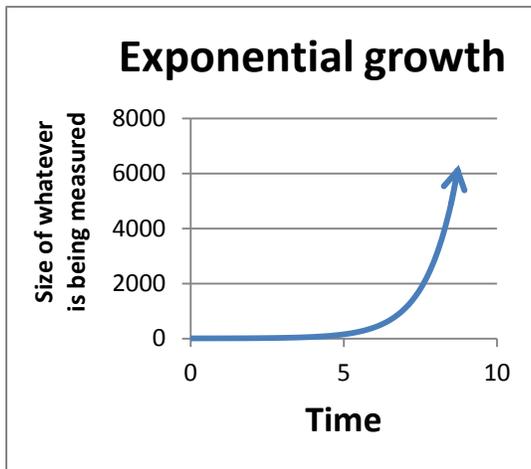


The Preserver, November 2016

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: $y = e^x$ , or whatever happened to ZPG? John Geale**

When I was teaching high school mathematics, I often introduced a unit on the exponential function by claiming that David Suzuki once said that one of mankind's greatest failures was our



failure to understand this very function. I can't find an authoritative reference to this statement, so perhaps it wasn't Suzuki; but that doesn't change the gist of the point I was trying to make: in the absence of other influences, many things tend to grow exponentially, and a graph of this type of growth looks something like the diagram to the left.

I've always seen several interesting features in this graph, but an important one is that for a while there doesn't seem to be much happening at all. Then rather suddenly the line heads upwards, getting steeper and

steeper - very quickly. If you Google "human population growth graph" you can find any number of similar-looking graphs. And this is what tends to happen to populations (or health care costs, or invasive species, or ...) whose growth is not kept under control.

This is why I am always amazed by the fact that in no official planning document I have ever seen is there any reference to limiting human population. Municipal, regional, and provincial planning always seems to be based on continual growth, and all "desirable" economic outcomes always require that everything always goes in the same direction - usually upwards. This seems ridiculously short-sighted. Surely if we look ahead beyond the next election we should be setting a maximum allowable population for each town, city, region, province, and even country. And this is true even if the growth is not exponential - nothing can grow forever.

How does all this relate to NLT? In the relatively short time I've lived in Northumberland County, I've seen far too many wonderful green spaces disappear - woodlots and forests have been cleared, formerly productive agricultural fields are now subdivisions, and sparsely populated rural areas have become crowded. The sooner we protect existing natural spaces the better, before they too are under pressure to be used to accommodate still further population growth. I know this can seem naïve, but growth does have to stop somewhere.

The total area NLT has been able to protect so far may seem like a drop in the bucket, but at least we are moving in what I believe is the right direction - which, ironically, is upwards.

## **SEEKING SPECIES AT RISK: The search for declining species on four Northumberland Land Trust properties**

**By: Monique Aarts and John Urquhart**

On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 the Pelton Nature Reserve was waking up as the dewy vegetation began to glisten under the warm rising sun. Blazing Star Environmental biologists John Urquhart and Leah Brown had been conducting breeding bird surveys since sunrise and were eagerly anticipating the song of a certain bird as they edged closer to a small forest clearing they had visited 21 days earlier. On this earlier date John and Leah had heard one loud, clear call: "ta-wit ta-wit ta-wit tee-yo". It sounded like the call of a Hooded Warbler but without getting a clear look at the bird or hearing a second call, it was not possible to confirm this warbler species. This time, John and Leah were determined to confirm the presence of this brilliant warbler. All of a sudden, they heard it again: "ta-wit ta-wit ta-wit tee-yo". It did not call again but it did do something else. The slightly irritated bird dive-bombed the biologists as they got a good look at the black-hooded yellow bird! Species observation confirmed!



Hooded Warbler

This was only one of many exciting events that occurred as Blazing Star Environmental staff surveyed 4 NLT properties for species at risk (SAR) between April 18 and June 23, 2016. The 3 primary target properties included McEwen Nature Reserve (where Whip-poor-wills were heard), Pelton Nature Reserve and the newly acquired Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve. A small amount of effort was also spent at Chub Point Nature Reserve, but no at-risk species were found.



Eastern Whip-poor-will

Before visiting the properties, a list of target species for each property was prepared using existing species databases, species ranges and suitability of habitat. With species checklists in hand, the biologists set out to survey the target properties for at-risk amphibians, birds, insects, plants and reptiles. Targeted survey types included bird call surveys, frog call surveys and snake cover board surveys. Visual encounter surveys were also used for birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects and plants.

The surveys were a resounding success as a total of 15 different SAR including birds, plants, reptiles and insects were observed on the target properties surveyed (Table 1, on following page). A report containing results and recommendations for future monitoring, mitigation and habitat restoration efforts was submitted to NLT to use for future management of the properties. The presence of at-risk species on NLT properties opens the door to future provincial and federal funding opportunities which may allow NLT to achieve some of these recommended actions to fight the decline of these species.



West Virginia White

*[Editor's note: The very thorough report referred to above was 46 pages long - enough to give us plenty of food for thought! We will work carefully through the recommendations*

*for habitat protection and improvement and for other follow-up activities on all these properties. We are most grateful for the very generous \$7000 grant from the Cobourg Rotary Club which allowed us to have these surveys carried out.]*

**Table 1. SAR found on each NLT property during targeted surveys in 2016.**

McEwen Nature Reserve	Pelton Nature Reserve	Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve
Butternut	Barn Swallow	Canada Warbler
Eastern Milksnake	Canada Warbler	Eastern Meadowlark
Eastern Whip-poor-will	Common Nighthawk	Eastern Wood-Pewee
Eastern Wood-Pewee	Eastern Meadowlark	Least Bittern
West Virginia White	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Monarch
Wood Thrush	Hooded Warbler	Snapping Turtle
	Wood Thrush	Wood Thrush

**WALLACE BIRDATHON - FINAL RESULTS** - we were delighted when we added up this year's donations in support of the Birdathon. Sponsorships totaled \$2258, a record for this event, thanks largely to our five expert birders and those who accompanied them. Many thanks to all our sponsors!

**SAVE THESE DATES! THE 7<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL SPEAKER SERIES, 2016-17**

For the upcoming winter speaker series we have teamed up with the Lone Pine Land Trust to bring you three excellent presentations. Note that November's event will take place at the Keeler Centre in Colborne, while in February and March we will be at the Cobourg Public Library. On all three evenings the doors will open at 7:00 p.m. for refreshments, and the speaker will begin at 7:30. All these events are free of charge and open to the public. Here are the dates and speakers:



Date: Thursday, November 17, 2016

Location: The Keeler Centre, 80 Division St, Colborne, ON

Speaker: Don Sutherland, Zoologist.

Topic: **"Species of Concern in Ontario - the Natural Heritage Information Centre's role".**

The other dates are in 2017: Thursday, February 16 and Thursday, March 23. These events will both take place at the Cobourg Public Library, 200 Ontario Street (the Rotary Room). On Feb. 16, **Erica Nol**, Professor of Biology at Trent University, will address the question **"Can Humans and Songbirds Co-exist in Southern Ontario?"** On Mar. 23, **James Conolly**, Professor of Anthropology at Trent University will inform us about **"Aspects of human settlement in Northumberland County."**

## A FINE CELEBRATION!

In September many friends and supporters gathered at the home of Director Robert



Fishlock and his wife, Urszula Kaczmarczyk to celebrate the donation of the 35-acre Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve to NLT. The donors, Kate and John van Nostrand, and several of their family members (photo to left) were present and many NLT members were able to meet them.

## ANOTHER AWARD FOR JOAN CHALOVICH

In October, George Gordon, Joan Chalovich and John Geale attended the OLTA (Ontario Land Trust Alliance) annual conference known as "The Gathering", near Orillia. At the Thursday evening banquet, Joan was presented with OLTA'S Vision Award, given for outstanding service to the land trust community. The nomination form, written by George, emphasized her long service, her terms as President and Treasurer, her long-standing relationships in our area, her planning skills, and her wise counsel. Congratulations, Joan!



## 2016 ANNUAL GALA DINNER

On October 26, over 100 supporters gathered for music, dinner, live and silent auctions and a fabulous presentation by author and



educator Michael Runtz. We thank Michael, organizer Whitney Lake, enthusiastic ticket-seller and auctioneer Doug Galt, and all who attended for a wonderful evening and some valuable fund-raising. [Photos courtesy of SNAPD.]



## MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM [Note: If you renew or join now, it is for the 2017 year.]

You may now submit your membership and make donations using your credit card: please go to [nltrust.ca](http://nltrust.ca) and click on the "Donate Now" button; this will allow you to use PayPal or CanadaHelps. Otherwise:

Please fill out the form below. Make cheques payable to "Northumberland Land Trust", and mail them along with this form to: Northumberland Land Trust, P. O. Box 1153, Cobourg, ON, K9A 5A4

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