



Nature
Guelph

invites you to hear

Dr. Larry Peterson

University of Guelph

**THE
FASCINATING
BIOLOGY OF
ORCHIDS**

Thursday

7:30 pm

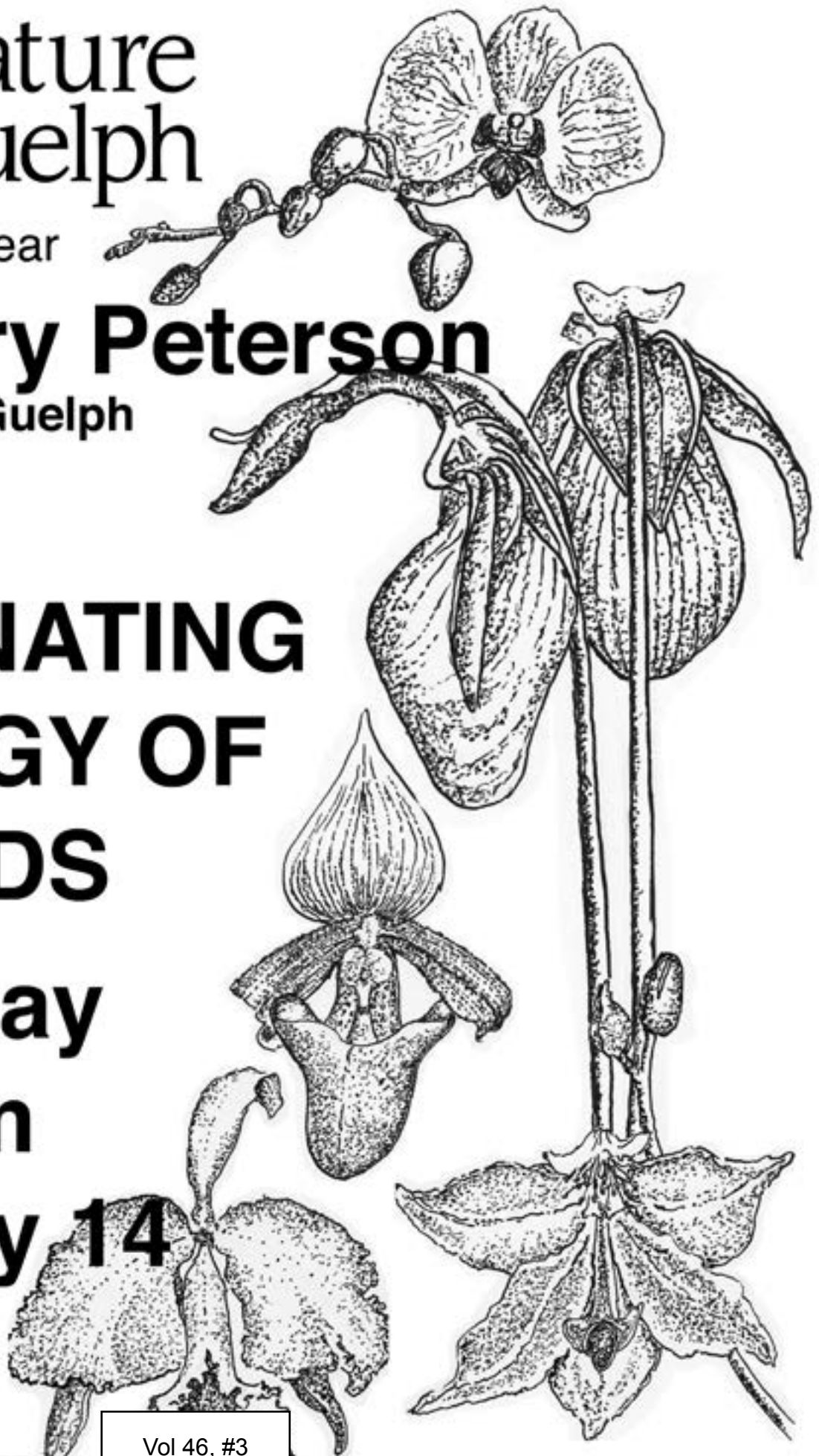
January 14

2016

U OF G
ARBORETUM CENTRE
EVERYONE WELCOME

Vol 46, #3
Jan/Feb 2016

<http://natureguelph.ca/>



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — Jenn Bock

Some of the executive members and I have been talking about our “formal” club objectives, and what they mean to us. They are outlined in our constitution as follows:

- To stimulate interest in and an understanding of natural history among the members of the Club, and the community at large, with particular attention to young people.
- To promote the wise use and conservation of our natural resources.
- To protect and preserve our natural flora and fauna.
- To cooperate with other organizations having similar objectives and ideals.

Those things are all wonderful and incredibly important, but there's so much more to being a member of this club. Here are a few other things that define this group, in my opinion:

The people – I love the feeling of walking into The Arboretum Centre and seeing so many smiling, happy faces. You may not know every person in the room very well, but everybody says hello and makes you feel welcome. And if you're so inclined and you take the time, every person in the club has an interesting story to share. I've made many life-long friends, and I look forward to future connections with other like-minded nature lovers!

The places – I've been in Guelph for quite a while now – I completed my undergrad at the U of G and never left – and there are still tons of cool places in and around this city that I don't know about. It's easy to say that you'll get out and explore, but attending club hikes and events has given me that push I need to get out to so many neat spots! Places like Marden Tract, Torrance Creek, Arkell Dam, Crieff Bog and Yorkands just to name a few!

The issues – I really enjoy learning about the important conservation/development issues taking place right here in our city. Our Conservation Committee Chair sits in on city council meetings and relays the information back to the executive. I like knowing about upcoming/ongoing development projects, and hearing about the environmental implications and considerations. At this time, our Conservation Committee Chair is also the Chair of the Environmental Advisory Committee for the city – a group that works as a “watchdog”, submitting formal comments and reminding the city staff and developers about environmental regulations they must consider. In the new year, we're planning to come up with a way to make this information available to all club members!

I could go on and on about the things I love about this club, but there's only so much room in this newsletter! For now, I'll just wrap this up and say that I really appreciate everything that Nature Guelph means to me! Thanks for being part of the amazing experience!

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 (March/April 2016) to [Susan Atkinson](#). The deadline is **Feb 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, Jan 14: "THE FASCINATING BIOLOGY OF ORCHIDS" Dr. Larry Peterson (Dept. of Integrative Biology, University of Guelph) There are over 800 genera and 25,000 species in the Orchidaceae. Dr. Larry Peterson will discuss features of orchid biology that have led to rapid speciation in the family. Topics will include pollination mechanisms, associations with beneficial fungi, adaptations to a wide range of terrestrial habitats, and the success of this group as epiphytes. The amazing diversity in floral forms has led to a multi-million dollar horticultural industry but has also resulted in many orchid species being poached from the wild. Because of this and the destruction of habitats, over 300 species are listed as endangered or threatened.

Thurs, Feb 11th: "IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE GROUP OF SEVEN" Jim and Sue Waddington Sue and Jim Waddington have been on a quest to locate the places that inspired the Group of Seven painters. They particularly like to search for sites that can only be reached by canoe and on foot. The talk will compare photographs of some of the 500 painting sites they have found with the corresponding artwork. They will discuss how they find the painting sites and what they have learned about the painters. In their talks, Sue and Jim show their photographs alongside art from the beautiful La Cloche hills of Killarney Provincial Park, from Bon Echo Provincial Park, the Georgian Bay islands, the Yukon and Nunavut.

Bucket Raffle

We will be holding our annual raffle at the meeting (before the speaker) on **Thursday, February 11**. Please bring any nature-related items you wish to donate (new or gently used). All funds raised go towards supporting Nature Guelph. Don't forget to bring cash to bid on items you like! You could be a winner!

Ontario Nature Report – by Mary Ellen Pyear

On Saturday, November 7th the Great Lakes West region of Ontario Nature met in Stratford. Peter Kelly and I represented Nature Guelph at the meeting. It was announced that next year's AGM for ON members would take place at the Evergreen Resort at Red Bay on the Bruce Peninsula over the weekend of June 3-5, 2016—so mark those dates in your calendar! On the agenda at the AGM would be hikes to Petrel Point Nature Reserve and other places of interest on the Bruce Peninsula.

ON continues to promote their nature reserves with events held at Willoughby near Caledon on Aug. 22, Cawthra Mulock near Newmarket on Aug. 29, and Reilly Bird Fringe Foray near Deep River on Oct. 3— and with more outings planned at nature reserves next year. A new ON project is the vernal pool mapping atlas, which will be done with conservation as the priority at the reserves across the province.

ON supports the ban on the spraying of Vision Max (a very strong version of Roundup) in northern Ontario. The MNR has allowed local logging companies to spray this herbicide to target trees in areas that they do not wish to harvest—a type of monoculture. ON believes that the spraying of Vision Max will have a profound effect on the wild blueberry crop and will be detrimental to both humans and wildlife in the area.

ON was ruled against in January 2015 on the Endangered Species Act lawsuit, which it had entered with two other organizations. However, it was recently granted an appeal, which is a first in ON's history. ON is also supporting the ban on the Spring Bear Hunt which was recently opened to non-residents of the province. The organization is not opposed to "fair chase" but they do oppose "bear baiting" practices.

Nature Guelph Annual Financial Statement

Income Nature Guelph 2014-2015 (July 31st 2014-June 30th, 2015)

INCOME	YTD 2014-	YTD	Comment
Category	2015	2013-2014	
Membership (and donations)	4250.19	4482	Membership (and donations)
Donations (at meeting)	275.8	292	
Advertising	300	300	
NATS and NITS	3148.36	2700	
Grants	-		
Fundraising	663.35	1657	Bucket raffle, Bird Studies Canada, etc
Reimder Westerhoff Education Fund	48.05	-	
Total	8685.75	9431	
Investment income	175.39	211	ING Direct: Moved \$24,258.04 to TD Business Acct Apr 27 2015
Total Income	8861.14	9642	

Expenses Nature Guelph 2014-2015 (July 31st 2014-June 30th, 2015)

EXPENSES	YTD 2014-	YTD	Comment
Category	2015	2013-2014	
Admin	710.68	637	PO Box; photocopying; new display cabinet, cheque books
Newsletter	605.14	457	
NATS and NITS	3108.56	2953	Owe for Winter 2015
Indoor program speakers, etc	1410.58	706	Speaker honoraria; new digital projector
Arboretum rent	935.6	1979	Arrears 2013-2014
Outdoor program	196.33	94	Picnic, Nature in the City
Ontario Nature membership, insurance	1055.24	1017	Insurance major cost
Publicity	393.25	24	Nature in the City "CN bridge sign" largest expense (don't repeat)
Miscellaneous	124.30	113.50	Ontario Nature Christmas cards
Westerhoff Fund	600	600	Ontario Nature Youth Camp
Total	9139.68	9852	

Financial Statement Nature Guelph 2014-2015 (July 31st 2014-June 30th, 2015)

Category	2014-2015	2013-2014	Comment
TD Bank- Chequing Account			
Balance forward	6496.53	9883	July 1 st , 2014
+Total income	8685.75	9512	
-Total expenses	9139.68	10093	
Transfer to petty cash	-	56	
Transfer to ING account	-	2750	
TD Bank-Chequing account-Balance	6042.6	6496	June 30 th 2015
ING Investment Account	Land acquisition and stewardship; not operational expenses		
Balance forward	24082.65	21081	
Transfer from TD account	-	2750	
Interest	175.39	211	ING interest
TD Business Account	24258.04	24042	
Petty cash	63.45	56	Membership; Treasurer
Total Assets	30364.09	30865	

Nature Guelph is Fundraising to Make Arboretum's Windows "Bird Friendly"

At the May 2015 talk to our club by Paloma Plant from the [Fatal Light Awareness Program](#) (FLAP), Paloma challenged us to do something about the periodic bird strikes on the large glass windows at the Arboretum. Although it is difficult to give exact numbers due to scavengers carrying off dead and injured birds, Chris Earley told us that he has witnessed strikes by a variety of birds, including a mourning dove, a hermit thrush, a black-throated blue warbler, a white-throated sparrow, belted kingfishers (at least two), an American robin, an American goldfinch, a cedar waxwing, a ruby-throated hummingbird, and a downy woodpecker.

Gordon Aitken took up the challenge and met with the Arboretum staff (including Chris Earley, as well as Michael Mesure, FLAP's Executive Director). They highlighted 10 large windows hazardous to flying birds. The windows need to be treated to allow the birds to discern the difference between greenery reflected by glass and the glass barrier itself. The challenge is to find a compromise that deters birds while retaining much of the aesthetics of the building. All those wedding photos!

The best solution is to coat the outside of the glass with opaque vinyl dots. The [FeatherFriendly](#) technology is a 3M product that features small dots in a 2 x 2 inch pattern that is transferred to the windows from a film rather like scotch tape. It's similar to a kids' tattoo "transfer".

Nature Guelph has obtained an agreement from the Arboretum for us to donate the cost of covering the 10 large plate glass windows with this aesthetic window covering. The Arboretum would in turn act as a local demonstration site and promoter of this technology. They will also help promote discussions in Guelph about how to stop the lethal impact of birds and windows. Glass kills between 100 million and a billion migrating birds annually in North America.

We have a quote for the professional installation of the dots on the 10 large windows from the Convenience Group for \$6,100 plus HST. The Executive has agreed to donate \$1000 of club funds, and we will start fundraising for the rest. We hope to install it in May 2016.

Please help us to fundraise for this initiative. Cheques sent to Nature Guelph are eligible for receipts for income tax purposes; donations can also be made via our Nature Guelph charitable donation site at [Canada Helps](#). For more information or to offer help, talk to Gordon Aitken (gaaitken@rogers.com) or John Prescott (jprescot@execulink.com).

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, January 20, 7:30 pm

Native Plants for Birds: Richard from Wild Birds Unlimited will discuss how to attract birds to your garden, including native plants that provide food.

Wed, February 17, 7:30 pm

Old Growth Cliff Forests: Peter Kelly will discuss the ancient forests found on cliffs.

Can Geese Cause Wake Hunting? (November 2015)

It was still dark when everyone arrived at the shore of Guelph Lake on October 25th. Anticipation hung in the cool, autumn air. What will the birds be up to this morning? As the sun rose in the eastern sky, we each set out to find a location to sit and observe the language of the birds.

At the beginning of the 7:00am sit, the wind picked up and crows called from the farm fields in the northwest. Were they preparing for a morning meeting? As the wind calmed, a small flock of dark-eyed juncos flew into the cedar trees near the nature centre bird feeder. A red squirrel alarmed from a walnut tree close by and then proceeded to eat his nutty breakfast. The events that followed proved rather interesting.

A mourning dove flew north from the lake edge to the bird feeding area. Shortly after, a noisy flock of Canada Geese took off from the water and flew westward. A silhouetted shape emerged from the shoreline and flew directly overhead, following the path of the mourning dove. Ann identified it as a Cooper's hawk. I watched the accipiter silhouette fly just behind me; its wings had narrowed and were tucked in close to its body. I was amazed how its flight pattern and shape matched that of a large mourning dove. Who would have thought that Cooper's hawks can be shape-shifting ninjas?

I read in Jon Young's book *What the Robin Knows*, that hawks and other animals have an energy-saving strategy called wake hunting. Wake hunting occurs when a predator takes advantage of a disturbance in the landscape. For example, in the summer as I mow the lawn, numerous bugs fly up from their hiding places in the grasses. The barn swallows seize this opportunity to dive in and feast on a buffet that has been agitated by the machine's wake. At the bird sit on Sunday, we wondered if the Cooper's hawk had used the noisy wake of Canada geese leaving the lake in its attempt to hunt the mourning dove. In addition to the birds, we were entertained by a muskrat at the base of the lake. The muskrat surfaced three times and always swam towards the west. Were there three muskrats? Was the muskrat stuck in a time warp? As often happens, the bird sit ended with a few answers and more questions. The natural world is fascinating!



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.

Nature Guelph Outdoor Activities – Marnie Benson

January 17, 2pm, Social Hike, Scotsdale Farm.

Join us for a casual hike to explore the heritage buildings, forests, wetlands, and First Nations archeological sites of this interesting site about 30 km east of Guelph. Meet in the parking lot at the old Legion (now “AirU Guelph”) at 919 York Rd to carpool.

Feb 14, 1pm, Social Hike/Ski/Snowshoe, Hilton Falls.

Let’s explore some of this conservation area’s 33.5 km of trails. The trails cover a range of habitats, visiting parts of the Bruce Trail and relics of an old sawmill at the falls. If snow conditions are good we can ski or snowshoe so bring them if you have them. Meet in the parking lot at the old Legion (now “AirU Guelph”) at 919 York Rd to carpool.

Check the website for upcoming winter trips to search for snowy owls and other winter birds, tour the Butterfly Conservatory, and explore Bruce Trail icy waterfalls.

YOUNG NITS & NATS ADVENTURES – Marilyn Swaby

On November 21, Sheldon (one of our Nats), his mother, Emmanuelle Drewitt, who is a Geology Professor at the U of G and her student assistant Tara prepared a whole morning on rocks and minerals. We learned how to identify igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary rocks and how they are formed. Thanks to all three of them, we certainly had fun learning!



Guelph Lake Nature Centre

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News from Nature Guelph Wildflower Society–Judy Brisson

Plant of the Month

Paw Paw *Asimina triloba*

Asimina triloba is the only temperate zone member of a large tropical family that includes the soursop, custard apple and cherimoya. I first encountered Paw Paw on a hot August afternoon at a conservation reserve in Ohio where, along with Spice bush, they formed the understory of a riparian woodland. The large spreading leaves, nearby stream, humid heat and buzzing mosquitoes made me think I was hiking in a tropical rainforest far removed from Cleveland. I have planted two in my woodland garden and hope one day to harvest the fruit.

When ripe, the fruit is very fragrant with a texture like custard and a distinct tropical taste. I was given about a dozen Guelph grown Paw Paw fruits several years ago and shared the fruits with friends and relations (on condition of returning the seeds); reactions were mixed. I think it would be best used instead of banana in a cake or sweet bread recipe. The seeds are numerous and large, covered with a slimy coating and time consuming to clean from the flesh. The seeds from those fruit were used for seed workshop that year and participants grew a number of trees.

Paw Paw has a spotty distribution throughout the Carolinian zone in Ontario and is thought to have been spread by the aboriginal peoples. It grows on a variety of soils from sand to clay, in sun or shade, requiring more moisture on sandy soils and in sun. It is a small tree under 10m high with large leaves up to 20cm long and yellow fall colour. It spreads slowly by suckers which limits its use as an ornamental. Blooming in May with dark maroon flowers, it is insect pollinated and two individuals are needed for fruit set. Fruits are yellow green, 5-10 cm long, kidney shaped bananas, ripening in late September. The fruits are eaten by racoons, squirrels and opossum, while the leaves are a larval food for the rare zebra swallowtail butterfly.

Propagation is by seed or cuttings. Seeds need 90 days of cold, moist stratification with low germination rates and very slow germination. Researchers at Purdue University are investigating a compound found in the fruit and leaves as a medication for fighting cancer. Although not commonly available in nurseries, there are some researchers in the US working on improving varieties for commercial fruit production.

Photo Credits: Zebra Swallowtail Caterpillar: By Robert Barber via Wikimedia Commons

Paw Paw Fruit: Scott Bauer, USDA



NEARBY NATURALIST CLUBS' MEETINGS

WATERLOO REGION NATURE See www.kwfn.ca

Monday, January 25, 7:30pm

Wildflower Walkabout in Southwestern Australia by Anne & Alan Morgan

Knox Presbyterian Church, 50 Erb Street West, Waterloo, Ontario

Note: This is the new location for WRN/KWFN meetings

Monday, February 22, 7:30pm

Ontario's True North by Mike Burrell

HALTON NORTH PEEL NATURE CLUB See www.hnpnc.com

Tuesday, January 12, 7:30pm,

Dr. Kevin Kerr: The Role of the Modern Zoo in Conservation

Tuesday, February 9, 7:30pm

Dr. Hamish Duthie: Wildlife Photography in Central America: Birds

HAMILTON NATURALIST CLUB See www.hamiltonnature.org

Monday January 11, 7pm – 9pm

Jonathan Bastien. Review of Floodplain Mapping (FPM) at the Hamilton Conservation Authority
Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd West, Burlington.

Monday February 8, 7pm – 9pm

Van Waffle. Fungi: the hidden kingdom

rare See www.raresites.org

Sunday, January 24: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Tracking animals in winter. Meet at rare ECO Centre (Slit Barn)

Cost \$8, register in advance

Sunday, January 30, 2016: 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Seed swap at rare: National Seed Swap Day

Meet at rare ECO Centre (Resource House)

No charge, but register in advance.

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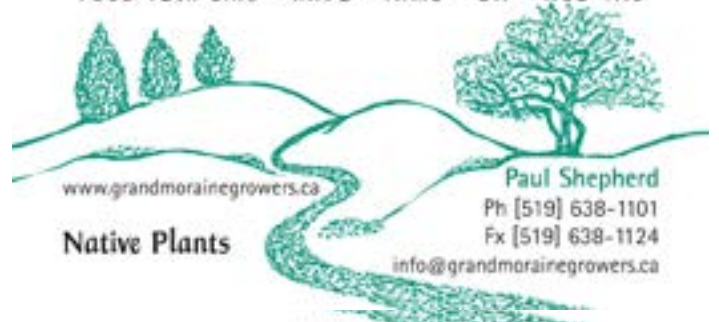
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Nature
Guelph

NG CALENDAR – UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Thurs January 14, 7:30pm Indoor Meeting, Arboretum, “The Fascinating Biology of Orchids” Dr. Larry Peterson
January 17, 2pm, Social Hike, Scotsdale Farm. Meet in the parking lot at the old Legion (now “AirU Guelph”) at 919 York Rd to carpool.

Wed, January 20, 7:30pm Ellington Residences, Native Plants for Birds: Richard from Wild Birds Unlimited will discuss how to attract birds to your garden, including native plants that provide food.

Thurs February 11, 7:30pm Indoor Meeting and Bucket Raffle, Arboretum, “In the Footsteps of the Group of Seven” Jim and Sue Waddington

“It is the life of the crystal, the architect of the flake, the fire of the frost, the soul of the sunbeam. This crisp winter air is full of it.”

--John Burroughs
