



THE WAKE-ROBIN

Newsletter of the Sault Naturalists of Sault Ste. Marie Ontario and Michigan.

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Membership renewal time

A reminder to members- Time for those with 2007 (or earlier) memberships to renew

Membership fees can be paid at the December and January general meetings, the annual dinner in February or by mailing your check and the membership form included with this newsletter (pg.10) to the Sault Naturalists PO Box. If you are unsure about the status of your membership, please call us at (705) 254-7214 or email us at: bengerbet@shaw.ca.

With 2008 new year's resolutions on the horizon, how about including on your list an intention to " talk up " the club and bring in some new members?

-Betty and Gerry Bennett. Membership Committee

OUTING REPORTS:



One of the spectacular beaches at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Park on the south shore of Lake Superior.

Greg Bruff of the US National Park service led us on an unforgettable Sept. outing to many of the sites of this glorious park. We thank him for taking the time to talk to us about its natural history, geology and park history.



Walking a blow-out at Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Park. Sept. 07. Photo by Val Walker

Myriads of Mushrooms Sept. 15

On a sunny but cool 50 degree F day with a N wind, eight Naturalists went on the Naomikong mushroom outing led by **John Lehman**. It was a wonderful time searching the pathway, the forest floor, dead and down trees, and old stumps for the different types of fungi. There seemed to be myriads of mushrooms that day. John identified many types.



John gave some tips for amateur mycologists that include:

1. Observe where mushrooms grow as that gives clues to the type, i.e. a stump or an open sunny spot with mushrooms in a fairy ring.
2. Use a knife to dig deep enough down to remove the base of the stalk, as a bulbous base may mean the mushroom is an Amanita.
3. Peek underneath to check for colored gills that may help in identification.
4. Identify Boletes by peeking underneath and finding a spongy substance rather than gills.
5. Compare the shape, the color, the size with photographs in books.
6. Learn the Latin name which often suggests what the mushroom is like, i.e. a salmon colored mushroom is (*Entoloma salmoneum*).

Here are the Non-gilled Fungi that were found. In the Puffballs group: Gem Studded Puffball (*Lycoperdon perlatum*), also called the Devil's Snuff Box because its snuff-colored spores puff out the top when it's ripe, and Pear

Shaped Puffball (*Lycoperdon pyriforme*). In the Jelly fungi group, we found Orange jelly (*Dacromyces palmatus*). It looks orange, spreadable, feels gooey, but the taste is questionable.

In the Bracket fungi, we found three types on one large stump of a fallen hardwood. The Artist's Conk (*Ganoderma applanatum*) is so cleanly white on the underside that artists can draw on it. The red banded polypore (*Fomitopsis pinicola*) has a red belt. Horse's Hoof (Tinder Polypore, *Fomes fomentarius*) does resemble a horse's hoof.

Boletes are sponge mushrooms. The Scaber Stalks (*Leccinum* species) and *Suillus* species are mostly edible.

These are some of the gilled mushrooms that were found. Pink spored: Salmon Unicorn Entoloma (*Entoloma salmoneum*) and Fawn-colored Pluteus (*Pluteus cervinus*). Dark spored: *Cortinarius alboviolaceus*, which has a cobwebby ring or threadlike veil. Light spored: Delicious Lactarius (*Lactarius thynos*) which gives off a milky substance when the gills are slit. A *Russula* has a stubby short stem and it is brittle. *Amanita flavoconia*, *Amanita citrina*, and *Amanita virosa* were identified. Also found were: various Waxy Caps, *Laccaria Laccata*, False Chanterelle (*Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca*), *Naematoloma* species, and *Clitocybe* species.

Being armed with these tips and information about the myriads of mushrooms helps a novice mycologist out in the field. – Jeanne Mannesto (with J. Lehman)



Fungi from Detour outing. Sept. 07. Photo by Carl Linhart.

Fungal Foray. Sept 9

There was another interesting educational mushroom outing with mycologists Jerry and Sandy Shein, hosted by **Bonnie Mackintosh** and other distinguished mycologists, including out own, Evelyn and Chuck and John. The outing began with the group collecting fungi at the Detour Roadside State Park followed with an identification session at Bonnie's family cottage.

108TH ANNUAL AUDUBON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT - DECEMBER 15, 2007

Have fun observing and recording birds in the Sault Ontario/Michigan area either on a designated route or at a feeder. At the end of the day all are welcome to join fellow birders for a Tally Rally and Pot Luck Dinner . For further information call Ken McIlwick (705) 541- 5643.



Ron and Val. Photo by L. Young

Bertha Rollo, a long time member of the Sault Naturalists, died at the age of 97 on September 28, 2007. Bertha was a dedicated birder and often spoke at local schools about ornithology and environmental awareness. She was the granddaughter of the keeper of the Whitefish Point Light Station, and she lived at the lighthouse for her first 21 years. During the 1980s she worked with Tom Farnquist to restore the lighthouse, contributing much of the furniture and artwork that originally belonged to her grandfather. A series of her short stories about life at Whitefish Point were published on the occasion of her 90th birthday.

- John Lehman

Outing Guidelines

-Please register for all outings by calling the trip leader or an outing committee member. Non-registrants are welcome, but risk being uninformed of the last minute outing changes.

- Dress for the weather and terrain with appropriate clothing and foot wear. Bring snack, water, binoculars, loupes, field guides, etc. For daylong excursions, bring lunch and extra water.

-Refer all questions and requests for transportation to the trip leader or a member of the committee.

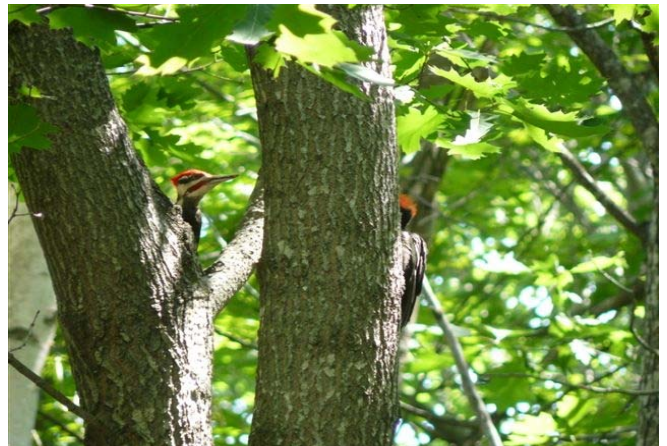
-If carpooling, consider assisting the driver with gas costs. Suggested amounts are: US \$2.00 and CAN\$3.00, depending on the length of the trip and the dollar.

-Inform your leader if you have to leave early, or make any changes to the plan or schedule while on the trip..

-Be aware of those in front and behind. Keep the group together. Follow the leader.

-Take out all garbage. - Do not trespass.

-Use a camp stove.



Pileated woodpecker pair. Photo by Joy Cohen.

Ontario Nature Fall 2007 Regional Meeting – News from Nature Canada.

(naturecanada.ca)

Some Results of a Nature Canada

Questionnaire: submitted by Tony Walker

Ontario Nature's Nature Network comprises -143 nature groups representing about 14,250 individuals.

-nature groups are almost evenly split between male and female members.

This is an ageing network with low recruitment of younger members.

18% of members are under 39 and

4% are under the age of 18.

60% of the groups' members are over 60 years of age and 5% are over the age of 80.

The average group has 153 individual members with the smallest having 8 and the largest over 1,000.

Volunteer hours:

- 19% on events and outings
- 18% on governing and planning
- 16% on stewardship projects
- 13% on organizing meeting events
- provincially 175,000 hours

Nature Protection Activities:

-focus is forming coalitions, networking as well as policy input

- species at risk and management planning
- 30% involved in land trusts
- 25% involved in land acquisition

How the groups communicate:

- email predominant form
- 75% rely on websites and publications
- 13% would increase use of their website if they had the resources

Materials Produced:

- 93% produce newsletter (quarterly, some monthly)
- 60% produce electronic newsletters
- 50% produce annual reports
- many produce their own publications
- many would like Ontario Nature publication reprinted

Expanding Nature Group Activities:

- 75% want to increase nature protection, education and outreach – also interested in nature restoration, natural history , stewardship, research and monitoring
- 60% want to expand their policy, planning and advocacy
- Most groups interest in collaboration with other groups – preferably local
- 60% indicated interest in networking with other groups in other provinces



Wishart Park. Nov 10. photo by G. Bennett

Wishart Park Cleanup-Betty Bennett, Coordinator

In cooperation with the City Public Works and Transportation Department through the Adopt-a-Park program, our club has signed an agreement with the city of Sault Ste. Marie ON to pick up litter as least twice yearly from Wishart Park on Fourth Line. The first cleanup of the club's newly "adopted" park took place on Saturday, Nov. 10; the next cleanup is scheduled tentatively to coincide with Earth Day activities.

Special thanks to volunteers: Robert and Joy Cohen, Helen Hutchinson and grand-daughter Aja and her friend Graham, Doreen Guerriero, Val Walker, Tony Walker, Carl Linhart, Dave Euler, and Gerry Bennett.



Val Victorious! Photo by Robert .Cohen

PROGRAMS – DEC. 2007 -May 08

- John Lehman coordinator

Meetings begin at 7:30 pm

Dec.11, 2007. Central United Methodist Church

This is our **annual holiday get-together**. The theme of the program this year will be *Outdoor Gear for Naturalists*. We expect to have such items as GPS units, BirdPods (iPods modified to play bird calls), tents and other camping gear, snowshoes and other winter gear, optical equipment, etc. The items will be displayed for everyone to examine and the members who brought them will be expected to say a few words about their items and perhaps demonstrate their use. So if you have some favorite item of outdoor gear you'd like to show off, bring it along. Refreshments will be provided, and there will be a selection of naturalist-related photos on the club's new display board.

Jan. 8, 2008. Central United Methodist Church

Jessie Hadley, owner of Woods and Waters Ecotours in Hessel, Michigan, will speak about *Paddling Journeys on the St. Marys River and along the Lake Huron Shoreline*. Jessie has been involved in natural resources and tourism in the eastern Upper Peninsula for the past 15 years. Her talk will tell us what it's like to paddle the length of the St. Marys River from Sault Ste. Marie to Lake Huron and west to St. Ignace. Jessie has been leading nature tours with Woods and Waters Ecotours for the past five years. She has also worked for the Michigan Nature Conservancy where she was project coordinator for the North Lake Huron Bio-Reserves; for Whitefish Point Bird Observatory monitoring piping plovers; for the state of Michigan doing deer research on Drummond Island; and for Hiawatha National Forest working on native plant gardens and invasive species removal. Her passion for nature and tourism has her currently involved in the Great Waters Project, a marketing initiative for eastern Upper Peninsula nature-based tourism, and in developing a bike path linking St. Ignace to Drummond Island.

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Annual Dinner and General Meeting

When: Tuesday, February 12, 2008.

Dinner at 6:00 p.m.

program should begin at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Where: West Superior Room, Cisler Center, Lake Superior State University, 650 W Easterday Ave., Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Menu: Buffet dinner should include oven-baked chicken, lasagna, green beans almondine, parsley buttered potatoes, tossed salad, cole slaw, fresh fruit salad, and German chocolate cake.

Cost: To be determined; probably about \$15 U.S. or Canadian

Directions: The LSSU campus is just east of I-75 on W Easterday Avenue. From Canada, turn right after leaving the U.S. toll booth, left onto W Portage, and left again at the Easterday Avenue 4-way stop. After crossing the viaduct over I-75, turn left at the first traffic light into the LSSU campus, then turn left at the stop sign and follow the road around the Cisler Center to the parking area in back. Enter the rear (north) entrance to the Cisler Center, then go up the stairs and straight down the hall to the West Ballroom, which will be on your right. Handicapped access is available at the south entrances to the building.

Speaker: Andy Fyon, Director of the Ontario Geological Survey/Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, will speak on *Life on the Rocks: Geology and Flowering Plants*. See the program list for more information. His presentation will include a non-technical discussion of the relationship between geology and flowering plant communities, punctuated by examples of the impact of geology on humans and animals. Several plant habitats will be discussed, including flowering plants found on Manitoulin Island alvars and in the boreal forest. The presentation will be accompanied by splendid photographs of wildflowers in their natural setting. You can see examples of Andy's photography on his web site, "Andy's Northern Ontario Wildflowers," at www.ontariowildflower.com.

Important: The deadline for ticket sales is Thursday, February 7. All tickets must be prepaid; none will be available at the door. For tickets, please contact:

Dieter Ropke (705) 942-9636 (will deliver)

Mary Ryckman (705) 253-6352

Carl Linhart (906) 635-9891

John Lehman (906) 635-5095

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(Program are cont'd on next page)

Programs cont'd

Mar. 11, 2008. Central United Methodist Church
William Gardner, Field and Laboratory Technician for the Great Lakes Laboratory for Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, will speak about *The Elusive Lake Sturgeon*. The lake sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) is a North American freshwater fish, an evolutionarily ancient bottom feeder that can grow to length of 2 meters and live for well over 100 years. It is an elusive, intriguing fish that is being viewed much differently than in the past. Bill's presentation will weave together the science, management and traditional aspects of this ancient leviathan.

April 8, 2008. Central United Methodist Church
Dr. Judy Westrick, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Lake Superior State University, and Dr. James Terrian, long-time Public Health Officer for Chippewa County, will give a joint presentation on *Blastomycosis, a Fungal Menace from Forest Soil*. Blastomycosis is caused by inhalation of the fungus *Blastomyces dermatitidis*, and an especially virulent form of the disease, called acute respiratory distress syndrome, has a 68% mortality rate. Some communities in the Eastern Upper Peninsula have experienced a rash of cases recently, including the death of a Drummond Island resident. The illness is most often contracted in wet forests, particularly cedar forests, so Naturalists who frequent such areas should be aware that blastomycosis may have symptoms similar to those arising from lung cancer or tuberculosis. Dr. Westrick will describe her research on blastomycosis and discuss the scientific aspects of the illness, and Dr. Terrian will discuss its public health implications.

May 6, 2008. Great Lakes Forestry Center
Jennifer Baker, Ontario Nature's Conservation Campaign Coordinator, will give an illustrated presentation about Ontario's songbirds, *Voices of the Boreal Forest*. Her colorful and informative presentation will describe the threats facing the birds' Boreal Forest nesting sites and tell what you can do to help protect them. It was recently estimated that over 200 species and a quarter BILLION individual birds breed in Ontario's Boreal Forest before migrating south. In fact, the Boreal Forest is recognized as THE single most important breeding ground for birds in North America, which is why it is called "Ontario's Songbird Nursery." This magnificent forest is under threat from industrial development, but we still have a tremendous opportunity to protect large portions of it. Learn what Ontario Nature is doing to conserve this ancient forest and how you can help.

June 10, 2008. Great Lakes Forestry Center
Sue Meades, Adjunct Professor of Biology at Algoma University College and a field botanist with nearly 30 years of experience, will speak on Exploring Labrador in Search of Rare Plants. In her illustrated presentation Sue will describe her experiences as leader of a rare plant survey in the lower Churchill River Valley in central Labrador. The study was initiated to examine the potential impacts of further hydro development on the lower Churchill River.

Meetings/Program locations & Where we Meet for outings

General Meetings:

Time: 7:30 p.m. 2nd Tuesday of each month, except May which is on the 1st Tues.

Places: Sault Ontario: Great Lakes Forestry Centre, 1219 Queen St. East.

Sept., Oct, Nov., May, June.

or **Sault Michigan:**

Central Methodist United Church corner of Spruce and Court St.

Dec., Jan., Feb., March and April

No meeting in July and August.

MICHIGAN OUTINGS

Meet at the Michigan Welcome Center (MWC).

Follow the blue directional sign immediately south of the International Bridge toll booths

ONTARIO OUTINGS

-Market Mall, located on Second Line West (Hwy 550) at Korah Rd. Meet in the NW area by the video store.

-Churchill Plaza – follow Hwy 17 E. The Mall is on the right off Trunk Rd. (Hwy17E) parking lot, by the entrance sign.

-Wellington Sq Mall – Follow Hwy 17 E to the McDonalds Restaurant, east of the Mall. Park on the west side of the parking lot, facing the mall.

-Zellar's Plaza North – enter A&P /Zeller's Mall from Great Northern Rd, or Northern Ave. Park west of the Pennington's store.

Issues of interest

Sulphide mining in the UP

Natasha Lapinski, Michigan Audubon Society representative for the six Upper Peninsula M.A.S. chapters, asked The Sault Naturalist Club of Ontario and Michigan and the other five chapters to adopt a resolution calling for a ban on all sulphide mining in the U.P. this past October. A proposed nickel mine in an ecologically sensitive area directly under the Salmon-Trout River, north of Marquette, Michigan, was the immediate reason for this initiative.

After a lengthy debate at its October meeting, the executive of our club decided that as long as we all continue to use nickel-dependent items such as stainless steel, could not in good conscience sign a petition asking for a ban of the mining of this mineral. However, a call for strong environmental controls was something with which we wholeheartedly agreed and endorsed. Gerry Bennett offered valuable insight which guided our concerns. Carl Linhart emailed Ms. Lapinski a detailed, thoughtful letter explaining our club's position. Carl also noted that we were not comfortable with the possibility of shifting the mining of this substance, with its subsequent problems, to any other part of the world, while calling for a ban in our backyard. Of the six M.A.S. chapters, two, including ours, were unwilling to adopt the resolution as written.

-Gerry Bennett

Energy

Before you purchase that new Hummer you should read **David Crane's column in the Toronto Star of Nov. 11th.** Mr. Crane's comments are based on the latest World Energy Outlook by the International Energy Agency (IEA). Here is the gist of his column in point form:

1. We are in danger of losing energy security. Projected future demand will rise to 102.3 million barrels per day by 2030, compared to 84.6 million bpd last year. More than 56 percent of this production will come from the Middle East and Russia. (Future production of Canada's oil sands will be less than 5 million barrels/day).
2. We risk becoming not only more vulnerable to supply disruptions but to the power of a few Middle Eastern producers and Russia to increase their market dominance and their ability to impose higher prices in the long run.

3. If per capita oil use in China and India were to reach the same level as in the United States, this would fully deplete the world's remaining proven oil reserves in just 15 years and prospective resources, in 26 years.
4. Greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels will grow so much that the world will greatly exceed the "safe" target of greenhouse gas accumulations in the atmosphere, as set out by the International Panel on Climate Change, of between 450 and 490 parts per million by 2050.
5. The IEA argues we have to invest heavily in energy research and development, embrace nuclear power and pursue energy efficiency and conservation much more aggressively.
6. We must also accept carbon pricing, such as a carbon tax, adopt much tougher standards for most vehicles, aircraft, buildings, appliances, lighting and industry, as well as advancing non-renewables such as hydro power, biomass and wind power.
7. As the IEA warns, "the primary scarcity facing the planet is not of natural resources or money, but of time. Making the necessary changes will not be easy and will cost. But at present, we are headed in the wrong direction."

Abstracted by Gerry



Yellow billed cuckoo found by the side of US Hwy.M- 129 16 miles south of SSM MI, June 26, 2007 – breeding season. Listed as Very Rare. Find and Photo: Carl Linhart.



Dark fishing spider. Photo & text by C. Linhart

At the state prison where I work, 20 miles south of SSM, Michigan, one day this past September, an inmate informed health services that he had awakened to find a spider on his face and that the spider had bitten him. The doctor examining him found swelling and localized inflammation on his face, consistent with a spider bite, but later (when I had an opportunity to question him) said that it looked like a chronic case of acne more than anything else. It is surprising that the spider was captured and brought to health services alive and intact in a plastic jar with air holes neatly punctured in the cap. The spider was given to me, as no one else seemed to want it (imagine that!).

Field guides provided an identification of *Dolomedes tenebrosus*, or dark fishing spider (from *L. tenebrae* darkness). From Weber in *Spiders of the Northwoods*, spiders of this genus are called fishing spiders because they are usually found on or near permanent bodies of water, also being seen on docks and cabins near water. Occasionally, they are found in dry woods or even in buildings.

Dolomedes tenebrosus is known to wander far from water and "is easily the largest spider regularly found in the North Woods." Typical of spiders, the female is much larger than the male. This specimen is a female.

An Internet search yielded following information from <http://entomology.uark.edu/museum/dolomede.html>: "It has been reported that adult female *Dolomedes tenebrosus* can have a menacing demeanor, striking viciously without yielding ground when harassed (Fitch 1963). Because of their large size, the fangs are certainly able to penetrate human skin. However, reports of humans being bitten by *Dolomedes* species are rare. A single known report indicates immediate burning pain at the site of the bite, followed by redness and minor local tissue necrosis."

After residing in a bowl in my kitchen for a week or two, readily eating flies and crickets, this spider was released into the woods on a warm and rainy early October day, not far from water. They are said to have a lifespan of 1 to 1.5 years and to be able to hibernate, perhaps under the bark of trees. It was released with hopes that it would have time to find a suitable location before the weather turned cold.

The SoonNats Wiki !!!!!!!!

We now have a new web site on the internet called the **SoonNats Wiki**, where a wiki is an interactive site like the Wikipedia, which allows internet users to make contributions. With the wiki you'll be able to submit outing reports before they're published in the newsletter and even include links to photos of the outings. (Any reports posted on the wiki will also be directed to the newsletter editor, unless you send them in yourself.) You can also submit photos for the Photo Gallery, bird sightings, suggestions for new programs or outings, and a variety of other information.

One page of the wiki is called Your Page, where you can submit just about anything you want that's related to nature and the environment: information about outdoor gear, articles on nature-related topics, questions that you'd like to have answered, reviews of books that you think the members should know about, or anything else you'd like to share with other members. If you have special expertise in an area, you can even start your own page to tell others about it; for example, Gerry Bennett is working on a page to inform club members about geology. For help in doing any of these things, e-mail jlehman@lssu.edu.

To access the site go to <http://soonats.pbwiki.com> or Google "soonats." That takes you to the Front Page, which tells you how to navigate the web site and how to enter your own contributions. To make a contribution you'll need to log in using the password, which is REDPOLL. Please don't reveal the password to nonmembers, because people have been known to enter a wiki site and trash it. There's a paragraph at the bottom of the Front Page that says "Join the Sault Naturalists." If you know anyone who would make a good naturalist you can direct them to that paragraph, which will lead them to information about the club and allow them to download a brochure and membership form. Most of us aren't getting any younger, so it's important to bring in new members to replace those who drop out. – **John Lehman**

-A little culture to enhance our enjoyment of nature and future outings: artistic interpretations of canoes and kayaks

**Meet the Artist Opening Reception and Artist Talk
Art Gallery of Algoma
10 East Street, Sault Ste. Marie Ontario
Thursday December 6 at 7:30 p.m.**

**Sally Thurlow will also do an Artist Talk
on Friday December 7 at 10 a.m.**

**Sally Thurlow: *Canoe Dreamings*
December 6, 2007 to January 5, 2008**

Organized by the Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa in collaboration with the Art Gallery of Peterborough, Thames Art Gallery, Art Gallery of Mississauga, Tom Thomson Memorial Gallery, and the Art Gallery of Algoma

I call these boats canoes even though they are objects of my imagination, and go beyond the watercraft that recall my childhood, and summer camp in the wilderness. Whether kayak, dinghy, (or even rocket-ship!) I felt compelled to open up this exploration and transformation of the canoe form beyond that “wilderness”. While examining the canoe’s symbolic depth as a Canadian icon... especially as an initial connection to, and gift from the First Nations People, I started to explore this gift in a broader sense, on a metaphorical journey through Canadian cultural practice.

The symbol of the canoe gives comfort to Canadians who still dream of it as their connection to the wilderness - a gateway to the past. The vision usually begins with this icon as the prospectors’ vessel of wilderness exploration and exploitation, but I have tried to look back further to the canoe’s ancestral heritage, to reflect on its meaning in contemporary society, and in our possible future. Just as the Natives and the European immigrants adapted the canoe for various uses, dependant on the availability of indigenous materials, so I am interpreting it with unconventional construction methods, exploiting its poetic properties, and allowing the viewer to experience modern “wilderness” frontiers. ~ Sally Thurlow



This 27 pound agate was found by Marie Linhart on a St. Joseph Island beach in October, 2007. Can you guess who got to carry it back to the car? Photo by Carl Linhart.



Lamprey in aquarium at Ontario MNR lamprey research building, Locks Park, 06/27/07 outing tour. Photo by Carl Linhart



Lichen. Photo by Dieter Ropke.

