Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club

The Esquesing

Sept – Oct 2018 Newsletter
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President's Message

As we embark on a fresh season of nature discovery it behooves me once again to extend credit to people who contribute their time, effort and expertise to the club. To Alexis Buset and Fiona Reid for example, who submitted an excellent proposal to the Town of Halton Hills requesting funding for a pollinator plant initiative. It didn't surprise me at all that these ladies carried it off. The town endorsed their proposal and came through with the funding. See page 6 for more on this exciting club initiative.

To vice-president Ian Jarvie for organizing June's memorable trip to Carden Alvar. See page 27 for the highlights.

To Kim Dobson for continuing to turn out low cost housing for needy birds. And to all the club members who helped put up and maintain these bird houses at both Scotsdale Farm and Forks of the Credit Provincial Park this year. The housing need, at the Forks in particular, seems acute. We have 22 boxes there now and all have shown evidence of avian occupancy.

To Bill McIlveen who continued to offer an interesting slate of Monday night walks this summer and who continues to help the club by compiling detailed and accurate records of flora and fauna observed on club outings, from the birds using our houses, to the number of chimney swifts roosting in Halton area chimneys, to the butterfly species of Forks of the Credit Provincial Park, and so on.

To Laura Weihs for her handling of the newsletter. It's become a professional looking product in her hands. Laura also hopes to include a section on environmental tips in each newsletter.

And finally to John Beaudette our able web-master, Lorysa Cornish who continues to connect with new members in a courteous, professional manner, and Janice Sukhiani who has the daunting task of managing the club's multi-dollar portfolio. And, of course, to club secretary Ann Fraser who has the unenviable task of distilling executive meeting babble into understandable prose. I apologize to anyone I've missed… please feel free to harangue me at club meetings.

This fall we have an excellent slate of speakers lined up. Come out to learn about prehistoric Lake Iroquois, monarch butterflies and badgers. And check your inboxes for notices of club field trips and environmental initiatives. We're set for another rewarding season!

Don Scallen

Talks and Walks

Indoor Events: Meetings begin at 7:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month, September to June at St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Church, 537 Main Street, Glen Williams, unless stated otherwise.

Tuesday, September 11, 2018
Mark Stabb: Lake Iroquois
Mark Stabb is the Program Director, Central Ontario-East, Ontario Region for the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Mark is an avid hiker and naturalist whose current fascination is exploring the landscape legacy associated with glacial Lake Iroquois. Lake Iroquois existed approximately 13,000 years ago and was essentially an enlarged Lake Ontario. Ice sheets blocked the St. Lawrence at that time, so Lake Iroquois outflow was via the Hudson River Valley to the Atlantic Ocean. The shoreline of Lake Iroquois is still very noticeable as a ridge south of us in the GTA. (Kudos to club member Bette-Anne Goldstein for suggesting this talk!)
(**Please note** that there will be a few native plants on sale at our September meeting. These will include butterfly milkweed grown from wild collected seed in Brantford and some native tree seedlings. Any money raised will go to club coffers.)

Tuesday, October 9, 2018
Don Davis: Monarch butterflies
Don Davis has been studying monarch butterflies for decades. A Toronto resident, he knew Fred and Norah Urquhart, discoverers of the monarch butterfly overwintering sites in Mexico. As Don speaks to us, millions of monarch butterflies will be converging on these sites, an epic event that has captivated imaginations for decades. Don has tagged thousands of monarch butterflies and has met and collaborated with monarch butterfly researchers throughout North America. He has much to share with us.

Tuesday, November 13, 2018
Josh Sayers: Ontario Badgers
Josh Sayers of Ontario Badgers will tell us about a mammal that most Ontarian's don't realize exists in the province. Ontario Badgers is involved in advocacy work, conservation and research to protect and better understand the ecology of badgers in the province. To learn more, visit their site http://www.ontariobadgers.org/

Tuesday, December 11, 2018
Annual Pot Luck and Slide Show
Come for Ray Blower's legendary bean salad and also for the opportunity to share some of your nature experiences with the club. If you participate in the slide show, please limit your presentation to ten minutes or less.

Outdoor Events:

Saturday, September 8, 2018
Mothing at Fiona Reid's Niagara Escarpment property
Last chance for Mothing in Speyside, 2018! There are some great advantages to moth study in September: no (or at least few) mosquitoes; darkness falls earlier so we can start (and perhaps end) at reasonable hours; and best of all, the fabulous underwing moths are still flitting through the forest. You never know what else we might see in addition to moths and caterpillars. At previous events we have seen a variety of frogs, Barred Owl, Canada Porcupine, and Northern Flying Squirrel. We will be having a moth-bait recipe competition to be judged by the moths! Contact Fiona for details. Meeting time is 7 p.m. at Fiona's house (email fiona.reid7243@gmail.com for directions and to RSVP). Please bring a flashlight, camera, walking boots/shoes.

Saturday, September 15, 2018 from 9 to 10 am
Group Litter Pickup starting from the parking lot at 93 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown Plaza with NaturesScene.com & Accurate Transmission, across from Miskas Wood Prod.
Litter is everywhere! If you would like to "do" something about it please join me for a group litter pick up. I will bring an assortment of latex and cloth gloves, pick up sticks with claws on the end and bags. If you have a favourite pair of work gloves, please bring those along. More details on page 9. Please RSVP Laura at biker_chic@sympatico.ca if you can attend. If people have time, we'll go for a coffee afterwards. *Help us make a difference!*

Sunday, September 30, 2018 at 1pm
Bird Box Cleaning at Scotsdale Farm
Our annual cleanup of our club's bird boxes at Scotsdale Farm. It's always interesting to examine the nests left by wrens, tree swallows and bluebirds. And occasionally to be startled by a deer mouse launching itself out of an opened box! Meet at the Scotsdale Farm parking lot accessible from Trafalgar Road.

Sunday, October 14, 2018 at 1pm
Bird Box Cleaning at Forks of the Credit Provincial Park
On this day we'll clean out our bird boxes at Forks of the Credit Provincial Park. Meet at the Forks of the Credit Provincial Park parking lot accessible from McLaren Road in Caledon.

Sunday, October 21, 2018 at 1:30 pm
Norway Maple removal at Silver Creek Conservation Area
Up for a vigorous afternoon eliminating an invasive species? Please meet fellow club members at 1:30 at the Silver Creek Education Centre parking lot on Fallbrook Trail. Bring branch and tree cutting implements of any kind as long as they don't run on anything but human power. Credit Valley Conservation, understandably, doesn't want us to use chain saws. Before commencing cutting we'll have a quick primer on Norway maple ID and then set about the task of taking them down. Credit Valley Conservation will visit the site afterwards to daub herbicide on the trunks of the trees we cut.

Why are we doing this? Norway maple Acer platanoides, readily self-seeds into woodlands. This introduced species, hugely common in the nursery trade, now dominates some Toronto ravines and is making inroads into natural areas across the province. Why is this a bad thing? Norway maples fail to support the insect fauna, including caterpillars, that feed our songbirds. Thus, as Norway maple replaces our native maples and other native trees, insect diversity and abundance decreases. Norway maples also cast dense shade which can inhibit the growth of wildflowers and other vegetation on the forest floor.

Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 1pm
Late Flowering Plant Survey at Willow Park in Norval
Bill McIlveen's annual survey of late blooming plants. Bill has been doing this for many years, yielding potentially useful data on changes in bloom times for autumn flowering plants. Meet at the parking lot at the end of Mary Street just east of Highway 7 in Norval. (The parking lot beside the old school with the Lucy Maud Montgomery garden out front.)

TBA
Watch your inbox for other autumn outdoor club events.

Outdoor Event Questions?
Contact Don Scallen at dscallen@cogeco.ca

Valerie Dobson Remembered

By Don Scallen

Long time member Valerie Dobson passed away in December of 2016. Valerie was an avid naturalist and hiker. She enjoyed travel and had a special place in her heart for Hawaii. This note came to me earlier in the year from her partner John Beamish:

Valerie always said she wanted her ashes scattered on the Bruce Trail but she wanted her toes to go to Hawaii. In March I was able to take Philip (Valerie's son) and Miles (her grandson) to Maui where we hiked, snorkeled, walked on the beaches … everything Valerie would have done. Two days from the end, we scattered her toes on Haleakala. There was a service (of sorts) and it was a fitting location to remember her. If I've done this correctly then this link will take you to some pictures of the ceremony:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/emyqs9xkckkl3j8/AAAv6X7NVsMuMS4ArEF9PnhJa?dl=0

Related to this story is a wonderful piece John Beamish wrote for the Globe and Mail about Valerie's battle with cancer. It's well worth a read:

https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/facts-and-arguments/my-wifes-quiet-strength-living-with-cancer/article30630424/

Pollinator Workshop

Alexis Buset

In early June, the Club was happy to announce that we had been awarded a Community Sustainability Investment Fund Grant from the Town of Halton Hills. With this grant, the Club will plan, promote and orchestrate a public Pollinator Workshop. While the exact date of the event is yet to be determined, we are targeting early next Spring.

Bee Fly
Photo by Don Scallen

Come out and learn about the important role of pollinators in ecological relationships, biodiversity, agriculture/food industry. We recognized a need in our community to develop a broader understanding of the role insects play in life on earth. We want to share the wealth of knowledge present among our Club members and educate people on the importance of native plants. We feel our Club is in a great position to engage and educate a wider audience and it will be fun! We will feature a few speakers, some hands-on displays and, best of all, lush and lovely native plant species to take home for the benefit of pollinators in participants' garden.

Female Sweat Bee (Halictus), Metallic Green Bee (Agapostemont)
Photo by Laura Weihs

Fiona Reid and Alexis Buset are lead organizers for this event. They will, at some point, ask for a little extra help for certain tasks. If you are interested in being involved, please speak to either of them at a meeting or send them an email.

Stay tuned for more information and ways that you can be involved in this exciting outreach event!

Bringing Nature Home; How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants

By Douglas W. Tallamy, 2009, Timber Press Inc., 358 pages
Reviewed by DJW

The decision to take down our healthy 25 year old maple tree was not taken lightly. It anchored the corner of our downtown Georgetown backyard where its dense canopy gave a delightful whispering rattling accompaniment to any windy day, and sheltered the ground below from rain and sun. In fact, it sheltered too well and kept needed rain and light from plants trying to grow in its dense roots below it.

But the tree was a Norway maple (Acer platanoides), and the convincing reason for taking it down was less its effects on other plants, but more its failure to support insect life: it was a non-participant in the web of life wherein bugs that eat plants are in turn eaten by other critters, especially birds, and thereby help to maintain nature's complex balance.

However, it's one thing to rip up a few handfuls of garlic mustard or knock down some giant hogweed, but another matter entirely to cut down a handsome mature maple tree; it was a tough choice.

The decision was vindicated as I inspected the leafy branches being stacked for the chipper on the shoulder of the road. The leaves were pristine, with no evidence of nibbling, boring, chewing, nest-making, web making, or other such uses. And not a bug was to be found. This was in stark contrast to the lacewings, katydids, caterpillars, and other critters found on the poor hazardous elm tree I sadly took down 15 years ago.

When Tallamy wrote this book in 2009, he ranked Norway maple as the most common shade tree in North America. Like many ornamental species, it has escaped cultivation and is rapidly displacing native trees. Its fast growth, hardiness, and tolerance of urban settings have made it a favourite of nurseries and municipalities.

Tallamy's book challenges us to fundamentally change the way we think about our gardens and their role in the larger landscape. He points out that "all plants are not created equal, particularly in their ability to support wildlife." In today's world, where natural systems are threatened in so many ways, he proposes that "gardening has taken on a role that transcends the needs of the gardener", and that gardeners have become important players in the management of wildlife, and can make a difference to the future of biodiversity.

Tallamy's training as an entomologist ultimately informed his epiphany. Most insect herbivores can only eat plants with which they share an evolutionary history, and as the number of food plants is reduced, then the number of insects is reduced. Over 95% of terrestrial bird species in North America rely on insects and other arthropods to feed their young. We've done a good job of reducing the number of insects: through farming practices, habitat loss (remember hedgerows ?), urbanization, and so forth. As the

number of insects has declined, then there is less food for birds, and bird numbers decline. Tallamy repeats renowned naturalist E.O. Wilson's statement that insects are the little things that run the world.

Tallamy doesn't rely on nostalgia or feelings of loyalty to native species, but instead lays out the science and touches on the growing body of research that impels the argument. He devotes a chapter to explain why insects can't eat alien plants (leaf chemistry); and a chapter to explain what is native and what is not (more to do with how a plant participates in the local ecology than where it comes from). He devotes a good number of pages to catalogue native plants and their attributes, along with meaningful descriptions of the "bird food" that they support.

Many of us are familiar with the concept of a keystone species upon which other species in an ecosystem largely depend such that if it were removed then the ecosystem would change drastically. Tallamy explains the thinking that this may be too static a concept that misses the highly dynamic character of real ecosystems, and he describes the Jenga Hypothesis as a more fitting metaphor. The game of Jenga consists of small wooden blocks assembled in layers into a freestanding tower; contestants take turns attempting to remove a block without causing the tower to collapse. In the Jenga Hypothesis, any species can play a keystone role under the appropriate circumstances, and the need for biodiversity becomes readily apparent in order to have robust ecosystems.

North Americans have done a good job of reducing biodiversity. For example, Tallamy points out that over 70% of the forests along the US eastern seaboard are gone; vast tracts of grassland are gone, replaced with mono-culture farmland. Cities, urban areas, and infrastructure have paved and laid sod over natural areas.

He discusses the preference of gardeners (and garden centres) for exotic plants that are "pest free". * Such plants may be desirable and attractive on a living room table, but once they escape into the wild, as they so often do, then unfettered by "pests" they proliferate, displacing native species, and reducing diversity and the menu options for local critters.

Tallamy contends that what we put in our gardens can, and does, have an impact and make a difference. We can provide a menu that will increase the odds of our grandchildren being able to enjoy the wildlife, particularly birds, which are in such distress.

This book isn't written for naturalists, who arguably are already onboard with his message. But in addition to the science that supports his argument, it offers abundant information about plants and critters (along with lots of pictures) to inform any reader to make better choices in their own personal spaces, and thus help to mitigate the challenges we all face.

In a lecture he gave to the Toronto Entomologists' Association in December 2017, Tallamy portrayed the lovely Norway maples that grace so many gardens, streets, and increasingly, woodland areas, as no better than "tree statues" in that they provide about as much support for insect life. We are deceived to think of them as integral parts of our biome.

In its demise, our own Norway maple provided a good pile of mulch, along with a couple of large trunk sections that will frame the new Red Oak that we intend to plant this autumn. Tallamy says Oaks are able to support 534 species of lepidoptera. We look forward to welcoming them, and the varied wildlife that will follow them, to our little garden.

Available in old fashioned analog ink on paper at the Halton Hills Library.

**For an engaging and fascinating account of the origins of western horticulture, including the transoceanic movement of so many species, read Brother Gardeners, by Andrea Wulf.*

Group Litter Pick Up – Let's make a difference!

By Laura Weihs

Saturday, September 15, 2018 from 9 to 10 am
Group Litter Pickup starting from parking lot at 93 Armstrong Ave., Georgetown
(Park in the plaza with NaturesScene.com & Accurate Transmission, across from Miskas Wood Products. This is between Mountainview Rd. and Sinclair Ave.)

I hosted my first group pick up at the end of May. It took 8 enthusiastic people just over an hour to pretty much fill the back of my van with bags of litter! We were pleased with our efforts. Everyone had a feeling of having done something to help the environment!

I had selected an area where I felt we were not only removing litter but keeping it from ending up in the Credit River and further contaminating the environment. This new location was picked for the same reason. The credit flows just downhill from where we'll be. You won't have to walk very far as there unfortunately is an abundance of litter with every footstep. There is a paved multiuse path to keep us safely away from cars and we can spread out in either direction from the parking lot. Please refrain from working on the steep bank so we don't have any tumbles! The owner of the building was pleased about the event and gave us permission to park there.

As mentioned in the Outdoor Events listing on page 4, I will bring an assortment of latex and cloth gloves, pick up sticks with claws on the end, pails and bags. The bags and cloth gloves were kindly provided by the Region of Peel who thanks you for your help! Feel free to bring your favourite pair of work gloves. For those who have time, we'll go for a coffee afterwards. I hope you will join us!

Please RSVP to Laura at biker_chic@sympatico.ca if you plan to attend.

Let's make a difference!

Milton Canadian Champion | Thursday, July 26, 2018

MUDPUPPY LOVE: ELUSIVE CREATURES FOUND IN 16 MILE CREEK

THE LARGE, AQUATIC SALAMANDERS WERE SPOTTED IN THE CREEK JULY 9 FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 30 YEARS

SAIRA PEESKER
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Conservation Halton has a mad case of mudpuppy love these days after finding dozens of members of the elusive species in Sixteen Mile Creek.

"Oh my God, we were stoked," said senior monitoring ecologist Andrea Dunn, who was taking part in a fish and wildlife rescue near Milton in early July when the aquatic salamanders were spotted.

"Even as an ecologist, I've only seen one before ... It was such an awesome find."Mudpuppies are the largest member of the salamander family living in this area, growing as long as 48 centimetres in adulthood, according to the Royal Ontario Museum Field Guide to Amphibians and Reptiles of Ontario.

They are fully aquatic, have visible external gills, tend to be brownish in colour and live near the floor of lakes, rivers and ponds. "My co-worker was on her knees digging through the mud (when the first one) squirted past her," said Dunn.

"She squealed and didn't know what it was at first. We all came running and were shocked to see it."

While not designated as a species at risk, mudpuppies are nocturnal creatures and are rarely spotted.

The last one seen in the Sixteen Mile Creek was about 30 years ago, said Dunn. They're present in Bronte Creek, with the last sighting there in 2014, and are occasionally caught by ice fishers in the harbour, she said.

Supplied/Conservation Halton

Conservation Halton ecologists discovered dozens of mudpuppies in 16 Mile Creek in July 2018. The species had not been seen in the creek for 30 years.

Because the species is so elusive, the discovery doesn't necessarily indicate any changes to the creek's health. "But it's a good indication that we have lots of natural diversity and good water conditions," said Dunn, adding it could mean there is minimal run-off going into the water.

"Species like this are very sensitive to herbicides."The discovery occurred July 9 when conservation authority staff began a multi-day mission to remove all fish and wildlife from a section of the creek that is part of a restoration project.

To catch the various creek-dwelling creatures, workers used techniques including pumping water out of the stream, dragging a net along the bottom and applying a mild electric current to stun fish and make them easier to catch-.More than 500 freshwater mussels, 3,000 fish and 30 mudpuppies were relocated downstream, said Dunn.

She encouraged members of the public to avoid trying to find mudpuppies on their own, saying "while it's an exciting find, it's important to keep wild animals wild."

"Trying to find them may adversely impact them by damaging their habitats."

Additional Mudpuppy Information

Yves Scholten

That was an incredible find for my colleagues. Very exciting! To my knowledge, they have previously been found in some locations after lampricide applications have been administered. Lampricides are chemicals administered to creeks where Sea Lamprey are thought or known to breed, in an effort to kill this species (which is invasive and impacts important fish populations, such as Lake Trout). The chemical kills the larvae of the Lamprey.

Most other animals are unaffected by it. Unfortunately, Mudpuppies are highly sensitive to it, and in some cases, mass Mudpuppy kills have occurred in streams treated with Lampricides.

Anglers sometimes catch them too, especially while ice-fishing in winter.

Since they love water with high dissolved Oxygen content, they like colder water. In many systems, this means they will move downstream in the warmer months, often migrating to deeper lakes where they can enjoy the deepwater temperatures. They then migrate upstream in the winter, to shallower streams, higher in the watershed.

Since little is known about the distribution of Mudpuppies in Ontario, any findings should be reported to the Ontario Nature Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (https://ontarionature.org/programs/citizen-science/reptile-amphibian-atlas).

They are nocturnal carnivores, and eat a variety of food, including crayfish which they crush with their strong jaws. Mudpuppies can lay up to 190 eggs in the spring, and the female then guards them for 2 months until they hatch.

Dragonfly Outing to Forks-of-the-Credit

W.D. McIlveen

On July 22, 2018, nine members of the Halton/North Peel Naturalists joined David d'Entremont at the Forks-of-the-Credit Provincial Park. The purpose of the event was to introduce the participants to the wonders of dragonflies and damselflies. The participants were duly rewarded.

HNP members listening to David d'Entremont describing the nature of dragonflies at the start of the field trip. Photo by Bill McIlveen

David took the time to describe the general features of Dragonflies, how to distinguish dragonflies from damselflies, and provided much information about typical life cycle. He pointed out how some species are migratory leaving our part of the world and travelling to warmer places to spend the winter. With each new species captured, David talked about the characteristics used to separate the species. He mentioned how it is usually easier to identify species by the males rather than the females.

We started by spending much of the day on the shore of Kettle Lake. At first, the sky was overcast and a few dragonflies were flitting about. But, during the time we were there, the sun came out and this changed the level of activity which dramatically increased. Several species quickly emerged from unseen places but the greatest increase in number was noted in the case of Common Whitetails and Twelve-spotted Skimmers. After this, we walked through the meadows where a different suite of species hunts for prey.

The dragonfly species tally for the day was twelve as indicated in the attached table. All of the species were common ones and they appeared in numbers and location in a manner that experience says they should. The results for the day could hardly have been better scripted to be normal.

Family	Latin Binomial	Common Name
Aeschnidae	*Anax junius*	Common Green Darner
Coenagrionidae	*Enallagma cyathigerum*	Northern Bluet
	Enallagma ebrium	Marsh Bluet
	Ischnura verticalis	Eastern Forktail
Libellulidae	*Celithemis elisa*	Calico Pennant
	Ladona julia	Chalk-fronted Corporal
	Leucorrhinia intacta	Dot-tailed Whiteface
	Libellula luctuosa	Widow Skimmer
	Libellula pulchella	Twelve Spotted Skimmer
	Perithemis tenera	Eastern Amberwing
	Plathemis lydia	Common Whitetail
	Sympetrum obtrusum	White-faced Meadowhawk

The photographs below illustrate a few of the sightings for the day.

Common Green Darner and Twelve-spotted Skimmer caught at Kettle Lake. The shed skin or exuviae shed by an undetermined dragonfly. Above photos by Laura Weihs

In addition to the dragonflies, the group was treated by the appearance of other groups of plants and animals. The list included birds (15), butterflies (13), amphibians (3), one reptile, one mammal and school of unknown minnow species. The amphibians included a tiny Gray Tree Frog that surely had just emerged. There was a large number of plant species in flower with Common Milkweed being quite prominent. Their abundance would have figured into the numerous Monarchs observed and two Monarch caterpillars found without any active searching. An assortment of other interesting organisms and ecological associations were noted on a casual basis.

The overall assessment of the day indicated that it was highly successful and the participants were all pleased with the results. In fact, there was some preliminary discussion about a follow-up event.

Check out this link: **The secret to turtle hibernation: Butt-breathing**

Submitted by David Williams

https://theconversation.com/the-secret-to-turtle-hibernation-butt-breathing-86727?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2027%202018&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20June%2027%202018+CID_8f8dee1b379ef676f8ceb2f795954233&utm_source=campaign_monitor_ca&utm_term=The%20secret%20to%20turtle%20hibernation%20Butt-breathing

September/October Quiz

(Answers are on the last page.)

Moths and Moth-watching – the best kind of night out!

By Fiona A. Reid

As an erstwhile mammologist, one might think I would only be interested in moths as food for bats. But let's look a bit closer – here is another group of much maligned, furry, night-flying creatures, with *so much* more diversity! In Ontario we have 8 species of bats (9 if you count an accidental), whereas we have around 2,000 species of moths. Moths range in size from little larger than a pin head, to a four- inch wide silkmoth. The variety of structure, form and pattern they display is breathtaking. Now that we can venture out armed with Beadle and Leckie's magnificent field guide to northeastern moths, and later use Moth Photographer's Group online images to confirm our identifications, we can start to discover just how many moths occur in a single location.

Mothing in Speyside starts about an hour before sunset. We prepare bait (from soft bananas, molasses, brown sugar and beer) well before the event date, so it can mature to a rich syrupy concoction. We walk the forest trails, spreading bait on large trees and flicking the brush over leaves with an old paintbrush. Some years ago we would set one or two lights and a sheet up around the house and at the forest entrance. These days we are often joined by a mothing group from High Park – the High Park Mothia – who take the business very seriously. They arrive armed with long extension cords, sheets, lights and

Photo by Don Scallen

moth traps and bustle about setting up. Moth traps are garbage bins filled with egg boxes (very lightweight structures with numerous nooks and crannies for moths to conceal themselves in). At the top a powerful light sits in a funnel that effectively guides the moths into the trap, where most species find a place to settle unharmed. A few may escape but there will be plenty left to study.

As dusk falls, we first inspect the sheets set up in the back garden and near an old fire pit. Moths are starting to gather, but so far they are smallish species that hold interest for the seasoned moth-ers, but not to those new to the game. We then head into the woods to follow the bait trail set out earlier. A few *Idia* species dominate, along with the non-native Large Yellow Underwing. Then a flash of eyeshine belies the presence of a Once-married Underwing. Wings closed, these moths resemble bark and can be easily overlooked, but as this one feasts on nectar it spreads out and reveals black and red hindwings etched with cream. Underwings are sensitive to sound and movement, so not everyone gets to see this species.

Once-Married Underwing (*Catocala unijuga*)
Photo by Fiona Reid

Spring Peeper
Photo by Fiona Reid

When we reach the first pond, there are several interesting visitors on the leaves of purple-flowering raspberry that were splashed with bait earlier. Not only moths, but their predators are on the move. We spot one, then a second Spring Peeper, a few spiders feasting on moths, and on the far side of the pond a Gray Treefrog is calling. Some of the group say they have never seen this frog, so we make our way around the pond and eventually locate it, a nice bonus of being in the forest at night.

Gray Treefrog calling
Photo by Fiona Reid

We make our way back to the sheets lit by mercury vapour and/or UV lights. Whoops of delight greet a large sphinx moth, a Modest Sphinx, also known as a big Poplar Sphinx. Its subtle patterns of soft greenish-gray hide brilliant pink flashes of underwing, but even the upper wings are lit with a mauve highlight. It is calm enough to allow us to open the wings, but won't hold the position long enough for photos. Another good find is the Pink-shaded Fern Moth, a close relative of the equally attractive Silver-spotted Fern moth seen on a previous outing. The experts can barely tear themselves away from the diversity of moths on this sheet, from moths that are similar in size to a speck of dirt, to drab gray geometers, and much more. Some of us want to check other sheets to see the more ornate, colorful, larger species on offer. In passing we check a light set up in front of my white garage door. Katydids,

spiders, beetles and a few moths are gathered here. The last light has the best diversity of the night and we find ourselves spending an hour or so here. A copy of the Peterson Field Guide is at hand, a sheet for recording species, and some small glass containers to keep the hard to identify species until morning.

Modest Sphinx (*Pachysphinx modesta*)
Photo by Fiona Reid

Some people have already left for the night, but others stay up until the wee hours. At about 2 a.m. we call it quits, turn off the sheet lights but leave moth trap lights on, and retire for the night. We have to get up around 6:30, though, as we can't leave the traps too long. Coffee and snacks quickly downed, we collect the traps and bring everything to the deck where we set up stations for photography (on logs or rocks). Opening the trap with care, we start to pull out egg cartons one at a time, examining and recording all the species seen. Many are familiar from the previous night, but there are also a few new ones, and our list grows. For small and hard to identify moths, we take photos and refer to both books and websites to verify IDs. It can take 3 hours to examine one trap! After the first trap is done, we make sure the remaining traps and animals are well shaded and take a break for a sumptuous brunch – courtesy of my chickens, supplemented by an assortment of delicacies from the overnighters.

Even the smaller moths can be extremely attractive, such as this Mountain Cosmopterix (*Cosmopterix montisella*) Photo by Fiona Reid

Fed, if not rested, we get back to work on another trap. One of my favorites is in this one, the lovely Moonseed Moth (*Plusiodonta compressipalpis*). Photo by Fiona Reid

By the end of the morning we will have close to 100 species of moths named, and a few more that will require further study. Well-pleased, equipment is carefully packed and the visitors head home. As for me, the hammock calls!

Work Towards a Zero Waste Lifestyle!

By Laura Weihs

Local stores *"Foodstuffs"* and *"The Bulk Barn"* both in Georgetown will let you either buy their containers to fill or take your own glass or plastic containers / jars to fill rather than using plastic bags! The product is put directly into a container and the customer does not pay for the weight of that container. I have only recently found out about this and have taken my containers to Bulk Barn where they weigh them empty, then I can fill them – it's so easy.

Apparently Foodstuffs has always had this policy!!!

For more info call Foodstuffs at 905-877-6569 or e-mail them at: info@foodstuffs.ca OR go to http://www.bulkbarn.ca/Reusable-Container-Program/RCP-Minimum-Standards.html for ***Zero Waste Lifestyle Inspiration!***

When you do have plastic bags and wrap don't forget that Halton now recycles those and they go in the Blue Box… **Reduce — Reuse — Recycle!**

The Flight to the Cities **Wilderness icons trade cliffs and forests for condos and gas stations**

By Don Scallen

In July I was filling a bicycle tire with air at the Petro Canada station at Guelph St. and Mountainview Rd. in Georgetown. A commotion on the station roof led me to look up, just in time to see a raven lifting off with a pigeon squab firmly in its grasp. (Pigeons have long nested on the roof overhanging the PetroCan pumps.) Then, in early August while riding my bike along Main Street south, I again looked upwards, this time to see a group of five ravens (possibly a family group) flying towards Silver Creek Valley from the west.

In downtown Brampton in 2017 and again this year, club members Peter Bailey and Rose O'Reilly, have been watching the activities of a peregrine falcon family from their condominium terrace. In both years a pair of adult peregrines were observed caring for a single fledgling. It appears quite likely that the peregrines nested in the area, if not on Peter and Rose's condominium itself. Regardless, the peregrines used their condominium as a convenient perch to launch attacks on urban birds – and sometimes, as Peter and Rose found out – on people too. (See their first-hand account in this newsletter.)

Ravens in Georgetown? Peregrines in Brampton? Astonishing. A few short decades ago suggestions of these avian wilderness icons colonizing southern Ontario would have been scoffed at. What gives?

The story of peregrine decline is familiar to most. A decline largely attributable to the widespread use of the insecticide DDT half a century ago. As late as 1986 nesting peregrine falcons were almost non-existent in Ontario. The first breeding bird atlas project, a massive undertaking that enlisted the aid of hundreds of birders across the province, including Bill McIlveen and myself, ran from 1981 to 1985. Only a single peregrine nest was found in Ontario during that period, in Arnprior.

Peregrine Falcon
Photo by Peter Bailey

Fast forward thirty years or so and peregrines occupy over 100 territories in Ontario and, remarkably, urban peregrines produce more young on average than their counterparts in natural settings. Tall buildings are excellent facsimiles for natural cliffs and pigeons serve as an abundant year-round food source.

Raven nesting in Cheltenham
Photo by Don Scallen

As for the ravens, the first breeding bird atlas reveals that in the early 1980's they nested no further south than the Bruce Peninsula and the southern border of the Canadian Shield. And now? They are beginning to colonize Toronto and are becoming a rather common sight throughout the GTA.

One takeaway in the recolonization of both peregrines and ravens, is that some birds and animals can change their behaviour to adapt to urban living, especially when plenty of food is available. For peregrines, city food is primarily pigeons. In fact, without an abundance of non-native pigeons it could be argued that peregrines wouldn't be able to establish a talon-hold in our urban centres. What about ravens? As committed nest robbers (as most corvids are, including jays and crows), they are also likely benefitting from abundant urban bird populations – as I witnessed in the PetroCan pigeon squab attack. It's no great surprise that ravens have nested recently on the Leslie Street Spit, which offers an uber-abundant supply of ring-billed gull chicks – food for raven young.

Photo by Don Scallen

So the natural world continues to change, often rapidly and in unexpected ways. Much of that change is negative, but not all of it. Peregrines in the skies over Brampton is surely a hugely positive development. Of interest too, is that some invasive species (pigeons for example) are supporting at-risk species like peregrines. Another example of an invasive species being put to good use by an at-risk species is unfolding on the islands at the western end of Lake Erie. There is some evidence to suggest that populations of at-risk Lake Erie watersnakes may be rebounding because the snakes are tapping into a new abundant food source: an invasive fish called the round goby. This doesn't exonerate the invasives for the harm they cause, but does demonstrate that sometimes, native species can adapt to take advantage of them.

I've written before about change being the only constant in nature. I'm certain that in the years to come we'll continue to be surprised by unexpected changes in the species composition around us.

Feathered Fury in Downtown Brampton

Article by Rose O'Reilly and Photos by Peter Bailey

We joined HNPN to make sure we got our 'nature fix', having recently moved from a quarter acre perennial garden replete with song birds and feeders and the occasional hungry hawk or strutting turkey. Who knew that our new concrete abode, high in the sky, would remind us that nature is never far away?

To our delight, we discovered a pair of peregrine falcons living just above our new rooftop terrace and seized every opportunity to watch these magnificent creatures, the fastest in the animal kingdom. Very soon afterwards, we introduced ourselves as one of the peregrine perched six feet away and seemed to size us up. Exquisite! We assumed we were well acquainted, naively so!

In early July, our previously inquisitive falcon began to swoop toward our terrace and we excitingly took an even closer look at this bird of prey. Not the smartest thing to do. I felt her wing tip brush my cheek as Peter yelled "get back against the wall". Then Peter lifted his cell phone in a desperate (but wholly inadequate) attempt to defend himself. The peregrine missed his face but still slashed his arm with its razor-sharp talons.

We saw the blood dripping and then wisely withdrew inside, just before our falcon returned and carpet-bombed a load of poop all across where we had been just standing. My concern was for Peter but even though the gash was eight inches long, it was not deep. I had been spared the sharp talons on my face, thankfully so.

Peter wearing the badge of honour, literally on his sleeve!

I immediately reflected on how this graceful creature had merely served us a warning, and not attacked with the full fury she was capable of.

We are happy to report that things are back to normal as we enjoy nature in our urban setting. We also know who rules the roost!

Monarch Migration

Buoyed by thermals the monarch rises,
gossamer wings aflame in the morning sun.
She becomes a mote against the azure,
high above farms and forests, lakes and rivers,
concrete cities and asphalt highways.
Meadows tinted purple and white with asters,
beckon her to rest and drink.
Nourishing nectar, sweet sustenance, elemental pleasure.
But then to the skies once more, hurried on by advancing cold.
Buffeted by wind, guided by Sol,
tracing a path thrumming with the whispering wings of her kin,
coursing a great aerial conduit forged over millennia,
southwest towards distant mountains,
a harbour from winter's wrath,
a place of teeming commune with millions of her kind,
draping Oyamel fir trees in shimmering orange.

Don Scallen

Bad Weather Equals Good Photography

Article and Photos by Gary Hall

It's a common misconception that sunny days provide the best conditions for photography. In fact, taking pictures in full sunlight is probably one of the worst times to take pictures. Full sunlight creates very harsh, highlights and shadows. That's why photographers are encouraged to get out there early in the morning or in late afternoon when the light is softer.

Atmospheric conditions offer some dynamic shooting opportunities. I often say, "Don't put your camera away just because it's raining" (that's light rain, not downpours). Wet weather, snow, fog and dust storms provide some stunning lighting conditions and create mood in your photographs. One precaution: keep your camera dry. You can purchase a rain cover for your equipment at a camera store or come up with a solution of your own. I use my Gore-Tex rain pants to cover my lenses and cameras. In fact, my rain pants have probably spent much more time on my cameras than they have on me!

Rain and Fog

Where sunny weather may wash out colours, wet weather makes them really pop. Look at the example of the apple. The red colour is nicely saturated and the water droplet adds to the overall composition of the image.

The hikers enjoying the view of the kettle lake at Forks of the Credit Provincial Park was shot in the fog. The fog and wet vegetation help set off the vibrant colours of their jackets. Try to imagine this scene without the fog.

Often just being in the right place at the right time coupled with luck can lead to an interesting image. On a trip to Yellowstone I was parked on the side of the road photographing some bison in the rain when a herd of pronghorn dashed across the highway and came to an abrupt halt on a hill on the other side – in single file, angling upward on the incline with a halo of fog setting them off from the trees in the background. What more could a photographer ask for?

Dust Storm

The image of the bull elephant sauntering through a herd of zebras and wildebeest was shot at Amboseli National Park in Kenya. Out of a group of sixteen, only three of us ventured out for a late afternoon game drive. The others decided to stay at the lodge because it looked like unstable weather. Part way through our drive, it started to rain just as the wind whipped up a brief dust storm. For the next two or three minutes, three excited photographers sprung into action taking advantage of the unique lighting conditions created by the storm.

Just as the brief storm ended, we were presented with another excellent scene of a family of elephants framed by a colourful rainbow.

Snow

One of my most popular pictures is the one of the three horses in the snowstorm. I call it "Tails to the Wind". I just happened to have my camera with me as I was driving home and turned on to a sideroad. When I saw these three horses lined up side by side in the snowstorm, I couldn't pass by. A relatively slow shutter speed helped capture the motion of the snow as it angled across the bodies of the horses. With the soft background, snow accumulating on the backs of the horses and the stoic look on their faces, one can "feel" the cold and the misery that these poor animals are experiencing.

The next time you're out taking pictures and it starts to rain, don't head for shelter - put on the rain gear, protect your camera equipment and keep on shooting. You'll probably be pleased with the results.

Photo Tips for Nature Photography– Camera Settings

Article and Photos by Ian Jarvie

Taking pictures with your camera set on Auto Mode means that the camera does all the work - you just point and shoot. If you are happy with that, fine, but if you choose, you can change the settings and take more control of things, sometimes with surprising results. Getting away from Auto Mode involves understanding the very basics, and depending on your camera, there are three main things you can fiddle with - collectively known as the exposure triangle - and to get the perfect exposure, all three have to play nicely together. So, the three things are Shutter Speed, Aperture and ISO, and here's a short explanation of each.

1. Shutter Speed is the length of time the camera shutter is open to expose light to the camera sensor. Shutter speed is given in fractions of a second, so 1/60 of a second lets in more light than 1/500 because the shutter stays open longer.

2. Aperture is the hole in the lens through which light travels to the camera sensor. Aperture is given in f numbers, and f4 lets in more light than f16 because the aperture is more open. (It's counterintuitive, the bigger the number, the smaller the hole).

3. ISO is the sensitivity of the camera sensor to the light passing through the lens. ISO is given in numbers, and the higher the number, the less light is needed to give the same exposure. (Shutter speed numbers are self-explanatory, but how the other two are derived is complicated and we don't need to worry about them here.)

Playing with these settings is like everything in life, you get nothing for nothing, and here's why!

A slow shutter speed certainly lets in more light, but if the camera is hand-held and not on a tripod, too slow will cause camera shake resulting in blurry pictures. You will need a high shutter speed to freeze fast moving objects like a bird in flight or running animal.

The shutter speed for the hummingbird shots was 1/320 of a second, and even that didn't freeze the wings!

Aperture not only controls the amount of light getting to the sensor, it also determines depth-of-field, i.e. how much in front and behind the subject is in focus. A large aperture, say f4, will let in lots of light, but will result in a very shallow depth of field, ie objects in front and behind the subject will be out of focus. F16 will let in much less light, but gives a much greater depth-of-field.

If your camera allows it, choosing the lowest ISO possible is generally the best. In general, the higher the ISO, the more “grainy” the picture will be.

So, depending on your camera, you may have control of all, or some of the three corners of the exposure triangle. Here are two of the settings you might like to try - Shutter Priority and Aperture Priority.

Selecting Shutter Priority means that you decide on the shutter speed, and the camera selects the correct aperture (and possibly what ISO too). If you want to photograph a bird in flight, set a high shutter speed of say 1/1000 of a second or even higher, and let the camera do the rest. Or set a slow shutter speed of say 1/100 and see how good the blurred water in a waterfall looks. Or change the camera to

Aperture Priority where you select the aperture and the camera sets the shutter speed. Try a shallow depth-of-field of say f5.6 and take a close-up of a flower, and see how it ‘pops’ out from the out-of-focus background. Or if you want both foreground and background in focus, say for a landscape shot of lakes and mountains, set a high f number of say f16 or even f32 and see how it looks.

If your camera allows you to set the ISO, play with that too, try setting some high ISO numbers and shoot some night scenes, and see how the graininess changes with ISO settings.

The wonderful thing about modern digital photography is that the images cost nothing. SD cards are cheap, and you can use them over and over.

So, get your camera out, get out of Auto Mode and experiment. Some images will be over exposed, some under exposed, some possibly out of focus, but you might be surprised at how good one or two of them turn out, and the more you take, the better they, and you, will get. But be careful, taking control of your images can be addictive!

Outing to Carden Alvar - a non-birder goes birding!

by Lorysa Cornish

The weekend of June 23/24 saw the first (hopefully) annual HNPNC outing to the Carden Alvar, a spectacular and important birding location half an hour from Orillia. A small group of fearless birders headed out Saturday afternoon to meet up for an evening/morning of nature viewing (overnighting in a series of cheap motels in Orillia), and what a wonderful outing it was! The plan was to meet up at 5, bird until it was too dark to see anything, then meet up again early Sunday morning (and yes, I mean early - 6:30 was the agreed-upon time) and bird until around noon or whenever people were done.

What is an alvar, you may ask? I certainly did. According to Nature Conservancy Canada: "Alvars are globally rare, naturally open habitats with either a thin covering of soil or no soil over a base of limestone or dolostone. Their unique features are the result of seasonal extremes from spring and fall flooding to summer drought. "

More importantly, why are they important? Again, courtesy of Nature Conservancy Canada:
"While at first glance alvars may appear barren, at a small scale they can be among the most species-rich communities in the world. In Ontario, extensive grassland alvars provide seasonal habitat for grassland birds, North America's fastest declining bird group. "

Swamp Sparrow –
Photo by Yves Scholten

Specific to the Carden Alvar, Ontario Parks further elaborates: "The biological inventories are impressive, with 230 bird species (including several rare or endangered species), over 400 plants (with many restricted to alvar habitat), and 130 species of butterflies and dragonflies."

OFO (Ontario Field Ornithologists) adds:
"The Carden Alvar is designated an Important Bird Area (IBA) by Birdlife International. Carden is nationally significant as one of the last strongholds of the Eastern Loggerhead Shrike in Canada and it has high populations of grassland and scrubland birds such as Upland Sandpipers, American Kestrels, Common Nighthawks, Eastern Whip-poor-wills, Eastern Bluebirds, Brown Thrashers, Golden-winged Warblers, Bobolinks, Eastern Meadowlarks, Eastern Towhees, Clay-colored Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows and Grasshopper Sparrows."

This was bound to be an amazing opportunity to see birds we don't see around Georgetown. What attracted me personally was the possibility of seeing Loggerhead Shrikes, also known as the butcher bird. Look this bird up if you're not familiar, it has interesting habits!

The outing was organized by our intrepid leader, Ian Jarvie, and also in attendance were (from left to right in photo) Tom Steller, Garry Kirkpatrick, Helen Ross, Fiona Reid, Pam Forsyth, Yves Scholten, and Alexis Buset. Not pictured: Joe Coutts, me, Ian who I presume was the photographer. I'd love to claim I was taking this picture (taken very early Sunday morning) but truth be told, I was still enroute to the meeting point, having left a bit later than I'd intended, and then been held up in the Tim Horton's drive-through. Not sure what Joe's excuse was. :)

Group Photo by Ian Jarvie

We met at the Kirkland Lift Lock for a picnic dinner (suggested by Fiona). I'd assumed everyone would bring a sandwich, but instead we had a veritable feast, sharing salads, hummus, breads, pate, fresh vegetables (including lettuces from Fiona's garden), hardboiled eggs (from Fiona's free-range chickens), and a marvelous quiche provided by Ian's better half. At our picnic site we saw our first birds, including Northern Rough-winged Swallows. After eating (and a quick bathroom break - there are actual facilities here, take advantage of them!) we headed to our first stop, Cameron Ranch, where we planned to see what there was to see, then leave some cars in the parking lot and carpool out to Wylie Road, described by OFO as "the best early summer birding road in southern Ontario." (This is not an exaggeration.)

Map from http://www.ofo.ca/site/page/view/articles.cardenalvar

Cameron Ranch is a lovely grassy area near trees and grazing cattle. Almost immediately we saw Eastern Meadowlarks, the ubiquitous Red-winged Blackbirds, an Upland Sandpiper popping up in the grass, and heard a Common Yellowthroat and an elusive Grasshopper Sparrow. Best of all, there was a group of three Loggerhead Shrikes in a tree - two young and an adult that swooped in with food. We were treated to an excellent view thanks to those who brought scopes (Fiona and Tom). We also saw Eastern Bluebird, Brown Thrasher, Northern Harrier, and a mind-boggling (for me) array of different sparrows. It was fun to watch the Song Sparrow throw back its head and sing with what appears to be unabashed joy.

Loggerhead Shrikes
Photo by Yves Scholten

Birding in a group is a great way to get started - experienced birders are so much better at spotting the little feathered creatures in trees and grasses. I found it quite hard to find some of them, even when told exactly where to look, but with time and experience it got easier. For neophyte birders such as myself, I found the best start was to point my binoculars in the general direction other people were looking and ask "what are we looking at?" Certainly I would never have found many of these on my own.

I also learned that birders bird by ear as well as by eye. We heard an amazing variety of warblers and sparrows, the buzz of the Grasshopper Sparrow, the 'wichita wichita' of the Common Yellowthroat, and a nearby 'moo' which Yves identified with a straight face as a "cowbird"!

Leaving the ranch, Yves overturned a rock and found a pair of Eastern Garter snakes, a large (and aromatic) female and a smaller male.

Red-eyed Vireo
Photo by Yves Scholten

Heading out onto Wylie Road, we quickly stopped to admire a Wilson's Snipe that Yves had spotted on a fence. Creeping slowly up the rough country road, we found Bluebirds, House Wrens, Blue-winged and Yellow Warblers, Chipping, Savannah, Swamp, White-throated, and Field Sparrows, Eastern Kingbirds, Bobolinks, Indigo Buntings, and a Red-eyed Vireo with its distinctive eyebrow.

We stopped at the Sedge Marsh to look for Sedge Wrens, which we heard but could not yet see. We also heard Leopard and Green frogs, and Alexis spotted a turtle. Watching it emerge from the other side of the small bridge, I spotted its yellow chin - a Blanding's turtle! Overhead, we heard the telltale cry of a Common Nighthawk, and were treated to a lovely view of its underside, the white bar on the wings clearly visible.

Common Nighthawk
Photo by Yves Scholten

As darkness descended, we heard the loud cries of Eastern Whip-poor-will. Fiona found a Meadow Jumping Mouse (which has a very long tail!), and spotted some other mammal further along the dark road. It's always fun to have mammal and herp experts along on a birding outing! Once it was too dark to see anything, we made our way slowly along the very rough road and back to the parking lot, to collect our cars and retire to Orillia for the night.

Meadow Jumping mouse
Photo by Yves Scholten

The next morning we met again at Cameron Ranch for an hour of birding before heading back to Wylie Road. This morning we again saw the Shrikes (my personal favourites!) along with Bluebirds, a Cedar Waxwing, and an actual appearance by the Grasshopper Sparrow! On our way out, Fiona identified a few small moths and we noticed an abundance of orange Skippers (a small attractive butterfly).

Grasshopper Sparrow
Photo by Yves Scholten

The area is spectacular not just for its birds, but the variety of unspoiled nature. We saw beautiful wildflowers including not only non-natives such as Bird's Foot Trefoil (pictured with the sparrow), Ox-eye Daisy, and brilliant blue Viper's Bugloss, but also Canadian Anemone, Common Milkweed, New Jersey Tea (a food plant for the endangered and rare Mottled Duskywing and Summer Azure butterflies), Spreading Dogbane, and Alvar specialities such as Prairie Smoke, Balsam Ragwort, and Fragrant Sumac.

Back in the cars, we almost immediately found an Upland Sandpiper conveniently close to the road, providing an excellent photo opportunity, and while stopped, were treated to an amazing aerial display by another Wilson's Snipe, hearing the incredible sound made by its tail feathers!

Upland Sandpiper
Photo by Ian Jarvie

We headed back to Sedge Marsh, determined to spot the wrens we'd heard the evening before, and were indeed treated to repeat albeit brief glimpses of a Sedge Wren. Here and along the road we saw Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, an American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk, Gray Catbird, Northern Flicker, Purple Finch, and Goldfinch. On Wylie Road, we saw a pair of Snowshoe hares - undoubtedly the mammal Fiona had spotted in the dark the previous night.

Next stop was Lake Dalrymple, where we saw Canada Geese, Common Loons, Black Terns, and Caspian Terns with their eye-catching orange bills. On the roadside were the remains of two unfortunately-plundered Snapping turtle nests; it was interesting to see the leathery shells that remained. A Green Heron flew overhead. Enroute, there were Turkey Vultures perched on a roof, and a number of Osprey, including some nesting on top of modified electrical poles along the roadside.

We turned down a narrow sideroad toward Cranberry Lake Marsh. While we didn't find any way to get close to the marsh, we did see more wildflowers such as Swamp Milkweed, Green frogs, and a gorgeous Polyphemus moth that had apparently just emerged from its cocoon. I had opted for binoculars over camera, but snapped this picture with my phone.

Polyphemus moth
Photo by Lorysa Cornish

Returning to the car park around noon, we split up and some of us headed home. Those remaining attempted to head down Canal Lake Road, but the bridge was out, so we returned to Kirkland Lift Lock to finish up our picnic remains for lunch, and were treated to the sight of a Baltimore Oriole, and had the opportunity to watch the lift lock in action, which was quite interesting and operates much faster than I'd expected. After lunch we parted and made our way back to our homes.

All in all, this was an incredible outing, and one that I would return to in a heartbeat. You do not need to be a birder to enjoy a birding outing, but you may well be one by the end. Big thanks to Ian for organizing and to everyone for sharing their knowledge, expertise, viewing scopes, cars, and food. I may even have gained a begrudging admiration for the variety of sparrows!

(Thanks to Ian, Fiona and Yves for help with details and additional information.)

HNPNC CARDEN ALVAR OUTING 23 & 24 JUNE 2018

Row #	Species	Count	Location
1	Canada Goose	7	Little Bluestem Trail
2	Mallard	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
3	Common Loon	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
4	Great Blue Heron	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
5	Green Heron	1	Little Bluestem Trail
6	Eastern Screech Owl	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
7	Northern Flicker	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
8	Turkey Vulture	3	Little Bluestem Trail
9	Osprey	2	Little Bluestem Trail
10	Northern Harrier	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
11	Red-tailed Hawk	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
12	Killdeer	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
13	Spotted Sandpiper	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
14	Upland Sandpiper	6	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
15	Wilson's Snipe	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
16	Ring-billed Gull	5	Little Bluestem Trail
17	Caspian Tern	2	Little Bluestem Trail
18	Black Tern	3	Little Bluestem Trail
19	Rock Pigeon	4	Kirkfield Liftlock
20	Mourning Dove	3	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
21	Common Nighthawk	8	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road

22	Eastern Whip-poor-will	6	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
23	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
24	Hairy Woodpecker	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
25	American Kestrel	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
26	Least Flycatcher	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
27	Eastern Phoebe	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
28	Great Crested Flycatcher	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
29	Eastern Kingbird	6	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
30	Blue jay	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
31	Loggerhead Shrike	3	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
32	Warbling Vireo	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
33	Red-eyed Vireo	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
34	American Crow	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
35	Common Raven	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
36	Northern Rough-winged Swallow	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
37	Tree Swallow	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
38	Barn Swallow	5	Kirkfield Liftlock
39	Cliff Swallow	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
40	Black-capped Chickadee	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
41	House Wren	4	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
42	Sedge Wren	4	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
43	Eastern Bluebird	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
44	Wood Thrush	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
45	American Robin	7	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
46	Veery	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
47	Gray Catbird	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
48	Brown Thrasher	2	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
49	European Starling	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
50	Cedar Waxwing	2	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
51	Baltimore Oriole	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
52	Ovenbird	5	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
53	Blue-winged Warbler	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
54	Golden-winged Warbler	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road

55	Common Yellowthroat	1	Kirkfield Liftlock
56	American Redstart	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
57	Black-and-white Warbler	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
58	Yellow Warbler	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
59	Black-throated Green Warbler	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
60	Northern Cardinal		
61	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
62	Grasshopper Sparrow	2	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
63	Chipping Sparrow	3	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
64	Field Sparrow	4	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
65	White-throated Sparrow	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
66	Savannah Sparrow	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
67	Song Sparrow	2	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
68	Swamp Sparrow	3	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
69	Eastern Towhee	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
70	Indigo Bunting	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
71	Bobolink	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
72	Eastern Meadowlark	5	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
73	Red-winged Blackbird	3	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
74	Brown-headed Cowbird	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
75	Common Grackle	1	Carden Alvar--Cameron Ranch
76	Purple Finch	1	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road
77	American Goldfinch	2	Carden Alvar--Wylie Road

Don't forget to check the last page for your answers to the Quiz!

Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club, Box 115, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4T1
Charity Registration number 869778761RR0001

Executive

President: Don Scallen	(905) 876-6180
Past President: Fiona Reid	(905) 693-9719
Vice President: Ian Jarvie	(905) 877-1441
Secretary: Ann Fraser	
Treasurer: Janice Sukhiani	(647) 408-9515

Appointments

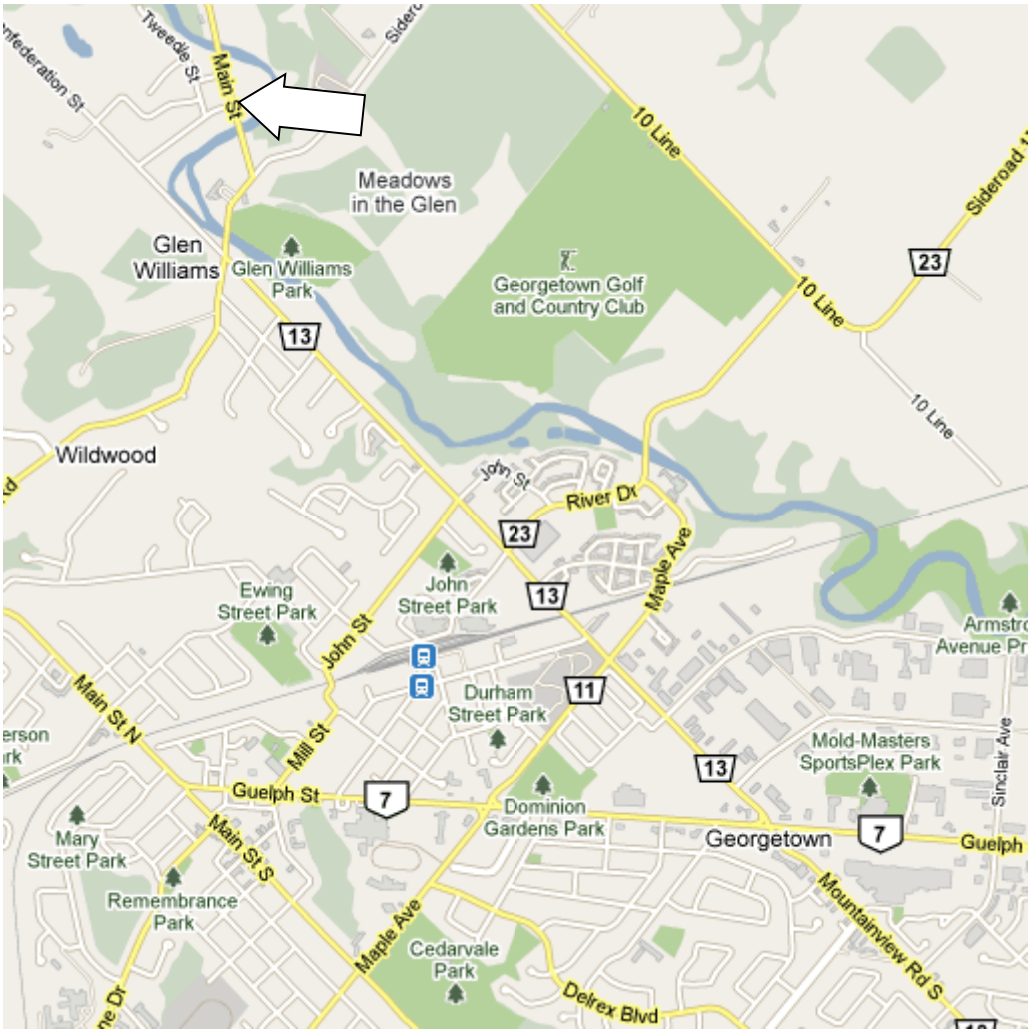
Membership:	Lorysa Cornish
Newsletter:	Laura Weihs
Ontario Nature Representative:	Don Scallen
Webmaster:	John Beaudette
Crozier Property Steward	
Hardy Property Steward	Ray Blower

Membership for one year: $30 Single; $40 Family
The Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club is an affiliated member of Ontario Nature.

www.hnpnc.com

Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club

Meetings are at St Alban's Church in Glen Williams starting at 7:30 p.m.



Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club Membership Form

_____ Renewal or _____ New Member(s) Date_____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

New membership fee for the period:

from September through to August	_____ Single ($30.00)	_____ Family ($40.00)
from December through to August	_____ Single ($22.50)	_____ Family ($30.00) from
March through to August	_____ Single ($15.00)	_____ Family ($20.00)
from June through to August	_____ Single ($ 7.50)	_____ Family ($10.00)

Would you like to make a donation to help send a youth to the **Ontario Nature Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership**? If yes, amount of donation: _____

Do you have any suggestions for programs or field trips?

_____

_____

_____

****

WAIVER OF LIABILITY

(must be signed by anyone planning to attend field trips or other outdoor activities)

In making this application, I affirm that I am in good health, capable of performing the exercise required to participate, and that I accept as my personal risk the hazards of such participation and will not hold the Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club or its representatives responsible.

In consideration of the Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club accepting my application, I hereby and forever release and discharge the Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club and its officers, directors, servants and agents from any liability whatsoever arising as a result of my participation in these trips and declare that this is binding upon me, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigned.

Signature(s): _____ Date: _____

_____ Date: _____

****

Please fill out this form and bring it in to next indoor meeting or mail with payment to:

Halton/North Peel Naturalist Club
P.O. Box 115,
Georgetown, Ontario
L7G 4T1

Answers to the Quiz

1. Yellow Garden Argiope

2. New England Aster

3. Praying Mantis

4. Dogbane beetle

5. Meadowhawk species

6. Green Frog

7. Kentucky Coffee Tree

8. Bird's Nest Fungi

9. Witch Hazel flowers

10. Red-bellied Snake

An invitation to members:

If you'd like to submit a visual quiz for the newsletter just let Don Scallen or newsletter editor Laura Weihs know. Laura's e-mail is biker_chic@sympatico.ca

Our next newsletter will be published in early November. Fall/Winter things could be the theme, but other nature related themes would be fine as well.