

North Durham Nature (NDN) 2017 Annual Report

Our club was created in the fall of 2013 which makes this year our fifth year! We continue to grow in understanding of the nature that surrounds us and in how to present it to you so that we can better protect and conserve it.

2017 was Canada's 150 and we captured the 150 theme in three events. First we continued our involvement with the Uxbridge Watersheds committee's **Brook Never Sleeps** March Break event for kids spreading it over 150 metres of the Uxbridge brook, a great in town connection with nature. Then a 150 species challenge for families at the Uxbridge Countryside Preserve was organized with six nature guides. This event was the first cooperative venture with the town Outdoor Recreation staff who brought a tent and lots of swag and snacks to the event. We recorded over 150 species of plants and animals in the Preserve and hope to make this an annual event. Finally at the Nonquon we joined Friends of the Nonquon where families chalked up nature points aiming at 150 in various categories.

The town of Uxbridge released its map of the Countryside Preserve in the spring which included our nature photos and our three nature trails along with text. We were given a handful of maps to sell to raise money for the Preserve trails and NDN.

This year we created a Prairie plot in the Countryside Preserve by selecting 300 native plants five grass species and eight wildflowers which were planted in a meadow by the local cubs and scouts. While many invasive and other native plant species have since moved into the plot we hope to continue to manage the plot by weeding this year.

We also continued with Scot Pine removal in the Preserve and the town is now attacking Dog Strangling vine, and Buckthorn while thinning the Pine plantations. The long term effect will be more diversity in the forest and the meadows

Working with Scugog Environmental Advisory team as NDN president and Town Trails volunteer we were able to educate and act on the invasive plant Phragmites. We persuaded the town to hire a student to map the invasive plant Phragmites on town trails, I led a group of volunteers in removing the plant from a local retention pond trail and we presented to town council the history and proposed strategy (Best Practices) for management of this invasive plant. This year we are hoping for a grant which will hire another student to continue the public education about invasives and this fight against Phragmites.

Our bird box project in the Uxbridge Countryside Preserve continues with local town volunteers while our Lafarge project has changed from a contract to a shorter yearly monitoring system run by neighbours on the seventh concession. The club has taken on building the Rothfel's Mouseproof Bluebird box after the sad news of the passing of Paul. Paul was a keen monitor of his bird boxes in the Lafarge Pit over the three-year contract, and was an active member of the club. His memory lives on with the club in his boxes available for purchase at any meeting.

Geoff Carpentier continues to raise more and more money for birds in Canada, and NDN through the annual *Great Canadian Birdathon* .

We supported two initiatives by Ontario Nature for provincial government reform : “the Review of the Environmental Bill of Rights “ and the “Proposed Regional Natural Heritage System for the Greater Golden Horseshoe” more details are on our website.

We organized and supported the Christmas bird counts in Uxbridge and Beaverton and the CBC 4 Kids at the Nonquon.

Next year marks the end of the two- year term for all Directors so elections will be held. As president my term will be up so a new leader will be needed. Besides the board there are many jobs that need doing each year and if you would like to help in any way let us know. In particular we are looking for refreshment help in Port Perry for our meetings there.

Looking forward to this year 2018 we will be: completing two initiatives planned last year as part of the Canada 150 : first a contribution was made to a new Bird Book “Birds of Nunavut” a project Geoff Carpentier is volunteering for which we hope will raise awareness for fragile Arctic species some which make it down to visit us in the winter (Snowy Owls) and close to home a new Interpretive sign at the Nonquon Outdoor Education Centre, a project we are working with Chrismar mapping and Durham District Board of Education. Our monthly talks and walks and bird box projects and more. We hope you will be there with us and look forward to more volunteer effort.

www.northdurhamnature.com