



The Swallow



Volume 21, # 1
Autumn 2003

Happy 20th Anniversary (Aug 10, 2003)

Directors:

President: Carey Purdon	625-2610	Jean Brereton	Rob Cunningham
Vice-President: Leo Boland	735-7117	Merv Fediuk	Myron Loback
Treasurer: Bernd Krueger	625-2879	Chris Michener	Elizabeth Reeves
Secretary: Manson Fleguel	735-7703	Benita Richardson	Gwen Purdon



The Rusty Blackbird is aptly named, but only for its Fall plumage. Photo taken on Oct. 6, 2002 at Lake Dore.

Video frame by Chris Michener

Membership in the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists is available by writing to: the PAFN, Box1242, Pembroke, ON K8A 6Y6. 2003/2004 dues are: Student \$5, Senior \$5, Individual \$7, Family \$10, Individual Life \$150, Family Life \$200.

Editor, The Swallow: Chris Michener, R.R.1, Golden Lake, ON K0J 1X0 - Submissions welcome!
ph: (613) 625-2263; e-mail: cmichener@renc.igs.net
PAFN internet page: <http://www.renc.igs.net/~cmichener/pafn.index.html>

e v e n t s • t r i p s

Westmeath Dunes

Dates: Sunday, Sep. 28 at 8 AM.

Place: Trip starts from the municipal boat launch in the town of Westmeath. Coming from the west on County Road 12, turn left in Westmeath before the gas station at the blue building and continue down to the water.

Species sometimes encountered are Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, American Pipit, Lapland Longspur as well as various shorebirds, gulls, ducks and geese. We'll drive from the town west to Sand Point Road for the walk.

Organizer Chris Michener -
ph 613-625-2263 or e-mail at
cmichener@renc.igs.net

Lake Dore Birds

Date: Nov. 1 at 9 AM

Place: Meet at the Township Park. Go south 300m. on Hwy 41, from the Lake Dore Rd. (Cty Rd 30) to Township Park Rd. The focus of this trip will be water birds, but a few songbirds may still be frequenting the riparian habitat. Some species that have been seen on Lake Dore in the first week in Nov. are Red-throated Loon, Tundra Swan, Brant, the three grebes, the three scoters and the three mergansers. Organizer Chris Michener ph 613-625-2263 or e-mail at cmichener@renc.igs.net

Eganville Christmas Bird Count

Date: Sunday, Dec. 14

Place: Eganville circle includes Augsburg, the town of Golden Lake, Green Lake, Lake Dore, Mink Lake and more. To view the Count circle map and download forms, go to our web page. (see front cover of The Swallow for URL)

After the Count, participants are invited

to gather at Carey & Gwen Purdon's home at 5PM to go over results and share a meal. They are the first house on right, south of Hwy. 60 on Island View Dr. This is about 3 km. west of the town of Golden Lake. Please contact Carey to confirm participation. ph. 613-625-2610 - email: purdon@renc.igs.net. To view the map and download forms, go to our web page. (see cover for URL) Cost: \$3.00

Pembroke Christmas Bird Count

Date: Saturday, Dec. 20

Place: In a traditional 15 km. diameter circle. Feeder watchers count birds in their yards, while field participants drive, ski or walk a pre-designated area keeping track of the numbers of birds. Reports are given to the compiler, Manson Fleguel, after the Count.

Participants are invited to meet at Manson & Judy's around 5 PM to go over results and enjoy pizza courtesy of the Club. Field Participants are asked to contribute \$3.00 for publishing costs in the Audubon CBC yearly report.

To view the Count circle map and download forms, go to our web page. (see front cover of The Swallow for URL) Please contact Manson to confirm participation, 613-732-7703 - email: mfleguel@nrtco.net.

Killaloe Christmas Bird Count

Date: Saturday, Dec. 27

Place: Circle is centred in Killaloe. Participate same as Pembroke Count. (see front cover of The Swallow for URL) Cost: \$3.00. Meet at Golden Sands Restaurant in Deacon at 5 PM after Count to share experiences and tally results. Please contact Chris Michener to confirm participation. 613-625-2263 - email: cmichener@renc.igs.net)

Trip Reports

Bellowes Bay Field Trip - April 26, 2003

by Manson Fleguel

You know when winter is finally over; the annual trip to the Bay is the first event the Club organizes and there are a number of people who attend each year. Ice or flood conditions can be hard to predict but this year neither posed a problem.

This year 13 folks met at the Marina and we shivered in the 9:00 AM winds. No special species were noted so we left for the center part of town to look for the elusive Cardinals. I had scouted out a singing male a few days earlier, but this wasn't enough to let the group have a look at him. However, a House Finch sang for us. From here we headed east towards Westmeath.

Plenty of Canada Geese were in the damp fields, but the large flocks of ducks that we had seen the previous year were not there. A Northern Harrier flew low over a weedy field beside the road, so close that we could watch his head movements as he scanned the ground for prey. Wild Turkeys, which are becoming so common, were also not in their usual field for the group.

The trip from Ron Laderoutes farmhouse to the Bay was dry. A highlight of the walk was a lone Greater Yellowlegs calling as it flew overhead. We were able to walk to the edge of the water because of the low conditions this year. Bufflehead, Mallards, Green-winged Teal, American Wigeon and a lot of Ring-necked Ducks were spotted. At one point, the full field of view of our scopes was completely lined with Ring-necked Ducks reminding us of a spectacular nature video. As we peered out at the Bay, a lone Merlin flew over the group as it crossed the open water. A Brown Creeper cooperated fully as it sang close to the group, and did its upward spiral on sev-



This Brown Creeper recovers its equilibrium after hitting a window. It flew away seconds later. Photo taken on Sep. 24, 2002 out Chris' window.

eral bare trees for all to enjoy. A Rusty Blackbird also sang for us.

Two Osprey were hunting over the west end of the Bay and the group observed at least one spectacular unsuccessful dive. A few minutes later, an immature Bald Eagle made an appearance, probably a second year bird.

At about 11:30, we felt we had seen all of the species available so it was back to the cars for the trip home. Any day of birding is a good day.

We ended the trip with 48 species identified. Here are the remaining species not mentioned in the above article:

Common Loon, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Wood Duck, American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Common Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Killdeer, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Rock Dove, Mourning Dove, Belted Kingfisher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Blue Jay, American Crow, Common Raven, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, European Starling, Chipping Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Dark-eyed Junco, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle, Brown-headed Cowbird, American Goldfinch, House Sparrow.



Fish Hatchery Walk - May 18, 2003 by Myron Loback

The annual Mothers Day Weekend walk to the Fish Hatchery was delayed one week to the Victoria Day Weekend and still things were late. The Canada Geese were nesting but there were no young. Also noticeably absent were the black flies and mosquitoes.

Twelve people attended the walk, which started at the top of the hill and we all made the three-hour walk without a bug bite. We managed to observe 36 species, which included an American Bittern seen flying overhead, and then we heard it as well. A pair of Green Herons flew by but the highlight of the afternoon seemed to be a pair of Baltimore Orioles actually seen building a nest. Both male and female were weaving and discussing where things should be. As this spectacle was going on, a Sharp-shinned Hawk flew over carrying a mouse in its claws. This really wowed the crowd. Winter Wrens were calling, as were Veery and Black-throated Green Warblers. Mallards and Wood Ducks both came in to land on the water. Tur-

key Vultures soared overhead. A lone Pileated Woodpecker drummed in the distance on something hollow. Some of us heard Ruffed Grouse drumming. It was busy with lots to see and hear. We visited for a while in the parking lot and our walk at the Fish Hatchery was over for another year.

Here is a complete list of the 36 species observed:

Mourning Dove, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Winter Wren, Black-capped Chickadee, Red-winged Blackbird, Ring-billed Gull, White-throated Sparrow, Turkey Vulture, American Robin, Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Goldfinch, Song Sparrow, Common Flicker, Common Grackle, Canada Goose, Yellow Warbler, Tree Swallow, American Crow, Swamp Sparrow, American Bittern, Green Heron, Mallard, Common Snipe, Baltimore Oriole, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Downy Woodpecker, Common Yellowthroat, Wood Duck, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Pileated Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Veery, Black-throated Green Warbler, Eastern Kingbird, Ruffed Grouse.



Jean, Carey, Leo, Ken, Myron and Martin intently look at waterfowl on Lake Dore during the 1999 Fall Lake Dore Trip. photo: Chris Michener

Lake Dore Odonate Count - August 2, 2003 by Carey Purdon

The weather up to the day of the count was predictably unsettled, with clouds and rain forecast all week for the count.

We awoke to a sunny morning, with great anticipation for another Lake Dore Ode Count.

Bob Braken and Chris Lewis were coming from Ottawa, and Jason Dombroskie was coming from Algonquin Park. Along with our regular crew here at PAFN we were in for some great odonating.

The participants did not let us down either, with a new count high of 47 species (bringing our count total to 61), 2504 (2277 Identified to species), 19 new count highs and 3 new count records....Wow!!

Our 3 new records are very unique and beautiful odonates, rare not only here in the PAFN circle (and the county) but also pro-

vincially.

Lestes eurinus, (Amber-winged Spreadwing) is the largest spreadwing we have in the province. Very few records in the Renfrew County (2 or 3) exist, and this is 2nd record for the PAFN circle to date that I am aware of. A large and colourful female *Gomphus cornutus* (Horned Clubtail), also provincially and locally rare was netted and identified. And finally a *Somatochlora kennedyi* (Kennedy's Emerald), (a member of the elusive *Somatochlora* genera) was netted at Micksburg Swamp. This sighting because of technical issues will require confirmation.

Chris Michener again provided an excellent representation from the *aeshna* genus.

I wish to thank all who attended and made this day a success.



The Pembroke Marina Walk - August 23, 2003 by Ken Hooles

The Pembroke Area Field Naturalist's Marina walk held on Saturday, August 23, had the best participant turnout in years. Eighteen persons turned up to see the birds around the marina and perhaps topple the Marina bird species record of 54 bird species established in 1986.

Unfortunately, this year the weather did not cooperate. Cool, strong winds created large whitecaps on the river. This eliminated any hope of spotting migrating shorebirds on the sandbars at the mouth of the Muskrat River and limited the usual number of water species usually found there.

In addition, the strong gusts of winds along the river shoreline were too strong for many songbird and migrating war-

bler species. It is a credit to the group that 19 bird species were identified on the walk. This was a record low number for the Pembroke Marina count. Last year, the group recorded 42 species, only 14 shy of the record of 1986.

It is interesting that the two highlights of the trip occurred both at the beginning of the walk, before most people arrived, and at the end when most were packing their cars getting ready to leave. The first highlight was a Bald Eagle that circled the marina, causing quite a stir with the local Ring-billed Gulls. The second highlight occurred at the end of the walk when a large Osprey flew low over the parking lot.

As previously stated, waterfowl were quite scarce this year. Yet despite the

weather conditions, the group identified four species that included Ring-billed Gull, a lone Merganser, a Black Duck, and a Mallard Duck.

There were few songbird species sighted on the walk. These included several Robins, American Goldfinch, a female Yellow Warbler, a Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Red-eyed Vireo, and several Ruby-throated Hummingbirds.

Three members of the Sparrow family were found on the count. These included numerous Song Sparrows, a Chipping Sparrow and a White-throated Sparrow. A few common birds were also observed such as

Mourning Doves, American Crows and several Starlings.

What was noticeably absent this year were duck species, shorebirds, herons, kingfishers, hawks, Merlin, and many migrating songbirds and warblers usually found at this time of year.

Despite the poor weather and lack of birds, the group displayed good sportsmanship and made the most of the outing. We can only hope that next year the weather will be more favorable. Who knows... maybe a new record will be set!



A Ring-billed Gull poses for a portrait in Eganville in August of 1993. photo: Chris Michener

PAFN Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

April 16, 2003 7:00 PM, Algonquin College, Rm. 201

Carey Purdon called the meeting to order at 7:25. A total of 32 persons attended the meeting. Carey then led a short quiz on colours included in bird names.

Bernd Krueger provided detailed treasurers report *[that is attached to these minutes]*. The treasurer's report was accepted as presented by Gwen Purdon seconded by Leo Boland.

Gwen then thanked Merv and Benita for their great help in making the 2002 yard sale a success again. It raised about \$263.00. A suggestion from the floor to sell used videos at future events was noted.

Under New business, the 2003 bird-a-thon fundraiser was discussed. Carey outlined the process, advising there will be a potluck supper at Benitas about 6:00 PM on the big day (May 31). A pledge sheet was handed out as well as a bird checklist, which could be used by the participants. All monies collected will be provided to the treasurer, Bernd, so receipts can be provided.

Manson read the minutes of the 2002 AGM. There being no corrections, Jean Brereton motioned for acceptance, seconded by Merv Fediuk.

Manson then read the nominating report. The list of candidates were Carey Purdon, Gwen Purdon, Liz Reeves, Bernd Krueger, Merv Fediuk, Myron Loback, Jean Brereton, Chris Michener, Robin Cunningham, Leo Boland, Benita Richardson and Manson Fleguel. There were no further nominations from the floor. The list was then declared elected upon a motion by Manson, seconded by Carey Purdon.

cont'd on page 8

Dreaming About Number 485 by Manson Fleguel

In May of 2003, our son, Brady and his fiancée, Astrid, moved to Vancouver, and in the same breath, advised us they were getting married out there. My first reaction, “Why not do it here before moving so far away and making all of us come that far to a wedding”, changed to “This could be my chance to get a few lifers as well as attending a wedding.” And so begins this story of finding a bird I have tried to find so hard before, and failed.... an American Dipper, as well as a few other species.

We left August 1, driving hard to get to the west before the wedding on August 8. The first Black-billed Magpies started to show up near Winnipeg and it seemed each prairie pot hole was filled with dabbling ducks. However, there were also lots of dried up sloughs as well, mud rings showing that this drought had only finished its evaporating influence recently. Hordes of grasshoppers in the southern part of Alberta coated the front of the car as well as leaving a sort of windrow along the sides of the traveled portion of the highway.

The wedding was spectacular, celebrated in an outdoor setting in Queen Elizabeth Park, the highest part of Vancouver, with the sun setting and the lights of the City and Grouse Mountain becoming evident. Our baby was no longer single.

The morning of the wedding, we went deep sea fishing out past the Lions Gate Bridge to about a distance of 10 miles. On our way back in, a Pigeon Guillemot launched from the cliffside and flew past our boat. This was my first record of that species so the fishing trip was worthwhile! We also landed 4 Salmon.

Two days after the wedding, it was decided that a trip to Vancouver wouldn't be complete without driving up to Whistler. Of course this road is being given a facelift prior to the 2010 Olympics so we wanted to see what all the fuss was about. The village was nice, but when everyone else had disappeared into the shops, I wandered off along the river that rushed past the village.

Several times earlier we had been in Dipper country, but I was unable to locate one. Once, my wife Judy had taken an unexpected dip in an icy mountain stream I had led her up; once, signs of Grizzlies around a stream sure to have Dippers, had forced me to abandon looking and once, a mudslide had obliterated the stream my Lanes Guide had suggested was a great spot to see Dippers. So finding this bird was now an obsession.

There was a small creek with a path beside, that emptied into the larger water. After following the path and the stream for about a kilometer, it widened as it passed through a meadow and my dream came true as I spied a starling-sized, sooty black bird wading in the shallow water, an American Dipper! This immature bird would all but disappear under the water, grasp a minnow, then walk out to



One can almost hear the high-pitched whistle of this Pigeon Guillemot caught in the act off San Francisco on June 24, 1995. photo: Chris Michener

dry ground to position it in its beak to swallow, then teeter its way back into the stream to repeat the process. I gazed at this little bird for 5 minutes! My excitement couldn't be contained and I couldn't get the full grin off my face for hours as I recounted the details of the sighting to anyone in my family who would listen. When asked if I had taken pictures, I replied that I had a 5-minute video up here (I tapped my head).

All too soon it was time to leave this beautiful city and I was able to add one more lifer as we drove back. In the Okenagan Valley, a small bird with a plume on



These California Quail were meandering near the Japanese Tea Gardens in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA, in June 1995. photo: Chris Michener

its head, posed on a fence near the roadway and after a quick stop and review of my book, I had a California Quail.

The addition of these 3 lifers brought my North American life list up to 487 species. I will always recall number 485!



AGM Minutes cont'd...

Door prizes and a coffee break followed. Then Mike Cadman provided an excellent show and talk on the current Breeding Bird Atlas, many times pointing out the large difference in occurrence of species from the previous atlas work in the early 1980's.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.



The Great Big - 'Name That Bird' Challenge

And now, more fun. Our PAFN checklist has 297 species listed. We have added quite a few species since the last checklist was published 15 years ago... so, in our own version of 'Pick Three', we are asking you to take a guess at the next 3 **new** checklist species. There are great prizes to be won, including field guides from Lone Pine Publishing and... you will get an official 'bragging rights' certificate!

To participate, email or mail (please see cover), by October 31, 2003, a list of 3 species you think will be the next birds added to our checklist to Chris. If one of your guesses becomes a new bird for the checklist, you win. **If you guess the 300th species, you win big!** Your list doesn't have to be in order, but it would be more fun to guess them in order, wouldn't it?

A few rules on checklist additions:

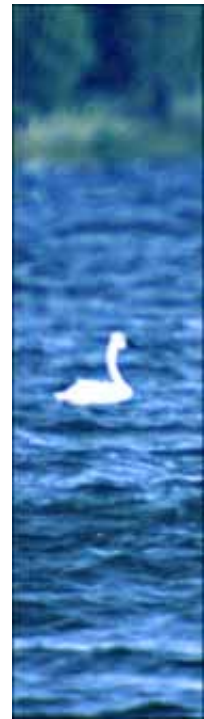
An introduced species must be self-sustaining in the wild for ten years to be acceptable as a new PAFN species. **Wild Turkey**, while on the checklist of the Birds of the Upper Ottawa Valley, was only introduced in 1997, so won't be eligible to be added to our PAFN species' list until 2007. Wild Turkey is the only species on the Birds of the Upper Ottawa Valley which isn't on the PAFN official list. In all other respects, the lists are identical (which makes sense because the PAFN supplied the list of birds for the Birds of the Upper Ottawa Valley). **Trumpeter Swans** are recently re-introduced in the East, so it will be a while before they are considered established. One was seen on a trip to Westmeath a couple of years ago, but was assumed to be from the re-introduced population and not added to our PAFN official list.

Also, Southern Ontario review species, (please see <http://www.ofo.ca/obrc/review.htm>) must be accepted by the Ontario Bird Records Committee (OBRC) before they can be added to our local checklist. Birders who saw the 2 most recent additions to our checklist, the Cinnamon Teal and Townsend's Solitaire, sent reports of their sightings to the OBRC and they were accepted and added to our checklist, and only just before the Birds of the Upper Ottawa Valley went to press.

For non-Southern Ontario review species, species which are regularly seen elsewhere in Ontario but for which we have no records (example, Eared Grebe), documentation in the form of a report is requested along with photos, if available, and/or field sketches. These reports should be sent to the PAFN Bird Record Committee, c/o the PAFN, Box 1242, Pembroke, ON K8A 6Y6. An example of a report form can be seen through a link on our web page. Basically, if you are viewing a bird not on our checklist, take plenty of notes and make some sketches noting colour, shape, size, etc. The more the better.

New species can occur at any time, so don't be left out, get out your field guide and get your best guesses in right away!

Good Luck! Chris Michener, ('Directors just wanna have fun!')



Trumpeter Swan near Westmeath, Oct 2, 1999. photo: Chris M.

Birding in the City of Lights by Ken Hooles

The city of Paris is often known as the 'City of Lights'. Every night, the city and its many historical sights are brightly lit for all to enjoy. Paris is also known as a cultural and historic center. The city has over 75 museums and countless monuments to France's glorious past. What it is not known for are its birds.

Nevertheless, last May, my wife, Pat, and I had the opportunity to explore this magnificent city for six days. Between touring, visiting museums, and just feeding our faces, we were able to locate a respectable 24 bird species in the city's many parks and gardens.

The five most common birds in Paris have to be the House Sparrow, the Collared Dove, the Wood Pigeon, the European Starling, and of course, the Common Pigeon. These birds are found throughout the city! Interestingly, I did not find the pigeon to be as much of a problem as in most large cities I have visited over the years.

Perhaps my most exciting sighting occurred on our first day in Paris near the famous Place de la Concorde. This is the main square in Paris, decorated with the famous Egyptian Obelisk from the Temple of Karnak, as well as various statues and fountains, and is situated in front of the bridge leading to the National Assembly. To one side of the square is the well-known Champs-Élysées that leads to the Arc de Triomphe. In a little park leading onto the avenue, Pat observed a small bird climbing slowly up the side of a tree. On close examination, this bird turned out to be a Short-toed Tree Creeper. This was my first sighting ever of a creeper species in Europe.

A few steps from the Place de la Concorde in the other direction are the Tuilleries Gardens, which connects to the Louvre Museum, the home to the Venus de Milo statue and the famed Mona Lisa painting. Taking a few minutes to rest on a park bench, I was able to observe several Collared and Turtle Doves, Carrion Crow, Starlings, and Magpies.

On a whim, on one of the days that it did not rain, we took a boat ride down the Seine River. This river has many beautiful and historic bridges, but does not seem to support much wildlife. On or above the river, we were only able to observe the odd Mallard, several Swifts, Swallows, and a Black-headed Gull that must have followed a barge up the river from the ocean.

My second best find in Paris, was located in a pond at the Rodin Garden and Museum. Rodin is probably one of the best-known sculptors in the world for his statues of the 'Thinker' and the 'Gates of Hell'. In the garden of the museum decorated with many fine sculptures was a large pond, and in this pond was a lone Pochard Duck.

One of my favourite visits was to the Chateau Versailles and its magnificent gardens. Located just on the edge of Paris to the north, this large palace was home to many of the French royalty, especially Louis XIV and XVI, and later, to Napoleon Bonaparte. The garden area ex-



A Collared Dove takes a drink near Reims in France. The species expanded throughout Europe from Asia in the 1900's.
photo: Chris Michener

tends 22 kilometers and consists of several small lakes and ponds, many fountains and flowerbeds, as well as many statues throughout the grounds. It is a haven for a variety of birds including the very vocal Blackbird, Willow-tits (Chickadee family), Chaffinches, Eurasian Goldfinch, and many of the birds previously mentioned.



A look at Louis IV's back yard at Versailles. photo: Chris Michener

Similar to the Chateau Versailles, the Chateau Vincennes is located on the western edge of Paris. The castle itself is under renovation, but there are tours of the barricades, the old church, and the grounds. While on tour, Pat and I noticed a pair of Sparrow Hawks soaring around the castle. Later, we were able to locate their nesting site on the sill of a window of the old chateau.

Finally, near the Chateau Vincennes, were the lovely King's Gardens, consisting of numerous flowerbeds, bushes, ponds, and songbirds. Unfortunately, it was raining and the only birds that I could identify were those that were large or that dared to come close. These included a Common Moorhen, the Great Tit, the Coal Tit (members of the Chickadee family), and several House Martins. In a large pond with a beautiful waterfall, I observed Mallards, a Red-crested Pochard, and Ruddy Shelducks.

Paris is indeed one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and like most cities if you take the time to carefully look, there are many bird species scattered throughout their gardens and parks for your enjoyment.

Please call me with your sightings at 735-4430. (for the Pembroke paper, ed.)



Notes on a Merlin nesting By Manson Fleguel

In the spring of 2003 a pair of nesting Merlins was observed in our back yard. I had always assumed that Merlins nested in Pines near large water bodies but this nesting shows they will nest elsewhere. The nest was likely an abandoned crow's nest as there had been crow activity in this area in 2002, although no nest had been observed then. The large stick nest was located on a branch near the trunk, on the east side of a tall White Pine, approximately 50 feet off the ground and was only visible from one location about 40m south of the tree. Many visits were made to this location with a spotting scope. The following notations were made from early May till late July:

Early May – Merlins were very noisy in the large pines behind our home.

May 14 – Discovered a bulky stick nest app. 50 feet up a pine. Observed both male and female Merlin flying about.

May 17 – Birds are much quieter today

May 18 – Male Merlin observed near top of another close-by pine. Female flew to a perching snag about 40m south of nest tree.

May 20 to 25 – Birds are noisy again. Male is often in his usual tree.

May 27 – Male sitting on snag, put the run on a crow that approached too close. Female not noted.

June 7 – Male in his usual tree. Found a Common Nighthawk wing below the perching snag tree.

June 13 to 16 – Male in his usual tree. Female not noted.

June 17 – 4:30 PM. Both birds are much noisier than usual.

June 21 – Male in usual pine tree, female on snag tree, fanning tail, lots of calling by both birds. Male doing a forceful “tick” in his usual tree (only time in entire observations to hear this sound)

June 30 – Observed female Merlin sitting on nest. (First time I was able to see a bird on the nest as I found a new vantage point to observe from)

July 2 – Saw female fly in to nest and feed 1 white headed young bird.

July 8 – Female on snag, male flew in carrying a young unfeathered bird carcass, the female immediately picked it from his talons and flew off with it to the nest.

July 10 – Observed both adults flying around and calling. Noted 1 grayish, clumsy young in nest.

July 14 – Female very agitated on snag tree (presume it is because of my presence). Saw 2 downy young in the nest.

July 15 – Saw 2 (possibly more) gray-brown downy young clambering around in the nest. Primary and tail feathers are in pin.

July 16 – Observed adult putting the run on a Turkey vulture that soared in too close.

July 17 – Saw 2 young tearing food apart in nest. Female on snag tree.

July 20 – Saw 3 young squabbling over a male American Goldfinch carcass. Nest sticks have gray down clinging to them. Young birds now have feathers starting to come through on the back and head. Tail and wing feathers are longer.

July 21, 22 – More shed down on sticks. Young are now standing more upright on the edge of the nest. Female on snag, very agitated with my presence.

July 24 – Male silent and sitting on nest edge. Young not visible, female very agitated on snag.

July 28 – Female on snag, silent. Saw 2 fully feathered young, preening. Young are now venturing out on branches from nest.

July 30 – Young are now becoming noisy. Observed 1 young at end of a green limb away from the nest, other 2 not seen, but heard.

July 31 – Observed 1 young bird “fly” to a nearby tree, brushing a branch as it passed, pretty clumsy.

August 1 – No further observations as we left for Vancouver today.

Footnote: It is assumed that all 3 young Merlins were successful in fledging.



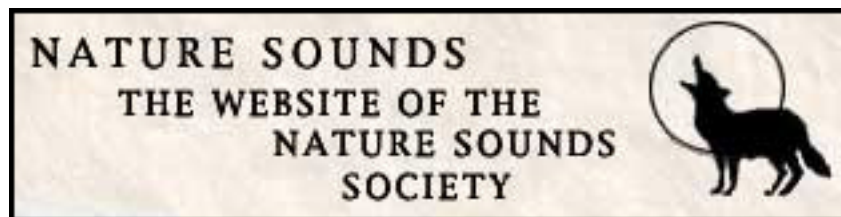
W e b H i t s

choice internet sites

Old Bird is a nonprofit corporation dedicated to facilitating acoustic monitoring of avian night flight calls. This organization has two primary branches of activity. One is the development and distribution of information and tools for advancing the method and utility of monitoring night flight calls of migrating birds. The second is the establishment and maintenance of networks of acoustic monitoring stations for gathering and distributing night flight call data for environmental education and understanding.



<http://www.oldbird.org/>



The Nature Sounds Society is a world-wide organization whose principal purpose is to encourage the preservation, appreciation and creative use of natural sounds. The Society promotes education on the technological, scientific and aesthetic aspects of nature sounds through its programs and a diverse network of contacts.

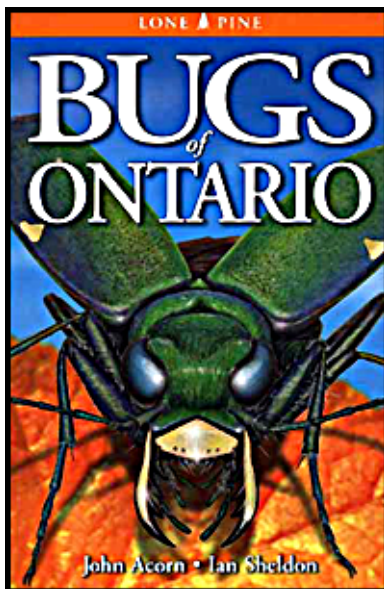
The Society publishes a twice annual newsletter and sponsors concerts, film showings, speaking events and field activities for recording, such as the Annual Field Workshop at San Francisco State University's field station at Yuba Pass and a series of recording club field events.

The organization is composed of biologists, museum professionals, conservationists, sound designers, musicians, artists and radio broadcast specialists concerned with ambient natural sound.

<http://www.naturesounds.org/index.html>

Book Reviews

Editor's note: Chris Ackerman of Lone Pine Publishing wrote to ask if we would like a review copy of this book, so, of course I said yes. We offer **two** reviews for you below.



Bugs of Ontario by John Acorn, 2002, Lone Pine Publishing, Edmonton AB, Canada. 2003

Review by *Christina Davis with input by Jason Davis and Sheldon Davis Sr.

My first impression of Bugs of Ontario with the big, green, scary-looking bug on the cover was that it was a children's book. I flipped through it and noted the colourful keys at the tops of the pages and the bright illustrations that take up almost half of each page. I was still pretty sure that this book couldn't contain much more than pictures that would keep kids occupied for an hour or so. I

picked up the book and started to read the introduction. The opening line, "This book is for bugsters" was all it took to get me hooked into reading more. John Acorn uses a conversational and fun tone to cover all the basics that any good nature guide would cover. The language is not so difficult as to confuse a child but complete enough to also interest an



Close-up shots of a Snow Flea climbing snow crystals. In the second image, the Snow Flea prepares for a jump. The antennae curl over the head, while the abdomen produces forked organs. The jump was too fast to capture the method of movement on video.

Video frames: Chris Michener

adult. I found that in about half an hour, I had learned quite a few new and interesting facts. The “bugs” in this book are broken down into groups with a key at the front and coordinating colours at the tops of the pages which makes it quick and easy to find what you are looking for. The illustrations are very good although the scale is hard to determine since they have all been drawn the same size. The conversational tone that was used in the introduction is also used in the descriptions which at times was a bit frustrating and the focus seemed to be on something interesting about each with the only real facts mentioned consistently being the length or wingspan and the habitat.

Overall, I would recommend Bugs of Ontario to anyone who is interested in getting to know the creepy-crawlies around us a bit better. As an introductory book, it will allow the reader to learn the names of what we see around us and lots of interesting facts about “the 125 coolest bugs of Ontario”. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have some rocks to turn over and some observing to do ...

**Christina is a GIS specialist in the mapping section of the MNR, Pembroke.*



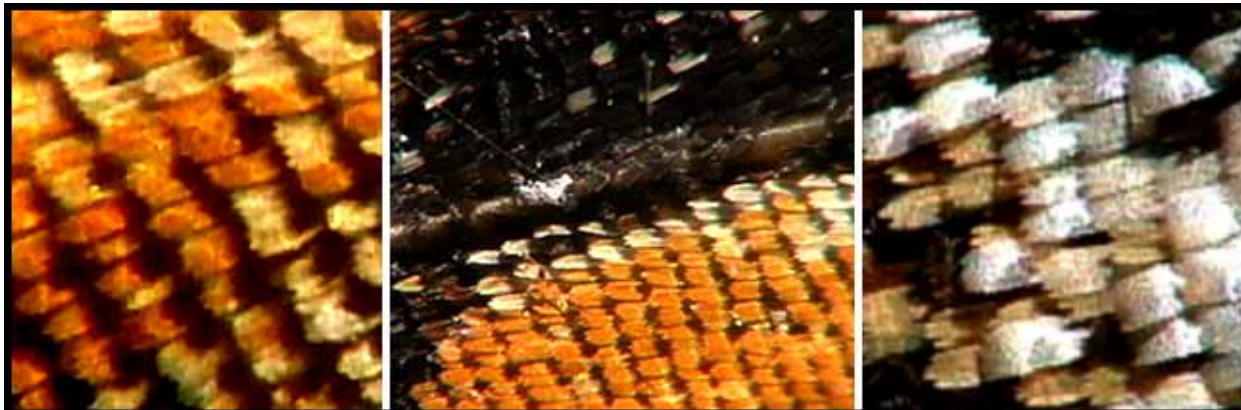
Review by *Carey Purdon with input from Gwen Purdon.

My wife and I have been asked to review “The Bugs of Ontario” by John Acorn and Ian Sheldon, ISBN 1-55105-287-3, published by Lone Pine Publishing, 2003.

This is a 5.5x8.5 inch, 160 page, soft-cover book. The book begins with a color coded grouping of the “bugs” including butterflies, moths, beetles, wasps ants and bees & sawflies, two-winged flies, lacewings, sucking bugs, grigs, damselflies and dragonflies, aquatic larva, adults, and non-insect arthropods. This is followed by a picture grouping (thumbnails, ed) of the species included in the book (125) which is great for quick reference. The book continues with an introduction to the basics of insect watching then outlines how the authors decided on the 125 species or groups of “bugs” to include in the book from the approximately 30,000 species of “bugs” in Ontario.

The main portion of the book is an account of the 125 bugs, one to a page, each starting with a great painting of that species or representative of the group, then a non-scientific, descriptive, humorous, practical, anecdotal account of that “bug” from the authors’ perspective.

A photograph of the John and his son,



Close-up collage of Canadian Tiger Swallowtail butterfly scales with a vein in the middle frame. photo: Chris Michener

lying crossways on a boardwalk, unhurriedly, but intently searching the aquatic treasures below, together, sharing, yet each lost in their own adventure, that seems to address the audience, the goals and, for me personally, the take home message of this book. This is a book for the parent or the child (great stocking stuffer!!) A book that encourages an "experience" with the insect and the world it lives in, an experience that is felt with the heart and the head, an experience that is to be shared personally and with others, an experience that is treasured and remembered.

There is an instant connection to the authors visually and emotionally as the authors' accounts awaken the child (or childhood memories) in all of us...a connection that permissively enables us to stop, to listen, to look and to inquire. It encouraged me to go beyond my comfort zone, a lesson transmitted to my other walks in life.

I would not recommend this as a reference field guide, but for the beginner it would be great to have in the car, at the beach, a picnic or a backyard nature walk.

This is a book we wished we had available when our children were growing up. I would recommend this book to people of all ages, to all with a little bit of a "bugster" in them. Enjoy the adventure.

**Carey is an MD with an office in Cobden.*

Annual woodlot conference will highlight local potential

Local property owners will be offered a variety of expert advice on the economic potential of their land at the eighth annual **Renfrew County Outdoor Woodlot Conference**.

The day-long meeting will be held **Saturday, October 4** on the J. McHale property near Douglas.

The day will begin with a look at the potential value of local woodlots, and the morning presentations will focus on planting, with topics on species selection, site preparation, planting techniques and control of competing vegetation. The afternoon topics will shift to more mature woodlot issues, and will include sessions on estimating standing wood volume, safe felling techniques and lumber yields.

Related product displays, Algonquin College Timbersport demonstrations, and presentations by the Ministry of Natural Resources on deer and wild turkey management will round out the day.

"This is a unique opportunity for individual property owners to get together in a forum like this," says Conference Organizer Mitch Baldwin. "It's a chance to learn and share information about a very important local resource."

The conference speakers represent a mix of local resource leaders and experts from other parts of the province.

"The goal is to help area property owners make the most of our forests," says Baldwin. "We focus on responsible forestry management that will maintain our environment and sustain our local economy," he adds. "Whether you're ready to market some timber or you want to improve the habitat to enjoy enhanced deer-watching or bird-watching, there will be information here you can use."

Admission for the day is \$5.00 and the first session begins at **9:00 a.m.** No pre-registration is necessary. The conference site is 2811 Stone Road, just southeast of Douglas. The Renfrew County Outdoor Woodlot Conference is organized by the County of Renfrew, Ottawa Valley Forest, the Renfrew County Stewardship Council, the Pembroke District of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Renfrew County Chapter of the Ontario

Woodlot Owners Association, and the Algonquin College Forestry Program.