THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

JUNE 2018

NIPISSING NATURALISTS CLUB

Renee Levesque

From the editor:

June is here and summer's on its way

I think June is the most delightful month of the year. It is the month when the garden comes alive and spring flowers dot wooded areas. It is the month of long days, the month of light. It is the month that hints at summer, but doesn't have summer's frenetic activity. L.M. Montgomery wrote, "I wonder what it would be like to live in a world where it was always June." (The only drawback where I live is the sheer number of blackflies and mosquitoes.)

There are many special nature days in June and no wonder! There is World Environment Day; World Oceans Day; Canadian Rivers Day; Nature Photography Day; World Sea Turtle Day; World Rainforest Day; Canoe Day; Meteor Watch Day; and, of course, the Summer Solstice, occurring this year in North Bay on June 21st at 6:07 a.m. On that day, we will have 7 hours and 12 minutes more daylight than we had on the Winter Solstice. (The photo above was taken at Marten River Provincial Park on the Summer Solstice in 2012, and the cover photo of the bullfrog was taken in West Nipissing on Canoe Day last June.)

What would summer be in North Bay without shadflies? Better, some might say, but after you read Dr. James Abbot's article on shadflies, you could change your mind. Dr. Abbot, assistant professor, Department of Geography, Nipissing University, is looking for input on ideas for shadfly management. He welcomes observations, discussions and questions on the topic of shadflies. His phone number and email address are at the end of his article.

What will be in store for us in terms of weather this summer? Keep your eye on the jet stream. Dr. Larry Dyke talked about the jet stream and climate change at April's meeting and wrote a short article for this issue based on his presentation.

Starting this spring and into the summer and fall, Jeremy St. Onge, former president of Nipissing Naturalists Club, and Professor of Environmental Studies and Biotechnology, Canadore College,

will be gathering wild food staples for his big year (2019) of wild food eating. Read about this fascinating experiment inside this issue.

In May's issue, there were articles on Alfred Russel Wallace and Charles Darwin. This theme continues with Chris Connors' book review on Alexander von Humboldt, a naturalist, explorer and geographer who greatly influenced Wallace and Darwin, among many others. He was a "star" in his time and for decades afterwards, much like the entertainment and sports stars of today.

In time for Canada Day, we will officially have the Canada Jay returned to us. Not that this bird ever left Canada, but its name somehow got lost back in 1957 and has now been restored. You will find an article on this, as well as the results of three May bird walks in Laurier Woods with Dick Tafel.

Other articles include interesting sightings from this spring; a collage of some of the activities from the Northern Regional meeting of Ontario Nature for which our club acted as host; and bios of our two new Directors, Allison Bannister and Matt Procunier.

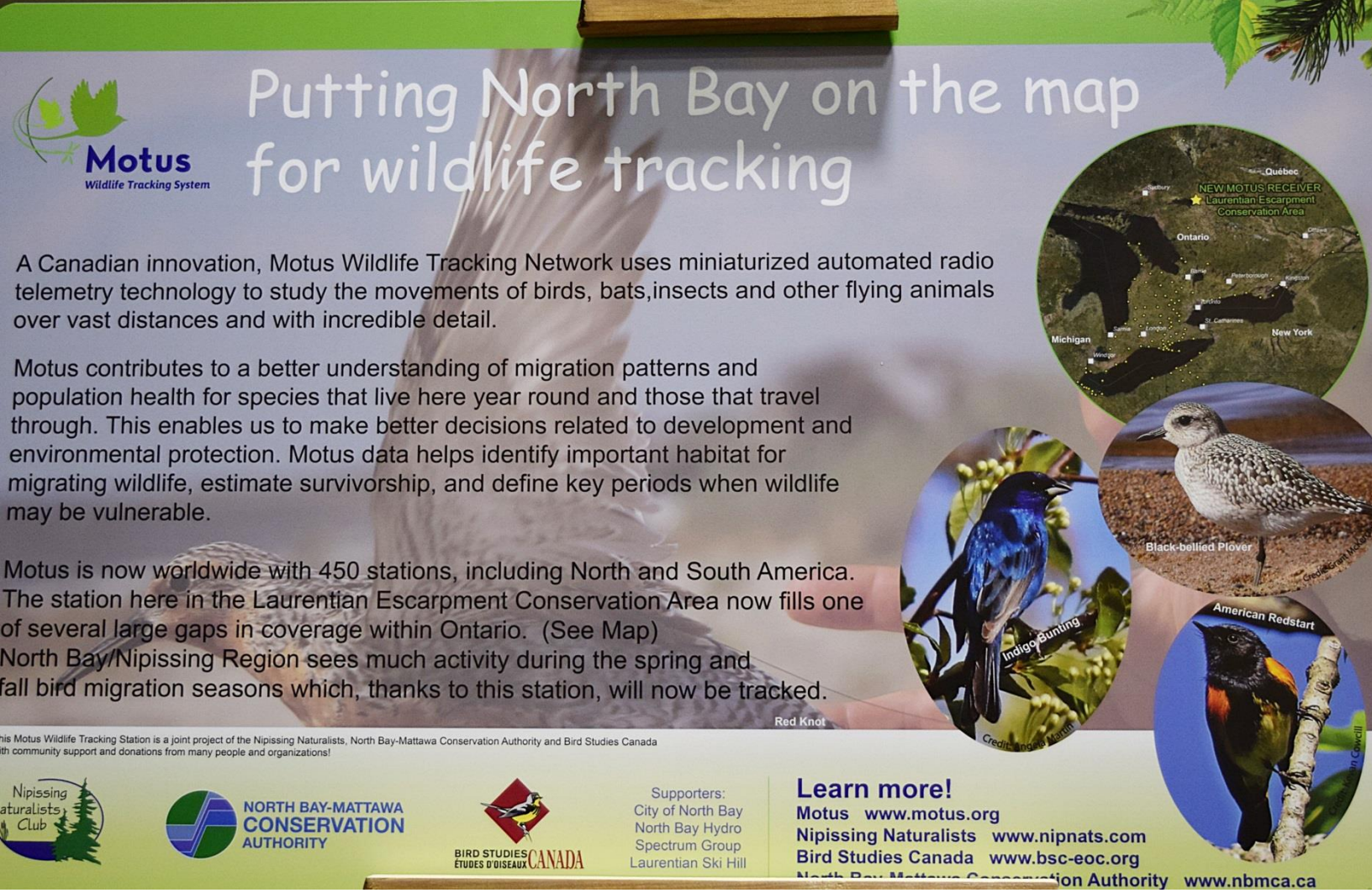
The speaker in June for the last meeting of the season is Mary Marrs. Mary is a long-standing club member who volunteers at her own expense in countries around the world. Her topic may not be nature-oriented, but it is by a dedicated club member who does much to help others.

Finally, Nipissing Naturalists Club undertook another major project, much as we did to get Louise de Kiriline Lawrence recognized with an Ontario Heritage Trust provincial plaque. Once again, we saw a major project to its successful completion and North Bay is now on the global wildlife tracking system with its very own Motus tower! Gary Sturge informed me on June 4 that two birds were recorded shortly after the tracking system became operational – a Savannah Sparrow that was recorded at Bird Studies Canada's headquarters in Port Rowan was recorded here three days later; and a Dunlin that was recorded near Tillsonburg was recorded here a day later. An article on the unveiling ceremony on May 25 and a list of donors, helpers and supporters who made this project possible follows "From the editor".

Have a safe and nature-filled summer. I will be back in September, but in the meantime, be sure to send me photos, observations, book reviews or articles on whatever nature species or events or books strike your fancy.

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

Renee Levesque



Text and photos by Renee Levesque, with Motus installation photos as indicated

On Friday morning, May 25, North Bay's Motus Wildlife Tracking System became official, tracking birds and other small wildlife as we gathered for the unveiling of the plaque. (Note photos on the plaque by Nipissing Naturalists Club members Kevan Cowcill, Angela Martin and Grant McKercher.)

There were many individuals, organizations and companies to thank and some, who went over and beyond what can be expected, received Awards of Appreciation or Thank You Awards.

Awards of Appreciation were presented to Cam Graham, General Manager, on behalf of Laurentian Ski Hill; Al MacDonald, Mayor, on behalf of the City of North Bay; Stuart Mackenzie, Migration Project Manager, on behalf of Bird Studies Canada; Paul Ridely, Manager of

Operations, on behalf of North Bay Hydro; and Darren Schankula, Vice-president, Corporate Operations, on behalf of Spectrum Group. Darren is pictured above with his award.

Mati Sauks, who donated $1,000.00, also received an Award of Appreciation. Brian Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer, and Troy Storms, Manager, Lands and Stewardship, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority, each received Awards of Thank You. Pictured above is Gary Sturge, who spearheaded the Motus project for Nipissing Naturalists Club, presenting an Award of Thank You to Troy Storms who ensured everything that needed to get done, got done. (Awards of Appreciation are to be given to Nipissing University, North Bay Lions Club and Rebuilt Resources.) A list of all donors follows this article.

Anthony Rota, MP for the riding of Nipissing-Temiskaming, was not able to attend due to commitments in Ottawa, but his Executive Assistant, Micheline Bédard, spoke on his behalf. With our provincial election looming, Vic Fedeli was not able to attend.

Taking part in the unveiling of the plaque (below) are, from left to right, Fred Pinto, Stuart Mackenzie, Troy Storms, Al MacDonald and Micheline Bédard.

After the speeches and the unveiling there was time to socialize and meet those who helped bring North Bay's Motus Wildlife Tracking System to fruition and put North Bay on the global wildlife tracking map. To see the locations of the Motus Wildlife Tracking System in North America and parts of Central and South America, as well as Australia and some European countries, see: https://motus.org/data/receiversMap?lang=en.

With his master of ceremony duties completed, Fred Pinto was interviewed by CTV, as were Stuart Mackenzie and Brian Taylor. See: https://northernontario.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=1403029.

Motus installation from start to completion. Left and centre photos by Kaye Edmonds, right photo by Renee Levesque

Motus donors

Thank you to all individuals, companies and organizations who donated money and in-kind services towards the Motus Wildlife Tracking System. Your donations helped us realize a dream that began when Dick Tafel suggested the idea at a Bird Wing meeting in November 2016 and became a reality in May 2018. That it became a reality is thanks in large part to Gary Sturge, Nipissing Naturalists Club, who spearheaded the project, and to Troy Storms, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority, who worked closely with Gary. Special thanks also to the following club members: Marc Buchanan who chaired the original planning committee; Irene Kasch who approached service clubs and organizations for donations; Connie Sturge, club treasurer, who kept the club's finances on track; Louise Simpson who carted around to many events her Motus poster, made in part with Bird Wing photos; Kaye Edmonds, official photographer of the installation of the pole; Renee Levesque, Fred Pinto and Sarah Wheelan for their promotion of the project in the newsletter, the media and on the website; and all club directors and member who supported this major project.

The donors are as follows:

$1,000.00: Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council; Nipissing University; Mati Sauks.

$500.00: North Bay Lions Club; Rebuilt Resources; Gary and Connie Sturge.

$100.00: Bird Wing; Greg Briggs; Marc Buchanan; Susan Christian; Peter Ferris; Jim Hasler; Lyn Ingham; Grant McKercher; Fred Pinto.

$75.00: Kerry Blaise.

$30.00: Kaye Edmonds; Dave O'Neil.

$25.00: Lori Anderson; Anonymous; Sheldon McGregor; Lorie and Janis Reed; Steph Romaniuk; Sarah Wheelan.

In-kind: Bird Studies Canada for technical expertise and labour.

City of North Bay for initial excavating.

North Bay Hydro ($4,000.00) for pole and installation.

North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority for land and ongoing electrical and Wi-Fi service.

Spectrum Telecom Group Ltd for material and labour for pole grounding.

This jay belongs to Canada

By Renee Levesque

Renee Levesque

The Gray Jay is no longer the Gray Jay. Yes, it is still grey, but its name has finally been restored to its original name, Canada Jay!

When it was first named back in1831, it was called Canada Jay, but unfortunately in 1957, the name erroneously got changed to Gray Jay and Gray Jay it has been until May 2018, 61 years later. And when the name was changed to Gray Jay, the American spelling of gray was used instead of our spelling of grey.

But we Canadians, like the Canada Jay, a member of the corvid family, are persistent and vigorously lobbied the North American Classification Committee (NACC) of the American Ornithological Society (AOS) to change the name back to its original name, thanks to ornithologist Dan Strickland, who spent much time researching the history of why the name was changed in the first place. For those who get the publication of the Ontario Federation of Ornithologists (OFO) magazine, *Ontario Birds*, you may recall Dan's article, "How the Canada Jay Lost its Name and Why it Matters".

Renee Levesque

In December 2017, Dan and six other members of the AOS submitted the proposal for the name change to the NACC. Proposals must receive a two-thirds positive vote by Committee members to pass – and pass it did, 9 votes for and 1 against.

Although the name change won't be officially announced until July in *The Auk: Ornithological*

Advances, you can't keep good news down, especially not when it comes to birders who always seem to know when there is a new bird in town.

Now what we need to do is to convince the Trudeau government that we want a national bird, and maybe by renaming the Gray Jay the Canada Jay that will do the trick, especially in this "The Year of the Bird". Certainly David Bird, McGill professor emeritus and B.C. ornithologist, will continue to push for having the Canada Jay declared our national bird. Letters have been written to the government, but responses to these letters have not been encouraging.

Why the Canada Jay as our national bird? Well, in addition to its now carrying the name of our country, it is loyal – doesn't migrate in the winter; it is tough – can breed in frigid temperatures; it is smart – a member of the corvid family like the American Crow and Common Raven and we know how smart they are; it is friendly – will eat out of your hand or land on your camera while you are trying to take its picture, as it did on Nicole Richardson's camera as shown below; it is found in every province and territory; it is not the provincial bird of any other province like the Common Loon (Ontario) and the Snowy Owl (Quebec); and it figures in the folklore of the First Nations people – the Canada Jay is sometimes called whiskey jack, a name derived from Wisakedjak, meaning trickster. Quite a few good reasons there for naming it our national bird.

For anyone who is a birder, you know we don't, we can't, give up easily. We are dogged in our approach and Professor Bird who believes so much that the Canada Jay must become our national bird, is prepared to walk across Canada to gather a million signatures in support of this. If it comes to a cross-country walk, it will be called "The Great Canadian Jay Walk".

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The shadfly

Renee Levesque

There's more to the story than meets the eye

By Dr. James Abbot

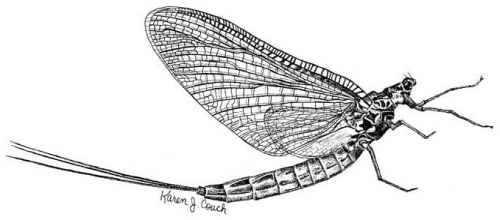
Introduction

The annual arrival of shadflies to the shores of Lake Nipissing is impossible not to notice. The sight, smell and sound (under foot or wheel) of millions of shadflies searching for a mate in their final life stage are an environmental and cultural phenomenon that characterizes the region.

The shadfly's predictable yearly appearance is significant in many ways. Shadflies are an important part of the food chain, a barometer of the health of Lake Nipissing, as well as an indicator of broader changes in the region's environmental landscape. This article provides a brief background on shadflies and potential ways to limit detrimental effects on both the shadfly population and humans.

Shadfly biology

Shadflies (known more commonly as mayflies) are part of the order Ephemeroptera. The name is derived from the Greek *ephēmeros*, meaning short-lasting, and *pteros*, meaning wing. The name is fitting since most of us only see the two to three days of a shadfly's time on land. However, the entire shadfly life cycle unfolds within two years. Once deposited on the water, eggs of *Hexagenia* spp., the most common shadfly species in Lake Nipissing, descend approximately 3 metres to the lake bed. Depending on the lake's oxygen and temperature, the eggs may hatch



soon after deposition or may overwinter. Larval mayflies, or nymphs, emerge and burrow into the sediment to filter feed for approximately two years in colder environments.

The shadfly season we encounter every summer in North Bay is really three separate events. When the water temperature approaches 20 degrees Celsius, nymphs that have moulted into subimagos (or preshads) begin to emerge from the water *en masse* and head towards the shoreline. Between 24 or 48 hours later, shadflies moult into the final imago phase. Male shadflies swarm in large numbers and attach onto females, mating only once before dying. Fertilized females return in large numbers to the water after sunset to lay their eggs on the lake, completing the cycle.

The variability in any one factor, such as water temperature, ice cover, wind strength and direction, can affect the relative number of individuals that survive in a given life stage. This complexity makes understanding cause and effect linkages of shadfly abundance very difficult to untangle.

The role of shadflies in aquatic and terrestrial food cycles

No research has been done to define or quantify where the various stages of the shadfly fit into the food chain. Given the changes to the region's environment (discussed below), we can assume that the shadfly's role as predator and prey has changed as well. However, it is evident that shadflies are an important part of insectivore and detritivore diets at least for a few weeks each year.

That fishy smell

In the 1980s, researchers began to recognize the role that salmon migrating to their natal streams to spawn and die played in environments far from the sea (e.g., Kline *et al*., 1990). They realized that salmon migrations resulted in a net transport of phosphorus and nitrogen from the relatively nutrient-rich marine environment to nutrient-poor inland forests.

A shadfly emergence may have a similar importance in the export of nutrients from water to land. When shadflies moult into their final stage, they have no mouth or digestive organs. Put simply, they are airborne fertilization machines with only one purpose. As such, they are packed with gametes and fat reserves, rich in phosphorus and nitrogen (and responsible for the fishy smell that accompanies shadfly season). This 'protein pump' therefore acts in two ways: it provides nutrients to Nipissing's fragile shoreline environments and is a net exporter of nutrients from the lake. This is important because increasing levels of these nutrients, especially phosphorus, can have detrimental effects on Lake Nipissing, causing low oxygen events and blue-green algae blooms.

Shadflies and Nipissing's environmental history

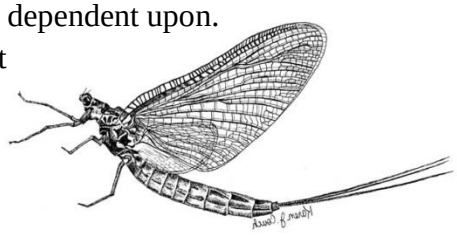
Changes in Lake Nipissing's aquatic and riparian environments have undoubtedly affected shadflies. The most evident has been the development of the built environment and artificial lighting. Swarming patterns as shadflies are drawn towards lights, as evidenced by the accumulations below streetlights. More subtle changes due to a removal of natural vegetation may also have influenced shadfly abundance and behaviour. With less vegetation density, in particular reduced numbers of mature trees along the waterfront, wind currents may draw shadflies (being poor fliers) deeper inland. Moreover, there are less natural sites for shadflies to congregate, leading to an accumulation on artificial structures.

From a broader scale, the dramatic change in vegetation cover in the Nipissing watershed over the last 200 years can also have had effects on shadfly populations. A landscape that was predominantly mature white pine was removed over the course of a few decades, replaced by secondary succession, farmland and urban development. This had a significant effect not only on the nutrient balance and structure of the lakefloor, which may have affected the nymphal stage, but also on the behaviour of shadflies on land.

Perhaps the most difficult to determine is the effect of the disappearance of sturgeon and cisco on the nymph and subimago stage. The recent steep decline in bat populations and insectivorous bird species may have had a similar effect on adult shadfly survival.

Emerging environmental issues

Lake Nipissing faces emerging issues that may impact shadflies. Increased input of nutrients and a warming climate may be leading to more frequent eutrophication events. This in turn can lead to episodes of low oxygen levels in the water. Shadfly nymphs are acutely sensitive to low oxygen, as witnessed by the massive decline in ephemeropteran abundance in Lake Erie in the 1950s because of pollution. Invasive species, such as the spiny water flea, could also impact the lake food chain, removing species that shadfly nymphs are dependent upon. As with most environmental trends, evidence is usually not immediately apparent, and by the time cause has been linked to effect, the negative consequences are difficult to reverse.

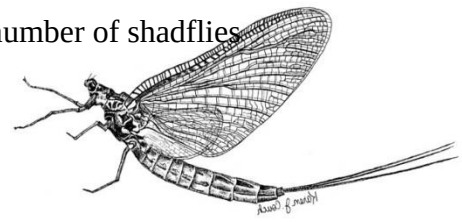


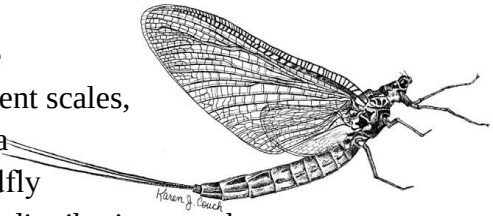
Important questions

There are many questions concerning shadfly abundance, behaviour and ecological importance that are both exciting to consider and vital to answer in order to manage this important resource. I address a few below:

Can we perceive trends in shadfly abundance?

This is an important question because changes in the timing or the overall number of shadflies can be an indicator of other ecosystem shifts. There is no simple

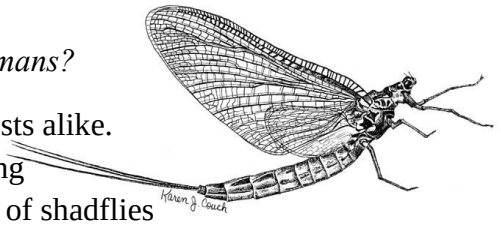




answer for several reasons. First, shadfly abundance and timing can be positively and negatively affected to a variety of factors acting at different scales, and with direct or indirect effects. Identifying an actual trend from data 'noise' is very difficult. Second, the historical data on Nipissing's shadfly abundance and timing is limited to anecdotal sources. Finally, shadfly distribution may have also changed, either disguising or exaggerating an apparent change in abundance. Lake Nipissing's shoreline has experienced development over time, with light patterns and human circulation changing. These factors may have acted to either disperse or concentrate shadfly swarms, and there may have been more or less people at different times present to observe changes in abundance.

Can we better understand the role shadflies play in nutrient export on land from Lake Nipissing?

Methods have evolved since early studies in how salmon transport nitrogen and phosphorus, making studies much more accessible and affordable. Isotopic analysis of these elements in areas that experience annual shadfly swarming can be compared to those that do not at relatively low cost. A better understanding of shadfly-mediated nutrient flows can be used to justify their management.

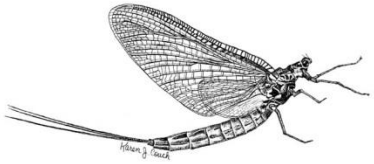


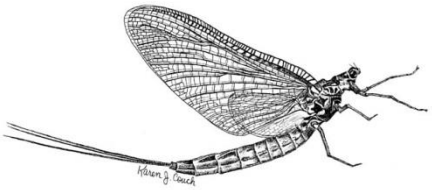
Ecological traps: Can we reduce 'conflict' between shadflies and humans?

Not surprisingly, this question has occupied town planners and scientists alike. A giant lighthouse-funnel hybrid was once proposed for Lake Nipissing to 'intercept' the shadflies before they came onshore! Accumulations of shadflies on lights, roads and windows have not only an aesthetic but also an economic cost. Surfaces can become so slick that it becomes a hazard for drivers. The countless adults that are crushed by vehicles or pedestrians, or power washed off of buildings undoubtedly result in less reproductive success or an opportunity to contribute to the food chain. In addition, females can deposit their eggs on wet paved surfaces that are mistaken for water, compounding losses in what is termed an 'ecological trap'.

There are several ways of addressing this question: (i) reduce artificial attractants to shadflies, (ii) increase natural vegetation, and (iii) educate the public. Reducing artificial attractants involves both the light sources that draw shadflies to a place (such as streetlights) and the surfaces that they rest on (such as windows). Reducing attraction to artificial light is simple: reduce the number and intensity of artificial lights. However, this solution is confounded by economic, aesthetic and safety concerns.

Research has shown that shadflies and other polarotactic (i.e., navigate by light wavelength) insects are drawn to surfaces that have a high horizontal light wave emission, such as water. Artificial surfaces, such as windows, streets and cars, also have high levels of horizontal light wave emission. Solar panels are also an emerging issue. While relatively rare at present, they will become more common in the future. Optimal panel alignment strives to achieve optimal

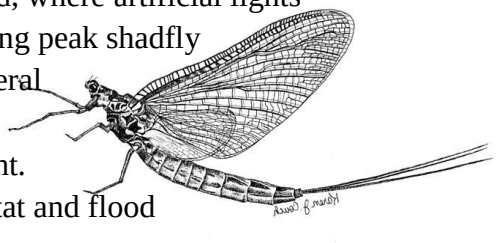




light polarization – which in turn acts as a draw towards shadflies and other insects. Tests on the effect of anti-reflective coatings on insect attraction to solar panels have been mixed (Száz et al., 2016). In full sunlight, coated panels were less attractive, but in overcast conditions, there was a significant preference by mayflies *for* coated surfaces.

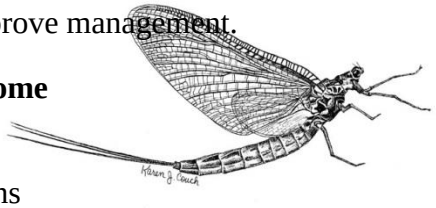
A modest proposal

Given the uncertainty, a prudent first step for reducing conflict is adaptive management, where reducing stakeholder cost and maximizing benefit are emphasized. To limit the economic burden of changing artificial light intensity, a seasonal strategy could be adopted, where artificial lights closer to the lakeshore could be switched off or dimmed before and during peak shadfly season. Increasing natural vegetation along shorelines may work in several ways: to make natural surfaces more likely for shadfly landings due to proximity and shelter from wind, and acting as a barrier for artificial light. The contingent economic and ecosystem benefits, such as shading, habitat and flood resilience, speak for themselves.

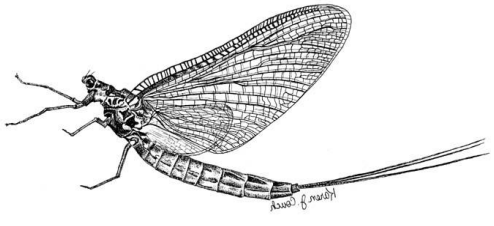


Regardless of what management options are considered, public education is important. The more stakeholders are aware of the ecological and economic benefits of shadflies, the more they can participate in the discussion. All management decisions involve trade-offs between different goals and weighing the merits of the options for achieving these goals. An informed community can better participate in discussions and the inevitable adaptations that occur with policy changes. Perhaps most importantly, the public has an invaluable role in contributing their insight gained from observing shadflies within Nipissing's natural and human landscape. This article concludes with a call to contribute this insight to improve management.

Calling all citizen scientists: Shadfly insight welcome



I started this article by stating the obvious: shadflies are impossible not to notice. A wealth of observations concerning shadfly seasonality, abundance and behaviour from different settings are extremely valuable in inspiring research questions. These observations include one made by a resident of Sturgeon Falls where shadflies appear to consistently emerge two weeks before they do in North Bay. The question then arises: if there is a difference, what causes it? Local differences in the aquatic environment? Artificial lighting? A genetically distinct subpopulation? Long-time residents are especially important in providing historical insight, both in terms of shadflies and overall regional change. This flow of information can act both ways: there is a growing role of citizens in providing systematic data for research projects, both reducing the cost of research and enhancing their contextual value and application.

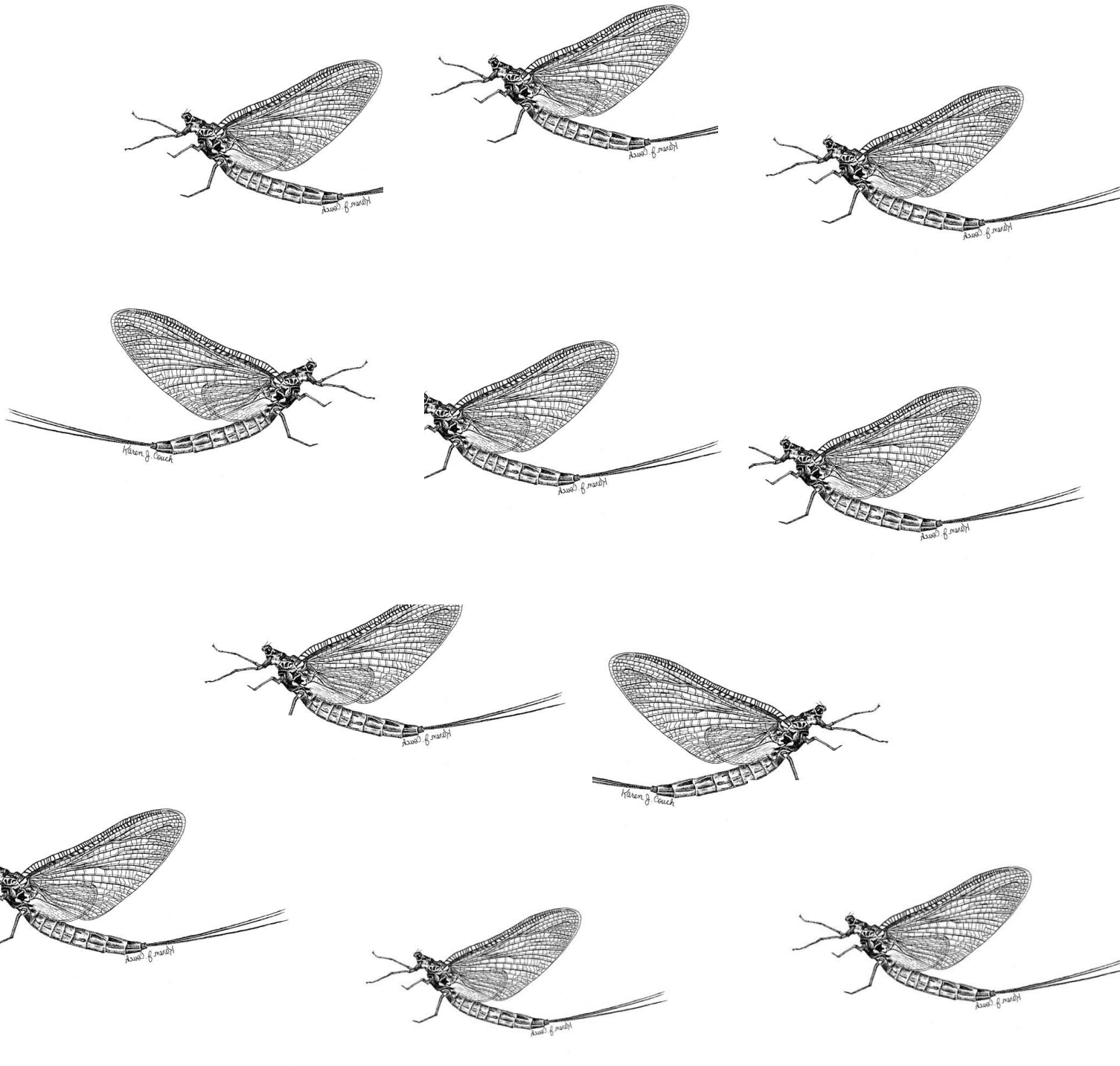


If you would like to discuss shadflies, either your observations, questions or ideas for management, please contact me at jabbott@nipissingu.ca, or 705-492-3354.

References:

Kline Jr. TC, Goering JJ, Mathisen OA, Poe PH, Parker PL. 1990. Recycling of elements transported upstream by runs of Pacific salmon: δN and δC evidence in Sashin Creek, southeastern Alaska. *Canadian Journal of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences* 47:136-144.

Száz, D., et al. 2016. Polarized light pollution of matte solar panels: anti-reflective photovoltaics reduce polarized light pollution but benefit only some aquatic insects. *Journal of Insect Conservation* 20 (4): 663-675.



Kaye Edmonds

Bird walks in Laurier Woods

By Renee Levesque

May 5: The first May bird walk of the season in Laurier Woods began in the damp fog and ended two hours later in the warm brilliant sunshine. However, the fog did not dampen the enthusiasm of 22 participants led by Dick Tafel.

One of the highlights, besides meeting some very nice people, was the sighting of the wood warblers. There were only two species, the Black and White and the Yellow-rumped, two warblers named after their colours, making them easier to identify at a glance and easier to remember their names, as opposed to, say, the Tennessee or the Cape May Warblers. But Yellow-rumped? Not the prettiest name despite its yellow rump!

Another highlight was hearing the poignant song of the "trilingual" and aptly named White-throated Sparrow – *Oh Sweet Canada-Canada-Canada; Cache ton cul, Fréderic, Fréderic, Frederic*, in Quebec; and *Old Sam Peabody Peabody* in the United States. For me, it is the song of the Northern Ontario forest, a song that takes me back to my childhood.

Another highlight was the singing of the Brown Thrasher (pictured at right), welcoming us at the parking lot as we began our walk. Like the Northern Mockingbird and the Gray Catbird, the Brown Thrasher is a mimic. It sings in couplets, passionately voicing each phrase twice. Always a joy in the early spring to hear it sing because it will cease doing so shortly after the eggs are laid. Then you will not see it on the top of a tree singing its heart out, but, if you are lucky, secretively foraging on the ground in tangled thickets.

Renee Levesque

Other highlights included the little Ruby-crowned Kinglets which refuse to stay still for long, thereby frequently eluding those of us who want the ultimate picture of one; the second flycatcher of the season seen after the Eastern Phoebe, the Least Flycatcher; the Pied-billed Grebe hanging out with the American Wigeon; and the two courting Belted Kingfishers at Arum Pond.

Stephen O'Donnell

The prize, the *Seasonal Checklist of the Birds of North Bay and Area*, for the best bird spotted went to Ross Morrison for the White-throated Sparrow (pictured at right). Good choice. Besides being "trilingual" and having a patriotic song, it is such a pretty sparrow with its whiter than white throat and the outstanding yellow patch between its eye and its bill, especially during breeding season when the yellow is at its most brilliant. And if that isn't enough, it is also polymorphic in that some adults have brown and tan stripes on their heads instead of the more outstanding and better known black and white stripes.

Interestingly enough, it was the White-throated Sparrow that was deemed the best bird spotted during the first May bird walk in 2017. And interestingly, no wood warblers were spotted during that first walk in 2017.

Renee Levesque

May 12: For the second May bird walk, the sun shone brightly for the full 2 hours on the 17 high-spirited participants, again led by Dick.

This time, there were more wood warblers, but still not many. Seen were a male Black and White (pictured at left), a male Black-throated Blue, and a Yellow-rumped, all aptly named. Not so aptly named was another warbler seen, the Nashville Warbler, called the Nashville because it was discovered in Nashville in 1811. The male seen during the walk showed off his chestnut-red crown patch, not often seen. But what is always seen on both the male and female is a very obvious white eye ring on a gray head.

Other highlights included 2 Great Blue Herons and a Green Heron, all in flight; a female Hooded Merganser; and 2 male Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers.

The prize this week initially went to Paula North for her choice of the Nashville Warbler (pictured below) as the most interesting species seen. However, as she already had the *Seasonal Checklist*, it went to Jackie Manella, who also already had the checklist, having received it last year during the first May walk, and so it went to Daniel Currie. All three identified the Nashville as being the most interesting species found, but Paula was the first to say so.

Stephen O'Donnell

May 19: The third May bird walk took place over the holiday weekend, attracting 25 participants, once again led by Dick. Rain was forecast but did not begin until well after the walk was completed.

Warblers seen were the Nashville, the Black and White, the Black-throated Blue and the Yellow-rumped as were seen the week before, but also two beauties, the striking male Blackburnian with his brilliant orange throat and the very pretty Northern Parula. Unfortunately not everyone got to see the Northern Parula spotted by Mary Young and seen by only few of us.

Other warblers seen were the many American Redstarts, all males with the exception of one female; the many lovely Chestnut-sided Warblers, most of which were pleased to meet us according to their song, *pleased, pleased, pleased to meetcha*; the bright Yellow Warblers that one can mistake at a glance for the male American Goldfinch; a male Black-throated Green; and a male and female Common Yellowthroat.

Renee Levesque

Another interesting warbler seen was the Ovenbird, (pictured at left) clearly standing out in the warbler world as an individual because it walks among the dead leaves of the forest floor rather than flitting about or frequently perching briefly on a branch like other warblers. It is called an Ovenbird because its well-concealed nest, which it makes on the ground,

resembles a Dutch oven. If you hear a loud, *teacher-teacher-teacher*, you know one is nearby.

Species were many during this walk, but so were the number of participants, so not everyone got to see all the birds some of us saw. A few of us saw at least 43 species!

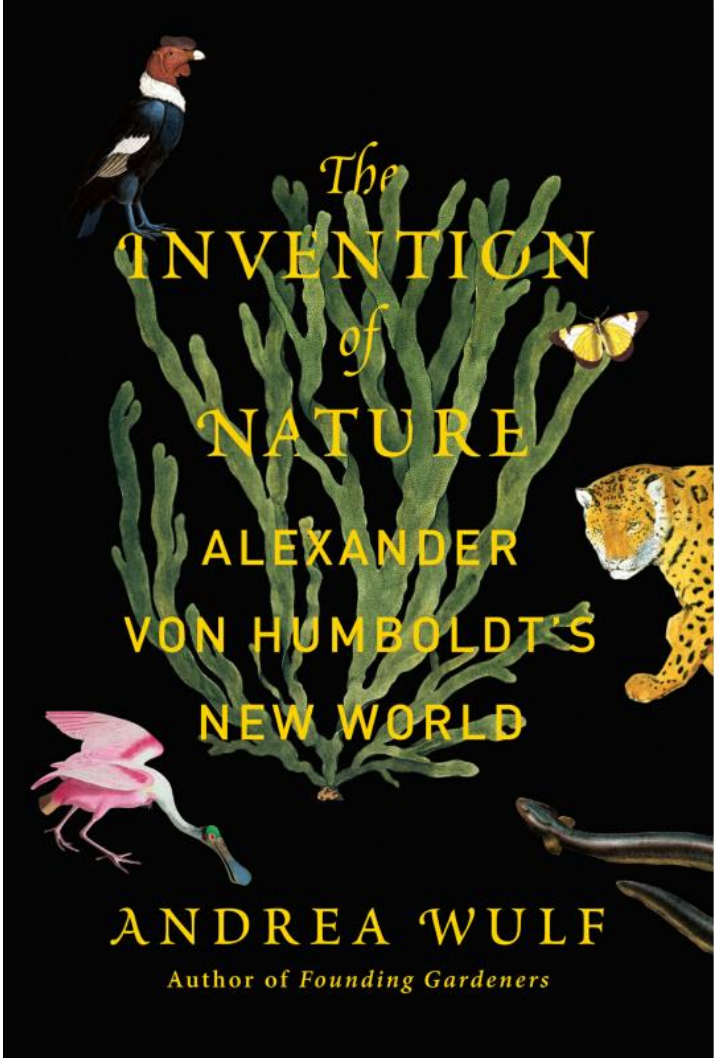
A species of note not seen previously was the Veery, a thrush like the American Robin, and another bird of the forest floor, one not often seen once there is growth. But from a remote distance, its surreal and rippling voice can be heard spiraling downward. Another seen, but not yet singing on that walk, was the Warbling Vireo. It is a cute little bird, but has no outstanding identification markings – no wing bars, no spectacles, no bright colours. But it makes up for that with its outstanding melodious voice which it uses all day. Most know the bird only by its song because once the leaves are on the sun-dappled deciduous trees, you are lucky to see it.

Renee Levesque

Two prizes were awarded at the completion of this walk – to Holly Featherstone for identifying the Blackburnian (at right) as one of the more interesting birds seen, and to Gerry Way for naming the Yellow-rumped. Had everyone seen the Northern Parula, I am positive it would have been considered one of the outstanding species, but the Blackburnian is right up there, and the Yellow-rumped has to be admired as one of our early warblers, a vigorous bird and an adaptable feeder, with a white chin and two other distinct yellow patches besides that on its rump. The photo below shows it does indeed have more going for it than a yellow rump!

Renee Levesque

Book Review



The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World
By Andrea Wulf
Vintage; Reprint edition (October 4, 2016)
576 pages

By Chris Connors

Alexander von Humboldt was a naturalist, geographer and explorer. When he died at the age of 89 on May 6, 1859, he was considered to be the "most famous man in the world after Napoleon". His portrait hung in museums around the world and in palaces as remote as that of King Siam in Bangkok. His name was a household word, known by every school child in Europe and North America. In his final days, newspapers carried daily updates on his condition. Tens of thousands of mourners came to his state funeral procession.

Ten years after Humboldt's death, hundreds of thousands of people celebrated the centennial of his birth with festivities around the globe. In the United States, there were parades, celebrations and speeches in many cities – Pittsburgh came to a standstill with 10,000 revellers and in Central Park in New York City, 25,000 people gathered to listen to speeches as a large bronze bust of Humboldt was unveiled. In Berlin where Humboldt was born, authorities ordered all government agencies and offices to close for the day. Despite torrential rain, 80,000 people gathered for hours to honour this scientific visionary and polymath. His birthday continued to be celebrated for decades after his death. (Pictured at left is Humboldt in 1843 from a painting by Joseph Stieler.)

Humboldt was the nexus of the scientific world. Influential people from around the world, including US politicians, made it a point to visit him in Germany. His books were published in a dozen languages and some people even bribed booksellers to be the first to receive copies. Many notable historical figures were heavily influenced by him and incorporated his ideas into their own work. This includes Darwin, Wallace, Thomas Jefferson, Goethe, Thoreau, Whitman, Emerson, Muir, and the

revolutionary who liberated South America from Spanish colonial rule, Simón Bolívar.

Humboldt's views are at the foundations of ecology itself. He revolutionized the way we see the world. Ecologists, environmentalists and nature writers are still influenced by his work, often without knowing it (e.g. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, James Lovelock's Gaia hypothesis).

Humboldt came up with the idea of vegetation and climate zones that snake across the globe. He found connections everywhere. Nothing, not even the tiniest organism, was looked at on its own. "In this great chain of causes and effects," Humboldt said, "no single fact can be considered in isolation." With this insight, he invented the web of life, the concept of nature as we know it today.

After Humboldt saw the devastating environmental effects of colonial plantations at Lake Valencia in Venezuela in 1800, he became the first scientist to talk about harmful human-induced climate change. Deforestation there had made the land barren; water levels of the lake were falling; and with the disappearance of brushwood, torrential rains had washed away the soils on the surrounding mountain slopes. He was the first to explain the forest's ability to enrich the atmosphere with moisture and its cooling effect, as well as its importance for water retention and protection against soil erosion. This seems self-evident now, but writers of Humboldt's time were of the opinion that clearing the forest would allow the winds to blow and make land and air healthier!

American artist Frederic Edwin Church followed in Humboldt's footsteps through South America and combined scientific details with sweeping views. The exhibition of his magnificent five-foot by ten-foot *The Heart of the Andes* (above) caused a sensation. When Church was ready to ship the painting to Berlin, he received the news that Humboldt had just died.

The author, Andrea Wulf, seeks to bring Humboldt's name back into our collective consciousness by outlining his ground-breaking work, his explorations, his obsessive study and measuring of everything that could be measured, his writings, and his influence on notable figures of his day and of those who were born after "the age of Humboldt". The book switches between Humboldt's life and work and his influence on other figures. The sections on Humboldt are fascinating, as are some of the chapters on historical figures – Goethe said a few days with Humboldt was like living several years, and wrote a character based on Humboldt into *Mephistopheles*. However, other historical figures, like Thoreau and Muir, didn't catch my interest, while some, like Haeckel, seemed to have only the most tenuous connection to Humboldt.

More places are named after Humboldt than any other person. Ocean currents, rivers, geysers, bays, major glaciers, and mountain ranges in China, South Africa, New Zealand and Antarctica bear his name. The Rockies were almost named the Humboldt Andes and Nevada was almost called Humboldt. There are many parks, schools and universities named after him. Almost 300 plants, more than 100 animals, including the Humboldt Penguin (right), and several minerals are also named after him. An area on the moon is called Mare Humboldtianum. In North America, there are four counties and thirteen towns named after him, including Humboldt, Saskatchewan, which was in the news for the bus crash that killed fifteen young athletes, and injured – some critically – another fourteen.

Adam Akumiszcza, Wikimedia Commons

Darwin, who copied out numerous passages from Humboldt's books and read them aloud to his teacher and his friends during their excursions, seemed almost obsessed with Humboldt. It was Humboldt's book of South American travels that inspired Darwin to travel to South America. Wrote Darwin: "My admiration of his famous personal narrative (part of which I almost know by heart), determined me to travel in distant countries, and led me to volunteer as naturalist in her Majesty's ship Beagle". Although Humboldt's *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent during the years 1799–1804* was comprised of seven volumes, Darwin took all seven with him into his limited space on the Beagle. "My feelings amount to admiration the more I read him," he declared in one letter home, and "I formerly admired Humboldt, I now almost adore him."

Darwin had imaginary conversations with Humboldt; made copious notes in the margins of Humboldt's books; and had new books shipped to him in South America. He modelled his own writing on Humboldt's ability to fuse "scientific writing with poetic description". His Beagle

voyage journal became quite similar in style and content to Humboldt's *Personal Narrative*, so much so that his sister complained he had been reading too much Humboldt. Others, however, told him how delighted they were with his "vivid, Humboldt-like pictures".

The Invention of Nature does a remarkable job outlining what Humboldt accomplished. Even if you are aware of Humboldt, there will be something new you will discover about him in this book. He was an accomplished polymath, fluent in many scientific disciplines, a prodigious writer, always learning, always studying, always corresponding with scientists around the world, writing more than 50,000 letters and receiving at least twice as many as that. (Recognizing that the telegraph would allow him to quickly obtain information from distant lands for his books, Humboldt also corresponded with Samuel Morse, the inventor of the telegraph and Morse code.) A map of Humboldt's expedition from 1799 to 1894 is shown below.

Wikimedia Commons

Overall, this is a well-written book about a genius whose name should be as familiar to people as Newton, Darwin and Einstein. This book is a good step in that direction.

***Editor's Note*:** *For a synopsis on Humboldt, check out Ted Ed on You Tube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EzakQuKqBeQ.*

For a list of books written by Humboldt: https://www.goodreads.com/author/list/303739.Alexander_von_Humboldt.

What it takes to eat wild for one year

By Jeremy St. Onge; photos courtesy of Jeremy St. Onge

I like food, but I especially like gathering and preparing wild foods. Although I have always gathered up wild foods here and there, I tackled them in earnest two years ago on a five-day wild-food-only adventure with a friend. He and I coined the phrase *Wilderness Living Challenge* to describe these kinds of wild food adventures.

The videos my friend produced from our experiment were a big hit on his YouTube channel, *The Wooded Beardsman*, and so we planned a second season. This past summer, we undertook a seven-day wild-food-only adventure. However, based on the abundance of food we collected, I stretched it out to 35 days of wild food eating.

From this experiment, I learned that I can happily eat a diverse range of wild foods, from acorn weevil grubs to groundhog livers. I also realized that I had become fairly adept at accessing various wild food resources from the Plantae, Animalia, and Fungi kingdoms (with a few Protista and Bacterial hitchhikers). While my own appetite for wild foods was growing, it became clear to me that the appetite for videos on this topic was also growing – several of our wild food videos on YouTube have over one million views!

So where does one go from here? After talking it over with my girlfriend, Delphanie, we

decided to tackle a full year of wild food eating. No grocery stores. No processed foods. Not even salt. How will we accomplish such a feat? Well, we all know that at some point our ancestors did it. And even though they were accessing resources in a greater abundance than can be found today, we think it can still be done by carefully accessing certain resources at peak availability and abundance.

As of this spring, we have started to set aside wild food staples to eat during our Big Year (2019). These staples will include maple sugar, game meat and plants, such as wild leeks, cattail pollen, wild apples, acorns and more.

We will use our freezer to store some foods, but will also explore other methods of preservation, such as fermentation, pickling, drying, smoking and salting. But wait – didn't I just say no grocery foods, including salt? We also plan to access some non-local food resources, such as salt, by bartering handmade wild-crafted items.

We plan to make our own vinegar from wild apples to make pickles. A big part of our focus will be to match wild foods with wild spices. No plain roasts here! We will be concocting brined venison braised in bear fat and served with spicy cranberry chutney and will wash it down with chokecherry wine! And for desert, we will have blueberry pie with an acorn and sedge-flour crust.

Weekly video blogs will document our progress. Enticing photographs will adorn Delphanie's Instagram account. We will rendezvous with wild food chefs and feature our favourite recipes. We will collaborate with other YouTube videographers and Instagram food junkies (no junk food allowed!). I may even write a book.

You can join the challenge by learning a new edible plant, by putting together an all-foraged meal, or by learning to make greater use of your fish than just the fillets - skin, tongue, brains, stomach, liver, swim bladder and eyeballs. You can use #WildernessLivingChallenge and #BigWildYear.

If you would like to follow our progress, look us up.

My YouTube channel is *One Wildcrafter:* https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCy7HUXYD7Ua6zPR384d1ETg.

Delphanie is on Instagram @DelphanieColyer:

https://www.instagram.com/delphaniecolyer/?hl=en

The Wooded Beardsman channel on YouTube also features many wild food adventures:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCuoSzo6nnDLKOiZ_rXHE6Gw

It should definitely prove to be one wild year!

Interesting spring sightings

By Renee Levesque

Kaye Edmonds

There were quite a number of interesting sightings this spring, five of which are listed below. Some are unusual and some more common, but all are interesting.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: On the morning of May 22, five of us – Dick Tafel, Lori Anderson, Kaye Edmonds, Daniel Curry and I – started off on our Bird Wing outing in Laurier Woods, mainly hoping to see as many wood warblers as we could. Although birders always hope to come across a rare or unusual species, we were not prepared to see a stocky Black-crowned Night-Heron sitting in a tree near the marsh with its neck tucked into its body, looking quite hunchbacked**.** It was at a bit of a distance at that point, but Kaye was able to get a photo (above) so we could positively confirm our sighting.

Although this heron is fairly common and widely distributed, it is not usually found in our area. In fact, as far as I am aware, the last time one was seen in our area was in 1994, also in Laurier Woods, by Dick Tafel. (According to eBird, the Night-Heron has been sighted in the Sudbury area over the years, from 2003 – when a juvenile was seen in October – to this past April. It has also been spotted over the years in the Ville Marie area, including one on May 3 of this year.) The rest of us had never seen a Black-crowned Night-Heron in Nipissing, although I have seen the adult and the juvenile in Florida.

Renee Levesque

The adult Black-crowned Night-Heron, as its name implies, has a black cap on its large, flat head. It also has a black back, with gray wings and a whitish to pale gray belly. It has short legs, a thick neck and a heavy pointed black bill. Immatures are brown with large white spots and yellow and black bills. In the photo at left, you can see the beginning of this immature's black crown.

It is not a big heron like our Great Blue Heron. Rather it is between the size of a crow and a goose, from 22 to 26 inches or 58 to 66 cm. It is found in wetlands across North America – by marshes, streams, lakes and reservoirs. During the day it tends to spend its time on tree limbs or concealed among foliage and branches. But from evening to early morning, it spends its time foraging. It is an opportunistic hunter, eating leeches,

earthworms, insects, lizards, crayfish, clams, mussels, fish, snakes, turtles, rodents, birds and eggs, but also carrion, plant materials and surprisingly, garbage at landfill sites.

It tends to forage on its own despite that fact that it is a social bird, roosting and nesting in groups. The groups include other heron species, egrets and ibises.

Its nest site is in a tree near cattails. Both the male and female incubate the nest and brood the chicks which leave the nest when they are a month old. They begin flying at six weeks, after which they widely disperse.

Although the Black-crowned Night-Heron is the most widespread heron in the world and although it is a common wetland bird, you have to look a little harder to find it than you would other herons. And because it is fairly common, it is a species of moderate concern. Threats include the draining and development of wetland habitat and contaminated runoff.

The Black-crowned Night-Heron is a good indicator of environmental quality because it forages at the top of the food chain; it tolerates disturbances; it has a wide distribution; and it is easy to study because it nests in colonies.

Kaye Edmonds

Barred Owl: Although the Barred Owl is the most common owl in our area, we do not often get to see the immature Barred Owl. But during the recent Great Canadian Birdathon, Fred Pinto's team comprised of Kaye Edmonds, Louise Simpson and Sarah Wheelan happened upon one on Alsace Road. Above is its photo – a delightful little fluffy thing.

Eastern Towhee: Another rare bird for our area showed up in my yard in the early morning of May 27, the female Eastern Towhee, a seed-eating bird with a short conical bill, looking somewhat like an oversized sparrow. I had a female in my yard on May 13, 2013, the last time I saw one in our area. According to eBird, there have been some sightings in North Bay, but not many. Martin Parker saw one in May 2006 in Laurier Woods, the same month and year he saw

one at Vic Rizzo's. (Martin didn't indicate on his checklist whether he saw a male or a female.) And in May 2009, Brent Turcotte heard its loud distinctive song in Laurier Woods. To my knowledge, none have stayed to breed in our area.

Renee Levesque

From All About Birds:
The female Eastern Towhee (above) has a brown head, throat and back, unlike the male which has a black throat, head and upperparts. Both have a white belly with rufous sides. They have long tails with large white tail corners that they flick and flash in response to other towhees and when disturbed.

The Eastern Towhee is a solitary bird, preferring a dense shrub cover with a lot of leaf litter in which it can scratch with a two-footed backward hop, much like the Fox Sparrow. It will come to your yard if you have brushy or shrubby borders and will venture out for fallen seeds from feeders if these are near the borders. In addition to seeds, it eats fruits and insects, and in the early spring, soft leaf and flower buds.

Because it is a bird of the undergrowth, it can be hard to see and that is why birders rely on hearing its call, *chewink*, or its song, *drink your tea*.

It usually nests on the ground, laying 2 to 6 eggs in well-hidden nests of stems and leaves. However, it is a common victim of the parasitic Brown-headed Cowbird. Unfortunately for the towhee, it shows no ability to distinguish between its eggs and the cowbird's eggs, and to make matters worse, the tricky cowbird will take out one of the towhee eggs when laying her own in the towhee nest. This makes it even harder for the towhee to notice an egg that is not her own.

Throughout its range, it is numerous and commonly seen, though its numbers declined by about 49% between 1966 and 2015. It is not on the 2016 State of North America's Birds' Watch List.

Scarce Infant: If you are wondering what a Scarce Infant is, it is a moth. I don't know why it is called Scarce Infant, but I do know that moths have some pretty strange names. It is a moth that is considered rare or uncommon throughout its entire range (Yukon to Labrador, south to New York and southern Alberta). Brent Turcotte spotted one and several Infants beside a parking area between Tyne and Little Tyne Lakes, about 18 km east of Trout Creek.

Jeremy deWaard, Wikimedia Commons

The Scarce Infant is an early spring day-flying (diurnal) moth. It is small and hairy with grey forewings with a white band. The hindwings are mostly white, heavily bordered with dark grey or black. Hosts for its caterpillar

are aspen, birch and alder. It prefers woodlands that are birch-dominated, along dirt roads and clearings.

Brent, who now posts sightings on iNaturalist, states that his report on this site of the Scarce Infant is only the third report from Northern Ontario. But he states that "because its range is more northerly than most species, that reduces the number of people available to observe it. This means that within its core range, it may not be rare after all, just uncommon."

Moths, of which there are more than 11,000 species in North America alone, get a bad rap even though they belong to the same family (Lepidoptera) as butterflies. But while the butterfly is colourful and represents freedom, for many the moth is considered a drab creature that nibbles on clothes. Although the Scarce Infant is not very colourful, there are many moths that are. Think of the Luna Moth, for example.

The easiest way to tell a moth from a butterfly is by examining the antennae. If they are feathery or fuzzy, it means it is a moth; if they taper to a point, it means it is a butterfly.

Actually, moths help scientists measure the health of ecosystems; provide food for nocturnal species, like bats and Screech Owls; and pollinate night-blooming flowers.

Moose: Earlier in the spring, a female moose (cow), probably a 2-year-old, wandered in from the woods behind our house, through our back yard, up the side of the house, over the front lawn and across the road before disappearing again into the woods. Her photo is below.

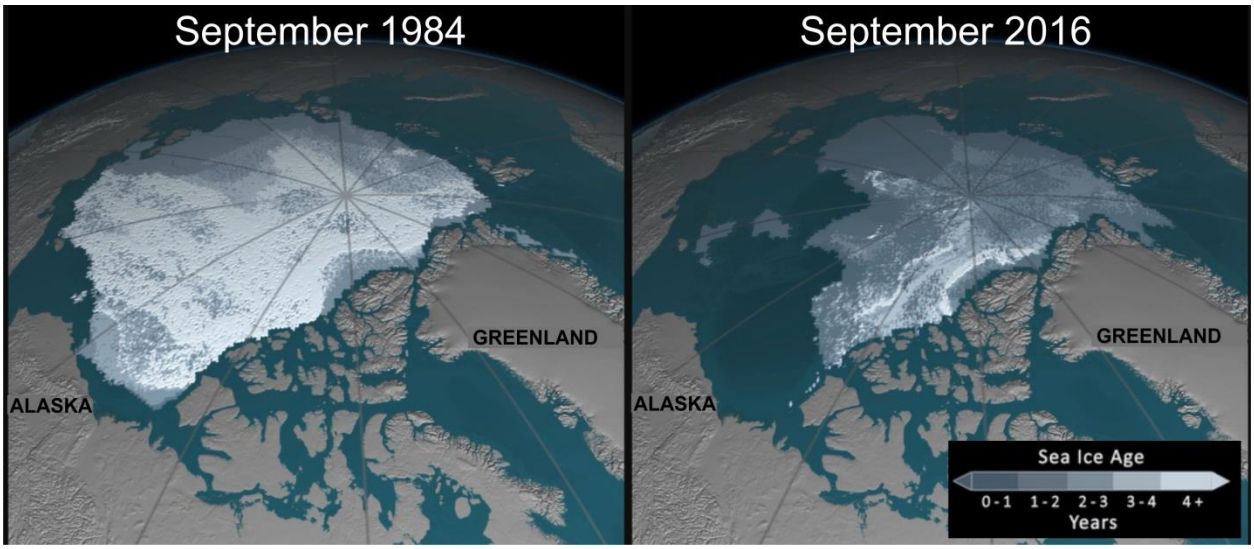
Renee Levesque

THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

The jet stream: messenger of climate change

By Larry Dyke

As part of a course I gave to geography students at Nipissing University this past winter, I included a discussion on climate change. Extensive documentation shows that the global surface temperature has increased close to 1°C since the early 1800s. Many countries, including Canada, have adopted the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit the continuation of this warming to 2°C, recognizing that our alteration of atmospheric chemistry has caused the increase. However, this increase has not shown itself as a steady rise. In North Bay, there was an extended cold period over this past Christmas, and in southern British Columbia, there was an unprecedented drought in 2015.



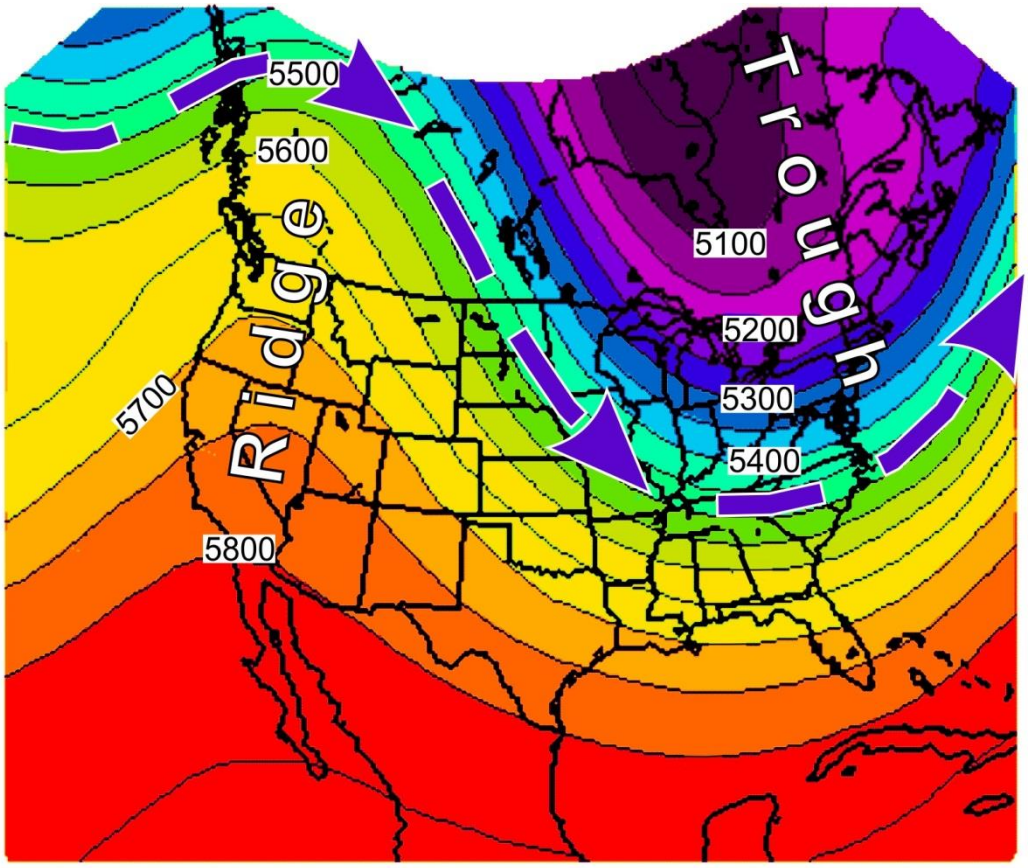
As part of the discussion on climate change, I brought the jet stream into the conversation, introducing recent research showing how the warming may be changing the dynamics of this river of air and promoting these extremes. Here we have a link between the overall increase in greenhouse gases and what we actually experience at different places on the Earth.

The jet stream forms as a result of the Earth's rotation. Air heated at the equator rises and flows northward towards cooler air over the polar regions. Because this stream of air retains the momentum it has from rotating with the Earth, it turns in the direction of the rotation, eastward in the northern hemisphere, towards the pole. This air flow is present all around the Earth as a horizontal, eastward-moving column in the mid-latitudes. This is the jet stream.

Like a river, the jet stream has a tendency to meander. The resulting waves in the jet stream also move to the east. This waviness is a major factor in determining the kind of weather seen at a given location, especially in the mid-latitudes. Global warming is accentuated in the Arctic because of the shortening sea ice season. Consequently, the temperature contrast between the equator and polar regions has decreased. This reduced gradient seems to be leading to a wavier

jet stream and the waves are moving eastwards more slowly. The ridges and troughs between jet stream waves also move and tend to characterize the weather for where they happen to be. So B.C. had a ridge of warm, dry air that tended to remain stationary from early winter 2014 through to the following summer. This Christmas, a trough from the north pushed southward, bringing to North Bay a protracted cold spell.

The figure to the right is a map of the upper atmosphere, showing contour lines for the height in metres at which the atmospheric pressure is about one half that at sea level. This surface has ridges and troughs that are separated by the jet stream (shown with blue arrows). Ridges usually bring warm air from the south and troughs bring cold air from the north. This is the regime that was operating this past Christmas, with the trough giving us the cold weather we had in Ontario. Continued climate warming is expected to increase the waviness of the jet stream and favour longer spells of weather associated with ridges and troughs.



The role of atmospheric warming in the control of the jet stream is still being worked out. Detailed observations of wind velocity, atmospheric pressure and temperature are required to characterize the jet stream. This kind of data has only been available for the past few decades, although is becoming more available. In the meantime, the working hypothesis is that we will see increasingly long-lasting intervals of different kinds of weather in different parts of the world.

Readers interested in more insight on the behavior of the jet stream should view presentations by Dr. Jennifer Francis, Research Professor, Environment and Biological Sciences, Rutgers University. Her website is https://www.jenniferafrancis.com/.

Editor's Note: On her website, Dr. Francis writes that she wants to become a more effective science communicator to help non-scientists gain a deeper understanding of why climate is changing.

THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

Northern Regional meeting of Ontario Nature

Some of the activities held during the Northern Regional meeting, May 11-13, that took place at the The Canadian Ecology Centre, Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, and in the field are from top clockwise: Andree Morneault, forester, demonstrating what she carries in her “cruising vest”; Annie Morin, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, Chalk River, giving a talk on Chimney Swifts; delegates using hand-held acoustic recorders to search for bats; and Andree demonstrating tree planting techniques to delegates who then planted some trees.

Photos by Fred Pinto

Your board of directors

Allison Bannister:

Courtesy of Allison Bannister

Allison has a B.Sc. in Wildlife Biology from the University of Guelph and an M.Sc. in Ecology from Lakehead University, Thunder Bay. For the last nine years, she has worked as a field biologist and/or technician for Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, Lakehead University, National Conservancy of Canada and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF).

While living in Thunder Bay for school and work, Allison actively participated in the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists and supported their efforts at the McKellar Island bird banding station: https://www.facebook.com/McKellar/.

Allison enjoys hiking and trail riding with her horse and husky, and one day she would like to try fly fishing for steelhead. (Horse and husky are featured in the photo with Allison.)

Just over a year ago, Allison relocated to North Bay where she currently works at MNRF as a Management Biologist. She and her boyfriend recently bought a 40-acre farm in Chisholm Township and Allison is looking forward to starting some wildlife projects once they move in.

"I have a passion for wildlife ecology and conservation and my favourite species, if I had to pick, is the Grey Wolf."

Matt Procunier:

Matt is originally from Corunna, a small town near Sarnia. He moved to North Bay to attend Nipissing University where he obtained a degree in Environmental Geography.

While attending Nipissing, Matt met his wife, Lindsey, and after graduation, the couple moved to Kingston where Lindsey attended Queen's and obtained her Masters in Urban and Regional Planning. With Lindsey at Queen's, Matt worked at an outfitter's store where he gained a lot of knowledge about many outdoors activities, especially those activities he and Lindsey particularly enjoy – birding, canoeing, hiking, mountain biking and camping.

After Lindsey graduated, the couple moved to Fort McMurray where Matt worked as an Environmental Technician-Hydrologist for an environmental consulting firm. Most of us get to work by road vehicles, but Matt got to work by helicopter as in the photo below!

While working in Fort McMurray, Matt spent countless hours deep in the boreal forest where he saw "a lot of wildlife up close, sometimes a little too close!"

Matt and Lindsey moved back to the North Bay area in 2015 and subsequently bought a house in Powassan.

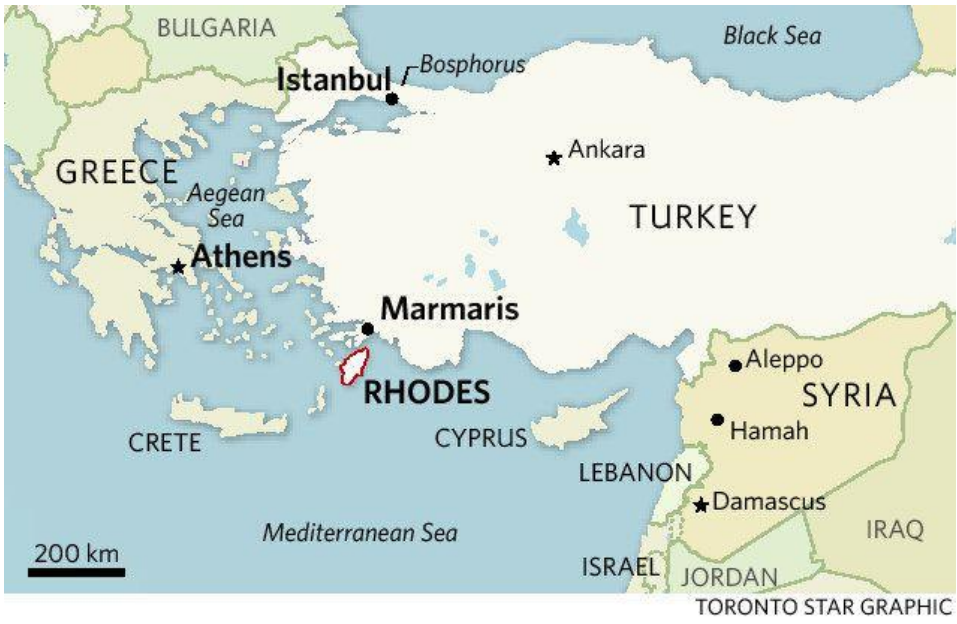
Courtesy of Matt Procunier

Speaker for June'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.**

June 12: Our final speaker of the season until September's meeting is Mary Marrs, member of Nipissing Naturalists Club.

In October 2017, Mary went to the island of Evia in Greece. After she spent a few days sightseeing, she spent the next three weeks volunteering her services, through Cross-Cultural Solutions (CCS), at a refugee camp for Syrians. The camp had about 700 residents waiting for placements in European and Scandinavian countries. Mary's volunteer group consisted of two Canadian and three American women.



This is not the first time Mary has volunteered with CCS. She volunteered her services in Peru, Guatemala and Morocco, and twice in Brazil. Following the devastation caused by Katrina, she also volunteered her services in New Orleans, through a local church.

From the Cross-Country Solutions website: Cross-Cultural Solutions staff and volunteers are working to address critical global issues by providing meaningful volunteer service to communities abroad, and contributing responsibly to local economies. The best approach to international volunteering—the only approach—is one designed by the community. In every community in which we work, we have long-standing relationships with local organizations who communicate real-time needs and objectives to the CCS team so that our volunteers can work alongside local people and make a sustainable impact.

The Louise de Kiriline Nature Festival will be held at Laurier Woods on **Saturday, August 18, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

This fourth annual event is hosted by Nipissing Naturalists Club, Friends of Laurier Woods and North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. As in the previous four years, there will be fun and exciting nature activities for the whole family. There will be a variety of kiosks to visit and events in which to participate. To keep abreast of what will be taking place, visit our Nipissing Naturalists Club festival website at: [http://www.nipnats.com/club-activities/nature-festival/.](http://www.nipnats.com/club-activities/nature-festival/)

Below, from the 2016 festival, are a couple of photos taken by Fred Pinto.

THE WOODLAND OBSERVER

Nipissing Naturalists Club

Board of Directors, 2018

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Dick Tafel, Chairman: rtafel@sympatico.ca. 705-472-7907

Gary Sturge, Treasurer

Renee Levesque, Bird Wing Scribe.

Monthly Bird Wing and Bird Bash reports are sent to members by email and posted on the Nipissing Naturalists Club's website, https://www.nipnats.com/club-activities/bird-wing/.

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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Special thanks to Gary Sturge for help in providing me with Motus information and to Brent Turcotte for information on his finding of the Scare Infant.

Other sources include: All About Birds, Cornell Lab of Ornithology; Nature Manitoba.

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/.