



Kingston Field Naturalists

February – March 2024

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 in Ongwanada Resource Centre off Portsmouth Avenue. Social starts at 7:00 pm, meeting starts at 7:30 pm.

Kingston Field Naturalists is a club of individuals who care about living things and their natural habitats in the Kingston area and beyond. We have more than 600 members. We share resources of three nature reserves: two on Amherst Island, and one on the Canadian Shield north of Sydenham. We are about to celebrate our 75th anniversary.

Dedicated volunteers run the Kingston Field Naturalists. Volunteers look after membership, find interesting speakers for meetings, manage the finances, plan field trips and rambles, care for the nature reserves, publicize our activities in the local media, produce programs to introduce young people to nature, keep the website up-to-date, voice concerns about conservation issues in our area, publish a quarterly journal and a monthly newsletter, and organize a dinner get-together in the spring and a 24-hour BioBlitz in June.

There are currently several vacancies on the Board of the KFN. Our Annual General Meeting and election of new Board members will be 18 April.

PLEASE CONSIDER HOW YOU CAN HELP TO RUN OUR CLUB.

Our Past President, Ken Edwards, is chair of the nominating committee. The other members of the committee are Anthony Kaduck, Erwin Batalla, and Larry McCurdy. They are actively seeking club members to help on the Board. Please contact them with your offer to help.

Ken Edwards rkfepajaro at me.com

Anthony Kaduck kaduckintransit at gmail.com

Erwin Batalla simbat at bell.net

Larry McCurdy larrymcc at kingston.net



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On Thursday 15 February Phillip Mercier will present Studying Bird Migration at Prince Edward Point

Philip Mercier is the Station Manager at the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory. He is an Ornithologist and Environmental Biologist and received a Bachelor of Applied Science in Environmental Biology with a specialty in Wildlife Biology. He was a bird bander at Fort McMurray, Alberta and at Washington College in Maryland. He has helped with the migration monitoring program for the Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory in Maryland.

This will be a Zoom presentation. Join us at Ongwanada for social time, a display of bird skin specimens showing the diversity of local woodpeckers, a used book sale, and a special vote (see page 4).

You will receive a **Zoom link** by email a few days before the meeting. You can also join the meeting by phone: contact Janet Elliott (613-547-2674) before the meeting to obtain the meeting ID and the Passcode.

We will have two speakers on Thursday 21 March Natasha Thorpe and Joanne Barnaby will present virtually Indigenous efforts to assist in the recovery of wildlife populations

Natasha and Joanne have co-facilitated multiple wildlife related processes for over 13 years, pioneering methods to bring together Indigenous knowledge and western science in guardians work and resource management. Most of their collaborations have been with Caribou peoples in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Alaska.

Our Annual General Meeting is in April. KFN Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are being rewritten in accordance with Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act guidelines. Members will have an opportunity to vote on the changes at the Annual General Meeting. The new Articles and Bylaws will be posted on the website in early March.



Red-bellied Woodpecker
Photo K. Webb

Rambles, Field Trips, and other outings

Please check the website for any updates.

RAMBLES are slow walks to notice nature; they take place on the first and third Tuesday each month. Please register with Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742) by the Sunday prior to the trip, to receive detailed directions. Dress very warmly! Good walking shoes or boots, a snack and a drink are advised. Poles are often useful if conditions are muddy or icy.

Tuesday 20 February 9:30 am to noon Butternut Creek Trail from Innovation Drive (off Hwy 15).

Tuesday 5 March 9:00 am to noon Casey Point off Aaragon Road with Kathy Webb

Tuesday 19 March 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Depot Creek Nature Reserve of the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington

Tuesday 2 April 9:00am to noon Bullen Road or K&P Trail from McIvor Road

FIELD TRIPS

Monday 19 February (Family Day) 9:15 am to about 12:30 pm Winter Birds

Leader: Erwin Batalla (simbat at bell.net or 613-389-0144) We will be looking for winter birds, especially large raptors like Eagles, Hawks and Owls. As with any natural wildlife viewing, sightings are not guaranteed. However, volunteers are busy scouting the area and hopefully the birds they have located will make an appearance for our group. Please email or phone the trip leader to register. Meeting location will be disclosed upon trip registration. Carpooling is recommended.

Saturday 9 March 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Presqu'île Waterfowl Outing

Leader: Gary Hillaby We will be meeting at our Kingston carpool location, the Invista Centre, and leaving for Brighton at 7:30 am. We plan to be at Presqu'île Provincial Park gate at 9:00 am. We will see what birds are available at the park and also check out what's happening at Wellers Bay. Participants should register with Gary (fieldtrips at kingstonfieldnaturalists.org)

Saturday 20 April 9:30 am to noon Helen Quilliam Sanctuary Clean-up

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 (simbat at bell.net or 613-389-0144) if you plan to come.

BioBlitz The BioBlitz committee has started preparing for our 2024 BioBlitz to be held June 14-15 on a property near Camden East. If you would like to volunteer or to be on the list for notification of details, please contact Janis Grant (janis.grant at icloud.com) or Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca or 613-389-6742).

JUNIORS

INDOOR MEETINGS 6:30 to 8:00 pm

at Centennial Public School, Norman Rogers Drive.

Please don't arrive before 6:30 pm so leaders time to set up.
As the weather gets messier outside, bring a pair of indoor shoes.

Thursday 22 February Mighty Microbes

Next indoor meeting Thursday 28 March



COIN COLLECTION

Each year the Junior Naturalists give back to nature in three ways: coin collection (spring indoor meetings), cleanup of lands (April field trip) and advocacy, letters etc. (April indoor meeting). The coin collection for 2024 will go to **Wildlife Preservation Canada** to help endangered species. Please bring coins to February and March indoor meetings. Nature will thank you!

FIELD TRIP

Please register with Anne (n8ture.anne@sympatico.ca) or at the meeting by the Thursday before the trip, to get detailed directions.

Saturday 24 February 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Helen Quilliam Sanctuary of KFN, north of Sydenham. Focus will be on spore-bearing species.

Saturday 23 March 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Property of Carolyn Bonta and Michael Johnson

SUMMER CAMP

A Stirrett scholarship is available for a Junior to attend Nature Camp in the summer. Ask Anne for details. Camps fill up quickly. Now is the time to think about it.

The Cataraqui Conservation Nature Explorers A summer day camp at Cataraqui Conservation Division Street for 6-10 year olds. Registration opens March 1 at noon. See website (<https://cataraquiconservation.ca/>).

Eco Adventure Camp A day camp at Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre for 8-13 year olds. Registration opens in January. See website (<https://ecoadventurecamp.ca/>).

TEENS



Saturday 10 February 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Wood Duck nest box maintenance at Land Conservancy property near Verona. Please register with Anne (n8ture.anne at sympatico.ca) by Thursday 8 February.

Saturday 9 March 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Robertson Cottage Beavers and their Habitat. Please register by 7 March for detailed directions.

Summer Camp A Stirrett scholarship is available for Leader in Training camp (Age 13-18) at Elbow Lake Environmental Education Centre July 2-5. Registration starts in January. Camps fill up quickly. Ask Anne for details. See website (<https://ecoadventurecamp.ca/>).

Club News and Updates

Welcome to new members David and Laurie Swinton, Johanna MacKinnon, Robert Gibson, Clarke Ian, Joaquin Varela, Heather Bashow, Robert Tavares, Arlene Hamilton, Siddharthsinh Jadeja, Christine Miller, Kathy and Allan Baer, Robin Knighton, Wanda Collier, Alyssa Bardy, Rod MacPherson and Anna Kristoffersen, Ken Gilmour, Lezlie Babcock, Jocelyn Purdie and Gord McRae.

Thanks to President John Donihee who has taken on the task of modifying KFN's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws to conform to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act. It has not been a simple task. Thank you for your patience and perseverance John!

It's Membership Renewal Time

The KFN membership year extends from April 1 to March 31 of the following year so 2023/24 memberships will soon be expiring. If you are a new member who has joined since the end of November 2024, your membership is good until 31 March 2025. If you are a previous member and have already renewed, thank you. If you are a Life Member, you never have to worry! If your membership is due for renewal, you can proceed in several ways:

- Join or renew online: <https://kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/membership-and-donations/>
- Download and print the membership form from the website and mail it in with a cheque payment to: Kingston Field Naturalists, PO Box 831, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4X6 .
- If you have any questions, please email membership@kingstonfieldnaturalists.org

Special Vote concerning KFN website

The KFN website has been hosted for several years on a private computer server. During this time the website has been greatly enhanced including the addition of online payment capability. All of this has been provided at no cost to the KFN through the generosity of a KFN member. By mutual agreement it is time for the KFN to move the website to a commercial host who could also provide ongoing IT support. There will be a significant but affordable one-time cost to move the website. Since this is not covered in the current 2023-2024 budget, we will need the approval of the membership to spend up to \$5000 on this project.

Please consider the following as a notice of motion to be voted on at the KFN General Meeting on 15 February: **Moved by Larry McCurdy that the KFN Executive be authorized to spend up to \$5000 to migrate the KFN website from the current private server host to a commercial website host.**

It is our 75th Anniversary! If you have any historical pictures to share, stories to tell, or suggestions for celebrating this achievement, please send them to the dedicated email: 75th@kingstonfieldnaturalists.org A suggestion to have a listing competition is in the works: stay tuned!

Participation Opportunities

There are currently several vacancies on the KFN Board. You can see the duties of the various executive positions on the KFN website <https://kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/membership-and-donations/volunteer/> The following members of the nominating committee will be happy to receive your offer to serve on the Board: Ken Edwards (rkfepajaro@me.com), Erwin Batalla (simbat@bell.net), Anthony Kaduck (kaduckintransit@googlemail.com) and Larry McCurdy (larrymcc@kingston.net).

KFN needs a publicity person right now! Currently we have no one looking after publicity for the club. This task involves sending news of our meetings and other events to the local media. If you are interested, please contact an executive member through the website or Ken Edwards (rkfe@queensu.ca) or info@kingstonfieldnaturalists.org.

Wingspan is a board game for bird enthusiasts who will play the role of researcher, watcher, ornithologist, and collector. The goal of the game is to attract a beautiful and diverse collection of birds to your wildlife preserve. This is a fun way to learn some interesting facts about a wide range of birds. Andrew Miller, a KFN member, has access to a venue for hosting games nights. If you are interested, please contact him: millerandrew88@gmail.com.

Upcoming Events of Interest

Fridays starting 23 February Wildlife by the Seasons Seniors Center

If you are interested in talking about wildlife and learning something new, consider signing up for Part 1, 'Wildlife by the Seasons' at the Seniors Centre on Francis Street. We will get together on Fridays between 1 and 2 pm from 23 February to 19 April. Topics are covered with PowerPoint, video film clips, and hands-on KFN specimen collections. See Senior Centre website for details.

www.seniorskingston.ca/programs Shirley French, Education Chair, is the instructor for the course.

Monday 19 February 7:00 pm A brief history of the ecology of the 1000 Islands Little Forests Kingston is hosting a 30-minute talk by Oliver Reichl about how our region came to be one of the most biodiverse places on the continent. Oliver, who serves on Little Forests Kingston Board of Directors, is the author of *A Natural Heritage Review of the Thousand Islands Ecosystem*. Register for this Zoom event on Eventbrite.

Conservation Committee Report from Chris Hargreaves, Chair.

The Conservation Committee is organized on an informal basis: members receive a monthly report by email and are invited to respond and/or help on any of the topics that particularly interest them, and/or to raise new issues. Additional members would be most welcome: just email hargreavescp@sympatico.ca if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

KINGSTON INNER HARBOUR SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT PROJECT

On 2 February the KFN had a 90-minute meeting with nine people who are working on the Kingston Inner Harbour Sediment Dredging Project, from Parks Canada, Transport Canada, Public Service and Procurement, and the consultants from WSP.

The revised conceptual Sediment Management Plan has been updated based on feedback regarding the original plan, as well as new technical and scientific findings. There is more information on the project website: www.kihproject-projetpik.ca The area to be dredged has been reduced. The report states that: "*Up to 3.5 ha of contaminated sediments will be dredged to a depth of up to 1 m below the harbour bed. Dredging will not take place along land, and will start in water after a minimum 5 m buffer zone from the edge of the toe of the existing shoreline protection.*" It was frustrating and alarming that nobody at the meeting could explain what "3.5 hectares of contaminated sediments ... to a depth of up to 1 metre" actually meant in terms of truckloads of contaminated sediment! The Sediment Management Project has also not yet considered how the contaminated sediment will be transported through Kingston, or where it will then be deposited!

Two years ago, the City of Kingston was approached to contribute \$10 million towards the overall cost of about \$70 million for the Inner Harbour Sediment Management Project. There are still a lot of questions to be answered regarding the project!

Crows

- For current information there is a Facebook group "Crow Watch Kingston, Ontario" with a website at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1070761247429905/>
- For more general information about crows, a recording of The Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington webinar presentation "TO KNOW THE CROW" by Kevin McGowan, PhD, of Cornell University can be viewed at To Know the Crow (youtube.com)

SNOWY OWLS

- There have been no reports of Snowy Owls in the Kingston Study area so far this winter.
- For more information see <https://www.projectsnowstorm.org/posts/two-owls-two-personalities/>

Horned Larks

- Brian Morin reported an unusual sighting of Horned Larks on Wolfe Island in January.
- If you have observations of Horned Larks, please contact Brian birdnews@ontbirds.ca

AVIAN INFLUENZA IN KINGSTON AREA

UPDATE TO 5 FEBRUARY

The Public Works Department of the City of Kingston has removed approximately 60 birds from public property at Lake Ontario Park and Elevator Bay areas. They do not and can not remove birds from private property. The Public Works Department is contacting Invista/Dupont to encourage them to clean up birds on their property.

The Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre in Napanee has received about 30 sick geese from private individuals. Avian influenza cannot be treated, so the geese have been euthanized to reduce their suffering.

The City issued a statement on Friday 2 February:

- *Community members should report any sightings of distressed or dead birds to the Ontario Regional Centre of the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative at 1-866-673-4781 or online at CWHC.WildlifeSubmissions.org. Birds in distress can also be reported to Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre at 613-354-0264.*
- *Please do not handle sick, injured, or dead wild birds. If handling wild birds or other wildlife is unavoidable, wear gloves or use a doubled plastic bag and avoid contact with blood, body fluids and feces. You should then wash your hands thoroughly with soap and warm water or use hand sanitizer.*
- *Protect your pets by keeping your cats indoors and dogs on a leash when out for a walk.*

An up-to-date report will be issued shortly.

Concerning bird feeders, the Government of Canada website states that:

"The use of bird feeders is unlikely to spread highly pathogenic avian influenza virus, and the risk of an outbreak in wild bird species that frequent feeders is considered low."

However, they also list some precautions: <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/migratory-game-bird-hunting/avian-influenza-wild-birds.html>

It is also a good idea to sterilize feeders on a regular basis to prevent the spread of other pathogens such as mycoplasma conjunctivitis.