



# The Egret

*The Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club*

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## Upcoming Events at a Glance

**September 12** – ECFNC Member Meeting  
**September 14 to 16** - Fall Flight and Harvest  
**September 15,16,23,24** – Festival of Hawks  
**September 20 to November 29** – Fall Hiking  
**September 18 to 25** – International Plowing Match and Rural Expo  
**September 25** – Hillman Hike  
**September 29** – ERCA Bike Tour  
**October 1 to November 1** – PIBO Banding  
**October 9 and 13** – Fall Seed Collection  
**October 10** – ECFNC Member Meeting  
**October 13** – Free Admission Day at PPNP  
**October 13** - Harvest Feast  
**October 13 and 14** - Art at the oTENTiks  
**October 13** – Dark Sky Night  
**October 14** – Harvest and Horses Festival  
**October 19** – JRPH After Dark  
**Oct. 20, 27, Nov. 3** – Owl Nights with PIBO  
**October 20** - TD Tree Days Windsor  
**October 26 and 27** – Ghosts of Pelee's Past  
**October 26** – The Night Shift  
**October 27** – TD Tree Days Leamington  
**November 3** – ECFNC Annual Dinner  
**November 17** – Super Santa Run  
**November 24** – Deck the Holidays  
**December 8** – Dark Sky Night  
**December 12** – ECFNC Member Meeting  
**December 17** – 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Bird Count

## Grand Canyon of Essex County Evening Walk – June 21, 7pm

By Aileen Petrozzi



Figure 1. Field Naturalists on the evening walk.

We slowly walked the path, passing open grassy fields, woodland, dense scrubs and wet land, with our guides, Dave Martin and Linda Wladarski. Stopping frequently to point out and explaining the plants, trees, butterflies, insects and birds. We saw indigo bunting, Baltimore orioles, and my favorite towhee. Bird calls are hard to remember for me, I have to hear them a hundred times but I won't forget the Eastern Towhee. *“Drink ...your teeeeea”*

Half way between the two concessions we reached the Grand Canyon of Essex County. This is only a nickname given to the deep ravine. Think how you would feel when looking at a picture of the real Grand Canyon. That is how I felt when we came upon the 'Grand Canyon of Essex County'. Wow, amazed!! This was great. Impressive for our flat Essex County. Looking down from the bridge, we saw a family of muskrats playing without a care while our group was above watching. Dave pointed out a redheaded woodpeckers' nest in one of the several

dead trees. They have been nesting there for several years now. Luck have it, we saw the pair.

I have since been back and the vegetation had grown greatly but the walk was still impressive. We heard and saw the towhee and one red headed woodpecker again. I will be back again especially in the spring migrations where Dave states: “all kinds of warblers”!

This is a must see for our members. I am always amazed at our guide's knowledge and willing to share it with others. Located off concession Rd 2<sup>nd</sup> and Texas Rd, behind the The Fort Fun Center. 20 minutes from Ojibway Center. It is an easy walking trail, which is a part of the Cypher Systems Group Greenway.



Figure 2. Eastern Towhee taken by Aileen Petrozzi.

## Bird List for Essex Grand Canyon Walk

*By Cathy Lapain*



Figure 3. Big Creek Trail Signage.

For those who joined the Essex Grand Canyon Walk on June 21<sup>st</sup>, these are the birds that were recorded:

Mallard Duck (9)

American Robin

House Wren

Barn Swallow (several)

Indigo Bunting (several)

Caroline Wren

Eastern Towhee

Norther Flicker

Red Headed Woodpecker (2)

Downy Woodpecker

Great Blue Heron

Green Heron

Gray Catbird

Red-Bellied Woodpecker

Baltimore oriole

Tree Swallow

Blue jay

Chipping Sparrow

European Starling

Morning Dove



Figure 4. Field Naturalists observing the Essex Grand Canyon.

## 2018 Butterfly Count

*By Jennifer Nantais*



Figure 5. Male Monarch Butterfly taken by Jennifer Nantais

In addition to its beauty and recreational value, the Ojibway Complex features a diversity of habitats. The five parks include pond and forest, as well as rare Tallgrass Prairie and Oak Savannah. A variety of habitats are able to support a rich diversity of species, especially in the prairie where more species at risk can be found than in any other habitat type. One of the ways Ojibway celebrates this diversity is through an annual butterfly count. This event brings together experts, enthusiasts and beginners and helps to highlight the significance of the area as well as contribute to collective natural knowledge.

Butterfly counts are similar to annual bird counts and utilize a circular area 24km in diameter. Our count radius includes Windsor, LaSalle, the lower portion of the Canard River, McGregor, Maidstone and Tecumseh. The count is sponsored by the North American Butterfly Association (NABA) and the participation fee is covered by the Friends of Ojibway Prairie.

On July 7th, 20 volunteers help make our 25<sup>th</sup> annual butterfly count one of the best ever! The sampling area covered all parks in the Ojibway complex – Ojibway Park, Black Oak Heritage Park, Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park, Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve and Spring Garden Natural Area, as well as Brunet Park in LaSalle.

Volunteers counted 1,114 individual butterflies for a total of 54 species. After a few dismal years, Monarchs fared well with 127 individuals observed during all life stages.

See the next page for a tally of all butterflies recorded during our 2018 count.

Black Swallowtail 5, E. Tiger Swallowtail 4, Spicebush Swallowtail 5, Cabbage White 92, Clouded Sulphur 41, Orange Sulphur 38, American Copper 7, Coral Hairstreak 11, Acadian Hairstreak 3, Edwards' Hairstreak 7, Banded Hairstreak 58, Hickory Hairstreak 65, Striped Hairstreak 3, E. Tailed-Blue 10, 'Summer'Azure 7, Great Spangled Fritillary 28, Variegated Fritillary 1, Silvery Checkerspot 1, Baltimore Checkerspot 31, Pearl Crescent 20, N. Crescent 51, Crescent Sp. 7, Question Mark 2, E. Comma 5, Mourning Cloak 4, American Lady 2, Painted Lady 1, Red Admiral 12, Red-spotted Purple 3, Viceroy 28, N. Pearly-eye 14, Eyed Brown 4, Appalachian Brown 13, Eyed Brown Sp. 16, Little Wood-Satyr 71, Com. Wood-Nymph 92, Monarch 127, Silver-spotted Skipper 26, Wild Indigo Duskywing. 69, Least Sk. 18, European Skipper 24, Tawny-edged Skipper 4, Cross-line Skipper 4, Long Dash 1, N. Broken-Dash 30, Little Glassywing 2, Delaware Skipper 23, Hobomok Skipper 1, Broad-winged Skipper 2, Duke's Skipper 3, Black Dash 4, Dun Skipper 8, American Snout 20, Tawny Emperor 4.

Ojibway Nature Centre would like to thank all volunteers who participated in the 2018 count, and invite new volunteers to consider helping with next year's count! We are now eagerly looking forward to the upcoming moth event to be held on August 24th where we will use lights and bait to attract some of the beautiful moths out of the darkness.

## Birding the Point Pelee Bioblitz

*By Jeremy Hatt*

The moment I heard that Point Pelee National Park was going to hold its first ever bioblitz, I knew I had to be involved. Inspired by previous blitzes I had attended like Ojibway Park's second blitz in 2015 and the Norfolk County Important Bird Area (IBA) blitz in 2017, I wanted to help find and identify as many bird species in a 24 hour period within the national park.

The bioblitz started at 12:00pm on July 21 and ended at 12:00pm on July 22, a running time of 24 hours for experts, volunteers, and the public to identify as many species as possible from moss and trees to mammals and bees and everything between.

Long before the blitz took place, Kory Renaud and I started working out a strategy for adding bird species to the list that might not otherwise be found. To do this, we knew a canoe trip into the Pelee marshes was a must. It was the only reliable area in the park to find high diversity of shorebirds. We also knew we had to put time in to find the breeding Prothonotary Warblers on Woodland Nature Trail.

On Saturday, immediately after the opening speeches for the event, Kory and I headed to the Marsh Boardwalk and despite the potential threat of rain, paddled our way toward Lake Pond.

Environment Canada had predicted rain and even storms for most of the day, but the poor weather held off and the canoe trip ended up being comfortably cool under cloudy skies. In Lake Pond, we saw high numbers of Wood Ducks and Black Terns and also recorded other wetland residents like Mallard, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Northern Harrier, Marsh Wren, Common Yellowthroat, Swamp Sparrow, and Red-winged Blackbird.



**Figure 6.** ECFNC members Kory Renaud and Jeremy Hatt canoeing in the Point Pelee marsh – Photo by Jeremy Hatt

Although it was quite windy on Lake Pond (one of Point Pelee marsh's largest areas of open water), we did manage to find Least Sandpiper and Killdeer on the first few mudflats, which attract numerous shorebirds to the marsh every summer. It was also a good workout. We followed

Lake Pond w/ a paddle north to Cranberry Pond where mudflats are more numerous and more sheltered from the wind. There we struck gold.

Within a few hundred meters of paddling, we added Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, and the species that would end up being our best bird of the blitz, a Stilt Sandpiper. We were able to get photos of almost every one of these species uploaded to iNaturalist, which the organizers of the blitz were using for data collection. The app works great for bioblitzes since records uploaded to it automatically include GPS coordinates, time, and other important information for the record. The iNaturalist app is available to download for free on most smart phones.



Figure 7. Stilt Sandpiper – Photo by Kory Renaud.

While we were enjoying all of the shorebirds, a pair of Sandhill Cranes appeared and we added Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, and Common Tern. Many

swallows were also feeding over the marsh and we recorded Barn, Northern Rough-winged, Bank, and Purple Martin. As beautiful as it was on the marsh, we knew we had to head inland to start searching for woodland species.

On our way in, we had one more target that Paul Pratt asked us to keep an eye out for: the Lilypad Forktail. This is a small species of damselfly that Paul had discovered at the park in 2001, the first record of this species in Canada! He had given us a description: small bright blue damselfly with a drooping club at the end of its abdomen, and it should be seen resting on a lilypad. Seeing a large patch of lily pads at the west end of Lake Pond, we slowly paddled along looking closely at every damselfly. We saw many of which we later identified as Eastern Forktail, but eventually a bright blue damselfly caught our attention as it landed on a lilypad near the front of the canoe. Bright blue body, drooped end of abdomen; it looked right but Kory and I had no prior experience with the species so we couldn't be sure. We consulted websites populated with entomological parlance too difficult to decipher but decided that this must be the Lilypad Forktail. Kory texted Paul a photo and promptly received a reply: "That's it!!"



**Figure 8. Lilypond Forktail – Photo by Kory Renaud.**

Our next stop was the Woodland Nature Trail where we were joined by Jeremy Bensetzung to search for breeding birds, perhaps an early fall migrant passerine or two, and our main target, the Prothonotary Warbler. Summer birding in the park requires patience as leaves are out and birds are singing less. On this day, mosquitoes were also out in full force making the search somewhat uncomfortable at times (when I got home from the blitz, I stopped counting my mosquito bites when I got to over 70).

On the trail, we recorded a number of common summering birds including Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, House Wren, Yellow Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and American Goldfinch. When we got to the south bridge on the Woodland Nature Trail we searched a long time for Prothonotary but unfortunately never heard or saw one; just got more mosquito bites! We gave up and

left for a much-needed pizza dinner provided by the park.

Later that evening we went for a walk around the boardwalk hoping to perhaps hear a bittern or rail but the only species we managed to add were Blue-gray Gnatcatcher in the parking lot and Mute Swan in Cranberry Pond seen from the marsh tower. An American Beaver close to the boardwalk was a nice addition to our mammal list, which also included Gray Squirrel, American Mink, and White-tailed Deer.

We ended our night mothing. Nets were set up in various areas around the Marsh Boardwalk parking area and many people came to enjoy a wide array of moth species including highlights like Achemon Sphinx, Virginia Creeper Sphinx, Green Marvel, Pearly Wood-nymph, and Large Maple Spanworm Moth.



**Figure 9. ECFNC members Tom Preney and Russ Jones identifying moths – Photo by Jeremy Hatt.**



On Sunday morning, Kory and I led a walk that was open to the public. We were originally going to take the group into Tilden Trail but after seeing how many gulls there were at the Tip from West Beach parking lot, we decided to have the group walk the main road to the Tip. There was potential for a rare gull to be mixed in with the group, or perhaps a few shorebirds.

Along the road, we recorded some more breeding birds like Eastern Wood-Pewee, Great Crested Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, and Black-billed Cuckoo (a lifer for two members of the group). Over Sparrow Field, we saw our only Bald Eagle of the blitz, an immature bird flying south. Once we reached the Tip, the number of gulls had diminished; no doubt because some earlier visitors had walked out to the end of the Tip and flushed the birds. However, we did add Great Black-backed Gull to our list and a large group of Sanderlings avoiding the waves was fun to watch through our scopes.

With little time remaining before the end of the blitz, Kory and I finished up at the Delaurier Homestead Trail but didn't end up adding any more bird species to our final tally. Within the 24 hour period, we ended up recording 70 species of birds. The blitz ended with a closing ceremony at the Visitor Center where observers were able to share their highlights from the weekend.

## Moth Night, 2018

By Jennifer Nantais, photo credits: Tom Preney



Ojibway Nature Centre and the Essex County Field Naturalists Club were pleased to host a free “Moth Night” event on Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup> which was attended by approximately 40 participants. Families and visitors of all ages brought their flashlights and their curiosity to help Ojibway staff and club members search for moths and other insects that usually live their lives unseen in the forest and natural areas.



Ojibway staff member Jennifer Nantais targeted rare underwing moths by “sugaring” the trees, a process which involves painting a portion of the bark with a solution composed of brown sugar, molasses, over-ripe bananas and beer.



Visitors were led on a night-time hike to check the trees for moths, as well as search for other creatures of the night such as other insects, spiders and nocturnal animals. Many beautiful underwing species were attracted to the sugar bait, including the Darling, Sweetheart, and Widow Underwing.



Jeremy Bensette from the Essex County Field Naturalists Club set up two light apparatus stations to attract moths and other insects and help visitors identify the insects which appeared. Visitors enjoyed the opportunity to tag along with multiple forest hikes and check the light stations many times before heading home with a new appreciation for the unique, nocturnal world around them.

## Celebrate World Rivers Day on the Detroit River

By Gina Pannunzio



Figure 10. Downriver view from the tip of Peche Island. Photo credit: DRCC.

Join the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup and the Essex Region Conservation Authority to celebrate World Rivers Day! Come find our tent during the City of Windsor's Open Streets Festival at the University Hub. Say hello and share your love for the Detroit River!

Each year, World Rivers Day falls on the last Sunday of September, to celebrate river systems across the globe. The special day highlights the importance of rivers by increasing public awareness of the challenges they face with the hope of improved stewardship of these resources.

Globally, rivers often share boundaries with numerous jurisdictions, and this day highlights the shared goal of strengthening regional and international networks who steward these resources.

The Detroit River has served an important role in the history of the Windsor-Detroit area and is one of the busiest waterways in the world. It connects Lakes Superior,

Michigan, and Huron to Lakes Erie, Ontario and the St. Lawrence Seaway. It is also designated as an American Heritage River and a Canadian Heritage River, the only river in North America to have this dual designation.

When the Windsor-Detroit area underwent rapid industrialization at the turn of the 20th century, the Detroit River became notoriously polluted. Years of extensive industrial, urban, and agricultural development along the Detroit River resulted in the historical release of harmful legacy pollutants from industry, bacteria from wastewater treatment plants, and nutrients from agricultural runoff.



Figure 11. Windsor Riverfront with Railyards. Photo credit: The Windsor Star.

These environmental issues have caused the impairment of several beneficial uses. As part of the international cleanup effort, the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) was signed between Canada and the United States in 1972, committing

both countries to protect and restore the Great Lakes Ecosystem. The Detroit River was designated as an Area of Concern (AOC), which are regarded as conservation effort aimed at cleaning up the Detroit River.

Both the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup (DRCC) and the Friends of the Detroit River (FDR) implement separate Remedial Action Plans (RAP) for Canada and the United States. Through community-based partnership between the government (federal, provincial/state, municipal), local industries, researchers, environmental organizations, and citizens working together, the goal is to protect, restore, and enhance the Detroit River ecosystem.

Remediation efforts from both Canada and the United States in the Detroit River include sediment cleanup and remediation, habitat restoration, municipal and industrial wastewater treatment, infrastructure upgrades, non-point source pollution management, as well as a suite of ongoing studies, investigations, monitoring, research, education and outreach. To read about these projects, check out the Detroit River Canadian Story Map: [www.detroitriver.ca/storymap](http://www.detroitriver.ca/storymap).



Figure 12. Paddlers enjoying the Detroit River. Photo credit: DRCC.

## ECFNC Nature Canada Campaign

By Steve Marks

[Nature Canada](#) is taking on the issue of housecats at large in Canada. Education is the main thrust of the campaign. Most folks, it seems, are unaware of the toll that cats have on our wildlife when they outside – even in a suburban yard.

***“Every year, 270 million birds die in Canada because of people—our cats; our windows; our transmission lines; our cars, our decisions. Would you change some small thing in your life to save bird lives? Read on, think it over and consider what you could do. Please join me and my colleagues at Nature Canada in making Canada safer for birds.” – Graham Saul, Nature Canada.***

Here in Essex County, we have an extremely big cat problem. There are simply too many roaming outside, in an area known for natural biodiversity – we have too many rare species and too many bird species in particular for this to be sustainable. It’s not just birds at risk either! I’ve known large fox snakes and even massasauga rattlesnakes to be killed by housecats!



**Figure 13.** An adult eastern fox snake being stalked by a “harmless - he would never hurt anything” housecat. Photo: Steve Marks.

Other nations are protecting their wildlife from housecats. Australia, New Zealand, UK, are all beginning to use methods besides the traditional TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) methodology. TNR has a 30+ year track record of failing to improve the situation.

If people can be educated on the topic, the hope is that they’ll keep their cats indoors, where they are safer and happier. Most kittens can easily be trained to stay indoors, or go outside only with supervision, just by making sure they have enough [stimulation](#). Cats that are used to going outdoors are trickier, but they too can be retrained. Here are some [ideas about how to enrich your cat’s life](#) so it’s content without free-roam, a [resource](#) to help you make the transition and a resource about [safe outdoor options](#).

After a unanimous decision by the Board of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, ECFNC is committing to promote the campaign. We'll be speaking with councilors both in Windsor, and in Essex County, to see about positive changes with respect to rules (Municipal Bylaws) pertaining to cats. Cats outside should be leashed, supervised, or enclosed to reduce their toll on wildlife.



Figure 14. House cat with dead bird. Photo credit: [www.onpasture.com](http://www.onpasture.com).

Regarding feral cat populations, action is also required. Nature Canada has decided to tackle pet cats first in this education campaign...

***“Unowned cats kill more birds per cat than their owned cousins, but since there are five times as many pet cats as feral ones, pet cats still kill a huge number of birds — somewhere between 40 and 140 million a year in Canada alone.”***

Join us in supporting Nature Canada's efforts to ensure nature gets the protection it needs from our mistakes! Educate yourself by visiting their website at [www.catsandbirds.ca](http://www.catsandbirds.ca)!



**CATS AND BIRDS**  
KEEP CATS SAFE AND SAVE BIRD LIVES

## Lower Detroit IBA Count Summary 2018

By Jeremy Hatt

ECFNC serves as the Caretaker for the Lower Detroit River Important Bird Area (IBA), a project of Birdlife International and administered in Canada by Bird Studies Canada. In 2018, members of the Club volunteered in three waterfowl counts covering the area from Willowood Beach southeast of Amherstburg to the north end of Fighting Island. This area is labeled as an important bird area for the high numbers of waterfowl that stage here over the winter months. Although Canvasback is the primary focus of the waterfowl counts, volunteers also counted all other waterfowl species as well as any other birds they saw. This is the second year that ECFNC has been involved in this project.

Three waterfowl counts were conducted this year on January 13, January 27, and February 24. For the first time in Canadian IBA count history, bi-national counts took place with volunteers counting waterfowl from both the United States and Canadian sides of the river. Volunteers from the Detroit Audubon Society helped count on January 27 and February 24. All data from the counts are entered into eBird.

The Lower Detroit River IBA is divided into an American IBA and a Canadian IBA. Volunteers on the American side were counting birds within the Canadian IBA that were only visible from their side.

This included the west side of Boblo Island, Crystal Island, and Fighting Island. Volunteers counted from four separate lookout points.

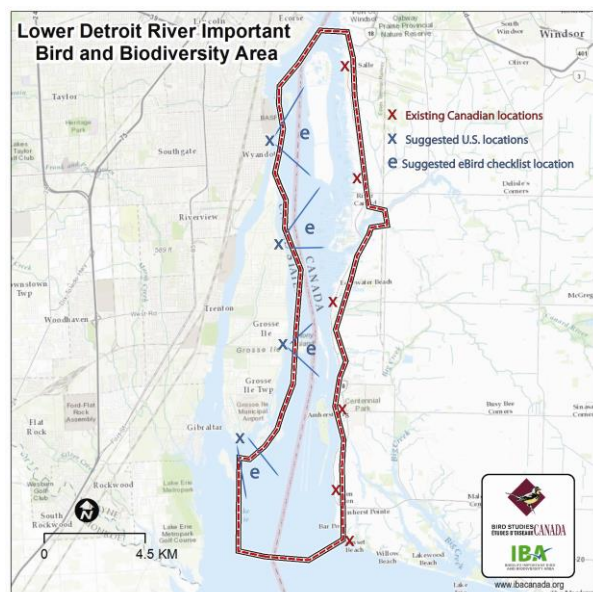


Figure 15. Bird Studies Canada map of Lower Detroit River IBA and counting locations.

On the Canadian side, ECFNC members count from several locations along the river including one additional lakeside count at Willowood Beach just outside the IBA. Locations good for observing waterfowl (and occasionally gulls and Bald Eagles) along the lower Detroit River include the Amherstburg Birding and Nature Trail, the Detroit River mouth from Front Road South (excellent viewing for Canvasback), Alma Street, Amherstburg Visitor Information Centre, Kings Navy Yard Park, Cooper's Marina, Wahneta Avenue, and Gil Maure Park.

**Results** (only diving duck counts included)

***January 13***

Canvasback – 2,500

Common Merganser – 14

Red-breasted Merganser – 20

***January 27 (combined total from U.S. and Canada)***

Canvasback – 16,951 (this marks the highest total number of Canvasback counted during an official IBA count although there have been higher numbers seen at one time on the lower Detroit River in the past).

Redhead – 200

Greater Scaup – 23

Bufflehead – 2

Common Goldeneye – 86

Common Merganser – 336

Red-breasted Merganser – 35

Other highlights: Mute Swan – 973, Gadwall – 3, American Wigeon – 1, Bald Eagle – 40

***February 24 (combined total from U.S. and Canada)***

Canvasback – 6,160

Redhead – 1,414

Ring-necked Duck – 34

Greater Scaup – 212

Lesser Scaup – 15

Bufflehead – 22

Common Goldeneye – 82

Common Merganser – 566

Other highlights: Tundra Swan – 5, Northern Shoveler – 2, Gadwall – 14, Green-winged Teal – 2, Northern Pintail – 14, Sandhill Crane – 2, Bald Eagle – 50, American Coot – 1.



**Figure 16. Common Mergansers seen from the U.S. side of the Detroit River – photo by Bruce Szczechowski.**

Thank you to all of the volunteers who contributed to our second year of waterfowl counts for the Lower Detroit River IBA. Canadian volunteers included Jeremy Hatt, Claire Saunders (Detroit River Canadian Cleanup), Kory Renaud, Dave Martin, and Linda Wildarski. U.S. volunteers included James Bull (President of the Detroit Audubon Society), Bruce Szczechowski, Diane Cheklich, Guadalupe Cummins, Brittany Leick, Sara Van Wormer, and Stephanie Cosmas.

Also thank you to Amanda Bichel of Bird Studies Canada for helping coordinate the counts and compiling the data from eBird as well as Erin Rowan of the Detroit Audubon Society for helping coordinate the American volunteers as well as scouting for safe locations to count from on the U.S. side.





Figure 17. Kory Renaud, Jeremy Hatt, and Claire Saunders enjoying large rafts of Canvasback on January 27 at the lower Detroit River mouth - photo by Jeremy Hatt.

If you are interested in volunteering for the Lower Detroit River IBA waterfowl counts in 2019, please contact me at [hattjeremy@hotmail.com](mailto:hattjeremy@hotmail.com).

## ECFNC Annual Dinner Flyer

# NOV. 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2018

## ESSEX COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB 34<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DINNER

**SPEAKER: TOM HINCE**

**POINT PELEE: The Park that Birds Built**

May 29<sup>th</sup> was a day of celebration. A hundred years ago to the day, one of the continent's greatest birding meccas, Point Pelee, Canada, officially became a National Park. Long before fancy Apps, technical field clothes and cutting edge optics, birders like Percy Taverner and William Saunders painstakingly documented the spectacle of migration on Lake Erie's north shore. Without their vision, passion, and determination, a national park would instead be wall to wall cottages with zero public access.

Join us as we walk in their footsteps . . .and thank them for the many that have followed in the last century.

For over fifty years, Point Pelee has played a pivotal role in Tom's life. He made his first visit to the park at the age of thirteen, and has birded Pelee for forty-four years of the past forty-five years. Tom has filmed around the globe for the Discovery Channel, and guided over a hundred tours on four continents, but always returns to Pelee each year to enjoy the spectacular songbird migration.

### Tickets:

Ojibway Nature Centre – 519-966-5852

Pelee Wings Nature Store – 519-326-5193

Carl Maiolani – 519-972-1399

JoAnn Grondin – 519-734-0056

Online visit our website at:

[essexcountynature.com/tickets](http://essexcountynature.com/tickets)

**Fogolar Furlan  
Club**

**Dante Costa Hall**

**1800 N. Service  
Rd., Windsor**

**Doors open:**

**5:30 pm**

**Dinner: 7:00 pm**

**Silent Auction,  
door prizes,  
share the wealth  
draw, cash bar,**

**Great Meal!!**

**Please note dietary  
restrictions on the  
back of your ticket**

**TICKETS  
PREPAID -  
\$40.00 EACH  
OR  
\$45.00 AT THE  
DOOR IF SPACE  
IS AVAILABLE**

## Point Pelee BioBlitz 2018

*By Heidi Brown*



**Figure 18. Point Pelee National Park BioBlitz Participants. Photo credit: Parks Canada.**

A big thank you to all the ECFN members who helped and participated in the Point Pelee 100 BioBlitz at Point Pelee National Park on July 21-22, 2018! It was the first park wide BioBlitz at Point Pelee National Park and it was a great success! Many ECFN members helped with the planning ahead of time and participated as experts and volunteers during the event. We couldn't have done it without YOU!

Keep your eye out for a final report on the BioBlitz findings in the December edition of the Egret.

Thanks again,

Heidi Brown - Point Pelee 100 BioBlitz co-ordinator.

## Red Knot Band Recovery in Wheatley

*By Jeremy Bensette*

As it happens, a very special and well-travelled guest paid a visit to a local beach in May 2017!



**Figure 19.** Rufa subspecies Red Knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*) with leg flag “EJY” – photo by Jeremy M. Bensette.

You may or may not be already aware of the conservation efforts in banding and marking migratory birds. For those not overly familiar with bird banding, let’s get caught up. Various unobtrusive objects (usually small metal rings, each with a unique identifying code) are fitted on the legs of various species of birds by qualified bird banders in hope that they are refound or resighted in the future to help understand the migratory tendencies of those species. Other banders who by chance recapture already banded birds and record the code printed on their tiny bands most often report recoveries. In some cases, larger markers such as leg flags, neckbands, wing tags, etc. are observed and recorded by birders in the field.

This article describes a very special leg flag recovery that I had the pleasure of hearing back about! As you may already know, I set out to do a birding Big Year in Ontario in 2017, and one of the many tricky but “guaranteed” species I needed to list was Red Knot (*Calidris canutus*), a medium sized sandpiper whose North American population is considered a species at risk.

On May 25, 2017, Karl Bardon and Richard Carr found a group of nine Red Knots on the beach at Wheatley Harbour. I was at Hillman Marsh with my trusty wingman and good friend Tim Arthur at that time, and naturally, we opted to make the five minute drive over to Wheatley to have a look! We ended up quite close to the Red Knots as they ran around on the beach among a large flock of roosting gulls, and I quickly noticed an orange leg flag on one of them. We got close enough to capture some great photos without scaring these special but sensitive birds, and after the crazy journey of my Big Year finished I reported that leg flag to the website for reporting North American bird bands. Months later in August 2018, I heard back about this marked bird in the form of a band recovery certificate, and was shocked by the information it provided...

This banded Red Knot known as “EJY” according to its leg flag was banded in the

Tierra del Fuego province of Argentina, the southernmost region of South America. Though it is commonly understood that this arctic breeding species overwinters in southern South America for approximately a 30,000 km round trip journey every year, it is amazing to think that my eyes crossed paths with a bird that was banded nearly 11,000 km south of the location we saw it at. Furthermore, this bird had been banded as an adult in October 2006, making it at least approximately 11 years old, and also signalling that it had flown at least 355,000 km in its lifetime! If that information is not mind-boggling enough already, this bird was banded by Mark Peck, a birder who I personally know from Toronto!

This was of course one of the major highlights of my Big Year. To me it is the great successes in conservation like this story and the nearly unbelievable feats of birds like Red Knots that really encapsulate the magic of birds. Keep an eye out and you too can and will find something remarkable like this!

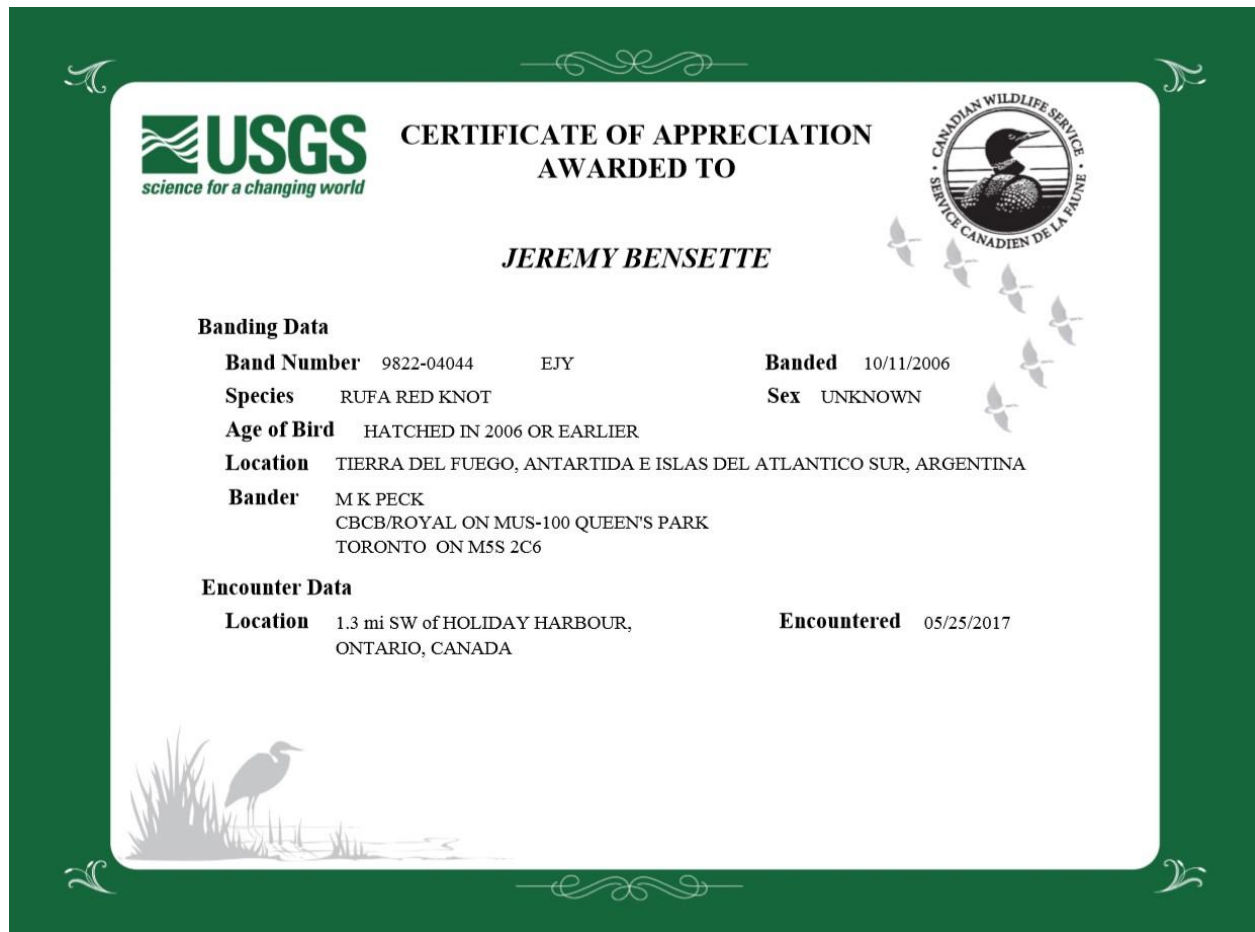


Figure 20. Reported Band Certificate for Red Knot “EJY” leg flag recovery – from USGS and CWS

## Upcoming Events

For full details and the latest updates, visit [www.essexcountynature.com/events](http://www.essexcountynature.com/events)

### ECFNC Meeting – September 12

Join the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club in welcoming Bob Pettit from Holiday Beach Migration Observatory with a talk about hawk migration and identification. We'll be at the Ojibway Nature Centre in Windsor starting at 7:30pm.

### Peche Island Tours

A new pontoon boat has made the long and storied history of Peche Island accessible to everyone! Upon arrival, visitors can expect to be treated to the island's unique sites including a 200-year-old bur oak tree, historic ruins, and beautiful landscapes. Daily trips Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. Cost is \$5 round-trip fee. Pre-registration is required by calling Lakeview Marina at 519-948-3383. For information please visit [www.citywindsor.ca/PechelIsland](http://www.citywindsor.ca/PechelIsland).

### Fall Flight and Harvest Weekend – September 14 to 16

A Pelee Island weekend packed with nature events and the *Harvest Dinner*, including a special dinner speaker on insect migration! Register for the dinner at: [www.peleeislandmuseum.ca/events](http://www.peleeislandmuseum.ca/events)

#### Some weekend highlights include:

- **Friday afternoon:** cycling tour, trail walks, films, and dinner at the new *Stone House 1891 Restaurant*.
- **Saturday:** Birding at Fish Point, bee demonstration, trail walks, film showing, crafts at *Pelee Art Works*, boat outings, and the *10th Annual Harvest Dinner*, with speaker Gard Otis; "*Butterflies & Dragonflies: The Other Fall Migrants*"
- **Sunday:** Birding at Fish Point, trail walks, boat outings, crafts at *Pelee ArtWorks*, wrap-up get-together before the 4:00pm ferry.

### Festival of Hawks – September 15,16 and 23,24

Join experts from the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory for this natural spectacle. Watch thousands of birds of prey flying overhead. Take in free programs hosted by local experts and see live hawks and owls up close. A great family event for experts and amateurs alike. Programs are free with the festival admission fee of \$15 per vehicle. More info here: <https://essexregionconservation.ca/education-and-events/festival-of-hawks/>.

ECFNC Blue Kestrel Café will be open at the Hawk Festival on September 15 and 16. If you are not volunteering, please stop by to support us. Come out and buy your breakfast and/or lunch while you enjoy the fresh air and all the events at Holiday Beach. If you

attend on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, you can also support the HBMO by making purchases at their food tent.

### **Fall Hiking – September 20 to November 29**

Exercise body and brain during a brisk morning walk with one of Ojibway Nature Centre's naturalists. Explore and meet new friends! Thursdays, September 20 - November 29, 10-11:30am. Cost is \$80/11 weeks.

### **International Plowing Match and Rural Expo – September 18-25**

Be a part of history! Join the International Plowmen's Association in Pain Court, ON and other partners in the agricultural community September 18 to 25. The IPM features events such as an opening parade, a plough match, antique and modern technology and many exhibitors (including ERCA and the DRCC). For more info: <https://www.plowingmatch.org/ipm2018>

### **All Ages – Hillman Marsh Nature Hike – September 25**

Join Essex Region Conservation and experts from the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club on a nature hike at Hillman Marsh Conservation Area! Meet at the parking lot for 6pm, hike is 45 minutes with a social after in the Nature Centre. For more information, please contact Gina at [gpannunzio@erca.org](mailto:gpannunzio@erca.org) or 519-776-5209 ext. 245.

### **OFO Convention – September 28, 29, 30.**

Fall migration is underway and if you haven't already done so it's time to register for the OFO Annual Convention at Leamington September 28-30th. Join the ECFNC for three days of fantastic field trips at Point Pelee National Park (PPNP) and nearby birding hot spots!

Enjoy our Friday evening "Birds and Beers" presentations by Jeremy Bensette (Breaking Birding Boundaries: My Ontario Big Year), PPNP (100 Years of Conservation and Community) and Sarah Rupert (Birding Challenge Quiz). A buffet meal is optional.

Enjoy the Saturday evening presentations, excellent banquet and keynote speaker Tom Hince (Point Pelee: the park that birds built).

Enjoy our raffle and many birding related vendors and displays.

Read more about the convention and register: <http://www.ofo.ca/convention/index>.

**Essex Region Conservation Bike Tour – September 29**

The Essex Region Conservation Bike Tour incorporates all the last sights of summer. Whether you are touring through picturesque country roads and along historic County Road 50, or meandering the off-road nature ride on the Chrysler Canada and Cypher Systems Group Greenways, this event is not to be missed. Come out for a great ride and help raise funds for our local trail system. This year, all routes will begin and end at Mettawas Park in Kingsville, and will feature a lakefront festival with local food and entertainment! For more information please contact Peter Baldwin at [pbaldwin@erca.org](mailto:pbaldwin@erca.org).

**PIBO Bird Banding Station – October 1 to November 1**

Weather permitting, small groups of visitors are welcome 7am to 11am at the Fish Point PIBO station on Pelee Island. More info [www.pibo.ca](http://www.pibo.ca).

**Fall Seed Collection Workshop – October 9 and 13**

As part of ERCA's annual seed collection program, the public is invited to register for the opportunity to assist ERCA's Certified Seed Collectors at two workshops hosted at Camp Cedarwin in Kingsville. Workshop attendees will learn how to identify targeted tree species that produce high quality seed, collect sustainably from these trees, test viability from the collection as well as process, clean and prepare seed for shipping. More info and to register <https://essexregionconservation.ca/education-and-events/fall-seed-collection-workshops/>.

**ECFNC Member Meeting – October 10**

Join us to welcome former ECFNC president Phil Roberts who will discuss Bald Eagles and what efforts are being undertaken to protect their population across Windsor/Essex. We'll be at the Ojibway Nature Centre in Windsor, starting at 7:30pm.

**Free Admission Day at Point Pelee National Park – October 13**

In 2017, to celebrate Canada 150, Parks Canada offered free admission and welcomed over 27 million visitors to our national parks, national marine conservation areas and national historic sites. What better way to say "thank you" to our visitors than to offer a free admission day?

**Harvest Feast – October 13**

A friendship feast at Point Pelee National Park in partnership with Caldwell First Nation featuring a combination of traditional Indigenous and European dishes. Further details and reservation information will be available soon.



**Hike at the Essex Sewage Lagoons/Greenway Trail – October 13**

Join Essex County Field Naturalists' Club member Kory Renaud on the Greenway trail at the Essex Sewage Lagoons at the corner of North Malden and Highway 3. The Greenway trail extension provides an excellent vantage point to see waterfowl and shorebirds that are refueling in the lagoons before their long flights south. The hike will continue down the trail to the wooded areas to see what other fall wildlife can be found. Meet in the parking lot on North Malden Road at 9am.

**Art at the oTENTiks – October 13 to 14**

Take a walk through the oTENTik village at Point Pelee National Park from 11am to 4pm and as the leaves crunch under your feet, visit a local artisan at work on each site. Not only will you get to see the beautiful products they create, but you'll also be able to watch first hand as they create.

Included with park admission. If you are interested in becoming a feature artisan, please contact us at: [pelee.info@pc.gc.ca](mailto:pelee.info@pc.gc.ca) or 519-322-2365.

**Dark Sky Night – October 13**

Join members of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada – Windsor Centre at the Point Pelee National Park Visitor Centre parking lot at 7:30pm for an evening of stargazing. Bring your own binoculars or take a look through one of the special telescopes on site for the evening.

**Harvest and Horses Festival – October 14**

Celebrate the fall harvest season on the John R. Park Homestead. Listen to ghost stories in the attic, try some cornhusk crafts, and see cider making and more! Meet the horses that made harvest possible 200 years ago. Take in the amazing parade of breeds or test your abilities in the blind buggy competition. Cost is \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children (ages 3 to 16), or \$20.00 family maximum.

**John R. Park After Dark – Tragic Tales & Pioneer Perils – October 19**

Follow costumed guides and step back in time. These dark, but true, stories will lead you to appreciate the many hazards of daily pioneer life. Event runs from 7:30pm to 9:00pm at the John R. Park Homestead.

**Owl Nights at PIBO Station – October 20, 27 and November 3**

Join neighbours and visitors, learn about migrating owls and see the ones caught for banding on Pelee Island. More info [www.pibo.ca](http://www.pibo.ca).

**TD Tree Days – Windsor Community Planting – October 20**

Join Essex Region Conservation Authority, the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, the City of Windsor, Little River Enhancement Group for a TD Tree Day in the green space by Florence Avenue and McHugh Street along the Ganatchio Trail. Event is on Saturday October 20 2018, starts at 9am and runs until 12pm. Parking will be available at the McHugh Park lot perpendicular to the trail. More info [gpannunzio@erca.org](mailto:gpannunzio@erca.org).

**Ghosts of Pelee's Past – October 26 to 27**

Join a park interpreter for an evening spirit hike at the DeLaurier House at 7pm. Walk in the footsteps of people who once called the park home, and discover some of Point Pelee's rich human history.

**The Night Shift – October 26**

Enjoy a guided night hike with Essex Region Conservation staff and discover the wildlife that is waking up as the sun goes down. Event runs from 7pm to 10pm at Holiday Beach Conservation Area.

**TD Tree Days – Leamington Community Planting – October 27**

Join the Essex Region Conservation Authority for a TD Tree Day to plant a portion of a new wetland restoration site within Lebo Creek watershed. Event is in Leamington on Saturday October 27 2018. The event starts at 9am and runs until 12pm. More info [gpannunzio@erca.org](mailto:gpannunzio@erca.org).

**Essex County Field Naturalists' Club 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner – November 3**

Save the date! Our speaker is Tom Hince. His topic is "POINT PELEE: The Park that Birds Built". Please join us for this talk on the history of Point Pelee. Tom is a great speaker and always has great pictures to go along with his talk. We will have our silent auction, door prizes, a share the wealth draw, and a cash bar. Tickets are \$40.00 each if prepaid, and \$45.00 if preordered and paid for at the door. If not preordered, \$45.00 at the door, only if there is space. Tickets can also be purchased for a period of time through our website: [essexcountynature.com/tickets](http://essexcountynature.com/tickets). Join us for this great evening! See the attached flyer for further information.

Donations to our silent auction or door prizes are welcomed, but we must follow Canada Revenue rules and give income tax receipts only if we receive purchase receipts. Thank you in advance for any donations that you are able to make.

**Creatures of the Night – November 1**

Join us for this spooky event, November 1 at 6pm as we get up close and personal with some of the wonderful things that lurk in the darkness...if you dare...evening hike and creature feature! Please register in advance. Cost is \$6/adult, \$5/child with a 10% discount for seniors and families of 3 or more. Wear your costume, bring a flashlight.

**Super Santa Run – November 17**

Walk or run 5km dressed as Santa! Limited early bird rates for adults and children. Free Santa suit with registration! Stay for the Amherstburg River Lights Festival. Proceeds go to local conservation projects happening throughout the region. For more information please contact Peter Baldwin at [pbaldwin@erca.org](mailto:pbaldwin@erca.org).

**Deck the Holidays Workshop – November 24**

Ring in the holiday season with a hands-on wreath making workshop from 2pm to 4pm John R. Park Homestead using natural materials from the forest and farm. Fee of \$30.00 includes materials and instruction, a mug of cider or cocoa, and a holiday snack from the hearth.

**Dark Sky Night – December 8**

Join members of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada – Windsor Centre at the Point Pelee National Park Visitor Centre parking lot at 7pm for an evening of stargazing. Bring your own binoculars or take a look through one of the special telescopes on site for the evening.

**Christmas in the Country – December 9**

See the Homestead in its holiday splendour. The pioneer house and grounds are decorated with materials gathered from the farm and forest. Warm up with mulled cider and roasted chestnuts. Meet St. Nicholas' historic counterparts, Ruprecht and Belsnickel. Check the 'list' to see if you have been naughty or nice this year. Make a gingerbread cookie and traditional ornament to take home. Cost is \$6.00 for adults, \$4.00 for children aged 3-16, or \$20.00 family maximum.

**Candlelight Christmas – December 11**

See the John R. Park Homestead decorated with natural materials from farm and forest. Craft a traditional ornament, bake on the hearth, and ring the sleigh bells. Costumed guides, will take visitors through the house and farm after sundown. Event runs from 7pm to 9pm.

**ECFNC Member Meeting – December 12**

Come and share photos and stories related to your nature experiences and sightings. This is a relaxed evening of club member participation and pre-holiday mirth. Please join us for some light refreshments and social time. \*If you would like to share photos, please bring them on a USB drive.

**67<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Bird Count – December 17**

Point Pelee National Park will be holding its 67th Annual Christmas Bird Count on Monday, December 17th and you are invited to participate. Started in 1900, the Christmas Bird Count is the longest running citizen science program in North America. Each year, volunteers from across the continent gather to count as many individuals and species as they can during their designated count period.

Volunteers will spend the entire day in the field, looking for birds, learning about the habitats they use in winter and join with others for some fun along the way. No experience is necessary, but participants will be expected to spend most of the day outside. At the end of the day, participants will gather at the Visitor Centre for a chili dinner, hosted by the Friends of Point Pelee, and we'll compile the results of the day's effort.

Participants must register by Friday December 14, 2018. Call 519-322-2365 ext. 0 or email us at [pelee.info@pc.gc.ca](mailto:pelee.info@pc.gc.ca) to register or for more information.

## Essex County Field Naturalists' Club – Stay in Touch

### ABOUT US

Essex County Field Naturalists' Club is a non-profit, open-to-the-public volunteer organization that focuses on promoting the conservation and restoration of the diverse natural heritage of Essex County and the surrounding region. We also strive to provide educational opportunities for the people of Essex County to become acquainted with and better understand the natural environment.

### CONTACT US

#### Mail:

Essex County Field Naturalists' Club  
c/o Ojibway Nature Centre  
5200 Matchette Rd.  
Windsor On, N9C 4E8

Except for our annual dinner in November, monthly meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm at Ojibway Nature Center, 5200 Matchette Road, Windsor. All are welcome! We also have monthly outings posted in the 'Events' section of this newsletter as well as on our website.

#### Email:

[essexcountynature@gmail.com](mailto:essexcountynature@gmail.com)

#### Website:

[www.essexcountynature.com](http://www.essexcountynature.com)

#### Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/EssexCountyNature](http://www.facebook.com/EssexCountyNature)

#### Twitter:

[@ECFNC](https://twitter.com/ECFNC)

#### Instagram:

[www.instagram.com/essexcountynature](http://www.instagram.com/essexcountynature)

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

**President:** Paul Pratt ([pratt.paul@icloud.com](mailto:pratt.paul@icloud.com))

**Vice-President:** Steve Marks

([steve.marks66@gmail.com](mailto:steve.marks66@gmail.com))

**Secretary:** JoAnn Grondin (519-734-0056)

**Treasurer:** Cathy Lapain ([aclapain@gmail.com](mailto:aclapain@gmail.com))

**Membership Secretary:** Carl Maiolani

([carlmaiolani@cogeco.ca](mailto:carlmaiolani@cogeco.ca), 519-972-1399)

#### Directors:

Dave Kraus (519-825-7491)

Kory Renaud ([koryrenaud@gmail.com](mailto:koryrenaud@gmail.com))

Gina Pannunzio ([gpannunzio@erca.org](mailto:gpannunzio@erca.org))

Andy Paul (519-817-0155)

Jeremy Bensette ([jeremy\\_bensette@hotmail.com](mailto:jeremy_bensette@hotmail.com))

Sam Dundas ([dundas.samantha09@gmail.com](mailto:dundas.samantha09@gmail.com))

Jennifer Nantais ([jennifer.nantais@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.nantais@gmail.com))

### CHAIRPERSONS/LIAISONS

**Ontario Nature Liaison:** Steve Marks

**ERCA Liaison:** Gina Pannunzio

**Bluebird Committee:** Don Bissonnette

**Ojibway Liaison:** Carl Maiolani

**Citizens Environment Alliance Liaison:** Andy Paul

**Windsor Essex County Environmental**

**Committee:** Jesse Gardner Costa

**Canada South Land Trust Liaison:** Dave Kraus

**Detroit River Canadian Cleanup Liaison:** Gina Pannunzio and Steve Marks

### COMMITTEES

**Egret Editorial:** Kory Renaud (acting)

**Field Trips:** Alexis Hand (chair), Ian Woodfield, Amy Weinz

**Junior Naturalists:** Kory Renaud, Andy Paul, Jeremy Bensette, Sarah Renaud

**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)

**Fish Book:** Dave Kraus

**Website & Social Media:** Kory Renaud

**Membership:** Jeremy Hatt (chair), Paula O'Rourke, Carl Maiolani, Sam Dundas

**ECFNC MEMBERSHIP**

Your annual membership fees help to support the local efforts of the club. To learn more about becoming a member, please contact our membership secretary, Carl Maiolani.

- Receive the quarterly newsletter *The Egret* via email
- Enjoy guest speakers at the monthly meetings
- Explore our natural heritage with a guide
- Help restore and protect Essex County’s natural heritage

**Online Payment Option**

Join or renew your membership online at [www.essexcountynature.com/membership](http://www.essexcountynature.com/membership)



**Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club Membership Mail-in Form – Due annually**

**Select One:**

- Individual membership \$20.00 / year \_\_\_\_\_
- Family membership \$25.00 / year \_\_\_\_\_
- Student (full-time) \$10.00 / year \_\_\_\_\_
- Tax Receipt Eligible** Life membership \$500.00 \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional 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](http://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**  
 c/o Ojibway Nature Centre  
 5200 Matchette Rd.  
 Windsor On, N9C 4E8

