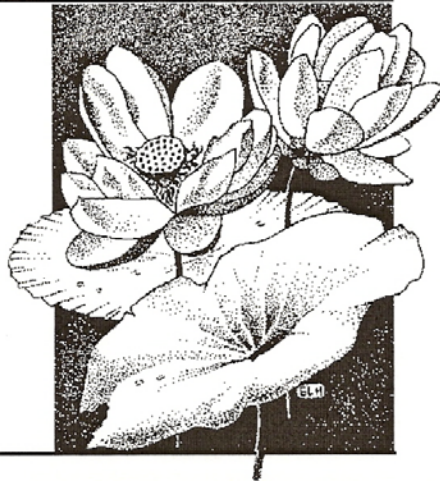


Lotus

NEWSLETTER
of the
NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS



OCTOBER 2012



PERFECT WEATHER BRINGS NEW RECORDS FOR LONG POINT BUTTERFLY COUNT

Report by: Adam Timpf

The 21st Long Point Butterfly Count was held on July 7th 2012 under hot, humid and sunny conditions with very little wind. It was perfect weather for finding butterflies, but taxing on the 20 observers. The warmer than average spring played a role bringing us large numbers of migratory butterflies as well as a few species we normally wouldn't see until later in the year.

Everybody's hard work paid off and many great discoveries were made. Participants counted 4155 Individuals (average 2590) of 54 species, one short of our record high of 55.

An amazing three new species were recorded on the count for the first time! New for the count were 7 Wild Indigo Duskywing, 7 Variegated Fritillary, and 1 Common Checkered Skipper. This brings the cumulative species total for all Long Point counts to 75 species. The sighting of the Common Checkered Skipper also represents the first record for Norfolk County.

(Continued on page 2)



Common Checkered Skipper (photo: A. Timpf)



Wild Indigo Duskywing (photo: Marlin/Google)

Long Point Butterfly Count - from page 1

The count also had an amazing number of record highs.

15 New Highs, 1 Tied – old record in parenthesis

Black Swallowtail - 25 (13)
Canadian Tiger Swallowtail - 4 (1)
Clouded Sulphur - 206 (205)
Orange Sulphur - 392 (132)
American Copper - 205 (28)
Coral Hairstreak - 76 (36)
Meadow Fritillary (1st since 2006)
Painted Lady - 56 (21)
Buckeye - 26 (2)
Eyed Brown - 65 (64)
Appalachian Brown - 39 (38)
Monarch - 186 (184)
Silver-spotted Skipper - 422 (161)
Broad-winged Skipper - 33 (24)
Black Dash - 27 (4)
Dun Skipper - 1149 (171)



Variegated Fritillary (photo: Lance Merry/Google)

It's hard to set record lows since most species have been missed at least once. Only 18 species have been found on all counts. Nonetheless we managed to do that too, spotting only 8 European Skippers (39 previous low).

Other species recorded were:

Eastern Tiger Swallowtail - 158
Spicebush Swallowtail - 25
Pipevine Swallowtail - 1
Cabbage White - 370
Bronze Copper - 7
Edward's Hairstreak - 29
Banded Hairstreak - 4
Hickory Hairstreak - 2
Eastern Tailed-Blue - 9
Summer Azure - 47
Great Spangled Fritillary - 38
Silvery Checkerspot - 3
Pearl Crescent - 108
Northern Crescent - 119
Baltimore Checkerspot - 23
Question Mark - 13
Eastern Comma - 8
Mourning Cloak - 13
American Lady - 12
Red Admiral - 161
Red-spotted Purple - 8
Viceroy - 4
Tawny Emperor - 10
Little Wood-Satyr - 7
Common Wood-Nymph - 10

Big thanks to Peter Carson and Mary Gartshore for hosting the wrap-up and to everybody who was able to participate. Hope to see everyone again next year. It's always the first Saturday in July, making the next count July 6th, 2013.

NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS

50th ANNIVERSARY GALA DINNER

October 20, 2012, Port Rowan Community Centre
Social Hour at 6.00 pm, Dinner at 7.00 pm- Cash Bar
\$25.00 per person

NOTE: Ticket sales close October 11

For tickets call: Alan Ladd 519-426-8504

Or: Shirley Rothery 519-586-9535

ENVIRONMENT:

Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)

Program Helps Farmers Help the Environment

Excerpts from a media release by:



LPRCA

and Grey Ag Services

Earlier this summer the Grey Agricultural Service Centre and the Municipality of Bayham announced the launch of the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) conservation program into Grey and Bruce Counties. A coalition of agricultural and conservation organizations, local and provincial governments and interested farmers introduced a pilot project into the region during the summer of 2012.

The Grey-Bruce ALUS initiative is the latest addition to a conservation program that is going through a period of unprecedented growth. ALUS is now established in four provinces: Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Ontario.

Developed more than ten years ago by Delta Waterfowl Foundation and Manitoba's Keystone Agricultural Producers, ALUS is a community-led, farmer-delivered incentive program that recognizes the unique role farmers and ranchers play not only in producing food, but in enhancing the healthy environment we all enjoy. ALUS creates a healthy, working landscape that simultaneously sustains agriculture, wildlife and the protection of natural spaces.

The program will inform the public of the importance of environmental stewardship, improve the ecological health of the Long Point Region watershed and carry out projects that will restore marginal farm lands in Bayham.

"Wind breaks, stream buffers and sediment basins go a long way towards improving the health of the watershed", said Roger Geysens of the long Point Region Conservation Authority. "The LPRCA is enthusiastic about the ALUS program expanding into Bayham. The projects that farmers initiated in Norfolk County were exciting and we anticipate a strong response from landowners who will want to participate", Mr. Geysens added.

This model was first introduced into Ontario in Norfolk County in 2008. ALUS recognizes the ecological and operational value of converting selected parcels of farmland into natural habitat. This improves the overall health and success of the farm and also provides environmental benefits that all Canadians can enjoy beyond the farm gate.

Partners include Ontario Nature, Delta Waterfowl, Municipality of Bayham, Elgin Federation of Agriculture, Long Point Region Conservation Authority and interested citizens.

ALUS KEY MESSAGES

Alternative Land Use Services or *ALUS* is a voluntary, community led, farmer delivered incentive program that recognizes the unique role farmers and ranchers play not only in producing food, but the healthy environment we all enjoy.

Active in four provinces: Ontario, PEI, Saskatchewan and Alberta, ALUS treats farming as a strong partner with the environment.

ALUS can turn selected parcels of farmland into a natural habitat that improves the overall health and success of the farm.

ALUS is unique. Like many environmental farm programs it provides incentive payments, but it's different in that brings with it project start-up help, ongoing technical assistance, and annual environmental service payments.

ALUS is a new concept and a beneficial way for farmers to do business.

Participation in ALUS is an investment in the common good.

ENVIRONMENT :

The LPRCA Annual Watershed Tour

By: Barb Hawke, Photos: Shirley Rothery

Once a year the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) puts on a bus tour to show projects that it has been working on, often in collaboration with other groups, to its Directors and local Politicians as well as representatives from groups like the NFN, the Long Point Biosphere Reserve Foundation, the Wood Lot Owners, farmers represented by ALUS (Alternate Land Use Services) and the Fish and Game Clubs.



Vernal pond and native plant restoration

On August 24th, 2012 it was "all aboard" the bus for the first of ten stops that focused on the northern parts of the watershed:

1. a 17-acre parcel located in the Big Otter Creek Watershed where the farmer owner wanted to restore unproductive agricultural land to native habitat. Native trees and bushes, grasses and flowers were chosen to prevent erosion and to slow down water flow. A shallow pool, saucer shaped and about 5 feet deep at its centre, was created both to retain water and to increase the types of habitats available to wildlife.
2. The Planning and Regulatory Services : The many requirements at all levels of any development area were reviewed.
3. Greening the Watershed: A 6-acre, \$50 Million program for trees in Tillsonburg for private landowners was explained.

4. LPRCA in the Township of South West Oxford: Forest Management, Trees for Roads and water source protection was explored. When questioned, Paul Gagnon explained that the buckets that have recently appeared beside newly planted trees are a watering aid. Each bucket has a pin prick in it that allows the water in it to seep out slowly. This slow application makes it easier for the water to penetrate the soil and benefit the tree.

5. Tillsonburg Regional Airport: Aviation needs and update was provided at this stop.

6. Norwich Conservation Area: The effects, usage, maintenance and future of dams was evident at this stop. Little Lake (our only kettle lake) was then visited en route.

7. Monitoring and Reporting: Seen here was the Kelvin gauge along Big Creek (Conc. 2 Windham) as well as discussing the Watershed Report Cards that will launch in 2013.

8. Forest Management: Discussion ensued regarding the operating plans and guides for 8,500 acres of forested lands

9. Waterford North Conservation Area: Recreation and tourism is worked into the landscape at this 130-acre site.

10. Waterford Heritage & Agricultural Museum: Social, industrial and agricultural history is explored at this newly renovated gallery.

A warm "Thank you" is extended to the speakers sharing their expertise and time so that we could better understand what is being done and pass it on to you, the reader.



Tour participants at Norwich Conservation Area Dam

FIELD OUTING:

Hummingbirds and Butterflies

By: Shirley Rothery

July 21, 2012, was a very hot and sunny day and so I was relieved upon arrival at Audrey Heagy and David Okine's farm to see chairs arranged in a circle under a lovely big shade tree. David showed the 25 participants 4 Hummingbirds that he had trapped using nectar positioned inside a wire box with a trap door. The trap is outside his living room window and David waits for a bird to come to feed and then he pulls a trip wire to drop the trap door. It is a very effective arrangement.

A visit to Wikipedia reminds me of some of the facts David gave us. Hummingbirds are birds that comprise the family **Trochilidae**. They are among the smallest of birds, most species measuring in the 7.5 – 13 cm (3–5 in) range. They can hover in mid-air by rapidly flapping their wings 12 – 80 times per second (depending on the species). To conserve energy while they sleep, or when food is scarce, they have the ability to go into a hibernation-like state (torpor) where their metabolic rate is slowed to 1/15th of its normal rate. They are also the only group of birds with the ability to fly backwards. Their English name derives from the humming sound made by the very fast beating of their wings. They can fly at speeds exceeding 54 km/h or 34 mph.



Hummingbird banding (Photo: Shirley Rothery)

With the exception of insects, hummingbirds in flight have the highest metabolic rate of all animals, a necessity in order to support the rapid beating of their wings. Their heart rate can reach as high as 1,260 beats per minute, a rate once measured in a Blue-throated Hummingbird. They also consume more than their own weight in nectar each day, and to do so they must visit hundreds of flowers daily. Hummingbirds are constantly hours away from starving to death, and are able to store just enough energy to survive overnight. Hummingbirds are capable of slowing down their metabolism at night or any other time food is not readily available.

Nectar, the birds primary energy source, is a poor source of nutrients, so hummingbirds meet their needs for protein, amino acids, vitamins, minerals, etc. by preying on insects and spiders.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird (photo: Inga Hinnerichsen)

After David's demonstration, the heat tolerant went for a noon walk around the rest of Audrey and David's farm which has a combination of forest and prairie habitat. A few butterflies were spotted along with some butterfly milkweed, but the highlight of the walk, for me, was the snake hibernaculum that had been installed on the property by the Long Point Basin Land Trust. A pit 8 to 10 feet deep was excavated and then filled with a jumble of rocks and wood, leaving enough space for snakes to enter but not enough room for their enemies to follow. A mound of vine covered rocks was all that marked the spot as we walked past.

Have you read or seen anything of interest to the NFN Membership lately? It may be concerning the environment, conservation, science, flora or fauna. Please, send us a short report, photos are always most welcome! Email: daveinga@live.ca

FIELD OUTING:

Raptor Migration at Hawk Cliff

By: Diane Salter

Saturday, September 15th was the perfect day for the NFN trip to Hawk Cliff, sunny skies with just the right amount of cloud and a northwest wind, ideal conditions. A small group of NFN members were there to watch a massive migration of hawks fly over, a total of 20,887 by the end of the day. The best hawk day of the year, I'm sure. The main group was 19,662 Broad-winged Hawks, many high up in the sky, but enough at tree-top level to give everyone a great view. 37 Bald Eagles, 522 American Kestrels and a steady flow of Monarch Butterflies passed over throughout the day.



Young birders at Hawk Cliff (Photo: Diane Salter)

The morning started with a talk by a Monarch Butterfly tagger. He has tagged over 2,000 monarchs in the past few years and 14 have been seen in Mexico in the mountain treetops where they spend the winter. He caught and tagged monarchs throughout the day, eagerly watched by a group of children who were fascinated by the process.

This talk was followed by a showing of hawks - Sharp-shinned, American Kestrels and a Northern Harrier that had been caught and banded that morning.

A large crowd gathered & watched eagerly as each bird was held so that everyone could see the identifying marks. Some of the children were able to touch the birds carefully. Comments like "they're so soft" captivated them, a future generation of birdwatchers in the making.

The count carries on until cold weather really sets in. The public is always welcome to join the count group. Steady winds from the northwest and the passage of a cold front increase the chances of seeing the migration at its peak.



Broadwing Hawk (Photo: Cecilia Verkley)



Northern Harrier (Photo: Cecilia Verkley)

BOOK REVIEW:

**HIKES & OUTINGS of
South-Central ONTARIO**

Publisher: Lone Pine Publishing
2311 96 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T6N 1G3
Website: www.lonepinepublishing.com
First printed: 2012
Author: N. Glenn Perrett

Editor's Rating: Two thumbs up!

Glenn Perrett has a degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Waterloo. He has published close to 200 articles on animals and the environment in several magazines and newspapers. He and his family have explored all the provincial parks, conservation areas, wildlife management areas and ecological preserves featured in this book during all seasons of the year.



Gnarled roots (Photo: Gord Handley / Google Earth)

The book covers 30 natural areas from the Niagara peninsula to Owen Sound and the Georgian Bay area and all the way to Presqu'ile Provincial Park. Most areas featured in this book are within an easy two-hour drive from Norfolk County. Each chapter begins with a thumbnail description of the area and easy-to-follow directions how to get there and an applicable web site. The book is generously illustrated with vibrant photographs and other graphics beckoning you to explore the areas for yourself. The author also offers interesting facts about each area's history, ecosystem, geology and geography, as well as plant and animal species to watch for along the way.

We are looking forward to exploring more of Ontario's natural treasures.

This may open up new possibilities for NFN outings?



Hilton Falls (Photo: David Piano / Google Earth)

NFN needs your help - no experience required!
(only a healthy dose of enthusiasm)

Environment Director
Field Events Director
Speaker Program Director
Directors-at-large



Attend 1 Directors' meeting a month, spend 3 - 4 hours a month helping with various tasks

Get involved with your club, it is a greatly rewarding experience!

For more information contact any Director - See the back page

Upcoming NFN Fall Events

NFN 50th Anniversary Gala Dinner

Saturday, October 20, 2012

See the notice on page 2

Mushroom Identification Hike

Sunday, October 21, 2012

1.00 pm to 3:00 pm

Backus Woods

Meet at the Parking lot on 3rd
Concession Road

Contact: Inga

519-875-5601

Meeting & Special Presentation

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

7.30 pm

Becoming an Eco Tourist

by: **Kristen Martyn**

Simcoe Seniors Centre

89 Pond Street, Simcoe

Speaker & Members' Christmas Social

Tuesday, December 11, 2012

7.30 pm

The Use of Plants in Native

Healing and Culture

Bill Monture, Six Nations

Simcoe Seniors Centre

89 Pond Street, Simcoe

NFN meetings

Norfolk Field Naturalist meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month from September to May. Meetings take place at the Simcoe Seniors Centre at 89 Pond Street.

The meetings are free and visitors are always welcome.

Doors open at 7:15 pm, programs begin at 7:30 pm.

NFN Mailing Address

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

Next Lotus issue:

December 2012

Input dead line:

Friday, November 30

About the NFN

Norfolk Field Naturalists members participate in meetings and field outings, many of which are family-friendly. Membership fees, are \$20 Individual and \$30 Family. Donations are eligible for income tax credits. Non-profit 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. Copies of the Lotus are available at meetings, by mail or by email and posted on the NFN web site. Articles published in the lotus reflect the views and opinions of the authors, but not necessarily those of the NFN.

www.norfolkfieldnaturalists.org

2012-2013 NFN Executive with contact & project information

		All 519-	
President	Bernie Solymar	426-7124	solymar@nornet.on.ca
Vice-President, Sanctuary/Natural Areas	Peter Carson	586-3985	gartcar@kwic.com
Treasurer/Past President	Audrey Heagy	586-9464	aheagy@bsc-eoc.org
Secretary	Colleen Dale	512-0240	cdale22@yahoo.ca
Membership/Publicity	Diane Salter	586-7775	bigcreek@kwic.com
Field Events	(vacant)		
Speaker Program	(vacant)		
Environment	(vacant)		
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Director-at-large	Barb Hawke	586-8375	bhawke@kwic.com
Director-at-large	Alan Ladd	426-8504	
Director-at-large	Rick Dowson	426-9774	mrrick@bellnet.ca
Director-at-large, Lotus Editor (appointed)	Inga Hinnerichsen	875-5601	daveinga@live.ca

Butterfly Counts: (appointed) Doug Timpf (deceased) Adam & Matt Timpf 586-9964

Christmas Bird Counts: (appointed) David Okines - Woodhouse Count 519-586-9464

Linda Thrower - Fisherville Count 905-774-1230

Honorary President: Al Robinson

Honorary Directors: Harry Barrett, Jim Harlow