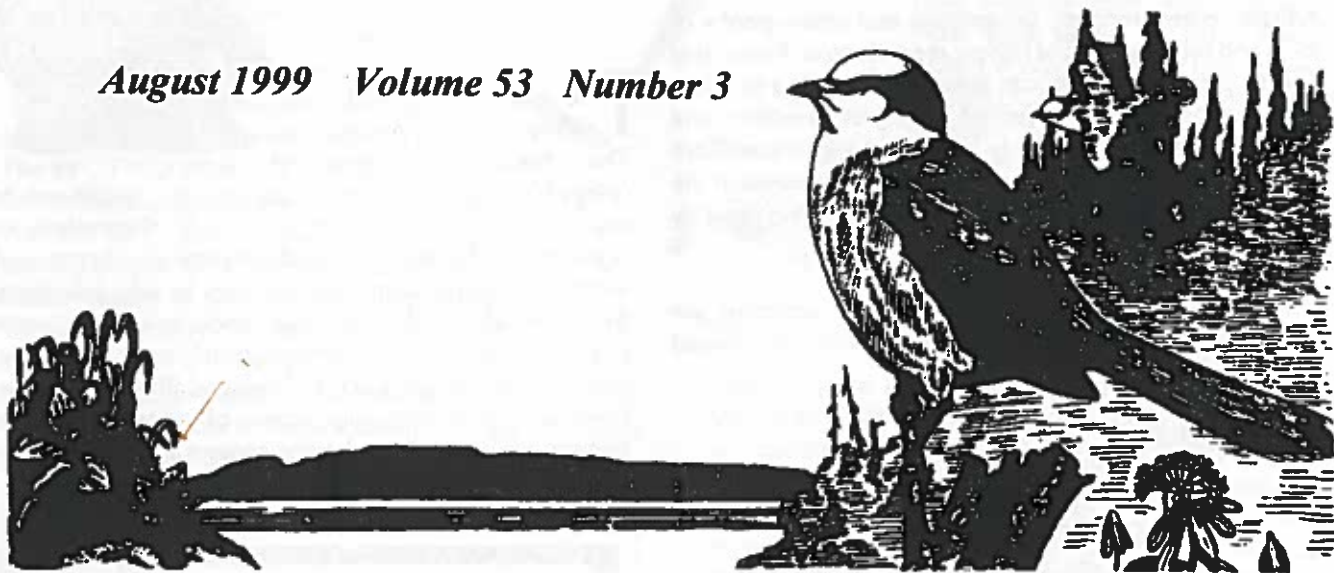


Nature Northwest

August 1999 Volume 53 Number 3



THUNDER BAY FIELD NATURALISTS

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Editorial Policy

Nature Northwest is a quarterly publication of the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists. Each volume of *Nature Northwest* (ISSN 0836-4702) consists of four issues published February, May, August and November. A subscription to *Nature Northwest* is a benefit of membership.

Articles, notes, records, illustrations and photographs of local and regional natural history are welcome. Please feel free to contact the editor in advance regarding possible submissions. Material accepted is subject to editing and revision. *Nature Northwest* is intended to be informative and thought-provoking. Therefore, views expressed in the publication are not necessarily those of the Thunder Bay Field Naturalists or the editor.

Your ideas, suggestions and constructive criticism are welcome. All written submissions and comments should be addressed to:

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From the Editor's Desk



The new 'year' starts for many of us in September. The historical pattern of 'everything stops till the crops are in', might not be expected to hold in an area not dependent on agriculture. Somehow, our short summer of seemingly endless daylight seems too precious to schedule away. By September, children are back in school, most vacations are over, a potentially hard winter lies ahead, and it's time to get back to business. This year we are blessed with a long wind down of summer - almost corresponding to the calendar season.

in memoriam

Reta Penwarden died this June in her 96th year. She lived in both Kingston and Cobourg before coming to Northwestern Ontario to teach, first in Fort Frances, then in Port Arthur. She joined the TBFN Club and was an active member, enjoying the field trips, and taking on several offices in the club. She and her friends used to decorate the tables for the annual dinner with the earliest flowers. She followed her interest in the natural world in her travels with Elderhostel holidays. She was a generous friend and an enthusiastic worker for both her church and our club. Her life was long and well lived. We shall miss her.



Birds

by Nick Escott

Winter 1998 - 1999.

Several bird species that we don't usually see in the winter stayed through the cold season this year. Flocks of up to 20 American Goldfinches were reported all winter long, also a few Cedar Waxwings. A Northern Flicker spent the winter in the Mariday Park area of Thunder Bay's north ward, and was seen at feeders and trees in several backyards on High, Summit, Winnipeg and Hill Streets. The SPOTTED TOWHEE that appeared last December continued to be seen in 2 different Westfort back yards through March 11. It was last seen at Irene Macdonald's, the same feeder where it was initially seen before Christmas. Purple Finches were reported all winter long in groups of up to 20 individuals. Late migrating Rough-legged Hawks were seen Jan 3 and Feb 1. For the first time in many years, there were no Snowy Owls in Thunder Bay.

Black-backed Woodpeckers were very common during the winter in last year's forest fire burn 140 km up the Armstrong Highway. During the winter they were feeding on the larvae of *Monochamus scutellatus*, the White-spotted Sawyer Beetle, which had infested the dead and dying trees in huge numbers. Woodpecker numbers dropped off by April, but many pairs stayed on in the burn and nested.

Two different RED-BELLIED WOODPECKERS wintered in The Thunder Bay area this past winter. The first was a male at East Arrow Lake, visiting the feeders at Frank and Irene Stewart's house. It stayed through the spring and was last seen mid-June. The second one was another male, seen on Thunder Bay's south side. It was first reported by Dave Elder on Jan 30 at the White Fox Inn, and was last reported March 7 on Scotland Street, but may have been in the area longer since it was seen very sporadically.

Spring Migration.

Several species of birds were reported in greater than usual numbers this year. There were at least 12 reports of Tundra Swans, up to 13 individuals. They first appeared April 5 at 3 different locations. A flight of Indigo Buntings arrived along the north shore of Lake Superior May 17. On that date, individuals were reported from Fort William, Thunder Cape, Nipigon, Red Rock, and Terrace Bay, and on May 18 in Marathon. Northern Mockingbirds also showed up at different locations on the same day: on May 22 separate birds were reported from

Thunder Cape, Mission Island, Silver Islet, and the Kabeyun trail in Sleeping Giant Provincial Park. Additional birds were seen at Nipigon May 17 and Thunder Cape May 31. At least 1080 Whimbrel were seen May 26 - 29 on Lake Superior islets and shorelines. Most were tallied by Brian Ratcliff during a colonial water bird survey. Thunder Cape had a good showing of Western Kingbirds, with 5 different birds between May 31 and June 5. There were 3 Ruddy Ducks seen: Hacquoil's gravel pit in Stanley May 22-24, the Correctional Centre ponds June 16, and Whitefish Lake June 20.



American White Pelican

Summer breeders and visitors. This summer there have been more reports than usual of American White Pelicans from Lake Superior and surrounding area. There have been at least 15 sightings, many at Mission Island marsh. The largest group¹ was about 30 individuals, at the mouth of the Nipigon River, seen by Brian Ratcliff on July 1. Black-billed Cuckoos were quite common this year in the Thunder Bay area, probably due to the forest tent caterpillar invasion. Sandhill Crane nesting was confirmed in the farmlands south of Thunder Bay on Hwy 608 near Hwy 61, where Brian Moore and Penny Ratushniak saw one chick with 2 adults June 26; and breeding was strongly suspected in a Black Bay Peninsula fen, where 2 agitated adults were seen by Sue and Mike Bryan on June 9. On the down side, Brewer's Blackbirds continue to be very scarce. Only one pair was found this year, on Hwy 102 near Sistonen's Corners.

Field Trip Report.

May 29 1999, "Flight of the Timberdoodle". This field trip was not very well attended this year, despite perfect weather conditions. We travelled about 25 km up Highway 527 to a fairly recent cutover, arriving at about 9:30 pm. At least 3 American Woodcock were displaying, and one was seen well at very close range on the road, "peenting" between flights. In addition, at least 2 Common Nighthawks were "booming", and an American Bittern flew lazily across the road as dusk fell. A large female Painted Turtle was just finishing laying her eggs on the gravel road bed, as we left. On the way home we saw 3 moose on the highway.

¹From National Geographic Society: *Birds of North America*

Bird Records

January through July 1999

The listed records include first (F) and last (L) reported migration dates, and notes on plumage (ad = adult, imm = immature, m = male, f = female, pr = male and female pair, s-m = singing male on territory, juv = juvenile, migr = migrant, N = nest, E = eggs). Species in capital letters are considered rare in Thunder Bay District. Send bird records at the end of each month to Nick Escott, 133 South Hill Street, Thunder Bay P7B 3T9 (or by e-mail to escott@norlink.net).

OBSERVERS: Jody Allair, Jess Antoniak, E.R. (Ted) Armstrong, Barry Atkinson, Al Baxter, Mr. and Mrs Geoff Bertin, Matthew Bryan, Jeremy Bryan, Rachel Bryan, Sue Bryan, Ross Chessell, William S. Climie, Kathy Ducaiova, Dave H. Elder, Aarre Ertolahti, Nicholas G. Escott, Geoff Gooding, Sheila Gooding, Allan G. Harris, K. Joan Hebden, Sharon Illingworth, Keith Johnson, Irene Macdonald, Brian Moore, Stanley V. Phippen, Brian D. Ratcliff, Penny Ratushniak, Enid Robinson, Pauline Robinson, Susan Robinson, George A. Williams, Wally Zarowski, Mike Zettek. m.obs. = many observers, TBFN = Thunder Bay Field Naturalists field trip, TCBO = Thunder Cape Bird Observatory staff.

| Common Name | Date | No. | Plumage | Location | Observers |
|--------------------------|----------|------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Red-throated Loon | 05 01 | 2 | | Mission Island | GG |
| Horned Grebe | 04 25 | 5 | | Sturgeon Bay | BDR |
| EARED GREBE | 04 30 | 1 | ad | Bare Point | GG |
| American White Pelican | F 05 31 | 8 | | harbour @ Pool 6 | Marion Smith |
| Double-crested Cormorant | 06 27 | 300+ | | Nipigon Bay | SB,TBFN |
| American Bittern | F 05 10 | 1 | | O'Connor Twp | MZ |
| Great Blue Heron | F 03 31 | 1 | | Keefer Terminal | GAW |
| GR. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE | 05 22 | 1 | | N past Hurkett | AGH et al |
| Snow Goose | 04 20 | 1 | | Slate River Valley | BM |
| Tundra Swan | F 04 05 | 2 | | mouth of McKellar River | Tom Tough |
| Gadwall | F 04 26 | 2 | | Chippewa | SB |
| American Black Duck | 02 14 | 1 | | Provincial Mill | SB |
| Canvasback | 05 04 | 16 | 8 pr | Cloud Bay | IM |
| Surf Scoter | 05 15 | 7 | | Hurkett | GG,SG |
| White-winged Scoter | 05 28 | 200 | | S of Kama Bay | BDR |
| Black Scoter | 05 26-28 | 1 | m | mouth of McKellar River | NGE |
| Oldsquaw | 05 22 | 4 | | Wild Goose Park | NGE et al |
| Hooded Merganser | F 03 15 | 1 | | Kam River, Westfort | GAW |
| Common Merganser | F 03 14 | 12 | 3m,9f | Thunder Cape | NGE,BA,KD |
| Ruddy Duck | 06 20 | 1 | m | Whitefish Lake | AGH,TBFN |
| Bald Eagle | 02 14 | 1 | ad | Armstrong Hwy | fide BA |
| Northern Harrier | F 03 29 | 1 | | near Pass Lake | P.Ratushniak |
| Broad-winged Hawk | 07 12 | 1 | dark | Expressway N of Oliver Rd | SVP |
| Rough-legged Hawk | 02 08 | 1 | light | over Hill St | AGH |
| Golden Eagle | 04 24 | 2 | | Sturgeon Bay Road | WZ |
| Peregrine Falcon | F 04 09 | 2 | | Mt.McKay, Mt.McRae | BDR |
| Gyr Falcon | L 03 22 | 1 | | Richardson's Elevator | Mike Antoniak |
| Sharp-tailed Grouse | 04 16 | 2 | | Hwy 17 @ Savanne River | BM,PRa |
| American Coot | 05 02 | 1 | | Chippewa | GAW |
| Sandhill Crane | 06 26 | 3 | 2ad,1ygain | Hwy 61 S of Hwy 608 | BM |
| American Golden-Plover | 05 23-24 | 1 | | Silver Islet | WSC |
| WILLET | 05 20 | 1 | | Pool 6 | S,E & P Robinson |
| Whimbrel | F 05 22 | | | Mission Island marsh | BM,PRa |
| Hudsonian Godwit | 05 22 | 2 | pr | Mission Island marsh | AGH,SB,NGE |
| MARbled GODWIT | 05 19 | 1 | | mouth of Pic River | Keith Wade |
| Ruddy Turnstone | L 05 28 | 3 | | Druid Rock | BDR |
| Sanderling | 05 22 | 1 | | Mission Island marsh | BM,PRa |
| WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER | F 05 16 | 1 | | Mission Island marsh | NGE,SVP,JAI |

| Common Name | Date | No. | Plumage | Location | Observers |
|------------------------------|------------|------|---------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Dunlin | L 05 24 | 5 | | Harstone, in pasture | SB, RB, MB |
| Buff-breasted Sandpiper | 07 28-29 | 18 | flock | Manitouwadge golf course | NGE |
| Short-billed Dowitcher | F 05 16 | 4 | | Mission Island marsh | NGE,SVP,JAI |
| American Woodcock | F 03 27 | 1 | | Boy Scout Road | BM,PRa |
| Wilson's Phalarope | 05 18 | 2 | | Chippewa | GG,SG |
| Bonaparte's Gull | F 05 13 | 16 | | Hurkett | AB,GAW,KJ |
| Glaucon Gull | 03 27 | 2 | | Provincial Mill | BM |
| Caspian Tern | F 05 13 | 2 | | Hurkett | AB,GAW,KJ |
| Common Tern | 06 19 | 3+ | | Longlac | NGE,SVP |
| Mourning Dove | F 03 29,31 | 1 | | 18Marks St feeder | BA |
| Black-billed Cuckoo | F 05 30 | 2 | | Candy Mountain Rd | BM |
| Snowy Owl | 01 04 | 1 | | Hwy 17 @ Schreiber | Mike Dube |
| Northern Hawk Owl | 02 10 | 1 | | Hwy 17 @ Black River | BA |
| Great Gray Owl | 01 09 | 1 | | Mills Block | fide SVP |
| Short-eared Owl | 04 10-11 | 1 | | Pool 6 | JAI,JAN,AGH |
| Boreal Owl | 04 08 | 6 | calling | Lac des Milles Lacs | Bill Hay |
| Common Nighthawk | F 05 23 | 1 | | Thunder Cape | JAI,JAN |
| Whip-poor-will | 06 25 | 1 | calling | Dog River Road | SVP |
| Chimney Swift | 07 26 | 2 | | Silver Islet | NGE,WSC |
| RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER | 01 30 | 1 | m | White Fox Inn, Thunder Bay | DHE |
| Three-toed Woodpecker | 01 26 | 1 | f | Lappe | Aarre Ertolahti |
| Black-backed Woodpecker | 01 31 | 161 | | burn 140 km up Hwy 527 | NGE,SVP |
| Western Kingbird | F 05 31 | 2 | | Thunder Cape | TCBO |
| Northern Shrike | L 04 10 | 1 | | Chippewa | BA |
| Philadelphia Vireo | F 05 13 | 1 | | Hurkett | GAW |
| American Crow | F 03 14 | 2 | | Whitefish Lake | Tom Ross |
| Horned Lark | 03 19 | 1 | | Mokomon | WZ |
| PURPLE MARTIN | 05 31 | 1 | ad | Thunder Cape | TCBO23 |
| White-breasted Nuthatch | 01 31 | 1 | | Lakeshore Dr.@ Grandview | JAI,JAN |
| House Wren | 06 01-17 | 1 | s-m | Rosewood Cresc, F.W. | ERA |
| Sedge Wren | F 05 29 | 1 | s-m | Savanne Twp | AGH |
| Marsh Wren | 06 07 | 1 | | Thunder Cape | TCBO |
| BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER | 05 25-26 | 1 | | Thunder Cape | TCBO |
| Eastern Bluebird | 06 06 | 4 | 2 pr | Correctional ponds | IM |
| Varied Thrush | 01 01-05 | 1 | | Copper Cliff Road | Bertins |
| Gray Catbird | F 04 21 | 1 | | Northwood | GAW |
| Northern Mockingbird | 05 22 | 1 | | Silver Islet | KJH |
| Brown Thrasher | 07 18 | 1 | | Candy Mtn Rd @ Slate River | AB |
| Bohemian Waxwing | L 04 24 | 6 | | Fort William | Margaret Allen |
| GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER | 05 29 | 1 | | Thunder Cape | TCBO |
| Orange-crowned Warbler | 05 20 | 1 | | South Hill Street, P.A. | AGH |
| Black-throated Blue Warbler | I F 05 15 | 1 | | Hurkett | GAW,m.obs. |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler | 05 23 | 1 m | audubon | Silver Islet | WSC |
| Black-throated Green Warbler | 05 04 | 4 | | Silver Islet | SB,JB |
| Connecticut Warbler | F 05 29 | 8 | s-m | Savanne Twp | AGH |
| Scarlet Tanager | 06 24 | 1 | m | Greenwood Lake pines | SB |
| SPOTTED TOWHEE | L 03 04-11 | 1 | f | Empire Ave backyard | IM |
| American Tree Sparrow | F 04 02 | | | Memory Road | SI |
| Vesper Sparrow | F 04 30 | 4 | s-m | 25th Sideroad | Jody Allair |
| Le Conte's Sparrow | 05 29 | 1 | s-m | Savanne Twp | AGH |
| Fox Sparrow | F 04 12 | 1 | | Dog Lake Rd feeder | BDR |
| Harris' Sparrow | 05 23-24 | | | Mission Island | IM |
| White-crowned Sparrow | F 04 26 | 1 | | Mission Island | IM |
| Dark-eyed Junco | 03 10 | 6+ | | Centennial Park Road | BM,PRa |
| Lapland Longspur | L 06 18 | 1 | m | Caldwell Lake | SB |
| Snow Bunting | 02 28 | 100+ | flock | RR tracks, Pole Line Road | BM |

| Common Name | Date | No. | Plumage | Location | Observers |
|-------------------------|------------|------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Northern Cardinal | 02 20-21 | 1 | m | near Centennial Park | Terrence Gunnell |
| Bobolink | 06 19 | 4+ | | Longlac Indian church | NGE,SVP |
| Yellow-headed Blackbird | 05 01 | 1 | m | Mission Island | GG,SG,m.obs. |
| Brewer's Blackbird | 05 29 | 2 | pr | Dawson Rd, Kaministiquia | AGH |
| Baltimore Oriole | F 05 15-16 | 1 | | Terrace Bay backyard | Georgette Sheridan |
| Pine Grosbeak | 08 02 | 1 | s-m | White Lake | SVP |
| HOUSE FINCH | 06 14 | 1 | m | O'Connor Township | Ross Chessell |
| Red Crossbill | 01 08 | 30 | | pinces near Lakhead U. | PRa |
| Common Redpoll | L 04 04 | many | | Memory Road | SI |
| Hoary Redpoll | L 03 26 | 1 | | Lakeshore Drive | Virginia Antoniak |

House Finch Nest.



This summer Barry Atkinson reported a House Finch nest at the Stovers' house on Isabella Street in the South Ward of Thunder Bay. The nest was located on a small shelf just under the roof of the front porch of the house. Colin Stover, a friend of Barry's son Willy, had seen the birds there at the nest, and Barry went to confirm the

identification of the birds. On June 15 he saw a female, and 2 young in the nest. Unfortunately, the nesting attempt was unsuccessful: a few days later Colin found 2 dead chicks, and a broken egg with a dead chick inside, on the floor of the porch. Barry obtained the nest, and found that about a quarter of the nest material looked like lint from a dryer.

This is the first nest record for this species in Thunder Bay District, although nesting was suspected once before, in 1996, when a male and female were observed on several occasions in the vicinity of Myra McCormick's house on Algoma Street.

What Our Club is Doing!

Monday, September 27, 1999 -8 PM

1. Brian Ratcliff, Project Peregrine.

Yes, we are still monitoring our falcons. Brian will bring us up to date on this year's successes and the plans for the millenium

2. Willard Carmean, Greenwood Lake

A lot of hard work has gone into the trails through this stand of old growth white pine. This year the signs are complete and the information kiosk has been built. See the area by way of Willard's slides. The trails have deliberately been left a bit rough to discourage trail bikes and other wheeled traffic.

✓ Audrey Heagy, Thunder Cape Bird Observatory Warden. Update on what has been going on.

Monday, October 25, 1999 -8 PM

✓ Butterflies - Jodi Allair - local butterflies and their habitats - learn to identify some beautiful winged creatures when the birds aren't singing in the summer

Monday, November 22E 1999 -8 PM

✓ A Naturalists View of Chile - Corrine and Alex
These two young people travelled to Chile last year and will share their impressions of the natural

In Memoriam

A long-time member of TBFN, *'Millie' Elliott*, died on February 17th, 1999. She and her husband, Jack were regular attenders of our meetings and field trips. For many years, they visited many of our parks during the summer, enjoying the outdoors, the flowers, and birds. Millie worked hard on our annual November Sales of pre-Christmas goodies - and will be missed in that capacity. Her husband, Jack, now in hospital, was membership secretary of the Club for several years. Our sympathy goes to her family, especially to her brother and sister-in-law, and TBFN members, Art and Margaret Elliott.

An enthusiastic TBFN member and supporter, *Helen Banazzo*, died last March 14th. She attended meetings regularly, and enjoyed our field trips very much. She helped her good friend Dr. Willard Carmean with his field trips - and will be sorely missed in that capacity. She also enjoyed travel and music, her special delight was her violin. Through her music she made many friends who will miss her lively participation in their activities. Our club will miss her friendly enthusiasm.

Joan Hebdon

FEDERATION OF ONTARIO NATURALISTS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Kingston, Ont., May 28-30, 1999

PROTECTED AREAS

The Kingston Field Naturalists were celebrating their 50th anniversary at this meeting with an emphasis on protected spaces.

Friday was Provincial Issues Day with a somewhat different format than previously. We had scans from the Southeastern Region by Peter Goddard and the Kingston area by Anne Robertson and Ron Weir - a very busy club. Then there were updates on Presqu'ile provincial park - Brighton City Council wants to be the source of the park plan! Dombind - the counties get it free to spread on the roads to keep down the dust - who knows what's in it and the company won't tell the Ontario Trust Alliance which is doing well and had a very successful conference and Important Bird Areas on Ontario - not everyone thinks these are necessary or a good thing.

Eva Ligeti, the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, spoke about what the Commission has accomplished and the annual reports. A very impressive lady! Able to express what needs to be said without being unnecessarily abrasive. I wonder if she will be reappointed when her term is up.

The afternoon was taken up with a panel on Lands for Life with Gail Beggs and Dave Watton from the MNR, Ron Reid from the FON, Craig McManus, Vice President, Domtar, Inc. and Charles Fox, Grand Chief, Treaty 9. Charles Fox is a very eloquent speaker and rather stole the show. We need to take notice that the First Nations feel ignored and are very unhappy about the whole Lands for Life process.

On Saturday I missed the early morning bird walk as the Club Reps had a breakfast meeting at 8 AM. We had a lively exchange of ideas and lots of fun catching up with the projects and problems (it) the regions and what the individual clubs are doing. Several of the regions may be considering joint projects now they know what the others are doing.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Jim Thorsell, Senior Advisor, Natural Heritage IUCN, the World Conservation Union giving

a global perspective on protected areas. I then went to a workshop on Natural History Video Production - fascinating, but you can't squeeze a six month course into an hour - no matter how fast you talk! The Plenary Speaker after lunch was John Lounds, Executive Director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada on Protected Areas: Natural Legacy 2000. The NCC hopes to add 156 million privately protected acres to help in preserving our biodiversity. After that I heard Michael Bradstreet, ED, Bird Studies Canada! Long Point Bird Observatory try to answer the question, *What is Needed to Preserve Avian Biodiversity?* He had some interesting ideas on how to determine which areas need urgent protection.

The banquet speaker was Peter Trueman, host and managing editor of the TV series, *Great Canadian Parks*; showing slides and describing his trips to Great Canadian Parks.

Sunday I went on the birding trip to the Helen Quilliam Sanctuary owned by the KFN and Frontenac Provincial Park. Some of the highlights were the pine warbler, golden-winged warbler and the cerulean warbler. May other birds!

That afternoon I visited with Mary and Ken Chapman; who used to be TBFN members. They wish to be remembered to their many friends in Thunder Bay. They have a house east of Kingston close to the St. Lawrence River. They had a killdeer nesting at the edge of their driveway, a small pond with several sorts of frogs in the backyard mid swallows flying in and out under the roof of their back deck - they can do most of their bird and nature watching at home!

After staying the night at a novel bed and breakfast, a decommissioned Coastguard vessel, I caught the plane for home having had a great vacation.

*Myra McCormick,
FON Rep, TBFN,
Northern Regional Director,
Board, FON.*

Federation of British Columbia Naturalists/ Canadian Nature Federation Annual General Meeting Qualicum Beach, B.C. May 13-16, 1999

The combined CFN/provincial annual meeting was held in British Columbia in May this year. The meeting was hosted by the Arrowsmith Naturalists, a club from Parksville and Qualicum Beach. Qualicum Beach is a very pretty little resort town, especially with the rhododendrons in bloom. Unfortunately, the main migration of waterfowl takes place in March and April and so there were no large rafts of ducks or flocks of Brant geese to be seen

On Thursday afternoon the CNF presented two seminars on Important Bird Areas and Endangered Species. The IBA programmes are going forward with other initiatives such as partners in Flight, the Canadian Shorebird Conservation Plan and the North American Bird conservation Initiative. The Canadian nature Federation and Bird Studies Canada are co-partners with Birdlife international.

The Endangered Species legislation keeps falling by the wayside. Each time it is re-introduced the terms of protection seem to get weaker! Conservation organizations (that's us) need to become more vocal since industry, and forestry in particular, seem to have very loud voices and the ear of the legislators.

On Friday I went on the early morning bird walk. The highlight for me was the orange-crowned warbler. The problem is that I didn't recognize any of the songs - not even the chickadees! Very humbling. The birds really do have different dialects in different regions. We returned in time for the Shiners' Pancake Breakfast. The seminar that morning was on *Parks as Classrooms* by David Williams and Tracey Johannassen from in Washington State. In the afternoon I went on *A Walk in Little Qualicum Provincial Park*. Very pretty - lots of waterfalls, fawn lilies - as advertised and a great many other plants I didn't recognize. The CFN AGM was that evening. They passed nine resolutions. The one I was happiest to see - and support - was the one expressing full support for the protection of 20% of the public land in Ontario requested by the Partnership for Public Lands in the Lands for Life planning process. The others ranged from protection of parks and marine areas to calling on all levels of government to renew their commitment to protection of the environment.

Saturday was an indoor day. I attended the session on *A New Direction in Forestry Practices* by Bill Beese, a forest ecologist with MacMillan-Bloedel. They are phasing out their present policy of clear-cuts over a five year period and will be practicing different approaches to 'variable retention'. The session on the Marbled Murrelet in Desolation Sound by Dr Frank Cooke was fascinating. This small seabird has been a mystery for years as no one could figure out where they nest.

Dr Cooke has solved that puzzle. The final talk was noon Naturalists in the New Millennium by Wayne Campbell, a senior research scientist with in the Wildlife Branch. His vision is to minimize the impact of changing habitat on bird populations in B.C. These are just the sessions I attended. There were at least three others of equal interest going on at the same time. The banquet that evening featured Arthur Black, who now lives on Salt Spring Island, as the guest speaker. He hasn't changed a bit - except for the beard and a little balder on top.

Sunday was, for me, a bus trip to the Pacific Rim National Park. The bus trip to the west coast of Vancouver Island was scenic on its own. The bog we stopped at was very interesting. (Bogs always are.)

The walk in the temperate rainforest was the highlight of the tour. Every fallen log and dead branch becomes a miniature garden of mosses; ferns and herbaceous plants. The amount of greenery is astounding. No surface is left uncovered - including the board walks which tend to be a bit slippery with moss.

After this meeting I drove down to Victoria to see the Butchart Gardens with some friends. Spectacular with the tulips and the rhododendrons in bloom. Then with the May long week-end coming up I drove up to Port McNeill to see Annette van Neijenhuisen, a TBFN club member still, in spite of distance.

We had great fun driving to the west coast of the island on the logging roads. We dropped in on George Williams sister briefly as she and her husband were getting their trailer park ready for the season. Very few birds! Annette says "No bugs, no birds". The skunk cabbage are very large and bright yellow. The marsh marigolds are small and white. Plant identification turned out to be our main focus with so few birds. Lots (and lots) of bald-headed eagles though. And then we spent Sunday with the volunteers who are raising salmon. They were getting their new weir ready for the grand opening and were having a wonderful time playing with the water. All very serious, you understand.

All in all a wonderful trip to a new and interesting area full of new and interesting birds, plants and people.

**THE NEXT MEETING IS IN CORNERBROOK,
NFLD. JULY 13-16; 2000. See you there!**

Field Trip Report

To the TBFN Nature Reserve, Nipigon River Mouth

Leader: Sue Bryan

June 27th, 1999

19 club members went aboard the *Morningstar* for a cruise down the Nipigon River starting from the Nipigon Marina.



From Peterson: *Field Guide to the Eastern Birds*

We studied pictographs on the cliffs on the east shore of the river mouth. We were fortunate to see two Bald Eagles on the nest in a huge old poplar on the TBFN Reserve. One Adult Peregrine was spotted high on the cliffs at the river mouth. Recent Helicopter surveys apparently found three Peregrine chicks in the nest on the cliff this year! An Osprey nest near Cooke Point

was spotted - new to us, although I believe it had been reported at this same spot some years ago Perhaps most interesting of all was a group of ten American White Pelicans, some in breeding plumage, seen on an islet in Nipigon Bay.

Forty-six common species were observed.

- Common Loon
- American White Pelican (10 seen on small, rocky islet between LsGrange Island and the mainland shore, in company with hundreds of cormorants. Two of these birds were in breeding plumage (black on top of head. Keel on upper mandible)
- Double-crested Cormorant (300+)
- Great Blue Heron
- Turkey Vulture
- Canada Goose (several family groups with goslings)
- Mallard
- Blue-winged Teal
- Common Goldeneye
- Common Merganser (female with 13 young)
- Osprey (1 adult on active nest)
- Peregrine Falcon
- Bald Eagle (Pair on active nest)
- Ruffed Grouse (one adult with group of young) Bald Eagle (Pair on active nest)
- Ring-billed Gull
- Herring Gull (adult with 1 flightless chick observed on nest ledge of cliff)
- Belted Kingfisher

- Downy Woodpecker
- Alder Flycatcher
- Red-eyed Vireo
- American Crow
- Common Raven
- Tree Swallow (nest in nest-box at Nipigon Marina)
- Bank Swallow
- Barn Swallow
- Winter Wren
- Veery
- Swainson's Thrush
- American Robin
- Cedar Waxwing
- Yellow Warbler
- Chestnut-sided Warbler
- Black-throated Green Warbler
- Black and White Warbler
- American Redstart
- Ovenbird
- Northern Water Thrush (Adult feeding small flightless young seen on shore)
- Common Yellowthroat
- Chipping Sparrow
- Savannah Sparrow
- Song Sparrow
- White-throated Sparrow
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Common Grackle
- Brown-headed Cowbird.

The *Morningstar* served a cool, surprisingly delicious juice drink that had many birders asking for the recipe. Maureen Dampier, our hostess, and co-owner of the *Morningstar*, sent along the recipe so we could include it in the newsletter. Don't dismiss the unlikely fruit concentrate until you try it!

Rhubarb Concentrate

1. Chop rhubarb (any amount)
2. Cover with boiling water
3. Let stand over night (10-12 hr)
4. Strain juice. For every 3-4 cups, add 1 cup sugar or sweetener (works with Splenda sweetener)
5. Heat to boiling to dissolve sugar
6. Freeze in containers
7. Add water to taste - Try a ratio of 2-3 water to concentrate

Marlene Turner

We are fortunate in that this unique community is situated on Manitouwadge Lake surrounded by hills, lakes and rivers, yet has a township campground and two hotels.

There is much to be discovered and recorded here as exemplified by the ground beetle collection of Tim Bakker, donated to the National Museum in Ottawa in 1995, which is connected with the Agriculture Canada Centre for Land and Biological Resources Research. His collection included 1,00 different species of approximately 3,000 beetles meticulously mounted and recorded. Dr J. M. Campbell actually named one of his latter specimens from Manitouwadge, *Micropeplus Bakkeri*, much to Tim's delight, as his physical health has led to the completion of his work.

Hard Maples may grow in the Thunder Bay area, but basically they stop for our area just west of Wawa. Tim Baker, however, transplanted one to his backyard over 20 years ago, and it struggled over the years. It was doing quite well until the unbearable winter of 1994. It is a survivor, like Tim, himself at age 80, and he claims the robin nest this year in its branches contains local horse hair! Horses have been reintroduced to town after many years of absence, partially due to winter and bugs. Tim is such a wonderful local naturalist, who has taught many here, including his family, so much of the world around us.

After a long winter, the wonderful heat brings with it the dread of local forest fires and uncertainty. On May 3, 1999, a forest fire started 20 km east of White Lake Provincial park and began burning in a northwesterly direction towards the north end of White Lake year round residents and cottagers were evacuated. The fire headed for town bringing soot with it. By May 20th, it was under control. 36,000 hectares were burned. Staff at the Provincial Park suggest we keep our eyes open for new plants. Fire is a natural component of a healthy boreal forest ecosystem succession.

Hummingbirds... We would be curious to know if the Manitouwadge hummers travel around Lake Superior via Thunder Bay or Sault Ste Marie. They arrive here mid to late May. (Ruby-throated with individual variations)

June 3rd a Yellow-headed Blackbird was reported in a local garden. June 6th, four Canada Geese were seen at the lake. Strange they would still be in the area. What effect has the local forest fire had?

Ravens are plentiful in town, whether we want them or not. One with a white wing feather is often seen. Some loons visit Manitouwadge Lake from their area nesting, private lake! So nice to hear them

Acougar was spotted running across Highway 17, at night, near Highway 614 (Manitouwadge corner), the week of July 12th. It was reported to MNR.

Virginia Thompson, Biologist with the local MNR Office and Dave Arola, local Conservation Officer, did an OWL Survey on Highway 614, recording mostly Boreal and some Barred and Great Gray Owls. They also did an Amphibian Survey which produced some Spring Peeper, Wood Frogs, and American Toads. They will do a small mammal survey in August and September.

Black Bears have not been anticipated, possible nuisance expected. At least seven bears have been live-trapped at the Gold Mines. One was bothering the local horses and another appeared in a backyard in the vicinity of three horses July 22nd. Birders are complaining of increased numbers of red squirrels and chipmunks, even though most do not feed birds in summer.

Afterthought: We were pleased to spot a hillside of Sheep laurel in early July. Beautiful crimson-pink flowers near town.



Public Information Centre

October 29th, 1999, April 20th, 2000, August 22nd, 2000

The MNR, Abitibi Consolidated, Inc., and Spruce River Forest Local Citizens' Committee are holding a public information centre to discuss the 2001 to 2021 forest management plan for the spruce River Forest

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, contact Vishnu Kowlessar at 1 (807) 475-1163

An information centre was held July 21st, 1999.

Protecting the ECO Office

Julian Holenstein

As you may know Tony Clement, the new Minister of Environment, has been publicly musing that they may get rid of the Environmental Commissioner's Office.

This of course would be very bad news for the environment and would in my opinion result in the following negative outcomes (by no means exhaustive):

1. Reduced oversight of Ministerial compliance with EBR.
2. Reduced ability of the public to understand environmental legislation and policy and to get involved in shaping it.
3. Reduced/ eliminated government environmental accountability.
4. Reduced/eliminated ability to communicate to the public and media concerning state of Ontario's environment.

I have appended the article from Saturday's Globe in full

GLOBE AND MAIL, SAT AUG.28, 1999
Richard Mackie, Queen's Park Bureau

Felt heat from environmental watchdog, Ontario may drop post

TORONTO, ONTARIO: Toronto Ontario's Progressive Conservative government is considering scrapping the position of environmental commissioner after four years of criticism from the watchdog who was dumped last week, Environment Minister Tony Clement said yesterday. The government decided Aug. 18 not to extend Eva Ligeti's term, which covered one year of the New Democratic Party government as well as four years under the Conservatives. Mr. Clement said that Ms. Ligeti's departure will not affect the government's determination to improve the environment. "Whether the person in that job is Eva or someone else, whether that job even exists, we are going to be accountable for our environmental record," he said in an interview to be broadcast today on the Global Television program Focus Ontario.

The government has yet to decide whether to replace Ms. Ligeti, said Dan Shultz, communications adviser to Mr. Clement. "Before the position [of environmental commissioner] was created, the job was done and done well by the ombudsman. . . . In the interests of the fiscal situation of the government, it would be an option to look at perhaps folding that office back into the ombudsman." But Mr. Shultz stressed that no decision has been made. "It's an option that's out there."

After Ms. Ligeti was told her term would not be extended, the government appointed a former assistant

deputy minister in the Environment Ministry, Ivy Wile, to act as interim environmental commissioner for three months. It promised it would consult with the opposition in the legislature about naming a replacement. Ms. Ligeti said she felt it would be a mistake not to have a full-time environmental commissioner.

"I certainly would be, as a person who's very interested in the environment, very sad if the position didn't exist," she said during Focus Ontario. "I think we have a long way to go, not only here in Ontario, but in Canada and across the globe, towards a better environmental outcome," she added. "And I think independent review, such as that of the environmental commissioner, over governmental activities on the environment is very important to help people cope with how to move forward on environmental issues."

Ms. Ligeti also disputed her reputation as a critic of the Progressive Conservative government's performance on the environment. She said she had confined herself to reporting what had occurred.

"When you set up as an office to review ministries of the government, sometimes you find good things and sometimes you find things that you have to be critical of."

OF INTEREST...

1. **COMMUNITY-BASED BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN THE NORTHWESTERN LAKE SUPERIOR LANDSCAPE**
 - PROJECT UPDATE AND INVITATION TO A SITE CONSERVATION PLANNING WORKSHOP - TO BE HELD IN THUNDER BAY AND DULUTH AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER
 - BINATIONAL PROJECT:
 - NATURE CONSERVANCY - GREAT LAKES PROGRAM
 - NATURE CONSERVANCY OF MINNESOTA
 - NATURAL HERITAGE INFORMATION CENTRE OF ONTARIO MNR
 - FUNDED LARGELY BY N.A. FUND FOR ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION
 - SOME SPECIES OF INTEREST
 - RAYS HEAD LADYSLIPPER STEMLESS LOOSEWEED
 - CONTACT NATURAL HISTORY INFORMATION CENTRE, 300 WATER ST., BOX 7000, PETERBOROUGH K9J 8M5

2. CANADIAN COUNCIL ON ECOLOGICAL AREAS CONFERENCE, OCT. 3 1999, OTTAWA

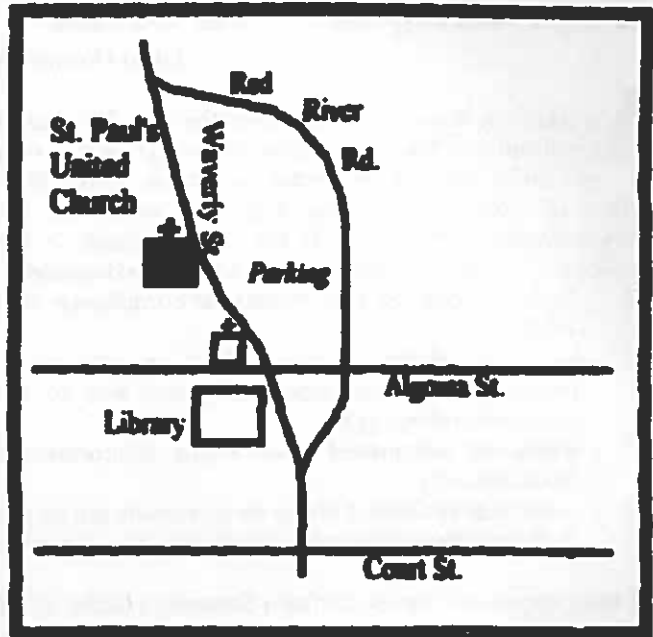
General Meetings

Lunan Hall, St. Paul's Church, Waverley St., Thunder Bay North.

Monday, September 27, 1999 - 8 PM
 Speakers: Heagy, Thunder Cape Bird Obs.
 Ratcliff, Project Peregrine
 Carmean: Greenwood Lake

Monday, October 25th, 1999 - 8pm
 Speaker: Jodi Allair: local Butterflies

Monday, November 22nd, 1999 - 8pm
 Speakers: Corrine and Alex: A naturalist's View of Chile



○ The Last Word ○

Thunder Bay Field Naturalists - Information - 1999

The Thunder Bay Field Naturalists club is a non-profit organization dedicated to

- ☛ the study of natural history
- ☛ the wise use of resources
- ☛ the preservation of natural areas
- ☛ teaching the public to understand and protect nature

Annual membership Fees

| | | | |
|--------------------|---------|-------------------|-------|
| Family | \$22.00 | Single | 19.00 |
| Students | 16.00 | Seniors (65+) . . | 16.00 |
| Corresponding . . | 16.00 | | |

Mailing Address

Thunder Bay Field Naturalists
 P.O. Box 10037
 Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 6T6

Meeting Dates

4th Monday: September, October, November, January, March, April
 Annual Dinner Meeting is held the 4th Sunday in February

TBFN Website

<http://TBFN.baynet.net> *** Note change
 Aarre Ertolahti 767-5985

Directors

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------|
| President | David Ellingwood | 343-9415 |
| Past President | Jean Lister | 344-3815 |
| Vice President | Brian Moore | 344-2986 |
| Treasurer | Betty Burke | 344-3265 |
| Recording secretary | vacant | |
| Editor, Nature Northwest | Pat Skula | 626-0089 |
| Membership | Anna Russer | 684-9025 |
| FON Representative | Myra McCormick | 345-6485 |
| Director-at-Large | Willard Carmean | 767-6300 |
| Director-at-Large | Tom Tough | |
| Director-at-Large | vacant | |

Appointed Positions

| | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Nature Reserves | Sue Bryant | 345-6446 |
| Bird Records | Nick Escott | 345-7122 |
| Programs | Myra McCormick | 345-6485 |
| Field Trips | Brian Moore | 344-2986 |
| Briefs | Julian Holenstein | 345-7784 |
| Juniors | vacant | |
| Publicity | Monica Holenstein | 344-8745 |
| Sales | vacant | |

Projects

| | | |
|---|------------------------|----------|
| Thunder Cape Bird Observatory | Nick Escott | 345-7122 |
| Peregrine Falcon | Brian Ratcliff | 768-8408 |
| Bluebird Recovery | Jean Lister | 767-5985 |

TBFN Reps on Community Committees

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|----------|
| Bruce Hoyer | Brightsands Forest Management Unit | 767-2022 |
| Deneen Brigham | Proposed National Marine Conservation Area | 345-7784 |