

BIRDS OF HAMILTON AND SURROUNDING AREAS

Book Review by Mark Cranford,
Vice President, South Peel Naturalists' Club

Birds of Hamilton and Surrounding Areas, published by Robert Curry and the Hamilton Naturalists' Club, October 2006, \$60. 676pp.

Birds of Hamilton and Surrounding Areas is not a field guide for bird identification. It does not replace the existing breeding bird atlas for Ontario and will not compete with the upcoming new Ontario atlas (being published later this year by Ontario Nature, based on the work of hundreds of volunteers and with the support of provincial, federal and non-government agencies).

However, for birders interested in bird patterns and occurrences along the Niagara Escarpment, this book is fast becoming essential reading. It covers almost 400 species and supplies some of the most complete information available. All aspects of a bird species' annual cycle are discussed, as well as its current status and population trends. The reader can move beyond simple identification to a determination of whether a bird breeds, overwinters or passes through during spring and fall migrations.

While the book covers a relatively small portion of the escarpment, the information and insights are relevant to understanding birds from Tobermory to Niagara Falls. If you are a birder in Hamilton and don't have this book, you need it right away! Anyone else interested in protecting and maintaining habitats should see this book as well.

Birds of Hamilton and Surrounding Areas includes 32 pages of colour photographs by expert bird



photographers, original art by Robert Bateman and others, a foreword by the renowned naturalist and writer Fred Bodsworth, and detailed colour maps of regional birding hot-spots and vegetation types.

When we know and understand the elements that make up an ecosystem, the task of developing strategies and arguments for protecting it becomes easier and more achievable. While this book covers only one aspect of the fauna of the escarpment, it is an excellent starting point for appreciating one of the most visible and enjoyable features of local ecosystems. With this book, you cannot go wrong with the birds!

For information about several ways to obtain this book, please contact the Hamilton Naturalists' Club, P.O. 89052, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4R5, or visit their website at www.hamiltonnature.org/publications/birdsofhamilton.htm. Proceeds from sale of the book will support conservation and education projects of the Hamilton Naturalists.

NEWS BRIEF

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as Commissioner of Planning and Development for the Regional Municipality of Niagara. He brings to the NEC a solid understanding of Niagara Escarpment protection that dates back to 1967-68 when he was a member of the team for the groundbreaking Niagara Escarpment Study, commissioned by then-Premier John Robarts and led by Professor Len Gertler. Mr. Cambrey was the guest speaker at CONE's 2005 annual general meeting.

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Greenbelt Foundation Fetes Bill Davis

On May 22, over 200 friends of the Niagara Escarpment, past and present, gathered at mid-day at the Toronto Botanical Garden (Edwards Gardens) for the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation's recognition of the

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