



# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 565, September 2009



Native plant garden, photographed by Jenny Bull. See inside cover.

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*Toronto Field Naturalist* is 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. 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, up to 500 words, of observations on nature in and around Toronto, reviews, poems, sketches, paintings, and photographs of TFN outings (digital or print, include date and place). Include your name, address and phone number so submissions can be acknowledged. Send by mail or email.

**Deadline for submissions for October issue:** Sept. 4.

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Jenny Bull (co-editor), Eva Davis, Karin Fawthrop, Nancy Fredenburg, Elisabeth Gladstone, Mary Lieberman, Ruth Munson, Marilyn Murphy, Toshi Oikawa, Wendy Rothwell (co-editor).

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Wendy Rothwell	
Past President	Pinky Franklin	
Vice President	Bob Kortright	
Sec.-Treasurer	Corley Phillips	
Nature Reserves	George Bryant	
Communications	Alexander Cappell	
Outings	Gail Gregory	
Outings and Web-master	Margaret McRae	
Monthly Lectures	Nancy Dengler	
	Marcus Feak	
	Elisabeth Gladstone	
	Barry Mitchell	

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

\$30 STUDENT, SENIOR SINGLE (65+)

\$40 SINGLE, SENIOR FAMILY (2 adults, 65+)

\$50 FAMILY (2 adults – same address, children included)

No GST. 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.*

### Toronto Field Naturalists

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Here is a part a list of native plants provided by Lorraine Johnson at the TFN monthly meeting in May (see p. 7):

#### trees and shrubs:

tulip-tree	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>
cucumber-tree	<i>Magnolia acuminata</i>
pawpaw	<i>Asimina triloba</i>
sassafras	<i>Sassafras albidum</i>
hoptree	<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>
blue ash	<i>Fraxinus quadrangulata</i>
Redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>
Spicebush	<i>Lindera benzoin</i>
Kentucky coffee-tree	<i>Gymnocladus dioica</i>

#### prairie species:

ironweed	<i>Vernonia gigantea</i>
butterfly-weed	<i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
compass-plant	<i>Silphium laciniatum</i>
flowering spurge	<i>Euphorbia corollata</i>
prickly-pear cactus	<i>Opuntia humifusa</i>
noddling wild onion	<i>Allium cernuum</i>
dense blazing star	<i>Liatris spicata</i>
gray-headed coneflower	<i>Ratibida pinnata</i>

#### grasses:

wild rye	<i>Elymus canadensis</i>
big bluestem	<i>Andropogon gerardii</i>
Indian grass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>

#### woodland:

swamp rose-mallow	<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>
green dragon	<i>Arisaema dracontium</i>
townsena	<i>Jeffersonia diphylla</i>

#### Cover photo:

Native plant garden with black-eyed Susans, aster species, big bluestem and evening primrose, with eastern cottonwood and serviceberry in the background.

### SOME NATIVE PLANT NURSERIES recommended by Lorraine Johnson at TFN monthly meeting in May (see p. 7)

Pterophylla Nursery	519-586-3985
Nith River Native Plants	<a href="http://www.nithrivernativeplants.com">www.nithrivernativeplants.com</a>
Natvil Ecological	<a href="http://www.roofgarden.ca">www.roofgarden.ca</a>
Acorus Restoration	<a href="http://www.ecologyart.com">www.ecologyart.com</a>
Grow Wild Native Plants	<a href="http://www.grow-wild.com">www.grow-wild.com</a>
Wild Canada	<a href="http://www.wildcanada.ca">www.wildcanada.ca</a>
Sweet Grass Gardens	<a href="http://www.sweetgrassgardens.com">www.sweetgrassgardens.com</a>
Grand Moraine Growers	<a href="http://www.grandmorainegrowers.ca">www.grandmorainegrowers.ca</a>
Native Plants in Claremont	<a href="http://www.nativeplants.ca">www.nativeplants.ca</a>

## TFN MEETING

**Sunday, September 13, 2009, at 2:30 pm**

### The Importance of Parks

*Ralph Toninger, Toronto Region Conservation Authority, will discuss the ecological importance of parks, and identify some key implementations that have changed the fate of species in the GTA.*

**VISITORS WELCOME!**

**SOCIAL: 2:00 – 2:30 pm**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 2:30 – 2:45 pm**

**Room 001, Emmanuel College, University of Toronto,  
75 Queen's Park Cres. East**

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

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

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee presents the following slate of nominees to the Board for the year 2009-2010:

President:	Wendy Rothwell
Past President	Pinky Franklin
Vice-President:	Bob Kortright
Secretary-Treasurer	Corley Phillips
Directors:	
due to retire in 2010:	Alexander Cappell, Margaret McRae
due to retire in 2011:	Elisabeth Gladstone, Corley Phillips, Marcus Feak, Nancy Dengler
due to retire in 2012:	Barry Mitchell, Lynn Miller, Heide Tonna

### Upcoming TFN Monthly Meetings

**Oct. 4** *Sixty Years of Birding in Toronto*

George Bryant, lifelong birder and longtime TFN member, will reminisce about his birding experiences and note significant changes he has seen over the years.

**Nov. 1** *The Carden Alvar: A Rural Oasis*

Ron Reid, Executive Director of the Couchiching Conservancy, will look at the ecology and recent successes in the protection of Carden Alvar's habitats and improving access for visitors.

**Dec. 1** *Aiming high (and dry): the Oak Ridges Moraine*

Mark Stabb, the Nature Conservancy of Canada Program Manager for central Ontario, will describe current projects to protect the natural features of this endangered ecosystem.

## 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.
- 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.

Thursday, **GLENDON RAVINE – Nature Walk**

Sept. 3 Leader: Nancy Dengler

9:30 a.m. Meet at the entrance to Glendon College at Lawrence Ave. E. and Bayview Ave. We will walk through the Glendon Campus and down into the Glendon Ravine portion of the West Don River – north on dirt trails if conditions are dry, or south on gravel trails if conditions are wet. Bring binoculars. Morning only.

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

Sept. 5 Leader: Anne Byzko

10:15 a.m. Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. in time for the 10:30 a.m. ferry (bring money for ferry). Bring lunch and art/photography/writing materials.

Monday, **EAST DON, FINCH TO SHEPPARD – Nature Walk**

Sept. 7 Leader: Alexander Cappell

1:30 p.m. Meet at the northwest corner of Finch Ave. E. and Leslie St.

Thursday, **COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH PARK – Nature Walk**

Sept. 10 Leader: Wendy Rothwell

10:00 a.m. Meet at the southwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd. W. and Kipling Ave. Bring lunch and binoculars.

Saturday, **LESLIE STREET SPIT – Birds**

Sept. 12 Leader: Kevin Seymour

10:00 a.m. Meet at the park entrance at Leslie St. and Unwin Ave. Bring lunch and binoculars.

Sunday, **LECTURE – The Importance Of Parks**

Sept. 13 Speaker: Ralph Toningner

2:30 p.m. Emmanuel College, 75 Queen’s Park Cres. E. See page 3.

Tuesday, **ROUGE PARK WETLANDS AND NORTH – Birds**

Sept. 15 Leader: Carol Sellers

10:00 a.m. Meet at Pearse House (last TTC bus stop before the Zoo and walk the short road east to the old house). Bring lunch and binoculars.

Saturday, **LESLIE STREET SPIT– Birds**

Sept. 19 Leader: Bob Kortright

9:00 a.m. Meet at the park entrance at Leslie St. and Unwin Ave. A joint hike with the Toronto Bruce Trail Club. Bring lunch and binoculars.

+

Saturday, **TORONTO ISLANDS – Ecology**

Sept. 19 Leader: Jenny Bull

1:30 p.m. Meet at the ferry docks at the foot of Bay St. in time for the 1:45 p.m. ferry (bring money for ferry). We will meet the leader at Ward’s Island dock at 2 p.m.

- Sunday, **WATERWORKS TRIANGLE – Lost Rivers Walk**  
 Sept. 20 Leader: Wayne Reeves  
 1:00 p.m. How past and present water reservoirs and pumping stations relate to Toronto's lost rivers. Meet outside Dupont Subway Station (northwest corner of Dupont and Spadina). A joint walk with Toronto Green Community.
- Tuesday, **HUMBER BAY PARK EAST – Birds**  
 Sept. 22 Leader: Doug Paton  
 10:00 a.m. Meet at the Humber Loop (66A bus from Old Mill Station or Queen streetcar). Bring lunch and binoculars.
- Saturday, **GUILDWOOD PARK – Nature Walk**  
 Sept. 26 Leader: Melanie Milanich  
 1:00 p.m. Meet at the park entrance at 191 Guildwood Parkway between Morningside Ave. and Kingston Rd. (116 Morningside bus from Kennedy subway station).

### **Ideas from the Outings Leaders' Workshop**, continued from May newsletter

#### **Part 4 – Suggestions for Promoting Outing Safety**

Compiled by Ruth Munson and Gail Gregory from the Outings Leaders' Workshop held January 17, 2009.

- Do the head count
- Stay with the group
- Identify a “back-person” to watch for stragglers
- Discuss safety at the start of the walk, identifying any special challenges or hazards along the route
- Make more effort to identify special challenges or hazards in the newsletter description so members can assess the difficulty of some outings
- Carry a cell-phone or identify if someone in the group has one
- Carry a first aid kit: What would its contents be? One idea is that a clean cloth (bandana or scarf) and some hand-wipes would be simple and easy
- Co-operate to summon trained emergency personnel – most important in serious situations. (Note: Defibrillators are located in city Recreation Centres if there is one nearby)
- Recommend “icers” in winter (for boots). Also non-slip walking shoes or hiking boots
- Include seasonal safety tips on the website especially for the advertised walks
- Ask members to report early leaving to the leader or back-person
- Offer directions for early leaving along the route
- At the junction of a path, either wait for everyone or post someone to direct the followers
- Recommend a walking stick
- Keep a reasonable pace
- Adjust to weather conditions
- Identify poison ivy
- Cross streets at traffic lights or crosswalks

Part 5 – “What we hope participants will learn from the outing and how can we / do we facilitate this?” will appear in the October newsletter.

*Speeding shadow birds  
 Circle over the sidewalk  
 Pigeons fleeing hawk*

Haiku by Helen Juhola

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At our Annual General Meeting on Sunday, September 13th, two valued board members will be stepping down.

**Gail Gregory** has made a significant contribution during the seven years she has served on the board. In her role as Outings Co-ordinator, she and her team have lined up over 140 walks per year, ensuring a variety of nature experiences for our members every week, led by knowledgeable and enthusiastic leaders. Gail has arranged periodic seminars to help our outings leaders maintain a high standard of excellence. An accomplished artist, Gail has taken particular interest in the monthly nature arts outings, a responsibility she is retaining, and she was the inspiration and driving force behind our successful 85th Anniversary nature arts exhibit in 2008. Gail has also served on the Audit and Finance Committee and has represented the TFN in advocacy for environmental issues. We thank Gail for her conscientious efforts on behalf of the TFN, and hope she will continue to play an active role.

**George Bryant**, who has been involved with TFN since his membership in The Junior Field Naturalists' Club, has served on the Board since April 2007. His primary responsibility has been our nature reserves. We are grateful to George for the hard work he has put into monitoring and maintaining the reserves, as well as seeking the best future for this aspect of our organization, and for bringing together a team – Jim Allan, Ernie Baltz and Barry Tocher – to share this responsibility. Over the past two years, George has made the nature reserves better known to our members by leading outings to explore them and writing articles about them in the newsletter. We trust he will continue to serve as a member of the Nature Reserve Committee. In addition, George generously shares his vast knowledge of nature by writing newsletter articles, leading outings and presenting lectures. We have a treat in store at our monthly meeting on October 4th when George will reminisce about his *Sixty Years of Birding in Toronto*.

I would like to thank our Nominating Committee, Pinky Franklin and Barry Mitchell, for recommending the following excellent candidates to fill the two vacancies on the board.

**Lynn Miller**, who has a B.Math, Honours Computer Science degree from the University of Waterloo, is employed by Autodesk, a world leader in 2D and 3D design software. For 2 years she published an online

newsletter called *Backyard Birds* for which she provided all of the photos and articles. She publishes a monthly online newsletter called *The Green Scene* about environmental issues and how people can help, and has organized a joint volunteer project between her company and Ontario Nature. Lynn loves nature photography, bird watching and bees. Her habit of “annoying her friends on hikes by constantly stopping to look at flowers and interesting insects” demonstrates how well she fits into the TFN, which she joined in 2006. Lynn is concerned that kids aren't getting the exposure to nature that she enjoyed, and feels that TFN is ideally placed to help foster a love of nature in young people, since we understand the wealth of natural beauty in Toronto. Lynn's computer skills are already benefiting TFN, as she is assuming the role of Webmaster and has set us up on Face Book. Her enthusiasm and initiative demonstrate that she will make an excellent board member.

**Heide Tonna**, who grew up in the Black Forest region of southern Germany, came to Canada after leaving high school. She studied towards the Certified General Accountant designation, graduating in 1982. She has worked for a number of companies managing investments for European investors, and recently retired after nine years with PricewaterhouseCoopers. Heide has always enjoyed the outdoors, being an avid hiker from a young age, and has more recently become interested in bird and tree identification. She joined the TFN in 2006, and loves participating in outings. We were delighted when Heide responded to our recent appeal for someone to assist with TFN's financial administration, and she is already working with our Treasurer, Corley Phillips. Her accounting expertise, combined with her interest in nature, make her an ideal addition to the board.

I am happy to announce that **Margaret McRae**, who has played an increasingly active role in organizing our outings, is assuming the role of Outings Co-ordinator, with continuing assistance from Charles Bruce-Thompson. We are grateful to Margaret for her proficiency as our Webmaster – a responsibility she is turning over to Lynn. I am also pleased to welcome **Louise Dixon**, who responded to our advertisement and is assisting with bookkeeping.

I would like to express my thanks to the other ten board members for their continuing dedicated support. We are indeed blessed to have so many talented and enthusiastic volunteers serving the TFN.

Wendy Rothwell

## MONTHLY MEETING REPORT

### The Natural Treasures of Carolinian Canada

Sunday, May 3. Lorraine Johnson, editor of *The Natural Treasures of Carolinian Canada: Discovering the Rich Natural Diversity of Ontario's Southwestern Heartland*

Lorraine started by explaining the term Carolinian Canada – used to describe the southern-most floral region of Ontario spreading south from Toronto in the east to Grand Bend in the west. Although less than 1% of the total land mass of Canada, the area contains more than 25% of the country's population and boasts a multitude of vegetation communities and species. Many of these are living at the northernmost edge of their range and are found nowhere else in Canada. There are globally rare species of freshwater mussels, the opossum (North America's only marsupial), 100 species of butterflies, 2000 herbaceous plant species and over 362 terrestrial species. New species of plants and insects are still being discovered.

The Carolinian Canada landscape is one of the most threatened in North America, containing almost 1/3 of Canada's rare and endangered species. Tree cover, prairies and wetlands have been greatly reduced. Farming our rich soil has contributed to loss of forest and soil erosion. Invasive species such as the emerald ash borer upset the system's equilibrium. Woodlots, if not protected, are given over to growing corn and soybean crops. The concentration of population with its intensive and extensive development generally disrupts habitat.

The striking Karner blue butterfly, a Carolinian species, was extirpated from Ontario by 1989. Long-term reintroduction efforts, involving controlled burns, are underway in High Park and Pinery Provincial Park



Karner Blue, photographed by Gerry Clements

to regenerate the oak savanna habitat essential to wild lupine, the only plant on which this butterfly's caterpillar feeds.

Lorraine is involved in the Carolinian Coalition, a non-profit group of over 40 conservation groups and many individuals, which has identified 38 "signature sites" as critical unprotected natural areas, including the Rouge Valley. Since 1985, they have been working with owners on the preservation of these sites. Now they are working on the 'Big Picture' – a map which, using advanced technology, provides a picture of how



Tulip-tree, photographed by Allen Woodliffe

existing natural areas can be linked together to create a natural heritage network of habitats. This network of core areas and green corridors is crucial to maintain bio-diversity in a productive, human-dominated landscape. For more information, visit [www.carolinian.org](http://www.carolinian.org).

Lorraine challenged us to bring TFN's conservation ethic into the lives of others by gardening with native plants. If, by chance, we are then accused of harbouring noxious weeds, Lorraine suggests we label our native species. Suddenly, the plants are special and neighbours are more inclined to admire them. Use their Latin names and the sceptical neighbours become quite calm! A list of Lorraine's suggestions for native plant species to try is on page 2 of this newsletter, along with a list of nurseries. Lorraine emphasized that it is important to obtain native plants from ethical plant producers and not from the wild.

Don't forget to pick up some plant labels.

Corinne McDonald

## EXTRACTS FROM OUTING LEADERS' REPORTS

**May 4, Jane Jacobs Tribute Walk. Leaders Helen Juhola and Pleasance Crawford.** For TFN's 3rd Annual Jane Jacobs Tribute Walk, we followed the same route as in 2006 and 2007 with one exception: near the top of Cedarvale Park, we took a dirt path up the slope on the right, which brought us to an easement on the tableland and, further along, to a Children's Garden. A neighbour explained that the easement—which provided access to the ravine from Arlington Ave—had previously contained 2 houses expropriated for the Spadina Expressway.

**May 8, Prospect Cemetery. Leader Pleasance Crawford.** ...It was distressing to see the poor condition of the Camperdown elm (*Ulmus glabra* 'Camperdownii') immediately north of the St. Clair gates. Since being photographed by Vincenzo Pietropaulo for Toronto Tree Portraits 2007, this then-magnificent specimen has lost its upper three quarters and much of the bark on the remaining trunk. The death of this tree, probably planted soon after the First World War, will certainly diminish the noteworthy collection of heritage trees in the cemetery.

**May 10, Taylor Creek Park. Leader Melanie Milanich.** ...The group was impressed with the size and layout of the new wetland which is one of the city's 11 Community Stewardship sites for this summer. We followed the walking trail passing marsh marigolds, bloodroot, may-apples, blue cohosh, downy yellow violets, trilliums and Jack-in-the-pulpits. We observed the sculptures filtering water and read the Charles Sauriol plaque (where we saw 3 orioles)... [See also In the News, page 21.]

**May 20, G. Ross Lord Park. Leader Carol Sellers.** In addition to the birds and butterflies listed, we saw thousands of tadpoles and a ground hog with 3 young.

**May 22, Garlic Mustard Pull, South Humber Park. Leader Wendy Rothwell.** We cleared two areas of garlic mustard, one chosen because it was near where a controlled burn had been done. There was an abundance of garlic mustard which the 7 of us couldn't tackle. We were supervised by 3 Parks staff who were very helpful and informative. This is part of a 5-year commitment to pull garlic mustard in this location. We hope to have more volunteers next year. The photo shows the other team of TFN volunteers pulling garlic mustard at Warden Woods.



Garlic Mustard pull at Warden Woods, photographed by Cheryl Post, Parks staff

**May 23, Highland Creek and East Point Park. Leader Blair Campbell.** I particularly enjoyed leading a walk in this area as one has the opportunity to walk through some relatively diverse environments all in one trek: the glacial valley of Highland Creek, the remnants of forested tablelands above the valley, the meadowlands above the lake and the Lake Ontario shoreline against the backdrop of the spectacular bluffs of Scarborough. We saw Red-eyed Vireo, Yellow Warblers, a flock of Cedar Waxwings in courtship mode, and heard a Pileated Woodpecker pounding on a tree. We also saw a deer foraging at the edge of the wooded area near Highland Creek.

**May 30, Milliken Mills Park. Leader Mohammad Ansari.** ...The flying of kites in this park is an environmental problem. Plastic and kite strings litter the park in abundance and are a hazard to wildlife.



**June 6, Nature Arts outing led by Nancy Anderson and Anne Byzko.** Yoshie Nagata photographed these baby Barn Swallows at Topham Park, and Valerie Singh photographed a beaver at Smythe Park.

**June 16, Fish, Etienne Brule Park. Leader Andrew Drake.**

Thanks to a chance meeting he had with past president Pinky Franklin, PhD student Andrew Drake was invited to give a lecture on fish. On June 16, over 25 TFN members were treated to a lively and information-packed two hour presentation on the banks of the Humber River, as well as *in it* for those who chose to go paddling!

Andrew had arrived long before our meeting time in order to set up his display which included assorted types of nets used by scientists and tanks filled with assorted samples of fish from the river. He mentioned that a government permit must be granted for every sampling event. There are between thirty and forty species in the Humber, including gobies, minnows, common shiners and large common carp. Samples may be collected in passive gear, in which the fish swims into a stationary trap such as the minnow trap, in active gear which the scientist moves through the water, and also with electro-fishing which, if done properly, does not harm the fish. The 10 metre (30 ft.) long seine net needs a person holding it at each end and the fish are caught in an open bag-like shape in the centre of the netting. In all methods there is a 2-3% mortality rate due to shock. Following government regulations one non-native species, the Gobi, has to be destroyed after it has been caught and studied as it is responsible for the loss of at least three native fish species in the Great Lakes.

River flow is divided into three categories: **pool**, deep with slow flow; **run**, shallower, quicker and smoother water; and **ripple**, with more turbulence. The ripple areas add oxygen to the river. Each flow attracts fish with specific characteristics. For example, the calmer pool will attract tall and wide body shapes, but streamlined fish can stay in the ripple areas and use minimal energy.

Andrew detailed the characteristics and behaviours of several species, then, good showman that he is, he unveiled the tanks one by one and answered all our questions. We were then invited to paddle into the river after receiving instruction on how to be safe while walking. One has to keep one's weight firmly on one leg while the other moves forward and secures firm footing. Only then does one step forward. About six of us went into the river, some with gum boots and some in sneakers, and we were led to a spawning area. Larger fish had moved pebbles and smaller rocks to create a 60 cm (2 ft.) bowl shape on the river bed and a school of small common shiners were seen laying eggs in it. Approximately 200 were swimming in place, facing upstream, and if we saw a quick flash of silver underbelly it meant that that fish was laying its eggs.

Soon after, we saw a young lady a bit upstream. She works for the government and was removing non-native lampreys from the Humber. These prehistoric looking creatures are fascinating, but if one latched onto us, we were told to pull it off at right angles, otherwise you rip flesh off your body!

This unusual event with Andrew Drake was most educational and entertaining, thanks to his deep knowledge and enthusiasm.

Report and photos by Anne Leon

EXTRACTS FROM OUTINGS REPORTS *continued on next page.*



Andrew at Humber River



The seine net



Gobi



Spawning area



Lamprey

EXTRACTS FROM OUTINGS LEADERS' REPORTS, *continued from previous page.*

**June 30, Lower Don. Leader Alexander Cappell.** Even in the heart of Toronto, you can still find signs of what was here before urbanization. Ramsden Park and Rosedale Valley are where Castle Frank Brook used to flow. Yellow Creek comes out of a sewer under Mt. Pleasant Cemetery into the Vale of Avoca and David Balfour Park and then disappears into another sewer before crossing Mt. Pleasant Ave. on its voyage to the sea. The houses on the north side of Summerhill Gardens sit on the slope of the Lake Iroquois shoreline.

**July 5, Taylor Creek Park. Leader Dianne Dietrich.** We began at the new Goulding wetland and Donora Ravine – many examples of removal of invasive species, such as Norway maple and maturity of pretty successful restoration plantings. Visited another restoration site on Dawes Rd. and a “spontaneous wetland” (flooded path) with an abundance of dragonflies, duckweed, and swallows. [See also In the News, page 21.]

**July 23, Waterfront, York St. to Bathurst St. Leader Phoebe Cleverley.** ...There is an interesting display at Harbourfront of large photographs taken from the air of boreal forests in northern Ontario: lakes, rivers, wetlands and coastlines of Hudson and James Bays. [See Coming Events, page 23.] The growth at the Spadina wetland is lush and the inlet has plenty of water this year...

**July 26, Rosetta McClain Gardens and Bluffs. Leader Bob Kortright.** Ten stalwarts not put off by the downpour at noon enjoyed the goldenrod just coming into bloom near some small water-plantain. Bank Swallows delivered meals to their nest holes in the bluffs, goldfinches nibbled on thistle seeds, a Willow Flycatcher and catbirds were heard along with what we believe was a mockingbird. Many butterflies, a dragonfly, and some beetles, wasps and bees took advantage of the lull between storms. A search for a reported Screech Owl family was not successful.

**July 28, Col. Samuel Smith Park. Leader Kerry Adams.** ...One of the group members was Carol Sellers, well-known for her expertise in the butterfly and moth area. One of the highlights of the walk was when Carol identified a female black swallowtail in the process of laying an egg. The egg was placed on a Queen Anne's lace flower head. [For follow-up, see Keeping In Touch, page 17.] At the base of the spit is a pond where we observed numerous Barn Swallows (50-60 plus) gathering in the shrubs – we believe to begin their migration. We saw a breeding pair of Red-necked Grebe. However, when the female came off the nest to join her mate, we did not see eggs or young. Entertainment during our lunch break came from the local mink that swam right beside us and then proceeded to hunt along the shoreline at our feet.



*Mourning Dove singing  
On my bedroom window sill  
Making a high “coo”*

Haiku by Roger Powley

Mourning Dove, photographed by Norah Jancik at Lambton Woods

If you have any questions concerning these financial statements, please contact the Treasurer, Corley Phillips, at 416-923-6363, or cphillips6363@rogers.com

**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, 2009 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, 2009 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.



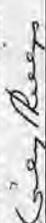
**Byron Bulmer**  
Chartered Accountant  
Licensed Public Accountant

Toronto, Ontario  
July 13, 2009

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT JUNE 30, 2009**

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Cash - operating fund	5,126	5,933
Cash - nature reserve fund	710	207
Money market fund	28,169	19,099
Accounts receivable	860	2,205
Prepaid expenses	<u>3,101</u>	<u>3,063</u>
	<b>37,966</b>	<b>30,507</b>
<b>Other assets</b>		
Publication inventory (Note 2c)	1,752	1,906
Photo library (Note 2f) (Note 5)	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
	<u>1,762</u>	<u>1,916</u>
<b>Investments (Note 2e)</b>		
Investment - special projects	58,638	58,638
Investment - nature reserve	<u>152,083</u>	<u>145,983</u>
	<u>210,721</u>	<u>204,621</u>
<b>Nature reserve properties (Note 2f)</b>	<u>281,702</u>	<u>281,702</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<u><b>532,151</b></u>	<u><b>518,746</b></u>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Accounts payable and accruals	2,459	3,385
Prepaid membership fees	<u>9,064</u>	<u>10,379</u>
	<u>11,523</u>	<u>13,764</u>
<b>Fund balances</b>		
Nature reserves fund (Page 5) (Note 2a)	434,324	429,253
Special projects fund (Page 5) (Note 2a)	86,304	75,729
General fund (Page 4) (Note 2a)	<u>520,628</u>	<u>504,982</u>
<b>Total liabilities and fund balances</b>	<u><b>532,151</b></u>	<u><b>518,746</b></u>

APPROVED BY THE BOARD:

 Director

 Director

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, 2009**

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
<b>NATURE RESERVE FUND</b>		
<b>Funds Received</b>		
Investments	5,709	5,262
Donations	-	100
Rental income	500	500
Bequests	<u>6,209</u>	<u>5,862</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Property taxes and maintenance	<u>1,138</u>	<u>675</u>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>5,071</b>	<b>5,187</b>
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<b>429,253</b>	<b>424,066</b>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<b><u>434,324</u></b>	<b><u>429,253</u></b>
<b>SPECIAL PROJECTS FUND</b>		
<b>Funds received</b>		
Investment income	566	3,638
Bequests	<u>10,000</u>	<u>1,585</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Computer	163	164
85 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	867	319
Green living show	1,376	1,940
Newsletter, colour and recycled paper	1,399	1,880
Miscellaneous	26	77
Slide inventory project	<u>-</u>	<u>189</u>
	<b><u>3,831</u></b>	<b><u>4,569</u></b>
<b>Excess of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>6,735</b>	<b>654</b>
Transfer from operating fund	<u>3,840</u>	<u>5,678</u>
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<b>75,729</b>	<b>69,397</b>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<b><u>86,304</u></b>	<b><u>75,729</u></b>

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, 2009**

	2009	2008
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Membership fees	24,830	24,231
Publications	281	362
Investment income	530	720
Miscellaneous income	(155)	-
Donations	11,775	14,493
G.S.T. rebate (Note 24)	<u>847</u>	<u>646</u>
	<b><u>38,108</u></b>	<b><u>40,452</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Outings	1,034	1,278
Lecture series	4,670	3,910
Newsletter, printing and mailing	8,994	8,330
Audit	1,780	1,908
Administration and member services	2,579	4,278
Telephone and internet	942	1,046
Office rent	<u>14,269</u>	<u>14,024</u>
	<b><u>34,268</u></b>	<b><u>34,774</u></b>
<b>Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses for the year</b>	<b>3,840</b>	<b>5,678</b>
Transfer to special projects fund	<u>(3,840)</u>	<u>(5,678)</u>
<b>Fund balance, beginning of the year</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Fund balance, end of the year</b>	<b><u>-</u></b>	<b><u>-</u></b>

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

**TORONTO FIELD NATURALISTS**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2009**

**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 administration 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**

Donations 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 in 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.
- Photo 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 approximate 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 cash flows has not been prepared as it would not provide any additional meaningful information.

**4. COMMITMENT**

The organization entered into a lease agreement for office space, at a cost of approximately \$15,000 per year. The lease will expire February 28, 2014.

**5. PHOTO LIBRARY**

The Photo Library consists of an estimated twelve thousand 35-mm colour slides, focussing on Toronto valleys, watercourses, shorelines, plants and animals and on TFN properties and activities. The collection, which began in the early 1970's, continues to expand by photo donation from members and others.

## FOR READING

***Grass, Sky, Song: Promise and Peril in the World of Grassland Birds***

By Trevor Herriot, Harper Collins/Phyllis Bruce, 273 pages, \$32.95

Trevor Herriot is a Regina-based naturalist, writer and illustrator, well known to the prairie public for his encyclopedic knowledge of birds on a radio phone-in show. His first book, *River in a Dry Land*, won a host of awards and established him as one of Canada's premier nature writers.

In *Grass, Sky, Song*, Herriot now splices a personal travel experience, natural history and bird lore into a requiem for the vanishing grasslands and the birds that inhabit them. Much of what he observes in the prairies



Eastern Meadowlark drawn by Geraldine Goodwin

also resonates in southern Ontario. For almost 100 years, our fields and pastures have been declining, replaced by the returning forest and urban sprawl. As our grasslands shrink, so do their bird species.

Toronto birders now make a special pilgrimage to Carden Plain just to see birds such as Bobolink,

Eastern Meadowlark and Loggerhead Shrike, species formerly well known to every farm kid.

Herriot uses the travels and observations of John Macoun as a continuing theme through the book. Macoun was a pioneer botanist and the last naturalist to see and record the ecology of the Canadian prairies in its pre-settlement grandeur. As well, the book contains profiles on 15 grassland species including many scarce birds familiar to easterners such as Grasshopper Sparrow, Upland Sandpiper and Burrowing Owl.

This is a beautiful book, not just for the lyrical writing but also for the delightful design. The editor's concept was to make it echo a 19th century book, complementing the author's re-creation of John Macoun's journeys.

Read this book and weep for our vanishing grassland birds. It is a pleasure to read as well as to hold—a model for nature writing.

George Bryant

***The Migration of Birds: Seasons on the Wing***

By Janice M. Hughes, biology professor, Lakehead University, Firefly Books, Sept 2009, 193 pages, \$40

This is not just a pretty coffee table book, though it is that. It is a wide-ranging look at all aspects of bird migration, from the history of the slow development of human understanding of the phenomenon, through the why, when, where and how birds navigate and fuel their amazing journeys of thousands of miles, often back to the tree in which they were born.

The writing is lively, and the science is brought to life with 10 in-depth migration stories. These include the famous 40,000 km annual voyage of the Arctic Tern, and the lesser-known migrations of cranes, waxwings, warblers, wheatears, dippers, phalaropes and shrikes. I particularly enjoyed the fascinating history of human attempts to explain the seasonal changes in birdlife, ranging from transmutation of redstarts into robins in the autumn in Greece, through the incredibly persistent belief (to the 19th century) that swallows hibernate in mud underwater, and that Barnacle Geese spend the summer as barnacles, and much else.

The techniques used to figure out the patterns of bird migration, from banding to radar, counting birds crossing the face of the moon at night, satellite tracking, and isotope analysis of feathers, are clearly explained. As recently as 2007, satellite tracking showed that a Bar-tailed Godwit flew 11,700 km non-stop from Alaska to New Zealand, perhaps even more amazing than the 4-day flight of the Blackpoll Warbler from Nova Scotia or New England to Venezuela each fall. Equally fascinating to me was the material on the evolution of migration, and why birds do it despite the very large toll it frequently takes. The mechanics and biology of flight, and how they evolved, are well treated, as are the intricacies of how birds are able to find their way through all kinds of weather on such long journeys.

The book wraps up with a chapter devoted to the hindrances mankind is throwing in the way of migratory birds, from the physical obstacles – mainly windows but also communication towers and wires – that are estimated to kill more than a billion birds each year in the US alone, to the more insidious threats of pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change.

*Continued on next page.*

The only thing that stands in the way of an unqualified recommendation of this book is a number of factual errors, such as:

- the map depicting Pleistocene ice sheets unaccountably shows Hudson Bay and the Baltic Sea as ice-free while surrounded by ice sheets.
- “Blue-gray Gnatcatcher is the only member of its lineage that has escaped the crowded tropics” – three gnatcatchers occur in continental USA.
- “No other birds breed further south than the Adelie Penguin.” Attenborough’s documentary *Life of Birds* stated that the Snow Petrel nests on nunataks in the trans-Antarctic range, further south than any other bird.

Bob Kortright

***The Philosopher and the Wolf – Lessons from the Wild on Love, Death and Happiness***

By Mark Rowlands, Granta, 2008.

Philosopher Mark Rowlands knows how to tell a good story. His approachable take on weighty questions can be inferred from another of his general reader titles *Everything I know I learned from TV*. *The Philosopher and the Wolf* is, above all, the story of his lifelong relationship with the wolf he called Brenin, adopted as a cub and who followed him from lecture hall to beach and from country to country. That neither creature was altogether fit for human company, as Rowlands with typically staunch self-honesty admits, provides the starting point for his meditations on wolf, ape and human nature. As might be anticipated, the stories range from the touching to the hilarious to the hair-raising. Passages of reflection which may test some readers’ tolerances soon give way to a new turn in the story as philosopher and wolf negotiate an uneasy truce

with the world around them. When the truce breaks down, episodes of infamy or minor celebrity await. In Ireland, Rowlands pretended Brenin was a Malamute since the breed was unknown there and an identified wolf would have been an imperiled wolf. (Think of the ratio of Irish wolf-hounds to Irish wolves.) Angry owners of a bitch impregnated by Brenin changed their tune when his pups proved popular and highly profitable.

A medieval fable portrayed animal natures as fixed, while human nature was unfixed and able to try out identities, seeking a best fit, a synthesis, or perhaps remaining forever restless. Rowlands endorses this human freedom, inviting the reader to learn from wolf nature and to leaven our all-too-reflex ape habits. At the same time he challenges the fixed view of animal natures, convincingly arguing that such beliefs live on in our post-Darwinian age, informing thoughtlessness and cruelty towards animals. For good measure Rowlands provides a glimpse into the rather unenviable life of the philosopher.

In the interests of reviewer transparency, it should be admitted that the reviewer was once a student of philosophy. However, these days he would much rather pause over minor differences in tail-feather depiction between guide books than ponder the question of being. It is his current self that recommends this moving and thought-provoking book to any nature lover or pet owner.

Marcus Feak

***Wicked Plants: The Weed That Killed Lincoln’s Mother and Other Botanical Atrocities*** by Amy Stewart, published by Algonquin books of Chapel Hill, \$18.95. Illustrated.

More than 200 examples of plants you may not wish to encounter – plants that have maimed, killed or smothered during the course of history. Brooklyn Botanic Garden has mounted an interpretive program (to Sept 6.) of many of the plants featured in this book, grouped under categories such as “crafty carnivores,” “demonic drinks,” “scoundrels or saints” and “deadly dinner.” Check out their website which has a virtual tour with audio at [www.bbg.org/exp/wickedplants](http://www.bbg.org/exp/wickedplants).



High Park oak savannah, photographed by Wendy Rothwell.

## ONTARIO HAWK MIGRATION

Extracted with permission from "Return of the Raptors, a Guide to the Great Hawk Migration" by Mark Stabb, in Ontario Nature's magazine *ON Nature*, Spring 2009. Mark will be speaking at TFN's December monthly meeting.

### Tips from the masters

The first step in identifying raptors is to get to know the shapes and body sizes the various species take in flight. Add to this some knowledge of typical behaviour and field marks, and you can start identifying species of migrating hawks. By visiting a hawk-watch site, you can pick up more tips from the masters, who, during lulls in the action, are more than willing to help out beginners.

#### 1 Accipiters

Accipiters have relatively short, rounded wings and long, narrow tails, making these birds agile when pursuing flying prey. They include sharp-shinned hawk (blue jay sized), Cooper's hawk (crow sized) and northern goshawk (raven sized).

#### 2 Falcons

Falcons are streamlined with long, pointed wings and narrow tails. They include the American kestrel (robin sized), merlin (blue jay sized), peregrine falcon (crow sized) and the larger, rarely seen, gyrfalcon.

#### 3 Harriers

Northern harriers have dark "hoods," long tails, a white patch on the rump and long, narrow wings. These birds glide with wings held in a slight V shape (dihedral).

#### 4 Buteos

Buteos have long, wide wings adapted for soaring, and relatively short tails. They include broad-winged hawk and red-shouldered hawk (both crow sized), red-tailed hawk (raven sized) and rough-legged hawk (similar body size to red-tailed with longer wings and tail).

#### 5 Ospreys

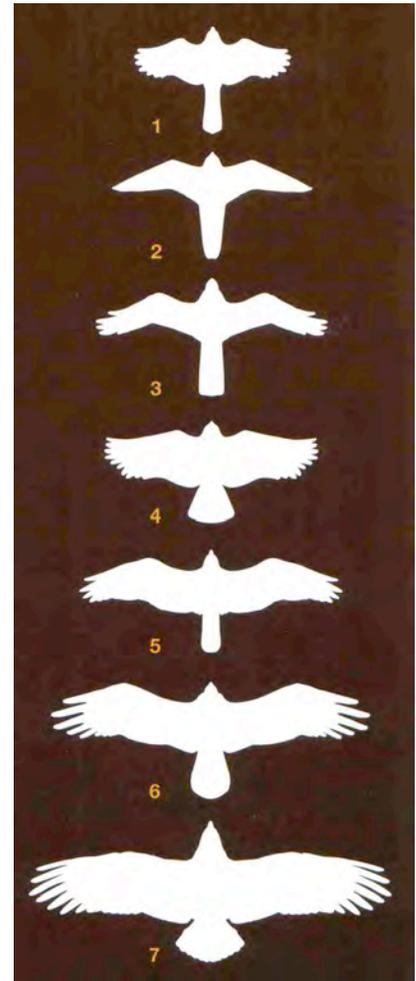
Ospreys have white patches on the body and long, narrow wings, also with white patches, which look crooked in flight.

#### 6 Turkey Vultures

Turkey vultures are large dark birds with long wings. Like the harrier, this species holds its wings in a dihedral when soaring.

#### 7 Eagles

Eagles are large birds with long, wide wings that they hold straight out in flight. The bald eagle, at maturity, has a bright white head and tail and a dark brown body. The golden eagle, at maturity, has a dark body; immature birds have white patches on their tail and wings.



### Best Hawk-Watching Guidebooks

#### Beginners:

*Field Guide to Hawks*, by William S. Clark and Brian K. Wheeler (Houghton Mifflin, 2nd ed., 2001); *Hawks and Owls of the Great Lakes Region and Eastern North America*, by Chris Earley (Firefly Books, 2004); *Hawks*, edited by Peter Dunne (Peterson Flash Guide Series, Houghton Mifflin, 1996); *Guide to Hawk Watching in North America*, by Donald Heintzelman (Globe Pequot Press, 2nd ed., 2004).

#### Advanced:

*Hawks from Every Angle: How to Identify Raptors in Flight*, by Jerry Liguori (Princeton University Press, 2005); *A Photographic Guide to North American Raptors*, by Brian K. Wheeler and William S. Clark (Academic Press, 2003); and, for reading at home, *Hawks in Flight*, by Peter Dunne, David Sibley and Clay Sutton (Houghton Mifflin, 1988).

### Hawk-Watching in Toronto

One of the 10 top hawk-watching sites in Ontario is Toronto's High Park. The High Park Hawk Watch takes place on a knoll near Grenadier Restaurant and is probably North America's only major hawk watch accessible by public transit. Observers may see upward of 10,000 raptors per season.

[www.greatertorontohawkwatch.com/sites/highpark.php](http://www.greatertorontohawkwatch.com/sites/highpark.php)

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

In October 2008, four of us travelled to Algonquin Park to look at the fall colours. After hiking the Whiskey Jack trail, as we stood in the parking lot admiring the beautiful colours, a very tall straight evergreen caught my eye. We discussed what it might be. The needles



weren't long enough to be white pine. We walked up to the base of the tree and were surprised to see it was artificial. The "tree" was fastened to a cement base and there was a shed nearby. Next day we went to the Visitor Centre and asked a park naturalist about the "tree." He smiled and said we were only the second visitors to ask, and explained that it

is really a cell phone tower disguised as a tree.

Apparently this is done in the States. In Algonquin, only the towers that the public can see are disguised. They certainly did a good job. Anybody driving on Highway 60, usually looking for moose and other wildlife, would never notice this new tree species.

Karin Fawthrop

Last term my nephew's regular walk to and from Humber College took him through the arboretum. Along the way he often encountered white-tailed deer, at the most 4, until April 9, 2009. That evening around 7:30 to his amazement he counted 14 deer eating on one of the playing fields. Several appeared to be the young from last year. It must have been a treat to see them, but it certainly sounds like the Humber valley may be getting overpopulated with deer. I wonder what members who regularly walk in that area have been noticing this summer.

Marilynn Murphy

I noticed interesting raccoon behavior. A local raccoon had four young this spring. When they were of age, she led them around the neighbourhood, but to her misfortune, one of the little ones was killed. I saw on the roof

*Gliding high above  
Like a hawk looking for prey  
Flies turkey vulture*

Haiku and photo by Joe Bernaske

next door (a local raccoon hangout) a rope about two metres long. The young raccoons loved to play with it. I then noticed the mother using the rope to lead the young. When walking down the street, she dragged the rope and her three remaining offspring would grab at it, which kept them intent on following her instead of playing in traffic.

Ken Cook

The black swallowtail eggs I got on Kerry Adam's outing to Sam Smith hatched very quickly [see Outings Reports page 10.] They were laid on Tuesday and hatched by Saturday. They're eating the Queen Anne's lace flowers now, and should progress to eating leaves as they get bigger. With any luck they will emerge as butterflies by early September and start another brood to overwinter in the chrysalis form. Or they may stay in the chrysalis until next year. And yes, it was on a TFN outing that I started to look at butterflies and moths.

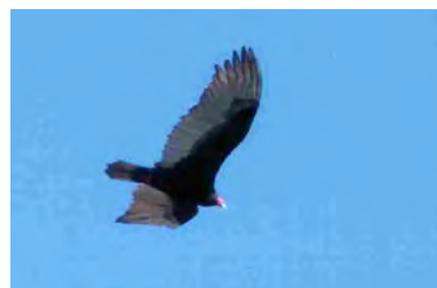
Carol Sellers



Black swallowtail,  
photographed by Margaret McRae

This summer's strike turned out to be a blessing for some. Swallows nesting under the ferry docks on both the city and island side must have welcomed a break from the regular interruptions to their attentions to their young. As each incoming ferry would block the flight path to their nests, the swallows would skim low around the remaining space, anxious for the five minute loading and unloading period to end. It must have been a relief to have five weeks of quiet – especially when the young were ready to leave their nests.

Jenny Bull



## BANDED WOOLLY BEARS

*You see them here, you see them there,  
those ever ubiquitous woolly bears.*



Banded woolly bear, photographed by Margaret McRae

By woolly bears, or as some call them woolly worms, I refer to the larval stage of the tiger moth family (*Arctiidae*) of which there are some 260 species in North America. Most of their caterpillars are hairy, some coated in dense bristles or setae of uniform length, rather like those of a brush haircut, while others have sparser, shorter body setae and punk-like hairy tufts at head and tail. Occasionally the latter are of bright colours, to warn predators and humans *not to touch*. Some feed on several species of plants, others on a single plant, while lichen moth caterpillars have a unique diet. The larvae of most species are solitary but a few are social and form large aggregations found in web nests.

Banded woolly bear caterpillars, the larvae of the Isabella tiger moth (*Pyrrharctia isabella*) and our subject here, are covered with stiff bristles of uniform length. You find them small in size (1cm long) and with all black setae amongst grass during early summer. Some remain black throughout this stage but the majority, in maturity (3-4 cm), present an orange, brown or reddish band in their mid region with black bands at either end. They are frequently seen marching determinedly across roads or pavements in the fall, often well into cooler weather. They do not bite if touched and most folk are not affected by their bristles, though a very small number with sensitive skin may develop an itchy rash. Sometimes a caterpillar will curl into a ball and play dead when touched, continuing on its way once returned to the ground. You may discover them curled up in sheltered places, for example under bark or fallen logs, in the wood pile or deep in dry leaf litter, sleeping away the winter and early spring; then they disappear for a time. These events are explained by the animal's life cycle.

The slow-flying, adult moth (wingspan 6 cm) is a dull yellow to orange and has a robust furry thorax and a small head. Its wings have sparse orange spots while the proximal segments of the first pair of legs are a bright reddish orange. The insects are nocturnal and unless you are particularly interested in moths you may not have seen them, except dead under an outside light during summer months. Females attach their eggs to vegetation during warmer weather, two generations per season is usual and after hatching in a few days the caterpillars voraciously eat a variety of vegetation including such things as asters, clovers, dandelions and other weeds, birch and maple leaves. As they increase in size their central third usually becomes orange to brown. Some adult caterpillars pupate in summer, others overwinter in sheltered areas by producing a cryoprotectant or insect antifreeze. The latter have another bout of eating in the spring and then pupate in a silken cocoon, becoming one generation of the moths that live during summertime.

The banded woolly bear is surrounded by myth while both the caterpillar and its moth are the source of stunning scientific facts.

Folklore has it that the severity of a coming winter may be predicted by the width of the central orange-brown body segments, a caterpillar has 13 in all – more brown than black means a fair winter, but more black than brown means there is going to be a harsh winter. There is no truth to this theory because the offspring of a single female can range from almost completely brown to almost completely black. Then, it is probable that band width reflects that larva's particular stage of maturity.

We know that the larvae of monarch butterflies (*Danaus plexippus*) feast on milkweed and thereby gain a cardiac glycoside, a type of cardenolide present in the latex of the plant's sap, in their bodies. If a bird or other predator eats the caterpillar it will, more than likely vomit. That caterpillar's bright stripes advertize that it is toxic.

Some healthy woolly bears of the *Grammia incorrupta* species also ingest small amounts of alkaloids from senecio and other plants to deter predators. (Is this why banded woolly bears have that bright central band, in imitation of their sister toxic species?) However, if *Grammia incorrupta* eat too much, the excess alkaloids kill them; like Goldilock's porridge the dose has to be

*Continued on page 22.*

## BIRD OF THE MONTH – NORTHERN FLICKER

One of our most abundant, attractive and fascinating woodpeckers, the Northern Flicker ranges across North America south of the tree line. In Toronto flickers can readily be seen from April to November and a few stay all winter.

The Northern Flicker, rather plump-looking and a little larger than an American Robin, will not be confused with any other bird. Despite being a woodpecker, the flicker spends much of the time on the ground foraging for its favourite food – ants. This affords us good opportunities to notice the black barring on its brownish back, the long bill, the heavily spotted belly, the black chest band and the red patch at the back of the head on both males and females. The males can be distinguished by their black “moustache” stripe running from the base of the bill towards the neck. In flight, the large white rump patch and the bright yellow under the wings are very distinctive. Northern Flickers were previously classified as two species, Yellow-shafted Flicker in eastern North America and Red-shafted Flicker in the west.

In their *Guide to Bird Behavior*, Donald and Lillian Stokes tell us “flickers usually mate for life, since both birds return to the same area to breed year after year.” In the spring, loud drumming signals to the mate and announces territorial claim. If louder is better, their occasional and seemingly comical use of a metal post is probably quite effective. Should a third bird arrive on the territory, the proprietor of the same sex as the intruder takes up the challenge. The showdown involves chases, head-bobbing and frozen poses while the proprietor's mate stays nearby pretending not to notice what's happening. The male and female share duties of nest hole excavation and raising the young. Deciduous trees with dead or rotting wood are preferred and they often re-use the same tree, making a new nest hole each year.

*The Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario 2001–2005* reports flicker populations have been declining 2.4% annually across North America since 1966. In Ontario, the Carolinian region shows “a significant 7% decline” since the previous atlas 20 years earlier, and suggests several reasons. “Although the flicker is adapted to human habitats, intensification of agriculture and urban

development in the Carolinian region may have reduced the abundance of large-diameter snags and trees and thus the numbers of this woodpecker. Habitat loss may be further exacerbated by competition with the European Starling for nest holes . . . starling densities in the Carolinian are nearly double those of other regions.” The atlas points out the importance of flickers to other species. “The large nest cavities excavated by the flicker are a critical resource to many other cavity-nesting birds and to mammals.”

September is a good time to see flocks gathering in Toronto for migration to areas south of the Great Lakes. The Stokes guide tells us flickers migrate south “in small, loose flocks that at times may grow to include as many as one hundred birds.” Prior to migration, groups of five to ten can be seen interacting, often with head-bobbing displays. In his book *Flashing Wings*, Richard Saunders noted his observation of a curious flicker

September 11, 1942 in Toronto's Cedarvale ravine. He watched a flicker alight in a tree about eight feet below a pigeon hawk (Merlin) which was lunging on a House Sparrow. “Slowly he sidled out onto a limb, cocking his head so that he could get a good view of the hawk. Now the hawk . . . had been bobbing up and down, somewhat in the way the flickers are doing again these days as they flock together for migration. Was then this cheeky

fellow trying to make out whether the hawk was really a flicker? Or was he, perhaps, taking this occasion to approach within good spying distance upon a dangerous enemy whom the flicker now knew to be too busy to be perilous? Whatever his motive the flicker worked gradually up the trunk, hesitating, backing off and advancing by starts, until he was only two feet below the hawk. . . . At two feet distance the flicker took a long look – and decided that this was none of his business.”

This fall as Northern Flickers gather for migration I'll be watching them for head-bobbing displays and for more signs of their evident intelligence and curiosity.

Marilynn Murphy



Northern Flicker with wasp, drawn by Diana Banville from a photo by Karl Maslowski

Note: All the above books are in the Toronto Public Library. *Flashing Wings* is only available in the Reference section at North York Central Library and Toronto Reference Library but can be found through used book dealers.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### *Toronto Field Naturalists participate in C.N.E Centennial Program*

From TFN Newsletter #318, October 1978. Photos from TFN archive. Photographer Mrs. S. McCoy[?]

This year the TFN made a special effort with our booth in the Arts, Crafts and Hobbies Building to help the Canadian National Exhibition celebrate its 100th anniversary and to show our appreciation for the space which they donate to us each year. Over 100 members (more than ever before) participated in the preparation and manning of our booth.

Laura Greer and her committee met with a tremendous response from our members and as many members as possible were given the opportunity to help. We are delighted to say that we had more than enough volunteers and Laura has her voice back!

Laura Greer, Muriel Miville and John Lowe-Wylde coordinated and designed the display. For anyone who did not see the booth, or the picture of it at the September meeting, here is how it looked:-

The back wall displayed a mural of "Toronto 1878-1978" (from log cabin to the C.N. Tower and Star Wars) as depicted by Ms. Joan O'Donnell's Grade 3 class at Charlottetown Road Public School, Scarborough. Tall vegetation for the back corners was provided by Bill Dibble and bouquets of wildflowers and shrubs were provided by Emily Hamilton and Helen Juhola. Each plant was labelled with its common name and an interesting fact about that plant. Among plants on display at various times were the following: tansy, teasel, bouncing Bet, goldenrod, asters, ostrich fern, willow, poplar, ash, sumac, Japanese knotweed, evening primrose, chair rush, mullein, dogwood, rowan, barnyard grass, Queen Anne's lace, Manitoba maple, black swallowwort, burdock, cattails, purple loosestrife, nightshade, black-eyed Susan, milkweed, heal-all, chicory, vervain, Joe Pye weed, willow galls, goldenrod galls. Emily Hamilton did a stupendous job

keeping our display fresh and interesting. This meant that Emily gathered new materials and went to the Ex almost every day!!

Also on display (carefully enclosed in glass containers) were poison ivy with its berries provided by Mary Smith, and ragweed provided by Emily Hamilton. Both these plants drew a great deal of interest from the visitors to our booth as did the mosquito larvae display which was provided through the kind assistance of Dr. Susan McIvor of the Department of Microbiology, Parasitology, University of Toronto. A termite display (provided by the Ministry of the Environment), a wasp nest, some porcupine quills and clamshells were also admired by the city-dwellers who visited the booth.



Jean Macdonald built a quiz board which was a great hit with children and adults alike.

All of these items were enclosed by a rail fence which John Lowe-Wylde built at home and then impressed those who erected the booth by fitting it together as easily as a child's jigsaw puzzle. This fence gave our booth a cosy, rustic look.

Information on the TFN, application forms, pamphlets from the F.O.N. on federated clubs for out-of-town visitors and other information were distributed, and memberships and TFN publications were sold.

A good time was had by all and there are many stories to tell!! Watch for some amusing tales in future newsletters.

A large THANK YOU to all who helped – our booth was a great success.



## IN THE NEWS

### The Toronto Keep Animals Safe Campaign

TFN has recently partnered with Toronto Wildlife Centre and the Canadian Cats Indoors Alliance and other agencies in a campaign to educate pet owners about the benefits of keeping their cats indoors – benefits both to cats and to wildlife. Outdoor cats face many dangers: predation by other animals, vehicles, human cruelty, and exposure to poisonous chemicals and debilitating diseases. Outdoor cats can also get lost or picked up by other people. Toronto bylaws do not protect cats that roam free on private property; a cat owner's neighbour has the legal right to trap a cat that is digging or defecating around their yard. As a result of these dangers, the average life span of an outdoor cat is under 5 years, more than 10 years less than their indoor counterparts. Because of health risks, two out of three veterinarians recommend keeping pet cats indoors.

Outdoor cats have a devastating effect on wildlife populations. U.S. research estimates that outdoor cats annually kill more than a billion birds and small mammals of both common and rare species. Outdoor cats, including those that are well fed, kill many animals that their owners are never aware of. Animals who escape from cat attacks are not as lucky as they may seem. A wound that's too minor to be visibly detected can still transfer bacteria, resulting in serious infection that will kill an animal even after it has "gotten away." Even with expert care from qualified wildlife rehabilitators, animals attacked by cats have a very poor survival rate. Toronto Wildlife Centre is inundated with hundreds, if not thousands, of calls every year about wild animals that have been injured or killed by cats. For more information visit: [www.keepanimalssafe.ca](http://www.keepanimalssafe.ca).

### Taylor Creek Park Wetlands officially opened

Adapted from a press release from City of Toronto, [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca) and Friends of Don East website [www.toronto.ca/don](http://www.toronto.ca/don). [See a so out ng reports, pages 8 and 10.]

The Goulding Wetland in Taylor Creek Park, between Dawes Rd. and Victoria Park Ave., is a newly excavated and expanded wetland that was previously a reed choked wet meadow. It now includes a ground water fed pond that is up to 1 metre deep in places, and a nature trail. The restored wetland provides improved wildlife habitat and increased native plant diversity. Habitat structures have been incorporated into the wetland design to provide habitat for amphibians, turtles and birds. *Don Watcher* ([donwatcher.blog-spot.com/](http://donwatcher.blog-spot.com/) 2009/06/goulding-wetland-official-opening)

reports that there was a turtle present for the official opening on June 12. The stewardship team assigned to the new wetland is working hard to control invasive plants.

### Revised map of the Lower Don now available

From Bring Back the Don, [www.toronto.ca/don](http://www.toronto.ca/don)

The Task Force to Bring Back the Don has updated its map of the Lower Don. This new printing is more interpretive, and includes updates on wetland sites and access points to the Lower Don Trail. To order a copy contact The Task Force to Bring Back the Don, 55 John Street, Metro Hall, 23rd floor, Toronto M5V 3C6 or call 416-392-0401.

**Riversides and Lost Rivers** have created a website ([www.thirstycitywalks.ca](http://www.thirstycitywalks.ca)) to support the Thirsty City initiative, which includes walks and other activities. The website features a downloadable field guide.

### Leslie Street Spit

Adapted from Friends of the Spit, Spring 2009 newsletter, at [www.friendsofthespit.ca/newsletter/April2009](http://www.friendsofthespit.ca/newsletter/April2009)

For the third time, Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel has denied approval for the modest infrastructure projects planned at the Spit as part of the original provincially-approved Revised Master Plan for the Spit. The buildings (the Bird Banding/Education Research Building, the environmental shelter buried into the bank and looking out onto Cell One, an open gathering space and two washrooms) are extremely modest in scale. Although FOS criticized the 20 ft. height of the proposed Staff Booth, the Design Review Panel appears to want all the structures to be bigger than planned. As a result of this defeat, we understand the TRCA has suspended work on these structures until it can get a clarification from the CEO of Waterfront Toronto as to what exactly is happening.

### Rosedale's Vale of Avoca Ravine

*Leaside-Rosedale Town Crier*, May 2009, reported in an article by Karolyn Coorsh, that native trees in the Vale of Avoca are being squeezed out by invasive species, according to Todd Irvine of LEAF (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests) who led a guided walk in the ravine last spring. "Norway maples are killing the older native trees as they fight for sunlight." Soil erosion, rock retaining walls, and pollution are also problems in the ravine.

## WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

### September 2008

September was, overall, a pleasant month with slightly-above normal temperatures and considerable sunshine. A couple of cloudy, rainy interludes brought precipitation up to near or slightly above normal. Hurricanes Gustav and Ike were involved on September 6th to 9th and 13th to 14th respectively. Gustav had already been absorbed into a system to the south, but Ike was more intact, passing to the north and west. It was a minor event in Toronto, but brought some flooding and high winds from Windsor up through north of Toronto, down the St. Lawrence, and even to Iceland. Sunny, warm weather prevailed the first week or so and again from the 20th-26th. It briefly topped 30° on the 3rd. Cooler weather prevailed mid-

month. There was no extreme weather of any kind in Toronto this month.

Monthly records were as follows at Pearson Airport (downtown followed a very similar pattern):

**Temperature:** Mean maximum 21.8°, mean minimum 12.0°, overall mean 16.9°. Difference from 30-yr average (1979-2008): +0.8°.

**Rainfall:** 83.4 mm. Difference from 30-year average (1979-2008): +9.9 mm.

**Sunshine:** 212.0 hours. Difference from 30-year average (1971-2000): +21.9 hours. Eleventh out of past 12 years with above-normal sunshine.

Gavin Miller

### BANDED WOOLLY BEARS, *continued from page 18.*

just right. Recently, Singer and colleagues,<sup>1</sup> expanding on previous studies,<sup>2</sup> discovered a fascinating fact that these woolly bears self-medicate to prevent an infestation with the larvae of a parasitic fly. The latter lays its egg inside a caterpillar and, when its larvae hatch, they feed on the host's internal organs before bursting from its abdomen, with fatal results. Infected *Grammia* woolly bears ate more from plants that provide alkaloids, and thus cured the infestation. Scientists do not know whether the alkaloids attack the parasites directly or boost the caterpillar's immune system to cure it. Perhaps their immune systems reacted by altering taste receptors so the animals craved more alkaloids.

The nocturnal adult moths of banded woolly bears might seem a good meal for a bat, but they are furry and some of the alkaloids ingested by their larvae carry-over to adults, so they are not particularly

palatable.<sup>3</sup> More importantly, the moth has a tymbal organ on its metathorax; this contains thin membranes which when vibrated produce ultrasonic sounds. The moth also has a tympanal organ on its thorax that functions as a hearing organ. When the moth hears the bat's high-pitched sounds, it evades the predator by a series of loops, spirals and dives. At the same time the moth produces high frequency sounds perceived by the bat as multiple echoes, and these leave it confused and unable to locate or target the moth. Earlier it was believed the moth jammed the bat's sonar system by its ultrasounds, but experiments indicate the moth is more intent on making its presence felt by its sounds and warning the predator of its toxins and bad taste. It proclaims that the bat should seek its dinner elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

Malcolm D. Silver

### References

- <sup>1</sup> Singer, M.S., Mace, K.C., Bernays, E.A. (2009) Self-Medication as adaptive plasticity: increased ingestion of plant toxins by parasitized caterpillars. *PLoS ONE* 4: (3): E4796. DOI:10.1371/JOURNAL.PONE.0004796 *PLoS ONE* (eISSN-1932-6203) [an international, peer-reviewed, open-access, online publication (or blog) published by the Public Library of Science.]
- <sup>2</sup> Bernays, E.A. and Singer, M.S. (2005) Taste alteration and endoparasitism. *Nature* 436, 476.
- <sup>3</sup> Hristov, N., Conner, W.E. (2005) Effectiveness of tiger moth (Lepidoptera, Arctidae) chemical defenses against an insectivorous bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*). *Chemoecology* 15 105
- <sup>4</sup> Mer, L.A., Surykka, A. (2001) How some insects detect and avoid being eaten by bats: tactics and counter-tactics of prey and predator. *BioScience* 51 570

## COMING EVENTS

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

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

These outings are aimed at the intermediate birder but beginners are also welcome. Information: [www.torontobirding.ca](http://www.torontobirding.ca)

- Sat. Sept. 12, 8 am – noon. Fall Migration, High Park. Leader Steven Favier. Meet in the parking lot inside the Bloor St. entrance at High Park Ave.
- Sat. Sept. 19, 8 am – noon. Fall Migration, Lambton Woods. Leader Don Burton. Meet in the parking lot at James Gardens (access from Edenbridge Dr).
- Sat. Sept. 26, 8 am (all day). Shorebirds and other migrants, Leslie Street Spit. Leader Bob Kortright. Meet at the foot of Leslie St. Bring lunch

### Toronto Entomologists' Association (TEA)

Room 206, Victoria College. Information: [www.ontarioinsects.org](http://www.ontarioinsects.org)

Sat. Sept. 26, 1:15 pm. Bring your photos to share with fellow enthusiasts.

### Royal Ontario Museum – Schad Gallery of Biodiversity

This new permanent gallery features 7 ecosystems, as well as aspects of biodiversity such as species at risk, endemic, invasive and domesticated species. Information at [rom.on.ca](http://rom.on.ca)

### High Park Walking Tours

2nd and 4th Sundays of each month, 10 am. Meet at the benches across the road south of Grenadier Café. Donation requested. Information: 416-392-1748 ext. 5 or [walkingtours@highpark.org](mailto:walkingtours@highpark.org) or [www.highpark.org](http://www.highpark.org)

- Sept. 13. Fall Migratory Birds. Leader Steven Favier
- Sept. 27. Fall Wildflowers. Leader Ron Luft

### The Market Gallery

South St. Lawrence Market, 2nd floor, 95 Front St. E. Free. Note: Gallery is closed Sundays, Mondays and holidays. Until Sept. 26. Toronto Island Narratives, Past and Present. Contemporary artworks by Island artists will be featured alongside art and artifacts from the Toronto Island Archives.

### Lost Rivers Walks

Information: [www.lostrivers.ca](http://www.lostrivers.ca)

- Sat. Sept. 12, 2 pm. Deer Lick Creek. Leader Ian Wheal. Meet at the southeast corner of Don Mills Rd. and Chipping Rd. (north of Lawrence Ave. E.).
- Sat. Sept. 26, 1 pm. Water and Energy – The climate change connection. How much energy it takes to get water to you, and how much water it takes to produce that energy. The evolution of sustainable building in the city. Leader John Wilson. Meet at the northeast corner of University and Queen. Walk and workshop.

### Ian Wheal Walks

Sat. Sept. 26, 2 pm. Meadow Creek. Meet at the southwest corner of Dufferin St. and Wilson Ave.

### Edwards Lectures – Toronto Botanical Garden

To register: 416-397-1341 or [www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca). Admission: public \$20, students \$15, members of TBG or reciprocal gardens, free.

Wed. Sept. 9, 7:30 pm. Designing a Very Personal Garden. Speaker Ron Rule

Tues. Sept. 29, 7:30 pm. The Restoration of Aberglasney (Wales). Speaker Graham Rankin

### RESPECT – A Photo Odyssey Celebrating Canada's Boreal Forest

Until Oct. 12 at Harbourfront Centre. Free. 80 Aerial Portraits. 9 Photographers. One incredible view

### School of Continuing Studies, University of Toronto

Mushroom identification course, Sept. 14 – Oct. 5 (4 evening classes and 2 Saturday field trips). Instructor Richard Aaron.

Cost: \$199 + GST. Information: [learn.utoronto.ca/site3.aspx](http://learn.utoronto.ca/site3.aspx) or e-mail [learn@utoronto.ca](mailto:learn@utoronto.ca)

### Learn4Life, Toronto District School Board

Birdwatching – Learn to identify bird species by appearance, song and habitat. A series of ten 3-hour walks in various Toronto sites. Cost: \$188 (\$94 for seniors). Fridays at 10 am, commencing Sept. 25 (course #35439) OR Saturdays at 8 am commencing Sept. 26 (course #35373). To register, visit [www.learn4life.ca](http://www.learn4life.ca)

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**Publications Mail**  
Registration No. 40049590



Garter snake and mustard flower, photographed by Yoshie Nagata on TFN outing at Leslie Street Spit, July 2009