



sault
naturalists

Think spring!

Spring- 2011 Newsletter Sault Naturalists of Ontario and Michigan



Goodbye Winter--Welcome Spring

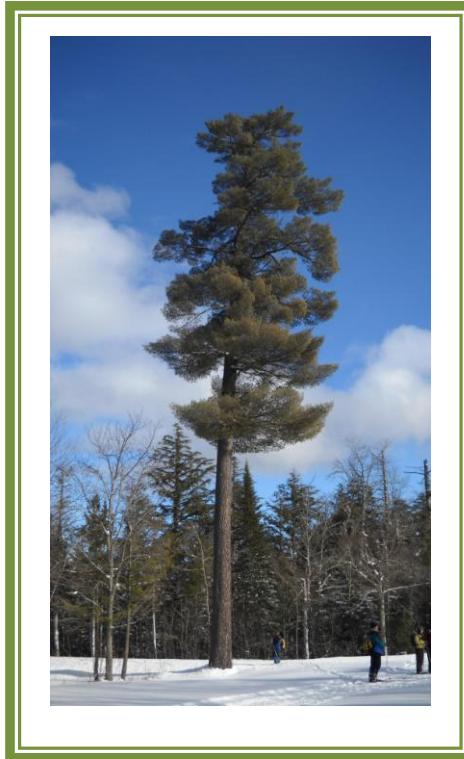
Greetings Fellow Naturalists,

We've had a great winter, with treks and outings to the many wonderful places near the "Twin Saults" but spring is always welcome and we are ready.

Val Walker is working on a new set of outings for spring and summer. You will receive a detailed list in the next couple of weeks, but just to whet your appetite, here are some highlights.

Before the birds return we will trek to Red Rock and Pancake Lookout for early spring hikes. The birds arrive in early April and much of April and May will involve birding, locally around the Sault, at Point Pelee and a trip to Mio, Michigan to find

the endangered Kirkland's Warbler. We will take traditional trips to Whitefish Point and a little longer trip to Pictures Rocks National Lakeshore Park looking for interesting birds and plants.



As the seasons pass into summer, the focus will shift to wild flowers, mushrooms, rocks and travel to interesting local landscapes by canoe, by bicycles and by foot.

We always have a good time with good conversations and fun and make many memories. Everyone is welcome so please consider joining us.

Dave Euler, President

<http://soonats.pbworks.com/w/page/8206039/About-the-Sault-Naturalists>

The Winter of Our Content



Our ski outings are always fun. This was Tahquamenon Park after which we went to the Brew Pub.



Watching a Peregrine Falcon, Yeah!



Checking out the chick-a-dee nesting hole.



You have to duck under the big trees on Sugar Island.



A quiet conversation at lunch.



One tired but happy person on snowshoes.

Watching Birds-By Satellite

Following Common Loons

Even if you can't make those early morning treks out in the fields and forests to keep up with your crazy 'birding' friends, you can still have fun 'watching' those fascinating creatures by satellite. With new opportunities to employ technology in interesting and educational ways, scientists have honed in on some birds and their movements that we can all enjoy.

Do you love loons and the calls they make when on their breeding grounds? Then check out the migrating loons website and loon movements on their breeding territories and migration flights.

www.umesc.usgs.gov/terrestrial/migratory_birds/loons/migrations.html



Catch-Up with Migrating Robins

The common American Robin found in many gardens and forests around North America always makes us think of spring.

In autumn, this bird migrates from the northern part of North America to the south, where it spends the winter. The scientific name of the American Robin is

Turdus migratorius, perhaps because it is such a colourful and well-known migrant.

Keeping up with migrating robins is fun and easy, especially for children, but who can resist the thrill of the first sounds of robins returning from their winter sojourn.



Check out this web site:

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/robin/>

The authors of this web site invite people to log in their first sighting of robins in the spring. They then produce maps which show the 'wave' of robins as they fly north and a map of the locations where the first songs of spring were heard.

The site is lots of fun and also contains much good information about these colourful birds we see in our gardens all year. You can see more birds by satellite just check the links below.

More Birds to Follow by Satellite

<http://www.salem-news.com/articles/september252010/red-knots-flight.php>

<http://www.followthebird.org/BirdsWeFollow/tabid/1539/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Camera Traps

'Camera Traps' are becoming an essential tool for wildlife researchers. These cameras allow them to expand their ability to learn about wildlife, both threatened species and the common animals that live in our backyards. A camera trap is just a camera positioned into a weather proof case, and rigged to take a picture when an animal breaks an electronic beam that projects out from the case. It is ingenious and effective and helps take inventories of endangered species and helps understand the behaviour of more common species.



These cameras are readily available at most sport supply stores, and range from about 75 dollars to several hundred. If you buy one of these cameras, you can find tips on how to place them at this web site. http://www.ehow.com/list_7273675_trail-camera-placement-tips.html

Pictures Taken by Camera Traps

The bobcat photo to the left was taken by our camera trap near Sault Ste. Marie, ON.

The Javan rhinoceros is a critically endangered species that lives in a few places in Southeast Asia, including Cat Tien National Park. Although these animals are hard to count, there are probably less than 60 animals left in the world. This example of a Javan rhinoceros is standing in typical habitat in Southeast Asia.



To see an amazing video of a mother and her calf, two of the last Javan rhinoceros left on earth, go to this web site.

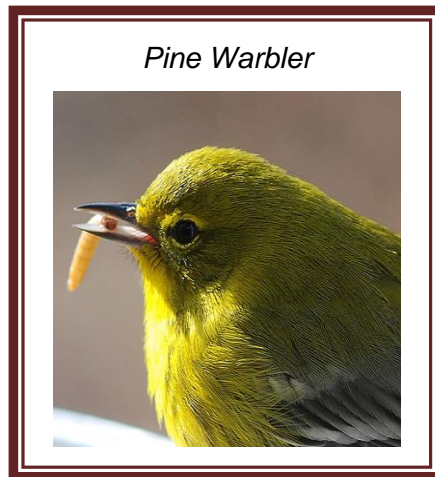
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2008/may/29/endangeredspecies.wildlife>

There are lots of pictures of wildlife taken with camera traps posted on the web, just Google 'wildlife camera traps', and you will be well rewarded.

Migration Spectacular

Although Eastern North America doesn't have the spectacular movement patterns of the Wildebeests of East Africa or the Woodland Caribou of the Yukon and Alaska, it does have its own wonderful migration. The Warblers of Eastern North America are truly as magnificent as any of the large mammals and the opportunity to observe them on their flight to and from their breeding habitat is not to be missed.

Point Pelee National Park in Southern Ontario is renowned as the best location in North America to observe the migration of these warblers. Often called the Warbler Capital of North America, over 40 species and thousands of these birds fly through every year. The highlight of the year is May when the birds are rushing north to their breeding grounds, but they also return in the fall when viewing can also be excellent. The Club travels to southern Ontario every May and visits Point Pelee as well as other good spots for warblers.



Canada's Boreal Forest Region is an important breeding ground for birds, including warblers and many other species. Stretching across Canada from Alaska to Newfoundland, nearly 50% of the 700 species that regularly occur in the US and Canada rely on the Boreal Forest for their survival.

During spring migration up to 3 billion birds fly through Canada to their breeding grounds in the Boreal Forest. Up to 5 billion birds (adults and offspring) fly south from the Boreal each fall. **A truly magnificent migration.**

Thanks to Joy Cohen for the picture of the woodpeckers and the lady slipper and to G. Bennet for the Mushrooms. Dave Euler took the Spring Beauty picture as well as the outings pictures. Other pictures are stock photos.

Dave Euler, President

See ya on the trails.

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