



PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

PECFN NEWSLETTER

January 2016

**Why not enjoy winter more?
Join a PECFN winter outing**



Sydney Smith of Wellington captured on camera this magnificent Bald Eagle during the PECFN outing to Amherst Island January 22nd. More photos on page 5, report on page 6.

PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY FIELD NATURALISTS

President's message Myrna Wood

PECFN's final submission went to the Tribunal on Jan 7. PECFN lawyer, Eric Gillespie and his team wrote an excellent summation of our experts' evidence on why Ostrander Point should not be destroyed by an industrial development. They wrote:

- As previously found by the Tribunal in its Decision, any risk of collisions with vehicles poses a substantial risk to the local Blanding's turtle population. While small gates will be installed at a very limited number of locations, the vast majority of the 324 ha Project site, with its existing trails and other accesses will remain completely open to the public. Project workers will also be traversing the roads year-round for monitoring etc. Poachers will have improved access, and the roads will continue to provide prime nesting habitat making turtles at this now notorious site more vulnerable. Natural predators will also continue to have improved foraging. The proposed remedy addresses very few of these primary threats.
- It is also open to the Tribunal to take into account additional factors that were part of the first hearing, as well as new information that was not available... Recent research suggests previous understandings of overwintering habitat are no longer reliable, making even off-season construction work highly problematic. New research also indicates both paved and unpaved roads fragment turtle habitat, regardless of traffic. None of these findings benefit Blanding's turtle or support proceeding with the Project.
- When all of the evidence is considered, it is respectfully submitted that it is clear: the Tribunal's initial finding of serious and irreversible harm to Blanding's turtle was correct; the Court of Appeal was correct in upholding it and; the Respondents have plainly failed to adduce sufficient evidence to support their claim that the proposed remedy will mitigate this harm.
- As a result, the Appellant respectfully submits that the Tribunal's decision regarding serious and irreversible harm to Blanding's turtle should not be altered, and the remedy of revocation of the REA should be maintained.

PECFN executive: Sheila Kuja, Agneta Sand, Myrna Wood, Sheena Kennedy, Cheryl Anderson, Sandra Dowds /Missing: Gerry Jenkison, Elizabeth Cowan, Sue Banks, Amy Bodman



A Story of David and Goliath

Myrna Wood



photo S. Smith

Exactly three years ago this month we appealed the Approval of the Gilead Power wind project at Ostrander Point. Those of you who have read lots of children's stories will recognize the plot where every advance is met with a dire threat but eventually the heroine wins through. Such has been our experience with the legal system. A coalition of many Davids' slingshots has battled a pair of Goliaths to a standstill.

Can this possibly be the end? The combined forces of the Provincial government and the Canadian Wind Energy Association, with their millions of funds, may find a way to continue this test case to give Ontario's Crown land wildlife areas to developers. But we will meet such action by mobilizing all those naturalists in Canada who recognize that after Ostrander Point, their area will be next. Meanwhile, we will celebrate this milestone and prepare for spring – nature's time of renewal.



Join us at the Bloomfield Town Hall 7pm

Tues. Jan. 26 Members' Night

Bert Jenkins: 'The Arctic'

Heather Coffey: 'Botany in the Veggie Patch'

Tues. Feb.23, Mark Read: 'The Highs and Lows of Nepal'

Tues. Mar. 29, Sue Banks: County wildflowers including their medicinal uses

Tues. April 26, George Reid: Aboriginal History in the County

Tues May 31, AGM, Terry Sprague: 50 years a Naturalist



Feb. Speaker, Mark Read

January 26 MEMBERS' NIGHT 7pm Bloomfield Town Hall

This is the time for members to share their nature experiences with fellow nature lovers.



Bert Jenkins
The Arctic



Botany in the Veggie Patch by Heather Coffey

While it's lovely to go for a walk in the woods, or welcome the birds to the feeder by your window, have you ever explored nature in your own yard? Let me welcome you to my garden. It didn't take long for me to notice that many of the plants we enjoy as food are all very closely related. Have you ever tried to save their seeds? Ever noticed that certain insects always go after some of them but not others? Some grow better with or without others? I'll give you an intro to botany... that you can take home to your own gardens!

Amherst Island

Friday Jan 22nd PECFN outing with Joanne Dewey

photos by S. Smith

Sandra Dowds, Lorie Brown, Joanne Dewey, Sheila Kuja, Amy Bodman at the Glenora ferry after a satisfying day.



One of the many Red-tailed Hawks we saw on that day.



Sandra feeding chickadees in the Owl Woods

Jan. 22/16

PECFN's Amherst Island Outing:

by Sheila Kuja

Twelve of us set off with Joanne Dewey to explore the eastern portion of Amherst Island. We saw 3 Snowy Owls, 1 Long-eared Owl (seen only by Joanne before it flew off in the Owl Woods), about 18 Rough-legged Hawks, including dark phase and light phase individuals; 8 Red-tailed Hawks and 6 Northern Harriers, plus six Bald Eagles (five near the edge of the woods on the south side of Front Rd, west of the Owl Woods; including four adults). Another birder saw a Northern Shrike but we were unable to locate it.

We also saw a flock of about 20 Snow Buntings near the south shore not far from the road to the Owl Woods. In that woods there were lots of tame chickadees (that enjoyed taking seeds from our outstretched hands), 2 White-breasted Nuthatches, 2 Downy Woodpeckers and a few Tree Sparrows. Near the houses along the north shore we saw House Sparrows and House Finches. In the water off the island shores there were Common Mergansers and Mallards while off the mainland shores there were Red-breasted Mergansers, Long-tailed Ducks and Goldeneye.

The Rough-leg hawks were very interesting because at around 2:30 when some of us were on the north side of the island re-checking a field with a large flock of sheep, we noticed quite a few of these Hawks, as well as the Eagles, sitting in trees and shrubs behind the flock - then noticed a number of the Rough-legs on the ground. They could even be seen walking within the flock as well as behind the sheep, farther away. Wherever the sheep were scratching the snow away to find grass to eat, mice and/or voles were being disturbed and scurrying away - and the

Rough-legs were catching them with a minimal expenditure of energy.

On our way home, as we were waiting in our cars for the 3 o'clock ferry to leave, we had a mature Bald Eagle fly along the shore toward us, alight in a tree along the shoreline so we could admire him (see page 1), and after a few minutes, he flew by the ferry going west as if to say good-bye (and maybe good riddance).

Not one of the best Owl days - but what a fantastic Hawk and Eagle day!



photos on Amherst Is. by Sydney Smith

Thank you for the Winter Wonderland Walk Saturday January 16, 2016

Gavin North drummed, the rain stopped and 64 people strolled along Hilltop Rd. and up Brewers Rd. to the Long Dog Winery for their reward of mulled wine and goodies. The Winter Wonderland Walk was a great success. Thank you to all the walkers and all the sponsors. Your enthusiasm and generosity resulted in over \$2400 deposited to the South Shore Appeal Fund.

Photos below by Caspar Radden



Borys Holowacz and Sheila Kuja sampling the excellent wine at Long Dog winery.



PECFN's Sheila Kuja and Amy Bodman enjoying the walk



Join us!

**Winter outing to Point Petre
with Joanne Dewey**

9am, Tues. February 9, 2016

RSVP

We will carpool; stopping occasionally to look for birds and other things on our way and then have a walk at the beach at Point Petre. Dress for the weather and bring a lunch. Meet at the Mary St. parking lot in Picton 9am **RSVP**



Chickadee
photo by S. Smith



Horned Larks by the roadside
photo by S. Smith

The PEPtBO NatureHood Program

PEPtBO's NatureHood Coordinator, Mark Read, with some PECEI environment club students (and a parent) are enjoying the **Christmas Bird Count For Kids**

Jan 2, 2016



Early on January 2, intrepid members of the PECEI environment club (and a parent) joined Mark Read, Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory's NatureHood Coordinator to do a "Kids' Christmas Bird Count".

Like the traditional Christmas Bird Count, the Christmas Bird Count (CBC) for Kids gathers birdwatchers for a bird count, and provides valuable winter bird population data for bird conservation. To prepare the new birders for an enjoyable counting experience Mark visited Prince Edward Collegiate before Christmas and led a binocular basics and bird identification workshop. Unlike the traditional Christmas Bird Count where enthusiastic participants spend the whole day counting and then meet for a, sometimes raucous, "species seen" round up, the Kids' CBC usually lasts only a few hours and is focussed on introducing young people to bird watching and counting. The results of today's count will be submitted to [eBird Canada](#) and shared with the CBC4Kids National Database.

The PEPtBO NatureHood program is funded through Nature Canada with a grant from Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service. NatureHood promotes nature awareness at the local level and exposes a new generation of naturalists and citizen scientists to nature all around them. "With PEPtBO's location in the Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area and as caretakers of the Prince Edward County South Shore Important Bird and Biodiversity Area, we have a unique opportunity to educate people of all ages about birds and their importance to eco-system health" says Cheryl Anderson PEPtBO president. "The NatureHood program has allowed us to introduce more County and regional residents and students to nature". In addition to the CBC4Kids, in the fall Mark led several school classroom visits to the Bird Observatory. The students experienced the migration monitoring activities of the Bird Observatory and were led through a bird identification workshop called "What's that Bird?". Over the winter bird feeders have been installed outside local classrooms and the classes enrolled in Bird Studies Canada's FeederWatch program. FeederWatchers count the kinds and numbers of birds at their feeders at regular intervals, and then submit their observations to Bird Studies Canada through an online portal. The information helps scientists study winter bird populations and the students learn to identify more bird species and how to be citizen scientists.

February 23 Speaker
Bloomfield Town Hall 7pm:
Mark Read
'The Highs and Lows of Nepal'

Nepal, a small Himalayan country sandwiched between India and China, has abundant wildlife. Ranging in elevation from 59 metres in the lowlands to 8848 metres at the top of the world means that pretty much every habitat-type is represented. With such a diversity of habitats comes an incredible diversity of birds, and people. Mark will reflect upon his time birding there whilst also sharing a few of the cultural experiences he encountered along the way.

Mark is currently the NatureHood Coordinator at Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory but that is just the latest in a long career in education that has taken him from Park Ranger at Sherwood Forest, UK, Ecotourism

Lecturer and Field Researcher in Thailand, Head of Secondary at an

International School in Egypt, and Senior Interpreter/Naturalist here in Canada with Ontario Parks. For two years, he was based in the lowland Terai region of Far-West Nepal working with the Ministry of Education as an in-school advisor. As an avid birder of almost 40 years, it is rare to see him without a 'pair of bins' hanging from his neck.

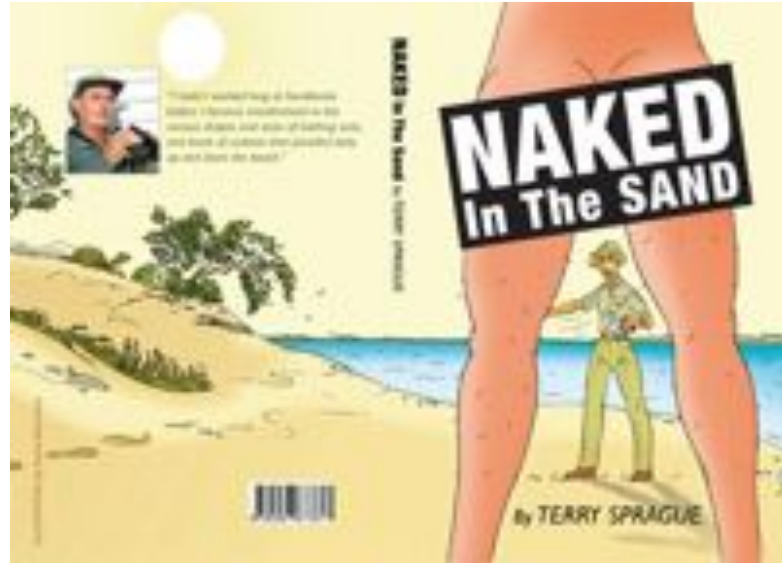


PECFN 2015/2016 membership was due at the September meeting. Please send your \$15 single membership cheque to Box 414, Bloomfield, ON K0K 1G0

Terry Sprague: “My work has always been my life.”

Upon Reflection... from his new book “Naked in the Sand”.

“Have I really retired, many have asked? What is retirement anyway? It is a chance to pursue our dreams beyond the workplace. However, my workplace has always been my dream, and while I have slowed down considerably, I will never retire completely. I will still be at my keyboard daily, furiously writing something, and accepting requests now and then for private hikes and tours, and continuing to offer my services as a guest speaker. Why? It is because my work has always been my life. And what better way to enjoy retirement than continuing to do the things I love? “



**Cheryl Anderson cutting the birthday cake at Terry’s book signing party.
*photos by Sacha Warunkiw***

Wed. May 18, 2016

Award winning 2012

Canadian documentary

starring Gorden Pinsent

narrated by Megan Follows

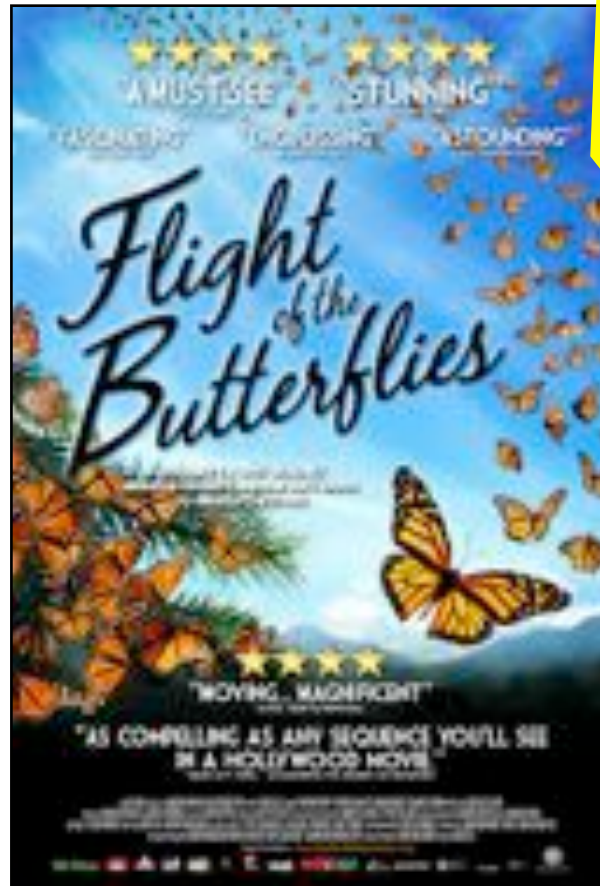
telling the story of the

decades long discovery of the

overwintering site of the

Monarch butterflies in

Mexico.



**Another exciting
Ostrander Point /
South Shore
fund raiser**

Join us!

As an evening fundraiser during the 2016 Birding Festival, PECFN is delighted to announce our screening of *Flight of the Butterflies*. This 2012 Canadian documentary tells the story of the four-decade-long investigation by Dr Fred Urquhart and his wife/collaborator Norah into the monarch butterfly and the discovery of its overwintering site in Central Mexico. The film blends factual information with dramatic re-enactment. Gorden Pinsent stars as Dr Fred Urquhart and Patricia Phillips as Nora Urquhart; Megan Follows is Narrator.

Don Davis, an old friend of PECFN who worked with the Urquharts and was historical consultant to *Flight of the Butterflies*, and Patricia Phillips, who has close ties the County, will make presentations and take part in a Q&A during the evening. We'll also show a short film that extends the themes of migration and biodiversity.

**Minutes of the Executive Meeting
Prince Edward County Field Naturalists
Picton Library
December 8, 2015, noon-2:00 p.m.**

Present: Amy Bodman, Elizabeth Cowan, Sandra Dowds, Gerry Jenkison, Sheena Kennedy, Sheila Kuja, Agneta Sand, Myrna Wood

Regrets: Sue Banks

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Status Reports

(A) Membership

We have four honorary members, 64 paid-up members and 47 who are on the books but haven't paid their dues yet.

(B) Treasurer

The following balances were reported:

PECFN: \$3,452.08

OPAF: \$1,437.00

Eric has been paid a further \$5,000.00.

(C) Programs

Outdoor programs

Dec.19: PEC Christmas Bird Count (which includes the eastern part of the County)

Dec.22: South Shore Christmas Bird Count

Jan.12, 2016: a walk through the Amherst Island Owl Woods, led by Joanne Dewey

Jan.16: Winter Walkathon in support of the South Shore Appeal Fund, ending at the Long Dog Winery

Feb.9: winter outing to Point Petre, led by Joanne

April 17: OFO outing in the County, led by Mike Burrell

Amy will look into winter mudpuppy watching north of Kingston, a guided walk in Peter's Woods in late April or early May, and another outing led by Mike Burrell, of Bird Studies Canada, sometime in the spring. Molly Mulloy will lead a walk at Mountain View in May.

Indoor programs

Jan.26, 2016: Membership night

Feb.23: Mark Read -- Highs and Lows in Nepal

March 29: Sue Banks -- Wildflowers in the County, including their medicinal uses

April 26: George Reid – Aboriginal History in the County. Amy will remind him.

May 31: Terry Sprague – Fifty Years a Naturalist

Suggested speakers for the fall were Pamela Stagg (feathers) and Tyler Hoar. Amy will contact a woman who is studying the dog-strangling vine.

(D) Fundraising Committee

Sheena has raised \$600.00 with her winter arrangements.

The native plant sale will be held in the Air Cadets Quonset hut on Macaulay Mountain on May 28. A \$100.00 donation to the Air Cadets in recognition of their kindness in lending the space was approved unanimously. Two sources of plants have been identified; both will take back unsold plants. Amy will have a banner prepared.

The film *Flight of the Butterflies* will be screened at the Regent on May 18. The format of the evening isn't final yet, but Pat Phillips and Don Davis are confirmed speakers. Myrna will ask Paul Catling to appear as well. Gerry and Amy will view and select short films on the themes of butterflies or migration to open the program. Gerry will create a draft budget for the evening and present it at the next Exec meeting. Total payable to the Regent for daily rental fees and additional charges is \$638.45.

The annual PECFN dinner and silent auction will be held in the Curling Club on April 23. Sandra will ask Ian Hanna about a wine auction. Michael Hoy will cater the dinner.

We're interested in connecting with Diana Beresford Kroeger about the possibility of screening her film (not yet released), *Ten Trees That Can Save the World*, as a fundraiser. Myrna will ask Terry Sprague for contacts.

Sheena raised the issue of paying our expert witnesses. They appeared pro bono the first time around, but the process has been so extended & time-consuming that they should be compensated. She suggested earmarking the proceeds from the WI Craft Sale for the witnesses. Myrna suggested that the next time we have \$5,000.00 in the bank we pay the witnesses rather than Eric. We will compose an explanation to donors.

(E) Ostrander Point and Tribunal:

Gilead is to submit final arguments on Dec.17; PECFN's reply is due Jan.6, 2016. Oral submissions will be heard in Toronto on Jan.15.

(F) Official Plan Review

Public hearings haven't been scheduled yet. Myrna will follow.

(G) BioBlitz

Sheila has given Borys the photographs to incorporate into the text. It was suggested that the next BioBlitz could be on private land, and that Terry might have suggestions. Amy and Sheila will try to find contacts for the Stronachs.

H) NatureHood

Report submitted by Cheryl Anderson:

“In September and October we had four elementary school visits to the Bird Observatory in addition to a group from Fleming College in Peterborough and one from the Kingston Junior Field Naturalists. We also ran Migration Matters on the Thanksgiving weekend with guided hikes on the Saturday and Monday and What’s that Bird kids program both days. Owl banding was advertised for the Sunday evening. On the two subsequent Saturdays in October we ran Big Sit raptor watch programs along with What’s That Bird kids programs.

“Moving into the winter we have plans to offer feeder watch kits (bird feeder seed and BSC feeder watch kit) to 10 elementary schools (five currently booked) and kids CBC with two groups -- one in Kingston and one in the County.

“The challenge will be to book four addition school visits to the BO in April or May to fulfill our obligation to introduce 10 school groups to the National Wildlife Area. The NatureHood funding winds up at the end of March so these arrangements have to be made before that time. We do expect also to require assistance either from volunteers or an additional leader (provided we have necessary funding) since Mark will be going back to Murphy Point before the end of May.”

(I) Ontario Nature

Nothing new to report.

(J) Millennium Trail

Amy reported that she had finally managed to organize a walk through the wetlands sections of the Trail with representatives of the County and Quinte Conservation. There is some dispute over whether the kind of stone dust proposed for the surfacing can stand up to submersion. A diversion around the entire area would be long, expensive and potentially dangerous to users, but a 1.4 km diversion around the Hubbs Creek section, via Danforth and Benway roads, seems feasible. Terry Murphy of Quinte Conservation has suggested gates and signs to mitigate damage by ATVs, but it is uncertain whether the County would be prepared to pay for these. If diversions were enforced from April 1 to Oct.31, there should be no objection from snowmobilers. Amy will attend a meeting next week. We will be asked for ideas for educational signage.

(K) Monarch gardens

Elizabeth reported that the County has declined PECFN’s application for a \$500.00 grant to buy starter plants. However, this may free up the Recreation Committees to budget for such plants. Cheryl has suggested applying for a Stark grant. Myrna said that people’s involvement and donations could take the place of money and schools should be approached

(L) Newsletter -

deadline Jan.15



3. New Business

- (i) The launch of Terry's new book is on Dec.20, which is also his birthday. Sandra will buy a card for us to sign, Myrna will order a cake from Metro, and Elizabeth will pick it up.
- (ii) Gerry is resuscitating PECFN's Facebook page. She would appreciate being sent any items or links that would be of interest to readers of the page.
- (iii) Myrna and Cheryl were videotaped as part of a project to record members of the PEC community on the turbine issue.
- (iv) Cheryl has submitted a donation to the County as a test run for the charitable receipt process.

4. Next meeting

Tues., Jan.5, noon to 2:00, in the upstairs public room at the Picton Library.

**Minutes of the Executive Meeting
Prince Edward County Field Naturalists
Picton Library
January 5, 2016, noon-2:00 p.m.**

Present: Sue Banks, Amy Bodman, Elizabeth Cowan, Gerry Jenkison, Sheena Kennedy, Sheila Kuja, Agneta Sand, Myrna Wood

Regrets: Sandra Dowds

1. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

2. Status Reports

(A) Membership

We have four honorary members and 65 paid-up members.

(B) Treasurer

The following balances were reported:

PECFN: \$3,090.58

OPAF: \$2,794.50

As at December 31, 2015, \$253,624.04 had been donated to OPAF. Eric has been paid \$220,000.00. The next time we have \$5,000.00 in the OPAF account we will use it to pay our expert witnesses.

Myrna will pay the Nature Canada membership dues online.

(C) Programs

Outdoor programs

Jan.12: a walk through the Amherst Island Owl Woods, led by Joanne Dewey

Jan.16: Winter Walkathon in support of the South Shore Appeal Fund (SSAF), starting 2:00 p.m. at Hilltop and Dainard roads & ending at the Long Dog Winery

Feb.9: winter outing to Point Petre, led by Joanne

April 17: OFO outing to Prince Edward Point, led by Mike Burrell

Amy will look into a guided walk in Peter's Woods in late April or early May; and ask Mike Burrell for a club outing. Molly Mulloy will lead a walk at Mountain View in May.

Indoor programs

Jan.26, 2016: Membership night. Heather Coffey is willing to speak; Bob Simmonds could talk about the trip to India; Amy thought she could make a brief presentation; Sheila will talk about the BioBlitz; Cheryl and Myrna will show the presentation to Latornell conference.

Feb.23: Mark Read -- Highs and Lows in Nepal. Myrna suggested that he be paid an honorarium rather than given a present. Sheena will prepare a cheque. Cheryl will ask him if he needs accommodation.

March 29: Sue Banks -- Wildflowers in the County, including their medicinal uses. If possible she would like a stand for her laptop of the sort that Marc Seguin used in his presentation.

April 26: George Reid -- Aboriginal History in the County. Amy will remind him.

May 31: Terry Sprague -- Fifty Years a Naturalist

Amy will try to pin down Chris Reid for next winter. Sheila has e-mailed Tyler Hoar.

(D) Fundraising Committee

There was a lengthy discussion of the South Shore Appeal Fund (SSAF), the new joint fund to which donations can be made that will be used for both the Gilead and the wpd appeals. The Executive was concerned by changes made to the OPAF website without their approval. The consensus was that we don't need a joint website for the joint fund: each group can continue to raise awareness and funds from its own website, with certain changes: for instance, donors will be asked to make their contributions to the SSAF and mail them to Box 173, Milford. Myrna will ask to have the OPAF website restored to its original form.

Another concern is how the joint fund is administered and we will request a meeting with Appec to discuss this.

The annual PECFN dinner and silent auction will be held in the Curling Club on **April 23**. Sandra will ask Ian Hanna about a wine auction. Michael Hoy will cater the dinner.

Another RiverWalk is planned for the week of **May 7-14** at Mill Falls House B&B.

The film *Flight of the Butterflies* will be screened at the Regent on **May 18**. Pat Phillips and Don Davis are confirmed speakers. Paul Catling will confirm by Feb 1 or name a substitute. Gerry and Amy will decide on the program; consider including some short films on the themes of butterflies or migration; and ticket prices. Gerry has signed the contract with the Regent (\$638.45) and will adapt the posters provided by the film company which Don Davis will deliver at the Jan 15 Hearing.

The native plant sale is slated for **May 28**. Amy will confirm the availability of the Air Cadets Quonset hut on Macaulay Mountain and ask if its notice board will be up. The Native Plant Sale Subcommittee will decide what plants to request from Peter Fuller. Marge Seguin has offered to decorate a PECFN banner, provided by Cheryl, that could be used for the sale as well as other events.

Myrna will contact Diana Beresford Kroeger's agent in New York about the possibility of screening her as yet unreleased film *Ten Trees That Can Save the World*, as a fundraiser.

(E) Ostrander Point and Tribunal:

Gilead submitted its final arguments on Dec.17; Eric is working on PECFN's reply, due Jan.6. Oral submissions will be heard in Toronto on Jan.15.

(F) Official Plan Review

The County will not hold any public hearings on its Official Plan Review other than Council discussions. Myrna has been told our recommendations on the Millennium Trail north of Wellington is a matter for the Wellington Secondary Plan, approved last year. Amy and Myrna will meet with the County's new Planner for advice on our recommendations Thursday and contact councillors who might support our efforts.

(G) BioBlitz report

The report looks beautiful, and Sheila will show it at the members meeting on Jan.26.

(H) NatureHood

Nothing to report.

(I) Ontario Nature

Nothing to report.

(J) Millennium Trail

See under (F).

(K) Monarch gardens

A Stark grant requires a recipient to have a registered charity status. Myrna reiterated that people's involvement and donations could take the place of money. Sheena suggested asking the WI for a donation. The project could be publicized at the screening of *Flight of the Butterflies*. We can also speak at WI meetings and Rec Committee meetings.

(L) Newsletter – deadline Jan.15

3. New Business

As Elizabeth will be away in February, Gerry offered to prepare the Minutes of the next Executive meeting.

4. Next meeting

Tues., Feb.2, noon to 2:00, in the upstairs public room at the Picton Library.



Long-tailed duck *photo S. Smith*