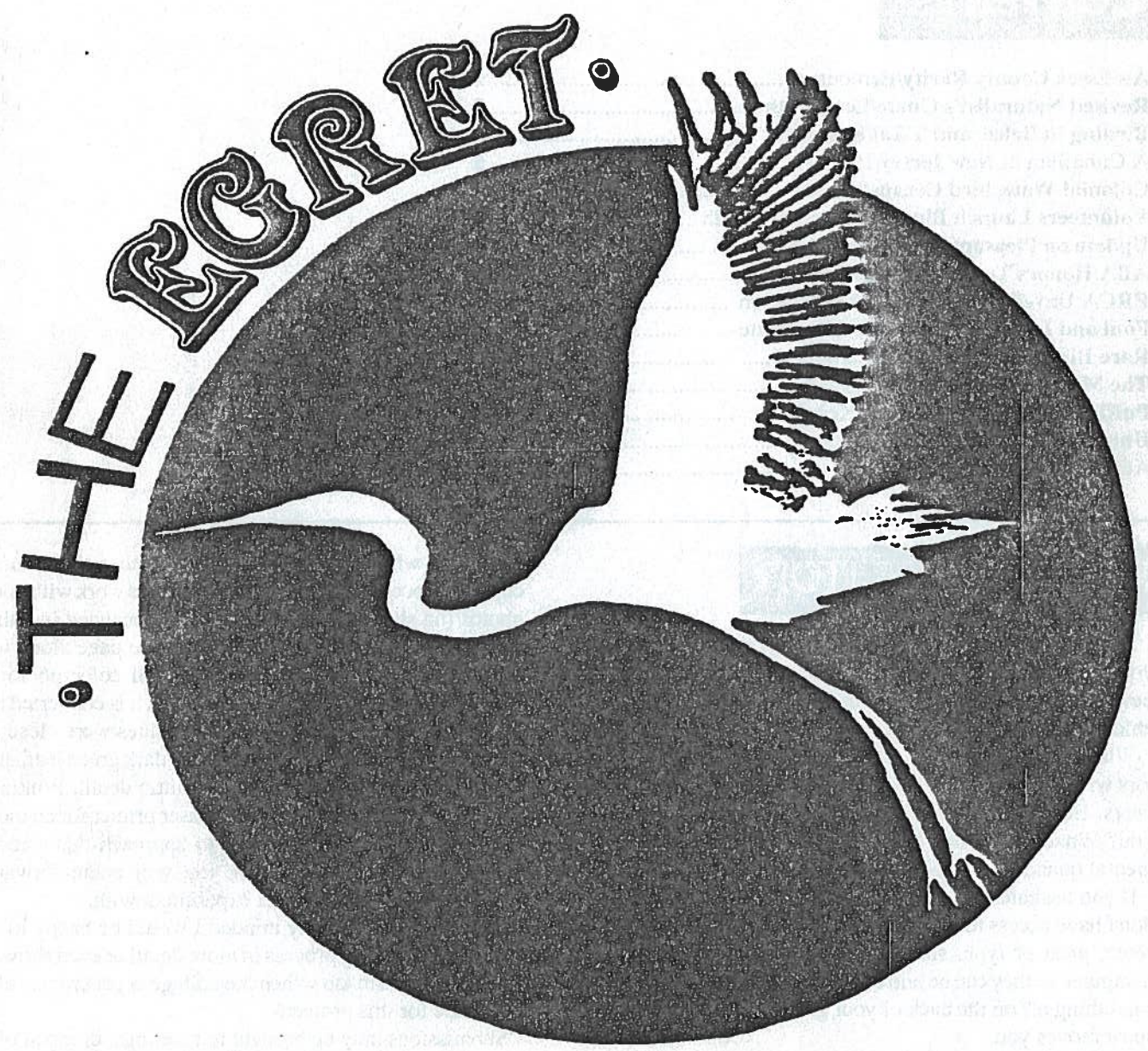


# Essex County FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB



# Essex County FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB



Volume 8, Number 2, June, 1991

## CONTENTS

An Essex County Rarity/Barbour .....	2
Revised Naturalist's Guide/Learmouth .....	3
Birding in Belize and Tikal/Kassimatis .....	4
A Canadian in New Jersey/Hince .....	5
Colonial Waterbird Census/Watson .....	6
Volunteers Launch Bluebird Box/Learmouth .....	7
Update on Pleasant Valley Trail/Learmouth .....	7
ABA Honors Towhee's Hosts/Pratt .....	8
ERCA Unveils Concept Plans/Learmouth .....	9
Foul and Loathsome Creatures/Ouellette .....	10
Rare Bird Alert/Watson .....	10
The Magic of Composting/Ranger .....	11
Puffins At Arms Length/MacKenzie .....	12
United Nations Award/Learmouth .....	13
Activities Calendar .....	14

## FROM THE EDITOR

No news may be good news to some people, but it's not when you are trying to fill up a publication. As we used to say in the newspaper business, putting out this edition was like making chicken soup out of chick feathers.

Which is certainly not to denigrate those few loyal contributors who have pretty much sustained *The Egret* through recent years. But what of the other 100+ club members? Where are you? What do you do? What do you think about the environmental quandaries that confront us all?

If you hesitated to write something because you can't type or don't have access to a typewriter — no problem! Whether you write, print or type, submissions still have to be input on a computer so they can be laid out in the pages. So feel free to dash something off on the back of your grocery list or whenever the spirit moves you.

And don't worry about the niceties of spelling and grammar. That's my job and I've been at it 25 years. Trust me — you won't be embarrassed when you see your work in print. Nor will I make substantial changes without consulting you. Just remember writing is like so many other activities: It is the practice that gives you self-confidence.

As well, illustrations of any kind are welcome. As you can see

black and white line drawings reproduce well in our photocopying process, but I am willing to try and work with your color photos (no slides please). These can be scanned into the computer and then resized and fitted into the page along with the stories. Unfortunately, a perfectly good color photo doesn't always yield an equally fine result when it is converted to black and white on the page. If the color values were close to each other, such as a dark red bird against a dark green leaf, the result will be a dark grey area with very little detail. Printing these pages with photos also ties up my laser printer for an inordinate length of time so we will have to approach this area slowly. Nevertheless I hope some of you will come forward with material that we can at least experiment with.

For anyone technically minded I would be happy to explain the photo screening process in more detail or even show you St. Clair's journalism lab which the college is generously allowing me to use for this project.

Submissions may be brought to meetings; dropped off at the college (please mark Journalism Dept. on the envelope) or mailed to my home: 920 Victory, LaSalle N9J 1W1.

Finally, the economic argument: Did you know we could have mailed an edition of double this size for the same price? Let's get our money's worth!

Susan MacKenzie

# AN ESSEX COUNTY RARITY

By Anne Barbour

With its extreme southern Ontario location resulting in a Carolinian hardwood habitat, Essex County has several floral species that are designated as "rare in Ontario but common in Essex County." The opposite designation of "common in Ontario but rare in Essex County," however, can be said for certain faunal species like the Southern Flying Squirrel and Beaver.

Could the latter possibly be establishing residency at Tremblay Creek near Stoney Point, in Essex County? This was the

question very cautiously posed to me in February by Gerry Waldron, biologist for the Essex Region Conservation Authority. Gerry's suspicions had been aroused when, on a routine check of the Tremblay Beach Conservation Area, he had come to a screeching halt upon the discovery of many suspiciously gnawed tree trunks along the west bank of the creek. The majority of these stumps, two to four centimetres in diameter, were chewed across diagonally with teeth marks evident. The stumps were centred halfway between Lake St. Clair and the railroad tracks.

More cuttings were later found on the east side of the creek. From remaining wood chips, gnawed branches and tree stumps, it was noted that Poplar, Willow, Staghorn Sumac and even a large Manitoba Maple had been sampled. Dared we even suspect that *Castor canadensis* was making a comeback after an absence of at least 200 years?

Historically, evidence exists to support the Beaver's presence in Essex County. Skeletal remains were found in archeological digs both at Point Pelee National Park and at the Laramie site just south of Cedar Creek. Two other locations show evidence of former beaver occupation. One is a large "prehistoric" dam in a woodlot northeast of Arner: a sinuous ridge less than a metre tall with another similar fainter ridge north, or "upstream" of the first. Secondly, a large area north of Ruthven, shown on Patrick McNiff's survey of 1791, was even then labelled as an "old beaver pond."

It is not surprising that this fur-bearing mammal would be

extirpated from the Essex County landscape even before this time. Due to the hardwood habitat that covered most of the county, this mammal was already uncommon when Fort Pontchartrain was built in 1701 as the nucleus of the city of Detroit. The sole purpose of the fort was to break into the fur-trading boom.

From whence, then, did our nomadic beaver come? From discussions with various naturalists, it was hypothesized that the beaver could have been washed down the Thames River in high flood-waters, and from the river's mouth, made its way to nearby Tremblay Creek. Although the Chatham MNR office had no official records of Beavers in Kent County, it was thought likely

that they could also be re-establishing there along the Thames and its tributaries.

Another theory was that this lonely individual was a "bank beaver," an old term used by trappers for hermit beavers ostracized from the colony because they are too old to perform mating duties. Left to strike out on their own, "bank beavers" will build a lodge on the side of a bank, which is exactly what this beaver had done. Recognizable even under the snow as an unnatural pile of sticks, when the snow and ice had disappeared, it was unquestionably lodge-looking, a cosy "retirement home" if ever I had seen one. Inspired by the Rare Species Report I was



currently working on for my boss, Paul Pratt, and aware of the upcoming Mammal Atlas for which Paul is also our county's Regional Co-ordinator, I decided to do some serious beaver-searching. Although wood chips, gnawed stumps and branches, and a lodge were all good evidence, it was my ultimate goal to see the perpetrator of all this work.

On a mid-day trip on March 5, I shared my discoveries with a local hunter. Instead of surprising him, he stunned me by saying that he had seen the beaver the previous evening at dusk. The beaver was so big that he was having a hard time crossing the frozen stream because he kept breaking through the ice. The hunter was quite aware that a special licence is required to trap beavers, and hoped, as I did, that he would be left alone. I was so excited by this news that I decided then and there to return that evening at dusk.

Thanking him, I used the 45-minute drive home to plan my getaway strategy. Once home, I quickly made dinner, instructed

number 1 son on details, invited any interested parties along, with no takers, then left at 5:15 p.m. Remembering how Paul had stressed the importance of photo-documentation, I took my camera along.

The marsh was much quieter as I made my way toward the creek for the second time that day. I readied myself in a spot where there were many stumps and waited, watching up and down the creek. Dusk fell, and just when I thought I would no longer be able to see, were anything to come out, I heard noises from my left. Slowly I turned, and there, completely out of the water, on a log, was *Castor canadensis*, nibbling away. My eyes took in his large sleek body, the size of at least three groundhogs, and his flat, broad tail, the diagnostic trait of this rodent. That look was for me; then for posterity and for my credibility, I nervously aimed my camera and took several pictures. Because my hands were shaking and because a second's time exposure was required in the dim light, the photos were not clear, but did show enough detail to be acceptable. My attempt to move closer frightened the subject and he hastily slid into the water and swam away upstream. Elated nevertheless, I went home and called three good friends about my fortuitous sighting. Bonnie Foley was so excited that we planned a return visit for Saturday, March 9th.

The day dawned with rain clouds threatening, but only a deluge would have prevented us from making our intended search. At dusk, we watched muskrat activity intensify in the marsh and heard squeaky chatterings that we couldn't identify, coming from several directions. Then we focused our attention on the creek, where all snow and ice had completely disappeared during the mild weather of the past few days.

Then, as darkness was nearly complete, we saw what we had come for: A large rodent swam silently from his lodge on the east bank, almost directly opposite us, to our side of the creek.

We could hear him amble out of the water and begin chewing. Bonnie and I knew it was THE BEAVER, but we also knew we'd be asked if we had seen its tail, for which the answer would honestly have to be "no." What to do? Castor was almost directly below us, to our left, but because of heavy brush, we couldn't see him! With darkness rapidly falling, we didn't debate long. We tried to move closer, ever so quietly for two extremely excited amateur naturalists. It wasn't quiet enough, though. The sound of Castor splashing into the water met our ears and we knew he was escaping. Drat! As we stood on the bank, dejectedly admitting that our chance to see proof positive was gone, a wonderful sound rang out in the still air: The loud, distinctive alarm of a beaver's tail slapping on the water! We hugged each other in sheer delight. Then, as if in answer to our unspoken question "Did we really hear what we thought we heard?" Castor obliged us by repeating his alarm not once, but three more times! In following his instincts to warn a non-existent colony, Castor had provided us with more unequivocal evidence.

We turned then to go, satisfied that our purpose had been accomplished. Our walk back to the car was silent, almost reverent. We had been part of an historic moment that bridged two centuries. A native of Essex County, trapped out by man's greed had quietly and unobtrusively returned on his own. My next thought, though, sent a shiver up my spine: How long would he be left to live here, doing the things that Beavers like to do? Sadly, I thought, if he really were all alone, he would probably stand a better chance of being unhindered than if he were raising a whole family. Ironically, though, that would ultimately mean that he would die out, once again leaving Essex County barren of this industrious mammal that had been abused so intensively in the foundation of Canada. Oh, Folly, thy name is man.

---

## PLANS UNDERWAY FOR REVISED NATURALIST'S GUIDE

**By Betty Learmouth**

*A Naturalist's Guide to Ontario* is to be completely revised through the co-ordinating efforts of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists. The book, edited by W.W. Judd and J. Murray Speirs, was published in 1964 by the University of Toronto Press and has been reprinted six times since then. It has sold 17,000 copies, but sales have declined since the last printing in 1979 due to the out-of-date contents. The University of Toronto Press is confident that a revised edition will have a ready market.

The book will continue to be a guide for birdwatchers and for botanists looking for wild flowers. In addition, the revised edition will also include sites where butterflies, mammals, and herptiles can be observed. The text will indicate significant species, the best season at which to see them and any unusual concentrations.

The format of the new edition will remain the same with two or three introductory chapters and regional guides for the province including more information about Northern Ontario. The

contents will provide useful information to both beginning and expert naturalists.

Plans for the revised edition include a strong environmental message for the preservation of natural areas, with sections on such topics as habitat loss, impact of wetland loss in Ontario, and the need for natural corridors for wildlife to travel between islands of green.

Obviously environmental education will be a primary function of the book. Other planned sections cover changes in natural areas that have occurred since the publication of the book some 25 years ago and naturalists' top 10 hot spots in Ontario. Certainly spring migration in Essex County would be a candidate for that list!

Point Pelee National Park was the only natural area described in the 1964 edition. The new edition will include a number of other designated natural areas such as our conservation areas and our nature preserves, none of which existed in 1964.

Gathering of information has begun and we can look forward to a useful and up-to-date guide to the natural areas of Ontario.



# BIRDING IN BELIZE AND TIKAL NATIONAL PARK, GUATEMALA

By Muriel Kassimatis

At the end of February the average Canadian is ready for anything as long as it involves sunshine and blue skies. So it was, we took off from the rigors of ice and snow to look at birds in Belize and Guatemala under the leadership of Field Guides Incorporated.

On arrival in Belize City we took a walk-about to pay our respects to the many sea and land birds that we could find. Belize City has no beach, but is on a harbor from which boats take off for the open Caribbean or for the barrier reef, off shore about half a mile and extending almost the whole length of the country. This reef is second only to the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.

What a pleasure to walk in the sunshine and watch dozens of Magnificent Frigate Birds wheeling overhead, their dramatically beautiful shape and coloring silhouetted against the blue sky — sheer poetry! Other more familiar water birds were: Brown Pelicans, Double-crested and Olivaceous Cormorants, Anhingas and Great and Little Blue Herons.

The following day we took a half-day boat trip along a lowland lagoon and up a quiet, sluggish river teeming with more water birds. Our main objectives were Sun Grebes, the stately Jabiru, a large New World stork, and a colony of Boat-billed Herons roosting in the mangroves. The latter were, to me, comical birds with their broad slipper-like bills, making them look top heavy enough to fall on their heads into the water. We failed to see the other two objectives because of unusually high water levels. Overhead soared numerous Snail Kites and down below we found the Apple Snails that are their main food. Many of these beautiful apple-sized snail shells were collected as souvenirs.

Late afternoon found us back on our school bus for the bone-crushing drive overland across the whole country of Belize and over the border to Guatemala. One side trip was made into Parrots' Wood, the private sanctuary established by the author of the book of that name. One water-hole stop yielded four kinds of Kingfishers in one sweep of the binoculars: Ringed, Belted, Amazon and Green.

Finally we arrived at Tikal National Park and the Jungle Lodge, our base for the next five days. Tikal is, of course, the scene of a huge complex of Mayan ruins which originated around 600 BC, was at its cultural peak around AD 800 and by AD 1000 was deserted and abandoned to the rain forest for almost a thousand years. The main plaza of the ruins with its majestic temples, palaces, stelae and altars is one of the loveliest settings in Central America. The tallest of the pyramid temples is 229 feet high. Several of these pyramids can be climbed for views of miles of unbroken forest.

The high point, literally and figuratively, of the trip was an

early morning climb to the top of Temple IV where we could view aerial shows put on by Double-toothed Kites, White Hawks, a Great Black Hawk, King Vultures and a Bat Falcon. In addition, we had the novel experience of looking down on the forest's upper storey to see such birds as the Keel-billed Toucan, Collared Aracari, Brown-hooded, Yellow-lored, White-fronted, Red-lored and Mealy Parrots.

Lest this get to be a tiresome catalogue of the 252 species seen by the group (but not all by me, needless to say!) let me end by giving you some descriptions of my personal favorites.

One of the objectives of the bird listers was the Tody Motmot. But for me, his cousin, the Blue-crowned Motmot was the thrill. He has two long, central tail feathers which he strips of their webbing, leaving racket-shaped tips. He then sometimes swings these rackets slowly from side to side like a pendulum. Why? Who knows! His coloring is highlighted by a sharply contrasting blue and black crown. Superb!

For magnificence try the Ocellated Turkey. This big, approachable bird was seen all over the grounds of the motel. Strutting before the females, with his blue head decorated with red warts, he would make our peacocks seem shy and withdrawn.

The Great Curassow, another turkey-sized bird, glossy black and white and sporting a curly, feather crest and a big yellow knob on his bill, was the climax of the day we saw many different new birds congregated at an ant swarm.

But for sheer endearing charm I give you the Red-capped Manakin. This dainty little bird with his flame-colored head and yellow trousers, displaying to the female perched nearby, was maybe my favorite experience. It is almost impossible not to be anthropomorphic as I savor this memory.

All things must end. After five days we flew south to a big city night in Guatemala's capital and thence home to Windsor to eagerly wait for May at Point Pelee.

## Concord School wins award for Little River Wetlands project

In early April, a package arrived at Concord School. When the package was opened, there was a beautiful plaque and certificate stating that the Canadian Wildlife Federation found the Little River Wetlands Project worthy of a national award for 1990. Since this award was not applied for by the school, the award came as a delightful surprise.

# A CANADIAN IN NEW JERSEY

## (Or, The "Least" of Our Worries)

By Tom Hince

May 19, 1990 did not begin like any other spring day. Four hotshot birders were weaving through the darkness, trying to dodge broken glass, trash, and scrap metal in a seedy parking lot in the heart of industrial New Jersey.

Between the four were a hundred years of field birding experience, and yet there were butterflies in more than one stomach. This was the unexpected scene at the start of the ultimate birding challenge — New Jersey Audubon's 6th annual World Series of Birding. Another 39 teams were shuffling in the same darkness, some just a few metres away, others at the opposite end of the state, all waiting for the same stroke of midnight. For half of them New Jersey was home turf, but the others came from as far away as California and Britain.

Paul Pratt, Michael Carlson, Bruce Dilabio and myself were the "Canadian" team. We felt like rogues trying to steal the crown jewels, in this case, the Urner Stone Cup and the Edwin I. Stearns Award. Our 1989 tally of 195 species netted us 4th place out of 30 teams, good enough for the Stearns Award for the highest "out-of-state" team. Our goal in 1990 was to break the magic 200 species barrier. Our dream, however, was to finish first, and bring home the Urner Stone Cup.

At 23:45 we manoeuvred into position at our first stop. It was cloudy, the winds light, much better than the soothsayers of the skies had predicted. We were greeted by the usual Big Day starting-line sound — silence. After an eternity (actually about a minute and ten seconds) we were delighted as the sound of a bird song seeped through the darkness. The wetland regulars eventually chimed off one at a time, and we cheered each . . . Marsh Wren, Moorhen, Swamp Sparrow. It was a day for appreciating all the birds . . . a Swamp Sparrow equalled a Black Rail equalled a Fork-tailed Flycatcher. Some, naturally, elicited more cheers than others! The Common Nighthawk at 00:06 was one such.

For the next hour and a half we moved up and down marsh dikes like four portable radar stations. Each new species was struck off until two remained on the "best chance here" list: Pied-billed Grebe and Least Bittern.

There were other locales for the bittern but this was the only

show in town for the grebe, and our time was almost up for finding this scarce resident. The night-glow of New York city provided enough light for our KOWA TSN4 to scour the marsh ponds. Remarkably, on the last pass, Bruce spotted the bird over 400 metres away and one by one we concurred, ". . . got it, . . . got it, . . . got it." We left minus the Least Bittern, but there were four backup spots.

Time and state troopers became the focus until our next stop. Sensibility, safety and speed were combined. You couldn't get there faster if you had to wait for a trooper to write you a ticket. You couldn't get there faster if you were banged up in a ditch.

You could get there faster with a compromise.

Around five, the first hint of daylight appeared. We bid farewell to the birds of the night and prepared for the world to wake. The next three hours were the most intense and testing birding in the entire year. Over a hundred species announced their presence.

The diversity was astounding. Warblers: Hooded, Black-throated Green, Worm-eating, Golden-winged, Black-throated Blue, Magnolia, and many more. Vireos: White-eyed, Yellow-throated, Solitary, Red-eyed, and Warbling. Thrushes: Robin, Veery, Wood, Swainson's and Bluebird. Flycatchers: Phoebe, Pewee, Least, Acadian, Willow, Kingbird, and Great Crested.

By 7:30 we passed the century mark. There were gifts: a Grey-cheeked Thrush whispering from a wooded ridge, Golden-crowned Kinglets in a small conifer grove, a Black Vulture emerging from a roost, and a lingering Yellow-rumped Warbler.

If Big Day birders were engineers, roads would be straight and

direct. Despite the curves of our mid-morning drive, the back seat occupants hung on through their greenish pallor.

After a brief grassland stop we belted up for "the drive." The next two hours gave us a chance to review our list, drink, eat, catch some sleep, and talk a little strategy. The 200 barrier seemed like a shoe-in as we rolled into Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, probably the only place in the whole state where every serious team must go.

We found wind, dust and frustration. The wind made "Brig" take on a miserly candour. It yielded the usual good variety of



shorebirds, gulls, terns, waterfowl and salt-marsh passerines, but there was no knockout punch. The "want list" was Swiss cheese instead of "done like dinner."

Paul dug through the peeps to find a Western Sandpiper. Other surprises included a Ruddy Duck, and a "friendly" donation from a nearby team. There was nothing wrong with joining in when a nearby leader yelled to his mates "catch that falcon, . . . Merlin!" To ignore would be foolish, to solicit would be against the rules. After two hours of being battered by the wind, we abanded "Brig" in silence.

By mid-afternoon we were 45 minutes behind schedule and below a 200-species pace. We had 172 species on the list, with 27 reasonable possibilities left. Over the next four hours we labored on, adding Yellow-throated, Kentucky and Prothonotary Warblers, Blue Grosbeak, Summer Tanager, Bald Eagle and 12 others to make 190 species.

Light was fading and the list of possibles was shrinking. A spot where we aced three Least Bitterns at dusk the year earlier brought silence. While we waited, we were handed three catch-up birds -- Bobwhite, Solitary Sandpiper and Red Knot. Still no Least Bittern. The sun set on our list of 196 species.

Four reasonable nocturnal ticks were left: Whip-poor-will, Chuck-wills-widow, Black Rail . . . and Least Bittern. Thirty seconds later a Whip-poor-will broke into song to claim spot 197, the car doors slammed in unison and we were on our way to the Black Rail spot.

Spirits were higher than they had been in five or six hours -- 200 was still in sight. We reached the rail location and piled out amid a dead end parking lot with four other car-loads of birders. Paul and Michael led the way to a far corner of the lot where they had had the bird several days previously.

Strangely, that end of the lot had no other birders. We stopped and our ears were immediately charmed by the "Kee Ke Doo" call of bird species 198. We trotted happily back through the other groups that were still gazing intently and unproductively into the darkness. All's fair in love, war and Big Days.

It was nearly 22:15 when we reached our guaranteed Chuck-wills-widow. We piled out of the car, although our steps were beginning to show signs of fatigue. Old faithful rang out its

## Colonial Waterbird Census

By Cathy Watson

This summer, the ORBBP and the Canadian Wildlife Service are joining forces to undertake a survey of the rare colonial birds nesting in marshland areas along the shores of the Great Lakes. The 1991 Colonial Waterbird Census involves covering a 5 km strip of the Great Lakes shoreline in search of Great and Cattle Egrets, Black and Yellow-crowned Night Herons, Forster's and Black Terns.

A cross-county blitz is planned for this area on JUNE 16. We will begin at Ruscom Shores Conservation Area and follow the Lake Erie shoreline to record and document the number of colonial birds breeding in the area. We'll make a complete circle, eventually reaching Ruscom Shores Conservation Area later that day (4:00 ish).

If you are interested in "tern"ing out for this adventure, please contact Cathy Watson at 326-1617 (evenings) or at Point Pelee National Park (Warden Service) 322-2365 ext. 216 (weekdays).

territory to the pleasure of team Kowa Optimed, Inc. (our corporate sponsor). Bird #199. Only the Least Bittern was left, and we knew there were several breeding pairs in southern Cape May county. Surely one would sing on a warm, calm spring night?

Cape May County Park was both the official finish line and the last spot for Least Bittern. We arrived at 23:00. After 40 minutes of slogging around ponds in the dark, Michael called for silence, and we all strained our ears in the same direction. Could that be the soft cooing of a Least Bittern?

After several long minutes, no one could verify the "maybe." We ended the battle against the birds and the elements. The Least Bittern won -- 199 species was our final total.

We hauled our weary bodies to the finish line and submitted our list along with the other frazzled teams. We placed third overall out of 44 teams. As well, we were the highest out-of-state team for the second year in a row, and achieved the highest-ever species total by a non-local team. We were one species behind the Bausch and Lomb team, last year's champs. The Zeiss team, headed by the series organizer Pete Dunne, stole the show with a record-shattering 210 species.

But we took great pride in our effort. May 18th, 1991 is the 7th World Series of Birding. We'll be there again, and this time we'll find that &?\*&?&? Least Bittern!

Reprinted from *Canadian Birding*,  
Winter, 1991 issue



## Pelee Wings

**WILDLIFE ART & CRAFTS  
BIRDING SUPPLIES**

98 MAIN ST. E. KINGSVILLE 733-4038

**SALE — 30% OFF BINOCULARS  
by BAUSCH & LOMB**

Over 75 models to select from: zooms,  
waterproof, compacts, & scopes.

**SALE — 50% OFF ELITE SCOPE**  
15-45 power zoom, fogproof, waterproof;  
lifetime warranty; \$367, includes GST.

- Solitudes Nature Recordings
- Nature Theme Gifts in Wood, Pewter, Stained Glass, Pottery & Silver
- Bateman Limited Edition Prints
- 10% Discount to ECFNC Members
- Field Guides, Bird Houses & Feeders
- Best Prices on Birdseed in Essex Co.

**Daily 10 - 6    Sunday 12 - 5**

# VOLUNTEERS LAUNCH THE BLUEBIRD BOX

By Betty Learmouth

The Bluebird Box and Trail Project has been successfully completed through the efforts of a number of volunteers who generously gave of their time and talents. Volunteers included a group of children from Windsor and Kingsville, older children from LaSalle and Harrow, ECFNC members and property owners who offered their properties for nesting box sites. The Bluebird Box Committee wishes to express its gratitude to all these individuals. This project would not have been realized without a great deal of assistance.

The first bluebird workshop was held at the Ojibway Nature Centre picnic shelter on Feb. 27 and was attended by a group of children, their parents and ECFNC members. Fifteen boxes were assembled in two hours. On April 7 these boxes were placed on T-bar stakes on land adjacent to the Arner Townline in Gosfield South Township.

A mid-March workshop was held at John Moore's workshop, North Ridge, where naturalists selected, measured and cut wood that Mr. Moore donated to the project. A total of 38 boxes were assembled by the end of that day.

Another well attended workshop was held on April 14 at the Ojibway Nature Centre. Twenty-five boxes were assembled by a talented group of carpenters. These boxes were erected in Colchester South Township on April 21, despite cold and wet conditions. Luckily April 28 was warm when a further 21 boxes were located in the same area. Volunteers were treated to the sight of Tree Swallows inspecting the newly placed nesting boxes.

Twenty-four boxes are located at the conservation area adjacent to Cedar Creek and were erected by just three persons in only a few hours. The habitat at Cedar Creek appears to be excellent for Bluebirds and the Bluebird Box Committee appreciates the opportunity that the Essex Region Conservation Authority has provided by allowing boxes to be placed on authority lands. ERCA has donated a number of boxes toward the project and these boxes are a welcome addition to the project.

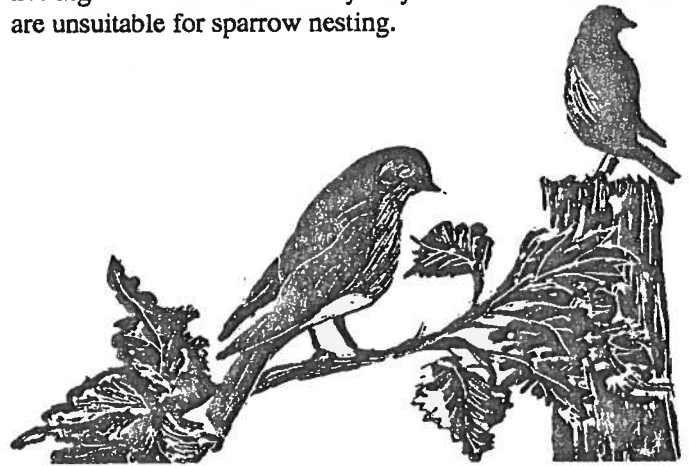
The 60th Windsor Troop of Boy Scouts from LaSalle constructed boxes from kits purchased with money received from Canada Trust's Friends of the Environment fund. These boxes are now located in Brunet Park where they will be monitored by the Scouts. Cubs, Guides, Brownies. In addition, a Scout from Harrow United Church assembled kits to be placed at the Harrow Agricultural Research Station where they will be monitored by a staff member who is also an ECFNC member.

The contribution of several individuals should be acknowledged. John Herba assisted the project by constructing 10 of the kits. Bill and John Balkwill cut, assembled and donated an additional 30 boxes to the project. These boxes have experimental elliptical openings to perhaps give a more natural hole. The Balkwills' boxes have the bark still attached to the slabs of wood that were used for the front and roof of each box.

Individual property owners have responded with enthusiasm to the thought of Bluebirds nesting on their properties;. They

have welcomed the chance to be a part of this project and have co-operated by allowing monitors to regularly visit their lands.

Bluebird monitors are reporting early successes with this project. As this report is being prepared, at least four pairs of Eastern Bluebirds have found the ECFNC's boxes and appear to be establishing nests. Other species that like our boxes are Tree Swallows, House Wrens and House Sparrows. We are encouraging the swallows and wrens to use the boxes for raising their young, but we will discourage the sparrows by removing their nesting material and eventually they will realize that the boxes are unsuitable for sparrow nesting.



## Early success reported on Pleasant Valley Trail

By Betty Learmouth

Throughout May, Eastern Bluebird monitors have been observing the Bluebird boxes of the Pleasant Valley Eastern Bluebird Trail. Early reports have indicated that Eastern Bluebirds have chosen to nest in the newly erected boxes. House Wrens and Tree Swallows have moved into the boxes as well.

On May 18 monitors undertook to examine each of the 72 boxes along the trail. Every box was opened unless it was evident that the occupants were at home. Tree Swallows peeping through the entrance assured us that that box was taken! For inexperienced monitors, the opening of the boxes was a crash course in nest identification for the three species that had chosen to nest in the boxes.

Eastern Bluebirds build a loosely constructed cup of fine grasses and weed stalks. The nest fills the bottom of the nesting box. The nest cup measures about 6.4 X 7.6 cm with a depth of 5.1 cm. The eggs are a pale blue color and the nests that we examined held as few as two eggs and as many as four. One nest contained newly hatched young, possibly four tiny babes.

We saw some very good examples of the nest building skills of the House Wren. The male House Wren builds dummy nests in all the available sites on a chosen territory. Thus we would find nests of twigs in two boxes with no evident activity at these boxes. Then we would discover a third box which had the characteristic twig base on which the female had placed feathers and



other pieces of nesting material such as grasses and rootlets. The eggs of the House Wren are an oval shape and white, but are so thickly speckled with minute reddish dots that they appear to be flesh-colored. The eggs also have a slight gloss.

Tree Swallows were the most frequently encountered nesting bird on the newly established trail. The nest of this attractive bird is mostly dry grass shaped so that there is a hollow in the centre or in the corner. Feathers are added and these often touch the eggs which are pure white and without gloss. We observed nests with four and five eggs respectively.

The initial results of the first complete survey of the trail indicate that 37 of the 72 boxes now have occupants. Seven of the boxes have been chosen as nesting sites by Eastern Bluebirds. Eleven pairs of House Wrens have moved into our boxes and 19 pairs of Tree Swallows have been attracted.

The Pleasant Valley Eastern Bluebird Trail has been located in an area that has been determined to be a successful site for Eastern Bluebird breeding over the years. One private landowner in Colchester South Township has had great success with his program of providing boxes for Eastern Bluebirds. During the 1990 breeding season five pairs of Eastern Bluebirds raised 41 young. This year two of the nests on this property have been predated and there are suspicions that the accusing finger should be pointed at the Southern Flying Squirrel which could glide from the adjacent woodlot to the boxes! Other property owners in Gosfield South have provided boxes which have successfully attracted Eastern Bluebirds over a number of years. It appears that the location of boxes in suitable habitat near properties that have attracted Eastern Bluebirds in the past is a key factor for the success of this project.

Monitors will continue to observe the activity at the boxes during the spring and into the summer. Bluebirds will nest a second time so interest remains high as the first season of the trail commences.

## ABA HONORS TOWHEE'S HOSTS

By Paul Pratt,  
Ojibway Nature Centre

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, on behalf of the American Birding Association is proud to present the ABA Commendation Award to Jack and Grace Lossing of Windsor. This award was initiated recently by ABA to recognize those people who have gone out of their way to be especially hospitable to birders.

Jack and Grace welcomed over 400 birders into their home between January 14 and April 26, 1986 to view Ontario's fifth Green-tailed Towhee. This was the first Ontario Green-tailed Towhee in 15 years and birders from Michigan and Ontario travelled up to 800 kilometres to see the bird. Birders were invited to view the towhee from the comfort of the Lossings' living room, were served coffee and doughnuts and asked to sign the guest register.

The exceptional hospitality of the Lossing family was greatly appreciated by the horde of birders, and frequently commented upon in radio stations' interviews, television programmes and newspaper stories.

The American Birding Association is the only continent-wide organization devoted exclusively to "recreational" birding in all its aspects. ABA information can be obtained by writing its headquarters at P.O. Box 6599, Colorado Springs, CO 80934.



## Friends of Ojibway

The Department of Parks and Recreation  
is interested in forming a group of volunteers to assist  
in enhancing the public use of Ojibway Park and Nature Centre.  
If you are interested in the environment, concerned about wildlife,  
love the out-of-doors, we'd like you to join the **Friends of Ojibway**.

Please sign up tonight or at Ojibway, giving your address and telephone.

# ERCA UNVEILS CONCEPT PLANS

By Betty Learmouth

Concept plans for the Ruscom Shores Conservation Area and the Tremblay Beach Conservation Area were presented to the Essex Region Conservation Authority's full authority at its April 11 meeting, at the April 16 meeting of Tilbury North township council and Rochester township council and at a public open house at the Essex Civic Centre on April 25.

The three concept plans developed for each area were designed to elicit response from the public, municipalities and government agencies. Final master concept plans are planned for September and again, reaction will be requested.

The concept plans for Ruscom Shores were drawn up considering public input by 24 respondents, the comments by Archaeological Research Associates Ltd. and the response from a telephone survey regarding recreational activities and facilities in conservation areas.

The concept plans for the Ruscom Shores ranged from Concept A which suggested that natural areas be maintained and enhanced, to Concept C which suggested high human impact use.

Tremblay Beach concept plans were drawn up using the input from 12 respondents and the telephone survey.

For both conservation areas, background information con-

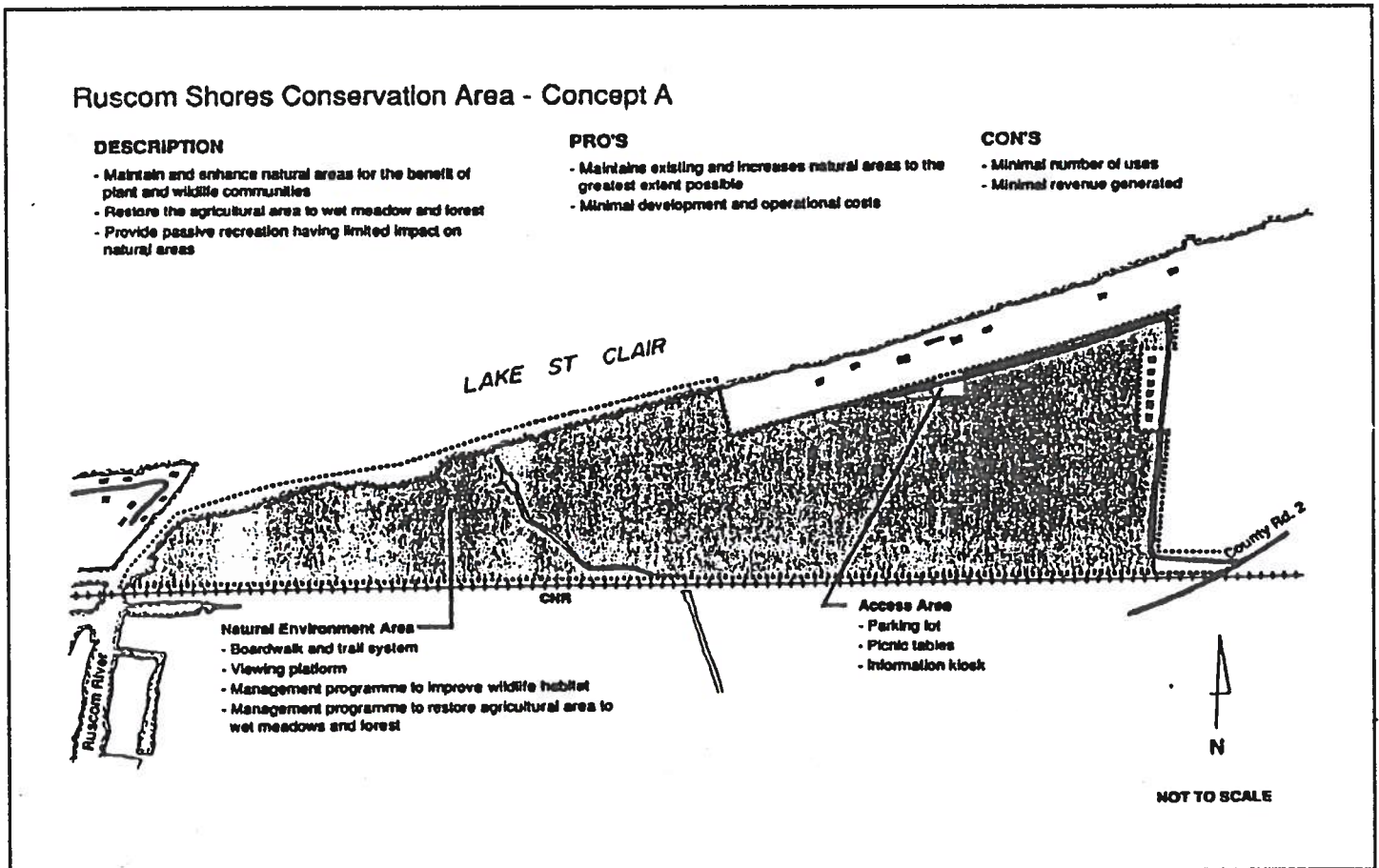
cerning land use and biological/cultural resources was collected and used to draw up the concept plans.

The Essex County Field Naturalists' Club executive discussed the concept plans at their April 24 meeting and voted to support Concept Plan A for both Ruscom Shores and Tremblay Beach.

At the public open house on April 25, Frank Sebestyen, a member of the newly formed Ruscom Shores Properties Owners Association, said that 80 per cent of the homeowners near the Ruscom Shores Conservation Area want the wetland preserved. The homeowners are not in favor of the high impact use of the conservation area as proposed by Concept Plans B and C and have chosen to support Concept Plan A.

Response to the various concept plans was to be received by the Essex Region Conservation Authority until May 30 and this input will be considered as the master draft plans for each area are drawn up.

The staff of the Essex Region Conservation Authority is to be commended for the thoughtful concept plans that have been presented for consideration. The public appreciates the opportunity to view the concept plans and the chance to be a part of the planning process. The plans were presented in a most professional manner and all interested persons are awaiting the presentations in September.



# FOUL AND LOATHSOME CREATURES

with Paul Pratt at Rondeau Provincial Park

By Barbara Ouellette

Rondeau Provincial Park was a small piece of heaven for Paul Pratt's "Foul and Loathsome Creatures" study Saturday, May 4. We set out in a cooling east wind from Rondeau's Visitor Centre at 5 p.m. with blue skies overhead. Right off the bat two of our boys found an Eastern Garter Snake warming itself by a log in the late afternoon sun.

At that moment the rest of us saw two darting dots which Paul instantly identified as a pair of Green Darner Dragonflies, confirming as we had long suspected, that our intrepid leader has built-in binoculars.

We overturned each log and rock under the tall White Pines, American Beeches, Tulip Trees, Sassafras, Butternuts, Yellow Birches and White Ashes. The findings were varied:

- Dozens of Red-backed Salamanders, ranging from babies to adults;
- Blue-spotted Salamanders with their iridescent blue spots bright in the sun against their shiny black skin;
- Very large and sluggish slugs;
- Three giant yellow-striped black millipedes sauntering on all their "thousand" legs along Paul's hand and right off the end with no sense of height;
- A June bug and two Scarab Beetles;
- And Fireflies in their large triangular-shaped larval stage.

Of course there were many more garter snakes of various sizes. Amid the leaves we found about 10 White Morels where Black Morels would still be expected this early in the spring. And budding up under the pines were Pine Saps, which will always stay yellow, never green, as they are parasitic on the White Pine roots.

Around our own feet jumped numerous lead-brown Spring Peepers, whose chorus from a pond later in the evening would astonish us with such volume coming from such tiny fellows.

In the slough with Silver Maple, Black Ash and Cottonwood overhead, Paul found under a log a baby Red-spotted Newt. The only other place we will find them in Essex County is Fish Pond on Pelee Island.

I had personally not been terribly eager to encounter a full-grown Fox Snake face-to. But along the road to the dump, one of us turned up the loveliest baby Fox Snake. Babies of all species have their winning ways.

A pair of Wood Ducks flew over the White Oaks behind the dump while Peg Wilkinson calmed a frightened garter snake in her ever-gentle hands. A single cockroach paraded himself over the burnt-out dump looking for a better place to hide.

The only anxious moment of the trip was when one of our ladies was discovered missing. Reassurance of a kind came with the discovery that Tom Hurst was also missing. When they reappeared some time later, many interesting sightings were reported, which we didn't doubt for a minute.

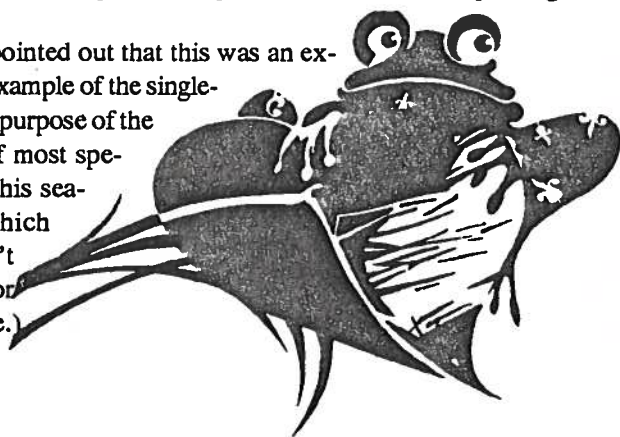
The evening had grown still. The grasslands by the east beach

were quiet as the sunset darkened. By the pond a solitary oak bush stood sentinel. Amid the grass lay a cover of wormwood and *Arabis lyatra*, a mustard which is food for the Marbled White Butterfly.

Tramping slowly back through a Black Oak stand, we were announced by the trumpeting Spring Peepers held in palms earlier in the day. Across the top of a stump marched the red coats above flat greys of the British Soldier Lichen.

At the close of the evening, near 9, a male Woodcock made his extraordinary display, fluttering up, up, up and across with a clucking ruckous, then dropping with a thud, always on the same spot on the path to beep and recover, before repeating the display.

Tom pointed out that this was an excellent example of the single-mindedness of purpose of the males of most species in this season (which we don't doubt for a minute.)



## RARE BIRD ALERT!!!

Have you seen these nesting birds?

By Cathy Watson

If you have seen any of the following nesting species in your backyard or favourite woodlot/natural area please report to Cathy Watson at 326-1617 (evenings) or at Point Pelee National Park at 322-2365 (ext. 216) (days).

- |                     |                            |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Red-shouldered Hawk | Long-eared Owl             |
| Cattle Egret        | Barn Owl                   |
| Least Bittern       | Short-eared Owl            |
| Kentucky Warbler    | Hooded Warbler             |
| Black Tern          | Great Egret                |
| Cooper's Hawk       | Prothonotary Warbler       |
| Golden Eagle        | Acadian Flycatcher         |
| Orchard Oriole      | Cerulean Warbler           |
| Summer Tanager      | Louisiana Waterthrush      |
| Western Meadowlark  | American Coot              |
| American Avocet     | Bald Eagle                 |
| Carolina Wren       | Black-crowned Night Heron  |
| Tufted Titmouse     | Yellow-crowned Night Heron |
| White-eyed Vireo    | Yellow-headed Blackbird    |

# THE MAGIC OF COMPOSTING

By Johanne Ranger

Have you ever examined a rotted log that has been on the forest floor for a while? You would have noticed how crumbly and spongy it has become. Insects, snails, fungi and bacteria contribute to the breakdown or decomposition of the log. It mixes with other components of the soil, such as sand or clay, to become a humus-rich soil. This is the beginning of composting. Nothing new, but something we humans need to rediscover.

Compost is most often described as being a "soil conditioner." It is organic material that has decomposed into usable soil form. Where can we get this organic material? Right from our own home. About 20-30 per cent of all household waste is compostable! This includes kitchen scraps, leaves, grass clippings and garden debris. Best of all, it is actually easy. You don't really have to make compost; it makes itself. But you do have to give it an opportunity to make itself, by providing the right mix of material, good ventilation, and the right amount of humidity.

### What can be composted?

You can compost everything organic. Vegetable and fruit peelings and leftovers, houseplant clippings, grass cuttings, leaves, egg shells, human hair, pet hair, even nail clippings. Do not add any fat matter or meat. They are hard to decompose and attract animals. You can help the decomposing process by chopping any large or tough pieces such as watermelon rinds before adding them to the pile.

### Getting started

You can start collecting your organic material anytime. Keep a plastic pail in the kitchen for easy collection. That way you don't have to bring it to your pile every day. Choose a convenient site for your compost. The area that you need will depend on the size of your household and the size of your yard. A 1-metre X 1.5-metre or a 1.5-m X 1.5-metre compost bin is a good size to work

with. It can retain its own heat, thus speeding up the composting process. Then start piling in your composting material.

Start with a layer of leaves or chopped brush or coarse material (cornstalks, sunflower plants etc.) Throw your kitchen scraps and all other organic materials on top, then cover with a thin layer of dirt. The dirt will provide the micro-organisms needed to break down the material. You can add a layer of manure to speed up the process, but this is not necessary. Then start the layering again! Turn the pile over with a shovel or pitchfork on the second or third day, and once a week after that.

The pile needs to be well ventilated. This is assured if your bin has lots of ventilation holes or slits. It must also be moist, but not wet. Materials should be "sponge damp" and produce no water droplets when squeezed. If your pile is dry, sprinkle with water; if it is too wet, turn it so that it can dry.

### Which compost bin?

The size and type of your compost bin depends on your needs. It can be a one-unit bin or a multi-unit bin. It can be round or square. There are a variety of commercial units available in many garden centres. Or you can make your own. You can use a garbage can or 45-gallon drum by removing the bottom and punching holes in the sides. You can build a square bin by using old planks, snow fence, chicken wire, bricks, etc. As mentioned earlier, a 1.5-m X 1.5-m square is a good size to work with. Place your bin directly on the soil or over a hole you have dug to a depth of 30 cm. Any deeper than that makes it hard for you to mix.

### Why compost?

The obvious reason is the amount of "waste" that does not take up more and more valuable land converted to landfill sites. We also lose the potential benefits of all that organic material. Kitchen waste buried along with non-biodegradable materials such as plastic may not decompose for dozens or even hundreds of years. If you add compost to your garden, not only are you fertilizing your garden with natural material, you are not using potentially hazardous chemicals — another way in which you can help our planet! Most important, it's easy!

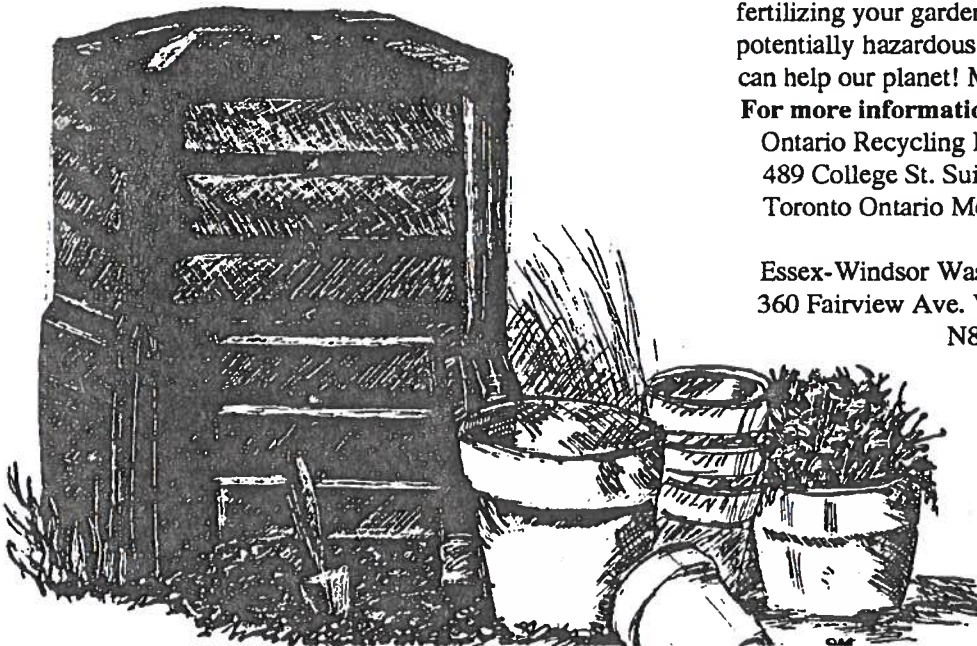
### For more information contact:

Ontario Recycling Information Service  
489 College St. Suite 504  
Toronto Ontario M6G 1A5

Essex-Windsor Waste Management Committee  
360 Fairview Ave. W, Essex, Ontario  
N8M 1Y6 (776-6441)

### Other sources of information:

*2 Minutes a Day for a Greener Planet*  
by Marjorie Lamb  
*The Daily Planet*  
by Paul Griss  
*Worms Eat My Garbage*  
by Mary Appelhof



# PUFFINS AT ARMS LENGTH

## A Trip to Machias Seal Island

By Susan MacKenzie

Of all the birds in the field guides the puffin seems the most improbable. Like the African gnu it might have been designed by a committee, of parts left over from previous efforts: penguin-like plumage; bright duck-orange feet; a rainbow apparition for a bill and eyebrows perhaps drawn by a cartoonist.

Maybe that's why people who don't know one bird from another shell out \$50 each for a rigorous five-hour trip to see a colony of these members of the auk family. Birders and non-birders alike seem to want to be convinced that the photos don't lie.

Whatever the reason, tour operators along the East Coast easily fill their boats through the summer months with folks willing to exert themselves a little for a good look at this absurd little bird which nests in large numbers on Machias Seal Island, New Brunswick.

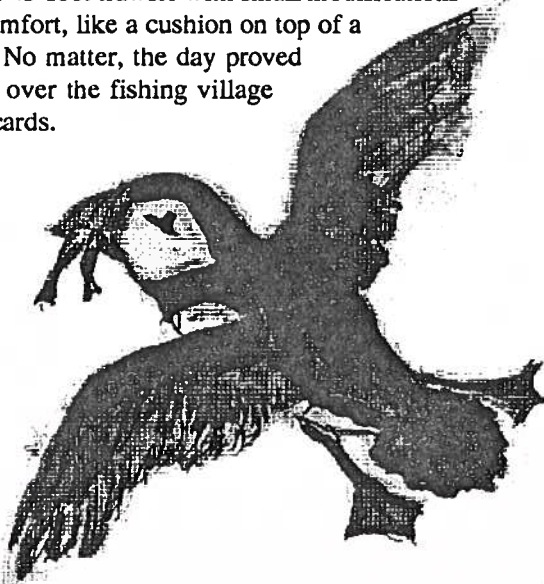
The exertion began early for us. The advertised 7 a.m. sailing became 5 a.m. — because of the tides — Captain Barna Norton explained.

On the Maine coast in mid-July, 5 a.m. is not quite as uncivilized as it sounds. The sun has already been up for at least 15 minutes. But that still left the small matter of accommodation — virtually none in the tiny harbor of Jonesport which Capt. Norman uses for the trips to Machias Seal Island.

(While similar trips are also available out of Grand Manan, New Brunswick it meant a long detour from our intended route, so it was Jonesport or nothing, and besides Capt. Norman's excursions were recommended in the Piersons' *Birder's Guide to the Coast of Maine.*)

So we bedded down in the Blueberry Patch Motel, (I kid you not) more than 11 miles down a rollercoaster road from the harbor. This meant arising at 3:30 a.m. since we had been warned Capt. Norman delayed for no one and not a few tardy passengers had been left behind.

The boat was a 45-foot trawler with small modifications for passenger comfort, like a cushion on top of a pail for seating. No matter, the day proved fine and sunrise over the fishing village the stuff of postcards.



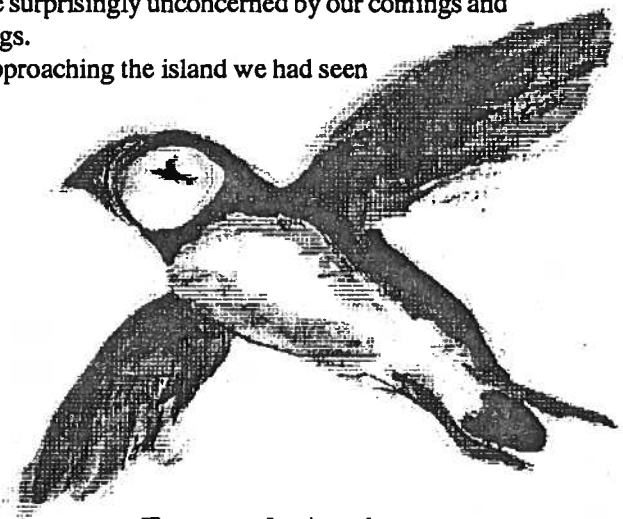
Eleven bleary-eyed fellow passengers shared the makeshift seating as the captain threaded the narrow channel through the floats and buoys that marked out fishing territories. Herring gulls and cormorants thronged the rocky islands we passed, with the odd string of scoters whizzing by — whizzing, because the captain wasn't wasting any time getting to the puffin sanctuary, pushing his diesel to a deafening 17 knots.

The reason became obvious. Machias Seal Island is a formidable stack of rocky cliffs with no dock, and only a slight incline among the boulders on which landing could be attempted. Many times, the captain said, he was unable to land his group because of the heavy surf. We were fortunate, but even this landing was no picnic: Transfer to a motorized dingy, then with a hand from a crewman, a frantic jump onto a slimy heap of seaweed, all the while hoping to hit firm rock before slipping back into the drink. This was followed by a 50-yard grovel across more seaweed-wrapped rocks to an 18-inch wide plank over a crevasse. Finally, one staggered up the slope of a derelict incline railway to the mown area atop the island.

Those of us who had worn boots and foul weather gear arrived in moderate comfort. Others in running shoes and light summer clothing looked like no amount of puffins could compensate for their ordeal. The other necessity was a hat. Worried Arctic terns ripped at bare heads and deposited excrement as we passed their nests, while their brazen young chicks raced up and down the paths, clambering over our feet with total nonchalance.

A student working the summer for the Canadian Wildlife Service directed us in small groups to the puffin blinds on adjacent sides of the island. We were to stay a minimum of 25 minutes in one blind, and then change with a group in the other one. We were ordered not to open the windows on opposite sides of the blinds to prevent the birds from seeing through and taking fright. Of course we obeyed, but as it turned out, the puffins were surprisingly unconcerned by our comings and goings.

Approaching the island we had seen



**Fratercula Arctica,  
the Atlantic puffin,  
off Machias Seal Island**

them in funny, whirring flight like some wind-up toy. Now on land, they hunkered down on their rocks or toddled with fearless curiosity to within two feet of the blind.

Thunk, a short pause, and then another thunk, followed by the sound of soft feet padding about. More puffins continued to land on the roof of the blind. On the bunker opposite ours we could see their comical faces leaning over, peering at the lenses and binoculars poking through the slats. The 25-minute period seemed well chosen. What had begun with a closeup look at five or six puffins soon expanded as more and more birds emerged from the rocky niches where they make their nests. Companionably they shared their rocks with a number of razorbills, which kept a wary distance from the blinds. No puffin chicks were in evidence, although there was much to-ing and fro-ing of the adults, their red bills overflowing with capelin.

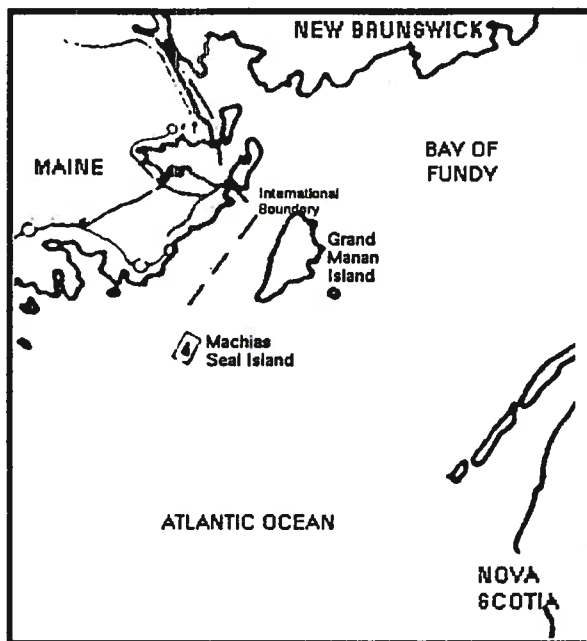
As might be expected with the sun beating down, the aroma of the puffin rocks eventually wafted into the photo blinds, adding to the seaweed stew that clung to our persons. Twenty-five minutes came to seem like a period of captivity.

Outside the blinds though, access to much of the island has been restricted because of the recent decline in the Arctic tern colony. This meant no chance to see the flocks of eiders that were supposed to be below the cliffs. In fact, we had been lucky just to surprise a small flock of black guillemots as we arrived.

Also sharing the island with the puffin and Arctic tern colonies are a 100 or so pairs of common terns and, a big perhaps — two pair of roseate terns. The roseates we didn't see — in fact the wildlife intern didn't know of anyone who had, but the common tern posed an interesting identification problem with the far more common Arctics. Grey breasts with blood red bills to the tip were the Arctics. White breasts with black-tipped red bills were the commons. But predictably there were a couple of grey breasts with what appeared to be black-tipped bills.

Tern-watching on the island was made easier by the presence of the chicks. This brought the adult birds into unnatural proximity with our cameras as they dove at the visitors and screamed what sounded like "beat it, beat it" from the sign posts and nest markers the wildlife service has erected.

Researchers have begun to connect the tern decline on the island with the increased number of visitors and it seems possible that at some point, visits will be restricted.



And that worries Capt. Norman so much that his brochure aggressively asserts a U.S. claim to the island. So aggressively, in fact that we grumbled about Yankee imperialism and debated cancelling the trip. Likewise the petition to Congress that passengers are asked to sign outraged our nationalistic sensibilities.

The captain himself did not look like a specimen the Republicans would be anxious to claim. Shaggy-haired and unnautically clad in a battered tweed jacket and jeans, he proved to be a soft-spoken man who has decided the best defence of his tour program is a good offence. Clearly he fears that if landings are some day to be restricted, it is the U.S. tour operators who will be the first to bear the cost. One sympathizes, but it seemed clear that even our small party of 13 left the tern colony in an uproar.

A reasonable compromise, we decided, might be to restrict all landings of those without a scientific purpose. Listers could certainly get the same number of species from a boat circling the island as they do now from the blinds and the paths. Photographers would be the principal victims of such a policy.

Too bad, but does the world really need another closeup of a puffin at the expense of an Arctic tern colony?

## United Nations -- Champion Defender Award

By Betty Learmouth

On June 5 and 6, children from all over the globe will gather in New York City at the United Nations to showcase their environmental projects. Concord School filled out an entry form and mailed a complete package (written description, photographs, art work) on the Little River Wetlands. On April 3 the school received a phone call to notify applicants that they had been successful. Concord School will be represented by Simone Wyatt, Christel Bechard, Alex Marin and Concord teacher Ian Naisbitt who is also an ECFNC member. The group will fly to New York on June 5, spend the night and return on June 6.

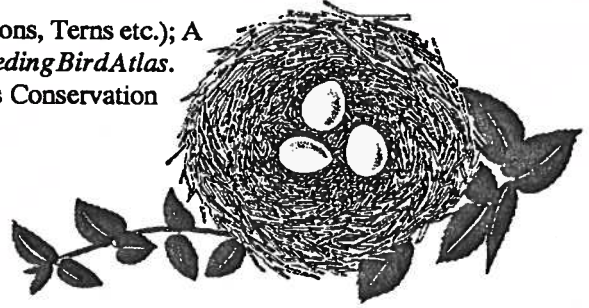
The school has learned that Concord is the only Canadian group to be selected in this competition. The following is a

portion of the letter that was received by Concord:

Congratulations! The members of your Earth Expo '91 project team have been named "Champion Defenders" by the United Nations Environment programme (UNEP), Kids for Saving Earth and its international sponsor, Target Stores. Our eco-wise judges have selected your project from hundreds of tremendous entries in the Earth Expo '91 contest. You'll represent kids from around the world at the United Nations in New York City! This will be a widely recognized event in which environmentalists like you will have a chance to show the world your contributions. Yours is one of the 30 kids environmental groups to receive this honor in New York. You will have a chance to meet other "Champion Defender" award winners during your two-day stay.

# ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- Wednesday, June 10** — ECFNC monthly meeting, 7:30 p.m.; Marlborough Community Centre; Speaker Tom Carpenter; Topic: Holiday Beach Hawk Tower.
- Sunday, June 16** — Field trip; Survey of colony breeding birds (Hérons, Terns etc.); A trip around the county shoreline for the *Rare Breeding Bird Atlas*.  
Leader: Cathy Watson; Meet at Ruscom Shores Conservation Area, 9 a.m. Phone 326-1617 for details.
- Wednesday, June 26** — ECFNC executive meeting
- Saturday, July 6** — ECFNC field trip: Pelee Island Nature Walk;  
Leaders: Johanne Ranger and Cathy Watson;  
Phone 326-1617 or 326-0234 for reservations.
- ~~Sunday June 16~~  
~~Saturday, July 6~~ — ~~Field trip for the Rare Breeding Bird Atlas; meet at Ruscom Shores Conservation Area; 9:30 a.m.~~
- Wednesday, July 10** — ECFNC monthly meeting; 7:30 p.m.; Meet at the Little River Wetlands where Ian Naisbitt will tell us about the restoration project.
- Saturday, July 20** — Field trip for the Rare Breeding Bird Atlas; meet at Cedar Creek Conservation Area, Arner Townline; 8:30 a.m.
- Saturday, August 3** — Field trip for the Rare Breeding Bird Atlas; meet at Holiday Beach Conservation Area (gateway); 8:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, August 13** — Things That Go Bump In The Night; introductory session conducted at Ojibway Nature Centre, 7:30 p.m. People interested in volunteering for the Ontario Mammal Atlas Project should attend this workshop.
- Wed., August 14** — ECFNC monthly meeting; 7:30 p.m.; Meet at Ojibway Nature Centre where Paul Pratt will lead us on a tour of the prairie and introduce its wildflowers.
- Thursday, August 15** — Warbler Migration Workshop introductory session. Ojibway Nature Centre, 7:30 p.m.
- Saturday, August 17** — Warbler Migration field trip run by Ojibway Nature Centre; 8:30 a.m., Point Pelee.
- Tuesday, August 20** — Things That Go Bump In The Night field trip run by Ojibway Nature Centre; call for time and place.
- Saturday, August 24** — ECFNC field trip; Canoeing on Point Pelee marsh with Johanne Ranger; Bring own canoe or phone 326-0234 by August 21 for rental reservation. Meet at Boardwalk; from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Friday, August 30** — Owl Prowl, conducted by Essex Region Conservation Authority staff; 8 p.m. Devonwood Conservation Area.
- Wednesday, Sept. 11** — ECFNC monthly meeting; 7:30 Marlborough Community Centre; Joy Ulman of the Windsor-Essex County Waste Management Committee will speak on "Landfill Crises and Solutions."



Friday, Sept. 13 —  
to Sunday, Sept. 15

Essex Region Conservation Authority's Festival of Hawks; Holiday Beach.

Saturday, Sept. 14 —

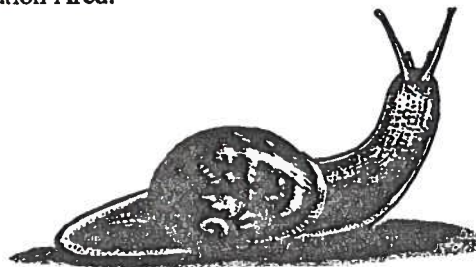
ECFNC field trip; return visit to some lesser known conservation areas. Meet 9 a.m. at Ducks on the Roof parking lot. Leader: Tom Hurst.

Friday, Oct. 4 —

Owl Prowl, conducted by Essex Region Conservation Authority staff; 7:30 p.m.; Maidstone Conservation Area.

**FOR REFERENCE**

Bird hotline ..... 252-BIRD  
 ERCA ..... 776-5209  
 Ojibway ..... 966-5852  
 Point Pelee ..... 322-2365



**WILDLIFE CONSERVATION GROUPS IN CANADA**  
 A Consumer's Guide to Wildlife Organizations

ORGANIZATION	MEMBERS	ANNUAL FEES	ANNUAL BUDGET	COMMENTS
CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION 1673 Carling Ave. Ottawa K2A 3Z1	550,000 Members & Supporters	\$20	\$7,000,000	Provincial affiliation with angler and hunter groups. Distributes International Wildlife; publishes Biosphere (French-language), Ranger Rick, Big Back Yard. Advocacy on freshwater fisheries, World Conservation Strategy, endangered species. Distributes 75,000 Wildlife Week school kits.
CANADIAN NATURE FEDERATION 453 Sussex Drive Ottawa K1N 6Z4	20,000	\$25	\$1,500,000	123 nature group affiliates with membership of 200,000. Publishes Nature Canada; operates bookshop. Advocacy on national parks, northern natural areas, endangered species, forestry policies. Education programs.
WORLD WILDLIFE FUND CANADA 60 St. Clair Ave. East Toronto M4T 9Z9	25,000 Supporters	based on donation	\$4,000,000	Publishes Annual Report, Working for Wildlife newsletter. Has raised \$15 million for endangered species projects, regional conservation strategies, wildlife toxicology research, international projects. Education program in 6000 classrooms.
NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CANADA 794A Broadview Ave. Toronto M4K 2P7	3500	\$25	\$1,800,000	Field representatives in B.C., Alberta, Quebec. Publishes Annual Report, Newsletter. Acquisition of 32,000 hectares; \$10 million raised. Promotes voluntary stewardship. Establishing conservation data centre in Quebec and other provinces.
WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA 1704 Carling Ave. Ottawa K2A 1C7	none	none	\$4,000,000	Publishes annual report, Habitat Quarterly, technical reports. \$16 million contributed to 160 projects; raises funds through sale of habitat stamps and prints. Report on Status of Wildlife Habitat in Canada. Private land stewardship programs, wetlands, Pacific estuaries, forestry practices.
GREENPEACE 578 Bloor St. West Toronto M6G 1K1	60,000	\$30	\$1,700,000	Offices in Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver. Publishes Greenpeace Magazine. Advocacy on commercial whaling, toxic emissions, global atmosphere, disarmament, public environmental awareness.
DUCKS UNLIMITED 1190 Waverley St. Winnipeg R3T 2E2	100,000 Supporters	\$20 (minimum donation)	\$44,000,000	340 local fund raising committees. 75% of budget from American affiliate. Publishes Conservator. Developed 883,000 hectares of habitat for waterfowl production, cooperative agreements with 9000 landowners. Current emphasis on small marshes, Great Lakes shoreline, B.C. estuaries.
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION 160 Bloor St. East Toronto M4W 1B9	2500	\$23	\$325,000	Six regional chapters in B.C., Prairies, Ontario. Publishes Borealis. Advocacy on new national parks, marine parks, wilderness areas, legislation and policy, protecting park wildlife.





**The EGRET, Volume 8, Number 2, June, 1991; newsletter of the Essex  
County Field Naturalists' Club; P.O. Box 3241, Tecumseh, Ontario N8N 3C4**

**Address correction requested**

Peggy Moore  
R.R. # 3,  
Cottam,  
Ont  
NOR 1B0