



The Swallow



Volume 28, # 2
Spring/Summer 2011

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Manson and Chris had turned the corner onto the Egan Line from the south end when this Bald Eagle was found standing on a road kill, which turned out to be a Snapping Turtle. We got pretty close but eventually the bird flew up into the tree and waited. Photo June 3, 2010: Chris Michener

Membership in the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists is available by writing to the PAFN, Box1242, Pembroke, ON K8A 6Y6. 2011/2012 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:

the PAFN web site (Webmaster, Mike MacDonald): www.pafn.on.ca



• Events & Trips •

Seedy Sunday – free admission

Sunday, March 6, 2011, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Fellowes High School, Pembroke

- heirloom, organic, open-pollinated seeds & plants for sale;
- presentations about gardening & more;
- meet the seed and food producers;
- local environmental groups;
- seeds & plants exchange table;
- buskers' corner;
- door prizes.

Refreshments for sale by the Ottawa Valley Food Co-operative (100 mile Lunch)

**** Stop by the PAFN table and say hello and learn more about the Renfrew County Biotabase and the Renfrew County Drum Circle Project.*

Owling Night

The Owl outing is on Saturday, March 26 at 7:30 pm at the Wilberforce Township Park. Go south on Hwy 41 past the intersection of Hwy. 41 and Lake Dore Rd., cross the bridge, go 100 metres more then turn right and go a short distance to the park. This trip will involve a driving loop through varied habitat. We'll use a CD of owl calls to encourage a response. The expected species is Barred Owl, but other species are possible. We could hear American Woodcock and other night calling birds. Trip Coordinator: Chris Michener, 625-2263; (cmichener@hughes.net)

PAFN Annual Meeting

Wed, April 27, 2011, Room 201, Algonquin College, Pembroke.

Agenda: doors open at 6:30; 7:00 pm to 7:30 pm - Annual General Meeting.

7:30 pm to 8:00 pm - social with refreshments.

8:00 pm. Ian Pineau will talk about the Adventure Outdoor Naturalist Program that Algonquin College offers and Ian's wife, Diana Komejan, will talk about her trip to Anarctica as a conservator of artifacts from past expeditions.

A Trip to Bellow's Bay

Date: Saturday, April 16, 2011.

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 and water will be encountered on the walk (1.5 km total). Migrant songbirds, ducks and friendly people are highlights. Spotting scopes are useful, binoculars essential.

Shaw Woods: Mothers' Day Weekend Wildflowers and Nature Walk

Date: Sunday May 8th, 2011 at 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 Leaders: Rob Cunningham, forester and naturalist (732-8402) and Grant Bickel, orchid and sedge aficionado. 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. This walk is

for all ages and is an introduction to the Shaw Woods, an old-growth forest. The walk is easy to moderate on well-maintained trails. The pace will be determined by the participants and will last about 2.5 hours.

A Walk in the Petawawa Terrace (Old Fish Hatchery)

Date: Sunday, May 15, 2011.

Time: 5 pm.

Trip Leader: Rob Cunningham.

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. Please bring rubber boots for some wet/muddy areas.

9th Annual Natural History Day - free

Date: Saturday, May 28th

Where: Deep River Sailing and Tennis Club

Time: Doors open at 8:30 am;

Talks start at 9 am; lunch at 11.45, please bring your own lunch; field trips will head out at 1 pm. The agenda is being worked out, but will include talks on interesting topics. The Children's program will start at 10:30 and run until lunch. The field trips will be announced later.

Please register by phone after April 14th. Check our web page for the number after April 14th. Leave a message with how many adults and children you are registering. The event is free.

Garage Sale - Fundraiser

Date: June 11th, 2011.

Where: Children's Garden Nursery, 375 Doran St, Pembroke.

This a combined garage sale at the Children's Garden Nursery. Benita and other volunteers from the Club will be staffing the sale of all manner of goods with the proceeds going to both the Children's Garden Nursery School and the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists Club. Donations of goods are welcome during the week leading up to the sale. For more information, please call Benita Richardson at 613-735-5404.

23rd Lake Dore Butterfly Count

Date: Saturday, July 2nd, 2011

(Rain/wind date, Sunday, July 4th).

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

Where: Wilberforce Twp. Park. 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. Bring butterfly field guide, binoculars, rubber boots (optional) for the bog after lunch, net (for catch & release) and lunch. A map of the Count circle and species list will be made available. A

participants' fee of \$3 (under 13 free) is asked to cover publishing costs of the North American results (North American Butterfly Association).



20th Hog Island Butterfly Count

Date: Sat., July 16th, 2011 (lousy weather day, Sun., July 17th).

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 made available. A participants fee of \$3 (under 13 free) is asked to cover publishing costs of the results printed by the North American Butterfly Association.

The 14th Lake Dore Odonate (Dragonfly) Count

Date: Sat., Aug 6, 2011 (lousy weather day Sun., August 7)

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 Wilberforce Twp Park. 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. Picture guides will be available as well as experienced participants. A large insect net, optional rubber boots, close focus binoculars, and lunch/drinks are suggested.

Marina/Waterfront Bird Walk

Date: Saturday, August 20, 2011

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!

Renfrew County Woodlot Conference

October 1, 2011. Check our website for more details or call Rob Cunningham at (732-8402).



Unusual birch species pairing

Written by Rob Cunningham, photos by Chris Michener

Here is an interesting occurrence of a white birch and a yellow birch growing together. You might expect that if two trees got started this close to each other, one would out-compete the other.



Two trees of the same species could potentially grow together equally for a long time. A good example would be red pine, a species that has relatively little genetic variation.

But with genetic differences, trees grow at different rates, and one should excel and come to dominate the other. The weaker one would slow in growth rate, decline in vigour, and become less resistant to insects and fungi that will try to eat it. The dying process can be very slow in trees. One has to observe closely to see the signs.

On the other hand, different tree species have different ecological requirements (or strategies for survival) and can share space if they use different resources--perhaps a deep rooted tree with a shallow rooted tree, or a shade tolerant tree with a shade intolerant tree. (But the shade intolerant tree's crown would have to be larger or higher to get adequate sunlight; whereas the shade tolerant tree could persist at the lower light levels for a number of years until it got the opportunity to take over when the larger tree died or fell).



The yellow birch and white birch are somewhat similar species, but not at all equal. Their growing coincidentally like this is rather rare and interesting. And in time, one might yet win and the other lose. Would you bet on the longer-lived and more shade tolerant yellow birch? Perhaps both trees will lose and die before reaching old age. Forces of nature will decide (unless people interfere).

The 2010 Pembroke Christmas Bird Count

By Coordinator, Manson Fleguel

The count was held on December 18 this year, and the weather was seasonal, making birding a treat (like we need to have good weather to enjoy birding!) 25 Birders were on the road and 45 feeders (54 persons) were watched for this count. 26 kilometers were walked and 1,115 kilometers were logged in the 13 vehicles on the road. It looks like all possible roads were covered in the 24 km. diameter count circle!

Overall, we found a total of **48 species** on count day with 2 more species seen during count week. Here are the individual sector results: Sector 3E squeaked out the most species with 34; Sector 3W was right behind with 33 species, Sector 1E found 27 species, Sector 1W found 25 species, Sector 2S had 24 species and Sector 2N had 20 species.

Participants in each sector follow:

Sector 1E was led by Bruce and Ben DiLabio and Susan Ellis in the field and Lynn Jones at the feeder.

Sector 1W had Mark Dojczman, Margaret McLeod and Manson Fleguel on the roads, while Jean Berrigan watched her feeder.

Sector 2N had Robin Cunningham, Elizabeth Link and Mike and Sandra MacDonald in cars, while Keith Curry, Jim and Ann Clarke, Ivy Levoy, Patricia Harmer, Marilyn Kruschenske, and Erick Leskie and Margaret Scott were watching feeders.

Sector 2S was ably led by Jean Brereton, Dustin Ryckman, and Christian and Andre Renault on the road while Erna Maves, Tom and Dawn Farnel, Ted Hiscock, Gary and Sheila Bucholtz, Barb Beimers and Jill Renault were the feeder watchers.

Sector 3E had Ken and Pat Hooles, Merv Fediuk, Ron Bertrand and Vic Harmer driving the roads while a large group of feeders was watched by Jim and Marg Anderson, Nancy Armstrong, Lorraine Bertrand, Ray Brazeau, Merv and Janie Dougherty, Merv Fediuk, Beth Guimond, Carolyn Lance, Francis Marcotte, Karin Maree, Wendell McLaughlin, Sandra and John Muir, Jack and Cecile Schreder, Dianne Thrasher, Gary and Sue Walton and Lauren Trute.

Sector 3W was driven by Myron and Evan Loback, Leo Boland, Teresa Frechette and Benita Richardson, and John MacGillivray. Feeder watchers included Dan and Jean Callaghan, Daryl Coulson, Howard and Francis Doelle, Judy Fleguel, Jeremy Inglis, Beth Loback, Wes Loback, Kathleen Moss and Harold and Shirley Wirth.

Some highlighted "Good Birds" of the day: Teresa Frechette spotted a N. Hawk-owl, Christian Renault came up with a Black-backed Woodpecker, Bruce and Ben DiLabio added Red-breasted Merganser and Brown-headed Cowbird, Mark Dojczman, Margaret McLeod and Manson Fleguel had 3 Bald Eagles (1 adult, 2 immatures) in one tree while Greater Scaup and Lesser Scaup were seen on an open section of the Ottawa nearby, Leo Boland, Benita Richardson and Teresa Frechette had a N. Goshawk chasing birds in town while Sandra and John Muir had one visit their feeder and John MacGillivray found a Carolina Wren for the count.

It is truly amazing that 2 common species, Ruffed Grouse and House Sparrow, were not found on count day, the first time both species were missed in 33 years of counting!

Another comment voiced by many field birders was that it is disappointing to see so many empty feeders during the count. Perhaps the Pembroke Area Field Naturalist Club might discuss ways of improving this situation.

I hope everyone had as much fun as I did on count day and look forward to future years. Thanks to all the participants, especially the coordinators of each sector, making my job a lot easier. Good birding.



Figure 1. This wind farm is situated between Wheatley and Rondeau.

Photo: Chris Michener

Point Pelee – still a great place to bird.

Point Pelee has always been a mecca for birders, attracting both local and international tourists. The old timers say the birds aren't there in the same numbers, and while this is true in my experience also, it is still an exciting place to visit.

Club members, Harry and Janet, have spent time surveying the dragonflies of the National Park and have seen some wonderful southern species. Butterflies are there in numbers, also, and in May, the wildflowers attract good numbers of these beauties.

An early morning start is considered good practice by birders, so getting away from the campsite with a coffee in hand utilizes good camping skills.

There is a daily entrance fee to enter Point Pelee National Park, but once paid, the idea is to head for the visitor centre, where you board the tram to get to the tip vegetation. There, on a good morning, many species of birds will have made the flight over Lake Erie and, being exhausted, seek the first bit of forest they can find. Birders can be found along trails, studying plumages. The excitement of a Yellow-billed Cuckoo, a Mourning Warbler or a Kentucky Warbler spreads fast and draws crowds.



Figure 2. This Red-bellied Woodpecker kept us company at our campsite in Wheatly Provincial Park. When we pulled into our site at dark on the night of May 14th, 2010, an Eastern Screech-owl welcomed us with a trill.



The Boardwalk is fun to walk, but not always productive for unusual birds. But it is a good place to lunch. Dragonflies can be viewed sitting on pond leaves. The White-eyed



Vireo is best found by recognizing its song. Wild Turkeys are fairly new to the park. They passed near the Raccoon tree, which is how I saw the Raccoon. It takes time to visit the various habitats at Pt. Pelee. But it is a special place and one can meet people from all over the world doing the same thing, enjoying watching birds.





It's hard to be a biologist these days. Not only do I have to look up at the Butternuts and down at the ginseng, but I have to stalk bumble bees to get a closer look at their back ends to see if they are the rare Rusty-patched Bumblebee. I have to tell people to survey for Bobolink, which, apparently, is a weird word to the non-biologist type. Worse yet, I have to ask, "but did you search for the Fatmucket?" It's good practice I suppose (for what, I don't know!). I'm getting used to the blank stares and raised eyebrows.

Where was I going with this – oh yes, Flooded Jellyskin, our Species in Focus. No, it is not something that grows on the leftovers in your fridge or another way to describe the "skin" on top of pudding.



Flooded Jellyskin (*Leptogium rivulare*) is a small lichen. When dry, it is a bluish grey colour, but when wet, it transforms into a translucent jelly. It shows up in seasonally flooded areas – usually shorelines and seasonal ponds, commonly on black ash and red maple, but really could grow on any tree in the flooded area. It will colonize rocks as well.

In order to persist, Flooded Jellyskin needs a combination of periodic flooding and then a lengthy exposure to air. It grows below the high water mark (see photo on next page), where most other species of lichen would die off.



This species occurs across Europe and North America, with Canadian occurrences in Ontario and Manitoba. Although it is wide-ranging, the populations are very small and have great separation distances between them. Flooded Jellyskin was recently listed as a threatened species in Canada and an endangered species in Ontario.

The threats to Flooded Jellyskin include the loss of substrate trees to insects and disease, predation from slugs, changes in water levels or flows (e.g., damming waterways, draining lands), pollution, and habitat loss.

The good news is that with increased search effort for this species, several new Ontario populations have been found, some of which are just southeast of us in the Ottawa area. Hopefully 2011 will bring some of the Flooded Jellyskin in Renfrew County to light. It's here, we just have to find it!

Oh, and I should probably mention – positively identifying these things involves two microscopes, an eye dropper and a razor blade. I miss my field guides!!!!

There, I've gone on for five paragraphs about Flooded Jellyskin. That was three more than I thought I could get out of this species! Hope to see you in the woods....I'll be the one on her hands and knees, staring at the lichens....or stalking the bee....or counting the spots on a beetle or....

