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UPCOMING SPEAKER

Join us September 25th for a presentation by Dr. Fiona Hunter on biting flies in Canada.

See waterlooregionnature.ca for details, and pg. 14&15 for information on more upcoming speakers!

OUTINGS, OUTINGS, OUTINGS

Read inside for more information on upcoming outings, and check your email for further updates, cancellation information, and new outings added.

REMINDER

Don't forget to renew your WRN membership this fall!



Figure 2 Floodplain shoreline habitat of nesting Bald Eagle along Grand River, Kitchener, 5 June 2017 (photo W. Wilson).

THE HERON

FALL 2017

RECEPTION HALL
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Successful Nesting of Bald Eagle in Kitchener, 2016 & 2017

By Bill Wilson

"FYI Bill. Here is our answer!!"

This exclamation from Art Timmerman, Management Biologist for the OMNRF, Guelph District, introduced an e-mail string received in mid-June 2016 that confirmed what many members of WRN and Friends of **rare Charitable Research Reserve** had been anticipating since 2010. A nesting pair of Bald Eagles monitored annually since that year had successfully fledged a chick. Whether the same pair attempted nesting throughout this time period is not known. A search of WRN club bird records indicates that this successful nesting was the first breeding record of Bald Eagles within Kitchener city limits.



Figure 1 Juvenile Bald Eagle on Doon GC, 14 June 2016 (photo T. Doering).

The string of e-mails originated with Todd Doering, Supervisor, Golf Grounds, Sport Division, City of Kitchener, who, on June 14, 2016, observed and photographed a Bald Eagle fledgling grounded on a Doon Valley Golf Course fairway (Figure 1). The following day, Doering observed the fledgling still on the course while an adult perched in a nearby tree below. Doering observed what appeared to be food for the young on the ground -- an encouraging sign. Adults will continue to feed grounded young provided that the young are not trapped in dense vegetation (Buehler 2000). Doering's observations on the Doon Valley Golf Course were opportunistic and much appreciated.

Continued on pg. 8

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Winter Issue

October 15th

Spring Issue

February 15th

Fall Issue

July 15th

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All WRN Club
meetings are held
in the Reception
Hall of the
Waterloo Knox
Presbyterian
Church

50 Erb St. West

Regular Meetings
begin at 7:30pm.
Doors open at
7pm.

**All parking is
FREE**

All parking access
is off Dupont
Street.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Our garden is full of caterpillars!

That's the hope at least. The milkweed we planted four years ago has thrived, and for the first time we're raising a few baby Monarchs. Meanwhile, every week new colourful species are emerging - beetles, bees, butterflies, dragonflies... and now the cicadas are starting to call. Summer is truly welcome and uplifting, not just for the sunshine and the warmth, but for the wealth of biodiversity that accompanies it, with so many exotic looking creatures hiding in every patch of weeds and goldenrods.

It's a small reminder of what's at stake for the environment. Here in southern Ontario, we have experienced tremendous loss of Carolinian forest, wetlands and other habitats; we also see the spread of monocultures, supported by neonicotinoids and other indiscriminate pesticides. Farther afield, the warm temperatures are alarming. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, locked in the high Arctic to insure against the loss of plant diversity, flooded in May 2017... because the permafrost melted. In July, an iceberg detached from Antarctica to break up and melt... it was larger than Prince Edward Island. Sobering thoughts to accompany the ice cubes and tonic – add gin if needed!

Summer also brings mosquitoes and insect bites – even biodiversity has its drawbacks – but that's why we can also look forward to fall! In fact, our September speaker will enlighten us on how

Canada's biting flies are faring in the 21st century, with the arrival of West Nile Virus and other concerns. I hope to see you all at Knox for another fascinating year of meetings and presentations.

In truth I'm somewhat daunted to serve as President of such a distinguished club, with a history stretching back over eighty years. But there couldn't be a more welcoming group. Stephanie has done a wonderful job steering us over the past twelve months, as have all her colleagues on the Board of Directors. I'd like to particularly thank those stepping down for their unstinting volunteer work – Charlotte for her outstanding diligence and attention to details big and small as Secretary; Genie for doing a fantastic job of scheduling engaging and stimulating presentations as Program Director; Marg for tirelessly coordinating our outings program, and leading it from strength to strength; and Shayne for his passionate and enthusiastic championing of conservation causes on behalf of the club. I'd also like to thank Josh for selflessly postponing his retirement to rejoin us as VP, and for recruiting a full and impressive roster of new Board members – they're young and experienced, energetic and wise... and in many cases three out of four!

Most importantly, I'd like to extend our sincere thanks to all of you who volunteered over the past year. You've written articles, and led outings, and given talks. You've set up for meetings, greeted members, and staffed booths. You've volunteered with WRN Kids, managed our social media, managed our website, and audited our books. You've even donned protective gear during a heatwave to fight hazardous invasive plants on our property. It's the life blood of WRN, and together I hope we can look forward to another wonderful year.

Last but not least, I'd like to thank our talented Heron Editor, to whom I am submitting this column five days past the deadline. Jenna - my apologies. I blame the caterpillars!

Don't forget to visit
www.waterlooregionnature.ca/membership
to renew your WRN membership for
the 2017-2018 season!



The following outings are confirmed for Fall 2017. A reminder notice will be sent out by email to WRN members approximately 5 days before the outing. In the event of change or cancellation, WRN members will also be notified by email. **WRN thanks the various property owners for so generously sharing nature on their land.**

Spectacular Spiders

When: Sunday, August 20, 2017 from 1:30pm for about 1.5 hours

Where: Jane Schneider's house, 567 Wilmot Line (enough parking in driveway and at nearby tractor shed)- we will walk from there.

Who: Dan Schneider 519-766-3329 rhanning.dschneider@sympatico.ca

Join Dan to discover many of these most remarkable predators. We'll explore different habitats and find spiders who hunt, fish and trap their insect prey. Participants will learn to identify the different family groups of spiders, as well as some beautiful species that share our homes, gardens, ponds, fields and forests. Easy walking, not wheelchair accessible, washroom available at start and finish, regular walking clothes - dress for walking in weather of the day.

Mill Run Trail Cambridge

When: Wednesday, September 6, 2017 from 9:30am for about 2 hours

Where: Mill Run Trail parking lot where Clemens Ave. meets Sheffield St. in Cambridge. Clemens Ave. can be accessed from Fishermills Rd. Fishermills Rd. is a continuation of Maple Grove Rd. which is an extension of Sportsworld Dr.

Who: Marco & Donna DeBruin

Join Marco for a leisurely morning walk along the Mill Run (Riverbank Trail). This trail follows the Speed River past a variety of habitats. The trail is fairly level and has some boardwalk sections along its length. We should be able to see a good variety of waterfowl along with other birds. Beavers and muskrat have also been seen along this trail.

HAVE AN OUTING SUGGESTION?

Contact: outings@waterlooregionnature.ca

Next outing deadline is October 15, however ideas are welcome at any time!

A Big Sit

When: Saturday, September 9, 2017 from 6p.m. until dusk

Where: At the culvert along Beaver Creek Rd., Waterloo.

Who: Jim Burrell burrellsc@golden.net

Come and enjoy good company and some lazy birding. Many birds use Laurel Creek Reservoir as a roost site. Bring a lawn chair, bins, field guides and a drink. We will watch the sunset.

The Nature of SpruceHaven

When: Saturday, September 16, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. for about 3.5 hours

Where: SpruceHaven, 2005 Notre Dame Drive, St. Agatha, ON (north of the town). Park near the drive shed and in the vicinity of the barn as much as possible.

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

Join David for a ramble through the different habitats at SpruceHaven; enjoy a session at the mist nets to see which migrants are passing through; marvel at a large Barn Swallow colony in a century old barn; and chat with Dave Westfall and his sister, Sandy, and brother-in-law, Jamie, while enjoying coffee and cookies after the morning's activities.

Please let David know (519 725-0866, theospreynest@sympatico.ca) if you will be attending in order to gauge numbers for the refreshments.

A Walk in the Woods — Baden Sand Hills

When: Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 1:30 p.m. for about 1.5 hours

(Rain Date: Thursday, September 21)

Where: The Cappleman property, 2774 Sandhills Road, Baden. Park in the driveway at the top of the hill, or along the shoulder of the road. Watch out for vehicles cresting the hill fast — they can be hard to see.

Who: Jim Cappleman 519-634-9711

We are planning a hike through our trails of diverse trees, expecting to discover fall colours, fall migrants, plants, fungi, insects & perhaps some animal life. This is hilly terrain, as the name implies. Afterwards, all are welcome to stay for a few refreshments.

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Also at St. Jacobs Farmers Market

****And now at the Stratford Farmers Market****

Hawk Cliff and Port Stanley

- When:** Saturday, September 23, 2017 from 8 a.m. until about 2:30 p.m. About 1 hr 20 min drive each way (if you don't stop for birds!)
- Where:** Meet at Fountain St carpool lot, South-west side of Hwy 401 overpass.
- Who:** Jim Burrell burrellsc@golden.net

We will head for Hawk Cliff and view migrating raptors, song birds and butterflies. This is a well-known migration monitoring site. While in the area we will visit the Port Stanley sewage lagoons; an attractive location to migrating shorebirds and waterfowl. Bring a lawn chair, drinks, lunch, bins, scopes and field guides. We should be back by mid-afternoon.

Identifying Trees & Shrubs

- When:** Saturday, September 30, 2017 at 10:30am for 1-2 hours, depending on interest.
- Where:** Wilmot Recreation Complex (WRC), SE corner of parking lot behind building near playground. The WRC is located on highway 7&8 at the corner of Nafziger Rd. Drive Hwy 7&8 west towards New Hamburg and turn right (north) at the traffic lights at Nafziger Rd. Turn right into the complex and drive behind the left end of the building to the parking area at the far end of the building.
- Who:** Wayne Buck 519-662-2529 waylyn2@cwisp.ca

We will learn to identify trees and shrubs by their leaves. We will also look for any other interesting plants that may be present at this time of year. This is a follow up to the walk held In March, 2017 in the same area, learning to identify trees and shrubs by their winter twigs and bark. It is an excellent site having 17 different species of trees and shrubs in a small area. This outing will be on the Schmidt Trail. This trail is crushed gravel and easy to walk. It is just over a year old and is new to many members of WRN. It is on land donated to Wilmot Township by the late Harold Schmidt Estate. Washrooms are available in the Rec Complex.

Migrating Sandhill Cranes

- When:** Thursday, November 9, 2017 at 4:15 p.m. for 1.25 hours
(Rain Date: Friday, November 10)
- Where:** Parking lot at NW corner of Ayr-Wrigleys Road and Spragues (Pinehurst) Road — known formerly as Highway 24A. Viewing from an observation tower on southern margin of Bannister Lake and from the lake margin.
- Who:** Ken and Janet Dance (H) 519-463-6156 (C) 226-792-6712
danceenvironment@rogers.com

No Fee. Not wheelchair accessible. No washroom at the site. We will walk for 3 minutes along a fairly level dirt path to the viewing tower. During the past 2 Autumns, 100 cranes have roosted at this location at dusk this time of year. In addition to cranes, expect waterfowl and possibly raptors. We will stay until sundown to see cranes drop from the sky onto the roosting site at dusk, so dress warmly and wear hiking boots. Bring binoculars, scopes, cameras. We will have a scope on site.

Please RSVP so that we can plan a rewarding outing.

Pat and Paul Bigelow Receive Honorary Life Membership Award

By Janet Ozaruk and Mary Ann Vanden Elzen

At the April meeting, Pat and Paul Bigelow were presented with the very prestigious Honorary Life Membership Award. This award acknowledges the valuable and exceptional service made to Waterloo Region Nature and is given to only the most deserving of members. And Pat and Paul certainly are! They joined the club in November of 1985 and, since that time, the value of their contributions to the club has been immeasurable.

Perhaps Paul's greatest contribution has been his service as Treasurer for a total of nine years: from 2002 to 2007 and from 2012 to present. Less well known is that Pat was actually club treasurer before Paul was: from 1993 to 1996. Both are members of the Montgomery Committee helping to manage and protect WRN's Montgomery Wildlife Sanctuary. And both have spent time staffing WRN tables at various public events.

Each, however, has a long string of individual contributions to the club.

Pat was a founding member, back in 1999, of the Young Naturalists Club and has been a constant presence ever since, expertly performing a variety of jobs behind the scenes. Nowadays, Pat is most likely to be seen at club events with a camera and telescopic lens strapped around her neck. In her role as unofficial club photographer, she has provided many photographs for the Heron newsletter, the club's archives, and most recently, the club's new website.

Paul has been invaluable as the Board's techie go-to person. He helped launch WRN's much enhanced



Photo by: Derek Hitchens

website and is now its manager; he spearheaded the club's use of MailChimp and PayPal; he was pivotal in launching Ecoposts and compiling the club's Facebook page.

When not behind the computer, Paul gets outdoors. Over the years, his steadily growing knowledge of birds makes him a reliable recorder for the club's annual Great Backyard Bird Count. His interest in wildflowers blossomed as well. Paul has led club botany outings both locally and to the Bruce Peninsula.

Few know all that Pat and Paul have done for the club. And yet, everyone would notice if they didn't do what they do. It's all done humbly and quietly. In contrast, at the April club meeting, the audience's standing ovation for them was long and loud.

To read the nomination document, check the WRN website or click on <https://waterlooregionnature.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Recommendation-for-the-Bigelows-April-24.pdf>

Do you know children from 7-12 who have an interest in the natural world?

This is your chance to **register for**
Waterloo Region Nature Kids!
A monthly outdoor adventure awaits!

Registration is now open for the 2017-2018 year.

To find out more, please visit the Waterloo Region Nature website at <https://waterlooregionnature.ca/kids/> or wrnatureclub.wordpress.com



Photo by: Marg Paré

Successful Nesting of Bald Eagle in Kitchener, 2016 & 2017, *continued*

By Bill Wilson



Figure 3 Two juvenile Bald Eagles at nest, 10 June 17 (photo R. Fowler).

In fact, this fledgling had flown to ground from its nest located in the treed floodplain that forms the buffer between the Grand River and the RiverEdge Golf Course across the river from the Doon Valley Golf Course. Some fairways of both courses are separated by the river and vegetated buffers along both sides of the river. During the latter phase of the hatchling stage and prior to normal fledging, vegetation obscures the nest location from nearby fairways on both golf courses (Figure 2– pg.1).

Food – primarily fish – and parental care is provided during the nesting stage. The young are brooded by the adults – mostly the female -- for about four weeks particularly during cool, inclement weather; as well, the adult will shade the young chicks from sun to avoid heat stress (Buehler 2000). Once the young have fledged, at anywhere from eight to fourteen weeks old, parental care is limited. Fledged young may follow adults and may be fed (in one study, up to six weeks); however, as independence increases, fledglings eventually disperse and hunt on their own.

Bob Fraser, Marshall at RiverEdge Golf Course, 2004-2015, and present-day golfer there, has been instrumental in reporting eagle activity particularly during the past two years. This year, 2017, Fraser regularly relayed his observations of the nest during late April, May and June, such as young wing-flapping to practice flight and to develop muscle strength on June 5. His reports supplemented observations made by me and

others with telescope from distance.

In 2017, two Bald Eagle hatchlings fledged in mid-June from this nest. On June 10, Randy Fowler photographed at distance* two fledglings standing on the nest (Figure 3). Fraser reported both young on a branch next to the nest on June 12 with an adult perched nearby but not in the nest which is typical adult behaviour five to six weeks after hatch (ibid). On the evening of June 14 only one young was observed at the nest site; the second one could not be located when the area was searched at distance* with binoculars and telescope. This may suggest that one young fledged before the second one and possibly left the nesting area before the second. Gary R. Bortolotti (1984), during a Saskatchewan study, observed males leaving the nest 4 days on average ahead of females. When the Kitchener nest site was next observed, the first week of July, neither adults nor fledglings were observed.

In summary, Bald Eagles have fledged three young in two years, 2016 and 2017, from a location in Kitchener along the Grand River where a nest was first constructed in 2010. What was observed during 2010 to 2015, a result of regular monitoring by members of WRN and Friends of *rare*, is the subject of the next article (part 2) in *The Heron*. Observers in 2016-17 included Donna and Marco DeBruin**, Todd Doering, Randy Fowler**, Bob Fraser**, Jerry Guenther, Ruth Kroft**, Bill Read, Heather and Bill Wilson**.

* refers to observations using telescope and camera (see Figure 3) ~740 metres from the nest site. For further comments and discussion of this approach to Bald Eagle observation during eagle nesting and monitoring, 2001 -2017, refer to parts 2 and 3 of this article.

**WRN members

References:

Bortolotti, G. R. 1984. Criteria for determining age and sex of nesting Bald Eagles. *J. Field Ornithology* 55(4) 467-481.

Buehler, David A. (2000). Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), *The Birds of North America* (P. G. Rodewald, Ed.). Ithaca: Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Retrieved from the Birds of North America: <https://birdsna.org/Species-Account/bna/species/baleag>
DOI: [10.2173/bna.506](https://doi.org/10.2173/bna.506)

Wilson, W.G. *journal field notes* 2016, 2017

FH Montgomery Wildlife Sanctuary– Annual Report 2016

Compiled By Margaret Lewis-Macdonald

Mandate

In accordance with The Management Plan for the property, the Conservation Director of the club is asked to submit an Annual Report about the property to the Board. The Montgomery Committee is to prepare the report. This report covers the period from March 2016 to March 2017 and is published in the Heron for the information of the members.

Report Of Activity

At our spring clean-up we met Bill Weiker walking along the road. His grandfather sold the property to KWFN and they still own several neighboring farms. The spring plants were remarkable this year—outstanding were the large areas of Dutchman's breeches! The alien Winter Aconite is spreading. Trout Lily, (yellow and white), Twin Leaf (in bloom), Blood Root, Trillium, Blue Cohosh, Solomon's-seal, Wild Geranium, Spring Beauty, Virginia Waterleaf and May-apple were some of the spring plants identified, many nearly in bloom! On June 10 we held another very successful garlic mustard pull. Again Wayne Buck led the effort. On this day we also located the Green Dragon (one of our rare plants in Montgomery) and photos were taken. October 21 found everyone in action again. More Ash trees had been downed, but there is evidence of regeneration of Bur Oak.

Periwinkle Eradication

We put down 2 new tarps but moved only a few others. We did note extensive untreated areas of periwinkle especially in the areas of posts 8 and 9 (where it is the feature).

Other Invasives

On June 29, 2016 our then-President Stephanie Sobek-Swant was notified by the Region of Waterloo's weed inspector that the noxious weed Giant Hogweed was present on our property. To learn more about the actions taken and future plans to deal with this plant, contact montgomery@waterlooregionnature.ca.

Trail Guide

Features described on the trail guide were all present spring and fall. However signs saying features not present remained three years after the guide was updated; they have been removed.

Montgomery Property Report Inspection

Inspection was performed October 21, 2016. Steady light rain did not interfere with the activity. The report has been submitted to the Board and approved.

Wood Duck Boxes

This is always the highlight of our day. This is the third season that they have been in place. One box "WD Box West" is close to the Nith River. And again for the third time we found evidence of wood duck breeding! We found one unfertile egg and two unbroken eggs that had been pierced (by a stick?) and some egg shell debris so definite signs of successful nesting. On top of all was a new squirrel nest of fresh leaves. The box was cleaned and fresh shavings put in. Our second box is in the interior "WD Box East. There was no sign of any nesting in this box this year. Again the box was cleaned and fresh shavings put inside.

General Observations

Excellent to find the Green Dragon thriving! Our spring woodland plants are also in very good health. Although we have lost many Ash and Beech trees the Bur Oak is coming in. We need to continue the effort to reduce the spread of periwinkle. We will require strong measures to deal with the Giant Hogweed. It was decided to focus on Giant Hogweed in spring 2017. We will not hold a garlic mustard pull in 2017 but will reassess for 2018.

Acknowledgements

Thank you again to all our committee members who not only provide their hours of work but also needed supplies and equipment for our work. And a special thank you to our volunteers who help with extra projects.

Respectfully submitted by The Montgomery Property Committee (in alpha order):

Pat and Paul Bigelow, Wayne and Lynda Buck, Marco and Donna DeBruin, Jim Cappleman, Fraser Gibson, Ross Dickson, Graham & Marg Macdonald, April Morrissey.

Membership Director's Report

By Anne Godlewski

Thank you to our donors:

Thomas
Heinrichsberg
Margaret Lewis-
Macdonald
Janet Sankey
Sarah Stevens

Welcome, New Members!

Sue Abson-Thorpe	Doug Innes	Paul Rouleau
Daina Anderson	Jon Krafchek	Pierre Rouleau
Carrie Balasso	Joseph Lance	Suzanne Rouleau
Jeremy Bannon	Linda Lehtonen	David Rozotto
Brittney Bourdages	Asha Philar	Nathan Stark
Jennifer Cary	Matt Roth	Anne Steven
Rachael Edwards	Kerry Roth	Sarah Stevens
Jennifer Fillingham	Claire Rouleau	Rachel ten Bruggencate
Nathaniel Harper	David Rouleau	Erin Thompson
Justine Heinrichsberg	Dominic Rouleau	Paul Thorpe
Poppy Heinrichsberg	Gabrielle Rouleau	Richard Trudel
Thomas Heinrichsberg	Jeanine Rouleau	Kim Van der Nolk van Gogh
Emma Henderson	Madeleine Rouleau	

Hidden Valley Art Show

By Anne Morgan

As many of you may know our long time members, Daphne and Gordon Nicholls, have worked tirelessly for years to preserve the integrity of Hidden Valley in Kitchener. Unfortunately Daphne did not live long enough to follow through on her plans to showcase the beauty and value of this incredible area. She hoped that another art show would inspire others to help in the protection of the forests,

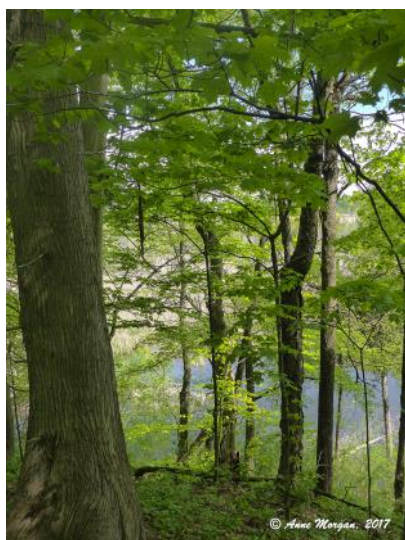


Photo by: Anne Morgan

wetlands and fields from development.

We are pleased to announce that Gord and several of Daphne's friends have taken up where Daphne left off, and have helped to organize a juried art show, 'Hidden Valley Revealed', that will take place at Homer Watson House &

Gallery, September 16 through to October 22, 2017. Whether it be the amazing vistas, the wonderful wildflowers or the diversity of wildlife, every aspect of Hidden Valley represents a jewel worth preserving, and we hope this art show will help to garner public support for its protection in perpetuity.

To read some of the historical perspectives on the struggles to protect the 200 acres of Hidden Valley with further descriptions of this amazing area, Gord has created a website: <https://sites.google.com/site/hiddenvalleyorg/Home>, and many photos have also been posted on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/HiddenValleyRevealed>

We thank our WRN members who may have submitted art work for the 'Hidden Valley Revealed' exhibit; and we encourage our membership to attend in support of the protection of this very special area.

Further details are on the Homer Watson House & Gallery website www.homerwatson.on.ca, or enquiries can be directed to Deb Swidrovich (519-746-5287) or Anne Morgan (519-747-4049).

WRN Photo Gallery



The Frigid Four a long johns outing on May 6 to Oxford County. Scott B., Mary Ann V., Janet D. and Wil. Photo: K. Dance.



Fraser Gibson stops to talk trees on the Schmidt Woods outing. Photo: P. Bigelow.



Dutchman's Breeches observed on the Cappleman's Outing. Photo: P. Bigelow.



KNAP Earth Day event.
Photos: P. Bigelow.



One of many red-backed salamanders observed during an outing at *rare*.
Photo: P. Bigelow.



A group shot at the Stamm Woodlot outing. Photo: P. Bigelow.



Montgomery Work Day. Photos: P. Bigelow.



An Azure butterfly observed in Sudden Tract. Photo: D. Thomas.

Correction: In the Spring 2017 edition of the Heron, photos from the WRN visit to the archives were incorrectly attributed. Thanks to Graham MacDonald for taking these photos!

Do you have nature or event photos to share? Send them to editor@waterlooregionnature.ca

waterlooregionnature.ca

Ontario Nature Report

By Fraser Gibson

Snapping Turtle Hunt Banned!

Our deepest thanks to everyone who supported our call to end the snapping turtle hunt in Ontario. Your voices were heard. (Twenty seven Nature Network groups signed onto the letter Ontario Nature submitted to the Environmental Registry calling for the snapping turtle hunt to be banned; many also submitted letters of their own. A total of 5,633 individuals submitted comments through our website.)

The government [announced its decision to terminate the hunt](#). This victory is proof that our collective voice, when amplified, can be a powerful tool to affect positive change for Ontario's wild species and wild spaces. Ontario was one of only two provinces that still had a snapping turtle hunt.

A Disappointing End for the ESA Court Action

Sadly, Ontario Nature and Wildlands League were denied their application to the Ontario Court of Appeal contesting the many industry related exemptions to the Endangered Species Act. Thank you for supporting us throughout this difficult fight.

Ontario Government Releases Updated Land Use Plans

In May, Ontario's Minister of Municipal Affairs, Bill Mauro, released the newly updated Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. While the province is moving the yardstick in the right direction, we have identified some significant concerns with the newly finalized plans. Check out our [blog](#) to see a recap of what we're pleased with, what we're disappointed with and what's coming next.

What Do We Want? More Protected Areas!

When do we want them? Now! Our government has promised to protect 17% of our land and inland waters through well-connected networks of protected areas by 2020. And today, we're only at 11%. It's time for leadership and action! Creating protected areas helps maintain clean air and water, conserves species diversity, gives us places to explore and experience nature, captures and stores carbon and buffers the impact of climate change. [Stand with Ontario Nature today](#) and call on our government to create more protected areas!

2017 Annual Gathering

Ontario Nature's 2017 Annual Gathering held on the shores of Lake Simcoe was attended by five WRN members. Ontario Nature recognized exceptional contributions to the protection of wild species and wild spaces. The Steve Hounsell Greenway Award was given to Michael Barnstijn and Louise MacCallum who last year were the recipients of a WRN Conservation Award.

Nature Network News

Ontario Nature publishes a monthly Nature Network Newsletter from which I draw material for the Heron. If you wish to see each newsletter they are posted on the Ontario Nature website at: [Nature Network News](#)

Witch Hazel

By Wayne Buck

On November 29, 2016, Ken Quanz, Fraser Gibson and I were hiking The Bruce Trail near Grimsby. The trail was for the most part on top of the escarpment overlooking Lake Ontario in the distance. It was a glorious day, 14°C, breezy, overcast, with most pleasant hiking conditions. The ground was covered with leaves and was somewhat slippery from the moisture beneath. With the leaves gone, we could see a long way into the bush, giving us an excellent view of what was growing there. I could see the large maroon-coloured buds of the Red Elderberry already forming, ready to burst open at the first sign of spring. Then I saw them, right beside the trail. I could touch them without even stepping off the path, the bright yellow narrow twisted petals of Witch Hazel, in glorious profusion. I was somewhat surprised as I would have thought the blossoms would be spent and gone by now, having accomplished their role of attracting pollinators for pollination. But no, there they were. I took the opportunity to photograph them and placed a strip of flagging tape on the ground to attract Fraser's attention as he passed by in case he was in rapt attention, listening to some far-off Winter Wren or Red-bellied Woodpecker.

Witch Hazel is one of my favorite native plants, with its bright yellow somewhat narrow twisted petals appearing when most other plants have died back and turned brown or become dormant. What an optimist these plants must be, thinking that insects are still able to be out and about to carry out their essential task of pollinating.



Photos by: Walter Muma
(ontariotrees.com)



Their optimism is rewarded since each year in October we collect the light-brown somewhat woody fruits or seed capsules that contain several black shiny seeds pointed at both ends. If planted in suitable conditions, they will germinate the following spring and require several years to grow to a size when they can be transplanted or, preferably, left to grow where they were planted.

I'm not sure whether the name 'witch' comes from the appearance of the shiny, twisted yellow petals that open at such an inhospitable time or from the fact that people (called diviners) used a fork branch of the shrub to locate (divining) water hidden below the ground to dig a well. Such people were highly valued in pioneer times.

The 'hazel' part of the name comes from the resemblance of the leaf to the true hazels, such as American Hazel which were associated with witches in the days of yore.

Recommended for you...

Have you watched or read something nature related that you think fellow WRN club members might enjoy? Send to editor @waterlooregionnature.ca and it may be included in the next newsletter!

"Gordon Nelson's new book, *The Magnificent Nahanni*, extols the wonders of this great northern River: towering Virginia Falls, great canyons, limestone caves, grizzly bear, caribou and other animals in a nearly intact ecosystem. It describes efforts to protect the Nahanni in a National Park, the role of indigenous people, continuing mining threats and an unusual natural history with 30 colour photos and 17 maps. "

(U. of Regina Press, 2017)

...by Virgil Martin

Upcoming Speakers and Meeting Programs

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 7:30pm. Meetings are free and visitors are always welcome.
Meeting Location: Reception Hall, Waterloo Knox Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb Street West, Waterloo

SEPTEMBER

September 25, 2017

Biting Flies in Canada: Are They Worse Than They Used to Be? Dr. Fiona Hunter

The Presentation: The nemesis to summer BBQs, camping, and soccer games, biting flies are a staple Canadian complaint. But as much as we're irritated by bites and stings, it's the diseases carried by these creatures that are the real concern. Are animals (including humans) at greater risk of contracting arthropod-borne diseases now than they were a century ago? September's presentation will address this question as well as examine changes in species distributions and the resulting affects on potential bloodmeal hosts. Mark your calendars for this engaging talk on such a current and important issue.



The Presenter: For nearly twenty years, Dr. Fiona Hunter has worked as a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at Brock University, specializing in Medical and Veterinary Entomology. Previously, she received her B.Sc. (Hons) in Zoology and M.Sc. in Botany from the University of Toronto and a Ph.D. in Biology from Queen's University. Lecturing in both her specific area of research interest and general undergraduate biology, Dr. Hunter is always trying to convert as many pre-med students as possible to the ecological and evolutionary sciences! Not only do Dr. Hunter and her graduate students conduct cutting edge research on West Nile virus transmission but, since the virus first appeared in Canada in 2001, she has worked closely with the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care as well as with the First Nations Inuit Health Branch to conduct mosquito surveillance and viral testing. More info on the Brock Fly Lab at: <https://brockfionaflyhunter.wordpress.com/>.

OCTOBER

October 23, 2017

October's presentation is being finalized!

Be on the look out for updates via email and on the club website: waterlooregionnature.ca



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Sunday, September 24

10:00am start

Join us at Riverbluffs Park, Cambridge for a 5K walk and fun run to *Turn the Map Green*

For more details visit:

raresites.org

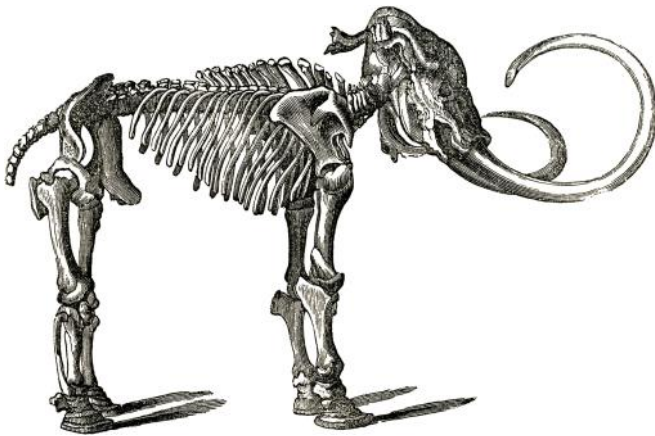


NOVEMBER

November 27, 2017

A Mastodon in a Biscuit Box Peter Russel

The Presentation: All museums receive fascinating donations from time to time, often accompanied with stories of their provenance. Although these origins often amount to only a couple of lines, some are comprised of a fantastic story. One of these enthralling histories came from the artifact known as 'Shirley's Box', a mysterious box of teeth from Highgate, Ontario, donated to the University of Waterloo's Earth Sciences Museum. What started as a few unidentified remains was revealed to be the teeth and lower jaw tusk of a mastodon whose history elicited information on the pre-history of Ontario. No, we didn't have dinosaurs roaming the province, but we did have giants of the ice age: mammoths, mastodons, giant beaver and more!



The Presenter: This month, WRN has the pleasure of hosting Peter Russel, past curator for the University of Waterloo's Earth Sciences Museum and recipient of the prestigious Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement. Growing up, Peter was lucky enough to live nearby a plethora of interesting mineral and fossil collecting sites in Yorkshire, England. Beachcombing for agate and carnelian and collecting ammonites, belemnites, and other fossils from the Jurassic sparked his interest in geology, and at 15, Peter was hired as a junior technician at the Geological

Department at Leeds University. He began his work at the University of Waterloo in 1967 and, in 2003, was instrumental in transferring the museum to its present location. Curator of the museum since the early 1970s, Peter was responsible for the installation of many exciting new displays, including the popular Cobalt Mine Tunnel. Although now retired, Peter still enjoys assisting and providing his expertise to the museum.

DECEMBER

December 11, 2017

Annual Holiday Party! ****Note the special date & time****

Date: December 11, 2017

Time: 7 - 9:30 p.m.



Information:

- Heads up! **Waterloo Region Nature's Annual Holiday Party! Come spend a fun evening with good company, festive music, and delicious food. Many creative and dedicated volunteers give their time every year to decorating the hall in order to make the night a great success.
- Potluck: please bring appetizers or desserts to share!
- Fair trade, bird-friendly, shade grown coffee will be provided, as well as hot mulled local apple cider.

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

Objectives of WRN

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:

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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