

June & David Moore

Peninsula Naturalist

Peninsula Field Naturalists

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Message from the President:

SHORT HILLS CONFERENCE - JANUARY 24, 1992

I received an exciting invitation to attend the signing of an agreement between Brock University and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, promoting cooperative research, management and stewardship in Short Hills Provincial Park. The document was signed by the President of Brock, Mr. Terry White; Dr. John Middleton of the Urban and Environment Studies Department; Mr. Jim Young, Operations and Support Manager for Southern Ontario, MNR and Mr. John Fraser from the Fonthill MNR. This signing which occurred in the Senate Chambers at Brock, was witnessed by PFN members, members of the Bruce Trail, members of the Brock Community and Niagara.

After a short slide presentation of the MNR's Short Hills Management Plan, speakers were asked to present their special interest in the park. I spoke on behalf of our club, starting with our roots in 1954, moving (quickly) to 1992 and what our members want to contribute to the park. John MacKenzie had recently sent a letter to the MNR in response to their Management Plan, stating that we were keen to help in many ways: donating our backs to such tasks as planting trees, building paths, maintenance work--and as I told them, we also have a valuable resource in the shape of well seasoned, (I mean experienced!) naturalists, who are experts in many aspects of the natural world.

...cont. pg. 2

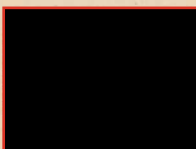
-OFFICERS: PENINSULA FIELD NATURALISTS-

- President - Carla Carlson
- Past Pres - John MacKenzie
- Vice Pres - Brian Ratcliff
- Secretary - David Moore
- Treasurer - Catherine Smith
- Membership- June Corey



DIRECTORS:

- Mildred Heatherton -
- Tracy Jennings -
- Mark McDonell -



- Paul Summerskill -
- Martin Walsh -
- Nancy Wilson -



When I thought of my many mentors that I have come in contact with in the PFN, I shared what a treasure trove of knowledge we have, within our membership. To link these people with the young students at Brock would be invaluable. For everyone.

I spoke about the special interest members have shown, in our clubs involvement with helping to make nature accessible to everyone in our community. I complimented the MNR on planning a one-kilometer wheel chair-accessible trail, proposed for the Swayze Falls area. I had calculated, that the PFN had 23 outings for the season and the Niagara Bruce Trail Club had 51 outings---just from Dec.-Feb.! That made 74 outings available to our community and many people do participate in several per week. Then I noted that only 2 of our outings were wheel chair accessible, and as far as I knew, only St. Johns Conservation Area was an easily accessible natural area. The odds here are 1 out of 36 for people in our community who need special trails.

When I think of the peace I achieve from wandering through the Short Hills in the spring, stopped in my tracks by a carpet of Trilliums or Dogtooth Violets, I feel we need to share this with others who only have access to Niagara's manicured parks and domestic flowers.

I challenged the MNR to achieve an accessible trail that is particularly wonderful! A trail that has wildflowers verging it's edge. A trail that somehow cuts through a hill that allows eye contact with wild flowers and the ability to study them at hand, rather than 3' below the person sitting in a wheel chair or standing with a walker. I challenged Brock University to integrate wheel chair accessible field research areas. Ours could be the first Canadian university where wheel chair bound biology students could actively participate in field research.

In conclusion, I suggested a biological control programme that would eradicate a nasty non-native weed that has invaded the Short Hills, as well as the Peninsula. Upon entry to the Short Hills at the information kiosk, people could pick up a brochure, with a key to identify garlic mustard (Alliaria petiolata). With special permission from the MNR to collect this species, one would gather it, take it home and prepare it, according to Grandma Coffman's recipe for Garlic Mustard Dip. It's delectable and in no time, the weed would be extinct!

Carla Carlson

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CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1991

Our 1991 CBC was the most successful, in all sorts of ways, that we've ever had. With 89 species, we left 1989 (with 78) behind in the dust; and the 40,150 birds were by far the greatest number we have ever tallied. (We were greatly helped by Nabil Khairallah's crew, who counted over 10,000 crows that evening - how do you count 10,000 crows??). Fifty-seven crazy people, including a reporter from CBC radio's Sunday Morning, braved frustratingly high winds to count birds in the field. Twenty-two others checked their feeders regularly (one of them watched his feeders NON-STOP for nine hours. I wonder if he now sees chickadees in his sleep!) And others, whom some of the field birders think were the most wonderful of all, cooked unbelievably delicious things for us to eat and drink at the end of a long exhausting day. Generous souls waited on us hand and foot, ensuring that every last bite disappeared! (And it did; I can remember at one point eying an interesting-looking casserole and thinking I must try a bite of it; when I turned around again, it was all gone!) It is hard to find a way to thank all of these people enough. I hope it will help for them to know that they are contributing to a huge body of knowledge that will enable scientists to understand, and ultimately help the birds.

The highlights? The most spectacular birds were of course the pelicans in Jordan Harbour. The most interesting result, I thought, was the jump from a maximum of 13 Eastern Bluebirds to 96! We had record high numbers of many of the duck species. In the Short Hills, 40 Wild Turkeys galloped past the Effingham field group. The Lakeshore group had a brief, tantalizing look at our first-ever Harlequin Duck on the count, and also managed to have the most bizarre experience of the count, when they discovered an underground bunker, furnished, and clearly occupied, in Mary Malcolmson Park (I've been walking over it every spring when I bird there - am I blind? Don't answer that!) A very, very big thank-you to all who participated. Come back next year. *Mary Ellen Hebb*

OBSERVERS:

Helen Abbott, John Bacher, Roy Baker, Audrey Barnsley, Frank Barnsley, Bouwe Bergsma, Leila Biggar, Anne Bright, Glyn Bright, Carla Carlson, Dorothy Chapman, Sue Chapman, Barbara Charlton, Rosalind Chaundy, Ronald Cook, Gail Cox, Beverly Craig, Ellen Cramm, Nel Dekker, Rob Dobos, Chris Escott, David Euler, David Flemming, Norma Flemming, Gladys Freitz, Pat French, Denys Gardiner, Francis Goldring, Libby Gollert, June Green, Mary Hale, Mildred Heatherton, Mary Ellen Hebb, Marcy Jacklin, Nabil Khairallah, Frank Kingdon, Richard Knapton, Mona Lampard, Bert Laughton, Lorna Lissaman, Gordon Lissaman, John MacKenzie, Lois MacKenzie, Sandy Martin, Bill Mathers, Dorothy McClelland, Kevin McLaughlin, George Meyers, Bob Millman, Marg Millman, David Moore, June Moore, Mary Morse, Aurelio Munoz, Doug Nasmith, George Naylor, Marilyn Oneschuk, Steve Oneschuk, Mateus Oppenzander, Kip Parker,

Ben Rempel, Bud Ripley, Paul Rose, Kayo Roy, Deborah Smith, Doris Stringer, Gar Stringer, Noreen Thwaites, Art Thwaites, Anna Troup, Bud Walsh, Chip Weseloh, Linda Weseloh, and Nancy Wilson.

St. Catharines Christmas Bird Count - December 15, 1991

COMMON LOON.....	1	LONG-EARED OWL.....	2
HORNED GREBE.....	7	SHORT-EARED OWL.....	1
AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN.....	2	BELTED KINGFISHER.....	6
DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT.....	9	RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER.....	1
GREAT BLUE HERON.....	21	DOWNY WOODPECKER.....	113
BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON.....	2	HAIRY WOODPECKER.....	20
CANADA GOOSE.....	1,023	NORTHERN FLICKER.....	14
WOOD DUCK.....	2	PILEATED WOODPECKER.....	1
AMERICAN BLACK DUCK.....	89	HORNED LARK.....	20
MALLARD.....	655	BLUE JAY.....	242
GADWALL.....	6	AMERICAN CROW.....	10,228
REDHEAD.....	7	BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE.....	486
GREATER SCAUP.....	2,327	TUFTED TITMOUSE.....	15
LESSER SCAUP.....	16	RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH.....	5
KING EIDER.....	4	WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH.....	45
HARLEQUIN DUCK.....	1	BROWN CREEPER.....	3
OLDSQUAW.....	8,520	CAROLINA WREN.....	6
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER.....	1,050	WINTER WREN.....	1
COMMON GOLDENEYE.....	323	GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET.....	20
BUFFLEHEAD.....	155	EASTERN BLUEBIRD.....	96
HOODED MERGANSER.....	8	HERMIT THRUSH.....	1
COMMON MERGANSER.....	601	AMERICAN ROBIN.....	7
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER.....	22	GRAY CATBIRD.....	1
NORTHERN HARRIER.....	3	NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD.....	96
SHARP-SHINNED HAWK.....	5	CEDAR WAXWING.....	104
COOPER'S HAWK.....	2	NORTHERN SHRIKE.....	1
NORTHERN GOSHAWK.....	1	EUROPEAN STARLING.....	3,182
RED-SHOULDERED HAWK.....	1	NORTHERN CARDINAL.....	304
RED-TAILED HAWK.....	205	AMERICAN TREE SPARROW.....	309
ROUGH-LEGGED HAWK.....	21	FIELD SPARROW.....	1
AMERICAN KESTREL.....	78	SONG SPARROW.....	28
RING-NECKED PHEASANT.....	1	SWAMPSPARROW.....	3
WILD TURKEY.....	40	WHITE-THROATED SPARROW.....	1
AMERICAN COOT.....	6	WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW.....	7
KILLDEER.....	1	DARK-EYED JUNCO.....	630
AMERICAN WOODCOCK.....	1	SNOW BUNTING.....	25
BONAPARTE'S GULL.....	138	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD.....	28
RING-BILLED GULL.....	2,961	COMMON GRACKLE.....	1
HERRING GULL.....	339	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD.....	3
GLAUCOUS GULL.....	1	HOUSE FINCH.....	871
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL.....	52	COMMON REDPOLL.....	2
ROCK DOVE.....	414	PINE SISKIN.....	28
MOURNING DOVE.....	458	AMERICAN GOLDFINCH.....	368
GREAT HORNED OWL.....	4	HOUSE SPARROW.....	3,240
SNOWY OWL.....	1		
SPECIES.....	89	INDIVIDUALS.....	40,150
OBSERVERS: 57 in the field, 22 at feeders.			

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FON ANNUAL CONFERENCE

May 29-31, 1992 - Brock University

Hurry, scurry folks! Apparently some of the field trips are already full! We don't want our own club members to be disappointed, so register now.

684-9064 Kay Smith
892-6718 John MacKenzie

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ATTENTION PHOTOGRAPHERS: CURRENT AND FORMER

This year's FON Conference being held at Brock University again, will feature a Photo Salon. Search your files for your best slides (must be taken in Canada) and plan to make an entry. There are five categories: Flora; Fauna; Canadian Wilderness; Shapes and Colour; In Accord with Nature. Details are given in the Conference manual which was enclosed with the Winter 1991 issue of SEASONS. Deadline: Wednesday, April 15, 1992.

Bob Layton, St. Catharines.
682-2435

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DREAMING OF SPRING!.....

GARLIC MUSTARD DIP

- 4 ounces of curd cheese (cottage cheese works)
- 4 tbsp. chopped garlic mustard leaves
- 2 tbsp. chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp. chopped chives
- sea salt
- freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 pint sour cream or natural yogurt

Put cheese into bowl, beat in leaves and herbs and season to taste. Beat in 1/2 pint sour cream or natural yogurt. Pick leaves only in Spring -- early May. Once white flowers are fully open, plants become leggy and leaves slightly tough.

Country-Side Cookbook
Gail Duff - 1982
Prism Press

Donated by Margery Coffman and served at our Morning Star Mill tour, last year!

FIELD TRIPS

Sunday, October 6, 1991

DUNDAS AREA

Sunday, October 6th. started out as a wet blustery day, but that did not deter 10 stalwart souls from joining the outing to the Dundas Area. The first stop was at the ponds just east of the Burlington Skyway and despite the rain we saw N. Shoveler, American Widgeon, Ruddy Duck and Eared Grebe. Noted shorebirds were Sanderling, Lesser Yellowlegs and Pectoral Sandpiper. We met up with other birders and they informed us that there were two White Pelicans and a Peregrine Falcon at Mountsberg Conservation Area. So with a slight change in the itinerary the convoy headed up Highway 6. The pelicans put on a good show flying from one end of the reservoir to the other. There was no peregrine seen but other species observed were Black Duck, Turkey Vulture, Gadwall, Mute Swan and lots of Geese.

The next stop was Tewes Falls at Dundas where we looked at the spectacular falls and hiked out to Dundas Peak. By now the sun was shining and we had a grand view of the fall colours. It was now mid afternoon and most of the group headed home but three of us took in one last stop, Coote's Paradise. We saw three species of warblers and found a dead Star Nosed Shrew on the foot path.

When we started this outing it sure looked like a complete wash out but we recorded some excellent species of birds and enjoyed a lovely fall day.

Brian Ratcliff.

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Wednesday, January 1, 1992

New Year's Walk

Our New Year's Day Walk, under the leadership of Frank Barnsley, proved to be most enjoyable. The day was sunny and mild as about 20 people hiked around the Lake Gibson loop beginning near the Beaverdam's community centre. It was good to have two children with us who collected an attractive winter bouquet. As for birds, it was not too exciting but we did see a good sized flock of Robins and a few Chickadees, Juncoes, Cardinals, Jays and Mockingbirds, and a solitary Kingfisher.

John MacKenzie.

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Sunday, January 26, 1992

7th. Avenue Louth Conservation Area

Bursts of sunshine filtered through the big fluffy snowflakes and the bare tree branches. The forest was snowy white to everyone's delight. Fifteen of us crunched and slid along with Brian Ratcliff, as he showed us one thing after another. Believe it or not, he found Walking Ferns! Camptosorus rhizophyllus are interesting little evergreen ferns with slightly leathery 6" long leaves--1" at the heart-shaped base, tapering to a fine point. The tips of the leaves that touch the ground, sprout new plants, thus the walking legend.

Our intrepid leader found Opossum, Deer, and Wild Turkey tracks! We nibbled on twigs of Yellow Birch (Betula lutea) and no wonder the deer love it--tastes like winter green! Someone said the big old 100' Yellow Birch we saw looked baroque!

We had Shagbark Hickory (Carya ovata) and Bitternut Hickory (Carya cordiformis) pointed out. The latter's terminal buds are mustard-yellow and flattened -- remarkable against the winter greys!

Andrew Parker was our adventurous youngster and sledged on the impossible hills, making the rest of us feel old! We concluded our hike with creamy hot chocolate and warm muffins swimming in butter (for those that still do that kind of thing!). Emma Carlson brought homemade pear jam, strawberry jam, and I supplied cheese and crackers. Thanks to Emma and Everett for making all that hot chocolate. Thanks to the National Bakery at the Pen Centre for donating the fresh muffins! We stood chatting with our hands wrapped around steaming mugs of hot chocolate, as the snowflakes and sunshine played about us.

Carla Carlson

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'Winter Tree Finder' by May Theilgaard Watts. A Manual for Identifying Deciduous Trees In Winter. 1970 Nature Study Guild, Box 972, Berkeley, California. 94701

INDOOR PROGRAMMES

The infamous Dr. Wally Poole from the Department of Education at Brock was our guest speaker on October 28, 1991. He regaled us with interesting video highlights from the Nature of Things-- including the mating rituals of Moose and that's enough said about that. If you weren't there...you missed out! I ain't repeating it.

Wally Poole, who had received the first ever C.W.I.P. recognition awarded to an individual, rather than an organization, told us of his efforts to naturalize areas in the Peninsula, using student labour ...that's what professor's are for! His slide presentation and information about C.W.I.P. grants, should inspire us again. After Sheila Piersol's native plantings at the Seaway property of Point Wellar Spit East last spring, using a C.W.I.P. grant, perhaps we should continue our efforts.

Carla Carlson

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On November 25, 1991, Barry Kent Mac Kay spoke to our club about birdwatching. He brought humour and new ideas to the club's already wide range of birders. Barry also showed concern for birders that chase their finds to exhaustion, thereby unknowingly harming the pursued birds. Barry is a writer and artist with wide experience in the fields of natural history, conservation, animal protection and communications. He is now working as a free-lance writer. Look for his column in the Toronto Star.

Nancy Wilson

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PROJECT FEEDERWATCH COUNTS BIRDS KILLED IN WINDOW COLLISIONS

What's ubiquitous, nearly invisible, and deadly to birds? The windows on your house. Birds often fly full tilt into unseen windows; some are killed, others are left stunned and vulnerable to predators. A recent study by Project FeederWatch provides insight as to just how many birds meet death by collision each year.

Project FeederWatch, launched in 1987, is a long term survey of the numbers and kinds of birds at backyard feeders in North America. Over 7,000 volunteers participated in 1990-91. Scientists at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York and Long Point Bird Observatory, Port Rowan, Ontario--the organizations that sponsor FeederWatch--use the data to track changes in resident songbird populations.

During the winter of 1989-90 Feederwatchers recorded the number of birds killed in window collisions at their homes. Nine percent of all FeederWatchers reported finding one or more window-killed birds, with an average of 2.0 deaths per home reporting kills.

Homes where window kills occurred typically had above-average numbers of bird feeders (and therefore large numbers of birds visiting). Window kill sites were usually located in rural areas close to woods and open water, and the yards had plenty of vegetation.

FeederWatchers documented 66 different species of birds killed in window strikes. Most were common feeder visitors: Pine Siskin, American Goldfinch, and Dark-eyed Junco together accounted for almost 44 percent of all window-killed birds.

The most frequently killed species died approximately in proportion to their abundance at feeders. A few species, however, seemed to be unusually unlucky. For example, Purple Finches make up 4.1 percent of all window-killed birds but accounted for only 1.8 percent of all the birds counted at FeederWatch sites.

All of the over-represented window-killed birds (Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Downy Woodpecker, Hermit Thrush, and Cedar Waxwing) are woodland or tree-loving species; thus, these birds are often present at the homes FeederWatch has identified as being prone to window strikes.

Most window strikes probably happen because a bird just isn't paying attention. FeederWatchers don't always witness the events leading up to a window strike. But in 16 percent of the window strikes reported, observers saw a panic-stricken bird escaping from a raptor. In an additional 1.5 percent of window kills, the victims had been chased by other birds or startled by loud noises or passing cars.

The exact number of birds killed in window strikes each year is difficult to determine. Predators and scavengers quickly remove stunned or dead birds; in this study, for example, some FeederWatchers saw hawks grab birds as they bounced off the window. But extrapolating from the 1989-90 study period, scientists estimate that 0.55 birds per FeederWatch home per year are killed in window collisions.

How does that compare to other window kill studies? To date, the best estimate of total annual window-strike deaths in the United States comes from Dr. Daniel Klem at Southern Illinois University. He believes that one to 10 birds are killed annually for every building in the country, for a total of 95 to 950 million victims. Our data suggest Klem's lower estimate may be the more realistic one.

Still, ninety-five million birds is one or two percent of the estimated total autumn population of birds in the United States--not a trivial number. We should strive to prevent window kills, particularly because the birds that die have been lured close to our houses by our feeders.

Recently, Klem also published the results of the first rigorous study of window strike-prevention devices: the hawk silhouettes, wind-socks, one-way films, and screens that are sold by many bird feeding supply outlets. Under Klem's experimental conditions, these commonly used deterrents did not reduce window strikes. The most effective window guard turned out to be a closely spaced grid of adhesive strips.

Few people, however, want to obscure their windows to this extent. FeederWatch participants who have had problems with window strikes recommend a less intrusive contraption: black plastic garden-protection netting mounted on frames installed about a foot away from the window. At one FeederWatch home where as many as seven collisions a day had occurred, bird mortality went down to a total of only nine over the entire winter after the netting was installed.

Project FeederWatch coordinator Dr. Erica H. Dunn, presented the data on window strikes at the 1991 meeting of the Association of Field Ornithologists; an article is being prepared for publication in an ornithology research journal.

You can be part of Project FeederWatch! To register for the 1992-93 season, send \$12 to:

Project FeederWatch
Cornell Lab of Ornithology
159 Sapsucker Woods Road
Ithaca, New York 14850

(Please make checks payable to Cornell Lab of Ornithology).

Birds killed at FeederWatch homes in winter, 1989-90. (Total number of birds=945)

SPECIES	% of all window kills	% of all birds seen
Pine Siskin	16.9	11.1
American Goldfinch	13.2	13.9
Dark-Eyed Junco	12.9	8.6
Northern Cardinal	8.8	4.1
Mourning Dove	5.5	6.4
House Finch	5.1	7.0
Purple Finch	4.1	1.8
Evening Grosbeak	3.7	3.6
Black-Capped Chickadee	3.2	3.3
Pine Grosbeak	2.1	0.6
White-Throated Sparrow	1.9	1.8
Common Redpoll	1.6	3.2
Downy Woodpecker	1.5	1.3
House Sparrow	1.5	6.3
Tufted Titmouse	1.1	1.6
Hermit Thrush	1.1	<0.5
Cedar Waxing	1.1	<0.5
Cassin's Finch	1.1	0.6
Blue Jay	1.0	2.5
American Robin	1.0	0.6
Red-winged Blackbird	0.6	2.1
Chipping Sparrow	0.3	2.3
Common Grackle	0.3	1.4
European Starling	0.1	2.2
43 other species	<1.0	<1.0 each

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During winter, snails often gather in groups in a sheltered spot to hibernate. They withdraw completely into their shell and seal the opening with a thick layer of mucus that hardens to form a waterproof plug.

THE ACTION NETWORK KIT

You have made a decision to take a simple but effective step towards fuller democratic participation. Politicians hear from industrial lobbyists all the time, but considerably less often from the public, except indirectly through elections. Because of this the ordinary citizen's chances of influencing specific policy decisions are very low. The key to change - to challenge detrimental policies - is education and organization. Canadians must act together to overcome policies shaped by the organization of political parties, corporations and powerful lobby groups.

As a constituent and consumer you have great clout when it comes to persuading government and corporate officials to follow sound environmental policies. Moreover, such officials generally pay more attention to organized efforts than to isolated ones. They know that if you have taken the time and energy to rally with others on an issue, you are probably going to follow through and publicize what they say and do about it.

LETTER WRITING TIPS

Letter-writing campaigns are a simple and effective way for Canadians to voice their opinions and have a hand in determining policies. When government and/or corporate officials receive enough letters on an issue they have to reevaluate their policies. They realize that the letters they receive are really a reflection of a much larger percentage of Canadian citizens who they have not heard from for one reason or another. Your views serve as feedback and let these officials know how popular their policies are. Many environmental policies have been reversed due to letters sent to ministers and corporate officials.

There is a technique to letter-writing and the guidelines recommended below have proven effective in letter-writing campaigns in the past. They are not law but rather good, effective tips.

TAKE TIME TO WRITE:

The main tip is to WRITE and to do so promptly. Quick action on your part can mean the difference between environmentally disastrous policies and protective ones.

BE COURTEOUS:

Do not write hostile or threatening letters. Hostile letters will alienate you from the person you have addressed. You want the person to whom you are writing to listen to your view. Therefore, show them that you are a responsible and conscientious adult whose opinion deserves to be recognized. This does not mean that you can not say that you are angry, but keep the statements restrained. Sarcasm and abuse are a waste of people's time and will give your letter little or no consideration.

Certain people have specific titles by which it is appropriate to address them. For example; A minister is "Honourable" but an ambassador is "Your Excellency".

BE BRIEF:

For most issues you should be able to fit everything on to one page. You can do this by following the simple rule of discussing only one issue in each letter.

Letters do not have to be formal, politicians are not worried about style, they want to know what you think. It is not necessary to include a lot of technical information on the issue. However, you should try to mention some or all of these (i.e. location, date, problem and/or legality, etc.). This will show the petitioned person that you are informed on the issue and will therefore not be easily dismissed with a simple or unacceptable reply.

DON'T BE JUDGMENTAL:

We must assume that whoever has done, or is doing something offensive has been, or is doing it out of ignorance and not malice. This means that it is our duty to inform them, not to chastise them. Avoid any comment on ethical, cultural or religious ideologies.

RECOMMEND ACTION:

Include a recommendation on how the problem addressed can be dealt with. It is important to mention this recommendation plus any other reasonable alternative you may think of. Recommend or ask for something specific such as a vote for a particular bill, a hearing, use of a cleaner technology, etc.

ASK THE PERSON FOR A REPLY:

Asking for a response forces the receiver of the letter to think carefully about and address the issue. If you receive a reply agreeing with your stand and showing the intention to take action, write back expressing your gratitude. However, most letters will not contain such a response. For example, it is not uncommon to receive a standard reply by way of a form letter. Don't let this discourage you because it means that there are lots of letters being sent in. If you get replies that are vague or inadequate then write back and tell the person "I am sorry but I feel that you did not answer my question adequately". You may also want to ask "What guarantees can you offer me that what you propose will be done?" Show that you are very concerned and will not let the issue be swept under the rug.

Most importantly, aim to attain an ongoing dialogue with the person addressed. We can all work together for a better world.

SEND COPIES ("C.C.") TO THE PARTIES INVOLVED:

To really apply pressure send copies to other concerned parties such as your local M.P. or M.P.P., the opposition parties' critics, the local newspaper editor, or all of the above! Let the person you have written know you have done this by typing "c.c:" and a list of the people who will receive copies at the bottom of your letter. They will know that all these people are watching what they do.

FOR URGENT ISSUES:

In especially urgent campaigns, send a PERSONAL OPINION MESSAGE (POM). It is a short message that can be sent to a public official through CNCP. The message arrives in the official's mailbox the next day. For last minute lobbying it is a very effective tool (although when time permits, the traditional letter is the most effective). Just call the CNCP Telecommunications office in your area and dictate a short message of 15 words or less costing only \$3.50 or 50 words or less at \$4.60. There is no charge for including your name and address.

EXTRAS:

- * If you prefer to send a telegram or have access to a fax machine please feel free to use these methods.
- * Letters to any Federal Member of Parliament (MP) care of the House of Commons, Ottawa, are free. This includes Brian Mulroney!
- * Write letters to the editor anytime you want to use a public forum to voice your opinions. These letters can be read by thousands of people, and it is not as hard to get published as you may think!

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