

Lotus

NEWSLETTER

of the

NORFOLK FIELD NATURALISTS



DECEMBER 2016



THE ANNUAL LONG POINT BUTTERFLY COUNT

Report by: Adam Timpf

The 24th Long Point Butterfly Count was held this past July 2nd under sunny skies with hardly any wind making for near perfect conditions. Thirty participants split into 9 parties scoured the forests, fields, marshes, roads and ditches to tally the 2106 butterflies sighted on the day. This is below the long term average of 2600 individuals. While the weather on the day of the count was ideal, the lack of rain earlier in the year may have negatively affected some species. The drought could have led to a lack of nectar sources, or a lack of puddles from which some butterflies drink water and or get nutrients. The good news is that diversity remains high with 50 species being recorded, 1 more than the average of 49.

One new species was added to the count - a single Columbine Duskywing found and photographed by Ron Allenson and Kathryn Boothby. I suspect that the count often falls between broods for this spring and summer flying species. Other count highlights include: 3 Tawny-edged Skippers was a new count high, besting the previous mark of 2. Four Grey Comma and 2 Common Sootywing tie previous high counts. A lowlight for the count was that nobody could find a Mourning Cloak, missed for only the 2nd time since 1992.

Continued on page 2...



Columbine Duskywing (Wikipedia)



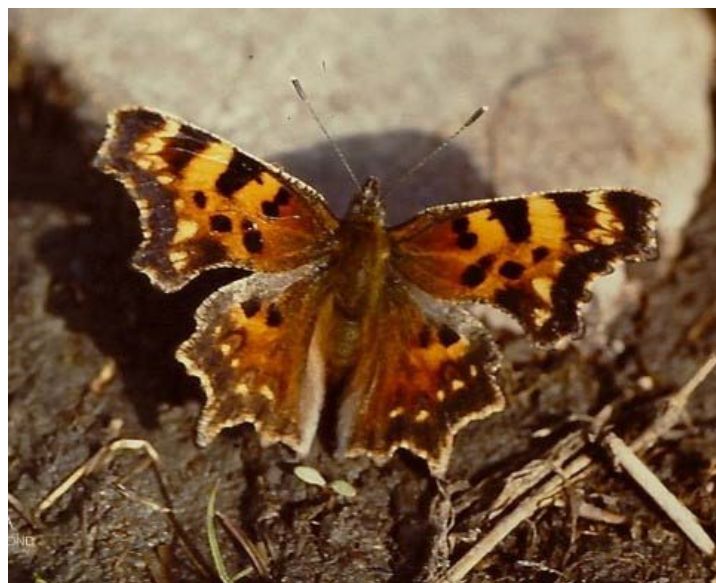
Mourning Cloak Photo: George Pond

Butterfly Count ...continued from Page 1

Always of interest, the Monarch butterfly was again in low numbers with 9 recorded. It is the 5th lowest total ever, and in 3 of the past 4 years we have failed to record more than 10 Monarchs. Hopefully this isn't the new normal and their numbers will climb higher in future years. After all, the count has recorded high counts of 184 (2012) and 186 (2013), averaging about 47 individuals across all counts since 1992. There are several possibly reasons for the decline, with research ongoing both locally and a far. Difficulties during their fall migration and on their wintering grounds in Mexico likely reduce the number of adults able to reproduce and move northward the following spring. Locally the caterpillar life stage is vulnerable with various predators able to feed on Monarch Larvae.

Many thanks to Peter and Mary for holding the wrap-up and for providing a great meal to the participants.

Next year's count is on Saturday July 1st, and I hope many of you are able to participate again. Please email me if you have any questions or comments: adam.timpf@gmail.com



Comma and Baltimore Checkerspot
Photos: George Pond

Species List:

Black Swallowtail	1	Northern Crescent	506	Silver-spotted Skipper	91
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	60	Baltimore Checkerspot	7	Southern Cloudywing	1
Spicebush Swallowtail	11	Question Mark	1	Northern Cloudywing	8
Cabbage White	336	Eastern Comma	24	Columbine Duskywing	1
Clouded Sulphur	138	Grey Comma	4	Common Sootywing	2
Orange Sulphur	10	American Lady	8	Least Skipper	16
American Copper	36	Red Admiral	34	European Skipper	96
Bronze Copper	11	Red-spotted Purple	24	Tawny-edged Skipper	3
Coral Hairstreak	9	Viceroy	5	Crossline Skipper	2
Edward's Hairstreak	300	Tawny Emperor	14	Long Dash	1
Banded Hairstreak	31	Northern Pearly-Eye	15	Northern Broken-Dash	7
Hickory Hairstreak	4	Eyed Brown	9	Little Glassywing	1
Eastern Tailed-Blue	12	Appalachian Brown	16	Delaware Skipper	3
Summer Azure	49	Little Wood-Satyr	30	Hobomok Skipper	7
Great Spangled Fritillary	89	Common Ringlet	2	Dion Skipper	2
Silvery Checkerspot	12	Common Wood-Nymph	25	Dun Skipper	3
Pearl Crescent	23	Monarch	9		

Long Point Butterfly Count

Team: Bernie, Richard, Len, Terry, Marlene, Robin, Inga

Thanks everyone for participating in this year's Long Point Butterfly Count! We were noticeably down in numbers this year but happy to have gotten the rarer ones – like Tawny Emperor and 3 Monarch caterpillars.

Here is a complete team list:

Silver-spotted Skipper	7
Northern Cloudywing	3
European Skipper	12
Peck's Skipper	1
Long Dash Skipper	1
Delaware Skipper	3
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail	11
Spicebush Swallowtail	6
Cabbage White	17
Clouded Sulphur	10
American Copper	3
Banded Hairstreak	3
Summer Azure	1
Great Spangled Fritillary	3
Silvery Checkerspot	3
Pearl Crescent	10
Northern Crescent	34
Red Admiral	6
Tawny Emperor	2
Northern Pearly-eye	9
Appalachian Brown	11
Little Wood Satyr	3
Common Wood Nymph	7
Monarch (caterpillars)	3

Editor's note: The following is a report by Bernie Solymár. The team totals are included in the overall total as listed on page 2



GREAT SPANGLED FRITILLARY
GEORGE E POND



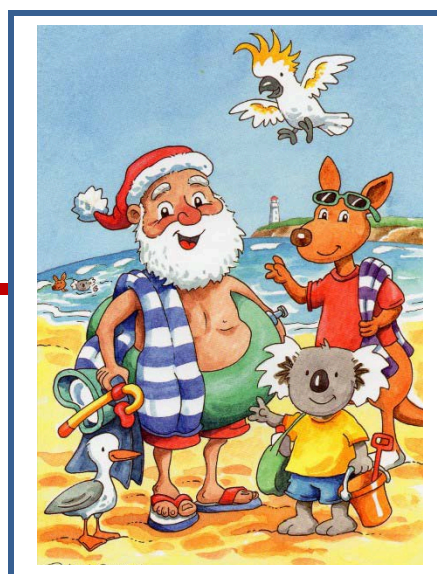
Great Spangled Fritillary and American Copper
Photos: George Pond

Thank You!

From Norfolk Field Naturalists to
Will Partridge
Guardian Computing
For hosting our website

to all NFN Members and Friends:

MERRY CHRISTMAS
and HAPPY NEW YEAR



TIRITIRI MATANGI

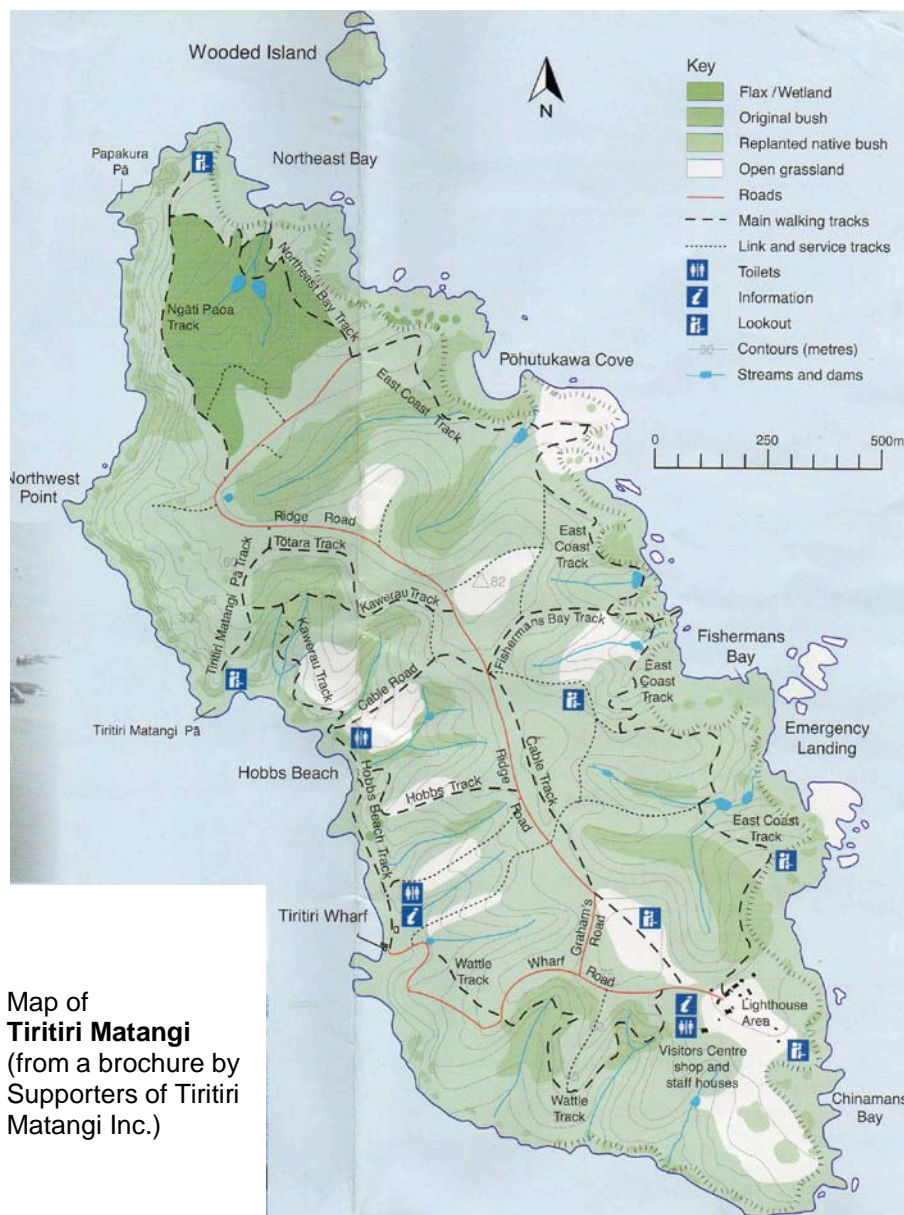
An Island Nature Reserve in New Zealand

By Inga Hinnerichsen

During a recent trip Down-Under we had the opportunity to visit a very special nature sanctuary: Tiritiri Matangi Island. Unlike most protected nature reserves in New Zealand, where you need a special permit for access, this island is open to visitors. It can be reached by private boat or a small ferry from Auckland 5 days a week. This island is definitely a "Must-See" while visiting New Zealand. Tiritiri Matangi ("Looking to the Wind" or "Wind Tossing About") is a scientific reserve and wildlife sanctuary. It is also one of New Zealand's most important restoration projects. It is managed by the Department of Conservation (DOC) and a community group, Supporters of Tiritiri Matangi Inc.



Ponga (tree fern) and Cabbage Tree
Photo: Inga Hinnerichsen



Map of
Tiritiri Matangi
(from a brochure by
Supporters of Tiritiri
Matangi Inc.)

New Zealand's island sanctuaries help to ensure the survival of many rare and endangered plant and animal species. They are especially valuable because they are easier to keep predator-free than mainland areas.

Before boarding the ferry to Tiritiri Matangi visitors are asked to check all bags for insects and stow-away rodents and thoroughly clean footwear preventing soil-born pests, spores and seeds to be carried to the island. All food brought to the island must be kept in closed containers. No camping, fires or pets are allowed.

Groups can make special arrangements for staying overnight in the bunkhouse facility normally reserved for volunteers and visiting scientists.

Contact: www.doc.govt.nz

An overnight visit will enable you to observe nocturnal wildlife, such as the Little Spotted Kiwi (*Kiwi Pukupuku*) and the common More Pork Owl (*Ruru*)

Tiritiri Matangi ...Continued from Page 4

Tiritiri Matangi was first settled by Maori tribes (iwi). Remnants of building sites and kumara (a sweet potato-like root vegetable) storage pits are still visible. Europeans arrived in the mid -1850s, and the island was continually farmed from then to the 1970s when the farming lease was not renewed and the island became a recreation reserve. The 220 hectare island was originally covered by a mixed forest. Centuries of Maori occupation followed by European farming saw the majority of the island converted to rolling grassland. Tiritiri Matangi's original wildlife suffered greatly when the forests were cleared for pasture. Many bird species were forced to leave in search of new homes and food sources, only a few of the most resilient ones remained.

A comprehensive native replanting program began on Tiritiri Matangi in 1984. A nursery was set up on the island specifically to grow plants from seed collected from the island. Bird droppings are now helping to spread seeds, contributing to the re-growth of the forest. By the completion of the planting program in 1994, over 280,000 trees had been planted. The program's success is mainly due to the efforts of thousands of volunteers. In just over 20 years the island is again covered in a lush native sub-tropical forest. DOC maintains a network of trails throughout the island.



Above: The rare Robin-size North Island Saddleback (*Tieke*)
Below: Another rarity, the Stitchbird (*Hihi*) This male is about the size of a Fox Sparrow. Note the white tufts at his ears.

Photos: Duncan Wright / Wikipedia

Although I observed these birds, photographing them was a challenge because of the dense bush!



Hobbs Beach Photo: Inga Hinnerichsen

Since becoming a sanctuary under the administration of DOC many of the rarer native birds have been re-introduced to Tiritiri Matangi. Several birds known to exist on the island escaped my search, such as the *Takahe*, a large swamp hen-like dark purple bird, the North Island *Kokako*, a crow-size blue grey bird with a distinctive black face mask and a bright blue chin patch, and the elusive nocturnal Little Spotted Kiwi (*Kiwi Pukupuku*) to mention a few.

Continued on page 6...

Tiritiri Matangi ...Continued from Page 5

The ocean birds are much more abundant than the upland birds in New Zealand. The areas we visited were mainly upland.

The following is my bird list of identified species, some also from the near-by Waiheke Island.

Ring-necked Pheasant* (*Peihana*)

Brown Quail*

California Quail* (*Koera*)

Black Swan (*Wana*)

Paradise Shelduck (*Putangitangi*)

Grey Duck (often hybridized) (*Parera*)

Little Penguin (in nesting box) (*Korora*)

Australasian Gannet (*Takapu*)

Cattle Egret*

White-faced Heron*

Australasian Harrier* (*Kahu*)

Weka

Purple Swampphen (*Pukeko*)*

Variable Oystercatcher* (*Torea pango*)

Red-billed Gull (*Tarapunga*)

Kelp Gull (*Karoro*)

Spotted Dove*

New Zealand Pigeon (*Kereru*)

Eastern Rosella*

Morepork (*Ruru*)

Sacred Kingfisher* (*Kotare*)

North Island Saddleback (*Tieke*)

Stitchbird (*Hihi*)

Bellbird (*Korimako*)

Parson Bird (*Tui*)

Whitehead (*Popokotea*)

Australian Magpie* (*Makipai*)

Fantail (*Piwakawaka*)

Eurasian Skylark*

Welcome Swallow*

Eurasian Blackbird*

Song Thrush*

European Starling*

Common Myna*

House Sparrow*

Common Chaffinch*

Yellowhammer*

Maori names *Italic*

*Introduced or naturalized

Pukeko
Purple Swampphen

Photo:
Inga Hinnerichsen



Variable Oystercatcher, black morph, with chick
Photo: Inga Hinnerichsen



Tui a.k.a. Parson Bird Photo: Sid Mosdell / Wikipedia

**Look for more birding in Australia
in the February Lotus**

Missed Opportunity

Environment and Climate Change Canada recently released a draft plan for managing populations of Snapping Turtles - and that plan is a disappointment. It fails to address the government-sanctioned hunting of the species, which is at risk in Ontario and several other provinces.

The plan acknowledges that hunting is a "high severity threat" that significantly affects turtle populations. But rather than propose to end hunting, the document calls for further evaluation, adjustment of regulations and the development of mitigation techniques.

This direction is inconsistent with the scientific evidence presented in the plan. Because Snapping Turtles are slow to reach sexual maturity and embryo mortality is high, the death of adults has a major impact on populations.

Most Canadian provinces where the species lives, including Manitoba Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, have already banned hunting. Only Ontario and Saskatchewan allow hunting to continue.

The many threats to Snapping Turtles include habitat loss, road mortality, chemical contamination and loss of their eggs to predators. The hunt further increases the vulnerability of an already at-risk species. (by Anne Bell)

For further info on these topics, and more, visit:
www.ontarionature.org

Report any illegal turtle collecting, not just Snapping Turtles, on Long Point to OPP

Welcome New NFN Members

2015 - 2016 Season

**Ron & Barb Mitchell, Richard & Karen Davis
and Jeremy & Liam Henderson**

We look forward to meeting you and hope you will participate in and enjoy all the NFN indoor presentations and field outings.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' REPORT

Autumn 2016

The NFN Board of Directors met after the summer break on October 6, 2016, at the home of Cliff Skerratt, one of our new Directors.

The following are highlights from this meeting.

Treasurer's Report:

Two deposits made in September totaling \$1,850
The new computer has been classified under Office Expenses. The new sound system falls under Miscellaneous Expenses.

Jen has completed annual charitable return for CRA. Barb just needs to add info on the new directors.

The total assets at September 30, 2016, was \$54,221.99

Committee reports:

The Long Point Causeway Improvement Project will be complete by the end of the year.

NCEE is still looking at purchase a property, funding pending. Presentations at schools are ongoing during the winter season.

Phragmites Action Alliance: All local spraying is now complete.

New Business:

Bernie volunteered to develop a draft for an update of the NFN Constitution, which was last revised in 1996 and is in parts outdated. It will be reviewed at the next BoD Meeting.

A protocol for disrupting field outings in case of adverse weather to be developed. Inga to follow-up.

The Mushroom ID Hike was a success regardless of the soggy weather. - The best mushroom season in years.

Ontario Nature requested donations towards their Pollination Program. It was decided that funds could be more effectively used locally. A discussion on involving local conservation groups to form a local Pollination Committee ensued. Possible roles: education and outreach, hands-on pollinator planting project, bee nest box building workshop, etc. Bernie to pursue.

The next BoD Meeting will be held on January 24, 2017.

Upcoming NFN

2016 -17 Winter Events

Christmas Bird Counts

Data collected provides vital information on the distribution of winter bird populations

Sunday, December 18, 2016

Woodhouse Count

Contact: David Okines,
david.okines@gmail.com
519-586-9464

Wednesday, December 28, 2016

Fisherville Count

Contact: Linda Thrower,
linda1@295.ca 905-774-1230

Tuesday, January 10, 2017

Phragmites in Norfolk

Janice Gilbert is a wetlands ecologist with the Long Point Phragmites Action Alliance. Janice will speak about this invasive species and the efforts being made to mitigate its spread and take back the marsh.

Sunday, January 22, 2017

2 P.M. to 6 P.M.

Winter Birding in Haldimand County

The fields of Haldimand and the open water along Lake Erie attract many wintering birds. Bring binoculars and wear warm clothing. Meet at Port Dover at the base of the dock on the west side of the harbour at 2 P.M.
Contact Bernie at 519-428-0706.

What a Hoot! - Owl Prowl

Saturday, February 11, 2017

7:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Take a moon lit hike as we play the recorded calls of owls and entice them to answer us. Bring a flashlight and dress warmly. This is a joint event with NCEE. **Location TBA.**

Contact Bernie at 519-428-0706.

Tuesday, February 14, 2017

Barn Swallows

Bird Studies Canada's Kristyn Richardson is involved with the Swift and Swallow Program. Kristyn will share the research BSC is conducting to fill key knowledge gaps in our understanding of Bank and Barn Swallow habitat use, including the results of artificial nesting structures and the effects of radio tracking.

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 2017

Input dead line:

Friday, Jan. 27, 2017

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

2016 - 2017 NFN Executive with contact & project information

		All 519-	
President	Inga Hinnerichsen	875-5601	daveinga@live.ca
Vice-President	Len Grincevicius	428-6796	portie_1989@eastlink.ca
Sanctuary	Peter Carson	586-3985	gartcar@kwic.com
Past President	Bernie Solymár	427-9969	solymar@nornet.on.ca
Treasurer	Barb Hourigan	583-1198	bbhourigan@yahoo.ca
Secretary	Eleanor Chithalen	582-4382	eleanor.chithalen@gmail.com
Director/ Membership	Diane Salter	586-7775	bigcreek@kwic.com
Director Speaker Program and Field Events	Len Grincevicius	428-6796	portie_1989@eastlink.ca
Director Publicity	David Curry	875-5601	david.curry@hotmail.com
Director Environment	Bernie Solymár	427-9969	solymar@nornet.on.ca
Director-at-large	Sue Olmstead	583-1436	ksolmstead@kwic.com
Director-at-large	Ken Olmstead	583-1436	ksolmstead@kwic.com
Director-at-large	Cliff Skerratt	582-0319	

Lotus Editor (appointed) Inga Hinnerichsen 875-5601 daveinga@live.ca

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