



COMING EVENTS

•**Friday, November 30, 2001, 7:30 p.m.** - General Meeting, Kawartha-Pine Ridge District Health Unit, Rose Glen Rd., Port Hope. The title of the November program is “**Sun, Sound and Some More**” which is the theatrical name of our speaker’s presentation on the Sandbanks Provincial Park. **Terry Sprague** is a naturalist with the Quinte Conservation Authority in Belleville. He is an outstanding naturalist, but he is perhaps best known for the many popular nature walks he either organizes or conducts each year. Terry is a former Park Naturalist at Sandbanks Provincial Park. He is very knowledgeable about its history, its degradation, and its recovery. He is familiar with the vegetation, birds and animals which inhabit or frequent these extensive sand dunes. In fact, he even knows each little spider which burrows in the sand, by both its first and last name. There is an unconfirmed rumour that Terry was there when the dunes were covered by water, 12,000 year ago! The story of the Sandbanks is fascinating and so is our speaker.

•**Saturday, December 15, 2001.** All day. **Annual Christmas Bird Count.** Contact Roger Frost at 905-885-9615 if you wish to take part (*More details on page 2*).

•**Friday, January 25, 2002, 7:30 p.m.** - General Meeting. Wasyl Bakowsky - Natural Heritage Information Centre. Rare Vegetation in Ontario. Cobourg Public Library.

2001 CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The annual Port Hope-Cobourg Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on Saturday, December 15. This is the 102nd Audubon Christmas Bird Count. WBFN has contributed data to this continent wide count since 1972, although the club has conducted its own Christmas Bird Census since 1954.

This is a strenuous day of birding, starting at dawn (or earlier) and continuing through most of the daylight hours. It is not necessary to be an expert birder to participate. Less experienced birders will be teamed with more experienced.

Feeder watchers are also welcome. Count the maximum number of birds of any one species seen during the day and telephone your totals to Norma Wallace (905-885-5552) at the end of the day.

If you would like to participate, contact Roger Frost at 905-885-9615, ekrf@eagle.ca.

The count will be followed by a pot luck supper at Welcome United Church at 5:30 p.m. Members who cannot participate in the count are welcome to join the counters for supper.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Kathleen and David Shirley, Roseneath

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

•**Mark Rupke**, WBFN's representative on the Board of Directors of Lone Pine Marsh is now the Chairman of the Board, replacing founder, Muriel Braham.

•Many thanks to **Geoff Dale**, a WBFN member for 35 years, and long time treasurer of the Property Committee, who has retired from that position. Janette Johnston, WBFN Treasurer, has agreed to replace Geoff.

•Congratulations to **Paul and Margaret Appleman** who recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary.

•Best wishes to **Carol Jones** who is convalescing at home following an illness.

BAILLIE BIRDATHON

In May 2001, **John Geale, Ian Tate** and **A.K. Sculthorpe** participated in the Baillie Birdathon on behalf of WBFN. Collectively, \$1,368.96 was raised, of which \$342.24 comes to WBFN. The balance goes towards the work of Bird Studies Canada.

THE WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS

Past Pres.	Terry Stopps.....	905-372-1028	.....	stopps@eagle.ca
President	Bob Short.....	905-885-1420	.....	mb.short@sympatico.ca
1st Vice-pres.	Carole Payne.....	905-885-6135	.....	bookbind@eagle.ca
2nd Vice-pres.	vacant			
Secretary	Petra Kennedy.....	905-349-2280	.....	pkennedy@town.cobourg.on.ca
Treasurer	Janette Johnston.....	905-373-1432	.....	jjohn@eagle.ca
FON Rep.	Joan Norris.....	905-372-9957	.....	d.j.norris@sympatico.ca
Curlew Ed.	Norma Wallace.....	905-885-5552		
	Elizabeth Kellogg.....	905-885-9615	.....	ekrf@eagle.ca

The editor is most grateful to those who have contributed to this issue of the Curlew. Copy for the January 2002 issue should be received by December 31, 2001. Rare or interesting sightings should be reported to Ted McDonald (885-4764) or Norma Wallace (885-5552) for the January Curlew. Correspondence for WBFN should be addressed to: "The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3W4."

ISSUES UPDATE

by Bob Short

DOMBIND

This is an issue that will not go away! Following the thorough review of the pros and cons of using Dombind as a dust suppressant on Ontario's rural roads in 1998, the Minister of the Environment gave Norampac to the end of 2000 to install an environmentally sound method of disposing of Dombind. Norampac had already had 10 years to do this. Subsequently, in 2000, Norampac requested an extension to the end of 2003. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists and other environmental groups, through the Sierra Legal Defence Fund, challenged this. The end result was that the Minister of the Environment granted Norampac a license to continue to the end of 2002, another two years in which this extremely toxic substance can be spread on our roads. Now we hear that Norampac may challenge this decision and will again request extension of the license to the end of 2003!

OAK RIDGES MORAINE

Earlier this year Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing set up an advisory panel, with representatives from environmental and conservation groups, the development and resource industries, municipal government and academia, to advise the Minister on a long-term strategy for the moraine's use and protection. The panel published its draft strategy in the early summer and this was followed by a series of public consultations in August and September. One of these was held in Cobourg at which WBFN made a presentation. The panel then revised its strategy based on input received at the public consultations. Perhaps surprisingly, the strategy has been environmentally strengthened. The revised strategy recommends that 92% of the

moraine would be off-limits to urban development, with new housing allowed only in the 8% of the moraine within existing urban boundaries and minor infilling of hamlets. A minimum width of 2 kilometers has been established for the Natural Linkage areas. Also, these areas have been increased to 24% of the moraine from the original 16%.

Now it is up to the Minister to introduce legislation that will incorporate the draft strategies into law.

PORT HOPE AON DEVELOPMENT

This development, as it is currently planned, threatens Little Creek and its associated ravine. The watershed and ravine system provide drainage for approximately 488 ha. (1200 acres) in the west end of Port Hope. It includes both clay and sandy loam plains (much of it currently used for farmland), and a 10 ha. (25 acre) ravine. The area consists of stands of mature mixed forest (white pine, eastern hemlock, red oak, white birch, black cherry and white cedar), mature coniferous forest (white cedar, white pine and eastern hemlock). One of the more important features of the area is the hemlock ravine. WBFN has submitted a brief to Port Hope with recommendations with respect to changes that should be incorporated in the final plan should the development be approved by Council.

COBOURG PARKS

Cobourg is currently preparing a long-term plan for its parks and green spaces. Early in the process, WBFN submitted a high-level brief and now, through Terry Stopps, we are

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currently providing more detailed input at the individual park level.

MISCELLANEOUS

WBFN has also submitted briefs on the following:

- Ontario's "Smart Growth" plan.
- The Kawartha Highlands Signature Site, one of the new "parks" established under Ontario's Lands for Life initiative.
- Ontario's Forest Management Guidelines for Retaining Forest Ecosystem Structure and Function. These guidelines provide for clearcutting areas up to 10,000

hectares in the Boreal Forest and 1,000 hectares in the rest of the Province.

- Canada's proposed Species at Risk Act currently before parliament (for the 3rd time!).

If you have questions concerning any of the above, or would like to see copies of the letters or documents, please give me a call at (905) 885-1420 or e-mail me at mb.short@sympatico.ca.



Ecogifts: A Legacy for Tomorrow, a Tax Break Today

Recent changes to Canada's Income Tax Act have resulted in significant tax benefits for landowners who donate all or part of their ecologically sensitive lands. New options, such as conservation easements, have also been introduced that give landowners a say over how their property will be cared for after they no longer own it.

It's all too familiar to hear people talk about wetlands that have been paved over for parking lots, forests that have been lost to development, and polluted streams that were once pristine. Habitat loss and degradation are major causes of a decline in biodiversity both across Canada and around the world. Nationally, about 340 species of wildlife are listed as "at risk." Some, such as the Karner Blue Butterfly and the Greater Prairie Chicken, are no longer found here in the wild.

Now, through Environment Canada's Ecological Gifts Program, individual and corporate landowners may donate ecologically sensitive land, or an interest in such land, to a nature conservation charity or government body and receive a donation receipt for the value of their gift. The tax benefit from an "ecogift" may be applied against 100% of the donor's annual income for up to six years! In addition, the amount of capital gains that is included as income associated with the ecogift has been reduced by 50% (to 25%). To receive the full tax benefit, the ecological sensitivity, recipient, and value of the donation must be certified by Environment Canada or a delegated authority.

The program works! Since 1995, over 200 gifts have been made, ensuring the conservation of more than 18,000 hectares of ecologically sensitive wetlands, woods, savannas and prairies - valued at more than \$28 million! For more information about this terrific program, visit the Ecogifts web site at <http://www.cws-scf.ec.ca/ecogifts/> or get in touch with the regional coordinators listed at the site.

*-Lesley Dunn, Environment Canada
reprinted from Birdwatch Canada, Fall 2001, Number 17*

A VISIT TO THE OWL FOUNDATION

by Marg Short

On October 21st Bob and I had the privilege of attending an open house at the Owl Foundation in Vineland, Ontario. Larry and Kay McKeever first started looking after injured owls when they lived in Peterborough. They moved to the property in Vineland in 1970, along with 18 Owls, as they needed room to build large outdoor cages.

Owls were brought to them due to many circumstances – injured by cars, from disreputable zoos and pet shops, and, the most common reason, having been shot! Now they also have birds sent to them from other owl rehabilitation facilities all over North America.

It took many years of observation and experimentation to learn how to properly assess the incoming birds, how to feed them, what type of cage each species required and, for those owls that would be returned to the wild, how best to prepare them for it. Kay keeps very precise notes about every bird and at one time published a textbook to help others. They have been fortunate to have a veterinarian who does most of the surgery for them, although Kay has done surgery and autopsies herself.

Practically all the owls are housed in cages out of doors but several birds are in the very beautiful wooden cages that were incorporated into the house designed by Kay. One or two birds roam freely within the house. While we were there one Screech Owl was perched in the corner of their living room and another was perched in the corner of their kitchen.

Over the years they have decided to only rehabilitate and breed North American species. At the present time they have about 200 birds. When an owl arrives at The McKeever's from somewhere other than locally it has usually been assessed and any required surgery has been done by a vet. Approximately 50% of the injured birds are

returned and released close to where they were found, after making sure they are able to hunt live food. The rest may be used for breeding with their offspring being returned to the wild. Owls with no satisfactory mates may be used as foster parents or be exchanged with another facility for breeding. The day we were there 5 Great Grey Owls, several Screech Owls and 2 Snowy Owls were in the huge training runs learning to catch their own live food.

In-cage cameras are used extensively for observation purposes and a whole bank of monitors fills one wall of a room in the house. This is especially useful for birds that have been put outside recovering from surgery and requiring close observation. They are also vital when a pair is put together for mating purposes to see if the match is likely to prove successful! Someone watches the monitors at all times – often volunteers or students.

Kay is still doing much of the work but she has many volunteers and students who use the facility in their studies. When we were gathered around her at the beginning of our tour Kay assigned a volunteer to groups of 2-4 people (to minimize the disturbance to the owls) and then she was off to weigh all the mice for the evening meal. She is considered to be one of the few experts on Owls in the world and the facility in Vineland one of the largest.

This time of year is chosen deliberately for the open house as breeding time is over and most releases and exchanges have been completed.

We had a wonderful couple of hours, saw every North American species except the Elf owl, and learned a great deal about them.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

compiled by Ted McDonald

Red-throated Loon	Oct. 22-31	1	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Common Loon	Oct. 12	66	off Lakeshore Rd.E., Cob.	LW
	Oct. 22	230	off Lucas Point, Cob.	MB
Horned Grebe	Oct. 12	69	off Lakeshore Rd.E., Cob.	LW
	Oct. 13	15	off Candlewick Woods, PH	RF
	Oct. 18-20	20	off Candlewick Woods, PH	ERM
	Oct. 24	50	off Lucas Point, Cob.	MB
Red-necked Grebe	Oct. 9	2	off Lakeshore Rd.E., Cob.	LW
Double-crested Cormorant	Nov. 5	1	Cobourg Harbour	ERM

Sightings - cont'd.

Ruddy Turnstone	Oct 15	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Sanderling	Oct 7	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Oct 19	3	off D'Arcy St Cob	GMCD
White-rumped Sandpiper	Oct 6	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Baird's Sandpiper	Oct 2-16	1 juv	Cobourg Harbour	MR
Pectoral Sandpiper	Oct 8	7	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Purple Sandpiper	Oct 27-30	1	off D'Arcy St Cob	MR BB
Dunlin	Oct 26	68	Cobourg Harbour	MR
PARASITIC JAEGER	Oct 5	1 juv	flying w along Cob beach	MR
	Oct 8	1	flying over lake Cob	CEG
Snowy Owl	Nov 5	1	Cobourg Harbour west headland	M.Obs
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Oct 22/23	20 banded	Candlewick Woods	RE
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Oct 24	1	Centennial Dr PH	ERM
	Oct 19	1	Augusta & Pine St PH	DS
Belted Kingfisher	Oct 23	1	Mill Golf Course Cob	AEW
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Oct 19/27		Port Britain feeder	AKS
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Sept 23	3	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Hairy Woodpecker	Oct 11	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Least Flycatcher	Sept 18	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Eastern Phoebe	Oct 13	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
	Oct 17	1	Grafton area	RI FI
	Oct 22	2	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
	Oct 23	1	Durham St PH	EK
Northern Shrike	Nov 7	1	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Blue-headed Vireo	Oct 28	1	Port Hone west beach	RE
Red-eyed Vireo	Oct 1	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
	Nov 13	1	Augusta St PH	EK
American Crow	Oct 26	150	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Tree Swallow	Oct 17	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Black-capped Chickadee	Oct 13	46	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Red-breasted Nuthatch	Oct 23-31	1	Ontario St Cob feeder	AEW
Brown Creeper	Oct 1	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
	Oct 16	1	Durham St PH	EK
House Wren	Oct 18	1	Candlewick Woods	ERM
Winter Wren	Oct 1	1	Durham St PH	EK
	Oct 29	1	Cobourg Harbour west headland	CEG
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Oct 18	10	Candlewick Woods	ERM
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Oct 18	2	Candlewick Woods	ERM
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Sept 23	1	Lakeshore Rd W Cob	IW
Eastern Bluebird	Sept 3-6	10	6 th Line PH	RIe
	Oct 20	13	Marsh Rd PH	ERM
	Oct 20-21	2	6 th Line PH	RIe
	Oct 22	7	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Gray-cheeked Thrush	Sept 29	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	ERM
Swainson's Thrush	Oct 12	1	Larchmere Golf Course	ERM
Hermit Thrush	Oct 18	2	Candlewick Woods	ERM
Wood Thrush	Oct 9	1	Albert St Cob	MR
VARIED THRUSH	Nov 2	1	Bowmanton Rd Hamilton Twp	KD
Gray Catbird	Oct 1	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
	Oct 1	1	Willow Beach	RE
Brown Thrasher	Oct 13	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
American Pipit	Oct 13	17	Cobourg Harbour west headland	CEG
Tennessee Warbler	Oct 10	2	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Orange-crowned Warbler	Oct 7	1	Cobourg Harbour west headland	CEG
	Oct 15	1	west side Willow Beach Marsh	MR
Nashville Warbler	Oct 7	2	Albert St Cob	MR
	Oct 10	2	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Yellow Warbler	Sept 18	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Chestnut-sided Warbler	Sept 18	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Magnolia Warbler	Oct 10	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Cane May Warbler	Sept 27	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Black-throated Blue Warbler	Sept 26	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Sept 30	30	6 th Line PH	RIe
	Oct 18	5 (2 banded)	Durham St PH	EK
	Oct 20	3	Marsh Rd PH	ERM
	Oct 22	12	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Black-throated Green Warbler	Sept 18	1	Lakeshore Rd E, Cob	IW

Sightings - cont'd.

Blackburnian Warbler	Sent 18	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Pine Warbler	Oct 28	1	foot of D'Arcy St Cob	MB
Palm Warbler	Oct 7	4	Cobouru Harbour west headland	CEG
	Oct 9	2	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
Blacknoll Warbler	Sent 16	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
American Redstart	Oct 18	1	Candlewick Woods	ERM
Common Yellowthroat	Nov 15	1	PH Waterfront Trail	EK
Wilson's Warbler	Sent 22	1	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
American Tree Sparrow	Oct 22	5	Cobouru Harbour west headland	MB
Fox Sparrow	Oct 8/28	1	Albert St Cob	MB
	Oct 12	3	Baltimore area	SH
	Oct 12	1	Grafton area	LJ
Lincoln's Sparrow	Oct 5/22	1	Cobouru Harbour west headland	MB
White-throated Sparrow	Oct 20	2	Candlewick Woods	ERM
White-crowned Sparrow	Oct 1-10	2	Lakeshore Rd E Cob daily	IW
Dark-eyed Junco	Oct 20	40	Marsh Rd PH	ERM
	Oct 26	27	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Snow Bunting	Oct 23	2	Cobouru Harbour west headland	MB
	Oct 28	80	foot of D'Arcy St Cob	MB
	Oct 30	46	Cobouru Harbour west headland	CEG
Indigo Bunting	Oct 8-11	1	Cobouru Harbour west headland	CEG MB
Eastern Meadowlark	Oct 19	1	Sylvan Glen Rd	ERM
	Oct 20	5	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Pine Grosbeak	Nov 18	4	Locelvn St & Moore Dr PH	RI MC
Purple Finch	Oct 2 4 5	5	Durham St PH	EK
	Oct 19	2	Centennial Dr PH	ERM
	Oct 19	4	Grafton area	BL FL
White-winged Crossbill	Oct 18-21	7	Lakeshore Rd E Cob	IW
	Oct 30/Nov 7	1	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
	Nov 9 & 12	4	Deblaquire St PH feeder	GMCD
Common Redpoll	Oct 28	3	Cobouru Harbour west headland	MB
	Oct 30	2	Cobouru Harbour west headland	CEG
	Nov 12	2	Durham St PH	EK
Pine Siskin	Oct 8-31	50	Cobouru to Port Britain	M Obs
	Oct 18	40+	Durham St PH	EK
American Goldfinch	Oct 1-31	20	Centennial Dr PH	ERM
Evening Grosbeak (f)	Oct 19	1	Centennial Dr PH	ERM
	Oct 27	20	Port Britain feeder	AKS
	Oct 27	65	over Durham St PH	RF
Black Bear	Oct 11	1	Turk Rd area	RH
Ladybugs	Oct 12	100s	throughout area	M Obs
Mourning Cloak Butterfly	Sent 30	1	Ontario St Cob	AEW
	Oct 10	1	Jamieson Rd & 7 th PH	IS
Monarch Butterfly	Oct 2	1	Ontario St Cob	AEW
Grasshopper	Nov 12	1	Jack Burger Sports Complex, PH	NW

Bill Crowley reports Hairbells in bloom in his garden in Port Hope on October 13 and both Prairie and Early Buttercups in bloom on October 28. Prairie Buttercups were still nodding on Nov. 11. These are typically spring flowering plants which have come into bloom with the October rains.

Observers: MB=Margaret Bain; BB=B. Beach; MC=Maureen Campeau; GMCD=Geoff Dale; KD=K. Drew; RF=Roger Frost; CEG=Clive Goodwin; SH=Susan Hamilton; RH=Reese Hunt; LJ=L. Jack; EK=Elizabeth Kellogg; BL=B. Logan; FL=F Logan; NL=N. Logan; RL=Rod Lee; ERM=Ted McDonald; M.Obs.=Many Observers; LS=Louise Schmidt; AKS=A.K. Sculthorpe; BS=Bob Smith; DS=Dawn Smith; DSv=Daphne Svenningson; IS=Ian Sculthorpe; AS=Audrey Stacey; NW=Norma Wallace; LW=Lori Wensley; AEW=Audrey Wilson