

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



Dear PECFN members,
It's hard to believe that 2020 is over! We want to thank you all for your support and patience as we moved our fall members' meetings to zoom. Please note that we have decided to move the 2021 Members' night from January to June, in the hopes that by then we will be able to meet in person. PECFN Exec



Island Point, just south of North Beach.

Photo by Bert Jenkins



Redpolls have descended on Prince Edward County in what is known as an "irruption" due to food shortages in the far north where this species breeds.
Photo by Sydney Smith



'Ray of Hope'
Photo Sydney Smith

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Am. Tree Sparrow

Photo S. Smith



Red-breasted Nuthatch..
..S. Smith.



PECFN, Zoom, and Our Monthly Meetings

We miss seeing everyone at our meetings in Bloomfield, but, after we worked out a few technical glitches, our Zoom sessions have been a great success. In September, Terry Sprague took us on a virtual tour of local Conservation Areas. In October, climate scientist and Queen's prof Dr Warren Mabee talked about climate change and new ways of living. In November, Dr Tim Johnson, senior research scientist at Glenora, presented a fascinating, though not always encouraging, update on the health of Lake Ontario. Thank you to our speakers for their entertaining and informative presentations.

Our Zoom meetings have had some unexpected benefits — for instance, the climate dividend. No matter how close to Bloomfield Town Hall you live or how far away, no need to get the car out of the driveway and blast greenhouse gases out of the tailpipe. And because location wasn't a factor, people have tuned in from as far away as Waterloo, Barrie, Oshawa and Ottawa. For each of our three meetings, at least 30 people have joined us online, a pretty good turnout, we think. Also, holding meetings over Zoom means that we can invite speakers from all over the province, or Canada, for that matter.



Online meetings are likely to continue well into 2021, beginning with our AGM on January 26. Eventually, however, we look forward to seeing you all in person once again. What a special evening that will be!

Make
Way!.....
S.Smith.

How Geology and History affect the Biodiversity of the South Shore of Prince Edward County -



Les worked as a research biologist with the Ministry of Natural Resources for over 30 years, most of that time in Prince Edward County where he lives and plays. For much of his career he worked on trying to understand the historical factors that caused Atlantic salmon to disappear in Lake Ontario. This work required a deep dive into Ontario's jaded history of alterations to the landscape from development that created a deep appreciation for the intimate relationship between human activity and cumulative environmental impacts.



South Shore IBA

January 26:

PECFN AGM. Via Zoom

followed by a talk by **Les Stanfield who will speak on the natural and cultural history of the South Shore.**

From the very origins of the geology of the County 176 million years ago to the present day with emphasis on the uses of the South Shore by indigenous tribes and European settlers. That geology and subsequent glacial scraping resulted in the karst geology of the South Shore making it poor farming land, but excellent habitat for wildlife. Les explained how the South Shore areas were used for defence training and aerial bombing practice during and after the second world war and how ultimately the area was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources as a hunting and fishing resource.

Les looks through issues with one eye on the past and one on the future as we work towards repairing damaged landscapes from past activities while working towards building more resilient eco-healthy communities for the future.

PECFN speaker on Zoom: February 23: Flying Squirrels in Ontario - Dr. Jeff Bowman

Jeff is a Senior Research Scientist with the Wildlife Research and Monitoring Section of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and also an Adjunct Professor in the Environmental and Life Sciences Graduate Program at Trent University.

He completed his Ph.D. at the University of New Brunswick in 1999, and has been with MNR since August 2001. Jeff leads Ontario’s furbearer and small mammal research programs, and has experience in population and landscape ecology, and landscape genetics. He has conducted research on many species and ecosystems, including work on fishers, martens, lynx, bobcats, wolverines, mink, wild turkeys, flying squirrels, and a variety of bat species.



Spoiler alert: The Nature of Things is airing a series of 5 episodes on Wild Canadian Weather beginning in January and flying squirrels from Jeff’s research project will be in the “snow” episode as well as the “behind the scenes” episode. Watch these programs to learn about his research.

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PECFN speakers March 30 on Zoom

David and Yvette Bree

Borneo



March 30: The Wildlife, Culture and Landscapes of Borneo - Yvette and David Bree

Join David and Yvette Bree on an armchair Zoom trip to Saba on the island of Borneo.

Fantastic birds, mammals and butterflies are still to be found in a country rapidly developing. Ecotourism infrastructure abounds but forests are shrinking. Find out what marvels are still to be found, how to see them and how you can help keep them there.



EXCITING NEWS!

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

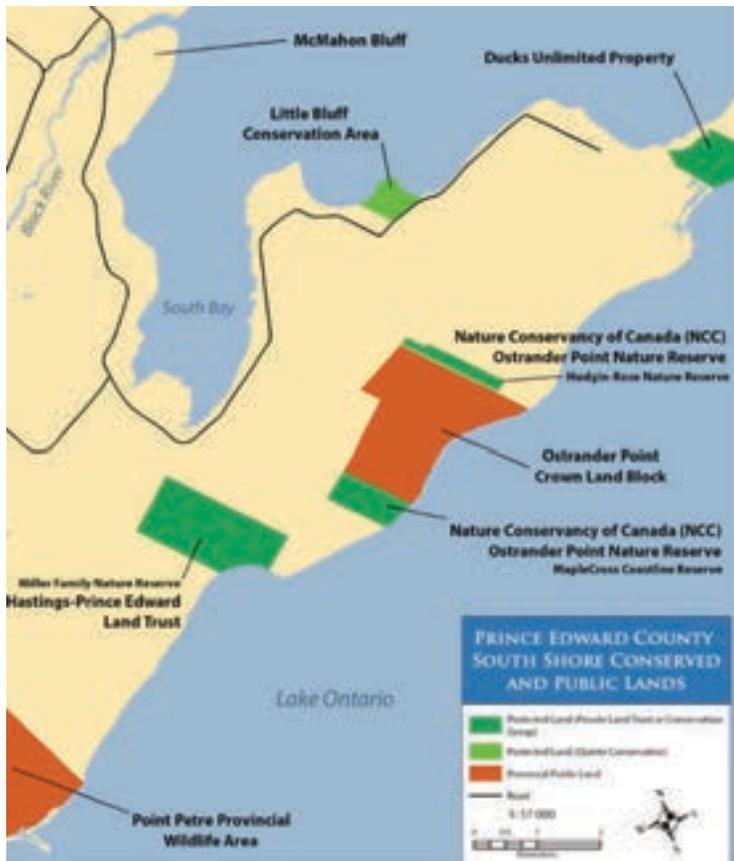
MCMAHON BLUFF

Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) Acquires McMahon Bluff

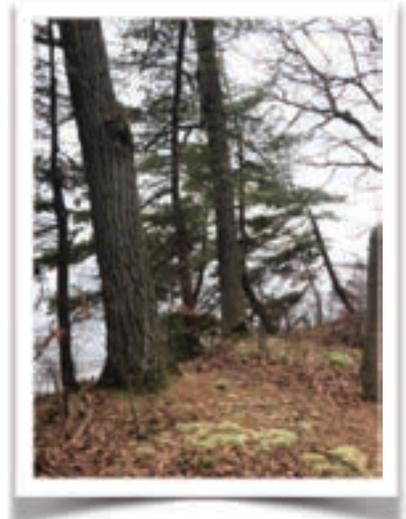
McMahon Bluff is a spectacularly beautiful property at the mouth of the Black River. It's diversity of habitats include forest, alvar, cliff faces, steep slopes, and savannah, as well as more than 2 km of undisturbed coastline. It's also home to uncommon trees and wildflowers. And as it lies just north of the PEC South Shore Important Bird and Biodiversity area, it provides breeding habitat as well as a much needed stopover for migratory birds, exhausted from their flight across the lake.

Although the 97 ha property (241 acres) was gifted to the NCC, the organization needs to raise \$460,000 this winter to cover acquisition costs and fund a management plan and on-going stewardship work. PECFN members might consider a donation to help protect this ecologically significant property for the long-term. Donations can be made at natureconservancy.ca/donate-eloc and use the comments box to direct your donation to McMahon Bluff conservation.

Also, cheques made payable to "Nature Conservancy of Canada" could be mailed to 245 Eglinton Ave E, Suite 410, Toronto, ON M4P 3J1, indicating either in the memo portion of your cheque, or in a note accompanying your donation, that your gift is for the "McMahon Bluff".



photos by Mark Stabb, NCC



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PECFN member Bert Jenkins was fortunate enough to accompany Mark Stabb on a walk through the McMahon Bluff property. Mark is the Nature Conservancy of Canada's (NCC's) program director for Central Ontario – East. The property is not open to the public yet but this is how Bert describes the area:

McMahon Bluff is Fabulous!

It is like having a small portion of the Peninsula Section of the Bruce Trail, but here in PEC: birding, hiking and photography should be exemplary.

Like much of the Bruce Trail, it's escarpment-and bench country, except the "escarpment" is a mesa, having no dip slope but being surrounded on all sides by steep slopes. Mark and I were walking along what emerged every now and then as a logging road, barely detectable and very old, and occasionally no more than a deer trail and sometimes not even that. We saw bald eagles, not only the eagles themselves, but we walked through areas of significant birdlime and thought one of their roosting sites must be above us. The picnic table in the images is quite near the cottages, no more than 100 m, and I'd say the cottage owners went there every now and then to sit and look at the view. There are apparently old trails on the mesa too, and Mark and I talked about linking them up one of the ravines that cut the slope, and which we thought must run with water in spring. Ultimately, this is a thoroughly exciting addition to the County's palette of protected areas.



PECFN has been busy!

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PECFN ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES – Report by Paula Peel

The PECFN executive has been busy on the advocacy front. There has been a surge of development applications in the County over the last six months, as the clock runs down on the current Official Plan. Some of these applications would not get past first base under the new Official Plan, and are particularly concerning as they could be approved under the existing Plan. We have also been actively involved in the public consultation process as the draft Official Plan makes its way through the final approval stages.

Specific PECFN advocacy activities during the past several months include:

- Submission to Planning staff in response to the IRTH proposal for an 18-unit hotel and 12 cabin tourist accommodation and spa facility in the Cressy area. Our comments include observations by a member of the executive who visited the site and noted inaccurate mapping of some vegetation and other concerns such as adverse effects to up to 16 Species at Risk listed as occurring in the immediate area. We also shared our submission with the Environmental Advisory Committee as well as providing a one-pager of summary points for council.

The PECFN executive is of the view that this development is in a totally unsuitable location in rural and environmentally sensitive land and should not be permitted to proceed. The property includes an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (Lost Lake Basin and Forest), is adjacent to another ANSI (Cape Vasey), and has an escarpment which acts as a wildlife corridor which would be negatively impacted by this development. It is also noteworthy that IRTH's proposal would not be permitted by the new Official Plan in being located in one of the County's Natural Core Areas.

- Two members of the PECFN executive attended the (virtual) public meeting for **Loyalist Heights**, another development that is trying to beat the clock on the new Official Plan. This development proposes to construct 375 – 400 new homes in the vicinity of Scoharie Road near the headwaters of Waring Creek and adjacent to the Millennium Trail. There has been no new information about this development since the public meeting almost six months ago.

- At an upcoming council meeting on January 19, the PECFN executive will comment on the Pebble Beach East Campark. This development, on the shoreline of Soup Harbour, consists of an expansion of the Quinte Isle Campark. If approved, 337 new trailer sites would be added to the already-existing 600 serviced seasonal trailer and camping sites. There are any number of concerns with this development, including its location on lands designated as a Natural Core Linkage in the new Official Plan and in being directly adjacent to the Soup Harbour Provincially Significant Wetland.

- In past months individual members of our executive have written to council and to their respective councillors and to Planning staff to express their concerns about Picton Terminal's rezoning application and the Bel Air Residential and Resort Development at Halfmoon Point on the County's South Shore. The executive also undertook to comment in response to Bel Air's deputation to the Committee of the Whole. Fortunately, both of those ill-advised ventures have been cancelled.

- Written comments on the Draft Official Plan: our comments reflect the executive's wide-ranging concerns about development in Natural Core Areas and Linkages; the need for buffer areas of 50 metres to protect natural features; the need for more robust measures to protect woodlands and wildlife habitat, particularly habitat used by endangered species; the need for changes to protect the County's wetlands, watercourses and groundwater resources over the next 25 years; the need to update population growth estimates based on current information, the need for further study into the Shore Lands designation. In summary our comments reflect our concern for our natural heritage in a future affected by changes in climate that should lead us to giving this priority in the Official Plan.

- The year ended on a good note with three members of the executive (Amy Bodman, Sheila Kuja and Gerry Jenkinson) capably representing PECFN at a special (virtual) council meeting on the Official Plan on December 15, 2020.

Our advocacy activities have been constrained this past year by the pandemic but a great deal was still accomplished. With your help and support we will continue to advocate for safeguarding our natural heritage in the County in 2021.

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Injured birds nursed at Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre, are being released by Amy Bodman in Wellington



Early one evening last October, I was walking across my backyard and noticed a Canada Goose standing uncharacteristically on the lawn. I approached the goose and as it waddled under a bush, I realized it was injured. I quickly went into the house and called **Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre**, who told us to bring it to them if we could and that they would stay open for delivery until 8 o'clock that night. My husband and I were able to get a blanket over the goose and put it in a box which we loosely taped shut and rushed it to Napanee.

About 2 weeks later I got a call from Sandy Pines telling me that my goose was ready for pick-up and release back to the wild. It turned out the goose had been shot, but would still be able to survive with the gunshot in him. Sandy Pines asked if, at the same time, I would pick up a Gray-cheeked Thrush they'd received from Wellington that was ready for release as well. The people who had delivered the thrush, a victim of a window collision, were no longer in the County. I called up my friend Sheila Kuja who agreed to go with me to pick up our precious cargo. With great pleasure, we drove the rehabilitated birds back to Wellington and released them.

The procedure for releasing rehabilitated wildlife is to release them as close to where they were found as possible and in habitat where they are likely to find their own kind. We released the thrush in a grove of trees west of the Wellington tennis courts, and the goose at the Wellington Harbour. The thrush flew out of its box in a flash and disappeared into the grove; after walking around a bit, our goose flew a short way into the harbour where it joined some Mute Swans and Mallards.

Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre, located on Hwy 2 west of Napanee, is a private organization which depends hugely on volunteers. Its mandate is to help injured and orphaned wildlife of all kinds and release them back to the wild. All of its funding comes from donations, bequeaths and fundraising events. Throughout the pandemic Sandy Pines has continued to rehabilitate injured wildlife, doing so with limited funds as it had to cancel its 2020 major fundraising events. Amy Bodman

If you wish to donate to Sandy Pines, please send a cheque to Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre at 8749 County Rd 2, Napanee, Ontario K7R 3L1 or make a donation through their website at:

<https://sandypineswildlife.org>

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

SSJI Presents
Monday January 18
7 PM Webinar
Terry Sprague
in conversation with Pamela Stagg



How do we learn about nature?

How do we teach conservation?

Terry Sprague talks to Pamela Stagg about his life as an interpretive naturalist and explains how his experiences can be applied to teaching nature and conservation today.

Terry Sprague is a naturalist who lives in Prince Edward County. His weekly columns on nature appeared in local newspapers fifty years. He has held positions at Glenora Fisheries Research and as an interpretive naturalist at both Sandbanks Provincial Park (8 yrs.) and Quinte Conservation (17 yrs.). He is recipient of the 2002 Pioneer Conservationist Award from Conservation Ontario, the 2004 Richards Education Award from Ontario Nature, and the 2015 Gold Quill Award from the Canadian Community Newspapers Association.

Many people will know **Pamela Stagg** as the host of the popular radio program, *The County, Naturally*. After her career as a writer and internationally-known botanical painter, she chose to use her retirement to teach adults about nature.

Pamela has also given bird identification workshops

and presentations on conservation-related topics across eastern Ontario.

All welcome

Please RSVP to register 613 849 7743

Note: Only one registration is necessary for each computer link

The zoom link will be sent to you one day before the webinar.

Enjoying the County

This female Red-bellied Woodpecker is a daily visitor to a feeder at Big Island. Photo by Terry Sprague



This pair of Bald Eagles continue this winter to visit their nest site occasionally at Cressy where the species nested for the first time this past summer, successfully raising at least one eaglet. Photo by Paul Wallace



Co-leader Amy Bodman reviews the field marks of an Iceland Gull we found at Prince Edward Point Harbour on December 6th during a SJJJ guided walk. Photo by Terry Sprague

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N. Cardinal - S. Smith



Evening Grosbeak S. Smith

Member Sightings:

While we're meeting by zoom for our monthly meetings, we'll be recording members' observations in the Newsletter. Please send notes to Sheila Kuja at sanda.kuja@bell.net for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Brian Durell – Oct. 27/20: We had a Black-throated Blue Warbler at our feeders this morning but I was too slow getting to my camera for a photo.

Henri Garand – Nov. 23/20: Prior to Sunday morning's storm, Fay and I witnessed another grisly scene of predation. Hunters on Muscote Bay may have wounded a duck, which a peregrine falcon captured and brought to ground in our backyard. It then spent 20 minutes tearing feathers and flesh off the corpse and looking up and around after every bite. I later identified the victim as a female lesser scaup. Curiously, its head was left intact until a herring gull flew down to dispose of the remains.

Cecile Yarrow – south-east of Demorestville - November was a great month for the corn field behind us after harvest, it was often full of hundreds of Canada geese, Mallards, one domestic goose and one Northern Pintail and so many Sandhill Cranes, their numbers ranged from 2 to a high of 167. They were way back in the field but we had great views with our scope.

January - we have a Merlin that keeps the birds skittish, but a high number of 42 Mourning Doves, a few days ago. So far 16 species have come to, or near, the feeder.

Amy Bodman, Allen and Sheila Kuja – Dec. 19/20 on the Prince Edward Point Christmas Bird Count discovered a Barred Owl on Roses Crossroad, sitting on top of a 2 m Red Cedar in about 3-4 m from the side of the road, and a few minutes later saw a Northern Shrike hovering above a field, watched it dive to the ground and assume it was successful hunting since it remained in the long grass for quite some time. Later at Cressy, Allen spotted a blue-phase Snow Goose among the hundreds of Canada Geese in the field opposite Prinyer's Cove.

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Tyler Hoar: reporting on the Sandbanks Christmas Bird Count on Dec. 22/20:

New species for the count: Ruddy Duck, Gray Catbird, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Towhee, Pine Siskin, Hoary Redpoll, Red Crossbill, and White-winged Crossbill; bringing the count total after 6 years to 134 species (with 86 species recorded on the 2020 count).

An Iceland Gull was seen on Rotary Beach in Wellington, and was also reported in Terry Sprague's Birding Report for the Quinte Area. If you are interested in birds, please check Terry's naturestuff.org website for weekly updates.

Ontario Nature Youth Summit – held “virtually” on three Saturdays in September

I found the Youth Summit very helpful, especially the lessons about the indigenous peoples. One of my favourite sessions was “Women in the Industry”. I found it very inspiring to hear their stories and how they were able to get where they are today. Thank you for allowing me to have the opportunity to participate in this incredible learning experience.

Mirabelle Barnes

Big Island Marsh
Photo Terry
Sprague



PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

The Biothon at the Nature Conservancy's MapleCross Coastline Reserve

Sheila Kuja

Amy Bodman, Cheryl Anderson, Peter Fuller and I continued our monthly visits until the end of December when we were joined by Joanne Dewey for our final walk on the property for the year. We always tried to maintain our social distancing throughout our walk from Helmer and Babylon Rd. where we met all the way to Lake Ontario and back again to the cars. During the fall most of our observations were of migrating birds, although there were a few Monarchs and other butterflies, as well as some late flying dragonflies and generally a few too many leopard frogs as we made our way to the Lake. In early October, we saw Blue-headed Vireos, Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets, American Robins, Purple Finches, White crowned and white throated Sparrows to name just a few of the typical species moving through the area while numbers of Rusty Blackbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles were observed flying overhead going east (towards Prince Edward Point).

On a cool, crisp Halloween morning, with a thin coating of ice over the puddles along the road, we weren't lucky enough to intercept a hawk migration but did see several Eagles, both Bald and Golden. We did, however, witness a major Robin migration (probably at least 1550 birds), with huge flock after flock passing overhead proceeding

east. That day we heard Black-billed Cuckoos calling early in the morning and saw several Eastern Bluebirds, Evening Grosbeaks, Snow Buntings, a Northern Mockingbird, Cedar Waxwings, American Pipits and even a Brown Creeper. We watched a flock of Pine Siskins foraging seeds from the Evening Primroses behind the rocky shore at the Lake – and a greater Yellow-legs in the water. Most of us were a little later arriving than we should have been but Cheryl was right on time and had the exciting experience of seeing her first Snowy Owl of the season, sitting on a sign where we usually park our cars. It immediately flew, so the rest of us didn't see the owl, which goes to prove that 'the early bird catches the worm' – or at least sees the owl. **Cont'd**



We're watching the Pine Siskins as they are in the shrubs at the edge of the Lake - by Cheryl Anderson.



Yellow Leg in the Lake –
photo by Peter Fuller

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Our November outing was much different because we only saw 27 birds in total! It had rained early in the morning but was just overcast for our walk. We flushed a Ruffed Grouse, saw a Sharp-shin Hawk and then only small flocks of Redpolls, Black-capped Chickadees and Dark-eyed Juncos, otherwise there were only single or a couple of Blue Jays, Crows, Ravens, Goldfinch and a Song Sparrow. In the summer the area had been “crispy” dry but on this occasion there had been a lot of rain during the past week, so, the poor drainage, typical of the south shore, was a factor and we had to make our way trying to avoid deep puddles along Helmer Rd. Coming back from the lake along Petticoat Point Lane proved to be quite a chore for those of us without rubber boots and we had soakers – but it wasn’t too cold and the sun came out which was warm on our backs.

December 29 was brisk and sunny. The rain the day before had either eliminated the snow and left a 1-2 cm layer of ice over the water in the puddles or produced a crust on the remaining 10-15 cm of snow that had fallen on Boxing Day. It was a challenge getting to the property and once we were there it was pretty slim pickings: 8 species and 22 individual birds. Our most exciting bird was an immature Bald Eagle sitting high in a poplar along the shore. He didn’t seem to mind us observing him but when a Raven sounded the alarm, he was off for “greener pastures”. A couple of Golden-crowned Kinglets in the shrubs at the edge of the Black Ash swamp, also near the lake, were our other noteworthy species. Although we didn’t discover as much as we hoped, It was wonderful to be out and enjoying one of the last days of the year doing what we like best – immersing ourselves in nature – especially on the South Shore. Our observations will be sent to Amanda Tracy at Nature Conservancy Canada and will form a basis for our BioBlitz at the property (hopefully!!!!) this June.

Sheila Kuja



Pine Siskin
Photo Cheryl Anderson

Upcoming Events from the South Shore Joint Initiative



As part of the County's Flashback February, SSJI presents the webinar

House Restoration: Philosophy, Principles and Q&A with Edwin Rowse, OAA, FRAIC, CAHP, RIBA Wednesday, February 17, 2021, 7 pm



photo: David Coulson, used with permission of Nature Conservancy Canada

Nestled in the South Shore of Prince Edward County, the unique and historical 1865 Moses Hudgin Log House is situated on the Hudgin-Rose Nature Reserve owned by Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC). The Moses Hudgin Log House Restoration Committee, a sub-committee of the South Shore Joint Initiative, is responsible for the restoration of the House. In 2021, initial restoration of the house will begin, under the direction of architect Edwin Rowse.

Edwin is an internationally renowned restoration architect who lives with his wife and cat in a heritage designated property just north of the South Shore Important Bird and Biodiversity area. Edwin will speak about the philosophy and principles of restoration underlying the work to Hudgin House. He will also take participants questions about how these may apply to their own projects.

To register, please RSVP to: https://www.ssj.ca/sssji_presents_flashback_february

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



**Celebrate the vernal equinox with SSJI on a South Shore Stroll!
Saturday, March 20 (rain date Sunday, March 21)
Charwell Point and Army Reserve Roads
9 am**

We will meet at the corner of Charwell Point Road and Army Reserve Road and stroll to the Lighthall Berm.

Early spring migrants such as Common Grackles and Red-winged Blackbirds should be around. Looking over the berm into the marsh we might spy Tree Swallows swooping for insects. Depending on the temperature we may find early emerging Turtles such as the iconic Blanding's or Painted Turtle. Mourning Cloaks are the one of first butterfly species to emerge.



Mourning Cloak photo: Dale Smith

Strolling at this time of year requires foot wear that is water proof – there will be many puddles, some quite large. Please be prepared.

All welcome

To register please RSVP at https://www.ssji.ca/spring_south_shore_stroll

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Minutes of the PECFN Executive Meeting Prince Edward County Field Naturalists December 1, 2020, 1:00 to 3:10 pm

Present: Amy Bodman, Sandra Dowds, Gerry Jenkison, Sheena Kennedy, Sheila Kuja, Paula Peel, Myrna Wood

1. *Approval of Agenda*

The agenda was approved. Sheila moved; Sheena seconded.

Action

2. *Approval of Minutes*

The minutes of the November 3, 2020, meeting were approved. Myrna moved; Sheila seconded.

3. *Status Reports*

Membership: 60 paid-up members plus four honorary.

Treasurer: Current balance \$6820.51.

4. *Outdoor Programs*

Outings:

May 1, 2021: Amy will confirm Marc Forget's planned walk on Gibson Mountain.

5. *Indoor Programs*

January 26 AGM, followed by Les Stanfield ("History of the South Shore"). Amy and Sheila will follow up.

February 23 Members Mtg – Jeff Bowman on Flying Squirrels.

March 30 Members Mtg – Brees on their Borneo trip.

April 27 Members Mtg – Mark Forget will not present over Zoom and it's doubtful that we'll be back in Bloomfield Town Hall by April. See Possible Future Speakers, below.

May 25 Members Mtg – no speaker yet.

June 29 Members Mtg – members night.

Possible Future Speakers – Judith Jones, phragmites removal project on Manitoulin island; Kat Lucas, Toronto Zoo, species at risk in the Great Lakes (we're on her waiting list; the Zoo hasn't scheduled after March); Joanne Dewey on a topic of her choice; Kari or Mike Burrell, iNaturalist training. Fall 2021: Pamela Staggs; Saw-Whet Owls, either a bird-bander or Paul.

5. *AGM Planning*

Procedure: Myrna proposed a revision to by-law 6.3, allowing our AGM over Zoom, as follows: "6.3 All meetings and elections can be held by electronic means when the Executive finds it necessary."

For voting, we'll count negative instead of positive votes: Naysayers will be asked to hold up a hand. (Quorum = 12 members, i.e., 60x20%) Notices must be sent out 10 days in advance of the AGM; financials, 21 days. We'll ask Bert and Ramesh to certify our financials. Subcommittee to organize AGM: Amy, Myrna, Sheena and Sandra. Myrna will send us the Exec our manual, for clarity/content suggestions.

New Executive Members: Sheena will distribute a new membership list for us to review and suggest new exec members. Roles: Paula agreed to accept the role of "Secretary" and will assemble and store a complete set of PECFN documents, such as minutes, financials, newsletters.

6. *New Business*

Newsletter: Date, end of December. Topics: AGM notice, including by-law revision and financial report (MW/SK); SSJI and PEPTBO announcements (AB); Biothon report (S Kuja); Bird release from Sandy pines (SK); Brief report on PECFN's recent advocacy (PP); Call for new exec members (GJ); Brief report on successes of Zoom members' meetings (GJ).

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Official Plan: We're concerned about imprecise definitions for "major scale" development and "impervious." We'll suggest that the OP use "small scale" development instead; Paula will review the ORM for definitions of "scale"; Myrna will work with Amy and Paula on a definition of "small scale." We may suggest borrowing language from the ORM for defining NCAs and NCLAs.

New process for Council's approval of the OP: Planning will summarize public comments from Have Your (HYS) for Council before presenting a revised OP. Amy will ask the CAO and clerk for the summary via email so we have a chance to comment before Statutory Meeting on December 15.

Irth: Amy thanked Paula and Sheila for their work on the information that went to Planning and Council on PECFN's behalf. It seems that Irth is suggesting that PECFN is spreading misinformation about their project. We will not respond to these unfounded allegations. Sheila will send her critique of the peer-reviewed third-party review of IRTH's EIS to PECSOHL for their use.

QIC Expansion: Gerry will add information from the current OP and from Kari's report to her draft letter and re-circulate it.

7. Reports

Tree the County: Sue reported to Sandra that the Ad Hoc Tree Policy Committee has been absorbed by the Natural Cover Working Group. At the COTW meeting, Council sent the AH Committee's report back to staff to add requests from Ernie Margetson and to evaluate the cost of implementing the report's recommendations. A letter-writing campaign is needed to propel Council in the direction needed.

Ontario Nature: Nothing to report.

PEPtBO: Amy will keep PECFN and PEPtBO informed of each other's news and will attend one PEPtBO meeting a year. Currently, PEPtBO is working on fundraising. Because of Covid-19 restrictions, most events – a source of revenue for PEPtBO – were cancelled this year.

Millennium Trail: Amy has been working on recognition of the 10/20 kph speed limits on PSW sections of the trail and has suggested that the wetlands near #33/east of Bloomfield are part of the Bloomfield creek coastal wetland and be included in the speed-limited areas. A recent Council meeting approved only two of four possible staging areas: Salem Road and Station Road.

SSJI and the Hudgin Log House: SSJI has struck a subcommittee to fundraise for restoration of the Log House. Dick Bird is building a canoe for auction, and fundraising items are available for sale on the SSJI website. A rare copy of a book describing 200 years of the Hudgin House had been given to Ben Rose. Myrna will ask that it be donated to the House's collection of memorabilia and signage for display. SSJI hosted a Zoom presentation on Conservation Reserves on November 30, with Audrey Heagy describing the management plan for the St Williams Reserve. On December 5, SSJI will lead a walk exploring the National Wildlife Area.

Turtle Sign Mapping: County staff are able to install 32 turtle/reptile crossing signs in 2021, representing 16 sites. Gerry and Sheila will determine priority locations.

Native Plant Garden: Nothing to report.

Bioblitz: We think a 2021 June Bioblitz is unlikely, but, as an alternative, Sheila suggested an outing where individuals could use iNaturalist to identify and report species in a personal Bioblitz. iNaturalist training could be provided by Kari or by Mike Burrell in advance, perhaps at our June members meeting.

Next Meeting: January 5, 2021, via Zoom.

Submitted by Gerry Jenkison

December 3, 2020