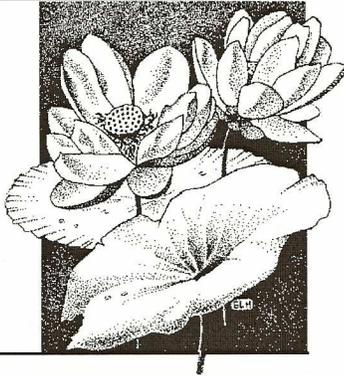


Lotus

NEWSLETTER
of the
NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS



December 2008

pipevine, black with 7 yellow spots on each side and then found 6 chrysalises, from which, on September 18, two Pipevine Swallowtails emerged.

Recent sightings included a late hummingbird (October), a Buckeye butterfly, Variegated Frateries (an irregular migrant) and flying squirrels.

Audrey Heagy welcomed Stephana Johnston, the local Green Party candidate, who joined us while awaiting the federal election results.

Meeting Notes

October 2008 Meeting

Announcements

A few Forestry Station books are still available.

Membership fees are due in September. Be sure yours have been paid.

A cheque for \$7,554.48 has been received, the NFN share of the total pledges of \$17,108.95 raised by the NFN Birdathoners, who were Betty Chanyi, Helen Godschalk, Peggy McArthur, Michael McMillan, George Pond, Shirley Rothery, Diane Salter, Jeff and Darlene Sauder, and Anne Wynia. Audrey thanked the Birdathoners and their sponsors for their excellent support of the NFN. Over \$210,000 was raised by the 2008 Baillie Birdathon, with more than 70 clubs and organizations sharing in the proceeds.

The Norfolk County Fair booth, located in the Commercial building, was operated jointly by NFN, Woodlot Owners and Norfolk County. It won the award for the best Commercial (building) display.

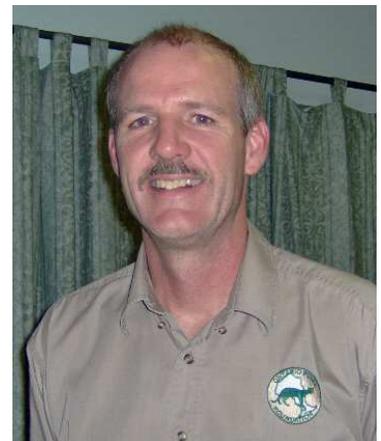
Alan Ladd has pulled together a group of people interested in walking / cycling / nature, etc., to create an inventory of trails in Norfolk and information on where improvements are needed to sidewalks, trails, roads, etc., which will be discussed with the county. This informal group will welcome the participation of anyone interested. Alan can be reached at 519-426-8504.

Al Robinson brought photos, taken by George Pond, of Pipevine Swallowtail, a Norfolk rarity, found on his own pipevine. Al had seen the caterpillars on the

October Speaker

38 members and guests came out to hear Stuart Kenn's talk "Stalking the Elusive Puma in Ontario". Stuart is President of the Ontario Puma Foundation, which he co-founded with Kee Dewdney, Adjunct Professor, Zoology Department, UWO, in 2002. Stuart graduated from Sir Sandford Fleming College, School of Natural Resources, in 1989, as a Cartographic Technologist.

Stuart is owner and chief cartographer of KennKart Digital Mapping, producing outdoor recreation and environmental maps since 1996, and has been an avid naturalist for many years, with involvement in many recovery / protection programs.



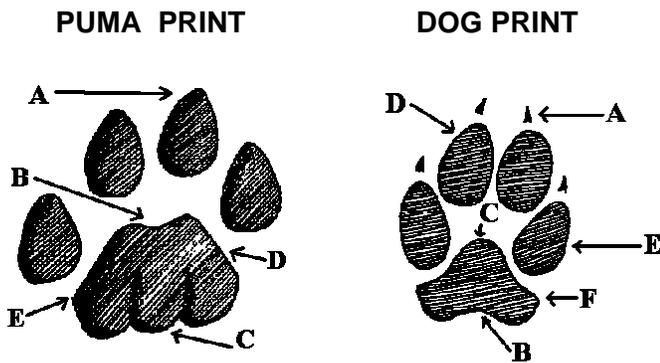
Stuart has frequently participated in birdathons in Norfolk. He has studied pumas for over 30 years, since his first puma project in Grade 3.

Stuart told us that "Everyone has a favourite animal as a child but most people grow up".

The puma, *Puma concolor* ("cat of one colour"), is known by more than 100 names, including mountain lion, cougar, eastern panther and screamer. With keen eyesight but having a poor sense of smell, it stalks and listens for prey, and can quietly creep close to a white-tailed deer (a favourite meal), spring onto its back and sever the spinal column to bring it down. The large front paws are padded and covered with hair for silence and the animal actually tests the ground for spots with no sticks or leaves to crackle and betray its presence, moving the back paws into the "safe" positions found by the front paws.

Pumas are very adaptable and can live in any terrain from sea level to mountain ranges and in any type of habitat. They lived all over the Americas and the old original studies that measured skulls, etc., identified 15 North and 15 South American species. They were persecuted by settlers (afraid of them), who used bounty hunters to chase them with dogs that drove them to find safety in trees where they could be shot. They are a close relative of the cheetah but cannot run for long distances as the cheetah can. This persecution drove them back to the west coast mountain ranges.

Although they are primarily tawny, many colours have been reported from sightings (including blue!). But there is no such thing as a black puma. Many "puma sightings" are reported but most are erroneous. The most dependable clues to puma presence are: (a) a ring of hair shavings around a kill - pumas do not eat hair but scrape it off; (b) a (perfect?) circle of flesh torn away to get at the heart, lungs and liver first; (c) the tracks.



Several characteristics differentiate between puma tracks and dog tracks. Unlike dogs, pumas leave no toenail marks and puma toes are not positioned opposite each other as dog toes are. The heel of a puma print has 3 lobes while a dog's is concave and the front of the heel is concave for a puma and arched for a dog.

Strong, skilled hunters, the puma's muscle density is 100 times that of a human and it achieves an 85-90% successful kill rate. The long thick tail helps to balance when climbing and, in chases, helps to turn quickly by pivoting the rear of the animal. Females weigh 35-60 kg and males weigh 60-100 kg and can grow up to 2.7 metres long (including the tail); they can carry 3 times their weight and may prey on caribou, moose, elk, bighorns, mountain goats, etc. Human kills are accidental; pumas do not stalk humans. Stuart told us that a human attack is likely triggered by movement catching a puma's attention and it attacks and then says "Oops".

Pumas are "loners" and each male and female has its own territory. Male ranges do not overlap but female ranges overlap 60% with male ranges and 30% with other female ranges. Females emit a blood-curdling scream when in heat to attract the male. They bear 1-6 young and may need to move them to protect them from eagles, bears, coyotes, wolves, etc. Pumas live a maximum 9-12 years in the wild; their claws and teeth wear down. In captivity they may live 20 years but the average life span is 7 years. They do not hibernate. In 1998, with DNA testing available, it was discovered that there were only 6 subspecies of puma in the Americas, not the 30 originally identified, and there is no East/West naming - all are North (or South) American pumas - there is no "Eastern Puma".

Elusive and shy, pumas avoid human contact, making estimates of their numbers and locations difficult. About 5000 are believed to be in B.C., and another 1000 in the foothills. The Ontario population may be about 500. From Alberta eastward, there have been occasional sightings over the last 100 years (possibly incorrect). In Ontario, pumas may be escapees, indigenous, or transient. Contrary to rumour, none have been released by MNR to help control other animal pests. They are very rare in this area, needing isolation from humans and large tracts of forest. The closest recent, confirmed sightings have been near Port Colborne, in the Wainfleet bog and wetlands area, and on the Niagara escarpment.

Stuart's website at <http://www.ontariopuma.ca> has more puma information and the map showing reported puma sightings in Ontario.

The number of questions at the end of his talk and the number of members who continued the discussion with Stuart at the end of the meeting were good indicators of the high level of interest in his subject and his comprehensive presentation of it.

November Meeting

Audrey Heagy

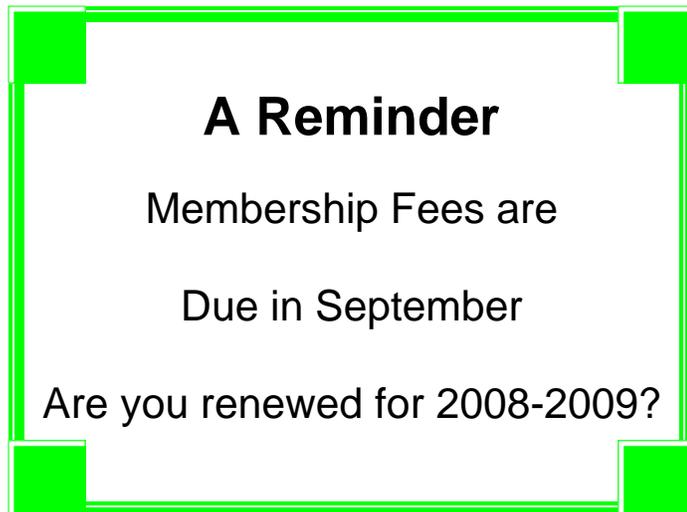
More than 40 people attended the November NFN indoor meeting. Once again we were able to enjoy a fantastic slide presentation featuring the wildlife, plants, and landscapes as seen by George and Shirley Pond during their travels to far-flung parts of the globe.

This particular photo essay, Wild and Free, took the audience from the shores of a northern Ontario lake to the wilds of Alaska, Australia, and the Galapagos. The dialogue enhanced the stunning photographs by accurately identifying the many different flowers, animals and insects featured and blending these brief glimpses of nature's diversity into a stirring anthem to wildness.

New NFN Members

NFN welcomes the following new members in the 2008-2009 season:

Allan Aubin
Gregor Beck & Kevin Kavanagh
Stella Gordon
Michael & Phyllis Kite
Mirek & Florinda Kotisa
Monte & RoseMarie Smith
Rick Szycha
Rita Waterman & family



NFN Fall Outings

Audrey Heagy

Rain showers put a damper on both the October and November field outings.

A total of four people took part in the tour of the St. Williams Forestry Station Interpretive Centre and the new public walking trail. Anne Wynia provided a very informative tour of the museum facility. Then the sun came out and we had a very nice hike along the newly established trail, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Forestry Station. There are many information markers along the trail identifying various tree species and describing some of the history of the forest. Between the four of us we had lots of questions and some answers regarding the trees, birds and mosses we saw en route.

Only three people turned up in the steady rain for the November hike in the Spooky Hollow Sanctuary. Fortunately the rain was not heavy and our raingear kept us dry. This 165 acre nature reserve near Normandale has been owned and managed by the Hamilton Naturalist Club for almost 50 years. The site has a beautiful stand of hemlock along the valley bottom and mature deciduous trees on the rolling upland area. With water dripping down off the trees, we mostly kept our eyes focused on the ground, trying to identify the various plants that still showed some signs of life. The evergreen leaves of the low growing partridge berry and wintergreen were particularly attractive. We did see a few Golden-crowned Kinglets flitting through the tree branches and a quick glimpse of a Great Horned Owl being mobbed by crows. From the road we spotted some salmon or trout migrating upstream to spawn in the clear, coldwater creek flowing through the sanctuary.

Hopefully the weather will cooperate for the upcoming Christmas Bird Counts including the Woodhouse (Simcoe area) count on Sunday December 14th, and the Fisherville (Haldimand) count on Saturday January 3rd. To participate in these counts contact the Coordinator.

Woodhouse CBC (Simcoe area), Sunday, December 14, 2008. Coordinator is David Okines, davidokines@aol.com, 519-586-9464

Fisherville CBC (Haldimand county), Saturday, January 3, 2009. Coordinator is Linda Thrower, giantindians@3web.net. 905-774-1230

Norfolk Caring for Nature Workshop November 2008.

Bernt Solymar (Article & Photos)

In a follow-up to the successful March 2008 launch of the “Caring for Nature in Norfolk” factsheet, the Carolinian Canada Coalition and partner organizations in Norfolk County hosted a “Caring for Nature Workshop for Rural Landowners in Norfolk” on Saturday, October 18th at Wagon Wheel Produce and Corn Maze west of Simcoe.



The 40 rural landowners that attended represented a diverse group – ranging from farmers to woodlot owners to owners of a few acres of land. The day long workshop provided them with an opportunity to learn about habitat stewardship projects in Norfolk, expert presentations on how to initiate projects on their land to create natural habitat and conserve biodiversity, tips on sourcing financial incentives, and a chance to meet with local conservation experts.



Norfolk County, located deep in the heart of the Carolinian Life Zone, is a place of vibrant natural diversity. It has many natural gems waiting to be explored – such as Backus Woods and Spooky Hollow, where lush Carolinian forests abound with wildlife, including the Southern Flying Squirrel and Redheaded Woodpecker; such as the St. Williams Crown Reserve that features rare oak savanna on its northwest side; and such as the kilometres of Lake Erie shoreline, comprising in part, the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve. But there are also significant private lands that contain valuable habitat, such as woodlots, meadows, and marshes, and plentiful wildlife, like the elusive American badger.

The landowners attending our workshop demonstrated a deep commitment for stewardship of their land and were eager to learn about doing more to enhance their properties for wildlife through habitat enhancement and conservation of natural and significant features on their land. A participant survey, conducted at the end of the workshop, indicated that over 80% were interested in a follow-up workshop specifically focused on helping species-at-risk on private property.



Representatives from the Carolinian Canada Coalition, the Norfolk Land Stewardship Council, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Long Point Basin Land Trust, Norfolk County, Norfolk Woodlot Owner’s Association, Acorus Restoration, Tallgrass Ontario, and Norfolk Field Naturalists were on hand to answer any questions participants had, and for individual consultations and follow-up plans.

Ten Easy Ways to Help Migrating Birds

Nature Network News November, 2008

Every fall, billions of birds are on the move, making the annual migration from Canada to warmer climates in the United States, the Caribbean, Central and South America.

About 40% of the world's bird species are considered migratory. In North America about 75% of bird species migrate, but in Canada alone roughly 90% of bird species take off for the winter



There are many things you can do to encourage birds to visit your yard during their migration, and to ensure that their journey is a safe one. Here are ten:

Rein in your pets - Leash dogs in natural areas, and keep beaches Fido-free in the breeding season. Keep cats indoors in the spring and fall and belled throughout the year.

Throw old bread in the bin - Old baked goods are prone to mould, and fill a bird's belly without meeting its nutritional needs. Mould can kill waterfowl. Instead of feeding old bread to the birds, offer dry seed, grains or fruits.

Put waste in its place - Birds become entangled in plastic bags, fishing line and other garbage, resulting in injury, strangulation or easy predation.

Break up your windows with stickers, decals or strips of colour. Unbroken reflections baffle birds, causing them to fly into the glass.

Drive Carefully - Especially in rural areas. Roadside birds take flight at an angle - possibly straight into your vehicle's path - so slow down.

Cap your chimneys and dryer vents - Wire mesh will keep birds from roosting or roosting in your furnace or fireplace.

Provide a water source - Bird baths need only be an inch or two deep and have a shallow slope. If you have cats that prowl the neighbourhood, it's best to mount the bath on a pedestal. Bird baths should be cleaned once a week with a stiff brush.

Plant Native plants - They provide shelter, places to raise young, and food sources. Good choices include aspen, willow, hollyhock, sunflowers, pussy willow, clover, bachelor's buttons, bee balm, butterfly bush, marigolds, globe thistle, and Shasta daisy.

Don't use herbicides on your lawn - Not only is the resulting monoculture duller than birding at high noon, these poisons get ingested into the food chain and washed into the waterways. If it says "-cide" on your weed remedy, avoid it.

Get the lead out - Fishing sinkers cause acute or chronic lead poisoning of thousands of birds in Canada each year. Use non-toxic alternatives.

Pot Pourri

Norfolk County Continues as Forest Capital of Canada in 2009

Norfolk County will retain its title as Forest Capital of Canada for a second year. A Forest Capital 2009 Committee has been established to determine what will be done in 2009. John de Witt is chair of the committee which has representatives from MNR, Forest Care, Norfolk County, NCC, NLSC, NWOA, LPBRF and NFN.



From the Board Minutes:

Motion: It is moved that the out of town speaker's fee be raised to \$150.00 and that the local speaker's fee remain at \$75.00. Carried.

Causeway Project: More training is planned for NFN volunteers to help them identify the species spotted during barrier fence monitoring along the causeway. Laminated cards are available that should help. New signs have been erected showing concept drawings.

Rowanwood Stewardship Work: NFN has received a grant from the Ontario Species at Risk Stewardship program for the eradication of exotic species and the restoration of natural habitat in the Norfolk Forest Important Bird Area (IBA) which includes Rowanwood. A combination of torching and spraying will be used. In Rowanwood they will try burning with a weed torch which cooks the plant. Garlic mustard will be sprayed in the fall and spring.

Disclaimer:

If you find mistakes in this publication, please consider that they are there for a purpose. We publish something for everyone, and some people are always looking for mistakes.

Author Unknown

Dedication of Arthur Langford Nature Reserve

By Gregor Beck

The Long Point Basin Land Trust celebrated the creation of its newest nature reserve on Sunday, October 6 by dedicating the Arthur Langford Nature Reserve in western Norfolk County.

The ceremony was attended by forty people who had played a part in establishing the new nature reserve, including several members of Arthur Langford's family and numerous members of the Norfolk Field Naturalists.



Family members attending the dedication were Arthur's daughter, Roberta Cone, Arthur's son, Peter Langford, and their cousin, Thomas Clute.

Photo credit: Anne Davidson

The 180-acre Arthur Langford Nature Reserve has exceptionally high conservation value and is largely forested with a high concentration of wetlands which feed local streams and which help restore groundwater.

The reserve provides important habitat for many native wildlife species and a number of rare species. Endangered American Chestnut and Butternut trees, once common in southern Ontario, occur there, as well as Black Gum, Jefferson Salamander and Acadian Flycatcher. Rare wetland habitats, such as Buttonbush and Silky Dogwood swamps, also occur.

The nature reserve's extensive forest areas provide excellent habitat for many of the region's favourite

birds, including Scarlet Tanager, Pileated Woodpecker and Wood Duck.

"The creation of this important reserve is a wonderful way to celebrate the lifetime conservation achievements of the land trust's founding president, the late Dr. Arthur Langford," stated Mary Gartshore, chair of the science advisory committee. "When I walk through this property, I think of all the things that Arthur enjoyed and valued," reflected Gartshore prior to leading a hike at the event.

"We were delighted to be joined by members of Arthur Langford's family," said land trust president, Peter Carson. "We're also very pleased that the Pressey family, from whom the land trust acquired the property, could be present since they have been stewarding this important site for several generations. Today, we celebrate the protection of this land over past, present and future generations – and we thank everyone who contributed to the securement of our newest nature reserve."

Participants at the dedication ceremony were treated not only to fine fall weather, but to delicious refreshments and some tremendous wildlife spectacles. Throughout the afternoon, flocks of migrant songbirds and raptors were seen – from kinglets and warblers to Bald Eagles and Osprey.

Support for the "Secure the Langford Legacy" campaign came from numerous members of the community, the Ontario Greenlands Program, Ducks Unlimited Canada, charitable foundations, the Long Point Foundation for Conservation, and several naturalists' clubs across the Carolinian Region.

The Long Point Basin Land Trust extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to the Norfolk Field Naturalists, as well as individual members of the club, for contributing generously toward the Arthur Langford Nature Reserve.

The Long Point Basin Land Trust protects and restores functioning ecosystems in the Carolinian Region, an area recognized as being among those having the highest diversity of flora and fauna in Canada.

The land trust owns two nature reserves and works with landowners and partners to steward natural areas. For more information, or to receive a copy of the land trust's newsletter, please visit www.lpblt.on.ca or email general@lpblt.on.ca.



developed his influential theory of seven multiple intelligences: word smart, number/reasoning smart, picture smart, body smart, people smart, and self smart. More recently, Gardner has added an eighth smart - nature smart. Many people, such as those in the fields of health care and education, as well as naturalists and especially parents, are now looking to nature as a possible "cure" for many of the societal problems faced by today's children.

Louv has a wonderful way of dealing with a serious subject and the author feels that not all is lost. In many European cities, especially those in Scandinavia, town planners are paying careful attention to "green design". They realize that "asphalt playgrounds don't offer the same natural or creative play that water, trees, bushes, flowers, and long grasses do." Some interest in "green design" is also happening in North America. For example, Chicago, under Mayor Richard Daley, is making a concerted effort to reclaim its 165 year-old motto - "City in a Garden" - by preserving open spaces, creating wildlife habitats, greenways, stream corridors, roof top gardens, etc. Thus, some astute politicians are now realizing that "nature" can occur at home - and not just somewhere else, such as conservation areas, national parks, seashores and wilderness areas - where some children are never taken.

When children want to play indoors nowadays because "that's where the plugs are", it is time for change. This thought provoking book should be read by all those who care about the children of the future: parents, teachers, medical professionals, politicians, religious leaders, naturalists, environmentalists, etc. There still may be hope for many of our children and grandchildren.

Ed Note: The book is available at Amazon for \$21.39 hardcover and \$13.30 paperback.



Book Review - "Last Child in the Woods" Saving our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder

Mary Ellen Pyear, Guelph Field Naturalists
Ontario Nature Network News, November, 2008

The main message conveyed in Richard Louv's book Last Child in the Woods is that children today are rapidly losing touch with nature and thus being negatively affected by problems such as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder), obesity, and depression. Further, the loss of creativity and curiosity, an ignorance of local floral and fauna, and a decreased sense of community occur. Many children, especially those in urban settings, are far removed from the fields and the forests where many of their parents and grandparents played as children. Instead, they are cooped up indoors - in front of televisions, computers, ipods, and video games. They are often afraid to go outdoors because of "stranger danger" or because of bullies who might be lurking in their local parks or other neighbourhood haunts. In the author's words, "we have scared children straight out of the woods and fields."

Louv points out that nature can offer our children healing, a place for solitude, and a chance to be creative in their play. Research has shown that daily outdoor walks - or even having a view of nature, such as trees, lawns, and gardens, through our windows - can have a positive and calming effect on some hyperactive children. Sadly, many parents find little time in their hectic, fast-paced lives to take their children on outings to enjoy and learn about the natural world.

According to the author, "nature" has now become the eighth intelligence. In 1983, Howard Gardner, Professor of Education at Harvard University,

Next Meetings

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

The Natural Heritage
Of Pinery Provincial Park
Alistair McKenzie, Pinery Prov. Park

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

How the Climate of Long Point has
Changed in 65 Years and
What the Future Holds
Adam Fenech, University of Toronto

Upcoming NFN Outings

Christmas Bird Counts

Join a local Christmas Bird count and spend the day in the field identifying and counting all the birds you see or hear. \$5 participant fee, waived for BSC members. Or, phone in to report the number of birds at your feeder on count day (no fee).

Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008

Woodhouse Count (Simcoe area)
David Okines 519-586-9464
davidokines@aol.com

Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008

Port Burwell Count
Ron Allensen 519-874-1343
bjbird9@hotmail.com

Saturday, Jan. 3, 2009

Fisherville Count (Haldimand Co.)
Linda Thrower 905-774-1230
giantindians@3web.net



Saturday, Jan. 17, 2009

1:30 - 6:00 pm

Winter Birding in Haldimand Co.

David Okines & Audrey Heagy
519-586-9464

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.

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 #0620070-52-14.

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

Next issue of Lotus:

February 2009

Input cutoff date:

Fri. Jan. 23, 2009

Club Mailing Address

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

2008 - 2009 NFN Directors with Contact and Project Information

		all 519-	
President	Audrey Heagy	586-9464	x243 aheagy@bsc-eoc.org
Past Pres. + Natural Areas	Peter Carson	586-3985	gartcar@kwic.com
Vice-President	Tara Crewe	586-3531	x232 tcrewe@bsc-eoc.org
Treasurer	Lynda Kosalle	res 426-0826	kosalle@amtelecom.net
		bus 586-7773	
General Secretary	David Okines	586-9464	davidokines@aol.com
Board Secretary		(position currently vacant)	
Membership	Diane Salter	586-7775	dianesalter@execulink.com
Field Events		(position currently vacant)	
Speaker Program	Bernt (Bernie) Solymar	426-7124	solyymar@nornet.on.ca
Publicity	Nina Cameron	586-8785	ninac@execulink.com
Sanctuary	Matt Brock	586-7585	greenheron99@hotmail.com
Environment		(position currently vacant)	
Dir. + Lakeshore 2ndary Plan	Peter Black	426-5036	peterblack@kwic.com
Director-at-large	Colleen Dale	586-9726	cdale22@yahoo.ca
Director-at-large	Shirley Rothery	586-9535	shirleyrothery@hotmail.com
Honorary President:	Al Robinson	Honorary Directors:	Harry Barrett, Jim Harlow
Lotus Editor	Anne Davidson	446-3589	birdyanne@gmail.com
Butterfly Counts	Douq Timpf	586-9964	timpf@nornet.on.ca