

OFO Annual Convention - Point Pelee

Saturday and Sunday, 13 - 14 October 2007

Saturday Field Trips

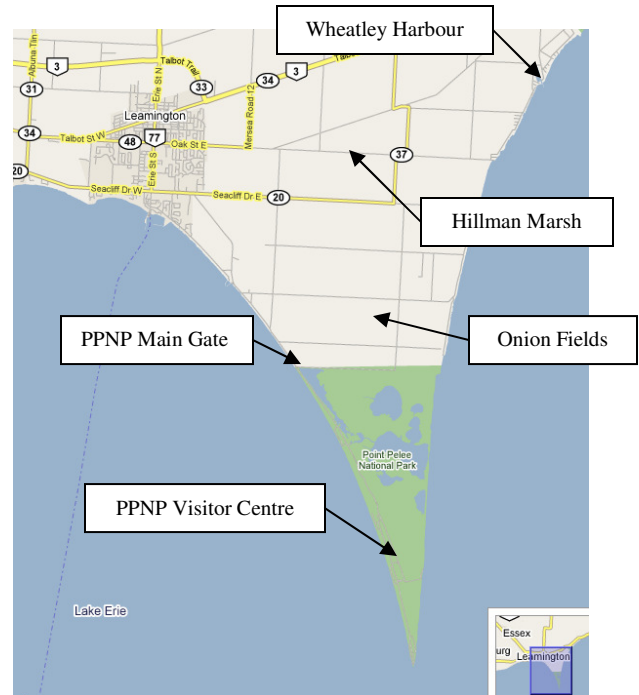
7:30 a.m. Point Pelee National Park

A morning hike to the The Tip and/or along some of the many park trails.

Leaders: Jean Iron, Ron Tozer, Sarah Rupert, Dave Milsom, Karl Konze and Paul Pratt.

Details: Enter Point Pelee National Park (PPNP) at Main Gate - entry fee will be payable. Meet at PPNP Visitor Centre parking lot. Plan to arrive a few minutes early, as the trip leaders will divide up the participants into smaller groups and go to different locations throughout the Park. Trip ends at 11:30 a.m.

Site Description: Point Pelee is renowned as a migrant hotspot and by mid-October there is always the chance of something really interesting. There is a train to The Tip, and the trails are easy walking throughout the Park. For more information on Point Pelee National Park, visit http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/on/pelee/index_e.asp.



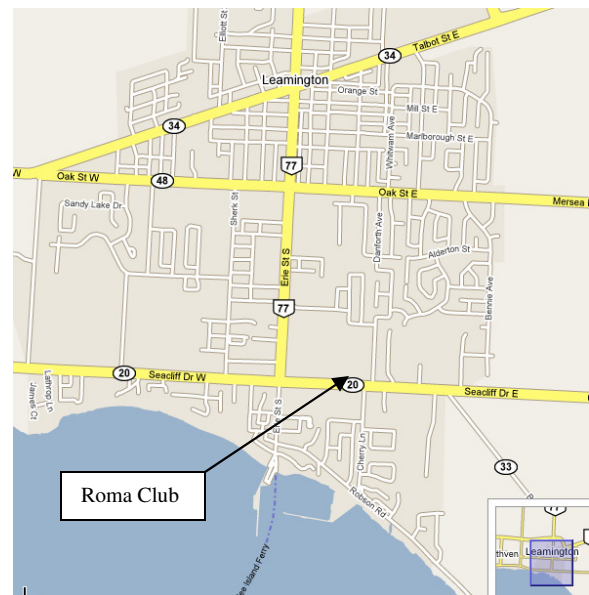
7:30 a.m. Point Pelee Birding Area

A morning of driving and short hikes to visit some of the local hotspots outside the Park.

Leaders: Marianne Reid and others if necessary.

Details: Meet at the Roma Club parking lot. Depending on numbers, the leaders may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Trip ends at 11:30 a.m.

Site Description: There are always plenty of birds outside the Park as well. Whether it's shorebirds or raptors in the Onion Fields; gulls, waterfowl and shorebirds at Hillman's Marsh; gulls and other waterbirds at Wheatley Harbour; or passerines in any small patch of woods along the way; this trip is sure to turn up some interesting sightings.



7:30 a.m. Holiday Beach Conservation Area

A day trip to Holiday Beach where you'll be hosted by the Essex County Field Naturalists.

Leaders: Rhonda Donely, with Phil Roberts demonstrating banding at Holiday Beach.

Details: Meet at the Roma Club parking lot (see map on page 1). Depending on numbers, the leaders may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Route to be determined by trip leaders; driving time is in the order of one hour each way. Trip ends by 2:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow time for participants to return to Leamington for the evening festivities.



Site Description: This Conservation Area offers a long sandy beach on the Lake Erie shoreline, plus many other amenities including large shady picnic areas, trails and a three storey observation tower. This trip should be good for late migrating raptors and there may be other interesting birds on the beach or in the wooded areas. For more information on Holiday Beach Conservation Area visit their website at <http://www.erca.org/ca/hbca/hbca.htm>.

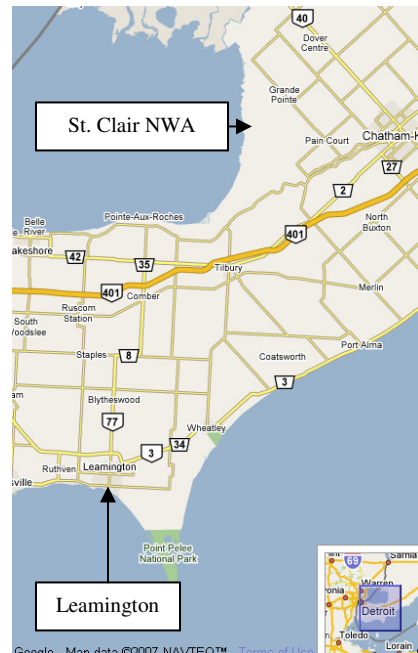
7:30 a.m. St. Clair National Wildlife Area

A day trip to St. Clair National Wildlife Area.

Leader: Brett Groves (additional leader[s] will be added if necessary).

Details: Meet at Roma Club parking lot (see map on page 1). Depending on numbers, the leader[s] may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Route to be determined by trip leader[s]; driving time is in the order of one hour each way. Trip ends by 2:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow time for participants to return to Leamington for the evening festivities.

Site Description: The St. Clair National Wildlife Area is a nature reserve located on eastern Lake St. Clair, west of Chatham. The cattail marshes and small ponds along the lake shore here are an important stopover location for migrating waterfowl, including large numbers of Tundra Swans. The marshes also provide habitat in the summer for species that can include Yellow-headed Blackbird, King Rail, Black Tern and Least Bittern. This area also provides habitat for several turtle species including the eastern Spiny Softshell Turtle and Blanding's Turtle. This site has been recognized as a Wetland of International Significance under the Ramsar Convention.



1:00 p.m. Point Pelee Birding Area

An afternoon of driving and short hikes to visit some of the local hotspots outside the Park.

Leaders: Marianne Reid, Ron Tozer and Steve Pike.

Details: Meet at the Roma Club parking lot (see map on page 1). Depending on numbers, the leaders may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Trip ends at 3:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow time for participants to return to Leamington for the evening festivities.

Site Description: See description for this trip on page 1.

Sunday Field Trips

7:30 a.m. Point Pelee National Park

A morning hike to the The Tip and/or along some of the many park trails.

Leaders: Jean Iron, Ron Tozer and Dave Milsom (more leaders will be added if necessary).

Details: Enter Point Pelee National Park (PPNP) at Main Gate - entry fee will be payable. Meet at PPNP Visitor Centre parking lot. Plan to arrive a few minutes early, as the trip leaders will divide up the participants into smaller groups and go to different locations throughout the Park. Trip ends at 11:30 a.m. or thereabouts, in time for lunch.

Site Description: See description for this trip on page 1.

7:30 a.m. Point Pelee Birding Area

A morning of driving and short hikes to visit some of the local hotspots outside the Park.

Leaders: Marianne Reid, Steve Pike and Sarah Rupert.

Details: Meet at the Roma Club parking lot (see map on page 1). Depending on numbers, the leaders may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Trip ends at 11:30 a.m. or thereabouts, in time for lunch.

Site Description: See description on page 1.

7:30 a.m. Holiday Beach Conservation Area

A trip to Holiday Beach.

Leader[s]: To be announced, depending on interest.

Details: Meet at the Roma Club parking lot (see map on page 1). Depending on numbers, the leader[s] may want to split the participants into smaller groups, and encourage car pooling, so plan to arrive at least a few minutes early. Route to be determined by trip leader[s]; driving time is in the order of one hour each way. Trip ends by 2:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow time for participants to head for home at a reasonable hour.

Site Description: See description on page 1.

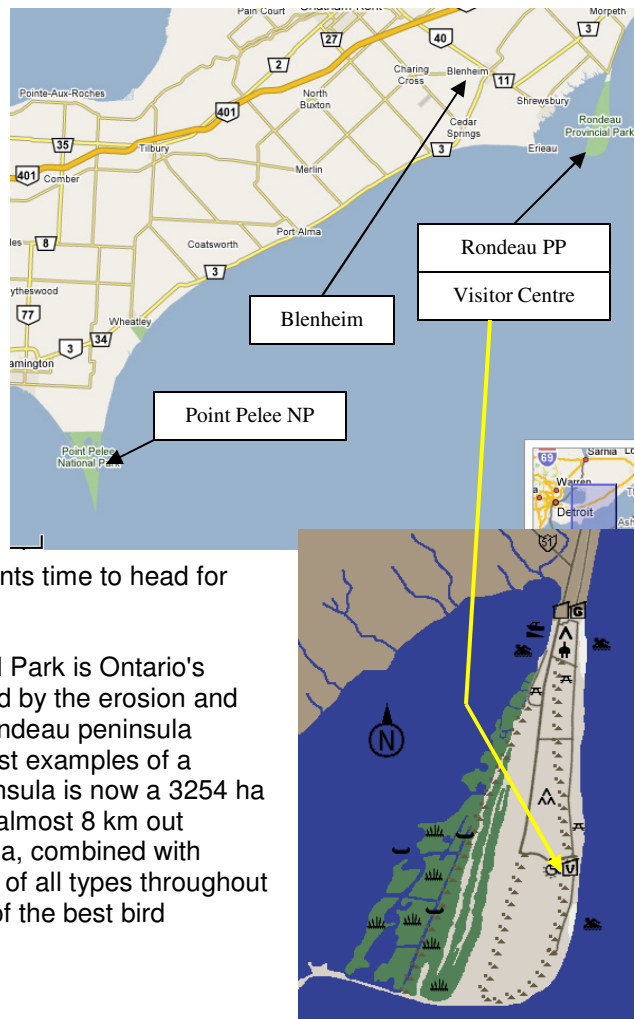
8:30 a.m. Rondeau Provincial Park and Area, then Blenheim Sewage Lagoons

A road trip to several hotspots, beginning with Rondeau Provincial Park and ending at Blenheim Sewage Lagoons.

Leader: Blake Mann and Maris Apse.

Details: Join the group at 8:30 a.m. at the Rondeau Provincial Park Visitor Centre; or later at 1:00 p.m. at the entrance to the Blenheim sewage lagoons. Trip ends at 3:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow participants time to head for home.

Site Description: Rondeau Provincial Park is Ontario's second oldest Provincial Park. Formed by the erosion and deposition of sand and gravel, the Rondeau peninsula constitutes one of North America's best examples of a Cuspate Sandspit. The resulting peninsula is now a 3254 ha Natural Environment park, extending almost 8 km out into Lake Erie. The Rondeau peninsula, combined with Rondeau bay, attracts migrating birds of all types throughout the spring and fall, resulting in some of the best bird watching in Ontario!



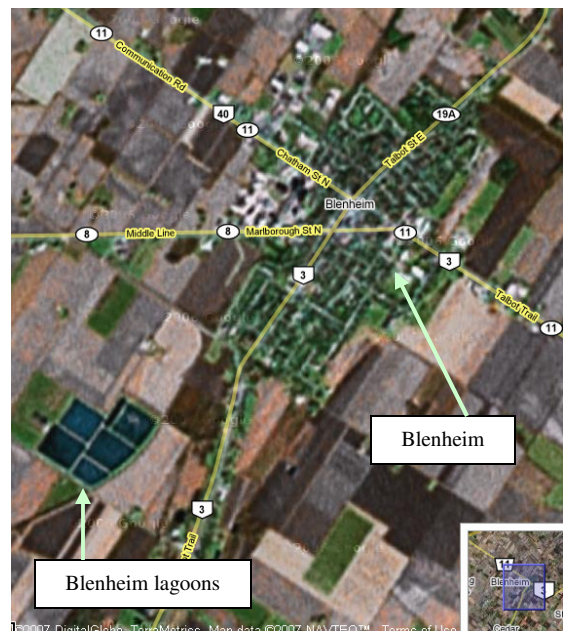
1:00 p.m. Blenheim Sewage Lagoons

Check for waterbirds and late migrants.

Leader: Blake Mann (additional leader[s] will be added if necessary).

Details: Meet at the entrance to Blenheim sewage lagoons -- wait for Blake and the morning tour to arrive before entering. From the junction of Highways 40 & 3 in Blenheim, go west on Hwy 3 for 2.9 km to Harwich Concession 3 (Lagoon Road) just outside town; turn right/north and drive 1 km crossing the tracks, and the lagoons will be on your right. Trip ends at 3:00 p.m. or thereabouts, to allow participants time to head for home.

Site Description: The lagoons at Blenheim are large and often provide suitable habitat for both waterfowl and shorebirds. There is always a chance of something else of interest as well.



Field Trip Leaders Bio's

Dave Milsom leads field trips for Quest Nature Tours, and Flora & Fauna, in Ontario, North America and internationally. He knows birds as well as butterflies, flowers and mammals. He regularly leads tours at Point Pelee.

Jean Iron has an extensive knowledge of birds and regularly leads field trips for Quest Nature Tours. She is well known in the OFO community and currently serves as Past President and co-editor of *OFO News*.

Ron Tozer is Banquet MC and a veteran field trip leader in Algonquin Park, where he was park naturalist until recently. Formerly co-editor of *Ontario Birds* and Chair of the OBRC, he is writing *The Birds of Algonquin Park*.

Marianne Reid is an enthusiastic and knowledgeable Essex County birder. She has worked as a bird hike leader at Point Pelee during the month of May and loves to share her passion for birds with others.

Sarah Rupert is a Point Pelee girl at heart, currently working for Parks Canada as the park's education coordinator. Having spent a good part of her youth birding Point Pelee with her family, she knows the area well.

Blake Mann is a Wallaceburg based birder, with great skill and a lot of experience birding in the Rondeau area in particular.

Brett Groves resides in the Leamington area and has great experience birding in and around St. Clair National Wildlife Area.

Karl Konze has worked as a bird expert during migration at Point Pelee National Park for a number of years, and has led birding hikes at previous OFO Annual Conventions. Karl is an environmental consultant

Steve Pike is an avid birder and bird photographer. He was one of a handful of people chosen recently to join the highly publicized search for Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in Florida. He knows the Pelee hotspots very well.

Rhonda Donley works with Environment Canada and is well acquainted with both the Point Pelee and Holiday Beach areas.

Paul Pratt is head naturalist at Windsor's Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve and is a familiar face leading field trips for OFO at past OFO Conventions.

Maris Apse is a former member of OFO's Board of Directors and has led numerous field trips for OFO. He is particularly knowledgeable about the Rondeau area.