

# THE QUINTE NATURALIST

The Quinte Field Naturalists Association is affiliated with Ontario Nature, a non-profit organization sponsoring nature education, conservation and research.

## FEBRUARY



## QUINTE and the CLIMATE CRISIS



*Quinte Field Naturalists*

*Lecture Series*



*Quinte Conservation photo*

**Monday, February 24, 2020**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Sills Auditorium**

**Bridge Street United Church  
Belleville**



*Quinte Conservation photo*

Brad McNevin, Quinte Conservation's new Chief Administrative Officer, will highlight the effects climate change is already having in our area and present ideas for what can be done to try to mitigate the crisis.



*All welcome (donations appreciated) ..... Refreshments are served*

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# ANNUAL MEETING

## Elections

The following people have agreed to stand for the positions indicated. If you would like to help but someone else is a candidate where you feel most qualified please let us know. It's amazing how flexible we are. Notice that we need two more volunteers.

President	- George Thomson
Vice-President	-
Corresponding Secretary	- Elizabeth Churcher
Recording Secretary	-
Treasurer	- Mike Shaw
Publicity	- Denice Wilkins
Environmental Officer	- Denice Wilkins
Membership	- Nancy Stevenson
Outings	- John Lowry
Social Convenor	- Sharron Blaney
Newsletter	- John Blaney

## SIGNS OF SPRING

Nature doesn't use signs of spring or any other season to determine how plants and animals should act. Nature uses the intertwined cycles of the earth's rotation and revolutions around the sun. The result is ever changing conditions which we divide into four seasons.

If we are dividing the year into four parts the question of what marks the transition from one part to the next arises. Arbitrarily we set the transition from winter to spring at the vernal equinox. Supposedly at this point day and night are of equal length. This is true as long as "equal" in this context means "pretty close to even."

The reason for the inexactitude is complicated. When does spring start? Nature doesn't care. Scattered through the newsletter You will see examples of what nature is doing regardless of what we want to call the season.



***A few horned larks overwinter most years so it is difficult to tell if birds found in February are migrants. This year none were reported in ebird in Quinte during January. There have already been a few reported this month including a flock of 19. That's good evidence that migration has begun. Tom Wheatley found this bird on March 8 last year and reported it in ebird.***

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# You DON'T want to miss this Earth Day Celebration!

## Quinte Field Naturalists Annual Fund-Raising Dinner!

**When?** Earth Day April 22, 2020. Arrive at 5:30, dine at 6pm

**Where?** Emmanuel United Church, Foxboro

**Delicious dinner** featuring Coq au Vin OR Stuffed Portabella Mushroom, Dessert

**After Dinner Presentation** by Max Finkelstein

**Price:** \$28 per person. Tickets must be purchased by April 13, 2020

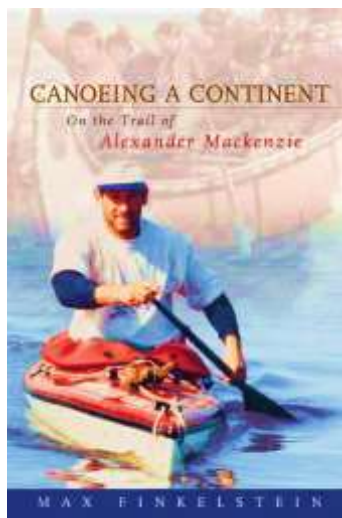
**Tickets available** at QFN meetings or by phoning 613-962-9337

**This is a zero waste, scent-free event.**

**Our Speaker – Max Finkelstein**

***Canoeing a Continent: On the Trail of Alexander Mackenzie***

In 1793 Alexander Mackenzie completed the first east to west crossing of North America north of Mexico. More than two centuries later, using Mackenzie's journals, Max Finkelstein retraced Mackenzie's route. An accomplished raconteur, Max will describe the hardships and triumphs of his odyssey.



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# RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

At the executive meeting on February 10, 2020 the QFN board adopted the following risk management policy. Please read it carefully and bring any questions or concerns to the Annual Meeting section of our February 24 meeting.

## Quinte Field Naturalists Risk Management Policy

The Quinte Field Naturalists recognize the fact that inclement weather and/or emergency situations may affect a member's ability to participate in an event and/or meeting. The safety of QFN members is important, and thankfully inclement weather days are infrequent.

With a membership region as large as the QFN, it is almost impossible to predict weather patterns throughout the region. With this, **the QFN encourages and stresses that members participate only when they feel safe to do so.**

The QFN Board will determine if a meeting and/or event will be cancelled due to weather with at least 3 Board members making the decision prior to 4 pm on the day of the meeting. Once the decision has been made, every effort will be made to notify the membership via email and Facebook.

**It is the responsibility of each member to decide whether or not they attend an event/meeting, and to check their email for notification.**



*Because it can generate enough heat to melt the snow around it skunk cabbage is the first wildflower to appear in spring. Bears eat it when they emerge from hibernation. It has a diuretic effect which hastens the elimination of waste accumulated during the winter months.*



*Striped skunks may occasionally forage on warmer days in winter. About this time of year they begin a serious search for mates. Male skunks are polygamous and defend a harem against other males. In the late nineteenth century furriers marketed the pelts as "Alaska sable."*

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

## Volunteer as a Citizen Scientist

Learn how you can be a citizen scientist for the Bay of Quinte by volunteering as a Marsh Monitor.

Monday, March 9, 2020 - 7:00 p.m.  
Quinte Conservation, 2061 Highway #2



photo by Ian Dickinson

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata*

Marsh Monitors help us learn about the health of our wetlands by observing for birds and frogs.

Quinte area naturalist, Terry Sprague will explain **FrogWatch Ontario**, great for the kids due to its simplicity.

As well as, the more extensive **Marsh Monitoring Program** that includes both birds and frogs, great for the outdoors enthusiast.

**Also, volunteers are needed to monitor Ospreys and Eagles.**

For information on this evening,  
Terry Sprague at  
613-848-4549 or email [naturestuff.tours@gmail.com](mailto:naturestuff.tours@gmail.com)  
[www.naturestuff.net](http://www.naturestuff.net) or [www.bqrap.ca](http://www.bqrap.ca)

In partnership locally with Lower Trent Conservation and Quinte Conservation



# 2020 NATURE ON THE HILL DAY

by Penny Vance

On Monday, February 3rd, Denice Wilkins and I went to Ottawa to attend Nature Canada's second annual "Nature On The Hill Day" - a program to lobby members of parliament to do more for Nature. This year the theme was, "Make Room for Nature" and we were asking our elected officials to follow through on their commitments on protected areas. The first "ask" (that's a lobbyist term we learned!) was to encourage the federal government to fulfill commitments it had made through the UN Convention on Biological Diversity to protect 17% of Canada's land and fresh waters and 10% of marine areas by 2020 and move on to achieve the next targets of protecting 25% by 2025 and 30% by 2030. At this point, Canada has protected 14% of marine areas, higher than the minimum target of 10%, but is at only 12.5% of the commitment of 17% of land and fresh waters promised for 2020. The second ask was to make long term budget investments to reach these targets beginning with allocating \$934 million in the 2020 budget. Thirdly, we asked MPs to follow through on Canada's commitment, to play an active role at the UN this year to ensure adoption of 30% protection by 2030 as a global target for all countries.



***Denice and Penny met with Liberal MP John McKay (Riding: Guildwood Ontario)***

The event began on the Monday evening with a training session. There were 51 volunteers at the session preparing to meet 65 Members of Parliament from all of Canada's political parties, each of whom had agreed to meet Nature Canada representatives. The volunteers came from across Canada and were from NGOs such as CPAWS, The David Suzuki Foundation, Conservation Authorities and local organizations such as our own Quinte Field Naturalists, Prince Edward County Field Naturalists and the Ottawa Field Naturalists. The Nature Canada participants were put into groups of twos or threes for their visits with MPs.

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***Joined by Fenja Brodo of Ottawa Field Naturalists Penny and Denice met with Liberal MP Francesco Sorbara (Riding: Vaughan-Woodbridge, Ontario)***

Denice and I were assigned visits to three Ontario Liberal MPs. Our first meeting was with long time MP John McKay, from Scarborough-Guildwood, next we met with second time MP Francesco Sorbara for Vaughan-Woodbridge, and finally, brand new MP Ryan Turnbull, from Whitby. These meetings meant going through an airport type security check before going up to the MP's offices.

All the meetings were very positive with our best response coming from the new MP who



***With Ann Mackenzie, also of Ottawa Field Naturalists, Penny and Denice also met with Ryan Turnbull, Liberal MP from Whitby.***

At the training session we heard from Mandy Gull, Deputy Grand Chief of the Cree Nation Government in Northern Quebec who spoke about Indigenous-led Conservation, Graham Saul, Executive Director of Nature Canada, and Lisa Gue of the David Suzuki Foundation. Lisa and other staff gave us tips on how to approach our meetings with the MPs including some skits to show us how NOT to go about lobbying, as well as how-to suggestions.

Denice and I felt good about the whole event and might well wish to do it again next year. It was a great learning experience and a fun though at times nerve-wracking adventure in the halls of parliament! We hope our efforts made a difference and we are anxiously looking forward to hearing the upcoming federal budget!



Hello Everyone,

I would like to invite you to please consider attending a discussion about the future of the Hastings Prince Edward Land Trust (HPELT). This informal discussion is open to anyone who is interested. It will happen on **Saturday February 29th, 1:00 p.m until 3:00 p.m.** at the **Demorestville Town Hall** (in the heart of Demorestville, 2774 County Road 5).

The Agenda includes:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Brief History and Accomplishments
- Where is HPELT at this point in time
- What does HPELT need moving forward
- How might you help? Next steps. Thoughts. Feedback

For more information please do not hesitate to contact me by email or phone 613-399-1985. [Andymargetson2@gmail.com](mailto:Andymargetson2@gmail.com)

I hope to see you there.

Andy Margetson



Almost everyone thinks of pussy willows as a sign of spring. The soft furry hairs are there to protect the developing flowers from the cold. Pussy willows are dioecious meaning the male and female catkins grow on different plants. Gardeners prefer the male plant because the yellow pollen-bearing stamens make a better show. Pussy willow stems kept in water indoors will develop roots and can be planted. Be careful. Pussy willows grow quickly and will need to be pruned regularly.





On **Thursday, February 27** Elizabeth and George will be on **CJBQ's call-in show** to talk about birds and nature in general. **Tune in at 10 a.m.** Phone in with a question or comment. *CJBQ 800am*



The three pages .attached with this newsletter contain the QFN financial information. Please look over them carefully. We will not be discussing them in detail but there will be a chance to ask questions before the vote to accept or amend them.

You may wonder why we still work to raise money given the size of our bank balance at the end of 2019. In the budget note that we have have some major expenses just to allow us to exist – insurance, rental for use of the church facilities, speakers' honoraria plus some lesser expenses. To carry out our mandates to support nature education, conservation and research also requires funds for student sponsorships, contributions for purchase of local ecologically important lands, and many lesser projects such providing seed for Frink Education Centre bird feeders as well as smaller donations to organizations like Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre and the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre. Through your club membership and support for fund-raising projects you are taking a concrete step toward preserving the environment we depend on. Thank you.

*The Quinte Field Naturalists Association, an affiliate of Ontario Nature, is a non-profit organization sponsoring nature education, conservation and research. It was founded in 1949 and incorporated in 1990 and encompasses the counties of Hastings and Prince Edward. The Quinte Field Naturalists Association is legally entitled to hold real estate and accept benefits.*

*Quinte Field Naturalists meet on the fourth Monday of every month from September to March (except December), 7:00 pm, Sills Auditorium, Bridge Street United Church, 60 Bridge Street East, Belleville. In April we hold our annual dinner at an alternate time and location.*

*New members and guests are always welcome.*

*Bring a friend.*

<b>President</b> George Thomson 613-478-3205	<b>Past President</b> Wendy Turner	<b>Vice-President</b>
<b>Recording Secretary</b> Nancy Stevenson 613-779-9407	<b>Corresponding Secretary</b> Elizabeth Churcher 613-478-3205	
<b>Treasurer</b> Mike Shaw 613-967-1055	<b>Publicity/Environmental Officer</b> Denice Wilkins 613-478-5070	<b>Membership</b> John Blaney 613-962-9337
<b>Newsletter</b> John Blaney 613-962-9337	<b>Outings</b> John Lowry 613-962-5232	<b>Social Convener</b> Sharron Blaney 613-962-9337

Next Newsletter Deadline – March 15, 2020

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