

Mission Statement:

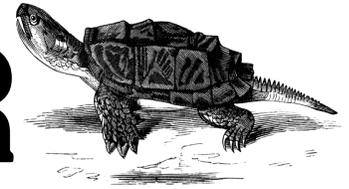
Our mission is to connect youth and families with nature and the outdoors, to raise awareness and appreciation for our natural world, and to foster a strong environmental ethic through community-based education and hands-on activities to improve our local environment.



Summer 2014

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The SNAPPER



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Mother Nature in Living Colour

Let nature be your teacher. Every time you go outside, look for something new to learn.



Here are three activities that children of all ages can enjoy. The next time you go on a hike or to the beach, pick up a few flat ladybug-shaped



stones. Then, using red, black and white paint, make ladybugs of all sizes for your garden. Did you know that ladybugs have been in space! In 1999, NASA sent a few ladybugs into space along with aphids to see how the aphids could escape their predators in zero gravity.

The second activity is a nature colour hunt. Use an egg carton, ice cube tray or any other divided container and put a different colour of construction paper or foam from the craft section into the bottom of each section. Then go for a hike in the backyard, at the beach, or in the woods, and see what you can find that most

closely matches the colour in each section. Put on some old clothes and get out some small paint brushes or small rollers to make garden flags using leaves and fabric paint. Cut small rectangles of light-coloured cloth, sew a pocket in one side for hanging, and then collect leaves of various shapes and sizes. Use a paint roller to paint the back of the leaves and then press them onto the fabric by placing the painted side down on the fabric, covering with a piece of newspaper, and then pressing down evenly to transfer the paint. Allow to dry and then hang.



Some cuts are good for wildlife

Riddle Me!

- Q: What do you call two dandelions that just got married?
A: Newlyweeds
- Q: If you are going on a long hike in the desert what should you carry?
A: A thirst aid kit

Did You Know?

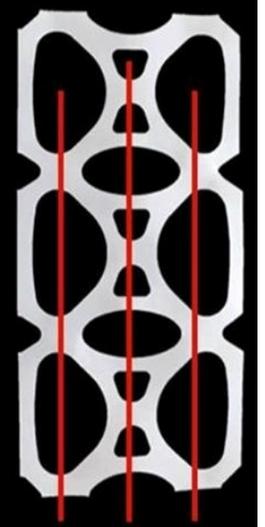
Butterflies DO NOT form cocoons, no matter what *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* says! They form a chrysalis. Many moths form cocoons, but not all of them. Some pupate underground instead. These caterpillars burrow into the soil or leaf litter, molt to form their pupa, and remain underground until the moth emerges.

In general, cuts to spending and services are never good for the environment. However, there are a few cuts that should be increased so that we can save wildlife.

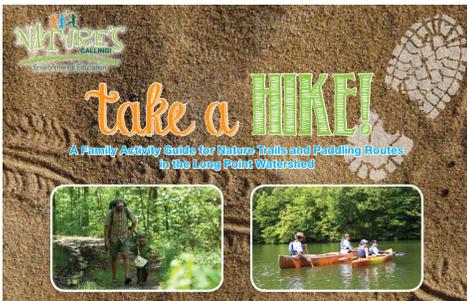
Just like all other garbage, six-pack rings should be disposed of properly in a secure garbage can. But before getting rid of them, cutting through all the openings will ensure that even if they do find their way into the wilderness, they won't cause problems for animals. Other small plastic items that need to be cut up before disposing of them include the small rings or collars that are found on plastic milk or juice jugs. Those rings are just the right size to strangle some of our smaller wildlife.

Even more dangerous than these items, however, is discarded fishing gear, especially the monofilament fishing line, fishhooks, and lures. If your fishing line gets stuck in a tree or bush, remove it. Don't just cut it and leave it for wildlife to become entangled in. Marine mammals, turtles, fish and birds become injured from entanglements, or might ingest the line, often dying as a result.

3 Cuts Can Stop This



Take a Hike!



Nature's Calling Environmental Education has produced the publication, *Take a Hike! A Family Activity Guide for Nature Trails and Paddling Routes in the Long Point Watershed*. This fun and educational booklet provides you and your family with a map and descriptions of 12 of our favourite nature trails and 4 of the best paddles in our watershed. The guide is also chock full of interesting facts and information, and provides you with ideas for family-focused activities while on your outing.

In his seminal book, *Last Child in the Woods*, author Richard Louv coined the term 'nature deficit disorder' to describe the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation. The book's message is simple – people that spend time outdoors tend to be healthier and happier. We support this philosophy and are dedicated to providing opportunities for our community to enjoy nature through outdoor activities and learning.

Download a copy of the guide at www.naturescalling.ca or email us at info@naturescalling.ca for a hard copy.

Growing Butterflies

Q: What is the connection between parsley and dill and Eastern Black Swallowtails?

A: Plants in the carrot family (Apiaceae), including parsley, dill, wild parsnip, and Queen Anne's lace, are the host plants for this butterfly's caterpillar.

This caterpillar may be considered a pest if it demolishes an entire crop, but hold the insecticide! Watching it develop from the egg through several instars to a fat caterpillar that forms a chrysalis and finally emerges as a beautiful butterfly can be a wonderful learning experience for kids of all ages! Swallowtail females typically lay only one



Looking for a unique and unforgettable outdoor theatre experience this summer and fall?
SPIRITWALK returns to your community...



FREE

Outdoor Theatre Workshops & Public Performances

July 19-20
August 9-10
August 23-24
September 6-7
The School, St. Williams

Recruiting now for youth participants for workshops and performances for ages 12 - 19. Also adult community members, educators & parents.

- A series of FREE day-long workshops throughout the summer
- Still-walking, big puppet, mask and costume making, acting, music and visual arts with professional artists
- Learn new skills and techniques with other young people
- Explore the local environment, species at risk, flora and fauna with environmental educators
- Be part of the performance at St. Williams Forestry Trail in September
- Get community service hours!

EVERYONE WELCOME!
No previous experience necessary

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egg on a leaf. When a butterfly or moth larva (also known as a caterpillar) first hatches from its egg, it is very small! This young caterpillar is referred to as a FIRST INSTAR caterpillar. A caterpillar has only one job: to eat! Between instars the caterpillar molts and changes colour and, after the 5th instar, forms a chrysalis.

The chrysalis is not a "resting" stage as many people think. The body of the caterpillar is transforming into an adult butterfly! Wings are fully formed in the chrysalis. Antennae are formed and the chewing mouthparts of the caterpillar are transformed into the sucking mouthparts of the butterfly.

After approximately 10 to 14 days as a chrysalis, the butterfly is ready to emerge. When the butterfly emerges from its chrysalis, its wings are small and wet, and the butterfly cannot yet fly. The butterfly must pump fluids from its abdomen through the veins in its wings, which causes the wings to expand to their full size.

If you want to watch a caterpillar turn into a butterfly, be sure to keep it supplied with LOTS of food, a branch from which to hang in its chrysalis, shade and lots of fresh air. Jars do NOT work for this. A proper butterfly cage (google it!) is the only way to keep the caterpillars safe and happy.

Have fun!





Summer Nature Watch - Dragons and Damsels

Birding has long been a popular past-time of nature lovers, with some being so passionate about their hobby that they maintain life lists. Butterfly watching has also gained a lot of interest in recent years..and now there is another option - dragonfly hunting!

Ontario is home to over 150 species of Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies), many of which are common here in southern Ontario. Many odonates can be identified with a field guide and a good pair of binoculars.

A decent camera with a zoom lens also allows later identification using some excellent on-line resources. (Note: NCEE has copies of The Dragonflies and Damselflies of Southern Ontario for sale at \$10. This a great introductory guide to our most common odonates. Contact us to purchase a copy.)

Dragonflies and damselflies can be found wherever there is water nearby. Many prefer ponds and small lakes, while others can be found along streams and rivers. They are aerial predators - catching other insects while deftly manoeuvring in midflight like a hawk chasing small birds. The best identification opportunities, however, are when they are perching on lily pads or other vegetation that overhangs water.

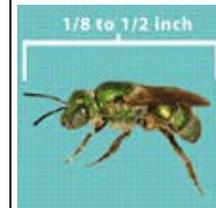
Like all insects, "dragons" and "damsels" have six legs and a body divided into head, thorax and abdomen. As a rule of thumb, damselflies are mostly small and slender, resting with their wings folded along the body, while the larger, more robust dragonflies always hold their wings roughly perpendicular to their body.

To get you started, below are some of the most common species found in our area.



Sweat Bees

The most common type of bees in the Northern Hemisphere are the Halictidae species, also known as sweat bees. These are drawn to salt in animals and human sweat and are often mistaken for wasps or flies. The salt in your perspiration is a delicacy for sweat bees, and they are generally trying to satisfy their cravings without an intent to harm.



Although they are irritating creatures that fly around and constantly try to get to your skin during hot, summer days, these insects play an important role in pollination. They feed on flower nectar. They gather pollen to feed their young and can carry large amounts using their hairy hind legs.

The bees visit a variety of flowers. Therefore, pesticides are not recommended for controlling these insects, as they are extremely beneficial to agriculture. If your garden has been invaded, you can simply cast them out by pouring water over the ground. Sweat bees hate water and will fly off to a different location.

Because they do not live in large colonies, sweat bees are less defensive than honey bees or wasps. While they are drawn to perspiration, they often lay down on your skin and can be squeezed by accident, often causing them to sting in defence. The sting is considered almost painless and does not become inflamed. However, people who are allergic to insect stings should see a doctor immediately. Only provoked females sting.



Lilypad Clubtail (Photo by Teija Kovanen)



Ruby Meadowhawk (Photo by Teija Kovanen)



Widow Skimmer (Photo by Bernie Solymár)



Bluet (Photo by Teija Kovanen)



Common Whitetail (Web photo)



Eastern Pondhawk (Web photo)



Ebony Jewelwing (Web photo)



Green Darner (Web photo)



NATURE'S

Nature's Calling Coming Events

5th ANNUAL BUTTERFLY AND DRAGONFLY FESTIVAL

Backus Heritage Conservation Area

Sunday, July 13th, 10 a.m. - 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, live butterfly cage, crafts, games, local musicians and guided hikes to look for butterflies and dragonflies. Come on out to Backus Heritage Conservation Area for all the fun! Cost is \$13 per vehicle.

NOCTURNAL SAFARI: BACKUS WOODS AT NIGHT

Backus Woods, 3rd Concession entrance

Saturday, August 30th, 7:30 p.m.

Enjoy the sights and sounds of animals that become active at night during this cool hike in Backus Woods. Bernie will call for owls, identify the songs of crickets and katydids, and attract late summer moths using light traps and baits. There will also be some awesome night games for everyone. Bring a flashlight!

GREAT CANADIAN SHORELINE CLEANUP & MONARCH TAGGING

Long Point Beach

Saturday, September 20th, 10 a.m.

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. Following a lunch on the beach, join Terri in learning about the annual Monarch Butterfly migration and see how biologists tag these beautiful butterflies to better track their trip to sunny Mexico. Meet at the parking lot across from the Causeway restaurant. Bring a bagged lunch and water.

Visit us at DUCK DAY

LPW Research and Education Centre, 546 Turkey Point Rd. (south of Hwy. 24)

Sunday, September 21st, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Be sure to pack up the family and head out to this annual event, hosted by 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.

SPIRIT WALK 2

St. Williams Forestry Interpretive Centre

Thursday, September 25th; Friday September 26th and Saturday, September 27th, 7 p.m.

Join us on a spectacular theatrical journey celebrating Norfolk County's nature. Stilt-walkers, masks, music, animal and human puppets, and beautiful lanterns will light up the woodlands in a fun, highly-sensory and full-of-surprises production. The event is created by local artists and community members working together with Shadowland Theatre from Toronto Island.

CHRISTMAS CRAFTS FROM NATURE

St. Williams Forestry Interpretive Centre

Saturday, December 6th, 1 to 4 p.m.

Let your creative side shine as you use the natural world to inspire your child's imagination and creativity. Kids will re-ignite their inner nature spirit and express themselves in making nature-inspired Christmas crafts. Time will be spent outdoors searching for the perfect items to create a holiday decoration to be treasured forever! Registration fee of \$10/child (includes craft materials and hot chocolate).

NOTE TO TEACHERS

Nature's Calling Environmental Education provides nature and environmental education programming to local schools in Norfolk, Brant, and Haldimand Counties. Our goal is to foster an appreciation and respect for nature and the environment, while engaging youth in environmental experiences. Our interactive programs are designed to meet learning expectations outlined in the Ontario Science and Technology Curriculum, as well as the Language and Geography strands. Each program comes with a resource package, which is filled with pre- and post-program related classroom activities. Each one-hour program is presented on a single class basis at \$75* per program. Multiple-class presentations are available on request. Request your own copy of our Ontario curriculum-based programming, "lessons in a Backpack" and "Nature in the Classroom," by contacting us at 519-410-7376 or info@naturecalling.ca. For more information about available programs, visit our website.

*Note: an additional mileage fee may be charged for schools more than 20 km from Simcoe.

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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Chris Bowyer (Nature Crafts Organizer)
Sally Gable (Art & Nature Instructor)
Terri Groh (Shoreline Clean-up Coordinator, Nature Hike Interpreter)
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Debbie Solymár (B & D Festival Coordinator)
Julie Stone (Spirit Walk Coordinator)
Marg Werden (Editor, The Snapper)

Nature's Calling! Environmental Education is an incorporated not-for-profit organization. Donations to support our work are gratefully accepted.