



The Peninsula Naturalist

Volume 185

Newsletter of the Peninsula Field Naturalists Club

February 1997

WELCOME WINTER!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings! It is an honour to be writing this new year's message as the new president of the PFN. This will be unexpected by most of you, since at the December meeting all members of the 1997 Executive except a president were elected. Following that meeting, I had discussions with AnaLorraine Stirling and Marcie Jacklin about the role of PFN president and, largely due to their encouragement and support, have agreed to take on the job.

I am a relative newcomer to the Niagara area (I have lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake for almost two years) and to the PFN. It was my interest in birding that first led me to the organization. Being so new to the club, I'm very much in a learning mode and look forward to meeting you and benefiting from your experience and expertise. The club has a rich and distinguished past and I will do my best to continue the work that has begun on a variety of community environmental issues and projects.

In any organization, good communication is vital to its well-being. I and the other members of the executive will do our best to keep you informed on issues and club matters. We also look forward to hearing your ideas about programs and outings, your nature and conservation activities and concerns.

If we haven't met already, please introduce yourself at meetings and outings. In the meantime, enjoy what winter has to offer -- the crisp, crunch of snow underfoot, the flashing colour of winter birds, the stark silhouettes of trees, the bending plumes of grasses in the wind.

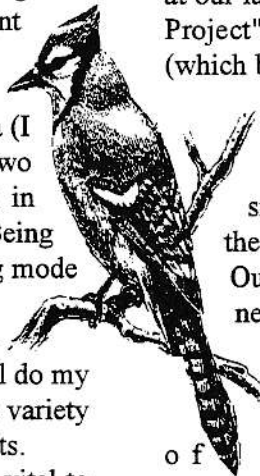
- Maggie Smiley -



INDOOR MEETINGS

Ontario Tree Atlas Project
Monday November 25, 1996

Rob Guthrie from the University of Guelph Arboretum spoke to a rather small and enthusiastic PFN crowd at our last indoor meeting about the "Ontario Tree Atlas Project". The coordinators of this ambitious project (which began in 1994) are looking for tree-loving volunteers who would like to participate in tree and shrub data collection for our area. This is an excellent opportunity to learn our local species since volunteers are trained in identifying even the toughest of species for their respective areas. Our PFN birder population could identify with the need to publish such an atlas, since the Breeding Bird Atlas of Ontario is noted to be a valuable resource for bird-lovers. Members would agree that much of the value of documentation of local species compositions, particularly rare or endangered species, is the foundation for habitat preservation in conservation efforts. If you are interested in participating in data collection for the Ontario Tree Atlas Project, contact: Rob Guthrie, University of Guelph Arboretum, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario, N1G 2W1.



WELCOME TO A NEW MEMBER

The Peninsula Field Naturalists would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new member:

Ted Dixon, St. Catharines

— CLUB NEWS —
GULL WALK

On December 7, 1996, a flock of roughly 30 great parka-backed birders congregated to search for gulls and other waterfowl, with Richard Knapton as leader. At Niagara-on-the-lake, we were rewarded with a birds-eye view of an oldsquaw duck. We made several landings along the Niagara river, ending our migration at Dufferin Island. The highlights of the day included an adult bald eagle, and California and Thayer's gulls. We were teased by a Carolina wren, which was heard, but not seen, on two occasions. A few lucky ducks spotted purple sandpipers. Although the day started out sunny, the clouds rolled in, and we considered moving the birding indoors to the School of Horticulture. We disbanded at 2p.m., with a total of 27 species. Many thanks to Richard for a successful outing.

- Katherine Stoltz -

HUNTINGTON BEACH STATE PARK

Would you believe that there is a top-ranked birding area just a few kilometres from a popular holiday destination for Canadians? My wife, Margaret, and I stumbled upon Huntington Beach State Park just south of Myrtle Beach, SC, in early November. This park is listed nineteenth on a list of the top fifty birding areas in North America. Myrtle Beach itself has a wide range of accommodations and the State Park has excellent camping facilities and is not crowded at that time of year. A daily entrance fee of \$3 is charged for those not camping in the park.

Bird observation areas in the park are all easily accessible and are within a few minutes' walk of each other. The varied habitats include a saltwater marsh, a freshwater marsh, sand dunes, a freshwater pond and, of course, a fine wide sand beach (virtually empty at that time of year) along the Atlantic Ocean. Both marshes can be observed from the paved causeway entrance and from two boardwalks extending out from shore. All three areas would be convenient for people of limited physical ability to access. They also provide excellent footing for spotting scopes.

The park staff put on three programs each day and birding walks are part of the program. When Margie and I were there, we were lucky to meet a recently-retired couple who were helping the park staff as volunteers. Sharon and Phil Turner had been birding almost every day since they retired and in that period of eighteen

months had gone from novices to experts. Birding has become their occupation. Their knowledge of the birds and the park's habitat made them excellent guides and we saw over 60 species, including 22 for our lifelist. Ducks abounded, many of the same which we observe at Long Point during migration in the spring. There were wood storks, clapper rails, black-bellied (not so in fall!) and piping plovers, greater and lesser yellowlegs, willets, dowitchers (not to mention sanderlings and dunlins!), yellow and black crowned night herons, common moorhens and common ground-doves (rare in SC), red-headed and red-breasted woodpeckers and a pair of soaring bald eagles that nest in nearby Brookgreen Gardens. Phil's scope gave us closeup views aplenty. There were great blue and tri-coloured herons, egrets and ibises galore. On the beach and in the marsh there were boat-tailed grackles, quite pretty birds, actually. The myrtle (yellow-rumped) warblers were ubiquitous - they were stragglers in St. Catharines until just before we left for the south. Almost as numerous were the northern mockingbirds and loggerhead shrikes. (At night we often heard barred owls in Ocean Lakes Campground in the town itself.) As well as the birds there were a dozen or so American alligators cruising the freshwater marsh in search of a meal of duck, although they more often basked in the sun on a small island close to the causeway. Food is less of a priority at that time of year as their metabolism slows down.

Myrtle Beach itself provides many forms of entertainment and there are several outlet malls to occupy oneself between birding expeditions. As well, there are other birding areas within an hour or two, including Swamp Gardens at the Magnolia Plantation (Charleston) where we spent the better part of a cool Saturday with only a handful of other visitors who, with the exception of a Swiss couple, missed much of what was there! Anhingas intrigued us there and three wood ducks were a real thrill. In the late fall hotel rates are quite reasonable, such as an efficiency at the Captain's Quarters, which one couple we met was renting for a little more than \$400 per month U. S. Camping fees in the State Park and in town are about \$17 U.S./night. It is well worth the two-day trip drive to Myrtle Beach, a destination we had written off after a visit more than twenty summers ago when our children were small and the beaches were packed and the town crowded. *Now* it is on our list of "must return to."

Information on Myrtle Beach is readily available on the internet and there is an excellent birding home page at birder.com.

- Wayne Berridge -

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT 1996
(St. Catharines, Ontario)

Date of Count : December 22, 1996 from 5:15 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
Description of Area : Seven and one half mile radius centered at 19th Street and 8th Avenue, Louth Township
 (43 07'N 79 22'W)
Number of Participants : In field - 43 in 13 Parties (non-owling); At Feeders - 4 Total Number 47.
Distance Traveled : By Automobile - 402 Miles, By Foot - 37 Miles
Total Time Observing : 108 Hours (75 Hours by Automobile, 33 Hours by Foot)
Temperature : -4 C - +2 C
Weather Conditions : Cloudy, foggy, misty; snow to light rain; moderate winds.

Red-throated Loon	2	Ruffed Grouse	1	Golden-crowned Kinglet	22
Common Loon	3	Wild Turkey	19	Ruby-crowned Kinglet *	1
Horned Grebe	4	Bonaparte's Gull	245	Eastern Bluebird	26
Double-crested Cormorant	10	Ring-billed Gull	1106	American Robin	79
Great Blue Heron	2	Herring Gull	368	Gray Catbird *	2
Mute Swan	* 6	Great Black-backed Gull	101	Northern Mockingbird lo	40
Canada Goose	362	Rock Dove	169	Cedar Waxwing	86
Wood Duck	c 1	Mourning Dove	721	Northern Shrike	3
Green-winged Teal	4	Eastern Screech Owl	5	European Starling	3566
American Black Duck	29	Great Horned Owl	1	Northern Cardinal	278
Mallard	546	Snowy Owl	1	American Tree Sparrow	673
Gadwall	5	Long-eared Owl	1	Chipping Sparrow *	1
Greater Scaup	lo 2	Belted Kingfisher	5	Song Sparrow	40
Oldsquaw	lo 155	Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	Swamp Sparrow	2
White-winged Scoter	11	Downy Woodpecker	60	White-throated Sparrow	12
Common Goldeneye	110	Hairy Woodpecker	17	White-crowned Sparrow	9
Bufflehead	104	Norther Flicker	16	Dark-eyed Junco	404
Hooded Merganser	56	Blue Jay	378	Red-winged Blackbird	2
Common Merganser	545	American Crow *	6150	Brown-headed Cowbird	2
Red-breasted Merganser	133	Black-capped Chickadee	444	House Finch lo	398
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	Tufted Titmouse h	15	American Goldfinch	253
Cooper's Hawk	5	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	House Sparrow	1972
Northern Goshawk	1	White-breasted Nuthatch	25	Total No. Of Species	75
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	Brown Creeper	9	Total No. Of Individuals	19,959
Red-tailed Hawk	107	Carolina Wren	7		
Merlin	* 1	Winter Wren	1		
American Kestrel	lo 13				

* Notable c Count Week lo Low h High

Participants in the Field :

John Bakker, Bouwe Bergsma, John Black, Colin Burns, Paul Chapman, Susan Chapman, Everett Daboll, Mary Deer, Rob Dobos, Ben Escott, Christopher Escott, Denys Gardiner, Peter Graham, Mildred Heatherton, Marcie Jacklin, Myra Kennedy, Nabil Khairallah, Frank Kingdon, Richard Knapton, Bill Mathers, Kevin McLaughlin, George Melvin, Bob Millman, Marg Millman, David Moore, Karina Mullaly, Rob Parker, Jim Phelps, Gary Pieterse, Kayo Roy, Cathy Sanderson, Lucy Sano, Karen Schneider, Maggie Smiley, Deborah Smith, John Stevens, Katherine Stoltz, Paul Summerskill and Bud Walsh.

Participants at the Feeders:

Roy Atamanuk, June Green, June Moore and Doris Stringer.

Compiler:

Richard Knapton and Marcie Jacklin. The Compilers would like to give special thanks to Ann Marie Pieterse, Mildred Heatherton, Kay Smith, Joyce Blakey, Bob and Marg Millman, Paul and Tina Summerskill, Anna Lorraine Stirling, Maggie Smiley, June Corey, Mary Deer, Karina Mullaly, Myra Kennedy and the following wineries: Stonechurch, Konzelman and Vineland Estates for their generous donations.

WAINFLEET BOG

The Wainfleet Bog Advisory Committee is in full gear to formulate a comprehensive management plan for the bog. This plan is to be submitted to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority by November 30, 1997. The Committee will be considering biological, hydrological, and land use issues. Anyone who is interested in sharing PFN representation at these meetings are asked to contact Ana Lorraine Stirling (957-1048).

CAROLINIAN CANADA LANDOWNER CONTACT PROGRAM (1996)

The Carolinian Canada Landowner Contact Program was initiated in 1987 by various agencies, in an attempt to address the difficulties encountered in preserving natural areas in Southern Ontario. The focus of this program was (and still is) the promotion of private land stewardship directed at those landowners who possess significant natural features on their properties. Landowners are offered information concerning these special features on their land, and are encouraged to enter into a stewardship agreement (a voluntary, handshake agreement) by which they agree to protect the property to the best of their ability.

With the aid of various funding sources, the Carolinian Canada Landowner Contact Program (within Regional Niagara) was originally conducted by the Peninsula Field Naturalists from September, 1994 to March, 1995. Areas completed in that time period included the Fonthill Sandhill Valleys, Jordan Valley and the Willoughby Clay Plain Forest. As of March 31, 1995, two additional areas within the project remained to be

completed; the Caistor-Canborough Slough Forest and Point Abino. Additional funding allowed for the completion of these two sites (and hence the project) in 1996.

The 1996 portion of the project may be considered a success. All stewardship agreements negotiated in both sites from 1987-89 were retained. As well, five new stewardship agreements were negotiated in Pt. Abino, seven landowners in this area agreed to the designation of stewardship friendly (i.e. landowner possesses a conservation ethic but does not necessarily wish to enter into an agreement). As such, the total acreage within these two sites considered to be protected as of 1996 is 2,125.4 acres (86.7% of site) in Caistor-Canborough and 295.18 acres (69.0% of site) in Point Abino.

- Susan Jonsson-Ninniss MSc. -

Landowner Contact Representative (1996)

Five landowners who negotiated stewardship agreements in 1996 are as follows:

Janet & David Butsch
Herbert & Maureen Heimerl
Mary Louise K. Munschauer
Edwin & Barbara Roseberry (Jr.)
Rose & Henry Nowak

Those landowners who received stewardship awards in 1995 ceremony are as follows:

Peter and Stacey Headey-Komenda
Roberta Schmidt
Casey and Susan Keus
David & Cindy McDougall
Tim Ripper
Geurt & Irma VandenDool
Andrew & Tony Heim
Jeff & Nelli VanDenElzen
John & Vera de Laat
Joseph & Eleonore Huibers
Josip Kulhanek

SEASONAL POSITIONS IN NATURAL HERITAGE EDUCATION AVAILABLE AT ALGONQUIN PROVINCIAL PARK

Natural Heritage Education involves a variety of programs and facilities designed to help visitors understand and appreciate the natural and human history of a park. The park naturalist staff in Algonquin Park consists of about seven positions. The normal period of employment is from mid-June to Labour Day. Accommodation

and meals are available at low cost in a Park staffhouse. All living and working facilities are smoke-free environments.

Preference is given to qualified applicants who will be potentially available in following years (such as students in their last years of high school, or the first one or two years of university). When an employee's work is satisfactory, summer employment in Natural Heritage Education often continues in subsequent years.

Park Naturalist:

* These positions involve the presentation of evening slide talks, conducted walks, children's programs and special events.

* Successful applicants usually have extensive natural history knowledge, and demonstrated communications skills.

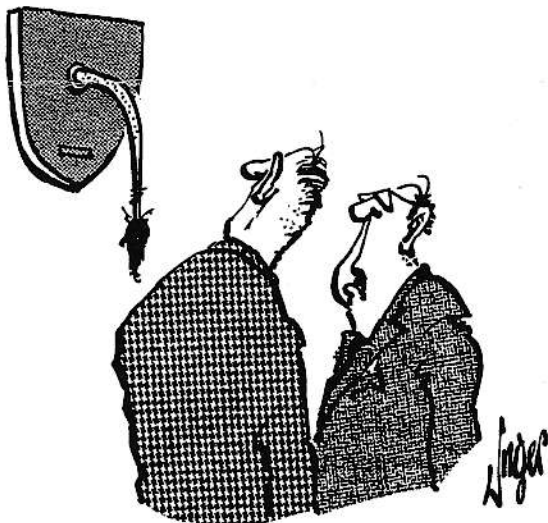
* The anticipated base rate of pay will be approximately \$15.00/hour.

Requests for Personal Experience Sheets (to be completed and sent to us along with your resume) and/or additional information should be directed to:

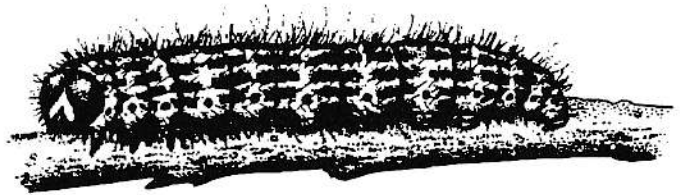
Park Naturalist
Ministry of Natural Resources
Box 219
Whitney, Ontario
K0J 2M0

Telephone: 613-637-2828 Fax: 613-637-2138

FINAL APPLICATION DATE: February 28, 1997



"I don't know what it was, but it sure could run."



? ? THE CATERPILLAR ? ?

It is spring, and there are 12 hours of daylight. A caterpillar climbs a vertical wall at a speed of 1 foot per hour during the day, and then sleeps for the 12 hours of darkness, during which it slides downward at 1/2 foot per hour. The wall is 48 feet high. How long does it take the caterpillar to reach the top of the wall?

Answer: It takes 6.5 days. Beginning at sunrise on the first day, when the caterpillar is resting on the ground, it will reach, by sunset of the first day, 12 feet; by each successive sunset, 18, 24, 30, 36, 42, and 48 feet.

TURN YOUR IDEAS INTO ACTION TO PRESERVE WILDLIFE DIVERSITY AND HABITATS

Protecting and preserving nature is everyone's responsibility. But it's a responsibility no one should take on alone. We need to work together, sharing ideas and initiatives, in order to safeguard the environment for future generations.

At Interprovincial Pipelines (IPL), we take our responsibility to the environment seriously. But we need your help. Do you have ideas on how to protect the environment? Tell us, and you could qualify for a grant up to \$5,000 through our Community-Based Environmental Initiative Program (EIP). While we're especially interested in protecting wildlife, projects that help preserve environmental quality - such as tree planting, energy conservation, or recycling - will also be considered.

Applications will be accepted until March 31, 1997.

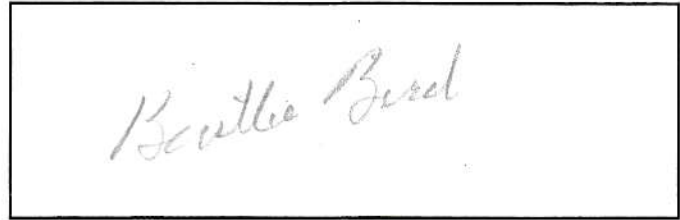
To request an application form or for more information, contact:

Program Coordinator Environmental Initiative Program
Interprovincial Pipe Line Inc.,
P.O. Box 398,
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2J9
Phone: (403) 420-5306 Fax: (403) 420-8253

or visit the Interprovincial Pipe Line Office nearest you.



To:



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The Peninsula Field Naturalist Club

A non-profit organization started in 1954 with the objectives to preserve wildlife and protect its habitat; to promote public interest in and a knowledge of the natural history of the area; and to promote, encourage and cooperate with organizations and individuals having similar interests and objectives. Affiliated with the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and the Canadian Nature Federation.

P.O.Box 23031, 124 Welland Ave,
St. Catharines, Ont.
L2R 7P6

The Peninsula Naturalist Newsletter

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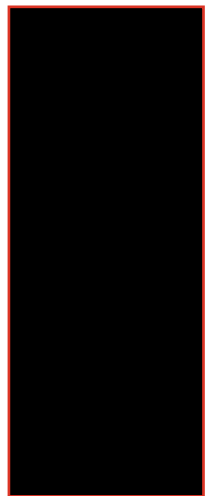
The editor welcomes written articles or artwork on any natural history topic. Handwritten articles will be accepted, but if possible, please submit typewritten articles, and/or computer disks containing your file. All pieces of artwork will be accepted, although line drawings are preferable, as they are better suited to photocopying. New ideas and constructive criticism are always welcome.

Editorial Staff: Lorne Stobbs, Ana Lorraine Stirling, Angie Leahy

Labelling/Mailing: June Corey & Kay Smith

1997 PFN EXECUTIVE

President	Maggie Smilie
Vice President	William Patterson
Past President	Ana-Lorraine Stirling
Secretary	Eric Waldron
Treasurer	Catherine Smith
Membership	June Corey
Director	Mildred Heatherton
Director	Alan Shaw
Director	Barb West
Director	Nancy Luft
Director	Richard Knapton
Director	Maggie Smiley
Newsletter Editor	Lorne Stobbs



--Please send submissions to the above address--

Deadlines for submissions:

Aug. 1, Nov. 1, Jan. 1, Mar. 1

PENINSULA FIELD NATURALISTS

BALANCE SHEET

As of December 31, 1996

<u>ASSETS</u>		<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
Bank Balance	\$4569.30	Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation (Wainfleet Bog)	\$2000.00
PFN Conservation Fund	4257.00		<u>2000.00</u>
Badge Inventory	141.00		
Decal Inventory	53.20		\$2000.00
PFN Coffee Mugs	128.00		
Bird Atlases	90.00		
(Estimated Value)			
Display Board	250.00		
Camera & Equipment	250.00		
Projector	75.00	<u>MEMBERS' EQUITY</u>	
Photocopier	5.00	Members' Capital	7928.50
Name Tag Board	25.00		<u>7928.50</u>
3 Coffee Urns	75.00		
Coffee Mugs	10.00		
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>\$9928.50</u>	<u>LIABILITIES & MEMBERS' EQUITY</u>	<u>\$9928.50</u>

Catherine Smith
Catherine Smith
Treasurer

Audited by:

Tina Summerskill
Tina Summerskill

PENINSULA FIELD NATURALISTS

Statement of Income & Expenses
January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1996

INCOME

Membership Fees	\$2097.00
Official Donations	377.00
Donations (Grantham Lion's Club)	250.00
Pub Night Draw	38.00
G.S.T. Rebate	44.05
Pot Luck Raffle	182.00
Ticket Sales	321.00
Bank Interest	65.34
FON Camp Rebate	390.00
Baillie Birdathon	107.85
Sale of Bird Atlas	10.00

TOTAL INCOME

\$3882.24

EXPENDITURES

Room Rental	\$608.86
Honoraria	280.00
Speaker's Expenses	64.97
Pot Luck Expenses	40.30
Photocopies	33.95
Postage	524.98
Stationery	75.50
P.O. Box	69.55
Cheques	14.42
Phone	75.00
Newsletter Printing	407.56
Publicity	214.95
Liability Insurance	260.00
FON Camp	390.00
Nature Conservancy	70.00
FON Membership	150.00
Bird Atlas	100.00
Projector Equipment	45.99
Landowners Contact Program	3385.22
School Award	100.00
Miscellaneous	65.45

TOTAL EXPENDITURES

\$6976.70

NET LOSS

(\$3094.46)

Catherine Smith
Catherine Smith
Treasurer

Audited by:

Tina Summerskill
Tina Summerskill