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## Join the WRN Board!

Multiple positions open  
for terms beginning  
June 2024

Contact [pastpresident@waterlooregionnature.ca](mailto:pastpresident@waterlooregionnature.ca)

## ATTEND A WRN OUTING!

Visit [waterlooregionnature.ca/outings](http://waterlooregionnature.ca/outings) to see the full calendar of events and to register



Photo: Fraser Gibson

# THE HERON

SPRING 2024

RECEPTION HALL  
WATERLOO KNOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
50 ERB STREET WEST, WATERLOO



## 402 and Counting: Montgomery Tract Species Inventory

by Jenna Quinn

The F.H. Montgomery Wildlife Sanctuary has been stewarded by Waterloo Region Nature for over fifty years. In that time, at least twenty outings and surveys have taken place to observe and document what species are found here including a property survey in May 1969 by Larry Lamb, Fred Montgomery, Craig Campbell and Ken Adese which directly contributed to the decision to purchase the property. Betty Cooper and Fred Montgomery returned in 1971 to complete a second survey of plants, and in 2004, Janet Ozaruk headed up a team of people who again searched the property for plants to compare lists with the previous efforts. Since then, many observations have been recorded by the Montgomery Tract Committee and other WRN members. In particular Fraser Gibson, Wayne Buck, Graham and Marg Macdonald, and Donna and Marco DeBruin have made significant contributions to a growing list.

In 2023, an effort was made to compile all known species lists for Montgomery Tract, including observations recorded in the online databases eBird and iNaturalist. The resulting list of 402 confirmed species includes 8 mammals, 1 reptile, 5 amphibians, 43 insects and other invertebrates, 118 birds, 214 plants and 21 species of fungi and lichen. Several species of regionally rare plants, including the Green Dragon, are highlights as well as multiple observations of at-risk birds.

Outings to this property are scheduled almost every year, and extra hands are always welcome on work days to maintain the property. Please reach out to [montgomery@waterlooregionnature.ca](mailto:montgomery@waterlooregionnature.ca) if you are interested in learning more.

Contribute your sightings to the Montgomery Tract Inventory by posting observations to iNaturalist or eBird or emailing them to [editor.theheron@gmail.com](mailto:editor.theheron@gmail.com) (preferably with photos and coordinates).

## 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

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:**

**Fall Issue**  
July 20  
**Winter Issue**  
October 20  
**Spring Issue**  
February 20

We are always looking for volunteers to fill positions of responsibility and sit on the Board of Directors. Please reach out to pastpresident@waterlooregionnature.ca if you want to learn more.

# President's Corner

*By Heather Polan & Brett Fried*

## Getting Youth Hooked on Birding!

In today's fast-paced, technology-driven world, it can be challenging to get young people to connect with the natural world. However, bird watching offers a fantastic opportunity to engage youth in outdoor activities, foster a love for nature, and encourage environmental conservation. By introducing young individuals to the wonderful world of birds, we can inspire a lifelong appreciation for the environment and wildlife. In this article, we'll explore creative and fun ways to engage youth in bird watching and provide them with a meaningful connection to the natural world.

So, how do we entice the younger generation into this captivating pursuit? Well, let's spread our wings and embark on a journey through the forest of imagination, where the leaves rustle with the promise of discovery and the sky is a canvas painted with vibrant feathers.

First and foremost, let's ditch the stereotype that birding is just for retirees with a penchant for khaki vests. In reality, birding knows no age limits! It's a thrilling quest that beckons to the young and curious. Imagine the rush of spotting a rare species or the joy of deciphering the intricate patterns of a bird's plumage.

For budding birdwatchers and youthful adventurers, getting started doesn't require a suitcase full of fancy optical equipment. A good pair of binoculars is the cornerstone of any birding excursion—opt for a lightweight and compact model with decent magnification to bring distant birds up close. We highly recommend using a pair of 8x or 10x magnification binoculars. A field guide tailored to your region is invaluable for identifying feathered friends, while smartphone apps offer an interactive twist to identification.

Now, let's talk tech! Smartphones aren't just for selfies and social media — they're powerful tools for birding, too! Equip your phone with bird identification apps such as Merlin and Sibley's Guide to Birds of North America and let technology be your guide.

Make birding a sensory experience. It's not just about what you see, but what you hear, too! Challenge your ears to pick out the melodious trill of a songbird or the raucous caw of a crow. Better yet, organize birding outings with friends and turn it into a friendly competition—who can identify the most calls?

Of course, let's not forget the importance of conservation. Birding isn't just about ticking species off a list; it's about fostering a deep appreciation for our feathered friends and the habitats they call home. Get involved in local conservation efforts, participate in bird counts, and spread awareness about the importance of preserving biodiversity.

By engaging youth in bird watching, we can instill a sense of wonder, curiosity, and respect for the natural environment. Through interactive and educational experiences, young individuals can develop a lifelong appreciation for birds, wildlife, and the great outdoors. By nurturing this connection early on, we can inspire the next generation of environmental stewards and conservationists who will work to protect and preserve our natural world for years to come.



# OUTINGS, ACTIVITIES, THINGS TO DO &

## UPCOMING CLUB OUTINGS

All outings require advanced registration by visiting [waterlooregionnature.ca/outings/](https://waterlooregionnature.ca/outings/)

Unless otherwise specified, meeting point locations will be provided upon registration. Non-members are welcome to register and attend outings but must sign a waiver. In the event of rain and unless otherwise specified, outings will be cancelled and not rescheduled. Participants should check the website the day before to confirm if the outing is proceeding in the event that rain is a possibility.

### Early Migrants Along the Lake Erie Shore

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Wednesday, March 13 from 8:30am to 2:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Join Jim Burrell at the meeting point at 8:30 am. We will travel west on the 401 to Aylmer police college to look for swans and then head south to Port Burwell. From there we will head east as far as Long Point to check the [Big Creek Marsh](#), an area of great ecological and social value, and the [Old Cut banding station](#).

Bring your binoculars, scopes, cameras, water, snacks and a lunch. We will return mid-afternoon. If the weather is nasty we will postpone to the next week, Wednesday, March 20.

**Meeting point:** 8:30 am at the Fountain St. Carpool lot at 401 and Homer Watson Blvd / Fountain St.

### Cozy Nature Book Club (March)

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Monday, March 18 from 2:00pm to 3:00pm

[Register online!](#)

The book club runs online, from November to March, during the coldest months of the year when staying home and reading is an excellent, cozy activity! Bring something to share – a nature book, old or new, a nature-based film, radio show or talk, piece of art, special sighting or... it's up to you.



Each person takes about 5 minutes to share and there are a few minutes for questions. You are encouraged to make yourself a cup of tea or other hot beverage, to enjoy during the meeting.

Lynn will email a link to the zoom call to people who register.



## Walk the Mill Race Trail

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Wednesday, March 27 from 9:00am to 12:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Leader: David Gascoigne 226-747-7299

davidmgascoigne@gmail.com

You will be able to feed Black-capped Chickadees from the hand, with a very good chance that White-breasted Nuthatches will join them. Occasionally even a Downy Woodpecker will take seed from your hand. We should also see Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, and by late March, migration will be underway, so a variety of species is possible, including Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Robin, Killdeer, several species of sparrow, perhaps an early Northern Flicker and who knows what else. The Conestogo River should yield waterfowl and gulls. Mammals will include Eastern Grey Squirrel, Eastern Chipmunk, Muskrat and occasionally White-tailed Deer. Mourning Cloak butterfly is a distinct possibility.

At the half way point we will visit the Eco Café in St. Jacobs to have a coffee and use the washrooms.

Registration is required. Non-members are welcome but they will need to sign an insurance waiver. Call David if you need to cancel last-minute or want to catch up with the group.

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

Dress according to the weather, bring your binoculars, snacks if you think you need them, and lots of enthusiasm.

## Waterfowl and Early Spring Migrants in the Port Rowan/Long Point Area

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Monday, April 1 from 8:30am to 1:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Long Point Provincial Park is the 4th oldest Provincial Park in Ontario, established in 1921. It has been designated as a World Biosphere Reserve. It is also one of the largest Waterfowl Staging areas in North America.

Please join Stewart, who has birded Long Point for over 30 years, in this outing. It is possible to see over 20 Species of Waterfowl, including the possibility of seeing the elusive Eurasian Widgeon, as well as Raptors, Shorebirds, Wading Birds and Sandhill Cranes.

We will also search for early songbird arrivals, which could include Rusty Blackbird, Brown Thrasher, Hermit Thrush, Eastern Phoebe and Sparrow Species.

This outing will proceed RAIN OR SHINE and participants should dress in appropriate gear, including good walking shoes. Most of the terrain will be level and dry, with occasional muddy areas possible. A spotting scope will be available, but feel free to bring a scope if you have one, as well as binoculars, snacks and water.

The excursion will begin at the Birds' Canada Office in Port Rowan, where washroom facilities are available. There is also a washroom at Old Cut Observatory.

Participants will receive an email from Stewart a few days before the outing. which will give registrants an opportunity to ask any questions about the outing. Look forward to seeing you then!

**Meeting point:** Long Point Provincial Park, 350 Erie Blvd, Port Rowan, Ontario

## Pollinator Roadside Project — Site Preparation and Sowing

Saturday, April 13 from 9:30am to 4:00pm and follow up day, if needed: April 20

Planting day: June 8 from 9:30am to 4:00pm

[Register online for April 13](#)      [Register online for April 20](#)

Beautification, Bees and Butterflies...come and help plant native plants and wildflowers along roadsides in Waterloo Region. Join any time between 9:30 and 4, or for the whole day, and be ready to dig, plant and prepare the site.

**Location:** in Kitchener, along Fisher Hallman near Glasgow, opposite the Tim Horton's and Food Basics. If driving, park in the parking lot and walk across the road. More details to be posted closer to the event.

[Read this post for more background on this project.](#)



### Vortex Optics

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## Celebrate Earth Day!

Monday, April 22

Waterloo Region Nature will announce the most loved natural spaces in the Region, chosen by members, that will be celebrated with a specially-designed badge. Come to our monthly meeting and be the first to find out where nature lives in the region.

## Native Plant Swap/Sale

Sunday, May 5 from 10:00am to 2:00pm

For the first time, Waterloo Region Nature is partnering with Parks Canada to host a native plant swap and sale! The sale will be at the Woodside National Historic Site at 528 Wellington Street North, Kitchener.

If you bring a plant (or plants) to swap, you will be able to swap with others. Native plant sellers will also be invited, more details to be shared soon.

## 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](mailto:outings@waterlooregionnature.ca).

## Discover Kinghurst Forest Nature Reserve

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Sunday, April 28 and Thursday, May 2 from 8:30am to 1:30pm

[Register online for April date!](#)

[Register online for May date!](#)

The rustle of maple leaves in the wind far above your head and the smell of wild leek below your feet are only a few of the delights you will encounter at the Kinghurst Forest Nature Reserve. This 356 hectare (880 acre) nature reserve in Grey County contains a remarkable mature maple-beech forest that is a rare example of pre-settlement woodlands in southern Ontario. A spectacular show of wildflowers greets visitors in the spring, as do provincially rare plants such as Hart's-tongue fern.

Join Anita to walk the trails here. She loves to walk here with her camera at the ready, and has room in her car for three passengers. Details provided when you register for the event. Of course, you are also welcome to drive up and meet at the forest. It's about 1.5 hours from Kitchener.

**Directions:** To visit Kinghurst Forest, follow Highway 6 north from Durham and turn west on County Road 25. Travel about six kilometers to Concession 6 and turn north. Just past a side road on your left you will see a driveway on the right marked by an Ontario Nature sign that leads to an enclosed parking area with a cedar fence and red gate. Please park to the right of the driveway and avoid blocking the entrance.

## Birding at Rondeau Provincial Park

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Tuesday, May 14 from 8:00am to 1:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Join Stewart MacDonald on this journey to one of the most renowned Birding Hotspots in Ontario! Rondeau Provincial Park, located on the north shore of Lake Erie, is known for its old growth Carolinian Forest and its proximity to Lake Erie. Migrant Songbirds are the Park's main attraction in the Spring.

Our target species are Warblers in their Spring Plumage as they pass through the Park on the way to their breeding grounds. In addition, Flycatchers, Thrushes, Vireos, Orioles, Indigo Buntings and Scarlet Tanagers are sought after species at this time of year.

The "Star of the Show" is often the Prothonotary Warbler which is an Endangered Species in Ontario. Rondeau is usually one of the most reliable places in the Province to see this brilliant Songbird.

The group will convene at 8:00am at the parking lot inside the Park Gate. There is a fee to enter the Park. Please dress according to the weather conditions and wear comfortable walking shoes. The terrain is generally flat and dry. The outing will proceed RAIN OR SHINE and will commence at "Warbler Way". Clean bathrooms are located there, as well as throughout the Park.

Please bring your binoculars, snacks and water for this excursion. Stewart will send participants an email a few days before the outing and will answer any questions you may have.

Looking forward to seeing you at Rondeau for a Fun and Exciting day of birding!

**Celebrating Birds**

**Huron Fringe Birding Festival**

MacGregor Point Provincial Park

One of Canada's Premier Birding Festivals

May 24 - May 27  
& May 30 - June 2, 2024

[www.huronfringebirdingfestival.ca](http://www.huronfringebirdingfestival.ca)

## Ecological Restoration — Garlic Mustard Removal at *rare*

Sunday, May 26 from 9:00am to 12:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Meet at the *rare* ECO Centre (768 Blair Rd) for a morning of garlic mustard removal at *rare*. More details to follow.



## Birding in Glen Morris

Wednesday, May 29 from 7:00am to 3:00pm

[Register online!](#)

Join Stewart MacDonald for this Exciting Outing, where we explore birding hot spots in the Glen Morris area, including Northern Brant County. This area is known for its Carolinian Forest, its proximity to the Grand River and several smaller lakes and Tall Grass Prairie habitat. It is possible to see both Grassland Species, Wading Birds, Raptors as well as Migrating and Breeding Songbirds all in one day!

Target Birds which would be uncommon and hard Species to find, including Cliff Swallow, Common Gallinule, Tufted Titmouse, Bobolink as well as sparrows, warblers, rails and other spring migrants.

The Group will meet at the Glen Morris Trail Parking Lot at 7:00am. Bathrooms are located there. Car pooling from there will be encouraged as some of the locations we will visit have few spaces for parked cars. A spotting scope will be provided but feel free to bring your own, plus your binoculars.

Participants should dress according to the weather conditions and wear comfortable footwear. The outing will proceed RAIN OR SHINE. Please bring snacks and water. There will be a lunch break and if the weather is nice, we will picnic outside. The afternoon portion of the outing will be shorter and conclude by 3:00pm. Stewart will send participants an email a couple of days before the outing, which will give you an opportunity to ask any questions about the excursion.

Stewart is looking forward to having an exciting day of local birding with you then!

## Moth Night, Save the Date!

Friday, May 31

[Register Online!](#)

Evening event. Details forthcoming.

### ROM SPECIAL OFFER

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Closes March 25, 2024



@ROMtoronto #ROMwpyON

Snow bison. © Max Waugh



## Hullett Marsh, All-Day Outing

Wednesday, June 5 from 8:30am to 3:00pm

[Register Online!](#)

Leader: David Gascoigne 226-747-7299

davidmgascoigne@gmail.com

This is an all-day event led by David Gascoigne. He describes this trip:

For several years my good friend Curtiss MacDonald, who was born and raised in the area, organized a trip to Hullett Marsh in Huron County. Curtiss has agreed to accompany us and has already advised that he has room for three others in his car.

We will stop at various spots to search for waterfowl, raptors, passerines, and anything else that captures our interest. A moderate amount of walking is involved, but nothing too strenuous.

On this outing nature's bathroom may be your only option – so be prepared! Last time there were portable toilets in a couple of spots, but there is no guarantee.

It became a tradition on visits to Hullett Marsh that at the end of the day we would swing by a country store where Curtiss would buy everyone an ice cream. No doubt we can convince him to do this again!

What to bring: This is a full day's outing so be sure to pack a lunch and snacks if you need them. Bring a folding chair so that we can have lunch in the field. Dress according to the weather, bring binoculars, a field guide and lots of enthusiasm.

Registration is required. Non-members are welcome but will be required to sign an insurance waiver.

**Meeting point:** Meet at SpruceHaven, 2005 Notre Dame Drive, St. Agatha, ON (carpool from there).




**BIRD**  
*Bingo*

Sunday, March 24  
1:30 - 3:30 pm

[Register Online!](#)

## Going Birding?

2024 is the fourth year of the third Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas.

Register with NatureCounts and be sure your bird checklists are added to Atlas-3.

[ontariobirds.org](http://ontariobirds.org)



## University of Waterloo BioBlitz May 6 — 12

The Sustainability Office at University of Waterloo is looking for subject expert volunteers to lead 2-hour guided walks focusing on specific organisms, such as birds, trees, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians

Please email [sustainability@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:sustainability@uwaterloo.ca) if you or someone you know are interested!

## Sudden Tract Snake Survey Volunteer Needed

Survey every 5-9 days from May to mid-July.  
Contact [teagann@ontarionature.org](mailto:teagann@ontarionature.org) if interested.

## 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 presentation begins shortly after 8pm** featuring a guest speaker on one of a variety of interesting topics.

Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 7:30pm in **hybrid** format. Join in person at Reception Hall, Waterloo Knox Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb St. West, Waterloo or register at [waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings/](http://waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings/) to join on zoom.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS:** For full presentation descriptions and presenter biographies and register to attend online visit: [waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings/](http://waterlooregionnature.ca/meetings/)

### Monday, March 25, 2024 @ 7:30pm – *Double Feature!*

#### **Giant Hogweed Mitigation Project** – John Kemp

The Giant Hogweed Mitigation Project strives to promote awareness and mitigate this threat to public safety and the ecosystem. Giant Hogweed has been spreading rapidly along the Grand River. Colonies of this plant have been encountered on both public and private properties from Waterloo to Brantford. Landowners have been dealing with the plants they know about. Contact with the sap of the Giant Hogweed plant can produce phytophotodermatitis which causes an extreme skin reaction to sunlight, which can produce severe burns and blisters. Let's join John Kemp as he provides an overview of the ecology, safety, mitigation, and legislation.

**John Kemp** has been working to locate and eradicate Giant Hogweed along the Grand River since 2010. His enthusiasm for eradicating this poisonous and aggressively invasive plant stems from his love of the outdoors. It started with Scouts when he was looking into local poisonous plants to teach young Scouts and his family, and what to watch out for while exploring. Since then he has connected with local officials, landowners, and local outdoors groups.

#### **Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas: The Power of Community Science** – Jenna Quinn

Ontario Nature's newly released Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA) publication is a decade-long community science project that tracked distributions and spatial trends of reptiles and amphibians across the province. ORAA data has increased the knowledge and protection for at-risk species in Ontario, and has contributed to reports and recovery plans, local land use planning, and habitat stewardship programs. Let's join Jenna Quinn as she presents the ORAA to our membership.

Jenna Quinn is the Conservation Science Manager for Ontario Nature. She joined Ontario Nature in early 2023, bringing over a decade of experience in the non-profit conservation sector. Jenna is passionate about working in collaboration with others to tackle land stewardship, research, and conservation initiatives that advance protection of natural spaces in Ontario. You may recognize Jenna as WRN Past President and Heron Editor!

**Monday, April 22, 2024 @ 7:30pm** – Wetlands, Rebecca Rooney, Associate Professor (Biology)  
University of Waterloo

**Monday, May 27, 2024 @ 7:30pm** – Moths All Around Us, Alan MacNaughton, Vice-President  
Toronto Entomologists' Association



# WRN Photo Gallery



***Do you have local nature or WRN event photos to share?  
Send them to:  
[editor@waterlooregionnature.ca](mailto:editor@waterlooregionnature.ca)***



*Photos: Mike Weissmann*



## WRN Teens Report

By Marg Paré

**W**RN Teens enjoyed an October afternoon **collecting seeds** at SpruceHaven with Levi Moore helping us identify wildflowers without flowers! These native seeds will be planted in schoolyard gardens. At the end of the month, we had a record turn-out for our last day **monitoring salamanders and tree frogs**.

In November, we hiked in **Homer Watson Park** and saw "the best view in the region," lots of interesting birds and plants, and we learned the history of the park. Homer has new fans! Later in the month, WRN Kids invited WRN Teens to their "**Sciensational Sssnakes**" presentation. Teens and Kids got to meet and touch an Eastern Red-sided Gartersnake, a Northern Water Snake, a Black Rat Snake, an Eastern Fox Snake, and also see a Blanding's Turtle and a Snapping Turtle.

In return, we invited Kids for a repeat "**Trail Maintenance = Holiday Decorations!**" project at SpruceHaven in December. We had a nice snowy walk trimming branches along the paths then chose some to take home. Before leaving, we stopped by to show our treasures to the Westfall-Hill's, our wonderful hosts at our favourite nature wonderland!

Teens hit off 2024 with our **New Year's Hike**, this time with a Teen leader! Roddie met us at a favourite spot, the Pioneer Tower, to lead us on the Walter Bean Trail -- an interesting complement to our November hike along the other side of the same section of river. With Roddie's help and everybody's sharp eyes, we counted 17 bird species. Teen birders were also invited to guide families at **rare's Christmas Bird Count for Kids** a few weeks later.

In February, we met at **Huron Natural Area** for another bird outing, but no birds showed up! After a refresher lesson on owl species, we spent a beautiful, dark evening walking on icy trails, standing still while Levi called, and listening hard but with no rewards this time!

Our **Data Team** met at the Earth Sciences Museum to create spreadsheets of our 2023 monitoring data about the salamanders, tree frogs, nesting birds, and snakes of SpruceHaven. These Teens are using their computer skills and developing an appreciation for complete and clear field notes!

### Upcoming Teens projects:

- ⇒ Visit to the **Ecology Lab** at University of Waterloo during March Break.
- ⇒ Teens "**Herp Day**" with Michelle MacMillan at **rare Charitable Research Reserve**.
- ⇒ Weekly monitoring starts again in mid-April! Hope the snakes have found our boards!

**Thanks** to the WRN board and members, regular adult volunteers, volunteer project leaders, the Westfall-Hill's, our many community partners, and the Teens' parent-encourager-drivers for all your support. And of course, thanks to all the Teens for being your amazing selves!

**If you're a teenager or in highschool, look up Waterloo Region Nature Teens!**

**Register at [waterlooregionnature.ca/teens](http://waterlooregionnature.ca/teens) or email [teens@waterlooregionnature.ca](mailto:teens@waterlooregionnature.ca) for more information.**



WRN Teens.

Photos: Helpful stranger (left), Eva Weber (right)



## Waterloo Region Nature Kids!

By *Rachelle Swayze*

**W**RN Kids have been busy! In October we had fun at Huron Natural Area playing a predator-prey game and in November we enjoyed a presentation by Scienstational Sssnakes and learned about native Ontario snake species. We met up with WRN Teens at SpruceHaven in December to trim walking trails and took the cuttings home to make seasonal decorations. January's Christmas Bird Count for Kids at *rare* was rescheduled to February due to inclement weather; we saw 16 different species of birds including over 100 Goldeneye ducks! In February, we explored the GeoTime Trail and learned the basics of using a compass.

Please see <https://waterlooregionnature.ca/kids-events/> for details and photos of our adventures.

Upcoming Outings: In March, we plan to go birding along the Mill Race Trail where we hope to feed chickadees and stop at the Eco Café.

In April, World Animal Protection will be visiting us to teach us about the wild animals as pets trade and how it is hurtful to animals and ecosystems. We will be using our new knowledge and team work to create a video in May about this topic. We hope to share the video to inform others about this harmful and unnecessary pet trade. It is great to be out in nature learning and playing together!



*WRN Teens & Kids at SpruceHaven.*

*Photo: Rachelle Swayze*



*WRN Kids Activities.*

*Photos: Rachelle Swayze*



## Membership Report

By Judy Watson

A reminder to members to renew your membership for the September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024 year. You can renew online or you can mail a cheque along with the renewal form you can print from the WRN website.

<https://waterlooregionnature.ca/membership/>

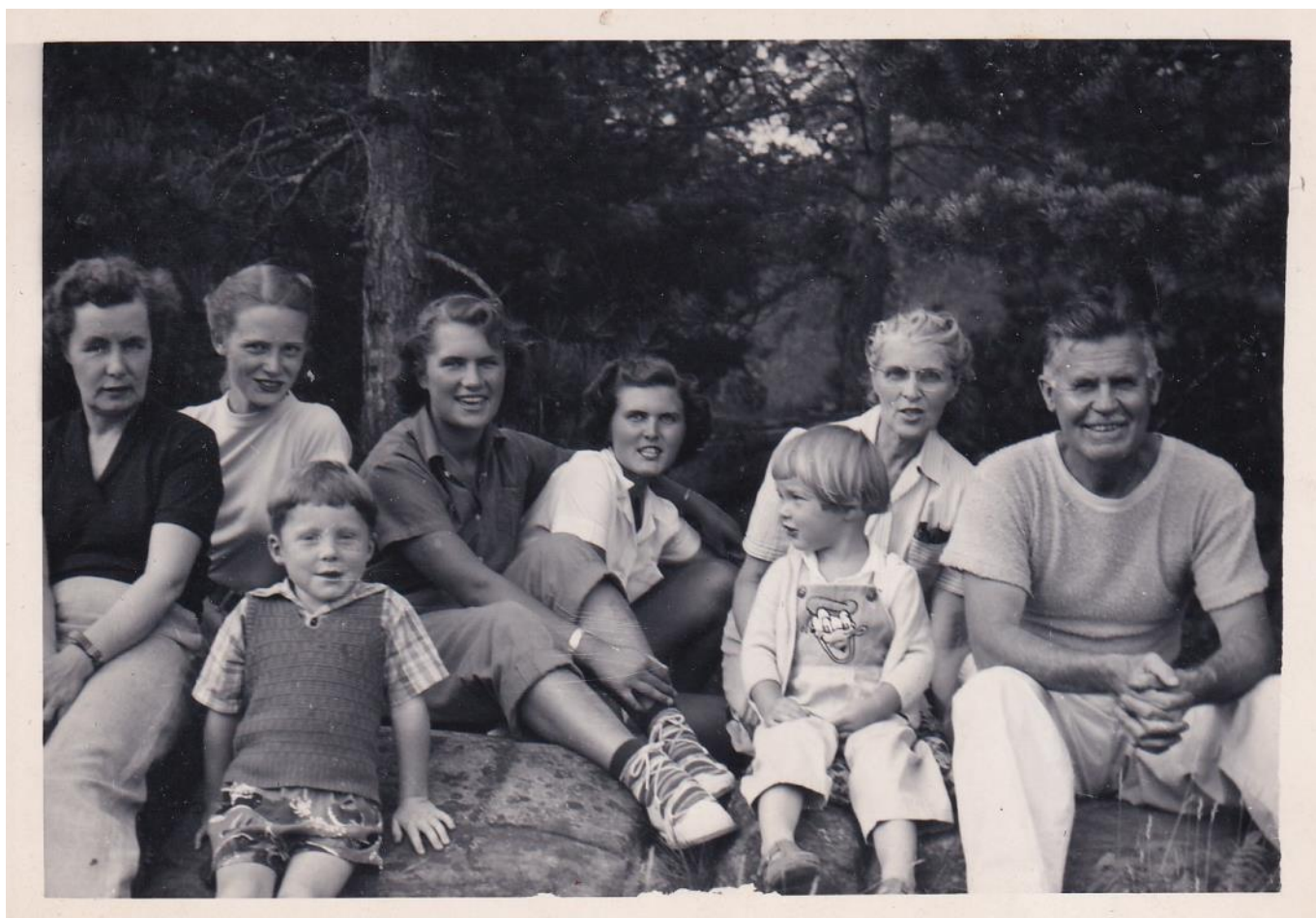
### Welcome New Members!

Paul Abell  
Joan Crowe  
Alice Lee  
John Lee  
Melina Metzger  
Dave Robson  
Patty Robson  
Mackenzie Ross

### Thank You Donors!

Thelma & Ron Beaubien  
Paul & Pat Bigelow  
Meredith Blunt  
Estate of Lois Elizabeth Cooper  
Walter Friesen  
Francine Gilbert & Jim Huffma  
Wende Gregory-Frei  
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Lori & Jim Strothard  
Mary Ann Vanden Elzen  
Chris & Michael Witmer  
Adrienne Zoe



A recently acquired photo from the summer of 1951 showing Roy Dickson, principal founder of KWFN/WRN, with wife Lyla and daughter Margaret beside her in the white blouse. Second from the left is Betty Pierce who, a year later, married, and acquired the name familiar to many of us - Betty Cooper.

## Ontario Nature Report

By Janet Ozaruk

### Protected Places Campaign

Ontario Nature is pleased to report that in 2023, they continued building a strong case for the permanent protection of over 1 million hectares of Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) designated conservation lands in Ontario. They completed an economic analysis outlining the net benefit of permanent protection, highlighting that it is possible to protect biodiversity and mitigate climate change while supporting local jobs and the economy. ON continued working with forestry companies, Indigenous communities, and local grassroots organizations to identify ecologically and culturally important areas to protect within FSC-certified forests. Through these collaborative efforts, the Nabish Wetland Complex, near Dryden in northwestern Ontario, was set aside as FSC designated conservation lands.



### Expansion to the Lost Bay Nature Reserve

Thanks to the incredible support of Ontario Nature members, ON expanded the Lost Bay Nature Reserve by 50 acres! This property is an important connecting corridor within the Frontenac Arch, one of the most biologically diverse areas in Canada .

Ontario Nature staff were busy this field season conducting annual inspections of their nature reserves. Conservation and data collection projects included monitoring vegetation, salamander, and snake populations, creating and monitoring vernal pools, and removing invasive species.

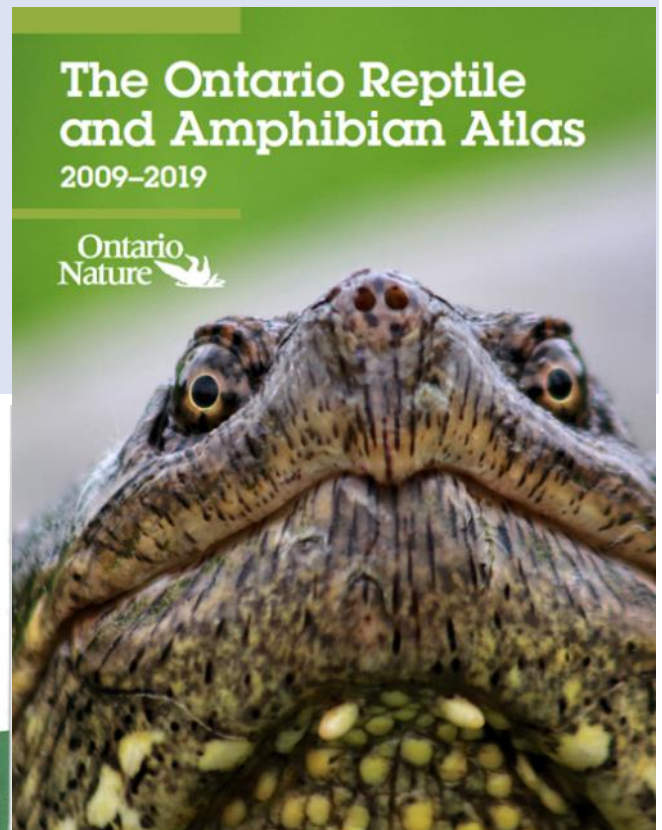
### Conservation Science

Ontario Nature is thrilled to announce the launch of the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA) publication, representing over ten years of community science data collected by more than 12,000 volunteers and contributors! ORAA data has increased the knowledge and protection for at-risk species in Ontario, and has contributed to reports and recovery plans, local land use planning, and habitat stewardship programs.

You can read the free digital publication here:

[ontarionature.org/reptile-amphibian-atlas](https://ontarionature.org/reptile-amphibian-atlas)

Hardcopy can be [pre-ordered online](#) by March 15th.



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### Membership Annual Fees\*

Family/Couple \$40  
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Club year runs from  
Sept. to August; New member-  
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Membership details at:  
[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. 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/](https://waterlooregionnature.ca/newsletter/)

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