

Mission

Statement:

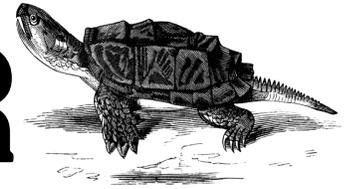
Our mission is to connect youth and families with nature and the outdoors, to raise awareness and appreciation for our natural world, and to foster a strong environmental ethic through community-based education and hands-on activities to improve our local environment



Summer 2013

Volume 5, Issue 2

The SNAPPER



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What did the spider do on the computer?



The made a webste!



Common Whitetail Dragonfly

To learn more about Dragonflies and Damselflies and how you can help protect them, see page 4.

Volunteers needed for Spirit Walk

Want to get involved in an exciting theatre and nature production? **Nature's Calling Environmental Education** is partnering with **Shadowland Theatre** to put on an exciting outdoor theatre production!

Similar in format to last year's **Lion on the Lake in Port Dover, Spirit Walk** is comprised of a series of free workshops over the summer and into September, leading to a production at the St. Williams Forestry Station on a trail on September 26, 27 and 28. Workshops will involve stilt-walking, masks, puppets, including giant ones, lanterns, costume and prop-making, music, acting, training, rehearsals, and more - all led by Shadowland and local artists and environmentalists.

The focus of the project is our relationship with nature. The audience will be taken on a journey through the woods where a story unfolds and they encounter the amazing things we have produced. The production will take place in the early

evening so that we have both daylight and darkness.

We welcome and encourage your participation to join us, contribute your skills and be a part of this exciting and fun project!

Nature's Calling Environmental Education & Shadowland Theatre present

SPIRITWALK

A Celebration of Norfolk's Nature through Theatre

JOIN OUR FREE SUMMER ARTS WORKSHOPS

Puppet, mask & costume making, stilt-walking, acting, music & more!
Help us create a stunning theatrical extravaganza in Norfolk County.

Workshops at The School in St Williams

Suitable for ages 12 to seniors! Please bring a lunch.

July 20 & 21, 10am - 5pm
August 10 & 11, 10am - 5pm
August 12 to 18, 10am - 5pm
September 7 & 8, 10am - 5pm
Rehearsals - September 21 to 25, times TBA

Performances September 26, 27, 28

Find out more!
Contact: 519 410 7376
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www.shadowlandtheatre.ca
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Are you a Hard-boiled Detective?

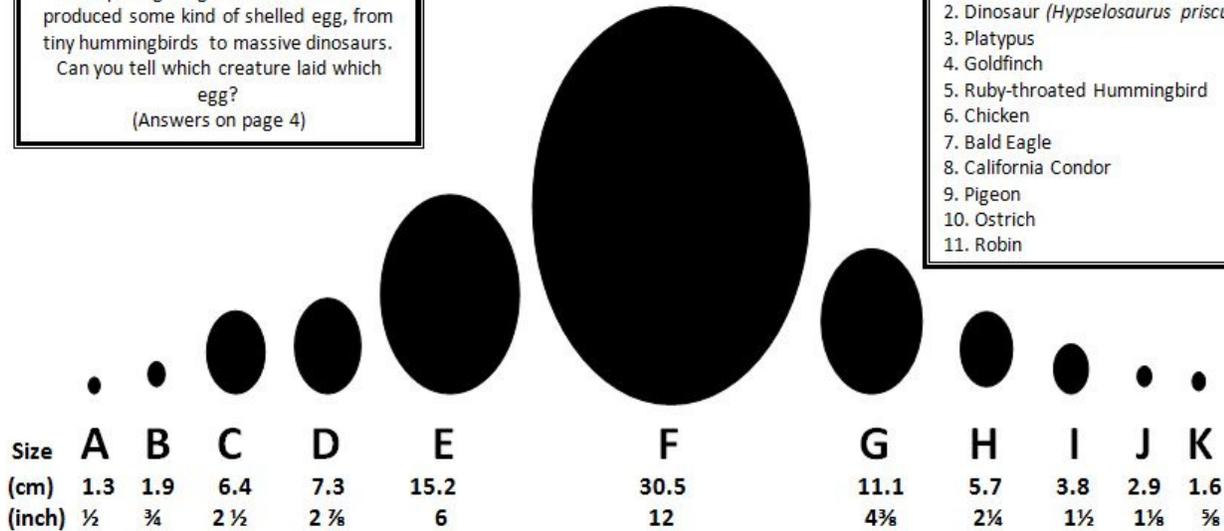
Eggs-tra small to Eggs-tra large

A surprising range of creatures have produced some kind of shelled egg, from tiny hummingbirds to massive dinosaurs. Can you tell which creature laid which egg?

(Answers on page 4)

Egg-laying Creatures

1. Wild Turkey
2. Dinosaur (*Hypselosaurus priscus*)
3. Platypus
4. Goldfinch
5. Ruby-throated Hummingbird
6. Chicken
7. Bald Eagle
8. California Condor
9. Pigeon
10. Ostrich
11. Robin



4th Annual Butterfly and Dragonfly Festival another huge success!

The 4th annual Butterfly and Dragonfly Festival, organized by Nature's Calling Environmental Education, was the most successful yet, attracting an estimated 300 people. Held at Backus Heritage Conservation Area on Sunday, the event included a variety of activities for the whole family.

One of the most popular activities was the opportunity to get close to some live butterflies in a walk-in cage. A wide variety of native butterflies and caterpillars, which had been raised for the festival, were on display and children were thrilled when a butterfly landed on their hands or arms. At the end of the festival, the cage was opened up and all the butterflies were released to fly free.

A "Spread Your Wings" parade led by local musicians "The Ukeheads" gave children an opportunity to show off their wings and other butterfly costumes. A number of crafts and games, as well as storytelling and face painting, kept children entertained throughout the day. Families were also invited to take part in butterfly hunts and pond studies to look for dragonflies. Adults were able to learn about the wide variety of native plants that are available for the garden that will help attract butterflies and other pollinators.

"I have to rate this year's Butterfly & Dragonfly Festival the most successful ever!" said Bernie Solymár, Executive Director of Nature's Calling Environmental Education. "The

activities, the music and storytelling, the parade, and the live butterflies were all obviously much enjoyed by all the families attending."



Cah, cah, cah!

Researchers for the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority found over 200 dead crows near greater Boston recently, and there



was concern that they may have died from Avian Flu. A Bird Pathologist examined the remains of all the crows, and, to everyone's relief, confirmed

the problem was definitely NOT Avian Flu. The cause of death appeared to be vehicular impacts.

However, during the detailed analysis it was noted that varying colors of paints appeared on the bird's beaks and claws. By analyzing these paint residues it was determined that 98% of the crows had been killed by impact with trucks, while only 2% were killed by an impact with a car.

MTA then hired an Ornithological Behaviourist to determine if there was a cause for the disproportionate percentages of truck kills versus car kills.

The Ornithological Behaviourist very quickly concluded the cause: when crows eat road kill, they always have a look-out crow in a nearby tree to warn of impending danger.

The conclusion was that while all the look-out crows could say "Cah", none could say "Truck."



Summer Nature Watch

Photos by Marg Werden



HUMMINGBIRD MOTH

Hemaris thysbe

The Hummingbird Moth is a day-flying insect that is often confused with a Hummingbird because of the way it flies. Hummingbird Moths use a long, thin, needle-like mouthpart called a proboscis to eat. The proboscis stays coiled up like a garden hose until it is time to use it. When the moth approaches a flower, it uncoils its proboscis and dips it deep into the flower where the nectar is.



INDIAN PIPE

Monotropa uniflora

Indian Pipe, also known as "Corpse Plant," is one of the easiest plants to recognize. Unlike most plants, Indian Pipe doesn't have chlorophyll, the stuff that makes plants green. Indian Pipe is a waxy, whitish colour. Indian Pipe grows only four to ten inches tall. It has flowers that droop and tiny, scale-like leaves. When they look at it, most people think Indian Pipe is a fungus.



ROSE-BREADED GROSBEEK

Pheucticus ludovicianus

The male Rose-breasted Grosbeak, boldly patterned in black, white, and rose, is easily identified. The drab, striped female, however, is more of a challenge, resembling a large sparrow or finch. The nest of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak is so thinly constructed that eggs can often be seen from below through the nest. The song is like that of the robin, only lower and more melodic.



CECROPIA SILKMOTH

Hyalophora cecropia

This is North America's largest native moth. Females can have a wingspan as large as 160 mm. The larvae are most commonly found on Maple trees, but they have been known to feed on Wild Cherry and Birch trees among many others. The only function for this moth is to reproduce. As a result, it does not have a functioning digestive system, does not eat and lives for only two weeks.



JEWELWEED or TOUCH-ME-NOT

Impatiens capensis

These bright orange flowers are called jewelweeds because they resemble dangling earrings. The name Touch-me-not comes from the seed pods, which explode when touched and scatter their seeds out in all directions. The mashed leaves of this plant were often applied on the skin to soothe rashes caused by stinging nettle and poison ivy.



GREY TREE FROG

Hyla versicolor

The Gray Tree Frog, as its Latin name suggests, has the chameleon-like ability to change its colour from greenish-gray to gray-black, depending on the colour of what it is sitting on, and becoming darker when the air is cooler. It has a white patch under each eye and is bright yellow-orange under the thighs, which is intended to frighten away predators when the frog jumps away from danger.

How are sand dunes formed?

A hands-on learning activity

What you need:

1. A large flat box with low sides
2. Some dry sand
3. A small fan
4. Some sticks and branches

Sand dunes are formed by wind and you can see how it happens



by spreading some sand evenly over the bottom of a large, flat box. Let the fan blow gently over the surface of the sand and watch how the air moves the particles of sand into small dunes. Move the position of the fan to see what happens. When sand and soil are blown away it is called "wind erosion."

To see how to protect land from wind erosion experiment by "planting" some trees (small branches or leafy weeds) and building some fences (small twigs or popsicle sticks). Turn on the fan again.

You will see that the wind piles the sand into strange shapes and also moves piles of sand from one place to another. You may notice, too, that the fence and shrubs help to keep the sand from blowing away.

The largest sand dunes in Canada are the Athabasca Sand Dunes in north-western Saskatchewan. They consist of a series of dune fields stretching for about 100 km along the south shore of Lake Athabasca. This is the largest active sand surface in Canada and one of the most northern sets of major dune fields in the world.

In Ontario, large sand dunes can be seen at Sandhills Park near Port Burwell and at Sandbanks Provincial park south of Belleville.



NATURE'S CALLING

Our name, Nature's Calling! Environmental Education, symbolizes a call to action to reconnect and embrace the natural world around us.

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Nature's Calling Coming Events

4th ANNUAL BUTTERFLY AND DRAGONFLY FESTIVAL

Backus Heritage Conservation Area
Sunday, July 14: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Bring the whole family to this popular annual festival! See live butterflies and learn more about these beautiful and amazing creatures! Activities and exhibits throughout the day will include a "Spread Your Wings" parade, crafts, games, and guided walks around the pond to search for dragonflies. Come on out to Backus Heritage Conservation Area for all the fun!

DUCK DAY

Long Point Wetlands Research and Education Centre, Turkey Point Road
Sunday, September 22 (tentative)

Be sure to pack up the family and head out to this annual event, hosted by the Long Point Waterfowl. There'll be retriever trials, duck carving demonstrations, vendors and lots more to enjoy. NCEE will be there with all kinds of children's crafts and family hikes.

GREAT CANADIAN SHORELINE CLEANUP & MONARCH TAGGING

Long Point Beach

Sunday, September 21st, 10am

In the morning roll up your sleeves and lend a hand cleaning up the beaches of Long Point. The TD Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup is a national conservation initiative that allows all Canadians to have a positive impact on their local environment. In the afternoon join us and learn about the annual Monarch Butterfly migration and learn to tag these beautiful butterflies so scientists can better track their trip to sunny Mexico. Meet at the parking lot across from the Causeway restaurant. Bring a bagged lunch.

SPIRIT WALK

St. Williams Forestry Station Trail

September 26, 27, and 28

See page 1 for more details. Tickets are available from Lighthouse Festival Theatre. Call 1-519-583-2221 or 1-888-779-7703 or online at www.lighthousefestivaltheatre.com. Free hot chocolate and apple cider donuts after each performance!

Damsels and dragons are not just found in fairy tales!

Dragonflies have a long history on earth. While dinosaurs roamed the earth about 200 million years ago, ancestors of present-day dragonflies were darting around 100 million years before that time. Fossilized remains of these pre-historic insects show that they had wingspans of up to 65 cm (26 in) and were probably the largest insect to have ever lived on earth.

Adult dragonflies and damselflies make a tasty treat for birds, spiders and frogs. The larvae are eaten by frogs, toads, newts, fish and birds. However, one of the main threats to these insects is human activity. Because the *Odonata* (the insect order to which dragonflies and damselflies belong) larvae can only live in oxygen-rich and unpolluted water, pollution and changes to their habitat can have an effect on their populations. In fact, dragonflies are frequently used to assess environmental health because they are so sensitive to water and habitat quality.

Loss of habitat when wetlands are drained to create farmland or a new suburb is contributing to a decline in the population of some dragonflies and damselflies. Although insects have never been studied to the same extent as more charismatic species (mammals and birds), a limited study conducted a few years ago indicated that at least ten per cent of dragonfly and damselfly species were threatened.

Dragonflies and damselflies share some characteristics, including membranous wings, large eyes, slender bodies, and small antennae, but there are clear differences between the two sub-orders. The most obvious differences are in their eyes, body shape and wings. Dragonfly eyes are located at the top of their head and either touch each other or nearly touch, while damselfly eyes are located to each side of the head. While dragonfly bodies are usually stocky with two dissimilar wing pairs, the hind one of which is broader at the base, damselflies are long and slender with two wing pairs similar in shape. The wings of the dragonfly are held horizontally or downwards when at rest, but

damselflies hold their wings closed over their abdomen.

Aeronautical engineers have studied dragonflies because of their flying abilities, unique to the insect world. Dragonflies are like small helicopters – they can hover, they can fly sideways and backwards, they can even fly upside down, and they can reach speeds of more than 65 kph.

Both dragonflies and damselflies begin life in the water as nymphs. They hatch in the spring and eat a variety of aquatic insects including mosquito larvae. In the late summer or early autumn, the nymphs emerge from the water, shed their exoskeletons and continue as adults.

Adult dragonflies have a series of barbs along their six legs, which they use to scoop mosquitoes and other flying insects out of the air, consuming large numbers of these insects every day. To encourage these insects we need to preserve our wetlands and reduce the use of pesticides and fertilizers that can pollute our waters. With more dragonflies and damselflies in the air, hopefully the mosquito population will decrease.

Answers to Egg Puzzle on page 2

A-5, B-3, C-1, D-7, E-10, F-2, G-8, H-6, I-9, J-11, K-4

Nature's Calling! Environmental Education is an incorporated not-for-profit organization.

Donations to support our work are gratefully accepted.

Our Partners

Norfolk Field Naturalists, Long Point Basin Land Trust, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, Bird Studies Canada, Pt. Rowan/South Walsingham Heritage Association, St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre, Acorus Restoration, Long Point Waterfowl, Shadowland Theatre, Scales Nature Park, Comfort Inn - Simcoe.