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## Newsletter Submissions

Please submit your  
pictures and articles for  
the May newsletter no  
later than May 15, 2018.

Email all submissions to  
Nancy Muzik at  
[john\\_nancy\\_m@rogers.co](mailto:john_nancy_m@rogers.co)

# THE NATURALIST

DURHAM REGION FIELD NATURALISTS  
CONSERVATION THROUGH EDUCATION  
[www.drfn.ca](http://www.drfn.ca)      [drfn1955@hotmail.com](mailto:drfn1955@hotmail.com)

## President's Message

So, you are a naturalist and you, of course, know that climate change is indeed real. But you have a friend or even a relative who thinks it is all baloney, fake news, something to believe or not believe. What do you say to them? Do you just shake your head and walk away or do you try to make them see reason? If the head of the government in the USA denies climate change is occurring, then how can we stand up to that?



Well the first thing you need to do is arm yourself with the facts. There are a zillion myths concerning climate that are used by deniers. Well maybe not a zillion. We are talking about facts here. The Skeptical Scientist website <https://www.skepticalscience.com/argument.php> lists 197 climate myths and cites scientifically sound arguments debunking these myths. One myth in particular says that “500 scientists refute the consensus.” “That humans are causing global warming is the position of the Academies of Science from 80 countries plus many scientific organizations that study climate science. More specifically, around 95% of active climate researchers actively publishing climate papers endorse the consensus position. “The science isn't settled” “That human CO2 is causing global warming is known with high certainty & confirmed by observations.” Another argument is that “It's a natural cycle” “No known natural forcing fits the fingerprints of observed warming except anthropogenic greenhouse gases.” I recently read an article regarding this last argument. Can't find it now, of course, but the gist was – yes, climate has changed in the past and will change in the future without the aid of mankind but what has happened in the past does not preclude that other factors may be acting to cause this particular change.

Read also David Suzuki's Mar. 1, 2018 article “Climate science deniers' credibility tested” <https://david Suzuki.org/story/climate-science-deniers-credibility-tested/> This recent article in the Guardian is an interesting

## 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')*

**March 26, 2018**

**Martyn Obbard - Polar Bears and Climate Change**

**April 30, 2018**

**Josh Sayers – Ontario Badgers**

**May 28, 2018**

**AGM and Members Night**

read for those looking for climate change facts – “Arctic has warmest winter on record: 'It's just crazy, crazy stuff' <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/mar/06/arctic-warmest-winter-record-climate-change>

To make you feel a little better National Geographic has some good news about what's going on in that country to the south of us. <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/05/trump-climate-change-paris-agreement-california-emissions/>

*Lois Gillette*

## Future Outings

**Saturday, April 14 at 7:00 AM**

Algonquin Provincial Park

We'll be looking for birds that are more common in the boreal forest. There are good possibilities of Evening Grosbeaks and both Crossbills. Spruce Grouse and Black-backed Woodpecker nest in Algonquin but finding them is the challenge.

This trip is contingent upon good road and weather conditions.

Bring a lunch. (Include something for the Grey Jays!)

Directions: Meet to car pool at 7:00 AM North parking lot at the Northview Seniors' Centre at Ritson and Beatrice Roads.

Alternately, meet at the West Gate (Dwight) park entrance at 10:00 AM.

Leader: Rayfield Pye

Difficulty: Snow and ice may make walking difficult at times.

Bring sunscreen if there will be sun. Dress for the weather conditions.

**Saturday, May 19 at 10:00 AM**

Steven's Gulch Wild Flower and Nature Walk

Stephens Gulch is a little jewel in Spring with a wide assortment of wild flowers. Meet at the Stephen's Gulch parking lot.

Directions: Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area is located northeast of Bowmanville. To reach the Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area parking lot, following these directions:

If coming from the south: From Liberty Street North, turn east (right) on Concession Road 4, turn north (left) on Bethesda Road, turn east (right) on Stephen's Mill Road, proceed along Stephen's Mill Road to Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area parking lot

If coming from the north: From Taunton Road (east of Liberty Street North), turn south on Bethesda Road, turn east (left) on Stephen's

Mill Road, proceed along Stephen's Mill Road to Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area parking lot.

Leaders: Our DRFN Plant Experts

Difficulty: easy walking

Bring appropriate clothing based on the weather forecast. Portions of the area may be slick and muddy depending on the weather so bring appropriate footwear.

Bring water and insect repellent (just in case).

Weather permitting, consider bringing a lunch.

**Saturday, May 26, 10:00 a.m.**

Butterfly Garden Spring Clean-Up -

There's lots to do to get the Butterfly Garden ready for summer - edging, spreading wood-chips, weeding, pulling grass, pruning, cutting dead stalks, planting marigolds, cleaning up litter, etc. etc. Please come and lend a hand to keep this pollinator garden going.

Bring garden tools, gloves, drinking water and dress for the weather.

Park on side streets Glencairn or Ansley, then walk a short distance to the garden on Rossland Road just west of the Oshawa Creek.

Note: Help is also (desperately) needed over the summer – a couple of hours once, or as often as you can come. Contact Dianne to arrange.

Questions: Dianne Pazaratz 905-433-7875 or dpazaratz@sympatico.ca

**DFRN Annual Weekend Outing – June 8-10, 2018**

This year we will return to one of our favourite places, the Peter's cottage on Canoe Lake near Verona off of Highway 38 north of Kingston. It lies on the southern edge of the Canadian Shield. This

area has a great diversity of bird species due to its location in the Frontenac Arch which connects northern and southern eco-regions. Always an exciting place to visit, especially in the springtime when birds are on territory and nesting season is in full swing.

There are 2 bedrooms available for guests at the Peter's cottage, one of which is a Bunkie. They will be available on a first come, first served basis. A few spots will be available for primitive camping. There is also a hotel in Westport, the nearest village. There will be a sign-up sheet at the March meeting. Or contact me at dlgill@sympatico.ca.

-Lois Gillette

## Past Outings

**Casual Winter Bird Walk – February 18, 2018**

Our Lynde Shores outing was delayed a week due to bad weather. Conditions were quite pleasant and our group had many close encounters with Chickadees as they readily fed from the hand. A harbinger of spring, Red-winged Blackbirds and Brown-headed Cowbirds called from great heights in the trees. Based on a tip, our group searched for and located a Northern Saw-whet Owl.



Submitted by: John Muzik

After everyone had a chance to see the bird from a discreet distance, we headed to Halls Road where an Eastern Towhee had been seen.

In transit, some members tracked an interesting hawk at Sobey's Pond. This proved to be an uncommon, Red-shouldered Hawk that stayed in the area for a few days to hunt the fields.



Submitted by: John Muzik

Those who missed the hawk, found a Northern Shrike as they drove down Halls Road.



Submitted by: Maria Prisciak 1

Upon our arrival we found that the Towhee was present but it chose not to appear as we waited. A Red-breasted Nuthatch that fed from the hand was our consolation.

### **Leslie Street Spit/Tommie Thompson Park – March 3, 2018**

Tommie Thompson Park can be intimidating in winter but we were very lucky and had great walking on dry asphalt and dirt throughout.

Despite the ice, there were quite a few ducks in open patches. We saw many Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye and Redheads. Common and Red-breasted Mergansers, Mallard, Gadwall and Bufflehead were also present.

The wind may have kept some birds quiet and hidden in the tall grass. Halfway through our 11.5 KM walk, we found a male Snowy Owl at the tip of the spit. I'm sure that many walked passed the owl as it peacefully sat on a rock. As we walked north, we checked the frozen ponds and found a Herring Gull enjoying a large fish and another Snowy Owl sitting comfortably on the ice.



Submitted by Brian Reid

Given the conditions, we were surprised by the absence of other raptors. We also expected Killdeer but we never heard their load call. Walk complete, everyone headed home. I'm sure that we all slept soundly that night.



Submitted by Brian Reid

*Don Docherty*

## Great Backyard Bird Count Summary

The annual Great Backyard Bird Count, held on the Family Day weekend, February 16-19, 2018 set new participation records. The DRFN submitted our own checklist during the Casual Winter Bird walk

which included a few seldom seen species in the winter.



Submitted by Maria Prisciak 1

Here are some interesting facts from the count:

- Canada is number 2 in the world for number of checklists submitted with the USA being number one
- Ontario is number one in Canada for the number of checklists
- There was a high number of Bald Eagles reported in Southern Ontario
- A rare Tufted Duck was reported in Windermere Ontario
- The most reported bird in the world was the Northern Cardinal

*Nancy Muzik*

## Ontario Nature Report

Spring is just a few weeks away and as a nature lover, no doubt you're excited. During the spring we see so much growth in nature, and the same goes for the work that we've got on the go. We are thrilled that the Canadian government tabled the best federal budget for biodiversity conservation in decades. It plans to invest \$1.3 billion over 5 years to support biodiversity and protect species at risk. The budget includes \$500 million, which will be matched to create a new \$1 billion Nature Fund to secure private land, support species protection, and help build Indigenous capacity to conserve land and

species. This is something Ontario Nature and many of our members were advocating for, and we hope this will help Canada meet its commitment to protect at least 17 percent of lands and inland waters by 2020.

The new and improved Ontario Nature Website is up and running. Go online and read the latest ON Nature magazine, or advocate for nature by keeping informed about current campaigns. Become a citizen scientist and submit your wildlife sightings to help collect data to fuel the fight to protect our endangered species.

The next Ontario Nature Lake Ontario North Regional Meeting will be held in Goodwood on Sunday, May 6th. Everyone is welcome and carpooling can be arranged.

*Maria Prisciak*

## Volunteers Needed for the Following Events

### Durham BioBlitz 2018



Submitted by: John Foster 1

Fellow Naturalists, the Ontario BioBlitz is coming to Durham Region.

In 2018 the Durham BioBlitz will be hosted by

both the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). There will be two bookend events and several smaller mini-events between May and September.

CLOCA is hosting the spring bookend event at Heber Down Conservation Area which will be run from Friday, May 11 to Sunday, May 13.

Submitted by John Foster 1



TRCA is hosting the autumn bookend event based in the Duffin's Creek Watershed which will be run from Saturday, September 22 to Sunday, September 23.

Between these two bookend events, several smaller mini-events on various nature subjects are planned. Activities at the two bookend events include an intensive scientific BioBlitz, a Guided Blitz, and a Public Festival of nature themed activities for all ages.

The BioBlitz is using an electronic method of recording observations called "iNaturalist". It is an excellent method for recording and storing data that is easy for scientists and the public to use.

Volunteers are needed to help conduct the BioBlitz. If you are interested in participating in the Durham BioBlitz email: [info@ontariobioblitz.ca](mailto:info@ontariobioblitz.ca), or [www.ontariobioblitz.com](http://www.ontariobioblitz.com) for more information, registration, and updates. You may also email me at: [gavian.stellatan@gmail.com](mailto:gavian.stellatan@gmail.com).

*John Foster*

## Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve- Garlic Mustard Pull

**Saturday, April 21 at 9:00 AM**

Volunteers are needed to help control the Garlic Mustard at Thickson Woods. Meet at Dennis and Margaret's house. Bring garden gloves and something to kneel on. If you have gardening tools

please bring them. There will be a limited supply of tools available to borrow.

## Feathered Friends Festival

**Saturday, June 2, 2018**

The 5th Annual Feathered Friends Festival is scheduled for Saturday, June 2 from 10 - 3 pm.

Volunteers are needed for various duties - lead bird hikes, help with garden planting, face painting, craft station, bird house building, event setup and take down.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Wioletta with Friends of Second Marsh at [wwalancik@secondmarsh.ca](mailto:wwalancik@secondmarsh.ca), or 905.723.5047.

## Huron Fringe Birding Festival

May 25-28 and May 31 – June 3

McGregor Provincial Park.

Registration and list of events are located at <http://friendsofmacgregor.org/page/huron-fringe-birding-festival>

## Events Here and There

# Let's Bee Friends!!

Sunday, April 15, 2018 at 2 p.m.

Diane Hamre Recreation Complex  
1780 Rudell Road, Newcastle

Free event, of interest to all ages.



Join Entymologist Kayla Vizza and Apiarist Emily Rose for a fascinating look at the world of bees. Learn about bees' unique biology and habits, the role they play as pollinators for a third of our food supply, how honey is made and more.

You may even see part of an active hive with live bees!!



@Samuel\_Wilmot



Facebook.com/Samuel-Wilmot-Nature-Area-218421738182957



swnanews.wordpress.com



Clarington



## Fabulous Fall Fungi

WORKSHOPS 2018

INSTRUCTOR: RICHARD AARON  
PRESENTED BY: QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BIOLOGICAL STATION

SESSION 1: SEPTEMBER 24-28

SESSION 2: SEPTEMBER 30-OCTOBER 5

SESSION 3: OCTOBER 9-12



Now in its 9th year, Fabulous Fall Fungi is a popular series of multi-day, hands-on workshops situated in a beautiful country setting where participants learn about fungal identification, ecology and natural history. Typically, 150-200+ species are IDed per session.

Suitable for all levels; max 12 per session.

Meals & accommodation included. Location: Queen's University Biological Station. Early registration is advised. <https://qubs.ca>.

*Richard Aaron*

## Proposal for Communicating Bird Observations in Durham Region

Charmaine Anderson is starting up a new way for Durham birders to keep in touch with each other and provide real time observations on birds that may be of interest locally, but not province wide. Long Point has started using WhatsApp as a way to get in touch with people. Charmaine has done some research and created a Durham Birds group. The aim is not to replace Ontbird reports, all rare sightings should be posted there first, but birds such as the Brown Thrasher, Eastern Towhee etc., could be posted to the local group. Below is a list of posting suggestions:

- out of season birds — Thrasher etc.,
- uncommon birds — Lapland Longspur
- Rare birds (in addition to being posted to Ontbirds — advantage of this is that people get a text vs. an email that may go unread for hours)
- Updates on locations of ongoing rare birds if not posted to Ontbirds — Ross's Goose
- other relevant Durham birding news
- No owl locations posted
- no breeding bird locations
- no sensitive species — Goshawk etc.

no reports of birds on private property unless homeowner permission is received

Advantage of WhatsApp

- you will receive a text when a person posts to the group
- you can set the group to mute, so you won't receive the text but can go into the group at any time to review the posts
- it works with Android, Apple and Windows phone
- minimal maintenance for the group, easy to add or delete people
- You don't need a data plan on your phone but must be in a WIFI location to receive notifications

Disadvantage of WhatsApp

- It does use internet — you can keep cellular data off for WhatsApp and only turn it on if you want to check for notifications
- You need to have a phone number to receive texts — although I'm looking into whether people can receive messages through their email address

How to get started:

1. Download WhatsApp to your phone, you can also download to your PC: <https://www.whatsapp.com/download/>
2. Open the link to the group, if you open it on your phone after downloading the app, it should take you to the group to join

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/oeNpvgfoEmJBSxY866zwVl>

If the link doesn't work, please send Charmaine an email at [charmmanderson@gmail.com](mailto:charmmanderson@gmail.com) and she will add you to the group.

I had WhatsApp on my phone already as I use it for free voice over internet long distance calling when I travel. I easily added the link to the group and have already received several text messages. It would be great if Charmaine is able to get this going in the Durham region. Give it a try.

*Nancy Muzik*