THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

MAY 2018

NIPISSING NATURALISTS CLUB

From the editor:

Spring has finally sprung (I think)!

Most of April felt like winter and as we begin May, there is still quite a bit of snow in the woods and some in my yard. However, as I write this on May 1, it feels like a real spring May day. Nevertheless, it is still somewhat hard to believe that any time soon we will see our provincial flower, the Trillium, which graces the cover of this issue of *The Woodland Observer*. The photo is one I took on May 19, 2016. However, nature has a way of making up for what was a slow-coming spring and if we don't see one by May 19, we will eventually.

Same with the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. We expect it to arrive in May, as it usually does, and so I did a short article and a collage of hummingbird photos, not just of the Ruby-throated, but hummingbirds from Trinidad and British Columbia. This loosely ties in with Fred Pinto's book review on *The Annotated Malay Archipelago,* as well as a short article on Alfred Russel Wallace, Victorian naturalist and author of *The Malay Archipelago.*

During the cold, snowy and windy afternoon of Saturday, April 28, I participated in our monthly Bird Bash and it certainly was a surreal afternoon. There was a fall-out of American Robins, Dark-eyed Juncos and American Tree Sparrows starting from my area near the college and university all along the western section of Lake Nipissing. I saw about 800 American Robins, if not more, hundreds of American Tree Sparrows, and certainly more than 1,000 Dark-eyed Juncos. It was really quite amazing and something I have not seen here before. It would seem flocks of both species came across Lake Nipissing, migrating north, but conditions were such that they had to land, resulting in this fall-out. Earlier in the week, large flocks of Rusty Blackbirds were seen in Laurier Woods and in West Nipissing. I also saw more Hermit Thrushes in one week, in Laurier Woods (about 20) and along Jocko Point Road (about 45), than I have ever seen. And then there were the Belted Kingfishers – 13 along Hwy. 17 West, one at every telephone post for a few km. It was one of those unforgettable Aprils in the world of birds.

It was also one of those unforgettable Aprils in terms of weather. Cold and snowy with lakes and ponds still frozen, making it difficult for waterfowl and the returning Osprey! Waterfowl were congregated on the very small areas of water that were ice-free. It may be we will break a record for an ice-free Lake Nipissing. The previous record was May 19, 1926, and in more recent years, May 11 in 1992, 1996 and 2014. The earliest Lake Nipissing has been ice-free is April 3, 1945 and April 4, 1946, and more recently, April 8, 2010 and April 11, 2012. You may recall the warm spring weather came very early in 2012. I remember it well because while it was especially warm here, in fact, quite hot, I was in Vancouver Island bundled up against the cool wind!

The Motus Wildlife Tracking Station will be installed sometime in early May about 12 feet or so from the top of the ski lift, next to the ski lift station from which the Motus Station will be getting its 120V power. There will be an unveiling ceremony for Nipissing Naturalists and the public on **Friday, May 25, at 10:00 a.m.** beside the ski lift station, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority, 15 Janey Avenue**.** It is expected Al MacDonald, Mayor of North Bay; Anthony Rota, Nipissing MP; and Stuart Mackenzie, Migration Program Manager, Bird Studies Canada, will be in attendance. **Be sure to mark the date on your calendar.** This is a major project of Nipissing Naturalists Club and North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority that came to fruition in a short period of time thanks to many donors and the support of Bird Studies Canada.

For those who plan to go to the Northern Regional meeting of Ontario Nature, **Fred Pinto has prepared a schedule of events which you will see inside this issue.** Because Nipissing Naturalists Club is the host, members can drop into any of the events, but you must let Barbara MacKenzie-Wynia, Regional Coordinator Nature Network, know of your attendance. She can be reached at: Barbaraw@ontarionature.org.

You will also find in this issue part 1 of Daniel Pike's presentation of whales in the North Atlantic and other places. Part 2 will be in June's issue. Also in this issue is an article on the GPS workshop led by Eric Mattson; a list of various surveys of birds, bats, amphibians and reptiles in which you can take part as a citizen scientist; and an outline of the May Laurier Woods bird walks with Dick Tafel, held every Saturday morning throughout May starting at 9:00 a.m. It would be great to get as many participants as possible for **Saturday, May 12, World Migratory Bird Day.**

May's speakers are Julie Robinson and Micheline Mamone, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. They will talk about the 30 or so Conservation Reserves in our area, highlighting the key features of these reserves, ranging from old growth pine forests to provincially significant wetlands. Details of the presentation are inside this issue. Possible outings this summer will be to survey the wildlife and plants in some of these reserves.

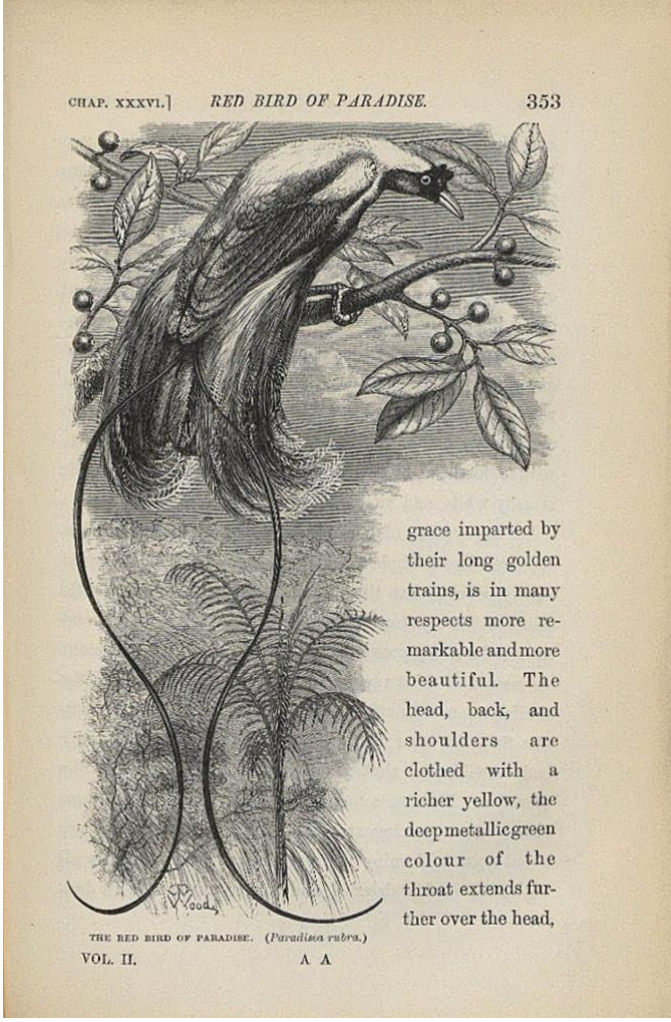
The photo of Lake Nipissing on the previous page was taken on April 29 this year, and the photo below was taken at Cache Bay the evening before, on April 28.

- *Renee Levesque, editor*, rlevesque1948@gmail.com

Alfred Russel Wallace: Co-developer of the theory of evolution

By Renee Levesque and Fred Pinto

On the following pages is Fred Pinto's book review of Alfred Russel Wallace's *The Annotated Malay Archipelago*, first published in two volumes as *The Malay Archipelago* in 1869. Wallace, a Victorian naturalist, explorer and collector, 1823–1913, is finally coming into his own as a co-developer of the theory of evolution through natural selection.


CHAP. XXXVI.] RED BIRD OF PARADISE. 353

grace imparted by their long golden trains, is in many respects more remarkable and more beautiful. The head, back, and shoulders are clothed with a richer yellow, the deep metallic green colour of the throat extends further over the head,

THE RED BIRD OF PARADISE. (*Paradisea rubra.*)

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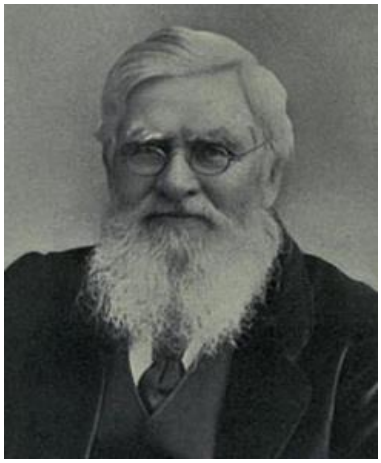
***From* The Malay Archipelago. 1869**

Wallace (below) spent 8 years in Southeast Asia gathering his extensive collection of insects and birds which, upon his return to Britain, he sold to a public enamoured by foreign exotica. It was in Southeast Asia in 1858 that he developed his theory of evolution, a theory distinct from Charles Darwin's, but a theory in which both Wallace and Darwin agreed that isolation and competition played a role. However, unlike Darwin, Wallace recognized that cooperation also played a role. (Some of Wallace's early views have been found to be incorrect, while others have been supported by new information.)



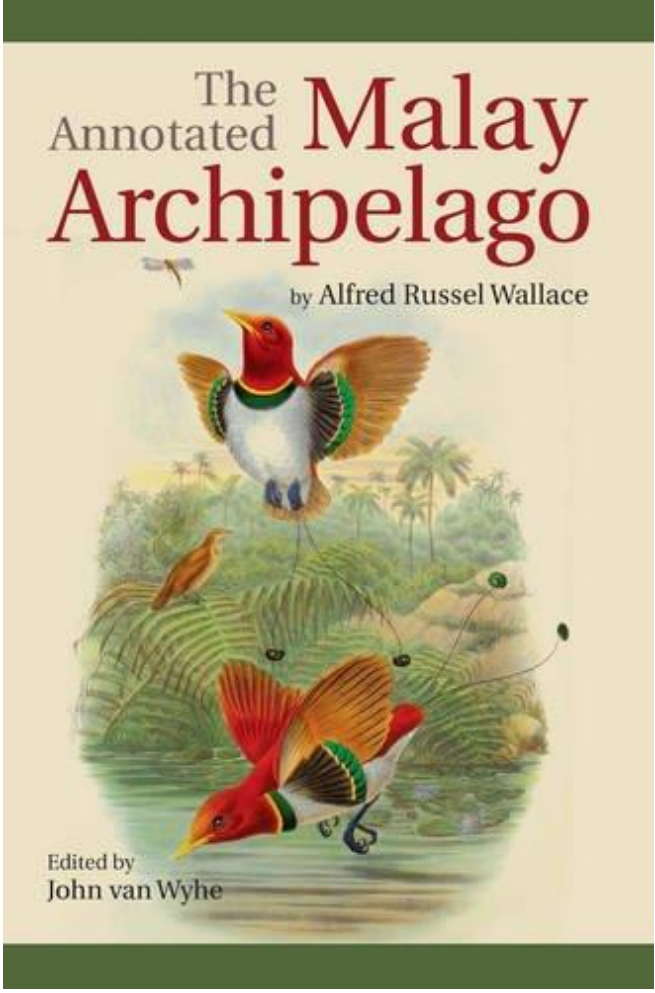
With the publication of Darwin's book in 1859, *On the Origin of Species*, scientists took more notice of Darwin than Wallace. It didn't help that Wallace was a very modest man and throughout his life referred to the theory of evolution as Darwin's theory.

Darwin and Wallace corresponded with one another and exchanged ideas over many years. Wallace dedicated his book on his observations in Malaysia to Darwin, and Darwin in turn cited Wallace's work more than any other scientist in his book, *Descent of Man*.

In 2013, Oxford University Museum of Natural History hosted a series of events to commemorate Wallace 100 years after his death. See: http://www.oum.ox.ac.uk/visiting/presenting6.htm.

Wallace Online, a project directed by the editor of *The Annotated Malay Archipelago*, John van Wyhe, is the first complete edition of the writings of Wallace and the first compilation of his specimens. It is a site well worth visiting: http://wallace-online.org/.

Book Review



The Annotated Malay Archipelago
By Alfred Russel Wallace, edited by John van Wyhe
NUS Press, Singapore (2015)
801 pages

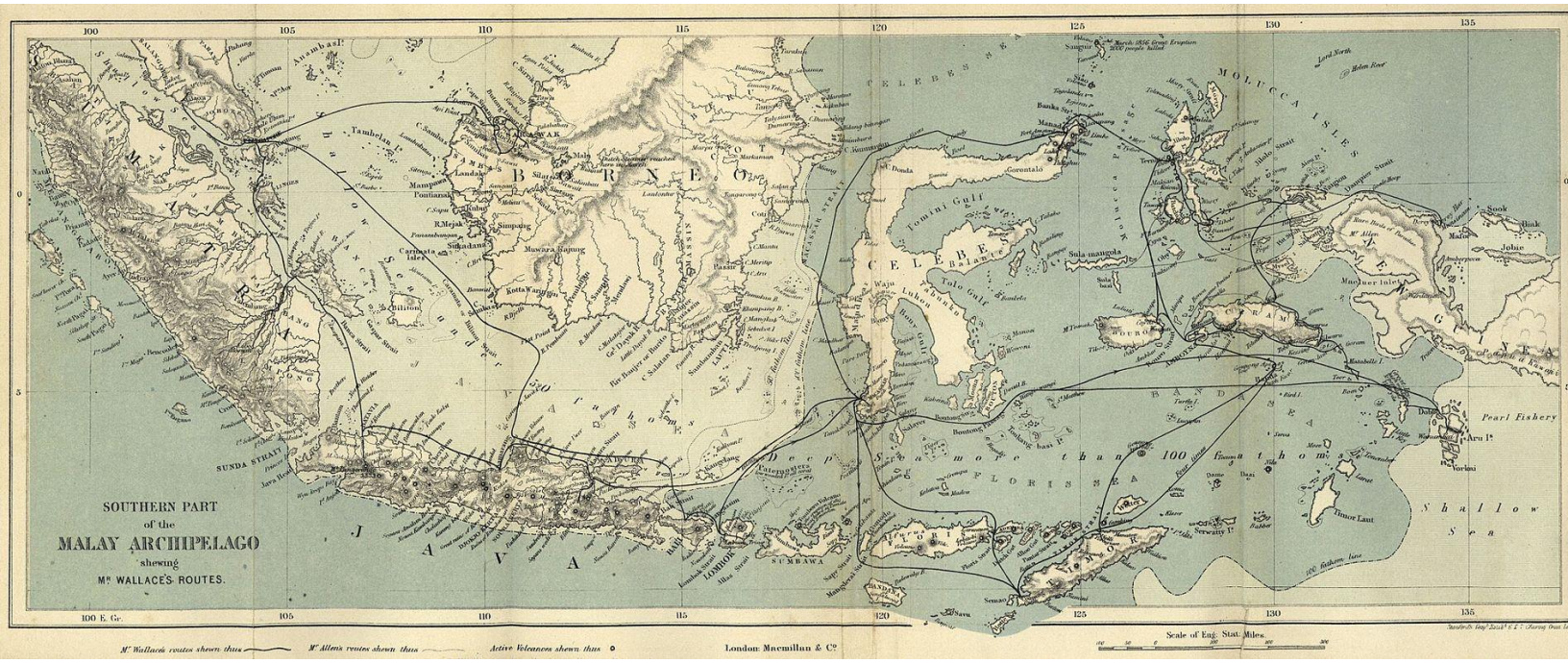
By Fred Pinto

The original book, *The Malay Archipelago*, was published in 1869. That was a time when adventure naturalists travelled the globe and collected specimens for the great new hobby of collecting and displaying specimens for their own sake.

Alfred Russel Wallace is known today as the co-developer of natural selection.

His first voyage overseas to South America, from 1848 to 1852, ended in disaster. His returning ship caught fire and sank midway across the Atlantic. Wallace was saved, but he lost all his notes and his specimens. (Because he was partly insured, he was able to recoup some of their value.)

However, this did not deter his adventures and he planned his second voyage, this time his important one, the one to Southeast Asia, or the Malay Archipelago. (See map below.) Here he remained for eight years, from 1854 to 1862.



In 1855, Wallace published a paper, stating that new species were often found in the same geographic region of similar but now extinct species. Three years later, while reflecting on his observation during one of his many bouts of tropical fever, most probably malaria, he had his epiphany: **New varieties are constantly appearing with random differences**. These individuals live in dynamic environments where the parent species may go extinct. Although the parent species may no longer be suited to the new environment, the daughter varieties may have the right characteristics to survive. This, Wallace reasoned, would mean that species could change gradually and without limit. It was Wallace's description of what Charles Darwin described independently and called natural selection.

Wallace's first essay to openly say that life evolves is called "On the tendency of varieties to depart indefinitely from the original type". This essay is often called the Ternate essay, after the place where it was written and from where it was mailed by Wallace to Charles Darwin. (Ternate is one of the Maluku Islands, west of New Guinea, and at that time, part of the Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia.)

Photos by Fred Pinto

Wallace dedicated his book, *The Malay Archipelago*, first published in March 1869, to Darwin. The book consists of various themes, unlike those written by other naturalists of the day who wrote chronologies of their travels.

Wallace calculates that he collected 125,660 specimens of insects, birds, shells, mammals and reptiles. One of these was the Oriental Pied Hornbill and another was the Proboscis Monkey, both seen above.

In reality, Wallace employed local guides and collectors to amass these specimens. Reading the book with the sensibilities we have today, we are aware of the inherent racism of the time. This is reflected in the lack of recognition of non-Europeans and the often racist descriptions that were common then.

JJ Harrison, Wikipedia

Because I was to lead a group of university students to Malaysia and Borneo in 2016, I wanted to read this book. It is considered one of the greatest travel books on Southeast Asia and it certainly lives up to its billing. I was able to get some new insights into what I was about to see.

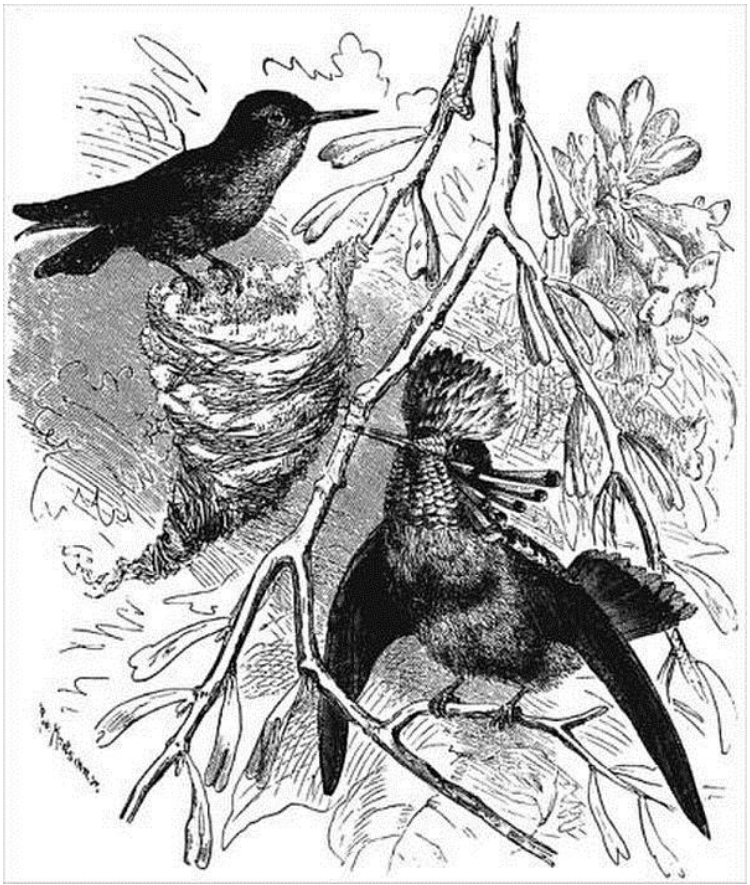
During our travels deep into the tropical jungles of the Malay Peninsula and Borneo, I marvelled at the sights and sounds. I would wake up early and walk around the open areas of the jungle to see and hear the various monkey species, the owls hooting and the many dawn insects calling. By breakfast, the mist from the night had burned off and the birds awakened and started feeding. Once a large green Katydid landed with a splat in front of me and as I snapped a quick photo, a male Red-bearded Bee-eater (seen above) swooped down and made off with the insect, much to the amazement of all the students. After dinner, and as the sun set and the lights were turned on, large insects, nocturnal birds and bats were drawn to the camp. It was a real life nature show that unfolded in front of us as we sat around the dining shelter delighted by all we saw and heard.

Those striking head plumes do it every time

By Renee Levesque

It all started at February's meeting with Fred Pinto showing a photo of a pair of mating Tufted Coquettes he saw at the Asa Wright Nature Centre in Trinidad. (See Fred's photo at right.) I decided I would hold on to it to use in May's issue with a photo by Kevan Cowcill of our very own Ruby-throated Hummingbird, the only hummingbird we get in Ontario. But as happens, ideas expand.

From Steve Pitt, I received a photo of an Anna's Hummingbird taken by a photographer, David Greer, who lives on Pender Island, British Columbia. I then received some photos of Asa Wright and Trinidadian hummers from Grant McKercher taken by his friend, Phil Kirk, who lives in England and whom Grant met while he and Shirley were vacationing in Trinidad. So I decided I would do a collage to celebrate the return of our hummer in May, using Kevan's photo of the Ruby-throated.



Then Fred wrote a review of *The Annotated Malay Archipelago*, and that led to an introductory article on the author, Alfred Russel Wallace. But Wallace cannot be mentioned without a mention of Charles Darwin, which led back to Fred's mating Tufted Coquettes.

Charles Darwin's second book on evolution, *Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to*

Sex, published in 1871, is about sexual selection, reproduction based on individual aesthetics. He used an illustration of a male and female Tufted Coquette (*Lophornis ornatus*) in his book as seen on the previous page to demonstrate the difference in appearance of males and females and how female choice leads to increased male beauty or "ornaments". (Male competition leads to "weapons", such as horns, and Darwin illustrated this with a drawing of the male and female Atlas Beetle.)

The male Tufted Coquette is a very striking bird with his rufous head plumes. The female lacks the plumes. See photos below of the male and female taken by Phil Kirk.

The Tufted Coquette breeds in eastern Venezuela, Trinidad, Guiana and northern Brazil. It is a tiny hummingbird, only 6.6 cm long.

On the next page is a collage of hummingbirds with our very own Ruby-throated taken by Kevan Cowcill in the centre. Clockwise from top left: Blue-chinned Sapphire, Phil Kirk; Anna's, David Greer; Rufous, Kevan Cowcill; White-necked Jacobin, Phil Kirk; Green Hermit, Fred Pinto; Ruby Topaz, Phil Kirk; and White-chested Emerald, Phil Kirk.







Counting whales to safeguard their future

By Daniel Pike; photos and charts courtesy of Daniel Pike

Whaling has been carried out by humans for thousands of years. In Canada, the Inuit of Nunavut, Nunavik and Labrador, and the Inuvialuit of the Northwest Territories, continue their traditional whaling today, primarily for Beluga, Narwhal and Bowhead Whales. Greenlanders also hunt these species, as well as Fin, Humpback and Pilot Whales. Photo below is of Inuit hunters with a Narwhal.

Inuit hunters harvest a Narwhal

Commercial whaling has a long and largely rather sad history. Before petroleum came into widespread use, whale oil was in demand as a fuel for lighting. The flexible baleen from whales was used much as we would use plastic today, most famously in corsets. Other products included meat and fertilizer. Technology for pursuing and killing the largest and fastest whales, such as Blue, Fin and Humpback, was developed in the late nineteenth century in Norway. The major innovation was a harpoon cannon and exploding harpoon grenade. Deployed from fast steam-powered vessels, this gave whale hunting a deadly new efficiency.

A general pattern followed in which whalers would move into an area, deplete the stocks of whales, then either go broke or move on to the next area. As a result, by the middle of the twentieth century, most stocks of large whales, especially Right, Blue, Fin, Bowhead and Humpback, were heavily depleted in the North Atlantic, and indeed throughout the world.

Some stocks have recovered since then, and commercial whaling has continued on a much smaller scale in Norway for Minke Whales and in Iceland for Minke and Fin Whales. Today the main product from these hunts is meat for human consumption. The hunts are highly regulated, with catch limits that are strictly enforced, and catching methods are regulated to make the hunts as humane as is feasible.

Why do we count whales and seals?

Surveys are carried out to generate estimates of absolute abundance – the number of animals in a specific area at a specific time. In some cases, estimates of relative abundance – a fraction of absolute abundance that is assumed to be constant – are also useful. If surveys are repeated over time, trends in abundance – whether the number of animals is increasing, decreasing or stable – can be estimated. The main use of these estimates is for the management of whale and seal populations, although they are also used for general environmental monitoring and ecosystem research.

Marine mammal management

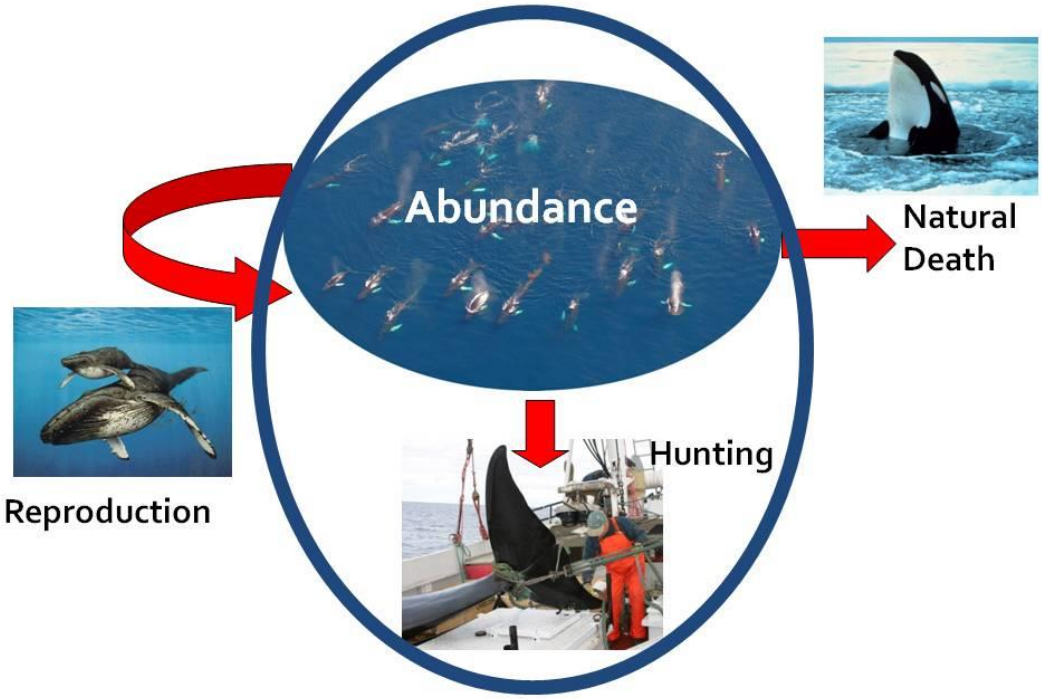
To effectively manage human impacts on whales, or any other wildlife for that matter, we need to know how many there are in the management area. We also need to know if this number is changing over time: Is the population going up or down? The best way to get this information is to carry out surveys to estimate the abundance of whales in specific areas. This must be done repeatedly over time to determine if the population is rising or falling.

Whale catcher boats in Reykyavik harbour

Human impacts on whale populations are mainly direct catch (hunting) and indirect catch (bycatch, ship strikes), but also pollution, climate change and even whale watching. The main goal of management is usually to ensure that human impacts on marine mammal populations are sustainable, meaning that they do not cause the populations to decrease below a pre-defined threshold. To do this, estimates of abundance are combined with past, present and projected future catch levels in a population model, a mathematical model that mimics the response of the population to catch. This enables managers to set allowable direct and/or indirect catch levels that will not endanger the population.

Change in an animal population depends upon the population size, the rate of reproduction and the rate of death, including natural death and death caused by humans**.** (See chart on next page.**)** Usually, at any one time, a wildlife manager will have direct information on the number of animals in the population (abundance) at one or more times in the recent past, and the number of

animals that have been landed by hunters in recent years. Rates of natural death and reproduction are usually taken from other studies and assumed to apply to the population in question.

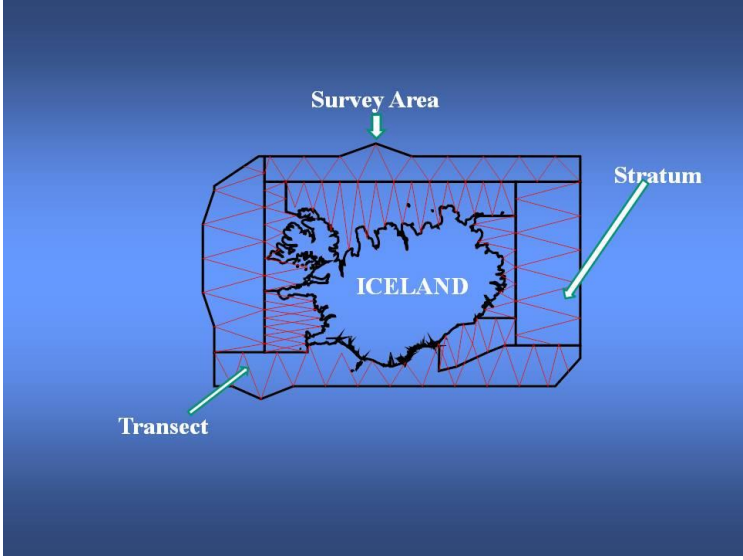


Sustainable catch can be defined as the number of animals that can be removed from the population over time without reducing the population below a pre-defined target level. It depends on the productivity of the population, which is itself a result of the interplay between population size and the rates of natural reproduction and natural death. These are themselves affected by the current abundance of the population relative to the number the environment can support (carrying capacity), in that a population at carrying capacity cannot increase over time. The increasing scarcity of resources, such as food, as the population approaches carrying capacity can decrease the rate of reproduction and increase the rate of natural death. All these factors must be included in a mathematical model of the population that can predict the future abundance of the population, depending on the observed abundance in the recent past and recent harvests. Such a model can also predict a level of harvest that will result in a stable abundance over time – a sustainable catch level.

Survey being conducted from a plane

How do we count whales?

The abundance of whales (and many other animals) is usually, though not always, estimated using surveys. Surveys are conducted at sea using either ships or aircraft. Generally ships are used for large offshore areas because they can stay at sea for long periods and thereby cover large areas. However, they are slow. Aircraft are more useful for smaller nearshore areas, areas they can cover very quickly using the short periods of good weather that become available

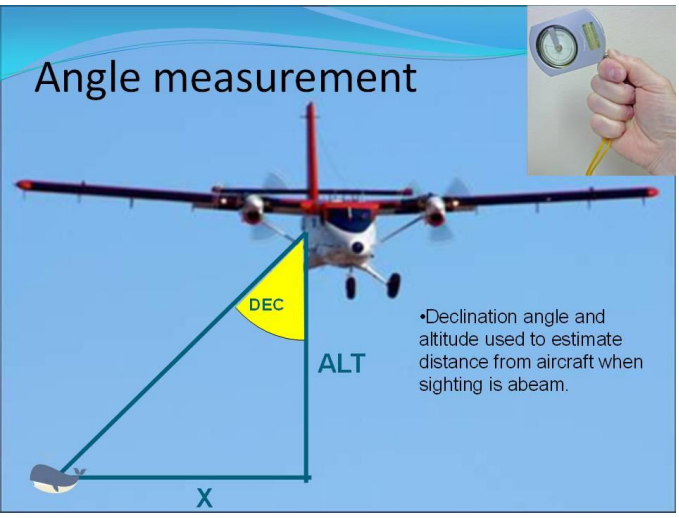


Design for an aerial survey around Iceland

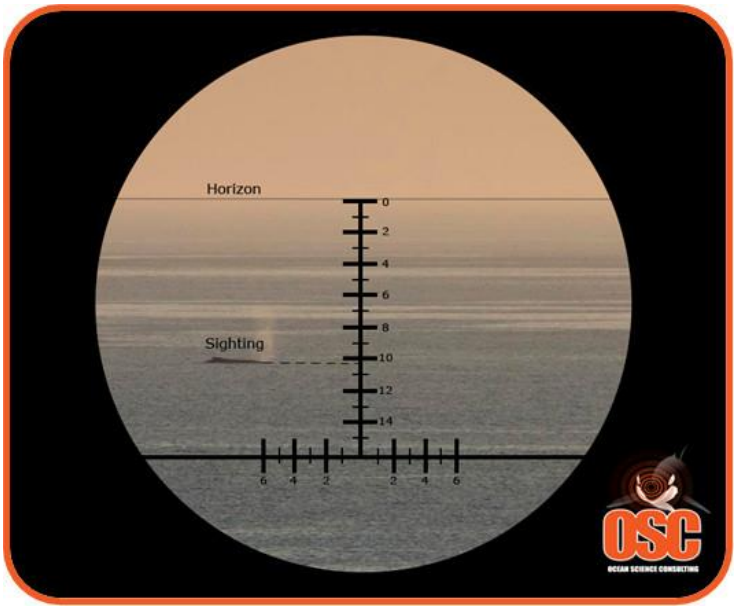
Survey design

The survey area is usually divided into smaller areas, called strata. Survey effort – the amount of time or distance the survey vessel will spend in the area – is divided between strata based on how common the target species is expected to be. Generally speaking, more effort is given to areas with high densities because this produces a more precise estimate. The survey vessel sails or flies a series of pre-defined transects that cover each stratum in the survey area. The transects are designed in advance of the survey to cover the area evenly, and are placed randomly over the strata.

Recording whales



Visual surveys which use human observers to count animals are the most common type. Observers concentrate on the area ahead of and beside the vessel or plane. When observers see an animal or group of animals, they immediately record the observation, noting such things as species identity, group size and the number of young in the group.



Observers then take a measurement of the perpendicular distance – the distance at 90 degrees to the direction of travel – to the animal or group. On an airplane, this is done by measuring the declination angle to the sighting using an inclinometer. Because the altitude of the plane is known, this angle can be converted to distance using simple trigonometry. (See graphic above.) On a ship, the distance of the sighting below the horizon is measured using binocular reticles or a simple ruler held at a set distance from the eyes. (See graphic at right.)

***Editor's Note**: This is Part 1 of Daniel's article on counting whales. Part 2, in which Daniel writes about the whales he has seen in the North Atlantic, in Arctic Canada and in Antarctica, will appear in the June issue of* The Woodland Observer.

GPS makes it harder than ever to get lost

By Dorothy deKiewiet

Fred Pinto

The morning of March 23 was a cold one – minus 16C and with the wind chill factored in, minus 21. But despite this, 14 enthusiastic Naturalists Club members met with Eric Mattson, Professor of Geography and Geology, Nipissing University, for a workshop on the Global Positioning System (GPS).

Eric began the workshop by explaining GPS: what it is; how it works; what it can measure; its accuracy and what affects it; the difference between the military and civilian systems; and how we can use it to navigate through a wilderness full of obstacles to reach our destination and get back to our starting point.

The second segment of the workshop was more hands-on. Eric taught us how to program the handheld GPS unit so that it was set to the proper datum and coordinate system to accurately get us from our starting point to our desired destination.

We then went outdoors and learned how to calibrate the GPS unit to more accurately record our location from the satellite signals. All thoughts of cold disappeared as we rushed to search for the geocached prize by following the bearing displayed on our GPS electronic compass. The prize was a lovely glass pendant handmade by Eric's wife, Ingrid Bajewsky, owner of Bad Dog Glassworks.

GPS use has become so universal, particularly for car navigation and vehicle tracking, that we hardly realize how recent the technology is, how it works and how easy it is to use with computers doing all the navigating for us.

Today the technology is used in law enforcement, espionage/surveillance, fleet tracking, sports/race monitoring and tracking the elderly/vulnerable or young children, among many others uses. With the press of 'start' on my iPhone, an app records the location where I started my walk, my pace at intervals, how many steps I took, how many flights of stairs I climbed, the distance I travelled and a map of my route.

Editor's Note: *$160.00 was raised from the workshop to go towards the Motus Wildlife Tracking System.*

Guided walks in Laurier Woods

On Saturday mornings, from 9 to 11 a.m., May 5 to May 26, you can enjoy bird watching walks with Dick Tafel in Laurier Woods.

May is the prime time to see wood warblers and you are bound to see plenty of them in Laurier Woods. Warblers are colourful, active birds, smaller than sparrows, with thin needle-pointed bills. Most have some yellow in their plumage, like the male Cape May Warbler in the photo below on the right, with his bright yellow collar, distinctive chestnut cheek patch and black streaks on his yellow breast and down his flanks. But some warblers don't have yellow in their plumage, like the male American Redstart in the photo below on the left with his dramatic orange patches that contrast with his coal-black coat.

Warblers aren't the only birds to be seen. If you are especially fortunate, you might also see the exotic male Scarlet Tanager (below middle) with his blood-red body and jet-black wings. It is a bird not always easy to see because it likes to stay high in the forest canopy.

Bring your binoculars and if you don't have any, you can still enjoy the walk, see some of the birds and hear them sing. *(Photo above is by Renee Levesque. Photos below, left to right, are by Kevan Cowcill, Lisa Hackett and Renee Levesque.)*

Surveys, counts and watches

American Woodcock, Renee Levesque

By Renee Levesque

Bird Studies Canada coordinates citizen science/volunteer programs throughout Canada. Below are those offered in our area:

American Woodcock Singing Ground Survey: Takes place in May and monitors the breeding populations of this species in North America. I know of only Gary and Connie Sturge who do this survey.

Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program: Takes place in May and June and involves the monitoring of assigned routes in marshes to track the presence and abundance of marsh birds and amphibians. Paul Smylie will be monitoring Laurier Woods as he has done for the past two years.

Canadian Lakes Loon Survey: Takes place from June to August to assess the long-term health of Common Loons and the lakes they depend upon. I am unaware if there are any participants for this survey.

Project NestWatch: This watch involves monitoring bird nesting and breeding success. If you have a bird nesting in your backyard, you are a candidate for this watch.

Common Loon, Rob Rodger

Great Canadian Birdathon: This annual Birdathon to raise money for Bird Studies Canada for bird research and preservation takes place over a 24-hour period in May. In our area, it will take place the weekend of May 26

and 27. Dick Tafel is accepting donations to send to Bird Studies Canada, with a percentage of the amount collected to be returned to a nature group or organization of Dick's choice. You can either donate directly to Dick or donate to him online at: https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/bird-studies-canada/p2p/birdathon/team/tafelot/captain/richard-tafel/. Charitable donation receipts will be issued by Bird Studies Canada.

SwiftWatch: Takes place from late May into June to monitor the number of Chimney Swifts, a threatened species. Grant and Shirley McKercher monitor the only known large roost in North Bay. There is also a known smaller roost in Mattawa that we discovered last year. **If anyone would like to watch that chimney for swifts, please let me know**.

Barred Owl, Renee Levesque

eBird: eBird Canada is an online bird sighting database to which you can contribute your bird sightings and through which you can find out what birds are where through maps, graphs and tables.

A reminder to those who enter their sightings on eBird that **May 5 is Global Big Day.** See: https://ebird.org/news/global-big-day-5-may-2018.

Surveys that have already taken place, but will be back again next year:

Nocturnal Owl Survey: Completed in April by at least 5 teams. There is a trophy awarded to the best owl survey report submitted by each team. Most team members are Nipissing Naturalists.

Christmas Bird Count, Kaye Edmonds

Project FeederWatch: To help scientists monitor winter birds, this project involves counting birds at feeders from November to April. Some members of Bird Wing participate in this survey.

Christmas Bird Count: This count is between December 14 and January 5 inclusive. It is a one-

day bird count that takes place across Canada, the United States and Latin America. Many members of Nipissing Naturalists Club and Bird Wing take part in this count.

Great Backyard Bird Count: This count takes place over the Family Day weekend. Participants count birds seen for as little as a few hours or for the entire 4 days of the count. Some members of Bird Wing take part in this count.

For more information on the above programs, check out Bird Studies Canada at http://www.birdscanada.org/ and click on Citizen Science at the top of the home page. Or contact Kathy Jones, Bird Studies Canada, Ontario Program Volunteer Coordinator, by phone at 1-888-448-2473, ext. 124, or by email at volunteer@birdscanada.org.

To learn more about birds, surveys and field outings, you can also attend Bird Wing meetings that take place at the North Bay Public Library the fourth Tuesday of every month from September to April inclusive, followed by field outings from May to August inclusive.

Northern Watersnake, Renee Levesque

Other bird surveys:

Breeding Bird Survey: This survey takes place in late June. In recent years, it has been undertaken by Paul Smylie who will do it again this year. For more details, see: https://ec.gc.ca/reom-mbs/default.asp?lang=En&n=416B57CA-1.

Non-bird Surveys:

Bats: Nipissing Naturalists will again monitor bats in the McConnell Lake area this June. If interested in taking part, please let Fred Pinto know.

Reptiles and Amphibians: The Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas is a citizen-science project through Ontario Nature that tracks distribution of reptiles and amphibians. See https://ontarionature.org/programs/citizen-science/reptile-amphibian-atlas/ for further details and to download the free app.

Your Board of Directors

Julie Falsetti:

Courtesy of Julie Falsetti

From the Niagara Region originally, Julie moved to North Bay in the summer of 2017. She attended the University of Guelph where she obtained her undergraduate degree in Wildlife Biology. She also obtained a graduate certificate in Ecosystem Restoration from Niagara College.

Julie recently started work for the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority as a Stewardship Intern, focusing on projects that involve native plantings, species at risk and invasive species control.

An outdoor enthusiast, Julie likes hiking, canoeing, birding and herping.

Courtesy of Riley Cormier

Riley Cormier:

Riley is also from the Niagara Region. He moved to North Bay to attend Nipissing University for a BSc in environmental science and physical geography.

When not doing school work, Riley works at Nipissing in the earth observation lab.

Riley spends most of his spare time canoeing and wandering the forest looking for reptiles, spiders and insects, all of which he likes to photograph.

Speakers for May's meeting

Meetings are now held at our new location, still on the **second Tuesday of every month**, from September to December and from February to June, **starting at 7:00 p.m.** The new location is**: 176 Lakeshore Drive, at the northeast corner of Lakeshore and Gertrude in the former Tweedsmuir Elementary Public School.**

Topic and Speakers for Tuesday, May 8: Ever wonder what hidden treasures are inside your local Conservation Reserves (CR)? Did you know that there are more than 30 CRs in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), North Bay District?

Ottertail Creek Conservation Reserve, courtesy of MNRF

Regulated under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, CRs protect significant natural and cultural features and are important areas for scientific research and monitoring.

Julie Robinson, District Planner, and Micheline Mamone, Management Biologist, MNRF, will describe the designation and review process for CRs within the North Bay District and highlight key natural heritage features of local CRs, ranging from old growth pine forests to provincially significant wetlands.

They will also discuss opportunities for nature enthusiasts to contribute to biodiversity values collection, including species-at-risk, to better inform management of the CRs and the surrounding areas.

Schedule of Activities for Ontario Nature Northern Region Meeting

Location: Canadian Ecology Centre located within Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park
Date: Friday 11th May to Sunday 13th May 2018

Date and time	Location	Event
Friday May 11		
Check in 3:00 p.m. 5:00 p.m. 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.	**The Canadian Ecology Centre (CEC)** **Aaniin Room**	 **Meet and Greet** **Dinner**
6:30 to 7:15 p.m.	**Aaniin Room**	**Presentation: Indigenous People Monitoring Fish and Wildlife** Peter Meisenheimer, General Manager Anishinabek/Ontario Fisheries Resource Centre
7:15 to 9:00 p.m.	**Aaniin Room**	**Ontario Nature Meeting** Greetings: Otto Peter, Ontario Nature President Protected Places Campaign Update: Caroline Schultz, Ontario Nature Executive Director Club Updates: Northern Representatives. Please submit Activity Reports.
9:00 p.m. Free Time	**Canadian Ecology Centre Grounds**	**Campfire**

Saturday May 12		
7:30 to 8:30 a.m.	**Dining Hall CEC**	**Breakfast**
9.00 a.m.	**Aaniin Room**	**Morning Presentation: Eastern Wolf** Roseanne Van Schie, PhD Candidate, University of Toronto
Depart 10:00 a.m.	**Car Pool to Field Trip Locations**	
Arrive 11:00 a.m.	**Explorer's Point Park** Explorer's Point Park is a triangle of green space jutting into the Ottawa River where the Mattawa River joins the Ottawa.	**Fascinating History and Geology of Area:** Fred Pinto, R.P.F., President, Nipissing Naturalists Club
11:30 to 12:15	**Explorer's Point Park, Mattawa**	**Chimney Swifts** Annie Morin, Canadian Nuclear Labs, Chalk River
12:15 to 1:00 p.m. Depart	**Explorer's Point Park, Mattawa** During lunch, we learn about the Ontario Nature Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA) and use of the ORAA App	**Boxed Lunch** **Harnessing the Power of Citizen Science: Using the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas (ORAA) in the Field** The app includes a field guide for the 48 species of reptiles and amphibians found in Ontario. To help identify sightings, the field guide includes a colour photo gallery, interactive range maps and detailed descriptions for each species. Call recordings are also available for frogs and toads. Sightings from anywhere in Ontario can be submitted in less than 30 seconds using the app on your smartphone or mobile device.

Afternoon Program Forestry Practices and Forest Ecology		
1:20 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	**Off Highway # 533**	**View Operational Final Harvest Site of White Pine** **Maple Stand along Oirig Road** **Yellow Birch and Canada Yew Study** Fred Pinto, R.P.F., Nipissing Naturalists President **Tree Marking Exercise: Understanding the Importance of Tree Marking** Al Stinson, Andree Morneault and Fred Pinto
4:30 to 5:00 p.m.	**Return to Canadian Ecology Centre**	
5:00 to 6:00 p.m.	**Free Time** **Aaniin Room**	**Networking with Naturalists** l free to bring your own refreshments.
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.	**CEC** **Aaniin Room**	**Dinner**
8.00 to 9.00 pm	**CEC** **Aaniin Room**	**Evening Presentation: Bat Monitoring** Rebecca Geauvreau, Species at Risk Biologist, FRi Ecological Services
Sunday, May 13		
7:30 to 8:30 a.m.	**Dining Cabin**	**Breakfast**
8.30 to 9.30 a.m.	**CEC** **Aaniin Room**	**Nature Network Discussion** Franco Mariotti, Regional Director Barbara Mackenzie-Wynia, Regional Coordinator
Depart for North Bay at 10:00 a.m.	**Pimisi Bay Picnic Area**	**Louise de Kiriline Lawrence Plaque Stop** Louise was an internationally renowned naturalist, author and nurse.
10.30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	**Laurentian Ski Hill, Janey Avenue, North Bay**	**The Motus Project: Putting North Bay on the Map for Wildlife Tracking** Troy Storms, North Bay-Mattawa C.A., and Gary Sturge, Nipissing Naturalists
Goodbyes and Departure		

THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

Board of Directors, 2018

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Monthly Bird Wing reports are sent to members by email and posted on the Nipissing Naturalists Club's website, https://www.nipnats.com/club-activities/bird-wing/. Here you will find in date order monthly Bird Wing reports; monthly Bird Bash reports; Year-end reports; and Christmas Bird Count reports.

The Woodland Observer is published electronically each month from September to June and sent to members by email and posted in date order on Nipissing Naturalists Club website, https://www.nipnats.com/newsletters/.

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Membership Fees

Annual Nipissing Naturalists Club membership fees are: single $20. 00; family $30.00.

There is an **additional annual $5.00 membership fee for Bird Wing** which meets the fourth Tuesday of every month in the auditorium of the North Bay Public Library from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m**. This membership fee is paid directly to Bird Wing**.

Nipissing Naturalists Club is affiliated with Ontario Nature: http://www.ontarionature.org/.