



The Peninsula Naturalist

Newsletter of The Peninsula Field Naturalists' Club

Volume 253
Spring 2022

New Members

- Mary Anne Goldsborough
- Shirley Chambers
- Please tell your family and friends about PFN. We love new members and new friends!

Upcoming Meetings

- All monthly meetings will be held online via Zoom until further notice.
- Updates will be posted on the Peninsula Field Naturalists Facebook page and Zoom codes will be sent by email.
- Apr. 25 @ 7:30 pm
Carolinian Canada: TBA

Upcoming Outings

- Earth Day Walk at Malcolmson Eco-Park - Saturday, April 23 @ 9:30 am.
- Wildflower Walk at Louth C.A. - Sunday, May 1 @ 10:00 am.
- Evening Bird Walk at Cherie Rd Park - Tuesday, May 10 @ 6:00 pm.
- Bird Walk at Malcolmson Eco-Park - Saturday May 14 @ 8:30 am.
- Watch for more announcements soon on our website, on Facebook and in your E-mail.



A Message From the President

Since my last comments on urban sprawl and the preservation of woodlots, there appears to be no reduction in the gradient of the slippery slope.

The Irish Grove Woodlot, Thundering Waters Forest and Waverly Woods were discussed in Volume 246 of The Peninsula Naturalist in November 2017. Fort Erie's creek/forest/wetland complex (Frenchman's Creek), provincially significant wetlands in Welland and a frog pond in Thorold can be added to the list. It is a ponderous chain. Observing the cutting that has recently occurred in the Thundering Waters Forest while driving along the Chippawa Parkway is disheartening.

But I feel my spirits lifted when groups such as Community Voices of Fort Erie and Biodiversity and Climate Action Committee Niagara raise concerns and inform citizens of Niagara of the

environmental and historical importance of the remaining woodlots and wetlands in this region. Marcie Jacklin, recipient of the 2021 Canadian Wildlife Federation's Stan Hodgkiss Outdoors Person of the Year Award and Liz Benneian, Director of A Better Niagara and founder of Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara, are champions for the environment. Community advocates do make a difference.

The senseless destruction of woodlots and provincially significant wetlands must stop. However, responsible development is possible in the 21st century. If you have not already, I ask that you add your signature to the over 9,100 individuals that have already signed the Save Waverly Woods in Fort Erie petition. Together, we advocate, educate and participate in conserving natural resources and green spaces.

Bob Highcock, President



The Irish Grove Woodlot in fall. © Jean Hampson

A Visitor at Dufferin Islands

by Ken Smith

If you had been to Dufferin Islands in Niagara Falls last fall, you might have spotted a duck with a cool slicked back haircut and bright pink socks. This Black-bellied Whistling-Duck had been visiting since at least August of 2021.

According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks usually prefer to stay in Central and South America and the southern coast of Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. However, the map of eBird sightings shows a scattering of individuals seen all across eastern North America. Generally, they do not migrate, although some individuals living in the Southern US will fly a short distance to Mexico for the winter. The Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks are increasing in number and expanding their range because they do well in habitats altered by humans. They like our agricultural fields, golf courses and parks.

The Cornell Lab website says they usually look for cavities in trees to use as a nest. They don't usually build a nest; instead, they'll just lay their eggs on whatever material happens to be there. Sometimes the female will sneak her egg into the nest of other Black-bellied Whistling-Duck females. The fact that they prefer cavities means that they do like nest boxes. However, there's probably no point in building a nest box for our visitor, considering they don't have a partner.



© Jean Hampson

Is our visitor just a lost soul doomed to be alone, or are they the scout for species expansion soon to arrive? We won't know for a while, but I am surprised that the winter hasn't scared the duck back to the Southern USA. If you get a chance to look them up online, check out their calls and pictures in flight. Their calls sound to me more like a finch species than a duck. In flight, they have a hunched back, which along with their eye-ring, makes

Dufferin Islands *continued*

them look like Marty Feldman in Young Frankenstein. But, despite the Marty Feldman appearance, they are stunning-looking birds. You have to love that incredible haircut, bright pink socks, and the red beak with blue at the tip.

Editor's Note: At the end of January 2022, Milagro, the name people gave the duck (Spanish for miracle), was captured and taken to a rehab facility due to injuries from the ice and temperatures. Even with all the human intervention, Milagro passed away.

A Greener Future

by Janet Damude

Rochelle Byrne was first interested in and studied fashion. However, she had grown up in a small community in cottage country, where she had developed an appreciation for nature, leading to her decision to go back to school for Environmental Science.

In 2014 she founded 'A Greener Future.' It is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to clean up the lakes, collect data on what they gathered and study the data to see where litter is coming from. The organization has two main programs, "Love your Lakes" and "Butt Blitz." They have four full-time staff and twenty core volunteers. The staff manages the volunteers, analyzes and studies the data, and arranges insurance and permits. They also have had 800 other volunteers, and they find that many groups want to participate, including high schools, for their volunteer requirements.

"Love your Lakes" is to clean up the litter around the lakes, and "Butt Blitz" raises awareness about cigarette butts. Cigarette filters do not compost and are toxic to the earth. Therefore, they should be disposed of safely instead of being thrown anywhere. When collected, there is an organization that makes the butts into park benches.

Rochelle lives in the Oshawa area, so they started by picking up litter on the Lake Ontario shoreline. There was litter everywhere. Creeks and rivers carry inland litter to the shore. Lake Ontario is the last lake of the flow among the great lakes, so it receives the most debris. It also has a higher surrounding population, so it was easy to find people eager to help. Municipalities clean up some areas using paid employees, and many volunteer organizations do their part.

Studying the data, A Greener Future found that most litter is plastic. It consisted of shingles, food wrappers, straws, zip lock bags, plastic caps, shell casings, plastic bottles, etc. So it is not all intentionally discarded but

still makes litter. They also noted where the litter was coming from: overflowing garbage pails or ones without lids and wind disbursement. In addition, raw sewage was found, probably from older treatment plants. So we must watch that we do not flush toxins down our toilets. Rochelle also stressed how hard foam is to discard, which does not recycle well, and she felt it should be banned and a substitute found. Another big problem is "nerdles". They are plastic pellets used in manufacturing, frequently spilled, and they are hazardous to wildlife and challenging to pick up and remove from the shorelines.

The programs were put on hold during the pandemic, so Rochelle decided to raise awareness and money with "Paddle Against Plastic." She spent eighteen days of July on a paddle boat around Lake Ontario. She stayed with friends and camped as she travelled from Kingston towards Hamilton and finished in Niagara-on-the-lake. Due to the weather, it took the whole month of July. However, she saw so much garbage in the lake that it made her want to do even more. Unfortunately, it is hard to develop a solution to all the litter that reappears even after a clean-up.

A lively discussion followed the presentation. Rochelle spoke of her family's lifestyle changes to reduce their plastic products and packaging use. Viewers were anxious to learn what they could do, so she recommended simple actions such as to keep learning by reading and watching documentaries, taking part by picking up garbage when you walk and supporting by donating money and volunteering.

She also recommended taking small steps at a time to reduce the amount of plastic waste you contribute.

We can all learn. I'm sure Rochelle Byrne's presentation inspired us to help clean up the environment and reduce our waste.

Tracks and Scat

by Ken Smith

Ever since I watched Kimberly Adriaansen's presentation about Tracks and Scat (or Pawprints and Poop as she likes to call it), I've been thinking about how many signs of life I've overlooked while I've been searching for birds. I'm sure that I've stepped over (and on) lots of interesting discoveries while my focus has been up in the trees.

Ms. Adriaansen has a Bachelor's in Biology and a Master's degree in Environmental Interpretation, and she works at the Tiff Nature Preserve in Buffalo, New York. The area where Tiff Nature preserve is located was originally a dairy farm and stockyard owned by George Tiff. Over 100 years ago, it became a shipping and railway centre, then a city dump. Finally, it was abandoned and became overgrown with invasive species such as European Buckthorn. Currently, it is a 264-acre nature preserve with five miles of trails and staff offer guided tours and school field trips.

Restoration programs have helped remove invasive plant species and replace them with natives making it an ideal location for wildlife, including the Blue-spotted Salamander.

A small ruler and a book on animal tracks are the main items that Ms. Adriaansen said would be useful when searching for signs of animals. Other items she said to consider are a magnifying glass, a camera, and a journal. She suggested that we search for tracks and scat like a mystery novel or like telling a story. For example, a set of talon prints with wing prints on either side in the snow might be from a bird of prey trying to catch a mouse or rabbit. Other tracks nearby might reveal more of the story.

In addition to looking for pawprints and poop, Ms. Adriaansen told us to watch for animal-made shelters, chew marks, body coverings, and food remains such as

Tracks and Scat *continued*

owl pellets and squirrel middens. She pointed out that getting kids to look for clues and figure out stories is a great way to get them interested in nature. It is rare to see a fox or deer during most of our hikes, but clues of their existence are everywhere if you look for them. Kids love mysteries and searching for clues. As Ms. Adriaansen pointed out, this allows them to become the animal and figure out what happened.

If you need some help with learning to identify scat, then the website Acorn Naturalists sells models of different animal poop. You could put the models all over your house to be ready the next time you're hiking in the woods.

Following this excellent presentation, I will remember to look down sometimes instead of always looking up.

Honouring Life in Alert Bay

Win Laar gave this outstanding presentation after she, her husband Kal and daughter Naomi visited son Dean and his friend Hayley in Alert Bay.

Alert Bay is on Cormorant Island, just off the eastern shore of northern Vancouver Island. It is in the ocean channel stretching between Vancouver Island and the BC coast. The trip took them to five airports, three plane rides, three car trips, and finally, Dean met them for the ferry ride in rain and fog. They had arrived.



The Big House.

© Win Laar

Alert Bay is a small community with a vibrant First Nation population, the 'Namgis, who live in harmony and share their culture. They admired the burial ground marked with totem poles and learned the stories associated with other totem carvings on an initial walking tour. They admired the 'Namgis' Big House because of the vast cedar construction and the exterior artwork. Inside surrounded by seating, was a large area with a fire pit and a huge drum. The world's tallest totem pole drew their attention. The base tree is 163 feet with a 10-foot tree top extension.

Later they walked along the coast and found a man smoking salmon. He explained that he was preparing for a potlatch the next day at the Big House and had a lot of cooking to do. Dean, who is a chef, offered to help.



'Namgis elder smoking salmon for the potlatch.
© Win Laar

They got a call from Dean to come to the Big House in the morning. They were allowed to witness a 'Namgis Wiping of the Tears ceremony. The ceremony was women honouring the lives of loved ones who had died in the last year, and no photos were allowed.

On the boat Seasmoke, they took a whale watching tour in the afternoon. Everyone wears a bright orange flotation suit. They learned how tails, markings and calls could identify different whale species and different individual whales. Interestingly a blow from a whale is a big breath that warms in the lungs, and when exhaled, the moisture condenses, appearing like a fog. They were lucky and saw Orcas and Humpback whales.

The next day Naomi and Dean were in a kayak race. Naomi got a lesson with a kayak in the vegetable garden because kayaks are slightly different from canoes. Naomi

by Janet Damude



Totem in burial ground.

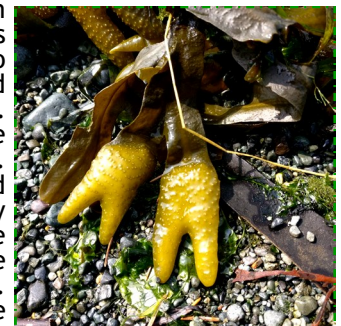
© Win Laar

and Dean dressed in appropriate costumes, so Win and Kal, the cheerleaders, also dressed up. The race has entrants from all across Canada and USA who paddle all around Cormorant Island, about four kilometres. The first three to finish received a monetary prize, but everyone received a gift. Win enjoyed seeing the historical dugout canoe carved from a vast cedar and beautifully painted. While the race was on, Kal and Win had a picnic lunch on the wharf and then walked along the coast to

enjoy the colours of rocks and plants.

An enjoyable time was spent visiting Telegraph Cove. It's named for a coastal telegraph station built a century ago and the end of the telegraph wire from Campbell River. The OrcaLab located here monitors whale sounds from the ocean. A pleasant visit was to the Whale Interpretive Centre. The area has lovely restaurants, and a picnic lunch and a coastal walk completed the day.

Another day Hayley took them out in her motorboat. She has an immense responsibility to avoid the whales, logs and other safety monitoring. While she remained alert, the family enjoyed the scenery. They saw Harbour Seals and one Stellar Sea Lion, and they examined the kelp in the ocean closely. Kelp is algae and commercially valuable. Along the shore were American Oystercatchers, Black Turnstones, Bald Eagles and a mother Black-tailed Deer with two young.



Vesicled Rockweed

© Win Laar

Another place they visited was Alert Bay Ecological Park, or Gator Gardens, as the locals refer to it. It did not look attractive. A salmon company had needed fresh water, so they dammed the stream in the swamp, which killed the tall old trees. The trees had been many stories tall and now were broken and down. The dead trees looked very spooky, covered with Witch's-hair Lichen. Bald Eagles and Ravens were numerous, with ravens making many of their numerous calls. Win also saw Bunchberry, Huckleberry, Coral Fungus, and the huge trees' artistic remains.

Honouring Life in Alert Bay *continued*

Alert Bay does not have a large population now. Fifty years ago, it was jam-packed with fishing boats, mining, logging and had a vibrant nightlife. The 'Namgis had built wealth on logging, fishing and mining copper. Now, most of the economy is tourism. Cruise ships dispense large crowds to shop, visit museums, go whale-watching and enjoy the small, interesting town. Tourists may think many of the Totem poles look neglected. However, First Nations people feel that when the totem poles fall, the honoured are free to go to their ancestors.

The potlatch was a ceremony for funerals, marriages, and for the wealthy to redistribute their wealth. In 1881 the government banned the potlatch, and a lot of the ceremonial gear was taken by private collectors and museums worldwide. Some of it is now being returned. Alert Bay has built a cultural centre called U'mista, the "return of something important."

A lot can be learned from this talk. Thank you Naomi, for contributing and teaching and Win for agreeing to share.

Freshwater Mussels

by Ken Smith

If you would like to contribute to science by making new discoveries, Sarah Richer suggests looking at freshwater mussels. In her talk on February 28 to the Peninsula Field Naturalists, she said that for many of the forty-two species native to Ontario, we do not yet know their lifespan, maximum size, age when they reach sexual maturity, and preferred host species. Observations by citizen scientists and iNaturalist sightings could help us learn more about these interesting and vitally essential animals. She also pointed out that the number of native species is a reasonable number to recognize and memorize (much easier than the 270 species of birds or 2797 species of plants).

Ms. Richer began her talk by explaining that mussels are part of the phylum Mollusca, including snails and slugs. Within this group of squishy and soft animals are the bivalves, including mussels. They are flattened and have a shell connected by a hinge. A single mussel can filter 40 litres of water per day which is why Ms. Richer refers to them as the 'Britas of the Great Lakes.' In addition to filtering the water, Ms. Richer said they are also crucial to ecosystems because they consume bacteria and algae.

Ms. Richer also described how mussels are more interesting than just shells sitting at the bottom of lakes quietly filtering. Mussels spend part of their lives as parasites of fish. A female mussel will disperse its larvae

by spraying them into the fish's face. The larvae will take nutrients from the fish until eventually they detach themselves and drop off. They will then start to grow and ultimately filter in their new location. Scientists believe that the larvae are merely irritants to the fish and not deadly.

Most of the mussels prefer to use a specific fish species. Ms. Richer explained some of the exciting tricks that the mussels use to attract the correct fish species. For example, some mussels can inflate themselves to look like leeches, crayfish, or smaller prey species of fish. These displays will lure in the desired species, which the mussel can then spray with its larvae.

Sadly, life is very tough for Ontario's native mussel species. Ms. Richer told us about the takeover of zebra and quagga mussels. As well, our native mussel species do not do well in water bodies surrounded by pavement or contaminated with pollution since they need other lifeforms to survive (such as fish to carry their larvae and bacteria and algae to feed on).

Overall it was a delightful and fun presentation. I'm almost positive it is the first presentation to the Naturalists Club where the phrase 'knocking boots' came up during the discussion. I will be keeping an eye out for mussels whenever I'm near the water.

A Walk at Mountain Locks Park

by Doug Gillard

On October 17, seven of us met for an outing around Mountain Locks Park. The club thought it was time to



© Bob Highcock

try to have a few outings in the Fall, and with COVID in mind, we limited the number of people and encouraged social distancing for the duration of the excursion.

There is a lot to see in this park. I'm interested in local history, so I was looking forward to visiting here again. Mountain Locks Park contains locks 15 - 21 of the

Second Welland Canal, and the locks are very well preserved. Locks 16 - 21 are also known as "Neptune's Staircase" because they are in a straight line, climbing the escarpment. After crossing Glendale Avenue, we came to lock 15, the first lock in the park. Looking at this lock, it's unbelievable to think the boats back in that time were so small. The Second Welland Canal was



© Bob Highcock

only in operation from 1845 to 1887 because the boats were being made bigger and bigger. When they planned the Fourth Welland Canal, they made the locks huge, thinking boats would never get that big, but look at the ships now, and they barely fit into the locks. As we walk along the wide path parallel to Bradley Street, we pass the only remaining Lock Tenders house dating back to when the canal was in operation 150 years ago.

This park is always an excellent place to see birds, and today wasn't a disappointment. Our list for the morning consisted of a Great Blue Heron, seven Turkey Vultures, a Red-tailed Hawk, two Eastern Phoebes, five Golden-crowned Kinglets and several other birds.



Eastern Phoebe.

© Jean Hampson

A good part of the lovely morning was still left when we finished our outing at Mountain Locks Park, so we went to Niagara College Ponds and then to the Outlet Mall Pond. There were 24 Northern Shovelers and 70 Green-

A Walk at Mountain Locks Park *continued*

winged Teals at the Niagara College ponds, which was great to see, along with many other birds.

We only had a few outings in the Fall of 2021, and as

COVID concerns heightened, we had to put more restrictions on them. We need to socialize and get out into nature, but we also need to do our best to remain healthy. So, hopefully, we can plan more outings soon.

Hiking the Jordan Valley

by Bob Highcock



© Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

On the sunny morning of October 24, 2021, eight members of the Peninsula Field Naturalists enjoyed a walk along Twenty Mile Creek in the Jordan Valley.

Our group hiked along a wooded trail to reach the

pond that can be seen from the village of Jordan above. People browsing in the shops might not know that the pond is used as a rest stop for migrating waterfowl and can yield a few surprises too. Our group had great looks at a Pied-billed Grebe, a first for eBird at this hot spot.

We continued walking on the trail between the pond and the creek, observing finches, sparrows, woodpeckers and chickadees. At the south end of the pond, one can walk up the stairs to the village or carry on towards Jordan Hollow. We carried on but chose to stop along Twenty



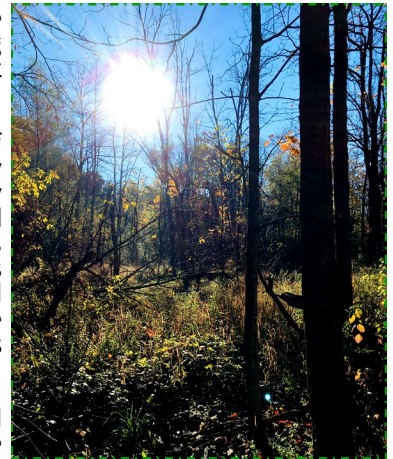
© Jean Hampson and Bob Highcock

Mile Creek before returning to the parking lot on Twenty-First Street.

Regardless of the time of year, there can be many sights on the Twenty Valley Trail. It's a good spot for spring migrants and flowers, dragonflies in the summer and counting birds during the St. Catharines Christmas Bird Count.

Bird species observed during the walk include

Mallard, Pied-billed Grebe, Mourning Dove, Ring-billed Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, American Robin, Cedar Waxwing, House Finch, American Goldfinch, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird and Yellow-rumped Warbler.



© Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

Bring Back the Brookies Tree Planting *By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock*

On the day before Halloween, club members Jean, Carol, Doug and Bob, along with representatives from the NPCA and other volunteers, helped with a tree planting on private property along the St. John's branch of Twelve Mile Creek.

Kerry Kennedy, the Project Coordinator of the Niagara Chapter of Trout Unlimited Canada, organized the event. This restoration project aims to establish a canopy cover that will create and maintain a healthy Twelve Mile Creek and suitable habitat for Brook Trout.



Carol Horvat and Doug Gillard planting a tree.
© Kerry Kennedy

Before commencing with the tree planting, the volunteers learned about Brook Trout by playing a round of life cycle frisbee. We discovered that the trout need gently flowing oxygenated water with cool temperatures. Native trees, shrubs and

flowering plants will help keep the creek cool and prevent erosion. It was muddy and damp work, but the number of volunteers and soft, wet ground enabled us to complete the task quickly.

As a bonus, a calling Pileated Woodpecker flew over the group during the tree planting.

It is beautiful to see property owners getting involved in the restoration, and they deserve thanks for allowing this restoration project to occur. They deserve an additional thank you for providing cookies and coffee afterwards.

The PFN looks forward and will be happy to continue volunteering at future restoration projects in Niagara. Bring back the brookies!



The group of volunteers.

© Kerry Kennedy

In Search of the Purple Sandpiper

By Barb West

November 7, 2021, was a gorgeous fall day as we set out once again to look for the Purple Sandpiper (we didn't find it). We did, however, see many birds along the way. These included Mourning Doves, Robins, a Northern Cardinal, House Sparrows, Mallard ducks, Goldfinches, Chickadees, Starlings, Canada Geese, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Juncos, Cormorants, Greater Scaup ducks, Bufflehead ducks, a Green-winged Teal duck, and Long-tailed Ducks. Out on Lake Ontario, we saw a Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gulls, Red-breasted

Mergansers, a Common Loon, a Red-throated Loon and a Bonaparte Gull. As well, we heard White-throated Sparrows and Northern Flickers.

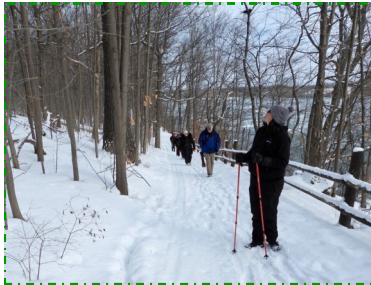
We did see some exciting wildlife. A Muskrat was swimming in the pond, and a Mink ran across our path.

Although we didn't see the Purple Sandpiper, there is always next year.

Birds on the Niagara Walk

By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

The Peninsula Field Naturalists were invited to participate in the only international birding festival in North America. The Birds on the Niagara is a winter celebration of birds that was held from February 10 to 13 this year. This year's festival was packed with virtual and live programs for all to enjoy. Many organizations contributed to making the event a great success.



© Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

There were walks on both sides of the Niagara River too! On the Canadian side, the Bert Miller Nature Club, Ontario Field Ornithologists and Peninsula Field Naturalists led hikes on Saturday and Sunday. The Upper Falls, Dufferin Islands, Nelson Park, Brown's Point and the Queenston area were the spots to be that weekend.

We led the guided walk on the General Brock Side Trail at Brown's Point in

Niagara-on-the-Lake. We had eight participants, and we observed birds both on the river and in the wooded grove along the trail. Birds that were seen included White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-



Northern Cardinal. © Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock



© Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

billed Gull, Herring Gull, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, American Robin, Dark-eyed Junco and Northern Cardinal.

It was a wonderful morning to be outdoors and enjoy the natural beauty of the Niagara River. We look forward to participating in the Birds On the Niagara 2023.

Outings Update

By Jean Hampson

With things opening up again, your Outings Committee will be meeting soon to create a schedule of walks and special events for club members. After two long years of restrictions with only a few opportunities to hold pop-up outings, we look forward to bringing you a full roster of field trips, planting events and possibly even a chance to enjoy an ice cream with our fellow members. The first four are listed here. Watch for more announcements soon on our website, on Facebook and in your E-mail.



Mountain Locks Park outing. © Debbie Wright

Please send RSVP to info@peninsulafieldnats.com to attend the following walks:

Earth Day Walk - Malcolmson Eco-Park

Saturday, April 23 at 9:30 am

Meet at the parking lot off Lakeshore Road at Niagara Street

Jean Hampson and Bob Highcock

Wildflower Walk - Louth Conservation Area

Sunday, May 1 at 10:00 am

Meet at the Louth C.A. parking area 3193 Staff Ave, Jordan Station

Jean Hampson and Bob Highcock

Evening Bird Walk - Cherie Rd Park

Tuesday, May 10 at 6:00 pm

Meet at the trail entrance at 73-71 Cherie Rd off Cindy Drive

Doug Gillard

Bird Walk - Malcolmson Eco-Park

Saturday, May 14 at 8:30 am

Meet at the parking lot off Lakeshore Road at Niagara Street

Barb West



The reward at the end of a long walk. © Bob Highcock

St Catharines Christmas Bird Count *By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock*

The Peninsula Field Naturalists held their annual Christmas Bird Count on December 19, 2021. The daytime temperature was -2° Celsius throughout the day, and the skies were partly clear.

Thanks to all the participants who assisted with the count. Special thanks to Sharon Wilson and Carla Carlson for allowing access to their properties during the count.

New high counts were recorded for Gadwall (45), Cooper's Hawk (21), Red-bellied Woodpecker (83), and American Goldfinch (586). A first for the count was four Sandhill Cranes observed by John Stevens in Area 1 of the circle. It was not a record high, but 110 Hooded Mergansers were observed during the count. The average recorded for the previous five counts is 68.6. The record high count was 123 in 2015. Although Snowy Owl was observed along Fifth Avenue Louth in west St. Catharines before and after the count, the species was not observed on December 19. Snowy Owl is noted as a count-week bird.

A virtual roundup was held in the evening to discuss birds observed during the day. Hopefully, in 2022 we can return to having our in-person potluck roundup.

For this year's count, we had 48 participants:

John Black, Sam Brockington, Paul Chapman, Sue Chapman, John Ciemitis, Paula Clark, Emily Cornfield, Rachael Cornfield, Trevor Cornfield, Stephanie Dagg, Rob Dobos, Philip Downey, Kathy Ellis, Christopher Escott, Doug Gillard, Jean Hampson, Shirley Harrison, Bob Highcock, Shannon Hingston, Carol Horvat, Myra Kennedy, Mike Kershaw, Terri Kershaw, Nabil Khairallah, Nabila Khairallah, Laurie King, Olivia King, Kara Kristjanson, Jeff Lewis, Debbie Loveridge, Sandy McCutcheon, Joan Preston, Bill Rapley, Melad Razzouk, Judy Robins, Diane Roy, Kayo Roy, Marlene Sanders, Karin Schneider, Tim Seburn, Bill Smith, Ken Smith, Nancy Smith, Roy Sorgenfrei, John Stevens, Katherine Stoltz, Sally Tasane, Tom Thomas, Gina Turone, Elizabeth Yates.

Canada Goose	1675	Red-tailed Hawk	128	Brown Creeper	1
Mute Swan	9	Sandhill Crane	4	Winter Wren	6
Trumpeter Swan	9	Bonaparte's Gull	4	Carolina Wren	42
Gadwall	45	Ring-billed Gull	531	Golden-crowned Kinglet	6
American Black Duck	19	Herring Gull	69	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Mallard	280	Iceland Gull	1	Eastern Bluebird	63
Canvasback	5	Glaucous Gull	1	American Robin	338
Redhead	42	Great Black-backed Gull	3	Northern Mockingbird	20
Ring-necked Duck	12	gull species	4	European Starling	8229
Greater Scaup	3	Rock Pigeon	492	Cedar Waxwing	29
Surf Scoter	1	Mourning Dove	931	American Tree Sparrow	256
White-winged Scoter	16	Eastern Screech Owl	13	Dark-eyed Junco	843
Long-tailed Duck	35	Great Horned Owl	6	White-crowned Sparrow	144
Bufflehead	55	Belted Kingfisher	4	White-throated Sparrow	20
Common Goldeneye	97	Red-bellied Woodpecker	83	Song Sparrow	16
Hooded Merganser	110	Downy Woodpecker	94	Northern Cardinal	213
Common Merganser	196	Hairy Woodpecker	15	Red-winged Blackbird	14
Red-breasted Merganser	240	Northern Flicker	27	Common Grackle	1
Wild Turkey	15	American Kestrel	24	Brown-headed Cowbird	141
Double-crested Cormorant	45	Northern Shrike	1	House Finch	312
Great Blue Heron	3	Blue Jay	486	Purple Finch	5
Turkey Vulture	2	American Crow	81	Pine Siskin	12
Northern Harrier	6	Horned Lark	22	American Goldfinch	586
Sharp-shinned Hawk	4	Black-capped Chickadee	271	House Sparrow	1790
Cooper's Hawk	21	Tufted Titmouse	21	Total number of species	77
Northern Goshawk	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	25	Total number of individuals	19304
Bald Eagle	8	White-breasted Nuthatch	37		

The Peninsula Field
Naturalists' Club



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2022 Executive

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Vice President ~ Carol Horvat

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Treasurer ~ Doug Gillard

Membership Secretary ~ Barb West

Directors ~Janet Damude

~ Mary-Lou Davidson ~ Roman Olszewski

~ Marlene Sanders ~ Don Stevenson

Non-Executive Positions

Newsletter Editor ~ Lorraine Brown-Joyce

Webmaster ~ Adrian Lawler

The Peninsula Field Naturalists' Club is 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. We are affiliated with Ontario Nature and Nature Canada.

Currently, our meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month from September to April (except December) at 7:30pm via Zoom. We may offer various popup outings around the Niagara area. Please check our Facebook page for more information.

The Peninsula Naturalist newsletter is published twice per year, in Spring and Fall. Submissions for the next newsletter should be received by the end of March or September for publication.

Club members are encouraged to send in articles, photos, stories, observations and outing reviews to penfieldnatsnews@gmail.com. Material accepted may be edited and will be used subject to space allowances.

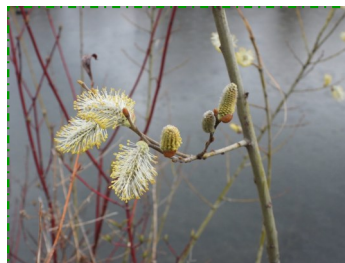
Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Peninsula Field Naturalists Club or the Editor.

Thank you to all the members who volunteer their time to our club and also to those who make submissions to make our newsletter fabulous!

Spring is in the Air...



Wild Turkeys. © Win Laar



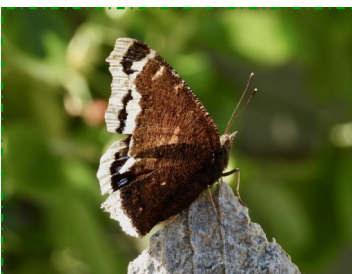
Grey Willow. © Jean Hampson



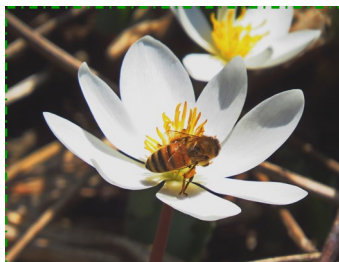
Spring Peepers. © Jean Hampson



White Trilliums. © Jean Hampson



Mourning Cloak butterfly. © Jean Hampson



Bloodroot. © Win Laar



Eastern Bluebird. © Jean Hampson



Virginia Bluebells. © Win Laar