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Nature Niagara News

Newsletter of the Niagara Falls Nature Club

Bulletin # 329

President's Message

Today as I listen to the waves colliding on the shore and tune in to hear distinctively repetitive birds calls, I think of how rhythmic the natural world can be. Reading this now, I hope you too can recall pleasurable sounds and satisfying moments in nature this summer.

Sand and waves on the shore of Lake Huron at Southampton, ON. © Kerry Kennedy

It has been rewarding to meet many new people this summer, and although the Wednesday Walks will soon wind up, we hope to meet again with scheduled day trips and monthly speaker meetings this fall and winter. For those who are familiar with the club's rhythm of activities, please make a point of introducing yourself and welcoming our newer members and those you haven't yet met. As we head into our indoor season, it is also a good time for considering how you may be able to support the activities of our nature club and the ongoing strength of our organization. There are many opportunities for volunteers to contribute; from leading a walk to helping with promotions, making a speaker introduction, or serving as a board member and attending meetings on the first Wednesday from September to May. We have benefited from a strong and committed Board of Directors, and the health of the club will rely on renewal and refreshment as we move forward. Once again, I ask that all of you - members of our wonderful and dynamic club - give thoughtful consideration to how you can contribute in ways big or small to the continued success of our club.

Listen with wonder,
Kerry

Two Owls

by Win Laar

The Owl Foundation lost two of its most well-known owls this past June.

Big Bird, a beautiful Great Gray Owl, was Kay McKeever's constant companion. During annual donor tours, Big Bird charmed visitors with her calm and gentle nature and appeared in hundreds of photographs.

I recently found my copy of The Owl Foundation NEWS from July 2005, describing how she came to TOF after having been hit by a car and left for dead in a ditch. Kay wrote, "Oh what a mess she was, poor lovely old owl; but defying the odds and still alive. She just sat in our intensive care room, wrapped in and supported by towels, under a heat lamp, remaining eye closed, head slumped - just enduring. Her jaw was out of alignment and her left ear canal still wet with blood from a cranial hemorrhage. Surely, she was dying. For two days, she was like a zombie; unresponsive, uncooperative with all we tried. In desperation, I made the food-offering sounds of a mother of her species, very low, with our foreheads almost touching. Eureka! She lifted her head, squeaked, and opened her beak!" "From then on, she was like a baby owl again. She ate every bit of mouse, her forehead in close contact with my face, her good eye closed, always gentle and cooperative." As time went on Kay carried her around on an astroturf covered small log, her own magic flying carpet. "She would get onto it herself and wait to be airborne!"

Welcome New Members

- Shirley Johnson
- Mike & Nanet Dickman
- Michelle Stranges
- Lesley Bray
- Lisa Kelley

Meetings at a Glance

- September 11th ~ KEN BURRELL - Best Places to Bird in Ontario
- October 9th ~ MARCIE JACKLIN - Brazil: Exploring the Atlantic Rainforest
- November 13th ~ MARK ZELINSKI - Heart of Turtle Island

Outings at a Glance

- September 13th - 15th - ALGONQUIN WEEKEND
- Saturday Oct 5th @ 9:00 am ~ RIVERWOOD CONSERVANCY
- Saturday Nov 23rd @ 9:00 am ~ DUCKS ALONG LAKE ONTARIO

See our Programs & Outings 2019 - 2020 brochure or the club website for more information.

- Do you love a fall mushroom hike? Never been but it sounds interesting? See the back page for information on a couple of upcoming hikes.

Two Owls

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Another owl loved and remembered by visitors was Big Red. Big Red was a Great Horned Owl, and although unable to fly and without a mate, she fostered dozens of orphaned Great Horned owlets through the years. Staff would put incoming owlets into her laundry basket nest through a back door to her cage, and as far as Big Red was concerned, if it was in her nest it was her babe, and she fed it and taught it how to be a proper Great Horned Owl. These babes all subsequently underwent release training and were returned to the wild near where they were originally found.

Two owls, alive because of the intervention and care of the staff at The Owl Foundation, who contributed much to our understanding and appreciation of our common humanity, if I may use that word, with our fellow creatures.

Emmy Darling and Skye Newman with Big Bird on her magic carpet. © Ian Darling

Hidden Corners: Florida with Owen Bjorgan

by Kiera Newman

The Niagara Falls Nature Club hosted Owen Bjorgan at our indoor meeting on May 8, to witness more of his travel adventures. As usual, Owen took us on a journey to one of the world's many exciting natural areas – in this case, just over the Georgia-Florida state line to the Suwannee River, then further south into the Everglades. With witty commentary and fantastic pictures, Owen wearing his Canada flag buff and carrying a hockey stick for exploration as well as protection, walked us through the Florida backwoods, stopping to appreciate the diverse and beautiful scenery. Our sneak peek into the third installment in his Hidden Corners documentary series that includes Niagara and Ecuador, Florida, especially in the dry season when Owen visited, was spectacular.

Owen wearing a Canada flag buff explains the usefulness of a hockey stick in the Florida backwoods. Screen capture from Hidden Corners: Florida © Owen Bjorgan

At this time of year, wildlife congregates around watering holes. From a turtle netted at the water's edge to an American Green Tree Frog resting on a plant to a skink that eluded capture playing peekaboo around a tree stump, the area was rich in wildlife. With it being the dry season, walking through the Cypress Trees was a breeze making it easy to walk among cypress knees, the cone-shaped woody projections growing vertically from the knobby root of the bald cypress tree. From the Florida Banded Water Snake, which is nonvenomous to the American Alligator, these watering holes can be hazardous. Owen also met less threatening wildlife – one such encounter was a Great Egret with an enlarged neck due to a fish visible going down its esophagus and a Wood Stork that stole the egret's first fish. He also saw Black Vultures sharing their lunch with a smaller alligator, not by choice of course. A pair of North American River Otters were fun to watch as they frolicked and hunted among the floating water lettuce, and they are the same species we have here in Ontario.

In graphic detail, Owen described with pictures and video, an encounter he had with a 10-foot alligator mom when he tried to capture one of her babies on a watering hole shore. The mother had been waiting in some weeds, and when Owen grabbed the young one in his net, it called out to its mom, who ran "on top of the water" to rescue her baby, chasing Owen and his friend and cameraman, Dave Tebbutt, out of the area! This terrifying event is part of what makes Owen's presentations so vivid and exciting, although we would be just as interested in having him present to our club even if he didn't have life-threatening footage to show!

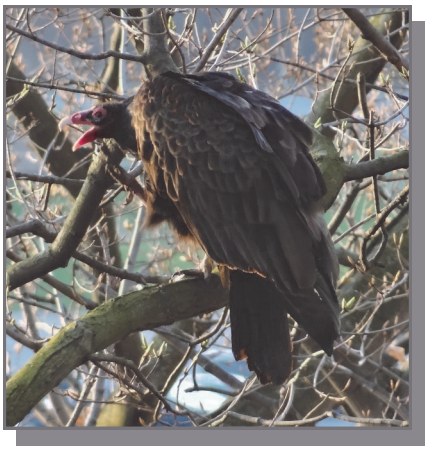
Toward the end of their week together, they visited the Florida Keys Wildlife and Environmental Area in the Everglades. The Everglades Rat Snake and American Crocodiles were found here along with many other species. We learned that a lot of the Mangrove trees that form the basis of the Everglades ecosystem are damaged or gone. They are adapted to saltwater or brackish water conditions and possess incredibly thick leaves. These wetlands, including the mangroves themselves, are filters that maintain water quality and clarity and keep pollution from entering the wetlands and ocean, a vital function of the ecosystem. They also protect the shorelines from damaging storm and hurricane winds. Without them, many species will suffer.

Owen, who currently works at Heartland Forest here in Niagara Falls, is continuing to educate others about the importance of wetlands and other natural systems. His Hidden Corners films, including a trailer for his latest, Tropical North Queensland (currently in the editing stage), are available online. To view the full documentary Hidden Corners: Florida, click this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jFm7xeNlWow.

Next up he hopes to visit Borneo or Madagascar. We can't wait, Owen!

Snippets of Selected Wednesday Walks by various authors as noted

For the first time in three years, our walk at Woodend Conservation Area on April 24 was not rained out, although it was quite chilly. With a notice of the outing having been posted on the NPCA Facebook page, there was a very large turnout of people. There were fewer flowers in bloom than in previous years due to the late start to spring. We did enjoy the blooms of Bloodroot, Hepatica, Dutchman's Breeches, Spring Beauty and Cut-leaved Toothwort. We also saw a Turkey Vulture sitting in a tree overlooking the Niagara College ponds where Chorus Frogs were singing. Thanks to Rhonda Armstrong for leading this walk. By Joyce Sankey.



A Turkey Vulture scouts the Niagara College ponds. © Joyce Sankey

Heavy rain cleared and about 35 people explored the woods at Cave Springs Conservation Area on May 15. Ice lingered at the entrance to the collapsed ice cave, sheltered by Ground Hemlock and Dutchman's Breeches. Both Red and White Trilliums caught the eye, as did Trout Lily, Virginia Waterleaf, Early Saxifrage, Early Meadow Rue, Blue Cohosh and several violets. We examined the barely visible Indian face carved into the rock near the base of the trail heading up, then climbed to find the less often seen Squirrel Corn, Mitre Wort and Polypody. Masses of mingled yellow and white lined the Bruce Trail along the top of the escarpment, with Large-flowered Bellwort and White Trilliums. We headed down with the cliffs looming to the left and tall Sugar Maple forest on the right, the almost full moon contributing to the feeling of peace in our evening. By Win Laar.

Red Trillium. © Win Laar

Looking upward at the beautiful escarpment. © Win Laar

Savoury meatballs, fresh salads and scrumptious pies were among the treats lined up on the picnic tables at Queenston Heights for the club's annual potluck in mid-June. Following a shared meal, we walked around the Landscape of Nations memorial, which recognizes the contribution of Indigenous people in the War of 1812. We then walked west along the Bruce Trail. While the spring ephemerals were over for the year, we commented on seeing many Bladdernut trees, which we had also seen in abundance just a week earlier at Louth Conservation Area. Staphylea trifolia seems to thrive in a similar habitat among the crevices and escarpment rock formations. As the evening was starting to close in, we turned around and headed back to Queenston Heights to end another lovely potluck dinner. By Kerry Kennedy.

The longhouse structure with the pattern of the Two Row Wampum Belt running in the path and bronze sculptures of John Norton (left) and John Brant mark the entrance to the Landscape of Nations Memorial at Queenston Heights. © Kerry Kennedy.

Approximately 14 people joined me for a walk on the hot and humid evening of July 3 at St John's Conservation Area. Most appeared quite interested in what I was able to show and identify. We saw nice examples of Shinleaf, Spotted Jewelweed, Mayapple and White Avens in the flower category. Among the trees, we found Hop Hornbeam, Tulip Tree, Blue Beech, Sassafrass, and Eastern Cottonwood. A couple of interesting fungi we observed were a Chanterelle Waxcap and a White Cheese Polypore. By Rick Young.

White Avens. © Rick Young

Chanterelle Waxcap © Rick Young

Snippets of Selected Wednesday Walks

continued from page 3

On the sweltering hot evening of July 10, 15 hardy souls turned out to walk along the Third Welland Canal. Accessing the Bruce Trail on Glendale Avenue just east of the bridge over the present canal, we moved south through dense vegetative growth, catching occasional glimpses of locks 13 to 16. The locks were 30 feet deep, lined with sizeable hand-cut dolostone blocks, which in places were tilting, revealing the rubble piled behind. In the future, a better time for this walk would be after the leaves have fallen, and the temperatures are more moderate. By Win Laar.

Lock 14 gate remnants and track. © Win Laar

Only five people joined me for a pleasant stroll through Marlene Stewart Streit Park in Fonthill on August 7. It was a warm evening, and the mosquitoes were out, but the small group made for an enjoyable walk with lots of talk on nature and other things.

We headed down the Gord Nemy trail that winds through a swampy gully and sandhills. We admired the straight, very tall trunks of Tulip Trees and the Eastern White Cedar, Red Oak and Sugar Maple that appeared to be old growth. There was a lot of Spotted Jewelweed with some of the much rarer Pale Jewelweed and lots of shrubs, including my favourite Spicebush. Rick identified both Black and Smooth Raspberry. White Baneberry, Thin-leafed Coneflower, Black-eyed Susan and Queen Anne's Lace were also among the many species noted. The swampy area held a lot of Skunk Cabbage. Cold, clear streams running through the property come from under the Fonthill Kame and are part of the headwaters of the Twelve Mile Creek. It is a very peaceful and interesting place to walk. By Janet Damude.

Spotted Jewelweed. © Rick Young

The Unofficial Weekend at Red Bay June 11 - 14

by Win Laar

It was a tough choice to make, whether to stay home and attend the Queenston Heights potluck or to head north in search of orchids. Sixteen smiling club members sat down to dinner at Evergreen Resort at Red Bay and learned why Lorraine still carries a snow shovel in her car: so that Rick can help a disgruntled snapping turtle cross a busy road, of course.

(Main photo) Loading up. © Debbie Wright.

(Top inset) Flying across the road. © Rick Young

(Bottom inset) Across the road and still disgruntled. © Rick Young

An extra perk of a Tuesday arrival was a talk by Peter Middleton of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists. Peter pointed out the symmetry of the curving Niagara Escarpment on the Bruce Peninsula with a mirror image on the American side and noted how water had shaped this land, as seen in the now high Bruce Caves eroded by wave action thousands of years ago.

Water and waves continued to feature as some of us headed down to Sauble Beach for a glimpse of the Piping Plovers. We were fortunate to locate one bird sitting on her nest, well protected from beach partiers and other predators within her exclusion fencing. Later Ron Goodridge shared photos and stories from www.merrileesnaturephotos.com, which followed two plover families. It was likely Ms. Green Dots which we had observed, the mate to Mr. Blue Bands. Four long-legged, big-footed chicks fledged from their nest a few days later, and two chicks from a nest further south, to Ms. Sunshine and Mr. New Blue. With near-record high water levels on the Great Lakes, the chicks had a shorter distance to run to forage for food in the rich wrack line at the water's edge.

Piping Plover at Sauble Beach, Mr. New Blue. © Ron Goodridge

Narrow-leaved Sundew © Lorraine Brown-Joyce

The next day we headed up to Petrel Point Nature Reserve, where we found our first orchids, Yellow Lady's Slippers, and there were dozens of them, even pushing through the gravel at the side of the road. Pitcher Plants were easy to spot in the shallow water of the meadow marsh, but it took binoculars to discern the upward reaching coral and lime green arms of Narrow-leaved Sundews, with their fine sticky insect-trapping hairs.

Unofficial Weekend at Red Bay

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Thanks to Peter Middleton's talk we viewed the southern side of the reserve with greater understanding, seeing now an ecosystem that has persisted relatively unchanged for thousands of years, with Labrador Tea, Sweet Gale, Tamaracks and old-growth Eastern White Cedars still alive despite protruding ghostly gray dead limbs.

Dwarf Lake Iris, species of Special Concern is no more than 2 - 3 inches tall. © Lorraine Brown-Joyce

A trip up the peninsula to Singing Sands Provincial Park at Dorcas Bay found much of the famous beach as well as some of the newly built boardwalk under water. Here the dainty white flowers of Beach Plum caught our eye, as well as the pink of Gaywings and the vibrant blue of the rare Dwarf Lake Iris.

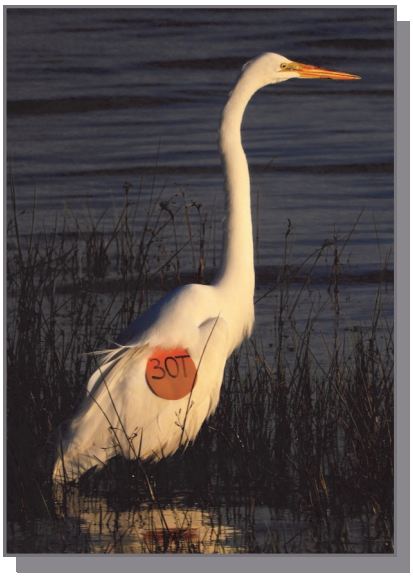
That evening some of us passed Bobolinks and Bluebirds on the way to a secret grove with many tiny Ram's Head Lady's Slipper orchids, their location now forgotten.

The next day brought torrential rains, an opportunity to laugh and learn new games. By afternoon the sky had cleared sufficiently for two pontoon boats to take us out into Lake Huron to the area of 70+ islands known locally as The Fishing Islands, to see the nesting Great Blue Herons and Herring Gulls, and one lone Bald Eagle. Thick fog soon rolled in hiding the shore and second boat, and we were glad to get safely back on land again.

High water and a cold spring had combined to slow the emergence of much that we hoped to see. We found two species of orchids; for more, we shall have to return another year.

Great Blue Heron nest in the Fishing Islands. © Rick Young

Tiny and beautiful, species of Special Concern, Ram's Head Lady's Slipper orchid. © Win Laar



Great Egret with a wing tag at sunrise just outside the cabin door. © Lorraine Brown-Joyce

Our Hemlocks Are Under Attack

by Kerry Kennedy

On an otherwise uneventful day in early June, an email came to the club with the surprising and unfortunate news that Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) has been identified on the Harold Mitchell Nature Reserve property. Ouch. The pristine 14 ha woodlot, with the largest stand of Eastern Hemlock along the north shore of Lake Erie, was purchased in 1970 by the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (now Ontario Nature) on behalf of the Niagara Falls Nature Club. We have continued to steward the property, visiting regularly, conducting inventories and reporting on its status. We can thank Janet Damude for taking the lead on the club's behalf over the past many, many years.

CFIA flagging tape marking the Hemlock trees. © Kerry Kennedy

While we suspected this day could come, and these tiny insects could be a threat, we hadn't anticipated it would come so soon or so unexpectedly. Thinking that we would have heard of established infestations in a closer radius before it would arrive at Harold Mitchell, this was sad news to digest. The first population of HWA was found in 2012 in Etobicoke, and the second was found between 2013 - 2015 in Niagara Falls at the Niagara Glen Nature Reserve. During an inspection, also in June 2019, it was detected again.

Within days of the news, we joined Ontario Nature at the Wainfleet property to meet the Plant Protection Program Officer from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), along with an employee from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Entering the woods on the adjoining property, a conservation area, we followed flagging tape to infested Eastern Hemlock trees. Turning over the first bough revealed white cottony balls clinging along the stem. Just as artificial snow might cover a Christmas tree branch, the extent of the HWA infestation was shocking - it was not only one or two small egg sacs, but a multitude. How had we missed seeing these in our regular forest visits? The infestation was so heavy that the ground beneath some trees was also sprinkled with the cottony sacs that had fallen from the upper boughs. The reality quickly set in that this was likely an uncontrollable situation.

Hemlocks Under Attack

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To assess the Harold Mitchell property, we walked north, crossing the property line and confirmed evidence of the little aphid-like insects near the south boundary of Harold Mitchell. The CFIA marked and documented the locations and while the white egg sacs weren't as thick, or on every Hemlock tree, we realized they would soon be moving in. Bushwacking north we came across fewer ovisacs and in the core of the woodlot, along the marked route we usually walk, there were no signs of HWA on any of the boughs we flipped over. This eased some of the anxiety I'd felt, worrying that we had previously missed the signs and an opportunity for early detection. It was a small consolation to know that there hadn't been evidence in sight around the areas we had checked recently.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid feeding on Hemlock needles. © Kerry Kennedy.

So, what does this discovery mean? Well, feeding at the base of the Hemlock needles, the hatched nymphs, known as crawlers, remove moisture from the needles, leaving the tree a dull grey colour and in time desiccating the needles. No longer able to produce new buds, the tree will die in 4 to 5 years. More detailed information on the complex life cycle of this tiny insect is available online – it's actually rather interesting for those of us who are intrigued by these things.
https://forestinvasives.ca/Meet-the-Species/Insects/Hemlock-Wooly-Adelgid

Information along with a short movie can also be found on this website:
http://www.ancientforest.org/hemlock/

The CFIA immediately issued a 'Notice of Prohibition of Movement' for Hemlock material at the property and are establishing an advisory committee for recommendations on monitoring or potential management.

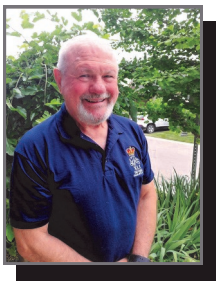
Fortuitously, Ian Smith from Lydian Environmental Consulting voluntarily flew a drone over the property before leaf out this spring, as we were interested in the topography and hydrology. His imagery is extremely high resolution and will serve as a great asset to assist in locating the Hemlock trees on the property. Thank you, Ian.

We've also received a biosecurity checklist for visits to the site to reduce the risk of transporting HWA to new areas.

- Wipe all equipment with an ethanol-based cleaner
- Use a lint roller to remove potential crawlers from clothing once you have left the forest stand
- Beat and/or lint roll hats and coats
- Avoid placing gear on or near hemlock trees
- If possible, refrain from visiting hemlock stands in uninfested areas for one week
- Do not collect branch samples or specimens but take lots of photos
- Do not bring your pet into infested stands
- Wearing light coloured clothing could assist with detecting and removing crawlers
- Launder all clothing prior to re-entering the field

Harold Mitchell is a lovely, unspoiled forest escape, so with lint rollers in hand, we will treasure these beautiful trees for as long as we are able.

Member News



© Dr. William Rapley

The Niagara Falls Nature Club would like to extend congratulations to club member Dr. William Rapley on being named the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's citizen appointee to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors beginning October 1, 2019.

Born in Hamilton ON, Bill had a unique career combining veterinary medicine, biology, conservation and administration. He obtained a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) from U of Guelph in 1971, was the first veterinarian at the Toronto Zoo in 1973, achieved his Masters of Science, Pharmacology (Environmental Toxicology) from U of Western Ontario in 1988, and retired from the Toronto Zoo as the Executive Director of Conservation, Education and Wildlife in 2017. Bill has participated in numerous conservation and fieldwork projects in 23 countries around the world, has served as president of several organizations, sat on the board of directors of many others and has received many awards. He currently serves on the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Committee and the Niagara Birding Action Committee and is a member of all three nature clubs in Niagara. (This is a very condensed version of his career and accomplishments).

Bill and his wife Paula reside in St Davids. He has four children and four grandchildren who live across Canada.

A Blast From Our Past

As space allows, we will be posting letters that were featured on the front page of past Nature Niagara News newsletters. They are updated so that they are readable in the current newsletter format, but the content is as it was printed. Many thanks to Win for scanning these from her personal collection and providing the details so long-time members can reminisce and more recent members can enjoy these treasures from our club's past. Lorraine, Editor.

El Wightman's involvement with the NFNC began in the early 1970s, and he became president in 1975 (the year we joined). However, it was the Wednesday Evening Walks for which El is most remembered. Practically single-handedly, he introduced hundreds of people to the joys of the nature trails found in our own back yards. His backpack always contained several books describing all the birds and flowers we were likely to see on the walks and pretty soon he had many of us doing the same thing. One thing that sticks in my mind is how El taught so many of us to gently separate the halves of a leaf to see if the fine hairs remained intact, a diagnostic of a dogwood. Win Laar.

Nature Niagara News

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NIAGARA FALLS NATURE CLUB

Editorial Committee: Mary Stewart
Helen Lothian, Derek Richards, Win Laar.

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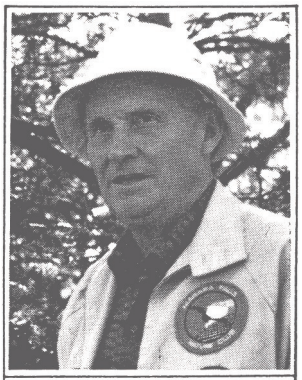

EL WIGHTMAN

It's a good many years since my last visit with Roy Sheppard. It must have been springtime; as there were several 'different' spring flowers blooming in his garden. He offered me some bulbs if I would come back in the fall when they could be moved. The purpose of my visit was to pick up a number of Mr. Sheppard's birding books and nature articles which he had written. Mr. Sheppard wanted the Niagara Falls Nature Club to have these writings in the hope that they could be distributed to interested members and friends. I never did get back for the bulbs, but Mr. Sheppard would be pleased to know that most of his books have now been distributed as he wished.

Receiving the R.W. Sheppard Award for Nature Conservation is a very great honour for which I am humbly grateful to the Niagara Falls Nature Club. In the past years, as the Award has been presented, I have marveled at the dedication, expertise and amount of time devoted by the recipients. It is indeed an honour to be among those who have received this prestigious award.

I can certainly never reach and influence the number of people that Mr. Sheppard did in his books, and newspaper articles. I'm not a writer but hopefully, someday, somewhere, someone will remember a comment by El Wightman and a creature, plant or tree will benefit. I keep planting seeds, not just in the ground but also in small minds. Just the other day a mother and her young son approached me. "Kevin has become very interested in birds, do you think you could help him a bit?" We chatted about the birds and where best to watch them. I mentioned that lots of different hawks could be seen at Beamer Point in Grimsby during spring migration. Kevin's eyes opened wide "Hawks!!?" We'll be arranging some birdwatching trips I'm sure, and another seed will be planted.

This little incident brought back memories from years ago of Saturday morning outings with neighborhood boys. They got to be good observers with an appreciation of nature. Some were more interested than others, but we all learned a bit. To-day, one of those boys is a policeman, another a church minister. Hopefully, somewhere a sermon point will relate to an early bird watching experience, and a youth in trouble will be helped by a policeman remembering a nature walk.

When a wetland is to be drained, a woodlot is to be leveled for new houses, a river is to be dammed or a factory is to be built on a green meadow, there needs to be someone with good memories from the past willing to say, "Wait a minute, is this the right thing to do?"

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El Wightman

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2019 - 2020 Executive

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~ Nancy Lease ~ Rick Young

Newsletter Editor ~ Lorraine Brown-Joyce

Webmaster ~ Kerry Kennedy

Archivist ~ Denise Davies

About Us

The Niagara Falls Nature Club is an affiliate club of Ontario Nature. Non-members are invited to try out club programs to learn about meetings, walks or outings. Should you wish to continue your involvement, please become a member.

Regular meetings with guest speakers are held on the second Wednesday of each month from September - June with the exception of April (dinner meeting) and June (potluck picnic). Doors open at 6:40 pm for refreshments and social time, meetings begin at 7:00 pm and are held at the Niagara Falls Public Library, 4848 Victoria Ave.

Memberships are due January 1st and cover a calendar year, January 1st - December 31st. The cost is $15 for students, $25 for a single membership or $35 for a family and can be purchased at our monthly meetings or by mail. Membership forms are available at meetings or on our web site.

Nature Niagara News, newsletter of the Niagara Falls Nature Club is published four times per year (February, May, August and November). Submissions for the next issue are due by the end of the month prior to publication.

Club members are encouraged to send in articles, photos, stories, observations and outing reviews to ***nfncnewsletter@gmail.com***. Material accepted may be edited and will be used subject to space allowances.

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Niagara Falls Nature Club or the Editor.

Thank you to all the members who make time to contribute to make a great newsletter!

In Closing…

Fall Fungus Hikes

Inga Hinnerichsen, President of the Norfolk Field Naturalists, has sent along information on a couple of fungus hikes that she will be leading this fall. Both events are free and open to all.

Sunday, September 29, 1:00 - 3:00 pm
Fascinating Fungi: Mushroom Identification Hike (Hosted by Norfolk Field Naturalists)

Dryad's Saddle © Lorraine Brown-Joyce

Join us on a fall hike in Backus Woods (South Tract) to look for and identify mushrooms and other fungi of all shapes and sizes. Bring a camera as you are not allowed to harvest mushrooms on this Nature Conservancy Canada (NCC) property. Meet at the Backus Woods parking lot at 1329 3rd Concession Road (west of East Quarter Line Road, east of Hwy. 59). *Contact Inga at 519-875-5601.*

Saturday, October 5, 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Mushroom Walk Among the Giants (Hosted by Long Point Basin Land Trust)

The walk will take place at the Jackson-Gunn Old Growth Forest, a LPBLT property with old-growth Beech and Maple trees. It usually yields a variety of fruiting fungi in the fall. Located off Lower Sideroad between County Road 28 and 2nd Concession Road ENR near Houghton Centre, mid-way between Long Point and Port Burwell. If you are planning to attend, please register on Eventbrite at https://mushroomwalkamongthegiants.evenbrite.ca after September 5. More information is available at www.longpointlandtrust.ca/events.

Keep your fingers crossed for good mushroom weather - not too hot and dry! I hope to see some of you out for these events. Cheers, Inga

Editor's Note: There may be a few members interested in going on the Backus Woods hike. If it's something that you are interested in attending, ask around. The best way to go there since it is a bit of a distance is by carpooling (and the parking lot is small).