

Outlook on Halton Hills



Top ticket

The Park Public School Parent's Association held its playground raffle draw last Wednesday night and \$900 was raised. Seen here pulling the winning ticket are (from left) Jamie Doole, 5, Matthew McCarthy,

6, and Amy Johnson, 5. The first prize of \$125 worth of groceries went to Rex Day. The \$50 steak voucher was won by Colleen Marchment and a dinner for two went to S. Steinhart. (Herald photo)

Friendly visitors

Are you interested in becoming a friendly visitor (one on one) to a young woman who is restricted in her activities due to a severe environmental sensitivity? She is presently living in Georgetown. Anyone who is interested in providing this person with some friendship, contact me at 877-1436.



Against the odds

PAT WOOD

Statistics from the recent teleconference on Employment and the Disabled from Tulsa, Oklahoma and broadcast to Sheridan College, brought forward some interesting facts and figures.

In the not too distant future, over half of those living in The USA will be over 65 and/or disabled. This indicates that steps must be taken now to integrate a large portion of this majority into the workforce. It appears to be the view of The Federal Government that economic forces will take care of society as it is in its own best interests to do so.

Additional pressure will burden or coffers with AIDS (HIV 1 and 2). Figures openly discussed, now, regularly indicate that over 1 billion may die from this virus. Paying for the medical treatment surrounding this carnage will not be made easier by the Government's Drug Bill that will prevent the introduction of generic drugs for AIDS for the next ten years.

The third point for consideration is triage. Triage means "to Choose". In most countries we choose who will receive treatment and who will not. Rarely is it done openly with public policy that may say, "Those over 55 will not receive dialysis."

Our current economy cannot support one-half the population being unproductive, nor can it afford to

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View Warbler migration

This weekend will be an excellent time to get out on the Bruce Trail and view the annual warbler migration. Many species do take up residence in our area, but many others just pass through, en route to northern forests, where tens of millions of warblers live, breed and raise young during the summer months. Now is the time to seek out these temporary visitors.

Backyard Naturalist

By DON SCALLEN
Herald Special



The appeal of warblers stems in large part, from the striking variety of plumage colouration among the males of the various species. Warblers are painted in almost every color of the rainbow. The Redstart is jet black with fiery orange patches, the Black-Throated Blue is hued exactly as its name implies, the Mourning is a nifty combination of slate gray and yellow and the Tennessee is a rather plain olive

green with a gray head. As varied as the colours of warblers, is the range of micro-habitats that they occupy. Each species inhabits its own particular ecological niche: tree branches, coniferous trees, the woodland floor, marshes, brushy growth beside streams etc. These habitats do overlap but an optimum environment exists for each species, where competition from other species is minimized. When two similar species do occupy exactly the same habitat, competition and sometimes interbreeding results. Eventually one prevails over the other.

A drama of this nature is currently being played out between the Blue Winged and Golden Winged warblers, two species that have essentially the same habitat requirements - they both favor brushy undergrowth in woodland openings or edges. Both of these species are found in north Halton, and one of the best places to observe them is the Hilton Falls conservation area and the adjoining Halton Regional Forest just northwest of Milton. Here the two species interbreed as they do in other places where their ranges overlap. Two hybrids are produced - Lawrence's Warbler and Brewster's Warbler. Brewster's, more similar to its Blue Winged parent, is the more frequent hybrid. This hybridization then, appears to favor the Blue Winged Warbler since its traits are carried in more of the hybridized offspring than are the Golden Winged traits. For this reason and possibly others, the Blue Winged Warbler is slowly displacing the Golden Winged Warbler. Eventually only the Blue Wings may inhabit the brushy openings of north Halton forests.

Probably the most familiar of our resident warblers is the Yellow. These warblers frequently appear in suburban yards, to glean small caterpillars and other insects from

garden shrubbery. Their yellow plumage is lined with rusty stripes on the breast. The Yellow Warblers' usual habitat is low growth near water - in such an environment they can be one of the most common birds.

Another abundant warbler is the Ovenbird, a thrush-like member of the family. This denizen of the forest floor is more frequently heard than seen; its shrill "teacher, teacher, teacher" is a familiar sound of the spring woodland. The Ovenbird is so named because its nest suggest the dome-shaped brick ovens of yesteryear.

Other resident warblers include Mourning, Black and White, Yellowthroat, Chestnut-Sided, Black Throated Green and the Northern Waterthrush. Next week's column will take a look at the habits and habitats of these species.

Camper hotline

Camper, want to know if there's room for you at the 53 provincial parks? The Ministry of Tourism and Recreation now has a number you can call toll-free, seven days a week.

A 24-hour recorded report is available to Toronto callers at 93-2992. Elsewhere in the province, you can call toll-free 1-800-268-3735 in English and 1-800-268-3736 in French. This service operates from 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. starting May 15.

From May 15 to June 26, the reports will be issued on Fridays. After June 26, the reports will be updated daily. Each park in the reporting program will give the actual vacancy as of 3 p.m. and the predicted vacancy for 8 p.m. The reports will run until Sept. 4.

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