

# Nature Guelph News

November/December 2016

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# The Next 50 Years

By Jenn Bock, President, Nature Guelph

In the wake of an extremely successful 50th Anniversary party – *thanks again to all those who helped make it happen!* – I would imagine that like me, many of you are left thinking about what the next 50 years will look like. Here are some of the short and long-term goals that I'd love to see this fantastic club work toward.

## More members

It wouldn't be much of a challenge to make it to 200 active members. We all know people who could benefit from being a part of this club, so let's try to bring them out. A larger membership means more energy, more great ideas and more nature education. Let's make it happen!

## More community outreach

Another no-brainer would be to continue expanding educational opportunities in the community (outside of just our membership group). I would love to see our Nature in the City workshop series continue to grow, and in the future we should consider hosting an annual "Guelph Nature Festival" with hikes, speakers, etc.

## More "on the ground" conservation projects

It would be great to see this club participate in more community initiatives like The Arboretum Bird Friendly Windows and citizen science projects like Christmas Bird Counts. Let's work together to tackle a few great projects in our community each year! What should we do next?

## More youth involvement

We've been doing such a great job engaging young people. Our NATs & NITs programs are top notch (as always) and the Youth Community Liaison on our executive has been doing a great job reaching out to the University of Guelph student community. We have more young people attending meetings and more student members than ever before! Let's think of more ways that we can engage with young people in our community.

On that note, we would like to extend a BIG THANK YOU to Jessica Tartaglia, our Youth Community Liaison. Jessica has been instrumental in helping us reach out to U of G students over the last few years, but she will be graduating from the U of G soon. Jess – we wish you all the very best!

We would love to hear your ideas about how you think this club can continue to grow and improve as we move forward. Looking back, we know that we have some pretty big shoes to fill... but with a group like this it seems like the sky is the limit.

HERE'S TO THE NEXT 50! ●



## Guelph Christmas Bird Count 2016

Sunday, December 18, 2016

Every December, people all over the world participate in a citizen science project called the Christmas Bird Count (CBC). The Guelph count takes place in a 24 km diameter circle around the city, and is divided into sections. Birders go out in teams within their section to identify and count as many birds as possible in a single day, and the results are compiled at a "tally rally" at the end of the day. The data is an important contribution to knowledge of wintering bird populations and how they are changing over time.

You can find more information on the CBC on Bird Studies Canada's website at [www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/cbc/index.jsp?targetpg=cbcparticipate&lang=EN](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/cbc/index.jsp?targetpg=cbcparticipate&lang=EN)

People of all levels of experience are welcome to participate. The CBC is a great way to participate in avian science and learn a little about the birds that spend their winters here!

*The CBC section of Nature Guelph's website at [www.natureguelph.ca/programs/guelph-christmas-bird-count/](http://www.natureguelph.ca/programs/guelph-christmas-bird-count/) will be updated prior to December 1 to include contact information for the 2016 section leaders. If you are interested in joining a specific team, contact the leader of that section. If you'd like to participate but don't have a specific team in mind, contact the count coordinator Mike Cadman at [Mike.Cadman@Canada.ca](mailto:Mike.Cadman@Canada.ca).*



# Ontario Nature Report

By Mary Ellen Pyear

Ontario Nature's 85th anniversary year is slowly coming to a close. Since its founding in 1931 (then called the Federation of Ontario Naturalists) ON has advocated for issues and programs such as Boreal, Greenway, Endangered Species, Nature Guardians, Nature Reserves, and Citizen Science across the province. The 12-member Board of Directors of ON is headed by President Kevin Thomason of the Kitchener-Waterloo area. Executive Director Caroline Schultz heads the organization which is comprised of over 150 groups, approximately 30,000 individuals, and a staff of about two dozen full and/or part-time staff at their office in Toronto.

ON's 85th Annual Gathering called *The Bruce Beckons* was held at the Evergreen Resort over the weekend of June 3rd to 5th, 2016 and was a sold-out event. The Friday night opener, the Great Ontario Natural History Quiz, allowed people to form teams and identify nature related items. The group comprised of Nature Guelph and Waterloo Region Nature won the event and each team member received a small prize. Following an early Saturday morning birding outing, a special presentation titled *Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights: A Toolkit for Change* was led by Ellen Schwartzel, Deputy Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, which highlighted topics such as protecting and funding natural heritage lands, species at risk, bird collisions with buildings, and barriers to fish movements. Late Saturday afternoon, the AGM was held

and nine Conservation Awards were announced and presented to winners. The Saturday evening Banquet was followed by the Keynote Presentation by Dr. Laurence Packer, York University whose talk was titled *The Importance of Bees: Ecology, Behaviour and Conservation*. Following are the workshops and field trips scheduled concurrently on Saturday (morning and afternoon) and Sunday:

## WORKSHOPS

Red Bay's Forests and Wildflowers  
*Erin Mallon, Ontario Nature*

Herpetofauna of the South Bruce Peninsula  
*Tricia Stinnissen, Parks Canada*

Hunters, Fishers & Trappers: Getting to Know Ontario Spiders  
*Dan Schneider, Nature Educator, Grand River Conservation Authority*

Introduction to Visual Astronomy  
*Ian Wheelband, Royal Astronomical Society of Ontario*

The Rise and Fall of Lake Iroquois  
*Mark Stabb, Nature Conservancy of Canada*

## FIELD TRIPS

Gulls & Herons: Red Bay String Island Pontoon Boat Tour  
*Debbie & Mike Bennett, Evergreen Resort*

Massassauga Rattlesnakes of Bruce Alvar Nature Reserve  
*Erin Mallon, Ontario Nature and Tricia Stinnissen, Parks Canada*

Malcolm Bluff Shores Nature Reserve  
*Adam Brylowski, Bruce Trail Conservancy*

Singing Sands Beach Interpretive Tour  
*Dr. Scott Parker, Parks Canada*

The Wildflowers of Petrel Point Nature Reserve and Oliphant Fen  
*Walter Muma, Naturalist and Lisa Richardson, Ontario Nature*

Sustainable Farming in Bruce County  
*Keith Reid, Grey-Bruce Alternate Land Use Services (ALUS)*

Nature Guelph members enjoyed attending the workshops and the field trips where they explored and encountered many amazing nature experiences offered on the Bruce Peninsula. The highlight of the weekend for the Guelph contingent was the pontoon boat ride to the Red Bay String Islands to see the nesting areas of gulls, herons, egrets and bald eagles. In fact, the entire weekend allowed participants to share stories, learn from each other, indulge in beautiful photography, and enjoy the superb home cooked food offered by the owners and staff of Evergreen Resort. Planning is already underway for next year's Ontario Nature's Annual Gathering and AGM to be held over the weekend of June 2nd to 4th, 2017 at the Kempenfelt Centre on Lake Simcoe at Innisfil near Barrie. Now is the time to mark the date for next year's event on your calendars! ●

Subscribe to Ontario Nature's **FREE Nature Network News!**  
[www.ontarionature.org/discover/member\\_groups/nature\\_network\\_news.php](http://www.ontarionature.org/discover/member_groups/nature_network_news.php)

**All about the birds and the bees!**

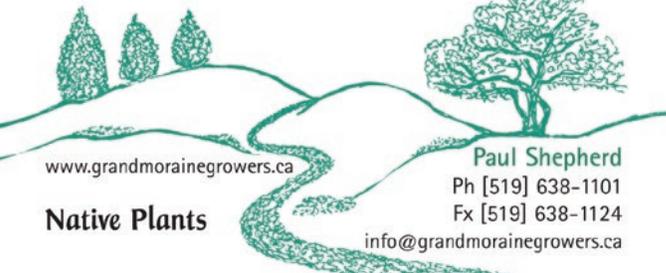


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# What a Celebration!



Nature Guelph celebrated its 50th anniversary at the River Run Centre on Sunday, October 16th in good company. The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), rare Charitable Research Reserve, Wild Ontario and numerous other local conservation organizations joined in on the celebration. Guests enjoyed live music by Canadian singer-songwriter James Gordon, great food by The Wooly, a silent auction, a look back over the past 50 years, and a look ahead to new opportunities. One of those opportunities is the GRCA's new Guelph Lake Nature Centre to which the club donated \$3,000. Several members were recognized for their important contributions to Nature Guelph over the years, including Tamara Anderson, Karen Bateman, Philip Gosling, Steve Lewis, Janet Sippel, Ann Schletz, and Marilyn Swaby. *Special thanks to the many contributors and volunteers who helped bring it all together.*





# Thank You!



**Silent Auction and Other Donors:** The Arboretum | The Bookshelf | Judy Brisson, Brisson, Leis and Associates  
 Chris Earley | Brett Forysth Photography | Hook, Line and Sinkers | Kloepfer Custom Framing and Gallery | Marian Thorpe  
 Planet Bean (Bill Barrett) | Red Brick Café | Pamela Richardson | Zehrs Markets.

**Organizing Committee:** A big thank you to event coordinator Brett Forysth, assisted by Susan Atkinson, Jenn Bock,  
 Margaret Hull, Carol Koenig, John Prescott, Mary Ellen Pyear and other members of the Nature Guelph Executive team.



Dr. Brock Fenton

# Exploring the Lives of Bats

## Nature Guelph Speaker Series

**November 10, 2016 – 7:30pm**

**OAC Centennial Arboretum Centre, University of Guelph**

*Everyone welcome*

Dr. Fenton will explore topics such as bats' adaptations for flight and echolocation, their behaviour, conservation and diversity. He will also discuss diseases that affect bat populations.



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## Guelph Lake Nature Centre

Please visit [www.grandriver.ca](http://www.grandriver.ca) for information about all GRCA family programs.

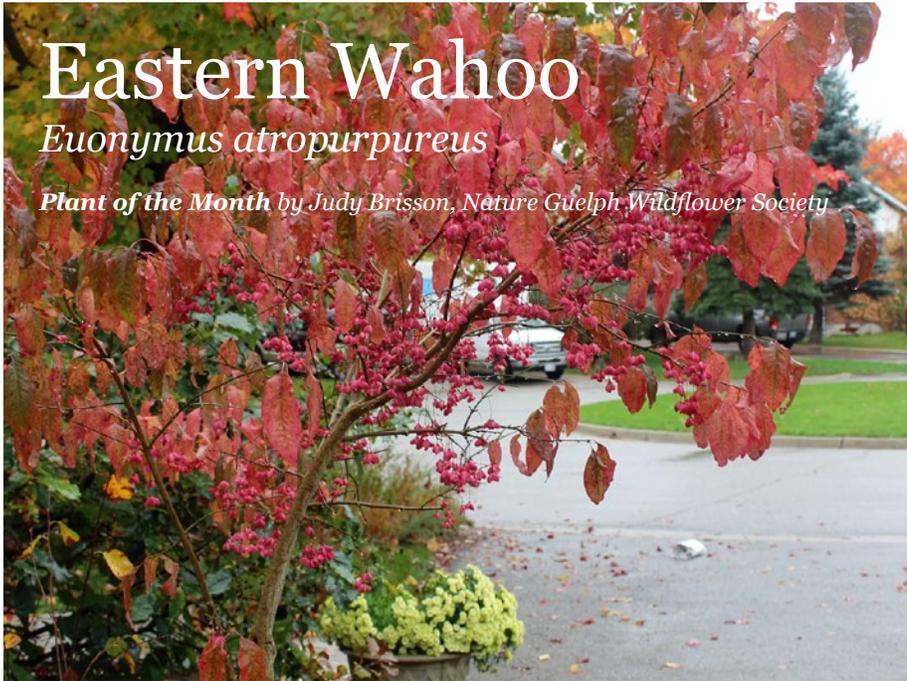


Photography: Brett Forsyth

# Eastern Wahoo

*Euonymus atropurpureus*

*Plant of the Month by Judy Brisson, Nature Guelph Wildflower Society*



Fall seed capsules showing arils



Flower and early seed capsule



## Nature Guelph Wildflower Society

- The NGWS had another successful Plant ID evening in September, hosted by Gerry & Sue Stephenson.
- In October, Stefan Weber from St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre provided a very informative evening about native plant restoration, seed collection and plans for a native seed bank. He also shared the names of his favourite native plants for the home garden. *We hope to work with him on native plant conservation in the future.*
- The September and October native plant exchanges were well supplied thanks to the members. One more exchange may happen in November if the weather stays warm.
- Native plants were provided for the 50th Anniversary Silent Auction, and as door prizes for Nature Guelph's October meeting.
- Monthly meetings will now be held in the library at John McCrae Public School. It is a comfortable, accessible space centrally located with ample parking and a bus stop outside the door.

Eastern Wahoo is one of my favourite small trees. I can't remember if it was the enthusiastic name or the fascinating seed pods that first grabbed my attention. Provincially rare but not on the endangered list, its range extends to just north of the Carolinian zone in Ontario. Frank and Anderson list it as native to Wellington County.

Eastern Wahoo is a small tree or large shrub with smooth green-gray bark that can grow up to 6 metres tall with a trunk up to 10 centimetres in diameter. Like many plants in the genus, twigs can be slightly winged or four-sided. Leaves are opposite, elliptical with an abruptly pointed tip and tapered base. The tiny flowers are maroon and green four-petaled beauties hanging in small cymes from the leaf axis, developing into large four-sided seed capsules

The plant is inconspicuous until the

fall when the leaves turn a bright red, while the seed capsules change from green to pink to fuchsia then split to reveal the scarlet seeds.

Although its wild habitat is moist open woodlands, streambanks and forest edges, it will grow in the home garden in average soil in part shade to full sun with supplemental watering needed only in very dry summers. It is an ideal tree for small urban yards with spring flowers, fall colour and the red fruits persisting into mid-winter. It should be more widely planted as an excellent substitute for European Spindle Tree and the invasive non-native Burning Bush.

The flowers attract small pollinating flies and bees, the fruit is eaten by several species of birds, and rabbits will eat young shoots. The fruit is poisonous to humans although the powdered bark has been used as a purgative. ●





*Keep Cats Safe & Save Bird Lives in Guelph* is an initiative dedicated to celebrating the contributions cats and birds make to our lives, our environment, and our community, and aims to increase public awareness of the impact on both cats and birds of the common practice of letting cats roam unsupervised outdoors.

The community partners involved in the initiative include the Guelph Humane Society, the Guelph Cat Population Task Force, Nature Guelph, The Arboretum at the University of Guelph, Wild Ontario, Songbird Only Avian Rehabilitation, Wild Birds Unlimited, and Nature Canada.

**Join us!** By volunteering you can:

- Share your passion for cats, birds and the environment
- Learn and gain practical experience
- Make a difference in your community.

## Calling All Guelph Community Activists!

We need passionate advocates to promote *Keep Cats Safe & Save Bird Lives in Guelph!* Activities will depend on your interests and the time you have available and could include:

- Distributing literature to neighbours and in local businesses, animal shelters, pet stores, etc;
- Encouraging organizations (local conservation clubs, wildlife rehab centres, animal shelters and rescue organizations) to join our campaign as partners;
- Pitch your local paper to do an article about cats and birds in your area;
- Give presentations at events, schools or clubs about the importance of keeping cats safe and saving bird lives.

We will supply all of the materials as well as a volunteer 'kit' to give you helpful information on how to help *Keep Cats Safe & Save Bird Lives*.

If you're interested in this opportunity, please contact us at [info@catsandbirds.ca](mailto:info@catsandbirds.ca).

## Join Nature Guelph! 2016–17 Membership Application

**Choose One:**  New Member  Renewal  Update

**Fill Out Your Personal Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I authorize Nature Guelph to communicate with me by email. *(Required)*

Yes  No Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer! *(How would you like to contribute?)*

**Select Your Membership:**

<input type="radio"/> Individual (\$25)	\$
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<input type="radio"/> Full-Time Student (\$10)	\$
--	----

**Optional:**

<input type="radio"/> Newsletter printed, mailed (\$10)	\$
---	----

<input type="radio"/> Donation <i>Tax receipt issued for amounts over \$10, not including membership fee</i>	\$
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<b>Calculate Your Total:</b>	\$
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**Choose Your Payment Method:**

Cash  Cheque payable to *Nature Guelph*

Online at [natureguelph.ca/membership](http://natureguelph.ca/membership)

# Statement of Operations

As a registered charitable organization, Nature Guelph is required to disclose its financial information to its members and the general public following each fiscal year ending June 30. This table provides a summary up to June 30, 2016.

For the year ended June 30	2016	2015	
<b>INCOME</b>			
Membership and Donations	\$ 3,483.00	\$ 4,250.19	
Donations (from Indoor Program)	274.37	275.80	
Advertising	300.00	300.00	
NATs and NITs	7,914.11	3,148.36	<i>Fees for Ripley Aquarium Camp</i>
The Arboretum Bird-Friendly Windows	6,703.68	–	<i>Campaign contributions</i>
Fundraising	843.60	663.35	<i>Bucket raffle, Bird Studies Canada, Joan Budd</i>
Reinder Westerhoff Education Fund	–	48.05	
	<b>\$ 19,518.76</b>	<b>\$ 8,685.75</b>	
Investment Income	–	175.39	<i>See GIC interest. Moved stewardship fund from ING to TD</i>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 19,518.76</b>	<b>\$ 8,861.14</b>	

<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Administration	\$ 707.17	\$ 710.68	<i>P.O. Box, domain name, website</i>
Newsletter	422.43	605.14	
NATs and NITs	7,121.30	3,108.56	<i>GRCA, Ripley's Aquarium</i>
Indoor Program	1,213.05	1,410.58	<i>Speaker honoraria, new digital projector</i>
Rent: The Arboretum for Indoor Program	946.90	935.60	<i>Arrears 2013–14</i>
Outdoor Program	–	196.33	<i>Picnic, Nature in the City 2014 (2015)</i>
Ontario Nature Membership, Insurance	1,059.24	1,055.24	
Publicity	–	393.25	<i>Nature in the City: CN bridge sign (2015)</i>
Miscellaneous	220.35	124.30	<i>Ontario Nature Christmas cards</i>
Reinder Westerhoff Education Fund	600.00	600.00	<i>Ontario Nature Youth Camp</i>
The Arboretum Bird-Friendly Windows	6,893.00	–	
Donation	1,000.00	–	<i>Hawk Cliff Woods purchase</i>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 20,777.04</b>	<b>\$ 9,139.68</b>	

## Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended June 30	2016	2015	
Balance Forward	\$ 6,042.60	\$ 6,496.53	
Total Income	19,518.76	8,685.75	
Total Expenses	20,777.04	9,139.68	
Transfer to Petty Cash	100.00	–	
TD Bank Chequing Account – Balance	4,784.42	6,042.60	
Tangerine Investment Account			<i>For land acquisition, stewardship</i>
Balance Forward	\$ 24,258.04	\$ 24,082.65	
Interest	90.68	175.39	
GIC	24,348.72		
TD Business Account	18.32	24,258.04	
Petty Cash	127.55	63.45	<i>Membership; Treasurer</i>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 29,279.01</b>	<b>\$ 30,364.09</b>	

# Upcoming Events

## NATURE GUELPH MEETINGS & SPEAKER SERIES

Meetings occur on the second Thursday of each month. We begin with a brief business meeting, followed by a short break, then the speaker's presentation.

### November 10 – 7:30 pm Exploring the Lives of Bats

Dr. Brock Fenton,  
Dept. of Biology, Western University

### December 8 – 6:00 pm Members Night: Holiday Potluck Dinner and Member Presentations

Share a short 5–20 minute presentation on anything nature-related. Email Peter Kelly at [indoorprogs@natureguelph.ca](mailto:indoorprogs@natureguelph.ca) by December 6 to book your spot. Include specifics on topic, presentation length, and any audio-visual needs.

If you can, please bring your favourite dish (should feed about six people) from the food category based on the first letter of your last name: salad (A–F), dessert (G–M), main dish (N–Z).

Don't forget a plate, cutlery, cup and something to drink. Coffee, tea and hot chocolate will be provided.

OAC Centennial Arboretum Centre,  
University of Guelph  
270 Arboretum Road, Guelph

Non-members are very welcome.  
Goodwill donations gratefully accepted.

For confirmation and updates,  
visit [www.natureguelph.ca](http://www.natureguelph.ca).

*We ask that you do not wear perfumes out of respect for people who are allergic to them.*

## NATURE GUELPH OUTDOOR EVENTS

### November 5 – 1:30 pm Arnell Dam

All about fall, including how and why leaves change colour, how animals prepare for the upcoming winter, and a bit about fungi.

Guelph Radial Line Trail: Smith Property  
Watson Road South, Guelph

Meet at the trailhead on the east side of Watson Road just south of Cooks Mill Road (just north of the Eramosa River)

### November 20 – 2:00–5:00 pm Social Hike

Preservation Park  
226 Kortright Rd. West, Guelph  
Meet at Hanlon Creek Park parking lot.

### December 4 – 8:00 am (all day) Niagara River Gull Trip

The Niagara River hosts the largest collection of wintering inland gulls in North America.

Meet at 8:00 am in the WBU parking lot, 951 Gordon St., Unit 3, Guelph OR meet around 9:15 am near the washroom in Queen's Royal Park overlooking the Niagara River (junction of Regent and Front Streets). Dress warmly.

### December 4 – 2:00–5:00 pm Social Hike

Guelph Lake

For more information on these events,  
contact [outdoorprogs@natureguelph.ca](mailto:outdoorprogs@natureguelph.ca).

## NATURE GUELPH WILDFLOWER SOCIETY

### November 16 – 7:30 pm Wild Lupines and Their Associates in Ontario

Dr. Gard Otis, University of Guelph

### December 21 – 7:30 pm Members Night

Bring along your photo book, display, plant collection or short PowerPoint – and a seasonal snack to share.

The Library, John McCrae Public School  
187 Water Street, Guelph

## NEARBY NATURALIST CLUBS

Halton/North Peel Naturalists Club  
[hnpnc.com](http://hnpnc.com)

### November 8 – 7:30 pm Fungi

Linda Kohn, Professor, U of T  
St. Alban the Martyr Anglican Church  
537 Main Street,  
Glen Williams (Georgetown)

## Hamilton Naturalists Club [hamiltonnature.org](http://hamiltonnature.org)

### November 14 – 7:00 pm Protecting Nature in Urban Areas

Jen Baker

Royal Botanical Gardens  
680 Plains Road West, Burlington

rare  
[raresites.org](http://raresites.org)

### November 15 – 7:00–8:30 pm Adventures in Biodiversity

Tom Woodcock, rare Planning Ecologist

### December 1 – 7:00–8:30 pm

Owl Prowl  
Jason Bracey

rare ECO Centre  
768 Blair Road, Cambridge  
Admission \$8. Must pre-register online.

## Waterloo Region Nature [waterlooregionnature.ca](http://waterlooregionnature.ca)

### November 28 – 7:30–9:30 pm The Motus Wildlife Tracking System

Stuart Mackenzie,  
Program Manager,  
Motus Wildlife Tracking System

Knox Presbyterian Church Hall  
50 Erb Street West, Waterloo



Attend a special **FREE** screening of this award-winning documentary about the decline of songbirds. Guest speakers will include Dr. Ryan Norris, Paloma Plant (FLAP) and Dr. Elizabeth Gow.

## THE MESSENGER

November 9 – 6:00 pm  
University of Guelph  
OAC Centennial Arboretum Centre  
[messengerfilm.com](http://messengerfilm.com)

## Reinder Westerhoff Education Fund

Reinder Westerhoff was a well-loved member of Nature Guelph, who died suddenly at 70 in 2013. A friend, teacher, scholar, mentor and instigator, in his memorial notice he named Nature Guelph as a group that could receive donations in his honour.

At Nature Guelph, we've used the Fund to send two youth every year to the Ontario Nature Youth camp. We continue to accept donations and donations to the Fund can be made through the Treasurer or via the Canada Helps website:

[canadahelps.org/en/charities/nature-guelph/](http://canadahelps.org/en/charities/nature-guelph/)

*Select the Reinder Westerhoff fund from the drop-down menu. A receipt will be issued for income tax purposes.*



## A Traveller's Guide to Feathers

Curious about the latest advances in the field of bird biology? Check out Glen Chilton's weekly column, *A Traveller's Guide to Feathers* where he highlights a recently-published paper from various scholarly journals from around the world.

[glenchilton.com/a-travellers-guide-to-feathers/](http://glenchilton.com/a-travellers-guide-to-feathers/)

Glen Chilton, Ph.D. is a biology professor at the Centre for Tropical Biodiversity and Climate Change at James Cook University in Australia, and a bestselling author.

## Nature Guelph Needs Your Talent!

**Outdoor Program Coordinator:** Planning, coordinating and helping to facilitate a series of outdoor events.

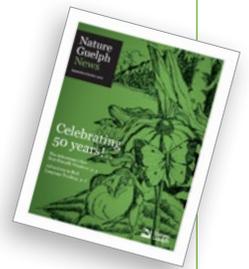
**Webmaster:** Updating and maintaining our Wordpress-based website. Includes some email administration.

*Interested in filling these volunteer positions? Please contact Brett Forsyth: [vicepresident@natureguelph.ca](mailto:vicepresident@natureguelph.ca).*

## New Mailing Fee

Members who wish to continue receiving a printed version of *Nature Guelph News* will be required to pay an annual \$10 fee in addition to their membership dues, to help cover the high cost of printing and postage.

*The new mailing fee was incorrectly stated as \$12 in the previous newsletter.*



### NATURE GUELPH EXECUTIVE TEAM

#### President

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519-824-4965

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#### Wildflower Society

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Nature Guelph News is published five times a year – every two months except July and August. Please submit all contributions for the next issue to Sandra MacGregor by email on or before December 15, 2016.

*Thank you to all our contributors.*

#### Advertising

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