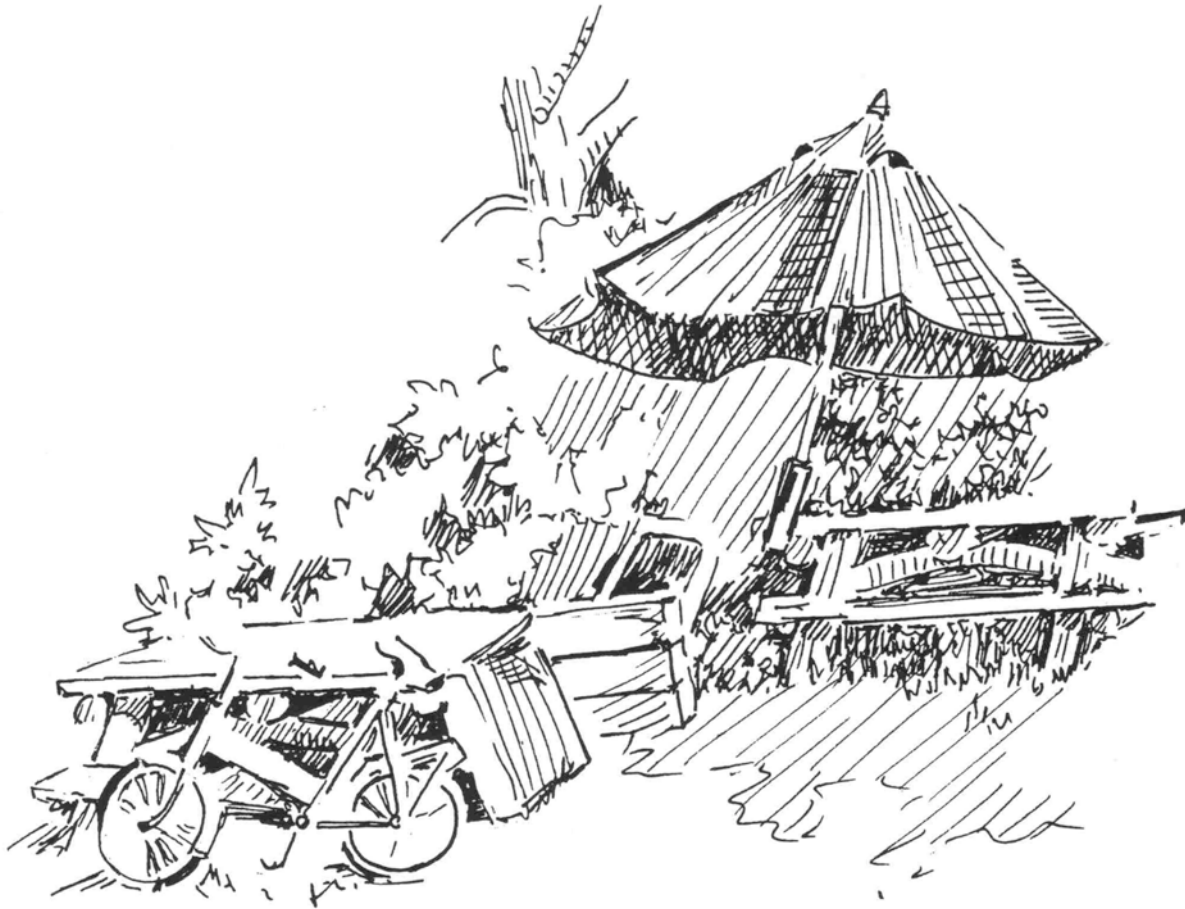


# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 541

September 2006



At the Island, site drawing by Mary Anne Miller

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# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Published by the Toronto Field Naturalists, a charitable, non-profit organization, the aims of which are to stimulate public interest in natural history and to encourage the preservation of our natural heritage. Issued monthly September to December and February to May.

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**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:**

Diana Banville, Jenny Bull, Eva Davis, Karin Fawthrop, Nancy Fredenburg, Elisabeth Gladstone, Mary Lieberman, Joanne Lynes, Marilyn Murphy, Toshi Oikawa, Wendy Rothwell, Jan Sugarman.

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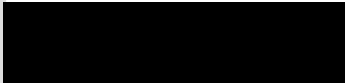
## IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER!

Send us your original writing (up to 500 words) of your thoughts and experiences of nature in and around Toronto. Do you have a favourite natural area in Toronto? Did a TFN outing introduce you to a new park? Tell us about it! Did you see any plants or animals that particularly interested you? Let us know! Tell us what, where and when, and any field guides or other sources consulted.

Also welcome are: reviews, poems, cartoons and sketches, natural history items in the news, and digital photos of TFN outings. Remember that photos will be reproduced in black and white photocopy. Please include your name, address and phone number so submissions can be acknowledged. Newspaper clippings should include source and date. Unsigned letters or emails will not be read. Attachments to unsigned emails will not be opened.

Note the deadline for submissions of time-sensitive material, e.g., notices of meetings or events. Deadline for October issue: 7 September 2006. Send by mail or email.

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## PUBLICATIONS

- TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB  
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- TORONTO CHECKLISTS (birds, other vertebrates,  
butterflies, other invertebrates, mosses, other plants) ..... ea. 50¢
- HUMBER FORKS AT THISTLETOWN, 2000 .....\$5.00

Add \$2.00 *per item* for postage and handling; no GST.  
Order from TFN office, see address below left.

## MEMBERSHIP FEES

- \$50 FAMILY (2 adults – same address, children included)
- \$40 SINGLE, SENIOR FAMILY (2 adults, 65+)
- \$30 STUDENT, SENIOR SINGLE (65+)

No GST. Tax receipts issued for donations. Membership fees and address changes should be sent to the TFN office.

*Please note: It has always been the policy of the Toronto Field Naturalists not to give out its membership list.*

# TFN MEETING

Sunday, September 10, 2006 at 2:45 pm

## Cannibalistic Spiders

**Maydianne Andrade**, University of Toronto

*A recent winner of the Young Scientist of the Year award, Professor Andrade has an international reputation for studying dangerous spiders up close and personal. Why do some female spiders kill their mates? Come and find out about the secret life of spiders.*

### VISITORS WELCOME!

#### SOCIAL

**2:00 - 2:30 pm**

Bring your own mug for coffee or juice if you wish,  
only paper cups provided.

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**2:30 - 2:45 pm:**

Presentation of Financial Report; Election of the Board

For more information call the TFN office at (416) 593-2656

Room 001, Emmanuel College,  
University of Toronto,  
75 Queen's Park Crescent East

Room 001 is one floor below street level. Entrance at south end of the building, down a few steps on an outside stairwell.

**Wheelchair Entrance:** Second door south on Queen's Park Crescent E. Door does not have automatic opener. Elevator is inside to the right.



NEXT MEETING, OCTOBER 1, 2006

The Humber: Tales of a Canadian Heritage River

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## TFN OUTINGS

- TFN events are conducted by unpaid volunteers.
- The club 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 by calling 416-393-4636.
- Check the weather by calling 416-661-0123 so you will know what to wear on outings which go rain or shine.
- Wear appropriate footwear for walking on trails which may be muddy, steep or uneven.

Saturday, **WARD'S ISLAND – Nature Arts**

Sept. 2 Leader: Melanie Milanich

10:00 a.m. Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. – the ferry leaves at 10:15 a.m. Bring what you need for photography, sketching or painting and anything you wish to share with the group when we discuss our morning's work after lunch. \$ for ferry ticket.

Tuesday, **COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH PARK – Birding**

Sept. 5 Leader: Don Burton

9:30 a.m. Meet at the south parking lot. The bus loop at the end of the Kipling South bus line is very close to it. Bring binoculars. Morning only.

Saturday, **MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY – Tree Identification Walk**

Sept. 9 Leader: D. Andrew White

10:00 a.m. Meet at the Davisville subway exit. Bring lunch.

Tuesday, **ROUGE PARK – Nature Walk**

Sept. 12 Leader: Orval White

10:30 a.m. Meet at Pearse House, Rouge Valley Conservation Centre, 1749 Meadowvale Rd. 2 to 3 hour loop walk. Will include the new wetlands and hilly terrain. Bring lunch.

Saturday, **HUMBER BAY PARK EAST – Nature Walk**

Sept. 16 Leader: Doug Paton

10:00 a.m. Meet at the Humber Loop (Queen streetcar line, just west of Humber River). Bring lunch and binoculars.

Sunday, **SMALL'S POND – Lost Rivers Walk**

Sept. 17 Leaders: Ian Wheal and Richard Anderson

2:00 p.m. Meet at the southwest corner of Woodbine Ave. and Eastwood Rd. Explore an area of lost ponds and streams and see how human activity has affected it. Moderately difficult. This is a joint outing with Toronto Green Community.

Wednesday, **YORK CEMETERY – Birds**

Sept. 20 Leader: Carol Sellers

10:00 a.m. Meet at the cemetery entrance on Beecroft Rd. at North York Blvd. Bring lunch and binoculars.

- Saturday,  
Sept. 23  
2:00 p.m.     **PARKS AND GARDENS OF THE WATERFRONT**  
Leader: Peter Iveson  
Meet at the southwest corner of Bathurst St. and Queen's Quay W. at the monument in Little Norway Park.  
Walk will proceed east ending at the Music Garden.
- Wednesday,  
Sept. 27  
10:30 a.m.     **EAST DON – Nature Walk**  
Leader: Roger Powley  
Meet at Woodbine Heights and Hackberry St. (91A bus north from Woodbine subway station – the 9:33 a.m. or the 9:57 a.m. bus will reach the start on time.) Steep hill at the beginning, walk will end at the forks of the Don. Morning only.
- Saturday,  
Sept. 30  
10:30 a.m.     **SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS – Nature Walk**  
Leader: Mary Taylor  
Meet at the southeast corner of Kingston Rd. and Chine Dr.  
Bring binoculars if you have them, and a lunch. We hope to see a variety of migrating birds, butterflies, and fall wildflowers.

### TIPS FROM THE LEADERS WORKSHOP

#### Responses to the question “*What things do you like best about TFN walks?*”

We appreciate good pre-planning of the walk to include points of interest and consideration of the comfort of participants (location of washrooms, local transit connections, etc).

It's important to share the walk plan with members as part of the greeting, and that members arrive on time. Responses emphasized an enthusiastic and welcoming beginning to the walk, with introductions of participants.

While knowledge is highly valued, so is inviting participation from the members!

It's a good idea to check with the group about the pace of the walk.

It's helpful for members to gather when the leader stops to speak at a point of interest, and for the leader to speak up facing the group. It can be difficult to hear an identification when the group is spread out in single file on a trail, so it's helpful if members share information with those coming behind.

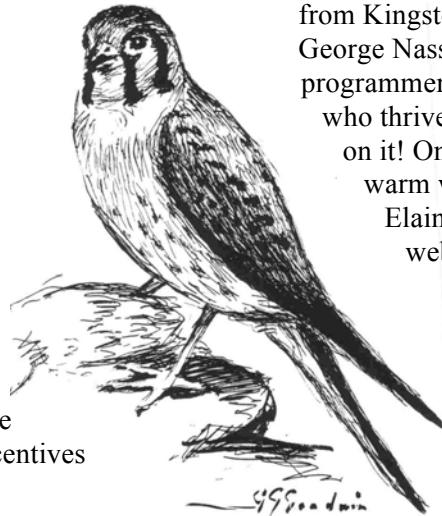
A brief summary at the end of the walk will complete the outing.

Compiled by Ruth Munson and Gail Gregory.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Last evening I went on the evening ramble in German Mills Settlers Park. It is the only outing I have been on this summer but it was the epitome of the reason I joined the TFN. A small group gathered at twilight to share the pleasure of being in a large, relatively unspoiled natural area (see TFN 528-7), guided by a knowledgeable leader. Many thanks to Theresa Moore for pointing out the American Kestrel perched on the hydro pole (my first sighting) and the multitude of other birds, insects and plants. We also learned about some of the social history of the park as well as current environmental issues. It was a wholly satisfying experience which strengthened my resolve to GO ON MORE OUTINGS! I hope your summer was filled with memorable encounters with nature and I hope to share some with you this fall.

The TFN was officially represented and warmly welcomed at Ontario Nature's 75th AGM and Conference, *Greenways and Waterways*, hosted by the Kitchener-Waterloo Field Naturalists. At the AGM delegates gave their unanimous support to a resolution put forward by TFN representatives Barry Mitchell and Phoebe Cleverley, calling on the Ontario Government to map an Ontario-wide greenway; develop a program of incentives for farmers to preserve woodlands and wetlands; require municipalities to do their part by mapping local greenways linking to the larger system; and launch a public education program explaining the benefits for humans as well as wildlife. I also attended the conference for two days which were chock full of interesting seminars, speakers, exhibits and outings as well as opportunities to meet with naturalists from all regions of Ontario. I heartily recommend going next year. I'm sure that former TFN president Jack Gingrich would concur, as he confided that this was the 46th year he has attended.



American Kestrel, drawing by Geraldine Goodwin

On a more local issue, the City of Toronto invited interested parties to participate in developing a "Renaissance Strategy" for Toronto's parks in order to determine how to improve parks and trails over the next 10 to 15 years. Barry Mitchell and I attended a Metro Hall session and Roger Powley and Don Pope represented the TFN at the North York session. Our position was outlined in a report written by Roger which basically concludes that we recognize that not all parks have valuable or unique natural heritage worth saving but those which do MUST be protected. We have not had any feedback from these sessions to date but we will continue to be involved in this process.

For the past year Elaine Farragher (with the help of Ulli Diemer) has been maintaining the TFN website remotely from Kingston. This job has now been assumed by George Nassas, a software developer and computer programmer who is "an enthusiastic, positive team player who thrives on variety and challenge." We're counting on it! On behalf of the Board and all TFN members, a warm welcome, George, and a hearty thank you, Elaine, for your many years of service as webmaster.

In response to the news that our accountant Alistair J. Kennedy was planning on retiring, the Board turned to Byron Bulmer, Chartered Accountant, to audit the financial statements for the year ending June 2006. We felt it was prudent to conduct an audit in light of the fact that it has been some time since the last one. We gratefully acknowledge the many years of assistance provided by Mr. Kennedy.

Compared with last year when I wrote my first report with more bravado than knowledge, I can now say with some confidence that the overall picture of the TFN is bright and the prospects for a healthy future are reassuring. I look forward to seeing you on September 10 at the AGM which will be followed by the intriguingly titled lecture *Cannabalistic Spiders*.

Pinky Franklin

Countryside scent  
On my street, woodsmoke at dusk  
Memories evoked.

Haiku by Helen Juhola

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND AUDITOR'S REPORT

See page 17

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of nominees to the Board for the year 2006-2007:

President:	Pinky Franklin
Vice-President:	Wendy Rothwell
Past President:	Phoebe Cleverley
Secretary-Treasurer	Corley Phillips
Directors: due to retire in 2007:	Alexander Cappell, Linda Stemmler, Nancy Fredenburg
due to retire in 2008:	Nick Eyles, Ruth Munson, Corley Phillips
due to retire in 2009:	Gail Gregory, Barry Mitchell, Jerry Spevak

Phoebe Cleverley, Nominating Committee



Eastern Milk Snake, drawn by Diana Banville from R.O.M.'s *Non-Poisonous Snakes of Canada #1*

## OUTINGS COMMITTEE REPORT

### Outings Bookings Update

The following contact people will call volunteers who have agreed to be on the TFN Leaders List. Please give them a prompt call back.

Midweek walks east of Yonge St.	Ruth Munson	
Midweek walks west of Yonge St.	Margaret McRae	
Weekends - 2nd and 4th of the month	Volunteer being sought	
1st Saturday - Nature Arts	Joe Bernaske	
3rd Saturday - Waterfront	Boris Mather	
3rd Sunday - Lost Rivers Walks	Peter Hare	

### Attention Leaders:

If you want to offer to lead a walk at a particular site or on a particular date, you may call the appropriate contact person or Gail Gregory [REDACTED] to see if it can be worked into the schedule. We want to give as many members as possible a chance to participate, and often have more than 60 different leaders in the course of the year.

### Thanks to ...

Nancy Fredenburg, who sends out the leaders report packages and brochures from the office; Mary McColl, who updated the leaders list and did the Midweek West bookings for the past few years; Alexander Cappell, who processes the outings records and produces an annual statistical report.

Gail Gregory, Outings Co-ordinator

## MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

### **Conservation of Northern Boreal Forest Wildlife, Sunday, May 7, 2006**

Dr. Justina Ray, Director, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada

As we find ourselves in the middle of a resource boom when everyone from China to India wants our hydrocarbons, nickel, uranium and many other metals, and even long dead coal mines in eastern Canada look like they may reopen, it is worth being reminded now and again of the long term environmental costs to our country. To take one example, Canada's headlong charge up the list of diamond producing countries from sixth to third (behind South Africa and Botswana) is a cause for celebration. Finally, we have gotten a grip on the very different geological conditions and terrains here in Canada compared to the much easier conditions in Africa that missed out on ice ages when ice sheets bulldozed sediment around and fundamentally rearranged the landscape. Devoid of a cover of glacial dirt, diamonds are much easier to find elsewhere. Shortly, we are about to open Ontario's first diamond mine, Canada's fourth. The list of potential new mines is not limited to diamonds either; the Canadian Shield of northern Ontario is a rich repository of mineral wealth awaiting discovery and is the focus of much new exploration by mining companies. This activity is taking place above the so-called 'cut line' at about 51° north (just north of Pickle Lake and Red Lake) that separates the forested south from the largely pristine and untouched north where wildlife is recovering (still) from the depredations of the fur trade. This northern-most piece of the province bordering Hudson Bay and James Bay (roughly 25% of the total area of the province) has acted as an unintended nature preserve by simply being left alone. It constitutes one of the largest parcels of northern boreal forest in the entire country. All this is at risk now by renewed interest from loggers and miners.

A mine itself is no bad thing necessarily (with notable exceptions), a small point in a sea of wilderness, but remote mines have to be serviced by all-weather roads given recent problems with seasonal ice roads in ever shortening winters. The roads bisect the terrain, make logging inevitable and permit deadly contacts between humans and larger carnivores such as caribou, wolverines, and wolves. This was the topic of a lecture

by Dr. Justina Ray, Director of the Wildlife Conservation Society Canada on May 7 that rounded out the year's Sunday afternoon lecture series. Well-illustrated and very well presented, Dr. Ray's lecture made the case for greater oversight of lands in the far north if the mistakes made in the south are not simply to be repeated. This time there are no lands further north that can act as a natural preserve; the Hudson Bay and James Bay frontier itself is threatened. The boreal forest will have been cleared and with it the organisms small and large that depend on it.

Dr. Ray illustrated and explored the historical development of Ontario's far northlands from 1650 onwards, centered on the dramatic effects on wildlife and native populations of the fur trade, notably that of beaver which was essentially extirpated from the north. Migrations of indigenous peoples were driven by their role as middlemen allowing the trade to flourish and feed the demand for furs and pelts in Europe. A sub-theme of the talk was that we are remarkably ignorant of our own north, not just the Arctic, which is understandable, but even the far north of our own province, which is not. She also identified new risks to the north posed by mining and the northward extension of forestry being considered by the province in the near future, threatening piecemeal destruction of the boreal forest. Modern environmental assessments scarcely (if at all) consider the cumulative impacts of development, focusing only on one particular site or operation. Death by a thousand cuts.

Management decisions will be made in the near future which may impact northern Ontario every bit as much as the fur and logging trades of the past. We must take it upon ourselves to become aware of the north's history and fragility if its past is not to be simply a prelude to an increasingly uncertain future. Dr. Ray is thanked for reminding us what is at stake. This was an excellent lecture to cap the year's lecture series.

Nick Eyles



## MYSTERY AND MAGIC ON THE BELT LINE TRAIL

On Thursday, May 4, fifteen of us, with Helen Juhola as leader, strolled from Eglinton West station to Mount Pleasant Cemetery. Helen first took us into the neighbourhood just east of Allen Road. Along these quiet streets, she pointed out maple and serviceberry flowers, compared the London plane tree with the native sycamore, and showed us that cherries, both wild and ornamental, have glands on the petiole and lenticils in the bark.



Photos by Pleasance Crawford

There, too, as we puzzled over a tree with small keys (like a red maple) and deeply lobed leaves (like a silver maple), a woman called from her front door, “It’s Autumn Blaze!” This, we learned later, is a cultivar of the Freeman maple (*Acer x freemanii*, a hybrid of *Acer rubrum* and *Acer saccharinum*).

Arriving at the Belt Line Trail, we soon saw widespread evidence of the highly invasive garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolaria*), whose succulent young leaves Sandy Cappell urged us to taste. “Could garlic-mustard greens become the next trendy food?” we wondered. Helen showed us the male and female flowers, always occurring on separate trees, of the Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*). Arne Juhola explained that the riverbank grape (*Vitis riparia*), which enshrouds many trees, eventually kills them.

In the former streambed between Memorial Park and the Russell Hill Road easement, Helen found patches of bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) and waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum* – see photo below), each holding its

own, thus far, against foreign invaders. Farther along this stretch, on the opposite side, Roger Powley pointed out the terraced rear garden of Robert Bateman’s boyhood home.

Continuing towards Avenue Road, an unusual dogwood tree behind a house on the north side caught our attention. The time was right for flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), but the bracts around these flowers were large, creamy-yellow, and only slightly notched. I blurted out “*Cornus kousa*” but knew I was wrong. Helen, Roger and I later decided the mystery tree must be one of several recent cultivars of *C. florida*. Soon we began seeing them in new plantings throughout the city.

Also on the north side of this section, we admired a saucer magnolia (*Magnolia soulangeana*) as tall as the three-storey house whose back garden it filled. Farther along, we observed an invasion of Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*). Then on the south side, at the rear of a delightfully unkempt property, Helen identified the delicate leaves and pale pink, four-petaled flowers of a lovely patch of *Cardamine*.

Features along the stretch between Avenue Road and Oriole Parkway included a very old willow, its immense trunk covered with burls, and garden escapes such as *Scilla siberica*, dame’s rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*), and yellow loosestrife (*Lysimachia punctata*). Especially between Avenue Road and Yonge Street, the trail was a carpet of chartreuse: the just-fallen flowers of the Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*).



Our walk began at 1:30 with a sprinkling of rain and ended at 4:00 in brilliant sunshine. The final sighting, near the gate from the trail to Mount Pleasant Cemetery, was a bed of Virginia bluebells (*Mertensia virginiana*) in full bloom.

Pleasance Crawford

## THE CARDINAL WAS ONCE A VERY RARE VISITOR

Having been out of the country for close to 20 years, and with much of my time taken up with the bureaucratic complications of getting back into the system, I have been unable to attend as many field trips as I would have liked. My few outings have been confined to some well established birding areas of Toronto, such as High Park, Edwards Gardens, Taylor Creek Park, the Scarborough Bluffs and Rouge Valley Park, where birding has been very much like meeting up with old friends. On almost every occasion I encountered the strikingly beautiful male Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) and the more subdued but equally attractive female bird, and this prompted me to think of the first time I ever set eyes on this magnificent species.

It was in February of 1967 and I was in the company of that doyen of birders Jim Baillie, and a few other avid birding enthusiasts. We were exploring the North York area close to Steeles and Leslie Avenue, on a typical bitterly cold day with the snow lying thick on the ground.

At one point we viewed a garden bird feeder with a male Cardinal in attendance. I well remember how this brilliant red bird shone like a beacon against the pure white snow.

What a marvelous way to see this bird for the very first time. Other birds of note for that day included an immature Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) perched on a small tree in the middle of a field (another first for me) and a Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*).

The Cardinal is a very common feature of Toronto's birdlife, but I wonder how we would regard this most handsome of local birds if it were far less so. Would our hearts not miss a few beats each time we caught sight of its bright red colouration if it were one of the province's great bird rarities?

Well, it might interest readers to learn that until the beginning on the 20th century, the Cardinal was, in fact, one of Canada's rarest birds; it was then believed to breed no farther north than the valley of the Ohio River

on the northern boundary of Kentucky. The first official record for this species was one taken at London on 30 November 1896. The birds remained of infrequent occurrence in south-western Ontario until 1910, when the species was included in southern Ontario and the southern Hudson River valley.

The first active Cardinal's nest was discovered at Point Pelee in 1901. It had reached Chatham as a breeding bird by 1909, London by 1915, Brantford by 1919 and Toronto by 1922. William Brodie became aware of the red birds at Point Pelee as early as July 1879 during his first visit to the park: "I formed a speaking acquaintance with several people and all had a story to tell about the visitation of 'warbirds' a few weeks previously. From descriptions given there was no doubt these 'warbirds' were Cardinals."



However, William Saunders, the noted Ontario ornithologist, in his subsequent visits to Point Pelee between 1882 and 1900 had found no evidence of Cardinals. According to the renowned ornithologist Percy Taverner this lack of evidence points to the conclusion that the Cardinal occupied Point Pelee until at least 1879, and had apparently deserted the locality until the turn of the century. During the

spring of 1907 both he and Saunders were at the Point and this time Cardinals were heard whispering all around them.

Cardinals received a big boost in the fall of 1938, when there was a mass influx in the Niagara Falls area. This great invasion resulted in the first breeding records for many areas in the southern counties of Ontario. It now occurs in the sphagnum bog country of central Ontario; I was surprised to see a male Cardinal in Cochrane during a butterfly excursion in 1974. Just how far this delightful addition to our avifauna will continue to expand in Ontario and neighbouring provinces beyond its present limits is unknown, but the extension of its range is expected to continue.

Article and drawing by Darryl Stewart

## INKY CAPS

True Inky Caps of the *Coprinus* genus have a particularly interesting exit-line: they auto-digest, they delequesce, they disintegrate into one collapsing inky blob. And don't get that blob on your hands or soles or clothing for it is truly inky and will not be removed easily.

Heading the group is the much sought after Shaggy Mane (Lawyer's Wig in Britain), *Coprinus comatus*. This is a delicious edible and whenever I have found any, I have dashed home, running all the way, in order to get them into the frying pan before they render up their black spores. Also edible are Mica Cap (*Coprinus micaceus*) and



COPRINUS Plicatilis - JAPANESE PARASOL  
CAPS 1/4" - 1" ACROSS WITH DEEP RADIAL GROOVES,  
GREY-BLACK. STIPES TALL, THIN, SMOOTH.  
SPORE PRINT BLACK. PATHWAYS, ROTTED WOOD.

Tippler's Bane (*Coprinus atramentarius*), a truly felicitous common name for it must not be consumed alongside alcohol. I recall years ago knowing a young man who, either ignorant or uncaring of this advice, ended up in hospital with severe stomach symptoms.

A much smaller Inky cap is the Japanese Parasol (*C. plicatilis*), which fruits in great clusters on rotted wood and has radial grooves in its small umbrella-shaped cap. It is an exquisite little being, fit defence for fairy creatures who might melt in the sun's rays. A fascinating genus!

Eva Davis

*Remember! Don't eat any mushrooms unless you are an expert in their identification. Eds.*

### REMEMBERING ...

#### JACQUELINE COURVAL

The Toronto environmental community was shocked and saddened in late July by the death of Jacqueline Courval, co-chair of Friends of the Spit. She was noted for her boundless energy and her dedication in preserving the Leslie St. Spit as an urban wilderness despite pressures to "improve" it.

#### CAROLYNN PARKE

Carolynn Parke, founding member and long-time president of Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP), passed away of a brain tumour on January 17, 2006. Over the past 13 years her bird rescue work included dawn patrols on downtown streets and the founding of Wingspread, a wild bird rehabilitation facility at her home in Claremont. FLAP has established the Carolynn Parke Memorial Fund and plans to revive Wingspread. Anyone interested in helping to carry on Carolynn's work through donation or volunteering can contact FLAP at 416-366-3527 or flap@flap.org.



## 2006 IS A REMARKABLE YEAR FOR THE MONARCH BUTTERFLY

It was 30 years ago – August 1976 - that National Geographic magazine published a cover story written by the late Dr. Fred Urquhart about his discovery of the monarch butterfly overwintering sites in Mexico. Since that time, interest in monarch butterfly biology and conservation has mushroomed. We've watched as record numbers of monarch butterflies were counted on Ontario butterfly counts. On August 1st, MNR scientist Ken Abraham spotted a monarch at Attawapiskat, a Cree village not far from the west coast of James Bay! Monarchs were first spotted in the Point Pelee area by Al Wormington in late April and by late May, they had arrived in Thunder Bay, Ontario and Winnipeg, Manitoba. Monarchs have now been spotted in all 10 Canadian provinces! I haven't seen the population this high since 1998.

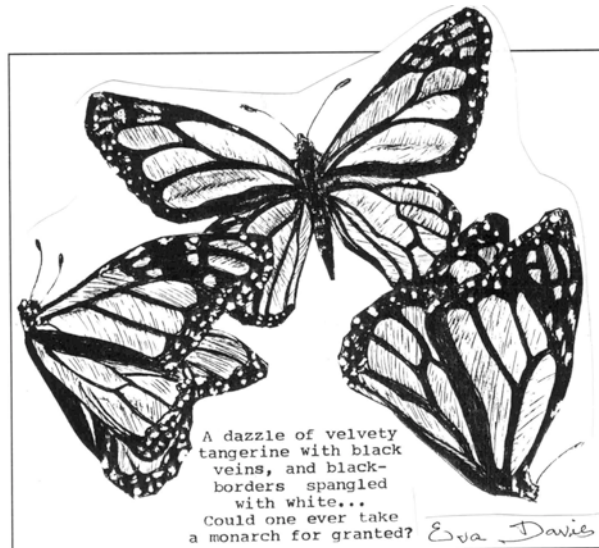
Fred Urquhart's wife, Norah, turned 88 this past June and she is delighted by the continued recognition their work receives. Fred's name was recently added to a plaque in Rouge Park, honouring those who have contributed to the knowledge of the area. The Monarch Teachers Network Canada held 3-day courses in Winnipeg, Orillia and Ottawa.

There are many ways that naturalists and others will be able to celebrate the spectacular monarch butterfly and what should be an excellent fall migration:

*Butterfly Days* will be held on September 9,10, 16, 17, 23 and 24 at the Greenway Blooming Centre, 2500 Shantz Station Road, Breslau, Ontario (just north of Hwy. 401 at Cambridge). Admission is free, and visitors will see monarch tagging and illustrated talks. The Naturium building contains many insect displays and there is a huge butterfly-shaped butterfly garden filled with nectar and host plants and wild butterflies. Young butterfly breeder Marco Kennema, recently a

guest on Breakfast Television (CITY-TV), has also constructed a new butterfly farm and conservatory. A small admission fee allows guests to see many adult butterflies and caterpillars on host plants. For more information go to [www.greenwaybloom.com](http://www.greenwaybloom.com), and click on "Butterflies".

Monarch Watch has initiated a program of *Monarch Waystations* and, to date, over 700 families and organizations have registered their gardens as a place where adult monarchs can safely feed and reproduce. Monarch tags are also being distributed. For details, go to [www.monarchwatch.org](http://www.monarchwatch.org).



Journey North will be encouraging students to participate in the *Symbolic Migration* of paper monarch butterflies to Mexico. Each student who sends a paper monarch to Mexico receives one back the following spring, but one made by a Mexican or American student. For details, go to [www.learner.org/jnorth](http://www.learner.org/jnorth). Maraleen Manos-Jones will be organizing *Spirit of Butterflies* tours of the overwintering sites in Mexico. Both spoke to

Toronto audiences in 2004. Their trips are outstanding. In March 2006, I took one such tour with Jose Luis Alvarez of La Cruz Habitat Protection Project. Of course, there was more to see than just butterflies. Try hiking through a volcano lava field! Go to [www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/DavisDonMX031706.html](http://www.learner.org/jnorth/tm/monarch/DavisDonMX031706.html). Contact Maraleen at: [mmjbutterfly@msn.com](mailto:mmjbutterfly@msn.com) and book early for the best dates.

I invite you to contact me at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] should you have any questions about the above events or activities.

Don Davis

## PIGEON TALES

### *Story One*

In July 2004, while on our boat at the Port Credit Marina, I pointed out to my husband that there was a pigeon in the water, not two feet away. He was not swimming or paddling, just bobbing in the water. What was he doing in the water? Was he drowning? My husband quickly moved to look for something to “rescue” the dove. I guess the quick movement startled him because with three flaps he took off from the water as easily as a duck or gull. A pigeon that wanted to be a duck?

### *Story Two*

In our backyard there is a pond with a large stone wheel. Water from the centre of the wheel bubbles up about ½ an inch and then trickles over the edges. The birds love to bathe and drink on the wheel, particularly the starlings who create quite a splash. One exceptionally hot day, a local pigeon decided to cool off. After landing on the wheel, he stood over the bubbling water and moved his body around, much like we do in a shower. Then, amazingly, he moved to one side and spread out first one

wing and then the other wing over the spout of water. He obviously was enjoying himself!

### *Story Three*

Three springs ago, looking out to the backyard there appeared to be a pigeon in distress. She (because of the diminutive size) was standing but not moving much. She did walk but when the other birds had reason to fly away she remained. We dubbed her “Walker” and brought her into the house for the day and let her nestle in an area in our den where she obviously felt comfortable and secure. The next day we let her out, she walked around and stayed in the backyard. When nightfall came, much to our surprise, she walked right up to the open door, hopped inside the room and walked over to “her” area. The next day we put her outside again; she stayed outside and eventually, we lost track of her. We had been able to identify her because she was a slate blue-gray with a distinctive white slash only on one wing. “Walker,” wherever you are, we wish you the very best.

Adele Casson

### ANOTHER ESCAPEE??

Extracted from an article by Lys Lawrence in *Pickering Naturalist*, March 2006

On a sunny cold January morning, Karin Fawthrop and I were walking along the roadway at East Point Park in Scarborough. After admiring a flock of some 20 Cedar Waxwings, Karin exclaimed, “Look! There’s a pigeon over here!” There sat a white and brown pigeon. But why was it sitting on the ground? It did not look quite like the hybrids found among Rock Pigeons, and Karin noted it wore a sturdy blue leg band. The bird fluttered along the ground awkwardly and we surmised it was an injured fancy pigeon. Karin recollected that she had a birdcage at home and, wrapping the captive in a sheet to transport it by car, we soon had the bird sitting on the floor of a budgie cage. Water and wild bird seed were supplied but the bird just sat, blinking.

Now what? The leg band had a series of letters and numbers, but no phone number. Perhaps the phone book might list a pigeon-fancier’s organization? Or maybe the Toronto Wildlife Centre had dealt before with lost

pigeons. What about entering the data from the band for a web search? To our amazed delight, information from

*Continued on page 26*



314 rock doves.

Row 1: 94

Row 4: 55

Photo by Karin Fawthrop

Row 2: 95

Row 5: 14

Row 3: 47

Row 6: 9

## FOR READING

***A GATHERING OF FLOWERS FROM SHAKESPEARE***, Gerard Brender à Brandis with F. David Hoeniger, The Porcupine's Quill, 2006, 144 pages, \$21.95.

Ever since I had the opportunity to peruse one of the hand-made copies of *A Gathering of Flowers from Shakespeare*, I have been hoping a more affordable edition would be forthcoming. That original edition, issued in 1997, was splendidly hand-crafted and published by the artist, Gerard Brender à Brandis. The new edition has been published this year by The Porcupine's Quill. It features over 60 exquisite wood engravings of flowers mentioned in Shakespeare's plays and poetry. With delicate detail, Mr. Brender à Brandis conveys the beautiful lines of leaves, stems and flowers. Some plants are presented in their natural habitat, others in a human context appropriate to Shakespeare's day. The artist's studio in Stratford, Ontario is a wonderful place to see more of his work and to learn about the techniques he uses.



The text is by F. David Hoeniger, Professor Emeritus, Victoria College, University of Toronto, president of Toronto Field Naturalists 1962 to 1964 and TFN board member 1960 to 1966. To accompany each engraving, Professor Hoeniger has selected quotes from Shakespeare and has illuminated these passages with details about the flowers' uses and symbolism. Furthermore he reveals Shakespeare's extensive knowledge of both wild and domesticated plants. As Professor Hoeniger points out in the introduction, Shakespeare was a keen observer who grew up in a small town and "many members of his audiences in

London too - a city then of only 200,000 - were more familiar with both the domesticated and the wild flora than urban people tend to be today."

The passage of four centuries certainly adds to the challenge of identifying species from common names. What flowers did Shakespeare have in mind when he spoke of love-in-idleness, eglantine, herb of grace or long purples? By answering many such intriguing questions, this book enhances the reader's understanding of, and appreciation for Shakespeare's works. Professor Hoeniger explains that often Shakespeare "was content with a mere family name, like violet or lily or pink, and therefore, unless the context provides some other clue, the engravings accompanying such passages show what we think was the most familiar species of the family in England in Shakespeare's time, either in gardens or in the wild."

This fascinating and beautiful book brings together Shakespeare's works, botany and the art of wood engraving. It will be a welcome addition to the library of those whose interests include any or all of these. It is available from booksellers or directly from the publisher. Cost of shipping and GST is included for prepaid orders by cheque or money order sent to The Porcupine's Quill, 68 Main St., Erin ON, N0B 1T0, but not included on VISA orders.

Review by Marilyn Murphy

See article by David Hoeniger in FROM THE ARCHIVES, page 25

*From the notice for the TFN monthly lecture December 7, 1959:*

Speaker: Dr. F. David Hoeniger

Subject: Birds in Literature

Dr. Hoeniger, an excellent amateur ornithologist and assistant professor of English at Victoria College, is in a position to make a unique contribution to our study of birds. As those who were fortunate enough to hear his lecture at the 1959 FON camp can tell you, the pursuit of birds in literature is every bit as much fun as their pursuit in the field when undertaken by one who knows both birds and literature so well.

FOR READING continued on page 22.



## KEEPING IN TOUCH



Framed photograph of Juhola Reserve at night by Jerry Spevak.  
Photo by Monica Spragge

It was wonderful, seeing so many TFN members and friends at the club's nature reserves on Sunday, May 28. We appreciate very much the honour you have bestowed on us, and all the work that went into organizing such a wonderful day. (We were glad we only had to *be there*).

The countryside seemed to be flourishing. Everything from marsh marigolds to yellow lady slippers were flowering, even along the roadside. Yellow warblers and a wood thrush sang greetings as we entered the reserve and an ovenbird called loudly as we left.

As we stood at the hilltop viewing where "our" reserve is and listened to Jerry Spevak's inspiring description of the club's properties in the valley, we wished we had a photo of the scene. What a thrill to be given such a dramatic one! That and the memory book we were presented with will always remind us of that memorable day and the many friends rejoicing with us. We are so proud to be part of a club that had the foresight to buy so many acres of cedar-scented landscape.

Looking forward to seeing many of you again, either in one of Toronto's many lovely natural areas, or at the club's reserves, once the plaque about "our" reserve has been installed on the rock pile just southeast of the shelter in the Jim Baillie Nature Reserve.

Aarne and Helen Juhola

I would like to say how much I enjoyed the special trip to the Club's more recently acquired property on the Uxbridge Brook on Sunday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, at which time the property was formally named the Helen and Aarne Juhola Nature Reserve in honour of the Juholas' enormous contribution to the Club.

I understand some 90 people attended, which says much in itself, especially in the mosquito season. The food and drinks provided were superb, all of which had to be carried in by hand to the shelter – a daunting task over such a long distance, especially as liquids are, by nature, heavy.

Credit will, of course, be given to our President, Pinky Franklin, and Jerry Spevak, the Club's alert scout for properties available in that area, not to mention the whole Board of Directors who, together, did such a successful and sterling job in planning and pulling off something as logistically tricky as this event was; but I would especially like to request that particular additional recognition, with each of the names involved of each of the "porters" who so manfully lugged in all that food, liquid and ice!

With hopes for further peaceful experiences in the arms of unspoiled Nature,

Jim S. Allan



The dedication plaque.

Photo by Robin Powell

KEEPING IN TOUCH continued ...

Many thanks (and congratulations) for the wonderful and much deserved tribute to Helen and Aarne. It was also a great party for all who attended and an excellent opportunity to appreciate the TFN reserves. More thanks!

Frances and Peter Money

Many thanks to Pinky Franklin and all the others who worked hard to make yesterday's celebration at the reserve so special. I thought the whole event was a great success, and everyone seemed to have a good time; I certainly did. The naming of the new reserve and the beautiful picture presented to Helen and Aarne were excellent choices to reflect the Club's appreciation of their enormous contribution. Thank you again.

Marilynn Murphy

My husband and I want to thank you for a memorable day today. You and your committee did a wonderful job. It takes a lot of planning and hard work to have a successful day. Thank you so much.

Marilyn and Art Ortiz

Just a word to say how much we appreciate the TFN magazine. The new look is lovely, but dare I say that I miss the old look? The work that goes into producing this is immense, and especially so under the former format. Kudos to the Juholas who dedicated years to this much appreciated publication.

Jean Collins

It is wonderful to include articles from the archives and to remember Emily Hamilton and her generous sharing of botanical knowledge.

Ann and Brian Gray

April 1st about noon two big black birds arrived in a little creek area, Curran Hall Ravine, to scour the landscape. I just caught their arrival out of the corner of my eye as they flew into a tall elm on the hill across from my home. Too big to be crows. I brought my binoculars up and discovered these immense black shapes – square shoulders, deepest black backs resembling Dracula. After a while they flew close to a tall willow tree and I was able to see their red heads and whitish beaks; also their grey undersection, flight feathers on the 6-foot span of wings – obviously Turkey Vultures.



We, the birds and I, stayed for about one hour. Occasionally one would fly west to scout, then the other east, about 5 minutes each trip, but no sign of food. It was the first sighting at close range, as usually they are soaring high in the sky. They probably flew to Morningside Park.

Sheila Ryan

Heavy clouds break loose.  
Defiant sun is challenged.  
It paints a rainbow.

Haiku by Therese Paradis



**AUDITORS' REPORT**

**TO: The members of  
Toronto Field Naturalists:**

I have audited the statement of financial position of **Toronto Field Naturalists** as at June 30, 2006 and the statements of general fund operations and nature reserve fund operations for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's Board of Directors. My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit.

Except as explained in following paragraph, I conducted the audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I plan and perform an audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. An audit also includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by the Board of Directors, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation.

In common with many non-profit organizations, income received is, by its nature, not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, my verification of income was limited to a comparison of recorded receipts with bank deposits.

In my opinion, except for the effect, if any, of any adjustments that might have been required had I been fully able to verify income as referred to in the previous paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Toronto Field Naturalists as at June 30, 2006 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



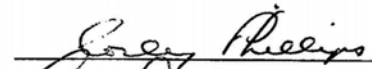
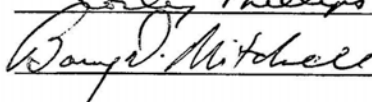
**Byron Bulmer**  
**Chartered Accountant**

Toronto, Ontario  
July 19, 2006

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT JUNE 30, 2006**

	2006	2005
	\$	\$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash - operating fund	17,729	17,049
Cash - nature reserve fund	250	32,285
Accounts receivable	1,028	1,232
Prepaid expenses	<u>2,818</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>21,825</u>	<u>50,566</u>
<b>Other assets</b>		
Inventory (Note 2c)	3,453	3,691
Reference library (Note 2f)	<u>10,500</u>	<u>10,500</u>
	<u>13,953</u>	<u>14,191</u>
<b>Investments (Note 2e)</b>		
Investment - special projects (market value 50,680)	55,968	59,152
Investment - nature reserve (market value 126,691)	<u>130,248</u>	<u>88,726</u>
	<u>186,216</u>	<u>147,878</u>
<b>Property (Note 2f)</b>	<u>281,702</u>	<u>281,702</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>503,696</u>	<u>494,337</u>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accruals	2,167	1,070
Prepaid membership fees	<u>10,010</u>	<u>15,495</u>
	<u>12,177</u>	<u>16,565</u>
<b>Fund balances</b>		
Nature reserves fund (Page 5) (Note 2a)	412,200	402,713
Special projects fund (Page 5) (Note 2a)	79,319	75,059
General fund (Page 4) (Note 2a)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>491,519</u>	<u>477,772</u>
<b>Total liabilities and fund balances</b>	<u>503,696</u>	<u>494,337</u>

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:

 Director  
 Director

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS  
STATEMENT OF GENERAL FUND OPERATIONS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2006**

	2006	2005
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Membership fees	23,367	17,430
Publications	399	561
Investment income	12	2,334
Miscellaneous income	2,955	-
Donations	4,164	5,821
G.S.T. rebate (Note 2d)	<u>1,152</u>	<u>1,232</u>
	<u>32,049</u>	<u>27,378</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Outings	1,542	2,783
Lecture series	3,383	2,584
Newsletter, printing and mailing	8,433	12,406
Audit	1,908	1,070
Administration and member services	1,439	2,707
Telephone and internet	1,127	634
Office rent	<u>12,887</u>	<u>14,106</u>
	<u>30,719</u>	<u>36,290</u>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>1,330</b>	<b>(8,912)</b>
Transfer to special projects fund	(1,330)	8,912
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS  
STATEMENTS OF NATURE RESERVE FUND &  
SPECIAL PROJECTS FUND  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2006**

	2006	2005
	\$	\$
<b>NATURE RESERVE FUND</b>		
<b>Funds Received</b>		
Investments	9,246	3,496
Donations	300	300
Miscellaneous income	500	-
Bequests	-	15,000
	<u>10,046</u>	<u>18,796</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Property taxes and maintenance	<u>559</u>	<u>1,140</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>9,487</b>	<b>17,656</b>
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<u><b>402,713</b></u>	<u><b>385,057</b></u>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<u><u><b>412,200</b></u></u>	<u><u><b>402,713</b></u></u>
 <b>SPECIAL PROJECTS FUND</b>		
<b>Funds received</b>		
Investment income	8,223	-
Bequests	<u>200</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><b>8,423</b></u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Computer	3,133	-
Outing	1,525	-
Special mailing	<u>835</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u><b>5,493</b></u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>2,930</b>	<b>-</b>
Transfer from operating fund	1,330	(8,912)
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<u><b>75,059</b></u>	<u><b>83,971</b></u>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<u><u><b>79,319</b></u></u>	<u><u><b>75,059</b></u></u>

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

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**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2006**

**1. OPERATIONS**

The Toronto Field Naturalists is a registered non-profit charity. The purpose of the organization is to stimulate public interest in natural history and to encourage the preservation of our natural heritage. For income tax purposes the organization qualifies as a not-for-profit organization which is exempt from income tax under the Income Tax Act.

**2. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The organization follows accounting principles generally accepted for not-for-profit organizations.

**(a) FUND ACCOUNTING**

The accounts of the Toronto Field Naturalists (TFN) are maintained in accordance with the principles of fund accounting. This method of accounting is used by most not-for-profit organizations. Resources for various purposes are classified into funds. The activities or objectives of each fund are specified by the donors or by direction from the Board of Directors.

- Operating Fund: Reflects the income and expenses associated with the TFN's program delivery and administrative activities. This fund is set to zero at the beginning of each fiscal year. Any excess (loss) of income over expenses is transferred to the Projects Fund.

- Nature Reserve Fund: Reflects the income and expenses relating to the Nature Reserves and also provides for future purchases. This is a restricted fund.

- Projects Fund: Reflects the income and expenses relating to special events or purchases that are outside the normal day to day activities. This is an unrestricted fund.

**(b) REVENUE RECOGNITION**

Donation and bequests are recorded when received. Donations and bequests which are designated for the Nature Reserve are recorded in that Fund. All other donations are allocated to the Operating Fund and all other bequests are allocated to the Special Projects Fund. Membership fees are recorded for a specific fiscal year and are amortized over the number of months remaining in the fiscal year at the time the monies are received. Membership fees received in advance are included in deferred revenue. All other income is recorded when received.

**(c) INVENTORIES**

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost and net realizable value.

**(d) REBATES**

The TFN applies for, and has received in the past, rebates for 50% of GST paid and 40% of that portion of the Office Rent that is considered property tax. The rebates are accrued for the period in which they are incurred.

**(e) INVESTMENTS**

Investments are recorded at cost. Adjustment for a lower market value will only be made if the Board decides that the lower value is considered to be other than temporary.

**(f) CAPITAL ASSETS**

- The furniture and fixtures in the office, including the computer equipment, are considered to have been expensed at the time of purchase or donation.

- Nature Reserve Property is recorded at cost.

- Reference Library is recorded at the lower of cost or net realizable value.

**(g) USE OF ESTIMATES**

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

**(h) FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The organization's financial instruments consist of cash, investments, accounts receivable and accounts payable. Unless otherwise noted, it is the Board's opinion that the corporation is not exposed to significant interest or credit risks arising from

these financial instruments. The fair value of these financial instruments approximates their carrying values, unless otherwise noted.

(i) CONTRIBUTED SERVICES

The Organization depends heavily on the use of volunteers to provide services. Because of record keeping and valuation difficulties, these contributed services are not recorded in the accounts.

3. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

A statement of changes in financial position has not been prepared as it would not provide any additional meaningful information. The previous year's financial statements were not audited, therefore opening surplus and reserve fund balances could not be verified.

4. COMMITMENT

The organization entered into a lease agreement for office space, at a cost of approximately \$13,000 per year. The lease will expire February 28, 2009.

**ESCARPMENT BIOSPHERE FOUNDATION**

Some TFN members may have taken part in a scheme to raise money for the Escarpment Biosphere Foundation by signing up with Escarpment Telecom. The TFN has recently received a letter of appreciation from the Foundation. Funds received have been used "to help acquire a significant new property every year."

**FOR READING** continued.

***Birds of Hamilton and surrounding areas*** by Robert Curry, Hamilton Naturalists' Club.

This 600-page reference book to the status of over 385 species of birds that have occurred in the Hamilton Study Area will be published in September 2006. The Hamilton Study Area covers a 25-mile/40 km circle from Hamilton's Dundurn Castle, and so includes all or parts of Brant, Haldimand, Halton, Norfolk, Peel, Waterloo, Wellington and Niagara Counties. As well as detailed accounts of each species, the book features:

- 32 pages of colour photographs by such expert bird photographers as Sam Barone, Barry Cherie, Brandon Holden, Jean Iron, Robert McCaw, Ken Newcombe, George Peck and others.
- Original art by Robert Bateman, David Beadle and Peter Burke
- A provocative foreword by Fred Bodsworth
- Chapters by leading local field naturalists covering a wide range of birding projects and the history of birding activity in the area
- Detailed colour maps of the region's hot spots and vegetation types
- Seasonal bar graphs for each species.

All proceeds from this publication go to support the Hamilton Naturalists' Club Conservation projects. To order, check the Naturalists' Club web site [www.hamiltonnature.org](http://www.hamiltonnature.org). Or phone Kim or Glenn Barrett at 905-525-2142 for more information.

Submitted by George Bryant

**BOOK SALE AT TFN OFFICE**

Books donated to the TFN are available for sale to members at a nominal price. We keep books for our library which are about Toronto's flora and fauna and their habitats but there are others on natural history topics that we don't have space for. To view books for sale, come by the TFN office on Friday morning between 9 and noon.

TFN publications available for sale are listed on page 2.



## IN THE NEWS

### LOCAL GROUP MADE HISTORY WITH TREE STUDY

By Rea McNamara. Extract reprinted with permission from the Annex Gleaner, July 2006.

City dwellers often find it easy to accept the lack of green space that surrounds them. But every so often there are those who remind us how vital it is to take responsibility for the spaces we have. Just over 15 years ago, Albany Avenue resident Amanda McConnell helped form Grassroots Albany, a local environmental group. Interested in caring for their local forest, the group conducted an inventory of trees in their neighbourhood.

Their published study became a vital source for other community-driven environmental groups, and influenced the City of Toronto to change its urban forestry strategies. It remains the only community-driven forestry study of its kind.

It was her career as a documentary writer that piqued McConnell's interest in the environment. For many years, she was a senior writer for David Suzuki's *The Nature of Things*, and it was after writing a two-hour special on the burning of the Brazilian rain forest that she was spurred into action. "Witnessing an ecosystem collapse was devastating," McConnell said. "And it made me think about what I personally could do about it."

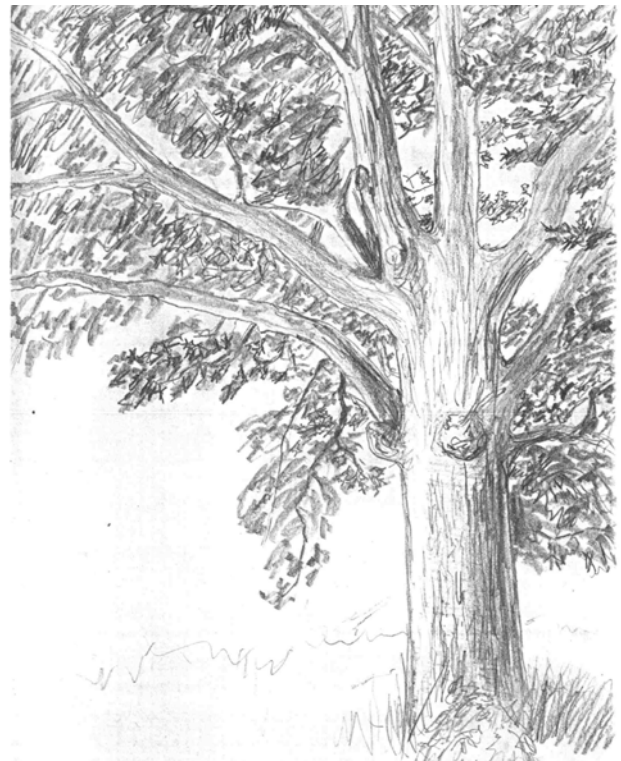
Initially, Grassroots Albany was typical of community-driven environmental groups. They met on a monthly basis, in alternating homes. But when David Suzuki mentioned the group in his column, it received 300 to 400 letters from across the country. In response, its members developed a package defining what a grassroots group should be, although they were unsure of their own definition.

"The purpose of Grassroots wasn't about the trees," recalled Temma Gentles, one of the group's founding members. "I think our initial focus was pretty unfocused, but gradually it evolved towards the direction of trees and yards." The group decided an inventory was required before any sort of conservation strategy for their trees could be initiated. They raised funds and hired forestry student Marshall Buchanan to conduct a tree audit. With the exception of one neighbour, the entire neighbourhood participated, allowing Buchanan to identify the trees in their front

and back yards, and classify them by type, height, age, and overall health status.

In 1992, the results were published. It was found that over 70 per cent of the trees surveyed were growing in back yards on private property, allowing the community to effectively take control of their own urban forest renewal. But there was also a 50-year age gap between older, large-canopy native species such as silver maple and the next generation, which wouldn't be able to fully replace the number of aging trees. Also lacking was a diversity of species, meaning that if a particular disease overtook one type, it could effectively wipe out a significant amount of the urban forest population.

The study encouraged Grassroots Albany to kick off a three-year "re-wilding" initiative that not only inspired the neighbourhood to plant a more diverse mixture of native trees in their front and back yards, but also the City of Toronto. "In the past, more non-native species



White Oak with Burls, drawn by Joanne Doucette

were planted than we would have liked, as we've really pushed the native trees," said Peter Simon, urban forestry planner with the City of Toronto. "But Grassroots Albany really influenced that particular community in that area to change."

The group's tree initiatives soon became shining examples of how important urban forest conservation was in the hands of a community. "Usually that's the way it has to happen," said Dr. Andy Kenney, assistant professor in the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Toronto. "If we're looking at these residential areas, most of the trees that grow on private property survive. The city doesn't have the jurisdiction or power to manage these urban forests, so it's important for groups like Grassroots Albany to take initiatives like this forward."

In 2004, a second audit was conducted, co-authored by McConnell and Gentles' daughter, a forestry student. It was created with a software program developed by Kenney that helps community groups collect and analyze tree inventory data. "The news was a big deal," McConnell said. "We learned that we had more diverse trees, and their health was

better. We improved our forest, and were able to maintain it for the past twelve years within our community."

The audits are now important urban forestry conservation resources. They are distributed widely in libraries, and considered required study texts for university forestry students. Simon said that even the federal ministry in Ottawa requested a copy. "Grassroots Albany is the best and only model for what we wish would happen in other communities," Simon said. "They actually raised funds and took stewardship of that particular area and hired someone to do an audit, and from there developed a forestry strategy plan. "The city would never have the resources to do that."

Since the audits, the group has taken on other initiatives, including the conservation of Taddle Creek, a "re-toading" project, and the dedication of a rose garden in the local park to Jane Jacobs.

[Harbord Village Residents Association will be conducting a similar tree survey of their area. Editor, Annex Gleaner.]

#### FROM THE NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

You may have noticed a difference in this month's newsletter paper. As an organization concerned about the environment, we have changed to 30% recycled paper.

We would like to welcome new members Mary Lieberman, Jan Sugerman, and Joanne Lynes, who bring computer and newsletter skills and experience to the committee.

Please help us to continue to produce an interesting newsletter by sending us your writing and art work.

#### GOOD NEWS FROM FRIENDS OF THE SPIT

The following letter was sent to members of the Tommy Thompson Park Advisory Committee (TTPAC) by Friends of the Spit on July 22, 2006:

In conversation earlier this week, John Campbell, CEO, Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation, confirmed that he had received a letter from Mr. Alan Latourelle, CEO, Parks Canada, informing the TWRC that "the project to develop a Discovery Centre in Lake Ontario Park will NOT proceed." Friends of The Spit welcome this announcement, and are pleased that Parks Canada has recognized that the Spit was an inappropriate location for this structure.

A great thank you to all our members, allied groups and supporters who made their feelings and voices known through the feasibility and planning study phases.

John Carley, Jacqueline Courval,  
Co-chairs, Friends of The Spit



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### Camp Billie Bear: Reminiscences and Expectations

Excerpt from an article by F.D. Hoeniger, TFN 171:7-10, March 1960

[The FON (now Ontario Nature) held a nature camp for some years at Camp Billie Bear near Huntsville. Ed.]

...At the table's opposite end is the cheerful face of T.F. (Prof. McIlwraith), the director, in a posture so incredibly relaxed that it is hard to imagine this man leading a group on a ten-mile walk through forests and quaking bogs. But don't you underestimate T.F.! And watch carefully his instructions: not to step too closely to the red-eyed vireo's nest and thus attract scavengers! It will be wise to listen to his experienced counsel in the woods and on the lake.

...All is ready for a first look around the grounds, where we notice purple finches and two evening grosbeaks pecking among the pebbles of the parking lot. We dash down the narrow path, five minutes, to Mud Lake. In spite of its name, this lake is heaven to me, as it will be to most campers. The silence is deepened by a few last bird songs of a yellow-throat, perhaps a swamp sparrow, and the chatter of frogs. We notice two beavers and – we almost would have missed it – a great blue heron fishing in the deadly quiet. Not far beyond the hills at the lake's other end must be the border of Algonquin Park. A mere five miles, perhaps, though no one as yet has risked the direct route across boulders and swamps. With our binoculars, we carefully examine the dead tree in the water, which last year held an Arctic woodpecker's nest: no activity there now. Content we return and sleep better than for many months.

We awake the next morning to the song of chestnut-sided warblers and the sewing machine drill of a chipping sparrow. This first Saturday is a busy day: the students arrive, sixty of them, boys of 18, men and women of 30 or 70; from Ottawa, Port Hope, Toronto and Timmins. Some seem for the first time to have slung binoculars around their neck, others look impressively experienced: teachers, bankers, typists, mechanics, high school students, carpenters, one doctor; some with a life list of ten who have just been introduced to the barn swallows on the telephone wires, others with one of 300, intent upon rarities; some who only know birds and no plants, others who know flowers but not birds. Camp will teach them all, how desirable it is to study nature not in parts but wholly.

...Later, the leaders drive off in twos or threes with their notes taken from the previous year, in search for those rare orchids or patches of royal fern or hummingbird's nest, which they hope to show off as prizes to their groups on Monday or Tuesday. Evening comes soon, and T.F. at dinner announces the first thrush walk, led by Helen Lawrence – that most patient of all teachers. This walk, to be often repeated during the coming weeks, is cherished by all, experienced and inexperienced. Barely half a mile from camp, we stop in the midst of the forest and yes! the name "cathedral forest" is proper. As the dusk spreads, first the wood and olive thrushes begin their piped chorus, and then the now rarer hermit thrush joins with its high, more flute-like song. Helen repeatedly describes the different songs in terms of contrasting spirals, the safest help in identification.

But some campers need longer time for their ears to become attuned to differences in bird-song. On the way home, luckily, a goshawk flies across our path, so quickly as to be recognized only by a few.



...By Monday the six groups of ten are ready to set forth. The beginners at first stay close to the camp-grounds, the more advanced drive two miles to the New Trail or even to the East River, whose beautiful loneliness is only occasionally interrupted by the flight of a spotted sand-piper or the knocking of the pileated among the stumps left by a forest-fire. The calopogon bog, that most exquisite spot for plantlife (bog rosemary, dwarf mistletoe, pitcher plants, the calopogon orchid) is reserved for the second week, so as to prevent it from being trampled down by nature enthusiasts. After the midday meal, we all meet on the veranda for announcements and for brief reports about the morning's discoveries and adventures. I value these meetings. As one attends them day after day, one becomes increasingly conscious of the variety of excitement nature around Billie Bear offers, and of how everything of plant and animal life in a particular habitat is closely interdependent; certain shrubs grow on certain soil, and certain birds will only be found near these same shrubs. How silly it seems then (as I did for a long time) to limit one's source of pleasure in nature by concentrating on birds alone! .....

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## WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

### SEPTEMBER 2005

The warming trend of recent years has made September transition from a generally autumnal month to one that is reliably part of summer. September 2005 was no exception. It was the second-warmest on record (at least at Pearson), thus making the June-September period the warmest ever (across all of southern Ontario). The month averaged 19.7° C downtown and 19.0° C at Pearson. It was also characterized by a few surges of tropical moisture that brought fairly abundant rainfall. The remnants of Hurricane Rita, for example, came on the 26th. Rainfall was close to normal overall – 67.6 mm downtown and 79.6 mm at Pearson.

The end of the month brought a bit of cooling as a vigorous cold front brought in the first autumn gale of the season on the morning of the 29th. Falling tree limbs and a few power outages were the result. The temperature drop was not severe, but was enough to prevent the month from breaking the record set for the warmest September, set in 2002. Overnight temperatures dropped below 10° C for the first time since May.

In keeping with the shift of weather patterns keeping Toronto in a summer mode, September had near-record high levels of sunshine, as autumnal weather systems stayed well to the north. The rainy spells coming from tropical remnants from the south did not bring long spells of cloudiness. The result: 263.2 hours of sunshine as opposed to a normal 190 hours or so. (The past nine Septembers have all had at least 200 hours of sun.) This was the highest since 1998 which had 266.6 hours of sun (recorded downtown).

The Summer of 2005 summarized (Pearson): Severe drought (patchy) until mid-August, when torrential rains hit.

May to September average 20.0° C  
(former record 1959 19.8°)  
June to September average 22.1° C  
(former record 2002 21.5°)  
June to August average 23.1° C  
(former record 1949 22.1°)

Gavin Miller

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### Pigeon Tales, continued from page 13

the Canadian Racing Pigeons site came right up. The series of letters referred to the specific owner in Ajax with address and phone number. No one was home, but a voice message was left.

As there was no reply by evening, Karin decided to call another racing pigeon owner. He offered to come right over and as soon as he picked up the pigeon, he could tell that it was too light – it must have been out for some time and had lost weight. He took it away and a couple of days later we received this note:

“We just wanted you to know what has happened to the pigeon. Unfortunately, she didn’t make it through the night. This is most often the case when these beautiful birds become lost as they do not know how to

take care of themselves in the wild. When we got her home, we gave her water which she readily took in. But we were quite worried about her as she had lost almost half her weight and was clearly quite exhausted. That has a huge effect on the racing pigeon’s ability to survive as you can well imagine. Rest assured that the bird was not sick, simply run down and exhausted. Thank you so much for rescuing the racing pigeon and for taking the time to contact us.”

Curious as to how long this bird had been lost, Karin pursued the matter. She learned that the most recent owner of the bird lived in Scarborough. He said that the bird had last raced in September and suggested that it had joined a wild pigeon flock

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## COMING EVENTS

### Toronto Ornithological Club – Jim Baillie Memorial Bird Walks

Aimed at the intermediate birder, but beginners are welcome. Free. If you have questions about any TOC activities, please feel free to contact us at [info@torontobirding.ca](mailto:info@torontobirding.ca) or, for further information, visit [www.torontobirding.ca/events.html](http://www.torontobirding.ca/events.html)

- Saturday, Sept. 2, 8:00 am (all day), Leslie Street Spit – “Fall Migration.” Leader: Norm Murr. Meet at the foot of Leslie St. Bring a lunch
- Saturday, Sept. 9, 8:00 am to noon, Lambton Woods – “Fall Migration.” Leader: Don Burton. Meet in the parking lot at James Gardens (access from Edenbridge Drive)
- Saturday, Sept. 16, 8:00 am to noon, High Park – “Fall Migration.” Leader: Steven Favier. Meet in the parking lot inside the Bloor St. entrance at High Park Ave.
- Saturday, Sept. 23, 8:00 am (all day), Leslie Street Spit – “Shorebirds & Other Migrants.” Leader: Norm Murr. Meet at the foot of Leslie St. Bring a lunch.

### Thickson’s Fall Nature Festival

- Saturday, September 16, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. – Fun for all the family. Enjoy a host of exciting family activities! Bird banding. Build your own nature box. Raptors and reptiles. Bucket raffle. Native plant sale. Adults \$5, Kids \$2, Families \$10. Directions: from Hwy 401 in Whitby, take Thickson Road south of Wentworth Street to the Waterfront Trail. Follow the signs. Information: 905-725-2116.

### Toronto District School Board Continuing Education

A series of 9 Saturday morning birdwatching/botany walks in the Toronto area beginning in late September. The walks begin at 8:00 am and end at 11a.m. Call 416-338-4111 or contact Miles Hearn, [REDACTED]

### High Park Walking Tours

For information phone 416-392-1748 or 416-392-6916 or visit [www.highpark.org](http://www.highpark.org)

### Ian Wheal Walks

- Sunday, September 3, 2:00 pm. Iroquois Shore Bluff. Meet at Dufferin St. and Regal Road (northeast side)
- Saturday, September 30, 2:00 pm. Henry Scadding’s Don Mount Caves and Lairs. Meet at Riverdale Library, Broadview Ave. and Gerrard St. E. (northwest corner)

### Natural History Travel

Small group nature tours. For information call George Bryant, 416-762-7941 or 1-800-371-7779, or email [naturalhistorytravel@sympatico.cca](mailto:naturalhistorytravel@sympatico.cca)

### Butterfly Days

September 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 27, at the Greenway Blooming Centre, 2500 Shantz Station Rd., Breslau, Ontario just north of Highway 401 at Cambridge. Free. Monarch tagging and illustrated talks. See article on page 12.

### Toronto Entomologists Association

For information, visit [www.ontarioinsects.org](http://www.ontarioinsects.org).

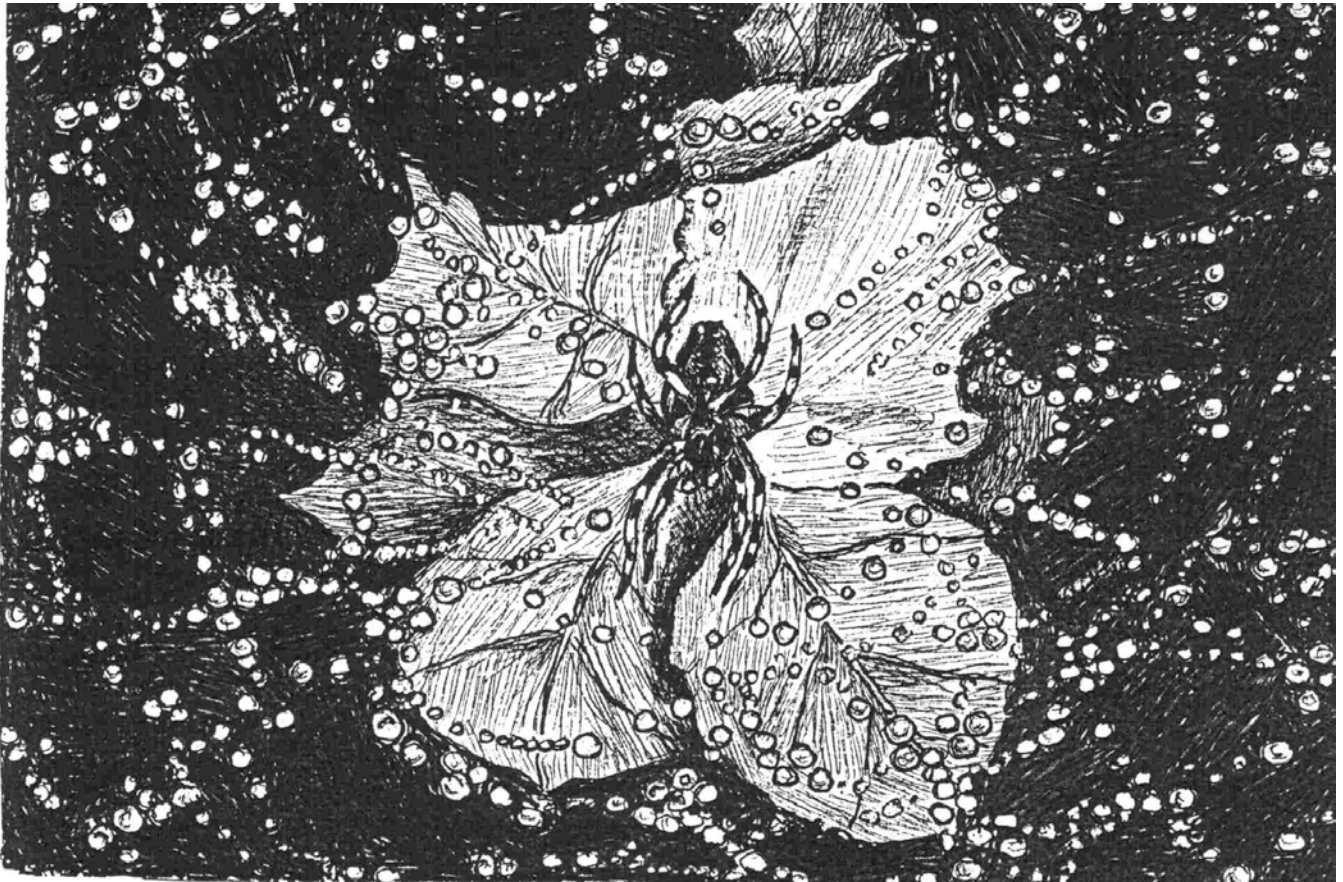
### Mycological Society of Toronto

For information, visit [www.myctor.org](http://www.myctor.org).

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Orb weaver spider on dewy web by Eva Davis