



COMING EVENTS

● **Friday, January 25, 2008, 7:30 p.m., Beatrice Strong Public School, 90 Rose Glen Rd., Port Hope**
Speaker: **Ben Walters and Miles Falconer.** Topic: **Avian Productivity in the Ganaraska Forest - A large forest or ecological trap?** Ben Walters and Myles Falconer, M.Sc. Candidates at Trent University, will present preliminary results of avian research from the Ganaraska Forest. The Ganaraska Forest is an 11,000 acre forest north of Port Hope, straddling Northumberland, Durham and Peterborough Counties. The forest is a multi-use forest, incorporating recreation, education and forestry. They will discuss the results they have found thus far, focussing on the effects of recreational and access trails as well as forestry techniques, on Eastern Wood Pewee, Red-eyed Vireo, Veery, Hermit Thrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and American Robin.

● **Friday, February 29, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Terry Fox Public School, 1065 Riddell Ave, Cobourg**
Annual General Meeting. *See other items about the AGM on pages 5, 7 and 8. More details will be provided in the February Curlew.*

Special Presentation by **Jenna Dickson and Alison Elliott.** Topic: **Students on Ice Arctic Expedition 2007.** Jenna and Alison are both members of the Trinity College School community: Jenna as a Grade 12 student and Prefect, Alison as a science teacher. Together, they participated in the International Polar Year 2007 Arctic Expedition with the award-winning Students on Ice organization. They will share slides and stories of their journey from Churchill, Manitoba north to Baffin Island. In addition to breath-taking encounters with Beluga Whales, Orcas, Walrus and Polar Bears, Jenna and Alison were able to see first hand the effects of climate change on northern ecosystems and speak with Inuit Elders about the impacts of these changes.

● See insert for **Proposed Revisions to the WBFN Constitution** which will be voted on at the AGM. This insert is the required 21 days' notice of a change in the constitution.

● **MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2008 ARE NOW DUE.** WBFN dues are levied on a calendar year basis. The renewal form is an insert in this issue.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Katerina Kryst, Cobourg

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

- The club extends sympathy to Audrey Stacy and family on the recent death of her husband, Ray.

Thanks to Ted McDonald for bringing this little note to our attention.

Today In History for December 14

1876 - Three English sparrows were spotted outside Grafton, the first ever seen here. They were part of a small flock that had been released in Quebec. The newspaper wrote it hoped they would stay.

from the Port Hope Evening Guide/Cobourg Star, prepared by John Jolie

CORRECTION to sightings from November Curlew: On October 17, Margaret Bain saw 18 Sanderling (not Semipalmated Sandpipers) at the foot of D'Arcy St., Cobourg. Sorry, Margaret

COMING UP

- January 26 at Presqu'ile Provincial Park: **Natureworks Soup Hike**. 1.5 hr. guided hike, followed by a hot bowl of soup and a slide show at Stonehedge. \$2 person/\$5 family. Preregister at 613-475-1688 ext. 2

- January 31 - **Northumberland Land Trust Annual General Meeting**, Alderville Community Centre. Dinner, Silent Auction, Sugar Island Singers, Alderville Youth Drum Group. Speaker: Dave Mowat - The Story of Alderville and the Black Oak Savanna. Tickets \$50 per person from Elisabeth LaFontaine, 905-349-9990 x1

- February 15-18 - Great Backyard Bird Count. Join thousands of other Citizen Scientists across North American in submitting checklists of your bird sightings on these days. Information at www.birdcount.org

- February 20, Lunar Eclipse: A total eclipse of the moon will be visible from most of North American and is predicted to be very good in Ontario. Partial eclipse will begin at 8:43 p.m. EST, with the total eclipse at 10:10 p.m. EST. This will last about 50 minutes. NASA web site: <http://sunearth.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse>

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40790538
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSED TO
BOX 421
PORT HOPE, ON L1A 3Z3

THE WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS

Past Pres.	Bryan Baxter	905-372-6273	bbaxter@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 February 2008 issue should be received by January 31, 2008. Rare or interesting sightings should be reported to Elizabeth Kellogg and Roger Frost at 905-885-9615, ekrf@eagle.ca, or Norma Wallace (885-5552) for the February Curlew. Correspondence for WBFN should be addressed to: "The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3."

WINTER GULLS

by Clive E. Goodwin

Winter has its compensations. Flocks of Snow Buntings drift across the snowy fields, soft lilting calls announce tree sparrows foraging along the hedgerows, and on the open waters of the lake flocks of waterfowl toss in the surf. Then there are the gulls.

Of course, gulls are not everyone's favorite birds. They stand around on the ice doing nothing, scruffy creatures that look as though they need dry cleaning, and all appearing vaguely alike. But gulls can also be fascinating. Among the motley array of young birds can be immaculate Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, and the seeming similarities can mask the presence of rarer species that can be drawn to the loitering flocks. The winter gull flocks are also a good opportunity to sort out those confusing plumages, and fortunately only two or three species will make up the bulk of the birds.

Over the years Cobourg harbour has been the most consistently productive locality in Northumberland for readily accessible gull flocks in winter, and we have 3,388 records from this location between December 1 and the end of February [this constitutes 82% of all gull records in this period, excluding the CBCs]. In all, 11 species have been recorded in this period, although three, Laughing Gull, Mew Gull and California Gull, have only four records among them, so they fall very much into the 'rarer species' category [the Laughing Gull from last year first appeared in March, 12 days later than the previous sighting in 1994!]. Bonaparte's Gull, although it can appear in fair numbers in early December, really does not qualify as a 'winter' gull, as there have been only scattered birds into the New Year, and it is really better considered as a very late migrant.

As for the rest, we have good numbers

of the three common species – Ring-billed, Herring and Great Black-backed – with much smaller [and rather unpredictable] numbers of Glaucous and Iceland, and occasional appearances of one or two Lesser Black-backed and Thayer's Gulls.

One of the intriguing things about these birds is that the numbers of each species varies from month to month: Ring-billeds hit a low in January and then almost double in February; Great Black-backed decrease steadily from a peak in November, while Herring Gulls increase steadily to a peak in February. This latter pattern is repeated, in smaller numbers, with Iceland Gull and Lesser Black-backed, but both Glaucous and Thayer's Gulls have a pattern shown by none of the others, with numbers peaking in January. These are composite totals over a period of years: there's quite a lot of variation from one year to the next, perhaps depending on ice conditions, so we will concentrate on the composites [For those of you who like looking at actual numbers, the gross totals are below; I have included March figures for comparison purposes].

Why do these patterns occur? As usual, we can only speculate. However, in the case of the Ring-billed Gull the answer is relatively straightforward. Many Ring-billeds leave Ontario in winter, so although they are still common birds at that time, their numbers are much reduced. By February we are seeing return migration, which peaks in March.

Herring Gull numbers are more difficult to explain. Herring Gulls, while common enough year-round, do not begin to approach Ring-billed numbers in the summer: in fact, the aggregate total for February is over 18 times higher than the highest monthly count

(Continued on page 4)

COMPOSITE TOTALS OF GULL SPECIES BY MONTH, 1991-2007

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Ring-billed Gull	43642	40270	25223	48704	69159
Herring Gull	7820	60446	139994	171129	72437
Thayer's Gull	1	4	17	11	5
Iceland Gull	4	53	161	212	106
L. Black-backed Gull	3	11	46	47	27
Glaucous Gull	7	182	430	306	146
Gr. Black-backed Gull	4836	4664	3125	1523	652

(Continued from page 3)

between May and August. This seems to suggest that winter birds are migrants from somewhere; but it is not clear where. The *Birds of North America*, the authoritative source for information on our birdlife, is rather silent about the Great Lakes' Herring Gulls. It says that the local adults winter here, while the young birds move south; and does not suggest that we get migrants from elsewhere. Coastal Herring Gulls are said to move out to sea or south along the coasts, and the account says nothing about where the "several thousand" spread across the Arctic go.

My guess is that we may be seeing migrant birds that originate both from the Arctic and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence. Supporting this is the fact that we have considerably more Herring Gulls from September through November than in the summer months, again suggesting migration, and the January-February totals may be particularly high because return flights are usually in a much tighter time frame than those in fall, also coupled with the fact that the harbour is often frozen in these months, giving numbers of birds a prime location to loiter.

Certainly the Iceland Gulls originate from the eastern Arctic. The bird we see here is believed to be the 'Kumlien's' race of Iceland Gull – it differs mainly in having grayish smudges on the tips of the wing - and it apparently nests on cliffs in the area of south

Baffin Island. It follows roughly the same wintering pattern as Herring Gull, but the numbers are so small that it's difficult to draw any real conclusions. As for the Lesser Black-backed, although they follow a similar pattern as well, no-one really knows where they originate: they're a European bird, but the numbers now being seen on this continent seem to suggest a closer origin, so perhaps they too are breeding in the eastern Arctic.

Which brings us to the real puzzle; why would Great Black-backed Gulls reach their highest numbers of the winter in December and then seem to steadily decline? In fact, the species reaches its highest numbers of the year during the fall and then declines from there. The fall numbers suggest migration, but where do they go, and more intriguing, why do we not seem to see them returning? Great Black-backed are a pelagic species, nesting along the Labrador coast, Newfoundland and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, with a very few on the Great Lakes, so we might expect a movement pattern similar to the three species above. At present, this is another of those odd, unexpected features the database reveals.

Which leaves us with Glaucous and Thayer's Gulls. Unlike the species above, Glaucous are spread across the north coastlines of the entire Arctic, while Thayer's nest on the northerly islands of the high Arctic, and winter mainly along the Pacific coast. There's an on-going debate as to whether

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Thayer's are really simply another race of the Iceland Gull [the birds look different, but they apparently don't seem to care!]. Race or not, their winter ranges are clearly very different, and the northern Great Lakes would seem to be the final winter destination of both Glau-

cous and occasional Thayer's Gulls.

So the gulls are with us all winter, but at the same time are among the true harbingers of spring. By February the returning flocks, all in bright, crisp spring plumages, will be calling noisily and displaying to one another, a sure sign that spring is on its way.

Silent Auction
WBFN Annual General Meeting (AGM)
February 29th, 2008

Mark your calendars! This year, WBFN is holding a fundraising Silent Auction at the AGM on Friday February 29th and we need your support to make it a success. The money raised will go to WBFN educational grants given each year to local schools for nature-related endeavours. School children are the next generation of naturalists, so please support this cause.

Donations of items (or services) towards the auction will be accepted until the January 25th, 2008 meeting. I want to thank all members who have already donated fabulous items to the auction. Your generosity is much appreciated. A complete list of items for auction will be published in the next Curlew.

On the night of the auction, items will be on display throughout the evening and you will have ample opportunity to sign in your bids during the social time prior to the actual commencement of the business part of the meeting, or at any time before the closing of bidding which will be announced later in the evening.

The auction will be strictly **cash and carry**, with **cash** or **personal cheques** accepted as payment. Bidding will be in increments of no less than \$1.00. Winning bids will be announced before the end of the meeting. Payment must be received at the end of the auction and items taken away that night. Everyone has a chance to go home with something they really wanted!

For those unable to attend the meeting, peruse the list of items in the February Curlew; perhaps you can ask a friend to bid/pay on your behalf.

For more information or to volunteer your help the night of the auction or to arrange for pick-up/drop-off of items please contact Louise Schmidt at 905-797-1059 or wingbeat@xplornet.com

Book Review

Peter E. Kelly and Douglas W. Larson, 2007. *The Last Stand - A Journey Through the Ancient Forest of the Niagara Escarpment*. Natural Heritage Books. 162 pages, \$39.95

I have been aware of Doug Larson's studies of the ancient cedars which grow on the cliff-face of the Niagara Escarpment for several years. Thus, when I saw an advertisement for *The Last Stand* in Ontario Nature, I decided that this book would be a necessary addition to my library.

I received my copy on the same day that I invited Peter Kelly to be the guest speaker at the Annual Meeting of the Field Botanists of Ontario. I have read the book and heard Peter's excellent verbal presentation. The only problem I had in reading the book is that it is like a mystery and I just couldn't put it down. I expect that most writers would like to write books with this kind of problem.

For a book of only 162 pages, the writers cover the topic rather completely. They discuss the history and geology of the Escarpment and the botany of these trees which range from 300 to over 1300 years old. The photographs are good and while the book is technical to some extent, it is written in easily understood English.

It starts with a concise description of the Niagara Escarpment, how it was formed, and its significance. Then there is a discussion of the Eastern White Cedar which grows on the cliff-face of the Escarpment. Its uses by both First Nations People and early European settlers are described. The explanations of why it can attain ages of 300, 500, 1000, or even 1300 years on the vertical cliff-faces of the Escarpment are interesting. No one has tried to clear the vertical cliff-faces for farming or building houses and loggers have not cut the trees. I don't really understand why not.

Normally, one thinks of old trees as being very tall, and having a very large diameter, but these trees are clinging to cracks in the Escarpment and are struggling for food and water, thus they are not giant. In fact some of them

hang down and the shapes of some of them remind me of a poorly trained Japanese Bonsai.

The photography is very good, particularly because Peter took many of the photos while hanging from a rope over the edge of the Escarpment. One picture shows an Eastern White Cedar which is less than a metre and a half long (tall) and it is over 300 years old.

There is a chapter in which old trees in other parts of North America and around the world are compared to the Escarpment's ancient cedars.

Towards the end of the book, Peter states that they sampled close to 600 ancient trees along 735 km. of the Niagara Escarpment. Ten of these trees were over 1000 years old with the oldest being 1320 years old. He then describes some of the trees found at different locations along the Escarpment. He has given each tree a name, such as The Ghost, The Alien, The Ancient One. It almost makes them come alive and makes you feel that they are very wise old friends.

The closing chapter is a look at the future of natural habitats and particularly the Escarpment and makes a strong case for conservation.

In my opinion, *The Last Stand* is an excellent book. It packs a lot of ecology, natural history, and technical information plus some excellent photographs into its 162 pages, but here is the catch, it is written in easily understood English just like a good mystery should be.

If you are interested in trees, you will find this book fascinating. If you are not interested in trees, I suggest that you read *The Last Stand* and I am sure that you will become interested in trees.

- Bill Crowley

Editor's Note: The Last Stand can be ordered at local book stores.

WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS
2008 NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

WBFN's Constitution provides that a Nominating Committee shall bring forward a slate of candidates for election at the Annual General Meeting and further nominations from the floor shall be accepted, with the nominees' prior consent, provided they are proposed and seconded.

This year's Nominating Committee consists of the undersigned, Past Presidents Bob Short, Terry Stopps, Russell Lake, Bill Wensley and members Michael Biggar and Petra Hartwig.

During the February 2006 AGM Barry Robinson, Doug Robertson and John Geale were elected as Directors, all serving a two year term which expires February 2008. Janette Johnston's term as Treasurer expires February 2008.. In addition Simone Merey completes her term as President, Michael Biggar completes his term as 1st Vice President and Louise Schmidt completes her term as 2nd Vice President in February.

All members have been contacted and we are pleased to report that Barry, Doug, Janette and John have each consented to let their name stand for election to another term.. Michael and Louise have consented to let their names stand for election as President and 1st Vice President respectively. Our Outings Co-ordinator, Ben Walters, has consented to let his name stand for the position of 2nd Vice President. Therefore, the Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates for election at the 2008 Annual General Meeting, each serving a two year term:

President:..... Michael Biggar
1st Vice President: Louise Schmidt
2nd Vice President: Ben Walters
Treasurer: Janette Johnston
(pending the appointment or election of a successor).
Directors:..... John Geale
..... Doug Robertson
..... Barry Robinson

Simone Merey becomes Immediate Past President..

Please let us know in advance if additional candidates will be nominated during the AGM.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee
Bryan Baxter, Chair.
08.01.01

WBFN TREASURER

After six years of dedicated and efficient volunteer service, Janette Johnston has decided to retire as WBFN's Treasurer. The Nominating Committee is now seeking candidates for the position and if you are interested or know someone who is capable and may be interested in being the Treasurer, please contact President Simone Merey or the undersigned. Janette has kindly offered to continue acting as our Treasurer until a successor is found.

Duties of the WBFN Treasurer are as follows:

- Receive and keep secure all general funds and operating accounts
 - Make necessary payments
 - Manage the club's investments
 - Attend monthly Executive Board meetings to provide financial information
 - Attend monthly General meetings to receive membership applications
 - Maintain an electronic database for the membership roster
- Complete and submit annual returns for registered charitable foundations.

Bryan Baxter, Chair
Nominating Committee

37TH PORT HOPE-COBOURG CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The 37th Port Hope-Cobourg Christmas Bird Count was held on December 15, 2007. Forty-nine participants braved the very cold, breezy conditions to record 24,590 birds of 83 species. Eight feederwatchers also contributed to this total.

Some of the highlights included Red-necked Grebe, Trumpeter Swan, Cackling Goose, Bald Eagle, Thayer's Gull, Long-eared Owl, Short-eared Owl, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and American Pipit.

It was also a good year for some northern irruptive species with good numbers of Bohemian Waxwings, Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls. Also impressive were high counts for Red-breasted Merganser, Iceland Gull, Common Raven, Eastern Bluebird, Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting.

The post-count potluck was held again at Welcome United Church, where many of the observers gathered to eat, warm up, and share stories of the day's birding.

Thanks to all who participated!

- Roger Frost, Compiler

For a complete tally of CBC results, log onto www.audubon.org/bird/cbc

OWL BANDING AT CANDLEWICK WOODS - 2007

by Roger Frost

After an absence of one year, owl banding commenced for its 10th season on October 3, 2007. Fifty-three Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded, which was the highest total since 2003.

Candlewick is a small woodlot on the north shore of Lake Ontario about 4 km west of Port Hope. On 10 nights between October 3 and November 1, banding attempts were made, resulting in 23.25 hours of effort. This was the smallest amount of effort in the history of this project.

As in previous years, the owls were attracted into the nets using a tape recording of Northern Saw-whet Owl calls. The calls were broadcast from a speaker hung about 2 meters high in a white cedar tree, which was surrounded by a triangle of 3 - 2 3/8" mesh, 40' mist nets.

This fall produced a huge flight of Northern Saw-whet Owls. Most banding stations in Eastern North America recorded their largest banding totals ever. Candlewick would likely also have set a record high total had more effort been put in. The magnitude of this flight can be illustrated by the fact that Candlewick banded 2.28 owls per hour in 2007. This is well above the previous record rate of 1.56 owls per hour in 2001.

The peak night at Candlewick occurred on October 12, when 14 Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded. The only other night to reach double figures was October 8, when 10 owls were banded. The 2007 flight was dominated by hatch-year birds. Over 75% of the

saw-whets banded at Candlewick were hatch-year birds. Similar age ratios were reported from other banding stations. Obviously, 2007 was a very successful year for Northern Saw-whet Owl breeding.

The sex ratio was similar to previous years, with 68% female, 6% male, and 26% unknown.

No foreign banded owls were recaptured this year, but one Candlewick banded bird was recovered elsewhere. Northern Saw-whet Owl #1204-27371 was initially banded on October 23, 2003 and was recaptured at Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory on October 30, 2007. This same bird was also recaptured twice in the fall of 2005! It was first recaptured at Prince Edward Point on October 20, then again north of Picton on October 21. This bird must like Prince Edward County.

In addition to the 53 saw-whets, one Barred Owl was banded on October 15. This was a hatch-year bird and only the second Barred Owl banded for this project. On October 24 another Barred Owl was seen hanging around the nets. Barred Owls also came south in much larger numbers than usual this fall.

The only other owl observed this season was a Long-eared Owl on October 28. For the first time in the 10 years of this project, no Great Horned Owls were seen or heard.

Thanks to Graydon Bowman for helping to erect the mist nets and to Bob Scult-horpe for the use of Candlewick Woods for this project.

A new book for your consideration. Thanks to Don Davis for bringing it to our attention.

Atlas of bird migration: tracking the great journeys of the world's birds. Elphick, Jonathan, General Editor. Foreword by Thomas E. Lovejoy. 176 p. col. photos. Firefly Books Ltd. 2007
ISBN - 13:978-1-55407-248-4
ISBN - 10: 1-55407-248-4

January 24, 2008 Public Information Forum
Draft Management Plan for Northumberland County Forest

- 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. - Open House
- 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. - Public Info Forum
 - Presentation by Dr. Marsh on Trail Study
 - Facilitated Roundtable
- Location: Alderville Community Centre, 2:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Northumberland County will be holding an open house on January 24 about the new forest management plan for the Northumberland County Forest. The county is currently reviewing its management plan for the forest and is seeking public input which will be used by the consultants preparing the plan.

It is very important that the public attend the meeting and make their views known, otherwise the continuing detrimental uses of the forest will continue and will potentially be expanded. Reports that are currently available, including a recently released draft trail study report are available at <http://northumberlandcfac.cenet.ca>. Go to the section labelled papers/presentations to download documents. If you cannot access the internet, please contact Ben Walters (contact info at end.) Draft plans and presentations will also be available at the open house.

Some of the issues that Willow Beach members and friends and family might address at the open house are the use of motorized vehicles in the Northumberland County Forest and the ongoing harvesting of trees during the bird breeding season. Options for the county on these issues are to:

1. Prohibit all motorized use from the forest and make a few trails wheelchair accessible for those that cannot currently access trails other than by motorized means.
2. Limit forest harvesting to those months outside of the avian breeding season (i.e. September to April) and ensure that cavity trees, standing dead trees and trees containing large stick nests are retained for wildlife values as is expected under current forestry practices.

Even if you do not actively “use” the forest, your opinion is valuable and you do have a stake in the forest for its intrinsic value and as the only voices for its natural environment and the wildlife that inhabit it.

If you have any questions or would like to make comments but are unable to make the open house, please contact Ben Walters at 905-885-9615 or at benjaminwalters@trentu.ca.

Ontario Nature’s 3rd Annual Youth Writing Contest

Entries can be an essay, story or piece of creative writing with a maximum count of 700 words, typed and double-spaced.

The author must be an Ontario Grade 7 or 8 student.

Deadline is April 15, 2008.

More information can be found at the Ontario Nature website:

<http://www.ontarionature.org/events/challenge.html>

This Letter to the Editor was written by WBFN member Don Davis in response to an article entitled "In search of monarchs; Mexican mountains offer spectacular hikes to see butterflies during winter" by Jessican Bernstein-Wax (Associated Press - December 2007)

Some Reflections on Visiting Mexico and the Overwintering Monarch Butterflies

I have just returned from riding a horse up the mountain Cerro Pelon (3000 m) near Manchenos, Mexico, to see the overwintering monarch butterflies. While the huge clusters have been described as the "Eighth Wonder of the World" and are particularly spectacular to see, those planning a trip to Mexico should be aware that this is a particularly violent time in Mexico's history. During my recent trip, 600 Federal officers arrested 52 illegal loggers and sawmill operators near Zitacuaro and the protected buffer zone of the Monarch Biosphere, and seized about 6000 tons of illegally cut wood. Similar ruthless mafia-type gangs are also engaged in drug dealing and other illegal activities in and near the Monarch Biosphere. Visiting birdwatchers and journalists have been assaulted and had their valuables stolen.

For these reasons, I recommend tours offered by Maraleen Manos-Jones at www.spiritofbutterflies.com. Tour leader Jose Luis Alvarez is fluent in English, Spanish and French, is very accommodating and provides his guests with great views of the monarchs. I have always felt very safe with Jose. In 2002, these trips won a conservation award from Smithsonian Magazine.

Mexico City, the world's largest city, can present risks, so choosing Continental or Mexicana Airlines flights to the colonial city of Morelia, the capital of Michoacan, is another choice.

As Jessica points out, the trip to the sanctuaries is quite strenuous, and I usually engage in a regimen of physical exercise many weeks before my trip. Driving and climbing up to 3000 metres can result in nausea from car sickness or the higher elevation. While walking up the mountain, you will sweat, huff and puff and stop to rest frequently in the thin air. Riding a horse up the narrow, steep, rocky mountain trails is also strenuous, and for this trip, it took us 1 1/4 hours to reach the monarchs.

Before the trip, I took Ducoral vaccine to help prevent "Montezuma's Revenge", and had previously received Hepatitis A vaccine. I bring a supply of Gravol, Imodium, Pepto Bismal chewable tablets and a broad-spectrum antibiotic (just in case).

Experienced travelers will know about the importance of hand washing, and to drink only bottled water or beverages. Bottled water should also be used for brushing your teeth and avoid rinsing your mouth out in the shower, particularly in rural areas. Generally, I avoid salads, except in higher-end restaurants and hotels. Traveling or driving at night carries risks. Watch where you are walking! Sidewalks and trails are often very rough and uneven.

As Jessica noted, there are many other attractions to see in and near the Monarch Biosphere, including archaeological sites (i.e. Tarascan pyramids) and the huge lava field near the Paricutin volcano (you can hike to see the buried town's half exposed church). Morelia is a World Heritage Site, with 200 remaining structures from the Spanish colonial period. I enjoyed the vibrant festivities around one of the 5 most beautiful churches in Mexico, in advance of December 12th and celebrations to honour Our Lady of Guadalupe. Given my trip preparations and experience from other trips to the Biosphere Zone, I was very comfortable ordering a taxi and taking a walking tour of downtown Morelia on my own. I was able to communicate effectively with a combination of Spanish words (i.e. bano = toilette), French and English words and phrases, and hand gestures!

The internet, as well as your local library, has a great deal of useful information about traveling in Mexico. DO YOUR HOMEWORK! The result will be a most satisfying and rewarding life experience. Feel free to contact me at : donald_davis@yahoo.com if you have any questions.

RECENT SIGHTINGS

compiled by Roger Frost

Snow Goose	Nov. 22	4ad, 1 juv.	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Ross's Goose	Nov. 22	1 juv.	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Brant	Nov. 3	2	Cobourg Harbour	LW
	Nov. 10	1	off west beach, PH	GL
	Nov. 19	1	Port Hope west beach	MB
	Nov. 1-27	2	ranging between Cobourg Harbour & foot of D'Arcy	CEG, MB
Cackling Goose	Nov. 8	3	Cobourg Harbour	MB
	Nov. 16	2	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Nov. 25	8	Cobourg Harbour	WBFN outing
	Dec. 9	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Trumpeter Swan	Dec. 10	1 #087	off west beach, PH	GL
Tundra Swan	Nov. 19	6	Cobourg Harbour flying east	MB
Gadwall	Nov. 27-Dec. 1	2 (pair)	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Northern Pintail	Dec. 18	1m	Cobourg Harbour	KN
	Dec. 25	2m	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Green-winged Teal	Nov. 10	400+	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Canvasback	Dec. 22	1f	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Redhead	Dec. 8	27	off Lake St. (Esco), PH	GL
Greater Scaup	Dec. 8	280	off Lake St. (Esco), PH	GL
Harlequin Duck	Nov. 12-13	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG, LW
	Nov. 21	1f	lake side of Cameco, PH	BW
	Dec. 20	3	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
	Dec. 22	1 f	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Surf Scoter	Nov. 5	5	foot of D'Arcy St., Cob.	MB
	Nov. 7	1	off Lake St. Marsh, PH	EK, RF
	Dec. 30	1	off Cobourg Harbour	EK, RF
Black Scoter	Nov. 2	3	Cobourg Harbour	LW
	Nov. 20	1	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Barrow's Goldeneye	Dec. 8, 27	1m	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Red-breasted Merganser	Oct. 22	6000	off Cobourg Harbour	LW
	through Nov.	flocks of 5000+	off Cobourg through Nov. & good numbers well into Dec.	CEG
Ruddy Duck	Nov. 17, 19	1	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Red-throated Loon	Oct. 21	2	Cobourg Harbour	LW
	Nov. 2	3	off Lucas Point, Cob.	RP
	Nov. 5	5	off Cobourg Harbour	MB
	Nov. 11	11	Presqu'ile PP	BDiL, FH, OntBirds
	Nov. 23	1	Lake Ontario @ Brand Rd., PH Ward 2	BW
Common Loon	Nov. 2	900	off Lucas Point, Cob. (high count)	RP
	Nov. 10	120	foot of D'Arcy St., Cob.	MB
Pied-billed Grebe	Nov. 5	1	yacht basin, PH	GL
Horned Grebe	Nov. 5, 10	6+	foot of D'Arcy St., Cob.	MB
	Nov. 11	110+	Presqu'ile PP	BDiL, OntBirds
Red-necked Grebe	Oct. 27	1	Cobourg Harbour	
	Nov. 21	1	off Cobourg Harbour	MB
	Dec. 4-21	1	Presqu'ile PP	RDM, FH, OntBirds
Northern Gannet	Nov. 16-22	3-4 juv	off Cobourg Harbour. Photos suggest possibly 3 or 4 different birds	JM, M.Obs
	Nov. 21	1	mouth of Gage's Creek, PH	EK
Double-crested Cormorant	Oct. 30	350	Cobourg Harbour	LW
	Nov. 14	1 juv.	Cobourg Harbour mouth	MB
	Nov. 15	1	Cobourg Harbour	LW
Turkey Vulture	Dec. 1	1	over Durham St., PH	EK

Sightings - cont'd.

Bald Eagle	Nov. 7	1	Castleton Rd. & 401	C&RH
	Dec. 11	1	off Lake St., PH, flying east	GL
	Dec. 17	1	Cobourg Harbour area	LW
	Dec. 22	1 ad	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 29	1	Close Point, Rice Lake	JN
	Jan. 2	1 ad	Roseneath Landing	DS
Red-shouldered Hawk	Nov. 9	1	over Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	MB
Golden Eagle	Nov. 13	1	over College St., PH	DB
	Nov. 16	1 imm	east end of Rice Lake	BW
American Kestrel	Nov. 19	2	Hwy. 2 & Gage's Creek, PH	GL
Peregrine Falcon	Dec. 13	1	Brand Rd., PH Ward 2, hunting Snow Buntings	BW
American Coot	to Nov. 17	3	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	to Dec. 18	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG, MB
Killdeer	Nov. 11	1	Cobourg Harbour (last)	CEG
Lesser Yellowlegs	Nov. 17-20	1	foot of D'Arcy St., Cob.	MB
Ruddy Turnstone	Dec. 9-13	1	Presqu'île PP	RDM, FH, OntBirds
Least Sandpiper	Nov. 21	1	Cobourg Harbour	RF
White-rumped Sandpiper	Nov. 11	12	Presqu'île PP	BDiL, FH, OntBirds
Pectoral Sandpiper	Nov. 3, 6	1	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Purple Sandpiper	Nov. 25	7	Presqu'île PP (high count)	FH, OntBirds
	Dec. 2, 4	4	Presqu'île PP	RDM, OntBirds
	Dec. 9	1	Presqu'île PP	FH, OntBirds
Dunlin	Nov. 2	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Nov. 6	25	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Wilson's Snipe	Nov. 19	2	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Little Gull	Nov. 4	3	Presqu'île PP	FH, OntBirds
	Nov. 19	1 juv.	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Bonaparte's Gull	Nov. 19, 23	150+	foot of D'Arcy St., Cob.	MB
	Dec. 11	5	off Gage's Creek, PH	GL
Thayer's Gull	Dec. 15, 21	1 ad	Cobourg Harbour	MB
	Dec. 21	3 ad	Cobourg Harbour	RDM
	Dec. 26	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Iceland Gull	Nov. 30	1	Cobourg Harbour	KN
	Dec. 21	9	Cobourg Harbour (high count)	MB
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Nov. 24	1 fw	Cobourg Harbour	RDM, M.Obs
	Dec. 14-26	1 fy	Cobourg Harbour	MB, CEG
	Dec. 19/26	1 ad	Cobourg Harbour	KN/CEG
Glaucous Gull	Nov. 27	1	mouth of Gage's Creek, PH	EK, RF
	Dec. 21	7	Cobourg Harbour (high count)	MB
Sabine's Gull	Oct. 17	1 dead	Lake Ontario @ Brand Rd., PH Ward 2	BW
Black-legged Kittiwake	Nov. 19	1	Cobourg Harbour	KN, M.Obs
Eastern Screech Owl	Dec. 15	2	Grist Mill Rd. n. of 7th, PH Ward 2	BW
Barred Owl	Nov. 13	1	Orchard Grove Rd., Alnwick-Haldimand	CEG
	Nov. 20	1	GRCA office trail, 28 & 401, PH	GL
	Dec. 30	1	Durham St., PH	SD
Long-eared Owl	Oct. 20-Nov. 2	3	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 7-21	2 max.	Lakeshore Rd. w. of Baulch Rd., PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 15, 21	1	Woodvale School Rd. n. of 7th, PH Ward 2	BW
Short-eared Owl	Nov. 10	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Nov. 26	1	Cobourg Harbour	KN
	Dec. 13	1	Lakeshore Rd.W. of PH	ERM
	Dec. 3-21	2 max.	Lakeshore w. of Baulch Rd., PH Ward 2	BW
Northern Saw-whet Owl	Nov. 6	1	Booth St., Cob.	JR
	Dec. 15	1	7th w. of Campbell Rd., PH Ward 2	BW

Sightings - cont'd.

Red-bellied Woodpecker	Nov. 16	1 m	7th Line, PH Ward 2	NG
	Nov. 21	1	McDonald Rd., Alnwick-Haldimand	MP
	Nov. 27	1	Baltimore	JJ
	Dec. 10	1	Vimy Ridge Rd., Hamilton Twp	DG
	Dec. 18-31	1	Edgewater Dr., Roseneath Landing	DS
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Dec. 22	1	Wooler	RDM
Yellow-shafted Flicker	Dec. 26	1	Sherbourne St., PH	A&AMcL
Northern Shrike	Nov. 9	2	Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	MB
	Dec. 14	1	east end of Cobourg	BL
	Dec. 15	2	7th e. of Cty. Rd. 10, PH Ward 2	BW, AE
Blue-headed Vireo	Nov. 11	1	Presqu'ile PP	BDiL, FH, OntBirds
Common Raven	Jan. 2	2	Roseneath Landing	DS
Cave Swallow	Nov. 10	1	Hwy. 30 & 401	MR, OntBirds
Winter Wren	Nov. 10	1	Willow Beach marsh, PH Ward 2	MB
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Nov. 10	1	Willow Beach marsh, PH Ward 2	MB
	Nov. 30	3	GRCA office, Hwy. 28 & 401, PH	GL
Eastern Bluebird	Nov. 1	18	Trent Valley Dr, Cramahe	CEG
	Nov. 9	35	Wesleyville Rd. n of Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	MB
Townsend's Solitaire	Dec. 27	1	Cobourg	RN
Swainson's Thrush	Nov. 11-13	1	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Hermit Thrush	Dec. 4	1	Presqu'ile PP	RDM, OntBirds
	Dec. 12	1	Vimy Ridge Rd., Hamilton Twp	JGe
	Dec. 20	1	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2, feeding on barberry and burning bush berries	PB
American Robin	Nov. 9	200+	Wesleyville Rd. n of Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	MB
Brown Thrasher	Dec. 15-21	1	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2 @ feeder	PB
American Pipit	Nov. 17-20	2	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 9	2	Presqu'ile PP	RDM, OntBirds
	Dec. 15	6	Perrytown area, PH Ward 2	BW
Bohemian Waxwing	Nov. 13	~30	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Nov. 13	~45	Bewdley	BW
	Nov. 28	200+	Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Dec. 9	8	Lakeshore Rd., Grafton	MB
	Dec. 10	50+	s. of Colborne	JF, KB
	Dec. 11	130	Upper Cold Springs, Hamilton Twp.	SW
Cedar Waxwing	Dec. 9	255	Lakeshore Rd., Grafton	MB
Yellow-rumped Warbler	Nov. 17	1	Presqu'ile PP (last date)	FH, OntBirds
Chipping Sparrow	Nov. 14	1	Presqu'ile feeder	MB
Savannah Sparrow	Dec. 11	1	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Fox Sparrow	Nov. 8	1	Hwy. 45 s. of Baltimore	AB
	Nov. 14	2	Presqu'ile feeder	MB
	Nov. 25	1	Vimy Ridge Rd., Hamilton Twp	JGe
	Dec. 3	1	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	PB
	Dec. 9-19	1	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 17	1	Hwy. 45 s. of Baltimore	AB
White-crowned Sparrow	Nov. 10-17	1ad, 1juv	Cobourg feeder	MB
	Dec. 1	1	Bruton St., PH	GL
	Dec. 10	1	east end of Cobourg	BL
	Dec. 30	1 imm	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Lapland Longspur	Nov. 2-3	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Dec. 4	1	Carman Rd., Cramahe Twp.	RDM, OntBirds
	Dec. 8	7	Lakeshore Rd. w. of Baulch Rd., PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 15	3	Campbell Rd. n. of 7th, PH Ward 2	BW
Snow Bunting	Dec. 9	700	Morrish Church Rd., PH Ward 2	EK, RF
	Dec. 14	1000	Wesleyville Rd. n of 401, PH Ward 2	ERM
	Dec. 15	~500	Cty. Rd. 10 s. of 7th, PH Ward 2	BW
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	Dec. 23	1	McEwen Rd., Hamilton Twp.	MJ

Sightings - cont'd.

Red-winged Blackbird	Dec. 8	10	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	PB
Eastern Meadowlark	Nov. 10	1	Willow Beach marsh, PH Ward 2	MB
Rusty Blackbird	Nov. 13	~200	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Common Grackle	Nov. 28-Dec. 13	max 2	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Pine Grosbeak	Nov. 13	4	Barnes Rd., Cramahe	CEG
	Nov. 15	5	Cty. Rd. 45 & 9	HM
	Nov. 16	7	Cobourg Harbour area	CEG
	Nov. 17, 19	2	7th Line, PH Ward 2	NG
	Nov. 18	5	Welcome, PH Ward 2	KMc
	Nov. 18	3	Hwy. 45 s. of Baltimore	AB
	Nov. 19	7	Lakeshore e. of Willow Beach Rd., PH Ward 2	PB
	Nov. 26	3	225 University Ave., Cob.	RP
	Nov. 27	2	Perry St., Cob.	JFi
	Nov. 28	8	Simpson Dr., Cramahe	CEG
	Nov. 28	20	Presqu'ile PP	CEG
	Dec. 8	6	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	PB
	Dec. 9	6	Hwy. 2, Grafton	MB
	Dec. 9	16	Anderson Rd., PH Ward 2	EK, RF
	Dec. 10	6	Bruton & Hill St., PH	GL
	Jan 2	11	Roseneath Landing	DS
Purple Finch	Dec. 1	1m	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Red Crossbill	Nov. 11	1	Presqu'ile PP	BDiL, FH, OntBirds
Common Redpoll	Nov. 22	100+	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
	Nov. 27	40	Cobourg Harbour (high count)	CEG
	Dec. 13	40	Dale Rd. n. of Cobourg	MB
	Dec. 15, 21	40	Peace Park, Cobourg	MB
Hoary Redpoll	Nov. 13	1	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Nov. 24	1f	Cobourg feeders	MB, RP
	Nov. 27	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Nov. 28	1	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 1, 13	1	Deblaire St., PH	GMCD
	Dec. 5, 7, 18	1	Cobourg feeder	MB
	Dec. 19-24	1	Durham St., PH	EK, RF
	Dec. 25	1	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
Pine Siskin	Dec. 1	2	Cobourg feeder	MB
	Dec. 12	2	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
American Goldfinch	Dec. 4	50	Durham St., PH feeder	EK
Evening Grosbeak	Nov. 3	~35	Brand Rd. & Lakeshore, PH Ward 2	BW
	Dec. 16	~30	Packer Rd., Almwick-Haldimand	D&LM
			Willow Beach Marsh, PH Ward 2, sunning itself beside footpath	MB
Eastern Garter Snake	Nov. 10	1	Willow Beach Marsh, PH Ward 2, sunning itself beside footpath	MB
Elk	Nov. 7	1	Newtonville Rd. & Lakeshore Rd.	VM
Least Weasel (white)	Nov. 14	1	Presqu'ile PP	MB
Raccoon	Dec. 11	1	s. of Colborne	JF, KB
Woolly Bear caterpillar	Dec. 11	1	s. of Colborne	JF, KB
Monarch Butterfly	Nov. 30	1	Cobourg Harbour	CP, WBFN outing
Painted Lady	Nov. 12	1	Presqu'ile PP	DD

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