

Hart's Tongue Herald

The Newsletter of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists

Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7

Website: owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca

Summer 2022

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Editor: Norah Toth



President's Report

I hope all of you are enjoying your summertime. Owen Sound Field Naturalists (OSFN) has organized a number of activities throughout the summer. As your new president, I urge you to partake in what is being offered.

The OSFN Board met briefly to approve support for an activity being undertaken by The Sustainability Project. This project involves the development of a so called "Tiny Forest" on the grounds of the Peninsula Shores District School in Wiarton. As an active member of Neighbourwoods North, I am familiar with this concept; it is very much in keeping with our mission here at OSFN.

Beyond that, as president, I have been inundated with requests to place OSFN's support behind various groups making appeals to the government to take action regarding climate change. For the most part, we have done so. As you are aware, the news becomes more and more distressing regarding droughts, floods, melts, changes in the distribution of vectors of infectious disease, reduction in food production capacity and more. Unfortunately, these alarming changes are beginning to pit one generation against the other. Those of Greta Thunberg's age see older generations having shamelessly consumed and polluted the planet. Sadly, this view is true. We are guilty, not on an individual basis, but we are guilty of having lived through a time when governments showed little to no concern for the environment.

It brings me back to the requests we receive on an almost daily basis. Guided by yourselves and the Board, I will support these requests. However, I have it on first hand experience that politicians pay little heed to online appeals/petitions from

groups and organizations such as ours. Why? Politicians are practical people. Come election time, OSFN has no vote. But we, the members, do have a vote as individuals.

I do not mean to make OSFN into a political organization. But with your guidance, we can make it more evident to the politicians that OSFN actually entails 200 odd votes. We begin to have an impact, as voting individuals, if we make politicians earn our vote by showing their support of policy that will help to sustain the environment.

On a different note, I have been perusing old OSFN papers. I note that some presidents have adopted tag lines. For mine, I call upon my favourite Shakespearian character, Falstaff. At the end of his life, he laments on how poorly he has used his time on earth. My rejoinder to him, and all of you (but in no way implying that you are Falstaffian!):

Time, make most of it!

Brendan Mulroy

President



VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOURS AVAILABLE

Ideally suited for Environmental Studies students who enjoy the outdoors.

Tree Planting and gardening hours available starting mid May with more duties available over the summer months. Total community commitment of 40 hours possible in one season.

If interested please contact: Marsha at court5vip@gmail.com or Lloyd at rhiandlloyd@gmail.com

Check out our websites to see all that we do.

<https://www.neighbourhoodsnorth.com/>

<https://owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca/>

Knowing Nature Better



5 Great Live Concerts
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Concert May 20 7:30

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We want to acknowledge the traditional territory of the Anishinabek Nation: the People of the Three Fires known as Ojibway, Odawa and Pottawatomi Nations. We 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.

Cover: A collage of local moths. Top Row (left to right): Apical Prominent, Cherry Scallop Shell Moth, Finned-willow Prominent, Red-spotted Glyph; Middle Row: White-marked Tussock Moth, The Herald, Brown Scoopwing, Flame-shouldered Dart; Bottom Row: Horrid Zale, Tufted Bird-dropping Moth, Waved Sphinx, Painted Lichen Moth. **Credit:** Brian Robin

Mothing at the Grey Sauble Arboretum

The weather on the night of the main event (Tuesday, July 19) was just perfect for moths -- hot, humid and cloudy. I think there were about 25 people there, although you may have a more accurate count. I was very pleased by the size of the turnout and the enthusiasm of the participants.



Virginia Creeper Sphinx. Credit:
Deanne Atherton

On my 2-night visit to Owen Sound, I had 150 observations of 116 species of moths. The number of observations is about the same as last year, but the number of species was down. This was due to factors other than the moths themselves, of which there were an especially

large number. The factors limiting my picture-taking were:

- * This year I had about 15 people for the opening of the moth traps at 7 am on Wednesday, July 20, so I spent a lot of time talking to the observers and didn't take that many pictures.
- * On the second morning, it rained fairly heavily for most of the time, so it was hard to take pictures.

I posted all of the observations on the iNaturalist website for anyone to see.

The 116 species are shown here:

https://inaturalist.ca/observations?month=7&nelat=44.95183704542325&nelng=-80.2290690491909&order_by=observed_on&page=2&place_id=any&subview=table&swlat=43.96791594007961&swlng=-81.14033009394899&user_id=amacnaughton&verifiable=any&view=species

The complete list of 150 observations is listed here:

https://inaturalist.ca/observations?month=7&nelat=44.95183704542325&nelng=-80.2290690491909&order_by=observed_on&page=2&place_id=any&subview=table&swlat=43.96791594007961&swlng=-81.14033009394899&user_id=amacnaughton&verifiable=any

Combining both years of observations together, 206

species of moths were seen at the Conservation Area. We chose a date a few weeks earlier than 2021, so a lot of the moths were ones not seen last year. Here is the complete list of the 206 species:

https://inaturalist.ca/observations?nelat=44.95183704542325&nelng=-80.2290690491909&order_by=observed_on&page=2&place_id=any&subview=table&swlat=43.96791594007961&swlng=-81.14033009394899&user_id=amacnaughton&verifiable=any&view=species

There were no especially notable moth observations this year from the point of view of the community of people interested in moths (although that may change as experts look over my observations).

However, there were several moth species which I personally had not seen in at least 15 years, and so it was particularly exciting for me. These were especially large and showy moths that are of wide interest among naturalists: Elm Sphinx, Great Ash Sphinx and Laurel Sphinx.



This moth is in the genus Pandemis. My personal favourite, as I think it looks like a little alien emperor with fabulous facial hair.

Credit: Rosemary Martin

I enjoyed myself greatly and I hope it will be possible to do this event again next year. Thank you to the Conservation Authorities for permitting me access to the Arboretum area to lead the event and put out the light traps.

Submitted by: Alan Macnaughton, Vice-president, Toronto Entomologists' Association



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Ontario Nature's Carbon Assessment Program

Members of the OSFN, under the direction of staff from Ontario Nature (ON), participated in a field survey at Malcolm Bluff Shores Nature Reserve in July. This involved examining both above-ground biomass and soil biomass in plots that had been predetermined.

At each 10-metre diameter plot, the above-ground



The field survey crew. Credit: Ontario Nature



John Dickson at one of the plots. Credit: Ontario Nature

We Welcome New Members:

Jennifer Barthel & William Doelman, Anthony Barton,
Carolyn & Marc Brooks, Nancy MacDonald, Lynn
Prentice, Kelly Rogers, Rob Wray

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Norah Toth at newsletter@owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca or
519-376-2918*

biomass was determined by identifying the tree species present including their height, diameter at breast height, the canopy cover they provided and recording their status. Soil biomass required extracting a soil sample, taking a small sample from each soil horizon and storing each sample in a labeled zip-lock bag.

This field survey, along with others, will provide ON the tools to validate their carbon storage model which enables predicting carbon storage in different land cover types. The goal is that this modelling will result in improved land management policies, guide future planning, advance conservation and enhance environmental conservation.

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Are you interested in becoming a
Global Bird Rescuer Team
member? Your involvement from
October 2—9, 2022 can save birds' lives, raise awareness of bird-
safe solutions, and empower members of our community to take
action to protect our local bird populations. For more information
about how to get a team involved: <https://globalbirdrescue.org/>

Monarch Population Status Update

Last winter brought some good news with the **Western monarch population** rebounding in numbers of 247,237 announced in January 2022, as compared with the winter of 2020 when they seemed on the brink of extinction with only 2,000 individuals counted. For a various number of reasons, the bounce back last winter offers “a rare ray of hope that the population is more resilient than we thought” said Emma Welton, a biologist who is western monarch lead for the Xerces Society which has co-ordinated the count since 1997.

The **Eastern monarch population** (this side of the Rocky Mountains) saw an increase in numbers too, at 35% more than the previous winter. The data was released on May 24, 2022 by The World Wildlife fund and the National

Commission of Protected Natural Areas in Mexico. An area of 6 hectares is considered to be sustainable but in 2020/21 it was at 2.10 hectares, while this winter (2021/22) the area of overwintering monarchs rose to 2.84 hectares, although overall numbers have seen an 80% decline in the last two decades. So it was really not surprising when monarchs were added to the endangered list by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in July, 2022. Although they have been classified by Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada as Endangered since 2016, the US Fish and Wildlife service has yet to add them to their Endangered species list.

Some good news to share from our family friendly OSFN monarch tagging event last fall at Isaac Lake. I discovered this spring that out of the 75 we tagged on Flight of the Butterflies Day, August 21, two tags were recovered in Mexico. The two recovered male monarchs were netted by Evie Gray and Maeve O’Meara. Both grandchildren of

club members received Certificates of Appreciation from Monarch Watch for their involvement in monarch butterfly research. These monarchs flew 4,235.6 kilometres on their fall migration to a mountain sanctuary they’ve never been to before, Cerro Pelon in the state of Michoachan, Mexico. Scientists who study monarchs use this Citizen Science tagging data, which associates the location of original capture with the point of recovery for

each butterfly, to determine pathways taken by migrating monarchs, the influence of weather on the migration and the survival rate of monarchs. We’ll let club members know if we have more tag recoveries after this fall’s tagging event, held on September 3 at Isaac Lake, near Wiarnton.

Just a reminder to readers that the best way to help increase monarch populations

is to create habitat and plant milkweed. Indoor rearing of monarchs is no longer acceptable due to increased spread of parasites and pathogens.

Submitted by: Audrey Armstrong



Audrey Armstrong and Evelyn Gray monarch tagging in August 2021. Credit: Willy Waterton



Evelyn Gray, with her Grandfather Bob Gray looking on, shows off her monarch after tagging and before releasing it to migrate to Mexico. Credit: Willy Waterton

A Good News Story about the Abilities of a Community of Naturalists to Make a Difference

I was visiting my mother Jean in Owen Sound on a Wednesday in July and I received a few photos from my sister Lenore from her home near Hepworth. She had been working around her pool when she noticed something small and shiny floating in the water. With the skimmer she scooped out this small object that turned out to be a Ruby-throated Hummingbird fledgling. She kept it in the skimmer and propped the pole near her feeder hoping the parents would find it. Nothing occurred and she could see the bird was in distress. When I got her email with pictures and a request for help, I immediately thought of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists Facebook Group I follow. I've recently seen people reach out to aid turtles crossing roads and entangled birds among other posts that help promote wildlife safety and preservation. I was impressed that my post with the pictures drew prompt responses from Sarah Elizabeth, Sandi Holland, Marsha Courtney and Karen Fran. All offered good advice and Karen went so far as to call a rehabber at Hobbitstee Wildlife Refuge to discuss the bird and its condition. Karen asked for my sister's contact details and made arrangements to pick up the bird within 90 minutes coming from Port Elgin where she works at the Local Veterinary Clinic. They already had another distressed bird that they were transporting to Nanticoke to the refuge and

rehabber in the morning. The Hummer would make the same escort. The birds arrived by midday on the Thursday and Karen reported that our little one was improving its



Ruby-throated Hummingbird fledgling.

Credit: Lenore Gervais

condition and had been accepting her feeding throughout the night. A week later Hobbitstee reported the fledgling is doing well and will be ready for release soon.

This was a wonderful example

of how social media and committed Naturalists in our area dedicated to wildlife preservation, appreciation and safety can really make a difference. I'm glad I joined the Facebook Group of the Owen Sound Field Naturalist's and I encourage you all to do the same. You never know when you'll get a chance to make a difference.

Submitted by: Brian Maher

Hibou Conservation Area

Hardworking volunteers and two Grey Sauble Conservation staff met on June 28, 2022 to remove 80 old pieces of boardwalk and replace them with new, sturdy boards.

The Friends of Hibou aims to keep the Interpretive Trail open and as safe as possible. Given that it is offering us a place to walk through an area of wetland, it is

understandable that the water is going to have an impact on the trail. Walkers must be prepared for wet spots. The boardwalk and graveled areas help keep the trail as walkable as possible.



Working on the trail. Credit: Don Sankey

Attention Current, Past (and Prospective!) OSFN Stewards

If you are a current or past Steward of an OSFN-stewarded property or project, and have any written/electronic records or monitoring reports, please send them my way... I am trying to compile as much as possible in one place. Also, I expect there will be a need for some new Stewards of both properties and projects. In general, the main responsibility is monitoring and conducting at least one site visit report each year. If you might be interested, please get in touch.

Neil Baldwin, Director & Stewardship Coordinator

osfn-stewardship@naturemail.ca

519-794-0129



PROGRAM LISTINGS



An adult Red Fox overseeing two kits. Credit: Pat Gillies

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 175 members and are a member club of Ontario Nature.

INDOOR MEETINGS are in person at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre.

E-Heralds will advise of any changes.

Indoor meetings are held on the **second Thursday** of the month, September to June. They are held at the **Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre, 1900 3rd Ave E, Owen Sound, at 7:00 pm.** 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; however, we encourage non-members to make a donation to help defray costs.

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, locations and schedules are subject to change. To avoid disappointment, please check www.osfn.ca for updates (changes to dates, speakers, locations, etc.) or watch for an e-Herald from newsletter@owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca We thank you for understanding.

www.owensoundfieldnaturalists.ca P.O. Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7



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 via the mail.

Thank you to **Caframo** for supporting the Young Naturalists Club & our Earth Day Keynote Lecture Series.

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 are subject to change or cancellation – visit www.osfn.ca

Sat Sep 10, 9:30 am - 1 pm - **Sarawak Saunter IV** with **David Morris**
A walk near Indian Falls will focus on goldenrods and asters. We will also see several species of ferns. Register: davidtmorris@rogers.com or 519-376-1304

Sat Sep 17, 9:30 - 11:30 am - **An Autumn Ramble at Anglesea Nature Trails & Managed Forest** with **Don Rawls**
Anglesea, in the Klondike Hills, is located west of Hwy 6 in Chatsworth Twp. Ferns, fungi, heritage trees, erratic boulders and local history will be featured. Register: 519-794-0561 or rawfam46@gmail.com

Fri Sep 23, 9 am - Noon - **The Asters & Goldenrods of Dorcas Bay** with **Tyler Miller**
The aster and goldenrod family (Asteraceae) is the world's second-largest family of flowering plants. Immerse yourself in their ecology during a hike with Tyler, a Field Ecologist with Bruce Peninsula National Park. Register: tyler.miller@pc.gc.ca or 705-341-2777

Sat Oct 1, 9:30 am - 1 pm - **Mclvor Wetland near Purple Valley** with **Bob & Marie Knapp**
This 300-acre Bruce Trail Conservancy property is north of Colpoy's Bay and has lots of escarpment features. Bring lunch and water. Tea will be served at Bob & Marie's cabin. Register: rmknapp@yahoo.com or 519-371-1255

Wed Oct 5, 10:30 am - 2:30 pm - **Beaver Valley Fall Colours Hike** with **Lilla Fodor**
During this fall colours tour, Lilla will share about the history and geology of the Beaver Valley, Bowles Gully and the Kimberley Forest. A lunch, sturdy footwear and hiking poles are recommended. Register: lillaf@icloud.com or 1-519-942-5257

Mon Oct 10, 10 am - Noon - **Thanksgiving Day Following in the footsteps of John Muir: A Trout Hollow Saunter** with **Robert Burcher**
Discover the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy's Trout Hollow Nature Reserve and learn about John Muir's connection to this area. Bring sturdy footwear, walking sticks, water and snacks. Register: Burcherphoto@gmail.com

Thu Oct 13, 10 am - 1 pm - **Trek Across the Lindsay Tract on a Black Spruce Forestry Hike** with **Kevin Predon**
Bruce County Forester, Kevin, will lead us to this unique stand of Black Spruce, common elsewhere, but locally rare. Two distance options are available. Register: KPredon@brucecounty.on.ca or 226-909-2840

Sat Oct 15, 9:30 am - Noon - **Water Birds & More in the Beaver Valley Watershed** with **David Turner**
What species has just flown in, is planning to stay or will be winging away southwards soon. This popular event will begin near Eugenia in the Beaver Valley. Register: 519-924-3560 or fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com

Sat Oct 22, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm - **Crevice, Caves & Cambering** with **Carol Mullin**
Join Carol for a unique geology hike through Boyd's Crevice near Owen Sound. This in-and-out hike offers varied difficulty and possible slippery conditions. Bring hiking poles, water and a snack. Register: ttcmullin@hotmail.com or TEXT 226-787-8804

Sat Oct 29, 1 - 3:30 pm - **New! An Autumn Woodland Stroll** with **Doug Price & Gayle Watson**

Trails travel through this scenic and hilly rural property in the Hills of Massie where Tamaracks turn golden in the fall. Diversity abounds amongst the meadows, forests and wetlands of this special property. Register: khofire@gmail.com or phone 519-377-0652

Sun Nov 13, 10 am - 2 pm - **Birding Around the Bay – Waterfowl & More** with **Erik Van Den Kieboom & Kiah Jasper**
Join Erik and Kiah for this OSFN fall tradition of checking the shorelines and the Sound for migrating ducks, grebes and loons. Inland, winter finches and juncos are possibilities. Register: kiahjasper@gmail.com or erikkieboom@outlook.com

Thu Feb 9, 9:30 - 11:30 am - **Nordic Ski** with **Beth Anne Currie & John Dickson**
We'll ski the grasslands of Sarawak/Georgian Bluffs/and/or Cobble Beach - depending on snow accumulation. Nature and history enrichment with fellowship and gentle exercise in the great outdoors. (A Snowy Owl joined the event last year!) Snowshoers are welcome. Register: bethannecurrie@sympatico.ca or TEXT 519-379-8231

Sat Feb 25, 1 - 4:00 pm - **Who Made Those Tracks & Why?** with **Jeff Kinchen**
Jeff will lead you on this interpretive late winter tracking hike. You will learn how to observe and recognize nature's clues. This is always a popular outing. Snowshoes may be needed. Register: bognors.finest@gmail.com or 519-374-4246

Sat Mar 26, 9:30 am - Noon - **Birding the Waters of the Beaver Valley** with **David Turner**
Many bird species are attracted to the Beaver Valley, including Tundra Swans (300 plus in 2021) at Lake Eugenia. You will visit birding hotspots throughout the Valley during the early spring migration. Register: fleshertonartgallery@gmail.com or 519-924-3560

Sat Apr 15, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm - **Springtime Hogg's Falls Tour** with **Lilla Fodor**
On this spring hike Lilla shares her intimate knowledge of the Bruce main trail in the Beaver Valley. You will end at scenic Hogg's Falls on the Boyne River. Bring lunch and snacks. Appropriate footwear and hiking poles suggested. Register: lillaf@icloud.com or 1-519-942-5257

Sat May 20, 1 - 3:30 pm - **A Springtime Saunter in the Hills of Massie** with **Doug Price & Gayle Watson**
Scenic views, flora and fauna and signs of spring migration are just some of the highlights you will discover. Register: khofire@gmail.com or 519-377-0652

Wed June 21, 1 - 3 pm - **Piping Plovers** with **Lynne Richardson**
Visit Sauble Beach to find out about the valiant efforts of these super-cute and super-endangered birds to raise their wee golf-ball sized chicks on a busy public beach, and learn about Plover Lovers too. Register: lynnerichardson@rogers.com or 519-599-3618

Thu June 22, 10 am - 3 pm - **Saugeen Valley Lookout** with **Brian & Clare Maher**
An outstanding opportunity to visit Nels Maher's and John Weir's Fern Garden. See orchids, birds and more on this 40-acre naturalized property by the Saugeen River near Durham. Bring lunch. Register: brianmaher599@hotmail.com or 705-728-1507

Indoor Meetings

Indoor meetings are held most commonly on the 2nd Thursday of the month from September to June. They start at 7:00 pm and are held at the Harry Lumley Bayshore Community Centre, 1900 3rd Ave E, Owen Sound. All events and times are subject to change and will be posted on our website or available through an e-Herald. Visit www.osfn.ca for updates and added events.

September 8, 2022 Rosemary Martin - **Winter Survival in the Insect World**

Have you ever wondered how dragonflies and other insects survive the winter? What impact will climate change have on these important ecological communities? Drill through the ice with Rosemary to discover the active ecosystem found below the ice. She will highlight under-ice video footage captured in a beaver pond in our very own Georgian Bluffs.

October 13, 2022 Natasha Barlow - **Conserving Aerial Insectivores: "It's a bird! It's a plane! It's...actually a bird?!"**

Ever wondered what those little birds swooping in and out of chimneys are? How about those using barns and other structures? They are aerial insectivores, a fascinating group of birds that eat insects and are amazing aerial acrobats. Join Natasha, Birds Canada's Ontario Projects Biologist, to learn about ways you can help these at risk birds!

November 10, 2022 Steve Ritchie - **Love at First Light: Astronomy**

You will hear a 62-year-old man's inner 9-year-old convey the sheer delight of discovery that happens every time he looks through his telescope; and how Covid, lockdowns and being a small-town radio host merged to cement a personal, physical connection with the cosmos.

December 8, 2022 Sarah McComb-Turbitt - **Diving into the Icy Cold**

Science and Artistry - Sarah combines her research into individual variations in the winter foraging behaviours of Gentoo Penguins, with her art as she shares their story through Wildlife Art for Conservation.

January 12, 2023 Walter Muma - **Springtime Wildflowers of the Great Smoky Mountains**

While early spring still has Ontario in its grip, the Great Smoky Mountains put on a spectacular display of wildflowers. Many species are familiar to us, while others are new to Ontario naturalists. Walter Muma will show us the many varieties of wildflowers of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

February 9, 2023 Kiah Jasper - **A Big Birding Year**

Kiah loves to talk about his recent (2022) Big Year of birding in Ontario, which is an attempt to break the record for most bird species seen in a calendar year. His travels took him from Attawapiskat on the coast of James Bay, to Ottawa, to Point Pelee National Park. Car issues, winter camping in -40 and countless bird photos will be featured.

March 9, 2023 **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 at robin.brian@gmail.com.

April 13, 2023 Don Scallen - **Salamanders**

Don has visited springtime ponds to witness the wondrous spectacle of Spotted and Jefferson salamander breeding. His salamander adventures are not limited to the spring. He has also ventured into the woods in early autumn to document the nocturnal behaviour of various salamander species.

2 pm Sunday April 23, 2023 **Celebrating Earth Day with Keynote Speaker Lenore Keeshig**

Details to be announced at a later date.

May 11, 2023 Dr. Bruce Broadbent & Jay Cossey - **'The Wasps We Love and the Wasps We Detest'**

Dr. Broadbent works with Agriculture Canada using tiny parasitic wasps to control pests. His team has had great success stories in the Ontario greenhouse industry. Entomologist Jay Cossey is a nature photojournalist and an author. He will have his popular books with him for purchase.

June 8, 2023 Alan Macnaughton - **The Moths All Around Us**

Owen Sound, with its abundant natural and forested areas, is a great place to be an aspiring "moth'er" or just a person who appreciates the amazing diversity of the insect world. Alan will explain why he finds moths so fascinating and why he especially likes the moths of Owen Sound and Grey-Bruce.

Events and presentation methods are subject to change.
Visit www.osfn.ca or check e-Heralds for updates.

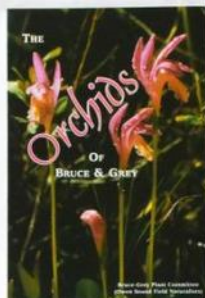
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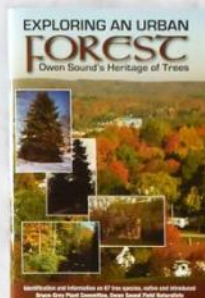
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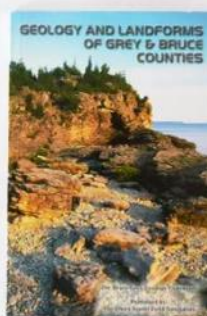
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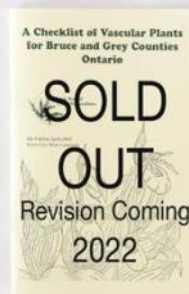
\$15.00



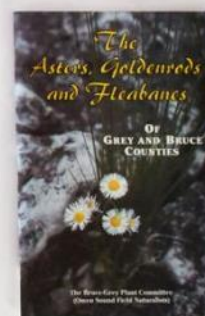
\$25.00



\$30.00



\$10.00



\$10.00

The Checklist of Vascular Plants for Bruce & Grey Counties is out of print! A digital copy of the 2010 Edition, shown above, can be downloaded from the Website. We are working with Tyler Miller who is updating the checklist. Tyler is a botanist / ecologist from the Peninsula and will be completing this revision and update in 2023. Stay tuned for more information as it unfolds. **The Publications Committee**—Audrey Armstrong, Barbara Palmer & Norah Toth

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 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/)

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

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

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During the Huron Fringe Birding Festival (May 28), the MacGregor Point Provincial Park Discovery staff led the Young Naturalists Club on a hike which included a game of bird bingo, critter dipping, a bird feeder making craft and a little bit of litter clean-up. **Credit:** Jody Johnson Pettit

Young Naturalists Club

Do you know a child who loves the outdoors and exploring nature? The Young Naturalists Club welcomes members aged 7 to 12 years old. Younger and older children are welcome!

The club typically meets the last Sunday of the month from September to June. Registration information: Jody Johnson Pettit, 519-370-2000, jljohnson@hotmail.com

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More details to follow

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Stewardship Grey Bruce: Norah Toth

Annual Meeting Highlights



Retiring Secretary, Barbara Gray and retiring President, Pam Kinchen. **Credit:** Marsha Courtney

Beth Anne Currie,
recipient of a
Community
Conservation
Award presented
by John Dickson.
Credit: Marsha
Courtney



Audrey Armstrong and Willy Waterton recipients of a Community Conservation Award presented by Pam Kinchen. **Credit:** Marsha Courtney



Retiring Treasurer, Elaine Mason and Pam Kinchen
Credit: Marsha Courtney



Pam Kinchen, Retiring President and Brendan Mulroy,
Incoming President. **Credit:** Marsha Courtney

Community Conservation Awards recognize citizens within the community (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.

The Trickster

When the buds of most orchid species are opening, the blossom rotates 180 degrees so that the lip of the flower points downwards. Such flowers are said to be resupinate,



Calopogon or Grass Pink. Credit: John Lamey

which means inverted. The flowers of the Common Grass Pink do not undergo such an inversion and are said to be non-resupinate. The lip of the blossoms of these plants points upwards, which is not the case in most orchid species. There is an excellent reason for this.

The flowers of the Grass Pinks are undeniably gorgeous and very elegant. We find them so as do species of insects, such as bumble bees that the orchid relies on for pollination. While most flowers use nectar to lure pollinators

into visiting them and the pollinator gets rewarded for its services, the Calopogon offers no nectar to the pollinating bee. As a result its pollination is reliant on newly emerged bees which are still naive enough to visit the flowers. After a few unsuccessful visits to Grass Pinks the bees learn to avoid this species.

The way the pollinating mechanism works in Calopogon is this. The bee is attracted to the fringe of hairs on the upward pointing flower lip, mistakenly thinking there will be nectar there. When it lands on the lip, the weight of the bee causes the lip, which is attached by means of a sort of

hinge to the lower parts of the flower, to tip abruptly downwards bringing the bee's head into precisely the region of the flower where the plant's reproductive structures are located. The orchid's pollen is found in two sticky masses called pollinia which adhere to the insect's head, often in fact to the surfaces of its eyes, and are now in a position to be transferred to, and to pollinate, the next Grass Pink's blossom the bee visits. This species blooms in late June/July. The next time you find one of these beauties, take a close look at it, you will be amazed at its complexity.

That this deception is successful is attested to by the frequent abundance of Grass Pinks in the bogs and fens of Ontario as well as by the fact that the species often forms seed capsules. We may think of flowers as passive structures but many of them have fascinating adaptations, such as this, by which they manipulate their insect pollinators. Such mechanisms have been finely honed over many generations so as to achieve the best possible result. This is how the incredible processes of evolution and adaptation work, through tiny incremental changes which gradually modify species so as to give each of them the best survival capabilities possible. This is an ongoing process which may be critical to the survival of many species in a world in which environmental conditions are in constant flux.



Calopogon are found where high quality ground and surface water exists. Credit: John Lamey

Submitted by: John Lamey



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Dec 14, 2022 - Jan 5, 2023 - Annual **Christmas Bird Counts** (CBCs) OSFN members are invited to participate in CBCs across Grey-Bruce. Watch the e-Heralds for dates and contacts, or visit this link to find a CBC near you. www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/cbc/index.jsp?targetpg=mapviewer&lang=EN

Sauble Beach Piping Plover Update 2022

Early this spring Plover Lovers were back on the beach surveying for Piping Plovers with our usual high hopes that a pair would choose Sauble Beach to nest on, as they have for the last 15 years! The Plovers Lovers group, Birds Canada and of course, Don Kennedy (an OSFN Community Conservation Award winner for his years of work with the plovers), conducted daily surveys from mid-April through to the end of May, the plover's main arrival time.

This monitoring found a that a total of five plovers touched down to check out the beach and look for mates. On April 24, Islay Graham (local, provincial and national Science Fair winner for her project on Piping Plovers in 2019) spotted a plover affectionately known as "Nubbins". Nubbins was distinctively identified by his missing right foot and his remaining bands. Nubbins had nested in Michigan in 2019 and 2021, and since plovers have a strong affinity to their nest sites, he stayed for 2-3 days, and moved on. The ability to identify individual plovers by their bands allows us to collect this data. It's shown us that plovers sure do a lot of beach hopping in the springtime! They pretty much have to, to find the few other plovers that come to the Ontario Great Lakes in search of others of their kind.

Nubbins was followed by a second Piping Plover, on May 7. The bands weren't read and it left the same day, unidentified.

On May 11 two plovers were sighted. They were identified as 1 year old birds from separate hatch sites in Michigan. We were pretty happy to see a (potential) pair! Sadly, they too moved on after a day or two!

Finally, on May 13 another singleton showed up, but not finding a friend, he or she stayed only one day.

Ultimately, no plovers remained to nest on Sauble Beach in 2022, for the first time in 16 years! This left us with the question of why did this happen. A range of factors may have influenced this outcome. It could simply be coincidence that no two



Nubbins enjoying winter in the Yucatan Peninsula.

Credit: Eduardo Cetina

plovers landed in at the same time to find each other this year, due to the fact that they are simply so

rare that there aren't enough plovers to go around. It could be due to the previous years of high water levels that greatly narrowed the beach and degraded the quality of the habitat. The Town's heavy grading and bulldozing of the beach and foredunes in 2016 and 2017, (for which they were found guilty of destroying the habitat of the endangered species) undoubtedly was a factor, perhaps a significant one. Off-leash dogs on the beach throughout the plover-arrival period, (although prohibited by by-law but not enforced) could be a disruptive factor. Finally, plovers have a strong affinity to return to a nesting beach where they previously nested successfully, but Sauble Beach has not had a successful nest (raising at least one, preferably more, chicks to fledging) since 2019.

Although this was a disappointing year at Sauble Beach, the news isn't all bad. Elsewhere in the province 7 pairs of plovers nested and most raised at least one chick. One "pair" turned out to be a female-female combination; they laid 6 eggs between them, thanks to a nearby nesting male with apparently too much time on his "hands". Each season we discover more about the Piping Plover! We are constantly entertained and amazed by the character, strength and resilience of these



endearing, endangered little birds! We look forward hopefully to a ploverly 2023 season.

Submitted by: Lynne Richardson

Nubbins at Sauble Beach, spring 2022. Credit: Don Kennedy

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The Monarch Butterfly by Carol Rolfe

The first day of September was a beautiful day. Mary Kathryn and I walked along the sand road through the woods. The sun was warm, the cricket sang, the bees and butterflies were busy among the goldenrod and michaelmas daisies, and occasionally we found a bush covered with glossy black thimbleberries which we picked, and popped into our mouths with the greatest pleasure.

Mary Kathryn is a very little girl, so after listening to some chickadees and a nuthatch she turned her attention to the low weeds that grew up by the roadside. Suddenly she stopped and pointed her finger at a worm hanging from a slender stem and said "what's that?"

"Why Mary Kathryn," I replied, "you have found a Monarch caterpillar. Let's examine it on its twig and while we walk home I will tell you a story."

In September, when the leaves begin to turn red and gold and the birds start winging their way south, a fragile creature – a Monarch butterfly – begins its own long journey towards warm weather. To reach its destination it may travel up to 3000 miles, flying that long distance on wings that measure just over three inches. Once there it will join thousands of other Monarchs on tall Eucalyptus, Cypress or Pine trees. Clinging in long strands, bunching together for protection during storms and searching the gardens for nectar on fair days, the Monarchs will spend the winter on these "butterfly" trees.

Towards the end of March they start to fly north again, moving steadily as spring renews the milkweed crop. The female lays a tiny pale green egg on the underside of a milkweed leaf, usually one egg on a leaf and no more than three eggs on the same plant. In five or six days the egg hatches into a miniature white caterpillar. Immediately the caterpillar eats the shell from which it has crawled, then turns to its only source of food for the next two weeks: Milkweed leaves.

For twelve to fifteen days the caterpillar devours milkweed day and night, molting several times as it grows, and after each molt, eating its shed skin in a very tidy manner. Near the end of two weeks, having reached maximum size, nature says it is time for a change.

The caterpillar becomes restless. It wanders sometimes 300 feet from the plant on which it was last feeding. I found one at the top of the rafters on our veranda. This wandering is instinctive and is nature's way of spreading the caterpillars over a large area so that an accident would not wipe out a whole colony at one time.

At last the caterpillar finds a place that suits him. He stops, spins a silken tab, attaches himself up side down to it, and hangs in the shape of a J.

Sometime within the next twenty-four hours the J suddenly straightens. Starting at the bottom - much as a lady would wiggle out of her girdle if she pulled it over her head - the caterpillar works its way out of its skin. In the space of a few seconds the caterpillar has changed into a chrysalis. Still dangling from the tab, the soft chrysalis hardens into an exquisite emerald-green jewel, its top and bottom dotted with spots of glistening gold.

The chrysalis hangs gently for another twelve to fifteen days, then nature again says it is time for a change – this time the last one - into a butterfly.

The chrysalis skin becomes transparent. Through it you can see the butterfly wings begin to take colour. The chrysalis darkens. Then the moment arrives. Rent from the bottom, the chrysalis splits and the butterfly somersaults from its prison. Crumpled, and wet it clings to the empty chrysalis, exercising slim black legs, pumping fluid into its expanding wings, coiling and uncoiling its long proboscis. It rests and dries. Then in a moment it fans its wings, and rises on lilting butterfly flight to its new life amongst the flowers.

Mary Kathryn and I reached the cottage. We sat and talked about the Monarch Butterflies fluttering over our own patch of goldenrod. Each day she came to see them, her eyes bright with anticipation. Then our holidays were over and Mary Kathryn went back to the city. By now I expect our special caterpillar is a dazzling butterfly, already on its way south for the winter.

The above article was published in *The Young Naturalist*, October 1972. In 1972, members of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists could subscribe to 10 issues of *The Young Naturalist* magazine for \$3.00 per year. Thank you to the Rolfe family for sharing this article, written by their mother. "Mom was a photographer, long before the digital age. With her photographs she lectured to hundreds of groups over the years about her favourite topics... dunes, orchids, birds, wildflowers, etc. and also monarch butterflies."



Box 401, Owen Sound, ON N4K 5P7



Carol believes in gardening for the birds. Here she shows a female Ruby-throated Hummingbird at her Blue Flag Iris in early June.

Credit: Carol L. Edwards



*During a late spring outing, the Young Naturalists Club enjoyed watching an Osprey on nest along with the remnants of lunch. Look closely and you can see one of the two chicks observed at this nest. Monthly outings for children aged 7 to 12 will begin again on the last Sunday of September. **Credit:** Marsha Courtney*



*A Red-headed Woodpecker from Grey County. This species is listed as endangered in Ontario and Canada due to loss of habitat. They prefer mature hardwood forests for their cavity nests. **Credit:** Nigel Eves*

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.

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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.