



## NEWSLETTER

### SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

SLSN is an incorporated not-for-profit Member of Ontario Nature.

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Research Partner with The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe ([www.zephyrsociety.ca](http://www.zephyrsociety.ca))

Member: Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

Member: Greenbelt Alliance

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**Note: Please renew your membership to receive future Newsletters**

## E-NEWS BLAST

### REMINDERS OF Winter Meetings, Outings and Issues

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#### Meetings:

All Meetings start at 7:30 p.m. at the York Region Police Building Meeting Room (Baseline Road between McCowan and Civic Centre Road) unless noted otherwise. Paid up members events (for insurance compliance).

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*Tuesday, March 10*

Club members Hessel and Mary Pape will present an illustrated talk on this unique wild place, its history, natural heritage and future. Don't miss this presentation about this mysterious island off the east coast of Canada.

## **“Sable Island”**

**Speakers: Hessel and Mary Pape**

**TUESDAY MARCH 10, 7:30 p.m.**

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Photo credit: Hessel Pape

- **Sable Island Talk Poster is Attached. Club Members Please print poster and Post on Notice Boards in your area.**

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**Outings:** All regular outings – Note: **Only paid-up members may participate (for insurance compliance).**

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2015

*Saturday March 7*      **Deer Census in Rouge Park National Park:** Call Paul Harpley to register 905-722-8021. Date to be announced later. Organized by Paul Harpley.

## INVITATION

### Rouge Deer/Mammals Census this year is Saturday March 7

A note to let you know that the **Rouge Deer/Mammals Census this year is Saturday March 7**. The weather seems to be evolving to this date being ideal for the census this year.

I have been waiting for the usual late February thaw, and as you all know this year it has not come.

According to weather reports it looks like the temperature is going to be seasonally cold by mid next week and this should hold the snow. I am with consultation from other advisors confirming to do the count **Sunday March 7. We would meet at 9:00 a.m. at the Rouge Conservation Centre (Pearce House) as in past years.** All arrangements have been made with the Rouge Conservation Centre to use the Pearce House as our base for the day. It would seem conditions could be ideal as the snow will be on the ground and snowshoes and skis could be an option. The deer will be most active then also and participants will have a reasonable chance of seeing some.

Please plan to attend if you can and feel free to bring anyone else if you can. It should be a great day.

Paul Harpley



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Please pass the information on to others who may be interested.

**A Message from the Ontario Greenbelt Alliance Coordinator**

**Georgina Councillor Dave Neeson's motion to Save the North Gwillimbury Forest**

On **Wednesday, March 4th** Councillor Dave Neeson will ask the Town of Georgina to endorse the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority's (LSRCA) new draft *Watershed Development Guidelines* which would prohibit the building of subdivisions on provincially significant wetlands (PSWs).

As readers will recall in September 2014, Ecojustice commented on a draft policy on behalf of **South Lake Simcoe Naturalists (SLSN)**. Ecojustice noted that the proposed policy was unlawful and allowed developments in wetlands even where there would be harm to the environment and other problems, like flooding. Ecojustice and SLSN are pleased that the

LSRCA responded by conducting a legal review of the draft policy. In December 2014, the LSRCA revised the policy to address the majority of comments submitted by SLSN on wetland development approval. LSRCA staff have now proposed the removal of the provisions that allowed housing developments to be automatically approved in Provincially Significant Wetlands. Under the new draft policy, proposed developments in or near wetlands will be very restricted.

If the new revised policy is approved by the LSRCA this spring, it will be a huge step forward for the protection of Provincially Significant Wetlands in the Lake Simcoe Watershed like the North Gwillimbury Forest. However, there is more work to be done by the LSRCA to protect headwaters and other natural features. Ecojustice will also continue to work with SLSN to ensure better public consultation and notice when the Conservation Authority considers wetland development permits so that we can make sure the policy is upheld in practice. Ecojustice is also monitoring the practices of other Conservation Authorities to ensure they comply with the law.

One local area in Georgina that will benefit if the LSRCA officially adopts its proposed new *Guidelines*, is the proposed Metrus Developments project that they will not be able to build a 1,073 unit subdivision on the Paradise Beach-Island Grove PSW in the North Gwillimbury Forest (NGF).

## Upcoming Conservation Issues

## Town Of Georgina Official Plan Review and the Ontario Greenbelt Review

These are areas of planning that are currently in need of quality and informed review and comment. SLSN has been engaged in current process and has concern about serious planning deficiencies, and past Council, staff and consultants recommendations and Policies affecting future habitat and wildlife conservation in South Lake Simcoe. In the coming months these matters will be developed. Please contact President P. Harpley to be involved in preparation of documents in this regard.