



Volume 18

May 2012

Issue 2

### **COMING EVENTS**

**May 7 – Opening of Huron Fringe Shop**

**May 25-28 , May 31- June 3 – Huron Fringe Birding Festival**

**May 25, 9:30 AM- Dedication of Bird Blind**

**Annual General Meeting- June 23- 3:00PM Visitor's Centre**

**July 14 – North American Butterfly Association Count**

**July 21- National & Provincial Parks Day**

**July 21, August 7 & Aug. 25 – MacGregor's Mystery Evenings**

**September 15 & 16- Wild for the Arts**

**September 28-30- Youth Summit for Biodiversity**

**October 20 – Witches in the Woods**

### **THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Using my best Brooklyn accent here is a little ditty my Mother used to tell me to announce the coming of spring,

Spring is sprung,  
DA grass is riz,  
I wonder where da boidies is.  
Da boid is on da wing.  
Don't be absoid,  
Da wing is on da boid.

Hopefully spring hasn't come and gone with the really warm weather we had in March and the birds are on the wing heading back to MacGregor Point for the Huron Fringe Birding Festival. The Festival will be back with a great program of activities and events between May 25<sup>th</sup> and June 3<sup>rd</sup>. A new feature of this year's Festival is the ability to register and pay on-line on the FOMPP(Friends of MacGregor Point Park) website. This is a great convenience and will eventually make participating in all of the Friends special events even easier.

The Bird Blind at the Ducks Unlimited pond which was completed last fall will be officially opened during the Festival and will add another focal point for that week's activities. Thanks again to all who participated in and sponsored this project.

Our immediate next project will be the installation of a large number of "way signs" along the Park paths and trails. The signs are intended to give people their bearings and will provide distance information between particular points of interest and landmarks. The Park boasts many kilometers of excellent walking and cycling and the signs should be a real boon to new and seasoned visitors alike.

The Huron Fringe Shop at the Visitor Centre is currently receiving deliveries of new stock for the coming year with a variety of new items and many old favourites. The stock of birding books is particularly interesting for Park users and people taking the course at the Bruce County museum.

We were very pleased recently to see the Ontario Park's Annual Friends Report which summarizes the activities of Friends groups across the province.

MacGregor Point Park and the Friends of MacGregor Point Park both compare very well with the services and activities carried out in other locations. Several Friends groups have received a grant which will enable them to undertake the development of a number of resource manuals for Friends activities which will be a big help for all Friends groups in managing and carrying out their activities.

We are also pleased to be sponsoring two local high school students to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit in Orillia this coming fall. There are very active nature study groups in a number of high schools in Grey and Bruce and it is really important for us to encourage their continued interest.

Staff is gearing up for an increase in traffic at the Park so please plan to visit soon. Here's to another great season at MacGregor Point.

Peter Harrison

### **HURON FRINGE BIRDING FESTIVAL RECEIVES FUNDING**



Cheque presentation by Lynda Cain, OPG to the Huron Fringe Birding Festival Committee

back row - left to right  
Anne Cathrae, Arlene Richards,  
Fred Jazvac, Carole Lupton, Doug  
Pedwell, Norah Toth, Jim Duncan  
Front row - left to right  
Matt Cunliffe, BJ Martin, Margaret  
Anderton, Lynda Cain (OPG),  
Judy Duncan, missing, Stewart  
Nutt

### **The Huron Fringe Birding Festival**

Registration for the Festival has been going well and we are looking forward to a number of new events and leaders. If you look on the Friends website ([www.friendsofmacgregor.org](http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org)), you may see that some events are full. You should find that other events may be available during similar time slots. The advantage to attending events that are not as fully subscribed is that you will

have a better opportunity to see birds or plants that are present along the route. Consider this as you register.

Once again the Rotary Club of Southampton will be running BBQ's each noon-hour for your dining delight.

Dr. Beth MacDougall- Shackleton is excited about presenting during our banquet on May 26 and her presentation about song and the mating behaviour of songbirds is based upon current research. We are using the Piper's Glen Golf Course facility again in 2011. We have listened to a number of you and are rearranging the food service and silent auction to allow for more comfortable seating for all attendees. Consider attending and supporting the festival as well as Friends projects in the Park.

On a more personal note, I have been thinking about what my days usually look like during the Festival. I like to camp. I thought you might enjoy what I do for a typical day.

5 or 5:30 am - the alarm goes off and I head off to the comfort station for a, hopefully, warm shower. It is always amazing to meet others doing the same thing at this time of day!

5:50 am - off to the Visitor Centre to check on the coffee (old habits die hard), welcome the other volunteers (I'm sure the registration ladies have slept in the tent, they are always there and smiling!) and talk to attendees as they gather for their 6 am events.

until 9:30 am - I always enjoy "hanging out" around the Visitor Centre. It is certainly a hub of activity. The ladies in the registration tent work efficiently and our coordinators are always there 15 minutes before the start of each hike.

9:30 am - It is time to put my feet up; or maybe just chat and find out how everyone else has been doing!

10:30 am - It often feels like mid-afternoon by now - the Southampton Rotary arrive to set up a very popular noon-hour BBQ. This

is my big meal of the day - no dieting for Norah during the festival!

2 pm - I'm getting sleepy! It is time for a walk to check out some of the rarities that may have been seen on the morning hikes. Maybe a visit with some of the young staff, they do rejuvenate we older types!

5:30 pm - A lighter dinner in town with some of my friends. Maybe I should check and see if the trailer is still there!

6:45 pm - Back to the Visitor Centre. Is it set up and open for the evening presentation? Thank you staff for doing this.

7:15 pm - This is my event of the day, attending an evening presentation! I have to make sure I'm sitting beside someone who might gently poke me to make sure I don't embarrass myself by nodding off during what is usually a very interesting presentation. I'm definitely not as young as I used to be! I wonder how the "older than me guys" do it?

9 pm - Back to the trailer - maybe a walk to say "hello" to some of my friends who have the energy to have a fire!

10 pm - I'm just too tired! My pillow is a welcome sight, I just hope that the neighbours are quiet or that the morning song of the birds doesn't start any earlier than I do in the morning!

The questions I can hear you asking are - "Is she crazy?" "Does she really do this for fun?" "Why?" - My answers - I love it! I enjoy seeing our visitors who are excited about meeting new people and seeing new birds. I find that it is very rewarding to be involved in the Festival from beginning to end - this includes the development of the program and the evaluation of what happened at the end of the Festival. I appreciate all the volunteers who provide a relaxed and friendly environment for everyone who has registered. And most of all, I love MacGregor Point Provincial Park and the unique resource it and the Bruce Peninsula provide for our Festival.

You might say - I'm addicted!

You don't have to be a birder to enjoy the Festival. Check us out!

Norah Toth, Co Chair

## **The Friends of MacGregor Point Bird Blind**

The Bird Blind has been completed! An opening dedication will be conducted on May 25, 2012 at 9:30 am at the Blind which is located on the east side of the Ducks Unlimited pond at the south end of the Park. A major project of the Friends of MacGregor Point, it involved both park staff and Friends volunteers during its planning, designing and construction. On Friday, May 25, we are looking forward to recognizing the many corporate and private individuals who have contributed to the Bird Blind project as well as all those who had the vision of building a blind in MacGregor Point Provincial Park.

This Bird Blind itself is ideal for bird watching, photography and wildlife viewing. It compliments the Observation Tower and provides opportunities to look west across the wetland. The Friends expect that all Park visitors will benefit from this, our latest completed project.

## **Park Signage**

Do you find the trails confusing in some spots? Sometimes get lost or disoriented? Watch for the new Way Point Signs that are being placed throughout the Park over the next year. The development, location and installation of these signs is a joint project of the Friends of MacGregor Point and MacGregor Point Provincial Park.

## **2012 Friends of MacGregor Raffle**

The tickets have been printed and November 7 may see you being the new owner of a Current Designs Kestrel OC Kayak. This beautiful kayak is easily transported: excellent for car or camper top. The second prize is a large Garden Fountain and the third prize is a \$200. gift certificate for Ontario Provincial Parks.

Many thanks to the generous support of Suntrail Outfitters, from Hepworth.



Marcie Matthies (+1), from SunTrail Outfitters, with Matt Cunliffe and Tom Church from the Park, show off the beautiful kayak, with a few extra friends from the Visitor Center.

## Ontario's Reptile and Amphibian Atlas( article reprinted with the kind permission of Ontario Nature)

Ontario's reptiles and amphibians are becoming increasingly rare. In fact, three quarters (18 of 24) of Ontario's reptile species are listed as species at risk.

Reptiles and amphibians are collectively known as herpetofauna and are a unique part of Ontario's biodiversity. An earlier atlas, called [the Ontario Herpetofaunal Summary Atlas](#), provided extensive information about where many of the province's reptiles and amphibians occurred. However, much of that information now needs to be updated. Furthermore, many populations of rare reptiles and amphibians are still being discovered. We need this information to monitor changes in the ranges of reptile and amphibian species and fluctuations in their population numbers. We also rely on this data to determine if a species is at risk and to identify and manage important habitat for rare reptiles and amphibians.

Ontario Nature has begun work on a new Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas project in partnership with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF), the Ministry of Natural Resources' Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC), and other government agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

The objective of the atlas project is to improve our knowledge of the distribution and status of Ontario's reptiles and amphibians by collecting observation submissions from the public, carrying out field surveys and amalgamating existing databases.

**We need volunteers to submit their observations of reptiles and amphibians found throughout Ontario. Observations can be submitted via an online form, an Excel spreadsheet (useful for submitting multiple observations) or a printable data card that can be mailed in.**

Submit your observations online now:

- [Online observation form](#)

You can download the spreadsheet and printable form using the following links:

- [Excel reporting spreadsheet](#) (xls: 104kb)
- [Printable reporting card](#) (PDF: 27kb)

**Ontario Nature's Youth Summit for Biodiversity** September , 2011 saw two local Saugeen District High School Students, sponsored by The Friends of MacGregor Park travel to Shomberg, Ont. to participate in a province wide Summit for Biodiversity. Ontario Nature organized this interesting weekend for students in grades 9- 12. Emmi Hunt and Aimee Burton, were members of SDSS's Planeteers Club, which is organized and strongly supported by teacher, Mrs. Nancie Darlington- Smith. Follows are some excerpts from Emi and Aimee. . .

My name is Emi Hunt, and I am a Grade 10 student at Saugeen District Secondary School. I'm a member of the school's Planeteers group as I want to be an active participant in keeping our environment healthy for many more years. I would like to thank The Friends for sponsoring me for the Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Sustainable Living this fall. It was a very informative and thoroughly entertaining weekend learning about many varied issues that affect our environment.

The summit was held at the YMCA Cedar Glen near Bolton Ontario, with its beautiful views and cozy cabins. Upon arrival we were greeted by members of the Youth Council (the young leaders who took the time to plan the summit) and given a wonderful greeting package filled with information about the summit, as well as a water bottle, a notebook made out of recycled paper, and a seed to plant.

While there I was able to take six extraordinary workshops that lasted for about an hour and a half. My first workshop was called "Connections to the Natural World" presented by Gary Sault, an elder from the Mississauga's of the New Credit. In this workshop we learned about the relationship between living things and how to respect the connections as well as learning about native plants that can be used for medicinal purposes. My next workshop was called "Building as a System" presented by Sandra Leigh Lester, a design expert with over eighteen years of experience. In this workshop we learned about green building design, including how green buildings work, elements, and leverage points for energy efficiency. This workshop was my personal favourite, and has even inspired me to seriously consider architecture as my own career path. After this workshop was Archery which taught us about the importance of precision and accuracy. I was even able to get a bullseye! My fourth workshop, "Green Lifestyle Products", educated us about the dangers of unlisted ingredients in personal care and cleaning items. In this class we also had the opportunity to make our own natural lip balm using beeswax, cream, and almond extract. The next workshop was "On the Road to Sustainable Eating" taught by Carole Ferrari. In this class I

learned how to cook local and certified organic food and how it has many positive effects. My final workshop was "Species at Risk" presented by Dr. Anne Bell and Josh Wise. This workshop gave us a look into Ontario species at risk, in particular the Blanding's turtle, and gave us a quick introduction to campaign work.

In addition to my six amazing workshops, we also had the privilege of hearing Lisa Glithero, a woman who in 2006 was honoured with the "International Women of the Earth Award" for her work in bringing environmental awareness into the education system. She also is the Education Director for a group that leads educational expeditions for young people to the Antarctic where they can see the impacts of climate change first hand. It was a very inspiring presentation. Emiko Hunt

This is Aimee Bertin, I am a grade 11 student at SDSS and an active member of the high school's eco group; the Planeteers. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to attend the Youth Summit for Biodiversity this September, it was a great experience! Upon arriving at the Summit, we were directed to long, log cabins where we would be staying for the next couple of days. Contrary, to what I was expecting, there were rooms inside these cabins equipped for three campers, complete with a separate bathroom. That first night I was able to meet so many new people, all of whom were very passionate about nature and the environment. On the Saturday morning, I participated in a workshop designed just to help students appreciate and marvel at

the environment that surrounds us. At one point, we were told to just go free and explore, at which point I promptly began to fill my memory card with pictures! Later on that day, I met some new friends of a different sort in the about different plants and herbs that have many medicinal benefits, and even got the chance to make my own salve. My final workshop of the day involved "green" products, learning which chemicals to avoid, which brands are safe, and how to make our own products. Saturday evening all campers participated in the Great Group Challenge, involving such challenges as creating a human electric bicycle. Sunday brought new learning experiences as I was taught how to cook

"Let's Get Wild" workshop. Volunteers from the University of Guelph brought some different species of birds from their animal rescue program, and they easily provided us with endless amounts of information. That afternoon, I learned sustainably, and where to acquire local ingredients. The "Kill your Bill" workshop provided me with a lot of new information about energy consumption that I was able to bring back to the Planeteers. Overall, I found the Youth Summit to be a wonderful learning experience, and a chance to meet so many new people. I would definitely recommend the Summit to anyone interested and wouldn't hesitate to go back!



**Emi Hunt, Mrs. Darling-Smith and Aimee Burton pose in the garden, planned and planted by the SDSS Planeteers and other students, staff and community; in front of SDSS, Port Elgin.**

**The 2012 Youth Summit for Biodiversity will be held in Orilla this coming fall. The Friends of MacGregor are again sponsoring 2 local interested students.**

## Forests and the Health of the Planet

reprinted with permission from the FGCA From: Richard Matthews, Global Warming is Real  
(Published April 13, 2012)

The health of our forests directly impacts the health of the planet. The importance of forests to the Earth's ecosystems cannot be overstated.

Research shows that forest die-offs are on the increase and this troubling trend is being linked to global warming. Heat and water stress associated with climate change are making forests vulnerable to insect attacks, fires and other problems.

As reported in an October 2011 New York Times article, millions of acres of forests in the northern and central Rockies are dying. In Colorado, at least 15 percent of that state's aspen forests are suffering due to a lack of water. The U.S. is not the only country where forests are succumbing to the effects of a warming climate, trees are also being impacted by climate change all around the globe.

The evidence for global warming continues to mount with March 2012 being the warmest in recorded history in the U.S. and January to March 2012 being the warmest first quarter on record in the lower 48 states. This is but the most recent data corroborating an increasingly irrefutable body of evidence.

Greenhouse gases are fuelling global warming and we continue to pour massive amounts of these emissions into the atmosphere. About 10 billion tons of carbon is being dumped into the atmosphere every year from the combustion of fossil fuels and the destruction of forests. The concentration of the gas in the atmosphere has jumped more than 40 percent since the Industrial Revolution, and this could double or even triple this century.

Despite the wealth of data supporting global warming and the crucial importance of forests to planetary health, world industry leaders in wood materials were gathering in Seattle on April 11-13 to discuss the role of woody biomass for production of biofuels. According to a UBC study, wood-based biofuels could be a competitive industry by 2020. While biofuels offer questionable benefits to the planet, wood based biofuels are even more suspect.



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**CORRECTION AND APOLOGY:** Apologies to Doug Martin. In our last issue of the hard-copies of The Spotted Turtle, the speech to honour Chris Tomsett was credited to “Dave” Martin. Of course, this was incorrect, as the speech was given by Mrs. Martin and written by “Doug” Martin.

**Membership Renewal ---** Change has arrived at The Friends of MacGregor Park. Memberships now last a year from the month that you join: i.e. if you join in February, then it will last until the following Feb. Also, you can now renew your membership online. Go to the Friends website: [www.friendsofmacgregor.org](http://www.friendsofmacgregor.org) or as always you can fill in the form below and mail it or drop into the Visitor’s Center, where the friendly staff will be very happy to renew your membership.

**Thanks to all the members who replied to the newsletter’s editor to confirm your receipt of the newsletter.**

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**Please complete your membership renewal and mail to:  
The Friends of MacGregor Point Park,  
R. R. 1, Port Elgin, ON N0H 2C5 .  
The Friends membership year extends 1 year from the date of payment.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ **\*\*please give us your e-mail, as this will reduce mailing costs for the newsletter\*\***

**Would you like to be contacted to volunteer at any of the builds or fund-raising functions(i.e. BBO’s) \_\_\_\_\_?**

Payment by: Cheque \_\_\_\_\_ Visa \_\_\_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_\_\_  
Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Category:**

Individual - \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Family - \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation in addition to membership \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Official Tax receipts will be issued for all donations.