

It's Time to Renew Your Membership.

See Diane Peter at the September Meeting or call her at 905-725-0982. Complete Form on page 6

What's Inside

President's Message

Future Outings

Past Outings

Ontario Nature Report

Tree-mendous Trembling Aspen

Watching Birds for Science

Membership Renewal Form



The November meeting features our annual bucket raffle. Bring your donations of gently used nature books and other nature items, wine, chocolate, preserves, fair-trade coffee etc. to the meeting. Raffle tickets will be sold prior to the meeting: 3 tickets for \$2 or 10 tickets for \$5.

Newsletter

Submissions

Please submit your pictures and articles for the January newsletter no later than January 15 to Nancy Muzik at john_nancy_m@rogers.com

THE NATURALIST

DURHAM REGION FIELD NATURALISTS
CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION
www.drfn.ca drfn1955@hotmail.com

President's Message

Forest bathing! What the heck is that? With or without clothes? It's a term I heard about only recently so I had to do a bit of research and find out what it's all about. Just google it and a plethora of web sites appear!

According to [Forest Holidays](#) "The Japanese practice of shinrin yoku, or Forest Bathing, is good for both physical and mental wellbeing. It is proven to reduce stress hormone production, improve feelings of happiness and free up creativity, as well as lower heart rate and blood pressure, boost the immune system and accelerate recovery from illness." This British company actually has holidays based on the concept of forest bathing. Looks like it's with clothes! Thank goodness!



If you want to read a result of a study into the importance of experiencing natural areas to the mental health of people read this article published in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America \(PNAS\)](#).

Or this study [The physiological effects of Shinrin-yoku](#) published in the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health (PMC) which found a correlation of increased physical health after "forest bathing". There are even studies that link forest bathing to an increase in immunity functions and anti-cancer proteins. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17903349>

As a child I loved to spend time in the forest just sitting and taking in the smells and sounds and sights. There was a particular little glade I used to go to. In the springtime the sun shone warmly into this secluded little opening in the forest. In between the calls of chickadees and blue jays there was a calming silence, a silence that cannot be found around us in the busy city. Even in our own homes with our appliances and buzzing we cannot find that kind of silence. I also had a favourite little oak tree situated on a hillside. I used to like to hang by the knees from one of its lower branches -all by myself surrounded by a forest of



Submitted by Lois Gillette

Upcoming Meetings

Meetings: last Monday of each month except June-August and December

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Civic Rec Complex, Bobby Orr Room, 99 Thornton S., Oshawa.

Come a little early to enjoy conversation and refreshments ('lug-a-mug')

November 26, 2018

Kevin Callan

"Paddling the Thames: An Epic Canoe Journey"

January 28, 2019

Otto Peter

Eastern South Africa Trip

February 25, 2019

Rayfield Pye

Hawk Identification Workshop

oak trees. Perhaps, coming from a big noisy family I instinctively knew that silence was to be treasured.

This fall we were lucky to have a spectacular showing of leaf colour. Even looking out my front windows at the bright reds, oranges and yellows of the trees in my neighborhood gave me a feeling of elation. Imagine what it was like in a whole forest of brilliant colour.

This November 3rd North Durham Nature had an outing on Forest Bathing at Crow's Pass Conservation Area lead by Patricia Baldwin. They invited us to "learn how nature is good for your health with a Canadian member of the International Society of Nature and Forest Medicine". I thought that I might like to join them but it turned out to be a cold rainy day although it did clear up later in the morning. Apparently, I am a fair-weather forest bather. At a recent Ontario Nature meeting Patricia mentioned that she was going to Japan to learn more about the practice. I hope we can get her to lead us on such an outing in the future.

Lois Gillette

Future Outings

Sunday, November 25 at 8 AM

Niagara Gulls

Leader: Rayfield Pye

Difficulty: Casual walking on sidewalks will be required.

Niagara Falls is a common destination for gulls in late fall and winter. A variety of interesting birds have been seen in the past including Lesser Black-backed, Slaty-backed, and California Gulls; Black-legged Kittiwake; Brant; Purple Sandpiper; Red Phalarope, Canvasback; Common Loons; etc. Niagara is also home to Tufted Titmice so a handful of seed may get you a lifer.

Meet to car pool at the southwest corner of the Pickering GO station. The drive to Niagara Falls should take approximately 2 hours.

It can be very cold, wet and/or snowy beside the Niagara River. (It can also be warm and dry...) Dress to stay warm and dry. Wear layers of clothing for flexibility.

Bring water and a lunch or prepare to dine at Tim's in Chippawa.

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Saturday, December 22

Durham Christmas Bird Count

Leader: Contact Rayfield Pye to participate @ 905-436-7998 or raypye@interlinks.net.

A sign-up sheet will be available at the November meeting.
Check for weather forecast and dress accordingly.

Saturday, January 12 at 8:45 AM

Annual Winter Bird Feeder Tour and Potluck Lunch

Organized with the help of Judy Bryson.

This year, we're hoping to see a variety of northern finches that have headed south in search of food. There are good possibilities of Siskins and Redpolls.

Meet at Mount Zion United Church to drop off food. (Drive north on Westney Road past highway 7 to Concession 8 and turn right (east). Address is 3000 Concession 8 just east of Salem Road.)

9:00 departure for a driving tour of feeders.
Lunch around noon at Mount Zion United Church.
Dress warmly!

Don Docherty

Past Outings

Darlington Generating Station Parkland

October 13

Darlington Generating Station parklands proved to be rich in species. Our group only did the loop that surrounds the berm but we saw a good variety of resident and migrating birds.

Our outing was held under less than ideal weather conditions. It was cool and breezy but trees and the generating station berm provided a wind break for most of our walking. The trail was in fine shape so the walking was easy. There were large numbers of Blue Jays quietly flying west. We also saw a kettling of migrating Turkey Vultures.

The west side of the berm features mature trees and a long fence covered in wild grape. We saw Brown Creeper, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Nuthatches looking for food on the tree trunks and Yellow-rumped Warblers hunting insects on the leaves.

Sparrows and Hermit Thrush concentrated on the grape.

The north side used to be lined by mature trees as well but they are now gone. Grassy slopes, small shrubs and another fence have replaced them. There were numerous Phoebe's hunting flying insects and smaller numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers in the shrubs.



Submitted by Brian Reid

The east side was a bit like the west but perhaps a little more sheltered. The thrush were absent (or hidden) but warblers were common including a male Black-throated Blue Warbler in sharp breeding plumage. Participants also saw Blue-headed Vireo and American Redstart. We also had large numbers of White-throated Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers in a patch of Red Osier Dogwood.

The southern portion of the trail is bounded by a large pond that had Trumpeter Swan, Mallard, Green-winged Teal, Great Blue Heron and a pair of Greater Yellowlegs.



Submitted by Brian Reid

Raptors present included Sharp-shinned and Coopers Hawks, Merlin and Northern Harrier.

The Darlington trails can be productive throughout the year. It's a great place for a stroll but don't forget your binoculars.

Don Docherty

Ontario Nature Report

There is still time for you to wish your family and friends a happy holiday season with our exclusive 2018 greeting cards. This year's card features a photo of festive red crossbills by renowned nature photographer Robert McCaw, as well as a heart-warming seasonal message. Proceeds from the sale of the cards support our work to protect the wild species and spaces you love, and help spread our conservation message. Order your cards now before they are all gone.

<https://ontarionature.org/give/other-ways-to-give/greeting-cards/>

Join a Christmas Bird Count in Your Community. Each year, Christmas Bird Counts give bird lovers a reason to relish winter. This year the counting will take place between December 14 and January 5, and the results will inform long-term studies of bird migration and bird population trends. If you are interested in joining a community count, visit our website for a working list of Ontario Nature member groups running Christmas Bird Counts.

Protect the Places We Love this Giving Tuesday! This year, Ontario Nature is participating with a campaign to help protect the province's wild spaces. For every dollar you give, up to \$15,000, our proud sponsor, Ontario Power Generation, will match it. Double your impact for nature: November 27, 2018 is Giving Tuesday, so protect the places you love, and please donate for the future of Ontario's wild spaces.

Maria Prisciak

Tree-mendous Trembling Aspen

An excerpt from Rachel Irwin's article in *The Arboretum*, University of Guelph.

What makes this widely distributed tree so special?

Brilliant Foliage: especially in the fall when it changes to golden-yellow

Photosynthesizing Bark: Cells in the bark contain chlorophyll which can take on photosynthesis in the absence of leaves! It is most abundant in early spring when the leaves have not fully emerged. Take a look at the bark of the Trembling Aspen and notice that it is green and has diamond markings. These markings contain lenticels which assist with gas exchange between the plant tissues and atmosphere.

Giant Superorganisms: Trembling Aspen reproduce from their roots. All the trees in an Aspen stand likely originate from a single seedling, making them one genetically identical superorganism that is connected underground. Even though an individual Aspen's life is approximately 100 years, their ability to reproduce clones a colony of Aspens can live thousands of years. A 100-acre trembling aspen grove in Utah called Pando is estimated to be 80,000 years old. It is the oldest living organism in the world.



Fire Resistant: Trembling Aspen are considered to be fire resistant due to their extensive root system. Heat from a fire actually aides in sprout production. It is also considered a pioneer species after a large disturbance to the ecosystem.

Nurse Tree: The Aspen is considered a nurse tree as it is fast growing and provides shade and protection to slower growing plants. They also support large populations of animals and their buds are a food source. In addition, the bark contains salicin, an aspirin like substance that has been used to treat burns, back pain and eczema. So, the

Trembling Aspen can literally nurse us back to health.

Watching Birds for Science!

It's that time of year again! The weather is changing, and the flurries are starting to fall. It's time to fill the bird feeders and get out the suet blocks!

Like many of you I enjoy watching the birds at my bird feeders and am always excited when a new species shows up. This year it sounds like we might have some exciting species visiting from up north, species such as Pine Siskins, Common Redpolls, Evening Grosbeaks and more! So, it is a great time to set up some bird feeders and watch the birds.



Pine Siskins - Submitted by Kristen Osborne

Did you know that you can contribute to science by simply watching the birds at your bird feeders? Project FeederWatch is a citizen science project that is operated by Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada. You simply watch birds for two days a week and record what you see. Project FeederWatch is a chance for everyday people to contribute to science and our knowledge and understanding of birds.

I've been counting and submitting my data to Project FeederWatch for 6 seasons now. One of my favourite things is getting to explore my data on the website. The website shows you graphs of the birds you report, and you can look back and see how things have changed in your backyard over time. For example, by looking at my data I can see that Common Grackles tend re-appear back at my feeders in the first couple of weeks of March. Before

the winter of 2016 I had very few to no sightings of House Sparrows at my feeders, compared to last season when I had on average 10 a week with a record count of 25 in November of 2017.

Through the data that people across Canada and the United States submit using Project FeederWatch, scientists can draw pictures of winter bird abundance and distribution across North America. While they are looking at the trends of species being reported, they can also look for what species aren't being reported that should be! So, reports with few to no birds are just as important as reports with lots of species!

So, if you enjoy watching the birds at your bird feeder, turn your love of birds into scientific discoveries with Project FeederWatch! The project runs November through to the first week of April every year and you can find more information at feederwatch.org.

Kristen Osborne

Friends of a Second Marsh Outing

wwalancik@secondmarsh.ca. *The event will be postponed due to inclement weather (rain, significant temperature drop).'" data-bbox="521 528 942 940"/>

Winter Walk & Chickadee Feeding

Sunday, December 2, 2018
1:00—3:00 pm
Second Marsh & McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Areas, Oshawa

Meet at the wooden information kiosk located after the woods, on the south side of Colonel Sam Drive. Parking is permitted on the road. Bring the family and join us to...

Feed some feathered friends, taste some Cedar Tea & make a craft. Enjoy some hot chocolate—don't forget to lug-a-mug.

Guided Hike @ 1:30 pm

For more information, please contact Wioletta at Friends of Second Marsh at 905.723.5047 or wwalancik@secondmarsh.ca.

*The event will be postponed due to inclement weather (rain, significant temperature drop).

Membership Application Form

Please check the appropriate area to indicate membership type.
For Family membership please indicate the number of family members.

Individual (\$25) _____

Family (\$35) _____ # of People _____

Life Member (\$300) _____

Family Life Member (\$450) ___# of people

Kindly complete all sections of this information form in order that we can update our address & telephone records.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

The membership year is September to June. Memberships not renewed by November 30th are considered lapsed.
Membership fees may be paid by cash or cheque at the DRFN Genera Meeting, or a cheque may be mailed, payable to:
Durham Region Field Naturalists, Box 54031, 8 King St. E., Oshawa ON, L1H 1A9
Do not send cash by mail.
Revenue Canada Charitable: No. 891631574RR0001.