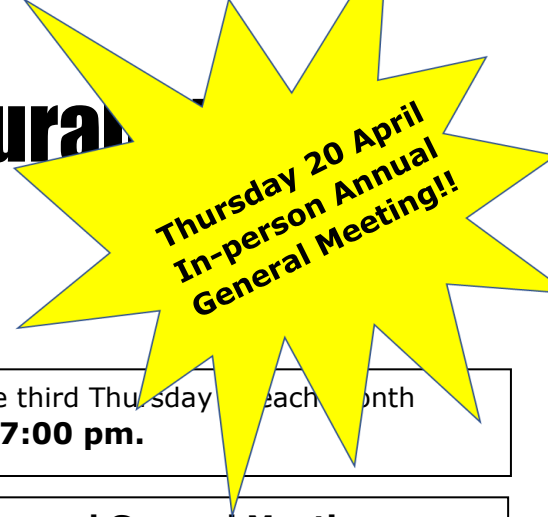




Kingston Field Naturalists

April - May 2023



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://kingstonfieldnaturalists.org>

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

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.**

Thursday 20 April will be our Annual General Meeting

We will have a short report of our activities in the past year, a review of the budget, and a vote by the membership on a slate of candidates for the 2023/2024 Executive. When the work is done, we will have short presentations from members of the executive. Rose-Marie Burke will be present *Come into the light: A Sampling of Moths and Other Night Flying Insects* and Janet Elliott will try to answer *What is a Wort??*

This will be a hybrid meeting. We will gather in the large meeting room at Ongwanada Resource Centre, Portsmouth Ave, Kingston. A Zoom link will also be sent to all members.

Our meeting will include a **book sale** of natural history books. Prices will be "pay what you can"; please bring your toonies and small bills! KFN **crests and memberships** will also be available for purchase.

Our May Dinner Meeting is Back! Thursday 18 May

at the Royal Kingston Curling Club, corner of Days and Front Roads.

Dr. Jeff Bowman will present:

Muskrats, water, and cattails: a story of love and loss

Dr. Bowman is a Research Scientist with the Wildlife Research and Monitoring Section of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and an Adjunct Professor at Trent University. He is Ontario's small mammal and furbearer research scientist, and has expertise in population and landscape ecology, genetics, and zoonotic diseases. He has conducted research on many species and ecosystems, including work on mink, muskrats, fishers, martens, lynx, bobcats, wolverines, wild turkeys, squirrels, mice, voles, and a variety of bat species. He is the Co-Chair of Canada's Federal-Provincial-Territorial working group on SARS-CoV-2 in wildlife, and he helps to lead Ontario's SARS-CoV-2 wildlife surveillance program.

Muskrats are aquatic mammals common to wetlands in Ontario, and they have often been called ecosystem engineers due to their habit of harvesting cattails and other aquatic plants. Muskrat populations appear to have been declining across North America since the 1980s and causes of the possible decline are not clear. I will present results from ongoing research into the status and ecology of this often-overlooked wetland mammal, aimed at better understanding potential causes of population decline.

Dinner choice will be chicken or vegetarian, tickets will be \$50 per person. Purchase your tickets at the general meeting in April, or by contacting Polly Aiken (pollyaiken13 at gmail.com or 343-363-1342). There will be a cash bar.

The sale of used natural history books and paraphernalia will also return. If you have something to donate for the sale, please contact Janet or Bruce Elliott (janet.l.elliott at gmail.com or 613-547-2674) and please limit your donation to 12 items.



Polyphemus Moth
Photo R-M Burke

If you have not renewed your membership...

please see page 4 on how you can do so online, OR purchase your membership at an in-person meeting.

Rambles, Field Trips, and other outings

Please check the website for any updates.

Be prepared for ticks! Wear long sleeves and pants tucked into socks.

RAMBLES take place every first and third Tuesday. Rambles are slow walks to notice nature in all its forms. Be prepared for ticks with boots, or pants tucked in socks. Bring a snack or lunch and a drink. For detailed directions please register by the Sunday before the trip with Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742).

Tuesday 18 April 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Helen Quilliam Sanctuary Greenwood

Track spring wildflower walk

Tuesday 2 May 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Milburn Creek property of NCC

Come and get to know this property before the BioBlitz

Tuesday 16 May 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Property of Shirley French, Cranberry Lake

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday 22 April 9:30 am to noon Helen Quilliam Sanctuary Clean-up

COME CELEBRATE EARTH DAY!!

Meet at the gravel pit at 9:30 am. Tools such as brush clippers and hammers are useful but not essential. Come and explore the trails, look for early spring flowers, butterflies and birds while helping with trail maintenance and signage. Refreshments will be available at noon at the gravel pit. Contact Erwin Batalla (613-389-0144 or simbat at bell.net) if you plan to come.

Saturday 6 May 6:00 am to 11:30 am Prince Edward Point NWA (Rain date 7 May)

Leader Anthony Kaduck This field trip is a visit to the Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area and Bird Observatory in search of spring migrants. This is a good time to catch up with incoming warblers, sparrows, vireos and other goodies. Waterfowl will still be hanging around in good numbers and there is a good chance of seeing Bonaparte's Gulls and a few swallow species. The trip will include several walks on forest trails and a walk out to the lighthouse (about 2.5 km round trip).

We will depart from the Tim Horton's parking lot (Gardiners Road and Bath Road) at 06:15 am to catch the 07:15 ferry. Please arrive early. Parking spots at the point are in short supply, so we will be encouraging participants to carpool.

Please register in advance: (kaduckintransit at gmail.com). If there are more than five cars we will attempt to find another leader so we can split into two groups.

May Bird Walks at Lemoine Point

May is a great time of year to observe nature at Lemoine Point and enjoy walking the trails. Every May we invite our Kingston Field Naturalists members and the general public (non-members) to come together and take a morning or evening guided trail walk. The walks take place every Wednesday in the month of May at 6:30 am and at 5:30 pm. A KFN leader will assemble the group in the south parking lot at Lemoine Point. Please note the change from previous years in the evening start time to add more daylight to the later walks. KFN members are encouraged to invite non-members and new members out to enjoy the beauty of Lemoine Point and to introduce people to what our group is all about.

3 May	6:30 am	Kathy Webb, Bill Depew	5:30 pm	Christine Hough
10 May	6:30 am	Anthony Kaduck	5:30 pm	Phil Harvey
17 May	6:30 am	Dianne Croteau, Richard Brault	5:30 pm	Steve Coates
24 May	6:30 am	Erwin Batalla	5:30 pm	Chris Grooms
31 May	6:30 am	Ken Ross	5:30 pm	Janis Grant, Nancy Spencer

MORE ACTIVITIES! Please see page 4 – 6 for details:

Kurt's Wednesday Bird Walks in April, May, June and July

page 4

Spring RoundUp Friday 19 May noon to Sunday 21 May noon

page 5

BioBlitz Saturday 9 June 3:00 pm to Sunday 10 June 3:00 pm

page 6

JUNIORS

Thursday 27 April 6:30 to 8:00 pm Indoor meeting
at Centennial Public School, Norman Rogers Drive
Invasive Species

Thursday 11 May 6:30 to 8:30 pm Evening Bird walk
at Lemoine Point (south, airport, side)
Be prepared for ticks with boots, or pants tucked in socks.



Field Trip

Saturday 22 April 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Helen Quilliam Sanctuary
Roadside Cleanup and Wild Flower Walk

Please register with Anne by Thursday 20 April to get details and directions.

Summer Camps

The KFN has a Stirrett Scholarship for a Summer Day Camp. Please ask Anne for more information.

TEENS

Please register with Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742) by the Thursday before the trip to receive detailed directions.



Friday 14 April evening 7 – 9 pm Marsh Monitoring
with Kathy Webb and Bill Depew

Saturday 13 May morning Global Big Bird day Wolfe Island
Practice with 'scopes as we tour the island for raptors and waterfowl to identify.

Club News and Updates

Welcome to new members: Louise Langlais, John Crawford & Jane Fitzgerald, Mike and Rosemary Brander, Gavan Watson & family, Lucy Aron, Candice McGrath & family, Dorothy Forrester & Robert Chittick, Jenny Sardone, Gary Luton, Don and Shirley Young, Simone Kingdon, Amy Kagerer.

Thank you to Ken Edwards, a long-time KFN member, who in the last several years has held the positions of Vice President, President, and Past President. For the past year he has been filling the position of Vice President again. He is our Zoom host for both general and executive meetings, and has facilitated our switch to hybrid meetings. Thank you Ken!

The Nominating Committee is currently calling for nominations to the 2023/2024 (May to May) KFN executive. They are seeking someone interested in handling publicity for the club. Candidate suggestions and expressions of interest are welcomed by Ken Edwards (rkfepajaro at me.com), Anthony Kaduck (kaduckintransit at gmail.com), and Gaye Beckwith (beckwithb at sympatico.ca).

Membership Renewal Time is 31 March

The KFN membership year extends from April 1 to March 31 of the following year so 2022/23 memberships will soon be expiring. ***If you are a new member since December 1, 2022 your membership is good until March 31, 2024.*** If you are a previous member and have recently renewed, thank you. If you are a Life Member, you never have to worry!

To renew your membership, you can proceed in one of several ways:

1. Join or renew online using the website: <https://kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/membership/>. Please note that you do not need a PayPal account to renew online: once you click the "Pay Now" button, you can proceed as a guest by clicking the "Pay with a credit or Visa debit card" button.
2. Mail a printed membership form downloaded from the website or a note containing your membership information along with a cheque payable to: Kingston Field Naturalists, PO Box 831, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4X6.

If you have any questions or if you have decided not to renew your membership and want to avoid receiving further renewal notices, please email Kathy Webb, Membership Secretary, at membership at kingstonfieldnaturalists.org.

Kurt's Wednesdays Bird Walks

Kurt Hennige is planning to provide the membership with some bird walks on Wednesday mornings. He will be targeting our six Key Biodiversity Areas managed by Birds Canada and Nature Canada. He was recently asked to review some of them for Birds Canada and many lack updated information on the key species which were used to create the areas.

Kurt plans to undertake Wednesday morning trips, once a month from April to November to 5 of the 6 areas. Each trip will be 4 hours in the areas close to Kingston (Wolfe and Amherst Islands and Napanee Plain) and up to 6 hours for Frontenac Forests and Prince Edward County South Shore KBA's.

Participants will be limited to 10 people and are required to contact Kurt at least 3 days before the trip to receive information on meeting point. While the focus will be on key target species like Brant, Little and Bonaparte's Gull for the Amherst Island trip, many other species will be counted as well. This could involve spending long times on scopes to get good counts. Patience will be required!

If you are interested, contact Kurt (khennige at xplornet.com or 613-876-1804).

Wednesday 26 April 8 am Amherst Island We will be counting Brant, and Bonaparte's and Little Gull.

Wednesday 10 May 7 am Prince Edward County South Shore Because of the date we will concentrate on looking for many of the 162 species of land birds recorded for the site, but will also check on late waterfowl like all three Scoter species.

Wednesday 7 June 6 am Frontenac Forests Very early start. We will search for many of the forest birds at risk such as Cerulean Warbler, Golden-winged Warblers and Yellow-throated Vireos.

Wednesday 5 July 7 am Napanee Plain This area currently holds over 60% of all Loggerhead Shrikes in Ontario. We will be searching for them, Upland Sandpiper and several Sparrow species.

Friday 19 May noon to Sunday 21 May noon Spring Round-up 2023

This annual birding event will run from Friday 19 May at noon to Sunday 21 May at noon. Birds will be counted only within the Kingston Field Naturalists bird area which is a radial distance of 50 km centred on Murney Tower. Members of the KFN are encouraged to get birding. You can backyard bird, bird in small groups or get out on your own and enjoy this special time on the birding calendar.

Submit your findings to eBird and they will be tabulated and the results will be reported in The Blue Bill. More details will follow.

Christine Hough attended Nature on the Hill. Here is her report:

As the Ontario Nature liaison for the KFN, I attended this year's Nature on the Hill in Ottawa. The focus of this year's Nature on the Hill was to encourage the federal government to honour its COP15 commitments and take action to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. Various members of Nature Canada Network met with Members of Parliament including Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault. This lobby group made a case for a national action plan that: is released by the end of 2023, has comprehensive and measurable targets, charts a course to conserve 30% of Canada's land and waters by 2030 (30X30), supports the rights of Indigenous Peoples, engages local communities, and most importantly, is accompanied by new federal legislation to ensure accountability. Minister Guilbeault indicated that drafting and tabling this new legislation will be a priority for his department. Minister Mark Gerretsen was not available to meet in Ottawa but did meet with representatives from Little Forests Kingston and No Clearcuts Kingston at a later date. Ontario Nature is now working with municipalities and local groups such as the KFN to identify protected lands that meet the criteria to have them included in 30X30.

NEXT STEP REGARDING THE TANNERY LANDS

Note from Chris Hargreaves, Conservation Committee Chair

An Ontario Land Tribunal case management conference regarding Patry developments appeal of the Kingston City Council rejection of their request for rezoning plans was held on 5 April. The actual hearing is scheduled for 30 January to 1 March 2024.

Monarch Ambassadors

The Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) is building a team of community volunteers to help gather information about Monarch Butterfly Migration in Ontario. The data collected through this study will aid in better protecting and conserving Monarchs and their irreplaceable habitat. CWF is looking for individuals and groups who can volunteer to frequently monitor local shores of Southern Ontario's Great Lakes during Monarch migration (mid-August to mid-September).

If you are interested in registering as a Monarch Ambassador, learning more, or being notified of future information sessions, [please click here to fill out our registration form and share it with anyone who may be interested!](#)

Raptor Migration

Last month we ran a request from Mike Street for information about migrating raptors. Derby Hill New York sees up to 100,000 raptors each spring; Mike wanted to determine their route once they reach Canada. Here are the responses received:

Kurt Hennige commented:

When I started to spend more time on Charleston Lake in spring and summer about 15 years ago, I asked myself the same questions. The short answer is that they are dispersing as soon as they come across the border.

A fair number of the Accipters, Northern Harrier and eagles are coming straight north over Lake Ontario, probably using some of the islands like Main Duck for resting. Some of them are visible at PEPT, but never in big numbers.

For the Buteos and Vultures, I spent several mornings over a few years along the Thousand Island Parkway and even walked up to Blue Mountain which is located northeast of Lansdowne and is the highest peak around here. On clear days a good part of St. Lawrence and New York Counties can be seen from there.

While hawks and vultures were migrating in low numbers on all locations I visited, the highest number (80 birds over 2 hours of BWA) I found surprisingly on Howe Island. I also noticed that many Turkey Vultures were going east on the south side of the river and did not cross in numbers where I was located.

Other members provided observations that conformed to Kurt's comments, as they reported Turkey Vultures all through the Cataraqui River, Howe Island, and Gananoque area.

Bill Evans added:

Unfortunately, two American birders who would have been a big help to the project passed away recently. Sheri (formerly Gerry) Smith, the founder and long-time counter at Derby Hill, died this past September, and Tom Carrolan passed away in 2019. Tom had come on the scene at Derby Hill later than Sheri but made an important discovery in the five years or so before he passed. By looking at radar data, he gathered evidence that in certain weather conditions a stream of raptors in spring migration will jump across the lake well to the west of Derby Hill. This may have been hypothesized previously because the raptor tallies at the Braddock Bay hawk count often were substantially different from that at Derby Hill. But Tom's research was the first that I know of that found evidence.

Sheri had a huge knowledge of raptors and certainly would have had ideas on how the raptor migration proceeds into Canada after passing Derby Hill. Both Sheri and Tom pointed out to me that the spring raptor flight around the eastern side of Lake Ontario can sometimes be seen (especially Broad-winged) on the Watertown NEXRAD radar data. 25+ years of that data is available online via <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/wct/data.php> I suspect analysis of that data might lead to some major clues for the investigation.

Why is Derby Hill so popular with migrating birds? According to their website:

Geography is the primary reason for the concentration of birds at Derby Hill. Thermals do not occur over water and most birds utilize thermals to save energy during migration. As birds migrate north in the spring and encounter Lake Ontario, most turn east and travel along the lakeshore until they can again turn north to continue their journey. Derby Hill is located precisely at the sweet spot where birds turn the corner of the lake.



Kingston Field Naturalists 2023 BioBlitz
Friday 9 June 3:00 pm to Saturday 10 June 3:00 pm
at Milburn Creek, Battersea

Guided walks with expert naturalists

Children's activities

Learn to find and identify flora, fauna and fungi

BBQ on Saturday

Marsh Wren
Cistothorus palustris
(photo by Kathy Webb)

For details of activities visit www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org (after mid-May)
To be added to mailing list please contact Janis Grant: janis.grant@icloud.com
Questions? Ask Anne (n8ture.anne@sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742)

Milburn Creek is a property of the Nature Conservancy of Canada