



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

Inside this issue ...

ECFNC Activities at a Glance 1
 ECFNC Contacts.....2
 21st Pelee Island Trip3
 Earth Day Bake Sale5
 Little River Clean up.....6
 Earth Day Planting.....7
 Arbor Week Celebration.....8
 Map Turtle Celebration.....9
 Halophytes10
 Activities and Excursions12
 Membership Form.....15

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

June 21st – Reptile and Amphibian Hike in the Leamington Area – 9:00am

July 8 – BioBlitz Volunteer Meeting

July 18-19 – Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz!!!

August 12th –Pollinators to Pied-billed Grebes

September 9th – Urban Wildlife Management: Skunks

Sept. 12th and 13th – Our Blue Kestrel Café

Nov. 14th – Please save the date for our 31st Annual Dinner.

Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz 2015

Join the BLITZ and help us catalogue a record number of species in 24 hours!

July 18 - 19, 2015

Location: Ojibway Nature Centre
5200 Matchette Rd, Windsor ON

For registration and schedule of events visit:
essexcountynature.com
facebook.com/ojibwayprairiebioblitz
@OjibwayBioBlitz

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

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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: Sheeva Nakhaie (chair), Sarah Baldo, Betty Learmouth
Field Trips: The Executive
Heritage: JoAnn Grondin (coordinator), Dave Kraus, Betty Learmouth, Jim McAllister, Bruno Sfalcin, Gerry Waldron, Shirley Grondin, Cathy Lapain
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

21st Annual Pelee Island Trip May 2-3, 2015

Jessica Rose and Craig Finnigan

With binoculars, backpacks, and a beautiful weekend weather forecast (no doubt called in by our very own weather guru Carl Maiolani) a group of 25 field naturalists and friends met at the Leamington dock eager to descend onto Pelee Island for what always promises to be a fun-filled weekend. Lead by Dave Kraus and co-piloted by his ever-entertaining daughter Megan, the group boarded the Jiimaan ferry and arrived on the island without incident. We were a big group this year, which meant the bus had an extra bounce for those of us sitting and standing at the back! The members of the group included: David Kraus, Megan Kraus, Carl Maiolani, JoAnn Grondin, Sharon Medeiros, Maxine Hartley, Denise Hartley, Bonnie Ross, Shirley Grondin, Paul Desjardins, Jessica Rose, Craig Finnigan, Cathy Lapain, Patricia Gorman, Linda Menard-Watt, Vivie Gagnon, Glen Bird, Margaret Calder, Bev Wannick, Wayne Wannick, Ian Woodfield, Barb Sandre, Cheryl Nantais, Mary Lynn Berthiaume, Mariette Girdard.



Dave Kraus' property. Photo: Cathy Lapain

One of the first stops on the island was a visit to Dave Kraus' property, which has been naturalised and restored to include ponds and wetland areas, snake hibernacula, and nesting boxes for various avian species. The group was spared a soggy trek, as we were able to view these many features from a raised trail/service road. From this trail we could appreciate all of the work that Dave has been doing to foster growth and success for native species of flora and fauna.

Megan Kraus brought enough riddles to provide in-bus entertainment between stops. My personal favourite (and the one that stumped us for the longest) was: When do you go on red, and stop on green? We'll let you ponder that one for a while. While trying to solve Megan's



Midpoint Beach. Photo: Cathy Lapain

latest head scratcher, the group scanned the fields and trees for birds and wildlife along the way. Several great blue herons were spotted this way, and small pit-stops were made throughout the weekend; to identify a group of plovers off in a field, and to take in the grandeur of a bald eagle sitting in its nest.

A relaxed walk along the Lighthouse Point Provincial Nature Reserve trail, passed the afternoon. Warblers were

spotted, woodpeckers were heard, and rocks were skipped into the lake as the group headed down the beach toward the historic lighthouse building. This trail also boasts a nice wetland area where turtles can be seen sunning themselves on logs not too far away. We saw many painted turtles, and a single Blanding's turtle that was kind enough to sit still so many group members could observe its bright yellow throat. Dave's eagle eyes also spotted a female map turtle sunning herself far off in the distance. At that range, many of us just took his word on that one.

As afternoon gave way to evening we returned to the Anchor and Wheel Inn for a delicious buffet-dinner in the sun. Some were even seen nabbing a second helping of chocolate cake before heading off for another walk in the surrounding area. This walk boasted three northern brown snakes and one garter snake cohabitating under a wooden board.

The following day, some eager birders were adding to the list at dawn while others (your authors included) were adding to their beauty rest. All met the call of a delicious hot breakfast though, and the satiated group headed out to start their second day of sun and sightings.

Luckily, the weather was still more than agreeable (balmy with a cool breeze off the water), and much of the morning was spent at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve. The head of this trail welcomed us with beds of white trillium and dutchman's breeches in full bloom. Some of the group members split off and visited the Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO) banding station. The more stubborn of us trekked the beach trail, and were rewarded with a whopping zero birds added to the list. After blasting our calves, beginner birder and semi-reluctant naturalist Craig spotted two northern orioles while sitting on a bench!

In the afternoon we traveled to the Stone Road Alvar (ANSI) area, to walk the unique limestone shorefront. We peered into crevasses and gazed into puddles while hopping from rock to rock and hoping to see some snakes. A single northern water snake was spotted nestled between some rocks, enjoying the day's warmth.

We also walked around Sheridan Point and the old quarry, which last year was teeming with warblers flitting around the ends of tree branches. This year, the warblers were more difficult to find. Carl did spot a cedar waxwing though, and Dave found a blue-spotted/smallmouth salamander hybrid.

Also, of special note during our trip: an adorable pair of red fox pups was spotted sneaking out from under a nearby cottage. Once aware of our gaze the two became coy, playfully darting in and out, to sneak bites of food left for them (perhaps by the building's owner?). Both grey and red foxes can be found on Pelee Island, but these pups were easily identified by the black booties on their paws.



Two baby red foxes. Photo: Cathy Lapain

Overall, the weekend bird count was totalled to 81 species, and the group amassed a nice list of nature sightings. A very special thank-you goes out to Dave for his time and effort organizing this wonderful weekend. His itinerary is expertly crafted, and his knowledge of the island's natural heritage is inspiring.

Oh! And in case you're still wondering about that riddle... it's when eating a watermelon.

Heritage Committee Earth Day Bake Sale-April 26, 2015

Cathy Lapain

The beautiful sunny weather brought many people out to Malden Park this year to attend 2015's Earth Day Celebrations. Several people stopped by our booth to check out all the wonderful baked goods donated by some of our members. We had cookies, squares, and cupcakes with colorful sprinkles on them for the kiddies, muffins and many more delicious items. Many thanks to Jo Ann Grondin, Pauline Renaud, Claire McAlister, Jessica Rose, Kathy



Lesperance, Peggy Hurst, Cathy Lapain, Shirley Grondin and Adam Jacobson for baking their little hearts out for this event. Also many thanks to Jessica Rose, Kathy Lesperance, Linda Menard-Watt, Pauline Renaud, Jo Ann Grondin, Shirley Grondin and Carl Maiolani for helping to sell the bake goods throughout the day. Also thanks to everyone who came out to our Earth Day bake sale and bought all our goodies.



JoAnn Grondin and Cathy Lapain at the Earth Day bake sale. Photo: Shirley Grondin

Little River Cleanup Event # 37

Caroline Biribauer and Ian Naisbitt

For the past few years, Caesars Windsor **Code Green** volunteer group has contacted Caroline/Essex Region Conservation Authority and requested a site for them to clean up. She coordinates and organizes the event to help them celebrate Earth Day.

This year Caroline and I checked three potential cleanup sites in the Little River Watershed: the Hawthorne site, the Old Channel site and the Twin Oaks site. We like to make sure there is enough work to keep the volunteers busy for at least two hours. We visited each site to determine which one needed a cleanup:

Hawthorne site: the section of Little River between Tecumseh Road East and Lauzon Road, adjacent to the Canadian Tire Store on Tecumseh Road. The Hawthorne site has been cleaned up 13 times between 1996 and 2014; it is notorious for shopping carts and enormous amounts of litter. Shopping carts are used by the locals to build a bridge across the river as a shortcut from the Forest Glade subdivision to the stores on Tecumseh Road. Basically, the supply of carts comes from the shoppers at the stores who take the carts home, but do not return them. The other issue: litter is blown in by the winter winds and collects along the tree line in the riparian zone of Little River. We observed it is mostly recyclable material, so concluded it blows out of the neighbourhood recycle boxes.

Old Channel site: the section of Little River in east Windsor which follows the original meandering channel, before the course of the river was straightened and the banks bermed. The Old Channel has been cleaned up 11 times between 1989 and 2002; this is the site where Concord Public Elementary School and the Little River Enhancement Group began the project of improving the watershed ecosystem.

Twin Oaks site: the Twin Oaks Business Park is south of E. C. Row Expressway and east of Lauzon Parkway. This site has been cleaned up 4 times between 1994 and 1996; it was formerly the Twin Oaks Golf Course. It is also a demonstration site for the rehabilitation of a river course from a U-shaped, erosion prone channel to a gently sloping, flood water retention area and natural habitat for wildlife.

Our observations revealed: the Hawthorne site could use a cleanup of several shopping carts and countless bags of litter, the Old Channel had very little litter, and the Twin Oaks site has a road, Munich Court that had an enormous amount of garbage at the end of it. We were shocked at the debris dumped at the end of a road into the business park. After 36 watershed cleanups, you would think we are accustomed to the sight of piles of discarded rubbish, but this annoyed us. Apparently, people feel they have the right to dump their garbage anywhere for others to clean up. Clearly, easy access to this isolated site is the cause of dumping all kinds of garbage: mattresses, concrete blocks, sofas, chairs, clothes, plastic pails, construction materials and other stuff people feel comfortable dumping there.

Update: we are pleased to report, with the help of City of Windsor Councillor Hilary Payne, this site has been cleaned up with a front end loader and truck! However, it didn't take long for

someone to dump another load a few days later. Steadfastly, Councillor Payne asked the City to block the road with barriers, so it will stay clean. We will plan for a future, general cleanup of the debris that remains throughout the site that the heavy equipment cannot reach.

The **Code Green** group chose to clean up the Hawthorne site again. On Wednesday, April 22, (Earth Day), 30 volunteers participated in Little River Cleanup Event # 37. Mother Nature presented us with a challenge: 4 C temps, mainly cloudy, wet flurries and gusty winds from 30 to 50 km/ h! As usual, only resilient volunteers attended and cleaned up from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This was the 14th time the community has cleaned up the debris from this site since autumn 1996.

Along with the **Code Green** group, there were volunteers from the City of Windsor, the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, Essex County Nature and the Little River Enhancement Group. This robust working group pulled out 16 shopping carts. Some of the unusual items removed from the river: a wooden rocking chair and an automobile hub cap. As well, countless bags of litter items were removed and the riparian zone of Little River looks a lot better from the volunteers' efforts.

RMC – Recycling Makes Cents, provided a recycle bin at the site and they will sort through the recyclables: cardboard, aluminum cans, glass bottles and newspaper. We appreciate RMC for providing this important service, otherwise, all the recyclables would end up in the landfill.

The water in the Little River was flowing at a steady pace and it was clear. Over the years sediment has been deposited on both sides of the river course. Seeds from local trees and shrubs have rooted and grown to maturity. This has forced the river to follow a meandering pattern. Once again Mother Nature has taken an engineered river bed and returned it to a more natural area.

Lil' Reg and ERCA appreciate **Code Green** for mobilizing their volunteers and helping to coordinate this cleanup event and look forward to working with them in the future.

Earth Day 2015 Planting Event

Caroline Biribauer and Ian Naisbitt

On Sunday, April 26, the Windsor-Essex community celebrated Earth Day by planting over 2 000 trees and shrubs of various sizes! Over 1 000 community volunteers participated in this event! Volunteers worked from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The City of Windsor and the Essex Region Conservation Authority organized the event.

The weather in the morning was mainly sunny with a UV index of 6 or high; clear, blue sky and a brisk 2 degrees Celsius, by noon it was a balmy 10 C. There was a north wind at 20 km/h gusting to 40 km/ h! Thankfully, there was zero threat of rain.

This is the fourth year we have planted in the Little River Corridor Park, between Florence Avenue and the old channel of Little River in east Windsor. It looks like this location is

complete. Except for some expected tree mortality due to heavy browsing in the area. The critters have to eat too! Some of the species of trees planted included: American Sycamore, Red Cedar, Tulip Tree, Pin Oak, Hackberry, Red Oak, American Elm and Swamp Maple.

Wildlife observed in the area included: swooping Tree Swallows, several Red-winged Blackbirds, Canada Goose, Mallard Duck, Common Grackles, a Great Blue Heron, Mourning Dove and one male Ring-necked Pheasant. Some species of gull did a flyby, black wing tips were obvious. Also, while looking across the field, you can see the damage that was caused by the Emerald Ash Borer - ash trees with no bark and grey coloured trunks.

And to top off a great Earth Day celebration, just as the last organizers were leaving the area, a beautiful Bald Eagle flew directly overhead! Fantastic!

Windsor-Essex Arbor Week Celebration at Lakeshore Woods in Windsor

Paul Giroux, Caroline Biribauer and Ian Naisbitt

On Saturday, May 2, a unique community tree planting event occurred at Lakeshore Woods Park on the city's east end, west of Banwell Road and north of Firgrove. This community tree planting event marked its 3rd season of tree planting at this location.

The planting event was arranged by Forests Ontario (formerly known as Trees Ontario), the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA) and the City of Windsor.

The event involved the planting of 200 native hardwood trees to the north and south of the north woodlot on site. The intent of the planting was to enhance the natural heritage features of the site, by introducing new genetics; appropriate tree species and seed sources to the somewhat degraded woodlot. The woodlot on site had been negatively affected by Emerald Ash Borer, Dutch Elm Disease and general urban sprawl over the last century. Half of the planted trees were to replace much of the damaged saplings from the previous year's planting. The long and snowy winter coupled with the work of the Eastern Cottontail rabbit had done much damage to the stems above the tree guards. Each dead tree was replaced with a new native hardwood. Tree species included Sycamore, Burr Oak, Pin Oak, Red Oak, American Elm and Freeman's or Swamp Maple. Some volunteers in the group were interested in learning that Freeman's Maple is a naturally occurring hybrid of the Silver and Red Maple trees.

The weather was delightful at the time of planting; sunny and 16 degrees Celsius topping out at 20 degrees by the time of plant wrap up! Volunteers of all ages, numbering approximately 75, were there to help out and they worked hard until 12:30 to ensure planting success. ERCA kicked off the event with a little tree planting 101 and then the planters went about their business ensuring proper tree planting depth, back filling, mulching and tree guarding.

A big thanks goes out to all the sponsors: Canadian Automobile Association, TD Friends of the Environment, Ontario Wood, ERCA, the City of Windsor and of course Forests Ontario! Did we mention that all the moms and dads, aunts and uncles and grandmas and grandpas also appreciated the treats from Tim Horton's? We look forward to next year.

The Northern Map Turtle, *Graptemys geographica*

Steve the Snake Guy



Map Turtle. Photo: Brennan Ackert

Recently, on a birding outing at the Big O Conservation Area in Comber, I spotted an unlikely species for the area... a Map Turtle! This is a pretty cool turtle, one of eight species native to Ontario, and one of 7 species found in Essex County!

Map Turtles are named for the markings on their shells, which look like the contour lines on a topographical map. There are 14 species in the genus *Graptemys*, collectively ranging from eastern Canada throughout the eastern US. The

species found naturally in Ontario is the Northern Map Turtle *Graptemys geographica*.

This turtle's carapace (upper shell) is olive green with fine yellow lines and has a distinct ridge (keel) along the centre and serrations along its back edge. Both the head and legs have an intricate pattern of bright yellow lines. This turtle has a yellow spot behind the eyes. The plastron (lower shell) is cream to yellow in adults, but in juveniles the plastron has dark lines along the seams.

Females get much larger than males and grow up to 27 centimetres in carapace length, whereas males grow to only 13 centimetres long. Mature females can weigh up to 15 times what a mature male weighs!

Northern Map Turtles typically prefer large rivers and lakes with high-quality water that supports the female's main prey animals, molluscs. Wherever there are abundant basking sites available in good habitat, it is still possible to see many of these wonderful turtles at once.

There are some populations of Northern Map Turtles in Ontario that are still fairly large. One time in 2008, I stood in one spot and counted 220 adults with a spotting scope! Don't be fooled by high numbers of adults. With little to no recruitment of youngsters due to increased pressure on eggs by subsidized predators like raccoons and skunks, foxes and coyotes, adults are often times the only members of a population. This is never a healthy situation. In addition to inflated predation of eggs, water pollution poses a serious threat because it can cause mass die-offs of molluscs, the primary food of female map turtles. Habitat loss and degradation due to shoreline development are additional threats to this species. It is also vulnerable to mortality on roads, like other turtles in Ontario and a recent study documented high rates of injury and mortality from boat propellers.

Female Northern Map Turtles may take more than 10 years to reach maturity. They nest from June through July and lay a single clutch of up to 17 eggs. They hatch in the fall, and in some cases the hatchlings overwinter in the nest. Like in most turtles, the incubation temperature of the eggs determines the gender of the hatchlings.

This species has very strong jaws. The large females eat molluscs such as snails and clams, as well as crayfish, other invertebrates and some fish. Males and juveniles prey upon smaller animals, like insects and small crayfish. Map Turtles aren't as long-lived as most turtles, but they do average more than 20 years.

The northern map turtle is protected by the Ontario Endangered Species Act, the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act and the federal Species at Risk Act. The current ranking of the species is "Special Concern".

Please join me in protecting some of the more "lowly" creatures of our natural world! Report your reptile and amphibian sightings to Ontario Nature's Herp Atlas, using the smartphone app or through email!

The Increasing Incidence of Halophytes

Gerry Waldron and Scott Hughes

Photography by Scott Hughes

Although halophyte might sound like yet another disease – possibly one affecting the breath –

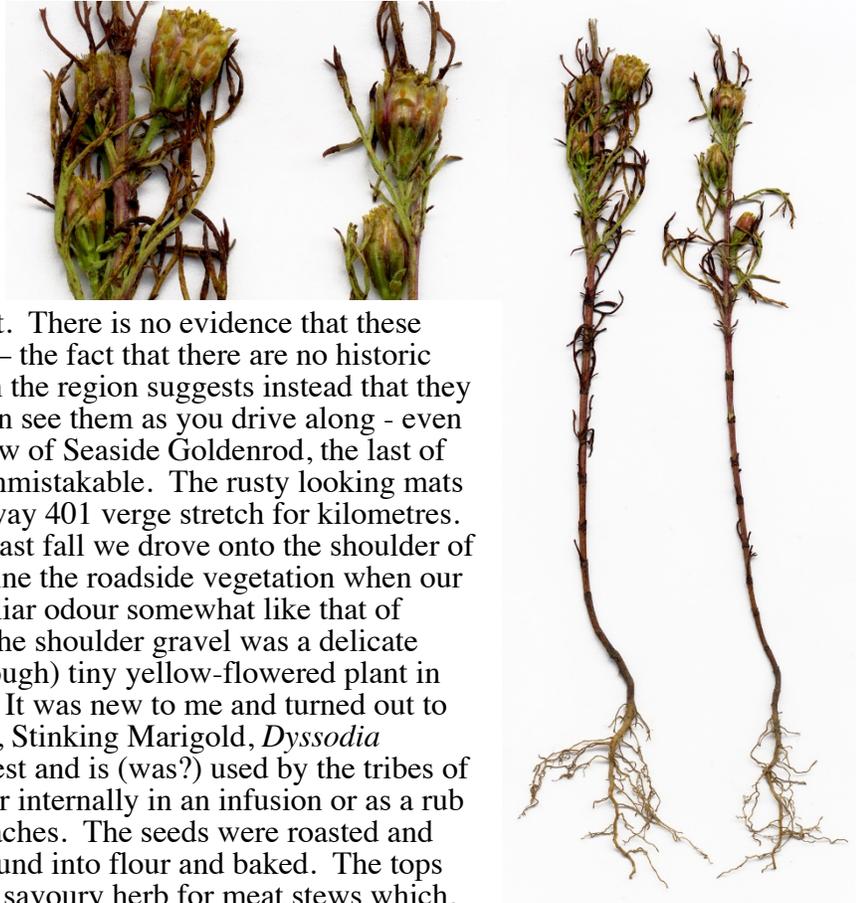


Gerry Waldron among the stinking marigold. Photo: Scott Hughes

poised to sweep through our population, it is in fact something entirely different. Phyte is derived from the ancient Greek for plant and halo from Greek for salt. A halophyte then is a salt plant, specifically a plant which grows in saline or highly alkaline soil. Considering that plant life arose in sea water, it is curious that of the world's estimated 350,000 – 400,000 plant species only 2,600 are classified as halophytes. Surprisingly, some of these are found right here in Essex County.

As far as anyone can determine, there were no naturally occurring salt licks or salt springs in Essex County before white settlement even though thick beds of salt lie 300 metres below ground. The first salt spring was created in Sandwich in 1866 when a drilled oil well yielded a flow of "mineral water" instead of the hoped for petroleum. The establishment of the salt mines in Sandwich West and the brine wells south of the Canard River in 1893 and 1919 respectively brought more salt to the surface but, with the rise of the automotive age, it was the widespread application of de-icing salt to our snow covered roadways and sidewalks that created the saline environments that we find today. The verges, side swales and medians of our well-travelled highways have become repositories of this salt, turning them into facsimiles of seashores and western salt pans.

There is a truism that nature abhors a vacuum; the destruction of vegetation unadapted to saline sites has created an opportunity for those that are. Essex County is a long way from the nearest sea shore yet somehow this vacuum has sucked in species from the



Atlantic shore and the far west. There is no evidence that these species were ever native here – the fact that there are no historic collections of halophytes from the region suggests instead that they are all recent arrivals. You can see them as you drive along - even at high speeds the bright yellow of Seaside Goldenrod, the last of our goldenrods to flower, is unmistakable. The rusty looking mats of halophytes along the Highway 401 verge stretch for kilometres. And they keep arriving. Just last fall we drove onto the shoulder of the Dougall Parkway to examine the roadside vegetation when our noses were assailed by a peculiar odour somewhat like that of marigolds. Growing right in the shoulder gravel was a delicate looking (but obviously very tough) tiny yellow-flowered plant in the aster family (Asteraceae). It was new to me and turned out to be one of these recent arrivals, Stinking Marigold, *Dyssodia papposa*. It is native to the west and is (was?) used by the tribes of that area as a medication either internally in an infusion or as a rub or smudge for fever and headaches. The seeds were roasted and mixed with other foods or ground into flour and baked. The tops were consumed as greens or a savoury herb for meat stews which, given the smell of the plant, supports the view that native Americans were very rugged people.

These vagrant species move down our highways, increasing their range yearly. Their seeds blow along in wind and truck backwash. They lodge in tires, and disperse in mud and snow on vehicle undercarriages.

Among the halophytes are subspecies of familiar plants. The subspecies exhibit smaller, thicker, almost succulent leaves and stems compared to their brethren found in regular soil. These modifications are genetically controlled rather than induced by the saline environment.

The most recent list of halophytes in southern Ontario that I can find is from the 1980's. It includes over 30 species. Doubtless there are several more here now, including the Stinking Marigold noted above. Formerly rare species such as the Seaside Goldenrod – originally found in the Great Lakes region only in Windsor, Anderdon Township, and Chicago – are now a widespread and common sight. We can expect them to remain so, at least until heated roadways become a reality.

Scott Hughes, the photographer on these roadside adventures, advises aspiring highway botanists that there is an element of danger in this activity particularly if the median is targeted for close examination. The high speed traffic and tire noise are certainly unnerving at best.

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!

June 16th Tuesday– Detroit River Evening – 6:30-8:30pm – You’re invited to the Detroit River Evening sponsored by the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup (DRCC). Come out to learn about projects from the past year aimed at restoring, enhancing and protecting the Detroit River, and listen to our guest speaker, Jon Bondy, speak about fishing the local waters. The Detroit River Evening will be held at the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER) on Riverside Dr. W. The event is free but registration is required. Register here: <http://2015detroitriverevening.eventbrite.ca>

June 20th – Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant Open House – 10:00am-2:00pm – Join the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup at the Lou Romano Water Reclamation Plant Open House on Saturday, June 20. The event is free to the public and includes plant tours, exhibits and activities for the whole family. Come out and learn about “where it goes... when you go.”

June 21st – Reptile and Amphibian Hike in the Leamington Area – 9:00am – Learn how you can become a citizen scientist with the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA)! Join Jonathan Choquette and Tom Preney, ORAA Coordinators for the Essex region, in a hunt for local herps in the Leamington Area. You’ll learn proven techniques for spotting these often ‘cryptic’ creatures, as well as proper methods to record and submit your observations to the ORAA (If you have an iPhone or Android phone, be sure to download the ORAA app beforehand). The hike will start at the Andrew Murray O’Neil Memorial Conservation Area parking lot at 9:00 a.m., rain or shine. Please come dressed appropriately for the outdoors. Rubber boots are encouraged as off trail hiking may be involved. Join us and contribute to our understanding of these fascinating creatures! Directions: From Windsor, take HWY 3 south to HWY 77 (Erie St.). Take Highway 77 north for 1.5 km and turn left on Mersea Rd. Andrew Murray O’Neil Memorial CA
554 Mersea Road 5 Leamington, Ontario, N8H 3V5

June 22nd – David Suzuki Book Tour: Letters to My Grandchildren – doors open at 9:30am –The Essex Region Conservation Foundation is pleased to announce David Suzuki is bringing his book tour to Windsor on June 22nd to speak on his new book *Letters to My Grandchildren*. In his most important book since *The Sacred Balance* and his most personal ever, revered environmentalist David Suzuki draws on his experiences and wisdom gained over his life to pass on to future generations. The event will be held on June 22nd at the Capital Theatre with doors opening at 9:30 a.m. It includes a talk from David Suzuki, Q & A session, and a book signing. Tickets are \$7 for adults or \$3 for students and are available online:www.davidsuzukiwindsor.eventbrite.ca.

June 30, 2015 deadline for Hometown Heroes nominations- The Hometown Heroes Award Program is your chance to help Canada recognize and celebrate environmental leaders — whether an individual, group or small business — who foster meaningful, long-term community awareness and action. Heroic candidates can win the Youth Hometown Heroes Award—a \$5,000

cash prize that can be donated to a local environmental group/cause of their choice or be put towards their post-secondary studies in the form of a scholarship; the Individual Hometown Heroes Award—a \$10,000 cash prize to donate to a local environmental group/cause of their choice; the Group Hometown Heroes Award—a \$10,000 cash prize to support their work; or the Small Business Hometown Heroes Award—a \$5,000 cash prize that must be used by the business to make an operational change that results in the business lessening their environmental impact, and permission from EDC to use the award and the EDC logo for one year to help market and promote the business and/or an approved product. <https://earthday.ca/hometown/en/index.php>
 Ontario Nature Blog - Ontario Nature has launched a new conservation science blog. This blog engages guest bloggers who are leading scientists in various areas of conservation biology. Here is the link to the blog. All kinds of fascinating stuff! <http://www.ontarionature.org/connect/blog/>

July 2nd-August 28th – Summer Science Day Camp – 9:00am-5:00pm – Canada South Science City will be holding Summer Science Day Camps throughout July and August. The day camp is designed for ages 5-12. Kids have fun discovering science through structured play. Early drop-off and late pickup available. Cost is \$25/child/day.

July 8 – BioBlitz Volunteer Meeting - Ojibway Nature center, 7:30pm: Volunteer meeting for the 2015 BioBlitz! We'll be going over tasks and doing any necessary preparations for the blitz. All interested in helping with the blitz should attend.

July 11th – CEA State of the Detroit River Boat Tour – noon-4:00pm – Tour includes lunch and expert narration about the Detroit River's environmental hot spots and unique fish and wildlife habitats. This is an excellent opportunity to see why we must continue to value this special river and do what we can to protect it. Tickets are \$30CAN/\$25US and can be purchased online at <http://www.citizensenvironmentalliance.org/>. To inquire about purchasing tickets at our office with cash or cheque, please e-mail us at ceadmin@cogeco.net or call 519-973-1116.

July 18th-19th – The Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz! 11am Ojibway Nature Center - The Ojibway Prairie Complex is an ecologically important area within the Detroit River watershed with incredible biodiversity – home to nearly 4000 species! The inaugural Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz – an event aimed at cataloguing as many species as possible within a 24-hour period – was held last year and over 1100 species were identified. This year's Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz will be held on July 18-19 and we could use your help to beat last year's record. The BioBlitz team is looking for participants, as well as volunteers to help run the event. There are also fishing opportunities, as a portion of the Detroit River is included in the survey area. If you are an angler interested in making the biodiversity that exists in our region known, please consider participating in this year's Blitz. Location: Ojibway Nature Centre, 5200 Matchette Road, Windsor, ON. Date/time: Saturday, July 18, 11:00a.m.-Sunday, July 19, 11:00a.m.



July 23rd – ERCA Golf Tournament – 12:30pm-5:00pm – The tournament will be held at Ambassador Golf Club on Sprucewood Avenue in Windsor. All proceeds from this tournament will continue to support the protection of the significant natural resources of the Essex Region. As a result of past success, the Chrysler Canada Greenway, Spring Garden Complex and LaSalle Woods have been protected for generations to come. Shotgun start at 12:30 pm.

July 25th-26th – Explore the Shore – 11:00am-5:00pm – An open-house event along County Road 50 involving 25 participating businesses, including conservation areas, wineries, farms, restaurants and gift shops. Holiday Beach Conservation Area and the John R. Park Homestead will be participating. Find out more at www.exploretheshore.ca.

August 12th – Essex County Nature Meeting – 7:30pm Ojibway Nature Center – ERCA’s Outreach: Students to Seniors ~ Pollinators to Pied-billed Grebes – Caroline Biribauer, ERCA’s Outreach Coordinator, will speak on the various programs geared to engage the public in our local flora and fauna. Schoolyard Naturalization, Citizen Science, Youth Engagement, and ERCA’s Native Gardens Network will be discussed. Caroline has been with the conservation authority for just over ten years, coordinating volunteers in a wide variety of programs, events, and activities in that time. She has lived and worked in various corners of the Carolinian Life Zone, which has served her well during her 6+ year tenure on the Board of the Carolinian Canada Coalition. She originally hails from Toronto, worked in the United States for just over two years for an environmental non-profit, and has been in the Windsor-Essex area since 2002.

September 9th – Essex County Nature Meeting - 7:30pm Ojibway Nature Center - Urban Wildlife Management in Windsor: What Did We Learn from the Skunk Trap and Kill Program? Alexis is a MS Conservation Biology student. She completed her thesis on the Urban Management of the Striped Skunk in Windsor. Alexis will talk about the rise in human-wildlife conflict in urban environments and the best ways to manage conflict. She will then discuss her research on the skunk and stray cat population in Windsor and factors that could be influencing their presence in neighbourhoods. She will discuss the pros and cons of population control and why the city’s skunk trap and kill program was ineffective. Lastly, she will discuss more long-term management solutions and why an urban wildlife management plan is needed in Windsor.

September 12th and 13th – Our Blue Kestrel Café will be open this weekend at the Holiday Beach Hawk Festival. Anyone who would like to volunteer to help organize this event or to volunteer at the Café is asked to contact JoAnn Grondin ([519-734-0056](tel:519-734-0056))

September 12th - 13th & 19th - 20th – Festival of Hawks- The Hawk Fest beckons outdoor lovers to some awesome activities as Zoo to You, Live Raptor Shows, Banding Demonstrations, free workshops and hikes. Learn about bird identification and adopt-a-hawk programs; participate in nature crafts and activities. Holiday Beach is ranked as the top hawk watching site in Canada by Audubon Magazine, and the third best in all of North America. Visit www.erca.org for a full schedule of events.

Nov. 14th – Please save the date for our 31st Annual Dinner. Our speaker will be Paul Pratt. Paul is an excellent speaker and has been travelling South of the Equator. He will have

fantastic pictures for us to view. Join us and catch up with friends, enjoy our silent auction, an excellent meal and pictures that will make you say “WOW”.



**Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club
Membership Form – Due January 1, 2015**

Individual membership \$20.00 / year _____ Family membership \$25.00 / year _____

Student (full-time) \$10.00 / year _____

Tax Receipt Eligible: Life membership \$500.00 _____

Donation _____

Publications: Wildflowers of the Canadian Erie Islands by Mary Celestino \$15 _____

Fishes of Essex County and Surrounding Waters by Lynda D. Corkum \$25 _____

www.fishesofessexcounty.com

Name _____

Street _____ City _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____ Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

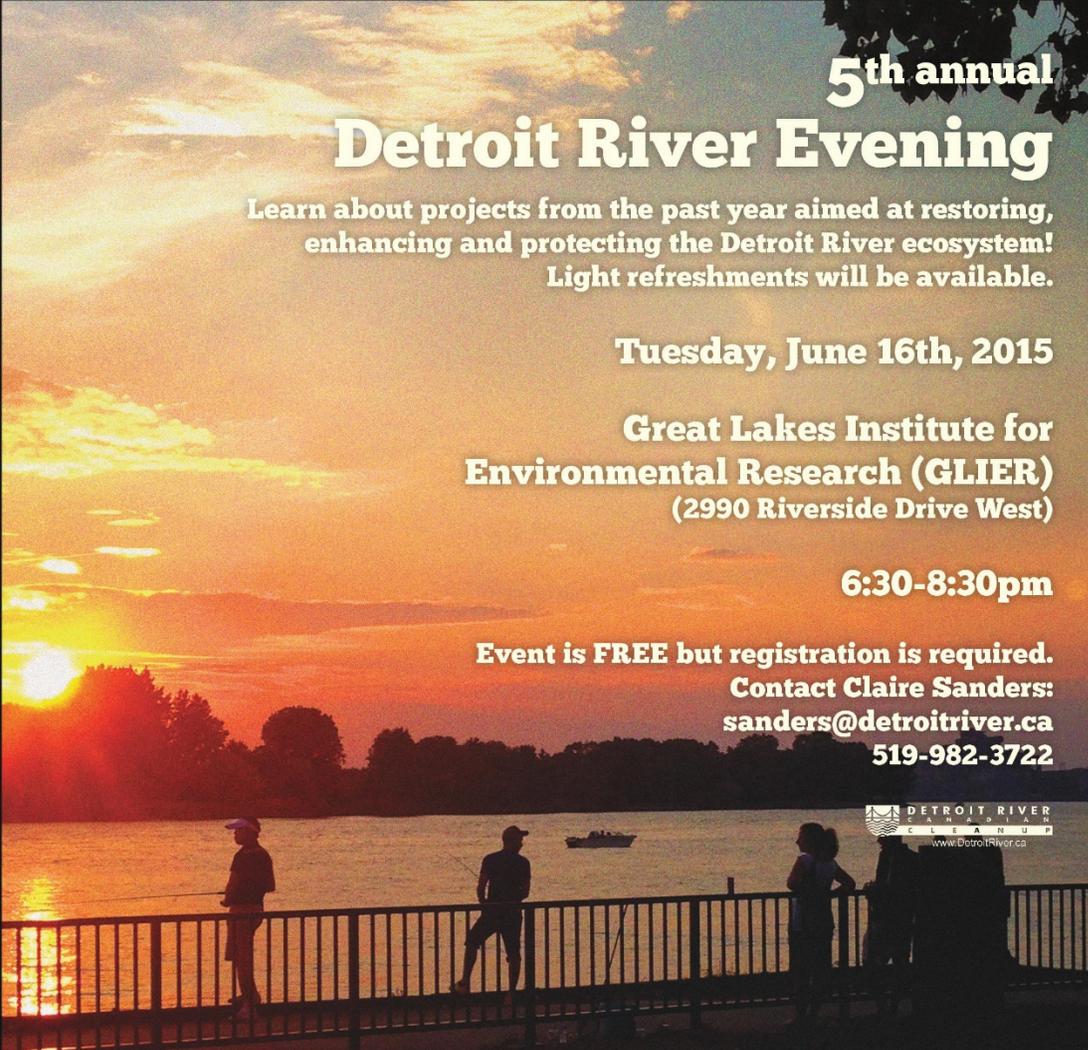
Please contact me to volunteer at ECFNC events!



Make cheques payable to: **Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club**

Devonshire Mall P.O.

P. O. Box 23011, Windsor, Ontario N8X 5B5



5th annual

Detroit River Evening

Learn about projects from the past year aimed at restoring, enhancing and protecting the Detroit River ecosystem!
Light refreshments will be available.

Tuesday, June 16th, 2015

Great Lakes Institute for
Environmental Research (GLIER)
(2990 Riverside Drive West)

6:30-8:30pm

Event is FREE but registration is required.
Contact Claire Sanders:
sanders@detroitriver.ca
519-982-3722



Guest Speaker:
Jon Bondy,
Detroit River / Lake St Clair
Fishing Guide

Jon Bondy has been fishing the local waters of Lake St Clair and the Detroit River for 35 years and has been a fishing guide for 21 years. Come hear about Jon's lifelong experiences on the river.

