



THE BULLETIN

February, 2004 No. 434

2003 - 2004 EXECUTIVE

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Events calendar

Botany Group	Date: Monday March 1, 2004
Executive Meeting	Date: Tuesday March 9, 2004 Location: McConaghy Centre
Bird Group	Date: Wednesday March 10, 2004 Merlin and Peregrine Falcon Location: Theo Hoffman's
General Meeting	Date: Thursday March 18, 2004 at 7:30pm Location: Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church hall 10066 Yonge Street
A walk in Whitchurch-Stouffville	Date: Saturday March 27, 2004 at 10am / noon Location: YRF Hollidge Tract Diana Piche, 905-773-4199

See Details on Page 2

There's a big chicken-like bird strutting around in our back yard!

Now Jim Ryan's back yard is not your ordinary Toronto back yard – it's about two acres smack on top of the Scarborough Bluffs just east of Brimley and south of Kingston Road.

It's 130 or more feet up, overlooking Bluffers Park. You can see the schools of carp or the trumpeter swans cruising around the marina below, or the far out chimney stacks of Niagara and Buffalo to the south, and Rochester to the southeast across the Lake.

Ruffed grouse?

"No, I've seen them" says Jim.

"Woodcock?"

"No, they have a long beak, don't they? This one has a short beak.

It pecks like a chicken and it's not scared of the dog!"

Well, I doubt anything would be scared of Duchess, a sappy old golden retriever that doesn't even raise an eyebrow at a squirrel.

continued on p. 3 ...



The Bulletin is published 9 times per year, from September to May inclusive, by the *Richmond Hill Naturalists*, and is mailed free to members. The Bulletin is the official publication of the Richmond Hill Naturalists, a non-profit organization, the objectives of which are to stimulate public interest in natural history and to encourage the preservation of our natural areas.

Address Correspondence to: **Richmond Hill Naturalists, P.O. Box 32217, RPO Harding, Richmond Hill, On, L4C 9S 3**

Deadlines: The editor encourages submissions from any member on any topic related to nature or conservation, and in particular, any issue that might be of interest or concern to members of this club. e-mail: lhelferty@sympatico.ca Deadlines are the first day of each month.

Bulletin Advertisers have been selected because of their relevance to member interests.

Members are encouraged to patronize our advertisers and please mention that you saw their ad in our Bulletin.

Change of Address: Any change of email or street address should be sent to Mike Turk who prints the envelopes for the Bulletin mailing. See the Executive List for contact information.

MEMBERSHIP IN RHN

The *Membership Application Form*, is available at each General Meeting from Mike Turk, or in our club brochure, available from any executive member listed (see page 1).

NEW MEMBERS

Chungsen Leung and wife **Debra Chute**
Jim and **Sharon Bradley**

Meet our new members at club events and say Hello!

RHN Events:

EVENTS FUTURE

Upcoming RHN General Meeting Speakers:

Thurs. March 18, 2004 – Douglas Skeates, 'retired' MNR forester and CESO member, will give a travelogue of his many environmental activities around the world. Exciting! RH Presbyterian Church 7:30pm

Thurs. April 15, 2004 – Dr. Theo Hofmann, our bird records secretary and volunteer extraordinaire, will show us his wonderful trip to Spitzburgen, Norway and the birds he encountered. RH Presbyterian Church 6:00pm. AGM

- **Monday March 1, 2004.** 12.30 p.m. Botany Group meeting.

- **Wednesday March 10, 2004.** Bird Group meeting. Species of interest will be the Marlin and Peregrine Falcon. Host this month is Theo Hoffman, 199 Arnold Ave., Thornhill. 905-889-1554.

- **Saturday, March 27, 2004.** A walk in Whitchurch-Stouffville with Diana Piche. Slow to moderate pace hike. 2 options: a) Meet at 10am in YRF Hollidge Tract on the E. side of Highway 48 for 4.4 km loop hike. OR
b) Meet at noon same location for 9 km hike with car shuttle. Done by 4 pm.

We will focus on identifying returning spring migrants by sight and sound. If doing both hikes bring lunch; otherwise bring water, snacks and binoculars. Call 905-773-4199.

- **Saturday April 10, 2004.** 9am-5pm. Beamer Hawk Watch. Grimsby. Call Ron Fleming (905) 898-7216 or email ronald-fleming@sympatico.ca

- **Saturday April 17, 2004.** 9am-2pm. Tiny Marsh, Midland, with Ron Fleming. Call (905) 898-7216 or email ronald-fleming@sympatico.ca



Please note: Richmond Hill Naturalists welcomes anyone to volunteer as an outing leader. If you would like to volunteer or you have any ideas, please submit them to Martin Chen (905-709-0246, jmchentoronto@rogers.com).

GTA Events:

TRCA Events: "Hoot and Howl". Enjoy a night of fun and adventure at either of these annual Hoot and Howls. A short slide presentation about owls and coyotes will be followed by a trip into the woods.

- **Saturday, February 21, 2004.** 7 - 9 p.m. Duffins Watershed Event. Glen Major Tract, Uxbridge. Look for parked vehicles on 7th Concession north of Balsam

- **Saturday, February 28, 2004.** 7 - 9 p.m. Humber Watershed Event. Claireville Conservation Area, Brampton. Meet at the Etobicoke Field Centre on the west side of Highway 50, north of Steeles Ave. Call (416) 661-6600, ext. 5660, or visit www.trca.on.ca for more information.

- **Saturday, March 6, 2004.** 9:30am – 3pm. Ontario Vernal Pool Association. First Special Meeting. Credit Valley Conservation Boardroom, 1255 Old Derry Road, Mississauga. \$15 non-member, \$10 OVPA member. Contact: OVPA by email: ovpa@sympatico.ca web: <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/ovpa>

- **Saturday, March 6, 2004.** 9:00am – 2:15pm. "Alien Invaders Workshop". Learn about Ontario's forest, wetland and lake invaders. Full day workshop coordinated by O.F.A.H., in partnership with the Oshawa Creek Watershed Committee and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Durham College. 2000 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa Room UA1120. Registration (including lunch) is \$10 before March 3, 2004 and \$15 after this date. Contact the O.F.A.H. "Invading Species Hotline" at 1-800-563-7711 or email invasive_species@ofah.org.

- **Monday, March 15, 2004.** 7 - 9:30pm. Durham Regional Environment Council "Well Aware" Forum. A public forum to provide you with the facts you need to know about caring for your water well. Blackstock Recreation Centre, 3440 Church St. W, Blackstock. Contact: Dave Renaud (905) 404-1279 drenaud@cawdrec.com or visit www.wellaware.com.

[Also held on **Monday, March 22, 2004.** Sunderland Memorial Arena. 20 Park St., Sunderland.]



Q. Have you ever wanted to see a Passenger Pigeon?

Q. Have you ever wanted to go behind the scenes in Endangered Species Recovery work?

If you said yes to either of those questions then be sure to register for the Federation of Ontario Naturalists' AGM on **Saturday, May 29, 2004.**

This will be a one day event. The morning will be held at Black Creek Pioneer Village and the afternoon will be spent touring natural areas and natural work that goes on 'behind closed doors' and is not normally open to the public. Speak to Diana Piché for more information 905-773-4199.

...continued from P.1

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

We worked around the yard a few days before we saw "the chicken". It was a partridge, a Chukar partridge, *Alectoris chukar*, from Hungary and western Asia. It's one of two species of partridge brought over to North America, along with the Ringnecked pheasant, to try to populate the farmlands. Our Harry Lumsden, writing in the 1987 Atlas of Breeding Birds of Ontario, gives a complete article on the other imported partridge, *Perdix perdix*, the so-called Grey partridge. He reports that they now are reported in 2 provinces and 19 American states. They normally form flocks or coveys of 20 birds but are secretive nesters.

The Chukar is a larger, handsomer bird, with crisp, military lines and markings on its head and body. There was no mistaking it. But at Ryan's it was a single bird.

My experience of Chukar were in eastern Ontario, in Almonte, near Ottawa -- the area where the Grey Partridge has prospered. An older fellow teacher, who loved dogs and old time game shooting (and that includes the raising of this game), took me on a stroll over to his farm to see the Chukars. They reminded me of small guinea fowl, scuttling among the fall wheat stalks.

Back then, a young student had handed me a "brace" - a pair of the birds, plucked except for the handsome heads. They were poached, I believe, from my teacher friend's land. They were tough as rubber chickens, but I was not much of a cook then and wouldn't risk "hanging" the birds to tenderize them, and besides, the student was on my gymnastics team.

I found them listed in "Roger Tory Peterson's Field Guide to the Birds East of the Rockies", as exotics, introduced birds, and escapees -- which means to say they have had only limited success. On the internet you can learn how to raise them.

We have talked a lot about our native partridge, the 'ruffed grouse', coming back into the Greater Toronto area.



I believe it can be seen across the Oak Ridges Moraine and in the Rouge River Valley Park lands. But not many. Foxes perhaps, since the end of the Arctic Rabies, coyotes maybe - but more likely feral cats - make it hard for this species to move back in. I often wonder what has happened to the beautiful, exotic Ring-necked pheasants that I remember screeching through the Toronto ravines when I first came to Toronto in 1948.

We worked for several more days at Dr. Ryan's. It was fall and a continual parade of hawks -- woodland, sharpshinned, coopers, a merlin -- flew westward over our heads paralleling the top of the bluffs. On the precipitous side of sand were tall maples and basswood. The basswoods were heavily marked by sapsuckers and didn't look too healthy, perhaps undergoing a succession battle with the maples on the quickly draining bluff edges. There was a large stand of mature ironwood reaching the garden edge west of us, and a big Norway maple over Dr. Ryan's swimming pool that we were trying to persuade him to have cut down to stop it from spreading its seedlings over the bluff edge.

And each morning our elegant companion strutted gently and slowly around his domain. He - I think it is a male - only hurries a bit if we try to approach him. We have suggested that Jim put out some chicken feed in the fall or think about acquiring a couple of females. Perhaps Theo will add Chukar partridge to the 2005 Ontario Breeding Birds Atlas. - Michael White, Past President

GRAY PARTRIDGE - *Perdix perdix perdix*

From the December bird group meeting (previously unpublished)

The Gray Partridge is comparable in size to a Rock Pigeon (a.k.a Rock Dove), but is also known by other names such as the 'Hun', the 'Hungarian Partridge', 'Hungy', 'Bohemian Partridge', 'English Partridge', 'European Partridge', 'Small Partridge', or 'Redtail' (since the tail is chestnut coloured).



The Gray Partridge is a species that is widely distributed in the northern and central parts of Europe and Asia, and was introduced to North America in the latter part of the 18th century. It originates from the British Isles and Central Europe. The Gray Partridge is divided into seven sub-species, but only one, the nominate *Perdix, perdix perdix*, is found in North America. Many of the birds used in stocking were from Hungary.

In North America they are found in three regions including the far west (California, Nevada, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and southern British Columbia), the southern Prairie provinces (including states such as Montana, Wyoming, North and South Dakota, western Minnesota, and north-west Iowa), and around the Great Lakes (Wisconsin, eastern Indiana, Ohio, northern New York, and southern Ontario). There are also established populations in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. They will move into the denser forests during the coldest parts of winter. Their population is widespread but smaller than in the 1950's.

The Gray Partridge is plain grey-brown with rufous bars and white streaks on the side. It has a rufous tail, except for the innermost tail feathers, which are grey. The neck is bland grey with some rufous. The bill is gray and the face is a rusty brown, this being more extensive and pronounced in the male. The male has a dark patch on the belly that is reminiscent of a breeding-plumaged Dunlin. The rufous tail feathers become prominent when it flicks its tail open, which it has the distinctive habit of doing. In the fall Grey Partridges form small coveys of 10-15 birds. They like cool, moderately dry climate and are resident on gently rolling hayfields and irrigated agricultural lands, but they prefer open grain stubble, cornfields or hayfields and open grasslands. In winter they prefer to feed on leaves of clover, alfalfa, bluegrass, wheat, dandelion, and wild mustard. In summer, when grasshoppers, caterpillars, butterflies, moths, ants and ground beetles are available, they add these to their diet, although their chief foods are seeds of cultivated grains such as oats, wheat, barley, corn, weeds and grasses such as lamb's quarters, crabgrass, foxtail grasses, prickly lettuce, and many others. Grit is also essential for digestion.

Valerie Kent
Artist



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Female Gray Partridge build the nests (while males stand guard) by scratching out a hollow 2-1/2 inches deep by 6-8 inches in diameter. They line the nest with weed stems, dead grasses and feathers, and commonly build them in wild grass or hayfields within 25-50 feet of field edges or along fence rows or roadsides, making the nests vulnerable to farm equipment and hunters. A nest of between 5 and 20 (or more) eggs are laid from May to August. Usually 15-17 eggs are laid during the first nesting of the season and slightly fewer in the second nesting. More than 20 eggs in a nest usually indicates more than one Gray Partridge hen has used the same nest. The eggs are olive in colour, and incubation is mostly by the female, which lasts for about 25 days. Both parents are at the nest when the chicks hatch and are led away as soon as they are dry. The chicks can fly after two weeks.

Many Gray Partridge can be seen flying into utility poles, electrical wires (especially in winter), barbed wire, electric fences, and cars on the road. - Dana Jonak



Evening Grosbeak (Coccothraustes vespertinus) and Pine Grosbeak (Pinicola enucleator)

- Notes from the January Bird Group meeting.

On January 14th, despite extreme cold and snowy conditions, seven keep bird enthusiasts gathered to discuss these two colourful birds.

The Evening Grosbeak was originally described as a species in 1823. It was first reported in Ontario in August of that year in the Thunder Bay district, and was next reported 31 years later in Toronto (1854). It is found only in North America, its original home being the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, but its range has now spread as far east at Newfoundland. Its eastward range extension is presumed due to the widespread planting of Manitoba Maple, as the seeds and buds are favoured food. They also enjoy sunflower seeds at feeders, where they will quickly eat enormous quantities. Many Evening Grosbeak are killed at roadsides, where they congregate to feed on rock salt. These birds are not migrants, but wanderers, following food sources in large, noisy flocks. The French (of Quebec) appropriately refer to this species as 'le Grosbec errant' ('wandering Grosbeak').

The Evening Grosbeak is a starling-sized finch, and has a conical yellow-green bill, which turns apple-green in breeding season. The adult male has a yellow forehead and eyebrow, with brown to yellow shading on the lower back, rump, and under parts. It has bold, white wing patches. The female has similar markings, but is grayer.

They prefer thick coniferous forest habitat, but have also successfully adapted to mixed deciduous habitats. Theirs nests are shallow loose cups of twigs, lined with rootlets, and are usually placed in a conifer anywhere from 15-60 feet above the forest floor. They lay 3 or 4 pale blue-green eggs, which are lightly speckled with dark brown, gray, and olive spots.

The adult male Pine Grosbeak is Robin-sized, has a dull rose-pink body and is grayish on the sides, flanks, and under-tail coverts. Their wings are blackish with two white wing bars, and a long, notched, blackish tail. They have a conical black bill. The adult female has a grayish back and under-parts, the head and rump being yellowish bronze, although the wings and tail are like thee male.

They prefer coniferous forests in the winter, but spread to mixed woodlands or areas where fruiting trees are found. They nest from 10 to 15 feet above the ground, rarely above 30 feet. The nest they build is flimsy, made of twigs, rootlets, grass and moss, lined with rootlets, grass and hair. They lay 4 or 5 greenish-blue eggs with purplish and grey spots.

They forage in trees, but also come to the ground, where they hop or walk about eating seeds. The male feeds the female during courtship, and may bring her one of her favored foods: the buds of some deciduous trees like maple, the fruit of crabapple, mountain ash, bittersweet or barberries, or even a caterpillar, beetle, or grasshopper. They have a 'gular pouch' which is used to gather and hold partly digested food for nestlings.

Pine Grosbeak range from Alaska and Yukon to Newfoundland & Labrador, forming a thin band across northern Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

Note from Muriel: We welcome anyone who is interested in joining our group to come to our meetings. They are held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. You don't have to know a lot about birds – we are all there to learn. All you need to do is phone the host or any other member of the bird group beforehand to let them know you would like to attend, and they would be happy to give you the details.

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EVENTS PAST

- During February 13th to 16th, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) weekend took place all across North America. The event creates a continent-wide "snapshot" of which bird species are where and in what numbers; information that is critical to monitoring the health of bird populations. The GBBC is developed and managed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon, with sponsorship in part from *Wild Birds Unlimited* stores and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (a division of the USDA).

- On Friday February 13th a citizen protest was held against the developments that are "legally destroying" a large part of the limited greenspace across Yonge Street and Bayview Ave in Richmond Hill. This protest was formed to highlight the lack of action by Dalton McGuinty and the Ontario Liberal government in protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine being developed on either side of Yonge Street, known as the "Yonge East-Yonge West" properties. Dalton McGuinty had promised to stop these developments during his election campaign.

Contact Carrie Hoffelner, BSc. 905-773-9393 daytime carrie@richmondhillactnow.com for more information.

NATURE NEWS

I am happy to inform our club that I have been selected to sit on the [Greenbelt Task Force](#) to establish a permanent Greenbelt around the Golden Horseshoe. Burlington Mayor Rob MacLissac is the Chair, which bodes well for a successful committee. Meetings will be held once a week through April resulting in an Advisory Paper from the Greenbelt Task Force. This will be followed by 6 'stakeholder' meetings and 8 public meetings through the spring. See http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_16471_1.html.

Our first meeting on February 16th was marked in an auspicious way as John Mackenzie, whom many of you may know worked as an environmental planner with [Save the Rouge](#) on the OMB hearing in Richmond Hill and whom is now Minister (of Municipal Affairs) [John Gerretsen](#)'s Staff Advisor on the Greenbelt Plan, and his wife Julie marked yesterday's meeting by having a healthy baby girl, Jenna, at 12:05 pm. John of course missed the first meeting with good reason, but is very happy with both events coinciding! We hope it is a sign of good things to come!

[Environmental Defence Canada](#) will also be meeting with various residents' and environmental groups across the Golden Horseshoe to launch The [NOAH Project](#). As a vision for renewal of our natural environment, I will be pushing this as a holistic concept to expand a functional natural heritage system across southern Ontario, starting with the Golden Horseshoe, to recover our species at risk of extinction through good policy and planning, which includes stewardship, land securement, and restoration.

When was the last time the Province protected land as a Park in southern Ontario, after all?

I also attended a Stewardship Meeting on Thursday, Feb. 12 hosted by the [Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation](#). They are looking for direction to set priorities to spend the \$15 million within the next 4-5 years! With \$3.5 million in additional monies donated by the developers as part of the [Liberals](#) negotiations on the Yonge East-Yonge West lands, the Foundation is also looking for advice on the use of these funds. Richmond Hill should be receiving these monies for restoration of the future [TRCA](#) managed park and establishment of a new [Oak Ridges Trail](#) loop through these lands. Our club met with the Town Park's Dept on Wednesday, Feb. 18 to discuss a Green Bridge across Yonge Street for this trail and for wildlife, which will have to integrate with York Region's plans on a rapid transit system up Yonge Street. We also pitched a 'Gardens for Nature' proposal for the Town to get residents involved in restoration.

With these many initiatives underway, protection of natural areas in perpetuity and the recovery of a functional natural heritage system is on the horizon. It is the birth of a new dawn...good things are in the air. Now is the time to get them launched so we can find the solid ground so sought after.

- Natalie Helferty, President

CONE* Update: Jason Thorne is moving to work as a staff planner in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (formerly MAH). A new Executive Director of CONE is being sought.

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General Interest

On Friday the 5th of December an international initiative was presented in Stockholm, Sweden for a new Nobel Prize on Sustainability.

The initiators of the campaign believe that a Nobel Prize for sustainable development could become a tremendous encouragement for all those who devote themselves to creating a sustainable society. Sustainable leadership is urgently needed at a time in which pollution, climate change and scarcity of clean water are the order of the day. The initiators believe that the Sustainable Prize can be used to stimulate companies and world leaders to actively support innovative, sustainable technologies and international treaties.

The call for a Nobel Prize on Sustainability is already supported by numerous organizations and individuals, including 1989 Nobel Peace Prize winner Dalai Lama, the political and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. The plea is also reiterated by the World Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the Earth Charter Initiative. The petition is furthermore signed by individuals like Dr Bedrich Moldan, former president of the Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD) of the United Nations, Dr. Lester R. Brown, founder of the Worldwatch Institute and companies like Body Shop International. The international initiative stems from the Dutch parliamentarian Boris van der Ham, British Euro-MP Chris Davies and former UN-Youth Representative Ingrid Aaldijk.

See: www.sustainable-prize.net for more information and to sign on. So far a total of more than 1 million people, represented by their organizations, have signed. Another 7200 individuals and groups/companies from 106 countries have undersigned the letter.

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

January 2004

Peel Region

Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 M at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.18 (PG). COHA and SSHA fighting over a kill.
Cooper's Hawk - 1 F at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.18,26 (PG).
Northern Goshawk - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.06,25 (PG).
Wild Turkey - 35 at Gore Road Jan.03 (anon. fide PG).60 at Albion Hills Cons. Area Jan.17 (anon. fide PG).
Great Horned Owl - 1 at Duffy's Lane Jan.06 (PG).1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.19 (PG).
Northern Flicker - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.04 (PG).1 at Palgrave Cons. Area Jan.18 (anon. fide PG)
American Crow - 100 at Duffy's Lane Jan.28 (PG).
Brown Creeper - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.19 (PG).
Snow Bunting - 500 at Humber Station Road Jan.16; 200 Jan.24 (PG).
Common Redpoll - small flock at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.19 (PG).
Pine Siskin - small flock at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Jan.19; 5 Jan.26 (PG).

York Region

Common Loon - 2 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
Great Blue Heron - 1 at Jane & Rutherford Rd Jan.04 [Flying over] (LNo), 1 at Rouge River in Markham Jan.21 (SLo).
Trumpeter Swan - 1 at Virginia Beach Jan.02 (BB).
American Wigeon - 2 (pair) at Snider Marsh Markham Jan.22 (SLo).
American Black Duck - 8 at Snider Marsh Markham Jan.22 (SLo).
Mallard - 800 at Snider Marsh Markham Jan.22 (SLo).
Bufflehead - 150 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
Common Goldeneye - 500 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
Hooded Merganser - 1 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
Common Merganser - 1000 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
Bald Eagle - 1 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.2 (BB), 4 at South Lake Simcoe Jan.03 (PH,SLXC).
Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 at N. Richvale Grnwy Jan.3 [Flying] (TH), 1 at Grenfell Markham Jan.7 (CMK).
Cooper's Hawk - 1 at 190 Grandview Ave., Thornhill Jan.01-31 (DJ). Appeared at least once a week.

Red-tailed Hawk - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham Jan.12 (CMK). Eating a Red Squirrel.
 Rough-legged Hawk - 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Jan.01 (KDu), 2 at S Shore Lake Simcoe Jan.02 (BB).
 American Kestrel - 3 at McGillivray & Rutherford Rd. Jan.17 (RJF,RHNC,YSNC), 2 at Huntington Jan.31 (RJF).
 falcon sp. - 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Jan.01 (JLo).
 Ruffed Grouse - 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Jan.04 (JLo).
 Mourning Dove - 30 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Jan.09 (KDu).
 Eastern Screech-Owl - 1 at Lake Wilcox Jan.03 [Heard only] (TH,NH,MPr).
 Snowy Owl – 1@Ravenshoe Rd. Jan.1(KDu), 1@Yonge/Ravenshoe Jan.2(BB).
 Belted Kingfisher - 1 at Rouge River in Markham Jan.21 (SLo).
 Red-bellied Woodpecker - 1 at 14th Ave. W of Durham Line Jan.03 (SLo).
 Northern Shrike – 1@Ravenshoe Rd. Jan.2(BB), 1 Imm@Weston/Major Mack Jan.17 (RJF,RHNC,YSNC).
 2 at 8th Conc.& 18th S.R. King Twp. Jan.17 (RJF,RHNC,YSNC). They were about 1.5 km apart. One was a juvenile.
 Horned Lark - 30 at McGillivray & Rutherford Rd. Jan.17; 40 on Jan.31 (RJF,RHNC,YSNC).
 White-breasted Nuthatch - 3 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Jan.09 (KDu).
 Carolina Wren - 1 at Grandview Ave., Thrnhl Jan.1-31 (DJ). Almost daily, 1 at Elmhurst Bch Jan.09 (KDu).
 Northern Mockingbird - 1 at Mount Albert Sdrd Jan.3 (PH,SLXC),.1 at Grandview Ave., Thornhill Jan.16,19,21 (DJ).
 American Tree Sparrow - 200 at Huntington and Rutherford Jan.17 (RJF,RHNC,YSNC).
 White-throated Sparrow - 2 at Wooten Way Markham Jan.03 (SLo).
 White-crowned Sparrow - 1 Imm at 10820 Pine Valley Drive Jan.22 (D&AD).
 Snow Bunting - 20 at McGillivray & Rutherford Rd. Jan.31 (RJF).
 Northern Cardinal - 6 at 199 Arnold Ave., Thornhill Jan.24 (DTH,TH).
 Purple Finch - 1 F at M.Mack & Hwy.27 Jan.01-09 (JLo), 1 M at 4 Grenfell Markham Jan.31 (CMK).
 Common Redpoll - 1 at Holland Landing at Brydons Jan.10 (BB).
 Pine Siskin – 1@Holland Lndg Jan.10 (BB), 4@Pine Valley Jan.22 (D&AD), 12 at Shady Lane Thrnhl Jan.1-13 (S.Va).
 American Goldfinch - 30 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Jan.09 (KDu).
BB Bruce Brydon, CMK Carol McKnight, D&AD David and Amy Darker, DJ Dana Jonak, DTH Doris Hofmann, JLo Joan Love, KDu Keith Dunn, LNo Lionel Normand, MPr Marco Prosdocimo, NH Natalie Helferty, PG Phyllis Graydon, PH Paul Harpley, RHNC Richmond Hill Naturalists, RJF Ron Fleming, SLo Stan Long, SLXC Christmas Count South Lake Simcoe, SVa Sandy Vanderbrug, TH Theo Hofmann, YSNC York-Simcoe Naturalists.

Errata:

In the December list of Bird Observations please note that the Ovenbird seen in Toronto was at the small Zoo in High Park.
 The 1,200 Bufflehead listed as being at the S end of Cook's Bay were scattered from there to Jackson's Point on Lake Simcoe.
 Also,
 I have not listed nuthatches. They were numerous and at almost every observer's feeder. What is especially noteworthy is that Red-breasted Nuthatches were present in unusually high numbers. They appear to have stayed based on recent observations.
 - Theo

From the Editor

There seems to be a feeling in Ontario that the government is still very new. Sure, they have been in the news a lot, but there seem to be some things that we hear a lot less of – like some issues of the environment. The idea of a 'greenbelt' around Toronto is a great one, but certainly not new - highway 407 now strikes its way through the centre of what was once the 'greenbelt' that former premier Bill Davis set aside to try and halt the sprawl north of Toronto. And why is the name Leona Dombrowsky not commonly heard? She is our new Environment Minister. Few headlines reach us with her name pinned to the caption.

With ongoing development occurring all around us in the form of highway and regional road expansions and widenings, new 'big pipe' projects and dewatering of aquifers, how will this provincial government meet the challenge of establishing a truly functioning ecosystem amidst the bull-headed charging forward by municipalities?

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