



# THE WAKE-ROBIN

Newsletter of the  
Sault Naturalists - Ontario and Michigan

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**Volume 49, Number 2, May, 2003**

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## Addresses for the Sault Naturalists

The Sault Naturalists can be reached at the following postal address. If the outing leaders or committee chairs are unavailable, you may contact Mary to be directed to the proper person:

Sault Naturalists	Mary Ryckman
P. O. Box 21035	194 Old Garden River Rd.
292 Northern Ave.	Sault Ste Marie, ON.
Sault Ste Marie	P6B 5A6
ON, P6B 6H3	(705) 253-6352

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## 2003 Spring Programme

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**May 6.** Joe Sniezek, Manager of Long Range Planning, City of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. *Recreational Trails in Sault Ste. Marie and Other Northern Cities.* Mr. Sniezek will describe recreational trails in the Sault Ste. Marie area, telling how they compare with comparable trails in Northern Ontario and how they might be improved.

**June 10.** Tom Weise, Wildlife Supervisor for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. *Wolves in the Eastern Upper Peninsula.* Mr. Weise will describe his

investigations into wolf-kill complaints for the DNR and discuss the implications of the recent removal of the gray wolf from the U.S. endangered species list. He will also talk about alleged cougar sightings in Michigan.

**Sept. 9.** A staff member of Clergue Forest Management Inc. will present aspects of the preparation of the Forest Management Plan for the Algoma Forest for the period 2005-2025. The plan area covers almost 1 million hectares of Crown land from the Sault Ste. Marie area to west of Wawa.

### 2003 Executive

President	Carl Linhart	(906) 635- 9891
Vice President	Helen Hutchinson	(705) 254-3648
Secretary	Gordon Van Midde	(705) 253-9746
Treasurer	Gail Andrew	(705) 942-0768
Outings	Chuck Bosley	(906) 248-3287
	Evelyn Simon	(705) 949-8206
Programs	John Lehman	(906) 635-5095
Observations Secretary	Ken McIlwrick	(705) 541-5643
Property	Gladys and Cliff Wallwork	(705) 779-3098
Membership	Ron Prickett	(705) 254-1533
Publicity	Tracey Latulippe	(705) 949-1231
Environmental Action	Vacant	
Newsletter	Betty & Gerry Bennett	(705) 254-7214
Botanical Records	Sue Meades	(705) 777-0496
Telephone Convener	Mary Ryckman	(705) 253-6352
F.O.N. Rep.	Tony Walker	(705) 759-6151
M.A.S. Rep.	Chuck Bosley	(906) 248-3287
Web Page Maintenance	Don Hall	(705) 248-1834

### Meetings

**Time:** 7:30 p.m, 2nd Tuesday of each month, except May (1st Tuesday)

**Place:** Sault Ontario, Sugar Shack, 5th Line

Sault Michigan, Central Methodist United Church, Corner of Spruce and Court St.

#### Schedule:

Sept.-Nov.	Sugar Shack
Dec. & Jan.	Central Methodist-United Church
Feb.	Annual Dinner Meeting- location varies
Mar.	Central Methodist United Church
April	Central Methodist United Church
May & June	Sugar Shack

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## Potpourri

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### Program and Environmental Action Committees

Our thanks to Dieter Ropke and Don Marles for their tenures as chairpersons of the Program Committee and Environmental Action Committee, respectively. Dieter and Don have made valuable contributions to our club over many years.

We are seeking a chairperson for the Environmental Action Committee. Please consider joining this committee- it provides an opportunity to truly "make a difference" in the quality of our world.

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### Adopt-a-highway Program

Can you spare about two hours on a weekday morning in early May to "help keep Ontario highways clean and beautiful"? Join other Sault Naturalists in our semi-annual cleanup of approximately one km. of Hwy 550 near Airport Road. Afterwards have coffee or lunch at a nearby restaurant. Please call Betty Bennett (254-7214) after April 30 for details.

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### Baillie Bird-a-thon

On Wednesday, the 28th of May this year, Jack Jones, Tony Walker and myself are participating in our 4th annual Baillie Birdathon. This is a marathon birding day, during which we work from dawn to dusk in an effort to find as many species of birds as we can in one day. It is a lot of fun for us, and a challenge, too, as we 'bird our brains out'!

On our first birdathon, in May of 2000, we found 101 species. In the second year, our total dropped to 98, but last year, 2002, we exceeded all expectations and reached a record number

of 107 different species of birds! Of course, we want to do better this year, but it is not all that easy ...

This is an opportunity for us to help raise money for many scientific and educational initiatives related to ecology and the



environment. We would very much like it if you could sponsor our efforts. There are two ways you can do this: you can pledge a specific amount per bird that we find, or just send us some money (less of a nail-biting experience for you). In either case, you are sent a tax receipt for any amount over \$10, and we will send you a full report about the day, and a list of what we saw.

Please e-mail, phone, write, or stop me in the street to pledge. I will need your name, address, postal code, and \$ per species or flat rate.

Don Wilshere,  
55 Thorneloe Crescent  
Sault Ste Marie, ON, P6A 4J4  
(705) 946 - 3393

#### Sault Naturalists Website

[Http://www3.sympatico.ca/don.hall2/index.html](http://www3.sympatico.ca/don.hall2/index.html)

Comments, suggestions or photos to contribute? Contact Don Hall at (705) 248-1834.

## ***Revised Field Trip Guidelines***

Out of consideration for the leaders, **always phone the trip leader** or a member of the Outings Committee to **register for all field trips** (not only if the weather is inclement). Phone numbers are provided with each outing description. If no one calls, the outing may be cancelled or the date changed. If you decide to attend at the last minute and have not registered, you are always welcome, but take your chances that the event is still on.

Please remember to dress appropriately for the weather, especially during our frigid deep-winter weather conditions! Also remember to bring binoculars, notebook, cameras and film, WATER snacks, etc. Remember to bring lunch and plenty of drinking water on day-long excursions. Loupes and field guides are useful items to bring.

All field trip leaders are volunteers. Participants do so at their own risk.

Remember the Naturalists' Code: **Take only photographs, leave only footprints.** Leave your pets at home and carry out all of your garbage. Leaders would appreciate no collecting unless by permission. Occasional specimens may be collected by the leader for a scientific record (herbarium collections), but no needless picking is permitted.

If you have questions or need a ride, please call the leader or organizer, whose number is listed with each outing, or call the Outings Committee, Chuck Bosley (906) 248-3287 or Evelyn Simon (705) 949-8206. If you do not have a car, there's always room in a car pool; someone in the outings committee will be happy to arrange a ride if you do not know a driver.

Carpool participants- please assist the driver in defraying transportation expenses. Suggested amounts: \$3:00 Can. or \$2:00 U.S. as a baseline and upward depending on the length of the trip.

### **Where we meet:**

**Michigan** - Michigan Welcome Center (M.W.C.)

Follow the blue directional signs immediately south of the bridge toll booths.

**Ontario** - Wellington Sq. Mall - Follow Highway 17 E to the Mall. Turn right into the entry lane. Park between the restaurant and the entrance, facing the latter.

- Zellers Plaza North - Enter A&P/Zellers Mall (formerly K-Mart Plaza) from Great Northern Road or Northern Avenue. Park west of Pennington's Store.

- Market Mall - Located on Second Line (Hwy 550) at Korah Rd. Meet at the N.W. area by the video store.

- Churchill Plaza- Parking lot, under the entrance sign, off Trunk Rd. (Hwy. 17E)

**Remember to buckle-up - It's the law.**

## Spring-Summer Outings - 2003

**Wed. Apr. 30, 6:00 p.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Walk the Dunbar Research Station to check early plant arrivals. Leader: Chuck Bosley (906) 248-3287.

**Sat. May 3, 2:00 p.m. (Ont.) Market Mall.** A short afternoon walk with Horst (end of Peoples Road) then relax beside a campfire and listen to the evening frogs sing. Bring supper (hot dogs or sausages to cook over the bonfire). Contact Gail Andrew (705) 942-0768- only if you need more information.

**Wed. May 7, 6:00 p.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Monocle Lake. A short walk through the woods and a great overview of the area from a viewing platform. Leaders: Chuck Bosley (906) 248-3247 and Evelyn Simon (705) 949-8206.

**Sat. May 10, 5:30 a.m. (Ont.) Central Algoma Secondary School (CASS) parking lot-** off Hwy 17E, Desbarats. Check out waterfowl for Ducks Unlimited with Tracey Latulippe. Tel.: (705) 842-2628. Lunch will be provided for participants.

**Wed. May 14, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Zellers Plaza North parking lot,** near Pennington's. Join Helen at Upper Island Lake for a walk to the marsh. Tel.: (705) 254-3648.

**Wed. May 21, 6:00 p.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Walk the St. Ignace shores. After birding and botanizing, stop for a Strawberry Festival treat at Big Boy Restaurant. Leader: Chuck Bosley (906) 248-3247.

**Sun. May 25, 7:00 a.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Join Carl in a birding and botany jaunt in the Cedarville area. Tel.: (906) 635-9891.

**Wed. May 28, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Market Mall.**  
Walk the ridge at Sunnyside with Ray Gareau (705) 779-2939.

**Sat. May 31, 9:00 a.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Hike a limestone ridge in Raber looking at anything that moves (or doesn't move!) with Rich. Tel.: (906) 297-2810.

**Wed. June 4, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot,** under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Assist Chris Sanders, (705) 759-6216, with the Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario this Wednesday and every following Wednesday until July 9.

**Sat. June 7, 6:00 a.m. (Ont.) Zellers Plaza North.** Chris Sanders will lead a walk through several different locales in his survey for the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas. Tel.: (705) 759-6216.

**Sun. June 8, 9:00 a.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.**  
Canoe Clark Lake (near Tahquamenon Falls area) with Chuck and Evelyn. Plan to see a quaking bog with many unusual aquatic plants and, if lucky, the resident ospreys. Phone Chuck (906) 248-3287 or Evelyn (705) 949-8206 for details and to register.

**Wed. June 11, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot,** under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario- Chris Sanders (705) 759-6216 - (see *Wed. June 4*).

**Sat. June 14, 7:00 a.m. (Ont.) CASS parking lot** (see May 10). Join Tracey in recording waterfowl species for Ducks Unlimited. Lunch provided. Tel.: (705) 842-2628.

**June 14-18. Orchid Conference.** For information contact David McAdoo at [DMCADOO@triad.ca.com](mailto:DMCADOO@triad.ca.com) or Sue Meades at (705) 777-0496.

**Wed. June 18, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot**, under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario- Chris Sanders (705) 759-6216- (*see Wed. June 4*).

**Sat. June 21, 8:30 a.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.** Hike with Bob Gay along the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (possibly Mosquito Bay area). Tel.: (906) 647-4038.

**Sun. June 22, 7:00 p.m. (Mich.) Lake Superior State University (LSSU).** Explore the evening skies with Randy Mullin at the LSSU Planetarium. Call Evelyn (705) 949-8206 for details.

**Wed. June 25, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot**, under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario- Chris Sanders (705) 759-6216- (*see Wed. June 4*).

**Fri. June 27-Mon. June 30 (or any time between) (Ont.) Campout at Pukaskwa National Park.** Please note: you must register your intent to attend by June 22. Call Chuck (906) 248-3287 or Evelyn (705) 949-8206 to sign up.

**Wed. July 2, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot**, under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Chris Sanders (705) 759-6216. Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario- (*see Wed. June 4*).

**Sat. July 5, 10:00 a.m. (Ont.) Zellers Plaza North.** Canoe from Trout Lake and portage to Crystal Lake. Call Ron Prickett (705) 254-1533.

**Wed. July 9, 6:00 p.m. (Ont.) Churchill Plaza parking lot**, under the entrance sign (off Trunk Road-Hwy 17E). Chris Sanders (705) 759-6216. Breeding Bird Atlas Survey of Ontario- (*see Wed. June 4*).

**Sat. July 12 & Sun. July 13 (Ont.)** Camping weekend at Timmins with our botanist Sue Meades and Timmins geologist, Ann Wilson

Join them for an exciting weekend of exploration. Call Sue Meades (705) 777-0496.

**Sat. July 19, 10:00 a.m. (Mich.) M.W.C.** Stalking the edible wilds with John Lehman (906) 635-5095.

**Sat. July 26, 9:00 a.m. (Ont.) (& July 27, optional) Wellington Square Mall.** Explore the geology and flora along the North Shore of Lake Huron to Elliot Lake. Gerry Bennett will discuss geological features while Sue Meades will comment on the flora. Sue will also discuss the aquatic plants growing on tailings from former mining operations. Day one will end with dinner at the Dunlop Lodge on beautiful Dunlop Lake. Day two (optional): after camping overnight at Mississagi Park we will continue with more observations on the geology and plant life of the area. Call Gerry at (705) 254-7214 before July 20.

**Sat. Aug. 9, 10:00 a.m. (Ont.) Wellington Square Mall.** Look for aquatic plants at Ottetail Lake with Sue Meades (705) 777-0496. Bring water shoes or rubber boots.

**Sun. Aug. 17, 10:00 a.m. (Ont.) Wellington Square Mall.** Join Chuck and Evelyn in exploring the Tower Lake area. Bring bathing suits for a dip before heading home. Tel.: Chuck (906) 248-3287 or Evelyn (705) 949-8206 to register.

**Sun. Aug. 24, 8:00 a.m. (Ont.) Echo Bay Elks Hall.** Canoe or kayak the Echo Bay Marsh. Four hours of easy paddling. Call Don and Vivian Hall at (705) 248-1834.

**Fri. Sept. 5-Sun. Sept. 7. (Ont.) Campout weekend at Gargantua Bay, Lake Superior Park.** Hike to Warp Bay as well as canoe the area. Anyone wishing to do the hiking only is welcome to join us at the campground at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. Call Chuck (906) 248-3287 or Evelyn (705) 949-8206 to register.

# Outing Reports

## Snowshoeing Expedition- February 8

Jim Miller led a group of eight on a snowshoeing expedition to the Quinn Lake conservation reserve area north of the Hwy 556 Bellevue railroad trestle. The scenery was quite beautiful, with curtains of icicles hanging on exposed rock faces in several places. Some discussion of Pleistocene geology was provided regarding the presence of a “hanging delta” feature south of the lake and basal and ablation glacial depositions. Lunch was enjoyed around a campfire on the edge of a glacial kettle lake.

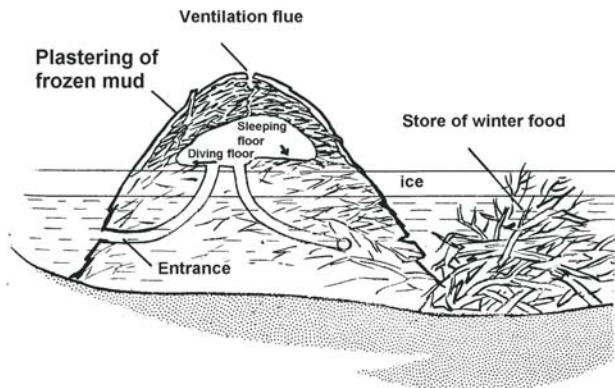
by  
Carl Linhart

## Ski Outing- February 15

A team of seven cross-country skiers skied in the Allard Lake area northeast of Maki Road, following the lay of the land. The snowy landscape revealed an array of tracks of



foraging, small-footed animals. There were many sightings of chickadees and snow buntings. Much discussion ensued on the single file tracks of the legendary “lightweight-shodded creature of wherever”. A beaver home (lodge)- a conical heap of sticks



and mud about 15 feet in diameter, 4 feet high, and layered with snow - sat against the frozen shoreline. We noticed that the lodge’s ventilation opening developed an 8-inch ice chimney, because of condensation. (See above for a drawing of a cross-section of a beaver lodge.) In a nook in the northeast corner of Allard Lake, the skiers enjoyed a fireside lunch under clear skies and a moderate temperature.

by  
Judith Falkins

### Red Rock Ice-Capade- Saturday, March 29

Four diehards ventured onto the pack ice on the southern shore of Lake Superior at Red Rock on Saturday March 29. It was a blustery day with winds from the northwest, temperature hovering at  $-4^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and somewhat overcast sky conditions.



The group consisted of Judy Falkins and Ron Prickett, both skiing, as well as Jim Miller and Valerie Walker on snowshoes. It was a challenge for the skiers as it had rained heavily the day before and temperatures had dropped rendering conditions rather slippery. The light flurries early in the morning had contributed only a sporadic skiff of snow over the ice surface lending little to traction. Nonetheless, the group proceeded briskly in a southeasterly direction following the shoreline for about 7.5 kilometers before breaking for lunch.

There were many telltale indications on the ice of the recent mild spell over the week prior to the outing. Several freshets were noisily spilling their contents from the thick conifer covered shoreline into the lake. In some cases, the runoff entered the lake from under the ice covering next to shore to create a hollowed cavity, which made for some trepidation when passing over. In other locations, there were

expanses of open water both in near-shore areas as well as in isolated locations some distance from shore. For the most part, conditions were quite safe with the level ice extending approximately 30m from shore before becoming irregular. For the next 50m beyond, the ice surface became progressively more disturbed with broken chunks of ice strewn like cordwood at the point where the waves break on an offshore ridge. As we passed along, we marvelled at the blue-green hues of some of the behemoth ice slabs to our right.

On the return trip, conditions had improved somewhat for the skiers as the sun's heat had softened the ice surface slightly to improve traction. We noticed curiously, several spiders periodically on the ice surface some distance from shore. Identification of these creatures is pending and it is surmised that because of the sun's emergence sporadically over the course of the afternoon, spiders (as well as other arthropods) can store enough heat to become active and pursue prey. These spiders were believed to have ventured out onto the ice seeking snow scorpionflies and/or snow fleas. However, as the ambient temperatures began to drop, they were becoming progressively less active.

We arrived mid-afternoon to our starting point with about 15 kilometers under our belts and some minor windburn for a few of us and a soaker for one of us (initials R.P.) but no worse for wear for the most part. This outing was an experience like no other.

by

Valerie Walker



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## Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas

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The second year of the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas project is now finished, and we are about to start the third year. The atlas is a 5-year project to record the status of all the breeding birds throughout Ontario. For record keeping, the province is divided into some 45 regions, and each region is subdivided into 10 x 10 km squares.

As Regional Coordinator for the atlas in the Sault Region I just attended a coordinator's meeting in southern Ontario. Progress for the completion of the atlas is on schedule, but in all regions there is still lots of work needed. Some trends are showing up already. It will come as no surprise to learn that cormorant numbers are up everywhere. Sandhill cranes are on the increase across much of the province, not just in our region. In southern Ontario red-bellied woodpeckers and tufted titmice have shown significant increases since the last atlas, so maybe, just maybe, we might find some up here! Most of the swallow family are down in numbers, and there has been a dramatic decline everywhere in the occurrence of nighthawks and whip-poor-wills.

In the Sault we have made a good start, but still have a long way to go if we are going to adequately cover the region. We should be able to get evidence of possible breeding for at least 80 species in each of the 60- 10 x 10 km squares that we have in our region and hopefully we can confirm breeding for many of the species. I think all the keener birders in the area are involved in the atlas project, but we can still use all the information we can get and it doesn't matter whether you are a beginner or an expert, you can still contribute.

Observations that confirm breeding are particularly valuable. 'Confirmed breeding' means finding a nest or seeing recently fledged young birds. Even if some of your

observations may seem trivial to you, they may be valuable additions to the atlas. Maybe you will have a robin nesting outside your window at home or at the cottage, or a phoebe up under the eaves. How about a barn swallow nesting in the garage, or cliff swallows under the local bridge? Purple martins, nighthawks and whip-poor-wills were quite common in our area during the last atlassing project in the 1980s, but so far we have no records for the current atlassing project, so look out for them.

While our emphasis here is on the Sault Region, which extends from Batchawana in the northwest to Thessalon in the southeast, records are needed for anywhere in the province. So if you are doing some camping, or fishing in the surrounding area, or just driving through, keep a record of what birds you see and where you saw them. The atlas organizers have come up with a very handy card for keeping these records which you can send in at the end of the season.

If you would like some of these cards, or any more information on the atlas, please give me a call. Note too, that June 7 is Provincial Atlas Day, when the organizers are exhorting as many people as possible to get out and 'atlas'. In addition, we are going to have an atlassing evening every Wednesday during June and the first half of July. Details are in the listing of the Sault Naturalists Outings. These will be a great opportunity for beginners to get out and learn from more experienced birders and for everyone to contribute to a worthwhile project.

C.J. Sanders

## Forgot to renew your membership?

See the form below.

Sault Naturalists Membership Form			
C/o Ron Prickett, Membership Chairperson, Sault Naturalists; Telephone (705) 254-1533 P.O. Box 21035, 292 Northern Ave., Sault Ste Marie, Ontario, P6B 6H3, Canada			
Categories and Fees			
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$10.00 CD \$ 7.00 US	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual
			15.00 CD 11.00 US
<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	20.00 CD \$15.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Life
			\$225.00 CD
Name: _____			
Address: _____			
Country & Code: _____ Telephone _____			
The YEAR on your address label indicates the year of paid-up membership. The membership year is from January to December.			

THE SKY IS NOT FALLING! THAT'S JUST A CROCK  
OF ALARMIST PROPAGANDA FROM A BUNCH OF  
LEFT WING ENVIRONMENTALIST WACKOS!



**Chicken Little, Age 40.**

### Membership

Life Memberships	13
To 2005	1
2004	1
2003	64
2002	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>121</b>

Ron Prickett  
Membership chairperson (705) 254-1533.

### The Border Birder Hotline

Ken McIlwrick is ornithological records chairperson and operator of the birding hotline.

Please make sure that, when reporting a sighting - particularly of rare birds, you include your name, phone number, location and date of sighting, the species and number of birds sighted. Sightings that are unconfirmed, because Ken cannot contact the caller to verify the sighting, will NOT be included in the monthly reports.

**The Border Birder Hotline phone number is: (705) 256-2790.**