

The Quinte Naturalist

The Quinte Field Naturalists Association is affiliated with Ontario Nature, a non-profit organization sponsoring nature education, conservation and research.

October



During their exhausting migration flights waterfowl stage or gather in large flocks to rest and refuel. From 12 O'clock Point at the western end of the Bay of Quinte you can see large flocks of waterfowl doing just that from October until freeze-up begins. Local birders have posted pictures of some species on eBird. Photographers are named in brackets. From the top, examples are American Coot (Cecile Yarrow), Bufflehead (Kyle Blaney), Northern Shoveler (Keith Gregoire) and Green-winged Teal (Rick Beaudon).

THE BAKELITE PROPERTY WHAT'S NEXT?

In the September newsletter I mentioned that Councillor Paul Carr cast the only dissenting vote when Belleville's council approved the purchase of a section of the former Bakelite property.

Councillor Carr has sent an email explaining the reason for his vote. Here is what he wanted us to know:

"I wanted to point out that although the land that the city purchased was considered developable, the sale of the property to the City included the condition that the man-made pond be utilized for storm water management purposes. It was clear that land would never be developed given this requirement. In fact, I asked the CAO about the storm water management pond requirements and he indicated in open session that the developers would need this pond as well as others given the significant development to the north. It is well known that storm water management ponds are turned over to the city with no charge. Same goes for parkland. So, the City could have achieved the same result without spending \$3.15M."

Whether or not you agree with Councillor Carr his message is a reminder of an important point. The pond which has been saved will be a stormwater management pond. Such ponds are necessary in an urban area where buildings and impervious surfaces like streets, sidewalks and parking lots which can't absorb rain or meltwater. Even a moderate amount of rain has nowhere to go except storm sewers. Stormwater ponds slow the flow of water. Pollutants from streets and lawns have time to settle where they can be absorbed by plants. The amount of pollutants reaching the bay is lessened.



Obviously the water in the Bakelite pond will be polluted as it has been for many years. That's actually a benefit to the bay. The pond still provides a great deal of wildlife habitat. Recently I visited a similar pond near the intersection of North Front and College Streets and took the picture above. I will see what I can find there in the next year.

Of course, the pond is only part of the city's newly acquired property. What will happen to the rest of the property? The fall issue of Belleville Magazine published by the city provides 2 pages about the waterfront from the Herchimer St. boat launch to the Bakelite property. On one of those pages there are two artist's depictions of how the property could be developed. The first is shown below.



It would be very disappointing if the site is developed in this way. It shows a “people park” with mown grass and a bit of nature. We need “people parks” where residents can play sports, picnic, meet friends and just sit looking over the bay but we already have 3 kilometres of bayfront “people park” running west from the Herchimer boat launch to Zwick’s Park.

We can see the difference between a “people park” with a nod to nature and even a badly degraded natural area with public access like the Bakelite site by observing the birds. Birders have submitted 249 checklists of sightings in Zwick’s and an equivalent 233 checklists from the boat launch/Bakelite area. The 116 species found in Zwick’s sounds impressive but about 40 of those species are there because of the bay, not the park and a further 25 or so species are generalist species which are ubiquitous throughout the city. The boat launch/Bakelite property has produced 164 species with the same 40 and 25 figures applying to this total. This leaves 51 species in Zwick’s and 99 in the Bakelite area. A look at groups like warblers and vireos requiring a more natural setting makes the difference even more striking with the figures being 25 species and 9 species.

This simple comparison requires a deeper analysis but it is suggestive. Birds are often used as indicators of the biodiversity. Where there are more bird species there are more species of every kind.



The second artist's conception shows a more desirable approach to the development of the pond edge. The vegetation is more conducive to species diversity and a viewing platform with educational plaques still encourages visitor enjoyment of the pond.



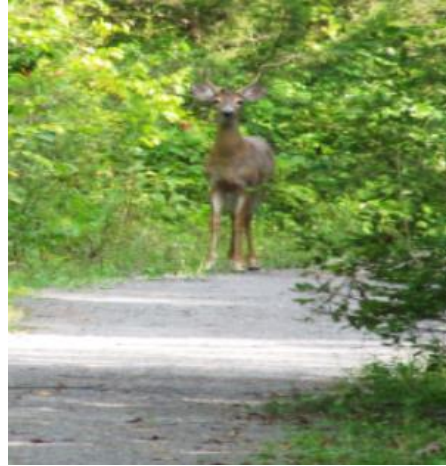
**American redstart is one of the warblers nesting along the Shirley Langer Trail.
Photo: Keith Gregoire**

The magazine article also outlines plans for the Shirley Langer Trail between the boat launch and Bakelite. Although at 8 metres wide it still suggests, to me, an extension of the Keegan Parkway, care is being taken to make it more ecologically diverse than the East Bayshore Trail. Lighting will be designed to minimize light pollution and the trail will be surrounded by wildflower meadows.

After the current election it will be up to the new council to continue the city's recognition of our natural heritage and to take steps to integrate the natural world as development continues.

CLUB NEWS

The Big News is our first general meeting in 2 ½ years



NATURE ALONG THE LOWER TRENT TRAIL

Robert Ormston

Robert is stewardship technician for Quinte Conservation and a long-time resident of Trenton. He is an amateur naturalist in his spare time and knows the area very well.

Running from Trenton to Glen Ross, the Lower Trent Trail gives users a taste of the beautiful landscapes and biodiversity of the lower Trent River valley. From forest to field, savannah to swamp, its variety of habitats and species is sure to pique the interest of naturalists of all stripes.

Join us to see what this close-to-home trail has to offer.

**Monday, October 17, 2022
7:00 p.m.**

**Centennial Secondary School
160 Palmer Rd. (corner of Harder Drive)**

Park in the south parking lot and enter through the southwest school doors

We Are a Busy Group

EDUCATION



Last June Belleville celebrated its new status as an official Bee City by holding a special pollinator event. Elizabeth Churcher spoke on our behalf and with a few members maintained a display and explained to visitors the importance of pollinators.

QFN maintains several sources of information about nature and club activities for members and the public.

- Catherine and Bernd Baier keep our Facebook page current. Please “like” it.
- For many years Terry Sprague has run naturestuff.net, a treasure trove about information about nature in PEC, what to see and where to see it. There’s also an archive of his 50 years of columns for several publications.
- Kyle Blaney is preparing a QFN website which will soon be available.
- And, of course, there is this newsletter.

Denice Wilkins organized our sponsorship of Vanessa Lavender, a Prince Edward County student, to the Ontario Youth Summit. Vanessa sent the following note:

Hi Denice,

I just wanted to thank you and the Quinte Field Naturalists for sponsoring my time at the Youth Summit. I participated in a workshop about Birding, one about Indigenous teachings, the medicine wheel and how these lessons connect to the environment, and I had the opportunity to process bear berries and learn about natural medicines. I gained a lot of knowledge through the work shops and discussions with the people around me. I even made some new friends!

I am so grateful you were able to give me this opportunity:)

Thanks again,

Vanessa

CARING FOR OUR ECOSYSTEMS



QFN organized a team to collect trash in the Cassidy Block and take it to the dump. The Cassidy Block is a large Quinte Conservation property owned by Quinte Conservation east of Stoco Lake. We are also partnering with Quinte Conservation to compile a list of species occurring there.



11 QFN volunteers recently constructed 55 turtle nest protectors. These will either be donated or given to other organizations and individuals.



Tweed Area QFN members planted and looked after a demonstration pollinator garden at the Tweed post office

Gardens like this both create beauty and help our declining insect pollinators



Bumble bees like this common eastern bumble bee are some of our best known pollinators. Photo: Jason King

Flies are second only to bees as pollinators. Hover flies and bee flies are particularly important. The fearsome looking appendage on this hunchback bee fly is a harmless proboscis used to feed on nectar and pollen. Photo: John Lowry



RESEARCH

Many members contribute data to various citizen science projects either as a group or individually. The Marsh Monitoring Program, the Ontario Nocturnal Survey the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas, eBird and iNaturalist are just a few of the projects which attract QFN members as participants. Two winter projects will soon be starting.

Project Feeder Watch

The FeederWatch season begins on November 1 and runs to April 29. The last day to start a two-day count at the end of each season is April 29.

FeederWatch count days are two consecutive days when you count the birds at your feeders. Do not change your count days just because you see remarkable numbers or kinds of birds. Doing so would bias your data. If you are unable to count during a particular week, that's okay.

It's so easy even a child can do it.

For information and to register go to <https://www.birdscanada.org/you-can-help/project-feederwatch>

Belleville Christmas Bird Count



The upcoming Belleville CBC will be taking place on Tuesday 27th December, 2022.

If interested, please contact Tom Wheatley at bellevillecbc@outlook.com.

This is a great excuse to spend time outside with friends.

Possible winter birds.
Bohemian waxwings.
Photo: Tom Wheatley

Fall Festival - Celebrating 50 Years of Outdoor Education at the H.R. Frink Centre



Join us in celebrating 50 years of outdoor education at the H.R. Frink Centre!

Participate in a variety of nature-based activities and crafts and help raise donations to re-build the Hi-Lo Bridge.

Join volunteers around the campfire for a complimentary cup of vegetable soup and share and hear stories of the Frink!

Help reduce waste: Bring your own mug and spoon.

WHEN: Sunday, October 23, 2022

WHERE: [H.R. Frink Centre and Conservation Area - 384 Thrasher Road Plainfield, ON](#) (View Google Map)

TIME: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

ADMISSION: \$5 per adult, free for kids under 14 years old

Proceeds support the re-build of the Hi-Lo Bridge - a cherished Frink staple.

THE IN-BETWEEN TIME

By George Thomson and Elizabeth Churcher

Reprinted with permission from the Tweed News, Sept. 30, 2020

NATURALLY

What's In a Name?

November 11, 2015

What is the name of that butterfly that is still fluttering about on November 4th? Picture yourself walking along a trail through the woods with us. It could be the Trans-Canada Trail through Tweed, a beautiful, picturesque pathway that surrounds you with a huge number of living things. You might venture down the same route a week or even months from now and encounter a number of different species. Of course, some of the individuals, like various kinds of trees, would be there every time. They are the conspicuous members in the structure of the woodland ecosystem and are dominant players affecting the lives of many



Tweed area naturalist, Joe Bartok, found this clouded sulphur, *Colias philodice*, last November and posted the picture on iNaturalist.

other organisms. As the seasons change, their appearance may be altered, but they remain steadfast while other participants come and go. During our walk, we naturally want to know the names of the different mushrooms, plants and animals that we meet. This curiosity about the natural world is a large part of being human. We love to categorize and name things, from car and truck makes and models, to clothing styles, to the trees and birds that capture our attention in the forest as we stroll along.

In 2015, we are well equipped with numerous devices to help us as we explore our natural world. We have the benefit of field guides, hand lenses, binoculars, I-phones and tablets. --- But imagine yourself walking down the same trail in the year 1900. You would have

none of these aids to assist with identification. Lists itemizing your discoveries would be populated with common words such as mushroom, fern and woodpecker. --- And you could not go home to search the internet for more detailed identification. These restrictions, however, did not stop people from naming plants and animals. The universal need to know, to categorize, to name, prevailed and it resulted in the invention of “common names” for living things. Without a refined process, the same species of plant or animal was often given several common names, even in one locality, and other labels in distant locations.



Orange Jelly Spot, Dacrymyces chrysospermus, a fungus found last November and posted on iNaturalist by Stephanie Dudek in the Marmora area.

While attaching specific labels to specimens in the early 1900's was almost impossible, the process of naming had been initiated years before. A Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus, who lived from 1707 to 1778, invented the binomial, or two-name, system to ease the burden of differentiating one type of living thing from another. The first of the two words, the Genus name, is always capitalized and it gives a label to the grouping that includes two or more related species. It is somewhat like our last name that links us to our aunts, uncles and cousins. Sometimes, the genus includes only one species, as in the group, Homo sapiens, to which we belong. The second word, never capitalized, is the species name which refers to a particular living organism such as a Beech Tree or a Red Fox. --- And in respect of all of you grammarians out there, we must mention that 'species' is both singular and plural.

The binomial names are derived from Greek and/or Latin and are standardized across the world so that, when people at any location on our planet read or hear the binomial or scientific name of an organism, they know or can look up the individual species. Let's examine the names of two of our bird feeder visitors, the Tree Sparrow whom we enjoy in the winter months and the Chipping Sparrow who is a warm weather guest. The genus Spizella, derived from the Greek 'Spiza' or 'finch' and the Latin 'ella' or 'small', includes both of these lively feathered friends, telling us that they are closely related. The Tree



American tree sparrow, *Spizella arborea*, the “winter chippie”. Photo submitted by the authors

Sparrow’s second name is ‘arborea’ meaning ‘tree’ while the Chipping Sparrow’s defining label is ‘passerina’ connoting ‘little sparrow’. Now you have a choice! When you see that small, chestnut-capped bird perched in a tree in the winter, you can impress your friends with its official common name, American Tree Sparrow, or its scientific name, *Spizella arborea*. The option for the Chipping Sparrow, which is quite similar in appearance but resides

with us only in warm weather, is *Spizella passerina*. Why bother with those Latin and Greek names which very few of us can remember? George scores high in this domain while Elizabeth drags her feet but makes no apologies! It’s only the binomial or scientific name that shows the relationships between species and is sure to be known all over the world.



Chipping sparrow, *Spizella passerina*. Note the difference in the eye line and the breast markings.

So, with aids in hand, we are stepping out into the treasured warmth of this beautiful November day to discover the name of that butterfly that is still searching for a tasty snack in the broccoli florets and those persistent Johnny Jump-up & Lamium flowers. Naming living things, of course, is only the first step: next comes more exacting knowledge about how they live and relate to others. These deeper understandings help us to develop an appreciation of them as fellow passengers on planet Earth --- an appreciation that is vitally important in these times of decreasing biodiversity. Let us continue to walk together and be intrigued by the beauty and value of what nature has to offer right here in the Tweed area.

iNat CSI: HOW TO IDENTIFY & PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS

<https://cwf-fcf.org/en/resources/downloads/webinars/public/inat-csi-how-to-identify.html>

Recently Kyle Blaney gave a one hour presentation online for the Canadian Wildlife Federation. In this presentation, Kyle discussed how factors such as size, shape,



seasonality, habitat, and field marks can help identify birds. He used his superb images of common species to provide examples and specify what to be wary of. Finally, he will give tips and tricks that can lead to better bird photos. You can view Kyle's presentation by clicking on the link above.

Photo: Northern gannet

The Quinte Field Naturalists Association, an affiliate of Ontario Nature, is a non-profit organization sponsoring nature education, conservation and research. It was founded in 1949 and incorporated in 1990 and encompasses the counties of Hastings and Prince Edward. The Quinte Field Naturalists Association is legally entitled to hold real estate and accept benefits.

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