



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

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ECFNC Monthly Meetings

Except for our annual dinner in November, monthly members' meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm at Ojibway Nature Center, 5200 Matchette Road, Windsor, 519-966-5852. We also have monthly outings, posted in the 'Activities and Excursions' section of this newsletter as well as on our website. Visit our Website at essexcountynature.com

A great big *Thank-You* to everyone who submitted articles and photos to the Egret this month. We always appreciate your submissions and couldn't run this newsletter without them!

Upcoming ECFNC Activities

March 12th – Native Tree Walk

April 12th – BSC Chimney Swift Talk

April 22nd – Birds and Wildflowers Hike

April 23rd – Reptiles/Amphibians Walk

April 23rd - Earth Day Bake Sale!!!

April 29th – Garlic Mustard Pull

May 6 and 7 – Pelee Island Trip

May 10th – To be announced

June 14th – City Forester Paul Giroux

Calling all volunteers!

The Earth Day Bake Sale is quickly approaching.

Volunteers are needed to provide baked goods as well as to help work the booth.

For more information:

See page 13 or email

Cathy Lapain -- aclapain@gmail.com

About the Club ...

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club was incorporated in March 1985. We are a registered charitable organization which promotes the appreciation and conservation of our natural heritage. ECFNC provides the community opportunities to become acquainted with and understand our natural world through identification, maintenance and preservation of the natural areas within Essex County and surrounding regions. ECFNC is affiliated with Ontario Nature/Federation of Ontario Naturalists. *The Egret* is published quarterly. To receive information on the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club or to submit articles, letters, reports, etc., please write to:

Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

c/o Ojibway Nature Centre
5200 Matchette Rd.
Windsor On, N9C 4E8

Information

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www.essexcountynature.com
Egret email:
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ECFNC fax # 519-839-4795

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519-966-5852
Point Pelee National Park
519-322-5700
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519-776-5209

ECFNC Contacts

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Chairpersons/Liaisons:

Ontario Nature Liaison: JoAnn Grondin
ERCA Liaison: Sarah Baldo
ERCA Conservation Areas Advisory Committee for park management: Sarah Baldo and Tom Preney
Bluebird Committee Chairman: Don Bissonnette
Essex County Land Stewardship Liaison: Linda Menard-Watt
Ojibway Liaison: Tom Preney
Citizens Environment Alliance Liaison: Jesse Gardner Costa
Windsor Essex County Environmental Committee: Jesse Gardner Costa
Canada South Land Trust Liaison: Dave Kraus
Detroit River Canadian Cleanup Liaison: Claire Sanders and Steve Marks

Committees:

Egret Editorial: Jessica Rose
Field Trips: Alexis Hand (chair), Paul Pratt, Ian Woodfield
Heritage: JoAnn Grondin (coordinator), Dave Kraus, Betty Learmouth, Jim McAllister, Gerry Waldron, Shirley Grondin, Cathy Lapain, Rachel Hasson
Little River Enhancement Group: Ian Naisbitt (chair), Jesse Gardner Costa
Fish Book: Dave Kraus, Jesse Gardner Costa
Website: Sarah Baldo, Kory Renaud (co chairs)
Social Media: Kory Renaud and Sarah Baldo
Membership: Jeremy Hatt (chair), Paula O'Rourke, Carl Maiolani, Jessica Rose

President Report for 2016

By Jesse Gardner Costa

Dear Club Members,

2016 was a year of growth and accomplishment for our club. We've had great attendance for our meetings this year and I've seen a lot of new faces. I'd like to thank our current members for your continued interest and welcome new members to the club. Special thanks go to our annual outstanding achievement award winners: JoAnn Grondin, Mike Malone and Joan Walker. Carl Maiolani's membership report will provide more details but we're glad to be reaching new audiences and will continue to expand our capacity of the club with the help from our membership. Don't forget to check out our newly revamped website (thanks to Kory Renaud) for resources and upcoming events.

In that vein, we've started a few non-executive subcommittees to involve members beyond executive membership as well as provide opportunities for new endeavours for the club. We started 2 new committees: a field trip committee – a group dedicated to coming up with ideas for field trips for the club; a membership committee – a group dedicated to attract and retain new members as well as improve the overall experience of all our membership. I'd like to thank 2 members of the membership committee, Jessica Rose and Jeremy Hatt for editing and contributing, respectively, to our quarterly paper, the Egret.

We have other ideas for subcommittees but are slowly rolling out programs, any members wishing volunteer should contact myself or Carl Maiolani.

BioBlitz - We're on a 2 year hiatus from the Bioblitz. Unfortunately we lost our venue for the 2017 International Blitz, we'll try again in 2019 or 2020. Instead we helped sponsor World Snake Day (WSD) (2016) by bringing in Sensational Snakes to run demonstrations at the park. WSD seems to be growing in popularity every year.

Despite our setbacks, we've been coordinating with Point Pelee national park. The plan is to have a full blown bioblitz at Point Pelee in 2018 (Pelee's 100th birthday) with the Club as a major partner. We're a little behind but still working on our 2015 Bioblitz results. Now that we've completed our Ojibway Shores report, we've focused our efforts on the Bioblitz.

Matchette Road, mitigating road mortality – Species (especially snakes and turtles) around the Ojibway Prairie Complex continue to be maimed or killed trying to cross the road. Our club has been advocating to have the City of Windsor take action to mitigate road mortality, specifically at Matchette Road,

right at the Ojibway Nature Center. We've been advocating for ecopassages and/or full or seasonal road closures to help sensitive species. If you're interested in working on this issue, please contact me, but you can always call your city councilors and encourage others to do the same. Ojibway is a natural asset to the city and its community and preserving it provides more benefit than any other land-use.

Ojibway Shores – *As a recap: the last natural shoreline along the Detroit River was slated to be clear-cut and filled in fall 2013. The Windsor Port Authority held a public meeting on July 3rd and was met with an overwhelming response from the public (over 500 people!), including many of our members.*

In the aftermath of this meeting, the Windsor Port Authority decided not to clear-cut the area and have committed to work with the environmental community (Field Naturalists', Citizens Environment Alliance, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup), ERCA and our local MPs, Jeff Watson and Brian Masse to come up with a solution to save the property.

We completed the Ojibway Shores Biological inventory report – Using data from our Bioblitzes and surveys from members, we wrote a report for the public that we presented to the Windsor Port Authority. Special thanks to all our partners involved. Our goal now is to start promoting the results, we'll start by posting it to our own website. This document will serve as a record of species inhabiting the property and will hopefully be used in the justification of preserving this important natural area.

Lastly, I'd like to thank the continuing efforts of our excellent executive members. Although we'll miss the presence of the members stepping down, we greatly appreciate their contributions and I know they'll continue to participate in the club. To all executive members; the club would not be where it is today without your hard work and creativity. I'm excited for the future of the club because I know the club is in good hands. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with you and look forward to working together on our current and new initiatives.

Thank you for your dedication and support,
Jesse Gardner Costa

A Curious Corner of Cedar Creek C.A.

By Gerry Waldron

On May 5, 1979 an unusual tree planting ceremony took place at the Essex Region Conservation Authority's (ERCA) Cedar Creek Conservation Area. At the conclusion of planting activities, the Honourable Eugene Whelan, Federal Minister of Agriculture at the time, unveiled the site's sign. The sign read, "Essex Region Nut Grove, established by the Essex Region Conservation Authority in co-operation with the Society of Ontario Nut Growers and the Province of Ontario."

The planting took place on a nearly level former agricultural field of poorly drained Caistor Clay soil bordered on the west by a conifer plantation and mature oak-hickory Carolinian woodland. Nineteen blocks and rows of seedling trees, 213 in all, were planted. These consisted of 42 Filberts, 32 Chinese Chestnuts, 22 Pecans, 20 Black Walnuts, 20 Carpathian Walnuts, 20 Shellbark Hickories, 10 Heartnuts, 10 Hicans, 10 Persian Walnuts, 10 Shagbark Hickories, 9 Hazelberts, 2 Chinquapin Oaks, 2 Persimmons, 2 Rock Oaks (*Quercus acutissima*), and 2 Scarlet Oaks.

In following years, maintenance consisted of mowing between the rows and likely Roundup (glyphosate) herbicide applications within the rows. With fiscal restraints, the grove's maintenance was reduced and eventually abandoned in the 1990's.

Today natural vegetative succession is well underway and the sign is long gone but the site is easily found because of its location in the southwest corner of the busy intersection of County Road 20 and County Road 23 (Arner Townline). Where nut tree seedling survival was high, planting rows are still visible and provide orientation in spite of the dense growth of native and introduced trees and shrubs. Survivorship results are thought provoking.

Species	# Planted	# Surviving
Filbert	42	0
Chinese Chestnut	32	0
Pecan	22	22
Black Walnut	20	0
Carpathian Walnut	20	0
Shellbark Hickory	20	20
Heartnut	10	0
Hican	10	10
Persian Walnut	10	0
Shagbark Hickory	10	3
Hazelbert	9	1
Chinquapin Oak	2	0
Persimmon	2	2
Scarlet Oak	2	0
Rock Oak	2	1
Japanese Emperor Oak	?	1

It is surprising that no Persian or Carpathian Walnut seedlings survive because generally they grow well in the Essex region and live for many decades. Most surprising though is the complete loss of Black Walnuts, given that healthy wild trees are establishing on the site. Conversely the failure of the Chinese Chestnuts could be expected on a seasonally waterlogged heavy clay soil.

No doubt the same holds true for the loss of Heartnut and Scarlet Oak, *Quercus coccinea*. Two exotic oaks were planted and both species are still present. One of two Rock Oaks survives in perfect health with a diameter at breast height (dbh) of 33 centimetres and height of 11 metres and a solitary Japanese Emperor Oak, *Q. dentata*, persists in a dwarfed shrub-like form.

Of the 42 Filberts not one remains, yet curiously a single Hazelbert of nine planted is in a thriving state. All 22 Pecans survive in good vigour and produce crops quickly taken by wildlife. The largest of these has a dbh = 30.5 cm and ht. = 11.5 m. Both Persimmons are likewise doing well (dbh = 24.5 cm, ht. = 10 m) and producing large crops of seedless fruits – both are female. Lacking seeds they are spreading by root suckering. Shellbark Hickory prefers sites like this, so it is not surprising to find all 20 trees doing well. Ten each of Shagbark Hickory and Hican were planted; today all the Hicans are thrifty (dbh=21 cm, ht. = 7 m) but oddly only 3 Shagbarks survive.

Although it is a shame that the grove was neglected for the past twenty-some years, it remains instructive. It illustrates yet again the need to choose appropriate tree species for specific soil conditions. Shellbark Hickory is obviously the native nut tree best adapted to Caistor Clay type soils. Given the results, wildlife habitat enthusiasts should consider the non-native Pecan, Persimmon and possibly Rock Oak as productive wildlife food plants on such clay soils. Although all three 'species' are well adapted to the site, the Shellbarks and Pecans have proven more productive than their hybrid, the Hicans. And the lone Hazelbert should find its way into a breeding program – there must be some superior genes harboured in that germplasm.

In an effort to reforest the vacant spaces in the nut grove, the Conservation Authority has wisely decided to plant seedlings of native Shellbark Hickory and Swamp White Oak, both of which are exhibiting good adaptation to the site. Several exotic tree species have found the site amenable, these include, Siberian Elm, Manitoba Maple, Amur Maple and Autumn Olive.

The nut grove is an interesting place for the naturalist to explore. Plenty of birds nest here. Park in the ERCA parking lot off the west side of the Arner Townline (Co. Rd. 23) north of the Cedar Creek Bridge. Wear sturdy shoes or boots. Walk north on the parking lot access road you just drove, to the corner where the road turns east to the Arner Townline. A rough walking path continues north from this corner. Go as far north as you can on this path and then when the path turns west bushwhack farther north into the shrubby successional area. The nut grove lies between you and County Road 20.

Anthropocentric view ignores crucial connections

By: David Suzuki (Submitted by Dave Kraus)

For decades, scientists have warned that we're on a dangerous path. It stems from our delusion that endless growth in population, consumption and the economy is possible and is the very purpose of society. But endless growth is not feasible in a finite biosphere. Growth is not an end but a means.

Humans are one species among countless others to which we are connected and on which we depend. Viewed that way, everything we do has repercussions and carries responsibilities. That we are part of a vast web is a biocentric way of seeing that we've followed for most of our existence. But in assuming the mantle of "dominant" species,

we've shifted to thinking we're at the centre of everything. This anthropocentric perspective leads us to imagine our needs and demands supersede those of the rest of nature.

The failure to see our interconnectedness and interdependence is most striking in the way we manage government affairs. Forestry, environment and fisheries and oceans ministers' priorities are not to protect forests, the environment or fish and oceans, but to rationalize our actions and ensure that whatever we do benefits us.

In an anthropocentric world, we attempt to manage important factors through separated silos, shattering the sense of interconnection. We draw arbitrary lines or borders around property, cities, provinces and countries and try to manage resources within those boundaries. But salmon may hatch in B.C. rivers and migrate through the Alaskan panhandle along the coasts of Russia, China, Korea and Japan before returning to their natal streams. To whom do they "belong"?

How do we manage monarch butterflies born in Ontario that travel through numerous U.S. states into Mexico? Grizzly bears are protected as an endangered species in the U.S. but can be shot if they cross into Canada.

This absurd disconnection was illustrated when provincial first ministers and the federal government [met to discuss climate change and health in December](#). It was an opportunity to recognize the enormous health implications and costs of climate change. Instead, talks proceeded as if the two subjects were unrelated.

The repercussions of a mere 1 C rise in global average temperature over the past century have been enormous. In 2015, climate negotiations in Paris were meant to signal a shift away from fossil fuels to prevent an increase of more than 2 C this century. Though the Paris commitment dictates that most known deposits must be left in the ground, governments like Canada's continue to support new pipelines and continued exploitation of fossil fuel reserves. Efforts by Canada, the U.S. and other major greenhouse gas emitters have been so minimal that scientists now openly discuss global temperature rises of 4 to 6 C this century. Because we can't seem to curb our emissions, many suggest we must geoengineer the planet!

As top predator, our species remains dependent on clean air, water and soil and biodiversity, making our ability to survive catastrophic planetary disruption questionable. Surely that should be a top line in discussions about health.

At the December meeting, having ignored the effects of climate change on health, our political representatives simply assumed health-care costs will rise steadily (they have) without attempting to understand the cause. Instead, they focused on provincial demands for and federal resistance to annual payment increases. But health costs can't continue to rise indefinitely.

We are accelerating degradation of the very source of our lives and well-being — air, water and soil — through massive use of pesticides, artificial fertilizers and literally tens of thousands of different molecules synthesized by chemists. Scientists suggest up to 90 per cent of cancer is caused by environmental factors. It's lunacy to ignore widespread and pervasive pollution as a primary health hazard. What we put into the biosphere, we put into

ourselves.

If we want to keep health costs from rising, we should focus on keeping people healthy rather than dealing with them after they're sick. The highest priorities must be to stop polluting the biosphere and clean up what we've already dumped into it. Most importantly, we have to rid ourselves of anthropocentric hubris and return to the biocentric view that we are biological beings, as dependent on the rest of nature for our survival and well-being as any other.

2016 Ontario SwiftWatch Report

Jeremy Hatt

The 2016 Ontario SwiftWatch Report from Bird Studies Canada is now available online!

Here is the link to the full report:

https://gallery.mailchimp.com/b79fe207008a31b86abe9daa9/files/8677ae3f-cd9c-4d3f-a3e8-b0ab126e8ef6/2016_Ontario_Summary_Report_final_EN.pdf

Essex County highlights

In 2016, ECFNC began to take a more active role in Chimney Swift reporting and monitoring in Essex County and it was the first year that data from Windsor was contributed to the project. Members monitored roosts in the spring and conducted detection probability surveys at two sites in the summer in Kingsville. Members also submitted sightings in the summer and fall, which added 9 new swift sites to the Ontario SwiftWatch database including one in Amherstburg, one in Kingsville, and seven in Windsor. Windsor also held its first "Downtown Swift Blitz Night," a great success attended by ECFNC members and staff from Bird Studies Canada. The highlight of the night was the discovery of an active roosting site with over 100 swifts entering.

There will be many opportunities for ECFNC members to volunteer in 2017 and an upcoming speaker from Bird Studies Canada to discuss Ontario SwiftWatch with our Club. Please contact me at hattjeremy@hotmail.com to get involved in monitoring swift sites, submitting sightings, and upcoming events.

23rd Annual ECFNC Weekend Trip to Pelee Island, Ontario. Saturday May 6 & Sunday May 7, 2017.

Leave at 10:00 am Saturday from Leamington Dock

aboard the M.V. Jiimaan (be at the dock by 9:20 am)

We will return to Leamington Dock by 5:45 pm Sunday

We will likely see: migrating waterfowl & warblers, wildflowers such as trilliums & waterleaf, basking turtles and snakes, bullfrogs, historic sites, and hear a chorus or two of American Toads, to suggest a few of the many enjoyable experiences on Pelee Island in spring. We should also get a chance to visit the Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO bird

banding station) and some of the recently acquired Nature Conservancy of Canada properties: Red Cedar Savannah ESA, Stone Road Alvar ANSI, Brown's Point and Woods, and Brown's Road Alvar. We will have plenty of time to walk, observe, and relax on the excursions to some of Pelee's most beautiful natural habitats, including: Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve, Lighthouse Point Provincial Nature Reserve, the Stone Road Alvar Complex, Sheridan Point ESA, and many other stops along the way (including natural habitat restoration work completed on my property).

Should we experience inclement weather, we can visit the Pelee Island Heritage Centre, tour the island in the comfort of our rented bus driven by ECFNC member Sharon Medeiros, and/or lounge at the Anchor and Wheel Inn.

I have arranged for bus transportation while on the island - no vehicles are necessary on the trip. There is parking at the Leamington Dock area. I have reserved space on the ferry for all registered, walk on passengers attending this trip - we will meet in the ticket office at the dock on Saturday morning at 9:30am.

Accommodations have been reserved at the Anchor and Wheel Inn. The motel and bed and breakfast style rooms are rustic, but comfortable and are situated on spacious grounds. Reservations are generally set for two persons per room. However, people do not need to register in pairs or groups - everyone is welcome and will be accommodated based on their wishes and room availability.

The Anchor and Wheel Inn contains a clean and comfortable restaurant where I have arranged for our delicious meals. We will break for meals regularly (lunch at noon and dinner at 5:45 pm on Saturday, breakfast at 8:30am and lunch at 12:45pm Sunday) and hot meals and snacks are also available on both ferry crossings.

The total cost will be \$ 195 this year. This cost will include: the two ferry trips, weekend bus transportation, four hot meals, overnight room accommodations, and all taxes and tips. The \$ 195 cost will include all expenses for the weekend other than alcoholic drinks, souvenirs, and snacks or meals on the ferry.

All interested persons need to do is: sign up with me and then show up at the Leamington Dock by 9:20 am Saturday morning with warm outdoor clothes and accessories, overnight necessities, \$ 195 cheque (payable to David Kraus) or cash per person, and a few additional dollars for extra snacks, etc. if desired. The trails are mostly elevated and dry, but you may wish to bring rubber boots to access some areas on my property or the bird banding station, especially if it has been rainy. Carl will hopefully arrange for good weather as usual !

I will contact each person that registers should any time or location changes for the ferry occur, otherwise the above outline is the basic schedule, rain or shine. I will hand out more detailed schedules on the Saturday morning ferry trip, but with our own driver and rented bus, we can be flexible and able to visit various sites depending on the weather and the group's wishes.

To register for this trip: see me at the ECFNC meetings, call, or email/text:

Dave Kraus phone: 519 825 7491 (leave message)

email address: david.kraus@publicboard.ca

text: 519 257 8674

I look forward to your company on this ECFNC outing !!!

Goals Are a Must

By Kit McCann

Goals... a word that not every birder says or uses but should. Before you jump to the next article and think this is a waste of time, give me a chance to explain why goals are a must. We all know goals are super important in life if we want to do anything, accomplish much, get a head, succeed or even for just MOVING 4WARD (subtle promotion ;) for my books there). So, just how are birding goals so important, you ask? 1) It keeps you on track 2) You feel a sense of accomplishment when achieving your goal 3) You have a better chance of adding a lifer to your birding life list 4) When other local birders know you have a goal they want to help you succeed (we are truly blessed in this area for the amount of birds we can see and the amount of great birders that are so helpful). 5) Others will ask you how you are making out with your goal and no one wants to admit giving up, so it motivates us to continue. 6) It gets you out into nature and a good source of exercise 7) Birding is relaxing and fun 8) It can be a de-stressor and we all can use that. 9) You meet many great people from all over the globe while birding. 10) It gives you an experience, instead of sitting in front of a brainwashing television. Hopefully you can see the value in birding goals and let us take the next step towards your birding goal for this year. It's time to decide what type of birding goal you would like to set. Do you want to add a lifer/s to your list? Get out at least once a week to go birding? Help fellow birders with their life lists? Go to your favourite birding spot and promote it to others? Be the #1 birder at a certain birding location? Be in the top 10 birders in Essex county or even be the #1 birder in the county (look out Kory you might have some competition this year)? Or you can even set up a ridiculous goal like I have done for this year. Some of you may know I just started birding last year in May and by December I decided to do my best at becoming the #1 birder in Ontario at least once in 2017 (overly-ambitious to most people I realize, but most of you just don't know how much work I will put into a goal). Anyways, I hit my goal twice already. Two weeks into January I was at 109 birds for Ontario and by the third week in February I again hit it with 134 birds (a lot of help and work, but I did it). Never tell someone a goal is unachievable because you have no clue how much work they are willing to put into hitting a goal. In case you didn't know, we actually have 3 other birders in our county that are in the top 10 for Ontario right now - Jeremy Hatt, Kory Renaud and Jeremy Bensette. My final words to you will be... set at least one birding goal and get your butt out there and go enjoy birding regularly this year! You can do it!

Happy Birding my fellow Essex county birders!!!
Kit McCann

2016 Holiday Beach Christmas Bird Count

By Jeremy Hatt

The Holiday Beach Christmas Bird Count was held on Dec. 27, 2016. 32 volunteers participated in the count with 31 people making observations in the field and one person observing feeders. A total of 46 party hours were tallied: 22 hours by foot, 24 hours by car, and 1 hour of feeder watching; together accounting for 410km of distance travelled for the count.

The weather made for a fairly comfortable day of birding with temperatures ranging from a low of -1.5C to a high of 3.5C. The coldest spots to bird were those exposed to the wind as gusts of more than 30km/h from the southwest brought quite a chill! The sky was cloudy all day but there was no precipitation. The waters of the Detroit River and Lake Erie were mostly open with some ice pileup near the shores and inland waters were mostly frozen with a few open areas where concentrations of waterfowl were found including Big Creek, Holiday Beach, and the marsh at Bar Point.

A total number of 14,133 birds were counted of 71 species. Highlights included 21 Snow Geese at various locations in the circle, 1 Ross's Goose in a field off Highway 18 west of Big Creek, 658 Tundra Swans, a Double-crested Cormorant at the Boblo Island Ferry Terminal, an adult Red-shouldered Hawk near the Amherstburg Birding and Nature Trail, 12 Rough-legged Hawks, one American Coot on the Detroit River, 8 Bonaparte's Gulls and 11 Great Black-backed Gulls on the Detroit River, 3 Great Horned Owls on Boblo Island, one Peregrine Falcon, 10 Eastern Bluebirds, and 1 Hermit Thrush. A few blackbird flocks were found with a final tally of 19 Red-winged Blackbirds, 23 Rusty Blackbirds, 64 Common Grackles, and 260 Brown-headed Cowbirds.



1 of 3 resident Great Horned Owls found on Boblo Island. Photo by Kory Renaud

Diving duck numbers were considerably lower than previous counts due to the open water of the river and lake allowing ducks to spread out and not be concentrated in the count circle. Only 80

Canvasback were found, 11 Redhead, 38 Greater Scaup, 3 Bufflehead, 8 Common Merganser, 4 Hooded Merganser, and 24 Common Merganser. These counts are all considerably lower than previous high counts.

The only new record high count for the circle was 60 Bald Eagles, mostly found at Holiday Beach. Two species were new to the Holiday Beach CBC: Ross's Goose and Black-crowned Night-Heron.

As of 2016, Betty Learmouth has passed the compiler torch over to Kory Renaud and me. Her many years of dedication to the Holiday Beach CBC as compiler and coordinator as well as her CBC summaries in The Egret are greatly appreciated and helped to make the transition a smooth one.

Kory and I joined Betty and her group to bird Boblo Island in the morning and the fields west of Big Creek to the Detroit River in the afternoon. The trail around Boblo Island makes for a nice winter walk. The skeletal remnants of the Boblo Island Amusement Park along with the lighthouse at the south end of the island and the 1839 blockhouse create a unique feeling of walking through the past. This is juxtaposed to the modern subdivision and condo development on the north end where we drove around to look for feeders and increase our House Sparrow count.

As we were making our way back to the ferry, our group had the great fortune of running into Bill Brundage. He is the man responsible for restoring the blockhouse and graciously gave us a private tour of its interior. The blockhouse served as a defense post for Canada on the river and is a two-story square building with a museum inside, which houses artifacts found buried around the site. These artifacts include pipes, arrowheads, pottery, and knives. Bill shared his passion and knowledge of the military history of the site while we explained to him about the Christmas Bird Count and the value of citizen science.



The following link is to a Windsor Star article on how it took Brundage four years to fully restore the blockhouse:

<http://windsorstar.com/news/restored-boblo-island-blockhouse-a-labour-of-love-for-retired-school-teacher>

Boblo Island selfie! (Left)

From left to right, front row: Kory Renaud, Kathy Lesperance

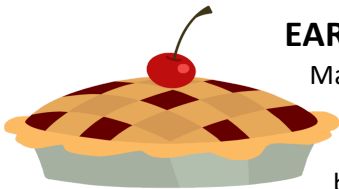
Back row: Betty Learmouth, Larry Onysko, Joan Affleck, Jeremy Hatt

Photo by Kory Renaud

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped to make this another successful count!



Larry and Betty try to get Mac to pose for the camera (Right)— photo by Jeremy Hatt



EARTH DAY BAKE SALE: Sunday April 23, 2017. Please join us at Malden park for a Heritage Committee fundraiser 10:00a.m. To 3:00p.m. Looking for volunteers to donate bake goods and also help out at the booth (2 hour shifts or whatever you can do) (You don't need to belong to the Heritage Committee). Please contact Cathy Lapain at aclapain@gmail.com. We need a lot of bake goods to make this fundraiser a success, so please donate generously. If you can't help by donating bake goods or helping out at the booth, please drop by and buy some goodies! **If you are donating cookies or squares please packaged in 6's or 12's for easy pricing. Please cover all baked goods with clear plastic wrap.**

As many people have allergies or restricted diets, it would be helpful if you could label all bake goods with a list of ingredients.

Thanks! See you there

Activities and Events

For further information concerning the ECFNC excursions, visit www.essexcountynature.com, or contact the executive (please see contact page). Let us know your ideas for upcoming excursions. Consider volunteering as an excursion leader!

March 12th – Tree ID and Appreciation Walk Join Dave Kraus for an informative walk around the Ojibway Nature Centre and surrounding trails as he shares knowledge and tips for identifying trees as well as interesting facts about them! The walk will begin at 2pm.

April 12th – A little bird in big trouble: using Citizen Science to help the recovery of Chimney Swifts A talk by Liz Purves, Ontario SwiftWatch Coordinator, Bird Studies Canada. Birds that feed on flying insects while on the wing (“aerial insectivores”) are experiencing widespread population declines across North America. One urban-dwelling aerial insectivore, the Chimney Swift, is experiencing particularly steep population declines across its breeding range in eastern North America, likely because of a multitude of factors. Through the SwiftWatch project, Bird Studies Canada (BSC), its partners, and hundreds of volunteers are working to help Chimney Swift recovery in Ontario and across the country, largely by identifying, monitoring, and promoting stewardship of nest and roost sites. This talk will first provide an introduction to BSC and its broader Citizen Science initiatives, then dive into the current state of Chimney Swifts and the aerial insectivore guild, and lastly share what BSC and Citizen Scientists are doing to help.

April 22nd – Birds and Wildflowers Hike Join experienced birder and nature enthusiast Kory Renaud at Cedar Creek Conservation Area at 9am for a walk that will start at the conservation area and then move to the new Cedar Creek Provincial Park to look at the blooming wildflowers and, of course, the birds!

April 23rd – Reptiles and Amphibians Exploration 1515 Mersea Rd 7 Leamington, 2:00pm
Nature walk and reptiles/amphibians search lead by "snake guy" Steve Marks and property owner David Kraus

April 23rd – Earth Day Bake Sale (Details on previous page) Malden Park, 10:00am-3:00pm
Please consider volunteering; if you are unable to volunteer, please consider coming to enjoy the day and purchasing some delicious baked goods to support the Heritage Committee.

April 29th – Garlic Mustard Pull Come on out to the Heinz woodlot and join Peggy Hurst in the removal of invasive garlic mustard. The hard work of volunteers each year is really making a difference; and don't forget, garlic mustard is a pest that you can eat!
Meet at 10:00 am in the lot behind the former Zellers store.

May 6th and 7th –Peelee Island Trip 23rd Annual ECFNC Weekend Trip to Pelee Island with David Kraus - see article in Egret for further details and registration information

May 10th – Monthly Meeting at Ojibway – Stay tuned via email or on our website for more information about this upcoming talk at 7:30pm

June 14th –Topic to Be Decided – Join us at the Ojibway Nature Centre for a talk from City Forester Paul Giroux at 7:30 pm

[illegible]

Donation _____

www.fishesofessexcounty.com

Phone Number _____

☐ Please contact me to volunteer at ECFNC events!

Thank you!

Windsor On, N9C 4E8