



The Heron
Spring 2015

Visitors Welcome

**Wing 404/Rotary Adult Centre
510 Dutton Drive, Waterloo**

Monday March 23, 2015 – 7:30pm

**Foraging
Peter Blush
Owner, Puck's Plenty**

- 1) Peter will present a brief history on himself and how he happened into foraging.
- 2) How Puck's Plenty moved from supplying wild edibles to simply educating people about these plants.
- 3) Stressing the importance of sustainability through prudent harvesting while implementing procedures to curve loss of habitat.

YOU HAVE LEFT YOUR MARK!

THANK-YOU

**To all of our Waterloo Region Nature members
who took the extra step to help out with a club
activity, event or position this year.**

**No Effort is Too Small
and
No Action Goes Unnoticed!**

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NEW Heron Editor**Jenna Quinn**editor.theheron@gmail.com**519-362-7921****Submission deadlines
are on or before:****Fall Issue
August 10th****Winter Issue
November 10th****Spring Issue
March 10th.**

Outings and Events

What a wonderful time of year to be any kind of naturalist: birds are returning, trees are leafing, insects are showing themselves and the days are still getting longer and warmer! Who could ask for more? Be sure to contact the leaders and get out and enjoy friendship and fresh air. If you have an outing in mind, contact me at 699-4695 or burrellsc@golden.net.

Since my 3 year term ends this spring, I would like to thank all those people who graciously gave their time to lead outings. Without their efforts we would not have outings to attend. Please consider offering your time and passion to continue these get-togethers.

Long Point and Environs – Saturday, March 21, 2015

The Burrells 519-699-4695 burrellsc@golden.net

Meeting Time/Place: 8:00 am Homer Watson Blvd. / Fountain Street 401 carpool lot

Join us for this popular annual outing to Long Point, one of Lake Erie's birding hotspots. We will focus on returning waterfowl as they stop on their way northward. Bring a lunch, binos, field guides and a scope if you have one. Dress warmly as it may be cooler near the lake at this time of year.

Cappleman Property - Tuesday, April 21, 2015

Jim Cappleman 519-885-0380

Meeting Time/Place: 5:30 pm at the Beer Store in the Highland Hills Mall, Kitchener

Come and enjoy a walk around one of the prominent "kames" in Waterloo Region. Enjoy spring ephemerals, mature forest habitat and impressive views. This property belongs to Jim and Irene Cappleman who will host this approximately 2 hour walkabout. Wear sturdy shoes and bring binoculars and field guides. Approximately 2 hours long.

Voices of the Night - Thursday, April 23, 2015

Fraser Gibson 519-576-9287

Meeting time/Place: at 8:00 pm in the Huron Natural Area parking lot on Trillium Drive, Kitchener

Experience the Voices of the Night as we focus on American Woodcock, but also listen for and identify amphibian and possibly owl calls. In April and early May the American Woodcock partakes in an interesting flight and sound mating display. Hopefully this late evening ritual will be on display in Huron Natural Area's old fields. The nearby wetlands should provide the habitat necessary for a variety of singing amphibians and the woodlands are known to be home territory for owls.

Bring binoculars, a flashlight and dress warmly.

Birding by Bike - Wednesday, April 29, 2015

Roger Suffling 519-742-4577 rcsuffling@uwaterloo.ca

Meeting time/Place: at the Grand Valley Trail parking lot in Glen Morris at 6:30 pm

We will look for birds and whatever else pops out along the trail. This should be about a 2 hour tour depending on lighting conditions. Bring binoculars and a working bicycle.

Thickson's Woods – A Migrant Trap – Monday, May 11, 2015

David Gascoigne 519-725-0866 theospreynest@sympatico.ca

Meeting time/Place: at 07:30 am at the commuter parking lot on Highway 6, just south of Hwy 401.

Thickson's Woods in Whitby contains the last stand of original, old growth White Pine in Ontario, situated right against the shore of Lake Ontario. It is a migrant trap in Spring and on a good day can rival more noted places such as Point Pelee and Rondeau for warblers, thrushes, vireos, flycatchers etc. It is much closer and an easy drive (providing the Toronto rush hour is not too terrible!)

This date should just about capture migration at its peak and I think we can all have a very enjoyable outing. It will be a full day event, so bring a lunch, binoculars, a field guide and whatever else you need to make your day comfortable. We will cancel only if constant rain is predicted for the entire day. There are several other interesting birding areas in close proximity, so we may leave Thickson's Woods for a while, possibly to return later.

Outings and Events

University of Guelph Arboretum - Tuesday, May 19, 2015

Dale Ingrey 519-884-3667

Meeting Time/ Place : at 9:00 am at the Canadian Tire parking lot on Victoria St. in Kitchener

Dale will lead a spring hike through the picturesque Arboretum grounds starting at the parking lot near the Arboretum Centre. We'll visit the Gosling Wildlife Garden first and then hike through the fields and forest before doubling back on the Ivey Trail or the Memorial Forest Trail. Along the way we'll encounter several habitats and various flora and fauna. The marsh marigold and other wildflowers should be resplendent and we may well encounter some interesting avian migrants and resident species. We'll also take some time to look at various species of trees, both native and exotic. Bring your field guides and binoculars as well as some liquid refreshment for this 3 and 1/2 hour outing (travel time included).

Birding the UW - Wednesday, May 20, 2015

Jim and Ken Burrell 699-4695 burrellsc@golden.net

Meeting time/Place: at 6:00am at the corner of Bearinger Rd. and Pineridge Rd., Waterloo

Join us for an early morning/prework ramble along Laurel Creek to the Brubacher House on the north campus of UW. There should still be many migrants around and it's a lovely time of day. Bins and water-proof footwear are essential. We should finish by 8:00 am.

Wednesday Wanderers: Sudden Tract – Wednesday, May 27, 2015

Marco DeBruin 519-658-5372

Meeting time/Place: at 9:30 am at the carpool parking lot just south of the 401 at Fountain St., Cambridge

Join Marco for a walk through the Sudden Tract. We'll try to find a variety of species of flora and fauna. Spring migration should be well under way at this time. The Sudden Tract has a number of trees and plant species that are at the northern limits of their range. Wear sturdy footwear and don't forget your binoculars and field guides. Be prepared for the possibility of biting insects.

The Wilmot Tract - Saturday, May 30, 2015

Wayne Buck 519-662-2529 waylyn2@cwisp.ca

Meeting time/Place: at 2:00pm. Drive west out of K-W towards Stratford. Exit at Queen St. Go south over the expressway and park on the east side facing north. There is a gate into the tract where we will assemble.

The Wilmot Tract parallels the Expressway. We will ramble through the tract looking for some late spring ephemerals like trilliums that will still be blooming, some early mid-season wildflowers and late spring migrating birds. The leaves may not be fully opened yet allowing us to see more deeply into the canopy. There is a well-defined trail (albeit a primitive one) that is of moderate difficulty. Bring water, bins, field guides and sturdy walking footwear. This hike will last about 2 hours.

Up Close to Honeybees - Monday, June 1, 2015

Fraser Gibson 519-576-9287

Meeting time/Place: at 6:30 pm at the entrance to Laurel Creek Nature Centre, Beaver Creek Road, Waterloo (if it is raining this outing will be postponed to Tuesday, June 2 because bees get grumpy in the rain!)

Join Fraser, a longtime beekeeper, on this unique outing to the apiary at Laurel Creek Nature Centre. An active hive will be opened and several frames removed so attendees get a close look at the contents of a hive. You will observe workers, drones, larvae, royal jelly, pollen and thousands of bees while learning about the life of these amazing social insects. Other interesting hive sights are likely as well.

Honeybees are very amicable at this time of year but attendees should wear long sleeves, long pants, long socks and shoes. Bonnets, veils and gloves will be provided to set your mind at ease.

Outings and Events

Exploring the River Trail at RARE - Saturday, June 6

Jenna Quinn 519-650-9336

Meeting time/Place: at 10:00 am at rare ECO Centre at 768 Blair Rd.

Join *rare* for a leisurely Saturday morning hike along *rare's* River Trail. Showcasing the Grand River, limestone outcrops, and alvar habitat this is a beautiful hike with lots to see. The trail is primarily a narrow footpath, with a few rocky inclines. Bring your binoculars; we will take a short break at the lookout to spot some raptors and other birds. This outing will last approximately 2 hours.

TURTLE NESTING at RiverSong – June to September ANY SATURDAY

John Pries 519-664-0532 or 519-574-8550 john.h.pries@gmail.com

Meeting time/Place: RiverSong Banquet Hall, 632 Hawkesville Rd, St. Jacobs

I will be pleased to provide personal tours on most any Saturday this summer from 9 am until 3 pm as I will typically be working around the property while Susan has the RiverSong cafe and bakery open.

Please [email me](#) if you wish to witness this very interesting event, or just show up if you happen to be driving in the St. Jacobs vicinity or after visiting the market. Please wear appropriate footwear for walking through the woods.

South Bound Shorebirds - Wednesday, July 15 and August 19th

Jim and Ken Burrell 519-699-4695 burrellsc@golden.net

Meeting time/Place: 6:30 pm at the Zehrs Plaza at Erb St. and Fisher-Hallman Rd.

The West Perth Wetlands (formerly Mitchell Sewage Lagoon) is a local hotspot for migrating shorebirds. It also attracts ducks and many other birds. We will travel to Mitchell for a relaxed evening of birding and maybe an ice cream cone. Bins, scopes and good footwear are needed.

**A FREE
Family & Friends
Event**

**Wonders of Nature Festival
Saturday August 29
11-2 p.m.
Huron Natural Area**

**Presented by:
Kitchener's Natural Areas Program &
Waterloo Region Nature**

**Featuring:
Kids Crafts & Activities
Guided Nature Walks
Guest Speakers**

**Learn About:
Butterflies
Pollinators
Birds
Bats
Native Plants**



Illustrations by Emily S. Damstra

PRESIDENT'S CORNER**David Gascoigne**

For a few days now I have been hearing male Northern Cardinals in full voice, trying to court the lady of their choice, so surely spring cannot be far behind. Yesterday while out birding you would have had a hard time to convince me with a temperature of minus 16 and the wind almost peeling the skin from my face!

The cycle of nature will take its course, nevertheless, and as naturalists we will all start to take note of the subtle changes that are occurring all around us as one season transitions to another. Spring is perhaps the sweetest time of all with renewal on all sides. A few days of temperatures above zero will get rid of most of the snow and then I will be scouring the ground for the first green shoots poking their way up through the soil. I expect that American Robins will soon arrive to scamper along the ground and then cock their heads to listen for faint sounds which indicate the presence of food. Each day has the potential to bring something new.

It is in this spirit of optimism that I reflect on my term as president of our club, a term which is rapidly drawing towards its conclusion. And, under the new schedule of publication of The Heron, this will be my final message to you.

It has been a wonderful experience, not without controversy from time to time, and not without a good deal of work. I have been blessed with a stellar board of directors, each member of which has helped me unstintingly, and it has been my good fortune to get to know some of the finest naturalists I have ever encountered. Many of you have offered me words of encouragement and appreciation and it has been heartwarming indeed to be part of this fellowship of nature lovers. Based on my experience as president I would urge each of you to consider putting your name forward for the vacant position of vice-president, so that you too can enjoy the pleasure a year hence. This position is perennially the most difficult one to fill but without a vice-president our club cannot continue. If you speak to any of the past presidents they will confirm that it is a pleasure and an honour to serve, and the year as vice-president serves as an introduction to the board and the manner in which it works, so you will be well-prepared to assume the reins of leadership.

We have been fortunate in Waterloo Region Nature to have had Thelma Beaubien as editor of The Heron for several years. I am not sure if we all realize what a commitment it has been to publish nine editions of this journal each year. As soon as one

month is completed and sent to the printer, work begins on the next edition. It is akin to having another job – but the pay is not so great! To Thelma we owe an enormous vote of thanks. She has worked diligently on behalf of all of us to make sure that an informative, neatly assembled bulletin is delivered to us. Articles germane to nature have been presented, notices made, field trips announced, special events reported on....and so it goes. All of this has been done with alacrity and efficiency and the greatest good humour. In addition Thelma has spearheaded and worked tirelessly on Wonders of Nature. As Thelma takes a well-deserved break from the rigours of publications deadlines I know that you will all join with me in saying THANK YOU THELMA. Enjoy the extra time that you now have available and make sure that you and Ron get to do all the things you love to do.

Have a great spring and summer everyone. Thank you for allowing me to serve.



Anybody interested in a birding by bike hike please email Roger Suffling at rcsuffli@uwaterloo.ca



Ontario Nature Report

Fraser Gibson

Register Now for Ontario Nature's 84th Annual Gathering

This is a wonderful opportunity to experience Ontario Nature's AGM in our own front yard! Spend a day on the Grand with Ontario Nature and rare Charitable Research Reserve. Our 84th Annual Gathering is happening May 23, 2015 at rare. The day will feature a flintknapping workshop, a solar home tour, a bird banding demonstration and several guided hikes. Online registration is now open. Please visit Ontario Nature's [website](#) to learn more about what's on offer for this year.

Nature Network News

For the last few years Ontario Nature has published a monthly electronic newsletter called Nature Network News. I customarily drew relevant material from that publication for this segment of the Heron. Since the Heron is no longer published on a regular basis, you will find the monthly issue of Nature Network News in the Notices section of the WRN website.

Local Public involvement requested in review of Niagara Escarpment and Greenbelt plans

The provincial government has launched a public review of the plans that protect the Oak Ridges Moraine, Niagara Escarpment and Greenbelt. This review is an important opportunity to strengthen these plans to further protect water, nature and communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. The first meeting will be held in Kitchener on Wednesday March 25, 2015 at Bingemans Conference Centre, 425 Bingemans Centre Dr. Open House 6-7pm Meeting 7-9pm. Additional information is available on the WRN website in the Notices section.

Visit the New Marvellous Moraine Website

We are excited to announce the launch of a new [website](#) that celebrates the "marvellous moraine". Brought to you by Ontario Nature, Save the Oak Ridges Moraine (STORM) Coalition, Earthroots and EcoSpark, it's part of an initiative to remind Ontarians of the value of the moraine and to engage them in the

upcoming public review of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Greenbelt Plan.

Pollinator Health Action Plan

The provincial government has announced a plan to reduce neonicotinoid use on corn and soybean by 80% by 2017. This target is a bold and necessary step to address the threats that these pesticides pose to human and ecosystem health.

Energy East Pipeline: Our Risk, Their Reward

Ontario Nature joins grassroots groups across northern and eastern Ontario opposed to the Energy East Pipeline project with a new video. You can check it out [here](#). The proposed pipeline puts our precious waterways at risk. Pipeline leaks can be gushers or pinprick leaks that slowly poison nearby waterways and aquifers. In the Kalamazoo River spill in 2010, 18 hours passed before the leak was discovered and 4 years later it still hasn't been cleaned up. We don't want this to happen in Ontario!

Last chance for 2014 Ontario Nature Conservation Awards

The deadline fast approaching to honour the individuals, groups, government agencies and corporations who have worked to protect nature in Ontario. If you know of an individual or group who deserves recognition for their contribution to conservation this year, we'd like to hear about them. Recipients of Ontario Nature's Conservation Awards will be honoured at our 84th Annual Gathering at rare ECO Centre in Cambridge on May 23, 2015. The nominations deadline is March 31, 2015. For more information or to submit a nomination, contact Lauren Wright at laurenw@ontarionature.org.

Registration Now Open for Ontario Master Naturalist Program

The Ontario Master Naturalist Program (OMNP) is a new community program established by Lakehead University Orillia in partnership with Ontario Nature. The first of its kind in Canada, the OMNP provides naturalists and those interested in nature and environmental stewardship the opportunity to become certified as a Master Naturalist. Click [here](#) to learn more or to register for the sessions.

Ontario Nature - Great Lakes West Spring Regional Meeting

The Upper Credit Field Naturalists will host our next Regional Meeting on Saturday May 2, from 10:00 to approximately 3:00 p.m.

This is a great opportunity to learn about Ontario Nature's Regional structure, hear about the activities of other clubs in our region and be updated on Ontario Nature activities. It's a great chance to meet other naturalists and share ideas among our Nature Network. If interested in attending, please contact Fraser.

Upcoming speakers:

Monday, April 27, 2015

Tony Zammit - Significant Elements of Biodiversity within the Grand River Watershed

Presenter: Tony Zammit, Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecologist, Grand River Conservation Authority.

The focus of this talk will be on GRCA lands, including such sites as Luther Marsh, Snyder's Flats, Conestogo Lake, Grass Lake, etc. He will speak about what the GRCA is doing to protect biodiversity on its own lands and focusing on conservation priority species, including species at risk and the various habitat restoration initiatives within key hot spot areas such as Luther Marsh. Tony will provide a brief overview of his role as an ecologist with the GRCA.

Monday, May 25, 2015

John Riley will speak on several of the themes from his recent book, The Once and Future Great Lakes Country: An Ecological History.

John L. Riley is a popular and passionate advocate for the natural world. His latest publication, "The Once and Future Great Lakes Country" provides both a detailed ecological history and a broad panorama of this vast region. It blends the voices of early visitors with the hopes of citizens now.

John is the Chief Science Adviser at the Nature Conservancy of Canada. He previously held positions as a botanist, geologist, ecologist and conservation professional with the Royal Ontario Museum, the Ontario Geological Survey and Ontario Nature.

Books will be available for purchase at the end of the meeting, and the author will sign them as requested.

Membership Director's Report Carol Foxall

Welcome New Members!

Gisela Bach
Amanda Bichel
Nick Boismier
Linda Dutka
Tyler Giesler
Francine Gilbert and Jim Huffman
Kristen Harrison
Constance Johnston
Steve & Fabia Joyce
Ian Laing
Ian McKay and Helen Parson
Les Misch
Beverly Olmstead and David Scallen
rare, represented by Carleigh Pope, Jenna Quinn
and Tom Woodcock
Chris Robinson
Stephen Schaller and Pina Greco
Neill Stewart
Krista Straus

Thank you Donors!

Ron and Thelma Beaubien
Amanda Bichel
Marco and Donna DeBruin
Tyler Giesler
Kristen Harrison
Kelly Holdaway
Steve & Fabia Joyce
Ian McKay and Helen Parson
Stephen Schaller and Pina Greco
Jane Schneider

Amherst and Wolfe Island Outing held on January 31, 2015 The Burrells'

Saturday, January 31 began as a very cold, clear day. The temperature upon arising in Kingston was -28 but not a cloud or a hint of a breeze which was a God send for the 12 people that met the 4 of us at the Millhaven ferry for the ride over to Amherst Island. We were not disappointed with the avian life that we found. Within 5 minutes of leaving the ferry in Stella, we had our first 2 Snowy Owls: 1 very close that allowed itself to be photographed. We slowly made our way around the island to the Owl Woods. The road was impassable so we prepared to walk in. Everyone prepared with extra layers and warm footwear as the temperature was a cool -23. We were not disappointed as we located roosting Long-eared Owl and Northern Saw-whet Owl. Both cooperative and allowed some great photos. The walk back to the cars was downhill with the slight wind to our backs. It was nice to get into the cars and get some heat although I did not hear a soul complain about being cold. The walk generated lots of heat beneath the layers. For the remainder of the morning we slowly made our way back to Stella for the noon ferry back to the mainland. Our morning on Amherst yielded the following list of raptors: Bald Eagle 2, Red-tailed Hawk 6, Rough-legged Hawk 14, Snowy Owl 5, Long-eared Owl 1, Northern Saw-whet Owl 1.

We made our way to the Wolfe Island ferry and were on the island by 2:30 pm. Again, we were not disappointed. A slow drive on the eastern end of the island was most productive; raptors and others were most cooperative. Snow Buntings were quite common, a lone Savannah Sparrow made an appearance, Lapland Longspurs were photographed, Song Sparrows were numerous and many deer made themselves noticed. The highlight of the island were the Short-eared Owls that were hunting. At one point, through our binoculars we could see 2 Short Ears and 2 Bald Eagles! Darkness forced us to head for the ferry and the mainland. Our Raptor totals for Wolfe Island were: Bald Eagle 3, Red-tailed Hawk 6, Rough-legged Hawk 1, Eastern Screech Owl 1, Snowy Owl 7, Short-eared Owl 8, American Kestrel 1.

It was an excellent day to be out and about!

The Great Canadian Birdathon 2015

For the 18th consecutive year, my family and I will participate in **the Great Canadian Birdathon**, formerly The Baillie Birdathon. This is an annual fund raiser for Bird Studies Canada and Waterloo Region Nature. Monies raised are used to advance research into bird conservation and the conservation of bird habitats. The Birdathon works this way; during the month of May, participants select a 24 hour period and attempt to identify as many bird species as possible.

We have selected May 11 - 12 in the Point Pelee area. We are asking for your continued support. You can sponsor us by making a pledge for the occasion and we will collect your pledge after the event with a written account of our day. We will be soliciting pledges at the March and April meetings of WRN or you can pledge online at

<http://birdscanada.kintera.org/birdathon/burrells>

Make checks payable to **BSC – The Great Canadian Birdathon** or pay cash to us when we collect. Any pledge over \$20.00 will receive a tax receipt and a pledge of more than \$35.00 will receive a quarterly copy of BSC's magazine "**Birdwatch Canada**".

Thank you for your consideration in supporting **WRN**, avian research and protection.

The Burrells (Jim, Ken, Mike and Carol Gregory)

THE PEREGRINES ARE COMING TO K-W Dale Ingrey

The peregrine falcons are coming to Kitchener-Waterloo again this year. Actually, the resident adults have been here all winter since hatching four chicks on the roof of the Sun Life building at King and Union Streets last year. The fledglings did not fare well, however, with three of the four crashing into the glass walls of the Sun Life building and succumbing to their injuries. The lone survivor, a female named Helia, migrated south in September, but her parents, Caster, the male, and Mystery, the female, have been plying their trade, surviving on the plentiful supply of urban pigeons in the twin cities all winter, and will soon be engaged in courtship and nesting behaviour.

The bad news is that Sun Life Financial has removed the sturdy nest box installed two years ago for the falcons' use because of scheduled

.....continued next page

maintenance and consequently, the birds have no safe nest box to use for egg laying and chick rearing. The good news is that the Canadian Peregrine Foundation, under the direction of Mark Nash, has contacted CKCO TV where the falcons, Caster, and a different female, Statler, successfully raised three chicks in 2013. CKCO TV has agreed to allow CPF to install a smaller nest box on the lower tier of the tower that previously served as the nesting site.

Responding to an urgent plea for financial help to construct and install this new nest box, Waterloo Region Nature has stepped into the breach. CKCO TV will pay for the anchors required to stabilize the box, the webcam and hookup costs, while WRN will pay for all the materials required to build and install the nest box. The latest high tech and durable materials are being used in order to ensure longevity and low maintenance over a period of years.

As you read this copy of The Heron the nest box and webcam installation should be completed on the CKCO TV tower. This will provide the resident falcons with the opportunity to evaluate this familiar site and hopefully use it to lay their eggs and raise their young. If they do avail themselves of this opportunity, the mortality rate of the chicks should be lower simply because this is a much safer location than anywhere else they may choose in K-W. When the chicks hatch, probably in early May, we will be calling for volunteers to participate in the three week fledge watch. Stay tuned to the Waterloo Region Nature website as the season progresses for updates. You may also visit the Canadian Peregrine Foundation website and click on K-W for information and photos of our peregrines, including webcam pictures.

A Call For Marsh Monitoring Participants By Ryan Archer

One of the sure signs of spring is the cacophony of frog calls emanating from the region's wetlands. These wetlands soon become epicentres of activity for breeding marsh birds as well, some species of which are intentionally conspicuous, others quite secretive. The presence and abundance of these amphibian and bird species are excellent indicators of the health of our wetland habitats due to their sensitivity to environmental change. As wetlands and

the wildlife that depend on them face continual threats from human-based impacts, the need for long-term monitoring has become an important means to inform research initiatives and effective conservation strategies. Long-term monitoring over large spatial scales can be a challenge for any government agency to accomplish. Citizen science programs such as Bird Studies Canada's (BSC) Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program (GLMMP) play an important role in collecting the data needed by scientists and policy makers to develop and track the success of these strategies.

The GLMMP is a bi-national, Great Lakes basin-wide marsh bird and amphibian monitoring program that utilizes the skills and enthusiasm of hundreds of Citizen Scientists to annually monitor local marsh habitats. Participants have the option to survey for marsh birds and/or amphibians, and also record characteristics of the surveyed marsh habitat.

Surveys are completed along monitoring routes of 1-8 stations. This data is used by BSC to track long-term trends in the occurrence and relative abundance of amphibian and marsh bird species at multiple spatial scales, from the Great Lakes basin as a whole to localized wetland groups. The program is supported by agencies such as Environment Canada and the US Environmental Protection Agency, which regularly use program data such as to track population trends of Species at Risk (e.g. Least Bittern) or monitor the recovery of Great Lakes coastal wetlands.

New MMP participants are being sought from the Waterloo Region area, to contribute to large-scale species monitoring while improving capacity to track wetland health in the region. For more information

please visit <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/glmmmp/index.jsp> or contact

Volunteer Coordinator Kathy Jones at

volunteer@birdscanada.org. Also, I am also available to assist new participants in establishing new routes or learning the survey protocol. Those seeking assistance can be put in touch with me through Kathy. Happy surveying!

Ryan Archer is a former coordinator of Bird Studies Canada's Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program and is currently a biologist with Natural Resource Solutions Inc. in Waterloo.

Baling for Branchton Wayne Buck

The Waterloo Stewardship Council has been working for 10+ years and continues to work on the restoration of several prairie remnants in the Cambridge area. Waynco and Branchton are 2 of the more familiar sites to Heron Readers. These are among some of the best tallgrass prairie remnants in Ontario, being somewhat unique because of the sandy gravelly soil on which they are situated. Precipitation drains away so quickly that during times of drought, trees would die. Fires would periodically sweep through and remove most of the smaller ones allowing the prairie plants to maintain their foothold.

This spring WSC hired a contractor to brush out hundreds of Manitoba Maples that had grown in the former agricultural field over a 10 yr. period and to work the ground up to remove the roots etc. to be ready for planting. This process took 2 entire days! Previously we had tried cutting them one at a time but we scarcely made a dent. The site was too large for our few members.

This fall we wanted to sow grass seed so that it could start growing next spring before undesirable plants (weeds) regained a foothold. But where to get the grass seed? When doing a restoration, it is important to use seed from a source as close as possible to the site so that the genotype is as close as possible to what was once there. The plants that were there originally adapted to the conditions over a period of many thousands of years giving them a distinct advantage over seeds that came from sources hundreds or possibly thousands of kilometres away. There is not enough grass at Branchton. We are leaving the grass at Waynco to continue spreading naturally which it is doing very well. Even if there was enough grass to harvest, WSC has only a handful of members (4-5), most of who are employed during the day, to do the harvesting. The rest, like me, are long in the tooth.

The grass field at Nith River Native Plants contains mature plants whose parents originally grew at Waynco so they have the same genotype. So the seed was desirable but how to collect it? I asked a

neighbour who had an antique machine that could handle fluffy seed if he would be willing to combine for us but the screens were in too dilapidated condition. What to do? I wondered about mowing the grass while the seed heads were intact, baling it in small rectangular bales that could be easily lifted, loading it on a trailer, transporting it to the site, opening the bales and scattering the grass which presumably still had seeds which would eventually fall off and hopefully grow.

This is what we did. We had 5 volunteers show up on a Friday in the middle of October, 2014, to scatter the straw on the prepared site in Branchton. The management at the Waynco Gravel Pit were most co-operative in allowing us access to the site on a day when they were not working there. It was overcast and windy which facilitated the spreading to the straw. The light coloured straw stood out in sharp contrast to the dull coloured vegetation allowing us to easily see where straw had already been thrown. We will not know if the seed was present or was able to germinate and grow until late next spring or summer. Next summer we also plan to plant plugs of forbs (flowering plants) that are thought to have been native to this prairie. (E.g. Black-eyed Susan, Hairy Beardtongue). If the experiment works, there will be grassland for birds such a sparrows and Meadowlarks which are becoming scarcer with each passing year due in large part to loss of habitat. More grassland. More birds. It's a win-win.



Nature in the City Speaker Series



Presented by:
**Kitchener's Natural Areas Program
&
Waterloo Region Nature**

Wednesday April 8:

Learning to Love Butterflies with Charlotte Moore
Kitchener Public Library (Central branch)
7 p.m. Register at www.kpl.org/programs.



Wednesday May 13:

A Cheep Night Out with David Gascoigne
Kitchener Public Library (Central Branch)
7 p.m. Register at www.kpl.org/programs.

More Information:

Joshua.Shea@Kitchener.ca
or 741-2600 ext. 4177

Full talk details: www.kwfn.ca

**We are looking for presentations and speakers
for this fall. Please let Josh Shea know if you are
interested or have ideas.**

Illustrations by Emily S. Damstra



Become a Citizen Scientist

Join the City of Kitchener Butterfly Monitoring Program

Monitor your site once per month (May-
Sept) by recording the butterfly species
that you observe.

All equipment will be provided.

Possible Sites:

Huron Natural Area, Lakeside Park,
Breithaupt Park & Homer Watson Park.

Training: Sun May 3 - 1p.m.

More Information and to Register:

Josh Shea

Joshua.Shea@Kitchener.ca

741-2600 ext. 4177

or

Charlotte Moore

charlotte.se.moore@gmail.com

Wonders of Nature

Saturday, August 29, 2015

11 am – 2 pm

Huron Natural Area

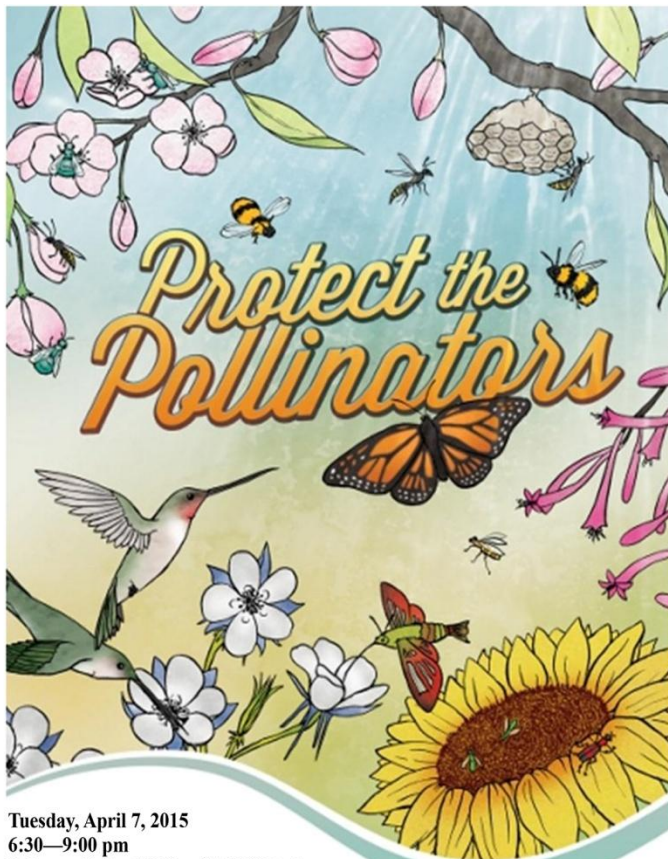
Please consider volunteering!

Positions include: Greeting, Registration, Set up/Take down, Parking, Information

If you are available to assist in volunteering, please submit your name and contact information to one of the organizers listed below:

Thelma & Ron Beaubien, Waterloo Region Nature, (K-W Field Naturalists)
thb33@rogers.com or phone 519-886-7118

Josh Shea, City of Kitchener, Natural Areas Program (KNAP)
Joshua.Shea@kitchener.ca or phone 519-741-2600 ext 4177



Tuesday, April 7, 2015

6:30–9:00 pm

Princess Twin, 46 King St. N Waterloo

Free (donations accepted)

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/protect-the-pollinators-tickets-15860778014>

Guest Speakers:

John Bennett: Sierra Club National Program Director

Paul McKay: Author of The Kepler Code

Laurence Packer: York University, specialist on native bees.

Panel discussion will follow and will include reps from local farming community

Bee and pollinator-friendly books and displays



KNAP EARTH DAY 2015

Kitchener's Natural Areas Program

Earth Day Celebration

Saturday April 25, 2015

1-4pm

Activities Include:

- Live demonstrations of birds of prey by the Canadian Raptor Conservancy
- Build and take home a Knap Bird Box (limited quantities)
- Tree planting, crafts and other activities including live animals



Huron Natural Area - 801 Trillium Drive, Kitchener



Contact: Natural Area Coordinator
Phone: 519-741-2600 ext. 4177
Email: knap@kitchener.ca
Web: www.kitchener.ca/knap



How do you communicate with WRN?

As we move towards upgrading our web pages and other means of reaching the membership, WRN has launched a survey to better understand the members' information needs and communication habits.

We're considering:

- To what extent do we use paper or electronic means?
- How can our website be improved?
- What needs to be changed
- What should be left alone?
- What are the best media for club communications?

Please give us your opinions and ideas!

You can take the survey in any of three ways:

- Use this web link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6YJRTHY>
- Fill in a paper survey at the March, April or May meetings
- Request a paper or electronic form from Roger Suffling (rcsuffli@uwaterlo.ca 519 742 4577)

The survey is set up mostly with check boxes but with room for your ideas. It is very quick to complete!

Overheard...

(at the Great Backyard Bird Count - Feb. 14, 2015)

Diehards! All good
fun despite the
terrible weather

We saw four
different
species of
woodpeckers
at the first stop

My best day
since coming
to Canada

Such a civilized
way of looking
at birds

I like
progressive
things like
that

Pizza's
arrived!

Wonderful
stories

A great way to
spend a day

Everyone was
so informative
and insightful

By Mary Ann Vanden Elzen

**Our optics are worth looking into!**

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A Fond Farewell!

Sincerest thanks to the members of the WRN for your support through articles and images for The Heron. With your submissions you make our newsletter a great product. As this is my final issue, effective immediately, please direct your emails and submissions to the new editor, Jenna Quinn. Please refer to Page 2 for the new editor's contact information and submission deadlines. Thank you, Jenna!

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Kitchener, ON N2M 3W6

Membership

Annual Fees

Family/Couple \$35
Senior Couple \$30
Adult Individual \$30
Senior (60+) \$25
Student (19+) \$25
Free Membership for
youth 18 and under.
Club year runs from
Sept. to August

Cheques made
payable to:
K W Field Naturalists.

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](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.

"The Heron" is the official
publication of the KWFN.
Information is written and
submitted by volunteer
members of the club. Articles
reflect the views of the
authors and are not
necessarily the views
endorsed by the KWFN club.

The Heron is published three
times per year. Please see
page 2 for details.

Print copies of the newsletter
are available at meetings free
of charge to members.

Newsletters available on
Our web site at:

[http://www.kwfn.ca/newsletter
.html](http://www.kwfn.ca/newsletter
.html)

Advertising Rates for The Heron:

Advertisement Size	Per issue	Full year 3 issues)
Full Page	\$200	\$520
Half Page	\$100	\$ 260
Quarter Page	\$ 50	\$ 130
One-tenth Page (business card)	\$ 25	\$ 65

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[http://www.ontarionature.org/ind
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ex.php)