

# ***Hart's Tongue Herald***

---

**The Newsletter of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists**

**Summer 2019**

**Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7**

**Volume 32 Number 2**

Website: [owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca](http://owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca)

*Editor: Norah Toth*



## **President's Report**

We have another great slate of evening presenters and day-time events planned for the fall / winter of 2019-2020. Thank you to John Dickson who plans these programs for your benefit.

The OSFN have been approached by several groups and individuals wanting support for projects or issues which are important to them. I feel it is important for all our members to realize that each board of the field naturalists has their own expertise, agenda and interests. We are volunteers with varied backgrounds and, the current board is cautious about following up on issues upon which we may not be well versed. A new challenge for the membership is the fact that a larger portion of the board are carrying full-time jobs which results in less time available to research and become familiar with local issues of which we may not initially have in depth background. For these reasons, your current board is not taking on an advocacy leadership role.

When we are able, we will most likely provide you with general information from other groups who have the expertise to know about issues that may affect the resources found in Grey Bruce. These groups may include the Ontario Nature, Environmental Defence, David Suzuki Foundation and others who we know have researchers and legal advice readily available to them.

Locally, we will be glad to let the membership know of concerns such as the Leith Beach, but your current board does not have the knowledge and is not in a position to take or lead action related to local issues.

We have been approached by the Ministry of Natural Resources related to the possible divesting of some Class 1 Wetland property along the Lake Huron shoreline. Since this is part of the same complex as the Oliphant Fen, we deemed this as important for us as a club to follow up on. Willy Waterton is taking the lead on this.

NeighbourWoods North continues to forge ahead with some major projects and the maintenance of the forest at

the Owen Sound hospital site. I was pleased to hear that the Feast in the Field fund raiser for NeighbourWoods North was a huge success! Congratulations to their organizing committee for all the hard work that went into this event.

Thank you to Elaine Van Den Kieboom for coordinating our Young Naturalists program. As field naturalists we know that knowledge of the natural world is necessary in order for the next generation to value, appreciate and enjoy the uniqueness of our area. I am pleased to let you know that there are plans to continue this program.

Every so often people cross your path who impress you with their passion and love of local resources. This summer I heard about the passing of two former club members who did just that. Bill Crowley often attended our indoor meetings. He would drive up from Port Hope, attend our meeting, stay in a motel, perhaps visit some of his favourite botany locations on the peninsula and then return home. Dorothy Kings was from Saugeen Shores. A life-long learner, who continuously nurtured a curiosity about the natural world, her true love was birds. She participated in the Baillie Birdathon, various other Citizen Science projects and many local Christmas Bird Counts. Another friend of our Grey Bruce area was Bob Day who was best known for his involvement in the creation of Fathom Five National Marine Park and Bruce Peninsula National Park. Bob managed to get the local communities to support the establishment of these two beautiful protected spaces.

Gordon Toth, President

### **We Welcome New Members:**

Coleen & Addison Daciw, Hillary Hopps, Krista McKee, Ingrid Remkins, Ian & Vicky Thompson

-----

**One of the first conditions of happiness  
is that the link between man and nature  
shall not be broken.**

Leo Tolstoy

The Ginger Press Bookstore  
848 Second Avenue East  
Owen Sound, Ontario  
N4K 2H3  
519 376-4233  
1 800 463-9937



# **Club News**

## **Butterflies and More**



*Common Ringlet on a daisy. Credit: Wendy Howell*

Chris Rickard, an active member of the Board of Directors of the Toronto Entomological Society, led a Butterfly outing at Bognor Marsh on June 27, 2019. It was a hot sunny day, which attracted quite a few naturalists. Unfortunately, very few butterflies were observed at this location. However Wendy Howell documented our sightings to include Northern Crescent (6), Red-spotted Purple, Common Ringlet (3), Tiger Swallowtail (2) and White Admiral. Participants also saw many damselflies and dragonflies. Audrey Armstrong recorded Ebony Jewelwing, Eastern Pondhawk, Chalk-fronted Corporal and Sedge Sprite.



*While walking a section of the Bruce Trail in Bayview Escarpment Provincial Nature Reserve, Mark interpreted spring on the forest floor of a maple dominated forest. Credit: Bill Hatten*



*The butterflies at Bognor Marsh brought out the kid in everyone! Credit: Wendy Howell*

## **Birding Bayview Escarpment**

On June 9, popular naturalist and former OSFN President Mark Wiercinski led a birding hike at Bayview Escarpment Provincial Nature Reserve. Many warblers and thrush were observed. Mark encouraged everyone to practice listening several layers deep into the forest.

In addition to the birds, many flowering plants and various trees species were identified. These included what Mark called “Doug Larson” trees, very old Eastern White Cedars. These cedars grow on the north side of the Escarpment and are typical of the ones studied by Professor Larson, a former teacher of Mark’s when he was a student at the University of Guelph.

Learning experiences were very much an integral component of this casual hike.



*A “Doug Larson” Eastern White Cedar. Credit: Bill Hatten*

# *A Plover Love Story.....Ms Green Dots and Mr Blue Bands*

Two pairs of endangered Piping Plover nested at Sauble Beach this summer, marking the 13<sup>th</sup> year of a recovery effort for the species at the beach. Bird Studies Canada oversees the recovery program at Sauble as well as the few other nesting beaches in Ontario, taking over from MNRF last year and bringing new ideas and effort to the program.

Locally at Sauble the "Plover Lovers" group of volunteers monitor the plovers throughout their breeding season. Plovers live tough lives. They compete with throngs of beachgoers for a nesting niche on the beach. They fend off natural predators that abound in unnaturally high numbers due to the availability of food beachgoers leave around. They have their favorite feeding areas along the beach disrupted and damaged by high water levels, wave uprushes, wrack-line raking, and the constant push of people simply enjoying the beach. The Plover Lover volunteers do what they can to educate beachgoers and encourage them to share a bit of the shore with the birds.



*Mr Blue Bands and chicks. Credit: Kirsten Snoek*

The plovers themselves help make this job easier. Monitoring them over time reveals secret details of their very interesting lives. These stories are fun to track and we find they fascinate families at the beach. So, we often tell beachgoers the story of Ms Green Dots and Mr Blue Bands.

Ms Green Dots (named for and identified by the green dots on one of her leg bands) hatched on a Michigan beach in 2015. In 2016, she came to Sauble and paired with "Mr. Lonely", a male who had spent the whole previous summer at Sauble without finding a female friend – after all Piping Plovers are endangered and there are so few around! Lonely and Green Dots soon had four eggs on the go, but part way through the 28-day incubation he fell victim to an overnight predator! Green Dots had to abandon their nest as plovers share "domestic" incubating duties and she simply couldn't go it alone.

However, the nesting instinct prevailed and Green Dots soon hooked up with "Port Boy", a male who had nested at Port Elgin in 2014, but had not found a female at Sauble Beach in 2015, or as yet in 2016. They nested, but Port Boy was also predated! So Green Dots, at only 1 year old, had already lost two mates and two nests.

After a winter "down south" Green Dots returned to Sauble Beach and paired up with 3 year-old "Mr Blue Bands" (named for and identified by the blue bands on both his lower legs). They scraped out their nest in the foredunes by the river and laid 4 eggs. But trouble was brewing! Blue Bands did not like incubating! Plover males take their fair and equal turn at incubation and switch the female off on a regular schedule. Blue Bands however, would show up late for his 'shift'. He didn't like to settle right down to business. He would frequently get off the eggs while on duty and run about picking up tiny shells, pebbles or grasses, tossing them around the nest. Once, he somehow knocked an egg right out of the nest cup as he was squirming around! However, he bumped it back into the nest before Green Dots was any the wiser!! But despite Blue Band's being something of a deadbeat dad at first, their four eggs hatched and they all made it to fledging (flying).

## *Hospitality at Meetings*

At each meeting, coffee and tea have been provided so that you have the chance to socialize. Marian Goldsmith, Julie Lamberts, Audrey Armstrong and Norah Toth share this job. If anyone else is able to help out the club by preparing and serving coffee and tea, please contact Norah Toth—ntoth@rogers.com

To help provide coffee supplies, a financial donation has been welcomed at the coffee table.

**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*



## ***A Plover Love Story Continued...***

In 2018 their plover love story continued! Green Dots and Blue Bands arrived back at Sauble again on different dates, but after a bit of beachcombing, found each other again and reunited. They fledged two chicks last year. Blue Bands by now had become a very attentive dad, and stayed with the chicks weeks after Green Dots turned her domestic duties over to him, and headed south for the winter on her own. Women on the beach generally applauded Green Dots for being such an independent plover! Meanwhile the chicks left Sauble Beach July 18<sup>th</sup>, then were found on August 4 by a picture-taking kayaker, on Chantry Island! Blue Bands finally headed down to Key Biscayne for the winter, where he and his blue bands were reported on December 7.

This spring we eagerly and hopefully awaited the return of this pair for a third year in a row, and were happily surprised to find them back on the beach in late April. This continued our opportunity to study their life histories. Volunteers watched again this season as they laid and hatched out four eggs, lost 2 chicks and fledged the other two. The data volunteers collect on



*Mr Blue Bands. Credit: Hayley Roberts*

this pair informs our knowledge-base on plover's ages, longevity and mortality, mate and nest site fidelity, nest site selection and affinity, egg hatches, chick fledging rates and dispersal from natal sites, and overall a chance to peek into the fascinating lives of an endangered wee bird family and discover new ways to support their recovery. While we're not

exactly sure how much love is involved in this 'love story' on the part of the plovers, we know there is plenty on the part of the volunteers and the people who become engaged on the beach. If you want in on this story next year, sign up now to volunteer as a plover lover and a citizen scientist!

---

## ***Book Review***

### **Eager: The Surprising, Secret Life of Beavers and Why They Matter**

By Ben Goldfarb

Chelsea Green Publishing, 2018, 286 pages with index and notes, 8 pages of colour photos

The subtitle says it all, and should be reason enough for anyone – beaver lover or not – to read this book. But let me add just a bit more information and opinion.

Beavers are unquestionably the architects of the Animal Kingdom. They not only re-shape landscapes, they create monumental changes. So often throughout history leading to the present day, those changes have not suited humans, the "owners" of the land. This book demonstrates the many ways in which beavers benefit the landscape *and* human needs and activities. Ben Goldfarb offers hundreds of examples, researched and written in meticulous detail, of people from different walks of life working to bring back beavers in the United States and the United Kingdom (the author's budget likely didn't run to making trips up to Canada but he did contact several Canadians eagerly beaver-ing away on behalf of North America's largest rodent – I know this from my email

correspondence with him).

Ben Goldfarb's writing is erudite, eloquent and just plain enjoyable. Here's one of my favourite passages:

"To my knowledge, the world's largest collection of beaver-themed tchotchkes, knickknacks, and memorabilia is housed on an oak-shaded street in Martinez, California, in a home whose front porch is guarded by a mural the size of a picture window – a reddish beaver, stick grasped in forepaws, tail raised in salutation. The dim interior has the feel of a shrine. Beaver magnets cling to the refrigerator; plush beavers perch atop the bureaus; a gallery's worth of beaver paintings, prints, and posters stare down from the walls. Gnawed stumps rest next to the fireplace.... The curator of this collection is a candid, vivacious woman named Heidi Perryman, a child psychologist who, through willpower and single-mindedness, has become one of the planet's foremost authorities on *Castor canadensis*."

*Eager* is rich in stories, many with happy endings and positive outcomes for farmers, ranchers, fishermen, environmentalists, anyone willing to see beavers from a different perspective. If you're not already a "Beaver Believer", I'll bet this book will make you one.

I want to acknowledge the traditional territory of the Anishinabek Nation: the People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa and Pottawatomi Nations. I give thanks also to the Saugeen First Nation #29 and the Chippewas of Nawash unceded First Nation, collectively known as the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, the traditional keepers of this land. As Field Naturalists we accept our responsibility to be good stewards of this land, in this time and into the future.

# ***Giant Hogweed (Heracleum mantegazzianum)***

*Adapted from Giant Hogweed Fact Sheet by Ontario.ca/invasive species*

Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), also known as Giant Cow Parsnip is a perennial plant and a member of the carrot family. It is a garden ornamental from southwest Asia that is naturalizing in North America and becoming more common in southern and central Ontario. Giant Hogweed has the potential to spread readily and grows along roadsides, ditches and streams. It invades old fields and native habitats such as open woodlands and is known to shade out native plants, although its impact in Ontario is not fully known.

The greatest concern relates to its clear watery sap. This sap contains toxins that can cause severe dermatitis (inflammation of the skin). You can get severe burns if you get the sap on your skin and the skin is then exposed to sunlight. Symptoms occur within 48 hours and consist of painful blisters. Eye contact with the sap has been said to cause temporary or possibly permanent blindness. Coming in contact with Cow Parsnip and Wild Parsnip can cause similar reactions.



*Giant Hogweed. Credit: A quick reference guide to Invasive Plant Species, Ontario Invasive Plant Council.*

## **Quick Tips**

- Plant type:** Herb. Mature plants can be over 3 metres tall.
- Arrangement:** Alternate.
- Leaf:** Lobed leaf 1-2 metres wide, lobes sharp-pointed.
- Bark:** n/a.
- Seed/Flowers:** Small, white flowers in a large umbrella-shaped cluster, 0.75 metres wide.
- Buds/Stem:** Hairy stem with purple spots.
- Habitat:** Fresh to wet soils in forests, swamps, meadows, marshes.
- Similar native species:** Cow parsnip (*Heracleum maximum*) – has smaller flowers, no purple spots on stems. Purple-stemmed Angelica (*Angelica atropurpurea*) has a rounded-topped flower cluster and leaves divided into many leaflets and the stem is hairless.

Do not touch Giant Hogweed because it is poisonous. If you do, wash your skin immediately in cool soapy water and do not expose to sunlight.

If you think you have Giant Hogweed on your property or if you see it in your community please call the Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711 or report your sighting online at [www.invadingspecies.com/Report.cfm](http://www.invadingspecies.com/Report.cfm). You will be asked to send in photos for identification. Do not collect parts of the plant for identification.



## *Grange Hollow*

Gardens & Nursery

Chatsworth, ON  
(519) 794 - 3444

[grangehollow@gmail.com](mailto:grangehollow@gmail.com)  
[www.grangehollow.ca](http://www.grangehollow.ca)

Official Supplier of the  
**Butterfly Gardens of Saugeen Shores**  
[www.butterflygardensoff.ca](http://www.butterflygardensoff.ca)



EDMUND (Ted) J. STEVENS  
KELLY L. GRAHAM  
JOHN D. MIDDLEBRO'  
NICHOLAS A.G. LOVELL  
ALEXANDER M. WADE

Tel: (519) 376-8730  
Fax: (519) 376-7135

**MIDDLEBRO' & STEVENS LLP**  
Barristers & Solicitors  
P.O. Box 100, 1030 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. East.  
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 5P1  
[www.mslaw.ca](http://www.mslaw.ca)  
[ms@mslaw.ca](mailto:ms@mslaw.ca)

General Law Practice

**TRUST.  
HELP.  
ANSWERS.**



## **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



## **PROGRAM LISTINGS**



*Butterfly Hike at Bognor Marsh. Credit: Wendy Howell.*

The Owen Sound Field Naturalists (OSFN) advocates and nurtures the appreciation, understanding and conservation of our natural world as is exemplified in our motto—Knowing Nature Better. We were created in 1989 to provide Owen Sound and area naturalists with the opportunity to meet like-minded individuals and to share activities that would allow them to increase their understanding of natural history and conservation. Today, we have over 150 members and are a member club of Ontario Nature.

**Indoor meetings** are held on the **second Thursday** of the month, September to May in the auditorium of the **Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library at 7:00 p.m.** In June, the Annual General Meeting starts at 6 p.m. with a potluck supper and is held at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church. Guest presenters are chosen to provide a wide range of topics. Their expertise covers natural history subjects that may be local, provincial, national or international in scope. Indoor meetings are open to the public.

The OSFN also provides a full schedule of **outdoor activities** throughout the year. On these outings, members learn and share first-hand knowledge about the flora, fauna and geography of this region. Participation numbers are usually limited on most outings to ensure the quality of the experience and to reduce impact on the environments visited. Pre-registration is required for outdoor activities.

**Please note that all programs and schedules are subject to change. To avoid disappointment, please check [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca) for updates (changes to dates, speakers, locations, etc.) or watch for an e-herald from [newsletter@owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca](mailto:newsletter@owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca) We thank you for understanding.**

[www.owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca](http://www.owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca) P.O. Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7

**The Young Naturalist Program**—Set aside these dates for the fall— **September 29**—Grey Sauble Conservation Headquarters —Registration & Salmon Spawning Hike. **October 27**—The Pottawatomi area with Judy Robinson. **November 24**—To Be Announced. E-heralds will be sent out with specific information about these Young Naturalists activities.



# *Outdoor Programs*

Pre-registration is required. Participant numbers are limited on most outings to ensure the quality of the experience and to reduce the impact on the environments visited. Please call or email the listed contact to register.

All events and times are subject to change – visit [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca)

**Tuesday, August 27, 2019 · 1:30 p.m. - 4 p.m. Sarawak Saunter** with David Morris. Explore the diverse flora near Indian Falls. Easy to medium. **Register:** 519-376-1304 or [davidtmorris@rogers.com](mailto:davidtmorris@rogers.com) **Limit:** 12

**Ongoing in September.** Help slow the advance of Dog Strangling Vine. For information, contact team leaders Bill Moses [bill.mosesos@gmail.com](mailto:bill.mosesos@gmail.com) or Nancy Brown [loheelm82@gmail.com](mailto:loheelm82@gmail.com)

**Tuesday, September 10, 2019 · 9:30 a.m. - Noon. Lower Indian River Excursion** with David Morris. Emphasis on flora and intriguing geology of the gorge. Rough, uneven footing. **Register:** Same as Sarawak Saunter above.

**Thursday, September 19, 2019 · 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. An Autumn Ramble at Anglesea Nature Trails & Managed Forest** with Don Rawls. Ferns, trees, erratic boulders and history in the Klondike Hills. **Register:** 519-794-0561 or [rawfam46@gmail.com](mailto:rawfam46@gmail.com) **Limit:** 16.

**Sunday, September 22, 2019 · 1:30 p.m. - 4 p.m. "Forest Bathing"** with Neil Baldwin. Engage with nature in new ways through relaxation and opening your senses. **Register:** 519-794-0129 or [offgridretreat@naturemail.ca](mailto:offgridretreat@naturemail.ca) **Limit:** 12.

**Saturday, September 28, 2019 · 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Leisurely Owen Sound Bruce Trail Hike** with Beth Gilhespy. Experience some of the Escarpment's most interesting geological features, first hand. **Register:** [beth.gilhespy@gmail.com](mailto:beth.gilhespy@gmail.com) or 519-835-9331 **Limit:** 25.

**Wednesday, October 9, 2019 · 9:30 a.m. - Noon. Lake Eugenia Water Birds** with David Turner. Discover the avian delights of this birding hot spot. **Register:** 519-924-3560 or [fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com](mailto:fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com) **Limit:** 16.

**Saturday, October 12, 2019 · 9:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Bob Knapp Old Growth Forest Hike** with Bob Knapp. A 6 km hike in Marshall Woods. Bring water and snack. **Register:** 519-371-1255 or [rmknapp@yahoo.com](mailto:rmknapp@yahoo.com) **Limit:** 16.

**Saturday, November 2, 2019 · 1 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Dynamics, Lifecycle Stages and "Nature" of Gravel Pits** with Neil McLean, Hydrologist. You will visit several sites. **Register:** [jwdickso@gmail.com](mailto:jwdickso@gmail.com) **Limit:** 16

**Sunday, November 10, 2019 · 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Birding Around the Bay - Waterfowl & More** with Erik Van Den Kieboom & Kiah Jasper. Meet at front of Bayshore

Community Centre, Owen Sound. **Register:** [erikkieboom@outlook.com](mailto:erikkieboom@outlook.com) or [kiahjasper@gmail.com](mailto:kiahjasper@gmail.com)

## **Annual Christmas Bird Counts – December 2019**

All OSFN members are invited to participate and assist with counts across Grey Bruce. Watch HTH and e-Herald for dates and contacts for the Owen Sound, Meaford, Saugeen Shores and Wiarton CBC's or visit <https://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/cbc/index.jsp?targetpg=mapviewer&lang=EN> and zoom to the circles near you.

**Thursday, February 13, 2020 · 9:45 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Nordic Ski Over the Grasslands of Sarawak & Along the Indian River** with Beth Anne Currie & John Dickson. Meet at Beth Anne's on Grey Rd 1 & car pool to ski location. Warm up & chili lunch at Beth Anne's! All ages! **Register:** 519-376-7237 or [bethannecurrie@sympatico.ca](mailto:bethannecurrie@sympatico.ca)

**Saturday, February 29, 2020 · 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Who Made Those Tracks & Why? An Interpretive Late Winter Tracking Hike** with Jeff Kinchen. Learn how to observe, and recognize nature's clues. **Register:** 519-374-4236 or [bognors.finest@gmail.com](mailto:bognors.finest@gmail.com) **Limit:** 12.

**APRIL 22, 2020 is EARTH DAY Special Events TBA, during Earth Week**

**Saturday, April 25, 2020 · 9:30 a.m. - Noon. Birding the Waters of the Beaver Valley** with David Turner. Tundra Swans & more during spring migration. **Register:** 519-924-3560 or [fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com](mailto:fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com) **Limit:** 16.

**Wednesday, April 29, 2020 · 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. An Interpretive Hike Searching for Trail-marker Trees at Neyaashiinigmiing** with Lenore Keeshig. Bring lunch. Meet at intersection of the Boundary Road & Sydney Bay Road. **Register:** [lenorekeeshig@gmail.com](mailto:lenorekeeshig@gmail.com) **Limit:** 12.

**Wednesday, May 27, 2020 · 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Springtime Woodland Stroll** with John Bakker & Christina Milani. A tour of their richly diverse and mostly wooded property. **Register:** 519-376-7098 or [milanicvm1999@gmail.com](mailto:milanicvm1999@gmail.com) **Limit:** 16.

**Sunday, June 7, 2020 · 7 a.m. - 11 a.m. Birding, Botany & Ecology at Bayview Escarpment Forest** with Mark Wiercinski. Tune your ears and open your eyes to experience the forest in spring. **Register:** 519-379-0437 or [Mark.Wiercinski@forces.gc.ca](mailto:Mark.Wiercinski@forces.gc.ca) **Limit:** 20.



## **Outdoor Programs continued...**

**Wednesday, June 24, 2020 · 1 p.m. Piping Plovers** with Lynne Richardson. Visit Sauble Beach to learn about the valiant efforts of these (super cute) endangered birds who raise their wee cotton-ball chicks on a busy public beach. **Register:** lynnerichardson@rogers.com **Limit:**15.

**Mid to Late June TBA Butterflies & More** with Chris Rickard. All ages. **Register:** crickard@sympatico.ca or 705-444-6671.

**All events and times are subject to change – visit [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca)**

## **Indoor Meetings**

Indoor meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month from September to June. They start at 7:00 p.m. at the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library, 824 1st Avenue West, Owen Sound. Remember, bring a coffee mug to meetings. All events and times are subject to change. Visit [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca) for updates and added events.

**September 12, 2019 Beth Gilhespy *The Geology of the Niagara Escarpment***

Beth is the past CEO of the Bruce Trail Conservancy and a geology enthusiast. She will delight you with a presentation on the geology of the Niagara Escarpment.

**October 10, 2019 Dr. Stéphane Menu *Birds on the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula: Changes across the years—2002—ongoing (forever?)***

Stéphane is the Station Scientist of the Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory at Cabot Head. Research started here in 2002; and continues.

**November 14, 2019 Adam Shoalts *Beyond the Trees***

Best-selling author Adam Shoalts launches his newest adventure book, *Beyond the Trees*, the story of his nearly 4,000 km solo journey across Canada's Arctic. He will share pictures from his recent expeditions as Explorer-in-Residence of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society. Included are experiences tracking rare snakes, sleeping alone in polar bear territory, canoeing through arctic ice and photographing elusive wildlife.

**December 12, 2019 Peter Middleton *We call it a garden. They can call it home***

Peter's talk focuses on the role gardens play as habitat for birds, in a time when bird populations face ever mounting challenges to their survival. Essential elements of habitat will be considered and how they can be achieved through planning. "The elements will be illustrated using our garden as a model. The place of birds in the planet's biological diversity is a constant sub-theme."

**January 9, 2020 Dr. Brent Patterson *Wolves and Coyotes in Ontario: Population Status and Recent Research***

Dr. Patterson spoke to us in 2014. He will provide an update and discuss the status and ecology of wolves and coyotes across the province as well as an overview of ongoing and recent research on wolves and coyotes. Topics will include life history, abundance, feeding habits, livestock depredation and advice on how to avoid conflict with coyotes.

**February 13, 2020 Marg Gaviller *The Horses of Sable Island....Plus the journey "back to Newfoundland"***

Sable Island horses, originally domestic animals, are now the main occupants of the island. They roam freely in the natural environment, comfortably in the temperate summers but battered by high winds and ferocious storms in the winter, and without human interference. These feral horses are, indeed, a joy to behold.

**March 12, 2020 Members' Night - Brian Robin Coordinating**

A potpourri of OSFN members' slides, displays, art, collections and compositions focusing on the natural world. A limit of 10 minutes for each presentation is preferred. Register yours with Brian Robin at [robin.brian@gmail.com](mailto:robin.brian@gmail.com) or 519-363-3204.

**April 9, 2020 Resilience – Transforming our Community**

Scientist Dr. John Anderson's climate change research makes this global crisis a personal issue, right in our own backyard. Designed to inspire action, this uplifting film, directed by Liz Zetlin, offers ways to build resilience in ourselves and our community by transforming the way we live.

## Indoor Meetings continued....

### **Celebrate Earth Week with Jarmo Jalava, Renowned Ecologist**

**Saturday, April 18, 2020 2 p.m. Jarmo Jalava *Relationships with Nature, as told through slides, stories and song***

In this multimedia presentation, ecologist, writer and songwriter, Jarmo Jalava will explore perspectives gained working and traveling as an ecologist, conservationist, avid birder and keen naturalist in a range of cultures and settings across Ontario and around the world. \$5 Tickets available in December. Held aboard the MS Chi-Cheemaun. For more information [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca)

Sponsored by

***Caframo***



**OWEN SOUND  
TRANSPORTATION CO.**

### **May 14, 2020 Bob Bowles *A Turtle Talk***

If Turtles Could Talk. Learn about Ontario's Turtles and more with Bob Bowles, a turtle's best friend. Bob will advise what people can do to help turtles. "They are coming under great pressure now with habitat loss due to development, increased traffic and people who have no regard for these interesting creatures."

**June 11, 2020 @ 6 p.m. SHARP Last meeting of the year.**

### **ANNUAL MEETING, POTLUCK SUPPER & PRESENTATION**

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 865 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. W, Owen Sound

Bring your own plates, cutlery and cup or mug, and bring a food dish to share, along with serving utensils.

**7 p.m. Alexis Burnett *Foraging for Edible and Medicinal Plants***

This presentation will focus on the ethical way to harvest plants from the wild for food and medicine. Alexis will talk about both native and non-native plants and will explore what it means to work with these groups of plants in a way that helps to sustain and regenerate local populations. As the popularity of foraging increases, it is more important than ever to learn what plants can be harvested in a sustainable manner.



OSFN has convenient donation options for those who wish to financially support the ongoing charitable work of the Club. Our website includes a "Donate" tab, with

secure access through Canada Helps. Canada Helps generates a receipt for income tax purposes. Donations can also be made in person, at the monthly meetings and via the mail.

*Thank you*

***Caframo***

***for supporting the Young Naturalists Club  
& our Earth Day Keynote Lecture Series.***

## ***Membership Application and Renewal Form***

**Name (s)** .....

**Address** .....

**Telephone**..... **E-mail (s)** ..... Check here if renewal.....

(your e-mail will be used for the OSFN e-herald, last minute notices and digital receipt of the newsletter)

**Membership Category:** Single (\$25)..... Family (\$40)..... Student (\$15)..... (payable by cheque or at [www.osfn.ca](http://www.osfn.ca) through Paypal)

**Donation** for LEAF (Local Education and Action Fund, promoting & fostering knowledge about nature) .....

**Donation** to Lorraine Brown Conservation Fund (supporting land acquisitions & interpretive infrastructure in Grey/Bruce) .....

**Donation** to NeighbourWoods North—Urban Trees .....

**(Donations may be made by cheque or on-line using Canada Helps at [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/owen-sound-field-naturalists/](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/owen-sound-field-naturalists/))**

By signing this form, I am agreeing that OSFN may contact me by phone or e-mail .....

We hereby confirm that e-mail and mail lists will not go beyond the OSFN. (See privacy policy at [owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca](http://owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca))

Membership is due in September each year and can be paid in cash or by cheque at any indoor meeting or by PayPal on the website. The OSFN Membership is current from September 1 to August 30 each year. Please complete and detach this form and submit it with your payment.

Owen Sound Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7

Charitable Registration # 76335 4321 RR0001

# *Climate Change could Devastate Painted Turtles*

An Iowa State University biologist is sounding the alarm for the painted turtle, one of many reptiles for which climate change could prove particularly threatening.

Fluctuations in temperature driven by climate change could devastate a range of species for which sex is determined by temperature during critical stages of development, according to recently published research led by Nicole Valenzuela, a professor of ecology, evolution and organismal biology. Rising temperatures, along with wider oscillations in temperature, could disrupt the ratio of males to females in painted turtle populations and threaten the survival of the species, Valenzuela said. The research was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Scientific Reports*.

Painted turtles undergo temperature-dependent sex determination while developing inside the egg. Eggs exposed to warmer temperatures tend to produce females, while cooler temperatures tend to produce males, Valenzuela said.

Numerous turtle species -- as well as crocodilians, some lizards and the tuatara -- undergo temperature-dependent sex determination. And increasing average temperatures combined with stronger thermal fluctuations that result from climate change could lead to drastic shifts in the demographics of those species, she said, eventually leading to population collapse and possibly extinction.

Valenzuela and her coauthors exposed eggs from Iowa to temperatures recorded in nests from three different painted turtle populations in Iowa, Nebraska and Canada from which the proportion of males and females was also recorded. Valenzuela said that allowed the experiments to compare the responses of multiple painted turtle populations, which revealed that not all populations exhibit the same sensitivity to temperature.

Valenzuela's previous studies exposed turtle eggs to constant temperatures in a laboratory to gauge the impact on sex determination, finding that an increase of about 4 degrees Celsius can mean the difference between a nest that produces only males and a nest that produces only females. But those experiments failed to account for the fluctuations nests encounter in the wild. Follow up studies with the simplest possible fluctuations (cycles of 12 hours

5 degrees Celsius above and 12 hours of 5 degrees Celsius below those constant values) caused sex reversal, or the process of some eggs producing males despite warmer average temperatures. Valenzuela hoped that if similar fluctuations caused sex reversal in natural nests, it could counter the effect of warmer temperature averages, alleviating the effects of climate change.

Valenzuela's most recent experiments found this not to be the case, however. In a lab experiment that exposed eggs to temperature fluctuations mimicking conditions found in nature, and to conditions in which the oscillations were exaggerated to mimic climate change scenarios, the researchers discovered the trend still points toward nests

producing a high proportion of females. The research showed that cooler temperature profiles that would tend to produce males trended toward females when the temperature fluctuations intensified. Embryos from warmer profiles, on the other hand, remained female or died when the fluctuations intensified.

"If what we found is

generalizable to other species with temperature-dependent sex determination, this is bad news," she said. "If an average increase in temperature is accompanied by greater variance, we'll see populations becoming unisexual faster than anticipated. The greater oscillations add to the effect of just higher average temperature."

Valenzuela said loss of habitat and exploitation has already left many turtles vulnerable to extinction, and climate change only adds to the peril these species face.

"The whole message here is the potential effects climate change can have on these species and the importance of our findings for conservation," she said. "Turtles are the most vulnerable group of vertebrates, and many use temperature-dependent sex determination."

**Journal Reference:** Nicole Valenzuela, Robert Litterman, Jennifer L. Neuwald, Beatriz Mizoguchi, John B. Iverson, Julia L. Riley, Jacqueline D. Litzgus. **Extreme thermal fluctuations from climate change unexpectedly accelerate demographic collapse of vertebrates with temperature-dependent sex determination.** *Scientific Reports*, 2019; 9 (1) DOI: 10.1038/s41598-019-40597-4

Materials provided by Iowa State University. Iowa State University. "Climate change could devastate painted turtles." *ScienceDaily*. ScienceDaily, 13 March 2019. <[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/03/190313114731.htm](http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/03/190313114731.htm)



*Credit: Nicole Valenzuela*



# *The Terrestrial Salamanders of Grey Bruce*

During the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association's October field trip Kevin Predon, Bruce County Forester, talked about the importance of ephemeral or vernal water pools and the role they play in supporting forest dwelling amphibians. Terrestrial salamanders benefit from ephemeral pools in upland forests. There are six species of salamanders found in Grey Bruce representing four different families - each with different life cycles.

**Terrestrial salamanders** have a number of common features: they live their entire life within the humus and soil of the forest floor; their forays to the surface for feeding and mating are usually nocturnal and coincide with warm, wet, calm conditions; they are among the most energy efficient of the vertebrates - converting roughly 90% of what they eat (mostly invertebrates - worms, slugs, insects) to mass and energy (humans convert roughly 25% of what is eaten to energy); some live 20+ years; low fecundity but high survivorship; body temperatures fluctuate with the local substrate; have small home ranges with complex social systems of territoriality and aggression; are a food source for vertebrates such as snakes, herons, racoons; in undisturbed forests, their densities often exceed the biomass of other vertebrates.

Probably 98% of salamander sightings will be the eastern red-backed which seems to occur under most over-turned bits of forest debris. Despite the high density, it is unlikely you will find the other three species of salamander unless you venture out with a flashlight early on a relatively warm, rainy evening in the early spring when salamanders are moving from the forest toward the water's edge to breed.

The terrestrial salamanders are divided into two families - the **mole salamanders** (*Ambystomatidae*) and the **lungless salamanders** (*Plethodontidae*) with two species each in Grey and Bruce. Both families have the ability to lose their tails to a

predator or if roughly handled but regrow the tail although usually shorter and of a slightly different colour.

The name **mole salamander** comes from their habit of staying underground or beneath objects or forest litter except when breeding. They breed in the early spring, as soon as the snow melts, in ephemeral ponds, ditches or shallow lake edges. Eggs are laid in small clusters and hatch in a few days. The larvae are chunky little creatures with relatively large external gills and well-developed tail fins. They are carnivorous and voracious, feeding on small aquatic invertebrates. They only have front legs at hatching but soon develop hind legs. Aquatic larvae colouring varies making it difficult to identify species. Transformation to

adults generally occurs in July or August depending on the size of the pond and the temperatures of the year. Young quickly disperse to the forest. Sexual maturity is reached in about three years. We have two species of mole salamanders in Grey Bruce. Both prefer moist, closed-canopy deciduous or mixed woodlands. They are uncommon in disturbed habitats.

The **Yellow-spotted Salamander** is fairly stout with a broad head and rounded snout. It is black to dark brown above with two irregular rows of yellow spots running from the back of the head to the tail. It can grow to 20+ cm.




*Yellow-spotted Salamander. Credit: Brian Robin*

The **Blue-spotted Salamander** is relatively small reaching only 13 cm in length. It is black to blueish-black with dark undersides and has intense white or blueish flecking on its sides and underside.

The **lungless salamanders**, with over 230 species, are the largest salamander family in the world. All lack lungs; they breathe through their skin and membranes in the mouth and throat. Their skin must remain constantly moist or they lose the ability to transfer oxygen. Both Grey Bruce species are rather small and narrow-bodied. They live in undisturbed moist woodlands and retreat below the surface in hot, dry weather and in the winter. Their breeding habits are slightly different.

The very common **Eastern Red-backed Salamander** is quite



Toby Bruce & Kelly Rogers  
RR 4 Chatsworth, Ontario  
N0H 1G0  
☎ (519) 794-3335  
✉ kellybeee@rogers.com

## Chatsworth Honey

HONEY • BEES WAX • QUEENS & NUCS • POLLINATION



## Juice up your life!

"In the **HEART** of  
Downtown Owen Sound"

**VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT  
JUICE BAR - SMOOTHIES**

Gluten-free, Dairy-free  
& Vegan Options

945 - 2nd Avenue East  
Owen Sound, ON N4K 2H5

519-270-8570  
thebleedingcarrot@gmail.com  
www.facebook.com/TheBleedingCarrot

### *Salamanders continued...*

small, up to 12 cm, and has two colour phases. The redback



*Red-backed Salamander*

**Credit:** Brian Robin

phase has a red or orange-red stripe running from the back of the head to the middle of the tail while the leadback phase lacks the red stripe and is dark on back and sides. In both phases, the belly has a "salt and pepper" appearance.

Breeding can occur in the fall or the spring. A cluster of 5 to 15 eggs is laid in early summer and suspended in a cavity underground or in a rotten log or stump. They complete the

gilled larval stage within the egg and hatch as miniature adults in about six weeks. The young stay with the female until the remnant gill buds are absorbed then disburse throughout the forest. They grow to sexual maturity in two to three years.

The **Four-toed Salamander** is a very small (up to 10 cm), slender, reddish to greyish brown with only four toes on each hind foot. The belly is white or greyish with black or light blue specks and the long tail narrows where it meets the body. Mating occurs in the late summer or fall and egg laying occurs in the early spring. A cluster of 15 to 60 eggs is suspended on overhanging vegetation, preferably sphagnum moss, over or very near shallow water. The female usually stays with the eggs which hatch in about six weeks and wriggle or drop into the water. The aquatic larvae metamorphose into the terrestrial form in about five weeks. They reach sexual maturity in three years.

**Submitted by:** Jim Coles

### *NeighbourWoods North*

The Hospital Forest has flourished. Trees that survived the spring drought in 2018 loved the wet spring of 2019; as did the seedlings that were donated, planted and mulched in the fall of 2018 and the spring of 2019. But of course, Mother Nature never sleeps. A variety of grasses and other aggressive plants have responded to this year's heat and moisture and are competing with the seedling trees. Volunteers have weed-wacked, watered and mulched to help the baby trees thrive!

The Healing Path is beginning to define itself in the southwest corner of the hospital property. Skirting around the helipad, a 15-metre strip of unmowed grass now has a path through it! Two Sugar Maples planted this spring at the southwest entrance to the trail are thriving; two Red Maples planted at the south entrance are struggling! We will nurse them along. A variety of further plantings are being discussed.

Requests for funding have been submitted and include a wheel chair accessible trail which will circumnavigate the hospital and The Welcoming Garden at the front entrance to the hospital.

On August 10, 2019, "A Feast in the Field" was enjoyed by 100 eager beavers who managed to purchase their tickets before they were "sold out"! This was a fund-raiser for The Healing Path. At it, we also celebrated the recent opening of The Gleason Brook Winery. A hearty thank you to Jackie and Tim Dixon who generously offered to make their new winery available for this event and who donated many hours and dollars toward its success.

Stay tuned and get involved. Volunteers are always welcome.

Email Lloyd Lewis at: [rhiandlloyd@gmail.com](mailto:rhiandlloyd@gmail.com)

**Submitted by:** Gord Edwards & Lloyd Lewis

### ***2018-2019 OSFN Board of Directors***

**President:** Gordon Toth, 519-376-2918,

**Vice-President:** Pam Kinchen, 519-370-0527,

**Past-President:** Kate McLaren, 519-538-1897,

**Secretary:** Julie Lamberts,

**Treasurer:** Elaine Mason, 519-372-0597,

**Membership:** Gordon Toth, 519-376-2918,

**Publicity:**

**Website:** Brian Robin, 519-363-3204,

**Conservation/Stewardship:** Chuck Mitchell, 519-378-3885,

**NeighbourWoods North:** Gord Edwards, 519-794-2315,

**At Large:** Deane Atherton,

**At Large:** Lynne Marie Sullivan

**At Large:** Kaitlin Almack

#### **Supporting the Board**

**Hart's Tongue Herald/E-Herald:** Norah Toth, 519-376-2918,

**Program/Publicity:** John Dickson, 519-376-3789

**Archivist:** Lynne Richardson,

**Owen Sound CBC:** Erik Van Den Kieboom,

**Young Naturalists:** Jody Johnson, 519-370-2000,

#### **Board Liaison**

**ALUS:** Chuck Mitchell

**Arboretum Alliance:** Bill Moses & Dennis Knight

**Parks Advisory Committee, Bruce Peninsula National Park/Fathom**

**Five National Marine Park:** Willy Waterton & Jan Pugsley

**Ontario Nature:** Audrey Armstrong

**Piping Plover Committee:** Lynne Richardson

**Rankin Resources Group:** Beth Anne Currie

**Stewardship Grey Bruce:** Norah Toth



## **Community Conservation Award**



John Dickson presents the Community Conservation Award to Lloyd Lewis. **Credit:** Bill Hatten

*The Community Conservation Award is designed to recognize citizens within the Grey - Bruce who in some way have made a significant contribution toward the welfare of the natural world through stewardship, restoration, protection or other actions deemed beneficial to natural habitats or species.*

Lloyd Lewis received this award at the 2019 Annual Meeting of the Field Naturalists. It was presented to him in recognition of his vision, courage and team-building in the creation of NeighbourWoods North. Lloyd perceived the need, and the opportunity, for an Urban Forest nurturing program, and then sought out the support of the OSFN and the community. He was inspired by the success of Toni Ellis with NeighbourWoods in Elora, and followed through to bring this dream to fruition in Owen Sound, inviting others in the community to share the dream, its ownership and rewards. The trees in the ground and the exciting plans for future projects ensure a magnificent legacy of which Lloyd, and all who have supported NeighbourWoods North, can be proud.

## **Honorary Life Membership**

An Honorary Membership is provided to someone who has been OSFN members for ten years or if they fill one or more of the following criteria: they have made a major contribution to the study of the natural world either through their career or through their hobby and interests; they have made a major contribution in education about the natural world, either as a particularly dedicated school teacher or adult educator, or through being active in organizing the activities of the Young Naturalists club or similar organizations for ten years or more; they have made a major contribution to the OSFN, either through a high degree of participation in OSFN projects or by being a member of the Executive for 15 years or more; they have made a major contribution to the protection and preservation of natural areas in Grey and Bruce counties.

At the 2019 Annual Meeting, Norah Toth was provided an Honorary Life Membership in recognition and gratitude for her hours of volunteer leadership and exemplary communication skills that have benefited the OSFN and supported the Hart's Tongue Herald newsletter. Her work in generating and supporting the Huron Fringe Birding Festival, the Bruce Birding Club and the Bruce Peninsula Bird Observatory have been remarkable. Her direction and



Beth Anne Currie presents an honorary membership to Norah Toth. **Credit:** Bill Hatten

leadership with Stewardship Grey Bruce over 15 years have influenced countless projects that restore, protect and enhance wildlife habitat across Grey and Bruce counties. Combined efforts in outreach and education in the recovery plan for endangered Piping Plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) along the Lake Huron shoreline typify Norah's belief that collaborations benefit countless generations to come!



## *The Rescue*

On the morning of July 24th, I was washing my hands when an unidentifiable bird smacked into the bathroom window about eight feet above the ground. I went outside to look for the bird, but it was nowhere to be found. I presumed it had flown away.

The next morning, I went out to fill two birdbaths with fresh water. As I stepped back from the first bath, there was a fluttering commotion at my feet and a bird scurried toward the plant leaves in front of me. I was able to gently catch the bird (a female Baltimore Oriole), which I presumed was the one that struck the nearby window the preceding day.

Its wings and legs looked to be intact, but as it struggled and stumbled along the ground, it would nose-dive into the ground like a small plane when it crashes nose first. I picked it up and placed it in a large cardboard box in the house. I thought it likely had suffered some neurological damage or concussion because of its apparent incoordination. It was unable to right itself from the supine position on its back to the prone or standing positions without my help.



The next morning I expected to find the bird lying dead in the box. However, to my surprise, she seemed alert and was 'jumping' around the box. I borrowed a large birdcage from a friend and placed the Baltimore Oriole in it. Over the next few days, the bird's steady improvement was remarkable. Initially, she could only jump towards, and often miss, the rung perches

in the cage, but soon she was able to grab and support herself on the rungs.

Within three days, on a diet of cool fresh grape pieces, mulberries, meal worms and water she was flitting and flying about the cage. Occasionally she would overshoot the mark when landing on a rung, but she quickly would regain her balance without falling.



Her coordination improved over the next couple of days and her appetite was hard to satisfy. By the sixth day, the bird was fully active in the cage and seemed ready and anxious for release back into the real world. Her cage had been placed on an outside porch on a few occasions from where she could see and hear some of her avian friends.

On the morning of Thursday August 1st, I released the Baltimore Oriole from my hands. To my delight, and that of my wife and my two young granddaughters, it took off like an Apollo 11 rocket, flying unerringly into an apple tree in our orchard about thirty yards away. It then flew into an adjacent mulberry tree.

There was no apparent incoordination in her flight pattern, although I think she appeared to dip her wings in appreciation as she flew off. I'm confident that after her week of recovery with us, she is now able to resume his normal life, healthy and free again.

A nice story with a sad beginning, but a happy ending indeed.

**Submitted by:** Paul Hiscox



**SUNTRAIL**

**SOURCE FOR  
adventure**

Quality outdoor equipment & clothing for the camper, backpacker, canoeist & kayaker.

Canoe & Kayak sales and rentals.

Sea Kayaking trips & instruction.



519-935-2478 1-877-882-2958 [www.suntrail.net](http://www.suntrail.net)

Highway 6 in Hepworth [suntrail@amtelecom.net](mailto:suntrail@amtelecom.net)



**Joanne Veerman** B.Sc., B.Ed.  
BROKER

*Attentive, professional service.*

**519-376-9210**  
900 10th Street West  
Owen Sound, ON  
N4K 5R9



Helping you is what we do.

**ROYAL LEPAGE** RCR Realty, Brokerage  
Independently Owned & Operated

[www.joanneveerman.ca](http://www.joanneveerman.ca)



Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7



## Knowing Nature Better

The Owen Sound Field Naturalists advocate and nurture the appreciation, understanding, and conservation of our natural world. We are like-minded individuals who enjoy programs and activities that help us increase our understanding of natural history and conservation in Grey-Bruce.



*Jack-in-the-Pulpit (Arisaema triphyllum).* **Credit:** Bill Hatten



*A Red-backed Salamander seen during an organized hike at Bayview Escarpment Provincial Nature Reserve.* **Credit:** Bill Hatten

## Facebook

Do you use Facebook? Both the Owen Sound Field Naturalists and NeighbourWoods North have active Facebook pages. Consider becoming a Friend so that you can keep informed about a variety of nature topics of interest both locally and at a distance.