



Kawartha Field Naturalists

Emerson Falls, Ontario P.O. Box 113 R0R 1R0

# NEWSLETTER

No.4 Summer 1985

"ACTION FOR NATURE & ENVIRONMENT"

## WELCOME SUMMER !

Early summer is the time when many young animals and birds can be seen, being fed and learning how to fend for themselves. Insects are everywhere, the spring flowers have produced seeds and a host of summer flowers are in bloom. This is a wonderful time to learn how to identify flowers - try to learn the major plant families first, and then work downwards until you can name individual plants. Some plant families are very easy to learn, the daisy and the peaflower families are good examples.

This is one of the few periods of the year when there is almost no bird migration occurring in Ontario. By mid-July, however, the first shore-birds are beginning to move back to their winter quarters, and this is a good time to brush up on your shorebird field marks to be ready for the main movement in August. Yellowlegs, pectoral, least, semipalmated and solitary sandpipers are the most widespread migrants which you may see. The warbler migration usually begins in August also.

The Eastern Garter Snake gives birth during the hot summer months. Up to fifty of these harmless yellow and black striped snakes are born together in July and August. Unlike other snakes which lay eggs, the garter snakes give live birth. This common reptile occupies a wide variety of habitats including meadows, marshes, woodlands and streambanks.

## ENDANGERED SPECIES OF ONTARIO

On July 23, 1971 Ontario's Endangered Species Act was passed. An endangered species is any naturally occurring animal or plant which, on the basis of the best available scientific evidence, shows indications of being threatened with immediate extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its provincial range.

There are now fourteen species officially listed as endangered in this province. They are; Bald Eagle, Blue Racer, Small Whorled Pogonia, Piping Plover, Timber Rattlesnake, West Virginia White Butterfly, Eskimo Curlew, Small White Lady's Slipper, White Pelican, Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Cougar, Golden Eagle, Kirtland's Warbler and Lake Erie Water Snake.

There are several reasons why species become endangered - the most common being pesticide contamination, thoughtless killing or collecting by people who do not realize the important roles which they play in the environment, and most critical of all - the loss of habitat.

If our ancestors had shared our awareness of the sensitivity of wildlife populations, our own experience might have been enriched by the sight of vast flocks of passenger pigeons, now gone forever. Let us make sure that we will always be able to enjoy all the species that are part of Ontario's wildlife heritage today.

## POISON IVY

It is that time of the year again when those of us unfortunate enough to suffer from poison ivy must take extra precautions against this plant which is now in bloom. Watch for the tell-tale three shiny leaves and yellowish-green flowers in swamps, meadows and open woods. Luckily, jewelweed is also blooming in moist woods and swamps. The juice from this plant, which is also known as "touch-me-not", can be used to soothe the itching of poison ivy and insect bites. Look for the small orange spotted flowers, shaped like miniature snapdragons.



## RECYCLING - by Martin Slykhuis

The Kawartha Field Naturalists are now in the process of implementing a recycling project in Fenelon Falls. We feel that it is an important project as Canada is presently expending so much energy towards the destruction of our valuable forests.

It is hard to believe that Canada faces a serious shortage of trees when all one sees along our northern lakes and highways is a continuous curtain of trees. A lot of clear-cut is not visible because lumber companies are not allowed to cut directly along shorelines and highways.

To brand the harvesters and bureaucrats as the villains is to oversimplify. The forest is their livelihood, so it is with more than a passing concern that important steps are being taken.

- "Supertrees" are being developed to grow higher and faster and are more disease resistant.
- To limit logging in given area per year allowing natural re-growth to keep pace.
- Foresters are becoming more responsible for less slash on a site and better reforestation projects.
- Scientists have been mobilized to develop cures for diseases which in the past have devastated huge forest tracts.
- Being better able to combat forest fires. Some 7,000 fires sweep across 2 million acres of forest annually, destroying millions of dollars of valuable timber. Of these fires, 75% are caused by man.

Unfortunately, these measures are not enough. World demand increases by about 5% per year. What can be done? Conservation, like charity, begins at home. Much of the packaging used today is unnecessary - avoid items which are more marketable because of their fancy packaging. Small amounts of groceries need not be put into more bags or boxes than they are already in. Cardboard boxes can be reused again and again. Reusing a carton five times requires 80% less energy than the one-at-a-time habit. Egg cartons, old lumber are other items which can be reused. Disposable plates and cups, while being convenient, are a drain on our environment.

Newspapers though, are the greatest wasters of lumber. The only sensible thing is to recycle them, and only increased concern will make a recycling depot a permanent feature of our community. The key to reduce waste is at the Source. Books and magazines should be passed to a friend. Libraries, nursing homes, schools and community groups are always looking for reading material. Stationery can be used more wisely too. A lot of office waste could be used for scratch pads etc. Envelopes can be reused by covering the previous address with a mailing label.

continued ...



## Finally .... The Three "R's"

Reject it! Buy only what you need in the first place and only in a package that produces the least amount of waste. Pass up items with more package than product appeal. Think before you buy.

Reuse it! Before you throw anything away, take another look at it. Is there another use for it around the house or garden. Would someone else want it? Can it be returned to the store?

Recycle it! Maybe you have no further use for that week's stack of newspapers, but someone else may! Separate them from your regular garbage. Our depot is located at the shed behind the Municipal offices. For further information call Martin at 887-3254.

It is up to each of us to see the forest for the trees while there is still time to preserve them both.

## WETLANDS .... MORE THAN JUST WET LAND!

The Kawartha Region Conservation Authority, in co-operation with Parks Canada and the Trent-Severn Waterway, is presenting the "Painted Turtle Playhouse" this summer.

The "Painted Turtle Playhouse" (a modified trailer) will be travelling to local lock stations and provincial parks during the months of July and August. The Playhouse will be presenting puppet shows, evening films and slide shows as well as a photographic display to the public. As indicated by the theme "Wetlands ... More Than Just Wet Land!", the trailer is being used to promote an awareness and understanding of the role of wetlands in improving water quality, controlling water levels, and providing fish and wildlife habitat, as well as recreational uses.

The "Painted Turtle Playhouse" will be at the following locations on the dates indicated,

Fenelon Falls Lock Station	June 28 - July 1
Bobcaygeon Lock Station	July 4 - July 7
Peterborough Lift Lock	July 11 - July 14
Emily Provincial Park	July 18 - July 21
Lindsay Lock Station	July 25 - July 28
Port Perry, Palmer Park	Aug. 2 - Aug. 5
Kirkfield Lift Lock	Aug. 8 - Aug. 11
Balsam Lake Provincial Park	Aug. 15 - Aug. 18
Rosedale Lock Station	Aug. 22 - Aug. 25

Come, bring your children, nieces and nephews, grandchildren or just yourself to the "Painted Turtle Playhouse"!



## ABOUT GULLS

The bird most people call a "sea gull" is the graceful Herring Gull, a common resident of our lakes. It winters from Lake Ontario south to the Gulf of Mexico.

It is possible to confuse the herring gull with its close relative, the ring-billed gull, as both species are often seen together. Herring gulls in adult plumage are 25 inches long, with large unmarked bills and flesh coloured legs. It takes three years for them to obtain this plumage, so you are likely to see many immature birds. Adult ring-billed gulls are 21 inches long, their bills are smaller, with black rings, and their legs are greenish yellow.

The latin name of the herring gull is *Larus argentatus*, which means "silver coloured gull", certainly a good description of this beautiful and useful species. Like most members of the gull family, it is a scavenger. That is why you see flocks of them around garbage dumps and fishing boats, or along beaches where dead fish are washed ashore.

The nests are made of plant material and are only a few feet apart within the gull colony. The three eggs, laid in late May, are greenish-buff with brown and black spots, and hatch in about 25 days. The chicks grow rapidly and leave the nest within a few days, although they are fed by their parents for several weeks.

## MORE ON TREES ....

Trees have been a haven for man throughout his evolutionary growth. In his humble beginning, he fled to them for protection from enemies mightier in body than he. He sought through their branches for food, lay in their shadows out of the blazing sun and crept into their hollows for shelter.

As intelligence grew, he shaped their branches into weapons, hollowed their trunks into dugouts, found solace, warmth, and protection in fires kindled of their fibre. He built dwellings of them far superior to his gloomy caves, fashioned vehicles to lighten his burdens, made paper on which to record his thoughts, found food and sustenance in the lifeblood of his arboreal guardians. He found buried treasure deep in the earth that trees of other ages had left for him; he learned that the roots of the forests hold the very earth together; that trees foster life-giving rains, prevent floods, and that birds and animals thrive among them.

And now, as man stands abashed and confused in a material world of conflicting ideologies, these tireless mentors furnish him with spiritual guidance. Contemplation of them raises his thought from earthly concepts, renews his perspective and understanding, his sense of communion with all life. Where man once saw in them only objects of utility, he now finds beauty and inspiration.

S.C.

## CLUB FINANCIAL STATEMENT June 30, 1985

### Statement of Expenses:

Speaker Honourariums	40.00
Stationary/Printing/ Photocopies	93.06
Postage	11.92
Field Trips/Special Events	555.00
Miscellaneous	67.11
Service Charge	2.77
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	859.86

Total Income	1420.28
Total Expenses	859.86
Balance	+560.42

### Statement of Income:

Memberships	370.00
Donations	500.00
Field Trips/ Special Events	451.00
Fundraising Projects	88.50
Interest	10.78
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	1420.28

Balance 1984	746.92
Balance 1985 (to June 30)	560.42
Present Balance	1307.34

submitted by Andy Sorensen  
Club Treasurer

## K.F.N. news & events

JULY 7, 12 noon: Picnic at the Ken Reid Conservation Area. Pot Luck or bring your own depending on your preference. Winners of the poster contest will receive their prizes at the picnic.



JULY 8: General meeting has been cancelled. It was replaced by a film at the Fenelon Falls Lock Station on June 29. The editors apologize to anyone who did not receive notice of the change in time.

### VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED !

The club along with the F.O.N. will be putting a display in the Lindsay Central Exhibition in September (18-22). Anyone interested in helping to man the display should keep those dates in mind. More information will be available in September.

NEXT DIRECTORS MEETING - Wednesday  
September 4 at 7:30 in the Municipal  
shed.

REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR OLD NEWSPAPERS TO THE  
RECYCLING BIN WHICH IS NOW LOCATED IN THE YARD BEHIND  
THE MUNICIPAL OFFICES IN FENELON FALLS!

HAVE A GOOD AND SAFE SUMMER !