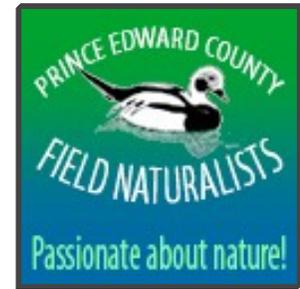


PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



What's Inside?

- p.1
- p.2 Sept. 29, 7pm. ZOOM talk: Terry Sprague: PEC Conservation Areas
- p.3 Oct. 27, 7pm. ZOOM talk : Dr. Warren Mabee: Climate Change and new ways of living
- p.4 Nov. 24, 7pm. ZOOM talk : Tim Johnson : Is Lake Ontario changing for the better or for the worse?
- p.5 Oct.1, 8am sharp. Outing with Terry Sprague: Macaulay Mountain Conservation Area
- p.6 South Shore Conservation Reserve launch
- p.7 - 9 Maple Cross Biothon
- P. 10 Four-leaved Milkweed
- p. 11 Ontario Nature Youth Summit
- p. 11 Neighbourwoods
- p.12 Past Spring Outing to Gull Pond
- p. 13 -16 PECFN minutes



Comet_NEOWISE photo by Ramesh Pooran



Mount Olivet photo by Terry Sprague



Sheila & Allen Kuja with Bloomfield Maple



Monarch caterpillar by Ramesh Pooran



announcement, with (L-R) Peter Kendall, Schad Foundation, Hon. Jeff Yurek (Min./ Environment, Conservation and Parks, Minister Todd Smith, Councillor (and president of SSJI) John Hirsch, Mayor Steve Ferguson
Photo by Ramesh Pooran



Cardinal Babies -photo by Sydney Smith

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Terry Sprague talk – 7pm

September 29 PECFN Members' Meeting –
Via Zoom

The Zoom link will be sent ahead to members a few days before the meeting.

CONSERVATION AREAS - Stepping Into Nature

Enjoy a virtual tour as we visit each of Prince Edward County's 10 conservation areas. Learn about their special attributes, their flora and fauna, and their history. Our speaker has been involved with these conservation areas since 1970.

Terry Sprague is a naturalist who lives on Big Island. His columns on nature have appeared in local newspapers since 1965. 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.



Christmas Fern/Macaulay Mtn.



Monarch Larvae/Ostrander Point

Tussock Moth on Milkweed/Big Island



Photos taken by Terry Sprague on his morning walks with his dog Christie.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

PECFN's speaker for October 27. 7pm
Dr. Warren Mabee
Via Zoom

The Zoom link will be sent ahead to members a few days before the meeting.

Climate Change and New Ways of Living



Climate change will impact all of us to varying extents. This talk will explore some of the likely impacts and some of the ways that we are working to adapt and change our ways of living. In particular, we'll talk about energy use and our shift to renewables, and the different ways in which changing energy might impact our lifestyles. We'll look at policies that Canada has implemented and try to imagine where things might end up.

Warren Mabee is Associate Dean and Director of the School of Policy Studies at Queen's University. He is the Canada Research Chair in Renewable Energy Development and Implementation, with a specialty in bioenergy technology and policy. As the Director of Queen's Institute for Energy and Environmental Policy he has interest in the intersection between energy issues and other aspects of environmental management. Dr. Mabee's research is networked through the International Energy Agency to initiatives around the world.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

PECFN Members' Meeting– **Via Zoom**

Tim Johnson– November 24/ 7pm

The Zoom link will be sent ahead to members a few days before the meeting.

Is Lake Ontario changing and if so for the better or for the worse?



The Great Lakes basin represents the world's largest contiguous freshwater ecosystem, supporting high biodiversity while also serving as a vital hub for the North American economy. Industrial and urban development, pollution, invasive species, and climate change are all contributing to changes in the biological and chemical composition and functioning of the lake ecosystem and ultimately the health and quality of ecological services provided. I will describe some of the recent and on-going biological, chemical and physical changes that are occurring in Lake Ontario related to both human-mediated and natural phenomena. I will provide context for these changes, largely to stimulate thinking and a broader understanding of how the effects of these changes may be viewed favourably, or negatively depending on one's perspective. By better understanding the complex interplay of various stressors and the diverse interests that rely on the lake we can collectively ensure a healthy and sustainable natural resource for future generations.

Industrial and urban development, pollution, invasive species, and climate change are all contributing to changes in the biological and chemical composition and functioning of the lake ecosystem and ultimately the health and quality of ecological services provided.

Tim's research focus is the structure and efficiency of aquatic food webs, including the effects of aquatic invasive species, climate change, and habitat alteration on growth and production of fishes and other aquatic organisms.

Tim Johnson is a Senior Research Scientist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, based at the Glenora Fisheries Station in eastern Lake Ontario. Tim grew up in southern Ontario where he developed a passion for the outdoors and improving our understanding of aquatic ecosystems. He holds a Ph.D. in Zoology with a minor in Limnology and Oceanography from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, in addition to his BSc (Marine Biology – Guelph) and MSc (Biology – York) here in Ontario. Tim's research focus is the structure and efficiency of aquatic food webs, including the effects of aquatic invasive species, climate change, and habitat alteration on growth and production of fishes and other aquatic organisms. Tim has co-authored over 85 peer-reviewed publications largely addressing ecological issues within the Great Lakes basin.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Terry Sprague Outing Thursday Oct 1 8:00 a.m. sharp

Macaulay Mountain Conservation Area with Terry Sprague

Meet at the picnic shelter at Macaulay Mountain Conservation Area, 224 County Rd. 8, Picton

Featuring a steep east-west escarpment rising some 40 metres above the local terrain, Macaulay Mountain is a favourite destination for hikers and picnickers. Our plan is to hike the loop in the lowland section below the steep escarpment. Total distance is 2.8 km although there are shortcuts within that loop that we can take. Hiking effort is easy. If there is interest, we'll visit and talk about Birdhouse City and the Whattams Memorial Walkway. Payment for parking can be made through McKay Pay (\$5). If you do not have the McKay Pay app on your Smartphone, it is possible to park discreetly at the Macaulay House Museum parking lot and follow the Whattam's Walkway the short distance to the Macaulay Mountain picnic shelter where we will be meeting at 8 a.m. Dress for the weather, good footwear advised, bring water and snacks. Some areas that we will pass through may contain ticks.

*****To register please e-mail tsprague@xplornet.com or phone 613-848-4549**



Summer birds in Sydney's garden



Hummer and Smoke Bush - S.Smith

Purple Finch Family - S.Smith

Yellow-rumped Warbler - S.Smith

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Process to create a new Prince Edward County South Shore conservation reserve launches

A South Shore Victory! – Standing next to limestone shelves on the edge of Lake Ontario, Hon. Jeff Yurek, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks announced yesterday that the province is beginning the process to designate Point Petre Provincial Wildlife Area and Ostrander Point Crown Land Block as a new conservation reserve.



Pictured from left to right: Peter Kendall (Executive Director, Schad Foundation), Hon. Todd Smith (MPP Bay of Quinte), Hon. Jeff Yurek (Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks), John Hirsch (President, South Shore Joint Initiative) and Mayor Steve Ferguson (Prince Edward County)

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



Halloween Pennant



Rhusaromatica



Cedar Waxwings
Photos by Peter Fuller

MapleCross Biothon:

..... Sheila Kuja

Although the Bioblitz at the NCC's MapleCross Coastline Reserve had to be cancelled in June, a few of us have made it a point to visit the area each month and keep track of all that we encounter – so we'll have a head start for our Bioblitz in June 2021. (Here's hoping it will be a go this time!!!).

Our first visit was at the end of January when we were completely oblivious to the fact that this would be a very complicated year for us and the world. At that point Cheryl Anderson, Peter Fuller, Amy Bodman and I met at the Home Hardware parking lot in Picton and travelled together in Cheryl's car down to the NCC property south of Helmer Rd.

Unfortunately, our February trip was the last that could be accommodated in this fashion. Cheryl and Amy continued the monthly outing through March and April and in May, Peter and I rejoined them – everyone driving their own cars to the site and maintaining social distancing while we hiked along Helmer Rd. from Babylon, observing part of Ostrander Point Crown Block as we made our way to the MapleCross site, making notes of the flora and fauna along the way.

If you aren't familiar with the property, it is immediately west of the Ostrander Crown Block Land, extending south from Helmer Rd. There is a trail from Helmer Rd. down to the lake about mid-way across the property with a small NCC sign indicating the way. Each month we have been pleasantly surprised by the different plants and animals we came upon following this route to the lake.

During the winter, as expected, we saw Robins, Tree Sparrows, Chickadees, Cedar Waxwings and Ravens but

Cont'd page 8

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

also Snow Buntings and Rough-legged Hawk, as well as a Bald Eagle near the lakeshore. We saw at least two to three Deer each time we were there but have only heard the coyotes, never seen them.

For the three days prior to our February outing we had had severe snow squalls and blowing snow which must have kept wildlife confined. The glistening fresh snow showed a myriad of recent tracks of coyotes and deer moving along the trails and across them; as well as meadow voles and possibly otters; plus squirrels, fox and rabbits. There were even Turkey tracks! It was amazing that there had been so much activity because usually it's just a quiet world except for the birds. All the animals must have been out looking for food and enjoying the chance to stretch their legs! It was a great opportunity to see exactly how much wildlife the area supports.

Among the highlights of our birding in spring and summer were Clay-coloured Sparrow, Black-billed Cuckoo and Black and White Warblers, as well as the usual Towhees, Thrashers, and other birds characteristic of the South Shore.

in the spring we were pleased to see lovely local displays of Wild Geranium, Columbine and Wild Phlox, as well as alvar species such as Early Buttercup, Bluets and Hairy Beard's-tongue in flower.

In June, we were delighted to come across a Blanding's Turtle making its way across Helmer Rd., leaving MapleCross travelling to the wetter area north of the road. Early in the season there were hundreds of Leopard Frogs, but as the drought deepened, we saw fewer and fewer.

In July, even though it was very dry, we saw at least 20 Monarchs, including adults nectaring on Swamp Milkweed and caterpillars feeding on the many Common Milkweed plants scattered in the grassy meadows. Black Swallowtail, both Orange and Clouded Sulphurs, Mourning Cloak, Eyed Brown, Northern and Pearl Crescents, Eastern Tailed-blues, and Viceroy are among the many butterfly species seen over the summer. Numbers of large Dragonflies were noted including Green Darners, Lance-tipped Darners, Black Saddlebags and Painted Skimmers, and the smaller Blue Dashers, Halloween Pennants and White-faced Meadow-hawks.

The property is a combination of wet and dry habitats with open meadows, thickets and forested areas, providing lots of interesting places to explore next year at the BioBlitz, or if you

prefer to visit yourself before that, please stay on the path and report your observations to me at sanda.kuja@bell.net. We've found that parking is easiest near the corner of Helmer and Babylon Rd. It's a bit of a walk back west along Helmer to the NCC property but I'm sure you'll have an enjoyable experience birding, botanizing and looking for insects, amphibians and reptiles as you go. **Cont'd on page 9**



*Blandings turtle
Photo by Peter Fuller*

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

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Sheila Kuja



Monarchs
Photo by Peter Fuller

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PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



Four-leaved
milkweed

Sheila Kuja



Just about everyone is familiar with Common Milkweed because it grows along roadsides and in dry meadows and has been promoted as a food plant of the Monarch Butterfly. Most naturalists know the Swamp Milkweed, which is actually the preferred food plant of the Monarch and is found in wetter ground and has deeper pink/magenta flowers and darker green, narrower leaves. Both naturalists and horticulturists know the Butterfly Milkweed with its bright orange flowers, growing in dry open ground (or now often in gardens). All three of these species were found at the Hudgin-Rose property during the BioBlitz in 2019.

However, few are familiar with the more delicate and smaller Four-leaved Milkweed which grows in drier forested habitats. It is endangered both federally and provincially and Prince Edward County is its last refuge in Canada. Formerly known from the Niagara region, along the rim forests of the Niagara River, and from the Bay of Quinte near Napanee (in the late 1800s), it is indeed now a very rare plant, due to loss of habitat and development. In mid-June a landowner contacted the club, asking if someone might come and check whether the Four-leaved Milkweed was growing on her property. I visited the site and was happy to confirm that she had discovered the rare milkweed. Not very many plants were found but this represents the third population that occurs in The County. One population was found in 2006 by Sean and John Blaney while David Bree found the second in 2007.

Standing only about a foot high with pale green leaves which appear to be in a whorl of four (but are actually two sets of opposite leaves growing close together), and light pink flowers of characteristic milkweed shape (as seen in the photos), look for this plant in Shagbark Hickory-Bur Oak-Red Cedar forests with small openings. There used to be more of this habitat in The County but a little still exists and may harbour this lovely, endangered milkweed. If you happen to come across this type of open forest in your ramblings, please look carefully for this plant, particularly in late June-early July when it is in flower, and take a photo to send to me (sanda.kuja@bell.net) or to the Natural Heritage Information Centre in Peterborough which tracks the locations of rare species in Ontario.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS



Ontario Nature Youth Summit: Sheila Kuja

.....

Every September Ontario Nature organizes a weekend for young people (ages 14-20) across the province to come together at a camp in Orillia to enjoy nature while learning and working together on various topics. This year PECFN was excited and proud to sponsor, Mirabelle Barnes, one of Mary Kay and Bob Morris' granddaughters, who has participated with her sister at several of our BioBlitzes on the South Shore. This year, taking covid-19 into account, the Summit had to be "virtual", so Mirabelle has joined the program on her computer on four Saturday afternoons in August and September. This is the first time the club has sponsored a candidate and we look forward to continuing to do so in the future. In the words of the late Gus Yaki, who helped begin The Nature Conservancy of Canada "unless people learn to love and appreciate the natural world around them, they are not going to stand up to protect it." It's our hope that by involving young people in the Youth Summit, they may become our future "protectors of nature".

Neighbourwoods Covid-19 Hiatus

Gerry Jenkison

While Covid-19 shut our Bloomfield Tree Inventory down this year, we had good results to report from our first two summers (2018/2019). We expect to complete the inventory in one more summer and truly hope that will be in 2021.



In 2018/2019, our 30 volunteers recorded 2200 trees. For each tree, we report on about 30 attributes, including exact location and species, three different measurements of size, and many more of general health and risks.

Manitoba Maples were found to be Bloomfield's most common tree (341), followed by Norway Maple (208), White Spruce (165), and Black Walnut (163). Bloomfield residents wondering what new trees to plant might wish to steer clear of these majority species, to encourage a healthy diversity in the village.

Neighbourwoods determines tree health by attributes such as a reduced crown, dead or broken branches, weak or yellow foliage, cracks and scars, girdling roots, leaning posture, and more. Our volunteers found that over 60% of trees were in good or excellent health, while 20% were in poor health. Reasons might include advanced age, lack of maintenance, or poor location.

If you'd like a more complete report, please don't hesitate to email Gerry.jenkison@icloud.com. Also, I'd love to hear from anyone who'd like to volunteer when we're able to continue our Neighbourwoods project. I can promise you that you'll learn a great deal about trees and will see these magnificent structures in a new light.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Gull Pond outing with Terry Sprague

From L-R:
Tricia Richens, Dale Smith, Jo
Bennet, Cheryl Anderson, Amy
Bodman, Liz Driver.



Hudgin Rose property

The Moses Hudgin Log House and its snake-rail fencing, half-way down Ostrander Point Road and awaiting restoration as a centre for field naturalists. The house, built in 1865, is situated on the Hudgin Rose Nature Reserve owned by Nature Conservancy Canada and upkeep and maintenance is being undertaken by the South Shore Joint Initiative.

Bert Jenkins

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Minutes of the Executive Meeting. Prince Edward County Field Naturalists

September 3, 2020, 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Present: Amy Bodman, Marjorie Cluett, Sandra Dowds, Gerry Jenkison, Sheila Kuja, Paula Peel, Myrna Wood

Regrets: Sheena Kennedy

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved. Sheila moved; Marjorie seconded.

Action

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the August 4, 2020, meeting were approved. Amy moved; Sheila seconded.

3. Status Reports

Membership: Postponed to next meeting.

Treasurer: Postponed to next meeting. SK

Amy thanked Marjorie for her excellent service to PECFN over the two years she has been part of the executive, and for agreeing to continue with publicity. Marjorie, we will miss your presence at meetings.

AB/MC

4. Outdoor Programs

Swift Watch: On Aug 6, 20 Swifts into the Cape; 2 into Books and Co; 2 into the Firehall.

On Aug 13, 27; 3; 5, respectively. On Aug 14, 1; 0; 0. On Aug 15, 1 into Queen St; Aug 17, none. Assumed Swifts have departed. SKuja

Ontario Youth Summit: Michelle Barnes has completed 2 of 4 interactive web casts. SKuja

Adopt an Acre: Postponed until 2021.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Outings: Early Oct, 2020. Terry has offered to lead a walk on the Red Trail at Macaulay Mountain

May 1, 2021. Marc Forget will lead a walk on Gibson Mountain.

5. Indoor Programs

Three speakers will present at fall online meetings via Zoom, using SSJI's Zoom webinar account. See below for topics. Amy will ask Diane Milan to manage Zoom mtgs. Amy will forward speaker bios and announcements to Gerry for Facebook.AB/GJ

Sept 29. Terry Sprague (PEC Conservation Areas):

Oct 27. Dr Warren Mabee (Climate Change, "Are There New Ways of Living?"):

Nov 24. Tim Johnson (Glenora Fisheries, "Is Lake Ontario Changing?"):

2021 Spring Programs: Amy and Sheila will brainstorm ideas for spring meetings. Possibilities mentioned were the Brees and Joanne Dewey.

Marc Forget (Gibson Mountain): Marc does not do Zoom presentations but has offered to make an inperson presentation on Apr 27 (but no later). Marc has offered to write a semi-technical paper on Gibson Mountain over the winter.

6. New Business

AGM: January 26, 2021, over Zoom.

Membership Dues: Members will need to pay by cheque. Amy will amend Sheena's excellent draft letter to members, pointing out the year's planned activities – Zoom presentations, several Spring outings, etc.

Membership fees will be held at \$15 p.a., but we will ask for donations to cover our annual expenses.AB/SK

Newsletter: Sandra will format the newsletter about a week after receiving all contributions:

Sheena – on membership (Amy's amendment); Amy – fall online meetings; Gord Gibbons – APEC fundraiser

to cover remainder of Eric's legal fees for WPD (Amy to ask Gord); Sheila – our sponsorship of Michelle SD/AB/SKuja/GJ

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Barnes in the Ontario Youth Summit; Gerry – Neighbourwoods 2019 results; Amy – 2020 Zoom meetings.

6. Reports

Official Plan: Myrna will consult with John Hirsch on the best way to precipitate adoption of the Draft OP, as we've seen no progress yet. MW

Planning Issues: John is proposing an Interim Control By-law (ICBL) that would adopt the protections given in the Draft OP to Natural Core Areas, Linkages, Woods, etc. The ICBL will also disallow further applications to Planning that affect Natural Core Areas, etc. ICBL would take effect for one year, by which time Council will hopefully have adopted the Draft OP. Currently, subject lands are the Irth and Pebble Beach East rezoning applications to Tourist/Commercial. MW

PEPtBO: Fundraiser Sept 22, presentation and films at the Mustang Drive-in.

Ontario Nature and provincial concerns: Myrna reported that the Fall Eastern Regional Meeting is Oct 3. MW

Millennium Trail: Amy reported locations of Staging Areas are being discussed, and placement of plaques and signs is ongoing. AB

SSJI, the Hudgin House: SSJI has leased the Hudgin House from the NCC, who do not look after buildings.

\$3–5K is needed for work to make the house structurally sound around \$100,000 to complete the house to its target state.

Turtle Sign Mapping: Using the Draft OP, "Schedule B, Natural Features & Areas," Gerry has determined that about 100 "Turtles Crossing" signs could be required where a wetland appears on both sides of specific roads. She will contact Ernie Margetson to describe the project and ask him how best to proceed. GJ

Native Plant Garden: Report postponed.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

Bioblitz: Depending on the pandemic, a bioblitz may be possible in June 2021.

Next Meeting: October 6, 2020, location TDB.

Submitted by Gerry Jenkison. Sept 7, 2020