



COMING EVENTS

● **Friday, February 29, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Terry Fox Public School, 1065 Riddell Ave, Cobourg Annual General Meeting.** See the President's Report on pages 3 and 4, the Minutes of the 2007 AGM on pages 5 and 6 and the Financial Statements on pages 7 and 8. Coffee will be available during the social time. Members are requested to **bring their own** mug to reduce the use of disposables.

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.

WBFN will hold its first **Silent Auction**. More information and a list of donated items up for auction are on pages 9 and 10.

● **Friday, March 28, 2008, 7:30 p.m., Beatrice Strong Public School, 90 Rose Glen Rd.N., Port Hope** Speaker: **Catherine McWatters**, North York Astronomical Association. Topic: **Looking Up at the Night Sky.**

Catherine McWatters will explain some of the current mysteries of the night sky, showing where and when to see the planets, meteors and evening constellations. She will also show and tell some of the activities of the North York Astronomical Association.

Catherine is a founding member of the NYAA, life member of the RASC, past member of the Toronto Junior Field Naturalists and freelance astronomy educator for more than 3 decades.

● **A Reminder that MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2008 are now due.** WBFN dues are levied on a calendar year basis. Rates and mailing address are on page 16.

43rd Annual Presqu'ile Christmas Bird Count

The Presqu'ile Christmas Bird Count, scheduled for December 17, 2007, was cancelled because of a severe weather watch, and was rescheduled for January 1, 2008. The weather on that date was as bad or worse than that on December 17 but, nevertheless, 26 hardy souls went out to count birds which resulted in 10, 239 individuals and 70 species (plus 8 count Period). Highlights included a Pine Warbler (a first for this count) and one each of Harlequin Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Hoary Redpoll and 2 Carolina Wrens and one count period Northern Mockingbird. In the late afternoon, 13 participants went to Stonehedge in Presqu'ile Park for the compilation and enjoyed hot food and rum cake!

Mareen Riggs
mriggs@sympatico.ca

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Lloyd and Bernadette McCabe, Cobourg
Sheila McCoy, Cobourg

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

•The club extends sympathy to Geoff Dale on the recent death of his daughter, Barbara.

PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40790538
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THE WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS

Past Pres.	Bryan Baxter	905-372-6273	bbaxter@eagle.ca
President	Simone Mérey	905-885-8347	smerey@nhb.com
1st Vice-pres.	Michael Biggar	905-372-7407	mbiggar@eagle.ca
2nd Vice-pres.	Louise Schmidt	905-797-1059	wingbeat@xplornet.com
Secretary	Karen Drew	905-342-2904	drew@eagle.ca
Treasurer	Janette Johnston	905-373-1432	jjohn@eagle.ca
FON Rep.	Carole Payne	905-885-6135	bookbind@cogeco.ca
Curlew Ed.	Elizabeth Kellogg	905-885-9615	ekrf@eagle.ca
	Norma Wallace	905-885-5552	

The editor is most grateful to those who have contributed to this issue of the Curlew. Copy for the March 2008 issue should be received by February 29, 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 March Curlew. Correspondence for WBFN should be addressed to: "The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3."

President's Report February 2008

As the end of my term as President draws nigh it has come to me a feeling of déjà vu. Brian Olsen (a Past President and an avid birder who went home to Australia) asked me to run for office many years ago. When Terry Stopps called, I recalled my promise to Brian Olsen that in the future it would be possible for me to serve on the WBFN Executive. In this way we honour our past while working in the present.

It is humbling to be President and to begin to comprehend that alone nothing can be accomplished but together we move forward. Every member contributes, first by joining and then by participating in Club activities, whether they are outings or meetings.

I would like to thank many for their direct assistance.

- Barry and Margaret Robinson manage the distribution of the Curlew, a major task eight times a year.

- Elizabeth Kellogg is our very capable *Curlew* Editor who organizes the contents of our monthly newsletter and is our enthusiastic Bird Sighting compiler at our monthly meetings. She also finds time to write a bi-weekly feature on the same subject in our local papers. When does she sleep and find time to devote to musical activities?

- Ben Walters is our Environmental Monitor and our representative on the Forest Advisory Committee. He is also our Outings and our Cobourg Pitch-in Day Coordinator.

- Gina McFarlane holds the new position of Media. She makes sure that our meetings and outings are well publicized. Her latest coup was an article on the Club in the Sideroads Publication. Gina and Ben designed our new display boards that we use on many occasions.

- Marilyn Harris faithfully brings our sound system back and forth to every meeting and she sets it up also!

- Our ON Nature representative is

Carole Payne and she is a tireless advocate for our Club, making presentations to Council and writing letters to the local Press. She also sets up our display at the Living Green Fair, the Port Hope Fair and finds volunteers to attend the booth at these events.

- Emma and Jim Sandham bring the name tags to the meetings. This means that we know each others' names and improves communication. Standing in front of everybody at a meeting I am quite grateful for those name tags.

- Petra Hartwig and Chris Drew are the Coordinators of the Volunteers for Peter's Woods. They make sure that there is always somebody making sure that the Woods are accessible, with a Visitor's Guide and Sign-In Book for feedback by the users. They have also been involved with the review of the Preliminary Park Management Plan and are investigating plans for repairs to the bridge and the boardwalk.

- Andy McLaughlin, Louise Baxter and currently Margaret Short look after the monthly raffle which helps to pay for the hall rental. The prizes are donated by our members and reflect their generosity.

- Brian Baxter looks after the Insurance Forms and has been a mentor in many ways. As Past President he has been looking after the passing of the torch from one Executive Board to the following one.

- Michael Biggar always has valuable insights and has supported me with his wise counsel.

- Louise Schmidt is our Representative on the Lower Trent Conservation Committee. She is also our Silent Auction Coordinator for the AGM in February and with Michael has worked tirelessly looking after donations and getting the bids ready.

- Bruce Parker put out a Herculean effort with the Education program last year and

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we had a great response as a result.

•Roger Frost is our Compiler for the Christmas Bird Count, the Northumberland Summer Bird Count, and the Winter Waterfowl Survey.

•Clive Goodwin keeps us abreast of the latest news on the Breeding Bird Atlas results. He makes sense of our own local data on the bird sightings in Northumberland.

•John Geale communicates meeting reminders, Club news and the latest info to all our members via the internet. He also writes letters and assists Ben on environmental issues.

•Our tireless secretary, Karen Drew, writes and revises the minutes with great efficiency. She also typed up the Constitution on computer so that we could revise it and have it ready for the AGM.

•Susanne Williams looks after our monthly Programme and finds fascinating speakers on many topics. She also arranges for the hall rentals and finds a replacement location on short notice.

•Sad to say, Janette Johnston has decided to retire as our Treasurer. She not only collects the money, looks after the bills and the donations, but she keeps our membership list up-to-date. We will miss her and we promise to donate to FLAP, her favourite charity, in the future.

•Our directors, Roger Frost, John Geale, Bill Newell, Doug Robertson, Barry Robinson and Audrey Wilson, bring their collective wisdom to Executive Meetings. They provide a balance of views, experience and backgrounds in order to steer the Club forward.

To all of these people I give my thanks for their support and advice. I apologize if anybody has been missed. I know that you will give Michael the same encouragement and support that you gave me. We are so very fortunate to live in an area that has forests, fields, lakes, rivers and ponds. We will continue to encourage the preservation, renewal and enhancement of our natural heritage.

Simone Mérey
President 2006-2008

WBFN TREASURER

After eight years (*we had it wrong in the January Curlew*) 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 Mérey 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

Willow Beach Field Naturalists Annual General Meeting Minutes
Beatrice Strong Public School – February 23, 2007, 7:00 p.m.

Call to Order:

Simone Mery called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm. She welcomed everyone. 55 people were present.

Announcements:

Simone outlined a tribute to Arthur Langford a Canadian environmentalist who died last week at the age of 96.

Bob Short reviewed the history of the Ganaraska Trail and publicly thanked Jack Goering and Pat Lawson for their hard work initiating it. He invited all to a hike in May which will be a tribute to these founders.

Barry Robinson requested back-up for delivery of the Curlew.

Reports:

Nomination Committee / Election of Board Members:

Bryan Baxter, Immediate Past President & Chair of the Nominating Committee put forward the following names for two year terms (see also February Curlew):

Directors – Roger Frost, Bill Newell, Audrey Wilson

Secretary – Karen Drew

Further nominations were called from the floor and none were forthcoming. Bryan Baxter moved that the Directors nominated be adopted. Seconded by Jack Goering. Carried. Bryan Baxter moved that the Secretary nominated be adopted. Seconded by Doug Galt. Carried.

Financial Report:

Janette Johnston reminded everyone that her report is in the February Curlew. She reviewed it briefly and offered to answer any questions. Moved by Janette Johnston that the Financial Report be adopted. Seconded by Bill Wensley. Carried.

Ontario Nature:

Carole Payne updated attendees on happenings in the organization.

President's Report:

Simone Mery reminded everyone that the 2006/7 President's report was printed in the February Curlew. Motion by Carole Payne to confirm actions of the Executive Board since the last AGM (per Report). Seconded by Helen Hunt. Carried.

Minutes:

Simone Mery advised that the AGM Minutes of February 24, 2006 require approval, but they were inadvertently missed from being printed in the Curlew. A hard

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copy was available for anyone to review upon request. Motion by Ben Walters to adopt the Minutes as is. Seconded by Bill Newell. Carried.

Outings / Environment:

Ben Walters reported on the Oak Ridges Moraine conference he attended recently. He reported on the 12 outings that were run in 2006, and reminded that there will be a write-up of each in the Curlew following the event. He reviewed those planned in 2007.

Press Communications:

Gina McFarlane introduced her position as Press Secretary and provided an update of her promotional activities to date. She showed the group via a visual on-screen presentation where WBFN advertisements and informational notifications were appearing in various media formats.

Peter's Woods:

Karen Drew on behalf of Petra Hartwig and Chris Drew reminded everyone that the Peter's Woods report was printed in the January Curlew. She provided highlights and thanked volunteers.

Northumberland Land Trust:

Doug Galt reported that 115 tickets were sold and 96 people attended the Gala. Doug reported on the Laurie Lawson property that is being held and those being worked on to acquire. He advised on membership of the Board of Directors and when their open meetings are, and potential improvements he would like to see.

Solar Heating:

Jack Goering showed a slide presentation of his experience with his own designed water heating system using solar panels.

Sightings:

Elizabeth Kellogg solicited bird and any other interesting sightings from members present.

Raffles:

Louise Schmidt thanked those who purchased and sold tickets, and indicated the funds went towards to WBFN Property account. A walking stick was awarded to Michael Biggar for selling the most tickets. Larry Fell won the framed photograph donated by Bill Crowley. Pat Wellar won the award winning duck carving donated by Michael Biggar. Louise solicited donated items for the Silent Auction to be held at next year's AGM.

Simone Merrey drew tickets for the 12 items in the raffle coordinated by Louise Baxter.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS FINANCIAL STATEMENT OPERATING ACCOUNT

December 31, 2007

Opening Balances January 1, 2007

Bank Balance	1,966.24
Petty Cash	50.00
Total Cash	2,016.24

GIC Investments

1. Cashable GIC maturing November 30, 2007	1,018.00
2. GIC maturing November 30, 2008	8,125.06
Total GIC Investments	9,143.06

Income 2007

Memberships	3,851.00	<u>2006</u>	4,556.00
Donations	1,508.96		1,764.00
Raffles	995.75		658.19
Bank Interest	0.33		0.31
GST Rebate	82.62		90.30
Baillie Birdathon	320.75		271.25
Miscellaneous	50.00		
GIC interest	272.19		254.65
Insurance Refund, R. Beaver book, Fundraiser			1,367.00
Total Income	7,081.60		8,961.70

Expenditures 2007

Curlew	1,727.03	<u>2006</u>	1,848.25
Postage	506.86		479.20
Meetings	530.33		487.43
Donations	2,230.00		3,205.00
Insurance	425.00		425.00
General Expenses	133.44		165.21
GST	139.08		165.23
Miscellaneous	50.00		20.00
Living Green Fair	35.00		25.00
Ontario Nature	150.00		150.00
Bird Counts	26.71		54.56
Total Expenditures	5,953.45		7,024.88

Net Income

1,128.15	1,836.82
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Closing Balances December 31, 2007 (Operating Account)

Bank Balance	3,094.42
Petty Cash	50.00
Total Cash	3,144.42

GIC Investments

1. Cashable GIC, matures Nov. 30 2008	1,044.98
2. GIC rate advantage, matures Nov. 30 2008	8,125.06
Total GIC Investments	9,170.04

Operating Account Notes

1. Total GIC interest earned 2007	299.17
2. Donations made to:	
St. Mary's Secondary School	250.00
The Burnham School	250.00
Boardwalk Friends of Presqu'ile	1,000.00
Port Hope Agricultural Society	20.00
Fire Dept. Alnwick Haldimand	75.00
Prince Edward Point Bird Obsv.	100.00
Fatal Light Awareness	100.00
Kawartha Turtle Trauma Owl Foundation	100.00
Peterborough Field Naturalists for Large Woodland	100.00
Ontario Nature Reserve Endowment Fund	100.00
Welcome United Church	35.00
Total Donations 2007	2,230.00

WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS
PROPERTY ACCOUNT STATEMENT
December 31, 2007

Opening Balances January 1, 2007

Cash	1,226.62	
GIC #1	11,432.22	Maturing May 17, 2007
GIC #2	11,124.71	Maturing May 25, 2007
GIC #3	10,824.26	Maturing May 24, 2007

Total Assets January 1, 2007 34,607.81

Income 2007

Interest reinvested from GICs 1 and 2	735.66	
Wallace Birdathon into cash account	1,180.50	
Deposit GIC #3 into cash account	11,193.90	includes \$269.64 interest
Total Income 2007	13,110.06	

Expenditures 2007

Northumberland Land Trust	12,003.00
Bank Charges	24.90
Total Expenditures	12,027.90

Closing Balances December 31, 2007

Cash	1,573.12
GIC #1	11,815.20 Maturing May 16, 2008
GIC #2	11,497.39 Maturing May 24, 2008

Total Assets Property Account December 31, 2007 24,885.71

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

It's almost here! The first ever WBFN Silent Auction takes place on Friday February 29th and your support is needed 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 and come have a fun evening.

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 starting at 7pm. and revise them before the close of bidding.

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 to make collecting cash easier. Winning bidders 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 and ask a friend to bid/pay on your behalf.

I want to thank all who have donated fabulous items to the auction. Your generosity is much appreciated. As promised, a complete list of items for auction is included in this newsletter. For more information please contact Louise Schmidt at 905-797-1059 or wingbeat@xplornet.com

ITEMS DONATED FOR SILENT AUCTION

	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DONATED BY
1.	“Beaver” Glen Loates signed print, unframed, matted	Print: Don Davis Matting: About Framing, Belleville
2.	Walking stick by Laird Nelson	Glenn McLeod, Northumberland Stewardship Council
3.	A Nature Guide to Ontario	Don Davis
4.	Wild Seasons Daybook	Jack Goering
5.	Eagle etching on glass vase by David Beavis	David Beavis
6.	Blue Jay framed original acrylic painting by Lin Reynolds	Lin Reynolds & Karen Drew
7.	Gardening Ecologically (booklet) by Kathryn McHolm	Kathryn McHolm
8.	Eastern Birds Petersen Guide Large Format	Don Davis
9.	Presqu’ile Provincial Park Year Pass (April 1/08 to Mar.31/09)	Tom Mates, Presqu’ile Prov. Park Superintendent & staff
10.	Scissor Holder	Jean Wilson

ITEMS DONATED FOR SILENT AUCTION - cont'd.

11.	Hummingbird Silk Scarf Hand Painted by Rick Beaver	Jack Goering
12.	Petersen Field Guide Warblers	Elizabeth Kellogg
13.	World Wildlife Fund 2008 Calendar	Andy McLauchlan
14.	Cackling Goose carving by Larry Fell	Michael Biggar
15.	Daffodil Stained Glass suncatcher by Bernice Grimshaw Cobourg	Anita McLauchlan
16.	Flower Stained Glass suncatcher by Bernice Grimshaw	Anita McLauchlan
17.	Bluebird Nest Box by Chris Lyons and one year membership in North American Bluebird Society	Chris Lyons Elizabeth Kellogg
18.	Ontario Maple Syrup	Joe Banbury, Banbury Farms
19.	Framed Poppy Print	
20.	Birds of Prey "coffee table book"	
21.	Lap Board, made by Marg & Bob Short	Bob & Marg Short
22.	Birds of Ontario Field Guide	
23.	Canadian Wildflowers by Catherine Parr Trill	Bob & Marg Short
24.	"Creation a novel" & Decorative Bookmark	
25.	3 sets of 4 Notecards by Kathryn McHolm	Kathryn McHolm
26.	"Ruby-crowned Kinglet" framed, signed Glen Loates Print	
27.	Ontario Birds by Fisher	Don Davis
28.	Regency Sherry	Helen Hunt
29.	Hummingbird Limited Edition Decorator Plate framed	
30.	Magical Memories 2 CD set	
31.	Birdwatching Book set	
32.	Lava Lamp	Anita McLauchlan
33.	Downy Waterfowl book	Deborah Panko
34.	Brown Pelican signed unframed print by Anne Worsham Richardson	Marguerite Doritty
35.	Picture Frame	Anita McLauchlan
36.	Bushnell Binoculars 7-15 X 25	Bob Popham
37.	Piano Songbirds CD	
38.	"Penguin" framed charcoal print by Hill	Bill Crowley
39.	Bird seed lot and Squirrel book	Book – Helen Hunt
40.	Children's Books Lot	Don Davis
41.	Bateman Framed Squirrel Print	
42.	Silver Dish	Anita McLaughlan
43.	Freixenet Champagne	Helen Hunt
44.	Eagle at Nest Porcelain	Connie Cunningham
45.	2 tickets to Friends of Music, April 19, 2008, Anne-Julie Caron, Marimba and Brian Finley, Piano. Capitol Arts Centre	Bob and Marg Short

Gleanings from the Northumberland Bird Database

THE 2007 YEAR IN REVIEW

by Clive E. Goodwin

By February we hope all the significant bird reports from last year are in, so it's a good time to look back at the kind of year it was. What were the highlights, and are there any interesting trends we can see? Of course, one of the delights of birding is that everyone will have his own highlights: maybe a flock of Pine Grosbeaks, or perhaps one of the warblers in full spring finery in May. But one that will probably stay with many of us was the sight of gannets plunge-diving a few yards off Cobourg's main pier in November. Northern Gannets are exciting birds, particularly when actively fishing, and few of us ever expected to see them so well in Northumberland; with reason, as only three or four had been reported from the County before, and none provided prolonged views. I say gannets: while only one bird appeared to be present on each visit the 'photos and descriptions taken at the time suggest at least two and possibly three birds visiting, and indeed four were subsequently seen at once at Oshawa.

Rare though the gannets were, three other 2007 species have had fewer appearances here. Unfortunately the two rarest were seen by very few persons [I'm not including attributions in this article, as almost all the observations will have appeared in *The Curlew*]. In fact, the Cave Swallow reported from Brighton on Nov.10 was seen by only a single person, albeit an experienced one, and the sighting came at a time when the birds were being seen elsewhere. It would be our first ever. The Ross's Goose in Cobourg harbour on Nov.22 was our second. It was seen under atrocious conditions by a tiny handful of birders. Our third-ever record, the Glossy Ibis at the Brighton wastewater ponds, had the consideration to stay around for a few days, June 14-18, although at times it was hard to find.

The next four species in order of rarity returned to the pattern of being elusive for most of the County's birders. We had three Sabine's Gulls, two at Presqu'ile and one in Port Hope, our 4th to 6th or 7th to 8th depending on whether we count three birds reported in 1987 as one bird or three separate ones. But this year's trio barely made it into the list of birds seen, as two were birds found dead. And the third, while it was first recorded on October 16, was seen by relatively few before also being found dead on October 23. Our 6th Townsend's Solitaire was another one-observer sighting, in Cobourg on December 27. Then to round out this catalogue of rarities seen by few was a Varied Thrush in Candlewick Woods on April 29, our 10th, which was never found again.

The dead gulls highlight one very unpleasant feature of the fall, the serious outbreak [or perhaps I should say continuing outbreak] of botulism on Lake Ontario. While it has been around for a few years now, 2007 seemed to be the worst year so far, with dead Common Loons, Red-necked Grebes, White-winged Scoters, Long-tailed Ducks, and Red-breasted Mergansers, and an assortment of gulls all appearing along the shorelines. Possibly related to the outbreak, we had low numbers of diving ducks other than mergansers. Some of this may have been no more than coincidence, but most of these species will feed on mollusks, and at present the disease is being linked to quagga mussels.

Probably the most dramatic consequence of this outbreak was the apparent collapse of the Great Black-backed Gull population. We went from a fall average of about 1500 between 1993 and 2003, to 48 in 2007. The decline started in 2004, when we had a

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fall total of only 700, but then in succession came 208 and 88. This coincides very closely with the botulism outbreak, and reflects the scavenging behaviour of Great Black-backed, which dominate other gulls feeding on dead fish and birds. Readers of the January *Gleanings* may recall that Great Black-backed usually reach their annual peak numbers in fall, so the prospects for the species looked gloomy. However, there was some recovery in December, with up to 15 being seen, which suggested some movement in – an interesting development in the light of the usual patterns as discussed last month.

The die-offs of loons and mergansers did not prevent those species from appearing in record numbers. Common Loon flocks yielded counts of 900 and 736, higher than any previous totals, and similarly with the much rarer Red-throated Loon, with fall counts of 11 and 8. While the mergansers did not produce any record highs, Red-breasted were present in large numbers from early October until the CBC and beyond.

Another feature of the autumn was the abnormally low water level on the lake. This followed the prolonged period of drought, and may have contributed to poor fall shore-bird numbers – maybe the birds were simply more dispersed with an abundance of habitat available. But species such as Semipalmated Sandpipers and Plovers were already known to be in difficulty, and I think that their 2007 totals [the lowest ever] were a true reflection of this decline. However, it was probably the low water that allowed Cobourg to post a high of 3 Buff-breasted Sandpipers while Presqu'ile only managed a couple!

In fact, low numbers seemed rather a feature of the year. The early spring concentrations of waterfowl at Presqu'ile were down, more due to fluctuating ice conditions at the time the birds were moving than anything else. Neither Brant nor Snow Geese appeared in their usual numbers, and the spring

Whimbrel flight seemed to pass west of the county.

Nevertheless, there were still many other noteworthy sightings, even though they did not fall into the 'extreme rarity' class. On January 1 two Cackling Geese appeared in Cobourg harbour, and they increased to five on the 10th, the first of a dozen or more reports of this poorly differentiated species. There have now been 27 reports since our first in 2005. Then on January 7 the first two Harlequin Ducks of the year were found at Wicklow. I presume they were the birds that turned up a couple of days later in Cobourg harbour, and 7 more reports were to follow, although some of these could also be of the same birds. On February 17 a Greater White-fronted Goose was found at Salem, but apparently was gone in a couple of days. March 4 brought the long-staying Laughing Gull to Cobourg harbour, which was reliable until May 14, then less regular to August 20. May was relatively uneventful, but a White-eyed Vireo at Presqu'ile on May 14 and 16 was our 23rd, while Wilson's Phalaropes at Chub Point on May 31-June 1 yielded one of our few records of a pair.

Fall brought a Marbled Godwit to Presqu'ile, July 29-August 3, and again briefly on August 24. Presqu'ile was also host to the next noteworthy species, also a shore-bird, with a Red-necked Phalarope on September 12-13, and finally a Black-legged Kittiwake appeared on November 19, appropriately enough again in Cobourg harbour.

The year did have some good news in the numbers area as well, although a further increase in the huge flock of wintering Mute Swans at Presqu'ile was hardly one of them. This alien bird is a very aggressive species that is intolerant of our native waterfowl. Wild Turkeys are another relative newcomer – this time a reintroduction – that seem to be doing well, as groups of 40 birds were reported from Peter's Woods, Roseneath and

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Wicklow. Raptors yielded some welcome positive news: the Summer Bird Count's 21 Ospreys were the most ever; Cobourg finally recorded its first confirmed Merlin nesting, as this expanding species continues to consolidate its numbers in the county; and the 24 Peregrine Falcon reports equaled the previous high, marking continued recovery from the lows of the 80's. Among expanding southerners, three Carolina Wrens were present at Presqu'ile over the fall, with more usual reports of birds further west as well.

Finally, winters were good to us in 2007. The year began with the influx of Three

-toed and Black-backed Woodpeckers. By November we were watching movements of winter finches, and while most of the Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins seemed to pass through, good numbers of Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls continued into December, the flocks of the latter spiced by a few Hoaries as well. Barred Owls were moving, and Bohemian Waxwings provided an added zest to the early winter. Now let's just hope those wrens survived the severe winter weather we experienced in December!

32nd Annual Waterfowl Festival – March 8-9, 15-16

The 32nd annual Presqu'ile Waterfowl Festival will be running again March 8-9 and 15-16. From 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. each day, volunteers will be stationed throughout the park with spotting scopes to help you find and identify up to 25 different species of waterfowl among the thousands of ducks, geese and swans present on Presqu'ile Bay. They will be happy to discuss with you what they are doing, where they came from and where they are going.

This year may well be the year of the swan. More and more of the endangered Trumpeter Swans are being seen in the area after a twenty year reintroduction program. The migratory Tundra Swans have also been present in greater numbers in the last few years and of course there are always plenty of the introduced Mute Swans in the bay. The waterfowl festival may give you the chance to compare all three species of wild swan in North America.

The Nature Centre will be open 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. with duck related displays and an organized children's program at 1 P.M. daily. There will also be a children's scavenger hunt running throughout the day. Also don't forget to stop into the Lighthouse Interpretive Centre where Lake Ontario heritage displays are on view and the Friends of Presqu'ile have their gift shop along with hot drinks and snacks for sale. Dave Richards, sales rep. from Bushnell, will also be there on March 8-9 to exhibit a fine selection of binoculars and spotting scopes. Bushnell has also once again generously donated binoculars and a scope to be used in the Friends' fund-raising raffle. As always there is plenty to see and do at the Presqu'ile Waterfowl Festival. See you there.

For more information call David Bree at 613 475-4324 ext 225 or david.bree@ontario.ca

RECENT SIGHTINGS

compiled by Roger Frost

Greater White-fronted Goose	Jan. 20-26	5	Port Hope Harbour	AM, MObs
	Jan. 22	5	Cobourg Harbour	KN, CEG
	Jan. 27	4	Cobourg Harbour	KN, CEG
Cackling Goose	Jan. 6	1	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Australian Swan	Jan. 12	1	Garden Hill Pond, PH Ward 2	AM
Mute Swan	Jan. 6	464	Presqu'ile Bay area	RDM
	Jan. 9	24	Cobourg Harbour - high count	MB
Trumpeter Swan	Jan. 30	1	Cobourg Harbour	MB
Tundra Swan	Jan. 16	12	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
	Jan. 27, 30-31	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Gadwall	Jan. 11	1	Presqu'ile PP, Gull Island	FH, OntBirds
American Wigeon	Jan. 17	1	Presqu'ile PP, Gull Island	FH, OntBirds
Northern Pintail	Jan. 8	2	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
Canvasback	Jan. 8	50	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
	Jan. 23	12	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
Redhead	Jan. 8	~1000	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
	Jan. 30	16	Cobourg Harbour - high count	CEG
Ring-necked Duck	Jan. 23	1	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
Greater Scaup	Jan. 13	110	off Gage's Creek mouth, PH	EK, RF
	Jan. 18	356	Cobourg Harbour - high count	CEG
Harlequin Duck	Jan. 6/14	1	Presqu'ile PP	RDM
Surf Scoter	Jan. 10	5	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
White-winged Scoter	Nov. 19	57	off Cobourg Harbour	LW
	through Jan.	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Jan. 12	14	off Cobourg Harbour	LW
	Jan. 29	3	off Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Black Scoter	Jan. 5	2f	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
	Jan. 13	1f	Presqu'ile PP, Gull Island	FH, OntBirds
Barrow's Goldeneye	Jan. 6/14	1m	Presqu'ile PP, off lighthouse	RDM
	Jan. 13	1f	PH Harbour	EK, RF, MB, MObs
Hooded Merganser	Jan. 1-6	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Common Merganser	Nov. 17	375	Cobourg Harbour	LW
Bald Eagle	Dec. 17	1	Cobourg Harbour, on breakwater	LW
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Jan. 28	1	Wellington St., PH	AHa
Northern Goshawk	Jan. 11	1	Cobourg east end	RDM
Merlin	Jan. 13	1	Cobourg Harbour area	CEG
	Jan. 25	1	over Young St., PH	NW, SL
Rough-legged Hawk	Dec. 1	1 dark	Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
American Coot	Jan. 26	1	Presqu'ile Bay	FH, OntBirds
Thayer's Gull	Jan. 15	1	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
Iceland Gull	Jan. 1-26	3 max.	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Jan. 6	2	Presqu'ile PP, Gull Island	RDM
	Jan. 18	6	Cobourg Harbour	RDM
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Jan. 4-6	1ad	Cobourg Harbour - dark back	MB, CEG
	Jan. 18	1ad	Cobourg Harbour - lighter back	MB, CEG, RDM
Glaucous Gull	Jan. 1-26	3 max.	Cobourg Harbour	CEG
	Jan. 6	3	Presqu'ile PP, Gull Island	RDM
	Jan. 18	4ad	Cobourg Harbour	RDM
Barred Owl	Jan. 6	1	Hamilton Rd. & Hwy. 2, PH	AA, MObs
Great Gray Owl	Jan. 27	1	near Brighton	RDM, MObs
Short-eared Owl	Jan. 13	1 dead	PH railroad station	GL
Red-bellied Woodpecker	Jan. 29	1	Sherbourne St., PH	AMcL
	Jan. 31	1f	Vimy Ridge Rd., Hamilton Twp	JGe

Sightings - cont'd.

Northern Shrike	Jan. 4, 5	1	Bruton St., PH	GL
	Jan. 10	1	Danforth Rd., Hamilton Twp.	CEG
	Jan. 12	4	Lakeshore Rd., Wesleyville, PH Ward 2	MB
	Jan. 31, Feb.1/3	1	Vimy Ridge Rd., Hamilton Twp	JGe
Common Raven	Dec. 16	7	Jamieson Rd. & 5th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 1	1	Julia & Ridout St., PH	GL
	Jan. 21	1	401 & Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2, flying west	MB
Carolina Wren	Jan. 19-31	2	Presqu'ile PP	FH, OntBirds
Golden-crowned Kinglet	Jan. 20	2	Koxville Rd., PH Ward 2	EK, RF
Eastern Bluebird	Jan. 5	11	Hawkins Rd. & Dale Rd., PH Ward 2	GL
	Jan. 8	2 (pair)	Jamieson Rd., & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 16	4	Willow Beach Rd., PH Ward 2	CEG
	Jan. 19	3	Lakeshore Rd. & Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2	JMcG
American Robin	Jan. 8	95	Jamieson Rd., & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 20	12	Koxville Rd., PH Ward 2	EK, RF
Northern Mockingbird	Jan. 20	1	Cty. Rd. 65, e. of Brighton	RDM
Bohemian Waxwing	Nov. 28	120	Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Dec. 3	150	Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 27	40	west of Brighton	MObs
	Jan. 29	100	Port Hope Conservation Area	GL
Cedar Waxwing	Jan. 27	500+	Union Rd., Brighton	CEG
White-throated Sparrow	Jan. 18	1	Chub Point feeder	SMcL
White-crowned Sparrow	Jan. 11-26	1imm	Cobourg feeder	MB
	Jan. 18	3	Chub Point feeder	SMcL
Snow Bunting	Jan. 25	500	Kellogg Rd., PH Ward 2	CEG
Northern Cardinal	Jan. 31	8	Willow Beach Rd., PH Ward 2	AH
Red-winged Blackbird	Jan. 5	5	Union Rd., Brighton	MB
	Jan. 6	6	s. of Colborne, feeder	KB, JF
	Jan. 16	2	Wesleyville Rd. s of railroad tracks, PH Ward 2	JMcG
Common Grackle	Jan. 5	1	Union Rd., Brighton	MB
Brown-headed Cowbird	Nov. 19	9	Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 5	6	Union Rd., Brighton	MB
Pine Grosbeak	Jan. 5	6	Presqu'ile PP, nr. lighthouse	MB
	Jan. 10	3	Telephone Rd. @ Hofer	CEG
	Jan. 20	3	Knoxville Rd., PH Ward 2	EK, RF
Purple Finch	Jan. 10	1	McEwen Rd., Hamilton Twp.	CEG
Common Redpoll	Jan. 6	90	Jamieson Rd., & 7th, PH Ward 2	LS
	Jan. 10	2	Durham St., PH	EK
	Jan. 30	8	Cobourg feeder	MB
Hoary Redpoll	Jan. 30	1	Cobourg feeder	MB
	Jan. 6	19	w. of Wesleyville, PH Ward 2, 1 m. in full breeding plumage	PB
	Jan. 30	25	Durham St., PH	EK
Short-tailed Weasel	Jan. 14	1	Presqu'ile PP, Owen Point	RDM

Observers: AA=Adele Appleman; AH=Allan Holdaway; MB=Margaret Bain; KB=Kim Braat; PB=Paul Bridges; JF=Jo Foster; RF=Roger Frost; JGe=John Geale; CEG=Clive Goodwin; AHa=Andrea Haight; FH=Fred Helleiner; EK=Elizabeth Kellogg; SL=Susan Laing; GL=Gary Little; AM=Art McLeod; RDM=Doug McRae; AMcL= Andy McLauchlan; SMcL=Sherwood McLernon; KN=Ken Niles; JMcG=John McGirk; OntBirds=Ontario Field Ornithologists listserv; RP=Richard Pope; LS=Louise Schmidt; NW=Norma Wallace; LW=Lori Wensley;

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Willow Beach Field Naturalists
P.O. Box 421
Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3

