

The Talon

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NEWSLETTER

SOUTH LAKE SIMCOE NATURALISTS

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

Telephone 905-722-8021

(www.slsnc.ca)

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

A rather unusual seasonal warm and humid spell into September gave us a welcome extended summer and was great weather for our September 21st forest outing that included wetland and sandy trails in a historical glacial feature landscape. Some interesting observations included various forest location nodes of Red squirrel tree nests, with particularly large and multiple nests and active squirrels foraging in the areas.



Red squirrel nests in Eastern Hemlock trees



Red squirrel nests – detail



Bolete mushroom

Some large tree trunk burls (made up of a tree's bud tissue that has not sprouted into foliage or grown into a twig), including some in Eastern white cedar trees that are not very common.



Burl on White spruce tree



Burl on Eastern White cedar tree



Jeff Boylin V.P. scanning trail

Various fungi were noticed, a typical fall forest discovery especially this year with all the rain we had.



Norma Knowlton birding



Liverwort



Artist Fungus

Our member meeting Event October 1st was outdoors at the Brown Hill area in perfect “summer” weather conditions, seasonally warm, sunny and a light wind. The cool air of the covered Park Pavilion was a welcome asset for our Event location. The hamburgers and hot dogs were expertly barbecued by Vice-President Jeff Boylin, and other refreshments and condiments supplied by the club were great support. Members brought salads and deserts which rounded out the afternoon meal. Great conversation, stories of summer adventures, and past experiences were shared by all.

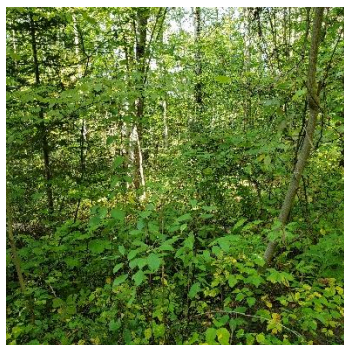


Members gather for meal



Then, most of us went for a nature walk down the wilderness trail in the area. We passed through some hidden diverse habitat areas ranging from pine forest restoration through some significant mature maple forest glades to early successional forest and grass meadows. Some trees had started changing colour (reds and yellows). In this little-used natural area not much Dog-strangling vine (DSV) was seen. It was a great time and place to be in the field as naturalists.

Typical birds like Blue jays, Common crows and chickadees accompanied us on the trail. Some confusing fall warblers flitted quickly by us at a few locations in their migration. A trio of members pushed farther ahead on the trail and discovered wetlands and a creek area with Jeff spotting a rather large Great blue heron in the creek bank wetland.



Trail forest habitat



Wayne and Jeff explore



Creek and wetland habitat

Various Cell phone documentary photos by P.Harpley above

Jeff Boylin photos below



Creek and wetland habitat with Great Blue heron on water



Common scouring rush

Quickly into October the birds are migrating through our area. Particularly the confusing fall warblers are everywhere in the trees feeding and flitting around trees excitedly moving through on migration.

See below our planned upcoming SLSN outings adventures details.

Member birders and Feeder Watchers note the Sutton Christmas Bird Count this year will be on Wednesday, December 27!

Paul Harpley, SLSN

REMINDER of upcoming planned,

Outings: All regular outings/events – **Note:** Paid-up members in good standing may participate (for insurance compliance). Any Provincial and municipal COVID-19 restrictions and safety protocols in effect. Information on the latest conditions and public health guidance can be found on the Government of Ontario [website](#).

Phone 905-722-8021 for more details.

2023 Autumn

Saturday October 14: Biking and/or Walking Exploration – Leslie Street Spit which is now called Tommy Thompson Park in Toronto.

A late morning and afternoon walking adventure at the now famous man-made Toronto lakefront Park, and some years ago subject of a C.B.C. "The Nature of Things" T.V. documentary. Members have talked about going here for many years as an outing. Fortunately, the area now is a formal Toronto Park site, and is accessible and safe. In early October the annual autumn bird migration will be well underway including waterfowl and shorebirds, and trees and shrubs will be in fall colours! Those who want to bike the park to the south point will need to bring their bikes by car (there is limited T.T.C. access – check Park Website). There is a public Parking lot at the north area trail head. Check the Toronto Parks website for more info. and directions at <https://tommythompsonpark.ca/>.

For those coming directly to the Park, the outing will start at 11 a.m. We will meet at the main Parking Lot. Bring a lunch and snacks as there is limited or no food and drink amenities at the Park. Alternatively, those needing a ride from Georgina, or wanting to car pool down with other members, should meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot for Coffee Time south of **Baldwin** in Georgina.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 3 hours.

Thursday November 16: Wye Marsh Wildlife Area Day

A late morning and afternoon forest, meadow, and wetland boardwalk walking visit to the Wye Marsh in north central Simcoe County on the west side of Lake Simcoe. Established originally many years ago as a Federal Wildlife area, The Wye Marsh Nature Centre was opened in 1969 as a nature centre operated by Environment Canada (EC). In 1985, EC turned operations over to Friends of the Wye Marsh (FWM), and fortunately retained and restored by local community people. Now it remains a fully functional facility. Most famous for its pairs of Trumpeter swans, important breeding animals, in the Ontario species restoration project with the Toronto Zoo and other facilities since the 1980's. Typically the swans can be seen well from the boardwalk.

Also, a modern Visitor Centre is on the site, a real plus if there is some rain. Recently the Centre has upgraded key exhibit areas and new displays and information can be viewed. Trails are relatively short and accessible. Picnic and rest areas are available along the way. A biodiversity area, and Birds of Prey facility is on site.

For those coming directly to the site, the outing will start at 11 a.m. We will meet at the main Wye Marsh Parking Lot near the Visitor Centre entrance. For further information and location directions see details at, <https://www.wyemarsh.com/> . Wye Marsh Centre location address is 16160 Hwy 12 East, PO Box 100, Midland, Ontario L4R 4K6

For those needing a ride from Georgina, or wanting to car pool to the “Wye” with other members, meet at 10 a.m. at the parking lot for Coffee Time south of **Baldwin** in Georgina (23721 Highway 48, Baldwin) visit <https://www.yelp.ca/biz/coffee-time-baldwin> for location details.

Dress for the weather. Bring binoculars. Any local or provincial COVID-19 health and safety guidance in effect. Plan for a minimum of 3 hours.

Wednesday December 27: Annual Sutton Christmas Bird Count (C.B.C.)

This is an early notice for the 2023 C.B.C. for members involved and responsible for Count area sectors, or Feeder Watchers. Other members who want to join the Count this year should contact Paul at 905-722-8021.

As we approach December more SLSN birding and related naturalist outings will be planned, preparing for the annual Sutton area Count, and will be advertised in the e-Newsletter.

2023-08-25

CBC News

Ontario's top 5 invasive species of summer 2023

They're here. From oak wilt to asexual crayfish, meet some of the province's main invaders.

Oak wilt, grass carp and asexual crayfish on the list

[Allison Devereaux](#) · CBC News · Posted: Aug 24, 2023 12:43 PM EDT | Last Updated: August 25



Oak wilt can kill a red oak tree in only two to six weeks and has been found in the Niagara Region. (Submitted by Lauren Rogers)

From a carp that can reach 45 kilograms to a female crayfish that reproduces without a male, the summer of 2023 saw new invasive species spottings in Ontario.

With the climate crisis expected to accelerate their introduction and spread, CBC London asked an expert to share his list of the province's top invaders.

#1 Oak Wilt

"That's the primary concern of mine," said Brook Schryer, assistant coordinator with the invading species awareness program for Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

The vascular disease showed up in the city of Niagara Falls in June, making it the first confirmed detection in Canada. It's since been found in the Township of Springwater in Simcoe County, and the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake.



Oak wilt disease was discovered in Belle Isle in 2016. (Michigan Department of Natural Resources)

"This is an invasive pathogen that is known to occur in the United States, particularly in places like Minnesota, but it has jumped over the border," said Schryer.

Oak wilt impacts what Schryer calls the "pipeline" of the tree, making it hard to send water and nutrients up and down. "The tree is not able to provide its canopy with water and nutrients," he said, adding that some species with oak wilt can die within two weeks.

The [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) has restrictions on the movement of firewood to try to prevent the spread of oak wilt to the rest of the province.

More Info: [Ontario's top 5 invasive species of summer 2023 | CBC News](#)

2023-09-06

Toronto Star

CLIMATE CRISIS

How climate-related natural disasters are driving up your insurance costs

With climate-related disasters becoming an annual occurrence across the country, there's more uncertainty in the insurance industry, apprehension among real estate buyers, and delays in the issuance of building permits and construction, Omar Mosleh reports. Inevitably, the results are higher premiums for everyone, one expert said. [These are the events in Canada that proved most expensive for insurance payouts.](#)

- **By the numbers:** "A decade ago, between 2001 and 2010, the insurance industry was paying out on average about \$675 million a year," said Rob De Pruis, national director of consumer and industry relations for the Insurance Bureau of Canada. "Over this past decade, that number has increased to over \$2.3 billion dollars a year on average annually."
- **Wait, what?** "It's not that huge storm or the wildfire in Kelowna that is directly affecting my premiums," said Mary Kelly, a professor in finance and insurance at Wilfrid Laurier University. "But the insurance company knows that for everybody, they'll have to retain more risk."

More Info:

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/how-natural-disasters-in-canada-and-around-the-world-are-driving-up-your-insurance-costs/article_95ae3d1d-d54e-5ac0-a9af-

[ff89f5fe2533.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198108](https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/how-natural-disasters-in-canada-and-around-the-world-are-driving-up-your-insurance-costs/article_95ae3d1d-d54e-5ac0-a9af-ff89f5fe2533.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198108)

CANADA

How natural disasters in Canada and around the world are driving up your insurance costs

There's a catalogue of cascading effects from increasingly common natural disasters that are being seen coast to coast, according to experts, creating more uncertainty in the insurance industry, apprehension among real-estate buyers and delays in construction and the issuance of building permits.

By Omar Mosleh Staff Reporter

Wednesday, September 6, 2023

7 min to read

Article was updated Sep 6, 2023

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



The McDougall Creek wildfire burns on the mountainside above a lakefront home, in West Kelowna, B.C., on Aug. 18.

DARRYL DYCK / THE CANADIAN PRESS

When the Sumas Prairie, a low-lying area formed from a drained lake, flooded and forced Marcel Ackermann and his family out of their home in Abbotsford, B.C., he said he was determined to muscle through it "hell or high water."

One might say he's been through both.

More Info:

https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/how-natural-disasters-in-canada-and-around-the-world-are-driving-up-your-insurance-costs/article_95ae3d1d-d54e-5ac0-a9af-ff89f5fe2533.html?source=newsletter&utm_source=ts_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&utm_campaign=frst_198108

2023-10-10

Live Science

Orcas are harassing and playing with baby porpoises in deadly game that has lasted 60 years

News

By [Sascha Pare](#)

published 6 days ago

Scientists may have finally figured out why a population of orcas in the Salish Sea have been tossing porpoises around and taking them into their mouths without eating them.



Southern resident killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) have been harassing porpoises for 60 years, most likely as a form of social play. (Image credit: Wild Orca)

Orcas have been harassing and toying with porpoises in the Salish Sea for 60 years, often to the point of killing them, but never eating them. Now, researchers think they know why.

The perplexing behavior, dubbed "phocoenacide" or "porpicide," often involves several [orcas](#) (*Orcinus orca*) tossing porpoises (*Phocoenidae*) around for up to five hours, traumatizing and sometimes killing their plaything.

"I always liken it to a group of friends in a swimming pool and they have a ball between them and the object is to keep the ball above the water," study lead author [Deborah Giles](#), an orca researcher at the University of Washington and research director at the non-profit Wild Orca, told Live Science.

The orcas belong to a [small and endangered population](#) called southern resident killer whales that live off the Pacific coast of North America. They are fish-eaters, meaning it's unlikely they are playing with porpoises to consume them — deepening the mystery of why these orcas do it.



Playing with porpoises may strengthen social bonding between orcas and improve their coordination and teamwork. (Image credit: Wild Orca)

More Info:

https://www.livescience.com/animals/orcas/orcas-are-harassing-and-playing-with-baby-porpoises-in-deadly-game-that-has-lasting-60-years?utm_term=3C30B0B9-105E-4EAA-AADD-1CF345DE8BE1&lrh=c1d733ba37a5dfa9e16bc4ee4324bcf4b8cc8708ca7e8963570669d33cd668e4&utm_campaign=368B3745-DDE0-4A69-A2E8-62503D85375D&utm_medium=email&utm_content=278C14CB-2252-4DEB-926F-7F8EF55B90AF&utm_source=SmartBrief

2023-09-30

National Geographic

COVID-19 Cases are rising Again...

More Info:

https://www.nationalgeographic.com/premium/article/sick-covid-refresher-tests-masking-isolation-medicine?rid=6EA0E815B8FFE40A55C58C2297DE34C8&cmpid=org=ngp::mc=crm-email::src=ngp::cmp=editorial::add=Compass_20230930