



COMING EVENTS

- Thursday, May 27** - Evening Walk in **Millenium Conservation Area, Port Hope**. Meet at the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority head office on the west side of Hwy. 28 just north of Hwy. 401. For more information, contact Ben Walters at 905-885-8586, benwalters@sympatico.ca.
- Friday, May 28, 2004** - **Outing to Peter's Woods**. Meet at **6:30 p.m.** in the parking lot at Peter's Woods. Directions: From Cobourg, drive north on Hwy. 45 to Centreton Rd. Turn east (the only choice of direction) on Centreton Rd. to the flashing caution light at Centreton. Turn north on McDonald Rd. to Peter's Woods, about 5 miles. Contact Bryan Baxter, 905-372-6273, bbaxter@eagle.ca, for more details or to arrange car pools.
- Outing to Trinity College School Observatory**. The announced date in April for this event was rained out. This outing will now take place in the first week of June on the first clear night at approximately 8:30 p.m. (dark). Entrance to the Observatory is off Deblaquire St., Port Hope. From Peter St. (Hwy. 2 at the east end of Port Hope, take Hope St.N. to Ward St. Turn east (right) onto Ward for two blocks to Deblaquire St. Turn north on Deblaquire (the only choice) past the main gates to the sign for the Junior School. Turn east (right) into the parking lot. For more information, contact Ben Walters at 905-885-8586, benwalters@sympatico.ca.
- Monday, June 7, 2004** - **Annual Bluebird and Whip-poor-will Walk with Hazel Bird**. Meet at 6:30 p.m. at the junction of Harwood Road and Beaver Meadow Road. It will be signed. Our Bluebird destination will be Harvey' Farm. New members who are not familiar with Hazel's Bluebird Project can phone Bryan Baxter for more detailed directions to the site, at 905-372-6273.
- June 12 & 13, 2004** - **Northumberland Summer Bird Count**. Contact Roger Frost, 905-885-9615, ekrf@eagle.ca for more information.

For **Summer Outings**, see page 2.

SUMMER OUTINGS

•Saturday, June 19, 2004 - Corbett Nicholls' private property - 9:00 am.

We will meet at the commuter lot at Hwy. 28 off Phillips Rd. in Port Hope at 8:30 a.m. for car pooling. This is the lot across from where Arby's used to be.

To get to the property follow Highway 28 out of Port Hope to Dale Road. Follow Dale Road west to County Road 10. Follow County Road 10 north the 7th Line at Perrytown, turning west. Take first left (south) on the 7th Line, this is Perrytown Road. Corbett is located on the west side of the road and is the last entrance on the west side. We will meet at the road side. Please park on the road. (Do not bring valuables that will be left in car)

This walk will be long and is somewhat hilly, considered of intermediate difficulty. A variety of habitats will be observed, agricultural edges, hardwood ravines, willow swamps, and pine plantations. With over 200 acres, there are many trails and things to see. Please bring a lunch as it will depend on the group, whether we continue into the afternoon.

•Saturday, June 26, 2004 - Bowman property, 9 a.m., 3966 Hwy. 2, 1.5 km west of Welcome corner. For car pooling, meet at 8:30 a.m. at the commuter parking lot at Hwy. 28 off Phillips Rd. in Port Hope. Parking will be back a farm lane in a clearing in the woods.

This is a fairly easy, level walk with mowed trails, along a farm lane and in a farm woodlot. Habitats include pasture, cropped fields, evergreen plantation and mixed woods.

•Saturday, July 10, 2004 Long Sault Conservation Area, Central Lake Ontario Region Conservnation Authority, cost \$1.00/person at trail head (or larger donation if you like), 9:30am

We will meet for car pooling at the Port Hope commuter lot across from the old Arby's (Rose Glen Rd.) at 8:30am.

To get to Long Sault Conservation Area follow Highway 28 from Port Hope to County Road 9 (Ganaraska Road). Turn left and follow County Road 9 west to highway 35/115. Take 35/115 north to highway 35 exit. Take the exit north and follow to regional road 20. Follow regional road 20 west to Woodley Road. Follow Woodley Road north to parking area.

There is a variety of trails on site which pass through a variety of habitats such as drumlin meadows, pine plantations, deciduous ravines and abandoned gravel pits. This is one of Durham's most beautiful forests. Bring a lunch and enjoy one of the many great picnic spots after the hike. The trails are wide and well maintained and have some hilly spots, this is a low difficulty trail system, except for some small hills.

•Saturday July 24, 2004 - Beck Property, 9:30am

We will meet first at the commuter parking lot on Rose Glen Rd. at 8:15 a.m. for car pooling, then meet at the north end of the Canadian Tire parking lot in Cobourg at 8:45 a.m.

To reach the Beck property follow county road 18 (Burnham Street), north out of Cobourg to

(Continued on page 3)

County Road 9. Turn west onto County Road 9 and follow to Hilton Harris Drive. Take Hilton Harris Drive and follow to the only entrance on the road.

There will be a variety of habitats to be observed including young forest, mature forest and pond areas. The trails are minimally maintained and would be of medium difficulty. This 240 acre property will be a delight to visit although don't forget your insect protection.

•Saturday August 14. - Lake Property, 9:30am

We will follow the same car pooling strategy as for the Beck property.

From Cobourg follow County Road 18, to County Road 74 (Dale Road) and follow east to Baltimore. At Baltimore follow County road 45 north to County Road 29. Follow County Road 29 past McDonald Rd. (the road to Peter's Woods) to the entrance to the site located directly across from Hayden Taylor Meats. The entrance is marked only by a gate.

This hike will be shorter but can be difficult due to water conditions. If there has been rain around the time we will visit, wear rubber boots or waterproof hikers. It is a very interesting property and will provide observation of an array of botanical features.

•Saturday September 11, 2004 - 9:00am, Thomas Property

To reach the Thomas property follow Walton Street west through Port Hope as it changes to Lakeshore Road. Follow Lakeshore Road west to Brand Road. Turn north on Brand Road to 1032, the white house, parking available in driveway or on roadside near driveway. Organized car pooling not available for this outing.

The 300 acre Thomas property provides Lake Ontario Shoreline, a dogwood meadow, creek, shrubland and deciduous forest. Walking is easy and trails are well maintained.



For more information on any of the
8586, benwalters@sympatico.ca

outings, contact Ben Walters at 905-885-

THE CURLEW

This issue of *The Curlew* is the last our members will receive until September 2004. The Editors are taking the summer off. Please keep touch, though, if you have any unusual sightings. You'll hear from us again in the Fall. Copy deadline for the September issue is August 31.

A NEW PLANT FOR ONTARIO FOUND IN COBOURG

by Clive Goodwin

On April 23, Joy and I decided to take a walk in Cobourg campground following our evening meal. The campground is adjacent to Victoria Beach, and is, of course, empty at this time of year.

From a distance, I noticed a pale yellowish haze over the centre of one of the campsites, which looked as though the grass there might have yellowed for some reason. As we approached, we could see that there appeared to be tiny flowers of some sort covering the area. The only tiny, early-blooming yellow flower I know of is Pale Alyssum (*Alyssum alyssoides*), but these seemed the wrong colour for this, as well as being in a strange place, and rather too early in the season. On arriving at the site, I discovered a plant which looked rather like a minute buttercup, no taller than a thumb nail, and which was completely new to me.

On returning home, I attempted to key our find out in the Michigan flora (which covers our area well), without success, but was finally able to locate it in both the *Flora of Canada* and in Gleason and Cronquist's *Manual of the Vascular Plants of the Northeast*. It was *Ranunculus testiculatus*, which Gleason called Bur-buttercup (the Canadian flora is rather casual about English

names). However, I find that the scientific name has now been changed to *Ceratocephalus testiculatus*, and an alternate English name is Hornseed Buttercup.

Neither book placed the plant in Ontario. The first said it was Eurasian, "rapidly spreading in the northwest USA, and reported from Kamloops, B.C.", while the second said it was widespread in the western USA and "occasionally introduced" in Iowa and Ohio. A check of the current standard reference (*Ontario Plant List*, by S.G. Newmaster *et al.*, 1998) failed to reveal a reference to it. It seemed we might have a new plant for the Province. And indeed it is new: on checking with Mike Oldham of the Natural Heritage Information Centre (one of the co-authors of the Plant List), he told me that he had been expecting the plant to appear, as it occurs as near as the US islands in Lake Erie. What he did not expect was for it to appear first in Cobourg, rather than in the south-west!

How did it get here? Probably on one of the trailers that camped at Cobourg over the summer. Railways are a well-known source of new additions to our flora, but in a smaller way, the same can be said of campgrounds.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Irene Ebsen, Cobourg
Sharon Foster and Family, Newtonville
Hans and Marlene Maas, Roseneath
Sherwood McLernon and Family, Grafton
Verne and Lois Meadows, Port Hope

VOLUNTEER FOR NATURE

WBFN members may participate free of charge for a day in many Volunteer for Nature events. All you need to do is register by calling 1-800-4402366 or 416-444-8419

Examples:

- With Carden Field Naturalists, there is a Carden Alvar Butterfly count on July 11 at 9:30 a.m. at Lake Dalrymple.
- With Alderville First Nations, there is A Wildflower Affair at the Rice Lake Plains from July 18th to 20th at 5 p.m.
- With the Otonabee Conservation Authority, there is Canopies and Caves at Warsaw Caves Conservation Area from September 24 to 27 at 9 a.m.

These are three of eighteen projects in Central Ontario. For more information call the numbers above or visit www.ontarionature.org.

*Simone Mérey
Ontario Nature Rep.*

MORE ABOUT TURTLES

For those who may be really interested in turtles, the topic of our April speaker, Joe Cebek from Trent University, the following two web sites may be of interest.

~ www.trentu.ca/biology/turtlewatch is the web site of Kawarth Turtle Watch, a new monitoring program to help keep track of the 7 species of turtles found in the Kawarthas. If you would like to learn more or to report sightings, visit the site.

~ www.kawarthaturtle.org is the site of the Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre, a facility to treat injured native turtles. They maintain a facility at Riverview Park and Zoo on Water Street in Peterborough to treat injured turtles, many the victims of road accidents. Injured native turtles are treated here, with the object to eventually release them into the wild.

THE WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS

Past Pres.	Carole Payne	905-885-6135	bookbind@eagle.ca
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The editor is most grateful to those who have contributed to this issue of the Curlew. Copy for the September 2004 issue should be received by August 31, 2004. Rare or interesting sightings should be reported to Ted McDonald (885-4764) or Norma Wallace (885-5552) for the September Curlew.

Correspondence for WBFN should be addressed to: "The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3."

AND MORE EVENTS

Port Hope Community Clean-up Initiative, May 29 for Ward 2. (Unfortunately, the Ward 1 date was not received in time for it to be publicized in the Curlew). Look for details in the local papers.

Ganaraska Forest Centre: Herptile Day, Saturday, June 5, 1-4 p.m. Learn about the lives of frogs and other amphibians and reptiles. An exploratory hike around wetlands and ponds near the Ganaraska Forest Centre is included so rubber boots are recommended. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call 905-797-2721 or e-mail gfc@eagle.ca. The GRCA sponsors events at the Forest Centre throughout the year.

Ecology Garden's Natural Homestead Tour, June 19 and 20 (rain or shine). \$15.00/ticket. Special rate for families and if you're cycling the Tour. For more information, contact Kathryn McHolm at 905-753-2196 or kathryngarden@sympatico.ca.

Presqu'ile Provincial Park NatureWorks Workshops run throughout the year on a variety of topics. For example, on Sunday, June 6 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., there is a Reptile Ramble. There is a fee of \$15 per person and pre-registration is necessary. For a brochure, contact Presqu'ile Provincial Park, R.R., #4, Brighton, ON K0K 1H0, 613-475-4324, Fax: 613-475-2209, or www.ontarioparks.com or www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca. NatureWorks is supported by Ontario Parks and the Friends of Presqu'ile Provincial Park.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

- The Club's good wishes go out to **Ian Tate** who, after a stay in Northumberland Hills Hospital rehab ward, is now recuperating at home from hip replacement surgery. In spite of the surgery, Ian is still planning to do a Baillie Birdathon some time in May. He'd welcome sponsors.
- Condolences from WBFN to **Bruce Parker and family** on the recent death of his father.

W. John D. Eberlie Research Travel Award

The Toronto Entomologists' Association is pleased to announce the recipient of the fifth W. John E. Eberlie Research Travel Award: David Punzalan of the Department of Zoology, University of Toronto. His project is entitled "Thermoregulation and sexual dimorphism in the ambush bug *Phymata americana*". This award of \$300 will help David's travel costs to his study site, the Koffler Scientific Reserve at Joker's Hill, King, Ontario, to do field studies that will complement his laboratory work. David presented the preliminary results of his research at the T.E.A. Student Symposium in March. His supervisors are Dr. Locke Rowe and Dr. Helen Rodd. Congratulations David!

The W. John D. Eberlie Research Travel Award is presented annually by the T.E.A. in honour of the late Dr. W. John D. Eberlie, a well known entomologist and family physician from Northumberland County and a past president of the Association. Dr. Eberlie was a WBFN member for

RECENT SIGHTINGS

compiled by Ted McDonald

Red-throated Loon	Apr. 17	1	off Candlewick Woods	RF
Common Loon	Apr. 9	10+	Lucas Point flying west	MB
	Apr. 10	84	passing Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
	Apr. 18	12	off Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Pied-billed Grebe	Apr. 8	1	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Horned Grebe	Apr. 6	3	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Apr. 15	10	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob.	LW
Red-necked Grebe	Apr. 3	5	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Apr. 12	23	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob.	LW
Double-crested Cormorant	Apr. 9	8	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
	Apr. 16	120	mouth of Ganaraska River PH	MH
Great Blue Heron	Apr. 8	3	over Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Great Egret	Apr. 13-18	1	Wicklow Beach marsh	BL
	Apr. 17	1	Pratt's Pond area Cob	AEW
Black-crowned Night Heron	Apr. 15	4	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob.	LW
	Apr. 17	3	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Turkey Vulture	Mar. 29	1	Wicklow area	AEW
	Apr. 1	8	Hwy #2 east of Cob	AEW
Mute Swan	Apr. 23	14	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	May 1	3	Lake St Marsh PH	CMCD
Wood Duck	March 3	1	Roseneath Landing	DS
Gadwall	Apr. 12/17	2	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Blue-winged Teal	Apr. 5	8	Lake St Marsh PH	MH
Northern Shoveler	Apr. 10	7	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Apr. 20	2	Lake St Marsh PH	GMCD
	Apr. 24	3	Lake St Marsh PH	RF EK
Northern Pintail	Apr. 4	8	Deer Park Rd. PH Ward 2	RF GB
	Apr. 19	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Green-winged Teal	Apr. 2	5	Willow Beach marsh	GL
	Apr. 4	8	Deer Park Rd. PH Ward 2	RF GB
Greater Scaup	Apr. 12	4	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Lesser Scaup	Apr. 12	1	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Surf Scoter	Apr. 14/19	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG,
White-winged Scoter	Apr. 10	26	off Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Long-tailed Duck	Apr. 8-15	10-59	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Bufflehead	Apr. 10	13	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
	Apr. 24	10	Lake St Marsh PH	EK RF
Common Goldeneye	Apr. 11	6	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Hooded Merganser	Apr. 3	4	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Red-breasted Merganser	Apr. 15	62	off Lakeshore Rd. Cob	LW
Ruddy Duck	Apr. 22	3	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Osprey	Apr. 12	1	Hwy 28 & Ctv Rd. 9	MB
	Apr. 18	3	Golden Beach area	RH
	Apr. 20	3	Hwy 28 & Ctv Rd. 9	AEW
Bald Eagle	Apr. 4	1	over Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Apr. 4	1 SY	Lakeshore Rd. & Haskill Rd	RF GB
	Apr. 18	1	Bowmanton Rd. & Ctv Rd. 9	RH
Northern Harrier	Mar. 12 on	2 (nr.)	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
	Apr. 22	1	Port Britain area	GMCD
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Apr. 18	1	Durham St. PH	EK
Cooper's Hawk	Apr. 1	1	Choate Rd. PH	MH
	May 1	1	Deblaquire St., PH – eating a Mourning Dove	GMCD
	May 6	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th , PH Ward 2	LS

Sightings - cont'd.

Northern Goshawk	Apr. 1	1	Cobourg Harbour area	CEG
	Apr. 6	2	Northumberland Forest	RF
Broad-winged Hawk	Apr. 28	1	Woodvale School Rd., PH Ward 2	LS
Red-tailed Hawk	Apr. 13	5	Lone Pine Marsh	DD
Rough-legged Hawk	Apr. 4	1	Deer Park Rd., PH Ward 2	RF, GB

Sightings - cont'd.

Eastern Phoebe	Apr 12	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
	May 1	2	Normar Rd. Cob	SMcL
Great-crested Flycatcher	May 5	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
Eastern Kingbird	Apr. 30	1	Lakeshore Rd., Wesleville	MB
	May 2	1	Haskill Rd. & Lakeshore. PH	ERM
Blue-headed Vireo	May 4	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
Purple Martin	Apr 17	2	Roseneath Landing	DS
	Apr 21	2	Garden Hill area	DW
Tree Swallow	Mar 30	2	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	Apr 19	1	Lakenort Creek	MB
	Apr 20	2	Hwy 2 & Gage's Creek	ERM
	May 2	50	Gage's Creek mouth. PH	RF
Bank Swallow	May 2	20	Lake St., PH	ERM
Barn Swallow	Apr. 5	1	Colborne area	KB
	Apr 9	1	over Lake St. PH	EK RF
	Apr 17	10	Cobourg Harbour	MB
	Apr 23	11	Lucas Point. Cob	AEW
Brown Creeper	Apr 2	1	Willow Beach	GL
	Apr. 3	1	suet feeder. Albert St., Cob.	MB
	May 4	2	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
House Wren	Apr 29	1	Albert St. Cob	MB
	Apr 30	1	Ontario St N. Cob	AEW
Winter Wren	Apr 3	1	Candlewick Woods	GL
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Apr 17	2	Durham St. PH	EK RF
	Apr 22	1	Deblaquire St. PH	GMCD
	May 2	40	Candlewick Woods	RF
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Apr 1	2	Willow Beach	GL
	Apr 17	3	Durham St. PH	RF EK
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Apr 21	2	Candlewick Woods	RF
	Apr 24	1m	Lake St. Trail PH	RF EK
Eastern Bluebird	Mar 30	2	Roseneath Landing	DS
	Apr 8	2	Crossen Rd. Hamilton Twp.	RH
Hermit Thrush	Apr 17	3	Candlewick Woods	RF
Wood Thrush	May 1	1	Albert St., Cob.	MB
Gray Catbird	May 1	1	Colborne area	SMcL
Brown Thrasher	Apr 18	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
	Apr 21	1	Roseneath Landing	DS
	Apr 23	1	Albert St. Cob	MB
	Apr 30	2	Garden Hill area	DW
American Pipit	Apr 9	1	Lucas Point. Cob	MB
Cedar Waxwing	Apr 27	40	Centennial Dr. PH	ERM
	May 3	31	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS
Blue-winged Warbler	May 2	1	Candlewick Woods	RF
Nashville Warbler	May 2	8	Candlewick Woods	RF
	May 31	1	Lake St. Trail PH	GMCD
Northern Parula	May 1	1 m	Albert St. Cob	MB
	May 2	1	Candlewick Woods	RF
Yellow Warbler	May 2	1	Colborne area	IF
Magnolia Warbler	May 3	1	Lake St. Trail. PH	GMCD
Black-throated Blue Warbler	May 6	1	Lake St. Trail. PH	ERM
Yellow-rumped Warbler	May 2	60	Port Britain Rd. PH	ERM
	May 2	90	Candlewick Woods	RF
Black-throated Green Warbler	Apr 21	1	Candlewick Woods	RF
Pine Warbler	Apr 23	1 m	Albert St. Cob – in maples	MB
	Apr 29	1	s. of Roseneath	FB-N
	May 4	2	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th PH Ward 2	LS

Sightings - cont'd.

Palm Warbler	May 1	2	Lakeshore Rd., PH	JGo
	May 2	8	Candlewick Woods	RF
	May 6	1	Lake St. Trail, PH	EK
CERULEAN WARBLER	May 5	1	Lucas Point area	CEG
Black & White Warbler	May 6	2	Lake St. Trail, PH	ERM
Ovenbird	May 6	1	Larchmere Golf Course	ERM
Northern Waterthrush	Apr. 28	1	Woodvale School Rd., PH Ward 2	LS

Sightings - cont'd.

Evening Grosbeak	Apr 16	1	Harwood Rd. & Ctv. Rd 9	CI
	Apr 17/18	1m	Durham St. PH	EK RF
	Apr 24	1f	Durham St. PH	EK
Red Squirrel	Apr 2	1	Young St. PH	NW
	Apr 3	1	Choate Rd. PH	MH
Cottontail Rabbit	Apr 2	3	Young St. PH	NW
	Apr 28	1	Abbott Blvd. Cob.	PS VS
Porcupine	Apr 8	1	Crossen Rd. Hamilton Twn	RH
Eastern Chipmunk	Apr 3	1	Abbott Blvd. Cob.	PS VS
Coyote	Mar. 7-May	1	Jamieson Rd. & 7 th , PH Ward 2	LS
Chorus Frog	Apr 24	3	Lake St. Marsh. PH	EK RF
Prairie Buttercup	Apr 1		Burnham St. PH	BC
Coltsfoot	Apr 1		Burnham St. PH	BC
Cabbage White	May 1	1	Young St. PH	NW

Observers: EB=Erich Bahr; MB=Margaret Bain; GB=Graydon Bowman; KB=Kim Braat; FB-N= Fran Brumel-Nijhowne; BC=Bill Crowley; GMCD=Geoff Dale; DD=Don Davis; JF=Jo Foster; RF=Roger Frost; JGo=Jack Goering; CEG=Clive Goodwin; BH=Betty Hewson; MH=Marguerite Huggins; RH=Reese Hunt; CJ=Colin Jones; EK=Elizabeth Kellogg; GL=Gary Little; BL=Bill Logan; ERM=Ted McDonald; AMcL=Andy McLaughlan; SMcL=Sherwood McLernon; LS=Louise Schmidt; DS=Dave Shirley; MS=Marguerite Short; PS=Paavo Siitam; VS=Viive Siitam; DSv=Daphne Svenningson; NW=Norma Wallace; DW=Doug Watkins; LW=Lori Wensley; AEW=Audrey Wilson

THE TRUTH ABOUT DANDELIONS

Nothing shouts SPRING like yellow. As colour bleeds into the black and white winter landscape, yellow leads the way in forsythia bushes, budding trees and daffodils. Yet, there's one tiny yellow bloom that for many makes us "see red" - the dandelion. It sprinkles our lawn with colour and sends us rushing to the garden center for herbicide.

Labelled a weed by lawn and garden experts, the dandelion is a complex little plant with an impressive list of nutritional, medicinal and ecological benefits to its credit. Our ancestors came to the New World with the things they felt necessary for their survival. One of those was dandelion seed. It's unlikely that they'd bring weeds on their journey. Still, the virtues of this perennial seem to have been forgotten in the centuries since their arrival.

According to prominent herbalists Gregory Tilford, "Dandelion is one of the most complete plant foods on earth." Containing 64 nutrients and health-promoting substances, dandelions have more beta-carotene than carrots, more lecithin than soybeans and more iron than spinach. In addition, these dandy little plants contain vitamins A, C, E, thiamine, riboflavin, calcium, potassium, phosphorous and magnesium. You can replace those expensive little bottles of colloidal trace minerals with dandelion and save big. In Europe dandelion is grown for use in salads, so the next time you're looking over a display of wilted mesclun salad mix at \$6.99/kg, consider what you're passing up on your own front lawn.

Since ancient times the dandelion has been recognized for its curative powers. The list of its medicinal properties is extensive. Prescription for Nutritional Healing, a veritable bible for naturopathic practitioners, lists the following: cleanses the liver and bloodstream; increases bile production; reduces serum cholesterol and uric acid; improves functioning of kidneys, pancreas, spleen and stomach; useful for abscesses, anemia, boils, breast tumours, cirrhosis of the liver, fluid retention, hepatitis, jaundice and rheumatism. Dandelion root is marketed in Canada as a diuretic. It is cultivated in India as a liver remedy and is used in China for relieving tonsillitis. In the US, dandelion farming is a growing \$10 million a year industry. Travelling light, our predecessors brought both food and medicine in one tiny plant.

And if you chose not to harvest them, dandelions can actually improve your lawn. Their deep roots reach down into hardpan and pull minerals to the surface, helping to restore topsoil. Because of their structure, they don't compete with grass, whose root system is only inches deep. Dandelions are natural humus producers, which attracts earthworms. When the plant dies, the root channels create natural pathways for the worms to distribute their own brand of organic fertilizer. All of these things contribute to the quality of the soil, and therefore the health of your lawn.

So instead of "seeing red" the next time a virtuous dandelion pops up, pick a bouquet for dinner and lower your blood pressure in the process.

*by Cindy Rennie
Submitted by Minnie Pennell*

The Curlew is published 8 times per year, January, February, March, April, May, September, October and November by the Willow Beach Field Naturalists.

Membership in WBFN includes a subscription to *The Curlew*.

Annual membership fees are:

Family - \$20 Single - \$18 Senior Couple - \$18 Senior Single - \$16

Cheques for membership should be made out to Willow Beach Field Naturalists and sent to: The Treasurer, Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON, L1A 3Z3. A receipt for Income Tax purposes will be provided for your membership fee as well as for any donation. Willow Beach Field Naturalists is a Registered Charitable organization.



Willow Beach Field Naturalists
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