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UPCOMING SPEAKER

Join us November 26 for a presentation from Heather Bagg on the weird and wonderful wildlife of Borneo

OUTINGS, OUTINGS, OUTINGS

See pgs 4-6 for more info on upcoming outings! Watch your email for updates and more outing announcements.



FWR Dickson Wilderness Area Opening

By Mary Ann Vanden Elzen

There was an excellent representation from WRN members, past and current, at the September 12, 2018 FWR Dickson Wilderness Area opening and dedication. Following the ceremony, many participated in a guided tour of the new boardwalk and trails.

From left to right are: Meg Slater, Levi Moore, Larry Lamb, Wayne Buck, Fraser Gibson, Betty Cooper, Mary Ann Vanden Elzen, Don Roberts, Ken Quanz, Harold Russell, Greg Michalenko.

Photo: K. Tupman



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> Submission Deadlines:

Spring Issue February 15th Fall Issue July 15th Winter Issue

October 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.



Small Wonders

As we approach a new season and another issue of our newsletter, my mind is drawn towards the many small wonders that appear around us in nature and unexpectedly in our lives. I am thankful for these moments and appreciate that they occur in my life.

As the winter season approaches, my curiosity and excitement grows. Like many of you, I try to get outside as much as I can during these months and am always amazed by what can be found. Each day can bring new discoveries such as little stories about nature in our city as is told by fresh footprints in the snow or in the excitement of an unexpected species found on a Christmas bird count or on a winter wander. One such 'annual discovery' that I am always excited to re-find on winter outings are snow fleas. Perhaps you have had the pleasure of stumbling upon these amazing little creatures or maybe this is your introduction...

The snow flea (*Hypogastrura nivicola*) is not actually a flea but rather a species of springtail. At first glance, they may look like loosely scattered specs of soil, but upon closer examination, these are tiny insects (well, not technically insects but that is another article) that are 'jumping in joy' for the

Nominations are now open for the WRN Conservation Award and the Honorary Lifetime Membership Award!

Due before December 15th.

Please contact Josh for more details. president@waterlooregionnature.ca

warmth of a sunny day. These springtails are soil organisms with a spring like tail that appear near the bases of trees and feed on decaying organic matter. In fact, despite their name, they can be found anytime of the year and are major players in the world of decomposition. Further to their small, yet amazing wonder status, they contain an anti-freeze protein, which effectively keeps them from freezing during the cold winter months and a springy tail that launches them airborne to escape potential predators. Just another one of those small wonders in the natural world that makes you marvel at life in new and magical ways. There is just so much to discover!



For me, small wonders can also appear regularly in other aspects of our lives. These moments appear in the form of a listening friend, a lunchtime chat with a mentor, in that person who regularly steps up to volunteer to organize an event or lead an outing, or who takes on a needed position to help lead the WRN board (hint hint!). If you have been the lucky recipient of one of these wonders, you might even consider nominating someone for a WRN conservation award. It is never too late or too small of a gesture to recognize someone for doing amazing things.

Over the coming months, I hope you will find lots of time to slow down and discover your own wonders this winter. I also encourage you to gift someone in your life a moment or wonder that brings an added joy to their day.

-Josh Shea



The following outings are confirmed for Winter 2018/2019. In the event of change or cancellation, WRN members will be notified by email. Outings are free unless otherwise noted. **WRN thanks the various property owners for so generously sharing nature on their land**.

Hamilton/Niagara for Waterfowl and Gulls -

When: Saturday, December 1, 2018 at 8:00am until approximately 3:00pm.

Where: Meet at the Fountain St. carpool lot.

Who: Jim Burrell 519-699-4695 burrellsc@golden.net

This is an all-day outing that will end at approximately 3pm. Travel to the inner harbour in Hamilton to look for over wintering waterfowl. We will then head to the Niagara area to view gulls on the river. Bring binoculars, scopes, water, lunches and warm clothes. We will disband in the Niagara area about 3pm.

Christmas Bird Counts 2018 ————————

2018 Dates	Location	Coordinator		
December 15	Kitchener Area	Ethan Gosnell	519-570-1256	ethan.gosnell2@gmail.com
December 16	Cambridge Area	Levi Moore	519-501-4031	levicmoore1@gmail.com
December 28	Linwood Area	Ken Burrell	519-498-0605	kenneth.gd.burrell@gmail.com

They need field observers/recorders and feeder watchers. If you would like to participate in any of these counts, please contact the Compiler.

HAVE AN OUTING SUGGESTION?

Contact outings@waterlooregionnature.ca

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

Cross-Country Skiing at the Schneider Property

When: Saturday, January 5, 2019 at 1:00pm.

Where: Meet at the first entrance to the property on Carmel Koch road closest to Wilmot Line. If

you go past the nun's residence, then you've gone too far west. Phone if unclear of the

meet-up location.

Who: Janet Ozaruk 519-893-0490 cell: 226-748-9905

This is one of the best areas around for cross-country, with a mix of open field, hardwood forest, plantations, and creeks. The trails are kept in good condition as trail use is limited only to skiing (no foot traffic) in the winter. There is a variety of trails to choose from and we can design a loop suited to our group. If snow conditions are looking questionable, phone contact to confirm if the outing is still a go.

Mill Race, St. Jacobs -

When: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 9:00am for approximately 2 hours.

Where: Meet at the Three Bridges Road end of the Mill Race Trail, near the bridge over the

Conestogo River.

Who: David Gascoigne 519-725-0866 cell: 226-747-7299

theospreynest@sympatico.ca

A pleasant, easy stroll along the Mill Race Trail to view winter residents and hand feed Black-capped Chickadees and White-breasted Nuthatches. Expected species also include Redbellied, Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers, Cedar Waxwings are always possible, Common and Hooded Mergansers are sometimes seen on the river. Many species of sparrow have over-wintered here, including Song, White-throated and Chipping. Dark-eyed Juncos will be present, as will American Tree Sparrows. Northern Cardinals and Blue Jays provide colour. There is an excellent coffee shop in St. Jacobs where we can all have a coffee/tea/hot chocolate to refresh ourselves before walking back along the trail. The total distance is about 3 kilometres.

Raptor Roundup in Wellesley and Peel Townships

When: Sunday, January 27, 2019 at 8:30am until approximately noon.Where: Meet at the Food Basics plaza on Laurelwood Drive in Waterloo

Who: Jim Burrell 519-699-4695 burrellsc@golden.net

We will travel through the 2 townships to find over-wintering raptors and whatever else pops up for us. Bring binoculars, scopes, water and warm clothes. There are no bathrooms available. We will disband somewhere north of Waterloo about noon.

Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

February 15-18, 2019.

Watch your email inbox for details about this very popular tour of home birdfeeders.



Cozy Nature Book Club 2018-2019

When: Monday, December 3, 2018 1:30-3:30pm

Monday, January 7, 2019 on the first Monday of the month Monday, February 4, 2019 (see left for specific dates)

Monday, March 4, 2019

Where: Mill-Courtland Community Centre, 216 Mill St, Kitchener. (Please note: Mill-Courtland CC

is nut free.). On bus route. Parking behind building as well as in front. Enter by front door

(as other doors are usually locked). No stairs.

Who: Lynn Conway 519-886-0812 (H) 519-501-2553 (C)

lynnconway@rogers.com

We meet monthly during late fall and winter to drink tea and tell each other about something nature related that we have read. The something could be a book, a magazine, article or poem that is fiction or non-fiction. RSVP is appreciated, but not required.

Birding the North Shore of Lake Ontario

When: Saturday, March 16, 2019; all-day outing beginning at 8:00am

Where: Meet at the commuter parking lot on Highway 6 just south of Highway 401

Who: David Gascoigne 519-725-0866 cell: 226-747-7299

theospreynest@sympatico.ca

First stop at the DesJardins Canal in Dundas, expect waterfowl, Hooded Merganser, Double-crested Cormorant, American Tree Sparrow, Downy and Red-bellied Woodpeckers. Second stop is LaSalle Park in Burlington for the large concentration of Trumpeter Swans plus gulls and numbers of waterfowl. The boardwalk may yield Carolina Wren, Northern Mockingbird, woodpeckers, sparrows and the chance to hand feed Black-capped Chickadees. Next stop will be at Sioux Lookout Park, for the chance to see Long-tailed Ducks at close range, and "flying" underwater. Large rafts of Common Goldeneye and all three scoters are possible, plus Red-breasted and Common Mergansers, Bufflehead, and Mute Swans. Other stops at Paletta Park, Bronte Harbour, Lakeshore Promenade depend on recent reports. Plenty of washroom stops and a lunch stop. Pack a lunch and snacks if you need them. Dress for the weather; bring binoculars, scope, field guide and enthusiasm.

Recommended for you...

"Rare Moments in Time, is a new book by former Record reporter, Bob Burtt, about a well-recognized landscape along the Grand River. Burtt surveys its prehistoric past, Indigenous Peoples, early European Settlers and well-connected families of the last two centuries as well as some of the people who helped secure its future as one of the country's largest urban green spaces. This background, together with several recent initiatives in conservation, environmental education and research, is a story about

rare Charitable Research Reserve"

...by Bill Wilson

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.







Waterloo Region Nature Teens

By Marg Paré

Waterloo Region Nature Teens has started! This new workand-learning club has completed our first project — and maybe a second by the time you read this. In September, we improved the nesting area for the turtles at Laurel Creek Nature Centre. October's project is helping to control invasive species at the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve and in November, we'll partner with City of Kitchener on a habitat restoration job.

Each month is different as we work with environmental organizations and meet experts in areas of interest to our members — all while earning volunteer hours! With 11 Teens we get a lot done — but there's room for more so pass on this info to teens you know. There is a small fee to join for the year.

For more info, write to teens@waterlooregionnature.ca Register at waterlooregionnature.ca/teens



Photos: L. Dutka

Waterloo Region Nature Kids

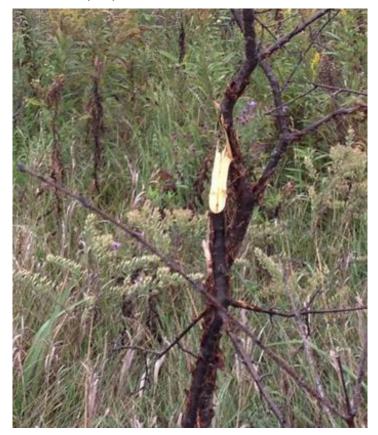
WRN Kids is also back in action for 2018-19!

We learned about Monarch migration from guest speaker Jeff Grant (photo left) and had an amazing bug hunt at our September meeting.

See our photos at wrnatureclub.wordpress.com/blog/

Stories From An Apprentice Tracker

hen I tell people I am an apprentice tracker, they often expect that I am down on hands and knees noticing prints, measuring gait and analysing substrate and landscape. While all these are certainly important to the world of tracking, my own experience has shown me that "sign", evidence of mammal activity, is much more prevalent and easier for people like me to assess.



During one of the last sunny temperate days of October I decided to go for a walk to the "owl pellet" tree, so named by my very sharp-eyed granddaughter. Along the way I noticed a young buckthorn tree with a recently broken branch. Upon closer examination I saw that bark had been worn off and I drew the conclusion that the broken branch was a result of antler rub. Deer were just entering the mating season, and this was one way to mark their scent. Feeling a little smug in my deductive skills I proceeded to the tree. Yes, I found an owl pellet and a small mandible of an unfortunate rodent nearby, but I was more pleased by the discovery of a circle of mushrooms, often referred to as a "fairy ring". They were growing in a ring about 12 feet in diameter about a spruce tree.

By Anita Smith



I then came upon a stand of beheaded mushrooms. Some of the stalks still had bits of the head attached but it was difficult to discern teeth marks. My guess was a hungry deer had chewed them off, since many were uprooted, and I expect a rodent wouldn't have spent that much energy for a few nibbles.



I also came across an old soup bone. I knew the bone had been at a human butcher shop because of the straight cut to the bone – my amazing deductive skills at work – but what was interesting were the teeth marks of various sizes evident all over the bone. Animals need their calcium so a find like this would have them chewing happily, much like we might enjoy a piece of cheese or a glass of milk.



Under the great horned owl's spruce tree, I found many cones, some intact but many chewed by a hungry and busy red squirrel, caching food for the winter. A few opened black walnuts and empty snail shells were seen as well.



After exploring the area thoroughly, I headed home the way I had come. I was thinking about the time I asked my master tracker about deer scat. Why were some scat in a neat pile and others scattered along a trail? He answered, as he so often does, with a question. Which one was made by a doe and which by a buck? As it turns out there is a difference.

Upon returning by the broken buckthorn tree again I decided to take a closer look at the part where the bark had been rubbed off. Imagine my surprise to

see hair embedded in the fibers of the bark! How did I not see that the first time? I pulled a few hairs from the bark and did "the test". I folded a hair in half and let go. Sure enough, the hair stayed kinked, a sign that it had belonged to a deer. Now I really felt smug, certain that my earlier deduction had been correct. Maybe I was really getting a handle on this tracking business!



But then as I went walking there again today I was stunned to see two more young buckthorn trees, not more than 2 meters away from the first, had been damaged, and yes, with deer hair embedded. Were these new rubs, made perhaps last night? Or did I simply miss them in my smugness when I happened by yesterday? My trail cam had captured a buck a few nights ago. Perhaps he was a regular visitor.

Apprentice tracker. I expect I will be an apprentice for a very long time. But with so much to learn I am not saddened or embarrassed. I am looking forward to the long journey ahead!



WRN Photo Gallery





Fern Hike at Laurel Creek Nature Centre Photos: P. Bigelow.









Fall Visit to Montgomery

Photos: P. Bigelow.

WRN Photo Gallery



↑ Fall Walk on Baden Sandhills Photos: P. Bigelow. Nature Photos: D. Thomas J Do you have nature or event photos to share? Send them to editor@waterlooregionnature.ca

Ontario Nature Report

By Fraser Gibson

Thank You for Your Continued Support

Ontario Nature extends their heartfelt thanks to their Nature Network member groups for sponsoring a young person to attend the 2018 Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership. This year, 55 member groups sponsored 80 youths from their communities. Held September 21 to 23 in Orillia, the summit brought together 106 teens from 74 communities across Ontario to network with each other and discuss topics such as sustainability, cross-cultural learning and reconciliation. WRN sponsored two attendees to this summit.

Protect the Places You Love!

Ontario Nature members are standing together to insist our governments keep their promise to protect 17% of Ontario's lands and inland waters by 2020. Please stand with us and make your gift today to help protect over 6 million hectares of Ontario's land and freshwater. With your help, Ontario Nature will work with and support Indigenous and local partners to help get protection for places such as Wolf Lake, the

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South Shore of Prince Edward County, the north French River watershed and Farabout Peninsula.

Save the Date for Giving Tuesday

Tuesday November 27 is Giving Tuesday, a day for people to give to the causes and charities that mean the most to them. Last year, you helped us raise \$37,143.93 to restore imperilled habitats across the province. This year, we are dedicating Giving Tuesday to our Protected Places Campaign. Our proud sponsor, Ontario Power Generation, will match every dollar you give up to \$15,000. So mark your calendars and help us protect the places we love on November 27!

GIVINGTUESDAY

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.

Membership Director's Report

By Anne Godlewski

Thank you to our donors:

Ann and Robert Bean
Paul and Pat Bigelow
Betty Brechun
Jim Cappleman and Irene Simpson
Lynn Conway and Alex White
Marco and Donna DeBruin
Bob Fraser
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Margaret Lewis-Macdonald
Anne and Alan Morgan
Doug and Su Morton
Gord Nicholls
Marg Paré
Jenna Quinn
Harold Russell
Deb and Ritch Swidrovich

Welcome, New Members!

Shirley Bauman
Irvin Bauman
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Brigitte Huber
Lucas Jeronimo Dultra Britto
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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

Read full presenter biographies at waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings

NOVEMBER

November 26, 2018

From Stinking Flowers to Flying Squirrels: The Weird and Wonderful Wildlife of Borneo Heather Bagg

The Presentation: Borneo is home of the comical orangutan, the world's stinkiest largest flower, monster flying squirrels, birds (beautiful and not so beautiful), including the endemic bristlehead and a large diversity of hornbills, monkey with the biggest schnoz, an amazing array of butterflies, and other spectacles. The world's third largest island hosts one of the longest underground rivers and other cave systems hosting an amazing bat exodus and caves where swiftlet nests are harvested for bird's nest soup. Heather's lifelong passion for birding and nature has taken her for months at a time to some of the world's most exotic locations and is excited to share her adventures in Borneo with WRN this month.

The Presenter: Heather Bagg has been a nature lover with a special passion for birds since a "wee lass" inspired by Red Rose tea cards and a children's bird book given to her by her grand-



mother, and later, birding with Dennis Rupert, founder of Lambton Wildlife. Traveling often months at a time, she's been to 30 countries and had close encounters with poisonous snakes, anacondas, huge spiders, killer bees, and strangers in the night. Her photo club and teaching experience, love of research, passion for wildlife, and always hiking with camera in hand have helped in developing her enthusiastic multi-media travel presentations that she has delivered to various organizations over the years. As a member of WRN, she looks forward to sharing with the club the natural wonders the world has to offer.



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DECEMBER

December 10, 2018

Annual Holiday Party: Quiz Night! *Special Time* 7pm-9:30pm

Join us for Waterloo Region Nature's Annual Holiday Party! This year your nature knowledge will be put to the test with a **nature themed quiz!** Compete as a table to be named the Waterloo Region Nature Holiday Party Quiz Champions. **Prizes will be on the line!** Rounds include "Name That Bird" and "Bone Brainiac".





Potluck: Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share! Fair trade, bird-friendly, shade grown coffee will be provided as well as hot mulled local apple cider.

JANUARY

January 28, 2019

Watch the Waterloo Region Nature website and your email for updates and more information about January's speaker.

FEBRUARY

February 25, 2019

The World of Pollinators: What's the Buzz? Kim Fellows

The Presentation: Why should we care about buzzing insects? Kim will draw you into the world of pollination, emphasizing how you can share your space with pollinators, especially native bees.

The Presenter: Kim Fellows was the outreach coordinator for Pollination Canada, a project under the umbrella of Seeds of Diversity Canada, for seven years. Kim's related background includes a BScH and MSc in Biology from Queen's University. Currently, Kim is active in her Bee City of Kitchener, Ontario.



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Senior (60+) \$30
Student (19+) \$25
Free Membership
for youth (<18)
Club year runs from
Sept. to August; Memberships
1/2 price after January 31st

Cheques made payable to:

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Bring payment to the next meeting or mail to:

Waterloo Region Nature 317 Highland Rd E. Kitchener, N2M 3W6

Membership details at:

https:// waterlooregionnature.ca/ membership/

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

"The Heron" is the official publication of WRN.
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 WRN 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:

https:// waterlooregionnature.ca/ newsletter/

Waterloo Region Nature is a member of Ontario Nature.

www.ontarionature.org/