

THIS ISSUE

Cover: COVID-19 Updates
 2: Contacts
 3: President's Corner
 4: Outing Alternatives
 5: WRN Teens
 6-7: The Peregrines of K-W
 8: Membership Report
 9: WRN Photo Gallery
 10-11: ON Nature Report

WELCOME NEW WRN BOARD

The start of a new club season means changes to your board of directors! Please see page 2 for a complete list of new and returning board members.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Memberships will be automatically renewed for the 2020-2021 season, see page 8 for more information

WRN KIDS CLUB

Although WRN Kids activities are currently paused until at least January due to COVID-19, please contact WRN Kids Coordinator Giselle Carter if you have interest in participating in 2021 or want to learn more.

kids@waterlooregionnature.ca



Important COVID-Related Information For the 2020-2021 Waterloo Region Nature Season

All WRN meetings, outings, and events remain cancelled until further notice. Unfortunately, COVID restricts us from gathering for our in-person monthly meetings at Knox Presbyterian for at least the duration of 2020.

Currently the possibility of having safe, small, outdoor outings is being explored. Watch for updates via email and the WRN website.

As many important club activities and offerings are not able to run as normal due to COVID, memberships are being automatically extended for the next year free of charge. See page 8 for further details.

There are many wonderful natural places to explore in Waterloo Region! Visit EcoPosts

(<https://ecoposts.waterlooregionnature.ca/>) for your guide to nature in Waterloo Region and try exploring some new areas within your social circles. Maybe you will find a new favourite spot to introduce to your fellow WRN members on an outing in the future!

To share interesting nature sightings with fellow club members, join our iNaturalist project "Waterloo Region Nature: Local Nature Sightings."

See page 4 for more information.

SUBMISSIONS WELCOME!

If you have any articles, photographs, artwork, reviews, outing recaps, etc. you would like to see in our newsletter, please submit them to editor@waterlooregionnature.ca

Tell us how you are staying connected to nature during the COVID-crisis!

Share your favourite hiking spots and nature sightings with members in the Heron.

waterlooregionnature.ca

WRN Directors

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

50 Erb St. West

In-Person Club Meetings are currently cancelled for the duration of 2020 due to COVID-19.

Positions of Responsibility

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Submission Deadlines:

Winter Issue

October 15th

Spring Issue

February 15th

Fall Issue

July 15th



President's Corner

By David Gascoigne

It seems that we have all been living with the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 for so long that it is becoming a new norm for many of us. What once seemed an unreasonable infringement on our freedom has become accepted practice. Who would think of entering a store without wearing a mask? Who would invite a neighbour into the house for morning coffee? Or more specifically as it relates to naturalists, share views through a telescope, or even congregate together for a nature walk?

Our lives have changed!

It is difficult, if not close to impossible, to predict how this is going to affect the course of events during our WRN year. Recently, engagements that I had scheduled for September and October with other groups have been cancelled. It is hard for me to imagine that we will be able to resume “business as usual” by the end of this year. The current wave of Coronavirus is still bedeviling us and there seems to be a general prediction on the part of medical authorities that a second wave will impact us as we move into the fall and winter. Groups of a hundred or more people meeting indoors seems a very unlikely prospect and we do not yet know when Knox Presbyterian Church will be open, either for its congregants or for outside groups. One might reasonably surmise that the more that diverse activities are permitted in a building, the greater the risk for person-to-person transmission of the virus, and the reduced likelihood that a doors-open policy will be reinstated any time soon.

So, we find ourselves in a period of uncertainty for which there is no precedent. Your board of directors is working diligently to try to navigate us through these uncharted waters and to ensure that the club remains strong and vital, and continues to represent the voice of conservation and nature in Waterloo Region. We gain our strength, and reinforce our

advocacy for conservation and the environment, through your support and commitment. Every time we speak, every action we take, is predicated on a strong community of like-minded people.

The reduction in human activity globally, as a direct result of the virus, has been termed an Anthropause, which has been beneficial for the environment, with improved air quality around the world, a resurgence of nature, less disturbance for wildlife, and a renewed commitment on the part of some nations to move away from fossil fuels. To what extent humankind will have the will to continue on this path once restrictions are lifted remains to be seen. In the meantime I would urge you to explore your garden more closely, and other areas close to your home. I rarely do any birding more than fifteen kilometres from my house, and I have been investigating the incredible richness of insects in my backyard. This has been a time to study unfamiliar taxa and to expand my knowledge of the richness of life that surrounds us all. I would encourage you to do the same, and also to remain in touch with your WRN friends, to share photographs and nature experiences, to help and support each other through a period such as we have never experienced before. Monarchs will be laying eggs soon and it is a fascinating and enriching experience to raise them indoors. If you have never done so, give it a try. We already have Black and Giant Swallowtails in their chrysalis stage, and can barely wait for the emergence of butterflies.

This is my second term as President of your club, and I am humbled by the opportunity to serve twice. Never did I imagine, however, that a global pandemic would set the tone for my year. I will need the help of every one of you, and I know I can count on it. Stay well, stay healthy, stay sane! This too shall pass!



All WRN group outings remain cancelled until further notice. Considerations for safe outdoor small group outings or virtual events are ongoing to help all WRN members stay connected to nature and one another during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consider exploring a new natural area in Waterloo Region.

Visit <https://ecoposts.waterlooregionnature.ca/> for some suggestions of great local natural areas to explore and natural features to see.

Monarch Madness

All WRN club members are invited to participate in Monarch Madness.

This is a citizen science project initiated by the Outdoor and Environmental Education Department of the Waterloo Region District School Board to get kids outside and thinking about the conservation of species at risk (Monarch Butterflies).



We want to identify Milkweed 'Gaps' in Waterloo Region (places where there isn't Milkweed). Participants can help by observing Monarchs and Milkweed in Waterloo Region before the end of September. Next year we will plant Milkweed at school sites in these gaps and establish three Monarch Waystations. Anyone can participate, it's lots of fun to do with family and it's a great way to engage in local conservation for a species at risk. Check out the Monarch Madness website <https://schools.wrdsb.ca/environmental-education/monarch-madness/> for instructions or contact Levi Moore (levi_moore@wrdsb.ca).

Share Your Sightings!

Whether you need help identifying a tricky nature sighting or you just want to share something interesting you have seen, post your local nature observations to the WRN iNaturalist project:

<https://inaturalist.ca/projects/waterloo-region-nature-local-nature-sightings>

Join the Waterloo Region Nature: Local Nature Sightings project and all nature sightings you post to iNaturalist from Waterloo Region will automatically be added, New to iNaturalist? All you need is an email address to sign up!

A WRN BioBlitz is in the Works!

Watch for details about an upcoming WRN bioblitz with physical distance precautions in place.

Waterloo Region Nature Teens

By Marg Paré

Our last report in the spring Heron claimed that Year 2 of WRN Teens was going awesomely! Well, the pandemic changed things pretty dramatically! We haven't seen each other since then but we have managed to transform our outdoor work project club into a virtual club!

First, we had a couple of Zoom meetings just to check in and chat. Then we took advantage of the technology to invite naturalists to speak to us. It turned into a great nature-learning series! We met with Josh Shea talking about pollinators; Jenna Quinn on environmental education and career choices; Michelle MacMillan on owls and owl research; Graeme Smith, a Trent master's student, on salamanders; Riley Jauniaux and Shayne Poleyko, UW ecology students, on tree identification; and Peter Rasberry on nature photography. We also had photo challenges, where we tried to put into practice some of what we learned from Peter and he kindly gave feedback. Thanks to all these knowledgeable people for sharing their expertise! We plan to continue our series over the summer.

A quick word on other Teens news. David Gascoigne dropped in on one of our projects and wrote a blog article about us! <https://travelswithbirds.blogspot.com/2020/03/wrn-teens-nest-box-project.html>

And, WRN Teen Linden Imeson Jorna is the proud namer of a Peregrine Falcon chick! Check out the

article on pages 6-7.

We hope WRN Teens will be able to meet in person and work together again starting in September. We're planning for more learning opportunities, meeting experts, and earning volunteer hours doing environmental work projects for 2020-21, Year 3! Teens register for the year and come out as often as they can.

We meet mostly on the last Saturday afternoon of the month but we'll be extra busy in September and October (all going well). We'll continue weekly salamander monitoring on Saturday mornings at SpruceHaven farm in St. Agatha and we're excited to be adding bird nesting box monitoring as well.

If you're a teen, please get in touch! If you're not, please tell a teen about Teens! We welcome anybody who's interested and is a teen (or almost) or is in high school (or almost).

Please spread the word that **registration for WRN Teens 2020-21 is open now on the WRN website.** We encourage interested teens to sign up now to be sure to receive all the updates. Because of the uncertainty of the pandemic, we are asking Teens NOT to pay the \$25 registration fee for now. Later, if the fee is a problem, please ask about our sponsorships.

QUESTIONS: teens@waterlooregionnature.ca

REGISTRATION, project reports & photos: waterlooregionnature.ca/teens



Left: Photo by WRN Teen Rowan Imeson Jorna for our Summer Photo Challenge.

Right: David Gascoigne joins us to report on our February project — building nesting boxes with Mike Smith and tracking with Anita Smith. Photo: M Paré.

The Peregrines of Kitchener-Waterloo

By Dale Ingrey

This year marks the eighth year that peregrine falcons (*falco perigrinus anatum*) have bred successfully in the twin cities. In 2012 two American falcons, Statler and Caster, raised one lone eyas on the rooftop of Sun Life.

There were peregrines in K-W before this historic event, but they were captive-bred birds. The first hack release in 1988 by the Kitchener Waterloo Field Naturalists saw four chicks, Ada, Agnes, Catherine and Mabel successfully fledge from atop the University of Waterloo library.

Between 1977 and 1996 some 520 peregrines were released in Ontario through projects managed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in an effort to boost the numbers of this species that was nearly driven to extinction because of the deadly pesticide DDT. In 2001 the Canadian Peregrine Foundation resumed the hack release program, this time at Kitchener City Hall.

In 2001 four chicks, Arthur, Guin, Henry and Sarah were released, in 2002 three more—Destiny, Gillespie and Langford and in 2003 another three—Rogue, Pippin and Tee-Dee. Although it is customary to assign names at banding, when peregrines are found dead or identified by a birder, the OMNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife band numbers indicate where they originated.

The naming custom continued when peregrines began nesting in K-W. That first chick in 2012, Sunny, was something of a miracle baby since he was born late in the season, raised without the protection of a nest box and had to overcome huge challenges in making his way back to his aerie atop a twenty story building. I wrote about his adventures and the fledge watch team's efforts in a story entitled "A Young Falcon Takes Flight" in the August 25, 2012 edition of the [Waterloo Region Record](#).

In December a nest box was installed on the Sun Life roof, but Statler and Caster chose instead to nest the following spring in a microwave dish on the CTV tower, not far from Sun Life. This time they raised three chicks: Big Al, Miss Fran and Arnie.

Back on the Sun Life roof in 2014 four chicks fledged, however three of them—Soleil, Pippin, and Merry— died after crashing into the reflective windows of the building. One fledgling, a female named Helia, survived and migrated in the Fall.

In 2015 a new unbanded female replaced Statler and quickly became known as Mystery. She and Caster managed to raise four chicks, Reggie, Chroma, Ginnie and Redbud in their brand new nest box funded by Waterloo Region Nature and installed on the CTV tower. The next year saw four more, three females-- Ziegler, Casper, and Hope-- and one male named Tenor who, by virtue of his smaller size and lighter weight, was the first to fledge. His siblings followed soon after, providing the fledge watch team with some rescue excitement.

In 2017 a young tiercel named Lucifer displaced Caster, but he was unable to persuade Mystery to breed. He was more successful the next year when four chicks hatched although he fractured his wing in June and spent the summer in rehab, leaving Mystery to handle the feeding and training herself. Three of the four juveniles—Mercury, Sadie, and Eos—survived but the smallest of the clutch, Monarch, was taken by a Great Horned Owl. Sadly, Lucifer also died shortly after his release from rehab that September.

2019 was the beginning of another chapter in the story when Enigma, another unbanded tiercel, replaced Lucifer and was so proficient in hunting and training that all three youngsters

fledged without incident. Kawai, Jupiter, and Hemera did not have to be rescued even once, a first for the fledge watch team.

As I write this our class of 2020 proves once again the precarious nature of life. Casey, the first to fledge, suddenly disappeared after four days of incident-free flight. His sibling Hope was rescued after coming down in a courtyard at the hospital and is now recuperating at the same refuge where Lucifer spent time. We are optimistic that she will recover sufficiently from her injuries to be released back into the K-W area soon. Meanwhile, the third juvenile, Artemis, is flying

well after encountering difficulty on his first flight, necessitating another rescue.

Noting that the first year survival rate is only 30% for these magnificent flying machines, we consider ourselves fortunate in Kitchener-Waterloo since our peregrines' survival rate is over 75%. In 2017 the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada declared the peregrine falcon no longer at risk, but still a species of special concern. No doubt the efforts of fledge watch teams here and elsewhere, as well as previous recovery efforts, have helped the peregrine return to its lofty and rightful place in the natural world.



WRN Teens were excited to select the name of one of this year's chicks!

"I was inspired to use the name Artemis because of its origin. Artemis was the Greek goddess of many things including most notably in this case, hunting and wild nature. Those two things truly come to mind when I think of peregrine falcons. They are fierce predators and remarkable hunters. So Artemis was the perfect fit to represent such an incredible animal"

-Linden, WRN Teen



Membership Renewal Notice

By Zack Stevens

With COVID-19 preventing Waterloo Region Nature from being able to offer the suite of nature programs you've all grown to enjoy, you may be questioning whether or not you should renew your membership—well question no more!

All WRN memberships are being automatically extended for one year, free of charge!

It's important to us that the club maintains its robust fellowship in order to continue to have a strong advocacy voice in our conversation and environmental protection work.

For those questioning whether or not it's worth joining the club this year, we haven't forgotten about you either. ***All new WRN memberships for 2020-2021 are also free!***

This way you'll be all set if/when we're able to provide our regular programs.

Should you still wish to pay for your membership, donations are certainly welcome. Any donation with a membership designation will be deposited into the club's Operating Fund. If you no longer wish to be affiliated with the club, and do not want your membership to be extended for another year, you may opt out by contacting membership@waterlooregionnature.ca.

We hope this gesture demonstrates how much we value you and your continued support of the club. Each and every one of you are vital to the sense of community and comradery that we aim to create.

Thank You to Our Donors

Suzanne Alden
Betty Cooper
Greg Gerrish
Mary Louise & Evange Kattides
Lynda Loberg
Levi Moore
Leanne Terry in memory of Luke Carere
Anonymous Donors

*Welcome, New Members**

John Buehner	Patrick Kraemer
Donna Bertrand	Jenny Lorette
Norm Bertrand	Michelle MacMillan
Philip Carriere	Megan McLeod
Josephine Ennis	Kathy Mortimer
Walter Friesen	Gordon Nelson
Greg Gerrish	Shirley Nelson
Charlie Klepack	Tracey Rayner
John Klepack	Christine Spence
Pippa Klepack	Chantal Stieler
Karen Kozdras	Min Min Tong
Louise Kraemer	Jonathan Veitch
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Spring Sale: First 2 weeks in April - Fall Sale: Last 3 weeks in November

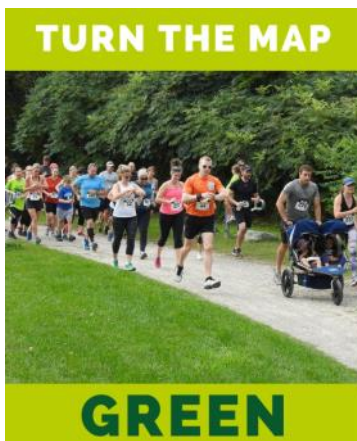
Voice mail 1-519-595-7587
4003 Line 73, R.R. 1, Newton, Ontario N0K 1R0

WRN Photo Gallery



Great Backyard Bird Count. Photos: Pat Bigelow

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



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Ontario Nature Report

By Fraser Gibson

Steamrolling the Way for Development, Behind Closed Doors

In April, while Ontarians grappled with the social and economic impacts of a global pandemic, the Government of Ontario quietly set the stage for development projects to proceed without public consultation or the right to appeal.

The Ford government suspended the use of the Environmental Bill of Rights (“EBR”) Registry for the duration of the COVID19 emergency and began issuing and revoking Minister’s Zoning Orders – effectively eliminating public participation in each planning decision.

A Minister’s Zoning Order allows the Minister to directly zone land for particular purposes. The Minister does not have to give notice or consult with the public prior to issuing or revoking a zoning order.

In late April, the government issued at least three new Minister’s Zoning Orders that will pave the way for development in parts of Vaughan, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Markham and Brampton, without notice on the ERO, thus eliminating any opportunity for public scrutiny or input.

Minister’s Zoning Orders are not subject to appeal to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT). This recent flurry of decisions to expedite development on farmland and greenspace by issuing or revoking zoning orders is thus a concerning trend. Ontarians can and should have meaningful opportunities to participate in planning decisions affecting their communities now and in the future.

As Ontario deals with COVID-19 and prepares for our recovery, the focus should be on enhancing community resilience to climate change and potential future pandemics. Enabling and supporting public participation in determining the future of our farmlands, forests, wetlands and other natural areas will be vital to advancing this outcome. Expediting development while keeping Ontarians in the dark does not serve the public interest.



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Protect Species at Risk While Strengthening the Forest Industry

In January, Ontario Nature reached out to their Nature Network of more than 150 groups asking them to reject the Government of Ontario's proposal to permanently exempt the forestry industry from the Endangered Species Act (ESA). At that time, the Province proposed a 'long-term' approach to 'cut red tape', claiming that the Crown Forest Sustainability Act (CFSA) – the law that governs industrial logging – provided all that was needed to protect species at risk from the negative impacts of forestry.

Ontario Nature disagrees. By not requiring that forest management provide an overall benefit for species at risk, the CFSA fails to support species' recovery.

In the interim, the government is proposing (as of June 13) to extend the existing regulation that exempts forestry operations from ESA requirements. If it so chose, the government could use the proposed extension to do better and actually ensure that its "long-term approach", including amendments to the CFSA and its regulations, supports the recovery of species at risk.

The government has acknowledged that there is a massive surplus in wood supply. Only about half of the forest that can be cut is being logged, and the level of harvest has been that low for over a decade. This means there is plenty of room to both better protect and recover species at risk, and strengthen the forest industry.

Ontario Nature and its Nature Network have called on the Government of Ontario to use this time wisely by meaningfully consulting with scientific and Indigenous knowledge experts and making amendments to the CFSA that support the recovery of species at risk.



It is with regret that we inform you of the passing of Susan Beemer on June 3, 2020, and her son Scott Beemer on July 2, 2020.

Both were active and long-time members of WRN.



A club for teens in or starting high school, partnering with a variety of local environmental organizations

Some of our past activities: Turtle nesting protection, Invasive plant management, Owl prowl

Teens meet Saturdays, 1 - 2 times a month, various locations

Visit waterlooregionnature.ca/teens for more information & registration

Learn about the natural world

Meet passionate experts

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Membership Annual Fees*

Family/Couple \$40
Senior Couple \$35
Adult Individual \$35
Senior (60+) \$30
Student (19+) \$25
Free Membership
for youth (<18)
Club year runs from
Sept. to August; *Membership
fees are waived for 2020-2021

Cheques made payable to:
Waterloo Region Nature
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/](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.
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Please see page 2 for
details.

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