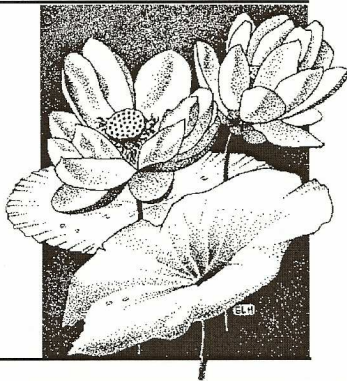


Lotus

NEWSLETTER
of the
NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS



October 2009

Meeting Notes

September 8 / 09 Meeting

Announcements:

Referring to the recent mailing to members, Audrey Heagy reminded everyone that the renewal form had been included and the 2009-2010 fees are now due. September / October workshops were outlined in enclosures along with a registration form.

(Ed note) The workshops still to take place are Ron Ridout's Oct. 17 Digital Nature Photograph session and Sally Gable's Oct. 24 "Inspired by Nature" Art Workshop for Kids.

Recent sightings included a Sphinx Moth caterpillar, Carolina Wren at hanging pots and a double-faced aster which had been pressed and was passed around those present (which elicited the question "Is this a disaster?").

September Speaker

Steve Scheers, Superintendent of Forestry and Cemeteries for Norfolk County, was in charge of The Great Tree Hunt that was initiated as part of the Norfolk Forestry Capital of Canada activities.



Steve introduced Adam Biddle, Forest Resource Technician, who had done much of the work on the

Great Tree Hunt project, to tell about the project and present the results.



The purpose of the Great Tree Hunt was to engage the community, inspire self-directed learning and commemorate Norfolk County's recognition as the Forestry Capital of Canada - 2008.

Three hundred and fifty (350) trees were entered by 130 people. Several schools made proposals of trees. Delhi Public School nominated 4 trees - the most of all the schools (one of which proved to be a Great Tree), and won 12 trees to be planted this fall. All schools that made a nomination received one tree.

One hundred and one (101) trees, comprised of eighty-one (81) hardwoods and twenty (20) softwoods, were selected as "Great Trees". Of these, 59 qualify for the Ontario Honour Roll and several more as Heritage Trees. The awards, made from a fallen White Oak, were presented at the February 2009 meeting of the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association.

A Driving Tour map is being created which will be available on the web to print off. It will be accompanied by the featured trees' information, pictures and measurements. Great Trees that are deep in woodlots on private property will not be included in the tour, only those that can be seen from the road. Norfolk County's largest tree is an Eastern Cottonwood. The primary criteria for selecting a Great Tree was size. The calculation used was "Circumference x height / 10". It was noted that there were no nominations of Backus trees.

The presentation ended with a slide show of the winning "Great Trees". Several of us were surprised by unusual tree names we had never heard before. More detailed information about Norfolk Great Trees will be available on the Woodlot Owners Ass'n web site found at www.norfolkwoodlots.com

The Great Tree Hunt project was a collaborative effort of the Norfolk Field Naturalists, the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association, Norfolk County and the Southwestern Ontario Loggers' Association. The bulk of the work was done by summer students working for the County (which is what most of the Ontario Trillium Foundation grant was to be used for).

Annual General Meeting

The 57 members present constituted a quorum. The minutes of last year's AGM were adopted as were the financial statements presented by Lynda Koselle. Audrey Heagy gave her President's Report, which provided a review of the past 12 months. Peter Carson proposed the Board for 2009-2010 which remained the same as at the end of 2008-2009 except for the addition of a new Director-at-large, Hazel Wheeler. No other nominations were received and the slate was approved as presented. *(Ed. note: The Annual Report insert in your October Lotus contains the President's Report, the financial statements as presented at the AGM, and the list of 2008-2009 Board Members.)*

June - July 2009 NFN Outings

Audrey Heagy

Big Creek Marsh Hike, June

The weather for the evening hike at the CWS Big Creek Marsh in June was very pleasant – sunny, warm and breezy. Unfortunately Danny Bernard the CWS site manager for the Big Creek and Long Point National Wildlife Areas was unable to lead the hike as planned (we got bumped by the CWS Regional Director). Seven people participated in the hike, led by Audrey Heagy.

Numerous Marsh Wrens sang their bubbly song from the cattails as we walked around the dike. Other marsh birds were also plentiful but more cryptic. We did see Great Blue Herons hunting for frogs, nesting Black Terns, and a Pied-bill Grebe paddling in the water. On the far side of the dike, a Canada Goose gosling got separated from the main group and raced ahead of us along the trail peeping frantically before

eventually heading down into the water and back to the gosling crèche. At one point a Least Bittern called its soft coo-coo-coo song (similar to a cuckoo).

The highlight of the walk was the turtles that we found nesting along the dike. In total we saw six snapping turtles (no really big ones) and one spotted turtle. The shell of the spotted turtle had been marked by turtle researchers. As the turtles were all busy laying eggs they just stayed put as we carefully passed by.

As we were leaving, the dusk chorus of bullfrogs and green frogs was starting up.

The Big Creek Marsh is a wonderful spot for wildlife viewing in the summer. Unlike most other natural areas in Norfolk, there are very few biting insects there. If there isn't a breeze there can be lots of midges in the air, particularly in amongst the tall stands of Common Reed (*Phragmites*).

Big Creek Canoe Trip, June

Due to heavy rains and thunderstorms this trip was cancelled.

Bluebirds and Butterflies in an Old Field, July

Due to rain and thunderstorms in the morning no one showed up for this event.

New NFN Members

We welcome our new NFN members:

Chris Bowyer
Jackie Cave
Barb & Bob Hawke
Dave Reid
Brett Schyler
Joyce & Dennis Wright

Zip Line Adventure

Diane Salter

I hate shopping, so finding Christmas presents for my son Greg and his family is always so difficult. This August the perfect gift appeared. I took them on a Zip Line Adventure. Bailey (10), Megan (8), Greg, Amy and I headed to Long Point Eco Adventures, between Turkey Point and St. Williams.

First we were all suited up in helmets and harnesses. Then we proceeded to 'ground school' where we learned all the basics. A lesson on a short zip line

taught us how to place our hands, brake, mount and dismount. Then, with much trepidation, we climbed the stairs to launch off the first zip line.

When you go with your 'grandkids' you can't 'chicken out'. Off we went! It was like flying but you felt in total control. The view out over Turkey Point marsh was spectacular. The tall Carolinian trees, the silence, even a bald eagle soaring over the marsh, all added to the moment. After 7 zip lines and 2 swinging suspension bridges, our final dismount on a rappel down to the forest floor gave us the feeling that we had indeed taken a wonderful adventure. Our 2 guides were very encouraging and knowledgeable and made us feel very safe. I can't wait to do it again.



Photo credits: Amy and Greg Salter

Long Point Butterfly Count - 2009

The Timpfs

The 18th annual Long Point Butterfly Count was held on July 4, 2009 under warm, sunny conditions. Eighteen observers covered 6 areas, and were able to come up with 50 species. This is slightly above our 17 year average of 49. However, overall numbers were below average, with only 2074 individuals (our 17-year average is 2652).

One new species was found for the count, a photographed Canadian Tiger Swallowtail. This brings the overall species count to 72. Record high counts included Canadian Tiger Swallowtail (1), Eastern Comma (42), Red-spotted Purple (tied at 30), Milbert's Tortoiseshell (tied at 1), and a Grey Comma (tied at 1). Record lows included Orange Sulphur (1), Bronze Copper (1), and Red Admiral (4). Big misses included Eastern Tailed-Blue (only missed in 1997) and American Lady (it was seen during the count-week, missed 3 times).

The full species tally was:

Black Swallowtail - 2
 Eastern Tiger Swallowtail - 78
 Canadian Tiger Swallowtail - 1
 Spicebush Swallowtail - 17
 Cabbage White - 245
 Clouded Sulphur - 40
 Orange Sulphur - 1
 American Copper - 4
 Bronze Copper - 1
 Coral Hairstreak - 7
 Acadian Hairstreak - 1
 Edward's Hairstreak - 6
 Banded Hairstreak - 1
 Summer Azure - 103
 Great-spangled Fritillary - 75
 Silvery Checkerspot - 14
 Pearl Crescent - 1
 Northern Crescent - 259
 Baltimore - 24
 Question Mark - 4
 Eastern Comma - 42
 Grey Comma - 1
 Compton Tortoiseshell - 1
 Mourning Cloak - 5
 Milbert's Tortoiseshell - 1
 Red Admiral - 4
 Red-spotted Purple - 30
 Viceroy - 11
 Tawny Emperor - 1
 Northern Pearly-Eye - 4
 Eyed Brown - 8
 Appalachian Brown - 5
 Little Wood-Satyr - 109
 Common Ringlet - 1
 Common Wood Nymph - 29
 Monarch - 34
 Silver-spotted Skipper - 50
 Southern Cloudywing - 6
 Northern Cloudywing - 13
 Least Skipper - 20
 European Skipper - 790
 Tawny-edged Skipper - 1
 Crossline Skipper - 2
 Long Dash - 2
 Northern Broken-Dash - 7
 Little Glassywing - 3
 Delaware Skipper - 1
 Hobomok Skipper - 7
 Broad-winged Skipper - 1
 Dun Skipper - 1

A big thanks to everyone who participated. We hope to have your help again next year (Saturday July 3rd)! Thank you to Peter and Mary for hosting the count's BBQ wrap-up. It was a great time!

Next Meetings

Tuesday, November 10, 2009
Impact of Predation on Wood Thrush
Populations in Fragmented Forests

Dr. Lyle Friesen, Environment Canada

Tuesday, December 8, 2009 6:30 p.m.
Member's Social and a Movie
Bring a seasonal treat to share before
the Movie: The 11th Hour (92 min)

Upcoming NFN Outings

Sat. Oct. 17 / 09

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Workshop - Ron Ridout
"Digital Photography 101"

Cost \$15.00 incl. lunch

Shirley Rothery 519-586-9535

Sat., Oct. 24 / 09

1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Art Workshop for Kids
Ages 8 to 13 years

Cost \$10.00 / participant

Free for KFT Members

Pre-registration required

Shirley Rothery 519-586-9535

Sun., Nov. 15 / 09

1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Great Trees of Norfolk
Driving Tour

Audrey Heagy 519-586-9464

Christmas Bird Counts:

All day ; \$5.00 fee waived for
BSC members

Sun., Dec. 20 / 09

Woodhouse (Simcoe area)

David Okines 519-586-9464

davidokines@aol.com

Sat., Jan 2 / 10 (tentative)

Fisherville (Haldimand Co.)

Linda Thrower 905-774-1230

giantindians@3web.net

NFN Meetings

Norfolk Field Naturalist meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month from September to May. The election of Directors takes place at the September meeting.

Meetings take place at the Simcoe Seniors Centre on Pond Street. They are free and visitors are always welcome. Doors open at 7:15pm; program begins at 7:30pm.

Next issue of Lotus:

December 2009

Input cutoff date:

Fri. Nov. 27, 2009

Club Mailing Address

Norfolk Field Naturalists
PO Box 995, Simcoe, ON
N3Y 5B3

About the NFN

Norfolk Field Naturalist members participate in meetings and frequent field outings, many of which are family-friendly. Membership fees, due in September, are \$20-Individual and \$30-Family; donations are eligible for income tax credits; Charitable Registration #119058691.

Guest speakers present programs on interesting and relevant natural history and conservation topics.

Club members receive the Lotus newsletter with articles on local natural history and club activities. It is published bi-monthly from October to June by volunteer club members. Copies of the Lotus are available at meetings but will be mailed (free of charge) to members if not picked up. Articles published in the Lotus reflect the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the NFN. Visit the NFN website at:

www.norfolkfieldnaturalists.org

2009 - 2010 NFN Directors with Contact and Project Information

		all 519-	
President (+ Field Outings)	Audrey Heagy	586-9464	aheagy@bsc-eoc.org
Past Pres. + Natural Areas	Peter Carson	586-3985	gartcar@kwic.com
Vice-President	Tara Crewe	586-3531 x163	crewe@bsc-eoc.org
Treasurer + Kids for Turtles	Lynda Kosalle	426-0826	kosalle@amtelecom.net
Secretary	Elisabeth van Stam	586-7719	evanstam@bsc-eoc.org
Membership	Diane Salter	586-7775	dianesalter@execulink.com
Field Outings	(position currently vacant)		
Speaker Program	Bernt (Bernie) Solymar	426-7124	solymar@nornet.on.ca
Publicity	Nina Cameron	586-8785	ninac@execulink.com
Sanctuary	Matt Brock	586-7585	greenheron99@hotmail.com
Director-at-large	Colleen Dale	428-0944	cdale22@yahoo.ca
Director-at-large	Shirley Rothery	586-9535	shirleyrothery@hotmail.com
Dir. + Causeway	Hazel Wheeler	586-3531 x165	hwheeler@bsc-eoc.org

Honorary President: Al Robinson **Honorary Directors:** Harry Barrett, Jim Harlow

Lotus Editor Anne Davidson 582-4382 birdyanne@gmail.com
Butterfly Counts Doug Timpf 586-9964 timpf@nornet.on.ca