

Greenleaves

Newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association

SUMMER 2017



www.bgwa.ca

President's Message

Chris VanderHout



Members,

Summer has come to an end and as I write this, approaching fall, we are getting the warmest weather this year. We had a cool wet year so no trees were looking for water. The forests stayed green and lush and wild plants took over open areas. That made it difficult to get through without a machete in hand. The most memorable night was when 6-7" of rain fell in a few hours. The South Saugeen River was higher than most people had seen in their lifetime. Certainly the landscape around the river changed dramatically and many shoreline plants had to start anew as being underwater so late in their growth cycle had them dying back. It is always amazing to see the power of water at work.

The board of directors had one meeting since the last newsletter. During it we finalized details for our recent annual barbecue and the Aldo Leopold movie night and set a date for an upcoming Treevia (tree trivia) get-together. As well we outlined a couple of events to set up our display this fall. As always the information about the events comes most easily to members who subscribed to the website. For those who do not have good access to the internet, we continue to do mail-outs. Stay tuned and let us know if there is something in particular you would like to see happen that might help support our vision better.

(Continued on page 2)

ANOTHER MAJOR MEMBER EVENT SAT OCT 14

See inside back page for details on this event featuring a screening of an award-winning documentary and guest speakers on legendary conservation thinker Aldo Leopold.

Preferred Registration, for members only, starts Monday September 25th, online at www.bgwa.ca

Members without internet access can register by calling 519-371-8465

*How about hosting a
member tour of your
woodlands?!?*

Contact Kevin Predon
519-270-0748

*Next Board Meeting
Oct 18, 7-9pm
Saugeen Conservation
in Formosa*

*first-ever
Tree-via Night!
Maclean's Brewery
November 18th*

GREENLEAVES

is the member newsletter of the Bruce Grey Woodlands Association, published quarterly and distributed to current BGWA members. Submissions are always welcomed on any topic related to BGWA's vision:

Promoting healthy forests and ecosystems in Bruce and Grey Counties through education, recreation and sustainable management practices.

Information, opinions, and directions in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect BGWA advice or policy.

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(President's Message, from page 1)

I want to give out special thanks to Kevin Predon and Cam Bennett who have been stars in commitment to our organization. They have been working with the events committee to put-out a great line of activities with the upcoming movie night being particularly exciting. I know I speak for the whole membership when I say thank you so much for your hard work!

We recently had our annual barbeque which was extremely enjoyable. Thanks to Fred Geberdt from the Sydenham Sportsmen's Association who led an excellent tour of spawning

channels located very close to the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority office where the picnic was held. It was very inspirational to see the results of a volunteer organization's efforts over the years and the positive impact they have made for fish from the Great Lakes. The work is a true example of stewardship and parallels the objectives of our own organization in the area of promoting healthy ecosystems. A good time was had by all, sharing food and stories. It was great to see many of you and I look forward to seeing more of you at upcoming events.

Wishing you all well,

Sincerely,

Chris VanderHout

Editor's Comments

Malcolm Silver

In my last comments about vegetation in the Azores I forgot to mention that the islands are plagued by a fast-spreading, invasive Australian native, the Australian Cheesewood (*Pittosporum undulatum*) an evergreen tree, to 25 m with simple, lanceolate, pointed, highly aromatic, leaves having undulate margins. Its flowers have white petals & the fruit is an orange, obovoid, capsule. It escaped ornamental gardens and is dominant on all islands, from 50 to 650 m.

You will see I have written little in this edition, due to volunteers and Neil Baldwin's persuasive powers. I am delighted by member's/contributor's interest in the Newsletter and thank them for their efforts. Nevertheless, they may consider me an invasive Australian

native in my harrowing, to get items in, on time for publication.

Now for something entirely different; whisky is a chemically complicated beverage. After malting, mashing, fermentation, distillation and maturing, for at least three years in oak barrels, the fluid is usually diluted to around 40% of alcohol by volume by the addition of water. Whisky enthusiasts often add a little water in their glasses. Until recently, no one knew why but now researchers in chemistry at Linnaeus University have answered a piece of the puzzle. .

Whiskey's taste is primarily linked to so-called amphipathic molecules, made-up of hydrophobic & hydrophilic parts. One is guaiacol, which develops when the grain is dried over peat smoke when mak-

(Editor's Comments, continued from page 2)

ing malt whisky and provides its smoky flavor. The scientists found that guaiacol was preferentially associated with ethanol molecules and that in mixtures with concentrations of ethanol up to 45% guaiacol was more likely to be present at the liquid/air interface than in the bulk of the liquid. This suggests that, in a glass, guaiacol will be found near the surface of the liquid, where it contributes to both the smell and taste of the spirit. Interestingly, a continued dilution down to 27% resulted in an increase of guaiacol at the liquid/air interface. An increased percentage, over 59%, had the opposite effect; the ethanol interacted more strongly with the guaiacol, driving the molecule into the solution away from the surface. Combined, these findings suggest that the taste & aroma of guaiacol and similar compounds in whisky are enhanced

when the spirit is diluted prior to bottling & this taste may be more pronounced on further dilution in the glass. So what is the optimal number of water drops to put in your whisky? How we experience taste and aroma is highly individual. Some people choose to add ice cubes to their whisky, to cool it & give it a milder taste. There is no general answer to how much water you should add to get the best taste experience.

REF. ScienceDaily.. <www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/08/170818093614.htm>.

This year is the diamond jubilee of my graduation from Medical School in Australia. I will leave in October for there & New Zealand to greet the diminishing band of brother graduates who survive (sadly all sister graduates have gone) & to birdwatch on the N-E Australian coast and in Papua New Guinea. Perhaps I will have something to write about their native forests in the next edition.

Ask a Forester: Is Tree-Topping Bad?

By Kevin Predon, BGWA Director

As the County Forester, I often have people ask me questions. Apparently, they think that I know things and, to maintain that illusion, I try my best to give a reasonably well-thought-out answer. An example of this recently occurred when a property owner in Bruce County asked me *is tree topping is considered a good practice?* I am not an arborist, so I really wanted to just say "NO" and leave it at that, but I remembered that I have a façade to maintain. Therefore, I needed to do some research, so I could learn the scientifically valid reasons why tree topping is bad. Now that I have become enlightened, I will share my newfound knowledge with all of you. Oh! And if anyone is not familiar with what "tree topping" is, it can be roughly defined as the removal of the majority of

the uppermost limbs of a shade tree, typically resulting in a drastic reduction in height and canopy size.

According to Kaiser et al. from the journal article "Warning: Topping is hazardous to your tree's health" (Arboric 12(2):50-52 1999) there are four main reasons why tree topping is a bad idea. 1) The reduction in leaf surface results in a lower food supply to the roots and the rest of the tree; 2) exposing the bark on the interior limbs to direct sunlight can result in scalding; 3) truncating limbs will result in an abundance of weakly attached epicormics that will become dangerous over time, and 4) the creation of limb stubs causes the exposed wood to become vulnerable to vectors of disease and decay.

There are many reasons why people may want to top their trees, but none is a good enough to butcher a perfectly good tree. A common reason is that sometimes people would

like to have a nice view from their house but there is a tree in the way. Thus, they want to cut half of it off. I think that in that circumstance, the best practice would be to either enjoy the tree as is, or cut it down entirely and plant a different species that will not grow as tall in its place. Another reason why someone might want to top a tree is that they think that it is too tall and it might fall on their house. Now, if this is truly a safety issue, the ONLY way to 100% eliminate the risk is to remove the tree entirely. Topping in this situation would just create a different type of hazard, in addition to drastically reducing the property's aesthetics. Again, the solution should be to live with the tree as it is or to remove it and replant with a shorter species. However, please do not confuse tree topping with pruning, which can be a very useful tool in maintaining the overall health of a tree when done carefully and properly.



Forest Camp

By Chris VanderHout, BGWA President

This summer in my commitment to being an engaged father, I decided to take a day off each week to be home with our 6 year old son Mola. In exchange for taking Mola for some other week days, I also offered to look-after our friends' 2 children as well. Tyson and Farrah are close to age with Mola and they all get along well, so it seemed like a good idea. So what to do for that day with 3 children? I have recently been intrigued with the concept of Forest Schools. In Wikipedia, Forest School is defined as *an inspirational process that offers children, young people and adults regular opportunities to achieve and develop confidence through hands-on learning in a woodland environment*. Love it.

So from this came the idea of Forest Camp. I figured we would make camp somewhere in our forest and build a shelter/fort or something to keep the kids engaged and have some fun. The process was inspiring.

I started them off with paper and markers and we drew some pictures of what our Camp could look like. No real parameters and just for fun and to get some imagination flowing.



I knew the area roughly where I wanted to set up camp, and we next ventured out with pruning saws, and with axe to find the right spot and prepare it. So we cleared some small saplings, trimmed some overhanging branches, made a fire pit and camp started to take shape. The thing that I really noticed was how the kids seemed to change when we went into the forest. If there were any little squabbles going on they disappeared as we started to walk down the path. It felt healing in so many ways.



After we got some of our tasks done and the kids were playing freely, I would sit peacefully and watch them. They would play with sticks, doing axing, building their own little stick forts and imagining. Of course the fire pit was a big attraction as the 2 boys exclaimed that they were fire scientists. Burning some of the hemlock branches that we had trimmed as that was called *crackle* like some name brand fire starter.



(Continued on page 5)

(Forest Camp, from page 4)



For the structure we ended up building a teepee. I'd never made one before and it seemed like a logical fit and fairly simple to construct. There was a section of the forest where maples had out grown and shaded-out a stand of cedar trees. We used those dead cedars for teepee poles. I cut them down and the kids used an axe to trim the branches. In short order we had nice long poles and propped them up against each other to form the frame.



We purchased a canvas tarp to skin the frame and after watching a few you-tube videos, we laid out a pattern on the shop floor and cut-out the shape we needed.

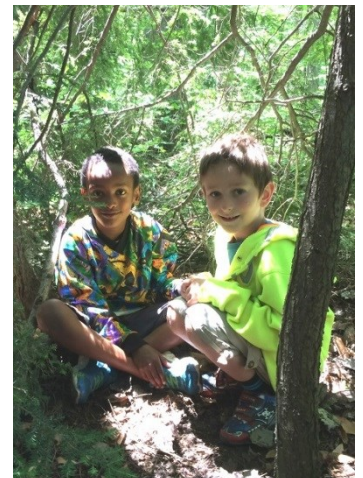
Working together we were able to get the tarp on the structure and it worked well.



The teepee appears to be very solid and I am optimistic that it will last for many years. Regardless of how long it does, I am confident that the experience of Forest Camp has created a long lasting memory for 3 little kids and an opportunity to have fun in the forest as children were meant to.



I look forward to more adventures with the kids in the forest and the future possibilities of Forest Camp. Creating a connection with children and nature is an important step towards building a future where humans respect and look after the world around us. Weaving in my little piece of that has been a rich experience in so many ways.



BGWA Event Report:

GUIDED BIRD HIKE, JULY 22, 2017

By Sandy Bunker, BGWA Director

Full marks to Cam Bennett for such a successful outing! There were about 30 participants who toured the GSCA arboretum in search of birds. Erik Van Den Kieboom as tour leader was exceptional! A youth, Erik was patient, extremely knowledgeable, and approachable.

The "threatening rain" weather may have diminished the insect activity for bird feeding, but there were still bird songs (chipping sparrows, song sparrows, red eyed vireo, robin, red-wing blackbirds, cardinals) and

bird flights (mourning doves, gulls, blackbirds, vultures, ravens, goldfinches, tree and barn swallows) to attract attention. A red breasted grosbeak made brief appearances, and a wood thrush may have made a cameo appearance. Erik's knowledge of the natural history seemed complete, explaining the nasty habits of the Carolina Wren, which was initiated after viewing some swallow nestlings in a bird box.

An important observation: The birds really appreciated the dead trees. A recent featured speaker at an Ontario Arborist meeting was extolling the virtues of dead trees in the environment as extremely beneficial to birds for nesting and food. Mistakenly some woodland owners consider a dead tree a sign of neglect/poor management.

News & New Science

Malcom Silver

Ontario promises more funding for tree planting program

Toronto August 31, 2017. The Ontario government has pledged additional funding for the 50 Million Tree Program through the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account Initiative. This increased support continues its drive toward healthy, abundant, and sustainably-managed forests across Ontario.

Fungal spore 'death clouds' key in gypsy moth fight:

This report studied the fungal pathogen (*Entomophaga maimaiga*) which first appeared in New England in 1989 and only infects gypsy moths. Its pollen-sized spores stick to caterpillars when they walk over them. Once attached, a spore uses enzymes to create a hole and enter the caterpillar's body, where a cloaking mechanism allows it to remain undetected by the larva's defenses. Over four to six days, the fungus multiplies and then kills the

host, after which new spores are literally shot from the cadaver into the air, where they become wind-borne. From May through June, when gypsy moth caterpillars are feeding and before they pupate, the fungal pathogen can run through up to nine infection cycles, while the numbers of infections increase dramatically. During the study, researchers found the peak caterpillar death rate due to *E. maimaiga* reached 86% within the week.

Researchers designed a trap for whatever was falling in the air. A cup at its bottom contained a buffer that preserved each spore's DNA. In the lab, the trap contents were filtered for pollen-sized particles, and then the amount of *E. maimaiga* DNA in each sample was measured using quantitative PCR. They found a correlation where, if the trap was closer to a defoliated area, it had more spores, and further away it had fewer spores. They even detected spores in a trap 70 km from a defoliated area.

Ref. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/08/170830124930.htm

A timely reminder. How to remove a tick and prevent future bites

As tick populations grow and spread across the country, their prevalence is increasing the public's risk for some troubling diseases. Of these diseases, say dermatologists, Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Powassan virus and alpha-gal syndrome -- a mysterious red meat allergy -- are among the most serious.

Ref. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/09/170901125102.htm

Earthworms at the root of sugar maple decline

Non-native worms are eating-up the forest floor, causing sugar maples to die back and perhaps harming other forest dwellers.

Ref. www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/09/170901125102.htm



UPDATE: Our Tree-o-Caching event is ongoing! Prize draw, amongst all members having found all 5 geocaches, for a Leatherman multi-tool, to be held at AGM. See www.bgwa.ca for contest details.

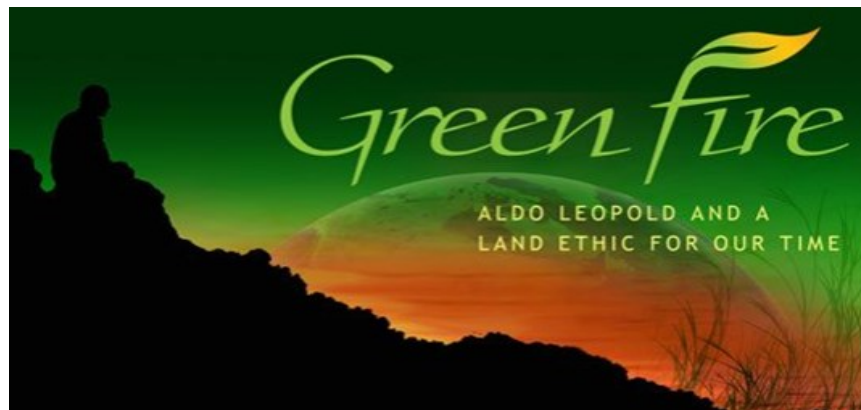
BGWA PRESENTS:

An Afternoon About Aldo Leopold

Movie Screening ♦ Eminent Speakers ♦ Refreshments

Saturday, October 14, 1-4 PM

Bruce County Museum theatre, Southampton



The first ever full-length documentary film about legendary conservation thinker Aldo Leopold, **GREEN FIRE** explores his extraordinary career and enduring influence, tracing how he shaped the modern conservation movement and continues to inspire projects all over the country that connect people and the land.

TICKETS

One free ticket per BGWA membership

+ up to 3 companion tickets @ \$5

Preferred registration for BGWA

members starts Monday SEP 25

General Public/non-members \$10

starting Monday OCT 2

register/purchase online www.bgwa.ca

ERIC DAVIES has spent the past 20 years studying natural history, ecology, conservation and forestry at Fleming College (Ecosystem Management), Trent University (BSc: Ecology), Simon Fraser University (MSc: Ecology), and University of Toronto (PhD: Forestry). He has a tremendous love for nature, and is dedicated to helping find, protect, and restore the landscapes and biodiversity of Ontario. Growing up next to the Saugeen First Nation in Southampton and the country sides of Grey, Bruce and Wentworth Counties, he has also developed has a deep appreciation for the traditional knowledge of indigenous people and farmers.



DOUG LARSON retired from the University of Guelph seven years ago after a 35 year teaching and research career. He is best known for the discovery of the ancient forests of the Niagara Escarpment. Four books and 130 research papers formed the core of the academic career. While not conducting research, Doug was heavily involved with woodworking, instrument building, songwriting, and recording. Five albums with Kid Coma (see iTunes for Complete Metamorphosis) were recorded over 8 years, and the material in those records covered many environmental and political topics including homage to Aldo Leopold. Most recently Doug has recorded an album (Things that need to be said, see www.larsonknox.com) with Steve Knox of the Kramdens. Doug's best known post-retirement project was the building of the Storyteller Guitar and the writing of a book of the same name (Dundurn, 2011). Seven other history-based guitar-building projects have been completed recently including three telling the story of the rediscovery the Dawn Redwood, one using wood from the 107 year history of Knight Lumber Inc. of Guelph, and three testing the incorporation into instrument building of the much-hated Common Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*).

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Ron Stewart

* lead hand

You don't have to be a Board member to get involved. Contact any member of a committee you might like to help with or learn about!

Meet Your Board: SANDY BUNKER

"The Bruce" had beckoned for years. After spending my formative years in rural Huron County and Guelph, and then various family and agricultural involvements in Lambton County for thirty years, Sylvia and I made the move to Car-rick Township ten years ago as "empty nesters". Hard-wood woodlots, with real hard maple, creeks, and a fif-teen year old coniferous plantation awaited us. This was a change from the windbreaks, ash, oak, and hickory hardwoods of Lambton. The imminent arrival of the ash borer spurred us to harvest some Lambton ash, mill it, and utilize it in board and batten construction, and house trim at our new location. Windbreaks, and more planta-tions, have appeared to utilize and protect slopes and ran-dom field shapes. Some fields have even been put to "the best use" - mixed plantations. The adage that the more you learn, the more you realize you don't know is an apt description of involvement with both our own woodlots and the Woodlands Association. Understanding interac-tions between flora and fauna, and their complex and var-ied natural environment continues to be a rewarding puz-zle. I appreciate those opportunities.



Meet Your Board: CAM BENNETT

I grew up in the small town of Hagersville in southern Ontario. After graduating from Fleming College I started working for Lands and Forests Con-sulting out of Desboro. My first job in this area was timber cruising forests of Bruce County's Lind-say Tract. A very green forest technician wander-ing alone in the bush trying not to spook a bear or step on a rattlesnake. After a few great years with Lands and Forests I moved on to Grey Sau-ble Conservation Authority. Here I have had the incredible opportunity to work in some of the most beautiful forests in Ontario. At Grey Sauble I get to do all the things that any forest techni-cian would dream of. From tree planting to tree marking and all the things between. One of my favourite parts of the job is meeting landowners and seeing how passionate people are about their own forests. I am on the events committee for the BGWA so if you have any ideas for activi-ties please let me know.

