



CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG

OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION • FEBRUARY 2018

President's Message

from

Reid Kilburn



Happy New Year and all the Best in 2018!

We enjoy winters on the lake, well for the most part. We are staying warm these days by making more frequent trips to the bird feeders! It seems like we have more birds at our feeders now than we counted around the lake in the annual December bird count. If you are curious as to approximately how many birds that might be, check out the related annual bird count article in this edition.

2018 marks 40 years since the formation of the Otty Lake Association as we know it today although stewardship of our lake was important to many long before 1978. 2018 also marks the 10th anniversary of the Otty Lake Management Plan, a plan that was developed by our community to protect the health and special features of our lake. It is also the year in which the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, one of our key partners, will update the Otty Lake-Jebbs Creek Catchment section of the Tay River Subwatershed Report. I mention these reports and anniversaries because, more importantly, they help highlight a long history of volunteers working together, devoting time and talent to ensure water quality and the environment are protected. Important reports such as these also take hours of volunteer time by volunteers and our partners to produce.

Over these many years, the Otty Lake Association has encouraged input from our members and partners in our broader community. We have



Photo: Barry Brown

created opportunities for everyone with an interest in our lake to come together, share concerns and ideas, and provide input on strategic matters important to everyone.

It has been five years since the last OLA survey and with it being the 10th anniversary of the Lake Management Plan, we felt it important that we seek input from the Otty Lake community through a formal survey. Your input will inform the Board of what you, our constituents, see as being the current key topics. Your input will help guide the OLA Board as it plans for the next two to three years.

With input from the OLA's 2013 survey and a review of the significant achievements over the past five years we are developing a new survey which we hope to distribute in March. More information and background will be distributed prior to the survey via email.

In the past 10 years, we on Otty Lake have set a pretty high standard in terms of survey response rates (rates for the original Lake Management Plan and the 5th-year review in 2013 both exceeded 40%!). Let's aim higher this time! We look forward to your input.

Please continue to read through this issue of Captain Otty's Log and catch up on the latest news and updates from our contributors and partners. If you would like to volunteer for any of these activities please get in touch with the OLA via email at info@ottylakeassociation.ca.

Stay warm!

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THE NEXT CHAPTER FOR OTTY LAKE'S JUVENILE LOON BEGINS!

The baby loon that was born on July 30th and lived in Echo Bay this summer had a successful fall. It's not uncommon for a juvenile to stay on its birth lake until ice-in, which is what ours did. Our juvenile was last spotted in Echo Bay on December 8th. Although it stayed late, it had company, as a gathering of eight loons was observed off Mile Point on December 11th.

The juvenile will likely head to the Gulf of Mexico or the coast of Florida for the winter and will stay there for the next 2-3 years before returning to the area. Interestingly, loons from Eastern Canada and the U.S. opt to overwinter on the Atlantic coast, and don't go as far south!

Here are a couple of articles you may find interesting! The first may explain the late hatch for our birds



Photo: Christine Kilburn

this year. Enjoy the winter birds, and perhaps your own trip south to warmer weather(?), and look for more loon information in our next Captain Otty's Log!

<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/science-of-summer-good-news-for-baby-loons>

https://www.conwaydailysun.com/activities/country-ecology-where-do-loons-go-in-the-winter/article_2fbd671d-b53c-5882-a5a8-c8259aad0064.html

Kyla Haley

BEWARE OF SPIDER HOLES ON THE LAKE!



In early January of this year people were noticing a number of "spider holes" on the lake. They look like cracks radiating out from a hole in the ice. Sometimes there will be a thin layer of ice over the hole, and other times they are open. Usually the holes are less than 30 cm (a foot)

across. These spider holes can form early in the winter when light-density snow covers an ice surface, insulating it unevenly from very cold air. The spider hole, or air hole, seems to be caused by an upwelling of water along a crack, melting out a hole. The flow channels, or spider legs are the overflow channels flowing outwards, creating slushy areas under the snow. Murray Hunt recalls "I was quite surprised a few years ago to realize that I was

PITCH-IN 2018

It has been a long cold winter with snow probably hiding all sorts of roadside garbage. I'm looking for volunteers to help clean up a bit of Rideau Ferry Road and Elm Grove Road, if we have enough volunteers to do the job. Pitch-In starts 21st April. However, around this part of Otty, as long as the roads get cleaned up before the end of April, this should be fine. Volunteers should let me know by 1st April if they plan to participate. Garbage bags will be at my home at the beginning of April. I will e-mail to ask those who have volunteered before, if they are willing to do it again. I need to know what road or part of a road you will be cleaning up so there will be no overlap. Thank you in advance.

Please e-mail me at lizofthelake44@gmail.com

Elizabeth Allcock



cross-country skiing over the top of one and was bogged down in slush on a very cold day." These areas are really wet, so stay well away from them. Gail Read commented that the deer were thoroughly enjoying browsing from the higher water level but knew to avoid the spider areas entirely. Murray notes that 2011 was another year when weather conditions were conducive to spider holes. The [wintertrekking web-site](#) has a good description and photos if you'd like to learn more.

RESIDENTS & KIDS TAKE PART IN CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

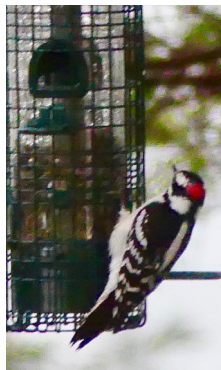
Started in 1900, the Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is North America's longest-running Citizen Science project. Counts happen in over 2000 localities throughout the Western Hemisphere, and Otty Lake has residents who take part. Section 1 of the Rideau Ferry Christmas Bird Count area (a 24 km diameter circle centred in Rideau Ferry) includes the north and north eastern parts of Otty. The south and western shores of Otty are covered in Section 2. This year, Sat. December 16th was Christmas Bird Count day. Bird Studies Canada and its partner, the National Audubon Society in the United States, rely on data from the Christmas Bird Count database to monitor bird populations.

Reid and I have participated in the Christmas Bird Count for the last three years. The added bonus has been that, for the last two years, we've had three of our grandchildren (all under 10) with us on that day. Thanks to involvement in this event, they are becoming bird watchers themselves! They can already identify a few birds by their song, and of course they can spot a blue jay from among any number of other birds!

Here are a few of the birds our grandchildren can now identify. I hope you have fun and engage your young people in watching, listening and learning about our lovely feathered friends. It's fun!



The Blue Jay - of course this bird can easily be spotted due to its unique colouring. But you can also hear it coming before you see it, thanks to its shrieking.



The Downy Woodpecker - as far as the children are concerned, this is the skunk bird - because it's black and white - no smell from this bird! And they know to listen to him tap tap tapping

on tree trunks, looking for insects. Of course he loves suet in the winter!



The Pileated Woodpecker is easy to identify - he's huge! And he sports a very bright red cap and cheek. He also is easily identifiable in flight, since he swoops and rises, and yells as he does so. And they certainly can hammer a tree loudly!



We all love our Black-capped Chickadee friends. Their cheerful song of "Chick-a-dee-dee-dee" is so endearing. The grandchildren identify their voices right away, and run around in the snow, singing "Chick-a-dee-dee-dee".



Then there's the colourful male Purple Finch, with his bright colouring on his head. And he enjoys bird feeders with black sunflower seeds.



Though the American Goldfinch is not nearly as "gold" in the winter, they are still sweet visitors at the bird feeders, and the males can be recognized by the yellow on their chests. They always sound like they're asking a question, sounding like "see-me?"



The children enjoy seeing the White-breasted Nuthatch as he moves headfirst down a tree trunk looking for food. He's also happy on suet feeders.



This is a Dark-eyed Junco - the girls call him "Stripe" because of the clear line between his slate grey top and white bottom. Juncos can

be seen under feeders, on the ground, where they prefer to collect the seeds dropped by others. You usually see more than one at a time.



This bird, the Mourning Dove, comes by its name honestly. Its call is a

mournful cooing sound, very recognizable and sometimes confused with the sounds of a hooting owl. You can identify them in flight since their wings often whistle as they cut through the air at high speed. They can be seen in pairs, eating seeds on the ground under bird feeders.

Christine Kilburn

[A link to the species counted that day is on our website](#)

16TH ANNUAL LAKE LINKS WORKSHOP



Lake Links 2017, which took place at the Perth Civitan Hall on October 21, 2017, was a most interesting workshop day. The OLA was well represented amongst the 120 attendees. Since 2002 Lake Links has provided an opportunity for lake associations and other volunteer groups in Eastern Ontario to come together with government and non-government agencies to explore common lake and river issues that matter most to our communities.

Lake Links 2017 speakers included Dr. Neil Hutchinson and Les Stanfield as well as representatives from the Muskrat Watershed Council and a number of our local community partners.

Dr. Hutchinson (Principal Scientist, Hutchinson Environmental Sciences Ltd.) looked at the big picture and encouraged workshop participants, when looking at problems on our lakes, to not just look at the lake itself but to look for stressors away from the lake.

He summarized some of the big changes seen in our lakes over the last decades, explaining that some problems like acid rain have been solved and others like climate change are just beginning to be understood. Dr. Hutchinson stressed that we have

our work cut out for us with climate change as it is so over-arching and everywhere – a planetary problem. His hypothesis is that climate change will have effects on our lakes similar to high total phosphorus levels (e.g. more blue-green blooms).

Les Stanfield developed the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol which looks at the cumulative effects of disturbances on stream health. It was very interesting to hear Les explain how headwaters matter much more than the main channel of a water body – (again the focus on the bigger picture) – headwater streams provide 80% of the functionality of a watershed.

Les stressed that cumulative effects of the various stressors on a system are difficult to manage, so people from different sectors need to be engaged to find common solutions to the environmental problems our waters are facing. His final point was that citizen science is needed to get a handle on our headwater areas.

A concrete example of what can be achieved by using science to understand the issues and stewardship to resolve them was provided in a case study presented by members of the Muskrat Watershed Council. Muskrat Lake (near Pembroke) is nutri-

ent enriched from various sources, causing negative effects in the lake. The Council is working with various partners and funding sources to get people involved. The Muskrat Watershed Council team emphasized that moving ahead towards solutions requires a consensus about a problem, and shared responsibility.

Municipal politicians such as North Frontenac Mayor Ron Higgins and Councillor Gerry Last from the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, as well as Joe Gallivan, Director of Planning and Economic Development for Frontenac County, Lyn Garrah, District Planner, MNRF and Mike Yee, RVCA Manager, Biology and Water Quality participated in a Community Partners Panel. All the talks had a common thread of importance of working together. Each speaker recognized that there are many issues affecting our lakes and that we need to work together to make the most of our resources and expertise

[Click here](#) or more specific information on the Lake Links 2017 presentations.

Mark your calendars for Lake Links 2018 on Saturday, October 20, 2018.

Karen Hunt and Christine Kilburn

CAPTAIN OTTY'S LOG is produced by the Otty Lake Association (OLA) three times a year, and is distributed by e-mail or Canada Post to all OLA members. Contributions to the Log are welcome.

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To find out more about the OLA, or to see past issues, please see: www.ottylakeassociation.ca. Or write to: The OLA, Box 20122, Perth ON K7H 3M6.

ENSURE YOUR PROPERTY IS ACCESSIBLE



Photo: Chris Dyrda

Are you certain your lake property would be accessible by fire, police or ambulance services in an emergency? Private roads and laneways should be plowed. If roads are slippery or have steep inclines, they should be sanded as well. Any time of year, make sure your access road is clearly identified and your municipal number is clearly visible, preferably with reflective numbers or letters for better visibility in the dark. You don't want emergency responders to have

to go house-to-house to find you. A large fire pumper truck will require 4 m wide clearance, as well as 4 m of height. So keep trees and brush clear of this path. Turns or corners should be wide enough to allow trucks to drive directly through, and ideally there will be sufficient clearance to turn around at the end. A fuel-free space of 10 m around your dwelling is often recommended to give firefighters a better chance to save your cottage from an advancing fire. Remove any shrubs, trees, deadfalls or woodpiles from this area.

For fire services response you are dealing with long distances, potentially poor driving conditions, volunteer firefighters who are not waiting at the station, and non-existent fire hydrants, which will increase response time to begin with. Don't let the condition of private roads and laneways add to that time. Seconds count in an emergency!

Emergency access can also affect your insurance rates. Many companies charge more to insure homes over a set distance (typically 13 km) from a fire station, that are only accessible by water, or that that cannot be accessed during the winter months due to unplowed roads. Even if your property is within the required distance of a fire hall, an unplowed laneway can mean higher rates. But even unoccupied cottages can still experience lightning fires or falling trees.

Barb Hicks



AREA COUNSELLORS NEEDED

Each spring a team of Area Counsellors visits the various regions around Otty Lake. This team forms a communication link between the Otty Lake Association Board and the residents within their community. The Spring Information Package is well received and Area Counsellors highlight initiatives, answer questions, update contact information, collect fees and gather recommendations.

Area Counsellors meet twice each year to provide input from residents, receive updates from the Board and participate in information sessions by local presenters regarding environmental issues of importance to our lake and residents. Their efforts are sincerely appreciated!

The success of this team is based on positive, friendly members who value effective sharing in their neighbour-

hoods. This program is best run by volunteers within their own communities where they are known and available for timely visitations. Our sincere thanks to the Area Counsellors who gave their time as volunteers in the spring of 2017.

We have a few vacancies and need some volunteers to work in:

- Area 3B: Middle section of Colin Farmer
- Areas 8A, 8B, 8C: Otty Lake Side Road to Maple Glen (2-3 volunteers)
- Area 11: McLaren Lake: (1 volunteer)

Please contact Gail Read, Counsellor Coordinator, at (613) 464-3063 or read2read@outlook.com if you can help. [See map](#) on the website for the area locations.

OUR CURRENT COUNSELLORS

- 1A Chris Harrison
- 1B Joan & Ric Potter
- 2 Ross Hollingsworth
- 3A Rick McCauley
- 3B Volunteer Needed!**
- 3C Deborah Kaczyki
- 4A EvelynDore
- 4B Sandy Grella & Phil Ito
- 5A,B Ian McDonald & Gail Read
- 6A Monika Siegmund Savage
- 6B Sue Trower
- 6C Jay Hendry
- 7A Sandra Hanna
- 7B Eileen Johnston
- 7C Elizabeth & David Allcock

8A, 8B, 8C Volunteer Needed!

- 9A,B Carol Handleman & Robert Cosh
- 10 Christine Kilburn
- BW Vice President of BurgessWood Board
- 5C Brian & Jennifer Perkin
- MG Dave Bell & Michelle Soucy

11 McLaren Lake Volunteer Needed!

NEW CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT



Christine Kilburn, Steve Barry, Anne Scotton and Dave Windholz, volunteers for Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Project

water quality monitoring, the development of our original State of Otty Lake Report and Lake Management Plan, shoreline naturalization, and a number of wildlife projects including invasive species monitoring, the BioBlitzes, and the more recent multi-year fish habitat restoration project. Perhaps most importantly, RVCA regulates construction along environmentally sensitive areas and reviews development proposals within or adjacent to natural areas. For a fuller description of the RVCA's collaborations with the OLA, see our [Community Partners Summary](#).

Barb Hicks

The Building Better Communities and Conserving Watersheds Act (Bill 139), passed in December 2017, included a new Conservation Authorities Act. The Conservation Authorities Act (1946) had been under review for two years and had received input from a wide range of sectors including environment, industry, agriculture and municipalities. Otty Lake and other lake associations had an opportunity to provide input, which was summarized and submitted by Karen Hunt on behalf of the Lake Networking Group.

The new Act will ensure more resiliency across Ontario watersheds and give communities a stronger voice in land use planning. It clarifies the roles and responsibilities of conservation authorities (CAs) and strengthens oversight and accountability. It will encourage increased public

engagement by requiring more public disclosure and that meetings be open to the public. These changes will give CAs the flexibility to address growing environmental pressures caused by climate change, such as flooding. Modernized funding mechanisms will help ensure CAs have sufficient operational funds and address disparities in resources between conservation authorities with large and small population bases.

(The new legislation will also replace the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) with the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal, and help ensure that proceedings before the tribunal are faster, fairer and more affordable.)

Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities play a central role in the restoration, conservation and management of water and land resources on a watershed basis, and do so in partnership with many different ag-

ricultural, environmental, municipal, and other agencies. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) has strongly supported the OLA over the years with expertise and resources on a long list of projects. These include water level and



Rosario Castanon Escobar, RVCA Staff

KUDOS TO THE RVCA

An Otty Lake resident, "Bruce", recently made these comments regarding an RVCA program to OLA board member Dave Bell:

Remember last summer I was telling you that I did all the necessary leg work in filling out application forms and meeting with reps from RVCA to get my shoreline restoration project approved and implemented? Well it was all completed and to my amazement it went very well, the RVCA staff couldn't have been any more helpful.

The second phase of this project was to apply for a Ontario Clean Water Grant that would cover 90% of my costs. After filling out the necessary forms and providing plans and drawings I made my submission to RVCA.

Well low and behold I received a call from RVCA this afternoon saying my application was approved and the cheque will be sent out shortly. Needless to say it is a celebration night in our household.

The people at RVCA are not the bad guys some people say they are. They were there to help me and it worked out great for everyone concerned.

State of the Lake. Our annual State of the Lake report was completed after our October log issue. If you missed the email notice announcing it was ready, head to [our home page](#) for a summary of lake conditions and environmental activities for the year. A number of OLA members contributed to the report, which was spearheaded by Derek Smith. It shows that Otty Lake is healthy, but we should not be complacent.

Lake Associations Video. A five minute film produced for the Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations (FOCA) explores why lakes and lake associations are important to us. OLA Past President Karen Hunt gets the final comment in the short film at 4:40. [Lake Associations: a FOCA video project, by Chelsie Xavier-Blower.](#)



Sewage System FAQ. Eric Kohlsmith (Upper Watershed Regulations Inspector) has prepared an extensive Sewage System FAQ handout as a follow-up to questions asked at the June 2017 field trip to the Septic System Demonstration Centre at the Baxter Conservation Area. Access the [11-page PDF](#) here or see the link on the sidebar of our "Wells and Septics" page on the OLA website. Questions can be directed to Eric at eric.kohlsmith@rvca.ca or by telephone at RVCA at 613 692 – 3571 ext. 1153.



Photo: Carol Handleman

Cottage Dreams Cancer Recovery Initiative. This organization helps families touched by cancer reconnect and rejuvenate with a week-long stay at a private, donated cottage. Cottage Dreams has placed over 10,000 families in cottages around Ontario and parts of Quebec since they began in 2003. Besides looking for cottage owners willing to donate their cottage for a week, Cottage Dreams also accepts donations. Read more at <http://www.cottage-dreams.ca/>.



Photo: Beth Fischer

Docks and Snowmobiles. Docks or rafts left in the water during the winter months can be a hazard to activities such as snowmobiling, particularly when covered with snow. It is the owners' responsibility to mark such hazards and thereby avoid the possibility of potential liability in case of an accident.

Cottage Rental Tips. If you are thinking of renting your cottage out to help recover some of your expenses, see some of the resources listed on [FOCA's website](#). In FOCA's 2017 [Lake Stewards newsletter](#), the Cottage Rental section on p.23 suggests you check your insurance, talk to your neighbours, and share your knowledge. Leave a summary sheet for renters unfamiliar with cottaging topics such as your septic systems, sound travelling over water, garbage and recycling, cottage etiquette, and so on. Here is one sample sheet from the [Leech Lake Association](#). Both Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley Townships permit cottage rentals, but some municipalities require a business license or ban short-term rentals altogether.



Photo: Chris Arbeau

2017-2018 Board Members

Full contact information is available on the website.

Reid Kilburn - President
Robert Cosh - Past President
David Bell - Vice President Finance & Treasurer
Cathy Kari - Vice President
Christine Kilburn - Secretary
Kyla Haley - Loon Survey
Monika Savage – Snake Survey
Barb Hicks – Log Coordinator and Webmaster

David Bromley – Log Design/Layout
Ian McDonald - Lake Activities Projects (LAP)
Gail Read – Counsellor Coordinator
Wally Robins - Fish Enhancement Project

Derek Smith – State of the Lake
Michelle Soucy – OLA Clothing
Anne Scotton – Director

SAVE THE DATE

OLA AGM,
SUNDAY JULY 8TH
1PM • PERTH LEGION

2017 FOCA FALL SEMINAR MEETING SUMMARY

The Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations, FOCA, of which the OLA is a member, represents volunteer associations and individual property owners in Ontario. Their mission is to protect thriving and sustainable waterfronts. This year's seminar theme was "Strong Associations for Future Generations."

In his introduction, FOCA Executive Director Terry Rees touched on the current state of volunteerism, as well as summarizing FOCA's work in 2017. Once again a well-attended Cottage Succession seminar was held. Work continues on invasive species monitoring and prevention. FOCA represents lake associations provincially, e.g. providing input to the restructuring of the OMB (Ontario

Municipal Board), and communicating topics of interest in the upcoming municipal elections. FOCA also works on Lake Pulse projects, which target common environmental problems affecting Canadian lakes to understand, manage and conserve freshwater resources. [Here is a link to Terry's presentation.](#)

FOCA was very pleased to have Alex and Tyler Mifflin as keynote speakers. The pair produce the TVO eco-adventure documentary series "The Water Brothers", Cottageing on Georgian Bay has been one influence in their passion for environmental education and conservation. They strongly believe in ensuring that audiences, particularly young people, are aware of the water challenges we face, and want youth to become part of the emerging solutions.

Christine Kilburn

FRESHWATER JELLYFISH FOUND IN BIG GULL LAKE

Here is just a portion of a interesting local invasive species story by Linda Corkum, an aquatic biologist active in the Big Gull Lake East End Cottage Association.

Cottagers have reported the presence of freshwater jellyfish in Big Gull Lake in North Frontenac (eastern Ontario). This is a surprise to many, because the relatives of freshwater jellyfish are found in the sea! There are more than 20 species of freshwater jellyfish, but only one freshwater species, *Craspedacusta sowerbii*, occurs in North America.

Freshwater jellyfish are not native to Canada, having arrived originally from China. They now occur in lakes and rivers in temperate climates all over the world. According to information posted by the U.S. Geological Survey, freshwater jellyfish likely spread throughout North America from one lake or river to another by bait bucket transfer by anglers, or by attaching to aquatic plants, stocked fish and waterfowl. They were first

reported in the U.S. in Kentucky in the early 20th century, and spread to the Great Lakes within a generation. Once in Ontario, freshwater jellyfish spread quickly throughout the province. Blooms of jellyfish were first noticed in Big Gull Lake in late summer of 2012 – one of many Ontario reports in recent years. Unlike their marine relatives, freshwater jellyfish don't harm humans because their stinging tentacles don't pierce the skin of mammals.

Linda Corkum

Read more in the [Summer 2017 FOCA Lake Stewards Newsletter](#), or see the [Big Gull Lake Association Jan. 2017 newsletter](#).



DE-ICING SALTS THREATEN LAKES

It is becoming clear that salts used to de-ice Canadian roadways are threatening lake ecosystems. A 2017 study found that over the past several decades 44% of the North American lakes studied became saltier. This of course is bad for plants, bad for fish, and bad for drinking water. The study found that lakes within 500 m of roads, parking lots and other impervious surfaces are most at risk.



Canada has been trying to reduce road salt use since 2001, switching to sand and experimenting with alternatives such as beet juice, brines made from molasses, or dregs from beer- and cheese-making processes to reduce the salt required. But you should know that what you might apply yourself to your driveway or pathways plays a role, too. It is estimated that more than 50 per cent of de-icing material applied is actually put down by private citizens and businesses. When spring comes, or even sooner, much of the salt you applied around lakeside homes will wash away with meltwater and end up in the lake.

So avoid the use of de-icing salts. Use coarse sand to increase traction on driveways and walkways. If you must use salt, use as little as possible, lower the throwing distance, only use at temperatures between 0 and -10 degrees C. and apply before the area freezes to be most effective.