

## **November 6 - Lake Simcoe Field Trip**

James Kamstra of North Durham Nature led a group of 12 to the southeast area of Lake Simcoe to see what waterbirds could be found. Twelve eager participants ventured out on this mild and calm sunny day.

The first stop was Holm's Point, on the York Region side of the lake. In a sheltered bay on the east side of Duclos Point, 3 Tundra Swans swam together. A solitary Red-necked Grebe was swimming and diving. A gathering of Bonaparte's Gulls were having a feeding frenzy. Suddenly a Merlin came zipping along from the water, hot in pursuit of an unknown passerine.

At a parkette midway between Holm's Point and Port Bolster we spied three Red-throated Loons in winter plumage among more numerous Common Loons. Eight female Black Scoters played in the gentle surf; and further to the right several White-winged Scoters. A flock of 11 Sandhill Cranes flew overhead.

From another lake vantage point at the end of Brock 2nd Concession we saw close to a hundred Horned Grebes spread out across the lake, as well as Common Goldeneyes and Buffleheads, a Long-tailed Duck and a tight gathering of Hooded Mergansers.

In all about 40 species of birds were noted including a good assortment of waterfowl.

## **Saturday April 2 – Waterfowl at Durham's Lake Ontario Marshes**

Four naturalists joined Geoff Carpentier on a trip to Cranberry Marsh on April 2nd. Despite a snowy start to the day, the weather turned perfect and allowed us to see 48 species of birds including 12 kinds of ducks, geese and swans, Horned Grebe, a beautiful adult Little Gull, Tree and Barn Swallows, a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, a singing Fox Sparrow and more. At one point a Downy Woodpecker, Back-capped Chickadees and two White-breasted Nuthatches landed on birders' hands to snack on some sunflower seeds. Perhaps the highlight was watching a pair of otters "cavorting" at the marsh. Presumably a male and female but possibly siblings, they spent over 30 minutes swimming slowly side by side, occasionally rolling over so that paws and tail were skyward, and at one point one was atop the other perhaps mimicking mating. Interesting to watch and as quickly as they arrived they were gone.