



Outing Report: Matheson Road (Not Maintained in Winter) – Walk

Saturday, November 23, 2019

by Chuck Miller

Matheson Road – Walk

Matheson Road runs between Ottetail Lake (Rydal Bank) and Caribou Road and is not maintained in the winter. This is an area of marginal farm land and old orchards rich in wildlife habitat. We parked and started hiking from Rydal Bank Park. The road is 4.5 km one way – 9 km return. Rydal Bank Park is located approximately 9 kilometres (km) north of the Bruce Mines, Ontario. A sincere **“Thank You”** to the Township of Plummer Additional and Rydal Bank volunteers that maintain the park and washrooms year round.



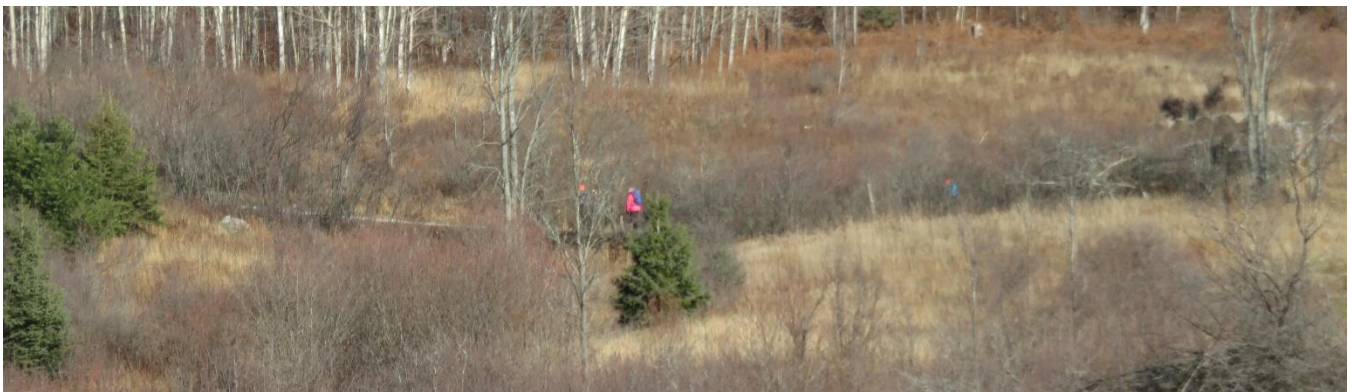
The winter like weather that we had the previous week had warmed to just above freezing, the day was mostly sunny; and generally a nice day for a walk in the country. 18 Sault Naturalists joined in the walk.

The lack of snow and overnight frozen ground made looking for animal track more challenging. Dave and Lesley had arrived early and spotted Canada Geese and Goldeneye ducks on Ottetail Lake. The swans that were in the area the week before were not see this day. There were however tracks likely of deer, moose, fox, raccoon and voles.





Ila spotted a deer trail starting at an apple tree. Mary sampled an apple aged in the cold. We stopped for lunch on some roadside boulders (some of them of Puddingstone) near Caribou Road before turning back and retracing our route.



A Hairy Woodpecker joined us on the way back. Lesley discovered some canid scat full of hair. Mark identified some invasive Knotweed at the road.



A muskrat house was visible back at Ottetail Lake as well as previously seen geese and ducks. Lesley pointed out an eagles nest on the far ridge of Ottetail Lake. (photo Knotweed and scat by Lesley Rich)



We finished the day with refreshments and treats at Bobber's Restaurant in Bruce Mines. Bobber's is home to some very deep-dish pies and large date squares.