



50th Anniversary

THE BULLETIN

November 2004 No. 440

2004 - 2005 EXECUTIVE

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Events calendar

Botany Group	Monday December 6, 2004 Topic: "Christmas Plants" Location: Marion Martindale
Executive Meeting	Tuesday December 14, 2004 Tuesday January 11, 2005
Bird Group	Wednesday December 8, 2004 7:30pm
General Meeting	Thursday January 20, 2005
Field Trips	- Friday December 3, 2004. 6:30pm. Owl Prowl & Night Hike in York Regional Forest Contact: Theo 905-889-1554 or Natalie 905-881-8403
	- Saturday December 11, 2004. 10:30 am. Location: Oak Ridges Trail, Uxbridge Contact: Diana 905-773-4199
	- Saturday December 18, 2004. Audubon Christmas Bird Count Contact: Natalie 905-881-8403

See Details on Page 2

Doors Open to Nature – 75 Events Celebrating 75 Years for Nature

In 2006 Ontario Nature will celebrate its 75th anniversary.

It is an impressive and important milestone, well worth celebrating. Since its inception in 1931 Ontario Nature has worked to build a strong federation of groups across the province. Today that Nature Network numbers 136 member groups who share the mission and commitment to preserve, protect and restore Ontario's natural heritage.

Many events are being planned throughout 2006, and groups are invited to participate in *Doors Open to Nature*, a community celebration of the federation's accomplishments as the 'one voice for nature' since 1931.

Doors Open to Nature will profile 75 events that highlight the contributions that local member groups have made to the federation and nature in Ontario. A special guide will be produced to encourage members of the community to join in these unique events. Look for the guide by the end of next year, and if you have any ideas for events our club might be able to host, don't hesitate to contact an Executive Member with your idea.



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.

NEW MEMBERS:

No new members.

Meet our new members at club events and say Hello!

EVENTS FUTURE

- **Friday December 3, 2004.** 6:30pm. Owl Prowl & Night Hike. Meet at the York Regional Forest North Tract. Location: McCowan north of Aurora Sideroad. Park at the bend in the road at the end of McCowan. Car-pooling is recommended. Contact Theo (905) 889-1554 or Natalie (905) 881-8403.
- **Monday December 6, 2004.** 12:30pm. The Botany Group will meet at the home of Marion Martindale to discuss Christmas Plants. There will not be any Botany Group meeting in January.
- **Wednesday December 8, 2004.** The Bird Group has changed its meeting times from 8:00pm to 7:30pm.
- **Saturday December 11, 2004.** 10:30 am. Uxbridge portion of the Oak Ridges Trail. Moderate paced hike. 6.5 km. Meet at roadside parking on Concession 3 south of Secord Road for a car shuttle. Bring water and a snack. For those interested there will be the option to do another 2km through the Secord property, in which case a lunch should be brought. To hike the 2 km through Secord only meet at the roadside parking on the 3rd Concession at 1:15 p.m. Please call Diana Piche, 905-773-4199.
- **Saturday December 18, 2004.** This year's Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is being coordinated by Natalie Helferty. Volunteers and feederwatchers welcome. Chili dinner at Gene & Charlene Denzel's home will be provided after the event for those participating. Dessert or salad appreciated. Contact Natalie at 905-881-8403 or nhelferty@rogers.com.
- There is **no** General Meeting in December. The next General Meeting will be on Thursday January 20, 2005. The speaker will be Scott Sampson of the Ontario Vernal Pool Association talking about "Life in Vernal Pools"

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).

2004 Annual Card Fundraiser

- This year's Robert Bateman design is: ***At the Cliff - Bobcat***
- Packages of 10 cards & envelopes are available for \$8.00 each or 2 packages for \$15.00.
- These are the same cards available from Ontario Nature but by ordering from your local club you provide us with a much needed source of income and avoid the shipping cost.
- There are two options:
 - a) Cards with "**Season's Greetings and Best Wishes for the Coming Year**" inscribed on the inside.
 - or
 - b) Hasty notes which are **blank on the inside** to allow you to create your own message at any time of the year.
- Also available at a substantial discount [\$5.50 each or 2 for \$10.00 - pkg of 10] are previous years cards:
 - "Red Fox" Season's Greetings cards or "On-alert Chipmunk", "Wolves on the Trail", "Snowy Owl" or "Kestrel" hasty notes.

Orders can still be placed. Contact Diana Piché at **905-773-4199** or e-mail diana.piche@sympatico.ca

Thank-you for your support.



Out of Town:

- Wednesday November 24, 2004. 6:45pm. Information session on how to create a bird habitat in your backyard this winter. Topics include: • Providing food, water and shelter • Types of bird feed • Types of bird feeders • Identifying common birds in your backyard. Newmarket Public Library Multipurpose Room (438 Park Ave., Newmarket). Please pre-register at 905-953-5110 (space is limited).

- Thursday December 2, 2004. 7pm. The Royal Botanical Gardens presents "The Spirit of the Butterflies", with Maraleen Manos-Jones, who was the first woman from the U.S. to discover the monarch butterfly's overwintering habitat in Mexico, and has returned there every year for the past 26 years to work with local communities. To register call 905-527-1158 or online at www.rbg.ca. Deadline is Tuesday November 23.



\$12 members, \$15 non-members.

- Sunday December 5, 2004. West Humber Naturalists hosts a field trip to Niagara Falls to see the thousands of Gulls which collect on the Niagara River every year. Scattered among these thousands are rarities from the West Coast, the High Arctic, and occasionally from Europe, along with other migrating waterfowl. Meet at 7:00am at Vellore Hall or 9:00am at the Table Rock parking area at Niagara Falls.

- Sunday December 19, 2004. West Humber Naturalists Christmas Bird Count and Feeder count. Round-up will be at Vellore Hall, with refreshments provided by the club. Contact Bill Edmonds at 905-731-7551 or email edmunds7551@rogers.com to get involved.

Events hosted by the Rouge Valley Conservation Centre:

- Sunday November 21, 2004. 2pm. Rouge Valley geology and history hike. Hike starts from Pearse House.

- Sun Nov 28 – 1:30 pm Twyn Rivers hike from Sheppard and Twyn Rivers Road.

For detailed information call the Rouge Valley Conservation Centre at 416-282-0453 or call Steve Gahbauer at 416-265-1719 e-mail gsteve6@attglobal.net.

All programs are rain or shine. All programs are free, but donations are always welcome.

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

ORM Invasive Species and Stewardship Study

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is undertaking a new project, the main objective of which is to develop a database of project opportunities on the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) on both private and public lands for:


1. The creation of a youth employment program beginning in the spring/summer 2005.
2. Acquiring a broad scale, ORM wide understanding of the spread and the severity of certain invasive plant species.

At this time the MNR is looking for information about where exotic/invasive species have been observed on the ORM and the relative density or severity of the infestations on both private and public lands. As well, they would like to know about the state of other natural features like streams in headwater regions and wetlands with potential for restoration or improvements on properties you visit, volunteer on, own and/or manage. Response and identification of potential problem areas and enhancement opportunities will ultimately determine success at getting youth crews to undertake projects on private lands within the ORM.

What they are looking for is evidence and the locations of Woodlands with:

- * Dog Strangling Vine * European Buckthorn * Tartarian Honeysuckle * Garlic Mustard * Mature Norway Maple
- * Other needed work suitable for youth groups (tree planting, trail maintenance, monitoring etc.)

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Watercourses with:

- * Log jams / old beaver dams
- * Severe Erosion
- * Invasive plant species (i.e.: Japanese Knotweed or any other)
- * a lack of suitable riparian vegetation

Wetlands with:

- * Exotic species
- * In need of habitat improvements
- * Clean-up and/or general restoration efforts

The website below has more information and a link to an e-mail form for submitting information:

http://www.stewardshipcanada.ca/sc_dynamicUpdates/update_images/ontarioStewardshipImages/46_ORM.htm

Please contribute as much information from your own property or from observations of places you visit on the ORM to the MNR. This information will go along way to improving coverage of the moraine and increasing the effectiveness of this effort. Your survey will be sent directly to Shawn Verge, the coordinator of this project and your responses will be kept private and confidential in accordance with government policy.

For those of you already familiar with the *Ontario Stewardship Rangers Program*, an ORM youth employment program will likely use a similar model and will ultimately be available across the ORM to assist private landowners and organizations with their on-the-ground stewardship efforts. The Ontario Stewardship Rangers program has been very successful but the reality is that there are just not enough crews available to meet the demand.



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Bird Group Meeting, October 13, 2004: **Acadian and Yellow-bellied Flycatchers**

Empidonax Viresens and *Empidonax flaviventris* were the birds discussed at the October meeting of the Bird Study Group. They are two of the five eastern representatives of the twelve species I North America of the *Empidonax* family of Flycatchers.

To the uninitiated the birds in this family look somewhat alike – little gray birds with wing bars and eye rings. They are generally called "empids" or "empies". They are a challenge because, while each species has a distinctive song, it is easy to confuse the songs, and hence, the birds.

All five species have eye rings and wing bars, and Kenn Kaufman, in his book "Advanced Birding" says, "their specific characters are so subtle that there're is softer more variation within a species than there is between any two species in the genus.

They are about 14cm from bill tip to tail tip so this doesn't help at all in the field. Song is the best identifier which Peterson, in his field guide to the birds of North America, depicts, for the Acadian, as "pit-see" with thee "see" a few notes higher than the "pit". The Yellow-bellied's song is a rising "chu-wee".

The Acadian Flycatcher breeds in swampy, mature woodland, flood plain forests and cypress swamps, as well as inn woodlands along ravines and watercourses where deciduous trees predominate. They lay 3, but sometimes 2 or 4, eggs which are creamy-white to buff-white in colour and sparsely marked at the larger end with specks or blotches of dark brown. They are incubated to around 13-14 days and the young are altricial and downy.

The range of the Acadian is slightly to the north of us, while the Yellow-bellied is a fair bit north of us (according to the range maps)

- Harold Farrant

First Wild Condor Chick Takes Off

The first wild-born condor chick to fly in California in 22 years officially fledged Nov. 4 when it took a 150-foot flight. It first left its nest in early September, perching 20-50 feet below the nest cave where it hatched April 9 near the Hopper Mountain NWR, CA.

The last wild condor chick fledged in 1982.

Both parents are captive-released birds. The 10-year-old father is the dominant male of the southern California flock. He was released by Hopper Mountain Refuge in 1995. The seven-year-old female was released at Big Sur by the Ventana Wilderness Society in 1998.



The parents will care for the chick until it is approximately 18 months old.

The 2,417-acre Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge in Ventura County, CA, was established in 1974 to protect the California condor. Two other wildlife refuges – Blue Ridge in 1982 and Bitter Creek in 1985 – joined Hopper Mountain to create a refuge complex for the same purpose. Today, Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge Complex is the base of operations for condor reintroduction to southern California.

Hopper Mountain Refuge provides foraging and roosting habitat. Its condor rearing facility has six simulated nest caves and a flight pen. Condor chicks are transferred to the flight pen when they are 8-10 months old to undergo power-pole aversion conditioning. They stay until they are old enough to be released into the wild.

One hundred eleven condors live in the wild in California, Arizona and Baja, Mexico; 135 live in captivity at the Los Angeles Zoo, San Diego Wild Animal Park, the Oregon Zoo and the Peregrine Fund's World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise, ID.

The largest bird in North America, the condor was listed as an endangered species in 1967 under a law that predated the Endangered Species Act. They have soared over mountainous areas of California since prehistoric times. But their numbers plummeted in the 20th century, reaching their lowest level in 1982 when just 22 birds existed. Their decline is partially due to loss of habitat and food and from shooting, lead poisoning and toxic substances used to poison predators.

The Condor Recovery Program began releasing California condors back into the wild in 1992.

EVENTS PAST

Lake St. George Field Trip

On Sunday, October 17 2004, the Richmond Hill Naturalists organized a walking tour of the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Lake St. George Field Centre. This historic site (located on the north side of Bethesda Road, east of Bayview Avenue) is normally not open to the public, so this walk was a terrific opportunity to stroll through the trails of the extensive property surrounding Lake St. George.



Andrew Boughen, the Education Program Co-ordinator at the Lake St. George Field Centre, led the tour.



Andrew showed us the highlights of the lake, the adjacent regenerating agricultural lands and wetland restoration, and the yet to be excavated archeological sites. The eighteen people and two dogs who participated in the 2-hour walk found Andrew's insight about the Lake St. George facility very informative, and learned a great deal about the history and geography of the site.

- Sharon & Jim Bradley

On November 25, 2004 the Conservation Council of Ontario and The Province of Ontario held a summit meeting for Ontario's conservation leaders in Toronto focusing on strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations and volunteers in helping meet Ontario's conservation goals and targets. The agenda included speeches from Environment Minister Leona Dombrowsky and Energy Minister Dwight Duncan, presentations to showcase leaders in Ontario's conservation movement, and breakout sessions on key conservation issues.

The conference co-Chairs were Donna Cansfield, MPP, and chair of the Provincial Conservation Action Team and

Jeb Brugmann, the president of the Conservation Council of Ontario.

NATURE NEWS



On its 65th anniversary the *Canadian Nature Federation* changed its name to become "**Nature Canada**". This article will highlight the **Communities In Action** program which Nature Canada began in 1999.

Thanks to community groups the program is making a difference for Canada's birds. Nature Canada, in conjunction with Bird Studies Canada and Birdlife International, created the Canadian Important Bird Areas (IBA) program.

An advertisement for Authentic Tree Care Inc. featuring a list of services, contact information, and a logo with stylized trees. The services listed are: TREE & SHRUB PRUNING, INSECT & DISEASE CONTROL, TREE & STUMP REMOVAL, DEEP ROOT FERTILIZING, and PLANTING & TRANSPLANTING. The contact information includes the phone number 1-888-366-CARE and (416) 990-CARE, and the address P.O. BOX 118, BALDWIN, ONTARIO L0E 1A0. The logo shows three stylized trees in green and brown.

Since its inception more than 140 projects have been supported and more than \$400,000 has been invested in on-the-ground projects in about 100 IBA's, with close to \$2 Million in conservation action leveraged.

The Canadian IBA program has identified 597 sites that provide critical habitat for birds across Canada. Nature Canada, working with local community members, provides financial support to help implement critical conservation-related activities, including conservation, restoration, education, research, and monitoring projects.

To learn more about Important Bird Areas in Canada, visit <http://www.ibacanada.ca/> or contact the IBA Outreach Coordinator at Nature Canada, 606-1 Nicholas St., Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7. 613-562-8208 ext. 245.

ARTICLES

'Smelly' mates guide seabirds

Seabirds called prions, which mate for life, find their nests by sniffing out their smelly partners, scientists say. The birds make their nests in deep burrows, which are very dark, so they cannot rely on any other sense to find them, Science magazine reports.

The birds also actively avoid their own smell, which could be a way of making sure they do not breed with their kin. Although this use of smell has been observed in mammals, it has never before been seen in birds.

They are strictly monogamous, although they rarely get to spend any time with their partners. Instead they take it in turns to incubate eggs and find food. "All the shared life of the birds is inside the burrow because they don't stay together at sea - they just alternate on eggs," said co-author Francesco Bonadonna, of CNRS in Montpellier, France. Sometimes a prion will forage at sea for up to two weeks, before returning to the nest to begin a stint of incubation duty. When they fly in from sea, they have to reliably find their own nest among a medley of other nests. But sight is not much use because they tend to come home at night and their nests are submerged in deep burrows. "Their burrows are underground and really, really dark," said Dr Bonadonna. "They have nothing other than odour to find their way." Luckily, prions are rather smelly, so returning birds can locate their nests by following their partner's distinctive smell.

"We found that the birds are able to recognize their partner's odour, and we think they use this odour to recognize their burrows," said Dr Bonadonna. Not only are the prions attracted by their mate's smell, but they actively avoid their own. At first the researchers were surprised by this, because they assumed that following its own scent might also lead it to its burrow. But since the birds spend such a long time at sea their nests are unlikely to smell of them, the team concluded.

But why the avoidance? Dr Bonadonna thinks it is a strategy to prevent inbreeding. He said: "To avoid mating with a bird that smells too similar is to avoid mating with a bird that is related."

Story from BBC NEWS Published 2004/10/29

Thursday, September 9, 2004

By Robert Derham

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Health Canada (HC) have received submission forms from Monsanto Canada Inc. for the approval of a new *genetically modified* (GM) alfalfa seed line that is resistance to the herbicide glyphosate. The approval would register Monsanto's GM alfalfa as "environmentally safe", as well as "safe for human food and animal feed in Canada".

The approval would also grant Monsanto a safety approval for *unconfined release*, however the submission is not for commercial planting or seed production purposes.

The enhanced alfalfa seed line has been listed under Monsanto's *Roundup Ready* group of brands, that have been enhanced to tolerate glyphosate treatments during the crop's growing season. Growers benefit from the enhanced glyphosate resistance trait in the alfalfa, which allows them to use a *wider spectrum herbicide* (one that kills a wider range of plants than does a narrow-spectrum herbicide). In field trials, the enhanced alfalfa reduced the number and amount of herbicide applications during a growing season, while also demonstrating no *short-term* adverse effects to humans or other living organisms. The main weed types that Roundup Ready applications effectively inhibited in field trials with the new enhanced alfalfa seed were barnyard grass, tumble pigweed, redroot pigweed and common lambsquarter.

LOCAL ISSUES

On Wednesday November 10, at the Halton Regional Offices Dufferin Aggregate's lawyer made a rebuttal to the evidence submitted in a 163 page summation delivered by Joseph Castrilli, the lawyer for the Coalition on the Niagara Escarpment (CONE) and Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (POWER). These groups believe that the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve should not be further destroyed for extraction of aggregates that can be found somewhere else.

CONE and POWER have been the only formal opposition to Dufferin Aggregate's 205 acre (0.83 square kilometre) quarry expansion. The area proposed for aggregate mining by Dufferin lies north of the existing quarry, south of 15th Side Road, and straddles the Milton /Halton Hills town line.

If the expansion is allowed, the total area in which mining had or is taking place would be 1156 acres or roughly 4.68km². Dufferin Aggregates is seeking to change the land use from "Escarpment Rural" to "Mineral Resource Extraction". The lands in question are in the heart of in the largest tract of naturally vegetated landscape south of Grey County and are part of the largest forest area within 100 kilometres of Toronto.

There are numerous reasons why this application should not be allowed, including:

- quarrying is would take place 30 meters below the water table, maintaining water levels by pumping water from the quarry back into the aquifer
- having to pump in perpetuity to maintain the wetlands and water to the creeks, essentially severing the Niagara Escarpment into two pieces
- destroying critical habitat for the endangered Jefferson salamander
- destroying an important birding area
- setting a precedent for other quarry expansion licences on the Escarpment

Dufferin Aggregates' is a subsidiary of St. Lawrence Cement. It's main office is located in Concord. The company provides crushed stone, gravel and sand for infrastructure construction in Ontario, and for supplying aggregates to the company-owned ready-mixed concrete plants. Dufferin Aggregates' Milton Quarry employs approximately 100 people. It has supplied numerous projects in the GTA with aggregate, including the new runway at Pearson Airport, Highway 401 and Highway 407 ETR.

On Saturday November 6 the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources made an announcement regarding the 1100 acres of publicly-owned lands in north Oakville (known as the "ORC lands"). 750 acres of the ORC lands will be preserved as open spaces and parkland., with 73 acres being set aside for a hospital and public transit. Only 277 acres of the land will be sold for development, a huge improvement from the previous government's offer to preserve a mere 40% of this land. These lands are bounded by Sixteen Mile Creek, Bronte Road, Dundas street and Hwy 407. There will also be protection for a 368-acre parcel north of Highway 407 in Oakville, and 168 acres of land connecting Bronte Creek Provincial Park to the Niagara Escarpment.

"The Ontario government's decision to preserve this land under the label '*strict conservation*' is a clear sign that our provincial government puts people ahead of profit – and Oakville residents are grateful," stated Regional Councillor Allan Elgar. Oakville MPP Kevin Flynn heard the concerns of Oakville residents, who told him they wanted the ORC lands protected, as he went door to door in his election campaign last year.

It was Oakvillegreen, a local, not-for-profit environmental group, who raised public awareness of the ORC lands several years ago, and supporters from all parts of the town fought hard for its protection, particularly when it was learned that the town of Oakville had earmarked these lands for industrial development.

According to Renee Sandelowsky, a Town Councillor from Oakville Ward 4, "This announcement has no down side. This is a day of pure celebration. We have received a wonderful gift for future generations who will enhance, nurture and value this huge and significant natural area, especially as Oakville enters a period of unprecedented growth and development in the north."

On November 8, the Ontario government released a draft Greenbelt Plan for the Golden Horseshoe and has introduced a new law - the Greenbelt Act, Bill 135 - to bring the Plan into effect.

This is a bold, important first step toward protecting vital southern natural areas, and is promoting the extension of this concept across all of southern Ontario through a "**Greenway Strategy**" [see www.ontarionature.org]

The Greenbelt Plan encompasses the 800,000 acres (320,000 hectares) already protected in the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and one million additional acres (400,000 hectares) of newly protected land for an impressive total of 1.8 million acres (720,000 acres). The Greenbelt Plan places major limitations on land uses in the Greenbelt such as stopping urban sprawl by keeping urban boundaries where they are now. Key natural heritage features (significant woodlands, significant habitat of species at risk, fish habitat, wetlands, etc.) are largely protected from development, as are prime farmlands and specialty crop areas (Niagara's tender fruit and grape lands and the Holland Marsh).

According to the legislation, the total acreage of the Greenbelt cannot be reduced.

Consultations with the public started on November 8th in Markham to a packed house, and many concerns were heard from various residents. Most people praised the legislation, however there were some concerns, particularly from farmers and developers concerned that the rights and value of their land will be reduced.

Consultations are continuing at this time, with hearings on November 23 in St. Catharines, November 25 in Oshawa, and November 29 in Caledon.

With regard to the legislation and announcement, the following statement from a farmer regarding the new Greenbelt appeared in the "Corner Post", heard weekly on CFCO in Chatham and CKNX in Wingham.

November 1, 2004

Our political process is making another attempt to resist market forces and create long-term lasting change that could result in a more interesting and creative place for our grandchildren to live. Our provincial government has promised a Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt — in effect, a permanent wrap around the cities and communities on the western shores of Lake Ontario. But, what if the next administration just sees these green lands as an easy location for highways, gravel pits and energy corridors? What if, housing developers, whether chasing or creating market signals, continue to speculate in these lands until municipal administrations cave in to the blandishments of an increased tax base and short-term economic opportunity.

This time there is more than mere promise in the province's efforts to create the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt. Three aspects of the proposal encourage me to think that market forces and political expediency will not win out.

First, the greenbelt boundary is extensive. Back in the spring, our government's discussion document proposed 600,000 acres. The boundary proposed last week has grown to one million acres. Even if speculators and political convenience nibble a few thousand acres out of the edges over the coming decades, the greenbelt will hold a massive permanent presence in our landscape.

Second, the province on a recommendation from the Greenbelt Task Force, appointed Lyle Vanclief, former federal minister of agriculture and Bob Bedggood, former president of the Christian Farmers Federation, to consult on the needs of agriculture. This Agricultural Advisory Team's advice on land use, taxation, research, consumer education, normal farm practices, trespassing on farm property, wildlife and payment for environmental services is "right on." If the province implements their advice, the business of farming can succeed in the greenbelt. The rest of Ontario agriculture will also benefit.

Third, there are no permanent boundaries for any of the cities bordering on Lake Ontario. There is no mention in any of the announcements, but examine the maps -- 175,000 acres of farmland bordering these cities are out of the greenbelt. Developers can speculate to their hearts content for the next 30 years. If the Liberals deliver on their promise to require increased population densities and more urban redevelopment, rezoning these lands out of agriculture can stretch to 40 or 50 years. I deplore our government's willingness to pave over these farmlands -- especially since most of them are of better quality for agriculture than the lands protected in the greenbelt.

However, by the time development reaches the limits of these lands the Golden Horseshoe Greenbelt will have joined the 800,000 acres of the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine as a permanent and valued fixture on our landscape.

- Elbert van Donkersgoed, P. Ag. (Hon.). Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario

Greenbelt related announcements can be viewed at www.mah.gov.on.ca/userfiles/HTML/nts_1_16289_1.html.

The advice of the Agricultural Advisory Team is posted at www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/aat/advice.htm.

(Submitted from various sources)

Tuesday October 19, 2004

In response to its request for proposals to provide 2,500 megawatts (MW) of clean new electricity supply, the Ontario Government has received proposals totalling more than 60,000 MW. This amount is more than double the peak-day demand in Ontario and dwarfs the current production of Ontario's five coal-fired power plants.

More than 150 companies submitted proposals, and the Town of Richmond Hill has retained some consultants to perform a pre-feasibility study which will help determine whether or not to commence a full scale feasibility study for a wind Power project.

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

October 14 2004 to End of October

Peel

American Woodcock - 1 at Clairville Cons. Area Oct.30 (ARa)
Red-headed Woodpecker - 1 at Mount Hope Oct.28 (anon fide PG,).
Pileated Woodpecker - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Oct.28 (PG).
Hermit Thrush - 12 at Albion Hills Cons. Area Oct.20 (EM).
American Tree Sparrow - Flock at Palgrave Conservation Area Oct.28 (PG).

York

Great Blue Heron - 1 at Hochreiter Road/Bathurst N End Oct.16 (KDu).
Black-crowned Night-Heron - 1 at Snider Marsh Markham Oct.18 (CMK).
Turkey Vulture - 26 at Markham Bypass Oct.19 [Circling above] (SLo).
Snow Goose - 4 at Coyote Pond, Markham Oct.31 (SLo).
Canada Goose - 500 at Elgin Mills & Leslie Str. Oct.31 (RJF).
Cackling Goose - 11@Coyote Pnd Oct18; 6 Oct22(SLo). 50@Swan Lk Oct20(GBell). 50@Elgin Mls/Leslie Oct31(RJF).
Wood Duck - 4 at Oakbank Pond Thornhill Oct.17 (MCh).
Northern Shoveler - 1 F at Milne Cons. Area, Markham Oct.28 (SLo).
Green-winged Teal - 10 at Milne Cons. Area, Markham Oct.28 (SLo).
Northern Harrier - 1 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Oct.18 (KDu).
Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 at 34 Shady Lane Thornhill Oct.23-31 (SVa).
Cooper's Hawk - 1 F at Elgin Mills and Bayview Oct.17 [Flying over] (RJF).
Rough-legged Hawk - 1 at King-Vaughan Line & Bathurst Oct.31 (RJF). Dark-phase
1 at King-Vaughan Line & Dufferin Oct.31 (RJF).
Light-phase American Kestrel - 1 at Markham Bypass Oct.27 (SLo).
Killdeer - 2 at Snider Marsh Markham Oct.13; 2 Sept.23 (CMK).
Greater Yellowlegs - 1 at Milne Cons. Area, Markham Oct.28 (SLo).
Lesser Yellowlegs - 1 at Markham Bypass Oct.19 (SLo). 4 at Milne Cons. Area, Markham Oct.28 (SLo).
Semipalmated Sandpiper - 9 at Milne Cons. Area, Markham Oct.28 (SLo).
Dunlin - 4 at Markham Bypass Oct.19; 3 Oct.24 (SLo).
Common Snipe - 4@Snider Marsh Mrkm Sept. 29; Oct.13 (CMK). 1 to 5 at Snider Marsh Markham Oct.18-29 (CMK).
Iceland Gull - 1 Juv at Coyote Pond, Markham Oct.24 (SLo).
Lesser Black-backed Gull - 1@Pond on 9th line@Hwy 407 Oct19(SLo). 1@Ponds, South Cornell Mrkm Oct19(SLo).
Glaucous Gull - 1 at Markham Sump:Bypass & 9th line Oct.19 (SLo)
Ruby-throated Hummingbird - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol Mck) Oct.13 (CMK).
Downy Woodpecker - 4 at 34 Shady Lane Thornhill Oct.23-31 (SVa).
Hairy Woodpecker - 2 at 34 Shady Lane Thornhill Oct.23-31 (SVa).
Eastern Phoebe - 1 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Oct.17 (KDu).
Blue-headed Vireo - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol Mck) Oct.21 (CMK).
Red-breasted Nuthatch - 2 at 199 Arnold Ave., Thomhill Oct.23-31 (TH,DTH).
Rebreasted Nuthatches were reported from many feeders (m.obs.) 1 at 190 Grandview Ave., Thornhill most of Oct. (DJ).
Brown Creeper - 1 at 34 Shady Lane Thornhill Oct.30 (SVa).

Golden-crowned Kinglet - 1 at Silver Lake Road Golf Course Oct.16 (KDu). 15 at Markham Boardwalk Oct.21 (CMK).
 Ruby-crowned Kinglet – 1@Silver Lk Rd Golf Crse Oct16(KDu). 12@Henderson West Woods Oct17(RJF).
 Swainson's Thrush - 1 at Markham Boardwalk Oct.21 (CMK). 1 at Silver Lake Road Golf Course Oct.30 (KDu).
 Hermit Thrush – 1@Snider Mrsh Mrkm Oct13(CMK). 1@Grenfell Mrkm Oct.13(CMK).
 American Pipit - 24 at Bathurst E side S of Jefferson Oct.17 (RJF).
 Cedar Waxwing - small flocks at 34 Shady Lane Thornhill Many sightings before & after 30 Oct.(SVa).
 Yellow-rumped Warbler - 8 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Oct.17 (KDu).
 Ovenbird - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol McK) Oct.13 (CMK).
 Eastern Towhee - 1 at Elmhurst Bch: Keith Dunn Home Oct.18 (KDu).
 Fox Sparrow - 1 at Markham Bypass Oct.19 (SLo).
 Swamp Sparrow - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol McK) Oct.29 (CMK).
 White-throated Sparrow – 4@Silver Lake Rd Glf Crse Oct16(KDu). 1—10@Grenfell Mrkm Oct18-30(CMK).
 White-crowned Sparrow – 1@Elmhurst Bch Oct.18 (KDu). 1 Juv at 4 Grenfell Markham Oct.24-27(CMK).
 Dark-eyed Junco – 10@34 Shady Ln Thrhnl Oct23-31(SVa). 30@4 Grenfell Mrkhm Oct.27(CMK).
 Rusty Blackbird - 12 at King-Vaughan Line & Bathurst Oct.31 (RJF).
 Purple Finch - 1 F at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol McK) Oct.18; 1 male 22 Oct. (CMK).
ARa Alfred Raab, CMK Carol McKnight, DJ Dana Jonak, DTH Doris Hofmann, EM Elizabeth Morton, GBell Gordon Bellerby, KDu Keith Dunn, KRS Kevin Shackleton, MCh Martin Chen, MuF, PG Phyllis Graydon, RJF Ron Fleming, SLo Stan Long, SLo Stan Long, SVa Sandy Vanderbrug, TH Theo Hofmann.

Richmond Hill Naturalists Annual Balance Sheet as of August 31, 2004

R.H.N. Annual Balance Sheet		
As of 31 Aug 04		
Account	Balance @ 31 Aug 03	Balance @ 31 Aug 04
ASSETS Cash and Bank Accounts		
Bateman GIC	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
GIC-1	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Chequing	\$ 3,855.36	\$ 3,893.44
Cash Float	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Total Cash and Bank Accounts	\$ 8,905.36	\$ 8,943.44
Other Assets		
Capital Equipment	\$ 900.00	\$ 810.00
Inventory	\$ 0	\$ 50.00
Total Other Assets	\$ 900.00	\$ 860.00
LIABILITIES & EQUITY		
LIABILITIES		
Accts Payable	\$ 0	\$ 0
Deferred Income	\$ 0	\$ 0
KLC Account	\$ 0	\$ 0
Peregrine Project	\$ 0	\$ 0
Reserves	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL Other Liabilities	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
EQUITY	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 8,803.44
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 9,805.36	\$ 9,803.44
NOTES: Depreciation of capital equipment and inventory is arbitrary.		

From the Editor

Due to space and time limitations the submission from the Botany Group will be published next month.
 -- Lloyd Helferty, Editor lhelferty@sympatico.ca