



The Orchid

Bulletin of the Peterborough Field Naturalists

"Know ♦ Appreciate ♦ Conserve Nature In All Its Forms"

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Regular monthly meetings are held the 2nd Wed. of the month in the downstairs auditorium of the Peterborough Public Library at 345 Aylmer Street N.

COMING EVENTS

<p>Friday January 20th 5:30 pm Baker's Hill Centre</p>	<p>72nd PFN Annual General Meeting Join us for the PFN's Annual General Meeting – a tradition you won't want to miss. Keep up to date on club business, elect the next executive, enter the raffle for fabulous prizes, enjoy a delicious meal and stay for an entertaining presentation. Social hour begins at 5:30, supper starts at 6:00, meeting at 7:00, raffle at 7:30 and speaker beginning at 8:00pm. To reserve your tickets, call Don & Emily Pettypiece at 750-1145, or purchase them at the December meeting. See pages 5 and 6 for more information.</p>
<p>Saturday February 11th 1:00 p.m.</p>	<p>PFN Outing: "Winter Birds Along the Otonabee" This half day outing, led by Martin Parker, will focus on the waterfowl which overwinter on the open waters of the Otonabee River and Little Lake during the winter months. The variety and number of birds depends on the amount of open water and ice. The outing will also visit the bird feeding stations operated by the Peterborough Field Naturalists at Beavermead Park. Meet in the north parking lot at the Peterborough Zoo, Water Street North at 1:00 p.m. Dress according to the weather forecast for the day of the outing. Bring your binoculars.</p>
<p>Wednesday February 12th 7:30 p.m. Ptbo Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: "What Arctic Indigenous Peoples Can Teach Two Ecologists" Speakers: Jennie Knopp and Kaitlin Breton-Honeyman (Trent University) Kaitlin and Jennie, PhD candidates at Trent University, have been studying beluga and arctic char ecology in the Canadian Arctic using a mixed methods approach. This approach draws on both biological science and Indigenous knowledge to inform understandings of these species. Kaitlin has been working in Nunavik (Arctic region of Quebec) studying beluga habitat ecology and Jennie has been working with the Inuvialuit (Arctic Region of Northwest Territories) on community-based monitoring of char. They will discuss how they have brought together these two knowledges and in particular what they have learned from the people who live connected to these species.</p>

COMING EVENTS continued

<p>Sunday February 26th 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p>PFN Outing: "Winter Tracking Workshop" Following the success of an outing last year, Craig Brant of Camp Kawartha has kindly agreed to lead another tracking workshop. This time it will be held from 9 am to noon at the Trent University Wildlife Area. Meet at the Environment Centre on Pioneer Road and come warmly dressed and ready for walking through snow. Accompanied children will be welcome. We will be able to retreat to the centre for warm drinks if the going gets too cold!</p>
<p>Wednesday March 14th 7:30 p.m. Ptbo Library</p>	<p>PFN Monthly Meeting: Ecology and Conservation in Tropical Mexico Ken Towle will provide us with an introduction to the ecosystems and wildlife of tropical Mexico, including a discussion of traditional uses, conservation concerns such as tourism, and some of the conservation and restoration work that has been underway.</p>
<p>March 25th</p>	<p>PFN Outing: "Owl Woods, Amhurst Island" Take the chance to join the Kingston Field Naturalists on a visit to Owl Woods, a spot renowned for the number and variety of owls that can take shelter in late winter. It will mean an early start from Peterborough, around 6 a.m. Look out for further details in the next edition of the Orchid.</p>

JUNIOR FIELD NATURALISTS

Cross-country skiing and/or snowshoeing at Camp Kawartha.

Sunday, January 29th & Sunday, February 26th , 1:45 to 3:45 p.m.

We will hit the trails or woods check out the winter scene. No snow? Snow worries. Come dressed to be outside and active anyway! Equipment can be provided unless your sizing needs to be really small or really big. I will be happy to see returning faces as well as any new members and their families. See you then!...Neil

Directions: Camp Kawartha is 8 kilometres along Birchview Rd. (off of Hwy 28North). I will meet you in the main parking lot.



ORCHID SUBMISSIONS WANTED

Deadline for submissions for the March issue: Friday, February 24th, 2012

Please send all submissions to: **Rebecca Zeran, PFN, PO Box 1532, Peterborough, ON, K9J 7H7** or via e-mail to: rebecca.zeran@mail.mcgill.ca

Other Events of Interest

January 25 th	The Peterborough Horticultural Society's next meeting is on Wednesday, January 25 th at the Peterborough Library, 345 Aylmer Street N. Our guest speaker will be Joe and Hazel Cook, owners of Blossom Hill Nursery, who specialize in growing both peonies and delphiniums. This evening's topic will be guiding us on how to grow delphiniums. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and refreshments. Meeting starts at 7:30 PM. All welcome.
February 22 nd	The Peterborough Horticultural Society will meet on February 22 nd , 7:30 pm at the Peterborough Public Library, guest speaker Kerry Hackett's topic is "Eating Your Weedies".
March 17-18	<p>Presqu'île Waterfowl Viewing Weekend - March 17-18/2012, 10am to 4pm</p> <p>Presqu'île will once again be hosting a waterfowl viewing weekend, where nature enthusiasts can come and appreciate one of the great spectacles on earth - the return of migrating waterfowl to their staging areas along the lower Great Lakes. Presqu'île is well situated to experience this phenomenon with close viewing and a good variety of species. Seeing 20 different species of waterfowl in a day is not unusual and 25+ species are usually tallied during the season. During viewing weekend, volunteers with scopes are situated at key areas to help visitors find and ID the different species.</p> <p>The Lighthouse Centre is the focal point for your visit. Ducky displays and children's activities are showcased and the Friends are there with hot drinks and snacks, and a BBQ from 11am onwards. The Friends' Gift Store is also open 10am to 4pm. A Bushnell representative will be on hand to answer your questions and show you the latest in optical equipment.</p> <p>If you want to come learn about ducks this is a great opportunity. If you are interested in coming out and helping with duck ID or in the Visitor Centre with the children's activities I would be more than happy to hear from you. For more information on the event or on volunteering please contact David or Lisa at 613 475-4324 ext 225 or david.bree@ontario.ca.</p>
March 28 th	The Peterborough Horticultural Society will meet on March 28 th , 7:30 pm at the Mark Street United Church, 90 Hunter St. East. Guest speaker, Joyce Higgs, will be talking about "Square Foot Gardening".

Are you interesting in becoming more involved in the PFN?

The terms of several members of the Board expire at this AGM. If you have an interest in joining Board, or becoming involved in some other way, please let me, or any other member of the Board, know as soon as possible. The Board meets once a month with the exception of July and August. Meetings are held in the evening of the first Wednesday of the month. We try to get one or two new people involved each year to ensure we don't get too set in our ways. New people bring in new ideas, which is important if the club is to continue to appeal to the public. Think about it. I can be contacted at 705-742-1524 or johnbottomley@sympatico.ca. Contact details for other members of the Board can be found in the Orchid.

The Which is Which?

- by June Hitchcox, courtesy of *The Apsley Voice* (www.apsleyvoice.com)

What kind of Woodpecker is it? – Downy or Hairy? How can we tell which is which? Without seeing them side-by-side, it is difficult. The Downy is sparrow-sized, 6 ¾” long; the Hairy is Robin-sized, 9 ¼” long. They come from a common ancestor so look much the same. However, their bills tell the tale: the Hairy’s chisel-like bill is about as long as its head while the Downy has a very short, stubby, pointed bill. Males of both species have a patch of red at the back of the head. These Woodpeckers are the only ones with white backs. The Hairy gets its name from these white feathers which loosely fall over the black borders, faintly making them appear as hair. Why don’t Woodpeckers get headaches when they whack at tree trunks to find bugs under the bark? It is because they have shock-absorbing bones in their heads! They eat so many harmful bugs, they are of great economic value to our world – wood-boring ants, tent caterpillars, moth larvae in Cattail Marshes, beetles. At your feeders, they like suet, seeds including sunflower, berries, cracked pecans and corn, cheese, apple, banana, coconut. See if you are able to tell which Woodpecker is which!

Unusual Sightings

- by June Hitchcox, courtesy of *The Apsley Voice* (www.apsleyvoice.com)

This year we have had a warm winter, at least so far – much like the one in 1983. However, the Peterborough Naturalists’ “Christmas Bird Count” held January 2 at the Petroglyphs recorded only 29 species, down from an average of 33 and had large declines in the numbers within those species. The day of the C.B.C. had lots of snow and wind and fewer bird feeders out, which Tony Bigg thought might account, to some extent, for the low numbers. Since then, other interesting species have been sighted in the Peterborough area. Due to open water: Green-winged Teal, Pintail, Belted Kingfisher plus Glaucous, Iceland, Ring-billed and Herring Gulls. Tony spotted a Swamp Sparrow. Red-bellied Woodpeckers have been increasing over the last few years – they have discovered the joy of bird feeders. One was sighted - you may be lucky so keep your eyes open. Meanwhile, in the Hamilton area, on December 16, very unusual sightings for that time of year: Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Black-throated Gray, Black-throated Green Warblers, Wilson’s and Yellow-rumped Warblers, Turkey Vulture, Killdeer and more. Just because you can’t believe what your eyes are seeing, do look in your bird book and you may find that you are correct!

New Members

*Kelly and Joshua Broadway
Avner Gilaad
Brian Ling and Jo Harris*

Welcome!

Call for Donations for the PFN’s AGM Bucket Draw

Each year at our Annual General Meeting we hold a bucket draw for items generously donated by PFN members and local businesses. Ticket sales for the draw generate much needed revenue for the club. The success of the AGM depends on the participation of our club members. Please join us for the night and, if you can, bring in an item to donate to our draw.

Join us for the Peterborough Field Naturalists Annual General Meeting!

Open to both members and non-members alike, the AGM features a banquet dinner, a keynote speaker, a silent auction and a bucket draw. A number of PFN publications will also be on sale.



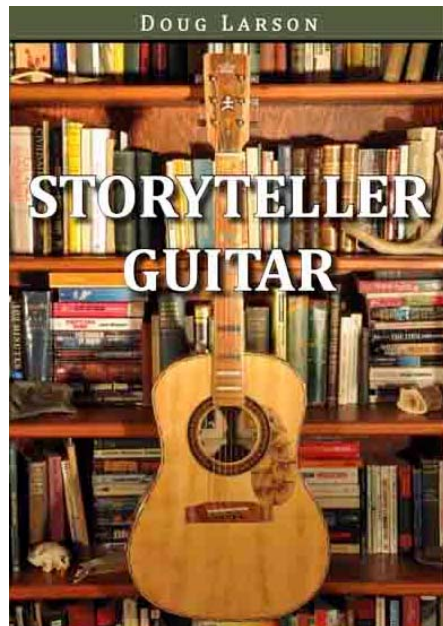
Friday, January 20th, 2012

**Baker's Hill Centre,
555 Parkhill Road East**

**Key Note Speaker:
Doug Larson
*"Storyteller Guitar"***

**\$27.50 per person
\$55 per couple**

**Doors open at 5:30 p.m.
Dinner starts at 6:00 p.m.**



Reservations are required and must be received by January 11th, 2012. To reserve tickets, please contact Don or Emily at (705) 750-1145 or donem.pettypiece@bell.net

Come on out to the PFN's Annual General Meeting on January 20th 2012!

Keynote Speaker: Doug Larson, "Storyteller Guitar"

Doug Larson is an award-winning scientist, author, lecturer, instrument maker, and musician. Now an emeritus professor at the University of Guelph, he spends his time lecturing about the union of art and science and uses the Storyteller Guitar as the touchstone to this philosophy. His newest book called Storyteller Guitar (available at fine bookstores across Canada) tells the stories about a guitar that took 2.5 billion years, six continents, thirty-five businesses, and sixty-eight people to build. In the twenty chapters of the book Doug takes the reader not only on a tour of guitar building, but also on a trip through the unified stories of art, science, and history contained in the pieces that he use to make the instrument. Written in a conversational style, the book invites musicians, scientists, and historians to view every product of human creativity with a sense of joy, wonder, and curiosity. The songs that Doug has written also deal with the same material but it all sounds like rock and roll to him! Doug gives public presentations across southern Ontario and beyond. The presentations include stories, songs, and visual material collected during the writing of the book. Audience members usually leave the shows without being able to separate the art from the science from the history from the music. Exactly! For more information see: www.storytelliguitar.com.

Silent Auction at the AGM

Local artist Kelly Dodge has donated another beautiful piece of art to the PFN this year! To find out more about Kelly and her artwork visit: www.kellydodgeart.com



PFN Trip to Niagara Falls and Area

- by Tony Bigg, Trip Leader

On December 4, 2011 a group of ten participants made the trip down to Niagara with the primary aim of seeing the many gulls on the river. We left Peterborough at 6 a.m. and making a brief stop in Burlington we headed straight down to Queenston and then Niagara-on-the-Lake. We hoped that the report from the previous day on the demise of the Razorbill, that had been around for three weeks at the mouth of the river would prove false. However the bird was never seen again. We did see Horned Grebe, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, American Coot, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Mallard, and American Black Duck in the river. We started our gull list with the four most common, Ring-billed, Herring Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, and Great Black-backed Gull. On the way to our next stop at the Adam Beck Hydroelectric Power Station we stopped briefly for a look at some Cedar Waxwings, a pair of very accommodating Tufted Titmice, a Golden-crowned Kinglet, and a White-throated Sparrow. Robins were numerous in the area also. At Adam Beck we had our first challenge with gull identification finding Iceland Gull, Glaucous Gull, and Thayer's Gull. The best bird, a lifer for me and most in the group, was a Pomarine Jaeger. These birds are normally seen only at sea or on the larger lakes. It was very unusual for one to wander up a river and allow us to watch from relatively close up.

From there we headed upriver to the Control Dam above the falls. Here we were able to see Lesser Black-backed Gull and a gull that fitted California Gull in all aspects except the colour of its legs. The experts, Ron Pittaway, and Jean Iron decided it was a hybrid of some sort. Strangely for Harlequin Ducks a pair was seen clearly by everyone sitting on the control dam. A little further down river among the rocks just above the Falls we added an American Wigeon, and a Purple Sandpiper sitting on its usual rock amongst the rapids.

At this point we heard that the Black-legged Kittiwake had been seen at the Whirlpool, and that the Franklin's Gull was still around Adam Beck. Going back down river we found the Kittiwake immediately flying below us at the lookout point - a beautiful bird. Back down at Adam Beck were told that the Franklin's Gull was roosting on rocks just south of the station. A couple of hundred meters walk upstream took us to a spot where we could look down with our telescopes to see the bird. We did add a Little Gull at our second stop at Adam Beck. In all we saw 46 species, but the quality of the 11 gulls, the Harlequin Ducks, and Pomarine Jaeger made it a trip to remember.

Bird list:

Common Loon, Horned Grebe, Canada Goose, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Greater Scaup, Harlequin Duck, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Bufflehead, Common Goldeneye, Hooded Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Red-tailed Hawk, American Coot, Purple Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Franklin's Gull, Little Gull, Bonaparte's Gull, Ring-billed Gull, Herring Gull, Thayer's Gull, Iceland Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Glaucous Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Black-legged Kittiwake, Rock Pigeon, Mourning Dove, Downy Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, American Robin, European Starling, Cedar Waxwing, White-throated Sparrow, and House Sparrow.

Christmas Bird Counts

-by Tony Bigg

Christmas Bird Counts are run annually between December 14th and January 3rd. The area is within a circle of 15 miles diameter. The count was started by the American Audubon Society 112 years ago and now covers many countries within North and South America, and Asia. Within Canada we report results to Bird Studies Canada.

The **60th Peterborough Christmas Bird Count** was held on Sunday, December 19, 2011. It is centered on the junction of Chemong Rd and Sunset Blvd. Twenty-eight participants took part. A second highest total of 58 species (average 54) and record high 15,005 individuals were counted. We had a record number of individuals of several common birds. The high numbers were no doubt due to the warmer temperatures, and abundant food crop in the area. Of particular interest were the return of a Wilson's Snipe (found further down the same small it was seen in last year) and a a rare winter Chipping Sparrow. Also of note was a Yellow-rumped Warbler, our first warbler since 1981.

Record highs and ties:

	New Record	Old Record		New Record	Old Record
American Wigeon	1	(1)	American Crow	691	(535)
Cooper's Hawk	6	(5)	American Robin	750	(495)
Wilson's Snipe	1	(1)	Cedar Waxwing	737	(417)
Ring-billed Gull	306	(284)	Common Starling	3400	(2553)
Eastern Screech Owl	2	(1)	Dark-eyed Junco	370	(309)
Red-bellied Woodpecker	7	(2)	Red-winged Blackbird	13	(5)

Other birds seen were:

Great Blue Heron 1, Canada Goose 1935, Mallard 806, Common Goldeneye 42, Bufflehead 3, Hooded Merganser 4, Common Merganser 6, Northern Harrier 1, Sharp-shinned Hawk 2, Goshawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 47, American Kestrel 3, Merlin 1, Ruffed Grouse 6, Wild Turkey 169, Herring Gull 221, Glaucous Gull 1, Great Black-backed Gull 2, Rock Pigeon 1402, Mourning Dove 313, Great Horned Owl 7, Belted Kingfisher 2, Downy Woodpecker 42, Hairy Woodpecker 29, Pileated Woodpecker 5, Blue Jay 302, Common Raven 1, Black-backed Chickadee 1746, Red-breasted Nuthatch 23, White-breasted Nuthatch 58, Brown Creeper 4, Golden-crowned Kinglet 4, Northern Shrike 13, Northern Cardinal 53, American Tree Sparrow 162, Chipping Sparrow 1, Song Sparrow 1, White-throated Sparrow 3, Snow Bunting 2, Purple Finch 2, House Finch 36, Pine Siskin 151, American Goldfinch 870, House Sparrow 228.

The **26th Petroglyphs Christmas Bird Count** was held on Monday, January 2nd in blustery winds with heavy snow squalls. 22 participants found 29 species, below our average of 33. The area includes most of Stony Lake, Apsley and across to Lasswade. No new high counts were obtained, but one all time low of 21 was counted for Blue Jays (our ten year average is 305). Unfortunately it was the second consecutive year we missed the Gray Jays.

Of note were:

- 40 Bohemian Waxwings in one flock
- 6 Bald Eagles - 4 adults and 2 1st year birds
- 2 Mourning Doves - the lowest since they moved north permanently into the area in 1995
- 21 Blue Jays - Lowest ever
- 514 Black-capped Chickadees - the lowest since 1990

21 White-breasted Nuthatches - the second lowest ever

Other birds seen were:

Ruffed Grouse 12, Wild Turkey 43, Herring Gull 1, Rock Pigeon 49, Barred Owl 1, Downy Woodpecker 11, Hairy Woodpecker 28, Pileated Woodpecker 5, Blue Jay 21, American Crow 9, Common Raven 138, Red-breasted Nuthatch 35, Brown Creeper 3, Golden-crowned Kinglet 34, Bohemian Waxwing 40, Northern Shrike 2, Common Starling 49, American Tree Sparrow 8, Dark-eyed Junco 4, Purple Finch 1, Red Crossbill 32, White-winged Crossbill 35, Common Redpoll, 1, Pine Siskin 167, American Goldfinch 428

PFN Books for Sale

The Peterborough Field Naturalists have published a number of books on the flora and fauna of the region over the past three decades. There is still of small supply of these publications in stock and along with the newly published 'Nature in the Kawarthas' will be available for purchase at the December and January meetings of the PFN. The stock consists of the following PFN publications:

- *Our Heritage of Birds: Peterborough County in the Kawarthas* by Doug Sadler. This was published in 1983. It is a detailed summary of the status of the birds of the county. Only six copies remain.
- *The Mammals of Peterborough County* by Geoff Carpentier, published in 1987. This book is a summary of the status of the mammals of Peterborough County. It is the finest book on the mammals of any county in the province.
- *Peterborough - Woodlots, Water, Wildlife and Wilderness - A Brief Guide to Areas of Special Interest in the Peterborough area.* It was published in the 1970's and was the first book published by the PFN. Seven copies remain.

The club also has a stock of *Birds of Cottage Country* by William Mansel, published in 1985. This is not a PFN publication and is an account of the author's experience with birds in Haliburton, Muskoka, Parry Sound and Algonquin Park. It contains a number of interesting antidotes on the birds of central Ontario.

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Member at Large	Sean Smith	Seansmith64@hotmail.com	875-6178

Other Volunteers		
Anne Elliot	Publicity	
Orchid Diary	Tony Bigg	652-7541
Orchid Mailout	Bob Quinn	



A Call Down the Path: Trail Marker Trees in Ontario

-by Paul O'Hara, originally published in the Field Botanists of Ontario newsletter (Fall 2011, Vol 23(3)), reprinted with permission of author

It was a couple of years ago. I forget what I was searching for now. Something tree-related - dreams of discovering more grainy black and white shots of loggers enveloped in Southern Ontario old growth. I was scanning the Niagara Falls online digital library when I saw a photograph that has been burned into my brain to this day. It was labeled, "The Old Indian Trail - Marker Tree, Townline Rd. (at Thorold - Stamford)".

Go check it out. It shows a mature, roadside White Elm (*Ulmus americana*) on the Haldimand Clay Plain near Thorold with its side branches pulled down, the trunk and main branches drawing the shape of an 'M', the lateral branches forming the crown. Aboriginals had purposefully modified the tree at one time - early to mid 1800s, I would guess - to point along an ancient footpath. The tree was well known in the community, ravaged by Dutch Elm Disease in the early 70s, but saved as a snag until a windstorm brought it down December 8, 1982.

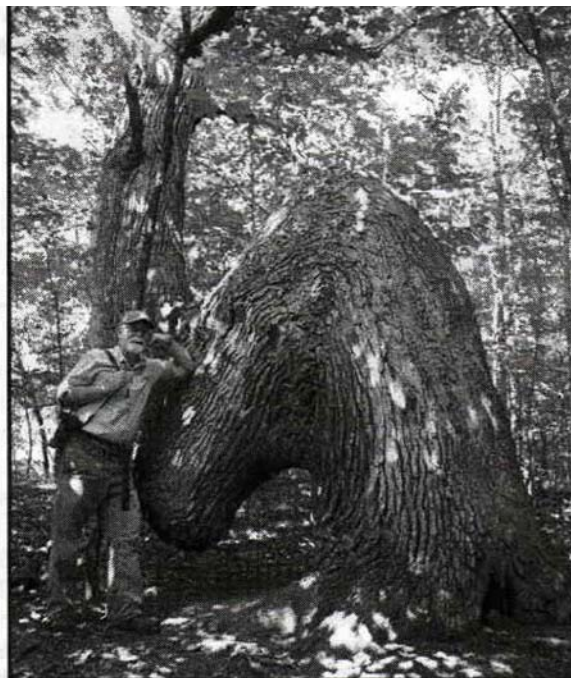
Wow, I thought, dumbfounded and flooded with questions. Where do I find out more about Indian trail marker trees? Are there more photos of tee markers I could find? Are there marker trees standing on the landscape of Southern Ontario today?

My first couple of questions would be answered with a little more surfing. I came across two links about trail marker trees, both from the United States. The first one is run by the Mountain Stewards (mountainstewards.org) of the Southern Appalachians, the second, a link to the Great Lakes Trail Marker Tree Society (greatlakestrailtreesociety.org) run by artist and trail marker tree researcher, Dennis Downes* from Illinois. Both sites show numerous photos of trail marker trees standing in the US today, but most of them didn't look like the Old Indian Trail Marker Tree in Thorold. Most were modified to

point in one direction and, not surprisingly in the US, most of them were oak.

Downes' site dug deeper into the background on how marker trees were formed and provided tips on what constitutes a true trail marker tree (apparently, there is some debate over what constitutes a true marker as there are a lot of bad examples out there - folks calling any old misshapen tree a trail marker.). True markers were modified near the ground. A sapling was bent over and its leader was fled down with rawhide, grapevine or secured with heavy rocks. The lateral branch pointing directly upwards was retained while the rest were removed. Over time the tree settled into the bend, the rawhide was removed or withered away, and a 'nose' was often left to point the way. As the tree grew, the diameter of the main trunk remained larger than the lateral branch forming the crown. Other trees, like the branches on the Thorold marker, were just pulled down and secured. Either way, marker trees were meant to look very purposeful, distinguishing them from naturally bent trees.

I learned that marker trees were used by



The 'Mother of All Markers' in Kingsville near Point Pelee. Gerry Waldron and a White Oak marker pointing west along a trail that is documented on a map drawn by crown surveyor Patrick McNiff in the 1790's. There is little doubt this magical tree was marked by Aboriginals sometime in the 18th century - Paul O'Hara (PO)

Aboriginals to point to all kinds of things: villages and camps, water sources and river fords, or to mark boundaries between Aboriginal tribes. It is thought that the practice of marking trees was taught to the first Europeans, and it is plausible that they and not the Aboriginals formed some of the markers remaining on today's landscape. Apparently, trail marker trees were common in pre-settlement times, most now lost to habitat destruction and the practice of removing ill-formed trees in woodlots.

My quest to find marker trees in Southern Ontario led me to spend a winter revisiting my old haunts in Hamilton, Halton and Niagara Regions to no avail. It was only when I started asking friends and fellow botanists that I started to get somewhere. None of them really knew about marker trees before. I just shared what little I had discovered and for some, a little light bulb went on above their heads as they recounted seeing a similar looking tree at such and such place. Some of the leads were dead ends, but some led me to the most magical trees I have ever seen.

A friend told me about seeing markers at her partner's cottage in the Kawarthas. Another told me about a tree in a Caledonia hedgerow. I learned of a grafted, double-trunked Sugar Maple that stood in Binbrook along the Welland River, believed to be a boundary marker between Iroquoian tribes (that is, until some kids started a fire under it 10 years ago and burnt it to the ground). This past summer, my friend and tree colleague, Gerry Waldron, showed me a couple of amazing marker trees in Windsor-Essex (see photos). One of them is the most impressive tree I have seen (online or in person) to this day. And last fall I stumbled across a couple of Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) markers less than 100 m apart in north Burlington pointing in the same direction along a path from the Niagara Escarpment to Lake Ontario - the only marker trees I have discovered on my own thus far.

Perhaps early colonists to Southern Ontario modified the smaller trees, but it is thought that, because of the bends, the growth on marker trees is slow and the trees are older than they look.

What is clear is that marker trees exist in Southern Ontario, and marking trees was an ingenious practice employed by the Anishinabe (Ojibway) and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Peoples of Southern Ontario. There is something so beautiful, sophisticated, and poetic about trail marker trees. It is incredible to think in this age of frenzied, electronic communication, that living, natural messages so simple and practical are still standing on the landscape today - a centuries old tap on the shoulder pointing us the way home. Reaching back to a time before the car, before roads and traffic lights, when sticking to the forest trail was crucial to survival, and a wrong turn could spell danger or death. For these reasons, I would argue that our oldest trail marker trees are the most historically important trees in Ontario today.

I am continuing my search to find and document more trees, seeing it as a project with a 10 or 20-year horizon. Yes, researching and walking old Aboriginal trails is helpful, but again, I have found the best way to find out more about these special trees is just to ask around. Therefore, I am appealing to the FBO membership: Do you know of a trail marker tree where you live? In your wanderings, do you remember seeing trees like these? Do you know of a marker tree that once stood where you live, a document describing it, or someone who may know of a marker tree in your area? If so, I would be very pleased to talk to you by phone or email, please and thank you.

I just learned of a trail marker tree that was chopped down this year, unknowingly, by a property owner along the shoreline of Lake Erie at Port Dover. Once dead, or removed, we lose their untold stories, stories that tell us about who we are and where we come from. Stories we can share with future generations about this very special land, and the incredible people that walked and marked its forest paths

Paul O'Hara, blueoak@sympatico.ca, (905) 540-9963

* Dennis Downes' new book Native American Trail Marker Trees: Marking Paths Through the Wilderness is available from the Great Lakes Trail Marker Tree Society at www.greatlakestrailtreesociety.org. It is the first comprehensive book on trail marker trees ever published.



PETERBOROUGH FIELD NATURALISTS

www.peterboroughnature.org

membership application form

Memberships may be obtained by mailing completed form and cheque to Peterborough Field Naturalists PO Box 1532, Peterborough, ON K9J 7H7

CONTACT

Name (s):		Home Tel:	
		Work Tel:	
Address:		Receive Orchid by:	<input type="radio"/> snail mail <input type="radio"/> e-mail <input type="radio"/> both please
		Email(s):	

MEMBERSHIP TYPE & FEE SCHEDULE

Please make cheques payable to *Peterborough Field Naturalists*

1. Single Adult \$25 2. Single Student \$15 3. Single Child* (age 5-12) \$10
 4. Family (couple or family with children*) \$30

*Please give the name(s) and age(s) of the children you wish to be enrolled in the PFN Junior Naturalists

Name	Age*	Name	Age*

MAIN INTERESTS

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Birds | <input type="radio"/> Butterflies/insects | <input type="radio"/> Botany (Wildflowers/trees/shrubs) |
| <input type="radio"/> Astronomy | <input type="radio"/> Aquatic Life | <input type="radio"/> Geology <input type="radio"/> Field Trips |
| <input type="radio"/> Hiking | <input type="radio"/> Conservation | <input type="radio"/> Other (specify) |

I (name _____) am knowledgeable in the following areas _____ and would be prepared to

- lead an outdoor session give a presentation prepare an article for The Orchid

I am interested in the following:

- Joining the PFN Executive Sitting on research or conservation committees Working on field projects
 Helping with refreshments at meetings Please have a member of the executive call me

AGE GROUP

This information helps us to understand the needs of our members. If a family membership, please check for each adult

- Under 20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80 < over

DONATIONS

Membership fees cover the general operating costs of the club while other sources of revenue are needed to fund special projects such as ecological restoration. You can assist the club by making a donation to help further our work in such areas. The PFN is a registered charity and issues receipts for income tax purposes. All donations are gratefully received and any member of the executive will be happy to speak to you concerning the use of such funds.

LIABILITY WAIVER

In consideration of the Peterborough Field Naturalists (PFN) accepting this application, I hereby for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever release and discharge the PFN, their officers, directors, servants and agents from any liability whatsoever arising from my participation in PFN activities, whether by reason of negligence of the PFN or its representatives, or otherwise. I affirm that I am in good health, capable of performing the exercise required for field trips or other activities in which I participate, and accept as my personal risk the hazards of such participation. As a member of the PFN and/or as a parent/guardian of a member under 18 years of age, I have read and understood the above, and accept its term on behalf of all of my underage children.

Signature: _____