



Vol LX No. 2

February 2015

## COMING EVENTS

● **Friday, February 27, 2015, 7:00 p.m.** - Annual General Meeting, Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario Street, Cobourg  
Speaker: **Caroline Schultz**, Executive Director of Ontario Nature;  
Topic: **From Our Backyards To the Boreal Forest and Beyond.**  
Executive director of Ontario Nature and conservation biologist, Ms Schultz will speak about the enormous boreal forest just to our north, how it is connected to our backyards, and how our backyards are connected to nature beyond our borders.

There will be a silent auction in support of WBFN education initiatives and refreshments before the meeting.



● **Sunday, March 8, 2015 – Algonquin Park Outing**, Leader: **Katsu Sakuma**  
We will be looking for Boreal specialities such as Gray Jay and Boreal Chickadee. Don McLeod will come, too, to help us interpret tracks. Meet at 7 a.m. at carpool lot at Phillips Rd. & Hwy. 28 in Port Hope for a full day outing. Dress warmly and bring lunch.

● **Friday, March 27, 2015, 7:30 PM**, Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario Street, Cobourg  
Speaker: **Mark Stabb**, Central Ontario Program Director, Nature Conservancy of Canada;  
Topic: **Legacy of a Lost Lake: Thoughts on Conservation of the Lake Iroquois Plan**

● **Sunday, April 19, 2015** - Birding Outing to Candlewick Woods. Leader: Roger Frost. Meet at 8 a.m. at the red barn opposite Dickinson Rd. and Lakeshore Rd., west of Port Hope.

*More details of talks and outings will be in future issues of the Curlew and on the web site.,  
[www.willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](http://www.willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) and on Facebook*

## Membership News

●Congratulation to WBFN Youth Representative, Milton Calderon Donefer. He has earned a \$100,000 scholarship from the Loran Scholars Foundation for his post secondary studies. Milton received one of 30 scholarships awarded across Canada, no mean feat, since there were 3,800 applicants! Well done.

## Membership Renewals

This is a reminder that WBFN memberships are due annually on a calendar year basis. The renewal form is available on the WBFN web site. This year, there is a new option for dues payment. They can be paid online through CanadaHelps. Dues will be accepted at the next meeting or members can mail them to The Willow Beach Field Naturalists, P.O. Box 421, Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3.

**Owl Prowl Cancelled:** Due to scheduling conflicts the Owl Prowl and Night Hike that was to take place at the Alderville Black Oak Savanna on Feb. 28th has been cancelled. Check the Rice Lake Plains web site for upcoming outings. <http://www.ricelakeplains.ca/calendar.php>

### Correction:

There was an error in the web address referred to in the President's Report in the January issue. The correct address is below.

<http://www.kingstonfieldnaturalists.org/bluebill/feedingbirds.pdf>

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

### THE WILLOW BEACH FIELD NATURALISTS

<http://www.willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org>

|                 |                   |              |                          |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------------------|
| Past Pres:      | Michael Biggar    | 905-372-7407 | mbiggar@eagle.ca         |
| President:      | Petra Hartwig     | 905-372-4301 | phartwig@cobourg.ca      |
| 1st Vice-pres.: | Brian Maxwell     | 905-885-0969 | bmaxwell@cogeco.ca       |
| 2nd Vice-pres:  | Gina Brouwer      | 905-373-5015 | georgina.brouwer@live.ca |
| Secretary:      | Eva Nichols       | 905-377-9454 | enichols@bell.net        |
| Treasurer:      | David O'Dell      | 905-885-3728 | dkodhome@hotmail.com     |
| FON Rep.:       | Deb Panko         | 905-372-1974 | bluebird@teksavvy.com    |
| Curlew Ed.:     | Elizabeth Kellogg | 905-885-9615 | ekrf@eagle.ca            |
|                 | Norma Wallace     | 905-885-5552 |                          |
| Webmaster:      | Bruce Parker      | 905-372-4911 | buice@sympatico.ca       |

*The editor is most grateful to those who have contributed to this issue of the Curlew. Copy for the March 2015 issue should be received by March 1, 2015. Rare or interesting sightings should be reported to Elizabeth Kellogg and Roger Frost at 905-885-9615, [ekrf@eagle.ca](mailto:ekrf@eagle.ca), or Norma Wallace at 905-885-5552 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."*

## **Willow Beach Field Naturalists Annual General Meeting**

February 27, 2015, 7:00 pm

Cobourg Public Library

### **AGENDA**

- **Call to Order** - President
- **Approval of Last AGM Minutes** - President
- **Announcements** - President
  
- **Reports:**
  - President's Report - Petra Hartwig
  - Financial Report - Brian Maxwell (on behalf of Treasurer, David O'Dell)
  - Nomination Committee / Election of Board Members - Acting Past President Russell Lake
  
- **Your New President's Announcement** - Brian Maxwell
- **Special Recognition** - Past President Petra Hartwig
- **Sightings and Next Outings** - Elizabeth Kellogg
- **Guest Speaker - Caroline Schultz:** From our Backyards to the Boreal Forest and Beyond
- **Silent Auction Winners** - President Brian Maxwell
  
- **Next General Meeting and Guest Speaker**  
Friday, March 27, 2015 at 7:30 pm Cobourg Public Library  
Guest Speaker: Mark Stabb: Legacy of a Lost Lake: Thoughts on Conservation of the Lake Iroquois Plan

### **Silent Auction at AGM**

For several years, WBFN has held a silent auction at the AGM to support the club's education initiatives. The list of donors to date include: Silver Pandora bracelet from Cortesis Jeweller (Cobourg) worth \$75, Presqui'le Park annual pass worth \$150, Bag of Niger seeds from Backyard Seeds worth \$50, Rice Lake tour with Vince Urbanski worth approx. \$150, Pies and butter-tarts from Marilyn Waring worth approx. \$30

More items are expected before the meeting. Thanks to our generous donors.

If you wish to donate an item or a service, please contact: Petra Hartwig at 905-372-2128 or [phartwig@cobourg](mailto:phartwig@cobourg).

## President's Report – February 2015

It has been my pleasure to be President of the Willow Beach Field Naturalists for the past three and a half years. I have been privileged to witness the inner workings of this Club, and it has been satisfying for me to contribute in my small way. I am reminded of my very first meeting 15 years ago and was inspired to get involved with a little nudge from Audrey Wilson.

The success of the Club is the result of team effort by both the Executive Board of Directors, but also the Coordinators and Committees that are so important and contribute hugely. Volunteers are 100% of the 'workforce' – comprised of the work that goes into the Club, but also the created atmosphere. We are all very busy people and this cooperative approach has allowed us to ensure that the programs are delivered to our members and guests.

Since becoming President of this Club, I have initiated introducing a youth representative to liaise between WBFN and CCI. Milton Calderon Donefer has done an exceptional job. A busy young man who is passionate and engaged and we will miss him as he graduates this year. It is my hope that we reach out to our youth and show leadership in mentoring and involvement.

Following is a list of activities WBFN has been involved in 2014

### **Environmental**

● Advisory Committee for Natural Spaces (ACNS) – Richard Pope and Margaret Bain

Our volunteers are vigilant to the illegal destruction of natural spaces, and following are some current issues:

Marina Expansion - how it impacts the

natural environment. There are many changes coming to the Cobourg Harbour area. With potential new slips being considered for the inner harbour (part of Phase II and all of Phase III of the Cobourg Parks Master Plan), WBFN are concerned for the natural habitat which is supported by the Cobourg Dragon Boat and Canoe Clubs. Shoreplan Engineering has come up with a completely new plan more acceptable to the public users of the harbour. This plan is due out soon. Public consultation is paramount on harbour expansion plan and west headland issues before anything is passed by Cobourg Council.

Shores of Midtown Creek on Division Street (Mazda Dealership) – illegal bulldozing contrary to development plans. Town has requested a full restoration plan from the owner Tremain Street park land (Monk's Cove) – our input is to keep it as natural as possible

● Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI) – Brian Maxwell, 1<sup>st</sup> VP

The group who proposed the improvement of the west beach in Port Hope is well organized. This work is projected to last 6-8 years. This area is next to Cameco and will need to be cleaned up before any improvements can be made. Brian is our liaison with a two year appointment and has asked the Town of Port Hope to notify WBFN about any work to be done which starts in 2017.

● Emerald Green Ash Borer - Gina Brouwer, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP

Early symptoms are not detectable and 4-5 years later the tree dies. Insecticide works but is costly and not effective if applied too

*(Continued on page 5)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

late. Some municipalities have not been doing anything and now face sheer numbers of dying trees and the huge costs associated with this. Port Hope and Peterborough both have infected/dying trees. In Cobourg the scale of damage is still unknown. Outreach and education is needed.

WBFN continues to be watchful of Port Hope Official Plan and Cobourg Parks Master Plan

● Wesleyville Gasification Proposal: no role for WBFN now that the issue has gone to OMB

● WBFN and Town of Cobourg distributed "Do Not Feed" brochures. Responsibility starts with education

## **Education**

● Education Awards – Karen Drew, Coordinator of Education

Education Awards of \$250.00 each were distributed to Dale Road Sr. Public School, C.R. Gummow Public School, and CCI. Carole Payne made the presentation to Dale Rd. Sr. Public School and CCI, while Gina Brouwer made a presentation to the CR Gummow Public School. Carole Payne presented the cheques to the respective schools.

The 2014 Scholarship recipient was Vivienne Jaehn-Kreibaum of East Northumberland Secondary School

● **Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative** - Bill Newell, Director and Representative

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is actively promoting the Iroquois Plains, showing that the area between Oakville and Kingston is significant. Several areas were subject to a prescribed burn last spring i.e. Hazel Bird Nature Reserve. Northumberland County built an accessible trail in the Northumberland For-

est.

● **Ontario Nature** – Deborah Panko/Frank Godfrey, ON Representative

Deborah attended the Spring Regional Meeting. When she stepped down as Coordinator, Frank kindly offered to take her place. The Fall Regional meeting in November at the Hillside Outdoor Education School in Scarborough was attended by Frank, along with Brian Maxwell, Bill Crowley and myself. These meetings give us a chance to see the successful operations of other clubs. It is anticipated that we may host the Ontario Nature Spring Regional meeting this year within our community.

## **Website**

Factored into the 2015 Budget is the re-designed website giving individuals the rights to post directly to the server. Both Bruce Parker and John Draper have worked closely and diligently, and we will keep you posted.

## **Events**

A Cobourg Canopy Tree Tour, lead by Gina Brouwer, took place in June with a 10 km bike tour of significant trees in the Town of Cobourg. Trees were planted and dedicated to the late Layton Dodge.

The Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund is a joint initiative between the GRCA and the Parks and Recreation department of the Town of Cobourg. Four tree planting dates were set.

Clive Goodwin has been given the Ontario Federation of Ornithologist of the Year Award - a very prestigious honour. Congratulations, Clive.

## **Constitution**

Director Tim Lawley is continuing to

*(Continued on page 6)*

(Continued from page 5)

research the government amendments to policy that will affect charitable and non-profit organizations

Director Bridget Jokitalo recommended that we use the rough working copy of the current constitution until legislation changes in 2016.

### **Coordinators**

Coordinator of Programs, Trish Whitney tendered her resignation after her years of dedicated volunteering as the Speakers Series Coordinator. We appreciate how much work goes into making this happen and thank her very much. Trish worked with Pam Lancaster to confirm speakers for the 2014-2015 season.

Director Pam Lancaster gave her notice as she had a baby in July. We thank her as well for her assistance to Trish in firming up speakers in the past as well as the 2014-2015 season.

### **Volunteer Service Awards**

A maximum of 6 adults per organization can be recognized annually with a provincial volunteer service award. Submitted this year were Deb Panko, Bob Short, Michael Biggar, John Geale and Barry and Margaret Robinson.

### **Peter's Woods**

A work party pulled many small/young dog strangling vines in the area. Erica Barkley, Assistant Ecologist, Ontario Parks – Southeast Zone, updated a map of dog-strangling vine, and they applied a herbicide treatment in June. Buckthorn on the adjacent property needed cutting down to prevent seedlings in Peter's Woods.

Many thanks to Simone and Tom Merey for fixing the Visitor Sign-in Box.

The gate will once again open on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Youth Representative**

CCI's Environmental Club entered the next stage of their Green Art Project. They sold water bottles, distributed plants around the school, and participated in the garbage clean up in Cobourg. As well they participated in the salmon release project.

An Education Award of \$250 which was allocated to their Club the previous year was used toward building green awareness.

With the support of the Cobourg Rotary Club, Milton Calderon Donifer was able to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit again last September.

### **Miscellaneous**

A Thank You gift was presented to Victoria Retirement Living for their generosity in providing a room and refreshments for the 2013-2014 executive meetings. The bird feeder and Niger seeds were well received.

Several 'thank you' notes were received. Mark Stabb, Nature Conservancy, stated that our \$200 donation would be used towards the purchase of the LeBlanc Property, Rice Lake Plains.

A donation was made to the WBFN by Jan and David Alford of Port Hope through Elizabeth Kellogg, of a framed print by Robert Bateman - "Roadside Tapestry", signed and numbered, and valued between \$250 - \$600. The print was appraised by the AGN and was offered for silent bid at the Cobourg Public Library for two weeks. The winning bid was \$250 from Jane McGrath.

*Curlew* – postage and printing costs: postage costs to send out the *Curlew* monthly has increased. Although it is the nature of the

(Continued on page 7)

*(Continued from page 6)*

costs of production and distribution, the Club will continue to encourage members to receive the *Curlew* by e-mail.

Bill Crowley has kindly accepted the post of “Official Greeter” at the General Meetings

CanadaHelps.org is an organization that facilitates donations and membership fees to be paid via the internet/credit cards. Access can be direct via internet or through our website.

The President was given a memory stick by Audrey Wilson of Hazel Bird’s notes from 1966 to 2004, and publications of the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative to be printed out and filed in archives. (“Archives” are a storage box of important information that is passed from President to President, with a review of its contents from time to time).

Please consider a small donation, which can be in the form of a service or item for the Silent Auction. We wish to continue offering the \$1000 Scholarship to a deserving student to further his/her education in natural history or its many forms.

I look forward to the role as Past President, and look forward to seeing everyone at the AGM.

*Petra Hartwig  
President*

Financial Statements will be distributed at the AGM.

## **2015 Nominating Committee Report Acting PP Russell Lake**

WBFN’s Constitution provides that a Nominating Committee shall bring forward a slate of candidates for election at the Annual General Meeting. Further nominations from the floor shall be accepted, with the nominee’s prior consent, provided that they are proposed and seconded. The members of the nominating committee include Petra Hartwig, Michael Biggar, Brian Maxwell, Gina Brouwer and Barry Robinson.

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of candidates for election at the 2015 Annual General meeting:

### **Executive (two year term):**

- President           **Brian Maxwell**
- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President   - *no candidates as of Feb 10*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President   - *no candidates as of Feb 10*
- Secretary       **Eva Nichols**

Our Treasurer, David O’Dell, will be staying on to complete the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of his term.

**Directors (two year term):** The following club members have agreed to stand for the position of Director:

**Gina Brouwer  
Brian Cook  
Bill Newell**

Current directors Tim Lawley, Maaike Berg-Nonnekes and Bridget Jokitalo will continue into the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of their term.

Barry Robinson and Pam Lancaster’s two year term has ended; the Willow Beach Field Naturalists Executive Board wish to thank them for volunteering their time and sharing their expertise while on the Executive Board.

The committee is pleased to announce that Chris and Karen Drew as well as Petra Hartwig have agreed to continue stewardship of Peter’s Woods.

**Willow Beach Field Naturalists Annual General Meeting Minutes**  
**Cobourg Community Centre – February 28, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order:**

Petra Hartwig called the meeting to order and welcomed new members and everyone present, and reminded of membership renewals. 63 people were present.

**2. Approval of Last AGM Minutes:**

**Motion** by Bill Newell, seconded by Tim Lawley, that the AGM Minutes of Feb. 22, 2013 be adopted. Carried.

**3. Announcements:**

Petra Hartwig, the silent auction organizer, thanked the many donors and the Silent Auction committee members, and discussed how the auction would work. She mentioned that proceeds again would be going towards the WBFN Scholarship Award.

**4. Reports:**

a. President's Report:

Petra Hartwig reminded everyone that the 2013/14 President's report was printed in the February Curlew. **Motion** by Bill Wensley, seconded by Bill Crowley to confirm the actions of the Executive Board since the last AGM, as per Petra Hartwig's Report. Carried.

b. Financial Report:

Rae Waring reviewed the report in the February Curlew. Bob Short will be auditing our records this year again. **Motion** by Simone Mery, seconded by Russell Lake that the Financial Report be adopted. Carried.

c. Nomination Committee / Election of Board Members:

Michael Biggar presented the Nomination Committee report. **Motion** by Bob Short, seconded by Harry Knapper to accept the report of the Nominating Committee. Carried.

Michael Biggar stated that he would be asking for nominations from the floor three times: these would be for all or any positions. No nominations from the floor were requested. **Motion** moved by Lori Wensley, seconded by Jack Goering to close the Nominations. Carried.

The following names for a one year term were put forth:

First Vice President – Brian Maxwell  
Second Vice President – Gina Brouwer

**Motion** by Trish Whitney, seconded by Bill Crowley that Brian Maxwell assume the position of 1st Vice President for a one year term. Carried

**Motion** by Russell Lake, seconded by Simone Mery that Gina Brouwer assume the



position of 2nd Vice President for a one year term. Carried.

**Motion** by Bill Crowley, seconded by Harry Knapper that Eva Nichols assume the position of Secretary for a one year term. Carried.

The following names have been put forth for a two-year term to replace three directors who have completed their years of service:

Tim Lawley

Maaike Berg-Nonnekes

Bridget Jokitalo

**Motion** by Bob Short, seconded by Deb Panko that Tim Lawley assume the position of Director for a two-year term. Carried.

**Motion** by Deb Panko, seconded by Karen Drew that Maaike Berg-Nonnekes assumes the position of Director for a two-year term. Carried.

**Motion** by Rae Waring, seconded by Tim Lawley, that Bridget Jokitalo assume the position of a Director for a two year term. Carried.

#### **5. Announcements:**

The President recognized the outgoing members of the Executive Board: Michael Biggar, Rae Waring, Bruce Parker and John Geale with a small token of thanks.

A presentation was made to George and Connie Cunningham to acknowledge the unheralded volunteerism to WBFN and to thank them for their many years of delivering the Curlew.

#### **6. Sightings and Next Outings:**

Elizabeth Kellogg solicited bird sightings from the members present.

#### **7. Speaker Presentation:**

Pam Lancaster introduced the guest speaker, Ewa Bednarczuk, Ecology and Stewardship Manager of the Watershed of Lower Trent Region Conservation Authority.

**8. Silent Auction:** winners were announced; items picked up and paid for.

#### **9. The next General Meeting:**

Columbus Community Centre on March 28 at 7:30 pm, with guest speaker Geoff Coulson, Warning Preparedness Meteorologist, Environment Canada - Topic: Summer Severe Weather in Ontario – frequency of severe thunderstorms and tornados and how to stay safe.

## Note from the VP

Our web presence continues to evolve. In January, we have added a “Donate Now” function to both our Home Page and under our Membership tab. This function allows you to access Canada Helps website directly from our website – you can pay your annual dues, or make a donation, or both. And if you want to clarify your intentions, there is a place to send a “*Message/Instructions*” to our Treasurer, saying exactly what your intentions are for your donation. Give it a try, and let us know what you think.

Our Facebook presence continues to grow – we now have 27 members. Have a look - there are some nice pictures – you can get to it by clicking on the **f** symbol in the upper right corner of the WBFN home page.

We’ve also tried to make it a little bit easier for people to manage their contacts within the club, by creating the following generic email addresses:

[president@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](mailto:president@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) - redirected to the president

[treasurer@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](mailto:treasurer@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) - redirected to the treasurer

[membership@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](mailto:membership@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) -redirected to the membership co-ordinator

[secretary@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](mailto:secretary@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) - redirected to the secretary

[info@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org](mailto:info@willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org) - our general inquiry address

We hope this makes it easier for folks to contact the right person in the club, especially as our executive positions change on a regular basis.

Finally, we’ve added a couple of new items in the *Links* section of the web site. We’ve been able to obtain a copy of the “Species at Risk” report commissioned by the Port Hope Area Initiative. This shows a list of the species that will be impacted by the huge environmental cleanup that will be taking place in the Port Hope area over the next few years. I believe that we are the only site to have this report.

Also, elsewhere, you will have read about the Royal Canadian Geographical Society’s contest to vote for a National Bird of Canada; we’ve added a link from our site to theirs.

*Brian Maxwell  
Vice President*

### Welcome to New Members

David and Maria Fraser, Newcastle  
Bridget Gallagher, Gores Landing  
David Impey, Colbourne

Mark your calendar for  
**Rice Lakes Plains Butterfly Count,**  
Saturday, June 13, 2015.

For more information, contact Val Deziel As-  
sistant Conservation Biologist Central Ontario  
The Nature Conservancy of Canada at 905-  
375-8825 or  
[Val.Deziel@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:Val.Deziel@natureconservancy.ca)



## Celebrating "roughly" a decade of conservation and camaraderie on the Rice Lake Plains!

Imagine you are married and a special anniversary arrives. Now imagine both partners are so busy that you forget to celebrate it! Well, it is safe to say that the partners in the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative (RLPJI) must be a busy lot, because we missed celebrating our big 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary! And we missed it by a country mile.

It was October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2003 at the Grafton Inn that conservation partners gathered to launch an ambitious ecological restoration project. The lofty goal: to restore a lost landscape – the tallgrass prairies and oak savannas of Northumberland County's Rice Lake Plains.

Signing the first agreement were staff from Northumberland County, Wildlife Habitat Canada, Ontario Parks, Lower Trent Conservation, Ganaraska Conservation and the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). NCC led the new partnership, which was fired up and inspired by the support of the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. In 2002, NCC had purchased the 811-acre (328 hectare) Burnley-Carmel properties, home to globally-rare black oak savanna habitats. This was our first big step into tallgrass and savanna conservation in the Rice Lake Plains. From the beginning, however, it was clear that a landscape-scale approach was needed to bring meaningful ecological change to the region.

The Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative was born!

We have collaborated on the full gamut of conservation activities ever since. In 2006, NCC took its first crack at prescribed burns, so necessary for the ecological health of prairies and savannas. Unfortunately site conditions did not allow us to proceed with the burns that spring. This was a setback (*and it would not be our last*), but it had a silver lining. We had clearly communicated to local people that we would not burn if conditions were not right and safe. And we followed through with this promise. But we burned the next year in 2007! Now many RLPJI partners use this valuable tool on a regular basis, with great results.

So much of our work, including the use of fire, has been inspired by the pioneering projects of the Alderville First Nation at their Black Oak Savanna site. Driven by a great vision and intensive hands-on efforts, the restored Alderville Black Oak Savanna is a marvellous ecological gem. Rick Beaver was behind much of the early restoration work at Alderville, and he was there to address the original RLPJI partners at the inaugural event in 2003.

Alderville First Nation joined the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative in 2007. Since then the partnership has welcomed a number of local volunteer groups, including Lone Pine Marsh Sanctuary, Willow Beach Field Naturalists, Northumberland Land Trust and Tallgrass Ontario. There have been many mile-

stones, including the first *Savanna Sentinel* newsletter (2004), the first Annual Prairie Day (2008), Northumberland County's forest plan, which designated many tallgrass and savanna sites for special protection (2009), and the 2009 opening of the Alderville Black Oak Savanna Ecology Centre (*in a former sports bar – check the floor for the blue lines!*).

Our website [ricelakeplains.ca](http://ricelakeplains.ca), with Savvy the Savannah Sparrow on the masthead, was launched in 2010, and we introduced ourselves on Facebook in 2013.

There have been joint fund-raising proposals, with partners regularly raising funds for one another (that is worth repeating – *the Rice Lake Plains partners regularly raise funds for one another*). Our recent grant from Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation is a typical example of how collaborating has come through for us. Funding sources have come and gone over the years, but our partnership, projects and programs live on.

Habitat protection lies at the heart of our partnership and since 2003 we have collectively protected more than 2,500 acres (976 hectares) of significant natural areas in the Rice Lake Plains! And we have welcomed thousands of people (including many members of the Peterborough Field Naturalists Club) to these lands to explore and be inspired by their natural wonders and scenic beauty.

There have been personal milestones as well, including volunteers turning to interns turning to paid staff, short-term contractors making long-term impacts on projects, as well as marriages, children and retirements. There has been great friendship, fellowship and camaraderie.

There is so much that we have achieved together. But in terms of tallgrass habitat much of the Rice Lake Plains still remains a “diamond in the rough.” There is so much more to do, and it is a pleasure and source of great pride to observe that our momentum has not stopped.

It has been more than 11 years since we started up the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative. But let's call it “roughly” a decade, so we can call this an anniversary year! Here's to another “roughly” ten years of conservation and collaboration!

It's never too late to celebrate.

*Mark Stabb,  
Central Ontario Program Director, NCC*

Please note: CANCELLATION  
Owl Prowl and Night Hike on Feb. 28, 2015  
has been cancelled. Please refer to the  
[www.ricelakeplains.ca](http://www.ricelakeplains.ca) event calendar.

## **MOSQUITO FAUNA CHANGING IN ONTARIO**

Dr. Fiona Hunter from Brock University reports that by surveying the mosquito fauna in Ontario each year, she has discovered that species' distributions have changed. By comparing present-day mosquito surveillance data to the 1975 surveillance data for the St. Louis Encephalitis outbreak, she and her colleagues have found that the once abundant *Anopheles walkeri* is at risk of extirpation. She believes that habitat loss and higher winter temperatures are potential causes. The most surprising discovery thus far is that *Culicoides sonorensis*, a species capable of transmitting several nasty livestock diseases, is firmly established in southern Ontario ... and entomologists didn't even see it coming!

*submitted by Don Davis*

## RECENT SIGHTINGS

*compiled by Roger Frost*

|                          |               |           |   |              |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------|---|--------------|
| Snow Goose (blue)        | Jan. 3/5/8    | 1ad       | Cobourg Harbour                           | KN/ERM/CEG   |
| Northern Pintail         | Jan. 3        | 1m        | Cobourg Harbour                           | KN           |
|                          | Jan. 24       | 1m        | Garden Hill pond                          | MB           |
| Canvasback               | Jan. 2        | 2         | Presqu'ile                                | FH, Ontbirds |
|                          | Jan. 10       | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | RF           |
|                          | Jan. 18-24    | 1f        | Presqu'ile Bay                            | RDM          |
| Redhead                  | Jan. 11       | 26        | Cobourg Harbour                           | RP, MB, CEG  |
| Ring-necked Duck         | Jan. 19-25    | 1m        | Presqu'ile                                | FH, Ontbirds |
| Ruddy Duck               | Jan. 2/4      | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | ERM/CEG      |
| Great Blue Heron         | Jan. 3        | 1         | Ganaraska River off Jocelyn St., PH       | KA           |
| <b>Turkey Vulture</b>    | <b>Jan. 1</b> | <b>2</b>  | Roseneath                                 | EK, KS, RL   |
| Bald Eagle               | Jan. 14       | 2 imm     | Cobourg Harbour, on ice                   | KN           |
|                          | Jan. 19       | 1 2nd yr. | over Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2               | RP           |
|                          | Jan. 29       | 1 imm     | Cobourg Harbour, eating kill on ice       | KN           |
| Northern Harrier         | Jan. 8        | 1         | Port Britain                              | MB           |
|                          | Jan. 14       | 1         | Lakeshore & Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2        | MB           |
| Red-shouldered Hawk      | Jan. 18       | 1         | Ontario St. & Presqu'ile Pkwy, Brighton   | RDM          |
| Rough-legged Hawk        | Jan. 4        | 2         | Lakeshore & Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2        | MB           |
|                          | Jan. 16       | 1         | Hwy. 2 nr. Amherst Blvd., Cob.            | MB           |
|                          | Jan. 29       | 1         | Deer Park Rd. & Hwy. 2, PH Ward 2         | GMCD, BP     |
|                          | Jan. 31       | 1         | Lakeshore & Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2        | MB           |
| Golden Eagle             | Jan. 9        | 1         | Grist Mill Rd., PH Ward 2                 | BW           |
| American Kestrel         | Jan. 2        | 1         | Hayward St., PH                           | ERM          |
|                          | Jan. 23       | 1         | Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2             | LS           |
| American Coot            | Jan. 18       | 2         | Cobourg Harbour                           | CEG          |
|                          | Jan. 24       | 1         | Cobourg Harbour, walking nr. Boat launch  | MB, ERM      |
| Sandhill Crane           | Nov. 21/14    | 3         | heard calling over Wesleyville            | PB           |
| Little Gull              | Jan. 11       | 1         | Presqu'ile PP, Owen Point                 | DS, RDM      |
| Thayer's Gull            | Jan. 9        | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | RP           |
|                          | Jan. 24       | 1ad       | Cobourg Harbour                           | MB           |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull | Jan. 30       | 1ad       | Cobourg Harbour                           | MB           |
| Glaucous Gull            | Jan. 10       | 8         | Cobourg Harbour                           | RF           |
| Snowy Owl                | Jan. 1-11     | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | m.obs.       |
|                          | Jan. 4        | 1         | Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2 - flyby     | LS           |
|                          | Jan. 8        | 1         | Deer Park Rd. n. of Hwy. 2, PH Ward 2     | SB           |
|                          | Jan. 15-16    | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | CEG          |
|                          | Jan. 24-31    | 1         | Cobourg Harbour                           | CEG          |
|                          | Jan. 27       | 1         | Candlewick Woods, PH Ward 2               | RF           |
|                          | Jan. 28       | 1         | Lakeshore Blvd., Cob.                     | SF           |
| Barred Owl               | Jan. 8        | 1         | Ganaraska Rd. & Rice Lake Dr., found dead | LS           |
| Long-eared Owl           | Jan. 16       | 1         | Presqu'ile PP, Atkins Rd.                 | RL           |
| Short-eared Owl          | Jan. 20       | 1         | Lakeshore Rd., PH Ward 2                  | RF           |
|                          | Jan. 27       | 1         | Marsh Rd., PH Ward 2                      | RF           |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | Jan. 3-8      | 1         | Canton, PH Ward 2                         | BL           |
| Northern Flicker         | Jan. 1        | 1         | 1010 Ontario St., Cob.                    | AEW          |
| Northern Shrike          | Jan. 13       | 1         | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                    | RF           |
|                          | Jan. 24       | 1         | Deer Park Rd., n. of Hwy. 2, PH Ward 2    | MB           |
|                          | Jan. 31       | 1         | Wesleyville Rd., n. of Lakeshore          | MB           |

## Sightings - cont'd.

|                             |                  |        |   |                |
|-----------------------------|------------------|--------|---|----------------|
| Blue Jay                    | Jan. 27/30       | 19     | Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2 - maximum     | LS             |
| Horned Lark                 | Jan. 17          | 30     | Deer Park Rd., s. of Hwy. 2                 | MB             |
|                             | Jan. 30          | 14     | Deer Park Rd. @ Hwy. 2                      | ERM            |
| Carolina Wren               | Jan. 31-Feb. 2   | 1      | Hamilton Ave., Cob.                         | BH             |
| Eastern Bluebird            | Dec. 12/14       | 2      | Wesleyville                                 | PB             |
|                             | Jan. 20          | 3      | Mail Rd., PH Ward 2                         | RF             |
| Hermit Thrush               | Jan. 14          | 1      | Cobourg backyard                            | MB             |
| American Robin              | Jan. 6           | 12     | Lakeshore Rd., s. of Grafton                | MB             |
|                             | Jan. 25          | 5      | Brookside Rd., Cob.                         | CEG            |
|                             | Jan. 27, 31      | 8      | Wesleyville                                 | MB             |
| Northern Mockingbird        | Jan. 19          | 1      | Willow Beach Rd., PH Ward 2                 | RP             |
| American Pipit              | Jan. 11          | 1      | Carr's Marsh                                | DG, JGe        |
| Cedar Waxwing               | Jan. 30          | 36     | Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2               | LS             |
| Lapland Longspur            | Jan. 6           | 2      | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | EK, RF         |
| Snow Bunting                | Jan. 6           | 700    | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | EK, RF         |
|                             | Jan. 10          | 100    | Jamieson Rd. & 7th, PH Ward 2               | LS             |
|                             | Jan. 17          | 300    | Deer Park Rd., n. of Hwy. 2                 | MB             |
|                             | Jan. 31          | 150    | Lakeshore/Dickinson Rd., PH Ward 2          | MB             |
| <b>Pine Warbler</b>         | <b>Jan. 3-29</b> | 1      | Presqu'ile PP, Campground office feeder     | BK, m.obs      |
| Chipping Sparrow            | Jan. 13          | 1      | Alderville Black Oak Savanna feeder         | EK, RF, RB, RO |
|                             | Jan. 13          | 2      | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | RF             |
| <b>Clay-colored Sparrow</b> | <b>Jan. 4</b>    | 1      | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | RF             |
| Field Sparrow               | Jan. 10          | 1      | Grist Mill Rd., PH Ward 2, feeder           | BW             |
| Savannah Sparrow            | Jan. 6           | 4      | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | EK, RF         |
| Fox Sparrow                 | Nov. 20/14       | 1      | Wesleyville feeder                          | PB             |
| Swamp Sparrow               | Jan. 25          | 1      | Covert Hill Rd., A/H Twp.                   | RF             |
| White-throated Sparrow      | Jan. 3           | 4      | Peacock Blvd., PH                           | KA             |
|                             | Jan. 21          | 2      | Lakeport                                    | CEG            |
| Red-winged Blackbird        | Jan. 15-16       | 1      | Mail Rd., PH Ward 2                         | CEG            |
|                             | Jan. 31          | 10     | Mail Rd., w. of Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2  | MB             |
| Rusty Blackbird             | Jan. 6           | 10     | Mail Rd., w. of Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2  | EK, RF         |
|                             | Jan. 14          | 9      | Mail Rd., w. of Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2  | RP, MB         |
| Common Grackle              | Jan. 14          | 1      | Mail Rd., w. of Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2  | RP, MB         |
|                             | Jan. 17          | 1      | Durham St., PH                              | EK             |
|                             | Jan. 27          | 1      | College St., Cob. feeders, later found dead | RP, MB         |
| Brown-headed Cowbird        | Jan. 14/31       | 2      | Mail Rd., w. of Wesleyville Rd., PH Ward 2  | RP, MB         |
| Purple Finch                | Dec. 18/14       | 3      | Wesleyville feeder                          | PB             |
| Common Redpoll              | Jan. 13          | 500    | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | RF             |
|                             | Jan. 14          | 200    | Lakeshore/Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2            | RP, MB         |
| Hoary Redpoll               | Jan. 13          | 1      | Haskill Rd., PH Ward 2                      | RF             |
|                             | Jan. 23          | 1      | Deblaire St., PH                            | GMCD           |
|                             | Jan. 23          | 1      | Presqu'ile, Bayshore Rd. feeder             | FH, Ontbirds   |
| Pine Siskin                 | Jan. 15/16       | 6      | 1010 Ontario St., Cob.                      | AEW            |
|                             |                  |        |   |                |
| Red Fox                     | Jan. 27          | 1      | McCullough Rd., n. of Wesleyville           | MB             |
| Star-nosed Mole             | Jan. 11          | 1 dead | Gage's Creek, PH                            | DG, JGe        |

**Observers:** KA=Kurt Appleman; MB=Margaret Bain; SB=Sally Bates; RB=Rick Beaver; PB=Paul Bridges; GMCD=Geoff Dale; RF=Roger Frost; SF=Stan Frost; DG=David Geale; JGe=John Geale; CEG=Clive Goodwin; BH=Brenda Harvey; FH=Fred Helleiner; EK=Elizabeth Kellogg; RL=Russell Lake; RL=Rod Lee; BL=Barb Loucks; ERM=Ted McDonald; RDM=Doug McRae; KN=Ken Niles; RO=Radek Odolczyk; Ontbirds=listserv of Ontario Field Ornithologists; BP=Bob Popham; RP=Richard Pope; KS=Katsu Sakuma; LS=Louise Schmidt; DS=Don Sutherland; BW=Ben Walters; AEW=Audrey Wilson.

## SOME 2015 ASTRONOMICAL HIGHLIGHTS

- April 4 - Pre-dawn total lunar eclipse, starting about 5 am. Best viewing time about 6:50 am before moon drops below the horizon
- June 30 - Venus and Jupiter close together in the western sky
- Aug. 12 to 13 – Perseids meteor shower
- Sept. 27 – In the eastern sky, a total lunar eclipse. Starts about 8:13 pm, ends 1:22 am
- Oct. 8 – At dawn , moon and four planets in the eastern sky.
- Nov. 7 – At dawn, moon with 3 planets in the eastern sky.
- Dec. 7 – At dawn, moon with 4 planets in the eastern sky
- Dec. 7 – Comet Catalina bright enough to be seen with binoculars
- Dec. 13 to 14 – Geminids meteor shower (peaks during daytime)

Eclipse calculator for Toronto: <http://www.timeanddate.com/eclipse/in/canada/toront>

AND START PLANNING FOR THE BIG ONE! Saturday, August 18, 2017, starting after 1 pm in Cobourg/Port Hope – DEPENDING ON WEATHER CONDITIONS AND USE OF PROTECTIVE EYE FILM OR DEVICES. Total solar eclipse will flow from west to east across central U.S.A. First time since 1914. A lifetime opportunity to witness totality if you travel to the U.S.A. Cobourg should experience 75% of totality, and Point Pelee about 85% of totality.

*Source: Skynews magazine – Jan/Feb 2015 (available in Cobourg Public Library)  
Submitted by Don Davis*

## Area Events

- Tuesday, March 3, 2015, 7 p.m., Cobourg Library, Rotary Room  
The Cobourg Ecology Garden Lecture. Preserving the Past: Protecting the Future: Heirloom Plants and their Stories. Presented by Mary and David Brittain, The Cottage Gardener Heirloom and Seedhouse & Nursery. Free
- March 14 and 15, 2015 - Presqu'ile Provincial Park Waterfowl Weekend, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. World-class waterfowl viewing during the spring migration. A valid park permit is required to enter the park. More details at [www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca](http://www.friendsofpresquile.on.ca)



- Running until March 29, 2015 at Peterborough Museum and Archives, 300 Hunter Street East, Peterborough, ON  
Exhibition - Winged Tapestries - Moths at Large  
See moths like you've never seen them before. These large-format photographs by Jim des Rivières are sure to leave a lasting impression. While their cousins the butterflies often get more attention, moths are older, more numerous, more diverse and in many ways just as beautiful.

*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 - \$35    Single - \$25

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.



P.O. Box 421  
Port Hope, ON L1A 3Z3

