



# The Egret

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

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### ECFNC Monthly Meetings

Except for our outdoor meetings in July and August, monthly members' meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm at Windsor Airport's new community room at the west end of the airport terminal building. From Division Road (County Road 42) turn north on Duncan McColl Road (1<sup>st</sup> street west of airport terminal entrance) then turn right (east) on Hayes Road (1<sup>st</sup> right) and drive to the end. Park on south side of long white garage. Community room is adjacent and east of this parking area.

## Annual Sturgeon Creek Kayak Trip

By Denise Hartley  
Photographs by Teresa Austrin

A small group of adventurous Field Naturalists set out the evening of July 21 to kayak Sturgeon Creek.

Mike Malone and Pelee Wings provided kayaks, equipment, and instruction in the finer points of kayaking. We left from Sturgeon Marina, and paddled leisurely up the creek as far as we could go. Along the way we enjoyed up close sightings of creek flora and fauna - huge flocks of blackbirds, muskrats swimming silently ahead of us, dragonflies floating overhead, and herons and egrets feeding on the mudflats. Twisted and sheared trees hanging over the creek banks were evidence of this summer's rough weather in the Leamington area.

As we drifted along, there was plenty of opportunity to visit and trade stories on summer trips and plans. Being Field Naturalists, there was also plenty of talk about ongoing environmental concerns in the county, like the Lake Erie wind farms proposal.

At the end of the evening, a few of us kayaked through the harbour to the entrance of the lake breakwall, where we sat and watched the sun set on Lake Erie's choppy waters. Then back to the dock to help load the boats onto the trailer for the return drive to Pelee Wings. The ever prepared Teresa and Joe handed out welcome refreshments.

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**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.  
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Windsor, Ontario N8X 5B5

**Information**

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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), Margaret Jennings (519-250-0705), Gerry Waldron (519-736-1276)

**Chairpersons/Liaisons:**

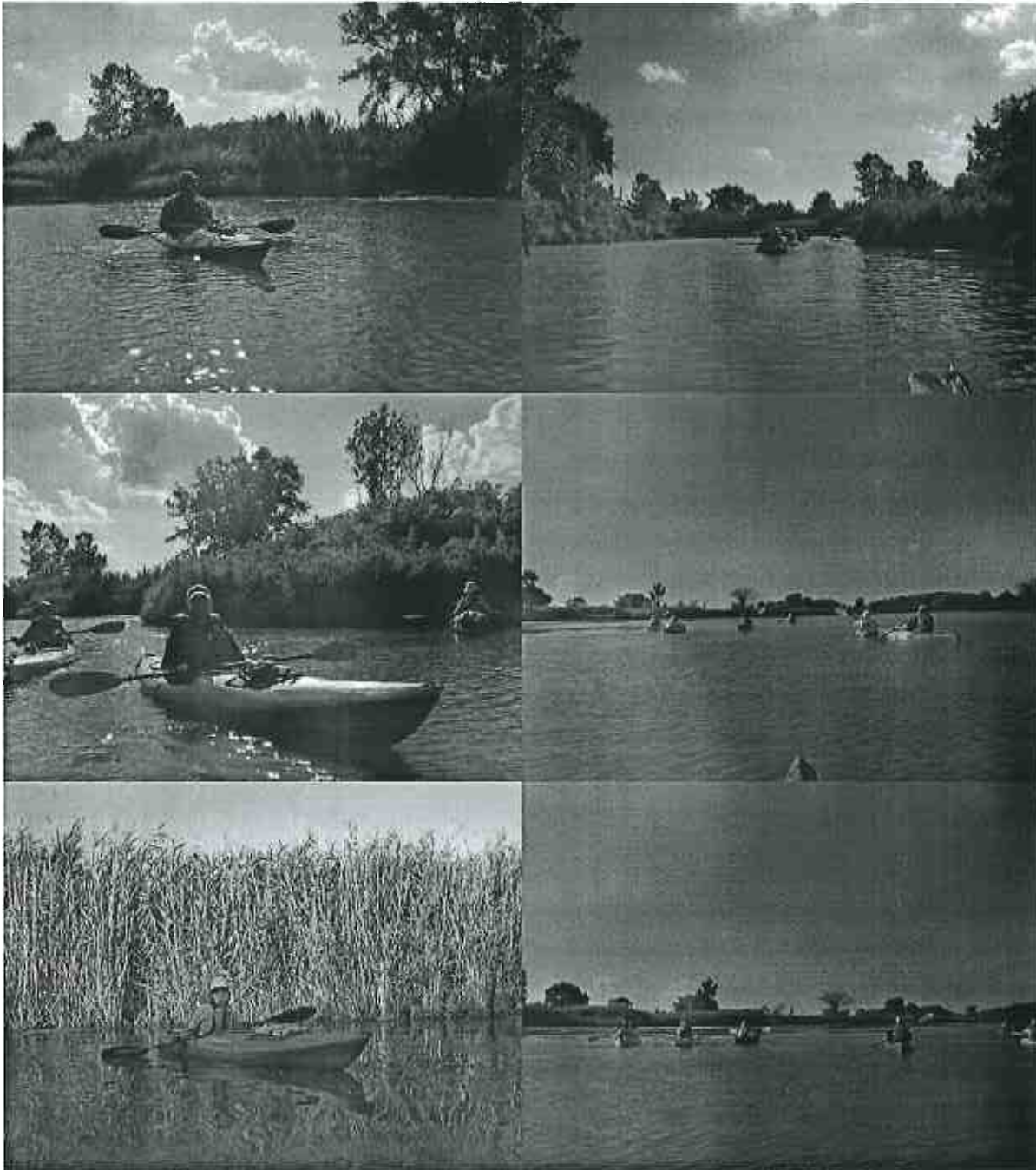
Membership Secretary: Denise Hartley  
Ontario Nature Liaison: JoAnn Grondin  
ERCA Liaison: Phil Roberts/Tom Hurst  
Carolina Woods Liaison: Ruth Junge  
Point Pelee Liaison: Phil Roberts/Mike Malone  
Bluebird Committee Chairman: Don Bissonnette  
NHRP Seed Collection: Bruno Sfalcin  
Special Events 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

**Annual Sturgeon Creek Kayak Trip (continued from page 1)**

Thanks to Mike and Pelee Wings for making the event possible. It was such a pleasant way to spend a hot summer evening, for novice and experienced kayakers alike.



**ECFNC members kayaking with close-ups of Mike Malone, Joe Parent, Lynda Corkum (top to bottom)**



**Exploring Black Oak Natural Heritage Park  
ECFNC Outdoor Meeting July 14, 2010**

By Ron Muir

Photograph by Karen Cedar

There were only five of us in number but we were mighty keen on learning about the Black Oak Site, given the temperature and humidity amounted to at least 40C. However, the mosquitoes were not bad. What a bonus! Karen Cedar led the group with daughter Leia.



ECFNC Members Anne Muir, Linda Menard-Watt, Ron Muir and Leia Nicoletti

Being native, the plants which we saw in this environment thrive and survive and in some cases are returning. Karen said that the trail where we walked had been groomed recently after several years of use by all terrain vehicles and road bikes, resulting in very rugged trail conditions and the destruction of some of the habitat. After some discussions between Paul Pratt, Karen and people using these vehicles, the conditions of the trails have improved significantly.

A prescribed burn took place this spring within the Oak Savannah and the abundance of flowering plants showed us that the habitat is responding well. In contrast, we observed another section of savannah that had not been burned and it was obvious that understory trees and shrubs have shaded out almost all of the flowers.

In the open field outside the savannah, which was formerly farmed, there is now evidence of a native seed bed regeneration, with many tallgrass prairie species present.

Of other interest, in the conversation were references to the proximity to Black Oak of the new plaza and border crossing bridge and a sense of how important the preservation of this natural space will be. Also, of special interest is the Field Naturalists ongoing role in the preservation and linkage of Ojibway Shores which is directly behind Black Oak.

Of course Leia represented the youngest generation in our group which will benefit from our efforts with the natural environment. I know she was listening very intently or was that sleeping? Nevertheless, I have no doubt she was thinking, " Good work people but be vigilant, there is much more to be done. "

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### Spring Garden Natural Area, July 27, 2010

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Betty Learmouth

Five hikers joined Ojibway Nature Centre staff person Tom Preney on July 27, 2010 for a hike through the Spring Garden Natural Area. The group met at the parking area of Titcombe and Malden Roads where the group then crossed Malden Road and walked along Elgin Lane where the group examined an interpretative sign related to the area. Tom remarked that the group would be looking for two species at risk during the walk, Dense Blazing Star and Fern-leaved False Foxglove.

Tom paused at the trail's edge to point out signs of the Emerald Ash Borer. A group of young Green Ash trees displayed cracked bark and D-shaped Emerald Ash Borer exit holes. The upper portions of each tree were leafless due to the infestation.

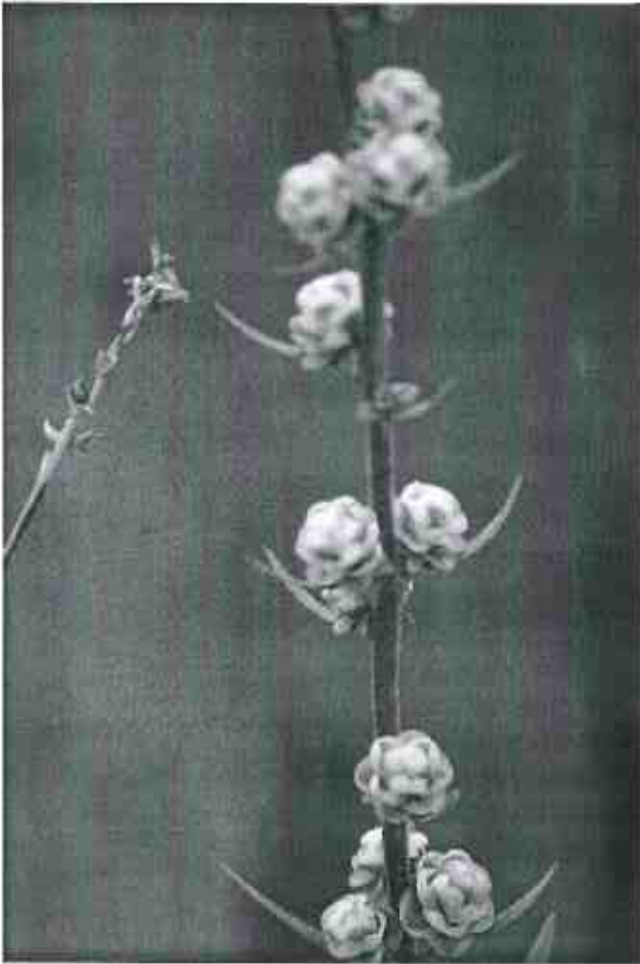
Along the trail, numbers of Ruby Meadowhawk dragonflies were noted as they flew about and rested on vegetation. The body of the male Ruby Meadowhawk is a brilliant red with clear wings while the female has an orange body and clear wings. An immature of this dragonfly species resembles the female.

Within the natural area, in an open area dominated by the prairie grass Big Bluestem, Tom identified tall stalks of Spotted Joe-Pye-Weed with its pink blossoms to which dragonflies are attracted. Another species of Joe-Pye-Weed, Sweet Joe-Pye-Weed may be seen behind the Ojibway Nature Centre, its pink flowers in a dome shape.

Along the trail, we noted Woodland Sunflower in bloom. Black Oaks along the trail provided shade which made the walk pleasant. The hikers entered a savannah just before the dry prairie habitat, searching here for the Fern-leaved False Foxglove without success. This species of false foxglove is rare and needs fire to stimulate its growth.

We stepped from the shady savannah to a sunny prairie. From the trail we had a view of the area which is a favourite for butterflyers during the butterfly census in early July. Butterflies present on the prairie on our visit included a Red-spotted Purple resting on Marsh Fern and two Tiger Swallowtails at a Buttonbush. Flowering plant species included Dense Blazing Star, Boneset,

Rough Blazing Star



Blue Vervain and the invasive Spotted Knapweed. Plant species noted in bud were Rough Blazing Star with its miniature cabbage like blooms, and Stiff-leaved Goldenrod.

Tom pointed out a tiny Monarch larvae on a Common Milkweed leaf. As we stood by the milkweed looking over the prairie, we observed an adult Monarch moving about the leaves of the Common Milkweed. As we watched, this butterfly touched the tip of her abdomen to the underside of several milkweed leaves. We realized she was laying her eggs which were mere white specs to our eyes.

On our return walk, Tom drew our attention to four colourful Dogbane Beetles which are his favourite beetle. As we completed our walk, Tom told us about a recent Eastern Foxsnake rescue in which he had assisted. A homeowner in the Ojibway area had called the centre with regard to a Foxsnake that had become entangled in plastic netting. This material is used to protect crops, or, as in this case, to prevent squirrels from digging

up and eating tulip bulbs. The Foxsnake had endured seven days of being wrapped in the netting while under a porch. Despite the summer heat and the rain, the snake had survived with some dehydration and a little damage to its scales, recuperating at the Ojibway Nature Center before its release.

Thank you to Tom for an enjoyable and informative walk to the Spring Garden Natural Area.

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## **Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve and Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park, July 20, 2010**

By Betty Learmouth  
Photograph by Betty Learmouth

Hikers joined Ojibway Nature Centre staff Tom Preney for a morning walk on July 20, 2010 within two areas of the Ojibway Prairie Remnants, the Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve and the Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park. Both natural heritage areas may be accessed from Titcombe Road, directly opposite the Ojibway Nature Centre's parking area.



The tallgrass prairie in mid July is a wondrous place to step into. Our group was not disappointed as prairie species bloomed all around us. The rich magenta hues of Tall Ironweed caught our eye as did the many pink blooms of Showy Tick Trefoil. Culver's Root with its showy white candelabra-like flower head bloomed along the trail. A prairie grass, Big Bluestem, towered above us along the trail. Off trail Early Goldenrod was beginning to flower, the many stalks of this species providing a golden haze in the prairie. Virginia Mountain Mint added more white to the colour mix along with dashes of pink from Spotted Joe-Pye-Weed and Dense Blazing Star. Gray-headed Coneflower was at the peak of its bloom displaying golden blossoms. The yellow flowers of Prairie Fringed Loosestrife were noted in a wet area along with Monkey Flower's blue flowers.



Smooth False Foxglove

often more than a metre in height; its large, yellow, multistemmed flower spikes certainly command attention. The false foxgloves are not edible and have no known medical value. The genus is named in honour of English herbalist John Gerarde: flava means yellow.”

During the walk around the pond at the Tallgrass Heritage Park, a Green Frog was heard calling which was joined by all other Green Frogs in the pond, creating an enjoyable chorus of croaks.

On the dry ridge we were impressed by the many plants of Smooth False Foxglove (*Gerardia flava* L.) which were in bud along with a few buds that had opened. Prairie enthusiast Larry Lamb in his publication *Plants of Carolinian Canada* had this to say about false foxgloves and Smooth False Foxgloves in particular: The false foxgloves are little known species to most field naturalists in Ontario. All three species are confined to one of Carolinian Canada's rarer habitats, oak-hickory savannah. The false foxgloves are parasitic on oak roots and require strong sunlight, hence the savannah affiliation. Another common name for them is oak leech.

After decades of fire suppression, many savannahs have grown in to become more forestlike. The false foxgloves and other sun-loving savannah associates, being displaced by shade-loving competitors struggle for survival. All three false foxgloves are at risk in Ontario.

The Smooth False Foxglove is the most common and showiest of the three. It is

Bird species observed or heard on the hike were Field Sparrow, Eastern Kingbird, Northern Flicker, Common Yellow-throat, Downy Woodpecker, Willow Flycatcher, Eastern Towhee, and an unidentified cuckoo species in flight.

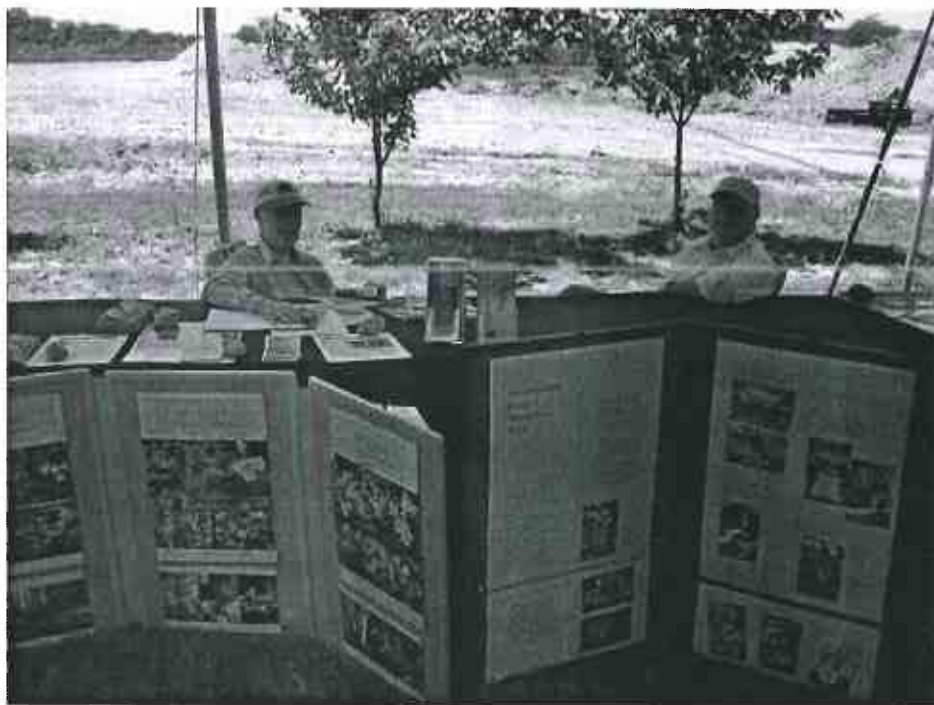
During the walk, everyone watched for bumblebees. Tom told the hikers that they should be on the alert for a particular bumblebee species at risk which has a distinctive and readily observed rusty tip to its abdomen. The Rusty-patched Bumblebee's only record is from the Pinery Provincial Park. We did not see the species at risk bumblebee but we did encounter other insects. Dragonflies observed were Common Whitetail, Ruby Meadowhawk and Spreadwing Dragonfly. Butterflies observed were Monarch, Wood Nymph, Black Swallowtail, Wild Indigo Dusky Wing, Common Sulphur, Viceroy, Eyed Brown, Pearl Crescent, Red-spotted Purple and Giant Swallowtail.

Thank you to Tom for sharing his knowledge of the Ojibway prairie, its birds, insects and plants.

References:

Lamb, Larry and Gail Rhynard. Plants of Carolinian Canada. Don Mills, ON: Federation of Ontario Naturalists, 1994.

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**Thank You ECFNC Members**  
**Betty Learmouth and Larry Onysko**  
**For promoting our Club June 19, 2010**  
**at the ECSN Summer Solstice at Sanson's Winery**



Photograph by Teresa Austrin



**Little River Hike, June 29, 2010**

By Betty Learmouth

Photographs by Betty Learmouth



Little River wetland

Hikers participating in the Ojibway Nature Centre's regular Tuesday morning hikes, met at Little River on June 29, 2010 to explore the area. During a nearly two hour hike, hikers enjoyed exploring a site that some had never visited before, while for others this was a return visit after an earlier visit in the spring.

Hike leader Tom Preney lead the group up the toboggan hill, along the trail toward the Bertha Bush, returning to the toboggan hill and crossing over the old Little River channel on the bridge. A variety of bird, butterfly, and dragonfly species were observed in this woodland habitat. The trail passed near the City of Windsor tree nursery and then to a water retention pond where Mallard Ducks were noted. Nearby were attractive pond restoration sites with a good expanse of water and stands of cattails.

On the trail we meet cyclists who lamented the disappearance of Mute Swans and their three cygnets from the ponds. Another couple mentioned the Pied-billed Grebe which was observed during spring courtship rituals.

A line of cottonwood trees was looked at carefully for the Bald Eagle nest which has been home to a pair of Bald Eagles for several years.

Tom mentioned that Osprey have been discovered nesting in the Town of Amherstburg this year. (From Front Road near Duff's Marina, take Duff Avenue to the tall tower and look for Osprey). This is a remarkable event as it is estimated that this species last nested in Essex County some one hundred years ago

At the second storm water retention pond, Tom commented that the turtles on basking logs were Red-eared Sliders and Midland Painted Turtles. The area around this pond has been planted with native plants including Gray-headed Coneflower and a species of indigo, White Wild Indigo, which is found in the mid west.

White Wild Indigo



Bird species observed were Canada Goose, Wood Duck, Mallard, Killdeer, Spotted Sandpiper, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Kingbird, Barn Swallow, House Wren, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Yellow Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Song Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird, and Red-winged Blackbird.

Butterfly species seen during the hike were Cabbage White, Clouded Sulphur, Orange Sulphur, Little Yellow (an uncommon species of note), Summer Azure, Great Spangled Fritillary, Pearl Crescent, Question Mark, Red Admiral, Eyed Brown, and Monarch.

Thank you to Tom for leading an enjoyable and informative hike at Little River.

## A Walk on the Greenway, June 13, 2010

Betty Learmouth

Photographs by Graham Brown



Spittlebug species

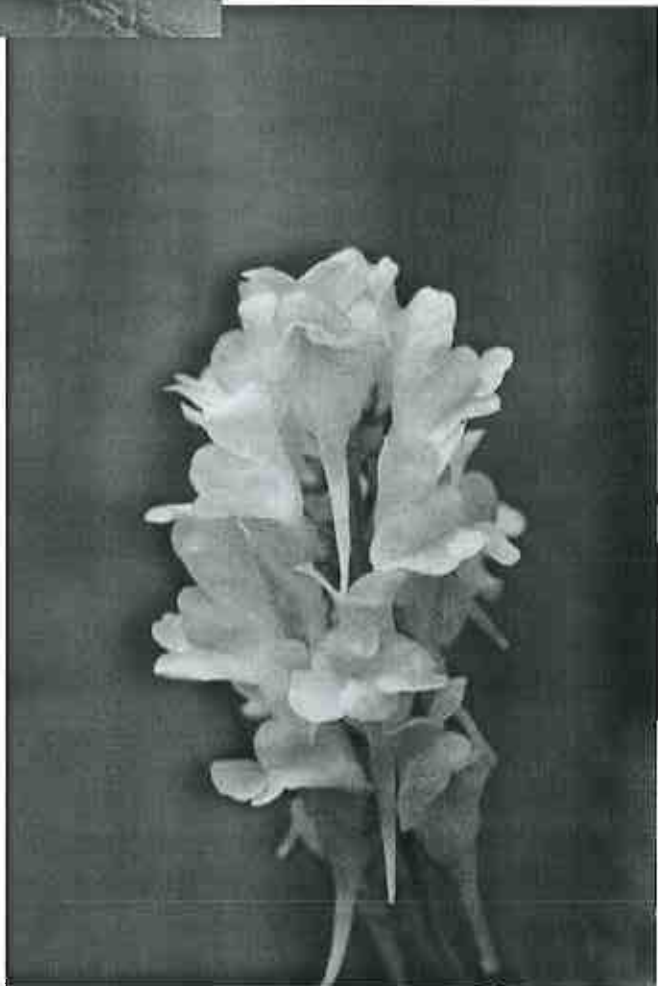
The parking lot has Common Hackberry and Rough-leaved Dogwood growing by the parking lot fence. Someone noted the white spittlebug foam on the limbs of the Common Hackberry which prompted Bev Wannick to examine the spittle foam more closely. Bev declared this species of spittlebug to be a different species from the goldenrod spittlebugs with which Bev is familiar. Both the coloration of the spittlebugs appeared to be different as well as the foam consistency.

Other trees in the parking area included several linden trees. A large Tree of Heaven had sent out suckers which were growing around the base of other trees in the parking area.

The Tree of Heaven reminded Kathy Lesperance that she had asked Gerry Waldron to investigate a large tree in her neighborhood near Riverside Drive East and Coronado which is growing on the boulevard. Gerry identified the tree as a male Osage Orange and declared it to be the largest individual of this species that he had seen.

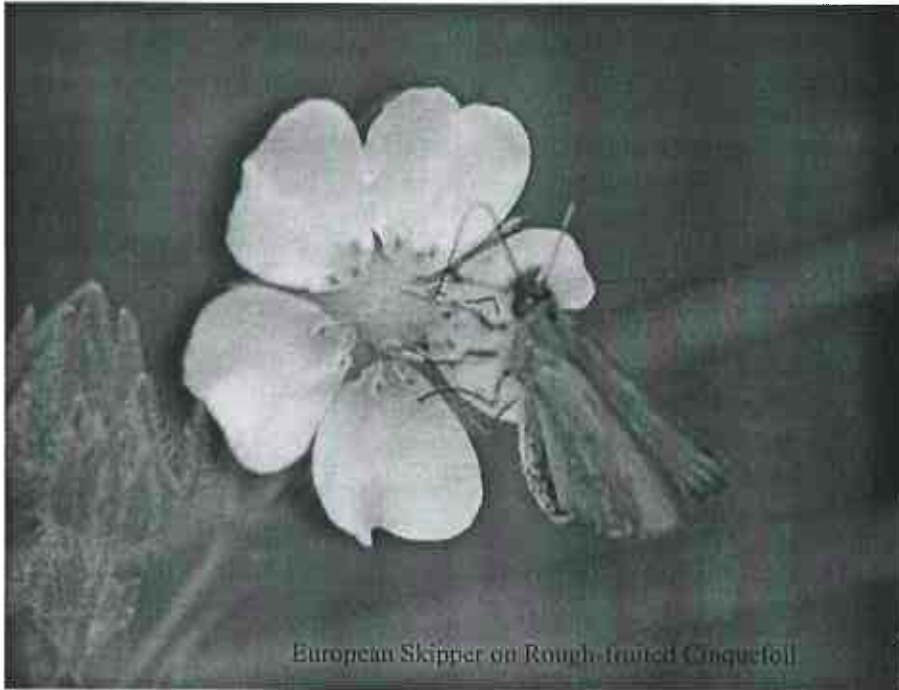
Seven ECFNC members and friends joined Wayne Wannick for a walk on the Chrysler Greenway on June 13, 2010. Wayne chose the section where the ECFNC had conducted its cleanup for several years, that is, the section to the east of the parking lot on Walker Road in Harrow.

Butter and eggs flower





The Greenway walk with Wayne was leisurely with a variety of tree species, flowering plants, butterflies and birds observed. Wayne pointed out a number of plant species, both native and non native growing along the Greenway edge. A summary of species observed is as follows: White Avens, Giant Ragweed, Prickly Ash, Black Locust, Narrow-leaved Plantain, American Hazelnut, Garlic Mustard, Poison Ivy, Field Horsetail, Rough-fruited Cinquefoil, Common Mullein, Bittersweet, Wild Potato-vine, White Mulberry, Wild Bergamot, Field Bindweed, Bladder Champion, Butterfly-weed, Black Medic, Burdock, Birdfoot Trefoil, Serviceberry,



European Skipper on Rough-fruited Cinquefoil

Motherwort, Sassafras, Yellow Goat's-beard, Catnip, Manitoba Maple, Butter-and-eggs, Fleabane sp., Hickory species, Yellow Sweet-clover, Dame's Rocket, Ground Cherry sp., Alfalfa, Common Milkweed, Elderberry, Purple Vetch, Hoary Alyssum, Smooth Sumac, Common Ragweed, Bouncing Bet, Prickly Ash.

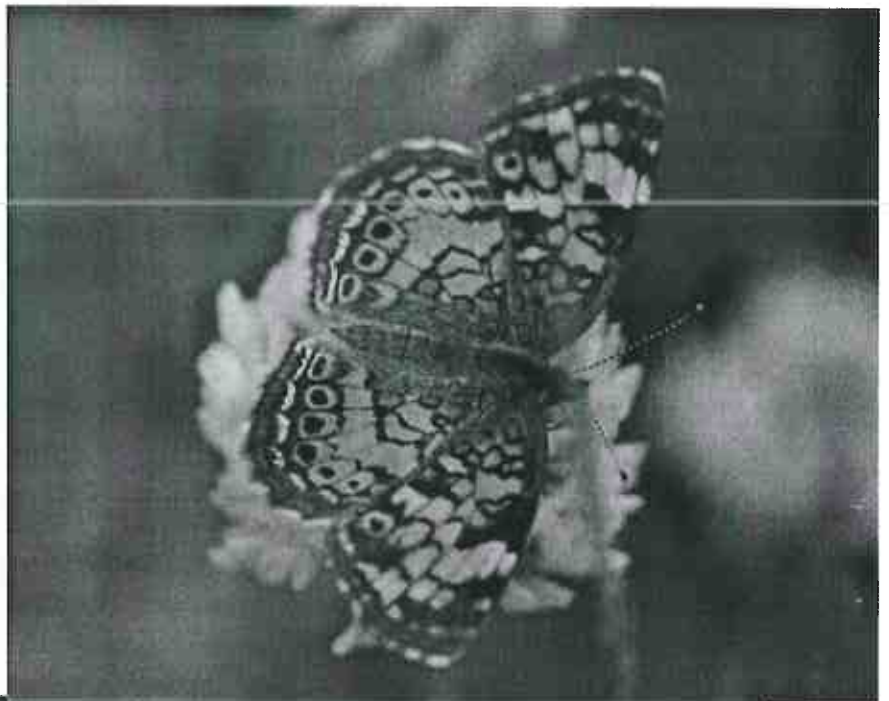
During the walk, a number of butterfly species were observed,

including Crescent species, Summer Azure, a single Black Swallowtail, Cabbage White, European Skipper, and a single Mourning Cloak. Blooms on a number of plants were attracting the butterflies. Both the Summer Azure and the European Skippers were seen frequently. The Mourning Cloak flew about several of the walk participants, attempting to land on their hats.

A number of bird species were observed during the walk including Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, Indigo Bunting, Barn Swallow, Tree Swallow, Grey Catbird, Yellow Warbler and Northern Oriole. The Indigo Bunting was a hit as a male sang from various tree tops in silhouette against the sky.

Thank you to Wayne for leading this enjoyable and informative outing.

Northern Pearl Crescent



**Black Oak Heritage Park, June 22, 2010**

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Betty Learmouth

Four hikers joined Ojibway Nature Centre's Chief Naturalist Paul Pratt on June 22, 2010 for a morning hike around the northern portion of Black Oak Heritage Park. The entrance way to the Park is off Broadway near the dog walk park. Paul drew the group's attention to the colourful Black Oak Heritage Park sign board provided by the Friends of the Ojibway Prairie.

Paul commented that the land we were walking across was quite barren as it had been the site of a ball diamond. Little mounds of soil were noted as we walked through the area. Paul pointed to a digger wasp "digging out" after an overnight rain. Paul informed the group that a little digger wasp has been discovered that preys upon the Emerald Ash Borer. Researchers have dug up blocks of dirt containing these digger wasps, then driven to sites where the wasps can hunt during the day. As digger wasps return to their tunnels, researchers can examine the wasps' prey, thus determining the Emerald Ash Borer's presence in a locale.

Paul mentioned another wasp found on the Ojibway Prairie Complex, the Cicada Killer. Female Cicada Killers have burrows which are guarded by intimidating male Cicada Killers. The female Cicada Killer captures a cicada, stings the unfortunate cicada, then flies back to the burrow where the cicada is placed in a chamber. An egg is laid upon the cicada.

Paul commented that cicadas may be found anywhere there are trees. In this area, we do not have the periodic cicada that emerges the same year once every seventeen years. This species emerges in huge numbers which overwhelm predators.

A small skipper was noted in the grasses around the old ball diamond which Paul identified as the European Skipper. This skipper was introduced to North America in a load of hay delivered to London, Ontario in the early 1900s.

The hiking group entered the Black Oak Heritage Park trail system just off the old ball diamond. Paul remarked that signs are to be put in place to assist with directions for hikers and visitors. At the entrance to the Park, the group heard a Rose-breasted Grosbeak and the call of a Downy Woodpecker. Paul noted that different tree species occur in Black Oak Heritage Park such as Black Walnut, Common Hackberry, Basswood and Bitternut Hickory. The view from the trail showed the results of an early spring burn conducted at Black Oak. Many shrubs have been burned, opening up the savanna area.

Due to mosquitoes, the group moved fairly quickly along the trails but with an opportunity for comments from Paul. Along the trail, a plant with a trumpet shaped flower was identified as Jimsonweed, a poisonous plant that was found on the former cabbage field after cultivation ceased on that site.

The group paused at an open savanna area where an Indigo Bunting could be heard singing. The rutted trails through the northern area of Black Oak Heritage Park have disappeared as a small bulldozer has smoothed the trails. As well, the Port Authority has stopped motorcyclists and



Paul Pratt and American Chestnut

vehicles from crossing their lands to reach Black Oak Heritage Park.

Paul mentioned that air photo coverage of the now Black Oak Heritage Park from the 1950s shows a very open habitat, identified today as a savanna. As we stood by the path's edge admiring the savanna around us, Paul identified Sassafras with its variable leaves, and commented that this tree is the food source of the Spicebush Swallowtail and certain moth species. At that very moment a handsome Spicebush Swallowtail flew and landed in vegetation near the trail for all to view.

Further along the trail the group viewed an American Chestnut with its few suckers. The fungus which is slowly killing this tree can survive on oak trees which are abundant at Black Oak Heritage Park.

Paul drew our attention to the blooms of Purple Milkweed. This uncommon and showy milkweed found in oak savannas has many magenta-red flowers in its drooping flower heads.

Several mushroom species were observed along the trail as recent rains have encouraged their growth. Paul identified a False Coral Fungus and a species of Russula and Amanita mushrooms. Amanita are handsome colourful fungi which contain deadly toxins.

We departed the savanna, walking across the site of the former agricultural lands. The Friends of the Ojibway Prairie have planted prairie plants on the perimeter of the lands and planting will continue.

As the group walked the last portion of the trail towards Broadway Park, the agitated calls of an Indigo Bunting and House Wrens caught our attention. Paul suggested that an Eastern Fox Snake in the vicinity could be causing concern for these nesting birds.

Many thanks to Paul for an enjoyable and informative walk through the savanna habitat at Black Oak Heritage Park.



**Annual Butterfly Hike at Point Pelee: July 11, 2010**

By Alan Wormington

Photographs by Alan Wormington

Maybe it was the hot weather. Maybe everyone was getting ready for the final World Cup Soccer game. Or maybe some were participating on a Butterfly Count somewhere. But for this year's annual butterfly hike at Point Pelee National Park on July 11, only a single participant showed up excluding the leader – Ken Newman from Colchester. What happened to the other regulars?

We started at 9:00 a.m. at the Visitor Centre, proceeding to West Branch and then southwards to the Tip. Quite remarkably on our walk to the Tip, biting insects were totally absent. Not a single mosquito, deerfly, horsefly, or stable-fly – amazing! The highlight was probably the Dukes' Skipper that we found on Spotted Knapweed at West Beach, and indeed it was literally on the beach. This is a swamp-loving species associated with Pelee Marsh, so anytime you see one out of normal habitat indicates it is in wandering mode in search of nectar sources.

Other highlights included good looks of an Eastern Cicada-Killer Wasp (rare in Ontario), one American Snout-Butterfly, and the first Tawny Emperor of the year. Also seen was a single light "winter-form" Question Mark, quite exceptional for the early date since normally this form does not appear until late August.

Near the Tip parking lot a large Eastern Cottonwood had blown over from the recent big storm, which had been cut up into pieces. This exposed some sap in a couple of places, along with attendant hungry butterflies including well over a dozen Hackberry Butterflies, several Question Marks, and the one Tawny Emperor.

Later at the DeLaurier Fields not much was seen, except for the only Common Sulphur for the day.

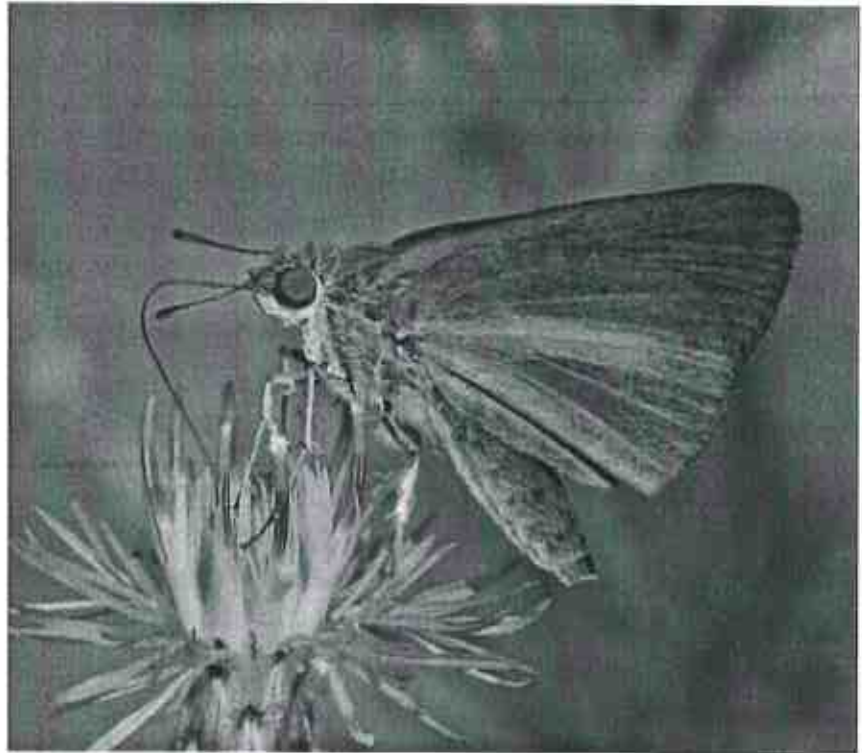
The last stop was the beach at the former park Administration Building, but again not much was seen here even though it is a well-known "hot spot" for butterflies.



Eastern Cicada-Killer Wasp

In total 16 butterfly species were found for the day, a bit lower than most years but a few highlights made the walk most worthwhile.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Number</u>
Northern Broken-Dash	2
Dukes' Skipper	1
Cabbage White	80
Common Sulphur	1
Orange Sulphur	40
Summer Azure	45
American Snout-Butterfly	1
Orange Crescent	6
Summer / Early Crescent	1
Question Mark	12
Eastern Comma	2
American Painted-Lady	4
Red Admiral	40
Hackberry Butterfly	20
Tawny Emperor	1
Monarch	4



Dukes' Skipper

Seventeenth Ojibway Butterfly Count, July 3, 2010

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Larry Onysko

As the date of the Ojibway Nature Centre's 17th annual butterfly count approached, butterfly watchers were watching the weather which was forecast to be clear, sunny and hot, perfect conditions for the count. The Ojibway Nature Centre's butterfly count is similar to a Christmas Bird Count as it takes place within a fifteen mile radius of Ojibway Nature Centre, extending from Little River all the way to McGregor and the River Canard.

Nineteen Butterfly watchers gathered early July 3, 2010, heading to their various areas around the Ojibway Prairie Complex. Each area is different in character with the butterfly species seen reflecting these variations.

Ojibway Nature Centre staff member Karen Cedar led one group of butterfly watchers, including Kathy Lesperance, Larry Onysko and Betty Learmouth, along Titcombe Road from 9:30 a.m. until noon. Titcombe Road is a closed roadway that is surrounded by prairie vegetation, with such species as Butterflyweed in bloom. The firm surface of the roadway is an attraction to species such as Question Marks which land there, providing good views of field marks. Thirteen individuals of this species were observed.

Karen suggested the group make a special effort to find skippers. The group found one Wild Indigo Duskywing, six Northern Broken-dash, and two Silver-spotted Skippers.

The most common species tallied was the colourful Great Spangled Fritillary. Thirty-four were observed as these strong flyers zoomed over the prairie vegetation. A few were seen nectaring on Butterflyweed, the orange of the Butterflyweed the same hue of orange as that of the Great Spangled Fritillaries.

The second most common butterfly species observed was the Clouded Sulphur (14) followed by the Monarch with 13 observed. We were delighted to see the Monarchs as last year's count had only a single Monarch.

Karen suggested that we walk to the park at Titcombe and Malden Roads where we could enjoy some shade while still butterflying. We found several species we had previously viewed, including Common Wood Nymph. At a distance we could see the Colicroot in bloom that was discovered in 2009 due to the lack of mowing around the ball diamond. We noted several dozen stalks of Dense Blazing Star, another Species at Risk, growing in proximity to the Colicroot.

Karen and her five month old daughter Leia, on her first butterfly count, headed off to the Nature Centre as the noon hour approached. Karen suggested that we look for species we had not recorded during our return walk on Titcombe Road. We were fortunate to find a Northern Pearly-eye, a Delaware Skipper and a Northern Crescent on our return walk.

Northern Pearly-eye



The following report is one prepared by compiler Paul Pratt which appears on the Ojibway Nature Centre's website: In 2010 nineteen participants found 1,821 butterflies of 52 species. The Ojibway Prairie Complex received the majority of coverage. Sites visited by counters included Ojibway Park, Spring Garden Natural Area, Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve, Malden Park and LaSalle. The count was hosted by the Ojibway Nature Centre and The Friends of Ojibway Prairie sponsored lunch and refreshments.

American Copper (51), Great Spangled Fritillary (277) and Question Mark (57) were recorded in record high numbers. 86 species (plus 1 count period) have been recorded over the seventeen butterfly counts.

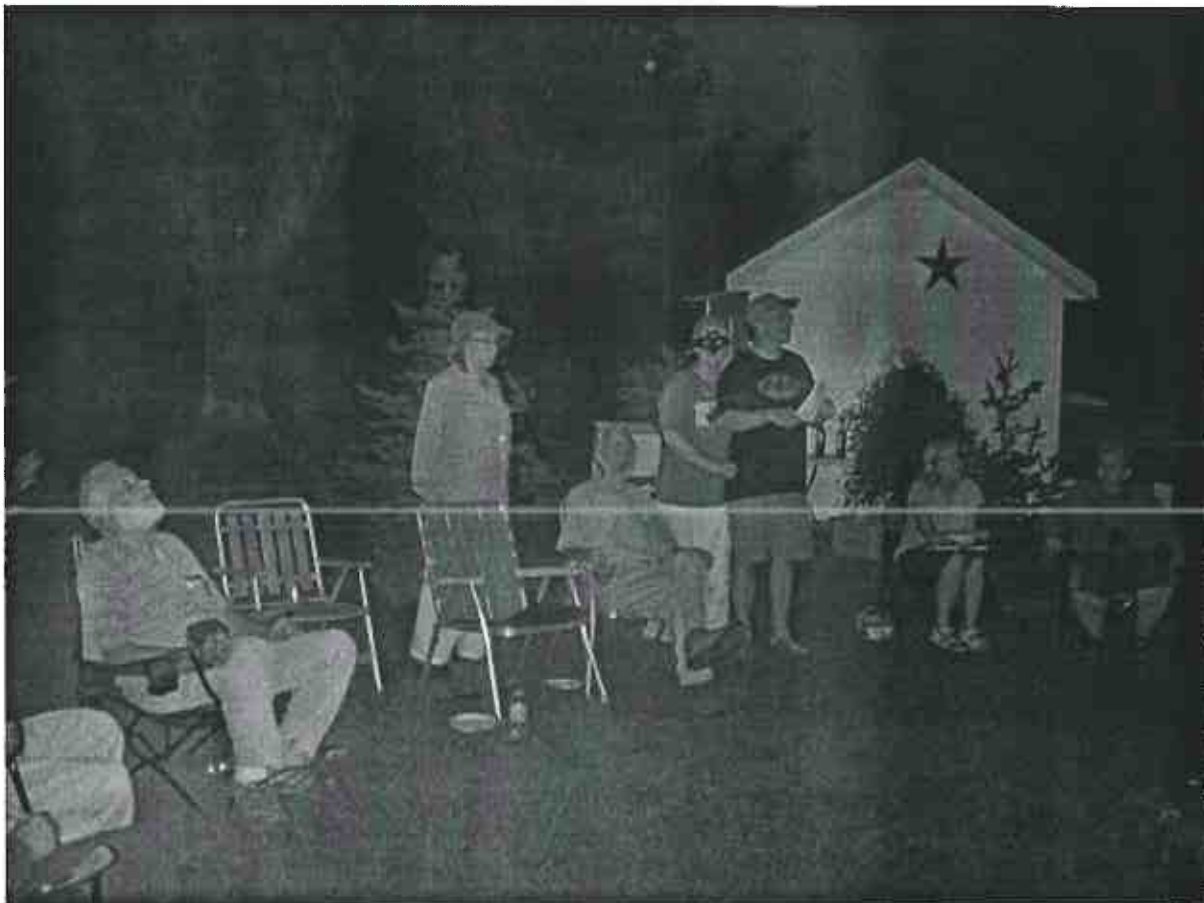
03 July 2010; 08:30-1700 hrs; sun AM 100%, PM 100%; 70-84 degrees F; wind 3-5 mi/hr. 19 observers in 7 parties. Total party-hours 27.5; total party-miles on foot 42. Observers: S. Butnari, M. Calder, P. Carter, K. Cedar, S. Cullen, P. DesJardins, K. Fawdry, S. Greidanus, B. Kulon, B. Kulon, J. Larson, B. Learmouth, K. Lesperance, B. Makar, B. Mann, K. Newman, L. Onysko, Paul Pratt (compiler), B. Ross.



Black Swallowtail 15; Giant Swallowtail 1, Eastern Tiger Swallowtail 23, Spicebush Swallowtail 1, Cabbage White 228; Clouded Sulphur 52, Orange Sulphur 43; American Copper 51, Coral Hairstreak 19; Acadian Hairstreak 4, Edwards Hairstreak 74, Banded Hairstreak 11; Hickory Hairstreak 7, Eastern Tailed-Blue 21, 'Summer' Spring Azure 11, Great Spangled Fritillary 277, Aphrodite Fritillary 1, Silvery Checkerspot 3, Pearl Crescent 30, Northern Crescent 11, Question Mark 57, Eastern Comma 6, Mourning Cloak 6, American Lady 12, Painted Lady 1, Red Admiral 52, Common Buckeye 1, Red-spotted Purple 1, Viceroy 24, Northern Pearly-eye 18, Eyed Brown 9, Appalachian Brown 19, Little Wood-Saytr 94, Common Wood-Nymph 173, Monarch 78, Silver-spotted Skipper 37, Southern Cloudywing 6, Northern Cloudywing 2, Dreamy Duskywing 1, Columbine Duskywing 1, Wild Indigo Duskywing 55, Common Sootywing 2, Least Skipper 4, European Skipper 24, Tawny-edged Skipper 4, Crossline Skipper 17, Long Dash 1, Northern Broken-dash 114, Little Glassywing 57; Delaware Skipper 51, Black Dash 2, Dun Skipper 1. Unidentified: Satyrium 1, Erynnis 1, grass-skippers 6. Total 52 species, 1821 individuals.

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**ECFNC Members' Outdoor Meeting  
THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT !  
August 13, 2010**



ECFNC Members (left to right) Bruno Sfalcin, Peg Hurst, Tom Hurst, Teresa Austrin, Joe Parent, Denise Hartley, Cathy Lapain - Photograph by Alison Klassen



Photographs by Teresa Austrin

**Brunet Park Hike, July 13, 2010**

By Betty Learmouth

Photograph by Larry Onysko: Ebony Jewelwing

Photograph by Betty Learmouth: "Mining" of the Poplar Serpentine Leaf Miner

Four hikers joined Ojibway Nature Centre staff person Tom Preney at the Town of LaSalle's Brunet Park on July 13, 2010 for a morning hike.

While waiting for everyone to arrive, Tom provided an update on a dragonfly Tom had observed July 11, 2010 at the Ojibway Pond. Tom noted and photographed a beautiful male Slaty Skimmer which is a medium-sized slate gray dragonfly with black eyes. Tom watched the characteristic aggressive behaviour of this species towards other dragonflies. Tom's exciting sighting is the 59th species of dragonfly reported at Ojibway. Chief Naturalist Paul Pratt suggests that naturalists should now be watching for the Russet-tipped Chubtail.

Tom stated that during this morning hike the group would look at natural heritage in Brunet Park with the hope that the group would be able to observe the Ebony Jewelwing, an attractive damselfly known to be found along the Cahill Drain.

The group headed off from the parking lot toward the power lines as a House Wren sang in the nearby woodland. Tom pointed out a Sassafras tree which exhibited the mitten, glove and sock shaped leaves of this tree species which is known for its colourful orange, red, and yellow fall foliage.

Jewelweed was growing in profusion by the trail. Tom commented that it is a favourite of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds which gather nectar from its blossoms. The sap of Jewelweed is soothing to small skin abrasions.

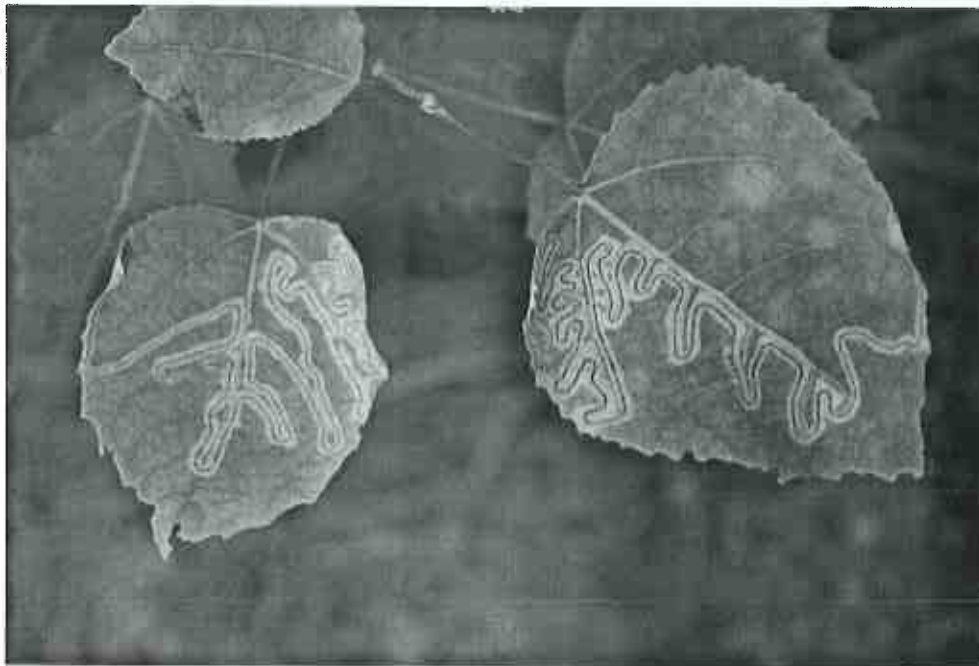
Tom commented that the woodland beside the trail has a fine display of Trillium in the spring which can be viewed with ease from an old sidewalk constructed in the 1920s that runs through the woodland.

Near the power lines, the Town of LaSalle has allowed regeneration with the result that tallgrass prairie plant species may be observed. Tom drew our attention to Prairie Dock in bud.

Along the trail, the alien plant Wild Parsnip had established. Its presence prompted a reminder that the Wild Parsnip and Cow-parsnip has sap that causes your skin to become photosensitive and will inflict burns and blisters. Naturalists should be aware of a new invasive plant that has entered Ontario. It is the Giant Hogweed which has a potent sap that causes painful burns and potential blindness. This plant should be removed with special precautions by properly attired personnel.

Plants along the trail included Gray-headed Coneflower, Showy Tick Trefoil, Wild Bergamot, Hog Peanut, Joe-Pye-Weed, Whorled Loosestrife, and Thimbleweed. Several poplar leaves displayed the distinctive "mining" of the Poplar Serpentine Leaf Miner. Tom Preney consulted Steve Marshall's insect guide to find the insect responsible for this "mining."





“Mining” of the  
Poplar Serpentine  
Leaf Miner

As we approached a section of the Cahill Drain where water flows over rocks, we found several Ebony Jewelwing damselflies resting on vegetation close to the drain. These beautiful insects have dark velvety-black wings and a remarkable green body. We were rewarded with the sight of at least six of these damselflies which are uncommon in Essex County.

Thank you to Tom for guiding us around Brunet Park and showing us the park’s special insects and plants.



Ebony Jewelwing

**Hillman Marsh Report, Spring 2010**

By Cherise Charron

Photographs by Cherise Charron



Worm-eating Warbler

March and April 2010 were pretty quiet at Hillman as they were working on shoring up dykes and placing rocks on the sides of the shorebird cell. The trails around Hillman were all torn up due to heavy equipment. I don't think the ducks really liked the machinery moving about.

The shorebird cell was not filled until the end of April and unfortunately drained early as of May 20th. Some birds of note that did drop in were Hudsonian Godwit and Snowy Egret.

In the tree lined scrubby areas east of the pump house a Kirtland's Warbler was observed on May 7th. This was the year of the Kirtland's Warbler in the Pelee area as Kirtland's Warblers were also reported at PPNP on May 15th and 22nd.

Other great birds this year at Point Pelee were Worm-eating and Prairie Warblers at Dunes May 2nd and 3rd and lifer birds for me. Mourning Warbler was behind the washrooms at the Tip on May 14th.

On May 15th at the very Tip was a Ruddy Turnstone with 10 - 20 Sanderlings in various stages of molt. Sanderlings in breeding (alternate) plumage was another lifer, as I have only seen Sanderlings in basic molt. Finally at Pelee on May 21, myself and many others had great looks at a male Dickcissel near the 42 sign area which was another lifer.



Kirtland's Warbler



Mourning Warbler



Dickcissel

Ruddy Turnstone and Sanderlings





Meanwhile out in Amherstburg, this May, the celebrity bird was a White-faced Ibis which hung out at Big Creek for quite a few days and was seen by many birders. What a beautiful and colourful bird. The green and purple feathers on the back looked beautiful in the intermittent sun. The White-faced Ibis was another lifer for me.

In the entomology department, I had a Pipevine Swallowtail on East Beach at the Tip on May 14th. This is a new butterfly for my butterfly list.

Later on May 20th about 25 metres south to the solar panel on the west side of the Tip, I located and photographed a Carolina Saddlebags for my dragonfly list.



White-faced Ibis



Pipevine Swallowtail



Carolina Saddlebags

**ECFNC Activities and Excursions, Sept. '10 – Dec. '10**

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 – ECFNC Members Meeting** – Speaker: Jesse Gardner Costa will speak on his research in the Oil Sands Area of Alberta. **Meet in Windsor Airport Community Room at 7:30 pm**, County Road 42, Windsor.

**September - Wednesday nights** during September 2010 are Pasta Nights at the Riverside Sportman's Club, 10835 Riverside Drive East, Windsor, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The cost is \$8.00 and this is a fund raiser for the Little River Enhancement Group.

Club members will also be at the Riverside Sportsmen Club on **Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>** selling baked goods. Their purpose is to raise funds to help defray some of the travel costs to fulfill our stewardship commitments for 2 properties on Pelee Island.

JoAnn Grondin will also have Annual Dinner tickets available at the Sportsmen Club from 5:00 to 7:00p.m. on **Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>**.

**September 9 to 12** - The Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society is hosting the 2010 32nd North American Bluebird Society Conference at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ontario. Possible nature hikes and wine tours for early arrivals. Visit the Ontario Eastern Bluebird Society web site or speak to Don Bissonnette for further information.

**September to December - Ojibway Fall Bird Migration Field Course**

A series of morning field trips to observe the incredible variety of birds that migrate through Southwestern Ontario each fall. Saturday morning field trips (8:30 am - noon) to Point Pelee (Sunday for Holiday Beach in Nov). \$15 each (dates are tentative)

**Sept 11**, (Saturday) meet at the Point Pelee Visitor Centre

**Oct 2**, (Saturday) meet at the Point Pelee Visitor Centre

**Oct 16**, (Saturday) meet at the Tip parking lot, Point Pelee

**Oct 30**, (Saturday) meet at the Tip parking lot, Point Pelee

**Nov 14**, (Sunday) meet at the Hawk Tower, Holiday Beach C.A.

**Dec 04**, (Saturday) meet at the Tip parking lot, Point Pelee

**September 16** – Canada South Land Trust Event - Join a guided walk on the Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve on Thursday, September 16, 2010 for a glimpse of fall flowering plants including asters, goldenrods and gentians. Meet at 6:30 p.m. on Titcombe Road at the prairie entrance which is across Matchette Road from the Ojibway Park parking lot. Call Betty at 519-944-0825 to indicate you are attending and for more information. Donation to the Land Trust's Legacy Fund is welcome. Refreshments following the walk.

**September 16** – Ojibway Nature Centre –Thrilling Thursday: Bugs, Bats & Beyond. Thursday evening 7:00 – 8:30 pm, Fee = \$6/adult, \$5/child. Call Ojibway for details (519-966-5852).

**September 18** – **Peche Island Day** Free Shuttles from Lakeview Marina, 10am to 1pm. For

details: [http://www.citizensenvironmentalliance.org/temporary/peche\\_island\\_day\\_2010.pdf](http://www.citizensenvironmentalliance.org/temporary/peche_island_day_2010.pdf)

**September 18 and 19 – Holiday Beach Hawk Festival.** This main weekend for the festival will include hawk watching from the tower, workshops, guided tours, banding, etc. Our Blue Kestrel Café will be open on both Saturday and Sunday. If you would like to help at the Café, please call Claire McAllister (519-254-1854). If you are unable to help at the Café, attend the festival and support your Club by buying delicious homemade muffins and enjoy the BBQ.

**September 26 – ECFNC Fall Hike** – Join Club member Ian Woodfield for a hike in the Spring Garden area. Meet at 2:00 p.m. by the horse paddock on Elgin Street off Malden Road. There is parking on the other side of Malden Road, across from Elgin Street.

**October 3 – ECFNC Fall Outing** – Club members Joe and Betty Williams have invited us to make their cottage a base for this outing. Take the first road east of Holiday Beach (Country Club Road). Follow it to the end, turn left on Lakeside Drive. Follow this to the end. There is a trail on ERCA property, a wetland and a beach. Meet at 2:00 p.m.

**October 13 – ECFNC Members Meeting** – Speaker: To Be Announced – Check [www.ojibway.ca/activity.htm](http://www.ojibway.ca/activity.htm) for updates. Meet in Windsor Airport Community Room at 7:30 pm, County Road 42, Windsor.

**October 17 – ECFNC Outing** – Join Club member Ken Goble for a walk around the Little River area to enjoy our wonderful fall colours and weather. Meet at 2:00 p.m. in the Little River parking lot (near the sewage plant). From Lauzon Road turn on the Little River Road which leads to the parking lot.

**October 17 – Canada South Land Trust Event** – Join landowners Bill Balkwill and Jack Balkwill for a fall walk on their woodland trails. Meet at 2:00 p.m. Directions: If you are coming from Essex, proceed south on the Arner Townline. Watch for Road 2 West in the Town of Kingsville and turn left onto Road 2 West. Proceed to house number 1880 and turn left onto the lane and drive to the parking at the Balkwill residence. Call Betty at 519-944-0825 to indicate you are attending and for more information. Donation to the Land Trust's Legacy Fund is welcome. Refreshments following the walk.

**October 30 – Carolinian West Regional Meeting.** If you would like more information, contact JoAnn Grondin (519-734-0056).

**December 8 – ECFNC Members Meeting** – Join Club members as we view our favourite camera shots and delicious desserts. Meet at the Windsor Airport Community Room, 7:30 p.m.

**ECFNC 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner  
Saturday, November 6, 2010**

**Guest Speaker: Dr. Lynda Corkum:  
Fishes of Essex County and Surrounding Waters  
Fogolar Furlan Club, Udine Hall, 1800 North Service Road, Windsor, Ontario**

**Tickets: \$30.00**

**Available from JoAnn Grondin (519-734-0056); Pelee Wings Nature Store (519-326-5193); and Ojibway Nature Centre (519-966-5852)**



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November 6, 2010 ECFNC Annual**

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For further information contact [fishesofessexcounty@hotmail.com](mailto:fishesofessexcounty@hotmail.com)

**Essex County Field Naturalists' Club  
Membership Form – Due January 1, 2010**

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)

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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!*

Tom Hagedorn

**Join us for a  
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Dr. Lynda D. Corkum is a Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Windsor and a long-standing member of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club. She is a past President of the International Association for Great Lakes Research.