

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

February 2019

President's Report - *Ron Prickett*

Hello fellow Naturalists. It has been another great year for the Sault Ste. Marie Field Naturalists. The programs have been great, the outings have been great, our projects have been successful. Some of our projects this year: milkweed conservation efforts on St. Joseph Island; Garlic mustard pulls in Sutton Park; efforts to monitor frogbit invasive species along the coast of St. Joseph Island; Christmas Bird Counts; BioBiltzes; naturalization efforts in the West End creeks and waterways; ongoing Swift Watch at the post office and courthouse chimneys; environmental input to the City's Official plan (Shape the Sault); attempts to have species at risk birds incorporated in the Forest Management Plan for the Algoma Forest; ongoing repair of the bird observation platforms, and the promotion of duck feeding signs at Belleview Park. All done with the strong support and participation of our club members. It is for the club that we all work together to have an enjoyable, educational and interesting experience both indoors and out.

For the future, I see the club having to take on an even more active stewardship roll representing the interests for a sustainable environment. There are forces afoot, both politically and environmentally, that will impact on the future of all our natural resources. If we wish a world that our children's children can enjoy and share with all other species in this world, we must be proactive. We must have a strong voice when any call is made that will affect negatively this world of ours.

In order to help in this endeavour, it must be our goal to invite others to join us who share our goals. Many hands make light work. It is essential that we also convince the younger generation, for whom we are doing this for, to share with us in this journey. We must work to offer programs and outings that will pull the millennials or whomever from their tablets, iPhones, androids or pads to the real world.

Thanks to your Executive who put in extra hours each month to help make your club the best. Chuck Miller (Vice President, Program Chair, STAC member), Jerry Kroetsch (Secretary), Angela Henley (Treasurer), Val Walker (Outings), Barb Scott (Membership), Jeff Robinson (Archives), Mark Harvey (Local Citizens Committee for Forest Management Algoma), Carrie Ginou (Ontario Nature Liaison), Bill Meades (Environmental Action Committee Chair), and Carter Dorscht (Social Media Coordinator).

Thanks to all who made our journey great this year.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
President's Report	1
Program Committee	2
Membership	3
Financial	3
Environmental Action	4
Outings	5
Ontario Nature	6
Algoma Forest LCC	7
Social Media	8
Christmas Bird Count	8
Connections to the Seasons	9



Your Executive: Front Row - Carter, Chuck, Angela, Val. Back Row - Jerry, Barb, Jeff, Ron, Carrie, and Bill. Absent - Mark

Program Committee Report - *Chuck Miller*

This year's programs included a variety of speakers at the club's monthly meetings and annual general meeting. This year's programs were:

Little Rapids Rejuvenation – Mike Ripley

Antarctica – Dr. Art Groot

Raving About Raptors – Kathy Bricker

The Dance of the Sandhill Crane – Jeff Lange

Fungi and Soils – Dr. Pedro Atunes

Ontario's Forest Fire Strategy – Dan Johnston

Drones in Wildlife and Vegetation Management – Joe Eder

Environment in City Planning SSM – Peter Tonazzo

Sea Lamprey Control – W. Paul Sullivan

Holiday Meeting and Social

A "thank you" to the generosity of our meeting host locations - **The Bayliss Library** (Affiliate of Superior District Library), **Great Lakes Forestry Centre**, and **Sault College**. "Thank you" also for your interest in nature and providing an opportunity to share our speakers with the larger public community.

The program committee works for the club members, so be sure to let any of the committee members know what you would like to see in future programs or if you have suggestions for speakers or presentations.

Your program committee is Jerry Kroetsch, Doug McDougall, Ron Prickett, David Trowbridge and Chuck Miller (Chair).

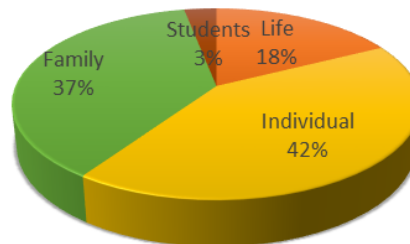
Thank you to all the AGM volunteers.

Membership Report - Barb Scott

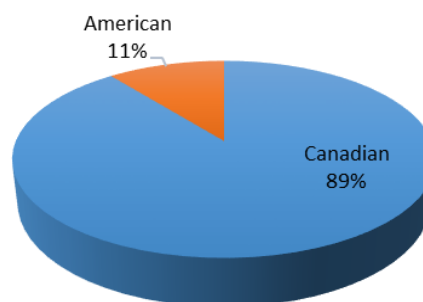
Membership as of January 01, 2019

Category	2017	2018
Life	21	23
Individual	59	55
Family	42	49
Students	7	4
Total	129	131
Canadian Membership	112	117
American Membership	17	14

MEMBERSHIP 2018



BY COUNTRY 2018

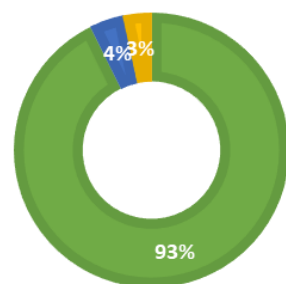


Treasurer's Report - Angela Henley

Category	Income	Expenses
Memberships	3,270	
Donations	143	
AGM	115	
President		153
Insurance		1,405
PO Box		188
Bank Charges		249
Ontario Nature		515
Bird Check List		115
Facebook		50
Outings		91
Misc		264
Totals	3,528	3,030

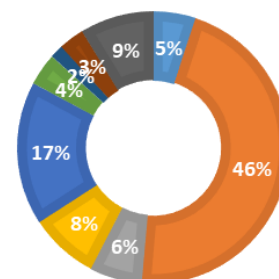
Account	Matures	Amount
GIC#1	01-18-2019	4,062.48
GIC#2	06-19-2019	4,195.33
US Account		992.21

INCOME



■ Memberships ■ Donations ■ AGM

EXPENSES

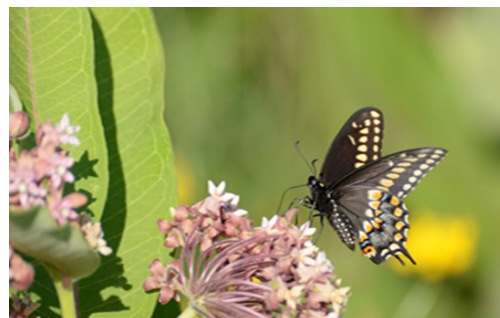


■ President ■ Insurance
 ■ PO Box ■ Bank Charges
 ■ Ontario Nature ■ Bird Check List
 ■ Facebook ■ Outings
 ■ Misc

Environmental Action Committee Report - *Bill Meades*

The Environmental Action Committee (EAC) continued to coordinate the participation of Sault Naturalist in the planning process for the 2020-30 Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Algoma Forest. Activities for the year included:

- February 6 - Dave Euler gave a presentation to the Algoma Forest Management Planning Committee reviewing some of the shortcomings of the previous 2010-2020 FMP and expressing the Sault Naturalists' desire to work with the planners to improve the 2020-2030 FMP, particularly for species at risk birds.
- February 27 - The Sault Naturalists Executive Committee decided to request that the Planning Committee treat all bird species listed as threatened or endangered in the provincial or federal Species at Risk Acts and known to occur within the Algoma Forest as Species of Concern in the development of the Proposed Long-Term Management Direction for the Algoma FMP 2020-2030.
- March 5 - The Sault Naturalists presented their position at the Forest and Benefits Workshop held by the Sault Ste. Marie Local Citizens Committee as part of the Algoma FMP planning process.
- May 16 - Dave Euler met with the Planning Team to request that the habitat modelling be undertaken for at least some of the species at risk birds as part of the FMP 2020-2030.
- July 25 - In a letter to Dave Euler, MNRF rejected his proposal for modelling species at risk birds as part of the Algoma FMP 2020-2030. They indicated that the matter could be taken to the District Manager Issue Resolution process if we still had concerns.
- August 30 - Dave Euler presented his concerns to the District Manager Issue Resolution Process.
- September 14 - The District Manager rejected the appeal and indicated it could be further appealed to the Regional Manager Resolution Process.
- November 14 - Dave Euler presented to the Regional MNRF manager about his concerns for the lack of habitat modelling for species at risk birds and a proposal of how this could be addressed in the FMP process.
- November 29 - The Regional Manager rejected the appeal. Species at risk birds will not be modeled in the Algoma FMP 2020-30.
- The Chair of the Sault Naturalists Executive Committee has sent letters to MNRF and the Sault Ste. Marie Local Citizens Committee voicing strong concern for the inadequate treatment of species at risk birds in the Algoma FMP 2020-30 planning process.



Black swallowtail—Mark Olivier



Orphan Lake—Ron Prickett



Marsh marigold - Val Walker



Robertson Cliffs - Val Walker

Outings Report- Val Walker

In 2018, the line up on the outings calendar ranged from gentle butterfly walks to rigorous explorations on snowshoe to some of Algoma's conservation reserves; from amphibian surveys on both sides of the border to waterbird surveys on the St. Marys River.

We had two Birding Big Days this year, one with The Kensington Conservancy in the Central Algoma area and one in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario as part of eBird's Global Big Day. Both these events will become annual events with results submitted to eBird.

We looked at fungi, wild apples, ferns, and wildflowers, scanned fields for Bobolinks and Eastern Meadowlarks and skies for raptors and swifts. We counted birds for two Christmas Bird Counts; navigated floodways and Nardia and ogled daisy stone and ripple rock.

We continued our fight against Garlic mustard (an invasive species) for the third year in Sutton Park.

The majority of the outings are led by club volunteers that are giving of their time and expertise. Many thanks to these folks. Suggestions for destinations and features of interest or study are always welcome and appreciated.

Outing reports and links to our Flickr account with related photographs can be found on the Sault Naturalists Wiki :

<http://soonats.pbworks.com/w/page/8206091/Outings>



Behind Robertson Cliffs, Jan 2018



Point Pelee National Park, May 2018



Goodhart Farms Nature Preserve, May 2018



Stobie Creek, July 2018

Ontario Nature Report - *Carrie Ginou*

The Sault Naturalists Club is a member of Ontario Nature, a group which protects wild species and wild spaces through conservation, education, and public engagement. As members, our club gets regular updates on current conservation issues in Ontario, is able to support advocacy on issues that are also important to us, and gets the opportunity to participate in the nature network, which consists of many other nature organizations and clubs.

Ontario Nature is currently engaged in a “Protected Places Campaign” which is involved in getting Ontarians active in pursuit of the Canada-endorsed United Nations target to protect at least 17 percent of the planet’s land and inland waters by 2020. Currently, less than 11 percent of Ontario is protected. To learn more, and sign on to the declaration for Protected Places, visit the Ontario Nature website: <https://ontarionature.org/campaigns/protected-places/>

In May, Carrie, Ron, and Val participated in the Northern Regional Meeting, a gathering which brings northern clubs and conservation groups together to learn, share, and network. It was hosted by the Nipissing Naturalists and held at the Canadian Ecology Centre in Mattawa, Ontario.

The Sault Naturalists sponsored Christopher Zayachowski to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit for Biodiversity and Environmental Leadership in September 2018. It is a great opportunity for nature focused youth to learn and inspire each other.

We are enthusiastic about sponsoring an attendee again in 2019. The Youth Summit will be held September 20-22, 2019 at YMCA Geneva Park in Orillia, Ontario. If you know of a potential candidate (grades 9-12 in September 2019) please contact Carrie (carrie@ginou.ca).



Harris's Checkerspot, June, 2018



Snowy owl—Carter Dorscht

Algoma Forest LCC Report - Mark Harvey

Sault Naturalist Local Citizens Committee (LCC) Representative for Issues Concerning Forest Management Planning in the Algoma Forest.

The focus of the LCC the last year has been to provide input into the new Forest Management Plan that is being prepared for our local crown forests.

So what is a **Forest Management Plan**?

A Forest Management Plan is prepared for a 10-year period for each management unit in the province. Each plan outlines the long-term objectives for the management unit and what forest operations will be completed during the 10-year period. A plan is prepared by a plan author, who is a Registered Professional Forester, with the assistance of an interdisciplinary planning team and Local Citizens' Committee, and input from First Nation and Métis communities and interested members of the public. A Forest Management Plan is approved when the MNRF Regional Director is satisfied that the plan provides for the sustainability of the forest, and that all identified concerns have been addressed. (copied from the Ontario Government web site on Public Participation in Forest Management Planning)

The Algoma Forest will have a new 10-year Forest Management Plan by Spring 2020.

In March of 2018 the OMNRF held a **Desired Forest and Benefits Meeting** in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario that included representation by your LCC representative. Attention was given to wildlife populations and wildlife habitat and how the new and future Forest Management Plans will address concerns of interest to Sault Naturalists.

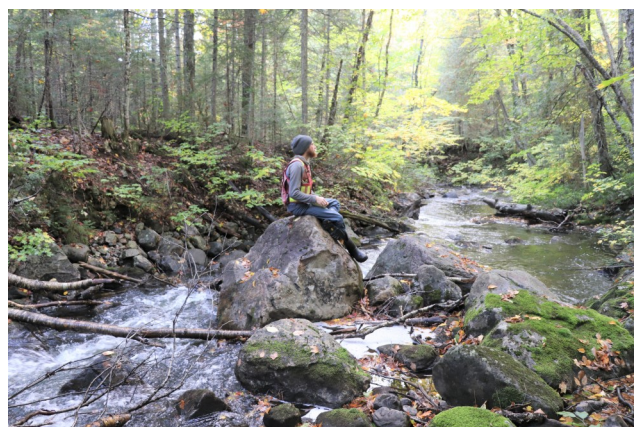
The planning team writing the new Forest Management Plan, in consultation with the Local Citizens' Committee, and First Nations and Métis communities, identifies desired benefits from the forest, and sets objectives to achieve them. With the aid of computer models, strategic analysis is conducted to determine the types and levels of access, harvest, renewal, and tending activities required to balance the achievement of management objectives. (copied from the Ontario Government web site on Public Participation in Forest Management Planning)

Other issues of concern that have been identified by Sault Naturalists relate to ensuring the habitat needs of bird and other species at risk are adequately addressed in the Forest Management Plan.

Sault Naturalist members are urged to attend the Forest Management Plan Public Open House here in Sault Ste. Marie to review progress to date on the proposed 2020 plan. Open House attendees may voice their concerns about how your forests will be managed. Dates have not been made available at the time this was written but the open house should be this spring. For more information on how you can participate in forest management planning check out this web site: https://files.ontario.ca/the_future_of_our_forests_eng_website.pdf



Moose—Carter Dorscht



Social Media Report - *Carter Dorscht*

Since our update last year, the Sault Naturalists Facebook page has almost doubled in size! We now have over 600 people who like our page and see our posts. This year, we've posted many photos of rare bird sightings, interesting wildlife sightings, and cool plants. Did you see the photos of the white White-tailed Deer on St. Joseph Island or the Northern Hawk Owl in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan? Reminders about our weekly outings, local environmental events and causes, and other interesting items get shared here as well.

The page can be found at facebook.com/saultnaturalists and everyone is encouraged check it out. Your likes, comments and shares will continue to help this club grow!

Sault Ste. Marie Christmas Bird Count - *Carter Dorscht*

Despite some less than ideal fog, the 2018 Sault Ste. Marie Christmas Bird Count was once again a success. 67 field observers, plus feeder watchers, managed to count 56 different species for a total of 6204 birds. The highlight this year was a Lesser Black-backed Gull, a first count day record of this species. This was the 63rd year that this count has occurred, which takes place on both sides of the border. Sault Naturalists members also participated in a number of other area counts.

10 MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES	2018 COUNT
Black-capped Chickadee	1359
European Starling	1015
Rock Pigeon	1003
Mallard	812
American Crow	289
American Goldfinch	251
Herring Gull	230
Blue Jay	177
Common Raven	132
Common Goldeneye	113

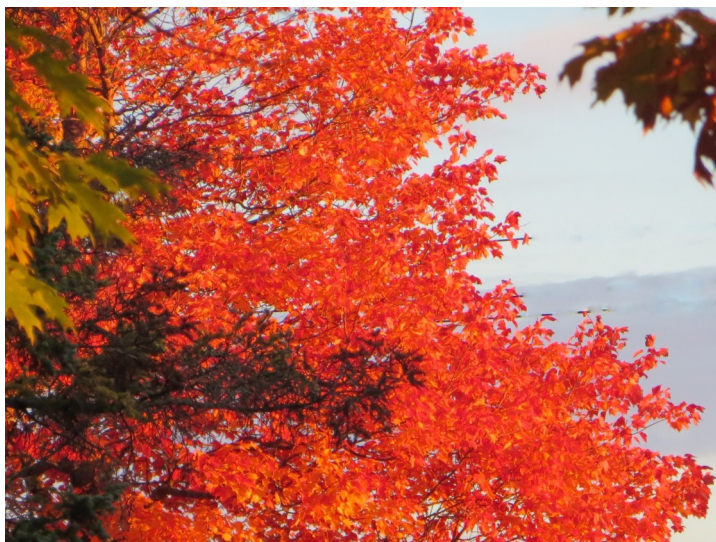
NEW ALL TIME HIGHS	2018 COUNT
Wild Turkey	87
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	6
Pileated Woodpecker	6
White-throated Sparrow	11
White-breasted Nuthatch	88

SIGNIFICANT SIGHTINGS	PREVIOUS COUNTS REPORTED
Lesser Black-backed Gull	0
Northern Mockingbird	3
Cooper's Hawk	3
Belted Kingfisher	5
Peregrine Falcon	11
Rusty Blackbird	14
Song Sparrow	10



Carter on the scope—Val Walker

Connections to the Seasons — *Ron Prickett*



With every step, the crackle of crusty leaves of late autumn

Leaves whose colours display the trail of autumns' magic touch upon the palette of the canopy of trees

The white capped mushrooms thrust their fruiting bodies high above the mulch of years gone by

The snow-white scape covers the forest floor and our frozen faces sense the dead of winter has arrived

Alas, beneath the icy cold blanket in the subnivean zone lives the lives of those who hibernate

Some who tunnel for sustenance all winter long surviving the season

The crunch of crusty snow at each step the only sound.

Our snowy trail left for those who follow, till the frosty wind erases the traces we ever passed this way

Oh, the glorious spring sun pouring out its favour on our faces

The Skunk Cabbage with its internal furnace flaming, thrusts its spadix through the still frozen blanket of ice and snow

Sun's touch on the Spring Beauty, the Trout Lilly, encouraging them to push their flowers forward through the frost of early spring

Warblers follow the sun's warmth, flying in following the great melting, bringing their beauty and sweet songs

The frog's courting croaks fill the night air, the cacophony hoping to seal their offspring's fate

The hum of the wings of a dragonfly circles the marshland searching for a mate

Hart's-tongue fern clammers over the sheer rock face making the most of summer days

Our bow slices the glassy still waters, our paddles splash us forward as the sun sparkles on the rippling surface

All are symbols of the seasons of the natural cycle that ring life's fond familiar bells that resonant with our soul

