

# Heron's Watch

#70 Fall 2011



## 2011—The year I became the Evening Grosbeak Lady By Ginny Moore

For much of my life, I have been the invisible one; the one whose name and face are forgotten, the wallflower. I really would have made a good spy. All that changed early in 2011.

The story really starts on November 15, 2010. It was on that date that I recorded the presence of nine **Evening Grosbeaks** for my first day of Project Feeder Watch. By December 6th, the number had risen to 30 and had doubled to 62 by January 3rd. I was thrilled every day to see them despite the incredible amount of seed that they were eating. But it never dawned on me to report their presence to anyone.



Around that time, there was a report on Ontbirds about a **Northern Hawk-Owl** in the Lake Dalrymple area of Carden. It had been around for over a week and still I had not made the 20 minute drive to the area to find it. I admit that I am pretty much a lazy birder - if it doesn't come to my yard, I'm not going to make much effort to go see it. Not for me the trips to southwestern Ontario to see the Fork-tailed Flycatcher or to eastern Ontario to see the impossibly massive numbers of Snow Geese gathering in the spring.

Finally, one Saturday morning I decided that it was ridiculous that there was an owl just down the road and I

had not yet seen it. So I headed outside, broom in hand to wipe the snow off the car. And there, parked at the bottom of my driveway was a fellow sitting in his car, camera lens sticking out the passenger side window. We chatted briefly about the beauty of these grosbeaks and how we both had yet to see the owl. Then off he went and I returned to brushing the snow off my car.

By the time I had arrived in the area for the owl, there were, naturally, a number of cars already there. After all, it was Saturday and those who had had to be at work all week were free to drive miles to see this bird. With all these eyes searching, we did manage to see the owl though it was well back from the road and could be seen clearly only through a scope.

At some point during this gathering of birders, I happened to mention that I had evening grosbeaks at my feeders. Every head in the group whirled in my direction. I could literally see ears being perked.

Oh, really! The interest was palpable and I offered that anyone interested in seeing them could follow me home. I left the owl area with a cavalcade of four cars behind me. Upon arriving home, we found two more cars sitting at the side of the road looking at the birds. Of course, the grosbeaks were spooked by the cars and it was then that the weight of responsibility settled on my shoulders and didn't leave for nearly three months. It was a weight that would never have occurred to me to feel before this point. It was the weight of wanting "my birds" to perform (show up) for the visitors.

So we all stood around for a while until a few birds showed up. I was disappointed that there were so few when usually there were so many, but these few birds seemed to satisfy. After a while, everyone had had their fill of the birds and I returned inside, immediately firing up the computer. Heart pounding, I posted to Ontario


*(Continued on page 5)*

KFN General Meetings are held in the at The Senior's Hall, 58 Murray St., Fenelon Falls. Meetings will be held at 7:30pm on the first Monday of every month with the following exceptions: January and September: Second Monday - May, July and August: No Meeting. **Guests always welcome.** The annual meeting is held on the last Saturday in April.

# Kawartha Field Naturalists

P.O. Box 313, Fenelon Falls, ON K0M 1G0

kawarthafieldnaturalists.org

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Club Projects</b></p> <p>Altberg Reserve     Robbie Preston                                 John Vandenberg  Altberg Wetlands     Eric Davis                                 John Vandenberg  Bluebird Trail         Vic Orr  CKL Flora             Anne Barbour                                 Dale Leadbeater  Chimney Swift Project Judy Kennedy                                 Robbie Preston  Victoria Stewardship Council                                 Dane Bone</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Contact Data (area code 705)</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 30%;">Barbour, Anne</td> <td style="width: 15%;">454-8945</td> <td style="width: 55%;">anne.barbour@bell.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Barbour, Brian</td> <td>454-8945</td> <td>ba.barbour@bell.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bick, John</td> <td>738-2707</td> <td>jjbick@nexicom.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Beacler, Randy</td> <td>488-2266</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blayney, Susan</td> <td>887-4691</td> <td>susan.blayney@gmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bone, Dan</td> <td>887-4691</td> <td>dan.bone@xplornet.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brophy, Tim</td> <td>324-2394</td> <td>tbrophy1@bell.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Davis, Eric</td> <td>439-2530</td> <td>jjedavis@istribute1.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dyment, Leslie</td> <td>359-1376</td> <td>lsdyment@lindsaynet.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Firth, Mary</td> <td>454-2837</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hoyle, Lizz &amp; Bill</td> <td>374-4073</td> <td>bhoyle@amtelecom.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Kennedy, Judy</td> <td>359-1239</td> <td>judykennedy@xplornet.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leadbeater, Dale</td> <td>454-0592</td> <td>dleadbeater@slrconsulting.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Love, Barb</td> <td>344-0771</td> <td>blove@city.kawarthalakes.on.ca</td> </tr> <tr> <td>McEwan, Mareen</td> <td>324-7577</td> <td>lmccewan@sympatico.ca</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Orr, Vic</td> <td>454-2690</td> <td>rrociv@gmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Preston, Robbie</td> <td>879-4478</td> <td>press_on@mac.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Randall, Loreen</td> <td>454-2592</td> <td>lr@randallwhite.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ridgeway, Martin</td> <td>454-0700</td> <td>jmridgeway@xplornet.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robinson, Joyce</td> <td>439-3082</td> <td>joycerobinson2@gmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Schouten, Gerarda</td> <td>454-1405</td> <td>gerarda60@hotmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skuce, Enid</td> <td>878-5710</td> <td>eskuce@lindsaynet.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Todd, Joan</td> <td>887-4098</td> <td>joantodd@i-zoom.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Vandenberg, John</td> <td>324-8152</td> <td>janjberg47@gmail.com</td> </tr> <tr> <td>White, Rick</td> <td>454-2592</td> <td>lr@randallwhite.net</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Young, David</td> <td>454-0313</td> <td>bbogle@live.com</td> </tr> </table>		Barbour, Anne	454-8945	anne.barbour@bell.net	Barbour, Brian	454-8945	ba.barbour@bell.net	Bick, John	738-2707	jjbick@nexicom.net	Beacler, Randy	488-2266		Blayney, Susan	887-4691	susan.blayney@gmail.com	Bone, Dan	887-4691	dan.bone@xplornet.com	Brophy, Tim	324-2394	tbrophy1@bell.net	Davis, Eric	439-2530	jjedavis@istribute1.net	Dyment, Leslie	359-1376	lsdyment@lindsaynet.com	Firth, Mary	454-2837		Hoyle, Lizz & Bill	374-4073	bhoyle@amtelecom.net	Kennedy, Judy	359-1239	judykennedy@xplornet.com	Leadbeater, Dale	454-0592	dleadbeater@slrconsulting.com	Love, Barb	344-0771	blove@city.kawarthalakes.on.ca	McEwan, Mareen	324-7577	lmccewan@sympatico.ca	Orr, Vic	454-2690	rrociv@gmail.com	Preston, Robbie	879-4478	press_on@mac.com	Randall, Loreen	454-2592	lr@randallwhite.net	Ridgeway, Martin	454-0700	jmridgeway@xplornet.com	Robinson, Joyce	439-3082	joycerobinson2@gmail.com	Schouten, Gerarda	454-1405	gerarda60@hotmail.com	Skuce, Enid	878-5710	eskuce@lindsaynet.com	Todd, Joan	887-4098	joantodd@i-zoom.net	Vandenberg, John	324-8152	janjberg47@gmail.com	White, Rick	454-2592	lr@randallwhite.net	Young, David	454-0313	bbogle@live.com
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Activity Leaders</b></p> <p>Adopt-A-Road         David Young  AGM Committee       Lizz Hoyle  Baillie Birdathon     Dan Bone  Christmas Bird Count Leslie Dyment  Telephone Tree        Enid Skuce</p>																																																																																
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Other Volunteer Leaders</b></p> <p>Altberg Conveniences     Randy Beacler  Archives                     John Vandenberg  Audio Visual                 Vacant  Auditor                        Loreen Randall  Club Photographer         Eric Davis  Concerned Citizens         Susan Blayney  Education Outreach         Dan Bone  Fundraising                 Brian Barbour  Library                         Gerarda Schouten  Nominations                 Tim Brophy                                         John Vandenberg  Publicity- Newspaper       John Vandenberg                                         John Vandenberg                                         Eric Davis                                         Judy Kennedy  Species at Risk               Mary Firth  Refreshments                Bill Hoyle  Volunteer Data               Eric Davis  Website</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Our Newsletter was printed on a  Konica Minolta Copier compliments of</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>The logo for KLCC (Kawartha Lakes Copy Centre) features the letters 'KLCC' in a large, stylized blue font with a white outline. Below it, the text 'KAWARTHA LAKES COPY CENTRE' is written in a smaller blue font, and 'Serving Kawartha Lakes Since 1982' is written in an even smaller font at the bottom. The logo is set against a background of a stack of papers and a copier.</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Visit the Kawartha Lakes Copy Centre at the east end of the  Whitney Town Mall in Lindsay for your copy and office needs</p>																																																																															

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## Editor’s Remarks      John Bick

Although it has been stated many times, I wish to say it again. We are very fortunate to have so many naturalists with a myriad of interests in our club. This newsletter proves this point. There are those who are interested mainly in the physical terrain of our area; be it fen, field or forest. There are some whose passion for plants motivates them to religiously seek out, discover and record specimens that were previously unfound in our vast and varied municipality. Others travel to far-flung parts of the planet to experience the wonders of nature elsewhere and then share their new knowledge with others. Our expert birders encourage the rest of us to keep honing our observation skills. Most importantly, many of you volunteer for the club whenever you are able. As a new year begins, let us resolve to continue this pattern and to recruit others to carry on this tradition.

### Fable of the porcupine



It was the coldest winter ever. Many animals died because of the cold. The porcupines, realizing the situation, decided to group together to keep warm. This way they covered and protected themselves; but the quills of each one wounded their closest companions. After awhile, they decided to distance themselves one from the other and they began to die, alone and frozen. So they had to make a choice: either ac-

cept the quills of their companions or disappear from the Earth. Wisely, they decided to go back to being together. They learned to live with the little wounds caused by the close relationship with their companions in order to receive the warmth that came from the others. This way they were able to survive.

Moral of the story: The best relationship is not the one that brings together perfect people, but when each individual learns to live with the imperfections of others and can admire the other person's good qualities.

## Message from President Brian Barbour

I'm always amazed by the generosity of the Kawartha Field Naturalists. As we all know, volunteer clubs throughout Ontario struggle to survive in this ever-increasing techno world we live in. The younger generations "X" and "Y" seem to be occupied with other interests and demands on their lives; belonging to nature clubs doesn't seem to be high on their priority list. Consequently, the KFN has a finite pool of talented and generous members, an enviable group, of which I am proud to be among.

In order to put a perspective on the "giving culture" of Kawartha Field Naturalists, here are some of the endeavours that our club has taken on. In the past year we have made several donations. These funds that the KFN gave to worthy causes came with no strings attached, no hidden agendas; we simple donated to causes that are connected to nature.

The Bluebird Ranch was financially supported by us in order help purchase a large parcel of land at the entrance of the Wylie Road/Carden Plain area. This land was destined for a housing sub-division which would have had an impact on the pristine "birding" of this unique area.

Next, the KFN donated funds for a small acreage of the "Malcolm Bluffs Shore" which Ontario Nature is purchasing near Warton, Ont. This 1000 acre parcel of wilderness, through which the Bruce Trail cuts , was slated for land development and logging. Thanks to the generosity of the KFN and many other nature clubs, this wilderness will remain "as is" for future generations to visit and enjoy.

The City of Kawartha Lakes has one of the most abundant amounts of "Provincially Significant Wetlands" in the province! What the KFN members had observed was that these important wetlands were being abused: garbage dumping, hunting, and mechanized vehicle trespassing , just to name a few of the infractions. Through the hard work and generosity of our members, along with donations of the Victoria Stewardship Council, signs have been erected near these precious lands that identify the significance of

the area and the rules which one must abide. In putting forth this effort, it is hoped that these wetlands will have a better chance of surviving and prospering in the future.

There are other worthy causes that we help out with: Sir Sanford Fleming College students, Fenelon Falls Secondary School's environmentally active student, the Owl Foundation, DeNure Wall for the Kawartha Trans Canada Trail, Friends of the Osprey and of course the caretaking and stewardship of the 1200 acreage : "Altberg Nature Reserve". This endeavour is a shared effort, both financially and by volunteers, between the KFN and Ontario Nature.

So now comes the final question: how do we pay for all of this? Two ways: our membership dues which the KFN have not increased for some time, and the AGM event which is conducted every April. During this April event, we have our general club business, voting for officers and executive. Our pot luck dinner is always a culinary delight, but our silent auction is our big fund raiser. This silent auction is the result of donations, "gifts," given to the KFN in order to be auctioned off at the AGM.

In order for this auction to be successful we need two things:

- 1) the donated "gifts" to be bountiful and beautiful
- 2) the "culture of generosity" in our bids

In the past, our members have always "risen to the occasion" on both counts. So let's all pull on the rope together and make this upcoming AGM another resounding success so that we, the Kawartha Field Naturalists, can continue to demonstrate our generosity in the name of nature.

Brian

(Continued from page 1)

birds for the very first time. It was mid-afternoon on Saturday, January 8, 2011 and it was the start of a real eye-opening experience.

Sunday, January 9th came in clear and bright with pretty pleasant winter temperatures. The evening grosbeaks woke me up with their chattering. I had just settled in front of the computer, Coronation Street playing on the TV beside me, when I noticed a car parked at the side of the road. People came and went for much of the day. A few arrived later in the afternoon when there was not a single grosbeak in sight. It was then that I realized that they had a tendency to disappear around 2 p.m. - a habit they maintained all winter.

On Monday, I expected to have no visitors. After all, most birders would be at work. Right?

Wrong! Who should show up but Jean Iron and Eleanor Beagan.

I had heard of Jean, of course, but never met her or seen her digiscoping techniques. They enjoyed the grosbeaks but it was the flock of over 50 **Common Redpolls** that seemed to most interest Jean who spent quite some time looking for a Hoary in amongst the commons. Alas, they all appeared to be commons but a few hoaries did show up later in February.

Okay, Jean and Eleanor are pretty avid birders. So when Tuesday arrived, I again expected that the rush would be over and my grosbeaks, redpolls and I would have an ordinary day.

Wrong again! The day was made extraordinary when a group of birders from Collingwood arrived. I was away from the house on Wednesday but when I arrived home, I noticed fresh tire tracks and unknown footprints. My birds had been appreciated even while I was away.

I guess by now you are getting the picture. Or perhaps you saw this coming when I first reported the birds on Ontbirds. From that day, there was someone coming by every day in January and every other day in February.

One day, it was a father and son from Connecticut; on another a group from Pennsylvania. A couple of guys who had been owling on Amherst Island before coming up to my place were from Maryland. And there were lots and lots of birders from Toronto.

For some birders, including the 14 year-old son from Connecticut, this was a chance to see a life bird. For many, it was an opportunity to catch up on a bird that used to be seen in great numbers when they were kids but had not been seen in a long, long time. For most, it was the thrill of getting an outstanding photograph. And for both Saturday and Sunday for two weekends in a row, "the paparazzi" stood for hours in bitterly cold winds, each one with camera gear that likely cost more than my

entire house. Some folks came by just once; others came by multiple times. I made some good acquaintances out of these guests.

By March, the numbers of visitors dropped to almost zero. Other birds had arrived and pulled the interest away from my grosbeaks and life became dully ordinary. The redpolls, which topped out with a count of about 300, were last seen on April 22nd. A small flock of nine grosbeaks stayed around until May 8th. The highest count for them was 82 in February. So while it was a relief to have the feed bill go down, I was sorry to see the excitement end.



But it had not ended. I am still reaping the dividends of that exciting winter. In the spring, while looking for the Yellow Rail at Sedge Wren Marsh in Carden, I was identified as **The Evening Grosbeak Lady**. At the Loggerhead Shrike Appreciation dinner in August, I again encountered strangers who at first had not recognized me outside of my winter clothing but who came up to me to thank me for allowing them to come see my birds. In September, on a trip to Cranberry Marsh to watch the hawk migration, I was lucky enough to encounter more folks who had been up to my place in the winter. Perhaps most fun, though, was during this trip. We had carpooled from Fenelon Falls and transferred to another vehicle in Lindsay. The driver of that vehicle, once she realized who I was, did a little skip of excitement and exclaimed: "I can't believe I have Ginny Moore in my car! ". How is that for a head-swelling experience!

Sadly, here it is, nearly Christmas and not a single evening grosbeak has shown up this winter. I will, however, be eternally grateful to these birds who made my winter of 2011 so exciting and who have opened me up to the birding world.

Since May of this year, I have become a member of the Ontario Field Ornithologists, the Kawartha Field Naturalists, the Carden Field Naturalists and the Couchiching Conservancy.

# Kawartha Christmas Bird Count by Dan Bone

December 28, 2011

## **Weather:**

-9 Celsius, 15 to 20 cms of fresh snow, variable sun and cloud, breezy.

## **Participation:**

26 counters and at least 4 feeder watchers made for another successful Christmas Bird Count. Kudos to Leslie Dymont, our compiler, for the high numbers of participants over the years. The loyalty and dedication of all the participants to Leslie and the count is impressive. As a die-hard, out-of-control birder I am very appreciative of those club members who support the count and make it possible. I love doing the Bird Count and without the support of the membership, I would be complaining about watching TV Christmas specials and eating too much.

Participants in teams: 1) Leslie Dymont, Judy Kennedy, Robbie Preston 2) Gord Scribbins, Enid Skuce, Ginny Moore 3) Kathy Callaghan, Dale Leadbeater, Loreen Randall, Louise Horne 4) Chris Elingwood, Henri Sahamies 5) John Vandenberg, Anne Barbour 6) Stephen O'Donnell, Judy Arai 7) John Bick, Tim Brophy 8) Lloyd McEwan, Maureen McEwan 9) Dan Bone, Susan Blayney, Luke Handley 10) Eric Davis, Joyce Robinson, Brian Robinson. Feeder Watchers: Vic Orr, Ruth Orr, Brian Barbour, Anne Irwin

## **Highlights:**

We added a new species to the all time list: John Bick and Tim Brophy saw 3 Eastern Bluebirds on Martin's Road north east of Fenelon Falls.

Despite a slightly above-average number of species seen at **49** (average 47) the total of individual birds at **3787** was our lowest since 1999 (3539).

## **Possible Reasons for low numbers of individual birds:**

*Weather:* With 15-20 cms. of fresh snow on the ground, the movement of birds might have been affected but more likely the unplowed roads and laneways inhibited birders and their movements. In areas 6 and 9 serious counting did not begin until after lunch. It might also be a wider trend as some other counts that we know of have similar numbers. We shall see. Tony Bigg, in reporting about the low numbers of individuals and species on the Petroglyphs count, speculates that the many empty bird feeders --perhaps due to poor economic conditions--are responsible. Also, few northern finches irrupted this year.

## **Possible Reasons for new or tied highs and slightly better than average species numbers:**

*Weather:* The mild fall and more open water than usual for the count likely explains that half of new highs are water birds. Perhaps the Eastern Bluebirds lingered due to the mild fall weather.

## **Key to reading the data listed below:**

Example....Rock Pigeon—91 (118) *High of 501 in '02*

“Rock Pigeon—91”= Species and # seen in 2011

“(118)”= the previous low # or high #, always in brackets.

“*High of 501 in '02*”= other interesting or pertinent data, always in Italics

## **New low, 5 species:**

Rock Pigeon—91 (118) *High of 501 in '02*

Mourning Dove—101 (105) *High of 415 in '02*

Downy Woodpecker—27 (30) *High of 61 in '00*

White-breasted Nuthatch—30 (48) *High of 109 in '07*

House sparrow—3 (12) *High of 87 in '05*

## **Tied for new low, 3 Species:**

Hairy Woodpecker—30 (31) *High of 101 in '06, 55 last year*

Red-breasted Nuthatch—9 (26) *High of 130 in '08*

Evening Grosbeak—0, (0) *High of 513 last year*

## **2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest, 7 Species:**

Ruffed Grouse—1, *High of 23 in '04*

Pileated Woodpecker—4, *High of 23 in '09, low 2 in '02*

Gray Jay—1, *High of 18 in '04*

American Crow—74, *High of 422 in '06, low 29 in '08*

Black-capped Chickadee—573, *High of 1622 in '05, low 571 in '00*

Snow Bunting—84, *High of 875 in '04, low of 67 in '02*

Common Redpoll—8, *High of 1317 in '07, low of 0 in '02 and '00*

## **Better News:**

### **New high or tied for new high 8 Species:**

Canada Goose—309 (201) *12th time in 13 years, low of 0*  
Hooded Merganser—7 (4) *5th time in 13 years, 5 times in last 7 years*

Red-breasted Merganser—20 (15) *3<sup>rd</sup> time in 13 years*

Common Loon—3, (1) *3<sup>rd</sup> time in 13 years*

Northern Harrier—1 (0) *2<sup>nd</sup> time in 13 years*

Northern Goshawk—1 (0) *3<sup>rd</sup> time in 13 years*

Red-bellied Woodpecker—2 (1) *Seen every year since '02*

Rusty Blackbird 3 (1) *New to count last year*

## **Other**

Red-winged Blackbird—2, *3<sup>rd</sup> time in 13 years, High of 5 in '03*

Bald Eagle—5, *2<sup>nd</sup> highest, High of 47 in '06, seen 11 times in 13 years*

## Fleetwood Creek Trip    by Tim Brophy

## PROJECT BANK SWALLOW

On Friday 30 October there was a trip planned for Fleetwood Creek. It was clearly explained that the trip would be cancelled if the weather did not cooperate. Overnight on October 29-30, it rained heavily. I listened to the local forecast, and it called for an all day rain. I decided to cancel the trip. Early in the morning I got one phone call from Jan Ridgway, and I informed her of my decision.

As the morning progressed, I checked the sky. There were a few clouds, but the sky was mostly blue. I changed my mind, and called Jan to inform her.

Jan showed up in Lindsay, along with her husband, Martin. They brought along Martin's brother Paul, and his wife Trish. No one else showed up to car pool. However, when we arrived at Fleetwood Creek, we were met by Susan Blaney.

The weather cooperated for the rest of the morning and we had a delightful walk. As it turned out, we were a bit early for the fall colours, but they had started changing. We had a good view of these colours from the lookout.

There were not many birds to be seen, the highlight being a bald eagle making a quick visit as it flew north. We also noted several monarch butterflies.

As there were no experts with us in any area of natural history, we attempted to pick out interesting sights as we proceeded, but ended up just enjoying the walk and the good weather.

We all had a very enjoyable morning. I believe more people may have joined us if the weather forecast had been accurate. Thanks to those who did participate, and a special thanks to Martin Ridgway, who did the driving.

Bird Studies Canada is looking for information on Bank Swallows in Ontario.

Did you see a colony of Bank Swallows this past summer? Bird Studies Canada's Ontario Region is looking for information on Bank Swallow colonies. These highly colonial birds nest in eroding vertical banks along shorelines, rivers, and also in gravel/sand pits among other places.

If you know of a Bank Swallow colony, we ask that you take a minute and visit Ontario Bank Swallow Casual Reporting Form <<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/bankswallow>> and record information on the location, colony habitat type, and number of Bank Swallow burrows observed. Please note that you will need your location coordinates in latitude/longitude - tips on how to easily find these coordinates are available on the online data entry form.

### **RISKS**

To laugh is to risk appearing the fool.  
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.  
To reach out to another is to risk involvement.  
To express feelings is to risk exposing yourself.  
To place ideas and feelings before a crowd is to risk their loss.  
To live is to risk dying.  
To hope is to risk despair.  
To love is to risk being loved in return.  
But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.  
The person who asks nothing, does nothing,  
Has nothing, and is nothing.  
They may avoid suffering and sorrow, but they cannot learn, feel, change, grow, love, live.  
Chained by their attitudes, they are a slave.  
They have forfeited their freedom.  
Only a person who risks is free.

*This was found and submitted by Gerarda Schouten who hopes that it will remind all of us to stay involved and contribute what we can to our club.*

## KFN BLUEBIRD TRAIL REPORT - 2011

Ruth and Vic Orr

Recorded below are the 2011 numbers for the bluebird trail compared to those of 2010:

2010	Categories	2011	Change
38	nesting pairs	34	-04
157	nest boxes monitored	142	-15
107	bluebirds fledged	108	+1
160	eggs laid	131	-29

Numbers of fledglings are about the same as in 2010 with an increase of one. Despite the abnormally cold weather during latter May causing a high mortality of birds at a critical time in the bluebird nesting cycle, our numbers were good overall. According to Bill Reid of the Eastern Bluebird Society, “weather above all else has the greatest impact on nesting success during the nesting season”.

We supplied fourteen additional nest boxes during 2011 (new and recycled). As everyone knows, it takes a lot of time and effort to properly monitor and maintain a bluebird trail. The satisfaction gained is however, well worth the effort!

In order to compile and report bluebird trail results, four items of information are required: Number of nesting pairs, number of boxes, number of birds fledged and number of eggs laid. If this information is not supplied, an estimation must be made in order to complete our report. Statistics show that the best nesting success happens when boxes are inspected at least once a week during the nesting season.

It is sometimes interesting if not entertaining when obtaining nesting results from the various monitors. For example, one monitor reported that he opened his nesting box for inspection and a flying squirrel 'flew' past his head and landed behind him! Another stated, when asked how many times during the nesting season they inspected their boxes the reply was: “we never open our boxes during the nesting season” (for fear of scaring the occupants away).

Thanks to all for supplying your nesting results; it is

you that make this report possible! Hopefully we will visit some over wintering Eastern Bluebirds, some migratory and some resident, in the Carolinas during February/March 2012.

Please note your earliest bluebird sighting in spring and let us know the details so we can record it in our 2012 report to the Eastern Bluebird Society.

Thanks again,

## KFN Corn Roast

By Lizz Hoyle

The annual KFN corn roast was held on Saturday, September 10, at the picnic shelter at Kenrei Park. Approximately 20 members gathered for a pleasant afternoon of enjoying nature, and getting caught up with each other's activities since the club last met in June.

An enjoyable walk through the park enabled us to view several plants, birds, and insects. Susan Blayney shared her knowledge of *odonata* with us as we attempted to gracefully net some of these delicate creatures for identification. I have misplaced my list but family names like clubtails, darners, spiketails, skimmers, were among those seen. Do you know there have been 171 species of dragonflies and damselflies recorded in the province of Ontario?



A meal of corn on the cob, supplemented with many delicious salads and desserts, was enjoyed by all before cleaning up and departing. Thanks Susan for organizing another fun gathering for KFN.

## Kawartha Field Naturalists—Recent Sightings from the Web Site

**December 18, 2011** - Hello... today at about 11:30, we saw a bald eagle on the ice near the middle of Sturgeon Lake off of Blythe shore (half way between Fenelon Falls and Sturgeon Point). He was sitting at the edge of the open water. He sat there for at least half an hour but we didn't see which direction he went. He looked to be at least 2 feet tall. It was amazing! Sorry the pictures aren't that great... he was too far away. Leah and Ed Connor

**November 19, 2011** - Hello, Today we have 12 Swans at out shore. Truly a magnificent site as in over 30 years we have only seen a couple. One of them is tagged and we wondered if it needed to be recorded. We live on Sturgeon Lake in Fenelon Falls. We have taken a lot of pictures of these magnificent birds because they are quite tame. Cindy Toms

**November 17, 2011** - A female snowy owl was sitting on a fence post 2 km north of Sunderland on the east side of Hwy 12. Eric Davis, Woodville

**November 7, 2011** - I have seen a female red-bellied woodpecker at my feeder, an immature red-headed woodpecker in the area, a red-tailed hawk and cow, calf and bull moose close to my house in my neighbour's pasture. Ginny Moore

**November 7, 2011** - Hounds in my yard announced the deer hunting season. Randy Beacler, Somerville Township

**November 7, 2011** - I have noticed a bumper crop of wild apples and wonder if there is anything being done to conserve this genetic resource. John "Appleseed" Bick, Bobcaygeon

**November 7, 2011** - An acquaintance of mine found a yellow-spotted salamander in his basement and a dark-eyed junco on the window screen. Vic Orr, Four Mile Lake

**November 7, 2011** - I have observed Rusty Blackbirds and a Red-bellied Woodpecker at our feeder. Also there was a Red-bellied snake on the rail trail trestle bridge. Susan Blayney, Bulmer's Road

**November 7, 2011** - There are White-crowned Sparrows at my feeder. Judy Kennedy, Lindsay

**November 7, 2011** - We noticed Ruddy Ducks and 12+ Cackling Geese (confirmed by David Preslie of Fleming College) at Walmart Flats pond. Maureen McEwan, Lindsay

**November 7, 2011** - Up here in Haliburton I have seen Meadow Hawk dragonflies, Mallards, Ring-necked Ducks, Hooded Mergansers and Pine Siskins. Don Smith

**November 7, 2011** - On our farm a 12 year old tagged cow elk is still being seen. She was captured in Alberta in 2000 and released in Bancroft soon after. Dan Bone, Bulmer's Road

**November 7, 2011** - White-winged crossbills, Janice Melendez

**November 7, 2011** - Red-headed Woodpecker has been seen at our feeder from October 20 to 23. Bill and Lizz Hoyle

**November 7, 2011** - There is a pair of Trumpeter Swans on Sturgeon Lake raising 10 cygnets which is a record according to the banders.

**October 7, 2011** - A couple of weeks ago, Robbie Preston and I went to check the trails in the Altberg for wind-falls. Just inside the west Yellow Trail, I found a beautiful tail feather from a Wild Turkey. We have often seen tracks in the snow, or on freshly raked trails, but we have never actually seen any of these illusive fellows. However, on Friday, October 7, at the bottom of the Red Trail, we finally spotted five, as they silently stole through the woods. Judy Kennedy, Lindsay.

**October 7, 2011** - On Friday, October 7, two adult Trumpeter Swans (one with tag # 902) with a whopping ten (!) cygnets spent the entire day in the tiny marsh behind Pleasant Point on Sturgeon Lake. Photos are available if anyone is interested. The sighting has already been reported to the Wye Marsh group for their records. Janice Melendez

**October 7, 2011** - On Thursday October 6th at about 2 pm i saw a single female Sandhill Crane on the Otonabee river as I was driving along water just south of the zoo. I was amazed to say the least; I've on ever seen two Sandhill Cranes in my life but I'm not from Peterborough and have no idea how common sightings are in the area. Sincerely, James T. Weyman

**October 4, 2011** - As I was driving down Skihill Road, just south of the Pigeon River in Omemee, a Fisher darted across the road in front of my car. Judy Kennedy, Lindsay

**A NEW ORCHID FOR THE CITY OF KAWARTHA LAKES AND CARDEN AREA: by Anne Barbour**  
**GREAT PLAINS LADIES' TRESSES (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*)**

September 21, 2011 was an adventure. Margo Holt, Lou Probst and Anne Barbour met Linda Read near the McGee Creek sign east of Lou's house (in Carden) and joined her in searching the field behind and to the east of the sign for *Spiranthes magnicamporum*, or Great Plains Ladies' Tresses. Lou said that it had been about 25 years since cows had pastured in this cultural meadow. Linda, who lives in Toronto, had been to the field on 2 different days in early September, including Sept 7<sup>th</sup>, at which time she had found first a single plant, then a colony of 7 to 10 plants that she photographed (photo attached). Linda remembered that the group of plants had been in front of, on the south side of a juniper shrub, in the eastern end of the field, which she named the 'Bear Field'. She had given it this name because of large dug-up areas where bears had obviously worked to find what must have been tasty grubs.

Despite there having been frost, Lou found one *Spiranthes* stem with several flowers that had no sign of having been touched by frost. Margo Holt identified it as a *S. cernua* since there was no yellow on the flower anywhere and no fragrance. It did, however give us the indication that we would be looking for full flower stems and not a dry, brown stem. We continued searching the field but found no more *Spiranthes*. It is a big field, and we were distracted when Judy Probst joined us with one of her dogs and told us that in the process of trying to find a spot to enter the field without having to climb the fence, she had seen some *Spiranthes* flowers on the roadside of the fence at the gate where a car can be parked, east of the McGee sign. The plants were on the east side of the parking spot, close to the first hydro pole in the roadside ditch. While Anne & Linda continued searching the central part of the field, Margo, Judy and Lou went to check out Judy's find. Margo excitedly called Anne & Linda over: these 6 stems were the real McCoy! They had yellow inside the lip and the sepals looked like cow horns – amazing! We were very happy to have recently seen the *S. cernua* that made comparison very easy.

Permission had been granted previously by the landowner, Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC), to the CKL FLORA Project via Anne Barbour to collect a specimen, as long as it would be deposited at the Royal Ontario Museum Herbarium. Protocol for collecting plants usually requires that 10 plants be pre-

sent. It was decided that although there were only 6 plants, one should be collected to be deposited at the ROM Herbarium as the plants were on City property and there was no telling what the plants would experience there, between salt and other road work. We weren't sure if the fragrance we were smelling was from the orchid or from Sweet Clover, but when Anne got the plant home to press, and got her nose close to the plant all by itself, the lovely fragrance was unmistakable.



Lou and Judy said they had *Spiranthes* in their field and could these possibly be *magnicamporum* also? Of course, we had to go have a look while we were all there! After meeting all of Lou and Judy's horses, Lou led us along an eastern trail near the southern treeline, out into a field that took us to the west side of the actual McGee Creek. This location is also on property belonging to Nature Conservancy Canada. Lou stopped about 30 m. west of the tower which he had had built to view the creek. There he pointed to a half dozen *Spiranthes* stems. Margo was quickly down on her knees, followed by Linda & Anne. Margo exclaimed that these had yellow inside the flower too! She also noted that the underside of the bottom of the flower also had the delicate yellow. So Lou and Judy also had *Spiranthes magnicamporum*, which made sense, being so close to the location of the first groups on the other side of the creek. Margo also pointed out that the little horn sepals, as they turned brown, became points that went skyward. It was too cool. After Linda & Anne went up the tower to photograph the creek, we re-

*(Continued on page 11)*

turned along the trail and counted 15 + *Spiranthes* which we assumed were probably *magnicamporum*. And that was just along the trail; who knows how many could be found if the field were scoured?

Success, thanks to many parties, but especially to the keen and observant eye of amateur botanist, Linda Read, who was doing what she loves most: searching for the beautiful and noticing the unusual. By September, most botanists have had their fill of summer field work and are beginning to think of hanging up their swamp shoes for the season. Without Linda's love for nature, and going out for one more exploratory tromp, who would have known that this lovely little orchid was growing under our Carden noses all the time? Thanks Linda, and thanks, Lou and Judy, for setting aside these special alvar sites for future generations to enjoy through the help of Nature Conservancy Canada and the Couchiching Conservancy. And thanks also to Mike Oldham and Paul Catling who provided essential technical behind-the-scenes work. Linda had emailed NHIC with her photos, expecting never to hear from anyone from the government; but Mike sent the photos off to orchid specialist Paul Catling at Agriculture Canada. Paul completed his PhD thesis on *Spiranthes* taxonomy at the University of Toronto. He looked closely at Linda's photos and replied to Mike "It has the descending lip with fleshy centre and little evidence of an upturned stalk at the base. It does look like *magnicamporum* (and should have monoembryonic (not polyembryonic) seed in a while."

After NHIC was notified about the collection and locations, a team of biologists spent Friday, Oct 7<sup>th</sup> at NCC's North Bear property in Carden Twp, looking for *Spiranthes magnicamporum*. The team consisted of Wasyl Bakowsky (NHIC), Don Sutherland (NHIC), Tanya Pulfer and Doug Van Hemessen (MNR). As reported by Wasyl Bakowsky, the team did indeed find "another Victoria County location for Great Plains Ladies-tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*) (see attached photo, plant was exceedingly fragrant, around a dozen seen, one collected)".

With 3 locations to date in Carden Twp. for Great Plains Ladies' Tresses (*Spiranthes magnicamporum*), and more likely to be found now that everyone will be looking, it's unsure whether a seed from the collected plants need to be dissected after all. We will be conferring with the experts on that issue.



Margo Holt & Linda Read discovering and checking out "Great Plains Ladies Tresses Orchid" Sept. 2011

A new fragrant orchid for CKL and lifer for me! What an exciting way to end the field season! Involvement in such a find makes the CKL FLORA Project all worthwhile. New participants are always welcome.

For Margo Holt's photo and description of the orchid characteristics, see the website for The Orillia Naturalists' Club, Find of the Month for September <http://www.couchconservancy.ca/ONCWebsite/htm/Find%20of%20the%20Month.htm>

### 12 swans a swimming



This pair of Trumpeter Swans created quite a stir this past autumn when seen with their ten signets on Sturgeon Lake. For awhile it seemed that only 9 of the young would be accompanying their parents on their migration since one of them was not always present with the rest (being given time outs by its mother ??) . However, by late autumn, Beverley Kingdon gratefully reported back to KFN members and others who had been monitoring the flock for weeks, that all twelve swans had arrived safely at LaSalle Park in Burlington, Ontario where they are expected to winter.

# PROSPECT MARSH NATURE RESERVE THROUGH THE EYES OF A YOUNG NATURALIST

by Mark Harris

Aug 20, 2011

When I was younger, my family would go on a number of marathon road trips. Like many children, after a while, I would begin to lose my cool and cause more than a fuss for my parents and siblings. Luckily, I got over it and one of my favorite past-times formed as a direct result of my distress during those epic journeys. I became enthralled with the landscape – I wanted nothing more than to be out in it rather than stuck in the back seat of the family car. I would catch myself sitting quietly, staring out at the changing face of the world as we careened along in our intrepid fake-wood paneled station wagon. One can imagine my parents and siblings were also grateful for my rare moments of stoic contemplation. The natural world is infinitely interesting and I have been hooked ever since.



Praying Mantis



Mark & Andrew on the Hunt

My first time out with the Kawartha Field Naturalists has simply added more fuel to my burning interest in ecology. The many individuals who regularly attend such events offered me a great deal of information on a multiplicity of organisms. I learned about the life cycles of various butterfly and orchid, as well as the history of numerous invasive species – naturalized across the meadow area and represented by astounding numbers. There is something sublime in being able to sit in and *with* nature – something I wish for everyone. I am thankful to have met so many passionate, knowledgeable, and caring folk. I know my first time out with such a dedicated group of naturalists will not be my last.



Argiope garden spider

Mark Harris  
Ecosystem Management '12, Fleming College

A few years ago I became interested in Namibia but had never heard of a company taking a trip there. Then I heard that Rostad Tours of Calgary were going and I signed up immediately. We were 21 on the tour. We flew with South African Airlines via Washington, Dakar in Senegal, Johannesburg and finally got to Cape Town, South Africa just in time to go to bed the next day!!!

It was late spring-early summer there and that very beautiful part of the world was lush! The first morning we took the cable car to the top of Table Mountain with the most gorgeous view of the mountains, with a low-hanging white cloud down below, hiding some of Cape Town and the Atlantic Ocean. The flowers and a lovely sunbird were captured on my digital camera. Then to Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens where we had an hour to roam and I took many more pictures of the flowers with the mountains in the background. Lovely. That afternoon we walked on the Board Walk along the Atlantic which we could see from our hotel balcony. Cold, windy.

The next day we followed the Atlantic seaboard to the beautiful Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve and Cape Point, one of my favourite places. It is a dramatic promontory where the currents of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans meet. We climbed to the lighthouse for a tremendous view of the area. Of course the baboons were present and what amazed me were the beautiful Protea shrubs all in bloom plus many other flowers. Then we visited a colony of Jackass Penguins and drove back through the Drakenstein Mountains.

We visited the Cape Winelands, seeing the very old town of Stellenbosch, renowned for its Cape Dutch Buildings. Then to Franschoek, (corner of France). In 1688, 176 French Huguenot refugees (Protestants) fleeing from religious persecution in France arrived there. They brought vine cuttings with them and established the vineyards there. The Huguenot Memorial, Museum and Gardens were outstanding with mountains in the background.

The next morning a short cruise took us to Robben Island where Nelson Mandela was a political prisoner for 18 years. It looked very bleak 6 years ago when I was there but there are yellow flowers blooming now. Nice. Seals and cormorants were on the rocks as we sailed by. That afternoon we flew to Windhoek, the capital of Namibia, just northwest of South Africa. It was a German Colony but after the

First World War, it was given to South Africa to administer, gaining its independence in 1990 with the name Namibia. It is a desert country with the population being 2,055,000. The central plateau has very rugged mountain ranges that we fully experienced as we went to Amani Lodge to see five cheetahs being raised (having lost their mother). They are to be released into the wild later. I simply love cheetahs! They also had 2 lions, male and female, who never learned to hunt and will be cared for until death! One of the pet warthogs bit my knee! We got a glimpse of hartebeests (antelopes) on the way back.

Later we travelled through the semi-arid Namib Desert with yellow grass, which gave us a sense of wide horizons, unconfined space, always with a mountain range in the distance. We saw many springbok and some oryx, (also called gemsbok), both being antelopes, and ostrich. In the middle of nowhere you would find lodges for the tourists to stay and each one was unique to say the least! Our first was called Moon Mountain Lodge on the side of a mountain. They were huge tents the size of a small house with running water and all for 2 people! That evening we saw the most beautiful sunset from the Lodge's Terrace which overlooked the endless plains and far away mountains with everything turning a deeper pink or orange as the sun went down. It's hard to describe.

Then we went to Sossusvlei, home to the world's highest dunes. Some are 500 metres (yards) high and are orange in colour. An amazing place. I climbed about three-quarters of the way to the top of one, on the ridge of course. Due to a lack of time and a tiring heart I turned around and came back down. I took my old Fuji camera with me and I got about seven absolutely amazing panoramic photos of the dunes, one not too far from the top! One of my favourite days! The next day we spotted 6 wild camels in the distance and my camera zoomed in on them. We drove through a canyon, badlands and a moonscape, all this on a gravel road. We stopped to see the plant called Welwitschia Mirabilis, which is endemic to the Namib Desert, one being 400 years old.

Our beautiful hotel in Swakopmund on the Atlantic had a pool, but it was too cold to swim. During a cruise on Walvis Bay a seal came on board to get fed! We saw a colony of Cape Fur Seals. The

*(Continued on page 14)*

White Pelicans on shore after our return were some of the cutest birds I've seen! Then we drove north along Skeleton Coast where many ships have been wrecked there. Then we went on to the Brandberg Massif Mountain which is the highest in the country. On arrival at the lovely Igowati Lodge farther north we finally could take our jackets off and have a swim in the cold pool which was delightful. They had many birds and animals on the property : a baby steenbok (antelope) which had to be fed, as well as peacocks, guinea fowl and behind a fence an ostrich and 2 springboks. I was delighted!

We then visited a Himba clan, a nomadic tribe. Later a short walk took us to see petrified wood. Then an 80 minute difficult climb over rocks took us to see very ancient rock engravings for which the area is known. Our Lodge at Twyfelfontein was once again unique and as we ate our picnics we fed the many birds at our feet! Then on to ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK, a very arid salt pan but with permanent springs. The animals had to drink at the water holes. We saw elephants, zebra, giraffe, springboks, oryx, wildebeests, warthogs, jackals, secretary birds, etc. We also got a glimpse of a male lion under a bush and a rhino.

On leaving there we visited the Africat Foundation who care for orphaned cheetahs and other big cats. Many are released back into the wild. The cheetahs once again won our hearts! Saw caracals too. Before arriving at Okonjima Lodge we saw Kudu antelopes and a baboon on a termite mound. From our "Room with a View" we saw 2 warthogs come out of a mudhole! Towards morning I heard a roaring lion very close by. (confirmed by staff). We were up at 5 a.m. and walked in the dark to the dining hall with lanterns which had been given us and I kept thinking "Where is that lion?" Apparently he was fenced in! After a long drive back to Windhoek for our flight to Johannesburg, followed by a 3 hour drive to Pilanesburg National Park farther north, we had a very long walk to our rooms in the huge lodge where we fell into bed!

My room-mate and I slept in, made coffee in the room and went out on the patio with cookies and the birds ate with us. Red-winged Starlings perched on our coffee table and even on the arm of my chair looking up into my eyes! We had a day of rest until we left at 4:30 p.m. to go on a safari. A violent electrical storm came up, everything became dark except for the lightning and the headlights of our vehicle. We were exposed to the outside with only a canvas roof and

every time we hit a bump the rain would roll off and fall on us on the outside. Guess where I was sitting?!! We were literally soaked to the skin! We were on 4 rubber tires but we were hanging on to metal...and I kept thinking of a newspaper story "21 Canadians killed by lightning while on a Safari"!! What screams and laughs! The next morning we had a successful safari. In the afternoon a huge elephant came up to our lodge, got in a little pool by the lodge and ate the reeds. That pool was for us, not for him! He had a huge audience!!!

Finally, we visited the stately city of Pretoria with the purple Jacaranda trees in full bloom. Also we saw the fascinating Voortrekkers Monument which tells the history of how the Dutch left the south and made the Great Trek through the mountains with wagons and oxen and all their belongings and suffered great difficulty in doing so, in order to find another place to settle. That night we boarded our plane and I slept about 8 hours in 2 instalments and arrived home the next night.

Hope you enjoyed travelling with me. Enid (Ines)

## **Trees Cocooned in Spiders' Webs**

**Pakistan 2011**



During the massive flooding in parts of Pakistan in 2011, millions of spiders climbed up into the trees to escape the rising flood waters. Because of the scale of the flooding and the fact that the water took so long to recede, many trees became cocooned in spiders' webs. However, there were fewer mosquitoes than expected, given the amount of stagnant, standing water that was around. It is thought that the mosquitoes became entangled in the webs thus reducing the risk of malaria.

Nature works in mysterious ways.

## What's in Your Back Forty ?

article & photos by Karen Y. Hogg (with permission to reprint from *Rural Dispatch*, September 2011)

While most farmers in the City of Kawartha Lakes (CKL) know many of the plants growing on their property, there are probably many that are less familiar and possibly even unknown to them.

The Kawartha Field Naturalists (KFN) is in the third year of a five-year study called the City of Kawartha Lakes FLORA Project. This initiative, being carried out by KFN volunteers, is documenting what plants are growing in the CKL, and in which habitats. When completed, the group will publish an annotated list of the flora of CKL, together with an overview of the city's watersheds, its wide range of habitats and the area's unique geology and climate.



Anne Barbour collecting specimens  
Photo by Karen Hogg

The Kawartha Field Naturalists volunteers are trying to cover properties (public and private) in all the former townships of Victoria County. With financial support of \$2,700 from the Victoria Stewardship Council, the group has inventoried several properties in most townships, but

only one property in each of Dalton, Digby, Mariposa, Ops and Verulam townships, so are looking for property owners, especially in those townships, who would like an inventory done.

Property owners are provided with a list of all the plants on their property when the inventory is completed. The project has also had assistance from the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (providing them with tours and workshops on collecting and mounting), and the Natural Heritage Information Centre, Peterborough (consulting on what should grow here and identifying collected specimens) and the Field Botanists of Ontario, (who have assisted with two inventories to date). Other supporters include Sir Sandford Fleming College and Coyle Packaging, Peterborough.

This community project is expected to enhance stewardship in the CKL. Since stewardship starts with knowing what resources are growing on the land and knowing what special relationships those resources may have to the geology, soils and climate, this is an excellent way for farmers to increase their knowledge of species at risk, toxic plants and invasive species.

Many landowners accompany the researchers to ask about various plants, hear of discoveries made and learn first-hand what's in their own back yard. Additionally participants are making a contribution to science as some plants collected are pressed and mounted for the Royal Ontario Museum's Herbarium and Biodiversity Collection, for use by the scientific community throughout the world.

Having a list of the plants on the property may also assist farmers in application for the Ontario Managed Forest Tax Rebate.



KFN Members with Plant Presses  
Photo by Karen Hogg

Anyone with property in the CKL who would like their property inventoried for plant species is welcome to contact the KFN for consideration, or to participate in survey and collection. The organization is also still in need of a volunteer to establish a simple database. For information call Anne Barbour at 705-454-8945 or email [anne.barbour@bell.net](mailto:anne.barbour@bell.net)

## The CKL Flora Project contributes to scientific knowledge around the world by Karen Y. Hogg.

(Permission to reprint from Kawartha Life, September 2011, Vol.11 #6)

Just beyond manicured lawns, fertile fields and tranquil pastures in the City of Kawartha Lakes, there's a natural wilderness found in woods, wetlands and sand dunes. This is where, in season, one walks amongst Trilliums, Columbine, Wild Ginger, Queen Anne's Lace and Lady Slippers just to name a few plants.

If you are one of those people who can't tell Poison Ivy from Watercress, the Kawartha Field Naturalists' (KFN) CKL Flora Project could be of special interest to you. Now in the third year of a five year study, the CKL Flora Project is an initiative to inventory all the plant species in the City of Kawartha Lakes (CKL). When completed an annotated list of the flora of CKL, with overviews of the city's watersheds, its wide range of habitats and the area's unique geology and climate will be published.

Properties, both public and private in the former townships of Victoria County, are being inventoried by KFN volunteers. To date several properties in most townships have been inventoried, but only one property in each of Dalton, Digby, Mariposa, Ops and Verulam townships. The KFN would like more property owners, especially in those townships to come on board.

With assistance from the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (providing them with tours and workshops), the Natural Heritage Centre, Peterborough (consulting on what should grow here and identifying collected specimens), the Field Botanists of Ontario (assisting with two inventories to date) and \$2,700 in financial support from the Victory Stewardship Council, the project has identified species at risk, invasive species and three new plants never before found in the City of Kawartha Lakes. These three are Bluntleaf Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum canadense*), American Bladdernut (*Staphyllea trifolia*), and Yellow Bartonian (*Bartonia virginica*), which is also a species at risk.

"The City of Kawartha Lakes has more kinds of habitat than almost any other county in Ontario," says Dale Leadbeater, a professional botanist co-chairing the Flora Project, adding, "That makes it (the county)

a great template." Ms. Leadbeater, who works for an environmental consulting firm, moved to the area five years ago and joined the KFN after discovering that many members also had an interest in botany.

Participating property owners often accompany the researchers to learn what's growing on their property and each receives a list of all the plants on the property. These might include, toxic plants like Bulbous Waterhemlock (*Cicuta bulbifera*), Common Waterparsnip (*Sium suave*), and Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) as well as invasive plants such as Dog-Strangling Vine (*Cynanchum rossicum*) Garlic Mustard (*Aliaria petiolata*) and Common and Glossy Buckhorn (*Rhamnus cathartica* & *R. frangula*). The volunteers also take soil samples checking the presence of calcium and identifying the history of the soil. Soil samples allow owners to see which trees are happiest growing in each specific area. Many plant specimens collected are pressed and mounted to be housed with the Royal Ontario Museum's Herbarium and Biodiversity collection for use by the scientific community around the world. The KFN expect to deposit at least 500 specimens to this collection. Participating landowners can also use the list to assist in application for an Ontario Managed Forest Tax Rebate. Stewardship begins with knowing what resources are growing on the land and knowing the relationships between those resources and the geology, soil and climate of the habitat.

Kawartha Field Naturalist Anne Barbour explains that this inventory will also make it possible to measure possible changes in local plant communities resulting from introduced species, climate change and population growth.

Anyone with property in CKL can contact Anne and submit their name for consideration to be one of the properties inventoried. Those interested in participating in survey and plant collection can also contact Anne Barbour at 705-454-8945 or email [anne.barbour@bell.net](mailto:anne.barbour@bell.net)

## **The Altberg Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Reserve –November 2011 by Robbie Preston**

It was most interesting as I spent Thursday, Nov 10th, 2011 in the Altberg Reserve by myself. Many things passed through my mind as I walked all the trails. It was an inspection trip, but at times it turned into a reflection in my mind of all of those who worked so hard each year to keep it a place that Ruddy (Altberg) would be proud of today.

The main purpose was a final inspection of what had been done since 2009, when I met with Mark Carabetta (Ontario Nature) for all things Altberg and a wrap up of the work there for 2011. I was also there to complete the trail marking of the four trails, including the new Venture Trail, for lack of a better name. That is now what was the bottom of the old Red Trail where it crossed some rough land. It would have cost thousands to build bridges, boardwalks and stairs to meet the current safety standards to make sure that volunteers and visitors are safe as they work in or enjoy the reserve.

As the Director of Infrastructure of the Altberg since 2009, I think of what I took over that was based on the dreams of others about preserving the wilds of the Altberg for many different and diverse needs, present and future.

The reserve is a rare place in time and in a gifted position within The Land Between. Mother Nature still rules these woods as to what she wants for all that use them, be it man or beast.

### **BACKGROUND**

To back up some, is to open to up the guide book of dreams and plans with the title, "Altberg Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Reserve - Management Plan, January 2003". This is the base, the "bible", so to speak, for everything that is undertaken in the Altberg by KFN members within our stewardship guidelines.

The 43 pages contain all the reasons as to how and why the Altberg has changed and the many things that need to be done each year. It is the working guide and agreement, signed by former club officials, that gives and creates safety for all that tread on the reserve: the scientist, the researcher, the naturalist or the common person, and all those who, for their own reasons, wish at some time to be in the deep woods.

Changes to the care of the land started back in the 1990s, with the first management plan of 1993 that ran until 1997 or 98. The additions of adjoining lands opened up the reserve to more visitors and different levels of users for a wider and more varied nature-based use of all the lands.

### **2005**

Soon it became obvious that the single old gate to the reserve had to be moved. It was a bottle neck. A small parking lot was needed due to the fact that users were parking their vehicles dangerously on the road edge and shoulder of the highway.

By 2005, KFN had created a small 3 to 5 car parking lot with two gates and a walk-through. There was more parking space inside, if you were one of those that knew the combination to the locks. Interesting, the roadway into the parking lot was between the two old gate posts and fencing which were only 10 ft apart, but there was a 40 foot culvert in place that one drove over to get into the new lot. The new lot fencing had a walk-through and the above mentioned two gates installed for passage into the reserve. Even today, one can only walk, snowshoe or cross country ski within the boundary of the reserve. With much work and effort a lot of old structures and habitat litter were removed. But each year, we still find more.

I have read in the club records, of the trails being marked by marker ribbon tied to tree branches to guide naturalists and/or other types of visitors into the Altberg. In 2005, I have been told that the trails got marked with blue plastic markers. But, in time, these were causing two major problems for the trail users. Some markers were installed by people who did not know to leave the nail head sticking out so the tree has room to grow. Over the years, the tree growth has pushed the markers off the nails, only to be lost in the ground cover.

The other problem was that they gave no sense of direction of travel or relation to the parking lot as the same markers were used on all the trails in both directions. People, new to the Altberg, or inexperienced visitors, became confused and disoriented. Trail colour markers were only at the start of different trails.

### **2007 and 08**

The wind fall damage of 2007 & 08, showed us the force of nature, as many mature trees were tipped over due to their shallow root structures. These trees took down others, some of which totally blocked the trails in different places.

Trail users created new routes around the windfalls, even to the point that at times, people wandered over the boundaries and off the reserve to get around the windfalls. Not everyone was able to climb over or

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under these trail obstructions.

The Altberg had also become a popular site for Fleming College outings to study the many different realms of nature there. In different areas along the lower Red trail windfall section, students plotted, tagged and recorded the damage from three different storms. Their work will give many generations of students a solid base of facts as the land in this area changes, because of the extra light due to the missing upper canopy cover. Elderberry bushes have grown to seven to eight ft. tall in just over 4 years on some of the tip ups. These records can be compared to the test block that had no damage.

The increased student usage exposed the parking problem to new levels. Their buses needed room to park off the road, for the safety of passenger off-loading or boarding. Also the buses were a road traffic hazard while parked for four to five hours.

### 2009

The fall of 2009 saw the upgrading of many things at the Altberg. Land was cleared to expand the parking lot to hold two buses and from eight to ten cars. When completed, it sported a 40 foot wide entrance and a cleared and levelled area of about 55 x 55 feet in size. A third bus, if needed can park inside by opening the west gate. The east gate will allow some extra cars to fit inside.

In the fall of 2009 three Fleming students spent a full day with me with chain saws, cutting and clearing, and opening of the trails to a minimum of four feet wide. At the end of the day they were not done the job, but had made a major start.

### 2010

In the Spring 2010, new fencing was installed to define the parking lot. As the reserve is open for public use, major work was started to clear the trails of litter, to ensure safe passage for visitors. A kid's old wagon was removed from an area on the upper Red Trail. Rusted pots and pans were taken away. The rubber tires had been eaten away by various critters.

Hundreds of volunteer hours were spent clipping and removing saplings and raking litter to define the trail routes.

A new marker system was created by me to make navigation easier for the many users of the Altberg. Each of the Yellow, Orange, and Red Trails were marked with triangles of their own colour. The colour is painted right on the trees, so that it remains until the tree falls. Whichever trail you are on, you will only see that trail's colour until you change trails. If the triangle is pointed down, you are headed

away from the parking lot. If the point is up, one is headed back to the parking lot. Some trees, due to their very rough bark, caused a problem, so we did a soft blaze, only taking a small amount of surface bark off, but not cutting into the cambium.

The same year we had a display at the Woodlot Conference. Two booths away was a firm selling timber-marking paint. After a chat, the rep me gave the contact information for the regional supplier, who, in turn, very kindly supplied us with forester tree paint in spray cans. About a \$160.00 donation.

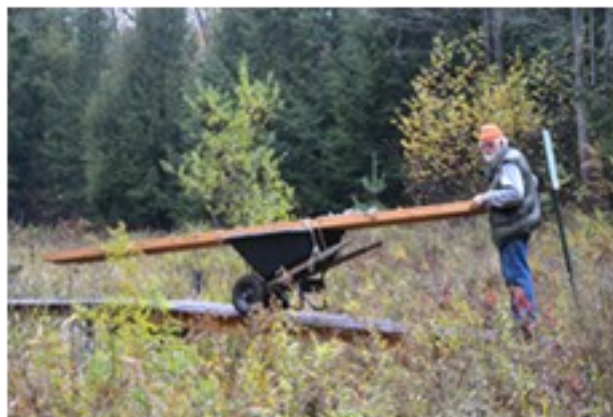
The fall 2010 saw the building of two bridge works on the Orange trail. One was built at the year-round wet crossing of the vernal pond stream on the north route of the Orange and one was completed below Mossy Rock. The year-round stream crossing had always been a messy crossing route.

### 2011

So what was achieved in 2011? A lot was completed, but some of that was because of what we had done or begun in 2009 & 10.

Repeated cutting of the parking lot last year (which I called the Altberg Meadow) reduced the yearly growth of tall-growing vegetation, reducing the maintenance work in the lot to just some small area clipping. A big heavy wire trap for small animals, located near the old cabin site, mentioned back in old reports was discovered and removed at last.

The spring of 2011 saw the closing of the stream crossing by the monument, and the building of 33 ft. bridge across the Beaver Meadow. Work became more enjoyable pushing a wheel barrow, full of tools, over the bridge rather than on the old route. As well, far less damage and erosion to the trail bank and tree roots would occur.



Robbie – Hauling Timbers on the Beaver Meadow Bridge

Some work got done in the spring but we never got the bottom of the Red Trail cleared. Mark Carabetta had

planned to do a work weekend in August, but that got cancelled and so did his September one. As Ontario Nature's manager of all of their reserves, it was hard for him to be in 20 some places at once.

So I planned a whole week long **"Work like hell/ Let's get it done"** event. Even with all the help that came out, it took longer than we ever dreamed.

That 7 days in 2011 saw a lot happen, as many, volunteered their time and talent; some, only to help serve lunch in the shelter we set up near the monument. Ontario Nature provided the food and drinks and other odd treats to keep us going.

The surface of the west side of the Yellow Trail got smoothed out in many places. The trail was cleared to 4ft. wide and a lot of the gullies were filled in. This makes it safer for all to walk, and cross country skiing should be more fun from now on. The Yellow Trail got two sections of boardwalk and the material is there for the spring, if need be, to add more. Only 4 or 5 trees had to be chopped. These were wind falls or dead trees about to fall down.

On the Orange Trail we added a new bridge beside the Herp Two location. As well, Gilbert Gaboury, a part-time, mature Fleming College student, made sand appear to cover the tree roots on the trail. His past trail-building experience was a big help. That area used to be a mess to get a wheelbarrow past this point. In different areas of the trail, about six trees had to be removed, as they were a hazard or were blocking the trail.

Two trails done, one to go. The Red is another story. The place where the Red Trail crossed the Beaver Dam had been closed in 2009. Too many people had slipped, got wet, or even turned an ankle. Funny until it happens to you, or if you were alone. A change in the Red Trail route had to be reset in 2011, due to erosion and a steep incline, which was not safe or comfortable for most who ventured there.

Just as you turn on to the upper Red from the Orange, there was ridge of surface limestone chunks sticking out of the trail. Gilbert came back and worked on his own the next week to turn that dangerous cobble section into a smooth, safe walking trail. In the Fall 2009 we had cut slots through the windfalls. Where the Red dropped off, the limestone bluff was a major mess. In 2010, it took 16 hours to cut and clear a way through this mess. Between 2010 & 11 the weed wackers have reclaimed this section six times. In this same area the elderberry bushes have grown 8 plus feet in four summers on the tip-ups. The berry canes are over 7 feet tall.... birds sure love them. As you

move south along the trail, there is/was the log bridge built in 05. One log was badly rotted, as the logs had not been debarked, prior to their placement. The replacement bridge is one of four new ones in this section of the trail as it winds ever closer to the west fence line.

Next time you are down that deep in the woods, remember that all the lumber that you see and walk upon was hand carried from the parking lot by fellow club members or volunteers.

Just before one gets to the first big granite outcrop and what is referred to as the Mesa is now the west side start of the new Blue Venture trail (the former toe of the Red Trail).

As some of you may know, the lower end of the Red Trail travels very close to the west boundary. Unfortunately, there are some hunters who don't respect the boundary markings and hunt right beside the fence, as evidenced each year by the shell casings far within the west boundary fence line.

I have been advised not to do any more work on the Blue Venture Trail, due to its closeness to the hunter stands and fence line, but also because of the high cost of material needed to build and create stairways, gully-crossing bridges on the upper section as well as the 120 ft. of board walk/decking needed to cross the wetlands on the lower section of the old Red trail. We will keep it inspected for missing trail markers which are the old blue plastic diamonds with the white hiker logo on them. If trees fall down, they will not be cut or removed.

At this point the new Red addition to the old Red east starts, or as it has been called the Lower Red section, or East section. At both intersections, one can see the new Red trail markers (painted) and the first few feet of the Blues. The Blue has a few painted markings continuing on with the blue plastic markers.

Now, we turn North to the parking lot. The trails have all been cleared, at last, to at least four feet wide. There may be the odd small root sticking up. But when you take a walk take your work gloves or your loppers.

Where the limestone bluff drains down and crosses the lower Red Trail, we created our longest bridge at the Altberg, almost 50 ft. long. No more stepping over slippery wet logs. Moving up the trail as it bends into the big windfall, we created over 70 some feet of board walks. This area of trail was always wet but also had chunks of granite and limestone dropped into the mud. In the past, we tried using tree slabs but the underlying rocks left them very unstable to walk

on. We also have two new sections up in the middle of the windfall, plus we have some extra lumber on hand if other areas turn into mud holes next year. The highlight of the big work week was the visits by 33 non-members, who stopped for information or to enjoy a fall walk in the woods.



Brian Barbour working on one of the many new bridged walkways



Monck Road ( #45) KFN- Cleanup Crew – November 2011



This is a closeup photo of **Dwarf Ginseng** (*Panax trifolium*) shown to KFN members by Don Smith at Snowden Park in May 2011. This is a brand new plant for Haliburton County, not listed in *Haliburton Flora* by Skelton & Skelton, 1991.( Anne Barbour)

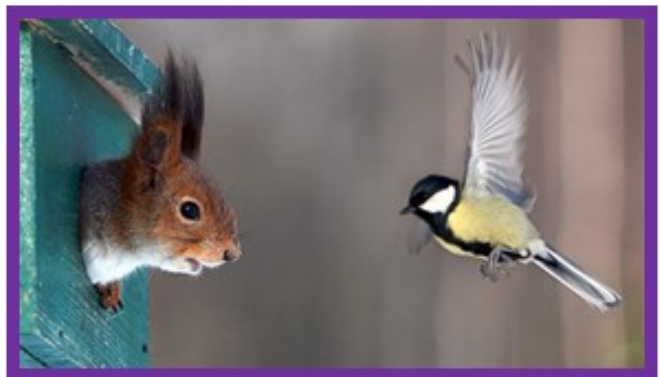
### THE FUTURE

In 2010, I spent about 24 days at the Altberg, as well as around 4000 kms. of driving and time to do it. This year, I think I will turn in less 20 full days and because I live closer the mileage has dropped in half.

All that is left now is to get the new trail signs showing the correct routes, bridges and board walks. Then, special sightings can have more accurate reference points. (By the way, if you hear of, or see someone with a Ontario Nature sign, find out where they got it, as some fool removed the one at the gate that describes what activities are allowed or prohibited in the reserve).

To all the members and volunteers from many groups who have helped in some way to make the Altberg a more enjoyable place to mix with nature, thank you for your time and special inputs.

Don't forget, the work is never done, as Mother Nature can grow things real fast or knock it down even quicker. Regular visits always find new growth and windfalls. Please help us to keep the trails clear and safe by dragging branches off the trails if possible, or by calling me at 705-879-4478, or email [press\\_on@mac.com](mailto:press_on@mac.com) if trees or other obstructions are blocking the trails.



I'm sorry... I didn't know you were coming back

Fleetwood Creek Outing led by Dale Leadbeater - June 2011



On Saturday, June 18, 2011, with the weather cooperating to perfection, 18 people, not intimidated by the rocky hill on Ballyduff Road in the City of Kawartha Lakes drove down to meet **Dale Leadbeater** in the 1<sup>st</sup> parking lot of the **Fleetwood Creek Natural Area (FCNA)**. **Field Botanists of Ontario** President and Marshall for the day, Bill Crowley introduced Dale saying that not only would we get plant identification but a complete ecology lesson as well. Bill was correct, for to Dale, there is always a reason why plants grow where they do, and being not just a botanist but an ecologist, Dale wants to know that reason.

Our objective would be two-fold:

- (1) to inventory & take soils samples for the CKL (City of Kawartha Lakes) FLORA PROJECT and
- (2) to add to the inventory for FCNA for Kawartha Conservation.

Kawartha Conservation manages this 900 acre property, which is a Provincially Significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) located on the Oak Ridges Moraine. The land was acquired by the Ontario Heritage Trust in 1983-84 through the generosity of Hilda Pangman in memory of her mother Adelaide McLaughlin, and with the assistance of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Kawartha Region Conservation and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Joyce Gould carried out the first Biological Inventory and Evaluation of the Fleetwood Creek Valley

in 1985. Joining us was Kristina Rawlings from Ontario Heritage Trust, who is working on a development plan for FCNA.

Dale explained that historically, Gooderham & Worts was licensed to cut wood in the City of Kawartha Lakes for their distilling operations. They would send crews up by train and ship back the lumber which included large amounts of oak and maple. This contributed to the denuding of the moraine after which farming was attempted. Unfortunately, the land was mostly rock and sand, so once tilled, the winds carried away what little soil there was. **Red Pines** (*Pinus resinosa*) were planted in the 1940's 'en masse' to retain the soils, and later **Scots Pine** (*Pinus sylvestris*) were also planted. But plantations are never the same as the integrated forest supporting wildlife that was lost.

Up at the Look-Out, Dale augured a soil sample where the depth of organics was 8cm. followed by silty, fine sand interspersed with gravel bits, as expected. Using an eye-dropper, Dale tested the soil for the presence of calcium by dropping dilute hydrochloric acid on it. It fizzed like crazy, indicating that the soil was loaded with calcium, un-weathered material, or parent material. It takes years of rain-water leeching through humus into the parent material to convert it to weathered soil. In the South American tropics, weathered soils can be 30 metres deep, but here it was practically non-existent. When you plant directly into the parent soil, plants find it too stressful and don't do well as nutrients are lacking or difficult to acquire. Dog-strangling Vine (*Cynanchum rossicum*), however, likes calcium and silty conditions. Although Joyce Gould's 1985 inventory did not list **Dog-strangling Vine** or **European Buckthorn** (*Rhamnus cathartica*), these species have arrived and are now thriving in soils where native plants find it more difficult to grow.

Along with climate change that muddles things up, habitat for wildlife is diminishing. A need to know what critters are here made us aware of the birds singing nearby. That warbler – is it a Golden-Winged (listed as Special Concern) or a Blue-Winged that is gradually expanding its breeding range into Golden-Winged territory where

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“Brewstering” then occurs? (That’s another story.) Richard Aaron identified it bee-buzzing like a BW. The bird remained hidden from view so identity could not be verified visually, but Richard checked his bird tapes when he got home to be sure. Mike McMurty’s excellent hearing and birding expertise also picked up a **Yellow-throated Vireo**, which likes deciduous forests. These are both new birds for the FCNA list.

Before leaving the Look-Out, Dale found a tree/shrub species that is near and dear to her heart: *Crataegus*. Dale’s academic research specialized in this genus, under the direction of Tim Dickinson, Curator at the ROM Herbarium, whose specialty is *Crataegus*. Also, Dale is known to root for the underdog or ‘underplant’ whichever the case may be. Dale encouraged us not to be afraid to identify *Crataegus*. There are characteristics that help in their identification. First, look at the stem: is it multi-stemmed or single? This one is single-stemmed. Check the inflorescence (when present) to see if it is hairy. Are the leaves dull or shiny? This one has dull leaves. What is the leaf shape? This one is truncate or wide at the base, and not lobed. Are the thorns small or long? These are small. Added together, these characteristics equalled **Scarlet Hawthorn** (*Crataegus pedicellata*). Black Hawthorn (*C. douglasii*) looks very much like this one, but it has black fruit, a dead give-away. Later on, in the Fleetwood Valley forest, we found **Long-spined Hawthorn** (*C. macracantha*). These have gigantic thorns that can be up to 10 cm. long – a real weapon! Its lovely cuneate leaf slopes sharply down to the stem. Lastly, Dale showed us **Dotted Hawthorn** (*C. punctata*). This single-stemmed hawthorn is a tree, not a shrub, with branches that go out perpendicularly, so its shape is pagoda-like. Dale says that this is the only Hawthorn that you can recognize going down the 401 at 90 mph, because of its shape. Its bark is also distinctively gray.

On the way down the hill, we discussed a few plants along the trail:

- 1.) **Showy Tick Trefoil** (*Desmodium canadense*) and its ability to cling to clothing and itself. Richard told us that the Greek word for *Desmodium* means ‘chain’, referring to the seeds.
- 2.) **Brome Grass** (*Bromus inermis*) with its signature: a faint ‘W’ on the leaf. This plant produces allelopathy, chemicals not necessary for its own sur-

vival, but that suppress other plants, or as Dale said “It actively fights anything in its path!”

3.) **Mayapples** (*Podophyllum pentatum*) or Umbrella plant can be eaten when plump and yellow, but never when green. The Mayapple can reproduce sexually with fruit, or vegetatively as clones.

4.) **Scouring rush** (*Equisetum hyemale*) nature’s scouring pad. On sandy slopes, it is “happy as a pig in a pig’s natural habitat.” Horsetails grew 40 feet tall 3 million years ago.

5.) **Carrionflower** (*Smilax herbacea*) used to be part of the Lily family but now has a family of its own: Smilacaceae thanks to the research currently being carried out on tropical plants.

6.) Our two foresters, Steve Smith & Bohdan Kowalyk, found **European Linden** (*Tilia cordata*) that resembles Basswood (*T. americana*) but with much smaller leaves. Looking up through the canopy, not one leaf showed a single hole from an insect’s munching. Basswood would be lacy, full of holes from insects that found it delicious, whereas nothing in North America eats Linden; it is not part of the food web. That said, it does, however, perform ecosystem services by providing shade, air quality benefits at the cost of the tree, and limiting erosion capacity by catching rain so it drops gently on the ground.

7.) **Manitoba Maple** (*Acer negundo*), in contrast to the Linden, is a favourite food of insects: everything eats it.

8.) **Rosy Sedge** (*Carex rosea*) was in full seed. Paula Davies rhymed off the memory aid: “Sedges have edges, rushes are round, grasses have lashes wherever they’re found.” Two other lyric variants:

- 1.) ‘grasses have nodes all the way to the ground.’
- 2.) ‘grasses wear robes all the way to the ground.’” (<http://www.hiltonpond.org/ThisWeek060615.html>)

We carpoled in 4 vehicles in order to drive down to the second parking lot to explore the east trail of the deciduous forest of FCNA. Dale noticed **Dwarf Scouring Rush** (*Equisetum scirpoides*) along the road, indicating ground water. A rather healthy **Butternut** (*Juglans cinerea*) was seen immediately on getting out of our cars. The forest housed quite a few of these trees, but most of them showed evidence of the canker disease.

Early along the trail, pockets of sunny prairie habitat produced lovely patches of **Hairy Beardtongue** (*Penstemon hirsutus*), more **Showy Tick Trefoil** (*Desmodium canadense*), and **Tall cinquefoil**

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(*Drymocallis arguta*). This plant has WHITE flowers, grows 30-65 cm tall (that's TALL) and has pinnately-compound leaves, versus the palmately-compound leaves of Rough-fruited Cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*); that's right, the one that has been mistaken more than once for whacky tobacky. One of the lovely woodland sedges with 3 hanging seed-heads was examined. Was it Graceful Sedge (*Carex gracillima*) or Drooping Woodland Sedge (*Carex arctata*)? In *C. gracillima*, the terminal spike is female, while *C. arctata*'s terminal spike is male with the female below. Thanks, Bill Thompson, for repeating the differences. Perhaps I will remember them if I tell myself: 'Graceful females stand up tall'. **Arrow-leaved Aster** (*Symphotrichum urophyllum*) is common here. **Tower mustard** (*Arabis glabra*) now known as *Turritis glabra* according to Vascan (<http://data.canadensys.net/vascan/search>) is native to Ontario. What a colony of **Shinleaf** (*Pyrola elyptica*); pity the plants were still in bud. Look out above! A nesting **Northern Goshawk** flew squawking overhead, protecting its young. The Red Pine plantation we were in was the perfect place for it to nest. A little further, we came to an actual Butternut grove, with at least one healthy looking Butternut. Steve told us that if logging had been done in FCNA, this open area would probably have been a skidding area for the logs. Butternuts need open area, hence here they be. At our feet, numerous baby **Bitternut Hickories** (*Carya cordiformis*) were beginning their life cycle.

A large patch of *Prenanthes* leaves was found. We won't know until the mature plant blooms whether it is **White Rattlesnake Root** (*Prenanthes alba*) with 5 to 6 flowers, or **Tall Rattlesnake Root** (*Prenanthes altissima*) with 5-12 flowers. Also *P. altissima* has fewer bracts, usually 5, while the other *Prenanthes* usually have about 8 principal bracts. This genus has now been changed in Vascan to *Nabalus*. Beside the *Prenanthes* was an area widespread with **Sprengel's Sedge or Long-beaked Sedge** (*Carex spengelii*). The plant has a messy, curly look. **Purple False Melic** (*Schizachne purpurascens*) was discovered and so was **Canada Avens** (*Geum canadense*) with its white flower.

Dale had another soil sample augured and measured the depths of organics to be 60cm. Her hydrochloric acid did not fizz on the soil, meaning there was no

calcium or parent soil. It was all weathered, yummy soils. Next, a violet that had finished flowering? Not exactly. Dale showed us the cleistogamous flowers that all violets have. These flowers don't open, but the pistil curls down into the stamens and self-pollinates. Walking to a spot to sit for lunch, Dale mentioned that her latest interest is beekeeping. With spring flowers finished, but summer flowers not fully on yet, beekeepers call this time period "the dirth" when bees have to really hunt for pollen. We then walked through grass-like clumps that turned out to be another woodland sedge: **Pennsylvania Sedge** (*Carex pennsylvanica*) that had already dropped all of its seeds. Passing a large **Hemlock** (*Tsuga canadensis*) tree, Dale mentioned how these are sensitive to climate change. She was happy to see that there were seedling Hemlocks too, likely with their roots grafted back to the adult's roots and thus receiving nourishment.

After lunch Dale took us to Fleetwood Creek, literally. Dale took a soil sample and found rotted organics with loose peat at the top and denser peat underneath. The lower peat material was in an anaerobic situation so decomposition takes place very slowly and the peat gets compressed even more. The B layer was very fine sand. The sample was a combination of plant and parent material. Dale explained that the standing water from the surrounding area percolates up and gathers into this streambed, part of the headwaters of Fleetwood Creek. That day, it was running rapidly to the north where it would meet up with Pigeon River. But Dale explained that groundwater is not always constant; it can fluctuate, so plants still tell us the story even though the water might be gone at a different time of year. Plants found that are ground-water indicators were **Spaghnum squarrosa** with leaves at right-angles to the branches, **Marchantia polymorpha** (a liverwort), **Cuckooflower** (*Cardamine pratensis*) and **Golden Saxifrage** (*Chrysosplenium americanum*). The latter has roundish leaves, about 15 mm long with tiny yellowish flowers, which are finished now. It is a creeping plant that forms a mat in springy, mucky places. This was an exciting find for Dale and the rest of the group, being a lifer for many of us and a first location for the CKL Flora Project.

We expected to find Willows, and found three: **Bebb's Willow** (*Salix bebbiana*), **Meadow** (*S.*

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*petiolaris*) and **Shining** (*S. lucida*), the latter, a very nice find. Sedges that were growing along the creek were **Interior Sedge** (*Carex interior*) in which the male flower wraps around the female, **Rough Sedge** (*C. scabrata*), **Porcupine Sedge** (*C. hystericina*), **Awl-fruited Sedge** (*C. stipata*), and **Schweinitz' Sedge** (*C. schweinitzii*), a plant with provincial ranking of S3. Paula found **Smaller Forget-me-not** (*Myosotis laxa*) while Charles Chaffey found 2 orchids in bud that he believed were **Northern Green Orchid** (*Platanthera aquilonis*) (this was verified by Mike Oldham after the author went back 6 days later to photograph the plants in flower.) A single graceful **Water Avens** (*Geum rivale*) was in flower along the bank. What a gorgeous, and productive little spot!

Leaving the water to go back on the trail, Prachi Patel found True Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis acetosella*) in flower. The trail continued through a patch of veritable northern habitat with **Hobblebush** (*Viburnum alni folia*), **Starflower** (*Trientalis borealis*), **Blue-bead Lily** (*Clintonia borealis*), **Indian Cucumber-root** (*Medeola virginiana*), **Rose-twisted Stalk** (*Streptopus lanceolatus*), **Clubmoss** (*Diphasiastrum* sp), **Mountain Maple** (*Acer spicatum*), **Goldthread** (*Coptis trifolia*), **Foamflower** (*Tiarella cordifolia*). A **Leatherwood** (*Dirca palustris*) had been eaten by deer and demonstrated its capacity to grow horizontally by rooting at the nodes. This shrub's bark is very supple and was used by First Nations as a wonderful lashing material. More shrubs included **Maple-leaved Viburnum** (*Viburnum acerifolium*) in flower, **Partridgeberry** (*Mitchella repens*), and **Pip-sisewa** (*Chimaphila umbellata*) with flower buds.

Ferns that were found included **Rattlesnake Fern** (*Botrychium virginianum*), about 10 lovely specimens, **Cinnamon Fern** (*Osmunda cinnamomea*), with hairy armpits, **Lady Fern** (*Athyrium filix-femina*), Bulblet **Bladder Fern** (*Cystopteris bulbifera*), **Evergreen Wood Fern** (*Dryopteris intermedia*), **Marginal Wood Fern** (*D. marginalis*), **Oak Fern** (*Gymnocarpium Dryopteris*), **Ostrich Fern** (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*), **Sensitive Fern** (*Onoclea sensibilis*), **Eastern Bracken Fern** (*Pteridium aquilinum*) and the best of all because it was a new one, **New York Fern** (*Thelypteris noveboracensis*).

Along the final stretch of the forest trail, there were

**Ricegrass** (*Orizopsis racemosa*) with all leaves basal, **Hairy Sweet Cicely** (*Ozmorhiza claytonii*), **Woolly Blue Violet** (*Viola sororia*), **Clearweed** (*Pilea* sp), another dying Butternut, and a large **Jack Pine** (*Pinus banksiana*) noticed by Steve Smith while looking up. Just to be sure the little guys weren't missed, Mike McMurtry spotted a tiny **Narrow-leaved Panicgrass** (*Dichanthelium linearifolium*), how I'll never know, growing in the sandy, abused, exposed habitat of the trail near one of the prairie patches: just what *Dichanthelium* likes. Great job guys!

After carpooling back to the first parking lot, we said goodbye to half of our explorers who had a long way to travel back home. The rest followed Dale to a private residence near Pontypool. Here we were treated to a brief tour of Russ Powell's farm and a very interesting history lesson of his property. The land was patented in 1817 to Mary McLean. In those days, it was very unusual for land to be patented to a female. The farmhouse was built in 1870 and is now connected to modern additions. The basement walls were built of stone and the floor joists of original timber, set 19 inches apart. Russ surmised that the lumber was cut from the property, then milled and dried. When the house was erected, there was insufficient lumber, but acquiring more lumber was much more difficult than just going to the local lumber yard, so the builders had to stretch out the lumber.

The 'bank barn' was built in the 1890's. There are no nails in it, only oak pegs. The old but well-constructed building was still good and strong so Russ had the barn repaired and a new metal roof installed. Originally, the cattle were kept on the main level with the horses stabled in an L-shaped addition along with the wagons and cutters. This 'L' was built to keep the horses out of the wind. We walked to the west side of the barn and up a slope of soil that had been banked against the side of the barn to allow for easy access to the second floor storage area of grain, hay and straw. Electricity only arrived at the farm in 1952. Before that a windmill was used to draw water from a well for both cattle and humans.

The north end of the property, draining to Fleetwood Creek is a Provincially Significant Wetland (PSW) Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). The south end which is farmed, drains to Cavan Creek.

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Russ is currently Chief Administrative Officer for the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, so is aware of the value of PSW's and ANSI's, as well as the benefits of a managed forest.

Russ explained that Pontypool has sandy loam which is highly susceptible to erosion. An old saying, "The land has changed hands" meant that your soil had been blown about, and now belonged to your neighbour and vice versa. Because of this erosion problem, Russ uses no-till methods, rotating between corn, soybeans and winter wheat, under-seeded with white clover. For those crops, Russ uses herbicides; the corn and wheat are Roundup-ready. Last year his soybeans went to Japan because they were a species ideally-suited to the production of tofu. Dog Strangling Vine is making headway into Russ' property, so he is trying industrial Turbo Prop, at 40:1 with reasonably good success. This product is a spin-off of 2, 4-D, that takes out only broadleaf plants as opposed to Roundup that kills everything. The product has been used in the Northumberland County Forest with better results than with Roundup. Russ is trying to keep the DSV out of his fencerows and hardwoods; he knows that he is only delaying it, hoping that it will stabilize.

We walked leisurely down the laneway to the Managed Forest portion of his property where Russ explained that he had taken out over 300 cords of wood from this 35 acres over 20 years. Another 25 acres behind this had been planted in Scots Pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) probably in the early 1960's. When the Scots Pine began dying out, hardwoods came through: oak, maple, Black Cherry. Russ explained that conifers are good for establishing soil and providing a nurturing environment for hardwoods, as long as the rows of conifers are far enough apart, and you have a seed source for the hardwoods. In another field where there had been hawthorns, White Pine (*Pinus strobus*) came up through the hawthorns. Back when cattle had to graze in these areas, they would say "You can put cattle back here, but they'd have to pack a lunch." Walking alongside Russ' wonderful deciduous forest had a calming effect on all of us. Russ told us that, at this point in his life, instead of taking out wood from the forest, he prefers to come, sit, and watch it grow. We thanked Russ for sharing his property, time and knowledge with us.

Although we were tired and no serious inventorying was done at this site, a few new plants for the CKL FLORA Project were noticed by eagle-eyed botanists Charles Chaffey and Steve Smith: **American Lopseed** (*Phryma leptostachya*), **Maryland Figwort** (*Scrophularia marylandica*), and **Autumn Olive** (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), an introduced species. Much of the fun for botanists is picking out the plants that are different. Now this group of trained and watchful eyes was done for the day. It had been a productive, entertaining and instructive day.

Thank you, Field Botanists for giving the CKL FLORA Project a shot in the arm.

#### NEW PLANTS FOR THE FLEETWOOD NATURAL AREA LIST FOUND BY FBO MEMBERS

Manitoba Maple *Acer negundo*  
Rough Sedge *Carex scabrata*  
Climbing Bittersweet *Celastris scanden*  
Golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium americanum*  
Long-spined Hawthorn *Crataegus macracantha*  
Scarlet Hawthorn *Crataegus pedicellata*  
Dotted Hawthorn *Crataegus punctata*  
Dog-strangling-vine *Cynanchum rossicum*  
Narrow-leaved Panicgrass *Dichanthelium linearifolium*  
Rattlesnakeroot *Nabalus sp. = Prenanthes sp.*  
Common Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*  
American Lopseed *Phryma leptostachya* (needs to be confirmed)  
Jack Pine *Pinus banksiana*  
European buckthorn *Rhamnus cathartica*  
Staghorn Sumac *Rhus typhina*  
Smooth Rose *Rosa blanda* (inside FCNA)  
Bebb's Willow *Salix bebbii*  
Shining Willow *Salix lucida*  
Meadow Willow *Salix petiolaris*  
Early goldenrod *Solidago juncea*  
Arrow-leaved Aster *Symphyotrichum urophyllum*  
New York Fern *Thelypteris noveboracensis*  
Little-leaved Linden *Tilia cordata*  
Tower Mustard *Turritis glabra = Arabis glabra*  
Hobblebush *Viburnum lantanoides*  
Four-seed Vetch *Vicia tetrasperma*  
Marsh Blue Violet *Viola cucullata*

## BIRDS seen or heard that day

1. Northern Goshawk
2. Ruffed Grouse
3. Mourning Dove
4. Ruby-throated Hummingbird
5. Eastern Wood-Pee-wee
6. Blue Jay
7. Black-capped Chickadee
8. Veery
9. Wood Thrush
10. American Robin
11. Yellow-throated Vireo
12. Blue-winged Warbler
13. Black-throated Green Warbler
14. Ovenbird
15. Mourning Warbler
16. Common Yellowthroat
17. Rose-breasted Grosbeak
18. Indigo Bunting
19. Field Sparrow
20. Song Sparrow
21. White-Throated Sparrow

A few **FUNGI** noticed and identified by Richard Aaron from the Toronto Mycological Society

Crepidotus crocophyllus  
 Mycena leaiana  
 Inocybe sp.  
 Polyporus umbellatus – a rare fungus that Richard has only seen once before in July 1994.  
 Polyporus varius (= Polyporus elegans)  
 Trametes elegans  
 Fomes fomentarius

Plus, one slime mould:  
 Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa

### ODONATA

*Dorocordulia libera* - Racquet-tailed Emerald  
 (I.D.ed by Richard Aaron)

### LEPIDOPTERA

*Limennitis arthemis arthemis* - White Admiral

## SCIENTIFIC WEATHER SCALES USED IN CKL FLORA PROJECT by Anne Barbour

The following scale is to be used in filling out the CKL Flora Inventory Record when a property is surveyed. The scale is easy to learn and keep terminology and interpretation of data consistent.

### CLOUD COVER USING EIGHTHS OR OKTAS

Oktas	Definition	Category
0	Sky clear	Fine
1	1/8 of sky covered or less, but not zero	Fine
2	2/8 of sky covered	Fine
3	3/8 of sky covered	Partly Cloudy
4	4/8 of sky covered	Partly Cloudy
5	5/8 of sky covered	Partly Cloudy
6	6/8 of sky covered	Cloudy
7	7/8 of sky covered or more, but not 8/8	Cloudy
8	8/8 of sky completely covered, no breaks	Overcast

The meteorological grid known as “Eighths” or “Oktas” estimates cloud cover simply in terms of the area of the sky obscured by clouds. It is a visual estimate of the sky from the ground, given to the closest value only. A value of 0 refers to clear sky, while 8 Oktas indicates an overcast sky with no breaks. If a very small amount of sky is visible, the designation would be 7; conversely, if a very small amount of clouds are visible, the designation would be 1. For the purposes of the CKL Flora project, make the best estimate that you can. Interestingly, Dale Leadbeater tells us that the amount of cloud cover in plant surveys makes a difference. “It’s been demonstrated that folks estimate percent cover of plant species differently when sampling in the sun as opposed to late afternoon or overcast. You wouldn’t think that it would matter that much, but it does. So I always like to include (cloud cover) just for information.”

<http://www.kawarthfieldnaturalists.org/CKLFlora.php>; under ‘Volunteers’, click to download Inventory Record

<http://www.worldweather.org/oktas.htm>

Dale Leadbeater: personal communication

## THE BEAUFORT WIND SCALE

The Beaufort Wind Scale was devised in 1806 by British Rear-Admiral Sir Francis Beaufort in order to standardize the estimation of wind by sailors. Since sailing ships were in use at that time, the original scale referred, not to 'wind speed' but to the effect that the wind had on the sails of a 'Man of War', the main ship in use by the British Navy at the time. The scale's 13 steps set a base on what sails a frigate could safely hoist, from "just sufficient to give steerage way" to "that which no canvas could withstand." "At zero, all his sails would be up; at six, half of his sails would have been taken down; and at twelve, all sails would be stowed away."

Later, when ships were powered by steam rather than wind, the description changed to how the sea, rather than the sails, behaved; land observations were also included. These changes are accredited to George Simpson, Director of the UK Meteorological Office and took place in 1923. Today, the [metric](#)-based units m/s or km/h are often used instead of the scale. In 1946, the International Meteorological Committee added 5 more values to the scale to refine the hurricane-force winds.

For the sake of the CKL Flora Project, these extended values will not be necessary. In fact, if anyone is out looking at plants in a wind higher than 5 on the Beaufort Scale, he is either getting paid for it or is out of his mind!

Beaufort number	Wind speed				Description	Wave height		What the sea looks like	What it looks like on land
	km/h	mph	kts	m/s		m	ft		
0	<1	<1	<1	<0.3	<a href="#">Calm</a>	0	0	Flat.	Calm. Smoke rises vertically.
1	1-5	1-3	1-2	0.3-1.5	<a href="#">Light air</a>	0.1	0.33	Ripples without crests.	Wind motion visible in smoke.
2	6-11	3-7	3-6	1.5-3.3	Light <a href="#">breeze</a>	0.2	0.66	Small wavelets. Crests of glassy appearance, not breaking	Wind felt on exposed skin. Leaves rustle.
3	12-19	8-12	7-10	3.3-5.5	Gentle <a href="#">breeze</a>	0.6	2	Large wavelets. Crests begin to break; scattered whitecaps	Leaves and smaller twigs in constant motion.
4	20-28	13-17	11-15	5.5-8.0	Moderate <a href="#">breeze</a>	1	3.3	Small waves.	Dust and loose paper raised. Small branches begin to move.
5	29-38	18-24	16-20	8.0-10.8	Fresh <a href="#">breeze</a>	2	6.6	Moderate (1.2 m) longer waves. Some foam and spray.	Branches of a moderate size move. Small trees begin to sway.
6	39-49	25-30	21-26	10.8-13.9	Strong <a href="#">breeze</a>	3	9.9	Large waves with foam crests and some spray.	Large branches in motion. Whistling heard in overhead wires. Umbrella use becomes difficult. Empty plastic garbage cans tip over.
7	50-61	31-38	27-33	13.9-17.2	High wind, Moderate <a href="#">Gale</a> , Near Gale	4	13.1	Sea heaps up and foam begins to streak.	Whole trees in motion. Effort needed to walk against the wind. Swaying of skyscrapers may be felt, especially by people on upper floors.
8	62-74	39-46	34-40	17.2-20.7	Fresh <a href="#">Gale</a>	5.5	18	Moderately high waves with breaking crests forming spindrift. Streaks of foam.	Twigs broken from trees. Cars veer on road.
9	75-88	47-54	41-47	20.7-24.5	Strong <a href="#">Gale</a>	7	23	High waves (6-7 m) with dense foam. Wave crests start to roll over. Considerable spray.	Larger branches break off trees, and some small trees blow over. Construction/temporary signs and barricades blow over. Damage to circus tents and canopies.
10	89-102	55-63	48-55	24.5-28.4	Whole <a href="#">Gale/Storm</a>	9	29.5	Very high waves. Large patches of foam from wave crests give the sea a white appearance. Considerable tumbling of waves with heavy impact. Large amounts of airborne spray reduce visibility.	Trees are broken off or uprooted, saplings bent and deformed, poorly attached asphalt shingles and shingles in poor condition peel off roofs.
11	103-117	64-72	56-63	28.4-32.6	Violent storm	11.5	37.7	Exceptionally high waves. Very large patches of foam, driven before the wind, cover much of the sea surface. Very large amounts of airborne spray severely reduce visibility.	Widespread vegetation damage. More damage to most roofing surfaces, asphalt tiles that have curled up and/or fractured due to age may break away completely.
12	≥118	≥73	≥64	≥32.6	Hurricane-force	≥14	≥46	Huge waves. Sea is completely white with foam and spray. Air is filled with driving spray, greatly reducing visibility.	Considerable and widespread damage to vegetation, a few windows broken, structural damage to mobile homes and poorly constructed sheds and barns. Debris may be hurled about.

## PAST NEWSLETTERS

Robbie Preston has been working on preparing the old newsletters from the inception of our club so they could be uploaded to the website. Have a look at the history of our club through the newsletters of the day. They can be found under “Newsletter” > “Archives” in the menu on the left of any page.

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