



Owen Sound
Field Naturalists

CANADA	POSTES
POST	CANADA
Publications Mail	Poste-publications
40038119	

Hart's-Tongue Herald

The Newsletter of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists

ISSN 1911-7183

Winter 2006

Volume 19, Number 3

Edited by Cindy Cartwright



The Three Foxy Snake Girls—Left to right—Anna and Lily Fletcher, and Anja Pink share smiles with a Fox Snake at the September 14 meeting of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists.. *photo by Jim Ansell*

Website Review: Rideau Valley Conservation Authority *By Don Rawls*

The Landowner Resource Center that is part of their website and is indeed a physical entity in the Ottawa Valley is a wonderful source for information for those of us who try to manage our properties in a sustainable and responsible manner. Their Extension Notes (in PDF format) are a series of fact sheets on a variety of resource management topics including agroforestry, financial aspects, forests, insects and pests, water and wetlands and wildlife. They include such things as how important cavity trees are in our bush and what to do to encourage wildlife, how to manage your forest with wildlife in mind and information on individual species of trees and the insect pests that infest them.

Their Additional Resources include topics such as Private Woodlot Management and Native Plant Resource Guide, click on “products” to see all their publications which can be downloaded as PDF or purchased in pamphlet form. Web Address:- <http://www.lrconline.com/index.htm>

For more links visit the OSFN website at <http://www.osfn.ca/>

Have you renewed your membership?

Editor's Notes— Cindy Cartwright

Seasons change and so do editors. We thank Lorraine Brown for doing a great job as newsletter editor for many years and look forward to working with her as President of the OSFN. A change of editors usually brings some changes to a publication and members will see some differences in both style and content. The ISSN number on the front cover is new. This number will allow copies of every newsletter to be deposited in the National Archives to be preserved for the future. There are ideas for new content while retaining some of the current features such as the Program at a Glance on the back page. Since involving children in the natural environment is a priority in my life, more information on the Young Naturalists and their activities will be included. Another change is the formatting of the newsletter. Once the newsletter content is prepared and edited, it will be passed to format for printing. I'm looking forward to providing members with an interesting and informative newsletter. I hope that members will continue to submit articles, photos, poems and ideas for the newsletter. Please submit future contributions to pom@bmts.com

A Clarification...re: Bruce Peninsula's First Butterfly Count

The first Bruce Peninsula Butterfly count was actually held on July 29, 2000. The count circle included Bruce National Park, the Cabot Head Nature Reserve, Cape Chin, Miller Lake, and Lindsay Road 20 to Lake Huron. 32 species were identified the first year. The highlight was the Dorcas Copper, a species that hadn't been considered during the planning stages. Cindy Cartwright coordinated the count, and Mary and Tony Rapati were our butterfly experts. The Bruce Peninsula National Park staff provided participants with a barbecue at Singing Sands for the tally at the end of the day.

The second count on July 28, 2001 was equally successful with participants coming from as far away as Ottawa and Toronto. 37 species were identi-

fied that year. The data collected from both the first and second counts was submitted to the NABA database, and copies were also provided to the Bruce National Park for their database.

A coordinator was not available in 2002 and so the count was temporarily put on hold. It's great to see that the Bruce Peninsula Butterfly Count has been resumed. The count circle has been shifted slightly to the northwest to duplicate the Christmas Bird Count circle and unfortunately, no longer includes Cabot Head Nature Reserve. However, the shift means that the islands of Fathom Five are now part of the count and could prove to be very interesting additions. Contact the Bruce Peninsula National Park for information to participate in the 2007 count.



... critter dipping with Nancy Griffith, SVCA



... learning to start a fire without matches

Youth Outdoor Expo

By Cindy Cartwright, Photos by Grant Ferris

Opportunities for children to experience the outdoors and heritage activities are declining rapidly in our modern world. So early in 2006 a committee was formed to develop an outdoor activity day to give local children a chance to try a variety of activities in a safe environment. Although the day was patterned after the highly successful outdoor day held at Luther Marsh, we felt strongly that more than hunting and fishing should be emphasized.

Approximately 45 children rotated through six activities: critter dipping in the river, practice casting into buckets, a

nature hike, archery, shooting on the 22-range, and bird banding. During the lunch break they also had the chance to visit display booths on various outdoor related activities such as carving, turkey calling, and camping.

Feedback from the participants was very positive and plans are already underway for the 2007 event. We would be happy to receive suggestions of other outdoor activities. Feel free to contact Cindy Cartwright pom@bmts.com or Jason Ritchie jason.ritchie@mnr.gov.on.ca with ideas or to help with the 2007 Outdoor Expo.



... trying their hand at carving duck decoys



... examining owl mounts and wings with bander Cindy Cartwright

Fungus Among Us: Mycorrhizal Fungi

By Joan Crowe

Fungi are Definitely Different. John Klironomos' talk on mycorrhizal fungi, at the November 9 meeting, was both enlivening and enlightening. As Freeman Boyd said in his introduction, John is a "fun guy" - one who understands his subject thoroughly but is able to make it understandable to those who know little or nothing about it. He kept us enthralled for over an hour. As he pointed out at the start of his talk, fungi are extremely important in the cycle of life as their ability to break down a wide variety of organic substances releases nutrients which are necessary to plants.

Plants are primary producers that use solar energy to lock up carbon dioxide in carbohydrates. These in turn are used by animals - the consumers. Fungi use carbohydrates, too, but they also have the ability to break down substances which are not available to most animals, such as cellulose from plant walls and lignin from wood. Therefore they can be classified as "decomposers".

When most people think of fungi they think of mushrooms but these are merely the spore-producing bodies of a few species of fungus. The actual organism is buried in the substrate on which it grows, such as the soil or a log or a tree. It is very easy to recognize fungi under the microscope, they consist of long thin threads (hyphae) with few cross-walls and scattered nuclei. They are quite unlike plant or animal cells with their single nucleus. The network of threads is known as the mycelium. Fungi produce spores in a variety of ways sometimes by simply splitting off part of the hypha, sometimes sexually by fusion of cells. The hyphae walls are largely composed of chitin - so are insect exoskeletons. It is these fundamental differences that have caused fungi to be put in a separate kingdom. They are certainly not plants.

According to John, fungal spores are everywhere no matter how much cleaning you do! Luckily, they will only grow when they alight on a suitable substrate under the right conditions - so avoid warm and moist if you do not want them to grow on your

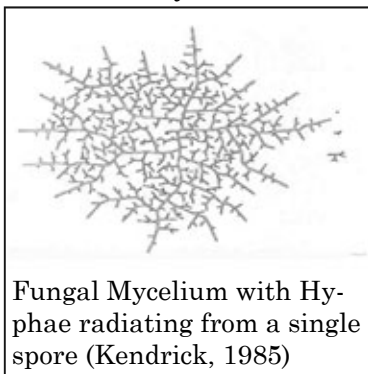
carpet! They vary enormously in size and shape but you will need a very good high power microscope to see any of them.

Fungi may be parasitic but many of them are symbiotic. That means they are just as vital to their host, as their host is to them. John's particular interest is mycorrhizal fungi or, to translate, "root fungi". These are symbiotic and are enormously important to a wide variety of plants - especially trees, and they are absolutely essential to orchids. Unfortunately, many of our gardening and farming practices are fatal to these fungi with equally bad effect on their hosts. John told an interesting story about the highly valuable French truffles which are becoming scarcer and scarcer. There is some evidence that this is due to pollution by nitrogen compounds which may be from fertilizers but it also seems that nitrogen emissions from cars have increased since carbon emissions were reduced.

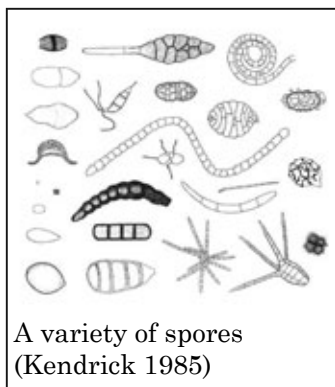
Mycorrhizal fungi come in two kinds. Some penetrate the roots of their host and some simply wrap themselves around the roots. Either way, the fungus is able to extract nutrients from its surroundings which it passes on to the plant. The plant in turn provides food to the fungus. John's research is focused on the mycorrhizal fungi associated with trees and he is lucky to have space in the University of Guelph arboretum. It is not an easy task, even identifying species is difficult, as the same one can turn

up in different guises. Fungi such as the *Penicillium* on your cheese or your orange is in an asexual phase. It is green because that is the colour of the spores, the mycelium is white. Fungi only known in this stage are referred to as imperfect, but they may turn up elsewhere in a sexual phase which looks totally different or, if sufficiently deprived, it will look like a single-

celled yeast. And, yes, Penicillin does come from *Penicillium*. It was discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming when he noticed it killing bacteria in a culture in a petri dish which had not been properly sterilized.



Fungal Mycelium with Hyphae radiating from a single spore (Kendrick, 1985)

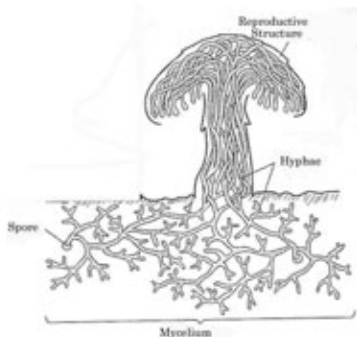


A variety of spores (Kendrick 1985)

See "More . . ." On next page

More About Fungus

There are, literally, thousands of species of fungi so studying them is certainly a lifetime commitment that not many of us could make. However, we should learn to respect the important place that fungi have in the environment. It is not an exaggeration to say we could not do without them. Unfortunately, apart from a very few edible species most people in our society have no time for them. Some wit has summed it up "Europeans are pickers, North Americans are kickers". Luckily, when we kick an unwanted mushroom out of our path we do not do much



damage as most of the organism is out of sight and will quickly recover from the loss of its fruiting body.

There were many questions at the end of the talk and one useful tip did come out of them.

Many people enjoy eating Morels but it is absolutely critical that you know how to separate them from False Morels which are poisonous. Morels are "cup" fungi but the cup is compound and they are hollow inside. False Morels are not cup fungi, they are a type of mushroom but the cap is convoluted and it is solid inside. The external difference is very clear in George Barron's book.

For those who want to pursue this subject further there are books that are highly recommended by John Klironomos.

⇒ "The Fifth Kingdom" by Bryce Kendrick. Mycologue Publications 1985. [Very academic but very comprehensive. He was John's PhD supervisor.]

⇒ Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada by George Barron. Lone Pine Publishing. 1999. [Fully illustrated with colour pictures and recommended by John if you want to identify the mushrooms you are planning to eat.]

⇒ Mushrooms Demystified (2nd edition) by David Arora, Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, 1986.

Adopt-a-Highway (MTO Program)

Roadside Clean-up Completed *By Lis Falk*

OSFN's section of Highway 6 was cleaned up on October 25, under the direction of the new co-ordinators, Elisabeth and Trevor Falk. Thanks to the following members who came out to help: Anne and Stan Cathrae, Joan and Walter Crowe, Karen Saliwonchuk, Jamie Fay and John Hands. Thanks also to those who volunteered for the first date we planned (which we cancelled due to poor weather) but were unable to help on the raindate. We do appreciate your intentions! Special thanks go to Neil from Warton, who brought us hot chocolate while we were working. We appreciated his thoughtfulness for this "random act of kindness"! The next highway clean-up will be planned for late April or early May 2007. Please consider volunteering to help us then. If we have 10 people, it only takes about two hours to do the job.

Email List

The OSFN executive is in the process of compiling a complete email list to contact members for special events, reminders, etc. between newsletters. This list would only be used for OSFN business and will not be shared with any other group. Please send your email address to Jim Ansell at jansell@sympatico.ca. Don't forget to notify Jim if your email address changes.



Toby Bruce & Kelly Rogers
RR 4 Chatsworth, Ontario
N0H 1G0

☎ (519) 794-3335

✉ kellybee@log.on.ca

Chatsworth Honey

HONEY • POLLEN • BEESWAX • POLLINATION SERVICES

NEUSTADT BOOK BARN

(behind Neustadt Library)

- MURDER/MYSTERY • HUMOUR • EARLY FICTION
- CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION • KIDS
- NATURE • SELF-HELP

Best selection of literary classics in the area. Boxes of interesting books.

Open: Tuesday-Sunday – 10 am to 5 pm

Mushroom Foray—September 17

On a day that still felt like mid-summer, about 20 OSFN members gathered at the Sauble ski trails to see what was fruiting in the woods. The day was typical of many days, in many woods, this past fall. There were mushrooms everywhere!

Story & photo by Lorraine Brown



Helvella infula, the saddle-shaped false morel—

Honey mushrooms (*Armillaria mellea*) were particularly abundant, covering stumps and even appearing to grow right out of the ground (though they would have been on buried wood, since this species always grows on wood). The beautiful red fly agaric (*Amanita muscaria*) were everywhere too, along with other members of this mostly poisonous genus. Another interesting mushroom that day was *Helvella infula*, the saddle-shaped false morel, a beautiful specimen growing out of a mossy cedar log.

After a few forays this fall, I am starting to think that the forested dunes along the Huron coast are some of the best places around to look for mushrooms in our region. Escarpment forests can also be good, but the soil isn't as rich and deep as it is on the dunes.

I received many reports that mushroom lovers were having a good year this year. My freezer is full of *Agaricus arvensis*, the large meadow mushroom known as the horse mushroom. Friends kept bringing them to my door; I dutifully ate some and chopped and sautéed the rest for the freezer.

Now, after a few fall frosts, the ground below the pines on our property is blanketed with the bountiful mouse mushroom, *Tricholoma myomyces*. Edible, but not incredible, as our mushroom guru David Arora would say. We'll leave them there and focus on the freezer full of better edibles. It was a great "shrooming" season.

Christmas Bird Counts are Coming...

"How are Christmas birds different from regular birds?" an American border guard asked Cindy Cartwright as she crossed the border for a Christmas Bird Count in Michigan a couple of years ago. Her response - "They're the same, just colder". But OSFN members do not have to travel that far to participate in a Christmas Bird Count as there are seven held in Bruce and Grey Counties. Contact the appropriate count coordinator for information on participating:

- ⇒ Owen Sound—December 16—Freeman Boyd, 538-4368 fboyd@log.on.ca
- ⇒ Hanover/Walkerton—December 16—Dorothy Kings, 389-5387
- ⇒ Wiarton—December 17—Joe Johnson, 534- 2736
- ⇒ Tobermory—December 20—Ethan Meleg, 596-2444 (318) ethan.meleg@pc.gc.ca
- ⇒ Meaford—December 28—Lynne Richardson, 599-3618 lynne.richardson@mnr.gov.on.ca
- ⇒ Kincardine—December 29—Ralph Knowles, 396-5580 remak@bmts.com
- ⇒ Saugeen Shores—January 3—Cindy Cartwright, 389-2585 pom@bmts.com

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



55 Years of Service!
Price Match
Guarantee

printing

STAN BROWN PRINTERS

Your Complete Printing Service
1240 4th Avenue East, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P5
Email: sbp@bmts.com • Prepress: sbdesign@bmts.com
Tel. **519-376-2899** Fax 519-376-1203

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*

The Winter Program

Thursday, February 8, 2007—Indoor

MONARCH MIGRATION & CONSERVATION

Monarch butterflies that leave Grey and Bruce each fall migrate over 4,000 km to Mexico. Audrey Armstrong, teacher & conservationist, will share her experiences in Mexico and her work with the Bruce Peninsula National Park through the Species at Risk Education Awareness program. The slide show will feature photographs by Willy Waterton who travelled with Audrey in 2006.



Saturday, February 17, 2007

SIGNS OF WINTER WILDLIFE, BOGNOR MARSH



Verle Barfoot takes us sleuthing for winter wildlife in the Bognor Marsh. Bring snowshoes or skis, depending on the conditions. Also bring a snack and thermos of hot drink.

Limit: 20 people
Register by calling Anne at 519-371-2853

Thursday, March 8, 2007—Indoor

KARST ON YOUR DOORSTEP...

We think of bedrock as solid, but in much of Grey and Bruce, it's riddled with holes! The Niagara Escarpment is famous for its karst topography – the sinkholes, caves and crevices that make the bedrock geology of our area unique.

Daryl Cowell of Tobermory, our speaker for the Annual General Meeting, has identified and mapped provincially and regionally significant earth science features along the escarpment, leading to their designation as provincial ANSIs (Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest) and their inclusion within the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System. Daryl is a co-author of OSFN's book on the Geology and Landforms of Grey and Bruce Counties.

Saturday, March 31, 2007

RED-NECKED GREBE SURVEY, DYER'S BAY

The Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory conducts an annual Red-Necked Grebe count when these birds are migrating through the Cabot Head region in great numbers. Join Rod Steinacher, president of BPBO, as he checks the five official count sites between Dyer's Bay and Cabot Head. Limit of 10. Register with Dian: 519-422-1514 or saublebeach@hotmail.com.

Thursday, April 12, 2007—Indoor

ENIGMATIC LINES IN THE SAND AND MASTER STONEMASONS

Retired forester Jim Coles takes us on a hike in Chilean Patagonia and central Peru to view fascinating geography, unique wildlife and vestiges of vanished civilizations.

Have you renewed your membership?



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



- GORE-TEX outerwear • hiking boots
- dehydrated foods • cook wear
- candle lanterns • topographic 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.
May 70 in Illegworth

(519) 935-2478
1-877-882-2958

See our Website at www.suntrail.net

All OSFN Members:

Your input for either topics for the Indoor Program or ideas for Outdoor Fieldtrip excursions would be greatly appreciated. Please e-mail thoughts to: Dian Wood, Program Coordinator saublebeach@hotmail.com

Botanical News

By Joan Crowe

This has been an exceptionally productive and prolonged season for plants. The amount of fruit produced by trees this year has been unbelievable, especially considering the beating they took from the ice storm in the spring. This is probably the result of the warm and wet summer. Ash and maple trees have been dripping with keys. Norway spruce are festooned with cones and white cedars decorated with bunches of tiny golden fruits. We have never seen so many berries on the different varieties of Mountain Ash around the town. Here we are in the second week in November and we still have not had a really killing frost, even the snow we had in October was barely freezing. A walk to the pot-holes near Inglis Falls (following the flagging tape put in by Nels Maher) at the end of October found all the ferns and mosses flourishing brilliantly. Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum* L.) probably has the longest flowering season of any plant in this area. Its pink flowers can be seen on rocks in forested areas early in the spring and flowers could still be found at the end of October this year. A Musk Mallow (*Malva moschata* L.) was blooming on a roadside bank this week and there was even one pathetic dandelion. Many spring flowers bloomed for a second time this autumn and this happened previously, only a few years ago. It seems to be a symptom of global warming. Hopefully we shall soon have a good snowfall to cover everything up before the ground really freezes. That is the best scenario for plants.

Please Support our Sponsors.

Remember to register with trip leaders for outdoor programs.

Have you renewed your membership?

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

Young Naturalists Have Flocked Together!

By Krista McKee

The Young Naturalists theme this year is "Birds of a Feather-Flock Together" and they will be discovering: feeding the birds, environmental games, Bluebirds, building Bluebird houses, bird banding, native traditions and more!

We are 27 participants strong! Weather has not on our side for the September and October meetings but we have persevered. The Young Nats have enjoyed learning predator and prey teachings with outside environmental games – even the adults take part (to keep warm). The Bluebird Trail was mapped out in the Arboretum Extension "Trees of Grey and Bruce" by Merle Gunby, Grey Sauble Arboretum Alliance and Lorne Smith, the Bluebird Man (Sydenham Sportsmens Association). Thanks to Glenn McKee for installing the steel stakes. The Young Nats will be building the Bluebird nesting boxes in March and erecting them. The Young Nats will be monitoring bluebird activity in April, May and June. We are very excited about this project!

The Youngs Nats have been keen in creating crafts to attract birds to their own backyards: collecting food sources for the birds for the creation of fall wreaths and pine cone feeders. The assistance from the parents has been outstanding! A big thank you to Stephanie Hargrave and Cindy Cartwright (Owen Sound Field Naturalists), and Monica Banz (parent), for their help and support!



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@bmts.com
www.cedarholme.bb-bruce.com



Justin Trudeau: The Importance of Preserving our Environment

By Dian Wood

Justin Trudeau was the keynote speaker for the 2006 Ontario Co-operating Associations Workshop sponsored by the Friends of MacGregor Point Provincial Park, held at the CAW Centre in Port Elgin on September 30th. The workshop was organized for co-operating associations with provincial, national or municipal parks, museums and historic sites, and for members of groups involved in preserving the natural and cultural history of Ontario. Many members of the OSFN were present in the audience of 800 who listened to Justin Trudeau.



The evening began with a slide presentation of nature photos, and then Justin came up through the audience to a chair set up on stage. In his warm, confident and easy oratorical style so reminiscent of his father, former Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau,

Justin simply spoke off the top of his head about climate change, oil reserves, the Alberta tar sands, the automobile and combustible engine, reducing meat consumption, the four R's of recycling (reduce, reuse, recycle, recover), solar energy, wind farms, Kati-mavik and becoming involved in politics. His message was similar in content to that of Al Gore's in *An Inconvenient Truth*. However, Justin did not use any graphs nor did he back up his presentation with scientific data. His information was very general and lacked factual content.

For the future, Justin envisioned clean energy for Canadian homes, with each home having its own

wind turbines and solar-collecting cells, and being attached to the electrical grid to sell surplus power to the grid or to buy power when needed. Justin concluded that wind farms, solar energy and nuclear energy are the three greenest forms of mass-production energy and the best choices for preserving our environment for future generations. He downplayed the danger of nuclear waste believing that the radioactivity of spent fuel rods for 110,000 years will be shortened through scientific research. In attendance, there were some members of the audience that privately disagreed with Justin's opinions and facts, especially in reference to wind farms and nuclear energy. Justin then proceeded to answer questions from the audience. Several individuals were concerned about the proposed wind farm project to be located near Ripley, southeast of Kincardine, equal in size to the largest now in Canada, involving Sunco Energy Inc., EHN Wind Power Canada and Enbridge Inc.

Overall, the audience was very appreciative of Justin's visit to Bruce County and several members conveyed their sincere admiration for his father, Pierre Elliott Trudeau.



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!



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



Down A Country Lane
Bed and Breakfast

Gord and Ellie Cox
R.R. #3
Warton, ON, Canada
N0H 2T0

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

Outdoor Education Centre Grand Opening

By Cindy Cartwright

A Dream Come True—Following years of fundraising and planning, the Bluewater District School Board was proud to hold the Grand Opening for the new dormitories, kitchen and dining hall at the Institute for Outdoor Education and Environmental Studies between Oliphant and Wiarton. The new building replaces three old portables that had housed the students for many years. Planning is underway for the next stage of construction which will replace the portable classrooms.

Grand Opening ceremonies for the new building were held on the weekend of October 20. Special guests attending the Gala Grand Opening on Friday night were treated to some of the magic that the students experience at the Centre when an exciting visitor, a Northern Saw-whet Owl, dropped in to be banded. On Saturday, members of the general public attended ceremonies which included a historical overview of the site, guest speakers, tours of the site and the new buildings.

The former Bruce County School Board was one of the first school boards in Ontario to open a residential Outdoor Education Centre during the early 70s. The tradition of Outdoor Education has remained strong through amalgamation with the Grey County Board (to become the Bluewater Dis-



Up close and personal – Gala participants touch a tiny owl while Cindy Cartwright answers questions. Photo by Doug Pedwell

trict School Board) and recent government cutbacks to outdoor education. While most other school boards in Ontario have closed their residential centres, the Bluewater Board has made changes to guarantee that our centre will remain open to students. We are very proud of the strong commitment to Outdoor Education in this area. The transfer of the property to the Bluewater Education Foundation earlier this year was another step to secure the future of the centre. More information can be found at www.bluewater-edfoundation.org/news.html



Rankin Resource Group

By Cindy Cartwright

After much discussion and several years of planning, the viewing tower at Isaac Lake has been completed and the Grand Opening was held on October 15th. The tower overlooks the ponds. Funding for this tower was provided by the Protection and Enhancement Grant program. Unfortunately, this valuable program was cancelled with the most recent change in provincial government.

The Rankin Resource Group is a community partnership organization committed to protecting the natural ecology of the Rankin River watershed and providing public access to these resources.

In the photo, clockwise are Bruce-Grey MPP Bill Murdoch, Rankin Resource Group Vice-Chair Ted Wilford, Arnie Clark, and Bruce Stewardship Network Coordinator Craig Todd

Photo by Elizabeth Cleminson

Spotlight on the Niagara Escarpment

By Joan Crowe

Calling all high school students within 100 km of the Escarpment! Pull out your video cameras and show us the importance of preserving the Niagara Escarpment!

The Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment (CONE) is holding the Niagara Escarpment Video Contest. Videos should be 2 – 5 minutes in length. Contest entries must be received by March 30, 2007. Entries will be judged on both the content and creativity. Prizes will be awarded to the top three videos as selected by our judging panel. Go to www.niagaraescarpment.org for details.

The purpose of CONE's video contest is to provide a fun and rewarding way for students to learn about the many values of the Escarpment to Ontario. This



video contest is part of CONE's outreach project, which is sponsored by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Current prize sponsors are Mountain Equipment Co-op (Toronto) and Suntrail Outfitters (Hepworth, Bruce County).

CONE is a non-government, non-profit coalition of conservation organizations, community groups and concerned citizens dedicated to the protection of the Niagara Escarpment, a World Biosphere Reserve. Founded 28 years ago, our work includes promoting Escarpment protection, monitoring development proposals, carrying out educational projects and fostering public appreciation of the Escarpment. The Owen Sound Field Naturalists have a representative on CONE.

The Millenium Seed Bank

By Joan Crowe

Kew Gardens is a familiar name in the botanical world. Starting out in the 18th century as a royal pleasure Garden at Kew Palace; under the guidance of William and Joseph Hooker it blossomed into a world class botanical research institution.

Their latest project has been the establishment of the Millenium Seed Bank which opened in 2000 at Wakehurst Place, the Kew annex near Hayward's Heath in Sussex. Its aim is twofold. First, to conserve seeds of 24 000 plants from around the world which are in danger of extinction and second, to preserve seeds of all U.K. species. This is not as easy as it seems since some of the rarest species almost never produce seeds.

The seeds are housed in climate-controlled underground vaults. Under the right conditions seeds can

survive for an incredibly long time. Seeds of a Lotus flower found in an ancient Egyptian tomb were germinated a few years ago. More recently, packets with 32 different kinds of seed which had been collected in South Africa 200 years ago, were found in a book in the Royal Dutch Library. The scientists at the seed bank have succeeded in growing 3 of them. According to models of seed survival the toughest of cereal seeds should have died under those less than ideal conditions, which included travel by sailing ship and a period in the Tower of London!

The seed bank has an interesting exhibition open to the public and outside a series of parterres (raised beds) growing plants which illustrate examples of British ecosystems such as shorelines and bogs. Wakehurst is an interesting place to visit with extensive gardens and a lovely 16th century house.

Website Review: Walter Muma's websites.

By Don Rawls

For those of us that rely heavily on pictures to identify plants that we see, this one on Ontario plants is one to add to your favorites. Actually a series of web sites by the same author all with a link to each other included (see his "other sites"). Walter says that this is very much a work in progress and has pages about wildflowers, trees, ferns, grasses, mosses and several other related subjects. The wildflow-

ers are indexed by Latin name, common name, color and even by the number of petals. Quality of the pictures is very good and details of the plant also include the page number in Newcombe, Peterson and ROM.

The main sites of interest are:- <http://ontariowildflowers.com/>, <http://ontariotrees.com/>, <http://ontarioferns.com/>

The Winter 2007 Program at a Glance

Indoor Programs

All indoor meetings will take place in the auditorium of the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library at 7:00 p.m. Following a social time and announcements, the speaker of the evening will present at 7:30.

Thursday, February 8, 2007	Monarch Migration and Conservation
Thursday, March 8, 2007	Karst on Your Doorstep
Thursday, April 12, 2007	Enigmatic Line in the Sand and Master Stonemasons

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 most outings. Please call the contact person indicated about a week before the outing.

Saturday, February 17, 2007	Signs of Winter Life, Bognor Marsh
Saturday, March 31, 2007	Red-Necked Grebe Survey, Dyer's Bay

OSFN BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2006

President: Lorraine Brown, 519-372-0322 lorraine@apropos.ca

Vice-President: Fred Jazvac, 519-797-3332
jazvacfb@bmts.com

Past president: Freeman Boyd, 519-538-4368 fboyd@log.on.ca

Secretary: Lynne Richardson, 519-599-3618
lynne.richardson@mnr.gov.on.ca

Treasurer: Marg Gaviller, 519-371-5149 mgaviller@bmts.com

Membership: Jim Ansell, 519-376-2775 jansell@sympatico.ca

Program: Dian Wood, 519-422-1514
saublebeach@hotmail.com

Editor: Cindy Cartwright, 519-389-2585 pom@bmts.com

Publicity: Jim Duncan, 376-4616 j_duncan@yahoo.ca

Hospitality: Anne & Stan Cathrae, 519-371-2853
acathrae@bmts.com

Jr. Naturalists: Stephanie Hargrave, Monica Banz, & GSCA
(Krista McKee) 519-376-3076

Member-at-Large: Judy Duncan, 519-376-4616
j_duncan@yahoo.ca

Member-at-Large: Jean Maher, 519-376-6016



Dian Wood and a new friend.

Photo by Jim Ansell