



# The Woodland Observer

## Nipissing Naturalists Club

### June 2015

*Enjoy Nature!*



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## Moving Forward with Ontario's Biodiversity Goals

*A Summary of the Ontario Biodiversity Summit, held in Niagara Falls from May 19-22*

By: Corinne Arthur

The summit began with the release of the new Ontario Biodiversity Report, which highlighted a series of 10-year biodiversity-related goals for the province that were set out in the year 2010. This report was the halfway point check-in as to how Ontario is doing on those biodiversity goals. Since 2010, we have gotten closer to reaching some of the goals but have gotten farther away from others. The next few days of the conference consisted of a number of fascinating seminars that we could choose from to learn about various aspects of biodiversity. Here is a summary of a few of the seminars that I attended:

### Far North Biodiversity Project

The far north of Ontario consists of 42% of Ontario's land area that was virtually unexplored until some biologists with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry recently set out to inventory its flora and fauna species. For the last five summers, teams of specialists have been hiking through the landscapes of the far north, setting up sites to collect samples and data. They have made some fascinating discoveries, including the identification of new species of spiders, dragonflies, and other insects. It is incredible that we are still discovering new, never before seen species in our own province! With this information they are hoping to help with community based land use planning and development of the Far North Land Use Strategy.

### Forest Healing

Ontario is realizing that there is a strong relationship between the health of our people and the health of our ecosystems. Not only do hiking, cycling, canoeing and leisurely walks in nature all provide us with great exercise opportunities, there is also evidence that the pheromones released from trees have a restorative and therapeutic effect on us. An essential part of people being in nature is having it easily accessible through nearby urban forests, conservation areas, trails through cities and provincial parks.

These diverse ecosystems also provide habitat for a myriad of species in addition to the health benefits to people. By way of bridging the gap, a task force was created called EcoHealth Ontario to find innovative ways to get people exercising in nature and gain an appreciation for nature for its health benefits. Some of the recent innovative ideas are:

- Healthy Parks, Healthy People movement - free entry on July 17th to Ontario Provincial Parks.
- providing binoculars beside hospital beds so that patients can birdwatch from bed.

### iNaturalist

The idea of citizen science (crowd-sourced biodiversity data), is that the general public can assist in monitoring and conserving flora and fauna species through new technology such as our GPS-encoded smartphones. There are a few ways in which this can occur, including a highly innovative one called "iNaturalist". This tool can be downloaded as a phone app or can be accessed online. It allows people to contribute to science by uploading photos and information about species onto a fun and interactive database. The idea is that anyone can take a photo of a species that they see, from an invasive crayfish to a giant white pine tree to an endangered snapping turtle, upload it to the app or website, include the location and any other details, and send it in. If they know the species name, they can include it and it will be confirmed by an expert and if they do not, there is a button they can press to ask for assistance in the identification and other naturalists, such as yourself, can help out. Once identified and confirmed, the data gets sent to the international species database, called GBIF (Global Biodiversity Information Facility), and can be used in the conservation of species. You can also use this tool to explore what species other people have seen in the area and even assist in the identification of species.

We had one of the creators of iNaturalist speaking to us at the seminar. He told a story about a conference they were at in San Diego where they included

# Exciting Winged May Migrants

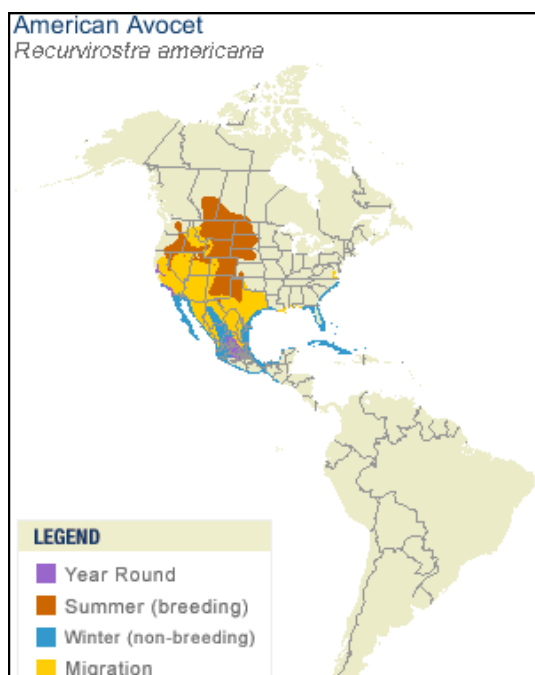
*A summary of the interesting bird species spotted during the May migration*

By: Corinne Arthur

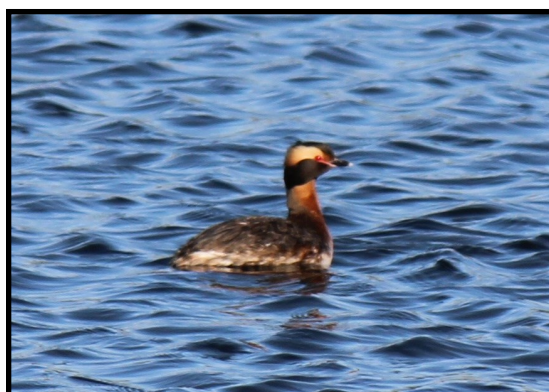
The North Bay area had some surprising visitors passing through during the month of May. An American Avocet, a bird common to western North America, was spotted and photographed at the Verner sewage Lagoon on May 20th. Thank you to Angela Martin for providing us with a photograph of this unusual visitor.



An American Avocet at the Verner lagoon. Photo courtesy of Angela Martin.



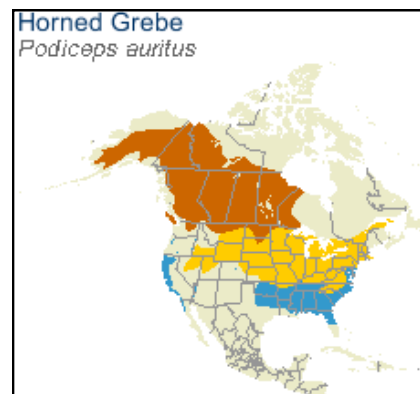
This Horned Grebe, an uncommon migrant to this area, was also seen and photographed by Angela Martin on May 20th at the Verner Sewage Lagoon.



A horned grebe at the Verner lagoon (top). Photo courtesy of Angela Martin.

The range map of the horned grebe (right). It is a migrating visitor to this area.

([www.allaboutbirds.org](http://www.allaboutbirds.org))



Finally, rumour has it that there was a scissor-tailed flycatcher spotted, wow!

## Carden Nature Festival

For those who are interested, the Carden Nature Festival is happening on **Saturday, June 6.**

Registration is necessary for am/pm workshops, there is limited enrolment and some free kids activities. Cost is \$39.00, \$59.00 with evening dinner. More details can be found at:

[Cardennaturefestival.ca](http://Cardennaturefestival.ca)

# Calendar of Events

## Next General Meeting

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

Cassellholme Auditorium @ 7:00 pm

## Previous Meeting Review

Lets give a big thank you to last month's speaker, Lesley Lovett-Doust whose intriguing presentation on "Endangered Species—Endangered Spaces: The ecology of the Eastern Prickly Pear Cactus, an Endangered Species in Canada " was fascinating to all who attended, despite the technical difficulties.



## Upcoming Speakers

**Date:** June 9, 2015

**Speaker:** Mark Kulhberg, Professor of History, Laurentian University

**Topic:** How environmentalism is failing us.

We will also have a presentation from the 2015 science fair winner, Payton Hack, describing his winning study.

## Upcoming Events

*For Nip Nats awesome summer outings see the table on page 4!*

## Monthly activities in Laurier Woods Conservation Area 2015

The Nipissing Naturalist Club of North Bay, Friends of Laurier Woods, North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority and various partners are hosting free nature-based public events in Laurier Woods Conservation Area. Laurier Woods Conservation Area is a 240 acre protected area created by the people of North Bay. The Woods are owned and managed by the Friends of Laurier Woods, made up of local citizens, and the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority. The Friends of Laurier Woods was formed twenty five years ago to create this park.

Meet at the Brule St parking lot rain or shine and join a walk to enjoy and learn something new about nature.

For information contact: [nip-nats@gmail.com](mailto:nip-nats@gmail.com)

### MONTHLY ACTIVITIES IN LAURIER WOODS

Date	Topic	Guide	Time
May 2 Additional birding outings on May 9, 16 and 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Birds	Dick Tafel	9.00 a.m. to 11 a.m.
June 6	Glaciation	Dr. Eric Mattson	10.00 a.m. to noon
July 4	Aquatic insects	Paul Smylie	10.00 a.m. to noon
August 1	Wild edibles and Wildcrafting	Jeremy St Onge/Lucy Emmott	10.00 a.m. to noon
August 15	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Louise de Kiriline Lawrence Nature Festival	Several activities for the whole family	
September 5	Seedless plants	Joe Boivin	10.00 a.m. to noon
October 3	Investigating tracks and signs	Jeremy St Onge/Lucy Emmott	10.00 a.m. to noon
November 7	Geology	Larry Dyke	10.00 a.m. to noon
December 5	History of Laurier Woods	Dick Tafel	10.00 a.m. to noon



a pamphlet instructing people to download the app and then go outside to the nearby urban park for a bioblitz. They took photos of any living thing that they saw and synched them all to the app for identification. These were just regular people at a conference, not botanists, ornithologists or scientists. Through this, they were able to identify over a hundred species in this urban setting, including a few native species outside of their known ranges and even a new invasive species. Scientists are now using this information to control the invasive species before it spreads even more. This tool is being seen as a new way for people to have fun in nature through photographing species, posting them onto an app, and maybe even challenging each other to see who can identify more species. All at the same time as assisting in increasing the global knowledge of native, invasive and endangered species ranges, habitats, monitoring and conservation priorities.

iNaturalist app for Android downloading: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.inaturalist.android&hl=en>

iNaturalist.org: <https://www.inaturalist.org/>

## A Possible Treatment for the Deadly White-nose Syndrome

By: Corinne Arthur



White-nose syndrome is a disease that is spreading across North America and has already decimated the populations of bats in Eastern Canada. American researchers have recently discovered a bacteria that could possibly help fight the deadly syndrome. They grew samples of the fungus and then exposed it to bacteria samples from the wild; two of the bacteria species were quite effective in treating the fungus. They have now moved on to conducting live tests with bats.

More information available at: <http://www.cbc.ca/m/news/canada/new-brunswick/us-scientists-find-bacteria-to-fight-deadly-bat-disease-1.3025073>

### SUMMER 2015 OUTINGS

Date	Topic	Description	Time
Saturday, June 13	Carden Plains Bird Watching	Bring lunch and drinks for the day. Depending on the length of stay we may stop for dinner on the way back to North Bay.	Meet at Visitor's Centre at 7:00am
Sunday, June 14	Visit Boreal Berry Farm & Winery, 748 Little Brule Rd, Warren.	Find out how haskap, cherries, grapes, lavender and Saskatoon berries are used to make wine. The tour will last about 2h. It will include wine tasting. Bring your lunch For those interested some will visit the Warren lagoons after the winery tour to look for water birds.	10 am depart from North Bay Visitor's Centre Tour begins at 11 am
Wednesday, June 17	Visit the largest maternal colony of endangered little brown bats  The count is dependent on weather: it will be re-scheduled if it rains or is very windy	We will count the bats before the females give birth. Count begins 30 min before sunset (occurs at 9.12 pm) Wear clothing to protect yourself from biting insects	Depart from North Bay Visitor's Centre At 7.00 pm and drive to Lavigne
Saturday, July 11	Visit the largest maternal colony of endangered little brown bats  The count is dependent on weather: it will be re-scheduled if it rains or is very windy	We will count the bats after the females give birth. Count begins 30 min before sunset (occurs at 9.09 pm)  Wear clothing to protect yourself from biting insects	Depart from North Bay Visitor's Centre At 6.00 pm and drive to Lavigne for those interested at stopping at Verner lagoons to search for water and shore birds.
Saturday July 25	Visit Board's Northern Nectars Honey Farm 6866 Hwy 534, Restoule. <b>Cost: \$5</b>	Observe bees and attend a workshop on honey production and uses of honey, wax, pollen, propolis and royal jelly. Wear suitable outdoor clothing, insect protection, and footwear.	10 am depart from North Bay Visitor's Centre Tour begins at 11 am and we will start to return at 2.30 pm.