

THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

APRIL 2016

Nipissing
Naturalists
Club



THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

From the Editor:

From dog-sledding to Spring Beauties

I sometimes feel I am living a month in advance since I began editing *The Woodland Observer*. My goal is to get the newsletter ready for distribution a week before the month begins, and from the last week of February when March's issue was distributed to now, when April's is to be distributed, there has been a dramatic change from winter to spring.

March's issue was out before our great dog-sledding adventure in late February – highlighted in this issue - when there was so much snow that our resident red squirrel was able, for the very first time, to triumphantly get past the baffle on the pole to the bird feeder by jumping from the highest point of the snow onto the feeder, bypassing the baffle entirely.

And while on the topic of dogs and dog-sledding, be sure to read the recent *Sudbury Star* article on wolves by Jim Moodie: <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2016/03/04/sudbury-group-wolves-the-necessary-predator>. You will see the connection once you read “A Special Bond” in this issue.

National Wildlife Week is the week of April 10 to 16. The theme this year is *Giving Wings to Wildlife Conservation*, focusing on all things that fly. Brent Turcotte's article on dragonflies and damselflies, therefore, comes at an appropriate time, as do a couple of article on birds - Steve Pitt's article on his sister's tailless raven and Sarah Wheelan's article on the outing in early March to see winter birds being banded at Hilliardton Marsh.

Three more Board members submitted their profiles, highlighted in this issue, as is former Board member Nicole Richardson's upcoming summer position working with grassland birds in Montana. These profiles are but snapshots of the Board members. I recently attended an event in which Board member Mary Marrs gave a talk to a group of women on her volunteer work in the *favelas* of Salvador, Brazil, and couldn't help but come away amazed at Mary's bravery and dedication.

On April's cover is a photo I took in April a few years back of the Eastern Spring Beauty, *claytonia virginica* (seen at right). It is also known as Fairy Spud, probably because the roots can be cooked and



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eaten like potatoes. Spring Beauty is found throughout the deciduous forests of eastern North America. Be sure to see it if you can because after it flowers, the entire plant disappears until the following spring. In the wildflower world, seeing a Spring Beauty is much like seeing our first American Robin. It means spring has truly begun.

I received the photo on the right, taken by Gary Sturge, of a very early sign of spring when it felt as if the snow would just keep coming and coming. Gary was optimistic that this meant the beginning of the end and it turned out to be so because shortly after he took the photo, we had a couple of weeks of mild temperatures that melted much of the snow. Since then, some of us have seen the return of the American Robin, the Canada Goose, and the Red-winged Blackbird, among other birds, all sure signs of spring.

April brings not only showers for May's flowers, but also April Fool's Day. The temptation is strong to play a prank on readers and I do have a good one, but I will resist. In one famous prank from 1957, a BBC current affairs program showed Swiss farmers picking freshly-grown spaghetti from spaghetti trees. The BBC was inundated with calls wanting to know where to purchase spaghetti plants!

Please send me any stories about or photos of signs of spring you discover over the next few weeks or let me know if you did anything special for the conservation of all winged creatures during National Wildlife Week.





Photo by Renee Levesque

Mush!

By Renee Levesque

It was one of those absolutely perfect outings: handsome dogs with names like Timber, Bear, Willow and Boo-boo with the crazy blue eyes; four cute puppies with their imploring stare protected by their mother, Bella; wonderful hosts in Roseanne Van Shie and her son, Peter; great camaraderie among the nine Nipissing Naturalists Club members who attended; perfect late February weather; lovely scenery along the Amable du Fond and on Dr. Seuss Lake, so named by Roseanne because the heron nests in the trees at the lake give it the appearance of Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*; lunch served by the lake in a prospector tent with a woodstove to keep us warm and bales of hay to sit on – and a delicious lunch it was: vegetarian chili and chaga tea made by Roseanne, potato salad made by Ewa Cholewa, and Dutch cookies made by Dorothy deKiewiet; but most of all, a fantastic and exhilarating experience dog-sledding in which we all had an opportunity to be both driver and passenger.

Without the assistance of sled dogs, human habitation in vast northern regions, areas inaccessible by other means, may not have been possible. The foremost peoples to use sled dogs were the Inuit.

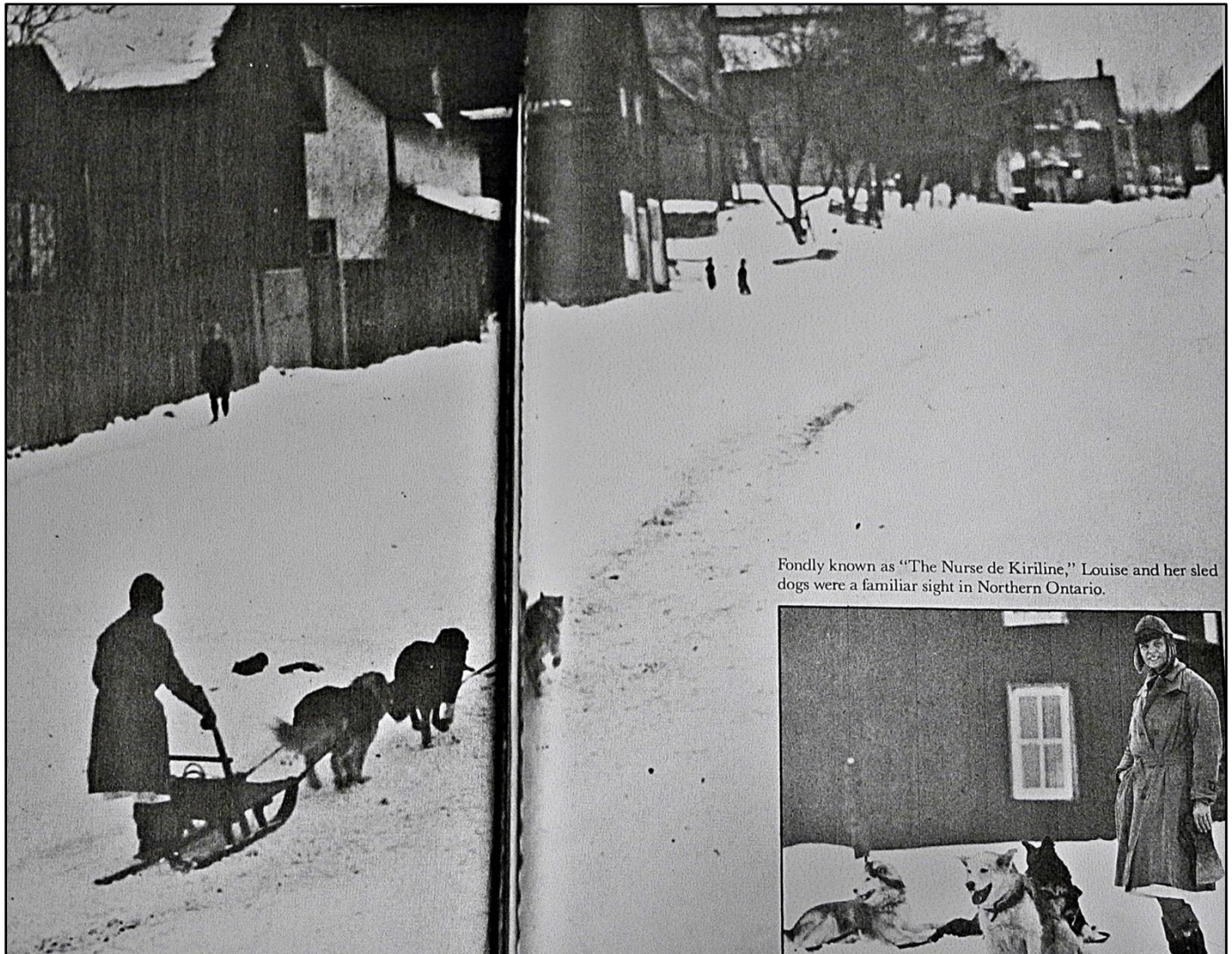
During the explorations of the Arctic and Antarctic, sled dogs proved essential. Popular expeditions by such explorers as Robert Peary in 1909 and Ronald Amundsen in 1910 brought renown to the stamina and endurance of the husky and its ability to withstand harsh climate and harsh terrain.

However, it was with the publication of Jack London's two novels, *White Fang* and *Call of the Wild*, in the early 1900s when the lore of the sled dog reached its climax. *White Fang* is the story of a wild wolfdog and *Call of the Wild*, Jack London's most popular novel, is the story of a kidnapped domestic dog that must learn the ways of the wild if he

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wants to survive. Both novels take place during the Klondike Gold Rush of the 1890s when dog sleds were in high demand.

Locally, Louise de Kiriline Lawrence as “The Nurse de Kiriline” used a dog sled to travel to her patients throughout the Bonfield area as you will see in the photo below. (It is a photo I took of a photograph someone brought to the Bonfield Parish Hall jam session.)



Fondly known as “The Nurse de Kiriline,” Louise and her sled dogs were a familiar sight in Northern Ontario.

Thanks to Paul Smylie for arranging this outing, one we won’t soon forget. See the collage of the participants on the next two pages, with photos by Renee Levesque, Dorothy deKiewiet, Sarah Wheelan and Dick Tafel.





A special bond

Photo by Dorothy deKiewiet

By Renee Levesque

Soon after our dog-sledding adventure, the renowned Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race began, a 1,600 km. journey through Alaska, and new research was released from the University of Alberta that shows dogs and humans have had a close relationship for thousands of years.

In an ancient community near Lake Baikal in Siberia, anthropologist Rob Losey has been excavating dog remains buried alongside human remains, suggesting dogs held a special place in the lives of humans. Some were buried with decorative collars. In one case, Losey found a man believed to be about 5,000 to 8,000 years old buried in the same grave as his two dogs, one on either side of him.

Although these dogs were companions and were loved and cared for as we love and care for our dogs today, they were also working dogs, working closely with the people of the area - hunting, transporting and protecting.

Losey is now investigating a new site in Siberia where there are the remains of more than 100 ancient dogs. It is the largest archeological collection of dogs in the Arctic and shows early evidence of sled dogs. You can hear Losey talk about his research on this YouTube video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=281II1bTBpY>

It is believed that modern dogs are descended from the Eurasian Grey Wolf. Wolves began foraging around human campsites, gradually becoming less inhibited, with one subspecies branching off and becoming genetically recognizable as dogs.

“The big question in the field now is when and where exactly dogs emerged from wolves, but I don't think that tells us very much,” Losey says. “What can we learn about people's relationship with dogs in the past? The history of our working relationships with animals, and our emotional relationships, is what interests me.”

The next page is a collage of Roseanne Van Shie's dogs, photos taken by me during our dog-sledding adventure. There wasn't a person who attended who wasn't emotionally affected by these handsome, friendly and loveable dogs.





Photo by Renee Levesque

Of Dragonflies and Damselflies

By Brent Turcotte

This is part one of Brent's 10 years as an odonatologist. Part two continues in May's The Woodland Observer. The photo above is of the Four-spotted Skimmer, likely the most widespread species in our area.

2006: Introduction to Dragonflies

In July 2006, I saw my first dragonfly, a **Twelve-spotted Skimmer** (seen below) while exploring near Munro Park during the annual *Gateway to the Universe Star Party* held in Powassan. I was looking across a ditch and found a bug with a checkerboard pattern and so began my interest in dragonflies, damselflies and bugs in general.

To get started in dragonflies and damselflies, it is good to start with recognizing the taxonomic families of the Odonata, the insect order of dragonflies and damselflies, and below is a quick guide to this. The number of species indicated is the number which has been found, to my knowledge, in the Blue Sky Region.

Damselflies: Generally smaller, thinner bodies than dragonflies; perchers; wings together or at 45 degrees; weak fliers.



Randy Holland

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There are three types:

1. Broad-winged Damselfs: Coloured wings; wings together; metallic bodies; found along rivers. (2 species)
2. Spreadwings: Wings at 45 degree angle when perched. (9 species)
3. Pond Damselfs: Wings together with one exception; most species blue on black bodies, but most other colors possible; small. (19 species)

Dragonflies: Larger, thicker bodies than damselflies. There are six types:

1. Darners: Medium to large fliers; most often seen on mid-July evenings in swarms of at least 10 individuals. (13 species)
2. Clubtails: Perchers; mostly river species with yellow markings on black bodies. (17 species)
3. Spiketails: Large fliers; yellow markings on black bodies with two broad yellow stripes on the thorax. (3 species)
4. Cruisers: Large fliers; yellow markings on dark brown bodies with one broad yellow stripe on thorax. (2 species)
5. Emeralds: Medium to large fliers; green eyes; some species with colored wings. (16 species)
6. Skimmers: Diverse appearance; many species with colored wings. (18 species)



Dragonflies reach their peak diversity around the first week of July. To get the maximum amount of diversity, schedule trips in June, July and August because some species have early or late flight periods. The earliest sighting I noticed was of an unidentified species on April 25, 2012, on Lake Nipissing, and the latest sighting, about October 10. With some effort you might get an **Autumn Meadowhawk** (seen above) on a warm sunny day in November.

Dragonfly habitats are associated with water, even if the dragonflies wander away from the water from time to time. Wetlands, like Laurier Woods, are good places to start because they have a variety of dragonflies, especially the picturesque skimmers. Other habitats to look for are temporary ponds, bogs and springs. For the more advanced, check out rivers, especially riffle habitats. Some species are restricted to very specific habitats, so to find these species, you first need to locate their habitats.

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2007: *Beginner*

In 2007, I focused more on butterflies, although I started finding more dragonflies. The big highlight from 2007 was finding hundreds of **Chalk-fronted Corporals** at the end of Northmount Road in the airport area of North Bay. (At the end of Northmount, there is a small pond and a corridor.) **Chalk-fronted Corporals** are one of the most common dragonflies in our area and are aptly named, as seen in the photo at right.



Photo by Renee Levesque

2008: *Getting Serious*

In 2008, I got a homemade net as a gift. Catching dragonflies almost doubles the number you can identify. Most skimmers can be easily identified without a net because they perch most of the time and because you can see them well with close-focusing binoculars. But some dragonflies don't perch often and identifying dragonflies on the wing is difficult. And to identify some species, they have to be examined in the hand, often with a hand lens, to look for small details. To identify some female bluets, the truly dedicated make the bluet a specimen and identify it under a stereo microscope. However, not many Odonata enthusiasts, myself included, do that. In any case, having the net enabled me to exceed the number of lifers I got in 2007: 27 in 2008 compared to 21 in 2007.

Pictured below is a mating pair of bluets, **possibly Northern Bluets**, but they could be another type of bluet, such as **Boreal or Vernal Bluets**, because with a photo alone, bluets can be difficult to identify. **Marsh or Hagen's Bluets** have small eyespots, whereas Boreal and Vernal Bluets have larger eyespots. The Northern and Vernal Bluets are the only male damselflies in which a microscope is required to identify them.

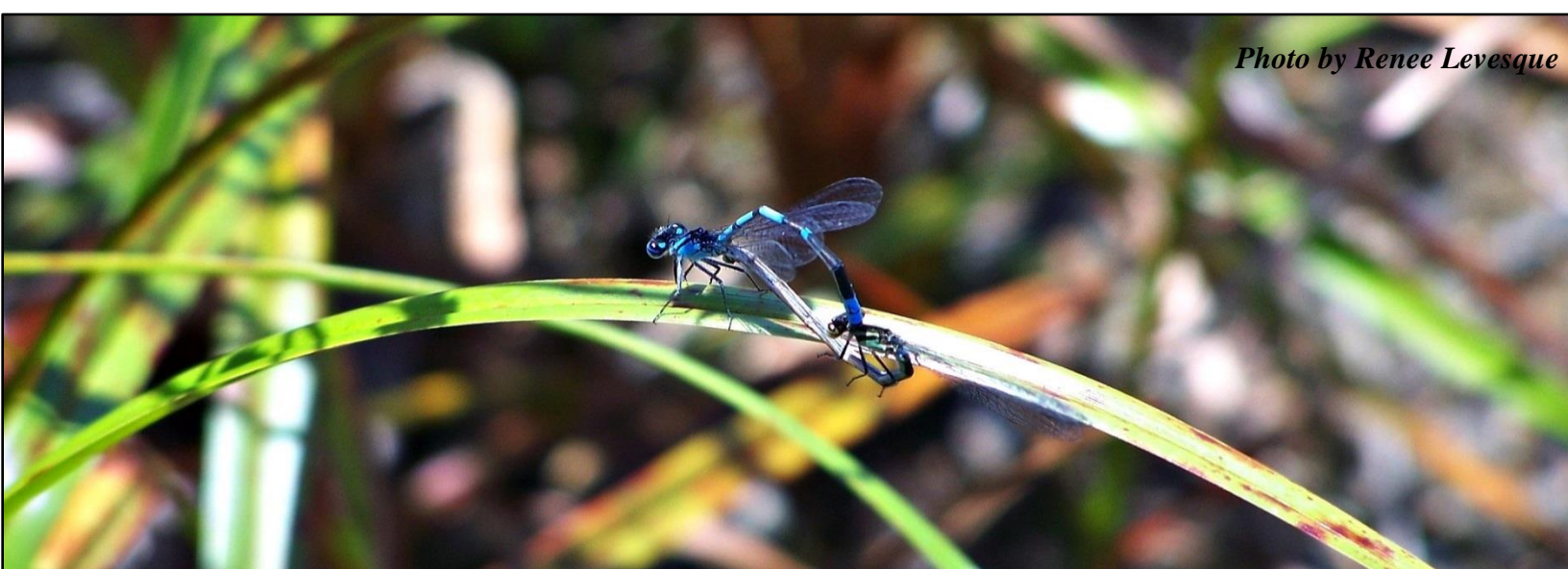


Photo by Renee Levesque

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Using a net can be fun. In the dragonfly family, the flyers are obviously harder to catch than the perchers. Beyond that, it varies from family to family and even species to species. Darners are harder than most emeralds, for example. Difficulty increases if a species is a fast flier, if it flies high, if it is wary, or if it flies so low to the water that you risk hitting the water with the net and losing the dragonfly. Percher dragonflies can be difficult to catch if they are on a tree trunk because a net can't wrap around the contours of the trunk, and if perchers are in shrubbery, this can result in snagging your net.

For fast fliers, it is useful to predict their patrol route and position yourself within it. With luck you might catch the dragonfly, but expect to miss and miss often. Sometimes you might stand in one spot to wait for dragonflies to come around, but oftentimes it seems the dragonflies come from the direction in which you are not looking. So you turn around and find they still come from the direction in which you are not looking! Damselflies are usually easy to catch, but a few species are very wary and these can be difficult to catch.

Dragonflies are so interesting that I don't mind looking for them alone. Because I knew of no one else in our area with the same passion for dragonflies, I stood a good chance of finding new species for the area and could then submit my observations to the Ontario Odonata Atlas. In fact, a little over ten species were first seen by me.

To date, I have logged several hundred field hours, with just a few of those hours with other people. But I am not totally alone. Ont-Odes is a Google Group that covers Ontario dragonflies. I have posted sightings, directions and questions to this forum. I also get to hear of the sightings of others and sometimes out-of-towners will post some neat sightings for our area. Northeast Odonata, a Facebook group, serves the same purpose, but its scope is bigger and not quite as useful, though responses to posts are often made more quickly.

My most notable sighting of 2008 was finding a population of **Midland Clubtails** on the sandy beach next to the mouth of Duchesnay Creek. I have now seen the Midland Clubtail four times there. It is a reliable species at that location as long as no wetlands are present there as they sometimes are.

I have also seen **Midland Clubtails** at the North Bay Public Library, at Champlain Park, and along the Theodore Fouriez Wetland Trails by the Sturgeon River House Museum. On the right is the only photo I have taken of one, but it is a photo of a newly hatched one with its delicate, shiny wings.

The Ontario Odonata Atlas is currently not online (and regrettably hasn't been for many years), but Odonata Central shows the species as sparse in On-



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tario, occurring primarily near the Great Lakes, with a few observations near Lake Simcoe and Thunder Bay. The Midland Clubtail is practically at the northern edge of its range in North Bay.

Another notable sighting was a **Mottled Darner** spotted along Rice Bay. I actually caught it while kayaking, a difficult feat! (Rice Bay is at the end of Songis Road off Hwy 63. You launch from an unmarked boat launch. The road is a bit rough.)

2009: Upgrading Equipment, Dragonfly Counts, and Striped Emeralds

In 2009, I began the Odonata season with four new pieces of equipment:

The first, a *Field Guide to The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Algonquin Provincial Park and the Surrounding Area*. It is my favorite field guide. It has all the details needed to identify all the species, and the species it covers fit our area better than any other book I have seen. The coverage is only slightly exceeded, and only for damselflies, by the book, *Damselflies of the Northeast* by Ed Lam. In the future, a North American guide to dragonflies, also by Ed Lam, will be available, although the Algonquin field guide will remain more portable for our area.

The second, a professional net. This net is collapsible and can fit in my pouch (although bulky) when I don't use it. Duty and shipping were nearly half the cost of the net, but the purchase was worth it. **Kaye Edmonds** captured this photo of me with my net at the Louise de Kiriline Nature Festival.

The third, a wide angle 16X hand lens. A hand lens is great for seeing the small details of terminal ends. However, I have found it not as indispensable as I thought it would be. I am very nearsighted and my focus without my glasses is four inches in front of my face. So the hand lens is only

slightly better at resolving details than my naked eye. Nevertheless, the hand lens does increase the comfort of resolving those details. I have found I have used it more looking at lichens. Unfortunately, I made a mistake when washing it one time. I used water to wash away the dust on the lens. Now there is dust on the inside of the lens that is impossible to remove.



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The fourth, chest waders. Chest waders open up a new world, the world of streams. While streams do not have the diversity of wetlands, they have species not found elsewhere. Chest waders are also good for getting into other types of wetlands, such as lakes, marshes, bogs, and fens, where they help in getting past deep, quiet areas and areas that are mucky. They will also protect you from very cold water.

Since using waders, I have come to appreciate the complexity of moving water. A stream can be said to have three major areas - the start, the middle and the end. The best streams to wade are the middle stretches. In the middle you have riffles, pools and runs. Riffles, areas of moderate erosion and typically very shallow with a swift current, are usually the nicest to wade. Many species are restricted to this habitat. The fine sand washed away from riffles ends up in deep areas called pools. In between are runs.

In 2009, I organized a dragonfly count. Unfortunately, I got only one participant. The next year I got none. I looked for dragonflies anyway, but my enthusiasm was dampened. While my counts are a washout, the Haliburton and Algonquin counts nearby get good participation.

On the positive side, 2009 was the year I found three lifer striped emeralds – **Ocellated, Ski-tailed and Williamson's.**

Striped emeralds, from the genus *somatochlora*, are much sought after among dragonfly enthusiasts and most of the time are found only as single individuals.

At the right is my photo of an **Ocellated Emerald.**



Editor's Note: The photo of the Twelve-spotted Skimmer was used with permission from Randy Holland, Leamington, Ontario. Check out Randy's superb photos of wildlife and landscapes on his website, Nature Photography, <http://www.randysnaturephotography.com/>. Click on the link for dragonflies for his photos of dragonflies.

Giving wings to wildlife conservation



Text and photos by Renee Levesque

The spotlight this year of **National Wildlife Week, April 10 to 16**, is on the winged creatures of the skies – birds, bees, bats, butterflies, dragonflies, damselflies and all things that fly.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Migratory Birds Convention Act between Canada and the US. It was the first international treaty to conserve wildlife.



With over 10,000 species of birds worldwide, birds are one of our most populous life forms on earth and this makes them a good indicator on how healthy our planet is. Healthy birds equal a healthy planet and right now, birds are in decline because of habitat loss, the use of pesticides, climate change, window collisions and cat predation.

What can we do as individuals to help? To prevent the killing of birds by cats, keep your cats indoors. This is much easier said than done if your cat has been allowed outside all these

years, so for those cat owners, vow to keep your next cat indoors from the time it is a kitten.

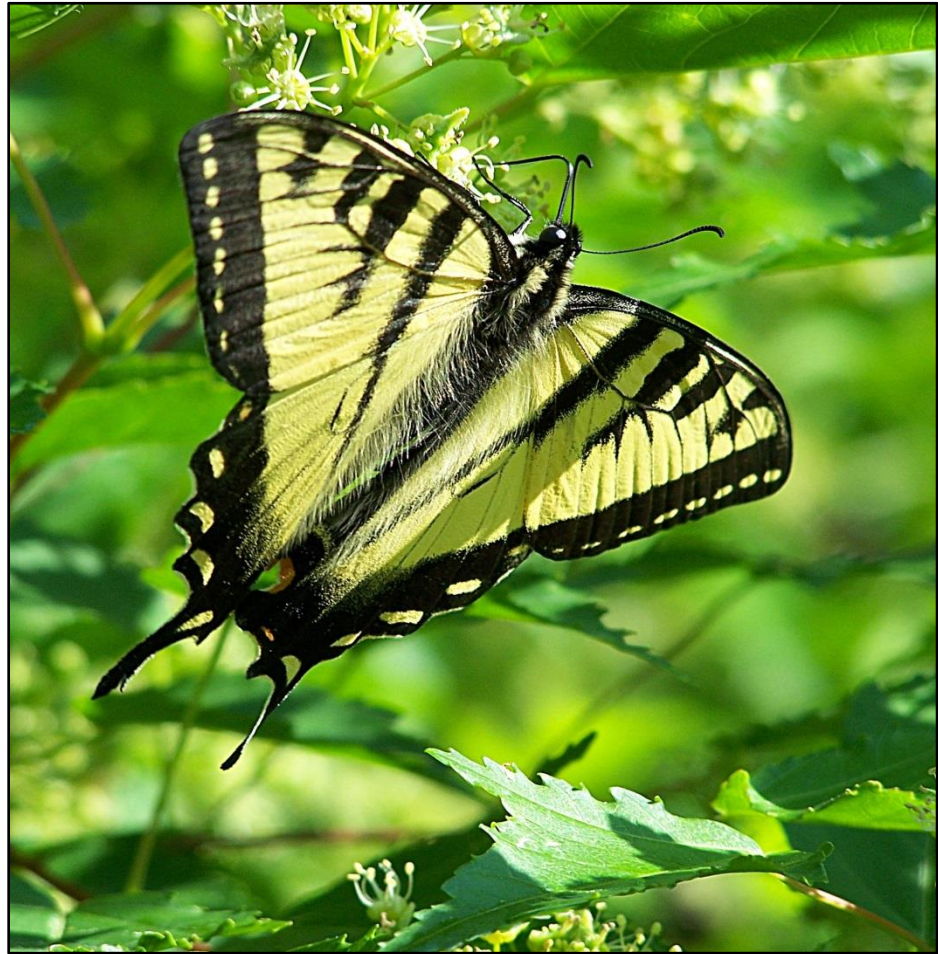
Bird collisions with windows are the leading cause of bird deaths across Canada. About 25 million birds are killed annually by colliding with windows. Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) has teamed up with FLAP Canada for Bird Impact Reduction Day (B.I.R.D.) to raise awareness of this issue. To read more on FLAP Canada, visit: <http://www.flap.org/>.

On April 12, CWF and FLAP are asking office buildings and corporate towers to turn off their lights for one evening to show support for the safety of migrating birds.

Just in case you think window collisions happen only in the bigger cities on larger buildings with many windows, a friend reported she saw four dead Bohemian Waxwings in February by North Bay's courthouse.

To help prevent window collisions on your home windows, you can purchase window decals to put on your windows. Office towers may kill more birds in a single day than only one home, but put all those homes in all the towns and cities together and a lot of damage that can be done. Laporte's on Lakeshore Drive was selling the window decals in previous years, but you can also purchase them online at Amazon.ca, https://www.amazon.ca/Window-Alert-WINDA5-Safety-Decals/dp/B001OE5HIG?ie=UTF8&*Version*=1&*entries*=0. However, keep in mind that only one small decal per window will NOT do the trick. To read more on the use of decals, go to the flap.org website.

On April 16, you can also *Walk for Wildlife*, sponsored by CWF. Go to <http://cwf-fcf.org/en/do-something/events/national-wildlife-week/w4w.html?src=rightnav>, and while on this website be sure to check out all the additional links on the right side and the bottom of the page.



The Raven's Tail



By Steve Pitt, photos by Kerry Fry

Residents in the River Road area of Astorville are doing a double take these days every time they see what looks like half a Common Raven flying through their neighbourhood. When the bird is on the ground, it appears perfectly normal because its tucked-in wings project backwards to cover a completely missing tail section. But when the raven takes to the air, its shortcomings are not hard to miss.

Kerry Fry, artist photographer, first noticed the unique bird about six months ago. “I thought I was seeing things at first,” says Kerry. “I called it Sad Sally because I felt sorry for the poor bird. I was sure it would not survive long without a tail, especially through the winter.” To Kerry’s delight, Sad Sally not only survived winter, but she now appears to be building a nest in anticipation of motherhood.

So Kerry no longer thinks of Sally as sad. “I now just call her Sally because she just gets on with all her normal raven activities,” she says. Kerry recently photographed Sally filching string from her garden fencing. “Some years, ravens grab all the bittersweet vine off my trellis for their nests. We forgot and cut the vine back last fall, so Sally has decided to take my string instead. I’ll have to leave some vine next fall.”

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“She's kind of a cheeky bird,” Kerry says in admiration, “And not a bit sad or shy.” (Kerry may be anthropomorphizing somewhat, but that’s what we often tend to do with birds and animals, and certainly something Louise de Kiriline Lawrence did.)

***Note from Nicole Richardson:** Birds can absolutely fly without a tail. Birds use their wings for thrust and to control elevation, and use their tail simply for fine-tuned steering.*

There are a few reasons why this raven may not have replaced its tail yet. Some species (though I don’t know if ravens are in this category) will only replace feathers in adequate conditions – where food is readily available, for example, or if the raven’s tail was broken rather than removed. If a bird’s tail is pulled right out because of a narrow escape with a cat or predator, it will grow back in. If the tail becomes damaged – if, for example, the feather shafts are broken close to the base – then the bird may not replace these feathers until its next moult, which could be a while if the feathers were fresh at the time of the damage.

The raven is fine, and so is any other bird you might see without a tail. Time without a tail is a normal part of life for many birds. Many baby songbirds learn to fly before their tail has completely grown in. They learn to flap and control their height before the fine-tuned steering comes into play. And some songbirds will drop all their tail feathers at once when it comes time to moult and grow a new tail!



A naturalist's daring confession

By Sarah Wheelan

I have a pretty daring confession to make: I know very little about birds. So little that in this group, it is kind of embarrassing. But enthusiasm is contagious and birders have plenty to spare!

I wouldn't have known a Pine Grosbeak if it bit me, but I was curious to see birds being banded and to learn more about the work that was being done at Hilliardton Marsh, north of New Liskeard. It was a small group of Nipissing Naturalists Club members who made the trek on March 5 for winter bird banding — just Steph Romaniuk and I — but there were plenty of others at Hilliardton's *For the Love of Birds* event held later that morning.

Steph and I tagged along on net checks and watched Bruce Murphy, Joanne Goddard, Chris Sukha, Nicole Richardson and several other volunteers collect and band Pine and Evening Grosbeaks, Black-capped Chickadees and Common Redpolls. I would now know a Pine Grosbeak if it bit me because I saw one clamp her *gros* beak down on one of the volunteer's hands. The face he made told me everything I needed to know!



Sarah with Common Redpoll, photo by Steph Romaniuk



Steph with Common Redpoll, photo by Sarah Wheelan

By the end of our visit, I had released two Common Redpolls and petted a Saw-whet Owl. Our unexpected visitor was rescued after hitting a window in New Liskeard, and after some monitoring and recuperating, he was banded and released later that night.

I learned about netting and banding, prevalent bird species in the area and research being conducted at Hilliardton. So now I am a card-carrying member of the Hilliardton Marsh Research & Education Centre. I mean, I'll have to go back for owl banding, right?



Pine Grosbeak, photo by Nicole Richardson

BATS
SUPERHEROES OF THE NIGHT

*and the houses
they live in!*

CRANBROOK
INSTITUTE OF
SCIENCE
Michigan's Museum of Natural History
NOW THROUGH JUNE 19



By Renee Levesque

You can own a piece of movie history **and** help bats by bidding on or buying bat houses through the *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice* auction of bat houses that began on **March 21, but runs until April 4** on eBay for charity. Just click on: <http://stores.ebay.com/auctioncause/bat-house>. (This link includes the public service announcement made by the movie cast and crew describing the project.)

Many of the bat houses are signed by Ben Affleck, by director Zack Snyder or by both. All bat houses are functional and can be used outside for bats or can be kept indoors as a collector's item.

This auction is being sponsored by the Organization for Bat Conservation, Cranbrook Institute of Science, Michigan's Museum of Natural History. The Organization for Bat Conservation is a nonprofit environment education organization and wildlife sanctuary, specializing in bats and other nocturnal animals. All proceeds from the auction will go to the care and feeding of their Animal Ambassadors, the 200+ bats that are the centre of their education work.

For more information about the Organization for Bat Conservation visit:
<http://science.cranbrook.edu/science-central/organization-for-bat-conservation>.

And while on the topic of bat houses, the official number of bat houses built on Halloween in 2015 was **1,341!** This takes into account the 67 bat house building events that were held on Halloween in the USA, Canada and Puerto Rico. And we were part of this event! (See *The Woodland Observer*, November 2015, posted on our website, <http://www.nipnats.com/newsletters/>)

Singing for de Kiriline

Every month, a jam session is held at Bonfield's Parish Hall, sponsored by the Rutherglen Jammers and the Knights of Columbus, and organized by Caren Gagne and Elmer Rose, two of the Jammers. Proceeds from the jam sessions go to a good cause. On March 4, thanks to Club member Steve Pitt, the proceeds went to Nipissing Naturalists Club to help raise the \$5,000.00 required to honour Louise de Kiriline Lawrence with an Ontario Heritage Trust plaque at Pimisi Bay.

Caren is a local artist and businesswoman and as Steve says, “part of almost anything good that is happening in this area.” She and her husband, Jerry, own the local gas station and general store on Hwy. 17 at Rutherglen. Elmer is a retired railroad worker and local historian. Caren and Elmer are always ready to raise money for local charities, such as the Bonfield food bank or the local animal shelter.

Club members who attended had a fun evening meeting some very interesting people, talking and listening to music performed by local musicians, one of whom, sax-player

LITTLE NASHVILLE MUSIC JAMBOREE!!!!

(ALL JAMMERS ,FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS WELCOME)

Friday, March 4, 2016 TIME: 6 P.M. TO 10 P.M.
fundraiser for the
Nipissing Naturalists Club
<http://www.nipnats.com/>

Louise de Kiriline Historical Plaque
to be erected on the shores of Pimisi Lake

WHERE: BONFIELD PARISH HALL,BONFIELD ON.

CALL FOR INFO:Caren 705-776-9705 or Elmer 705-776-2673

ADMISSION :3.00 Per person ...Musician:2.00 per person...

Sponsored by:The Rutherglen Jammers &
The Bonfield Knights of Columbus

email: Krista_42@hotmail.com or kiwi@bellnet.ca

Traditional and Silent Auctions, Bar Refreshments(LLBO) Snack Bar/Pizza .

There will be books, original artwork and giftware up for auction. Prints of nature watercolours by North Bay artist Paul Smylie will also be available for purchase at \$15 per copy.



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Bruce Burns, is an old friend of my brother-in-law who credits “Burnsie” for helping him become a good drummer.

We also got to meet the woman who now owns Louise’s loghouse nest, Leslie Mckinnon. She told Steve she definitely wants to attend our April meeting to hear Paul Smylie talk about bicycling the Dempster Highway.

And then there were Diane and Derek Day, Mattawa Museum Board members, who attended with a contribution cheque for \$500.00 on behalf of the Mattawa Museum and presented to Steve by Elmer (see photo at right). The museum is closed until the end of April, but when it opens in May, there will be a model train display of the area, certainly a display we should all wish to see because it was the railroad



that opened up our area and enabled more and more people to settle here. Steve is in the process of setting up a Louise de Kiriline Lawrence display at the museum for later in the year. We will keep members informed of the date of that display.

For the museum’s permanent displays, visit:

<http://www.visitamuseum.com/en/museums.asp?id=28&alpha=no&action=museum&display=photogallery>.

Steve also organized a silent auction at the jam session and the proceeds from that, as well as from the bidding on three pies made by local church members and donations made by people who attended the session, totalled \$363.00. So the night ended with \$863.00 in contributions, new friends made, old acquaintances renewed and one fun evening, thanks to Steve, Caren and Elmer, the Mattawa Museum, all the musicians, and all those who attended and contributed to the plaque.

From Blue Sky to Big Sky Country

Club member and former Board member, Nicole Richardson, a second-year undergraduate biology student at Nipissing University, will soon be heading off to the US to work with birds.

Nicole leaves in early May to spend her summer on the Northern Great Plains of Montana where she will work with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies on a long-term project studying declining grassland birds. Grasslands are among the least protected biomes in the world and if grassland birds are to be protected, so too must grasslands.

This project, on the breeding grounds of grassland birds, aims to measure the nesting success and demographic rates of particular bird species to gauge the health of their populations and the quality of the habitats they utilize. It focuses primarily on Grasshopper (seen at left) and Baird's Sparrows, but also examines Sprague's Pipit, Chestnut-collared Longspur and Lark Bunting. Because there is a counterpart study on the birds' wintering grounds, this project will also encompass their entire life cycle.

Nicole is an avid birder and naturalist who spends her time observing, admiring, and working with wildlife, primarily birds. Among the many things Nicole does, she spends much of her time at Hilliardton Marsh banding songbirds, owls, hummingbirds and any other bird that finds the nets. She also helps out from time to time with regular migration monitoring and Snow Bunting banding at Ruthven Park in southern Ontario. Pictured above is Nicole with a dark morph Rough-legged Hawk in the Kitchener-Waterloo region.

Nicole will be returning from Montana around the second week of August, after which she will spend two weeks in James Bay working with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada, on a migratory shorebird project. When she returns, more birding and continuing studies are in store for Nicole as she pursues an internship for credits at Hilliardton Marsh.



Photo by Nicole Richardson

Your Board of Directors

You have no doubt been impressed by the four Directors profiled in March's edition of *The Woodland Observer*. Here profiled are three more Directors, with the last four to be profiled in May's and possibly June's editions.

Sonje Bols

Sonje grew up in Eastern Ontario in a very rural and agricultural landscape. She moved to Northern Ontario seven years ago and states, "I have really fallen for the North."

Given the environment in which she grew up, Sonje became avidly interested in nature from a young age. This interest has followed her around the world: from the deserts of California to the mountains of Japan and Costa Rica.

Sonje is currently wrapping up a Masters of Environmental Science on Boreal Forest Bank Swallows at Nipissing University. She spends her springs tree planting in eastern Ontario, and her summers as an interpretive naturalist at Algonquin Provincial Park.



Pictured at right is Sonje holding the endangered Blanding's Turtle at Algonquin Park.

Mary Marrs

Mary was raised on a 200-acre farm at Lake Penage, west of Sudbury. It was an environment that lent itself to Mary's spending a lot of time outdoors, learning bird songs and nesting habits, examining the ground and woods for signs of small animals and loving the water of the fast-flowing river that bounded the farm's property on three sides.

This love of nature continued to be prominent throughout Mary's adult life with camping across Canada, canoeing, cross country skiing, dog team driving and many other outdoor activities, many undertaken at her "camp" or cottage on Lake Talon.

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Mary has volunteered for five service trips with Cross Cultural Solutions, to Brazil (twice), Peru, Morocco and Guatemala. She usually volunteers for a month at a time, helping at in-country social service programs, five days a week.

For quite a few years, Mary lived in the big cities of southern Ontario, but in 1986, she and her husband were happy to move to North Bay. A few years ago she heard about Nipissing Naturalists, attended the meetings and enjoyed the speakers and meeting people of similar interests. And then, as Mary states, “Eventually because of peer pressure, I joined the board.”

Mary, all bundled up, is pictured at right at the recent dog-sledding outing.

Joe Boivin

Originally from Timmins, Joe spent a lot of his time growing up cycling, hiking, and camping in the easily accessible wilderness surrounding his hometown. His love of the natural world drew him to studies in biology which he pursued at the University of Guelph and the University of Toronto’s Faculty of Forestry.

After finishing his studies, Joe worked on several different projects with the Canadian Forest Service and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Then, an opportunity to teach undergraduate biology at Nipissing University brought him to North Bay, thus fulfilling his desire to teach at the post-secondary level, a passion he discovered while completing his graduate studies.



In his spare time, Joe likes to take advantage of the natural beauty of the North Bay area with its easy access to places like Temagami and Algonquin Park where he goes as often as possible. The photo at left is of Joe and his family on the trails of Duchesnay Falls.

Outings and events

The 2016 Annual General Meeting of Friends of Laurier Woods with **guest speaker, Dick Tafel**, past president of Nipissing Naturalists Club and of Friends of Laurier Woods, will take place on **Wednesday, April 6, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.** In early December, Dick led the walk through Laurier Woods in celebration of its 25th anniversary (see February's issue of *The Woodland Observer* on our website, <http://www.nipnats.com/newsletters> /) and now he will expand on that by sharing "his passion and knowledge of the natural and cultural history" of Laurier Woods.



The meeting will be held at **Rorab Shrine Club, 1260 Brookes Street, North Bay**. The reception begins at 6:00 p.m., with dinner at 6:30 p.m., the business meeting at 7:30 p.m. and Dick's talk at 8:00 p.m.

Cost is \$25.00 a person and **advance ticket purchase is required**. Tickets are available at the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority and at Mayne Travel, 173 Main Street West, right in downtown North Bay, or by contacting Theresa Haist at 705-492-9734, or Susan Christian at 705-752-2837.

From **Saturday April 30 to Sunday May 1, Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve Ltd.** presents *Springtime Forestry Tour and Social Event*, a gathering of forest lovers for a tour of the forestry operations, silviculture science, wood processing and ecotourism operations at Haliburton Forest. This forest has a world-class reputation of sustainable multi-use forest management.

Cost is **\$75.00 per person and includes accommodation as well as all the activities**. There is also a suggested fee of \$10.00 for a Saturday night BBQ dinner. To reserve your room, call 705-754-2198 and mention that you are with the *Springtime Forestry Tour and Social Event*.

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See the poster at right for a list of activities and for the email addresses of organizers you can contact to answer any questions you may have. (You will have to zoom in.)

Saturday mornings throughout May, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m., Dick Tafel will lead birding tours through Laurier Woods. If you want to learn about birds, if you want to see spring migrants coming through North Bay, some to stay and some to move on, and, in particular, if you want to see wood warblers that have come north from thousands of miles away to breed and raise their young, or if you just want to enjoy early spring walks through Laurier Woods to see what nature has in store, then come out for these walks. Meet at the Brule Street Parking lot.

The photo below, if you again zoom in, indicates the sheer number of bird species that arrive in Laurier Woods within the first week or so of May. (Photo below from May 2012.)

Springtime Forestry Tour & Social Event



Haliburton Forest
& WILD LIFE RESERVE LTD

1095 Redkenn Road Haliburton, ON
www.haliburtonforest.com

Saturday April 30-Sunday May 1

Haliburton forest is considered a world-class example of sustainable multi-use forest management. Covering 100,000 acres, it was the first in North America to be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council. Haliburton Forest has developed a "wood processing cluster" that produces conventional lumber, log homes, canoeing paddles, and non-timber forest products like honey, maple syrup, and chaga tea. Haliburton Forest also operates a unique ecotourism business throughout the year.

Join our gathering of forest-lovers for a springtime tour of the forestry operations, silvicultural science, wood processing, and ecotourism operations at Haliburton Forest!

Cost: \$75/person for accommodations and activities

*Casual BBQ dinner will be served Sat. night with a suggested fee of \$10
** All other meals available on-site at "The Cookhouse Restaurant"

Itinerary

Saturday (April 30)

12:30 pm Arrive and check in at Base Camp
1:00 pm Silvicultural tour of the Blue Heron Demonstration Forest
3:00 pm Wood processing tour of sawmill, biochar reactor, firewood processor, etc
4:30 pm Value-added tour of Wood Shop and/or Paddle Shop
6:30 pm BBQ dinner at Base Camp with a great big bonfire

Sunday (May 1)

10:00 am Private tour of the Wolf Centre
11:00 am Meet Hershe the Moose and logging horses
12:00 pm Everyone goes home. Or stick around and enjoy the trails

To Book:

Call Haliburton Forest
to reserve your room:
(705) 754-2198

*When calling, please mention you are with the Canadian Institute of Forestry's Springtime Forestry Tour & Social

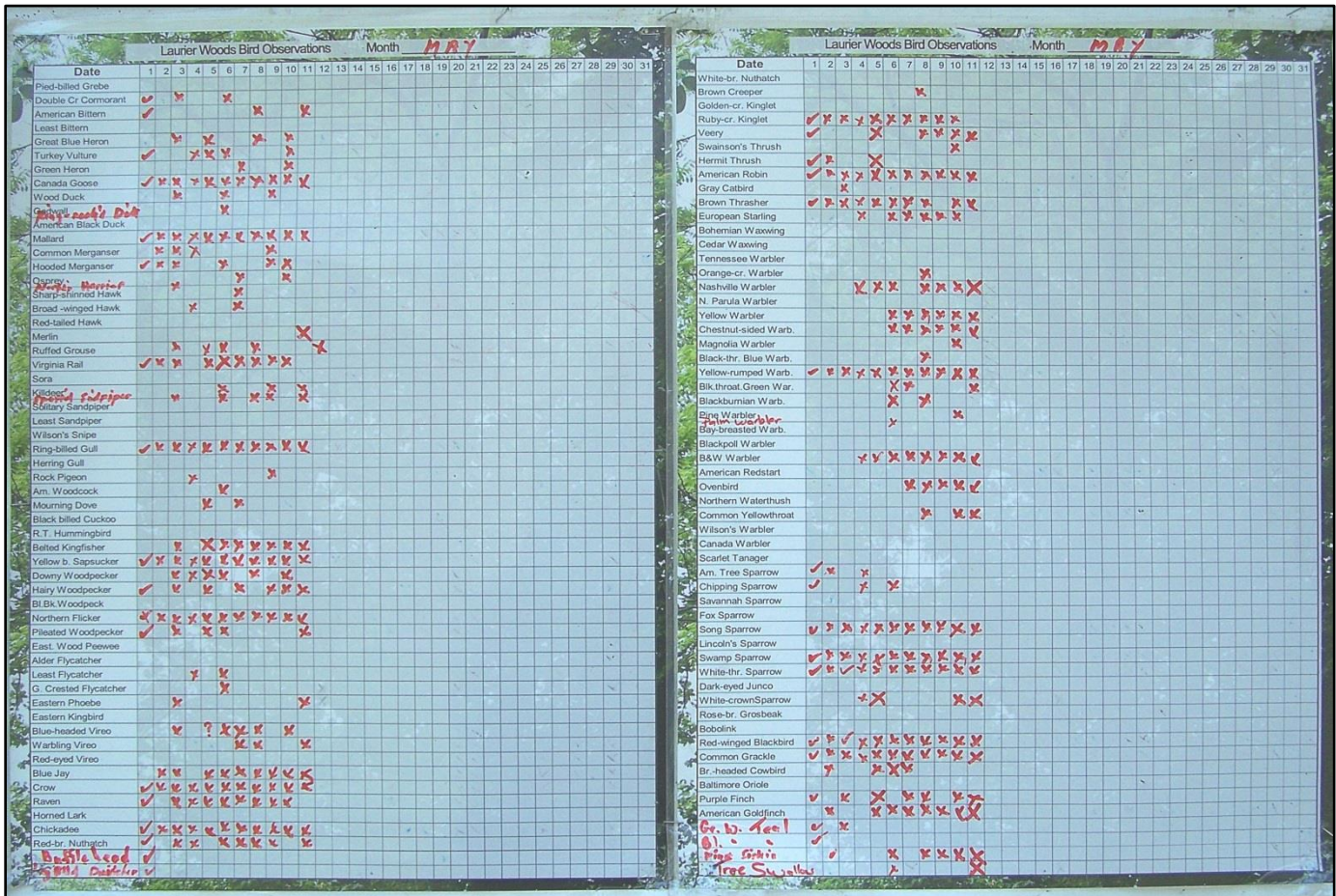
More Info Contact:

Scott McPherson (CIF):
scott.mcpherson.4stree@gmail.com

Lacey Rose (CIF):
laceyrose@gmail.com

Malcolm Cockwell (HF):
mcockwell@haliburtonforest.com

Brought to you by:

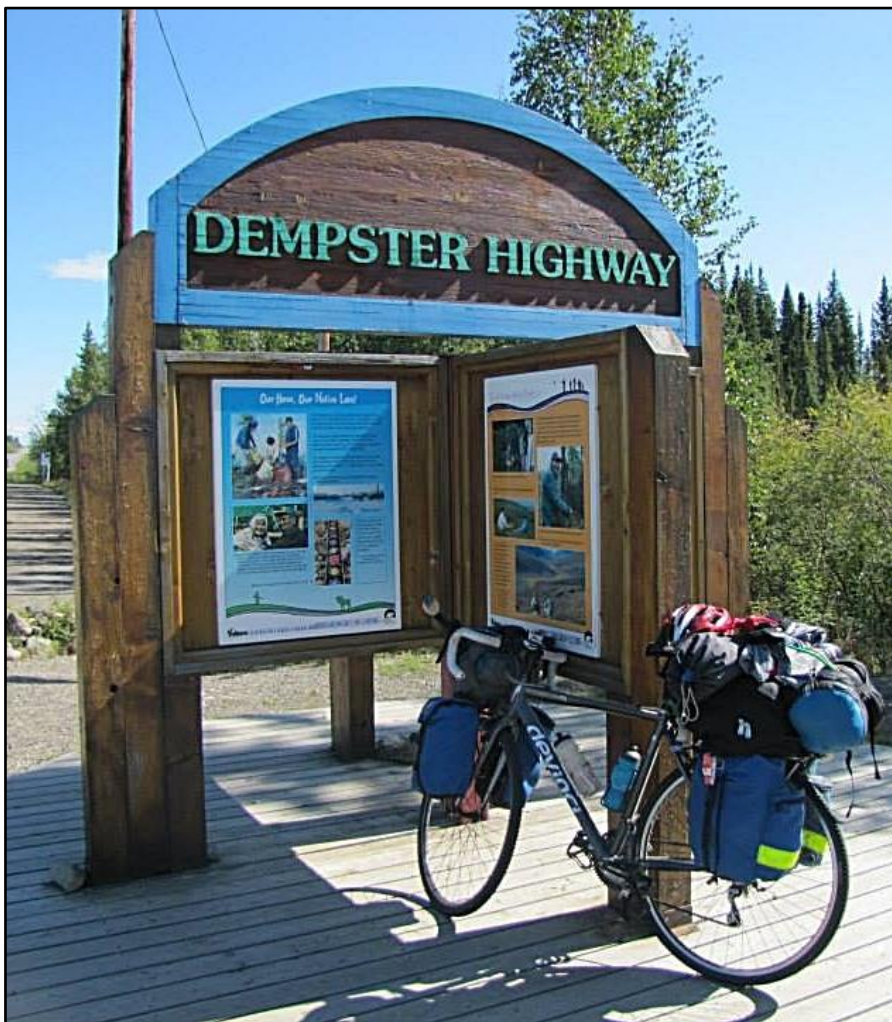


Upcoming speakers at monthly meetings

As you will see below, the speakers for our meetings in April and May should prove very interesting with presentations that take us to Dempster Highway and the Arctic Circle, to the Hudson Bay Lowlands and to Okavango Delta in Botswana.

Meetings take place the second Tuesday of every month in the auditorium of Cassellholme, starting at 7:00 p.m.

On **Tuesday, April 12**, Paul Smylie will talk about *Bicycling the Dempster Highway: Whitehorse to Inuvik*.



Last summer, Paul spent two weeks cycling alone along Canada's only all-weather road to cross the Arctic Circle. Learn from Paul about his amazing journey and what it is to cycle alone along a gravel road in the Arctic.

The photo on the left shows Paul's packed bike as Paul begins his journey on The Highway to the Arctic.

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On **Tuesday, May10**, Larry Dyke, retired geologist, Geological Survey of Canada, will talk about *The Role of Geology in Creating Wetlands, Havens for Animals*, focusing on the Okavango Delta of Botswana and the Hudson Bay Lowlands of Canada. Below is a wonderful photo taken by Larry of an elephant in the Okavango Delta.



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Board of Directors, 2016

Fred Pinto, President: fredpinto1@gmail.com 705-476-9006

Marc Buchanan, Vice-president

Joe Boivin

Sonje Bols-Hill

Irene Kasch

Mary Marrs

Stephen Mitchell

April Phelps

Oriana Pokorny

Paul Smylie

Sarah Wheelan

Past Presidents

Dick Tafel

Ted Price

Steph Romaniuk

Angela Martin

Greg Boxwell

Jeremy St. Onge

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Bird Wing

Dick Tafel, Chairman: rtafel@sympatico.ca. 705-472-7907

Gary Sturge, Treasurer

Renee Levesque, Bird Wing Scribe.

A Bird Wing newsletter is published each month, except December, and sent to members by email and posted on the revamped Nipissing Naturalists Club website, <http://www.nipnats.com/club-activities/bird-wing/> - also see photos taken by Bird Wing members that Sarah Wheelan has now posted in the Bird Wing section of the website.

The Woodland Observer is published electronically each month from September to June and sent to members by email and posted **on the recently revamped Nipissing Naturalists Club website** <http://www.nipnats.com/> under the link, Newsletter.

Editor: Renee Levesque: rlevesque1948@gmail.com

Contributors this issue: Joe Boivin, Sonje Bols, Dorothy deKiewiet, Larry Dyke, Kaye Edmonds, Kerry Fry, Renee Levesque, Mary Marrs, Steve Pitt, Nicole Richardson, Steph Romaniuk, Paul Smylie, Gary Sturge, Dick Tafel, Brent Turcotte, and Sarah Wheelan.

Special thanks to Roseanne Van Shie and her son, Peter, and their wonderful huskies; Mattawa Museum; the Rutherglen Ramblers and the people of Bonfield for their generous contributions; and Peter Holland for permission to use his photo of a dragonfly from his website, Nature Photography.

Membership Fees

Yearly Nipissing Naturalist Club membership fees are: single, \$20. 00; family, \$30.00.

There is an **additional \$5.00 membership fee for Bird Wing** which meets the **fourth Tuesday of every month in the auditorium of the North Bay Public Library from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.** This fee is paid directly to Bird Wing.



The Nipissing Naturalist Club is affiliated with Ontario Nature: <http://www.ontarionature.org/>.