



Friends of Mashkinonje

www.mashkinonje.com

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The Wetlands Observer

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Winter Home of Bald Eagle and Red Fox

Early Arrival of Winter at Mashkinonje

Freezing temperatures in mid-November froze the lake creating treacherous ice. A deer went through the ice and did not survive. Once a deer has gone through the ice, their hooves do not provide a grip to pull themselves out. Even if they fall onto the ice, it is difficult for them to get back up. This is not a nice occurrence but it does help other wildlife to survive our cold winters. This bald eagle was one of 3 who came to feed on the deer. A few days later the ice was thick enough, to provide a safe crossing for these four deer.



2013 White Pine Cone Crop

The summer of 2012 was very hot and dry. White pine trees responded at Mashkinonje with a bumper cone crop. A question was asked, does a big cone crop result in lots of seeds? The Friends cut a cone in half to answer that question. The seeds are the white circles in the cross section photo. The cone appears to have lots of seeds. Will this mean more beautiful white pines in Mashkinonje, we certainly hope so!





Subnivean (*beneath the Snow*) Life

By Chuck Miller

Creatures have different strategies to survive the winter, some remain active all winter on the surface, stay in lodges, swim under ice, sleep in the muck at the bottom of ponds, stay in leaf litter, move into dens or huddle in fissures in rocks. Still other creatures like red-backed vole live on the surface between the snow and the ground, called the “subnivean” level.

In the sky, moisture begins to crystalize. These crystals collide and form a snowflake, often made up of hundreds of crystals. Once on the ground, snowflakes pack tightly. This snowpack traps air and blocks the wind and cold, creating an insulated area for small animals to live. Despite cold temperatures above the snow, heat rising from the ground combined with energy to freeze and thaw, generally keeps the temperature near to the ground close to the freezing point. This zone between the snowpack and the ground is the subnivean zone.

Voiles utilize the subnivean zone in the winter to develop networks of tunnels. The snowpack offers warmth and cover. This zone is a haven for many small animals. Winter predators have developed specialized skills for hunting prey in the subnivean zone. Great grey owls, foxes and coyotes locate prey under the snow by sound. They collapse the tunnels, blocking travel by the rodents below. Weasels are also adept winter hunters of subnivean prey.

When out snowshoeing watch for tracks in the snow and keep in mind the tunnels and creatures beneath your snowshoes.



Making Your Wilderness Dreams a Reality

Canoe Raffle Winner

The 2013 canoe raffle winner of a beautiful blue and white, 16.6 foot Prospector Canoe by Scott Canoe was Patrick Duffy of Alban Ontario, Congratulations and Happy Paddling!



Nighthawk Arrival – Beginning of the End of Summer

By: Chuck Miller

It is always a joy to see flocks of nighthawks gathering in late summer. Spending many summers in Killarney, the arrival of nighthawks on cool August evenings is a first indication that summer is coming to an end. I had always associated nighthawk arrivals with late August – it was a bitter sweet surprise to see a flock on July 28 – bitter because it signals the end of summer – sweet because they are such a joy to watch.

Nighthawks are not hawks at all. They belong to a family of birds referred to as “goatsuckers”. Nighthawks feed almost entirely on insects that they capture on the wing. As many as 500 mosquitoes have been found in the stomach of a single nighthawk.

Nighthawks breed across southern Canada and their numbers have been declining. They have recently been added to Ontario’s Endangered Species List with a “Species of Concern” designation.



50th Anniversary of Mashkinonje



A beautiful day greeted Friends for our 50th anniversary celebration. The park was designated in 1963 and has seen many changes over the past 50 years. The majority of these changes occurred over the past 15 years. Most of our history has been documented in our past newsletters. For this occasion, we developed a fun diary of Mashkinonje and a DVD showing the beauty of the park and our accomplishments. These were given to our Friends as a thank you, to enjoy and share. Of course there was a cake; you have to know our history!



Left to right: Ron Garbutt, Councilor Municipality of French River; Ross Hart, Northeast Zone Manager Ontario Parks; Claude Bouffard, Mayor Municipality of French River; Jeremy Pawson, Superintendent Mashkinonje, Paul Schoppmann, Mayor Municipality of St Charles; Chuck Miller, Retired Superintendent; Angela Martin, President Friends of Mashkinonje



AGM and Picnic

By: Chuck Miller

August 18th was a sunny day for the Friends of Mashkinonje AGM and Picnic held at the Loudon Trailhead. Forty people attended the picnic, including a silent auction, corn on the cob, sausages and cake! Special thanks to Gary Martin, who always looks after cooking at our events. Peter Beckett and Harley Lang



announced the top bidders of all the interesting donations, including gift baskets from the French River Horticulturalists. Jeremy Pawson was the top bidder for a Beaver aircraft flight donated by Harley and Liz Lang. Thank you all for joining us and making our picnic a fun occasion.

Halloween Hike

Everyone couldn't wait to get hiking. It wasn't spooky at all?



Christmas Bird Count

By: Angela Martin

Our Audubon Christmas Bird Count was held on January 5, 2014. We were fortunate to have good winter conditions, so that the 5 field observers and 4 feeder watchers could count birds in our circle.

We found 20 species and 710 individual birds. This was the lowest number of species since we began our count in 2002; the highest number of species was 32. The counted individuals were the second lowest in our history.

The number of birds found in the count circle has been declining over the past 5 years. Some of the birds stay all year round and some migrate into the area. A factor that determines birds' winter presence is food. Birds will travel to where they can get food or stay if food is present. The cone crop was good this year and other food is present. Birds usually found but not present on this count day were Redpolls, Pine or Evening Grosbeaks and Northern Shrike. Most of these species remained in their northern range because there was enough food for them to overwinter.

Overall many bird species populations are declining. Our environment is changing for various reasons, some species find it difficult to adapt to the resulting changes and some become extinct. This can occur here, along their migration route or in their wintering grounds.

The reasons for doing the Christmas Bird Count are for enjoyment and to gather scientific information for the Audubon Society and Bird Studies Canada. This accumulated information provides a base to determine changes in bird populations. This helps us know what is going on, leading to what mitigation measures need to be taken, if we are able.

The highlights of the day were Cal Osborne and Sandra Arseneau's barred owl and Gary Martin's northern goshawk.

Thank you to those who took part, your passion is appreciated!



2014 Events

All events meet at the Loudon Entrance,
Hwy 64 1km south of Musky Island Rd.
For information contact: Angela Martin
friendsofmashkinonje@yahoo.ca

Cross the Park Snowshoe

Saturday February 8th,
at 10:00 am

Earth Day Hike

Saturday April 26th, at 10:00 am

AGM and Picnic

Sunday August 16th,
AGM 11 am, picnic noon

Halloween Hike

Saturday November 1st 1-4 pm

Winter World at Mashkinonje

S	E	A	S	N	N	T	N	A	M	R	O	D	C
H	N	S	N	W	E	S	Q	U	I	R	R	E	L
U	R	O	O	H	F	R	E	E	Z	E	U	P	A
S	A	D	W	E	A	S	E	L	I	N	K	C	T
H	E	W	F	P	E	R	K	O	C	W	I	H	R
S	A	C	L	R	A	C	A	V	E	W	K	I	E
S	S	O	A	S	U	C	S	V	A	S	G	C	K
W	U	C	K	B	I	F	K	H	E	R	L	K	C
E	B	O	E	D	E	N	T	E	O	N	E	A	E
A	N	O	T	S	O	O	R	U	L	O	T	D	P
T	I	N	C	R	O	S	S	B	I	L	L	E	D
E	V	I	N	S	U	L	A	T	I	O	N	E	O
R	E	F	O	X	E	S	H	I	V	E	R	I	O
S	A	A	K	T	A	O	C	R	E	T	N	I	W
R	N	G	O	L	D	F	I	N	C	H	L	W	O

WORD

Snowpack

Ice

Grouse

Subnivean

Raven

Insulation

Woodpecker

Chickadee

Owl

Thaw

Crossbill

Kinglet

Foxes

Saw-whet

Weasel

Den

Sweater

Freeze-up

Roost

Cocoon

Shiver

Snowflake

Vole

Squirrel

Winter-coat

Goldfinch

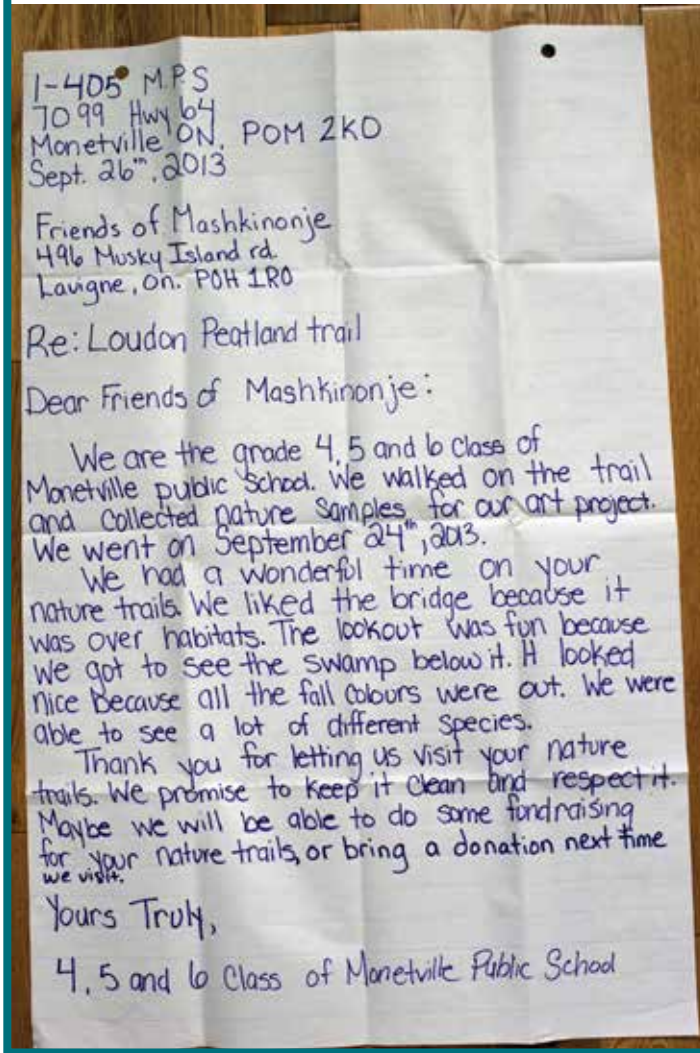
Down

Dormant

Hush

Fur

Special Visitors



Thanks to



Thank you *Ontario Parks* for allowing us to make Mashkinonje an integral part of our life.



Trans Canada Trail
Sentier Transcanadien

Thank you *Daniel D. Longlade, FCA, Collins Barrow* for completing our financial statements and tax return.



The McLean Foundation — grant

Royal Bank of Canada — volunteer program completed by Mary Tallevi

Due North Marketing for hosting our website.

Jay Tee Graphics Ltd.



Thank You Nicole Wilson

Nicole is leaving the Board of the Friends of Mashkinonje to assist her family. Nicole has been our Secretary for 5 years. Nicole has diligently kept our meeting minutes in order and worked at Friends special events. She will be greatly missed. Thank You Nicole.



2013 Donors

Muskrat Marsh \$50

Cathy Armshaw
J Barbeau & Lee Smith
Colleen & Gerard Carriere

Tamarac Swamp \$100

Bayview Excavating
Dan & Cendrine Busch
Don Ferguson & Roberta Kipp
Gail & Dave Geis
Nancy & Andy Kennedy
G J Mechanical
Ted & Grace Price

Cottongrass Fen \$250

Andrew Martin
Saenchiur Flechey

Nature Writers are invited to share their sightings and experiences with nature. Articles have to be from the Mashkinonje area and can be up to half a page. They are subject to the editor's approval, and should be submitted to Angela Martin at friendsofmashkinonje@yahoo.ca.

New Members

J Barbeau & Lee Smith
Anita Bracer
Edith & Jacques Carriere
Scott Chandler & Andrea Sykes
Debra Clarke
Jim & Joy Cuff
Thomas LaDuron
Ron Sully & Elizabeth Gardiner

CONTACT US

We hope you enjoyed our newsletter. To view past editions, visit our website

www.mashkinonje.com

or contact us at:

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2013–14 Board of Directors

President: Angela Martin

Vice President: Dr. Peter Beckett

Secretary:

Treasurer & Membership: Brenda Tunney

Park Liaison: Jeremy Pawson, Ontario
Parks Superintendent

Assistant Park Superintendent:

Leah Campbell

Director Fundraising: Mary Tallevi

Diane Furchner

Thank you for being a Friend

What's New This Winter at Ontario Nature

ON Nature Magazine

Winter has arrived and with it the winter 2013 issue of *ON Nature* magazine. In it you can read about:

- Ontario Nature's efforts to bust the myths surrounding Massasauga rattlesnakes
- Winter camping: how to prepare for it and what to expect
- Intrepid owl enthusiasts who brave winter to seek out these elusive birds
- Four new groups who joined Ontario's Nature Network this year



To read back issues of *ON Nature*, visit www.onnaturemagazine.com.

Ontario Nature Wins \$3,000 for Caribou Film

A big "thank you" to all of our Nature Network friends for helping us win \$3,000 from MEC for the production of a film about the impacts of industrial development in the Brightsand caribou range! MEC Wild Bucks selected our project to compete against 4 other organizations across Canada and your votes secured us second place and \$3,000.

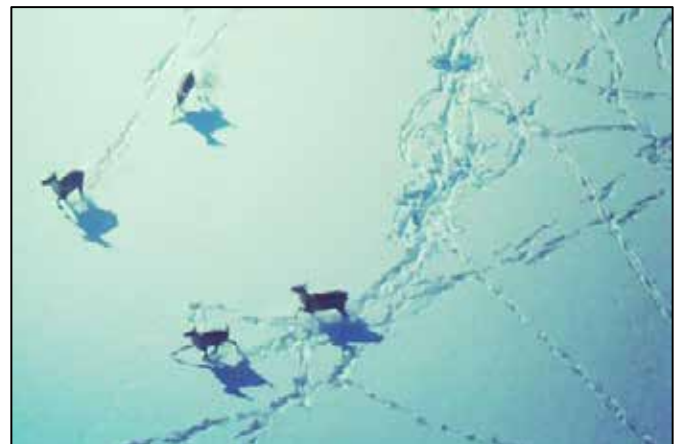
Through our film, we will "speak for the trees" to inspire governments and the forest industry to stop logging in areas used by the woodland caribou. By protecting Ontario's northern wilderness, we will protect the threatened woodland caribou and other vulnerable wildlife that depend on undisturbed, mature boreal forest to survive.

To learn more about the iconic woodland caribou and our efforts to save its habitat, contact Julee Boan at juleeb@ontarionature.org.

Join Ontario Nature today

Ontario Nature takes action every day protecting wild species and wild spaces in every corner of our province – from your backyard to the boreal forest and beyond. But birds, butterflies and badgers are not the heart and soul of our organization. People like you are. Will you join Ontario Nature today, and become a part of our growing conservation success story? For more membership information, please visit www.ontarionature.org/give/membership/index.php.

Woodland Caribou Herd Near St. Raphael Prov. Park – Ian Gillies



Lost Bay Nature Reserve Adds 40 More Hectares

Lost Bay Nature Reserve grew by 100 acres (40 hectares) this fall with the addition of a new parcel of land. This parcel will connect the two existing sections of the reserve. Considered part of the Algonquin to Adirondacks (A2A) Connection because of its location within the Frontenac Axis, Lost Bay Nature Reserve is home to 7 reptiles at risk including the Blanding's turtle and the grey rat snake. To learn more about Ontario Nature's system of nature reserves, contact John Urquhart at johnu@ontarionature.org.



Lost Bay Nature Reserve Shoreline at 2012 AGM – Sylvia Naylor

Identifying Odonates at the 2013 Ontario BioBlitz – Noah Cole



Join the Ontario BioBlitz in 2014

After a highly successful survey of Rouge Park this September, the Ontario BioBlitz is set to become a truly provincial event. In 2014, the Ontario BioBlitz, the largest survey of its kind in the world, will expand to include locations from across the province. From Windsor to Cornwall to Thunder Bay and all points in between, we're keen to have you join us for this one-of-a-kind event. The 2014 BioBlitz is scheduled for the weekend of May 24th-25th, but any bioblitz occurring in late May or early June is eligible to be part of the provincial event. If you'd like to include your group's biological inventory as a part of the 2014 Ontario BioBlitz, contact Lisa Richardson at lisar@ontarionature.org. To learn more about the Ontario BioBlitz and to see the 2013 results, visit www.ontariobioblitz.ca.

Children's Farm & Playbarn – Friends of Bronte Creek Prov. Park



Ontario's Nature Network Continues to Grow

Please join us in welcoming two new groups to our Nature Network, the North Durham Nature Club and the Friends of Bronte Creek Provincial Park. Each group brings with them a dedication to public engagement in nature conservation that will strengthen our efforts to protect the province's wildlife and habitats. To learn more about the community and naturalist groups that make up Ontario's Nature Network, visit http://ontarionature.org/discover/member_groups/member_groups.php.