



Since 1923

TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 628 May 2017



Black-eyed Susans, Crothers Woods. Photo: Ken Sproule

REGULARS

Children's Corner	21
Coming Events	26
Extracts from Outings Reports	18
From the Archives	25
In the News	23
Keeping in Touch	20
Monthly Meetings Notice	3
Monthly Meeting Report	13
President's Report	12
TFN Outings	4
Weather – This Time Last Year	24

FEATURES

TFN Grant Report: Bird Studies Canada	14
Toronto's Trailing Arbutus and Relatives	15
Q&A: Pollination	16
Toronto Ravine Strategy Update	17
Cottonwood Flats Monitor Program	19
Nominating Committee Report	19
Striped Coral Root	20
My Nature Journey	22
TFN MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL	27

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.

Toronto Field Naturalist is published by the Toronto Field Naturalists, a charitable, non-profit organization. Issued monthly September to December and February to May. Views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or Toronto Field Naturalists. The Newsletter is printed on 100% recycled paper.

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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

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

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MEMBERSHIP FEES	ONLINE NEWSLETTER	MAILED NEWSLETTER
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FAMILY	\$50	\$60

No HST. Tax receipts issued for donations. Send membership fees and address changes to the TFN office.

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 and be sure to include what your photo is and where it was taken.

To read posts, go to www.torontofieldnaturalists.org and click on Twitter or Facebook.



Wood anemone.
Photo: Wendy Rothwell

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As we embark on our summer break, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who contribute to our newsletter by providing regular features, sharing knowledge in feature articles and answering members' questions, keeping us informed of TFN's activities and projects or submitting photos, artwork, stories and book reviews. Thank you also to our Newsletter Committee (named above) who proofread everything for accuracy and assist with type-setting. And a particular 'thank you' to Jenny Bull who, since stepping down as co-editor, continues to provide invaluable guidance and assistance.

As you enjoy nature during the spring and summer, please send in your stories and photos for inclusion in the September issue.

TFN MEETING

Sunday, May 7, 2:30 pm

Grow Wild: Gardening with Native Plants

Lorraine Johnson, author, will describe how to grow a successful garden with plants native to the Toronto area



VISITORS WELCOME!

SOCIAL: 2:00 – 2:30 pm

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

Just south of Museum subway station exit, east side of Queen's Park. Accessible 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.

Share your thoughts and insights about this lecture on social media with the hashtag #TFNTalk.

UPCOMING TFN LECTURES

- | | |
|---------|---|
| Sept 10 | Jason Ramsay-Brown (Author, <i>Toronto's Ravines and Urban Forest</i>):
<i>Growing hope: Renaturalizing the landscape and ourselves.</i> |
| Oct 1 | Martyn Obbard (Research Scientist, Ministry of Natural Resources):
<i>Polar bears and climate change: is there a tipping point?</i> |
| Nov 5 | Gail Fraser (Associate Professor, Department of Biology, York University):
<i>Double-crested cormorants and Leslie St Spit's urban wilderness.</i> |
| Dec 3 | Peter Mills (Author and Illustrator, <i>Metamorphosis</i>):
<i>Ontario's amphibians at all stages of development</i> |

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 or 416-393-4636).
- Outings go rain or shine; check the weather by calling 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.*
- **We recommend you check with the TTC for any schedule disruptions which may occur on weekends. Allow extra time if necessary.**

Please share your favourite walk photos on social media with the hashtag #TFNWalk.

- Wed
May 3
10:00 am
- JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE – Nature, Birds and Plants**
Leader: Miles Hearn. Meet at the JBNR gates, 749 Fowlers Rd, Uxbridge, for a circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with gentle slopes. Learn to identify bird calls and look for spring ephemerals and other signs of spring in the forest. Bring lunch, water and binoculars. Sturdy waterproof footwear, insect repellent and long sleeves and pants all recommended. Washrooms at beginning of walk. Return to Toronto by about 4 pm. Please contact Charles Bruce-Thompson 416-778-5340 or cbthomps@gmail.com by April 30 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.
- Wed
May 3
6:30 pm
- GERMAN MILLS CREEK SETTLERS PARK – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Theresa Moore. Meet at the northeast corner of Steeles Ave E and Leslie St for a 2-hr circular ramble on paved and unpaved surfaces with a few small hills. We will look for signs of spring, especially wildflowers and migrating birds. No washrooms.
- Sat
May 6
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 for a circular walk. 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 7
2:30 pm
- LECTURE: Grow Wild: Gardening with Native Plants**
Speaker: Lorraine Johnson, author and expert on native plant gardens
Emmanuel College, 75 Queen's Park Cres E (see details on page 3)
- Thurs
May 11
10:00 am
- YORK BELTLINE RAILWAY AND PROSPECT CEMETERY – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Linda McCaffrey. Meet at the entrance to Eglinton West subway station. We will follow the trail of the York Beltline, trace the course of Lavender Creek into the cemetery, admire the stately trees and a few historic graves and exit the cemetery on St Clair Ave W where you can take a streetcar.
- Sat
May 13
10:00 am
- CROTHERS WOODS – Spring Flowers**
Leader: Margaret McRae. Meet at the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk in Crothers Woods with some unpaved trails and steep hills. No washrooms. Morning only.
- Sun
May 14
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 of Aggie's specimens were from the Baby Point and Humber Valley area. Many of these flowers still survive in the Magwood Sanctuary. Approximately two hrs ending at Lambton House for tea and a talk about Agnes.
- Wed
May 17
10:00 am
- WEEDS PART 1**
Leader: Miles Hearn. Meet in front of Chester subway station for a circular walk on mostly flat terrain. This is Part 1 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 hours. Washrooms available. Bring binoculars and field guide if you wish.

- Thurs
May 18
6:30 pm **EAST DON PARKLANDS – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Stephen Kamnitzer. Meet at the Second Cup, Laureleaf Plaza, on the southwest corner of Steeles Ave E and Laureleaf near the Esso gas station between Leslie and Bayview. A circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces. We will explore the forest, the East Don River and German Mills Creek in the area south of Bestview Park. There is a reasonable possibility of seeing beavers in the East Don and deer in the Finch hydro corridor. Optional coffee stop at the Second Cup after the walk. Bring binoculars. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sat
May 20
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 21
2:00 pm **UNEARTHING STORIES OF LOST SPRING CREEK, BLUE GREEN CITY PART 2 – Lost Rivers**
Leaders: Richard Anderson and friends. Meet at the southwest corner of Dundas St W and Indian Grove (1 block east of Keele St). (#40 Junction bus from Dundas West subway station.) We'll follow the ravine systems of Spring Creek from its edges at Dundas to its re-emergence as a live watercourse in High Park. A linear walk of about 3 km, on city streets and park paths. Washrooms in commercial venues. Walk ends near High Park streetcar loop within walking distance of Keele subway station. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues
May 23
6:45 pm **TORONTO WATERFRONT AND GARDENS – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Peter Iveson. Meet at the northwest corner of Bathurst St and Queen's Quay W beside the war memorial in Little Norway Park. Walk will conclude at the Music Garden.
- Thurs
May 25
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 walk on mostly paved flat surfaces. We'll explore the gardens and woods looking for nesting birds, late migrants and early butterflies. Bring lunch and binoculars. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sat
May 27
1:00 pm **TODMORDEN MILLS WILDFLOWER PRESERVE – Nature Walk**
Leader: Paula Davies. Meet at the entrance to the Wildflower Preserve at Todmorden Mills, 67 Pottery Rd for a circular walk. We will look for signs of spring wildlife and check out work done by the stewards. Dirt trails and some stairs. Washrooms available.
- Sun
May 28
1:30 pm **HIGH PARK – Trees and Shrubs**
Leader: Bohdan Kowalyk. Meet at the entrance to High Park at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with some steep slopes. Washrooms at end of walk. We will see black oak woodlands, invasive species and introduced, endangered and threatened species. About 2½ hrs (3 km).
- Tues
May 30
6:30 pm **ROSEDALE AND DON VALLEY – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Tessa Edward. Meet outside Castle Frank subway station for a linear walk on mostly unpaved surfaces through Rosedale and into Craighleigh Gardens. We'll head down into the Valley via Milkman's Way and then north to the Brick Works. We can check out the wetland for nesting birds and new growth. Bring binoculars, bird book, etc. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Wed
May 31
10:00 **ROUGE PARK – Spring Ephemerals**
Leader: Cass Stabler, Resource Management Officer, Rouge National Urban Park. Meet at Glen Rouge Campground for a walk on the Rouge's Mast Trail. Steep slope and some stairs at the beginning and end of walk. Take bus #85 from Don Mills subway station or Rouge Hill GO Station to Sheppard Ave E and Kingston Rd. Then walk about 1 km east on the north side of Kingston Rd to the Glen Rouge campground entrance. Bring binoculars and a field guide if you wish.

Ravine City Family Nature Walks

TFN and TRCA are pleased to present the Ravine City Family Nature Walks program! Bring the whole family for a morning of birdwatching, bug-hunting, games and activities or an inspiring walk in the woods. Saturdays starting at 10 am. Those scheduled for the spring and summer are:

- | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|
| May 13 | Skip into Scarborough Bluffs | July 8 | Live it Up in L'Amoreaux |
| June 3 | Kick Back in King's Mill Park | Sept 16 | Believe in Black Creek Parkland |

Register for these free events at <http://www.trcastewardshipevents.ca> Space is limited.

Please tag photos you take on these walks with #TFNWalk #ravinecity so we can all live vicariously through your lens!

LYME DISEASE - TAKE MEASURES TO PROTECT YOURSELF

To check out Toronto Public Health's Lyme Disease Fact Sheet, visit www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=f4f52d6855e02410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD. Or call 416-338-7600.

- Sat
June 3
10:00 am **ROUGE PARK – Nature and Heritage**
Leaders: Jim and Petra Grass. Meet at the Glen Rouge 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 with some stairs and steep slopes to look at birds and wildflowers. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Sun
June 4
1:30 pm **HUMBER RIVER – Nature Walk**
Leader: James Eckenwalder, Associate Professor of Evolutionary Biology, University of Toronto
Meet at Old Mill subway station for a circular walk along the Humber (south on the west bank). We recommend long sleeves and long pants. No washrooms.
- Tues
June 6
10:00 am **TORONTO WATERFRONT TRAIL EAST – Nature Walk**
Leader: Blair Campbell. Meet at the southwest corner of Lawrence Ave E and Port Union Rd. We will follow the Toronto waterfront trail west on a linear walk to the FJ Hogan Water treatment plant (Copperfield & Manse Road), visiting the East Point Bird Sanctuary. As a possible option we may walk a bit along Beechgrove Beach. Caution: this is a nude beach! There are some stairs if we descend to the beach. Bring: binoculars, lunch and sturdy walking boots. Mostly flat, unpaved surfaces, some stairs. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Tues
June 6
6:45 pm **RIVERDALE PARK EAST – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Vivienne Denton. Meet at Broadview subway station for a circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces with gentle slopes. We will examine naturalized areas including woodland planted by the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, areas tended by the City stewardship program, and newer plantings beside 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 7
10:00 am **RIVERSIDE DRIVE – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Madeleine McDowell. Meet at South Kingsway north of The Queensway next to the Petrocan gas station. The Swansea bus from Runnymede subway station stops there. Walk will end at Bloor St W and Jane St. See the Humber Marshes, the site of Jean Baptiste Rousseaux's home, Elizabeth Simcoe's visit and ancient First Nations trail. Walk some of the Toronto Carrying Place; Home Smith's 1912 footprint development and 250 years of recorded travel.
- Sat
June 10
10:00 am **EARLSCOURT AND WEST TORONTO RAILPATH – Heritage**
Leader: Linda McCaffrey. Meet at the southwest corner of St Clair Ave W and Lansdowne Ave. We will trek through Earlscourt Park, admire the historic buildings from the Canadian Foundry Industrial Complex and access the trail at Cariboo Ave. Along the trail we will admire several fine industrial buildings from the heyday of the Junction. Thirsty trekkers may want to check out the Henderson Brewery. Walk ends at Dundas West subway station.
- Sun
June 11
1:30 pm **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. About 2½ hours. No washrooms.
- Tues
June 13
10:00 am **EAST DON PARKLANDS – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Barbara Jackson. Meet outside the Second Cup in the plaza on the south side of Steeles Ave E at Laureleaf Rd S between Bayview and Leslie for a circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with some steep slopes. We will explore the trails in the northern part of the East Don Parklands around the East Don River and German Mills Creek, reviewing some of the history of the area while looking for birds, plants, trees and late spring flowers. Bring water and binoculars. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Wed
June 14
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) for a circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat. Washrooms available. Bring binoculars. The walk will end at the foot of Cherry St.
- Sat
June 17
10:00 am **GOLDIE FELDMAN NATURE RESERVE – Nature Walk**
Leader: Charles Chaffey. Please tell the leader by Thursday June 15 if you need a ride or can offer one, so that car-pooling can be arranged (416-752-2897 or charles.chaffey@sympatico.ca). We will meet outside the south exit of York Mills subway station on Old York Mills Rd and drive to the reserve at 4093 17th Sideroad, King City to start the walk at 11 am. Bring water and lunch and binoculars if you wish. We should be back in Toronto by 4 pm.

- Sun
Jun 18
2:00 pm
LOST NEIGHBOURHOODS, LOST ECOSYSTEMS. Unearthing stories of St Jamestown – Lost Rivers
Leaders: Helen Mills and the St Jamestown Rivers Rising Ambassadors. Meet outside Sherbourne subway station for a fascinating journey into the past, present, and possible future of St James Town. How forests became a neighbourhood, and that neighbourhood became the densest most diverse part of Toronto – “the world in a few city blocks.” Heritage, water, trees, gardens, food security, climate change and of course the stories of nearby lost rivers: Castle Frank Brook, Cruikshank Creek and Sumac Creek. A linear walk mainly on city streets. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Wed
June 21
6:45 pm
THREE BURIED CREEKS OF MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY – Evening Ramble
Leader: Alexander Cappell. Meet at the northeast corner of Moore Ave and Bayview Ave for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces, flat with some steep slopes. We’ll find signs of buried Cudmore Creek, Mud Creek and Yellow Creek in and near the cemetery and finish at a coffee shop near Yonge and Eglinton.
- Thurs
June 22
10:00 am
HIGH PARK – Wildflowers
Leader: Wendy Rothwell. Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk. Some hilly and rough terrain. Morning only.
- Sat
June 24
10:00 am
GLENDON RAVINE AND BURKE BROOK – Nature walk
Leader: Nancy Dengler. Meet on the southeast corner of Bayview Ave and Lawrence Ave E for a circular 2½-hr walk through Glendon College campus, West Don River flood plain (chance of seeing Baltimore checkerspot butterfly), and then up Burke Brook Ravine to Bayview Ave. Mostly flat TRCA trails but a steep climb near the end. Washrooms at start and end.
- Sun
June 25
1:30 pm
CABBAGETOWN AND THE CEMETERIES – Heritage
Leader: Janet Langdon. Meet at the southeast corner of Sumach St and Winchester St. Walk ends on Parliament St. Some hills. Not a circular route.
- Tues
June 27
10:00 am
ROUGE BEACH TO PETTICOAT CREEK – Birds and Butterflies
Leaders: Carol Sellers. Meet at the Rouge GO station on Lawrence Ave E just east of Port Union Rd to carpool to the beach for a circular walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with some stairs. We should see several nesting birds, including cliff swallows under the bridge, and a variety of butterflies. Bring lunch and binoculars. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Wed
June 28
10:00 am
WEEDS PART 2
Leader: Miles Hearn. Meet by Dufferin subway station, northwest corner of Dufferin St and Bloor St W for a circular walk on mostly flat terrain. This is the second 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.
- Thurs
June 29
6:45 pm
LAWRENCE PARK AND BURKE BROOK – Evening Ramble
Leader: Nancy Dengler. Meet at the southwest corner of Yonge St and Lawrence Ave E in front of the Locke Library for a 1½ hour circular walk on mostly unpaved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes and stairs. We’ll look at the naturalistic landscaping in Lawrence Park, self-established trees on the slopes of Burke Brook ravine, an early restoration effort on the Burke Brook floodplain and the history of Alexander Muir Gardens. Washrooms at start.

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 416-429-7821 or marg.mcrae@gmail.com.



Black-eyed Susan.
Watercolour and watercolour pencil by Joanne Doucette

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 for protection 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
July 2
1:30 pm **TADDLE CREEK, ST CLAIR W TO COLLEGE ST – Nature Walk**
Leader: Alexander Cappell. Meet at the southwest corner of Bathurst St and St Clair Ave W for a linear walk, flat with some gentle slopes, mainly paved. We'll visit the Wychwood Park pond and continue southeast through the Annex to Philosopher's Walk where the bed of buried Taddle Creek is visible from Bloor to College. We'll finish at a coffee shop near University Ave and College St. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Tues
July 4
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 with some steep slopes. We will climb the steps to Dundas St W 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 or snacks. Binoculars and cameras might be useful. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Wed
July 5
6:45 pm **BACK LANES AND BURIED CREEKS OF DOWNTOWN BLOOR ST W – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Alexander Cappell. Meet at the entrance to Christie subway station for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat with gentle slopes and some stairs. We'll find signs of Garrison Creek (Christie Pits); in the back lanes some of its tributaries, and farther east barely detectable Russell Creek. We'll continue east to Taddle Creek (Philosopher's Walk) where we may climb one stairway to finish at a coffee shop near Bay and Bloor.
- Sat
July 8
10:00 am **CAWTHRA PARK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Ken Sproule. Meet in the parking lot at the east side of Marie Curtis Park. Take the #501 Lake Shore streetcar and shuttlebus and/or the GO train to Long Branch. Walk down 42nd St to the parking lot. If there are enough cars for car-pooling we will drive to Cawthra Park at Cawthra Rd and Arbor Rd in Mississauga. Cawthra Park is a small wooded area that is home to the red-backed salamander and perhaps the threatened Jeffersonian salamander. Including travel time it should take 2 to 2½ hrs. If enough cars not available, we will visit Marie Curtis Park. Level ground on unpaved paths.
- Sun
July 9
1:00 pm **CENTENNIAL PARK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Claire Bergeron. Meet outside the LCBO at Burnhamthorpe Mall. From Islington subway station take Burnhamthorpe bus #50 to Old Burnhamthorpe Rd just past Renforth Rd. Cross the street to the mall. A 2-hr circular walk. Washrooms available at the Conservatory (approximately 20 minutes from beginning of walk).
- Wed
July 12
6:45 pm **TREES AND ARCHITECTURE PART 1 – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Richard Partington. Meet at the southeast corner of Charles St W and Queen's Park Cres opposite the planetarium. We will take a 2-hr circular walk considering things architectural and arboreal.
- Thurs
July 13
10:00 am **WESTHILL AND HIGHLAND CREEK – Heritage**
Leader: Linda McCaffrey. Meet at the bus stop on the south side of Kingston Rd at Old Kingston Rd for a walk along Old Kingston Rd through West Hill, Highland Creek Valley and Highland Creek Village to the Morrish General Store at Meadowvale Rd. We will see historic buildings, an exquisite Presbyterian cemetery and a graveyard which received its first souls during the reign of King George III. Take bus at Kingston Rd and Meadowvale or return with leader to starting point.

- Sat
July 15
1:30 pm **TWO CREEKS AND A RIVER IN NORTH YORK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Alexander Cappell. Meet at the southeast corner of Steeles Ave E and Laureleaf Rd (midway between Bayview and Leslie) for a linear walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with some steep slopes. We'll follow the ravine edge of the Bestview Creek erosion gully down into the valley of German Mills Creek which will take us to the valley of the East Don River, then south to the Finch hydro corridor and its bike path which will take us up and out to a coffee shop at Bayview and Cummer. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sun
July 16
2:00 pm **WARDEN WOODS: LANDSCAPE, WATERCOURSES AND THE URBAN FOREST – Lost Rivers**
Leaders: John Wilson and Jason Ramsay-Brown. Meet at the southwest corner of Warden Ave and St Clair Ave E across from Warden subway station for a 3.5-km circular walk through one of Toronto's most spectacular ravines. Thousands see it from the subway but few experience it close-hand with expert commentary. Washrooms available in subway station. Some steep slopes and uneven trails. Joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Tues
July 18
10:00 am **EGLINTON FLATS – 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 steep slopes. Two hrs+ (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 Gov Simcoe from 1793 and the bridge and site of John Scarlett's mill from the 1850s. 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 19
6:45 pm **TREES AND ARCHITECTURE PART 2 – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Richard Partington. Meet at the northwest corner of College St and Queen's Park Cres. We will take a circular walk considering things architectural and arboreal. 2 hrs.
- Sat
July 22
10:00 am **FORKS OF THE DON – 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 available at E T Seton Park where we will have lunch.
- Sun
July 23
1:30 pm **HUMBER RIVER – Nature Walk**
Leader: Doug Paton. Meet at Old Mill subway station for a linear walk south along the Humber ending at Lake Ontario.
- Tues
July 25
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 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. Mostly paved surfaces, mainly flat. Washrooms at the end of the walk. Bring binoculars.
- Wed
July 26
10:00 am **WEEDS PART 3**
Leader: Miles Hearn. Meet in front of Coxwell subway station for a circular walk on mostly flat terrain. This is Part 3 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.



Black swallowtail butterfly on sunflower.

Photo:
Theresa Moore

Female American toad

Photo:
Lynn Pady



- Sat
July 29
1:30 pm **G ROSS LORD PARK FROM WEST TO EAST – Nature Walk**
Leader: Alexander Cappell. Meet at the northeast corner of Dufferin St and Finch Ave W for a linear walk, mostly unpaved but even, with gentle slopes. We'll see the Finch hydro corridor, a flood control dam and the artificial lake it created on the West Don River, and the junction of the Don with Fisherville Creek. We'll walk along a berm separating two housing developments to finish at a coffee shop near Bathurst and Finch. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sun
July 30
1:00 pm **RESTORATION AND CITIZEN SCIENCE IN THE DON VALLEY – Nature Walk**
Leader: Jason Ramsay-Brown. Meet at the corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a 4-km circular walk to visit the Beechwood Wetland, Sun Valley and Cottonwood Flats, the site of the TFN's latest ecological monitoring program. Discover how the industrial legacy of the Don Valley has been transformed into natural heritage. Bring water, camera, binoculars and curiosity. No washrooms.
- Tues
Aug 1
6:30 pm **TODMORDEN MILLS WILDFLOWER PRESERVE – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson. Meet at the entrance to the wildflower preserve at Todmorden Mills, 67 Pottery Rd. We will look at how a seriously degraded landscape has been coaxed back to health by a decades-long stewardship program. Dirt trails and some stairs.
- Wed
Aug 2
1:30 pm **TREES AND ARCHITECTURE PART 3 – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Richard Partington. Meet at the northwest corner of St George St and College St. Our walk will wind around the south end and west side of St George St ending at Wilcox. We will consider things architectural and arboreal. 2½ hours.
- Sat
Aug 5
1:30 pm **WEXFORD PARK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Charles Chaffey. Meet at the northeast corner of Warden Ave and Bertrand Ave (any 68 Warden bus from Warden subway station) for a circular walk on mostly unpaved, mainly flat surfaces. We'll take the Gatineau Trail east to Taylor Creek, then west and north, around the paths in the Wexford Park woodlot and back to the starting point where there is a Tim Hortons. Binoculars optional. No washrooms.
- Sun
Aug 6
1:00 pm **CENTENNIAL PARK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Claire Bergeron. Meet outside the LCBO at Burnhamthorpe Mall. From Islington subway station, take Burnhamthorpe bus #50 to Old Burnhamthorpe Rd just past Renforth Rd. Cross the street to the mall. A 2-hr circular walk. Washrooms at the Conservatory (approx. 20 minutes from beginning of walk).
- Tues
Aug 8
10:00 am **THE POCKET, HASTINGS CREEK AND ASHBRIDGE HOME – Heritage**
Leader: Linda McCaffrey. Meet at the exit from the Greenwood subway station. We will wend our way through The Pocket, one of Toronto's streetcar suburbs, trace the course of Hastings Creek, check out part of the Indian Bazaar and follow Ashbridges Creek to Queen St E and Ashbridge House. Take the Queen streetcar or the Greenwood bus back to the subway.
- Thurs
Aug 10
6:30 pm **HIGH PARK WILDFLOWERS – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Wendy Rothwell. Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk including some hills.
- Sat
Aug 12
10:00 am **WINDFIELDS PARK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Nancy Dengler. Meet at the southeast corner of Bayview Ave and York Mills Rd for a circular 2-hr walk along the midsection of Wilket Creek Ravine as far south as Post Road. We plan to see many examples of stream erosion, an oxbow lake in the making, an old dam and pond, the "big woods" on the Wilket Creek floodplain and some late summer wildflowers. Washroom in Second Cup at York Mills plaza.
- Sun
Aug 13
1:30 pm **UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO – Quads and Quieter Places – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Janet Langdon. Meet outside the main doors of Northrop Frye Hall, 73 Queen's Park Cres E for a linear walk on mostly paved and flat surfaces. We'll stroll through the campus looking at green spaces and modern quadrangles where students can get a little peace to study and think. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Tues
Aug 15
10:00 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, uneven surfaces with some steep slopes. #35 Jane bus. There is a parking lot accessed 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 golf course built by the only Golf Olympic Gold Medallist, and maybe a mocking bird, a great blue heron or a large turtle. Walk ends across from Tim Hortons. Bring snack, binoculars, camera.

- Thurs
Aug 17
6:30 pm **GLEN STEWART RAVINE – Evening Ramble**
Leader: Bob Kortright. Meet at the Beech Ave Parkette, 40 metres south of Kingston Rd, for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces with some steep slopes. See the magnificent oak forest of the Glen Stewart ravine from the boardwalk erected to protect the previously trampled slopes and the planted parkland housing 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 19
10:00 am **RAVINE AND RAIL, THE WHAT WHEN AND HOW – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Ed Freeman. Meet at the northeast corner of South Dr and Glen Rd (Sherbourne #75 or Rosedale #82 bus) for a 2-hr linear walk with some steep slopes. From start onto Glen Rd bridge, then return to Milkman's Lane, along the former Belt Line and through Mount Pleasant Cemetery to Davisville subway station. Bring curiosity, water, binoculars. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Sun
Aug 20
2:00 pm **BETTY SUTHERLAND TRAIL: LOWLANDS, UPLANDS AND MYSTERIES – Lost Rivers**
Leaders: John Wilson and Jason Ramsay-Brown. Meet at the southeast corner of Sheppard Ave E and Leslie St across from Leslie subway station for a linear walk along a remarkable trail that displays the resilience of nature on the East Don River as it skirts Highway 401. Discover and learn about ruined mills, energy sources from an era not far removed from our carbon-challenged present. Some steep slopes and uneven trails. Will end at a TTC bus stop on Don Mills Rd near York Mills. Washrooms at the start and within walking distance of the end. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Wed
Aug.23
10:00 am **WEEDS PART 4**
Leader: Miles Hearn. Meet by Spadina subway station, northwest corner of Spadina Rd and Bloor St W for a circular walk on mostly flat terrain. This is part 4 of 4 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
Aug 26
10:00 am **WILKET CREEK – Nature Walk**
Leader: Ken Sproule. Meet in the parking lot at the entrance to Wilket Creek Park on Leslie St just north of Eglinton Ave E for a circular walk of approximately 2½ hrs through Wilket Creek, Sunnybrook and Serena Gundy Parks on a mixture of paved and unpaved trails. Some steep hills. Washrooms available. Bring binoculars and water.
- Sun
Aug 27
1:30 pm **CENTRAL WATERFRONT PARKS – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Richard Partington. Meet at the Princes' Gates, south end of Strachan Ave to wander through Coronation Park, Little Norway Park and ultimately the Music Garden where, if we're lucky, we may attend a free concert at 4 pm.
- Wed
Aug 30
1:30 pm **TREES AND ARCHITECTURE Part 4 – Nature and Heritage**
Leader: Richard Partington. Meet at the northwest corner of St George St and College St. Our walk will wind around the east side of St George St ending at Hoskin Ave. We will consider things architectural and arboreal. 2½ hrs.



Belted kingfisher and cedar waxwing. Photos: Viktor Moroz

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This being my last report until September, I have decided to start the summer on a positive note with some encouraging pieces of news – it's not as though we have too much of that these days! Storm water and the problems it causes in a city like Toronto are well known. Almost half the Don Valley watershed, all 38 kilometres of it, is now covered in housing. More housing means more roads, driveways, roofs, malls and parking lots. Where once water percolated into the soil or flowed into wetlands, it now runs off unhindered into a periodically torrential Don River. So any initiative aimed at reducing the volume, and the amount of pollutants carried along with it, is welcome.

The good news is that some progress is being made towards addressing this problem. The City of Mississauga has introduced a storm water charge for home owners and businesses based on how much of their property is covered by impermeable surfaces: roofs, driveways, parking lots, etc. The reasons stated by the city emphasize flooding mitigation, property protection and infrastructure costs. However, it is the environment that stands to gain in the long run – cleaner, clearer streams and rivers, a healthier lake and improved wildlife habitat.

At the time of writing, Toronto City Council is considering a similar storm water charge. They propose removing the portion homeowners pay for storm water management (currently embedded in the water rate), and showing it as a separate charge on the water bill. If this charge causes property owners to pause before installing that double-width driveway, or businesses from creating acres of impermeable parking lots, it will have done its job.

TFN members can help in this regard by signing Ontario Nature's petition to oppose lobbying efforts to roll back proposed Greenbelt and Growth Plan protections: <http://ontarionature.good.do/sprawl/email/>. The Premier and Cabinet are about to make final decisions on the updated Oak Ridges Moraine, Greenbelt, Niagara Escarpment and Growth Plans. The choice is between continued sprawl with the concomitant added impermeable surfaces, or protection of natural spaces, clean water and farmland.

When thinking about the plight of pollinating insects, the honeybee and colony collapse disorder are usually the first things mentioned. However, honeybees are an introduced species, specifically designed for honey production, whereas there are over 700 native bee species in Canada. Other pollinators include butterflies, flies, wasps, moths, some beetles, hummingbirds and certain bats. Pesticides, specifically neonicotinoids, which were introduced in the

late 1990s, are strongly suspected of being at the root of the catastrophic pollinator decline.

The good news here is that Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is proposing to phase out, over the next three to five years, most uses of imidacloprid, the most widely used neonicotinoid, and has also initiated a review of other neonicotinoids registered for use in Canada. Europe is well ahead of us in this regard. The EU imposed a temporary ban on the use of three neonicotinoids on some crops in 2013 and is proposing a complete ban on their use in open fields.



Bumblebee on tansy
Photo: Ken Sproule

It is frustrating to be told that measures to protect nature which do not directly benefit humans are somehow less worthy of financial support because they can't be monetized. But it now appears that access to natural spaces does have measurable benefits. The good news? A study in Sweden found that patients recovering from stress-related mental disorders who underwent a nature-assisted rehabilitation program significantly reduced their health care costs. After a year's therapy, primary care costs were reduced by 28% and the duration of hospital stays fell by 64%. (See <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24473518>)

If these outcomes could be attained by medication, the drug manufacturer would stand to make a fortune! If you are hesitating about whether to go on an outing, just remember the therapeutic – along with many other – benefits that communing with nature bestows.

My final piece of good news is hardly news at all. A couple of years ago, on the Leslie Street Spit, I heard a call that I hadn't heard for thirty years – the unmistakable guttural *caw* of the raven. The last pair of ravens in Toronto was killed in Queen's Park in 1848. To see and hear them as they tentatively reoccupy their ancestral territory after 170 years is an occasion for celebration in the present and a small token of hope for the future.

It's membership renewal time again. You will find membership renewal information on the inside back cover and on the TFN website: www.torontofieldnaturalists.org Naturally, I urge you to renew in order to continue receiving the many membership benefits. Just to mention one – TFN outings – I've figured out that, based on a \$40 membership fee, each outing costs you only 25 cents. Benefits also include this fabulous newsletter and our lecture series. Since membership fees alone do not cover our operating expenses, please consider adding a donation, however small (or large!).

Charles Bruce-Thompson
president@torontofieldnaturalists.org

MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

Green Roof Wildlife In Toronto: Opportunities and Limitations

April 2, 2017

Scott MacIvor, U of T, Scarborough

Scott MacIvor's passion for green roof ecology shone through in his April TFN talk. Not only is he on top of this science for Toronto but also that happening in Europe. Scott refers to humans as "animators" of roof top sites, sending the message that awareness of different factors and appropriate designs is important in how we plan for and implement green roofs in our city so that future buildings can be valuable contributors to native urban ecosystems.

All green roofs have a basic structure of waterproofing membranes, substrate and plants, and often include neat modifications for water retention. This is how they contribute to storm water management. Toronto's aging combined storm-sewer overflows desperately need this help! Most roofs studied are flat, and natural variation can be incorporated into the green roof with tree trunks, rocks and small hills. Green roofs also reduce the urban heat island effect, as the soil and plants absorb the sun's energy rather than reflecting it back as bare roofs do.

Toronto's Green Roof Bylaw (2009) made us the first North American city to require green roofs on new development. The fortuitous arrival of Scott and the Green Roof Innovation Testing Lab (GRIT) at U of T is providing scientific analysis of both the design and the impact of the roofs. GRIT is set up to test variables such as soil composition and depth, plant composition, etc. to improve the contribution of new green roofs to Toronto's urban ecology. They and the City of Toronto are sharing good ideas in a series of downloadable booklets such as "[City of Toronto Guidelines for Biodiverse Green Roofs.](#)"



Ryerson's green roof garden (Torontoist, Sept 29, 2014
<http://torontoist.com/2014/09/city->)

Green roofs can be a habitat for wildlife. Current roofs, designed with sterilized soil and non-native, low/no maintenance plants, welcome some life, but native plants on the ROM and buildings at UTSC are allowing us to learn about species that take advantage of the new habitats. Scott and GRIT are exploring how the organisms arrive and utilize the habitat (mostly post-installation), related microclimate factors (moisture, temperature, solar radiation, wind), local impact (that 60-storey high rise next door) and larger landscape factors (location of nearest ground green space).

Of the 364 species of bees that make Toronto home, 92% are native (see City of Toronto Biodiversity Series booklet). Research in Toronto and New York has shown:

- too many honey bee hives have detrimental effects on native bee species because they overuse food sources;
- crops are more dependent on bee diversity than on number of bees;
- 49 species of wild bees have been found on only two Toronto roofs;
- most significant factors for bee habitat are floral area and open sunlight...think urban rooftop meadows;
- buildings above five storeys show decreased bee diversity and abundance. As Scott points out, the natural world does not tend to exceed this height, so why would bees?

Toronto's location on the path of major spring and fall migration routes needs to be taken into consideration if we are really trying to enhance conservation. FLAP suggests setting green roofs at least 9 m from windows to prevent bird hits. Both birds and bats perceive flat reflective surfaces (solar panels) to be water, causing deaths. Vegetation needs to be selected to prevent green roofs from becoming "ecological traps." Data show that precocial birds (offspring that find own food from time of hatching) such as Canada geese and killdeer, currently enjoy our green roofs. However, some roofs (e.g. Regent Park swimming pool) have little or no food, are hot and dry, and lack hiding places, allowing predators to harass and kill the young. Scott shared the interesting tidbit that native Toronto birds do not crash into windows as much as the migrating species do and that some of our local raptors have evolved a feeding strategy of guiding the visitors into windows!

Scott and his group will continue to look into the value of plant species diversity, the role of native plants in promoting greater diversity of other organisms, and the role of green roofs in rare species conservation and in facilitating organism movement through urban landscapes. Hopefully we'll hear about this in a few years!

Meg O'Mahoney

TFN GRANT REPORT

Inspiring Youth to Conserve Birds through Citizen Science

By Emily Rondel
Bird Studies Canada

“I love birds! We see plenty of them at our cottage,” is a phrase I commonly hear from participants in Toronto bird events. When I ask what they see up there, I typically get a good list of species such as great blue heron, ruby-throated hummingbird, black-capped chickadee and red-breasted nuthatch. When I ask, “Did you know you can find those birds at home in Toronto too?” the question is most often met with surprise, although I like to think that there is also some excitement in discovering that a favourite bird species can be seen without a multi-hour drive!

Part of Bird Studies Canada’s urban program goal is to connect Torontonians with the rich bird life of their home city. Due to a commonly held misconception that urban environments are devoid of wildlife, Torontonians of all stripes tend to overlook their native bird species, even if they have an interest in birds. With funding from TFN, we attempted to address this issue by engaging Torontonians (especially youth) in a full roster of bird-related activities in 2016-2017. Throughout the year, these programs trained and prepared participants for Bird Studies Canada’s many

Citizen Science programs so that new birders could use their skills to contribute to bird research and conservation. Working with partners at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) and the Humber Arboretum, we delivered a number of youth-oriented programs throughout the year:

1. Youth who registered in the Ontario Field Ornithologists’ “Young Birder’s Program” were given two full-day workshops behind the scenes at the ROM to enhance their knowledge of bird identification and Citizen Science projects (20 young birders attended overall).

2. Thousands of visitors to the ROM were trained in bird identification skills through fun interactive games utilizing the “Merlin Bird ID” app, and were given information on how to use those skills during the Great Backyard Bird Count. We also completed a full Project FeederWatch program at the ROM for thousands of passersby, with prizes for correct winter bird identification.

3. The ROM’s special “Blue Whale” exhibit meant that marine biology took precedence over ornithology at the museum this year, so Bird Studies Canada held its March break program at Humber Arboretum. Our friends at Humber’s Centre for Urban Ecology helped us bring members of the Rexdale community on some great bird-finding walks. Over 60 community members received hands-on training in Citizen Science programs while viewing the birds in their own community.



Buttons were among the prizes we gave out at the museum.

Photo: Emily Rondel



An “all ages” audience takes part in the Great Backyard Bird Count program on the Arboretum grounds.



Winter birding basics for families is fun, no matter what the weather. Photos by Marilyn Campbell

TORONTO'S TRAILING ARBUTUS AND RELATIVES

Toronto's native trailing arbutus or mayflower (*Epigaea repens*) belongs to the Ericaceae (heath family) as do two closely-related species of *Arctostaphylos* (bearberry). Other family members include *Vaccinium* (blueberries) and *Gaylussacia* (huckleberry; see TFN newsletter, Dec 2014), *Gaultheria* and *Pyrolas* (Feb 2015), and *Monotropa* (Nov 2010). This large cosmopolitan family includes about 124 genera and about 4,050 species.

Epigaea repens is the provincial flower of Nova Scotia. Its name comes from the Greek *epi* (on), *gaia* (earth), and *repens* (creeping), referring to the way it grows. It has white to pink, 8 to 15 mm, trumpet-shaped flowers. These are terminal or in leaf axils. *The ROM Field Guide to Wildflowers of Ontario* (2004) states that it occurs in sandy to rocky forested areas and blooms at any time from April to June. TFN's *Vascular Plants of Metropolitan Toronto* (2nd ed. 1994) listed it as locally rare and only recorded in High Park and the Glen Stewart Ravine. I have not found it in Toronto. My illustration is from Iles de la Madeleine. It ranges across southern and central Ontario except in the southernmost ecoregions adjacent to the Manitoba border. Its full range is Manitoba to Newfoundland and the eastern 40% of the U.S.

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi (common bearberry) ranges across Ontario. However, the TFN does not report it in Toronto. Its full range is all of North America except some U.S. southern states. Its scientific name is redundant, from the Greek *arktos* (bear) and *staphyle* (a bunch of grapes) and the Latin *uva* (grapes) and *ursi* (bear).

Another species, *Arctostaphylos rubra* (red bearberry), occurs throughout Canada except Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. In the U.S., it is reported only in Alaska and Wyoming. These two species are very similar – small shrubs, usually 15 cm tall or less, both with white and pink urn-shaped flowers, about 6 mm long, clustered in terminal racemes. A distinguishing feature is that *A. rubra* leaves can be up to 5 cm long, whereas those of *A. uva-ursi* do not exceed 3 cm. The red berries of both species are eaten by bears.

If you find trailing arbutus in Toronto, please note its location and forward this information and photos to the TFN. This species, I fear, may be extirpated here and I would like to be proven wrong.

Article and photos by Peter Money



Illustrations from top:

Trailing arbutus or
mayflower,
Epigaea repens

Common bearberry,
*Arctostaphylos uva-
ursi*

Red bearberry,
A. rubra



Clarification re Madder Family article in April issue

Galium triflorum (madder family), with its mention of three-flowered cymes, in the April issue may have puzzled you. Look closely: the younger two flowers are still in bud, to the left of the older flower in bloom. PM

Q&A: POLLINATION

Question: *How do plants attract certain pollinators and minimise the likelihood of self-pollination?*

Wendy Rothwell

Answer: Plants attract pollinators by providing rewards of nectar and/or pollen. Most pollinators are insects: beetles have biting mouthparts and prefer pollen; flies have sucking mouthparts and feed on nectar; bees make use of both; and butterflies and moths use their probosces to probe for nectar.

Plants advertise themselves by having colourful and/or fragrant flowers. Different colours and scents attract different pollinators. The dark red, stinky flowers known as carrion flowers are pollinated by flies. Bees can perceive ultra-violet and are more attracted to flowers at that end of the colour spectrum rather than the red end.

It's thought that some patterns of colour in a flower act as "nectar guides," pointing the way to the nectar at the base of the flower. Some nectar guides can be seen by humans only under ultra-violet light, but it is assumed that they are seen by bees.

The size and shape of the flower also affect which pollinators will visit. Narrow tubular flowers can only be pollinated by birds or insects with long tongues or probosces, or by insects small enough to crawl inside. Closed gentians are only pollinated by bumble-bees because they are strong enough to push their way into the "closed" flower.

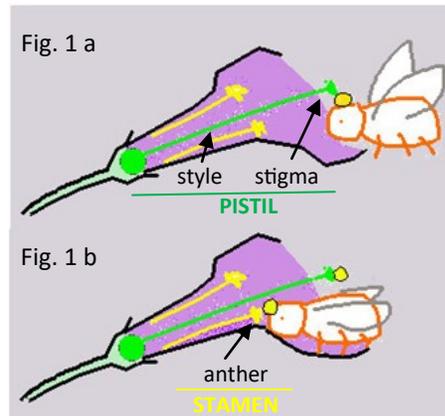


Each species also flowers at the time of year and time of day that its pollinators are active. Because a suite of flower characteristics will attract the same suite of insect species, there will be an increased chance of cross-pollination.

While visits from pollinators promote cross-pollination, plants also minimise the likelihood of self-pollination by the relative placement of their anthers and stigmas (the sticky area at the end of the style that catches pollen). Some species completely separate them by having

unisexual flowers, either on different plants (eg willows), in different areas of the plant (eg birches), or different branches of the inflorescence (eg some sedges).

Species with fertile anthers and pistils within the same flower may have a long style that keeps the stigma away from the flower's own pollen, as in the horizontal tubular



flowers of the mint family. This arrangement also ensures that an insect landing on the lip of the flower will deposit pollen already stuck to its head from a previous flower onto the stigma (Fig. 1a). The insect then moves

into the flower to reach the nectar, picking up more pollen as it passes by the anthers (Fig. 1b).

Many species also use differences in timing of sexual maturity to minimize self-pollination. Depending on the species, pollen may be released before the stigma becomes receptive or vice versa. While this method may prevent self-pollination within a single flower, it doesn't prevent transfer of genetically identical pollen from a *different* flower on the *same* plant. So in some species such as umbellifers, entire flower heads are synchronized.

Plants minimize self-pollination because in the long term inbreeding can lead to a loss of genetic variety. This may reduce a species' potential to adapt successfully to changes in the environment. However, it's not essential to avoid self-pollination all the time. It's better to have seed resulting from self-pollination than none at all.

So, in the event that cross-pollination isn't successful, most species can also self-pollinate. For example, the umbellifer sweet cicely has some flowers in its inflorescence that are *not* synchronized, while some violet species produce a second kind of flower specifically for self-pollination. These flowers don't need to open and are often overlooked because they are small, green and hidden under the leaves.

There is a vast continuum of variation across the thousands of plant species in the ways plants attract pollinators and minimise self-pollination, though the same or similar methods may be found throughout a family. Many examples are described in the natural history essays in *Collins Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe* by Alastair Fitter (1987), available in the public library. Also check out the general and family introductions in *ROM Field Guide to Wildflowers of Ontario* (2004).

Jenny Bull

TORONTO RAVINE STRATEGY UPDATE

After an interlude of several months, the Ravine Strategy Advisory Group (RSAG) reconvened in January to receive updates on the second phase of strategy development from the City's Inter-Divisional Working Group. The primary focus of the meeting was a review of the draft evaluation criteria behind the Priority Management Areas Study, which aims to identify potential sites for near-term planning and investment activity, as outlined in the Strategy draft.

Schollen & Company Inc., the consultants leading the study, encouraged very active discussion among all participants. The majority opinion voiced by RSAG members (TFN included) was that the protection and restoration of ecological integrity and health must be a key driver behind any criteria developed for determining Priority Management Areas.

The draft Strategy does not define how ecological integrity and health will be measured and monitored, but a motion put forth by Councillor Gord Perks was carried on June 16, 2016, requesting that "a plan for establishing and monitoring ecosystem health indicators" be included in the final Strategy report. It may be assumed that this plan would greatly influence the criteria developed for determining Priority Management Areas.

The TFN strongly supports putting ecological integrity and health at the forefront of selection criteria for Priority

Management Areas and, indeed, the Strategy as a whole. To this end, during the January meeting we proposed that any natural area with outdated or incomplete ecological assessment data should be treated as if it were an Environmentally Significant Area until such time as updated assessments were made available. In addition, we recommended that specific criteria be developed that

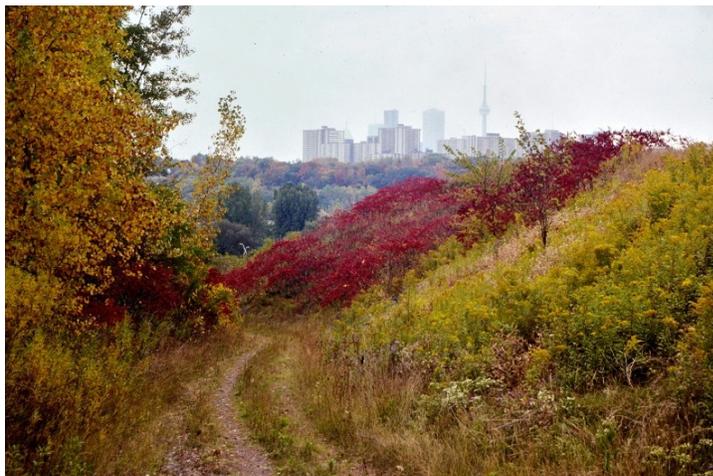
acknowledge the importance of continuity of habitat, existing wildlife migration routes and the potential for developing new bio-corridors via Priority Management Areas.

As for the Strategy itself, the TFN reiterated its desire to see a notable increase in the strength and volume of language regarding the prioritization of ecological preservation and restoration. The current draft appears to take these priorities somewhat for granted, largely deferring to pre-existing external legislation and

regulation such as the Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-law and TRCA Regulation 166/06, rather than enshrining any new protections of its own. We sincerely hope that the final Strategy will show a strengthening of language in this regard, reflective of the emphasis put on ecological preservation and restoration by RSAG members.

The final Strategy (including the Priority Areas Study) is expected to be sent to Executive Committee on May 16 and should be brought to Council in the July 5 session.

Jason Ramsay-Brown



Don Valley Brick Works, 1993. Photo: Robin Powell
From TFN Slide Collection

BOOK NOTICE

*The Toronto Carrying Place:
Rediscovering Toronto's Most Ancient Trail*
by Glenn Turner, Dundurn Press, May 2015

Nominated for the 2016 Heritage Toronto Book Award

For more information, see www.torontocarryingplace.ca/about-the-trail

Available in bookstores and in the public library.

See also Toronto Carrying Place Historic plaque website:
torontoplaques.com/Pages/Toronto_Carrying_Place.html

See also TFN outings on June 7 and August 15

New Citizen Science Initiative

FRESHWATER MUSSELS

Toronto Zoo and Fisheries and Oceans Canada are asking citizens to report sightings of native freshwater mussels this summer.

For more information:
www.torontozoo.com/conservation/mussels.asp

EXTRACTS FROM OUTINGS LEADERS' REPORTS

Birds, Colonel Sam Smith Park, Mar 1. Leader: Anne Powell. The sound of red-winged blackbirds greeted us on an unseasonably warm day. We saw 27 species including a ring-necked duck, common grackle, four killdeer and a dozen red-necked grebes. Five tundra swans flew over.



Killdeer at Col Sam Smith Park, April 2010.
Photo: Ken Sproule

Old York, Mar 8. Leader: Ed Freeman. From St James Cathedral we ventured through the Victorian garden to the northeast corner of the original 10 blocks of York, the corner of Adelaide and George Streets. We then passed the Bank of Upper Canada, Toronto's first Post Office and Mr Christie's biscuit factory, now George Brown's St James Campus. We turned south to King St and over to Ontario St, where Surveyor-General D.W. Smith had his estate "Maryville." At Berkeley St, the eastern edge of York, we looked at the former Garibaldi Hotel and the many wood moldings of the Reid Lumber Co. After passing the former site of the first Parliament Buildings and the old Consumer Gas buildings, we examined the site of the Types Riot and the nearby Gargoyle, now functioning as a fountain. After viewing St Lawrence Hall and the archaeological excavation for the new St Lawrence north market (many drains from the 1831 market exposed to view), we ended at King St and Leader Lane, where we discussed a falcon nesting site.

Geology and Winter Birds, Scarborough Bluffs, Mar 11. Leader: Anne Purvis. The creek sported mossy rocks and a thin covering of ice as we hiked down the cliff to the sculpture, *The Passage*. Two red-tailed hawks sat beside each other on a high branch, one appearing smaller than the other. Red-tails may mate for life, so we wondered if this was a pair or two siblings. Later we saw them sailing in the updraft along the cliffs. We also saw several mourning doves and heard cardinals singing. As we arrived at the lakeshore, a flock of long-tailed ducks

was swimming in the water. We saw more of these later, along with buffleheads and mallards.

The sun, fairly low in the sky, was illuminating the Scarborough Bluffs. We could see the two lower layers of the Scarborough formation, laid down by a river that flowed from Georgian Bay at the start of the Wisconsin Glaciation 60,000 years ago. Above this, we saw the Sunnybrook Drift, formed when the lake was dammed with ice, 100 meters deeper and full of floating icebergs.

We enjoyed the beautiful aqua colours of the lake, the red of sumac and dogwood, the yellows and browns of willows and winter weeds. The grey furry pussy willows heralded spring. Large mixed flocks of grackles, robins and red-winged blackbirds perched in the trees and flew among the phragmites. Carolina wrens and red-wings sang. We saw places where bank swallows had excavated many holes, and wondered if some of the larger holes might have been made by kingfishers.

Marie Curtis Park, Mar 18. Leader: Ken Sproule
We discussed the history of the Small Arms Company, a Crown corporation that produced and tested rifles, machine guns and ammunition during World War II. The inspection building, firing wall, sound baffles and water tower are still standing and are part of Heritage Mississauga. The company employed thousands of people working three shifts. The streetcar line was extended from Long Branch to accommodate them. Birds seen were goldeneye, red-breasted merganser, mallard, mute swan, house sparrow, ring-billed gull, starling, red-winged blackbird and robin. A notable plant seen was beech drops (*Epifagus virginiana*).

Small's Pond and Simpson's Garden, Mar 22.

Leader: Joanne Doucette. At the site of the Old Orchardview Hotel, which overlooked Small's Pond, we saw the location of the mill dam. We went up Penny Lane into Orchard Park. At Battenburg Ave we found one of the original over-150-year-old pear trees in what used to be Joseph Simpson's orchard. We also saw a Cooper's hawk and some cardinals in full voice.

Leslie St Spit, Mar 25. Leader: Bob Kortright. On this wet windy day, a few white-winged scoters were a welcome sight among the scaup, bufflehead, goldeneye, and longtails at the south end of the outer harbour marina. More exciting were the spring migrants in Embayment D: ring-necked ducks, canvasbacks, many wigeon, and a gorgeous male harlequin duck, some gadwall, mallards and all three mergansers. Some of us went on to Cell 2, where we found killdeer and three green-winged teal. Discouraged by cold and rain, most of us headed back to the park entrance, having great views of a mockingbird along the way. A mink and a beaver were spotted.

COTTONWOOD FLATS MONITORING PROJECT

The inaugural season of the Cottonwood Flats Monitoring Project is well under way!

On March 28, about 20 TFN volunteers were treated to a tour of the site by TRCA fauna biologist, Paul Prior, and Urban Forestry staff, Cheryl Post and Jessica Iraci. We familiarized ourselves with the site, learned a bit about its history and recent restoration efforts, and discussed some of the ways we might best observe and document its flora and fauna. Many thanks to Paul, Cheryl and Jessica for an informative and enjoyable outing.

On April 2, we held our first monitoring session. TFN volunteers logged 13 American robins, 6 red-winged blackbirds, 2 song sparrows and 1 dark-eyed junco – not too bad for the start of April. We also catalogued the damage done by a very industrious beaver: 20 trees down. During the session, our Site Ambassador engaged with many of the 84 people (and their 44 dogs) that wandered by the site, all quite curious as to what was taking place.

If you're interested in learning more, my walk, "Restoration and Citizen Science in the Don Valley" on July 30 (see page 10) will include a visit to Cottonwood Flats and discussion about this project. Also, feel free to follow us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/cottonwoodflats>



Orientation session at Cottonwood Flats, March 28.
Photo: Charles Bruce-Thompson

Jason Ramsay-Brown

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee recommends the following slate of nominees to the Board for the year 2017-2018:

President: Charles Bruce-Thompson

Past President: Nancy Dengler

Vice President: Jason Ramsay-Brown

Secretary-Treasurer: Bob Kortright

Directors:

Due to retire in 2018: Lynn Miller, Alex Wellington, Anne Powell

Due to retire in 2019: Vivienne Denton, Elizabeth Block, Jane Cluver

Due to retire in 2020: Anne Purvis, Ken Sproule

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."

STRIPED CORAL-ROOT

For the ultimate view of the striped coral-root, both Frank Morris and Don Gunn (*The Native Orchids of United States and Canada*, 1929) recommend that you see it from below when it is backlit. As many as 30 flowers could be clinging to the red-purple leafless stem that is often a foot high. Each bloom has boldly striped petals and sepals that form an umbrella over the deep red tongue. Frank Morris wrote a vivid recollection of them:



While searching a favorite spot up a slope we came upon an extraordinary scene. At the top of the slope and at the edge of the plateau for 20 yards it was crowded with flowering stems of the striped coral-root. We counted 523 spikes. They were in three main tiers, one above the other, sometimes scattered, sometimes closely crowded. Along the sides of a fallen pine trunk, they thrust out like masses of fungus. At one spot were 34 flowering stems in a dense sheaf barely five inches in diameter...

A few days later we were passing through the neighborhood early in the morning and couldn't resist a short detour to the wood. This time we approached from behind, across the plateau... The sun's rays slanting through the pines struck full on the face of the plateau, and the ranks of the coral-root were lit up with a blood red glow like rubies or garnets. Until one has seen them in sunlight no one has any idea how beautiful these orchids can be.

The various coral-roots really have “coral roots.” Because this orchid lacks chlorophyll, it must get its nourishment from the relationship between the “roots” and fungi just below the surface.

2016 was not a good year for striped coral-roots. They can handle the cold but not the heat in woods from the Maritimes to the West Coast.

Article and photo by Harvey Medland

KEEPING IN TOUCH



This photo of a juvenile Cooper's hawk was taken on Feb 3, 2017 in our backyard in Toronto as it ate a house sparrow.

George Turner



One of the pair of Cooper's hawks in Col Danforth Park checking out the bird feeders.

Karin Fawthrop

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Draw lines to Match Bird Behaviour with What's going on?

Who is it?	What are they doing?
	1. Two male chickadees do the fee-bee call back and forth. Photo: Dan Pancamo
	2. Two cedar waxwings hop towards each other and pass a berry back and forth. Photo: Minette Layne
	3. The male catbird gives a call like meowing, fluffs his feathers and raises his wings. Photo: Charlesjsharp
	4. The female northern oriole is pulling fibres from a milkweed plant. Photo: Mdf
	5. The male tree swallow flutters his wings and touches bills with a female. Photo: Cephas

What's going on?
a A female is being courted
b A nest is being built that will hang far out on a branch
c A winter flock is breaking up and a male and female are pairing up
d The winter flock is breaking up and territories are being established
e A human intruder is near the nest

See answers on page 27

by Anne Purvis

*Cormorants perch high
In tattered treetops black shapes
Against the blue sky*

Haiku by Elisabeth Gladstone

MY NATURE JOURNEY

When I moved to the High Park area in 1994, I had no idea what a significant part it would play in my life. I have always enjoyed the beauty of nature in a general way, but it was only in my late 50s that I began to take a more specific interest.

I remember seeing an enchanting little bird flitting about the shrubs near my home and feeling that I had to know what it was called. It turned out to be a white-breasted nuthatch. Perhaps this was the beginning of my interest in birds. In 1995, a friend and I went on an Elderhostel vacation on the island of Grand Manan, New Brunswick. It was a perfect location for the two focus subjects – birds and wildflowers. I felt a strong urge to learn more about both and was torn between them. My memories are more of the flowers. However, for the next few years, the birds won out.

In 2002 a friend told me about Toronto Field Naturalists, and I immediately joined. Through TFN outings I became familiar with Humber Bay Park East and Col. Sam Smith Park, and discovered to my surprise how many birds could be seen in “my” High Park. Birding trips to places like Point Pelee and Rondeau, led by George Bryant and shared with other TFN members, kindled a passion for bird-watching which gripped me for the next dozen or so years. All vacations were planned with birding in mind, and I bought every bird field guide I could find. *Secret Lives of Common Birds* by Marie Read sparked an interest in bird behaviour, and I derived much pleasure from Marilyn Murphy’s “Bird of the Month” series in the newsletter.

Through my involvement with TFN, I attended several Ontario Nature annual meetings. The one at Carden Alvar in 2008 was particularly memorable, and this may have been where my interest in wildflowers was reawakened. The thrill of seeing a field ablaze with Indian paintbrush,

prairie smoke and balsam ragwort was perhaps the beginning of my fondness for alvars, which I have since enjoyed exploring on the Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island. In recent years, the focus of my library has changed to wildflowers and I have become increasingly fascinated, not only by their beauty, but also by the intriguing ways they are designed to facilitate pollination and seed dispersal. Two books that have fostered this interest are *Beauty and the Beasts – The Hidden World of Wildflowers* by Michael W.P. Runtz and *The Secrets of Wildflowers* by Jack Sanders (see review TFN #618 March 2016). TFN outings and newsletter articles (thank you, Peter Money) have been helpful in nurturing this interest, and I am especially grateful to Jenny Bull for encouraging me and answering my questions.



Wild Columbine in High Park
Photo: Wendy Rothwell

Almost imperceptibly, time spent in my favourite High Park began to change. Rather than looking up, hoping to see birds, I began to look down and become aware of the great variety of wildflowers that grow there. This fitted in well with my other hobby – photography. Trying to photograph birds is a hit-and-miss affair because they seldom co-operate. But flowers stay put, allowing me to try different vantage points and camera settings in an effort to capture a good image. Also, I can return to the same

location confident of seeing the plants as they develop from bud to full bloom to fruit.

For the last couple of years, I have devoted many happy hours to seeking out wildflower species in High Park, photographing, identifying and learning about them. It seemed a natural next step to want to share my discoveries. Hence, I am happy to announce my new website www.highparkwildflowers.ca which I hope may give pleasure to TFN members and others who frequent High Park.

Wendy Rothwell

100 NATURE HOT SPOTS IN ONTARIO –
The Best Parks, Conservation Areas and Wild Places
by Chris Earley and Tracy C. Read
Published by Firefly Books, 2016. \$29.95

Ontario offers a remarkable number of fascinating places for naturalists to explore. If you are looking for ideas for day trips or short holidays in the coming months, this beautifully illustrated book may be just what you need. It provides helpful information about 100 natural places, what they are noted for, and the flora and fauna you are likely to see there.

IN THE NEWS

One less worry for snapping turtles

On Friday March 31, 2017, the Ontario government announced its decision to terminate the legal hunting of snapping turtles. This is long overdue but still a welcome development. Snapping turtles are a species of special concern in the province, so allowing them to be hunted made no sense ecologically. Even taking just a few adult turtles from a population can have a huge effect, as female turtles can take 17 to 20 years before they lay their first clutch of eggs. And they are already under pressure from habitat loss and road kill. This is a great decision for the government to make.

Learn more about the snapping turtle here:

https://www.ontarionature.org/protect/species/reptiles_and_amphibians/snapping_turtle.php

The decision is posted here:

<https://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/displaynoticecontent.do?noticeId=MTMxMDUy&statusId=MjAwNjQw&language=en>

Early, warm springs can be bad for migrating birds

Research continues to show that long-distance migrating birds are hurt by our earlier springs caused by climate change. These birds can't alter their schedule of when they take off from wintering grounds, but local insects do emerge earlier, so the birds could miss the food supply peak. Reduced food supply can hamper the birds' ability to breed successfully.

Learn more about how climate change is affecting birds here:

<http://naturecanada.ca/what-we-do/bird-conservation/climate-change-birds/>



Snapping turtle, Leslie St Spit, 2011
Photo: Ken Sproule

Micro-bad

Scientists from Carleton University have found that there are more plastic microfibers in the Ottawa River and tributaries than plastic microbeads. Microfibers are used in apparel such as yoga pants, fleece jackets and other athletic wear, and are washed out of the garments when laundered. They then find their way into natural waterways and eventually the ocean. As with microbeads, zooplankton and larval fish ingest these plastics and can either die outright, or suffer predation and concentrate the plastics further up the food chain. In the water samples the researchers collected, as much as 95% of the plastic content was microfibers and 5% was microbeads.

<http://www.cantechletter.com/2017/03/yoga-pants-contaminating-environment-finds-new-canadian-study/>

Lynn Miller

20th Great Backyard Bird Count Results

Canada recorded 258 species and made a stellar contribution with 14,908 checklists! Top 10 most frequently reported species (in order): northern cardinal, American crow, mourning dove, dark-eyed junco, downy woodpecker, blue jay, black-capped chickadee, house finch, house sparrow and white-breasted nuthatch.

Note that the American crow has bounced all the way up to number two. It has typically come in near the bottom of the Top 10 ever since West Nile Virus appeared in North America in 1999. Perhaps the crows are finally rebounding after the virus took a serious toll on their overall population.

Extracted from: www.birdscanada.org/news/great-backyard-bird-count-results

Read more about this year's weather impacts, early birds, rarities or a particular region at gbbc.birdcount.org/2017-gbbc-summary/

Asian Carp Threat to Great Lakes

If you think you see an Asian carp, use the Fisheries and Oceans Canada link below to check identification and how and where to report this invasive species. The term "Asian carps" collectively refers to four species of carps: bighead, silver, grass and black.

To date, there have been a few captures of individual bighead carp and grass carp in Canadian waters of the Great Lakes. Asian carps are prolific breeders, and in some areas where they are established they have dominated habitats, making up as much as 80 per cent of the biomass. This website includes lots of information about these carps, and measures being undertaken to prevent their invasion of the Great Lakes.

www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/environmental-environnement/ais-eae/species/asian-carp-fact-sheet-eng.html

Jenny Bull

WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

May 2016

May brought fairly dry, sunny conditions with a split between chilly and hot weather. It was cold for the first three weeks, then rather hot the last part of the month. The cold pattern, which persisted from April, was most intense on the 15th with daytime temperatures around 7°, blustery winds, and snow flurries observed throughout the city. The minimum of 0.1° at Pearson on the 16th was the lowest for the month since 2005, when there was a monthly minimum of -0.5°.

The pattern reversed dramatically after the 20th, with a turn to hot, sunny weather. The highest temperature (both downtown and at Pearson) was 31.5° on the 28th. There were three days in the low thirties. However, the dry conditions were consistent through the month, with no major rainfalls. Total rainfall was less than half of normal, with 34.2 mm downtown and 24.8 mm at Pearson Airport. It was the driest May since 2005.

The warmer latter part of the month won out over the cold first half, with mean temperatures about 1° above normal: 14.6° at Pearson and 15.5° downtown.

The spring of 2016 as a whole was actually warmer than the long-term average even though it gave the impression of chilliness. Warm weather in early to mid-March and at the end of May cancelled out the cold conditions that prevailed from late March to mid-May. However, the spring was only fractionally above the 30-year average: 7.4° at Pearson and 8.3° downtown.

June 2016

June ended up being much drier and somewhat warmer than normal. In general, weather systems in the U.S. Midwest got shunted southwards and crossed Ohio and Pennsylvania instead of southern Ontario. Toronto had abundant sunshine and moderate hot spells interspersed with shorter cool-downs. The fronts did not bring much rain, and the weather was mostly pleasant but not exciting. Mild drought conditions set in, with a pattern of mostly below-normal precipitation persisting for several months.

Monthly mean temperatures were 20.0° at Pearson Airport and 20.1° downtown, about half a degree above normal overall; overnight temperatures were around or even slightly below normal due to low humidity and cooling at night. The coolest night was June 8th with a minimum of

7.4° at Pearson Airport and 8.0° downtown. (The downtown reading was the coolest June night since 2007.) The hottest days were June 20th (34.6° at Pearson) and the 27th (33.2° downtown).

Total rainfall was about a third to a half of normal with 26.4 mm at Pearson Airport and 35.7 mm downtown. Most of this fell on the 4th-5th. Thunder occurred on 3 days and was really half-hearted. It was the driest June at Pearson since 1991 (when 24.4 mm fell) and since 2007 downtown (when 30.3 mm fell).



Cumulus clouds over High Park
Drawing by Joanne Doucette

July 2016

July was a rather hot, dry month, about half a degree cooler than the very hot Julys of 2005, 2011 and 2012 and between one or two degrees above the long-term average. The monthly mean temperature was 23.7° at Pearson Airport and 23.8° downtown. Contrary to recent trends, mean maximum temperatures rose further above normal than overnight lows. This was a function of the dry soils and relatively low humidity that persisted most of the month which allowed for greater night-time cooling.

The weather was uneventful overall, with several very hot spells interspersed with brief cooler periods. The cooler weather was mostly confined well to the north. There were 14 days at Pearson Airport when the temperature rose to 30° or more, and 11 such days downtown.

Particularly hot days included the 13th (36.0° at Pearson), 22nd (35.5° downtown and 35.2° at Pearson), and the 27th (34.0° at Pearson).

Rainfall was light overall with the month's fronts producing hit-and-miss thunderstorms. Most of southern Ontario was in drought conditions. Amounts were not drastically low, but the below-normal rainfall following several dry months led to serious cumulative shortfalls. Furthermore, high evapotranspiration rates occurred due to hot, sunny conditions. Pearson Airport had 39.8 mm of rainfall, about half the normal. Downtown fared somewhat better with 51.1 mm, while Buttonville Airport in Markham approached normal with 63.6 mm. One of the hit-and-miss thunderstorms brought minor flooding to parts of the east end of the city (the Beach, western Scarborough) on July 27th.

Continued next page

FROM THE ARCHIVES

From TFN 95, November 1950 Report of Raven Sighting R.M. Saunders (Editor)

I received from Mrs. Naomi le Vay the report of a raven seen in Moore Park Ravine. Ravens are very unusual visitors to this part of the country, but there are one or two reports of ravens seen hereabouts almost every season. So far as I know, this is the first report this winter. Mrs. le Vay's interesting account reads as follows:

"I think perhaps the most exciting adventure of the fall, to me, occurred on September 22nd. It was a dull, cloudy morning as I started out on my usual walk in the ravine, that forgotten bit that runs north from Moore Avenue to Merton Street. All was quiet until I reached a spot about half way between Moore Avenue and the cemetery bridge. Then the silence was rent by horrible raucous cries, so harsh and flat that I wondered if any bird could utter them. I could locate the spot whence the cries seemed to come, but so dense was the bush at this spot that my eyes could not pierce the foliage, nor could I see a place to penetrate the underbrush. As I listened for some minutes longer to the unearthly sounds, the cries seemed to be mingled with the higher pitched screams of a jay or jays. I decided to circle back and find an entrance into the bush. This was accomplished with some difficulty and a certain amount of noise, and when I reached the spot, my quarry had flown.

"Catbirds and cardinals near the bridge seemed nervous and disturbed. I went no farther north but began to retrace my steps towards Moore Avenue. As I approached the southern slope I suddenly noticed a huge bird in silhouette in a dead tree at the top of the eastern slope. I thought at first it was a large, bulky hawk or from its dark plumage even a vulture. Then the bird considerably turned its profile to the sky and I saw at once the long, heavy black bill only slightly curved at the end. I observed then, even



Common raven,
Toronto Islands, 2015.
Photo: Ken Sproule

in the poor light, that the bird was quite black, like a giant crow, and I knew that I was looking at a species I had never seen before and was not likely to meet again in the city. It came to me that my bird could and must be a northern raven.

"I was confused for a moment to hear the cawing of crows, and presently the great bird swept across the ravine with two crows in pursuit, and I was able to gauge for an instant the difference in size of the two species. Then began a merry chase up and down the valley, the crows after the raven and myself panting behind. For my pains I only caught the most fleeting glimpses of a large black form trying to elude the crows in the leafy branches – a bird of the wilds, shy at best, and at present hounded and harassed by its close relatives, the crows and jays. At least the mystery of the raucous cries in the woods was cleared, though to call such sounds 'croaking' is a real understatement to my mind ..."

August 2016

It was the hottest August on record across Toronto and most of southern Ontario. The highest temperature attained was 35.9° at Pearson Airport on the 12th but, more remarkable, almost the whole month was near or above 30° with only one cold front making it south as far as Toronto on the 21st. There were 12 days with highs at or above 30° at Pearson and 10 such days downtown, the rest of the days (aside from the 21st-22nd) being in the upper 20s. Unlike earlier in the summer, there was also some humidity. The 22nd had a minimum of 13.1° at Pearson and 14.1° downtown. Otherwise Toronto was solidly in the subtropical belt normally of the southern United States, well below the reach of significant air mass changes. The previous record holder for August was 1959, which had 16 days over 30° but more cold fronts.

This pattern was somewhat similar to August 1988 except that, in that year, a distinct pattern change about two-thirds of the way through put an end to the hot conditions.

Precipitation was just slightly below normal due to unstable tropical conditions on the 12th-16th. These rains were connected with the tropical (but non-hurricane) system that brought devastating floods to Louisiana. Downtown had 53.7 mm and Pearson had 66.8 mm for the month, mostly during this period. This was no more than a brief interruption in Toronto's medium-to-long-term drought.

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 (www.torontobirding.ca)

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

- Sat May 13, 7:30 am - noon. High Park Spring. Leader: Pat Hodgson. Meet at parking lot inside Bloor St entrance at High Park Ave.
- Wed May 17, 6:30 - 8:45 pm. Ashbridge's Bay - Spring migrants. Leader: Bob Kortright. Meet at southwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd and Northern Dancer Blvd.
- Sat May 20, 8 am - late afternoon. Toronto Islands Spring. Leader: John Nishikawa. Meet at Ferry Docks at foot of Bay St to catch the 8:15 ferry to Hanlan's Point.
- Sat May 27, 7:30 am - noon. Col Sam Smith Park - Whimbrels and other migrants. Leader: Kevin Seymour. Meet at the most southerly parking lot at the foot of Kipling Ave south of Lake Shore Blvd W.
- Sat June 17, 7:30 am - 11 am. Bird Photography Walk. Leader: Nancy Barrett. Meet at the Humber Bay East parking lot (Lake Shore Blvd W at Park Lawn Rd).

High Park Walking Tours (www.highpark.org)

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

Information: 416-392-6916 or walkingtours@highpark.org

- May 7 The Amazing Birds of the Park. Brian Bailey
- May 21 The Ecology of Grenadier Pond. Christine Tu-Parker
- June 4 Spring Babies at the Zoo. Sonya Dittkrist
- June 18 Plants and Flowers. Ron Luft
- July 2 More Bees, Please. Scott MacIvor
- July 16 Exploring Spring Creek Ravine. Stephen Smith
- Aug 6 Caterpillars, Moths, and Butterflies. Don Scallen
- Aug 20 Native Plants and Flowers. Karen Yukich

Toronto Entomologists Association (www.ontarioinsects.org)

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

Tommy Thompson Park Bird Festival (www.springbirdfestival.ca)

Sat May 13, 8 am - 4 pm

Col Sam Smith Bird festival (http://www.ccfew.org/html/bird_walks.html)

Sat May 27, 10 am - 2 pm. (Hourly walks at 9:00, 10:00, 11:00, 12:00 & 1:00)

LEAF: Leslieville Tree Festival (www.yourleaf.org/leslieville-tree-festival)

Sat June 17, 12 noon to 4 pm. Leslie Grove Park (Queen St E and Jones Ave). This free, fun-filled celebration of our urban forest includes activities for the whole family!

Rouge Park Weekly Guided Nature Walks (www.rougepark.com/hike)

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

The Market Gallery (www.toronto.ca/marketgallery)

To July 15. Becoming Canadian in Toronto. Explores immigration through stories of struggle, triumph and celebration. The gallery is located at South St Lawrence Market, 2nd floor, 95 Front St E. Gallery closed Sun, Mon and holidays.

ROM Out of the Depths - The Blue Whale Story (<https://www.rom.on.ca/en/blue-whale>)

Lost Rivers Walks (www.lostrivers.ca)

Walking tours limited to 20 participants. To ensure a spot on the tour, please e-mail in advance to info@labpacestudio.com

Ian Wheal Walks

- Sun May 7. 6:30 pm. Geography of War - Toronto. Isongo River, Italian Front, WWI Memorial walk. Meet at the southwest corner of Lansdowne Ave and St Clair Ave W.
- Fri May 12, 7 pm. Geography of War - Toronto. Canadian Horse Memorial walk, Western Front, France, 1917. Meet at the southeast corner of Dufferin St and College St.



Yellow warbler.
Photo: Ken Sproule

Toronto Community Stewardship Program (track.upaknee.com)

Volunteers are needed to help take care of natural sites in Toronto, including East Don Parkland, Rouge Valley, Warden Woods, Don Valley Trail, Beltline, Crothers Woods and Morningside Creek. To participate, visit the above website.

TFN MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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

Membership type

(please check one)

Online Newsletter

Mailed Newsletter

Single	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$60	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior single (65+)	\$30	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>
Senior family	\$40	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth (under 26)	\$10	<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 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

NATIVE PLANT SALES

High Park (www.highpark.org/event/native-plant-sale)

Sun May 7, 11am - 2pm. In front of the Greenhouse. Cash only. Large orders only available after 1pm from the remaining stock. Park in Grenadier Restaurant parking lot. Assistance in carrying plants will be provided. Proceeds support the work of High Park Volunteer Stewardship Program and native plant restoration in High Park.

NANPS (www.nanps.org)

Sat May 13, 12-3pm. Markham Civic Centre, 101 Town Centre Blvd, Markham
 Sat May 20, 11-4pm. Artisans at Work, 2071 Danforth Ave (Woodbine subway station)
 Sun May 28, 12-4pm. Christie Pits (Christie subway station)

Toronto Botanical Garden (www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca)

May 12-14. Fri, 10am to 8pm.; Sat-Sun, 10 am to 5 pm

Answers from page 21: 1 - d 2 - c 3 - e 4 - b 5 - a

Ref: Donald W. Stokes and Lillian Q. Stokes. *A Guide to Bird Behavior, vols. 1&2.* Toronto: Little and Brown, 1983

Toronto Field Naturalists
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Toronto, Ontario, M5B 1J3

Publications Mail
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Groundhog. Watercolour by Joanne Doucette