



Newsletter of the Bert Miller Nature Club

The Rambler

FALL 2025

A Message from the Board

The BMNC Board is pleased to announce that Anne Mills has been appointed as our new president. For the past two years, we have assigned different board members to serve as "President of the Month." By sharing these responsibilities, we managed to keep the club's business running without too much stress. We

were delighted when Anne, who joined the board in 2022, stepped forward and agreed to take on the role full-time. With her expertise and dedication, our club will move forward with greater stability. We are all grateful to Anne for taking on this vital role and thank her for her commitment.

From the President's Pen

I am honoured and thrilled to have been appointed by the Board to the position of president of the Bert Miller Nature Club. Let me introduce myself and provide a little bit of background: my family has lived in Fort Erie for 28 years, and my two children grew up here. I had several different careers in my working life: working in Hydrogeology, then as an Environmental Scientist, and as a GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Manager. I have

been on the Board for about 2 years and am still learning the ropes. I am passionate about the environment, family and dogs.

Last May, we initiated a Bursary for a graduating student from Greater Fort Erie Secondary School (GFESS) who had shown environmental stewardship and/or would be taking an environmental-related course at college or university. This will be an annual Bursary, and we encourage you to consider donating to it. Donations can be made by clicking the "Donate Now" button on our website's home page at <https://bertmillernatureclub.org>. These students are the future. Together, let's preserve the beautiful natural areas in the Niagara Region for our children, grandchildren and future generations. If you have any thoughts/suggestions or vision for the future of the Club, I would love to hear from you. You can email me at bertmillernatureclub@gmail.com.

Anne Mills



Insights from Sharaya by Sharaya McCollum-Brown

Hi everyone. You may remember me as the new board member or "baby board member," as I jokingly referred to myself at our last in-person meeting. Let me reintroduce myself. I am Sharaya McCollum-Brown. I grew up in Fort Erie and have always wanted to get involved with the Bert Miller Nature Club. Over the past two years as a member, I became increasingly engaged with the Club, which ultimately led me to join the board.

Over the past eight months, I have had the honour of working on this fantastic board alongside veteran board members.

As a new member and in my first experience serving on a board, they have been incredibly supportive and receptive to my ideas and input. Reflecting on my first eight months on the Bert Miller Nature Club board, I have learned a great deal. Our board works very well as a team, collaborating to build on each other's ideas, listening to diverse perspectives, and working together towards our shared goals and purpose.

In this role, I have had the opportunity to share my ideas, some of which have been implemented. We have organized several successful events, including Fort Erie

Welcome New Members

- Rob Mueller
- Verena Schleich
- Elly & Bill Smith
- Krissy Whyte

Upcoming Meetings

- December 8 @ 7:00 pm (virtual) - Jennifer Baici—Wild Turkeys in Ontario—A Life History
- January 12 @ 7:00 pm (virtual) - Dylan White—Caribou: Keystone of the Canadian Wilderness
- February 9 @ 7:00 pm (virtual) - Katherine Yagi—Wainfleet Bog Restoration
- March 9 @ 7:00 pm (in-person) - AGM and Marcie Jacklin—Lemurs, Chameleons and of course, Birds
- April 13 @ 7:00 pm (in-person) - Kerry Royer—Conservation Areas of Niagara
- May 12 @ 7:00 pm (in-person) - Amy Proulx—Wild Mushrooms

Upcoming Outings

- Keep an eye out for email updates or check the Club's website or Facebook page for information on future outings.

Memberships

- September marked the beginning of our 2025–2026 season; memberships are now past due. Memberships can be purchased through CanadaHelps or at an in-person meeting. Thank you to everyone who has already renewed.
- We look forward to reconnecting with old friends and meeting new ones. Everyone is always welcome.



Insights from Sharaya

Pride and Ridgefest. Both events helped us to connect with the community and attract new volunteers and members. At both events, the button maker was a big hit among people of all ages!

I hope that through community events and outreach, we can attract more new members and volunteers to support the traditions and events we all cherish, while also creating new ones. We have several other projects

continued

underway, and I am eager to share many new ideas. I am always open to input, feedback, and suggestions from members!

I feel so honoured and delighted to be part of this fantastic crew and look forward to another year on the board. Please keep an eye out for upcoming events on our Facebook page and in our email newsletter.

June Friendship Trail Outing

On Saturday, June 7, the BMNC crew travelled along the Friendship Trail between Ridge Road and Burleigh Road in Ridgeway. We observed various species of flora and fauna and got impromptu plant and fungi lessons from Amy Proulx, along with birding tips from Marcie Jacklin.

Later, we gathered at the Southcoast Cookhouse in Crystal Beach for lunch. During the meeting, Amy Proulx, Bert Miller's granddaughter, gave a short talk about Bert Miller, shared family stories, and showed various family photos along with the iconic family tree hand-drawn by Bert himself (more about this in the



Participants on the Friendship Trail.
© Sharaya McCollum-Brown

article on Bert Miller on page 4). Overall, it was a lovely outing and one not to be missed! It marked a great ending to the 2024-2025 season before our summer break. We're looking forward to doing this again next year!

We are pleased to welcome Marcie Jacklin and Amy Proulx for talks in the 2025-2026 season. Marcie Jacklin will present on "Lemurs, Chameleons, and of course, Birds" on March 9, 2026, and Amy Proulx will present on Discovering Mushrooms on May 12, 2026. Please explore our other speaker offerings for the 2025-2026 season.

by Sharaya McCollum-Brown

Fort Erie Pride

Anne Mills and Sharaya McCollum-Brown staffed the Bert Miller Nature Club booth at the Fort Erie Pride event on June 28 at the Leisureplex.



Anne and Sharaya.
© Sharaya McCollum-Brown

Ridgefest 2025

On Saturday, July 12, 2025, the BMNC team once again set up a booth at Ridgefest in Ridgeway, likely for the twentieth time or more. Thanks to the support of our members, community partners, and numerous volunteers, we created an impressive display. The event featured Dave Gibson's Sky-Hunters/Birds of Prey exhibit, which included Baby the Bald Eagle and Boo the Great Horned Owl.

We featured a popular button-making station and other fantastic displays, including handmade matching games created by the fabulous Dawn Pierrynowski, as well as brochures about local species and those at risk. A few volunteers signed up, and we hope they will become future members of the Bert Miller Nature Club. We look forward to continuing this fantastic event again in 2026.



The BMNC booth at Ridgefest.
© Sharaya McCollum-Brown

A few buttons created by children visiting the booth.
© Sharaya McCollum-Brown

by Sharaya McCollum-Brown

Stevensville Fall Fair

by Anne Mills

The Bert Miller Nature Club was pleased to take part in the annual Stevensville Fall Fair, held at the Stevensville Conservation Area on September 27 from 10 to 3 pm. As always, this was an enjoyable event that drew families, young and old, from all over Fort Erie. There was strong attendance, an overall happy hometown vibe, many vendors, a silent auction, lots of delicious food, and games and pony rides for the kids. The weather behaved and was sunny and warm.

Many families stopped by the Bert Miller Nature Club booth to play the educational and memory games that Dawn Pierrynowski had brilliantly created, and there was a never-ending line-up of kids wanting to make a button. Members enjoyed helping kids choose a design, colour it, and turn it



into a button. The Fair was an excellent opportunity to raise awareness of the Club, and a BMNC pamphlet was handed out listing our upcoming programs and activities. Thank you to Tim and Dawn for the setup; Dawn, Lynda, Deb, Christine, and Viki for helping at the booth; and Viki, Rick, Sharaya, Damien, and Owen for the teardown at the end. It was a real team effort and a great success!



Visitors try out the many educational exhibits
© Anne Mills

World Migratory Bird Day

World Migratory Bird Day is celebrated twice a year: once in the spring and once in the fall. This, of course, follows the bird migration, with migrants coming through our area in the spring en route to their breeding grounds and then, again, in the fall as they make their way back to their winter homes.

This year, we planned our event during the fall migration. Teaming up with the Fort Erie Public Library, we designed a program to introduce beginners to birdwatching. Local birding expert, Marcie Jacklin, was the guest speaker on Saturday, October 18, at the library's Centennial Branch. She talked about the "tools of the trade", binoculars and cameras, explaining the various features and what they provide. She



The group ready to find birds at Shagbark.
© Dawn Pierrynowski

also showed multiple types of binoculars and their different components.

Another vital tool is those that help with bird identification. Several apps help with this task and are easy to use. She discussed how to look at a bird and focus on key features, such as colouring, wing bars, tail markings and eye rings. These are the things that will make it easier to use the app for identification.

We also had a display set up with information on the Bert Miller Nature Club and our upcoming programs. A free handout of common backyard birds was also available, along with Marcie's handout on useful websites.

Marcie's presentation was put into action the following day, October 19, during our walk in Shagbark Nature Park. All the participants joined the walk as Marcie, and others pointed out birds, plants, and other natural objects. A flock of Bluebirds greeted us on arrival, and we ended up with 15 different species of birds. A bonus find was a couple of garter snakes captured by Damien Robinson. This gave us all an excellent opportunity to see these colourful creatures up close.

We all enjoyed the morning walk through the woods with the fall colours and fresh air—many thanks to Marcie for donating her expertise to these events.



Damien with Eastern Garter Snake.
© Dawn Pierrynowski

Nature at Queen's Park

Anne Mills and Marcie Jacklin took the GO train to Toronto and represented the Bert Miller Nature Club at the Ontario Nature event "Nature at Queen's Park," held there on October 20, 2025. For the event, MPPs and elected Members were invited to an informal gathering with representatives from nature groups across Ontario, along with many Ontario Nature staff. It was a great chance to speak directly with MPPs



about protecting land, water, and wetlands; conserving biodiversity; and discussing local concerns. There were light refreshments and plenty of conversations. Overall, it was a fantastic opportunity to network with elected officials, other nature groups, and Ontario Nature staff, and to brainstorm and develop new ideas for our Club. Plus, there was a very cool display

Group photo of the participants from across Ontario. © Anne Mills

Nature at Queen's Park

continued

of reptiles.

Ontario Nature is a charitable organization that supports and advocates for environmental protection and recently ran a strong campaign to repeal the Ontario Government's Bill 5 (<https://ontarionature.org/>). It also provides resources to nature groups across Ontario and holds meetings twice a year for them to network and learn from each other. The Bert Miller Nature Club is very pleased to be part of



Marcie happily holding a snake. © Anne Mills

Bert Miller

Sometimes folks hand me "stuff" related to Bert Miller. Whenever this happens, I digitize any new information and upload it to our club's archive. This fall, longtime club member Cynthia Skinner gave me a clipping from a newspaper that contained an article by Bert Miller. This was the first time I learned that Bert Miller might have written a column.

I searched Newspapers.com for this article or others by Bert Miller, but couldn't find any. Since it might interest readers, I am reprinting it here. I smiled when I saw it was about the bird species used in our club's logo. If you know the publication date or the newspaper that published it, please share that information.

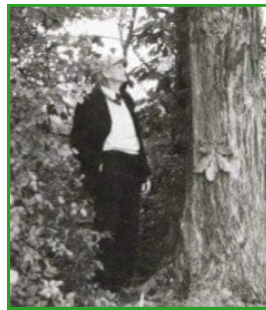
Nature Study by BERT MILLER

Last Saturday, November 12th, it was my privilege to go out with a friend, in the woods to search for Pileated Woodpecker (*ceophloeus pileatus*). This bird is considered quite rare in this area, but is seen quite frequently much farther north. A beautiful bird, as large as a crow, blue-black with a flaming red crest on top of the head, with large white wing patches- seen only in flight.

These birds drill large holes deep in the trunk of green pine trees in search of ants and grubs. It seems that white pine trees growing on heavy land tend to decay in the centre, and then the ants start to work, and these birds certainly know where to look for them. Horace Troup of R.R. No. 3, St. Catharines, had heard reports of the pileated woodpecker being seen in the area south of Jordan and Beamsville, between Fonthill and Smithville. So we set out in the morning, and going through a number of woods we saw considerable evidence of their work in pine trees, but no birds. After lunch we continued our search, and in the afternoon, we finally saw what we were looking for. Near the western end of Gainsborough Township in Lincoln County, we saw the pileated woodpecker.

Strong field glasses are needed to make close observations in ornithology in the woods. This is a very shy bird, and it is only with great difficulty that you will be able to get near enough to observe it closely, as it will keep moving well ahead of you as you endeavour to approach it. I have not kept close check on all the different kinds of wild birds that I have seen in one season, but the locating of the pileated woodpecker in this area seems to be an outstanding observation.

It would be interesting to hear from anyone who may have observed these birds recently in this latitude. Any unusual record that naturalists have observed in any form of nature study should surely be put on the map.



Bert Miller with a Kingnut Hickory tree.
© Photographer unknown, BMNC Archives

The family tree Sharaya mentioned previously, hand-drawn by Bert Miller, is shown below, with the text from the bottom transcribed. Although difficult to read, every branch and leaf has names and dates on them. This is truly a work of art.



Andrew Miller was born in New York State in the United States in October 1766. When he was a boy all his people were killed by the Indians and he alone was taken alive by them. In 1779 the Indians brought him into Niagara a prisoner boy, here he was redeemed from them by John Burch Esq. with whom he lived until he was grown up. He married the daughter of a U. E. Loyalist and with a feeling of deep gratitude towards his benefactor John Burch, he named his oldest son after him, John Burch Miller. In 1793 he took up land on the frontier in the county of Lincoln, (Welland) Canada, this was on the Niagara River about five miles below Fort Erie at the end of an Indian trail leading back through the woods to Port Colborne. He did not receive a deed from the Crown for this land until the year 1801. Later on he took up other lands from the Crown in different parts of the province. In June 1809 he was appointed to be an Ensign in the Third Regiment of Militia in the District of Niagara, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Warren. His Excellency Sir Francis Gore was then the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada. Andrew Miller lived on the land he first received from the Crown until he died in January 1843 and his family and descendants will be found on the Tree above. To the best of my knowledge the above is correct. Albert W. Miller, Fort Erie, Ont Canada Feb 25, 1909.

Continued on back page.

A Mystery Solved

On Saturday, May 24, we were turning into the driveway when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw something streak from the house out toward the road. In a flash, it was gone. What was it? Where did it go?

It was time to put on my birding hat and find out what that streak flying by could have been. Binoculars in one hand and my camera in the other, I headed out to the spot where I thought I saw this possible bird. Sure enough, something flew straight to the Eastern Bluebird nesting box at the end of the driveway near our busy, noisy road. *It was an adult White-breasted Nuthatch!*



We regularly have White-breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*) year-round at the feeder and on the trees nearby. These small black and grey birds with white streaks are about the size of a sparrow (13-15 cm). They are constantly searching out tasty morsels on the oak tree in front of the house. They travel up, down, upside-down and all around the trees. In the winter, they are at the bird feeder looking for sunflower seeds, peanuts, and suet. Nuthatches are known to store seeds in the winter by tapping them into tree bark. I haven't seen this behaviour, but I have observed a Downy Woodpecker saving seeds much the same way in the hollow part of a branch in the winter. According to Cornell Lab All About Birds: "White-breasted Nuthatches eat mainly insects, including weevil larvae, wood-boring beetle larvae, other beetles, tree hoppers, scale insects, ants, gall fly larvae, caterpillars (including gypsy moths and tent caterpillars), stinkbugs, and click beetles, as well as spiders. They also eat seeds and nuts, including acorns, hawthorn, sunflower seeds, and sometimes crops such as corn. At birdfeeders, they eat sunflower seeds, peanuts, suet, and peanut butter." We rarely see Red-breasted Nuthatches at our location.

It was Sunday, May 25. Curiosity got the best of my husband and me. We decided to open the nesting box to see if there was anything inside. What a surprise we got.



I quickly took a photo of a nest and what appeared to be five white eggs with reddish-brown speckles. A closer look at the photo revealed that the nest seemed to be made of twigs, hair, fur, bark, and lumps of dirt. It appeared to have a cup of grass, feathers, and other soft materials under

the eggs. These birds sometimes use nesting boxes like ours, but otherwise they use natural tree cavities or abandoned woodpecker holes.

According to Cornell, the nesting period is 26 days, and the egg incubation period is 13-14 days. I'm looking forward to seeing the hatchlings in about 13 days. Since I don't know the exact date the eggs were laid, I calculated that they should hatch on June 6.



by Dawn Pierrynowski

On Monday, June 2, I watched as the parents flew in and out of the box, carrying food (photos at bottom of previous column), and cleaned up by removing the fecal sac (photo to right). Once the adults flew off, we



The photo from Monday, June 9, shows that the nestlings now have some of their feathers.

Friday, June 13, was the last picture taken inside the box. We didn't want to disturb them so close to fledging time. Look at all the feathers!



On Saturday, June 21, I saw a flurry of activity around the nesting box. I set up the camera and captured a series of photos of the fledglings peaking out at the world. By the end of the day, all of them were gone. We didn't get to see them leave. I am now experiencing "empty nest syndrome" again, and worse yet, I have to clean up after birds this time. It was bad enough with my kids. Maybe my husband will do it.



You can find the plans to build a White-breasted Nuthatch nesting box by clicking on link # 2.

References:

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/White-breasted_Nuthatch/overview

<https://nestwatch.org/learn/all-about-birdhouses/birds/white-breasted-nuthatch/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-breasted_nuthatch

It's a Wrap—Well Almost

Since January 2021, birders across the province have been participating in the 3rd Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas. The first and second atlases were published in 1981-85 and 2001-05, respectively.

It isn't quite over, though; you can still add information about Eastern Screech-owl and Rock Pigeons in November and December, and starting in December, you can add information about Great Horned Owls. Register here: <https://www.birdsontario.org/> to add any previous information as well.

The Atlas has been a success for many reasons, but the most important is the volunteers who have contributed countless hours over the past five years. We had a great team in Niagara, especially this last year, when many Atlases chipped in to help in areas that needed more surveys and species. It was a tremendous effort, and the final maps showed Niagara was one of the few regions that completed all the requirements.

In the last two atlases, data had to be submitted on paper forms. For this atlas, participants could enter data on an app. This meant anyone could atlas anywhere in Ontario and have their data included.

We also had the benefit of two excellent people who organized the entire atlas and were available to answer questions and provide help.



Great Horned Owl.

©Marcie Jacklin

Over the past 50 years, birds have declined, especially grassland species. The atlas and other surveys will help to see current trends and possible reasons for the declines.

It is still very early in the data analysis, but I can report on a few changes we have seen so far.

Breeding Blue-winged Teals and Gray Partridges have all but disappeared from Niagara and have declined across most of Ontario, likely due to habitat loss and human disturbance. The decline in Eastern Whip-poor-will has also been dramatic, although we still have some in Wainfleet Bog. Other declining species include Grasshopper Sparrows. Bald Eagles

are a fantastic story, with dramatic increases across Southern Ontario. This may be attributed to the dangerous insecticide DDT, which was used from 1940 to 1970 and is slowly disappearing from our environment. Barred Owls are slowly expanding south, and we are fortunate to have several breeding pairs in Niagara. However, one pair is frequently disturbed by wildlife enthusiasts eager to see this beautiful bird.

Once again, many thanks to everyone who participated on this atlas. It was a tremendous effort, and we should all be proud of our accomplishment.

Exciting Rarity Spotted at Morgan's Point

by Tim Seburn

A Black-throated Gray Warbler at Morgan's Point Conservation Area has been seen by many enthusiastic birders this fall. Jean Farnan discovered and identified it on November 15. It features a tiny yellow spot in front of its eye, which is a distinctive diagnostic field mark of the species.

Although its normal range covers the West Coast of the United States and, east of the Rockies, only in Nevada and Arizona, this is the second year in a row that this species has been found in Niagara. Last December, one was spotted at Port Weller.



Black-throated Gray Warbler.
© Marcie Jacklin

Kid's Corner – Who Am I?

by Dawn Pierrynowski

Solve the Bird Life Cycle Riddles.

1. I have an embryo inside me. The embryo is a baby bird. I may be a solid colour. I may be speckled. My size varies according to the species. I am a hard shell.	2. I have few or no feathers. My eyes are closed. I cannot fly. My parents give me food and warmth. I need a lot of care. Who am I?	3. I am covered with soft down feathers. My eyes are open. I may have some "Flight Feathers" I am unable to leave the nest. Who am I?
4. I may fly out of the nest. I am not ready to fly any distance. My feathers are completely developed. My muscles have become stronger. Who am I?	5. I am ready to fly! I almost look like my adult parents. I am not ready to mate. When I am a little older, I may be called a "subadult." Who am I?	6. I have "full" adult feathers called plumage. My feathers may change colour with the seasons. My feathers are brighter and have clearer markings during the breeding season. I am able to mate. As a female, I lay eggs. Who am I?

Who Am I?

Match the correct word to the riddles above.

juvenile hatchling adult egg fledgling

nestling

Answers

1. egg 2. hatchling 3. nestling 4. fledgling 5. juvenile 6. adult

Seabirds, Scenes and Jellybeans—Newfoundland

by Ron Goodridge

A long-postponed trip, originally scheduled for 2017, was cancelled due to a car accident just two weeks prior. It finally took place with Porter Airlines on June 14, 2025.

We arrived in St John's early in the afternoon, picked up our rental car, and headed down the Trans-Canada Highway towards the Bonavista Peninsula, where we would spend the first four days of our eight-day trip. Even though we were exhausted from nearly 24 hours without sleep because of a Niagara Airbus pick-up at 2 am (!), we relaxed and felt invigorated by the stunning Newfoundland scenery during the three-hour drive to our motel in Port Rexton.

The last four days were spent in and around St John's, including visits to Cape Spear, Signal Hill, The Rooms, and The Jellybeans. Then came our final day at the magnificent Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve in the southern Avalon Peninsula.

The trip was planned to see as many Newfoundland birds as we could, enjoy the scenery, and have a cod dinner or two. All goals were achieved, and everything exceeded our expectations! To put it simply... a GREAT trip!

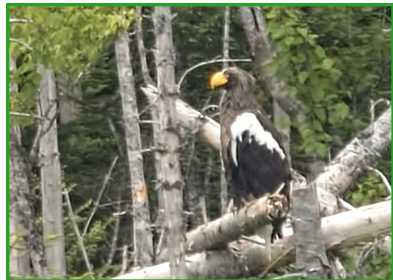


Atlantic Puffins. © Ron Goodridge

We could not get enough of the Puffin colony in Elliston, which we devoted two separate days to. The birds posed for pictures, often just a few feet from the cameras.



Grazing horses. © Ron Goodridge



Steller's Sea-Eagle. © Ron Goodridge

A memorable moment was spotting the massive and ultra-rare bird of prey from Russia, the Steller's Sea-Eagle, the first of this species to ever visit the Lower 48 and Canada. "Stella" has now been present in North America for over 5 years, since 2020, with 3 years in

Newfoundland!

A Humpback Whale waves hello to our O'Brien Boat Tour group at the Witless Bay Ecological Reserve, located half an hour south of St. John's.



Humpback Whale. © Ron Goodridge



The Rooms.

© Ron Goodridge

Newfoundland's provincial museum in St. John's honours the province's fishing heritage through its name and building design. "The Rooms"

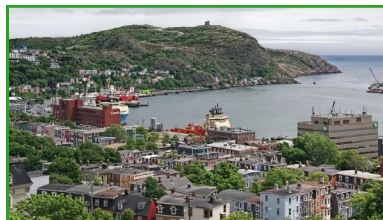
was the term used for the ubiquitous fishing sheds found throughout the province's many "outports," and their "shed-like" design is reflected in the museum's exterior.

A notable exhibit at The Rooms is this large sculpture, titled "The Earth, Our Mother," carved from a Fin Whale skull by Labrador Inuk artist and environmentalist Billy Gauthier. The Fin Whale, the second-largest creature on Earth, measures nearly 90 feet long and has a skull that stands 5 feet tall.



The Earth, Our Mother carving.

© Ron Goodridge

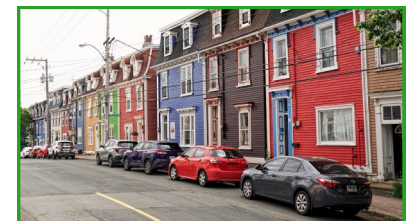


Signal Hill and St. John's Harbour.

© Ron Goodridge

Signal Hill, seen here from the balcony of The Rooms, sits at the entrance to St. John's Harbour, where Marconi received the first trans-Atlantic wireless signal in 1901.

Brightly painted row-houses, known as "The Jellybeans," now line many blocks in downtown St John's.



Jellybeans.

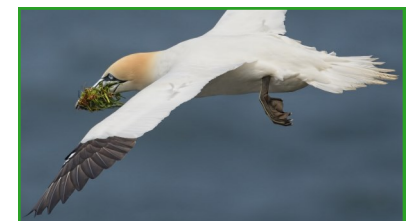
© Ron Goodridge



Northern Gannets. © Ron Goodridge

A guided tour with expert Newfoundland birder Jared Clarke to Cape St. Mary's Ecological Reserve was THE highlight of our week. It hosts 35,000 pairs of Northern Gannets, the largest seabird in the Atlantic,

nearly as big as a Bald Eagle.



A Northern Gannet carrying nesting material.

© Ron Goodridge

Bert Miller Nature Club

PO Box 1088
Ridgeway, ON
L0S 1N0



www.bertmillernatureclub.org
email: info@bertmillernatureclub.org

2025 - 2026 Executive

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•Tim Seburn

The Rambler Newsletter

•Newsletter contact: Tim Seburn
•Editor: Lorraine Brown-Joyce

The Bert Miller Nature Club is a charitable organization formed in January of 1995 by a group of people interested in sharing their enthusiasm for nature. Earl Plato, a local naturalist and history buff, was the founding president. The club is named after a well-known naturalist and resident of Fort Erie, Bert Miller, whose passion inspired all those who participated in his many rambles throughout the Niagara Peninsula. Since its inception, the Bert Miller Nature Club has been committed to preserving, protecting, restoring and improving the Niagara Peninsula's natural environment. Through monthly meetings, field outings and advocacy activities, the Club strives to foster an understanding and awareness of our natural heritage and its value in enhancing the quality of life. It also promotes cooperation with other organizations having similar interests.

In conjunction with the Town of Fort Erie, the BMNC maintains stewardship of the Shagbark Nature Park. This rehabilitated natural area features a woodland with marked trails and interpretive signage, a meadow containing native plantings and a chimney swift tower. The Park is located on Burleigh Rd between Nigh and Dominion Roads in Ridgeway.

Meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m., in person for September, October and April to June, and virtual via Zoom for November through March. Field outings may be scheduled periodically. Please visit our website, www.bertmillernatureclub.org for more information on our club and a complete list of activities.

The Rambler newsletter is published biannually in the Spring and Fall. Members are encouraged to submit articles, nature events or experiences, photos and outing reviews to bertmillernews@gmail.com. Items submitted may be edited and will be used subject to space allowances. Thanks to the many members who take the time to contribute to making a newsletter for everyone to enjoy.

Bert Miller

continued from page 4



Miller Homestead-Niagara River Summer 1887
Back L-R: Edward Kerr and Lucy Miller with baby Fred
Front L-R: Lucy, John, Tom, and Bert Miller

Photo of Bert Miller, age 5, at Miller homestead, intersection of Miller Creek, the Niagara River, and the Indian trail. The Indian trail ended on the East side of Point Abino Bay and later became Ridge Road—photo from BMNC archives.