

Midland-Penetanguishene Field Naturalist Club

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President: Liz Schandlen 526-8320
Vice President: Kate Harries 322-2545
Treasurer: -Carolynn Fishleigh 549-0827
Secretary: Lyn Barnett 549-3857
Shirley Tilson (Winter) 526-6816
Past President: Dan Whittam 527-5360

The President's Message

Welcome back from a wonderful summer.

We have a very interesting and varied program to look forward to. Please mark Sunday May 15th,

2011 on your calendars.

We have Sainte Marie Restaurant reserved for our 50th Anniversary celebration. Terence Dickinson, astronomer, author, editor of

SkyNews, member of the Order of Canada, teacher and broadcaster (did I forget anything?) will be our keynote speaker. More details of the celebration to come.



Liz Schaldlen

Club News

Bob Whittam Receives Environmental Award

One of our founding members, Bob Whittam, was presented with The first annual Simcoe County Environmental Award at the Elmvale Water Festival, Saturday August 21st for his lifetime of work for the Environment. The reason we have Wye Marsh today is because Bob created "The Friends of the Wye Marsh" and kept it running after the Government stopped funding it. Sponsored by the Bayshore Broadcasting Network, Bob received a copy of the Tom Thompson painting "Round Lake". He also received an additional Certificate of Recognition from the

Government of Ontario for winning the award. Bob gave an excellent speech, in which he encouraged us to take our children and our grandchildren for walks in nature to help them connect with it and develop a desire to protect it. These types of walks have been shown to be beneficial for children with autism. He related his own wonderful childhood where he took many a nature walk at "Oogally Poogally Swamp" (as he affectionately named the walk in the woods behind his summer cottage). The Festival was officially opened at 9:30 a.m. with native water ceremonies which our own Elizabeth Brass Elson helped to lead.

Carolynn Fishleigh

In memoriam

It is with sadness that we learned of the passing of one of our newer members, Doreen Morrison. She had cancer for the last three years and that was about the length of time that she belonged to our club. Even though she knew she could only attend rarely, she generously, was one of the first one to support us by paying her membership. Her obituary said it beautifully "In knowing her, Doreen made us all better people - may we radiate kindness as she did so beautifully."

Carolynn Fishleigh

GUEST SPEAKERS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

(All outings leave from the south-east Corner of Wal-Mart parking lot at 9:00 a.m. sharp unless otherwise specified)

ONTARIO REPTILE & AMPHIBIAN ATLAS

Thursday October 21 2010,
7:30 p.m.

Joe Crowley will speak to us on atlassing Ontario's reptiles.

Contact: Irene Berry 361-2500

ON. HURONIA REGIONAL MEETING

Saturday October 23, 2010

The Orillia Field Naturalist Club will host the meeting in Orillia
Contact: Joanne Scott 549-7091

M.T.M.

Wednesday November 10,2010

Volunteers show-and-tell about this local conservation association.

Contact: Jack Scott 549-7091

MONARCHS

Thursday, November 18, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Eleanor Wellman will be speaking on the Magic of Monarchs.

Contact: Irene Berry 361-250

CHRSTIMAS POT LUCK AND 111th AUDUBON BIRD COUNT

Saturday December 18, 2010,
6:00 p.m.

Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre

111th Audubon Bird Count followed by our potluck dinner, bird count tallies and Christmas Holly and Mistletoe Auction Fundraiser for the OWL Foundation. Please bring items wrapped in festive style - with a descriptive poem attached; bidders then make their bids accordingly. Our duelling auctioneers are David and Linda Whitehead.

Contact Register with David

Schandlen 526-8320

Outings

September Rocks Outing

On September 22 "the usual suspects" headed out under threatening skies for a rather different outing. The object of interest was to be geology instead of zoology. Our first stop was Patterson Park in Port McNicoll. The search for fossils in the limestone outcrops at the little park came up short with only some "problematica" - poorly preserved cephalopods and byrozoa. Next, we saw evidence of the most recent (ca 10,000 year old) glacial advance in a gravel pit on Gratrix Road near Victoria Harbour. We also saw some raised shorelines near Waubaushene but we had difficulty correlating them with the written

descriptions. (Glacial geology is not my strength.)

By the time we reached Big Chutes the weather was "splendid September". We spent some time puzzling over the Grenville Province (ca 1.1 billion year-old) granitic gneiss near the Chutes where I was the recipient of some very perceptive questions from the birds, beetle and buttercup crowd. I hope I had believable answers. It was much fun for me and I think my "students" also. Who would not enjoy such a fine day in the September sun!

Gerry Bennett

Yikes! It's a Black Widow Spider!

On a recent geology field trip at one of the stops on regional Rd. 34 near Hwy 400, we saw more than just rocks. While searching for garnets, I picked up a loose stone only to find a beautiful shiny black spider on the underside of the stone.

The spider was about ½ inch long, with three bright red spots edged in pale yellow on the dorsal (back) side of the abdomen. There were a few yellow lines laterally. I didn't look at the ventral (belly) side. I carried the stone with its rider up out of the ditch to show Sid, who immediately said "I think it's a black widow". That sent us both to the books and the internet upon returning home. It would seem this was a northern black widow spider (*Latrodectus variolus*). According to an article in the Toronto Star, by Antonia Guidotti of the ROM in Toronto, Ontario sightings of the northern black widow have been confirmed over past decades in London, Grand Bend, along the Bruce Peninsula and on some Georgian Bay islands (Beausoleil). Guidotti says they've been especially common in Barrie. But "especially common" is still uncommon. For pictures, check these websites:

<http://bugguide.net/node/view/26421/bgimage>

Diagnostic services at Michigan State University

http://pestid.msu.edu/Default.aspx?TabId=263&SkinSrc=/Portals/0/skins/print_template/skin

Betty Bennett

Potpourri

The Queen of the Night

Here is a little note on the *Selenicereus grandiflora*- Queen of The Night.

It is a night-blooming cactus-vine native to warm climate zones such as Texas, Southern Arizona, Mexico, West Indies, and most of Asia.



The Queen in her prime

It is treated as an indoor plant (not in direct sunlight) in cooler climates but can be

placed out doors, on a shady verandah for the summer. It is one of the ugliest of house plants, but has the most beautiful flower.

Flower - large white flower, about 10 inches in diameter, with the pale yellow centre, and pale pink sepals Bloom time - summer (May to September) and the flower lasts only for ONE

night - after dark, only to fade by morning. Pollination is by moths that are

attracted to it by the

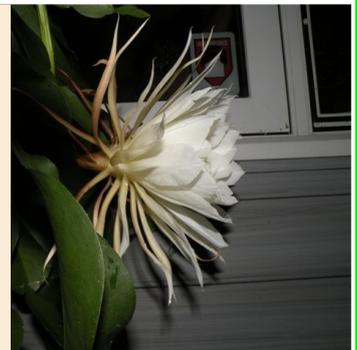
heavy vanilla fragrance. One can almost hear and actually see the flower open with a 'pop-pop' sound.

It is worth the wait for a whole year to see this lovely flower open before your eyes - a real show/conversation piece, and a good reason to have a "Queen of The Night Party" - which I do!!!

One can see a large potted plant of this at the Midland Mountain View Mall, right next to the Phoenix Jewellery Store.

Mary Rajapakse

The Queen past her prime (A few hours later)



Ancient creatures from the "Black Lagoon" of Georgian Bay

This photo (with others) came from the Scotts along with info from Bob Whittam about some interesting creatures found in Georgian Bay near Bone Island (north of Honey Harbour).

The animals are Bryozoans from the phylum Ectoprocta-a group with a fossil record dating back to the upper Cambrian (500,000,000 years ago). Bryozoans are a colony of zooids. Each zooid has whorls of delicate feeding tentacles swaying slowly in the water catching its food.

The colony is gelatinous, firm and slimy. Some massive colonies may exceed 2 feet in diameter but most are 1 foot or less. The colonies form on submerged logs, twigs and wooden docks.

Jack and Joanne Scott

ed note: Fossils of ancient marine bryozoa are very common in local Ordovician (ca. 450 million year old) limestone.



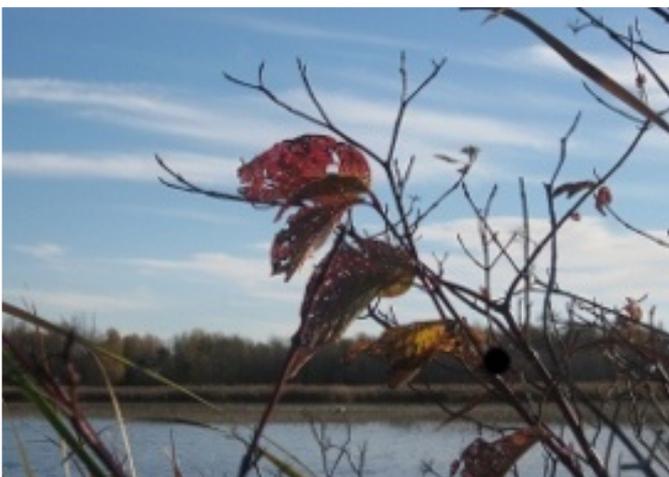
Any one interested in road cleanup?

Call Jack Scott at 549-0791 to join "Jacks Litter Lifters".

Who knew that collecting garbage could be so much fun!

Any ideas for another interesting outing?

Pass them along to Morley Bath at 526-8692.



"The sedge has withered from the lake and no birds sing."

Our 50th.

Fifty years have passed since the founding of our club. The next (winter) issue of the Lilypad will be devoted to the history of the MPFN and the accomplishments of those to were so important in its success. If you have stories and/or pics please forward to Gerry at bengerbet@rogers.com or phone (705) 526-1650.