



The Rambler

Fall 2018

From the President's Pen

I feel that I have big shoes to fill as the new President. Earl Plato, Peter Foebel, Rob Eberly, Dawn Pierrynowski (twice), Paul Philp, and Lynda Goodridge are the Past Presidents of the Bert Miller Nature Club. While it's a bit daunting to take hold of the reins as President after these talented, caring and enthusiastic folks have taken such good care of the Bert Miller Nature Club, it's also reassuring to know that I'm walking in the footsteps of such fine people. I will do my very best to continue the work and honour the dedication of the club's founder and those who have served on the executive in the past 23 years.

I have only been President for three weeks, but I would already like to thank everyone who has patiently answered my questions, helped me with computer issues and assisted in making the transition as smooth as possible. To make the transition to the next President even more streamlined, the Bert Miller Nature Club needs a Vice President - someone who would be willing to learn the ropes and after approximately two years, be ready to take the reins in their hands. The continued health and longevity of the club depends on this orderly and very common practice of any organization to have a Vice President. Please consider volunteering for this position.

The club's activities have been varied and educational during this past year. Dawn and Lynda launched Butterfly Buddies Kits in partnership with the Fort Erie Public Library and participated in their Summer Reading Sign-Up event in June. Members of the club assisted with Town of Fort Erie tree give away in June. Three presentations were made at St. Philomena Elementary School in May on the topic of "Biodiversity and Species at Risk" given by Owen Bjorgan. Our club sponsored two students from the Greater Fort Erie High School to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit in September.



Monarch butterfly at Shagbark. Dawn Pierrynowski photo.

There were other ways the members of our club got involved in the community. Several members participated as judges at the Niagara Envirothon in May, held at the Conservation Club. To help defray the cost of hall rentals and speakers, some of our members represent the club at Uncle Sam's Charitable Bingo. Chimney Swifts are monitored by some of the club members and reports of these sightings are given to Bird Studies Canada. Three of our members sit on the Town of Fort Erie Environmental Advisory Committee. Identification sheets on local butterflies have been designed and are available for public distribution. In April, a representative from the Club attended the Ontario Nature Regional meeting. Several of our members participate in Christmas Bird counts and the Buffalo Ornithological Society counts.

The Bert Miller Nature Club is an involved, educational and community-minded organization. Our members are active participants in many worthwhile projects and initiatives in our local area. With a membership as engaged and willing to volunteer as this, perhaps I shouldn't feel daunted by my new position. I look forward to the next two years.

Lets get out and enjoy nature,

Deb Sherk

Welcome New Members

- Irene Cameron
- Cathy Messier
- Paul McCurdy

Upcoming Meetings

- Nov. 19th - Peter Thoem – The Owl Foundation: A Fly By Night Organization
- Dec. 17th - 6:00 pm Holiday Potluck followed by David Chapman – Magic of the Night Sky
- Jan. 21st - Bob Manson – Same Continent, Different Worlds: Birding in South Africa and Gambia
- Feb 18th - Annual AGM followed by Marcie Jacklin – Chilean Adventure: A Nature Journey from Top to Bottom
- March 18th - Doug Tozer – Lake Erie: What Do Birds Tell Us?
- March TBA–Nature In Niagara in partnership with the Fort Erie Public Library
- April 15th - Jack Imhof – Navigating the Biodiversity of Canada's Stream Corridors

Upcoming Outings

- Jan 13th - 10:00am – Walk on the Wild Side
- Feb 23rd - 10:30am – Winter Tree Identification for the Family
- April 28th - 10:00am – Hiking Marcy's Woods

For more information, please refer to the club brochure or website.

Butterfly Buddies Take Off!

by Lynda Goodridge

On June 16th, Dawn and I helped to launch five Butterfly Buddies kits in partnership with the Fort Erie Public Library. As part of this initiative, the Bert Miller Nature Club supplied the items for the kits, which are now available for loan to anyone holding a valid library card. The idea is to get individuals and families out into nature by offering items to help them discover the beautiful butterflies that can be found around us. Each kit contains a pair



Lynda and Dawn look on as library patrons learn about butterflies. Ron Goodridge photo.

of close focus binoculars, an identification booklet on butterflies of Southern Ontario, a handout listing the most common butterflies that can be found in Fort Erie and tips on how to look for them.

The launch was held during the library's Summer Reading Sign-up event, which included displays and activities for kids to do as they registered for the program. Our club was well represented with both display items for kids to explore, and crafts for them to make. Over 100 children attended the event and our club received excellent coverage in the local media.

This is one of a number of projects that the BMNC board has undertaken in an effort to reach out to the general public. We are able to do these things with bingo money that has been approved for public outreach. Many thanks to Fort Erie Bingos and to our dedicated Bingo volunteers for making this possible.

Introduction to Waverly's History

by Tim Seburn

In this issue of the Rambler, we take an in-depth look at the history of Erie Beach and Waverly Woods. Currently residents of Fort Erie have access to a portion of the Friendship Trail which passes along the Lake Erie shoreline of this property, and until this past spring, residents were able to pass through Waverly Woods for dog-walking, birding, looking at the ruins, or simply to enjoy their day in an urban forest setting. This area is now posted no trespassing. Presently there are signs recognizing the Niagara Movement, a very interesting series of signs on the Erie Beach Amusement Park, but there is nothing recognizing Snake Hill's role in the bloodiest battle on Canadian soil, nor its role in the "underground railway".

The planned development for this site, presently under appeal, would protect seventy percent of the current mature woodland. However, the recommendations of the town's Environmental Advisory Committee, were not wholly adopted by this plan. These recommendations included protecting the entire mature woodland, including a buffer zone along the northern limit to provide foraging opportunity for spring migrants, moving the tower northward to reduce bird collisions and traffic, and, most importantly, not extending Lakeshore Road through the woodland for a whole host of reasons, including the impact this would have on Fowlers Toads.

We hope you enjoy this journey through the ages at one the most significant historical sites in Canada. If you are interested in more information on the topics covered, please contact the author of the article.

The Birds of Waverly

by Marcie Jacklin



Eastern Wood-Pewee. Ron Goodridge photo.

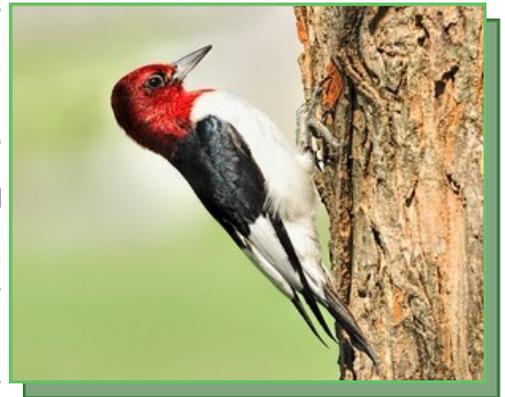
One of the best spring migratory hot spots in Niagara is located at Waverly Woods in Fort Erie. According to eBird, a citizen science database of bird sightings, Waverly is ranked the fourth most productive site in Niagara based on several decades of observation. The top four sites are Port Weller East pier (249 species); Beamer Conservation Area (227 species); Biggar/Grimsby Sewage Lagoons (also 227 species). The tally for all years on eBird for Waverly Woods is 221. I should point out that the number of birders who visit the first three sites is much higher than at Waverly. If Waverly had the same coverage it would likely be in the number one or two spot.

So what makes Waverly so productive? It is not only the woods that attract so many species of birds it is also the swamp area adjacent to the woods. Much of this area has been untouched by chemicals for decades or longer so the insect life is abundant. The native trees attract hundreds of different kinds of insects. Another factor is the adjacency to Lake Erie. During spring migration the birds are flying at night, but poor weather conditions can create what birders call

The Birds of Waverly cont'd

“fall out” conditions, where the birds are forced to land because of rain, fog or wind. I have been lucky enough to experience these times when the woods and surrounding swamp are literally filled with birds, making it impossible to count how many birds are actually there. Another special time to bird this area is when the remnants of a hurricane hit our region. This weather system can bring extreme rarities like Black-capped Petrel which was spotted in 2003.

Although my eBird entries are incomplete, I personally have recorded 156 species so far. Some of the best sightings are early records of Hooded Warblers before they became more common in Niagara; Golden-winged Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker, and a rarely documented occurrence of a Cerulean Warbler which sang both the typical Cerulean song but also the Hooded Warbler song. But my favorite bird by far is the endangered Red-headed Woodpecker. Once one of the more common woodpeckers in Niagara, their numbers have dwindled significantly over several decades with the federal government declaring their status as endangered earlier this year.



Red-headed Woodpecker in Fort Erie. Ron Goodridge photo.

This special area is the last critical migratory bird spring stop-over location in Fort Erie along the lakeshore between Point Abino and the Old Fort. Sadly if this area is developed, the migratory birds will have no habitat to refuel and continue their spring journey to the north.

As a result of concerns about Waverly Woods and the economic impact it will have on our communities in terms of the large number of birders who visit Fort Erie from Niagara, Ontario and New York, an economic and marketing strategy for bird watching for Niagara is in the initial stages of being created by collaborators from multiple organizations. You may remember, Tim Seburn and I gave a presentation last fall on this topic at the Crystal Ridge branch of the Fort Erie Library. I also gave an abbreviated version of this talk to the Fort Erie Town Council in the early winter of 2018. In both cases the talk centred on economic opportunities for the Fort Erie area. I am proud to say I am Chair of this committee and we will be inviting feedback from the public in the future.

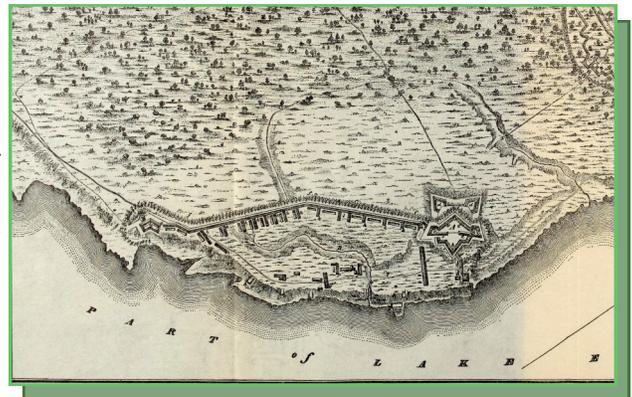
Spring Migration Video Links – [Video 1](#) – [Video 2](#) – Click the video links to experience spring migration at Waverly.

Erie Beach—The Changing Landscape

by June Chipp

The “Cleared Forest”

In September of 1814 during the War of 1812, volunteers of the New York State Militia crossed the river into Fort Erie and set up a camp “west of Snake Hill in cleared forest along the Lake Erie shore” (from Joseph Whitehorne’s book *While Washington Burned*). Snake Hill referred to a large 20-30 foot high sand dune on top of which was a battery of cannons. The map to the right, *Siege and Defense of Fort Erie* (Cruikshank), shows the area around the fort and to the west, as being clear, with woods outside that area. The military, at first the British then the occupying Americans, undoubtedly kept it that way so that snipers and enemy forces couldn’t sneak up on them. It can be seen that this cleared land extended into the Erie Beach area.

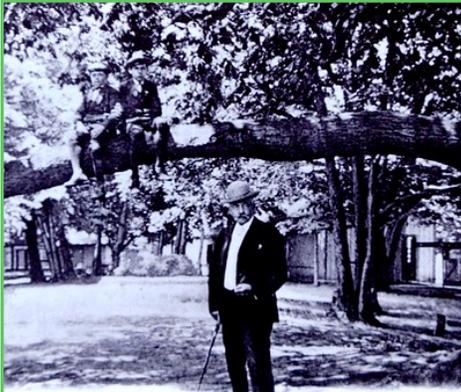


It is likely that the scrub bush would have been cut out and a few large trees left. These would probably be primarily oaks, as this is the main species which inhabits the lakeshore behind the cottonwoods at the beach. Indeed, we read that during the attack by the British on the fort on August 15, 1814, the advance force came upon an American piquet about 300 yards west of Snake Hill described as “posted in an oak grove” (from E. A. Cruikshank’s book *The Siege of Fort Erie*).

Fort Erie Grove

Moving forward in time, we see that the “grove” concept continues. The area at Erie Beach, to Kraft Road, was originally part of the Military Reserve, but by 1876 all the reserve land had been subdivided for selling off. The land owners at Erie Beach set up the area as a picnic ground for the public in 1885, and it was called “Snake Hill

Erie Beach—The Changing Landscape cont'd



by Morning, at Fort Erie Grove.

Courtesy of Fort Erie Public Library, Digital Archives

Grove”, being near to the famous sand dune. The area was inhabited by various types of snakes. When the land was purchased by a group of Buffalo businessmen a few years later, they changed the name to “Fort Erie Grove”. This photo on the left, labelled “Morning at Fort Erie Grove”, undated, shows a nattily dressed gentleman and 2 children in knickerbockers sitting on a large tree limb. The photo on the right shows local resident Mark Hanna standing in front of the same oak tree.



Oak tree at Waverly, taken Oct 10, 2018. Tim Seburn photo.



ON Archives - Erie Beach Blue Streak

The Sandy Coast

While the land back from the shore was an open area populated by a few large trees, the coast itself was covered by low sandy dunes. The photo at the left, labelled as circa 1919 (Ontario Archives), shows the east end of Erie Beach and the pier. The whole coast is white and sandy. The roller coaster seen running parallel to the shore is the Blue Streak.

Another reference to the dunes is mentioned in an old history account. We read that Joseph Wells of Yorkshire, who had a grist mill in Fort Erie, as a sideline, operated “a merry-go-round at old Fort Erie Grove, as it was then called, among the sand dunes” (from M. Raymond’s Tales of the Old Town).



ON Archives - Erie Beach

The Landscaped Gardens

As the picnic grove developed further, we move into the next phase of Erie Beach. The businessmen had a vision of an amusement park for the respite of the industrialized City of Buffalo, along with a first class hotel with all the latest amenities. They undoubtedly considered the ideal backdrop for a fine hotel would be gardens where the patrons could stroll. Accordingly the whole area was planted with lawns, set out within a grid of concrete sidewalks.

The photo on the left shows how extensive the grassed area was, starting at Helena Street where the Erie Beach Hotel was located, now Waverly Beach. The photo on the right shows the amusement park, with the casino in the foreground, and the midway and sports field at the back. Note the decorative Lombardy poplars that have been planted.



ON Archives - Erie Beach

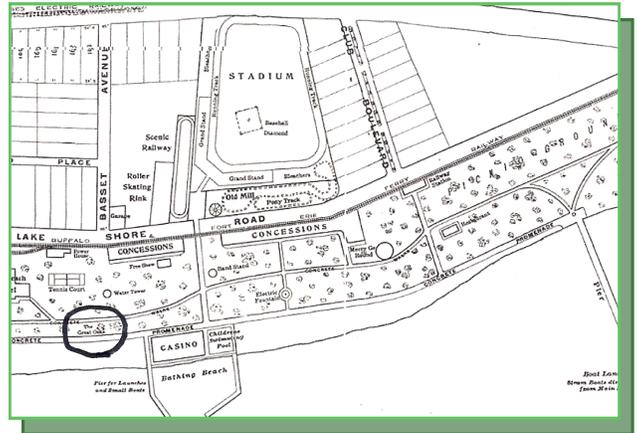
Early Erie Beach—The Changing Landscape cont'd



Erie Beach - Oak at entrance - Oct. 6, 2018. June Chipp photo.

The Great Oaks

When Erie Beach closed in 1930 the park began the process of “re-greening”. It grew back into the “older growth forest” we see today. However some of the original trees were left during the clearing. In fact, on the 1910 map of Erie Beach, there is a notation marked “The Great Oaks”. It is located just before the casino on the north side of the promenade. Today, at this location, there is still an old oak tree in a concrete planter. It is easy to find as you walk along the path. Interestingly, if you compare the GPS bearing of this tree with the 1934 Google imagery of Erie Beach, it matches up with a tree canopy. Could this be one of the original “great oaks”? If it was “great” in 1910, it would be very old indeed!



Early Reports From Erie Beach and Waverly Woods

by Tim Seburn

Thanks to the great work of Dr. Ron Williamson and many other archeologists who have conducted digs on the near-shore lands where Lake Erie meets the Niagara River, we know aboriginal people lived in this area for hundreds of years. And thanks to Maria sharing one of Lorne’s old files, the extensive research on Erie Beach of the eminent Buffalonian, Peter C. Andrews, came to light. In 1952 he reported, “Indian relics have been found including arrow heads, celts and hammerstones” and “sand excavators discovered charcoal from Indian camp fires beneath forty feet of sand”. (Pot and arrowhead photos are artifacts unearthed by Dr Williamson, on display at the Peace Bridge Admin. Building).



Tim Seburn photo



Tim Seburn photo

Here, First Nations people found an abundance of species to rely on for survival. Some of these are now sadly gone. Most remain. While smoked passenger pigeon squabs can no longer be served in bundles of six, bound by their necks, as was the Seneca custom; and while mastodons, caribou, elk, and even buffalo, which made an annual migration to a saltlick on Buffalo Creek, may no longer roam our woods - cougars, the namesake of our lake (The word Erie means “long tail”, signifying the Cat nation), may still pass through our region from time to time, and the great beds of flint, once the main attraction at Erie Beach for making arrowheads, can still be seen along the shoreline.

Almost every rock, in which this flint is found, also contains fossils of earlier life from the Devonian period, such as coral, bits of brachiopods and trilobites. A fireplace in a home at Point Abino is made from rocks, mined from the Lake Erie shoreline, which contain several complete horned coral. The first record I have found of a visitor noting these fossils at Erie Beach was made by John Grew, who walked this shoreline on August 25th, 1803. Mr. Grew also noted a great diversity of modern shells. Did you know that in the late 1800s there was a popular association in Buffalo dedicated solely to the study of local mollusk species, including those along the Canadian shoreline? While everyone enjoys walking the shoreline, the popularity of this group made little sense to me until I finally found a photograph of the group’s very attractive leader. I think it would be an interesting project to have our high school students create a list of shell species found today at Waverly Beach and compare it with the species list compiled over 100 years ago.

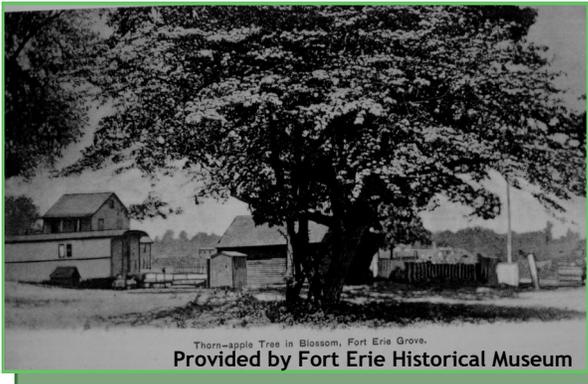
I have found records for the area around Waverly Beach first being called “Place of Hats”. According to Seneca tradition, as relayed to several early visitors to Fort Erie, soon after the first visit of white men to our area, a battle occurred on Lake Erie between the French in their bateaux and Indians in their canoes. After the French lost the battle and were drowned, their hats washed ashore near where the French later decided to build their trading post.

Thanks to Jane Davies of the Fort Erie Historical Museum, the journal of John Carver, a Captain in the British navy, who sailed Lake Erie in 1767, has come to our attention. He provides an early description of the “sugar loaf” dune, and may have been the first to dub it, “Snake Hill” based on the diversity of snakes he found. Of the species he

Early Reports from Erie Beach and Waverly Woods cont'd

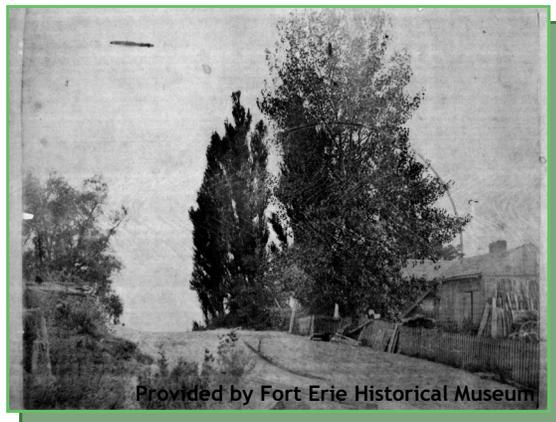
describes, only the northern water snake, garter snake and brown snake are known to persist at Waverly Woods. The eastern hognose he reported, to the best of my knowledge, has not been found east of Buffalo Road in my lifetime. (Two of the oldest photos of the Snake Hill area in the Fort Erie Historical Museum collection. Snake Hill photo right and Fort Erie Grove photo below).

Lady Simcoe, wife of our first Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe, visited Erie Beach on August 26th, 1795. She describes catching



crayfish and watching Indians washing their clothes from the flat rocks which extended well out into the lake. She stayed one

night indoors in an "indifferent house, kept by dirty people" I believe this was the Palmers. An 1850 map shows this cabin, amazingly still standing, in the oak grove on the military reserve. The Palmers also received a Crown grant for the lakeshore between Helena and Kraft in 1801. After camping on the beach, Mrs Simcoe left us with a drawing of her campsite. She later coloured this drawing and added an Indian spearfishing, something I did here as a child. And crayfish are still common here today too. I recently ran



into some young kids coming back from the beach with a pail full of crayfish, and asked them where they got them. When they told me their mother caught them, I said, "I wish my mother would catch me crayfish"! One of the girls, no doubt prompted by my white hair, responded, "Your mother's probably dead" (She's not!!).

Another visitor was Isaac Weld, who visited Waverly Woods in October 1795, and provided a more complete description of what was likely the same house at which Lady Simcoe stayed. He reported a "sorry habitation", log house, small, one room, door falling off the hinges, no glass in any of the three windows. One guest entertained himself by shooting arrows out the window. Weld feared he would "be famished if he remained under the care of old mother Palmer".

Perhaps hoping for a tasty squirrel, Weld rambled through Waverly Woods while detained by ill winds, and frequently fell in with parties of Seneca using bows and blowguns to hunt, and he provided a detailed description of this blowgun. "It is a narrow tube, commonly six feet in length, made of a cane reed, or some pithy wood, through which they drive short, slender arrows by the force of their breath, the arrows not much thicker than the lowest violin string, headed with triangular bits of tin, with two inches of thistle down at the opposite end". He notes darts can be shot 50 yards, and they never miss from within ten to fifteen yards.

I did some research and found references to indigenous peoples making blowguns from both a native phragmites and a giant cane (*Arundinaria gigantea*). Although the giant cane is native to the American southeast, I strongly suspect this was the reed Weld witnessed. It is much woodier and grows even taller than phragmites, and the First Nations of the southeast had a long history of encouraging and relying on it for a variety of purposes. Not having access to giant cane, Rick Stockton and I thought we would try our luck with phragmites. The native phragmites grows singly, not in dense stands, and the stem is smooth, not ribbed between the nodes, like the invasive species. Not knowing a location for native phragmites, we resorted to the non-native.

Rick informed me that you have to get the shaft perfectly straight to get any velocity out of the dart. Apparently Indians knew how to use heat to straighten stems. I don't. So instead, I taped a phragmites stem to an old broom handle. Then I had an even more brilliant idea. Why not tape several stems to the same broom handle and create a four shooter! This way, if and when I ever get the dang thing working, I might get a second, third, or maybe even a fourth shot before my brazen squirrels dismount my feeders. I plan to find some long hawthorn or honey locust thorns for darts. Do you think it will work? Just kidding!



Tim poses with the four shooter blowgun he assembled. Marcie Jacklin photo.

June Chipp dug up what was likely the first report we have of Fowlers Toads. It was made by Lieutenant Mermet of the DeWattevilles' Regiment, an 1812 soldier at Fort Erie, who wrote, "I have 20 toads beneath my feet, 100 grasshoppers on my clothes". In the '90s, club members volunteered with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Dr. Green of McGill in a study of Fowlers

Early Reports From Erie Beach and Waverly Woods cont'd

toads at Waverly. We clipped the toes of toads in a pattern that would allow individuals to be re-identified. Fowlers are still common at Waverly Woods today. Calls were heard this spring both from the public beach and at the foot of Bardol Avenue, and foraging Fowlers were found as far as 300 metres above the beach near Bardol Avenue.

I had read the plaque at Waverly memorializing the location of the first meeting of the Niagara Movement in July 1905. When Black Leaders of this civil rights movement found they couldn't safely meet in Buffalo, they moved their meeting to the Erie Beach Hotel, at the time a popular destination for Buffalonians. However, I was quite unaware of the earlier importance of this area to the history of civil rights.

Quoting Peter C. Andrews again, "Snake Hill in the 1850s had a considerable Negro colony. Located close to the American border and easily accessible, it was used as the final stop on the famous 'underground railway' which provided a means of escape for many Southern slaves". Fugitive slaves looked for yellow daylilies grown by Quakers in Pennsylvania. These Quakers had connections to Quakers in Bertie Township, where slavery had been abolished since 1793. (Bertie was originally called Quaker Township, and Ridgeway was likely originally the Quaker village of Black Creek). Perhaps the Fort Erie military reserve was the only place available for newly arrived slave refugees to squat. It must have been an amazing sight watching them rejoice in their freedom. Quoting Andrews again, "At one time colored camp meetings held in the old Snake Hill Grove attracted hundreds of visitors from both sides of the border", and, "Among the better known slaves to come to Snake Hill was Dan Banks, whose face adorns the box of a well-known cooked breakfast cereal". Quaker Oats? I'm not sure, but I'd bet his face had a really big smile!

Archive Submissions or Access

by Tim Seburn



Dave Labbe (left) Bob Chambers (centre)
Rob Eberly (right)

Rob Eberly, an early President of our club recently moved to Alberta, and left us with a couple boxes of documents related to his years in office. To safeguard these and other important records, the club has decided to digitize them and store them in an online archive. Rick Stockton and Tim Seburn, the team responsible for the archive, are presently focusing on records pertaining to the Marcy Woods period, before 2004. Over 700 items have been photographed to date. For those who were involved with the club during the early years, please go through your old boxes of photographs and documents. If



Dave Labbe with a ceremonial eagle feather.

you find items you would like to contribute, or if you are a researcher wishing to access the archive, please speak to Rick or Tim.

New Book Pre-Order — Best Places to Bird in Ontario



Best Places to Bird in Ontario is a new book being released in May 2019 by two brothers, Mike and Ken Burrell, who both presently sit on the Ontario Bird Records Committee and are excellent birders. It is part of a series being published by Greystone Books. The book features the top 30 birding destinations in Ontario, giving a birding overview, strategy (site guide), and detailed directions alongside colour maps and photos of target species. The Niagara area is well covered in the book.

Pre-orders are currently being taken until March 30, 2019, with the cost being \$20 (20% off the cover price). The copies will be signed by both authors. Although shipping cannot be offered at this price, Koyo Roy has graciously offered to distribute the books to anyone who places an order from the Niagara area. Pre-order is available at <http://burrellbirding.ca/best-places-to-bird-in-ontario/>. Please let them know in the comments that you are located in Niagara so they can direct your book(s) to Koyo.

Disclaimer: The editors, Koyo Roy or the Bert Miller Nature Club do not have any affiliation with this publication but just want to let area birders know of its existence.

Bert Miller Nature Club

PO Box 1088
Ridgeway, ON
L0S 1N0



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

2018-2019 Executive

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•Alida Osborn
•Tim Seburn

The Rambler Newsletter

Co-Editors
•Lorraine Brown-Joyce
•Tim Seburn

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 natural environment of the Niagara Peninsula. 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, a rehabilitated natural area that 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.

Indoor meetings are held the third Monday of the month, September through June and are open to the general public. Field outings are 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.

The final word...



Students on Ice (SOI) was established in 2000 with the mandate to educate the world's youth about the importance of the Polar Regions, to support their continued growth and to inspire initiatives that contribute to global sustainability. The SOI Foundation is internationally recognized as a pioneer and leader in Polar Education. Since inception, SOI has taken over 2500 students and staff on its award-winning educational expeditions to the Polar Regions. (From the website studentsonice.com)

Canada C3 (Coast to Coast to Coast) is a Signature Project for Canada's 150th Anniversary of Confederation in 2017. The centrepiece was an epic 150-day sailing journey from Toronto to Victoria via the Northwest Passage that took place from June 1st to October 28th. It inspired a deeper understanding of our land, our peoples and our country. (From the website canadac3.ca)

Our club has made arrangements with Geoff Green, founder and CEO of Students On Ice, to make a presentation for grades 9 and 10 students at the Greater Fort Erie Secondary School on Wednesday February 13th at 12:15pm. His presentation will include a showing of the new film Canada C3. Our vision is to have other community organizations join with us to help fund a Fort Erie student's future participation in this program. We anticipate a few tickets will be available for club members. Contact Tim Seburn if you're interested.

As the seasons are changing, so to are some things at the Bert Miller Nature Club. We would like to extend a warm welcome to our new President, Deb Sherk, and thank her for stepping into the recently vacant and very important position of President. We look forward to the next two years with a new president at the helm. Thanks also to Lynda Goodridge for the leadership she provided during her terms as President and for staying on as Past President. Another huge thank you goes out to Paul Philp for his dedication to our club in continuing as the Editor of The Rambler even after he moved away from the area. The torch has been passed along and we hope you enjoy the newsletter we have created for you now and going forward. Please join us in thanking Deb, Lynda and Paul!!

Your Editing Team, Lorraine and Tim

