



COMING EVENTS

•**Friday, April 26, 2002, 7:30 p.m. - James Kamstra - Butterflies.** The guest speaker, James Kamstra from Port Perry, is an environmental consultant and a very knowledgeable naturalist. He also leads eco-tours of Central and South America for Quest Tours. James is a member of the North American Butterfly Association and is the Regional Editor for New York State of their publication. He has been involved in the annual Sunderland Butterfly count, and will be participating in his Tenth Annual Oshawa Butterfly Count this summer. Therefore, it is safe to say that James has counted an awful lot of butterflies. He is an excellent speaker and is well qualified to lead the WBFN April Butterfly Hunt at the Kawartha-Pine Ridge District Health Unit, Rose Glen Rd., Port Hope.

•**Saturday, May 4, 2002, 9:30-11:30 - Opening of Peter's Woods** - Everyone welcome to do some trail maintenance, general cleaning and the first walk in the woods for the spring. Please call Russell Lake at 905-372-3636 if you are able to help or if you require more information.

Thursday Evening Outings in May. Call Alison Elliott (905) 797-2584 for information and directions.

•**Thursday, May 2,** Ganaraska Millennium Conservation Area, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Meet in the visitor parking lot of the G.R.C.A. located at the northwest corner of Hwy 28 and Hwy 401.

•**Thursday, May 9,** Cobourg Waterfront, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Meet at the parking lot west of the yacht club.

•**Thursday, May 16,** Port Hope Waterfront Trail, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Meet at the parking lot on Lake St., east of Esco.

•**Thursday, May 23,** Garden Hill Conservation Area, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Meet at the Port Hope (Arby's) commuter lot to carpool.

•**Thursday, May 30,** Port Hope Conservation Area, 7 – 8:30 p.m. Meet in the parking lot just north of the 401 off Cavan St./Choate Rd.

•**Friday, May 24,** 6:30 p.m. - Annual walk at Willow Beach Marsh

•**June 8 & 9** - Northumberland Summer Bird Count. Contact Roger Frost, 905-885-9615, ekrf@eagle.ca

•**Monday, June 10** - Annual Bluebird and Whip-poor-will walk with Hazel Bird

Following is a list of the Executive and Committee Chairs as elected at the Annual General Meeting in February 2002.

**Willow Beach Field Naturalists
(WBFN)**

2002 Executive

(905)

<u>Officers:</u>	<u>Name:</u>	<u>Phone:</u>	<u>FAX:</u>	<u>E-Mail:</u>
Past President	Bob Short	885-1420		mb.short@sympatico.ca
President	Carole Payne	885-6135		bookbind@eagle.ca
1 st Vice President	Bryan Baxter	372-6273		bbaxter@eagle.ca
2 nd Vice President	Simone Merey	885-8347		archangel@nhb.com
Secretary	Petra Kennedy	349-2280		pkennedy@town.cobourg.on.ca
Treasurer	Janette Johnston	373-1432		jjohn@eagle.ca

Directors:

Jack Goering	885-4430	885-4430	jgoering@eagle.ca
Russell Lake	372-3636		russelllake@sympatico.ca
A.K. Sculthorpe	885-6960	885-4577	
Joan Norris	372-9957		d.j.norris@sympatico.ca
Bill Newell	352-3051		homework@eagle.ca
John Geale	342-3851		jgeale@tcs.on.ca

Property Committee:

Chair	Russell Lake	372-3636	russelllake@sympatico.ca
Treasurer	Janette Johnston	373-1432	jjohn@eagle.ca

FON Representative:

Joan Norris 372-9957

Curlew Editors:

Norma Wallace 885-5552
Elizabeth Kellogg 885-9615 ekrf@eagle.ca

Activity Coordinators:

Meetings	Bill Crowley	885-2123	
Outings	Alison Elliott	797-2584	alisonmelliott@hotmail.com
Raffle	Sharon Pickering	885-8982	
FON Student Camp	Carole Payne	885-6135	bookbind@eagle.ca
Bird Counts	Roger Frost	885-9615	ekrf@eagle.ca
Peter's Woods	Russell Lake	372-3636	
Education	Bruce Parker	372-4911	buice@sympatico.ca
Lucas Point	Janette Johnston	373-1432	jjohn@eagle.ca
Lone Pine Marsh	Giles Burnet	885-1817	
Auditor	Bill McCarthy	885-7376	

The editor is most grateful to those who have contributed to this issue of the Curlew. Copy for the May 2002 issue should be received by April 30, 2002. Rare or interesting sightings should be reported to Ted McDonald (885-4764) or Norma Wallace (885-5552) for the April Curlew. Correspondence for WBFN should be addressed to: "The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3W4."

WHO SAYS MONEY DOES NOT TALK!

by Audrey E. Wilson

On September 11, 2000, I did a Monarch Butterfly slide presentation for the Kawartha Field Naturalists in Fenelon Falls. During the program, club members tagged Monarchs I had taken for that purpose. Since the night was extremely stormy, we placed each one in a cellophane envelope for release the following day.

The following summer, Leslie Dymond, their program person, contacted me again. She had visited the overwintering roosting sites in Mexico during the winter. She arranged for the club to participate in a butterfly workshop at our place in Presqu'île on September 9, 2001. Unfortunately, several days before this scheduled event, a cold front went through and overnight the abundant Monarch numbers were reduced to almost none. However, I managed to catch 16 Monarchs on a red clover patch in Cobourg and transported them to Presqu'île for education tagging purposes.

The naturalists arrived about 10:30 a.m. They studied 12 cases of moths and butterflies noting the key differences. Each member then tagged and released the Monarchs. The 16th and last one tagged was number 89-316, a large female. On February 13, 2002, Dave Kust, a Minnesota teacher who was volunteering for Monarch Watch at

the Mexican site, bought and reported this tagged specimen found at the El Rosario overwintering site. Don Davis, a local fellow tagger (*and WBFN member. Ed.*), visiting this area recognized the tag series as one of Dr. Urquhart's and subsequently phoned me.

Interestingly, since I began to tag for the Urquharts in 1955, returns only resulted with large numbers being tagged. For example, between 1957 and 1972, I tagged a total of over 12,000 Monarchs with only 40 returns. Of course, none were from Mexico as this was prior to the 1975 finding of the overwintering sites in Mexico. If we fast forward to 2001 and consider that one specimen is found in Mexico from a group of only 16 being tagged, we must question what has caused this difference in the rate of returns! Basically, the locals – school children and their families search through piles of dead Monarchs after school hours for tags as they are turned over to Monarch Watch for \$5.00 each. Indeed this past year has seen bogus tags being purchased, a concern to Monarch Watch who has spent a total of \$1,700 on found tagged specimens this year. WHO SAYS MONEY DOES NOT TALK!

AND A FURTHER NOTE

by Don Davis

From Feb. 18 to March 2nd, 2002, I drove through Mexico with a group of Americans, beginning at San Antonio, Mexico, and also driving back (3600 km driving)! The wildlife, geography and history were outstanding, as were the dramatic changes in scenery - barren desert, industrial development, lush agricultural areas,

mountainous terrain.

One of our primary objectives was to visit the overwintering sites of the monarch butterfly near Anganguo in the state of Michoacan. We visited El Rosario and Chincua, and were allowed briefly to see the areas where millions of monarchs died due to a severe storm in January 2002. At El

Rosario, there were even large clumps of dead monarchs rotting high in the Oyamel fir trees.

We met one night in Angangeo with Dr. Orley "Chip" Taylor of the Monarch Watch Program. Over 1,772 tags have been purchased from the guides at the overwintering sites at the established rate of \$5.00 US each. This represents a half day's pay for these people. The previous high number of tags recovered in a year is 689. The Monarch Watch has now run out of money to buy any further tags this year.

In checking their preliminary list of recovered tags (about 700 had been purchased at that time), I noted that 6 were mine and of these, 4 had been placed on monarchs released last September at Presqu'île during the Monarchs and Migrants

Weekend. I was later contacted by The Monarch Watch about an Urquhart tag purchased at El Rosario. This turned out to be one of Audrey Wilson's tags. (*See article above.*)

Monarchs are now streaming northward through Texas, and have even been spotted in Mississippi. Just a few weeks ago, record frost froze all the milkweed that had emerged in the southern states. Let's hope that the milkweed has recovered and re-emerged.

I would ask WBFN members this spring to record and send to me reports of "first" sightings of monarch butterflies. They begin arriving here some time in May, often seen in the late afternoon as early as late April (depending on weather conditions), having flown across Lake Ontario and feeding on lilac and other flowering plants in

JOURNEY NORTH

Journey North is an award-winning internet based science program, that monitors and measures the arrival of spring across North America through "first sightings" of certain target species. The data are used in classroom studies by over 300,000 students in Canada and the United States.

We request your support. You may register at the Journey North Website at: www.learner.org/jnorth, and post your data there. You may also forward your data to: donald.davis@utoronto.ca.

Sightings should include: date, name and e-mail address of observer, nearest village and town, name of specie observed and any relevant particulars.

Target species for 2002 are:

earthworm
frog (first heard)
hummingbird
loon

milkweed (first leaves)
monarch butterfly
monarch egg laying, eggs, larva
oriole, oriole nest-building
red-winged blackbird
barn swallow
other signs of spring

A complete chart listing these events and others is posted at the Journey North web site but cannot be accessed until you register with the program.

Thank you in advance for your support. If you could share this information with other field naturalists or field naturalist clubs, this would be appreciated.

*Don Davis
Toronto, ON
donald.davis@utoronto.ca*

Owling Amherst Island 2002

by Alison Elliott

Saturday, February 23 dawned sunny and clear. By the time WBFN members and friends emerged from their cars on board the Amherst Island Ferry, we counted a record 19 people making the trip across to this owl mecca.

Travelling initially along the north shore of the island, the group stopped several times for good views of Red-tailed Hawks and Rough-legged Hawks hunting over the open fields. Despite the mid-winter timing of this trip, it was amazing to view the hawks through “shimmering” air; a result of solar warming of the earth usually associated with hot summer days.

Rounding the east end of the island, the first Snowy Owl was spotted. A mere white speck to the un-aided eye, its features became clear once spotting scopes were trained on it. Later in the day, a second Snowy Owl was seen perched along an old fencerow in the middle of the island.

During the walk into the owl woods, a Northern Shrike hurtled by overhead, setting the stage for the other predatory birds we were hoping to see. The trails throughout the woods seemed serene in the still, warm air, but once a Northern Goshawk was identified perched near the pine woods, it was clear that life was anything but peaceful for the owl population. One Long-eared Owl was spied, careening through the dense pine boughs, but the usual array of small owls was missing.

In place of the anticipated viewing, a neat opportunity was given us to examine the feathers from several “previously enjoyed” Long-eared Owls. The gorgeous plumage is characterized by swirls of several hues of brown, with the flight feathers distinguished by their length and serrated leading edge.

Predator - prey interactions are not always easy to encounter, but they sure are interesting! A good day was had by all.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Brian Maxwell, Port Hope

Rick Beaver & Ruth Clarke, Roseneath

Teresa Reed, Cobourg

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

- Congratulations to **Simone** and **Tom Mérey** on the occasion of the birth of their first grandchild, Gabrielle, born March 24, 2002.
- Hazel Bird** could still use a few drivers for nest box monitoring. Phone her at 905-342-5218

P.A. SYSTEM

The first action of the new executive was to purchase a P.A. system for the club. Since our numbers are steadily growing, it has become increasingly difficult for members at the back of our meeting halls to hear the guest speaker. George Lee of George's Guitars in Cobourg let us try out the system at the March meeting. The response from those in attendance was overwhelmingly positive, so the system has been purchased. We are negotiating with another local club (whose membership includes several WBFN members) to share the cost of the system, but a decision has not been finalized at press time.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

compiled by Ted McDonald

Common Loon	March 17	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Pied-billed Grebe	March 24	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Apr. 3/4	1	Lake St. marsh, PH	MB/EK
Horned Grebe	March 29	7	off Candlewick Woods	RF
	Apr. 4	1	Chubb Point, Grafton	MB
	Apr. 6	25	off Candlewick Woods	RF
Red-necked Grebe	March 19	6	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Double-crested Cormorant	Apr. 4	1	Chubb Point, flying east	MB

Sightings - cont'd.

Wild Turkey	March 1	10	7 th Line Hope	AF
	March 17	12	Port Britain area	IS
	March 23	1	Port Britain area	IS
	March 30	21	McDonald Rd. Haldimand	GH NVK
Killdeer	March 8	1	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
	March 13	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
	March 16	2	Osaca Rd	RE FK
Greater Yellowlegs	March 16	1	Osaca Rd. - early date	RE FK
Dunlin	Anr 1	1	Cobourg Harbour – probably overwintered	MB
American Woodcock	March 28	4+	south of Grafton	MB
Bonaparte's Gull	Anr 4	2	Chubb Point – flying west	MB
	Anr 4	6	off Lake St. PH	EK
Iceland Gull	March 20	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	March 25	1 imm	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Glaucous Gull	March 6	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	March 17	1	Rice Lake at Bewdley	RE FK
	March 27	1 ad	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Great Horned Owl	March 27	1	Port Britain area	IS
Barred Owl	March 9	3	Ganaraska Forest Centre	AE
Northern Saw-whet Owl	March 20	2	Bewdley area	GB
Belted Kingfisher	March 16	1	Cobourg Creek Golf area	AEW
Red-bellied Woodpecker	March 8/10	1	Port Britain area	AKS
Hairy Woodpecker	March 10	3	Port Britain area	AKS
Pileated Woodpecker	March 14	1	Cobourg Harbour area	CEG
	March 15	2	Northumberland Heights Rd	JN
	March 20	1	Bewdley area	GB
Brown Creeper	Anr 4	1	Port Britain area	GMCD
Tree Swallow	March 30	2	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
	March 31	8	Cty. Rd. 29 w. of Burnley	BN
	Anr 3	16	Sewage Treatment plant PH	MB
	Anr 4	25	Sewage Treatment plant PH	EK
	Anr 6	1	Garden Hill area	DW
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Anr 1	2	6 th Line Hamilton Twn	JG
Eastern Bluebird	March 9	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
	March 12	2 (nr)	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
American Robin	March 10	5	7 th Line Hope	AF
	March 15	19	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	March 22	20	Wesleyville	MB
	Anr 2	30	PH sewage treatment plant	EK
Bohemian Waxwing	March 16	18	7 th Line Hope	AE
Cedar Waxwing	Anr 3	100	Augusta & John St. PH	IR
American Tree Sparrow	March 24	19	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
Vesper Sparrow	March 28	1	Chubb Point – early	MB
Fox Sparrow	Anr 8	1	Deblauire St. PH	GMCD
Dark-eyed Junco	March 18	1	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
Song Sparrow	March 14	1	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
	March 22	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
Red-winged Blackbird	March 1	35	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
Eastern Meadowlark	March 15	1	Colborne	MB
	March 29	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th Hone	IS
Common Grackle	March 10	2	7 th Line Hope	AF
House Finch	March 21	2	Victoria St N. PH	WO
Common Redpoll	March 24	1	Centennial Dr. PH	ERM
	Anr 4	8	Durham St. PH	EK
Evening Grosbeak	March 13	3	Cavan Rd. & 6th Line Hamilton Twn	DSv
	March 18	20	Garden Hill area	DW
Red Fox	March 23	1	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
Eastern Chipmunk	March 9	1	n. of Colborne	JF KB
	March 28	1	Young St. PH	NW
Red Squirrel	March 9	1	Young St. PH	NW
Garter Snake	March 31	3	w. of Burnley	BN RE FK
Mourning Cloak	March 31	1	w. of Burnley	BN, RE, EK

Joan Norris reports ice out of Rice Lake on March 15, a month earlier than in 2001. On March 29th, Jesse Bates saw dandelions in bloom at the Port Hope west beach.

Observers: EB=Erik Bahr; MB=Margaret Bain; KB=Kim Bratt; GB=Gwen Bushett; GMCD=Geoff Dale; AE=Alison Elliott; JF=Jo Foster; RF=Roger Frost; JG=John Geale; CEG=Clive Goodwin; GH=Gretchen Harris; EK=Elizabeth Kellogg; ERM=Ted McDonald; DM=Don Morrison; BN=Bill Newell; JN=Joan Norris; WO=Walter Osborn; LR=Linda Ross; LS=Louise Schmidt; AKS=A.K. Sculthorpe; IS=Ian Sculthorpe; DSv=Daphne Svenningson; BT=Brian Taylor; NVK=Nick Vanderknokke; NW=Norma Wallace; DW=Doug Watkins; AEW=Audrey Wilson.

THE DOUG TARRY BIRD STUDY AWARDS FOR YOUNG ORNITHOLOGISTS

The Doug Tarry Bird Study Awards foster the development of ornithological interests in Canadian teenagers. Recipients of the awards attend a week-long workshop/natural history camp at Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO), located on the north shore of Lake Erie, Ontario.

The Doug Tarry Young Ornithologists' Workshop is a major component of the Observatory's educational program. Since its inception in the mid 1970s, the Workshop has been the jumping-off point for many of today's most talented field biologists. Thanks to the keen foresight and generosity of humanitarian and naturalist Doug Tarry, the Workshop is offered free to selected applicants. This year, the Workshop is being held from Friday 2 August to Friday 9 August, 2002.

The Workshop focuses on "hands-on" learning and training in field ornithology, providing a unique opportunity for like-minded teenagers to markedly enhance their knowledge and skills in the scientific study and aesthetic enjoyment of birds. Participants learn how to identify, age and sex birds, and to study their populations and behaviour. Careful and skilled instructors teach the secrets of bird handling and banding techniques, how to prepare specimens for scientific study, and an array of bird censusing techniques. Regular afternoon field trips are taken to places of biological interest within the internationally designated Long Point Biosphere Reserve. Evenings too are busy with slide presentations and nocturnal field work.

Space is limited to 6 participants, ranging in age from 13-17 years old. The Award covers all direct costs of the workshop (accommodation, meals, travel while at Long Point, and professional instruction), but recipients are responsible for their transportation to Long Point. Prospective participants are invited to request an application form from: Jody Allair, Bird Studies Canada/Long Point Bird Observatory, Box 160, Port Rowan, Ontario, N0E 1M0 (tel: 519-586-3531; fax: 519-586-3532, e-mail: lpbo@bsc-eoc.org, or visit the BSC web sit www.bsc.eoc.org.

Applications are due 1 May 2002

NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE

- The Royal Ontario Museum** kicked off National Wildlife Week on April 5 by opening an interactive display in the Hands-on Biodiversity gallery which highlights Ontario's Tall Grass Prairie.
- The Tadpole Monitoring Project** requests volunteers to submit information about the state of amphibian populations in Southern Ontario. For further information, check out the web site at www.trentu.ca/biology/tadpole or contact Amy Greer at Trent University, amgreer@trentu.ca.
- In addition to the opportunity noted above for teenagers, **Long Point Bird Observatory** relies heavily on volunteer field assistants of all ages in all of its projects. There are both long and short term projects which need hands. Contact the Landbird Programs Coordinator (lpbo@bsc-eoc.org) or visit the web site: www.bsc-eoc.org.