



THE BULLETIN

May / June, 2004 No. 437

2003 - 2004 EXECUTIVE

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Events calendar

- Corn Roast 2004! Saturday September 11, 2004
- Executive Meeting Tuesday September 13, 2004:
McConaghy Centre
- General Meeting Thursday September 16, 2004
Rich Hill Presbyterian Church 10066 Yonge St.
- Field Trips - Tuesday June 1, 2004. Carden Alvar
Contact: [ian Cannel](mailto:ian.cannel@rogers.com), 905-660-4533
- Saturday June 6, 2004. Mill pond 'Splash'.
- Saturday June 12, 2004. Tiny Marsh 8am
Contact: Tracey Etwell, 905-726-1269
> Saturday June 12 is also Richmond Hill Heritage Day.
- Sunday June 20, 2004. Lake Wilcox Dragon Boat race
Contact: Michael Gurski, 416-325-9164
- Sunday June 27, 2004. Carden Plain
Contact: John Watson, 905-895-1549

See Details on Page 2



Water For Tomorrow

[Water For Tomorrow](http://www.waterfortomorrow.com) is a program run by York Region whose goal is to promote Water Awareness and encourage every person in York Region to use water wisely. The *Water For Tomorrow* program has the goal of educating elementary students in Grade 7 about water issues, promoting student activities related to water issues, holding a Children's Water Festival, and offering suggestions for saving water.

On average, each person in York Region uses about 260 litres of water a day, which is enough to fill two bathtubs. Climate, fixtures and habits all determine how much water is used, but since older toilets and showerheads use twice as much water as newer models, the *Water For Tomorrow* has the additional goal of upgrading all homes that now have inefficient fixtures by providing free upgrades of showerheads and toilets.

-- For FREE fixture upgrades (Toilets and Showerheads) call Neptune Technology Group at 1-888-215-4060 --

The *Water For Tomorrow* program also aims to change attitudes about how we use water, and has Landscape Advisors available for free to help York residents assess their property and identify ways of reducing the water they use for their lawn and garden.

-- For FREE Landscape Advice call York Region's Long Term Water Project at 1-888-967-5426 --



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 9S3**

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

No new members this month.

Meet our new members at club events and say Hello!

EVENTS FUTURE

RHN Events:

- Tuesday June 1, 2004. 730am-630pm. [Carden Alvar](#), east of Lake Simcoe. The Carden Alvar is a rare landform of limestone, covered with a thin layer of soil. The resultant low growth provides the habitat provided by a broad range of bird species that favour grassland and scrubby growth. Meet in [Kirkfield](#) in the parking lot of [Lady Mackenzie School](#). Starting point is Highway 48 and Davis Drive, in Newmarket. Bring a lunch and water. Try and carpool as much as possible. We will be driving along Wylie Road and stopping periodically to walk and bird. If you have any walkie talkies, do bring them (set to frequency 1.0), as they are very useful for car to car communication. Contact / Leader Ian Cannel, 905-660-4533, Cannell@Rogers.com, cell 416-722-0433.

- Saturday June 6, 2004. [Mill pond 'Splash'](#) & tree planting. This is a community event to celebrate the headwaters of the Don River. Activities will include a scavenger hunt, environmental and historical exhibits, displays and demonstrations, music, entertainment and refreshments. Free.

- Sunday June 12, 2004. Richmond Hill Heritage Day. Check out our display.

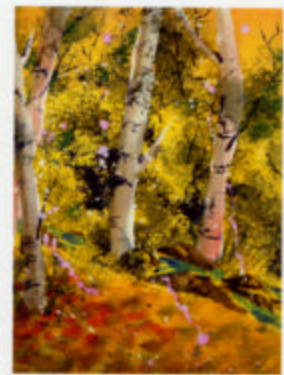
- Saturday June 12, 2004. 8am-2pm. [Tiny Marsh](#) near Midland. Come see spring bird migrants and budding flora. Meet at Hwy 400 and King Rd. #11 Southeast Parking Lot. Leader Tracey Etwell, 905-726-1269.

- Sunday June 20, 2004. Dragon Boat race, Lake Wilcox, Oak Ridges. Join the 20 paddler team for this great event. Leader: Michael Gurski, 416-325-9164, Mike.Gurski@ipc.on.ca.

- Sunday June 27, 2004. Carden Plain. Join and search for rarities such as [grasshopper sparrows](#), [upland sandpipers](#), [Eastern Towhees](#), [Brown Thrashers](#) and more. Meet at the intersection of Hwy 404 and Hwy 9 (Davis Dr.) in the South-West parking area at 7:00 a.m. or meet in the parking area of Kirkfield Lock at 8:15. Leader John Watson at 905-895-1549.



Valerie Kent Artist



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artistvalerie@rogers.com

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:

- **Thursday May 20, 2004.** Greenbelt Taskforce Public Consultations started on this day and will continue to June 16. See www.greenbelt.ontario.ca for more information.

- **Thursday May 27, 2004.** 7- 9pm. TRCA Don Watershed Event. Don Valley Brick Works, off of Bayview Ave, south of Pottery Rd, Toronto. Call (416) 661-6600 ex.5660, or visit www.trca.on.ca.

- **Saturday May 29, 2004.** [FON 73rd Annual General Meeting](#) & Gathering : "Northbound from Toronto to Superior – Protecting Ontario's Nature". Featuring Award-winning authors [Joanie and Gary McGuffin](#) who will show pictures and tell stories from their three month canoe voyage along Ontario's Great Lakes Heritage Coast from Lake Superior's Pigeon River to Port Severn on Georgian Bay. Location: Black Creek Pioneer Village.

- **Tuesday June 1, 2004.** 6:00PM. A Tour of KMS Peel Garbage Incinerator. Incineration is one traditional method of garbage disposal, but is controversial. Come learn more about incineration. Learn about the processing of incoming garbage, the incineration process, and control of air emissions. Limit of 30 participants. Confirm by contacting Allan Giacomelli by May 18, 2004 at allang@spectranet.ca. \$5.00/person (Limited spots)



- **Ontario Nature** will be airing radio 'public service announcements' at the end of May (24th – 31st) on 98.1 CHFI in Toronto and CIQB-FM 101 in Barrie. If you get these stations in your listening area and could tune in, we'd really like to know what you think and would appreciate your feedback!



MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

Pesticides too harmful to use in any form, doctors warn

The link between common household pesticides and fetal defects, neurological damage and the most deadly cancers is strong enough that family doctors in Ontario are urging citizens to *avoid the chemicals in any form*. The [Ontario College of Family Physicians](#) released the most comprehensive study ever done in Canada on the chronic effects of pesticide exposure. The study found consistent evidence of the health risks to patients with exposure to pesticides. Children are far more vulnerable to the effects of pesticides than adults because their bodies are growing. After examining 12,000 studies conducted from 1990 to 2003 around the world, the researchers said *there is no evidence that some pesticides are less dangerous than others..* The massive scientific literature review comes at a time when many cities across Canada are trying to ban the use of pesticides to make gardens and lawns pest-free, but are also increasing efforts to get rid of mosquito larvae before West Nile season. Quebec has already banned the most common lawn and garden pesticides across the province starting next year. The [Canadian Cancer Society](#), the [Learning Disabilities Association of Canada](#), the [Registered Nurses Association of Canada](#) and the [Ontario Public Health Association](#) have called for the bans as well. Cathy Vakil, of the [Family Medicine Centre at Queen's University](#) in Kingston noted that alternatives to pesticides are available in most cases and should be considered because the profoundly negative effects of some chemicals can be passed down through generations. "People need to think long and hard if they want to take that risk for themselves, their children and their grandchildren for the sake of a golf-green lawn," she said. The pesticides used in Toronto's 200,000 storm sewers to kill mosquito larvae emit a product as they break down that is a [retinoid](#), a family of chemicals known to cause limb deformities in fetuses. This chemical can wash into Lake Ontario and in turn into the drinking water of the Greater Toronto Area. See <http://www.hcfa.on.ca/cached.asp?id=4151>

- Submitted by John O-Gorman, Caledon Countryside Alliance <mailto:jcogorman@sympatico.ca>

see also: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20040511.wpest0511/BNStory/National/> -Editor.

The eighth wonder of the world (reprinted with permission)

For many Canadians and visitors from other countries, [Algonquin Provincial Park](#) is the essence of Canada's natural landscapes. Dan Strickland knows more about the Park than anyone alive. As Chief Naturalist for 30 years, Dan wrote guides to Algonquin's trees, fish, birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians, and wildflowers. He guided the creation of two of the Park's main public attractions - the visitor centre and the logging museum.



A long day's paddle from Algonquin brings you to [Bonnechere Provincial Park](#) on the shores of beautiful Round Lake. On May 1, park staff - with support from the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Renfrew County Stewardship Council, and the local naturalists' clubs from Arnprior and Pembroke - hosted the Renfrew County Natural History Day. Dan Strickland was a featured speaker at Natural History Day. Besides his efforts to bring nature to the public, he is the world's leading scientific authority on [gray jays](#), a species that he refers to as the eighth wonder of the world.

Gray jay pairs stay in the same neck of the woods, all four seasons, year after year. Their territories, found among boreal conifers such as spruces, are well guarded from other couples. They are very long lived. Their secret of longevity - and surviving long cold winters - is stored food. All summer and fall, jays store insects, spiders, berries, and so forth under bark and lichen on trees. They have hundreds of these hiding places scattered through their territory.

Stored food is key to winter survival. One fall, Dan offered pieces of bread dyed blue to the jays. That winter he found blue bird droppings. He inserted mealworms into holes drilled in a spruce one summer and found some still intact next spring, with a significant percentage of their original food value. Food storage means that gray jays don't take dangerous winter migrations.

Food storage means gray jays don't take dangerous annual migrations, unlike most of our songbirds. Adult jays almost never die in winter. Other seasons are more dangerous. Spring migration brings back winged predators such as sharp-shinned hawks.

Gray jay courtship takes place as early as late January, and eggs are in the nest by March. Why nest in late winter, when snowstorms still rage? Dan explains that the jays are coasting along on stored food. They also need to get nesting duties out of the way early, and begin stocking up for the next winter. While adults are safe in winter, eggs and nestlings are eaten by red squirrels. To avoid drawing attention to the nest, adults minimize trips back and forth. This means carrying the largest load of stored food possible.

Things get tough when young jays leave the nest. Brothers and sisters fight. Only one gets to remain on the territory where it was born. The others move on. They might get adopted by foster parents who have lost their young to squirrels, but most don't make it through the summer. Life is getting tough for adults as well. Gray jay territories in Algonquin Park, mapped by Dan through years of work, are now vacant.



The problem is climate change. Warmer winters and freeze-thaw events cause stored food to rot. Jays prefer spruces for storing food. Their bark and lichens may retard decay. Spruces in Algonquin are at the southern edge of their range, confined to margins of bogs and lakes. They are in decline. As they vanish, so will gray jays.

Gray jays will survive further north in the boreal forest. Species on mountain tops, islands, and other limited habitats won't be so lucky. A recent study in the world's top science journal, Nature, estimates that climate change will cause the extinction of as many as 25% of the world's species by 2050.

- Ole Hendrickson

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Ole Hendrickson is a scientist and founding member of the Ottawa River Institute, a non-profit, charitable organization based in Pembroke and found at www.ottawariverinstitute.ca on the internet.



EVENTS PAST

A Loss for Wildlife in Richmond Hill

On Wednesday May 19th 2004, Richmond Hill Council turned down a request by the Naturalists and other residents to set aside the Bethesda/Leslie block from the [Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan](#) Conformity By-law Amendment. These lands are adjacent to the East side of the Jefferson Forest, and are surrounded by ORM Core, Linkage and Countryside designated by the provincial plan.

As we are all aware, this area has development constraints due to the difficulty arising from the area infrastructure, community, groundwater, hydrological, environmental and aboriginal heritage conditions. This property should be protected to maintain the function of the Oak Ridges Moraine, yet the plan, [Official Plan Amendment 218](#), is now in place to urbanize more of the ORM in Richmond Hill along Leslie Street north of Stouffville Road.

These lands were not part of the land swaps and should have gone back to the Province, through the town, as we requested. This property is currently not serviced. Current construction of the pipe further down Leslie at Elgin Mills has led to dewatering. This pipe will then head further north to hook all the way to Queensville.

We were hoping for a better outcome, but the bylaw was passed by all attending councillors and the Mayor. Elio Di Iorio and David Barrow were both absent, and Brenda Hogg did not attend sighting "legal issues" relating to this item being on the agenda.

- Marianne Yake

Friends of the Don East (FODE)

The second draft "[Don Valley Transportation Corridor Master Plan](#)" was presented at a series of public meetings in April, and successfully integrated transportation planning with strategic environmental protection, and *rejected a 2002 proposal to expand the car-carrying capacity of the Don Valley Parkway (DVP)*. The Plan proposes increased mass transit and improved traffic flows while incorporating a vision that includes reduced air emissions and limits on the environmental impact of moving millions of people through and around the Don Valley.

The Master Plan is still under development, and needs to be fleshed out in detail before the City can make final choices. Find out more at the FODE website: <http://www.web.net/~fode/>.

Also, in May, the Federal and Ontario Government jointly announced the signing of a contribution agreement to jointly fund 12 construction projects to improve the GO Transit rail and bus transit system in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), resulting in a total investment of \$1.05 billion.

See more at <http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/May2004/07/c0244.html>.

> On April 30, 2004 David Anderson, Minister of the Environment unveiled an updated [Tentative List for World Heritage Sites](#), which included the [Atikaki/Woodland Caribou](#)/Accord First Nations and the [Rideau Canal](#) in Ontario. World Heritage Sites are places of outstanding universal value to all humankind, and are of exceptional cultural or natural significance. The World Heritage List is a means of acknowledging that some place are of sufficient importance to be recognized by the international community. Membership on the List is the most significant global designation any site can achieve. Canada is currently home to thirteen World Heritage Sites.

> May 6, 2004. The [Ontario government](#) will ban the live sale of several invasive fish species. The [regulation](#) prohibits the buying and selling of live bighead, black, silver and grass carp, along with all species of [snakehead](#), and two species of goby that are used for bait. Invasive carp species have a voracious appetite, high reproduction and growth rate. If they were to take hold in the Great Lakes, they would have a severe impact on [recreational](#) and commercial fisheries, and on fish and wildlife habitat in shallow and near-shore areas. The new regulation also includes a ban on selling these fish for aquarium use, and extends to grass carp for use in backyard ponds. Carp species that are currently sold live in [food markets](#) will still be available for sale but must be killed before the customer takes them from the store. At least 160 exotic species have already been introduced into Ontario lakes and streams. [Invasive species](#) have also been linked to health issues, such as botulism in birds, which in turn raises concerns about their impact on humans.

> On Saturday April 24, 2004 at 3pm the [Canadian Peregrine Foundation](#) invited members of the Richmond Hill Naturalists to watch the daily falcon feeding at the Kortright Centre at the Canadian Peregrine Falcon education barn.

> On Thursday, May 13th, 2004 King Environmental Groups (KEG) held a fundraising dinner. The guest speaker was [Stephen Lewis](#), the former Canadian Ambassador to the United Nations and now a [UN Special Envoy](#). His presentation was on Greenspace Preservation and people's rights and responsibilities. The chairman for the evening was Henry Jackman, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. The evening included a dinner and a silent auction. The proceeds of the event went toward protecting the Oak Ridges Moraine.

> On Saturday April 24, 2004 the annual Richmond Hill Naturalists Mill Pond Cleanup took place. This event was organized by past President Tom Waechter.

> On May 1st, 2004 the Richmond Hill Naturalists held a Memorial Tree Planting for Dr Ann Fowle. Ann had passed away in February. Ann was an active member of the Richmond Hill Naturalists and the Thornhill Garden and Horticultural Society. The Markham Environmental Alliance also held their annual 'Pomona Mills Park Community Clean Up'. This event was organized in part by RHN member Valerie Burke and was dedicated to the memory of Ann.



> In an older but unreported bit of news, we learned that in January one of our Directors, Mr. Harry G. Lumsden, C.M. of Aurora, became a member of the Order of Canada for his contributions to Science. More information can be found at <http://www.gg.ca/media/doc.asp?lang=e&DocID=4110>.

> On May 7, 2004 the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) met at the Bird Studies Canada facilities in Port Rowan, Ontario (near Long Point) to assess the conservation status of 36 wildlife species. One of the Carolinian species considered was the Round Pigtoe. This



freshwater mussel that is now found only in Lake St.Clair, and three other Southwestern Ontario watersheds, is endangered by the exotic invasive Zebra Mussel, and by deteriorating water quality. There are now eight mussel species considered Endangered in Southern Ontario. Several plant species found only in Canada are also deemed to be at risk, including the Gulf of St.Lawrence Aster and Victorin's Gentian, both assessed as Threatened. COSEWIC noted that all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) pose a threat to seven of the twelve plant species they considered at this meeting. ATVs can cause soil erosion and directly destroy plants. There are now 456 species in various COSEWIC risk categories, including 169 Endangered, 114 Threatened, and 140 of Special Concern. In addition, 21 species are Extirpated (no longer found in the wild in Canada), 12 are Extinct, and 33 are Data Deficient. COSEWIC's assessments will be forwarded to the federal Minister of the Environment and will form the basis for inclusion in the legal list of species at risk under the Species at Risk Act.

NATURE NEWS

> The [Greenbelt Task Force](#) will begin holding a series of public meetings to ask Ontarians their views on permanently protecting greenspace across the Golden Horseshoe. Consultations are to start on May 20. The greenbelt will be a permanent and sustainable legacy for current and future generations. The views and ideas collected in these sessions will help the task force craft its advice to the government on how to most effectively establish a permanently protected greenbelt stretching from Niagara Falls to Rice Lake.

Its recommendations will help the government draft a clear approach to protecting greenspace in the Golden Horseshoe. The public will have a chance to comment on the details of this approach in the fall.

With a proposal to permanently protect over 600,000 acres of land in the GTA through the Greenbelt Protection Act, there is a great need for naturalists to speak out in favour of this plan. Ontario Nature would also encourage you to ask that the province use the greenbelt model as a template for a larger Southern Ontario Greenway Strategy that would protect nature and farmlands and curb urban sprawl throughout southern Ontario.

Ontario Nature has prepared the Southern Ontario Greenway Strategy as a way to take the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt model across the south and needs you as a member of the Nature Network to make this message heard at the upcoming public consultations. During these consultations the province is also seeking input for greenbelt boundaries, which means that this is your chance to identify important natural areas in your neighbourhood and see

them permanently protected! As a naturalist you have unique information and knowledge about the natural systems in your area that deserve protection – information and knowledge that is key for the greenbelt task force to hear at the consultations.

See more about the Greenbelt Task Force at <http://www.greenbelt.ca>

> On April 21, 2004 the Ontario Government donated 3,400 acres of prime Rouge riverine habitat and agricultural land to the City of Toronto, Pickering and Town of Markham for expansion of Rouge Park in order to link Lake Ontario to the Oak Ridges Moraine. Rouge Park is now the largest Natural Urban Park in North America. For more information on Rouge Park, please visit: <http://www.rougepark.com> or the press release: http://www.rougepark.com/programmes/communications/pdfs/provlands_trf_announce-april04.pdf

General Interest

> The Ontario government is seeking an additional 300 Megawatts of renewable energy capacity, which is defined as wind, solar, biomass, bio-oil, bio-gas, landfill gas, or water generation. Bidding takes place in early summer and projects will be announced by early November. This represents a significant first step in Ontario's plans to boost the amount of renewable energy in the province's electricity supply mix.

See: http://www.energy.gov.on.ca/index.cfm?fuseaction=english.news&body=yes&news_id=60

> May 06, 2004 : The Ontario government plans to cull nearly 6,000 cormorants on High Bluff Island in Presqu'ile Provincial Park. The Ministry of Natural Resources blames the cormorants for destroying old growth trees on the Island. Earthroots (<http://www.earthroots.org/>) says their plan has little to do with protecting the environment and everything to do with protecting sport fishing opportunities. Read more about the proposal by reading about the plan by downloading the "Draft Management Strategy for Double-crested Cormorants at Presqu'ile Provincial Park", which can be found at <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/presq/cormorants.pdf>.

> On April 1, 2004 new standards took effect in Ontario that limit emissions of particulate matter (PM) from the exhaust of large diesel trucks, buses, and heavy-duty diesel vehicles. The new regulations are the toughest standards in North America. Limits will be tightened in two stages, The next stage will be on April 1, 2005. An anti-idling strategy will also be developed for large trucks and buses. The [Ontario School Bus Association](#), the [Ontario Trucking Association](#) and [Pollution Probe](#) strongly support the new measures.

See : <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/news/2003-1023/122101fs.htm>

> The Ministry of Transportation for Ontario (MTO) is currently seeking comments on this a proposed document, "Environmental Protection Requirements for Transportation Planning and Highway Design, Construction, Operation and Maintenance", which is available for review on the MTO public website at:

<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/engineering/envirostandards>. The ministry will accept written submissions and comments until June 14, 2004. The MTO public website where this proposal document is posted, has an e-mail link to allow members of the public to provide feedback. Written comments can also be directed to:

EBR Coordinator, Provincial and Environmental Planning Office

301 St. Paul Street, 2nd floor, St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 7R4. PH: (905) 704-2210 FAX: (905) 704-2007

> On May 12, 2004 Toronto announced a \$35 million initiative to reduce emissions that cause global warming and smog. At the international 'Conference of the Reducers' hosted by the City the Mayor called for substantial new investment in energy efficiency and innovative green power-generation in city-owned operations. He hopes that by 2010 city-owned operations will have reduced their greenhouse gas emissions by 60 per cent from 1990 levels. Toronto's city-owned operations have *already* cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 42% from 1990 levels through energy efficiency programmes. Toronto has achieved a 2% citywide decrease between 1990 and 1998. The Kyoto Protocol calls for a 6% reduction from 1990 levels. In addition to reducing local air pollution from coal-fired electricity plants, the projects will cut electric bills, improve public safety at traffic intersections, enhance air quality and public health, and make social housing more comfortable for tenants.

> A proposed logging road, dubbed 'Road 770', to be built by forestry giant [Domtar Inc.](#) in the [White River Forest](#) of Ontario, is threatening [Pukaskwa National Park](#)'s wolf population. The [Pukaskwa wolves](#) are a unique population because they are a genetically isolated enclave of [Gray wolves](#) within Eastern Canadian wolf range. The park's wolf population has already been in decline for some time.

The road will cut through a wilderness corridor along the park's northern boundary and will intersect the territories of four wolf packs and an important Woodland Caribou Recovery zone. Road 770 puts Pukaskwa wolves in a perilous position. A loss of wolves in the region may fundamentally and forever change the ecosystem. Pukaskwa is the only National Park that exists within the wolf's Ontario range. Along with the increased traffic of logging trucks, this road will open up previously remote wilderness to hunters, trappers, snowmobilers and ATV users.

Parks Canada authorities and researchers believe that the road poses a *significant* threat to Pukaskwa's wolf population and the ecological integrity of the Park, and have requested the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources to effectively prohibit public access with gates and physical barriers. The OMNR has refused to implement even these minimum access control measures.

Please write a personal letter to the Ontario Minister of Environment (the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Environment, 135 St. Clair Ave W, 12th Floor, Toronto ON M4V 1P5 Tel: 416-314-6790 Fax: 416-314-6748 Email: ldombrowsky.mpp@liberal.ola.org) to show your support for an individual environmental assessment of Road 770.

Also please write a personal letter to the Minister of Natural Resources (the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources, 6630-99 Wellesley St W, 6th Floor, Whitney Block, Toronto ON M7A 1W3 Tel: 416-314-2301 Fax: 416-314-2216 Email: dramsay.mpp@liberal.ola.org) who recently committed to implementing a wolf conservation plan around Algonquin Park. Remind the Minister that this plan should ensure that wolf populations are sustained across the province and that important wolf habitat is protected.

An email can also be sent to the Ontario government directly from Earthroots' Wolves Ontario! website at: www.wolvesontario.org/wolves/pukaskwa.shtml.

Volunteer Opportunities Still Available !

Botanist or birders from field naturalist clubs who may be interested in being on the "[Tallgrass Ontario](#)" survey team are encouraged to contact [Ontario Nature](#) and sign up for summer programs surveying tallgrass remnants in Ontario between June and August.

Tallgrass Ontario is still looking for groups of 3-6 botanists and birders, including team captains, to survey local tallgrass remnants. A crew or crews may be needed in each of the following areas during the dates noted:

June 7- 25 ---- tallgrass in Toronto, Hamilton areas
June 28-July 1 - Essex
July 12 - 15 --- Kawartha Prairies
July 19 - 22 ---- Middlesex and Thames River and Elgin
July 26 - 29 --- Rice Lake Plains, Lower Trent River
Aug 2 - 5 ---- Niagara Prairies
Aug 6 - 14 --- Tallgrass Prairie Conference, Madison WS – no surveying, but all are invited to attend!
Aug 16 - 19 --- Lake Simcoe
Aug 23 - 27 --- Remaining areas.

Team members will get an orientation to the data collection methods, a free Tallgrass Ontario membership, a T-shirt and refreshments in recognition of their time in the field. Tallgrass Ontario representatives are available to do orientation presentations for field naturalist groups or potential crews about the project and tallgrass in Ontario.

Put your identification skills to use for conservation in Ontario. Tallgrass ecosystems are a globally imperiled ecosystem and one of the most endangered ecosystems in Canada. Tallgrass ecosystems are part of Ontario's natural heritage, and provide habitat for a huge number of wildlife species.

For more about Tallgrass Ontario, visit www.tallgrassontario.org

If you know of a remnant that may not be in the current Tallgrass Ontario database, please contact:

Dr. Will Wilson – wwilson@lakeheadu.ca or Chris Daniel – christopher_daniel@sympatico.ca directly.

If you are interested in taking part in the "Tallgrass Ontario" project as a crew member or in booking an orientation presentation, contact your Regional Coordinator, Erin McGauley, at (905) 985-6506 or erinm@ontarionature.org.

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

April 2004

Toronto

Bald Eagle - 1 Ad@Black Creek / Jane Apr.03 (TH,GC,GCarp).

Fox Sparrow - 3 at Black Creek nr. Jane Apr.03 (TH,GC,GCarp).

Peel

American Bittern - 1 at Centreville Creek Apr.29 (PG).

Trumpeter Swan - 2 at Gibson Lake Apr.08 (anon fide PG).

Wood Duck - 5 at Albion Hills Cons. Area Apr.08 (PG,EM).

Northern Harrier – 1@Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.03 (PG). 1@Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (DMi).

Northern Goshawk - 1 Imm at Albion Hills Cons. Area Apr.18 (PG,EM).

Broad-winged Hawk - 2 (pair) at Mt.Pleasant (Stoneheart Est.) Apr.15 (PG,EM).

American Woodcock - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (DMi).

Long-eared Owl - 2 (pair) at Clairville Cons. Area Apr.16 [Adult entering] (PG).

Pileated Woodpecker - 2 (pair) at Centreville Creek Apr.29 [Nest building] (PG)

Warbling Vireo - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (PG).

Tree Swallow - 2 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.09 (PG).

Red-breasted Nuthatch - 2 (pair) at Bolton Apr.06 [Nest building] (anon fide PG).

Brown Creeper - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.15,29 (PG,EM).

Carolina Wren - 1 at Centreville Creek Apr.29 (PG).

Winter Wren - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.16 (PG).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (DMi).

Eastern Bluebird - 2 (pair) at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.03 (PG).

Hermit Thrush - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.17 (PG,EM).

Brown Thrasher - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (PG).

Palm Warbler - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 (DMi).

Eastern Towhee - 1 at Palgrave Conservation Area Apr.06 (anon fide PG).

Field Sparrow - 1 at Humber Valley Herit.Tr.Bolton Apr.29 [Singing Male] (DMi).

Vesper Sparrow - 1 at Centreville Creek Apr.29 (PG).

Purple Finch - 4 at Palgrave Conservation Area Apr.04 (EM).

Common Redpoll - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Apr.03 (PG).

York

Common Loon - 2 at Lake Wilcox Apr.09 (S&JB).

Double-crested Cormorant - 2 at Coyote Pond, Markham Apr.19 (SLo).

Snow Goose - 1 Imm at Major MacKenzie & Markham Apr.13 (SLo).

Mute Swan - 3 at N End Bathurst Street Apr.03 (KDu).

Trumpeter Swan - 2 at N End Bathurst Street Apr.03 (KDu).

Tundra Swan - 80 at Hochreiter Road/Bathurst N End Apr.11 (BB). 60 at N End Bathurst Street Apr.13 (KDu).

Wood Duck - 2 at Lake Wilcox Apr.12 (S&JB).

Ring-necked Duck - 4 at Lake Wilcox Apr.04 (S&JB). 5 at Coyote Pond, Markham Apr.11 (SLo).

Bufflehead - 15 at Lake Wilcox Apr.08 (S&JB).

Hooded Merganser - 4 at Lake Wilcox Apr.10 (S&JB).

Osprey – 1@Silver Lk Golf Crs Apr9(KDu). 2@Bloomington/404 Commun.Twr Apr12(TH). 1@HInd Lndng Apr28 (BB).

Northern Harrier - 1 at Apr.03 (RJF). 2 (pair) at N End Bathurst Street Apr.11 (KDu).

Cooper's Hawk - 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Apr.01 (JLo).

Northern Goshawk - 1 at Pangman Springs Cons. Area Apr.03 (RJF).
 Red-shouldered Hawk - 1 at YRF - Hall Tract Apr.03,22 (RJF).
 American Kestrel - 2 at St.John's S.R. & Warden Apr.03 (RJF).
 Wild Turkey - 1 at Newmarket N end Apr.09 (LoP). 6 at Kennedy and St. John's Apr.22 (RJF).
 Lesser Yellowlegs - 1 at N End Bathurst Street Apr.10 (KDu). 2 at Coyote Pond, Markham Apr.19 (SLo).
 Solitary Sandpiper - 1 at Toogood Pond, Unionville Apr.27 (SLo).
 Spotted Sandpiper - 2 at Coyote Pond, Markham Apr.21 (SLo).
 Common Snipe - 10 at 2 Conc. East Gwill.& Queensv. Apr.11 (KDu).
 American Woodcock - 1 at Faulkner Ave. Woods Apr.22 (RJF).
 Caspian Tern - 1 at Toogood Pond, Unionville Apr.20 (SLo).
 Short-eared Owl - 2 (pair) at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Apr.07 (JLo).
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - 1 at YRF - Zephyr Tract Apr.11 (BB).
 Northern Flicker - 1 at Wilcox Lake Complex Apr.12 (S&JB).
 Pileated Woodpecker – 1@Wilcox Lk Apr7(S&JB). 1@Hwy 7/Bathurst Apr.11(TH). 1@Faulkner Woods Apr.24 (RJF).
 Common Raven – 1@Faulkner Ave. Woods Apr.22 [Male](RJF). 1@YRF, Zephyr Tract Apr.28 [Circling above] (TH).
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - 1 at Cold Creek Conservation Area Apr.29 (DMi).
 White-breasted Nuthatch - 1 at Cold Creek Conservation Area Apr.29 (DMi).
 Winter Wren - 1 at 123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Apr.10 (H&MF).
 Golden-crowned Kinglet - 2 at Toogood Pond, Unionville Apr.20 (SLo).
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 5@Toogood Pond, Unvl Apr.20 (SLo). A few at Cold Creek Cons. Area Apr.29 (DMi).
 Eastern Bluebird - 2@Doane Rd. E of Woodbine Apr.11(KDu). 2 (pair)@Holborn Rd. E of Woodbine Apr.11 (KDu).
 Bohemian Waxwing - 3 at Holland Landing at Brydons Apr.02 (CB).
 Cedar Waxwing - small flock at Holland Landing at Brydons Apr.02 (CB).
 Yellow-rumped Warbler - 2 (pair) at Snider Marsh Markham Apr.28 (SLo).
 Pine Warbler - 2 at YRF - Hall Tract Apr.22 (RJF).
 Eastern Towhee - 2 (pair) at Backyard newmarket Apr.27 (ED'A).
 Fox Sparrow - 1 at Maple Avenue Richmond Hill Apr.04; 2 on Apr.10 (GL).
 White-throated Sparrow – Several@Idleswift Thornhill Apr.13(GD). 1 at Cold Creek Conservation Area Apr.29 (DMi).
 Rose-breasted Grosbeak - 1 M at Idleswift Thornhill Apr.13 (GD).
 Eastern Meadowlark – 1 at Pangman Springs Cons. Area Apr.03 (RJF).
 Rusty Blackbird - 1 at Silver Lake Road Golf Course Apr.09 (KDu).
 Brewer's Blackbird - 1 at Wooten Way Markham Apr.05 (SLo).
 Pine Siskin - 3 at Holland Landing at Brydons Apr.03; 2 Apr.25 (BB).
ARa Alfred Raab, BB Bruce Brydon, BCa Barry Cameron, CMK Carol McKnight, D&AD David & Amy Darker, DTH Doris Hofmann, FWh Freddy Whillans, GL Graham Leonard, HL Harry Lumsden, ICa Ian Cannell, JLo Joan Love, JMc John McLean, KDu Keith Dunn, KRS Kevin Shackleton. PG Phyllis Graydon, RCu Robert Cubbitt, RJF Ron Fleming, SDP Susan DiPucchio, SLo Stan Long, SVa Sandy Vanderbrug, TH Theo Hofmann, TS Tessa Shelvey.

From the Editor

It's been a very busy spring for everyone who involves themselves in conservation and political advocacy for nature. There have been or will be many issues, events, and opportunities for people to get involved, from the Greenbelt Task Force to the upcoming Federal Election, the work of the Richmond Hill Naturalists is continuing apace. Our efforts to educate and advocate on behalf of nature seem to be coming to fruition at this juncture in history as more and more attention is being paid by people from all sectors of society as a general awareness of the degraded state of the natural world in our neighbourhoods becomes more and more apparent. Groups are also now coming together across the GTA and across the province as never before, the backbone of this effort being the newly formed [Ontario Nature Network](#).

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