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# Sault Naturalists of Ontario and Michigan. Annual Report for 2007

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## 2007 Executive

President: Dave Euler..... 705 248 1494  
Vice Pres. Jeanne Mannesto..906 632 4285 (Dec.)  
Secretary: vacant  
Treasurer: Gail Andrew..... 705 942 0768  
Membership: Betty and Gerry Bennett...  
705 254 7214  
Outings coordinator Val Walker....  
705 253 7044  
Program coordinator:John Lehman. 906 635 5095  
Archivists: Gladys and Cliff Wallwork  
Local Citizens Committee Rep: Donna Ryckman-  
Rooney  
Michigan Audubon rep: Chuck Bosley  
Ontario Nature rep.: Tony Walker  
Publicity: Evelyn Simon  
Christmas Bird Count: Ken McIlwrick  
kmcilwri@NRCan.gc.ca  
Biological records: Sue Meades  
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Web masters: Vivian and Don Hall 705 248 1834  
[www3.sympatico.ca/donandvivhall/index.html](http://www3.sympatico.ca/donandvivhall/index.html)  
Wiki coordinator: John Lehman:  
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## Sault Naturalists of Ontario and Michigan: Who We are

Founded in 1954, the Sault Naturalists is an international club with approximately 120 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
- to support and cooperate with other organizations with similar aims.

The group is affiliated with Ontario Nature, the Canadian Nature Federation and the Michigan Audubon Society.

Meetings are held from September through June on the second Tuesday of each month, (May meeting is on 1<sup>st</sup> Tues) in either Sault Ontario or Sault Michigan. See newsletter, *The Wake -Robin*, or the webpage, or our Wiki for details. The annual meeting is in February.

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**Financial Statement For 2007  
Prepared By Gail Andrew, Treasurer**

Sault Naturalists. January 2, 2008

**Operating Expenses:**

(Account At CIBC, in Canadian Dollars)

Balance January 1,2007 \$12,846.18  
Balance December 31,2007 \$12,509.29

**Receipts** \$1946.83

Memberships \$1865.00  
Premium on US Funds \$11.83  
Donations \$70.00

**Disbursements** \$2283.72

Newsletter \$205.99  
Postage \$214.67  
Insurance \$450.50  
Capital Projects \$15.13  
Ont. Nature/Nature Can \$150.00  
Misc. \$1247.43

Receipts over(under) Disbursements (\$336.89)

**Operating Expenses**

(Account at Huntington National Bank in US Dollars)

Balance January 1,2007 \$365.91  
Balance December 31,2007 \$737.15

**Receipts** \$452.64

Memberships \$421.00  
Misc. \$31.64

**Disbursements** \$81.40

Donations \$70.00  
Postage \$11.40

Receipts over(under)Disbursements \$371.24

**GIC's** at CIBC (in Canadian Dollars) #1 \$3586.36  
#2 \$1829.90

The Club gratefully acknowledges the following donations:

June Koropeccki \$50.00  
S.Smith \$20.00  
R.Lindley \$30.00

**Message from the President:  
Dave Euler**

The seventh year of the 21st millennium was a good one for the Sault Naturalists. There were outings in every month of the year, often 2 or 3 times each month, and we explored many hidden places in both Ontario and Upper Michigan.

We produced an Environmental Assessment for parts of the proposed walking and hiking trail through Fort Creek Conservation area for use by the City of Sault Ste Marie in building the trail. Due to government constraints which had become burdensome for the club, we switched from The Adopt a Hwy 550 programme to Adopt a Park (Wishart Park )cleanup. We continued the process of finding a suitable place to build another bird watching platform and Tony Walker completed repair work on the Pumpkin Point Platform. John Lehman has begun a Wiki site.

For 2008 we have goals and ideas to explore. We need to locate and build another bird watching platform which will use the rest of the money granted to us by the Ontario Government for that purpose. Conservation initiatives in Michigan will involve identifying *Important Bird Areas*, and getting involved in efforts to monitor lake levels in the Great Lakes, and the health of the St Mary's River.

In Ontario a new Forest Management Plan is underway and there will be opportunities to be part of that process. Ontario Nature, the Provincial conservation organization is preparing initiatives in Boreal Forest Conservation and protecting migratory bird habitat. The Canadian Federal Government is initiating a consultation process for protecting nests of migratory birds and we will want to follow that process closely. Many members continue to participate in the Ontario Marsh Monitoring Programme. A similar program has been initiated for Michigan, and Chuck Bosley is coordinating this for 2008.

(continued on p.5)

## Program Committee Report, Submitted by John Lehman, Committee Coordinator

The Program Committee scheduled and coordinated the following programs for 2007.

**January 9, 2007. Paul DeBeer**, a graduate of Sault College's Field Naturalist Program, spoke about *The Nature and Diversity of South and East Africa*.

**February 13, 2007. Annual Dinner Meeting.** **Gregg Bruff**, from Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, spoke on *Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore and the U.S. National Park System*.

**March 13, 2007. Marshall Werner**, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Lake Superior State University, spoke about *The Biological and Chemical Health of the St. Marys River*.

**April 10, 2007. Dan McKenny**, a senior scientist with the Canadian Forest Service, spoke on *Making Sense of the Global Warming Debate*.

**May 1, 2007. Robert Knudsen**, Species at Risk Technician for the Ministry of Natural Resources, spoke about *Wood Turtle Biology and Conservation in Algoma*.

**June 12, 2007. Dave Euler**, wildlife biologist/forestry consultant and trip leader for Quest Nature Tours, spoke on *The Rio Negro of the Amazon*.

**September 11, 2007. Dave Kreutzweiser**, Research Scientist in Aquatic Ecology and Ecotoxicology with the Canadian Forest Service's Great Lakes Forestry Center, spoke on *Rethinking the Use of Waterside Buffer Strips in Forestry*.

**October 9, 2007.** Environmental activist **Cynthia Pryor** spoke about *Living Off The Grid—A Lifestyle Preference*.

**November 13, 2007. Chad Kister**, writer and environmental activist working with the Alaska Coalition, spoke on *Polar Bear Survival and Global Warming*.

**December 11, 2008.** Our annual holiday get-together was based on the theme "*Outdoor Gear for Naturalists*"

Thanks to **Leslie Askwith and Marjorie Hall** for their contributions as program committee members.

## Christmas Bird Count

The 53rd Annual Sault Ste. Marie Ontario/Michigan Christmas Bird Count was held, Saturday December 15, 2007.

Results for the CBC circle ONSS are reported below:

93 participants (65 on routes and 28 at feeders) contributed to the second highest species total (63) recorded on this CBC circle.

The Record High is 65 (in 2006) and prior to this the record was 57 (in 2005).

When count week species are added, that number rises to 64.

Despite a good effort (people hours and distance traveled) only 8032 Individual birds were counted (7010 on routes and 1022 at feeders).

This is below average for recent years.

Highlights were emailed to participants.

I would like to thank all who participated in the count. Additional thanks to all the Group Leaders and to Gladys Wallwork for gathering the feeder data.

**Ken McIlwrick**, Christmas Bird Count Coordinator

## Ontario Nature Report: Tony Walker Club Representative

The start of the year 2007 involved a questionnaire from Ontario Nature, as a past President of the club I had lots of information regarding the many aspects of our membership and this helped me complete the questionnaire, we were compensated to the tune of \$100 to club funds (see *The Wake- Robin, Vol. 53, #3*).

On March 30th I, along with three others from the Northern Groups, were invited to the beautiful Ecological Retreat in Hockley Valley, funded by Nature Canada. Representatives from across the province gathered to brain storm and share their expertise on how to shape Ontario Nature's future. Much was achieved that will be used in the years ahead.

The Spring 2007 meeting took place at the Welcome Lodge hosted by Friends of Mashikinonje and Nipissing Naturalist Club. Local items were discussed. A guest speaker talked about Forest Practices around North Bay, We considered what products are best for the environment, looking at concrete, steel, and wood.

**Environmental Election Priorities.** Thirteen of Ontario's leading environmental organization's have come together to develop a set of Key Environmental Priorities that can help steer Ontario in a new and healthier direction. Relevant issues are: Energy, Waste, and Boreal Forest Conservation.

The Fall 2007 meeting was held in the Killarney Park. Science North's Franco Marriotti spoke on how we look at local history and how we accept the slow changes around us. He used the history of Easter Islands and compared it to Sudbury. As the talk and slide show progressed we saw how modern science unravels the mysteries of the past. An excellent talk. Our Group discussions included such topics as: Northern Issues, Halton Recycling-waste recycling plant in the municipality of French River, draining Wetlands alongside Highways in the North, forest practices- use of Biomass for fuel. herbicides. ATV suppression, wind farms, and the insurance of property owned by clubs.

Also discussed was the topic of *Increasing the Northern Voice* by a) growing the Nature movement in the North, b) looking at new ways to communicate northern issues.

Steve Wilkins, the new Stewardship Northern Director will work on such issues in the North as bear management, decline in club memberships, and also Species at Risk funding.

If you would like electronic minutes from any of the meetings I have attended please let me know.

Your input on matters concerning Ontario Nature and the naturalist club's concerns should be brought to my attention. This way I can represent you best. -Tony Walker.

## Local Citizens Committee, Donna Ryckman-Rooney, rep.

Annual Report for the Sault Naturalists

The Algoma Forest Local Citizens Committee (LCC) is a standing committee of volunteers representing various sectors of the local community. The purpose of the LCC is to participate as an integral part of the forest management planning process for the Algoma Forest.

Our primary functions are: Advising the Ministry of Natural Resources District Manager on forest management planning issues, assisting planning teams in the preparation of forest management plans, and assisting in the implementation of forest management plans.

Our work for the next couple of years requires some input from you, the members of the Sault Naturalist. We are being asked to review the current information about the Algoma Forest and to consider what we want the Algoma Forest to look like in the next 20 years. Now is the time to let our views be known and submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Clergue Forest Management. I hope everyone in the club will talk to me and give me information as to what you think important values are to be included in the new Forest Management Plan.

Please contact me if you have questions and I will be pleased to discuss the issues involved in the plan.

Respectfully submitted, **Donna Ryckman-Rooney**

President's message continued from p 2)

However, we also must remember that one major of the club is to have fun, learn about the natural world and enjoy each other's company while exploring the world around us.

Be sure to join us for outings, for our programs on the second Tuesday of each month, (except May, of course when it is the first Tuesday) and for the special projects we conduct from time to time. Photos of many outings were collected in the photo book, *walk in the woods, out and about with the Sault Naturalists*, compiled and produced by Curt Bosket.

Sincere *Thanks* to our leaders, committee coordinators and executive, to Robert Cohen acting secretary, and thanks to those who are featured in this annual report. Our club can not function without you. –Dave Euler, President

## Outings Report: Val Walker Coordinator

2007 outings included a wide scope of activities in an attempt to suit the eclectic tastes of the membership.

Some of the highlights which include many of the old favourites were:

- Backcountry skiing to the Canyon, on the North Country Trail, to the Desbarats bat caves, on the Lake Superior shoreline at Red Rock and Pancake Bay Provincial Park
- Don & Vivian Hall's ever so popular winter twig identification potluck, a mushroom identification outing with the pro's –thanks Bonni, Jerry & Sandy and an entomology workshop with scopes & specimens
- Bird watching at Lake George, Whitefish Point, Pumpkin Point, Point Pelee, Seney, here, there and everywhere (it seems)
- Slogging thru Hay Marsh
- Hunting for the elusive showy orchid, spring skunk cabbage and other assorted wild flowers, ferns, edible and not so edible fungi

- Paddling through swamps, marshes, rivers and along Great Lakes shorelines
- Geology excursions to Theano Point, Desbarats and the Kemp Mineral Resources Museum
- Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Park Tour – wow! Thanks, Greg.
- Various hikes along woodland trails, through swamps and bogs, atop mountains high and valleys low

This year the club was instrumental in the documentation of flora and bird life in the **Fort Creek Conservation Area** as part of a biological inventory in support of the HUB Trail initiative. The membership contributed to the inventory on four separate outings coordinated by **Don & Marjorie Hall**.

In addition, some diehard birders dragged themselves out of bed to participate in the Michigan Breeding Bird Survey. Of course, the Prez sprung for breakfast which was definitely an incentive for the not so diehard birders that participated.

As usual, the membership was well represented for the annual Christmas bird count organized by our own **Ken McIlwrick**.

This fall, a memorial hike to Whitefish Island was held in honour of Jim Miller, our fallen friend, devoted and enthusiastic club member. He will be sorely missed by all.

Thank you to all the leaders for their time, expertise and dedication. Please feel free to suggest any new outing destinations. Looks like we've got a few new prospects for this year (Les Cheneaux Islands and the Hendrie Water Caves). Stay tuned.

And please, to avoid disappointment, remember to call the trip leader to indicate you plan to attend a scheduled outing. Trip details and times can change for all sorts of reasons.

See You Out There. Valerie Walker, Outings Coordinator

## Membership Report

(data from 29/12/07)

Submitted by Betty and Gerry Bennett  
Membership Committee

<b>Total No. Memberships</b>	<b>119</b>
Total No. US	37
Total No. Canadian	82

### Categories

Life (paid)	10
Individual	55
Family	38
Student	2
Complimentary individual	10
Complimentary family	0
Life, Group	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>

### Yr.(s) Paid To:

Life	14
2009-2012	3
2008	24
2007	71
2005-2006	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>

### News Flash

Check out the new Earth Hour website for 2008!

Earth Hour is on 29 March 2008 at 8pm, and it looks like it's going to be really big. So far, as well as Sydney, there'll also be Chicago, Tel Aviv, Manila, Copenhagen, Melbourne, Brisbane and Toronto all turning off their lights for an hour in the name of fighting global warming. And for sure there will be more cities by March.

Sign up and join the movement, and closer to the day Earth Hour organizers will also send you useful tools, tips and info. Sign up at <http://www.earthhour.org/sign-up> by e-mail to the Soo Nats. President from Northwatch. Box 282, North Bay P1B 8H2

## Media

Sault Naturalists participated in a segment of "Plugged In" on Channel 10 with a taping of "**Winter Twig ID**" with **Don Hall** at the Sault College Wood Lot in December.

Thanks to all who participated to give our club more community exposure.

Submitted by Betty and Gerry Bennett

## Adopt-a-Park Program Betty Bennett, Coordinator

The Sault Naturalists entered into a contract with the City of Sault Ste. Marie Ontario in 2007 to pick up litter at Wishart Park at least twice yearly as part of the Adopt-a-Park Program. Our first session in November was well attended, with 12 members "giving the boot" to garbage on the trails.

### Newsletter report: *The Wake-Robin*,

newsletter of the Sault Naturalist club of Sault Michigan and Ontario, was printed three times in 2007, Spring, Autumn and Winter. ( Vol. 53, no.1, 2, & 3.) Our logo, a trillium (provincial flower of Ontario) and a robin (state bird of Michigan), is printed on the front page. Members had the choice of email or postal delivery. The newsletter included submission of text and photos from the club members. The Annual Report is printed in February, to coincide with the Annual Meeting.

-submitted by **Gail Giuliani, editor**