

## **March 19th 2017 - Bird Box Inspection Walk on the Bird Loop in the Uxbridge Countryside Preserve**

Eighteen interested nature enthusiasts enjoyed a sunny +10C stroll around a 3 km “Bird Loop” assisting Derek Connelly inspect the bird boxes for this year’s arrivals. The walk started with a review of the importance of boxes as nest cavities to replace the many dead trees we are removing for development and as hazards; the variety of birds that use them and what a typical nest looks like using an old Bluebird nest and eggs one of the preferred Bird House tenants. On the walk larger Duck boxes were pointed out by the pond and stories of some of the birds that use them told.

The nearby bird feeder was topped up with Black oil sunflower seed and Derek explained that keeping this feeder full by the everyone on their visits to the preserve could lead to being able to feed chickadees by hand in the future. Hiking up to Observation hill we finally reached the first Bluebird or Swallow box. Here cleaning, relabeling and the predator control structures were checked. The lookout from here gives everyone a good view of the landscape the birds use. Dropping down from the hill volunteers helped out checking boxes as we continued our circle of the Preserve.

Fortunately not one box had any sign of mouse or squirrel activity this winter. New labels and the addition of a screen ladder to help young birds climb up to the exit were identified on some boxes. A couple of boxes had come loose on their poles but fortunately one volunteer had brought his power driver which made a quick fix. An older box with a chewed wide hole finished the walk. It contained an old nest of a House Wren and on top evidence of an unknown bird nest start using well woven grasses and tissue into a circle? Was this a nuthatch? A House sparrow? Obviously more observations will be needed this summer.

Participants were invited to help this summer with the Bird Box monitoring and to join us at our next event a talk on Trees this Thursday in Port Perry. Derek thanks all those who added their experiences to the walk, helped out carrying equipment, checked, fixed and cleaned boxes. We now have a welcome home for our feathered friends If you are interested in helping monitor the Birds Boxes in the Countryside Preserve contact Derek Connelly at [ndnature7@gmail.com](mailto:ndnature7@gmail.com) or come out to a Nature Club event [www.northdurhamnature.com](http://www.northdurhamnature.com)

## **February 17th, 2017 - Feeder Tour**

Four car loads of ten birders ventured out at 8:00 am into the foggy north Durham countryside to see what the Hottest Bird Feeders had to offer. They were not disappointed. Given a list of eighteen common winter feeder birds to target the group found sixteen of them at feeders and four others nearby. Our new birders had their targets too and the first request was to see a waxwing. (**click above link for full review**)

## **February 4th, 2017 - Winter Wetland Snowshoe at the Nonquon Provincial Wildlife Area**

A successful joint venture between the Friends of Nonquon and North Durham Nature with approximately 50 participants! People of all ages gathered at the Pheasant Pen Classroom site at the Nonquon Wetlands, put on a pair of snowshoes, and went on several guided hikes lead by

knowledgeable volunteers. The Big Brother's and Sister's of Clarington joined local families for this event, and were a welcome addition. The chickadees were glad to receive a hand feeding of sunflower seeds on this chilly winter day! Many animal signs were spotted along the hikes, including a beaver lodge, footprints left by a variety of animals, woodpecker holes, muskrat lodges, and a red squirrel tunnel. The hike was ended with a warm mug of hot chocolate and cookies, giving participants a chance to warm up and explore the displays in the building.

**Official Audubon Christmas Bird Counts - Uxbridge Dec 27th 2016, Beaverton Dec 30th 2016**

*Once again we joined birders throughout the Americas in the annual bird count now in its 117th year. Learn more about the count by visiting <http://www.audubon.org/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count/conservation/science/christmas-bird-count>*

*Follow underlined link to Audubon results: [Uxbridge CBC](#) [Beaverton CBC](#). Written reports in the club newsletter. Join us to get one!*

*Uxbridge - 43 species; Beaverton 41 species*