



The Egret

the Newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club

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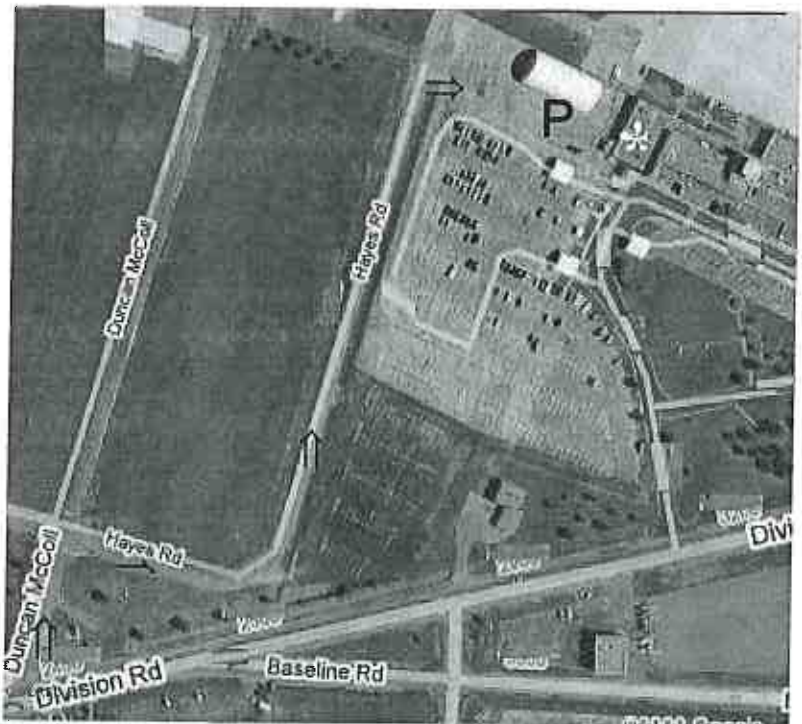
Reminder!

New Monthly Meeting Location!

Beginning September 2009 the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club will hold their monthly members' meeting at Windsor Airport's new community room.

This spacious and comfortable room is situated at the west end of the airport terminal building.

From Division Road (County Road 42) turn north on Duncan McColl Road (1st street west of airport terminal entrance) then turn right (east) on Hayes Road (1st right) and drive to the end. Park on south side of long white garage (P). Community room (*) is adjacent and east of this parking area.



About the Club ...

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club was incorporated in March 1985. We are a registered charitable organization which promotes the appreciation and conservation of our natural heritage. ECFNC provides the community opportunities to become acquainted with and understand our natural world through identification, maintenance and preservation of the natural areas within Essex County and surrounding regions. ECFNC is affiliated with Ontario Nature/Federation of Ontario Naturalists. *The Egret* is published quarterly. To receive information on the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club or to submit articles, letters, reports, etc., please write to:

**Essex County Field Naturalists'
Club**

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

Information

ECFNC website
www.ojibway.ca/ecfn.htm
Egret email
kcedar@city.windsor.on.ca
ECFNC fax # 519-839-4795

Ojibway Nature Centre
519-966-5852
Point Pelee National Park
519-322-5700
Essex Region Conservation Auth.
519-776-5209

ECFNC Contacts

President: Phil Roberts (519-776-8315)
Vice-President: Joe Parent (519-322-0004)
Secretary: Linda Menard-Watt (519-734-1879)
Treasurer: Teresa Austrin (519-322-0004)

Directors: Karen Cedar (519-966-5852), Denise Hartley (519-735-1926), Tom Hurst (519-839-4635), Dave Kraus (519-825-7491), Mike Malone (519-326-5193), Ron Muir (519-736-6507), Ian Naisbitt (519-735-2087), Gerry Waldron (519-736-1276)

Chairpersons/Liaisons:

Membership Secretary: Denise Hartley
Ontario Nature Liaison: JoAnn Grondin
ERCA Liaison: Phil Roberts/Tom Hurst
Carolina Woods Liaison: Ruth Junge
Point Pelee Liaison: Phil Roberts/Mike Malone
Bluebird Committee Chairman: Don Bissonnette
NHRP Seed Collection: Bruno Sfalcin
Special Events Coordinator: Karen Cedar
Essex County Stewardship Network Liaison: Linda Menard-Watt
Ojibway Liaison: Karen Cedar
Citizens Environment Alliance Liaison: Phil Roberts
Windsor Planning Advisory Comm. Liaison: Phil Roberts
Canada South Land Trust Liaison: Tom Hurst
Detroit River Canadian Cleanup Liaison: Phil Roberts/Ian Naisbitt

Committees:

Egret Editorial: Betty Learmouth, Karen Cedar
Speaker: ECFNC directors
Field Trip: JoAnn Grondin, Margaret Jennings
Heritage: JoAnn Grondin (coordinator), Margaret Jennings, Dave Kraus, Betty Learmouth, Muriel Kassimatis, Jim McAllister, Bruno Sfalcin, Gerry Waldron, Peg Wilkinson, Shirley Grondin, Cathy Lapain
Annual Dinner: Heritage & Special Events Committees
Little River Enhancement Group: Ian Naisbitt, Tom Henderson

Kayaking with Mike

By Karen Cedar
Photographs by Joan Walker

On the afternoon of Wednesday July 15, 12 ECFNC members anxiously waited by their phones. An exciting opportunity to go kayaking with Mike Malone of Pelee Wings Nature Store was planned for the evening. Unfortunately inclement weather was predicted and sure enough, the event was postponed. Mike reported that the water was very rough and not conducive to the fun experience he had planned for club members.

A rain date of Wednesday July 29 had been set and once again bad weather in Windsor made trip participants wary but Mike reported that the waters of Lake Erie were placid and conditions were perfect for our trip!

We all arrived at Pelee Wings by 6:00 pm and were loaded into our individual kayaks, instructed on paddling techniques, safety procedures and then launched off of Pelee Wings' sandy beach into Lake Erie. Mike Malone and Joan Walker were our guides.



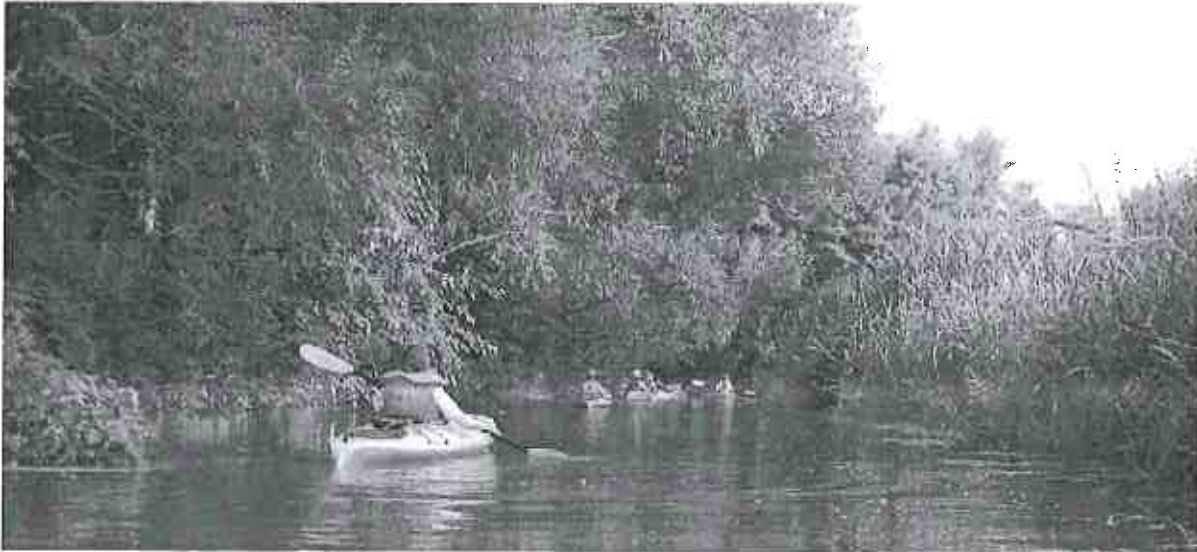
Everyone practiced moving their paddles and boats in the small bay off of the beach before setting off into the lake to find the mouth of Sturgeon Creek. Caspian Tern and several Forster's Terns as well as gulls and cormorants were seen from our boats.

Once in Sturgeon Creek, Mike led us to a tiny secluded pond adjacent to an area proposed for development. This little pond is a great place to see nesting birds. Then we headed up the creek across a large open pond with views of

Great Egrets, Great Blue Herons, a Belted Kingfisher, and lots of swallows. A Red-headed Woodpecker was heard calling from the dying tree-tops of green ash trees. The creek began to narrow with towering phragmites on either side changing to weeping willows and other riparian species including buttonbush. A green frog could be heard with its distinctive banjo twang. As we expertly weaved our way along the creek the sensation was one of being in a tropical wetland, far from Essex County ... had we paddled to South Carolina? Then the time came to turn around and begin the journey back to land as we now enjoyed a sunset cruise. Two of our members had lingered behind and had amazing looks at a large white-tailed deer! Kayaking is a great way to be unobtrusive and can result in incredible wildlife viewing opportunities.

The wind had risen slightly so there were some small rolls on the lake which allowed us to test our new kayaking skills as we navigated back to Pelee Wings' beach. We all landed safely and found our land legs again! We then helped put away the equipment and thanked Mike and Joan for the wonderful opportunity they had just given us.

Thanks again to Mike Malone for providing not only his expertise and time but also all of the equipment for this very special anniversary event!



The Flora of the City of Kawartha Lakes

Upcoming Guest Speaker: Anne Barbour

Please come out to our meeting on Wednesday October 14 for a special presentation with Anne Barbour, a transplanted ECFNC member! Anne has a passion for plants and photography and is happily indulging both hobbies in Kawartha Lakes. She writes:

“We have great subjects here: wildflowers, ferns, different trees, saprophytes, sedges (although I've pressed more than I've photographed). To give you an idea: 9 orchids so far, Indian Pipes, Pinesap, Fringed Polygala, Bishops' Cap, Mitrewort & Naked Mitrewort, 3-leaved Solomon's Seal, Sundew and Dewberry, Leatherleaf (in flower), Labrador tea, Bogbean, Pink Pyrola and Shinleaf, 21 ferns so far, Hobblebush, Spikenard (that pretend-shrub), 5 trilliums (including variants), Sarsaparilla, Indian Cucumber root, Rose-twisted stalk, Bloodroot, Starflower, Bluebead Lily, Pale Corydalis, and of course alvar plants, Indian paintbrush, Prairie smoke, Early Saxifrage, Field Chickweed, Balsam Ragwort, Upland white Goldenrod (used to be an aster), Harebell, Hairy Beardtongue, Prairie Cinquefoil, Shrubby Cinquefoil, Seneca Snakeroot, White Camas (leaves only because it's in the Little Bluestem Reserve & that can only be entered with a guide) and much as I'd like to, we can't forget invasives: Buckthorn and DSV (dog-strangling vine) are worse here than Garlic Mustard. But my best photo is Wild Ginseng - *Panax quinquefolia*, that I photographed not knowing what it was, but thinking, 'Mmm, that's a plant I don't know; its leaves look like horse-chestnut.' and 4 months later when I was going through my photos from the summer, and knew more about rare plants, I said 'oh my goodness!'”

Our Kawartha Field Naturalists have begun a 5 year project: City of Kawartha Lakes FLORA to inventory the plants that grow here, because very little of that has been done in our city (former Victoria County). We are collecting and pressing specimens for the ROM (one of our KFN members is a professional botanist who used to work there). Dale Leadbeater-she's leading a trip in the northern part of our city for the Field Botanists of Ontario in September. Other trips will also be in our city, in the Carden Twp at Cameron Ranch (a section is now open for public access all the time) and the new Little Bluestem Reserve.

For City of Kawartha Lakes FLORA, we invite private owners to let us inventory the plants on their properties, and so far have very good participation. There is a write-up on our website: www.kawarthafieldnaturalists.org and I will soon be giving photos from this summer's field work to our web guy. The Victoria Land and Water Stewardship Council gave us a grant of \$2700.00 to buy equipment so I will be making a presentation to them also this fall, making it fun, of course!"

Essex County Photographs, Early June 2009

By Betty Learmouth

Photographs by Jason Telasco

Local wildlife photographer Jason Telasco has kindly provided *The Egret* with a selection of photographs from early June 2009 in Essex County.

The Art of Jason Telasco
October 8 – November 8, 2009

Painted Feathers, Photographs,
Original Paintings

The Gibson Gallery
140 Richmond Street
Amherstburg, Ontario

www.gibsonartgallery.com

Thursday – Sunday
11:00 – 5:00



Holiday Beach C.A. – Moorhen (above), White Pelican (below)

Ambassador Bridge – adult Peregrine Falcon feeding immature male



Spring Excursion, Sunday March 2009

By Cathy Lapain

Four hardy ECFNC members showed up for the Spring Excursion at Ojibway Nature Centre. Perhaps the pending rainy weather kept most members inside by their cozy fireplaces! Hoping that a few more members would show up, we waited until approx. 2:10p.m. Before we left the parking lot Paul Desjardins, JoAnn Grondin, Margaret Jennings and I heard the chatter of a Belted Kingfisher. We then departed out on a self-guided tour starting off at the Pin Oak trail, dodging a few raindrops here and there. Sightings were a Black-capped Chickadee, Dark-eyed Junco, Downy Woodpecker, American Robin and we heard a Northern Cardinal and Blue Jay in the distance. As we went along Paul pointed out several tree species, including a good example of the damage done to an Ash tree by the Emerald Ash Borer. The rain decided to get a little harder but onward we went, sighting a pair of Phoebes feasting on whatever insects they could find. We were able to get several good looks at them. We then decided to cut our walk short, due to the increasing rain, and headed back towards the Nature Centre but not before getting several good looks at some Yellow-Crowned Kinglets flitting around in some brush. Many thanks to Paul for pointing out several tree species along the way.

River Canard Conservation Area, June 7, 2009

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Betty Learmouth

Nine enthusiastic ECFNC members joined Consulting Ecologist and ECFNC executive member Gerry Waldron for a hike at the River Canard Conservation Area on June 7, 2009. Everyone gathered in the parking lot of the C.A., joining Gerry for two hours and one half hours of exploration around the woodland and creek during which we observed and learned the names of a variety of sedges, identified a number of plant species, discovered several old growth trees as well as a grove of Kentucky Coffee Trees.

On the trail leading away from the parking lot, Gerry pointed out invasive phragmites and Multiflora Rose. A variety of sedges were seen along the trail which Gerry identified for us, providing some additional information on these little known plant species which are often noted in our natural areas but are not well known to naturalists. Gerry encouraged the group to learn the names of our sedges of which there are several hundred in eastern North America.

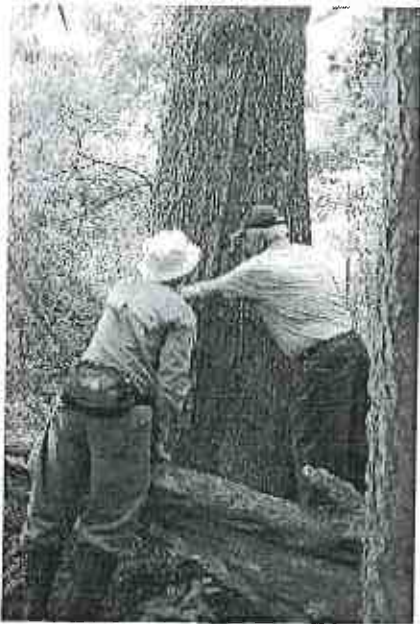
Lakeside Sedge (*Carex hyalinolepis*) is a robust sedge species that may be found in good numbers in damp sites. Foxtail Sedge (*Carex vulpinoidea*) is the most widely found of the North American sedges. *Scirpus atrovirens* is a bulrush found on almost any forest path. Graceful Sedge (*Carex gracillima*) is a rare species found in the River Canard watershed. Slender Sedge (*Carex tenera*) is a common species. On the other hand, Squarrose Sedge (*Carex squarrosa*) is a rare sedge found in Essex County woodlands including the Balkwill Woodland in the Town of Kingsville. *Carex pennsylvanica* is a small early flowering sedge that develops many leaves producing an attractive green carpet within the River Canard woodland.

Gerry remarked that until recently there were no common names for many of the rare sedges. A good lens is necessary to examine these plant species.

Some plant species seen along the trail edge included Small-flowered Agrimony, Canada Anemone, Blue-eyed Grass, the native iris (*Iris virginica*), Spring Avens (*Geum vernum*), Water Hemlock, Moneywort (an alien found in damp sites), Sensitive Fern, Wild Geranium, Black Snakeroot, Common Cinquefoil, Poison Ivy, Bedstraw (*Galium palustris*), Virginia Waterleaf, Hornwort, Wild Ginger, Mayapple, Wild Garlic, and the native nettle.

Gerry told us the River Canard Conservation Area was grazed when it was privately owned. This activity resulted in a depopulated understory lacking such species as White Trillium. But, as Gerry remarked, the understory is coming along.

Gerry showed the group a large White Oak around which Harbinger of Spring may be observed on the slight slope at the base of the White Oak. This species is notable as the first flowering plant species of the early spring in Essex County.



Henry Dreidger is assisted by Peggy Hurst as a large White Oak is measured.

Two large White Oaks were seen nearby which were measured by Henry Dreidger and Bill Balkwill. The first White Oak measured 127 inches in circumference with an estimate that it could be a metre across. The second White Oak which appeared to have suffered from two lightning strikes was found to be 118 inches in circumference.

Close to the two elderly White Oaks, Gerry located a partially alive Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*). This tree was first identified during an early ERCA plant survey in the 1970s by J.W. Johnston and Wayne Wannick. Gerry expressed amazement that the duo had found this particular isolated tree. The dogwood's trunk measured 28.5 inches in circumference below an old burr. Bill Balkwill stated the tree was hollow with an estimate that this tree could be one hundred years old.

Peggy Hurst called our attention to a "Poison Ivy tree." A Poison Ivy vine has enveloped a small dead tree, its extra large leaves giving the impression that the dead tree was in fact a living one.

Rather than retracing our way over the flooded trail, Gerry suggested we follow the creek as we made our way back to our starting point. As we walked along the creek's soft edge, Gerry showed us Lizard's-tail, an uncommon plant in Essex County with arrow shaped leaves. This plant is able to withstand the creek's fluctuating water levels but may not fare well with the ATVs that frequent the area. Here in Essex County, Lizard's-tail is nearing the northern limit of its range. The flowering stalk resembles a white tail with the tiny white blooms expected from mid to late summer.

Bushwacking back to our starting point, Gerry pointed out a Trumpet Vine growing in its native state which, except for Pelee Island, is uncommon in Essex County. Across the creek we could see three towering Kentucky Coffee Trees with their canopies emerging above the surrounding trees.

Gerry pointed out a Buttonbush and showed us a Crack Willow. The small branches of this medium sized willow species from Europe are barely attached to the parent tree as Gerry demonstrated. These branches float down stream where they may root.

Bird species observed during the walk included Turkey Vulture, Wood Peewee, House Wren and Tree Swallow. A Leopard Frog was observed close to the parking area.

Thank you to Gerry for an informative and enjoyable walk in the River Canard Conservation Area.

Midsummer Images from Walpole Island

By Betty Learmouth
Photographs by Rachel Powless

Rachel Powless and Carl Pascoe have had a busy 2009 summer on Walpole Island as they have undertaken hummingbird banding. They have enjoying the Island's prairies and the insects attracted to the prairie plants.



Yellow Lady's-slipper
(Pottawatomi Prairie)



Small White Lady's-slipper (Tri-angle Prairie)



Giant Swallowtail on Ironweed
(Tri-angle Prairie)

Fifteenth Ojibway Butterfly Count, July 4, 2009

By Betty Learmouth

Butterfly enthusiasts gathered at the Ojibway Nature Centre's parking lot on July 4, 2009 for the fifteenth Ojibway Butterfly Count. Some groups were already in the field such as designated counters who were out and about on the Ojibway Prairie. Those in the parking lot chose to accompany either Paul Pratt to the Spring Garden Prairie ANSI or Karen Cedar to Titcombe Road. The weather forecast called for a mix of sun and cloud with moderate temperatures.

By 9:50 a.m. the Titcombe Road group of Karen Cedar, Shirley Grondin, Betty Learmouth, Larry Onysko, and note taker Bonnie Ross, had tallied 25 Little Wood Satyrs flying above the vegetation along the abandoned roadway. A special treat were several Great Spangled Fritillaries seen about the roadway vegetation.

At 10:20 a.m. an Ebony Jewelwing was observed near the location where the power lines cross Titcombe Road. This large black handsome damselfly is an uncommon insect in Essex County which is more commonly seen in shaded environments with running water such as streams or rivers.

By 10:30 a.m. the group had reached the unmowed ball diamond at the intersection of Titcombe Road and Malden Road. The area was golden with a sedge, *Scirpus pendulus*, which was thigh high. The group was thrilled to see many Colicroot plants in bloom in the meadow. Colicroot is a Species at Risk (SAR) which is now protected at this site as mowing has ceased. Karen told us the ownership of the site is unclear, either the Province of Ontario or the City of Windsor.



Butterfly counters from left to right: Shirley Grondin, Karen Cedar, Bonnie Ross, Betty Learmouth
Photography by Larry Onysko

Several in the group had read The Windsor Star's "Letters to the Editor," for July 4, 2009, remarking on a particular letter written by David A. Coyle of Apex, North Carolina. Mr. Coyle wrote:

"I recently had the opportunity to visit Windsor after having been away for many years.

I was impressed by how good the city looks.

Intentional or not, your urban naturalization project is wonderful, bringing life, colour and nature back into spaces that were sterile, chemical-laden monocultures.

Eliminating the noise pollution from mowers, chemical waste from fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides, the savings by not running small motors are probably too great to even put a dollar value on.

In the era where everyone talks about doing something and most places pay only lip service to transforming our environment for the better, Windsor is doing something significant and meaningful.

Instead of a sad urban meadow segregated and lonely in some derelict corner of a former forgotten public space, you've transformed the city and have set a positive example to all other communities, everywhere.

I don't usually look forward to my trips to Windsor, but now I do."

Back on Titcombe Road, the group was treated to the sight of a Viceroy and a Mourning Cloak at 11:45 a.m., both resting on the roadway. Other butterfly species encountered were Common Wood Nymph, European Skipper, Northern Broken-Dash, a single Cabbage White and Pearl Crescent species.

After completing the Titcombe Road walk, the group hiked to the back of Ojibway Park to search for other butterfly species in the area where the Wild Lupine is found. Here we were fortunate to find five Eastern Tailed-Blue to add to our morning's count.

Our group joined with other butterfly counters for lunch in the Ojibway Nature Centre's picnic shelter. The group that had tallied species in the Spring Garden ANSI were excited for the discovery of a 'Northern' Oak Hairstreak, a new species for the count and a new species to be observed by many in the Spring Garden group. Minutes prior to seeing this species the Spring Garden group had reviewed its field marks, which was quite remarkable. Butterfly enthusiast Jeff Larson obtained a photograph of the butterfly, admitting that he was quite shaky while photographing the 'Northern' Oak Hairstreak.



Northern Oak Hairstreak
Photograph by Jeff Larson

Lunch for the count was catered by Deb Waugh which was enjoyed by 14 observers. Thank you to the Friends of Ojibway Prairie for making lunch arrangements.

The following is the summary of the count provided by compiler Paul Pratt to the North America Butterfly Association:

Region 22 (Eastern Canada including New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Quebec)
1. Windsor, ON: Year: 15; Location 42°14' North, 82°58' West, centre at UTM grid reference 378 778 on Walker Road 1 km N of Hwy. 3. See 1994 report for habitats.
04 July 2009: 0830-1630 hrs. sun AM 10%, PM 10%; 65-75°F; wind 0-6 mi/hr.
14 observers in 3 parties

Total party-hours 13.5; total party-miles on foot 15

Observers: M. Calder, K. Cedar, P. DesJardins, S. Greidanus, S. Grondin, J. Larson, B. Learmouth, K. Lesperance, K. Newman, L. Onysko, P. Pratt, P. Renaud, B. Ross, I. Woodfield

Black Swallowtail 1; Eastern Swallowtail 4; Spicebush Swallowtail 3; Cabbage White 46; Clouded Sulphur 22; Orange Sulfur 22; Coral Hairstreak 8; Acadian Hairstreak 1; Edwards' Hairstreak 19; Banded Hairstreak 14; Hickory Hairstreak 141; Striped Hairstreak 15; 1. 'Northern' Oak Hairstreak 1; Eastern Tailed-Blue 30; 'Summer' Spring Azure 6;

Great Spangled Fritillary 24; Silvery Checkerspot 32; Pearl Crescent 8; Northern Crescent 5; Question Mark 2; Eastern Comma 5; Mourning Cloak 9; American Lady 1; Red-spotted Purple 1; Viceroy 14; Northern-Pearly-eye 19; Eyed Brown 1; Appalachian Brown 6; Little Wood Satyr 193; Common Wood Nymph 87; Monarch 6;

Silver-spotted Skipper 32; Southern Cloudywing 4; Northern Cloudywing 8; Columbine Duskywing 1; Wild Indigo Duskywing; Least Skipper 12; European Skipper 161; Peck's Skipper; Tawny-edged Skipper 10; Crossline Skipper 7; Northern Broken-Dash 87; Little Glassywing 38; Delaware Skipper 15; Hobomok Skipper 20; Black Dash 1; Dun Skipper 1.

Unidentified: grass-skippers 4; Phyciodes 1

Total 47 species, 1154 individuals

Field Notes: 1. one prior record for "count week," photographed by Jeff Larson. Giant Swallowtail seen on July 5, but missed on count day.

Ojibway Provincial Prairie Walk, June 10, 2009

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Betty Learmouth

On June 10, 2009 twenty-one ECFNC friends and members meet in the Ojibway Nature Centre's parking lot where Karen Cedar kindly distributed the June issue of *The Egret*. Chief naturalist Paul Pratt then lead the group assisted by Karen Cedar on an evening walk through the Ojibway Provincial Prairie Nature Reserve where we enjoyed numerous prairie plant and bird species under pleasant late spring evening conditions.

As the group departed from Ojibway Park, blooms on a Tulip Tree were noted. Tom Hurst held down a branch allowing photographers to obtain close-ups of a colourful white and orange blossom. Paul Pratt noted that Juneberries, also known as Saskatoon berries, were almost ripe. American Robins and Cedar Waxwings enjoy this food source.

Paul Pratt announced that an Inornate Ringlet has been observed on the Ojibway Prairie during the previous week. This butterfly species was seen on the Gnatchio's Trail's southern section at the Twin Oaks Industrial Park last year by ECFNC member Paul DesJardins and was fully expected to appear at Ojibway Park this year. This particular species has been slowly creeping southward as it expands its range from its more northerly habitat.

As the group walked along Titcombe Road, Paul Pratt pointed out several grasses along the roadside including Timothy, Orchard Grass and Smooth Brome. These introduced grass species are cool season grasses which operate well under cool weather as experienced in Essex County over the last few weeks. Our lawn grasses are cool weather grasses.

In contrast, our native prairie grasses begin to grow with warm weather in mid July. Paul showed us patches of Indian Grass along Titcombe Road which would gain in height in a few weeks time. We then entered the prairie at the Titcombe Road entrance near the power lines.

Paul told us that on Saturday, April 11, 2009, 85 acres of the Ojibway Prairie were burned in a fire that ranged from Titcombe Road across the Ojibway Provincial Prairie Nature Reserve. This fire was hot enough to kill small shrubs including Prairie Willow and sumac.

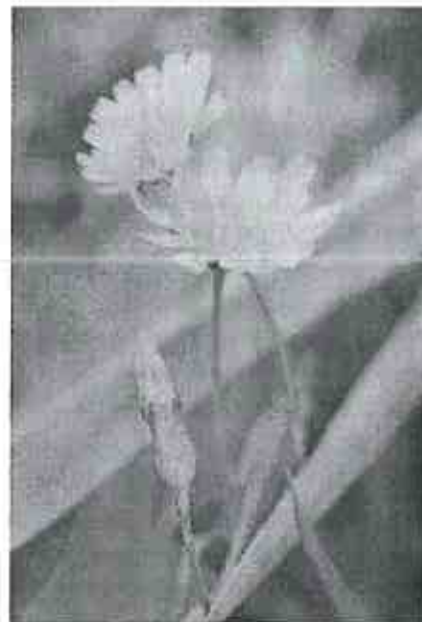
A walk participant inquired regarding the incidence of chiggers on the prairie. Paul replied that chiggers may be expected by late June. Ojibway Nature Centre staff member Karen Cedar was wearing a pair of colourful knee high rubber boots as protection against chigger bites which can be extremely itchy and uncomfortable for several days.

Dog ticks are also found on our prairies. Paul told us of an excursion to Walpole Island which was attended by Allen Woodliffe, Karen Cedar and Paul. The three naturalists conducted an experiment to determine if a visitor's position in the walk through the prairie made a difference with regard to the numbers of ticks which may be found on one's clothing after a prairie visit. Allen reported 100 ticks as the leader of the file while Paul reported 53 ticks from his position directly behind the leader. Karen as the third person in the file, reported just 7 ticks. It would appear from this small sampling that ticks take the first opportunity to drop upon a potential victim.

Paul pointed to several plants along the trail including asparagus and Wild Indigo which is the food source for the Wild Indigo Dusty Wing skipper. A blue dye may be obtained from the roots of Wild Indigo. We observed the creamy orange blooms of Two-flowered Cynthia from which a brown dye may be obtained from its roots. The golden blossoms of Hoary Puccoon were noted.

Ant mounds may be seen from the trail that leads into the Ojibway Provincial Prairie Nature Reserve. Paul told us that three different kinds of mound building ants live on the Ojibway Prairie.

Other plant species observed along the trail included a Panicum grass species, Yellow Stargrass, Blue-eyed Grass which is not a grass but an iris, the leaves of Tall Ironweed, blooms of Canada Anemone, Flowering Spurge, Virginia Mountain Mint, Spreading Dogbane, Daisy Fleabane, Royal Fern, Gray Dogwood, and Flat-topped Aster.



Two-flowered Cynthia

Paul commented that the small gnarled oaks we see scattered over the prairie may actually be very old. Fire knocks back the woody vegetation on the prairie but root systems persist and may be massive. Ideally a burn should be held on some part of the prairie on a yearly basis or every year for three years, especially if the prairie is shrubby. This year's accidental burn was the first fire in six years on the Ojibway Prairie. Conditions have not been optimum for a burn during the past few years.

A number of bird species were heard or seen during the walk including Green Heron, Eastern Screech-Owl (heard), Common Nighthawk (heard and seen), Eastern Wood-Pewee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak (two males), Blue Jay, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Indigo Bunting (singing in a Black Oak), Eastern Towhee, Field Sparrow and Orchard Oriole.

The single Common Nighthawk was first detected as it called from a mature Black Oak in the savanna near the trail which meanders to the first entrance to the Prairie Reserve. With his binoculars Paul Pratt searched the limbs of the tree for the bird which was likely resting lengthwise on a high limb. At 9:04 p.m., as dusk was descending, the bird flew overhead from its roost in the Black Oak. Paul commented that the Common Nighthawk is a member of the Goatsucker Family.

The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behaviour says this about Nighthawks and Nightjars: Nighthawks and nightjars are superficially similar, medium-size crepuscular or nocturnal birds whose presence and identity are best revealed by voice. These birds are collectively referred to as "goatsuckers," after the old erroneous belief that they would fly into barns at night and suck dry the teats of goats. Goatsuckers are typically dark, cryptically coloured, and intricately patterned. They are outwardly similar to owls or perhaps small hawks but are easily distinguished by their flight patterns, face and head shape, short legs, and horizontal stance. Goatsuckers live in forests, savannas, beach and desert shrub, and cities, at elevations from sea level or below to about 12,000 feet (3,600 m.)

Reference:

The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behaviour. New York: Knopf, 2001. p. 348-352.

City of Windsor Naturalization Update

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Betty Learmouth

CBC broadcaster Tony Doucet, and host of "The Early Shift" program, interviewed City of Windsor naturalist Paul Pratt on July 30, 2009 with regard to naturalization of City of Windsor lands.

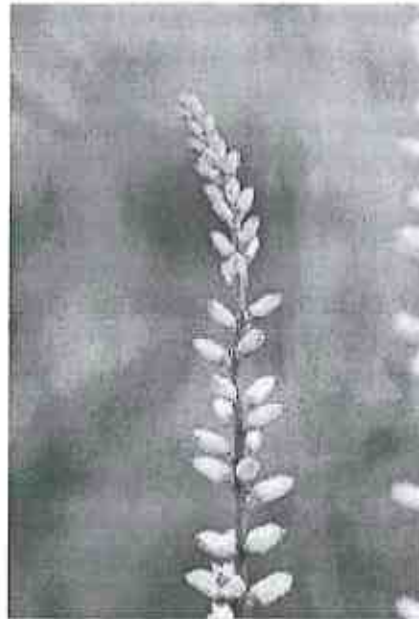
Paul indicated that naturalization would occur within Malden Park, one of the largest parks within the City of Windsor supporting the highest elevation in Essex County. This park features large hills which will be left as grasslands. During the past fifteen weeks, American Kestrels have been noticed as they hunted over the open slopes. Other wildlife spotted has included Groundhogs and Red Foxes.

Another success from the lack of mowing in the City of Windsor has been the discovery of a number of Colicroot (prairie wildflower) which were found in the back field of a ball diamond in Titcombe Park. These 600 plants are protected by the Endangered Species Act and are the second largest group in Canada.

Paul told Tony that the Ford Test Track will be returning to its role of well groomed soccer pitches. During the time the area was unmowed Paul made a visit, walking through the middle of the sixty acre site, observing eight male Bobolinks. The long time period without mowing allowed the birds to nest successfully.

Another grassland species observed were Savannah Sparrows. Grassland are becoming rare in Essex as few cattle and horses are pastured anymore.

Paul reported that no new areas will undergo naturalization along the river front.



Colicroot

Take a Hike, Barb

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Larry Onysko

When Barbara Peacock, hostess of CBC's afternoon program "CrossTown", announced that she and "Nature Guy" Phil Roberts would be hosting a hike at Point Pelee National Park on Saturday, July 25, 2009, there was a rush by CBC listeners to register for the event. The hike would take place rain or shine from the White Pine picnic area.

A steady downpour on the morning of July 25, 2009 did not stop over thirty participants who wished to celebrate Barbara's retirement from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. "Nature Guy" Phil Roberts welcomed everyone, noting that he and Barbara had worked together for fifteen years, or to be more exact, for fourteen years and four months. Most of their segments were radio broadcasts with some pieces for CBC television. Phil said the interviews gave a sense of "what was going on" on a seasonable basis. Now it was the turn of CrossTown listeners to send "Barb on a hike."

Phil explained that there would be three components to the morning's activity. First, there would be a recording of a single last piece with the "Nature Guy" for CrossTown to be broadcast on July 30, 2009. The second part of the event would be a hike to the Point Pelee cemetery. The third activity was for everyone to simply have fun.

Barbara set up her equipment to record the final piece, requesting that CBC listeners ask questions about some aspect of nature that they might have been wondering about.

In response to a question regarding successful breeding of Prothonotary Warblers this past season, no confirmation was known. Sarah Rupert, Point Pelee National Park Chief Interpreter, reported there were great sightings of a male Prothonotary at Point Pelee which called for a mate well into the season.

Barbara was asked by Rob Dunlop if she was ever frightened by anything. Barbara said she was not, although Phil suggested that the day the duo did a segment in a smelly marsh and ignited methane gas was notable. Phil commented that their eyebrows are just coming back now!

Marg Ross inquired if Barbara had ever met a Flying Squirrel. Barbara responded that she had not. Phil added that he had meet many Flying Squirrel researchers, but had only meet a Flying Squirrel once over the years. Sarah Rupert told the group that by luck she had seen two Flying Squirrels gliding over the road as she was leaving the Park late at night.

The coolest animals observed by Barbara were likely Bald Eagles although coyotes and hummingbirds rank right up there.

The "Nature Guy" segment of "CrossTown" began with a request by program producer Eric Rosenblum to bring a Red-tailed Hawk into the radio studio. The hawk made an impression by leaving a large white stain on the studio carpeting. There was a feeling that there could be fifteen years worth of interviews just waiting to happen!

Susan Ross wanted to know where all the Wild Turkeys are coming from. Susan's imitation of a turkey gobble was very well done, drawing peals of laughter. Phil responded to Susan's question by stating the eggs are vulnerable but once the birds are grown they live long lives.

Upon completion of the questions, Phil urged Barbara to go take a hike along with everyone.



Group gathered at cemetery.

The umbrellas came out and off we went to the cemetery. A lively discussion concerning Poison Ivy occurred as everyone looked at the lush vegetation along the trail.

Anders Path led us to the cemetery where Phil entertained us with tales of his experiences as a budding young naturalist. This was a favoured site when Phil was growing up. The thickets beside the old cemetery were habitat

for various bird species including Yellow-breasted Chat which were heard more often than they were seen. Phil remembers fondly an incident when a Peregrine Falcon chased a Blue Jay through the cemetery.

Everyone was invited to return for refreshments at the picnic shelter. Phil presented Barbara with useful gifts she was delighted to receive including a pair of hip waders and a dip net. Phil said he could have presented Barbara with an insect collecting bottle but suggested that Barbara's husband Lee could easily make one for Barbara. Barbara organized a draw for door prizes in the CBC tent which included CBC pens, CBC pins, CBC mugs with Solitudes tapes, various backpacks, and stuffed animals.

Phil concluded with a comment to Barbara of "thanks for all the memories." Everyone was reminded of the last "Nature Guy" interview to be held on July 30, 2009 with a fond farewell to Barbara on the occasion of her retirement in the CBC's big studio on Friday, July 31, 2009 between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

The locally produced afternoon program will return in September with a new name and theme song along with its new host Bob Steele. If listeners wish the "Nature Guy" to return, contact the CBC and let management know of your interest in programming.

Bat Night, August 2009

By Betty Learmouth

Teresa Austrin and Joe Parent welcomed Essex County Field Naturalists' Club friends and members to Bat Night at Teresa and Joe's rural residence in the Town of Leamington on the evening of August 22, 2009. For those who arrived early, Joe and Teresa provided a tasty BBQ along with a selection of delicious salads prepared by ECFNC members.



At 8:00 p.m. ECFNC President Phil Roberts arrived with a Red-tailed Hawk to provide an informative hawk talk to a group that now included a number of children and their parents who had enjoyed a program at Point Pelee that day and who had been directed by Point Pelee staff to Teresa and Joe's residence and Bat Night.

Photo of group imitating bat
by Joe Parent

The immature Red-tailed Hawk that Phil discussed was one trapped earlier at the Windsor Airport. Phil showed his audience how a hawk can successfully hunt prey, meanwhile keeping its head on the same plane as it pursues its prey. Visitors were fascinated to see this raptor close-up while they learned about its keen sight, its tongue, its talons and its feather perfect tail indicating an adequate supply of food as the young bird grew and developed in the nest this past nesting season.



Phil Roberts & Red-tailed Hawk by Larry Onysko

Red-tailed Hawk (above), Phil Roberts, Teresa Austrin & Red-tailed Hawk (below) by Brett Groves



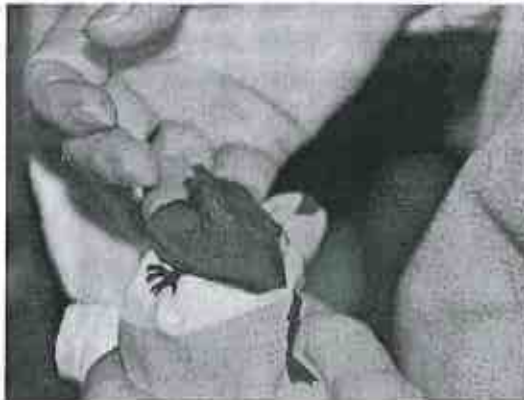
As twilight approached, Phil turned his attention to a discussion of bats. Everyone was alarmed to learn that there have been huge losses of bats due to White Nose Syndrome, a fungal growth that affects bats in a number of ways including causing loss of winter fat stores, pneumonia and the

disruption of hibernation and feeding cycles. Whole roosts have been affected, particularly in New York State as well as other states in Northeastern United States. As of this date, White Nose Syndrome has not been found in Ontario. Efforts to combat this serious disorder include closing caves to spelunkers and monitoring roosting sites.

After Phil's introductory talk, everyone moved to Teresa and Joe's front lawn, for a chance to see Big Brown Bats exit their day time roost. We observed four bats drop from an opening under the eaves and circle about the house. Phil commented that the bats would have a drink at a nearby water source before heading out to hunt. The bats we were observing were likely females which have raised young this past season. The males appear to roost in the large bat box in the back yard as the females raise young. Phil suggested that these bats may not migrate south, but may migrate northward to winter roosts. One bat was caught in a mist net which Karen Cedar carefully removed and wrapped in a towel so everyone could catch a glimpse of this small creature.



Big Brown Bat wing by Larry Onysko



Big Brown Bat tail and foot by Brett Groves

Thank you to Teresa and Joe for sharing their bats with us. Thank you to Phil for his comments and to Karen for her bat handling skills.

Excerpted from the Windsor Star Obituaries



SMITH, Gayle Paula (nee Staniszewski) Passed away peacefully on August 31, 2009 at Windsor Regional Hospital (Metropolitan Campus) aged 54, with Robert, her husband of 36 years, at her side. She was the daughter of Hon. Paul I. Staniszewski and Wanda Marie Boguslawska (d.1969) and sister of Camille Hankie, Vancouver, B.C., Michelle Bevan, Langley, B.C. and Andrea Charlton, Essex, ON.

She was a committed environmentalist who quietly and freely volunteered many years of her life to protecting animals and wildlife habitat in Essex County. She had assisted Erie Wildlife in the daily care of their injured animals as well as those she tended at her own home. She was on the Board of Directors of the Essex County Field Naturalists Club and participated in several important projects including the collection of indigenous native seeds many of which are now saplings ready to be planted. She joined early in the successful effort to protect Marshfield Woods, a provincially and globally significant wetland habitat in Essex County. She produced videos from the air showing the natural wildlife linkages and corridors in the county which need environmental protection. Gayle was also an amateur genealogist who used her skills at tracing ancestry for searching Ontario provincial archives for land grants, maps and ownership records of environmentally important areas in Essex County. Her documentary evidence was significant in major Ontario environmental law cases.

A tree will be planted at Heavenly Rest Cemetery in her memory, as well, hundreds of trees will be planted in Gayle's memory throughout Essex County by members of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club! We encourage you to plant a tree of your own in memory of a loved one. If you so desire, memorial donations by cheque may be made to: Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, Devonshire Mall P.O., P.O. Box 23011, Windsor, Ontario, N8X 5B5. www.walterdkellyfuneralhome.com

A Twinkle in Time: 400 Years of Astronomy

with Paul Pratt

JOIN THE ESSEX COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB
FOR THIS DAZZLING JOURNEY INTO SPACE
FOGOLAR FURLAN CLUB
UDINE HALL
1800 E.C. ROW (N. SERVICE RD.) WINDSOR

November 7, 2009

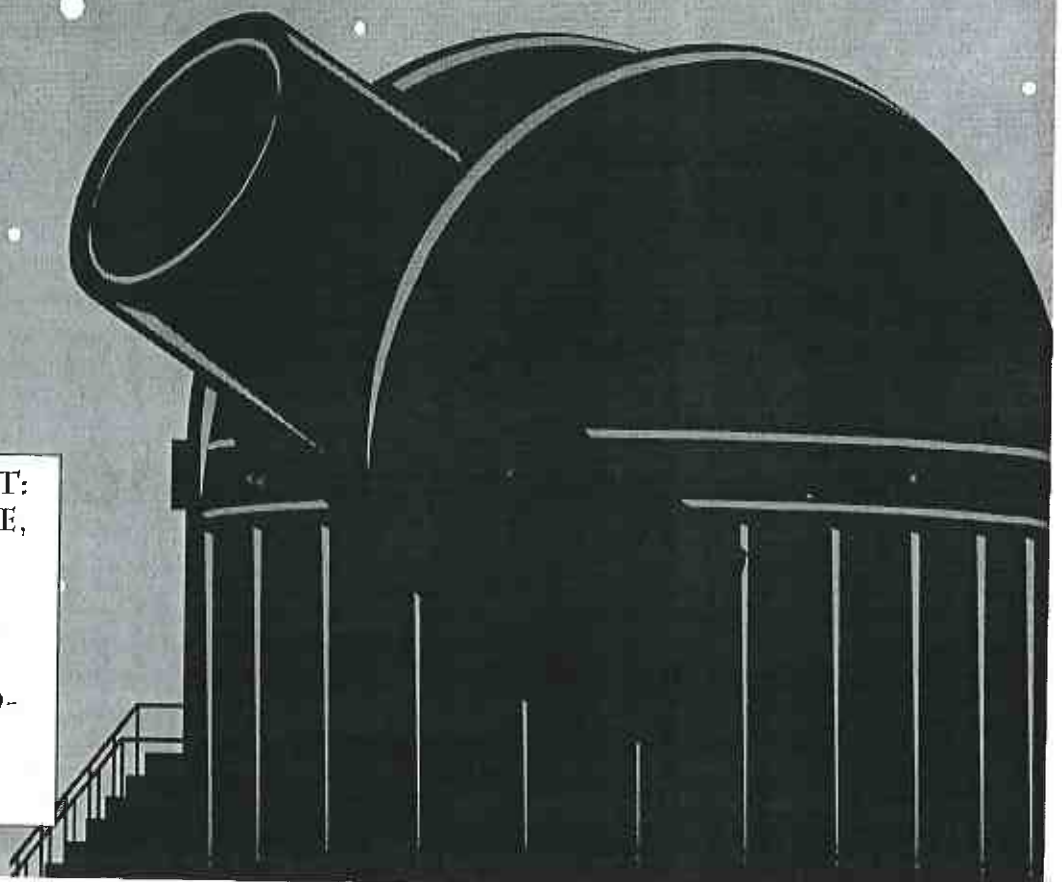
6:00PM COCKTAILS, 7:00 PM DINNER

GIANT SILENT AUCTION, DOOR PRIZES

Celebrate
ECFNC's
25th
Anniversary

2009 is the
International Year of
Astronomy

\$30 TICKETS AVAILABLE AT:
OJIBWAY NATURE CENTRE,
5200 MATCHETTE ROAD,
WINDSOR, 519-966-5852
PELEE WINGS NATURE
STORE, 636 POINT PELEE
DRIVE, LEAMINGTON, 519-
326-5193 AND JOANN
GRONDIN, 519-734-0056



25TH ANNIVERSARY HIGHLIGHTS

Over the past 25 years the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club has been involved in a wide variety of incredible events over and above our regular committees and activities. The following is just a sample:

Ontario Breeding Bird Atlases, Mammal Atlas, Tree Atlas, Herpetofaunal Atlas

World Series of Birding – 1993, 1995

10th anniversary party in September 1994 at Ojibway Park with a prairie hike, displays, barbeque and campfire.

Organization and hosting of 1997 Federation of Ontario Naturalists and Canadian Nature Federation Annual General Meeting and Conference

Assisting in the formation of: Canada South Land Trust, Backyard Habitat Program, Essex County Stewardship Network, Essex County Woodlot Owners Association

The Natural Habitat Restoration Program established local native seed collection and plant development in Essex County. This program restored many privately owned lands as well as landfill properties and distributed of hundreds of thousands of native tree and shrub seeds to Ontario tree nurseries with the result that some native species such as Kentucky Coffeetree went from rarity to ubiquity! T-shirts are still available and can be purchased at our December meeting!



Fundraising in 1999 for the purchase of property (now known as Shaughnessy Cohen Memorial Savannah) on Pelee Island:

Wings & Wine at Pelee Island Winery with dinner, wine tasting and guest speaker Tom Hince.

Project Grizzly Movie Night

Pelee Island Getaway with tours of Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve and Stone Road Alvar, wine tasting and lunch at Pelee Island Winery Pavilion.

Fundraising and campaigning to save natural areas in Essex County such as:

Heinz Bush, Ruscom Shores, Marshfield Woods, Brown's Road, Pelee Island.

Events to raise monies for conservation of lands have included yearly bake sales and the annual auction at the annual dinner as well as the Festival of Hawks food concession.



ECFNC Field Trip to River Canard

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club: A Short History

(with excerpts from The Egret Vol. 1 No. 1)

On January 31, 1984 the first organizational meeting of the club took place with a dozen people in attendance. The next several meetings were extremely productive and resulted in a constitution, fee structure, posters, information pamphlet, name for the club, field trip schedule, agenda for a public meeting and plans for incorporation and application for charitable status.

The only difficulty seem to be settling on a name for the newsletter!

The very well-attended first public meeting on April 11th was held at the Windsor Public Library. Tom Hince showed slides of Point Pelee and provided a tutorial on owls.

By June membership had reached 75.

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club was incorporated in 1984-5 with the following directors:

James McAllister, Peter Bondy, Beverly Christianson, Thomas Hince, Michael Oldham, Barbara Ouellette, John Pilkington, Paul Pratt, Ralph Thomas, Wayne Wannick, and Alan Wormington.

What an amazing achievement!

25 Years of Annual Dinners

- 1985: First dinner with Dick Benoit of the Holiday Beach Migration Observatory who spoke on hawk migration.
- 1986: Bob Graham - Point Pelee National Park
- 1987: Mary Gartshore - Environmentally significant areas in Haldimand Norfolk.
- 1988: Fred Case - North American terrestrial orchids.
- 1989: Brock Fenton - Bats
- 1990: Mary Ellen Foley - Owl Rehabilitation and Research Foundation
- 1991: Mike Cadman - Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas and the new mammal atlas.
- 1992: Robert Johnson- Conservation of reptiles and amphibians in Carolinian Canada
- 1993: Gerry Waldron – Natural Habitat Restoration in Essex County
- 1994: Tenth annual dinner with Bruce Duncan - Life History of the Opossum and its movement into Ontario
- 1995: Ron Tiessen – Pelee Island Heritage Centre
- 1996: Judy Yerkey – Detroit Peregrine Falcons
- 1997: Our annual dinner was a banquet at the Cleary as part of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' and Canadian Nature Federation's AGM and Conference during August 1997. The guest speaker was Bruce Runnels of The Nature Conservancy.
- 1998: Allen Chartier – Ruby-throated Hummingbird migration
- 1999: Fifteenth annual dinner with Jon McCracken – Prothonotary Warblers
- 2000: Paul Pratt – Eastern Australia's Wildlife
- 2001: Henrietta O'Neil – Point Pelee's human history as well as its "special place" status
- 2002: Ben Porchuk – Pelee Island and the Okanagan Valley
- 2003: Chip Weseloh – Bird research in Lake Erie's Western Basin and the Detroit River
- 2004: Twentieth annual dinner with Bruce Kershner – Old growth forest in Southern Ontario
- 2005: Dan Mennill – Understanding bird songs
- 2006: Brock Fenton – Listening in on the lives of bats
- 2007: Stephanie Doucet – How birds communicate with colour
- 2008: Tom Hince – Tanzania
- 2009: Twenty-fifth annual dinner with Paul Pratt – 400 years of astronomy

Hooray to Our Presidents!

Jim McAllister
 Deb Gorman Smith
 Peter Bondy
 Tom Hurst
 Dave Kraus
 Phil Roberts

E.C.F.N.C. Camping at Point Pelee National Park

(all the things we learned)

By Peggy Hurst

Back in the days of our youth, we would book the group campsite at PPNP for a weekend in April or May, whenever we could get it, and haul in our tents and food from the parking lot. We did this for several years in a row, anyone could join us, and we shared the site, divided into 4 areas, with scouts who slept on the ground and had a dining tent bigger than our house, and with birders from all over.

I learned that if I brought my wagon, we could haul a lot more stuff from our vehicles to wherever we were assigned. When we had finished preparing our respective meals, we had to haul everything edible back to our vehicles. We learned that the raccoons out there could open toolboxes (where Margaret McDonald stored her bread), and would go in the door of your tent looking for food, and then go out the side wall, empty handed. Like, who needs doors? We learned that they were so accustomed to people that they would take food out of your hand, whether you wanted to share or not.

I learned there was hydro in the picnic shelter, and one year I hauled in my microwave and heated up clam chowder. We learned that you could sit around a campfire and consume vast quantities of wine, and when we ran out, there was leftover wine from a wine and cheese gathering at the interpretive center. If you had a park employee sharing your campsite, this was valuable information. (I found out what it was like to get really intoxicated, at the ripe old age of 40....)

We found out that when other birding groups turned in early, the die hard partiers would join our group. When said partier was the science writer from the Globe and Mail, we received honourable mention on our 'sociability' in the next week's column.

We learned about how territorial cardinals are, when we had to cover every car side mirror in the parking lot with paper bags. We learned how much rain the site would hold, when we woke up floating on our air mattress in our tent. We learned that paper towels are no substitute for coffee filters.

We learned how to avoid stepping on the snails during nocturnal hikes to the beach to star gaze. We learned that flashlights weren't all that necessary, especially when there was a full moon. We learned how the showers had motion sensors to turn them on, although we didn't really want to shower then, and the hot water had yet to be turned on.

We learned the back trails in and out of the nature center. We learned that poison ivy is tiny and bright red in the spring, and is rampant around the camping area. I learned that I could see nearly as many birds if I sat and waited for them in the campsite, as I could if I dragged myself up early and went looking for them.

We learned how interesting and fun it was to camp with a varied group of individuals, when the nights are cold, and the sleeping bags are warm and the skies are dark, and the birds sing you awake in the morning. I'm thinking it may be time to do this again. Any takers?

A Very Brief Visit to Middle Island

Submitted by Betty Learmouth.

The following article appeared in Volume 7, Number 4 of The Egret, December 1990. The field excursion described was certainly a memorable one, especially for the eight naturalists who made "the round trip" to Middle Island.

Despite a forecast of high winds, thirteen naturalists boarded the Pelee Islander ferry on September 15, 1990 for an intended visit to Middle Island, an important Environmentally Sensitive Area in Lake Erie. As the ferry lurched toward Pelee Island, optimism for our visit to Middle Island somewhat diminished. Upon our arrival at Scudder, the van drivers, who were transporting us to Dick's Marina, were confident that we would be able to reach Middle Island as they said the waters south of Pelee Island were calm.

Our hopes for a Middle Island visit were again dashed by Fred Krestel, our fishing charter captain. Fred explained that although the lake was calm in the immediate area, once the fishing charter boat passed Fish Point, we would experience Lake Erie waves that could prevent landing on Middle Island. After some discussion, Fred decided that we could "have a look" and eight naturalists boarded the fishing charter boat.

We did reach Middle Island after sliding over waves that only Lake Erie can generate, and we all were transported to the weathered limestone slab shoreline via the tender. Fred left us to pick up the second group of naturalists and we settled down to lunch, mean while admiring our surroundings – hackberry trees behind us and wondrous fossils in the limestone. Within minutes, Fred returned and in a waterman's understated manner announced that the wind was "breezing up" and more trips were out of the question. Hurriedly we packed our lunches and made our way to the fishing charter for a roller coaster ride back to Pelee Island.

The vans transported us to the Fish Point Provincial Nature Preserve where we had an enjoyable walk through the woodland, admiring such plants as the Bur-cucumber and the Tall Bellflower. At least four naturalists had not visited Fish Point and they were delighted to experience this Carolinian woodland. Some naturalists explored the Lake Erie shoreline and the spit while others watched birds over the pond. A remarkable caterpillar resembling a bird dropping was observed as we left the woodland for the 4:00 p.m. ferry departure. The winds had diminished and our ferry ride home was relatively smooth after another enjoyable day exploring Essex County's unique natural heritage.



ECFNC 2001
Field Trip to
Chelsea Spa
Woods with Joe
Parent

Financial Commitment Fulfilled

The Preservation of 6 acres of Carolinian Natural Habitat known as the Heinz Bush
By Thomas Hurst

On Monday, November fifth, 2001 ECFNC President Dave Kraus and Friends of the Heinz Bush Chair Ruth Junge, along with "Friend" Erma Tiessen, presented the Town of Leamington with a cheque for \$47,199.73. This money was the result of many hours of fundraising by many individuals dedicated to the preservation of a rare natural habitat remnant known locally as the Heinz Bush. The Town of Leamington for its part has committed itself to preserving this site in its natural state and is now starting a process of public consultation to develop a management plan towards this end.

Early in 1992, Leamington residents were surprised to learn of a proposal to destroy the Heinz Bush as part of a new subdivision. Up until this time, the 10-acre bush was owned by the H.J.Heinz Company, which unofficially had allowed generations of town residents to enjoy the only remnant of natural habitat within town limits.

As a result, concerned citizens banded together to form the Friends of the Heinz Bush. The Friends then initiated a lobby and fundraising drive in order to preserve this rare resource. Many individuals aided the Friends' in their efforts, including children from Queen Elizabeth Elementary School who made presentations to council and students from St. Louis School who collected 70,000 pennies for the Bush.

Highlights of the campaign included a poster contest, a door-to-door solicitation of donations and a Heinz Bush lottery calendar. Dozens of elementary school children created very imaginative posters to lobby for preservation. Contest winners were awarded prizes donated by local merchants and the David Suzuki Foundation. To kickoff the fundraising campaign, the Heritage Committee of the ECFNC pledged \$4000, and the Citizen's Environment Alliance committed \$1000. In October and November of 1993, several hardy souls canvassed almost every residence in Leamington and Mersea Township in the cold and rain. The most effective vehicle for raising funds was the calendar drive in 1995. Local artist Harold Burton donated a specially created drawing for the calendar masthead, and twelve local businesses were sold advertising space to offset printing costs. At a cost of \$20, purchasers had a chance of winning a share of \$13,680 in cash prizes.

So many individuals were involved in this effort that if the author were to attempt to list them, he would most certainly commit a "George Bush Jr. - Canada faux-pas" and leave someone out. It must be noted, however, the Friends co-chairs, Ruth Junge and Bobby Clarke provided the inspiration, drive and management skills that made the campaign a success. Many Field Naturalists, including every Club Executive member of the early 90's, donated time and or money to the effort. In 1996, the ECFNC recognized Gerry Kaiser's Heinz Bush Calendar salesmanship with an award.

By 1994, the Catholic School Board agreed to preserve for posterity the portion of the Bush they had acquired for St. Michael School, except for a portion removed for sports fields, and the Town of Leamington committed to preserving the balance still held by the developer. In turn,

the Friends committed to raise \$35,000 to assist the Town in acquiring the remaining portion. After years of negotiation an agreement has been reached between the Town and the developer allowing the Friends to fulfill its commitment on November 5th.

Although the area of the Heinz Bush has shrunken over the years, the Town of Leamington is to be commended for responding to the desires of its citizens to integrate this piece of nature into its community for the enjoyment of future generations. We look forward to helping the Town devise a management plan for these woods, and encourage Council to look for other opportunities to incorporate natural habitat sanctuaries within their recently expanded borders.

John Moore – A Reminiscence

By Gerry Waldron

I don't remember the first time I met John Moore which is strange when you consider what a forceful character he was. It must have been in the early 80's when I was working at the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Harrow. The Research Station housed the Western Ontario Fruit Testing Association and at this time John was in his fruit growing stage (all good plant people go through these stages) so he would have been attending meetings and picking up trees from the fruit breeding program to test on his farm. This love of plants led him to be active in three horticultural societies, plus the Canadian Chestnut Council, the North American Fruit Explorers and I don't know how many other organizations. Additionally, he was a seminal member of a vast network of like-minded, plant-loving individuals. However his interests were wide ranging. For example, John and I shared an enthusiasm for beekeeping, although he persisted long after I'd given up in the face of new and increasingly virulent bee diseases.

As I became more involved with the Field Naturalists Club, of course I saw a lot more of John. He exhibited an irreverence I found refreshing. He seemed happily engaged with those aspects of natural history that allowed him to theorize and experiment – Bluebird nesting box design comes to mind but tree seedling shelters were also a big item. Recycling plastics and other waste material from our throwaway society factored largely in his experiments. With the formation of the Natural Habitat Restoration Program I saw more of John particularly during my years as NHRP Seed Collection Coordinator. It might be solely my personal perspective but I believe NHRP was the vehicle that allowed him to make his greatest contribution to our environment.

My measure of the man comes solely from his last decades. Of his earlier years I confess to knowing next to nothing. He had no formal education in the plant sciences that I am aware of and thus was free to theorize and experiment in a fashion that was highly original. His mind was agile, receptive and integrative. Had he chosen science as a career - probably the opportunity was not open to him - I don't doubt he would have been a brilliant researcher.

John was a boon travelling companion. Whether off to Chestnut Council meetings or in the pursuit of hard to procure Pawpaw cultivars, he was entertaining and stimulating, always ready to take an unscheduled side trip either conversationally or literally. It was while travelling that he might share a story, so I knew he was a toolmaker, that he had worked on machinery at Boblo including the engine of the 'Papoose' shuttle boat. His ability with tools and machinery is

legendary. That he seldom parted with his projects or their components, except as a generous gift, was evident from the accretion of clutter in his shop and farmyard.

The native plant movement brought John's interests in horticulture, propagation, natural history and proselytization together and forged them into a consuming passion that lasted for more than a decade right up to his death. There are plants – thousands and thousands of plants – and not just trees and shrubs, everywhere in our region and beyond that exist because of this passion. Quite a legacy in itself.

Of course, the contributions of an individual are diminished or amplified by those around them and here John had the great advantage to have for a wife the like-minded, supportive Betty who shuns the spotlight that John sought but without whom John's accomplishments would have been lessened.

In NHRP seed collection, John was, as in all else, inventive. I have a slide of him in full flight, collecting Red Cedar berries with both hands, using his inimitable (at least I never saw anyone else try it) bucket in teeth methodology. I can see in my mind's eye his special pole for collecting the pods of Kentucky Coffeetree swinging wildly above the traffic along Ouellette Avenue. On wet or blustery days he sustained the morale of the NHRP troops with the impressive repertoire of silly songs and bad poetry he had committed to memory.

As with many crusty people, the core was pure mush. This was a man who would not only give the shirt off his back, but if you had asked for them, his pants and socks too. In this he had Betty



John & Betty Moore receive ECFNC Outstanding Achievement Award 2000 from Tom Hurst

as co-conspirator. It was hard to come away from the Moore house without homemade bread (kneaded by yet another invention), jams, nuts, plants, eggs or the chickens themselves. Twice they plied me with home raised turkeys!

A week or so before John died he wanted to share a thought with me. Speech was difficult and frustrating for him but I understood that he had some Pawpaw seedlings that needed grafting in spring. He was worried they weren't being properly protected from the vicissitudes of outdoor life. I said I didn't know if my grafting abilities were up to the level of skill needed to assure success. When he responded I could see he was agitated because he hadn't got his idea across: "No, not for you to graft, for me." All of us who had John for a friend were able to partake of that enthusiasm for living things and life in general.

ECFNC Activities and Excursions, Sept '09 – Dec. '09

For further information concerning the ECFNC excursions, contact JoAnn Grondin (519-734-0056), or Margaret Jennings (519-250-0705). Let us know about your ideas for upcoming excursions. Consider volunteering as an excursion leader.



“Thank you” to those who have volunteered to lead an excursion.
We appreciate leaders sharing their time and expertise with others.

September 8 – November 24 – Ojibway Nature Centre Hiking Group. Join these naturalist led hikes as we actively explore our local natural areas. Tuesdays 10:00 – 11:00 am. Fee = \$47/12 weeks. Call Ojibway Nature Centre (519-966-5852) for details.

September 9 – **ECFNC Members Meeting** – Guest Speaker: Phil Roberts, Protection and Preservation of Ojibway Shores. **Meet in Windsor Airport Community Room at 7:30 pm**, County Road 42, Windsor.

September 10 - The Naturalized Habitat Network's Native Plant Propagation Workshop will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Essex County Civic Centre. This three hour seminar will outline all practical aspects of native seed collection, preparation and cultivation. Demonstrations and handouts will be provided. Cost is \$25 per person. To register, call Dan Bissonnette of The Naturalized Habitat Network at 519-259-2407.

September 13 – **ECFNC Excursion** – Club member Dave Kraus invites ECFNC members to join him for a walk at 2:00 pm through his acres of goldenrod and asters in flower and native prairie plants. We will also walk through mature woodland and restoration areas. Address: 1515 Mersea Rd. 7. From Windsor take Highway 3 east to Highway 77 (north of Leamington). Turn north (left) onto Highway 77. Go about 3 miles to Mersea Rd. 7. Turn east (left) onto Mersea Rd. 7 and go about 5 miles (through one stop sign) to #1515 on the north side of the road.



Dave Kraus pond

September 17 – Ojibway Nature Centre –Thrilling Thursday:
Save Endangered Species. Thursday evening 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Fee = \$6/adult, \$5/child. Call Ojibway Nature Centre for details (519-966-5852).

September 19 – Peche Island Day– Free shuttle boats will be available between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm to take visitors to Peche Island from Lakeview Marina. Guided tours of the island will also be available. ECFNC members are invited to help with tours as there will be an opportunity to learn about the natural heritage and wildlife of the island. To volunteer please call Ojibway Nature Centre 519-966-5852.

September 19 - 20 – Holiday Beach Hawk Festival. This main weekend for the Hawk Festival will include hawk watching from the tower, workshops, guided hikes, banding, etc. Our Blue Kestrel Café will be open on both Saturday and Sunday. Please call Claire McAllister, 519-254-1854, if you would like to help at the Café.

September 19 - The Naturalized Habitat Network's Annual Native Plant Sale. Join us with our region's best native plant growers who will gather at the Maidstone Recreation Centre. This one day event begins at 9:00 a.m. and will last until 1:00 p.m., rain or shine. The Centre is located on County Road 34, about 2 km. east of Walker Road, just south of #3 Highway. Call Dan Bissonnette at 519-259-2407 for more information.

September 26 – Windsor Centre – Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. All are welcome to attend this open house with opportunities to view celestial objects through a state of the art gigantic astronomy telescope. Visit rasewindsor.com for directions and more information.

October 10 – Canada South Land Trust – This year's fall walk will take place in David Ainslie's twenty-five acre woodland in the Town of Leamington (the former Mersea Township). Meet at 2:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served.
Directions: From Windsor, take County Road 46 to Comber. At the intersection with County Road 77, turn right and proceed south. Proceed through Staples and watch for Mersea Concession 10. Turn left and proceed east for 2.5 km till you see the woodland on the north side of the road. Note entrance and drive in. Closest house number is 1039.

October 12 – **Ojibway Nature Centre Fall Colour Festival**. Enjoy the amazing colours of fall with free activities and guided hikes. Visit the ECFNC display and say hello! Thanksgiving Day Monday, noon – 4:00 pm. Call Ojibway Nature Centre (519-966-5852) for details.

October 14 – **ECFNC Members Meeting** – Guest Speaker: Anne Barbour, The Flowers of the City of Kawartha Lakes. **Meet in Windsor Airport Community Room at 7:30 pm**, County Road 42, Windsor.

October 15 – Ojibway Nature Centre –Thrilling Thursday: Mushrooms & Digital Photography. Thursday evening 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Fee = \$6/adult. Call Ojibway Nature Centre for details (519-966-5852).

October 18 – **ECFNC Fall Excursion** – Join club member Ian Woodfield in a tour of Malden Park, a naturalized area with extensive trails, hills and ponds, including the highest point in Windsor. Meet at 2:00 pm at the Banquet Centre parking lot at 4200 Malden Road, Windsor.

October 22 – 23 – Carolinian Canada Forum 2009 – Exploring Collaboration Between Tourism, Recreation and Conservation. The Forum will be held at the Pelee Days Inn and Pt. Pelee National Park. For Forum Highlights – www.carolinian.org/Forum2009.htm and to register - www.carolinian.org.

October 24 – Windsor Centre – Royal Astronomical Society of Canada. All are welcome to attend this open house with opportunities to view celestial objects through a state of the art gigantic astronomy telescope. Visit rasewindsor.com for directions and more information.

November 7- Our 25th Annual Dinner – Guest Speaker - Paul Pratt

Topic - A Twinkle in Time: 400 Years of Astronomy

At the Fogolar Furlan Club – Udine Hall, 1800 North Service Road, Windsor

Doors open 6:00 pm. Dinner at 7:00 pm.

Please donate to our Silent Auction and/or door prizes. If possible, we would appreciate receiving your Silent Auction and Door Prize donations before the event. Call JoAnn Grondin, 519-734-0056, if you have any donations.

Tickets are \$30.00 each and are available at:

Pelee Wings Nature Store, 636 Point Pelee Drive, Leamington – 519-326-5193

Ojibway Nature Centre, 5200 Matchette, Windsor – 519-966-5852

JoAnn Grondin – 519-734-0056

November 19 – Ojibway Nature Centre –Thrilling Thursday: Out of this World Astronomy. Thursday evening 6:30 – 8:00 pm, Fee = \$6/adult, \$5/child. Call Ojibway (519-966-5852).

December 3 – Canada South Land Trust – Guest speaker Todd Pepper will discuss his birding adventure in Brazil during September 2009 which included visits to the Atlantic coastal forest, the Pantanal (a huge wetland complex) and the Cristiliano River tributary of the Amazon River. This program will begin at 7:30 p.m. in Room C of the Essex Civic Centre. A donation of \$20.00 is suggested with a charitable receipt to be issued. Please call Betty at 519-944-0825 to register for this event. Proceeds to the Land Trust’s Legacy Fund. Refreshments will be served.

December 9 – ECFNC Members Meeting – Members Night! Bring your slides, photos, stories, desserts, ECFNC memorabilia as we wrap up our 25th anniversary celebrations! **Meet in Windsor Airport Community Room at 7:30 pm**, County Road 42, Windsor.

**Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club
Membership Form**

Individual membership \$20.00 / year _____ Family membership \$25.00 / year _____
 Student (full-time) \$10.00 / year _____ Sustaining membership \$30.00 / year _____
 Life membership \$500.00 / year _____ (tax receipt eligible)

Name _____

Street _____ City _____

Province _____ Postal Code _____ Phone Number _____

E-mail _____ I wish to receive the Egret by email.

Make cheques payable to: **Essex County Field Naturalists’ Club**
 Devonshire Mall P.O., P. O. Box 23011, Windsor, Ontario N8X 5B5

Thank you!