

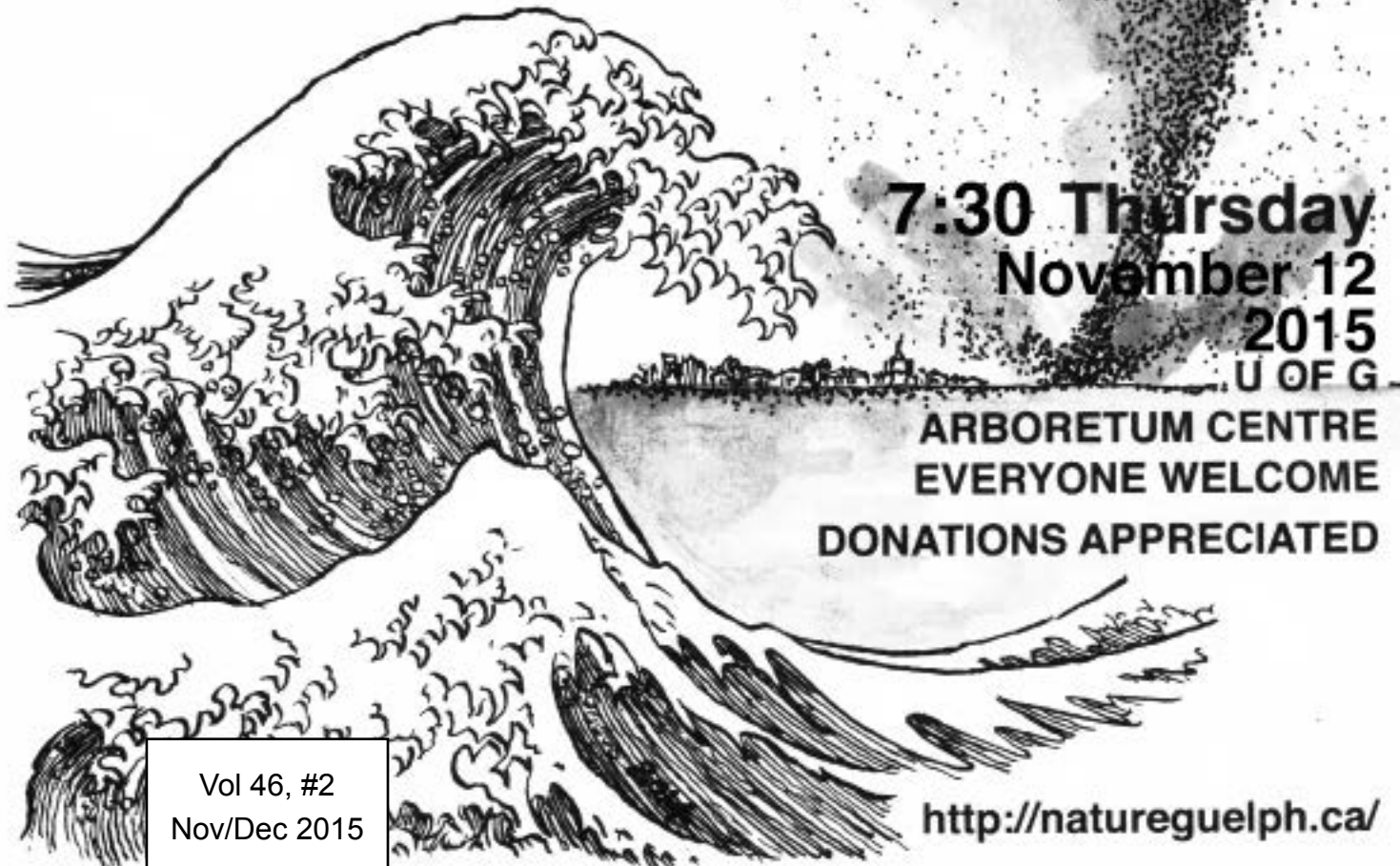


Nature Guelph

invites you to hear

GEORGE KOUROUNIS **EARTH'S** **EXTREMES**

**Documenting
the most extreme
forces of nature**



7:30 Thursday
November 12
2015

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ARBORETUM CENTRE
EVERYONE WELCOME
DONATIONS APPRECIATED

Vol 46, #2
Nov/Dec 2015

<http://natureguelph.ca/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — Jenn Bock

Recently, I had a very dear friend tell me that he HATES winter. Hates the cold, hates the slush, hates the shorter days, but most of all he hates that you can't enjoy the outdoors anymore. It's just no fun.

Personally, I love outdoor winter adventures, but I totally agree that it can be a little tougher to drag myself out of the cozy armchair (complete with blanket and a nice, warm tea) and out into the cold, outdoor winter world. But the truth is, outdoor adventures in the winter can be the most fun of all! All you need is an open mind, the right clothing and gear and a little motivation! So, Nature Guelph, let's bundle up and head on out!! I'm hoping that this list of amazing local or near-local hidden gems will inspire you to lace up your boots, grab your mittens and hit the trails!

Guelph Radial Trail – A great portion of this trail can be accessed via a trailhead on Watson Rd, just south of Stone. The well-defined trail loosely follows the Eramosa River, and includes a lovely lookout point and views of the Arkell Dam.

Speed River Trail – Starting at Riverside Park (a great spot for a picnic!) this trail follows the Speed River across Woodlawn Rd. and comes to an end at Victoria Rd. From here you can cross Victoria and follow the multi-use G.O.R.B.A. trails (Guelph Off Road Bike Association) all the way to the impressive Guelph Lake Dam.

Fletcher Creek/Crieff Bog (Hamilton Conservation) – Heading out of town (On old Hwy 6, just south of the 401) this amazing naturalized quarry boasts nice trails, great interpretive signs, boardwalks and a unique limestone bog-like habitat.

Rattlesnake Point (Conservation Halton) – Heading even further outside of Guelph, Rattlesnake Point in Milton is widely considered to one of the most impressive collections of bold-faced cliff lookout points in southern Ontario. Hidden caves, glacial deposits and year-round group camping only add to its appeal.

Limehouse Conservation Area (Credit Valley Conservation) – This beautiful park located in Halton Hills showcases a variety of Niagara Escarpment landscapes, including an area known as the “Hole in the Wall”, where ladders cut through fissures in the escarpment rock. You can spend the day taking in the rocks, streams, forests and interesting historical remnants of the Lime industry.

With great places like this, both right in town and just a short drive away, it should be easy to round up some friends and family, pack a travel mug and enjoy what this beautiful province has to offer, even (and in some cases, especially) in the winter!!

NEWSLETTER — Sandra MacGregor and Susan Atkinson

The newsletter is published five times a year – every two months except July and August. Please send all contributions for the next issue (Jan/Feb 2016) to [Susan Atkinson](#). The deadline is **Dec 20th**. Thank you to all contributors. Stephen Lewis is our front page artist — thank you Steve. **PERSONAL WANT ADS:** As a service to members we run personal “want” ads or “for sale” ads of a nature theme at no charge. Contact Susan if you have anything to sell or there is something you want to acquire.

INDOOR PROGRAM — Peter Kelly

All meetings begin at 7:30 pm (December and June excepted) on the second Thursday of each month, and are held at the University of Guelph's Arboretum Centre. For confirmation and updates, please visit our website at www.natureguelph.ca. We begin with a brief business meeting, followed by a 10-minute break then the speaker's presentation. **Non-members are very welcome and goodwill donations are gratefully appreciated - suggested contribution is \$2 per person.** We ask that you do not use perfumes out of respect for people who are allergic to them. The entrance to the Arboretum is on College Avenue just west of Victoria Road. For a map see: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum/thingstosee/printmap.shtml>

Thurs, Nov 12: "EARTH'S EXTREME'S" George Kourounis (Adventurer and Television Host)

Toronto based George Kourounis; an explorer, adventurer, television host & storm chaser, often finds himself in places where most others are attempting to evacuate. He specializes in documenting the most extreme forces of nature, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, volcanoes and any other phenomena that Mother Nature has in her arsenal. Supplemented with stunning photographs and video clips, George will be sharing his most extreme adventures and behind the scene mishaps from his countless explorations from around the globe.

Thurs Dec 10th — POTLUCK AND MEMBERS' NIGHT, 6PM. This is the meeting when members can do presentations on any topic related to nature or show us pictures from their recent trips. Please let Peter Kelly (our past president/indoor programs coordinator) know if you have a presentation to make so it can be fit into the schedule. Come for a delicious potluck dinner, and stay for our members' presentations which will begin at about 7:15 pm.

** Please note early start time of 6:00 pm for this event

For the potluck, please bring a dish that corresponds to the first letter of your last name. Each dish should feed about six people. A-H ~ a main dish (casserole, lasagna...) I-P ~ a salad (leafy, bean...) Q-Z ~ a dessert (pie, squares, cake...)

Don't forget a plate, cutlery and a cup and something cool to drink if you wish! The usual coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. If you can't bring food, bring yourself anyway. There will likely be spare dishes available.

THANKS NATURE GUELPH!

Letter to Nature Guelph from Sarah Dykstra, one of the two youths sponsored by Nature Guelph to attend the Biodiversity Conference in September

I am writing to thank you for sponsoring me to go to the 2015 Ontario Nature Environmental Youth Summit that took place from the 25th-27th of September. I had an incredible time and learned very much. I participated in five workshops, including "Passionate About Pollinators", "Making Eco-Art for Community Change", "Medicinal Plants of Ontario", "Spotting Salamanders" and "GMO or OMG?" I also went on a nature hike both mornings, participated in a Action Planning Forum, met many like-minded people and saw two inspiring guest speakers. Thank you for sponsoring me in such an educational, fun and inspirational weekend!

Nature Guelph Membership Now Due

The annual memberships are now overdue. You may renew your membership (if you haven't already done so) online through our website www.natureguelph.ca and click on "Memberships"; by mail to Nature Guelph, Box 1401, Guelph, Ontario, N1H 6N8; or in person at any monthly meeting.

A New Guelph Lake Nature Centre Complex

— Cam Linwood, Development Coordinator, Grand River Conservation Foundation

The Guelph Lake Nature Centre has been a source of excitement and inspiration for more than 600,000 children who have visited the facility. Whether it's a day below the dam, or an afternoon spent playing Predator-Prey, each experience is unique and helps foster memories that will last a lifetime.

After 30 years and so many thousands of visitors though, the current facility is tired and the programs held within it are bursting at the seams. It's time for a new facility.

The Grand River Conservation Foundation and Grand River Conservation Authority have embarked on a campaign to raise funds for a new Guelph Lake Nature Centre Complex. This new facility will be located within the park and the landscape surrounding it will be purpose-built to enhance the many outdoor initiatives the facility will support. Approximately \$1.3-million has been contributed toward the cost of the new \$3-million facility, with construction scheduled to begin during the summer of 2016. But that doesn't mean the site hasn't already been active with new projects to support the centre.

The Operation Pollinator Garden at Guelph Lake, built with funding provided by Syngenta Canada Inc., is a rich and vibrant pollinator habitat featuring wildflower meadows, ponds and nature trails designed with student experiences in mind. In addition, students from Saint James Catholic Secondary School have been on-site, developing a new bird-feeding area that will help bring students even closer to nature.

The current Guelph Lake Nature Centre has been home to the NITs and NATS (Young Naturalists and Naturalists-in-Training) program for many years. This program helped generate support for a \$3,000 pledge from Nature Guelph in 2013. For more updates on the new Guelph Lake Nature Centre Complex, and to find out how you can help support the campaign, please visit www.grcf.ca, check us out on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GrandRiverConservation or contact Cam Linwood at the Grand River Conservation Foundation: clinwood@grandriver.ca.



News from Nature Guelph Wildflower Society

Plant of the Month

Cystopteris bulbifera Bulblet Fern

References say that *Cystopteris bulbifera* usually grows on limestone cliffs and rocks, but it is common in moist low woods in Guelph and can be found in wet swampy areas as well. It was one of the first ferns I learned to recognize: long, narrow fronds lying low to the ground with small bulblets on the undersides. The only fern that reproduces vegetatively, as well as by spores, mature fronds have small bulblets along the stem that drop off to form new plants. There are several species of *Cystopteris* in Ontario and they freely hybridize, so exact identification can be difficult. Bulblet fern is the only one consistently found with bulblets.

As a garden plant, it is very obliging, growing well in part sun-to-full shade, acid-to-alkaline, sandy-to-clay soil. It does require moist soil but even in dry conditions will simply go dormant until moisture returns. Combine it with columbine, sarsaparilla, marsh violet and wood ferns on the floor of a moist woodland garden. Unlike aggressive ostrich fern, bulblet fern grows in well-mannered, loose clumps, spreading slowly to 60cm and up to 30cm high. Propagation, like that of other ferns, requires patience if growing from spores. Clumps can be divided or the bulblets can be planted.

Photo: *USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database / Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions. Vol 1:15*



Guelph Lake Nature Centre
Sunday June 22nd 11am-3pm
Party In The Park
A day of fun with critter shows, games, etc.



Please Visit www.grandriver.ca for information about all GRCA family programs

All about the birds and the bees!



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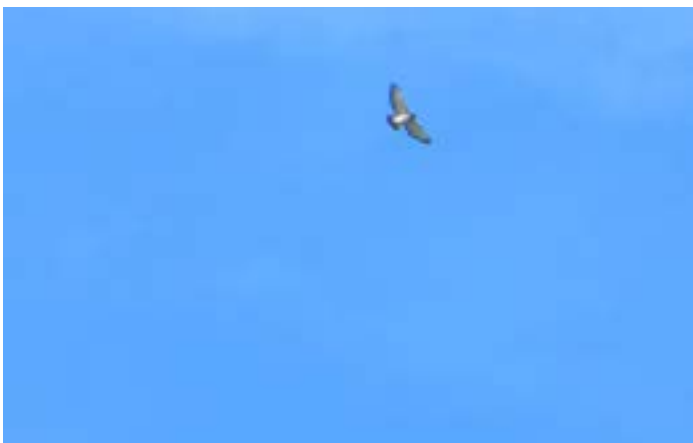


Sounds like a Chipmunk Dance Party (Sept 2015)

“An inspiring moment from this weekend’s bird sit is that almost half of the participants rode their bike to Guelph Lake for a 7:00am meeting time. The bikers (and drivers) were greeted on arrival by a wild turkey on the South side of Conservation Road. There was a cool, light wind and the sun was low in the sky when we started our bird sit on the North shore of Guelph Lake. The water sparkled and we could hear the sound of fish jumping. The dew dripped off of wild grapes leaves and the bugs started to stretch their flying muscles and move around.

As the sun rose higher, we were bathed in warm, golden rays and serenaded by cricket songs. This all seems quite utopian; however, there was unrest in the Animal Kingdom that morning. An aerial predator was on the hunt. A zone of quiet in the Northwest was like an “elephant in the room” during the first 30 minutes of the bird sit. In every other direction, we could hear Chickadees, Goldfinches, Canada geese, Blue Jays, Kinglets, American Robins, Song Sparrows, Cedar Waxwings, Nuthatches, Woodpeckers and American Crows. Some sounds were companion calls and some were alarms. The young Goldfinches were saying “Feed me” to their foraging parents in tall, sandpappy cup plants. Flocks of Jays, Canada geese, and Gulls flew overhead from the East to the West. Some were heading noticeably Southwest.

Broad-winged Hawk Circling



The quiet zone to our Northwest remained unchanged. Suddenly an orchestra of “chuck” calls from our little friends *Tamias striatus* seemed to echo from every direction. It was a surround sound of tribal chipmunk beats, much like a woodland dance party.

Had we read pages 301 and 302 of Mark Elbroch’s *Behaviour of North American Mammals* ahead of time, we may have recognized this sound as an alarm call. According to Elbroch and Rinehart, when chipmunks vocalize “chuck” calls repeatedly, it is an alarm for aerial predators. Within moments, a Cooper’s hawk flew fast from the quiet zone in the Northwest edge of the field to the Pine Forest in the East. John and Spencer had a good look at the accipiter. As we came together at the end, the hawk flew over and everyone had a chance to see it. As we wrapped up the bird sit, we glimpsed two more hawks circling high above. A pair of Broad-winged Hawks climbed a thermal overhead.

The chipmunks didn’t seem to mind these migrating raptors; they had returned to foraging and general chipmunk cuteness. In closing, we walnut likely forget the or-kestral sound of the chipmunk’s alarm for aerial predators:)



Ontario Nature Report

The Ontario Court of Appeal has granted Ontario Nature and Wildlands League leave to appeal a lower court ruling that puts already endangered species at further risk of extinction.

“Biological diversity is a great treasure of our planet with ecological, social, economic, cultural and intrinsic value, yet we are losing plants and animals forever at an alarming rate due to human activities,” says Caroline Schultz, Ontario Nature’s Executive Director. “That’s why the Endangered Species Act was put in place — as an essential safeguard to protect Ontario’s natural heritage for our kids.”

This marks the first time environmental groups have won the right to appeal to the Ontario Court of Appeal on a case about the Endangered Species Act (ESA) or about endangered species.

The appeal, to be argued by lawyers from Ecojustice, challenges the Ontario Divisional Court’s decision to uphold a provincial regulation that exempts major industries from the ESA and allows those industries to kill species at risk and destroy their habitat.

“The Court of Appeal only hears appeals of public importance,” said Lara Tessaro, Ecojustice lawyer. “The Court has signalled that our clients’ legal challenge to this regulation, which deprives endangered species of the law’s

protection, is important to Ontarians.”

When it was introduced in 2007, the ESA was considered the gold standard law for species protection in North America. Recent years, however, have seen Ontario avoid its duties to protect at-risk wildlife.

A regulation made by Cabinet in 2013 exempts major industries — including forestry, mining, energy, and residential development — from the strict protection standards outlined in the ESA. In many instances, these exemptions give industries a free pass to kill endangered or threatened species, and destroy their habitat, as long as this harm is “minimized.”

Species threatened by the regulation include the American Eel, Blanding’s Turtle, Lakeside Daisy, Eastern Hog-nosed Snake, Acadian Flycatcher and the iconic Woodland Caribou.

“We can’t allow the government to turn its back on at risk birds, turtles and mammals just so it can save a few bucks,” said Anna Baggio of CPAWS Wildlands League. “It is up to Ontario to provide a lifeline not an anchor for these species when faced with imminent threats of extinction.”

– **Text taken directly from [Ontario Nature website](#).**

Ontario Nature Report

– by **Mary Ellen Pyear**

The May 2nd meeting of the Great Lakes West Region of Ontario Nature was hosted by the Upper Credit Field Naturalists in Shelburne. Jenn Bock, Peter Kelly, and Mary Ellen Pyear represented Nature Guelph at the meeting. Joan Daynard of the Stratford Field Naturalists stepped down as Regional Director after three terms in office. It is with great pleasure that I report that Peter Kelly, Past President of Nature Guelph, was unanimously elected to take over the position previously held by Joan. Our club and our city will be well represented in the coming years by Peter’s involvement as Regional Director. Several executive members will be attending the upcoming meeting on Saturday, November 7th in Stratford.

Ontario Nature Holiday Cards

On another note, Ontario Nature Holiday Cards and Notes will be available for sale at our upcoming November and December meetings. The hairy woodpecker is the bird featured on this year’s cards.

You can see the photo that will be featured on the cards on the [Ontario Nature website](#).

WILDFLOWER SOCIETY MEETINGS

Indoor Wildflower Society Programs

Meetings are the third Wednesday of the month from September thru May in the basement common area at the Ellington Residences, 168 Metcalfe St. at 7:30 pm. Entrance is via the covered ramp on the north east end of the building.

Wed, November 18, 7:30 pm

Guelph's Urban Forest Plan

Ellington Residences, 168 Metcalfe St, Guelph

Timea Filer from the City of Guelph will discuss the city's Urban Forest Management Plan.

Wed, December 16, 7:30 pm

Members Night

Ellington Residences, 168 Metcalfe St, Guelph

Bring along your presentations, photos or display along with a seasonal snack to share.

TRACKING CLUB MEETINGS

Sunday November 22, 2015

Bird Language Tracking

Meet at the Guelph Lake Nature Centre at 8:00am

Outings will run for approximately 2.5 hours.

Birds are the “alarm system” of the forest, broadcasting the whereabouts of hawks, owls, foxes and more through their calls and postures. During this tracking club outing, we will spend one hour sitting and listening for bird songs and alarms and observing the landscape for signs of mammal activity. Each person will choose their own location to sit so that we can return together at the end of the session to share stories and piece together the patterns of the landscape. We will map out our experiences from a birds-eye view. Beginner birders are welcome! Please bring a small notebook, a waterbottle and your six senses (the 6th sense is your sense of wonder).

Nature Guelph Outdoor Activities – Marnie Benson

Sunday November 15, 2pm, Social hike, Limehouse Conservation Area.

Meet at Conservation Area parking lot, 12169 Fifth Line, Limehouse LOP 1H0. Social gathering tbd.

Sunday November 22 at 11 am.

Come out for a nature walk in the Arboretum with Nature Interpretation student Vestie Soars! This a great opportunity to get outdoors before winter sets in, learn some of the natural history of the Arboretum, and gain some insight on what some of the denizens of the Arboretum are doing to prepare for winter. Meet at the Arboretum sign, pedestrian entrance, off Arboretum Rd

Saturday December 5, 8 am. Gulls on the Niagara River with David Brewer. Meet at Wild Birds Unlimited at 8 am to carpool for a full day adventure of spotting the gems in the gull congregation. Return time approx. 4pm.

Sunday December 20, Annual Christmas Bird Count. This is an all day event that starts early and wraps up around 5pm. More details to follow on the Nature Guelph website

NEARBY NATURALIST CLUBS' MEETINGS

WATERLOO REGION NATURE See www.kwfn.ca

Monday, Nov 23, 7:30pm

Topic to be Decided

HALTON NORTH PEEL NATURE CLUB See www.hnpnc.com

Tuesday Nov 10, 7:30pm,

The Once and Future Great Lakes Country

HAMILTON NATURALIST CLUB See www.hamiltonnature.org

Monday Nov 16, 7pm – 9pm

Flowers for Feathered Friends with Sean James

Monday Dec 14, 7pm – 9pm

Through the Lens: Why Nature Photography? with Kyle Horner

rare See www.raresites.org

Thursday, Nov. 5, 7pm to 8:30pm

What happens to Bees in Winter? led by Erica Shelley

Thurs, Nov 12, 7pm. to 8:30pm

Owl Prowl led by Jason Bracey

YOUNG NITS & NATS ADVENTURES

THE YOUNG NATS WERE CAVING AT ROCKWOOD ON OCTOBER 10TH.

THE NITS WERE CANOEING AT ROCKWOOD ON SEPTEMBER 20TH.



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www.natureguelph.ca



Nature
Guelph

NG CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Thurs Nov 12, 7:30pm Indoor Meeting, Arboretum, “Earth’s Extreme’s” George Kourounis

Wed, Nov 18, 7:30 pm Wildflower Society, Guelph’s Urban Forest Plan, Ellington Residences

Sunday November 15, 2pm, Social hike, Limehouse Conservation Area.

Sunday November 22, 8am Bird Language Tracking, Meet at the Guelph Lake Nature Centre

“The color of springtime is in the flowers, the color of winter is in the imagination.”
Terri Guillemets
