



Owen Sound
Field Naturalists



Hart's-Tongue Herald

The Newsletter of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists

Box 401, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 5P7

Winter 2005
Volume 18, Number 3

Editor: Lorraine Brown



Many people saw this snowy owl in the vicinity of the hospital and OSCVI in the weeks before Christmas. Here, it perches on a street light on December 7, around 1 pm. The owl made it into the Owen Sound Christmas Bird count on Dec. 17. (Photo by Dave Tannahill, with a little help from Willy Waterton's 500 mm lens)

Put Green Space First: A Greenway for Grey & Bruce Counties

The Greenway workshop on October 15 was organized by Ontario Nature, hosted by the Owen Sound Field Naturalists, and supported by the Bruce Resource Stewardship Network and the Grey County Forest Stewardship Network. The Sydenham Sportsmen's Association donated the use of the hall.

Ontario Nature's goal for the workshop was to provide information on the Southern Ontario Greenway, as well as to discuss how we could work in partnership with local groups to further existing initiatives that support both local and provincial conservation.

Wendy Francis, Ontario Nature's Acting Executive Director, outlined the Greenway vision of a web of conserved green space (natural areas and farmland) which will connect existing cores of natural areas. This is important for wildlife movement and sustaining biodiversity, as well as protecting air and water quality.

Wendy's keynote presentation was followed by a panel discussion in which representatives described the current status of land use planning in Grey and Bruce Counties, as well as the grassroots efforts to implement a greenway in Waterloo. Chris Laforest, Director of Planning for Bruce County, provided an overview of the work the County has done and is doing to conserve green space. He also provided advice for successfully moving the Grey/Bruce Greenway initiative forward. Peggy Hutchison of the Grey Association for

Better Planning described the importance of having the community engaged in planning. David McLaren representing the Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation spoke on the traditional perspective of First Nations to the environment as well as

the importance of connecting with First Nations regarding land use planning initiatives. Kevin Thomason, of the Sunfish Lake Association, described their successful pro-active and cooperative approach to working with developers to reach conservation goals.

Participants agreed that there is a will to move forward in a coordinated way to implement the Greenway in Grey and Bruce Counties. We identified opportunities, challenges, and important considerations for moving forward. The meeting was particularly interesting in that it brought together naturalists, angler/hunters, farmers, First Nations and landowners. Please visit osfn.ca for a more detailed report on the meeting.

A second event will be held on Saturday, January 14, 2006 at the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association hall. The event will provide more information about conservation activities groups have underway or planned. Mapping of existing protected areas in Grey and Bruce Counties will be available and a communications plan will be developed.

A committee including Clarke Birchard, Glenda Clarke, Jenn Baker and Jackie

foto art CAMERA AND FRAME SHOP

842 2nd Avenue East, Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 2H3
Telephone (519) 376-4592 Fax (519) 376-3973

*For all your outdoor photo needs
Cameras, film, binoculars, scopes, outdoor gear
and tripods*

Stockman will organize the Jan. 14 meeting. Craig Todd of the Bruce Stewardship Network is collecting existing maps and working to produce one map that will show all green spaces in Grey and Bruce Counties, so we can get an idea of where linkages need to be developed.

If you are interested in attending this meeting, please contact OSFN president Freeman Boyd.


OSFN Sweatshirts Available Again

Marg Gaviller has organized a purchase of very nice quality sweatshirts with an embroidered OSFN logo. Colours include dark green and dark and light brown. The price is \$30.00. To order, please call Marg at 371-5149.

Did you buy one of these sweatshirts at the October indoor meeting, and pay with a cheque? If so, please check to see if it went through your bank account. Our book-keeping was less than perfect that night and we appear to be missing the payment for one sweatshirt. If this cheque didn't clear your account, please call Marg Gaviller.

WILLY WATERTON

SWEETLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



specializing in:
outdoor / lifestyle
editorial & sports
weddings
cottage & home portraits
equestrian
skiing
boating
environmental portraits

519-376-3959

General Delivery, Kemble, Ontario, N0H 1S0, sweetwater@bmts.com

Welcome New Members!

Don & Linda Knight
Diane Breukelman
Gary & Lynn Morgan &
Family
Bonnie & Don Reid
Monica Banz & Jon
Anderson
John Hlynialuk

COATES & BEST INC.

883 2nd Avenue East
Owen Sound, Ontario
(519) 376-5499 Fax (519) 376-5366
email: coates.best@bmts.com

. . your source for Books, Topographical Maps
and more for all your outdoor adventures!

Trophies Two and Georgian Gallery

Trophies • Plaques • Awards
Custom Picture Framing
809 2nd Ave. East
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 2H2
519-376-9280
trophies2@on.aibn.com
Sue Allison & Yvonne Mcteer
Established 1976 • Celebrating 30 Years

Ask your M.P. ...

Things are heating up fast and furious as we approach the January 23 election. If a candidate comes to your door, are you ready with some good environment-related questions? If not, Ontario Nature has some questions they would like answered. Feel free to ask these yourself, and thanks to ON for the suggestions.

1. Climate change could potentially have a serious impact on many species in decline and will actually add to the list of species at risk.

What would you do to address climate change?

2. Canada has made a commitment to fight poverty and support the Millennium Development Goals. However, we have learned that too often unsustainable poverty alleviation activities can result in the destruction of natural resources and may, as a result, exacerbate poverty.

What has your party done and what will you do to support the worldwide fight against poverty while ensuring sustainable development in the developing world?

3. Will you support local resource extraction activities in protected areas

(eg. in Suffield National Wildlife Area in Alberta)?

4. In the past, parties have made campaign commitments to better manage Canada's natural heritage through the establishment and expansion of national wildlife areas, migratory bird areas and national parks. Sadly, the reality has been less promising.

What has your party done and what will you do to protect Species at Risk in these areas?

What will you do to ensure that new national parks, such as Mealy Mountains in Labrador, Manitoba Lowlands National Park and Bathurst Island in Nunavut are created?

What will you do to ensure that new National Wildlife Areas are created?

Atlas Trip on the Muketei River, June 21 to July 1, 2005

OSFN member and avid birder Judith King was one of a handful of southern Ontario birders who volunteered to cover some of the Breeding Bird Atlas squares in the wilds of Northern Ontario. Here's her report.

Muketei is a wilderness river that cuts through the massive Hudson Bay Lowland about 300 km west of the James Bay coast, just north of the Attawapiskat River into which it flows. Our atlasing crew flew in from Pickle Lake and paddled about 100 km downstream to where the Muketei joins the Attawapiskat.

The Muketei is an intimate river, being a mere 50-100 m wide. It is also a fast river as it drops quickly in elevation: we started about 160 m above sea level and ended about 100 m above. The map showed only two rapids; after a dozen we lost count of them!

While setting up our first camp at the upstream end of an island, we were serenaded by no fewer than 28 species of birds, including Bay-breasted, Cape May and Tennessee Warblers, White-winged Crossbills, Swainson's Thrush, and Gray Jays. We paddled downstream from this base camp and conducted 25 point counts and general atlasing in each of two adjacent squares. In our first square alone we found 64 species of which nine were confirmed breeders. The only sign of human life we found was an abandoned trapper's cabin. What a thrill to be out there with no signs or sounds of humans for 11 days.



Down A Country Lane Bed and Breakfast

Gold and Billie Cox
R.R. #5
Wiacon, ON, Canada
N0H 2T0

Phone: (519) 534-3170
Fax: (519) 534-1211
Email: info@downacountrylane.com
Website: www.downacountrylane.com

The

Another Roadside Clean-up Completed

OSFN's section of Highway 6 was cleaned up on October 20th, under the direction of the new co-ordinators, Linda and Eimie Tekutis.

Thanks to the following members who pitched in: Stan and Anne Cathrae, Walter and Joan Crowe, John Hands, Blain Horsley, Karen Saliwonchyk, and Liz Squires.



Steven King, Michael Runtz, John Reaume and Judith King spent two weeks in the wilderness of Northern Ontario this past summer, monitoring birds for the Breeding Bird Atlas.

At the beginning, the floodplain shoreline was rimmed with a narrow but dense thicket of alders and willows, ideal habitat for the Wilson's Warblers, Philadelphia Vireos and Fox Sparrows that we commonly heard. Most birds were difficult to see, and some such as Orange-crowned Warblers were heard but never seen. This near-impenetrable habitat housed the greatest diversity of birds in those squares.

Just in from the floodplain was a fringe of tall forest of aspen, white spruce and balsam fir. Here Ruby-crowned Kinglets sang and Gray Jays chattered incessantly. Further inland was peatland where thick sphagnum moss and caribou lichen formed deep carpets underfoot and black spruce and tamarack grew as an open forest. Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, Boreal Chickadees, Lincoln's Sparrows and a few Pine Grosbeaks were found here whenever we neared a small pond. Greater Yellowlegs invariably launched a verbal aerial assault on us.

As we paddled downstream to our next squares, a feat made easy by the river's strong current, the terrain changed

dramatically, as did the bird life. After lining our canoes through yet another set of rapids, a single Bohemian Waxwing flew over while a Northern Parula sang nearby. As the elevation dropped and the drainage decreased, water began to dominate the landscape. Between this vast wetland and the river lay a dense floodplain of willows, then a narrow fringe of conifers, ranging from a few metres to a half km in width, and finally an open black spruce peatland.

In this endless muskeg, myriad ponds and small lakes lay separated by floating peatlands on which carnivorous plants such as great sundews and pitcher plants thrived. The bogs were the major feature: string bogs, floating bogs, and scrub bush bogs (our terms). The floating bogs were moss and lichen as far as we could see. It was very difficult to do point counts as you could not stand still without sinking. The scrub bush bogs were hummocks of mosses and lichens with small black spruce (30-60 cm) and tamarack dotting the landscape. A compass and GPS were essential, as everywhere looked the same. It would have been very easy to get lost and never be found. This was

part of the awe this area of our province holds for us. Its beauty is in its simplicity.

The dwarf black spruce and tamaracks were ideal perches for the Lesser Yellowlegs that now joined the Greater Yellowlegs in screaming out a welcome whenever we approached. In this open peatland the odd raspy songs of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows rose from sedge fens. From the isolated clumps of spruce, Lincoln's Sparrows and the occasional White-crowned Sparrow sang. However, the most common sparrows were Savannah and they could be heard and seen at most point counts in this habitat. At one point count, a solitary Common Redpoll flew over Michael and John, reinforcing the northern flavour of this region.

Our final square lay where the Muketei meets the Attawapiskat River. This was an exciting junction, with Arctic Terns, Bonaparte's Gulls, and a pair of Bald Eagles nesting in a poplar on an island across from our campsite.

The trip provided many memorable moments. We had an up close and personal encounter with Sandhill Cranes and their chick walking around our tents. We also encountered beavers, otters, black bears and moose, and had more than enough biting flies and mosquitoes.

All told we spent 11 days on the river, canoed 100 km, surveyed 12 squares, completed a total of 80 point counts and tallied 82 species of birds, 21 of which were confirmed breeding.



QUALITY EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING FOR BACKPACKERS, CANOEISTS, KAYAKERS, AND CYCLISTS



- Gore-Tex outerwear • hiking boots
- dehydrated foods • cookwear
- candle lanterns • topo maps
- sleeping bags • tents
- backpacking stove

CANOE AND KAYAK RENTALS

Open daily from 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Sundays 1 - 5 p.m.
Hwy. 70 in Hepworth

(519) 935-2478
1-877-862-2950

See our Website at www.suntrail.net

Meeting and Field Trip Reports

Special thanks to Mike Cadman and the Breeding Bird Atlas for getting us to the river and allowing us to enjoy a trip of a lifetime.

Written by Judith King for the Ontario Field Ornithologist Newsletter, October 2005. Reprinted here with some editing.

Mushroom Foray at Inverhuron Park, September 25

About 10 OSFN members gathered at this newly opened park to hunt for wild mushrooms. It was a mild day so we soldiered on, enjoying the downpour. In spite of it being a great fall for mushrooms, and in spite of having had good luck scouting in the park just a week before, the foray was a bit short on 'shrooms. One truly interesting find was a skirted stinkhorn (*Dictyophona duplicata*). It and other stinkhorns spread their spores by smelling absolutely disgusting, thereby attracting flies that land on the mushrooms thinking they might be something worth eating, then fly off, taking spores with them.

We also found a few edibles, including honey mushrooms and a lovely piece of the exotic-looking, yellow and orange chicken of the woods (*Laetiporus sulphureus*). We cooked these up in the park's picnic shelter and ate them with lunch.

A Night Under the Stars, October 15

John Hlynialuk's presentation at the GSCA was awesome, even though it was a cloudy night. He showed amazing images of Mars and covered the history of the red planet in terms of human fascination from Greek and Roman mythology to the Russian and American space race photos of Mars. He also showed the latest NASA images of the mysterious planet. About 40 people came out for this program. John showed NASA images of Mars, and with his in-depth knowledge, made each and every one of us want to see Mars through a telescope. He invited us to drop by his place (as long as we phoned ahead of time to make arrangements) to view Mars through his telescope.

Fall Waterfowl Tour, November 20

A knowledgeable group of 9 birders participated in the annual "around the bay" waterfowl hike on November 20th. 15 species of waterfowl were sighted along with 4 species of gulls. Red-necked Grebes and Hooded Mergansers were seen in unexpected numbers. Seven land birds who visited near the water's edge and one lonely Great Blue Heron who forgot to check his calendar rounded out the total.

The weather was cool. The companionship in the group was warm and friendly and the ducks co-operated to make for an interesting day.

Happy Winter Birds

Do you ever wonder if you have the right seed mix for the birds that come to your

feeder? If you buy your seed at Bayshore Country Feeds Limited (regular advertisers in the Hart's-Tongue Herald) you can put your mind to rest. Your birds are getting what they want and need.

About a year ago, Doug Gilkinson, the owner of Bayshore Country Feeds on 2nd Avenue east in Owen Sound, contacted Dave Fidler to ask for his advice on creating the perfect seed mix for the birds in our area. The result of Dave's knowledge of what birds eat at feeders and Doug's ability, as a feed mill owner, to get the seeds and mix them in the right proportions, is Bayshore's Mixed Seed.

Dave had advised Doug that sunflower seed is the single most important seed for a great variety of birds at this latitude. As a result, Bayshore's mixed seed contains large amounts of black oil sunflower seed and smaller amounts of striped sunflower seed.

It also includes a finch mix of red and white millet, canola, flax and canary seed, plus a scratch feed mix of barley, wheat and cracked corn. Towhees, juncos and sparrows go for the scratch feed. A small amount of whole corn is added, for mourning doves and crows. There are also peanuts for the jays, nuthatches, and chickadees. Customers sometimes ask for a mix that won't attract blue jays, which tend to throw seed all over the place as they eat. But Doug points out that the seed that falls on the ground gets eaten by the ground feeders, like juncos and mourning doves, so it isn't lost.

Flotsam & Jetsam Books
David Samuels
Specializing in out-of-print Nature,
Canadiana, Art and general non-fiction.
203 Bruce Road 32, Cargill, Ontario N0G 1J0
flotsam@bmts.com 519-366-1309

 **BAYSHORE**
COUNTRY FEEDS LTD.
Sunflower Seeds & Wild Bird Feed Mix
Bulk & Bag Birdseed
Indoor & Outdoor Bird Feeders
And A Full Line Of Pet Foods
Mon. - Fri. 8 - 5:30 Sat. 8 - 4
TEL: 519-376-5830 FAX: 519-376-6246
1304 2nd Avenue East, Owen Sound

I've been buying seed at Bayshore for years, and attracting large numbers and a wide variety of birds – even a dickcissel a few years ago. Every bit of the seed gets eaten, so I know it's a good mix for the birds we get. The seed is cleaned at Bayshore before being bagged, and contains virtually no dirt, twigs, etc. A 20 kilogram bag of mixed seed sells for \$16.52, plus taxes that bring it up to \$19.00.

Support our advertisers and do the birds a favour – try the mixed seed from Bayshore Country Feeds in Owen Sound.

Lorraine Brown

New Atlas for the Northern Bruce Peninsula

The Wildlands League, in collaboration with Parks Canada in Tobermory and many other local organizations including OSFN, have produced The Northern Bruce Peninsula Ecosystem Community Atlas. Evan Ferrari, director of the Wildlands League, made a brief presentation at the December indoor OSFN meeting. He presented Jean Maher with a copy of the Atlas, in recognition of the work that Nels had done on the project.

According to Evan, the atlas is intended to assist everyone interested in protecting the ecological and economic health of the Northern Bruce and in making good decisions and good choices about the future of this remarkable area.

The atlas has been designed to be accessed mainly on line at the Wildlands

League website. Only a small number of copies of the book have been printed. OSFN did purchase a copy, however, for the Owen Sound Public Library. It will also be available in branches of the Bruce County Public Library.

Evan's talk whetted our appetites for the great GIS maps available in this atlas. An advantage of accessing it on line is that you can zoom in on the details of the maps, as Evan did during his presentation. Hence, the atlas is a more powerful tool online than it could ever be as a printed book.

A main objective of the atlas is to encourage people to see the Northern Bruce Peninsula as the larger ecosystem of which Bruce Peninsula National Park could be considered the core. Parks are protected areas, of course, but just outside their borders, anything can go on, including activities that may have a negative impact on the park's ecosystem. An ideal situation (from a naturalist's point of view) would be to establish buffer zones around parks, where activities are limited to those that will not have that negative impact on the park. However, this is just not possible. People want the freedom to do whatever they like with their land.

The Wildlands League and the park hope

that the atlas will get people thinking about the greater park ecosystem on the Bruce, and about the impact of their land-use activities on it.

This is an interesting project from my point of view as a member of the Ontario Parks Board. The board worked with Parks staff in 2004/5 to develop new protected areas legislation for Ontario. We recommended the establishment of buffer zones around parks where publicly owned land abuts a provincial park. We proposed that an environmental assessment be required before any major projects are undertaken on these public lands, to determine potential impacts on the park ecosystem. Unfortunately, this suggestion did not make it into the final legislation.

To view the Northern Bruce Peninsula Atlas on line, visit www.wildlandsleague.org.

Lorraine Brown

Walter Tovell, 1916-2005

We are sad to report that Walter Tovell, geologist, former ROM director, OSFN life member, and champion of the Niagara Escarpment, died on Friday, December 30, at 89 years of age. We will miss his cheerful personality and his passion for the Escarpment.

NORTHERN BRUCE PENINSULA ECOSYSTEM
Community Atlas

WILDLANDS LEAGUE
A chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society

Wanted: A Vice-President for OSFN

Our annual general meeting takes place at the March indoor meeting. This year, the only position we'll need to fill on the executive is that of vice-president.

Vice-president sounds scary, but keep this in mind: the VP will be in that position for two years - plenty of time to learn the ropes before becoming president in 2008!

It's fun and interesting being on the OSFN executive - and not a huge amount of work.

Would you consider running for this position? Please think about it. If you're interested, please contact Don Willmott, our past president.

Queen Snake on Bruce

The Queen Snake shown at right was found in the drainage between Upper and Lower Andrew Lakes. This is only the fourth record this century for this threatened species on the peninsula. Its presence in the park is very important from a research conservation/species at risk perspective. Anyone who's out and about should look out for snakes with solid olive-brown backs, especially in or adjacent to wetlands. If you see what might be a Queen Snake, please do your best to catch it, photograph it and contact John Haselmayer at the national park. Phone: 519-596-2444, Ext. 302 Email: john.haselmayer@pc.gc.ca

The "mystery photo" on page 10 of the last issue is a fruiting body of the wolf's milk slime mould (*Lycogala epidendrum*). The fruiting bodies are bright pink, found on dead wood, and about 3 to 15 mm across. They're common throughout the forests of Grey & Bruce.


OSFN BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2005

President: Freeman Boyd, 538-4368 fboyd@log.on.ca
Past president: Don Willmott, 376-7082 willmott@bmts.com
Vice-President: Eimie Tekutis, 986-4265 ltekutis@bmts.com
Secretary: Lynne Richardson 599-3618 lynne.richardson@mnr.gov.on.ca
Treasurer: Marg Gaviller 371-5149 mgaviller@bmts.com
Membership: Jim Ansell 376-2775 jansell@sympatico.ca
Program: c/o Dian Wood, 422-1514 saublebeach@hotmail.com
Editor: Lorraine Brown 372-0322 lorraine@apropos.ca
Publicity: Blain Horsley 986-4839 bmhorsl@bmts.com
Hospitality: Anne & Stan Cathrae 371-2853 acathrae@bmts.com
Jr. Naturalists: Bob Fletcher 372-0355 bobflet@rogers.com
Member-at-Large: Judy Duncan, 376-4616 j_jduncan@yahoo.ca



This Varied Thrush was seen at a feeder north of Shallow Lake in December. Dave Fidler has sent in a rare bird record for it, and the bird may make it into the Owen Sound Christmas Bird Count - the first ever! (Photo by Dave Fidler, using his 20-power telescope and digital camera.)

BRUCE TELECOM
Connecting your world


Toby Bruce & Kelly Rogers
RR 4 Chatsworth, Ontario
NOH 1G0
☎ (519) 794-3335
✉ kellybee@log.on.ca
Chatsworth Honey
HONEY • POLLEN • BEESWAX • POLLINATION SERVICES

The Winter Program

Indoor Program

**Thursday, Jan. 12
"Into the Ice Age!"
with Peter Storck**

Peter Storck, formerly curator of archaeology for the Royal Ontario Museum, follows the southern Ontario trail of Early Paleo-Indians as they hunted caribou, bison, and perhaps mammoth and mastodon as the continental ice sheet retreated 11,000 years ago. The trail led eventually to the Niagara Escarpment and to the source of flint for making the important tool points needed for survival. Peter's autobiographical journey shows us how he came to know where to dig for artifacts and how he learned to craft the life tools of Early Paleo-Indians.

Saturday, Jan. 21 "Signs of Winter Wildlife in the Bognor Marsh" with Verle Barfoot

Bring snowshoes or skis, depending upon conditions. Bring a snack and thermos of hot drink. Register by calling Blain at 986-4839. Limit: 20 people

Indoor Program

**Thursday, Feb. 9
"The Bear Truth about the Bruce"
Melissa Tonge,
Bruce Peninsula
National Park**

Black bears play an integral role in the upper Bruce Peninsula ecosystem. Come learn more about where they live, how they are being managed and other results of the Bruce Peninsula National Park Bear Study.

Saturday, February 18 "Mystery Bird Watching Tour" with Cindy Cartwright

Join Cindy in an interesting day of watching for winter birds. Cindy is known as the Bird Lady of our area. She is an outstanding birder and you will learn a great deal with her on this outing. Call Cindy to register: 389-2585.

Indoor Program Thursday, March 9 Bringing Back the Bluebirds: A Review of the Nest Box Program

About ten years ago, the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association and other similar organizations put on a major push to bring bluebirds back by installing hundreds of nesting boxes in appropriate habitat around southern Ontario. They've learned a lot about how the boxes should be constructed to keep predators away, where and how they should be installed, and many other pointers on how to provide for these beautiful, once-threatened birds.

Lorne Smith, a member of OSFN and the SSA, known locally as the Bluebird Man, will give us an update on the program. He'll bring in boxes of various designs and explains which ones work better and why. He'll show us his photos from ten years of working with bluebirds.

This program will be just in time for the early spring return of the bluebirds.

Please remember to call and register with trip leaders for all programs.

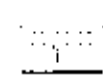
Saturday, March 18 "Owl Prowl" with Joe Johnson

Come out for a hoot of a time with naturalist Joe Johnson to look for mainly Great Horned, Screech and Barred Owls. Bring your flashlights and wear warm clothing. For registration and more info contact Joe: 534-2736.

Indoor Program Thursday, April 13 "The Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Programme" with Robert Wenting

The Loggerhead Shrike, once considered a fairly common breeding bird from Manitoba through Ontario, has suffered a serious decline and has been on the endangered species list in Canada since 1991. Robert Wenting, Chair of the Loggerhead Shrike Recovery for the Canadian Wildlife Service, will reveal the reasons for the shrike's decline and show us what recovery actions the Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Team is implementing to support the remaining populations.

Coming this spring: outings to look for lichens, spring peepers, wildflowers, and birds. Also, a group camping weekend at Point Pelee on May 5-6 - the height of the spring migration. Watch for these programs in the spring issue of the HTH.



**printing
376-2899**

Your Complete Printing Service
"Everything from Process Colour to Business Cards"
**STAN BROWN PRINTERS
LIMITED**

1240 4th Avenue East, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 5P5
Fax: (519) 376-1203

New Boardwalk at Petrel Point

Ontario Nature has a program called Volunteers for Nature where volunteers can take part in projects throughout Ontario designed to protect sensitive areas, restore habitats and promote activities to foster appreciation and enjoyment of nature. From July 6 to 10, 2005, several Ontario Nature volunteers and ON staff arrived at Petrel Point Nature Reserve near Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula to complete the construction of a boardwalk designed to protect the sensitive habitat at this site. Petrel Point is one of many reserves owned by Ontario Nature around the province and is designated as an ANSI and a provincially significant wetland.

Petrel Point already had a boardwalk, but it ended in a dead end. Not wanting to re-trace their steps, people had created several trails through the fen to return to the road. This summer's project was to build more than 100 metres of boardwalk to complete a loop back to the road where the existing boardwalk began. The idea was to keep people off the sensitive vegetation while giving them even greater opportunities to experience the fen. Construction materials were purchased from local suppliers, and the boardwalk was built to allow for handicapped usage.

A team of volunteers and ON staff set up camp at Sauble Falls Provincial Park and travelled daily to the site. Once the "camp" was established, all participants contributed to meal preparation and clean up. Ontario Nature provided the food and the volunteers provided the skills and enjoyment to prepare fabulous meals. Participants came from various parts of southern Ontario, including myself from Owen Sound.

The weather cooperated for the entire project. Bright sunny days and hot temperatures were the norm; however, a little cloud cover



would have been nice as well. The warm temperatures provided ample excuses to visit a local resident with a shady yard and access to the cool waters of Red Bay. Over the course of our stay numerous residents of the area provided much appreciated assistance ranging from advice to building to hospitality. Petrel Point is fortunate to be surrounded by a dedicated group of residents who are concerned for its protection as a special and rare place.

At the end of the project a satisfied team left the area to return to everyday activities knowing that the boardwalk was completed and all construction materials and other garbage removed. Other highlights for many of the

participants included seeing rare plant species and several bird species for the first time. If you think you might like to join Volunteers for Nature, visit the Ontario Nature website, www.ontarionature.org.

Jim Hastie

The new boardwalk, before and after. The new 100-metre stretch completes a loop, giving visitors a more complete fen experience while also protecting the sensitive habitat.



Members of the construction team included 3 ON staff (at right), Jim Hastie (seated, left) and other volunteers from southern Ontario.

Do you like to write? Do you love nature?

We bet you've had a great experience with some part of nature in the last little while. Perhaps it was collecting and studying frogs at the lake this summer. Perhaps it was climbing your favourite tree in the park close to your home. Or perhaps you've had a memorable wilderness encounter this year. See any wildlife? Nature is everywhere, miles away from nowhere, and right in your own backyard!

We'd like to hear about what you think about nature – Submit an essay to:

Ontario Nature's Youth Challenge Writing Contest

You can win cool prizes, and even get your essay published in *ON Nature* magazine!

Write in and tell us why you think we need nature and a healthy environment in Ontario. The topic is:

Why Do We Need Nature?

What you need to know:

- You must be a grade 7 or 8 student attending school in Ontario.
- Your submission can be an essay, a story, or a piece of creative writing, with a maximum count of 700 words, typed and double-spaced. A panel consisting of a journalist, teacher and environment specialist will judge all the entries.
- The top 3 entries will be published in *ON Nature* magazine, an award-winning nature and environment magazine in Ontario.
- Three winners will receive cool prizes for their work, and be honoured for their achievement at Ontario Nature's 75th Anniversary conference in Kitchener-Waterloo, in June 2006.
- The top 3 entries will have their work sent to Ontario's Premier, Dalton McGuinty.

Send your original entries by **April 15, 2006** to:

Chair, Youth Challenge Essay Contest Committee
Ontario Nature
355 Lesmill Road
Toronto, ON M3B 2W8
or send an email to info@ontarionature.org



Make sure you have a title page telling us the title of your essay, your name, address, phone number, email address, your parent's name, what grade you're in, and the name of your school. Learn more about Ontario Nature at www.ontarionature.org.

Good Luck! And remember, have fun!

Last Stand: A New Book on the Niagara Escarpment

Pete Kelly and Doug Larson of the University of Guelph, who discovered the Niagara Escarpment's old growth forest of ancient cedars, are planning a new book called "Last Stand: A Journey through the Ancient Cliff-Face Forest of Canada's Niagara Escarpment".

This is going to be a very interesting book. It will take readers onto the cliff-face to learn first-hand about Escarpment ecology and the intimate details of the lives of those ancient cedars. It will challenge our understanding of what constitutes a really old tree. It will also explore the spiritual and medicinal significance of white cedar to First Nations people. Richly illustrated with Peter Kelly's excellent photos taken during his research, this is a book that anyone living on the Escarpment will want to own.

Peter and Doug need to collect 500 pre-publication subscriptions for the \$60 book before they can get it published. Five OSFN members gave us subscriptions at the December meeting. We're not collecting money at this point - just expressions of interest in

buying the book when it is published. Can we add your name to the list? If so, please e-mail your name, address and phone number to lorraine@apropos.ca or call me at 372-0322 and I will pass the information along to Peter and Doug.

New Tree-cutting Bylaw Coming Soon

Grey County's new tree-cutting bylaw will be presented to County Council in mid-January. Over the next few months, the bylaw will be presented to the public at meetings that will be announced in the local media.

Dave Taylor, OSFN's representative on the Grey County Bylaw Committee, would like to see a good turn-out of naturalists and others who want to protect the County's forests at these meetings.

The new bylaw is definitely an improvement over the old one. For the first time, it takes all forest values into account - not just the dollar value of the timber that could be extracted, but also wildlife values and other

immeasurable values of forests that contribute to a healthy environment.

*Cedarholme Bed & Breakfast
& Cottages*

108 Beech Street, Hope Bay, R.R.# 6, Wiarton, ON N0H 2T0



John & Lynn McCurdy

Phone/Fax: (519) 534-3705
cedarholmebandb@brmts.com
www.bbcanada.com/874html



The new bylaw requires a permit to cut trees, rather than just a notice of intent. This change will allow the County to issue tickets for minor infractions and stiff fines for major infractions.

The bylaw makes good forestry practices more explicit. In the past, trees could be cut if the trunk had reached a certain diameter. With the new bylaw, tree cutters will have to take both trunk diameter and basal area (ie the total volume of trees in a woodlot) into account. Also, it will be necessary to have a registered forester do a plan before any cutting is allowed.

Dave reports that there's a strong element opposed to these changes. They will be vocal, and could try to overturn the bylaw. Dave wants to make sure that the bylaw is given a fair and balanced hearing. That means getting people who are in favour of better forest management out to the meetings.

Please watch the media during January and February for information on the times and locations of the public hearings, or check on the Grey County web site. Get out there and let your voice be heard.

The Ginger Press Bookshop and Cafe

848 Second Avenue East
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 2H3
519 376-4233
1 800 463-9937
www.gingerpress.com

The Fall 2005 Program at a Glance

Indoor Programs

All indoor meetings take place in the auditorium of the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library at 7:00 pm.

Thursday, January 12 - Into the Ice Age!

Thursday, February 9 - The Bear Truth about the Bruce

Thursday, March 9 - Bringing Back the Bluebirds: A Review of the Nest Box Program

Thursday, April 13 - The Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Program

Outdoor Programs

The outdoor program of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists is designed to help members discover new areas, add to their knowledge of natural history, or just to enjoy a "stroll in the woods" with like-minded people. Note that each trip has its own specific time and meeting place. Registration is required for all outings. Please call the contact person indicated about a week before the outing.

Saturday, January 21 - Signs of Winter Wildlife in the Bognor Marsh

Saturday, February 18 - Mystery Bird Watching Tour

Saturday March 18 - Owl Prowl

Membership Application & Renewal Form

Name.....

Mailing Address.....

Telephone.....E-mail.....Check here if Renewal.....

Membership Category: Single (\$18).....Family (\$25).....

Return with cheque to: Owen Sound Field Naturalists, Box 401, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 5P7

Membership cards can be picked up at indoor meetings. Check here if you want your card mailed to you.