

The Heron September, 2014

Upcoming Club Meeting: Monday, September 22, 2014 7:30 pm visitors welcome

Wing 404/Rotary Adult Centre 510 Dutton Drive, Waterloo

On September 22nd, please welcome our guest speaker:

Mark Nash, The Canadian Peregrine Foundation

KWFN Sanctuary Fund - Donation to Bruce Trail Conservancy Graham Macdonald

In November 2013 KWFN donated \$10,000 to the Bruce Trail Conservancy's Nature Reserves acquisition campaign. Their fund raising was successful and the three properties are now secured and under BTC management. As part of their donor recognition program BTC organized tours in May and June of each of these new Niagara Escarpment reserves. Many KWFN members participated along with other donors, both individual and from other clubs and organizations. The walks highlighted the natural and human history of the properties and were ably guided by BTC ecological stewardship employees. BTC and their sponsors provided snacks and cider at the event that I attended and we all drank a toast to the donors that have made these lands part of our protected natural heritage. Reports from those who walked the other properties give high praise for the quality of the natural heritage now preserved.

Thank you to all KWFN members who have donated to our Sanctuary Fund and who made our donation possible. We continue to watch for suitable opportunities to put your money to work nurturing nature. Of interest locally is a proposal by the Region of Waterloo to set up a large Conservation Land Trust. Keep eyes and ears open for news on this front.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

October 27, 2014; Mary Ann Vanden Elzen, 80th Anniversary of the KWFN

November 24, 2014 Brendon Larson, Redefining our Relationship to Nature



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Submission deadlines are the 10th of the following months, August to November and January to May.

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September Outings and Events

A Big Sit

Jim Burrell 519-699-4695 <u>burrellsc@golden.net</u>
Meeting Time/Place: 6:30 pm, Saturday, Sept. 13 at the Culvert on

Beavercreek Rd., Waterloo

Bring a lawn chair, a coffee (or beer) and a pair of binoculars for a relaxed evening of sitting. We will keep an eye on the Laurel Creek reservoir to see what comes in for the evening. Keep your eye on the weather and dress accordingly.

Hawk Cliff and Environs

Randy Fowler 576-2788

Meeting Time/Place: 8:00 am, Sunday, Sept. 14 at the Fountain St. carpool

lot in Cambridge

Join us to watch the raptor migration at Hawk Cliff near Port Stanley. Many different species take flight at this time of year. Live bird demonstrations may be taking place so we may get to see a few up close and personal. Bring your cameras, a lunch, drinks and a chair. Bonos are a must and a scope if you have one. If you would like to meet us there, you can get directions to Hawk Cliff at www.ezlink.ca/~thebrowns/Hawk Cliff/

Cranberry Marsh Hawk Watch and Other areas

David Gascoigne <u>theospreynest@sympatico.ca</u> 519-725-0866

Meeting Time/Place: September 27 at 8:00 am at the commuter parking lot just south of Hwy. 401 on Hwy. 6

The principal destination will be the Cranberry Marsh hawk watch but we will check in the week before the excursion to see what other interesting species have been sighted in the area. Possible other locations to visit will be Reesor Pond, Whitby Harbour and Thickson's Woods. This will be an all day excursion so be sure to pack a lunch. Bring binos, scopes and a lawn chair also. Dress for the weather.

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KWFN's Craig Campbell Receives the W.W.H. Gunn Conservation Award by Graham Macdonald



I am very pleased to announce that long time KWFN member, **Craig Campbell**, has received the prestigious W.W.H. Gunn Conservation Award from Ontario Nature. This honour is awarded to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding personal service and a strong commitment to nature conservation over a number of years with exceptional results.

The ceremony took place during the Ontario Nature Annual Gathering and AGM held at YMCA Geneva Park near Orillia on June 21st 2014. The nomination was initiated by Ken Dance and supported by the KWFN Board of Directors. Craig unfortunately has undergone major surgery during the last year and was unable to attend the event. He asked me, as Past President and signatory to the nomination, to attend and receive the award on his behalf. Joan Daynard, Ontario Nature Director and Regional Coordinator (Great Lakes West) read the following citation:

"Craig Campbell has devoted all of his working life to the study and documentation of many aspects of Ontario's natural heritage including studies of plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and butterflies. Craig has played a major role in documenting the occurrence of many of Ontario's threatened and endangered species and he has mentored many of today's naturalists and biologists over his career.

Craig's study of natural history has included numerous volunteer efforts including censuses, surveys, atlases and other citizen science projects. He was also instrumental in the Regional Municipality of Waterloo's adoption of environmental planning by documenting the Region's natural heritage and initiating the identification of it Environmentally Sensitive Areas. We are all very fortunate to benefit from the natural legacy of more than 50 years of Craig's extraordinary work."



Bruce Trail Conservancy Receives the Steve Hounsell Greenway Award Graham Macdonald

This award honours an individual or group who has added a vital linking piece to Ontario Nature's Greenway Initiative, by preserving a natural core or corridor, building support for preserving a natural heritage system, laying the groundwork for a legislative advance in greenway planning, fighting to restore a wetland, or any other action that contributes to the Greenway.

All KWFN members can be proud that they have contributed to this award through their donations to our Sanctuary Fund from which we made a \$10,000 donation to the BTC Nature Reserves 2013 campaign. Further detail on this award can be found on the BTC web site at http://brucetrail.org/news/show/460.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER David Gacoigne

The summer is going by quickly it seems and it is time for me to write my first message as President of our Club.

I would be remiss indeed if I did not first of all acknowledge the enormous amount of work Graham Macdonald put into his term as President and to recognize that what he accomplished will resonate in our policies and actions for many years to come. Graham is going to be a hard act to follow.

It seems to me that many challenges lie ahead for all of us who love the natural world in all its diversity, not the least of which is the fact that the environment and related issues seem to have slipped off the political agenda. It was both interesting and distressing to me that during the recent provincial election it received virtually no attention at all from any of the political parties, save perhaps the Greens where it is part of their fundamental credo. I, like all of you I am sure, received numerous automated calls from polling firms asking me to rate what I thought were the key issues for the election – the economy, health care, honesty in government, transportation and so on. I put myself through the agony of listening through these surveys and not once was the environment on the list. It is not so many years ago that it was at the top of everyone's list.

I think we all have to work to get it right back up there, especially given the concern over chemicals such as neonicotinoids, and the potential impact that it has for insect and bird populations. The rash of denials about its lethal capacity mirror those aimed at Rachel Carson when she first exposed the dangers of organochlorine pesticides such as DDT so many years ago, and our efforts to have this substance eliminated from the pesticide arsenal should not cease. I just reread Carson's book *Silent Spring* and it is chilling to see the similarity between the rash of denials about DDT then and neonics now, and the personal attacks she faced when she exposed its dangers.

Our Club is about to join the world community on Facebook and Twitter. We have a committee set up to investigate and implement this action. It seems imperative at this juncture in our history to embrace the technology so familiar to our young people. Our rebranding exercise is well advanced and I expect that before long we will be known by a snappier, more modern sounding name.

I was happy to be part of our 80th Anniversary celebrations and it gave me a great sense of pride to know that I am part of a tradition that stretches back for eighty years – more than most of us have lived. I am inclined to think that the founding members would be pleased with what they see today. They would know that their child has grown up to be a mature responsible adult, with every expectation of great things to come in the future.

I am humbled to be your President and I ask for the help of all of you in this grand endeavour. I certainly can't do it alone. I have a strong executive with much new blood and I know that they will be a very positive force for the club. We owe them a great vote of thanks for their willingness to serve.

Let's all have a wonderful year together!





Ontario Nature Report Fraser Gibson

New Greenway Guide Released

Ontario Nature has released the Best Practices Guide to Natural Heritage Systems Planning. The guide promotes municipal greenway planning, a strategic approach to land use planning which addresses biodiversity loss and the uncertainties of climate change. It draws on 50+ examples of strong policies from 23 municipalities. These policies are protecting and enhancing the many benefits nature provides including flood control, pollination and improved air and water quality. To download your free copy, visit www.ontarionature.org then "Protect" then "Greenway Program".

Last spring, KWFN's Conservation Director. Karen Buschert, wrote a letter of concern regarding neonicotinoids to several government officials. Following is a letter on the same topic written by:

Anne Bell Director Of Conservation and Education Ontario Nature.

Letter to the Editor: Ban neonics. Period

July 8, 2014 By Anne Bell The Globe and Mail

Re Pesticide Linked To Bee Deaths To Be Restricted In Ontario (Report on Business, July 7): It's great to see Ontario take the lead on restricting neonicotinoid pesticides (neonics), but the government needs to go much further than the proposed licensing system.

An international review of more than 800 studies. released this summer, indicates neonics have led to the widespread contamination of soil, water and

vegetation, where they remain for months, even years. Designed to disrupt the central nervous system of organisms, these pesticides are known to adversely affect many pollinator species including bees, butterflies and birds.

With respect to bees, for example, neonics cause direct mortality and also impact navigation, learning, food collection, resistance to disease and fecundity.

Isn't it ironic – and lamentable – that to grow food, we're using insecticides that have lethal or sublethal effects on beneficial organisms, like pollinators, which are vital to healthy food systems?

These pesticides merit the same fate as DDT – an outright ban.

Anne Bell, director of conservation and education, Ontario Nature

Breithaupt Park Outing Recap Janet Ozaruk

The very first outing of the newly formed KWFN took place on May 13, 1934 at 6 a.m. when 13 people gathered in Breithaupt's Woods to study birds, flowers, etc. The party identified from 50 to 70 species of birds and several spring flowers and plants. I thought it would be appropriate to celebrate our club's 80th anniversary by revisiting the site and doing our own bird count. Many members have asked about the species that were sighted in 1934, and despite digging in the archives by the club archivist, Mary Ann vanden Elzen, no species list has ever surfaced.

The early morning of Tuesday 13, 2014 did not bode well. I had been woken up in the night by the sound of pelting rain and occasional clap of thunder. Our power had been out at some point and my clock was flashing 12:00. I briefly thought about cancelling the outing -surely no one would show up. But one should never underestimate the determination of birders – there were 15 people waiting in the damp gloom of the parking area.

Breithaupt Park has undergone many changes over the years. It was once contiguous with Bechtel Park before the expressway was built, separating the two areas. Like so many other urban forests, the

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......Outing Recap continued

vegetative make-up has been altered heavily by invasive species such as garlic mustard, periwinkle and celandine. Despite these changes, the bird count did not disappoint with a total to 57 species.

Mike Burrell generously recorded the sightings and provided the following:

Waterloo--Breithaupt Park, Waterloo, CA-ON May 13, 2014 5:50 AM - 8:00 AM Protocol: Traveling 1.25 kilometer(s)

Comments: KWFN outing to celebrate 80 year anniversary of club. Rain let up just before 0600 and then we got another shower about half an hour before finishing.

57 species (+1 other taxa)

Mallard (Northern) (Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos/conboschas) 4
Hooded Merganser (Lophodytes cucullatus) 1 female flew over first thing
Red-tailed Hawk (Eastern) (Buteo jamaicensis borealis) 1

American Woodcock (Scolopax minor) 1 heard when we first arrived

Ring-billed Gull (Larus delawarensis) 3

Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon) (Columba livia (Domestic type)) 2

Mourning Dove (Mainland) (Zenaida macroura [carolinensis Group]) 1

Common Nighthawk (Chordeiles minor) 2 at least two individuals flew over us at the parking lot as we were about to leave

Red-bellied Woodpecker (Melanerpes carolinus) 1 Downy Woodpecker (Eastern) (Picoides pubescens pubescens/medianus) 5

Hairy Woodpecker (Eastern) (Picoides villosus [villosus Group]) 2

Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted) (Colaptes auratus auratus/luteus) 3

Eastern Wood-Pewee (Contopus virens) 1 Least Flycatcher (Empidonax minimus) 5 Empidonax sp. (Empidonax sp.) 1

Great Crested Flycatcher (Myiarchus crinitus) 4

Blue-headed Vireo (Vireo solitarius) 2
Warbling Vireo (Eastern) (Vireo gilvus gilvus) 1
Philadelphia Vireo (Vireo philadelphicus) 2 both
were seen well by the entire group - looked like a
Warbling Vireo with more contrasting
cap/eyeline/supercillium and bright yellow throat. One
of them even was observed singing.

Red-eyed Vireo (Red-eyed) (Vireo olivaceus olivaceus) 4

Blue Jay (Cyanocitta cristata) 2

American Crow (Corvus brachyrhynchos) 3

Tree Swallow (Tachycineta bicolor) 3

Black-capped Chickadee (Poecile atricapillus) 10 White-breasted Nuthatch (Eastern) (Sitta carolinensis carolinensis) 3

House Wren (Northern) (Troglodytes aedon [aedon Group]) 3

Veery (Catharus fuscescens) 1 heard singing Gray-cheeked Thrush (Catharus minimus) 1 heard singing

American Robin (Eastern) (Turdus migratorius migratorius/achrusterus) 15

Gray Catbird (Dumetella carolinensis) 1 European Starling (Sturnus vulgaris) 10

Ovenbird (Seiurus aurocapilla) 4

Tennessee Warbler (Oreothlypis peregrina) 2 Nashville Warbler (Eastern) (Oreothlypis ruficapilla ruficapilla) 7

American Redstart (Setophaga ruticilla) 5
Magnolia Warbler (Setophaga magnolia) 4
Bay-breasted Warbler (Setophaga castanea) 2
Blackburnian Warbler (Setophaga fusca) 5
Yellow Warbler (Northern) (Setophaga petechia [aestiva Group]) 1

Chestnut-sided Warbler (Setophaga pensylvanica) 7 Black-throated Blue Warbler (Setophaga caerulescens) 1

Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle) (Setophaga coronata coronata) 4

Black-throated Green Warbler (Setophaga virens) 3 Canada Warbler (Cardellina canadensis) 1

Chipping Sparrow (Spizella passerina) 2

Song Sparrow (Eastern) (Melospiza melodia melodia/atlantica) 2

Scarlet Tanager (Piranga olivacea) 2 male and female seen separately

Northern Cardinal (Common) (Cardinalis cardinalis [cardinalis Group]) 6

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......Outing Recap continued

Rose-breasted Grosbeak (Pheucticus Iudovicianus) 8

Indigo Bunting (Passerina cyanea) 2 Common Grackle (Bronzed) (Quiscalus quiscula

versicolor) 10

Brown-headed Cowbird (Molothrus ater) 2

Baltimore Oriole (Icterus galbula) 9

House Finch (Common) (Haemorhous mexicanus mexicanus Group) 1

American Goldfinch (Spinus tristis) 5

House Sparrow (Passer domesticus) 6

Hermit Thrush (Northern/Eastern) (Catharus guttatus faxoni/crymophilus) 1

Black-and-white Warbler (Mniotilta varia) 5

View this checklist online at http://ebird.org/ebird/view/checklist?subID=S1837121

This report was generated automatically by eBird v3 (http://ebird.org)

Graham Macdonald kept the plant record and provided the following:

List of Plant Species

Recorded During the 80th Anniversary Breithaupt Woods Outing, 13 May 2014
Graham Macdonald

This list is not exhaustive but attempts to record the species that were in bloom or attracted attention during the outing (Common names only).

Jack-in-the-Pulpit
Early Meadow Rue
Virginia Waterleaf
Bellwort
Yellow (Canada) Violet
Common Violet
Yellow Trout Lily
Mayapple
Canada Mayflower
Heal All
Wild Ginger
Sarsaparilla
White Trillium
Red Trillium

False Solomon's Seal Bloodroot Elderberry sp. Butternut tree

Aliens noted:

Garlic Mustard, Periwinkle, Celandine, Scilla (blue flowered garden bulb).

Our outing was cut short by a brief torrential downpour. However – bonus – this caused a fallout, bringing even more warblers down to eye level.

Thanks to all the good sports who came out and provided the eyes and ears to generate these sighting lists!

Montgomery Garlic Mustard Pull Wayne Buck

On Friday, May 22, 2014, 16 people showed up at the Montgomery Wildlife Area on Bridge St., a few kilometres west of New Dundee, in Wilmot Township, dressed in their finest old clothes. They had accepted the challenge of The Montgomery Committee to reduce the spread of Garlic Mustard in the property.

The committee has been working for several years to reduce the amount of Periwinkle on the property. This year, they decided to embarque on a second project to reduce the spread of Garlic Mustard in the forest. This project will continue for several years in order to deplete the seed bank that the mustard has built up in the soil over the years. We have no illusions of completely eradicating the plant; but by reducing its numbers and density, we hope to increase the numbers of native plants such as trilliums and Jack in the Pulpit.

The volunteers managed to fill 28 garbage bags which weighed just under 300 lb.; a substantial amount when you consider how many of the spindly plants it takes to add up to a pound. And, when you consider how many seeds each of those plants would have produced, given the opportunity to mature; the number is staggering.

The committee thanks all those who participated and look forward to seeing even larger numbers of people and bags of Garlic Mustard in the spring of 2015.

Membership Director's Report Carol Foxall

The board apologizes to the greeters for accidently leaving them off the list of volunteers submitted to the Heron for publication in the June 2014 issue.

The greeters for the 2013 – 2014 membership year were: Christina Edwards, Karol Grainger, Judy Hamel, Gail Hill, Brenda Holvey, Marion Kelterborn, Elaine La Ronde, Louise Litwiller and Daphne Nicholls.

It is time to renew your membership for the 2014-2015 membership year. If we have your email address you will receive a renewal notice via email. Otherwise you will receive a membership form with your print copy of the Heron. Please fill out the form and mail it with a cheque made out to 'KW Field Naturalists' to the address on the form. Alternatively, you may bring the form and cheque or cash to the September meeting. I will be at the back of the room, ready and eager to receive your renewals!

Email addresses provided on the membership form are used for club purposes only, we do not distribute them to other parties. Some of the ways in which we use the email address are: notification that a new issue of the Heron is available on our website, outing reminders or cancellations, requests for volunteers, renewal reminders, etc. At any time you may opt out of receiving all emails or specific categories of emails – for example those related to outings.

We ended the 2013-14 membership year with 163 memberships representing 244 members. This is a slight decrease from the 2012-2013 membership year which ended with 173 memberships representing 262 members.

Hill's Oak Wayne Buck, Native Plant Nut

Before I became interested in native plants, I knew of only 2 species of Oak: Red and White. When our son, Graham, started learning more about trees, he talked about Shumard's Oak, Hill's Oak and Black Oak; trees we never heard of. I think I can now, with some difficulty, identify the 11 species of Oak that are indigenous to Ontario plus a few more that are native to Eastern North America such as Scarlet Oak. Of these 11 species that are indigenous to Ontario, the only one I have never seen growing naturally is Bear

Oak, (Quercus illicifolia) which is found in a few scattered locations in Eastern Ontario although we did grow a few short-lived individuals from acorns we were given by a fellow plant nut.

We in Waterloo Region have a species of Oak that few other regions of Canada have; Hill's Oak.

According to Gerry Waldron, in his book, "Trees of the Carolinian Forest" tells us that "The nearest stands of Hill's Oak are 240 km away, in Michigan." There is plenty of suitable terrain between Waterloo and Michigan and people have searched for them but none have ever been found.

Hills Oak (*Quercus ellipsoidalis*) prefers to grow in the sandy, gravelly soils such as are found in the Brantford, Cambridge, Paris area often, according to Waldron, in isolated clumps called hammocks. It will grow on dry or moist sites but never in swampy sites like its close relative Pin Oak (*Quercus palustrus*). It is often associated with Pignut Hickory which is also found in this area of Ontario. It is a tree of the open areas, intolerant of shade and is often found growing with prairie grasses such as Big Bluestem and Little Bluestem.

It is a tough tree, well suited to this area where, for thousands of years, frequent fires occurred until the fires were suppressed by influx of settlers. Like many Oaks, if the portion of the tree above the ground is burned off in a prairie fire, the base or root will usually resprout and grow again, until it reaches a size and height where it can be above and withstand the heat of the fire.

At least 2 sources I checked, (Waldron, Wikipedia) mention that some scientists feel that Hill's Oak is more closely related to Scarlet Oak, (*Q. coccinea*), than to its similarly named relative Pin Oak (*Q. palustrus*). Hill's Oak is sometimes referred to as Northern Pin Oak although the aforementioned scientists think it might be a northern variant of Scarlet.

Waldron describes Hills Oak as a medium-sized tree, 15-20 m in height. It's diameter seldom exceeds 60 cm. The largest specimen in Ontario was growing in North Dumfries in 1980 and was 19.5 m in height and 82 cm in diameter. The 2011 Champion Tree Hunt of Waterloo Region describes the largest Hills Oak was nominated by Peter Kelly as growing on Whistle Bare Rd., Cambridge. It is described as being 63 cm in diameter and 20 m in height.

.....Hills Oak continued

Twigs are usually hairy at the beginning of the season, turning smooth and reddish-brown towards the end. Mature bark has shallow interconnected fissures giving it a smooth dark brown colour. The leaves are shiny dark green above and hairless on the underside except for the intersections of the veins. They have 5-7 bristle-tipped lobes separated by wide rounded scallops which in my mind resemble Black Oak. Acorns are 17-25 mm long with reddish-brown hairy scales covering one quarter to one half of the bullet-shaped nut. The small size of the acorns makes them a valuable food source for many smaller forms of wildlife including birds and small mammals.

If you want to see some Hill's Oaks, there are some on the west side of Dumfries Rd. about a kilometre south of the former Cecil Cornwell School which is now a church. There are also some on Brant Waterloo Rd.



Photo by Graham Buck Please view Walter Muma's website for more images:

http://ontariotrees.com/main/index.php

What's Betty Looking At submitted by Mary Ann Vanden Elzen

I was over at Betty Cooper's today. She had phoned to say a pair of Cecropia Moths were mating at her place. She had brought the male's coccoon to the May club meeting to show everyone. She discovered the moth on her wall yesterday and, by today, it had already been found by a female.





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Suggested reading links submitted to the Editor:

David Gascoigne: David's blogspot has an article on Duntroon Crevice Heights Nature Reserve, one of the properties our \$10,000 donation to the Bruce Trail Conservancy helped to secure.

http://www.travelswithbirds.blogspot.ca/2014/06/duntroon-crevice-heights-nature-reserve.html

Roger Suffling: http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/push-to-ban-plastic-microbeads-from-facial-scrubs-gains-momentum-1.2670960

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Bring payment to the next meeting or mail to: KWFN at 317 Highland Rd E., Kitchener, N2M 3W6

Membership details, on our web site at: http://www.kwfn.ca/member ship.html

KWFN is a registered charitable organization. Membership fees and all donations are tax deductible.

Objectives of the KWFN

TO acquire and disseminate knowledge of natural history.

TO protect and preserve wildlife.

TO purchase and hold appropriate parcels of land for the advancement of conservation.

TO support public interest in nature and its preservation by supporting the enactment of wise legislation and by other means as falls within the scope of the Corporation.

General Information

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month, September to May with the exception of December. Our meetings are free and visitors are always welcome.

Outings are scheduled almost every month.

Advertising Rates for The Heron:

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full page half page quarter page 1/10 page (business card)	\$200 \$100 \$ 50 \$ 25	\$1600 \$ 800 \$ 400 \$ 200

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Newsletters available on Our web site at:

http://www.kwfn.ca/newsletter.html

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