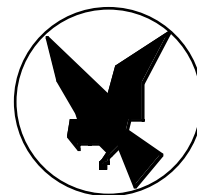


EARTHWAYS[©]



Earthways is a publication of LAMBTON WILDLIFE INCORPORATED - P.O. BOX 681, SARNIA, ON N7T 7J7

Gordon Catterson - Editor

Cheryl Veary-Webmaster

February, 2010

Website: www.lambtonwildlife.com

All indoor programs are open to the public and are held on the last Monday of the month, from September to November and January to March at the YMCA Learning & Career Centre 660 Oakdale Avenue at 7:30 pm. Articles in Earthways represent the views of the author and not necessarily the views of Lambton Wildlife Inc.

Indoor Program

February 22, 2010

Rare Woody Plants of Ontario

Sean Fox, Arboretum Manager University of Guelph Arboretum, will talk about the threatened and endangered trees and shrubs in Ontario, particularly in Southern Ontario. The Arboretum has a number of significant projects, including a mature seed orchard and an extensive gene bank. There is a lot of discussion about protecting endangered animals, but they rely on the health of the habitat provided by trees and shrubs.

March 29, 2010

Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass

Liz Primeau, the highly respected and well known author of numerous books on gardening, including the best seller Front Yard Gardens, founding editor of Canadian Gardening magazine and the former host of Canadian Gardening Television on HGTV, will be our speaker. She has long been the leader of the turf the turf movement. She preaches the mantra of biodiversity and the beneficial transformation that occurs when you replace an expanse of lawn with plants that attract birds & butterflies.

THIS INDOOR MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE SCITS AUDITORIUM*.

April 17, 2010.

L.W.I. Annual General Meeting and Banquet-Mandaumin United Church Hall.

Business meeting and elections at 4:30, bucket draw opens at 5:00 with the delicious turkey dinner with homemade fruit pies to be served at 6:00 pm. Guest speaker will be Winnifred Wake of the McIlwraith Field Naturalists of London talking about chimney swifts, mysterious little birds in big trouble...a threatened species. Winnifred was the force behind the amazing project in London to learn more about nesting and roosting habitat of chimney swifts: Swift Watch.

*Note change of venue.

Outdoor Program

Please note: - All youth under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult on the outings.

- Items marked with an * are or can be a half day only.

*Down River Ducks

Sunday, February 7, 2010.

Meet: 9:00 a.m. at the Dow People Place parking lot (north of McLean's Centre). Lunch at a local restaurant. Wintering ducks, peregrine falcons, swans, uncommon gulls, etc.

Coordinator: Paul Carter: 344-2571

*Howard Watson Nature Trail Clean-Up

Sunday, April 18, 2010

Meet: 9:00 a.m. at Modeland and Cathcart trail entrance.

Inquiries: Gord Catterson 337-1246

*Highway 402 Clean-up

Saturday, April 24, 2010.

Meet at 8:45 am at Wawanosh Wetlands parking lot.

Inquiries: Joe Haselmayer 542-2826

*Native Plant Sale

Saturday, May 1, 2010.

Time: 8:00 a.m. to Noon

Location: 1267 Lakeshore Road

Attract birds and butterflies to your yard by planting native wildflowers. See also p.3.

Organizer: Brenda Kulon 869-2833

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Greetings from the President

Liz Primeau, one of Canada's premier gardeners, will be the guest speaker at Lambton Wildlife's March Indoor Meeting. Primeau was founding editor of Canadian Gardening magazine and host of Canadian Gardening Television on HGTV. She is an acclaimed author of numerous gardening books, as well as an interesting autobiography *My Natural History: The Evolution of a Gardener* which I mentioned in my President's message in the January 2010 issue of *Earthways*.

She will be speaking about the benefits of biodiversity achieved by transforming front yard grass lawns into a garden habitat, which in turn attracts birds and butterflies. She explores this topic in her latest book *Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass*.

To accommodate the large crowd expected to turn out to hear Primeau, the regular March Indoor Meeting has been changed from the usual Oakdale Avenue venue to SCITS auditorium. Be sure to take note of this change.

Her talk and presentation will be of great interest to gardeners and non-gardeners alike. She is a very gifted lady, and as well as being an expert gardener, is a wonderful public speaker. Please take advantage of this opportunity to hear and see Primeau. I encourage all LWI members to make every effort to attend this meeting and to invite a friend or neighbor to go with you. This is a wonderful chance for every LWI member to extend LWI's outreach to the general public and the community at large and, of course, to experience an enjoyable and informative evening.

On another note, every month LWI receives a number of newsletters from other naturalist clubs in the region. It is a good way to exchange information and to see what things are piquing the interest of other naturalist and outdoor clubs, as well as picking up tidbits of information that otherwise might go unnoticed.

For example, have you ever wondered why nearly half of North American wolves have black coats while European wolves have mostly grey or white coats? Well, if you are like me, it is probably not something that has crossed your mind too often. You might be surprised to learn, however, that the reason is quite interesting. An article in the December 2009 issue of *Toronto Field Naturalist*, citing a report from biologists and molecular geneticists at the University of California-Los Angeles, gives us the answer.

Genetic DNA analysis concludes that black coats in wolves are the result of historical mating between black dogs and wild grey wolves. A mutant gene variant found in dogs and passed to wolves in mating is the culprit. Scientists believe this occurred long before Europeans brought dogs to North America and must have been the result of mating between dogs of Native Americans and wolves.

Why natural selection favored the proliferation of black coats in wolves is not known for certain. A number of reasons are speculated: "camouflage; strengthening the immune system to combat pathogens; or a preference to mate with individuals of a different coat color."

This is a rare example of a mutant gene originating in a domesticated species being passed to and becoming frequent in a closely related wild species. It seems that DNA testing and analysis has given biologists and molecular geneticists a new tool to explore and explain the mysteries of nature.

Richard Maxfield

Indoor Program:

Liz Primeau presentation: *Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass*. Monday, March 29, 2010. Getting Liz Primeau to speak to Lambton Wildlife is a real coup. Liz is one of Canada's best known writers about gardens. She was the founding editor of *Canadian Gardening* magazine and host of her own television program. Her most recent book is *Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass*, published by Firefly Books.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE MEETING HAS BEEN SWITCHED TO SCITS HIGH SCHOOL: 275 Wellington Street.

We have bumped up the importance of her presentation by changing the venue from the our regular meeting place at the YMCA Learning & Career Centre, capacity about 120 persons to the SCIT's auditorium (Sarnia Collegiate Institute & Technical School), 275 Wellington Street, capacity 650-700 on main floor & 100 in the balcony. We are working on a marketing plan to do our best to fill SCITS auditorium. We urge ALL members to attend this program event. Tell your

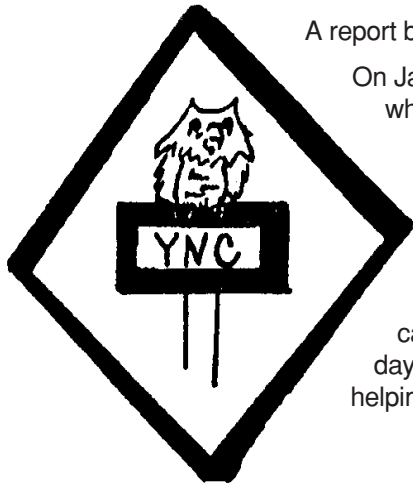
gardening friends about it. Tell your neighbours who you hope will spruce up their front yard about it. We are hoping to have people change how they look upon their front yards. This will be a subtle way of furthering our interest in increasing habitat and reducing unproductive monoculture.

Sale of Tickets for 2010 AGM/Banquet:

The tickets still only \$15.00 each for a fabulous country-cooked turkey dinner with homemade pies. The tickets will be available at the February 22nd meeting at the YMCA Learning Centre and the March 29th meeting at SCITS. We recommend highly that you get your tickets before the March 29th meeting at SCITS as there will be a lot going on that night.

Contact:	Alexia Gladdy	519-337-6483 or
	Joan DiFruscia	519-332-0830

Young Naturalist Report:



A report by William about our last work day at the Bluewater Centre for Raptor Rehabilitation:

On January 16, the Junior Conservationists enjoyed a trip out to the Raptor Rehab. Center where they helped out with the amazing birds there. They started by separating fish into meal sized portions for a hungry heron who came to the raptor rehab center cold and starving. Though they did not feed this bird, they got to see it, and were impressed with how large it looked up close! Later that day the group also got to take the Raptor Center's educational long eared owl for a walk in the woods on the property and clean out his cage as well as several other cages in the intensive care area of the center. This group of teenagers also cleaned out a couple of the other cages and did some other building maintenance jobs that needed doing. It was a full days work, and the junior conservationists went home with their heads held high after helping more animals in need.

William

Upcoming Events:

Young Naturalists (age 6-11)

Feb 13th: Ska Nat Doht Villiage from 1:00-3:00PM

Topic: Medicinal and Edible Plants – to be confirmed

Jr. Conservationists (age 12-16)

Feb 20th: Ska Nat Doht Villiage

Topic: Snowshoeing – date and time to be confirmed

We still have room for new members in both groups!

Please contact Melissa Levi @ insektiv@hotmail.com for info.

Attention: LWI Native Plant Sale

Attention all gardeners and all good citizens:

May 1, 2010 is the date of Lambton Wildlife Annual Native Plant Sale. It runs from 8-12 noon at 1267 Lakeshore Road.

Lambton Wildlife members we need your help!

We need people to :

1. Label plants on May 24, 2010 Call Barb @ 542-5788
2. Check their gardens in spring cleanup and separate your plants, putting aside some for LWI. Call Brenda Kulon @ 869-2833
3. Donate native plants from your gardens or woodlots .Call Brenda @ 869-2833
4. Help pot our plants. Call John Teasel @ 542-5788
5. Take down the display at 12 noon on Saturday. Call Brenda at 869-2833
6. Take pamphlets home and place them in your neighbour's mailboxes, post offices, grocery stores, community centre, and churches. Call Floyd Elliott @ 337-7653.
7. Speak at your local horticultural meetings, coffee clubs, bowling teams, fitness groups etc about our plant sale. Call Brenda @ 869-2833
8. Buy plants for those who cannot make it to the plant sale.

9. Take plants and store some for the summer for next year. Call John @ 542-5788 or Brenda @869-2833

10. Keep an eye open for new housing developments that will be uprooting native plants, and report them to Brenda at 869-2833.

11. Look on your property or housing developments for ostrich fern or maiden hair fern. We need it . Call John 542-5788 or Brenda 869-2833

12. Join a work party that will be saving some plants from destruction or housing developments. Call John@ 542-5788

13. Help sell plants on the day of the sale. Call Brenda @ 869-2833

14. Donate soil or posts. Call John.

15. Make a donation, even if you do not want any plants.

If you can help us in any of the above ways, please call Brenda.

Money from the plant sale goes to saving and purchasing environmentally sensitive land sites in Lambton County.

Thank you for your help.

Brenda Kulon

January Indoor Meeting:

Again a great turnout for an excellent talk by Kariann Anderson speaking on peregrine falcons with a talk entitled Peregrine Patrol.

Kariann was introduced by Malcolm Boyd who said we were very fortunate to have her as she recently moved from Michigan to Texas but agreed to return for this talk. He mentioned that she has a Masters degree and most recently was the Peregrine Falcon Coordinator for the DNR. As such one of her monitoring sites included the falcons which have adopted the Bluewater Bridge as a nesting site. Kariann was accompanied by her young son and a program volunteer Barb Baldinger.

Kariann began by showing the silhouettes of various raptors including peregrines, with their characteristic sickle shape with pointed wings and longish tails. She said that peregrine means 'traveler' while their genus is falco, hence peregrine falcon. They are crow sized birds and weigh about 2 lbs. with a 3 ft. wing span. She said it is sometimes said that they can fly at 200 mph but that is only when diving. In level flight they can fly at 40-55 mph but in a stoop (dive) can reach speeds of 200 mph. She said they choose buildings in a migration corridor thus ensuring a good supply of prey. They make contact with their prey with closed talons thus sort of 'punching' the bird which is then stunned. They then catch the falling bird in mid-flight. If they miss they will refrain from retrieving it on the ground as they are vulnerable there.

She further explained that the adult bird is dark grey on the back and crown with dark bars or streaks on a pale chest. Also they have cheek stripes. They have a notched beak which is used to kill their prey by severing the birds spinal column. She also said that each face is distinct and that expert observers such as Barb can identify each bird by their face pattern. The males and females are identical in appearance but the female is about one third larger, something that is common in raptors.

She said that eggs are laid in mid-April, hatch about a month later and fledge 35-42 days later. They lay the eggs high up on cliffs or buildings. In July of 1987 5 captive birds were released in Detroit, 3 females and 2 males. In 1993 the first wild bird arrived and there are now 12 sites including the pair at the Bluewater bridge.

She discussed three examples, the Fisher building, the Whittier Hotel and the Bluewater Bridge. The Fisher building has a male named Maume and a female called Alpha. She had some terrific photographs of the birds as well as of the chicks. They monitor the nests and band the babies which first appear as white balls of fluff. The adult birds are now more or less used to this routine and wait by the nest box until they are done. In one case a baby bird fell out of the nest box and had to be rescued at midnight by Kariann and her husband who chased it down the street. It was given to a raptor rehabilitator and was later returned to the family. She had pictures of the bird's siblings encouraging it to fly.

She then talked about the Whittier Hotel which she said was an old building being rehabilitated. In much the same

process they band the babies but the female in this case, which is a Canadian bird was much more feisty and bit the handler, drawing blood.

Finally she came to the bridge pair, a male called Dubya and a female called Tonga. After placing a nest box the falcons appeared within one week and they have been monitored since 2005. After 2007 the male bird was displaced by an unbanded bird. She said this location is very difficult to monitor as the box is hidden below the roadway. The box was erected by the Michigan Department of Transport and the DNR was unaware of the birds. She said they have to use a bucket to go over the side to get at the birds.

Kariann concluded by saying that from 2005 to 2008 they monitored 8 sites and in 2009 tracked 11 sites. She said between 14 and 19 birds fledge each year with 14 in 2005, 19 in '06, 13 in '07, 18 in '08 and 17 last year. At the Bluewater Bridge 15 have fledged, 9 females and 6 males. She gave special thanks to Bill Fockler of MDOT who built the box.

This was an excellent talk by someone who obviously had a great passion for what she does. In response to a question about where the birds nested prior to the tall buildings she said they were not native to this area and only appeared when the buildings became available. She also said they don't like modern buildings with their steep sides but prefer older buildings with niches and cornices where they can successfully hide.

Kariann was thanked for a great talk by Eric Marcum.

Gord Catterson

Reprinted from John's column in The Observer with permission. There is also a native form of phragmites which readers may recall we encountered on a recent trip to Walpole Island, called redleg by the native people. A couple of years ago Malcolm Boyd demonstrated the difference between the native and introduced plant at an indoor meeting. It is a real problem in Lambton County. It is generally agreed that the best control is to burn it in spring just as the new growth appears and then hit it with Roundup TM. I thought this and Malcolm's column were interesting comparisons as to when it is and is not appropriate to spray.

Phragmites

Garden Clippings for Jan 2, 2010

A couple of decades ago there was much hullabaloo about purple loosestrife. That was followed by the threat of zebra mussels. We don't hear as much about these invasive species lately, but they continue to threaten our native land and waterways.

I suspect it won't be long before the invasive species common reed (phragmites australis) is pushed to the forefront by the Ministry of Natural Resources and other agencies.

Introduced to North America in the 1800's, phragmites can be found wherever anything grows anywhere in the world, except for a few tropical areas. Here in southwestern Ontario it grows along roadways, in ditches and swales, in

marshes, and unattended rural areas.

Phragmites spreads and propagates by seeds and rhizomes. The rhizomes just beneath the soil surface are a tangled network of long, fine roots and are almost impossible to dig out completely.

The common reed usually grows to about 2 to 4 metres high with narrow stems extending upward. Think of it as grass on steroids. Attractive plumes appear in midsummer, starting out pinkish in colour, then turning white. After a few frosts the white plumes turn to brown straw colour.

The stems of Phragmites die off with the frost in the same way that perennials die and turn brown. But rather than rot or deteriorate, the tough stems remain upright standing all winter then remain standing though the next growing season and the following winter.

Eventually the stems fall over and form a dense mat that accumulates into mulch that won't allow other desirable plants to grow. As time goes on, other vegetation suffocates, while phragmites invades along its merry way.

Phragmites is difficult to control. If the stems are physically removed, they should be burned in order to destroy the seeds. Digging out the rhizomes might do more harm than good, because the roots will likely remain viable and resume growing wherever they are dropped.

Glyphosate or Roundup™ is an effective herbicide that will control phragmites, provided it is applied at the proper time of year. Perhaps when the Province of Ontario realizes that phragmites poses a threat to rare native dune plants, they will allow glyphosate to be used to eradicate this invasive species.

Proposed Use of Btk to Kill Gypsy Moth in 3 Sarnia Parks

In early March of 2009, the Sarnia Community Services department recommended that a consultant's report be implemented and that 3 areas in 3 Sarnia parks be aerial sprayed in early June with the pesticide Btk to try to 'control' gypsy moth infestations.

This matter was raised at the March 10 meeting of the LWI Board and the following motion was passed: "that LWI object to the use of aerial spray of Btk to control gypsy moth in the parks in Sarnia and that reasonable funds be expended if required to provide information to the public".

I discussed the matter with Mayor Bradley and he said that there was absolutely no public support for the proposed spraying. Thanks to the efforts of the Mayor, City Council deferred consideration of the recommendation and asked staff to hold a public consultation first. Then it became evident that there would not be enough time to both consult with the public and spray in time to catch the gypsy moth in the caterpillar stage, when the spray is effective. They decided to defer any pesticide spraying to 2010. The infestation to be treated was 30 – 35 acres in Canatara, Oak Acres and Cardiff Parks.

The gypsy moth is a member of the order *lepidoptera*, which includes all butterflies and moths. LWI's problem with Btk is that it kills all *lepidoptera* species which will be in larvae stage when the spraying takes place. The spray will carry

far from their selected 3 sites...it does that whether a helicopter or an aircraft is used.

LWI experts have identified 38 species (in 7 families) of butterflies as being found at one time or other in Canatara Park: 9 species of skippers, 4 species of swallowtail, 2 species of fritillary, monarch, wood nymph, common ringlet, little wood satyr, viceroy, red spotted purple, red admiral, buckeye, painted lady, American lady, Milbert's tortoiseshell, mourning cloak, eastern comma, question mark, northern pearl crescent, pearl crescent, spring azure, eastern tailed blue, banded hairstreak, bronze copper, orange & common sulphurs, & cabbage white.

We don't have a list of the moths that are in Canatara, but moths comprise about 80 to 90% of *lepidoptera*. Moths are mostly nocturnal. We found a 1993 *lepidoptera* report of Pinery and Port Franks wetlands and dune complex and they encountered 472 species of moth. Many of these likely occur in the 3 parks that were going to be sprayed. It is not just the birds feeding their young that would be affected. Many flies, wasps, bugs and spiders also depend on caterpillars for their larva's food source.

Many oaks in Sarnia are under stress.... some of the stress coming from the fact that municipal services and houses (with house drains) have lowered the water table and this limits the amount of water that oaks get...especially when we have summer droughts, which we had the previous 5 years. I have had gypsy moth in our backyard oaks for over 10 years....they are part of the environment. I have not had any infestations.

I feel that spraying Btk likely does not have any positive impact in the long term and because it will kill other *lepidoptera*, the end impact is more likely to be negative. Since gypsy moth has settled in, sometimes it concentrates, but such concentrations always self destruct, because of their density. Nature seems to be boom and bust for many species.... they outgrow their food source, get caught in disease or their predators increase. In the late '80's, when they were still fairly new to Ontario, a clump hit the Pinery Provincial Park. The Park sprayed with Btk. The infestation was controlled. However, that forest runs from Sarnia to Grand Bend. The County Forest in Port Franks also had gypsy moth infestations....The county did not spray and it died down naturally. No oaks died directly as a result of the infestation. So, in the final analysis, nothing really was gained by using Btk...except for some loss of all other *lepidoptera*....one of which may have been assisting the extirpation of the Karner blue butterfly which happened at the same time as the spraying.

There is also an attitude problem here....when something is 'wrong' in nature, we should intervene with our chemicals. Lets not sit around and watch nature takes its course. After decades of struggle, we are finally getting people not to spray their lawns with insecticide in order to have nice, evergreen lawns.... why is the spraying of trees any different? People demand the government DO something....and they hire consultants who almost always recommend spraying. Since the municipality paid for the report, they now have to spray.

I visited Canatara in the early summer. The City had not sprayed. You could see dead gypsy moth larvae all over the place, shriveled up. Nature's control mechanisms were at work. The infestation had crashed, just as it had in the County Forest 10 years ago. There was virtually no gypsy moth damage.

I was pleased that it wasn't just Lambton Wildlife that raised concerns about the spraying. The residents near the areas to be sprayed didn't want it done either. Before I requested that LWI take a stand, I consulted with 2 entomologists and one ornithologist (but no toxicologists) to confirm that my concerns about the use of Btk were valid. Stan Caveney, a retired entomologist from Western and a long standing member of Nature London (formerly McIlwraith Field Naturalists) strongly supported the stand of the LWI Board. He noted that the City of London was spraying Btk to control gypsy moth infestations and he felt badly that Nature London had not raised a stink.

Many communities in the South-west appear to be following the consultants recommendations and a lot of Btk spaying is occurring. The residents of Sarnia, their Council and the Sarnia Observer, as well as the Board of Lambton Wildlife should be congratulated on their approach to spraying.

Malcolm Boyd

Subject: Squirrel survey

Just thought I'd pass this on to the membership in case any were interested in helping this student out. All the forms I brought to last Monday's meeting were taken up (which is great).

Tania Havelka

Hello,

I am writing to invite you and your club members to participate in a study, "Biogeographic patterns of coat colour of eastern grey squirrels." I am doing this research as part of my undergraduate Honours thesis at Trent University, under the supervision of Professor James Schaefer.

The goal of my project is to describe the biogeographic trends in the pelage of these squirrels, which tends to be either black or grey. To do this, I am surveying Naturalist and Audubon clubs across North America regarding their observations about this little mammal. I hope that your members would be willing to participate. If so, I would be pleased to mail you a package of 1-page questionnaires that could be distributed at one of your meetings. I will include a stamped, return envelope. Please let me know how many participants you expect to take part so that I can mail you the appropriate number of questionnaires.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary; you and your members are under no obligation to complete the survey. Participants will remain anonymous in the compiled database and final reports.

This research has been approved (29 September 2009) by the Biology Department ethics review committee at Trent University. For questions about this research, please contact Dr. James Schaefer, Professor of Biology by email

(jschaefer@trentu.ca) or by telephone (705-748- 1011 extension 7968).

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Kong B.Sc. Student

jenniferkong@trentu.ca

From the Curb to Your Castle:

I decided to attend this talk as part of the Central United Church lecture series after Fern Noel had done some promotion of it at the January indoor meeting. I had intended to publish a notice of it in the January Earthways but somehow overlooked it so thought I would do an article for Earthways explaining what it is all about.

The speaker, Michael Hirlelay of Waste Management, was introduced by Fern. Michael then proceeded to talk about this project, which is the construction of a 3.2 megawatt electrical generating facility at their Petrolia landfill site. This is enough power to service a town about the size of Petrolia. The power generated is fed into the provincial grid and is expected to be operational this summer.

Michael said that the company has 3 operating sites in southwestern Ontario and manages 2 closed sites including the park on Blackwell Road. As well they have 119 landfill gas to energy projects the majority of which are in the United States. They have some 20 million customers and operate in 48 states, Canada and Puerto Rico. They are also the company that provides a bucket for use during the cleanup of the Howard Watson Nature Trail.

Michael then described the process whereby waste collected at the curb ends up producing electrical power. The waste trucks haul the garbage to the waste site where it is immediately dumped, spread and compacted by machines weighing 60 tons. Compaction is very important to the process to ensure anaerobic decomposition. The type of waste is also important as household waste tends to have a relatively high organic content which helps to produce a higher level of methane, the principal component of the gas given off by the landfill site. Construction and demolition waste will produce much less methane. The composition of the gas is approximately 40-65% methane, 30-50 % carbon dioxide with the rest (trace amounts) being mainly oxygen and carbon monoxide. He said several factors affect gas production including moisture level, compaction, leachate level, cap, temperature and final cover. The waste is covered by a clay cap after compaction to reduce moisture entry and the final cover protects the integrity of the clay cap. Higher temperatures mean an increased bacterial activity.

Michael showed a graph relating time to gas production in cubic feet/minute (cfm). The graph started in 1995 with levels of close to zero, climbing to 1800 cfm by 2016 and then falling off to about 750 cfm in 2030.

The gas collection system uses a 36" bucket auger which drills holes into the waste. A well head then connects to the

collection system which is a grid of pipes that collect the gas and distributes it to 4 Caterpillar engine/generator units which burn 1200 cfm of landfill gas to generate electricity. The electricity then feeds into the provincial electrical grid. Overall the efficiency of the process is in the 75% range and they receive 11.5 ¢/kwh for the power, with the difference between that and what consumers pay constituting the incentive to the company to build the unit.

Michael briefly mentioned the leachate management process. He said the Petrolia site was ideal as it lies on an almost impenetrable clay sub soil which makes collection much easier. The leachate made up of rainwater, ground water and moisture in the garbage is collected and treated before being released.

In response to questions he said that there are no plans for the Blackwell Road site as too little gas is produced to make it feasible. Much of the waste on that site came from construction and demolition work.

The Watford site has good potential and will probably be a candidate in the future. The Blackwell Side Road site already has a system operated by Bluewater Power to produce electricity.

Michael was thanked by Fern Noel.

Gord Catterson

Area Christmas Bird Counts 2009-10

By Blake A. Mann

Christmas bird counts were rather routine this year. Good weather held up and there was very little snow to deal with unlike last year. The theme for this year seemed to be the overall lower number of birds.

The first count, where many Lambton Wildlife members participate, was held on December 19 around Kettle Point. Birds tended to be few and far between and no outstanding ones were located. Always a treat to see, some Bohemian waxwings were seen in Pinery. Total species was 63.

The next day some of us moved down to Rondeau and area to scout that locale. I think it was one of the nicest weather days we ever had there! It was calm, not too cold and the sun came out. Once again, there were not large numbers of birds, but some decent ones were tallied.

Most notable, was a northern waterthrush at Erieau along

the marsh trail. Actually, Jim Burk and I found that individual exactly a week before. It is an incredible bird for December, let alone a Christmas bird count. Other good birds on the count included Virginia rail, turkey vulture, sandhill crane and evening grosbeak. Total species for this count reached 115, which was once again an Ontario high.

The Strathroy count was held December 23 under favourable conditions as well. Count total also reached 63, a record high for there. New for the count list was a red-headed woodpecker. There were several record high counts, including an amazing 36 yellow-rumped warblers.

The Wallaceburg count took place December 27 and tallied 79 species. New species for count day included a ruddy duck and a sandhill crane. Notable birds included common loon (2), green-winged teal, two black scoters, two merlins, and two "Oregon" juncos.

Northern bobwhite were not seen for the sixth year in a row. The only viable wild population in Canada is on Walpole Island, but they are almost on the edge of extirpation.

The annual St. Clair NWA count was held on New Year's Day, ringing up 70 species. Some areas were not accessible and weather for this one was less than ideal with brisk northerly winds. With the previous cold weather, most water was frozen, reducing waterfowl numbers considerably for which this count relies upon. New for the count was a yellow-bellied sapsucker and notables included turkey vulture and gray catbird.

Each year is different, and the counts are always fun and interesting.

Ontario Nature AGM: 2010:

Through of the initiative of Brenda Lorenz, the area nature organizations have agreed to sponsor the 2010 AGM of Ontario Nature. Lambton Wildlife, Sarnia Urban Wildlife, Friends of the Pinery, Sydenham Field Naturalists and the Carolinian Canada Coalition will be the co-sponsors.

At the September indoor meeting Brenda made an appeal for volunteers to assist in this event. The theme of the conference will be "Water in the Carolinian Life Zone". Sarnia's location makes it an ideal spot to discuss this subject with its' vital impact on all aspects of life.

Please contact Brenda if you would like to help out with this important local event.

CUT AND MAIL

To help us serve you better please circle or check (optional):

Age Groups: Under 12 12-20 20-40 40-60
60-80 over 80 or M. Y. O. B.

Interests: Birds Flowers Animals Insects
 Fungi Fish Trees
 Conservation Environment
 Other _____

Activities: Hiking Camping Bicycle Riding
 Canoeing Walking Talking
 Writing Cross Country Skiing
 Other _____

Might be willing to:

Serve on Committee
Chair Committee
Serve on Board
Act as LWI Representative
Come to Indoor Meetings
Go on Outings
Participate in Slide Show
Be an Advisor

Other Information to Share with LWI:

Need transportation to meetings _____
Special skills or work experience _____

Camping at Point Pelee:

Thursday, May 13 to Monday, May 17.

Point Pelee is one of North America's top birding hotspots for spring migration. For many years, Lambton Wildlife has arranged for inexpensive camping within Point Pelee National Park. The camping is very close to the interpretative centre and the tram to the Point. It is the only place in the Park where camping is permitted and only a few spots are available. The amenities are just fine: a covered eating area, drinking water and flush toilets (and an outdoor shower for the hearty). In the past we have tried to be there before the usual incredible rush of bird watchers. However in recent years, the weather has been a bit cold and rainy. So this year, we tried for camping spots right at the usual peak of warbler migration and thanks to the efforts of Larry Cornelis and Paul Carter, we succeeded. This will be a joint outing with Sydenham Field Naturalists.

The camping will be from a Thursday, May 13 arrival to Monday, May 17 departure.

Cost will be \$64.00 for 4 days & nights. An amazing deal, compared to accommodation outside the Park. You will also have the benefit of birding with our LWI experts. That is a lot of fun. You will see birds that you won't see, or at least won't be able to identify if you don't bird with experts such as ours. Please make your reservations as soon as possible as space is limited. This has become a joint program with Sydenham Field Naturalists.

Contact: Larry Cornelis: 519-339-8785 or Paul Carter: 519-344-2571

Youth Writing and Art Contest

The annual Youth Contest is back, making this its 5th year running – only this year we're excited to add an art component to the submissions!

As you may know, the year 2010 has been declared the Year of Biodiversity by UNEP. So to support this initiative in raising awareness about the critical importance of biodiversity for a healthy planet, the topic for this year's Ontario Nature Youth Writing and Art Contest is Wild Species & Wild Spaces: why biodiversity is important to me. The contest is open to students in Grades 7 & 8 across Ontario. And make sure to note the awesome prizes being offered this year to the contest winners! Deadline is Feb. 26, 2010.

Information about the contest is also posted on our site at <http://www.ontarionature.org/events/youthchallenge.html>, so be sure to check it out.



Board of Directors:

Richard Maxfield	President
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Malcolm Boyd	Past President
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Eric Marcum	Board Member
Mary Margaret McGrail	Board Member
Shawn McKnight	Board Member
Doug Winch	Board Member

Deadline for March issue is
Friday, March 5th, 2010
 Please leave typed material or discs in
 mailbox
 at 502 Roosevelt Drive
 or email to:
gpcatt@xcelco.on.ca

----- CUT AND MAIL -----

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail to : Lambton Wildlife Inc. Box 681 SARNIA, ON N7T 7J7

Name: _____

Address: _____ email _____

_____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____ Date : _____ Earthways via email? Yes _____ No _____

Membership fees: Single \$20 Family \$25 Young Naturalist \$15 (\$5 ea. add'l child) (Circle one)

Donation \$ _____ (Business number 11900 4620 RR0001) Total \$ _____

