



The Peninsula Naturalist

Newsletter of The Peninsula Field Naturalists' Club

Volume 254
FALL 2022

New Members

- Jane Burbage
- Amanda & Mark Keresztes
- Michael Higgs
- Bev & Ken Byberg
- 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.
- Nov. 28 @ 7:30 pm Bruce Mackenzie - FIFTY POINT LAND COMPLEX

Upcoming Outings

- In Search of the Purple Sandpiper - Sunday, November 6 @ 8:30 am.
- Cherie Road Park - Saturday, November 19 @ 9:30 am.
- Watch for more announcements soon on our website, on Facebook and in your E-mail.



A Message From the President

It is hard to believe that the Peninsula Field Naturalists have held monthly meetings through Zoom for two years. Video conferencing has been a valuable tool for our club over this time. Our guest speakers did not have to travel during inclement weather, and we broadened the search area to obtain a presenter.

Though Zoom conferencing has been advantageous, gathering for an in-person event is preferred. The return to indoor gatherings is being welcomed and well-received. Jean and I represented the PFN at the NPCA Conservation Awards in September, and it was great seeing Marcie Jacklin and Kerry Kennedy each receive an Individual Award of Merit. Catching up with friends at the Ontario Field Ornithologists annual convention and sharing group activity reports



Bob photographing a Milksnake. © Jean Hampson

at the Ontario Nature Carolinian East Regional Meeting certainly is better in a hall or room than looking at a computer monitor. Presenting *The Wild West of Cuba* to the Bert Miller Nature Club in September made Jean and I feel we need in-person meetings again.

With that said, I thought I would take some time here to let you know that the Executive are working hard to ensure we have a room available for 2023. Unfortunately, we have not been able to confirm our previous meeting place, so if anyone has suggestions, please e-mail us at info@peninsulafieldnats.com.

I look forward to seeing you all again for a PFN indoor meeting. Until then, go out and spend time enjoying nature.

Bob Highcock, President

In Memory of Roman Olszewski 1950 - 2022

On September 12, 2022, PFN member Roman Olszewski passed away. Roman was the Director of Technical Services for Athletics Ontario. He dedicated nearly 40 years to the sport of Track and Field, and in 2021, Roman was inducted into the Athletics Ontario Hall of Fame.

Roman was a long-time member of the Peninsula Field Naturalists and The Niagara Peninsula Geological Society.

Roman was an active member of the PFN, having served on the Board from 1997 to the present as a Vice-President, President, Past-President and most recently, Director. Roman had extensive stamp, coin, mineral and lichen collections. His lichen collection is one of the largest private collections in Ontario and will be donated to Guelph University. His vast knowledge of lichens had him leading outings for the Peninsula Field Naturalists, which many members and guests thoroughly enjoyed.

The Executive and club members will greatly miss Roman. PFN has made a memorial donation to Parkinson Canada to honour Roman's contribution to our club.



Hidden Corners: East Andes Ecuador

by Janet Damude

Owen Bjorgan likes to spend time in biodiversity hotspots. He likes being in Niagara because it is the biodiversity hotspot of Ontario. So the next logical step forward for Owen was to spend time in the most incredible biodiversity hotspot in the world. With that in mind, Owen travelled to Ecuador to see the Amazon rainforest.

Owen spoke to the Peninsula Field Naturalists on Zoom about his trip to Ecuador at our March 28 meeting. He travelled there while filming his documentary "Hidden Corners: East Andes Ecuador." You can watch the video on his YouTube channel, Owen's Hiking and Adventures, at https://youtu.be/8UhCmLj_c5E, along with the other Hidden Corner documentaries Owen has produced.

The area that Owen visited was on the east side of the Andes mountains, which connect with the Amazon rainforest. The Amazon Rainforest spans several South American countries, including Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana and Venezuela. The Andes mountains help make the Ecuadorian section wetter than other rainforest areas. According to Owen, this area of Ecuador has two seasons: wet and wetter. All this rain means that some sections are regularly flooded during the rainy season. Owen described trees with rivulets of

water pouring down them. All of this moisture and the longer days create a biodiversity bonanza.

He told us about trees draped in mosses, lichens, and even other plants (epiphytes). Then, Owen showed us pictures of the exciting animals he encountered, such as toxic stick insects, Long-horned Beetles as big as your hand, Cane Toads the size of cow plops, and Earthworms that look like short garden hoses. At one point, he thought he had encountered the highly venomous snake called the Fer-de-lance, but luckily it was a clever mimic.

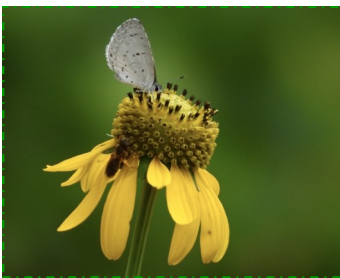
Owen also described his many positive experiences with the local Ecuadorian people. He told of how great they were with guiding and surviving in the wild. They shared important experiences with him, such as a days-long father-and-son fishing trip. They also helped him to survive a bout of Dengue Fever and inspired him to keep exploring after he recovered. We're all glad he survived his trip and encounters with snakes and giant crickets so we can hear about more exciting adventures in the future.

Thank you, Owen, for another exciting and enjoyable presentation.

Carolinian Canada

Dr. Stefan Weber of Carolinian Canada was the speaker for our April meeting, and his knowledge of native plants was awe-inspiring.

Dr. Weber studied interactions among co-flowering spring ephemerals at the University of Guelph. He received a Ph.D. in Biology from McMaster University, researching invasive plants, seed conservation and ecosystem restoration. Stefan is the founder of Ontario Plant Restoration Alliance, a member of the Ontario Biodiversity Council and currently works with Carolinian Canada. Dr. Weber resides in Niagara and has recently appeared in the best-selling sci-fi novel "Bloom" by Kenneth Oppel.



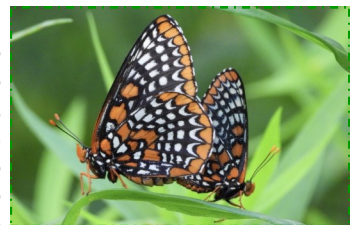
Summer Azure on Cutleaf Coneflower.
© Jean Hampson

Stefan informed us he lives in St. Catharines and started his first garden three years ago. He stressed the importance of native plant gardening to support the ecosystem, diversity and food chains. Native plants support insects which in return support birds. Birds indicate the health of the ecosystem. He suggested we invite nature into our backyards.

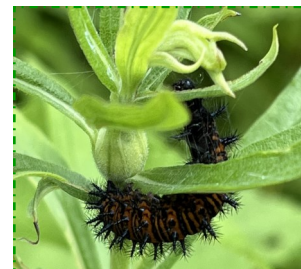
We live in the most biodiverse region of Canada but also the most populated and most fragmented because of the colonizing of Ontario. Therefore, we must support indigenous-led restorations as we are losing native plant diversity.

by Mary-Lou Davidson

close relationships with insects that pollinate the plant. Stefan showed a slide of native Turtleheads in his garden and explained that to be pollinated, the Turtleheads require native bumblebees. The Baltimore Checkerspot butterfly



Baltimore Checkerspot adult.
© Jean Hampson



Baltimore Checkerspot larvae on Bee Balm.
© Bob Highcock

depends on the Turtleheads to lay its eggs. The Giant Swallowtail, Ontario's largest butterfly, can lay eggs on two native plants: the Prickly Ash and the Hop Tree. It was interesting to learn that its caterpillar disguises itself as a bird dropping and, if that does not work, then as a snake to scare predators away.

Stefan studied habitat restoration at McMaster University and worked with the Ministry of Transportation to create prairie and grassland recreation along highways. Various soils and native plants were examined for mass blooming to benefit insects, including native parasitic bees. This is a good sign as it means there is a healthy native bee population.

Carolinian Canada and partners spearheaded a seed conservation strategy. Unfortunately, very few native plants are protected, and old groves like the native plum can be cut down. As a result, we have witnessed the disappearance of old woodlots.

Carolinian Canada *continued*

The Carolinian Zone, stretching from Toronto to Windsor, is Canada's most diverse and fragile ecoregion. This zone is home to 1,500 different plant species. Thirty-seven of these are legumes (in the bean family) which are important for fertilizing soils and providing nutritious food for wildlife.

Dr. Weber treated us to several photos of native plants that he encouraged us to include in our gardens. He is

full of fascinating information and his time to speak went by too quickly. Nevertheless, we thoroughly enjoyed his presentation to the Peninsula Field Naturalists and look forward to hearing from him again.

For more information on plant conservation and native plant gardening, please go to www.caroliniancanada.ca, where you'll find a wealth of information, including native plant garden kits.

Identifying Warblers

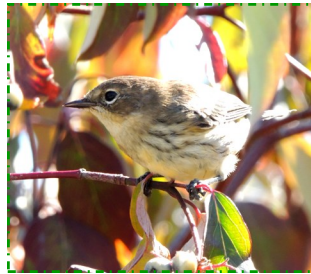
By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

Our first Zoom meeting for the Fall 2022 session took place on September 26, and it was an interactive presentation about warblers by Marcie Jacklin.



Prairie Warbler.
© Jean Hampson

Marcie showed photos of warblers in the province of Ontario and asked those present to point out defining features to pinpoint identification. It was a fun workout for our brains. Identifying warblers without a completely unobstructed view is difficult, but Marcie demonstrated that getting a photo showing even just part of the bird



Yellow-rumped Warbler.
© Jean Hampson

can be helpful.

Guides such as *The Warbler Guide* (Tom Stephenson and Scott Whittle) are a helpful resource. In addition, since the views that we often have of the birds are high above in the trees, a guide showing icons of tail patterns and undertail coverts is useful.

Warbler identification can be challenging, but Marcie demonstrated that with practice and attention to detail, we could all work on improving our birding skills.



Black-throated Blue Warbler.
© Jean Hampson

PFN Quiz

by Marlene Sanders

1. What is the largest ocean on Earth?
2. What was the date of the Summer Solstice or Litha in the Northern Hemisphere this year?
3. How many national parks are in Northwest Territories and which province has the most national parks?
4. What is the oldest living plant species?
5. Do you know there are wild bison in Canada? Where can the largest herd be found?

The answers can be found on the back page of this newsletter.

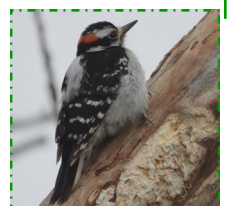
Earth Day Walk for Friends of Malcolmson *By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock*

In late March of this year, Claire Theijsmeijer of the Friends of Malcolmson Eco-Park contacted the PFN to let us know that they would be able to have an Earth Day event at the municipal park again. Claire also asked if we would be interested in leading a birding hike. The PFN was pleased to hear that the Earth Day event had returned to Malcolmson Eco-Park and enthusiastically accepted the request.

The hike was popular in the past, and it drew interest again on Saturday, April 23. In addition to PFN members attending the walk, members of the public took the opportunity to bird watch along the trails in the park.

Birds observed during the event included Canada Goose, Mallard, Mourning Dove, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Downy

Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Carolina Wren, European Starling, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, House Sparrow, House Finch, American Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Grackle, Yellow-rumped Warbler and Northern Cardinal.



Hairy Woodpecker.
© Jean Hampson



The group of participants.

© Jean Hampson

Members of the public enjoyed the walk and learning about the birds we saw in the park. It was a fun morning for all. The PFN will gladly lead a hike for future Earth Day events organized by the Friends of Malcolmson Eco-Park.

Wildflower Walk at Louth C.A.

By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

The morning of Sunday, May 1, was cool, but that did not stop members of the PFN in their search for wildflowers and ferns at Louth Conservation Area in Lincoln.



Large White Trillium. © Jean Hampson

Wildflowers observed along the trails included Blood Root, Yellow Trout Lily, Large-flowered Bellwort, Red Trillium, Canadian Wild Ginger, Blue Cohosh, Dutchman's Breeches, Cut-leaved Toothwort, Large White Trillium and Sharp-lobed Hepatica.



Canadian Wild Ginger. © Jean Hampson

We paused to admire Louth Falls, which was flowing well. The group then returned to the top of the Niagara Escarpment and walked on the Bruce Trail to

Staff Avenue. Here we navigated the rocky path. The large crevices contained many species of fern, including Walking Ferns. Oak Sedge was growing beside the pathway.



Walking Fern. © Jean Hampson

Bird species observed during the walk include Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Winter Wren, Carolina Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, American Robin, White-throated Sparrow and Northern Cardinal.



Louth Falls © Jean Hampson

In the 90 minutes the group spent at the conservation area, we observed a good variety of plant and animal species.

Cherie Road Park Outing

by Doug Gillard

When we sat down to plan the club's outings for the upcoming few months, we discussed how to increase the number of excursions we could fit into the migration season. So, we decided to do a few mid-week evening outings.

The first was on Tuesday, May 10, at Cherie Road Park in north St. Catharines. Ten of us were out on a cool evening looking for spring migrants, especially warblers. I was the leader for this walk, but I needed a lot of help from the more experienced birders in our group to identify the birds. On this outing, Bob, Jean, Shirley and Rafael were excellent birders at identifying the birds by sight and sound. We all saw many birds that night, and if we didn't know what they were, we would ask the birding experts and then add them to our list. I got six new birds for my year's list that evening.

Cherie Road Park is a relatively unknown park located off Cherie Road in north St. Catharines. The creek that runs through the park is called Walker's Creek—so named for the Walker family who worked a 300-acre farm in the block between Niagara Street and Vine Street to the east and west and Parnell Road and Linwell Road to the north and south. George Walker bought the fruit and vegetable

farm in the early 1880s and named it Sunnyside Farm. The family started selling the land to developers in the early 1950s, and one of the streets in the new development was called Sunnyside Drive.

The trail that runs through Cherie Road Park is part of the Waterfront Trail system. The Waterfront Trail stretches over 3600 kilometres along the shores of most of the Great Lakes in Ontario.

After searching for birds for over two hours, we had a list of 48 species we had seen. Some of the highlights for this outing were Eastern Phoebe, Blue-headed Vireo, Swainson's Thrush, Baltimore Oriole, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and several warblers, including a Black-and-white, a Nashville, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Palm, Yellow-rumped and a Black-throated Green Warbler.

The weather was great; the birds were there for us to see. It was a fun evening with our birding friends in a small, relatively unknown St. Catharines park. It's always nice to get out into nature, and a bonus to introduce this park to a few fellow birders.

Spring Bird Walk

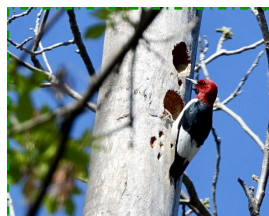
by Barb West



The Group. © Jean Hampson

Saturday, May 14, was a gorgeous spring day as we searched for spring migrants in Mary Malcolmson Park.

We saw thirty-nine species of birds. Some common ones were Goldfinch, Red-winged Blackbird, American Robin, Gray Catbird, Black-capped Chickadee, Northern Cardinal, Downy Woodpecker, Common Grackle, Blue Jay, Starling and Mourning Dove. In addition, we saw many warblers,



Red-headed Woodpecker. © Jean Hampson

including Yellow, Magnolia, Blackburnian, Bay-breasted, Tennessee, Black-throated Blue, American Redstart, Northern Parula, Cape May, Yellow-rumped and Black-throated Green. The highlight of our day was seeing a Red-headed Woodpecker. They haven't been spotted in the park for several years.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird. © Jean Hampson

We also saw the beautiful Scarlet Tanager a couple of times and several Baltimore Orioles.

Spring Bird Walk *continued*

In addition, a Great Horned Owl flew out of a tree, and we heard a Wood Thrush. Other birds we spotted were Northern Flickers, Carolina Wren, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Least Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo,

Warbling Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, House Wren, Song Sparrow and House Finch. There was also a Mallard duck on the pond. Overall, it was a successful outing.

Martindale Area Birding

by Jean Hampson



Blue-winged Teal duck.
© Jean Hampson

On May 21, PFN club members met at the Green Ribbon Trail for birding in the Martindale area of St. Catharines.

We were hoping to find some warblers but unfortunately encountered very few. We

did see thirty species of birds at the Green Ribbon Trail. A beautiful male Blue-winged Teal glided across the pond, and a Wood Duck perched on a fallen tree. We observed a pair of Great-crested Flycatchers that appeared to be inspecting nest holes in a dead tree. Eastern Kingbirds and Gray Catbirds were in the trees along the path, as well as a pair of Baltimore Orioles gathering nesting material. Our only warbler



American Bullfrog.

encounter was a Tennessee Warbler we heard but did not see.

Next, we explored Francis Creek Nature Area. We found twenty species here, including a flyover by a Cooper's Hawk. Then on to the Merritt Trail off Martindale Road.



Canada Goose gosling. ©Jean Hampson

Here we found eighteen species, including the only warblers we could see: a Yellow Warbler and a Common Yellowthroat. An unusual Common Goldeneye captured our attention for a while, the baby Canada Geese were napping in the sun, and the large bullfrogs posed, so everyone had a chance to take a nice photo.

St. John's C.A. Evening Walk

by Jean Hampson

St. John's Conservation Area is a beautiful spot in Fonthill, and we weren't disappointed with our Evening Walk on May 24.



Time for a rest stop.

© Jean Hampson

Many readers may be familiar with the accessible trout pond near the parking area, but many trails extend throughout the park that immerse hikers in Carolinian species of trees, plants, birds and animals. Our hike on the moderately difficult St. John's Ridge Trail tested the endurance of our hardy group, but the views and birds we enjoyed made it worthwhile. We saw many species of ferns, pungent



One of the ferns along the trail. © Jean Hampson

Skunk Cabbage and flowering plants. We even found some comfy benches suitable for a quick rest stop.

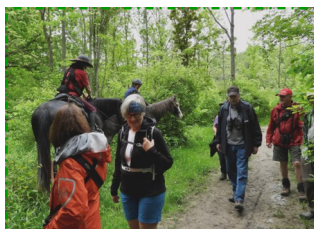
On this hike, we heard or observed twenty-two species of birds. Highlight birds included Hooded Warblers and Scarlet Tanagers. St. John's C.A. is one of the most reliable spots in Niagara to find these species.

We wandered back towards the pond to watch a Canada Goose family residing there and reflected upon the beautiful evening until the biting insects encouraged us to head home.

Rim of Africa Trail Walk

by Bob Highcock

It was an overcast morning when members of the PFN met in Parking Lot A in Short Hills Provincial Park. At the same time, family and friends of Bluebird champions Aurelio, Felix and Margaret were gathering for a memorial bench dedication for the trio. Before the start of the hike, we had a pleasant chat with Aurelio's son Tony, a classmate of Jean and mine from Brock University. We reminisced about a friend who is no longer with us, wished each other well with our day's activities and headed in opposite directions along the Rim of Africa -Bruce Trail

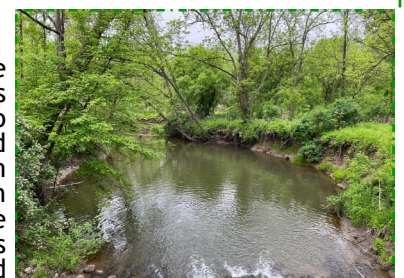


Horses on the trail.

© Jean Hampson

Friendship Trail.

The section of the Bruce Trail at Short Hills Provincial Park our group walked along is twinned with a section of the Rim of Africa Trail, located in South Africa. The twinning marks friendship and international cooperation between the two organizations.



Twelve Mile Creek.

© Bob Highcock

This trail walk is one of my favourites in

Rim of Africa Trail Walk *continued*

Niagara. We hiked south on the trail along the banks of the meandering Twelve Mile Creek to a meadow not too far from the Wiley Road entrance to the provincial park. In the spring, you are sure to find migrating birds and, in the summer, breeding birds, butterflies and dragonflies. And on occasion, you may run into some people enjoying the trail on horseback.

Bird species observed during the walk include Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Blue Heron, Turkey Vulture, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-bellied

Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Traill's Flycatcher, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Red-eyed Vireo, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, House Wren, Carolina Wren, Gray Catbird, American Robin, American Goldfinch, Field Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Common Grackle, Blue-winged Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Yellow Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Cardinal, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Indigo Bunting.

Don't Step on the Snails!

by Doug Gillard

On Tuesday, June 7, eight of us enjoyed a beautiful evening walk around the Outlet Collection Ponds in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For hours before this evening's outing, it rained non-stop. At about three o'clock, the sun came out for a few minutes and then it started to rain again. Finally, as the weatherman forecasted, it cleared up at five o'clock. I was pacing the floors all day, constantly looking out the window and checking the weather. After the weather cleared, the air was enjoyable, cool and fresh. With all the rain during the day, I thought the path would be muddy, and a few other people did too and wore their rubber boots, but it wasn't. All the rain brought many snails onto the path, and Barb kept saying, "don't step on the snails." Walking, looking for birds, and trying to avoid the snails was hard. So, as we were walking, there was the occasional "oh no" after you heard the crunching sound of a stepped-on snail. "Sorry, Barb."

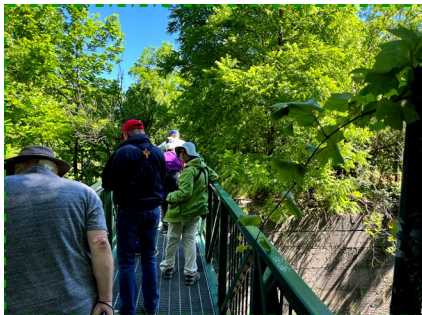
The Outlet Collection Ponds are well known to many people as a place to see birds and a nice place to go for a walk. Carol and I have visited the ponds many times at different times of the year. In this area of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Garden City Raceway operated from 1964 to 1976. When the mall was built in 2014, the Ministry of

the Environment required a stormwater management system to be made to handle rainwater and melted snow. It was designed with five ponds separated by stone berms, and each pond performs a specific water management function. They planted a variety of grasses, brush and small trees and left them to evolve naturally. At different times of the year, butterflies, moths, snails and birds can be seen. Niagara-on-the-Lake town employees cut the weeds and grass along the path a few times during the year. The weeds and grass along the pathway needed to be cut, so we picked up a few ticks. You must be aware and vigilant in checking yourself for ticks.

We only saw nineteen species of birds on this outing, with the highlight being a mother Mallard with her seven babies. We also saw a Great Egret, a Willow Flycatcher and six Yellow Warblers. In addition, we stopped to watch three rabbits chasing each other in the field as we were leaving the ponds. Even though the Outlet Collection Ponds is a popular place to visit, it was Mary-Lou's first time here. One reason we do the club outings is to introduce different areas to interested nature lovers.

Mountain Locks Park Insect Crawl

By Jean Hampson



Crossing the pedestrian bridge. © Bob Highcock

On June 18, we once again visited Mountain Locks Park to search for butterflies and other insects. Our group walked along the Merritt Trail until we crossed the pedestrian bridge over the old canal to the Bruce Trail and an open wildflower field. Immediately we

started seeing butterflies such as Peck's and European Skippers, and Little Wood Satyrs. Dragonflies like the Twelve-spotted Skimmer buzzed overhead. Regarding birds, we observed Mallards in the canal and Downy Woodpeckers, Baltimore Orioles and Northern Cardinals all feeding young. The star of the show was



The group looking for birds. © Bob Highcock

a beautiful Silver-spotted Skipper that was high up on a vetch and visible to all. This is a lovely area for observing insect life.



Silver-spotted Skipper. © Jean Hampson



Twelve-spotted Skimmer. © Jean Hampson

June 30 Ice Cream Walk

by Jean Hampson

The annual ice cream walk from Jaycee Park to Port Dalhousie is always a great way to kick off summer. The Barn and Cliff Swallows nesting under the pedestrian bridge are a highlight as they swoop over Martindale Pond and under our feet. We could see a family of Mute Swans with young cygnets and a Great Blue Heron as we crossed into Port Dalhousie. We were impressed by the quick and friendly service at Old Port Dairy Bar and the delicious flavours of ice cream available. As we enjoyed our scoops and shakes, we admired the sailboats in the marina and chatted with each other and passersby.

I hope my fellow club members enjoy this annual outing as much as I do.



The group enjoying the prize, ice cream.

© Bob Highcock

Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site Outing

by Doug Gillard

On top of the escarpment, the Peninsula Field Naturalists' first outing for the fall season on September 10 was to the Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site in south St Catharines.



Woolly Bear caterpillar. © Debbie Wright

The Naturalization Site, which opened to the public on September 28, 2004, has evolved from an open pit quarry to a municipal landfill to the Glenridge Quarry Naturalization Site. Located next to the quarry was the Canadian Drive-in. It was opened on July 17, 1947, and closed in 1982. When it opened,

it was one of only five drive-ins in Canada, and the price of admission was \$.50 per adult. I talked about the area's history, and several people started reminiscing about their memories of the drive-in.

There are many paths throughout the site, and we followed the longest route on this outing. Nine of us came out to take in the beauty of this constantly evolving site. We walked past the Large Clay Borrow Pit Pond and after checking with everyone, we climbed to the top of the Summit Overlook.

It was a beautiful early fall day with above-average temperatures. Unfortunately, there weren't many birds or butterflies to see, but it was an enjoyable outing. It's always good to be out in nature and exploring its beauty.

Soon after we started our walk, a large committee of thirty-seven Turkey Vultures was seen taking flight from



Walking on one of the paths. © Debbie Wright

their roosting place. At one time, the Turkey Vultures roosted on the roof of a church below the escarpment, but the church has been recently torn down. I don't know where they are roosting now, but they may have found a new spot nearby. We also saw several Grey Catbirds and ten American Goldfinches.

It was a pleasure to see quite a few Monarch Butterflies too. Next, our path led us to Pit Pond, where we saw seven Canada Geese, two Trumpeter Swans and a few Mallards. The highlight of our stop at the pond was watching a young couple feeding the catfish. They visit the pond once a week to feed the fish, and we were surprised to see so many Black Bullhead Catfish in the pond. There were hundreds of fish coming to the surface for their breakfast.



As always, it was fun visiting with others that love nature.

Black Bullhead Catfish. © Shirley Chambers

Introducing Bev and Ken Byberg

by Doug Gillard

I want to introduce to our members two new members to the Peninsula Field Naturalists Club. Bev and Ken Byberg. Through their foundation, they will give an annual donation of \$1000.00 to the PFN. On behalf of the PFN, thank you for the gift and welcome to the Peninsula Field Naturalists.

Ken was born and raised in Northern Ontario on a dairy farm in the Little Claybelt, approximately 150 km north of North Bay. After high school, he enrolled in Haileybury School of Mines, graduating in 1965 and 1967. Then in

1977, he attended Laurentian University to complete his professional engineering status. Between 1965 and 1980, he was employed by Inco in Sudbury in various positions up to Underground General Foreman.

Bev was born in the UK and immigrated to Canada at age ten. She resided in Peterborough and Hamilton until marrying Ken in 1967. During this time, she graduated as a Dental Assistant.

In 1981 the couple, with two girls, relocated

Introducing Bev and Ken Byberg *continued*

to Manitouwadge, Ontario, some 400 km north of Sault Ste. Marie. Here Ken worked for Noranda Mines as Chief Mines Engineer and Mine Superintendent of a large 5000-ton per day underground base metal mine. Bev raised two girls, looked after the household, and later owned and operated a ladies' clothing store. In 1993, with ore reserves declining and operations shutting down, the family moved to Pelham (Effingham) and started two companies due to a hiatus in mining. Ken purchased Meta Lake Lodge, a fly-in fishing and hunting lodge north of Nakina, with a partner, and M'Lady Distributors, a wholesale greeting card company centred in the Niagara Peninsula. In 1997, after selling Meta Lake, they purchased Island 10 Fishing Retreat, a remote resort on Lady Evelyn Lake, a seven-hour drive north of Niagara. The resort is now run by their daughter Andrea. Not finished with mining, Ken and his brother Terry, in 2002, started and ran Silver Eagle Mines, with holdings in Mexico and Canada. The recession of 2010 crippled Silver Eagle as it did with most mining ventures.

Both Ken and Bev love the outdoors and the Canadian wilderness and cherish what we in Canada take for

granted. Ken was a hunter and fisherman, loved and respected wildlife, and spent many hours fishing and enjoying the north from their floatplane, which they still own.

In 2017 after sponsoring various charities, they felt it was more beneficial to start their foundation, emphasizing bursaries, non-profit and volunteer organizations, performing work, helping environmental, Christian, animal, and wildlife husbandries etc.

“Of all God's creations, birds are the most impressive. They can fly, communicate, and travel, are beautiful, colourful, cheerful, friendly, and bring joy to anyone watching. As a matter of interest, the three closest to our hearts are the Ruffed Grouse, hummingbird, and owl families.”

“It is a pleasure to be associated with a group dedicated to preserving these creatures.” - Bev and Ken Byberg

Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Update

by John E. Black

As of this writing, most data for the Atlas Niagara Region 11 has now been entered for the first two years. Fifty-two participants worked 1,315 hours, submitted 12,780 records and observed 129 species in the twenty-five Squares of Region 11.

2023 is an important year for the Atlas in Region 11. First, some squares received a small amount of coverage and will be improved by the process of “Square Bashing.” A large number of point counts have to be made as well for many squares. Finally, two squares have lost the birders assigned to work them, and new birders are required.

Marcie Jacklin, the Regional Coordinator for Region 11, will present data on the 2023 atlas year in a webinar in early 2023. You will learn about Square Bashing, Point Counts, other Surveys and Data Entry. You might contact her if you are interested in participating in the Atlas in 2023. (mjacklin@brocku.ca)

You can learn more about the Atlas by visiting https://www.birdsontario.org/jsp/download/obba_guide_en.pdf

Region	Checklists	Participants	Squares	Records	Species	Hours	Hours (peak)	Points (In Person)
Ontario (Province)	88182	1334	2822	810692	269	62554.1	41087.6	20380
1. Essex	1419	79	32	10674	132	1170.7	693.2	282
2. Chatham-Kent	1343	54	35	10394	143	776	547.5	426
3. Lambton	1182	66	40	10062	155	1062.4	741.2	318
4. Middlesex-Elgin	3276	146	70	22789	159	2472.6	1515	944
5. Norfolk	2247	98	35	24197	165	2087.5	1084.4	679
6. Huron-Perth	2324	73	48	19966	155	921.5	598.4	607
7. Waterloo	2814	108	30	23671	165	1945.6	1157.4	461
8. Bruce	1814	89	61	16115	176	1165.1	929.1	274
9. Grey	2245	67	36	18775	149	1436.1	861.2	224
10. Halton	2373	141	38	22290	171	1984.1	1250	564
11. Niagara	2017	52	25	12780	129	1315.7	806.5	101
12. Toronto	1837	143	16	17912	132	1935.2	1180.1	182
13. Simcoe	4139	168	62	34741	184	3504.3	2087.3	594
14. Kawartha	1032	98	26	10969	161	583.6	430.7	149
15. Hamilton	2381	110	31	21154	155	1745.9	1070.6	401

There is a total of 47 Regions covered by the OBBA. This table shows the results from the first 15 Regions (This list includes Toronto, Hamilton and Simcoe and other regions that might be of interest).

Great Canadian Birdathon 2022

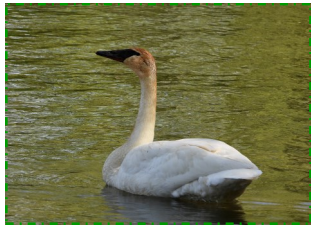
By Jean Hampson & Bob Highcock

For the 2022 Birdathon, the Fitzgerald Flickers (Jean and Bob) started their 24-hour tally at Fifty Point Conservation Area in Grimsby at 12:45 pm on Thursday, May 19. While at this eBird hot spot, we recorded Canada Goose, Mourning Dove, Chimney Swift, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Caspian Tern, Common Tern, Double-crested Cormorant, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Great Crested Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, Blue Jay, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, House Wren, European Starling, American Robin, House Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Baltimore Oriole, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler and Northern Cardinal.



Fitzgerald Flickers. © Bob Highcock

Our next stop was the Grimsby Wetlands. We spent under one hour at this location and added Mallard, American Coot, House Finch and Savannah Sparrow. Unfortunately, no shorebirds.



Trumpeter Swan. © Jean Hampson

During our coffee break, we observed Rock Pigeon and then headed to the Forty Mile Creek Side Trail. A big surprise here was a lone adult Trumpeter Swan. Other new species here were the Spotted Sandpiper and Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Next, we looked for grassland birds in Grassie on top of the Niagara Escarpment. A Great Blue Heron and Turkey Vulture flew overhead. Additional birds seen included Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.

To search for woodland birds, we headed to Cave Springs Conservation Area. Here we found Red-tailed Hawk, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch,

Carolina Wren, Orchard Oriole, Hooded Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Indigo Bunting.



Indigo Bunting. © Jean Hampson

Back in St. Catharines, we stopped at the Green Ribbon Trail, where a Mute Swan was occupying a nest. We also observed Cooper's Hawk, Warbling Vireo and Gray Catbird.

After a dinner break, we went to Wainfleet, heard the song of an Eastern Whip-poor-will, and observed a Great Horned Owl fly across the road right in front of us, bringing our total for the first twelve hours to fifty-nine species.

The next morning before heading out for the day, we saw a Red-eyed Vireo in our yard. At the Port Dalhousie East Pier, we added Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, Dunlin, Least Sandpiper, Bonaparte's Gull, American Crow and Cliff Swallow. When driving along Lakeshore Road, we heard a distinctive nasal cah and pulled into a plaza to observe a Fish Crow perched on a cross of a neighbouring church.

We walked through Malcolmson Eco-Park, where we found Wood Duck, Belted Kingfisher, Red-headed Woodpecker, Cedar Waxwing and Brown-headed Cowbird. Our best variety of warblers was found here and included Common Yellowthroat, American Redstart, Northern Parula, Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler and Canada Warbler.

We stopped at Niagara Shores Conservation Area to add Bank Swallow and headed upriver to the Centennial Lilac Gardens to add Chipping Sparrow. Finally, at the Upper Falls near the barge, we saw nesting Great Egrets and Black-crowned Night Heron just in time before our twenty-four hours were up.

After twenty-four hours of birding over May 19 and 20, we observed eighty-four species. We want to thank everyone for their generous donations to raise funds for bird conservation.

Upcoming Christmas Bird Counts

St. Catharines Christmas Bird Count	December 18, 2022
Niagara Falls CBC	December 27, 2022
Port Colborne CBC	TBA
Grimsby Peach Tree CBC	TBA
Waterfowl (Duck) Count	January 8, 2023

Contact: Bob Highcock/Jean Hampson
bob.jean@sympatico.ca 905-327-5457

Contact: Marcie Jacklin
mjacklin@brocku.ca 905-871-2577

Contact: Drew Campbell
drewcampbell@roadrunner.com 716-668-0759

Contact: Co-compiler Liam Thorne

Contact: Phil Downey
philip.downey@gmail.com

AGM and 2023 Memberships

On November 28, 2022, at 7:30 pm, join us on Zoom for our Annual General Meeting, followed by a presentation by Bruce Mackenzie on the Fifty Point Land Complex. Watch your email for the Zoom link.



to renew your PFN Membership. Our rates remain unchanged. A family membership (2+ members at the same address) is only \$35. A Single Membership is \$25 and \$15 for Students or Low-income. A PFN membership is an excellent gift for your nature-loving family and friends.

The Peninsula Field
Naturalists' Club



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2022 Executive

President ~ Bob Highcock

Vice President ~ Carol Horvat

Secretary ~ Jean Hampson

Treasurer ~ Doug Gillard

Membership Secretary ~ Barb West

Directors ~Janet Damude

~ Mary-Lou Davidson

~ Ken Smith ~ 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.

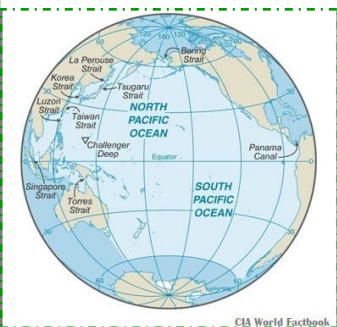
The Peninsula Naturalist newsletter is published twice per year, in Spring and Fall. Submissions for the next newsletter should be received by the end of March or September for publication.

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!

Quiz Answers



1. Pacific Ocean. 165.2 million km² and it contains half of the Earth's ocean water.
© CIA World Factbook



2. June 21, 2022 Photo is Summer Solstice at Stonehenge.
© Reader's Digest, Jessica photo/ Getty Images



3. There are five national parks in NWT: Nahanni, Nāáts'ihch'oh, Aulavik, Tuk Tuk Nogait, and Wood Buffalo.

British Columbia has the most, with seven parks. Mount Revelstoke, Kootenay, Glacier, Yoho, Gwaii Haanas, Pacific Rim, and Gulf Islands.
© Parks Canada, Nāáts'ihch'oh National Park Reserve



4. The Ginkgo tree or Ginkgo Biloba is 270 million years old.
© Igor Sheremetyev, Green Ginkgo



Ginkgo Biloba MacAbee BC fossil leaf.
© Wikipedia



5. At Mackenzie Bison Sanctuary near Fort Providence, Northwest Territories. There are 2000.
© Tessa MacIntosh Spectacular North West Territories, Bison on Great Slave Lake.