

# NEWSLETTER



# 59 Winter 2007

## Inside This Issue

<u>Article</u>	<u>Page</u>
Watch The Birdie	3
Altberg Wildflower Walk	4
Early Birders	5
Early Birders 2006 Recap	6
A Life Time First	6
Owl Banding At James Mclean	
Oliver Ecological Centre	8
Well-traveled Northern	
Saw-whet Owl	9
Members Photography Contest	10
Altberg Nature Reserve	11
Protecting Your Nest Egg	
And Our Planet	12
Links To Interesting	
Websites	13
North American Bird	
Facts Quiz	14
New Research Shows	15
Not All Nests In Trees	16
Answers to Quiz	17
What Human-related Hazard	18
Monarch Butterflies	18
An Athiest was taking a Walk	19
About James Baillie	20
New Members In 2006	21
Coming Events	22
Photo Contest Entry Form	23

## President's Message

It has been a busy time in our club since my last message. There have been some significant changes. Leslie Dymont helped out as our Ontario Nature rep. Although she did an excellent job, she had other duties, plus a busy life. She gave up this job, which has been taken over by Eric Davis.

For health reasons, Yvonne Gibson retired as a director, and as our secretary. She will be missed after several years in this position. We are fortunate to find a replacement for her with Joan Todd, whom you will recognize as one of our past presidents.

Again, for health reasons, Ruth Orr retired as a director, and as chairperson for the telephone committee. She will be replaced by Enid Skuce. We wish Yvonne and Ruth the best of health.

Brian Woods has resigned as the membership chairperson, but remains as a director. Taking over in that position is Brian Barbour. Brian Barbour also served as our temporary secretary while we searched for a replacement for Yvonne Gibson. He did a wonderful job in a position he did not really want. All the directors are grateful for your help Brian.

Gillian Morden has had a busy year. She is taking care of our program, and was taking care of the archives. She also did a lot of hard work on the very successful art raffle. With all this work, she has passed on the archives position to John Vandenberg, who was eagerly waiting for a position since he became a director.

Other significant events include Dan Bone acquiring 15 pairs of binoculars, plus other equipment and field guides which are available to our members on our field trips.

## "ACTION FOR EDUCATION, NATURE & ENVIRONMENT"

*Guest are cordially welcomed.*

KFN General Meetings are held at the Fenelon Falls Seniors Club Hall, 105 Lindsay Street, 7.30 pm., 1st Monday of each Month, September, Monday after labour day and no meeting July and August.

## EXECUTIVE

President	Tim Brophy
Past President	Lawrence Crossing
Vice President	John Vandenberg
Treasure	Loreen Randall
Secretary	Joan Todd

## Directors

Brian Barbour	Dan Bone
Eric Davis	Leslie Dymant
Gillian Morden	Jim Saigeon
Vic Orr	Judy Kennedy
John Vandenberg	

## Committee Chairpersons

Adpot-A-Road	Rick White
Altburg Reserve	Vic Orr
Archives	John Vandenberg
Auditor	Al McMaster
Baillie Birdathon	Loreen Randall
Bill Watts Blue Bird Trail	Tom & Louise Horne
Christmas Bird Count	Leslie Dymant
CKL Land & Water Stewardship	Dan Bone
Constitution	Brian Woods
Early Birding	Tim Brophy
Membership	Brian Barbour
E-mail	ba.barbour@nexicom.net
Newsletter	Judy Kennedy
E-mail	judykennedy@lindsaynet.com
Nominations	Lawrence Crossing
Ontario Nature	Eric Davis
Photography	Eric Davis
Programme Co-ordinator	Gillian Morden
Publicity	Jim Saigeon
Refreshments	Joan Crossing
	Mary Firth
Telephone	Enid Skuce

We are also in the process of negotiating with the City of **Kawartha Lakes** to be included in their spring and summer program. These outings will make the public more aware of our club, and perhaps produce more members. The club may also earn some money with these trips, but it has been emphasized that our main goal is not to make money, but to introduce the general public to the wonders of nature.

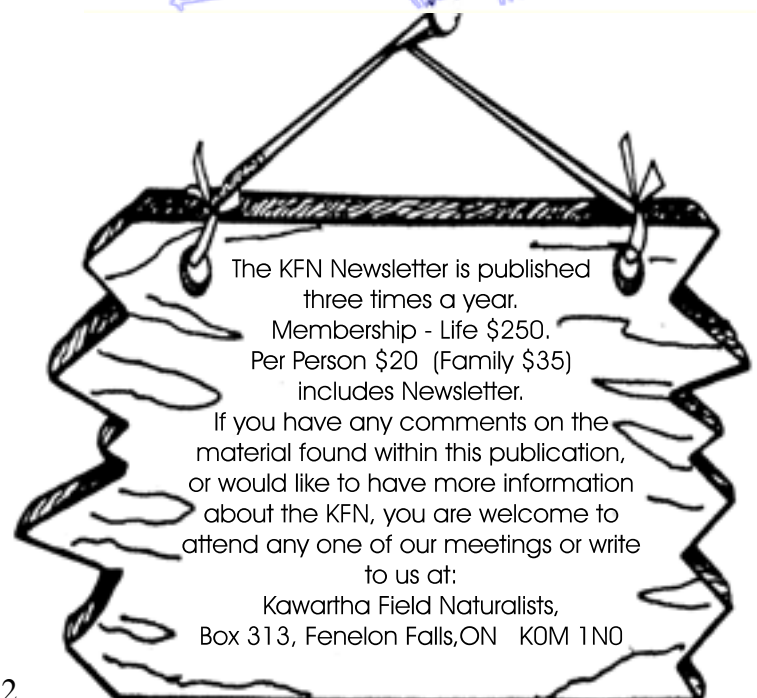
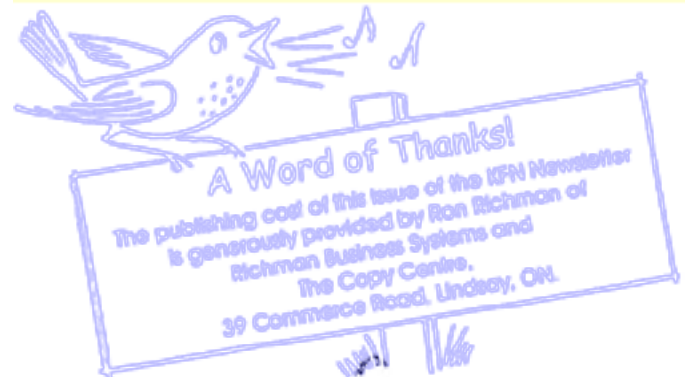
As I am writing this at the beginning of December I realize that you will not be reading it until after Christmas. I hope you all had a happy holiday season, and I wish you all the best in the New Year.

## A Word of Thanks

The graphic design of this issue of the KFN newsletter and photo adjustments is generously provided by

*Robbie Preston,  
Photography & Graphic Arts.*

171 Rink St. Unit 278, Peterborough  
705-876-9571 [press\\_on@mac.com](mailto:press_on@mac.com)



# Watch the birdie - Cheese Please - Click

For the last year I have been able to share a long-time passion of mine with many new found friends here at KFN. That passion is helping others enjoy something that I also enjoy. In this case it involves nature, wild life, and photography. Plus the knowledge of the workings of digital camera files, the necessary software programs that make that click of a shutter turn into a "Wow, what a great picture!" First of all, remember, we can't all know everything and second, I am also in the line up of people trying to learn the ever-changing new world of digital photography so I am willing to help. But I do not know it all and never will.

So where do we start. Lets start in this issue to try to find common ground as to what the three main file names mean. There are **Jpegs, Tiffs and Raws**. My food is got to be cooked but the camera file I love is raw. Read and find out why.

Your digital camera outputs images depending on type, style or manufacture of your camera and how it will create and store the images you take.

Some of what I learned from the internet.

## 1. Jpeg:

When Jpegs are chosen, the original data from the electronic sensor (whether CCD, CMOS, Foveon, etc.) goes through considerable processing in the camera (adjusting of white balance, contrast, sharpness, colour saturation, etc.), and is then stored using a "lossy" compressed file format called a **jpeg**. Using the example of a 3 megapixel camera, what starts out as 9 megabytes worth of data ends up as a jpeg of let's say 900 kilobytes, a tenfold reduction in file size.

A **jpeg** is a useful format for general purposes because the file size is so much smaller: more images can be stored on the memory card, they can be emailed or uploaded to the internet quicker, etc. But just like film cameras, smaller film images produce smaller good pictures.

But that reduced file size is gained at the expense of image quality. Basically, some data is thrown away, resulting in what is usually referred to as **jpeg** "artifacts." These can be seen when the image is carefully examined, especially in areas like a clear, blue sky, but are visible elsewhere in the image as well. The more the image is enlarged, the more obvious they become.

A further disadvantage of the **jpeg** format is that these artifacts tend to get more severe and more noticeable if the image is adjusted in a graphics editor (**Adobe Photoshop, Corel Photo-Paint 9, JASC PaintShopPro**, etc.). In general, the photographer does have some degree of control here, in that most cameras offer different user-selectable levels of **jpeg** compression, but regardless of which level is chosen, some data is being thrown out. Also, what started out as 12-bits of data per color is now being stored as 8-bits of data per color, so there is data being thrown away here as well. More on this below.

## 2. TIF:

This is a standard graphics format, which can be read by virtually all graphics programs. As with the **Jpeg**, the image created here still contains data produced after all the in-camera processing discussed above. But the advantage (and disadvantage) here is that there is no compression, and therefore no data loss associated with this format. The price paid for **this higher quality** is the larger file size. Typically a 3 megapixel camera will create a **TIF** file approximately 9 megabytes in size. This large size typically results in very slow writing times in the camera, and for these reasons, **TIF** is not in common usage for initial file creation in-camera.

### 3. Raw:

The image file created by a camera using **Raw** Format contains the full spectrum of the data captured by the camera's electronic sensor, prior to all of the processing for White Balance, Contrast, Sharpness, Colour Saturation, etc. It contains the full 12-bits of data per color, as opposed to the 8-bits/color in **Jpegs**. And at least in the case of **Canon's Raw** Format, the data is stored in a "lossless" compressed format, meaning that no data is thrown away. This results in relatively smaller file sizes, but without the data loss that occurs in **Jpegs**. The downside here is that each camera's **Raw** Format is created using proprietary technology, and so a conversion to a standardized graphics format is a necessary step.

It is the old story but in a modern way. You get what you pay for. Remember the Brownies and the cameras the took 35mm? The **Brownies** took snap shots and the 35's took the pictures that could be enlarged and presented with altered images.

Robbie Preston

## **ALTBERG WILDFLOWER WALK**

16<sup>th</sup> June, 2006

Present: **Jim Saigon**( leader), **Craig McLeod** (co-leader - ferns), **Ted Oakes** (scribe)

Members: **Mary Firth; Ray Laughlen; Mary Bunka; Teresa Wallin; Brenda Neureuther, Sheila Ziman; Brian Woods, Pat Oakes**

Guests: **Aileen Coates, Keith Coates** (Haliburton Field Naturalists)

There once was a man named Jim Saigon,  
Who ID'ed wildflowers in their season,  
Be they wort, be they moss,  
He was n'ere at a loss,  
In the woods to the north of Bobcaygeon.  
Anon

**Wort:** Originally a general name for an herb whence it still continues in many, as **liverwort, spleenwort** - **Samuel Johnson** - A Dictionary of the English Language, London, 1755.

The company assembled at the **Altberg** at 6:30 p.m. Prior to starting, the leader explained the **Altberg** informational signs and trail markings. The company then commenced the walk during which the following flora were identified by the leader and the co-leader:

**Thimbleberry; Speedwell; Sensitive Fern; Interrupted Fern; Intermediate Wood Fern; Small Striped Maple; Wild Lettuce; Club Moss;**

At this point the leader pointed out the **limestone - granite** division geological markings.

**Marsh fern; Orange Hawkweed; Yellow Spotted Dock Lily; Royal Fern; Ox-eye Daisy; Daisy Fleabane.**

At this point at the monument by the beaver meadow a **Red-backed Salamander** caused a  
4 distraction.

**Painted Trillium; Indian Cucumber Root** (like a star flower in appearance); **Hobble Bush; Ground Cedar** (club moss); **Ground Pine** (club moss); **False Solomon Seal** (in berry); **Star Flower; Blue-bead Lily (Clintonia Borealis)**

At this point the leader pointed out bear claw marks on beech tree.

**Hemlock; Hepatica Acutaloba; Blue Cohosh; Jack-in-the-pulpit**

On a limestone ridge: **Northern Maidenhair; McKay's Fragile Fern; Wild Leek; Cushion Moss.**

Here the leader pointed out a beaver felled tree lying across the trail.

**Pyrola; alternate leaf dogwood**

The company returned to the parking lot at 8:07 p.m.

As they gathered round to bid farewell to the leader, one was reminded of the poets famous observation:

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,

How one small head could carry all he knew.

**Oliver Goldsmith**

**Ted Oakes** (scribe)

## **Early Birders**

23 Sept. 06

Club members met at **Tim Horton's** in **Fenelon Falls** early Sat. morning and after coffee and toasted bagels (with herb and garlic cream cheese) we carpoled and set off in 2 cars. There were 6 of us : **Jim and Barb Dalgleish, Gord Scribbins, Joan and Lawrence Crossing** and our leader **Tim Brophy**. As you will read here, **Tim** did his usual excellent job of finding the birds. We started off on **Long Beach Rd.** where it is intersected by the rail trail and were surprised at the number of birds in the area - probably attracted by a feeder at a near-by house and a fence lined with **wild grapes**.

We observed - **Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jays, Robins, Mourning Doves, Chickadees, White throated Sparrow, Palm Warblers, Downie Woodpecker, Killdeer, Goldfinches, Song Sparrow, White Crowned Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Canada Goose, Redstart (F) and Mallards.** **Barb's** father evidently worked with the CNR and she was excited to find bits and pieces of railway remaining on the trail - spikes etc - she wanted them as souvenirs and went back to their car - pockets bulging. Next we had a look at the lake at **South View Estates** and saw **Green Winged Teal** and **Blue Winged Teal** and more **Mallards**. Hunting season had evidently started so nearby shots drove us away.

Next we went up **Ranchers Rd** (past **Leslie's** farm) and saw **Flickers, Eastern Phoebes, Red winged Blackbirds,** another **Killdeer, Herring Gulls** and two fat good looking coyotes close by who were skirting a herd of cattle. Then we went over to **Powles corners** and made our way to<sup>5</sup> the marshes on **Cameron Rd.** We saw - **Rock Pigeons, Wood ducks, Great Blue Heron, Cedar Waxwings,** - had a close look at another **Swamp Sparrow** and more **Red-winged Blackbirds**

Today, they were able to examine them from a close distance, and really appreciated their colours.

I hope to see the regular people, as well as some new attendees in the New Year. Hopefully, we can improve on our numbers next year.

**Tim Brophy**

## **A LIFE TIME FIRST**

People ask me why do I always carry my camera. I answer, one never knows when you will see a shot of a life time. On Dec. 20 my other work took me to **Treasure Island** about 12 km east of **Kingston** on the **St. Lawrence River**. To the east of the causeway that joins the island to the main land was a site to behold... **swans**. Yes, I like others in my life-time had seen swans.

First surprise was that as a Kingstonian, an outdoorsman and a hunter I had never seen swans in that part of Ontario. Second surprise was that it was Dec. 20. Normally that water would have 4 inches of ice. Third was that I lost count of how many birds that were there, resting and feeding. I did not have the time to get to a better location where I could take clearer or more detailed photos.



**Swans feeding in the shallow bay waters**



From where I was working I could not see any of the birds but had noticed a few mallards. So I set my camera equipment up on my friends raised deck (where I was working) Later in the afternoon I got a life time view of about **150 swans** as they swam up and down the far mainland shore. This section of 5 panorama shots contains 28 birds.

**Robbie Preston**

## Owl Banding at James McLean Oliver Ecological Centre

On a very dark October night, I attended an owl banding session at the **James Oliver centre** near Bobcaygeon. It was an amazing experience. Four saw-whet owls were caught and banded while I was there. They are caught in nets set up like badminton nets and are attracted by the constantly emitted sound of a saw-whet owl. Handlers gingerly unravel them from the nets and proceed to band, measure, weigh and sex them. Their sex is determined by their size - the larger ones are females. I was surprised by how small these birds are, somewhere around 100 grams.

They are adorable creatures, responding to gentle caressing around their face by closing their big, beautiful eyes. They have a dark stripe on their eyelid that looks like eyeliner and occasionally they will bat their eyes - it is hilarious.

A highlight of the evening was the trapping of a bird that already had a band on it. Turns out it was banded in Pennsylvania in 2004.

I highly recommend attending this event. Thanks to all who made it happen.

**Eric Davis**



**Eric Davis**



**Eric Davis**

Checking the wing for age colourations. **Robbie Preston**





Give the owl something to hold and there is less chance of it clawing your fingers.

Wings are measured for length.

**Robbie Preston**

Note:- **Eric and Robbie** enjoyed two different nights with two different teams.



Weigh-in time: Note the owl upside down in the juice can. **Robbie Preston**



Banding another bird.

**Robbie Preston**

## Well-Traveled Northern Saw-whet Owl

1 December 2006 Bird Studies International Newsletter

Northern Saw-whet Owls are commonly banded in eastern and central Canada where several of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network stations have long-term owl monitoring projects. The species' movement in that part of the country is becoming well documented. In the west, however, this is not the case. It is only in the last few years that banders have begun targeting Northern Saw-whet Owls. In 2002, Vancouver Island's Rocky Point Bird Observatory initiated a fall owl monitoring project that now bands 200 to 400 Northern Saw-whet Owls annually. The Rocky Point Project has had a handful of recoveries in Washington State, all of which were within 150 kilometers of the banding site.

Elsewhere, Dan Zazelenchuk has been banding Northern Saw-whet Owls on his farm near Kyle, Saskatchewan since 2003, and he has worked as a volunteer on Last Mountain Bird Observatory's Saw-whet Owl Monitoring Project. On October 23, Dan made an interesting discovery in his owl nets - a Northern Saw-whet Owl that had been banded September 27, 2003 at Rocky Point Bird Observatory, over 1150 kilometers to the west of his current location. Rocky Point Bird Observatory's Paul Levesque could not believe it. "This is an amazing recovery. In the past three years this owl flew over open ocean to leave Vancouver Island, crossed the Rockies, and was crossing the Great Plains when Dan recaptured it. Band recoveries like this show how little we know about the movement patterns of owls."

# **KFN Members Photography Contest**

**Judy Kennedy and Robbie Preston** will organize and conduct a Photography Contest for KFM Members. The object of the event is to provide a venue for members to show another side of their hobbies and to collect an assortment of photographs for use in our newsletters, educational and promotional material.

All submission material will be kept in photo archives held by the Newsletter Editor, with credit(s) given to the photographer, whenever they may be used in any way by the Club. All other copyrights of the photo remain with the photographer.

All photographs must have been taken within the **Kawartha Lakes Region**. There will be five categories for subject matter as follows:

## **Flora:**

Plants, flowers, grasses, indigenous trees in bloom, mosses.

## **Fauna:**

Animals, birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and insects.

## **Landscapes and the Heavens:**

Woodlands, grasslands, marshlands, lakes, rivers, day and evening sky, moon, stars, and northern lights.

## **Club Activities:**

Group Shots of members during road cleanups, trail creation and marking, field outings, and Community Education Outreach.

## **"Shot of a Lifetime":**

Rare shot of animal, bird, plant, fish, amphibian, reptile and a brief description of where, how and when the shot was taken and why it was a shot of a lifetime for you.

All photographs must be submitted in standard photo size up to **A MAXIMUM OF 8" X 10"**, either commercially processed or computer printed on **PHOTO QUALITY PAPER, MOUNTED, UNFRAMED**.

Entries per contestant will be limited to two submissions for each category.

## **Prizes:**

Prizes will be awarded for first, second, third and honourable mention in each category and a special prize for "Members' Choice" of the single best from all categories. Prizes will be solicited from commercial sources and will be items that are photography related. All sponsors will be advertised at the launch, judging and awards events, as well as in our newsletter and local newspapers. An invitation will also be extended to these sponsors to present the prizes and receive recognition for their contribution.

## **Judging:**

Judging will be on merit of subject content, technique, composition and balance and will be judged by all members present and in good standing, by use of a ballot sheet for first, second, third and honourable mention in each category and "Members Choice" for best overall.

Submissions will be displayed for judging under the five category headings, with numbers assigned for use in judging. Names of contestants will not be displayed until judging has been completed.

Closing Date: October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007. Judging Date: November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 General Meeting.

Announcement of winners and awarding of prizes: December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 General Meeting.

## ALTBERG NATURE RESERVE

On December 8<sup>th</sup> last, nine enthusiastic participants including **Mark Carabetta** and **Maria Papoulias** from **Ontario Nature** met at 10AM in Coboconk. We car pooled to the Altberg Nature Reserve where some of us on snowshoes and some without trekked through some twenty cm of snow. Our tasks were three fold; to place 50 salamander boards in two areas adjacent to the beaver meadow; to do coordinates at various points around the trail leading to and from the beaver meadow and around the limestone ledges to the west of the beaver meadow. We also placed some colour coded arrows to indicate the trail junctions in the northern area.

As a result of the 72 waypoints and additional coordinates to be done around the longer "mesa" trail over the next few weeks **ON** will compile trail maps with distances and features such as the **Altberg plaque**, beaver meadow and others on "you are here" maps.

Thanks to **Mary Bunka**, **Eric Davis**, **Judy Kennedy**, **Tom Horne**, **John Vandenberg** and **Brian Woods** for your enthusiastic assistance.

Stay tuned for further outings and progress reports on these Altberg initiatives.

by **Vic Orr**



**Brian Woods, Tom Horne, Mark Carabetta, Judy Kennedy, John Vandenberg, Maria Papoulias, Mary Bunka, Vic Orr. Photographer:- Eric Davis**

## Protecting your Nest Egg and our Planet.

The winter edition of **ON NATURE** magazine arrived the other day and along with it came another, very interesting and informative magazine called "greenliving." This little publication is packed with articles and advertisements promoting awareness of the everyday products we use, new eco-friendly products, energy saving tips, and recognizes companies and people who are making a difference in the spaces we live in and the products we use to help protect our environment.

Recently, I received a wonderful surprise of an inheritance which I had never, in my wildest dreams, had expected, and one of the articles in this little magazine caught my interest. It was called "Investing in a Better World. A beginner's guide to putting your money where your conscience is." It talked about "Socially Responsible Investing"; about supporting the best corporate citizens while keeping your money away from the bad guys.

When I look over the room at a KFN meeting, I'm certain that the majority of us are on the same page when it comes to being self sustainable in terms of our investments, but at what cost to the environment? We may think that the biggest dividends come from the Mining, Oil, or IT investments, but, not always, according to this article.

Three Socially Responsible Mutual Funds were mentioned as having paid high average returns over the last decade (13.7 - 15%)

They are: Acuity Social Values Canadian Equity - 13.7%  
Ethical Special Equity - 15%  
Mackenzie Universal Sustainable Opportunities Capital Class

Or perhaps you want to invest directly in companies that are actually helping the environment and not just poseurs who have **greenwashed** people into thinking they are more attuned to green issues than they really are.

Two were mentioned, trading on the American Stock Exchange.

They are: PowerShares WilderHill Clean Energy Portfolio - a group of more than three dozen companies working on various types of clean energy. Trades on the NYSE under the symbol PBW.

PowerShares Water Resources Portfolio - holds the shares of companies involved in businesses such as producing potable water and water treatment. Trades on the NYSE under the symbol PHO.

To learn more about socially responsible investing, here are a few good web links to get you started:

Corporate Knights [www.corporateknights.ca](http://www.corporateknights.ca)

Social Investment Forum [www.socialinvest.org](http://www.socialinvest.org)

Philips, Hagar & North Investment Management Ltd. [www.phn.com](http://www.phn.com)

By **Judy Kennedy**

## **Links to interesting websites:**

<http://www.featheredfotos.com/home.html>

<http://www.featherphotos.com/index.html>

<http://www.feathertalk.com/>

<http://www.naturepatrol.com/>

Birdzilla.com

600 species profiles, the full Bent series online. Includes over 100 Web sites providing state-based birding and bird feeding information. Also link to Birdzilla specialty shops for birding and bird feeding products.

Birdchick.com

Meet Sharon Stiteler and join her on one of her many birding adventures.

BirdIQ.com

A National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Web site with great information. Includes map with birding festivals, trails and raptor centers. Large resource section with links to other Web sites.

## **Research, Education and Conservation**

American Bird Conservancy -- [www.abcbirdf.org](http://www.abcbirdf.org)

Programs include Cats Indoors and collision awareness.

Cornell Lab of Ornithology -- [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)

Stay abreast with the latest on the Ivory-billed Woodpecker or participate in one of their important Citizen Science programs.

International Migratory Bird Day -- [www.birdday.org](http://www.birdday.org)

Annual event celebrating neotropical migrants.

National Audubon Society -- [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org)

Conservation and birding information.

Purple Martin Conservation Association -- [www.purplemartin.org](http://www.purplemartin.org)

All things purple martin, information and the latest products.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service -- [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)

They've got it all.

# Shopping

TheBirdsongIdentifyer -- [www.theBirdsongIdentifyer.com](http://www.theBirdsongIdentifyer.com)

For those without cell phones, the Identifyer is a handheld player that makes it fun and easy to learn bird songs.

Eagle Optics -- [www.eagleoptics.com](http://www.eagleoptics.com)

One-stop-shop for binoculars and spotting scopes.

Project WildBird -- [www.projectwildbird.org](http://www.projectwildbird.org)

Participate in a national bird feed preference survey.

Wild Bird Centers --- [www.wildbird.com](http://www.wildbird.com)

Locate a Wild Bird Center store near you or shop online.

## Birding Industry Information

BirdingBusiness.com -- [www.BirdingBusiness.com](http://www.BirdingBusiness.com)

The only publication serving the trade side of the bird feeding industry.

WBFI

Bird feeding industry trade association. -- [www.wbfi.org](http://www.wbfi.org)

[www.earthroots.org](http://www.earthroots.org)

Defender of Ontario's Wilderness and Wildlife, and a great source for news about Temagami, Niagara Escarpment, Oak Ridges Moraine, Leslie M. Frost Centre, Wolf populations, myths regarding the Double Crested Cormorant, to name a few. Source of interesting books and posters on Temegami, wolves and trails.

## North American Bird Facts: Quiz

Taken from [www.birdiq.com](http://www.birdiq.com)

### Questions

What bird is, or has.....

1. Tallest?
2. Heaviest?
3. Longest wingspan?
4. Fastest bird flight?
5. Fastest level flight?
6. Slowest bird flight?
7. Fastest wing beats?
8. Most feathers?
9. Least feathers?
10. Longest migration?
11. Fastest running bird?
12. Deepest diving bird?
13. Greatest weight-carrying capacity?
14. Greatest G-force?
15. Best hearing?
16. Most singing?
17. Coldest temperature endured?
18. Largest colony of nesting birds?
19. Most northern nesting bird?
20. Largest tree nest?
21. Highest tree nest?
22. Longest nesting burrow?
23. Largest clutch of eggs?
24. Longest incubation period?
25. Shortest incubation period?

# New research shows How birds are adapting in remarkable ways to life in the stressful city

Dec. 5, 2006. \

FRANCINE KOPUN

FEATURE WRITER, TORONTO STAR

City songbirds, who must relate and mate over the roar of traffic, sing shorter, faster, shriller songs than their country cousins, who can afford to take a more relaxed approach to life, according to new research from The Netherlands. In fact, shy, retiring chickadees would do badly in the stepped-up city. "They defend their territory with their songs, so if you don't do well with your songs then you get more intruders and your energy and time is spent fighting and you will not last long," says researcher **Hans Slabbekoorn** of **Leiden University in Leiden**. His findings appear in the Dec. 5 issue of **Current Biology**.

Songbirds also chirp to attract mates, and the shriller, faster, shorter songs are more likely to be heard over the roar of cars and trucks and rumbling streetcars, says **Slabbekoorn**, who recorded songs of the **great tit** (*Parus major*) in **Paris, London, Prague, Brussels and Rotterdam** and compared them to their winged neighbours in nearby natural habitats, including **Fontainbleau and Thetford Forest**.

He also found that city birds sang fewer of the common song types and instead sang more rare and odd song types — although he's not sure why this should be so. Birds are, in fact, adapting in remarkable ways to life in the stressful city. Rebounding from near-extinction in the 1980s, nine pairs of **peregrine falcons** nest on ledges of buildings in the **GTA**, including a pair at the downtown **Sheraton Hotel** and another pair at 18 King St. E.

Loners who prefer remote cliffs, peregrines were introduced to urban living by establishing captive bred chicks in nests in North American cities in the 1980s and 1990s. A pair of U.S. falcons made headlines worldwide in 1995 when they became the first to take up permanent residence in Toronto.

City living offers peregrines definite perks: They feast on carefree pigeons grown complacent with easy urban living. They have no natural predators in the city and plenty of humans on hand to rescue fledglings that flunk flying 101 and end up squawking about city sidewalks.

Peregrines even date like the two-legged urbanites they share the city with — males court females by offering them up to a dozen food packages a day, says **Mark Nash**, president of the **Canadian Peregrine Foundation**. "They wine and dine them," says **Nash**. "There are interesting and humorous human similarities here."

Rural and urban peregrines rarely swap habitats, says **Nash**. City birds tend to spend their lives in the city and country-loving peregrines live out their lives on remote cliffs. City birds can even differ physiologically from their country cousins.

Earlier this year, German researchers released the results of a study which found that urban **European blackbirds** have developed a different response to stress than **rural blackbirds**. Essentially, they are able to endure more stress without producing the stress hormone corticosterone. Although the hormone helps the birds react to stressful situations, too much 15

of it too often can impair immune and brain functions, according to **Jesko Partecke** of the **Max Planck Institute for Ornithology, Andechs/Seewiesen, Germany**.

"These differences in our birds were intrinsic, which is amazing," said **Partecke**. "So either there is a genetic effect or early environmental or maternal influences have caused these differences." The differences may help explain why the formerly reclusive and timid forest dweller has come to colonize European cities, according to **Partecke**.

## Not all nests in trees are for birds



As the leaves fell from the trees around my trailer retreat up at Horn Lake, I found out why we had a lot of **Yellow Jackets** this past summer.

It is interesting to see the size of some of these paper nests. This one was about 10" in diameter.

They are only used for one summer in most cases as the weather knocks them down once the leaves fall. These nests are created from a very fragile gray paper like material that the **hornets** make.

**Robbie Preston**





## Answers to Quiz on Page 14

1. **The Whooping Crane** - about 5' or 60".
2. **The Trumpeter Swan** - about 36 lbs. and they can still fly!
3. Both the **American White Pelican** and the **California Condor** - about 9 feet.
4. **The Peregrine Falcon** in Stoop - 175 mph world record.
5. **Red-Breasted Merganser** - 100 mph world record.
6. **American Woodcock** - 5 mph world record.
7. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** - 70 beats per second, 4,200 per minute.
8. **Tundra Swan** - 25,216, World Record.
9. **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** - 940, World Record.
10. **Arctic Tern** - 12,500 miles one way, World Record.
11. **Greater Roadrunner**. Beep-beep! 26 mph.
12. **Thick-billed Murre** - up to 689 feet below the water surface, World Record.
13. **Bald Eagle** - 15 lbs, World Record.
14. **Red-headed Woodpecker** - hitting tree with bill at 13 mph, World Record.
15. **Barn Owl**.
16. **Red-eyed Vireo** - 22,197 songs in 10 hours, World Record.
17. **Snowy Owl** - minus 80 degrees F. World Record.
18. **Passenger Pigeon** - about 136 million covering 760 square miles -World Record - now extinct.
19. **Ivory Gull** - above the Arctic Circle in Northern Canada - World Record.
20. **Bald Eagle** - about 9 feet wide, 20 feet deep, weighing almost 3 tons - World Record.
21. **Marbled Murrelet** - 148 feet high - World Record.
22. **Rhinoceros Auklet** - 26 feet long - World Record.
23. **American Bobwhite** - 28 eggs - World Record.
24. **California Condor** - up to 50 days.
25. Several passerine birds, including **Black-capped Chickadees**, - 11 days. World Record.

Every bird is different, but did you know that one **robin** lived 14 years? A **Blue Jay** lived 18 years. One **Mallard** lived 28 years, longer than the oldest wild **Golden Eagle**, which lived 25 years. The oldest living wild bird on this list was an **Arctic Tern**, in spite of the fact that **Arctic Terns** have the longest migration of any birds in the world, flying from the Arctic to Antarctic, and back, each year!

The maximum known age for some other species, in years:

---

Arctic Tern -34	House Wren - 7
Atlantic Puffin - 21	Long-eared Owl - 28
Barn Swallow - 16	Mourning Dove - 19
Black-and-white Warbler - 11	Mute Swan - 22
Black-capped Chickadee - 12	Northern Cardinal - 16
Black Vulture - 11	Northern Fulmer - 23
Bristle-thighed Curlew - 24	Northern Gannet - 25
Brown-headed Cowbird - 16	Osprey - 32
Brown Pelican - 31	Peregrine Falcon - 14
Canada Goose - 23	Red-bellied Woodpecker - 20
Common Barn Owl - 18	Red-throated Loon - 23
Common Eider - 23	Red-winged Blackbird - 16
Common Grackle - 20	Ruby-throated Hummingbird - 6
Dark-eyed Junco - 11	Trumpeter Swan - 24
Double-crested Cormorant - 23	Warbling Vireo - 13
European Starling - 20	White-breasted Nuthatch - 10
Golden Eagle - 25	White-crowned Sparrow - 13

Grasshopper Sparrow - 7  
Gray Catbird - 11  
Great Crested Flycatcher - 14

Herring Gull - 32  
House Sparrow - 13

Reference: The Bird Almanac by David Bird (1999, Firefly Books).

## What human-related hazards do birds face?

Annual human-related mortality of birds

---

House cats: 500,000,000 \*

Hunting: 120,000,000

Window kills: 80,000,000

Road kills: 57,000,000

Poisoning: 3,500,000

Pest control: 2,000,000

Television towers: 1,200,000

Miscellaneous: 7,000,000 (combined)

\* assuming each house cat kills 5 birds per year, which is probably a very low rate; the actual rate may be much higher.

Reference: The Bird Almanac by David Bird (1999, Firefly Books).

## Monarch butterflies



Anne Barbour's photos she took of migrating **Monarch butterflies** roosting in a yard in **Stoney Point, Essex County, Ontario**, the evening of August 31st and morning of September 1st.

## **An atheist was taking a walk through the woods**

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods. "What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!" he said to himself. As he continued walking alongside the river he heard a rustling in the bushes.

Turning to look, he saw a 7 foot grizzly charging towards him.

He ran as fast as he could up the path.

Looking over his shoulder he saw that the bear was closing in on him.

His heart was pumping frantically and he tried to run even faster.

He tripped and fell on the ground.

He rolled over to pick himself up but saw the bear raising his paw to take a swipe at him.

At that instant the atheist cried out: "Oh my God....!"  
time stopped.

The bear froze.

The forest was silent.

It was then that a bright light shone upon the man and a voice came out of the sky saying:

"You deny my existence for all of these years, teach others I don't exist and even credit creation to a cosmic accident.

Do you expect me to help you out of this predicament?

Am I to count you as a believer?"

The atheist looked directly into the light and said:

"It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as a Christian now, but perhaps, could you make the BEAR a Christian?"

"Very well," said the voice.



The light went out, and the sounds of the forest resumed.

And then the bear lowered his paw, bowed his head and spoke:

"Lord, bless this food which I am about to receive and for which I am truly thankful,

Amen.

# About James Baillie

from Bird Studies International



For nearly 50 years **Jim Baillie** worked as **Assistant Curator in the Ornithology Department of the Royal Ontario Museum**. Although not formally educated in ornithology, his knowledge of birds was unsurpassed. **Jim Baillie** had the ability to share his knowledge with thousands of people, amateurs and professionals alike, through newspaper columns, scientific publications and informal conversations with countless visitors to his museum office.

**Baillie's** enthusiasm and knowledge have inspired hundreds of naturalists to pursue bird study and conservation. Both the **James L. Baillie Memorial Fund** and the **Baillie Birdathon** have been named to honour this great Canadian naturalist, conservationist and educator.

## The 2006 KFN Baillie Birders

Having a great day



Photos by Bill Hoyle



## NEW MEMBERS IN 2006

Robbie Preston

Peterborough

Jim and Barbara Dalgleish

Bobcaygeon, ON

Gordon Scribbins

Kirkfield ON,

Janet and Graham Lorham-Martin

Fenelon Falls ON,

Joanne Pain

Lindsay ON

Agatha Tawaststjerna

Collingwood On,

Mary Bunka

Fenelon Falls ON

Jim and Laurie Johnson

Fenelon Falls ON

Lloyd Leadbeater

Kirkfield ON,

Shelly Wild

Bobcaygeon ON,

Lloyd & Maureen McEwan

Lindsay ON

## Coming Events

Saturday Jan. 20, 2007- 1 PM **Cross-Country Sking --Pot Luck supper** Hosted by Vic & Ruth Orr

Monday, April 16, 2007 - 9:30 am. **Altberg & Hwy 45 Road Clean Up.** Volunteers needed!  
**Altberg Wildlife Reserve** parking lot. Rick White

Saturday, April 28, 2007 – 5:00 PM **Kawartha Field Naturalists' Annual General Meeting and Pot Luck Supper**

Speaker: **Peter Middleton**, Quest Tour Guide - Topic: **Temples, Tigers & Cranes of India**

June 2007 Photography workshop Leader: **John Poole**  
Time and Location - TBA.

Photo by **Eric Davis**



**December's table of "Visions of Sugar Plums"**  
**A big thanks to those who shared their culinary arts.**

## Meetings

January Monday the 8th  
April Monday the 2th

February Monday the 5th  
May Monday the 7th

March Monday the 5nd  
June Monday the 4th

# Kawartha Field Naturalist 1st Annual Photo contest - Entry form

All entries to be in the hands of Judy Kennedy by closing date of 5.00 pm October 31st, 2007.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phones \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

### Categories

#### Flora:

**Image 1** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

**Image 2** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

#### Fauna:

**Image 1** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

**Image 2** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

#### Landscapes and the Heavens:

**Image 1** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

**Image 2** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

#### Club Activities:

**Image 1** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

**Image 2** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

#### Shot of a life time:

**Image 1** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

**Image 2** -- Media. Film  Digital  Print Size 4" x 6"  5" x 7"  8" x 10"

A brief description of where, how and when the shot(s) was taken and also if it is a " Shot of a Life Time" then "why it was a shot of a lifetime for you".

By entering the KFN Members Photography Contest 2007, I here-by grant the club the unlimited use of the submitted images with credits to me for use in the club's news letters, educational and/or promotional materials as required.

It is agreeded and understood the all rights and copyrights of the image remain with the photographer.

Signature:

Date: