

THE BRODIE CLUB



Established 1921

Website: <http://thebrodieclub.eeb.utoronto.ca/>

THE 1,076th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB

The 1,076th meeting of the Brodie Club was held on Tuesday, 16 September, 2014 in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Laboratories of the University of Toronto.

Chair: Bruce Falls

Secretary: Rose Addison

Editing Secretary: Ricky Dunn

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm and was attended by 25; 24 members and one guest.

Roll Call: Abraham, Aird, E. Addison, R. Addison, Beadle, Bryant, Carley, Currie, Daniels, Dunham, A. Falls, B. Falls, J. Hussell, Iron, Johnson, A. Juhola, H. Juhola, Kotanen, Machin, Martyn, Pittaway, T. Rising, Seymour, Strickland

Guest: Fred Cooke (guest of Bruce Falls), renowned for his long-term study of the Snow Geese of La Perouse Bay in the Canadian Arctic.

Regrets: J. Bendell, Y. Bendell, Bertin, Boswell, Curry, Dunn, Eadie, D. Hussell, Lumsden, McAndrews, Obbard, Rapley, Reading, J. Rising, Slessor, Sutherland, Tomlinson, Zoladeski

Minutes: The report of the June 2014 Field Trip was moved for approval by Dunham and seconded by Trudy Rising.

Announcements, Committee reports and New Business

Program—Bruce Falls and Ed Addison provided information for meetings as follows:

Oct. 21	Felicity Somerset, Professional Photographer	Birds, Beasts, Bugs and other Delights
Nov 18	Chris Guglielmo, UWO	The Physiological Ecology of Migration in Birds and Bats
Dec. 16	Brent Patterson, MNR	Towards science-based management of wolves and coyotes in Ontario

Remaining meetings will be held Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Mar. 17, and April 21, 2015, with dates for May and June still to be determined.

R. Addison reminded members of the annual elections to be held during the October meeting. She encouraged members to consider volunteering to serve on any of the committees, particularly secretarial and refreshments. There is no upper limit on numbers on committees. Here is the **2013-2014** roster:

Secretary: Editing secretary: Ricky Dunn; Corresponding Secretary: Rose Addison;

Recording secretaries: Ed Addison, Rose Addison, George Bryant, Ricky Dunn, Sandra Eadie, Trudy Rising, Kevin Seymour.

Treasurer: Aarne Juhola.

Membership: Ann Falls, Bill Crins, Kevin Seymour, Trudy Rising.

Program: Bruce Falls, Ed Addison, George Bryant, Hugh Currie,

FON representatives: Glenda Slessor, Bob Currie

Archives: Ricky Dunn, Sandra Eadie, Kevin Seymour.

Refreshments: Oliver Bertin, Ann Falls, Trudy Rising

WebSite: Ricky Dunn, Jeremy Hussell, Oliver Bertin, Ken Abraham.

Field Trip: George Bryant, Hugh Currie, Bob Curry

R. Addison summarized some club stats from last year.

No members joined the Brodie Club during the 2013-2014. Our membership decreased by one with the death of long-time member, Norm Martin, on March 24, 2014.

- Total active membership during the 2013-14 season was 51. Average attendance was 27.9 members and 5.2 guests, for an average total attendance of 33. This is a slight increase over the 31 of last year and 28 in both 2010-11 and 2011-12.
- Lowest attendance was in May, with 22 present, and highest in December with a recent record of 59.
- Three members attended all nine monthly meetings and the Field Day: Ann Falls, Bruce Falls and Jeremy Hussell. (Ann and Jeremy have not missed a meeting in 2 years now!)

SPEAKERS:

Kristen Martyn, Sid Daniels, Jean Iron and John Carley made short presentations, and provided write-ups and images for these minutes.

Kristen Martyn: told us about Snake Road (La Rue Road), which is located in the Shawnee National Forest in Anna, Illinois. Each spring and fall for two months La Rue Road is closed for protection of migrating snakes and amphibians as they make their way from their winter hibernation habitats to their summer swamp habitats. Herpetologists have reported that the main factor in triggering the seasonal migration is ground temperature. La Rue Road was open to traffic year-round prior to 1972. This resulted in the death of many animals that were crossing the road. Consequently, the Forest Service decided to close the 2.5-mile segment of the road during the seasonal migration to protect the reptiles and amphibians. The number of animals protected by this action is unknown; however, far fewer reptiles and amphibians are found dead on the road.

A number of interesting habitats dominate this area, including Ozark Mountain Highlands (Illinois Ozarks) with lime outcrops; dry upland and slope forest made up of oak, hickory, Sugar Berry, American Elm, Green Ash, Sweetgum and Short Leaf Pine; loess hill prairie; limestone glades; cypress swamps; caves and wetlands. The region is home to an incredible number of flora and fauna. Here are some numbers to give you an idea:

- 1150 Plant species in all
 - It is one of only two sites in the state where the native shortleaf pine grows naturally
 - 37 Rare, threatened or endangered IL plants
- 39 Species of Amphibians
- 59% of Illinois Reptiles, including 35 Species of Snakes
- 90% of Illinois Mammals
- 175 Species of Birds
- Interesting fauna includes:
 - Spring Cavefish
 - Indiana Bat
 - Bobcat
 - Armadillo
 - Eastern Woodrat
 - Golden Mouse
 - Mississippi Kite

Kristen writes a nature blog, and a full description of the Snake Road trip, along with other posts, can be found at <http://naturenotesblog.blogspot.ca/>



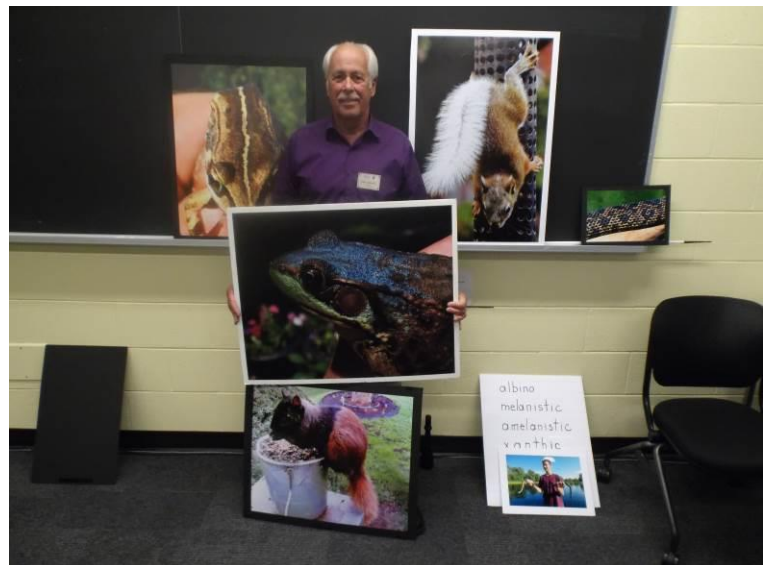
Cave salamander (*Eurycea lucifuga*)



Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix*)

Sid Daniels: Familiar Friends in Gaudy Garb: Sid introduced us to a few of his backyard animals that have departed from what we would consider their normal colouration. Included were a black squirrel (basically melanistic) with a reddish chestnut hindquarters and tail, a red squirrel born in his front apple tree with an pure white tail, and finally a Green frog with a bright almost metallic, blue back.

He also went on to describe some unusual pigmentation variations in all animals, including amelanism: no black pigment but all others may be present, and axanthism: the absence of yellow. A blue Green frog occurs when the yellow pigment normally mixed with blue to produce green is missing and the blue stands alone.



John Carley: presented a draft of *Best Practices: Glass*, a document prepared by his firm for the City to use as a reference tool for those developers, planners, architects, etc. whose projects would be required to comply with the City of Toronto Green Standard Bird-Friendly provisions.

Stemming from the ground-breaking work of Mike Mesure and FLAP, the 2007 Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines produced by the City of Toronto Planning Department with a volunteer working group were incorporated into the Green Standard (hence became mandatory) in January 2010. John's talk touched on the guidelines, the legislation, and how the green standard now mandated a level of care and concern for bird collisions with buildings in Toronto.

ALL GLASS REFLECTS

It is easy to understand that fully reflective glass creates a great problem for migrant birds. However, all glass reflects depending on the angle of light and the angle of view. It is this Face One reflection that must be disrupted or otherwise marked, to alert birds to the glass.



All glass reflects, even interior face fritted or obscure glass.



All glass reflects, with double jeopardy of architectural plantings reflected. Site plantings must be selected and positioned with care to avoid the reflection of apparent safe refuge.



The lower level glazing of this Markham public building was treated with a 5 cm x 5 cm dot pattern, to dramatically reduce bird collisions.



This Markham atrium was successfully treated with a "stripe", dramatically reducing bird collisions with the glass.

Carley is also co-chair of the Friends of the Spit, and he spoke about the Leslie Street Spit, encouraging all members to visit. A total of 316 species of birds, both migratory and resident, have been observed on the Spit. Carley talked briefly about newly revised Tommy Thomson Park/ Leslie Street Spit Bird Checklist, and distributed copies to those present. This is the 4th edition of the checklist (first was in 1988 with 244 species) and "was prepared by volunteers, and coordinated with and published by the TRCA, with financial support from Friends of the Spit and other groups and individuals. This new checklist has been fully updated, and contains Seasonal Abundance codes for each species. An online copy can be downloaded from the Friends of the Spit website http://www.friendsofthespit.ca/spit_about.htm"

Jean Iron brought us up-to-date on the Western James Bay Shorebird Project at Little Piskwamish. In her 6th year of participation, it was Jean's first time surveying at this camp, the best location for Red Knots, where daily totals of 1000 and more were regular. The team conducted daily shorebird surveys, recorded flags on Red Knots, and was involved in new research to track Semipalmated Sandpipers, White-rumped Sandpipers, Dunlin, Red Knots and Hudsonian Godwits. Small devices called nano tags, which emit a radio signal, were placed on about 160 shorebirds. Towers to receive the signals have been erected on James Bay, the shores of the Great Lakes, along the St. Lawrence River, in the Maritimes, and on the Atlantic Coast. Already numerous radio signals have been picked up and more information is expected once all data have been analysed. Two representatives of the Moose Cree First Nation participated in all activities. A major aspiration of the project is to recognize the importance of this unparalleled subarctic staging area and give more protection to James Bay through a special designation such as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). More information and photos: <http://www.jeaniron.ca/2014/JB14/p1.htm>



Left: Adult Red Knot with lime green flag. Little Piskwamish, James Bay, ON, 7 Aug. 2014

Right: Semipalmated Sandpiper with a nano tag attached. Little Piskwamish, 1 Aug.



Jean also spoke about her return trip to Iceland in early July 2014, about a week later than a trip the previous year. One week makes a difference to breeding birds at this northerly latitude. Shorebirds, ducks, geese, swans and Arctic Terns all had young. Close views of Atlantic Puffins and other alcids on spectacular cliffs showed very few young, possibly an indication of the decline in many of Iceland's breeding seabirds, which may be attributed to a collapse of sand eel populations and warmer ocean temperatures. A whale watching tour provided close views of a Humpback Whale. Lake Myvatn (Midge Lake) is excellent for viewing waterfowl because lake waters have a rich food base for ducks. This area is close to the mid Atlantic Ridge, where the North American and the Eurasian plates are moving apart. Volcanic landscapes and dynamic geology create an exciting environment to experience Iceland's natural history. More information and photos:

<http://www.jeaniron.ca/Trips/Iceland2014/p1.htm>



Lake Myvatn area is characterized by pseudocraters formed by lava flows



Humpback whale in an estuary in northern Iceland

QUESTIONS and COMMENTS:

Questions to Martyn

Q. Rising- What is the size of the Siren salamander?

A. About six inches ... all the aquatic salamanders have aquatic gills

Q. Iron – is special footwear needed when you are “snaking”?

A. Martyn wears rubber boots and stays on road.

Comment: Abraham reported that two friends with cottages on lakes north of Peterborough area had each remarked on an outbreak of snakes this year, in lakes where they usually swim. He also drew attention to other natural history areas close to Snake Road, near the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Union County State Fish and Wildlife Area, Horseshoe Lake Nature Reserve, Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, Cypress Creek NWR (all in IL), Ballard Waterfowl Area in KY, and other National Forests in the region are excellent for general birding in the spring and fall, as well as for waterfowl and shorebirds.

Questions to Carley

Q. Rising- Is there good evidence for some of the measures to mitigate bird kills working?

A. At the Markham Public Utilities building there was a 98% reduction from 130 birds. The employees like the look of the window film on the building. Homeowners can get a do-it-yourself product (see Correspondence for details)

Q. Falls – Cost?

A. Residential kits are not expensive.

Q. Bryant- Update on when Spit will be open on weekdays?

It is now open on evenings, and they hope to go to two days/week soon.

Q. Falls- Is there a chance of visitor transportation being provided?

A. Likely not. Cost of a vehicle for the disabled is too high. When the spit is not open, sailors can drive out.

Speakers were thanked by Ed Addison.

OBSERVATIONS

Carley and his wife Victoria observed a female Whirlabout (a species of skipper) on Sunday September 7, 2014 at the ornamental plantings at James Gardens, Etobicoke. The only other Whirlabout record of which John is aware, also a sight record, is by Barry Harrison from Scarborough (date unknown).

Machin commented that an application for a small road near her farm on Bobolink Hill was denied because of the importance of the habitat for Bobolink.

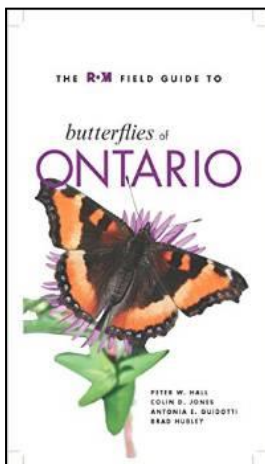
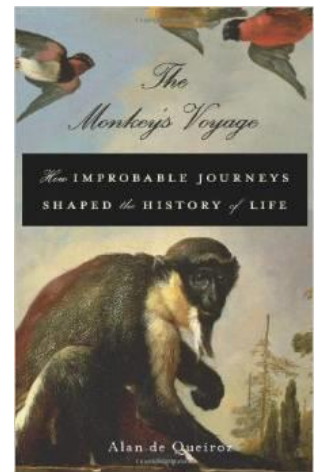
Bryant described some highlights of a five-day trip with fellow Brodie members **Daniels** and **Curry**, along the north shore of Lake Superior with stops at Pukaskwa, Neys and Old Woman Bay.

- Least chipmunk - very long tail; range peters out about top of Georgian Bay
- Northern and Greenish Blues and Dorcas Copper butterflies near Marathon
- Sedge and Zigzag Darners (with larva of Sedge Darners noted in Neys Park splash pools, which would freeze solid in winter)
- Pawpaw Sphinx moth at Spanish
- 3 metre tall cylindrical thistle along the road shoulders near Wawa -- never seen before, and with reason. It was *Cirsium altissima*, Tall Thistle, a brand new Eurasian invasive which entered ON via the Michigan upper peninsula as per A. Reznicek's [Flora of Michigan](#).

- Franklin's (*aka* Sparrow's Egg) Ladies' slipper at Pukaskwa. Past flowering but Bob Curry knew the location as he had been there only three weeks prior when it was in full flower. The only location south of Hudson / James Bay.
- Mingan Moonwort at Pukaskwa, only found on Lake Superior shores
- Sandhill Crane family south of Wawa

Helen Juhola brought a very invasive aquatic plant, Water Soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*), to the attention of the club members. The Juholas learned about it on a trip along the Trent River at Healey's Falls, south of Rice Lake. There is a concerted effort there by the Hunters and Anglers group, MNR, Conservation, Parks and Environment agencies to remove as much as possible and to prevent it from spreading. This is the only known population in N.A. and possibly stemmed from a garden pond planting. [Secretary note: In discussion with board member of Ontario Invasive Plant Council, it was learned that Water Soldier is being sold in many plant nurseries at a very good price point.]

Helen recommended The Monkey's Voyage. From a review: "Biologist Alan de Queiroz describes the radical new view of how fragmented distributions came into being: frogs and mammals rode on rafts and icebergs, tiny spiders drifted on storm winds, and plant seeds were carried in the plumage of sea-going birds to create the map of life we see today. In other words, these organisms were not simply constrained by continental fate; they were the makers of their own geographic destiny. And as de Queiroz shows, the effects of oceanic dispersal have been crucial in generating the diversity of life on Earth, from monkeys and guinea pigs in South America to beech trees and kiwi birds in New Zealand. By toppling the idea that the slow process of continental drift is the main force behind the odd distributions of organisms, this theory highlights the dynamic and unpredictable nature of the history of life."



Seymour recommended a new butterfly book, ROM Field Guide to butterflies of Ontario, published in July 2014 by the ROM. It contains range maps, great photos (including caterpillars) and is easy to read.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Tuesday, October, 21st at 7:30 pm in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories. The speaker will be professional photographer, Felicity Somerset. Her presentation is titled Birds, Beasts, Bugs and other Delights.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25.

CORRESPONDENCE:

From John Carley:

The Convenience Group makes and sells a DIY product titled “Feather Friendly Film DIY Tape.” It is sold in 100ft rolls, complete with measuring guides and instructions. Order from the website www.featherfriendly.org (Click at upper right corner where it says “buy DIY tape”), OR, contact

The Convenience Group,

10 Butterick, Etobicoke (Kiping and Evans Ave area)

Attention: Todd Vogelsburg [416 233-6900 extension 380](tel:4162336900).

If you call Todd rather than use the website, mention that Carly was the reference. Todd has said that if you had any installation concerns, do call him and he’d be pleased to help.

Jeremy Hussell sent these photos of a female Banded garden spider (*Argiope trifasciata*), top (at left) and undersides. The males are smaller and less conspicuous. These common spiders weave a characteristic zigzag stripe into their webs.



Twenty-five years ago: In September 1989, Dr. Mark Taylor spoke to the Brodie Club on Biology and Conservation of Mammalian Carnivores, with a focus on the mongoose. Jim Bendell asked whether young mongooses should be called ‘mongoslings,’ eliciting the response “It’s a free country.”

