



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

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Upcoming ECFNC Activities

Sept. 17th and 18th – Second weekend of the Hawk Festival

September 25th – Reptile and Amphibian Hike – stay tuned for further details

Nov. 5th – Our 32nd Annual Dinner. Guest speaker is Brock Fenton on “Exploring the Lives of Bats” July

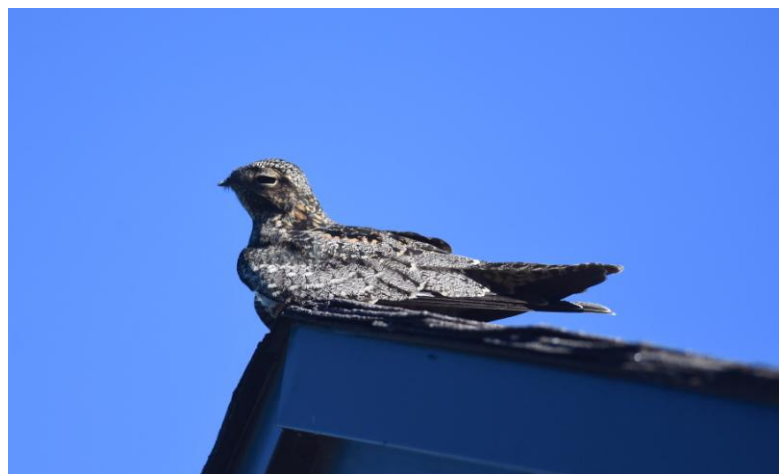
Dec. 14th – General Meeting – Join Club members for our yearly special meeting where picture presentations are given on travels from our members and friends. Desserts and coffee available. Meet at 7:30 pm at Ojibway Nature Centre.

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!



**Common Nighthawk on rooftop in Amherstburg
Photo by Kory Renaud**

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:
roset@uwindsor.ca
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

ECFNC Contacts

President: Jesse Gardner Costa (zissoucosta@gmail.com)
Vice-President: Paul Pratt (naturalist@primus.ca)
Secretary: JoAnn Grondin (519-734-0056)
Treasurer: Cathy Lapain (aclapain@gmail.com)
Membership Secretary: Carl Maiolani (carlmaiolani@cogeco.ca, 519-972-1399)
Directors:
Linda Menard-Watt (519-734-1879)
Dave Kraus (519-825-7491)
Kory Renaud (koryrenaud@gmail.com)
Sarah Baldo (519-300-0039)
Claire Sanders (sandersc@uwindsor.ca)
Steve Marks (steve.marks66@gmail.com)
Jeremy Bensette (jeremy_bensette@hotmail.com)
Tom Preney (tomprenney@hotmail.com)

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

Alan Wormington 1954-2016

Alan Wormington was one of the founders of ECFNC and wrote many articles for the Egret, helped write the Club's by-laws, gave presentations, led walks, and greatly contributed to the understanding of natural history in Essex County. He will be missed.



Alan Wormington birding at Netitishi Point along the James Bay Coast – October 1, 2014
Photo by Kory Renaud

Obituary in the Windsor Star:

Alan Wormington 1954-2016 Alan Wormington passed away on 3 September in his 63rd year, surrounded by several of his many friends at the Leamington Hospice. Alan had been battling bone cancer for the last 30 months. He is survived by his sister Janne Hackl (husband Leo) and nephew Jonathan (wife Elizabeth) and great nephews Ethan and Ryan and great niece Julia, as well as his many good friends in the Ontario birding (birdwatching) community. Alan was perhaps the most skilled birder of his generation in Canada, being known across the continent for his birding abilities. He was an accomplished writer and contributed greatly to the understanding of the status and distribution of birds in Ontario. Additionally his knowledge of butterfly status and distribution in Ontario was unequalled. His death leaves a huge hole in the birding and butterfly community across this province. He will be dearly missed by many. Cremation has already taken place. A memorial service to Alan will take place at a later date to be specified. A donation in his memory can be made to the Ontario Field Ornithologists. - See more at:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/windsorstar/obituary.aspx?pid=181305542#sthash.gXfgqens.dpuf>

The following article by Sarah Sacheli also appeared in the Windsor Star celebrating Alan's life as a naturalist:

<http://windsorstar.com/news/local-news/he-was-a-part-of-nature-birding-world-mourns-expert-alan-wormington>

Message from long-time friend, Bob Curry, sent to the Ontbirds rare birds listserv:

Ontbirders,

It is my sad duty to report to you that Alan Wormington passed away this evening at a hospice in Leamington. Over the past few years but especially the past several weeks Alan has dealt with the ravages of cancer. Many friends and visitors have travelled to see Alan, especially in the last couple of weeks. His family and his "Leamington family" appreciate this support. As older birders know and newer birders need to know, Alan has been regarded by his peers as the finest field birder in the province. His contributions to knowledge of the status of birds in his beloved Point Pelee and indeed the entire province are unmatched over the period of his life. His writings on birds in Ontario are far too numerous to mention here but his legacy and his contributions will be appropriately acknowledged in the months to come. Ornithology in Ontario has suffered a great loss but no less is the loss that we his many birding and naturalist friends are now feeling. Alan was special.

A Selected History of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club (1990-2000)

By Jeremy Hatt

The decade from 1990-2000 would see a marked shift for ECFNC from merely a social club to a club that was actively involved in politics, activism, and even protests. These were busy years for ECFNC and it is impressive how ready and willing members were to evolve the Club into an organization that was featured in the news, responsible for helping protect land across Essex County, and dealing with local and provincial governments. With matters of business like incorporation, by-laws, and insurance out of the way, as well as a stable membership base, it was finally time for ECFNC to have an impact on a broader scale, just as the founding members set out to do in 1984.

The next 10 years

Though members of ECFNC were eager to propel the Club to the next level, the beginning of 1990 was not a good year for the Club's accounts. ECFNC was expanding faster than its finances and it became clear that an increase in membership fees would be prudent. "There was a point early on in my Presidency that I had to take a couple hundred dollars out of my pocket and give it to the Treasurer," Tom Hurst recalls. With more outings offered each year, a high quality newsletter, and more activities for members to

get involved with, a modest fee increase was not seen as burdensome. Membership was raised to \$15 per individual, \$20 per family, and a life membership of \$150. Later in 1996, another increase was made to \$20 per individual, \$25 per family, and a life membership of \$200. The annual membership fee has stayed the same ever since but a student fee was eventually added at \$10 per individual, and life membership was raised to \$500. In 1992, ECFNC was able to help supplement its accounts with money made from selling the Club's first official shirt. Designed by Terry Ouellette, these shirts were brought to events like the Federation of Ontario Naturalists annual conferences and were popular among members.

At this time, a new venue was also required to necessitate the growing number of members attending meetings. In 1992, meetings were moved from the Marlborough Community Center to the Union Gas building. When Tom first became president, he remembers attendance of about 30-40 people. Once the Club moved its meetings to the Union Gas venue, up to 70 people were attending some meetings, in part a result of the Club's emergent activism and media attention. The Union Gas venue was used until 1999 when meetings were moved to the Essex Civic Center for a short time and then to the Essex Credit Union in 2000. The Ojibway Nature Center was also used for a few meetings from 1999-2000.

Despite the Club expanding into new territory, monthly outings continued to be a major component of ECFNC activity throughout the period from 1990-2000. Two popular and well-attended outings were an annual butterfly walk led by Alan Wormington in the Point Pelee Birding Area as well as the Pelee Island weekend trip organized and led by Dave Kraus. Alan's butterfly walks were multimedia affairs involving a slide presentation on identification followed by an instructional walk finding many of the species just seen in the slides. After the first offering, members immediately requested the outing become an annual event. The walks led by Alan were enjoyed for many years. Dave Kraus's Pelee Island trip also became an annual event and has been tremendously popular every year since; always selling out.

New committees were also popping up in the early 90's since more members meant more active volunteers. In 1990, one of ECFNC's longest-running committees was established by Don Bissonnette: the Bluebird Committee. The committee was established in response to a decline in Eastern Bluebirds in rural areas across Ontario and was announced in the spring newsletter of that year. It was headed by Anne Barbour, Betty Learmouth, Bill Balkwell, and Don. The group also had an advisor from ERCA in Gerry Waldron. The goal of the committee was "to create habitat for, and to study, the uncommon Eastern Bluebird." Within its first year, the committee chose 20 sites on which to establish bluebird nestbox trails, with each trail having four to ten nestboxes (about 100 nestboxes total). The committee immediately started gaining help from Club members and the community. Workshops were held and open to the public to teach people how they could build their own bluebird boxes and how to monitor nesting sites. By May of 1990, the first successful reports came in from Pleasant Valley. In subsequent years, the funds raised from members participating in the Baillie Birdathon (now the Great Canadian Birdathon) were given to the Bluebird Committee to continue their valuable work. The

Bluebird Committee would go on to report the details of their successes in many issues of the Egret. The Committee is still active in the Club.

ECFNC also became heavily involved in the Natural Habitat Restoration Program (NHRP), established as a network of organizations in 1992 looking to restore and promote green spaces in Essex County. ECFNC appointed an advisor from the Club to be on the board (Barb Ouellette was the first advisor on the board until Dave Kraus took the role in 1994) and eventually formed a committee focusing on how the Club could best aid the program. Volunteers were rounded up for native seed collection and sale and this went on for many years. The Club also pledged \$500 over a three year period to help get the project off the ground.

Moreover in 1992, the Club became an employer for the first time. An application from ECFNC and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to the Environmental Youth Corp Program provided the necessary funds to hire two students to monitor changes in the fish community at the Wheatley Fisheries Branch of the MNR. It was ECFNC's task to ensure salaries were paid to the two employees. The funds given to the Club by the Environmental Youth Program were used to pay the students and it was a great opportunity to educate two youths in their path toward a career in nature.

ECFNC has always encouraged its members to contribute to citizen science and the Club was keenly involved in projects throughout the period. Five Christmas Bird Count areas were birded by ECFNC members annually and the first butterfly counts in the county (Windsor-Ojibway and Point Pelee Birding Area) were also well attended by Club participants.

Of course, an organization is only as strong as its volunteers and ECFNC has always been fortunate to have dedicated members who have committed years of service toward its success. Volunteers like Myrtle Bessette who was the Club's secretary for 10 years. In Vol. 11, No. 5 of The Egret, Tom Hurst writes, "Myrtle has been the Club's Secretary since its foundation in 1984. She has steadfastly kept the minutes and thus the history of the Club through several administrations. Over the years she has as a principal officer had a positive influence on the Club's activities and evolution. More than that her pleasant demeanor has made membership on the Club's Executive much more attractive to the rest of us. Equally comfortable discussing Club policies or serving coffee at monthly meetings, Myrtle epitomizes the ideal Essex County Field Naturalist."

Another long-serving Executive member was Peg Wilkinson. She served as the ECFNC Treasurer for thirteen years before stepping down in 2000. In Vol. 16, No. 2 of The Egret, Betty Learmouth wrote these words of Peg: "During the past thirteen years that Peg has been our ECFNC Treasurer, the number of accounts for which Peg was responsible and the amount of monies handled grew significantly. Peg faithfully attended ECFNC Executive and monthly member meetings over the years with much time and effort expended behind the scenes to keep our ECFNC accounts in good order... Our heartfelt thanks to Peg who has volunteered her time and expertise to the ECFNC's Treasurer's position. We are all appreciative of a job well done."

Perhaps no one in the Club has been more involved throughout its history than Betty Learmouth. In 1991, she was honoured by ERCA by being awarded the “Environmental Achievement Award for an Individual” and Tom eloquently summed up her dedication to ECFNC in Vol. 16, No. 1 of The Egret: “I don’t think a more deserving recipient can be found in the Essex region. Over many years she has worked tirelessly to preserve, protect and enhance our community’s natural habitat... Betty served on the Club Executive from December 1985 until she stepped down as Vice President in 1990. With the possible exception of NHRP, she has been a member or chaired every committee of the ECFNC. She was the second Editor of the Egret and to this day contributes greatly to its publication. She is one of the Club’s main Holiday Beach Hawk Festival Coordinators and played a major role in hosting the FON Conference in Windsor. She is active in organizing our Annual Dinner. She has been a Club speaker and trip leader as well as a recruiter of trip leaders and speakers. The enthusiasm and optimism she brings to each project is equally important. She is a pleasure to work with as she is motivated, organized, conscientious, and a nice person. This combined with her cooperative easygoing style have propelled many would be bystanders not only to volunteer but to extend themselves to a greater degree because of her fine example. Our natural environment has reaped not only the rewards of Betty’s endeavours but the countless efforts of those she has inspired.”

A selected history of the Club can only include so many names but the work of countless volunteers is captured on every page of every issue of The Egret in years past.

Activism

Vol. 6, No. 1 (1989) of The Egret opened with an announcement to members that there were plans to develop a subdivision on the area of land making up the Sandwich West Woodlot in Sandwich West Township. The woodlot was familiar to members of ECFNC and the proposal struck a chord with the Executive. A plan was immediately hashed out to get actively involved in protecting the land. 13.8 acres of woodlot was under threat of development after being designated for a subdivision under Phase II of a housing development. The concerns were many. The area contained a significant number of prairie plants and seventy five species of plants that were provincially and nationally rare were identified on the property. The woods were also home to a high diversity of oak species and a total of 38 tree species and 30 shrub species. If that wasn’t enough, the area under threat of development also contained some of the most mature trees in the woodlot. Initially, the Club’s involvement was limited to a letter writing campaign. Members were encouraged to contact the Ministry of Natural Resources, Members of Provincial Parliament, and the Sandwich West Councilors. The power of letter writing must not be underestimated; an amendment regarding the proposed development was eventually placed before the Ontario Municipal Board.

By 1990, a citizen’s group was formed to protest the development, the Sandwich West Environment at Risk or SWEAR group. This group held a fundraising event that raised \$1,500 towards future expenses involved in fighting the project. Tom Hurst and Peggy Moore (Hurst) were in attendance to answer questions and make sure ECFNC’s presence

was felt. The more individual and organizations presented their opposition, the more authorities started to listen. The number of members of SWEAR grew quickly. Eventually the opposition to the subdivision even resulted in media attention. ECFNC members were encouraged to request the Minister of the Environment to undertake an environmental assessment and a tree survey of the woodlot.

On April 8, ECFNC held an outing to the Sandwich West Woodlot, a chance for members to visit the area and learn of its importance and in August, with cooperation with the Clean Water Alliance, a rally was held at the site.

The efforts of ECFNC and SWEAR were successful. With mounting pressure, the Ministry of Natural Resources eventually investigated the site to see if it met designation requirements for an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Councilors of LaSalle also listened. They made an appeal to the provincial government for assistance in purchasing the woodlot. It was a long process with ECFNC inputting their guidance every step of the way. Eventually the site was designated as an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) and renamed the LaSalle Woodlot ESA. In Vol. 11, No. 2 of The Egret (1996), Tom Hurst recognizes the Town of LaSalle “for its new zoning bylaw to protect 85 hectares of the LaSalle Woodlot Environmentally Significant Area. LaSalle councilors deserve our support for their foresight and courage.”

The LaSalle Woodlot was only the beginning of the Club’s ambitious fights to protect land. When it rains, it pours, and the early 1990s saw another threat to a natural area in Essex County that ECFNC became heavily involved in. This time, a proposed golf course had received the green light to develop over a portion of the Ruscom Shores marshland area.

The situation was complicated. The issue dated back to 1983 when ERCA issued a Master Plan that included a blueprint for 123 acres of Ruscom Shores Conservation Area. At the time, ERCA did not have the funds to fully purchase land surrounding Ruscom Shores and to aid in funding for various projects in the county, ERCA leased out around 50 acres of the area for farming. Though farming took place some years, the land remained relatively undisturbed until a proposal was put forth for commercial development of an 18-hole golf course (eventually dropped to 9 holes as to not disturb the cattail marsh within the conservation area). ECFNC members Mike and Joan Malone, Betty Learmouth, Dave Kraus, and Phil Roberts (and many more) were all deeply committed to not having Ruscom Shores turned into fairways.

Tom Hurst recalls the moment it came to his attention that ECFNC needed to get involved. “I think I was only President for two weeks and I was sitting in front of the nature centre at Point Pelee and Betty Learmouth was approaching me from the parking lot and when she got close to me she says, ‘Oh Tom, we have to do something about Ruscom Shores!’ Ruscom Shores was owned by [ERCA] and there was a proposal to develop it. In particular, they thought it would be a good idea to put a golf course in there.”

The golf course proposal led to some disagreements between ECFNC and ERCA. ERCA was supportive of the golf course as long as certain restrictions were made to protect the marsh area from development while ECFNC wanted to see as much land protected as possible. Various other environmental groups were brought to the table including the Clean Water Alliance from Windsor (now the Citizen's Environmental Alliance). The Clean Water Alliance called for a rally on July 9, 1990.

The scene was tense. Media outlets including the Windsor Star were present and about 100 citizens demonstrated at the site. They were met with an obstreperous assembly of local residents who supported the golf course and met protestors face to face. Choice words and even thinly-veiled threats were made to demonstrators, as Mike Malone outlines in an article on the protest in The Egret.

Eventually ERCA began to take more action on the issue when one of its employees proposed that an independent Environmental Assessment would be requested. Around the same time, ECFNC member Russ Munroe contacted the Ministry of Culture and Communications on the potential heritage impacts of the development. Pressure was building from the public and environmental organizations and the developer, Norbert Trepanier, withdrew the proposal for building a golf course, ultimately due to the costs he would have to incur through Environmental Assessments and an Archeological Survey.

“We made it difficult enough, by raising the profile of Ruscom Shores, that the developer withdrew his proposal after a while,” Tom explained of the eventual turnaround, “That really gave us encouragement that people from the community could make a difference on a broader stage.”

Despite disagreements about Ruscom Shores, the bond between ERCA and ECFNC grew strong after 1994 with the Conservation Authority's new Strategic Plan for 1994-2020. ERCA solicited opinions from various groups in Essex County and ECFNC was able to provide specific recommendations to the plan. ERCA committed, with new focus, to work cooperatively with communities towards the greening of the Essex Region.

Full details of the Ruscom Shores can be found in two articles by Mike Malone in Vol. 9, No. 4 of The Egret. The above account is a summary of these pieces.

The LaSalle Woodlot ESA and Ruscom Shores undoubtedly raised the profile of the Club. ECFNC members were being interviewed on television and their successful stopping of developers was read about in the newspapers. As a result, membership saw a rise, a benefit to ECFNC when they became involved in future land disputes, including the “Heinz Bush”, known today as Carolina Woods in Leamington.

The effort to conserve land is always an uphill battle and in 1993, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources imposed a 32% cut in grants to local conservation authorities. This cut coincided with ERCA's announcement of their “Islands of Green” campaign, a campaign which sought to raise funds to preserve natural habitat in Essex County. Tom Hurst felt

the cut could jeopardize ERCA's efforts for protecting Carolinian forest in the county and other critical habitats. In Vol. 10, No. 2 of the Egret, Tom included a letter he wrote to the Ministry of Natural Resources expressing his displeasure on behalf of ECFNC for the cuts. With less than 5% Carolinian Forest cover in the county, any threat, however small, to this habitat was deemed important enough for ECFNC to get involved. So when a small woodlot in the core of Leamington was facing the bulldozer, ECFNC threw in their support.

The Club put together a Heinz Bush Committee made up of Mike Malone, Terry Ouellette, Ruth Junge and Tom Hurst. ECFNC members dug deep into their pockets and provided financial support to the "Friends of Heinz Bush", a community group hoping to raise enough money to purchase the woodlot and save it from the threat of a residential development plan. An initial pledge of \$4,000 was provided from the Heritage Committee to go towards the \$100,000 goal. Additional funds were raised by any means from door to door donations to selling nature calendars and getting pledges from other environmental organizations.

Although part of the woodlot was unavoidably lost to Queen Elizabeth Public School, efforts from the community and help from ECFNC's Heritage Committee protected a portion of this gem from being completely demolished. The trees of Carolina Woods still stand tall in Leamington and ECFNC's logo is proudly displayed on an interpretive sign at the entrance to the bush alongside other groups that contributed funds. An annual Mustard Garlic pull by ECFNC members led by Peggy Hurst is still put on today. Another piece of land the Heritage Committee was responsible for raising money to protect during the period was a section of the Stone Road alvar on Pelee Island. ECFNC continues to be a steward of this Ontario Nature Property. Set up in 1990, the Heritage Committee had proven to be ECFNC's most crucial committee for protecting land in the county.

In 1999, Essex County was faced with yet another golf course development threatening an important piece of natural land: the Marshfield Clayplain. Another high-profile case for ECFNC, the start of the fight to save Marshfield from destruction served as a bookend to a decade of hard-fought successes. An account of the Marshfield property will appear in the next installment of the ECFNC history.

The President

When Thomas Hurst became President in 1990, he could not have expected that he would hold the position for 10 years during one of the busiest and most influential decades in the Club's history. Relatively new to ECFNC at the time, Tom remembers the Executive meeting where he was voted in. "Pete [Bondy] looked around the room and said, 'who should we get to be president?' and no one spoke out, but me being new enough, I thought, 'well I guess I could do it,' and of course you know how these things work. Everyone else seconded it immediately. No one else wanted the job at the time but it had to be done so I was there and I was willing to do it."

“When I first accepted the position,” Tom recalls, “my only goal was to see what I could do to help the Club. Very soon though, it became apparent to me that [ECFNC] was not going to remain primarily a social club of people who enjoyed nature but it was also going to take up a more political [involvement].” Tom would prove to be a President that, along with a devoted Executive, took on formidable challenges head on.

In almost every newsletter during his Presidency, Tom wrote a President’s Report that appeared in the front pages of The Egret. In the reports, he detailed the Club business as well as thanked and acknowledged the hard work of members who were volunteering tirelessly to keep the Club strong. With the Ruscom Shores and Sandwich West Woodlot developments falling onto his lap the moment he took the position, Tom knew it was important that members of the Club were made aware of all business happening within ECFNC and behind the scenes. Undertakings of this scope require a lot of extra hands.

Tom’s propensity for disseminating information also became part of the monthly meetings of the Club. “One thing I did do was I made the Club business an incredibly long part of the meeting; a tendency to want to include everything and so it would be half hour to 45 minutes of me standing up there telling Club members about what was going on in the community. Probably the biggest complaint during that period of the time was that I took up too much of people’s time at these meetings.” Despite the complaints, it encouraged members to get involved.

Eventually Tom had another goal for the Club and that was to ramp up networking with other nature organizations. One of the most ambitious examples of such relationship-building was ECFNC hosting the 1997 Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON) annual conference. The event required its own planning committee chaired by Karen Cedar and the banquet speaker for the conference was Bob Macdonald of CBC’s Quirks and Quarks and the keynote speaker was Robert Bateman. This kind of networking allowed ECFNC’s message to reach outside of Essex County and helped augment the Club’s political clout.

At the time that Marshfield was expected to become a golf course, Tom was beginning to think of letting someone else take on the leadership role. In his President’s Report in Vol. 14 No. 4 of the Egret, Tom quipped, “My glib stock answer to the question: Are you still President of the Essex County Club? is that someone has to do it.” Tom Hurst stepped down as President in 2000 and Dave Kraus, Vice-President since 1993, took over the role.

ECFNC meant a lot to Tom during his ten years as President but he has gone on to serve the Club in many ways in proceeding years. He showed not only how much impact a nature club can have on a community under good leadership but also how much impact a nature club can have on its members.

“I got rheumatoid arthritis just prior to becoming President. I had just found out. It was really tough the first few years. It attacked me quite severely and I was in a lot of pain, 24 hours of pain. I went from 150 lbs down to 95lbs within four to five years and so life was

hell but one of the things that kept me doing stuff, kept me moving, was that I had to go to the Executive meetings each month; I had to go to the outings. The Club kept me very busy. I had to get out and had to keep moving. That was important. Being the President of the Club probably saved me a lot of anguish. I needed a focus, and there was one.”

What Tom gained from his time as President, he gave back to the Club tenfold.

The Egret

In January 1991, Susan Mackenzie took over the editing role from Betty Learmouth. A career in editing for 25 years, Sue gave The Egret a fresh new look in her first issue, Vol. 8, No. 1. During her time as editor, submissions were now all input on a computer and printed in a new design, which was more suggestive of a newspaper layout. Sue was also granted access to St. Clair College’s journalism lab, which had a scanner that allowed colour photos to be copied and printed in the newsletter. Printing from a computer meant that font and layout were now neat and consistent throughout and new flares of design were incorporated like borders around photos and lines separating articles. Sue’s last issue was December of the same year.

Tom Hince took on the Editorship during 1992. Like all editors before him, Tom was indebted to a dedicated group of regular contributors to the newsletter but wanted to expand these contributions to include members’ works who had not participated in the past. “Please continue to submit,” he stressed to regular contributors in his first issue, “but we are going to give new authors first dibs on space in the June issue.” In his final duty as editor later that year, Tom resolved to focus his last issue on the accomplishments of the Club. Vol. 9, No. 4 serves as a testimony to the successes of the Club and how the hard-fought effort and determination of members working together can accomplish incredible things.

Pat Arseneault became editor in 1993. This was a time of transition for The Egret and articles were included in various forms from typewritten to handwritten. Pat was the editor during one of the busiest periods of the Club when activism and Club projects were myriad. During her time, she was responsible for publishing the Tenth Anniversary Issue of The Egret. This issue, Vol. 11, No. 3, included reprints of articles from past newsletters that Pat felt, “[highlight] something that I have found is common among most members of the Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club, a sense of humour and an undeniable love and respect for our environment and all the life contained within.” Pat stepped down as editor at the end of 1994 but continued to serve on a newly formed Newsletter Committee until 1996. This committee also included Betty Learmouth, Karen Cedar, and Ian McInnis with David D’hondt taking over as Editor in 1995. Karen would stay on the Newsletter Committee until 2012 and Betty Learmouth into 2016.

During David’s time as Editor, the Egret once again went back to a newspaper-style layout with articles contained in columns and graphics throughout. The Club’s newsletter has always been fortunate to have dedicated Editors and David was no exception. In fact, according to Tom Hurst’s President Report from 1996’s first issue, David managed to

produce The Egret and his first child in the same week! This first issue also saw another new look for The Egret, a simple streamlined article-per-page layout that has remained the style of The Egret until today.

During this time, Betty Learmouth continued to type hand-written submissions to streamline the final editing for David. The new design and printing procedures also allowed for advertising space, introduced to The Egret in 1994. Settingington's Fertilizer Service Ltd. was one such advertiser, placing ads in the Egret in 1995.

The final installment of the selected history of the Essex County Field Naturalist's Club will appear in a future issue of The Egret.

Author's note: My sincere thanks once again go out to everyone who helped with providing insight on ECFNC's history. I would like to again mention that Jim McAllister, Tom Hurst, Bev Wannick, Betty Learmouth, Dave Kraus, Phil Roberts, and Peter Bondy graciously agreed to being interviewed. It was an inspiration to sit down with all of these members responsible for building the Club into what it is today. I would not be able to write the history of the Club without access to past issues of The Egret and I extend my thanks to Tom and Peggy Hurst, Dave Kraus, and Jim McAllister for lending me their old copies. Finally, thank you to Carl Maiolani for his continued encouragement of this project.

A Successful Holiday Beach Hawk Festival!

By Rob Dunlop

On Sunday, September 10th I had the pleasant task of helping man (or manhandling!) the hot dog/sausage barbecue along with fellow Field Naturalist and general factotum Carl Maiolani. Alongside of us a highly capable team of food servers and salespeople helped the whole event run smoothly. Many thanks to all the volunteers.

The beautiful weather, the expert presentations and the generosity of spirit of the many naturalists who shared their love of birding made for an excellent day! Also present were some "plein air" artists who exhibited another way of appreciating nature; they were eager to speak to interested observers of their work.

The only "fly in the ointment" (luckily not a black fly!) was the fact that we ran out of hot dogs due to the large crowd and their insatiable craving for those delectable Brenner wienies! At one point a disappointed customer intoned, "I'm hangry!" a combination word expressing hunger and irritation at the same time! What to do? Well, resourceful Carl tooled down the road and brought back some Mitchell's "Gourmet Hot Dogs!" ... but only 12!! And they were individually wrapped in plastic covers! They didn't last long! And the throngs still needed food. So off Carl went once again. Luckily the club members' offerings of homemade muffins and cookies kept the crowd at bay until Carl's return. Many thanks to Carl for staving off the starvin'!

There may have been few hawks on Sunday but I saw many eager-eyed children enjoying a family outing that was educational in the very best sense of that word! Long Live The Hawk Festival! And thank you so much fellow volunteers!

A Visit from Ontario SwiftWatch

By Jeremy Hatt

On the evening of August 15, 2016, staff of Bird Studies Canada visited Windsor to search for Chimney Swift nesting and roosting sites. Kory Renaud and I joined Liz Purves, coordinator of Ontario SwiftWatch, along with Kristyn Richardson and Megan Wilcox. We surveyed the area around Ouellette and University Avenue in downtown Windsor to locate as many active Chimney Swift sites as we could in the final hours of the day.



Jeremy Hatt, Kory Renaud, Kristyn Richardson, and Liz Purves observing a chimney for swift activity – photo by Megan Wilcox

It did not take long to hear the distinct twittering flight call of swifts overhead. The five of us split into two groups to cover more ground and began looking for chimneys. Possible nest sites were considered to be chimneys where swifts entered earlier than they would to roost, or where swifts were seen entering and exiting a chimney.

At 8:07p.m., Kory Renaud and I hit the jackpot and found a large chimney on Ouellette where we saw swifts entering in the late evening. As we watched, at least a hundred Chimney Swifts dove down into the chimney to roost for the night. We were really excited to find such a populated roost.



Chimney Swifts entering a roosting site on Ouellette – photo by Megan Wilcox

By the end of the evening, we were able to add the following sites to the Ontario SwiftWatch database:

327 Ouellette Ave - roost

~100 swifts entered between 20:07 - 20:50

100 University Ave West (University Ave West and Pellisier St) - possible nest

3 swifts entered between 19:45 - 20:45

176 University Ave West (University Ave West and Victoria St) - possible nest

2 swifts entered between 20:15 - 20:45

119 Chatham St W (Chatham St W and Pellisier St) - possible nest

6 swifts entered between 20:24 - 20:45

Bird Studies Canada is seeking volunteers to find roost chimneys in Essex County so that we can increase swift monitoring efforts in this region. If you have an hour or two to spare this fall, you can help identify Chimney Swift habitat during a sunset stroll through your town. We would also love to hear about any known nesting or roosting sites or previous swift sightings. Please contact Jeremy Hatt at hattjeremy@hotmail.com with

your observations, or if you would like help in finding suitable chimneys. For more information on SwiftWatch, please visit <http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ai/chsw/>.

Thank you for helping us to learn more about this incredible bird!



SWIFT WATCH
SUIVI DU MARTINET



BIRD STUDIES CANADA
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Help find and monitor Chimney Swift nest and roost sites in Essex County to support stewardship, research, and conservation efforts for this Threatened species.

Find out how you can get involved!



George Peck



TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

Contact Essex County SwiftWatch Coordinator at hattjeremy@hotmail.com or visit www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ai/chsw

Erin Brethauer

Saturday, November 5, 2016
Essex County Field Naturalists' 32nd Annual Dinner



Speaker:
Brock Fenton

“Exploring the
Lives of Bats”

Brock will cover
*from evolution
and echolocation

*to behaviour

*and bats in
folklore

*also diseases and
conservation

*with local and
worldwide
examples

Saturday, November 5, 2016

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!

We will try to accommodate dietary restrictions if you pay for your ticket by Oct.
24th.

(No dietary restrictions guaranteed after the 24th.)

Tickets are available from:

Ojibway Nature Centre, 5200 Matchette Road, Windsor, Ontario – 519-966-5852
Pelee Wings Nature Store, 636 Point Pelee Drive, Leamington, Ontario – 519-326-5193
Carl Maiolani – 519-972-1399
JoAnn Grondin – 519-734-0056

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!

Sept 23-25, 2016 Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership - Join Ontario Nature and the Youth Council for the seventh annual Youth Summit.

October 12th – General Meeting – Larry Cornelis from the Sydenham Field Naturalists will speak on the Sydenham River Nature Reserve. This is a 78 hectare property that straddles both sides of the eastern fork of the Sydenham River, near the town of Alvinston. There is great diversity in the property with species at risk that call it home. The property is being purchased by Ontario Nature and our Club has made a donation towards this purchase. Meet at 7:30 pm at the Ojibway Nature Centre

Nov. 5th – Our 32nd Annual Dinner - Please join us for this Annual event. Our speaker is Brock Fenton on “Exploring the Lives of Bats”. There will be auctions, door prizes, cash bar and a great meal. We will try to accommodate individuals with dietary restrictions, but tickets must be paid for by Oct. 24th so that there is time to arrange the dinners. Along with your dietary restrictions, please be sure to include your telephone number on your ticket, so that JoAnn Grondin can contact you regarding the accommodation. If you have any items to donate to the silent auction or door prizes, please contact JoAnn Grondin ([519-734-0056](tel:519-734-0056)). Your contributions are appreciated. See the separate page flyer for additional information.



**Essex County Field Naturalists' Club
Membership Form – Due annually**

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

c/o Ojibway Nature Centre

5200 Matchette Rd.

Windsor On, N9C 4E8