

localnews

www.peterboroughexaminer.com

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LIVING

Read a blog or find a photo

More great websites that download the natural world to your computer screen

This is the third and final instalment of a series on my favourite websites.

PROVINCIAL

1. The Land Between (www.the-landbetween.ca) "The Land Between" is the transition zone which lies between the Canadian Shield and the St. Lawrence Lowlands stretching across south-central Ontario from Georgian Bay to Kingston. In the central and eastern parts, it runs just north or south of Hwy. 7. This landscape is a mosaic of unique spaces including small connected lakes, remarkable rivers, rare alvars, fens, rocky barrens, meadow marshes, woodlands, and scattered settlements. However, the natural areas need to be properly stewarded and managed. You can get involved in the Land Between initiative through donations, monitoring, or even by entering into a conservation agreement with a land trust such as the Kawartha Heritage Conservancy.



Drew Monkman
OUR CHANGING SEASONS

2. Campsite 24 (www.campsite-24.ca) Ontario Parks' Campsite24 aims to encourage kids, teachers and families to head outdoors, explore nature and go to parks. All content on the site is Ontario-specific. For example, you will find slideshows on the life history of eight different taxa (mammals, fish, amphibians, reptiles birds, insects, trees, plants) as well as games celebrating the adaptations of each of these taxa (e.g., frogs catching mosquitoes.)

3. Natural Heritage Information Centre (nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca) - Located right here in Peterborough, the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) compiles, maintains and distributes information on natural species, plant communities and spaces of conservation concern in Ontario. The website makes much of this information available through the internet. You can also download NHIC newsletters and use the Biodiversity Explorer for querying records of biodiversity information within Ontario. For example, you can find the latest, most detailed information on the status of the whip-poor-will in our province.

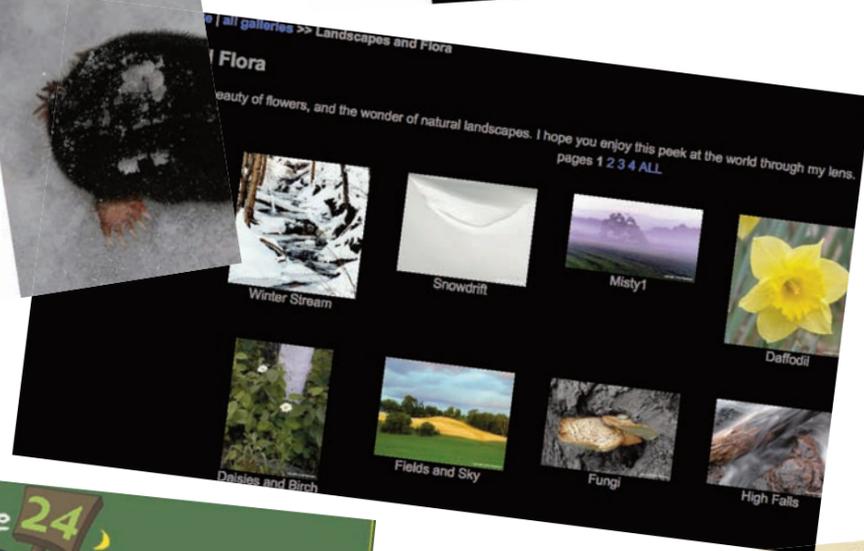
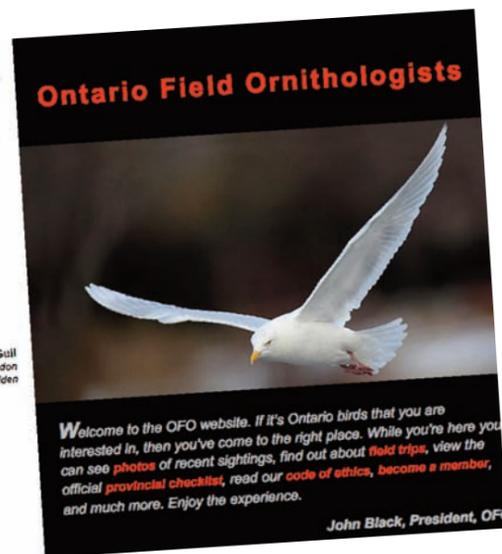
4. Explore Ontario's Biodiversity (www.rom.on.ca/ontario/index.php) This Royal Ontario Museum site allows you to create your own field guide to animals of your local area, right on your screen. You can also obtain lists of Ontario species at risks, try a bird song quiz, and look at some specimens in the ROM research collections.

5. Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario (www.birdsontario.org/atlas/index.jsp) By clicking the Data and Maps tap, you can find maps for both the breeding range and the breeding abundance for all of Ontario's breeding birds. You can also compare the second atlas (2001-2005) to the first (1981-1985). Try clicking on wild turkey and comparing the breeding evidence maps from the two atlases. The range expansion of this bird has been amazing. Click on whip-poor-will to see a species that has followed the opposite trend.

6. Toronto Wildlife Centre (www.torontowildlifecentre.com/index.html) Toronto Wildlife Centre is a registered charity supported only by donations that helps people and wildlife by rescuing wildlife in distress, and providing medical care and reha-



Glaucous Gull
Photo: Brandon Holden



bilitation to sick, injured and orphaned wild animals with the goal of releasing recovered patients back into the wild. You can also call them at 416-631-9942

7. Ontario Field Ornithologists (www.ofo.ca) At the Ontario Field Ornithologist (OFO) website, you'll find photos of recent sightings, find out about upcoming field trips, view the official provincial bird checklist, become a member, and much more. You will also find ONTBIRDS, OFO's electronic mailing listserv that notifies birders of interesting Ontario bird sightings. This is an essential tool for anyone serious about birdwatching in Ontario.

8. Toronto Entomologists' Association (www.ontarioinsects.org) A great site for anyone interested in learning more about Ontario's insects.

9. Ontario Nature (www.ontarionature.org/index.php) Ontario Nature is a charitable organization that protects wild species and wild spaces through conservation, education and public engagement. It represents more than

30,000 members and supporters and 140 member groups across province. The website contains a wealth of resources to help you get involved in conservation projects. There are also excellent downloadable resources such as A Citizen's Toolkit for Nature Conservation, a Checklist of the Birds of Ontario, Junior Naturalist Manual, and many more.

10. Field Botanists of Ontario (www.trentu.ca/org/fbo) The FBO is open to anyone with an interest in botany and its conservation in the province of Ontario. It provides opportunities for people to meet and pursue their interests in field botany. The group often gets together in the Peterborough area.

BLOGS

1. The Marvelous in Nature (the-marvelousinnature.wordpress.com) Seabrooke Leckie is a young writer, illustrator, and photographer, but most of all a lover of nature. She lives in rural

eastern Ontario, surrounded by woods and meadows from which she draws endless inspiration. Highly recommended!

2. Native Plant Girl (nativeplant-girl.blogspot.com) This site for native plant gardeners & stewards provides a huge amount of information on topics including upcoming events, native plant identification, species lists, native plant gardening "how to's", regional native plant recommendations, native plant sales and nurseries, seeds, organizations, invasive plants, etc.

3. Bruce Di Labio's Blog (brucedilabio.blogspot.com) Bruce is one of Ontario's premier birders, photographers, and trip leaders. Follow him on his birding adventures both in Ontario and abroad.

PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Karl Egressy (www.kegressy.com/index_1.html) Karl has generously allowed me to use his stunning

pictures for many years now. If you've never seen his site, be sure to pay it a visit.

2. Jean Iron (www.jeaniron.ca/index.htm) Amazing pictures of Ontario birds and insects by one of the province's leading birders and trip leaders.

3. David Harries (https://picasa-web.google.com/daharries) David is a talented local photographer who has put together a Picasa Web Album of over 400 of his favourite shots. Most of these were taken near his home in South Monaghan township.

4. Ernie Basciano Photography (www.pbase.com/bassphotographics) Here you'll find more beautiful shots of our local wildlife.

Drew Monkman is a Peterborough teacher and author of *Nature's Year in the Kawarthas*. He can be reached at dmonkman1@cogeco.ca. Visit his website and see past columns at www.drewmonkman.com.