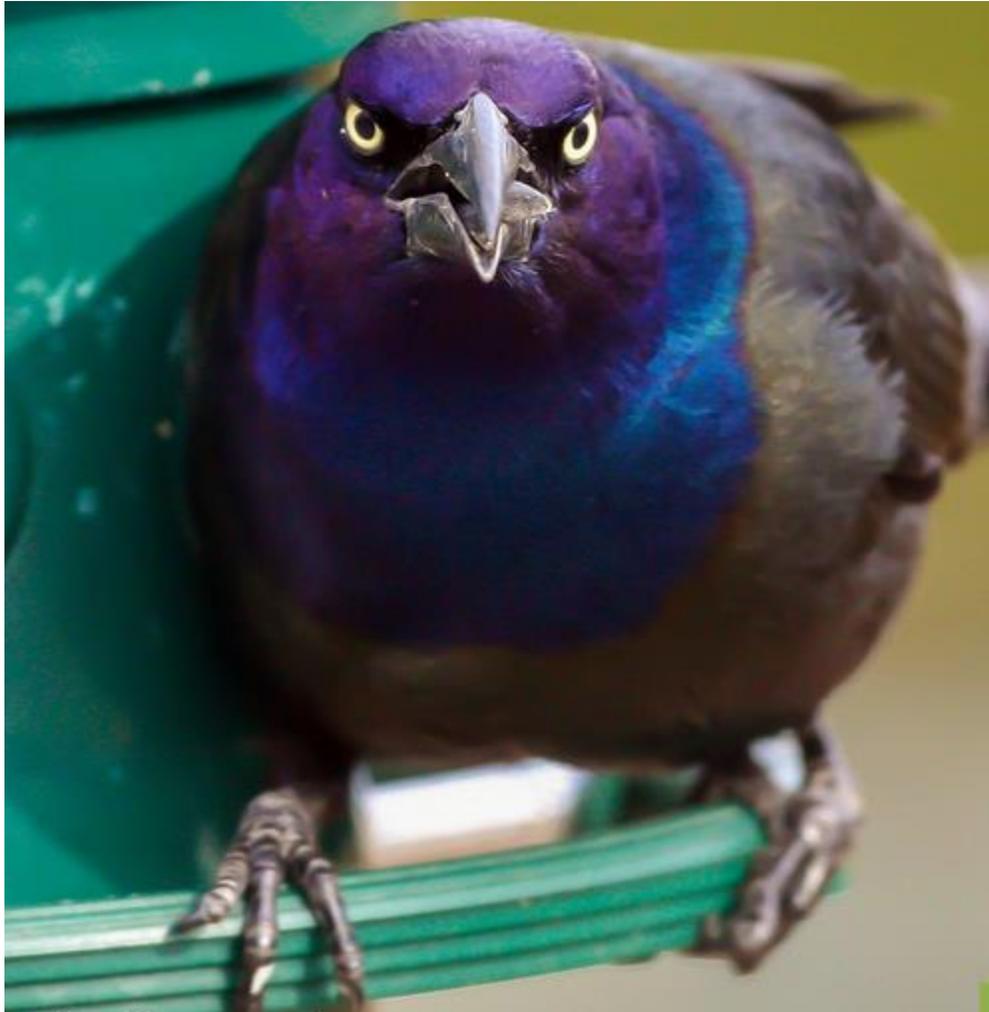


The Quinte Naturalist

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

April



Common Grackle

Photo by Kyle Blaney

Don't you dare forget our webinar. Monday, Apr. 26 at 7 pm.

Register here - https://www.ssji.ca/ssji_presents_qfn_webinar

CLUB NEWS

Executive Meeting

The executive had a Zoom meeting on March 24. There have been some changes on the board. Sharron Blaney resigned as social convenor but volunteered to be recording secretary. Catherine and Bernd Baier volunteered to coordinate outings when we can resume the program. Cathy Lake and John Lowry have joined the board as members at large. They will be our liaisons with Belleville's citizen advocacy group. We still need a president, vice-president and social convenor.

Treasurer Mike Shaw reported a bank balance of \$8423.81. This healthy amount is a result of their being no large projects requiring support and no speakers' honoraria or hall rental to pay.

Nancy Stevenson, membership secretary, indicated that we have 102 members included in 18 family memberships and 57 single memberships.

Denice requested permission to purchase materials for 25 turtle ICUs, some to be given to Sandy Pines Wildlife Centre for fund-raising. The executive granted the request.

We will soon have our own website. Complete meeting minutes will be posted there.

Nature Outings from Catherine and Bernd Baier

Unfortunately we are unable to organize group outings at this time but we encourage you to enjoy the warm spring weather by taking advantage of local nature areas. During a lockdown, outdoor exercise with household members is permitted.

The following links provide information on walking areas close to Belleville and Lennox and Addington County near Napanee. Please submit any information and photos of your own favourite hiking areas for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Things to do in L&A County – Naturally
Lennox & Addington
<https://naturallyla.ca/explore/>

Fall Hikes with Kids – Bay of Quinte
Tourism (even if it isn't fall)
<https://bayofquinte.ca/touism/fall-hikes-with-kids-bay-of-quinte/>



Virginia Spring Beauty at Massassauga Point - Photo by John Lowry in iNaturalist.

SIGHTINGS

Send your sightings to either quintefn@gmail.com or sharronjohnblaney@gmail.com.

On Nature Stuff <https://naturestuff.net> Terry Sprague lists local bird sightings weekly. He summarizes sightings by location so you can see where you are best able to see our birds returning in May. There are also beautiful photos of some of the week's sightings.

Phil Martin reported from their farm southwest of Marmora.

In our barn the ravens are back nesting for year 7 and sounds like the eggs have already hatched. It is nice to have them but do they ever make a mess and stink. Also when I go out on the tractor the male raven follows me. If I stay in a field, he will perch high in a tree watching me and then move on when I do. Last year the kestrel found the nest box I put up about 4 years ago and had a couple of young. Now they are back and we can watch them from our kitchen window. Also we were inspecting our raised garden and Lindy was saying where she should be putting the veggies etc. I told her that I yelled at Oliver, one of our dogs, to stay out of it, when we went over there was a small hole in one corner and believe it or not a rabbit had dug a hole and there are some babies in the fur lined hole. These gardens are only about 50 feet from our kitchen window by my outside wood furnace. There are geese and 2 loons on Crowe river at the back of the farm. The deer are so used to us they just watch as we pass by either on the tractor or the atv.



Tom Wheatley noticed this house finch nest in a hanging planter on his parent's porch in Foxboro. In Quinte house finches usually nest in locations such as planters and evergreens close to human habitations.

Peter Fuller reported on a rare bird in Prince Edward County.

A rare winter visitor to Eastern Ontario took the lockdown seriously and spent most of the winter at a feeder on County Rd 2 just north of Wellington. The Golden-crowned Sparrow is usually found along the west coast of North America although scattered sightings occur across the continent. This individual was first observed at the beginning of Dec 2020 and was seen almost daily until the end of Feb 2021 associating with a small group of White-throated Sparrows all of whom enjoyed cracked corn from a ground feeder and spent most days in the dense cover of lilacs and spruce trees. Reports on eBird for Eastern Ontario confirm that this was a rare visitor in our area. There are records of sightings from 1984 in Brighton and 2010 and 2012 in Ottawa.



You have to look very closely to see the golden crown on the bird Peter photographed because it is in its dull, non-breeding plumage. In its summer range in northern British Columbia and Alaska it shows its characteristic crown. Photo by Mason Maron in eBird

Gerry and Denise Doekes seem to live in a birder's paradise north of Marmora

March 22 & 23 we heard a Northern Saw-whet owl calling from the northwest side of East Twin Sister lake, 2 nights in a row, around 9:30pm.

March 26 we watched an adult Golden Eagle flying and soaring over Croft's Road around 9:00am.

April 13 we saw 2 Sandhill Cranes flying north over Twin Sister Lakes road.

Red-shouldered hawk calling and flying on territory for the last 3 weeks in the area of our house.

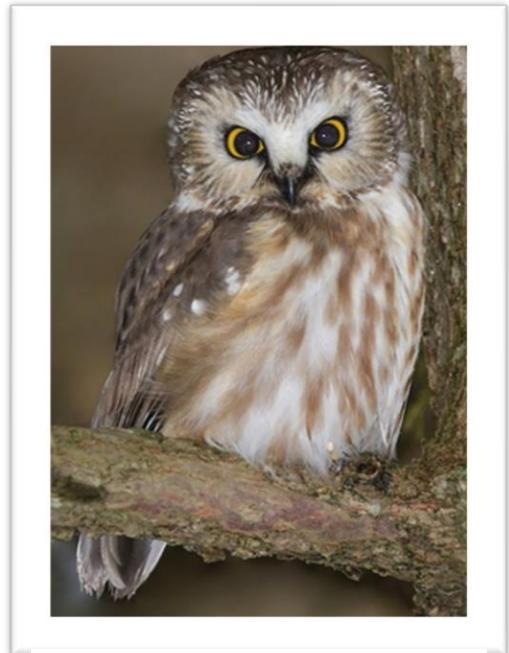
April 14 we saw 2 greater yellowlegs and one killdeer foraging around a pond edge along Vansickle rd.

I forgot to mention that 12 evening grosbeaks have been present for over a week across from Tim Hortons in Marmora and still there yesterday, We also saw and heard a Merlin calling and hanging around the trees by Tim Hortons parking area. Also, the past Saturday there was another flock of Evening Grosbeaks on

somebody's property along Station Rd. east of Marmora closer to the landfill site.



Twenty-five or thirty years ago you would not have found a sandhill crane nesting in our area. Now there are a few known nesting sites locally and probably several more that have not yet been found. Photo by David Gascoigne, Brant County, in eBird.



Perhaps because the banding program at PEPtBO has demonstrated that many of these tiny owls are migratory we tend to think of them as northern birds. In fact, in suitable habitat, they nest throughout the Great Lakes Basin and beyond. Photo by Zane Shantz, Bruce County, in eBird.

A Sign of Spring from Catherine Baier

Groundhogs are also known by the name woodchuck and are one of several animals whose name has Native American origins. Early colonists in New England reported that “wuchak” was a local Algonquin name for this animal. Others referred to them by the Algonquin names “ockqutchaun” and “wejack”. The settlers evidently found it easier to say woodchuck and this name stuck. Our resident groundhog is respectfully named Ms Wu and she is shown here enjoying he morning sunshine.



CITIZEN SCIENCE

You may have noticed that many of the pictures in this newsletter originated in either eBird or iNaturalist. They are probably the most popular citizen science projects. Such projects benefit both the user who has an online list of sightings and the researchers who use the data which they have no other way of acquiring.



John Lowry has decided to use iNaturalist for his wildflower pictures. If you can't identify a species iNaturalist uses AI to suggest a species name and this identification will be confirmed by experts. John found the bloodroot (left) at the Sidney Conservation Area on Airport Rd and the early buttercup (right) at Massassauga Point.



For Inaturalist you need a picture or audio recording if you want confirmation of your own identification. In eBird you don't need a picture although you will be asked for a picture or detailed written description for a posting of an uncommon species. Keith Gregoire often posts pictures in eBird. This time of year birds are wearing their brightest plumage so pictures are an added bonus. Keith took this picture of a swamp sparrow in Hanley Park which is threatened by development in Belleville's east end.

Jason King, who lives in Tweed, makes extensive use of iNaturalist. He has posted over 13,000 photos of species of all kinds. Here are two examples:



Northern Azure. Apr. 19, 2021 near Tweed. One of our earliest butterflies it overwinters as a chrysalis and can often be seen flitting about on a path in a woodland clearing.

Eastern garter snake. Apr. 14, 2021 Near Tweed. Ectotherms or cold-blooded animals such as snakes must rely on external sources such as sunlight to regulate their body temperatures. Endotherms like us rely on our metabolism to regulate body temperature and must eat more food more often.





Every 20 years in Ontario five organizations including Ontario Nature and Birds Canada organize an ambitious citizen science project requiring participation from hundreds of amateur naturalists. The entire province is divided into 10 kilometre square blocks where participants record the occurrence and breeding evidence for all bird species found within each block. Even if your knowledge of our birds doesn't extend beyond the facts that they fly and have feathers you can participate. The project lasts for 5 years from 2021 to 2025 so you have plenty of time to learn to identify birds. Organizers have produced a 1-hour video for beginning birders and atlasers. It provides basic information on equipment like binoculars and where to find information on identifying birds. For once, Google is not the answer. You will also learn how you can help with the atlas. Have a look.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=1704087263108105&ref=search>

Members' Recommend

This section is a chance for QFN members to suggest events, TV shows, internet offerings of interest.

Catherine Baier recommends a book

Blaze Island, written by Canadian author Catherine Bush who lives in eastern Ontario, is an entertaining work of fiction about close knit residents on a remote island off the shores of Newfoundland during a hurricane. It has been referred to as a thoughtful assessment of our predicament in the face of climate change.

Hanley Park Videos

Doug Knutson of Windswept Productions has produced 2 videos showing the ecological value of Hanley Park, the area in east Belleville threatened by development. It's impossible to view these and not understand why the area must be protected.

<https://vimeo.com/518682659> shows a winter bike ride.

<https://vimeo.com/529074715> the view from a drone

Several members have recommended a number of helpful and enjoyable online videos over the next few weeks.

From the South Shore Joint Initiative

The SSJI You Tube channel has several of their past presentations available. Cathy Lake found Amanda Tracey's presentation, *Invasive Species in the South Shore IBA*, particularly important. https://www.ssji.ca/ssji_presents.

From The Land Between

This organization's area of interest includes the land north of a line stretching from Marmora to Madoc to Tweed in Hastings County. They are in the midst of a series of videos teaching beginning birders how to identify our local birds.

<https://www.thelandbetween.ca/event/13-days-of-bird-identification-with-tlb-7/>

- April 27 6:30-7:30 Birds of Prey
- April 29 6:30-7:30 Thick-billed birds (corvids, woodpeckers...)
- Tuesday May 4th 6:30-7:30 Insectivores (Cuckoos, Shrikes, Vireos...)
- May 6th 6:30-7:30 Songbirds (chickadees, titmice....)
- May 11th 6:30-7:30 Large Songbirds (mockingbirds, thrushes...)
- May 13th 6:30-7:30 Finches
- May 18th 6:30-7:30 Warblers!!!

The Speaker Series Sponsored by the Friends of the Salmon River and the Friends of the Napanee River

This series continues on Tuesday, May 18, 7-8 pm. Olivia Hughes, Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan's Stormwater Project Coordinator, presents "*Springtime Gardens: Controlling stormwater runoff on your property*".

Past presentations are also available on the website. <https://www.friendsofsalmonriver.ca/>



Small white violet posted by Jason King in iNaturalist on April 24. Like other violets this common perennial takes no chances with reproduction. The flower shown here is probably pollinated by bees but produces few, if any, seeds. Later inconspicuous self-pollinating flowers will appear at ground level. They do produce seeds. In addition, the plant sends out runners which root to produce new plants.

John Lowry Recommends This Presentation from NCC

Celebrating Migration – Return of Spring Birds to Canada’s Flyways

Thursday, April 29, 2021
1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Eastern Time

See the website for details and to register.

https://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/what-you-can-do/events/naturetalks/webinars/spring-migration.html?utm_campaign=NAT_NATURETALKS&utm_source=eblast&utm_medium=email



Finally, PEPTBO never fails to present a Birding Festival

MAY IS BIRDING MONTH

Join PEPTBO's Virtual Spring Birding Festival
for information and to register go to:
peptbo.ca/sbf

May 5, 7 pm Terry Sprague:
"Leave it Natural and They will Come"

May 8, noon Cheryl Chapman:
"All About the Bird Observatory"

May 19, 7 pm Julia Zarankin:
"Birding: Passion to Passion"

**May 20, 10 am Bee Day: Julie White,
Long Point Honey Co.**
"What goes On in the Beehive"

GET OUT! KIDS' CLUB
Free Nature Fun to download

- Bird Behavior Scavenger Hunt
- Top 5 Nature Challenge for Spring

Register to get **The Family Birding Kit**

Check out the PEC Library Provincial Park Adventure Kit: Birding Expedition

Partner Activities

April 26, 7 pm Kyle Blaney "Beauty Close to Home"

May 15, 1030 AM Join PEC Libraries for a virtual Bird Adventure story time

May 25, 7 pm Kari Gunson "How to Use iNaturalist"

PRINCE EDWARD POINT
BIRD
OBSERVATORY

peptbo.ca

naturehood
A NATURE CANADA SOCIETY
PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY

News

Tom Wheatley Reports - The look of a drive through Foxboro will be changing soon. Many of the large Ash trees that line the street are dying, and the City of Belleville has placed Orange dots on their trunks in preparation for cutting them down. Literally an "Ash's to Ashes" scenario that will change the tree-scape of the village.

A Large Development is Causing Concern in Prince Edward County

Quinte's Isle is a large campark on Salmon Point Road near Sandbanks Provincial Park. County council has approved a plan to add 337 sites to the existing 619 sites. At the meeting which approved the expansions local groups and citizens made 26 presentations, all against the plan. Concerns included the loss of natural heritage features and farmland and the addition to already serious summer traffic problems. As one presenter pointed out this will give Quinte's Isle a population in the summer equaling that of the village of Wellington.

I think that this type of development makes the South Shore Joint Initiative's work to preserve this natural area even more significant. Please support SSJI.

How about Some Good News?



Wisdom, a 70-year-old Laysan albatross returned to the Midway Atoll National Refuge over 2,000 kilometres northwest of Honolulu last November. On February 1 possibly her 39th offspring hatched. Wisdom was banded in 1956 as an adult bird. In her life Wisdom has flown millions of kilometres. A single flight by Wisdom or her mate to forage for food for their

chick may be over 1,000 kilometres. (Photo from Wikipedia).



Photo from Wisdom from Wikipedia

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.

President George Thomson 613-478-3205	Past President Wendy Turner	Vice-President Vacant
Recording Secretary Sharron Blaney 613-962-9337		Corresponding Secretary Elizabeth Churcher 613-478-3205
Treasurer Mike Shaw 613-967-1055	Publicity/Environmental Officer Denice Wilkins 613-478-5070	Membership Nancy Stevenson 613-779-9407
Newsletter John Blaney 613-962-9337	Outings Catherine and Bernd Baier 613-478-3319	Social Convener Vacant

Next Newsletter Deadline –April 15, 2020

Please send submissions to sharronjohnblaney@gmail.com