



FRINGE NOTES

DECEMBER, 2008

HURON FRINGE FIELD NATURALISTS, Box 143, Kincardine ON. N2Z 2Y6

~~ Founded 1985 ~~



President's message....

Now that winter is upon us and the bird feeders are filled we can concentrate on Christmas. At our last Executive meeting we decided to cancel the January meeting, and have a meeting in June instead. Remember that if the speaker cancels then we will not hold a meeting. A phone tree has been organized in an attempt to keep you informed of any cancellations. Marion Donnelly has sewn some lug-a-mug bags that are available for purchase at upcoming meetings. On behalf of the Executive may you have a wonderful Christmas with your family and friends!

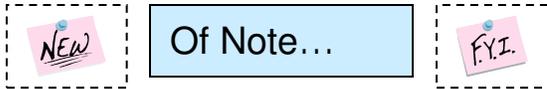
- Maithel Lee

Individual Highlights:

President's Message: 1
 Of Note... 1
 Outing Reports: 1 - 3
 Outings & Excursions, &

CHRISTMAS BIRD

COUNT info: 3
 Regular Meetings: 4
 Bits 'n Bobs: 4
 Member List: 5
 Sponsors: 6



NOTE TO CONTRIBUTORS: Next issue: MARCH
Cutoff date for all articles: Feb. 25th

OUTING REPORTS

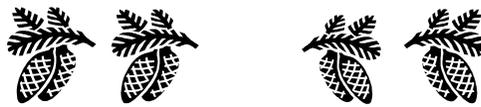
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www.huronstewardship.on.ca

CORN ROAST, September 13th, 2008

Twenty-one members risked threatening skies to enjoy a wonderful corn roast at The Ark. After a shortened walk with our knowledgeable host, Art, the skies did open up but we were all able to seek shelter on the front porch. There we enjoyed Tom's corn and hotdogs with a generous potluck of salads and desserts. Each year it is always interesting to see the changes that nature brings to the area around The Ark, nurtured by the stewardship of Janice and Art. Thanks again to The Ark for an informative afternoon.
 Jim Armstrong



The Chickadee
 Piped a tiny voice hard by
 Gay and polite, a cheerful cry,
 'Chic-chicadee-dee!' Saucy note
 Out of a sound heart and a merry
 throat,
 As if it said, 'Good day, good sir.
 Fine afternoon, old passenger!
 Happy to meet you in these places
 When January brings new faces!'
 - Ralph Waldo Emerson

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~~~~~  
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~~~~~  
Fringe Notes is published three times a year for members of HFFN. Membership is \$12/ year for single and \$18/ year for family.

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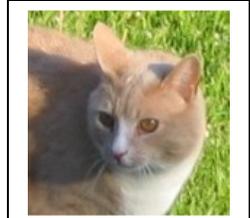
Annual Point Clark Birding and Barbecue, Oct. 25th 2008.

Another very successful gathering, despite inclement weather later in the morning, when members who had come out to watch waterfowl at the Lighthouse conceded the day (and the group of Scaup braving the swells out on the Lake) to the rain, and retired to President Maithel Lee's home nearby for a warm and convivial gathering. About twenty people and one guest enjoyed the chat and amusing tales before lining

up for an excellent meal. Thanks to Maithel for providing the great burgers and yummy premeal snacks; to members for their tasty contributions, and to Steve for barbecuing out in the garage!

Maithel's cat Bailey later managed to snafu a burger patty and pronounced it delicious!

- Editor

**Ball's Bridge Outing**

A beautiful day for the reopening of Ball's Bridge. The bridge had been closed to traffic as it was deemed unsafe, a local group was formed to help to raise funds and work with organizations and politicians.

The end result is now a safe crossing of the Maitland River for all traffic. We were also told of the history of the bridge and the settling of this area along the Maitland. The Ball family settled on the shore of the Maitland, the first Ball settler lived in a hollow log the first winter before bring his family the next spring to build a home.

After the speeches we then drove over to the Maitland Block Road to an area that crosses Blyth Creek where we enjoyed a BBQ. While we were waiting for the food to cook the Conservation Reps demonstrated electro fishing in the Blyth Creek. This is not legal for you and I as it is only done to identify the species of fish in streams and rivers. They say that 35 species live in the Maitland and its tributaries.

Following the BBQ we had a fly fishing demonstration by a local resident who also teaches the art of fly fishing. He showed us many of the flies that he ties to try and trick the fish into thinking that they are seeing a real bug on the water. He also compared his flies to the real larva and bugs that the fisherman caught.

Seven club members enjoyed the day, some headed home but Linda and I took a drive over to the "Little Lakes" not far from the bridge. There are many things to see so very close to home that we do not seem to know too much about.

Thanks to Tom Lobb for setting this outing up and being our leader.

- Jack Campbell



**BALL'S BRIDGE
OUTING, Oct.
18th.**

Thanks to
Jack Campbell
for these 3
views.



Ball's Bridge Outing Photo's – Con't.

Upcoming OUTINGS and EXCURSIONS



On Your Feet! Many of our hikes are like a walk in the park....but not all! If you're thinking of lighter shoes for an outing, do check the announcements for a note on the expected terrain. Bring your treaded hiking shoes or boots along....just in case!

OUTING CHECKLIST: binoculars, bird/plant/other book, bug repellent, hat, water, hiking stick, sunglasses, hanky, area map, snacks, thermos (in car), waist/backpack, boots for rough/wet terrain, cell phone. In Spring and Fall: rain slicker, gloves.



109th Audubon Christmas Bird Count – Monday, December 29th

25th Annual Kincardine CBC

The 25th annual Kincardine Christmas Bird Count will be held this year on **Monday December 29th**. Over the years the Huron Fringe Field Naturalists have provided volunteers to make this Count a success. And so this year we are again appealing for participants to provide a good coverage of our area. Therefore please consider contacting me if you can help.

So how does this Count work? The area is a 24km circle with its centre just west of Ripley and this area is divided into 4 sections. Each section has about 4 or more birders and they begin counting around 8am till dusk. However some birders go owling, usually earlier in the morning. After counting every bird seen or heard during the day, everyone meets at a local restaurant for refreshments and the results for the whole area are tabulated.

There is a \$5.00 registration fee which is forwarded to Bird Studies Canada for administration.

You do not have to be a good birder to participate, and you don't have to bird the whole day. Teams will be made up of novices and more experienced birders. Even if you can't tell the difference between a Purple Finch and a House Finch or a Tree Sparrow and a House Sparrow, someone will help you with the identification.

**To take part in the Kincardine CBC, please contact:
Ralph Knowles @ 519-396-5580 or remak@bmts.com**



OUTINGS CONTINUED NEXT PAGE...

OUTINGS CONTINUED NEXT PAGE...





OUTINGS CONTINUED..



EAGLE WATCH, Saturday February 21st 2009

Meet: 1:00 pm. at Zehr's parking lot in Kincardine
Contact: Jim Armstrong, 519 396-5856.
Details: Join the group for a chance to see bald eagles along the Lake Range Road near Bruce Power and the lakeshore. Perhaps we will see hawks, wild turkeys and deer. After, warm up at the Armstrong's with a hot drink and a muffin. 1092 West Street

~ ~ ~ **REGULAR MEETINGS** ~ ~ ~

Regular meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Pine River United Church on Hwy 21.

Social Time: 7. 30 pm ~~~~~ Meeting: 8:00 pm

LUG-A-MUG ... BRING YOUR OWN MUG TO THE MEETING!

NOTE on cancellation of meetings – 'No speaker. no meeting.'

The Kincardine News, Cable 6, or Joy Munn (519-395-3570) will have *up-to-date details* closer to these dates.

November 25, 2008:

Speaker: John Gerrath from the Nature Conservancy in Guelph.
Topic: What the Conservancy does. John will also give us ideas for 'Outings and things to do'.



January 27th, 2009

This meeting has been cancelled.
 We will hold a meeting in June instead.



February 24th, 2009: The Camino de Santiago

In September 2008, Jayne Miltenburg travelled to northern Spain to walk part of an 800 km. pilgrimage route, the Camino de Santiago de Compestala. She will share pictures of the beautiful scenery and describe her trip along this ancient trail.



March 24th, 2009:

Dr. Andy McKee of the Ministry of Natural Resources will give us 'Turkey Tales' ...about the reintroduction of wild turkeys.



BITS 'n BOBS....pickin's, snippets and queries, et al....

POINT CLARK JUNCOS were sighted Nov. 18thbringing our winter with them. Look for warmer days when you miss these weather prognosticators at your bird feeders next year!

LEAVING old birds' nests in your nesting boxes until Spring will provide tiny chilled critters with a place to huddle during the bitter cold days, but don't forget to haul out the detrius when warm weather returns, so that birds can come home to a spring-cleaned house.

MOURNING DOVES are ground feeders, and will use a roofed feeder set on the ground with mixed bird seed in it....but have you considered a hanging feeder with a tray or extended perches that they can fit on, filled with mixed birdseed...or better still, Mourning Dove food? Extended perches can be made with longer pieces of dowelling or even a stout, straightish twig that will fit through the feeder or its mesh. The doves will thank you!



Has your Membership Expired? We hope that you will consider renewing your membership. Mail to:

**Huron Fringe Field Naturalists,
 P.O. Box 143, Kincardine, Ontario N2Z 2Y6**

By doing this you will help ensure having a continued roster of top quality speakers. Other clubs have increased their dues by quite a lot, so if you could help recruit new members it would help keep dues low. Thanks to all for your continued support of your club. See lower left side of Page 2 for details.



HFFN Paid for 2009			
First	Last	First	Last
STEVEN	BOWERS	ART WIEBE & JANICE	MCKEAN
JACK & LINDA	CAMPBELL	BARBARA & SHARON	MCKENZIE
JOHN F	CARD	BARBARA & KIRK	MCNAUGHTON
STANLEY & JACQUELINE	CLEMENTS	Marilyn	Meldrum
Janet	Cunningham	JAYNE-BRADY	MILTENBURG
DENNIS & MARION	DONNELLY	MARION	MOSOLF
JOAN	DOUGHERTY	DON & JOY	MUNN
RHODORA & ARTHUR	DOUGHTY	LUCILE	MYERS
JOHN & MARY	FARRELL	STEVE & JENI	PEPPER
LUCILLE	FISCHER	FREDA & LENARD	REIS
RAY & LOIS	GALBRAITH	Julia	Richman
JOHN & BARBARA	GAMBLE	Joan & Vic	Sobczuk
WILK	GILLIN	JOAN	STADELMANN
BERT & WENDY	HOGENBIRK	SYLVIA	STEPNOW
CATHERINE	HOGG	LINDEN & GRETA	THURBER
JIM & BARBARA	HOLLINGWORTH	MURIEL	TURNER
GLEN & ELAINE	HOLMES	HELEN	VANDERGLAS
CHARLIE & LORNA	ISAACS	RUTH	WALKER
JEAN	KENNEDY	DR. J. MICHAEL	WATTS
DOROTHY	KINGS	JAMES	WHALING
RALPH & MARY-ANNE	KNOWLES	MAITHEL LEE	WILSON
LINDA	LOWNDS	Ron & Ruth	Witt

Book Review : Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario, 2001-2005. First appeared in the EDUCT newsletter, Issue 18, Sept. 2008, of the Edinburgh University Club of Toronto.

This is a huge, beautiful book, packed with information interesting to birders, but also fascinating to anyone caring about the natural world and the changes we are seeing in it in our lifetimes, specifically in Ontario. It was published in late 2007, the second such Breeding Bird Atlas, the first having been produced exactly 20 years ago, so not only does it give a picture of the current status and distribution of the birds of the province, but it permits quite precise quantification of both increases and decreases in bird populations as well as advances and retreats in their Ontario range across the last two decades. It is a monumental work. Data were collected by 3417 observers, clocking 152,263 hours of effort over the five years, in a landmass stretching from Middle Island in Lake Erie, at the latitude of Rome and northern California, to the subarctic tundra on the shores of Hudson Bay. And this prodigious amount of data is brilliantly presented. Each of the 286 breeding species has a lucid written account illustrated by superb photos of the birds themselves, often accompanied by nest and habitat shots. The maps are amazing. Each species has a Breeding Evidence map, clearly demonstrating its likely presence or absence in every one of the 10km squares covered (100km in northern Ontario), with dots to show if the species was recorded in both atlases, only the first one, or newly in the current one, giving an invaluable picture of range expansions and contractions. Point Counts – recording all birds seen and heard at prescribed locations for exactly five minutes – also allowed the production of Relative Abundance maps for almost half the breeding species, often giving a surprising picture of where relatively common species are in fact most common.

The face of Ontario has changed dramatically in the last 20 years, and human population growth and changes in land use are well reflected by this Atlas. In the south, the suburban sprawl of cities, with the resultant loss of wetlands and agricultural acreage, has driven out some more reclusive bird species, but has also encouraged those more able to adapt to urbanization – just think of all those Canada Geese grazing on condominium lawns beside our yacht-filled harbours, and the “McDonald’s” gulls fighting over spilt French fries in our paved-over malls. But with the abandonment of marginal farmland, there has also been a significant increase in forest cover across northeastern North America, and this has benefited some shyer woodland species. One of the more surprising findings of this second Atlas is the fact that, overall, more species have increased rather than decreased in numbers in Ontario in the last 20 years. Though there were variations by region and habitat, over the whole province 74 bird species showed statistically significant population increases, while 39 showed significant decreases. Common Ravens have expanded south into much of the land they probably occupied before the pioneer clearances and Eastern Bluebirds have survived European Starlings usurping their nesting cavities by volunteers setting-up starling-proof nest boxes along many new “bluebird trails” in open country. But grassland birds and the aerial foragers – swallows and swifts, nighthawks and whip-poor-wills - seem in precipitous decline, for reasons that are unclear, probably complex, and evident across North America. So, this book is wonderful to browse through, or to consult for specific information - a must for the cottage or the Toronto backyard. It is thoroughly scientific, yet uniformly well written and accessible, with wonderful far-ranging chapters outside the actual species accounts. It is most attractively illustrated, and the whole production is of an extremely high standard. It is published by a partnership between Bird Studies Canada, Environment Canada, the Ontario Field Ornithologists, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and Ontario Nature. The book is large (and quite weighty), 9x12”, with over 700 pages, and sells for \$92.50 plus GST. To order the Atlas, phone 1-800-440-2366 (416-444-8419 in Toronto) or go on-line at www.birdsontario.org

Dr. Margaret Bain (M.B.Ch.B 1961, F.R.C.S.Ed. 1965) is a retired obstetrician-gynaecologist with an (almost) obsessive interest in birding, in Ontario and around the world. She is the Ontario Regional Editor for the quarterly publication *North American Birds* and was the 2005-2007 Chair of the Ontario Bird Records Committee.

GARY TRACK
owner/chef

Watercress
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Winter Wonderland.....

From the Editor's files: HFFN Outing, Jan. 17th, '04. the Wallis Bush, nr. Ripley.

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Newsletter!*



**Best of the Season
To Everyone!**



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