



Kingston Field Naturalists

October and November 2021

KFN

A registered charitable organization and a member of Ontario Nature
Box 831
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 4X6

KFN Website
and links to other sites:
<https://kingstonfielddnaturalists.org>

Blog: <http://kingstonfielddnaturalists.blogspot.com>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/Kingstonfielddnaturalists>

Membership Inquiries:
Kathy Webb
kw2 at queensu.ca

Meetings are normally held at 7:30 pm on the third Thursday of each month from September to April. Social starts at 7:00 pm.

Our October meeting will be Thursday 21 October Stu Mackenzie, Director of Migration Ecology at Birds Canada will present

Wingtips at our fingertips: understanding the complex lives of migratory animals

The protection of migratory birds and their habitat requires a complete understanding of how they use landscapes and habitats throughout their full annual cycle. This information not only tells us where we should invest our limited time, resources and energies, but it also communicates the story of migration to engage and link people and communities in conservation action. Join Stu Mackenzie, Director of Migration Ecology at Birds Canada to learn how scientists are advancing the understanding, appreciation and conservation of migratory animals through the Motus Wildlife Tracking System.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Motus) is an international collaborative research network that uses coordinated automated radio telemetry to facilitate research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Motus is a program of Birds Canada in partnership with collaborating researchers and organizations. Motus allows researchers to track the smallest animals possible (birds, bats, and insects), with high temporal and geographic precision, over great distances and reveal important aspects of their life movements, connectivity, ecology, and life histories. Motus combines the collective impact of local, regional, and even hemispheric projects into one massive collaborative effort that expands the scale and scope of everyone's work and maximizes the use of scarce resources. It also makes data available and more useful for future projects, collaborative endeavors and large-scale meta analyses. Motus will play a vital role in increasing our understanding of migratory animals, and also help us to meet critical outreach and education objectives.

Please see page 4 for Zoom meeting details.

Upcoming Meetings:

Thursday 18 November Dr. Jesus Soriano of the University of Campeche will speak to us about biodiversity in the State of Campeche Mexico.

Thursday 16 December is member's night. Do you have some pictures or a short video to share?



Motus is being used to track Snow Buntings in eastern North America.
Photo P. Waycik

The Owl Woods will be closed from 15 November through to 5 December. Thank you everyone for your patience and respect to the Laurets who own the property and have allowed us for many years to enjoy this treasure.

Rambles, Field Trips, and other outings

This is hunting season! When hiking and birding, wear bright clothes, make noise. In South Frontenac crossbow hunting is allowed from 1 October to 31 December. Gun hunting for deer is allowed in November and December. Check the MNR site <https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-hunting-regulations-summary>

Be prepared for ticks! Wear long sleeves, tuck long pants into socks, and use repellent. Check your clothes and your body as soon as possible after being out.

Please check the website for any updates on rambles and field trips.

RAMBLES are slow walks to notice nature in all its forms.

Registration is still required for COVID tracking. Please register with Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742) to receive detailed information of meeting points. COVID questions will be asked. Please bring a mask. Ticks are still around: be prepared

Tuesday 19 October 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Sutherland-Bayley NCC property (one hour drive north on Canoe Lake Rd). From town at 9:00 am. Back 2:00 pm.

Tuesday 2 November 8:45 am to early pm Amherst Island Martin Edwards Reserve
Meet promptly at 8:45 am at Gardiners Town Centre (Bath Road at Gardiners Road) near Tim Hortons to carpool to 9:30 am ferry. Return on 1:00 or 2:00 pm ferry. Cost \$10 per car, return. Fewer cars is better. Good time for shorebirds. More details on registration.

Tuesday 16 November 9:00 am to 1:00 pm Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre (ELEEC) Meet in town at 9:00 am or at site at 9:30 am. Return in town 1:00 pm. Bring a snack.

Tuesday 7 December 9:30 to 11:30 am Collins Creek from McCullough Park
Meet on site (Elmwood subdivision). Dress warmly!

FIELD TRIPS Please contact the leader to register for these trips.

Wednesday 20 October 8:00 am to approx 10:30 am Amherstview Lagoons

Sunday 24 October 8:00 am to approx 10:30 am Amherstview Sewage Lagoons

Leader: Kurt Hennige (register at khennige at xplornet.com) This is an EXCELLENT (and I do mean EXCELLENT) opportunity for members to familiarize themselves with this Loyalist hotspot. You never know what you might see on the lagoons. Kurt will show you where and how to bird on this township facility. You will be on private property, so have your KFN membership card in case you are asked for ID. This is a great opportunity to be led by one of KFN Master Birders and should not be missed. Participants are to meet at the gate to the lagoons at the end of Golf Course Rd. Limited to 10 persons for each date.

Friday 5 November at noon to Sunday 7 November at noon Fall RoundUp

It's the time of year again to get involved in the Fall Roundup. Gather your bird lists and your backyard counts during the assigned dates and submit them to eBird. All KFN members are strongly urged to follow current COVID protocols. Erwin Batalla will be collecting the lists and the results will be entered in the next Blue Bill. Those unable to enter their lists into eBird you can contact Gary Hillaby at 613-547-8121

Sunday 7 November 9:00 am to noon OPG Wetlands

Leader Kurt Hennige (khennige at xplornet.com) This is a rare opportunity to get access to this private property jewel west of Bath. You will require your current KFN membership ID. Current COVID protocols will be followed. Open to ten participants, contact Kurt to register.

Saturday 27 November 7:00 am to 4:00 pm Snow Goose Prowl

Leader- T.B.A. We will be prowling for Snow Geese, stopping at various spots along the St. Lawrence River. The trip will go as far east as Lancaster and requires an early start because of the distance covered. We will meet at the carpool lot at Hwy 401 and 15 to arrange carpooling. Those interested should contact Gary Hillaby (fieldtrips at kingstonfieldnaturalist.org)

December Christmas Bird Count see page 4

JUNIORS

Indoor meetings

An email will be sent to registered members if indoor meetings become possible.

Summer projects are due 28 October.

Field trips

Saturday 30 October 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Helen Quilliam Sanctuary of KFN
(times from town) **Hike with emphasis on "little things"**

Details and in town meeting place on registration with Anne (613-389-6742 or n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca) by Wednesday 27 October please.

Saturday 27 November 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Camden Lake Wildlife Area
(times from town) **Focus on habitats**

Details of in town meeting place on registration with Anne (613-389-6742 or n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca) by Wednesday 24 November please.



TEENS



Saturday 13 November 9:00 am in town to 3:00 pm
Fun with Ferns

This trip will introduce you to fern identification and recording through photography, drawing and pressing plants.

At Robertson Cottage. Includes a hike.

Please register with Anne (613-389-6742 or n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca) by 10 November.

Future meetings:

Saturday 11 December Christmas Bird Count

Club News and Updates

Welcome to new members: Catherine Zanetti, Carl Kaduck & family, Erin Bailey, Adrian Kennedy, Richard and Joan Worsfold, Lois Horrocks & family, Chris Townsend and Leslie Gooding, Peter Burjorjee, Kay Lloyd, Roberta Panter, Michelle and Paul Martin, Andrea Kingsley, Murray Beckel.

Thanks to Larry McCurdy, our treasurer. Larry has been handling all KFN financial matters with care and confidence since 2007. He gently guides KFN executive to keep expenses down and to invest in what is best for the long-term health of the club. We appreciate his wise council on many club-related topics.

Zoom Meeting Updates for 21 October

- You will receive a **zoom link** a few days before the meeting. The ZOOM link will be opened at 7 pm. The formal meeting begins at 7:30 pm.
- There will be two **breakout rooms**: The room labeled "**social**" is available for people to enter and chat. The second room will be hosted by members of the **nature reserves** committee. This is an opportunity to learn more about the KFN's nature reserves, ask questions, provide input or just listen. You can enter and exit the rooms by clicking on the "breakout room" tab on your Zoom screen. Some computer platforms do not allow you to enter on your own. If this happens to you, just turn on your microphone and ask to be placed in the room by the moderator. The rooms will be open from 7:00 to 7:25 pm.
- **No computer? Don't miss the meeting:** Join our monthly meetings by telephone! Contact Carolyn Bonta (613-531-4578) 1-2 days in advance of a meeting to obtain the Meeting ID and Passcode.

Access to the Invista property for KFN members

Invista has kindly agreed to allow us walking access via the west security gate. This is the second entrance as you are heading west along Front Road out of Kingston. You MUST show your up-to-date membership card at the security booth. Invista is trying to limit the number of visitors so please don't bring non-members unless they have obtained prior permission on their own.

Christmas Bird Counts 2021

The 122st Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) will be upon us before we know it! This large citizen science project is composed of many individual CBCs which take place within fixed 24 km diameter circles on a single day between 14 December and 5 January; the Kingston count always falls on the first Sunday within this time frame. There are 10 counts that commonly take place within the KFN birding area. Here is the coordinator/compiler information:

- **Kingston** – Sunday 19 December (Kathy Webb, kw2 at queensu.ca)
- **Prince Edward Point** – Saturday 18 December (doc0013 at icloud.com)
- **Frontenac** Saturday 18 December (Michael Johnson & Carolyn Bonta, bonta.johnson at sympatico.ca)
- **Westport** (Wendy Briggs-Jude, bwlaire at rideau.net)
- **Delta** (Jim Thompson, jthompson211 at cogeco.ca)
- **Thousand Islands** (Josh Van Wieren, josh.vanwieren at canada.ca)
- **Gananoque** (Kurt Hennige, khennige at xplornet.com)
- **Napanee** (Kurt Hennige, khennige at xplornet.com)
- **Moscow** (Bonnie Bailey, bonnie.bailey at paperwrks.com)
- **Amherst Island** (Janet Scott, jiscott at kos.net)

The dates of most of these counts remain to be determined. Please click on the map link of the following website for the most up to date information for each count (<https://www.birdscanada.org/bird-science/christmas-bird-count/>). Although the COVID-19 pandemic continues, we're optimistic that most of our local CBCs will continue to take place this year. All counts will be conducted in a COVID-safe manner and comply with public health guidelines; as such, restrictions regarding participation remain to be determined.

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The Frontenac CBC on Saturday 18 December will support some in-person outreach and survey activity again this year. Carolyn Bonta and Michael Johnson are the co-coordinators (613-531-4578 or bonta.johnson at sympatico.ca). More details will be available later this month.

Friday 10 December 7 to 8 pm "How to Conduct a CBC Survey" virtual training

Interested in learning how to conduct a Christmas Bird Count survey? We are always seeking Citizen Scientists to help tally winter birds. Basic bird ID skills paired with enthusiasm is all you need, yet the logistics and data collection aspects can be daunting the first time. Learn the basics of surveying in this Zoom presentation.

Saturday 11 December 10 am to 12 noon Mock survey at Tree Frog Woods near Verona

We will cover 3 km of gentle trail. Experienced birders and CBC surveyors are welcome. Come meet and help mentor the new cohort!

To register for one or both sessions contact Carolyn Bonta (613-531-4578 or bonta.johnson at sympatico.ca)

There is still time to have your donation to the KFN's Endowment Fund matched!

In an effort to assist local charities to increase their endowments, **the CFKA has offered to match contributions, up to a total of \$1000 per fund, between now and 31 December.** This is a great opportunity to increase our endowment fund, and the KFN executive has agreed to use donations to our Habitat Preservation Fund to take advantage of this offer. We are asking our members to consider a donation to help us provide for the future of our protected properties. Donations to our Habitat Preservation Fund between now and 31 December will be used for that purpose. These donations can be made by cheque or through Paypal on our website. Members also have the option of donating directly to the CFKA, selecting the KFN Environmental Protection Fund from the list of agency funds listed on the CFKA website. If you have any questions feel free to contact our Treasurer Larry McCurdy (613-389-6427 or larry at mcurdy.biz).

Kingston Inner Harbour Remediation

CONSERVATION UPDATE from Chris Hargreaves, Chair of KFN Conservation Committee

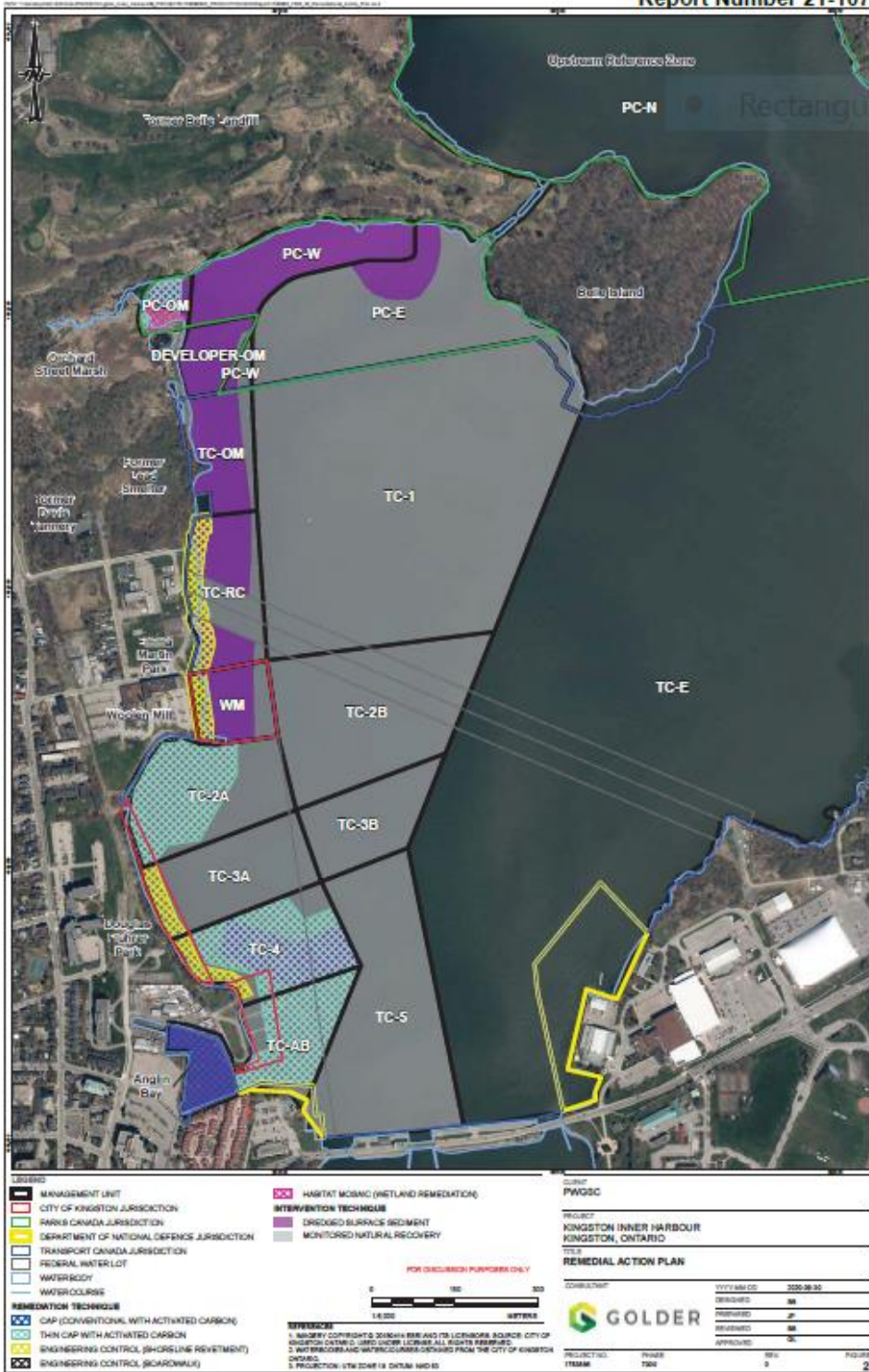
Some KFN members may be wondering about an article in the *Whig Standard* on Thursday 30 September, as it included the Kingston Field Naturalists in a list of the groups challenging the Federal Government's Inner Harbor Remediation Plan.

City Council and the public were initially informed about the plan in April, when there was a motion for the City to explore contributing \$10 million towards the \$71.4 million Transport Canada remediation plan. The request from Transport Canada (TC) included a map which showed areas where dredging was proposed. (A copy is attached at the end of this newsletter.) The map led to a lot of questions: Why was Transport Canada proposing to dredge up contaminated sediments, rather than leaving them be? How safe would the project be? And why was it proposed now?

Council then requested Transport Canada to make a presentation explaining their proposal to the *City's Environment, Infrastructure and Transportation Policies Committee* (EITP). TC made this presentation to the EITP on Tuesday 28 September. It described the background to the remediation plan, and stated that it was part of a long term plan to clean up polluted sites across the country. TC asserted that similar work had been done safely in other locations but did not address any of the specific concerns raised about the plan in April.

During the EITP meeting I questioned three aspects of the remediation plan:

- I challenged a comment by TC that the Inner Harbour was not being used to its full recreational potential! Their statement assumed that the best recreational use of the harbour was for swimming, but I pointed out that very few people wanted to swim there because the water is shallow and weedy! I also stated that many KFN members would argue that the harbour was currently being used for its maximum recreational potential, as an area to walk and observe nature downtown. (The emphasis on swimming seems to be a foundation of the TC plan: if nobody goes



into the water, there would be minimal health risk to humans from “dermal contact”, and a major reason for the cleanup would disappear.)

- I pointed out that describing the option of leaving things as they are as a “do nothing” approach overlooks the fact that natural remediation is occurring. People may be “doing nothing”, but nature is doing a lot! In recent years the number of turtles and the amount of other wildlife observed in the Inner Harbour has been increasing. Also, while TC raised the occurrence of “fish deformities” as a reason for remediation, I have not found any records of deformed fish occurring in the Inner Harbour since they were mentioned in a report published in 2014.

- I tried to get more information about a comment during the TC presentation that dredging would “remove some contamination but not all”, as their consultant’s written report refers to areas where, “sediments would be expensive and/or difficult to physically manage”. TC responded that they will be prioritizing hotspots, and that remediating those would bring down the overall level of pollution. But if some hot spots are going to remain, I wonder if the \$71.4 million remediation plan is worth the cost, and the disruption it would cause to the current ecosystem in the Inner Harbour?

River First YGK is a recently formed facebook group working to raise awareness and questions about the inner harbour remediation plans. They have four working groups (Science, Property, Process, and River Knowledge) and are looking for more members. You can contact them at riverfirstykgk@gmail.com