

Annual Report of the Chaos Corners Centre for the Study of One Thing & Another

Year: 2015. Personnel: Frederick W. & Aleta Karstad Schueler. Headquarters: Canada: Ontario: Grenville County: Bishops Mills: 4 & 6 St Lawrence St. (K0G 1T0) 44.87156° N 75.70095° W (100 m homesite)
Vision: Sustainable Human habitation of the Earth Net Financial Assets: \$5.28 CDN Mission: Documentation & amelioration of ecological change resulting from Human habitation of Canada.

Seasonal Greetings to friends and family,

It's been a busy year, with lots of travel (twice to New Brunswick & once to British Columbia) and we are resettled in our family "Weirs House" home in Bishops Mills – after 3 years of living in our work cottage "Piper's House" next door – hoping to accomplish our sedentary winter's work in what remains of this mild El Niño winter.

The big family event of the year has been Jennifer & Rory's purchase of a house in nearby Kemptville, so that Rory can walk to the commuter bus for his job in Ottawa (a job which appreciates his work & gives him raises) while Jennifer has the car. Their house is also an easy walk to two parks, a grocery store, the library, and a moms & toddlers drop-in centre, all very much enjoyed by three-year-old Sam. Once or twice a week Aleta accompanies him to enjoy those amenities, giving his mom a break. You can read about [one of these days in town as a comment on a report on an alternative vision of childcare](#).

Because of our failure to find a situation where we're working within an organization, these annual letters have become something like the annual reports of a corporation: the **Executive Summary** is the two paragraphs above, followed by a listing of groups we've worked with, internet links, a narrative of what happened & a sidebar of discoveries, then, labeled as appendices, a planning document, a list of publications & reports, the burbling of the year's songs & verses, and a report on the winter solstice.

We have no forecast of what 2016 may hold – the winter will be spent in reroofing the woodshed, high-tech replacement of the windows in Weirs House, painting, curation, data management, writing, and Mudpuppy Nights around home (with excursions planned to Muskoka & Lake Erie). We may spend April trying out a protocol for assessing Critical Habitat for Chorus Frogs, and then redoing 1973 & 1983 Chorus Frog surveys in NW Ontario, and continue west to a tentatively planned survey of Texada Island in the Strait of Georgia. We've talked about doing a Transcanada survey/book project about carbon sequestration in mature communities & wetland soils... and we've got to get **Fragile Inheritance** going as a name & bank account, since nobody seems to want to run it as an actual organization... and perhaps a rewriting of Arthur Clarke's **Freshwater Molluscs of Canada** will emerge as a project, and throw everything else aside...

So we forage forth into a world bent on undoing climate change without abandoning its spendthrift ways, and close with a quote from Fred's e-mail signature which we struggle to emulate: "*[The] two fundamental steps of scientific thought - the conjecture and refutation of Popper - have little place in the usual conception of intelligence. If something is to be dismissed as inadequate, it is surely not Darwin [, whose] works manifest the activity of a mind seeking for wisdom, a value which conventional philosophy has largely abandoned.*"¹

read only as much of the rest of this as you feel you need to,

¹ Ghiselen, 1969. *Triumph of the Darwinian Method*, p 237. - see also Romans 12:20-21

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Fred + Aleta". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the main text block.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS: [South Nation Conservation](#) (auditory monitoring survey, both on Fish & Wildlife committee, which Fred chairs), [New Brunswick Museum](#) (BiotaNB artist & artist's husband), [Adirondacks to Algonquin Collaborative](#) (field work, organization, & analysis of the Hwy 401 porosity project), [Ontario Herp Atlas](#) (1195 records contributed, steering, publication, & technical committees), [Ottawa Field Naturalists Club](#) (Conservation committee).

Database evaluation for 2015Dec23/0154:15: 119,705 total records, 2766 records flipped for DFO; 849 unflipped Unionid records, 524 NO:Unionidae records, 2552 unprocessed waypoint records; 6031 records from 2015.

INTERNET PRESENCE: Our [main blog](#) is has been nothing like daily this year, [Vulnerable Watersheds](#) has been relatively inactive, because we've been moving too fast to paint or survey sites along pipelines, [Mudpuppy Night – and on facebook](#) – continues to attract viewers, though we have yet to have any ice so far this year. Aleta manages the [NatureList](#), the [Ontario Road Ecology Group list](#), and her father's [“Daily Catch”](#) blog. Fred hopes to ramp up his contributions to [Quiet Curatorial Time](#) & Aleta to her - And of course the mercenary aim of all this is to get you to study the possibility of buying considerable numbers of items from our [stock of hard-copy books](#) and the [Library of One Thing and Another](#) – especially the 2016 calendars of paintings of trees [“Our breath is in their leaves.”](#) or the slightly less plausible but highly educational [“Tiny Dinosaurs Explore Canada.”](#) We're both on [facebook](#), which we alternately regard as a superb venue for discussion & education, and as a black hole into which time is sucked in unlimited quantities.

Fred wrote on 15 September 2015: "Well, by now it's clear that that the theme of 2015 has been rushing - both to meet impossible demands and so fast that much was left undone. In the winter we were rushed by vast numbers thronging to Mudpuppy Nights, and external demands that meant that we only had about five days all winter to work on the data and specimens brought back from our 2014 pipeline trips.

"Then we spent the spring frog season surveying all our local roads for going-to-breeding Leopard Frogs for an experiment that went wrong due to a whim of the weather, and also to monitor calling from wetlands managed by South Nation Conservation, testing hypotheses about which species would occur where. The inevitable progress of the spring also contained struggles among alternative plans for the gardens, and a survey of snake emergence from hibernation and culvert-worthiness in our Highway 401 project with the Algonquin to Adirondack Coalition.

“Among the 401 field work and gardening, the end of June arrived too soon! Off to northwestern New Brunswick for a musical canoe festival and remote internetless bioblitz, home again as Cow-Parsnip and Poison Parsnip bloomed along Autoroute 20 and Hwy 401, blue screens of death as Fred's laptop developed a passion for commas, and then his desktop computer declared that its hard drive was no more.

“Hardly having had time to repair the computer and pack for the next trip, we were off to Toronto to help try to apply a tropical model to Canadian biodiversity for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. We dropped off our little Boler trailer with Buwaldas east of Toronto on our way there, then picked it up again and headed north to *Cepaea* snails along Junction Creek, west past unvisited friends in a rush to arrive in Edmonton for a planned Karstad family gathering. But Aleta's parents were unable to come to Edmonton, so a mid-course correction took us to the Milk River (looking for introduced *Ligumia recta*), and to Kelowna to see the parents in their 'Retirement Resort,' check trail cameras, & to pick up a couple of family treasures – a Kenyan Zanzibar chest for Jennifer,

& Aleta's grandmother's china cabinet. It was good to find them settling in nicely and Aleta's mother's health improving. There we finally slowed down for a few days, camping for a whole week beside Aleta's sister Karen & husband's motorhome outside the resort.

“After the postponed family gathering with the Edmonton Karstads, and some sisterly plain air time, we headed back across the Prairies and Ontario checking out the *Lampsilis radiata/siliquoidea* Lamp Mussel complex for Isabel Hannes Ph.D. project, to arrive in Ottawa in time for a libel trial where Fred testified that those who study a subject are likely to know more about it than those who don't, and Aleta experimented with the craft of court artist, sketching continuously through four days of trial.

“Upon arrival home, we found huge new Potatoes and blighted Tomatoes, giant heritage Squash hidden in our jungle garden, which was swathed in trailing Nasturtiums, and discovered that a blast of lightning had taken out both the centre of a neighbour's house & various input/output aspects of the not-unplugged-before-we-left new desktop computer. Jennifer and Rory were actively searching for a house to buy in Kemptville, and we left them pretty soon to meet our colleague Isabelle Picard in Sherbrooke, Quebec, and rush along the St Lawrence and down the St John to Canadian Herpetology Society meetings where we gave a paper entitled 'Humanity & herpetofauna: what is the nature of the relationship?' before further plain air scamperings, and another winter when we again plan to operate 'in a context of having resolved to stay home and get the houses and yard into a socially-acceptable level of orderliness,' and to get to 'sorting and cataloguing through the rest of the winter.'”

On our return from Saint John we continued work along the 401, painted some enormous Burr Oaks, waited until 18 October for frost, attended various meetings, and watched the partially frozen creek melt on 1 December, helped Jenn & Rory move, pretty well discharged our debts with the long-awaited money from the sale of the Store, suffered through massive, long-delayed dentistry (Fred) & a debilitating cold (Aleta), picked caterpillars & slugs off the streets of Bishops Mills into the tail-end of December, and stoked and set the Solstice fire.

Discoveries in the course of the 2015 scramble have included the rare Nosey Pondmussel *Ligumia nasuta* & the even rarer narrow-gauge snail *Acella haldemani* in Fishing Lake, several previously unknown populations in Ontario and BC of the beautiful introduced landsnail *Cepaea nemoralis*, the generalization that modern bureaucracies operate on the principle of "*guilty until grudgingly acknowledged to possibly be innocent*," that Yellow Sweet-clover (*Melilotus officinalis*) replaces *M. alba* on dry and disturbed soils and in the southern Prairies, that plastic toy dinosaurs can be photo-snapped into charming narratives, glittering blue masses of Flea Beetles on shoreline plants along the South Saskatchewan River, an apparent decline in Leopard Frog populations at the south end of Lake Manitoba, wooly black caterpillars of Giant Leopard Moths attempting the crossing of the 401 in the Frontenac Arch, and twice (but not the third time) the nest where a pair of really free-range Chickens were laying their eggs.

Appendix 1: If you're interested in contrasts, you can compare the above account of what we did this year, with what we expected to be doing (note that all the items in *bold italics* did not happen!)

fred's facebook status 10 Feb 2015: Right now we're in the process of making the house more habitable by getting all the *drift bagged and drift residue and plant specimens up from our pipeline project to the trailer/museum*, and I'll be sorting and cataloguing through the rest of the winter, as well as writing up a review of an Environmental Assessment for a mal-planned dump, entering data from

Hwy 401 from last summer, **flipping co-ordinates from a big roadkill file, and mapping the spread of invasives through a few local wetlands**. Also, Aleta is teaching oil painting at St Lawrence College in Brockville, as well as trying to **finish Fragile Crossings paintings**, milk the Goat, and disperse the eggs laid by the hens.

We still haven't been paid for the Store, but progress of a sort is being made on that front, and Rory has a job as a documentation manager at <http://www.shopify.com/> so the kids will become a source, rather than a sink, for funds. After having been a sub-minimum academic wage slave for a few years, it's a bit stunning for him to be whisked into what's not only a relaxed but high-speed silicon-valleyesque work environment (e.g. free beer with lunch), but also to be generously paid for his work, and to be, at 30, older than most of his fellow workers.

In the spring we're going to have to listen locally for the Leopard Frogs that seemed to be wiped out by last winter's anoxia, and we're thinking of doing a Lake Ontario/GTA drift and listening sweep, **including Patera appressa in Trenton and drift at the Royal Botanical Gardens. In late May, Isabel Hannes, who's doing a Ph.D. at Buffalo on the Lampsilis radiata/siliquoidea complex, will be sampling mussels around here**, and with Isabelle (Picard) in Quebec, and then we'll be off to New Brunswick for the New Brunswick Museum's bioblitz, and then we're working up plans to do **some more pipeline stuff along the Ottawa Valley, including canoeing the Mattawa River - mostly to see if there's any Unionid species left behind from the heroic days of being the outlet for the upper lakes, but also paintings and Chinese Mystery Snails and this and that. AND we've made noises to Steve Marks about going to Windsor for the Ojibway Prairie blitz in August, which would also involve some butler-snaking around in Skunks Misery**, as well as looking for *Ligumia nasuta* in various suspected waterbodies. Tanya Pulfer is looking into mobilizing **a citizen science sweep through the Oak Ridges Moraine for Unionids**.

All of this is set in a context of having resolved to **stay home and get the houses and yard into a socially-acceptable level of orderliness**, Aleta's parents' precarious health, monitoring roadkill along the 401, writing up a bunch of projects, **Aleta's sister visiting for painting excursions**, planting extensive *Parsnip*, Squash, and *Gobo* gardens, teaching the grandson how to climb trees and identify snails, and having assured Joyce Cook that we'll **cut down and up all the Ash trees along their lane** when the Emerald Ash Borer arrives. It's perhaps fortunate that one of our few social skills is canceling-out (items in **bold/italics** did not happen).

Appendix 2: Public Effusions in 2015

Anonymous [David Shanahan]. 2015. **Invasive Species legislation passed**. *North Grenville Times*, 11 Nov 2015, page 8. http://issuu.com/ngtimes/docs/november_11_issue_45_north_grenvil (accessed 24 November 2015). FWS quotes: "This kind of legislation has the potential to rescue vegetation management from what I call the 'theorem of the stupid worker' - in which management holds that employees are too dull to learn the difference between desirable and undesirable species of plants or animals, so they're just sent out to whack or spray all species indiscriminately, instead of, for example, bush-hogging the invasive Cathartic Buckthorn along Bolton Road while leaving the native Canada Plum... The devil is always in the details of this kind of legislation - and then in the gumption put into enforcement and action. Agencies and governments refer to 'rapid detection - rapid response' in their planning for invasive species, but it takes real field time, real familiarity with the native biota, and real attention paid to naturalists' social media to do the rapid detection, and it takes a bureaucracy able to wrap its mind around real situations to do the rapid response."

Forsyth, R. G., M. J. Oldham, & F. W. Schueler. 2015. ***Patera appressa* (Say, 1821), an introduced land snail in Ontario, Canada (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Polygyridae)**. Check List 11(2): 1583. [17 February 2015]. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15560/11.2.1583>

- Forsyth, R. G., M. J. Oldham, E. Snyder, F. W. Schueler, & R. Layberry. 2015. *Forty years later: distribution of the introduced Heath Snail, Xerolenta obvia in Ontario, Canada (Mollusca: Gastropoda: Hygromiidae)*. Check List 11(4): 1711. [7 August 2015]. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15560/11.4.1711>
- Karch, Mandy, Fred Schueler, and Cameron Smith. 2015. *Highway 401 (Gananoque To Brockville) Species-at-risk Ecology Project Final Report 2014-2015*. unpublished report by Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative to Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund Project #: 1-14-A2A. February 2015. 37 pp.
- Karstad, Aleta. 2015. *Bend in the Assiniboine River*. North Grenville Times, 1 April 2015:17
- Karstad, Aleta. 2015. **letter to the editor**. North Grenville Times 3(48):5 2 December 2015. "I am an author, and I think a lot about books - mine, and other people's. And books that I've read and loved, and passed on to other folks to enjoy -"
- Robinson, Nancy. 2015. *When is a Weed Not a Weed?* Environmentally Yours (column), The Trading Post, Yarmouth Nova Scotia 10(18):2 (1 photograph by Aleta Karstad).
- Ross, Cecily. 2015. *In the Muck with Mudpuppies*. On Nature Winter 2015 55(4):30-34 (page 30, oil painting by Aleta Karstad) <http://www.vdocshop.com/doc/on-nature-magazine/onnaturewinter2015/2015112301/#30>
- Schueler, Fred. 2015. *Another Winter of Mudpuppy Nights in Oxford Mills*. North Grenville Times 3(2):3 14 January 2015. (cover photo by Aleta Karstad).
- Schueler, Frederick W. 2015. *An episode of black and white Birds*. Trail & Landscape 49(3):115-116.
- Schueler, Frederick. 2015. *Anecdotes of Hibernial Anoxia*. Trail & Landscape 49(2):44-49. *expanded version of* Schueler, Frederick. 2015. *Anecdotes of Winter Rivers devoid of Oxygen*. Ontario Rivers Alliance Blog, posted by Linda Heron on Sunday, January 18th, 2015 - <http://www.ontarioriversalliance.ca/anecdotes-winter-rivers-devoid-oxygen-frederick-schueler/>
- Schueler, Frederick W. 2015. *Comments on Technical Support Document #4 – BIOLOGY – December 2014*. report to Capital Region Citizens Coalition for the Protection of the Environment, 17 Feb 2015, 21 pp.
- Schueler, Frederick W. 2015. *comments on "Recovery Strategy for the Western Chorus Frog (Pseudacris triseriata), Great Lakes / St. Lawrence – Canadian Shield population, in Canada – 2015."* unpublished report to Recovery Planning, Environment Canada. 13 Dec 2015. 21 pp.
- Schueler, Frederick. 2015. *Principles of Riverine Health*. Ontario Rivers Alliance Blog, posted by Linda Heron on Sunday, January 18th, 2015 - <http://www.ontarioriversalliance.ca/principles-riverine-health-frederick-schueler/>
- Schueler, Frederick W. & Aleta Karstad. 2015. *Comments on the "IUCN Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas."* report to International Union for the Conservation of Nature, October 2015. 6 pp.
- Schueler, Frederick W., & Aleta Karstad. 2015. *Humanity & herpetofauna: what is the nature of the relationship?* platform presentation, Canadian Herpetological Society, 2nd annual meeting, Saint John, New Brunswick, 19-20 Sept 2015. **ABSTRACT:** Society starts with a cultural predisposition against herps, but while we may be strongly predisposed in their favour, we need arguments that can reach non-herpetological communities. Our suggestion is that the anthropocentric metaphor "all men are brothers" be extended to treat all living creatures as relations, emphasising herpetofauna because they are formerly-scorned taxa. It's a platitude that humanity evolved as small inbred hunter-gatherer bands with an ethos of reciprocal altruism & mutual subordination, but when the written record of civilized social relationships begins, pretty much everything was organized in a top-down hierarchical way. As philosophers began to think about things, they began to advocate reciprocal altruism & mutual subordination, and even went so far as the metaphor that "all men are brothers." Darwin showed that all of Life is a single family, making herpetological (and other) conservation a family obligation. Accelerated resource exploitation and global warming provide compelling instrumental reasons to do what we've long been saying is right through love of our beasts and their habitats. We need unified ways for humanity, as a species, to relate to other taxa, and we suggest that atlases are an encouraging start in unifying human concern about herps.

Appendix 3: Poems & songs & O2B from 2015 & the tale-end of 2014

Canadian biogeography

When your Gastropods are acorns, and your clams are plastic spoons,
the Bananaconda coils by the roadside in the noon.
They call it the New River because the tide that it receives
was not postglacial welling-up from deep refugia.

So tread the northern border of the boreal extent
and turn the empty rocks to see how far the Crayfish went.
The Duck may carry Duckweed on its migratory toe,
but aquatic creatures only spread where confluent waters flowed.

the scientific review of fiction

any kind of literature
published without an abstract
probably isn't worth reading¹

- 1) every poem is, of course, its own abstract. There's also a good chance that a prose, or sub-prose, document is worthless if the abstract is styled an "executive summary."
-

The Musselhead's Song

Oh, give me a drought, when the mussels stick out of the mud of Bear Brook and Greens Creek.
I'll whistle a song as I squelch along, and determine their range in a week

*Squelch, squelch, squelch along, if you're not stuck then nothing's gone wrong
When the Champlain Sea's coming up to your knees, then your mussel foot better be strong.*

Then give me a drought, when the mussels stick out of Assiniboine Red River mud.
I'll whistle my song as I get along, and determine their range in a month.

*Squelch, squelch, squelch along, if you're not stuck then nothing's gone wrong
When Lake Agassiz's coming up to your knees, then your mussel foot better be strong.*

Oh, give me a June, when the flutes are in tune, and Tobique is exposed to the Sun,
I'll wander once more on the shinglely shore, as the river's song's fiddled and sung.

*Stroke, stroke, stroke, and draw, as flotillas go by, pitch and yaw,
Isostatic rebound brought up all of this ground, and the pearl shell is there on the bar.*

Oh, the musselhead knows, when there's mud twixt his toes, and blind groping's the optimal way,
That each naiad he finds is the finest design evolution has ever produced.

*Squelch, squelch, squelch along - "Think like a Muskrat"'s our song -
When postglacial ooze fills your boots and your shoes, then your mussel foot gets you along.*

Subject: observed this morning
Date: Tue, 30 Jun 2015 17:00:11 -0400
From: Fred Schueler <bckcdb@istar.ca>
To: karstad@pinicola.ca

"I'm starving!" is the baby Raven's only form of speech
"Grk, over here," the parent says, "there's food down
on the beach."
"I cannot leave this tree - growrrrrk - it would be too
much trouble."
"O, little one you cannot live your life within a bubble."



"Scholarly tones and song" the Raven says onto his wife
"Are surely interrupted by this reproductive strife."
"Wait until September dear, when we'll fly upside down,
and say 'gluk' to each other in the Pine tree's topmost crown.

***The Bowl of Food is Dog's Best Friend,
It stokes her inner fires,
So she can get right up and bark
At those she thinks are liars.***

facebook, 29 March 2015 - George Ruetters: Keep her away from Parliament Hill She'll go hoarse!

***the urban forest is a place
where businesses may flourish -
even if the forest floor's
raked up and bagged as garbage.***

(for Ottawa 27 Dec 2014 - sorry about the approximate rhyme)

a 2015 campaign song based on Stan Rogers 'The House of Orange':

I took back my hand and I showed him the door:
no dollar of mine would I part with today
or vote for a party that sucks up the land
and throws it as profit away.

We fled Vietnam wearing all that we owned
were called draft evaders and hippies and more
but built a new life here in love with the land:
coulees, pingos, and boggy lakeshores

Our kids have no party tricks, none can support
Anthropocentrism by any name
"buy this" or "watch that" scheme can't matter at all
When climate change is the big game

And meanwhile the middle class pleads *status quo*,
while Tar Sands are ground into grim toxic goo
and wetlands are drained when we know they should grow
sequestering carbon for good.

It's cruel corporate greedsters who spurn the fair path:
A liveable world we could have at their will.
Since the day that Arrhenius first did the math,
They've denied & bribed as they've drilled.

Now they cry out for money and wail at the door
"Resource" or "development," all of it's shame,
for the country is broken when rivers are dammed
and farmland is 905'd o'er.

No penny of mine will I add to their fray.
"Economy first!" they will cry out in vain,
green is the colour the land ought to be
- so throw over both red and the orange.
King Steve, and the red, and the orange.

(905 is the new telephone area code around Toronto, which is an Ontario metaphor for fiscally well-off socially & environmentally indifferent faux-con suburbanism)

7 Nov 2015 (inspired by Mr Harpers parting message of congratulations to the Civil Service):

Hypocrisy, that golden gala girl,
telling politicians what to feel.
From dazzled lips the sound bites fly,
'crosst facebook and TV,
like rolling farts the poobahs speak
fluent hypocrisy -
Oh, Canada, fling verbal bling to thee,
so governed by purest hypocrisy...

“the tiny mind, the tiny mind, it is a fertile bird - but all of its offspring are intellectual turds.” facebook response to something about the CPC.

24 October 2015 - Catherine Morris: What I see most of in the litter here (Burnstown, ON) are curled-up specimens of this kind of millipede (it's late October... nothing is very lively) so I was surprised to see this millipede moving slowly when I lifted the dead leaves above it... Turns out that it's HEADLESS! But it was still making that metachronal movement of its legs as it walked and it was able to rear up. **Clayton Shearer:** Your millipede is in the family Parajulidae, from what I can see. These creatures have high diversity at higher ranks, than most of the insects.

Fred Schueler: Oh to be a headless Julid
walking in the autumn woods
brains are vastly over-rated
zombie millipedes are good.

Subject: Glance Reflections - poem

Date: Wed, 11 Nov 2015 13:57:47 -0500

From: Aleta Karstad <karstad@pinicola.ca>

To: Jennifer Tanner <jennifer.tanner@hotmail.ca>, Rory Tanner
<roryjtanner@gmail.com>, Frederick Schueler <bckcdb@istar.ca>

Glance Reflections on Returning Home

Jennifer's glance above the sink
Confirmed entrapment
In the childhood home of
Unintended
Unrealized
Abandonment

She broke the mirror and escaped

Joyfully and at long last
Into a house
Like the perfect wedding dress that promised
Ten years ago
That she would live in Grace

=====

Missing the kitchen cabinet mirror
Above the sink
My expectant familiar
Glances
Rebuffed

The closed eyelid
Not looking back at me

Four screws and a chopstick
Mounted the mirror
And today
My glance meets my own eyes again

In that familiar place
Above the kitchen sink
I see myself
Returning home
For the seventh time

Subject: **the phone has been a-popping....**
Date: Mon, 07 Dec 2015 14:59:33 -0500
From: Fred Schueler <bckcdb@istar.ca>
To: karstad@pinicola.ca

**...while you have been shopping.
Isabelle is seeking funds to survey
southern Chorus Frogs this printemps,
So maybe we'll head westward later
wallowing in chorus data,
having made EC abashed of
unrealistic ways.**

O2B riddles on species of trees

Oh to be a greyish *Betula*,
Oh to bear popular leaves,
giving those New England oldfields
just the tangly twigs they need

Oh to be *alleghaniensis*
Gold-fringed pillar of the north,
Finest of the old-growth features
Spun out to veneer the south.

Oh to take a purple August
When the summer swamps arise,
Giving up a scarlet autumn
As unconquerable roots survive.

Oh, to be an epicormic!
Manitoba leads the way
with its *Quercus macrocarpa*
dressing up in lobed display.

Oh to stand above the Maples,
towering over Beech and Ash,
Spreading arms of dark endurance
As the scores of decades pass.

Oh to curl with coils of fire,
Oh to sled across the snow,
Oh to burble scarce-sweet gallons,
And surmount white water's flow.

EOBase Narrative - beginning 10 January 2015. - filtered by YEAR="2015".AND. ("poem"\$SHOW_CAUGHT.OR."song"\$SHOW_CAUGHT)

<p>10 January 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Grenville County: Oxford-on-Rideau: Bishops Mills:4 & 6 St Lawrence St. (100m ard homesite), 31B/13, 44.87156N 75.70095W TIME: 1645. AIR TEMP: -11 ca, light overcast, breezy. HABITAT: rural village, shallow soil limestone plain. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. 2015/002/c, <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> (Starling) (Bird). 16 adult, seen, song. in tight line on hydro wire at Weirs House.</p>	<p>Oh, to be a winter Starling sitting up upon the line, looking out for seedy roadsides - Where is there is something to find?</p>
<p>25 January 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Grenville County: Augusta: Land'o Nod/Merrickville Rds. (100m auditory station), 44.78472N 75.76563W TIME: 1219. AIR TEMP: -13°C, sunny, calm. HABITAT: oldfield, small Pines & scrub, mixed forest, Pine plantation. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/006/b, visit (event). natural history, driveby, song. roadside branches slashed off all along Land'o Nod Road.</p>	<p>Oh to be a roadside whacker, Oh to shred the Scottish Pine. A municipal brush hogger Grinds along bereft of mind.</p>
<p>8 March 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Grenville County: Oxford-on-Rideau: Nutrient-depletion Glade, 0.2 km S Bishops Mills. (50m glade), 44.87094N 75.70065W TIME: 1345. AIR TEMP: 0°C, snowing, breezy. HABITAT: shallow/bare soil limestone flats among Thuja clumps. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. FWS15Mar081345/a, <i>Thuja occidentalis</i> (Eastern White Cedar) (Plant). 1/dominant tree, sapling, forage, poem. foliage flexible as cutting entangled trunk SE of glade. [I was investigating the temperatures at which the foliage changed from flexible to brittle]</p>	<p>Despite good hay the <i>Thuja</i> is the branch Goats choose to chew. They go for it as eagerly as all the wild Deer do.</p>
<p>7 April 2015 - (at home) TIME: 1225. AIR TEMP: 3°C, sunny, breezy. HABITAT: rural village, shallow soil limestone plain. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. 2015/036/aa, <i>Sayornis phoebe</i> (Eastern Phoebe) (Bird). 1(+?) call, heard, song. calling from all around.</p>	<p>Oh to be <i>Sayornis phoebe</i>, demarcator of the spring, voicing the conclusive message that Insects are on the wing.</p>
<p>26 April 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Leeds County: Elizabethtown: Highway 29/3.4 km ESE Tincap. (25m waypoint), 31B/12, 44.60487N 75.71726W TIME: 1209:34. AIR TEMP: 8°C, cloudy, breezy. HABITAT: flooded field/dense Typha marsh/ gravelpit. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/073/g, <i>Pseudacris 'brown-maculata'</i> (Great Lakes-StLawrence Chorus Frog) (herp). index2 call, heard, driveby, song. WAYPT/155, small chorus from pond SW of traditional marsh, which continues to be filled, heard in noisy driveby.</p>	<p>Brockville, land of desolation, Where the Chorus Frogs decline: Fill the marsh & cut the swamp down, We are jerks and that is fine.</p>
<p>3 June 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Leeds County: Highway 401(S side), 2.89 km WNW Rockport. (25m waypoint), 31B/5, 44.38610N 75.96646W TIME: 1518. AIR TEMP: 28°C, sunny, breezy. HABITAT: grassy/ herbaceous superhwy roadside above Typha marsh. A ditty about plastic bottles of brownish liquid found all along Hwy 401. We had our hands full enough with dead Muskrats, however, & didn't undertake the chemical studies called for here:</p>	<p>Are they pee or are they Pepsi? Bottles by the 401. Chemistry is most delightful when scenarios are fun.</p>

13 June 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Lanark County: Beckwith: **Hwys 7/15, Carleton Place.** (50m intersection), 31F/1, 45.12844N 76.12682W TIME: 1538ca. AIR TEMP: 26°C, sunny, breezy. HABITAT: highway plastic/commercial strip. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/161/j, *Ondatra zibethicus* (Muskrat) (Mammal). 1 adult, DOR, driveby, song. scrap of fur on island of interchange.

**Oh to waypoint scraps of Muskrat,
marking down each furry patch,
so the habitating model
finds, or not, its marshy match.**

19 June 2015 - Canada: Ontario: Grenville County: Oxford-on-Rideau: **Anniversary Spruce, 0.2 km S Bishops Mills.** (25m waypoint), 31B/13, 44.87069N 75.70057W TIME: 1155ca. AIR TEMP: 16°C, sunny, breezy. HABITAT: young Thuja bush in shallow-soil limestone oldfield. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler, Samuel J. Tanner. FWS15Jun191155/b, *Dumatella carolinensis* (Catbird) (Bird). 1 adult, seen, heard, song. calling as it works through the adjacent Apple shrubs.

**Oh to be a *Dumatella*,
speaking out in catty tones
Saying all the wild Strawberries
Are a harvest all your own.**

28 June 2015 – New Brunswick: **Highway 385/Little Tobique River, 29.4 km E St Quentin.** (25m waypoint), 21O/6, 47.48109N 67.00383W TIME: 1649-1658. AIR TEMP: 18°C, overcast, calm. HABITAT: gravelly clearwater stream/brushy roadside in extensively clearcut landscape. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/180/cz, *Limenitis arthemis arthemis* (White Admiral) (entomological). 1 mature, DOR, song. on roadside near bridge.

**Oh to be a mighty Admiral,
risen from a poopy plop,
struck down by a passing pickup
with neither will nor means to stop.**

28 June 2015 – New Brunswick: Nepisquit PNA: **Nepisquit River, Popple Depot.** (25m waypoint), 47.39793N 66.51143W TIME: 1924-1933. AIR TEMP: 22 ca, sunny, calm, sunset. HABITAT: bouldery Alder/Elm thicket on bridge-crossed island in clearwater gravelbed rive. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. 2015/180/oz, *Arisaema triphyllum* (Jack-in-the-Pulpit) (Plant). common sapling, prey of predator, seen, poem. several blooms among the brush & boulders of the island.

**Oh, to speak from hooded pulpits,
and to preach in soggy tones:
Keep the water table stable -
Leave the swampy woods alone.**

5 July 2015 - Canada: New Brunswick: Nothumberland County: **Grand Lodge, Popple Depot.** (100m site), 47.39900N 66.51330W TIME: 1000ca. AIR TEMP: 24 ca, sunny, Beaufort light breeze. HABITAT: riverside lawn surrounded lodge. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/185/d, *Sphyrapicus varius* (Yellowbelly Sapsucker) (Bird). 1 adult, heard, song. drumming nearby on something wooden.

**Oh, to be a bold Sapsucker
Oh, to be Ralph of the roofs
banging the staccato message
you're the one who's found the
grooves.**

(same location) TIME: 2100ca. AIR TEMP: 20 ca, clear, calm. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. FWS15Jul052100/a, *Chordeiles minor* (Northern Nighthawk) (Bird). 2-3 adult, seen, heard, poem. beenting overhead.

**For a central Canadian
Popple Depot's
"soft and gentle moth eaters"
are a vacation in the 1970s.
How long, oh captains of industry,
how long before Ottawa is once again
enwoven with *Chordeiles*?**

<p>7 July 2015 - Canada: New Brunswick: Nothumberland County: Grand Lodge, Popple Depot. (100m site), 47.39900N 66.51330W TIME: 1738. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/190/b, <i>Bombus ternarius</i> (Orange-belted Bumble Bee) (entomological). 1 worker, seen, heard, song. little worker on <i>Trifolium repens</i>.</p>	<p>Oh to work as <i>B. ternarius</i>, Blazoned by your orange band, so even those who bumble <i>Bombus</i> toss your name about, quite off-hand.</p>
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<p>8 July 2015 - Canada: New Brunswick: Madawaska County: Saint-Jacques: Madawaska R/St-Joseph Road. (25m waypoint), 21N/8, 47.43433N 68.38337W TIME: 1044. AIR TEMP: 19°C, sunny, windy. HABITAT: highway bridge over highwater river in small town. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler. 2015/192/b, <i>Hirundo pyrrhonota</i> (Cliff Swallow) (Bird). common adult, seen, heard, song. WAYPT/070, clearly nesting under the bridge. About 15 visible in flight around the bridge at any time.</p>	<p>Oh, to be a <i>pyrrhonota</i> and to paste a bulbous nest - Muddy mouthfuls made into housing - Apogee of resourcefulness.</p>
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20 July 2015 - Canada: Ontario: York Region: Toronto: **Chestnut Centre, 89 Chestnut Street.** (25m waypoint), 31C/4, 43.65427N 79.38540W HABITAT: high-rise residence building in highrise urban downtown. OBSERVER: Frederick W. Schueler, Aleta Karstad Schueler, +++. 2015/222/f, **meeting** (pre-planned meeting) (event). museum, seen, heard, song. Key Biodiversity Areas discussion. - this process just isn't suited to Canadian conditions – and it's falsified by the Annapolis Valley KBA, which proves to be an accidental concatenation of occurrences, unrelated to anything specifically about fresh water.

<p><i>a hymn to the boundaries sickness:</i></p> <p>Polygon, O Polygon conserve yourself now, if you can. I draw a line across the sand it shows what is protected land destroy the rest it's fine with me I must defend the boundary - it is as narrow as can be euclidean dimensionality O Polygon, O Polygon conserve yourself now, if you can.</p>	<p><i>- the best one can say of the process is that it's observed to be silly.</i></p> <p>Grotesquely artificial It is the Polly-gone, We worship at its alter, it does go on and on. . .</p>
<p><i>And another:</i></p> <p>Polygon, oh polygon, conserve yourself, oh polygon the boundary is the sacred thing didngdingalin, ding ding a ling the real world is a nuisance, eh? So we fabricate KBA.</p>	<p><u><i>from our apology for ourselves:</i></u> <i>Fred realized, during the composition of his thesis, that in every case where he'd classified a phenomenon into categories, the situation was better explained as an ordination or regression – a response to continuous variables, rather than a chopping-into-parts. This doubtless had roots in taking plant ecology from Bob Whittaker & infra-specific systematics from Bill Brown ... This leads us to suspect all classifications, boundaries, and partitions, & prefer explanations based on combinations of continuous causal factors....</i></p>

<p>28 July 2015 - Canada: Manitoba: : Assiniboine R/Hwy 100. (25m waypoint), 62H/14, 49.86938N 97.32575W TIME: 1503:49. AIR TEMP: 26°C, sunny, windy. HABITAT: prairie river at prairie superhwy. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. FWS15Jul281503/a, visit (event). natural history, song, driveby. WAYPT/155, river midling high but not bankfull., as the Red River was.</p>	<p>Oh where is the drought they were talking about with the mussels exposed to be found? All I see is wet fields with their soybeanish yields, and black muck oozing out of the ground.</p>
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<p>7 August 2015 - Canada: British Columbia: Highway 1. (25m waypoint), 82N/6, 51.47773N 117.14758W TIME: 1209:31. AIR TEMP: 22°C, sunny, breezy. HABITAT: brushy/baresoil valley roadside. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/239/h, <i>Ulmus pumila</i> (Siberian Elm) (Plant). 1 sapling, seen, song, driveby. WAYPT/051, 3 m sapling on down-sloping bank N of highway. - of course, there are no Slippery Elms here to hybridize with.</p>	<p>Siberian Elm, the true Canadian tree, Never cut down, has immortality. From magazine back covers it has spread from sea to sea, and with its slippery wives it spawns a Métis progeny. O pumila, O pumilamity, poom, poom, poom, poom, poom, poom, it's everywhere, you see. . . .</p>
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<p>9 August 2015 - Canada: Alberta: Highway 1(East-bound). (25m waypoint), 82O/1, 51.08849N 114.27465W TIME: 1619:16. AIR TEMP: 25°C, light overcast, calm. HABITAT: grassy/herbaceous prairie superhwy roadside bank. OBSERVER: FWS & AKS. 2015/245/g, Calgary residential sprawl crusting the horizon:</p>	<p>Oh, to be the blackish Slime Mold That is known as Calgary, Festering over hills and prairies, Leaving only the Bow's valley.</p> <p>(Sorry to sound so misanthropic but if what we do is wrong then it must inspire verses of a bold remedial song)</p> <p>Yo, to Canada - don't exploit your fossil fuel resources 'til solar panels on each rooftop glint in the dawn from every hill.</p>
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Appendix 4: the 2105 Solstice Event

Happy turn-of-the year, family & friends!

We invited all members (and domestic symbionts) of *Homo sapiens* to our annual Sunreturn celebration – this year on Sunday evening 20 December. Contributions of snack foods and burnable waste were welcomed – especially since, for some reason, despite moving between houses, we hadn't assembled much burnable material, so all clean-burning trash was appreciated. We've moved back into George & Esther Weir's house, 4 St Lawrence Street (for the 7th time since 1981), so there was more room to host guests than in recent years.

In Ursula le Guin's very wise [Wizard of Earthsea](#) books, Sunreturn was a universal ceremony of singing and dancing and reciting old tales on the solstice. There's lots of year-end traditions, but as for us and our house, the experience of the longest nights and the promise of the return of increasing day length is significant enough to celebrate. We further simplify things by regarding ourselves as our gifts to each other. After the Solstice, we look forward to simply enjoying the rest of December and the first days of January, free from the hectic scramble of Christmas and New Years.

Some reference this as a "pagan rite," but it is entirely based on our reasoning from first principles - one clearly needs a midwinter celebration, and the root of these all is the Sunreturn, and what better way to emulate the return of light than to set fire to the previous year's trash? (acting on this line of thought was precipitated by the fact that when we came home in 1986 the oil tank had rusted through and had leaked oil all over its wooden frame and adjacent soil). Having begun to do this, we were a little surprised to find that there's no pagan history of out-of-doors winter Solstice fires, though the Yule log was dragged inside to burn, and there were many summer solstice fires, when fuel was, presumably, less precious (on the Summer Solstice our rite is to stay up all night, recording the calling of Mink & other Frogs, and the onset of the avian dawn chorus).

So we scamper around like a combination of Taggart-Miller waste disposal services, the parliamentary cafeteria, and the Oxford University press, just to get ready, then we eat, listen, talk, sing, and combust well into the wee hours.

Since Jennifer and Rory have moved to their new house in Kemptville, we've embellished the Weirs House living room with twin brown paisley carpets on the newly brown-painted floor, a coat of white bulls-eye paint on the plywood patch on the ceiling, one bookshelf nearly filled with the first influx of favourites and classics from the mostly-still-boxed personal library next door, and the other book case full of small paintings, and with the "curio cabinet" from Aleta's grandmother's house on Vancouver Island, now full of china - all presided over by a friendly fire in the new pellet stove with its big glass door... oh yes, a fresh new coat of paint on the copper-coloured cookstove hearth in the kitchen! Our old house, which will never be perfect, looked its best for this year's Solstice guests.

Folks were greeted as they entered the kitchen door by the traditional (but with no alcohol this year) hot spicy Wassail in a big steel bowl on the cookstove. We had a pleasant houseful: Tanners (3), McNicolls (2), Adam Zeileman and his mother Noreen (first time for her), Bill Adams (first time), Sandra Powell



(first time), Bob Olsen, and Greg Hutton Missed this year were the Cooks, the Seburns, the Scotts, the Grahams, the Days, Corey, and Clay & Christena. Our eleven guests comfortably filled all of our chairs, and the goodies they brought filled the table around our cheese plate.

There were some who would have liked to come but couldn't, because Sunday night is after all, a "work-night." We'd thought of Sunday as a day when they'd be freer, but one supposes they'd have been doubly constrained on a weekday. Fred will contact the authorities and arrange that the solstice will only fall on Saturday hereafter (Friday conflicts with Mudpuppy nights).



Three-year-old grandson Sam, shepherded by his dad Rory, graciously allowed himself to be introduced to each of the guests, and patiently endured the whole evening as the only child. He was befriended by Sandra, the dear lady who commissioned one of my big Burr Oak paintings this fall. She had Sam on her lap for a considerable time as he accessed the cheese tray. He especially loves the soft Brie and Camembert. Just wait until he meets Sandra's gentle senior Arabian horse Tor - then he'll be her best friend for life!

As the conversation swung to accounts of the doings of Squirrels and Chipmunks, Sandra told us a "just so" story about how the Chipmunk got its stripes, and then someone else told a different version - but both involved an argument with a Bear. Bob Olsen & the McNicolls traded canoeing adventures. As ever, there was so much talk that no live music happened - but there's always hope for next year. Wait - there was one song - Fred sang his satirical "Ottawa" anthem for the McNicolls in the kitchen just before they left after midnight!

Fred printed out our poems and songs from the past year, a couple of 2015 reprints about introduced snails, his review of the Chorus Frog recovery strategy, and our presentation about 'Humanity & herpetofauna: what is the nature of the relationship,' but in the maelstrom of conversation no one was introverted enough to pick any of these up and retire to read them.

About 20h30 Fred and others went out to the fire site and, with a single match, lit the pile that had accumulated over the past few days. This year the conflagration was of rather modest size, since we didn't have much dry stuff to burn - though some visitors contributed dry wood scraps and firewood and a bag full of mastercard receipts dating back to the 1970's, but the main feature was many pails of latex paint. We'd gone through the paint we'd inherited over the decades, and Aleta had selected out the ones that were still spreadable and consigned the rest to the flames. Fred had poured off the supernatant watery fluid, and the remaining latex burned quite nicely, but the cans made up much of the pile, so it had to be tended, as he's doing in the photo.



Some worry that these fires might release dangerous fumes, but part of the message is that the material burned isn't locally accepted for recycling, and a significant aspect of the purification of the ritual is burning whatever society has produced and has come to us. The same goes for the much-bruited-about carbon release - if there were to be real progress towards a carbon-neutral society, we'd fret about this release, and only burn stuff photosynthesized on our land, but again part of the message is that this kind of thing goes on all the time in industrial production and transportation and in the heating of buildings.

In the latter decades (this is our 30th Solstice fire) we have pretty carefully shied away from plastics and foams and such - but the fire does contain some things, like wood painted with pre-1986 paint, which we wouldn't burn in the stove. Only one can of the paint was a bright colour, and that released some nice copper-tinged flames, but the rest of the paints were all white or dull, and we didn't see any other coloured flames. Later, all the metal gets gathered up from the ashes and recycled.



When the fire was deemed burned down enough to leave, the returnees were each served steamed pudding topped with caramel sauce & whipped cream. This year's pudding was lighter in texture than in some years, and with lots of candied Ginger and Dates as well as Cranberries, in addition to the usual Apple, Carrot, Potato, Currants, spices, and butter - all blended together with a cup of freshly ground Kamut flour and then steamed for 4 hours. It was nice to have made the discovery, earlier in the day, of where the pudding mould had been hiding all year - there have been Solstices (after a couple of our many household moves within the village) when we have had to improvise.

Our special host snack offering this year, although an experiment, was unanimously proclaimed delicious - Oat crackers spread with a mixture of soft Goat cheese and kimchi, garnished with half a black Olive.

The kimchi is a new kitchen culture for us - a way to use our great crop of Jerusalem Artichokes. Adam made his own vegan delight by mixing the kimchee with avocado, and so finished up the current

jar, but there are three larger jars standing ready, and lots more artichokes, both in the bin and in the ground!

Fred initiated the kimchi project, basing the theory on what we learned from his brother Ted several years ago. Ingredients vary according to what's available, but this batch had grated Jerusalem Artichokes, Pumpkin, and Horseradish (in that order by volume), mixed with salt and cayenne. We inoculate this mixture with a little juice from the previous batch and press it into wide-mouthed jars. Plastic bags keep the air out (Aleta's invention). The result after a week or two of fermentation is moderately peppery and crunchy, with a pickly zing.



Happy New Year (calendral, astronomical, & ecological) to everyone! - with Love, Fred & Aleta