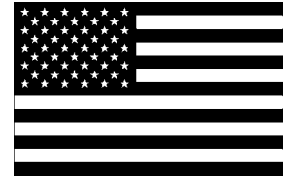




# The Sault Naturalists



## Who We Are

Founded in 1954, the Sault Naturalists is an international club with approximately 150 members. The objectives of the club are: to provide members with a common meeting ground for the exchange of ideas and for broadening their knowledge and understanding of natural science; to promote the appreciation, preservation and conservation of our natural heritage; and to support and cooperate with other organizations with similar aims. The group is affiliated with the Ontario Federation of Naturalists, the Canadian Nature Federation and the Michigan Audubon Society.

Meetings are held from September through June on the second Tuesday of each month, in either Sault Ontario or Sault Michigan. The annual meeting is in February.

Annual membership dues are: family, \$20 Canadian and \$15 U.S.; individual, \$15 Canadian (\$11 U.S.); student, \$10 Canadian (\$7 U.S.); and life, \$225 Canadian. The organization's mailing address for membership is c/o Ron Prickett, 90 Tilley Road, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, P6B 3Y9.

## Message From The President

It is hard to believe that a year has passed since the last annual report. There have been many trials and tribulations over the past year in the Naturalists club but it appears that most problems have been ironed

out and hopefully everyone is looking forward to an upcoming successful year.

We are still without a permanent secretary. If anyone is interested in filling this position, please contact a member of the executive. I would like to say a big thank you to those members who have filled in at general meetings as secretary; your help was greatly appreciated!

Several club members have given more than their share of help and support to the benefit of the club. You know who you are - thank you!!!!!! For any member who has e-mail, if you would be interested in receiving your newsletter electronically, please contact the newsletter chairperson (Sue Meades, [sjmeades@sympatico.ca](mailto:sjmeades@sympatico.ca)) or any other executive member with e-mail. Also, thanks to the efforts of Don Hall, the Sault Naturalists now have a web site. You may check it out at <http://www3.sympatico.ca/don.hall2/>

Lets all work together to make 2001 a year to remember for the Sault Naturalists of Ontario and Michigan.

**Linda Kehoe**  
President



### Executive for 2000

President	Linda Kehoe	(705) 541-3303
Vice President	Helen Hutchinson	(705) 254-3648
Secretary	Volunteer needed!	
Treasurer	Gail Andrews	(705) 942-0768
Outings	Lothar Dahlke	(705) 946-5073
Programs	Evelyn Simon	(705) 949-8206
Bird Observations	Bob Knudsen	(705) 942-2127
Property	Gladys and Cliff Wallwork	(705) 779-3098
Membership	Ron Prickett	(705) 254-1533
Publicity	Catherine Lauzon	(705)942-9397

## Membership

This last year has been a learning experience for me with respect to tracking, contacting, securing, monitoring and reporting on members of the Sault Naturalists. I have created a database in Lotus Approach for the membership of the Sault Naturalists, and have made available to the executive membership lists from this database.

Hopefully, communications with members will be consistent in the future. I think continuity of membership will follow since members will know by their address label the status of their membership. With this regular contact, I then have access to our members with minimal extra cost. Without contact with our members, there is no incentive to maintain membership.

Individual letters accompanying the January Newsletter have been sent to those members one year behind in dues.

### Membership Report

<b>Total Members -</b>	<b>151</b>
Life	10
Family	62
Individual	79
USA Members	54
Canada Members	97



**Note: Not all members are current with respect to dues.**

Thank you to the executive and the newsletter editors for their help in serving the membership. Thank you, the members, for your support. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any suggestions for improving our procedures with respect to membership

If anyone knows of someone who might wish to join our club, please drop me a line and I will send information about our club to them.

**Ron Prickett,**  
Membership Chair

## Outings Committee

I would like to thank all the outing leaders for a job well done. Without your dedication and the sharing of your expertise we wouldn't be able to expand our minds.

Again we had a good variety of trips. Spring came a little early and caused a few inconveniences, but nothing too great. If you have any ideas for new areas to explore, individuals that may wish to lead an outing, or just an idea of something new we may want to see please give me a call. There is an incredible wealth of natural resources out there just waiting to be explored or just be appreciated. Let's have another great year.

It's important when we go out that someone on the trip documents what was seen, numbers of people on the trip and any general comments, and submit it to a committee member or me so we can inform others of the trip in our newsletters. We're getting a little slack on this. We're not looking for scientific reports here, just the highlights of the trip and possible recommendations for changes, if necessary.

An important aspect of any trip is calling the leader to inform him or her of your interest in going and to verify that the trip is still on. There have been instances where trips have been cancelled or changed for a number of unforeseen reasons. Because at times there are trips that are somewhat strenuous, it's important to be sure that you check with the leader for this as well. It's important to be prepared with water, lunches, binoculars and even cameras if that's your desire.

Again, thanks to all for your participation in all aspects of the outings.

**Lothar Dahlke**  
Chairperson  
Outings Committee



## Newsletter Committee

Like many committees in our club this year, the newsletter committee has suffered from lack of volunteers. This, coupled with my field demands and a mix-up of communication between committees, resulted in the summer newsletter being missed. In the fall, a substitute newsletter was compiled without the knowledge of the newsletter committee. Things got back on track by the end of the year. With the help of Betty and Gerry Bennett, and Judy Falkins, the winter newsletter was sent out at the beginning of January. Betty and Gerry have volunteered to help with proofreading duties and

mailing (along with the membership chair, Ron Prickett) and have also taken on the responsibility of compiling the annual report. The newsletter editor, Sue Meades, has the responsibility for compiling the fall, winter, and spring/summer newsletters.

Proofreading duties will be shared among Sue, the Bennetts, and Judy. If anyone else is interested in volunteering with our committee, there are many tasks that need to be done for each newsletter and your help would be greatly appreciated.



Respectfully submitted,  
**Sue Meades**  
Newsletter editor

## Environmental Action Committee

The activities of your Environmental Action Committee have been ongoing. Requests for input continue, be it reviews and comments on public documents, participation in workshops, participation on advisory committees, networking and responding to environmental concerns. These requests are from our members, our community, industry, provincial and state governments, and provincial, state and national organizations and associations.

As public interest in the protection of our environment and natural heritage grows, the need for networking and partnerships with other interest groups grows. The need for our participation, support and involvement grows. We have been unable to meet some of these networking challenges due to our current financial state and lack of charitable status, and the need for additional members on our committee to share the workload.

Public concern and participation in environmental issues is ever increasing in most of North America and the world. However public interest in these issues in the Sault region, both in Ontario and Michigan, remains low. Our need to awaken the public and encourage their support and active participation has never been greater.

Your committee has not been able to move ahead on new initiatives for the Saults in 2000, except for our involvement with the Ontario Federation of Naturalists in respect to the John Kerastas Nature Reserve.

However we remain strong in those areas that we have been involved in for many years.

To move forward, we need full support from all our members. To accomplish this in 2001, we need additional members for our committee. We have need of a recording secretary and of volunteers for fundraising, publicity, letter writing, ecological surveys, monitoring environmental conditions, and attending public information sessions and meetings.

We can be proud of our achievements. As a result of our past work regarding the protection of the last roadless area in our region - The Megisan Lake E.A., and of our input to the Ontario Living Legacy Program, most of the recommendations that we advocated have been accepted, or are in the process of being implemented.

The Great Lakes Heritage Coast and 21 sites in the Sault Ste. Marie District have been protected and set aside, pending legislation, as provincial parks or conservation reserves.

In addition, the designation of the St. Marys River as a Canadian Heritage Waterway was achieved in part as a result of our work on the St. Marys Binational Public Advisory Council. Many of its goals were recognized and, I believe, used as supporting documentation in the designation process, in order to achieve the declaration. I was invited to the designation celebrations but was unable to attend.

Members of the Environmental Action Committee serve as representatives to St. Marys River Binational Public Advisory Council, the Sault Ste Marie Local Citizens Committee concerning timber management planning, and the Lake Superior Advisory Committee.

There are a large number of activities and projects associated with the above committees. For example, the Lake Superior Advisory Committee addresses issues such as:

Coastal Brook Trout Rehabilitation Plan; Index Netting Program; Herring and Lake Trout; Sturgeon Programs; Batchawana Bay Perch Netting; McIntyre River Rainbow Trout Counter; Summer Creel Census; Batchawana Bay; Cormorants; Herring/ Whitefish/ Trout; Nipigon Bay Walleye Assessment; Lake Superior Fish Community Objectives; Lake Superior Chub Survey; National Marine Conservation Area; two-line fishing regulations; Binational Programs / LaMP/RAP; EcoSuperior; Black Bay Walleye Rehabilitation; Salmon limits in Lake Superior; Batchewana First Nation treaty negotiations; Sea

Lamprey in Lake Superior.

The St. Marys River Binational Public Advisory Council (whose foundational purpose is cleanup and restoration of the St Marys River) addresses issues such as: Stage II Report; research proposals; BRAC office; Algoma Steel; St. Marys River Fisheries Task Force; LAMPS; Binational Programs and all other issues relating to the watershed of the St. Marys River including human health; dumping of plutonium along the north shore of Lake Huron; Michigan State Public Advisory Council (SPAC; IJC).

Some workshops and information sessions were attended in addition to the above committee meetings. These included: Great Lakes Heritage Coast; agreement between Algoma Steel and Ontario Ministry of the Environment; U.S.A. Environmental Protection Agency tour of the tannery site, Sault Ste. Marie Michigan; Sault Ste Marie Conservation Authority meeting regarding developing a golf course on Conservation lands; Lake Superior Lakewide Management Plan open house.

In addition to the above, the club continues to participate in the Adopt-a-Highway Project.

These activities are the results of the many hours and hard work of dedicated, committed environmentalists. My deep thanks to each for their support and valuable contributions. Some of these are:

Ron Prickett Tony Walker  
Judith Falkin Don Hall  
GerryBennett



We invite you to come to our meetings. Join with us, and make your world a little better.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Donald L. Marles**  
Chairman

## Federation of Ontario Naturalists

It was a great pleasure to host the fall meeting of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists at Camp Wakonda. The F.O.N. consists of 15,000 members and 100 clubs. Both Linda and I had worked hard to find a suitable location. From Oct. 13 to 15, representatives of the northern clubs arrived. The weather was cold and cloudy with sporadic rain.

Gregor Beck, Director of the F.O.N. was to give a special presentation titled *Community Conservation: an Idea Whose Time Has Come*. This was the same

talk that Ric Symes gave in North Bay at the May meeting where it was received with great interest. However, munchies and further mingling replaced the talk and we all had an early night.

Breakfast was supplied and everyone ate heartily. The presentation of our first session was *Marketing to Win*, presented by Ron Arato. Ron's talk dealt basically with the many ways a club can market and sell itself to its betterment.

Midday lunch was a repast fit for royalty. The afternoon agenda included a 10-minute update of our club's activities, given by yours truly, ably supported by our president. A total of 7 groups presented an overview of their clubs' projects, and other items of interest. A new face, and a new club, was John Lavoie of Manitowadge Conservation Club. John received an especially warm welcome. He had driven all the way from Manitowadge to Camp Wakonda to be with us.

Next on the agenda was an update of F.O.N.'s Complete Nature Network Survey by the two F.O.N. reps. Lunch was followed by a special presentation given by the coordinator of the Job-Mollins Keone-Partnership for Public Lands Boreal East. This presentation complimented the many groups who were involved with the Lands for Life issue, and explained the many uses of land, now and in the future.

The following day, after a breakfast that was another treat, we had a general discussion. I mentioned our club's involvement with SARA (Species at Risk Act), the petition to get government to take seriously the need to put teeth in the present legislation on endangered species.

All-terrain vehicles are a growing concern in and around Ontario, especially with regards to the destruction of hiking trails and the Canada Cross Country Trail in particular.

Jim Johnson presented the results of a Wood Turtle survey conducted by Friends of Mississagi Park. That survey almost mirrored the one Bob Knudsen is doing here in the Sault district.

Chuck and Evelyn arrived and led us on a "fungus hike" at Tower Lake. My thanks to them on behalf of the group for an informative walk. Also, I would like to thank Linda and the staff, who supplied us with hot meals and their company.

As club rep, any concerns with regards to matters

concerning our club and its involvement with F.O.N. should be addressed to me so that I may help shed light on the subject of concern.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tony Walker.

### **Ontario Field Ornithologists' (OFO) Code of Ethics**

A code of ethics was written by the OFO (Ontario Field Ornithologists) Executive and adopted as policy in June 1994. In the past, this code was considered unnecessary, but times have changed and as more and more pressure is put on our environment it is essential to do whatever we can to lead by example. We hope that everyone birding in Ontario will endorse, actively follow, and encourage others to follow this code. It will be reviewed annually and we welcome your input.

**Habitat protection.** Habitat is vital for the existence of birds and we must ensure that our activities cause minimum damage to our environment. Use trails to avoid trampling vegetation. Keep disturbance to a minimum. Although some birds can tolerate human activity, this varies from species to species and from season to season. Use common sense and extreme caution around nests. Migrants may be tired and hungry and should not be kept from resting or feeding. When photographing birds, study their reaction and if they become agitated, back off. Avoid the use of flash photography on owls. Tape recordings and similar methods of attracting birds may cause stress for territorial birds. They should be used sparingly and avoided in heavily birded areas. Do not deliberately flush birds. Patience is often rewarded.

**Rare breeding birds.** If you discover a rare breeding bird, do not feel under any obligation to report your find to other birders. Record the details of your discovery. You may wish to file the nest with the Ontario Nest Records Scheme at the Royal Ontario Museum. Avoid visiting known sites of rare breeding birds unless they can be viewed from a distance without disturbance.

**Rare birds.** Rare migrants or vagrants are the species most sought after by birders. If you discover a rarity, consider the circumstances carefully before releasing the information. You must take responsibility for the decision to release the find. You should consider whether an influx of birders will disturb the bird, people or other species in the area; whether habitat will be damaged; and where people will park.

Inform the landowner of the find, explain what may happen and obtain permission to tell other birders. Ask the landowner for a list of dos and don'ts; for example, where birders may stand to get a good view and what restrictions there may be on time of day. Also ask which areas are off limits. If you decide to release the news, give precise directions and instructions. If possible include a phone number. At all times make as little noise as possible. Remember, most non-birders will be surprised by the number of visitors who wish to see a rare bird.

**Landowners and occupiers of land.** Before entering an area, be aware of the rules about access such as by-laws of Conservation Authorities, National and Provincial Parks, and Regional Authorities. Many landowners and authorities allow birders access to areas normally off limits. Always act in a responsible way and if you are asked to leave, do so immediately. Do not block gateways or cause damage to fences, and leave gates as you find them. Do not obstruct people who may be working in these areas.



**Other birders.** Have proper consideration for other birders. When telephoning for information, do so at reasonable hours of the day. Try not to disrupt other birders' activities or scare the birds they are watching. Many other people enjoy the outdoors; do not interfere with their activities. Be polite to other birders and helpful to beginners. If you see people obviously disturbing birds or significantly damaging habitat, explain to them the effect of their actions but be courteous; they may not be aware of the effect they are having.

**Records.** Increase our knowledge about birds. Keep notes of your sightings and send them to area compilers. Send rare bird reports to the Secretary, Ontario Bird Records Committee.

When birding in other countries, provinces or regions, find out if there is a local code of ethics or any special rules that should be respected.

*The above was downloaded from the OFO website by Tony Walker and abridged by the editors.*

## Michigan Audubon Society

As associate members of the Michigan Audubon Society, the Sault Naturalists are able to partake in any environmental action indicated by the society goals for 2001 such as: resolving avian deaths at communication towers; the impact of off-road vehicles, and jet-skis on the environment; the killing of Great Lakes migratory birds, such as the Piping Plover, by use of mosquito pesticides in Florida.

As associate members, the Sault Naturalists can participate in the Whitefish Bird Observatory, or visit any of the many M.A.S. sanctuaries in Michigan. Sault Naturalists may also take part in M.A.S. events, such as the Feb. 2001 Purple Martin workshop to be held in the Sault area. As an individual member, you can join the M.A.S. and receive the publications of the *Jack Pine Warbler*, and the National Audubon magazine.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Chuck Bosley**  
Chair of Michigan Audubon Society

## Year 2000 Bird Report

Winter settled into the twin Saults by the second week of January. The most common bird reported was **Pine Grosbeak**. They could be seen in small flocks of 5 or 6 everywhere. This was unusual because they even outnumbered the usually more common Bohemian Waxwing. On Maple Leaf Rd. in Echo Bay on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1 **Boreal Chickadee** and 1 **Black-backed Woodpecker** visited a feeder. Another **Boreal Chickadee** continued to visit a feeder in Sault Michigan from early December and 1 more was heard on Carpin Beach Rd. on the 12<sup>th</sup>.



on January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1 adult and 1 immature **Bald Eagle** were seen roosting in their regular spot across from Station Mall in the deciduous trees overlooking the St. Mary's River.

The first **Varied Thrush** of the year showed up at a feeder on January 16<sup>th</sup> on Nokomis Rd. near the Sault Airport. The adult male was feeding on suet

along side of 2 **Hairy Woodpeckers**, 2 **Downy Woodpeckers**, 15 **Pine Grosbeaks** and 5 **Common Redpolls**. This bird could be seen regularly throughout the winter. It was later named "Victor" the Varied Thrush. The second **Varied Thrush** visited a feeder next to the OPP building in Blind River.

Unusual over-wintering birds included an **American Kestrel** on January 30<sup>th</sup>, at Highway # 17 and Bar Rd., and a lone female **White-throated Sparrow** that remained at a feeder behind 186 Breton Rd. Excitement about the Sault **Gyr Falcon** was rekindled with two reports during the week of January 30<sup>th</sup>, when it was seen chasing a duck in front of the Edison Sault Electric Company power plant on the Michigan side. Then on February 7<sup>th</sup>, it was seen perched on the black train trestle lift bridge tower.

On February 7<sup>th</sup>, visitors from Ohio to the Upper Peninsula reported 1 **Bald Eagle**, 1 **Northern Shrike** and a **Rough-legged Hawk** at the Dafter Dump; 1 **Red-tailed Hawk** and 8 **Pine Grosbeaks** in Rudyard on H-40; a female **Snowy Owl**, 1 **Northern Shrike**, 1 light morph **Rough-legged Hawk** and 12 **Snow Buntings** at Rudyard on Center Line Rd. and the Mile 20 sign; and 1 **American Kestrel** on I-75 and 129.

At a feeder at Findlay Hill on Pioneer Road behind Echo Bay, as many as 6 **Hoary Redpolls** were counted with 50 **Pine Grosbeaks**, 1 **Pine Siskin** and 200 **Common Redpolls**. The first and only **Great Gray Owl** for the season was seen on February 19<sup>th</sup>, on the Voyageur Trail section at the east side of Gordon Lake.

Ice breakup occurred three weeks earlier than usual with local **Bald Eagles** returning to their nest early. There were two at Echo Bay Marsh and at Gordon Lake on March 4<sup>th</sup>. A male **Merlin** was found at the south side of the St. Joseph's Island bridge perched on a dead white pine on February 27<sup>th</sup>, and was still there on March 4<sup>th</sup>.

Some early spring migrants were reported the week of February 27<sup>th</sup> when 3 **Red-winged Blackbirds** were seen feeding with a flock of **European Starlings** on Lake St. in Echo Bay. That same day 1 lone **Common Grackle** perched atop a tree in territorial fashion at the corner of Shannon Rd. and Chambers Ave. and 1 **Northern Harrier** was seen on Hwy 17 and Maple Leaf Rd.

But March 7<sup>th</sup> was the best day for spring migrant reports. At the Echo Bay marsh, there were 4 **Red-**

**winged Blackbirds**, 10 **Bald Eagles** of which 4 were adult, 6 **Canada Geese** on three nests and 1 **Common Merganser**; at Pumpkin Point, 14 **Bald Eagles** of which 9 were adult, 28 **Common Goldeneye**, 1 **Hooded Merganser** and 6 **Canada Geese**; at Gordon Lake, 4 **Pine Grosbeak** and 6 **Sharp-tailed Grouse**. On Ranger Lake Rd. eight km west of Hwy 129, 5 **Black-backed Woodpeckers** remained after a high count of 16 three weeks earlier. This was the site of a spring of 1999 forest fire. On Hwy 129 two small flocks of **Snow Buntings** were observed moving north, while 1 **American Robin** and 3 **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were seen near Gravelly Creek.

On March 8<sup>th</sup>, there was a very early report of 4 **Chipping Sparrows** and 1 singing male **Northern Cardinal** visiting a backyard feeder on Mark St. The following day, 6 **Common Grackles** made an appearance. Also on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Fairmount Dr. was invaded with 35 **Bohemian Waxwings**, 2 **Pine Siskin**, 125 **Common Redpolls**, and 5 **American Robins**.

The first report from Whitefish Point Bird Observatory came in the week of March 25<sup>th</sup>. Highlights for the week were **Red-shouldered Hawks** and **Red-tailed Hawks** migrating every day. **Sandhill Cranes**, all three **Accipiter** species and **Golden Eagles** migrated each day from March 20<sup>th</sup>. The Whitefish Point Bird Observatory provided a daily update through their website at [www.wpbo.org](http://www.wpbo.org).

On March 19<sup>th</sup>, Great Lakes Power and Sault Naturalists erected a new **Osprey** nest platform at the end of Lake St. in Echo Bay. On Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup>, the male **Peregrine Falcon** returned to the



Robertson Lake cliff site. That same day, the first **Peregrine** sighting was reported at Whitefish Point Bird Observatory.

On March 24<sup>th</sup> at the Spanish Marina, three **Tundra Swans**, 1 adult **Bald Eagle** and hundreds of James Bay **Canada Geese** were attracted by abnormally low water levels. Two days later on the 26<sup>th</sup>, two **Tundra Swans** were seen in the distance while two adult **Bald Eagles** fed on one **Tundra Swan** and two immatures watched nearby. This is the first report the Sault Naturalists have ever received of possible predation by **Bald Eagles** upon **Tundra Swan**.

Owls began to move through Whitefish Point Bird Observatory, with **Short-eared Owl** on April 1<sup>st</sup>, **Long-eared Owl**, **Boreal Owl**, **Northern Saw-whet Owl** and **Northern Hawk Owl** on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. **Eastern Phoebe** and **Golden Eagle** were also present that day. The following day the first **Cliff Swallow** was seen. April 12<sup>th</sup> was the last day the **Golden Eagle** was seen. Large numbers of **Red-tailed Hawks** and **Rough-legged Hawks** were counted throughout that week. This was the best week for owling at the observatory with a **Northern Hawk Owl** being the highlight as well as **Long-eared Owl**, **Barred Owl**, **Short-eared Owl** and **Northern Saw-whet Owl**. **Red Crossbills** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** also made their appearance on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The long-awaited arrival of large numbers of **Broad-winged Hawks** finally began on April 26<sup>th</sup>, with well over one thousand passing through. Other highlights included a **Great Gray Owl**, a **Peregrine Falcon**, good numbers of **Red-necked Grebes**, a **Field Sparrow** and a lingering **Fox Sparrow**.

**Tundra Swans** began building in numbers at Lake George on schedule. There were reports of as many as 104 that were viewed from the elk park. Different species of ducks like **Northern Pintail**, **American Wigeon**, **Gadwall**, **Lesser Scaup** and **Bufflehead** were also present. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, one lone **Lapland Longspur** flew overhead.

The **Red-shouldered Hawk** and spring woodpecker survey routes have yielded the usual good population of **Red-shoulders** on St. Joseph's Island with numbers down along the new Hwy 17 extension in Garden River First Nation. **Northern Flicker** numbers were down from previous year counts because the majority had yet to arrive in Algoma from the south. **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were in full courtship antics for the counts.

The Bruce Mines Sewage Lagoons were very high and attracted good numbers of waterfowl. On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, there were 1 male **Ruddy Duck**, 1 **American Coot**, **Wood Ducks**, **American Wigeon**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Ring-necked Duck**, **Redheads**, and **Mallards**.

It was a relatively uneventful spring migration this year in Algoma. With early warm temperatures and then cooler than usual afterwards, birds migrated through the area without stopping over. However, a strong migration of warblers was reported from the Stobey Creek to the Desbarats area on May 4<sup>th</sup>, with **Nashville**, **Northern Parula**, **Yellow**, **Magnolia**, **Cape May**, **Black-throated Green**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Blackburnian**, **Blackpoll**, **Black-and-white**,

**American Redstart**, **Common Yellowthroat** and **Northern Waterthrush** tallied. On May 7<sup>th</sup> at Lake George north, the first **Solitary Sandpiper** was reported. In Echo Bay, **Brown Thrasher** and an early **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** arrived.

The spring highlight was the appearance of 12 **American White Pelicans** at Gawas Bay on May 14<sup>th</sup>. The following day, 5 were reported from the south end of Lake George. Then on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 4 more pelicans briefly showed up at Bellevue Park.

Results from Tony Walker and Don Wilshire's Sault Naturalists' Baillie Birdathon on May 27<sup>th</sup> tallied 101 species highlighted with a **Whimbrel** flying by the lookout at Stribling Point. A rare breeder for Algoma was a **House Wren** nest found in Echo Bay that added to the list. A late **Redhead** was found in Echo Bay also. A pair of **Northern Mockingbirds** was reported at Hwy 17 and Maple Leaf Rd., east of Echo Bay. Another pair set up their territory on Lake George Rd. and the Bar River during the week of June 7<sup>th</sup>.

A pair of **Short-eared Owls** frequented the fields near Centre Line Rd. and Old Soo Rd. and as many as 6 **Short-eared Owls** were counted between Brimley and Rudyard in Michigan. Also in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, many nesting sites of **Lecote's Sparrow** and **Sedge Wren** were found while one **Field Sparrow** was heard singing on Dick Rd. across from the airbase. The **Green Herons** returned to the Bruce Station area again for the second year. There were three **Peregrine** nests along the east coast of Lake Superior each with three young. The pair at the International Bridge was observed defending the south end of the bridge. Another **Peregrine** pair with three young was reported in the North Channel in the Cutler area.

**Sandhill Cranes** began building in numbers in their traditional staging area near Desbarats. The first count on August 20<sup>th</sup> produced a total of 380 cranes. The second count on September 2<sup>nd</sup> totalled 672. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> as many as 10 **Black Crowned-night Herons** were reported feeding along the St. Marys River headrace and tailrace.

The highlight for the fall migration was a **Harris' Sparrow** that visited a feeder in Echo Bay at 34 Church St. and was last seen at 5:30 pm on October 15<sup>th</sup>. **American White Pelicans** also were highlights for the month of September in the Sault Ste. Marie area with one feeding on dead salmon at the St. Mary's River Rapids and another visiting the beach at Haviland Bay. At Bell's Point on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2 **Red-throated Loons**, 2 **Pectoral Sandpipers**, 1 **Spotted Sandpiper**, 8 **Common Snipe**,

**Turkey Vultures**, 2 **Pileated Woodpeckers** and 1 **Fox Sparrow** were seen. A male **Harlequin Duck** reported on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> above the compensating gates was not seen again. On Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, a juvenile **Harris' Sparrow** visited a feeder on Frame Cres. in Elliot Lake. On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, a male **Varied Thrush** was reported eating winterberry along Pine Shores Rd. In Batchawana, a **Northern Cardinal** was visiting a feeder and down the road at emergency number 578, an **Eastern Towhee** visited another feeder.

Owls began to appear in daily reports throughout November and December. The first was a **Northern Hawk Owl** at Hwy 638 north of Bruce Station on Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>. The second was another found at the Sault Locks on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>. A **Great Gray Owl** was reported on Echo River Rd. on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and another was seen by a group of birders visiting from southern Michigan on the 25<sup>th</sup> on Neebish Island. That same group counted 12 **Northern Shrikes** south of Sault Michigan, several **Sharp-tailed Grouse** along Riverside Dr., 1 **Northern Hawk Owl** at Shunk Rd. south of 11 Mile Rd., 1 **Northern Hawk Owl** at the northwest corner of Riverside Dr. and 12 Mile Rd., and a **Black-backed Woodpecker** at the junction of Scenic Dr. and 15 Mile Rd. The first **Snowy Owl** for the season was reported on Dec. 16<sup>th</sup> at Bellevue Park. Another **Snowy Owl** turned up at the Algoma Steel Plant on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and another unfortunate one was struck by the Wisconsin Central train at Mile 53. The first report of a **Great Gray Owl** came from Don and Vivian Hall on St. Joseph's Island. They saw it on December 10<sup>th</sup>, along the "D" Line one km west of the 10<sup>th</sup> Side Rd. On Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, at 87 Wayne Cr., Linda and John Tibbles were surprised when a **Northern Hawk Owl** paid a visit to their backyard long enough to be videotaped and photographed.

More **Great Gray Owl** sightings began on December 15<sup>th</sup>, with 2 **Great Gray Owls** near the MTO yard on Hwy 638 about 1 km north of Hwy 17. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, another was seen on 13 Mile Rd. in Michigan and on the 26<sup>th</sup>, a very cooperative **Great Gray Owl** perched on a hydro pole on Hwy 638, 3.3 miles east of Echo Bay.

This was a very eventful year in the bird world with many observers contributing. Thanks go out to all who have phoned in, e-mailed or just passed me their notes.

Great Birding in the Border Area

**Bob Knudsen**  
Ornithological Records Chairperson



## 101st Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count, December 16, 2000

After two easy winters, the twin Soos area was in for a change. This year, winter came quite early, and stayed. By mid-November the ground was frozen, and snow soon blanketed everything. By Count Day, December 16, both local bird life and local birders were accustomed to the winter conditions prevailing.

This is not to say that the weather was severe. Actually, temperatures hovered around the freezing mark, warming up towards the late afternoon, and a pretty, Christmas-like snowfall, beginning in the early morning, became heavier and heavier as the day progressed, finally turning to wet snow and even freezing rain in some areas. A brisk wind from the east continued almost all day.

The weather affected birding in three ways: the snowfall obscured visibility for most observers; and, the mild day, and the mildness of the weeks previous, left almost all water open. This made it harder to find waterfowl, as the areas in which they could be found were quite extensive. The harlequin ducks, for instance, were known to be in the area but impossible to locate. Also, the brisk wind not only made it difficult for small birds (such as chickadees) to forage in the open, but it added to the wind-chill factor, encouraging at least one compiler-birder to huddle in the warmth of a vehicle and suggest numerous stops for coffee.



Birders, both in the field and at feeders, did a tremendous job of finding both good species and good numbers. Several Unusual Bird Report forms were sent to Audubon this year with the totals, including Green-winged Teal (Sam Rosa), Wood Duck (Cynthia Suhay), and Iceland Gull (Bob Knudsen). Cliff Wallwork's group found a Sharp-shinned Hawk. Donna Ryckman's group added a Boreal Chickadee to our list. Robert Cohen's group, at the 5th Line dump this year, was one of two parties to add Glaucus Gull to their tally. Klaas

Oswald's hiking group spotted a Brown Creeper at Hiawatha Lodge. A Goshawk charged through Manitou Park while Chris Sanders' group enjoyed the show. Euan Aitken's group found this year's lone American Robin. John Tibbles, birding from his property at Wayne Court, added a flock of 800 Bohemian Waxwings to this year's already excellent numbers in that species.

Over in Michigan, Chuck Bosley's group enjoyed watching an encounter between a Bald Eagle and an otter. (The otter decided that he would be more likely to keep his fish dinner if he went back into the river.) Ken Willis's group was one of two groups to find a Red-tailed Hawk this year. The French's, in Michigan this year, added to this year's excellent numbers of Bald Eagles - fourteen, both mature and immature. Tony Walker's group found a flock of 23 Hooded Mergansers. Doug Munson's group found the best numbers of grouse in the Count Circle: 6 Sharp-tailed and 6 Ruffed!

Feeder counters did everything they could, not only to increase the totals of the more common varieties, but also to fill in some gaps left by the field observers. For instance, the only Northern Cardinals tallied this year were at feeders. Two Gray Jays dropped in to Joanne Knudsen's feeder to sample the food left there. A single White-throated Sparrow was counted at Chris Sanders' feeder, and Dr. Paul Syme had the only House Finches recorded this year.

Good numbers this year include the totals for Bald Eagles (already mentioned) and the total for Bohemian Waxwings (1,594). The total number of species was 52 (plus 3 more for Count Week species) and the total number of individuals on Count Day was 7,133. Also in good numbers were the participants in this year's count: 52 in the field and 18 at feeders!

### Species and numbers

#### "A" List

Snow Bunting	202
Black-capped Chickadee	466
American Crow	447
Mourning Dove	116
Rock Dove	668
Black Duck	7
Goldeneye Duck	125
Mallard Duck	702
Common Merganser	47
American Goldfinch	471
Evening Grosbeak (CW)	5

Pine Grosbeak	11
Snowy Owl	2
Ruffed Grouse	11
Herring Gull	547
Blue Jay	104
Red-breasted Nuthatch	17
White-breasted Nuthatch	15
Common Redpoll	7
Common Raven	305
House Sparrow	35
Tree Sparrow	56
European Starling	1022
Dark-eyed Junco	17
Bohemian Waxwing	1594
Downy Woodpecker	21
Hairy Woodpecker	13
Pileated Woodpecker	6

**“B” List**

Northern Cardinal	3
American Robin	1
Brown Creeper	1
Hooded Merganser	23
Bald Eagle (6 adult + 8 imm)	14
Sharp-tailed Grouse	6
Glaucous Gull	3
Ring-billed Gull	1
Iceland Gull	1
Double-crested Cormorant	2
Canada Goose	21
Golden-crowned Kinglet (CW)	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1
Northern Shrike	3
Pine Siskin (CW)	2
White-throated Sparrow	1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1
Goshawk	1
House Finch	3
Common Loon	1
Green-winged Teal	1
Bufflehead	1
Red-tailed Hawk	2
Wood Duck	1



**Twas the Night Before Bird Count**

(A new seasonal classic) With apologies to Randy Moratz, Tony Walker, and especially to Clement Moore

Twas the night before bird count when all 'round the way,  
Not a bird had been tallied, not even a jay.  
The bins had been hung by the backdoor with care,  
In hopes that the morning soon would be there.

The counters were nestled all snug in their beds,  
While visions of hawk-owls danced in their heads;  
I slept in my longjohns, Sorels by the bed,  
My gloves at the bedside, wool toque on my head.

The alarm it went off and it rang with a roar,  
I flung on my clothes and sprang out the door!  
Away to my auto I flew like a flash,  
Fired up the engine and made a mad dash.

The sun peeking out through the thick morning haze  
Cast a faint hint of daybreak on my sleepy gaze.  
When what to my bleary eyes now appeared  
But the rendezvous spot and, just as I feared,

With a big pile of maps, our leader was there.  
(But, first for the day was our breakfast fare ...)  
More rapid than eagles his counters they came,  
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name:

Now Chuck! Now Evelyn! Now Noreen and Doreen!  
On Robert! On Joy! On Klaas and Dave Bean!  
To the west to the airport! To the east to Bell's Pt!  
Dash away! Dash away! Tear up the joint!

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
We searched for the winged ones up in the sky.  
So all round the forest, we counters we flew,  
With lists of good birdies and feeder counts too!

And then in a twinkling, the survey was done;  
The counting and listing of each little one.  
As I called it a day and was turning around,  
Round the corner St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed in a snowsuit, from head to his toes,  
His boots were all muddy, his fingers looked froze.  
A pair of old Bushnells were flung round his neck  
He looked like a birder who'd just been through heck!

His eyes had no twinkle! His face was not merry!  
His cheeks were all sunburnt, his nose like cherry!

His dry little mouth had chapped-looking lips,  
His long straggly beard hung down in gray strips.

The stump of his pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.  
He had a tired face and a round sagging belly  
That bounced when he coughed, like a bowlful of  
jelly.

He huffed and he puffed, a right tired old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.  
With a wink of his eye and a twist of his wrist,

He tossed me his data, an impressive list!

He spoke not a word, as I glanced at his work.  
He'd filled all the columns, as neat as a clerk.  
And laying a finger 'longside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, to his half-ton he goes.

His motor he started, his horn he toot-tooted,  
Then away to the north he turned and he scooted,  
But I heard him exclaim as he drove out of sight,  
Happy Counting to all and to all a Good Night!

## Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year 2000

Prepared and submitted by  
Gail Andrew, Treasurer  
January 9, 2000

### Operating Expenses

*(Account at Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, rendered in Canadian Dollars)*

<b>Receipts</b>		\$3460.59
Memberships	\$957.10	
Resale	60.50	
50/50 Draw/Bird count	160.00	
Premium on U. S. Funds	138.97	
Donations	841.04	
Baillie Birdathon	73.75	
From U.S. Account	250.00	
From N.C.U. Account	700.00	
Annual Dinner (Net)	279.23	
	3460.59	
<b>Disbursements</b>		\$2879.34
Newsletter	60.38	
Postage	170.48	
Stationery & supplies	33.13	
Insurance	355.00	
Long distance & Hotline	606.13	
FON membership	150.00	
P.O. Box rental	77.04	
Bank Charges	0.00	
Capital Projects	109.71	
Donations	100.00	
Affiliated Memberships	275.00	
Miscellaneous	942.47	
	2879.34	
<b>Receipts over (under) disbursement</b>		\$581.25
<b>Balance January 1, 2000</b>		\$385.15
<b>Balance December 31, 2000</b>		\$966.40



**Operating Expenses**

*(Account at the National City Bank, rendered in U.S. Dollars)*

<b>Receipts</b>		\$234.00	
Memberships (net)	190.00		
Donations	23.00		
Annual Dinner	16.00		
Resale	5.00		
	234.00		
<b>Disbursements</b>		\$423.64	
Postage	49.80		
Bank charges	46.03		
Donations	50.00		
Stationery & supplies	27.81		
To Canadian account	250.00		
	423.64		
<b>Receipts over (under) disbursement</b>			(189.64)
<b>Balance January 1, 2000</b>		1450.37	
<b>Balance December 31, 2000</b>		1260.73	
			189.64



**Savings**

*(Savings at Northern Credit Union, in Canadian Dollars)*

<b>Membership shares</b>		\$25.00	
<b>Patronage shares</b>		88.00	
<b>General account</b>		\$1231.85	
<b>Receipts</b>			
Interest & dividend	6.12		
<b>Disbursements</b>			
Dues +s/c	8.15		
To Canadian operating account	700.00		
	708.15		
<b>Receipts over (under) disbursements</b>			(702.03)
<b>Operating balance Jan. 1/2000</b>		1933.88	
<b>Closing balance Dec. 31/200</b>		1231.85	



<b>Term Deposit No.3</b>		\$2271.16
Reserve	278.60	
Life Membership	900.00	
Property	1092.50	
<b>Term Deposit No.5</b>		\$1825.66
Guide Book	1228.25	
Baillie Birdathon	597.41	
<b>Term Deposit No. 6</b>		\$1071.13
Reserve	963.61	
Birdathon	107.52	
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$6512.80</b>

The Club gratefully acknowledges the following donations in 2000:

K.Baldwin	\$20.00
D.Hall/R.Knudsen	\$152.43
J.Koropecki	\$50.00
Vancouver Natural History Society	\$450.00
R.Knudsen	\$163.61

We note that the donation from the Vancouver Natural History Society resulted from a profit sharing with participants of a trip to the Queen Charlotte Islands in May 2000 by the following Sault Naturalists:

G. Andrew	C. Bosley	N. Towers	E. Wentz
H. Hutchinson	T. Carr	E. Simon	M. Ryckman
R. Benson	and others from other clubs.		

