

Heron's Watch



67 Winter 2010

How Old Are My Trees?

by Dale Jackson

Glenn Walker is looking for more trees to core and date for his PhD thesis. This past November, Dale Jackson invited to him to her home, to discover the age of some trees on her property. Here are the results of his sampling.

I quote Glenn below.

"My best estimates from the core samples taken today (Mon. 30th Nov 09) are:

Cedar on ridge: 410

White pine on shore by house: 320

Sugar maple by driveway: 250 (large margin of error because it is very rotten)

Sugar maple on ridge by bench: 220

2nd large white pine on Logger's trail going from house: 195

"Chicken" pine: 145

1st large white pine, Logger's trail: 130

Beech, past "chicken pine": 118

Red oak: 78

The white pine rings were more distantly spaced than those of the cedar, but it is a very impressive tree nonetheless. I appreciate the opportunity to look at these trees."

If anyone thinks they may have something of interest and wants to find out the dates of their trees they may want to contact Glenn at 887-5174 or walkergg@hotmail.com.



Tallest and oldest pine is 320 years old



View from below



View of the trunk, growing out of granite

KFN General Meetings are held in the St James Anglican Church Hall, 19 Bond Street, Fenelon Falls, 7:30 PM., 1st Monday of each Month, (2nd Monday after a holiday Monday) from September through June.

EXECUTIVE

President	John Vandenberg	324 - 8152
Vice President	Brian Barbour	454 - 8945
Treasurer	Loreen Randall	454 - 2592
Secretary	Joan Todd	887 - 4098

DIRECTORS

Susan Blayney
 Dan Bone
 Tim Brophy, (Past President))
 Eric Davis
 Lizz Hoyle
 Judy Kennedy
 Robbie Preston

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AGM Committee	Loreen Randall	454 - 2592
Adopt-A-Road	Rick White	454 - 2592
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	Robbie Preston	876 - 9571
Altberg Wetland	Eric Davis	439 - 2530
	John Vandenberg	324 - 8152
Archives	John Vandenberg	324 - 8152
Audio Visual	Rick White	454 - 2592
Auditor	Al McMaster	738 - 5460
Audio Visual	Rick White	454 - 2592
Baillie Birdathon	Loreen Randall	454 - 2592
Bill Watts		
Bluebird Trail	Vic & Ruth Orr	454 - 9516
Chimney Swift	Judy Kennedy	878 - 8575
Project	Robbie Preston	876 - 9571
CKL Flora	Anne Barbour	454 - 8945
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Citizens	Susan Blayney	887 - 4691
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Education		
Outreach	Dan Bone	887 - 4691
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Membership	Lizz Hoyle	374 - 4073
On Nature Rep	Eric Davis	439 - 2530
Newsletter	Judy Kennedy	878 - 8575
	judykennedy@xplornet.com	
Nominations	Tim Brophy	324 - 2394
	Joan Todd	887 - 4098
Programme		
Co-ordinator	Susan Blayney	887 - 4691
Publicity	Judy Kennedy	878 - 8575
	Eric Davis	439 - 2530
Refreshments	Mary Firth	454 - 2837
Species at Risk	Judy Kennedy	878 - 8575
Telephone	Enid Skuce	878 - 5710
Victoria	Dan Bone	887 - 4691
Stewardship		
Council		
Volunteer Data	Bill Hoyle	374 - 4073
Website	Eric Davis	439 - 2530

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Have you renewed your
membership?

Please check your
 membership card to
 make sure that your
 2009 dues are paid.

Our newsletter was printed on a
Konica Minolta copier model # 7272,
 compliments of



Visit them at 370 Kent Street West
 in Lindsay for your copy needs.

Message from the President

According to our Constitution:

Article 2: Objectives

The objectives of the Club are to:

- a) foster public interest and appreciation of Nature.
- b) educate Club members and others about Nature.
- c) promote environmental protection.
- d) encourage wise stewardship of all natural resources.

The second objective of the club is to “educate club members and others about nature”.

We are doing a great job!

Our club is providing learning experiences for our youth. The education outreach program is teaching our younger citizens about tadpoles, caddis flies and hawk owls. The chimney swift tower project included secondary students in the construction of suitable habitats for swifts. The Altberg wind-fall study is providing a learning experience for second year Sir Fleming College students. The Altberg wet-lands is being monitored by third year Sir Fleming students. Our contribution of monies to the Saw-whet owl banding is helping teach Trent University students. We certainly are doing our share of helping educate the young.

But, the most successful learning is happening within our membership. The monthly meetings teach us about bats, frogs, orchids, the Land Between and Ontario Prairies. The list goes on.

The January presentation on the swift towers made it clear that members need more information on the clubs activities. To that end, group leaders of activities like the City of Kawartha Lakes Flora, the Bill Watts Blue Bird trail, the salamander study and the wetlands have been approached to give more in-depth presentations in the future. What is learned at these presentations may make some even more interested and induce them to join in the activities themselves.

Our outings provide an excellent learning situation. The recent Fleetwood trip comes to mind. The sixteen members present exchanged information about geology, glaciation, invasive species, lichens, boletes, spring peepers, acrocarps and pleurocarps. We got to learn about each other. In the end all came away with an even better understanding of the importance of conservation, the need to enjoy a beautiful autumn day and the joy of good company. A real learning experience!

Article 2, objective b) of the constitution is being well observed.

Well Done Members.
Your President
John Vandenberg

Editor's Message.

by Judy Kennedy

Yoghurt! Creamy, delicious, nutritious. If this product was offered in the dairy section of the Loblaw's store when I was growing up, we certainly didn't know about it. For most of today's families, it's a staple and a regular item on the weekly grocery list. Raspberry, blueberry, peach, mango, key lime, vanilla. Mmm-mm, yummy! As much as I love the stuff, I don't buy it often, and for a couple of reasons. One reason is because I love the stuff a little too much. Buying the litre size is a dangerous choice for me. The temptation to curl up on the couch with a good movie, a litre tub of black raspberry and a spoon is just too great a risk.



But the primary reason that deters me from buying the single serving, multi packs of assorted flavours is all of the throw-away plastic packaging that they come in. I have often thought that there must a more practical and environmentally friendly way to enjoy this delicious treat.

During my search for Christmas gifts, I came across an electronically controlled yoghurt maker. When I brought the item home, I studied the instructions and began to think that it couldn't be too difficult to make yoghurt in my own kitchen, as long as I could provide the low and constant heat source required for the duration of the fermenting process. A quick Google search of the internet gave the instant answer I was searching for. Now, with a couple of preserving jars, a cup of chopped fresh fruit, a sprinkle of Stevia natural sweetener or honey, I can transform a litre of milk into several servings (or not) of creamy, delicious desert, breakfast or snacks. I feel no remorse for my new found indulgence, because I am eating something that is healthy, without consuming the unnecessary chemicals and preservatives produced by manufacturers listed in the "Who's Who of the Chemical Industry. But the greatest source of my joy and pride is the elimination of the guilt for depositing all of that plastic in my recycling bin.

Which leads me to ask the question; are we becoming brainwashed by the media and the packaging industry into believing that our water is so bad for us, that our food is so complicated to prepare, that we can only be sure of safety and proper nutrition in the foods we consume by purchasing it in all of this superfluous packaging? If that is so, why do we have so many kids with allergies, learning and behavioural disabilities and problems of obesity?

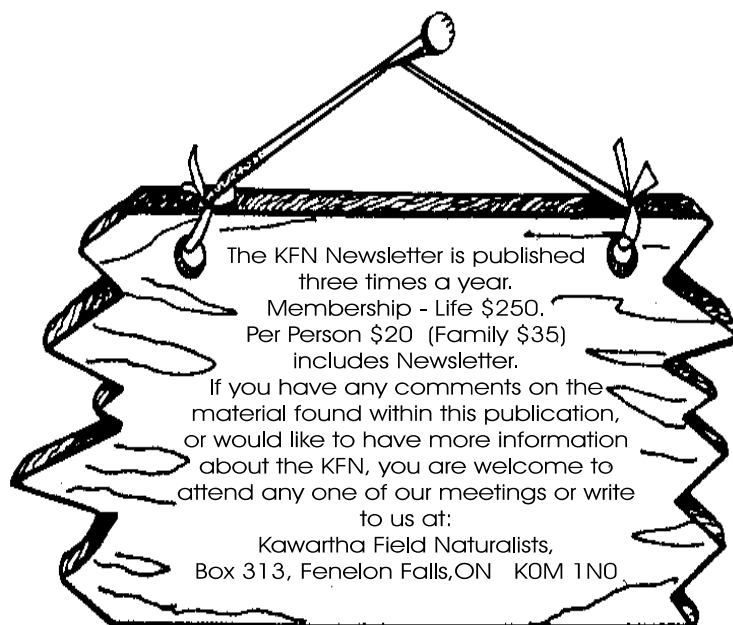
Now I'd be foolish to say that these problems are directly related to excess packaging. In fact, the packaging is an added benefit, to help us to make the choice between purchasing the convenience food, or making it from scratch. While the quantities of fat, caloric and sodium contents are usually listed along with the natural food ingredients and nutritional values, chemicals and preservatives, the origin of principal ingredients is not.

Editor's Message.....Cont'd

We have no way of knowing where the ingredients were grown, what chemical fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide preventions they were subjected to, or what their natural nutritional values were. Labels indicating that the contents were "prepared in Canada" or the US, or other countries that we trust are no assurance that the ingredients were domestically grown. Then there are the ones that say "prepared for (XYZ) Foods". The question is, in what country were they prepared? Pesticides that are banned for use in North America are still being used in foreign countries where some ingredients, especially herbs, may have been grown. Prepared foods may also contain genetically altered ingredients from other countries. I don't know about you, but I don't feel that purchasing a pre-packaged single entree that has a "prepared for" label and has more than the daily recommended consumption of sodium is a healthy choice, for me or for the environment.

There are many benefits for choosing to consume locally grown food. Honey, produced by local apiaries, by bees that collect it from flowers that grow locally, when consumed, helps allergy sufferers develop a greater tolerance to pollen. Fruits and vegetables that grow close to their market contain higher nutritional values, because they are harvested closer to maturity. They also have much more flavour. Locally grown foods are also safer, because they are not genetically modified and usually haven't been sprayed with synthetic pesticides.

Local foods take less energy to store and to transport and less packaging to protect them during shipping. Supporting local growers ensures community sustainability and helps to preserve our greenbelt. Let's try to become more aware of the foods we eat, where they come from, try to support our local food producers and be more eco-friendly in our choices.



Merlin Nest in the City of Kawartha Lakes

Bob Hartley

Sept. 2009

It was June 3rd, 2009. I was repairing fences at the back of our property when the sound of a raptor caught my attention. Following the high-pitched series of 'keekeekes' I caught a glimpse of a male Merlin just as he landed in an ash tree. Then there was a second bird. A moment later he was feeding his mate

Five and a half weeks later, on July 16th, our dog was taking me for a walk when the same call rang through the forest. A second, slightly lower call of the female Merlin, joined in as the pair strenuously objected to my presence. They were about 30 metres over my head at the top of a cluster of white pine trees. When this agitation was repeated two days later it was clear that the nest was somewhere in the pine canopy.

On July 19th there was a wild display around the nest area. The female was yelling at me and a juvenile was constantly following and yelling at the female. I was very impressed by the fledgling's flight skill at such a young age.



Photo Courtesy of Evelyne Huller

During the next week there was a lot of chasing and feeding over a steadily expanding area. On one occasion I was lead to the juvenile by it's demanding calls from a dead pine tree overlooking our pasture. I was able to study it through binoculars for about ten minutes before a parent turned up to 'chase me away.'

On August 7th there was an 'air show' over our home. On four occasions a young Merlin literally roared through the sky in hot pursuit of a mourning dove, all the while screaming at it. Each time the dove escaped and the raptor disappeared into the trees with a depressed sounding cry. At one point the adult female was coaching the hunting lesson, adding her loud instruction to the cacophonous mix. It appears that nothing was caught for at 7 a.m. the next morning the young hunter was loudly chasing its mother, for breakfast - or was it still looking for yesterday's dinner?

A new addition turned up on August 8th when four Merlin were seen together for the first time. The female stayed about 100 feet away while the two young aggressively chased the male for food. This was the last time either adult were seen. The last sightings of the young were of a lone immature Merlin that was seen early during the mornings of August 20th and 21st. It was hunting along the fence line of our abandoned pasture.

During the summer period 30 Goldfinch and two Chipping Sparrows that visited our feeder vanished. So did a pair of White-breasted Nuthatches, two pair of Pine Warblers, a pair of Black-throated green Warblers that lived near the nest site and a family of Song Sparrows that lived in the fence line of the pasture. Even the number of Mourning Doves declined significantly. It was a noticeably low count year at our feeder and the forest adjacent to our home. These feeding observations are consistent with those reported from the first recorded Merlin nest in Waterloo Region (Read and Wilson. 2009. p. 99).

Merlin.....Cont'd

DISCUSSION

To the best of my knowledge this is one of the first recorded Merlin's nest in the City of Kawartha Lakes. The general southward movement of this breeding species has been well documented. There are no nesting records in my old reference books for Ontario County (Speirs 1977), Muskoka Region (Mills 1981), and the City of Kawartha Lakes (Peck, G.K. and James, R. D. 1983). Earl Calvert's 1950s list of 180 species, which includes such uncommon examples as Lapland Longspur, Prairie Warbler and Short-eared Owl, does not include any mention of Merlin. Until very recently, nests in Ontario were only reported from the northern area of the province.

The southward movement of breeding Merlin was indicated by a comparison of the two Breeding Bird Atlases of 1981-85 and 2001-05. The first (Cadman et al. 1987) indicates no confirmed breeding south of Algonquin Provincial Park. The second (Cadman et al. 2007) shows about 17 breeding pairs of Merlin in the Kawartha Lakes Region and 3 along the Lake Ontario north shore. A pair of Merlin have been sighted in the southern area of Lindsay during the previous two breeding seasons and are assumed to have nested.

This is the first known rural Merlin nest. There is reason to believe that rural and urban birds have different behaviour traits. The most obvious of these is clearly seen in a comparison between the nesting pair described above and the Waterloo Region pair. The latter were not disturbed by a considerable amount of human noise and movement. They didn't ever object to the banding of their chicks. The City of Kawartha Lakes pair, on the other hand, objected in very strong terms when I simply walked below the nest area. It would appear that urban birds are much more tolerant to human interference than their country cousins.

The appearance of only two young, rather than the usual four, may have been the result of predators living in the immediate vicinity. There was a raven's nest in the neighbouring property less than one half kilometer to the south, and a Goshawk nest three quarters of a kilometer in the same direction. The ravens, which hunted regularly in the area of the Merlin nest, were the most likely to have taken a nestling or two. The Goshawks were never seen over our property but were observed hunting to the south and east of their nest.

It was very exciting to have a Merlin nest on our property and to witness the young pass through their stages of passage. My wife and I were saddened by the loss of our nuthatches, warblers and sparrows. This was especially true of those that ate regularly at our feeders. It seems that every living thing has a place in nature, but we have difficulty celebrating that place when a 'pet' becomes dinner.

Merlin.....Cont'd

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INTERNET SITES

Kidzone at <http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/birds/Merlin.htm>

Wikipedia at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merlin_\(bird\)=Reproduction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merlin_(bird)=Reproduction)

ALTBERG WILDFLOWER SAIGEON SAUNTER

31ST May, 2009

by Ted Oakes

Present: Jim Saigeon (leader), Gerarda Schouten, Don Smith, Ted Oakes (scribe)

The day was cool with frequent showers
But that did not deter the flowers
From showing of their pretty faces
To dedicated flora aces.
Anon.

The group assembled at the Altberg gate at 3 p.m. and commenced the trek into the forest. Although it had been cold and windy the wind was not noticeable in the forest and the vegetation cover made it seem warmer. But perhaps encouraged by the lack of wind mosquitoes were an inconvenience, although abated by bug spray and, in the case of one of the group, netted clothing. To maintain the flora character of the outing and to avoid trespassing on the preserve of fauna groups the members concentrated on spotting and identifying wild flowers, averted their gaze from any sign of moose or bear and closed their ears to bird songs. In the interest of total accuracy two lapses must be noted: one occurred at a salamander station and the other in the case of a luna moth that was apparently making its escape from an AmbienCR commercial and fell exhausted on the path in front of the party as they were on the homeward trek. The leader attempted to resuscitate the little creature, with undetermined success.

The following specimens
were positively identified during the walk.

wild lettuce,
creeping veronica
star flower*
Canada mayflower
dogtooth violet (trout lily)
Solomon's seal*
false Solomon's seal*
sarsaparilla
white Trillium - grandiflorum
red Trillium - (wake robin) (Trillium erectum)
Lycopodia - creeping cedar
- ground pine
- l. annotinum

hobble bush
Sweet cicely (osmorhiza claytoni)*
stemless lady slipper *
white violet
wintergreen (partridge berry)
ferns: - sensitive
- royal
- marginal shield
- interrupted
- lady
- Christmas
- bracken
- oak



Star Flower



Stemless Lady Slipper



Solomon's Seal



Creeping Cedar

Altberg Wildflower WalkCont.d

Indian cucumber root*
orange hawkweed (devil's paintbrush)
wild strawberry
horse tail "fern"
wild gooseberry
bunchberry
wood sorrel
twisted stalk
jack-in-the pulpit*
blue cohosh
wild leek
bell flower
yellow violet (viola rubescens)

bed straw (galium)
northern bugle week (in water)
dandelionblue bead lily (clintonia borealis)*

columbine*
bane berry
goldenrod
bell wort
foam flower *



Indian Cucumber Root



Foam Flower



Blue Bead Lilly

* Denotes specimens found in bloom.

At 5:20 p.m. the group reassembled back at the gate and bade farewell to the Altberg.

An Opportunity to Explore Our Nature Reserve

Altberg Spring Trail Clean Up.

April Sat. 3 Sun. 4. 9.30 a.m. 'till your tired. Dirty weather rain date, April 10, 11.

Wear your garden duds, gloves . . . good idea!

Wear rubber boots, as the ground will be wet in places.

Please bring a leaf rake and clippers or loppers, if you have them.

We could use a few wheelbarrows.

Most important, bring your drinking water and what ever you need for lunch and snacks.

Don't forget your Bino's and Cameras. One never knows what we may see of find.



CKL FLORA CORNER: LLOYD'S PLANT

by Anne Barbour

On June 9, 2008 a large group of KFN amateur botanists met at Maureen and Lloyd McEwan's property on Lorneville Rd. While walking down the laneway, the regular weedy wildflowers were being recorded. Among them, Lloyd noticed a plant with several little purple flowers in a whorl. "What's this plant?" he asked. "That's 'Heal-All' Anne said, "also known as 'Selfheal'. It's from the mint family; feel its square stem." Further down the lane, Lloyd asked again "What's this plant?" pointing his cane at a plant with ovate, toothless, opposite leaves, just beginning to produce a flower head. "That's 'Heal-All'" said Anne; "it's just getting ready to flower." Later, walking between the soybean field and the hedgerow, for a third time, Lloyd pointed his cane at a plant where the flowers had finished, and the distinct oblong seed-head had formed. "What's that plant?" Anne looked at the plant then looked at Lloyd. "That's Heal-All," she repeated for the third time. Lloyd's eye was definitely focused on picking out this plant! The funny thing is, over 2 months later, on Aug. 20th while Louise Horne led another group of KFN amateur botanists around her and Tom's property, Lloyd repeated his question several times, and Louise gave him the same answers. Finally, Louise said "From now on, we should call that plant 'Lloyd's Plant'."

According to the Ontario Plant List (1998: Newmaster, Oldham), there are 2 subspecies in Ontario that we can look for: *Prunella vulgaris* ssp. *Vulgaris* (Selfheal), and *Prunella vulgaris* ssp. *Lanceolata* (Heal-All), with a narrower leaf; the latter is less common. Most lawns where herbicides have not been used will likely house this plant. And with a name like Heal-All, who wouldn't want it in their lawn? "Heal-all is both edible and medicinal. It can be used in salads, soups, stews, or boiled as a pot herb. It has been used as an alternative medicine for centuries on just about every continent in the world, and for just about every ailment" Besides that, the tiny purple hooded flowers thrusting out their fringed lips in whorls above the plant's opposite leaves are a dependably cheery sight one can expect wherever one goes, all summer long. *Prunella vulgaris* - Selfheal or Heal-All, learn to recognize it.



Photo from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prunella_vulgaris

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prunella_vulgaris

KFN Annual Awards

Each year, at our Annual General Meeting and Banquet, awards are presented to members who have been chosen by their fellows, as having performed outstanding service to our club.

The Suncatcher Award

A stained glass Great Blue Heron suncatcher, beautifully handcrafted by Mary Firth, is presented to a member who has not previously received this award. Nominations are open to any individual who is a member in good standing who has demonstrated exceptional service to the club and our members. Possible candidates for this award are, in alphabetical order:

Brian Barbour	Anne Barbour	Susan Blayney	Joan Crossing
Mary Firth	Lizz Hoyle	Bill Hoyle	Judy Kennedy
Robbie Preston	Gerarda Schouten	John Vandenberg	Dale Leadbeater

The "Chippy" Award

A replica of a Chipmunk, expertly handcarved by Lawrence Crossing, is presented to a member who has previously been the recipient of the Suncatcher award and been chosen by our members as having demonstrated continued and long standing service to our club and our members.

The candidates for this award are, in alphabetical order

:

Tim Brophy	Eric Davis	Louise & Tom Horne	Bill & Elinor Manion
Al & Jackie MacMaster	Loreen Randall	Pat Seymour	Joan Todd.

All members are requested to cast their votes for those they consider most worthy, either at our monthly meetings, or by email, mail or phone to Brian Barbour.

Good News for The Environment and Migrating Birds.

In November, 2008, the City of Toronto implemented their Eco-Roof Incentive Program, to offset their new bylaw adopted on May 26, 2009, making it mandatory that all new construction of buildings or additions to buildings, having 2,000 square meters or more of floor space, must include a green roof consisting of suitable vegetative material and sufficient medium to sustain live plant material with a coverage of from 20% to 60% of available roof space. – City of Toronto Website.

On October 27, 2009, Toronto City Council, in an historic move, voted unanimously to pass legislation making it mandatory for all new construction in the city to meet specific standards of bird-friendliness. e.g. glass treatments, shielded light fixtures, ground level ventilation grates.

FLAP Newsletter, Nov 09

www.flap.org

More Bird Species at Risk

30 November 2009 - The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) met in Ottawa from November 23-27 to assess the risk of extinction for Canadian wildlife species. The Birds Specialist Subcommittee, which is co-chaired by Dr. Marty Leonard (Dalhousie University) and Jon McCracken (Bird Studies Canada's Director of National Programs), presented status reports for seven bird species at the November meetings.

Of these, the previously-assessed status was reconfirmed for five: Greater Prairie-Chicken (Extirpated), Eskimo Curlew and Mountain Plover (Endangered), and Yellow Rail and the princeps ("Ipswich") subspecies of Savannah Sparrow (Special Concern). Given that there have been no verified sightings of the Eskimo Curlew anywhere since 1963, this species is on the brink of becoming the first Canadian bird to be declared Extinct since the Passenger Pigeon nearly 100 years ago.

Two bird species were upgraded to a higher category of risk. The newly-assessed Chestnut-collared Longspur was designated Threatened, based on results from volunteer-based monitoring programs like the Breeding Bird Survey showing that severe population declines this species has suffered since the 1960s are continuing (albeit at a slower rate). This native prairie grassland specialist is threatened by habitat loss and fragmentation from road development associated with the energy sector.

The Bicknell's Thrush, previously considered a species of Special Concern, was up-listed to a designation of Threatened. Data from the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas project and the High Elevation Land bird Program were instrumental to this consideration, documenting declines in the occupied area (in QC, NB, and NS) over the last three generations. While reasons for the decline are unclear, habitat loss on the wintering grounds, management practices such as pre-commercial thinning in regenerating forests, and climate change are leading to a reduction of suitable high-elevation habitat.

More information can be found on the COSEWIC website.

<http://www.cosewic.gc.ca/>



Eskimo Curlew



Mountain Plover



Chestnut-collared Longspur



Bicknell's Thrush

News from The Concerned Citizens Committee

Are you concerned about what is happening to our natural world? Would you like to be better informed? Although our club is not an advocacy group, as concerned citizens, there are things we can do to make a difference. Participation is entirely at the discretion and action of individual members, and not as a representative or voice for the membership as a whole.

KFN has created a new committee called the Concerned Citizens Committee so that club members can join forces as individuals to stay on top of what is happening in our community. See below for the issues that we have concerns about to date.

Our mandate is to bring matters which affect the environment at the local, provincial or national level to the attention of KFN members at general meetings, through the newsletter and on the website. Our work includes information gathering, petition signing, letter writing campaigns and following the activities of other organizations such as Ontario Nature, SEAL (Sustainable Ecological Alternatives to Living) and Towards Balance.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me.

Susan Blayney 705-887- 4691 or susan.blayney@gmail.com

KFN INVITED TO ENVIRONMENTAL ROUNDTABLE

Submitted by Susan Blayney

On January 10, the CKL Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) held an environmental roundtable, inviting various groups to put forward initiatives towards realizing their goals towards protecting the environment. This Committee reports to City Council and although it does not have much in the way of budget, it promised to help those groups attending to find partners to help with the funding their proposals. Susan Blayney, Eric Davis and Dan Bone accepted the invitation on behalf of the Club's Concerned Citizen Committee.

Lou Probst, chair of the Roundtable asked that each of the groups attending to come up with a maximum of 3 proposals and 1 funding source. He called the exercise an information retrieval process. After we made our presentations, each group was given an opportunity to vote on any three of the proposals. The EAC will decide which proposals to recommend to Council based on popularity and feasibility.

The KFN Club is dedicated to the preservation of our natural heritage. We believe that education is the key to a healthy, sustaining and sustainable environment. These are the proposals we put forward that day.

1. Building a fence along the western boundary of the Somerville Tract to secure the protected habitat of the Altberg Nature Reserve against poachers and ATV encroachment.
2. Developing signage to educate the public on the importance of the provincially significant wetlands in the CKL and to address the illegal dumping of garbage and pollutants into these sensitive ecosystems.

Environmental RoundtableCont'd

3. Creating an education project to encourage landowners to preserve habitat for pollinating insects by suggesting alternatives to cosmetic mowing of road allowances.

It was very informative for us to be apart of this process. We heard proposals to improve water quality and quantity, to increase water sustainability over the next 20—30 years, to produce biomass fuels on abandoned farmland, to reduce municipal production of greenhouse gases, to improve organic waste diversion, and to create an environmental website to name just a few. Some of these are big projects and some are smaller more focused projects like our own.

CITY OF KAWARTHA LAKES ENVIRONMENT ROUNDTABLE PARTICIPANTS

Balsam Lake Cottagers Association

Carden Field Naturalists

CKL Agricultural Development Advisory Board

Couchiching Conservancy

Gaming Centre for Sustainable Lakeside Living

Integrated Carden Conservation Strategy

Kawartha Field Naturalists

Kawartha Heritage Conservancy

Kawartha Lake Stewards

Kawartha Conservation Authority

Lake Scugog - Scugog Connections

Lake Land Alliance

Ontario Anglers and Hunters

Ontario Ground Water Association

Ontario Soil and Crop Environment Farm Plan

Ontario Woodlot Association

S.E.A.L.- Sustainable Ecological Alternatives for Living

Sir Sandford Fleming College

Sir Sandford Fleming Student Association

The Land Between

Toward Balance and Community Gardens

Victoria Stewardship Council

The votes were cast and the results follow on the next page.

Environmental Roundtable ...Cont'd

Environmental Roundtable Results

INITIATIVES	TOTAL VOTE
1. Lake Management Plan	14
2. Septic & Wells systems Managed	10
3. Biomass Industry Development	8
4 Stewardship Self Guide	7
5 ELC Mapping	7
6 Food Charter	6
7 No Child Left Inside	5
8 Increase Water Testing Broadly Based	5
9 Storm Water Discharge Lindsay	4
10 Alt Sewage Treatment Omemee	4
11 Publish Annual Emissions for STP	3
12 Forest Management By-Law	3
13 Conduct Rural Sustainability Symposium	3
14 Water Conservation in Building Code	2
15 Bobcaygeon Sewage Treatment Plant	2
16 Continue Community Garden Program	2
17 Fertilizer Control	2
18 Forest Products Industry	2
19 No Mow Road Allowances	2
20 Vermicomposting	2
21 Restrict Billboards	2
22 Turtle Crossing Signs	2
23 Storm Water Q.C.	2
24 VSC included in Agri Action Plan	2
25 Terrestrial Invasive Species Control	2
26 Inventory Environmental Practices	2
27 No Ice Fishing	2
28 Complete Heritage Apple Orchard	2
29 Independent Peer Review of EIA	2
30 Seek Alternative to Landfills	2
31 Sign Promote Provincially Significant Wetlands	2
32 Plant Spruce Trees Along Roads	1
33 Solar Heat Public Pools & Showers	1
34 35M Buffer to Shorelines	1
35 Hazardous Waste to Summerville	1
36 Post Beach Closure History	1

Highlights of a Backyard Birder's Journal

Lizz Hoyle

November – snow buntings sighted dancing around the periphery of our backyard, they landed and rose, landed and rose in the fields before finally coming in to feed on the ground under the feeders. A northern shrike patrolled our area all winter, perching on our clothesline several times to allow us a good look at him. (also a great perch from which to plan his strategy!). On 2 occasions we saw him snatch a snow bunting off the ground, and a hairy woodpecker off the suet feeder.

March 12th – heard some howls tonight as we were standing out on the back deck enjoying the mild temperature. Where were they when we went on the “owl prow!” with KFN last week?

Mid –March we saw a pair of red-tailed hawks just north of our property. For the first time I actually saw the color on the tails. I got a book on red-tailed hawks from the library, and learned that only mature hawks have red tails, and the reason you don't see a lot of the actual red tails is because few hawks live to maturity.

That same week a friend who shared my interest in birding brought a lifeless hawk to me for help with identification! We decided it was either a Coopers or a Sharp-shinned hawk. That was when I became aware of the dilemma birders have in identifying these 2 hawks; they are almost identical except for their tails - the cooper's tail is more rounded than the sharp-shinned. So much to learn!!

A flock of about 30 waxwings fed on the bittersweet on the south-west fence several times all winter.



March 29th – a pair of bluebirds are house shopping. We first saw the male on the 25th.

April 4 – the bluebirds appeared to be building a nest; when I checked, found only a few pine needles.

April 14 – We saw our first eastern towhee scratching under the feeder. At first we thought it was an oriole, but a second glance showed us that this was different, this bird had a white belly. There are numerous juncos and some white-throated sparrows (black and white striped). They have a bright yellow spot on their head just above the eyes (lores). Through the binoculars it is brilliant yellow. We've also seen song, field, chipping, and tree sparrows, white-crowned sparrows, and even occasionally a Fox sparrow and the towhee is part of the sparrow family. I used to think the LBJ's (little brown jobs) were impossible to differentiate, but I'm learning!

Also saw 4 Northern flickers in the barnyard. I have to learn to look for the colors of their moustache – yellow shafted males have a yellow moustache, and red-shafted males have a red one. Their underwings match their moustaches. Amazing! Also saw a yellow-bellied sapsucker, with his red throat and red spot on his head. This evening I saw 6 herons flying in formation, what a sight. At

Birder's JournalCont'd

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April 20 - bluebirds definitely building a nest, mostly early morning activity.

Tree swallows are at #2 house.

April 30 - Lots of finches, purple, house, and gold. Meadowlarks and upland sandpipers both seen in the front field this week, turkey vultures, lots of crows, and a northern harrier most days.

May 5 - checked the bluebird nest - 4 wee eggs!

May 7th - What a battle! A dozen or more tree swallows were clicking and flying, some were dive-bombing the bluebirds. I saw them take the female to the ground. We finally took some nesting boxes from other locations and put them up in this location - and suddenly everything was fine, there were enough houses for them all. Just like kids fighting over candy!

May 8th - Everything remains quiet with the swallows and bluebirds. The orioles and hummingbird arrived this morning - and are they thirsty! They're drinking and drinking - the oriole tipping the hummingbird feeder to drink, and the hummingbird and a downy woodpecker drinking out of the oriole feeder! Same stuff. I put fruit out yesterday, thinking the bluebirds might eat it, but haven't seen a single bird even near it. The eastern kingbirds are here, Three male rose-breasted grosbeaks were at the feeder today, and I later saw 6 of them in the same tree. What a sight.

May 16th - What a week! Orioles, 2 males and 1 female, are feeding voraciously, and also enjoying an orange I put out for them. The female is weaving a nest on a low-hanging branch of the birch tree out front. We can see her working on it from the upstairs bathroom window. I worry about how secure it will be, its on a fine flimsy looking branch.

Checked the bluebird box - at least 3 babies with fine downy feathers. A robin is nesting high in the birch, and the cardinals fly in early every morning, and late in the evening. Don't know where they're

May 17th - Such entertainment this morning. An absolutely beautiful red-headed woodpecker arrived at the feeder, nabbed a few seeds then flew away, but came back several more times, drank from the birdbath, pecked at the clothesline pole. He's so handsome. So clean-looking, his head is deep red, almost burgundy. He hung around all day and evening.



Birder's JournalCont'd

May 29th - Bluebirds fledged today. We watched them, what an experience. The parents called them all yesterday afternoon and evening, trying to coax them out of the box but it wasn't until this morning that the first one left the box; by noon they had all fledged.

May 31 - the oriole nest is hanging in there, surviving some very strong winds. Have been able to watch the male and female change "brooding shifts"

I hear the brown thrasher singing nearly every day, and caught a glimpse of 2 of them out by the lilacs. I love their song, it makes me laugh out loud, it is so happy, the way they repeat each sound twice.

I finally identified a bird call I've been hearing for years - the "wolf whistle" of an upland sandpiper. I read about it in the FON newsletter, then listened to it on the Stokes CD, and it is definitely the call that has been haunting me for so long!!



June 4 - checked the bb box - another nest and 1 egg. Hurrah! (I discarded the old nest a couple of days after the first brood fledged.)

June 7th - orioles have hatched. - lots of feeding activity. There's no way I can see inside the nest so don't know how many. Saw my first scarlet tanager; he flew in and perched on the clothesline one morning, and came back again in the afternoon, but haven't seen him since. Bill said when he was a boy they were seen frequently around here.

And so it goes. We have been entertained by all of the above, as well as chickadees, blue jays, mourning doves, white breasted and red-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, pileated woodpeckers, red-bellied woodpeckers,, grey catbird, starling, red-winged blackbirds, crows, ravens, various warblers, bobolinks, blackbirds, grackles, killdeer, cowbirds, pine grosbeaks, redpolls, pine siskins, evening grosbeaks, indigo bunting, house wren, various flycatchers, red-bellied woodpeckers, wild turkeys, ruffed grouse, partridge, common snipe, northern goshawk, mallard ducks, Canada geese, blue herons, sandhill cranes, even some great gray owls, all viewed from our back deck. Within 100 metres of our house are large trees, a waterhole, hayfields, pasture and forest's edge. It is indeed a backyard birders' paradise!



Northern Cardinal



Grey Catbird



Hungry American Goldfinches

Photos by Bill and Lizz Hoyle

"Omeme Wastewater Woes May Be Solved By Mother Nature"

by Judy Kennedy

The headline on the front page of our Lindsay newspaper caught my immediate attention. It seems that Omeme's wastewater treatment plant is under an order from the Ministry of Environment to find solutions for years of operating at or beyond it's current capacity.

For years, Gerald McGregor, councilor for Ward 15, has been fighting an uphill battle to convince the city to look at alternative, environmentally harmonious methods of addressing and solving the problem, which could save the taxpayers of Lindsay the cost of a multimillion dollar pipeline to the Lindsay processing plant. After many hours of research, presentations and a trip with Rick McGee, our Mayor, to the Brighton constructed Wetlands, Council gave consent for the City of Kawartha Lakes to enter into an agreement with Fleming College, Lindsay, to take advantage of innovations and research projects developed at the College's Centre for Alternative Wastewater Treatment lead by Senior Scientist, Dr. Brent Wooton.

The college, which recently applied to the Province of Ontario's natural resources science research program for \$1.2 million in funding, has about 10 companies anxious to work within the project. If this project is successful, it will see one of the leading edge technologies in the world operating right here in the City of Kawartha Lakes, in partnership with the College. While the project is exciting, it will probably take from three to five years to see it through to completion, and so it should. As we all know, there are no quick fixes, or band-aid remedies when it comes to working in harmony with Nature, but the result will be worth the wait.

What will the benefits for Nature? It will mean that there will be more habitats for wildlife to nest, feed and seek refuge during migration, with the addition of constructed and engineered wetlands. It will also mean that our Land of Lakes will be protected from pollution, through the implementation of cost effective, low maintenance, innovative "green" technology to remove phosphorus and metals.

It will bring visitors from other municipalities, cities and countries to learn from our success, not to mention birders and tourists and a welcomed boost for local tourism and economy.

There may even be an opportunity for our club to partner with the College and the City, to provide enhancements to the site that promote educational awareness of wildlife, migration, and an appreciation for the relationship between the facility and Mother Nature. After all, she has always known what is best her family.



Newly planted wetland project site



Same wetland project site 2 years later

KFN Outing to Amherst Island- January 15, 2010

by John Bick

On Friday January 15th 2010, a party of 9 which included Susan Blayney, Anne and Brian Barbour, John and Janette Ritchie, Tim Brophy and John Bick from KFN assembled at the Millhaven dock to take the 10:30 a.m. ferry across to Amherst Island. This was after an unsuccessful search of feeders in nearby Bath for a Tufted Titmouse. In the unfrozen bay and on the trip across to Amherst were American Coot, Hooded Merganser, American Black Duck, Long-Tailed Duck, Great Black-Backed Gull and other common species.

The first stop was on the eastern end of the island to observe Snowy Owls (2) and Snow Buntings (several). Then it was on to the famous Owl Woods where we were very lucky to observe a wintering Boreal Owl which was a lifer for some. We were able to find with the help of another birder a Northern Saw-Whet Owl who posed beautifully for us and others. Before that we had very clear looks at a Barred Owl snoozing on an overhead limb. In hindsight it appeared to be quite well fed which may explain our inability to locate any Long-Eared Owls which had been seen the week before. However, we did locate in other places and among numerous tree branches, clumps of tell-tale reddish-brown owl feathers. Our attempts to see any Short-Eared Owls were in vain even though we stayed almost until dusk when they are usually most active.

We had good views of several Red-Tailed and Rough-Legged Hawks as well as an American Kestrel, Northern Harrier, and Northern Shrike.

A good outing and a thrill to see so many owl species in one day in one place.



John, showing where we will go on Amherst Island



Saw-whet Owl



Barred Owl



Susan Blayney, John & Janette Ritchie, John Bick, Tim Brophy, Michael Bates (Campbellford), Anne & Brian Barbour

Photos by Anne Barbour

If You Can't Squawk Like The Little Birds,...Get Off The Roof!!!

by Judy Kennedy



Here I was, catching some rays and minding my own business...

I was just about to close off this edition, when my email chime announced the arrival of a message. It was from my friend, Ingrid, who lives in Pickering. Her house backs onto the Dr. J. Murray Speirs Ecological Reserve, situated in the south end of the Altona Forest.



..I don't have to stay and put up with this, I'm leaving now!



...when, along comes one of my nosey neighbours, yapping about some feathers under a tree down the way....

I imagine her delight, as she witnessed this Barred Owl at high noon, being harassed by a Northern Cardinal and a Blue Jay, as it perched on the roof of a neighbour's house.



Give it a rest, or I'll start talkin' about the nest raids and that cute young redhead down in the valley!!



...then, she gets Mr. Cardinal all agitated and they both start harassing me...

Soon after, it retreated to a nearby tree, perhaps to seek refuge from the assault in the protection of the surrounding branches. But the Blue Jay wasn't giving up, and finally drove the Owl back into the forest.



OK, I'm outa' here! Remember what I said when you sleepin' in the Hawthorne bush tonight!

Thanks, Ingrid, for sharing such an awesome experience with us.

KFN Christmas Bird Count

On December 27, 14 intrepid birders met at Tim Horton's to receive their recording sheets and maps before heading out to scour the woods and horizons for the les oiseau de jour. At the end of the day, following a sumptuous meal of family favourites, the count tallied 47 species, including a red bellied woodpecker and a brown thrasher. For complete details, visit the Audubon Website at http://cbc.audubon.org/cbccurrent/current_table.html

An Energy Saving Bulb Has Broken - Evacuate the Room Now!

Danger: The new eco-friendly bulbs contain toxic mercury (picture posed by model)
Energy-saving light bulbs are so dangerous that everyone must leave the room for at least 15 minutes if one falls to the floor and breaks, a Government department warned yesterday.

The startling alert came as health experts also warned that toxic mercury inside the bulbs can aggravate a range of problems including migraines and dizziness. A leading dermatologist said tens of thousands of people with skin complaints will find it hard to tolerate being near the bulbs as they cause conditions such as eczema to flare up..

The Department for Environment warned shards of glass from broken bulbs should not be vacuumed up but instead swept away by someone wearing rubber gloves to protect them from the bulb's mercury content.

In addition, it said care should be taken not to inhale any dust and the broken pieces should be put in a sealed plastic bag for disposal at a council dump & not a normal household bin.

None of this advice, however, is printed on the packaging the new-style bulbs are sold in. There are also worries over how the bulbs will be disposed of.

Under new regulations for hazardous waste, councils are obliged to recycle them. At present, they should be placed in special bins also used for batteries at a council dump. But in future, councils will have to provide a collection service or install special recycling banks for the bulbs.

There are fears that without a proper disposal system, the mercury content could contaminate water supplies.

Independent environmental scientist Dr David Spurgeon warned yesterday: ' Because these light bulbs contain small amounts of mercury, they could cause a problem if disposed of in a normal bin.

It is possible that the mercury could be released into the air or from land-fill when they are released into the wider environment. That is a concern, because mercury is a well-known toxic substance. '

And dermatologist Dr John Hawk, told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that some people already find it difficult to tolerate the fluorescent- strip lighting that is widely used in schools and offices, which works in the same way as the eco-friendly bulbs. He said: ' Fluorescent lights seem to have some sort of ionising characteristic where they affect the air around them.

This does affect a certain number of people, probably tens of thousands, in Britain , whose ailments flare up just by being close to them. Certain forms of eczema, some of which are very common, do flare up badly anywhere near fluorescent lights, so these people have to just be around incandescent (old-style) lighting.

Exploring "THE LAND BETWEEN" With Dale Leadbeater

Submitted by Anne Barbour and published
in the Field Botanists' of Ontario Newsletter

Our day began at Cooper's Falls, a settlement where one can practically stand with one foot in Simcoe County, the second in the Municipality of Muskoka, and a third (if that were possible) in the City of Kawartha Lakes. Nine FBO members and one guest met at the bell cairn on the Black River at 9am, where we learned that Emma and Thomas Cooper from England had been the main protagonists of this settlement. They and others had been given land locally in the mid 1800's on condition that they clear it for farming within a specified time limit. Little did they know that they were settling in the "Land Between", which conferred on them a great deal of barren habitat once the trees were gone, and a short growing season to boot. Some descendants of those early, hardworking pioneers still inhabit the area, and to their credit, a few of them still farm. Dale showed us maps of the City of Kawartha Lakes, explained about the geology and variety of habitats, and informed us that our destination would be locations in the City of Kawartha Lakes in the extreme northwest section of the Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Park, one of the largest reserves in Ontario. Our trip would serve 2 purposes: 1) to give participants a chance to experience a great fall day of 'free' botanizing in "The Land Between" one of Ontario's biological hotspots and 2) to record plant species for the Kawartha Field Naturalists' project called CKL Flora. (More about that later.)

Once carpooling had been established we drove east on Black River Road, skirting the winding river. The shoreline was often sandy, then granite bedrock would appear, reminding us of the extremely varied habitats in this area. As we drove, Dale pointed out Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis* var. *spectabilis*) on the river side of the road and almost directly opposite on the other side of the road, the signature species of the Ontario Barrens: Spreading Juniper (*Juniperus communis*), with Canada Yew (*Taxus canadensis*) visible as well.

At our first destination, we admired the Black River and its sandy banks while Dale told us about the huge population of First Nations peoples who lived in North America when the Europeans first arrived in the 14th century: over 40 million! These numbers were decimated by Hepatitis A and Smallpox. In this area, the First Nations had been cultivating the land, from the 12th to the 14th centuries using fire to clear it. Fire was good for hunting game and for maintaining their herbal and sacred plants. But because the land was so sandy, with very little soil, the First Nations people would clear, stay for a few years and then move on. It also meant that when the European settlers came, they saw secondary growth of trees instead of first growth.

On that cue, we went to look at some trees. Large cathedral-like maples dominated a swamp that, now, in early September, was merely damp under our boots. Dale told us about the theory that dear Henry Kock, formerly known as "Mr. Arboretum", from Guelph University had: that there are no native Silver Maples (*Acer saccharinum*) in Ontario. Some time ago, Henry, who was always paying attention to the habitats that trees preferred, noticed that so-called 'Silver Maples' were growing in the lowlands as well as in much dryer uplands along with Red Oaks (*Quercus rubra*) and White Ash (*Fraxinus americana*). Since the Silver Maples were tolerating both habitats, Kock decided to look at them more closely. He began to notice that the ones up on dry land were slightly different from the ones down in the lowlands; and they were NOT Silver Maples (*Acer saccharinum*). What Kock theorized was that Silver and Red Maples hybridized sometime while the glaciers covered Southern Ontario. The Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) and this very prolific hybrid followed the glaciers back into Ontario, but the Silver Maples never came naturally. In Modern times, true Silver Maples have actually been imported from Ohio and liberally planted; so Henry felt that Silver Maples are not native to Ontario at all.

The Land Between . . . cont.d

Now the hybrid, named Freeman's Maple (*Acer x freemanii*) has tremendously high plasticity. It can look very much like Red Maple and then in other places it can look very much like Silver Maple. The difference is seen, however in the keys. "Comparison of the fruit size in the Red/Silver maples is the best way to distinguish Freeman's Maple from the two species." The keys of Freeman's are intermediate between the small keys of Red Maple, and the large, woody keys of Silver Maple. Also, the keys of Silver Maple are straight, whereas the keys of Freeman's Maple are curved. Standing in the vernal pond far away from any part of civilization, Henry would have agreed that we were surrounded by Freeman's Maples. To be absolutely positive, purists might insist on a return in the spring to look at the keys. I'm game! Are you?

Where Dale goes, so goes her soil auger, since soil composition is such a key factor in determining the plant life of a habitat. Brian Barbour, wielded the auger with expertise and laid out the soil for all of us to see and feel. Descriptions were noted and measurements were taken of A & B horizons. A GPS reading was taken and ground cover, shrub and canopy layers were noted. With botanists, that's not as easy as it sounds! Discussion ensued as to whether the *Hypericum* sp. was really *Triadenum fraseri* - it was decided that the plant in question was *T. fraseri*, or Marsh St. John's Wort. With that, the botanists were let loose to explore and identify!

Some of the species they found were water-loving species Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*), a swamp species that can also be used in basket-making; Swamp Candles (*Lysimachia terrestris*) have little wings in leaf axils; Northern Willow-herb (*Epilobium ciliatum* spp. *glandulosum*) with its white hairs on its seeds; Northern Water Horehound (*Lycopus uniflorus*), Speckled Alder (*Alnus incana*), Water Avens (*Geum rivale*), Northern Blue-Flag (*Iris versicolor*).

While examining an elm, Bill Draper exclaimed: Slippery Elm! (*Ulmus rubra*) We gathered around Bill and he turned the leaf over, pointing out that when more than 2 of the side vein are branched, it is not White Elm (*Ulmus americana*), or Rock Elm (*Ulmus thomasii*), but Red Elm or Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra*). Another identifying feature is the colour of the layer close to the cambium, which was cut into very carefully to verify identification. White Elm has a diagnostic "oreo cookie" layering of dark, white, dark. Sarah Mainguy called it a layer cake where the middle layer is vanilla, hence the name "white" elm. (Stop thinking about lunch.) This tree had layering that had a dark centre. Also, the inner bark was mucilaginous, hence the common name "slippery" elm. Someone else mentioned that if you strip off the bark and soak it, then pound it, it can be used to make baskets. We learned quite a bit about this uncommon tree for Canada that Farrar shows a range far to the south of where we stood.

What sedge is this? *Carex stipata* or the regularly rare *Carex laevivaginata*? Sarah explained to check the clasping sheath - if the sheath is wrinkly, it is *stipata*, if smooth, then *laevivaginata*. This one was wrinkly, and was soft below the flora, so *C. stipata* it is. Other graminoids discovered included Fringed Sedge (*Carex crinita*), a northern species, Tuckerman's sedge (*Carex tuckermanii*) with its diagnostic notch on the achene, Bladder sedge (*Carex intumescens*), Drooping Wood Sedge (*Carex arctata*), Filiform Rush (*Juncus filiformis*); Fowl Manna Grass (*Glyceria striata*), whose

The Land Between . . . cont.d

foliage is palatable to cattle, sheep, and horses, but is largely ignored by White-Tailed Deer; Canada Blue-joint (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), so valued as fodder grass that it is still called "beaver-hay" by local farmers. Together with the sedges, it grows in meadows too wet for cultivation, hence another common name: marsh-hay. Finding Virginia Wild Rye (*Elymus virginicus* var. *virginicus*) was somewhat of a surprise because it is usually found around the Great Lakes.

Moving to the Upland deciduous forest, Bill pointed to PI & said "Do you see what I see? It's not far up the tree, but it is climbing, with tendrils!" Who would have thought *Rhus radicans* would be found so far north? A Beaked Hazel (*Corylus cornuta*) with next year's bud prompted the comment that it is one of the first things to bloom in the spring; the female flower is red.

Dewey's Sedge (*Carex deweyana*) and Long-stalked Sedge (*Carex pedunculata*) were noted. Leah handed me a lovely Graceful Sedge (*Carex gracillima*) which turned out to be Dale's favourite too. Fringed Brome (*Bromus ciliatus*) was examined with a hand lens for its soft hairs.

Both the Common Elderberry (*Sambucus canadensis*) and the Red-berried Elder (*Sambucus racemosa* spp *pubens*) were found. Sarah explained that a good way to distinguish the two when there are no flowers or berries is by their pith colour: the former has white pith while the latter has brown pith. Downy Serviceberry (*Amelanchier arborea*) whose fruit "may be the best-kept secret in the woods" had no fruit - the critters beat us to them!

Ribes and rubus - they will be the bane of me! Thanks to the botanists, I can now recognize some differences: Wild Black Currant (*Ribes americanum*) has gold dots underneath, tends to have a squarish stem and has no prickles; Prickly Gooseberry (*Ribes cynosbati*) is well-named with 1 to 3 spines at the nodes; Swamp Red Currant (*Ribes triste*) has fat leaves that resemble Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*) leaves; Bristly Blackberry (*Rubus setosus*), whose canes do not root at the tip, has stems that are densely covered with fine bristles (which is what setose means!) while Red Raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) has leaflets that are long and pointy, almost featherlike, and bristles that are more hairlike.

There's a plumed goldenrod...is it possible to tell what it is? Sarah said to look for hairs at the base...yes! That means it is a Canada Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*).

Moving to the wet meadow, we found some asters. Calico Asters (*Aster lateriflorus* var. *hirsuticaulis*) were everywhere - we knew this because every time Bill saw one, he turned over a leaf. The reason for this exercise in repetitive strain injury was to find an Ontario Aster. Bill told us that Calicos have hairs only on the mid-vein, whereas the entire underside of the Ontario is hairy. Sarah explained about Swamp Aster (*Aster puniceus* var. *firmus*) vs. New England (*Aster novae-angliae*). They both have clasping leaves, but Swamp Aster's are not as crowded and its flowers are a lighter shade of mauve. The stems of Swamp Aster is often purple-red, especially in the sun, but not when it's in the shade. We saw an example of both. Another difference: New-England Aster has glands, so when you rub your hand over the stem it is very fragrant. Swamp Aster has no glands therefore it has no fragrance. Pointing to an aster with white flowers, Sarah explained that Arrow-leaved aster (*Aster urophyllus*) is a very dense white aster that is not hairy. Its status in Ontario is S4.

The Land Between . . . cont.d

3 Avens were found: Yellow Avens (*Geum aleppicum*), White Avens (*Geum canadens*), and the less common Rough Avens (*Geum laciniatum*).

In a wetter part of the meadow, Arrow-leaved Tearthumb (*Polygonum sagittatum*) (also ranked S4), Live Forever (*Sedum telephium*), Marsh Purslane (*Ludwegia palustris*), Large Cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*) were interesting discoveries.

Dale made sure that we had a gorgeous spot for lunch, at the bridge over Victoria Falls. Granite boulders provided our lunch table, and for those dedicated botanists, an identification site to continue their research. What could the plant be that has caught Bill's eye near the rapids? Don't fall in Bill! Up the bank, others rested in the shade at the intersection of the Ganaraska Trail, where numerous hikers were coming out, some after a 2 day hike. Our group took the southern trail after lunch, but only as far as our time would allow. Being well aware of the pace of botanists, Dale gave the order that no one could be distracted and stop until we got to the marsh. So off we hiked at a brisk pace, botanists calling out their sightings that I recorded, often having to race to catch up. We were hiking through a mixed forest and did break Dale's rule once. As she marched along, Eleanor Thomson was rattling off names, one of which was Nodding Trillium (*Trillium cernuum*) and I shouted "Nodding Trillium! Where? I've never seen one before!" So she retraced her steps and found again the plant that, even in September, had the recurved peduncle with seed pod bent down below the leaves. Dale checked Mike Oldham's list of Victoria County flora, and *Trillium cernuum* was NOT listed! Thanks to the FBO, a new plant for the City of Kawartha Lakes had just been found!

Once at the marsh, some of the plants we saw included Three-way Sedge (*Dulichium arundinadea*), Sweet Gale (*Myrica gale*), Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), Fringed Bindweed (*Polygonum cilinode*) and Mild Water Pepper (*Polygonum hydropiperoides*), which several botanists tasted in order to identify it.

Back on the trail again, Eleanor found Northern Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-femina* var. *angustum*), which she explained can be recognized because 'the lady' points her 'toes' (bottom 2 pinnae point downwards), but doesn't shave her 'legs' (stalk has dark brown hair-like scales near the base).

It wasn't long after that we reached the barren habitat. Harebell gave us a small clue that we were close and the cliff confronting us, a much bigger one. Gordon had gone ahead to scout out a pathway up and pointed us in the right direction. On the way, a fern with short stiff fronds was spotted seeming to grow right out of the southwest facing granite wall next to the trail. Eleanor identified it as Rusty Woodsia (*Woodsia ilvensis*) by rubbing the stem and finding the joint where it breaks off easily. On checking Mike's list, we learned that *W. ilvensis* had already been found in Victoria County by Don Sutherland. I liked the sound of this fern's genus name "Woodsia" and later found that in 1810, Robert Brown had named it after the English botanist Joseph Woods. Fern lovers probably know that ferns were very popular in the mid-19th century Victorian age; so much so, in fact that the craze developed into fern fever and came to be called Pteridomania. *Woodsia ilvensis* was particularly hard-hit in the Moffat Hills of Scotland which used to have the most extensive populations in the United Kingdom; now, however there remain only a few small threatened colonies.

The Land Between . . . cont.d

Up on the cliff, a blue line of paint on the granite marked a section of the Ganaraska Trail that called to us... We viewed the marsh stretching out before us – oh to have a canoe! The explorations were limitless, but it was 3: 30 p.m. and we were running out of time. Let's record what we can identify here before returning to our cars.

To name a few: Northern Dewberry (*Rubus hispidus*) crawled along the rock floor, Poverty Oat Grass (*Danthonia spicata*), Fringed Blue Aster (*Aster ciliolatus*), Hedwigia ciliata, a moss common on rock walls, Sweet Fern (*Comptonia peregrina*) which isn't a fern at all, but a shrub, Reindeer lichen (*Cladina* sp.), Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), Broad-leaved Panic Grass (*Panicum latifolium*), Velvetleaf Blueberry (*Vaccinium myrtilloides*), Common Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and close by, its companion moss *Polytrichum juniperinum*, plus two other mosses, *Polytrichum piliferum*, and Rock spikemoss (*Selaginella rupestris*).

On the way back we spotted a lovely spray of Old Man's Beard, an apt name for Virgin's Bower (*Clematis virginiana*) where the flowers have gone to seed. Back at the cars, we relished the nearby habitats that we did not have the time to explore: a buttonbush marsh and a bog, and contemplated returning at another time. Positive comments were made about the pleasures of free botanizing. Our tired but satisfied group said its good-byes and departed, some of us with long lists thanks to everyone's participation. To all of you in the group, this amateur botanist is especially grateful for sharing your knowledge and thrilling me with so many botanical lifers in one day!

¹ 2008 Kock, Henry Growing Trees from Seed. Richmond Hill: Firefly Books

² 1995 Farrar, John Laird, Trees in Canada. Markham, ON: Fitzhenry & Whiteside. P. 358

³ http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/grasses/plants/fm_grass.htm

⁴ Poison Ivy

⁵ <http://www.cnr.vt.edu/DENDRO/DENDROLOGY/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=9>

⁶ http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/elements/el_report_old.cfm?elid=168252

⁷ http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/elements/el_report_old.cfm?elid=54070

⁸ Owen Sound Field Naturalists. 2005. A Guide to the Ferns of Grey and Bruce Counties, Ontario. Owen Sound, ON: Stan Brown Printers. p. 81

⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodsia_ilvensis

Do you have an interesting Hobby, Special Interest, Holiday or Event to share?

Why not put your thoughts, experiences, sightings, or story into a word document and email it to me at judykennedy@xplornet.com

I'm always looking for interesting or important nature news from our members and friends.

Coming Events

GENERAL MEETINGS

Meetings will be held on the first Monday of every month (except July and August) at 7:30 pm in the meeting facilities of St. James Anglican Church, 19 Bond Street East, Fenelon Falls. A social time occurs after the meeting. Donations are appreciated towards the cost of refreshments. Guests are always welcome.

OUTINGS

Kindly arrive at the meeting place before the designated departure time. When carpooling, we always meet at the Tim(Horton)'s in Fenelon Fall's and Lindsay(Whitney Mall). Please share expenses with your driver. Participants are responsible for their own refreshments. In the event of inclement weather, please contact the leader to check the status of the outing. Non-members are always welcome. For more information contact Susan Blayney, Programme Director 887-4691

Monday February 1

General Meeting

Speaker: Rob Mac Gregor

"The Story of the American Eel"

Saturday, February 7, 10:00 am - 3pm

X Country Skiing in the Somerville Tract. Meet at the parking lot south side of Hwy 45.

10 K east of Norland. Bring a lunch.

Leader: Susan Blayney 887-4691

In case of bad weather cancellation - Sun. Feb. 13 is the alternate date

Monday March 1

General Meeting

Speaker: Tina Fridgen

"Frogs"

Saturday March 20

Birding Day Trip - Presqu'ile Prov. Park Waterfowl Festival

Bring your lunch, dress for the weather. Carpool: Fenelon Tim's. 7:30am Lindsay Tim's 8 am

Leaders: Tim Brophy 324-2394 and Dan Bone 887-4691

Monday April 5

General Meeting

Speaker: Don Smith

"Small Mammals of Victoria County:

A Show and Tell of Diversity among 34 Species"

Coming Events

Saturday and Sunday April 10 and 11, 9:00

Altberg Reserve Spring Trail Cleanup

We need rakes, leaf blowers, loppers, gas weed whackers. Bring a lunch and drinks.

In case of bad weather cancellation- Apr. 17, 18 are the alternate dates

Other dates are being planned for boardwalk and bridge building. Stay tuned.

Contact: Robbie Preston 705-876-9571

press_on@mac.com

Saturday April 24, 5pm

KFN"S Annual General Meeting

Potluck Supper Silent Auction

Speaker: Bridget Stutchbury

"Tracking the Amazing Journey of Migratory Songbirds"

Fenelon Falls United Church

123 Colbourne St., Fenelon Falls

For information and tickets call:

Lizz Hoyle 374-4073

Please consider volunteering to make this event a success

Monday April 26, 9:30 am

Hwy 45 Clean Up

Altberg Wildlife Reserve Parking Lot

We need lots of Volunteers!

Contact: Rick White 454-2592

May

Baillie Birdathon

Consider how you can have fun birding and raise money for Bird Studies Canada as well as our KFN club

More information will be provided at General Meetings

Check out www.bsc-eoc.org/support/birdathon

Saturday May 29 All Day Outing

"A Walk in the Clouds"

Haliburton Forest Canopy Tour

\$85 per person (12 participants minimum) includes admission to Wolf Centre

Contact Susan Blayney 887-4691 to sign up Payment in advance

