



THE BULLETIN

January 2007 No. 460

2005-2006 EXECUTIVE

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Events calendar

Botany Group	Monday February 5, 2007 Topic: Wild orchids Where: Siglint Fitting, 25 Citation Dr, Toronto
Executive Meeting	Tuesday February 13, 2007. 7:00pm Where: Robert Holland Centre
Bird Group	Wednesday February 14, 2007 Topic: Sandhill and Whooping Crane Where: 190 Grandview Ave Thornhill
General Meeting	Thursday February 15, 2006. 7:30PM Speaker: Paul O'Hara Topic: Comeback of the White Pine in Ontario Location: Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, Wallace Hall. 10066 Yonge St. North of Major Mackenzie Dr., West side.

Check for more Events and Outings on Page 2



Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in the Florida Panhandle



On May 21, 2005 [Dr. Geoff Hill](#), ornithology professor at [Auburn University](#), and two research assistants, Tyler Hicks and [Brian Rolek](#), took a kayak trip down the [Choctawhatchee River](#) in the Florida panhandle.

Within an hour of launching their boats, they heard a bird hammering loudly on a tree. When the bird flew off through the canopy, Brian got a clear view of a large woodpecker with white on both the upper- and underside of the trailing edge of the wings.

An hour later, Geoff heard a double knock, the diagnostic display raps of an Ivory-billed Woodpecker. In this same area, they found large cavity entrances on the trunks of trees and places where woodpeckers had scaled tightly adhering bark from recently dead trees. Brian's sighting, the double knock, the huge cavity entrances, and the scaled bark all suggested that an Ivory-billed Woodpecker might exist in this mature swamp forest.

Geoff, Tyler, and Brian decided to conduct a winter search to try to gather better evidence for the presence of ivorybills. They asked **Dr. Dan Mennill** to join the search and conduct sound monitoring in the area...

To read more go to <http://tinyurl.com/fu64o> or www.uwindsor.ca/dmennill



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 2nd Thursday of each month.**

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

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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.

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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. You may also sign up or renew at <http://www.rhnaturalists.ca/membership/>

NEW MEMBERS:

Meet new members at club events and say Hello!

EVENTS FUTURE



- **Monday February 5, 2007.** The February meeting of the Richmond Hill Naturalists **Botany Group** will be held at the home of Siglint Fitting, 25 Citation Drive in Toronto. The topic will be "Wild orchids".



- **Tuesday February 13, 2007. 7:30pm.** The February **Executive Meeting** will be held at Phyllis Rawlinson Park.



- **Wednesday February 14, 2007.** The **Bird Group** will meet at Donna Jonak's, 190 Grandview Ave Thornhill 905-881-0603. The topic will be **Sandhill and Whooping Crane**.



- **Thursday February 15, 2007. 7:30pm. General Meeting** at the Richmond Hill Presbyterian Church, Wallace Hall, 10066 Yonge St. in downtown Richmond Hill, just north of Major Mackenzie Dr. on the west side. The speaker for February will be **Paul O'Hara** of Blue Oak Native Landscaping. His inspiring story called **The Faithful Witness: The Journey of the White Pine in Southern Ontario** based on his recent book. www.blueoak.ca



- **Thursday, March 22, 2007. 7:30pm.** Joint meeting with the **West Humber Naturalists** at Kortright **Conservation Centre** in Kleinburg where **Dr. Daniel J. Mennill** of the Univ. of Windsor will present a special lecture on his research and findings of **Ivory-billed Woodpeckers** on the Choctawhatchee River in Northwest Florida. Tickets are only **\$10.00** but get yours ahead of time since there are only **130 tickets** available! To reserve your seat call Marianne Yake at 905-883-3047 or Mike Turk at 905-731-8380.

Please note: Richmond Hill Naturalists welcomes anyone to volunteer as an outing leader.



- **Sunday January 28, 2007. 1:30pm. Rouge Valley Nature Walk.** Meet at the parking lot at the Bailey Bridge in the Finch Meander, Old Finch Rd. Free, rain or shine. Approx. 1-1/2 to 2 hrs.



- **Sunday February 4, 2007** the [York-Simcoe Naturalists](http://www.york-simcoe.com) will hold an **Environmental Networking Event** at Seneca King Campus. This is an opportunity to share ideas and connect with other environmentalists in the area. RHN has been invited. If you wish more information, contact Marianne Yake at 905-883-3047.



- **Monday and Tuesday February 12-13, 2007. THE MORaine. FOR LIFE. Oak Ridges Moraine Symposium** being held on the fifth anniversary of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. Speakers: **Jim Bradley**, Minister of Tourism and Minister responsible for the Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine Foundations, **David Burnett**, **Steve Holysh**, **Debbe Crandall**, **David Lewis Stein** and Sunday Dinner Banquet with **Elizabeth May**. Radisson Hotel Toronto-Markham, 50 East Valhalla Drive, Markham, Ontario. See www.ormf.org/symposium for more info.



- **Saturday, February 17, 2007. "Back to Basics: Stewardship 101": 8th Annual Stewardship Forum.**

Workshops, lectures and tours. Kortright Centre for Conservation 9550 Pine Valley Drive in Woodbridge. For Pre-registration contact **Joanne Jeffery**, Manager, Watershed Stewardship and Outreach Education, Watershed Management Division, TRCA, (416) 661-6600, ext. 5638. jjeffery@trca.on.ca

MEMBER SUBMISSIONS

Bird Study Group

A timely review of Cooper's Hawks and Sharp-Shinned Hawks took place at the Farrant's house on 13 Dec 2006. A group of 9 people had a lively discussion about the science, anatomy and distribution of these predators.

Three days later, Gene and Charlene Denzil's group found a Coopers' Hawk while on a coffee break at the Yonge and Bernard Tim Horton's during the Christmas Bird Count.

- Martin Chen

Two Wolves

One evening an old Cherokee told his grandson about a battle that goes on inside people. He said, "My son, the battle is between two "wolves" inside us all.

One is Evil. It is anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego.

The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith."

The grandson thought about it for a minute and then asked his grandfather: "Which wolf wins?"

The old Cherokee simply replied, "The one you feed."

- Submitted by Sharon & Jim Bradley



- The wind was blowing too hard along the Toronto waterfront for me to get the tears out of my eyes and ID any of the ducks or swans on my way back on bicycle from Tai Chi in High Park Sunday, but the geese were headed into the wind. Elsie and I had a nice visit with Harry Lumsden, working on his records last week and then to David Tomlinson with his fascinating study of song-sparrow nesting territories in the St. John's Road marsh near him. David has mapped them for many years as development moves towards the marsh. It's meticulous work.

I have made a New Year's resolution to work to support and help development of the wonderful new park up on the Moraine! All the best in 2007.

- Michael White



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Note:

The Oak Ridges Moraine Corridor Park has been officially named the **Kettle Lakes Park**, our original name derived from our Kettle Lakes Coalition that was the catalyst group started by Margaret Cranmer-Byng of RHN to protect this park!

Thanks for all those who were involved in saving this park from 1997 onward! The salamanders thank you too.

- Natalie Helferty

LOCAL NEWS

Jan. 10, 2007 Canadian News Wire

- Gord Miller, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO), released the results of a poll today showing that the people of Ontario put a much higher value on protecting the environment than is reflected in government budget allocations.

The ECO poll asked Ontarians to estimate what percentage of the provincial operating budget they thought was assigned to the Ministry of the Environment, and then asked what percentage they thought should be allotted to the ministry.

The Ontarians sampled in the ECO poll thought, on average, that about **12 per cent** of the budget would be slated for the Ministry of the Environment.

More than 90 per cent of poll respondents assumed the ministry got at least 1 per cent - or much more - of the provincial budget. In fact, the actual portion of the budget assigned to the Ministry of the Environment for the fiscal year 2006/2007 is closer to one-third of 1 per cent - **0.36 per cent**.

Once people learned the real budget allocation, more than 80 per cent of those polled thought it was too low.

The people responding to the ECO poll were then asked what percentage of the province's annual budget they thought should be allotted to the Ministry of the Environment. Three-fourths of poll respondents, on average, said that the ideal allocation of the provincial budget assigned to the ministry **should be 12 per cent**.

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Province Approves Project To Divert Waste From Landfill

After a detailed review and public comment period, the province of Ontario has granted certificates of approval to [Orgaworld](#) a Dutch waste management company that currently operates five other composting facilities in the Netherlands, for the construction and operation of a new state-of-the-art composting facility that will take yard waste and source-separated organic material and turn it into high quality compost for use as fertilizer.

The new facility is to be located near London and *the company is actively pursuing other locations in the Greater Toronto Area*. The proposed facility will compost a total of 40,000 tonnes of waste per year from **York Region** and St. Thomas. York Region currently ships its organic waste to Michigan and the composting facility will provide a home-grown solution for managing Ontario's waste. If London and area municipalities so choose, they too could send compost to this facility.

NATURE NEWS

Toronto is going to need a lot of new and different trees

- Cameron Smith, Toronto Star, December 30, 2006

Just having trees isn't enough. If Toronto is to cope with global warming, it will need a forest. And, says Richard Ubbins, the city's director of forestry, trees in the forest will need to be different from much of what's growing now on Toronto's streets.



Global warming will bring changed rainfall patterns that could result in severe flooding at certain times and severe drought at others; it also could bring destructive winds, new pests and stress that make trees more susceptible to diseases.

What an urban forest can do that a collection of trees cannot is moderate temperatures in a way that goes far beyond simply providing shade. The moisture released into the air by a forest will reduce extreme highs and lows of temperatures. "This is not a tree-by-tree effect," Ubbins says. "It's a forest effect." The whole would be much greater than the sum of the parts.



"Trees are one of the best water managers around," Ubbins adds. They hold water in the ground, which will ease the impact of droughts. And when it's raining, a forest canopy will slow the descent of water and even reduce the amount reaching the ground, giving the earth a better chance to absorb it. These mediating effects are important because Toronto has a lot of clay. "When we get a drought, it gets hard and can crack," Ubbins says, "and when it rains, the water runs off, because the clay can't absorb it fast enough."

He wants to greatly increase the tree canopy over Toronto, "maybe even double it." But he cautions: "This is a long-term objective. It will take decades to do." So, the city is encouraging people to plant more trees on private property. "And we'll be looking at the new City of Toronto Act to see what we can do to protect growing spaces for trees," Ubbins says.

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Rick Aquanno

In the past, most of the trees planted in Toronto were clones, and even today, he says, "if we buy 500 whips (young saplings), they may be (cuttings) from only two or three trees." This means there are lots of identical trees growing in the city that are especially susceptible to damage, because if a disease strikes a clone, its identical companions will be equally vulnerable. The solution is to plant trees grown from seeds rather than cloning them, which the city is starting to do.

It's also increasing diversity among trees. "Global warming is going to add a lot of stress," Ubbins says, and the city will need different trees with different strengths to

increase resilience. Where one fails, another can succeed. Redbud and tulip trees from farther south are doing well in Toronto now, Ubbins says, as are some of the hickories, such as shagbark, as well as sassafras, sweet gum, yellowwood, chinkapin and pin oaks. And maybe before too long, sycamores, which can grow 150 feet tall, will flourish here.

It also will be necessary to plant the southern cousins of trees already in Toronto, sugar maples and red oaks from North Carolina, for instance, because they'll be genetically different and better able to handle rapidly rising temperatures. In the meantime, several city departments – water, engineering, transportation, urban design, planning and forestry – have been co-ordinating efforts to ensure the city is a hospitable place for trees.

"Our vision is to have a city within a park," Ubbins says. It can be done, he adds, by linking existing parks through neighbourhoods filled with trees. By mid-century, if his vision is fulfilled and if greenhouse gas emissions are cut so temperatures don't keep rising, Toronto the Good may have become Toronto the Lush.

CNN January 4, 2007

Proof of Rapid Melting of Canadian Arctic

- A giant ice shelf the size of 11,000 football fields snapped free from from the coast of [Ellesmere Island](#), about 800 kilometers (497 miles) south of the North Pole. 16 months ago scientists using satellite images noticed that it became a newly formed ice island in just an hour and left a trail of icy boulders floating in its wake.

This is a dramatic and disturbing event. It shows that we are losing remarkable features of the Canadian North that have been in place for many thousands of years. We are crossing climate thresholds, and these may signal the onset of accelerated change ahead. In 10 years of working in the region [Warwick Vincent](#) of Laval University, who studies Arctic conditions, said he had never seen such a dramatic loss of sea ice.

The collapse was so powerful that earthquake monitors 250 kilometers (155 miles) away picked up tremors from it. The [Ayles Ice Shelf](#), roughly 66 square kilometers (25 square miles) in area, was one of six major ice shelves remaining in Canada's Arctic. Scientists say it is the largest event of its kind in Canada in 30 years and point their fingers at climate change as a major contributing factor. The remaining ice shelves are 90 percent smaller than when they were first discovered in 1906.

Even 10 years ago scientists assumed that when global warming changes occur that it would happen gradually so that perhaps we expected these ice shelves just to melt away quite slowly, but the big surprise is that for one they are going, but secondly that when they do go, they just go suddenly, it's all at once, in a span of an hour. Within days, the floating ice shelf that broke off had already drifted a few kilometers offshore. It traveled west for 50 kilometers until it finally froze into the sea ice in the early winter.



In the global perspective Antarctica has many ice shelves bigger than this one, but then there is the idea that these are indicators of climate change. The spring thaw may bring another concern as the warming temperatures could release the ice shelf from its Arctic grip. Prevailing winds could then send the ice island southwards, deep into the Beaufort Sea where they could drift into populated shipping routes and areas where there is significant oil and gas development.

We still have long way to go on green issues

- Serena Willoughby, Staff Writer (York Region), Dec 28, 2006

There is uniformity across the region in many things. But the environment isn't one of them.

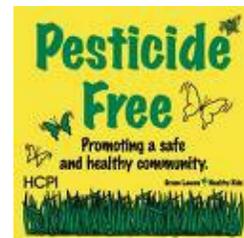
So what you can and cannot do with garbage and pesticides, for example, depends on where you live. And that isn't likely to change soon. The [Canadian Cancer Society](#) wants most lawn and garden pesticides banned, citing research by the [International Agency for Research on Cancer](#), that indicates some substances in pesticides are known, probable or possible carcinogens.

Despite the warning, most municipalities in the region still don't have pesticide bylaws. One exception is Newmarket. Its [pesticide bylaw](#), passed in June, takes effect September, 2008. While some councillors in Vaughan have initiated pesticide reduction strategies for their ward and the town's environmental strategy touts the existence of a "pesticide reduction pilot," 2006 did not usher in a bylaw.

In Markham, public information meetings began in October to get input on a pesticide bylaw, despite protests from lawn care companies. "I think we've come a long way on the issue of pesticide reduction; we've done consultation to make sure everyone's voices are heard on this," said Markham councillor [Erin Shapero](#). The town of Georgina has also supported a pesticide bylaw.

Despite the absence of a pesticide bylaw, most municipalities in York are leading by example, refusing to use pesticides in town operations unless it is to control noxious weeds like poison ivy. Vaughan, Georgina, King, Markham and Whitchurch-Stouffville fall into that category. **Richmond Hill** and East Gwillimbury use pesticides for maintaining sports fields, arguing the danger posed by weeds when they get wet and children play on them is greater than that posed by using potentially cancer-causing chemicals.

"It's not even progressive thinking anymore; the public expects a level of protection and that means eliminating things that violate our bodies and our children's bodies," Councillor Shapero said.



While canning pesticides can be a hard-sell for people who have that lush-green-lawn fever, no one can argue the benefits of reducing waste through curb side pickup of organic waste. While Markham has had a green bin program since 2005 and Vaughan implemented one in November, the rest of York Region will have to wait until next year.

Richmond Hill is set to unroll a green bin program in April and the northern six -- Newmarket, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Aurora, East Gwillimbury, King and Georgina --won't have programs in effect until September. Markham's phase two for the green bin organics program will also begin next year. It focuses on green bin collection in highrise buildings, schools and community centres. Provincially, a deposit-return for wine and liquor containers begins in February.



This year, climate change was on everyone's minds, with Al Gore's documentary "[An Inconvenient Truth](#)" having a major influence on our awareness of the issue and Ontario Environment Minister [Laurel Broten](#) named climate change and air quality as one of her top ten resolutions for 2007.

But what are we doing to address climate change?

Last summer was one of the worst for smog, with a slew of days in June and July in which the air quality index was so poor, it was dangerous to do any kind of physical activity outside. "As the evidence mounts showing the link between air quality and health, 2007 could be your year to make your own personal clean-air efforts -- like taking transit, never idling your vehicle, getting an energy audit, turning down the thermostat, upping the air conditioning or better yet, using fans to cool your home," said Environment Minister Laurel Broten.

King, Markham, Newmarket, Vaughan and **Richmond Hill** took part in the 2006 Annual GTA smog summit, to facilitate the exchange of ideas and sign a declaration committing themselves to developing strategies to improve air quality. Markham councillor *Erin Shapero* introduced the world mayors and municipal leaders declaration on climate change at the summit, proposing tough targets like 30% reduction in emissions by 2020 and 80% by 2050.

In 2007, the [Federation of Canadian Municipalities](#) will begin work on a manual to show municipalities how they can combat climate change, said Councillor Shapero.

There were other initiatives to improve air quality like anti-idling bylaws, such as those in Vaughan and Newmarket and York Region's *Corporate Clean Air Task force* that met in June, to outline a strategy to track and reduce pollutants in the region's air.

But with a lack of federal leadership on climate change, municipalities can only do so much. The federal government's [Clean Air Act](#), introduced last fall, represented a dismal disappointment to environmentalists as it was short on action and focused more on further consultation. For more information go to www.weconserve.ca or www.yrea.org

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HERE'S HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- Leave the car home more often and take transit, walk or bike
- Don't idle your car. There are anti-idling by-laws in most municipalities
- Turn off lights, use energy-saving bulbs, wash clothes in cold water and insulate your home
- A five-minute shower uses 50 per cent less energy and water as a hot bath
- Cut down on your waste, compost more of your scraps, use cloth bags instead of plastic
- Shop sustainably. Use products and companies that put the environment first

(Note: Watch for YREA's Eco Footprint Newspaper in your local paper in February!)

Help Protect Temagami - The Ministry of Natural Resources has recently released its preliminary plans for the recreational management of Temagami's back-country. These plans have been posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) website at <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/023198ep.htm> Please write to the MNR by February 14th, 2006.

Ontario Species At Risk Act – The Wildlands League is supporting the recommendations from the government-appointed expert review panel in developing this update to the old *Ontario Endangered Species Act*.



Whooping crane population rebounding slowly

The endangered [whooping crane](#) population is making a comeback but it still has a long way to go before it's out of danger, biologists say. For the first time since the 1800s, there are more than 500 whooping cranes in North America.

The population of North America's endangered whooping crane is on the rise. The species hit an all-time low in the early 1940s when only 15 birds remained. The cranes nest in Wood Buffalo National Park, which straddles the N.W.T.-Alberta border, and then migrate to Texas where they spend the winter. There are 237 cranes in the flock that summers in Canada and another 280 that live in captivity or as part of a flock reintroduced in the eastern U.S.

EVENTS PAST

The 107th Christmas Bird Count was held for the Richmond Hill Count Circle on Sat. Dec. 16, 2006. Both last year's count, a high of 55 species, and this year's count (53) are shown. **New species.** See www.audubon.org/bird/cbc/

Species	Count 106	Count 107
Great Blue Heron	4	4
Trumpeter Swan	9	17
Canada Goose	79	4585
Wood Duck	1	
Mallard	878	919
American Black Duck	63	62
Northern Pintail	1	
Bufflehead		2
Common Merganser (HC)		24
Hooded Merganser		1
Northern Harrier	1	1
Bald Eagle		1
Accipiter sp.		1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	5	4
Cooper's Hawk	7	7
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	
Red-tailed Hawk	41	58
Rough-legged Hawk	1	1
Hawk sp.	4	3
American Kestrel	9	4
Merlin	1	
Ring-necked Pheasant	1	
Wild Turkey	27	6
Ruffed Grouse	1	
Ring-billed Gull	71	1252
Herring Gull	8	14
Great Black-backed Gull (HC)		40
Gull sp.	24	1
Rock Pigeon	397	535
Mourning Dove	743	443

Species	Count 106	Count 107
Great Horned Owl		1
Barred Owl	1	1
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	1
Short-eared Owl	1	
Belted Kingfisher	1	2
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	
Downy Woodpecker	51	44
Hairy Woodpecker	15	8
Pileated Woodpecker	3	2
Northern Shrike	2	6
Blue Jay	134	82
American Crow	451	170
Horned Lark	219	
Black-capped Chickadee	539	684
Brown Creeper		5
White-breasted Nuthatch	57	17
Red-breasted Nuthatch	15	36
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	1
Hermit Thrush	1	
American Robin	238	9
Northern Mockingbird	35	13
European Starling	926	1171
Cedar Waxwing	44	68
American Tree Sparrow	114	134
Song Sparrow	6	4
Swamp Sparrow	2	3
White-throated Sparrow	1	2
Dark-eyed Junco	387	172
Snow Bunting (HC)	215	
Northern Cardinal	72	85

Purple Finch		1
House Finch	197	119
White-winged Crossbill		23
Pine Grosbeak	3	

Pine Siskin	7	6
American Goldfinch	445	694
Common Redpoll	1	1
House Sparrow	489	231

BIRD OBSERVATIONS

December 2006

Peel Region

Great Blue Heron - 1 at Pond, Bovaird & Dixie Rd. Dec.28 (GoC).
 Common Goldeneye - 1 at Palgrave Conservation Area Dec.01 (DJM). Very late.
 Hooded Merganser - 9 at Cedar Mills Pond Dec.03 (DJM). Late for Hooded Mergs.
 Northern Harrier - 1 at Caledon East Dec.27 (GoC).
 Common Raven - 2 at Palgrave Conservation Area Dec.01 (DJM).

York Region

Great Blue Heron - 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.18 (TM&GR). 1 at Cold Creek Valley Dec.27 (RJF).
 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27 Dec.28 (JLo).
 Snow Goose - 2 Ad at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.08 (SLo).
 Ross' Goose - 1 at Cook's Bay (S End) Dec.22 (KDu fide RJF).
 Canada Goose - 1000 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.08 (SLo). 10,000 - 15,000 in Markham Area Dec.31 (SLo).
 1 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.30 (SLo). Speckled Head, orangy bill, body as Canada Goose.
 Slo suggests a cross between a Snow Goose and a Canada Goose.
 Cackling Goose - 2-9 daily at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.01-08 (SLo).
 Trumpeter Swan - 2 ad., 1 juv@Lk Wilcox Dec.2(S&JB). 14@Lumsden Prop, Aurora Dec.16 (TH,TEt,TM&GR,RHXC).
 Swans had appeared from the wild this fall to join the swans that Harry Lumsden has as residents.
 Northern Pintail - 1 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.30 (SLo). 1 at SE area Lake Simcoe Dec.30 (JMcl,BEXC).
 Green-winged Teal - 1 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.02 (SLo).
 Lesser Scaup - 2 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.26 (SLo).
 Bufflehead - 1 at Toogood Pond, Unionville Dec.16 (H&MF,DJ). 2 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.26 (SLo).
 Common Merganser - 4 at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.26 (SLo).
 Bald Eagle - 1@Phyllis Rawlinson Pk Dec16 [Flying](G&CD,MCh,RHXC). 1@SE Lk Simcoe Dec30 (JMcl,BEXC).
 Northern Harrier - 1@Reesor Ponds Markham Dec4(SLo). 14 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Dec.16 [Circling above] (KDu).
 Sharp-shinned Hawk - 1 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27 Dec.01-30 (JLo). Visited feeders regularly.
 1@Arnold Ave, Thrnhl Dec11(TH,DTH). 2@Aurora RHXC Sec 8 Dec16 (TEt,TH,TM&GR,RHXC).
 Cooper's Hawk - 1 at Aurora RHXC Sector 8 Dec.16 (TEt,TH,TM&GR,RHXC).
 Red-shouldered Hawk - 1 Juv at Reesor Ponds Markham Dec.16 (SLo).
 Rough-legged Hawk - 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Dec.11 (KDu,CDu). 1 at Dufferin & Hwy 407 Dec.21 (TH).
 American Kestrel - 1 at Islington & Major MacKenzie Dec.01 (JLo).
 Little Gull - 1 at SE area Lake Simcoe Dec.30 (JMcl,BEXC).
 Bonaparte's Gull - 1 at Schomberg Sewage Lagoons Dec.01 (DJM). 8 at SE area Lake Simcoe Dec.30 (JMcl,BEXC).
 Snowy Owl - 1 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Dec.11 (KDu,CDu). 2 at W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Dec.16 (RJF).
 Barred Owl - 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.16 (NH,Marianne Yake). Near entrance on Warden
 Long-eared Owl - 4 at Burlington Outdoor Rec. Centr Dec.17 (KDu,WHXC), also on Dec.27 (RJF).
 Hairy Woodpecker - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham Dec.01-31 (CMK). Daily several visits.
 Northern Flicker - 1 at Faulkner Ave. Woods Dec.16 (ChvR).
 Pileated Woodpecker - 1 at Bruces Mill Cons. Area Dec.16 (MBi).
 Northern Shrike - 1@Maj Mack/CP Rail Dec1-30(JLo). Seen almost daily.
 1@Aurora RHXC Sec Dec.16(TEt,TH,TM&GR,RHXC). 1@Huntington S of McGillivray Dec27 (RJF).
 Common Raven - 1@W. End Ravenshoe Rd. Dec5 [Flying West] (KDu,CDu). 1@YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.24 (BB).
 1 at Bathurst & Mulock, Newmarket Dec.24 [Flying West] (RJF).
 Red-breasted Nuthatch - 2 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Dec.01-16 (JLo).
 Brown Creeper - 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.24 (BB).

Golden-crowned Kinglet - 1 at YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.24 (BB).
 American Robin - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol McK) Dec.23-24 (CMK).
 Northern Mockingbird – 1@Aurora RHXC Sec8 Dec16(TEt,TH, TM&GR,RHXC). 1@Sandale Rd. Stfvllle Dec21(J&CW).
 1@Idleswift Thrnhl Dec.23 (G&CD). 1 at Pugsley Ave Richmond Hill Dec.25 (R&DP fide GD).
 Cedar Waxwing - 17 at Lake Wilcox Dec.17 (S&JB).
 White-throated Sparrow - 1 at 4 Grenfell Markham (Carol McK) Dec.28 (CMK).
 Dark-eyed Junco - 12 at M.MacKenzie & Hwy.27,J.Love Dec.28-30 (JLo). Almost daily.
 Snow Bunting - 22 at Keele & Hwy 9 Dec.24 (RJF).
 Northern Cardinal - 5 at Idleswift Thornhill (G.Denzel) Dec.25 (G&CD).
 House Finch – 40@Pugsley Ave RichHill Dec25 (R&DP fide GD). 12@Grenfell Markham Dec.31 (CMK).
 White-winged Crossbill - 20 at YRF - Robinson Tract Dec.18 (TM&GR).

Durham Region

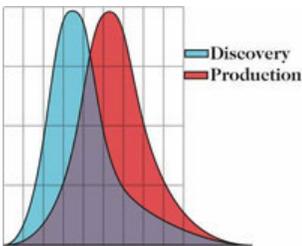
Common Merganser - 300 at Beaverton Harbour Dec.30 (JMcl,BEXC).

Out-of-Area

Slaty-backed Gull - 1 at Niagara River Dec.03 (DJM).
 Razorbill - 1 at Mouth of Niagara River Dec.03 (DJM).
 Snowy Owl - 1 on Bruce Peninsula Dec.30 (ARa).
 Black-backed Woodpecker - 1 F on Bruce Peninsula Dec.30 (ARa).

ARa Alfred Raab, BB Bruce Brydon, BEXC Beaverton Christmas Count, CDu Chris Dunn, ChvR Christel von Richter, CMK Carol McKnight, DJ Dana Jonak, DJM Dave Milsom, DTH Doris Hofmann, G&CD Gene & Charlene Denzel, GD Gene Denzel, GoC Gord Cameron, H&M Harold & Muriel Farrant, JLo Joan Love, JMcl John McLean, KDu Keith Dunn, MBI Michael Biro, MCh Martin Chen, NH Natalie Helferty, R&DP Rod & Denise Potter, RJF Ron Fleming, S&JB Sharon & Jim Bradley, SLo Stan Long, TEt Tracey Etwell, TH Theo Hofmann, TM&GR Theresa McKenzie & Glenn Reed, WHXC West Humber Xmas Count.

From the Editor



Are we running out of oil? That is a question a lot of folks have been asking themselves for a long time. The answer is, of course, that we have been “running out” of oil since the very first day we started using it to power our economy!

But, have we planned well enough for that inevitable day when the oil supply starts to decline? What are the real alternatives for us? Wind? Water? Sun? These may ultimately

be the cleanest and most abundant sources of energy we have, but certainly in North America we are nowhere near being able to use them as primary sources of energy. I’ve never driven an electric car (with the exception of a Toyota Prius hybrid test-drive – once).

A lot of emphasis now is going toward bio-diesel research. Bio-diesel is diesel fuel that is derived from plants and other living matter (like algae). But can we make enough to power our ‘economy’ such as it is? After all, we very often have to eat these plants as well! Can we feed the energy industry **and** feed our growing population?

Most rational scientists tell us that we will absolutely have to reduce the amount of energy we use and curb our consumption habits as the years move forward and oil (and gas) becomes scarcer and alternatives struggle to catch up.

Perhaps it would be best if moved toward building that infrastructure **now**, while the oil and gas is still cheap.

Europe is well on its way, with countries like Germany, Denmark and Italy deriving significant proportions of their energy from the wind and solar energy, but even third-world countries like India and Brazil are on the move, making tremendous gains in the renewable energy infrastructure. Even some of the poorest places in the world are starting to understand the urgent need to move away from fossil fuels. A recent story from Gaviotas, Columbia tells us that they have found an Ecological Fossil Fuel Alternative in the form of a bio-diesel plant that processes oil from waste restaurant grease as well as from palm trees that are sustainably harvested by Gaviotas villagers in the Orinoco delta.

The story tells us that 400,000 gallons of bio-diesel are produced a year from 2000 acres of palm trees and that formerly all of the farm equipment and all of their vehicles were powered by diesel fuel – but now the village is entirely fossil fuel-free. Will we ever get to that point here in Canada? Bio-diesel factories are few and far between here in Canada.

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P.S. There are other very significant reasons for us to move away from fossil fuels as well, the most significant of which is Carbon Dioxide pollution and the resultant Global Warming!

