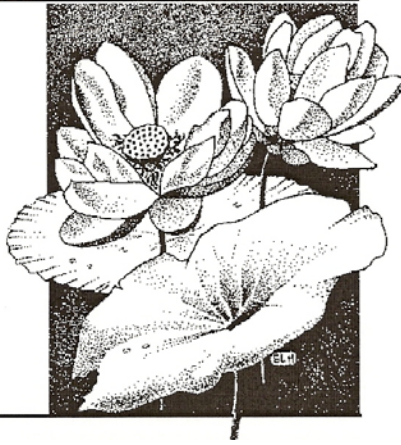


# Lotus

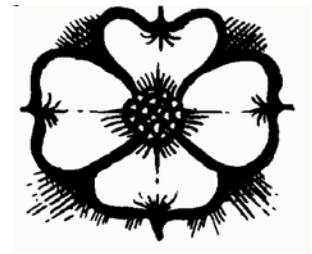
NEWSLETTER

of the

NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS



DECEMBER 2013



## Fleeting Treasures from Down Below Part 1

By Florinda Kotisa



Morel (photo: Florinda Kotisa)



Turkey Tail (photo: Inga Hinnerichsen)

Most people walk through the woods enjoying the foliage and the birds, but gazing downwards can reveal the fascinating world of wild mushrooms that pop up unexpectedly and then seem to disappear just as fast. The enthusiastic participants that attended Inga Hinnerichsen's mushroom identification walk at the end of September can attest to that. There are several thousand varieties of wild mushrooms in North America. They can be beautiful, weird, and delicious too, provided that you can identify the species that are poisonous.

The following is a description of just a few of the common mushrooms that I have found in Norfolk County.

After the dearth of mushrooms in winter, May brings out one of the choice edibles, the Morel (*Morchella*). Morels are distinctive because of their honeycombed heads and hollow interiors. They don't like competition and are often found on disturbed ground where they look like tiny pine cones perched on stems. Some people in their eagerness, may confuse them with false morels (*Gyromitra infusa*) which look vaguely similar and tend to appear earlier in the spring. Their brainlike caps are folded rather than honeycombed and are saddle-shaped. These mushrooms can cause acute poisoning as they contain a substance, monomethyl hydrazine, that is similar to rocket fuel.

Continued on page 2



True Morels....and False. Helvellas resemble the Morchellas: White Elf Saddle (photos: 1 Florinda Kotisa, 2 & 3 Wikipedia)



## FLEETING TREASURES... Continued from page 1

Another interesting mushroom that starts to grow about the same time is the Hemlock Reishi Mushroom (*Ganoderma tsugae*). These mushrooms are fan-shaped with a shiny reddish-brown crust, yellowing at the margins. Although corky and tough when mature, they are highly prized in Chinese medicine as a broad spectrum cure for a host of maladies such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cholesterol build-up to name a few.



Chantarelle (photo: Wikipedia)

June is a quiet month for mushrooms, but this is followed by the fruiting of the edible yellow Chantrelle (*Cantharellus cibarius*) in July. Finding them is like coming across a treasure of scattered gold coins. They have concave wavy caps of thick, firm flesh. The undersides have blunt, forked decurrent gills running down the stalk.



Jack-O-Lantern (photo: Wikipedia)

Unfortunately, there are also the deadly Jack-O-Lanterns (*Omphalotus olearis*) that may be mistaken for chanterelles. They grow in clusters, unlike chanterelles, and glow in the dark, yes really. If you don't believe me, just sit in a dark closet with a specimen and watch the show!



Oyster Mushroom (photo: Bernie Solymár)

There are some mushrooms that can grow at various times during the summer if the conditions are right. Oyster mushrooms (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) often fruit on dead wood. Their whitish to buff caps are fan-shaped, overlapping in large bunches like oysters. The stalks are nonexistent, or if present usually stubby and off-centre. They are delicious breaded and fried.



Chicken of the Woods (photo: Inga Hinnerichsen)

Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus sulphureus*) also grow in overlapping clusters or rosettes on wood. They are quite spectacular as they are bright orange with sulphur yellow margins.

Meadow Mushrooms (*Agaricus campestris*) are related to the supermarket White Button, Cremini and Portobello mushrooms. They fruit in lawns and pastures and have purple-brown spores.

There are also a number of mushrooms that can only be described as weird. The Dog Stinkhorn (*Mutinus caninus*) belongs to the *Phallaceae* family. It sends up a long conical fruit body with a pinkish tip and is covered with a thin, glistening slime. Given the name, you can just imagine what it looks like! - See page 3





Dog Stinkhorn (photo: Florinda Kotisa)

Old Man of the Woods (*Strobilomyces strobilaceus*) has a shaggy fruiting body covered with black scales. It looks old and wizened but, surprisingly, tastes quite good if you can get past its appearance. White Elfin Saddle (*Helvella crispa*) is a whimsical whitish mushroom with a fluted stalk and irregularly saddle-shaped head. - See page 1. It looks quite magical.



Leaf Jelly (photo: Inga Hinnerichsen)

Then there are the jelly fungi. Leaf Jelly Fungus (*Tremella foliacea*) is gelatinous and consists of a mass of wavy or leaf like folds.

In late summer, if you are very very lucky, you may find a King Bolete (*Boletus edulis*). It is also known as Porcini in Italy, Cep in France and Steinpilz in Germany. This is a fat mushroom with a yellow-brown cap. The underside of the cap doesn't have gills but is covered with a layer of sponge. It deserves its regal name because the taste is

superb, sweet and nutty. I have noticed that it grows at the same time as Fly Agaric (*Amanita Muscaria*) and the Destroying Angel (*Amanita Virosa*). Fly Agarics look like the classic toadstools. Their caps are orange-red or yellow with scattered white flakes on them. The Destroying Angel is pure white and looks pristine and virginal. Both *Amanitas* are white spored and have a ring, or partial veil, on the upper end of the stalk and a volva, or cuplike covering, at the base. Both are deadly poisonous. Ingesting the Destroying Angel often results in death due to kidney and liver failure. It is Nature's joke to have one of the tastiest mushrooms, the King Bolete, growing side by side with some of the most poisonous mushrooms, the *Amanitas*.



Fly Agaric and King Bolete (photos: Florinda Kotisa)

**Fall mushrooms will be discussed in Part 2  
in the next issue of the Lotus.**



**Members' column**  
**SIGHTINGS**



Cattle Egret (photo: Len Grincevicius)



Cattle Egret in cow pasture (photo: Len Grincevicius)



"What kind of a chicken are you anyway?"  
(photo: Diane Salter)

A Cattle Egret was spotted and photographed by Len Grincevicius and Diane Salter in early November. It stayed around for several days in a pasture near Hazen Road and 8th Concession Road in North Walsingham. - Enjoy the pictures!

**Have you seen anything interesting?  
...or been somewhere beautiful?**

**Share your photos  
with your fellow NFN Members  
in the LOTUS**

**Email to : [daveinga@live.ca](mailto:daveinga@live.ca)  
Subject line: photos for Lotus**

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

**From the 2012 - 1213 seasons:**

**Helen Button**

**John Foster**

**Karin Jonasson**

**Teresa Sitko-Cole**

**Don and Marg Wilson**

**We are looking forward to meeting you all  
and hope you will participate in and enjoy  
all the NFN indoor presentations and field  
outings!**

**WELCOME**

**... one more new Director!**

**Barb Hourigan**

**We are so pleased to have you with us  
and look forward to working with you**

## ONTARIO BADGER PROJECT

Update by: Josh Sayers

### **Editor's note:**

*We received this email from biologist researcher Josh Sayers earlier this summer. Josh is the Guest Speaker at our meeting on Tuesday, April 8, 2014.*

***Don't miss this exciting presentation!***

Hi folks,

I thought I'd pass along some pictures we recently got confirming that our lone radio-implanted female badger (Sue) has had young this year. So far it looks like she only had one kit.

I was doubtful she'd had young considering we recorded her moving several kilometres between burrows as late as a site visit on March 11. But then she ended up staying put at the next burrow for several weeks (while the other 5 male badgers had resumed normal activity), so I was pretty convinced that there was something going on!

We've had a remote camera on her burrow the whole time, and while she hadn't moved burrows, she'd been very active. Nearly every night we got photos of her going in and out of the burrow, as well as photos of raccoons showing up in increasing numbers and regularity to look for scraps around the burrow entrance (we documented this last year as well when we had a camera on Lindsay and her kit).



Just last week we finally got pictures of her bringing the kit to a new burrow. I was actually a bit surprised by how small it was, but then again we haven't had pictures of kits this early in the year before. It's got a lot of growing to do in the next month!



Another interesting thing is that this might actually be the kit of one of our implanted males, who moved south from Tillsonburg late last summer to spend a few days with Sue during what would have been the breeding season.

All the other implanted badgers are still on the air and being tracked regularly. We had a bit of a scare with one of the males who vanished late November last year. We were unable to locate him during our intermittent winter visits, but he turned up again in the beginning of April. He had been close to the deep ravines of Big Creek so I suspect he was just out of range from our receiver and didn't move around much through the winter.

We hope to trap another 4 starting in June, so hopefully this time around we manage to get more females!

**RECEIVE THE LOTUS**

**IN FULL COLOUR**

**by email - greener and cheaper than snail mail**

**Notify Diane Salter**

**Phone: 519-586-7775**

**Email: [bigcreek@kwic.com](mailto:bigcreek@kwic.com)**



## "Never Give Up"

A book for children of all ages

Written and illustrated by: Jan Everett

Story and photos by: Jan and John Everett



In 1952 John's family began holidaying on Long Point, renting a cottage for decades on Woodstock Avenue. Jan and John began renting a cottage there in the late 90's; eventually purchasing theirs in 2009. John has travelled the Causeway for over 60 years.

This beautiful road with its canopy of cottonwood trees is the main thoroughfare for turtles, snakes and frogs moving between Long Point Bay and Big Creek Marsh. On an average day, there are 2,400 vehicle trips across this road. On summer weekends, that number rises to over 8,000 per day.

To keep turtles and the occasional frog out of harm's way, Jan and John put a shovel in each of their cars. They save 15-30 turtles each year by stopping and carrying them across the busy road when it is safe to do so. Some are as small as the palm of your hand; yet one measured well over one meter long.



A baby  
Midland  
Painted Turtle  
and  
a Snapping  
Turtle about  
to cross a  
road

Turtles move to and from the marsh to lay eggs in the spring, search out their summer habitat and eventually their winter hibernation spots. Many of the turtle species found in Long Point (Blanding's, Spotted, Northern Map and Snapping) are at risk, threatened or even endangered.

As a tribute to their hard work (and as a surprise birthday present for John this last July) Jan wrote and illustrated a children's book called **"Never Give Up"** chronicling little Johnny's labours to assist these reptiles to cross the Causeway road safely. The surprising ending to the book coincidentally ties in to the Long Point Causeway Improvement Project (LPCIP) and their efforts to do the same.

The LPCIP Committee has for the past seven years raised funds, built over four kilometers of environmentally-friendly fencing to keep animals off the road and guide them to specially-designed culverts that allow them to pass safely under the road. Working with the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation, these dedicated citizens have been instrumental in saving turtles, snakes and frogs from injury or worse.

Another theme emerges from this book. In the face of continued obstacles in life, **"Never Give Up"** encourages us to always keep trying new things. Through the book, Jan also tries to increase awareness that we can all do our part, even through simple acts. A healthy turtle population is a litmus test for a thriving eco-system. Saving these animals is a building block to preserving our natural environment.

**"Never Give Up"** sells for a suggested retail price of **\$9.99** and is available at **Shear Creations** and **A Book Shoppe** in Port Rowan.

All proceeds go to **LPCIP**

More info at: [www.longpointcauseway.com](http://www.longpointcauseway.com)



## New Challenges, New Field Guide Books

By Bernie Solymár

We wouldn't be naturalists if we didn't have a dog-eared copy of Peterson's or Sibley's Field Guide to the Birds on our book shelf or in our cars. But for those of us looking for new challenges below are 2 excellent field guides that introduce us to whole new and exciting groups.

### Trees of the Carolinian Forest

By Gerry Waldron, 2003, \$20. Available from [www.carolinian.org](http://www.carolinian.org)

There are 74 unique tree species in the Carolinian Life Zone, the temperate stretch of southern Ontario, that are found nowhere else in the country. We live in the northernmost range of the "lofty Tuliptree, the elusive Pawpaw, the flamboyant Black Gum, the brooding Butternut, the Magnolia, the Cucumber tree" and many more deciduous species. This book is a wealth of information on how to identify, preserve, use, and propagate each species, including important notes on the qualities of each species' wood, natural enemies, and value to wildlife. The Carolinian zone is rich in human population too -- one quarter of Canada's population resides here. The author tells us how we can protect and encourage these wonderful trees despite urban encroachment".

### Mushrooms of Ontario and Eastern Canada (Lone Pine Press)

By George Barron, 1999, Available from the publisher.

Mushrooms are awesome! I became a fungi fan 2 years ago when past member, Fergus Nichol, led us on a walk in Backus Woods on Thanksgiving weekend. Since then I've spent the last couple of autumns photographing these slimy and strange denizens of the forest floor (and tree trunks). This full-colour photographic field guide to over 600 mushrooms and fungi of Ontario, Québec and Atlantic Canada as well as the northeastern United States. Spectacular photos, a pictorial guide to groupings, and excellent species information combine to make this a real easy-to-use reference book. Includes notes on edibility and poisonous mushrooms.

**More Guide Book reviews  
in the next issues of Lotus**

## IN MEMORIAM

The Norfolk Field Naturalists lost 2 of our dear and long-time members this year –

**Shirley Pond and Arthur Loughton.**

We extend our deepest sympathy to both the **Loughton family** and the **Pond family**.

We extend our warmest gratitude with regards to donations to NFN in memory of

**Arthur Loughton** by

**Harry B. Barrett and Peggy McArthur**



## Don't forget NFN on your Christmas List!

In 2013 the NFN donated **\$15,000** to the Long Point Basin Land Trust toward the purchase and long-term stewardship of a natural area near Fishers Glen. We now need to replenish the Securement and Protection fund in order to be able to support other projects like this in the future.

The NFN will gratefully accept any donations for the Land Securement or other projects  
- please, specify.

As a charitable not-for-profit organisation,  
NFN will issue a tax-deductible receipt  
for all donations over **\$10.00**

Charitable registration # 11905869RR00001

Also note that a **\$500.00** donation will secure you  
a **Life-time Membership** with the NFN!

A legacy in your Will or insurance policy is another  
option to support the work of the NFN.

**Wishing you all a Happy Christmas Season  
and All The Best in the New Year!**

## Upcoming NFN Winter Events

### Christmas Bird Counts

**Sunday, December 15, 2013**

**Woodhouse Count** (Norfolk)

Contact: David Okines,  
519-586-9464 davidokines@aol.com

**Saturday, December 28, 2013**

**Fisherville Count** (Haldimand)

Contact: Linda Thrower  
905-774-1230  
giantindians@3web.net

### Birding in Hawai'i

**The endangered species capital**

**Tuesday, January 14, 2014**

**Speaker: Jody Allair**

Jody will guide you on a visual presentation on the birds of Hawai'i and their conservation issues

### Winter Birding in Haldimand County

**Sunday, January 19, 2014**

Meet at Port Dover, base of the dock  
at 2.00 pm sharp

**Contact David Okines or  
Audrey Heagy at: 519-586-9464**

**What a Hoot! Owl Prowl  
at Turkey Point Provincial Park**

**Sunday, February 2, 2014**

**7.00 pm to 9.00 pm**

Meet at the entrance to the park  
Contact Bernie at 519-428-0706

### Where are the Whip-poor-wills?

**Tuesday, February 11, 2014, 7.30pm**

**Speaker: Audrey Heagy**

They are now considered a  
Threatened Species. Learn more  
about these nocturnal birds and the  
various projects underway

## 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,  
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:

**February 2014**

**Input dead line:**

**Friday, January 31, 2014**

## 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. Charitable registration  
# 11905869RR00001

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](http://www.norfolkfieldnaturalists.org)**

### **2012-2013 NFN Executive with contact & project information**

		<u>All 519-</u>	
<b>President</b>	Bernie Solymar	426-7124	solymar@nornet.on.ca
<b>Vice-President,</b>	Peter Carson	586-3985	gartcar@kwic.com
<b>Environment/Sanctuary</b>			
<b>Treasurer/Past President</b>	Audrey Heagy	586-9464	aheagy@kwic.com
<b>Secretary</b>	Colleen Dale	512-0240	cdale22@yahoo.ca
<b>Director/</b>	Diane Salter	586-7775	bigcreek@kwic.com
<b>Membership/Publicity</b>			
<b>Field Events</b>	(vacant)		
<b>Speaker Program</b>	(vacant)		
<b>Director-at-large</b>	Barb Hawke	586-8375	bhawke@kwic.com
<b>Director-at-large</b>	Alan Ladd	426-8504	
<b>Director-at-large,</b>	Inga Hinnerichsen	875-5601	daveinga@live.ca
<b>Director-at-large</b>	Eleanor Chithalen	582-4382	eleanor.chithalen@gmail.com
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<b>Director-at-large</b>	David Curry	875-5601	david.curry@hotmail.com
<b>Director-at-large</b>	Barb Hourigan	583-1198	bbhourigan@yahoo.ca

**Lotus Editor** (appointed) Inga Hinnerichsen 875-5601

**Butterfly Counts:** (appointed) Adam 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