to Nov 10 (1), Amherst Island, BMD.
- Northern Shrike**—Oct 22 onwards, Elginburg, EB.
- Warbling Vireo**—Oct 16 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS, late.
- Blue Jay**—peaks Oct 3 (1000), 4 (1200), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Red-breasted Nuthatch**—very weak flight.
- Brown Creeper**—peak Oct 5 (55), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Sedge Wren**—Aug 30 (1) Lyndhurst, J. Joe.
- Townsend's Solitaire**—Nov 5 (1), PEPT, KFN, 3rd record.
- Gray-cheeked Thrush**—night flights Sep 16/17 (200 per hour x 6 hours), Sep 20/21 (600 per hour x 6 hours), 24/25 (700 per hour x 5 hours), Kingston, RDW; Sep 21 (30 grounded), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Swainson's Thrush**—night flights Sep 5/6 (100 per hour x 4 hours), 16/17 (7200 per hour x 6 hours), 19/20 (800 per hour x 5 hours), 20/21 (7000 per hour x 6 hours), 24/25 (5000 per hour x 5 hours), Kingston, RDW.
- Cedar Waxwing**—peak Nov 5 (3100), Kingston, KFN.
- Golden-winged Warbler**—Sep 19 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS, late.
- Orange-crowned Warbler**—Sep 29 to Oct 5 (4 in all), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Black-throated Blue Warbler**—to Nov 7 (1), Elginburg, EB, late.
- Pine Warbler**—Nov 22 (1), Bath, B. Ripley.
- Prairie Warbler**—Oct 16 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS, record late date past 30 Sep 90.
- Palm Warbler**—western race Sep 7 (1), PEPT, *fide* RTS.
- Blackpoll Warbler**—peak Sep 6 (85), PEPT, *fide* RTS.

Wilson's Warbler—Nov 15 (1), Wolfe Island, NLB, late.

Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow—Sep 26 (1), Oct 3 (3), 10 (1), 18 (1), Amherst Island, B Ripley *et al.*; Oct 1 (1), Amherstview Sewage Lagoon, M Bain.

Fox Sparrow—Oct 10 (15) Amherst Island, B. Ripley; peak Nov 5 (26), Kingston, KFN.

Brewer's Blackbird—Nov 5 (1 male), south of Napanee, JHE, RDW.

Purple Finch—Sep 9 to Nov 19 in a moderate flight.

Red Crossbill—Nov 5 (2), PEPT, KFN.

Contributors:

E. Batalla	M. Carboy	S. David	B.M. Dilabio
J.H. Ellis	P.J. Good	C. Grooms	C. Heffernan
K. Hennige	P. Hockey	Kingston Field Naturalists 3+	V.P. Mackenzie
North Leeds Bird Club	B. Rowe	W. Smith	R.T. Sprague
O. Weir	R.D. Weir	D.V. Weseloh	

Otters, A Pileated Woodpecker, Wild Turkeys, A Dearth of Crows

Terry Fuchs

Early in October, when only two of the twenty cottages along our Upper Beverley Lake shoreline were occupied during the week, the absence of human neighbours seemed to be reflected in the proximity of and the species of the wildlife I saw. The otters I spotted on two successive days were the first I had seen here in nine or ten years. I wasn't expecting otter when one appeared between the lakeward shore of a long island and my canoe in the clear grey light before dusk, so initially I thought beaver, which I come upon regularly at that time of evening. Their big doggy heads push through the water but submerge at the same instant they smack their tails down in alarm. In only a few weeks the previous autumn, in a bay just north of our row of cottages, they had gnawed down eighty or more slim trees to weave a massive, sprawling food raft to carry them through the winter, the largest cache I had ever seen.

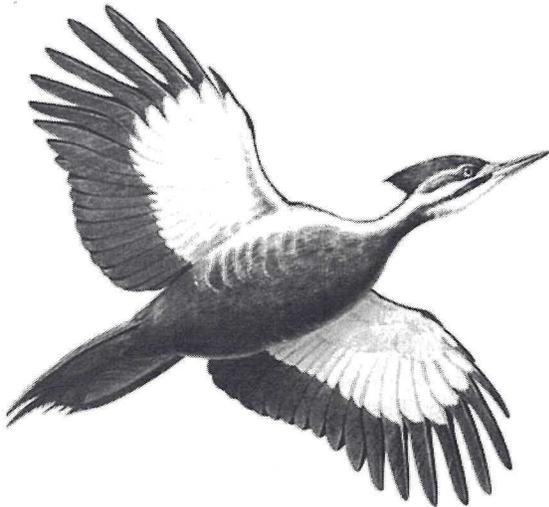
The last otters I had encountered on Upper Beverley Lake were stretched on

their stomachs among fish heads and backbones on an edge of snow-dusted ice smudged with their feces as I turned the canoe into the frozen narrows leading to the head of the lake one chilly November afternoon. I had speculated that they were probably the same pair that had shadowed my canoe once that summer while I was paddling down the far shore. Their heads and upper bodies had suddenly bobbed up beside me, swivelling like periscopes. They had paralleled the canoe, hardly beyond the reach of my paddle, alternately bobbing like miniature channel buoys and diving, whistling a high-pitched, querulous chirp.



Photo: Jim Leopold, US Fish & Wildlife Service website: <http://images.fws.gov>

After so many years the lone otter on this October evening was as much of a surprise as the original two had been. As it narrowed the gap between us, its head rose out of the water in that familiar periscope motion, lifted by its long upper body elevating to give it a better view. This time, however, its behaviour seemed more defensive than curious, even though it was the one heading in my direction. It swayed like a cobra, hissing and spitting, its head with its flattened snout and nubby ears disproportionately small above its thick, sleek torso. It kept repeating this performance, diving and then flaring even nearer to me, always exhaling in a jerky chuff-chuff-chuff. Eventually it circled across my bow and then submerged and stayed under.



The next afternoon, paddling in the bay where the beavers had built their food raft, I saw two otters. Their identity was not in doubt this time. The reflections of yellow and orange leaves glowed in the water, lily leaves stippled the bay in a broad horseshoe around the curve of its shore, and tall, bowing reeds slashed the air with slender green welts, almost like an optical illusion. Across the bay the otters were undulating in and out of the water, parting the reeds, one right on the tail of the other, their slinky bodies rippling in hoops and crooks. Watching this aquatic roller-coastering, I was surprised at an otter's uncanny length,

not so apparent when it is swimming with just its head cutting the water or even when it is treading water, its head and elongated torso bouncing and rocking above the surface. Keeping to the reeds, the otters slithered and arched, currents almost as fluid as the water itself, folds of their backs, as they bucked and plunged and sounded, cresting the water like a miniature archipelago of small, moving islands. The effect, particularly doubled by a pair, makes me speculate whether distant otter sightings account for some of the lake-monster legends: grainy photographs of bunched coils along the mist of horizon really just contorting otters, exaggerated like far-off islands that give the illusion of floating on a cushion of glassy air by light refracting off water.

The other creatures that seemed to materialize out of the neighbourhood's emptiness and silence that week were birds—a Pileated Woodpecker and a flock of Wild Turkeys, neither species rare any more, but noteworthy here for propinquity. Especially the turkeys. As is usually the case, I heard the woodpecker ahead of seeing it, late one afternoon just before turning back toward home where our cottage road dead-ends in the driveway of the last cottage before the woods. To me the pileated's ragged, ratcheting cry is a Canadian woodland equivalent of the weird jungle noises that provided the soundtracks for the Tarzan movies I avidly watched as a boy. Hearing a Pileated Woodpecker is more common than sighting it, but I had not spotted one in a while and I was hopeful of seeing this bird. As I stood in the road scanning the trees, the woodpecker scooted around a trunk, its red head with its upswept comb jiggling into view poised for its bill to attack the wood, its crow-sized black and white body canted back on its legs. But instead of the frenzied blur of head and drumming reverberations of punky wood I might

have expected, it cocked an eye downwards. Suddenly it veered in zigzaggy flight to a nearby tree. It clung there only briefly before fluttering into the forest, trailing its raucous hoot.

The Wild Turkeys, a day or two later, were almost laughably near, across the cottage road in my neighbours' side yard. Their cottage, of course, was locked and vacant until the Thanksgiving weekend. Since Wild Turkeys' successful reintroduction some years ago from Michigan stock, sightings of them in this vicinity are not a lot less common than those of deer. Like deer, they skitter across the township road in front of my car. Driving or riding my bicycle, I sometimes see them browsing near the far, woody edges of fields beside the roads. Several years ago, not that long after they had been reestablished, a flock used to parade down the middle of the paved road to the Hotel Kenney at Jones Falls early every summer morning, according to Joe Kenney, its proprietor. But walking across my back yard to the cottage road as afternoon shaded into evening, I was within yards of blundering into the midst of the flock in my neighbours' yard when I noticed them. The sky had been slung with heavy grey cloud all day and a wind-whipped, icy darkness was falling, and the only bright spots, other than a neighbour's lights a few doors down, were the birds' wattled pink-red heads as they drifted closer together at my approach; their feathers, in the gloom, were the colour of charcoal. I stopped in my tracks, but the turkeys milled in an uneasy huddle. To reach the road without disturbing them further, I sheered away across an adjacent yard, but, still in their loose cluster, like a squad of exceptionally stubby football players leaving the field together, they sidled through the gritty dusk toward the slope of woods at the back of the property.



The missing birds this fall and over the summer, in comparison to their numbers of the past couple of years, are the crows. Apparently crows and Blue Jays are being hit extremely hard by the West Nile virus, although I have not heard of any dead birds being found in this vicinity. In any case, the flock of crows that had laid claim to our cottage community from dawn to dusk—very literally—disappeared this year, except for the odd straggler or loner. We were no longer invaded by the cocky birds strutting across lawns, shrieking back and forth from the trees, raiding ice-cream tubs of peanuts left out for our gregarious, mooching chipmunks, promenading along deck railings past front windows, cholericly harrying the hawk that sat on the television antenna or clothesline next door, and serenading the neighbourhood with their explosions of hoarse guffaws every morning before we were up. They began their heckling after first light, sounding so loud in my neighbours' bedroom that they maintained the crows must have been congregating beneath the window.

In all honesty I cannot say that I regret the loss of early-morning noise. One young crow last summer roosted in the pines outside my bedroom window, and from not long after dawn would for hours bleat a grating, blubbery, hard-

done-by caw, surely, I thought, the crow version of a spoiled child's manipulative sobbing. But perhaps there was some organic cause, a defect in its voice box, for over the course of the whole season it never grew out of this phase. Ordinarily, however, I suspect that I have more affection for crows than do most of the other cottagers. Two of them are retired farmers, and to farmers crows are the aerial equivalent, or worse, of groundhogs. During my adolescence my best friend and I were practically welcomed with open arms by a farmer friend of my father's when we asked permission to hunt groundhogs in his pastures; my father and I hunted crows together on the edges of cornfields. People generally find crows sinister because of their swagger and boldness, their calculating slyness, their sheer size as birds, and their scorn for human beings, not to mention, possibly, the blue-black midnight sheen of their feathers and their dark, knowing eyes. My mother, who visits for most of July and August, considers them bullying and rapacious. And when they nested in the pine trees around her home, they did drive out the cardinals and finches and other songbirds that were sources of pleasure and entertainment at her birdbath.



I could say, I guess, that I admire crows for their brass, their impertinence, their lack of respect, disdain even, for authority. But this anthropomorphic assessment of their traits is much more recent than my fondness for the actual birds, which dates back almost forty years to when I was a university student in Ottawa, and which was originally contingent merely upon their appearance at a specific time of year. In those pre-global warming days, by the end of February the Ottawa winter, which had been going on since November, felt as though it would never end. For months the only recurring colours in nature had been slush grey, cloud grey, blizzard white, the blank, flat white (on overcast days) or coruscating white (during sunshine) of the drifted fields in the park beyond my dead-end street, and the icy sky blue of perfectly stable arctic fronts. Cold air hung so heavily that it pinched the insides of my nostrils when I stepped outdoors, and the only sound was the squeaking underfoot of the trampled snow on the sidewalks. At this juncture of unceasing, unalleviated cold, I would be aware one brilliant February morning of crows sparsely scattered like large, fleshy black leaves through the branches of the bare trees in the last block before the park, yelping in summer's voice. I do not know where they had been hiding all these months, since crows are scarcely migratory. But well before the first robin sighting or even Red-winged Blackbirds in the marshy backwaters in the park's out-of-the-way corners off the Rideau River, the crows' renewed clamour and the shadows of their sooty bodies shifting over the blue-shadowed snow and the translucent blue sky were the first auguries that winter might be starting to break.

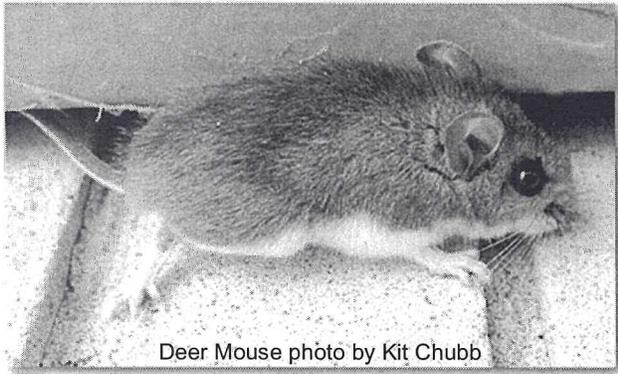
The year through the lens . . . Snow Geese in March*Photo by Gaye Beckwith***Notes on Natural History, No. 345, December 14, 1966***Helen R. Quilliam*

Each autumn we find we have to wage a battle against White-footed Mice. A pile of sunflower seeds discovered in a drawer tells us that once more the battle is on. It is an engagement that I undertake reluctantly, for not only are these one of the most attractive of little beasts but one of the most industrious. Who could fail to admire the industry and perseverance needed to carry in one night the contents of a complete tin of cashew nuts, carelessly left open, from the kitchen to a Wellington boot in another room?

Compared with the ordinary house mouse, these little creatures, also called Deer Mice, are things of beauty with their immaculate white fur on underparts, legs and feet. Their ears are large and their tails not as long as those of

house mice. They are primarily seed-eaters and only become more catholic in their taste when they come into our houses.

Their true homes are in the fields, hedgerows and woods. They use cavities in trees in which to store their food. Their sharp teeth can open shells as hard as a cherry pit and often while filling their storehouses each nut or seed garnered is shucked before it is stored. They are good climbers and make their home in bushes and trees as often as on the ground. A round mass of fine grasses makes a warm snug nest. Often they appropriate a bird's nest left over from the past season. I came on one of these one day in early winter. Anxious to examine the nest to see what sort of bird



Deer Mouse photo by Kit Chubb

had built it, I found it neatly domed with a mat of fine grass and the hole inside lined with down. A tiny hole at the base of the nest was its front door. As I touched the nest, the occupant came scurrying out and down the branches of the bush. Its winter store cupboard was probably close by.

As with all rodents, these are prolific and rapid breeders, having from two to four litters in a year with three to six young each time. In the wild, their principal enemies are hawks, owls, cats, foxes and weasels.

Their tracks on the snow are often numerous and can be recognized by their very small size and by the long line their dragging tails make when they have been running. This line sometimes helps in differentiating their tiny prints from those of the Meadow Vole, the other very common small rodent of the fields. However, a study of the pictures in Olaus Murie's *Field Guide to Animal Tracks* is the surest way of learning to tell their tracks apart.

White-footed Mice do not cut the runways through the grass which are one of the most typical signs of Meadow Voles. The voles, also frequently called Meadow Mice or Field Mice, are of a chunkier build than White-footed Mice, have very small ears that lie close to their head and are brown all over. They live entirely on the ground and never ascend trees and bushes. Their principal foods are grain, seeds, roots, green vegetation and the bark of shrubs and trees. It is these latter which suffer particularly in the winter when other food is scarce. It

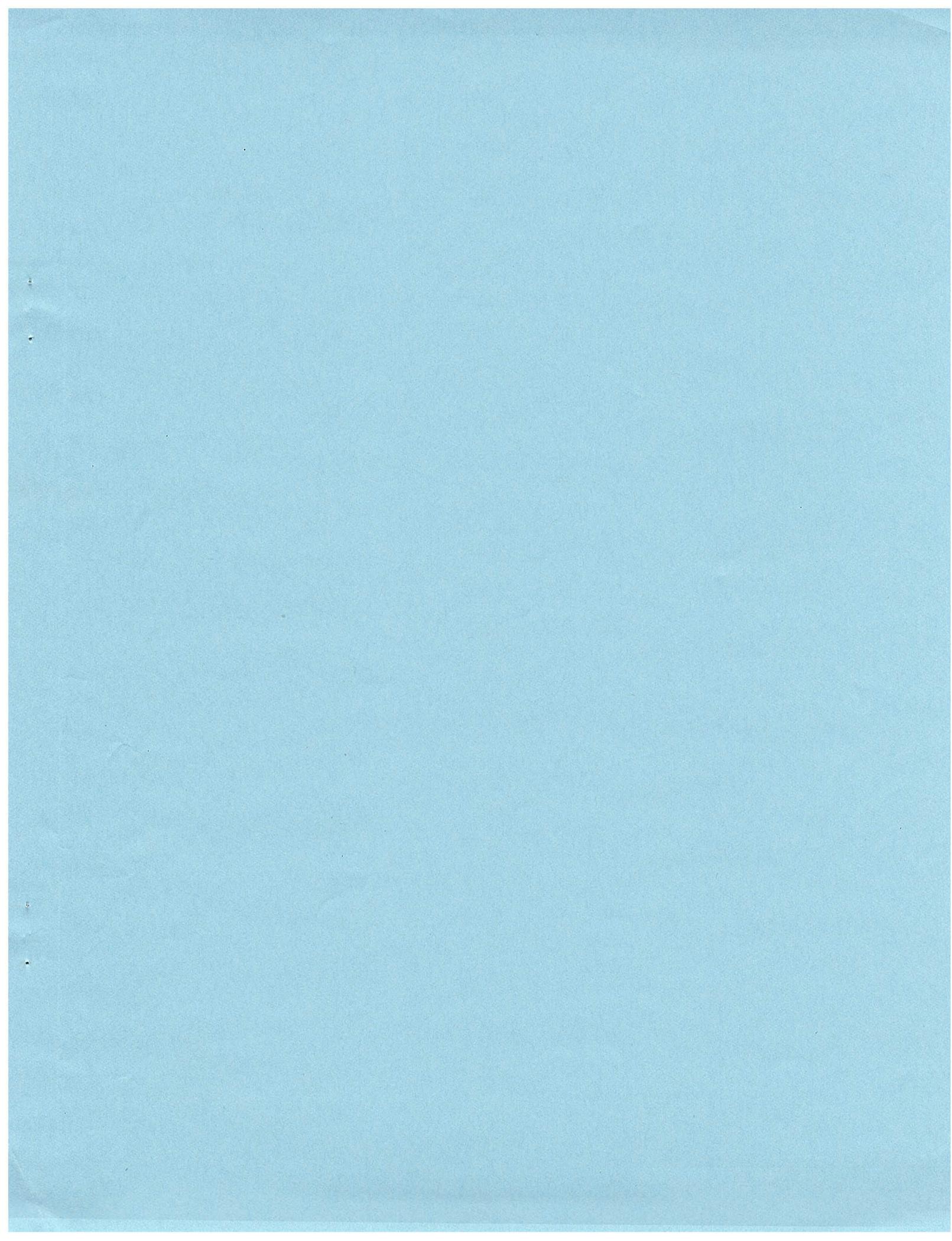
has been calculated that a thousand voles in a meadow would require at least 12 tons of grass or other vegetation to maintain them for a year. Their rate of multiplication is also high, with six young at a time and with four litters a season.

They store some food for the winter, but their most characteristic behaviour is constructing an intricate system of tunnels. In the spring, as the snow melts, it is easy to see this fascinating complex network. The nests are compact bunches of grasses and fibres placed in the shallow burrows. From the burrows radiate tunnels—in summer through the grass and in winter through both grass and snow—to various sources of food supply and as means of escape. Along these tunnels will be found small bunches of cut grass on which they have been feeding.

Voles never come into houses, barns or outbuildings, their nearest approach to human habitation being to wood piles or around haystacks.

Some people confuse these rodents with lemmings, but true lemmings do not come south of Arctic regions. Meadow Voles, however, have their peaks and cycles of particularly high populations as lemmings do, and these can be local, as they appear to be this year, or extend over a vast area. A number of years ago they were particularly numerous everywhere in this region on both the mainland and the islands. They also, apparently like lemmings when they become too crowded, undertake migrations that may result in their deaths. That same year, a long line of them was found on the ice of Lake Ontario headed from Wolfe Island toward Amherst—frozen to death.

Predators of Meadow Voles are much the same as for the White-footed Mice and because of the voles' great capacity for rapid reproduction, the importance of the preservation of all hawks and owls cannot be overstressed.



Philinas Email
Baengjis@lakeheadu.ca