



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

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Nineteenth Annual ECFNC Dinner by Betty Learmouth

On November 1, 2003, eighty-two ECFNC members gathered at the Windsor Manor Club, 1140 Goyeau Street for the ECFNC's nineteenth annual dinner. Doors opened at 6:00 p.m. with a cash bar and an opportunity to bid on over 100 items at the annual ECFNC fund raising silent auction. At the door, Karen Cedar, Connie North, Margaret MacDonald, Donna Sale, and Peg Wilkinson greeted everyone and distributed nametags. Margaret Jennings and Betty Learmouth assisted with the silent auction items that had reserve spots on the silent auction tables.

The evening's MC Joe Parent announced dinner which was a buffet with a number of selections including Greek salad or mixed greens salad, penne in tomato sauce, eggplant parmigiana, veal parmigiana, roast beef, chicken, roast potatoes and green beans. Dessert was a choice of sweets or sliced fruit with tea or coffee.

Following dinner, ECFNC President Phil Roberts was pleased to present ECFNC member *Donna Sale* with the Club's *Outstanding Achievement Award*, recognizing Donna's devotion to the Natural Habitat Restoration Program which Donna coordinated for many years. Donna was taken completely by surprise upon being presented with the award, expressing her gratitude to the Club members who came out over the years to assist in seed collection.

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Happy Holidays!



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 be acquainted with and understand our natural world through identification, maintenance and preservation of natural areas of Essex County and surrounding regions. ECFNC is affiliated with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON). *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 :

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President: Phil Roberts (776-8315)
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Treasurer: Teresa Austrin (322-0004)

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Public Information Officer: Joe Parent
Egret Editor: David D'hondt
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E.R.C.A. Liaison: Bruno Sfalcin
Friends of Heinz Bush: Donna Sale
Point Pelee Liaison: Mike Malone, Phil Roberts (alternate)
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N.H.R.P. Committee Chairperson: Donna Sale
Special Events Coordinator: Karen Cedar
E.C.S.N.: Tom Hurst
Ojibway Liaison: Karen Cedar
Two Creeks Liaison: Richard Bilinski
Canada South Land Trust Liaison: Betty Learnmouth

Committees

Egret: David D'hondt, Karen Cedar, Betty Learnmouth, Nicole
D'hondt, Shirley Grondin
Speaker: E.C.F.N.C. Directors
Field Trip: JoAnn Grondin, Bert Harris, Margaret Jennings,
Betty Learnmouth
Annual Dinner: Heritage Committee
N.H.R.P.: Dave Kraus, Donna Sale, Gerry Waldron, Linda
Kennette, Teresa Austrin, Patricia Rhoads, Peggy Hurst
Heritage: Mary Celestino, Betty Learnmouth, Margaret
Jennings, Muriel Kassimatis, Jim McAllister, Patricia Rhoads,
Gerry Waldron, Peg Wilkinson, Dave Kraus, JoAnn Grondin

Nineteenth Annual ECFNC Dinner *(continued)*

The second presentation was to ECFNC member *Patricia Rhoads* who has been recognized by *Carolinian Canada* for Patricia's contribution as a native plant grower. Vicki McKay, a Carolinian Canada director, made the presentation to Patricia and had these comments regarding Patricia's award:

"Carolinian Canada makes annual awards for conservation and education efforts related to the special natural heritage of the Carolinian zone by recognizing outstanding contributions by individuals, corporations, non-profit organizations and government organizations.

Patricia Rhoads was nominated for an individual award based on the following: Patricia has been working with the Association of Canadian Educational Resources to establish monitoring plots in Essex County to include a newly restored site, a site to be restored where the understory has been removed, and a mature forest. The latter of which is a fifty acre Oak/Hickory Forest, owned and managed by Ms. Rhoads and her husband Chuck.

Patricia has been actively restoring natural habitats in Essex County, which includes: writing proposals to obtain funding, working with landowners, inviting and working with school and community groups in the restoration of the sites. Patricia has reported that many of her sites have included over forty species of indigenous trees and shrubs, propagated from seeds collected locally.

Patricia is one of the co-founders of the Canada South Land Trust. She actively sought people to form an organization that could work together to support the conservation of natural areas of a more local and regional interest. Patricia has held the position of Director in many local organizations dealing with resource conservation, these include: Essex County Woodlot Owners' Association, Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, Christian Farmers Association of Essex County, Natural Habitat Restoration Program, the Friends of Marshfield Woods and the Canada South Land Trust.

Patricia brought together like-minded people to create a forum to provide information to local landowners wanting to restore natural habitat on their properties. Her expressed motivation for this forum was that she has met many people that want to improve their environment, but found that although many of these landowners are highly motivated to do the "right thing," there has generally been a lack of awareness of the resources and information available. The first Habitat Restoration Conference for Essex and Kent Counties was held in March of 2002. Patricia was Chairperson for this conference, which included a diversity of topics for the various interests for landowners and highly respected speakers from NGOs, private and government agencies from Southwestern Ontario.

She has also made time to start a Native Plant Nursery Woodland Farm. At last count the number of trees, shrubs and wildflowers, all derived from local seed sources, was over 20,000 and growing.

All of her efforts and contributions are done while raising three children. In summary, an amazing woman working against all odds in Essex !"

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Nineteenth Annual ECFNC Dinner *(continued)*

Our speaker for our nineteenth annual dinner was **Chip Weseloh**, a research biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service based in Downsview, Ontario. Chip entitled his Power Point presentation "**Colonial Waterbirds of Lake Erie and the Detroit River.**" The Canadian Wildlife Service's program objectives for colonial nesting birds include monitoring breeding populations every ten years and monitoring for contaminants, a program started in 1974. In Ontario there are 1,000,000 colonial waterbirds with the numbers increasing to 2,000,000 throughout the Great Lakes.

In Lake Erie's Western Basin, thirteen or fourteen species of colonial waterbirds breed with eleven species known on Canadian islands. On the U.S. West Sister Island, Snowy and Cattle Egret and Little Blue Heron are known to breed.

Chip provided a summary of the various populations of colonial waterbirds based on the latest ten year survey. Ring-billed and Herring Gull populations are stable. Great Black-backed Gulls were found on Mohawk Island in 1954 with 40 pairs of this species now found on Lake Ontario. These birds have moved in from the Atlantic coast but have not yet breed on Lake Superior.

There are a number of Common Tern colonies on Lake Erie that have been artificially maintained as Common Terns have a hard time in competition with other species. A publication entitled *Birds of Kingston* (1869), reports that Common Tern eggs were collected for market, as many as 90 dozen eggs at a time, to be sold for 15 to 20 cents per dozen. Chip has sought historical nesting records from historian Pierre Berton, author of *The War of 1912*, but Mr. Berton reported he had found no reference to nesting Common Terns during his research.

The peak nesting for Common Terns appears to have been during the 20's and 30's. Big Chicken Island was reported to have hundreds of nesting terns. During the last three censuses the numbers of Common Terns breeding has declined from 2,000 to 1,500. Common Tern nesting has been lost at Port Colbourne and at Rondeau Provincial Park. At the Leslie Spit, three rafts support 70 to 80 terns on each raft. There is a similar situation at Sandusky.

Two hundred Caspian Tern nests are found on Mohawk Island where the birds nest on windrows of Zebra Mussel shells.

Black Terns are marsh nesting terns which prefer a marsh that is 50 per cent open and 50 per cent vegetation. If cattails encroach, the Black Terns will leave the marsh. There have been some interesting sightings of Black Terns during the last few years. In 1996, a group of 40 to 50 were seen congregated behind the Pelee Motor Inn at Sturgeon Creek. At Colchester Harbour, some 400 were seen in mid April (date). This species nests between mid April and July, then seeks suitable roosting habitat from July through September. Seven roost sites have been identified between Wheatley and Kingsville but development is a threat to roost sites. There is a lot of variability from year to year. This species shows a definite decline as observations at Long Point and by the Buffalo Ornithological Society show.

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Nineteenth Annual ECFNC Dinner *(continued)*

Black-crowned Night-herons are in decline in both the United States and Canada due to competition for nest sites. Mark Shieldcastle reports that successional change in undergrowth and a shift in vegetation appear to be a factor in this species' decline.

Great Blue Herons are stable in the United States, but declining in Canada.

During the late 1970's there were few Double-crested Cormorants compared to 2003. Double-crested Cormorants were found in 1913 on Lake Superior and were across Lake Superior by the 1920's. By the mid 30's to mid 40's, this species was found on Lake Ontario and in the St. Lawrence River. Current active sites include Buffalo Harbour, Rondeau Provincial Park and five islands in the Lake Erie Western Basin as well as Sandusky Harbour. There has been some decline in the nesting numbers for 2003, due to destruction of trees, the preferred nesting habitat.

From the 1930's through to 1980, Double-crested Cormorants were content to nest on the cobblestone islands of Big and Little Chicken Islands in the Lake Erie Western Basin where the numbers remained stable at 100 pairs. In 1980, the birds moved to East Sister Island and to Pelee Island.

This relocation and increase in population of the Double-crested Cormorant population has resulted in vegetation destruction and an impact on the fisheries. On East Sister Island, trees have been killed as well as on the west end of Middle Island. Vegetation under trees on Middle Island has been destroyed. Chip stated that one pound of fish per day is consumed by a single cormorant. Cormorants are in the area from mid April through mid October, approximately 150 days. It is estimated in eastern Lake Ontario that Double-crested Cormorants are consuming 25 to 30 per cent of the forage base. In Georgian Bay, the fish stock has gone down but there are lots of complicating factors such as harsh winters and cold waters.

Chip has undertaken some bird banding and telemetry work in recent years. At Great Egret nesting sites on Walpole Island and on three islands in Lake Erie's Western Basin, red leg bands with letters have been applied above the knee but very few records have resulted from this work.

From 1999 to 2001, twelve female Herring Gulls were monitored by satellite telemetry. During 2002, twenty female Herring Gulls from Fighting Island were monitored from May through August. Most of the sightings were south of Fighting Island where contaminants would be the greatest. Herring Gull eggs from 15 sites have been analyzed for contaminants.

Thank you to everyone who attended our dinner and supported the fund raising silent auction. Thank you to all our ECFNC members who donated items towards the silent auction. Thank you to those persons who set up the silent auction including Karen Cedar, Shirley Grondin, and Betty Learmouth. A special thank you to Jacques Nicoletti who installed the microphone and speakers. Thank you to those who assisted at the door as greeters and to those who helped around the hall prior to the dinner. Thank you to Joe Parent who does such a great job as MC.

Thank you to our guest speaker Chip Weseloh who provided an informative overview of colonial waterbirds in Lake Erie and the Detroit River.

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction

We wish to thank the following ECFNC members for their generous contributions to our silent auction and door prizes:

Books

Stalking the Blue-eyed Scallop, by Euell Gibbons, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Chasing the Dragon's Tail: the Struggle to Save Thailand's Wild Cats, by Alan Rabinowitz, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Square Foot Gardening, by Mel Bartholomew, donated by Peg Wilkinson
The Solar Greenhouse Book, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Canadian Ghost Stories, donated by Linda Dawson
A Plantsman's Guide to Fushias, donated by Linda Dawson
Pelee Island: human and natural history; guide to a unique island community, donated by Wilds of Pelee Island Conservation Centre
Photo Field Guide to the Butterflies of Southern Ontario, by Ian Carmichael and Anne Vance, donated by Betty Learmouth
The Old Farmer's Almanac, donated by Margaret Jennings
Gary Fleming's Animals of the World Jigsaw Book. Five Mile Press Ltd., Rowville, Victoria, Australia, donated by Juliet and Pauline Renaud.
Guess Which? The Millbrook Press, Brookfield, CT, donated by Juliet and Pauline Renaud.
Mussio Ventures Presents Backroad Mapbook: Algonquin Region, donated by Richard Smith
Mussio Ventures Presents Backroad Mapbook; Ontario Cottage Country, donated by Richard Smith
Mussio Ventures Presents Backroad Mapbook: Southwestern Ontario, donated by Richard Smith
Who's at the Zoo? Phidal Publishing Inc., Montreal, QC, donated by Juliet and Pauline Renaud.
An illustrated guide to Organic Gardening, donated by JoAnn Grondin
Landscaping for Small Spaces, donated by JoAnn Grondin
Growing Herbs, donated by JoAnn Grondin

Clothing

Federation of Ontario Naturalists sweat shirt, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Great Blue Heron T-shirt, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Living Life on the Hedge T-shirt, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Point Pelee National Park T-shirts (2), donated by Peg Wilkinson

Tapes & CDs

Listen to the Mockingbird, Solitudes CD, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Nature Trails: Teach Kids to Identify Wildlife by Sound, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
2 CD's, donated by Joan Walker and Mike Malone, Pelee Wings Nature Store
...continued on page 7

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction *(continued)***Miscellaneous**

Rain gauge, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Ceramic owl, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Etched glass candleholder, donated by Peggy Hurst
Egret print, donated by Frances Langlois
"Learning to fly," collector's plate, donated by Dave Kraus
"Taking off," collector's plate, donated by Dave Kraus
Wildlife Habitat Conservation Prints, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2003, donated by Dave Kraus
Nature Portraits: Nature Photography (2 packages), donated by Anne Barbour
Picture Frame with Oak Leaves, donated by Linda Dawson
Christmas Note Pad, donated by Margaret Jennings
High Intensity Light, donated by Margaret Jennings
Ball Point Pens, donated by Margaret Jennings
Whales and Dolphins 16-Month Planning Calendar, donated by Margaret Jennings
Dare to Dream, 16-Month Planning Calendar, donated by Margaret Jennings
Christmas Tree Plate Frosted (2), donated by Margaret Jennings
Glass case, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Sealife; an authentic collection of colorful creatures, donated by Peg Wilkinson
2 Ceramic mice, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Christmas moose with satin bag, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Suncatcher, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Cowry necklace, donated by Peg Wilkinson
2 hemp Necklaces decorated with colourful stones, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Oven mitt with colourful maple leaf design, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Soft dinosaur toy, donated by Peg Wilkinson
Set of dishes, 16 pieces, donated by Peggy Hurst
Machine quilted table runner with dragonfly print, donated by Shirley Grondin
Jams in a basket, donated by Shirley Grondin
Box of jam, donated by Betty Moore
Nature photographs, donated by Anne Barbour
2 ECFNC mugs, donated by ECFNC
Ontario Provincial Park maps, donated by Ojibway Nature Centre
Bags of wild bird seed, donated by Ojibway Nature Centre
Suet cakes, donated by Ojibway Nature Centre
2 Nature Calendars, donated by Joan Walker and Mike Malone, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Canada Puzzle, donated by Mike Malone and Joan Walker, Pelee Wings Nature Store
Swallowtail Butterfly brooch, donated by Irene Girard
Silver bird brooch, donated by Irene Girard.
Enameled bird brooch, donated by Irene Girard
Pewter Birdwatcher's brooch (2), donated by Irene Girard.
Duck clip-on earrings, donated by Irene Girard.
Bird's nest with pearl eggs brooch, donated by Irene Girard.

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Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction (*continued*)

Decorative box with bird, donated by Irene Girard.
 Hand painted polyresin Common Loon hook, donated by Irene Girard
 Shell collection, donated by Irene Girard
 Framed and matted print, Great Blue Heron, donated by Irene Girard
 Framed and matted print of Doves, donated by Irene Girard
 "Dog Tired – The Springer Spaniel" – collector's plate, donated by Irene Girard.
 Deluxe food server, donated by Susan Aylesworth
 Crystal covered candy dish, donated by Susan Aylesworth

Donations from Natural Habitat Restoration Program

Scale mechanical beam with both pound and kilo weights, up to 100 pounds
 Electronic scale both ounces and grams up to 2000 grams
 # Bar fridge - outside dimensions: ht. 830 cm, width 470 cm, depth 490 cm
 Waring blender with heavy duty Blades which have been filed to dull them slightly
 Small blender - Westinghouse Filed blades, 7 speeds
 Sieves set of 4 with a catch pan, 8" diameter for very small seeds
 Sieve - 16" diameter, with 2 mesh inserts for larger seeds
 # Orchard ladder - tripod style ladder

We wish to thank the following publishers and organizations who generously contributed the following nature related books, calendars and tapes:

Adventuring Along the Lewis and Clark Trail, by Elizabeth Grossman. 2003. Donated by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA (ISBN 1-57805-067-7)

Alaska's Wildlife, by Tom Walker. 1995. Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-201-5)

Amazon Wildlife. 2002. Donated by Langerscheidt Publishing Group, Maspeth, NY (ISBN 1-58573-602-3)

American Nature Writing. 2003. Donated by Fulcrum, Golden, CO (ISBN 1-55591-353-9)

Anne Lindsay's Lighthearted Everyday Cooking (book), donated by Ojibway Nature Centre

Animals and Their Young: How Animals Produce and Care for their Babies. 2003. Donated by Kids Can Press, Toronto, ON (ISBN 1-55337-061-9)

The Bald Eagle of Alaska, BC and Washington, by David Hancock. 2003. Donated by Hancock House, Surrey, BC (ISBN 0-88839-536-1)

Bateman 2004 Naturalist's Calendar (3). Donated by Madison Press, Toronto, ON
 ... *continued on page 9*

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction (*continued*)

Bears, by Kevin Van Tighem. 1999. Donated by Altitude, Canmore, AB (ISBN 1-55153-811-3)

The Bears of Katmai: Alaska's Famous Brown Bears, by Matthias Breiter. 2000. Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-544-8) (2 copies)

Bird Brains; the Intelligence of Crows, Ravens, Magpies, and Jays, by Candace Savage. 1995. Donated by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA (ISBN 0-87156-956-6)

Birds of Heaven: Travels with Cranes, by Peter Matthiessen. 2001. Donated by Greystone / Douglas & McIntyre Publishing Group, Vancouver, BC (ISBN 1-55054-997-9)

Birds of Michigan, by Charles T. Black. 2003. Donated by Lone Pine Publishing, Edmonton, AB

A Breath of Fresh Air: a Celebration of School Gardening, by Elise Houghton. 2003. Donated by Sumac Press, Toronto, ON (ISBN 0-920020-61-5)

Canmore & Kananaskis Country, by Gilleen Daffern. 2003. Donated by Heritage House, Surrey, BC. (ISBN 1-894765-41-9)

City Birding: True Stories of Birds and Birdwatching in Unexpected Places. 2003. Donated by Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA (0-8117-0027-5)

Creation; a novel, by Katherine Govier. 2002. Donated by Random House of Canada Limited, Toronto, ON

Crows! Strange and Wonderful, by Laurence Pringle. 2002. Donated by Boyds Mills Press, Honesdale, PA (ISBN 1-56397-899-7)

The Disappearing Forests, by Janice Parker. 2003. Donated by Weigl Educational Publishers, Calgary, AB (ISBN 1-58340-168-7)

Fall Colors Across North America, by Anthony E. Cook. (no date). Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-599-5)

Federation of Ontario Naturalists family memberships, donated by Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Toronto, ON

Federation of Ontario Naturalists T-shirt, donated by Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Toronto

Feral Future: the Untold Story of Australia's Exotic Invaders. 2002. Donated by University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL (ISBN 0-226-49419-5)

... *continued on page 10*

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction (*continued*)

Festival of Hawks mug (2), donated by Special Events Committee, Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

A Guide to Audubon's Birds of America, by Suzanne M. Low. 2002. Donated by Donald A Heald Rare Books, New York, NY (ISBN 0-939226-09-X)

The Great Bear Rainforest: Canada's Forgotten Coast, by Ian McAllister & Karen McAllister. 1997. Donated by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA (ISBN 1-57805-011-1)

Great Wildlife of the Great Plains, by Paul A. Johnsgard. 2003. Donated by University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, KS (ISBN 0-7006-1224-6)

It's a Hummingbird Life, by Irene Kelly. 2003. Donated by Holiday House, NY (ISBN 0-8234-1658-5)

The Life Cycle of a Snake, by Bobbie Kalman. 2003. Donated by Crabtree Publishing Co., St. Catharines, ON (ISBN 0-7787-0660-5)

The Living Great Lakes: Exploring North America's Inland Seas, by Jerry Dennis. 2003. Donated by H.B. Fenn and Company Ltd., Bolton, ON (ISBN 0-312-25193-9)

Living the Good Life; Your Guide to Health and Success (book), donated by Ojibway Nature Centre

Mr. Bloomfield's Orchard; the Mysterious World of Mushrooms, Molds, and Mycologists, by Nicholas P. Money. 2002. Donated by Oxford University Press Canada, Don Mills, ON (ISBN 0-19-515457-6)

National Parks of America, photography by David Muench. 2003. Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-124-8)

Nature Along the Way map and Ojibway Tallgrass Prairie (2), donated by Ojibway Nature Centre

Ontario Provincial Park map (2), donated by Ojibway Nature Centre

Building a Prairie (booklet) and prairie seeds, donated by Friends of Ojibway Prairie

The Oryx Resource Guide to El Nino and La Nina. 2002. Donated by Greenwood, Westport, CT (ISBN 1-57356-378-1)

Owls of the World, by James Duncan. 2003. Donated by Key Porter Books, Toronto, ON
... *continued on page 11*

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction (*continued*)

Plundering Paradise: the Hand of Man on the Galapagos Islands, by Michael D'Orso. 2002. Donated by HarperCollins, New York, NY. (ISBN 0-06-019390-5)

Primal Forces, by David Muench. 2000. Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-522-7) (2 copies)

The Purple Martin, by Robin Doughty. 2002. Donated by University of Texas, Austin, TX (ISBN 0-292-71615-X)

Reader's Digest Children's Book of Animals. 1992. Donated by The Reader's Digest Association Canada, Montreal, QC

Restoring North America's Birds; Lessons from Landscape Ecology. 2000. Donated by Yale University Press, New Haven, CT (ISBN 0-300-07967-2)

Saving Birds: Heroes Around the World, by Pete Salmansohn. 2003. Donated by Tilbury House, Publishers, Gardiner, ME (ISBN 0-88448-237-5)

Seasons of The Arctic, photographs by Paul Nicklen. 2000. Donated by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA (ISBN 1-57805-057-X)

The Rough Guide to Yosemite National Park. 2002. Donated by Pearson Canada, Newmarket, ON (ISBN 1-85828-886-X)

Sharkabet; A Sea of Sharks from A to Z, by Ray Troll. 2002. Donated by Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company, Portland, OR (ISBN 1-55868-518-9)

Snake Conservation kit (2), donated by Ojibway Nature Centre

Songbirds; Celebrating Nature's Voices, by Ronald Orenstein. 1997. Donated by Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, CA (ISBN 0-87156-947-7)

Stokes Beginner's guide to Butterflies, by Donald and Lillian Stokes. 2002. Donated by AOL Time Warner Book Group, Boston, MA (ISBN 0-316-81692-2)

Stokes Beginner's Guide to Dragonflies, by Blair Nikula. 2002. Donated by AOL Time Warner Book Group, Boston, MA (ISBN 0-316-81679-5)

Stokes Field Guide to Bird Songs, Western Region, by Donald and Lillian Stokes. 1999. Donated by Time-Warner Audiobooks, NY (2 copies) (Tape)

Suet Cakes, donated by Ojibway Nature Centre, Windsor, ON
... *continued on page 12*

Donations to the 2003 ECFNC Silent Auction (*continued*)

There's a Frog in My Throat, by Loreen Leedy & Pat Street. 2003. Donated by Holiday House, NY (ISBN 0-8234-1774-3)

Trails of Greater Moncton, by Kate Merlin. 2003. Donated by Goose Land Editions, Fredericton, NB (ISBN 0-86492-349-X)

Walking in Scotland. 2002. Donated by Lonely Planet Publications, Oakland, CA (ISBN 1-86450-350-5)

Weeds in My Garden: Observations on Some Misunderstood Plants, by Charles B. Heiser. 2003. Donated by Timber Press, Inc, Portland, OR (ISBN 0-88192-582-9)

Wildlife Atlas: a Complete Guide to Animals and Their Habitats, by John Farndon. 2002. Donated by The Reader's Digest Association Canada, Montreal, QB (ISBN 0-7621-0354-X)

The following is an article from the November 8, 2003 issue of the Farm Market Newspaper reprinted with permission from Peter Epp under the headline "Essex woman honoured by Carolinian Canada."

Carolinian Canada Honours Patricia Rhoads

Carolinian Canada has presented a conservation award to Patricia Rhoads of Essex County for her and her family's work restoring and monitoring the ecological health of Carolinian habitat in Canada's most threatened ecological region - Ontario's Carolinian Life Zone.

The award was presented November 1, 2003 at a dinner organized by the Essex County Field Naturalists' by Vicki McKay, a director of the Carolinian Canada Coalition. "Patricia's work over the years in protecting, restoring and monitoring natural heritage in Essex deserves recognition," said McKay. "Carolinian Canada is proud to recognize her contribution to conserving Carolinian species and habitats."

Rhoads' accomplishments include helping establish environmental monitoring sites in Essex County, including a site newly planted with trees and shrubs, a site to be restored and a mature forest owned and protected by Rhoads and her husband Chuck; co-founding the Canada South Land Trust, an organization working for conservation of natural areas in Essex and surrounding areas; and organizing the first Habitat Restoration Conference for Essex and Chatham-Kent. Rhoads is also credited with starting a native plant nursery. At last count the number of trees, shrubs and wildflowers, all from local seed sources, was over 20,000 and growing.

Natural Habitat Restoration Program Coordinator Honoured

by Gerry Waldron

The Natural Habitat Restoration Program was founded in 1992. Our club was active in the program right from the start and the program came completely under the club's control in 1995 when the federal funding ended – naturally!

Club members have been active in all aspects of NHRP and several members have served as NHRP chair or coordinator during the past decade. These ten years saw the distribution of hundreds of thousands of native tree seeds to Ontario nurseries, hundreds of acres of restoration projects in Essex County, and the establishment of hobby native plant nurseries and Woodland Farm nursery by our member Patricia Rhoads. As NHRP winds its activities down this is its continuing legacy.

Through the past decade, one person stands apart from the rest in terms of dedication to the NHRP in all its administrative and logistical complexities. Her natural humility will make her insist that others played an equally important role but without Donna Sale NHRP would not have been the long running success we know. Donna brought her keen mind and organizational skills to a daunting task. She even sacrificed her back to the cause lifting those heavy containers of nuts.

Now Donna is taking a well deserved break and with the upcoming retirement of husband Peter we will likely lose her for good to a retirement home in the north.

**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival**

September 11 – 14, 2003

Report of Events by Mary Celestino

On a scale never before seen on Pelee Island, the 8th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network (CARCNet) in conjunction with the 3rd Annual Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival took the island by storm.

The event was spearheaded by Ben Porchuk of The Wilds of Pelee Island through the generous co-sponsorship of TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and Pelee Island Winery.

Scientists, researchers and naturalists from numerous universities and science institutions presented their findings all in a combined effort to protect Canada's endangered amphibian and reptile species.

Speakers from as far away as British Columbia to the west and Quebec and New York to the east and from northern Illinois to Florida attended the event.

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**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)**

Throughout the four day event, over 53 presentations were made which included three distinguished keynote speakers. Although fast-paced, the conference was scientifically rewarding and well organized.

Coinciding with the event was a live display of Native Reptiles and Amphibians of Ontario and Beyond by 'Sciensational Ssnakes!!!'; a poster display by CARCNet; and a vast array of books, artworks, nature crafts and science items exhibited for Silent Auction which was held in the Pelee Island Winery Pavilion.

The choices of field trips and evening entertainment was endless, beginning with early morning birding at Fish Point Nature Reserve with Rob Tymstra; guided afternoon tours of Lighthouse Point Savanna, Stone Road Alvar, glacial groves in the alvar's southeast limestone beaches and Fish Point; including a "Fossil Fuel Day" featuring bicycles, hybrid gas-electric automobiles, solar power and a tour to Renewable Energy Powered Home at The Wilds of Pelee Island.

The cool wine cellar of the Pelee Island Winery was a welcome relief as the audience eagerly crowded in to hear the first keynote address by Dr. Richard B. King, Dept. of Biological Sciences of Northern Illinois University who impressed us with his research work on **The Lake Erie Watersnake: A 23-year Perspective on Microevolution, Population Status, and Recovery Planning.**

The following presentations then ensued on the topic of ECOLOGY and CONSERVATION.*

Georgian Bay Fox snakes: Observations on Long Distance Travel and Sexual Behaviour – Anna Lawson, Carrie MacKinnon and Ronald J. Brooks, Dept of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Amphibian and Reptile Surveys on First Nation Land in the South Okanagan – Dave C. Cunningham, Stephen Hureau, Christine A. Bishop, Ron Hall and Mike Sarell, Canadian Wildlife Service, B.C.

Amphibian Survival in a "Suburban Backyard Habitat" – Sara K. Rubin – Rochester, New York.

The Socioecology of the Red-Backed Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*) in North-Central Ontario: Territoriality and Behavioural Differentiation Between Colour Morphs in Agnostic Encounters – Njal Rollinson & D. Hackett, Dept. of Biology, Nipissing University.

Spatial Ecology and Reproductive Behaviour of the Eastern Hog-Nosed Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*) in Wasaga Beach, ON – Glenn Cunnington, The Friends of Nancy Island Historic Site & Wasaga Beach Park.

... *continued on page 15*

Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)

The Spatial Ecology of the Eastern Massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus catenatus*) and Eastern Hog-Nosed Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*) in a Recently Fragmented Landscape – Jeremy D. Rouse, Robert J. Willson, Ron Black and Ronald J. Brooks, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

Movement Patterns and Habitat Use of Juvenile Black Ratsnakes – Laura Biorgan, Biology Dept., University of Ottawa.

Leopard Frog (*Rana pipiens*) Movement Through North August: Wet & Dry Years – Frederick W. Schueler, Bishop Mills Natural History Centre, Bishop Mills, Ontario

Demography and Spatial Ecology of Wood Turtles (*Clemmys insculpta*) in Algonquin Provincial Park – Kim Barrett & Ronald J. Brooks, Conservation Halton & Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Day 2: Friday, Sept. 12th, 2003

Early the next morning the second keynote speaker D. Ronald J. Brooks of the University of Guelph, stirred the morning audience with his illuminating talk on the **The Human Footprint and Conservation in Canada: Can Reptiles Make It Back Out of Their Endzone?**

The following scientific findings were then presented:

Road-Killed Turtles in the Outaouais, Quebec, During the Nesting Season – Jean-Francois Desroches & Isabelle Picard, Charlesbourg & Trois Rivieres, Quebec.

Treatment and Rehabilitation of Injured Turtles as a Conservation Initiative in Ontario – Kristy Hiltz, Karwartha Turtle Trauma Centre.

Herpetological Projects of the Southern Okanagan – Sara L. Ashpole (Winner of the Digital Frog Award, Student Achievement), Sue Austen, Brenda Baptists, Christine A. Bishop, Mike Sarrel & Wendy Schebel, University of Guelph, Sos Stewardship, B.C., Desert & Heritage Centre, B.C., Canadian Wildlife Service, B.C., Ophiuchus Consulting, B.C., Ducks Unlimited, B.C., Osoyoos Indian Band, NK'MIP Desert & Heritage Centre, Rattlesnake Program.

Rearing (*Rana pipiens*) for Conservation – Doug Adama, Columbia Basin Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program, B.C.

After a brief lunch at the winery, a variety of guided field trips were offered to the participants with groups boarding island buses to Fish Point, Stone Road Alvar and Lighthouse Point.

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**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)**

By three o'clock that afternoon CARCNet members and all members of the conference returned to the West Dock Memorial Park, rolled up their sleeves and armed with plants, rocks, shovels and wheel barrows, dug out a pond for the citizens of Pelee Island as part of the CARCNet *Giving Back Project* who donated a Legacy Wetland for the benefit of the island.

Participating in this grand event were members of the Township of Pelee, Toronto Zoo (*Adopt a Pond*), Pelee Island Heritage Centre, The Wilds of Pelee Island, Environment Canada, TD Canada Trust and Pelee Island Public School.

A sign was erected on the site and by 5:00 p.m. that same afternoon, the construction of the pond was complete with water plants, stones and water which were hurriedly provided by the local volunteer fire department.

During the unveiling, a government cheque for \$150,000.00 was presented to the Township of Pelee Island for the construction of a multipurpose wetland.

This milestone in the history of Pelee Island is of major significance as it continues with the tradition of preserving the island's natural environment. Over one hundred years ago, nearly one-half of Pelee Island consisted of wetland marshes which were subsequently drained for agricultural use. This practice was common throughout Canada, North America and mainland Essex County.

It is only recently that the value of wetlands has been discovered not only in the provision of habitats for endangered wetland species particularly rare amphibians and reptiles but also by being beneficial to humans as well.

Consequently, CARCNet has identified Pelee Island as the first Important Amphibian and Reptile Area (IMPARA) in Canada.

The funding provided for these wetlands will make Pelee Island a leader in using wetlands as a sewage treatment system and as a natural means in treating human waste while at the same time providing valuable habitat for endangered wetland wildlife.

Construction and design of the wetlands area will be conducted by UEM Consultants, a Niagara based company along with The Wilds of Pelee Island staff members who will work with the township during the sewage treatment project. Wetland plant species as well as cattails will be introduced in the wetland which will break down sewage and allow safe re-entry into the ground. The system will also accommodate trucked-in waste water from outside sources. This new sewage treatment system will allow the facilities in the West Dock area to expand and service future growth in the vicinity.

... continued on page 17

**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)**

That evening a dinner by the Friends of the Environment Community was held at the Pelee Island Winery Pavilion Hall where the Silver Salamander Award was presented to June Feltz, an honoured and long-time environmental advocate of Pelee Island. The Blue Racer Award was presented to Ben Porchuk for his achievements in protecting the endangered wildlife of the island. As a token of good-will, each Pelee Island household was offered free dinner tickets to attend the banquet along with a copy of a book published by The Wilds of Pelee Island on the human and natural history of Pelee Island.

Day 3, Saturday, September 13th, began with the third key-note speaker, Dr. James P. Bogart of the Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph who spoke of Pelee Island's very own **Salamanders of the Ambystoma laterale – texanum – Complex of Pelee Island.**

HERPETOLOGICAL SURVEYS continued throughout the morning session.

The Monteregian Hills Herpetological Project – Patrick Galois & Martin Oullet, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue & Montreal, Quebec.

The 2002 James Bay Expedition – Ontario – Frederick W. Schueler, Bishop Mills Natural History Centre, Bishop Mills, Ontario.

The next scheduled talks were on IMMUNOLOGY and TOXICOLOGY.

A Comparison of Immune Traits of Baitshop and Wild Juvenile Leopard Frogs (Rana pipiens) – Pamela L. Rutherford, David L. McRuer & Mark R. Forbes, Dept of Biology, Carleton University.

Immunosuppression in Leopard Frogs (Rana pipiens) due to Pesticide Exposure – Anatheia Albert, Ken Drouillard, Douglas Haffner & Brian Dixon, Dept. of Biology, Univ. of Waterloo.

Assessment of Pesticide Exposure and Effect in Amphibians Using Agricultural Habitat, South Okanagan, British Columbia – Sara L. Ashpole, Christine A. Bishop and John Elliott, Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph & Canadian Wildlife Service, B.C.

The Difficulties Associated with Using Reptiles and Amphibians in Ecological Risk Assessment – Mary-Kate Gilbertson & Ruth N. Hull, C. Wren & Associates, Guelph & Canox Environment Inc., Mississauga.

Size-based Fecundity of a Northern Population of Painted Turtles – Jason Samson & Ronald J. Brooks, Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Phenotypic Consequences of Nest-site Selection in Black Ratsnakes (Elaphe obsoleta) – Gabriel Blouin-Demers, Patrick J. Weatherhead & Jeffrey R. Row, Dept. of Biology, University of Ottawa.

... *continued on page 18*

**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)**

Nest-site Selection, Developmental Success and Over-winter Success in a Northern Population of Painted Turtles (*Chrysemys picta*) – Elinor J. Hughes & Ronald J. Brooks, Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Reproductive Ecology of *Nicrophorus pustulatus*, (Coleoptera: Silphidae) an Ophidian Egg Parasitoid: Current Knowledge and Future Research – Gregory Bulte, Gabriel Blouin-Demers and Patrick J. Weatherhead, Dept. of Biology, University of Ottawa.

Populations, Development and Landscape Models: Exploring the use of GIS in Conservation Decisions – David A. Galbraith, Manager of Biodiversity Projects, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton, Ontario.

Range Extension and Habitat Description for the Northern Dusky Salamander (*Desmognathus fuscus fuscus*) on the North Shore of St. Lawrence River, Quebec, Canada – Jean-Francois Desroches and Daniel Pouliot, Quebec.

Validity of Counts of Carapacial Growth Lines to Determine Age in Wood Turtles (*Glyptemys insculpta*) – Pamela Wesley, Kathryn Peiman & Ronald J. Brooks, Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

The Effects of Harvesting and Site Preparation in White Pine Stands on the Abundance of Red-Backed Salamanders – Andree E. Morneault, Brian J. Naylor, Lee S. Schaeffer, Dianne C. Othmer, South Centre Science & Information Section, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, North Bay, Ontario and Novus Consulting Forest Conservation & Restoration, B.C.

It's Time for a National Turtle-marking Scheme – Frederick W. Schueler, Bishop Mills Natural History Centre.

The final day of the event, Day 4, Sunday, September 14, began early in the morning with the continuation of the LIFE HISTORY II series:

Does Summer Length Limit the Distribution of Oviparous Species? – Sarah M. Holt, Matt Skinner & Ronald J. Brooks, Dept of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Extreme Survivorship and Delayed Maturity of a Northern Population of Painted Turtles – Jason Samson & Ronald J. Brooks, University of Guelph.

A Morphometric Study on Six Ranids of the Genus *Ptychadena* – Alanna Edwards & David M. Green, University of Guelph.

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**Canadian Amphibian & Reptile Conservation Network
and The Pelee Island Winery Endangered Species Festival (*continued*)**

Application of Life History Theory and Population Model Analysis to the Conservation and Management of the Last Southern Ontario Populations of Wood Turtles (Glyptemys insculpta) – Melissa Cameron and Ronald J. Brooks, University of Guelph.

Relative Effects of Introduced Trout and Minnows on Development, Behaviour and Distribution of Long-Toed Salamanders (Ambystoma macrodactylum) – K. J. Pearson and C. P. Goater, Dept. of Biological Sciences, University of Lethbridge.

Geographic Peripherality and Genetic Diversity in Northern Populations of Five-lined Skink (Eumeces fasciatus) – Briand J. Howes and Stephen C. Lougheed, Dept. of Biology, Queen's University.

Phylogeography of the Five-lined Skink (Eumeces fasciatus) – Bethany A. Lindsay, Brian J. Howes & Stephen C. Lougheed, Dept. of Biology, Queen's University.

The Influence of History and Scale on Gene Flow in Peripheral Populations of the Bullfrog – James Austin, Stephen C. Lougheed & Peter Boag, Dept. of Biology, Queen's University.

The afternoon's sessions resumed with talks by the staff of The Wilds of Pelee Island:

Multipurpose Wetland for Human Community and Species at Risk – Paula Carpenter, The Wilds of Pelee Island Outdoor Centre for Conservation.

Monitoring of Microhabitats for Snakes on Pelee Island – Anne Marie Fortner, The Wilds of Pelee Island Outdoor Centre for Conservation. (Logo by Anne Marie Fortner).

Digital Nature – Celia Clark & Sara L. Ashpole, Digital Frog International Inc., Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

The Use of Radiotelemetry in Snakes: Surgical Techniques, Guidelines and Recommendations – Robert J. Willson and Jeremy D. Rouse, Parry Sound, Ont.; Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; Dept. of Zoology, University of Guelph.

Long-term Effects of Radio-Telemetry on Black Ratsnakes – Gabriel Blouin-Demers and Patrick J. Weatherhead, Dept. of Biology, University of Ottawa.

The four day event ended with tearful goodbyes as we all joined hands on the sunny fields of the Pelee Island Winery and vowed to return next year for the 4th Annual Endangered Species Festival.

* Anyone wishing more information on any of the above scientific lectures may contact The Wilds of Pelee Island. E-mail: www.wildsofpelee Phone: (519) 724-9918

Birds of Point Pelee, OFO Annual Convention, September 20 - 21, 2003

by Betty Learmouth

The Ontario Field Ornithologists Annual Conference returned to Point Pelee after a year's absence with 150 persons registered for field trips and the banquet on September 20 - 21, 2003. The Annual General Meeting was held this year at Leamington's Roma Club. The Roma Club's main hall, devoted entirely to the AGM, was filled with book displays, sales tables and a silent auction of selected nature art pieces. The banquet tables were decorated with fresh vegetable centrepieces of red peppers, English cucumbers, individual servings of Heinz tomato juice, and Town of Leamington cucumber pins. Ron Tozer was the evening's MC who moved the proceedings along with a bit of humour thrown in.

OFO President Jean Iron welcomed everyone, remarking that guests from Michigan and Massachusetts were in the audience. Jean thanked the faithful advertisers who support the OFO publication *Ontario Birds*, including Pelee Wings Nature Store (both Joan Walker and Mike Malone were in the audience) and Bushnell Sports Optics represented by Gary Stephey, a business which has supported both the ECFNC and the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory. Jean reported that OFO membership continues to boom. The Ontbirds listserv is extremely popular with 1,400 subscribers.

During OFO field trips earlier in the day, 111 species had been tallied including 10 shorebird species, 16 warbler and 11 raptor species. Of interest was a Dicksissel heard at Seacliffe by Alan Wormington and a second individual seen south of the washrooms at The Tip. A Willet was observed behind the Day's Inn while a Prairie Falcon was seen at The Tip.

The year's OFO Distinguished Ornithology Award was presented to Bob Curry. Tom Hayman of London was recognized for his contribution of over 2,000 birding columns which have appeared in the *London Free Press*. Guest speaker Ethan Meleg was introduced by Ojibway Nature Centre's Paul Pratt. In his introduction, Paul told the audience that the persons who have inspired Ethan through the years have been his mother Lily who worked at Point Pelee National Park, and his stepfather Tom Hince who encouraged Ethan to excel at both birding and photography.

Ethan's photographs have appeared in various publications, calendars and in the August 2003 issue of *Forbes* magazine. With considerable candor, Ethan entertained the audience and provided insight into photographers' techniques for obtaining glorious bird photographs. Patience and the study and understanding of bird behaviour has rewarded Ethan with some memorable photographs ranging from colourful warblers at Point Pelee National Park to Great Blue Herons in a Florida rookery to a young yawning Peregrine Falcon on a Florida beach. One outstanding photograph was that of a Sora walking across golden-coloured reed stalks, the dark bird contrasting nicely with the background. A recent photograph from May 2003 taken on Point Pelee's East Beach showed a Blackburnian, Cape May and Yellow Warbler together in the same frame. Henrietta O'Neill thanked Ethan.

The OFO annual dinner is always a well organized and enjoyable event. This year's participants left with wonderful memories of a delightful evening with old friends and new acquaintances. Everyone took away some fresh vegetables from the centrepiece arrangements as no one should ever leave Leamington without fresh produce.

Dragonfly Downs - September 14, 2003

by Shirley Grondin

Dragonfly Downs is the idyllic home of Richard and Cathie Smith, our hosts for today's tour. It is a warm, overcast Sunday afternoon, when nineteen members of the club convene at the Smiths. The Smiths have lived on this 32.2 acre property for several years and have worked very hard to restore large areas of the land to a natural state and have included a woodland with a variety of trees, several ponds and a prairie. A neighbouring farmer tills approximately seven acres of their farm.

The house, large shed and landscaped yard are set back from the road, close to the centre of the property and we begin our tour here. Richard points out some of the trees in the area such as Sweet Gum, Catalpa and Chinese Chestnut. A Wahoo shrub, which the Smiths obtained from John Moore, grows near the wooden fence - "the fence separates the tame from the wild." More than one club member probably has a little reminder of John in his/her yard. Near the front door of the house we see a Praying Mantis on one of the little shrubs. From here we head toward the road, then east along a trail through the trees. At the beginning of the trail, we encounter the first of four ponds. This is one of the smaller ponds and is teeming with Leopard frogs. This woodland area has larger trees, which were planted several years ago by the Smiths. There is a variety of native and ornamental trees and shrubs on the property, with the majority being native, and include Burr Oak, Red Oak, Silver Maple, Elm, Green Ash, Pin Oak, Tulip, Hackberry, Curly Willow, Sycamore, Poplar, Red Ash, Staghorn Sumac, Grey Dogwood, Shellbark Hickory, Swamp White, Red Cedar, Shumard Oak, and Basswood.

It started to drizzle as we circled around near the back of the property and for most of us it was refreshing so we continued our tour. We pass a more recently restored woodland area containing a large number of Sycamore seedlings. These were planted with the help of some school children through the Natural Habitat Restoration Program. Goldenrod and Asters cover the area, providing a protective cover from browsing deer. Along this back trail are bluebird houses where one pair successfully nested. Other houses provided nests for Tree Swallows and House Wrens. The Smiths keep the trail mowed in this area so that it is easier for the Bluebirds to catch bugs. There are lots of Wild Strawberries and Nannyberry bushes along the trails to provide food for the "berry loving species."

Next we come to a prairie area which contains many species of flowers such as Blazing Star, Grey-headed Coneflower, Ironweed, Bergamot, Black-eyed Susan, Hairy Aster, Heath Aster, Sneezeweed, Tall Sunflower, Queen Anne's Lace, Common Milkweed, a variety of Goldenrod including Early and Grass-leaved, New England Aster, Tick Trefoil, and Boneset. Many Monarch butterflies, Clouded Sulphurs and Cabbage Whites are feeding in this prairie area. Cathie and Richard said it is interesting to watch the prairie change each year as it evolves. At the edge of the prairie is a swale to protect the rest of the farm from a prairie fire or a prescribed burn.

... continued on page 22

Dragonfly Downs - September 14, 2003 *(continued)*

Next, we come across two ponds, both of which are large. The depth of the ponds range from five to fourteen feet. Both ponds are full of bass and the fish have been conditioned to associate food with voices so they followed us as we tour around the pond hoping someone would throw in a few grasshoppers. Many wetland species are growing in or along the pond edge. Some of the species are Swamp Rose Mallow, Swamp Milkweed, Pickerelweed, Cattail, Arrowhead, Water Plantain, Flag Iris, Cardinal Flower, Bur Reed, Water Lilies, Turtlehead and sedges. Also at the pond edge are some Wood Duck boxes. The Smiths had a pair of Wood Ducks nesting this spring. The female laid eleven eggs but Starlings drove them from the nest. The Starlings then made a nest over the Wood Duck eggs. The Wood Ducks moved to another box and laid two eggs but neither hatched. This was very disappointing for the Smiths since it is not always easy to attract Wood Ducks. In order to prevent flooding from the ponds an overflow area has been added with a trench that leads out to the front ditch. In this area of the ponds, there is a White Pine grove and a Basswood grove, along with some Pussy Willow and Weeping Willow trees.

As we head back toward the house, we pass a row of Grey Dogwood covered in white berries. Near the large shed or barn is the last of the four ponds. This one is smaller and is home for many Green Frogs. Since Richard is a native species grower, he has a large nursery area set up beside the shed. There are many species of trees, flowers and shrubs at various stages of growth. By now it has stopped drizzling and we gather on the back patio of the house for a little refreshment, which was so generously provided by the Smiths. This has been a terrific outing with much to see and appreciate and we thank Richard and Kathy for hosting the club.

Point Pelee Natural History News -- Volume 3, Number 3 (Fall 2003)

This issue (16 pages) contains the following:

ARTICLES:

POINT PELEE MEMORIES: 1956 to 1999 - William A. Martin

[Bill provides insights, viewpoints, anecdotes, short stories, etc., covering his annual birding pilgrimages to Point Pelee over the past 40+ years]

NOTEWORTHY BIRD RECORDS: JUNE to AUGUST 2003 -- Alan Wormington

[A total of 4 pages detailing three months of observations, including such rarities as Black Vulture, Piping Plover, Franklin's Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Sabine's Gull, Eurasian Collared-Dove, Chuck-will's-widow and Eurasian Tree Sparrow]

POINT PELEE BUTTERFLY COUNT: AUGUST 9, 2003 - Sarah E. Rupert

[28 counters found 43 species and 6229 individuals; new species for the count were Pipevine Swallowtail, Wild Indigo Dusky-Wing and Long Dash]

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Point Pelee Natural History News -- Volume 3, Number 3 (Fall 2003)(continued)

RECORD-LATE WARBLERS AT POINT PELEE: SPRING 2003 - Alan Wormington
[Nashville, Black-throated Blue, Yellow-rumped, Palm and Wilson's warblers were all found on record-late dates during the spring of 2003, details of which are included; an overview of previous late occurrences is also provided.]

IN THE FIELD:

Lake Chubsucker: Still Present in Pelee Marsh
Bull Frog: Still Present in Pelee Marsh
More Black Witches at Point Pelee: Summer 2003
Eurasian Tree Sparrow: Second Record for Point Pelee
Record-Late Carolina Wren Nest for Point Pelee

NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS:

W.E. Saunders Birding Odyssey: September 6, 2003
OFO Annual Meeting (2003) held at Leamington
New Publication on Pelee Island

UPCOMING EVENTS and OUTINGS:

November 2003
December 2003

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Included with the articles and notes described above is a total of 15 photographs.

Alan Wormington, EDITOR
Point Pelee Natural History News
E-mail: wormington@juno.com

WEB PAGE:

http://www.wincom.net/~fopp/Natural_History_News.htm
[includes an index for past issues]

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Friends of Point Pelee E-mail: fopp@wincom.net

ECFNC Activities and Excursions, December 2003 through May 2004

For further information concerning the ECFNC excursions, contact Bert Harris (966-3263), JoAnn Grondin (734-0056), Margaret Jennings (250-0705), or Betty Learmouth (944-0825). "Thank you" to everyone who has volunteered to lead an excursion. We appreciate leaders sharing their time and expertise with others. Let us know about your ideas for upcoming excursions. Consider volunteering as an excursion leader

December 10 – ECFNC Members Meeting – Members night – Share a selection of your favourite slides or Christmas baking with fellow ECFNC members. Meet at the Essex Civic Centre at 7:30 p.m. in Room C.

December 14 – Rondeau Provincial Park Christmas Bird Count – Contact Paul Pratt at Ojibway Nature Centre.

December 15 – Point Pelee National Park Christmas Bird Count. Call Interpreter Sarah Rupert for more details.

December 20 – Cedar Creek Christmas Bird Count – Contact Paul Pratt at Ojibway Nature Centre for details and to be assigned to an area. This count is followed by a potluck supper and a tally of the day's sightings. Everyone is welcome! Contact Peggy Hurst at 839-4635 regarding your contribution to the potluck supper.

December 21 – Lake St. Clair / North Shore Christmas Bird Count - Contact Paul Pratt at Ojibway Nature Centre.

December 27 – Rockwood/Amherstburg Christmas Bird Count - Contact Paul Pratt at Ojibway Nature Centre.

Sunday, December 28 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

Monday, December 29 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

Tuesday, December 30 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

January 1, 2004 – Detroit River Christmas Bird Count - Contact Paul Pratt at Ojibway Nature Centre. This count is a wonderful way to celebrate the New Year. This could be a morning or all day count depending on your energy levels on New Year's Day. Everyone is welcome!

Friday, January 2 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

Saturday, January 3 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

Sunday, January 4 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

January 10 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Winter Birding - Discover a variety of winter bird life in Essex County! Upcoming trips on Jan 24, Feb 7, 21. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1 or sign up for all 4 and receive a discount.

January 11 – ECFNC Winter Excursion – Enjoy an afternoon of owling at Holiday Beach Conservation Area with Tom Hurst who will explain how and where to find owl species such as Long-eared Owls in the pine plantations at Holiday Beach. Meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Park entrance. Holiday Beach Conservation Area is found by following Howard Avenue from Windsor to the white community building at the corner of County Road 20 and Howard Avenue. Turn right onto County Road 20 and proceed to the corner of County Road 50 and County Road 20 at Ure's Country Store. Turn left and watch for the conservation Area's entrance on your right.

January 14 – ECFNC Members Meeting – Our guest speaker will be Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Management General Manager and ECFNC member Todd Pepper who will discuss solid waste management and recycling in Essex County through a PowerPoint presentation. Meet in the basement meeting room at the Windsor Family Credit Union, 2800 Tecumseh Road East at 7:30 p.m. We will meet everyone at the back entrance of the Credit Union to direct you to the elevator.

Sunday, January 18 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

January 24 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Winter Birding - Discover a variety of winter bird life in Essex County! Upcoming trips on Feb 7, 21. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1

Sunday, February 1 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Winter Festival - Enjoy cross-country skiing, free family activities and winter wanders through the park. A 10% discount on bird seed and feeders. 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Free admission into the park

February 7 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Winter Birding - Discover a variety of winter bird life in Essex County! Upcoming trip on February 21. Saturday morning field trip. Cost: \$13/1

February 8 – ECFNC Winter Excursion – Join ECFNC member Gerry Waldron for a walk at Big Creek Marsh. Hopefully the marsh will be frozen so we may venture out on the ice along the shoreline otherwise we will be exploring inland. Our meeting place will be the Big Creek Conservation Area which may be reached by driving from Windsor along Howard Avenue to County Road 20 at the white community building. Turn right onto County Road 20 and proceed past the intersection of County Road 50 at Ure's Country Store. Continue west, passing over the Knapp's Island Bridge, watching for the Conservation Area sign on the left. If there is snow, we hope a neighbor will plow for us so we may park in the driveway. Meet at 2:00 p.m.

February 11 - ECFNC Members Meeting – Biologist and ECFNC member Vicki McKay will bring us an update on Point Pelee National Park's Species at Risk. Meet in the basement meeting room at the Windsor Family Credit Union, 2800 Tecumseh Road East at 7:30 p.m. We will meet everyone at the back entrance of the Credit Union to direct you to the elevator.

Sunday, February 15 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Cabin Fever Hikes - Get out and discover the wonders of Ojibway in the winter. Follow animal tracks to their homes and find out how different animals survive the elements. 1:00-2:00 p.m. Cost: \$3/adult/day; \$2.50/child/day

February 21 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Winter Birding - Discover a variety of winter bird life in Essex County! Saturday morning field trip. Cost: \$13/1

February 22 – ECFNC Winter Excursion – Join University of Windsor researcher and ECFNC member Lynda Corkum for an afternoon in the lab. Lynda will offer a survey of Great Lake fishes to ECFNC members from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Lynda will provide an overview of the fishes (key characteristics, habitat preferences, collection methods). Members will gain experience in using taxonomic key to identify preserved specimens (gloves will be provided!). This session will provide a good background for the field trip to the Belle Isle Aquarium, February 29th.

The session will be held in the Biology Building (Room 29), University of Windsor (2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Free parking is available in the "bookstore" lot on the northwest corner of Sunset and Wyandotte (enter the lot on Sunset Avenue opposite the Odette Business Building). To get to the Biology Building, walk north on Sunset to parking lot K (opposite the Grad House). The Biology Building is located on the west side of lot K. Walk down the ramp and knock on the classroom window (immediately to the right of the door). The classroom will hold 20 people. Please call (253-3000 extension 2717) by Friday, February 20th if you are interested in attending.

February 29 - ECFNC Winter Excursion – Enjoy an afternoon exploring the City of Detroit's Belle Isle Aquarium and the nearby Conservatory which has a fine collection of plants from around the world. Meet at the Greater Essex County and Windsor District School Board's parking lot at 451 Park Street East at 1:45 p.m. We will be able to car pool. Please bring U.S. cash as there is a small admission charge into the Aquarium of \$4.00 for adults and \$3.00 for seniors.

March 10 – ECFNC Annual General Meeting – The annual meeting is always a great way to catch up on ECFNC activities and perhaps join a committee that appeals to you. Elections for directors will be held. Entertainment will be provided by a series of knowledge testing nature quizzes.

Meet in the basement meeting room at the Windsor Family Credit Union, 2800 Tecumseh Road East at 7:30 p.m. We will meet everyone at the back entrance of the Credit Union to direct you to the elevator.

March 28 – ECFNC Winter Excursion - Cleanup on the Greenway – This cleanup will be first of three that the ECFNC has agreed to do during 2004 as part of our adoption of Greenway section. ECFNC's secretary JoAnn Grondin is the organizer for these outings to our ECFNC section of the Greenway which extends from the Town of Harrow east to the McCormick Sideroad. We will meet in Harrow at 2:00 p.m. where Walker Road crosses the Greenway just by Colio Wines. Bring work gloves and wear clothing that you don't mind soiling during the cleanup.

April 3 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Upcoming trips on April 17, May 1, 8, 15, 22. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1 or sign up for all 6 and receive a discount.

April 8 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Advanced Birding – Woodcocks and Owls - A serious birder's delight! An in-depth workshop where the identification and amazing life stories of our feathered birds will be revealed. Refreshments provided. 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.; Upcoming: Shorebirds - May 6, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Cost: \$13/night

April 14 - ECFNC Members Meeting – University of Windsor student Nick LaPointe will share his summer 2003 research project in the Detroit River with ECFNC members. Nick has provided a description of his talk: The objective of my study is to examine fish habitat associations in the Detroit River. Any species at risk found in the river were of particular interest. In order to determine these associations, we first determined substrates in less than 3 metres of water, between La Salle and Amherstburg. We then selected sites with uniform substrates of either mud, sand, gravel or weeds. Fish were then sampled using hoop nets, Windermere traps, seine nets and boat electrofishing. I will be discussing the fish caught, including species at risk and invasive species, as well as other interesting catches and sightings. Meet in the basement meeting room at the Windsor Family Credit Union, 2800 Tecumseh Road East at 7:30 p.m. We will meet everyone at the back entrance of the Credit Union to direct you to the elevator.

April 17 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Upcoming trips on May 1, 8, 15, 22. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1

Tuesday, April 20 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Friends of Ojibway Prairie Spring Cleanup - Refreshments provided. 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 25 – Earth Day at Ojibway Nature Centre - Fun for the entire family: Environmental exhibits, entertainment, children's activities, food and much more!! 12:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. All parking at Windsor Raceway with a free shuttle bus to Earth Day events.

April 28 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Weekend Day Birding at Pelee - Discover the most popular outdoor hobby in North America through a series of morning field trips at Point Pelee. Upcoming dates May 5, 12, 19. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. Cost: \$10/trip

May 1 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Upcoming trips on May 8, 15, 22. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1.

May 5 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Wildflowers at Spring Garden Natural Area - Learn how to identify and photograph those dazzling spring jewels. Each night will explore a different habitat at our newest city park. Meet at Titcombe Park on Malden Road. Woodland: May 5, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Prairie: May 26, 6:30 p.m -8:00 p.m. Cost: \$13/person/2 weeks

May 5 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Weekend Day Birding at Pelee - Discover the most popular outdoor hobby in North America through a series of morning field trips at Point Pelee. Upcoming dates May 12, 19. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. Cost: \$10/trip

May 6 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Advanced Birding – Shorebirds - A serious birder's delight! An in-depth workshop where the identification and amazing life stories of our featured birds will be revealed. Refreshments provided. Shorebirds: 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Cost: \$13/night

May 8 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Upcoming trips on May 15, 22. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1.

May 12 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Weekend Day Birding at Pelee - Discover the most popular outdoor hobby in North America through a series of morning field trips at Point Pelee. Upcoming dates May 12, 19. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. Cost: \$10/trip

May 12 - ECFNC Members Meeting – Guest speakers Jo Ann MacKenzie and Simon Liao will present a program entitled “Birding Taiwan.” JoAnn and Simon will be visiting Southwestern Ontario in May to enjoy the spring migration during which they are volunteering to speak to several groups including the Toronto Ornithological Club and the ECFNC. Jo Ann is past president of the British Columbia Field Ornithologists and Liao is Chairperson for the Asia District of BirdLife International and is the former president of the Wild Bird Society of Taiwan.

Meet in the basement meeting room at the Windsor Family Credit Union, 2800 Tecumseh Road East at 7:30 p.m. We will meet everyone at the back entrance of the Credit Union to direct you to the elevator.

Wednesday, May 12 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Big Day Birding - An intensive day of birding for people seeking 100 plus species of birds in a single day! Alternate upcoming date: Saturday, May 22 Time: 6:00 a.m. Cost: \$25/day

May 15 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Upcoming trip on May 22. Saturday morning field trips. Cost: \$13/1.

Saturday, May 15 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Native Plant Sale - Attract wildlife to your yard with flowers, trees and shrubs. Time: 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

May 19 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Weekend Day Birding at Pelee - Discover the most popular outdoor hobby in North America through a series of morning field trips at Point Pelee. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. Cost: \$10/trip

May 22 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Bird Migration - A series of field trips to observe the incredible variety of bird life which migrates through Southwestern Ontario. Saturday morning field trip. Cost: \$13/1.

Saturday, May 22 - Ojibway Nature Centre – Big Day Birding - An intensive day of birding for people seeking 100 plus species of birds in a single day! Time: 6:00 a.m. Cost: \$25/day

May 26 – Ojibway Nature Centre – Spring Wildflowers at Spring Garden Natural Area - Learn how to identify and photograph those dazzling spring jewels. Each night will explore a different habitat at our newest city park. Meet at Titcombe Park on Malden Road. Prairie wildflowers. 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. Cost: \$13/person/2 weeks

**Essex County Field Naturalists' Club
Membership Renewal**

Annual dues are due as of January 1, 2004.

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

Sustaining membership \$30.00 / year _____ Life membership \$500.00 / year _____

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ Province _____

Postal Code _____ Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

Make cheques payable to:

Essex County Field Naturalists' Club
Devonshire Mall P.O.
P. O. Box 23011
Windsor, Ontario N8X 5B5

Thank you for renewing your ECFNC membership!

