



The Swallow



Volume 30, # 1
Fall/Winter 2012

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Cattle Egret near Augsburg on October 27, 2012

(Photo by Christian Renault)

Membership in the Pembroke Area Field Naturalists is available by writing to: The PAFN, Box 1242, Pembroke, ON K8A 6Y6
Dues for 2012/2013 are: Student \$10, Senior \$10, Individual \$15, Family \$20, Individual Life \$150, Family Life \$200.

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

* Events & Trips *

The general public is welcome at all events

Note: Please be sure to check the PAFN web site for updates, notices, and details of all club events so you don't miss anything. www.pafn.on.ca

2012

Pembroke Christmas Bird Count

Date: Saturday, December 15, 2012

Place: Within a traditional 15 km diameter circle.

Cost: Free (*This year the National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada waived the fee.*)

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. Participants are invited to meet at Manson & Judy's around 5 pm to go over results and enjoy pizza courtesy of the Club.

To confirm your participation, please contact:

Manson Fleguel 613-732-7703

Email: mfleguel@bell.net

Chris Michener Memorial Eganville Christmas Bird Count

Date: Sunday, December 16, 2012

Place: The 15 km Eganville count circle includes Augsburg, the village of Golden Lake, Green Lake, Lake Dore, Mink Lake and more.

Cost: Free (*This year the National Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada waived the fee.*)

Feeder watchers count birds in their yards, while field participants drive, ski or walk a pre-designated area keeping track of the mileage and numbers of birds. After the count participants are invited to meet at the home of Bernd Krueger and Liz Reeves around 5 pm to tally up results and enjoy some food.

To confirm your participation, please contact:

Jean Brereton 613-625-2263

Email: jbrereton@hughes.net

2013

Seedy Sunday - Admission is free

Date: Sunday, March 3, 2013, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Place: 420 Bell St., Fellowes High School, Pembroke

Some of the attractions:

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

Although Seedy Sunday is not a PAFN Club event we will have a display table set up, so please come by and visit!

Owl Prowl (Owling Night)

Date: March 29, 2013

Time: 7:30 PM

Trip Leader: Christian Renault (613-735-8395)

Place: Wilberforce Township Park. Go south on Hwy 41 past intersection of Hwy 41 and Lake Dore Rd., cross the bridge, turn right after the bridge 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.



Shaw Woods: Mothers Day Wildflower and Nature Walk, May 13, 2012

by Robin Cunningham, Trip Co-Leader

Harry Adams and I co-led the annual Mother's Day walk in the Shaw Woods. About 25 people enjoyed a leisurely afternoon walk on the trails in great weather. People observed a wide range of sights and sounds in this old growth forest. Some of the wildflowers in bloom were: trout lily, white and red trilliums, blue cohosh, jack-in-the-pulpit, and white, yellow, and purple violets.

We observed and compared some common ferns: spinulose and marginal woodferns, sensitive, interrupted, oak, beech, New York, and bracken ferns. Although disappointed by the low numbers of dragonflies and butterflies, we were pleased with the absence of biting insects.

Our bird list for the afternoon totaled 29 species:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Bald Eagle | Wood Duck |
| Mourning Dove | Pileated Woodpecker |
| Hairy Woodpecker | Yellow-breasted Sapsucker |
| Least Flycatcher | American Robin |
| Wood Thrush | Veery |
| Hermit Thrush | Red-eyed Vireo |
| Bay-Breasted Warbler | Black & White Warbler |
| Black-throated Green Warbler | Black-throated Blue Warbler |
| Chestnut-sided Warbler | Blackburnian Warbler |
| Cape May Warbler | American Redstart |
| Northern Waterthrush | Ovenbird |
| American Redstart | Eastern Bluebird |
| Redwing Blackbird | White-throated Sparrow |
| Song Sparrow | Chipping Sparrow |
| Rose-breasted Grosbeak | |

Hope you can join us on this field trip next year!



A Walk in the Petawawa Terrace (Old Fish Hatchery), May 20, 2012

by Christian Renault, Trip Co-Leader

Trip leaders: Robin Cunningham and Christian Renault

On May 20, at 5 pm, under a partly cloudy sky, with a pleasant temperature in the mid 20's, 11 people showed up to enjoy this annual walk.

Proceeding along the former road, we walked down the escarpment towards the woods on the bottom right side. Initially we only saw (or heard) a few bird species: Blue Jay, Veery, White-throated Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, Ovenbird, and Black-capped Chickadee.

In the lower flat area of the park we saw numerous other species: Goldfinch, Red-winged Blackbirds, Tree Swallows, Cedar Waxwings, Common Grackle, Common Yellowthroat, a Baltimore Oriole, Chestnut-sided Warbler, American Crows, Ravens, Yellow Warblers, and a Brown Thrasher. Following the trail along a little creek heading towards the Ottawa River, we hoped to see lots of aquatic birds. Not many were seen, however, but one Semipalmated Plover landed on a flat gravel area creekside and entertained us for 3-4 minutes, while it took a sip (perhaps looking for some food) before it took off. In the distance we could see some Canada Geese with goslings. Trip co-leader Robin Cunningham played some bird songs on his MP3 player that briefly called out a protective Virginia Rail responding to this 'virtual' rival.



Brown Creeper (Photo by Christian Renault)

We saw and heard a distant American Bittern, and a Broad-Winged Hawk that flew above the forest. A Killdeer also announced its presence along with a Mallard, Ring-billed Gull, Black and White Warbler, Swamp Sparrow, and a Belted Kingfisher. We could hear several Red-winged Blackbirds and three different drumming Ruffed Grouse.

On the way back along the west trail just before the escarpment, we had the pleasure of hearing two Cape May Warblers and a Yellow-throated Vireo, as well as a Great Crested Flycatcher. On the upper part of the escarpment as we headed back to the parking lot, we saw a beautiful Brown Creeper hugging a small tree trunk. It looked sleepy, almost in a daze, so we were able to observe it closely and to photograph it with ease. We also heard a Hairy Woodpecker, American Robins, Northern Flickers, Red-eyed Vireos and White-breasted Nuthatches.

All in all, despite the heat, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. It was a good evening!

Other sightings of interest on this walk were 2 Tiger Beetles seen at the bottom of the road. A total of 10 singing Gray Treefrogs, 1 Green Frog, and what sounded like 2 Mink Frogs were also heard.

On my way home, as the sun was about to set, I thought I would drive by the Pembroke airport in an attempt to locate Vesper Sparrows, a species I had found there last year during the Renfrew County 150th anniversary celebrations. I was rewarded for my efforts by 4 singing males located along the fence between the airport and the road.



And then, an interesting sighting: a greyish bird landed briefly on a post then dropped down and hid in the dried grass. After 5 minutes spent looking for it, I clearly saw a Northern Mockingbird surface above the grass. This was my very first sighting of this bird in Renfrew County!

Northern Mockingbird (Photo by Christian Renault)

The name 'Mockingbird' proved to be appropriate as I witnessed this "mimic thrush" imitate a Robin, and then a Phoebe. The song was so good I was almost fooled into believing a Phoebe was hiding in a tree.



Garage Sale at The Children's Garden Nursery School, June 9, 2012

by Benita Richardson, Director

With thanks to the members and friends of Pembroke Area Field Naturalists Club and the families and staff of The Children's Garden, our yard sale was an outstanding success once again! This combined fundraiser has become a much anticipated annual event.

With over \$300 to share between the two organizations, and several car loads of items donated to Value Village, our world definitely felt the lighter footprint. We were graced with a beautiful morning where visitors to our sale were gifted with the sights and sounds of beautiful flora and fauna, birds, butterflies and bees! What a great way for those new to us to experience PAFN and The Children's Garden!

Thanks to everyone who donated items and those who purchased them. If you have items to donate for next year, we'll begin accepting them during the week leading up to the sale next June. Watch for notice of the date in the Spring 2013 edition of *The Swallow*.



24th Annual Lake Dore Butterfly Count, July 7, 2012

by Jean Brereton, Coordinator

The spectacular spring migration promised it would be an amazing year for butterflies. On April 16 a huge migration of Red Admirals blew into Southern Ontario.¹ Two days later, on April 18, I witnessed a similar awe inspiring influx of Red Admirals into Renfrew County. I saw them first while in Petawawa and upon my return to Golden Lake later that same day I witnessed swarms of them around my house. What a sight!

By July 7, however, we were well into the unusually dry and hot weather conditions of this summer and results for count day results were low. Whereas Red Admirals had earlier been everywhere, we only saw three on count day.

The very highest tally for the Lake Dore Butterfly Count was in 1999 when we counted 44 species. This year our total of 28 species was low, but still respectable. Notable was the minimal number of European Skippers: only 4 seen this year whereas last year we counted 835.

Participants on the count this year were:

1 Royal Ontario Museum blog: <http://blog.rom.on.ca/2012/04/mondays-massive-migration/>

Jean Brereton (*count coordinator and co-leader*), Ethan Anderman (*butterfly aficionado² and co-leader*), Christian Renault, Ole Hendrickson, Dustin Ryckman, Chantal Hopkins, Linda Spagnolo, and Robbie Anderman.

The sky was overcast for a good portion of the morning but the afternoon brought sunny conditions. Temperature at 9:00 am was around 21C and heated up to 30C in the afternoon.

Lake Dore Butterfly Count Results

<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
18	Black Swallowtail
2	'Veined' Mustard White
30	Cabbage White
44	Clouded Sulphur
19	Orange Sulphur
1	Harvester
4	'Summer' Spring Azure
12	Great Spangled Fritillary
7	Meadow Fritillary
4	Pearl Crescent
36	Northern Crescent
3	Question Mark
1	Painted Lady
3	Red Admiral
8	White Admiral
4	Viceroy
4	Northern Pearly-eye
9	Eyed Brown
2	Little Wood-Satyr
27	Common Wood-Nymph
59	Monarch
7	Columbine Duskywing
4	European Skipper
2	Peck's Skipper
1	Tawny-edged Skipper
3	Northern Broken-Dash
6	Delaware Skipper
13	Dun Skipper

The following groupings of butterflies (*fly bys*) were seen but species were unidentified: *Phyciodes* sp. 10, *Speyeria* sp. 2, *Colias* 1, *Hesperinae* sp. 2.

Thanks to all count participants who might have chosen to spend this scorcher staying cool by the lake. Indisputable evidence that identifying butterflies is a deeply rewarding experience! Come on out next year and try it for yourself!

2 aficionado: a person who likes, knows about, and appreciates a usually fervently pursued interest or activity



21st Hog Island Annual Butterfly Count July 21, 2012

by Jean Brereton, Count Coordinator

This count was named for Hog Island, located in the Ottawa River, as it is geographically located in the middle of the count circle. Chris Michener, who initiated this count, was inspired by the apparent *yin/yang* symbol created by Hog Island and surrounding waterways. And he intended the count circle to be half in Ontario and half in Quebec. So voilà!

Our group of field participants spent a good part of the morning exploring the large open field just inside the gate of Westmeath Provincial Park. The morning was mostly sunny, but some cloudy patches moved in later in the afternoon.



After enjoying the morning butterflying in Westmeath Park the group stopped for lunch at the *Women's Institute Memory Garden* at Hazley Bay near Greenwood. The previous year, on count day, club members had planted some perennials here in memory of Chris Michener. After watering the very dry plants and eating our bag lunches, we split up into three groups for the afternoon in an effort to cover more territory.

Indian Skipper (Photo by Chris Michener)

Count participants this year were: Jean Brereton (*count coordinator and co-leader*), Ethan Anderman (*butterfly aficionado and co-leader*), Linda Spagnolo, Christian Renault, Bernd Krueger, and Elizabeth Reeves.

Hog Island Butterfly Count Results

<u>Numbers</u>	<u>Common Name</u>
4	Black Swallowtail
223	Cabbage White
42	Clouded Sulphur
14	Orange Sulphur
1	Harvester
3	American Copper
2	Acadian Hairstreak
1	'Summer' Spring Azure
4	Great Spangled Fritillary
1	Silver-bordered Fritillary
2	Pearl Crescent
6	Northern Crescent

4	American Lady
1	Painted Lady
3	White Admiral
15	Viceroy
9	Common Wood-Nymph
158	Monarch
1	Crossline Skipper
11	Dun Skipper

The following groupings of butterflies were seen but species remained unidentified: *Phyciodes* sp. 5, *Hesperinae* sp. 3.

Thanks to everyone who came out to participate in the 21st Hog Island Count!



15th Annual Lake Dore Odonate Count, August 4, 2012

by Harry Adams, Trip Co-Leader

The 15th Annual Lake Dore Ode Count held on August 4 was a very warm day and quite typical of the hot, dry weather we experienced all summer. The turnout was excellent, with 11 participants, including Noah Cole, who came all the way from Toronto to join us.

Having gained experience from last year's count, leaders Harry Adams and Christian Renault had the participants split into two groups in order to increase the area covered.

Unfortunately, the extended period of hot weather had a devastating effect on the wetland habitat favoured by dragonflies and many previously productive sites were completely dried up. As a result, this was the worst count year ever in terms of the number of individuals (158) and number of species (21) recorded. In spite of this, much fun was had by all.



Count participants:

Back Row (left to right): Harry Adams, Benita Richardson, Christian Renault, Bernd Krueger, Janet Nelson, Jean Brereton, Leo Boland, Noah Cole.

Front row (kneeling): Claire Lepine, Elizabeth Reeves, Lee Manto.

"The Odonators, 2012"

(Photo taken by a friendly fisherman at Shaw Pond using Noah Cole's camera.)

2012 Odonate Count Results

Ebony Jewelwing	2
Slender Spreadwing	1
Swamp Spreadwing	2
Variable Dancer	41
Powdered Dancer	10
Marsh Bluet	7
Stream Bluet	2
Skimming Bluet	1
Hagen's Bluet	7
Fragile Forktail	3
Eastern Forktail	33
Canada Darner	1
Dragonhunter	2
Least Clubtail	1
Halloween Pennant	2
Common Pondhawk	7
Slaty Skimmer	4
Widow Skimmer	9
Cherry-faced Meadowhawk	1
White-faced Meadowhawk	19
Autumn Meadowhawk	3
<u>Total</u>	<u>158</u>



Young naturalist, Lee Manto, demonstrates how to hold a dragonfly for purposes of identification.

(Photo by Noah Cole)



Pembroke Marina/Waterfront Walk, August 18, 2012

by Ken Hooles, Trip Leader

This year's Pembroke Marina Walk held on Saturday, August 18, was successful both in terms of participants and in bird species found. Similar to last year, the weather conditions were ideal and the Ottawa River water levels were low, exposing sandbars. What also made it special was that the fall migration had started early for both shorebirds and songbirds.

This year, 15 persons participated in the trip and we were able to locate 53 bird species. This was only five species fewer than the record number of 58 species established in 1998.

Similar to the past two years, the waterfowl species were almost non-existent with only 6 species located on the entire excursion. This was highly unusual, and I contribute this to the low water levels on the Ottawa River. The 6 species included Canada Geese, Mallards, Cormorants, Common and Hooded Mergansers and Common Goldeneye Ducks.

The low water levels on the Ottawa River should have been good for shorebird sightings, but only three shorebird species were located: Spotted and Semipalmated Sandpiper and a couple of Greater Yellowlegs.

The warblers and songbirds were more numerous than last year with at least 10 species being identified. These included Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Nashville, Yellow-rumped, Magnolia, Tennessee, Black and White, Common Yellowthroat, a rare Cape May Warbler and American Redstarts. The fall migrants such as Wilson's, Blackpoll or Bay-breasted had not yet arrived.



Northern Cardinal (Photo by Beth Loback)

The highlights of the walk included the sighting of a Green Heron, Cooper's Hawk, Merlin, Philadelphia Vireo, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and the Cape May Warbler.

Other interesting sightings included Great Blue Heron, Belted Kingfisher, Chimney Swifts, a Veery, Eastern Phoebe, Northern Cardinal, Osprey, and Turkey Vulture.

Notably absent on this year's excursion were several members of the Sparrow family, song birds such as Tanagers and Orioles, shorebirds, and flycatchers. The Pembroke Marina Walk began in 1988. Between 1988 and 2011, 126 bird species have been identified on this excursion. This year, we located two new species for the count: a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and a Cape May Warbler.

This brings the total bird species for the marina walk to 128. This year, the Pembroke Marina Walk record species was almost matched, which made for a very challenging and enjoyable outing. Thanks to all of you who made this outing so successful.



Westmeath Park Walk, September 29, 2012
by Christian Renault, Trip Co-Leader

(Other Trip Co-Leaders: Robin Cunningham and Ted Hiscock)

A total of 11 adults and 2 children gathered at the Westmeath Boat Launch at 8:30 a.m. The trip started out foggy but within a half hour, the fog had lifted. There was no wind, and the sky was partly cloudy.

Highlights (and delights): through the mist we spotted 3 Red-necked Grebes and 2 Common Loons. On the spit were 2 American Pipits and 4 Lapland Longspurs who were all very cooperative. They allowed us to get close enough for a really good look while they were feeding on grass seeds. This was a good start to the morning as it's hard to get so close to American Pipits and Lapland Longspurs. We were less than 10 metres away! We also heard a calling Sandhill Crane as it flew by and we spotted a Beaver who was swimming nearby.



We then drove to Sand Point Road, and walked along the shore through the low shrubs in search of Sparrows. First we saw Yellow-rumped Warblers, then White-crowned Sparrows, Song Sparrows, and Swamp Sparrows. There were some Blue Jays, White-breasted Nuthatches, Black-capped Chickadees, a Northern Flicker, American Robin, and some American Pipits that called every so often.

Several flocks of Canada Geese were coming down the river. Just as we were about to begin our return trip, we saw 2 sparrows flying, and one of them, a Nelson's Sparrow, very cooperatively allowed us a good extended view. This made for a very happy group!

Nelson's Sparrow
(Photo by Christian Renault)

The trip ended around 11:30 a.m. at which time most of the group left. A few participants, however, stayed on for a last look of the Ottawa River from the end of Sand Point Road. They were rewarded for the efforts by the sighting of 6 Northern Pintails, 2 Lesser Scaups, 2 Black Ducks, and 10 Greater Snow Geese (3 of which were *Blue Morphs*), these latter geese were swimming and resting with the Canada Geese. Some usual species were notably absent - there were no shorebirds, nor birds of prey. And only 2 Ring-billed Gulls. But we had a good time, great weather, and sightings of many interesting species.



American Pipit (Photo by Christian Renault)



Lake Dore Birds, October 27 2012

by Manson Fleguel, Trip Leader

Despite the steady rain, a temperature hovering around 5 degrees and a miserable wind, amazingly 7 others showed up at the Township Municipal Park to go birding! It takes some “hard-core” birders to endure this. On top of that I had neglected to wear a heavier coat. (Thanks Jean!)

Our group took advantage of the cover of the shelter at our meeting spot from where we spotted Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Herring Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Blue Jay, American Robin, and Dark-eyed Juncos before moving on.

By the time we got to the overlook on Point Church Drive, the rain had let up and the main issue here was the brisk north-east wind. However, with all the sharp eyed birders along, we were able to spot Canada Goose, Greater Scaup, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Black Scoter, Long-tailed Duck and Bonaparte’s Gull, as well as many of the other species already mentioned.

We were lucky at the next stop, where the gate was open and we were able to drive right up to the beach at the Lake Dore Tent and Trailer Park (a big thank you to Carole for granting us permission to access this great birding spot every year). The rain and wind had picked up again so spotting and identifying species became a real challenge. Here we added to our outing list: Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser and Pied-billed Grebe. A bonus of the bad weather was the absence of hunters. My “Ruddy Duck” turned into a Hooded Merganser when the viewing improved a bit! A lesson to be certain of bird identification even in poor viewing conditions.

From here we drove over to Biederman Park. Again the weather limited our birding but we were able to see Mallard, Ring-necked Duck, Rock Pigeon and Black-capped Chickadee.

Our last stop was at the “spit” along the north shore, where 5 Greater Yellowlegs were resting. While this accidental spit is not welcomed by the local cottagers and home owners, it is a boon to birders when the lake is ice-free.

The drive itself yielded other species seen by various members of the tour: Red-breasted Merganser, Wild Turkey, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, American Crow, Common Raven and American Tree Sparrow.

On a bad weather day we were rewarded with 32 species.





Ruby-crowned Kinglet

This article is in memory of my friend Chris Michener, who, once flashed by a Ruby-crowned Kinglet, got forever hooked on birding.

The Ruby-crowned Kinglet (*Regulus calendula*) is a tiny bird, about 11 cm long (4.25 inches), with a short black beak to eat bugs, seeds, berries and sap. They weigh about seven grams as adults.

In terms of colour, both sexes are similar. They have mostly olive green upperparts and buff underparts. The darker wings have yellowish edging and two white wing bars, though one is often obscured. A thin white eye ring is visible. The tail is black but edged with yellow or olive green and the legs are black. The small bright red patch on the crown is often completely concealed, unless of course, you get flashed! This display occurs most often during the breeding season, as the male seeks a mate.

This kinglet is fairly widely distributed, occurring across almost all of Canada and into some northern States, and can be found in both conifer and mixed wood forests as long as there is good cover. They winter in the southern United States.



*Ruby-crowned Kinglet
(Photo courtesy of Tom Thomas)*

Nests are usually made in spruce trees, and are most often seen hanging from a small branch or twig. On average, four to ten eggs are laid and hatch in about 2 weeks. After 12-14 days, the fledgling birds test out their wings.

Both parents feed the young, eating mostly insects and other small critters (ants, small spiders, etc.). They will also eat berries, some seeds and drink a little sap. When they are feeding on insects, they often flick their wings, which frightens the insects to death - literally! The kinglets will flit and hop around on twigs and branches, but they also pluck insects right out of the air, a technique called hawking.

Their call is described as a rattly ji-dit; ji-dit; ji-dit or chip-chip-chip. It is very high pitched and can change tempo. If that song description didn't clear it right up for you, fear not! Male Ruby-crowned Kinglets are a helpful combination of aggressively territorial and curious, and they respond well to pishing. Careful though... you might get flashed!

This little jewel is often part of mixed flocks of smaller birds, especially during migration, so get out those binoculars - you never know what you might find!

