

NORFOLK WOODLOT OWNERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

At the last Board of Directors meeting I was selected to represent Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association (NWOA) as President. Many thanks to Past President, Angelle van Kleef, for her vision and for her leadership of our Association. I shall endeavour to work just as hard at doing a good job in this role.

It was with some trepidation that I undertook the position of President. So far, my fears are completely unfounded because the NWOA Board is comprised of very competent, resourceful and dedicated people. It is important that we attract new members to keep our organization vital and current, especially people who are willing to share a few hours of their valuable time and expertise to assist with putting together some interesting workshops and tours for our members. If a friend or neighbour of yours would like to participate with a fun and informative group, please invite them to join online at our website <http://www.norfolkwoodlots.com/>

Our team of directors are planning some really interesting events for the 2015-2016 year. We have a **tour of Tim Hortons Children's Foundation and Chestnut Nursery** scheduled Sept 19th, 2015. We also have a **workshop** on barn swallow/forest bird decline and what you can do about it, slated for 7pm-9pm September 24th 2015 at Bird Studies Canada with a follow up **Interpretative Session** in May 2016. The **Annual General Meeting**, a perennial hit, is slated for Wednesday March 2nd 2016 at Delhi German Hall.

We welcome your comments, thoughts and ideas for our newsletter, workshops and Annual Meeting. You can post them on our website, call me at 519-428-2615 or email me at john.dewitt@holliswealth.com

John de Witt

Alternative Land Use Norfolk Environment Stewardship Tour - August 26, 2015

See details on final page of the Newsletter.

Tim Horton's Chestnut Nursery Tour - September 19, 2015

A tour of the chestnut plantation at the Tim Horton's Camp is scheduled for September 19th. We will leave the Springview Golf Club at 9 a.m. and arrive at our destination by 10 a.m. We will be met by Christine Vey, who will conduct a tour of the facility and grounds via tractor and wagon. Dress appropriately for the weather. We have a bus booked from Sharp Bus Lines. This should be a most informative tour which will cover the history of the chestnut trees in Ontario and Canada, the decline of the species, disease results and recovery strategies as undertaken at this site. Everyone is welcome. If you have interest in attending, please contact Betty Chanyi at 519-586-7175.

Conserving Aerial Insectivore Habitat

It's difficult to imagine what the rural landscape of Ontario would be like without swallows; many landowners view their arrival in spring as a momentous indication that winter has finally passed. Or maybe these birds hold a special place in our hearts because, unlike many other species of birds, they truly share our "habitat", nesting on human-built structures including our barns and our homes.

Despite how frequently humans overlap with swallows (part of a group of birds collectively called aerial insectivores because of their habit of eating flying insects while flying high in the air) we know relatively little about them. This is unfortunate considering the severe population declines that species of Swifts, Swallows and Nightjars are currently experiencing in Ontario and around the world.

In an effort to help conserve swallows and their habitats, Bird Studies Canada (BSC), a national charitable organization dedicated to bird science, conservation and education, is working with partners, communities and individuals to help address some high priority threats and knowledge gaps for aerial insectivores.

The workshops described below will help participants learn to identify aerial insectivores so that their observations can contribute to research and conservation initiatives, as well as provide examples of stewardship actions that could be undertaken by landowners if birds are nesting on their property. Engaging individuals and communities in monitoring, stewardship, and conservation of these species is important because these birds will only recover if they are valued as an integral part of our neighbourhoods and ecosystems.

--Kristyn Richardson

Birds of the Carolinian Forest

Southwestern Ontario is the only place in Canada where Carolinian Forest can be found. Thus, it is home to several unique types of plants and animals, found nowhere else in Canada.

While many woodlot owners are familiar with Carolinian trees such as Tulip and Black Gum, some may not be as familiar with the unique birds that live here. Southwestern Ontario supports Canada's largest concentrations of Acadian Flycatchers and Louisiana Waterthrush, plus large numbers of Cerulean Warblers and other birds that depend on large tracts of mature hardwood forest. Haven't heard of these birds? Don't worry, few have. Some, like the Cerulean Warbler, spend all day high up in the canopy making them more often heard than seen. Plus, there is only a small amount of these birds' preferred habitat in South Western Ontario and most of their populations are in the United States, making them all the more rare. As well, what Canadian habitat there is, may be subject to many pressures, from recreational use to poor harvesting practices. Lastly, these birds migrate south for the winter, as far as Central and South America, where they are threatened by habitat loss and degradation.

Bird Studies Canada has monitored birds in the Carolinian Forest for many years, and maintains Canada's most comprehensive database on these species. But, knowing where these birds are and how many is just the beginning. Equally important is how we use this information to help conserve them. This doesn't mean you shouldn't harvest lumber or firewood in your woods (for some species this may even help make habitat), just that one should follow good harvesting practices. Many organizations, such as the MNRF, have already created guidelines on how to make your woods bird friendly.

Because several birds are federally listed as "at risk", and given the benefits of forest certification programs, forestry companies and woodlot owners are keen to demonstrate that they are implementing beneficial practices for forest birds at risk. But, although forest certification programs, woodlot owner

associations, timber companies and private owners are eager to demonstrate their commitment to species at risk, some are unsure how to incorporate the habitat needs of forest birds into management plans.

Through the workshops, Bird Studies Canada will introduce you to these species and their habitats, give you an idea of the types of information we've been gathering for all these years and how Bird Studies Canada may be able to help interested woodlot owners manage for these birds.

- *Becky Stewart*

Barn Swallow / Forest Birds Workshop - September 24, 2015

Thursday, September 24, 2015, 7:00 to 9:00 PM at BSC headquarters
115 Front Road Port Rowan
(capacity: 70)

7:00 to 7:30 PM - Stewards for swallows (Kristyn Richardson)

7:30 to 7:50 - Questions

7:50 PM to 8:05 PM - Break

8:05 to 8:40 PM - Forest Birds at risk and other unique bird species (Gregor Beck and Jody Allair)

8:40 to 9:00 PM - Questions

Workshop #2 - May 26, 2016

Thursday, May 26, 2016, 7:00PM to 9:00PM, location and agenda TBD

Interpretative Walk - May 28, 2016

Saturday, May 28, 2016 8:00 AM, with BSC staff, Location TBD

Beech Bark Disease Workshop - October 28, 2015

Beech Bark Disease has been found in east side of Norfolk County but only the scale insect has been observed in west Norfolk. It is only a matter of time for the disease to infect all of Norfolk woodlots. So this is a subject that the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association board of directors wish to bring to the attention of their members. The Province has a good fact sheet at <http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/beece-bark-disease> .

A Beech Bark disease workshop will be lead by Dr Richard Wilson on Wed Oct 28 2pm-4pm plus an hour tour of infected woods. The workshop will be held at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs auditorium, 1283 Blueline Road (near Hwy#3). The tour will be conducted a short drive away from the OMAFRA location.

Dr Wilson has provided a link on beech bark disease from his laboratory that some members might find useful. <https://dr6j45jk9xcmk.cloudfront.net/documents/2851/stdprod-096009.pdf>

If interested in the workshop and site visit, please contact David Reid before Friday Oct. 23/15 at dave.reid@eastlink.ca or **519-426-8856**



Wednesday August 26, 2015

8:30 – 9:15 Welcome and Registration

Burning Kiln Winery,
1709 Front Road, St. Williams, Ontario

9:30 Departure (by bus)

Site 1: Timpf Farm – Oak Savannah, Dune Restoration & Pollinator Hedgerow

A field of blow sand was re-contoured to create a dune and savannah ecosystem. native trees, grasses and forbs were planted to establish this uncommon habitat. (2014)

Guest Speakers: Welcoming statements by Chris Van Paassen (ALUS Norfolk PAC Chair); Mary Gartshore (Consultant Biologist) "Restoring Oak Savannahs"

Site 2: Coon Farm – Wetland Creation, Riparian & Slope Reforestation, Tallgrass Prairie, Hickenbottom Water Control

Three wetlands were created on marginal farmland adjacent to a creek that was prone to flooding. Invasive species were removed and native trees, grasses and wetland species were planted to stabilize the slope and provide a riparian buffer. Cool season grasses were planted along the waterway now controlled by the Hickenbottom structure. (2014)

Guest Speakers: Glenn Coon (Landowner); Paul Gagnon (Long Point Region Conservation Authority - Lands & Waters Supervisor) "Creating Wetlands in a Floodplain"

12:30 LUNCH – Burning Kiln Winery (1709 Front Road, St. Williams, Ontario)

Lunch will be catered by David's Restaurant. **Suggested \$10.00 donation**

Guest Speakers: *Greetings from our local political representatives;* Megan MacLean M.Sc (Formerly University of Guelph) "Alternative Land Use Services Farmers and Environmental Stewardship"

Site 3: Burning Kiln Winery – OSCWGA Market Partner – Wetland Enhancement, Riparian Reforestation, Tallgrass Prairie

A former irrigation pond was expanded to create a littoral zone and enhanced with native vegetation. Tallgrass prairie species were planted in 16' wide buffer strips for gully erosion control as well as in a 1.5 acre area of marginal farmland. (2009, 2014)

Guest Speakers: Karen Matthews & Mike McArthur on the ALUS-OSCWGA Partnership and consumer response to ALUS projects.

Site 4: Long Point Eco-Adventures – Tallgrass Prairie, Wetland Creation and Mixed Hardwood Wind Break

7.5 acres of Tallgrass Prairie were planted on retired farmland. A large wetland was created in a floodplain adjacent to the prairie and wind breaks were established along the road edge.

Guest Speakers: Adam Van Paassen (LPEA Manager), Bryan Gilvesy (ALUS Canada) Final Remarks

3:00 Consider a \$5 flight of wine samples at the Burning Kiln Winery to end your day!

Tour Generously Sponsored By:

