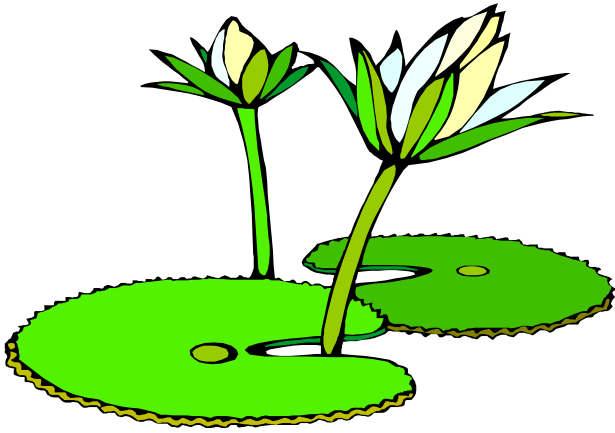


THE LILYPAD

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Winter 2004



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Best Wishes for a happy and healthy New Year to everyone at the Midland Penetanguishene Field Naturalists! With the arrival of the new year and the winter weather, we will be looking forward to our upcoming speakers and outings. A visit to the Copeland Forest to see the deer yard, a trek around Midland Bay Woods to observe trees and tracks and a trip to Waubauskene to view the ducks are on the agenda for the next few months. I know that I am excited about these events and I hope you are too. 2004 promises to be interesting, educational and fun!

Joanne Scott

Who We Are

We are continuing our series profiling some of our members. Here is a couple well-known and loved by many members:

Naturalists, adventurers and concerned citizens are only a few of the hats worn by John and Edna Lucas. This wonderful couple were a vital part of the Midland Penetanguishene Field Naturalists for many years. After moving to Midland from Mississauga in 1974, they actually were hoping to join the local historical society but discovered the Naturalists Club instead. In 1975 they became members and thus began many years of support, involvement and leadership. John held the position of program director and was twice president. He and Bob Whittam collaborated on the development of a "Friends" organization, after government funding for Wye Marsh was cancelled. He was also responsible for starting the gift shop at Wye Marsh and organizing volunteers. Edna was in charge of photography and the photo albums, so important to our Club's history. She also came up with the Wye Bean Soup idea, our main source for fund-raising for our Club. The couple always loved travel and adventure. Their stories about their trips were always interesting and entertaining. Sadly, John passed away a couple of years ago and Edna has had to deal with severe health problems. However, when she is well enough, she continues to attend our meetings, much to the delight of us all. Over the years, John and Edna have donated a great deal of their time and talents to the Club. We are so fortunate to have had them as members.

Joanne Scott



Edna and John share a moment together.

Special Announcement!!

On April 3 our club will host the Huronia regional Spring meeting of the FON. Representatives from each club will meet to exchange ideas and to brainstorm with the executive of the FON. Evan Ferrari will speak on the need for a new protected areas act. Club members and the public are welcome. Your club rep is Adrienne 526 3042.

Midland-Penetanguishene Field
Naturalists Club
Box 393
Midland, Ontario L4R 2J8

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.*



Schedule

Here are the club meetings for the winter season. Check the brochure for more information.

COPELAND'S FOREST
Saturday January 17, 2004, 10:00 a.m.

SIMCOE COUNTY HEALTH UNIT
Thursday February 19, 2004 7:30 p.m.

TREES, TRACKS AND TEMPERATURE
Saturday February 21, 2004, 10:30 a.m.

VOLUNTEER FOR NATURE
Thursday March 18, 2004 7:30 p.m.

DUCK!
Saturday March 27, 2004, 10:00 a.m.

REPTILE AWARENESS
Thursday April 15, 2004, 7:30 p.m.

WYE RIVER HIKE
Saturday April 17, 2004

HEMP
Thursday May 20, 2004, 7:30 p.m.



THE NATURE BOOK CLUB



“CROW LAKE” by Mary Lawson
Published by Vintage Canada. 2002.

This story of denial, loss, sacrifice and love of family takes place in northern Ontario. It is of interest to naturalists as it has a nature theme flowing throughout the book. However, since the author never lived in northern Ontario, there may be some inaccuracies involving the wildlife in the story. Read it and decide for yourself!

Joanne Scott

Be a Wye Valley Patroller!

Valley Watch is a volunteer based program intended to help the Wye Marsh create a presence in the valley while simultaneously gathering information about the valley. Pairs of volunteers will go on patrols in various parts of the valley a few times a week. Their purpose is to be seen as a presence in the valley. Their role is not one of enforcement. Any problems that they do encounter, such as illegal use or garbage dumping, will be photographed, recorded, and dealt with by the appropriate authorities. Information provided by the volunteers would be very valuable to the clean up of the valley, reducing further damage, and maintaining existing trails. The second purpose of the program is to gather biological information about the valley. Volunteers will keep detailed records of sightings of animal and plant species, that will assist in maintaining an accurate bio-inventory. Their records would also be helpful in monitoring our species-at-risk. Volunteers will be recruited from the community, including local high schools, recreation groups, etc. They will be supervised and trained by staff in the Stewardship Department of the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre. The volunteers will be equipped with communication devices, first aid kits and GPS systems for safety purposes. Volunteers will also be provided with binoculars, digital cameras and species identification books to aid them in their patrols. Call Wye Marsh at 526-7809.

CLUB NEWS



Back by popular demand, on Oct. 16 Walter and Joan Crowe traveled from Owen Sound to entertain us with their stories, jokes, and slides. Their wonderful trip to Alaska and to the Pribilof Islands left us all envious. Hopefully, we can entice them back again. *Dave Schandlen*

On Oct. 18, a group of 20 people enjoyed a trip to a quarry at Lake George to view fossils. The weather was perfect and we saw trilobites, crinoids, cephalopods and ammonoids. These were found in limestone deposits dating back to between 430 to 600 million years. *Sid Hadlington*

Our guest speaker, at the November 20th. meeting, was Ken Smith, from the Orillia Field Naturalists Club.

Ken showed his slides and talked to us about glaciers and their effects on the landscape, as they grew and receded over an extended period of time. We were amazed at their power as we viewed moraines, eskers, kettle lakes and mountains that have been created and/or moved by glacial action. Ken finished off his presentation with a surprise bird quiz-much to the delight of all the birders! *Joanne Scott*

On Saturday, November 22nd. Max and Jean Wagg arranged for our Club to visit "Holmstead", the home of Michelle Pilon and Brian Holmes. Michelle took us on a nature walk around her property to see their Class 3 provincially significant wetland area. They have done extensive rehabilitation and restoration work to the marsh area of their property. This area is actually the headwater of a wetland that empties into Thunder Bay. As we walked along, we stopped to look at evening grosbeaks, wood ferns, deer tracks, Pilgrim geese and an injured Canada goose. The outing was complete with hot drinks and sweets supplied by the Waggs. *Joanne Scott*

On Saturday December 20th, 2003, thirty four club members and guests set out to take part in the 104th annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The eight groups experienced cold but clear conditions. Keen eyes and attentive ears helped our groups identify 50 different species and 3,677 individual birds. Some interesting sightings were Northern Goshawk, Ring Necked Pheasant, White Winged Crossbill and Bohemian Waxwing. Once again, I would like to thank everyone who gave up their Saturday to take part and especially those who have taken part year after year to ensure a healthy bird count in our area. *Dave Schandlen*

Saturday December 20th was a busy day for the Field Naturalists. The day began, for many, with the Audubon Bird Count and finished, at the Wye Marsh, with a hearty meal and an auction. Both the bird count and the auction were successful. Special thanks to Dave Schandlen for organizing the bird count, to Linda and David Whitehead for being our entertaining and delightful auctioneers and also to Diane and Tom Marr for keeping score of the funds raised by all the bidding. *Joanne Scott*



Recipes!

Send us your favourites and we'll print them right here.

S'mores Bars

1/2 cup butter or margarine	1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs
3/4 cup brown sugar	8 oz. Semisweet chocolate or 1 1/2 cups chocolate chips
1/2 tsp. Vanilla	2 cups miniature marshmallows
1 cup flour	

Cream butter and sugar. Mix in vanilla, flour and crumbs. Press into greased 8 or 9" square pan. Bake 15 minutes at 350. Sprinkle with chocolate and marshmallows. Bake for 15-20 minutes more. Broil for a few seconds if you need a more singed look. *Adrienne Jex*

MOROCCAN CARROT SALAD

Here is a recipe I got from a friend. You can leave out the pepper flakes if you wish. It travels well;

1 Lb. carrots, peeled and grated	2 Tbs. vegetable oil	2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely chopped
1 Tsp. salt	2 Tbs. cumin seed	1/2 Tsp red-pepper flakes
1 Tsp. brown sugar	2-3 Tbs. parsley, chopped	3-4 TBS lemon juice

Heat oil in a large skillet, add garlic and cook 2-3 minutes. Stir in salt, cumin, red-pepper flakes and sugar. Stir in parsley and lemon juice. Cook 1-2 minutes, then stir in carrots. Eat warm or refrigerate overnight and eat cold. *Dorothy Harper*



On Thanksgiving 2003, Libby Reynolds, an employee of Wye Marsh, took her 89-year-old mother to the Marsh. It was a special trip, as you can see from this letter, sent by her to the newspapers:

“Thanksgiving Monday was one of those amazing fall days when you had to get outside and enjoy the last of the warm sunshine. When my daughter and granddaughter suggested a picnic lunch and walk at the Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre, I immediately said yes. However, residing in a nursing home, I wondered how I would manage on the trails. Much to my delight, we were offered the use of an “all terrain wheelchair” by the two kind ladies at the front reception desk. The chair had been donated by the local Midland-Penetang Field Naturalists’ Club and lived up to its name.

With big bicycle type wheels on the back, we covered the ID Trail, wheeled up the ramp to the observation blind, moved safely along the boardwalk and over to the swan pond where we saw the many Trumpeter Swans. With seed provided by the Marsh, we fed the chickadees from our hands as we toured past the Observation Tower and back to the display hall, where Sonic, the giant snapping turtle, entertained us.

I understand the Wye Marsh hosts an Accessibility Weekend in February to display all their winter handicapped equipment along with other vendors to assist the “not so able” visitor to enjoy the outdoors in all seasons, as I did today.

I would highly recommend the Centre to everyone and again I want to thank those who made my day so delightful.

Sincerely,

Alleyne Attwood

Former member of the Wildflower Gardeners

And Midland-Penetang Naturalists’ Club



Eastern Fox Snake News

During this past summer, a couple of events happened with the Eastern Fox Snake project. First the bad news—a researcher, in the Wasaga Beach area, tracking a couple of snakes fitted with transmitters, became puzzled by the lack of movement of the snakes. On finding their location, he was horrified to discover a man who had just finished chopping them to pieces with his shovel. The culprit was completely unaware that these harmless snakes were an “at-risk” species. He was also not the least bit remorseful with his actions. The victims turned out to be hog-nosed snakes, not eastern fox snakes, but nonetheless it was a horrible act. The person responsible for the attack was charged and eventually convicted and required to pay a fine.

Now the good news—Awenda Park naturalists were delighted to meet up with a fox snake, fitted with a transmitter last summer. It had returned to the same sight this summer. This was a great surprise because the snake had quickly disappeared a few days after the transmitter had been installed and it was felt that it had met an untimely end. The family that found the snake had just learned about the fox snake project through information sessions and posters in their area. They were able to locate and catch a couple more snakes, on their property. They are now great supporters and educators for the program.

Joanne Scott



Roadside Flora Study Update

A number of club members met in November to form a roadside flora study group. The group plans to identify all plant species growing along various roadside habitats, and note their abundance and growing conditions over a number of years. We hope to be able to note changes over time and differences associated with various roadside activities such as mowing and spraying. Current plans are that the study will span a number of years, but will start in Spring 2004. It is also expected that this will be a learning process for all members who wish to be involved. We are hoping to develop teams consisting of both experienced and beginner botanists to cover different roadways, so any member interested in learning botany and able to spend a bit of time and effort during the growing season is welcome. This project is envisioned as much a learning process as a study. Our current thoughts are that specific roadside habitats are to be surveyed in detail on approximately a monthly basis, but that this will be somewhat flexible. Any member who wishes to become involved should phone Greg Lutick at 526-3042 or email me at glutajex@csolve.net.