



Nature Guelph

invites you to hear

John Riley

Nature Conservancy of Canada

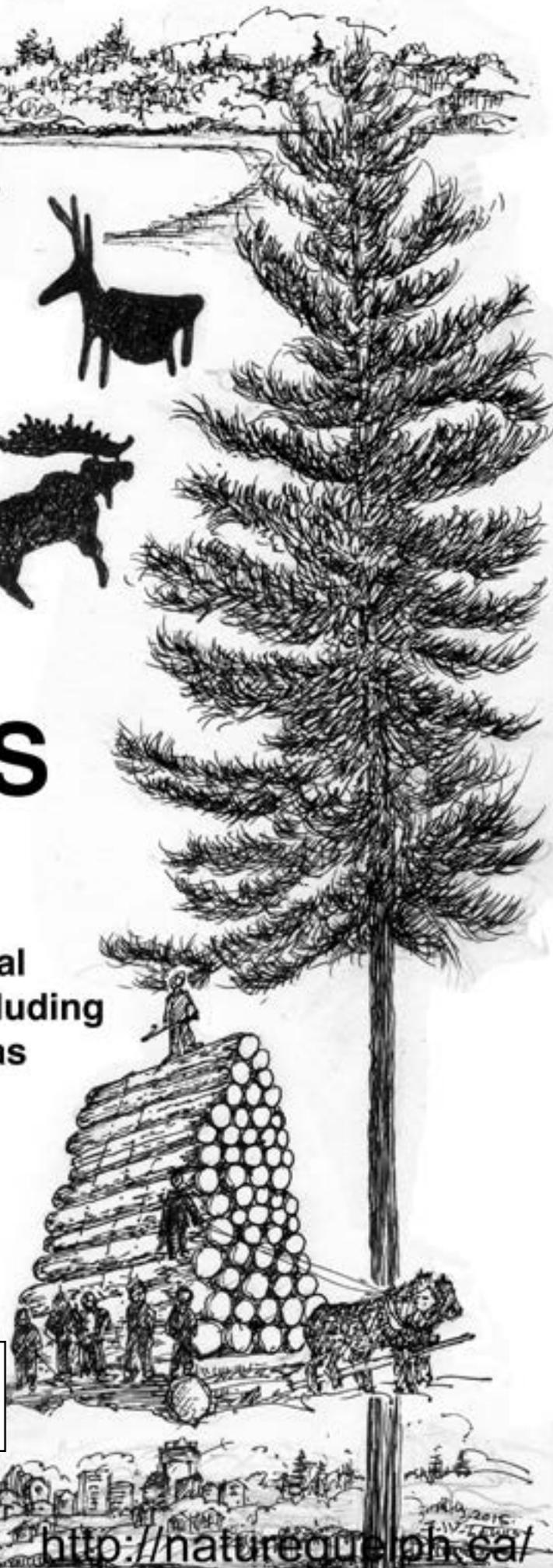
THE ONCE AND FUTURE GREAT LAKES COUNTRY

Scanning the history of environmental change in the Great Lakes basin, including massive declines in flora and fauna as well as recent increases in nature protection and re-wilding.

Thursday, September 10, 2015

Vol 46, #1
Sept/Oct 2015

U OF G
ARBORETUM CENTRE
EVERYONE WELCOME



<http://natureguelph.ca/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — Jenn Bock

The end of another amazing summer...I've been very lucky to have the opportunity to get out to some great natural places this season. My own adventures, combined with the title of our next indoor meeting (*Once and Future Great Lakes Country with John Riley*) has inspired me to think about how fortunate we are to live in a province where we have access to such a wide variety of natural wonders, including those associated with the largest freshwater system on this planet. For the purpose of this article, let's leave the comfort of our own lovely city, and dive into a bit of a "Great Lakes nature checklist".

Lake Ontario At the mouth of the Saint Lawrence River, Wolfe Island (the largest of the Thousand Islands) is home to Big Sandy Bay Management Area. Extensive sand dunes and wetlands allow rare plants and animals to flourish. Moving east you find other important dune-wetland complexes like those in Prince Edward County and at Presqu'île Provincial Park, as well great places for urban nature exploration like the Toronto Islands the Hamilton Harbour and the mouth of the Niagara River at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Lake Erie The southernmost and shallowest of the Great Lakes is known for unpredictable wind and wave action, and impressive lightning storms. Bird watching hot spots like Long Point (the home of Bird Studies Canada), Rondeau Provincial Park and Point Pelee National Park stand out when you look at a map of the Lake Erie shoreline. A quick ferry ride from Kingsville or Leamington will take you to Pelee Island, the southernmost populated part of Canada and home to endangered snakes like the Blue Racer, the Lake Erie Watersnake and the Eastern Foxsnake.

Lake Huron From the southern point near Sarnia, the shoreline of Lake Huron transitions as you move north from the oak savanna at Pinery Provincial Park to the coastal wetlands of MacGregor Point to the iconic, rocky shores of the Bruce Peninsula. The windswept pines of the Georgian Bay shoreline can be experienced from the mainland at places like French River and Killarney or from Islands like Beausoleil (Georgian Bay Islands National Park), Manitoulin or Philip Edward (named one of the best paddling destinations in the province).

Lake Superior This last Ontario Great Lake is the largest in North America, by volume. It's also the coldest, and has relatively low algal production, which make it crystal clear. Though obviously not a quick day trip, it's well worth visiting the Superior shoreline in places like Pukaskwa and Sleeping Giant Provincial Parks. For a real adventure, shuttle or paddle out to Michipicoten Island for a glimpse of a rare southern population of Woodland Caribou!

The Great Lakes— yet another reason to love and appreciate this incredible, natural place that we call home!

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 (Nov/Dec 2015) to [Susan Atkinson](#). The deadline is **October 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>

September 10, 2015: "THE ONCE AND FUTURE GREAT LAKES COUNTRY" John Riley (Nature Conservancy of Canada) John's talk will scan the history of environmental change in the Great Lakes basin, including massive declines in flora and fauna, as well as recent increases in nature protection and re-wilding. His talk will underline the diversity and uniqueness of the Great Lakes country and its many people, from pre-contact to present. The region's emerging city states and their effects on climate and countryside will also be highlighted. John Riley will have paperback copies of his book "The Once and Future Great Lakes Country" for sale for \$25 available at the meeting.

October 8, 2015: "SAVING THE BEES; WHAT THAT MEANS FOR OUR NATIVE SPECIES" Sheila R. Colla, Assistant Professor, York University. In policy and media discussions about pollinator declines, focus has been spent understanding threats to the European Honey Bee. Native pollinators contribute to agricultural crop pollination and help maintain natural ecosystems. Dr. Colla will discuss the status of our native bees in the wild, focusing on the best-known group, the bumble bees. She will discuss threats to declining species and how we can support those on the brink of extinction.

NATURE GUELPH MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 2015-2016

Date _____

New Member or Renewal Update Member's Name (Print)

Fee \$ _____ (Individual \$25, Student (Full time only) \$10) Donation \$ _____ (Tax receipt over \$10.00)

Total \$ _____ Cash Cheque Make cheques payable to: Nature Guelph

Address _____ I require a mailed copy of the News Letter available on website

Contact Phone # _____ e-mail Address _____

I would like to volunteer as: _____

(Required) I authorize Nature Guelph to communicate with me by e-mail YES NO signature _____

Nature Guelph Outdoor Activities – Marnie Benson

Sunday September 27, 3pm.

Social Hike at Little Tract

Join us for a casual hike through this beautiful mature forest and we will retire to a nearby pub afterwards.

Meet at the north entrance parking lot on the south side of Concession Rd 4, west of Sideroad 10 N.

Saturday October 3, Time to be decided

Bio Blitz at Yorklands Green Hub (YGH)

Following up on the first Bio Blitz in 2013, YGH would like to further understand the current ecological status of the lands and waters they hope to transform into a sustainability demonstration centre. Join us to help identify all of the flora and fauna we can find at this key local resource.

Yorklands Green Hub aims to create a self-sustaining education, demonstration and research hub at the former Guelph Correctional Centre to engage citizens to be stewards of our land, food, water, and our overall wellbeing.

Check the website closer to the date for more details. <http://www.yorklandsgreenhub.ca/>

Check the Nature Guelph website for other October hikes too!

Have Your Say on Wetland Conservation

The Ontario government is developing a Strategic Plan for Ontario Wetlands and they want your input. The plan will identify a provincial vision, goals and objectives for wetlands in Ontario and set out a series of actions that the government will undertake over the next 10 to 15 years to improve wetland conservation across the province. Your feedback will identify current challenges and opportunities and help guide future actions. Visit the [Environmental Registry](#) to submit your comments before the October 30th deadline. (Text and information courtesy of [Ontario Nature](#))



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 drink and the bean



Guelph's coffee roasting company. Three locations:
Downtown at 2 Wyndham St.,
the Grange/Victoria Plaza,
south Guelph at 1467 Gordon St.
www.planetbeancoffee.com

We are recognized locally and part of politicians.



News from Nature Guelph Wildflower Society – Judy Brisson

With a tree program for the NGWS meeting and National Forest Week happening Sept 20 to 26, I thought it would be fitting to feature the first tree cut down during the founding of Guelph.

Quercus macrocarpa, also known as Mossycup Oak or Burr Oak would be a perfect urban tree if not for its size. It is tolerant of drought, pollution, high pH soils, poor soils, sandy soils, compacted clay soils and can also survive in acidic soil. And it has no serious pests or diseases. Ah, but the size; the crown grows 25m high and wide with a 150cm circumference trunk. Four of the largest trees found in GUFF's 2008 Great Tree Hunt were Burr Oak, all over 125cm in circumference. This tree will fill your small urban yard or you can share it with several neighbours.

Magnificent in parks or fields, it is a massive spreading tree at maturity with large, fiddle shaped leaves and furrowed bark with corky ridges. In the White Oak family, it has been known to hybridize with others in the wild. Slow growing, Burr Oak is difficult to transplant due to its large tap root. Seedling Burr Oaks commonly have tap roots that are 1.5m deep into the soil by the end of their first growing season. Burr Oak has large acorns (1.5cm long) covered by a mossy cap which inspired the common name. Oak acorns are an important food source for squirrels, mice, rabbits, wood duck, white tailed deer and black bears. White oak acorns were an important food for First Nations, being lower in tannin than the Red Oaks.

The tree has a large range, covering most of central and eastern North America. It was an important tree on the Great Plains due to its tolerance for drought. Today it is used as an ornamental and as a lumber tree.



1. photo by W.D. Brush, hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database
2. photo by W.G. Baxter, hosted by the USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

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TRACKING CLUB — Tamara Anderson

Adventures in Bird Language Tracking (May 2015)



Field Sparrow Singing Photo by A. Schletz (Rotary Forest, May 2015)

FISP can't be right...or can it? Four letter bird-banding codes boggle my mind. This morning's tracking club outing demonstrated the art of naming birds concisely as we tracked bird language from a hill overlooking the Rotary Forest at Guelph Lake. Early morning sunshine and warm winds from the South bathed the landscape as we each sat, observing and listening to bird calls, songs and alarms. The first of four 15 minute time periods commenced with a crow call. This was the busiest time period. Tree swallows chattered overhead, mouths agape, hungrily eating insects on the wing

Bird Language Mapping (Rotary Forest, May 2015)



Field Sparrows (FISPs) announced their territories like the diminishing bounce of a ping pong ball. A Northern Flicker alarmed from the forest edge to the West. Could a bird of prey or a mammal have caused the alarm? We later tracked his flight path over each of our sit spots as we mapped the story from a birds-eye view.

The next three time periods included watching a flock of 29 Blue Jays fly west to east across the top of the hill. A Red-Bellied Woodpecker churred regularly from the forest to the west, announcing his territorial claim. The toads trilled from the pond and Red-Winged Blackbirds perched along the shore. American Goldfinches sang their "potato chip" and "sweet, sweet, sweet" songs. American Robins chuckled.

The sounds were overwhelming at times but also amazing to try to decipher. A coyote call signalled the end of the fourth time period and everyone reunited at the top of the hill. We mapped out the bird language as best as we could, reminding ourselves, like the territorial Savannah Sparrow to "Take, take, take it eas-y" and enjoy the process.

Bird Language Mapping (Rotary Forest, May 2015)



The Tracking Club will continue all year. If you would like to be on the contact list, please email Tamara at frogforest@hotmail.com. Find dates of future Tracking Club activities and follow the discoveries on its blog: <http://natureguelphtracking.wordpress.com/> which can also be found on our website under Programs/Outdoor.

WILDFLOWER SOCIETY MEETINGS

Sunday September 13, 1:30 pm

Outdoor Program, Field and Forest Walk

Drumlin Farm, 4564 Watson Rd S, Puslinch.

We will meet Gerry and Sue at Drumlin Farm to check out the fall blooming flowers in the field and woodlot.

Directions:

Take Arkell Rd from Gordon St to Watson Rd. Turn right onto Watson. Cross Hume and Maltby. Drumlin Farm is about 20 seconds from Maltby, on the left. Follow the lane and meet at the barn.

Tuesday September 15, 7-9pm

All about Trees, The Arboretum, University of Guelph

Details: Hands-on and interactive demonstrations and booths all about trees. Demonstrations include, how and when to prune trees, how to plant a tree, maintenance of trees, trees for wildlife and more. Drop by during the evening for some great information about trees. Something for everyone! Co-sponsored by Nature Guelph Wildflower Society, GUFF and Guelph Healthy Landscapes

Indoor Meetings

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 September 16, 7:30 pm

Annual Plant ID: trees and Shrubs

Bring field guides, magnifying lenses and branches from trees and shrubs for our annual identification workshop.

Wed October 21, 7:30 pm

Nature Guelph Monthly meeting

Program: TBA

Plant Exchange. Leftover plants from the plant sale will be available for the September exchange. Bring along your extra plants or seeds to share at both the September and October indoor meetings.

Ontario Master Naturalist Program Fall Workshops

The inaugural Ontario Master Naturalist Program (OMNP), launched this spring by Lakehead University and Ontario Nature, will offer a series of fall workshops to build on the program's success. These informative sessions are open to everyone and will cover topics ranging from invasive species to mushroom identification and species at risk to field sketching. Please note that the workshops are designed as general interest sessions and are not part of the OMNP certificate program. For more details or to register online, visit the [Ontario Nature](#) website.

NEARBY NATURALIST CLUBS' MEETINGS

WATERLOO REGION NATURE See www.kwfn.ca

Monday, Sept 28 7:30pm

A Year in the Life of a Herper: Reptiles and Amphibians of the Eastern Seaboard, Kyle Horner

HALTON NORTH PEEL NATURE CLUB See www.hnpnc.com

Tuesday Sept 8, 7:30pm,

Costa Rica Sea Turtles, Josh Feltham

HAMILTON NATURALIST CLUB See www.hamiltonnature.org

Monday Sept 21, 7pm – 9pm

Safari and Gorilla Trek in Uganda, The Pearl of Africa with speaker Maggie Sims

rare See www.raresites.org

Wednesday, September 30, 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Knitting in Nature Night. Meet at Lamb's Inn

Sunday, October 4, 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.,

Biobus, Mobile Collection Vehicle, Meet at rare ECO Centre. Join BIO's field vehicle, the BIObus, and learn about the field methods that were employed to collect specimens and the innovative technique that helps identify them - DNA barcoding

DO YOU KNOW A TD EMPLOYEE?

If a TD Volunteer (has to be a TD employee) logs 40+ volunteer hours with a charity, then the charitable organization receives a \$500.00 grant. "Hundreds of grants are available to TD employees and their Canadian charitable organizations. Have your TD Volunteers applied?"

DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIRDSONGS?

<http://warblr.net/>

This is a birdsong recognition app that allows you to use your iPhone to point at a song/sound and it IDs the bird. It is going viral in the UK, but so far UK only. There are similar apps available for North America. Check out **All About Birds** for a review of some of the apps available!

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TRACKING CLUB MEETINGS

Sunday September 20, 2015

Bird Language Tracking

Meet at the Guelph Lake Nature Centre at 7:00am

Sunday October 25, 2015

Bird Language Tracking

Meet at the Guelph Lake Nature Centre at 7:00am

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).

Conservation Authority Act Review Open for Comment

You can have your say on the provincial government’s review of the Conservation Authorities Act. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) has posted a discussion paper to solicit public and multi-sector feedback on the current act, which governs conservation authorities and the programs and services they deliver. This discussion paper outlines a number of ways to engage in the review and MNRF encourages all parties to participate. The deadline for submitting comments is October 19, 2015. (Text and information courtesy of Ontario Nature)

Help Ban VisionMax Spraying in the North

You may want to consider signing a petition calling for a ban on the use of Monsanto’s Vision-Max herbicide in the boreal forest. Forest management companies spray VisionMax and other glyphosate herbicides to curb the growth of plants that compete with trees grown for logging. But this spraying coincides with peak blueberry season, exposing berry pickers and wildlife to potential harm. The International Agency for Research on Cancer recently designated VisionMax as “probably carcinogenic”. To learn more, contact Julee Boan at juleeb@ontarionature.org. (Text and information courtesy of [Ontario Nature](#))

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Nature Guelph

NG CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Thurs, September 10, 7:30pm The Once and Future Great Lakes Country, John Riley, Indoor Meeting, Arboretum.

Sunday September 13, 1:30pm Outdoor Program, Field and Forest Walk, Drumlin Farm, 4564 Watson Rd S, Puslinch.

Sunday September 20, 7:00am, Tracking Club, Bird Language Tracking. Meet at the Guelph Lake Nature Centre

Sunday September 27, 3pm. Social Hike at Little Tract, Meet at the north entrance parking lot on the south side of Concession Rd 4, west of Sideroad 10 N

*“Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.”
~Albert Camus*
