

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The wonderful winter weather has brought lots of snow again. It's time to enjoy all the action at our backyard feeders, observe and ponder the variety of animal tracks and gaze at diamonds, sparkling in the snow, on sunny days and clear cold nights. Hope you can get outside and enjoy the nature in the New Year!

Christmas began on a sad note when we learned of Lloyd Delaney's death. The article below, planned before he died, profiles his life. A donation was made in Lloyd's memory from our Club to the Wye Marsh. The Club will arrange for a permanent memorial to Lloyd, perhaps a plaque on one of our benches along the I.D. Trail. This will be decided at our next meeting.

Joanne Scott

Who We Are

This is the second of a series profiling some of our members. We feature a member who recently passed away, the remarkable Lloyd Delaney. He certainly will be missed.



Naturalist, great grandfather, educator, priest, environmentalist and athlete, Rev. Lloyd Delaney was each of these combined in a unique synergy that was both eccentric and wonderful. Lloyd Delaney died on Dec 10, 2002 at Huronia District Hospital after a brief illness.

Lloyd Delaney was a retired priest of the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, previously serving as rector at Gore's Landing, Lakefield and Midland. He was a graduate of Trinity College and as well as his love of canoeing he was known as an athlete in hockey, skiing, boxing, track, volleyball and many other sports. He was inducted into the Midland Sports Hall of Fame last year at the age of 85. Until then, he also coached a Metis women's volleyball team. He was a 'scholar and a gentleman', a pioneer in environmental activism and a humanitarian who was always ready to express his opinion on environmental issues. His love of nature was shared through Scouting as well as his volunteer work for the FON and

the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre.

John Lucas got him involved in our club, and eventually Lloyd was President of the Field Nats from 1979-81. Together with John and others, he was instrumental in getting the Friends of Wye Marsh going when the government pulled out of the site. He gave us his opinion and influence freely on important matters affecting the environment ever since.

Dozens of friends could always expect weekly telephone calls from Lloyd about a recent observation of a bird or with a plea to join him for a day's canoeing. He was an ardent canoeist and for many years led the FON's spring day trip from the Big Chute through Six Mile Lake and the Pretty Channel. He also led our club's canoe outings frequently.

Reverend Lloyd Delaney was a unique naturalist who will be remembered as a distinguished member of the MPFNC. We wish you good paddling in Heaven Lloyd!

Thanks to Bob Whittam, Paul Delaney, Pat Taylor and Edna Lucas for details of Lloyd's life.

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President: Joanne Scott
1st Vice president: Greg Lutick
2nd Vice president: Adrienne Jex
Treasurer: Diane Marr
Secretary: Shirley Tilson
Past President: Liz Schandlen

We're on the web!
www.csolve.net/~mpfnc

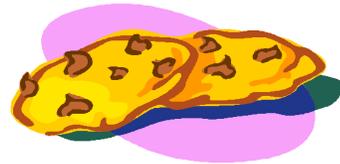


OUR MISSION STATEMENT

*To study and appreciate nature.
To protect and preserve wildlife and
the environment.
To stimulate public interest in, and
promote protection and
preservation of
nature.*

RECIPES!

Send us your favourites and we'll print them.



CHOCOLATE-COVERED FRUITCAKE BALLS

2 cups crumbled fruitcake 7 ounces fine-quality bittersweet chocolate, cut into bits

In a food processor grind the fruitcake until it forms a ball, scoop up rounded teaspoons of it, and with dampened hands form them into balls. Let the balls stand in a jelly-roll pan lined with wax paper for 30 minutes. Melt the chocolate, stirring until it is smooth. Balancing the fruitcake balls on the tines of a fork, dip them into the chocolate, letting the excess drip off, and transfer them to the wax paper. Chill the balls for 30 minutes. Makes about 24 balls.

FRUITCAKE COFFEE ICE-CREAM TERRINE

2 cups finely chopped fruitcake 1 1/2 quarts coffee ice cream, softened slightly

Line a metal loaf pan, 9 by 5 by 3 inches, with plastic wrap, leaving a 3-inch overhang on all sides. In a bowl stir together the fruitcake and the ice cream, spread the mixture into the loaf pan, and fold the plastic-wrap overhang over the top. Freeze the ice-cream mixture for at least 8 hours or overnight. Unmold the terrine onto a serving dish and serve it sliced. Serves 8.

Adrienne Jex found these recipes for recycling fruitcake, a timely topic!! See her for more fruitcake-recycling recipes.

Oven-Crisped New Potatoes

2 lb. red-skinned new potatoes, well scrubbed and quartered. 4 tbsps. olive or corn oil 2 tbsp. minced fresh parsley
1 1/2 tsp. dried (or fresh) rosemary salt and freshly ground black pepper

Position rack in middle of oven and preheat to 400 F. Place potatoes in a single layer in a shallow baking dish after tossing them together with the oil and rosemary. Place in oven and bake stirring potatoes well every 10 minutes, until they're crisp and golden outside and tender inside - about 40 minutes. Sprinkle potatoes with parsley. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Toss again and serve immediately. Serves 4. Note: A nutritious and delicious way to replace french-fried potatoes.

Marilyn Lawrence

Computer News

At the present time our web site, <www.csolve.net/~mpfnc> has three external links, to The FON, Wye Marsh and the Simcoe County Nature Board (SCNB). The FON in turn has web links to over three dozen provincial websites. Wye Marsh has connections to its own programs, links to trumpeter swans, 'Journeys to Discover' and local B&B's. The SCNB has a bulletin board system that will enable you to send in sightings of birds, butterflies, etc., to other interested parties. Our webmaster, Peter Tillson, has worked hard on our site. Check it out! You can also go to many other interesting nature sites all over the world. Try Bird Studies Canada (www.bsc-eoc.org), or Environment Canada (www.ec.gc.ca). Contact Peter for more information.

Here's another computer tip. There is a new CD called Dawn Chorus 1, for learning to identify birds by sight and sound. It is primarily for beginning birders, and is well-priced at \$29.95, from a Canadian company called Birdsong Bytes. If a number of members are interested, we can get a bulk price. See Joanne for more info.



CLUB NEWS



We had a comfortable sized group out to view Carden Plain. We took time to see and enjoy most of the area, explaining the different parts of same. We had a number of birds i.e. Yellow-rumped warbler, Palm warbler, Black-throated green warbler, Black & white warbler, Bluebirds, Robins, Song sparrow, White-throat sparrow, White-crown sparrow and Chipping sparrow. It was a pleasant fall outing.
Sid Hadlington

Our October meeting was well attended and much enjoyed. Rick Towns, president of the Barrie Astronomy Club, gave an informative and engaging talk about our solar system and the autumn sky. His excellent slides and homemade telescope were much appreciated; unfortunately clouds prevented testing of the scope.
Adrienne Jex

The following Saturday, nineteen club members ventured north amongst the crimson autumn colours to Huntsville. Robin Tapley and his assistants took us through a never-ending forest until we reached the Observatory. The night sky didn't co-operate as the evening was cloudy, but we still enjoyed a slide presentation and observing the surrounding forest through night vision glasses. A unique and interesting spot. Hopefully, next time the stars will shine.
Liz Schandlen

At our November meeting we had occasion to hear Sandy Neilson and see her amazing video made during her trip to Antarctica for an environmental cleanup. British Energy, parent company of Bruce Power, also sent her to the environmental World Summit in South Africa. We were very fortunate to share in both these trips, a real treat for the club.
Pat Taylor

The November hike was on the Tiny Trail from County Road 61 to Concession 12. There was snow underfoot; but the temperature was comfortable. The Copeland Creek valley is quite beautiful, with impressive trees, several kinds of ferns and marshland. Red squirrels and chickadees were our only companions, although blue-winged teal had been sighted earlier in the month. The Scotts kindly offered their home nearby for a picnic lunch.
Adrienne Jex



Schedule

Here are the next few club meetings. Check the brochure for more information.

MOUNTAINVIEW SKI HILLS
Saturday January 18, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

BLAZING PADDLES
Thursday February 20, 2003, 7:30 p.m.

WYE VALLEY UPDATE
Saturday February 22, 2003, 1:00 p.m.

CLIMATE CHANGE
Thursday March 20, 2003, 7:30 p.m.

AWENDA PARK
Saturday March 29, 2003, 1:00 p.m.

DARWIN AND THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS
Thursday April 17, 2003, 7:30 p.m.

BEAR CREEK WILDLIFE SANCTUARY
Saturday April 19, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

ONTARIO BUTTERFLIES
Thursday May 15, 2003, 7:30 p.m.

NATURE, ART AND BUTTERFLIES
Saturday May 24, 2003, 7:30 a.m.



Linda and David Whitehead, our Christmas auctioneers!

103rd National Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count

On December 14, an overcast Saturday morning, following cold temperatures, 27 members of our club set out for the annual trek to record birds seen in our area. The eight different groups set out around 8:00 am, traveling by car or on foot to cover our area. Again this year all eyes and ears were at the alert in an attempt to spot our feathered friends, who at times can be very deceptive and difficult to get a real good look at. Once an identification has been made, the information is transferred to the tally sheet which records the species type as well as how many are seen. This year our spotters came up with 51 different species and a total count of 3,921 individuals. Some notables this year were a red bellied woodpecker, dark-eyed junco, sharp-shinned hawk, cardinals and a bald eagle. As always after another successful count, the club met at the Wye Marsh for our annual Christmas pot luck dinner and auction. Around 50 members made the night very successful. A very good meal was followed by our auction, where \$300 was raised for the McKeever Owl Foundation. To the members who support the bird count year after year, thank you and we hope to see you again next year. *David Schandlen*



Members' Inbox

Close Encounters at the Blueberry Patch

Adrienne and I have been working for a number of years to establish a blueberry patch in what was a plantation of Scots pine. The Scots pine had originally been planted, we believe, for Christmas trees; these were about 40 years old and nearly all crooked and diseased. Before the blueberries went in, we had to clear out the pine, some young poplar, staghorn sumac and hazelnut, and then prepare the soil. Once the blueberries were in the ground we had to care for them throughout the following years. Many of the plants are now about 13 years old.

While working on this new plantation we observed a few things we might have expected, but came as pleasant (in general) surprises. Some of the things that one would expect included finding a nest of young snowshoe hares at Eastertime, noticing woodland or meadow jumping mice hopping almost kangaroo-fashion through newly planted grass, or hearing foxes "grocking" just outside the edge of the new field. Other events were a bit more unusual.

I was standing in the middle of a wide-open field of about one or two acres. I had been putting in young blueberry plants or weeding ones that were already planted when I decided to stop for a few seconds to rest, leaning against my shovel. I heard a kingfisher calling, so I turned around to look in its direction. It was still quite far away and I figured it was heading to the creek about a quarter mile away. However, it now seemed to be descending and heading in the direction of our new field. I stayed still and continued watching. The kingfisher kept descending. I realized he wasn't headed just for the field but was headed directly to me. He flew to within about 20 feet of me with the obvious intention to land on me or my shovel, when I became a bit concerned and instinctively made a motion so that he wouldn't land on me. I suppose I had no reason to be worried, but it just didn't seem like the appropriate place for him to set down. Maybe people can fit into the environment?

I was weeding or planting again when I kept hearing a bleating in the woods. I went to investigate, but the noise kept moving and it wasn't immediately clear which direction it was coming from; I decided just to stand there in the woods for a while to see if I could tell. The noise kept getting closer. Somehow it knew where I stood and was coming directly toward me. Seconds later I could see a young fawn coming through the brush. I guess it thought I was Mom. He got to within 10 or 20 feet of me when I thought I should advise it differently. It eventually realized the mistake, but what would have happened if I hadn't said anything?

I was pruning blueberries this time. It was early November. I was crouched down between rows of now nearly mature highbush blueberry plants that were 4 to 5 feet tall. We now had about three acres of berries and I was in one of the many rows. This one was strewn with the prunings that I had just lopped off the bushes. I heard what I thought was the sound of people walking up to the patch through the woods to see either the plantation or me. This is a fairly common occurrence. The noises kept getting closer and when I figured the people were near enough to greet I stood up in the row to see who they were. I heard the noises but I didn't see any people. But then I saw my visitors, low to the ground, turning up the row I was in, and heading straight for me over all the obstacles I had just placed in their way. It was obvious they were having an engrossing conversation. They got to within 10 or 20 feet of me when I got concerned again. I mean, what would happen if you had four otters, each about four feet long, swarming over you?

And did I tell you about the snapping turtle in the blueberry field?

Greg Lutick

Cameron Ranch Alvar update

Our club is very familiar with the Cameron ranch issue, so an update of the project may be appreciated. As you know, in February 2002 the owner accepted an offer from the Nature Conservancy of Canada to buy the ranch, allowing for a year to raise the \$1.6 million needed to complete the project. NCC has over half of the purchase price confirmed so far, with the partnership of the Couchiching Conservancy. The October update of the Couchiching conservancy mentioned our club's donation in their update. Their goal is to raise \$200,000 of the sale price. Fundraising activities will continue in both organizations, with approaches to local corporations and individuals.

Trumpeter Swan Treatment Centre



The Trumpeter swans of the Wye Marsh Valley now have a new place to rest and recuperate. With the help of generous donations from the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (through the Nature Network Grant Program) and other partners, the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre has constructed a year-round treatment centre that can house up to four swans simultaneously. With two outdoor and two indoor pens, the centre will allow Marsh staff to care for and monitor sick or injured swans.

With the help of volunteers from the Midland community, the centre was completed this fall. The centre includes a viewing room for the public that will incorporate educational signage about the Trumpeter Swan Reintroduction Program.

The Wye Marsh program currently monitors 104 swans throughout the year, which is approximately a third of the Ontario population. For more information about Trumpeter Swans or the reintroduction program, contact the Swan Department at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre, 705-526-7809 or wymarsh@cryston.ca.