

Northumberland Land Trust

Ontario, Canada

Preserving Northumberland County - one acre at a time

The Preserver, August 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Fundraising Gala Tickets Now Available Miriam Mutton

I hope everyone is having a wonderful summer. It was an honour to be asked to step up to the position of President and be assured I have not let John Geale get too far away! Thank you, John, for your exemplary leadership as President of the NLT. And, to all, please visit the NLT web site for more information about the NLT Board members.

In this edition of The Preserver, there are articles on the very successful Wallace Birdathon this year, an update on Stewardship Activities, and a preview of this year's Prairie Day on September 9.

Included also is the poster for one of our most popular events, the Fund-Raising Gala, which will be held this year at the Best Western Inn and Conference Centre in Cobourg on October 25, 2017. Mark your calendars! A fun and entertaining evening, it is also a great opportunity for potential new members to learn about the NLT. On page 6 you will find the poster and information about getting your tickets today.

WALLACE BIRDATHON 2017

John Geale

This year's birdathon was hugely successful, thanks to all our sponsors and to our six expert birders. We only have space here for some of the highlights, but all the results can be found on our website at nltrust.ca.

The first birder to cover a property was John Urquhart at "Jack's Marsh" - the Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve, on May 9. This was early enough in the season that from the Lake Ontario shoreline John was able to pick up several species that would be seen nowhere else. These included Common Merganser, Bufflehead, and even a Common Loon. In the marsh John found Least Bittern, and in the nearby field was the birdathon's only Eastern Meadowlark. John's total was 57 species, including 14 seen on no other property.



Common Loon



Cerulean Warbler

May 22 was a very popular birdathon day, and Margaret Bain chose this date to visit the Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education centre, accompanied by Maureen Riggs. Heavy fog interfered with the identification of many of the warblers that were streaming through the treetops, but Margaret says that her sighting of a Cerulean Warbler was her "bird of the day."

This was only one of 17 warbler species recorded, and Brown Creeper and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher were also good finds. Margaret's final count was 63 species, of which 4 were unique to this property.

Also on May 22, Roger Frost spent the day at the Leckey Nature Reserve. It was a good warbler day here as well; Roger managed to find 18 species, including the threatened Canada Warbler. He also did well with raptors, seeing 4 species including Great Horned Owl and Northern Goshawk. With grassland, various forest types, some swampy territory and a beaver pond, this property has a wide variety of habitats. Roger took full advantage of this to record 84 species, including 9 not found elsewhere.



Canada Warbler



Grasshopper Sparrow

And finally on May 22, Ben Walters covered the McEwen Nature Reserve. His Blue-winged Warbler (a new species for this property) and Grasshopper Sparrow were not seen anywhere else. Other interesting sightings included Whip-poor-will (a threatened species both provincially and federally), Wild Turkey, Least Flycatcher, and Eastern Bluebird (at least three pairs of which made use of our nest boxes). Ben's total count for the day was 65 species.

Doug McRae and John Geale spent 5 hours on May 26 at the Chub Point NR. The woods themselves could best be described as flooded, so most of the time was spent around the periphery. The highlights included a displaying American Woodcock, and several Veerys and Northern Waterthrushes singing enthusiastically, A Lincoln's Sparrow singing near the railway track was the most surprising bird, but the find of the day was a Ruffed Grouse nest with 13 eggs (photo to right) near the very centre of the property. Doug's species count was 46, very good for a small property with little habitat variation.



David Geale returned and recovered from an exhaustive birding tour of southern Ontario with some Taiwanese clients in time to complete our birdathon on May 30. Tom Jackman went with



Brewster's Warbler

him in the morning, and their "bird of the day" was not even a true species, but a "Brewster's" Warbler, a hybrid between Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. They were the only birders to find a cuckoo; they heard it sing but were unable to spot it, and since our two cuckoo species sometimes sing each others' songs it could not be positively

identified. David's species count was 56, beating last year's early May total by 5.

And now to the overall results, which broke records in three categories. We had a record 36 sponsors, some of whom sponsored all six birders. The addition of the Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve produced several species that could not reasonably be expected elsewhere, and our grand species total was 118, beating 2016 by 12. And our sponsors were, as always, very generous, donating a total of \$3,315.45, about 50% more than ever before. The winner of the contest to guess this total was Torontonion David Moore (who owns a property south of Bewdley); he came up with the exactly correct number! The more local winner was Tracy Parker, whose guess was 120. It is worth noting that this event is not only about raising

money. It also gives our members and other folks a chance to be actively involved in our activities and to see our properties, and over time we will learn much more about all the bird species that breed on or migrate through the Nature Reserves.

At the July meeting of the Board of Directors, a motion was passed to present Norma Wallace with a life membership in the Northumberland Land Trust. Later that month Bill Crowley and John Geale visited Norma and made the presentation to thank her for her many years of support; Norma was very grateful for this recognition. We were also able to thank her daughter, Susan Laing, who has been a great help to Norma and the Wallace Birdathon in recent years.

AGM 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

Our Annual General Meeting was held at the Cobourg Public Library on Wednesday, June 14. Board member Whitney Lake prepared the NLT Annual Report 2017 and it was distributed at the meeting. Please contact us if you would like a copy of this Annual Report.

OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE JACK VAN NOSTRAND NATURE RESERVE

On a beautiful sunny Saturday, May 27, we unveiled the sign at our newest Nature Reserve and declared it "OPEN"! Several members of the van Nostrand family were in attendance, and they joined other NLT members for refreshments at the Grafton Village Inn.



NORTHUMBERLAND BIOBLITZ RESULTS - AN UPDATE

The first annual Northumberland Bioblitz was a resounding success! Over 50 biologists, skilled naturalists, environmental students and avid nature lovers scoured over 200 acres to determine what species they could identify, and the results are impressive!

The Northumberland Bioblitz spanned three properties, all of which are managed by different organizations in Northumberland County. The most well-known property surveyed during the event was Peter's Woods Provincial Nature Reserve. This stunning piece of old growth forest is owned by the province, but relies on the Willow Beach Field Naturalist Club to maintain the

trails and infrastructure of this beautiful parcel of land. Two other properties were also surveyed as part of this blitz: the Pelton Nature Reserve managed by the Northumberland Land Trust, and the Schultz property managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

Although the final numbers won't be fully tallied for a few more weeks, so far we have already positively identified over 200 species! So far some of the highlights include the incredible diversity of bird species that call these properties home; over 70 species have been identified. To give some context to that number, during the recent flagship bioblitz held in Rouge National Urban Park, the species count was 96, and that survey stretched from the shores of Lake Ontario all the way to Newmarket!

The Northumberland Bioblitz was organized by the Willow Beach Field Naturalist Club, in cooperation with the Northumberland Land Trust and Nature Conservancy of Canada. However, an event like this brings many organizations and individuals together. Lower Trent Conservation donated the use of their tents for this event, and experts from Rouge National Urban Park, Blazing Star Environmental, University of Guelph, Sir Sanford Fleming College, York University, Trent University and other groups assisted with surveys during this blitz.

MORE DETAILS ON THE BIOBLITZ IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER!

STEWARDSHIP NOTES

Lots of wet weather again interfered with some projects, but we were able to get some work done, thanks to help from Tom and Jenny Jackman.

Pelton - A rough trail is now marked out so that those who need to get to the stream or the marsh no longer have to simply bushwhack. Work continued on thinning the red pine plantation, and while doing that we noted some dog-strangling vine (DSV) that needs attention. On the positive side, we also saw lots of healthy-looking clumps of gray-headed coneflower which had MANY insects busily working on them.

McEwen - The west fence has been improved, although much more remains to be done.

LLOEC - The vernal pool studies are being revived in collaboration with the Trent Community Research Centre, guided by Dylan Radcliffe, who is actually our Jack van Nostrand Steward.

Leckey - Frank and Jeff have kept the trails in great shape! The Stewardship Team did some minor pruning and eliminated some European buckthorn. Several DSV locations were also noted for Bill Newell to work on.

Jack van Nostrand - The high water levels of this year prevented the installation of the hydrological instruments we had planned. There's always next year!

Chub Point - Work will begin soon to control the *Phragmites* along Station Road. This could be a "many hands make light work" sort of project, so if you'd like to help please let Bill Newell (bill.newell@xplor.net.ca) know.

PRAIRIE DAY

NLT is a participating organization at the Alderville First Nation Black Oak Savanna and Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative 10th annual Prairie Day in Alderville Saturday, September 9, 2017, 8am to 3pm. Admission is by donation. There will be live music, children's activities, interpretative outings and walks, traditional teachings, native foods and RLPJI displays. The event will be held at 8467 County Road 18 in Alderville.

MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

You may submit your membership and make donations using your credit card: please go to nltrust.ca and click on the "Pay Membership" button. Otherwise:

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

✂ -----

Renewal New membership

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other: _____

Last name _____ First name(s) _____

Address _____

Number and Street

City/town

Postal code

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

Individual: \$25 Family: \$40 Supporting: \$50 Corporate: \$100

Donation: \$100 \$250 Other _____

I wish to remain anonymous

THE **NORTHUMBERLAND LAND TRUST** INVITES YOU TO THEIR
ANNUAL

GALA FUNDRAISING DINNER

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25TH - 5:30 P.M.

BEST WESTERN COBOURG INN AND CONVENTION CENTRE
930 BURNHAM ST., COBOURG, ONTARIO

Live Auction – Silent Auction
Proceeds in support of NLT's stewardship activities

Guest Speaker: David Phillips

Senior Climatologist, Environment and Climate Change Canada



DAVID PHILLIPS (left) has been employed with Environment Canada's weather service for more than 45 years. His publishing credits include two bestsellers: The Day Niagara Falls Ran Dry and Blame It On The Weather. He is the author of the Canadian Weather Trivia Calendar, the most popular calendar sold in Canada. David frequently appears on national radio and television as a commentator on weather and climate

phenomena.



Northumberland Land Trust

TICKETS

\$75 WITH A \$30 INCOME TAX RECEIPT INCLUDED.



Northumberland Land Trust

Reserve a seat at David Phillips' table - **\$150** including an income tax receipt for **\$105**

Reserve a table for 8 guests and receive two complimentary bottles of wine for the table

To purchase tickets visit **nltrust.ca** or phone **905-342-3851** or email gala@nltrust.ca

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION VISIT www.nltrust.ca