



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

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Upcoming ECFNC Activities

September 12th and 13th – Our Blue Kestrel Café

September 27th – Reptile and Amphibian Hike

October 14th – “Why Should I Recycle?”

November 7th – Owl Hike

November 14th– Our 31st Annual Dinner

December 9th – “Open Mic” Member Sharing

ECFNC Monthly Meetings

Except for our annual dinner in November, monthly members’ meeting 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!

Essex County Field Naturalists’ 31st Annual Dinner

November 14th

**Save the Date!
Get your Tickets!**

Details on Page 3

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

ECFNC website
www.essexcountynature.com
Egret email
sheeva.nakhaie@gmail.com
ECFNC fax # 519-839-4795

Ojibway Nature Centre

519-966-5852

Point Pelee National Park

519-322-5700

Essex Region Conservation Auth.

519-776-5209

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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: Sheeva Nakhaie (chair), Sarah Baldo, Betty Learmouth, Jessica Rose
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

November 14th – Save the Date! Buy your Tickets!

Essex County Field Naturalists' 31st Annual Dinner
and Celebrating 30 years
for the CEA and the ECFNC

Our speaker is Paul Pratt.
Paul's topic is "Exploring the
Brazilian Rainforest: Images of the bold, the beautiful and the bizarre".

Saturday, Nov. 14, 2015
Fogolar Furlan Club, Dante Costa Hall
1800 North Service Road, Windsor, Ontario
Doors open at 5:30 pm
Dinner at 7:00 pm
Tickets are \$35.00 each

There will be a silent auction, door prizes, cash bar, and a great meal. Reconnect with old friends, make new friends, and have fun!!

Tickets available from:
Ojibway Nature Centre – 519-966-5852
Pelee Wings Nature Store – 519-326-5193
Carl Maiolani – 519-972-1399
JoAnn Grondin – 519-734-0056

A Message from Neighbourhood Bat Watch

Hello,

The Neighbourhood Bat Watch is looking for bat colonies. If you have bats living in your cabin, house, bat box, garage or anywhere else, we want to hear from you!

Bats are currently threatened by White-nose Syndrome. This disease has killed between 5 and 10 million bats since its discovery in 2006 and it is quickly spreading west across Ontario. Bats play a crucial ecological role by eating night-flying insects.

Members of the public are essential contributors to bat conservation because even common species of bats are difficult to find and, therefore, difficult to protect. Please visit the Neighbourhood Batwatch website (www.batwatch.ca) to report a colony.

For more information, please visit www.batwatch.ca or email batwatch@outlook.com.

Thank you for your time and enjoy your summer!

Kaleigh Norquay,

Research Coordinator, Willis Bat Lab (<http://www.willisbatlab.org>), University of Winnipeg

For those who may not yet be familiar with the fungus that is plaguing our bat populations, here are some excerpts from Batwatch.ca:

“In 2006, a microscopic fungus was introduced from Europe to a tourist cave near the town of Albany, New York. This introduction led to the appearance of white-nose syndrome (WNS) in North America, a fungal infection that is causing one of the most drastic declines ever observed in an animal group. Until recently, the fungus causing the disease was unknown. However, a group of American experts recently identified the fungus as a new species by the name of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*. This fungus, which thrives in cold and humid environments, grows on hibernating bats and infects the wing tissue and muzzle. Since bats prefer to hibernate in humid caves and significantly lower their body temperature and suppress their immune system to enter hibernation, they are susceptible to the fungus. As a result, it has propagated widely through bat populations.”

“In locations where WNS is present, in just a few years, cave-dwelling bats have suffered mortality rates of 90-100%, which may lead to the extirpation of certain populations. Mortalities occur during the winter because the fungus infects bats during hibernation. Infection causes bats to wake up more frequently and thus, use up their fat reserves before the end of winter.”

- See more at: <http://batwatch.ca/content/white-nose-syndrome#sthash.Nb2LVWuQ.dpuf>

Windsor Essex Nature Sightings: recent sightings

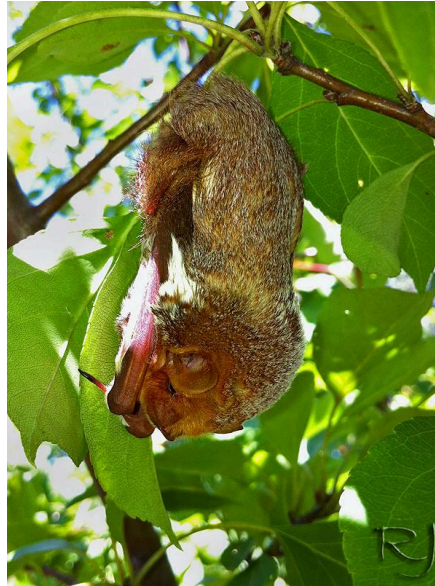
Arrowshaped micrathena (*Micrathena sagittata*): This brightly coloured spider was found at Ojibway Park on August 15, 2015. This is only the second time I've encountered this species in our area so I was excited to say the least. –Tom Preney



This beautiful caterpillar will transform into the Spiny Oak-slug Moth. It was discovered on the underside of a dogwood leaf at Ojibway Park, on August 15, 2015. The spines are mildly venomous so it's best not to touch these little guys. -Tom Preney



While doing a plant survey this afternoon I had a very special encounter with a red bat! These bats are solitary and roost in tree foliage, in this case a wild plum tree. It is such a rare treat to see these in their roost like this and one I will not soon forget. After snapping a couple of photos, we quietly crept away and left the bat to sleep the rest of the day away. Russ Jones



A sneaky little camouflaged looper (wavy-lined emerald larva) hanging out on my blazing star last night. These caterpillars nibble off bits of their preferred flower and glue it to themselves, making it difficult for predators to spot. I watched another one of these walk right past the waiting jaws of a crab spider, the spider stirred a little, but didn't strike, allowing the caterpillar to continue on its way unharmed.



In Canada this mantidfly (*Leptomantispa pulchella*) is only known from a handful of records, from Ojibway and from the Okanagan Valley in BC. The plant is slender bush clover (*Lespedeza virginica*), it is endangered and is only known in Canada from a single patch of about 160 plants at last count (probably less now), at Ojibway Park. You can't see either of these two species together anywhere else in Canada!

-Russ Jones



ECFNC at the Ontario Field Ornithologists Convention

Jeremy Hatt

The Ontario Field Ornithologists (OFO) is holding their annual convention in the Point Pelee area this year from October 2-4. The event includes field trips to popular birding locations in Essex County including Ojibway Prairie Complex, Holiday Beach Conservation Area, Point Pelee National Park, Hillman Marsh Conservation Area, and nearby areas like Wheatley Harbour, Wheatley Provincial Park, and Two Creeks Conservation Area. A number of leaders at the event are members of ECFNC and will be providing their expertise and local knowledge to help registrants find fall migrants. ECFNC will also have a display at the Saturday Evening Banquet from 4-6pm where they will be selling books and providing information on the club. A copy of *Fishes of Essex County and Surrounding Waters* has been donated as a door prize at the banquet. Further details on the OFO Convention can be found at <http://www.ofo.ca/site/page/view/convention.programs>.

Ojibway Prairie BioBlitz 2015

Tom Preney

We wanted to thank you for your participation in this year's BioBlitz. The event could not have been as successful without your support. More than ever, public support will be the key to preserving our biodiversity.

Although it's preliminary I think our species count will surpass what we accomplished last year. Data will continue to trickle in and we'll summarize and publish our results as soon as we can. We've already got 2 new species (*Holcocephala fusca*, *Phidippus pius*) for Canada!



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Phidippus pius (Holy jumping spider)

photo & id: Gerry Blagoev

For now we'll be debriefing with **our partners (Friends of Ojibway Prairie, Essex Region Conservation Authority, Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, Ojibway Nature Centre and Citizens Environment Alliance)** and reporting back to our funding sources - we may ask for some feedback in the near future from you.

Enjoy the last days of summer and we hope to work together again at future events.

Keep exploring!



ECFNC Becomes Caretaker for the Lower Detroit River Important Bird Area

Jeremy Hatt

Earlier this year, ECFNC became a Caretaker for the Lower Detroit River Important Bird Area. The Important Bird Area (IBA) Program is an initiative coordinated by Birdlife International and supported in Canada by Bird Studies Canada and Nature Canada. The initiative aims to identify and conserve important areas for bird populations such as staging areas for waterfowl, migratory flyways, and areas that support large nesting colonies.

Six IBAs are found in Essex County: Point Pelee, Pelee Island Natural Areas, the Pelee Island Archipelago, Holiday Beach/Big Creek CA, Eastern Lake St. Clair, and the Lower Detroit River (which includes the Detroit River from the north end of Fighting Island to the river mouth at Lake Erie).

One of the responsibilities of a Caretaker is to monitor populations of birds that occur in significant numbers in their IBA. As Caretaker of the Lower Detroit River IBA, ECFNC will monitor late fall and wintering waterfowl populations on the lower Detroit River; particularly Canvasback, Redhead, and Common Mergansers. An average of 8,000 Canvasback is recorded on the river each year, making up more than 1% of the estimated North American population. The Ring-billed Gull colony on Fighting Island is also listed as a species occurring in large number during the breeding season but this is outdated; the colony has crashed and is no longer present.

Other responsibilities a Caretaker can take part in include habitat restoration, raising awareness, and advocacy. ECFNC plans to coordinate a waterfowl count this winter to provide data to the IBA Program. More information will be provided to members closer to winter.

For more information on the Important Bird Area Program, visit <http://www.ibacanada.ca/>.

A site description for the Lower Detroit River IBA is available at <http://www.ibacanada.ca/site.jsp?siteID=ON047>

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!

This upcoming Weekend: 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.

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 27th – Reptile and Amphibian Hike on Dave Kraus' Property– 10:00am (rain or shine) – Learn how you can become a citizen scientist with the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA)! Join Tom Preney and Jonathan Choquette ORAA Coordinators for the Essex region, along with property owner, Dave Kraus in a hunt for local herps. 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 Ontario Nature Reptile & Amphibian Atlas app beforehand). 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!

Loacation: 1515 Mersea Road 7 Leamington, Ontario

October 2-4 OFO Convention - ECFNC will have a display at the Saturday Evening Banquet from 4-6pm where they will be selling books and providing information on the club. Further details on the OFO Convention can be found at http://www.ofo.ca/site/page/view/convention_programs.

October 14th “Why Should I Recycle” This talk given by Heather Taylor of the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority will address the following questions and issues:

Who is EWSWA? How long does the stuff you throw in the garbage sit in our landfill? The plastic obsession and what it is doing to our water and planet. The “single serving” obsession and the consequences. What can and cannot be recycled? What you can do to help - small changes that make a big difference!

October 17th - 25th Anniversary Tree Planting On Sat Oct 17 at 10 am members of the Little River Enhancement group will plant 24 large stock native trees in the Ganatchio Corridor Park about 250 metres south of Riverside Drive. The site is opposite the white oak planted in 1991 in honour of Gov.Gen. Ray Hnatyshyn. All are welcome to attend. In May 2016 the final tree and memorial rock will be dedicated.

November 7th Owl Hike - Join Kory Renaud for an owl prowling at Holiday Beach Conservation Area. We will look and listen for owls in and around the park. Meet at the Holiday Beach main gate parking area at 7pm. Be sure to dress for the weather and bring along your boots as we will be exploring some of the trails in the park."

November 14th - 31st Annual Dinner – Come out for a fun evening of food, friends, and photos as Paul Pratt takes us through some of the amazing things he has seen in the Brazilian Rainforest. For more information, see Page 3 of this newsletter.

December 9th “Open Mic” Member Sharing– Join us to watch members show their photos from their travels, hobbies and employment. Enjoy homemade desserts and mix and mingle with friends. If you would like to share your own photos, come prepared with your flashdrive. Meet at 7:30 pm at the Ojibway Nature Centre.

Upcoming Christmas Bird Counts:

Dec 19 Cedar Creek, Paul Pratt

naturalist@primus.ca

Dec 20 Blenheim (Rondeau), Keith Burk

keithburk2@xplornet.com

Dec 21 Point Pelee, Sarah Rupert

sarah.rupert@pc.gc.ca

Jan 1 Detroit River, Paul Pratt

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!

Thank you!

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

Devonshire Mall P.O.

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