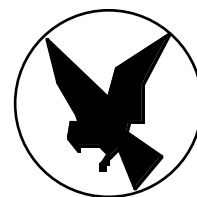


# EARTHWAYS<sup>©</sup>



Earthways is a publication of LAMBTON WILDLIFE INCORPORATED - P.O. BOX 681, SARNIA, ON N7T 7J7

Gordon Catterson - Editor

Cheryl Veary-Webmaster

January, 2010

Website: www.lambtonwildlife.com

All indoor programs are open to the public and are held on the last Monday of the month, from September to November and January to March at the YMCA Learning & Career Centre 660 Oakdale Avenue at 7:30 pm. Articles in Earthways represent the views of the author and not necessarily the views of Lambton Wildlife Inc.

## Indoor Program

January 25, 2010

### Bluewater Bridge Peregrines

The Bird Lady, university professor Kariann Reno from Detroit, will bring us up to date on the success of the Peregrine Falcon nesting program on the Bluewater Bridge. She will review falcon biology and the recent history of the falcons in view of environmental pressures.

February 22, 2010

### Rare Woody Plants of Ontario

Sean Fox, Arboretum Manager University of Guelph Arboretum, will talk about the threatened and endangered trees and shrubs in Ontario, particularly in southern Ontario. The Arboretum has a number of significant projects, including a mature seed orchard and an extensive gene bank. There is a lot of discussion about protecting endangered animals, but they rely on the health of the habitat provided by trees and shrubs.

March 29, 2010

### Front Yard Gardens: Growing More Than Grass

Liz Primeau, the highly respected and well known author of numerous books on gardening, including the best seller Front Yard Gardens, founding editor of Canadian Gardening magazine and the former host of Canadian Gardening Television on HGTV, will be our speaker. She has long been the leader of the turf the turf movement. She preaches the mantra of biodiversity and the beneficial transformation that occurs when you replace an expanse of lawn with plants that attract birds & butterflies.

April 17, 2010.

### L.W.I. Annual General Meeting and Banquet-Mandaumin United Church Hall.

Business meeting and elections at 4:30, bucket draw opens at 5:00, with the delicious turkey dinner, with homemade fruit pies, to be served at 6:00 pm. Guest speaker will be Winnifred Wake of the Mcllwraith Field Naturalists of London, talking about chimney swifts, mysterious little birds in big trouble...a threatened species. Winnifred was the force behind the amazing project in London to learn more about nesting and roosting habitat of chimney swifts: Swift Watch.

## Outdoor Program

Please note: - All youth under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult on the outings.

- Items marked with an \* are or can be a half day only.

### Bickford Oak Woods Beaver Swamp Tour

Saturday, January 30, 2010

This is a joint event with Sydenham Field Naturalists. Clean out wood duck boxes, stroll through button bush/beaver swamp, under the heron rookery. Snowshoes an asset if snow is deep. Meet at the Bickford Oak Woods at 10:00 am, St. Clair High School at 9:30.

Leaders: Larry Cornelis: 1-519-627-8785 and Tom Chatterton.

### \*Down River Ducks

Sunday, February 7, 2010.

Meet: 9:00 a.m. at the Dow People Place parking lot (north of McLean's Centre). Lunch at a local restaurant. Wintering ducks, peregrine falcons, swans, uncommon gulls, etc.

Coordinator: Paul Carter: 344-2571

### \*Howard Watson Nature Trail Clean-Up

Sunday, April 18, 2010

Meet: 9:00 a.m. at Modeland and Cathcart trail entrance.

Inquiries: Gord Catterson 337-1246

### \*Highway 402 Clean-up

Saturday, April 24, 2010.

Meet at 8:45 am at Wawanosh Wetlands parking lot.

Inquiries: Joe Haselmayer 542-2826

## Index

Indoor Program .....	1	<u>Reports</u>	
President's Message .....	2	OLTA Conference .....	4
Outdoor Program .....	1	November Indoor mtg	6
Young Naturalists .....	3	Youth writing contest ..	3
Board of Directors .....	8	Trivia .....	3
<u>Notices</u>		<u>Articles</u>	
Deadline .....	8	Pawpaw fever .....	3
Letter to Editor .....	2	Swoosh the Pike .....	7
ON AGM .....	8		

## Greetings from the President

The season's festivities are behind us now as we enter the New Year. I hope you were able to spend some enjoyable time with friends and family over the holidays and that the New Year brings you good health and happiness.

Our Indoor Program over the next few months features some interesting speakers, and as usual culminates in Lambton Wildlife's Annual General Meeting and Banquet April 17, 2010 at the Mandaumin United Church Hall.

I want to make special mention of our March program when our guest speaker will be the well respected gardener and author Liz Primeau. Primeau served as editor of Canadian Gardening magazine and was the host of the TV series Canadian Gardening Television. She has written a number of gardening books, including Front Yard

Gardening, which will be her topic at the March meeting.

I want to write a few words about another of her books, *My Natural History: The Evolution of a Gardener* which I had the opportunity to read over Christmas. (It is available to lend through the Lambton County Library system, or can be purchased at The Book Keeper in Sarnia.) Although Primeau is extremely well known in Canada as an author and gardening expert, I was not that familiar with her work. Not being a "green thumb" gardener, I was not too sure just how interested I would be in a book about gardening. Much to my delight, I found that she writes in a very engaging and informative style and the book itself was a joy to read, even to a gardening initiate like myself.

In fact, it is not a "how-to" book about gardening, but rather, as the title suggests, her journey of discovery and growth as a gardener. As a young child, her father and her Uncle Ren, both avid gardeners, were her early mentors and their love of gardening exerted a lasting influence on her. As a young girl living in Winnipeg and then next on a farm near Paisley in southern Ontario she was free to explore the outdoors, the "fields and streams of the rural countryside."

Numerous studies have shown that this early connection to nature is very important. If children do not experience the natural world as they grow, they are less likely to be terribly concerned about the protection and preservation of the natural environment as they mature into adults. It is in this context that makes LWI's Young Naturalist and Jr. Conservationist Group program so important. LWI is very fortunate to have programs led by such knowledgeable and enthusiastic leaders as Melissa Levi and her predecessors to foster this connection between youth and nature.

Primeau goes on to describe as how, over the course of years, the gardens at her homes were modified and shaped as she became more aware of design as an influence in gardening. She points out that design has for thousands of years been a central feature of great gardens- the 600 BC Hanging Gardens of Babylon being a famous example. She writes about flowers, plants, and trees in harmony with paths and ponds and waterfalls, and how all must flow together naturally in order to produce the desired affect one hopes to achieve.

She makes note that the gardens of ordinary people are often termed "vernacular gardens" by garden experts and historians. They are vernacular in the sense that they contain "the same kind of plants as other gardens in the area and conform generally to local styles." Although certainly not of a rigid formal design like the grand park-like gardens of Europe, nor are they meant to be, vernacular gardens do express the gardener's own personality and the hands-on experience of creating something of their own design for their own pleasure and enjoyment and that is reward enough.

Whatever your skill as a gardener, I think you will find *My Natural History* worthwhile to read and I highly recommend it to you. I am very much looking forward to Liz Primeau's appearance in Sarnia in March and to her talk on Front Yard Gardens. I am sure we will find her ideas innovative and thought provoking.

LWI has some exciting plans in development in conjunction with her visit that I know you will find intriguing. Watch for details to be announced over the next few months.

Dick Maxfield

Letter to the Editor

### **RE: Editor's views on global warming.**

Ever since I've been a member of LWI I've been greatly impressed by the amount of work Gord does for the club, and he has, arguably, made a greater contribution to LWI than anyone else over the past 15-20 years.

So I was very surprised to read his anti-environmental views on global warming. He shares those views with the oil and gas industry and with neo-conservative ideologues.

David Suzuki has called failure to act to reduce carbon emissions an "intergenerational crime" i.e. the victims are our grandchildren. Gord is concerned that action to reduce carbon emissions may result in "higher prices and taxes".

Nonetheless, we all believe what we want to, and, we all have our own sense of what is important in life. So I'm surprised, but not concerned that these are the personal opinions of the editor of *Earthways*, and, in a real sense, the voice of LWI to many of our audiences.

But what I am appalled at, is that these views of the editor, which argue against action now which could protect our natural environment for future generations, is published in *Earthways*. I believe this does a disservice to LWI and damages our reputation in the natural environment community. And, finally, I think it's an insult to those members of LWI who care about the natural world.

Joe Haselmayer

### Young Naturalist Report:



A report by Sean about our participation in the Christmas Bird Count, December 19, 2009:

This years Christmas bird count was a very fun event and for me, was a great success. Our group saw multiple species of birds. There were a lot of different species of water birds including ring-necked duck, black scoter, common goldeneye, and bufflehead. Although there were many ducks there were also land birds, including downy woodpeckers, a pileated woodpecker, black-capped chickadees, white-breasted nuthatches, and bald eagles. My favourite bird at this count had to be the pileated woodpecker.

They are so neat and are not commonly seen. Over all, this day was a good day with nice weather, and we learned a lot from Alf Rider and Melissa.

By: Sean

A special thanks to Alf Rider for spending the day with us! We enjoyed our time and your teachings! - Thanks Alf!!

We still have room for new members in both groups!

Please contact Melissa Levi @ [insektivi@hotmail.com](mailto:insektivi@hotmail.com) for info.

### Youth Writing and Art Contest

Hi everyone,

The annual Youth Contest is back, making this its 5th year running – only this year we're excited to add an art component to the submissions!

As you may know, the year 2010 has been declared the Year of Biodiversity by UNEP. So to support this initiative in raising awareness about the critical importance of biodiversity for a healthy planet, the topic for this year's Ontario Nature Youth Writing and Art Contest is Wild Species & Wild Spaces: why biodiversity is important to me. The contest is open to students in Grades 7 & 8 across Ontario. And make sure to note the awesome prizes being offered this year to the contest winners!

Information about the contest is also posted on our site at <http://www.ontarionature.org/events/youthchallenge.html>, so be sure to check it out. There's a link to the official Convention on Biological Diversity 2010 IYB website with a video that's worth watching.

Cheers,

Lenore

Lenore Nadeau

Manager, Nature Network and Youth Programs

Ontario Nature

366 Adelaide Street West, Suite 201

Toronto ON M5V 1R9

Tel: 416-444-8419 ext. 222

Toll free: 1-800-440-2366

Fax: 416-444-9866

<mailto:lenoren@ontarionature.org>

[www.ontarionature.org](http://www.ontarionature.org)

Check out ON Nature magazine's new website! Please visit us online at [onnaturemagazine.com](http://onnaturemagazine.com). You can comment on stories, join a discussion group, submit your favourite photos and more. We'd love to hear from you!

### Pawpaw Fever:

The November 9th 2009 issue of Maclean's contained an article on pawpaw fruit. It describes the flavour of pawpaw as a heavenly mixture of banana and guava, mixed with a touch of persimmon. It goes on to talk about the fact that it grows in Ontario's Carolinian zone and that few Canadians are even aware of it. Hardly surprising since if you mention Carolinian Canada to most people, even in southwestern Ontario, you would get a blank stare.

Apparently this fruit is much sought after by chefs and some have created delicious desserts using the pawpaw. Pioneer families would have been more familiar with the fruit as it was eaten by them as a treat. I recall being at a talk by the late Henry Kock at the library in Bright's Grove and he sang a few lines of an old song called "Under the Pawpaw Tree". Farther south in the U.S.A. they can be found in roadside and farmer's markets. However here in Canada the habitat for the trees have been threatened and they are now much more difficult to find. Demand has created the need for a commercial industry here in Ontario and it is expected they will become more widely available in a few years.

Meanwhile you may want to talk to Larry Cornelis as to where they can be found locally as he is aware of spots close by where they grow. As well the Sydenham Field Naturalists are working to preserve a woodlot on the east side of Wallaceburg, whose tentative name is Wallaceburg Pawpaw Woods. A commercial opportunity?

Gord Catterson

### Wilderness:

Percentage of Africa that is wilderness 28%.  
Percentage of North America that is wilderness 38%.

## Together We Can...An Inspirational Journey

By Klaus Keunecke

(A Volunteer for Nature - A LWI Member - A Bullfrog Power Customer)

On the foggy morning of Thursday, October 29, 2009, Peter Banks and I set out early to represent Lambton Wildlife Inc. (LWI) at the 11th Annual Conference of the Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA). The Conference was held at the Kempenfelt Conference Centre in Barrie. Hidden in a beautiful deciduous forest, the modern conference centre overlooks Lake Simcoe. On our arrival, loons still lingering on the lake and trees still cloaked in bright yellows and oranges made for a grand autumn scene.

The theme of the Conference was "Solid Foundations: Together We Can!" Over the 2 1/2 days of the conference, Peter and I were exposed to a compelling and dynamic keynote speaker, to some excellent and some not-so-great workshops related to land trust issues, to motivational speakers with moving personal stories, to Ontario's Minister of Natural Resources, to landowners who donated their wilderness lands, to the dedicated people who run OLTA, to the magician who entertained at the Awards Banquet, to OLTA's 2009 award winners, to exhibitors ranging from Bullfrog Wind Power to the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, to good food and good accommodations - and above all, to people representing various land trusts, environmental organizations, conservation authorities, and government agencies with a common bond - a 'Love of Nature' and a passionate desire to protect and enhance our natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

DAY 1: Peter Forbes, a writer, photographer, farmer, conservationist, and cofounder of the 'Center for Whole Communities' from the Mad River Valley in Vermont, served a triple-function on the first day of the Conference. He delivered the keynote address, conducted the all-day 'Whole Communities' workshop, and topped it off with an unforgettable, heartwarming, passionate, and inspiring evening session.

In his keynote address Peter, who has built a national reputation in the US as the champion of more than 100 successful conservation projects, stressed that people like us must champion environmental and social change by reconnecting people to nature and by engaging 'have' and 'have-not' communities alike in novel and persuasive ways to once again bond with the land. We must reach out to the 98.5% of the population who are not members of a nature organization and who do not subscribe to a nature publication. He concluded with these thought-provoking reminders: - 'For a land trust conservancy to be successful building, RELATIONSHIPS is as important as PLACE' - 'It is not enough to CARE, we must ACT to protect our natural and cultural heritage'.

In the course of the 'Whole Communities' workshop, Peter introduced us to the Spanish word 'QUERENCIA'. It conveys such meanings as a sense of place and belonging, returning to your roots, connecting with people, love and being loved, aloha, a sense of who I am as a person, a sense of caring and bonding with the land. Throughout the

remainder of the day Peter repeatedly invoked the spirit of 'QUERENCIA'.

Next he gave us a glimpse of some novel ways employed to protect ecologically valuable lands: Land trusts are introducing the 'food' component in conservation easement agreements (CEA's) to bring local communities and local producers together - land trusts are buying forests and contracting out the lumber rights - US Voters in some jurisdictions have successfully tied their tax dollar to conservation efforts - The Nature Conservancy has built a school for the children of a remote Montana ranching community and 17 families of ranchers have agreed to stay and reintroduce bison to the area as part of a CEA.

Land trusts work together with beef farmers and government to secure funding for fencing and cattle drinking stations - land trusts provide land for community members interested in gardening and growing their own organic food. Peter then asked this question: "What do Communities need to hear from Conservationists"? In our discussion we came up with this list of what they need to hear: We listen - we care - we want to change the natural environment for the better - we seek balance - we respect you and your views - we value your contributions - we are going to inspire you, not demand of you - we want to create a culture of belonging, not one of suspicion and fear - we want to work together with you to achieve a common goal - we want everyone, including future generations, to win.

To illustrate how change happens and how a single individual can profoundly change society, Peter Forbes took us back to 1963. He showed us a black and white video of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. making his 'I have a Dream...' speech to a huge crowd in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. It was the defining moment of the civil rights movement and it changed America. It was the first time I had seen the complete version of King's passionate speech and it raised a number of questions in my mind: What was it that made Dr. King so influential? What was it in this speech that connected so deeply with people? Who will bring about the defining moment of the environmental movement and profoundly change our world for the better?

Peter Forbes used King's speech to illustrate how STORIES can change people and nations, and how you can connect with people in opposition by revealing the WHY, the Big Picture, the shared vision, and the shared values. 'Common Values' tend to unite people, whereas 'Strategies' spelling out the HOW, the steps, facts and figures tend to cause conflict and divisiveness. The secret is to focus more on the WHY and less on the HOW. To achieve a breakthrough on contentious issues Peter advised: 'Ask people what they care about - then let people talk'. One other critical element in connecting with the 98.5% of the people outside the realm of environmentalism is language. Peter walked us through a short exercise and it quickly became apparent that words like ecology, natural heritage, watershed, stewardship, sustainability; 'Green', organic, etc. are overused by conservationists and poorly understood by the uninitiated. Words like the spirit of nature, love of the land, dreams, nurture, home, achievable tasks, etc. are more likely to resonate.

Peter closed his workshop session by reemphasizing that conservationists must move beyond 'acres' and focus on what is most important: We must tell people that we are proud to be conservationists - tell stories that paint a picture of the world we long to see - rethink and reinvent 'SUCCESS' - connect people to one another and to nature - choose the one significant thing we each personally can do to build whole communities.

In the evening Peter succeeded in captivating his audience from the start. Without a word he flashed a series of stunningly beautiful photos of people, mountains and valleys on the big screen. He then proceeded by telling us three stories of people who profoundly changed him and the course of his life. For one and a half years he lived in a tent in a valley in the mountain kingdom of Nepal - miles from the nearest road to the outside world. The valley had been designated to be flooded as part of a hydro development project and the people, who for generations have lived the simple life and tended their rice paddies in this isolated valley, were to be displaced. Peter Forbes went there to record 'The Before' for National Geographic. The heart-warming interaction with the young and old in this remote valley made a deep and lasting impression on him. Unlike people from many other parts of the world, these people wanted to live nowhere else - it was their QUERENCIA. Dr. William Coperthwaite, originator of the taper-walled yurt, author of "The Handmade Life: In Search of Simplicity", and good friend of the late Buckminster Fuller (architect of 'Geodesic Dome' fame) became Peter's mentor and idol. Coperthwaite has a Ph.D. from Harvard, but chose to live the simple life in the woods, on an isolated stretch of coastline in Maine. There, without telephone, computer, or TV, he labours in his round three-story version of a yurt patterned after the yurts used for centuries by the nomads of Mongolia. Coperthwaite is intent on capturing the healing, the creative, the communal, and the spiritual nature of the 'yurt' and characterizes the thrust of his work as not simple and self-sufficient living, not yurt design, not social change, but as ENCOURAGEMENT - encouraging people to dream, to seek, to experiment, to plan, to create, and to find a better way to be one-with-nature. The third person who had a profound impact on Peter's outlook was Gladys, a black woman in Harlem. Gladys almost single-handedly transformed an empty urban wasteland, covered with litter, into a street-side garden and forest - an 'Oasis of Green' for her neighbours in the heart of Harlem. We gave Peter Forbes, the driving force of 'Whole Communities', a standing ovation.

DAY 2 - On Friday morning Howard Clifford started us off on an emotional roller-coaster account of why and how his family donated their 1200-acre Alba Wilderness property to the Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy under a 999-year Conservation Agreement. In a quiet manner Howard related how a sequence of coincidences led the Clifford Family to acquire the property in 1979 - how they restored it into one of Lanark County's gems of nature - how Howard himself helped an elderly cancer patient achieve her dying wish to reconnect with nature on this land, and how he was moved by the simple and eloquent words of a

visiting native chief talking about the spiritual attachment to the land. Howard considers 'Nature' the best preacher, the best teacher, the best friend, the pathway to the soul - 'Nature' refreshes the spirit again and again. He advised us to engage landowners emotionally and in a non-threatening way to share the still natural and ecologically valuable parts of their land. He ended his emotional presentation with this profound insight: "If we don't protect nature we lose our soul". We all sat there in hushed silence as the eyes of more than one filled with tears. At the end, Howard also got a standing ovation.

DAY 3 - On Saturday morning I sat in the comfort of the conference room and ended up taking one agonizing step after another towards the top of Mount Everest with Peggy Foster. In her pursuit of exploring her own human limitations she has climbed the highest peaks on six continents and set her sights on the seventh - Mount Everest. After dazzling us with breathtaking photos of each of her conquests, Peggy led us up the slopes of the highest mountain to the 'Edge of the Earth'. With a spellbinding narrative, accompanied by photos, video clips, and sound-bites she conveyed how a physical, mental and spiritual bond develops with fellow-climbers, with the local Sherpa, with the starkly beautiful environment, and with the forces of nature in the pursuit of the impossible. As Peggy climbed the mountain in virtual reality, we experienced the camaraderie among climbers, the bitter cold, the howling winds, the struggle to breathe at high elevations, the mysterious heartbeat of the mountain, the constant fear, the shear exhaustion, and death. 300 meters short of the summit, Peggy had to make a decision - to climb to the top of Mount Everest and die on the descent, or to turn around and live. She chose to live. She had reached her absolute limit. Back in the Sherpa village a little girl came up to Peggy, tugged at her and motioned to her own eyes and then to Peggy's eyes. Peggy could not understand what the little girl wanted. No, she did not want a candy. No, it was not a fascination with Peggy's blue eyes. Finally, someone came to translate the little girl's wish - she wanted Peggy's courage when she grew up.

It was an inspirational journey. And yes, Peter Banks and I had come to learn more of the ins and outs of land trusts and building solid foundations for land conservation at this conference. We did attend a full slate of the more technical workshops and we did pick up pointers on such issues as: Conservation Easement Agreements (CEA's) with owners of ecologically valuable lands, funding for the acquisition of critical lands, effective land-stewardship planning, tax implications, the systematic monitoring and enforcement of CEA's, and more. In the true spirit of the conference theme, Solid Foundations: Together We Can! Peter Banks, of LWI Fungi-Foray fame, delegated the task of writing the formal conference field report for the LWI Land Trust Committee to me - but 'Together' we did.

(Websites to visit: [www.olta.ca](http://www.olta.ca)  
[www.wholecommunities.org](http://www.wholecommunities.org) [www.yurtinfo.org](http://www.yurtinfo.org) )

### November Indoor Meeting:

Again an excellent turnout of about 75 people attended the LWI indoor meeting at the YMCA Learning Centre on Monday, November 30th.

Prior to the speaker the Young Nats did a great job of educating the audience on frogs, part of the subject matter for the evening. Eight of them hopped into the room with green faces and each of four pairs represented different frog species. Their leader Melissa Levy described each and had the Young Nats act out a role for each.

First was the chorus frog, the first one we hear in the spring with three dark stripes on their back. The sound they make was represented by a stick being stroked across a chair leg producing the "ribbet" sound we are familiar with. It was amazingly life like.

Next were spring peepers with a dark X on the back and their sound was mimicked by the sound of sleigh bells. The green frog was represented by a sharp twang, sounding like a loose banjo string. In this case they used a taut rubber band. Last were cricket frogs which are found on Pelee Island only and make a sound like two pebbles clicking together.

The kids then separated and by sounding their respective sounds hopped to reunite in pairs, demonstrating how they find each other in nature. A really nice demonstration.

Next Larry Cornelis introduced the featured speaker, Scott Gillingwater. Scott is currently the Species at Risk Biologist/Rare Reptile Research Program Manager for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. His research includes areas throughout Ontario focusing primarily on SAR reptiles and their habitat. He has over 16 years of professional experience in turtle and snake conservation biology throughout southwestern Ontario.

Scott began by saying that there are 13 types of frogs and toads and 11 types of salamanders and newts in Ontario. While toads can occupy both wet and dry areas frogs require moist areas in the form of rivers, streams or wet meadows and swamps. He said that the American toad is the most common and can be as large as 10 cm although most are smaller. He said the females are bigger and their diet is mainly insects. The other toad he mentioned was Fowler's toad which is threatened. They live in the sandy north shore of Lake Erie and have a call like the sound of a screaming baby. They can hybridize with the American toad and the call of the hybrid has characteristics of both. The Eastern hog nose snake is a predator and they are threatened by beach raking.

Scott then moved on to frogs. All of them in Ontario breed in water and their skin must remain wet. They are quite common but some species are declining. They help to control insect populations and are a significant food source for birds and snakes.

He started with the green frog and said it is similar to the bullfrog and the mink frog. He said they make take a year or two before the tadpoles transform into a frog.

He then moved on to the bullfrog and indicated that it is the largest in Canada and is still listed as a game species. It

too may not transform into the frog stage for a couple of years. He said it will consume anything it can get in its mouth, skips across the water before diving and will bleat like a young goat if it is picked up. It will eat young turtles and snakes and has even been seen swallowing a small bird.

Next was Grey's tree frog which can change colour from green to brown to grey. They have unique toe pads and are bright yellow on the inner sides of the rear legs. They are well camouflaged and can be found off ground in vegetation. However they must return to wetlands to breed and lay eggs. Their tadpoles have a bright red tail.

Scott next talked about the leopard frog. He said they are very common in marshes and swamps and are brown, green or both. They usually, though not always, have dark spots and are very similar to the pickerel frog.

Lastly he mentioned Blanchards cricket frog which is likely extirpated in Ontario. It was confined to Pelee Island and Point Pelee and was last reported on Pelee Island. It has quite a wide variation in appearance and is tiny, less than 2.5 cm.

Then Scott discussed salamanders and newts. He said some lay eggs on land while others do so in water and there are both terrestrial and aqueous species. The most common salamander is the eastern redbacked which he said is usually a forest species. They lay eggs on land and most have a red back but some are completely dark and are often called leadbacks.

The eastern newt is the only one in southwestern Ontario and they may transform directly from the aquatic larval stage to an aquatic adult stage, but usually go through a juvenile land stage before returning to the water as an adult.

He then turned to the blue spotted salamander and said it was confusing to identify. It is found in moist woodlands and while there are a few pockets of pure bluespotted salamanders they often hybridize with both the Jeffersons and small mouth salamanders.

Scott mentioned some recent finds in the streams feeding into the Niagara gorge. These are the northern dusky and the Allegheny dusky, both extremely rare. They need rocky flowing streams for their survival. He also described the development of the spotted salamander saying that the male leaves sacs of sperm which the female finds and takes in. The eggs develop within a gel sac, move to the larval stage, then move to land where they lose their gills. They then develop bright yellow spots.

Scott then talked about threats faced by all these creatures. These include the usual loss of habitat so common in the natural world. Impact is caused by agriculture, marina development, golf courses, dams and housing development. Other threats are road mortality, agricultural practices, pollution, persecution, predation and collection for both pets and food. Frog's legs remain a delicacy.

Scott said that solutions are difficult as wetlands continue to be drained, the population continues to grow and development will not end. He said we need to educate and do outreach programs to make people more aware of the

problems. Better protection laws are required, there is a need to create wetlands and for landowner stewardship programs. He talked about monitoring programs run by Bird Studies Canada and the Toronto Zoo. Information can be obtained at <www.bsc-eoc.org/mmp.html> and <www.torontozoo.com/adoptapond> Both of these are aimed at teaching young people about frogs.

Finally Scott mentioned a new guide prepared by him and Alistair MacKenzie of the Pinery that will be available shortly. Also a ROM field guide that is very good, a book called Amphibians & Reptiles of the Great lakes Area by James Harding and The Frogs & Toads of North America by Lang Elliott, Carl Gerhardt and Carlos Davidson. This book includes a 70 minute CD documenting calls.

Scott was thanked by Ken Bulgin for an excellent talk.

Gord Catterson

*The Editor. Earthways.*

*I made this story up yesterday. It is an expansion of an Essay that was done for homework at my alma mater- the Hull Grammar School too many years ago to remember.*

*Alf Rider*

### **Swoosh the Pike. A made-up Story for Liam as per Henry Williamson.**

It was something starting from nothing. A change. Just a strange feeling of a difference between a something and a nothing. It was the swing of the Sun from the East over to the West as the Earth spun towards the light. Then came a time of activity and then peace again.

His growing eyes started as tiny black spots smaller than a pinpoint and were growing each day and with that a greater ability to detect first light and lack of light. Then in the light there were shapes like the clear egg shell that was around him and then things beyond. These things sometimes moved. In the deep silent moat around the old castle the water had been clear after the ice melted. That was when his almost meter-long Mother had been swimming with five males, all smaller than her had cruised the shallows scattering many thousands of tiny amber-coloured eggs onto the weeds where if they were lucky they stuck. Those that did not find a place up off the muddy bottom became covered in muddy silt and would never know anything. Later the water

would first turn green with all the minute plants called algae and then clearer as minute animals called plankton ate the plants. These would in turn feed the tiny growing fish.

His Mother now had gone to the deepest and quietest part of the Moat to rest and then to begin again her habit of catching any smaller fish or water vole as a snack. Sometimes she swallowed a duckling or even a young swan if she was hungry and the size was right. She lay silently in the water, her green back shaded to silvery sides with pale spots, her belly was white, invisible except to tiny fish. Her head was the shape of a shoe and her huge mouth lined with many rows of backward-pointing teeth never let go of any slippery fish. Even her tongue and roof of the mouth had these gripping teeth. Nothing escaped her bite.

Her three single fins were all at the back of her body to give a firm hold on the water as she rippled her body fast enough to send her at almost twenty miles an hour from a standing start after her next meal. These were the dorsal, caudal and ventral fins, usually known as back, tail and ventral fins. Her paired fins were behind her gills by which she took oxygen from the water which her body used to create energy. These were the front fins which were yellowish and were always moving slowly helping to keep her balance. They were known as the pectoral fins-just as our shoulder girdle is called the pectoral girdle.

Just before the tail was a second pair of fins called the pelvic fins just like our pelvic girdle where our hips are. This pair of fins also helps keep the fish the right way up when swimming and to help steer. But she knew nothing about these things and would never care or think about them because they were able to do things for her without any thought at all. And seemingly in control of everything a pair of expressionless eyes which could look almost all around her.

Back to the now spotted egg. There was also now a tiny bit of red beginning to show close to the eyes. This will split into three parts. A heart, and two gills by which to breathe by taking in water and extracting the oxygen that combined with other chemicals such as sugar to make carbon dioxide and water at the same time releasing a huge amount of energy.

The tiny heart can be seen to be pumping blood now and now the thing becomes a living animal. The egg breaks and out comes a tiny fish that looks very much like a minute

----- CUT AND MAIL -----

### **To help us serve you better**

#### **please circle or check (optional):**

Age Groups: Under 12    12-20    20-40    40-60  
60-80    over 80    or    M. Y. O. B.

Interests:    Birds    Flowers    Animals    Insects  
                  Fungi    Fish        Trees  
                  Conservation    Environment  
                  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Activities: Hiking                    Camping            Bicycle Riding  
              Canoeing                    Walking            Talking  
              Writing                    Cross Country Skiing  
              Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Might be willing to:

Serve on Committee  
Chair Committee  
Serve on Board  
Act as LWI Representative  
Come to Indoor Meetings  
Go on Outings  
Participate in Slide Show  
Be an Advisor

#### Other Information to Share with LWI:

Need transportation to meetings \_\_\_\_\_  
Special skills or work experience \_\_\_\_\_

sturgeon with its up-turned tail.

Almost immediately, just under the surface of the water, he sees a movement just in front of his mouth. A quick 'Snap' and he has caught his first meal—a tiny water animal with only one big eye called a cyclops. The old Greek bad man had only one central eye and he was called Cyclops.

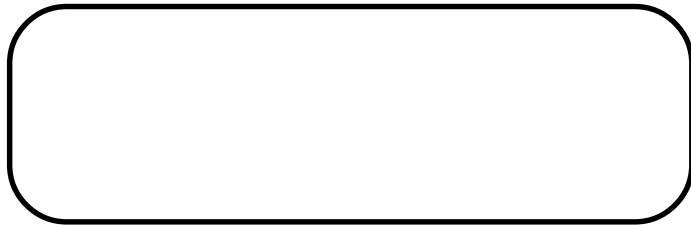
Every day he ate and grew. At one inch or 2.5cms. he started to move deeper down from the surface. Here there were baby fish called 'fry' that he caught and ate.

At about the length of a shoe he started to stay deeper in the water and still hidden in the weeds. Soon it would be time to move into deeper water- keeping a careful look-out for bigger pike like his mother who would snap-up a young pike.

Many years later after the ice had gone and the water was clear he would find a big lady pike and spend the early spring along side her keeping other male pike away while she laid her eggs that would hatch into fish which would never know their mother.

Some fish such as bass, take great care of their eggs and fry, but not the pike. And so another generation of pike grow up carrying the traits of their parents. Inheriting the good things that had kept them alive over the twenty or more years of their lives.

Best Wishes.  
Alf.



**Board of Directors:**

Richard Maxfield	President
Vacant	President Elect
Malcolm Boyd	Past President
Avalon Hamlin	Secretary
Bill Scott	Treasurer
Ken Bulgin	Board member
Krista Cowieson	Board Member
Robert Difruscia	Board Member
Alexia Gladdy	Board Member
Tania Havelka	Board member
Bill Hopkins	Board member
Melissa Levi	Board Member
Eric Marcum	Board Member
Mary Margaret McGrail	Board Member
Shawn McKnight	Board Member
Doug Winch	Board Member

**Ontario Nature AGM: 2010:**

Through of the initiative of Brenda Lorenz, the area nature organizations have agreed to sponsor the 2010 AGM of Ontario Nature. Lambton Wildlife, Sarnia Urban Wildlife, Friends of the Pinery, Sydenham Field Naturalists and the Carolinian Canada Coalition will be the co-sponsors.

At the September indoor meeting Brenda made an appeal for volunteers to assist in this event. The theme of the conference will be "Water in the Carolinian Life Zone". Sarnia's location makes it an ideal spot to discuss this subject with its' vital impact on all aspects of life.

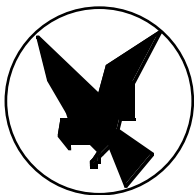
Please contact Brenda if you would like to help out with this important local event.

Deadline for February issue is  
**Friday, January 29th, 2010**  
Please leave typed material or discs in  
mailbox  
at 502 Roosevelt Drive  
or email to:  
gpcatt@xcelco.on.ca

----- CUT AND MAIL -----

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Mail to : Lambton Wildlife Inc. Box 681 SARNIA, ON N7T 7J7



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date : \_\_\_\_\_ Earthways via email? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Membership fees: Single \$20 Family \$25 Young Naturalist \$15 (\$5 ea. add'l child) (Circle one)

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Business number 11900 4620 RR0001) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_