

The Talon

Vol. 28, No. 5, April 2018



NEWSLETTER

SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

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

Post Office Box 1044 Sutton West, Ontario, L0E 1R0

Telephone 905-722-8021

(www.slsnc.ca)

Research Partner with The Zephyr Society of Lake Simcoe (www.zephyrsociety.ca)

Member: Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

Member: Ontario Greenbelt Alliance

Note: Please renew your membership to receive future Newsletters

Meetings and Outings

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. No July or August Meetings. Members events (insurance compliance). Visitors welcome.

York Regional Police, 3 District Community Meeting Room
3527 Baseline Road, Georgina.



NOTE: Consistent with YRP recent procedures in place regarding evening use of their Community Meeting Room (CMR), attendees of SLSN meetings must be current members of SLSN in good standing, and may be asked to provide further information, as requested.

***Tuesday, April 10* Ontario's Greenbelt:** The Greenbelt in Ontario has been a leading land use planning tool that, after a number years in existence has recently completed a review. SLSN members will interrogate its form, extent and function. In recent months the province has engaged Ontarians in an exercise at growing the Greenbelt. Club members research, presentation and conversation meeting.

***Tuesday, May 8* Shorebirds:** Many shorebirds (or "waders," as they are called in the Old World) are known as real puzzlers to novice birders and to some experienced birders as well. Most species have two or three different plumages. Presentations of photo reference and specialized information about I.D.'s, life cycles, ecology, breeding and the Ontario Tundra, and Lake Simcoe perspectives will be presented. They are going to be arriving any day.

Outings: All regular outings – Note: **Paid-up members in good standing may participate (for insurance compliance).**

2018 Spring

***Saturday April 28: Spring Birding and Nature Study*:** The annual Spring Birding trip along Lake Simcoe will concentrate on waterfowl and shorebirds, this year to the east. Rare migrants can sometimes turn up unexpectedly so be prepared. Later in the day we may do some hiking and general nature study in one of our local natural areas. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Tim Horton's in Sutton on Dalton Road. Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars etc.

Members, please consider writing and submitting an article to the Talon Newsletter. Submit to one of the Executive members.

Phone Paul 905-722-8021 or Norma 905-476-4747 for further information about meetings and naturalist outings.

York Region Forest News

Controlled Burn: The Regional Municipality of York's Natural Heritage and Forestry Services Branch undertook a controlled burn of tallgrass prairie/oak savanna habitat located within the **Bendor & Graves Tract** of the York Regional Forest earlier this spring 2018. **Public is now allowed to visit the site of the burn. Hopefully the tallgrass habitat will start growing this summer.** Please visit www.york.ca/yrf for more information.

As of March 1, 2018 we have officially entered the Burn Window (March 1st – April 30th, 2018). Staff and the burn consultant will be monitoring the weather and site conditions. Very precise wind and moisture conditions are required in order to proceed with ignition.

For more information contact Dayna at dayna.laxton@york.ca ext. 73119 or Kevin Reese (kevin.reese@york.ca) Program Manager, Forest Conservation ext. 76033.

Forest Plan and Conservation: The Region of York working on the development of a Forest Management Plan for the York Regional Forest. The Forest Management Plan will replace the existing Forest Management Plan which is set to expire at the end of 2018 and will guide the management of the Forest for the next 20 years.

York Region's **Parking Lot design** contractor will be undertaking work in the **Drysdale Tract**. The operation is expected to last *two months*. For the safety of the public and workers please keep clear of the operation.

Also, Region's **2018 Timber Harvest** contractor will be undertaking work in the **Hollidge, Scout, Robinson, Davis Drive, and Porritt Tract** next week. The operation is expected to last one months.

Contact Colin.macdonald@york.ca or 905-830-4444 x75258 for further information.

Species at Risk – Endangered – Ontario

Protect the Piping Plover Nesting Area

Posted on *March 20, 2018*



Endangered Piping Plover chicks hiding in the naturalized beach flora. (Wasaga Beach – July 5, 2016)

Much of the following was published in the Sun Times, Owen Sound – Thursday, March 15, 2018.

The Owen Sound Field Naturalists have issued an “urgent” call to action in response to the Mayor of South Bruce Peninsula’s assertion that the town will till and rake Sauble Beach this spring before the endangered piping plovers return.

The 300-member group is asking people to e-mail the municipality’s council members in an effort to prevent the work, which it says would put the tiny shorebirds and long-term health of the Lake Huron beach in peril.

People are being asked to copy their e-mails to provincial officials, including those at the Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry (MNR) and all the way up to Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne.

“Basically, it’s whoever you can think of that might finally influence this mayor and council to do the right thing. I honestly don’t know what else we can do other than stand in front of

bulldozers and it may come to that,” Kate McLaren, president of the Owen Sound Field Naturalists’ board of directors, said in an interview Wednesday.

“We have a lot of concerned people that are just enraged by this attitude. And especially given all of the work that’s gone into plover habitat to try to keep them safe.”

Tilling the beach, she said, will remove and kill grasses and sedges that are part of dune ecology and help to stabilize the dunes and prevent erosion. The vegetation provides habitat for plovers, she said, which require grass cover to, among other things, hide from predators.

Mayor Janice Jackson told The Sun Times late last month that the town will “absolutely” be tilling the beach this spring, despite the MNRF advising against it.

The plan, she said, is to cultivate the town-owned portion of Sauble between the water’s edge and 30 feet west of the historic dunes, as per the town’s beach maintenance policy, after the ground thaws but before the plovers arrive.

Asked Wednesday about the campaign by the field naturalists group, Jackson said the town is “certainly not going to alter our position” regarding tilling the beach.

Her assertion, from her Facebook posts, is that *“the tip of the beach, at Groves Point, was cleared right out by a Hiho last April. We removed all the vegetation from the last boardwalk to the breaker wall. Within days of removing the weeds and willow bushes, the Plovers landed and set up their first nest. Once they landed, we were unable to go back and remove the roots causing the growth to quickly return. It seems this MNRF map further supports the Town’s position that the Plovers will not nest on a vegetated beach. The Plovers seem to want what the majority of our community wants.... a clean beach.”*

This is the furthest thing from the truth based on all science available.

This form will send emails to the Premier, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Mayor.

Western Canada

Greater Sage Grouse – Renewed Conservation Work Needed

American Bird Conservancy – status 2018-03



Photo above: Greater Sage-Grouse, Tom Reichner/Shutterstock

Greater Sage-Grouse once were common with vast flocks found across the sagebrush sea of the American West. Today, this remarkable species is at grave risk and its habitat is disappearing at a rapid clip.

ABC is working to educate legislators and the public at large on the dangers faced by sage-grouse and dozens of other threatened species. The American Bird Conservancy is asking for help by supporting their campaign to save the Greater Sage-Grouse.

Greater Sage-Grouse have been the subject of intensive protection, but recent conservation efforts are at risk due to administration policy changes, and a new congressional rider exempting the grouse from Endangered Species Act protection.

They aim to raise \$15,000 with this online campaign. Google the American Bird Conservancy for more information. You will be helping ABC raise awareness and mobilize support for sage-grouse and other birds in trouble.

Thank you for considering this urgent need.

Sincerely,

Steve Holmer
Vice President of Policy
American Bird Conservancy

Ontario Nature

Protected Places Campaign

In 2010, Canada endorsed the United Nations target to protect at least 17 percent of the planet's land and inland waters by 2020. This **national commitment** was then

adopted in the Ontario Biodiversity Strategy (**target 13**), opening the door to a new and welcome opportunity to protect the places we love.

Currently, less than 11 percent of Ontario is protected. We need to work together to make sure the next three years count so that wild species and wild spaces are protected for generations to come.

“We share the same canoe, and it’s time for the paddles to hit the water. We are in fast water now, and we need all the wisdom we have to guide us through” – Rick Beaver.

Sign the Declaration to Show you care about protected places

<https://ontarionature.org/campaigns/protected-places/>

Ontario Nature asks Premier Wynne to issue a Zoning Order to prohibit development on the Paradise Beach-Island Grove Provincially Significant Wetland at the North Gwillimbury Forest. See letter at the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance jack=saveNGForest.org@cmail20.com – April 3, 2018 NOTICE.