



OFO NEWSLETTER NUMBER 21

JULY 1990

The summer is fast streaming past all of us, as we endure the dog days of summer. Personally, this respite from the consuming urge to pry into the private lives of birds is somewhat of a relief to me and my family. Soon however I'll have to get back on the trail for the fall period. I hope you are having a pleasant and productive summer as well.

Many of you will have recently received your December 1989 Ontario Birds. As long time members will attest, we have had consistent and chronic problems in getting the Journal out on time. So many things have gone wrong over the years that we likely could now publish a manual on the subject of pitfalls to avoid. Our most recent concerns centre around the transfer of editorialship and reliability of the print shop we employ. Our new editor Al Sandilands cannot be faulted as he's beginning his portfolio months in arrears. We all feel he is doing a great job despite this weight on his shoulders. Recently, I approached a new printer to take on the task of printing the Journal. If we accept their proposal, I have been assured that they will afford us the priority we deserve as a paying customer. Please bear with us during this continued period of development. Thank-you for your patience. We are in desperate need of articles for the Journal. Items of any length will be welcomed by Al. So if you've been waiting for a chance to submit that long thought about article, please submit it now.

The mail this summer has been somewhat thin, but nevertheless I thank those who sent along items of interest. First however ...

I understand that several individuals failed to renew their 1990 memberships. We certainly hope that members will consider talking to their friends now to encourage them to renew or join. As discussed, we are working towards establishing a consistent schedule for publication of our products. As an aside, if anyone has "old" membership forms, that you wish to give to friends, please ensure that the fee quoted is correct. The annual dues are \$20.00. We've have been receiving forms with remittances of amounts at least two years old!

Reports on Field Trips:

All of the trips and sessions offered this year have proven successful. Algonquin Park, Rainy River and of course our spring meeting at Rondeau were generally well attended. The calibre of leaders was excellent. Patience and an instructional attitude led to all participants enjoying their day(s) with OFO. The highlight for the spring outings' attendees had to be the day Dave Elder led a group of members to survey Rainy River and Lake-of-the-Woods. Virtually all of

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the expected "rarities" were found, but additionally, to the delight of those present, they found Ontario's second ever Sprague's Pipit. Later several other Ontario birders made the long trip and relocated the bird. In the last Journal we sent out a list of trips for the rest of 1990, but I'll briefly relist them again herein.

Field Trips:

August 25: Al Wormington will lead a never before offered fall trip to Pelee. Come see the park when birders are rare, but bikinis abound! Meet at the Park's Visitor Centre at 7:30 a.m.

November 18: Bob Curry, known as one of the best of Ontario's birders and a patient teacher, will lead a trip to Niagara Falls to look for its specialities. Meet at Niagara-on-the-Lake at the park at the mouth of the River at 9:00 a.m.

1991: We've already commenced making our plans for 1991. Trips are planned to Petroglyphs Provincial Park, Rainy River, the ROM, Long Point, Beamer Point, Point Pelee campout, Marathon and Sarnia. Stay tuned for details of these exciting adventures.

Summer Sale:

Members often ask if they can purchase back copies of the Journal. We now have copies of all printings available, except Volume 5. So if you're bored with summer and want to get something to read, now is the opportune time. Since the cost of the Journal varied so radically over the years, we have adopted a complicated formula for purchase.

Volume 1 (Numbers 1 & 2)	\$5.00
Volume 2 (Numbers 1, 2 and 3)	\$6.00
Volume 3 (Numbers 1, 2 and 3)	\$6.00
Volume 4 (Numbers 1, 2 and 3)	\$6.00
Volume 5 (Limited issues)	\$2.50 per issue
Volume 6 (Numbers 1, 2 and 3)	\$12.00
Volume 7 (Numbers 1, 2 and 3)	\$12.00

* Single issues of Volumes 1 through 5 can be purchased for \$2.50 per issue, and of Volumes 6 and 7 cost \$4.00 per issue.

Baillie Bird-a-thon:

Gail Worth co-ordinated the Bird-a-thon for OFO again this year. She did a commendable job, as always, in organizing sponsored birders and sponsoring members. We'll have a report

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later on highlights, but for now, if you agreed to sponsor someone, please remit your monies immediately to Gail at R.R.#3, Shelburne, Ontario, L0M 1S0. Make cheques payable to the Long Point Bird Observatory. Thank-you to all who took the time to sponsor a birder.

Area Representatives:

With the last Journal, Ron Scovell included a request for members to volunteer as area representatives to assist other members with organizing and attending OFO functions. Many areas still require representatives. If you can help in this community service, please contact Ron through the OFO mailbox as soon as possible, so that we can finalize our network.

In the News:

(1) The ROM is offering an extensive program of nature related programs this year, including:

to Aug. 8/90 - Into the Heart of Africa
to Sept. 3/90 - The Nature of Birds - A Photo Essay
from Sept. 15/90 - Lichens: Fine Details of the Natural Landscape
from Nov. 21/90 - Wildlife: Images in Painting and Sculpture
from Dec. 15/90 - Owls: Birds of Prey in Canada

(2) New Raptor group formed: The Niagara Peninsula Hawk Watch has recently been established at the Beamer Conservation Area. For more information, contact OFO and we will provide details as they become available.

(3) Project Peregrine - Sudbury: A coalition of industry, government, academia and conservationists has been assembled to assist the Peregrine Falcon in the Sudbury area. The Ministry of Natural Resources will co-ordinate this project with seed money of \$30,000 provided by Noranda and Falconbridge. In June 1990, fifteen birds were taken to Laurentian University for hacking. More information on the project can be obtained from the MNR at Sudbury (705)522-7283.

(4) Saving the Trumpeter Swan: The Friends of Elk Island Society, Site 4, R.R.#1, Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta, T8L 2N7 has been working for the last four years to save the Trumpeter Swan since it was listed as rare by COSEWIC. Moderate success has been achieved by these dedicated souls. If you would like to help financially or otherwise, please contact them for further information.

Short and Tweet:

Several correspondents have written to tell of their observations for this column.

(1) Leslie Cartwright of Ottawa reports that she recently moved to an older row house in the west end. A Pileated Woodpecker excavated a hole through the wood siding, and built a nest in the attic. It successfully raised its brood.

(2) Gail Worth of Shelburne tells of a trip to Pelee Island last fall. She watched a Yellow-billed Cuckoo catch a "fuzzy yellow caterpillar" and roll it back and forth in its bill until all the fuzz was removed. The bug then became dinner.

(3) Virgil Martin birded Cape Hurd on the Bruce Peninsula. On May 20, 1990 he watched a Solitary Sandpiper standing on a log in a small pond. Drifting backwards, it seemed oblivious to its surroundings. Finally it moved into a grounded snag whereby a small branch caught it under the tail. With its rear hoisted skyward, and in immediate danger of being catapulted into the pond, it made a hasty pirouette and avoiding further damage resettled on the other end of the log. Not yet out of danger, another snag loomed ahead. Stumbling onto the sunken parts of the log, with the stick mercilessly pressing forward, the bird, now up to its belly in water, abandoned ship. Its clumsy departure was suffixed by the sympathetic laughter of the observers.

(4) David Allison of Scarborough also was out and about on May 20th. While working at a part time job in a restaurant, one of the cooks offered to show him the "baby Blue Jay" he had rescued. The bird had been kept in a small covered bowl. The bird turned out to be a Black-throated Blue Warbler! Moments later, the formally docile bird escaped in the restaurant and subsequently was recaptured and released in the parking lot. Dave observed that the bird seemed to fly towards his nearby home. To his surprise a male Black-throated Blue was present in his yard for the next five days. Perhaps it's only wishful thinking, but he believes it was his "restaurant bird".

And in Closing: H.R. Thomson, Superintendent of Point Pelee National Park, wrote to OFO to request birders' assistance in ensuring that Pelee's vegetation be given a chance to rejuvenate. As those of you who visited the Park this year will know, many trails were closed for this purpose. New signs throughout the area advised of the Park's efforts in this regard. Please, if you're going to visit the Park in the future, respect these signs.