

The Swallow



Volume 24, # 2
Spring/Summer 2007

Directors:

President:	Leo Boland	Grant Bickel	Jean Brereton
Vice-President:	Rob Cunningham	Merv Fediuk	Ted Hiscock
Treasurer:	Mike MacDonald	Bernd Krueger	Myron Loback
Secretary:	Manson Fleguel	Sandra MacDonald	Chris Michener
		Benita Richardson	



This Long-eared Owl was one of twelve that Club members, Rob Cunningham, Manson Fleguel, Ken Hooles and Mike MacDonald found on Amherst Island near Kingston on January 10th. As well, 3 Short-eared, 1 Saw-whet, two Snowy and many hawks were seen.
photo: Rob Cunningham

Membership in the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists is available by writing to: the PAFN, Box 1242, Pembroke, ON K8A 6Y6. 2007/2008 dues are: Student \$10, Senior \$10, Individual \$15, Family \$20, Individual Life \$150, Family Life \$200.
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a colour copy of the Swallow is available for download (.pdf) at:
PAFN web site: <http://www.renc.igs.net/~cmichener/pafn.index.html>



• E v e n t s & T r i p s •

Skywatch - Messier Marathon Anyone? by Jean Brereton

The OAOG (Ottawa Astronomy Observers Group) and club member Chris Thuemen are cooking up a Messier Marathon for March 17 and/or March 24, 2007. Messier Marathon is a term describing the attempt to find as many of the Messier objects as possible in a single night. This marathon offers the prospect of observing all 110 objects in one night. You might say "In March!?", especially since it means keeping an all night vigil

with no promise of tolerable temperatures or even clear skies, but the fact is there are only a few days each year when you're likely to have a chance of catching all 110 Messier objects. You need a dark sky so it must be on or close to a new moon (the new moon this month is the evening of March 18) and be close to the vernal equinox (which this year falls on March 20).



Chris Thuemen and the others are well dressed for the March 29, 2006 Star Night near Micksburg. photo: Chris Michener

So because the plan has yet to be completely hatched, if you're interested in throwing your hat into the participants ring, please email Chris Thuemen (cthuemen@morristhuemen.com) or Jean Brereton (jbrereton@renc.igs.net) and we'll keep you updated on plans as they unfold. (Chris Thuemen said something about late night pizza - do they make deliveries way out near Soike Road?) Soike Road is 1 km east of Micksburg, north side of Mountain Rd.

May there always be starlight on the path,
Jean

Below is an article from: Stargazer Online's "Guide to the Messier Marathon"

<http://www.richardbell.net/marathon.html>

The Messier Catalog has been a favorite of deep sky observers for over 225 years. Ironically, the famous list that contains some of the most beautiful objects in the sky was originally intended to be a list of objects to avoid. French comet hunter and nebulae cataloger Charles Messier decided to create a list of fuzzy blobs that looked liked comets through his telescope. The catalog was first published in 1771 and contained 45 objects. Most of these objects were not actually discovered by Messier, but some of them were. With the help of the mathematician Pierre Méchain, the list grew to 68 objects in

1780.

A year later, Messier's and Méchain's list grew to 103 objects. Seven more objects (M104 through M110) were added later. Some of the objects that Messier added to his catalog, such as the Great Nebula in Orion (M42), were well known and did not belong on a list of objects that could be mistaken for a comet - Messier knew it and the astronomers of his day knew it, the list just took on a life of its own! I've always wondered if Messier knew his list would become the showpiece objects of the night sky. What Messier did not know, however, was that it is possible to observe all 110 objects in a single night!

Yes, that's right! In an amazing coincidence, most of the objects (if not all) that Messier and Méchain took 24 years to observe and catalog can be observed in one night around the time of the vernal equinox in March. The Messier Marathon was invented (or discovered) independently by several amateur astronomers and clubs in the 1970's. The first marathoner to hunt down all 110 Messier objects in a single night was perhaps Gerry Rattley of Dugas, Arizona on the night of March 23/24, 1985. To attempt this feat of observational proficiency, you must have excellent sky conditions, an ideal observing site, a trusty telescope, and (most importantly) strong observing skills.

Owling Night

When: 7:15 PM, Saturday, March 31st, 2007

Where: Wilberforce Twp Park parking lot. Go south on Hwy 41 past intersection of Hwy 41 and Lake Dore Rd., cross the bridge, turn right after bridge and go a short distance to park.

Trip Coordinator: Chris Michener, 625-2263 (cmichener@renc.igs.net)

A route will be followed by car parade (car-pooling encouraged!) passing through varied habitat. A tape of owl calls will be used to encourage owl response.

PAFN Annual Meeting - speaker yet to be decided.

Wed., April 18, 2007, 7:00PM, Room 201, Algonquin College, Pembroke.

The Club's business meeting will last until 7:30 or so, followed by refreshments.

At about 8 PM, our guest speaker will present an undoubtedly excellent topic.

A Trip to Bellow's Bay

Date: Saturday, April 21, 2007.

Time: at 9 AM.

Trip Leader: Manson Fleguel, 732-7703.

Meet at the marina in Pembroke, at the mouth of the Muskrat River. Car pooling will be offered. Bring rubber boots, as mud will be encountered on the walk (1.5 km total). Migrant songbirds, ducks and friendly people are highlights. Spotting scopes are useful, binoculars essential.

4th Annual Natural History Day - Free, but must pre-register! The MNR is handling the registration and will have a dedicated phone number after April 1st. Check our web site.

Where: Arnprior, church hall to be announced, but it will be near Gillies Grove.

Date: Saturday, May 5, 2007. 9 AM - 4 PM

Schedule: 9 AM - 12 noon: morning outdoor childrens' program, while inside will be talks about various nature topics.

12 - 1:00 PM, lunch. (bring objects from nature for a 'show & tell' display table.

1:00 - 4 PM: A field trip to Gillies Grove with expert nature interpreters is planned.

Shaw Woods: Mother's Day Wildflowers and Nature Walk

Date: Sunday May 13, 2:00 pm

Place: Due to limited parking at Shaw Woods, we will first meet at Wilberforce Twp. Beach & Picnic Park. From the intersection of Hwy 41/Lake Dore Rd., go south on Hwy 41 over the Snake River bridge and make the next right.

Trip Organizer: Grant Bickel, 687-4765; Rob Cunningham, 732-8402. and photographer, Bernd Krueger, 625-2879.

The purpose of this outing will be to enjoy early spring in the beautiful Shaw Woods. The main focus will be to see woodland wildflowers. We should see Blue Cohosh, Trout Lily, Trilliums and several others species. Other plants and trees will also be identified and warblers will likely be heard and seen. This walk is for all ages and families are encouraged to come for a Mother's Day outing. The walk will be easy to moderate on well-maintained trails. The pace will be determined by the participants and will last about 2.5 hours. Photographers are welcome and we will split into groups depending on interests.

A Walk in the Petawawa Terrace (Old Fish Hatchery)

Date: Sunday, May 20, 2007.

Time: 5 PM.

Trip Leader: Myron Loback 735-1278.

Meet in the upper parking lot of the Terrace, on Laurentian Drive. (go west of Pembroke on Pembroke St. towards Petawawa, turn north on Laurentian Dr., watch for sign and parking area). Some migrant songbirds and waterfowl can be expected. Good outing for children as Canada Geese will likely be present and, quite possibly, with young. This is an enjoyable, relaxed outing.

Breakfast at the Swamp: Bird Trip and Birdathon for our youth team.

Date: Saturday, May 26, 2007.

Time: 7 AM.

Trip Leader: Leo Boland with help from -

the breakfast caterers: Benita Richardson and Sandra MacDonald.

This trip will start with a breakfast (provided by the above volunteers and the PAFN) at the Ross Road wetlands on Ross Road between Stafford Road 3 and the Micksburg Road. We expect to see Virginia Rail, Sora, Green Heron, Black Tern, Marsh Wren and possibly a Least Bittern. We will then tour the Snake River Line area in hopes of seeing Sandhill Crane, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, shorebirds and ducks.

A youth birdathon team (**the Mighty Ducklings**) will start a day long search for as many species as they can identify after breakfast on Ross Road. Chris Michener will be their driver. The team members will be aged between 10 and 12 years old. Please help support their efforts and the PAFN by filling in the enclosed pledge sheet. The members of this youth team are our future naturalists. The results of their 'Big Day' will be available on our website or by calling Chris Michener (625-2263). (email: cmichener@renc.igs.net)

PAFN - 9 and Dine - Fundraiser

Date: Friday, June 8th, 2007. (tentative)

Time: 5 PM. Tee-off time.

Island Brae Golf Course will be the site of dinner and 9-holes of golf. The cost is \$35.00

each (last year's cost). The format will be best ball. If you don't golf, come for supper (reduced rate). To register a team or yourself and for more information, please call Benita Richardson at 735-5404.

3rd Annual PAFN Tri-wing Challenge. This is a weekend long event where teams of one or more individuals are challenged to spend an amount of time from **4 PM Friday, June 22 to 4 PM Sunday, June 24** counting bird, butterfly and dragonfly species (or just one category if you want to concentrate your focus). At 4 PM Sunday, everyone is invited to a PAFN **potluck picnic** at the Wilberforce Township Park to tabulate the results. The park has swings, outhouses, tables under a roof and an extensive sand beach for swimming. Bring your own plates and utensils as well as food items.

The 4 categories of the **Tri-wing Challenge** are:

- high count totals for bird species; (last year 102 species were seen)
- high count totals for butterfly species; (29 species last year)
- high count totals for dragonfly species; (27 species last year)
- high count for total of all three. (158 total species last year)

Each team member (give your team a name!) does not have to identify each species but does have to remain within earshot of each other. The Tri-wing Challenge is based on the honour system for the correct identification of all species. Species lists for birds, dragonflies and butterflies can be found on our web site or contact Chris to have paper copies mailed to you. Pre-registration is not necessary. For more information contact Chris at 625-2263 (email: cmichener@renc.igs.net). Four trophies are available to be won.

18th Lake Dore Butterfly Count

Date: Saturday, June 30, 2007 (Rain/wind date, Sunday, July 1).

Time: 9 AM. Organizer: Chris Michener 625-2263.

Meet at the parking area at the intersection of Hwy. 41 and County Rd. 30 (the Lake Dore Rd.). Bring butterfly field guide, binoculars, footwear (optional) for the bog, net (for catch & release) and lunch. A map of the Count circle and species list will be available. A participants' fee (under 12 free) of \$5 is asked to cover publishing costs of the North American results (North American Butterfly Association).

15th Hog Island Butterfly Count

Date: Sat., July 14, 2007 (lousy weather day, Sun., July 15).

Time: 9 AM.

Organizer: Chris Michener 625-2263.

Meet at Mullen's Esso, Pembroke St. E., near the turn to Quebec. The Count Circle for this butterfly Count is half in Ontario and half in Quebec. In the past, some groups have gone to the Westmeath area; others have butterflyed on Allumette Island. You can choose the area you prefer. Maps of the circle and checklists will be available. A participants fee (under 12 free) of \$5 is asked to cover publishing costs. See previous event.

The 9th Lake Dore Odonate Count

Date: Sat., August 4, 2007 (lousy weather day Sun., August 5)

Time: 9 AM. Organizer: Chris Michener, 625-2263.

An excellent opportunity to appreciate this group of insects, we have had fun with nets

and encountered a good variety of damselflies and dragonflies. The idea is to search for 'odes' within a 7.5 mile radius of Biederman Park, Lake Dore. Meet at the parking area at Hwy. 41 and Cty. Rd. 30 (Lake Dore Rd.). Picture guides will be available as well as experienced 'odonaters'. A large insect net, optional rubber boots, close focus binoculars, sun screen and lunch/water are suggested.

Marina/Waterfront Bird Walk

Date: Saturday, August 18, 2007

Time: 8 AM.

Trip Leader: Ken Hooles 735-4430.

Meet at the Pembroke marina, by the mouth of the Muskrat River in Pembroke. Ken will introduce us to migrant birdlife along the Pembroke waterfront. There are usually gulls, terns, ducks, geese, cormorants and songbirds such as vireos, warblers, sparrows and finches. Surprises usually occur and it's a good social outing... a chance to meet some very nice people!

Westmeath Provincial Park - entrance from Westmeath Rd.

Date: Sept. 8, 2007

Time: 9 AM.

Where: At the entrance to the Park. This is on County Road 12, about 5 km SW of Westmeath. Leaders: Leo Boland, Rob Cunningham and Bernd Krueger will be trip leaders. This time of year is great for migrants in the Park. Species that have been seen at this time are Sandhill Cranes, Bald Eagles, Merlin, various vireos and warblers, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Wood-Pewee and if we make it as far as the beach, some shorebirds, terns and gulls.

Renfrew County Woodlot Conference

Date: September 22 (tentative)

Where: the property of Don Kilby, at 1039 Lake Clear Road. Call Rob Cunningham for more information (613-732-8402)

Habitat: hardwood stands and Red Pine plantations. Visitors will be able to see the results of different management options in hardwood stands.



MNR invitation to participate in local F&W advisory committee

In January 2007, the Ministry of Natural Resources, Pembroke District formed a new Fish & Wildlife Advisory Committee. This committee reviews local resource management projects and initiatives related to fisheries and wildlife management, including species at risk. The Committee meets four times per year and the term of membership is discretionary but is usually three to five years. Although the Committee has just been formed, member vacancies sometimes arise. If you are interested in standing for membership, please contact the Madawaska Area Supervisor, Ministry of Natural Resources, 31 Riverside Drive, Pembroke, Ontario K8A 8R6.

Trip Reports

The 2006 Pembroke Christmas Bird Count

By Compiler, Manson Fleguel

For the first time in its 29 year history, the Pembroke CBC was held on a Sunday; the date, December 17. An early December cold snap that dumped about 6 inches of snow with temperatures of -15°C to -20°C seems to have sent many of the expected species scurrying south. This early cold spell was followed by unseasonably mild and wet weeks that should have meant a record (or close to it) year for us. The actual day of the count was mild with no precipitation so birding was easy. The Ottawa River, as with most water, was open.

We ended the count with **48 species**, adding 2 “new” birds to the count. One species, a Chukar, is presumed to be a released or an escaped bird, while the other species, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak, is most unusual at this colder time of year. Both birds were coming to feeders. Viola Nitschke found the Chukar on Airport Road and the second species was visiting Moe Guimond’s feeder on D’Youville Drive. Both are great sightings!

This year we had 23 field birders while **a record 52 feeders** were watched. The feeder people put in 128 hours, while the field people totaled 79 hours. 39 km. were put



in on foot, while 897 km. were logged driving in the circle. One owl was found in the 1 hour of owling prior to dawn.

As usual, the circle was divided into 6 sectors, each with a coordinator and other birders. The following is a review of the statistics by sector.

Sector 1W, on the Quebec side had Bert Cain as the lone field birder. His 2 feeder watchers were Jean Montgomery and Howard and Doris McLean. This sector had the only Great-horned Owl on the count. There were **18 species** found in this sector.

Sector 1E, also on the Quebec side, had Manson Fleguel, Susan Ellis, Jenny Montgomery and Robert Hillerby in the field and 1 feeder watcher, Einar Lund. This sector had the only Am. Black Duck, Harlequin Duck, Bufflehead, Am. Robin, and Brown-headed Cowbird on the count. They tallied **31 species**.

Sector 2N had Robin Cunningham, Ted Hiscock, Mike and Sandra MacDonald and Maxine Jeffrey in the field, while the 9 feeders were watched by Jim and Ann Clarke, Keith Curry, Patricia Harmer, Eric Leskie, Ivy Levoy, Myra Lovisa, Viola Nitschke, Bruce Schoof and Sherry Soltysiak and Jill and Andre Renault. They had the only Chukar on the count in their sector. A total of **21 species** was found.

Sector 2S had Chris Michener, Jean Brereton and Ole Hendrickson as field participants. Feeder watchers were Sheila and Gary Bucholtz, Dwight and Lucy Dickerson, Erna and Victor Maves and Jack Schreader. The sector contributed the only Golden-crowned Kinglets to the count. They ended the count with **26 species**.

Sector 3E had Ken Hooles, Pat Wolfe, Ron Bertrand, Merv Fediuk and Vic Harmer in the field. This sector had the most feeder watchers by far: Nancy Armstrong, Lorraine Bertrand, Ray Brazeau, Jack and Barb Darbyson, Merv and Jane Dougherty, Lorna Fediuk, Moe Guimond, The Hooles feeder, Mike and Marilyn Kruschenske, Carolyn Lance, Francis Marcotte, Karin Maree, Wendell McLaughlin, Allan Mills, John Payne, Bob and Julie Pick, Mac and Dianne Thrasher, Ray Virtue and Gary and Sue Walton. The only Rose-breasted Grosbeak was found in this sector and it was a “new to the count” bird species. This sector had the highest species count with **33 species**.

Sector 3W had Christian and Andre Renault, Teresa Frechette, Benita Richardson and Leo Boland in the field. The feeder watchers were Mr. & Mrs. Howard Doelle,

Mary Lou Hansen and Mac Nussey, Jeremy Inglis and family, Rick and Charlene Kranz, Myron Loback, Wes Loback, Kathleen Moss,



Moe Guimond hosted this Rose-breasted Grosbeak in south-end Pembroke this winter. It was a new species for the Pembroke Christmas Bird Count.

photo: Ken Hooles

A.J. Recoskie and Harold and Shirley Wirth. This sector had the only Gray Jays and Evening Grosbeaks on the count. There were **26 species** reported for this sector.

Some of the highlights: 1) The 2 new species for the count. 2) We set a new high count of Red-tailed hawks (13). 3) Our 5 Bald Eagles tied a previous high number. 4) A high count of 722 Am. Crows. 5) The second highest count of Snow Buntings (3848). 6) A new high count for Northern cardinals. (7) The second time on the count with a

high count of Brown-headed Cowbird. 8) The third lowest count of House Sparrows (44) and 9) a very low count of Evening Grosbeaks.

I want to thank all those who helped out again this year, especially the coordinators of the individual sectors. The CBC is always an exciting time to see what species have lingered in our area and how many of the regulars we can find.

The 14th Eganville Christmas

by Compiler, Chris Michener

On December 16th, 2006, 20 field participants and 21 feeder watchers took part in the Eganville Count. The weather ranged from 0 C. to 5 C. and was mostly cloudy, but much to the delight of participants, had sunny periods throughout the day. Mink Lake was frozen but Lake Dore was open as was Wilber Lake. Moving water was mostly open such as in the Bonnechere River. Shaw Pond, on the Snake River, was mostly open.

Seven PAFN club Directors participated, 2 past-Presidents, and 7 Life members. I would like to thank these and all participants who gave of their time to count birds.

Now let's look at some of the results. This was the 14th Annual Count and we are still counting new species.

New species:

Northern Pintail, a female found the day before the Count by Ron Bertrand and Vic Harmer, but also seen on Count day (Shaw Pond in Micksburg Zone);

Chukar, an attractive escaped bird found at the Larry Romhild residence along Lake Dore Rd. in the Green Lake Zone;

Turkey Vulture, seen by Charlotte Lehmann above her yard, while watching her feeder (Micksburg Zone).

Second time seen:

Long-tailed Duck, found by Bernd Krueger on the Bonnechere River;

Red-necked Grebe, found by 2 parties on Lake Dore;

Great Blue Heron, found by Rob Cunningham and Sheldon Davis on the Shaw Pond.

Song Sparrow, found by Jason and Christina Davis.

White-crowned Sparrow, at Mike Lett's feeder (with help from his son and mother).

Third time seen:

Canada Goose, Bufflehead, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-billed Gull, Glaucous Gull and Snowy Owl.

Highest numbers for Counts:

Common Merganser (165), Northern Harrier (2), Red-tailed Hawk (7), Herring Gull (356), Great Black-backed Gull (24), Northern Shrike (5), Red-breasted Nuthatch (78-tied), White-breasted Nuthatch (51), Golden-crowned Kinglet (16), American Robin (3), European Starling (262), Song Sparrow (4), White-crowned Sparrow (2), Dark-eyed Junco (14), American Goldfinch (698).

Notable misses and low numbers:

Gray Jay (4) – second lowest number

Northern Cardinal – missed

Pine Grosbeak – missed

Purple Finch (9) – low
Common Redpoll (3) – low
Evening Grosbeak (12) – second lowest number.

The total species of 58 for the Count breaks the old record set in 2001 (54). The total number of birds set a new record... 3,748 (3,700 in 2005).



Notice of Membership Dues Changes

Article X and XI, PAFN Constitution

Please be aware that at the Annual General Meeting in April, 2007, a proposal will be introduced to change Bylaw No.1, Membership dues, effective May 1, 2007 as follows:

a. Individual	from \$7.00	to	\$15.00
b. Family	from \$10.00	to	\$20.00
c. Student (<18)	from \$5.00	to	\$10.00
d. Senior	from \$5.00	to	\$10.00

(Life memberships are not affected)

Background:

The Club was established in 1983. Membership dues were established then and have not changed to date, with the exception of adding Life memberships as an available category. Club costs have increased. One item that has increased dramatically is the cost to provide liability insurance, an expense that the current membership dues barely cover. The Club newsletter is another necessary part of Club communications and costs to copy and mail it have increased. (Chris Michener has done the actual editorial production at no cost).

It has therefore become necessary to increase the membership dues to keep the Club viable.

Club Secretary, Manson Fleguel



W e b H i t s
 choice internet sites



Butterflies and Moths of North America

Occurrence maps, species accounts, checklists, and photographs

Image Gallery

Select a family to view image thumbnails:

- All ---
- Brush-footed Butterflies (Nymphalidae)**
- Doid Moths (Doidae)
- Gossamer-wing Butterflies (Lycaenidae)
- Hooktip Moths (Drepanidae)

Go

Choose a category and thumbnail images will be presented, such as these images:

<p>Monarchs ready to emerge.</p>		
<p>Monarch <i>(Danaus plexippus)</i></p>	<p>Monarch <i>(Danaus plexippus)</i></p>	<p>Cramer's Eighty-eight <i>(Diaethria clymena)</i></p>

<http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org/gallery>

December 2006–January 2007 Issue

No Joy in Mudville

The freshwater mussels of North America are in trouble. Of 300 native species, some 70 percent are extinct, endangered, or declining. Invasives such as the zebra mussel have been, er, muscling them out of lakes and streams; development and pollution are also threatening their habitats. Now the beleaguered bivalves must add yet another peril to their list of woes: a new study shows that the widely prescribed antidepressant Prozac, a common pollutant, interferes with their reproduction.

Like other drugs, Prozac often ends up in lakes and streams after being excreted and making its way through a wastewater-treatment plant. Fluoxetine hydrochloride, its active ingredient, boosts the concentration of the neurotransmitter serotonin in the brain.

To test its effect on mussels, Rebecca M. Heltsley, a biologist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Charleston, South Carolina, and several colleagues placed female eastern elliptio mussels in tanks of water laced with serotonin, or with fluoxetine hydrochloride at various concentrations, some matching the levels that commonly occur in bodies of freshwater. All the mussels were carrying larvae; within forty-eight hours, mussels in each tank had prematurely released their larvae, which were often too immature to survive. The greater the concentration of fluoxetine hydrochloride, the more larvae were released. Better filtering of sewage would give freshwater mussels a less depressing outlook, says Heltsley. (Presented at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society, September 2006)

—Rebecca Kessler

Natural History Web site.

http://nhmag.com/master.html?http://nhmag.com/1206/1206_samplings.html

Other topics in this issue:

Four-Winged Migration.

"... colleagues glued minute, custom-made radio transmitters to the undersides of fourteen dragonflies known as common green darners..."



Broken Refrigerator.

"...Waite and Strickland discovered that in the past twenty-five years the gray jays' breeding season has advanced by about a week."



Ah, the sounds of spring. There's nothing quite like a chorus of spring peepers to let us know that winter is over and spring has finally arrived. This tiny little critter has a huge voice, and can be heard quite a distance away. Here are the goods on this fellow:

Description

An adult peeper is about 2 – 3 cm in length, and is variable shades of brownish grey, sometimes with hints of yellows or rust colours. They can change their colour slightly to blend in with their surroundings. It has a dark brown cross on its back, hence the species name "crucifer". It has a light beige or creamy coloured belly. The legs have dark bands around them and the feet are webbed. Spring peepers belong to the treefrog family, so like other treefrogs, the fingers and toes have suction cup-like disks.

Biology and Ecology

The chorus of peepers is the result of males, singing for a mate. The males often sing their single clear whistle note in trios, with the baritone of the group leading off. The call is repeated about once per second. Peepers are primarily nocturnal, but can be heard during the day, especially when it is rainy or overcast. Territory size ranges from 1 metre to a whopping 5 metres; not a bad stomping ground for a 3 cm beast! A peeper doesn't reach maturity until 3 years of age. Breeding can start as early as March, and usually extends into June. One female will lay up to 1000 eggs in the pond, and they hatch within 5-12 days into tadpoles that are larger than the adults!



photo: anonymous

The tadpoles transform by July. The spring peeper chorus usually goes on hiatus for the summer, but returns for a farewell concert in the fall.

Spring peepers are good climbers, and the males often climbing up shrubs, plant stems and leaves to get a better vantage point for their singing. On the ground, they are well camouflaged by the leaf litter.

Peepers feed on just about anything that they can catch with their sticky tongues, including small flies, spiders, and worms.

Habitat

Spring peepers have a fairly broad range, extending from Manitoba to the Maritimes, down through the eastern United States to the northern border of Florida. In the spring

they inhabit vernal (seasonal) ponds and woodland pools, and marshes near wooded areas. For the summer, the adult peepers move back to the woods. Once the cooler temperatures of fall approach, peepers take cover under logs and loose bark and leaf litter, and spend the winter in a comatose-like state.

Want to help? Become a Frog Watcher! Check out Nature Watch's Frog Watch program, and report your froggy findings! <http://www.naturewatch.ca/english/frogwatch/on/>



Looking for Natural Beauty

by Chris Michener

Am I one to say where this natural beauty can be found? Well, perhaps. One can't deny that a view is one criteria for determining the allure of a place. With a beautiful view, can one say, "How ugly?" A talking, cascading stream certainly lends to the audible feature of such a place. With such a sound, could one reach for ear plugs? Even better is one that is easy to reach, has a good lunch spot and allows the chance to sit and dream as the world turns. Eureka, I have it!

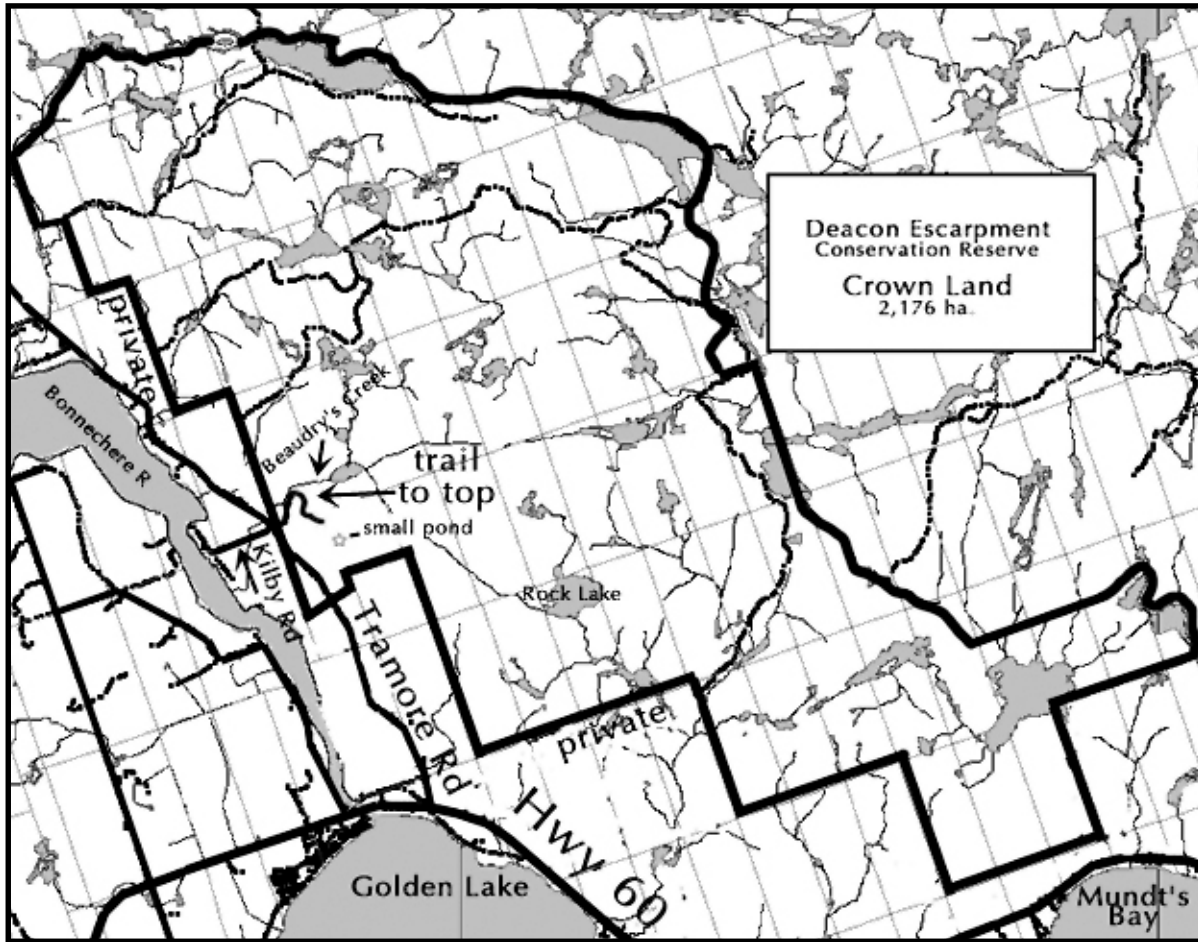
The top of the Tramore Cliffs, in the Deacon Escarpment Conservation Reserve, surely comes a close second to the Grand Canyon or Cape Breton? And it's close by, can be visited in a couple of hours and is Crown Land, which makes it accessible for all.

The escarpment is over 100 m. high, and faces southwest, overlooking the Bonnechere River and Golden Lake. The conservation reserve includes the escarpment, the talus slopes below, and undulating, bedrock-controlled land above. The area of the reserve covers over 5,300 acres.

Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), rare in Renfrew County and at or near its northern range limit in North America, grows on the cliff face and terraces, in places forming the dominant cover among Red Oak, Large-toothed Aspen and White Pine. This habitat has almost yearly visits from the rare Prairie Warbler in June. Understorey species such as Fragrant Sumac and the sedge *Carex umbellata* are also uncommon in the area. Also seen or heard are Song Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, Scarlet Tanager, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Turkey Vulture, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Pine Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Eastern Phoebe, Veery, Nashville Warbler, Northern Flicker, Cedar Waxwing, Downy Woodpecker and Common Raven, which occasionally nests on the cliff face. Dark-eyed Junco nests on top of the escarpment as well as Hermit Thrush and Red-eyed Vireo. Eastern Towhee nested here in the past and could surprise again.

Talus slopes with occasional spring seeps and streams provide an environment for a rich and diverse mixed forest. The well worn path to the top of the cliffs touches such a stream, adding to the beauty of the hill climb. On the trail, watch for Common Spadwell, Canada Hawkweed, Barren Ground Strawberry, Tiger Lily, Northern Bugleweed and Northern Water-horehound. The trail is steep only for a short distance but does go uphill throughout its length. Access the trail on Tramore Road, right behind the Kilby Road sign. Kilby Road is 2.3 km north of Hwy. 60. Park on Kilby Road on the shoulder. Take water in warm weather.

The top of the escarpment holds extensive areas of dry, scrubby open-canopy



woodlands, dominated by bedrock exposure and scrubby Red Oak and White Pine on shallow sandy to coarse loamy till. Grasses and shrubs dominate in the understorey, with areas of feathermoss and lichen growing on shallow areas. Ponds and wetlands with marshy or boggy edges occur frequently on the escarpment tableland among the mixed forests.

But, the main feature of the escarpment is the spectacular view of Golden Lake, the Bonnechere River, the Wilno Hills, the forests and farmland. Hawks and Turkey Vultures frequently use the updrafts created by the southwest-facing cliffs to soar lazily on the thermals and if you drift into a dream, it could be a flying dream.



Pembroke Area Field Naturalists Birdathon

Birdathon Date: May 26, 2007

Birders' Team Name: **the Mighty Ducklings**
 We've named our youth team here, but we hope other teams or individuals will participate.

Record of Sponsorship

Name of Sponsor (Please Print)	Address (inc Postal Code)	Pledge / Species	to be filled in after the count			
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