



50th Anniversary

# THE BULLETIN

December 2004 No. 441

## 2004 - 2005 EXECUTIVE

President	Natalie Helferty . . . . (905) 881-8403 <a href="mailto:nhelferty@rogers.com">nhelferty@rogers.com</a>
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Maryanne Yake . . . . (905) 883-3047 <a href="mailto:myluyden@yahoo.ca">myluyden@yahoo.ca</a>
2nd Vice President	-- Position Available --
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Past President	Michael White . . . . . (416) 926-9553 <a href="mailto:michael.white@sympatico.ca">michael.white@sympatico.ca</a>
Field Trips	Martin Chen . . . . . (905) 709-0246 <a href="mailto:jmchentoronto@rogers.com">jmchentoronto@rogers.com</a>
Director	Tracey Etwell . . . . . 905-726-1269 <a href="mailto:tetwell@hotmail.com">tetwell@hotmail.com</a>
Bulletin Editor	Lloyd Helferty . . . . . (905) 707-8754 <a href="mailto:lhelferty@sympatico.ca">lhelferty@sympatico.ca</a>
Director	Theo Hofmann . . . . . (905) 889-1554 <a href="mailto:theo@hera.med.utoronto.ca">theo@hera.med.utoronto.ca</a>
Director	Harry Lumsden . . . . (905) 727-6492 <a href="mailto:theholtentwo@cs.com">theholtentwo@cs.com</a>
Director	Mike Turk . . . . . (905) 731-8380 <a href="mailto:turkm@access.com">turkm@access.com</a>
Director	Sharon Bradley . . . . (905) 773-7415 <a href="mailto:sbradley@aci.on.ca">sbradley@aci.on.ca</a>
Director & Don Rep	Tom Waechter . . . . . (905) 737-4305 <a href="mailto:twaechter@acncanada.net">twaechter@acncanada.net</a>
FON Rep	Diana Piché . . . . . (905) 773-4199 <a href="mailto:diana.piche@sympatico.ca">diana.piche@sympatico.ca</a>
Humber Alliance Rep	George Ivanoff . . . . (905) 773-0631 <a href="mailto:hertzberg.ivanoff@sympatico.ca">hertzberg.ivanoff@sympatico.ca</a>

## Events calendar

Executive Meeting	Tuesday January 11, 2005
Bird Group	Wednesday January 12, 2005 7:30pm Location: Mike Turk's 217 Romfield Cir Topic: Cowbirds
General Meeting	Thursday January 20, 2005 Featuring: Scott Sampson Topic: "Life in Vernal Pools"
Botany Group	Monday February 7, 2005
Field Trips	- Saturday December 18, 2004. Audubon Christmas Bird Count Contact: Natalie 905-881-8403

See Details on Page 2

## All of this because of a turkey?

### *A rumination on nature and culture for 2005*

It is early winter, the Christmas season. It is also the time to gather native meadow plant seeds. The method is called 'collecting meadow duff' - break the puff covered heads off meadow plants and stuff them in a garbage bag for transport to the spreading location. This is a cheap and expedient method to import several species of Solidago [Goldenrods] and Aster -- and whatever else can be identified -- to developing meadows that lack natural seed sources. It remains to be seen if it helps to end the Canada Thistle infestation that has threatened the effectiveness of the Richmond Hill Parks department's sincere efforts to naturalize one of their Parks, Hunter's Point Park, west of Yonge Street beside Highway 7.

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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](mailto:lhelferty@sympatico.ca) Deadlines are the first day of each month.

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**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

- **Tuesday January 11, 2005.** The first Richmond Hill Naturalists Executive meeting of 2005 will convene.

- **Wednesday January 12, 2005.** 7:30pm. Note: The Bird Group has changed its meeting times from 8:00pm to 7:30pm. The topic will be Evening, Brown headed and Bronzed Cowbirds. Meet at Mike Turk's, 217 Romfield Cir, Thornhill. Call 905-731-8380 for more information.

- **Thursday January 20, 2005.** 7:30pm. The next **General Meeting** will feature Scott Sampson of the Ontario Vernal Pool Association, who will be talking about "Life in Vernal Pools". Meet at the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church hall, 10066 Yonge Street.

- **Monday February 7, 2005.** 12:30pm. The Botany Group will meet to discuss plants. There will not be any Botany Group meeting in January.

**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](mailto:jmchentoronto@rogers.com)).**

- **Friday February 5th, 2005.** Join the [Friends of Second Marsh](#) for dinner, dancing and live entertainment in Oshawa. It's a wetland theme of course - be sure to wear your safari clothes! All proceeds from the event will be in support of the Great Lakes Wetland Centre. For more details contact Marilyn Cole at 905-723-5459 or [campaign.secondmarsh@rogers.com](mailto:campaign.secondmarsh@rogers.com)

## MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

February 2004 **Botany Group Meeting**

Topic: Wetlands

After partaking of refreshments the group discussed wetlands – areas which contain water part of or all year round and as to the life it supports and the benefits to the environment. Wetlands consist of bogs, swamps, shorelines, marshes and fens. The Bog is dominated by sphagnum mosses and heaths, poor drainage and nutrient poor with low productivity. Marshes are wet places with herbaceous vegetation. A Swamp is a wet place that can contain up to 9 feet of water and is a dark tea colour, dominated by shrubs and trees, living and dead. The wind passing through creates oxygen for plants.

Fens are related to bogs but are more favourable to plant life. You may find black spruce, cranberries, s, pitcher plants, orchids, wild calla, bog laurel, sedges, and leatherleaf, which is the first plant to establish itself after a fire. Muskegs have constant water but are stagnant with porous mud.



Long dismissed as noxious, unprofitable places, wetlands are now prized as one of the richest ecosystems on earth, and yet their destruction continues. Wetlands also lock up large amounts of carbon – especially in the form of peat – thereby preventing it from entering the atmosphere as carbon dioxide, the principal culprit in global climate change. Wetlands provide feeding, spawning and nursery grounds for many species of saltwater fin and shellfish and for most freshwater gamefish as well. They are habitats of resident bird species and more than half of migrating birds.

Wetlands absorb and filter pollutants that would otherwise degrade lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and aquifers. People need protection from too much water in the wrong places at the wrong times. Coastal wetlands buffer the impact of storm tides on populated uplands; inland marshes sponge up runoff, reducing flood crests downstream. Wetlands stabilize shorelines and riverbanks. They are the glue that hold the lands together.



Dana Jonak & Federation Of Ontario Naturalists  
see: <http://www.regional.niagara.on.ca/government/abc/eeac/wetlands.aspx>

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It is early winter, the Christmas season. It is also the time to gather native meadow plant seeds. The method is called 'collecting meadow duff' - Break the puff covered heads off meadow plants and stuff them in a garbage bag for transport to the spreading location. This is a cheap and expedient method to import several species of Solidago and Aster -- and whatever else can be identified -- to developing meadows that lack natural seed sources. It remains to be seen if it helps to end the Canada Thistle infestation that has threatened the effectiveness of the Richmond Hill Parks department's sincere efforts to naturalize one of their Parks, Hunter's Point Park, west of Yonge beside Highway 7.

This is what we we're doing. 'We' includes 50 grade nine to twelve students from Richmond Hill's Langstaff Secondary School along with two of their teachers and us helpers. We were "collecting duff" in the tall Goldenrod meadows of Lake St. George on a relatively fine December afternoon.

All was going well, then a young fellow calls out "Look at the turkey!"

The way kids talk these days, my first thought was that he was commenting on a friend. But a few minutes later he comes up and asks me directly, "Did you see the turkey?"

"There are no turkeys at Lake St. George", I had to answer. There are deer. We'd seen one bounding away in horror from our mass invasion of the three duck ponds in the middle of the Centre earlier in the morning. There were goldfinches and chickadees and a white breasted nuthatch at the feeders near the Lake St. George house. There were robins in the cedar forest, probably pigging out on the buckthorn berries. There was even a hawk, huge enough to perhaps be an eagle, flying south of the Center.

"Yep, we've got a turkey" admitted Andrew Boughen, who runs the Lake St. George Education Centre for the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. "We sometimes feed him out in the back field".


As I apologized for doubting the student naturalist I made a note to send someone out to get the Lake St. George turkey for the Christmas Bird Count - we might win the number of species "prize" for 2004, especially with good weather and a possible eagle.

I also found myself thinking about the turkey and the recent loss of writer Pierre Berton and the many articles in his honor in our daily papers.

I must admit I have never read any of Pierre Berton's 50 books. He chronicles Canada's north, the railroads, the gold rush, Canada's industrialists and even some rumrunners and financiers, I believe. On the other hand I have read all of Pierre's friend, Farley Mowatt's, works.



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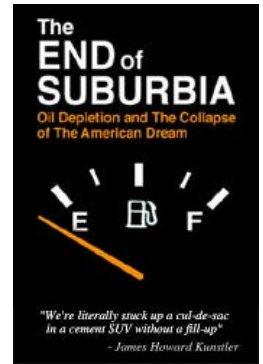
Mowatt, also has written mostly about the north. These are stories about the Inuit, the Dene, the Innu, the wolves, the whales and the cod peoples (Thule) of the east. Mowatt's peoples, human or animal, live 'with Canada' and pursue their tough, surviving lives there. They do not tame it or exploit, mine it, fish it, hunt it or log it only to send these precious resources to Europe or America or Japan -- to build bigger cities, financial empires, or Rosedale homes. In fact in many cases, the peoples and animals that Mowatt knew were victims of changes brought about or imposed by the peoples of the south that fill Berton's work. But then again, I have to admit that I am part of Berton's people -- not Mowatt's.

What connects the turkey with Berton in my mind is this Canadian writer's recipe for roast Turkey that I'd read in the morning's Star. Now when I hear about flocks of turkeys being reestablished in York Region Forests, and in Peel and Durham and when I hear of the movement of Turkeys north along the escarpment and west along the moraine, I cannot forget the "bird as feast". I can't help it. Here we were working to restore a little bit of nature to the city, including habitat for the re-introduced turkeys -- a relatively wild turkey.

A week ago I listened to the CBC Massey lectures frighteningly graphic forecasting of the future of our "dominating civilization". A week before that, we joined our Green Party Candidate and Bulletin Editor at a film called "The End of Suburbia" that foretold the reality of the future of our fossil fuel driven lives and Communities. Amazingly, Richmond Hill was the 'model' of this film's dire predictions.

We keep doing what we can to change, and we try to take note of the changes that have happened in the past 50 years of the Richmond Hill Naturalists. We still do the Christmas Bird Count. We read Suzuki. We plan for a Richmond Hill 'Gardens for Nature' program. We hear Rick Mercer touting, with an unreal sincerity, the Canadian Ministry of the Environment's "[One-Ton Challenge](#)" - for each of us to reduce the five tons of pollutants that we each produce every year -- to four.

And then I covet that big green bird in the fields of [Lake St. George](#). I guess I have a lot of work to do -- beginning with myself. Have a Happy New Year Caring for Nature, everyone.  
 - Michael White, Past President



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*A hundred years ago perhaps the largest problem for food policy was food quantity - ensuring a sufficient supply of food. Industrial food production has solved this problem in the North but its very success has bred a whole host of other problems that now present themselves in myriad forms from food borne diseases to questionable animal welfare practices and soil and water degradation. The problem our food supply faces today is now one of quality.*

**Thanksgiving's Hidden Costs**

Picture yourself in the supermarket, loading up your cart on a last-minute. You're exhausted & you just want to get home, and your senses are pummeled by the brightly packaged bounty all around you. You are at once awakened and overwhelmed. What will you pick from this vast garden?

It's an astounding global selection that appears & at first glance to be fairly affordable. Shiny, freshly waxed fruits and vegetables beckon from overflowing bins, hardly a bruise or nonconforming shape in sight. Broccoli, oranges, bananas, asparagus, melons and pineapples are piled high in the middle of winter. Crops hailing from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Chile, Argentina, every productive corner of America and elsewhere, display the terrific powers of industrial agriculture, seemingly boundless international trade, and rapid long distance transport of perishable foods.

A few quick swivels of the shopping cart reveal long fluorescent boulevards of packages and cans, each promising to save you time and enliven your taste buds. There are pre-cut and flavored fruits and vegetables (produce with "value added"), fully prepared kids' lunches, multi-colored chips, soups and stews, frozen dinners, a whole kingdom of precision-flavored cereals, sauces and powdered meals. Just add water and plug in the microwave. It's a bachelor's (or working parent's) paradise.

In today's North American supermarket, there are no seasons, no limits. The world's harvests and manufactured meals are at your fingertips. The supermarket appears to symbolize the best of democratic capitalism, offering consumer choice and a largess born of amazing productivity. But how does all this food actually get here? Is it really as cheap and convenient as it seems?

In fact, this veneer of epicurean egalitarianism conceals a less glamorous set of realities. Our most basic necessity has become a force behind a staggering array of social, economic and environmental epidemics, pesticide-laminated harvests, labor abuse, treacherous science, and, at the reins, a few increasingly monopolistic corporations controlling nearly every aspect of human sustenance. The way we make, market and eat food today creates rampant illness, hunger, poverty, community disintegration and ecological decay; and even threatens our future food supply.

This extraordinary bounty is made puts our future at risk: eroding topsoil and water supplies, poisoning the ground and polluting rivers and streams with roughly [1.2 billion pounds of pesticides](#) and another billion tons of toxic [manure runoff from huge animal factory farms](#). Meat and chicken in your cart is filled with growth hormones and pesticides, nothing likely to kill anyone, but enough to pose possible long-term health risks. What can and does kill is all the bacteria in the meat, a plague exacerbated by the way animals are "farmed" and processed in enormous warehouses and lightning-speed assembly lines. More than [5,000 people die each year from foodborne illnesses](#), and hundreds of thousands more require hospital care.

The system that produces and transports this superabundance runs on oil and diesel. The average food item on your supermarket shelf has traveled at least 1,500 miles, and all that long-distance transport requires millions of gallons of diesel fuel. On today's industrial farm huge single-crop harvests are coaxed by 15 million tons of petroleum-based fertilizers each year. Experts such as Cornell University's [Dr. David Pimentel](#) have found that U.S. agriculture, largely through its reliance on [petrochemical-based fertilizers and pesticides](#), uses some 400 gallons of fossil fuel per person per year to feed every American. That's more than 100 billion gallons of oil and oil equivalents used in the United States each year just to manufacture food. The bulk of the food in your shopping cart, especially the meat, dairy and packaged products, is owned by a handful of exceedingly powerful corporations that exercise increasing control over what we eat, how it is made, how much it costs, and who produces and profits from it.

Just five corporations now control 42 percent of all grocery sales in America. Due to this intensifying corporate takeover, nearly 20,000 farmers go under each year (one every half an hour), the victims of market centralization by food corporations and supermarkets. When these farms disappear, the social and economic fabric of rural communities is shattered; whole generations of highly skilled producers of food are lost.

These are just some of the immense costs we never see on our supermarket receipts. But we pay them nonetheless, in the form of taxes and public spending: billions of dollars a year in public health costs to treat food-related illnesses such as high cholesterol and heart disease; environmental expenses for monitoring and cleaning up factory farm runoff; spills that have discharged millions of tons of animal manure into rivers and streams; workers' compensation costs and public medical bills for injured farm workers and meat factory employees, who typically have no insurance; unemployment and welfare payments to foreclosed farmers, and often many of the surrounding businesses that rely on those farmers.

"The present land economy rests on a foundation of general ignorance," argues writer-farmer [Wendell Berry](#). "Most of us don't know how we live and at what costs, either ecologically or human ... For how long can we maintain an industrial superstition that we can beat the world by destroying the world's capacity to produce food?"

In recent years, leading firms like [Tyson Foods](#), [Safeway](#), [ADM](#) and [Cargill](#) have gobbled up competitors and consolidated their near-monopoly control over the entire food chain. The top four beef producers occupy an almost unprecedented 80 percent of the U.S. meat market.



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The very way we eat affects the future of food. Our buying and dining choices today affect our food options tomorrow. It's not simply a matter of big-farm-versus-small-farm, or pesticides against organics, natural versus genetically engineered. The food we eat is the product of a whole system that is in the process of destroying itself. Poisoning our air and water, turning topsoil into useless dust, and putting farmers out to pasture. If we are to have a truly healthy cornucopia that sustains society, the entire system of making, distributing and marketing food must be made sustainable.

What's needed is a whole new way of thinking about food -- one that encompasses health, affordability, accessibility, ecological sustainability, and an economics that enables farmers to keep growing food.

By Christopher D. Cook, AlterNet <http://www.alternet.org/story/20556/>

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- Submitted by Diana Piche

## EVENTS PAST

### APOLOGY

I offer all those members who were not notified about the change of date of the Owl Prowl on Friday December 3rd, and turned up at the meeting place in vain, my sincerest apologies. I also apologize for not turning up there myself in case there were members who expected the prowl to take place, as indeed there were.

I am very sorry for this and hope that something like this will not happen again.

- Theo Hofmann

## NATURE NEWS

The following is an item found in the magazine "[World Birdwatch](#)", September 2004:

A radio-tagged Pacific Golden Plover (*Pluvialis fulva*) flew almost 4,000 km from its wintering grounds on Oahu, Hawaii, to the Alaskan peninsula in 70 hours, recording an average flight speed of about 56 km/h.

Since there is no land between the two points it must have flown non-stop.

- Theo Hoffman

note: A subscription to World Birdwatch can be obtained online at [http://www.birdlife.org/publications/world\\_birdwatch/](http://www.birdlife.org/publications/world_birdwatch/).



## SPECIES AT RISK



- Thursday November 25, 2004.

A record numbers of Whooping Cranes

arrived at their wintering quarters from their breeding grounds in the Wood Buffalo National Park in Alberta.

The Aransas-Wood Buffalo whooping crane population has reached a historic milestone. An aerial census on 24 November, 2004 of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge in Texas, including the surrounding areas, estimated the number of whooping cranes present at 181 adults + 32 young = 213 total. This was a record total.

The number of cranes present at Aransas is estimated at 213 and consists of 129 adults, 52 subadults, and 32 chicks. The record total exceeds the previous high of 194 reached by the population last winter. The 53 cranes found on San Jose Island is a record total surpassing the previous high of 50 set last winter. The population of whooping cranes has doubled in the last 18 years.

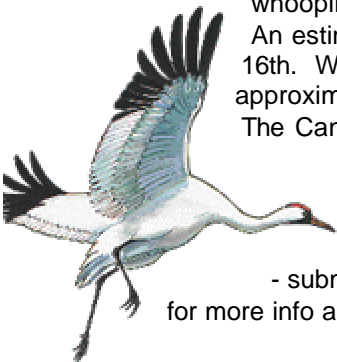
An estimated 23 white-plumaged cranes and 4 young have arrived since the last flight on November 16th. With the presence of 213 whooping cranes at Aransas, the migration is estimated to be approximately 97% complete.

The Canadian Whooping Crane Coordinator is Brian Johns.

Tom Stehn

Whooping Crane Coordinator

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



- submitted by Theo Hoffman

for more info about Whooping Cranes visit [http://www.virtualsk.com/current\\_issue/whoopers.html](http://www.virtualsk.com/current_issue/whoopers.html)

## ARTICLES

On November 25, 2004 the province of Ontario unveiled 10 renewable energy projects to create electricity from renewable resources such as the sun, wind and water. It will add 395 megawatts to the province's generating capacity, enough electricity to power 100,000 homes a year. The government has promised to add 1,350 megawatts of electricity from renewable resources to the province's power grid over the next three years.

Private companies will pay \$700 million toward the cost of building the new plants. The average cost for electricity from the new generators is expected to be around 8 cents per kilowatt-hour – this is 25% less than the forecast cost for Ontario Power Generation to return the [Pickering A Unit 1 nuclear reactor](#) into service (10.7 cents per kWh) and will offset the equivalent to 40 to 50% of the annual output of the Lakeview coal-fired power plant in Mississauga, which is the single largest source of air pollution in the Greater Toronto Area.

The new green power projects include:

- [Umbata Falls](#) Hydroelectric project on the White River, near Marathon
- [Trail Road Landfill Gas Generating Station](#), Ottawa
- Eastview Landfill Gas Energy Plant, Guelph
- Five wind farms, near Sault Ste. Marie, Collingwood, Shelburne, Goderich and the north shore of Lake Erie.

[Pollution Probe](#) also released a [public opinion poll](#) on November 24, 2004 which revealed that “green power” is the preferred electricity supply source of 60% of Canadians followed by large hydro projects (19%) and natural gas-fired power plants (15%). Nuclear power is the preferred electricity source for only 5% of voters. At the bottom of the list is coal-fired power which is the preferred option for only 1% of Canadians.



On December 2, 2004 the minister of Natural Resources for Ontario announced a plan to improve the conservation of wolves across the province. The Minister is proposing to [regulate the recreational hunting of wolves](#) by restricting the seasons and limits on the number of wolves that can be hunted annually. Ontario has been recognized as one of the worst jurisdictions in the world for its exploitative wolf management policies. Currently there is an open season for hunting and trapping wolves without quotas or bag limits to restrict the harvest. Wolves are only adequately protected on 3% of their range in the province, while 97% is still open to hunting and trapping. In Ontario, only four wilderness areas are off-limits to hunters and trappers. Outside these areas, wolves can be killed year-round without limit, including the Eastern wolf, a species at risk.

## LOCAL ISSUES

### A warning about Fresh Water

**Several Artesian Wells have stopped flowing on the Oak Ridges Moraine** in the Robinson Creek headwater wetland complex. Several other wetlands are likely to suffer impacts in a dry year.

Massive de-watering of up to **69 million litres per day** for the construction of York Region's “[Big Pipe](#)” sewer deep within the aquifer system flowing from the Oak Ridges Moraine, is also leading to disruption of water wells and reduction of base flow in the many Rouge River tributaries that occur in the affected zone.

As well, the ground water being pumped to the surface is very different in temperature and chemical composition than the local streams which receive the pumped discharge, resulting in abnormal flow and temperature regimes and substantial changes in water chemistry. The massive dewatering not only reduces the amount of fresh water available in the aquifer, it also causes the [harmful alteration, disruption and destruction](#) (HADD) of sensitive fish habitat in the Rouge River. HADD is an offence under the [Canada Fisheries Act](#), yet is being ignored by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans ([DFO](#)).

If this wasn't reason enough to stop the dewatering -- and thus the project -- perhaps the thought of 69 million litres of [fresh water](#) being pumped and discarded from our precious groundwater resources on a daily basis is warning enough of the folly of such a practice – 69 million litres is enough water to fill 72 Olympic-sized swimming pools – every day!

Jim Robb, Rouge Park Alliance

[ Note: An Olympic-sized swimming pool holds approximately 960,000 litres of water. ]

In **December** many comments on the Draft Greenbelt plan were submitted by numerous groups, including (as an example) one that was submitted by the [planning staff of Clarington](#), to the east of Toronto. In it they provide good rationale and support for the eastern expansion of the Greenbelt.

They include some important points, such as:

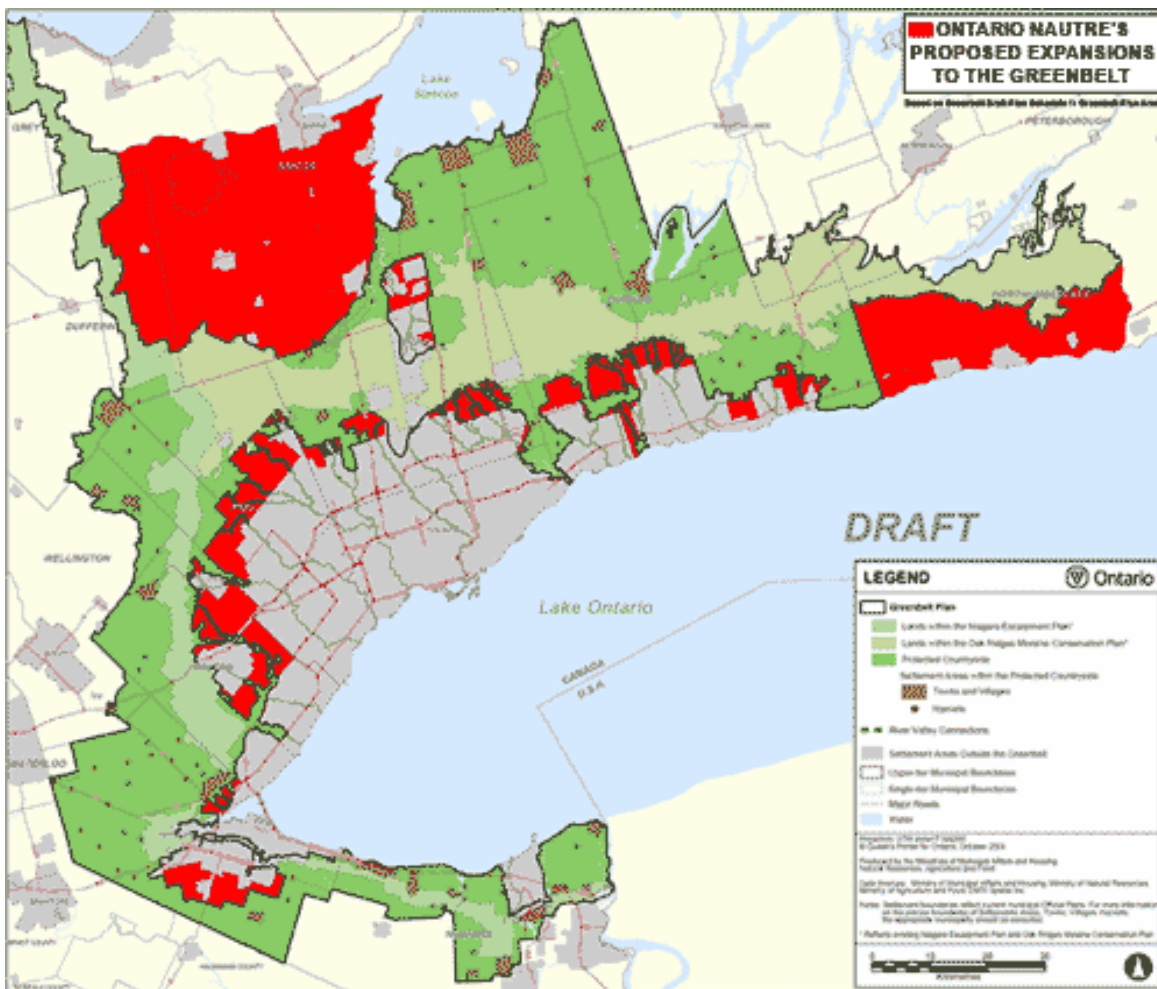
- The Greenbelt should be extended eastward to cover portions of [Northumberland County](#)
- The Province should consider a more tightly aligned Greenbelt around existing urban centres to ensure that the status quo development situation does not continue for years to come.
- The Greenbelt should be more tightly aligned around existing urban centres
- The Province should Exempt Municipal Conformity Amendments from Appeal to the OMB
- Aggregate Extraction Rehabilitation Policies need to be strengthened
- The Province must take more targeted action to [make agriculture more viable](#)
- The Greenbelt Plan should permit unserviced industrial areas in Villages and Hamlets
- The Province needs to provide assistance to Municipalities to undertake conformity exercise

The Clarington town planners should be congratulated for their attempts at trying to strengthen the Greenbelt Protection Act (Bill 27). It is hoped that other municipalities will join in trying to expand the Greenbelt – for all of the people, plants, birds and other wildlife that will use it for generations to come.

Other recommendations that were submitted from other groups for expanding the Greenbelt included:

- Protecting prime farmlands and important greenspace between the ORM and the existing urban envelope
- Protecting and supporting the Farmers that use the land that has been protected using various measures that should, for instance, reduce the percentage of productive farmland that is rented or leased
- Expanding the Greenbelt outward to control urban sprawl and avoid “leap frog development”
- Adding the Seaton Lands in Pickering to the GTA Greenbelt
- Extended the Greenbelt along river valleys through urban areas and along the Lake Ontario shoreline
- Placing a moratorium on planning and construction of all 400 series highway expansions, particularly Hwy 407 E
- Adding all of the federal Airport lands in Pickering

Ontario Nature has come out with a map for a proposed expansion of the Greenbelt lands. Their map is below:





It is clear that there is much support for expansion of the Greenbelt from within numerous community, non-profit and advocacy groups as well, which hopefully means that the Government will take heed and make expansions. Imagine this map, expanded to the East (and perhaps even to the West as well), containing a vibrant agricultural community providing both food and recreation to the millions of citizens of the city at its heart. This is the ultimate vision of the Greenbelt.

– Editor.

Note: Bill 135 - the new Greenbelt legislation - is to be effective December 16, 2004.

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*A NEW Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail Website Launched*

An updated website was officially launched last month, allowing cyclists, hikers and tourists alike to plan trips. The website received over one million visits during a 5-month period in 2004. A key feature of the site is the web maps of the Trail. There are about 90 full colour maps covering 740kms of Trail available to be downloaded and printed for free. There is also updated information on what to see and where to stay along the Trail (click on community [profiles](#)). Visit the Waterfront Trail website at [www.waterfronttrail.org](http://www.waterfronttrail.org).



## BIRD OBSERVATIONS

November 2004

### Peel Region

American Kestrel - 1 at Healey Rd. & Hwy. 50 Nov.02 (PG)  
Red-headed Woodpecker - 1 at Mount Hope Road Nov.01-08 (Jane Ferguson fide PG,). Visiting feeder.  
Red-bellied Woodpecker - 1 at Mount Hope Road Nov.26 (Jane Ferguson fide PG,). Visiting feeder.  
Pileated Woodpecker - 1 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Nov.01 (PG). Regularly for most of the fall.  
Golden-crowned Kinglet - small flock at Albion Hills Cons. Area Nov.04 (PG).  
American Tree Sparrow - small flocks at Albion Hills Cons. Area Nov.04 (PG).  
Pine Siskin - 5 at Graydon Property, Humber Grove Nov.03-06 (PG).

### York Region

Common Loon - 3 at Lake Wilcox Nov.06 (S&JB).  
Great Blue Heron - 1@Snider Marsh Mrkhm Nov.19 [Flying over] (CMK). 1 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.27 (SLo,TH).  
Greater White-fronted Goose - 1 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.29 (SLo).  
Canada Goose - 3000 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.27 (SLo,TH).  
Cackling Goose - 7 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.27,28 (SLo,TH).  
Trumpeter Swan - 11 at Musselman Lake Nov.10 (GL,RCu,). Five adults, 6 cygnets.  
Bufflehead – 30@Musselman Lk Nov.02 (SLo). Large raft@Lk Wilcox Nov.3 (S&JB). 18@Lk Wilcox Nov.05 (S&JB).  
Hooded Merganser - 30 at Lake Wilcox Nov.08 (S&JB). 11 at Musselman Lake Nov.10 (GL,RCu,).  
Common Merganser - 10 at Lake Wilcox Nov.08,17 (4),19 (2) (S&JB).  
Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 Juv at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol Mck) Nov.24,29 (CMK).  
Cooper's Hawk - 1 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.19 (SLo,TH).  
Red-tailed Hawk - 2 at Sugarbush at Hwy 7 & Bathurst Nov.14 (MCh).  
Rough-legged Hawk - 2 at Coyote Pond, Markham Nov.02,03 (SLo). Black Phase. 1 at Markham Bypass Nov.17 (SLo).  
American Kestrel - 1 at Markham Bypass Nov.19 (SLo).  
Common Snipe - 6 at Snider Marsh Markham Nov.15 (CMK).  
Iceland Gull - 2 at Markham Bypass Nov.23 (SLo).  
Lesser Black-backed Gull - 2 at Markham Bypass Nov.22 (SLo).  
Glaucous Gull - 1 at Markham Bypass Nov.22 (SLo).  
Eastern Screech-Owl - 1 at Doane Rd. & McCowan Nov.29 (TH,RJF). Calling spontaneously  
Barred Owl – 1@YRF-HQ Tract (Hollidge) Nov.19 (LoP). Seen roosting during daylight near creek W of 9th concession.  
Downy Woodpecker - 2 (pair) at 123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Nov.11 (H&MF).

Northern Flicker - 1 at Snowball Corners Nov.08-13 (RGi).  
 Pileated Woodpecker - 1 at Idleswift Thornhill (G.Denzel) Nov.08 (GD). 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Nov.10 (JLo). 1 at Richmond Hill Mill Pond Nov.15 (FWH). 1 at Snowball Corners Nov.17 [Flying South] (RGi).  
 Northern Shrike - 1@Nobleton Nov5(PG). 1@Jane&King S.R. Nov.14(RGi). 1@Markham Bypass Nov.17 (SLo,TH).  
 Common Raven - 1 at Hwy 48 and Vivian Road Nov.23 (SLo).  
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - 2@123 Woodward Ave, Thrnhl Nov.11(H&MF). 1@Bridgport Rich Hill Nov.14-22 (FWH).  
 Brown Creeper - 1 at Whillans, Bridgport Richmond H Nov.26 (FWH).  
 Hermit Thrush - 1 at Bartley Smith Greenway Nov.22 (TH).  
 American Robin - 7@4 Grenfell Markham Nov.13 (CMK). 11 at 123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Nov.29 (H&MF).  
 Northern Mockingbird - 1 at Bartley Smith Greenway Nov.22 (TH).  
 Cedar Waxwing - 30 at Nantucket Dr. Oak Ridges Nov.07 (SDP). 9 at 123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Nov.29 (H&MF).  
 Pine Warbler - 1 at Holland Landing at Brydons Nov.13 (BB).  
 Fox Sparrow - 1@ Bridgport RichHI Nov1(FWH). 3@Grenfell Markham Nov.5,7(CMK). 1@Arnold Ave, Thrnhl Nov8 (TH).  
 White-throated Sparrow - Several at Idleswift Thornhill (G.Denzel) Nov.08 (GD). 2 at Lake Wilcox Nov.10 (S&JB).  
 Dark-eyed Junco - 3@123 Woodward Ave, Thrnhl Nov.11,25 (5) (H&MF). Also at many other feeders in small numbers.  
 Snow Bunting - 50 - 60 at Markham Bypass Nov.17 (SLo).  
 Red-winged Blackbird - 2 at Idleswift Thornhill (G.Denzel) Nov.08 (GD).  
 Common Grackle - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol Mck) Nov.13-14 (CMK).  
 Purple Finch - 8 at Park Crescent Oak Ridges Nov.30 (S&JB).  
 Pine Siskin - a few at Bridgport RichHill Nov.6,8,12(FWH). 1-2@123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Nov.11-13 (H&MF).  
 American Goldfinch - 30@Nantucket Dr. Oak Rdgs Nov.1-9 (SDP). 4 at 123 Woodward Ave., Thornhill Nov.11 (H&MF).

#### Durham County

Northern Shrike - 1 at 4th Conc. Pickering Townline Nov.02 (SLo).  
 Golden-crowned Sparrow - 1@Cranberry Marsh, Hall Rd Nov.6 (KDu,m.obs.).  
 Golden-crowned Sparrows are extremely rare in Southern Ontario - one every few years.  
 This one has remained for 4 weeks and is still present as of Dec. 4.

#### Toronto

Ring-necked Duck - 1 at Humber Bay Park Nov.19 (GD).  
 Common Goldeneye - 2 (pair) at Humber Bay Park Nov.19 (GD).  
 Hooded Merganser - 23 at G. Ross Lord Park Nov.08 (TH). 12 at Humber Bay Park Nov.19 (GD).  
 Ruddy Duck - 1 M at Humber Bay Park Nov.19 (GD).  
 Cooper's Hawk - 1 at Hilda St & Patricia, Willowdale Nov.03 [Flying over] (TH).  
 Red-tailed Hawk - 1 at Hwys 401 and 400 Nov.06 (MCh).

#### Out-of-Area

Purple Sandpiper - 1 at Niagara Falls Nov.06 (SLo).  
 Barred Owl - 1 at Hwy 27 & Ardagh Road Barrie Nov.17 (Tracey Etwell).  
**BB Bruce Brydon, CMK Carol McKnight, FWH Freddy Whillans, GD Gene Denzel, GL Graham Leonard, H&MF Harold & Muriel Farrant, GBell Gordon Bellerby, JLo Joan Love, KDu Keith Dunn, LoP Lorie Parrott, m.obs. Many Observers, MCh Martin Chen, PG Phyllis Graydon, RCu Robert Cubbitt, RGi Richard Girardin, S&JB Sharon & Jim Bradley, SDP Susan DiPucchio, SLo Stan Long, TH Theo Hofmann.**

## From the Editor

In an effort to expand the readership of the Richmond Hill Naturalists and get more people interested in nature, past issues of the Richmond Hill Naturalists "Bulletin" will be posted on the internet on the Federation of Ontario Naturalists / Ontario Nature website. You can reach the link to past issues of the newsletter on the website by going to [www.ontarionature.org](http://www.ontarionature.org). Click on 'Nature Network' and then 'Community Conservation Groups'. Choose 'Lake Ontario North' on the map and then select 'Richmond Hill Naturalists'. You may also go directly to [www.ontarionature.org/network/groups\\_detail.php?ID=70](http://www.ontarionature.org/network/groups_detail.php?ID=70)

Lloyd Helferty, Bulletin Editor [lhelferty@sympatico.ca](mailto:lhelferty@sympatico.ca)  
 905-707-8754 Mailing Address: 603-48 suncrest Blvd. Thornhill, ON L3T 7Y1