



Since 1923

# TORONTO FIELD NATURALIST

Number 652 May 2020



Skunk cabbage at Todmorden Mills, February 2020. Photo by Cynthia David. See page 3.

## REGULARS

About TFN	14
Extracts from Outings Reports	15
Junior Naturalists	17
Keeping In Touch	3
Lecture Notice	20
President's Report	2
TFN Outings	7
Weather (This Time Last Year)	16

## FEATURES

Tree of the Month: Japanese Flowering Cherries	4
Volunteer Profile: Charles Bruce-Thompson	5
Toronto's Native Honeysuckles and a Relative	6
Report of the Nominating Committee	16
Membership Renewal	19
Message from the Editor	19

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The decision to cancel all TFN walks and events for the foreseeable future was utterly heartbreaking. Public health advisories gave us little choice but, that said, it was still a difficult decision to make. Those of us responsible for bringing TFN's many amazing programs and activities to life have certainly learned a great number of very valuable lessons during this trying time.

Above all, we've learned that, while our century-long mandate may be to help people understand, enjoy and protect nature in Toronto, our highest obligation is the well-being of our community. Before COVID-19, this was a baked-in ingredient, evident in everything from our offering of walks that encourage vigorous physical and mental health to our fretting about the details of our liability insurance. Moving forward, we will need to be more conscious and engaged in considering the health and welfare not only of our members, but society-at-large.

We've learned that our recent digital advances were more than just "keeping up with the times." They were a necessity. Our website, email and social media channels let us announce our program cancellations to over 90% of our membership almost instantaneously and with minimal volunteer demands. The effort to contact those members we could only reach by phone took several stressful days, days spent imagining them braving the TTC to come out to walks, all for naught.

We also came to have a renewed appreciation for the social opportunities our programs and activities provide. For many, TFN events are more than just time out in nature or opportunities to learn; they are chances to catch up with old friends and make new ones. Happily, this point is something we have been able to address immediately, even under present circumstances. If there is a friend you'd like to reach out to, but don't have their contact information, TFN can help. See page 3 for the arrangements we have made to facilitate this. If you're on Facebook, I'd like to draw your attention to the new TFN Community Group we've just launched. This group allows folks to start their own threads and conversations, share photos and other content, and connect with one another directly. While only in its infancy, it has already become a vibrant place full of nature art, photos from people's backyards, botany quizzes and good-natured humour. If you're on Facebook, I strongly urge you to join: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/tfncommunity/>

Sometimes, simply hearing a friendly voice is just what the doctor ordered. We have a solution for that as well. Over 70 episodes of TFN's radio series, *Toronto Nature Now*, are now available online: <https://soundcloud.com/scopeatryerson/sets/toronto-nature-now>. From Bruce's melodic musings on Shakespeare's starlings to Richard Partington's charismatic narrative on hackberry trees, the series is not just a chance to learn more about nature; it's a way to enjoy at your leisure the thoughts of your friends.

To catch the latest episodes as they are broadcast, tune in to CJRU 1280 AM before 9:12 am on Tuesdays.

In time, the restrictions we must now endure will be relaxed. Be reassured that, even now, the TFN Board is discussing ways we might truly celebrate our community's reunion and nature in our city together. While lots of potential plans are being discussed, one thing is a certainty: our volunteer appreciation party. Back in November 2019 the Board decided that the various committee-organized celebrations that occurred throughout the year were no longer a sufficient expression of the gratitude of our whole community to those who so freely give their time to our programs and activities. While COVID-19 may have made the timeline for celebrating these contributions quite nebulous, it has had no impact on our keen desire to pull together an event to remember. Please stay tuned.

So, my friends, until we resume the normalcy we are all craving, please check the "For Members" section of our website for the latest and most in-depth information about TFN activities and for new ways of connecting with one another. Our social media channels will continue to offer you stimulating information and enjoyment, so please follow and subscribe as you feel inclined. For those who do not have a routine online life, please note that we will periodically change the outgoing office voicemail message to reflect the current status of our programs and activities. You only need to call 416-593-2656 for the most vital information. And when you renew your membership this year, I strongly urge you to give us your email address if you have not yet done so.

Stay safe. Be wise. Take care of yourself and each other. We'll all be back together on the trails soon enough. Absence, they say, makes the heart grow fonder.

Jason Ramsay-Brown  
president@torontofieldnaturalists.org

### WHAT'S NEW ON TFN'S WEBSITE

While the newsletter may be on hiatus until September, our website never rests! Updates will be made regularly over the spring and summer.

Keep in touch with TFN at <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/> to find:

- ◆ Status of TFN activities in light of COVID-19
  - ◆ New articles and content
  - ◆ Expanding our newsletter archives
  - ◆ Opportunities to advocate for nature
- ... and much more!

## KEEPING IN TOUCH

Regrettably, we have had to cancel many outings planned for spring. Nevertheless, indomitable TFN members are still finding ways to enjoy nature, observing from their homes or walking alone or with a companion while practising physical distancing. Here, and on succeeding pages, are some of the stories and photos they have submitted. We hope they will cheer you in these difficult times.

On March 7, we spotted our first skunk cabbage of the year melting its way through the snow along the Wilket Creek trail just south of Edwards Gardens. Skunk cabbages are thermogenic: they are able to generate heat by burning up sugars that they stored from the previous year. This “warm-bloodedness” is thought to function in protecting the floral tissues from freezing, providing a warm haven for early pollinators and/or dispersing the flower’s foul scent to attract pollinators. At the end of March, the snow and ice were gone and more than 100 skunk cabbages could be seen along the trail.

Ron and Nancy Dengler



Every few years, early spring brings a few uncommon visitors to the pond on the golf course near German Mills Settlers Park. On March 23 and 24, I was delighted to see five Hooded Mergansers there (three males and two females). While the males occasionally expanded their white crests, they were not uttering any courtship calls.

Theresa Moore

While hiking on the Leslie Street Spit in mid-March we saw *Swan Lake* being enacted before our very eyes! Two magnificent Trumpeter Swans, swimming alongside each other, stretched their necks in a perfectly synchronous mating dance. The “*pas de deux*” continued with many intricate moves. It was as if the swans were bringing themselves to a place of harmony for the great adventure of building a home and raising young.

A couple of weeks later the swans were nowhere to be found. They had left to make a home somewhere in Saskatchewan, Athabasca or the high Arctic.

Anne Purvis

*continued on page 18*

## CONNECT WITH A FRIEND DESPITE PHYSICAL DISTANCING

If there is a fellow TFN member you'd like to connect with, but you don't have their contact information, we can help. Just email <mailto:membership@torontofieldnaturalists.org> or leave a phone message at 416-593-2656 telling us who you'd like to hear from, and the email address or phone number they should use to reach you. Volunteers will pass along your contact information to that member as soon as possible.

If you are open to receiving calls or emails from any of your fellow members, please let us know that you grant permission to share your contact information with any member who asks for it and we'll be happy to make it available to them without delay.

## TREE OF THE MONTH: JAPANESE FLOWERING CHERRIES (*PRUNUS SERRULATA* ET AL.)

Japanese cherries (sakura) are among the few trees in our landscape to which Torontonians pay specific attention. We gather in our hundreds or thousands for a few days in May (in ordinary years) to witness the fleeting splendour of their flowering in locations of mass plantings like High Park, Cherry Street Parkette or Robarts Library on the University of Toronto campus. The national flower of Japan and central to its traditional national identity, sakura have been developed over centuries of hybridization and selection from a pool of about a dozen wild cherry species. Of the original species, *Prunus serrulata* is among the hardiest and is, perhaps, one of the biggest contributors to the cultivars we see here. Granted their long history of breeding, however, it would be a herculean task to disentangle the species contribution to each, and we don't really need this esoteric, if foundational, knowledge to appreciate the beauty of this annual spring spectacle.

The masses of flowers, with single or double petals ranging in colour from white to deep pink, are borne at the tips of flowering short shoots that are easiest to interpret during their winter dormancy. These slow-growing short shoots, found in many species of cherries, pears and crabapples, are each tipped by a terminal vegetative bud that is surrounded by a cluster of larger, plumper flowering buds. When the buds burst, each expands in a short tuft of up to six slender-stalked flowers, the cumulative concentrations of which clothe all the branches.

This profusion of flowers is not followed by further reproductive exuberance. Far from it. Look in less tended spots near the groves and you will see no seedlings, a reflection of the near absence of their small, fairly unpalatable cherries maturing on the trees. While the complex web of hybridization that comprises their ancestry makes Japanese flowering cherries mostly sterile, they cannot be entirely so or the myriad of cultivars resulting from crossing would not exist.



Japanese cherry tree (top), blossoms (above) and short shoots with winter buds (left), all in Cherry Street Parkette. Next page: Japanese cherry bark with lenticels in High Park. Photos: Ron Dengler

*continued on next page*

## VOLUNTEER PROFILE: CHARLES BRUCE-THOMPSON

In weather fair or foul, you will find Charles Bruce-Thompson wandering the Leslie Street Spit. “Bruce,” as most know him, has been walking or cycling the Spit since the early 1980s, and many TFNers have experienced this remarkable urban wilderness thanks to his cheerfully guided walks. He wants others to share his passion and observe firsthand how the Spit just keeps getting better.

Growing up in the South Downs of England, Bruce was surrounded by nature and did a lot of walking. After relocating to Toronto, however, he found that his busy life made it harder to connect with the great outdoors aside from an occasional round of golf. Luckily for us, Bruce discovered the Toronto Field Naturalists through a simple online search about ten years ago. It was a revelation. He recalls his surprise: “Here was this fantastic group, offering guided outings at an estimated cost of about 25 cents per walk!” Moreover, the TFN opened his eyes to the city’s extensive network of natural ravines.

Bruce’s entry into volunteering was coordinating TFN walks for east Toronto under the guidance of Margaret McRae. This helped him to get to know the TFN community. Soon he found himself leading walks too, initially as a way to fill walk slots. As he eased into the walk leader role, he found it surprisingly satisfying. “People are so grateful for their walk leaders,” Bruce

notes. “Essentially you just need to know the route and try not to lose anyone. Nine times out of ten you’ll have experts on your walk happy to ID anything, so there’s nothing to fret about.”



Bruce’s willingness to stretch into new roles also led him onto the TFN Board and then to take on the responsibility of President 2016-2018, an experience he found very gratifying. Among other things, he learned much about civics. Previously Bruce had never been to City Hall, so he was impressed to see how willing Council committees are to hear input from regular citizens. The adequacy of Toronto’s approach to protecting natural areas is another matter though, and one that worries Bruce. “I fear City Council’s strong emphasis on access over protection,” he notes. “I wish we could bring the ravines back to health before we add kilometers of new paths. Otherwise

we risk loving them to death.”

When it comes to ravine health, Bruce’s preferred approach is to roll up his sleeves and dig in. He can often be found at Todmorden Mills Wildflower Preserve where stewardship volunteers (including many TFNers) gather Mondays and Fridays to control invasive weed species. Clearly this is a happy space for Bruce: “No committees; no letters to write,” he grins. “Just very satisfying physical labour.”

Ellen Schwartzel

### TREE OF THE MONTH *continued*



Older trees often have short, thick trunks and appear beaten up, frequently having lost large limbs as they aged. Because, as in many cherries, gum canals develop in their living wood as a result of traumatic events such as limb loss, the trunks and limbs often bleed with conspicuous pools of gum. This is not as fragrant or sticky as the resin exuded by conifers such as spruces, pines or balsam fir. The dull greenish to brownish grey bark of Japanese flowering cherries may lack the vibrancy found in some other cherry species, which can sport ultra-shiny bark with brilliant mahogany red or even golden hues, but they carry another characteristic cherry bark feature to an extreme. One way we recognize a tree as a cherry is by conspicuous horizontal lenticels forming ladder-rung bands up and down the trunk. In Japanese flowering cherries, these become particularly large and thickly corky ridges, their fresh tan colour contrasting elegantly with the smooth bark background over which they rise.

Due to COVID-19 we may not be able to visit our favourite sakura groves this year, but we can take some comfort in knowing that their display will not be diminished by our absence and that their glory will still be there to greet us when we are able to return and give them the honour due to them.

James Eckenwalder

## TORONTO'S NATIVE HONEYSUCKLES AND A RELATIVE

The honeysuckle family (Caprifoliaceae) is a small one, mainly of shrubs and vines, containing about 12 genera and 250 species. It is confined to the north temperate to subtropical zone. TFN's *Vascular Plants of Metropolitan Toronto* (1994, 2nd ed.) stated that native honeysuckles include one *Diervilla* and three *Lonicera* species. There are also four introduced Eurasian *Lonicera* species/hybrids grown as garden plants that have escaped into many wild areas.

*Diervilla lonicera* (bush honeysuckle) is common throughout most forested areas of Toronto. It is a shrub up to about 1 m tall with funnel-shaped flowers up to 20 mm long. It blooms in late spring or in summer. Its range is from Saskatchewan to the Maritimes and the eastern third of the U.S. (U.S. Dept of Agriculture Plants database).

The native *Lonicera* species are *L. dioica* (smooth honeysuckle), *L. canadensis* (Canada fly honeysuckle) and *L. hirsuta* (hairy honeysuckle, not shown). The second is locally uncommon and the other two locally rare. *L. dioica* is a vine with flowers up to 20 mm long, blooming in late spring or early summer. In Toronto it is recorded in Centennial Park, Etobicoke and in Lambton Woods (Humber watershed), Wilket Creek (Don), the Rouge Valley, High Park and on the Scarborough Bluffs. Its range is all of Canada except the Maritimes, Newfoundland and Nunavut. It includes all of the eastern half of the U.S. except the southernmost states (USDA).

*L. canadensis* is a shrub 2 m tall with flowers up to about 15 mm long. It blooms in the spring. In Toronto it has been found in Centennial Park, the Humber marshes, Wilket Creek and Burke Brook (Don watershed), and the Rouge Valley.

One introduced *Lonicera* is *L. tatarica* (Tartarian honeysuckle), a pink-flowered species very common in Toronto. *L. morrowii* is a very similar and less common introduced species that hybridizes with *L. tatarica*.

Finding the native *Lonicera* honeysuckles was difficult, which surprised me because their flowers are so distinctive. If you find any of them, record where and inform the TFN.

Article and photos by Peter Money



From top: Bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*); Smooth honeysuckle (*Lonicera dioica*);  
Canada fly honeysuckle (*L. canadensis*); Tartarian honeysuckle (*L. tatarica*)

*Snowdrops shyly peek  
Through a blanket of dried leaves  
Robins boldly stare*

*Defending red-wings'  
Angry dives chase me away  
Call triumphantly*

Haikus by Elisabeth Gladstone

## TFN OUTINGS

TFN events, conducted by unpaid volunteers, go rain or shine. Visitors and children accompanied by an adult are welcome. No pets please. TFN assumes no responsibility for injuries sustained by anyone participating in our activities. **Please thoroughly clean your footwear before each outing to avoid spreading invasive seeds.**

*The Toronto Field Naturalists wish to acknowledge this land through which we walk. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississauga of the Credit River. Today it is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to be on this land.*

**PLEASE NOTE: As per current public health advisories, all TFN walks and events are cancelled. When we are permitted to reinstate our regular programming we will announce this via email, in the "For Members" section of our website, and by changing our outgoing office voicemail message at 416-593-2656.**

- Sat  
May 2  
10:00 am     **LAMBTON WOODS TO JAMES GARDENS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Kayoko Smith.** Meet at the entrance to Old Mill subway station for a circular walk or possible drop-out at James Gardens. We will walk along the Humber to Lambton Woods looking for spring wildflowers and early migrating birds. Bring water and lunch. Washrooms at beginning and end.
- Wed  
May 6  
10:00 am     **HUMBER RIVER – Heritage and Spring Migration**  
**Leader: Ellen Schwartzel.** Meet at Old Mill subway station. The Humber River meandering through Etienne Brulé Park was once a major trade route for Indigenous Peoples. We will ramble up to Dundas St W, finishing at Lambton House to find the Warren Park #55 bus to Jane subway station. Bring snack or lunch and binoculars. We may see warblers and may be allowed entry to historic Lambton House.
- Sat  
May 9  
10:00 am     **CROTHERS WOODS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Margaret McRae.** Meet at the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk to see spring wildflowers. No washrooms.
- Sun  
May 10  
1:30 pm     **AGGIE'S WILDFLOWERS – Humber Heritage Committee Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Madeleine McDowell.** Meet at Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas St (#55 Warren Park bus from Jane subway station stops at the door). Rediscover the world of Agnes Dunbar Moodie Fitzgibbon, daughter of Susanna Moodie and illustrator of *Canadian Wildflowers* (published in 1867). All of Aggie's specimens were from the Baby Point and Humber Valley area. Many of these flowers survive in the Magwood Sanctuary. Approx. 2 hrs, ending at Lambton House for tea and a talk about Agnes.
- Wed  
May 13  
1:30 pm     **MOUNT PLEASANT CEMETERY – Nature and Personal Histories**  
**Leader: Ed Freeman.** Meet at the Moore Ave/Mud Creek entrance to the Cemetery. We will look at landscapes and visit monuments to persons of interest as we walk through the cemetery to Davisville subway station.
- Thurs  
May 14  
6:45 pm     **LAKESHORE – Evening Ramble (Spring Flowers)**  
**Leader: Peter Iveson.** Meet at the northwest corner of Queen's Quay and Bathurst St beside the monument in Little Norway Park. Walk will end in Toronto Music Garden.
- Sat  
May 16  
10:00 am     **LESLIE STREET SPIT – Joint Nature Walk with Toronto Bruce Trail Club**  
**Leaders: Ray Berzins and Bob Kortright.** Meet at the entrance to the spit at the foot of Leslie St for a circular walk. Bring lunch and water. Participants can leave anytime by walking back to the starting point.
- Sun  
May 17  
2 pm     **MINDING MIMICO – Lost Rivers**  
**Leaders: Korice Moir and others.** Meet near the blue stage in Mimico Square/Amos Waites Park at the corner of Mimico Ave and Lake Shore Blvd W (#501 streetcar). A 2-hr 3-km meander through the Mimico neighbourhood exploring the past, present and future of its waterways. Mostly paved flat sidewalks with little slope ending at Park Lawn Rd and Lake Shore Blvd W. Washrooms at beginning and end. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Mon  
May 18  
10:00 am     **DORIS MCCARTHY TRAIL TO GUILDWOOD PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson.** Meet at the trailhead off Ravine Dr at Bellhaven Cres just south of Kingston Rd for a circular walk. We will walk through parks and along streets at the top of the bluffs to Guildwood Park, then return along the lakeshore to finish with a steep ascent of Gates Gully. Bring water and lunch. About 7 km, 3½ hrs. Some rough trails and steep slopes. Washrooms at the Guild Inn.

**TAKE NOTE: All spring and summer outings are provisional based on the status of the pandemic. Before setting off for a walk, please check our website <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/> or phone the office at 416-593-2656 for the latest information.**

- Tues  
May 19  
6:00 pm  
**EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS – Evening ramble**  
**Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson.** Meet at the bus stop at the south end of the Market Garden building, adjacent to Bayview Ave for a circular stroll around the park. We will look for migrating birds and admire the abundant flora and insect life. The Evergreen shuttle bus leaves Broadview subway station at 5:45 pm and arrives at the Brick Works at 6 pm. We won't start until it arrives. Easy trails. 90 minutes.
- Thurs  
May 21  
10:00 am  
**COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH PARK – Birds**  
**Leader: David Creelman.** Meet at the southwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd W and Kipling Ave. We will walk on flat ground, mostly on good trails and grass. Bring binoculars. The Whimbrel Watch is on so we may be able to add some shorebirds to the warblers etc. we hope to see. A 3-hr walk, but easy to leave and return to TTC at any point. Washrooms at the beginning, at the Student Welcome Centre, 2nd floor, and possibly along the way.
- Sat  
May 23  
10:30 am  
**ROUGE PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Charles Chaffey.** Meet at Twyn Rivers Dr and Sheppard Ave E. Take bus to Sheppard and Meadowvale and walk half a km east. Drivers park in the Glen Eagles Vista lot, 7 Twyn Rivers Dr at Sheppard. In the morning we shall go east, then south on the Mast Trail. Bring water and lunch to be eaten in the Twyn Rivers area. In the afternoon we shall explore northward, finishing around 3 pm. Binoculars recommended. Washrooms at Twyn Rivers and along the way. Mostly unpaved and uneven flat surfaces with some steep slopes.
- Sun  
May 24  
1:30 pm  
**TODMORDEN MILLS WILDFLOWER PRESERVE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Paula Davies.** Meet at the Preserve at 67 Pottery Rd for a circular walk to see the preserve and work done by the stewards.
- Tues  
May 26  
6:00 pm  
**TOMMY THOMPSON PARK – Evening ramble**  
**Leader: Stephen Kamnitzer.** Meet at the entrance to the temporary parking lot on Unwin Ave about 20 yds west of Leslie St. A 3-hr circular route on mostly paved trails. We will look for birds, plants and anything else that nature has to offer. Dress warmly – it could still be cool in the evening. Bring binoculars and water.
- Thurs  
May 28  
1:00 pm  
**FROM BEECHWOOD TO THE ONTARIO SCIENCE CENTRE – Nature and suburb**  
**Leader: Linda Klevnick.** Meet on the northeast corner of Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a linear walk into the Don ravine, emerging at Don Mills Rd to walk along some of the streets of Flemingdon Park, a multicultural, high density high-rise community constructed in the 1950s. Walk will end at the Ontario Science Centre.
- Sat  
May 30  
10:00 am  
**THE MEADOWAY – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Emily Rondel, TRCA.** Meet at McCowan Rd and St Andrews Rd just east of Thomson Memorial Park. The Meadoway in Scarborough is being transformed from a hydro corridor into a vibrant 16-km stretch of urban greenspace and meadowlands to become one of Canada's largest linear urban parks. In the next seven years, this site will become a space filled with butterflies, birds and wildflowers – a rich meadow landscape realized on a scale never before seen in Toronto. We will focus on native plants species and migratory birds.
- Sun  
May 31  
1:30 pm  
**HIGH PARK – Trees**  
**Leader: Bohdan Kowalyk.** Meet at the entrance to High Park at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk to identify trees and other plants. Wild blue lupines should be blooming.
- Wed  
June 3  
6:45 pm  
**WOODBINE PARK AND BEACH – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright.** Meet at the southeast corner of Coxwell Ave and Eastern Ave for a linear walk, mostly paved and flat. We will follow the beach to Beaches Library at Queen St E and Lee Cres. Washrooms along the way.
- Thurs  
June 4  
10:00 am  
**HIGH PARK – Wildflowers**  
**Leader: Wendy Rothwell.** Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk. Wild blue lupines will likely be in bloom. Some slopes and rugged terrain.
- Sat  
June 6  
10:00 am  
**THE DON, BEECHWOOD TO THE FORKS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Margaret McRae.** Meet at Beechwood Dr and O'Connor Dr for a circular walk to the Forks of the Don walking on both sides of the river. Bring lunch and water. Washroom in E.T. Seton Park.
- Sun  
June 7  
1:30 pm  
**HUMBER RIVER, WEST SIDE – Trees**  
**Leader: James Eckenwalder.** Meet at Old Mill subway station for a circular walk south along the west bank to identify trees. We recommend long sleeves and long pants. No washrooms.



## FOR ENJOYMENT OF OUTINGS

**Wide brimmed hat** for protection from sun

**Long sleeves and long pants** for protection from mosquitoes, poison ivy, thistles, nettles and ticks (tuck in your shirt)

**Long socks** for protection from ticks (tuck pant legs into your socks)

**Light-coloured clothing** – easier to spot ticks

**Hiking boots or running shoes**

**Rainwear**

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

**Binoculars and camera**

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

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

**TAKE NOTE: All spring and summer outings are provisional based on the status of the pandemic. Before setting off for a walk, please check our website <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/> or phone the office at 416-593-2656 for the latest information.**

- Tues  
June 9  
6:45 pm      **RIVERDALE PARK EAST – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Vivienne Denton.** Meet at Broadview subway station for a circular walk. We'll examine the naturalized areas and look for birds and other wildlife. As we head back up Broadview Ave we can admire the view of the city in the sunset. Walking surfaces are unpaved but even with gentle slopes. Washrooms at beginning and end.
- Thurs  
June 11  
10:00 am      **TOMLIN'S CREEK – A Lost River**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey.** Meet at Main Street subway station exit for a leisurely walk through the former village of East Toronto and along the former course of Tomlin's Creek, through St John's Norway cemetery to Small's Pond (now Orchard Park). Tomlin's Creek can sometimes be seen trickling along a residential driveway, having escaped the confines of the sewer system. There are historic buildings on Benlamond. This part of Toronto was once covered with Norway pine. The route is downhill with some steep slopes and a steep staircase. Municipal washrooms may be open in the parks.
- Sat  
June 13  
8:00 am      **WATERFRONT – Photography Walk**  
**Leader: Zunaid Khan.** Meet at the flagpole in Coronation Park and walk along the waterfront through Trillium Park, Ontario Place, then over to the Argonaut Rowing club and back.
- Sun  
June 14  
2:00 pm      **MOORE PARK RAVINE – A Literary Walk**  
**Leader: Jason Ramsay-Brown.** Meet at the northern trailhead on Moore Ave across the street from Mount Pleasant Cemetery Visitation Centre. From Margaret Atwood's *Cat's Eye* to Anne Michaels' *Fugitive Pieces*, Moore Park Ravine has served as a literary setting for some of our most endearing authors. Come take a 2-km linear walk through the ravine and into the pages of several great works of literature. Uneven trails with steep inclines. Hike ends at the Brick Works.
- Tues  
June 16  
6:30 pm      **HIGH PARK – Evening Ramble (Medicinal Plants)**  
**Leader: Meaghan McLaughlin.** Meet at the park entrance at the corner of Bloor St W and Parkside Dr (near Keele subway station). Take a stroll through High Park and learn about basic medicinal and traditional uses for many spring and summer wildflowers. This urban park provides many examples of plant species used in herbal medicine. There will be tinctures to taste. Not a circular walk.
- Wed  
June 17  
10:00 am      **HIGH PARK – Nature and Restored Habitats**  
**Leader: Ellen Schwartzel.** Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk including some hills. Wild blue lupines, restored by years of volunteer efforts, might still be blooming. About 2 hrs. Bring binoculars. Lunch at Grenadier Restaurant an option.
- Sat  
June 20  
10:00 am      **EASTERN LAKESHORE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Leila Lessem.** Meet at the Guild Inn, 201 Guildwood Pkwy. We will walk along the Doris McCarthy Trail and view the sculptures behind the inn. Dirt and steep trails. Washrooms at start of walk. Bring snacks and water.
- Sun  
June 21  
2:00 pm      **PORT LANDS NATURALIZATION: Bringing Back the Don – Lost Rivers**  
**Leader: John Wilson.** Meet at Distillery Loop TTC stop on Cherry St south of Mill St. See firsthand the progress made to naturalize the mouth of the Don River as an essential flood-mitigation resilience strategy as Toronto becomes an exemplar of climate adaptation. A 2-hr 3-km circular walk on mostly flat paved surfaces. Washrooms at beginning and end of walk. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.

## LYME DISEASE - TAKE MEASURES TO PROTECT YOURSELF

For an excellent article on this subject, see the Spring 2019 issue of Ontario Nature's magazine:  
<https://view.publitas.com/on-nature/spring-2019/page/8-9>

Also check out Toronto Public Health's Lyme Disease Fact Sheet: <https://goo.gl/rSVGcv>  
 or call 416-338-7600.

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- Wed  
June 24  
6:45 pm      **CHERRY BEACH – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Richard Partington.** Meet at the corner of Cherry St and Villiers St (#72B bus south from Pape subway station). We will walk south to the cottonwood grove adjacent to the beach, east to the playing field, then south onto Cherry Beach. Walk will end by 8:15 pm at the foot of Cherry St where there are washrooms and a bus stop.
- Thurs  
June 25  
10:00 am      **DON VALLEY – Weeds Part 1**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn.** Meet in front of the Sisters of St Joseph of Toronto at 2 O'Connor Dr (where Broadview Ave ends and O'Connor Dr begins) for a 2-hr circular walk. Take #8 (Broadview) or #100 (Flemingdon Park) bus north from Broadview subway station and exit at O'Connor. We will look for plants that get around on their own, struggle for light, nutrients and water and survive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds).
- Fri  
June 26  
6:30 pm      **BLYTHWOOD RAVINE – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Nancy Dengler.** Meet in front of Locke Library at the southeast corner of Yonge St and Lawrence Ave E for a hairpin-shaped walk along the middle reaches of Burke Brook, starting at Lawrence Park and Alexander Muir Gardens. Mostly unpaved surfaces with gentle slopes and stairs. Washrooms at start and end of walk.
- Sat  
June 27  
10:00 am      **G. ROSS LORD PARK – Cavity Nesting Birds, Nest Boxes**  
**Leaders: Robert and Dierdre Bean and Kayoko Smith.** Meet at G. Ross Lord parking lot at Dufferin St and Martin Ross Ave (500 metres north of Finch Ave W). Free parking. A 3-km linear walk on mostly paved surfaces with gentle slopes, ending at Steeles Ave W and Dufferin St for TTC or 3 km back to starting point. Washrooms half way. Birding, checking for native birds in nest boxes with a long snake camera. Nest box types and placement. Kayoko will cover plants and shrubs that attract birds. Bring binoculars, insect repellent, camera and snacks/water.
- Sun  
June 28  
2:00 pm      **EAST DON PARKLANDS – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Claire Bergeron.** Meet at the northwest corner of Leslie St and Sheppard Ave E across from Leslie subway station for a circular walk. No washrooms.
- Tues  
June 30  
7:00 pm      **THE FALLINGBROOK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey.** Meet at the corner of Kingston Rd and Victoria Park Ave for an easy 1-hr walk on paved surfaces to the R C Harris Water Treatment Plant on Queen St at Neville Park. The Fallingbrook ravines are steep, downhill. No stairs, no washrooms. This lovely brook once tumbled into Lake Ontario over the Bluffs. Now the valleys are lined with prestigious homes, some of historical significance. The Queen streetcar at Neville Park loop will take you to Hambly Ave and the #64 bus which goes north to Main Street subway station.
- Thurs  
July 2  
10:00 am      **MARIE CURTIS PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson.** Meet in the parking lot at the east side of the park for a 2-hr circular walk. Take the #110B bus from Islington subway station, or the #508 Lakeshore streetcar, to Long Branch. Walk west along Lake Shore Blvd W, then down 42nd St to the parking lot. Level paved and unpaved paths.
- Sat  
July 4  
10:00 am      **GLENDON RAVINE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Nancy Dengler.** Meet at the southeast corner of Bayview Ave and Lawrence Ave E for a walk along the West Don River through the Glendon Forest Environmentally Significant Area. The wetlands of Glendon Forest may yield Baltimore Checkerspot butterflies. Mostly flat TRCA trails with a climb into and out of the ravines. Washrooms available at start and end of walk.

**TAKE NOTE: All spring and summer outings are provisional based on the status of the pandemic. Before setting off for a walk, please check our website <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/> or phone the office at 416-593-2656 for the latest information.**

- Sun  
July 5  
11:00 am     **JIM BAILLIE NATURE RESERVE, UXBRIDGE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn.** Meet at the reserve entrance, 749 Fowlers Rd for a 12:15 start. Contact Margaret McRae at 416-429-7821 or [marg.mcrae@gmail.com](mailto:marg.mcrae@gmail.com) by July 2 re carpooling. We welcome drivers who can take passengers.
- Tues  
July 7  
6:45 pm     **GLEN STEWART RAVINE AND AMES CREEK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Bob Kortright.** Meet at Beech Ave, 50 metres south of Kingston Rd, for a linear walk on unpaved surfaces with gentle slopes and stairs. With Friends of Glen Stewart we will follow the ravine through forest, park and streets to the beach looking for as many kinds of organisms as we can find. Bring binoculars. Washrooms at end of walk.
- Thurs  
July 9  
10:00 am     **WINDFIELDS PARK – Weeds Part 2**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn.** Meet at the southeast corner of Bayview Ave and York Mills Rd. Take the #95 bus (York Mills) eastbound from York Mills subway station and exit at Bayview Ave. A 2-hr circular walk looking for plants that get around on their own, struggle for light, nutrients and water and survive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds).
- Sat  
July 11  
11:00 am     **HIGH PARK – Medicinal Plants**  
**Leader: Meaghan McLaughlin.** Meet at the park entrance at the corner of Bloor St W and Parkside Dr (near Keele subway station) for a linear walk. High Park provides many examples of plant species used in herbal medicine. We will learn about basic medicinal and traditional uses for wildflowers. There will be tinctures to taste.
- Sun  
July 12  
10:00 am     **TOMMY THOMPSON PARK (Leslie Spit) – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Martin Chen.** Meet at the parking lot at the south end of Leslie St at Unwin Ave for a circular walk to see a beautiful view of Lake Ontario and have a chance to see great birds and plants.
- Tues  
July 14  
10:00 am     **SMYTHE PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leaders: Madeleine McDowell and Susan Horvath.** Meet at the park entrance on the west side of Jane St at Alliance Ave (#15 Jane bus). There is a parking lot accessed from Scarlett Rd located by the swimming pool a short walk from meeting point. A 2-hr+ circular walk on unpaved and uneven surfaces with some steep slopes. See what has become of a former gravel pit, the site where John Graves Simcoe had lunch in September 1793, the route of the Toronto Carrying Place, a swimming pool inspired by the Queen Elizabeth Bldg at the CNE, a golf course built by the only Canadian golf Olympic gold medalist and maybe a mockingbird, a Great Blue Heron or a large turtle. Walk will end across from Tim Hortons. Bring snack, binoculars and camera. Washrooms at beginning of walk.
- Wed  
July 15  
6:00 pm     **THE WEST DON – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Linda Klevnick.** Meet at the Ontario Science Centre bus stop on Don Mills Rd for a ramble south along the West Don on mostly paved trails. Walk ends at O'Connor Dr at Beechwood Dr.
- Sat  
July 18  
10:00 am     **CORKTOWN COMMON AND THE CANARY DISTRICT – Heritage and Nature**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey.** Meet at St Lawrence Market, southwest corner of King St E and Jarvis St, for a linear walk over mostly paved relatively flat surfaces. Our route will be along the Esplanade, through the Distillery District and the shiny new Canary District to the Common where there is a lovely wetland and a fine hill for viewing the Don Valley. We will then cross the Don River into Riverdale to admire the refurbished Broadview Hotel at Queen and Broadview. From there you can take the streetcar to Line 2 subway. Washrooms in Corktown Common.
- Sun  
July 19  
2:00 pm     **AN OBSCURED CREEK IN CENTRAL ETOBICOKE – Lost Rivers**  
**Leaders: Brian MacLean and others.** Meet at New Gate Presbyterian Church, 240 The Westway, at Wincott Dr, between Islington and Kipling. (#53G Lawrence bus to the Wincott Dr stop on The Westway or either #45 Kipling bus to The Westway and walk 3 blocks east or #37 Islington bus to The Westway and walk 4 blocks west.) We will follow the channel of Humber Creek through four city parks to where it empties into the Humber River, exploring Wincott Wetlands pond and Chapman Ravine, an “Environmentally Sensitive Area.” Walk will end at Scarlett Rd and Chapman Rd, three blocks north of Eglinton. A 2-hr 4-km walk on mostly paved paths, mostly flat with one steep hill. Boots recommended for soggy ground. Washrooms available. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Wed  
July 22  
6:00 pm     **TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN AND WILKET CREEK RAVINE – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Kayoko Smith.** Meet in front of the garden centre (TBG building) for a 2-hr circular walk through the garden and into the ravine. An easy walk for a lazy summer evening.

**TAKE NOTE: All outings listed for spring and summer are provisional based on the status of the pandemic. Before setting off for a walk, please check our website <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/> or phone the office at 416-593-2656 for the latest information.**

- Thurs  
July 23  
10:00 am      **TAYLOR MASSEY CREEK – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey.** Meet at Victoria Park subway station for a quiet walk through Dentonia Farm (now Crescent Town) into the Taylor Creek Valley, around a small wetland, diverting to the Gould mansion and exiting at Main Street subway station. This is a relatively short walk but we may be tempted to linger at the wetland where I once saw a muskrat draw a reed into its burrow. Municipal washrooms in the park may be open.
- Sat  
July 25  
10:00 am      **THE MEADOWAY – Butterflies and Insects**  
**Leaders: Sarah Kotsopoulos and Dane Somgyvary, TRCA Meadoway staff.** Meet at Bendale Junior Public School, 61 Bendale Dr, Scarborough (bus stop at McCowan Rd and St Andrews Rd). A 1 to 3-km circular guided hike on paved and grass trails. Experience the Meadoway, a 16-km stretch of hydro corridor being transformed into a vibrant combination of urban greenspace and meadowlands to become one of Canada's largest linear urban parks. We will walk along part of the Scarborough Butterfly Trail through restored meadow habitat that contains many native wildflowers and grasses, provides increased biodiversity and habitat for many birds and mammals and plays an important role in the successful life cycles of pollinators. Experience the vitality of this restored meadow and delve more deeply into the connections it provides between nature and an urban environment.
- Sun  
July 26  
2:00 pm      **HIGHLAND CREEK VALLEY TRAIL – Accessible Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Linda McCaffrey.** Meet in the parking lot on Old Kingston Rd in Highland Creek Valley (between Westhill and Highland Creek) for an accessible Japanese-inspired ‘forest bathing’ walk along the path connecting the U of T athletic fields with the Scarborough campus along Military Trail. Forest bathing is simply taking in the forest through our senses: inhale the clean air, savour the forest scent, hear birdsong and rustling leaves, spot wild animals, watch sunlight filter through the trees. There are accessible viewing platforms and a charging station for wheelchairs. This is not a segregated event. It is beneficial for everyone. There are historic dwellings along the way and deer in the woods. There are accessible washrooms in the athletic fields. Dress sensibly to protect from ticks.
- Tues  
July 28  
6:00 pm      **TOMMY THOMPSON PARK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson.** Meet in the parking lot to the west of the traffic lights at the foot of Leslie St for a 90-minute circular walk around the upper reaches of the park. Some uneven trails.
- Thurs  
July 30  
10:00 am      **COLONEL SAMUEL SMITH PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Charles Bruce-Thompson.** Meet at the southwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd W and Kipling Ave for a circular walk. (#944 Kipling South Express bus from Kipling subway station to Lake Shore Blvd W or #508 Lakeshore streetcar to Kipling.) Level paved and unpaved paths.
- Sat  
Aug 1  
1:00 pm      **CHORLEY PARK SWITCHBACK – Accessible Nature Walk**  
**Leaders: Elizabeth Reid and Alexander Cappell.** Meet at the Rosedale bus stop at the corner of Glen Rd and Douglas Dr. We will walk around the park to a driveway heading to the ravine edge. Alternatively, a walkway further south off Roxborough Dr provides wheelchair accessibility. We will walk slowly down the switchback, which is paved and not too steep for people with mobility issues. The Chorley Park Switchback was finished in August 2018 and planted with many new trees, shrubs, grasses and other perennials. Our walk will last about one hour, ending at the top of the switchback. From the lower end of the switchback at the Beltline Trail, you may optionally leave the group, walk a short distance along the trail, then take a short fairly low grade ramp or a staircase down to the Don Valley Brick Works Park where you can look around, use washrooms and take the TTC.
- Sun  
Aug 2  
10:00 am      **JONESVILLE ALLOTMENT GARDENS – Bee Ramble**  
**Leader: Beth Binnington.** Meet at the southeast corner of Victoria Park Ave and Craighton Dr where the Victoria Park #24A bus stops (first stop north of Eglinton), about 9 minutes north from Victoria Park subway station. Bring a hat and water. Port-a-potty on site. (Parking is also available at the Jonesville Allotments; Jonesville Crescent, west off Victoria Park Ave.) Bees of all kinds will be buzzing at the allotment gardens and the Meadoway. An opportunity to familiarize yourself with Toronto's common bumblebee species and other natives such as sweat bees. The gardens themselves are well worth a visit. A 2-hr circular walk on level ground.
- Mon  
Aug 3  
2:00 pm      **THE DEEP STORY OF CASTLE FRANK – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leader: Paul Overy.** Meet at the entrance to Castle Frank subway station for a linear walk on mostly paved surfaces with some stairs and some steep slopes. To mark Simcoe Day, we will explore the physical setting of Castle Frank, John Graves Simcoe's summer home, the story of its establishment and its implications for how Ontario was settled by Europeans. The walk will end near two bus routes at Parliament and Wellesley Sts. Bring water. We will go into the Don Valley by stairs and some soil trails. Please wear suitable footwear. No washrooms.

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- Wed  
Aug 5  
10:00 am     **SCARBOROUGH BLUFFS NEAR SCARBOROUGH HEIGHTS PARK – Weeds, Part 3**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn.** Meet on the south side of Kingston Rd at Glen Everest Rd. Take #12 bus (Kingston Rd) from Victoria Park Subway and exit at Glen Everest Rd. A 2-hr circular walk looking for plants that get around on their own, struggle for light, nutrients and water and survive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds).
- Thurs  
Aug 6  
6:30 pm     **HIGH PARK – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Wendy Rothwell.** Meet at the park entrance at Bloor St W and High Park Ave for a circular walk to look at wildflowers. Some hilly terrain.
- Sat  
Aug 8  
10:00 am     **TAYLOR CREEK WEST – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Charles Chaffey.** Meet at the upper benches in Cullen Bryant Park just north of O'Connor Dr and Coxwell Blvd. (Take any #70 O'Connor bus from Coxwell subway station to O'Connor Dr and walk one block north on Coxwell Blvd.) A circular walk on mostly unpaved and uneven surfaces with stairs and some steep slopes. We will walk through the valley of Taylor Massey Creek towards where it joins the East Don, looking for wildflowers and fruits of the earlier bloomers. Binoculars recommended.
- Sun  
Aug 9  
1:30 pm     **WEST DEANE PARK – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: James Eckenwalder.** Meet at the pedestrian bridge over Mimico Creek by the West Deane parking lot off Martin Grove Rd north of Rathburn Rd (#48 Rathburn bus from Royal York subway station). A circular walk with gentle grades in a typical Toronto ravine. The ambiance is a mix of play, picnic grounds, manicured parkland, regeneration plots, ravine slope and valley bottom woodland. No washrooms.
- Wed  
Aug 12  
10:00 am     **EXHIBITION PLACE, ONTARIO PLACE – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Richard Longley.** Meet at Exhibition Place TTC loop (end of line north of BMO stadium, south of CNE GO, served by #509 and #511 streetcars and #29 bus). Allow at least 30 minutes for streetcar or bus leg. Walk will end at Wellington Pub, Wellington-Portland near Bathurst, King and Spadina streetcars. Participants may opt to drop out at Strachan or Bathurst.
- Thurs  
Aug 13  
6:45 pm     **TODMORDEN AND THE LOWER DON VALLEY – Evening Ramble**  
**Leader: Mary Taylor.** Meet at the southwest corner of Broadview Ave and Pottery Rd/Mortimer across from the Dairy Queen for a walk through Todmorden Wildflower Preserve.
- Sat  
Aug 15  
10:00 am     **UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO CAMPUS AND QUEEN'S PARK – Trees and Heritage**  
**Leader: Ellen Schwartzel.** Meet at the northwest corner of St George St and College St. See how a series of urban makeovers has shaped U of T's downtown campus over the decades; notably the greening of the St George corridor, the naturalized pathways and a new landmark project to re-imagine King's College Circle. Flat paths and lawns. About 2 hrs. Washrooms available.
- Sun  
Aug 16  
2:00 pm     **TREATY WALK ON ETOBICOKE CREEK (MARIE CURTIS PARK) – Lost Rivers**  
**Leader: John Wilson.** Meet at the northwest corner of Lake Shore Blvd W and Brow Dr (access road to Long Branch GO station) one block west of Long Branch TTC loop. The mouth of Etobicoke Creek marked the city's western border in Treaty #13 ("The Toronto Purchase") 1805. We will trace the former courses of the creek, exploring the re-naturalizing ravine of the lost "Long Branch," and locate the treaty boundary separating British Toronto from the Indigenous lands of the Mississauga of the Credit. A 2-hr 4-km circular walk on mostly paved flat surfaces with some uneven sections and gentle slopes. Washrooms available. A joint outing with Toronto Green Community.
- Thurs  
Aug 20  
10:00 am     **THOMSON PARK – Weeds Part 4**  
**Leader: Miles Hearn.** Meet at the southwest corner of McCowan Rd and St. Andrews Rd (one block north of Lawrence Ave E). Take #16 bus from Warden subway station and exit at St Andrews Rd. A 2-hr circular walk looking for plants that get around on their own, struggle for light, nutrients and water, and survive without our direct intervention (sometimes called weeds).
- Sat  
Aug 22  
10:00 am     **LAMBTON PARK AND THE HUMBER – Nature and Heritage**  
**Leaders: Madeleine McDowell and Lance Gleich.** Meet at Lambton House, 4066 Old Dundas St (#55 Warren Park bus from Jane subway station stops at the door). A 2-hr+ circular walk on mostly unpaved uneven surfaces with some stairs and steep slopes. We will climb the steps to Dundas St W and cross into the park. We will compare changes over the last century and a half with photos and accounts of previous adventures. The habitat is Carolinian oak savannah. We will follow the Humber back to Lambton House where we will have a cup of tea. Binoculars and cameras might be useful. Washrooms at beginning of walk.

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- Sun  
Aug 23  
1:30 pm      **WEST HUMBER PARKLAND – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Jim Graham.** Meet at the park entrance at the northwest corner of the Irwin/Arcot intersection. (Take the #73 Royal York bus from Royal York subway station or the #9C or #9F Wilson bus to the Irwin/Arcot stop.) The West Humber Trail is an 8-km paved path from Albion Rd along the stream almost to the Claireville Dam. This can either be a straight walk as far as is desired and back, or you can exit at Humber College (about 5 km along) to take the bus. Most of the route is city parkland and mixed woods, with lots of bird and animal life.
- Tues  
Aug 25  
1:30 pm      **QUEEN’S PARK – Trees and architecture**  
**Leader: Richard Partington.** Meet at the southeast corner of Charles St and Queen’s Park. We will proceed south to Wellesley, cross through Queen’s Park northwest to Philosophers Walk and end at Bloor, considering things architectural and arboreal.
- Thurs  
Aug 27  
1:30 pm      **UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO CAMPUS – Trees and architecture**  
**Leader: Richard Partington.** Meet at the northwest corner of St George St and College St for a walk to consider many things architectural and arboreal, ending at the elm tree on Willcocks Ave.
- Sat  
Aug 29  
9:00 am      **DON RIVER TRAIL – Nature Walk**  
**Leader: Martin Chen.** Meet 100 metres south of Leslie St and Steeles Ave E to explore the Don River trail with nice views of the river and mixed forest. No washrooms.
- Sun  
Aug 30  
1:30 pm      **UNION STATION TO TORONTO’S FIRST POST OFFICE – Heritage**  
**Leader: Richard Longley.** Meet inside Union Station main hall at the bench north of the central information kiosk. (Look for the spelling mistake among the station names on the architrave.) Our route will wind north and east past the Royal York, Design Exchange, banks at Bay and King, Allen Lambert Gardens, former O’Keefe Centre, Berczy Park and Fountain, Gooderham Flat Iron Bldg, St James Cathedral, St Lawrence Hall, 1827 Bank of Upper Canada, 1871 de la Salle Institute and 1834 Toronto’s First Post Office. Walk will end on Adelaide St E east of Jarvis. Bring snack and water.

## ABOUT TFN

TFN is a charitable, non-profit organization.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Jason Ramsay-Brown  
 Past-President, Stewardship: Charles Bruce-Thompson  
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### NEWSLETTER

*Toronto Field Naturalist* (ISSN 0820-636X) is printed on 100% recycled paper. Printing & mailing: Digital Edge Printing & Media Services.

Views expressed in the newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or Toronto Field Naturalists.

Members are encouraged to contribute letters, short articles and digital images. Please email to: [newsletter@torontofieldnaturalists.org](mailto:newsletter@torontofieldnaturalists.org)

**Submissions deadline for Sept. issue: Aug 4**

### CONTACT US:

Telephone: 416-593-2656

Website: <http://www.torontofieldnaturalists.org>

Email: [office@torontofieldnaturalists.org](mailto:office@torontofieldnaturalists.org)

See email addresses for specific queries at: <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/about-tfn/contact-us/>

Address: 2 – 2449 Yonge St, Toronto M4P 2E7. The office is normally open 9:30 am to noon on Fridays.

**Note:** If you wish to drop by on Friday, please phone first to ensure that someone will be there.

## EXTRACTS FROM OUTINGS LEADERS' REPORTS

**Birds, Colonel Samuel Smith Park, Feb 27. Leader: Anne Powell.** Despite high winds and blowing snow, we observed 23 species including House Finch, Hairy Woodpecker and Northern Mockingbird. Some of us viewed our first Red-winged Blackbird of the 2020 season, and the highlight of the morning was seeing a Long-eared Owl.



Long-eared owl, Col. Samuel Smith Park, January 2016,  
Photo: Ken Sproule

**Warden Woods, Mar 5. Leader: Vivienne Denton.** The path was icy and there was some snow on the ground but we strolled in sunshine through the woods. Early sounds of spring were a woodpecker knocking and the calls of cardinals. We saw a Hairy Woodpecker and a pair of cardinals. A kingfisher swooped by, a Red-tailed Hawk soared above the apartment towers, and we heard many chickadees, most hiding in the bushes. We saw the hoof prints of a deer in the ice by the path. We looked at the erosion of the sandy banks of this part of Taylor Creek, caused by winter floods, and noted the stream remediation. From the Pharmacy Road Bridge we looked over the Dentonia Golf course which blocks the route

along the stream to Taylor Creek Park. As we walked through the apartment tower complex toward Victoria Park subway station, we saw a cluster of urban birds – Rock Doves, starlings and House Sparrows – pecking at crumbs under a tree.

**Morningside Park, Mar 14. Leader: D. Andrew White.** Near the parking lot and a birdfeeder there were Blue Jays, Red-winged Blackbirds, cardinals, chickadees, crows, Canada Geese, Grackles, Mallards, nuthatches; Downy and Hairy Woodpeckers; also a Wild Turkey cock that seemed to be a regular as he was not very afraid of people. Along the path we saw Red-tailed Hawks and a Rough-legged Hawk. We also observed gray squirrels, red squirrels, a raccoon, and evidence of beavers (downed aspens).



Wild turkey cock, Lynde Shores, Whitby, November 2015.  
Photo: Ken Sproule

Sadly, the remaining walks scheduled for March had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

### 2020 YOUTH SUMMIT FOR MOTHER EARTH

September 25-27, 2020

Join 100 other young people from communities across the province at the 2020 Youth Summit at YMCA Geneva Park on Chippewas of Rama First Nation territory near Orillia to build leadership skills and environmental knowledge.

TFN is offering full scholarships (worth \$375 each) for five GTA students. To apply for a scholarship or for more information, please email [office@torontofieldnaturalists.org](mailto:office@torontofieldnaturalists.org) putting "SCHOLARSHIP" on the subject line.

## WEATHER (THIS TIME LAST YEAR)

### May 2019

This was the coolest May since 2002 with a mean temperature of 12.4° downtown and 11.8° at Pearson Airport (close to 2° below the long-term average). The mean daily maximum temperature downtown was the lowest since 1997. The temperature rose to 20° or higher on nine days, the warmest being the 23rd (26.6° at Pearson). Conversely, three days stayed below 10°, the 13th having a potentially record-low maximum temperature at Pearson, the high remaining about 8°. Cloudy, rainy conditions were frequent throughout the month with short sunny spells as system after system traversed the Great Lakes. There were no severe thunderstorms or extreme downpours. Rainfall was about 20 mm above normal with 99.9 mm downtown and 97.6 mm at Pearson.

### Spring summary

Spring 2019 averaged 1.3° below normal both downtown and at Pearson Airport. It was the coolest spring since 2014 which was biased by its extremely cold March. It was the third wetter-than-normal spring with 250.4 mm downtown and 254.8 mm at Pearson. (The 30-year average is about 205-210 mm.) The wet was less extreme than in 2017, although Lake Ontario rose to a level comparable to that year with flooding on Toronto Islands. This was a scenario similar to 2017, high water levels being a Great Lakes watershed-wide phenomenon exacerbated by the need to restrict outflow from Lake Ontario to prevent flooding in Quebec.

### June 2019

June continued cool and wet. On June 3rd, the minimum temperature of 7.1° downtown was the lowest reading for

June since 1998 when it hit 6.0°. There were several cool spells as late as the 13th when daytime temperatures stayed below 20°. It became seasonably warm during the final week, continuing wet. On the 28th temperatures rose to 29.5° downtown and 29.6° at Pearson Airport. Overall the month was one degree below the 30-year running average (1990-2019) across the Toronto area. The monthly mean temperature was 18.7° downtown and 18.2° at Pearson.

Total precipitation was 106.0 mm downtown and 108.6 mm at Pearson. (Normal is 77-78 mm.) Rainfall was well-distributed through the month, tending towards steady soaking rather than the intense thunderstorms characteristic of summer. These totals, although high, were not extreme. It was the wettest June since 2015, when totals were as high as 183.9 mm downtown.

### July 2019

July was a fairly warm and humid month, more typical of recent summers and almost identical to the previous year. The monthly mean temperature was 23.5° downtown and 23.4° at Pearson Airport, exactly the same as 2018 at Pearson and 0.2° cooler than 2018 downtown. There were no extremes; however, hot humid spells slightly outweighed cooler intervals so the monthly means were 1° to 1.5° above the 30-year 1990-2019 average. The hottest reading was 33.8° on July 20th at Pearson, while the coolest was 12.8° at Buttonville Airport (Markham) on the 8th. Pearson's monthly minimum of 14.3° on the 1st was tied with 2012 as the highest monthly minimum on record.

As is typical for July, rainfall totals varied according to where showers and thunderstorms hit. Pearson recorded 104.2 mm, considerably above the normal of 75.3 mm.

*continued on page 18*

## REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominating committee recommends this slate of nominees to the Board for the year 2020-2021:

**President:** Ellen Schwartzel

**Vice President:** Zunaid Khan

**Past President:** Jason Ramsay-Brown

**Secretary-Treasurer:** Bob Kortright

**Directors:** Due to retire in 2021: Liz Menard, Bob Kortright, Lynn Miller, Anne Purvis

Due to retire in 2022: Kayoko Smith, James Eckenwalder

Due to retire in 2023: Mark Stewart

TFN by-law No. 1, Section 5(g) provides that "any three members may submit, in writing, to the Secretary-Treasurer by July 15 the name of a candidate accompanied by the written consent of the nominee. Such nominations shall be published in the September issue of the newsletter and the names of such nominees shall be added to the list of candidates submitted by the Nominating Committee." Nominations should be sent to the TFN office, 2 – 2449 Yonge St., Toronto, ON, M4P 2E7.

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



## JUNIOR NATURALISTS: BIRDS ARRIVING!



Baltimore Oriole

The month of May usually brings the largest wave of millions of migratory birds to Toronto. Some of them will stay to breed in the city; others will continue to their breeding grounds farther north. Birds travel along migratory routes called "flyways" and Toronto happens to be at the overlap of two of these: the Atlantic Flyway with birds typically travelling to the High Arctic, and the Mississippi Flyway with birds travelling to the Boreal Forest and Hudson Bay Lowlands.

May 11 marks World Migratory Bird Day. While this year's community bird events have been cancelled to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, you can still enjoy backyard or balcony birdwatching, making a list of the different species you see. Online apps such as <https://www.allaboutbirds.org/news/> will help you with identification, provide interesting information about each bird and enable you to listen to their songs and calls.

Here are a few of the more common migratory birds you might see in Toronto:



American Goldfinch



Scarlet Tanager



Golden-crowned Kinglet



Ruby-throated Hummingbird (female)



Common Grackle



Northern Flicker

Photos by Ken Sproule

Vanessa McMain

### UPCOMING JUNIOR NATURALISTS EVENTS

We hope it will soon be possible to resume our Saturday morning events. Please watch for the latest news at: <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/about-tfn/junior-naturalists/>

KEEPING IN TOUCH *continued*

No one should feed wild animals. I have been so very good about this, but this winter I was tested. Last summer we had twin fawns come with



their mother. Later, when they were just out of the spots stage, they came alone. I never saw them with an adult again. They managed to keep healthy and came and grazed about every five days.

In February we had a daytime high of minus 20°. I was sitting at the dining table and the yearling twins appeared. The larger one, a male, came up to the edge of the deck and stared into my eyes. I stared back. Then he held my gaze and licked his lips. The message was clear! I melted. I gave in. I had two wrinkled apples from my daughter's tree and threw one fairly close to him. He ate, then moved a bit away. I tried to get one to the other, but she did not move in time. He did.

A week later they were at the edge of the ravine and the smaller twin looked at me. I put my head to one side to greet her and she took one step forward. I did not move, as I promised myself I would NOT make a habit of feeding them. She turned and left.

Anne Leon

On March 28th, we watched a pair of Red-tailed Hawks collecting materials for a nest in Wilket Creek Ravine. Both birds were active in snapping branches from hemlock trees; in fact, we heard the snap first and then looked up to see the bird dropping off the branch and flying across the ravine. Sometimes we observed an individual flapping and pulling to detach the branch. Most of the branches taken to the nest were short and pencil- to finger-size in diameter. Both birds seemed to be involved in wedging the new branches into the nest high in another hemlock tree across the ravine. From our angle the nest was see-through, so there was more work to be done before it would be ready for eggs.

Ron and Nancy Dengler



*continued on next page*

WEATHER *continued*

Downtown had 73.7 mm – exactly the long-term average. Other areas, especially to the north and west, were drier. The biggest rainmaker was the remains of Hurricane Barry on the 16th-17th. This struck during a general incursion of humid tropical air culminating in 33°+ temperatures on the 20th. There were a few showers on the 16th and torrential rains in some areas the next morning. Pearson recorded a total of 67.0 mm on the 17th. This was the heaviest downpour since July 8th, 2013 and caused localized flooding in Etobicoke, but such amounts were not widespread. The tropical impacts (heat and rain) were more intense in the United States. As in 2018, we experienced some high haze from forest fire smoke from time to time.

## August 2019

August was a pleasant summer month with near-normal temperatures and relatively light rainfall. Periods of sticky, humid weather were punctuated by several refreshing cold fronts. The hottest day was the 21st, with a high of 31.5° at the Environment Canada office in North York, while

the lowest reading there was 10.0° on the 25th. Downtown did not hit 30° this month, the highest reading being 29.7° on the 21st. Pearson hit 30.4° on the 21st with a monthly minimum of 12.2° on the 24th. Overall, temperatures were almost exactly equal to the 30-year average (1990-2019). Mean temperatures were 21.3° at Pearson (normal 21.1°) and 21.6° downtown (normal 21.9°). There was a subtle drop toward fall-like conditions in the second half of the month. Changeable weather brought occasional thunderstorms. Toronto had hail on the 17th. Overall, rainfall was below normal: 54.0 mm downtown (normal 71.2 mm) and 44.6 mm at Pearson (normal 69.9).

## Summer summary

Summer 2019 as a whole ended up being close to average. A wet and cool June was followed by a warm July with variable amounts of rainfall and a dry somewhat cool August. Average temperature (June to August) was 21.3° downtown (exactly normal) and 20.9° at Pearson (0.2° above normal). Rainfall for the period was 233.7 mm downtown (normal 222.9 mm) and 257.4 mm at Pearson (normal 222.5 mm).

Gavin Miller

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership fees for 2020-21 are due by June 30.

Go to TFN's website, select FOR MEMBERS and click on "Renew Your Membership" in the brown box at the right-hand side. Or use this quick link: <https://torontofieldnaturalists.org/for-members/renew-your-membership/> You may renew online, paying by credit card or PayPal, or print the form and send it to the TFN office along with your cheque.

If you have an email address, please be sure you have advised us so we can give you online access to the Newsletter – a benefit even to those who choose to receive a paper copy. Online version is available a week or more before mail delivery.

If we don't have your email address, we will send you a membership renewal form by mail.

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

Youth (under 26)	Free (Digital only)
Senior Single (65+)	\$30
Single	\$40
Senior Family (2 adults 65+)	\$40
Family	\$50

No HST. All members with email address receive digital newsletters. There is a surcharge of \$25 for those who prefer a printed mailed newsletter.

### KEEPING IN TOUCH *continued*

My husband Pedro noticed a squirrel running across the back grass. I realized she was carrying a baby when I saw her repeat the performance following the same path. She had spent over four weeks building a dry leaf nest high in the silver birch outside my bedroom window. In late December I had watched squirrels courting on the huge old breaking down oak just close to the ravine edge, so I knew there was a hole in one horizontal branch. That is where she took her five babies, one each trip!

The next day I saw a blue jay examining the leaf nest. Perhaps that was the reason for the move. It was lovely to observe an act I had only read about! But she had to work hard.

Anne Leon

On March 31, a cloudy windy afternoon, I had Tommy Thompson Park to myself for a few hours. I enjoyed two new arrivals in the 'bird' department: a few phoebes were snagging bugs near the shoreline of Bay D and a woodcock flushed as I walked an off-road path ... whirr! ... Several Wood Ducks – flying, paired up, bachelor groups, courting and calling their plaintive song. Mockingbird heard. Iceland gulls wheeling and hovering in the gale in their whiteness. Full chorus everywhere of Red-winged Blackbirds, Song Sparrows, robins, House Finch, gulls and geese, plus the few remaining Long-tailed Ducks.

Pussy willows were out, and coltsfoot in bloom – always the first flower for me, so bright in the brownness!

Lynn Pady

### MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR



It was gratifying to receive recently two encouraging messages in praise of our newsletter. Phoebe Cleverley, who phoned to express her appreciation for the April issue, said the newsletter means even more to her than in the past, as she only does short walks in her neighbourhood while observing the 6-ft social distancing rule. And Esther McNeil emailed to say she finds our publication with its photographs and articles to be excellent; she reads and looks at them continually.

I trust all of you who contribute to our newsletter will feel encouraged by these words of commendation – those who write articles, contribute photos or "Keep in Touch" by sharing your nature experiences; also those who work behind the scenes editing, formatting and proofreading (even when COVID-19 restrictions challenge us to find new ways of doing this work). I am very grateful to all of you.

I hope this issue will help to fill the gap as we miss being able to walk together during this most exciting time of year. Please send us your stories and photos to share with other members.

Wendy Rothwell

**Toronto Field Naturalists**  
2 – 2449 Yonge St.,  
Toronto, Ontario, M4P 2E7

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LECTURE SERIES: FALL 2020

- Sept 13 Erling Holm, Royal Ontario Museum  
*Redside Dace and Fish Diversity*
- Oct 4 Stuart Livingstone, University of Toronto  
*Dog-strangling Vine*
- Nov 1 Patrick Moldowan, University of Toronto  
*Salamander-eating Pitcher Plants*
- Dec 6 Paul Zammit, Niagara College  
*Rethinking Beauty: Inspiring Gardeners in a Changing World*