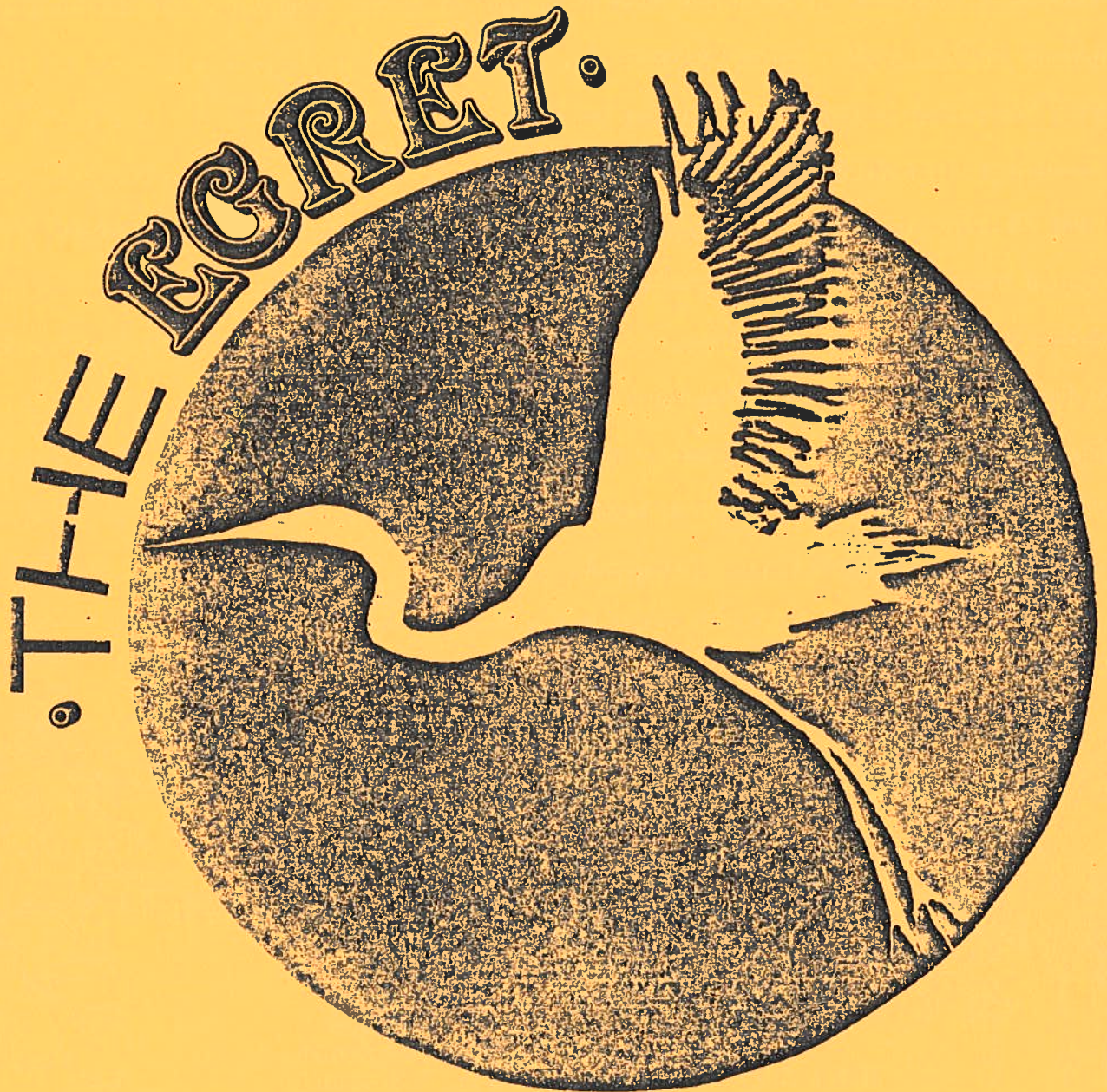


Essex County
FIELD NATURALISTS'
CLUB

VOL. 6, NO. 1
MARCH, 1988

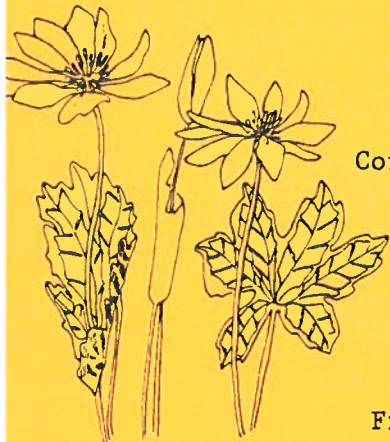


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Our slate of officers for 1989 is as follows

- President - Peter Bondy - 735-2376
- Vice President - Shannon Managhan
- Recording Secretary - Myrtle Bessette
- Executive Member - Bonnie Foley
- Correspondence Secretary - Shannon Managhan
- Treasurer - Peg Wilkinson
- Audio Visual - Bill Langlois, Tom Hurst
- Dinner Chairperson - Johanne Ranger
- Membership - Ella Walker
- Programme Chairperson - Johanne Ranger
- Newsletter Co-editor - Peg Wilkinson
- Newsletter Editor - Betty Learmouth
- Field Trip Co-ordinator - Betty Learmouth



Meetings are held monthly from September until June, on the second Wednesday of each month at the Marlborough Community Centre at 7:30 p.m.

- CLUB NEWS UPDATE -Sandwich West Woodlot

Members of the E.C.F.N.C. are invited to express their dismay regarding plans to develop the Sandwich West Woodlot in Sandwich West Township. It has been learned that 13.8 acres of the woodlot has been designated for a subdivision under Phase II of a housing development.

This woodlot is a significant environmentally sensitive area for the following reasons.

- 1) The area contains an association of prairie plants that is highly significant. Seventy-five plant species that are nationally and provincially rare have been identified.
- 2) The area contains a high diversity of oak species including Red, Black, Pin, Bur, White and Swamp White.
- 3) The area contains a diversity of 38 tree species and 40 shrub species.

Please write letters to the following persons and express your concerns regarding the future of Sandwich West Woodlot.

Hon. Vincent Kerrio,
Minister of Natural Resources,
99 Wellesley St. West,
6th Floor,
Toronto, Ontario. M7A 1W3

Mr. Bill Wrye,
Member of the Provincial Parliament (Liberal)
Constituency Office: 1010 University Ave. West,
Windsor, Ontario. N9A 5S4 Telephone: 258-2626

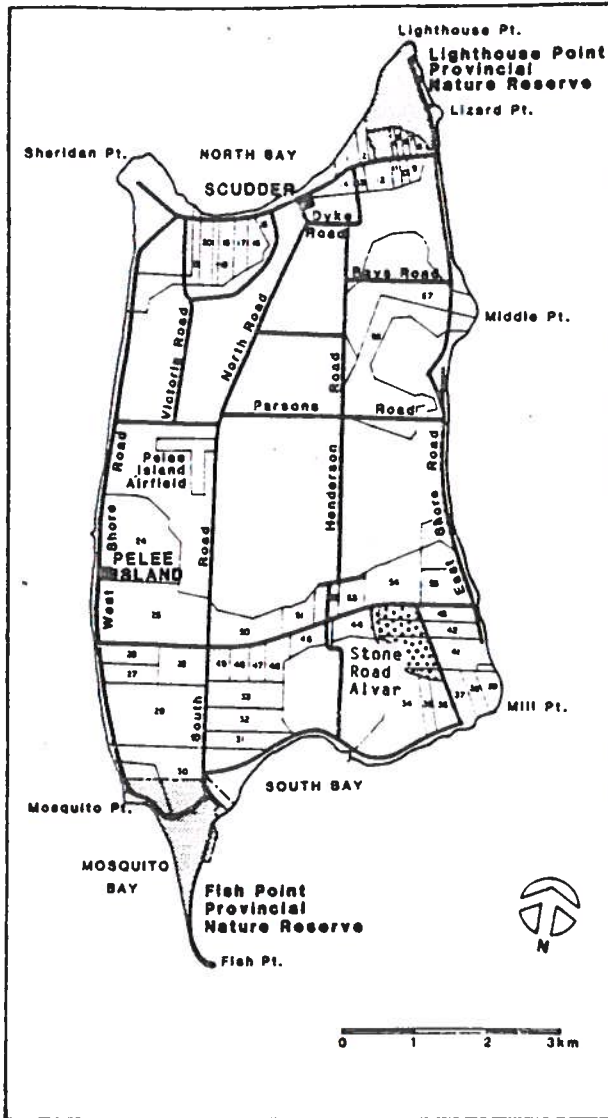
Mr. Remo Mancini,
Member of the Provincial Parliament (Liberal)
Constituency Office: 21 Princess St.,
Leamington, Ontario. N8H 2X8 Telephone: 326-2031

Mr. Mike Ray,
Member of the Provincial Parliament (Liberal)
Constituency Office: 3760 Tecumseh Road East,
Windsor, Ontario. N8W 1H9 Telephone: 948-5005

Mr. Dave Cook,
Member of the Provincial Parliament (NDP)
Constituency Office: 4848 Tecumseh Rd. East,
Windsor, Ontario. N8T 1B8 Telephone: 944-4343

PELEE ISLAND INVENTORY 1988

James Kamstra



Pelee Island, Essex County, showing the nature reserve areas.

During the summer of 1988, I was employed by the Ministry of Natural Resources as a botanist to conduct surveys of four sites on Pelee Island. Two of these (Fish Point and Lighthouse Point) are provincial nature reserves while the others (Stone Road Alvar and Middle Island) are privately owned but recognized as 'Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest' by the MNR. Parts of the Stone Road Alvar are protected by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Essex Region Conservation Authority.

The study was a biological inventory with an emphasis on documenting the presence of significant species, primarily plants, but animals as well. In each of the four sites, recognizable vegetation

communities were identified, mapped and field checked. Most of the provincially rare species encountered (i.e. species listed by Argus et al. 1982-87, Atlas of the Rare Vascular Plants of Ontario) were mapped. However, some 'rare' species such as Roughleaf Dogwood, Prairie Rose and Short's Aster were so widespread that attempting to map them accurately would have been more effort than it was worth. With my capable field assistant Brendon Larson, and occasional help from Mike Oldham and Allan Woodliffe, we were able to locate 53 of the approximately 85 rare species recorded from Pelee Island since historical times.

Although flat and almost featureless topographically, Pelee Island is a remarkable contrast of wet and dry ecosystems. On the wet side, the peninsulas of Lighthouse Point and Fish Point are victims of the fluctuating waters of Lake Erie. At Lighthouse Point, high water levels and storms in late 1972 broke the dike and flooded an area of farmland which has not been reclaimed since. Gradual but constant erosion has continued to eat away at the point to the present. Meanwhile Fish Point's configuration is continually shaped and reshaped by the great lake.

At the other extreme, parts of the island interior are unusually dry. In areas known as "alvars", limestone bedrock has a very shallow overburden of soil. In summer the soil dries out creating a xeric microclimate that greatly retards the natural process of succession but favours certain species. The Stone Road Alvar is the best known and the most extensive alvar. Here a number of typically mid-western plant species thrive. Some like the Yellow Horse-Gentian, Miami Mist, Corn-salad, Downy Wood-Mint and Conobea are unknown in Canada outside of the Erie Islands.

The summer drought of 1988 had a major visual impact on the Stone Road Alvar. The relentless heat and lack of precipitation during June and July caused a disappointing floral display in comparison with an 'average' year. Herbaceous plants bloomed briefly or not at all and then withered as the scant soil layer lost all of its moisture. Some trees and shrubs lost their leaves while the abundant Rough-leaf Dogwoods retained their foliage which dried and shriveled to the consistency of potato chips. It was not the best summer to experience the alvar's botanical bounty.

In addition to rare plants, Pelee Island's alvars provide the only remaining habitat for Blue Racers in Canada. Elusive and swift, these snakes are rarely encountered during the summer months. Without finding a trace of racers after two months of fieldwork, Brendon and I were beginning to doubt that they existed. Finally, with the onset of cooler weather in September racers began to turn up, unfortunately often as road victims. We found the first live one on Brendon's

last working day. It was a much deserved find.

Pelee Island is also known for several other herptile specialties. The Lake Erie Water Snake which, like the Blue Racer, is officially endangered in Ontario. We encountered them in all of our sites, a good sign considering Pelee Island contains the world's largest population of this unique subspecies. Fox Snakes were also widespread, particularly in late summer when hatchlings would wander widely. Unfortunately we encountered many of the snakelets flattened on roads. Our most surprising herptile find was an adult Box Turtle strolling through the dry woodlands at Fish Point. Several previous Box Turtle records from this nature reserve suggests that it may be native there. The Small-mouthed Salamander hybrids, usually widespread on Pelee Island, were scarce this year probably due to the drought. More disappointing, we could find no signs of Blanchard's Cricket Frogs despite several search attempts. This species has declined drastically in the last twenty years and may already be extirpated from Pelee Island (and therefore Canada!).

The drought also affected butterflies. Some of the common species were less common than usual. There were also a few surprises: in particular several Pipevine Swallowtails and Sachem Skippers, both southern vagrants. The Sachem has not been recorded in the province since 1968, but others were encountered this summer at Point Pelee and Ojibway Prairie. I found the tiny Scalloped Sooty-wing Skippers at both Fish and Lighthouse Points. Pelee Island may have the only permanent population of this species in Canada.

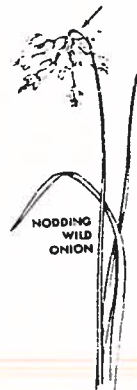
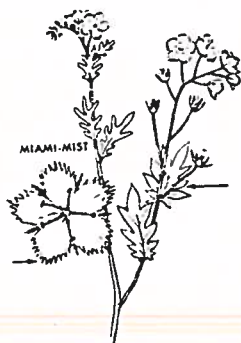
As for birds, Pelee Island was disappointing in the breeding season despite the area's reputation during migration. A few southerners, notably Carolina Wren, Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Great Egret, were numerous. Many common expected species, on the other hand, were rare or absent. Sparrows, for example, were poorly represented despite apparently suitable habitat. An active breeding colony of Dickcissals made up for the shortage of Song, Chipping and Savannah Sparrows, however.

The 1988 Inventory helped to locate and assess the status of the significant

species of the four natural areas of Pelee Island. One of the major management goals of the areas is to maintain populations in the long term. Effective management requires monitoring of the environment to recognize changing conditions and identify threats to priority species. On Pelee Island, for example, some rare plant species are dependent on the open sunny conditions of an early stage of succession and they are gradually being phased out as fields transform into shrub and eventually, forest.

The high number of provincially significant plants and animals makes Pelee Island an exciting place for a naturalist. The island's character is also part of the charm of working there. Despite the presence of 8 million people within a 100 kilometre radius, Pelee Island somehow seems away from the 'rat race'. It enjoys relative isolation since it is an island. There are few paved roads, limited facilities and only several hundred full time residents. In addition, the island's remaining forest cover has not been significantly reduced in the past few decades, a contrast to the mainland of southwestern Ontario. In fact, most of the island's former grazing lands have been abandoned, some of which are now significant natural areas.

Of course Pelee Island is not immune to the development pressures around it. Recent cottage developments at Sheridan Point and Mill Point are evidence. The latter scheme in particular, threatens to have a major impact on the Blue racer and Lake Erie Water Snake. In addition, a new ferry scheduled to begin operation in 1990, is being constructed. It will carry four times the number of cars that the present boat handles. Likely, the coming years will see increased traffic, more cottage development, improvement (i.e. paving) of existing roads leading to fewer rare plants and more road-killed racers.



LOOKING BACK WITH WILF

Wilfred Botham

The following notes are from Wilf's records.

Point Pelee - 4 Dec. 1965 - Mostly cloudy; several snow showers. Saw a new life bird, and maybe a first record for Ontario! There were two of them, in the small trees on the east side of the sparrow field, no more than half a mile from the tip of the Point. They were some kind of bluebird, but not Eastern: the only blue was on wings and tail, the other feathers were ashy-gray, the back a little the darker; a bronzy tinge at the throat, the eyes had half circles of white at the rear edge. One bird was lighter and the half circles were very faint. The edges of the wing feathers were pale, as in flycatchers. No sound was heard from either bird. Later I met a Toronto couple, Earl and Eva Damude. He was stepping out of their car, in the Nature Trail parking yard and was asking me what was to be seen. When I replied there were two Mountain Bluebirds he noticeably paused momentarily in his rising to full height - a difficult feat if it were to be done consciously - then he said, "Now, let's get this straight!" However, when they had seen the birds they agreed with me that they were Mountain Bluebirds, either females or immature males. Then I visited Bill Wyett, Park Naturalist, and he went down and saw the birds. After returning home I phoned several people, telling them about the Mountain Bluebirds. Shortly thereafter Damude phoned - from Leamington, I suppose - he had phoned Jim Baillie of the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, and Baillie thought the birds were most likely Mountain Bluebirds - several had been seen in the Lakehead area this fall (there goes my Ontario record!) and Jim said to tell Wilf to collect the bird, but when Damude told him he did not think Botham had a permit to collect Jim said to tell him to collect it anyway. I told Earl I had no gun, at that he seemed relieved, and said, "Well then, we will just tell Baillie we were unable to collect the bird." However, only this afternoon Bill Wyett had told me he had a permit to collect; I told Damude this and suggested he see Bill when he returns to Point Pelee tomorrow. Bill had told me he did not like the idea of collecting a single such as this, but

under the circumstances he might be willing, since it would be a first Ontario specimen. After thinking about the number of people who might be down tomorrow to see the bird I believe I ought to go down in the morning and ask Bill to delay collecting until Monday.

Sun. 5 Dec. 1965 - Saw the two birds again, a number of others also saw them; Jim Wilson had a scope and through it the eye-ring appeared almost complete. The blue covered the upper surface of the tail and the lower back. There was blue on the primaries, maybe only the visible edge. I talked with Bill Wyett about the people who might come to see the birds today (none did come whom I had telephoned), and what Baillie had said; Bill thought one bird ought to be collected, but agreed that tomorrow would be soon enough. (He did collect one sometime during the week following.) He would collect it for the Park, he said, not for the ROM. The Damudes had decided to have nothing more to do with collecting or not collecting one of the birds. "Let the Park people collect it if they wish", they said. He must have forgotten that he was the one who phoned Baillie, and started it all. Eva Damude said she could not sleep last night for worrying about it - getting up to open, then to close, the window.

8 Dec. - Letter from Damude - he had talked with Baillie - had looked at skins in the Museum - they have little doubt the birds are adult female Mountain Bluebirds.

11 Dec. - Bill Wyett has the brighter of the two birds. The other disappeared and was not seen again. The plumage is bluer than could be seen with the glasses. There is considerable blue in the wings, and blue on the back almost to the neck. The eye-ring is complete, wider above the eye. Bill Wyett said Baillie has written to Tony Pierce, Park Superintendent, suggesting he have Wyett collect one of the birds.

Point Pelee - 6 Feb. 1965 - I watched some interesting Marsh Hawk behavior. It was in the open, grassy field once an orchard. One bird was beating back and forth, then dropped to the ground, then rose with a mouse in its talons. It flew up, made a circle, then dropt its prey near where it had been caught. Then I noticed another

hawk had flown in; it picked up the mouse, flew a short distance, then alighted on the ground and proceeded to eat the mouse. The first hawk was then seen standing on the ground not far away. There had been no conflict, apparently the first hawk had given the mouse willingly to the second hawk. Both birds were brown. Could the second hawk have been the young of the first?

Point Pelee - 3 Apr. 1965 - From the marsh board walk I watched an aerial display of a male Marsh Hawk - the bird was fairly high, and making short, quick upward and downward flights, back rolls, just about every maneuver possible - I watched for several moments until the bird was so far off it could be followed only with binoculars. It was about 3:30 in the afternoon. Then I heard a squeaking behind me and a female marsh hawk flew past, making a few turns and rolls, as the male had done, but more slowly, and not continuously. Mostly she flew straight forward. I had never witnessed this kind of behavior previously, but can only suppose it to be mating behavior.

Point Pelee - Thurs. 15 Apr. 1965 - In the Sun Parlor Nature Club bulletin received today the Editor, Stella Pierce, mentions dead birds lying on the west beach, following last Sun's storm.

17, 19 Apr. - At Point Pelee I gathered up dead birds from the west beach, or made a note of their presence. 229 birds of 24 species were counted. They were: Robin 105, Fox Sparrow 45, Junco 19, Song Sparrow 14, Sapsucker 5, Meadowlark 5, Hermit Thrush 4, Cowbird 4, Starling 4, Redwing 4, Tree Sparrow, 3, Rusty Blackbird 3, Vesper Sparrow 2, Savannah Sparrow 2, Flicker 1, Winter Wren 1, Field Sparrow 1, Woodcock 1, Virginia Rail 1, Kingfisher 1, Brown Thrasher 1, Snipe 1, Red-shouldered Hawk 1, Turkey Vulture 1.

16 May 1966 - Point Pelee - I could hear them from the Tilden woods. I walked towards the sound until I came to the deep ditch in the middle of the farm field. A number of toads were mating and trilling and laying long strings of jelly-coated eggs. The males were smaller. Not all were mated and it seemed to be the unattached toads that were doing the trilling. There were about 20 toads altogether. They

seemed to be oblivious of my presence.

23 Apr. 1963 - Rowley Frith had lent me a little booklet to read, a memorial volume to Dr. Saunders, which had been published by the FON shortly after Dr. Saunders' death. The booklet is a collection of Saunders' writings, alternated by short pieces by Dr. Saunders' acquaintances. Reading it inspired me to write of my own experiences with the Dr., which I will leave in the book when I take it back. This is what I wrote:

A Day with Dr. Saunders

I was glad to read the memorial booklet to Dr. Saunders. It gives a very good impression of the man, I think, and reminded me of the short acquaintance I had with him. I met Dr. Saunders in the early or mid-thirties, when he was in his seventies. I had heard that a group of famous naturalists were on the Island, staying in a farmer's vacant house only half a mile from the farm where I was employed, so I walked down on Sunday to meet them. All I remember of that meeting was Dr. Saunders asking me if we had no small mammals except deermice on the Island. It seems he had set out a number of traps, as was his custom, and had caught nothing except three of those animals.

The second time I saw Dr. Saunders was in Point Pelee 2 Oct. 1937. The Kent Nature Club had sponsored a trip to the Point for the FON and I had read about it through a very short notice in the Windsor Star. I reached the Park entrance by boat and bicycle, from there I rode with a Chatham member of the Club, who had kindly offered me a ride in his car. The day was pleasantly spent, dominated by the exuberant presence of Dr. Saunders. A Windsor Star photographer took some pictures of us, and I returned to Pelee Island a member of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, of which I had not heard until seeing the notice in the Star. I still have the pictures and article that appeared in the Star following the meeting, and also a map of the Point showing where certain interesting plants could be found. (I should add that the FON was formed in 1931.)

The next meeting was in '38 or '39. A neighbour and I walked down to Fish Point - he carrying a gun - and when we came near the end of the Point I saw Dr. Saunders

was there, and with him a young woman. My neighbour would have had us turn aside to avoid the strangers, but I wished to speak to the Dr. The meeting started very badly, when Dr. Saunders gave my neighbour a tongue-lashing for the alleged careless manner in which he was carrying his gun. (The neighbour never saw me afterwards without commenting on that mean-tempered, rude old man!) Then Dr. Saunders introduced me to the young lady as his granddaughter Kay.

I must have mentioned to the Dr. that I had a collection of plants that I had trouble in identifying. He told me they were hiring a boat to take them to one of the islands the next day and I should bring my plants and accompany them, he would identify the plants for me while on the way to the island. That evening, or next morning, the Dr. phoned to say that the lake was too rough for the proposed trip, instead they would drive to Lighthouse marsh, and invited me to ride with them, and to bring a lunch. I accepted, of course. At the marsh they were finding birds, but I saw very little with my 4-power field glasses, and neither of them offered to let me use theirs. In fact, the girl seldom spoke. When I asked to use his glasses to look at a bird I had never identified myself he gave them to me with obvious reluctance, so I did not ask again. I did not then know that you never let your glasses out of your hand when you are birding! On the way back to the car I asked him to identify a plant growing beside the path. He said it was Geranium. I knew it wasn't that, but said nothing. Later I learned it was Hydrophyllum, of which we had two species on the island.

Kay drove the car, and when we were nearing the end of the homeward trip we passed several people gathered about a car, fixing a tire. I knew them and shouted some comment as we passed, which must have diverted Kay's attention, because she drove the car slightly off the gravel on the left side of the road, being on that side because of the other car, and hit a weed-hidden low concrete end of a bridge. The jerk jarred my neck so I was a little slow in opening the door, and Dr. Saunders, who was in the middle, rather crossly asked why I took so long to get out. When we assessed the damage we found a tire blown, and both the axle and the steer-

ing rods bent. However, the wheel still pointed straight forward. The Dr. had a spare in the trunk, but no key to the trunk. The people from the other car were now with us, and one of them borrowed a hacksaw from a nearby farmer with which they soon sawed through the outside hinges of the trunk, and got the tire out. The trip was resumed without further incident.

Just before the accident Dr. Saunders had thought he heard the song of a grasshopper sparrow, but when they stopped to listen the song was not repeated. He said Pelee Island is strangely short on species of nesting sparrows.

At the end of the trip I thanked them, but was unhappy because I felt I had been the indirect cause of the accident.

That was the last time I saw Dr. Saunders.

Several days later I received a letter saying they had arrived safely back in London with the "sick car". He also sent me two very old botany textbooks. Somewhere along the way I have lost both the letter and the textbooks, a loss that I feel keenly.

ENCHANTED ROCK ADVENTURES

Bev Wannick

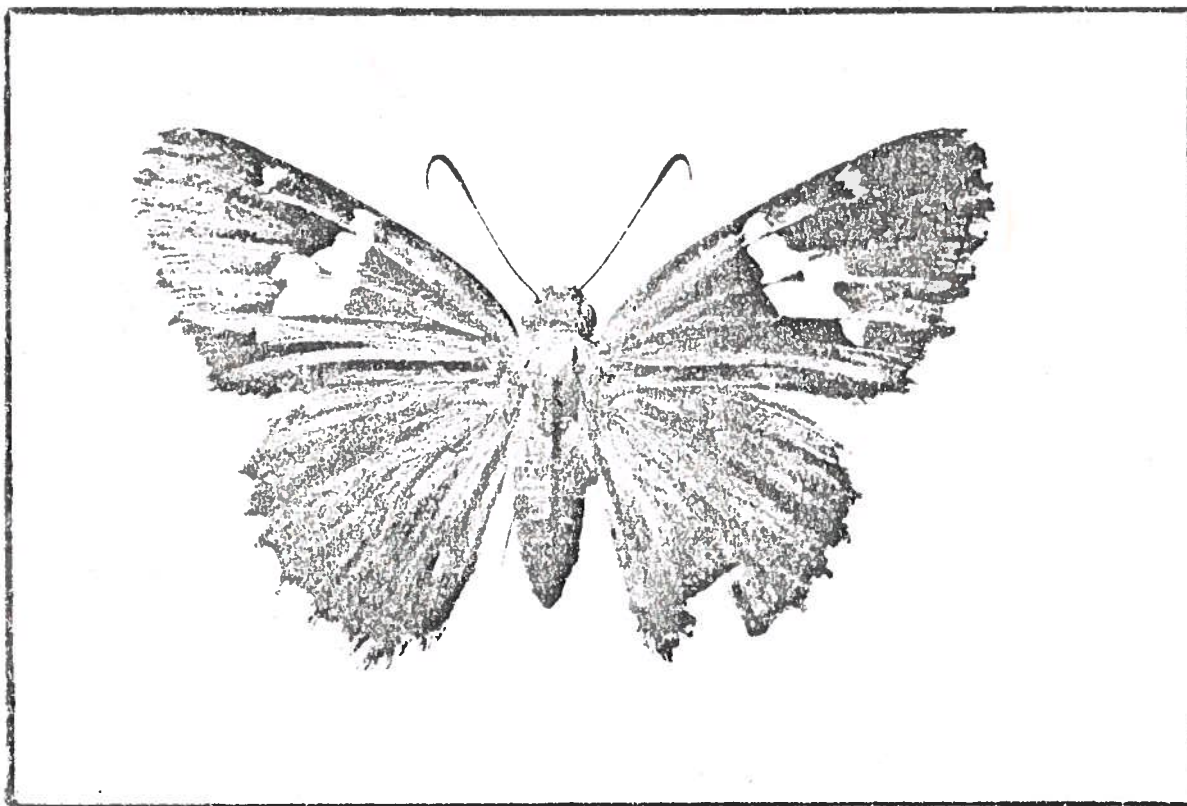
The First Adventure

Joshia and Kate moved into a house in the woods, by a clear blue lake, when their father got a new job in a far away place.

One day, after swimming lessons, Kate was splashing around in the shallow water and Joshia was diving for coloured pebbles on the lake bed. To his surprise, he found a large flat stone which appeared to have carved drawings on it. He swished the rock around in the water and rubbed the slimy green algae off with his hand. Joshia was a little too eager to clean his treasure because the stone slipped out of his grasp. His unhappy cry brought Kate over to investigate as fast as her little arms could swim.

ACHALARUS LYCIADES IN SANDWICH WEST TOWNSHIP OF ESSEX COUNTY

Jeff Larson



With rapid urban development occurring in many section of Essex County, I made a concerted effort in 1988 to survey the few remaining prairie remnants for lepidoptera. On June 9th, 1988, I visited a small prairie remnant in Sandwich West Township near Windsor. The site is rather small; only 10 hectares in total area, and is surrounded on three sides by a wooded area dominated by pin oak. On the prairie edge bordering upon an agricultural field, there is a rather large concentration of alfalfa which happened to be in bloom. I was impressed by the over 200 Epargyreus clarus which were nectaring in this area.

I spotted what at first appeared to be a strange looking specimen of E. clarus. As I approached, it gently flew from flower to flower - somewhat uncharacteristic of E. clarus, which tends to rapidly dart to and fro when feeding. Immediately I was struck by the large expanse of white on the outer edge of the underside of the hindwing. There is nothing that can compare to the feeling one experiences when observing a completely unexpected rare butterfly. My heart skipped a beat when I realized

I was looking at Achalarus lyciades! In the process of capturing it, I unfortunately nicked the right hindwing. Otherwise the butterfly was in fairly good condition.

In a subsequent conversation with Paul Pratt, head naturalist at Ojibway Park in Windsor, it was mentioned that this might be the first confirmed record in Ontario. Paul says that this is one species he suspected might be found in this area. He adds that many of the hostplants listed in Scott (Butterflies of North America, 1985) are found in many of the prairie remnants in the Windsor area.

I was somewhat skeptical of whether A. lyciades might be a resident rather than a migrant in Sandwich West Township until July 9th, 1988. On that date I revisited the location of my first encounter with A. lyciades, and found another one. This worn specimen was captured within ten metres of the first. This slow moving butterfly was observed defending a territory measuring five metres by five metres. Each time an E. clarus would intrude upon this space, it was chased out. I observed this activity for a full twenty minutes before capturing it.

It is possible that a small colony of Achalarus lyciades may exist in this area. If indeed this is a migrant, what are the chances that the first two records in Ontario would be found within ten metres of each other but a full month apart? Next year I plan to return to this location to ascertain whether there is a resident population.

(continued from p.11)

No sooner had Kate reached him when a Rock Bass wriggled up to the water's surface with a big smile on his shiny lips. "You have found a treasure indeed," said the Bass, his gills twitching as he breathed. "Long ago a medicine man carved symbols in this rock, so he could, with the wild creatures talk."

Before Kate and Joshia could recover from their astonishment, and could ask the talking fish a question, he darted into the water plants and disappeared. After a few minutes search, the children found the precious stone. Since the first adventure, Joshia and Kate have used the magic rock to talk to many of the wild creatures who lived in the world around them.

BOTANY TRIVIALIZED

Gerry Waldron

Here are a few facts (and some mere speculation) about our county's flora.

The Commonest Plant

If we include the waters of Essex County there is no doubt that some tiny water plant such as an alga would be the most common but let's just consider land plants. City dwellers might opt for bluegrass. About mid August they would probably revise that to crabgrass. However, taking the county as a whole we could define the most common plant as the one covering the greatest area. Then the choice becomes obvious - the soyabean. Within the last decade this Chinese import has replaced native American corn as the crop with the greatest acreage (hectareage). That makes it the most common plant from June planting through October harvest but what about November through May? There's something to think about.

The Rarest Plant

Even if we restrict this to native wild plants the list of candidates could be fairly long. And the answer would never be definitive because we need to count individuals, something tedious enough with woody plants, but very difficult with herbaceous perennials and practically meaningless with annuals. Possibilities would include Trumpet Creeper, Chestnut and Dwarf Hackberry (less than a dozen of each); Rock Elm and Round-leaved Catbrier (less than half a dozen) or one of the rare orchids like Nodding Pogonia, Puttyroot or Showy Lady's Slipper. Probably the rarest plant is one that hasn't been found yet.

The Biggest Plant

Again we need a more exact definition. If we define biggest as greatest volume then many clonal plants that are joined underground (usually) such as grasses, dogwoods or sassafras would be contenders. But, then we have the problem of knowing which plants belong to which clone without digging the whole thing up. I guess we would have to dig it anyway to measure the below ground volume.

The easy way out is to make the biggest the tallest. The tallest plant I know

is a Tuliptree growing on E.R.C.A. property north of Arner Point. It soars an impressive 36 metres. Incredibly that isn't tall enough to get it on the Honour Roll of Ontario trees - it is bettered by a Tuliptree at Short Hills Wilderness Area, Niagara Region.

The tree with the greatest volume of wood might be a Red Oak on the south side of Cedar Creek (there must be something in those Cedar Creek soils). Although only 25.9 metres tall the girth is $5\frac{1}{2}$ metres.

The Smallest Plant

To avoid including fungi and algae let's look for the smallest flowering plant. In this case we have a clear winner and in fact a world champion - Watermeal or Wolffia. There are two species of Watermeal which usually grow together in local waters as an ingredient of 'green soup'. From stem to stern the entire Watermeal plant measures less than 1 mm. They could be mistaken for algae. That makes the flower of Watermeal itsy bitsy indeed. So our smallest plant also sports our smallest flower.

The Biggest Flower

We have a native flower so big that only a cultivated exhibition dahlia could surpass it. It is North America's biggest flower, yet few have ever seen it. This is the flower of the American Lotus - a great yellow chalice up to 25 cm wide. Unfortunatley, you need hip waders or a canoe to examine it closely and sample its pleasant scent. Everything about this plant is heroic - the floating leaves are up to 70 cm wide and the seed is the size of an acorn. Best bet for viewing is the northeast corner of the highway 18 bridge at River Canard in late July. Landlubbers will need binoculars.

The Biggest Leaf

Is it possible that any leaf could surpass the lotus' 70 cm? At a maximum length of 90 cm the Kentucky Coffeetree does just that. Of course this is a doubly compound leaf so the individual leaflets are only 6 cm long. The enormous leaves provide a great mass of foliage in summer but with leaf fall the tree assumes the

stark appearance which gave it the Latin name Gymnocladus: gymno-naked, cladus-branch. Easiest viewing of Kentucky Coffeetree is at the Pro Speed Lub Shop corner of Princess Ave. and Tecumseh Rd. (while having your car's oil changed) or along Ouellette north of the railway overpass.

The Oldest Plant

This is a tough one. Intuitively we would guess one of our largest trees but a lot of plants, for example algae, reproduce vegetatively - simply splitting in two or budding like more complicated plants such as the Watermeal. This makes them virtually immortal. The clonal land plants like grasses and dogwoods are similar. Pieces of the clonal organism may die but the organism itself goes on. Therefore my candidate for oldest land plant is a clonal species and one which could have colonized the county right after the glaciers retreated around 14,000 years ago. Back then the soils were raw and exposed. Spores are faster travelling than seeds so how about a pioneering club moss like Lycopodium digitatum. There is one problem with this choice - it takes about twenty years to grow one from a spore. There is a lot of room for speculation in this category.

WILL THEY SOON BE HISTORY

Thelma Walker

It is not unusual to see black bears in the summertime in Northern Manitoba.

At times they show up around the summer homes near the Lake, or even in the gardens, as one did early one morning when I was picking beans. Needless to say I left.

A few times they have become a nuisance, and probably a bit of a danger in that cottage country, and it is then that the "Parks Boys" are summoned to bring along a bear trap. This trap does not harm the bear of course, other than possibly raising his blood pressure, and he is carted off to a less populated area.

One morning we came out of the house to find the bear had smashed the heavy wooden lid of the compost pit and had gone in in search of something to eat. He must have been quite a mess when he hauled himself out by the look of the grass around that area. His trail led to the nearby woods. (continued on p. 19)

WANDERING WITH WILF

Wilfred Botham

15 Apr. 1976 - The following poem came into my hands about 40 years ago. I don't remember how I got it, and I don't know when the poem was written. It probably dates to sometime in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. It is based on the fossils that had been found in various of the earth's rock strata and the names mentioned are the names given to those rocks by the discoverers of the fossils. They were usually named after the region where they were found. In the poem a young couple are in a restaurant and he is telling the girl this fantastic story of their imagined incarnations throughout the ages.

When you were a tadpole and I was a fish
 In the Paleozoic Time,
 And side by side on the ebbing tide
 We sprawled through the ooze and slime;
 Or skittered with many a caudal flip
 Through the depths of the Cambrian fen,
 My heart was rife with the joy of life
 For I loved you even then.

Mindless we lived and mindless we loved,
 And mindless at last we died:
 And deep in a rift of the Caradoc drift
 We slumbered side by side
 The world turned on in the lathe of time,
 The hot lands heaved amain,
 Till we caught our breath from the womb of death,
 And crept into life again.

We were amphibians, scaled and tailed,
 And drab as a dead man's hand;
 We coiled at ease 'neath the dripping trees,
 Or trailed through the mud and sand;
 Croaking and blind, with our three-clawed feet
 Writing a language dumb,
 With never a spark in the empty dark
 To hint at a life to come.

Yet happy we lived, and happy we loved,
 And happy we died once more;
 Our forms were rolled in the clinging mold
 Of a Neocomian shore.
 The eons came, and the eons fled,
 Till the sleep that wrapped us fast
 Was riven away in a newer day,
 And the night of death was past.

Then light and swift through the jungle trees
 We swung in our airy flights,
 Or breathed in the balms of the froned palms
 In the hush of the moonless nights.
 And oh! what beautiful years were these,
 When our hearts clung each to each;
 When life was filled, and our senses thrilled
 In the first faint dawn of speech.

Thus life by life, and love by love,
 We passed through the cycles strange;
 And breath by breath, and death by death
 We followed the chain of change.
 Till there came a time in the law of life,
 When over the nursing sod
 The shadows broke, and the soul awoke
 To a strange, dim dream of God.

I was thewed like an Auroch bull,
 And tusked like the Great Cave Bear;
 And you, my sweet, from head to feet,
 Were gowned in your glorious hair.
 Deep in the gloom of a fireless cave,
 When the night fell o'er the plain,
 And the moon hung red o'er the river bed,
 We mumbled the bones of the slain.

I flaked a flint to a cutting edge,
 And shaped it with brutish craft;
 I broke a shank from the woodland dank,
 And fitted it, head and haft.
 Then I hid me close to the reedy tarn,
 Where the mammoth came to drink---
 Through brawn and bone I drave the stone
 And slew him upon the brink.

Loud I howled through the moonlit wastes,
 Loud answered our kith and kin;
 From west and east to the crimson feast
 The clan came trooping in.
 O'er joint and gristle and padded hoof
 We fought and clawed and tore,
 And cheek by jowl, with many a growl,
 We talked the marvel o'er.

I carved that fight on a reindeer bone,
 With rude and hairy hand.
 I pictured his fall on the cavern wall
 That men might understand.
 For we lived by blood, and the right of might,
 Ere human laws were drawn,
 And the Age of Sin did not begin
 Till our brutal tusks were gone.

And that was a million years ago,
 In a time that no man knows;
 Yet here tonight in the mellow light
 We sit at Delmonico's;

Your eyes are deep as the Devon springs,
 Your hair is as dark as jet,
 Your years are few, your life is new,
 Your soul untried, and yet---

Our trail is on the Kimmeridge clay,
 And the scarp of the Purbeck flags,
 We have left our bones in the Bagshot stones,
 And deep in the Coraline crags;
 Our love is old, our lives are old,
 And death shall come amain;
 Should it come today, what may say
 We shall not live again?

God wrought our souls from the Tremadoc beds,
 And furnished them wings to fly;
 He sowed our spawn in the world's dim dawn,
 And I know it shall not die;
 Though cities have sprung above the graves
 Where the crook-boned men made war,
 And the ox-wain creaks o'er the buried caves
 Where the mummied mammoths are.

Then as we linger at luncheon here,
 O'er many a dainty dish,
 Let us drink anew to the time when you
 Were a tadpole and I was a fish.

(continued from p. 16)

Last summer we hadn't seen any bears around although there was evidence of their having been there in the overturned stumps and dead logs where they had been searching for ants. So, as many folks do, we decided to drive over to the dump and sit there awhile, with the hope of seeing some.

Around dusk, out of the bush came 3 bears - 2 black and 1 brown - to forage in the garbage. The smaller of the two black ones found a plastic margarine container, carried it up onto the road and sat down to enjoy licking it. The other two also found some things to their taste. Another vehicle was there besides ours and the men in it were also watching the bears.

I got out to take a picture and as I did, I heard one of the men say "Take the picture -- they'll soon be history." We didn't think they meant any harm to these bears. Surely they were just enjoying them as we were. But it wasn't long before we knew. The man got out of his car with a rifle and shot two of the bears. The other bear ran into the woods and may have escaped. The bears were gone. The sun was gone. We drove home.

Upon enquiring in the town the next day we learned that the bear hunting season had just opened. This hunter was within his legal rights.

Maybe they really will "soon be history."

1988 HOLIDAY BEACH HAWK WATCH SUMMARY - THE FIFTEENTH AUTUMN

Dick Benoit
Hawk Committee Chairperson

RED-TAILED HAWK

Holiday Beach Conservation Area, near Amherstburg, Ontario again was the site of an exciting autumn of hawk watching. Not only is the site graced by a newly constructed three tier viewing tower, but the symbolic one millionth hawk, an adult Red-

tailed Hawk, was recorded.

It was a record year for Turkey Vultures which have shown a steady increase in migrating numbers. Cooper's Hawks and Merlins also had recorded numbers of migrants. Broad-winged Hawks were slightly below the fifteen year average. The main disappointment were the low number of Northern Goshawks.

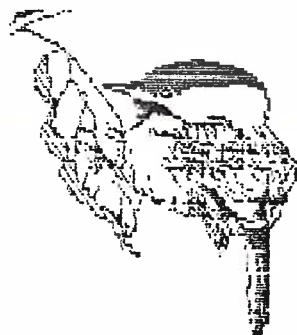
<u>SPECIES</u>	<u>1988 TOTALS</u>	<u>15 YR. AVG.</u>	<u>15 YR. TD.</u>
Turkey Vultures	12,365	5,240	78,612
Ospreys	97	83	1,202
Bald Eagles	37	24	273
Northern Harriers	1,006	701	9,162
Sharp-shinned Hawks	16,158	13,903	201,595
Cooper's Hawks	903	562	6,750
Northern Goshawks	14	32	369
Red-shouldered Hawks	1,111	914	11,655
Broad-winged Hawks	27,420	39,762	551,310
Red-tailed Hawks	7,494	6,777	87,017
Rough-legged Hawks	106	145	2,020
Golden Eagles	35	27	327
American Kestrels	3,571	3,309	45,337
Merlins	42	20	254
Peregrines	15	15	184
Unidentified Hawks	172	428	6,702
Totals	70,546		1,002,769

This environmental project's success is due to the dedication from a group of volunteers who spent 92 days for a total of 711.75 hours scanning the skies for the migrants. Sundays were covered again for the twelfth season by Allen Chartier,

(continued on p. 25)

FOURTH ANNUAL CEDAR CREEK CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT *** 17 DECEMBER 1988

--- Paul D. Pratt



On Saturday, December 17th, 31 birders participated in the fourth annual Cedar Creek Christmas Bird Count. The 24 km. diameter circle is centred 5.3 km. northeast of Harrow. The 69 species (69,904

individuals) recorded was a lower total than normal due to exceptionally cold weather prior the count. Highlights included Common Snipe, House Wren, 12 Carolina Wrens and 2 Brown Thrashers.

Fourteen parties tallied 107 hours in the field and 7 hours predawn calling for owls. Chris Lemieux received the most interesting response from his efforts at attracting owls with taped calls. An agitated screech-owl flew into Chris' car looking for the source of the calls. Betty Learmouth co-ordinated the dawn Crow census at Essex. A new Canadian record was set with 54,675 crows tallied leaving the roost.

At the end of a long, cold, windy day everyone gathered at my house for the compilation and a potluck dinner.

A total of 102 species have been recorded on the past four counts. Cedar Creek holds the Canadian record for Eastern Screech-Owl and American Crow. Over 41,000 participants took part in the +1500 different bird counts held this year in North America. All of the information gathered will be edited and published in American Birds. If you missed the count this year remember to mark Saturday, December 16, 1989 on your calendar for next year.

PARTICIPANTS:

Area 1, Kingsville: Don Cecile, Gladys Fisher, Bob Hawker, Chris Lemieux (area leader), Ethan Meleg, Johanne Ranger, Cathy Watson, Pat Watson, Jason Wintermute, Natalie Zalkind.

Area 2, Cedar Beach & Cottam: Bill Balkwill, Frances Barry, Wilf Botham, Tom Hince (leader), Betty Learmouth, Carl Maiolani, Shannon Managhan.

Area 3, Essex & McGregor: Anne Barbour, Peter Bondy (area leader), Jim McAllister, Ralph Thomas.

Area 4, S. Colchester: Keith Burk, Thomas Hurst, Jeff Larson (area leader), Steve Pike.

Area 5, Harrow: Gary Allen, Jo Barten, Bonnie Foley, Bruce Ford, Cheryl Learn, Paul Pratt (count compiler).

RESULTS: Great Blue Heron 1, Canada Goose 4904, American Black Duck 2, Mallard 8, Redhead 2, Common Goldeneye 1, Common Merganser 189, Red-breasted Merganser 6, Bald Eagle 1, Northern Harrier 2, Sharp-shinned Hawk 6, Cooper's Hawk 4, Red-shouldered Hawk 5, Red-tailed Hawk 86, Rough-legged Hawk 11, American Kestrel 34, Ring-necked Pheasant 17, Killdeer 1, Common Snipe 1, Bonaparte's Gull 1, Ring-billed Gull 18, Herring Gull 120, Great Black-backed Gull 15, gull species 7, Rock Dove 771, Mourning Dove 1579, Eastern Screech-Owl 52, Great Horned Owl 29, Belted Kingfisher 2, Red-bellied Woodpecker 7, Downy Woodpecker 162, Hairy Woodpecker 7, Northern Flicker 18, Horned Lark 164, Blue Jay 219, American Crow 54675, Black-capped Chickadee 2, Red-breasted Nuthatch 2, White-breasted Nuthatch 29, Brown Creeper 42, Carolina Wren 12, House Wren 1, Winter Wren 3, Golden-crowned Kinglet 46, Eastern Bluebird 19, Hermit Thrush 2, American Robin 5, Brown Thrasher 2, Cedar Waxwing 2, European Starling 1970, Northern Cardinal 317, Rufous-sided (Eastern) Towhee 6, American Tree Sparrow 411, Field Sparrow 4, Song Sparrow 246, Swamp Sparrow 71, White-throated Sparrow 38, White-crowned Sparrow 8, Dark-eyed Junco 236, Lapland Longspur 1, Snow Bunting 630, Red-winged Blackbird 7, Meadowlark sp. 1, Common Grackle 2, Brown-headed Cowbird 109, Purple Finch 8, House Finch 580, American Goldfinch 185, Evening Grosbeak 5, House Sparrow 1954.

POINT PELEE CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - 1988

The thirty-seventh Point Pelee C.B.C. was held on Monday, December 19, 1988.

Thirty-eight observers participated and tallied 84 species and 26,083 individuals.

The weather was clear with light winds and temperatures slightly above 0° at midday.

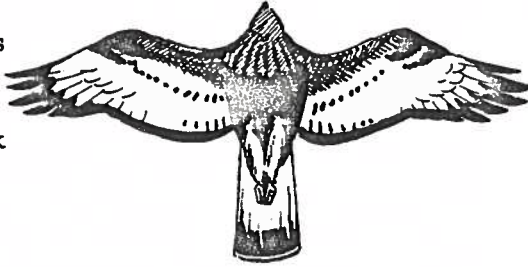
Millie Evans compiled the count and the Friends of Point Pelee served a supper to the participants at 6:00 p.m.

Common Loon	2	Short-eared Owl	1
Double-crested cormorant	2	Saw-whet Owl	1
Great Blue Heron	3	Belted Kingfisher	3
Canada Goose	14	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1
American Black Duck	82	Downy Woodpecker	163
Mallard	108	Northern Flicker	9
Redhead	35	Horned Lark	386
Ring-necked Duck	9	Blue Jay	32
Greater Scaup	321	American Crow	3449
Lesser Scaup	30	Black-capped Chickadee	21
Oldsquaw	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	17
White-winged Scoter	11	White-breasted Nuthatch	4
Common Goldeneye	388	Brown Creeper	108
Bufflehead	108	Carolina Wren	43
Hooded Merganser	1	Winter Wren	11
Common Merganser	926	Golden-crowned Kinglet	175
Red-breasted Merganser	3428	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2
Turkey Vulture	1	Hermit Thrush	3
Bald Eagle	2	American Robin	4
Golden Eagle	1	Bohemian Waxwing	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	Cedar Waxwing	31
Northern Goshawk	3	European Starling	1712
Red-shouldered Hawk	4	Yellow-rumped Warbler	9
Red-tailed Hawk	36	Northern Cardinal	194
Rough-legged Hawk	3	American Tree Sparrow	969
Northern Harrier	1	Field Sparrow	18
American Kestrel	33	Song Sparrow	273
Ring-necked Pheasant	21	Swamp Sparrow	131
Virginia Rail	1	White-throated Sparrow	37
Killdeer	1	White-crowned Sparrow	18
Common Snipe	1	Dark-eyed Junco	237
Little Gull	1	Lapland Longspur	1
Bonaparte's Gull	2219	Snow Buntings	495
Ring-billed Gull	2773	Red-winged Blackbird	123
Herring Gull	2720	Yellow-headed Blackbird	1
Thayer's Gull	1	Rusty Blackbird	40
Glaucous Gull	1	Common Grackle	120
Great Black-backed Gull	111	Brown-headed Cowbird	622
Rock Dove	300	Purple Finch	2
Mourning Dove	601	House Finch	638
Eastern Screech-Owl	13	American Goldfinch	84
Great Horned Owl	21	House Sparrow	1551

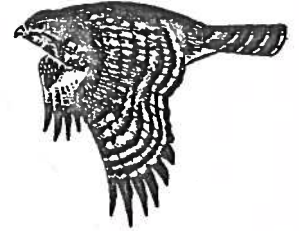
Continued.....

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Barry, Frances
 Bondy, Peter
 Brough, Clifford
 Burk, Keith
 Carhart, Ernie
 Cartwright, John
 Chomyshyn, Mike
 Connop, Scott
 Fisher, Gladys
 Glover, Bev
 Hince, Tom
 Jennings, Mark
 Klager, Cal
 Laylin, Lee
 Laylin, Roger
 Liptrot, Brad
 Martin, Dave
 McAllister, Jim
 Meleg, Ethan



Miller, Charles
 Miller, Janice
 Pike, Steve
 Platt, Ian
 Pratt, Paul
 Read, Peter
 Rennie, Brian
 Simms, Jonathan
 Simms, Roger
 Snider, Ross
 Surette, Chris
 Surette, Mike
 Tesolin, Dino
 Thomas, Ralph
 Thornbury, Barb
 Thorpe, Marion
 Tymstra, Robert
 Wintermute, Jason
 Woodliffe, Alan

A RHYME ABOUT CROWS

Anne Barbour

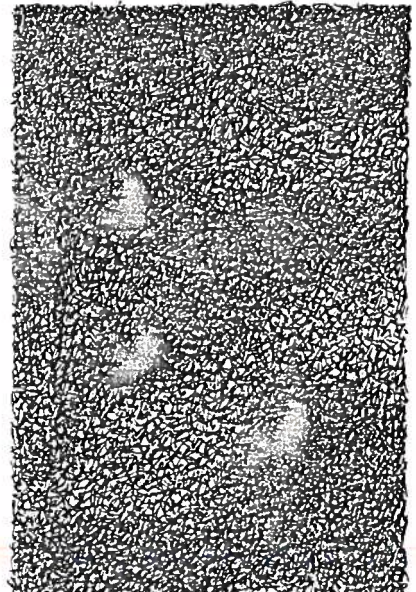
In honour of another extremely successful Crow Count at which 54,675 birds were tallied (last year's Canada-high figure was 46,900), I think it only appropriate to bring to your attention a recent picture book entitled "Crows" with pictures by Heidi Holder.

This old rhyme originated in England and Scotland but centred there among magpies. Though different versions have been recorded, this is the version Heidi so richly illustrates with the love story of an adventurous weasel and a faithful mink:



CROWS

1 is for bad news
 2 is for mirth
 3 is a wedding
 4 is a birth
 5 is for riches
 6 is a thief
 7 is a journey
 8 is for grief
 9 is a secret
 10 is for sorrow
 11 is for love
 12 is for joy tomorrow.



THE 1989 POINT PELEE DEER COUNT

Tom Hurst



For the second year running the weather was most cooperative for the counting of deer in our neighbouring national park. The possibility of wet feet was the only hazard encountered by the sixty-four volunteers on Saturday, January 7. The count was only an additional excuse for a winter walk in the woods.

Many of the volunteers had participated in the previous year's count and their experience added to the efficiency of this year's operation. The method employed by the Park was identical to that

used a year earlier. The volunteers were dispatched from a bus at the northern park boundary to form a southward moving line which forced the nervous deer to the southern tip. Those deer reluctant to be herded in this fashion were counted as they crossed northward through the human chain. Once concentrated at the tip, the volunteers then drove the deer northward across the east-west road which bisects the Park at the Interpretive Centre. This allowed Park staff stationed there to count the herd as it crossed the line.

This year there were 20% more deer to be counted than the year before. Remarkably 145 deer were found to be in the Park that day. Of these one third were bucks, one third does and one third fawns. This is the normal ratio for deer populations. A coyote and a fox also made an appearance to be counted while some Great Horned Owls oversaw the proceedings. Unfortunately, for one buck, a handsome set of antlers became a souvenir of the count. The antlers were snapped off in the dense underbrush as the buck endeavoured to escape the oncoming humans.

Now 145 deer would appear to be an excessive population for a 15 square kilometer park. Some experts feel that 30 - 40 deer would most likely be a sustainable population for Point Pelee. However, Park Wardens lecturing after the count were not as certain as Eugene Whelan that the shotgun solution was necessary. They didn't believe that enough was known about the relationship between the deer population and the Point to draw conclusions. One hypothesis forwarded was that the great number of deer was a winter phenomenon and that in spring the majority may annually leave the Park. This would lessen, perhaps to acceptable levels, the stress upon the flora of the Park. So far Point Pelee has escaped the severe effects of overgrazing that plague highly deer populated regions such as Rondeau Provincial Park.

In response to concerns for the future of the Point as a unique flora habitat, the Park management plans a concerted research project on the deer population. Individual deer will be captured and fitted with radio signaling devices to aid in tracking deer movements throughout the year. At the same time these deer will be evaluated as to their health and presence of disease within the herd.

Recently visitors to the Point have found small areas fenced off to trespassers. These are "exclosures" which prohibit deer from grazing in this limited area. These "control areas" will give the Park management an idea of what effect the deers' grazing is having on the Park's flora. As well, attempts will be made by Park staff to estimate the numbers of deer in the Point during other seasons. Also for those avid volunteer counters a 1990 winter deer count will be undertaken.

Counting the deer individually is by far the best way of determining Point Pelee's deer population. The winter deer count is an important tool in the management of a most unique Canadian natural environment. And, I might add, a most pleasant experience for the participants.

(continued from p. 20)

Mondays were covered for the second season by Wayne Wilson and Bea Lazar, Tuesdays were personed for the fiteenth consecutive year by Audrey Weir and Esther Cusick, Wednesdays had Laurie Yorke for the seventh season with help from Bob Hawker, Thursdays had Carl Sibert and Mike Kielb with over ten combined years on the site, Friday's crew of Joanne McIntyre, Freeman Davis, Bob Pettit, and Mel Stahl also have combined over ten seasons of hawk watching at the site. Will Weber, John Ralston,

PLANNING YOUR LANDSCAPE FOR THE BIRDS

Don Bissonette

Winter is a good time to plan your landscape. There is plenty of time for research on trees, shrubs, and gardening. Landscaping books from the library can be helpful. Also visit garden centers. They usually have brochures and books for customer use.

No doubt, many of you are hoping to encourage wild life in your backyards. The Essex Region Conservation Authority has a few publications covering this topic and the staff is ready to answer any questions you may have about creating a backyard habitat. Hopefully, this article will give you a few ideas too.

The Importance of Evergreens

Evergreens are very essential in creating a backyard habitat. Many small birds prefer to roost in evergreen branches - this is especially true in the winter when deciduous trees offer no wind protection.

Many birds prefer to nest in evergreens, such as the Mourning Dove and Cardinal.

In rural areas, pheasants and Northern Bob-white prefer to roost and nest below evergreens. This gives them protection from weather, and concels them from predators. Ducks also seek out evergreens for nesting.



Some evergreens also supply food. Some birds are adapted for pulling seeds out of pine and spruce cones. Many small birds eat juniper berries.

Evergreens seem to have the most environmental significance when several are planted in a cluster.

Clusters of evergreens are a safe haven for wildlife.

A Look at Different Evergreens

Most evergreens prefer a light, acid soil. However, most of Essex County is a heavy, sweet, clay soil. So, when you plant evergreens, it's a good idea to use peat moss, and occasionally some acid fertilizer.

PINES - The Austrian Pine is very adaptive, and does well in this area. The other varieties of pine don't always thrive. Not only is the soil not to their liking, but the summers are too long and too hot.

The nicest Scotch Pines, and White Pines in Essex County are growing where they receive some protection from wind, and have some shade.

SPRUCES - Spruces for the most part do very well in Essex County. The Norway Spruce has the fastest growth; however, they are often sparse. The White Spruce does not grow as fast, but holds a full, well-formed shape. The Serbian Spruce has shiny blue-green needles, and a full shape.

CEDARS - For a long time, Eastern White Cedars have been used for hedgerows with limited success. In the wind and full sun, they grow slowly. Unless they receive acid fertilizer, they often become sparse. They brown out quickly every winter.

Nurseries have developed new cultivars of White Cedar - most of these cultivars are hardier and more adaptive. For the past few years, Essex County landscapers have been using the new strains, such as "Emerald" and "Smaragd".

JUNIPERS - Junipers come in 3 forms: Uprights, Bushes, and Low Creepers. There are several colours: Soft Blue, Dark Green, and Yellow-Green. Most of them can grow in full sun or partial shade.

Some of the uprights are very hardy, and can be used for hedgerows. The Spartan is a dark green upright, which does very well in Essex County. Perhaps some day it will be Essex County's number one hedge plant.

Some of the spreading junipers have been planted in nature reserves. Rabbits, grouse, quail, pheasants, and ducks use them for cover, and nesting.

Deciduous Trees and Bushes

There is a multitude of trees and bushes that will offer food and shelter in your

backyard habitat.

Keep variety in mind. First of all, a variety in size. Some birds prefer to nest high up, like Scarlet Tanagers. American Goldfinches nest in small, but dense trees, or bushes.

Most people use bird feeders to attract birds. However, feeders, in conjunction with natural food work better. Again, use a variety of fruit and berry bushes. This way, you will attract a wider variety of birds. Cedar Waxwings are partial to Autumn Olive, while Goldfinches like birch seed.

Also, try to plan for an almost-continuous supply of food. Most bushes only fruit for a few weeks once a year. Pick shrubs that bear their fruit at different times.

Here is an example of an almost-continuous food supply - the approximate time of fruit production is in brackets.

Raspberries (late June, July)
 Serviceberry (July)
 Red Mulberry (late July, early August)
 Currants (August)
 Mountain Ash (August, early September)
 Chokecherry (late August, September)
 Autumn-Olive (September, October)
 Sumac (October)

You can control the size and shape of many deciduous plants. Many of the berry bushes such as Mulberry, Serviceberry, Nannyberry, and Elderberry, can be pruned into single-stemmed, small trees.

VINES - Vines are mostly overlooked by Ontario landscapers. Not only do they have landscape value, but they attract wildlife.

The Trumpet Vine flowers in July and August. The deep orange, trumpet-shaped flower is almost red. It is a favourite among humming birds.

The Virginia Creeper is a clinging vine. Using "suction cups", it holds to brick, concrete, stone, and wood. During the autumn, it produces brilliant shades of orange and red, and also a small fleshy fruit for the birds to eat.

Hardy English Ivy is another clinging vine. It holds its leaves year round.

Many birds roost and nest among hardy English Ivy, seeking cover from the wind and predators.

Perennials and Annuals

Many people plant a garden of sunflower plants. This will feed Cardinals and Blue Jays in the winter.

In Wisconsin, certain landowners are planting crops for wildlife. Most of these crop plots are planted at the edge of wooded areas. Some have brush piles nearby. The crops planted are corn, sorghum (a relative of corn) and Bobwhite Soybean. These crops provide food and cover for pheasants, quail and rabbits.

However, most of us plant perennials and annuals to attract butterflies, moths, and hummingbirds.

If you're trying to attract "hummers", use a lot of red and bright orange flowers - Red Salvia, Lupines, Fuchsia, Carpet Bugle and Trumpet Vine.

Flowering crab trees are also important for attracting the hummingbird. Crabs start to flower in early May. Hummingbirds return to this area in May. Usually, at that time, crab tree flowers are their main food source. Again, red flowering varieties such as Radiant and Royalty work well.

Weigelas, or "Cardinal Bushes" and Rose-of-Sharon Bushes are also beneficial for the hummers. Both bushes bloom from late spring to early fall.

BIRD SEED - Keep bird feeders filled year round. Many people choose to suspend their feeders from a chain or wire; however, this causes the feeder to swing in the wind. This motion makes the birds nervous, and many will not visit the feeder. Keep your feeder secured to a post, or in the fork of a tree.

Bird seed is not just for birdfeeders. Sprinkle some on the lawn in winter. This will attract birds which prefer to feed on the ground, such as Horned Larks and Snow Buntings.

The area around bird feeders can become messy. You might consider turning up the soil around the feeder, then spreading woodchips and raking periodically. Every few years you might clean the whole area of seeds and chips and place in your compost

heap for future compost.

Also, sprinkle it wherever you can. Put some on the picnic table... unless you're into winter picnicking! It's good to have more than one feeding station! That way, smaller birds will have somewhere to feed - even if domineering birds, like Blue Jays, are at the main feeder.



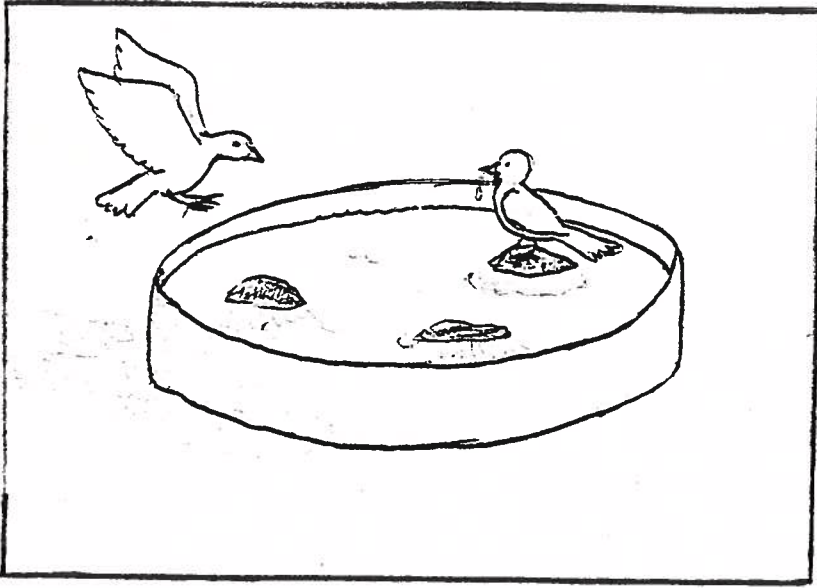
Birds prefer lookout points near feeders, where they can inspect for safety.

If possible, plant small trees and bushes 25 - 40 feet away from your feeder. Before visiting your feeder, most birds prefer to land first on a "look-out" point to inspect the feeding area. Trees and shrubs close to the feeder provide security. If anything frightens them while feeding, safe cover is not far away.

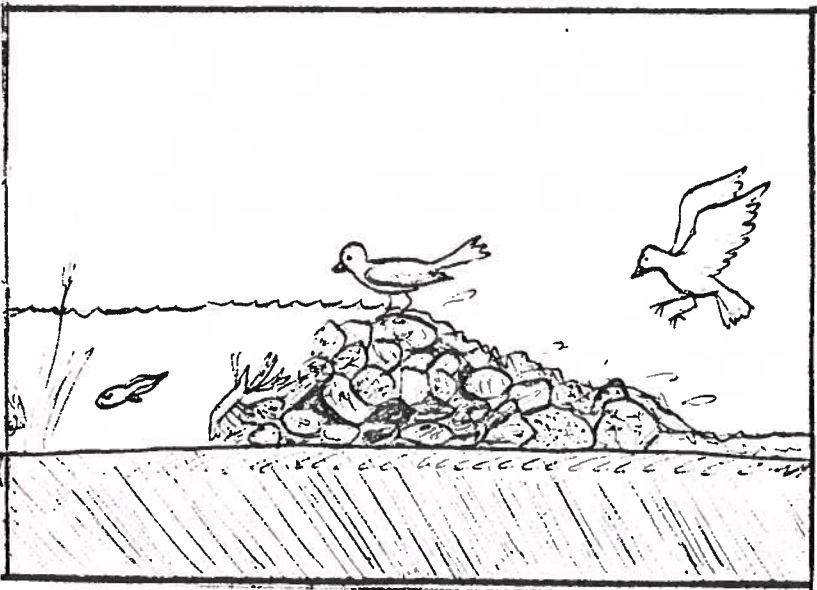
WATER - Water will attract any animal, especially in a dry summer. Many people supply water in the form of a birdbath. However, many birds are slow to use a birdbath. After all, it's unnatural. Water is usually on the ground, not on a dish on a pedestal.

Any shallow dish filled with water, under a shady tree is bound to attract birds. A clean, upside down aluminum garbage can lid will do the trick. Place a few rocks in the water, to create standing room.

An upside down, clean garbage can lid is truly the budget model of a ground birdbath. You can get fancy, by digging a shallow pond, laying a plastic liner, and edging it with rocks.



A "Budget" Model Ground Bird Bath.



A Creek Bird Bath (side-cut view).

Years ago, I built a dam in a rural ditch. It was one foot high, and made entirely of field stones. I often see birds, especially Robins, standing around this dam and mini-pond drinking and bathing.

On a quiet day, the sound of water splashing over the rock dam can be heard about 200 feet away. I'm wondering if most birds find this spot by sound, and not sight. After all, this spot is covered by bushes and spreading trees, at almost every angle.

Conclusion

Planning your landscape "for the birds" can be rewarding. Hopefully, you'll be able to birdwatch just by standing in your backyard. And who knows, planting trees, bushes and plants may give you a new interest and hobby. Some day, you may be the president of the Windsor Horticultural Society.

Most importantly, you'll be supplying habitat for wildlife. Considering Essex County's shrink-

ing environment areas are down to 2%, it's vital we do everything and anything we can to improve the situation for wildlife.

- CLUB NEWS UPDATE -

Our Christmas raffle (a nature videotape and camera strap) was won by Anne Barbour, Amaryllis bulbs donated by Linda Moore were won by Deb Gorman Smith and Paul Pratt. Our next raffle will be held June 14 and prizes include books for a naturalist's library.

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Our winter field trips were well attended. "Thank you" to the leaders who volunteered to lead these walks.

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Don Bissonette, an E.C.F.N.C. member, can offer assistance to club members regarding pruning, landscape design and landscape installation. Contact Don at 737-6034

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If you have suggestions for future speakers and field trips, please contact the persons co-ordinating these activities for our club.

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On February 24, 1989, the Ministry of Natural Resources announced that fox bounties paid by municipalities will be declared illegal and will be phased out by October 31, 1989.

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Consider participating in the Baillie Bird-a-thon 1989 on May 13, 1989. In 1988 club participants raised \$210.00 for our club and \$630.00 for the Long Point Bird Observatory. More details at the April meeting.

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"Thank you" to all the contributors of this issue of "The Egret." All E.C.F.N.C. members are invited to submit articles, drawings, etc.

* * * * *

The Junior Naturalist will be available this month. The contributors are Bev Wannick, Shannon Managhan and Anne Barbour. Subscriptions are \$5.00/year and we presently have approximately twelve subscribers.

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- March 8 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting
 Topic: Urban Forestry
 Speaker: Shannon Managhan
- " 12 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
 Sandwich West Woodlot
 Leader: Bonnie Foley
 Meet at 2:00 p.m. at the Village Market Plaza on Malden Road
- " 29 - Executive Meeting 7:30 p.m.
- April 6 - Spring bird migration field course
 7:30 p.m. - Ojibway Nature Centre
- " 8 - Spring bird migration field trip
- " 9 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
 Tremblay Beach Conservation Area, Stoney Point
 We will spend an hour or so cleaning the area for visitors.
 Meet at 2:00 p.m. in the parking lot
- " 12 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting
 Marlborough C.C. - 7:30 p.m.
 Topic: Ontario hydro and the choice of sites for hydro lines
 Speaker: Greg Neil
- " 16 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
 A visit to the pre-historic beaver dam
 Leader: Bill Balkwill
 Meet at 1:30 p.m. at the Cedar Creek C.A. parking lot. We will
 be walking for several hours through one of the most extensive
 woodlots in Essex County
- " 19,20 - E.R.C.A. Program
 Birding at Hillman Marsh - 9:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- " 20 - Spring Wildflowers
 7:30 p.m. - Ojibway Nature Centre
- " 22 - Spring bird migration field trip
- " 23 - Spring wildflowers field trip
 1:00 p.m. - Sinclair's Woods, Kent County
- " 26 - Executive Meeting 7:30 p.m.
- " 26-30 - E.R.C.A. Program
 Birding at Hillman Marsh
- " 27 - Birding for beginners
 7:30 p.m. - Ojibway Nature Centre
- " 29 - Birding for beginners field trip



- April 30 - Spring festival at Ojibway
Ojibway Nature Centre - 1:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Build a wren nesting box, enjoy a special children's programme.
A dedication ceremony will be held for the newly acquired
Tallgrass Prairie Heritage Park. A conducted walk through the
Prairie will follow the ceremony.
- May 3-7 - E.R.C.A. Program
Birding at Hillman Marsh - 9:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- " 6 - Spring bird migration field trip
- " 7 - Birding for beginners field trip
- " 10 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting May 12,13,14 - Birding Festival
Marlborough C.C. - 7:30 p.m. Pt. Pelee N.P.
Topic: Wildlife photography
Speaker: Bob Graham
- " 10-14 - E.R.C.A. Program
Birding at Hillman Marsh - 9:00 - 4:00 p.m.
- " 13 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
Birding Day for the Baillie Bird-a-thon
Leader: Peter Bondy
Meet at Tremblay Beach C.A. at 8:00 a.m.
- " 14 - E.R.C.A. Program
Mother's Day Wildflower Hike at Arner Point 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Meet at the Cedar Creek Conservation Area
- " 20 - Spring bird migration field trip May 20 - Birders' Brunch
11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Pt. Pelee N.P. Visitors Centre
- " 21 - Birding for beginners field trip
- " 26,27, - Federation of Ontario Naturalists
28 Annual General Meeting and Conference
Hosted by the Kingston Field Naturalists at Kingston, Ontario.
- " 27 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
A visit to Rondeau Park for "squeaks and peeps in the night."
Enjoy tree frogs, American toads, newts, Fowler's toads, etc.
Leader: Peter Bondy
Meet at 7:30 p.m. at the entrance to Rondeau Park.
Bring your waders (optional) and flashlights.
- " 28 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
Sandwich West Woodlot to view spring flowers including the
Yellow Lady's Slipper
Leader: Bonnie Foley
Meet at the Village Market Plaze on Malden Road at 2:00 p.m.
- " 31 - Executive Meeting
- June 3 - E.C.F.N.C. Field Trip
Pelee Island Nature Preserve Tour
Leader: Brendan Larson
NOTE: Please call Betty Learmouth as early as possible (944-2292),
DAYS) for details and to indicate you will be a part of this trip.
We must reserve car space and car pool on the ferry.

- June 8 - Life in the Marsh
7:30 p.m. - Ojibway Nature Centre
- " 10 - Life in the Marsh Field Trip
10:00 p.m. - Lake St. Clair Wetlands
- " 14 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting
Marlborough C.C. - 7:30 p.m.
Speaker: Jeff Larson
Topic: Herptiles
- " 20 - Things-that-go-bump-in-the-night.
9:00 p.m.
Learn a new group of insects this spring with this short programme on nocturnal insects.



Young Naturalist day camps.

Ojibway Nature Centre

Swamp walks, wildlife viewing, nature games and crafts for children aged 7 to 11. Day-long programmes are held every Wednesday in July and August.

- July 15, 16 - E.R.C.A. Program.
Holiday Beach Summer Festival
Holiday beach Conservation Area.

The Council of Sandwich West

....continued from page 1

Vince Marcotte - Reeve
Bill Varga - Deputy Reeve
Ron Arkell - Councillor
Joe Durocher - Councillor
Mike Raymond - Councillor

The Township of Sandwich West,
Town Hall,
5950 Malden Road,
Windsor, Ontario. N9H 1S4

LETTER WRITING STRATEGIES TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE ...

To bring about changes in the laws and regulations, letter writing can be very effective, if the following tips are utilized.

1. Keep your letter short. Make at most two or three points or a single
2. Handwritten letters are as good as typed letters as long as they indicate that you are serious about the ideas and are not just copying
3. To increase the impact of your letter, copy it to two or three members, or ministers.
4. Ask specifically that the person reply to your letter, or ask a question that you expect answers, or ask whether the person is willing to take a certain position. If you receive no reply within three weeks, write again.
5. Do not threaten or try to intimidate the person. Remember, you are asking for their support.
6. Individual letters are more effective than group letters or form letters.
7. Send a copy of your letter to the environmental or recreational organization that is working on the issue. This lets them know how much support you have in the form of letters. Otherwise, they don't know their strength.
8. Be sure to include "Hon." before ministers' names.
9. Send your letter today. The more you procrastinate, the less likely it will reach the persons responsible in time.
10. Get in the habit of writing letters regularly. Once a week is a good rule to have in mind. Remember, they can be handwritten.

The EGRET, Volume 6, Number 1, March 1989; newsletter of the Essex County
Field Naturalists' Club, P.O. Box 3421, Tecumseh, Ontario. N8N 3C4
Address correction requested.

Peggy Moore
R.R. # 3,
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