



sault
naturalists

Sault Naturalists
of
Ontario and Michigan

ANNUAL REPORT... for 2013

President's Message *.....for 2013*

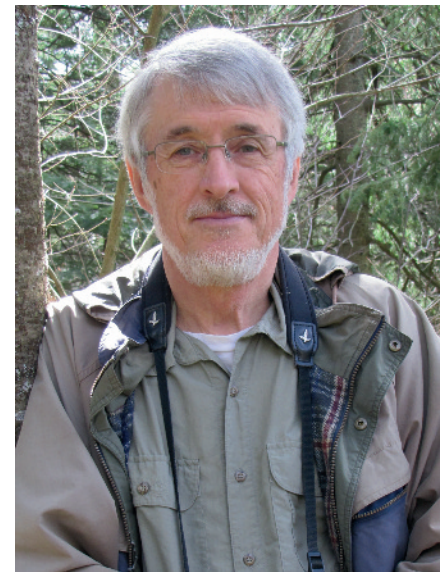
As I sit down to write my annual message, I'm afraid my mind is elsewhere. The club is deeply involved in a conservation effort related to bird droppings. It's like I'm knee deep ...no..no... that metaphor would not be appropriate for an annual report! As many members are aware, the capping of the Courthouse Chimney in Sault Ontario means that thousands of Chimney Swifts, a threatened species, have been excluded from prime roosting habitat. Our club is working hard to "Save our Swifts" and our efforts are beginning to bear fruit, it looks like the swifts will again have a place to roost this May.

I once thought of the Sault Naturalists as a small group of like-minded people, meeting once a month, enjoying the outdoors and otherwise flying under-the-radar. Nothing could be further from the truth! As well as dealing with conservation issues our club is well known and active in many areas.

Our members sit on advisory boards for forest management, fisheries management and two local conservancies. We work closely with Ontario Nature and the Michigan Audubon Society including caring for two nature reserves. Our expertise is in demand at events and exhibits including the Desbarats Green Expo and the Hub Trail Festival. When non-profit organizations like the Lake Superior Watershed Conservancy, the Kensington Conservancy and the Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition need help minimizing environmental impacts of their projects, they call on us.

There is so much to be done; the work we can do locally is limited only by our imagination and our volunteer base.

But let's not get hung up on work; there is time for play as well! Our outing list is second to none! We've stayed true to our outdoor roots with botanizing, birding, hiking, cycling, paddling, skiing or camping outings almost every week.



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We may take for granted that many of our friends are members of the Sault Naturalists. In my case, this is not because my friends all joined the same club; it's because *I met them in the club*. Friendships made here have led to many good times that don't show up in annual reports, and excursions to both nearby and far-off locales.

Our 2014 annual meeting will be a one-of-a-kind celebration of our 60th Anniversary. We hope to have two of our founding members in attendance. 60 years of enjoying nature together, that's quite an accomplishment!

Thanks to the past presidents who have offered guidance and many thanks to all those who have contributed to a wonderful year - Those brave souls who arranged and led a tremendous range of outings, the program people who found and cared for our guest speakers, the many people who contributed to the 60th anniversary celebration, the computer wizards who maintained a healthy club presence on the web, the long-suffering executive committee members who worked tirelessly and put up with my occasional ineptitude, those who took notes, decorated, counted birds, wrote reports and compiled newsletters.

Let's not forget the thoughtful people who provided coffee and refreshments, kept our finances in order, arranged the Christmas Bird Count, kept track of the membership, worked at the Hub Trail Challenge and the Green Expo, publicized our activities and did a great job of representing the club in other organizations.

Special thanks to long-time member Gladys Wallwork. Gladys has stepped down from her work as archivist, leaving the club archives in very good order.

I'm sure I've missed someone. Many, many dedicated and talented people work hard to keep this club running smoothly.

I have found the position of president to be a demanding one. It can be all-consuming when issues like Chimney Swift habitat come up. It's time to take a break from the computer screen. I will be stepping down from presidency, but still remaining active on the Executive Committee. Many thanks for the support and kind words over the last two years. I will do what I can to support the incoming president, and I wish him/her well.

Don Hall

Sault Naturalists' Executive...2013

President:
Don Hall
(705)248-1834

Vice-president:
Ron Prickett
(705)254-1533

Treasurer:
Gail Andrew
(705)942-0768

Recording Secretary:
Donna Ryckman- Rooney
(705)945-9821

Membership:
Harvey Robbins
(705)949-4863

Program Committee Chairperson:
Dave Euler
(705)248-1494

Outings Coordinator:
Valerie Walker
(705)253-7044

MAS Representative:
Carl Linhart
(906)635-9891

Ontario Nature and STAC
Representative:
Tony Walker
(705)759-6151

Member-at-large:
Robert Cohen
(unlisted)



THANK YOU EXECUTIVE!!!

Save our Swifts !!!

As many club members have witnessed each spring, Chimney Swifts roost in the Courthouse Chimney in downtown Sault Ontario. The spectacle is a sight to behold – as dusk approaches they swirl around chimney, spiraling inwards until one bird gets up the courage to go in. The others follow – often by the hundreds, sometimes by the thousands. Unfortunately this incredible phenomenon did not occur in 2013; the government of Ontario had capped the chimney. Our club learned of the capping in November 2013.

Chimney Swifts are a threatened species both provincially and nationally, and a sizeable portion of northern Ontario Chimney Swifts used that chimney. We viewed the capping as a violation of the Endangered Species Act but the province did not share our view as the droppings were said present an “imminent risk to health and safety”.

The club immediately began working with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, looking for a way to help the swifts. Solutions were hard to come by because two ministries were involved and the chimney also has heritage values – it must be protected from the elements. We pursued the quiet, behind-the-scenes approach until mid-January but alas, there was little progress. Some government agencies were on our side, while others simply didn't care.

As time was running out, we called a public meeting for January 21, 2014. Email invitations were sent out to 120 people and also posted on social media. Attendance was good, and a new group called SOS – *Save our Swifts* was born. SOS did all the planning for a major publicity campaign, to be implemented if a firm commitment to uncap the chimney was not forthcoming.

Governments don't like negative publicity, especially in an election year. The threat of press releases and protest marches finally got the wheels turning, and as the annual report goes to press it looks like the swifts will have a good place to roost in 2014. SOS will not rest on its laurels, the group will remain active and vigilant, making sure that work which has been promised is actually completed before the swifts arrive this spring.

There is no doubt that without the efforts of the Sault Naturalists the chimney would have remained capped and valuable swift habitat would have been compromised. Many thanks to all who contributed to the effort!

submitted by Don Hall

Sault Naturalists *Treasurers Report for 2013*

Canadian Account

Balance Jan. 1/13: \$1752.12
Balance Dec. 31/13: \$5128.90

Receipts: \$5420.73
Memberships: \$1820.00
Misc: \$3600.73

Disbursements: \$2043.95
Newsletter Printing: \$117.39
Postage: \$44.60
Insurance: \$732.24
Bank Charges: \$81.38
US.Exchange: \$3.34
Donations: \$840.00
Ont.Nature/Nat.Canada: \$225.00
Receipts over (under) Disbursements: \$3376.78
GIC \$3031.86 Maturing Jun. 17/14

US Account

Balance Jan 1/13: \$632.71
Balance Dec. 31/13 \$156.0000

Receipts: \$265.00
Memberships: \$165.00
Misc: \$100.00

Disbursements: \$741.00
Donations: \$200.00
Insurance: \$541.00
Receipts over (under)
Disbursements: (\$476.00)

submitted by Gail Jones treasurer



photos pages 4,6, and 15
courtesy of
Bill Purnis



Program Committee's 2013 Report...by Dave Euler

Dave Euler, Chair, Members: David Trowbridge, Nancy Logan, Bob Currell, Rob Routledge

The programs in 2013 ranged from trips at sea to “capture” all the seabirds of the world in a picture to an examination of the tiny little soil organisms that live in the soil right outside our houses. Even if you didn't leave the twin Sault's this year, you shared travel experiences and pictures from Australia to the southwestern United States.

The unforgettable presentation by Kirk Zufelt at the annual meeting will be remember for a long time. Pictures of Albatrosses and seabirds were a reflection of Kirk's passion for birds who live on the sea. He can talk about them for hours, and did. At the other end of the scale of life Paul Hazlet gave an illustrated talk about the important tiny organisms that live just under our feet that we do not notice as we walk the fields and forests around our homes. Without these tiny creatures, we would not have air to breath and rich soil to grow our food.

Mike Ripley, Environmental Coordinator for the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, talked about **Our Urban Tributaries: Opportunities for Restoration**. Much of the twin Saults are built on former wetlands that were part of the St. Mary's Rapids ecosystem that has largely been destroyed. Mike talked about groups of concerned citizens on both sides of the border who are looking at how these streams could be restored for habitat, improved water quality and recreational opportunities.

In April we watched Chris Holbrook track fish around the Great Lakes with acoustic Telemetry. Understanding where, when, why, and how fish move has been a basic challenge to fisheries management in the Great Lakes and Chris is helping "unravel the mysteries of Great Lakes fish behavior".

Then in May when spring was nearly here, Bill Purnis and Flo MacLeod took us with them to Australia where we enjoyed their stories and pictures of the land down-under. Bill's pictures, as usual, made it seem as though we traveled with them in that beautiful country.

For a complete change of pace, John Pedlar a Forest Biologist at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Sault Ste Marie, Ontario talked about “**assisted migration**” - the intentional movement of species to novel locations that are projected to have suitable future climate” This approach has been highly controversial in the conservation community because it directly conflicts with the longstanding paradigm of managing species within natural range limits. John's presentation was both unique and stimulating.

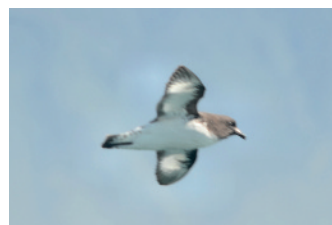
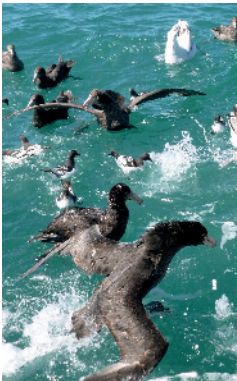
Nancy Logan, a club member and a retired palaeontologist (i.e. very backward naturalist) shared some thoughts on **Unassisted Migration** developed while studying aquatic insect fossils from around the world and up to a few million years old. Her pictures of caddisfly and chironomid (midge) skeletons are not only beautiful but also useful when you know who's who, who eats what, who lives where now, and who used to live there. A wonderful presentation.

Fred Post gave an interesting presentation in October about the Essar Steel environmental monitoring program here in the Sault. This topic is important to all of us who live here and we welcomed Fred's candid and thoughtful presentation.

In November, we traveled with Ron Johnson and Linda Tozer-Johnson to see birds of the South West US/Mexico border lands. Along with Ron and Linda we birded the Rio Grande river area of Texas to New Mexico and on to South Arizona. There were twelve varieties of hummingbirds, 8 varieties of orioles, 3 varieties of tanagers, many varieties of warblers, buntings, woodpeckers, towhees, wrens, flycatchers, grebes & great views of the elegant trogon & others. A great trip for everyone.

We finished the year in December at the Central United Methodist, our last meeting in that location. The film (DVD) was the hit of the meeting as we watched the life story of Aldo Leopold, one of the most prominent conservationist of the 20th century. We watched as he changed from a person involved in exploiting nature to a true conservationist, leaving a legacy of writing that inspires people all over the world to a love of nature and the outdoors.

So that was our year, we traveled far and wide, enjoyed some intellectual conversations, loved the pictures, and told our stories of the year. Now that 2014 is here, I expect that the programs will be just as enlightening and fun as last year.

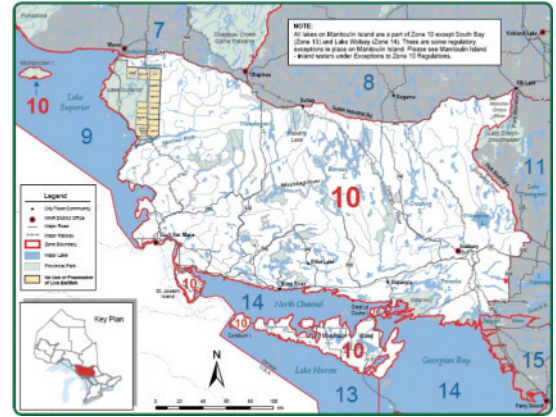
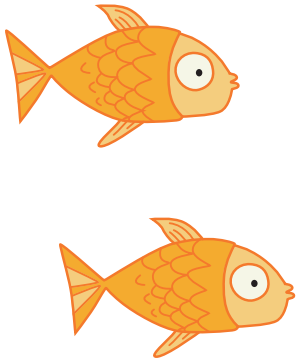


*sea birds
near
Kaikoura
New Zealand*

2013 FISHERIES MANAGEMENT REPORT

by Valerie Walker, FMZ 10 Council Representative

The Ministry of Natural Resources, with the support of the Fisheries Management Zone 10 (FMZ 10) Advisory Council, has developed or is the process of developing strategies for the management of our sports fishing resource. The Sault Naturalists are represented on the FMZ 10 Advisory Council by Valerie Walker and alternate Harvey Robbins.



In 2013, new regulatory options for the management of bass (small and largemouth) were presented to the public for comment. Effected January 2014, there is now a split season on bass in FMZ 10. Those bass found in waters east of the Serpent River and south of Highway 17 (including Manitoulin Island) will be open the 3rd Sat. in June to Nov. 30th. The season now opens one week earlier than in the past in response to climate change. For those bass north of Highway 17, it will be open season all year round with a catch and possession limit of 6 fish (catch limit unchanged from 2013). This means that all waters in the Sault Ste. Marie District will be open for bass season all year round.

The theory is that bass in the smaller more southerly area, are considered native and require some protection from angling. Bass in the much larger northern area have been introduced and are considered to be invasive intruders. As a result, less protection is afforded. See rationale in:

[Bass in FMZ 10](#)

There are more changes in the FMZ 10 lake trout fishing regulations for 2014. Eighteen acid damaged lakes in the Sudbury basin have been identified by the FMZ 10 Project Team as 'recovery lakes' to rehabilitate lake trout. With council's advice, MNR has recommended these lakes for 'sanctuary' status where fishing is closed all year for all species. In addition, seven hatchery stocked, Put-Grow-and-Take lakes, typically open all year, will have a closed season the same as natural lake trout lakes. Fishing for these Put-Take-and-Grow lakes will be permitted from January 1 to Labour Day under 'Additional Zone 10 Fishing Opportunities'.

For more of council's Proposed Changes to FMZ 10 Lake Trout Regulations in 2014 see:

[Lake Trout Changes for 2014](#)

For the 2014 Ontario Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary for FMZ 10 (new revisions in red) see:

[FMZ 10 Fishing Regulations Summary for 2014](#)

Just posted: BROADSCALE MONITORING LAKE REPORTS. BROADSCALE monitoring is the collection of a small amount of information on a large number of lakes. The information collected is used for management and reporting on the condition of the resource. Management decisions will be based on this type of monitoring. To see the Lake Reports, go to:

http://www.web2.mnr.gov.on.ca/fish_online/fishing/

Keep an ear to the rail for future regulatory options for the management walleye and pike as well as live bait in Fisheries Management Zone 10.

Membership Report for 2013

(as of February 1 2014)

Membership Total **112**

US members **20**

Canadian members **92**

Categories

Life (paid) **13**

Individual **47**

Family **44**

Student **1**

Complimentary Individual **1**

Complimentary Life, Group **6**

Year Paid To:

2014.....**56**

2015.....**1**

Life**19**

New Paid Memberships since Aug. 2007...69

submitted by Harvey Robbins

The mailing address for the Club:

Sault Naturalists

P.O. Box 20136, 150 Churchill Blvd.

Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 6W3

Canada

VISIT US ON THE WEB!!!

www.soonats.pbwiki.com

**-report on the Northern Regional Fall 2013 meeting held
in Elliot Lake on September 27-29th**

-submitted by representative Tony Walker

Friday Program

We met our friends of the Penokean Hills Field Naturalists at 1:00 p.m. at the Sherriff Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, located in the City of Elliot Lake. The Sanctuary is under the stewardship of the Penokean Hills Field Naturalists and managed by Rio Algom. The members of PHFN have dedicated many volunteer hours improving walking trails, installing a butterfly/hummingbird garden and erecting nesting boxes/platforms and bird feeding stations. The Sanctuary includes 4 distinct natural habitats including: Cattail Marsh, Tamarack Bog, Beaver Meadow, Upland Mixed Forests and Lowland Transition Forest. A new interpretive trail head and brochure were completed this year.

Our group enjoyed the beautiful vista and fall colours from the Fire Tower Lookout. The view from it is a 360 degree panoramic view of Elliot Lake and the surrounding areas, including the North Channel of Lake Huron, Manitoulin Island and USA.

Fire Tower overlooking Elliot Lake and Sherriff Creek



“Threats to Turtles”

Special Guest Speaker – Dr. Jacqueline Litzgus,

Assistant Professor, Biology Sciences & Engineering Laurentian University

Franco Mariotti introduced our very special guest, affectionally known as the “turtle lady”. We heard about the 8 species of turtles in Ontario and the threats to individual species in poaching, harvesting, habitat loss, nesting site eradications, predators, human interventions. Jackie spoke about her research and that of her students. One of the 3 research projects is entitled “*Not just any old pile of Dirt*” – Chris Edge and James Paterson are researching on how and where females walk to their nesting sites. The team looked at the building of artificial nesting sites to see if the turtles would use artificial material in a safe area away from roads. Another research projects is looking at “*Evaluation of Nesting Cages*” by Julia Riley. It is looking at predator-exclusion cages to reduce turtle nest mortality. However, the impacts on developing hatchlings have not been explored. The research compared the influence of three commonly used cage types on the nest environment and hatchling phenotype and found that most cages can be deployed without substantial negative effect on the health of hatchling turtles. Her study indicated that nest caging is an effective conservation tool for promoting recruitment. The other research project was called “*On the Road Again*, measuring the effectiveness of mitigation structures for reducing reptile and road mortality and maintaining populations connectivity” James Baker Gilbert
jx_baxtergilbert@laurentian.ca.

Saturday Morning Program:

Club Activities and Updates:

Sault Naturalists Ontario and Michigan www.soonats.pbworks.com

President: Don Hall

Rep: Tony Walker

Website: John Lehman – Wiki Site

Anniversary Date: Founded in 1954 – 60th Anniversary in 2014

AGM: February 2014

Projects and Activities:

- Community Events
- Stewarding a Nature Reserve
- Speakers and Presentations

Special Projects:

- Canada Day hub Trail; organizing a section of 100 metres of forest and wildlife in Fort Creek Conservation Area. Prizes and water were on hands and cyclists and families.
- Ongoing repairs and upgrades to many viewing platforms
- Continuing clean up at Wishart Park in keeping with donor’s wishes, located 1 mile east of Highway 17 on fourth line.
- Local Citizens Committee

2 Key Conservation Issues:

- A club member attends meetings involving “*Bass in Fisheries, Management Zone 10*” – smallmouth and largemouth bass provide valuable sport fisheries in many northeastern Ontario, however, they are not native to much of fisheries zone 10. Recognizing the introduced and expanding bass species, MNR is developing objectives for the bass populations in zone 10 and to create a potential regulatory options.
- Sault Trails Advocacy Committee Watching and Commenting on the plans as they unfold (club is pushing for I.D. markers for plants and trees)

2013 OUTINGS REPORT – *Valerie Walker*

Well this winter is considerably different than last year at this time!

We did have some snow in the bush in mid-January 2013, but not enough to warrant skies or snowshoes for our long awaited return to Gros Cap. After many years of not having access to the site, a change in ownership of the property resulted in open access to silent recreation. We even visited the site again in June. What a spectacular area with not only stunning vistas but unique and diverse plant life as well. Welcome back, Gros Cap!

We had our usual assortment of ski outings to Tahquamenon Falls State Park, St. Joe's island, Bob's Bush, Pancake Provincial Park, Maple Lake and our second go-round on the frozen Lake George Wetlands and the rugged Turkey Lake Watershed loop. In addition for the first time, we explored the Michigan Nature Association's challenging Schafer Family Nature Sanctuary at Roach Point.

Pancake Provincial Park



Of course, much time was spent contemplating birds whether searching for owls on the frozen flats near Rudyard or scanning for returning swans and ducks east of the Sault near Lake George. The spring is when all the stops come out and it's high gear for birding as well as botanizing. Between several fiddlehead and spring flower forays in both Michigan and Ontario, we discovered an exceptional array of plant species to delight.



Desbarats Birding

Thanks to Carl Linhart, for the first time, we participated in a weekend Bio Blitz at Roach Point, organized by the Michigan Nature Association's Adrienne Bozic. Club members identified and mapped as many species of plant and wildlife as possible in this, one of Michigan's largest and most important sanctuaries. In addition, our own Dave Euler roused the troops to continue our efforts to prepare a spring and summer plant list for the city's Hub Trail.

With biking, paddling and hiking to all our favorite haunts, including Beaver Island, Drummond Island, Robertson Cliffs, the North Channel and Delirium Swamp to name a few, we still managed to have a focus on the younger crowd. Thanks to Vivian Hall's efforts, we had a 'Whitefish Island Family Birding & Picnic' for the first time as well as an 'Animals of the Boardwalk' event.

Field trips, whether nature oriented, family focussed or educational are all a result of our dedicated members that are giving of their time and their input. Thank you for your continued support.

Happy trails!

Botanizing at the Atrium



OUTINGS: WINTER/SPRING 2014

Val Walker, coordinator

(Please contact trip leaders before each outing)

Point Pelee Birding in Early May – Four days of camping (or B&B) at the height of the songbird migration, in one of North America's premier birding locations. Because camping is limited on the point this must be planned many months in advance. Dates cannot be finalized until the month of February. Limit of 20 campers. If you are interested please call the leaders right away. No experience necessary.

Don or Vivian Hall right away 705-248-1834

Saturday Feb 15

Turkey Lake Watershed Ski - Travel the Mile 38 Road to the Natural Resources Canada Turkey Lake Base Camp. A moderately strenuous ski of about 10 km through spectacular remote Algoma wilderness. Let's try a slightly different route this year. We'll ski south of Wishart Lake and pass around Batchewana Mountain. It will be a long day. Bring a lunch, water and extra clothes.

Leader: Bob Currell 705-942-2235

Meet: 9 am Old Zellers Plaza North

Sunday Feb 16

St. Joe Ski and Pot-luck - Ski the Jocelyn Centennial Grounds on St.

Joseph Island, followed by a pot-luck dinner at the Hall's. Family-friendly,

groomed loops of various lengths. May be postponed due to weather or snow conditions; calling ahead is essential.

Leaders: Don and Vivian Hall

705-248-1834

Meet: 12:30 pm Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Feb 22

Skiing the Doctors' Property on St.

Joe's Island - Dr. McCloud and Dr.

Roedde make their property on St. Joe's Island available for winter skiing without charge. This is a gentle property that winds through a sugar bush and adjacent pasture for horses. The trails

are well-groomed and we always have fun on them. **Don't bring a lunch this time.** We'll ski for a couple of hours then go to the bakery for lunch. After lunch you can return home or we will investigate other opportunities for skiing on the Island if you have time.

Leader: Dave Euler 705-248-1494

Meet: 10 am Wellington Square Mall

Sunday Feb 23

The Canyon Ski – Join Mark and the

Voyageur Trail Association members for a challenging backcountry ski to the legendary canyon north of Peoples Rd. Skiing distance is approximately 8 km return through sloughs and over hills. Bonfire at noon. Bring lunch & water.

Leader: Mark Crofts 705-254-2356

Meet: Call the leader for details

Wednesday Feb 26

Ski Lonely, Iron and Birch Lakes – Don seeks to recapture the seasons of his youth with a ski trek across Birch, Iron and Lonely Lakes. An exploratory trip, checking out the area for a possible Saturday outing next year. We'll spot a vehicle near Tower Lake, then park at the end of Iron River Road. Includes 4 or 5 km of snowmobile trail (hilly, could be rough) and 7 km of beautiful, level lake crossings. Bring lunch, water and a sense of adventure. Calling ahead is essential.

Leaders: Don and Vivian Hall

705-248-1834

Meet: 10 am Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Mar 01

Roach Point MNA Preserve Ski or Snowshoe - This nature preserve now totals 763 acres in size and is described by the Michigan Nature Association as “remote, wondrous, and a fine example of how nature looks when spared from human interference.” Flat terrain with difficulties in navigating around downed trees. We will again attempt to reach Munuscong Bay on the St. Marys River after an unsuccessful attempt last year. 40 Km/32 miles to destination. Bring lunch.

Leader: Carl Linhart 906-635-9891

Meet: 9 am Michigan Welcome Center

Wednesday Mar 05

Gibboney Lake Ski/Snowshoe – In the spring we will be helping the Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition with a canoe-based biological inventory of the Gibboney Lake Wetlands. This is an opportunity to gauge the lay of the land with the advantage of easier winter access, and no bugs! Bushwacking, perhaps 3 or 4 km. Bring lunch and water.

Leaders: Don and Vivian Hall

705-248-1834

Meet: 10 am Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Mar 08

Pancake Tour – Ski the Ecology Trail and the Lake Superior Shoreline in this provincial park. About a 10 km ski. Bon fire at noon. Bring a lunch and water.

Pancake Park is about 80 km north of the Sault.

Leader: Ron Prickett 705-254-1533

Meet: 9 am Old Zellers Plaza North

Saturday Mar 15

Gerstacker TNC Preserve Ski – At the Nature Conservancy preserve on the Lake Huron shoreline east of Cedarville, MI. Flat terrain, easy skiing. In 2013 we skied beside tracks of a mating wolf pair on Big Trout Lake. Long day anticipated, with 50 mile/80 km drive to destination. Bring lunch, of course.

Leader: Carl Linhart 906-635-9891

Meet: 9 am Michigan Welcome Center

Sunday Mar 16

Fun in the Snow – A kid-friendly outdoor time at Don and Vivian Hall’s. Outdoor games, campfire, a chance to try wearing snowshoes. Pot-luck dinner around 5 pm. All ages welcome! Meet at Wellington Square Mall or drive directly to the Hall’s near Echo Bay.

Leaders: Don and Vivian Hall

705-248-1834

Meet: 2:30 pm Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Mar 22

Swans and Waterfowl - By now the swans and ducks should be back, resting and feeding on the St Mary’s River and associated wetlands. This will be an excursion by car east of SSM, stopping and looking for swans, eagles, ducks and early migrants. Bring a lunch, and dress for the weather. We will drive east along the old Hwy 17 stopping at open water spots, including Echo Bay and Pumpkin Point. Depending on where the birds are, we may drive a bit further.

Leader: Dave Euler 705-248-1494

Meet: 10 am Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Mar 29

Ski Bob’s Bush - We’ll travel to the Sylvan valley and visit Bob’s bush to see his small maple syrup operation. Help collect pails of sap, feed the fire, make hot chocolate or just enjoy being outside on a spring day. If there’s enough snow we can ski around the property and look for signs of wildlife. Bring a lunch and water.

Leader: Bob Currell 705-942-2235

Meet: 10 am Wellington Square Mall

Saturday Apr 05

Snowshoe or Ski @ Red Rock – Well, if this winter is truly a winter of yore, there should still be ice at Red Rock. We'll travel the coastal trail along Lake Superior and out onto the frozen shoreline & ice formations. Shore lunch at noon.

Leader: Val Walker 705-253-7044

Meet: 10 am Market Mall (far west end)

Saturday Apr 12

Whitefish Island Early Bird Walk – It may be early for spring but who knows. We'll walk along the trail system to see what's in and what's up. Bring along your bird and plant identification guides and binoculars. Dress for the weather. We can go for lunch in town if there's interest.

Leader: Ron Prickett 705-254-1533

Meet: 9 am Parks Canada parking lot

Saturday Apr 19

Pancake Lookout – Hike the trail through a mature maple and yellow birch forest to the lookout platforms for spectacular views over Pancake Bay and west to Whitefish Point. About 7 km long round trip with some climbing. We'll be watching for spring migrants as well.

Bring a lunch. Pancake Park is about 80 km north of the Sault.

Leader: Val Walker 705-253-7044

Meet: 10 am Old Zellers Plaza North

Saturday Apr 26

Annual Whitefish Point Bird Observatory Spring Fling - Make your way to the Point and join the birders to observe the impressive hawk migration. Many other feathered migrants to see as well! Hook up with the Soo Nats Clan at the Visitors Centre at noon for lunch. Call Tony for details. Go to <http://www.wpbo.org/> for special events scheduled for this weekend at the Point.

Leader: Tony Walker 705-759-6151

Meet: Whitefish Point, Michigan

Saturday May 03

Early Birds and Wildflowers on the Hub Trail - As part of our continuing effort to prepare a plant list for the Hub trail, we will travel the Trail on this early spring day. We will document the early plants and wildflowers, and add to our list of nature on the trail. This will be part of our future efforts to bring interpretative signs to the trail and communicate with people the nature values of the Trail. This time we will start at the Fort Creek parking lot and walk along the trail to find as many early wildflowers and wildlife that we can. Bring lunch, dress for the weather.

Leader: Dave Euler 705-248-1494

Meet: 10 am Fort Creek parking lot off Second Line

Saturday May 10 (or 17)

Loon Migration at Gros Cap - Date will be finalized when Point Pelee outing has been scheduled.

Reintroducing one of Gary Rahn's favourite outings. Migrating loons fly up the St. Mary's River then swing north, flying by the bluffs at Gros Cap. The leaders remember one morning spent with Gary, perhaps 25 years ago; there was an endless stream of Common Loons, an incredible sight. There could be Red-throated Loons as well. Chris Sanders studied this phenomenon and found that migration peaks awfully early in the morning. If you are online you can read Chris' paper [here](#) (page 196); there are many familiar names in the acknowledgements.

Leaders: Don and Vivian Hall

705- 248-1834

Meet: 7 am Market Mall (far west end)

Sault Naturalists Program Descriptions *Winter 2014*

Go to <http://soonats.pbworks.com/Future-Programs> for directions to the meeting sites (click on *Where We Meet*) and for program updates or changes.

Please note change in meeting times

6:00 pm, February 11, 2014, Moose Hall, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

60th Anniversary Celebration and Annual General Meeting

The 60th Anniversary Committee is working on a one-of-a-kind presentation, **Sault Naturalists – Past, Present and Future**, with skits, slides, stories and more. We need your stories, pictures – old and new – and ideas for a light-hearted, fast-paced look at our past, present and future. If you have anything to share, please contact Gail (705 942-0768) or Vivian (705 248-1834).

Tickets will be on sale after Christmas.

7:00 pm, March 11, 2014 Bayliss Library, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Kirtland's Warbler Management in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan

*Steve Sjogren (Wildlife Biologist) Hiawatha National Forest, St. Ignace Ranger District
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The Kirtland's Warbler (KW) was listed as federally endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 in the United States. Intensive management will probably always be needed for KW due to the effects of fire suppression and cowbird nest parasitism. As a member of the Kirtland's Warbler Recovery Team, I have been working for KW recovery most of my 30+ year career with the Forest Service, on the Huron-Manistee and Hiawatha National Forests. I am currently responsible for wildlife management on the East Unit of the Hiawatha, including the 60,000 acres Raco Plains, which held 15 singing KW last June. I discovered the first KW on the Hiawatha in 1993, north of Manistique, and launched an intensive KW management program on the Forest. The KW population in the UP has steadily, but slowly, grown since 1993, with 31 singing males counted this year. I will use the Raco Plains example to illustrate an ecosystem management strategy that benefits not only KW, but also sharp-tailed grouse and other species that are adapted to fire. Since effective fire suppression has eliminated important ecological features at Raco, our management is focused on restoration of habitat that mimics wild-fire.

