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

Due before December 15th

Contact president
 @waterlooregionnature.ca

Join us **November 28th** for our next hybrid
 meeting, with Rachael Derbyshire as our
 in-person speaker (see pg.4)



Photo: Yuri Nápoles Padrón

focussed on following the travels of the Belted Kingfisher we happened upon a restless Green Heron (*Butorides virescens*) who seemed dissatisfied with the current fishing spot.

Continuing along we stopped to observe several Tamaracks (*Larix laricina*) that were thriving in the moist soil beside the river while noting that one Tamarack was slowly being smothered by a large Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

Upon reaching a small wooden bridge beside the remnants of a beaver's lodge we looked up and realized that daylight was receding. Time had passed too quickly with the distractions of nature and pleasant conversation, so we all reluctantly turned and started back towards the trailhead. Meandering along the final stretch of our return trip we noticed the tidy row of pie pumpkins that lined the farmstead porch. A harbinger of fall, it gave rise to thoughts of Thanksgiving and pumpkin pie. Thank you to everyone for accompanying us on our last slice of summer stroll.



Walter Bean/Grey Silo Trail Outing

By Natalie Walker

With the weather being a wildcard this time of year, our early evening section hike along the Walter Bean Grand River Trail at Grey Silo began under cheerful skies. Our group was composed of 15 enthusiastic trail goers and two first time outing leaders Natalie Walker and Judy Watson.

Our first observation occurred not too far from the trail head at a tiny pond close to the Elam Martin Farmstead. The summer's growth of Cattails (*Typha latifolia*) almost concealed the male Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) dabbling in the centre of the pond.

Continuing along we appreciated the warmth of Goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*) and the clusters of ripe indigo-coloured fruit hanging heavy on the Riverbank Grape (*Vitis riparia*).

As we walked alongside the Deer Yard, we noted the beauty of the early evening sun skimming across the tall grasses covering the meadow. We stopped for a time to notice a Black Willow (*Salix negra*) decorated with pine cone galls, each containing the larva of the gall gnat midge (*Rabdophaga strobiloides*).

Passing several zippy golfcarts and following the winding trail the broad expanse of the Grand River finally became visible and we all left the path to get a closer view across the shoreline. A Great Blue Heron (*Ardea herodias*) overlooked the river while a female Belted Kingfisher (*Megaceryle alcyon*) jetted back and forth. While

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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.

Positions of Responsibility

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Submission Deadlines:

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



Bill 23 - Make Your Voice Heard!

The Ontario Government's Bill 23 "*More Homes Built Faster Act*" is cause for serious concern, with sweeping changes proposed to natural heritage and land use planning legislation and policy. It would not only remove and weaken environmental protections in Ontario but also cut out public voices like ours from the decision-making process. Our Conservation Director, Levi Moore, has led an effort to ensure WRN speaks out against especially the most egregious aspects of Bill 23. Here is an excerpt from our letter sent to local and provincial government representations. Visit our website for the full letter and recommended actions.

- Jenna

As a club we have many concerns. We agree with many of the opinions already expressed by organizations such as [Ontario Nature](#), [Environmental Defence](#), [Conservation Halton](#), 50x30WR, and [Conservation Ontario](#). We would like to emphasize that our main concerns are as follows.

- 1. We are disappointed that this legislation has not been given the time it deserves to be properly reviewed by Ontarians.** It is a huge bill (277 pages) with such sweeping changes to multiple acts and regulations in Ontario that it cannot be properly reviewed, let alone discussed, in a few short days. In the interest of democracy, *we ask that more time be provided to review this legislation so that its merits can be properly vetted by Ontarians.*
- 2. Don't reduce the requirement for developers to conserve green space and build natural amenities.** This natural infrastructure improves property values, reduces urban heat island effects, improves air quality, creates healthy places for our children to be active and play, absorbs excess rain runoff thereby protecting our homes from flooding, creates spaces for the enjoyment of nature and so much more. Bill 23 reduces the requirements put on developers to provide such amenities, robbing these values from the growing parts of our community.
- 3. Natural heritage features owned by Conservation Authorities are precious and deserve to be protected.** Our club and many of our members have donated land to Conservation Authorities with the express intent that it be protected as nature reserves in perpetuity. That, under these new laws, the land we donated might be sold off to developers is a violation of the intent behind our donations.
- 4. Removing conservation authorities' ability to protect our community from floods and harmful pollution or preserve our forest, wetlands and wildlife habitat is a direct attack on our communities future health and safety.** We already have all the land we need designated for development to meet our needs for many decades. At a time when extreme weather events are becoming more frequent we need Conservation Authorities to protect people and property from these natural hazards.
- 5. The Bill, as written, promotes urban sprawl, Waterloo Region has said clearly that we want to protect our rural and natural spaces from this type of development.** The amendments this Bill makes to section 23 of the Planning act would allow the government to impose sprawl on our community, destroying the flood regulation, carbon sequestration, erosion control and ecological integrity these spaces provide.

We ask you to please give consideration to our above requests, in particular, pause the rushed passing of this act, reconsider the unnecessary reduction in protected natural spaces, and rather than reduce the role of Conservation Authorities in the protection of our communities engage with them to find more effective ways to support the creation of affordable housing in Ontario.

Visit www.waterlooregionnature.ca/conservation/ to read the full letter, and take action!

OUTINGS, ACTIVITIES, THINGS TO DO &

Monthly Member Meeting & Nature Presentations

Anyone with an interest in nature is welcome to attend our free monthly meetings. We start with a few announcements of noteworthy upcoming events, conservation issues or projects. We welcome new members and guests and we invite all to share their recent local noteworthy nature sightings. The main feature is a presentation by a guest speaker on one of a variety of interesting topics.

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 7:30pm at Reception Hall, Waterloo Knox Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb St. West, Waterloo.

Upcoming Meetings: For full presentation descriptions and presenter biographies visit:
waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings

Monday, November 28, 2022 @7:30pm—
Canada Lynx and Snowshoe Hare Populations
in Yukon

Presenter: Rachael Derbyshire, PhD Candidate,
Trent University

Rachael is currently working to understand how the foraging and movement behaviours of a predator – the Canada lynx – are influenced by natural declines in its preferred prey – the snowshoe hare. This work has brought Rachael to Yukon Territory, Canada, where for three winters she has spent her days living off grid while trapping, collaring, and tracking lynx through the vast boreal forest in which they roam.

Monday, December 5th, 2022 @7:30pm—
Rather than the traditional potluck, join us for a stroll in Waterloo Park—see pg 6 for further details (*Note the special date & time*)

*Future Dates: January 23, February 27,
March 27, April 24, May 29 (AGM at 7:00pm)*

Celebrate Birds

**Huron Fringe
Birding Festival**



**May 28 - May 31
& June 3 - June 6, 2021**

www.huronfringebirdingfestival.ca

25 Years

MacGregor Point Provincial Park

UPCOMING CLUB OUTINGS

The most up to date public health guidelines will be followed for all outings. Unless otherwise noted, pre-registration by contacting the outing leader is required. Non-members are welcome but are required to sign an insurance waiver.

Doon Agreement Forest, Kitchener

Leader: Neil Taylor 519-893-6469

When: Monday, November 7 at 9:00am for approximately 3 hours (Rain date: Tuesday, November 8)

Location: Mill Park Dr. near the gates to the Presbyterian Cemetery

Description: Join Neil for an outing along the trails through an old reforestation as part of the Homer Watson Park complex. Mature shagbark hickory will be identified. Late south bound migrants might be seen along with new migrants from the north such as American Tree Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos. Sturdy hiking footwear, a walking stick, camera, and binoculars are suggested.

Registration is required by contacting Neil.

Nature Book Club

Leader: Lynn Conway lynnconway@rogers.com

When: We will meet monthly, Mondays at 2pm on the following dates: November 14, 2022, December 12, 2022, January 9, 2023, February 13, 2023, March 6, 2023

Location: Virtual via zoom for approximately 1 hour

Description: Each of us will take a turn to share briefly about a nature book we have read. The book may be fiction or nonfiction, newly published or an old favourite, prose or poetry. Actually, the book does not need to be a book. People are welcome to share about a nature article, nature talk or even a nature themed piece of art or artifact. Maybe you have a favourite place you like to go to enjoy nature you would like to tell us about. **To register for one or more of the meetings please email Lynn.**

Bechtel Park Walk in the Woods

Leader: Anita Smith thinkoutsidenbr@rogers.com

When: Monday, November 21, 2022 from 10am - 11:30am

Location: We will meet near the playground equipment, Bechtel Park, Waterloo

Description: Come for a walk in the woods at Bechtel Park in Waterloo. There are occasional gentle slopes but no strenuous hills. Trails lead us through mature forest, along Laurel Creek and a short path through open pasture. With the leaves down we will try our hand at identifying some of the large trees by their bark and learn how to age a tree without cutting it down to count its rings! **Please email Anita at thinkoutsidenbr@rogers.com to confirm your attendance.**

Interested in leading an outing?

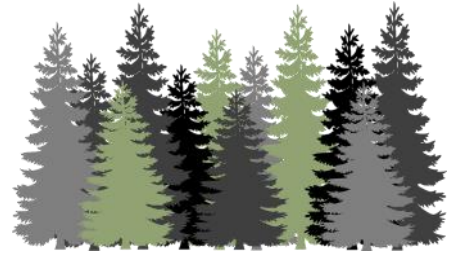
Offers to lead outings for any season are always welcome. Remember, you don't need to be an expert to lead an outing. Please contact the Outings Director at outings@waterlooregionnature.ca with your ideas and interest. A BIG thank you to all who have lead outings this year!

Hiking - Petersburg Regional Forest / Petersburg Bush

Leader: Michael De Andrade mdeanrade@hotmail.com

When: Saturday, November 26, 2022 at 8:00am sharp for 2-3 hours

Location: 2703 Queen Street #2665 Wilmot, ON N0B 2H0
(south of HWY 7/8 on the east side of Queen St)



Description: Petersburg Crown Lands are a popular hiking trail. It is a beautiful forested area adjacent to agricultural land. This forest is administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources. The woodlot contains over 5.5 km of multi-use trail as well as additional informal trails. This will be a relatively easy to moderate hiking trip. Highlights will include viewing bogs, Alder Creek, Conifers & Hardwoods and remnants of an old farmstead & swimming pool. Bring a snack and water. Appropriate footwear is required. Hiking stick and crampons are recommended (weather conditions). Washrooms are not available. Parking is limited but vehicles are permitted to park on the road shoulder. Respect and obey all requests to stay off of private lands/property. **Registration is required by contacting Michael.** Number will be capped at 15 persons.

Toronto—Mississauga—Oakville

Leader: David Gascoigne davidmgascoigne@gmail.com 519-725-0866 226-747-7299 (C)

When: Saturday December 3 beginning at 9:00am for a full day outing

Location: Meet at Humber Bay Park, West, Lakeshore Boulevard, Toronto, ON
(specific instructions will be provided when you register)

Description: Beginning at Humber Bay Park, both East and West, we will scour Lake Ontario for Redhead, Canvasback, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Trumpeter Swans, and others, late migrants and early winter arrivals along the shore, raptors, mammals such as Muskrat and Mink, possibly American Coot, Common Loon – and whatever else we can find! Northern Mockingbird is always a possibility at Humber Bay. There will be a number of stops to increase our chances of finding a wide variety of species. We will start at Humber Bay Park, moving from there to Colonel Samuel Smith Park, on to Lakefront Promenade in Mississauga, and ending at Bronte Park in Oakville. Depending on time we may include a couple of other stops. This is a full day's outing so be sure to pack a lunch and snacks if you need them. Dress according to the weather, bring binoculars, a scope if you have one, a field guide and lots of enthusiasm. Car pooling should be possible and we encourage this practice as long as you are comfortable riding with others.

Registration is required by contacting David. We can accommodate 25 people for this outing as long as COVID restrictions are not reimposed.

WRN Holiday Gathering...*Outside!*

Leader: Members of the WRN Board of Directors

When: Monday, December 5 at 7:30pm for approximately 1.5 hours

Location: Waterloo Park. There is free parking in the Seagram Dr. Parking Lot.
We'll meet at the edge of the parking lot by the trail going into the park.



Description: Join us for a stroll around lovely Waterloo Park to enjoy the festive lights display and early winter weather. Dress for the weather. Bring a thermos of cider or hot chocolate, or money to buy some there (if available for sale). Washrooms available. Registration NOT required. Hope to see you there!

Christmas Bird Count - Learn the Basics

Leader: Neil Taylor 519-893-6469

When: Saturday December 10th at 9:00am and/or Sunday December 11th at 1:00pm for 3 hours

Location: Parking lot of Doon Presbyterian Church (with permission) at 35 Roos St., Kitchener
(off Old Mill Rd in Doon)

Description: The annual Christmas Bird Count for Kitchener will take place on December 17th and the Cambridge CBC is December 18th. New participants are always needed to complete this census and make it successful. If you would like to take part in the count but are unsure of what's involved, then join Neil to learn the basics and gain self-confidence to volunteer for this year's CBC. Dress warmly and bring your binoculars, camera, field guide, notepad, pen and pencil. Neil confesses that he is also using this outing as a means of scouting out this area for rare birds in advance of the count itself. Sturdy hiking footwear is suggested. **Registration is required by contacting Neil.**

Christmas Bird Count (CBC) 2022

Started in 1900, the CBC is North America's longest running citizen science project. Counts happen in over 2000 localities throughout the Western Hemisphere. Each CBC is conducted on a single day between Dec. 14th and Jan. 5th. Counts are carried out within defined diameter circles that stay the same from year to year. They are organized, usually as group efforts at the local level, often by a birding club or naturalist organization.

The **Kitchener CBC will occur on December 17th** with snow, rain, or shine. All birds observed within the 15-mile diameter circle during the 24 hours are counted, but even a few minutes at home spent watching a feeder is valuable information. We welcome all birders to the count, new or experienced, so feel free to contact Ethan Gosnell at ethan.gosnell2@gmail.com if you have any questions or are interested in participating in the count.

The **Cambridge CBC is running on December 18th**. All volunteers are welcome. Looking for more feeder watchers in particular. Please contact Levi Moore at levicmoore1@gmail.com with questions or if you are interested in participating in the count.

The Mill Race Trail, St. Jacobs

Leader: David Gascoigne davidmgascoigne@gmail.com 519-725-0866 226-747-7299 (C)

When: Wednesday January 11th and Saturday January 14, 2023 at 9:00am for approximately 2.5-3 hours

Location: Meet at the parking lot on Three Bridges Road near the bridge over the Conestogo River, St. Jacobs.

Description: The Mill Race Trail is an easy walk, for the most part on flat level ground. You will be able to feed Black-capped Chickadees from the hand, with a very good chance that White-breasted Nuthatches will join them. We often see three species of woodpecker, Golden-crowned Kinglet and a variety of sparrows are usually present. The berry crop provides great deal of food for Cedar Waxwings and American Robins that spend the winter here. Northern Cardinal is common. American Beavers have been very active and you will see the results of their industriousness. We frequently have excellent, prolonged views of Muskrat and from time to time White-tailed Deer and American Mink. At the half way point we will visit the Eco Café in St. Jacobs to have a coffee and use the washrooms.

Dress according to the weather, bring your binoculars, snacks if you think you need them, and lots of enthusiasm. **Registration is required by contacting David.**

Snowshoeing at Drynan Regional Forest, North Dumfries Township

Leader: Michael De Andrade mdeanrade@hotmail.com

When: Saturday January 21 at 8:00am for approximately 2-3 hours

Location: Drynan Regional Forest, 1292 Dumfries Road, North Dumfries, ON, in the gravel parking lot.

Description: The Drynan Tract is situated in a geographic area known for its aggregate (gravel) pits. It is characterized by a rugged topography with low-lying marshy areas within ridges of glacial till. This area is hilly and contains several small kettle lakes and swamp-like depressions. Drynan is one of about 17 regional forests within Waterloo. The area is managed by the Region of Waterloo. Bring a snack and hot chocolate/water. Appropriate footwear and outdoor winter gear is required.

Hiking stick is highly recommended. Washrooms are not available. **There is sufficient parking available.**

Difficulty level is moderate. Trails will consist of what appeared to be an old logging pathway and footpaths. There may be an opportunity for “bush whacking”. Respect and obey all requests to stay off of private lands/property. **Registration is required by contacting Michael.** Number will be capped at 15 persons.

Tour of Wellesley Township to Find Over-Wintering Raptors

Leader: Jim Burrell burrellsc@golden.net

When: Sunday January 29 from 8:30am until noon

Location: Meet at the Food Basics Plaza on Erbsville Road in Waterloo

Description: We will slowly travel through Wellesley and Peel Townships to ID raptors and whatever jumps out in front of us. Bring water, snacks, scopes/bins, cameras. Dress warmly as we will be out until noon. No washrooms but lots of trees. Limited to 20 people or 10 cars.

Registration is required by contacting Jim.



Snowshoeing at the Woolwich Reservoir/Dam

Leader: Michael De Andrade mdeanrade@hotmail.com

When: Saturday February 4 at 8:00am for approximately 2-3 hours

Location: Woolwich Reservoir, 7224 Reids Wood Drive, Elmira, Ontario

Description: The Elmira Lions Club built and maintains the Lion Trail, a 7.4 km loop trail that goes around the reservoir and through nearby wooded areas. The loop is fairly flat and well-marked. Sections of the trail include sugar maples and pine forests, bridges, creeks and a small waterfall. Difficulty level is easy. There will be an opportunity to cross the reservoir if ice thickness is deemed safe.

Bring a snack and hot chocolate/water. Appropriate footwear and outdoor winter gear is required. Hiking sticks are highly recommended.

Washrooms are not available. **Parking is limited** but vehicles are permitted to park on the road shoulder. Respect and obey all requests to stay off of private lands/property. **Registration is required by contacting Michael.** Number will be capped at 10 persons.

SUBMISSIONS NEEDED!

If you have any
articles,
photographs, outing
recaps, etc. you
would like to see in
our newsletter,
please submit them
to:

editor
@waterlooregion
nature.ca

Early migrants along Lake Erie north shore

Leader: Jim Burrell burrellsc@golden.net

When: Wednesday, March 15 from 8:30am until 3:00pm

Location: Meet at 8:30 at the Car Pool parking Lot south of Hwy 401 on Fountain Street.

Description: We will travel to Aylmer and then to Lake Erie all the way to Long Point stopping as needed. Our objective will be early north bound migrants and any other local residents birds and fauna. We will lunch at Long Point. Bring water, snacks, lunch, scopes/bins, cameras and warm clothes. We will limit ourselves to 20 people. **Registration is required by contacting Jim.**

Saving Our Song Birds

By Rebecca Marquez, Wild Birds Unlimited Team Member

What's more thrilling than hearing that flute-like birdsong in a budding spring wood? Is it an American Robin? No, it's not quite right. It can only be a male Baltimore Oriole singing to establish its territory. Whether you've attracted them to your yard with a cocktail of grape jelly and oranges or crossed their (flight)paths, you know what a joy it is to catch that flash of vibrant orange and hear them sing.

Wild Birds Unlimited seeks to share the joy of bird feeding in all facets, including living bird-friendly lives. In partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Wild Birds Unlimited has created an initiative to do just that! *Save the Song Birds* outlines seven practical actions we can all take to help the Baltimore Orioles, the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, among many other species who either make annual migrations or who choose to stay in our wintery climes not only to survive, but thrive.

A staggering one billion birds are estimated to die *each year* from window collisions. Perceiving reflective windows as habitat they can fly through by day and attracted to city lights at night, especially during spring and fall migrations, windows present a huge hazard to songbirds. The simplest thing we can do is to put up markers on our windows. Products like Feather Friendly, window decals or getting creative and making your own designs on the exterior of your windows are great solutions. The key is having a design or image every two inches.

Research shows cats are the top human-caused reason for the loss of birds. Keeping cats indoors can not only extend their lives by keeping them out of harm's way but also the lives of around 2.4 billion birds in the USA and Canada a year.

We know the importance of native plants now more than ever with the Monarch butterfly now on the endangered species list effective July of this year. And habitat loss is the biggest reason for bird populations decline. Not only are native plants hearty and beautiful, they offer the much needed habitat for birds. Offering shelter as well as food sustain birds, butterflies and other wildlife.

Birds are harmed either through direct contact with pesticides or by eating contaminated seeds and/or insects. Purchasing organic and reducing pesticide use around our homes benefits us as well as birds.

Native forests are often destroyed by coffee farms to grow coffee in direct sun. Shade-grown coffee preserves forest canopies for migratory species like Baltimore Orioles to survive in their wintering habitats. Coffee roasters like Birds & Beans are shade-grown and directly benefit the preservation of native forests.

Avoiding single-use plastics as much as possible or finding products that have reused them, keeps plastics out of the environment where birds may mistakenly ingest them.

Watching birds is one of the greatest actions we can take. Not only can it inspire awe in someone whose eyes are opened to the wonderful world around us, but recording and submitting this data to Cornell through eBird or Project FeederWatch generates invaluable information for conservation efforts.

Please spread the word about how we can all help save the song birds. It's people like you who have a deep appreciation for nature that can make such an impact in our community and beyond.

WRN Teens Report

By Brynn Roderick

This summer and fall, members of the WRN Teens continued to meet every Saturday morning at SpruceHaven Farm in St. Agatha. The land is made up of many different native environments including woodland, bog, pond, and grassland. It is exciting to observe all the changes in the environment from week to week, month to month, and season to season.

WRN Teens adult volunteers (Linda Dutka, Michelle MacMillan, Graeme Smith, Thelma Beaubien, and Marg Paré) accompanied us on these activities at SpruceHaven. We checked on salamander boards and frog tubes and in the spring and summer we monitored nest boxes. This year we found Red-backed Salamanders (*Plethodon cinereus*) under the salamander boards and Grey Treefrogs (*Dryophytes versicolor*) in the frog tubes. (Thanks to Levi Moore for setting up frog monitoring for us and being our consultant.) Nest box residents included Eastern Bluebirds (*Sialia sialis*) and Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*). At the end of the summer when things quieted down a bit we helped by doing some maintenance on both the nest boxes and salamander boards.

During the summer, Graeme, Michelle, and Thelma helped out by leading some additional

Saturday morning activities at SpruceHaven. In July, Graeme led a tree measurement activity and Michelle led a benthic pond study. Thelma introduced us to some of the many butterflies that call Ontario home.

On some Saturday afternoons we also had work projects and learning projects led by community partners and nature experts. In the summer, these activities included a Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) removal at White Cedar Forest in Waterloo led by Linda Sloka, a former Teens parent, and an Ecology Hike led by Dr. Cory Wallace at Huron Natural Area in Kitchener.

So far this fall, we attended a birding hike with David Gascoigne at Riverside Park in Cambridge, worked at a pollinator garden with Giselle Carter at Forest Heights in Kitchener, participated in a Mushroom Hike with Janet Ozaruk at Homer Watson Park in Kitchener, and did a Benthic Invertebrate Study in the Grand River at **rare** Charitable Research Reserve with Michelle MacMillan. We're also happy to welcome a new adult volunteer, Philip Pyatt.

We've got a bunch more activities coming up in the fall, which I'm sure everyone is excited about!



(Above) Gardening at Forest Heights Pollinator Patch
(Right, Top) River study at **rare** Charitable Research Reserve
(Right, Bottom) WRN Teens at SpruceHaven after monitoring salamanders and tree frogs

Photos: Marg Paré
waterlooregionnature.ca

The Inaugural Cambridge Bee City Festival

By Jim Dyer

Cambridge received its designation as a Bee City in late June, 2021. One of the commitments that comes with this designation is to put on a Bee City festival, which Cambridge fulfilled on October 1st, 2022.

This inaugural festival was hosted by the Ancient Mariners Canoe Club at their boathouse in Riverbluffs Park, 251 George Street, Cambridge. Instead of sitting through lectures from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, this festival allowed the public to walk through a collection of pollinator displays.

This boathouse provided a rain or shine venue and the garage style doors at each end of this building allowed easy foot traffic for visitors, free airflow and reduced potential for viral transmission. The festival

featured live music by “Tea for Three” and a pre-recorded message from the Mayor. It also provided guided tours of the Cambridge Pollinator Preserve (CPP), the oldest pollinator habitat project in Cambridge.

The Ancient Mariners had another compelling reason to host this event. The 5-panel Education Centre in the Preserve was opened in a public ceremony in 2012, making 2022 its 10th Anniversary. Consequently, an in-door copy of these panels was a major part of the display that the Mariners brought to the event.

The festival was a chance to showcase the City’s pollinator-friendly projects. Twelve organizations contributed displays, including Cambridge City

Green, The *rare* Charitable Research Reserve, Cambridge Butterfly Conservatory, Preston Idea Exchange, Grand River Conservation Authority, Reep Green Solutions, Cambridge Food Bank, Hespeler Horticultural Society, Preston Horticulture Society, Galt Horticulture Society and Cambridge Rivers’ Edge Gardeners, as well as the contribution by the hosts.

To appreciate what this festival means for the City, one only needs to consider its success. The number and variety of displays attest to the diversity of activities underway in Cambridge, most launched before Cambridge became a Bee City. The steady flow of visitors and the 70-plus guests that were signed in showed that public awareness of the threats to pollinators is high in Cambridge. Although a new-comer to Bee City, the festival was an announcement that Cambridge has been protecting pollinators for a long time.



(Top) Some visitors to the festival. Photo: L. Ferguson

(Bottom) The CPP display with Education Centre panels. Photo: D. Whittier

Mini Group on Trees, a Recap

By Judy Watson

Judy Watson, Theresa Markus, Alice Buehrle, Natalie Walker and Aili Su, five tree 'students and teachers', met on a covered patio on a lovely evening. We heard soft rumbles of thunder, we heard light rain at times landing on the roof, we saw a rainbow, we saw a monarch butterfly and we shared with each other all kinds of knowledge about trees. Four trees in particular were the focus of study. Some of the many things we learned follows.

Ontario is 2/3 forest! 81% of our forests are on crown land. 9% are parks and protect forests. How significant to learn that the health of 90% of our forests are subject to various governments and institutions.

Surprising to all of us was that Black Spruce is Ontario's most common tree being 37% of our trees and Sugar Maple is 4% of our trees.

Insects and disease rank higher as killers of trees than forestry and forest fires. 2.9% of our forests are ravaged by insects and disease annually while .25% are taken by forestry and .13% are taken by fire.

Our trees protect us from climate change. They eat greenhouse gases. They protect us from winds and they cool the earth. Research has shown they enhance our health and students learning. Our trees are the best water filters and they provide food and shelter for all species. Trees can protect themselves from many diseases and infections by emitting a chemical into their leaves when they detect a threat, and they have the ability to provide warning of the threat to other trees. Trees provide much nutrition to the forest bed which houses and feeds thousands of species.

Trees outlive all other living organisms and creatures. Our lives depend on trees.

If you like wine you can thank the **White Oak** tree for the best wine barrels. Alice taught us that the wood is flexible, dense and has vertical tubular structure that all helps to make the wood impermeable to water. Even the structure of the wood helps in the production of the perfect wine barrel. France has significant policy for reforestation of White Oak to support their wine industry. The White Oak is found primarily in Eastern regions because it requires cooler wet conditions. The leaves give an easy identification because they have rounded edges as opposed to Red Oak which has pointed edges. We learned that flour can be made from the acorns and to our delight Natalie said she put her foraging instincts into action and made some acorn flour following a complicated process. She made brownies with the flour.

Theresa said **White Birch** are very special to her and we were fascinated to learn that the horizontal cracks you see in the paper bark are for breathing!



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Theresa's favourite thing about the White Birch is that it has many healing properties including anti-inflammatory and pain relief. White Birch can be used to make flour and tea. The sap can be made into Birch syrup!

Natalie brought along some beautiful green **Tulip Tree** leaves that had tiny specks of white in them. They were the size of a large hand. The tulip tree is a native tree and is often grown along city streets because it is a fast grower. The green and orange flowers are stunning. The next door neighbour has one and he told us that there were about 300 flowers on it this year. To see them you need to stand under the tree by the trunk and look up. Natalie said that she really enjoys watching a tulip tree go through the season's changes as she walks her regular route past one.

When Aili arrived she was happy to see her tree, **Tamarac**, in the neighbour's yard. She reported that the Tamarac is also a native tree and enjoys wetlands and much moisture. It does not do well in the shade. It appears just like a coniferous tree yet it is

a deciduous tree. The leaves are a delicate green appearing as needles. These leaves turn yellow and fall off every fall. Aili wanted us all to see this tree close up and she went over and knocked on the neighbour's door and he allowed us to stand around in his backyard and admire this beautiful tree close up. What a great experience.

They are not that common to see because they need the right moisture and sun and animals just love to eat the small cones that are only produced every 3-6 years!

We also talked about Arboretums and decided to look up the meaning which is: "a botanical garden devoted to trees." We ended our conversation saying there is a wonderful arboretum in Guelph and another in New Hamburg.

All in all it was such a nice meeting. It was quite apparent how much we all think nature is just grand and that there is endless knowledge to gather in our hearts and minds about nature.

Waterloo Region Nature Kids!

By Rachelle Swayze

What a wonderful start to the WRN Kids! In September we had two outings. The first was an amazing butterfly talk and walk by Thelma Beaubien and her husband Ron. We learned interesting things about butterflies and then hiked around SpruceHaven observing monarchs, viceroys and a variegated fritillary. To read more about our outing, see our blog – always written by one of our participants!

<https://waterlooregionnature.ca/2022/09/25/wrn-kids-butterfly-hike-2022/>

Our second outing was to Huron Natural Area for some games and a scavenger hunt. We found many interesting nature treasures by using our five senses. Read more about our outing here:

<https://waterlooregionnature.ca/2022/10/02/wrn-kids-scavenger-hunt-2022/>

Our October outing was to Mill Race Trail in Woolwich. We talked about bird beak shapes and how they are related to what foods birds eat. David Gascoigne led us on a bird watching walk and we saw chickadees, woodpeckers, and mallard ducks. Many kids successfully hand fed the chickadees. Read more about it here:

<https://waterlooregionnature.ca/2022/11/06/wrn-kids-mill-race-trail/>

In November we will be exploring **rare** discovering the flora, fauna and archaeological history of the land. In December we are meeting up with WRN Teens to trim tree branches at SpruceHaven Dec 17, 2-4 pm.

Some outing ideas we are working on for the winter include: shelter building and snowshoeing.

It is great to be out in nature learning and playing together!

Membership Report

By Judy Watson

If you have not yet renewed for 2022-2023 membership year you can renew now. To ensure you continue to get our updating emails about outings, events, our newsletter and important information, you can renew and pay for your membership on our website! Just go to waterlooregionnature.ca and click the Membership tab, and then follow the prompts. Alternatively, you can fill out a printed membership form (which you can also obtain online) and bring it along with your payment of cheque or cash to the next membership meeting. You can also mail your renewal in with the membership form and a cheque written to Waterloo Region Nature. If you have already renewed your 2022-2023 membership, thank you for supporting Waterloo Region Nature with your membership!

Thank You to Our Donors

Natasha Barlow and Grant Davis
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Margaret Slater
Lori and Jim Strothard
Selwyn Tomkun and Victoria Ho
David Westfall and Jamie and Sandy Hill
Judy Wyatt

Welcome, New Members

<i>Ian Andreasen</i>	<i>Yuri Nápoles Padrón</i>
<i>Ali Engering</i>	<i>Philip Pyatt</i>
<i>Judith Gingrich</i>	<i>Pamela Sadler</i>
<i>Trish Kleist</i>	<i>Tomas Szuchewycz</i>
<i>Kuldip Malhotra</i>	<i>Jeanette Vincent</i>

With sadness, we inform you of the passing of
 Gregory Vincent on July 26, 2022.
 He will be remembered as a long-time WRN member.
 Our sympathies are with all those missing Gregory.



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Ontario Nature Report

By Fraser Gibson

Member Group Runs Successful Advocacy Campaigns

The Nith Valley EcoBoosters (NVEB) has been involved in two advocacy campaigns recently that concerned land use in Wilmot Township. NVEB worked with other groups and individuals to oppose an application for a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO) that proposed a large development on agricultural land. NVEB also supported Citizens for Safe Ground Water with their efforts to oppose a proposed aggregate operation that threatened water and natural areas. Members of the NVEB delegated to Wilmot Township for both issues.

NVEB wrote letters to Wilmot Council outlining our concerns. Both Waterloo Region Nature and Ontario Nature also wrote letters opposing the MZO application. Cachet Developments subsequently withdrew their application for a MZO. Wilmot Council voted to turn down the application for a zoning change that would have allowed the proposed gravel pit to be developed. Community engagement paid off!

Article submitted by Dorothy Wilson of the Nith Valley EcoBoosters

Kitchener's Parks Contribute to Canada's Protected Areas

Ontario Nature and the City of Kitchener announced that 20 properties (585 hectares) in Kitchener's Natural Heritage System now qualify as protected areas, contributing to Canada's target to conserve 25 percent of lands and waters by 2025. These sites are among the first municipal conservation lands in Ontario confirmed to be managed to the national standards for protected and conserved areas.

"Preserving and protecting our valued green spaces is a priority for the City of Kitchener, so it's great to see the City's hard work and dedication being recognized in this way," said Mayor Berry Urbanovic.

Kitchener's natural heritage system is comprised of wetlands, woodlands, and valley lands that maintain biophysical diversity and ecological functions, support viable populations of indigenous species, and sustain local ecosystems.

"Ontario Nature congratulates the City of Kitchener on this significant achievement," says Caroline Schultz, Executive Director at Ontario Nature. "Its strong policies and approaches to managing natural heritage ensure that biodiversity is protected for current and future generations."

Recently, 2,132 hectares of municipal and conservation authority-managed lands across southern Ontario were added to Canada's protected areas total, based on assessments conducted by Ontario Nature in partnership with five municipalities and two conservation authorities, with technical support from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

"Our government is proud to support partners like Ontario Nature and municipalities towards our shared goal of conserving and expanding more natural areas. Protecting more green spaces, especially across urban areas, helps build climate change resiliency and flood protection for local communities as well as maintain habitats for a variety of species," said David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Qualified protected areas in Kitchener include: 1. Borden Wetland, 2. Briarfield Park, 3. Homer Watson Park, 4. Huron Natural Area, 5. Idlewood Park, 6. Lackner Woods, 7. Lakeside Park, 8. Laurentian Wetland, 9. Springmount Park-Idlewood Creek, 10. Steckle Woods, 11. Tilt's Bush, 12. Topper Woods, 13. Brigadoon Woods, 14. Carisbrook Drive Natural Area, 15. Doon South Creek, 16. Grand River Natural Area – Sims Estate, 17. Grand River – Pioneer Tower Natural Area, 18. Kolb Park, 19. Natchez Woods, 20. Pinnacle Hill Natural Area

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**WRN is a registered
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Membership fees and all
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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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