

VOL. 9, NO. 1
MARCH, 1992

Essex County
FIELD NATURALISTS'
CLUB



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Presidents Message / Tom Hurst..... 1

Articles

Christmas Bird Counts / Paul Pratt 2-5

Is the Sweet Chestnut
Out of the Woods / Barbara Oulette 6-9

So You Want
To Raise Bluebirds / Bill Balkwill ... 10,11

Bluebird Notes / Don Bisonette 11

Bird of Fire / Jim McAllister 12,13

Wheatley Wildflowers / Vicky Johnston 14,15

Bluebird Song Quiz / Don Bisonette 15

News

Financial Statement / Peg Wilkinson 16

Whats happening? 17

Activities

'Possum Problems / Karen Cedar 18

Calendar of Events

March through July 19

AN INVITATION....

You are invited to submit the following for the June EGRET (and future issues):

- Letters to the Editor
- A site guide to your own stomping grounds
- Any other article

In the June EGRET, I would especially like to feature articles by those who have not written for this newsletter before. If you want any advice or assistance, just give me a shout. That doesn't mean we aren't interested in articles by our regular contributors. Please continue to submit, but we are going to give new authors first dibs on space in the June issue.

Thanks for your contributions and comments in advance. I look forward to an exciting summer issue. Please let me know your comments on the March issue (good, bad or indifferent!).

DEAR ECFNC MEMBERS,

The first issue of the 1992 Egret coincides with the first signs of spring. Spring is a time for renewal and growth in nature; and I predict, for the members of the ECFNC and their club as well.

A significant change for the club in 1992 is the relocation of its monthly meeting to the offices of the Windsor Union Gas Company. The gas company has lent the club the use of its fine facilities without charge to our membership. On behalf of the club, I wish to thank the Union Gas Company for its generosity and community spirit.

The ECFNC prospects for this year are assured by the recruitment of outstanding individuals to the club executive. The executive has elected Peter Bondy to serve as Vice-president, Peg Wilkinson as Treasurer and Myrtle Bissette as Secretary. Every one on the twelve member executive has assumed responsibility for specific tasks necessary to the smooth functioning of the ECFNC. I am sure their efforts and time is appreciated by all of us.

While I have been President of the ECFNC, the club has become directly involved in the politics of conservation. Issues such as the proposed commercial development of Ruscom Shores Conservation Area and the Sandwich West woodlot compelled our club to mobilize in support of protecting our dwindling natural habitat. The individual efforts of Betty Learmouth, Mike Malone and Johanne Ranger, to name a few, cannot be overly praised.

In the future, the ECFNC hopes to expend more energy in pro-active rather than reactive measures to fulfill the goal of promoting "the appreciation and conservation of the diverse natural heritage of Essex County". Don Bisonette's Bluebird Committee is a prime example of the direction we wish to take in the future. The creation of the Heritage Committee chaired by Peter Bondy is another initiative in this direction. Its mandate is to formulate and suggest long-term programs by which the ECFNC can do its part in promoting the natural environment of Essex County.

Whatever projects we decide to undertake, it is obvious that we must work in conjunction with other like minded organizations. The Essex Region Conservation Authority, for example, has been quite helpful in giving advice and expertise to our own bluebird committee. The authority has already outlined several cooperative projects for our future consideration, while other local groups have indicated similar interest. Let us all work together for a more natural environment in which to live.

Promoting the natural environment is not the only focus of the ECFNC. It is just as important for the club to help to ensure the enjoyment of nature by its member. The club does this in part by providing interesting speakers and field trips. For my own part, this, and the social rewards of meeting similarly interested individuals is a primary benefit of belonging to a nature club. In order to enhance your experience as a member of the ECFNC the executive needs input from its membership. Please do not be shy about making suggestions as to how the club can serve you better. Let us know what you would like to do as part of the club and what type of programs and speakers you would like us to offer. Your participation is encouraged. Remember this is your club and it will be as rewarding an experience as you wish to make it.

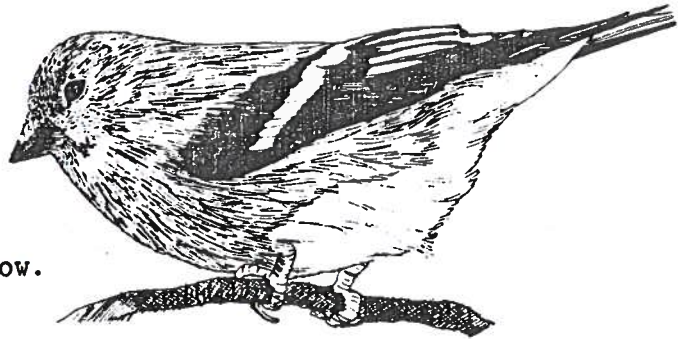
Thank you - Tom Hurst, President, ECFNC



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS 1991 - Paul D. Pratt

An impressive total of 123 species were recorded on the four Essex County Christmas Bird Counts held between December 14 and January 1 by fifty-five participants. A brief summary of highlights is as follows.

CEDAR CREEK: Highlights from this count included a Sora, 4 Common Snipe, 5 Killdeer and a Great Blue Heron, all huddled around a small muddy pond near Colchester and a new Canadian high count for American Crow.



POINT PELEE: A record high total of 106 species were recorded on the 40th Point Pelee CBC. Highlights included Cape May Warbler, White-eyed Vireo and "Audubon's" Yellow-rumped Warbler as well as a record Canadian high for Carolina Wren (86).

ROCKWOOD: These are the results from the Ontario portion of the Rockwood, Michigan CBC. Approximately 13 percent of the count area is in Ontario, and includes the Detroit River shoreline from the town of Amherstburg to Lake Erie. Highlights included the first Long-eared Owl, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Lincoln's Sparrow and Brewer's Blackbird for this count.

DETROIT RIVER: Another count centred in Michigan but including an Ontario portion along the Detroit River in Windsor and LaSalle. The Windsor participants recorded 68 species on the Ontario side of the river.

RESULTS:	CEDAR CREEK	POINT PELEE	ROCKWOOD	DETROIT R.
Common Loon	2	1	1	0
Pied-billed Grebe	0	CP	0	0
Horned Grebe	0	CP	0	0
Great Blue Heron	35	18	4	0
Tundra Swan	0	0	7	1
Mute Swan	0	0	0	8
Snow Goose	7	4	0	0
Canada Goose	3,582	286	610	390
Wood Duck	1	0	0	0
Green-winged Teal	0	1	0	0
Am. Black Duck	114	84	3	39
Mallard	697	90	86	395
Northern Pintail	4	CP	0	0
Northern Shoveler	0	3	0	0
Gadwall	2	CP	0	0
Canvasback	85	21	2,000	650
Redhead	11	6	0	1
Ring-necked Duck	1	0	0	2
Greater Scaup	187	272	10	8
Lesser Scaup	178	168	0	1
scaup species	58	600	6	0

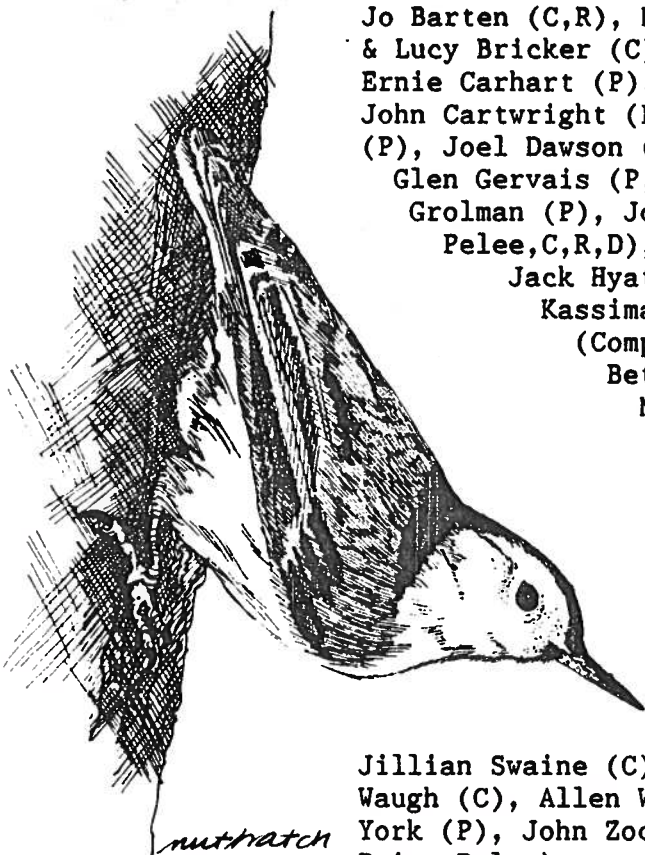
RESULTS (con't): CEDAR CREEK POINT PELEE ROCKWOOD DETROIT R.

	CEDAR CREEK	POINT PELEE	ROCKWOOD	DETROIT R.
King Eider	0	CP	0	0
Oldsquaw	0	21	0	0
Black Scoter	0	7	0	0
White-winged Scoter	0	6	0	0
Common Goldeneye	13	366	26	26
Bufflehead	7	70	3	48
Hooded Merganser	6	2	0	2
Common Merganser	38	1,703	16	6
Red-breasted Merganser	31	517	3	0
merganser species	0	262	20	0
duck species	102	0	0	0
Bald Eagle	1	5	2	0
Northern Harrier	28	58	2	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	2	2	1
Cooper's Hawk	5	1	0	3
Northern Goshawk	1	5	0	0
Red-shouldered Hawk	3	3	1	2
Red-tailed Hawk	62	50	12	18
Rough-legged Hawk	5	5	1	4
American Kestrel	43	20	0	11
hawk species	2	2	0	0
Ring-necked Pheasant	6	18	0	20
Virginia Rail	0	CP	0	0
Sora	1	0	0	0
American Coot	0	3	0	0
Black-bellied Plover	0	CP	0	0
Killdeer	10	15	0	1
Common Snipe	6	2	0	1
American Woodcock	0	4	0	0
Little Gull	0	2	0	0
Bonaparte's Gull	4,916	761	800	44
Ring-billed Gull	3,345	900	975	603
Herring Gull	906	1,197	425	85
Thayer's Gull	0	1	0	0
Glaucous Gull	0	4	1	0
Great Black-backed Gull	77	386	47	14
gull species	250	212	100	0
Rock Dove	452	353	1,018	14
Mourning Dove	1,120	913	213	140
Eastern Screech-Owl	49	12	4	3
Great Horned Owl	13	13	2	3
Snowy Owl	0	CP	0	0
Long-eared Owl	4	9	1	12
Short-eared Owl	0	3	0	0
Northern Saw-whet Owl	0	2	1	0
Belted Kingfisher	3	1	1	2
Red-headed Woodpecker	0	1	0	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3	9	0	5
Downy Woodpecker	79	155	11	16
Hairy Woodpecker	6	3	0	2
Northern Flicker	16	61	8	1
Eastern Phoebe	1	2	0	0
Horned Lark	232	2,157	600	15

RESULTS (con't):	CEDAR CREEK	POINT PELEE	ROCKWOOD	DETROIT R.
Blue Jay	140	71	37	89
American Crow	90,753	4,025	570	65
Black-capped Chickadee	9	23	5	5
Tufted Titmouse	0	0	0	7
Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	11	0	0
White-breasted Nuthatch	19	39	3	8
Brown Creeper	42	19	7	0
Carolina Wren	18	86	6	10
Winter Wren	4	14	4	1
Marsh Wren	0	1	1	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	20	17	2	0
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3	3	0	0
Eastern Bluebird	3	102	0	0
Hermit Thrush	1	20	0	0
American Robin	6	85	0	1
Gray Catbird	0	1	0	0
Northern Mockingbird	1	1	0	0
Brown Thrasher	0	1	1	0
Water Pipit	0	1	0	0
Cedar Waxwing	16	218	0	0
Northern Shrike	1	0	0	0
European Starling	1,839	5,402	437	1,401
White-eyed Vireo	0	1	0	0
Cape May Warbler	0	1	0	0
Yellow-rumped Warbler	7	136	0	0
"Audubon's" "	0	1	0	0
Common Yellowthroat	0	CP	0	0
Northern Cardinal	192	333	90	102
Rufous-sided Towhee	2	8	1	0
Am. Tree Sparrow	279	1,083	164	51
Field Sparrow	1	11	3	0
Vesper Sparrow	0	1	0	0
Savannah Sparrow	1	0	0	0
Fox Sparrow	0	3	0	0
Song Sparrow	115	311	54	72
Lincoln's Sparrow	0	2	1	0
Swamp Sparrow	34	116	40	25
White-throated Sparrow	43	197	0	8
White-crowned Sparrow	4	11	1	1
Dark-eyed Junco	188	249	20	71
"Oregon" Junco	1	2	0	0
Lapland Longspur	7	20	6	2
Snow Bunting	143	1,838	10	0
Red-winged Blackbird	13	367	100	26
Meadowlark (sp.)	59	4	0	0
Yellow-headed Blackbird	0	1	0	0
Rusty Blackbird	12	31	57	15
Brewer's Blackbird	0	0	1	0
Common Grackle	6	41	25	1
Brown-headed Cowbird	17	138	104	3
Northern Oriole	0	0	0	1
Pine Grosbeak	3	0	0	0
Purple Finch	8	31	9	0

RESULTS (con't):	CEDAR CREEK	POINT PELEE	ROCKWOOD	DETROIT R.
House Finch	1,385	1,020	635	149
Common Redpoll	2	2	0	12
Pine Siskin	26	16	6	1
American Goldfinch	204	320	10	91
Evening Grosbeak	0	1	0	0
House Sparrow	1,292	1,238	261	50
DATE	Dec 14	Dec 16	Dec 21	Jan 01
TOTAL SPECIES	90	106	65	68
TOTAL INDIVIDUALS	113,728	29,532	9,692	
OBSERVERS (IN FIELD)	30	33	5	3
FEEDER WATCHERS	1	0	0	0
PARTY HOURS (daylight)	110.5	106.5	14	14
(owling)	10	6.0	1	0.5
(feeder watching)	1	0	0	0
COUNT WEEK SPECIES	0	9	0	0
HIGH COUNTS (set or tied)	24	26	na	na
NEW SPECIES	8	2	4	?

PARTICIPANTS (C=Cedar Creek, P=Pelee, R=Rockwood, D=Detroit): Anne Barbour (C), Jo Barten (C,R), Martin Blagdurn (P), Peter Bondy (C), Jim & Lucy Bricker (C), Keith Burk (C), Bernard Calhoun (C), Ernie Carhart (P), Tom Carpenter (Compiler - Rockwood,P), John Cartwright (P), Karen Cedar (C,P,R), Mike Chomyshyn (P), Joel Dawson (C), Gladys Fisher (P), Jim Flynn (P,C), Glen Gervais (P,C), June Gordon (P,C), Dick & Tina Grolman (P), John Herba (C), Tom Hince (Compiler - Pelee,C,R,D), Hank Hunt (C,P,R), Thomas Hurst (C), Jack Hyatt (P), Vicky Johnston (P), Muriel Kassimatis (C), Mike Kielb (P), Jeff Larson (Compiler - Ontario portion of Detroit R.), Betty Learmouth (C), Laurel McIvor (P), Jim McAllister (C), Ethan Meleg (P), Allan Merritt (C), Charles Miller (P), Dick Myers (P), Karl Overman (P), Steve Pike (C,P,D), Gavin Platt (P), Ian Platt (P), Paul Pratt (Compiler - Cedar Creek,P,R), Gurth Pretty (P), Johanne Ranger (C), Phil Roberts (C), Mary Ellen Scully-Mosna (C), Roger Simms (P), Bob Smalley (P), Jillian Swaine (C), Sylvia Thys (C), Pat Watson (P), Deb Waugh (C), Allen Woodliffe (C), Alan Wormington (P), Laurie York (P), John Zoch (C), (Ojibway Nature Centre, Friends of Point Pelee)



IS THE SWEET CHESTNUT OUR OF THE WOODS? - Barbara Ouellette

Report on the public meeting of the Canadian Chestnut Council held at the Ontario Horticultural Research Centre, Simcoe, Ont., Nov. 7, 1991

When Gerry Waldron, the biologist with ERCA, first mentioned attending the Chestnut Council meeting in Simcoe, I jumped at the chance to go along. Besides, I had been told that our fellow-traveller Bruno Sfalcin's lovely wife Eleanor would send us with a north Italy-style picnic basket carrying a feast fit for kings--which is exactly what she did, including four bottles of Perrier!

Then Nov. 7 arrived with the season's first major slush storms and flu threats. But with the jolly companionship of Gerry, Bruno and Eleanor's incredible basket, the journey was as much fun as the meeting was informative.

As the Chestnut Council meeting commenced, Dr. Colin McKeen, former plant pathologist at the Harrow Research Station and current chairman of the Chestnut Council, and Michigan State's Dr. Dennis Fulbright unfolded in broad scope and clarity what Dr. McKeen has called "The Sweet Chestnut Saga". The plight of the American Chestnut, and the labour of researchers and environmentalists told a singularly compelling story.

The native chestnut, called Sweet or American Chestnut (Castanea dentata), once constituted about one quarter of the hardwood forest trees in North American, including our Carolinian zone of southwestern Ontario. The rich beauty of the tree, its sturdy hard wood, and delicious chestnuts, which were food staple for both human and animal communities, placed the chestnut at the heart of the North American forests. Swift-growing, it often reached 80-100 feet with a diameter of 6 feet, towering with straight trunk above the other forest members.

And chestnut wood was used for just about everything. Ironically one of the chief reasons it was so useful is the natural decay-resistance, so that it came to be used wherever soil met wood. Full of tannins, it became a backbone of the heavy leather industry as well; easy to work and with a fine grain, it was a favorite for furniture and interior trim.

Whenever chestnuts are named, the question comes with it, "Which chestnut are you talking about?". The native American or Sweet Chestnut (Castanea dentata) is not to be confused with its relatives, much smaller trees, the Spanish Chestnut (Castanea sativa), Chinese Chestnut (Castanea mollissima) or Japanese Chestnut (Castanea crenata), long cultivated in the orchards of Europe and Asia.

Nor should it be confused with the Horsechestnuts or Buckeyes, none of which are actually native in southwestern Ontario. Most common is the Horsechestnut (Aesculus hippocastanum) which is planted as a shade and street tree. The Horsechestnut produces polished dark chestnut-brown seeds that resemble those of the American but are inedible. The Horsechestnut leaf is large and palmately compound; the American Chestnut is simple, oblong-lanceolate. Horsechestnut flowers are candlesticks of orchid-like white blooms; American Chestnut flowers are slender arching catkins of delicate, cream-coloured blossoms. Similarly, the nuts found today in our supermarkets are not American chestnuts but are usually Spanish chestnuts grown in Europe, or occasionally Chinese. Both are much smaller than American Chestnuts.

The native American Chestnut once flourished on the sandy soils of the Carolinian zone south of a line roughly extending from Oakville on Lake Ontario to Grand Bend on Lake Huron across mid-Michigan and south to Georgia and Louisiana. Heartland of the chestnut was the Appalachian area of the U.S.

Then in 1904 a forester at the N.Y. Zoological Society's park in the Bronx noticed that the tops of some of the park's chestnut trees were dying and that an unfamiliar fungus had ruptured their bark. As subsequent years sadly witnessed, this was the chestnut blight fungus (Endothia parasitica) probably introduced into North America through the port of New York nursery stock of Chinese and Japanese Chestnuts. These oriental chestnuts have long been known to carry the blight without succumbing to it themselves.

Chestnut blight grows in mats of tangled fungus threads under the bark, in places breaking the bark open in cankers. It girdles the trunk, nutrient flow is cut off, and the tree dies. Suckers still spring from the root system even of long-dead trees. But at about ten years old, the fungus kills them too.

The results of the blight for the American Chestnut were devastating. During the next fifty years wind, rain, birds and insects carried the relentless fungus until chestnut stands were decimated throughout its entire North American range. What has been called the worst catastrophe in forest history killed 2 million trees in Ontario, 5 billion in Appalachian U.S.

During these years, the blight also entered Europe through ports in Italy, destroying the Italian groves of Castanea sativa, and spreading northward to France. The European chestnut recovery story is for another chapter, a story with a happy ending so far, as we trust ours will eventually be.

At the same time, Endothia parasitica infected other close relatives of the American Chestnut, though to a much lesser degree: in North America the Scarlet Oak (Quercus coccinea), Live Oak (Quercus virginiana), and English Oak (Quercus robur), none of which are native to Canada. All of these oaks have been able to recover from the fungus and keep growing.

But is there any hope for the American Chestnut? Most who are researching the question say yes. To begin with there are survivors. In fact, it appears by nature's defense we now have three categories of chestnut blight survivors:

1. Some hundreds of seed-producing trees which never did contract the disease and remain completely blight free.
2. Suckers growing up from stumps, and
3. Others which appear to have Endothia parasitica but are able to heal to a degree and keep growing.

This last category appears to have a hypovirulent ("less virulent" or "enfeebled") form of the fungus caused by a virus infection which debilitates the blight with some kind of cell damage. One might say in these cases the sickness is itself sick. This allows the tree's natural defenses to take hold, and the tree's life to be prolonged.

How remarkably prescient is Robert Frost's now famous poem written in 1930 when the situation appeared hopeless:

"Evil Tendencies Cancel"

Will the blight end the chestnut?
The farmers rather guess not.
It keeps smoldering at the roots
And sending up new shoots
Till another parasite
Shall come to end the blight.

Many different strains of hypovirulent blight have been found. Only a few of these are sufficiently sick to allow the trees to recover. And in only a few is the virus able to spread from tree to tree. Nonetheless, it appears in recent decades that the chestnut blight may be growing less destructive, largely it is thought, due to the presence of these hypovirulent strains.

So with nature's defence, there remains much American Chestnut germplasm out there.

Meanwhile the scientific community has not been sitting idly by. To be sure many of the early research efforts were not successful. Neither cutting out the cankers or replacing them with cement nor applying dirt poultices managed to retard the spread of the blight. Likewise, growing the nuts of surviving chestnuts in the hope that they would be genetically resistant saw the second generation of trees succumb. A number of other projects were similarly frustrated.

But considerable research is ongoing in broadly two approaches. One aims to incorporate the blight resistance of oriental chestnuts into the American species through cross-breeding; the other aims to transmit the debilitating virus by inoculating infected trees. This latter approach is one method of biological control or "biocontrol".

Earliest cross-breeding experiments hybridized American Chestnut with blight-resistant Chinese Chestnuts. The offspring were then crossed with a Chinese tree again. The resulting trees were blight resistant all right. But they had lost many of the most desirable characteristics of the American Chestnut. These new hybrids had more the growth habit of the apple tree instead of the towering, straight-grained trunk, full crown and prodigious nut crop of the American.

So in the last 20 years, cross-breeding experiments have taken a different turn in order to retain American Chestnut character. This new work aims eventually to produce American Chestnut trees that have picked up only the blight resistant genes, otherwise preserving American Chestnut germplasm intact. But with trees, cross-breeding experiments are long term. And many outlive the researchers themselves.

This brings us around to biological control. Biocontrol is the primary avenue of scientific work in Canada and Michigan and the essence of reports delivered at the Nov. 7, 1991 meeting of the Canadian Chestnut Council. Remember the Chestnut Council Meeting? The two main speakers at the meeting, Dr. Colin McKeen and Dr. Denis Fulbright with their staff are, as far as I know, the only researchers on the American Chestnut problem in Canada and Michigan today.

And what quickly becomes apparent, the Arner Chestnut, which survives at a height of 24m (78') and diameter of 70 1/2cm (28 1/2"), is Essex County's quiet hero. This is the chestnut you may have heard about and some of you have seen sequestered in the woods of Arner Point, a portion of Cedar Creek riverine forest wisely owned and protected by ERCA. The woods around the venerable chestnut were once predominantly American Chestnut trees. Today there are only three: The Arner Chestnut; one neighboring stump still "smoldering at the roots and sending up new shoots"; and one very small tree, whose roots may be much older than the tree looks at a spindly 4' high because it has been nibbled to the ground year upon year (this year it is carefully ensconced in anti-deer wrapping). Until the 1970's there was one other lesser but still large chestnut survivor on the water side of The Arner Chestnut, but it went down into the high flood waters of the early '70's.

So the Arner Chestnut survives and produces seeds. But the seeds are not fertile. For there is no longer any other nearby chestnut large enough to produce pollen. As with many trees, the chestnut must cross-pollinate to produce fertile seed.

Here the Arner tree illustrates the deeper problem; not only individual trees must survive but communities of trees that can cross-pollinate must survive.

The Arner Chestnut has become one of the central figures in science's fight to help the chestnut survive in Canada. With particular attention to the Arner tree, Dr. McKeen has made the chestnut research his retirement work. Funding from the World Wildlife Fund and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Renewable Resources has enable Dr. McKeen to keep watch on Canadian chestnut trees. He reports that there are over one hundred chestnut regrowth sites. There are a number of (perhaps 6 or 7) of entirely blight free trees with trunks exceeding 2' diameter, among the largest surviving chestnuts in all North America.

At the same time -- and this is where the Arner Chestnut and Dr. McKeen's research comes in -- there are some chestnuts in southwestern Ontario with hypovirulent strains of the blight. Dr. McKeen has isolated the sick fungus from some of these trees, chief among them The Arner Chestnut which has not one but two different hypovirulent strains, and inoculated it into infected trees. The virus then spreads, making the sickness sick, and enabling the trees to keep growing. Similar work in Michigan was reported by Dr. Fulbright, who gave us a historical overview of the problem as he presented his research.

All things considered, it becomes clear that the Sweet Chestnut is not yet "out of the woods". Obviously alongside research we must undertake maximum protection of the precious remnant trees. The Conservation Authority is concerned because the Arner chestnut trees are not producing viable nuts, and hypovirulence by itself will not save the chestnut. The trees must be at maximum vigor to secure their survival.

In particular, they need sunlight and freedom from competition with the other forest trees. Because of this the Arner trees will get some special treatment this winter. Some of the neighboring trees which are shading the chestnut will be girdled to allow more sunlight to fall upon the chestnuts. Hopefully the two small trees will be strengthened and rise into the forest canopy to become pollinators. Then seeds will again fall to the forest floor to germinate and produce the trees of tomorrow's forest.

So the "Sweet Chestnut Saga" is still in progress, the ultimate outcome not known. But as Dr. McKeen wrote in the spring of 1991:

It has long been recognized that evolution favours a truce. In the 60 years of chestnut/blight fungus encounter, the pathogen is becoming less virulent. Hopefully more resistant types of the Sweet Chestnut species will also come to the fore.

To date, the comeback observed for the chestnut has been achieved largely without man's conscious help. But with proper direction, human efforts should improve its restoration.

SO YOU WISH TO RAISE BLUEBIRDS - William H. Balkwill

Essex County still has enough suitable habitat to maintain a modest flock of Eastern Bluebirds. Hard work, diligent field studies, sticking to proven facts and good management and with the coming of future springs, it may again be possible to hear the cheery notes of the Eastern Bluebird throughout the county.

Any place where vegetation is short with a thin scattering of trees is suitable habitat such as golf courses, sewage lagoons, highway right of ways, close cropped pastures, sod bound creek banks and any place where the vegetation is regularly mowed. Apple orchards may seem to be ideal but the use of highly toxic pesticides make them questionable. Do not attempt to erect any nest boxes in either private or public land before receiving written permission from either the landowner or proper public officials.

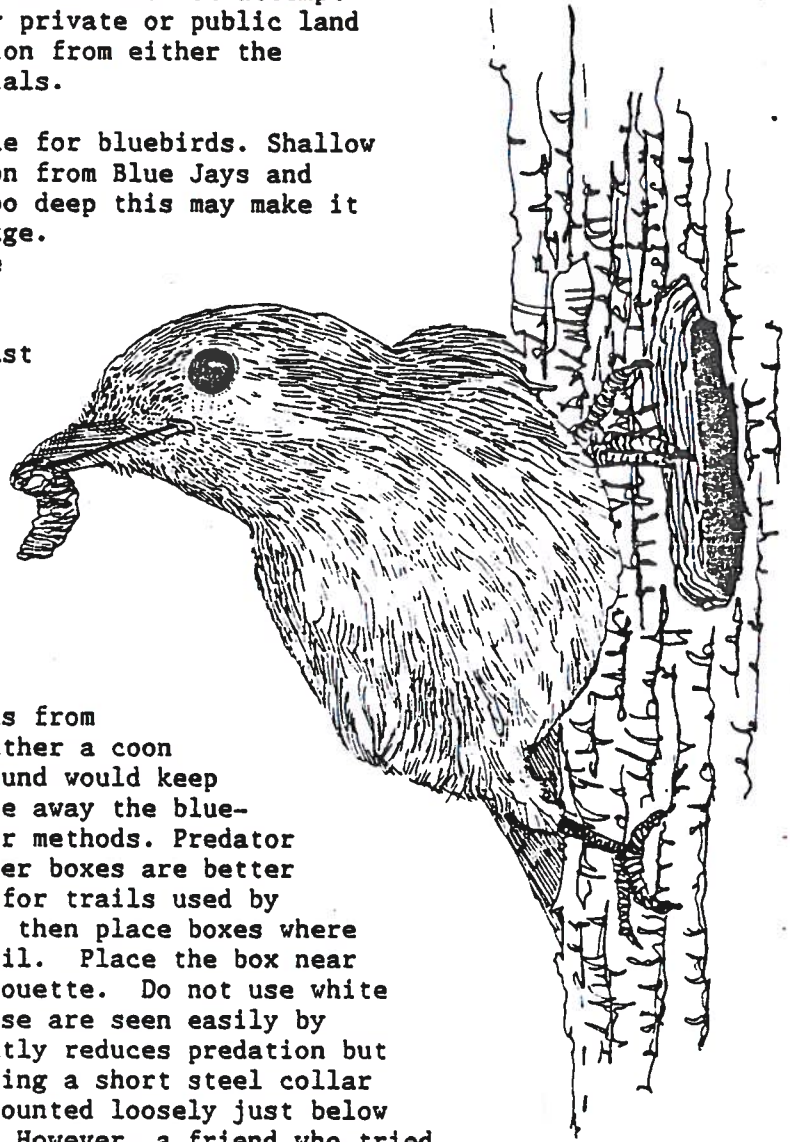
Most nest box designs are suitable for bluebirds. Shallow boxes are susceptible to predation from Blue Jays and Common Grackles. If the box is too deep this may make it difficult for young birds to fledge. For plans see the Dec. 1991 issue of the EGRET.

Placing nest boxes facing southeast to catch the early morning sun and in the shade of the midday sun is ideal for early spring nestings. Later nestings can face any direction and have slightly more shade. In open areas place nest boxes near a shrub or rose bush. This allows birds to take refuge from attacks of raptors.

The only sure way to keep raccoons from raiding nest boxes would be to tether a coon hound under each nest box! The hound would keep away raccoons but would also scare away the bluebirds so we have to look for other methods. Predator guards can be of some help. Deeper boxes are better but not totally coonproof. Watch for trails used by raccoons when erecting nest boxes then place boxes where they are not visible from the trail. Place the box near a tree or shrub to break the silhouette. Do not use white or light reflectant paints as these are seen easily by raccoons. Using steel posts greatly reduces predation but again these are not foolproof. Using a short steel collar about 2 feet by 6 inch diameter mounted loosely just below the box is said to be excellent. However, a friend who tried this said that bluebirds would not accept boxes where he used them.

The use of lubricating grease is said to work (on the pole to deter climbing). I intend to try it on my own mounting post this year. Warning: grease is toxic to domestic livestock.

Monitoring is more than checking boxes and counting the young. You should study the birds in the field and note where the birds are foraging. The location of boxes they favour as well as the boxes they shun should also be noted. This will be helpful for future placement of boxes.



In the early spring, (especially on newly set up bluebird trails) observe from a good distance so as not to disturb the birds. Bluebirds are individuals - some are aggressive and others are very tolerant, and still others are very timid. Once incubation starts bluebirds will seldom abandon their nest but it is preferable to wait until some birds are feeding young before opening boxes for inspection.

If a sparrow or starling is seen at or near a nest box it should be inspected. If they have started to build a nest it should be cleaned out and the flap left open for at least a week. Never allow either starlings or sparrows to rear young in the nest boxes. The offspring would eventually take over all nest boxes driving the bluebird from the trail you are trying to establish. It may take a full season or more to discourage sparrows from a nest box.

Inspection every two weeks should be sufficient. Where sparrows are a problem or if you wish to band the young then you should inspect at least once a week. Open and close boxes very gently. Speak softly and only if you must. Do not talk at the chicks, as they do not understand any human languages! Remember bluebirds are wild birds not free roaming pets. The only reason to touch the young birds are if you need to change an insect infested nest to a clean one or for banding. Remove the old nest between two boards to keep down infections of ants, maggots and mites. Put the old nest in a shopping bag and remove from the site.

=====

ATTENTION ALL BLUEBIRDERS!

Do you have a Bluebird house on your property?

Do you know sites where Bluebirds are nesting in a natural cavity?

The Bluebird committee would like to hear from you.

WRITE TO US THIS AUGUST,
OR WHENEVER YOUR NESTING SEASON IS FINISHED.

Let us know.....

- 1) Where your property is.
- 2) Number of boxes.
- 3) Number of bluebird pairs that visited your boxes, then moved on.
- 4) Number of bluebird pairs that used your boxes.
- 5) Number of bluebird broods, and number of fledglings per nest.
- 6) Data on other cavity nesting 'critters'.
- 7) Anything noteworthy you learned about the above.

Please write up your data, and send it to:

Betty Learmouth, Bluebird Secretary
2405 Princess Street
Windsor, Ontario
N8T 2V1

"THE BIRD OF FIRE" - Jim McAllister

If you're looking for a way to prolong the spring birding season after the migration has peaked at Point Pelee, let me suggest a couple of choice spots, both in Michigan. One is the Mio/Tawas City area, the other is Whitefish Point just northwest of the Soo on Lake Superior. In this article, I'll deal with the former, an area I've visited now four times.

Leaving after work on the Friday of our long weekend in May, an easy three hour drive from Detroit via I-75 to Alger and then Highway 33 will get you to Mio. There are ample motel rooms available at reasonable rates but restaurants have a pretty limited fare. Broiled walleye/pickereel was ordered, boiled is what we got! Remember you're here for the birds, not the food.

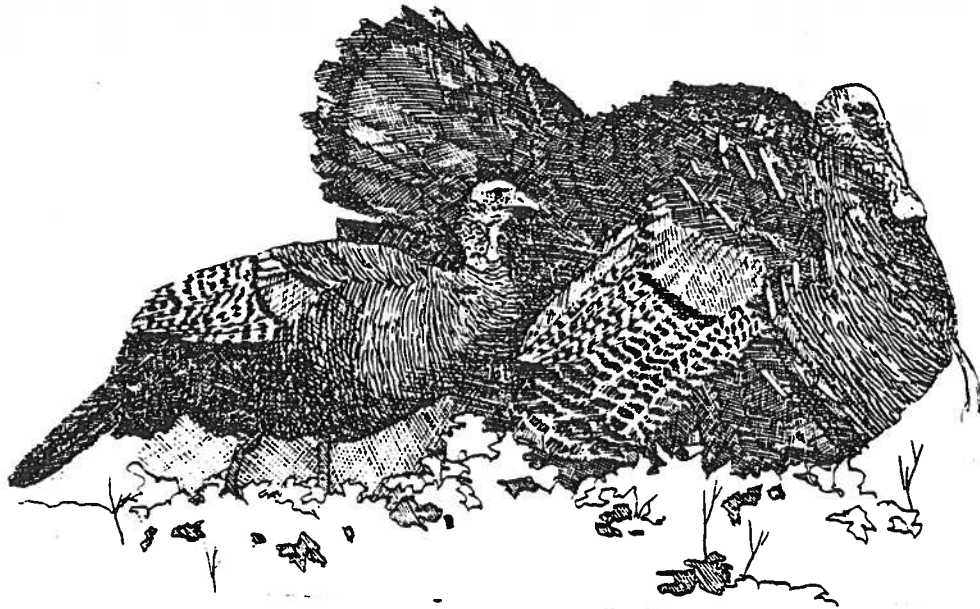
What brings many people to Mio is the Kirtland's Warbler, a large model of which is seen as one enters the town. This warbler is called the "bird of fire", so named because it nests on the ground only under jack pines about 8 to 20 years of age. The cones of this tree will only open and release their seed during the intense heat of a forest fire. This area of northern Michigan is, at present, the only known breeding area of the Kirtland's Warbler.

Its habitat is so specialized that unless extraordinary measures are taken, the bird would soon become extinct. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages over 200,000 acres of forest, segments of which are burned and replanted each year. The number of breeding pairs, although probably never too high has hovered around 200 pairs despite the herculean efforts to raise the number to 1000. Attention is starting to focus on their wintering grounds in the Bahamas where logging is quickly decimating habitat. The Winter 1992 issue of American Birds reports that the 1991 total of singing males increased to 347, the highest total since the 502 reported in 1961.

If one wishes to enter the managed areas, it is required that one register at the ranger station on the north side of town just before the bridge over the AuSable River. The first tour begins at 7:30am with a mandatory film and question and answer period. By about 8:00am, the ranger leads a caravan of cars into the jack pine forests just south of town. As one drives deeper into the area, one passes the various stages of forest development from burned out to recently replanted to mature to forest ready to be burned.

After a drive of a few miles, the caravan pulls off to the side of the road and everyone now follows the ranger on foot. Less than a minute later, the distinctive song of the kirtland's is heard but when we locate it, with sun behind it, all we can see is a silhouette. Never mind, within seconds another male is heard on the west side of the road. With some difficulty, the bird is finally located about 100 metres away and everyone has a good look at him through a scope. Suddenly, not more than 6-7 metres away a female pops out on a branch at eye level! Then our first bird changes position affording great closeup views of another male.

After everyone has taken pictures and seen enough of the "bird of fire", the ranger leads us to one of the many cowbird traps scattered across the area. This huge cage is filled with hundreds of cowbirds that would surely parasitize the nests of Kirtland's Warblers if they were not eliminated. Before the cowbird control program was instituted over 2/3 of all Kirtland's nests were parasitized and its numbers dropped to a dangerously low level. Both Clay-coloured and Grasshopper Sparrows make their appearance and bluebirds are quite common. Upland Sandpipers are a certainty and if you're lucky as we were, you might just see the spectacular mating display of the male.



From far above he hurtles headlong toward the ground pulling up at the last instant landing beside the female. Prairie Warblers are also seen and heard and the elusive Turkey is a good possibility especially early in the morning. This reintroduced species that formerly been hunted to extirpation is making a strong comeback in this area.

After a very productive morning, we head to Tawas City on Lake Huron, a further hours drive, to bird Tawas Point which has been referred to as Point Pelee in miniature. Tawas Point like Pelee sticks south into the lake acting as a migrant trap and when conditions are right as they were the first time we visited, virtually every tree and bush is sporting its own assortment of passerines - 20+ species of warblers, tanagers, bobolinks, buntings, etc. Lingering loons can still be seen not too far offshore with rafts of ducks including scoters and hooded mergansers. Gulls and terns fly along the shore, while hundreds of shorebirds including a dozen whimbrel rest on a sandbar 25 meters off the Tip. The water here is still cold even in the third week of May so dress warmly.

Tawas City being a tourist resort in summer offers a good selection of motels, but not restaurants out of season. Nearby Rifle River State Park is a good spot for camping and excellent for birding. Any woodland birds missed elsewhere can likely be found here including flycatchers and about 20 species of warblers. Raptors include Bald Eagle, Osprey, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged, Cooper's, Sharp-shinned Hawks and Northern Goshawk. Great Horned, Eastern Screech and Barred Owls all live in the park and respond well to tapes. Barred Owls were heard every night we were in the area.

There are large tracts of land here that are largely unpopulated, if you want to get away from the crowd. This is a very pretty part of Michigan that has many lakes and the northern woods-look, but is so accessible to us. In addition to the 100+ species of birds that can be seen in a weekend, like comparable parts of eastern Ontario, maple syrup and cheddar cheese are big local products widely available.

As well as birds, I should mention the spring wildflowers, like trillium and the abundant yellow lady's slipper, are just reaching their peak here then. If you plan a summer visit, a canoe trip down the AuSable River is highly recommended. However, according to the locals the best time to visit is the fall when the colours are spectacular. Whatever time of year you choose to visit, this is a wonderful part of the earth to see.

Next: Whitefish Point

WILDFLOWERS at WHEATLEY PROVINCIAL PARK - Vicky Johnston

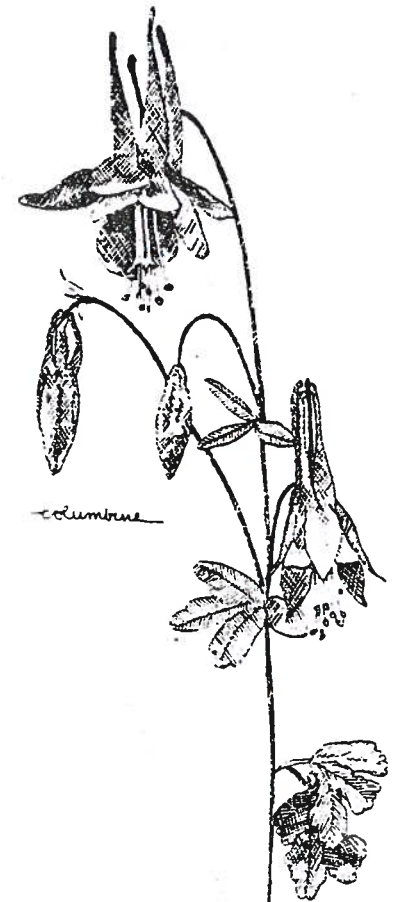
I want to alert the club's plant lovers to Essex county's best-kept spring wildflower secret- Wheatley Provincial Park. Wheatley offers the best combination of spring flower variety and ease of access to be found in this part of the county. As spring runs into summer, Wheatley's woodland flowers senesce and the summer flora of savannah, prairie, and marsh areas at Ojibway, Walpole Island, and Point Pelee demand the botanists attention. However, for a few weeks in April and early May, Wheatley is the place to be!

The peak for variety of flowering plants occurs in the last two weeks of April. In a one-hour stroll along the nature trail on April 27 last year, we tallied 24 different spring wildflowers (plus two vines/shrubs) in bloom (see list below). The most notable plant in flower was white species of Trout Lily which is listed as rare in the region. Last year over 500 individuals were blooming along the nature trail. Here you can also see the white variety of the Red Trillium. This is kind of confusing- the red trillium (Trillium erectum) has a white variety that is not the white trillium that we all know (Trillium grandiflora). Newcomb's flower guide can help you distinguish between the two- the two species have distinctly different flowers when you really look at them and it's very interesting to see the white flower colour overlain on the red flower's morphology. Wild Ginger is also abundant - what a neat looking plant!

The best place within the park for spring flowers is along the nature trail which winds through a mature, relatively undisturbed beech-maple-oak forest. Park just off the road at the entrance to the group camping laneway (before you reach the main gates of the park). Walk along the laneway for a few hundred feet and you will see the nature trail branching off to your right. Allow yourself at least one hour to walk this 1 km trail- the flowers are thick in the spring!

IN FLOWER, WHEATLEY PROVINCIAL PARK, APRIL 27, 1991.

Purple Cress (Cardamine douglassii)
Blue Cohosh (Caulophyllum thalictroides)
Wild Geranium (Geranium maculatum)
Sharp-lobed Hepatica (Hepatica acutiloba)
Garlic Mustard (!) (Allaria officinalis)
Marsh Marigold (Caltha palustris)
Pin Cherry (Prunus pennsylvanica)
Field Pussytoes (Antennaria neglecta)
Small-flowered Crowfoot (Ranunculus abortivus)
Miterwort (Mitella diphylla)
False lily of the Valley (Maianthemum canadense)
Dandelion (Taraxacum officinale)
Trout Lily (white) (Erythronium albidum)
Trout Lily (yellow) (E. americanum)
Pussytoes sp. (Antennaria sp.)
Spring Beauty (Claytonia virginica)
Red Trillium (white; red var.) (Trillium erectum)
Early Buttercup (Ranunculus fascicularis)
White Trillium (Trillium grandiflora)
Jack-in-the-Pulpit (Arisaema atrorubens)
Wood Anemone (Anemone quinquefolia)
Purple Violet (Viola sp.)
Yellow Violet (Viola sp.)
Wild Black Currant (Ribes americanum)
Dwarf Ginseng (Panax trifolium)
Early Meadow Rue (Thalictrum dioicum)



If you do visit Wheatley and like what you see, please make it known that you, as a taxpayer, appreciate this park for its natural qualities. Wheatley is grossly underfunded and staff cannot afford to properly patrol the park and enforce regulations. As it lies between two "giant" provincial parks (Rondeau and Pinery), it seems to be overlooked by the powers-that-be. Letters should be addressed to:

Park Superintendent
Wheatley Provincial Park
Box 640
WHEATLEY, ON
NOP 2P0

Bud Wildman
Minister of Natural Resources
99 Wellesley St. W, Rm. 6301
Queen's Park
TORONTO, ON M7A 1W3



Happy botanizing!

BLUEBIRDS IN SONG (trivia) by Don Bissonnette

North Americans have long had a fascination and love for bluebirds. What is it that makes Sialis sialis so intriguing? Artists have expressed their love for the bluebirds in paintings, on greeting cards, in poems and in songs.

Here are some lines, from songs. All these songs were popular at one time or another. Can you guess their titles? Answers found on page 18. Good luck!

- 1) If happy little bluebirds fly, oh why, oh why, oh why, can't I?
- 2) I'm happy with the simplest things. A Saturday night dance, a picture show, and the joy that the bluebird brings!
- 3) Gone away, is the bluebird; here to stay is a new bird.
- 4) Ain't it kind of silly, bluebirds in the moonlight?
- 5) There's a bluebird on your windowsill, there's a rainbow in your sky.
- 6) Mr. Bluebird on my shoulder; it's the truth, it's actual, everythin is satisfactual.
- 7) There are bluebirds over..

Answers to Bluebird song quiz: 1) Over the Rainbow, 2) I was raised on Country Sunshine, 3) Winter Wonderland, 4) When I'm with You, 5) Bluebird at Your Window, 6) Zipadeedoda, 7) White Cliffs over Dover.

ESSEX COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS'S CLUB

STATEMENT OF ASSETS & MEMBERS' EQUITY AS AT DECEMBER 31, 1990

ASSETS

Cash on Hand		\$ 50.00
Savings Account #1		65.96
Savings Account #2		42.74
Term Deposits		7,100.00
Current Account		
(\$401.27 less outstanding cheques of \$120.74)		280.53
Organization expense		<u>170.05</u>
TOTAL		\$7,709.28

Members Equity		7,709.28
(Includes amounts attributed to		
Lifetime memberships	\$1,500.00	
Acquisition Fund	<u>5,967.63</u>	
Total	\$7,467.63)	

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1990

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Disbursements</u>	
Lifetime memberships	\$ 500.00	Donations	\$ 250.00
Other donations	50.00	Insurance	235.00
Regular memberships	2,122.00	Egret Printing	578.43
Banquet	2,402.50	Postage	488.87
Auction	1,549.50	Banquet	1,529.47
Sale of Prints	260.00	Room Rental	270.00
Other Sales	303.65	Telephone	135.25
Advertising	75.00	Office Supplies	142.64
Baillie Birdathon	338.06	P.O. Box	26.20
Bank Interest	162.29	S.D.B. Rental	27.50
Miscellaneous	<u>19.50</u>	Poster Printing	1,816.19
	\$7,782.50	Dues	103.30
		Miscellaneous	<u>31.05</u>
			\$5,633.90

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS' EQUITY FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1990

Excess of receipts over disbursements			
\$7,782.50	-	\$5,633.90	=
			\$2,148.60
Plus:			
Reversal of amount expensed in 1989			
for organization expense	+		170.05
Less:			
Unlocated difference in previous year's			
member's equity calculation	-		<u>27.00</u>
Subtotal			\$2,291.65
Plus Previous Year's members' equity		5,417.63	
Members' equity as of December 31, 1990		<u>\$7,709.28</u>	
		=====	

NEWS AND NUGGETS

Baillie Birdathon 1991: Congratulations goes out to the 1991 Baillie Birdathon Team of Richard Bilinski, Betty Learmouth, Carl Maiolani, Jim McAllister, Peggy Moore, and Tom Hurst. They were part of the 331 individuals representing more than 55 clubs that raised a record total of \$115,576.01! Remember, a portion of all funds raised by ECFNC team members is rebated back to the Club.

Baillie Birdathon 1992: Tom Hurst assures me that this year will be even bigger and better for the ECFNC Baillie Birdathon Team. Participants receive a free T-shirt by Peter Burke. In addition, to raising funds for the club you can have some fun and get a crack at some superb prizes - which include a pair of Leica 10x42B binoculars, a Bushnell Spacemaster scope and several excellent bird books and prints. This years official birdathon weekend is May 9 and 10 but you can do your birdathon anytime in May, anywhere in the world.

ECFNC Officers and Executive Contacts

President - Tom Hurst 839-4675
Vice-president - Peter Bondy 978-2737
Treasurer - Peg Wilkinson
Secretary - Myrtle Bissette
Corresponding Sec.. - Barbara Ouellette
Field Trips - Phil Roberts
Annual Dinner - Carl Maiolani
Egret Editor - Tom Hince 326-4354
Bluebird Committee - Don Bisonette

Financial updates: In this issue you will find the Financial Statement for 1990 of the ECFNC. Starting with the June issue we will print quarterly summaries of the Treasurers report (as was done in the DEC., 1991 EGRET). The 1991 Financial Statement will appear in the fall unless is finalized for inclusion in the June issue.

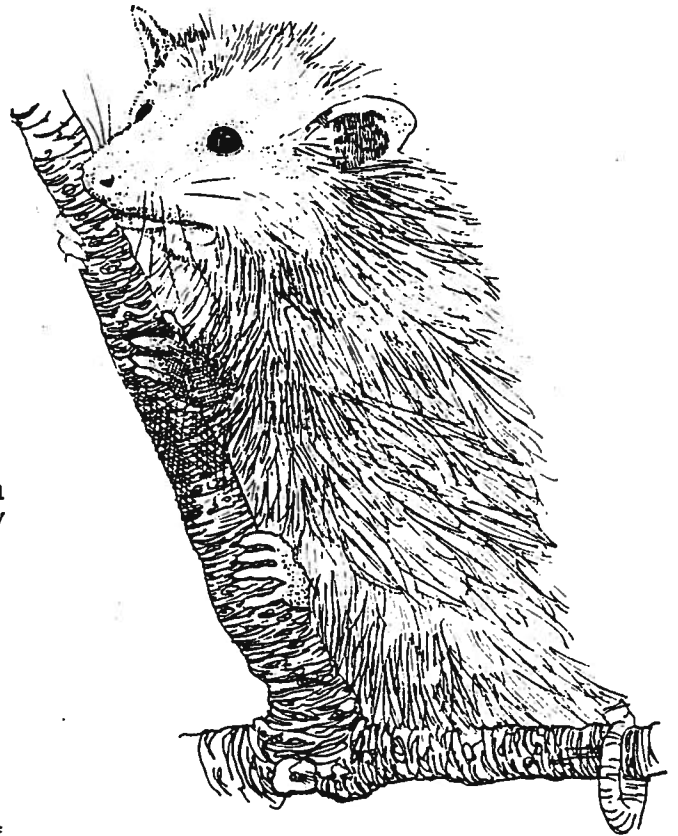
Prairie Conference Update: Planning for the upcoming Prairie Conference (August 6-9) is in full swing. A complete detailed information and registration package should be available by March 15th.

Natural Habitat Restoration Program: Point Pelee National Park, Essex Region Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources have initiated a habitat restoration program for Essex County. The group is in the initial stages of formulating objectives and a working structure. They have asked the ECFNC to appoint an advisor to the working group.

"The Atlas of Breeding Birds of Michigan": This a new publication authored by Richard Brewer, Gail McPeck, and Raymond Adams, Jr. It is a comprehensive volume based on the six-year survey conducted by more than 1000 volunteers. You can order it by mail from Michigan State University Press 1405 S. Harrison Rd., 25 Manly Miles Bldg., East Lansing, Michigan 48823-5202. It should be available in some local bookstores as well (the Friends of Point Pelee will have it in stock). Price: about US \$40.

Signs of Spring: As we go to press, many spring migrants are returning. Waterfowl viewing should reach its peak over the next three weeks. Migrants noted so far include Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Pintail, Wood Duck, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Eastern Bluebird, Belted Kingfisher, Killdeer, Red-shouldered Hawk, Eastern Meadowlark, American Woodcock, Great Blue Heron and Snow Goose ("Blue" form).

"The Feather Quest": This is a crisp, new volume by Peter Dunne, nationally known author. You could call it a story of a year of birding North America's best birding sites. But really it is the story of birding and birders, the places they go and things they do. Wonderful reading. It contains a chapter on Point Pelee which I'm sure readers will find intriguing (also available from the FOPP). Price: about \$30.



' POSSUM PROBLEMS

1. Opossums are
 - a) the only monkey in North America
 - b) the only marsupial in North America
 - c) a large rodent
 - d) a small carnivore
2. The nearest relative to an opossum is a
 - a) mouse
 - b) squirrel
 - c) raccoon
 - d) kangaroo
3. Opossum fur is generally
 - a) gray-white in colour
 - b) brown in colour
 - c) yellowish in colour
4. An adult opossum is the same size as a
 - a) dog,
 - b) cat
 - c) squirrel
 - d) mouse
5. An opossum's hind foot track closely resembles the print of a
 - a) rabbit foot
 - b) human hand
 - c) skunk foot
6. Opossums have
 - a) short naked tails
 - b) short furry tails
 - c) long naked tails
 - d) long furry tails
7. Adult opossums use their tail for
 - a) hanging from tips of branches
 - b) carrying nesting material
 - c) strangling prey
 - d) all of the above
8. Opossums have
 - a) 50 teeth
 - b) 30 teeth
 - c) 10 teeth
 - d) no teeth
9. An opossum's diet usually consists of
 - a) seeds and nuts
 - b) fruit and insects
 - c) carrion
 - d) all of the above
 - e) none of the above
10. Opossums can have a maximum litter of
 - a) 2 young
 - b) 8 young
 - c) 13 young
11. Eight newborn opossums can fit into
 - a) a teaspoon
 - b) a shoe box
 - c) a bushel basket
12. When frightened, an opossum may
 - a) run
 - b) feign death
 - c) snarl and bite
 - d) climb a tree
 - e) all of the above
13. Opossums can be found
 - a) in your backyard
 - b) in restaurant dumpsters
 - c) along roadsides
 - d) in wooded creek valleys
 - e) all of the above
14. Opossums are
 - a) found everywhere in Essex County
 - b) starting to be found in Essex County
 - c) not found in Essex County



*** Please report all opossum sightings to Ojibway Nature Centre (966-5852).

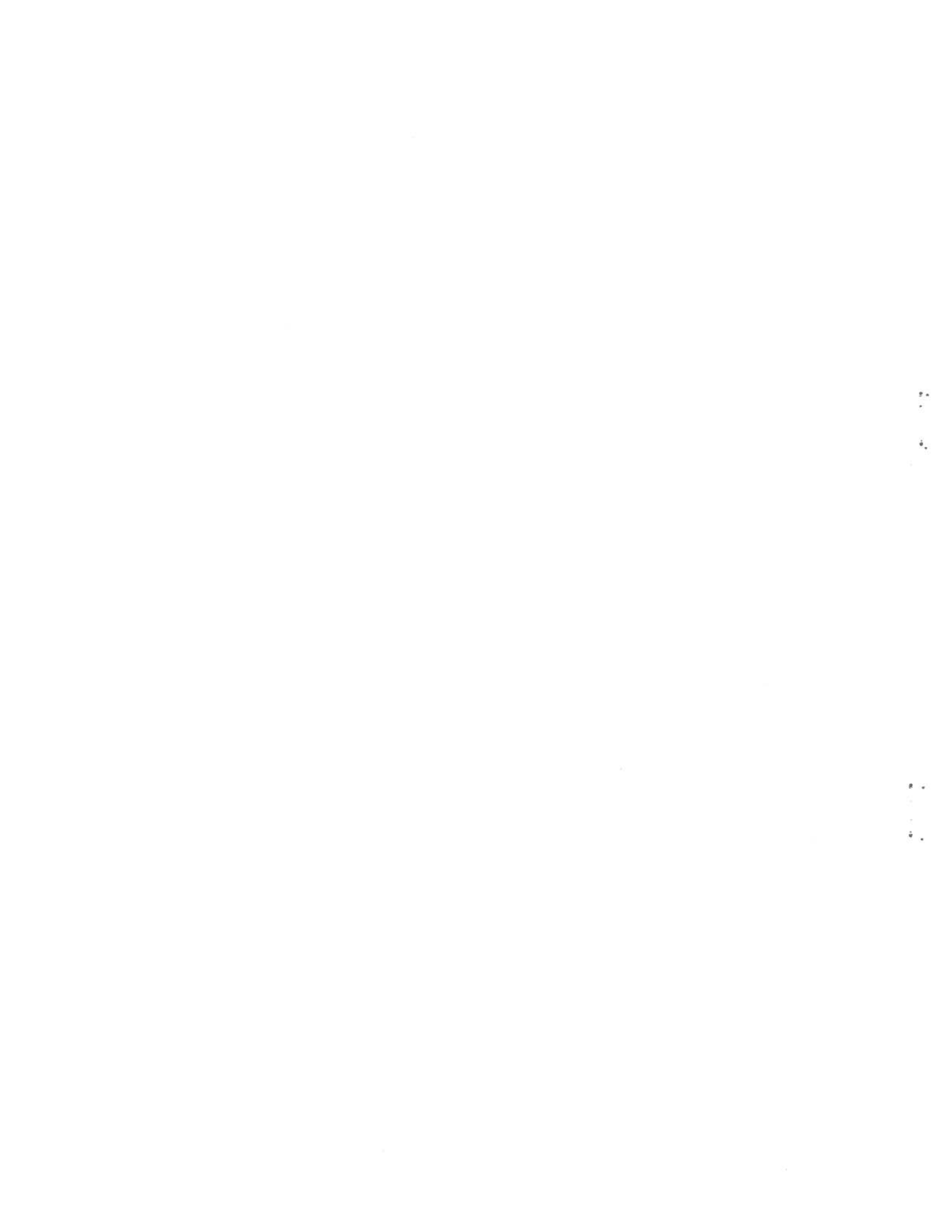
Karen Cedar

SPRING SPECIAL EVENTS
Essex Region Conservation Authority

- *April 25, Sat.** **The Tremblay Beach Trek**
9:00am -Noon A first look at spring birds in this wetland haven. Hike and explore Tremblay with staff naturalist.
Tremblay Beach Conservation Area
- *April 26, Sun.** **Arbour Week Tree Hike**
2:00pm Come and enjoy a breath of spring air while discovering the unique varieties of oaks which grow in this interesting woodlot. Rubber boots are a must!
Devonwood Conservation Area
- May 2-3, Sat.Sun.** **TROUT DERBY**
8:00am-4:00pm Trout derby, tagged fish, prizes, cash, sponsors.
Holiday Beach Conservation Area.
- *May 10, Sun.** **Mother's Day Wildflower Walk**
2:00pm The woodlots abound with Trilliums, May Apple, and Trout Lily. This guided hike will point out what is sometimes missed on the forest floor.
Kopegaron Woods(Meet at Hillman Marsh C.A.)
- *May 16, Sat.** **Bird Banding Morning**
8:00am Spend a morning looking at a very unique wildlife research program. The capture, banding, and release of spring migratory birds. Slides. Demonstrations.
Hillman Marsh Conservation Area
- *May 24, Sun.** **Nature Photography Workshop**
9:00am-2:00pm Get close to a Red-Tailed Hawk, Great Horned Owl, or American Kestrel as well as other live nature photo opportunities.
Hillman Marsh Conservation Area

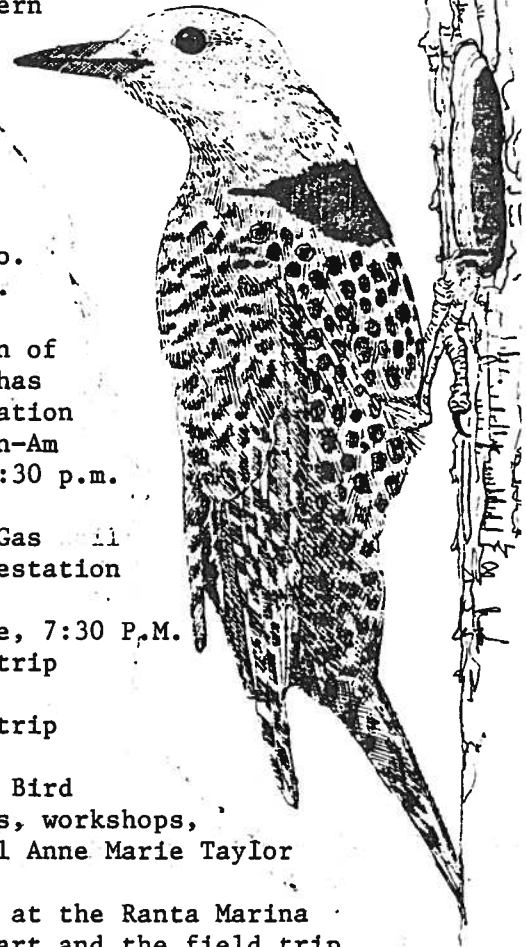
*** PLEASE CALL TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS AS SPACE IS LIMITED**
PHONE: 776-5209





ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

- Wed., March 11 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Union Gas Building
Speaker: B. Learmouth Topic: Parks of Northern Tanzania - flicker
- Mon., March 23 - Monthly Meeting of the Citizens Environment Alliance, Main Library, 7:00 p.m.
Speaker: Cam Wright Topic: 3R's of waste management
- Wed., March 25 - E.C.F.N.C. Executive Meeting
- Sat., March 28 - Bring back the birds", a special one-day symposium at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto.
Call Ken Towle at (416)366-6100 for more info.
Cost: \$20.00
- Tues., March 31- An evening with David Suzuki for the promotion of his new book Wisdom of the Elders. Programme has been arranged by South/Shore Books in co-operation with Citizens Environment Alliance and the Can-Am Indian Friendship Centre. Capital Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
Cost: \$5.00
- Wed., April 5 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Union Gas Building. Speaker: Ross Thomson Topic: Reforestation in Essex County
- Thurs., April 9- Spring birding workshop, Ojibway Nature Centre, 7:30 P.M.
- Sat., April 11 - Ojibway Nature Centre's spring birding field trip
- April 24 - May 3 is Arbour Week.
- Sat., April 25 - Ojibway Nature Centre's spring birding field trip
- Sat., April 25 and
- Sun., April 26 - 22nd annual general meeting of the Long Point Bird Observatory, Port Rowan. Includes field trips, workshops, banquet and guest speaker, Kay McKeever. Call Anne Marie Taylor at 586-3531 for more information.
- Sun., April 26 - E.C.F. N.C. Field trip to River Canard. Meet at the Ranta Marina at 12:00 noon. The leader will be Randy Stewart and the field trip will conclude at 3:00 p.m.
- Mon., April 27 - Monthly Meeting of Citizens Environment Alliance. A walking tour of Little River is planned. Meet in the parking lot of Little River, 6:30 p.m.
- Tues., April 28- Ojibway Nature Centre's wildflower workshop, 7:30 p.m.
- Wed, April 29 - Ojibway Nature Centre's weekday birding field trip
- Wed., April 29 - E.C.F.N.C. Executive Meeting
- Sun., May 3 - Ojibway Nature Centre's spring wildflower field trip
- Wed., May 6 - Ojibway Nature Centre's weekday birding
- Sun., May 10 - Spring Festival at Ojibway Nature Centre, 1:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m.
- Tues., May 12 - Dedication of the Centennial Forest at Little River by the Governor General of Canada. Details to be announced.
- Wed., May 13 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the Union Gas Building
- Wed., May 20 - Ojibway Nature Centre's weekday birding
- Wed., May 27 - E.C.F.N.C. Executive Meeting
- May 29 -31 - "Partners in Nature", the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' 1992 annual conference and general meeting at Brock University, St. Catharines, hosted by Peninsula Field Naturalists
- Wed., June 10 - E.C.F.N.C. Monthly Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Union Gas Building



The Egret, Volume 9, Number 1, March 1992; newsletter of the Essex County Field Naturalists' Club, P.O. Box 3241, Tecumseh, Ontario N8N 3C4

Address correction requested.

Thomas Hurst,
R.R. # 3,
Cottam,
Ont
NOR 1B0