



Since 1923

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 620 May 2016



*A. Takeda  
Photography*

Black swallowtail butterfly photographed by Augusta Takeda in Newfoundland, July 2010

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**Mission Statement:**

Toronto Field Naturalists connects people with nature in the Toronto area. We help people understand, enjoy, and protect Toronto's green spaces and the species that inhabit them.

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**IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER!**

We welcome contributions of original writing (between 20 and 500 words) of observations on nature, especially in the Toronto area. We also welcome reports, reviews, poems, sketches, paintings and digital photographs. Please include "Newsletter" in the subject line when sending by email, or on the envelope if sent by mail.

Please re-name digital photographs with the subject and your name (abbreviations ok). In the accompanying email include location, date and any interesting story or other information associated with the photograph.

**Deadline for submissions for September issue: Aug 1**

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

Jenny Bull (co-editor), Vivienne Denton, Karin Fawthrop, Nancy Fredenburg, Elisabeth Gladstone, Judy Marshall, Lynn Miller, Toshi Oikawa, Jennifer Smith, Wendy Rothwell (co-editor).

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<b>MEMBERSHIP FEES</b>	<b>ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER</b>	<b>MAILED NEWSLETTER</b>
YOUTH (under 26)	\$10	\$20
SENIOR SINGLE (65+)	\$30	\$40
SINGLE	\$40	\$50
SENIOR FAMILY (65+)	\$40	\$50
FAMILY	\$50	\$60

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*Please note: TFN does not give out its membership list.*

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The office is open 9:30 am to noon on Fridays



TFN is on Twitter and Facebook! Got something interesting to share? We'd love to get your photos and insights on TFN activities, Toronto nature events and interesting nature news. Just email [media@torontofieldnaturalists.org](mailto:media@torontofieldnaturalists.org) and be sure to include what your photo is and where it was taken.

To read posts, go to the website [torontofieldnaturalists.org](http://torontofieldnaturalists.org) and click on Twitter or Facebook.

Photo: Wendy Rothwell



Hedge bindweed

**NOTE FROM THE EDITORS:**

This is the last issue before we all head outside for the summer! Watch for the September newsletter at the end of August.

Many thanks to all the people who have contributed articles, news and illustrations over the year. Please keep the newsletter in mind as you observe and appreciate nature over the summer and send us your impressions in words and pictures.

Thanks, too, to the Newsletter Committee for their dedication in proofreading, checking the outings information, and preparing reports and features.

**We are still looking for a volunteer who knows MS Office to help compile the newsletter. Please contact the office if you have some experience in Word and would like to join our team.**

## TFN MEETING

**Sunday, May 1, 2:30 pm**

**Ontario's Orchids: Perpetual Beauty Worth All Costs**

*Tom Shields, Southern Ontario Orchid Society  
will discuss how to protect and preserve Ontario's beautiful native orchids*

**VISITORS WELCOME!**

**SOCIAL: 2:00 – 2:30 pm**

**Sale of TFN publications:  
Todmorden Mills + 7 ravine studies (\$16 value) for only \$10**

Emmanuel College, Room 001, 75 Queen's Park Cres.

Just south of the Museum subway station exit (east side of Queen's Park). Enter at south end of building, down a few steps on outside stairwell. **Wheelchair entrance:** second door south on Queen's Park. Elevator inside to the right. Room 001 is one floor below street level.

**For information:** call 416-593-2656 up to noon on the Friday preceding the lecture.

### UPCOMING LECTURES, FALL 2016

Sept 11 Five great extinctions – are we facing another?

Kevin Seymour, Assistant Curator,  
Natural History, Royal Ontario Museum

Oct 2 Plant exploration: the search for novel floral diversity.

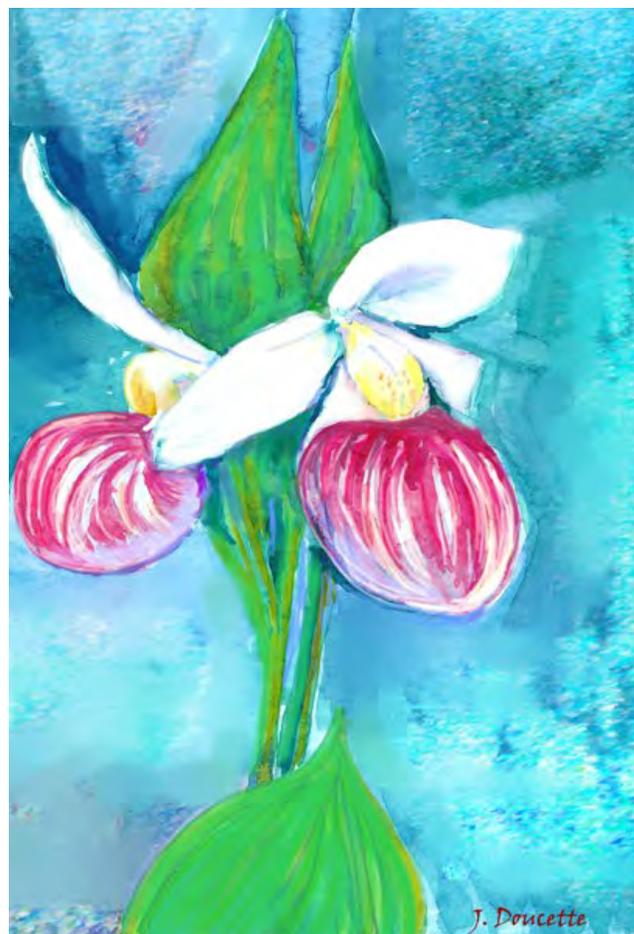
Spencer Barrett, Professor, Dept of  
Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, U of T

Nov 6 Toronto's Urban Bird Programs.

Emily Rondel, Bird Studies Canada,  
Toronto Projects Coordinator

Dec 4 Wolf and Coyote Behaviour.

Dennis Murray, Professor, Integrative  
Wildlife Conservation, Trent University



Showy lady's-slipper, *Cypripedium reginae*,  
by Joanne Doucette

## TFN OUTINGS

- TFN events are conducted by unpaid volunteers.
- TFN assumes no responsibility for injuries sustained by anyone participating in our activities.
- Children and visitors are welcome at all TFN events. Children must be accompanied by an adult.
- If you plan to bring children in a stroller, be aware that there may be steps or other unsuitable terrain.
- Please do not bring pets.
- To get to outings on time, check TTC routes and schedules ([www.ttc.ca](http://www.ttc.ca) or 416-393-4636).
- Outings go rain or shine: check the weather online or call 416-661-0123 so you will know what to wear.
- Wear appropriate footwear for walking on trails which may be muddy, steep or uneven.
- *Please thoroughly clean your footwear before each outing to avoid spreading invasive seeds.*

- Sun  
May 1  
2:30 pm     **LECTURE – Ontario’s Orchids: Perpetual Beauty Worth All Costs**  
Speaker: Tom Shields, Southern Ontario Orchid Society  
Emmanuel College, 75 Queen’s Park Cres. See page 3.
- Tues  
May 3  
11:00 am     **16 MILE CREEK, OAKVILLE – Spring Ramble**  
**Leader: Charles Chaffey** Some Carolinian wildflowers absent or rare in Toronto are abundant here. We shall explore the Heritage Trail System northwards to Lions Valley Park where there are washrooms, and return by a different route. Meet at the parking area next to 1027 Skyvalley Cres, Oakville; map: [www.spnc.ca/Maps?OHTS2.html](http://www.spnc.ca/Maps?OHTS2.html). Transit users gather in the upper level of the guard's (accessible) coach on the Lakeshore West GO train that leaves Union Station at 9:43 am, connecting at Oakville to bus #13 West Oak Trails; get off at West Oak Trails Blvd north of Skyvalley Cr. Carpooling inquiries: [REDACTED] Bring lunch. We will leave before 3 pm to be back at Union Station at 4:30 pm.
- Wed  
May 4  
10:00 am     **JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE – Nature, Birds and Plants (Car Pooling)**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn** Meet at the gates to the JBNR, 749 Fowlers Road, Uxbridge for a circular walk on mostly un paved and uneven surfaces with gentle slopes. We will explore most, if not all, the marked trails in the JBNR. Bring lunch, water and binoculars. Sturdy waterproof footwear, insect repellent and long sleeves and pants all recommended. Washrooms at beginning of walk. Please contact Charles Bruce-Thompson [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] by May 1 to arrange car-pooling to the reserve north of Uxbridge. State your name, phone number, whether you can offer rides and for how many, or if you need a ride. Give your approximate location in order to arrange a convenient rendezvous. Return to Toronto by about 4 pm.
- Wed  
May 4  
6:45 pm     **TENTH ANNUAL JANE JACOBS TRIBUTE WALK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leaders: Pleasance Crawford and Helen Juhola** Meet in Ben Nobleman Park on the south side of Eglinton Ave W opposite the Eglinton West subway station. From there, via Everden Rd, Cedarvale Park, Strathearn Rd and Cedarvale Ravine, we will walk to St Clair West subway station at Heath St and St Clair Ave W, ending around sunset at 8:24 p m. Bring binoculars.
- Sat  
May 7  
1:30 pm     **WILKET CREEK PARK – Trilliums and Spring Nature**  
**Leader: Mary Taylor** Meet at the northwest corner of Eglinton Ave E and Leslie St. This area features an impressive population of white trilliums, along with other spring wildflowers, and is also an interesting area for migrating birds.
- Sun  
May 8  
1:30 pm     **AGGIE'S WILDFLOWER WALK – Nature Walk (Humber Heritage Committee)**  
**Leader: Madeleine McDowell** Meet at Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas St. Rediscover the world of Agnes Dunbar Moodie Fitzgibbon, daughter of Susanna Moodie and illustrator of *Canadian Wildflowers* (published in 1867). All Aggie's specimens were from the Baby Point and Humber Valley area. Many of these flowers still survive in the Magwood Sanctuary. Approx 2 hrs ending at Lambton House for tea and a talk about Agnes.
- Tues  
May 10  
2:00 pm     **CENTRAL TORONTO WATERFRONT PARKS – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: John Bacher** Meet at the southwest corner of Bathurst St and Queen’s Quay W for a 1½-hr circular walk including Coronation Park and Little Norway Park. Mainly flat and mostly paved surfaces. Develop appreciation for limited but important parks in central Toronto waterfront. No washrooms.

- Sat  
May 14  
10:00 am  
**BENLAMOND ESTATE – Lost Creeks, Heritage**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey** Meet at Main subway station for a 2½-hr linear walk of about 6 km. We will examine historical and significant buildings in the Benlamond Estate before tracing the course of Tomlins Creek down the Escarpment on paved but fairly steep downhill slopes. Tomlins runs through St John's Norway Cemetery en route to Orchard Park, formerly Smalls Pond. From there we will stroll through the Gerrard Indian Bazaar to Greenwood Ave. We will cross the former courses of Smalls Creek and Ashbridges Creek and note vestiges of the shack town that once festered on Erie Terrace. Bus service available on Greenwood to Queen St E or Greenwood subway station. Public washrooms in Orchard Park may not yet be open for the season.
- Sun  
May 15  
2:00 pm  
**WETLANDS AND WILDFLOWERS BEHIND ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE – Lost Rivers Walk**  
**Leaders: Helen Mills and friends** Meet at the corner of Don Mills Rd and Gateway Blvd opposite the Science Centre for a circular walk exploring the secluded natural areas of the West Don River in E.T. Seton Park. Some bushwhacking. Washrooms available only at the rallying point. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues  
May 17  
6:45 pm  
**TORONTO WATERFRONT AND GARDENS – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Peter Iveson** Meet at the southwest corner of Bathurst St and Queen's Quay W beside the war memorial in Little Norway Park. Walk will conclude at the Music Garden.
- Wed  
May 18  
10:00 am  
**WEEDS PART 1**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn** Meet at Castle Frank subway station for a circular walk on mostly flat terrain (one descent into and ascent out of the valley). This walk is the first of four walks where we'll be looking for plants which get around on their own, struggle for light, nutrients and water and thrive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds). Up to 2½ hrs. Washrooms available. Bring binoculars and field guide if you wish.
- Sat  
May 21  
10:00 am  
**LESLIE STREET SPIT – Birds, Insects and Plants**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright** Meet at the park entrance at Leslie St and Unwin Ave for a long circular walk on flat, mostly paved surface, about 12 km. Bring binoculars, lunch and water. A joint outing with the Toronto Bruce Trail Club. Washrooms available.
- Sun  
May 22  
1:30 pm  
**CROTHERS WOODS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Margaret McRae** Meet at the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk in the Don Valley, hopefully in Crothers Woods to see spring flowers. There may be dirt trails and steep hills. No washrooms.
- Thurs  
May 26  
10:00 am  
**HIGH PARK – Spring Wildflowers**  
**Leader: Wendy Rothwell** Meet near the park entrance at High Park Ave and Bloor St W for a 2-hr circular walk with some unpaved trails and slopes. We will walk through the oak savannahs, open meadows and forested slopes of High Park looking for spring wildflowers.
- Sat  
May 28  
10:00 am  
**EAST DON PARKLANDS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Phil Goodwin** Meet at the Second Cup in the plaza at Steeles Ave E and Laureleaf Rd S for a spring walk in the forest. Morning only.
- Sun  
May 29  
1:30 pm  
**TODMORDEN MILLS WILDFLOWER PRESERVE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Paula Davies** Meet at the entrance to the Wildflower Preserve at Todmorden Mills, 67 Pottery Rd. Come early to tour the historic buildings at Doors Open Toronto. We will look for signs of spring wildlife and check out work done by the stewards. Dirt trails and some stairs. Washrooms available.
- Tues  
May 31  
6:45 pm  
**RIVERDALE PARK EAST – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Vivienne Denton** Meet at the entrance to Broadview subway station for a circular walk around Riverdale Park East on mostly paved surfaces with gentle slopes. We will examine naturalized areas including woodland planted by the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, wetland areas, and newer plantings beside the Bridgepoint Health Centre. We will return via Broadview Ave stopping to admire one of the best views of the city skyline at sunset.
- Wed  
June 1  
10:00 am  
**WEEDS PART 2**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn** Meet at Greenwood subway station for a circular walk, mostly paved and flat with gentle slopes. This walk is part 2 of 4 where we'll be looking for plants which get around on their own, struggle unaided for light, nutrients and water; and thrive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds). Up to 2½ hrs. Bring binoculars and field guide if you wish. Washrooms available.

- Wed  
June 1  
10:30 am **ALDERVILLE BLACK OAK SAVANNAH – Lupines in Bloom**  
**Leader: Joanne Doucette** Leaving Toronto 10:30 a.m., be back in Toronto around 6 pm. Alderville Oak Savannah has planted tens of thousands of wild lupine in the hopes that, when the Karner blue butterfly is reintroduced, it can be brought to this large prairie and oak savanna remnant south of Rice Lake. Enjoy a guided tour and an opportunity to purchase First Nations handicrafts. This is a 1¼ hour drive from Toronto. Car-pooling. Space is limited so reserve by May 18 by email to [REDACTED] or leave a message at [REDACTED]
- Sat  
June 4  
1:30pm **SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Ed Freeman** Meet at the southeast corner of Birchmount Rd and Kingston Rd for a circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces, mainly flat. We will walk south along Springbank Ave, in Rosetta McClain Gardens, along Fishleigh Dr and into Scarborough Bluffs Park returning via Undercliff and Romana Drives. Washroom in Rosetta McClain Gardens. Bring camera and binoculars.
- Sat  
June 4  
1:30 pm **GATES GULLY – Family Walk**  
**Leader: Jason Ramsay-Brown** Kids, parents, caregivers and friends, come and join the TFN as we explore Scarborough's Gates Gully. Search for butterflies, birds, and other critters that haunt the bluffs! Hear tales of smugglers, soldiers and buried British treasure! See a shipwreck poking out of Lake Ontario! Meet at the start of the Doris McCarthy trail, located on Ravine Dr, a short walk south from the intersection of Kingston Rd and Bellamy Rd. The rough path down to the lake and back is a little over 2km and quite steep. Strollers not recommended. Bring curiosity, water, camera, binoculars, and a snack if you like. No washrooms.
- Sun  
June 5  
1:30 pm **HUMBER RIVER – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: James Eckenwalder**, Associate Professor, Dept of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Toronto. Meet at Old Mill subway station for a circular walk along the Humber. Long sleeves and long pants recommended. No washrooms. Steep stairs at the beginning.
- Tues  
June 7  
10:00 am **YORK CEMETERY – Trees**  
**Leader: Jeff McMann** Meet at the Visitation Centre in the Cemetery (160 Beecroft Rd) for a 2-hr circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Thurs  
June 9  
6:30 pm **UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO: Quads and Quieter Places – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Janet Langdon** Meet outside the main doors of Northrop Frye Hall at 73 Queen's Park Cres E for a linear walk on mostly paved and flat surfaces. We'll meander through the downtown campus looking at green spaces and modern quadrangles where students can get a little peace to study and think. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sat  
June 11  
1:00 pm **GEORGE LESLIE AND GREAT TREES OF LESLIEVILLE – Nature walk**  
**Leader: Joanne Doucette** Meet in Leslie Grove Park at the corner of Queen St E and Jones Ave for a circular 2½-hr walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat. Hear about the history of George Leslie, the Toronto Nurseries, Alexander Muir and some of the great street trees in this part of Toronto. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sun  
June 12  
1:30 pm **HIGH PARK – Trees and Shrubs**  
**Leader: Bohdan Kowalyk** Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with gentle, some steep, slopes. Washrooms at end of walk. We will see black oak woodlands, invasive species and endangered and threatened species. About 2½-hrs and 3 km.
- Tues  
June 14  
10:00 am **ROUGE PARK AND THE WATERFRONT TRAIL – Birds and Natural History**  
**Leader: Blair Campbell** Meet at Rouge Hill GO Station, east of Port Union Rd and Lawrence Ave E for a circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat. We will proceed east to the Rouge River Marsh, and may stray a bit into Pickering. We'll head back west along the Waterfront trail. If you are travelling by TTC, there will be several opportunities to catch the Lawrence Ave bus. Free parking at Rouge Hill GO station. Bring lunch and binoculars.
- Thurs  
June 16  
7:00 pm **HENRY FARM AND BETTY SUTHERLAND TRAIL – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey** Meet at Leslie subway station at the southwest corner of Sheppard Ave E and Leslie St for a 3 km circular walk, mainly flat with gentle slopes and mostly paved surfaces. No washrooms. We will follow the Betty Sutherland Trail south and walk through Havenbrook Park noting Oriole Lodge, historic home of the Henry family, then follow Manor Park Court back to the trail and return to our starting point. Bring water and binoculars.
- Sat  
Jun. 18  
2:00 pm **WILKET CREEK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Peter Heinz** Meet at the bus shelter on the southwest corner of Lawrence Ave E at Leslie St for a 2-hr circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with some stairs. Washrooms at start of walk. This loop takes us from manicured gardens through Wilket Creek ravine, up the steep escarpment of ancient Lake Iroquois and down into the West Don River valley. Learn of challenges faced by a watercourse as it struggles with development. Bring binoculars and water.

## FOR ENJOYMENT OF OUTINGS

**Wide brimmed hat** for protection from sun

**Long sleeves** for protection from mosquitoes, poison ivy, thistles, nettles and ticks

**Long pants** for protection from mosquitoes, poison ivy, thistles and ticks (tuck your shirt into your pants)

**Light-coloured clothing** makes it easier to spot ticks

**Long socks** to help protect you from ticks (tuck your pant legs into the socks)

**Hiking boots or running shoes**

**Rainwear**

**Sun glasses, sun screen** and **insect repellent**

**Binoculars** and **camera**

**Water** or other beverage and a **snack**

**TTC Ride Guide** (free), **map**, **notebook** and **pen**

**Bring your family and/or friends, but ... NO pets allowed**

- Sun  
Jun 19  
2:00 pm
- THE LAURENTIAN CHANNEL – A Long Lost River**  
**Leaders: Helen Mills, Bill Clarke and Paul Overy** Meet at the southwest corner of Bloor St W and Indian Rd (2 blocks east of Keele St) for a linear walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with gentle slopes, some steep slopes and stairs. We will explore the origin, course and significance of one of the remaining ancient rivers in southern Ontario, which continues to flow today. Deep underground, it links Georgian Bay to Lake Ontario, passing under High Park. Its waters were unexpectedly brought to the surface by city workers in 2003, and tell the story of its source and significance. Approximately 2 km, some along city streets but mostly within High Park, ending near Spring Creek within an easy walk of Howard Park streetcar loop. Moderate difficulty. Wear appropriate footwear for soil paths which may be muddy. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues  
June 21  
6:15 pm
- BUGS AND CRAYFISH IN THE HUMBER – Exploration of Benthic Biodiversity**  
**Leader: Holly Brose, EcoSpark** Meet at Old Mill subway station. If you prefer, meet at the north end of King's Mill Park parking lot closest to the road entrance where we will be around 6:30 pm. A circular walk in a small area. Explore the aquatic invertebrates of the Humber. We will not cover much distance, but a lot of biodiversity. Sit riverside or don some hip waders to help collect benthic macro invertebrates (BMI's) with D-nets. We'll identify the BMI's up close and determine a rough reading of river health at the Old Mill. You'll leave this walk knowing more about the current state of water quality in your area and having discovered a new benthic community you may not have known was there. Bring rain boots or shoes which may get muddy. No washrooms.
- Wed  
June 22  
10:00 am
- BUTTERFLIES AT THE BLUFFS – Birds, Insects and Plants**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright** Meet at Ravine Dr, 100 metres south of Kingston Rd at the head of Doris McCarthy Trail for a 3 to 4-hr linear walk ending at the Guild Inn. Gentle slopes, some steep, mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces. The sheltered south-facing slopes of Gates Gully, through which the Doris McCarthy trail passes, are good for June butterflies. We'll discuss Scarborough waterfront proposals. The Guild Inn park and woods provide more territory to explore for those with the energy to do so. Bring lunch and binoculars. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sat  
Jun 25  
10:00 am
- CROTHERS WOODS AND SUN VALLEY – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Margaret McRae** Meet at the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk in the Don Valley on hilly dirt trails. No washrooms. About 2½ hrs.
- Sun  
June 26  
10:00 am
- WINDFIELDS PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Nancy Dengler** Meet at the southeast corner of Bayview Ave and York Mills Rd for a 2-hr circular walk on mostly unpaved, mainly flat surfaces, in the northeast section of Wilket Creek ravine. Washrooms at end of walk. Bring water and a snack.
- Wed  
June 29  
10:00 am
- ROUGE PARK – Birds and Wildflowers**  
**Leaders: Jim and Petra Grass** Meet at the campground parking lot at 7459 Kingston Rd (1 km east of Port Union Rd and Sheppard Ave E) for a circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces, mainly flat with two steep slopes and some stairs. We will cross the bridge into the wooded area and return along the river, finishing at the parking lot. Washrooms at beginning of walk. Bring binoculars and walking boots.

## LYME DISEASE - TAKE MEASURES TO PROTECT YOURSELF

Visit Toronto Public Health's website and check out their Lyme Disease Fact Sheet, including the prevention tips. From the TPH home page, click on Communicable Diseases, then Index, then Lyme Disease. Or call 416-338-7600. See also Canadian Lyme Disease Foundation: [www.canlyme.com/lyme-basics/](http://www.canlyme.com/lyme-basics/)

- Thurs  
June 30  
6:45 pm     **CHERRY BEACH AND BEYOND – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Richard Partington** Meet at the bus stop at the intersection of Cherry St and Commissioners St (Bus 72A from Pape subway station or 172A from King subway station). A circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat and no stairs. No washrooms. Bring binoculars. The walk will end at the foot of Cherry St.
- Sat  
July 2  
10:00 am     **E T SETON PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Ken Sproule** Meet at the southeast corner of Don Mills Rd and Gateway/Overlea Blvd for a circular walk of approximately 2½ hrs. The first half (if dry) will be on dirt paths with a lot of climbing along the slopes of the West Don valley. We will return on paved paths. Bring binoculars. Lunch optional.
- Sun  
July 3  
1:30 pm     **BURNETT CREEK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Alexander Cappell** Meet at the southeast corner of Bathurst St and Finch Ave W for a linear walk about 2½ hrs. We'll follow mostly-buried Burnett Creek through a series of linear parkettes into York Cemetery and then down a steep wooded gully ending in a concrete channel leading to the West Don River, not far from a coffee shop near Bathurst St and Sheppard Ave W.
- Tues  
July 5  
10:30 am     **EGLINTON FLATS: Three Centuries of Canada's Story – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Madeleine McDowell** Meet at the northwest corner of Scarlett Rd and Eglinton Ave W for a circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces with some gentle and steep slopes. Two hours or more. 3 km. We will cross the Humber bridge to the east bank and experience the vistas en route. We will see a native Birch circle, the campsite of Lt Governor Simcoe from 1793 and the bridge and mill site of John Scarlett from the 1850's. We will see some beautiful habitat, the power of the river and possibly some fossils. Bring snacks, cameras, shoes suitable for damp conditions and insect repellent.
- Wed  
July 6  
6:30 pm     **CEDARVALE RAVINE – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Alex Wellington** Meet on the northeast corner of Bathurst St and St Clair Ave W, to enter the ravine at Tichester Rd, ending at Eglinton Ave W near Marlee Ave. Mostly unpaved surfaces with gentle slopes and some stairs. No washrooms.
- Sat  
July 9  
10:00 am     **TAYLOR CREEK – Dragonflies, Butterflies and other Winged Things**  
**Leader: Anne Purvis** Meet at Cullen Bryant Park at the north end of Coxwell Blvd for a 2-hr circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with some steep slopes and stairs. We will hike down the stairs and cross Taylor Creek at the bridge; east to the frog pond to look for dragonflies and exoskeletons; west to the Don Mills Rd parking lot; then climb the embankment, cross the meadow and visit the raised ponds area in search of more winged creatures, including birds. Return through the woods and along hydro cut to the stairs. Bring sturdy boots and binoculars.
- Sun  
July 10  
1:00 pm     **EAST DON PARKLAND – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Barbara Jackson** Meet at the northwest corner of Sheppard Ave E and Leslie St for a circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, flat with some steep slopes. We will walk north and west, taking the unpaved path through Newtonbrook Park to the Finch and Bayview area, then a short distance north on Bayview to pick up the paved Finch Recreation Trail. This will take us east to the East Don Parkland Trail. We will look for birds, butterflies and plants. Bring water and binoculars, your knowledge and enthusiasm. If the weather is inclement or the Newtonbrook path is muddy, we can opt for a shorter linear walk north through the East Don Parkland ending near Cummer Ave and Leslie St. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Tues  
July 12  
10:00 am     **MORNINGSIDE PARK – Birds and Butterflies**  
**Leader: Carol Sellers** Meet at the first parking lot in the park off Morningside Ave south of Ellesmere Rd for a circular walk about 3 hrs on mostly paved surfaces, fairly flat. Bring lunch and binoculars. Prime time for butterflies.
- Thurs  
July 14  
7:00 pm     **DENTONIA ESTATE – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey** Meet at Victoria Park subway station for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces with some stairs, flat with some steep slopes. We will walk north to Taylor Massey Creek and follow it west to Dawes Rd where we will stop to admire the restored Massey Goulding Mansion, all that remains of Dentonia Farm. We will return to the creek and continue west to the exit on Barrington Ave and follow it south to Main subway station. There should be wildlife sightings in the woodlands along the creek and we will review the rich history of this part of Toronto. Bring water and binoculars.

- Sat  
July 16  
2:00 pm  
**MILNE HOLLOW – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Peter Heinz** Meet in the parking lot of the Charles Sauriol Conservation Reserve immediately east of the DVP south of Lawrence Ave E for a circular 2-hr walk on mostly paved surfaces. Mainly flat. No stairs. No washrooms. By TTC, take the #54 Lawrence East bus from Eglinton subway station to Railside Dr and walk 10 minutes downhill to the park entrance. We will explore the East Don River valley, site of former mills, a ski hill and recently created storm water ponds, now home to a diversity of wildlife. Bring binoculars.
- Sun  
July 17  
2:00 pm  
**WHAT'S IN A NAME? HISTORIC MEADOW CREEK – Lost Rivers**  
**Leader: Helen Mills, John Wilson and Ian Wheal** Meet at Lawrence Ave W and Duval Dr (east of Keele at the north side TTC stop) for a linear walk along a live tributary to Black Creek ending at Rustic Dr east of Keele St. The stream's ravine holds secrets of the urban wild, and wears the many names this relatively unknown creek has been assigned over the years. Paved park trails with washrooms at the rallying point. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues  
July 19  
10:00 am  
**HISTORIC LAMBTON PARK – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Madeleine McDowell** Meet at Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas St (#55 Warren Park bus from Jane subway station stops at the door). We will take a 2-hr+ circular route with some stairs, mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces, gentle slopes with some steep slopes. Washrooms at beginning of walk. We will climb the steps to Dundas St and cross into the park. We will compare changes over the past century and a half with photos and accounts of previous adventures. The habitat is Carolinian Oak Savannah and we will follow the Humber back to Lambton House where we will have a cup of tea. Bring lunch and /or snacks. Binoculars and cameras might be useful.
- Wed  
July 20  
6:30 pm  
**BURKE BROOK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Nancy Dengler** Meet at the southeast corner of Yonge St and Lawrence Ave in front of the Locke Library for a 1½-hr circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes, stairs and no washrooms.
- Sat.  
July 23  
10:00 am  
**FORKS OF THE DON CIRCLE TRIP – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Margaret McRae** Meet at the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk to the Forks of the Don. Bring lunch and water. Rough dirt trails in one direction and paved in the other. Washroom at E.T. Seton Park where we will have lunch.
- Sun  
July 24  
1:30 pm  
**NORDHEIMER RAVINE AND SURROUNDING AREA – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Kayoko Smith** Meet at St Clair West subway station south exit on St Clair Ave W for a 2½-hr circular walk on mostly flat unpaved surfaces along Castle Frank Brook. We will observe plant materials used for Roycroft and Glen Edyth wetland restoration project and take a look at ongoing efforts by City stewards to maintain the integrity of the ravine. We can enjoy the historic gardens of Spadina House, Ardworld Gate and Eaton's. Bring water and binoculars. Some stairs. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Tues  
July 26  
6:30 pm  
**WOODBINE PARK TO KEW GARDENS – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright** Meet at the southeast corner of Coxwell Ave and Eastern Ave for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat, no stairs with washrooms at the end of the walk. Through Woodbine Park past the storm water ponds, across Lake Shore Blvd E to the boardwalk along the beach and through Kew Gardens to the Beaches Library on Queen St E. Bring binoculars.
- Wed  
July 27  
10:00 am  
**WEEDS PART 3 – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn** Meet at Main subway station for a circular walk on fairly flat, mostly paved surfaces. This walk is part 3 of 4 where we'll be looking for plants which get around on their own, struggle unaided for light, nutrients and water, and thrive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds). Up to 2½ hrs. Bring binoculars and field guides if you wish. Washrooms available.
- Sat  
July 30  
10:00 am  
**ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION IN THE DON VALLEY**  
**Leader: Jason Ramsay-Brown** Meet at the corner of O'Connor Dr and Beechwood Dr. Walk concludes at Todmorden. Some of the most beautiful spots in the Don Valley would hardly exist were it not for the efforts of Toronto's stewardship community. Over the decades, a combination of volunteers, charities, City programs and TRCA initiatives have helped to transform industrial legacy into natural heritage. Join us for a 4-km linear walk through Cottonwood Flats, Beechwood Wetland and Todmorden Mills Wildflower Preserve, and discover the spectacular results of these efforts. Bring water, camera, binoculars, and a snack if you like.

- Sun  
July 31  
1:30 pm     **LAKE IROQUOIS SHORELINE BATHURST TO YONGE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Alexander Cappell** Meet at the northwest corner of Bathurst St and Davenport Rd for a 2-hr walk along the crest of the shoreline with vistas looking south. End at a coffee shop near Yonge St and St Clair Ave. Some hills.
- Tues  
Aug 2  
10:30 am     **SMYTHE PARK – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Madeleine McDowell** Meet on the west side of Jane St and Alliance Ave at the entrance to Smythe Park for a 2-hr+ circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with some gentle and steep slopes. #35 Jane bus. There is a parking lot entered from Scarlett Rd but located by the swimming pool near Jane St, a short walk from the starting point. Washrooms at beginning of walk. See what has become of a former sand and gravel pit, the site where John Graves Simcoe had lunch in September 1793, the route of the Toronto Carrying Place, a swimming pool inspired by the Queen Elizabeth Bldg at the CNE, a view of a golf course built by the only Golf Olympic Gold Medalist, and maybe a mocking bird, a great blue heron or a large turtle. Walk ends where we started, across from Tim Horton's. Bring snack, binoculars, camera.
- Thurs  
Aug 4  
6:30 pm     **GLEN STEWART RAVINE – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright** Meet at Beech Ave parkette 40 metres south of Kingston Rd for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces, gentle slopes with some steep slopes. See the magnificent oak forest of the Glen Stewart ravine from the boardwalk erected to protect the previously trampled slopes, the planted parkland and housing of the buried lower reaches of Ames Creek. At the lake, we will walk west, ending at Queen St E. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sat  
Aug 6  
10:00 am     **ROUGE PARK RAMBLE - Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Glen Hamilton** Meet at the parking lot of Glen Rouge Campground at 7459 Kingston Road, 1 km east of Port Union and Sheppard for a 2½-hr circular walk on the Mast Trail after some steep slopes, mostly unpaved surfaces. Bring binoculars, water and a snack.
- Sun  
Aug 7  
1:30 pm     **YELLOW CREEK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Alexander Cappell** Meet at the southeast corner of Bloor St E and Sherbourne St for a 2½-hr linear walk on flat terrain with some steep slopes and stairs. From the Glen Road bridge we can look down at the forest of the Rosedale Ravine, where Castle Frank Brook once flowed. Then we'll descend into the valley of Yellow Creek and go upstream to Mount Pleasant Cemetery, where the creek flows out of a huge sewer grate, and climb the stairway to Heath St E, not far from a coffee shop on Yonge St.
- Tues  
Aug 9  
6:45 pm     **UPPER WEST DON – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Alexander Cappell** Meet at the northwest corner of Steeles Ave W and New Westminster Dr for a 2-hr circular walk with gentle slopes. We'll visit the Upper Don, Fisherville Creek and an unnamed buried creek just north of Steeles Ave, pass under a railroad bridge and under Dufferin St, see some front lawn gardens, a mixture of mowed and natural parkland, a pond visited by waterfowl, some late summer wildflowers and finish at a coffee shop near Steeles Ave W and Dufferin St, not far from the starting point.
- Wed  
Aug 10  
10:00 am     **MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY – Trees**  
**Leader: Jeff McMann** Meet at the front gates at 1643 Yonge St for a 2-hr circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sat  
Aug 13  
10:00 am     **ETOBICOKE CREEK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Ken Sproule** Meet at the northwest corner of Evans Ave and The West Mall for a circular walk of about 2½ hrs. A mixture of dirt and paved paths with some moderate hills. Bring binoculars. Lunch optional.
- Sun  
Aug 14  
1:30 pm     **CENTRAL WATERFRONT PARKS – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Richard Partington** Meet at Princes' Gates, south end of Strachan Ave to wander through Coronation Park, Little Norway Park and ultimately to the Music Garden where, if we're lucky, we may attend a free concert at 4 pm.
- Tues  
Aug 16  
10:00 am     **JAMES GARDENS AND LAMBTON WOODS – Birds and Butterflies**  
**Leader: Carol Sellers** Meet in the first parking lot in James Gardens on Edenbridge Dr east of Royal York Rd for a circular 3-hr walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat. Bring lunch and binoculars. Washrooms at start of walk.
- Thurs  
Aug 18  
6:30 pm     **HIGH PARK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Wendy Rothwell** Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk to look at wildflowers. Some unpaved trails and slopes.

- Sat **CHATSWORTH RAVINE – Nature Walk**  
 Aug 20 **Leader: Nancy Dengler** Meet at the southeast corner of Yonge St and Lawrence Ave by Locke Library for a 2-hr  
 10:00 am circular walk with some stairs, mostly unpaved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes. Washrooms at start of walk.
- Sun **A LATE SUMMER TOUR OF ROUGE PARK – Lost Rivers**  
 Aug 21 **Leaders: Parks Canada Staff and Lost Rivers leaders** Meet at the Twyn Rivers parking lot on Twyn Rivers Dr,  
 2:00 pm 1.5 km east of Sheppard Ave E (after the second bridge). Car-pooling is recommended, as the parking lot gets full,  
 and the nearest bus stop is at the Sheppard-Twyn Rivers intersection. We will hike Little Rouge Creek, a river whose  
 course from the headwaters on Oak Ridges Moraine is the least developed of GTA rivers. A circular 4.5-km hike on  
 unpaved park trails. Washrooms available at the walk's mid-point at the Rouge Park Welcome Centre. A joint outing  
 with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues **LOST CREEKS IN THE BEACH – Evening Ramble**  
 Aug 23 **Leader: Linda McCaffrey** Meet at the northeast corner of Queen St E and Woodbine Ave for a linear ramble  
 7:00 pm mostly on paved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes. The unique topography of the Beaches, with steep hills,  
 deep gullies and backyard ravines was peppered with small rivers, now mostly filled in, but we will locate 5 of them  
 on this walk; also several heritage buildings including a tiny perfect synagogue, an exquisite gardener's cottage, a  
 lifeguard station and more. We will make our way to Neville Park and Queen St E where you may exit at the streetcar  
 loop or walk a few blocks to take a bus to Main subway station. Bring water and binoculars.
- Wed **WEEDS PART 4**  
 Aug 24 **Leader: Miles Hearn** Meet at Kennedy subway station street exit for a circular walk on mostly paved surfaces,  
 10:00 am mainly flat. This is the final summer walk of 4 where we will be looking for plants which get around on their own,  
 struggle unaided for light, nutrients and water, and thrive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds).  
 Up to 2½ hrs. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sat **MORNINGSIDE PARK – Plants and Fungi**  
 Aug 27 **Leader: D Andrew White** Meet in the first parking lot in the park off Morningside Dr south of Ellesmere Rd for a  
 10:00 am circular walk of 2½ to 3 hrs. Washroom available. Bring water and lunch if you wish.
- Sun **FOOD, WATER AND THE EVOLUTION OF DINNER – Nature and Heritage**  
 Aug 28 **Leaders: Paul Overy and Helen Mills** Meet at the Christie St entrance to Wychwood Artscape Barns, 601 Christie  
 1:30 pm St, for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes and no stairs. About 2½ hrs. Explore the  
 evolving past, present and possible future relationship between water and food in the area of the headwaters of lost  
 Garrison Creek. Rediscover the fundamental role of water in relation to food, learn something about the water  
 footprint of the food we eat, and make some surprising connections with local lost rivers. Along the way we will walk  
 through a neighbourhood that was once a giant orchard, and discover that many fruit trees still grow there. Mostly  
 along city streets, ending near St Clair Ave W and Winona Dr. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Wed **SWANSEA, HIGH PARK – Nature and Heritage**  
 Aug 31 **Leader: Ed Freeman** Meet at the northwest corner of Windermere Ave and The Queensway for a 2-hr linear walk  
 1:30 pm on mostly paved surfaces, flat with some steep slopes and stairs. We will walk past old ponds and observe the  
 problems they present and the transformation from an industrial centre to residential housing, and enjoy nature within  
 High Park. End at Grenadier Restaurant and return home from High Park subway station. Bring curiosity.



Bunchberry, TFN Nature Reserve  
 Photos by Margaret McRae



Baby barn swallows, Rough Park



Ironweed

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am very pleased to announce that the Special Meeting of Members on April 3rd was well attended and the motion to revise our membership fees was approved (see page 26). In the long term, the increase in fees associated with mailed Newsletter memberships will help us balance our yearly operating budget, while maintaining our outings, lectures and Newsletter programs. Offering an online-only subscription will keep the membership fee low for those members. As suggested during the discussion at the meeting, mailed Newsletter subscribers with an e-mail address will also receive the password for an online copy.

Back in early March, I had written to Premier Kathleen Wynne on behalf of the TFN about Growing the Greenbelt. The letter focussed on expanding the Greenbelt and protecting water resources, specifically key headwater areas (Humber and Rouge Rivers, Caruthers Creek) and ground water recharge areas (Paris/Galt and other moraines, Lake Iroquois shoreline). I was surprised to receive a call from her constituency office and an invitation to speak to her directly about these concerns. In mid-March, I met with the premier and one assistant at her office on Eglinton Ave. I was delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the TFN and our programs. She looked through our March Newsletter and seemed particularly interested in the TFN outings – especially in her riding – and in our outreach walks program for school and community groups. I wasn't able to sign her up as a member, however!

Before the meeting with the premier, I had spoken with Joshua Wise, Ontario Nature's Greenway Program Manager, about current concerns related to the Greenbelt. As a result of that conversation, I tried to emphasize two key points: 1) the importance of expanding the Greenbelt to protect watersheds and water sources and 2) the urgency of mapping natural heritage systems within the Greater Golden Horseshoe so that they receive protection before

they are overtaken by urban sprawl. The premier knew that there had been some "pushback" from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry about the time frame for mapping. She regards the mapping of soil types for establishing agricultural lands within the Greenbelt as a high priority.

At the time of the meeting, I hadn't yet seen John Bacher's article in the April issue of the Newsletter. I share his concerns about planning control within the Greenbelt being handed to the municipalities. Ontario Nature also identified a need for an independent oversight body to ensure consistent implementation across municipalities and also a need to reform the Ontario Municipal Board, especially the appeal process for municipalities. I hope that interested TFN members will attend the Greenbelt Review Information Night on April 27 (see page 11, April issue) to learn more about these concerns.

In this past month, I've enjoyed seeing the return of early songbird migrants, including song sparrows, golden-crown kinglets and brown creepers. What I'm really waiting for, however, is the return of our migratory warblers that overwinter in southern Mexico, Central America and

northern South America. I've been looking at the animated map provided by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Go to the link provided on the TFN website under Newsletter to see where the birds are on today's date – and where they are headed over the next month.

I wish everyone an enjoyable spring and summer season with many opportunities to observe nature close to home or farther away. If you have any concerns or comments about the TFN's planning, programs and activities – or even just to share a nature observation – please do not hesitate to contact me.

Nancy Dengler  
[president@torontofieldnaturalists.org](mailto:president@torontofieldnaturalists.org)



Nancy Dengler with Premier Kathleen Wynne

**Your membership expires June 30, 2016**

To ensure you receive a September newsletter, please renew promptly for the year July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017.

Note: If you are electing a mailed newsletter, you can save \$10 by paying your renewal fee before June 30th.

## MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

### Ontario's Badgers

April 3, 2016. Josh Sayers, Ontario Badger Project

Badgers, with their distinctive black-and-white vertical facial markings, present interesting challenges for the researcher beyond their endangered species status. Their solitary nocturnal lifestyle combined with no apparent vocalizations require those who study them have a good sense of humour and lots of patience.

Badgers are members of the weasel family. Their distribution appears to be centred in Norfolk County extending into contiguous counties. Slightly larger than raccoons, they have short broad bodies along with extremely large front claws making them well adapted to living in burrows. Researchers in BC have evidence of tool use by badgers: hair traps they had placed by badger holes were moved by the badgers to block entrances to a ground-squirrel's burrow. Badgers are opportunistic carnivores, chowing down on chipmunks, groundhogs, toads, snakes, eggs, skunks (a favourite) and even road-kill. They live seven to ten years and can be aged by their teeth (similarly to tree rings).

The nomadic nature of badgers has them moving burrows every few nights. They either dig new ones or take over previously used ones. New badger burrows are distinctive with large visible mounds of excavated soil. They are often found in banks or slopes just inside the forest edge. This preference for boundary areas means that badgers do not interfere with farming.



Badgers breed in late summer or early autumn, and both sexes have multiple partners. Females exhibit delayed implantation with embryos not implanting until winter. One to three kits are born in early spring and stay in the same burrow until the mother moves them later in the season. Kits are actively exploring outside the burrow by summer – enabling motion-activated cameras to capture a few colour pictures! By mid-August, the kits are independent and disperse to find and set up their own territory.

It is likely that badgers have always been a fringe species in Ontario. Their population of fewer than 200 animals makes them a species-at-risk with in-breeding issues. Vehicular traffic, coyotes and large dogs and habitat loss are threats. Canine distemper has been found in some badgers. This can be a problem given their low population size and low genetic variability.

The data from this study were obtained primarily through radio-tracking and motion-activated cameras set up outside burrows. Once a badger is found, it is live-trapped then taken to a vet to have a transmitter implanted; its neckless body precludes traditional radio-collars. Hair traps outside burrows verify an individual's identification.

Josh's engaging presentation was complemented with great video clips of rambunctious badger kits annoying mom as well as some kits' rapid burrow retreat when they couldn't see mom behind the skunk she was bringing home for dinner.

Meg O'Mahony



Removing a badger from the live-trap to place him into the transport barrel.



A large dirt pile at a burrow on a bank between a field and a fallow area.



The badger's front claws are about 1.5 inches long. No other Ontario mammal has such proportionally long claws.

## ONTARIO NATURE LAKE ONTARIO NORTH REGIONAL MEETING

On April 9, TFN hosted this Ontario Nature (ON) regional meeting at the Toronto Botanical Gardens. The program began with talks about the natural world of Toronto's ravines. Jason Ramsay-Brown, author of *Toronto's Ravines and Urban Forests*, evoked Toronto's landscape prior to European settlement: a forest of maples, oaks and white pines alive with birds and crossed by rivers and streams filled with aquatic life. Now, most of the rivers and streams are trapped underground, and 90% of the wetlands are gone. Remaining wild areas are threatened by human activity. But he suggested there is hope for our urban ravines in a new urbanity that emphasises intensification over urban sprawl, healthier means of transit, and greener ways of living. A recent survey showed that 50% of people in the city visit natural areas at least four times a week to walk and enjoy nature. A world class city is more than the built environment, it also includes the natural environment. Toronto has 2.2 million trees which sustain life for common and rare species. This is a pivotal time for the City and citizens have been invited to lend their voices to the Ravine Strategy, a tree planting strategy, and a revised greenbelt plan. The ravines and forests are a treasure unique to the city and we need to have the will to sustain them.

Paula Davies' talk moved the discussion from the ravines in general to grassroots efforts to work for the preservation of a particular area. Paula heads the stewardship team of the Todmorden Mills Wildflower Preserve, winner of a Toronto Heritage Award for "cultural or natural heritage." Paula thanked TFN for nominating Todmorden for the award, putting the idea of the excellence of natural heritage before the public (see TFN 615, Nov 2015). This 10-acre natural area received ESA designation from the city in 2015. It contains rare plants (e.g. a *Carex* species), high diversity of habitats (a direct result of stewardship) and water seepage zones which support wetland plants and animals. Stewardship efforts at Todmorden largely consist of ecological restoration – the process of assisting the recovery of an environment that has been destroyed. Stewardship does not stop at invasive plant removal but follows up with planting aggressive natives which allow more delicate plants to follow. Students often assist at the preserve, and education and outreach play an important part. Paula

encouraged everyone to participate in stewardship activities.

The third speaker, Eric Davies, is part of a U of T Faculty of Forestry, Toronto Ravine Revitalization Study and he spoke on Rewilding Toronto's Ravines. In one study, measuring insect life on native and non-native trees of comparable size in similar locations showed that there were many more insects on native trees. Not only do insects do better on native trees, but there are also more birds. He referred to similar conclusions in entomologist Douglas Tallamy's book *Bringing Nature Home*. A companion study looked at the encroachment of non-native trees into Toronto's ravine forests. In a 1977 study 10% of the trees were Norway maples while a 2015 study in the same areas showed that this has risen to 40%. They estimate that now more than 50% of Toronto's tree cover is non-native, often invasive species, yet in spite of this the City of Toronto's



Participants at ON regional meeting. Photo: Lloyd Mayeda

list of recommended trees is still less than 30% native, and there is no protocol about where the seeds come from. One of the ways that city forests are affected by the domination by non-native trees is that very few native trees are naturally regenerating. The study group aims to locate mature native trees in the study areas, collect their seeds, and undertake a replanting program, restocking and revitalizing the native tree coverage. For those interested, he recommended Henry Kock's book *Growing Trees from Seed*. Citizen scientists interested in surveying biodiversity in the ravines should contact the U of T Toronto Ravine Research team ([www.toronto.ravines.org](http://www.toronto.ravines.org)).

ON's regional meetings are held twice a year and are attended by representatives of its member associations, allowing discussion of shared interests and issues. Lynn Miller shared with the group her expertise in setting up a membership survey using the recent TFN survey she designed as an example. Her pragmatic and pithy tips were well received and drew much comment and discussion. In the roundtable that followed, each chapter was invited to share highlights and issues, such as involving local youth and concerns relating to pollinators.

*Continued on page 18*

## TORONTO WILDFLOWERS: GERANIUMS

The Geraniaceae (geranium family) consists of five or six genera and about 800 species most commonly found in temperate regions. The genus *Pelargonium* includes species used as ornamental houseplants and as summer bedding plants. Plants so used in Toronto belong to this genus, not to genus *Geranium*, although commonly called geraniums.

The TFN's *Vascular Plants of Metropolitan Toronto* (2nd ed., 1994) listed three *Geranium* species native to Toronto and three introduced species. The native species are *Geranium maculatum*, *G. bicknellii*, and *G. carolinianum*. One introduced species, *G. robertianum*, common in wild areas of Toronto, is shown here for comparison.

*G. maculatum* (wild geranium) is common in Toronto, occurring in forests and meadows from Etobicoke to the Rouge, in High Park and on the Scarborough Bluffs. It blooms at any time from late April to early June. Plants grow up to 70 cm tall and have flowers about 30 mm wide, in terminal few-flowered clusters. *The ROM Field Guide to Wildflowers of Ontario* (2004) reported its Ontario range from the Lake Simcoe-Rideau ecoregion to the U.S. border and the southernmost ecoregions adjacent to the Manitoba border. The U.S. Dept of Agriculture database shows its range from Manitoba to Quebec and in most of the eastern half of the U.S.

The other two native geraniums, *G. bicknellii* (Bicknell's geranium) and *G. carolinianum* (Carolina geranium) are locally rare, only reported at Wilket Creek (Don). The former is illustrated with a photo from Beausoleil Island. Its summer blooming flowers are 10 to 15 mm across with slightly notched petals. Its leaves are palmately lobed. Its very wide distribution includes all of Canada except Nunavut, and most of the north and central U.S.

In comparison, the introduced species, *G. robertianum* (herb-robert) has unnotched petals and palmately compound leaves.

Enjoy the common species and, perhaps, try to find the two locally rare species. My Toronto searches for these have not been successful.

Article and photos by Peter Money



From top:

Wild geranium, *Geranium maculatum*

Wild geranium flower close-up

Bicknell's geranium, *G. bicknellii*

Herb-robert, *G. robertianum*

Ed: This is Peter's 50th Toronto Wildflowers article! Many thanks, Peter, for introducing us to so many of our local wildflowers.

## TFN GRANT REPORTS

### The Urban Nature Ravine Series: Getting to Know the Nature on Your Doorstep

by Diana Wilson and Josh Padolsky,  
Toronto Botanical Garden (TBG) education staff

The Toronto Botanical Garden sits on the edge of Toronto's urban ravine network, the home of one of Toronto's few above-ground waterways, Wilket Creek. Thanks to generous funding provided by the Toronto Field Naturalists, TBG offered a new suite of urban water and wildlife programs under the umbrella of the Urban Nature Ravine Series to educate TBG's community about Wilket Creek and Toronto's unique ravine ecosystems. Programs in the UNR Series were offered to local families and students from the Thorncliffe and Flemingdon Park high-priority neighbourhoods that also sit on the edge of the Don River ravine system.

In the fall of 2015, nearly 200 grade 8 students participated in the new Water in the City program, an innovative citizen science program for grade 8 classes that looks at the impact of urban life on Toronto's waterways. Students who participated learned about Toronto's ravine network, lost rivers and storm water management.

Students gained firsthand experience investigating the health of an aquatic ecosystem through site observations, sample collecting and water quality testing. Feedback from both teachers and students was very positive. Over the coming years, data from this program will be collected and used to informally assess the health of Wilket Creek.

Also under the UNR umbrella is the City Critters Family Series, which offers families the opportunity to learn about some of Toronto's misunderstood urban wildlife. Every program included an indoor and outdoor portion, hands-on exploration activities, games and sometimes a visit from live animals. The TFN grant supported five events in 2015, each with a different wildlife theme – backyard birds, frogs, snakes, butterflies and animal tracking. One of the highlights from the year was releasing live monarch butterflies in early fall to begin their super-migration to Mexico.



A family getting ready to release a monarch butterfly during a City Critters event.

### EcoSpark's Changing Currents Program: Connecting students to nature in their community

by Holly Brose, Education Coordinator

Note: Holly is leading a TFN outing exploring aquatic critters on June 21

For the second year TFN has helped EcoSpark bring hundreds of students from across Toronto into their local rivers to teach them about watershed science through the Changing Currents program. This program is many things. It is a water monitoring project that tracks water quality data in the waterways that run across school property and in the ravines students pass on their walk home. It is an outdoor science and geography lab that allows students to collect data from their neighbourhood. But most importantly, it takes students out of the classroom and guides them through a meaningful exploration and discovery of nature in their community. These combined experiences allow students to build connections to wildlife and local nature that run deep.

"It is amazing to see students become so absorbed in the watershed," comments a grade 12 environmental science teacher who has participated twice. "Students continue to talk about it weeks later." This year, 100% of our surveyed teachers rated the program "Excellent" in engaging students with nature. Each season we continue to see a high return rate. "Every time I teach this course,"

says a grade 9 science teacher, "I look forward to the opportunity to participate. All too often we are restricted to just showing kids the theory, we rarely have the opportunity to put them into a real life, outdoor, biological research assignment." This kind of engagement breeds passionate advocates for, and stewards of, local nature. In fact, this fall three of our Toronto school participants committed to stormwater landscaping projects that will help protect water quality in the Highland Creek and Humber watersheds. For example, after monitoring water quality, students at Sir William Osler High School are now installing rain barrels on the school property. This will help stop the flow of polluted water towards the Highland Creek tributary that borders the school. Their teacher is excited with her students' new-found enthusiasm for outdoor projects.



"The program became the focal point of many follow-up activities that encouraged environmental stewardship among all students, not just the participants.

*continued on page 18*

## LINE 9 PIPELINE IS A RISKY BUSINESS

Many people in Toronto are unaware that a pipeline project that could have disastrous consequences for Toronto's rivers and streams, including the Rouge, the Don, the Humber, and the Credit, was recently approved and put into operation.

The pipeline in question is Enbridge's Line 9, a 40-year-old pipeline whose flow has been "reversed" and is now being used to transport diluted bitumen from the Alberta tar sands, as well as fracked Bakken shale oil. Both these products are inherently more dangerous than conventional oil and gas. Bakken shale oil is potentially explosive, and tar sands diluted bitumen is abrasive and causes damage to pipelines. The danger is increased by the fact that Line 9 is an old pipeline which already has many cracks. A U.S. PHMSA Pipeline Alert warns that reversing the flow or changing the product of a pipeline can have significant impact on the line's safety and integrity.

During the National Energy Board (NEB) hearings on Line 9 in 2013, pipeline expert Richard Kuprewicz said that, based on the evidence, there was a 90% likelihood that Line 9 would spill in its first few years of operation.

Such a spill would not be a minor event. Line 6B, a sister pipeline operated by Enbridge, also carrying diluted bitumen, suffered a major spill into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan in 2010. Thirty-five miles of the river were closed for two years, and, six years later, portions of the river still have not been cleaned up. Part of the problem is that once diluted bitumen has spilled into water, it is almost impossible to remove it. Conventional cleanup methods are inadequate which has been recently documented by the U.S. National Academy of Science.

If Line 9 spills into one of Toronto's rivers, or one of the many other rivers, this kind of virtually irreversible damage is what we could face here.

Approval for Line 9 was rushed through under an expedited industry-friendly process set up by the Harper government. Richard Kuprewicz's recommendation that

extensive hydrostatic testing be carried out on the 40-year-old pipeline to determine its integrity was set aside and instead testing was done on only three discrete areas, and not at the pressure rating considered the gold standard. Also an exemption was made to Enbridge by the NEB for the number of shut-off valves recommended.

There was no environmental assessment at the federal or provincial level. Toronto city council unanimously requested that the province carry out an assessment, but the Ontario government did not act on this request. Significantly, a ruling in January 2016 in a case against the BC government by two First Nations regarding the Northern Gateway pipeline, the Supreme Court of BC stated that it is a provincial responsibility to assure safety of such a pipeline even if it is in federal jurisdiction.

The Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, whose land and water is crossed by Line 9, have taken the lead in challenging it. They have gone to court arguing that their rights as a First Nation to be adequately consulted on a project that crosses their territory, were ignored. Their case is now proceeding to the Supreme Court of Canada.

This pipeline is a risky business for Torontonians. It not only puts our drinking water at risk, but also the natural habitat of significant watersheds. Damage from a spill could be catastrophic, and possibly irreversible. It is also a part of the tar sands megaproject, which is a major contributor to climate change and its disastrous implications for the human and natural world.

There is an online e-petition to the government asking for a halt to Line 9: [petitions.parl.gc.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-248](http://petitions.parl.gc.ca/en/Petition/Details?Petition=e-248). For further information you can also write to: [tarfreetoronto@riseup.net](mailto:tarfreetoronto@riseup.net)

You can also make a fundraising contribution to the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation's Supreme Court case: [www.gofundme.com/chippewas](http://www.gofundme.com/chippewas)

Miriam Garfinkle

## KEEPING IN TOUCH



Photo: Larry Fawthrop

On March 27 around 3pm this red admiral was sunning itself on a blue tarp in my backyard. Temperature 10°. Usually mourning cloaks are the first ones I see but have not seen one yet.

Karin Fawthrop



Photo: John Catto

This unusual western warbler has been visiting our backyard feeder in Leaside since late November, and is still with us in late March. Note the yellow, not white, throat.

Margaret and John Catto

GRANT REPORTS *continued*

Students were eager to participate in similar activities and kept asking if they could have more field studies of this kind!" Some schools directly engage in class stewardship projects, such as tree planting, and stream clean-ups. And in many schools, teachers report that their students have returned to these natural areas on the weekends or after school to spend time outdoors.

The program is a series of firsts for students: the first time visiting their local stream, putting on waders, and doing real science. "[I love] getting hands-on in the water and being able to do what real biologists do" says a grade 12 student. Students follow a benthic biomonitoring protocol in which they collect and count aquatic organisms (such as stoneflies and crayfish), and determine stream health

through the analysis of their data. When they discover these tiny creatures hidden in the stream, any fears of getting dirty and wet or seeing something gross melt away. Kids become entranced by these little bugs that are usually no more than 5cm long. One teacher found that during the study "everyone was engaged and interested – even students who didn't expect to be into it, were!" Stream study also enhances teachers' ability to teach lessons with local relevance and meaning. One teacher finds the study is a really vivid way to discuss water quality: "I use the stream study to kick-off an entire unit on the politics of water." With the support of TFN, EcoSpark can continue to facilitate students' transformative journey from student to scientist to steward for their local environment through our Changing Currents program.

ONTARIO NATURE REGIONAL MEETING *continued*

Advocacy for nature is an important part of the work of ON and its member groups. 905-area groups talked of advocacy efforts relating to highway construction and urban sprawl and development in natural areas, and a more rural group was concerned about agricultural clearing of hedgerows and wetlands probably related to the use of larger machinery. City groups raised the problem of dogs off leash and spoke of participation in city planning discussions.

After the indoor program, Miles Hearn led a walk into the natural area adjacent to the Botanical Gardens. As the walk began a pileated woodpecker obligingly flew across the way, illustrating the wonder of our natural spaces that we had come together to celebrate and protect.

Vivienne Denton



Miles Hearn leads an outing after the ON regional meeting. Photo: Lloyd Mayeda. See also back cover.

## REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee recommends the following slate of nominees to the Board for 2016-2017:

<b>President:</b>	Charles Bruce-Thompson	<b>Vice-President:</b>	Charles Crawford
<b>Past President:</b>	Nancy Dengler	<b>Secretary-Treasurer:</b>	Bob Kortright
<b>Directors:</b>	due to retire in 2017: Anne Powell, Elizabeth Block, Jennifer Smith due to retire in 2018: Lynn Miller, Alex Wellington, Bob Kortright due to retire in 2019: Vivienne Denton, Jason Ramsay-Brown, Jane Cluver		

TFN by-law No. 1, Section 5(g) provides that "any three members may submit, in writing, to the Secretary-Treasurer by July 15 the name of a candidate accompanied by the written consent of the nominee. Such nominations shall be published in the September issue of the newsletter and the names of such nominees shall be added to the list of candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee." Nominations should be sent to the TFN office, 2 Carlton Street, Unit 1519, Toronto, ON, M5B 1J3.

According to TFN by-law No.1, Section 5(b), "If an election is required it shall be by ballot mailed to all members. Ballots may be mailed to the auditor or deposited at the Annual General Meeting prior to the commencement of the meeting. The ballots will be tabulated by the auditor who shall announce the results."

## CHILDREN'S CORNER

### MATCH UP: *Ways Animals Use Their Tails...*

There are many kinds of tails with many uses. Match each description with an animal.

- 1) I slap my tail on the water to warn of danger. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) I use my tail to change directions. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) I use my tail to brace against tree trunks while I drill for insects. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) I vibrate my tail when threatened, but I have no rattle. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) I use my tail as a brake when I'm landing. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) I absorb my tail for food while I'm growing. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7) I curl my tail around branches when I climb (but cannot hang from my tail). I'm an \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8) If threatened, I may lift up my tail and eject a smelly spray from the glands underneath. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9) When there's danger, I raise the white underside of my tail as a flag so others will follow me. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_.



Virginia opossum



Pileated woodpecker



Striped skunk



White-tailed Virginia deer



American beaver



American toad tadpoles



Cooper's hawk



Milk snake



Minnow

Answers on page 22

by Judy Marshall

Photos courtesy Ken Sproule, [www.toronto-wildlife.com](http://www.toronto-wildlife.com)

## FOR READING

### *The Vascular Plants of the Bruce Peninsula*

by Joe Johnson  
297 pp

For more information visit:

[vascularplantsofthebrucepeninsula.wordpress.com](http://vascularplantsofthebrucepeninsula.wordpress.com)

Joe Johnson has spent more than 40 years living and botanizing on the Bruce. Anton Reznicek, Curator at the University of Michigan Herbarium, writes: "The Bruce Peninsula is Ontario's most famous botanical destination...The alvars, cliffs, wooded rock outcrops, and shoreline fens attract researchers and naturalists alike. ...here is a comprehensive modern flora, a botanical travel guide.... In it you will find detailed answers to questions like: How common is it? Where else on the Bruce does it occur? What is the usual habitat? When does it bloom? Almost 100 species are illustrated by colour photos, often in both flower and fruit, plus there are several pages of detailed maps. This flora is the plant book that all visitors to the Peninsula with an interest in natural history will need."

City of Toronto's Biodiversity Series

### *Trees, Shrubs and Vines of Toronto*

available soon

Check your local public library this spring for a free copy!

Watch also for the official launch of the latest three booklets – Bees, Fungi and Trees, Shrubs and Vines – likely to happen in May.

## EXTRACTS FROM OUTINGS LEADERS' REPORTS

**Wilket Creek, Mar 5. Leader: Ken Sproule.** It was snowing at the beginning of the walk but it soon tapered off. Birds seen (or heard) were white-breasted nuthatch, chickadee, robin, junco, blue jay, cardinal, house finch, house sparrow, Canada goose and mallard. We also saw a cottontail and the large cocoon of a giant silkworm moth (probably *Hyalophora cecropia*). The highlight was the snow covered views of Wilket Creek.



In Centennial Park Conservatory.  
Photo: Ron Dengler

**Centennial Park Conservatory, Mar 12. Leader: Nancy Dengler.** We started in the conservatory looking at tropical plants and some very talkative birds (sulfur-crested cockatoo, cockatiel and budgerigar). The plant collection contains representatives from most of the major lineages of vascular plants: Australian tree fern, giant dioon cycads, southern hemisphere conifers like araucarias and podocarps, unusual monocots such as the voodoo lily (aroid family), traveller's palm (bird-of-paradise family) and cornstalk dracaena (lily-of-the-valley family) and some striking eudicots such as the vegetable tapeworm (knotweed family), lemon vine (cactus family) and shrimp plant and blue sky vine (both acanthus family). After our tour of the greenhouse, we headed outside to the shores of Etobicoke Creek, stopping to look at birds on the Centennial Park pond. It had been ice-covered just one week before, but now wood ducks, hooded mergansers, common goldeneyes, buffleheads and mallards, as well as one horned grebe, had found it. Vocal grackles, red-winged blackbirds, American crows, and song sparrows made the surrounding parkland sound like spring. Bob Kortright spotted a red-shouldered hawk overhead and orange jelly fungi in the small patch of woods.

**Burke Brook, Mar 19. Leader: Ed Freeman.** We enjoyed near-freezing temperature under brilliant sun and a cloudless sky. In Alexander Muir Gardens we observed a bright male cardinal. We enjoyed the mature forest and examined the springs seeping from the hillside in

Sherwood Park – the former Waterworks Park where North Toronto got its water for a decade. We saw four hawks, most probably red-tails, although one was thought to be a Cooper's. Other birds seen included chickadee, robins, downy woodpecker and a red-winged blackbird.

**Lost Rivers, Discover the Rountree in Rountree Lavender Creek! Mar 20. Leaders: Helen Mills, Eugenia Jardim.** The group explored Lavender Creek and a tributary as far as the Lake Iroquois shore cliff noting old oaks and other high quality woodland fragments at the stairs at the top of Blackthorn and in Bert Robertson Park. We saw blue jays sitting on a fence. Interesting community stories told along the way included accounts of ancient trails, David Rountree's farm and his connection to the Stockyards. We touched on the convoluted local sewer system, the problems of basement flooding in the area, and plans to deal with the situation.

**Leslie Street Spit, Mar 26. Leader: Bob Kortright.** Birds were not abundant, but most wintering species (all three mergansers, scaup, redhead, white-winged scoters, long-tails, mallards, gadwall, goldeneye, wigeon, bufflehead, mute and trumpeter swans, Canada geese, gulls, tree sparrow, woodpeckers) were still there. New arrivals included many song sparrows, red-winged blackbirds, robins, killdeer, ring-necked ducks, canvasback, 50 cormorants, six red-necked grebes, crows and one golden-crowned kinglet. Other good sightings included three red-tailed hawks and traces of beavers and coyotes.



Birding on the Spit.  
Photo: Lloyd Mayeda

**Cedarvale Park, Mar 30. Leader: Miles Hearn.** We saw 18 species of birds, including sharp-shinned, Cooper's and red-tailed hawks, ring-billed gull, hairy and downy woodpeckers, American crow, black-capped chickadee, white-breasted nuthatch, brown creeper, American robin, golden-crowned kinglet, red-winged blackbird, northern cardinal, American goldfinch, dark-eyed junco and song sparrow. We also found coltsfoot in flower.

## SHUTTERBUG PRESIDENTS: ANOTHER LOOK AT THE TFN SLIDE COLLECTION, PART III

The TFN Slide Collection represents the work of 44 members who were also photographers. All told, they donated more than 13,000 slides taken during the pre-digital age of 35mm transparencies. Six of the 44, Jack Gingrich, Wes Hancock, Helen Juhola, Mary Smith, Jean Macdonald and Robin Powell, also served as president. This three-part series focusses on these presidential shutterbugs.

Next in line was Jean Macdonald, president from 1984 to 1986. Jean, in Diana Banville's sketch of her feeding Canada geese in the waterfront, was the newsletter's first cover girl! While by day she worked for an oil company, Jean in her spare time was a keen naturalist—serving on the editorial committee of the newsletter and honing her considerable skills as a photographer. Her images in the slide collection, spanning the years 1975 through 1987, illustrate landforms such as the Leslie Street Spit in its early years as well as flora—both non-flowering and flowering—and fauna including turtles and snakes.

R.M.S. (Robin) Powell served two-plus terms as president from 1988 to 1990 and 2001 to 2005. Succeeding Mark Sawyer as TFN slide librarian about 1976, Robin spent a quarter century enlarging and organizing the collection. Included are hundreds of his own slides taken between 1970 and 2003, some while he was manager of the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve. Long before single-lens reflex cameras had panorama features, Robin painstakingly documented threatened landscapes throughout the GTA: Don Valley Brick Works, Black Creek, Centennial Swamp, and the route of Highway 407. In 1976, TFN used photographs by Robin and others, showing Taylor Creek at Taylor and O'Connor Drives, in its partially successful effort at the OMB to halt residential development on the forested fingers south of the creek.

**CONCLUSION:** At least four other past presidents, although not photographers in their own right, are represented in the slide collection through images taken by others. They are Fred Bodsworth (1960-1962), Bill Andrews (1974-1976, Eileen Mayo (1990-1992), and Joan Patterson (1992-1993). And we would certainly be remiss not to mention that 21st-century presidents, using digital cameras, are carrying on the tradition of documenting TFN activities and sightings and donating their images to the club.

Pleasance Crawford and Helen Juhola

Ed: In Part II of this series, the image of boardwalk builders at JBNR in 1984 was taken by Jean Macdonald and incorrectly attributed to Mary Smith.



Gull colony on Leslie St Spit, 1975.  
Photo by Jean Macdonald.



Centennial Forest, Scarborough, 1984.  
Photo by Robin Powell



Scarborough Bluffs shoreline looking towards Bluffers Park, 1977. Photo by Mary Smith.

## WHAT'S ALL THE FLAP ABOUT?

by Irene Fedun, FLAP

Have you ever heard a bird hit a window? This is one of the leading causes of bird mortality – ornithologists estimate that in North America over one billion birds are killed annually by hitting glass and mirrored walls. It seems obvious: reflective, transparent glass panes are everywhere in our homes and workplaces, and migratory birds that make their homes in woodlands or wetlands can easily be fooled by the reflection of a tree or shrub in the glass. Or they see the large potted plant inside a building and think they can land there. Or worse still, windows on either side of a building give birds the illusion that they can sail right through to the trees on the other side.

The Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP) Canada shows how we can all be part of the solution. It's as simple as making the glass visible to birds – *from the outside*. Birds need “visual markers” to alert them to the presence of a barrier to flight. One hawk silhouette positioned in the corner of a large pane of glass will simply not do it. A warbler or thrush could be flying towards the opposite corner of the window. The bird might be lucky and survive the crash with only a nasty headache. Or the result could be severe injury or death, especially if the bird is flying at 40 kilometres an hour, which is travelling speed for most songbirds.

Affixing anything opaque to the outside of a window will work if the markers are no more than 4 inches apart on the vertical or 2 inches on the horizontal. In other words, to be truly bird-friendly a window or expanse of glass must have no reflective openings larger than 2 inches by 4 inches (which represents the wingspan of most songbirds). Otherwise, small birds such as vireos and kinglets are still in danger. Hanging wind chimes or old CDs or ribbons on the outside of a window – as long as they are 4 inches apart – will do the trick. So will whitewashing or soaping your window, although the latter may have to be repeated after a rainfall.

Acopian BirdSavers are 1/8-inch diameter nylon parachute cords hung outside the glass. Take some quick measurements of your windows (instructions on [www.birdsavers.com](http://www.birdsavers.com)), then put in your order, with proceeds going to wildlife preservation. Or buy some parachute cord at an army surplus store, follow the

directions on the website and make your own. Elegant and effective.

Another do-it-yourself kit comes from Feather Friendly® Technologies ([www.featherfriendly.org/feather-friendly-other-technologies.php](http://www.featherfriendly.org/feather-friendly-other-technologies.php)). The film uses a marker-only application to the exterior glass surface. The kit is made of 100-foot rolls of marker tape, two measuring strips and installation instructions. Window screens or netting are another option. For more ideas, visit [www.flap.org](http://www.flap.org).

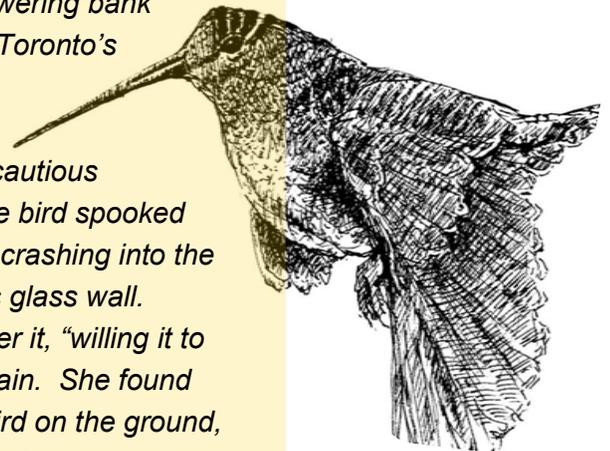
FLAP Canada has produced a Homes Safe for Birds brochure that provides collision prevention ideas. At [www.flap.org/residential\\_new.php](http://www.flap.org/residential_new.php), click on English or French where it says: Download our latest homeowner brochure.

*One very early morning last fall, FLAP rescue volunteer Violet Pettigrew spotted an American Woodcock in the courtyard of one of the towering bank buildings on Toronto's King Street.*

*Despite her cautious approach, the bird spooked and took off, crashing into the office tower's glass wall. Violet ran after it, “willing it to live”, but in vain. She found the broken bird on the ground, blood trickling from its beak.*

*When she picked up the body, a small bloodstain remained on the concrete – a fleeting reminder that a beautiful bird had died there.*

Irene Fedun, FLAP



American woodcock  
drawn by Diana Banville

### Answers from page 19

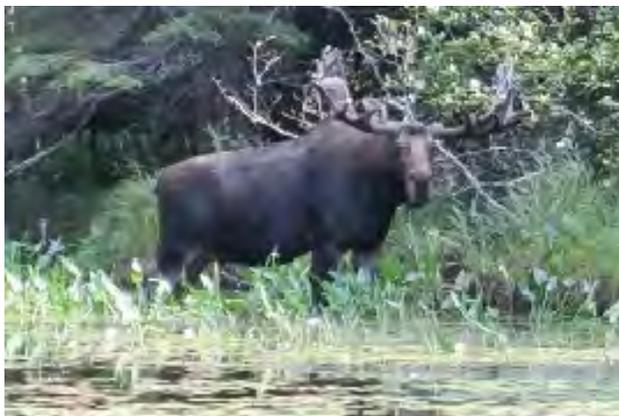
1) beaver; 2) minnow; 3) woodpecker; 4) milk snake; 5) hawk; 6) tadpole; 7) opossum; 8) skunk; 9) deer

## IN THE NEWS

### Killing Wolves Isn't the Answer

On December 17, 2015, Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry proposed weakening hunting restrictions and allowing anyone with a small game license to kill up to two wolves and an unlimited number of coyotes per year. They would do this by removing the game seal currently needed to kill these animals. Fortunately the Ontario Government rejected the proposal.

Moose populations are in decline in northern Ontario but science does not support killing top predators as a successful management practice. Even the government's own study indicates that other factors (including hunting pressures) are affecting the moose population more than wolves (see link below). In fact, removing keystone species



Moose in Algonquin Park. Photo: Lynn Miller

can have dramatic negative effects on the entire ecosystem, as was discovered when wolves were killed off in Yellowstone National Park in the U.S. and subsequently reintroduced (see link below). We are happy that the government has turned down this ill-thought-out proposal.

[www.ontario.ca/page/factors-affect-moose-survival](http://www.ontario.ca/page/factors-affect-moose-survival)  
[www.yellowstonepark.com/wolf-reintroduction-changes-ecosystem/](http://www.yellowstonepark.com/wolf-reintroduction-changes-ecosystem/)

### Do Birds Go Grey?

There is no need to ask "Does she...or doesn't she?" when it comes to a bird's colouration. Birds don't go grey. And now science has been able to explain it in minute detail that wasn't available before. It has been widely known that the colour we see when looking at feathers is produced by manipulating the reflection of light and not by pigmentation, as with human hair, but the mechanism at work has eluded science until now.

Using a powerful high-energy x-ray instrument called a synchrotron, scientists were able to build up detailed images of the spongy nanostructure within a Eurasian jay's feather barb, down to a scale of a billionth of metre. Inside

the spongy nanostructure there is a network of sub-microscopic holes that accounts for the overall hue of the plumage. A feather barb can go from white to blue purely by changing the size of the sub-microscopic holes. This explains why the brightly coloured feathers of many birds do not fade in sunlight or go grey with age. Unlike human hair these feathers don't rely on the continuous production of the dark pigment melanin, which decreases with age.

If you do see a bird with white feathers it could be either an albino (very rare) or leucistic bird. Leucism affects only birds that have a melanin pigment in their feathers, like grackles.

The study: [www.nature.com/articles/srep18317](http://www.nature.com/articles/srep18317)

### Trash Collection in the Ocean

You may have heard of the infamous Great (North) Pacific Garbage Patch that is estimated to be between 700,000 to 15,000,000 square kilometres in size. But you might not know that it is just one of five garbage accumulations where currents converge in the oceans. The second largest is the North Atlantic Garbage Patch, but trash also accumulates in the Indian Ocean Gyre, South Atlantic Gyre and South Pacific Gyre. In 2016 a Netherlands foundation called The Ocean Cleanup will be testing a barrier design that uses currents to gradually trap waves of waste, while it allows fish and other types of creatures to pass through. The goal is to employ this technology on the Great Pacific Garbage Patch by 2020. Plastic pollutions cause the death



Turtle in Hawaii. Photo: Lynn Miller

of millions of seabirds and hundreds of thousands of marine mammals each year. Turtles in particular are sensitive to plastic debris as they mistake it for jellyfish and if they eat it they can become sick or even starve. Plastics can also entangle marine life, preventing them from moving freely or being able to eat. Let's hope that the test is a success.

[www.theoceancleanup.com/](http://www.theoceancleanup.com/)

## WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

### May 2015

May was generally warm and sunny, punctuated by short but sharp cool spells. One of these, which followed the Victoria Day weekend, brought damaging frost to parts of southern Ontario. The associated cold fronts generally did not bring consistent rain, with the exception of the one at the very end of the month, and conditions were quite dry in most places.

It proved to be the fourth-warmest May on record at Pearson Airport with a mean of 16.2°, 2.5° above normal (May 1991, 1998, and 2012 were warmer). Temperatures rose to just shy of 30° several times both early and late in the month. Downtown was affected by the lingering cold of Lake Ontario, which canceled out the urban heat island effect, so had the same mean temperature as Pearson but lower maximum temperatures.

With the sunshine and generally dry conditions, there was a wide range between high and low temperatures. This was borne out by the patchy late freeze on May 23 (after the long weekend), which affected some crops in southern Ontario. While Pearson Airport recorded a low of 1.1°, some places dipped into negative territory: North York -0.5° and Clarendon (northeast of Toronto) -2°.

Rainfall was erratic. Thunderstorms on the evening of the 10th were hit-and-miss affairs. A powerful system on the 30th-31st brought consistent heavy rain, with the 31st being cold. Monthly rainfall totals were 50.1 mm downtown (a few days were missing data but were apparently pretty dry) and 62.8 mm at Pearson Airport: 10-20 mm below normal.

### June 2015

June was a strikingly wet month, with 20-35 mm downpours occurring every few days. It was the second wettest June on record downtown with 183.9 mm (and the wettest of any month since September 1996). The period of record downtown goes back to 1840, and the wettest June was in 1870 with 205.5 mm of rain. Pearson was slightly less extreme with 160.2 mm recorded; it was the airport's third-wettest June. The month managed to avoid major flooding since rainfall events were spaced apart and it followed several months of drier-than-normal weather.

Cloud cover associated with the weather systems, along with the continuing chill of Lake Ontario after the previous cold winter, held temperatures down a bit. Monthly mean temperatures ran about 1° to 1.5° below normal (18.1° and 18.0° downtown and at the airport respectively). The mean maximum temperature at the airport was cooler than that for May, though there were certainly humid periods. Surprisingly, we did not have severe thunderstorms, just tropical downpours plus one very cold rain late in the month. On the 27th-28th, Pearson Airport recorded 48.4 mm of rain, with the 28th having daytime temperatures in the low to mid teens.

A growing El Niño, likely the strongest since 1997-1998 (though it's too early to tell), may have had something to do with the weird weather. While heat and drought continued out west, a nearly continuous feed of tropical moisture moved north from Texas into the Mississippi and Ohio Valleys, then the lower Great Lakes and east to the Atlantic states.

### July 2015

Conditions quieted down in July with much drier, sunnier weather than in June. Temperatures gradually rose until low thirties predominated by the last week. Humidity was generally moderate and the last week of the month was only a marginal heat-wave. July was fractionally cooler than normal overall, with a few minimum readings below 10° in outlying areas on the 3rd.

Rainfall was just 24.4 mm at Pearson Airport, the lowest since 2005 and the sixth lowest on record. Downtown had just 17.1 mm of rain, the lowest since 1954 and drier than droughty years like 1959, 1983 and 2011. Thunderstorms were conspicuous by their scarcity, and no rain to speak of fell after the 7th. Some of the western influence moved east into the Great Lakes. However, this was not really a droughty month, because June had been so wet and there was abundant soil moisture. Shallow-rooted lawns were beginning to brown a bit by the 31st.

### August 2015

In spite of the strong El Niño brewing, August was unremarkable with near-normal temperatures and precipitation. Cool weather prevailed during the first part of the month and again on the last week. There was heat and humidity mid-month and just after. The hottest temperature at Pearson Airport was 32.6°, while downtown it was 31.6°; both readings on the 17th. It dropped to 10.9° on the 28th at Pearson. The month was within a fraction of a degree of normal: 21.1° downtown (normal 21.7°) and 20.7° at Pearson Airport (normal 20.8°).

Rainfall was basically normal although, as is usually the case in the summer, it was spotty and sporadic. Most of it fell on the 2nd and 10th. Storms on the 2nd represented one of the few severe thunderstorm events in southern Ontario this year. Hail fell in Toronto and there was a tornado in Teviotdale in southwestern Ontario. A strong weather system on the 20th, labeled "fall-like" and attributed in part to El Niño energy, proved unexceptional. Complete rainfall totals were not available for either downtown or Pearson this month. However, it was higher north of the city. Toronto Island had just 44.0 mm while Buttonville had 74.9 mm and North York 93.0 mm. The overall impression was of a fairly dry month, drier than the rainfall totals would indicate, because of the preceding dry July and widely-spaced rain events of August.

Gavin Miller

## COMING EVENTS

If you plan to attend any of these events, we recommend that you contact the organizing group beforehand to confirm time and place.

### **Jim Baillie Memorial Bird Walks – Toronto Ornithological Club** (Information: [www.torontobirding.ca](http://www.torontobirding.ca))

Aimed at the intermediate birder, but beginners also welcome. Free to the public.

- Sun May 1, 7:30 am - noon. Humber Bay Park East - Spring migrants. Leader: Don Burton. Meet at Humber Bay E parking lot.
- Sat May 7, 7:30 am - noon. High Park - warblers, orioles, sparrow, hummingbirds. Leader: Pat Hodgson. Meet at the parking lot inside the Bloor St W entrance at High Park Ave.
- Sat May 14, 8 am - late aft. Toronto Islands - Later spring migrants. Leader: John Nishikawa. Meet at ferry docks at the foot of Bay St off Queen's Quay to catch 8:15 am ferry to Hanlan's Point (ferry \$7.25 adults; \$4.75 students/seniors). Bring lunch.
- Sun May 22, 7:30 am - noon. Colonel Samuel Smith Park - whimbrels and other migrants. Leader: Petra Grass, Jim Grass. Meet at the most southerly parking lot at the foot of Kipling Ave south of Lake Shore Blvd W.

### **High Park Walking Tours** (Information: 416-392-6916 or [walkingtours@highpark.org](mailto:walkingtours@highpark.org))

1st and 3rd Sundays of each month from 10:30 to noon. Meet at the benches south of the Grenadier Restaurant.

- May 1 The Ecology of Grenadier Pond, Christine Tu-Parker
- May 15 The Amazing Birds of the Park, Brian Bailey
- June 5 Spring Babies at the Zoo, Sonya Dittkrist, Zookeeper
- June 19 Plants and Flowers, Ron Luft
- July 3 More Bees, Please, Scott MacIvor
- July 17 Exploring Spring Creek Ravine, Stephen Smith
- Aug 7 Caterpillars, Moths, and Butterflies, Don Scallen
- Aug 21 Native Wildflowers, Sharon Lovett

### **Toronto Entomologists Association** (Information: [www.ontarioinsects.org](http://www.ontarioinsects.org))

The TEA conducts a number of field trips during the summer. Everyone is welcome.

### **Tommy Thompson Park: Sunday morning bird walks**

April to June 5 and August 14 to November 13, starting 8 am. Meet at park entrance, 1 Leslie St.

### **LEAF's Tree Tenders Volunteer Training Program** (For information or to register: [www.yourleaf.org](http://www.yourleaf.org))

May 10, 12, 14, 17 at St. Matthew's Clubhouse, 450 Broadview Ave in Riverdale Park East at Langley Ave. \$80 + GST.

### **Rouge Park Weekly Guided Nature Walks** ([www.rougepark.com/hike](http://www.rougepark.com/hike))

Explore Rouge Park's trails with a Hike Ontario certified volunteer leader. E-mail [hike@rougepark.com](mailto:hike@rougepark.com) or phone 905-713-3184, Mon - Thurs.

### **The Market Gallery** ([toronto.ca/marketgallery](http://toronto.ca/marketgallery))

South St Lawrence Market, 2nd floor, 95 Front St E. Free. Gallery closed Sun, Mon and holidays.

- To June 11. Tunnel Vision: The Story of Toronto's Subway
- Opening June 18. When The Beatles Rocked Toronto

### **Lost Rivers Walks** ([www.lostrivers.ca](http://www.lostrivers.ca))

A program of Toronto Green Community, walking tours explore Toronto's urban ecology to encourage community stewardship of water and nature. There is no charge, registration is not required and walks are "rain-or-shine." Please dress appropriately.

### **2016 Swift Night Out, Moss Park**

Sat May 28, 8:15 pm. Join Bird Studies Canada and Toronto SwiftWatch volunteers to witness the amazing spectacle of hundreds of chimney swifts diving into a chimney to roost for the night! Learn about this urban species at risk and how you can help chimney swifts by getting involved in SwiftWatch monitoring efforts across the city. Meet in Moss Park (Queen St E and Jarvis St) just south of the tennis courts on the west side of the park. Bring your lawn chair, camera and binoculars. For information: email [ontarioswiftwatch@birdscanada.org](mailto:ontarioswiftwatch@birdscanada.org)

### **Ontario Bio-blitz** ([www.bioblitz.ca](http://www.bioblitz.ca))

June 11-12. Credit River Watershed. Registration closes May 20.

*Continued next page*

### **Tommy Thompson Park Spring Bird Festival**

Sat May 14, 7:30 am - 4 pm. (Information: [www.springbirdfestival.ca](http://www.springbirdfestival.ca))

### **Spring Bird Festival at Colonel Samuel Smith Park**

Sat May 28. Hourly walks starting 9 am.

Information: [www.ccfew.org/html/bird\\_walks.html](http://www.ccfew.org/html/bird_walks.html)

Baltimore oriole. Photo: Norah Jancik



## SPECIAL MEETING OF MEMBERS REPORT - SUNDAY APRIL 3, 2016

TFN Members passed a motion increasing membership fees as follows:

Fees for members choosing a print version of the Newsletter mailed to them:

Family - \$60, Single - \$50, Youth - \$20, Senior Family - \$50, Senior Single - \$40.

Fees for members receiving the Newsletter online:

Family - \$50, Single - \$40, Youth - \$10, Senior Family - \$40, Senior Single - \$30.

These fees become effective July 1, 2016

### COMING EVENTS *continued*

#### **NANPS Native Plant Sales** ([www.nanps.org](http://www.nanps.org))

- Sat May, 7, 10 am to 3 pm. Markham Civic Centre, 101 Town Centre Blvd, Markham (Hwy 7 & Warden Ave)
- Sat May, 14 11 am to 4 pm. Artisans at Work, 2071 Danforth Ave, Toronto (Woodbine subway station)
- Sun May 29, 12 noon to 4 pm. Christie Pits, south end of park (Christie subway station)

#### **High Park Native Plant Sale** ([www.highparknature.org](http://www.highparknature.org))

Sun May 8, 11 am – 2 pm In front of the Greenhouse. Large orders available only after 1 pm. Cash only.

Very limited parking at Grenadier Restaurant. **Please use transit, walk or bike if cherry blossoms are in bloom.**

#### **Toronto Botanical Garden Plant Sale** ([www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/))

Fri May 13, 10 am - 8 pm and Sat May 14 and Sun May 15, 9 am - 5 pm. 777 Lawrence Ave E at Leslie St.

Partnering with St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre, the largest source-identified native plant nursery in Ontario, who will bring uncommon specimens and high impact native plants.

#### **Lambton Park Public School Tree Walk**

Sat May 14, 1:30 pm. Meet at Scarlett Rd and St Clair Ave W. We will proceed to Lambton Park Public School, visiting sites related to the school's beginnings. Hear stories of 12 Lambton Park students killed in the First World War, commemorated by six Memorial Trees planted on November 11, 1919, which were featured in the Great Toronto Tree Hunt, 2015.

Leaders: Madeleine McDowell with Bonita Nelson, descendant of two of the men commemorated by the Memorial Trees.

#### **Ian Wheal Walks**

- Tues May 10, 6:30 pm. Physiography of St. Anne's – St. Helen's neighbourhoods. Meet on the southeast corner of College St and Lansdowne Ave for a 2-hr walk about lost sinkholes, swamps and underground water catchment areas.
- Tues May 24, 6:30 pm. Don Valley lookouts – an Eiffel Tower, Grecian Temple and Venetian Gondola site. A heritage walk. Meet at the entrance to Broadview subway station.
- Sat June 11, 1:30 pm. North Annex: Heritage and Physiography. Meet at Summerhill subway station for a 2-hr walk along the Lake Iroquois shoreline seeing old roads and trails and sites of former estates interspersed with the modern east-west Canadian Pacific Railway line. Co-leader: Nancy Dengler.
- Sun June 19, 11 am. Greektown's water reservoir (Geology and Physiography). Meet at the entrance to Pape subway station.

#### **Lakeshore Grounds Online Exhibitions** ([www.lakeshoregrounds.ca/#!/wings-of-the-lakeshore/pkngq](http://www.lakeshoregrounds.ca/#!/wings-of-the-lakeshore/pkngq))

In anticipation of the opening of Lakeshore Grounds Interpretive Centre, they have posted a series of online exhibitions which feature the past and present of the Lakeshore Grounds: Wings of the Lakeshore; Transformation of the Cottages; Snapshots of the Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

#### **2016 International Piping Plover Census in Ontario**

Information: [ploverlovers.com/2016/03/2016-international-census-taking-place-in-ontario/](http://ploverlovers.com/2016/03/2016-international-census-taking-place-in-ontario/)

#### **Toronto's Community Stewardship Program** ([www.toronto.ca/greentoronto](http://www.toronto.ca/greentoronto))

Groups of volunteers get together weekly to take care of natural sites in Toronto, including Crothers Woods, Don Valley Brick Works, Beechwood Wetland, Nordheimer Ravine, Humber Bay Butterfly Habitat, River Park East and Milne Hollow.

#### **Todmorden Mills Wildflower Preserve**

For information about joining the dedicated group of stewards who meet one or two mornings a week to care for this preserve in the Don Valley, contact Paula Davies at [wildflowerpreserve@gmail.com](mailto:wildflowerpreserve@gmail.com).

TFN MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

**Note:** *All members with an email address will receive the password for the online Newsletter*

**Membership type**

(please check one)	Online Newsletter	Mailed Newsletter (paid before June 30)	Mailed Newsletter (paid after June 30)
Single	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$60 <input type="checkbox"/>
Senior single (65+)	\$30 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$30 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>
Senior family	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$40 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$50 <input type="checkbox"/>
Youth (under 26)	\$10 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$20 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$20 <input type="checkbox"/>

Membership fee \_\_\_\_\_  
 Donation (tax receipts issued) \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL** amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

**Member information:** (Note: we do not sell or swap our mailing list.)

Name (as on mailing label) \_\_\_\_\_

My address has changed

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**To renew:** Send this form with payment to Toronto Field Naturalists, 1519-2 Carlton St, Toronto, ON, M5B 1J3 **OR** go to [www.torontofieldnaturalists.org](http://www.torontofieldnaturalists.org) to pay by PayPal or print the form.

**Volunteering:** I would be willing to volunteer in the following area(s):

- Outings       Outreach       Office       Newsletter       Website   
 Environmental issues       Nature Reserves       Finance/Accounting       Youth



**Volunteers Needed for Phoning**

TFN needs people to phone members who haven't renewed their memberships.

This is done in the first week of August, after renewals have been recorded and in time for mailing the September newsletter.

If you could help with this, please advise Margaret McRae at \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

**Toronto Field Naturalists**  
1519—2 Carlton St.,  
Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1J3

**Publications Mail**  
Registration No. 40049590



Groundhog at Edwards Gardens, seen on Miles Hearn's walk following ON Regional Meeting, April 9. Photo: Lloyd Mayeda