

June 2011



The Heron

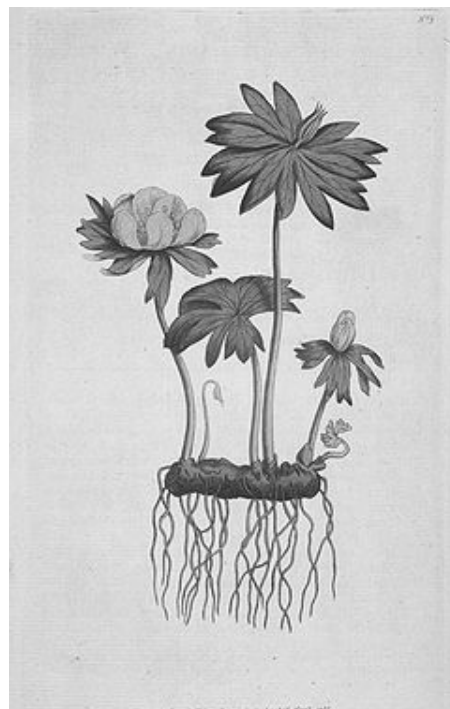
KITCHENER-WATERLOO
Field Naturalists

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Next Club Meeting:

September 26, 2011 at 7:30 PM
Wing 404/Rotary Centre, Dutton Dr., Waterloo



Eranthis hyemalis

Commonly known as Winter Aconite or Wolf's Bane.

See Native Plant Nuts on page 4



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Submissions for the Heron need to be received by the 15th of the month.

Submit via email,
<deb.heron_editor@rogers.com>
or mail to 30 Calmcrest Drive,
Kitchener N2E 1V3



Information for everyone

In Appreciation of our Volunteers

KWFN is very fortunate to have so many volunteers as members are called upon on numerous occasions and clipboards always return with a list of willing hands. Willingness to give of your time, talent and interest make KWFN much more successful, enjoyable and welcoming for everyone. The following compilation of tasks gives an idea of the varied and multiple opportunities for volunteerism in KWFN while also showing our club's wide reaching involvement.

Editing the Heron, Ontario Nature rep, Young Naturalist leader/supervisor, Noteworthy Bird sightings recorder, librarian, distributing and mailing the Heron, archivist, Native Plant Nut leader, webmaster, Waterloo Stewardship Network rep, outings leader, pamphlet distributor, pot luck helper, greeter, meeting speaker, KWFN display staffer, bean bag publicity game builder, Archives Committee, CBC compiler, speaker write-ups, selling Christmas cards, selling nature guides, printing and handing out receipts, Montgomery Property Committee, Founders' Property Committee, KNAP rep, Conservation Committee, web site manager, contributing to the newsletter, auditor, Baillie Birdathon participant, bird box building guide, bird silhouette supervisor, soup, chili/soup/dessert maker for ON Regional Meeting, Montgomery work party, recording minutes of all meetings, booking speakers, finding hike leaders, sightings leader, tracking membership, creating a preliminary bird checklist, keeping a record of our finances, running meetings, writing advocacy letters, Awards Selection Committee, Executive Guide updating and pdf formatting. The list goes on and on and...

The KWFN wishes to acknowledge the valuable and varied contributions made by our members over this past year. Hopefully, this lists is complete but tracking all volunteers is a task in itself so my apologies go to anyone whose name and efforts have been missed. And although not named, our thanks also goes to everyone who has contributed financially to the club through donations or by supporting a fundraising activity.

Irena Baltaduonis	Ken Burrell	Jim Galway	Jan Hook	Margaret Mac-	Geraldine Sander-
Cameron Bates	Mike Burrell	Catherine Gehl	Rick Hook	donald	son
Robert Bezeau	Karen Buschert	Fraser Gibson	David Hunsberger	Jill Marshall	John Sanderson
Pat Bigelow	Jim Cappleman	Nancy Gibson	Dale Ingrey	Levi Moore	Josh Shea
Paul Bigelow	Betty Cooper	Karol Grainger	Larry Lamb	Anne Morgan	Roger Suffling
Suzanne Bitter-	Ken Dance	Judy Hamel.	Elaine La Ronde	April Morrissey	Neil Taylor
mann	Donna DeBruin	Larry Hamel	Julie Liptak,	Walter Muma	Mary Ann Vanden
Jenny Blanchard	Marco DeBruin	Helga Hartman	Louise Litwiller	Gord Nicholls	Elzen
Janice Bock	Carol Foxall	Dennis Hilker	Jim Lackenbauer	Daphne Nicholls	Mary Voisin
Lynda Buck	Deb Fowler	Doris Hilker	Curtis MacDonald	Janet Ozaruk	Katharina Walton
Wayne Buck	Randy Fowler	Valerie Hill,	Graham Mac-	Barb Peeren	
Jim Burrell	Michael Frind	Derek Hitchens	donald,	Ken Quanz	

Special thanks goes to the current Board members who have put forth considerable time and effort to ensure the business of the organization is run in an efficient and professional manner while providing the membership with interesting outings and speakers. Our appreciation is also extended to those who have volunteered to serve on the Board and other club related positions in the future. We look forward to another promising year.

The STAMM WOODLOT, in NW Waterloo, off Lake Louise Blvd. (accessed from Conservation Dr. or Westmount), was showing a profusion of spring wildflowers during the first week of May.

Look for Dutchman's Britches, Bellwort, Red Trilliums, Trout Lilies, Marsh Marigolds, Hepatica, lots of Spring Beauty and White Trilliums in this tiny woodlot with trails.

Janice Bock

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Pandora's Box

You never know what you'll find when you go for a walk. That's one of the reasons why I enjoy walking on trails so much; it's never the same 2 days in a row. It's like that old saying: "You can't swim in the same river twice." Back in the middle of April, Lynda and I decided to go for a walk in the Montgomery Sanctuary to check on the condition of the trail after the high water following the spring thaw and to check on the Twinleaf and other spring ephemerals. We knew there was a work party scheduled for May 6 which we unfortunately were unable to attend. The first half of the trail still had a lot of water laying on it. To be sure there were a lot of plants actively growing but many were non-native; Garlic Mustard, Dame's Rocket, Periwinkle and the like. No wonder they crowd the native plants out. The non-natives are up and growing long before the native plants even emerge. We saw only one lonely Twinleaf, still purple, no doubt from the cold temperatures we experienced in April. We swung along the river where the fisherpersons like to set up, and as we walked we noticed a low growing bright yellow flower blooming near a log that had drifted up onto the bank from the river. The flower was a brilliant yellow, reminiscent of a buttercup or Marsh Marigold, about 3 cm across, with 6 petals. The stamens and pistils were also yellow. The plant stood less than 10 cm. tall. I had never seen this plant before and did not know its name, so I took several photographs of

Native Plant Nuts

By Wayne Buck

it. We found 2 others just like it within 10 m.

When we got home I looked in several plant guides but the closest I could come was Globe Flower, a plant that is not even known in Ontario. So I sent some photos out to my plant I.D. team: Larry Lamb, Pat Deacon, and Graham Buck. Pat and Graham were stumped but, good old (I can say that now that he's retired) Larry came up with the correct identification. Larry wrote back; "This is *Eranthis hyemalis*, a common spring garden, cormaceous plant. It can be weedy over time. Dig it up and plant it with your tulips, daffodils and croci. Though it really is worth a herbarium collection for being found establishing in the wild. European."

I thought he was joking about the herbarium specimen part.

Here is what Wikipedia says about it: (see page 1 for drawing)

"*Eranthis hyemalis* is a plant found in Europe, which belongs to the family Ranunculaceae, the buttercup family. The plant is small, but it has large, yellow, cup-shaped flowers. It is commonly known as Winter Aconite or Wolf's Bane. This plant grows from a tuber and has a low habit. All parts of the plant are poisonous when consumed by humans. Native to woodlands, this plant is used in gardening as a groundcover, and is valued for the fact that the bright green foliage and yellow flowers appear extremely early in the spring."

Just my luck. So many things I find turn out to be nothing. But since it was also a new plant to Graham, and the fact that it had

been found growing in a naturalized setting Graham contacted Mike Oldham at Ontario Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) who wrote: "I believe the photo is of Winter Aconite, *Eranthis hyemalis*, a rare escape from cultivation that I have only seen once outside cultivation in Ontario (in Niagara). *Trollius laxus* (Globe Flower) would have less dissected and somewhat different looking leaves. Since *Eranthis* is so seldom naturalized in Ontario (Morton & Venn 1990 state only "planted & persisting") it would be worthwhile collecting a voucher specimen. We don't have a collection in the NHIC herbarium so would be pleased to receive one (and/or a specimen could be deposited in OAC).

I have been to the Montgomery Sanctuary and found it to be a very nice piece of woods (I didn't see *Eranthis* there!)."

Wow! I thought Larry was kidding when he said to collect a herbarium specimen. I had never done that before although I have looked at herbarium specimens. So I decided to GPS the location of the plants, dig them up carefully, thereby getting rid of them so they didn't spread further, and press them for a herbarium specimen. Graham gave me the directions as how to do this.

So, what we thought was going to be an uneventful walk in the woods turned out to be quite an adventure. Bill Bryson would have been proud!

Ontario Nature-Great Lakes West-Spring Regional Meeting

KWFN hosted a very successful Regional Meeting on Saturday April 9, at the Laurel Creek Nature Centre. Eight clubs from Owen Sound to Stratford were in attendance. Many compliments were received about the excellent soup and chili lunch provided by our KWFN volunteer cooks. These were followed by delicious home made squares for dessert. Following the sharing of information and presentations from the ON staff, a walk around the property, on this beautiful spring day, concluded the meeting.

80 Years Strong!

Submitted by Lisa Richardson, Ontario Nature

We can hardly believe it's been 80 years! Join us June 11-12, 2011† for our Annual General Meeting and Gathering celebrating 8 decades as Ontario's voice for nature. The festivities will take place at the beautiful Ganaraska Forest Centre in the heart of the Oak Ridges Moraine (just north of Port Hope), and will include a gala dinner, a variety of informative field trips and nature workshops, and a



kids nature camp. For more information, contact Lauren Wright at laurenw@ontarionature.org or 1-800-440-2366 ext 271. It'll be great fun for everyone!

Sedge Identification Workshop

Submitted by Kelly Purves,

Please join us on Wednesday June 8 and Thursday June 9 when the Toronto & Region Conservation Authority hosts a 2-day workshop on identifying local species of the genus *Carex*. By the end of the workshop, you will have learned about important sedge identification features, how to distinguish some very similar sedge species, and much more. For more information, please visit <http://events.trca.on.ca/index.php>.

Ken Burrell – Pelee Island and the Spring Reverse Migration of Songbirds at Fish Point

Ken Burrell, a longtime KWFN member, seasoned birder, and University of Waterloo student who has just completed his undergraduate thesis in the Faculty of Environment, gave a fascinating talk on his research into the reverse-migration phenomenon of songbirds he studied at Pelee Island.

Ken began by noting that Pelee Island, a sand island formed by Lake Erie's basin currents, is unique in being the southernmost part of Canada. As such, it lies in the Carolinian Zone, which is noted for its milder climate and longer frost-free growing season compared to the rest of the Ontario.

Pelee Island was originally a marsh, and was dewatered in the late 1800s for agricultural purposes. The low-lying 5x10-kilometre island has several marshes, as well as an elaborate network of dykes, canals and pump stations.

Ecosystem-wise, the Island is also

important for many flora and fauna that are considered species at risk (SAR), and it is a biodiversity hot-spot. Several species, such as the Lake Erie Water Snake, Blue Racer Snake, Gray Fox, and Blanchard's Cricket Frog are not found anywhere else in Canada. Pelee Island is also notable for its absence of certain species: there are no coyotes, no white-tailed deer, no groundhogs, and no grey squirrels. The Island is also home to more than 50 nationally rare plant species. The Island is also an important bird area (IBA) internationally.

Despite the predominantly flat-open-field landscape of the island, stands of virgin Carolinian forest remain at all corners of the Island, and care is taken to preserve these ecologically valuable remnant forests in their natural form.

Pelee Island's major industries are agriculture (grain and viticulture), as well as marketed tourism that includes an annual pheasant hunt.

Recap by Michael Frind

But a major component of the tourism arises in the form of birdwatching. Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve (FPNP), located at the extreme southern tip of the Island, is arguably the best for observing migrating birds as they prepare to cross Lake Erie or come in from Cleveland, Ohio.

The Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO), part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN), is located on the Island's southeast corner. Lighthouse Point PNP, at the Island's northern tip, is convenient for watching birds arriving from and leaving to Point Pelee. All of these favoured birdwatching locations have sizeable forests, thus enabling birds to rest, refuel, and recover from their long migratory journeys.

Pelee Island is important for both rare and common species of migrant songbirds (e.g. Warblers and

Concluded on page 8

Outings Schedule



By Mary Voisin

Stamm Woodlot – Spring Wildflowers (NEW)

Friday, June 3, 2011.

Janice Bock 519- 745- 3296

Meeting Time/Place

Departing 4 pm from 424 Lake Louise Blvd. at Waterton St.

Join Janice on a walk to view the great variety of Spring Wildflowers just north of Laurel Conservation area. On Mother's Day Weekend, masses of White Trilliums, Red Trilliums, Dutchmen's Britches, Squirrel Corn, Wild Ginger, May Apple, Marsh Marigolds, Hepatica, Trout Lilies, Spring Beauty, Bellwort and many more were displaying. Jack-in-the-Pulpits and ferns were two days away from unfolding. Bring your camera for this 75 min. walk-about.

Hullett Provincial Wildlife Area

Saturday, June 4, 2011

Curtis MacDonald

Geraldine & John Sanderson

Meeting Time/Place

8:00 am at the Blue Moon Café in Petersburg on Notre Dame St (Hwy 20) ½ km north of Hwy 7

Join us as we travel to the Hullett Provincial Wildlife Area near Clinton in Huron County. It is one of the most spectacular wildlife habitat developments in Eastern Canada. This 2200-hectare site located along the South Maitland River has extensive wetlands and marshes with viewing stands, as well as forests, fields and trails. This site is on the paths of two major waterfowl flyways (Atlantic and Mississippi). This will be an all day outing with 1+ hours of driving each way. Bring a lunch, drinks, binoculars, field guide and a scope if you have one. (Call Mary Voisin if you have any questions.)

Viewing the Sky With Telescopes

Friday, June 10, 2011

Brady Johnson and Brian Dernesch

519-745-5757

Meeting Time/Place

Starting around dusk (8:30 pm) at Waterloo Park. Enter Waterloo Park from Westmount Road by the fire hall. There is parking at the end of the road. The demonstration will take place in the field where the band shell is (was?)

Brady Johnson and Brian Dernesch of KW Telescope and members of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada will be on hand to show night sky treasures through a variety astronomical telescopes. Featured will be Saturn with its marvelous ring system, the moon in magnificent detail, and some deep space objects including globular clusters, nebulae and distant galaxies.

KW Telescope is at 100 Victoria Street North, Kitchener, at the corner of Weber and Victoria. If you have questions about the outing please call us at 519-745-5757 or visit www.kwtelescope.com

Drynan Tract

Saturday, June 11, 2011

Neil E. Taylor 519-893-6469 and Gloria Zimmerman 519- 883-8199

Meeting Time/Place

9:00 a.m. Carpool parking lot Homer Watson/Fountain St., and 401.

Gloria and Neil plan to make stops for birding along the way. After the visit to Drynan, the outing will include a drive along roads to see grassland species such as various

sparrows, Eastern Bluebirds, Bobolinks, Meadowlarks, and ? and ?.

This outing is intended to welcome members to a unique area that is part of a larger environmentally sensitive area called Hungry Hills. After a short time to visit the new trails where the old monoculture of red pine has been removed and plantings of replacement native species suitable to the habitat, the group will pass by the new honorarium rock, plaques, and arboretum. The Waterloo Stewardship Council, in partnership with the Region of Waterloo developed a strategy to manage about 5 acres of the Drynan Tract property at the east end. Drynan consists of a typical Carolinian oak-hickory forest. This area is hilly and contains several small kettle lakes and swamp depressions. Many wetland species normally inaccessible can be observed comfortably from the paths, which surround these wet areas. Bring binoculars, drinking water, and wear sturdy footwear and a hat for the all morning outing.

Dickson Wilderness to

Bannister Lake Walk

Friday, June 24, 2011

Wayne Buck 519-662-2529

Meeting Time/Place

10:00 am at the car park on Homer Watson just south of the 401

Join Wayne on a hike from the Dickson Wilderness to Bannister Lake. The recently burned prairie on the north side of The Dickson will be explored before embarking on the trail to Bannister. (Wear study footwear for this rough dirt path.) Waterfowl may be seen from the viewing platform

at Bannister Lake. The plan is to drop people off at Dickson, drive the cars back to Bannister, drive one car with the drivers back to Dickson and hike one way. This is dependent on the number of participants. Do not bring valuables that you have to leave in the car. Long pants recommended due to presence of poison ivy. Anticipated duration: 2 hr.

KNAP Outings

Pre registration is required as enrolment is limited (519) 741-3400 ext 3349

Birds of Breithaupt Park Saturday June 11, 8am-10am Entrance off Union St, adjacent to 804 Union St.

The mature forests and regenerating fields of Breithaupt Park provide great habitat for a variety of bird species. This hike will take birders of all ages and skill levels on a casual walk to learn about some of the urban birds found living in our City. No experience necessary. Bring along binoculars if available. **Registration Required!**

All about Bats Saturday June 18, 8-10pm Huron Natural Area, 801 Trillium Drive, Kitchener.

Meet at the School Portable.

Spend an evening learning about

the amazing lives of bats. These creatures are common in urban areas and are a great animal to have living in your neighbourhood. This program will feature an indoor presentation and outdoor hike. **Registration Required!**

Huron Natural Area Butterfly Count Saturday July 9, 1-4pm Huron Natural Area, 801 Trillium Drive, Kitchener.

Join fellow volunteers and local naturalists in the 1st ever Huron Natural Area Butterfly Count. This count is being delivered in coordination with Jessica Grealey who has been working on butterfly conservation and research in Waterloo Region for many years. Participants will learn about the amazing variety of butterfly species found living in the Huron Natural Area and will assist with an inventory. Be prepared to be outside for the afternoon. Suitable for people of all ages and skill levels! **Registration Required!**

Dean's Lake Saturday, July 16, 2011 Wayne Buck 519-662-2529 Larry Lamb 519--744-53-54

Meeting Time/Place
10:00 am at the carpool parking
lot on Homer Watson just south
of the 401

Larry and Wayne will explore some interesting wetlands that historically have held some very interesting indigenous wetland plants. It has been many years since Larry has visited this gem just south of Cambridge. Who knows what we will find? Wear clothing suitable to exploring lake edge. Bring insect repellent and possibly a lunch or snack. Duration 2-3 hours.

Native Plant Nuts Outings

Indigenous Plant Outings - Summer
2011

I was talking to Larry Lamb about possible outings for the summer of 2011.

As many of you may know, Larry retired from his job in the ecology lab at U of W last year and he continues to be busy. He would like to go on some outings in the summer but rather than set dates ahead of time, he would prefer to have a group of interested KWFN members (required) who are interested in indigenous plants who could be ready to meet at an appointed location and head out to explore an area on short notice.

Larry has historical records of places in the region from years ago that many of us have never been to or even heard of. He uses these to organize outings to see if some of these significant plants are still there. These are not walks on trails such as at the Dickson or Sudden Tracts. We often bushwhack through second growth vegetation. Some of the places he mentioned as possible sites were: Veech's Lake, Kossuth Bog, and wet areas at the Drynan Tract.

If you would like to be on the list of people to be notified of these outings, send your name(s) and email address (no phone numbers please) to me and I will put your name on the email fan-out that will be sent when Larry contacts me. Email: Wayne Buck at: waylyn2@cwisp.ca



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Spring Reverse Migration continued

Orioles) as well as colonial nesters (e.g. Herons and Egrets). The Island sits in the middle of the Mississippi and Atlantic flyways, and as such is geographically crucial to birds seeking to cross Lake Erie in the most efficient way possible. The Island is located between Point Pelee and Crane Creek, Ohio, thus enabling birds to cross Lake Erie in two steps, thus minimizing the risk of depleting their energy reserves in mid-flight and drowning.

As a longtime birdwatcher, Ken noted that Pelee Island sees about 320 avian species each year, and that this compares very favourably to the 385 seen at Point Pelee and Long Point. Over his years of observing avian migrations, Ken confirmed the phenomenon of reverse migration (RM), a perplexing reversal of migration direction of entire flocks of birds. He noted that even though RM has been documented in the research literature since the 1930s little is known about its causes. He wanted to investigate RM and ascertain the influence of weather. And, he wanted to gain insight into which species are more prone to RM than others.

Researchers have long known that the RM phenomenon occurs mostly in the fall, and is rarer in the spring (with May being a good time to observe the spring RM at Pelee). Many of the initial observations came from Scandinavia and the Maritimes, where bird migrations are also notable. Later, the RM phenomenon was observed at Pelee too. The fact that RM is not unique to the Pelee area further supports the view that it is triggered by weather patterns.

Ken noted that bird migrations are not solely a nighttime occurrence. Birds were seen migrating between one and four hours after sunrise, and they were noted to be sometimes flying into the wind, as if they were trying to avoid bad weather by staying ahead of a drop in barometric pressure.

Ken's thesis research entailed a

substantial fieldwork component. His observations were done at Fish Point. He predicted that wind direction would be the most significant predictor of RM events, and that days with southerly winds and low barometric pressure would be strong predictors of RM. He further hypothesized that Warblers would be the most common family of birds observed.

Ken soon found that the numbers of reverse-migrating birds were indeed statistically significantly influenced by a southerly wind direction and higher temperatures. Meanwhile, low barometric pressure and wind speed were merely near-significant predictors—that is, less important than wind direction and temperature, but still worth noting. And, humidity and cloud cover were not found to be significant predictors.

The most common reverse-migrating species was the notably common Blackbird (14,725 individuals), in particular the Red-Winged Blackbird. Baltimore Orioles and Common Grackles were also very common RM birds. Warblers were the second most common family observed (627 individuals), of which Yellow-rumped and Yellow Warblers were the most commonly seen.

Ken concluded that RM, despite being a known phenomenon, has implications that are still not completely understood. It is unknown where the RM birds go and what happens to them. For example, with regards to RM birds observed flying back south towards Ohio—are older birds less likely to survive the second trip over Lake Erie so soon after having landed from the first one northwards? And, what are the long-term impacts on avian populations?

Ken also noted that bird banding, which has been done for some time and which continues to this day at PIBO, could be another potential source of data if it were combined and cross-correlated with RM monitoring.

Ken also noted that future RM ob-

servations from Pelee Island could be conjugated by simultaneous observations in Crane Creek, Ohio. Such a two-stage observation system would enable RM birds to be tracked accurately in real time, and could perhaps be combined with a targeted RM-specific banding effort—and perhaps with high-tech radio tagging as well.

How many of the RM birds that leave Canada make it back to the States, and of those, how many make it back to Canada in a second attempt? Do some birds embark on RM and then turn back because of fatigue? How many succumb in the process? What is the drowning rate of birds with each lake crossing? And, of those that make it back to the States, how long do they wait before re-crossing of the lake?

And, how do springtime RM events differ from the autumn ones? How do differences in spring and fall weather, and in differing food supplies, and in the differing wind directions with respect to flight directions (i.e. fall RM would be S-N-S instead of the N-S-N of the spring RM) affect RM survival rates? Each question serves as a potential springboard for further research, and may trigger additional questions in the process.

For RM birds, how much recovery time prior to each lake crossing is optimal? What tradeoffs are there in terms of securing a breeding territory and finding food? Does an RM event (i.e. three lake crossings instead of just one) translate into reduced breeding success in the subsequent season? How does ongoing climate change affect RM events?

These questions—and many others—will provide a powerful impetus for future study. Eager to learn more and to put his well-honed field skills to use, Ken is planning to embark on graduate studies in this field, starting immediately.

Special thanks to Ken Burrell for bringing his intriguing avian research findings to the Kitchener

Dedication Address on Behalf of the Waterloo Stewardship Council

And Appreciation to WSN Vol- unteers At Drynan Tract (Delivered by Neil E. Taylor – May 6th, 2011)

The programme for the day read as follows: "Thanks go to the following WSN pioneers.

- ◆ Sandy Barrie
- ◆ Peter Wilhelm
- ◆ Fred Schneider
- ◆ Larry Erb
- ◆ Howard Herrle
- ◆ Paul Perrin
- ◆ Peter Kyle
- ◆ Theresa Schumilas
- ◆ Neil Taylor
- ◆ Jim Gilhuly

These people helped establish a model program that uses different experiences and expertise of individuals from a variety of backgrounds to meet local concerns."

My research indicates that the Council started in 1998. Seven of the ten listed were involved in the first year or so. One of the original volunteers, Peter Kyle, has been a volunteer for thirteen years. He's like that watch that, "Just keeps on ticking." I have known Peter for eleven of these years. He has been a direct link to those early years, providing counsel and information that has always been instructive and for which we continue to be very grateful.

On November 3rd, 2002, I was in pursuit of a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher south of London at a former WWII air force training station at Fingal. This is now a Wildlife Management Area. While there, I passed by a small arboretum that the Elgin Stewardship Council had established to honour its volunteers. Immediately, I felt this was something that the Waterloo Stewardship Council might replicate. Al Murray can attest to how this project took on a life of its own that was never easy. We are here to-

day to formalize this project's successful accomplishment.

Before we honour these first ten people, I would like to make a few remarks about volunteerism.

The great anthropologist, Margaret Mead, once stated, "Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

I reference this quotation because in talking very recently to several of the early volunteers being honoured today, they expressed their frustration that too often roadblocks were put in their paths in those beginning days and that this led to no action. To them I would say, in spite of this, the Council has moved forward, completing and continuing various programmes and projects that were a direct result of the foundation that was established in those first years. You gave us a legacy that we build on.

I would also ask you to consider the fact that the richest people in the world are not millionaires; they are volunteers. Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless. When you volunteer, it means you give yourself without any regression, without condition, but with full devotion. Volunteering is not really a choice; it's a responsibility.

A volunteer is a person who believes in fidelity, who is faithful in a world that the media often portrays as unfaithful. A volunteer is a person who is grateful in a world that often seems ungrateful. A volunteer is a person who gives when others appear to be only grasping. A volunteer is a person who listens when others express hesitation or doubt. A volunteer is a person who acts as a light to others, giving witness in a mixed-up age, doing well and willingly the tasks at hand. Volunteers are aware of community needs and then do something about them. Volunteers dedicate them-

selves to taking action and solving problems in their communities.

Canadians have a rich history of volunteering and community involvement. Some 12.5 million of them dedicate their time across Canada. What might this represent in hours and energy?

From the Ontario Stewardship web site, statistics claim that each year, more than 16,000 volunteers dedicate their time and energy to over 600 projects. Each year, efforts through Ontario Stewardship, and the 46 councils that it represents, restore more than 1,500 hectares of wetlands and headwater areas, plant 1.2 million trees, and restore more than 40 kilometres of shoreline. The work here at the Drynan Tract in Waterloo Region is an outstanding example of such a project that would not have come into being without the various contributions of volunteers.

But today, we are not dealing in statistics. We are recognizing people...people who have made a difference by volunteering. Those being honoured here today have been leaders for positive change to benefit the natural heritage in the Region of Waterloo. They have been a force for environmental protection and advocacy. They have educated others directly or indirectly concerning the value of responsible stewardship.

When you gave, I suspect the honour in giving was honour enough. There is no doubt in my mind that these volunteers never considered that they would have this type of recognition. It was your depth of commitment, your quality of service, the product of your devotion -- these were the things that counted.

You have often heard, "There is no "I" in Team!" Well, "There is a "U" in volunteer!" Thank **YOU!**

(This document has been edited by Neil E. Taylor to remove extraneous information not germane for this publication.)

President's Corner

Victoria Park Stormwater Walk

On Sunday May 8, I participated in my first ever Jane's Walk. Named after Jane Jacobs, avid champion of community-based liveable cities, these events are an informal and pleasant way to get to know a neighbourhood.

Dubbed "The Victoria Park Stormwater Walk," it was one of five on offer in Kitchener that day. A group of twenty gathered. We strolled through the park, stopping here and there to hear histories, anecdotes and personal remembrances from knowledgeable local guides.

And, throughout, water was the theme.

Back in the 1800s, the pioneers arrived looking for farmland. What is now Victoria Park came to be part of Joseph Schneider's 448 acre farm. The eastern section, today overlooked by the Clock Tower, was cleared of the dominant Sugar Maple, White Pine and American Elm and transformed into tillable fields and pasturelands. The western section had always been dominated by water. The creek was dammed and became a popular swimming and fishing hole. A flume was constructed and the water channelled to power Joseph Schneider's sawmill. Most of the remaining area was swamp and completely unsuitable for agriculture. Even now, these low grounds are often seeping with water.

These were the first of many developments which changed the natural hydrology of the area.

As the town of Berlin thrived and its population increased, demand for new homes and businesses nibbled at the Schneider farmlands. In 1894, led by Mayor Hib-

ner, a controversial but visionary decision was made to purchase 28 acres of the farm and swamplands plus an additional 5 acres to create an urban green recreational space for the townspeople.

Following the land purchase, the area was completely transformed. Massive engineering works removed trees, enhanced islands, built bridges and created an artificial lake. The new park soon became a popular destination for skating, canoeing, swimming, picnics, teas, family gatherings and sporting and musical events.

"But," quipped one of the guides, "it wasn't always so good in the good old days." Removing trees, diverting the creek's channel, creating an artificial lake – these all changed the hydrology of the area. In addition, the creek became a dumping ground for people and industry. Water quality suffered. Eventually, swimming and the harvesting of ice were banned.

Over time, problems also developed in the five creeks feeding into Victoria Park lake. Sections of their meandering courses had been straightened and concretized. Particularly during storm surges, the now racing waters cut into earthen banks and the eroded sediment carried and deposited into Victoria Park lake.

Mixing with it, too, was stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces – streets, rooftops, driveways, parking lots. This debris, some toxic, flowed into storm drains, then into creeks, and finally into Victoria Park lake.

Which brings us to the present. Victoria Park is still an urban gem enjoyed by many. But it is a tarnished gem. Visitors cannot help but notice the shallowness of the water, the dark green gobs floating on the surface, and the

By Mary Ann Vanden Elzen

odour!

Periodic dredging to remove excess sediment has occurred over the years. This approach, however, only addresses the symptoms. Really needed was the multi-pronged watershed approach recommended by the 2009 class environmental assessment and, eventually, accepted by the City of Kitchener.

For Victoria Park, highlights include:

- Digging a deep channel on one side of the lake to improve water flow
- Creating a sediment forebay to simplify periodic removal of excess
- Planting of native shrubs and grasses along shorelines to discourage waterfowl use
- Creating a marsh area to absorb and filter water
- Planting native trees to improve water percolation into the soil

Work is set to begin in the winter of 2011.

As for the incoming streams, the planting of shade trees in riparian areas – only one of the recommendations - will reduce erosion, cool water temperature and enhance habitat.

Through stories and anecdotes, this Jane's Walk has highlighted how natural features – so destroyed, degraded and compromised in the past – perform invaluable services essential for our well being and the liveability of our urban spaces.

I look forward to enjoying a Victoria Park which is a true gem in the middle of the Kitchener urban setting.

June Outings at a Glance - refer to page 6 of this Heron for full outing details

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Stamm Woodlot 4 pm	4 Hullet Wildlife Area 8 am
5	6	7	8	9	10 Night Sky Treasures 8:30 pm	11 Drynan Tract 9 am
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 Dickson Wilderness Bannister Lake 10:00 am	25
26	27	28	29	30		
June 11, 18 and July 9 KNAP outings require pre registration						
July 16 – 10 am Dean’s Lake						
Summer Plant Outings – send an email to Wayne Buck waylyn2@cwisp.ca if you would like to be notified of these outings.						

Update from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors met May 9 and discussed the following topics:

- The Board received the Auditor’s Report
- The Board approved the donor agreement with the Region of Waterloo Archives
- Update Board and non-board positions to be filled
- Financial report for 2010-2011
- Budget for 2011-2012
- Status of the Executive Guide
- Montgomery Property inspection form

Because some agenda items were not discussed and have been piling up, the Board has scheduled an additional meeting for May 24. The minutes of the May 9 meeting will be approved at the Board’s next meeting May 24. The approved minutes can be viewed in the KWFN library at club meetings, or you can request to receive a digital version from Katharina Walton.



Kitchener, ON N2M 3W6
317 Highland Road East

Kitchener-Waterloo Field Naturalists

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Bring payment for membership to the next meeting or mail to KWFN at 317 Highland Rd E Kitchener N2M 3W6

Objectives of the KWFN

- 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 monthly from September to May, on the fourth Monday of the month with the exception of December. Our meetings are free and visitors are always welcome. Outings are scheduled almost every month.

KWFN is a registered charitable organization. Membership fees and all donations are tax deductible. KWFN is affiliated with Ontario Nature (FON) and Nature Canada (Canadian Nature Federation)

www.kwfn.ca



"The Heron" is the official publication of the Kitchener-Waterloo Field Naturalists' Club and is produced by volunteer members of the club. It is published nine times yearly from September to June, except for December.

Copies of "The Heron" are available at meetings but will be mailed (free of charge) to members if not picked up.

Articles reflect the views of the authors and are not necessarily the views endorsed by the KWFN club.

Pesticides in Ontario *It is KWFN's policy not to use pesticides on any club property or during any club activity. (November 2000)* In April 2009 the use of pesticides for commercial reasons was banned in the province of Ontario. This ban overrides all municipal by-laws. The main exceptions are for agriculture, human health and safety, golf courses, sports fields (though not parks), forestry, and in some instances to protect natural resources. Any pesticide identified as Class 9 is not allowed for residential or cosmetic use. To report non-compliance with the ban please contact the Guelph OMNR office at (519) 826-4955. For more information go to:
<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/land/pesticides/>