



# DRIFTWORDS

SERVING THE RIDEAU SINCE 1911 • POONAMALIE TO NARROWS LOCK

*Celebrating Driftwords' 22nd Year*

*June 2002*

## ***The Wastewater Garden Coming Soon to the Dry Dock Near You!***

BRLA is pleased to announce that the long-awaited Wastewater Garden is going to be built at Dry Dock this summer! This national pilot project will be a model for sustainable on-site wastewater management in rural Canada. And what is really unique about this technology is the fact that

it has ZERO DISCHARGE, meaning no nutrients (phosphorus!) or pathogens are released to the environment - especially attractive for shoreline properties. Part of the pilot project is to research adaptations of the system, which has been proven and certified in

Massachusetts, for colder Canadian climates. Along with the Garden, we will be rebuilding the back shed area to accommodate for an anticipated increase in traffic, and to make more room for educational/public space. And now that the Township process for the minor variance is completed, we are ready to start digging!

Finally, we would like to thank those people and organizations for their generous contributions to the project so far:

Township of Rideau Lakes  
Joe Jordan, MP for Leeds-Grenville  
Federation of Canadian Municipalities  
John Teixeira, Teixeira Construction  
TD Canada Trust - Friends of the Environment Foundation  
Bronfman Foundation

National Research Council - Industrial Research Assistance Program  
Environment Canada - Science Horizons Internship program  
John Silburn, P. Eng., Restoration Engineering  
David del Porto, Sustainable Strategies  
Queen's University, Civil Engineering  
Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation  
Lamont Brown

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***Angee McKellar***

# Annual General Meeting

by Tracey Alf



The BRLA Annual General Meeting (AGM), usually held mid-June each year, will convene August 3<sup>rd</sup> this summer. By rescheduling we hope to attract members who traditionally arrive later in the season and ensure that everybody has this important opportunity to become informed about – and add their voice to – their lake association.

During the AGM, members are updated on the current status of relevant items from the previous year's meeting and informed of new issues. Current and new Board members are also introduced and Board committees, such as Administration and Environment, make their yearly

reports. In addition, the BRLA year-end financial report is presented, illustrating, among other things, how your membership dollars have been spent. Perhaps most importantly, you will have a chance to meet with fellow members and discuss their views.

Although members have year-round access to staff, the AGM offers a special chance to meet with a variety of employees. BRLA membership staff will be on hand to sign up new and returning members. BRLA management & RLSCW Research Leaders will be available after the meeting to answer questions and will have program and project displays set up for discussion.

To entice some of our younger members we will be holding our first annual mini-AGM; in the basement of the Community Hall. The grueling agenda will have such action items as face painting and crafts. When this and the "other" meeting have adjourned, all members are invited to attend the BBQ held at the old Gallagher property, now home to the *Centre for Sustainable Watersheds*.

We look forward to meeting with familiar faces from AGMs past and hope to see a number of new members. The more input and support we receive from you, the more effectively we can serve our members and the Rideau Lake environment.

## **BRLA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Date: August 3, 2002**

**Time: 2:00 p.m.**

**Location: Portland Community Centre**

### **AGM Agenda**

Call to Order  
Minute of Silence  
Minutes of the 2001 AGM  
President's Report  
Financial Report  
Committee Reports  
Administration  
Environment  
Fireworks & Regatta  
Shoal Markers  
RLEF  
Rideau Lakes Club  
Election of Directors  
New Business  
Adjournment

**Will more be accomplished at the downstairs meeting?**

### **Mini-AGM Agenda**

**(Basement of Community Centre)**  
Call to order  
Discussion on shortening school year  
Yelling and Running Around  
Call to order  
Discussion on why toys are great  
Face Painting  
Crafts  
Face Painting  
New Business  
Adjournment  
Face Painting

**BBQ to follow on the grounds of the  
Centre For Sustainable Watersheds  
(14 Water St.)**

# President's Pen

by Richard Bradley

This is the time of the year when the BRLA unfolds like a butterfly out of a cocoon. The winter meetings of the Board of Directors were dedicated to the essentials such as staffing, budgets, facilities upgrades, membership initiatives and program planning. Ho-Hum.

Then May arrives together with.. A staff of 38 in Dry Dock, the Carriage House and on the lake

- The negotiated settlement of the Mason Marina appeal
- 103 shoal markers in the water
- Assembly of deliverables for our year-end financial statement
- Preparation for the June 27 fireworks display
- Crisis with the pontoon boat
- Crisis with our insurance premiums
- Crisis with.....well, you get it

The Mason matter and the three year probationary zoning which implemented the settlement has been widely reported in the local press. Any settlement beats an adjudicated result but I have some

final thoughts on the matter. The houseboat fleet, which galvanized the united opposition, was banished, but Dr. Darragh Elliott now has a marina for a neighbour.. This sobering reality tempers my sense of satisfaction somewhat if I put myself in his shoes. The zoning confusion originated with the Township but rather than deny,deny,deny the municipality took the lead in sorting out the problem and advancing a proposal which was approved by all parties. Hats off to Reeve Holman, Julie McAdoo and the Council of Rideau Lakes. Hats off as well to their Counsel Paul A. Webber, Q.C. The Association has a role to play in finishing the environmental assessment which we adopted as the premise for any permanent zoning or final decision on the waterfront activities on this site. Parks Canada is proceeding with further studies. We expect continuing co-operation among all stakeholders to avoid duplication of effort and expense.

\*\*\*

There will be additional BRLA small craft seeking donations from boaters at the fireworks display this year. We have always found those

in attendance to be more than willing to contribute to the cost of the show, but the logistics of visiting several hundred massed watercraft are complicated. The collection vessels will be identified. Please be generous when approached.

\*\*\*

The launch of our 18' bow rider is the final event in the spring ritual of 'opening the cottage'. The initial firing of that 130 HP inboard engine is music to my ears and a symphony for my father who helps me load the powerless boat back onto the trailer if the engine doesn't start. This year we had instant gratification. One turn of the key and...I pumped two litres of green glycol into Big Rideau Lake. Did you know that the antifreeze which protects the cooling system from freezup can be replaced at any marina before the boat is launched? I didn't!

Please put Saturday, August 3, 2002 on your calendar for the BRLA Annual General Meeting at the Portland Community Hall. Start time is 2 pm.

## Learn More About Lake Country

Come on in to Dry Dock and check out the newly re-organized Rideau Lakes Environment and Information Centre and its 20 partner groups and learn about the exciting programs that your Lake Association is leading this year:

- Water Quality
- Boat Safety
- Invasive Species
- Composting Toilets
- Healthy Homes & Shorelines
- Fisheries
- Environmental Monitoring
- Septic Systems & Alternatives
- Birding



# Four Swans a-Trumpeting!

by Chris Heffernen

So far, the year 2002 has been a good year for the Trumpeter Swans of Rideau Lake.

The Hudson Bay pair has had an excellent season. On the 7th of June we were lucky enough to see three baby swans with their parents on the nest. We are looking forward to watching the progress of the baby swans this summer.

On another happy note, a second pair of birds (tagged) has been spotted, but we have not been able

to read the tags to identify who the birds are. Although the pair has attempted to nest, they have not yet been successful.

We will be monitoring both pairs throughout the summer and will keep you up-to-date on their progress. Please let us know if you are monitoring them as well. Hopefully we will be able to widen the network of Rideau Lake Swan Watchers so we may keep better track of their travels and keep them safe so that future generations will

be able to know the joys of the Trumpeter Swan.

Please contact Chris at Barred\_Owl2002@yahoo.com or 272-5136



## Enviro Editorial: To Light Or Not To Light?

by Shawn Barnes

Light pollution is an environmental problem that is generally misunderstood as an urban, not rural, problem. While the effect may be more dramatic in urban areas, recent studies have indicated that the impact of light pollution on humans, wildlife, and non-urban areas are significant as well.

Canadians experience a lot of light pollution, in fact, 97% of all Canadians are regularly exposed. Exposure to light at night decreases melatonin production, a hormone which may have cancer-fighting properties. Light at night also impairs night vision - 59% of Canadians have lost their ability to see at night!

Considering humans are diurnal and light exposure at night can have an adverse effect on us, imagine the effects on nocturnal animals! Any exposure to light, however dim, can adversely affect their habitat and consequently, their behaviour. Frogs become effectively blind under light and their vision will continue to be

impaired for some time after the light is turned off, reducing their ability to hunt and feed. Additionally, frogs will stop croaking under light, disrupting and adversely affecting their mating rituals. Could light pollution be one of the reasons why we hear fewer frogs croaking on Rideau Lake?

Light-trespass, when a light source covers more than the intended area, is another problem with night-lighting. This is particularly apparent on a lake where the reflective properties of water, along with large open stretches, allow shoreline lighting to reach greater distances. This means that shoreline lighting can extend past adjacent properties, to neighbours on distant shorelines as well. Moreover, this glare can hamper night vision and endanger those navigating water at night. As development on Rideau Lake continues, the effects of light pollution will become more apparent, as will the effects on human and wildlife health. As individuals, we can make educated decisions

when choosing to use lights at night for safety, security, or illumination for outdoor activities, to help minimize impacts on the environment.

Some things you can do to reduce light pollution:

- \* **Don't leave lights on all night**
- \* **Use motion detectors & timers**
- \* **Choose outdoor fixtures that direct light at specific areas**
- \* **Try opaque covers over lights**
- \* **Talk with your neighbours about their use of light**
- \* **Try low wattage bulbs**

### Apology from the Mailing House

Mailrite, Kingston, mistakenly inserted membership renewal reminders to paid-up 2002 members in the May *Driftwords*. They regret the embarrassment.

# Largemouth Bass Tournament Survival Study

By Stacy McLean

This year, BRLA staff will be undertaking an intense Largemouth Bass Tournament Survival Study. It has been developed based on recommendations from the results of the Rideau Lake, 1996-1999 Largemouth Bass Displacement study recently published by Mark Ridgway.

## 1996-1999 Study Summary

Mark Ridgway (MNR) in partnership with the BRLA, wanted to examine the implications of displacement of largemouth bass on home range, movement and survival after a tournament. In 1996 and 1998, a total of 28 largemouth were caught and implanted with radio transmitters and tracked to determine their natural movements and their natural home ranges. In 1997, 27 fish were implanted and displaced over a range of distances (1.5-16.5 km) and their movements and home range characteristics were compared to fish that were not displaced. Displaced largemouth bass were followed for a year after displacement to determine if they returned close to their site of capture. This study found that **no fish displaced more than 8 km returned home**. Of those displaced less than 8km only 47% returned.

## 2002 Study

This year, the BRLA will be implanting 22 largemouth bass at the first tournament of the year to determine the survival of fish when released in a normal tournament setting. Many factors will be observed at the tournament and an Angler Survey will be conducted to see what catch-and-release tactics anglers take to increase survival of the fish. Another important component of the study will be to double tag as many fish (both smallmouth and largemouth) that come through the tournament weigh-in. This double tagging study will allow us to determine how multiple recaptures affect the survival of fish.

### We need your help!

A big component of this study is to determine how many of the tagged bass come out of the fishery. Therefore a huge component is relying on anglers to report tag returns. If you are fishing the Rideau Lake this summer and catch a bass with one or two tags on its back, please record the number on the tags and notify BRLA. Please tell staff the location (or area) you caught the fish and whether you returned it to the

lake or if you kept it. If you are an avid angler and fish the Rideau for bass often, please call to receive your Tag Return Card. By filling in the card and returning it to the BRLA at the end of the season, you will be qualified to win a Shimano Rod and reel. All anglers who report a tag number will also be entered into this draw and each angler will receive a monetary thank you, a Shimano hat valued at \$35 and a letter detailing the details of that particular fish. So please, help this study and report your tags!



For more information on this study or to receive a copy of the published paper by Mark Ridgway, please call Stacy or Jason at 272-3629 or 272-5136.

## Non-Members Get A One-Time Bonus!

This issue of *Driftwords* is sent to **all shoreline owners on Rideau Lake**, including those who are not yet members. A big word of thanks to Sun-Mar for its cash support that helps cover the extra mailing costs. As a courtesy we enclose its mini catalogue, custom printed for the Rideau Lake. Please pass it along to a friend if you're not in the market yourself.

Consider your membership now for year round

# Healthy Lakes Home Visit Program

By Barbara Robbins

BRLA would like to introduce a new partnership with the Lanark & Leeds Green Community to offer a Healthy Lakes Home Visit Program in the Rideau Lakes area.

The Healthy Lakes Home Visit was designed to help home and cottage owners learn how to make their properties healthier. "Healthy Lakes" is offered on an as-requested basis (while supplies last!). Representatives will visit your property and conduct a customized, confidential walkabout with you to identify problems and suggest solutions that will improve the health of your property and the lake.

## Why Participate?

- Healthier shoreline living
- Cleaner water
- Environmental protection
- Enhanced property values
- Information and hands-on-learning



## What We Offer

- Specialists trained to identify shoreline management issues and to suggest recommendations for remedial actions
- Healthy Lakes Information Package - literature on septic systems, water conservation, environmentally friendly shorelines, native and invasive species, regulations & contacts, wildlife habitat creation, natural erosion control techniques, pesticide alternatives, as well as other applicable information
- Links to financial assistance programs available for retrofits to septic systems, shoreline naturalization and well protection
- Tips to save time and energy on property maintenance
- Assistance in developing a "Conservation Plan" for your property
- Native wildflower seeds to transplant on your property
- Follow-up consultation

To arrange a Healthy Lakes Home Visit Program please contact Barbara Robbins at [robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca](mailto:robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca) or 272-5136

Co-sponsored by LLGreen, a project of the Rideau Environmental Action League. To arrange a similar visit outside the Rideau Lake's shorelines please contact Susan Brandum at 267-2257 or [llgreen@superaje.com](mailto:llgreen@superaje.com)

## Cost

A suggested donation of \$25.00 is appreciated.

## Big Thanks for Donations to Healthy Shoreline Demonstration at Welcome Centre Site

**Rideau Docks** for donating environmentally friendly floating dock. *Rideau Docks is also offering a 5% discount for all BRLA members.* You may reach Rideau Docks at 273-2036, [docks@rideau.net](mailto:docks@rideau.net) or [www.rideaudocks.com](http://www.rideaudocks.com)

**Ferguson Forest Centre** for donating 400 native seedlings. If you are interested in ordering seedlings for your own property, please contact the Ferguson Forest Centre at 258-0110 or [info@seedlingnursery.com](mailto:info@seedlingnursery.com)

**Green Spaces Landscape Design** for donating natural landscape design planning and consulting. If you are interested in these services, contact Green Spaces Landscape Design at 283-5850, [david@greenspaceslandscaping.com](mailto:david@greenspaceslandscaping.com) or [www.greenspaces-landscaping.com](http://www.greenspaces-landscaping.com)

**Halloway Farms Native Plant Nursery** for donating native wildflowers, grasses and shrubs. If you want to acquire native species or information on local seed harvesting, contact Holloway Farms at (613) 395-6120 or [hallowayfarms@attcanada.net](mailto:hallowayfarms@attcanada.net)

# Loon Report

By Nelson Amaral

Loon nesting is well under way on the lake this year! Four artificial loon nesting platforms were placed on Rideau Lake earlier this spring, bringing the total to eight so far. And they work!

*LoonWatchers* have reported two pairs of loons utilizing the platforms. And three other pairs using natural islands have been sighted

so far.

We have had great response from the public this year, with reports of loon pairs and nesting spots from Narrows Lock to Poonamalie.

If you would like to become a *LoonWatcher* or if you just want to inform us. *LoonWatchers* are volunteers who collect data on loons, particularly nesting loons and their

chicks, to help us track and protect this symbol of quite lake country living. Participation can range from weekends to 2 to 3 times a week. Anyone interested in becoming a *LoonWatcher* can sign up at Dry Dock or contact Nelson at 272-5136 or via email at amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca.



Rideau Lake Platform: "No Vacancy"

Photo by Nelson Amaral

## Come One, Come All to the Rideau Ferry Day!

On Saturday July 27<sup>th</sup> from 11-4pm, please come out to Rideau Ferry at the bridge for a day full of fun, learning and of course great food!

- Face painting
- Kids games and crafts
  - BBQ
- Water testing demonstration
  - Well water testing demo
  - Septic system



- information
- Bass tracking demonstration
- Canoeing demonstration
  - Boat rides
- And much, much more!



## Tip Of The Hat

**Paul VanLuven** electrical work at Dry Dock & Carriage House

**Andy Smith** DFO canvas bags

**Julia Sneyd** Storing MNR Boat during winter months

**Harold Nichol, Ron Lumsden, Tony Davy** storage of Littoral boats

**Gray & Aileen Merriam, June Buckingham, Mike Wirths** Bioblitz volunteers

**Once again BRLA is selling Sun-Mar  
composting toilets  
- with a 15% discount to our members!**

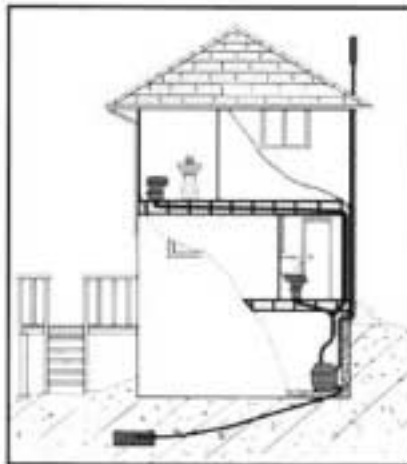
Come see our display at Dry Dock and talk to staff about the benefits of a composting toilet system for your residence. Barbara Robbins, our nutrient management technologist, is trained and knowledgeable in the sizing, operation and maintenance of the Sun Mar products. She is available to answer any questions or concerns you may have, to ensure that you will be completely satisfied and comfortable with your unit. We order directly through Sun-Mar and it will be delivered within a few days to our office or right to your door.

Contact Barbara Robbins at robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca or (613) 272-5136 to order or for more information.

**Why use a composting toilet?**

Composting toilets are one of the best on-site wastewater management technologies for pollution prevention and water conservation. By diverting solids and flush water from your septic system, more than 90% of the pollution to the system is removed – reducing the nutrient load and ultimately allowing for better treatment:

- To prevent costly upgrades to your septic system: many septic systems are inadequate and/or undersized
- To manage wastewater in homes with limited capacity for wastewater disposal
- To conserve water
- To protect environmentally sensitive areas from nutrient and pathogen loading



*A typical Installation with two 1 pint toilets*



If you're planning to buy a Sun-Mar and are not a member now, the 15% discount would cover your membership for 4 years!



**Let's Talk About  
It**

The Centre for Sustainable Watersheds will be hosting a seminar series to discuss different lake/community issues. The program will take place @ RLEIC Thursday evenings, with meet & greet at 7:30pm, presentations starting at 8pm, and an open discussion following.

**Tentative schedule:**

June 27 – Nelson Amaral,  
**Community Monitoring**

July 4 - Barbara Robbins and Jeff Margison  
**Healthy Lakes**

July 11 – Stacy McLean  
**Largemouth Bass  
Tournament Survival Study**

July 18 – Mike McGahern,  
Ottawa Solar & Wind Power  
**Alternative Energy**

July 25 – Rabies Unit  
**Rabies in the Rideau Lakes**

August 1 – Barbara Robbins  
**Septic Systems and  
Composting Toilets**

August 8 – Geof Hall  
**Invasive Species**

August 15 – Erika Kiss and Mark Sunohara  
**Water Quality**

August 22 - Sarah Rosolen and Brent Barr-Taylor  
**Wastewater Garden**

August 29 – Corey Pietryszyn  
**Rideau Lakes 2002 Photo  
Essay**

# Is Your Septic Working Properly?

By Barbara Robbins

A typical septic system has a life span of about 20 years. After this, it may be inadequate at removing nutrients and bacteria, posing a risk to human health and nearby water resources. This type of malfunction may go unnoticed, as it can occur even if the septic system appears to be functioning efficiently. Septic systems on shoreline properties pose an even greater risk, as the distance from treatment area to surface water is shorter. As well, high water levels in the spring will carry contaminants more rapidly and eroding shorelines will decrease the actual distance of the septic system to the water.

## What to do?

- Inspect your septic tank every 2 years and have it pumped every 2-3 years
- Avoid chemical inputs into your septic system; these chemicals destroy friendly bacteria in the septic tank (Alternatively, baking soda, vinegar, and soap will clean almost anything!)
  - Install effluent filters on your system to prevent solids from reaching the septic bed
  - Reduce water usage by installing low flush toilets and water saving devices
  - Keep all solids out of your septic system including tampons, bandages, hair and other non degradable items (install hair traps and food traps in showers and sinks)

**Please come in to RLEIC or contact us to find out what more you can do!**

Contact Barbara at (613) 272-5308 or [robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca](mailto:robbins@sustainablewatersheds.ca) or more information on how to maintain a healthy septic system.

## You don't have to kiss a frog to show it that you care...

Frogs are intimately connected to both terrestrial and aquatic environments and are very susceptible to pollutants in their habitat. Environment Canada created FrogWatch to improve public participation and knowledge in the importance of frogs as sensitive environmental indicators. FrogWatch participants learn to identify the calls of the different frogs and toads in their area and track them throughout their breeding season. We will compile all of the information from participants in the Rideau Lakes area and submit it to Natural Heritage Centre's database. If you would like to improve your frog identification skills, call 1-888-31-FROGS, then press 18 to listen to recordings of frog calls. Frog sounds can also be listened to through Canadian Nature Federation website at [www.cnf.ca/frog/east.html](http://www.cnf.ca/frog/east.html). Or come by Dry Dock to borrow a CD.



Anyone who is interested in participating in this program can sign up at Dry Dock or contact Nelson at 272-5136 or via email at [amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca](mailto:amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca).

## Come to Dry Dock to see our new products!



If you've never been to Dry Dock you'd be surprised at our vast array of **Environmental Friendly products** that are biodegradable and septic safe. If you're looking for

BRLA clothing or gift ideas come and browse the many different articles of clothing. Summer store hours are Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm and Saturday and Sundays 9am to 4pm.



# 3rd Annual Bioblitz a Success!

By Shawn Barnes

Despite uncooperative weather Friday morning, our Bioblitz activities this year were a definite success! The day started with thunderstorms and the cancellation of a planned visit by a grade 7-science class, but even still, over 30 participants and experts braved the weather and showed-up to take part.

One of our volunteer experts, Dr.

Gray Merriam, a retired professor of conservation ecology and environmental science, kept participants entertained for about an hour, discussing the importance of ecology and understanding of environmental issues. By the time Professor Merriam had finished speaking the rain had stopped and participants tramped through the Mill Pond Conservation Area to identify as many species of plants, insects, invertebrates, reptiles, mammals, amphibians, and birds as possible. Some of the rarer

species to the area we observed included a Red-shouldered Hawk, Cerulean Warblers, Eastern Red Spotted Newt, 5 foot Black Rat Snake, Ribbon Snakes, Northern Waterthrush, Indigo Buntings, and



Scarlet Tanagers. We have not yet compiled the full list of what was found, but it looks like we identified over 120 separate species - more than in any

previous year!

On Friday night the weather cleared enough to have an Owl Walk and an Astronomical Observation Session. The wind was a little too strong for optimal owl investigating, but one Barred Owl and a Whip-Poor-Will were heard. On the other hand the night was great for astronomy and we all enjoyed seeing star clusters, and other celestial bodies through Mike

Wirth's amazing 22" diameter telescope!

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the Bioblitz, most importantly our volunteers, Gray Merriam, Aileen Marriam, June Buckingham, and Mike Wirths. Thanks also to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority for allowing us the use of this amazing spot. We will be hosting more birding events, owl walks, and astronomy viewings through the summer with plenty of opportunity for participation.

Please call BRLA at 272-3629 or 272-0299 if interested.



## Fire Assistance Network

The Fire Assistance Network (FAN) is a system of volunteer lake residents dedicated to fire safety on the lake. There are currently three portable water pumps, which will be maintained at the homes of volunteers strategically located around the lake. These pumps will be available for rapid deployment to the location of a fire for the use of trained fire-fighting units. In addition, a powerful water turbine jet-boat is currently in the final stages of being retrofitted for firefighting capabilities. This boat boasts the ability to pressurize five fire hoses while remaining stationary offshore, providing a constant supply of water to even the most inaccessible lake-front property. The FAN is currently looking for volunteers around the lake to be part of a phone network and be on call to transport the portable pumps to the scene. If you are interested in committing to this important endeavour, please contact BRLA for more information.

## ***Birders' Call***



*Artist: Chris Heffernan*

Birding has become a favourite past-time on the lake, and is a perfect opportunity to share in the enjoyment of nature with others. We will be conducting Bird Walks every Monday morning this summer (starting July 1<sup>st</sup>), and along the way, we will be gathering information for the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas 2001-2005. This is our second year of participation in the program, which will chart the breeding distributions of more than 300 species province wide. As the Rideau Lakes area is home to several rare species, including the Red-Shouldered Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Cerulean Warbler, Red-Headed Woodpecker, and Bald Eagle, this census will help us identify important breeding areas for these species. As locations for the walks will be rotating, come visit Dry Dock, or contact Chris for more information: 272-5136 Barred\_Owl2002@yahoo.com

We are also gathering information on nesting birds to answer important questions such as breeding distributions, nesting habitat, and factors affecting the success or failure of a nest. If you have a nest around your home, or know the location of a nest please contact us so we can tell you how to monitor it non-intrusively. Most nests can be easily checked on a weekly basis, however some species can become stressed, aggressive or abandon a nest if the proper care is not taken. Please visit Dry Dock or contact Chris (see above) for more details.

## ***Tell Us More! Landowner Survey on Water Management***

In the more urban areas around the lake, most properties are dependent on groundwater as their primary source of drinking water. And in these areas, improper storm water management can often lead to the contamination of groundwater causing related health risks. As part of our storm water runoff investigation (see May 2002 issue), the *Centre* is planning to conduct a door-to-door survey in the towns of Portland and Rideau Ferry. Questions will be related to several aspects of water management including property land use, well details, water quality and supply, and sewage disposal systems. By providing an accurate assessment of urban water management, this survey will help our investigators determine appropriate mitigation strategies. We acknowledge that local knowledge is a valuable resource of information and your participation in the survey will be greatly appreciated.

For more information contact Mark at 272-5136 or sunohara@sustainablewatersheds.ca

## ***Is it just me, or is it getting warm around here?***

PlantWatch is a volunteer monitoring program developed by Environment Canada to help identify changes in plant ecology that may indicate greater environmental change. Participants record flowering times for white water lilies and report dates to researchers at the *Centre*. We will then submit your data, along with other information gathered throughout the area, to Environment Canada. You can check Environment Canada's website to see maps showing bloom dates across Canada.

Anyone interested in participating in PlantWatch can sign up at Dry Dock or contact Nelson at 272-5136 or amaral@sustainablewatersheds.ca.



# *How's the water along your shoreline?*

Come visit us on the BRLA pontoon boat and find out about your water quality instantaneously! We will be monitoring water quality along the shoreline of Rideau Lake every weekend this summer with new field testing equipment and providing you, the interested residents, with the results on the spot.



## **Look for the BRLA Pontoon Boat on Weekends!**

Then come aboard or talk to gunwale-side to the knowledgeable staff.

- Learn about the new equipment and what it is doing for you!
- See water quality results immediately and find out what they mean
- Find out about the benefits of membership
- Find out how to start an environmental monitoring program in your own bay
- Ask questions, give feedback and pick up information packages!

## ***Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF)***

Last fall the RLEF initiative prompted some extra contributions toward new water testing equipment and led to a successful application by Upper Rideau Lake Association for Trillum Funding. Together, these resources made possible the purchase of the necessary equipment to support the exciting new program explained above. And it was instrumental in BRLA's ability to develop new cost effective monitoring programs for the Upper Rideau.

- Your donations always count, year-around.*
- We appreciate your generosity.*
- Tax receipts are mailed promptly.*