



# HIBOU NEWS

News from the Friends of Hibou

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Register for scheduled hikes:  
<https://www.greysauble.on.ca/waiver/covid-19-guidelines-and-waiver-for-guided-hikes-friend-of-hibou/>



**Bob and Marie Knapp** founded the Friends of Hibou in partnership with GSCA, under the enthusiastic leadership of John Cottrill and Chris Hachey in 2013.

*We aspire to enhance the recreational and natural appreciation of Hibou Conservation Area. Friends of Hibou is run totally by volunteers.*

The committee consists of volunteers: Bob Knapp, Marie Knapp, Krista McKee, Don Sankey, Barry Lewin, Susan McGowan and Brian Tannahill

## The Interpretive Trail

Article by Bob Knapp

Across from the main entrance to the Hibou Beach, you see a sign guiding you to the Interpretive Trail. I find it surprising that many frequent Hibou visitors have not explored the Hibou property on the other side of the road. Except for the sound of nearby traffic walkers are intrigued by the step into wilderness.

As would be expected the wetland changes with the season, the rainfall and the water levels of Georgian Bay each year. We were surprised at the flooding after the very heavy downpours this spring and summer. But that is the purpose of a wet land. The water level soon fell.

The Boardwalk is meant to protect you from the water levels. Gravel is on much of the trail system to reduce muddy spots. It doesn't always work, but we go with the flow of nature. The numbered signs are meant to point you to descriptions either using your phones or using the brochures available at the entrances to the trail. We are indeed fortunate to have such a unique wetland so close to Owen Sound.



## Conservation Area Etiquette

1. Clean up after yourselves. Pack out what you bring in, including pet waste. Read all signage – Observe signs noting permitted uses and trail rules.
2. Keep dogs on a leash and under control at all times.
3. Stay on the trail – Follow the marked trail, respect private property and trail closures.
4. Do not damage live trees or plants.
5. Please be respectful to other visitors and remember some are there to enjoy the quiet. No fires are allowed.
6. No camping anywhere on Hibou Conservation Property.
7. Do not disturb or collect wildlife. Plan ahead! Please check the GSCA website for any updates. Be prepared to pay for parking and use the washroom facilities provided.
8. Observe all COVID-19 Protocols. Leave only your thanks and take nothing but photographs.

## Planned Hikes for Fall

Together with Grey Sauble Conservation, Friends of Hibou are again offering guided hikes/walks this fall. More may be offered later in the season depending on weather and Covid so watch our web site and Face Book page

All hikes will begin at the parking lot by the Pump House at the Southern entrance to the trails. Covid Restrictions will be followed. Please have a mask handy and keep a safe distance from others.

### Register for scheduled hikes:

<https://www.greysauble.on.ca/waiver/covid-19-guidelines-and-waiver-for-guided-hikes-friend-of-hibou/>

**Sept 20 Monday 10:00am till 12:00** Adapted Forest bathing walk with Marie Knapp

**Sept 30 Thursday 9:30 till 12:00** A guided hike on the Interpretive Trail with Bob Knapp

**Oct 7 Thursday 9:30 till 12:00** A guided hike on the Interpretive trail with Barry Lewin.



## Thank you

To those who respond to the call for volunteers and work hard to keep Hibou ready for use.

To those who keep their dogs on leash as requested, who keep the beach area clean and pick up litter when they see it.

To those who pleasantly share the area keeping a safe distance from others and showing respect

To those who pay for parking knowing the money is spent wisely to keep Hibou operating.

To those who love and enjoy Hibou and aim to keep it a happy and relaxing place to be.

To Don Sankey and Bob Knapp for the photos.

To Susan for refreshing the round flower bed.

## Summer Is Ending

Article by Susan McGowan

It has been a summer of record heat and humidity this summer with temperatures ranging over 25 degrees Celsius for on twenty days in August. What better place to be, if you can, than at Hibou Conservation area swimming or walking the trails. It was breezy on Monday and I took a stroll around



to see what was happening in the nature world.

I saw some colourful wild plants. The asters (left) and goldenrods (right) are in bloom at this time of year. Although many of these flowers look similar, there are actually 15 asters and 16 goldenrods listed by field naturalists, in our area!



Touch-me-not (left) is also known as jewel weed and grows in moist areas. Hummingbirds, bees and butterflies visit the flowers. The stems are delicate and translucent. When ripe, the seeds spring open, tossing the seed far away from the plant.



Boneset (right) grows in damp areas and has the distinction of the stem appearing to grow right through the leaf.

Ferns are one of the oldest living organisms on earth and over 40 varieties grow in the Grey Bruce area. I recognized the sensitive fern, with its broad fronds. It occurs in damp areas in shade or partial sunlight. On your left is Sensitive Fern.



Turtlehead (right) is wetland plant with white flowers arranged along a main stem and can reach over a meter tall. The name comes from the silhouette of the flower appearing to be a turtle's head. Check it out. Several plants were on the west side of the main boardwalk.

But moving into autumn means that plants are slowing down and many have produced seeds for next year. Seeds and nuts provide food for birds and mammals such as ruffed grouse, wild turkeys, squirrels and deer. And of course, the seeds are then distributed in the droppings, also known as

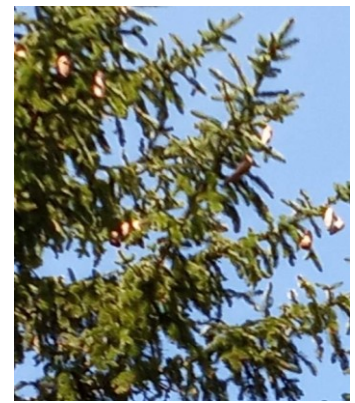
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“scat”, of the animal. Seeds are surrounded by a protective husk or cone, which over time dries to release the ripe seed. Seed crops are produced in volume every few years.



Cones are a food source for squirrels and chipmunks and they often drop them and cache them in huge piles to eat over the winter.

Two species of spruce are in the beach area, white spruce (left) with smaller cones and Norway spruce (right) which has long cones.



Pine cones are familiar to us all, not only the favourites of squirrels. Cones are also collected from the ground and used for crafts. Austrian pine cones pictured on the left. Eastern white cedar (right) is one of the most common native trees in the Grey Bruce and is so versatile, growing on both damp and dry sites. It seems to be a good year for cedar seed, which provide food for many birds and mammals.



White birch (left) is another very common native tree in Ontario, and very recognizable with the white papery bark. Its seed container is referred to as a catkin. When ripe and dry the seeds fall or are picked up by the wind. Glossy buckthorn (right) is an invasive shrub which monopolizes growing space, crowding out native plants. Nevertheless, it produces a fruit which is eaten by birds and mammals. The seed is then distributed in the droppings, increasing the spread of the plant.



So another season has passed at Hibou and soon the leaves will be turning colour, and our residents, the frogs, turtles, raccoons, and porcupines will be preparing to hibernate until spring. The birds are starting to flock already to migrate to warmer climates for the winter. Try to take some time to enjoy our trails through the autumn and see what you can discover.