



Owen Sound
Field Naturalists



Celebrating 20 years 1989-2009!

Hart's-Tongue Herald

The Newsletter of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists
Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7
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Volume 21, Number 3
Editor: Cindy Cartwright

Monarch Butterflies were the topic of discussion at the October Young Naturalists Meeting.

Audrey Armstrong, was the guest speaker and Young Nats volunteer, Rheanne Perry, dressed up as a butterfly so that the group could interact with the presentation.



2008 Christmas Bird Counts in Bruce and Grey

To participate in any of the following Christmas Bird Counts, contact the compiler.

Date	Area	Compiler	Phone / Email
Sunday, Dec 14	Wiaraton	Joe Johnson	519-534-2736
Wednesday, Dec 17	Tobermory*	John Haselmayer	519-596-2444 ext. 302 john.haselmayer@pc.gc.ca
Saturday, Dec 20	Hanover/Walkerton	Dorothy Kings	519-389-5387
Saturday, Dec 20	Owen Sound	Freeman Boyd	519-538-4368 fboyd@log.on.ca
Sunday, Dec 28	Meaford	Lynne Richardson	519-599-3618 lynne.richardson@mnr.gov.on.ca
Monday, Dec 29	Kincardine	Ralph Knowles	519-396-5580 remak@bmts.com
Saturday, Jan 3	Saugeen Shores**	Cindy Cartwright	519-389-2585 pom@bmts.com

* There will be a social the night before at Tom and Sharon Williamson's at 53 Grant Watson Drive. The park can provide accommodation if anyone wants to come up the night before. There will be a pre-count breakfast at 7:00 a.m. on count day, and a post-count chili dinner and tally at 5:00. Both will be held at the Bruce National Park Visitor Centre.



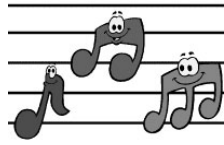
** Participants for the Saugeen Shores CBC will meet at 7:30 a.m. (location to be determined) and the post-count dinner and tally will be held at MacGregor Point Provincial Park at 5 pm

November surprise *photo by James Turland*

The 12 Ways of Christmas

On the first day of Christmas my true love said to me,

“Let’s replace our lights with energy saving L E D s”.



Okay, it doesn’t quite fit the music but it leads in the right direction. Christmas activities and gifts have an effect on the environment long after the holiday season has ended.

Here are twelve suggestions to help decrease our impact on the environment:



LED lights will be on sale once Christmas is over so consider buying them during the holiday sales to decorate your home for future years.

Buy locally. Gifts made in China may be cheaper but the environmental footprint left to ship it across the world is huge!



Even when turned off, most modern electrical appliances use energy to remain in “instant-on” mode. This is known as phantom load and adds up to over 1,000 kWh each year in the average home. A gift of power bars will allow your family and friends to stop this energy waste with a flick of a switch.

Provide rechargeable batteries with every gift that uses batteries – cameras, toys, flashlights, radios. If you want to take it to the max, use a solar powered inverter to recharge the batteries.



How about programmable thermostats? Is there someone on your list who would appreciate being able to save energy during the day while they are away and still come home to a warm house in the evening?

How about a rain barrel for your gardening friends? It collects and stores water to provide an environmentally friendly source of soft water that doesn’t contain chemicals from treatment plants.



Wrap presents in reusable cloth bags or designer boxes. Try a different colour or design for each family member. They can be used all year for other occasions such as birthdays.

Giving a computer to someone this year? Laptop models use significantly less power than the traditional desktop computers.

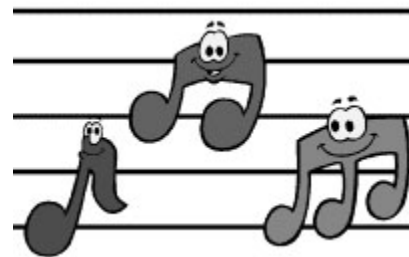


Some people like to give appliances as gifts, often chipping in with other family members to cover the cost. Make sure all new appliances are energy star rated and have energy saving options.

Quality, refillable water bottles make great gifts for the outdoors lover on your list. Give bottles that are easy to clean, hard to damage, and have hooks, clips or handles for easy carrying along the way.



Serve local food for your holiday meals. Give a list of locations to your guests. Then continue to look for local meat, produce, herbs and seasonings throughout the year to decrease the environmental effects of shipping foods over thousands of miles from other parts of the world.



**We wish you a Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

Important Announcement

Change of location for monthly meetings

The library auditorium is not available for the months of January, February and March for our indoor presentations. The children's section of the library is being renovated and the books will be relocated to the auditorium during this time. As a result, our indoor meetings will be moved nearby to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, which is just north of the library on the same side of the street. Although, the front of St. Andrews is located at 865 Second Avenue West, it can be easily accessed from First Avenue West by a driveway. Use the same parking as previously for meetings.

The room we are holding our meetings in is a rugged-in area that seats 150 people and has a welcoming look to it. It also provides us with ample hospitality room. Coffee mugs will not be available, so please bring one from home.

OSFN would like to sincerely thank St. Andrew's for making this inconvenience a minor one.



Remember to bring your own mug or refillable water bottle to meetings.

Young Naturalists

by Stephanie Hargrove

September was a busy month for many families as children returned to school and extracurricular activities began. Nineteen Young Naturalists took 2 hours on a Sunday afternoon to enjoy being together in the quiet of the woods as we gathered for our first meeting of the 2008-2009 program. There were salamanders to hunt for under the rocks and fallen logs. Sleepy salamanders, reminding us that the earth was preparing for rest. That afternoon also included answers to the question "what is a tree worth?" The children reflected on the contribution of trees to the environment, for the animals and learned how the financial worth of a tree is calculated. They also collected leaves for an experiment on "why some leaves change colour".

As the beautiful show of fall colours surrounded us in October, the children were introduced to the journey of the Monarch Butterfly with Audrey Armstrong. She described the Monarch, their lifecycle and the migration of these beautiful butterflies. Audrey invited a guest, Brooke Giles, from Flesherton who has won many science fair awards with her Monarch Butterfly Project. Abbey Woodhouse also shared with the group stories and reflections of her time at Camp Kawartha last summer.

With snow on the ground in November, the Young Naturalists turned their attention to the night sky during an afternoon spent with John Hlynialuk. He shared his interest in Comets and Meteors in a presentation called "Wanderers in Space".

The afternoon finished with a hunt for space rocks, magazines for the children to take home and lots of information for them to think about and share with their friends and families the next time they are sitting under a dark, clear night sky watching for shooting stars.



Sauble Ski Trail Hike

by Beryl Lougher

Here are some pictures of the hike into Sauble Ski Trail. We didn't get too far in our 2 ½ hours as Peter and others found lots of interesting plants, trees and a few mushrooms to view as well as the Spring peeper, Red Eft and Gray tree frog (pictured below). The weather cooperated. We ended the day at Sauble Falls where a lone Great Blue Heron was searching for food.



Hike participants: Jim Smith, Joe Johnson, Bob Daisley, Peter Middleton (leader) and Eileen O'Connor

Membership Reminder

Memberships are due in September each year and are a major source of funding to support our programs and activities.

Single membership: \$20
Family/couple: \$30

Please renew your membership at the next indoor meeting, or use the membership form included with the Fall newsletter and send a cheque to:

Owen Sound Field Naturalists
Box 401
Owen Sound, N4K 5P7

We thank everyone who has already renewed for their continued support.

OSFN Supporting Ontario Nature's Greenway Initiative

by Fred Jazvac

Ontario Nature has begun an initiative called the Greenway Project.

“A greenway is a network of natural areas, made up of core lands and waterways of conservation value connected by corridors that allow the passage of wild species between them. A variety of land uses occur within greenways, including agriculture, hunting, woodlot management and other resource uses that sustain the quality and ecological viability of wildlife corridors and habitats. The purpose of greenways is to maintain and enhance the conditions that are necessary for native species to flourish.”

They are starting first in Bruce and Grey Counties as a pilot because we seem to be more blessed with intact forests and wetlands than most other counties of Ontario. OSFN is fully supporting ON's initiative as collaborators. We have Cindy Cartwright as our representative on the steering committee and we send additional reps to all other meetings who will in the future sit with other working groups assigned to a specific task. Much time, effort and money will go into the Grey-Bruce Greenway Project and the residents, the flora and fauna will all be richer for it.

Ontario Nature is proceeding with representatives from landowner groups, fishing and hunting groups, farmers' organizations, county planners, conservation and nature groups. To attain full agreement ON is using a consensus strategy. Compensation for procuring land and for keeping Greenway land out of production has been proposed with money coming from business, government, donors etc. As further developments occur, we will keep you posted.

Visit the OSFN's website at www.osfn.ca



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2009 Winter Program

Thursday, January 8

POLES APART: A Visit to the Ends of the Earth

When we think of the polar regions of the world, thoughts are often dominated by visions of sweeping snowfields, icebergs and emptiness. Although all 3 images apply, the Arctic and Antarctic regions are vastly different and varied. Life abounds, almost defying logic, and seasons alter the landscapes dramatically. Yet there is trouble in these distant and frozen Edens. This program will compare the polar regions and what is happening to them, as global warming and other environmental pressures affect their vast and remote landscapes.

Presenter: Peter Middleton

Sunday, February 1

2:00 pm-4:00 pm

CROSS COUNTRY SKIING at Colpoy's Bay

There will be a small trail fee for this Bruce Ski Club trackset trail. MEET at 2:00 pm at Tim Horton's in Warton.

PLEASE pre-register with trip leader Harriet Nixon: 519.534.0426 or harrietrnixon@bmts.com BEFORE Sunday, February 1st.

Thursday, February 12

STAR GAZING FOR BEGINNERS

Can't tell the difference between a star, planet, galaxy or a globular? The Star Lady, Donna Giesler, will show you the Winter Hexagon of Stars and introduce you to the wonderful world of Backyard Astronomy! Be prepared to go outside for part of this presentation!



Saturday, February 28

MUSHROOM SHOPPING and X-COUNTRY SKIING!

We'll say goodbye to winter with a visit to Northern Woods Specialty Mushrooms in Markdale to buy some of their specialty mushrooms, then head to the nearby Glenelg Ski Trails where Blain Horsley will lead us on an easy late winter ski outing. (Cost per person to use trails is \$8)

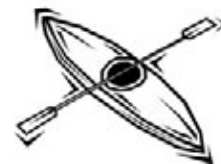
Register with Lorraine: lorraine@apropos.ca or 519-371-4096



Thursday March 12

SCIENCE PEERS INTO THE TIME LINE

Park Ecologist Scott Parker will present the results of various park studies that have looked at our changing environment. Pollen and post-glacial climate; lakebed diatoms and presettlement water quality; airphotos/survey notes and landscape change; DNA and population isolation; and field notes and inland fish communities. The Annual General Meeting will follow this presentation.



Thursday, April 9, 2009

KAYAK JOURNEY: Marathon to Thornbury, Ontario

On a paddle and a prayer: a 53 day solo kayaking pilgrimage through middle-age and the landscape of Lake Superior and Georgian Bay with Brian Goodings. Find out how to prepare for a long-distance kayak trip and see nature at its best in this unique adventure.

Ontario Nature Great Lakes West

Region by *Lorraine Brown*

On Saturday November 13, the Great Lakes West regional meeting of Ontario Nature took place at the home of Lorraine Brown and Andrew Armitage. There were about 22 people in attendance representing the following clubs from Ontario Nature's Great Lakes West Region: Friends of Macgregor Point Park, Guelph FN, Huron Fringe FN, Kitchener-Waterloo FN, OSFN, Saugeen FN, Stratford FN, Sunfish Lake Association, Upper Credit FN and representatives from Ontario Nature, including Peter Gilchrist, the director of their board.

Reports: Saugeen FN mentioned the concern about lighting levels at the proposed new WalMart in Port Elgin, and their work, in collaboration with OSFN and the Bruce County Astronomical Society, to convince WalMart and the Town of Saugeen Shores of the deleterious effects of the planned and unnecessary high light levels for the WalMart parking lot. Ontario Nature may develop a resolution to fight intensive lighting here and in other developments around Ontario. They are also working on resolutions regarding gravel pits close to water tables and wind energy projects.

SFN have also established a conservation award and are working on their constitution, the Bruce Clean Water Festival, and stewardship of the Kinghurst Nature Reserve including arrangements to have snowmobilers re-routed to stay out of the reserve.

Friends of MacGregor reported that they are hosting Ontario Nature's AGM next year during the Huron Fringe Birding Festival. Doug Pedwell from FMPP also reported on the trails they are developing to connect park trails to the local rail trails.

The Guelph Field Naturalists are working with the City of Guelph to create a 'pollinator park' at a capped landfill site. It will be planted with species that attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds. GFN are providing volunteers for

the project. They also have a Naturalists in Training (NITs) group for kids who outgrow the young nats program but still want to stay involved.

The Kitchener-Waterloo Field Naturalists partnered with the City of Kitchener and the Waterloo Stewardship Network to hold a family-oriented Earth Day celebration April 26. Five hundred people (!) came out to participate in Chickadee nest box building, bird silhouette cuttings, nature walks, viewing aquariums containing local fish and presentations from Sciencesational Snakes. Their Trillium funding is now over, but the partners plan to continue the project with funding from the city.

OSFN reported on work on our new website, which will include checklists (ferns, birds, butterflies) that can be downloaded; work to develop an email list of local organizations who share similar environmental interests to facilitate immediate action about emerging issues; and plans for a community conservation award to recognize individuals and groups for their efforts on behalf of nature.

The Stratford Field Naturalists have started regular Sunday walks from 9 to 11am during the summer. The walks are advertised at the tourist office, and attract both locals and tourists. They are getting from 8 to 20 people, some of whom become new members.

The Sunfish Lake Association has formed an association of associations called the Grand River Environmental Network (GREN) www.gren.ca. They meet monthly.

Ontario Nature gave an update on their Greenway initiative in Grey and Bruce. Mapping to determine the best locations for corridors for wildlife is now complete. They are working with County planners and other local organizations, and will be holding another meeting here in January.

It was inspiring to hear what other clubs in our region are doing.

Area Events

The “**We All Live Downstream**” exhibit will open on January 17th at the **Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre** in Southampton.

Learn about the relationship between human activity and the use/abuse of this precious natural resource.

Joe Crowley, the Reptiles-at-Risk Project Coordinator for Ontario Nature, will be speaking at the **Saugeen Field Naturalists** meeting on **Monday Feb. 16** about his research on the reptiles in the ON Nature reserves found in Grey and Bruce counties. This information will also tie in neatly with the Greenway project of Grey/Bruce.

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Welcome to our newest members!

Amy Blackwell
Andre DenTandt
Paul and Linda Matthies,
Spencer Bruin
Sydney Caldwell
Callie Cameron-Grieco
Cole and Lance Davey
Olivia Duwyn
Alex Madill
Alyssandra McFadden
Wade and Jordan Reynolds
Matthew Struthers
Dylan Williams
Donna Giesler
Neils and Judy Munk
Mike and Helen Penfold
Walter Muma and Julie Liptak
Casey Lunman
Renee Fedun and David Wells
Beryle and Tony Sharp
Amber Robinson Family
Richard and Elaine Mason
Joan O'Reilly
Richard and Felicity Langstaff
Vicki Lee
Susan Wallace
Andrew Koshan
Huntsville Nature Club

Members are reminded to notify Jim Ansell at 519-376-2775 or jansell@sympatico.ca when they have a change of phone number, mailing or email address.

Long Time Ago in Owen Sound

paraphrased from historical information provided by Clarke Birchard

Sometime prior to 1972 there was a Grey-Owen Sound Naturalists Club which had officially disbanded but a small, informal group of naturalists continued to meet from time to time in Owen Sound. The late Nels Maher and Tom Murray were both in that group. It is believed that Peter Middleton was also involved in the group.

In 1975, the Saugeen Field Naturalists were formed and held meetings in Durham. Several carloads of people traveled from Owen Sound to Durham for each meeting and at some point prior to 1988, one of them asked "Why are we driving all this way each month? We have enough people to begin a new club in Owen Sound."

The first meeting of the new organization, the Owen Sound Field Naturalists, was held in January 1989. **Happy 20th Birthday, OSFN!**



Over the next year we would like to include historic photos and stories about the OSFN activities over the past 20 years. Members are welcome to send photos, articles and anything else they feel would be interesting about the early years of the club. Submissions for the next newsletter should be sent to the newsletter editor by March 1st. Photos should be in jpeg, articles should be unformatted in Times New Roman.

E-Newsletter

Many organizations have switched to electronic newsletters in their efforts to save money on postage and printing. This allows them to use the savings for club projects and activities.

The benefits to members include:

- ✓ receiving a newsletter with colour photos,
- ✓ quick and easy ability to save and store the newsletter on the computer or disk,
- ✓ immediate delivery of the newsletter when it is published instead of waiting for it to arrive in the mail.
- ✓ helping the environment by using less paper

The Hart's-Tongue Herald is available to any member who would like to receive an electronic version simply by notifying the newsletter editor (Cindy Cartwright pom@bmts.com) or membership director (Jim Ansell jansell@sympatico.ca).

Members will continue to receive a paper copy of the Hart's-Tongue Herald in the mail unless they request the email version.



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Red-Spotted Newt

Notophthalmus viridescens

Latin name: *Notophthalmus* - *noto*, for back and *ophthalmus* for eye referring to the spots (eyes) on the back of this amphibian; and *viridescens*, from *viridis* meaning green which refers to the usual greenish colour of this species. The common name is derived from the red-spotted appearance of this newt. There are four recognized sub-species, two of which occur in Canada: the eastern red-spotted newt, and the central newt.

Salamanders and newts belong in the order Amphibia, along with frogs, toads and caecilians - a legless, salamander-like animal. Salamanders and newts can be found in the Americas as well as the temperate regions of Europe, Asia and Northern Africa.

Salamanders and newts are not lizards, who belong in the order Reptilia, although they are often mistaken for them because of their similar appearance. What separates salamanders and newts from lizards is their life history and some less noticeable physical characteristics. Salamanders have soft, moist skin without scales and lack claws and external ear openings. Salamanders and newts may live a totally aquatic, semi-aquatic or terrestrial life. Semi-aquatic species spend most of their life on land, but have one or more aquatic phases. The Red-spotted Newt, an inhabitant of Ontario forests, lives its juvenile phase as a terrestrial life eft, but lives its adult phase as a semi-aquatic animal usually spending winters on land.

Salamanders and newts have tadpole-like larvae with external gills, which can feed immediately after hatching from frog-like eggs. Both larvae and adults are carnivorous and eat insects and small invertebrates. Larger adults are able to eat fish, frogs and other salamanders. Salamanders and newts are generally nocturnal and spend their days hidden underneath leaf litter or rotting logs.

Newts live in grassy or weedy ponds. Breeding males develop a high wavy crest on their tails. Newts eat mostly the immature stages of pond insects, particularly midges.

Newts lay eggs singly on the leaves and stems of pond plants in April and May. By August or September the aquatic larvae change into a juvenile stage called a red eft. This elegant little creature is bright red or red-orange, with two rows of black-bordered red spots.

The red efts then migrate to lakeshore and woodland habitats to mature. You may see them crossing wet highways at night in August and September. Though seldom seen in daytime, efts are active in the forest litter on rainy nights. After about two years living in damp woods, they return to the ponds as adult newts for the rest of their lives.

Editor's note: This information was obtained directly from the Nature Conservancy, Ministry of Natural Resources, and Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History websites.




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Measuring Carbon Footprints

The University of Guelph has an online “carbon calculator” that allows you to measure how much carbon dioxide you are emitting and compares you to other people in Canada. A quick trial run of the calculator showed that my footprint is 2.4 tonnes of CO₂ per year and the average person in Canada shows 9.8 tonnes/yr. The action section suggests a variety of ways to decrease your footprint. The calculator is available at www.zerofootprint.net/calculators/guelph



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The Winter 2009 Program at a Glance

Indoor Programs NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION FOR JANUARY TO MARCH ON PAGE 3

January 8	Poles Apart: a Visit to the Ends of the Earth
February 12	Star Gazing for Beginners
March 12	Science at Bruce Peninsula and Fathom Five NPs
April 9	Kayak Journey

Outdoor Programs The outdoor program 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.

February 1	Cross Country Skiing at Colpoy’s Bay Trail
February 28	Mushroom Shopping and Cross Country Skiing at Glenelg Ski Trails
April 18	Ephemeral Pond Exploration

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photo courtesy of HWW