

THE RAY

THE SCHOOL FOR OUTDOOR LEADERSHIP, ADVENTURE AND RECREATION

Review

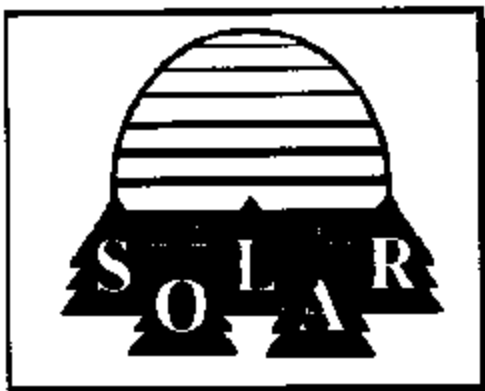
Bird Watching at Point Pelee National Park

By Cindy Harrison

Mid-May brings the world renowned annual spring bird migration to Point Pelee National Park in Ontario, Canada. On Saturday, May 15th, seventeen S.O.L.A.R.ites met at Point Pelee to see the air show.

Keith Germain was the only one brave enough to meet at my place at 8 a.m. to get an early jump on the bird watching. Armed with binoculars and field guides we looked like real birders (except we didn't have on those silly hats that birdwatchers wear!). It was a beautiful sunny day and the birds were out for all to see.

We hiked the birding trails and our group identified the following species: Yellow Warbler, unidentified Warbler, House Wren, Indigo Bunting (and an imposter piece of ribbon), Scarlet Tanager, Downy Woodpecker, Gray Jay, Cowbird, Eastern Kingbird, Northern Oriole, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, unidentified bird of prey (not from Star Trek, probably a hawk), Cardinal, Redwing Blackbird, Barn Swallow, unidentified Gulls, Mallard Duck, unidentified Sandpiper, unidentified Loon, House or Purple Finch, and American Goldfinch. We also saw large dragonflies mistaken for



hummingbirds; and a fox snake that posed for our pictures.

We stopped at the Visitors Center for lunch and then moved on to the Marsh Boardwalk for more birdwatching. It was a great day to spend with the birds. I was thrilled to see my personal favorites the Yellow Warbler, Indigo Bunting and Scarlet Tanager, because of their brilliant colors. Thanks to all that attended and happy birding.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

Saturday, June 5th is National Trails Day. Organizations across the country are holding activities to commemorate our national and local hiking trails. In conjunction with these activities, Wilderness Outfitters in Ann Arbor is asking all local outdoor recreation clubs (including SOLAR) to send at least five representatives (more would be great) on June 5th to Pinkney Recreation Area to assist with trail maintenance. The SOLAR club uses Pinkney Recreation Area for one of the Backpacking Class Practical Trips.

On Saturday, June 5th volunteers will meet at Silver Lake Parking lot, at the trail head at 9 a.m. Drinks and snacks will be provided for trail workers. Dress

Upcoming Event

Return to the Heron Rookery

Back by popular demand, on Sunday, June 13th, Jonathan Schechter will be leading a trip to the Heron Rookery at the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve. Jonathan has led two previous S.O.L.A.R. trips to the Preserve with overwhelming success. This year, there are over 100 active heron nests in this rookery and this is the prime time to see the baby herons. The plan is to meet at the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve Parking Lot at 9:30 a.m. Dress for hiking in the woods. Bring cameras, binoculars, and lots of mosquito repellent! Jonathan says, no dogs, no bathrooms, and no charge! Come to the June S.O.L.A.R. meeting to sign up or call Jonathan at 338-2082 for further information.

for the woods and plan for the bugs. Bring work gloves and hedge trimmers or large garden clippers if you have them. The group will be working on the trails for about three hours and then will meet back at Silver Lake beach for a post-work party. Bring your own picnic lunch and stuff for the beach party.

If you are interested in representing SOLAR for this worthwhile cause, please contact Cindy Harrison at 331-2804 as soon as possible, or sign up at the June SOLAR meeting. Happy Trails!

Foul Weather and the Bicyclist

By Steve Linkemann

Make no mistake about it, I am a diehard fair weather biker. I prefer my weather not just fair, but warm also. As you can imagine, this makes getting in shape each spring for TOSRV a tricky proposition. TOSRV (Tour Of Scioto River Valley) is a 2 day, 210 mile ride from Columbus, Ohio to Portsmouth

and back held on Mothers Day weekend.

My normal cycling wear started out as a T-shirt and shorts which soon gave way to cycling shorts and a short sleeve jersey. This is enough for me down to about 70 degrees. Long sleeve jerseys and cycling tights are available, but they are inconvenient when the day starts out cool and warms up. You either have to bring along both warm and cool weather clothing or be cold in the morning or hot in the afternoon.

I have chosen to use wool arm and leg warmers to allow me to bike down to about 60 degrees. They are relatively compact and can be removed quickly. The one drawback to using them is their inclination to slide down. This can be remedied by using safety pins to attach them to jersey sleeves and shorts. Polypropylene warmers are also available. To extend my comfort range down to about 45 degrees, I add a light windbreaker to the mix. I have experimented with gloves and toe warmers, but find that I don't need them. Sure, my fingers and toes get cold, but after riding a few minutes, they get warmer.

Dealing with cool weather is simple, just add more clothing until you are warm enough. Adding more clothing until you are dry enough, however, does not seem to be the way to go for wet weather for a couple of reasons. First, as you add more layers to get drier, you also get warmer. This will generally result in being either too wet or too warm. Secondly, staying completely dry while riding a bike in the rain is, I think, impossible. The combination of spray, forward movement and your motion on the bike allow water to get to you unless you are completely sealed. Staying completely sealed while riding for more than a few miles is very tricky indeed. I have tried several approaches to deal with getting caught in the rain while riding over the years.

At first I would get off the bike and find shelter under a tree, one of nature's umbrellas. This works fine for a short shower at the expense of taking more time for the ride. Getting back on the bike immediately after the rain stops is a bad idea unless your bike has (See Rain, page 5)

ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

June

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|---|
| 1 | Tuesday | General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 p.m. |
| 2,9 | Wednesday | Windsurfing, Class
Keith Germain (685-1211) |
| 4 | Friday | WalleyBall, Racquettime, Livonia
Mike Felix (908-1991) |
| 5 | Saturday | National Trails Day Pinkney Recreation Area
Cindy Harrison (331-2804) |
| 4-6 | Weekend | Rattlesnake Prov. Park, Canada
Rock Climbing, etc. Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 8 | Tuesday | Ethnic Dinner, Enzo's Warren Cafe
Joan Govan (356-3627) |
| 12 | Saturday | Windsurfing Practical
Keith Germain (685-1211) |
| 12-13 | Weekend | Personal Challenge Weekend
Jim Gilfix (851-5289) |
| 26 | Saturday | Soaring, Ionia, Michigan
Jim Gilfix (851-5289) |

July

- | | | |
|------|----------|---|
| 6 | Tuesday | General Membership Meeting
Colony Hall, Southfield, 7:30 p.m. |
| 9-11 | Weekend | Rattlesnake Prov. Park, Canada
Rock Climbing, etc. Al Fylak (852-7514) |
| 18 | Sunday | Fossil Hunt, Arcona, Ontario
Jim Gilfix (851-5289) |
| 23 | Friday | WalleyBall, Racquettime, Livonia
Mike Felix (908-1991) |
| 24 | Saturday | Canoe the Huron River
Jim Gilfix (851-5289) |

A Message from the Outgoing President

By Al Fylak

For those that haven't heard, June will be my last meeting as president. Although many know me as a man of change, I have managed to stay involved in SOLAR for ten years. Those that know me realize that there must be something special about anything Al Fylak would do for that long. In particular, SOLAR has been a constant source of enthusiastic people and diversified outdoor activities.

Through participation in SOLAR classes and activities, I have met numerous life long friends, including my wife Ellen. Then by some mystery of nature, along came our 5 month old boy, Andrew. It's amazing what can happen as the result of one's love for the outdoors. I can honestly say that, "SOLAR has been very good to me." Hopefully, many of you have had or will have your own significant and enjoyable SOLAR experiences.

As I step aside to make room for new blood and ideas, I would like to thank everyone that has made the last ten years so enjoyable. I look forward to continued involvement in other capacities. For those so inclined, I recommend your involvement as officers, trip leaders, instructors, or participants. Generally, one will get out of SOLAR what one puts into it. I'm sure SOLAR tradition will be carried on by the new officers and members.

A few procedural comments

As the president of SOLAR and a member for ten years, I would like

to highlight some significant procedures that have caused confusion and aggravation for many years. Some of these procedures have elevated to the status of "myth" because so many folks either do not understand them or feel that their situation is special from everyone else's.

Without sounding harsh, we need to be consistent in our policies to be fair to all members. Some of the more significant policies are discussed below.

Myth #1: I only need to pay dues once to remain a SOLAR member.

To some peoples surprise SOLAR dues are due on an annual basis. We do have lifetime memberships available for those that find it more convenient to write one check, but for most of us dues are due every January. Please see the Membership chairperson if you are in doubt as to whether or not you are paid up.

Myth #2: I can get my money back if I decide not to or can not go on a trip for which I have already paid.

This is not true. You can sell your spot to another member, however, we cannot refund your money. Most trips require down payments and advanced head count commitments. Our treasury is not large enough to absorb associated losses due to last minute cancellations.

Myth #3: I can bring my non-SOLAR friends or relatives on SOLAR trips.

We will gladly sign up anyone as a member assuming they pay their \$20 annual dues. It is not fair for non-members to gain benefits without paying dues.

Windsurfing is back!

Well, you said you wanted it and SOLAR aims to please. Starting on Wednesday, June 2, Keith Germain will be holding classes on windsurfing for those interested.

The class will consist of two instructional periods, Wednesdays, June 2 and 9, at Bob Westbrook's apartment, and a practical exercise on Saturday, June 12. If there's a conflict, a second practical may be scheduled at a later date.

Cost for the class as well as sign-up will be announced at the regular SOLAR club meeting on Tuesday, June 1, so if you're interested be sure to get to the meeting that night. If you miss the meeting, you can call Keith at 685-1211 for more information.

Recipe File

Shrimp and Crab Fettucini Alfredo

- 2 bags Noodles & Alfredo Sauce
- 1 can Shrimp
- 1 can Crab
- 2 bags Dried Peas (freeze dried)
- 2 T Butter (or per noodle package)
- 2 T Dry Milk (or per noodle package)
- 3 T Parmesan cheese

Prepare noodles and sauce according to instructions on bag. Stir in remaining ingredients while heating noodles.

Thanks to Joan Goven for providing this recipe.

Memories of Cycling America

This month's program will feature a slide and talk show by Joe Datsko of last summer's bicycle tour across America.

The 90 day, 5,270 mile ride passed through 15 states and included "wheel dipping" in two oceans. All the more amazing is that at 70 years young, Joe was the oldest participant of the ride. I don't think Joe just started riding a few years ago, but this is a good sign for the rest of us procrastinating athletes.

So come and find out what motivates one to undertake such a huge challenge.

Notice:

The Michigan Anti-Cruelty Society needs 50 foot lengths of heavy rope. Climbers and cavers retiring ropes, please contact Tucker Coon at home, 545-390 or work, 358-4435

People

Please join the editors in extending sincere sympathy to John Gulas on the loss of his father.

Pam Claydon has a new address for the summer

Pam Claydon
c/o Custer State Park
HCR83 Box 70
Custer, South Dakota 57730

Please write! It gets lonely in the woods!

Review

Maybury in May

On Sunday May 16th at noon(ish), 33 members congregated under the picnic area to begin the 1st SOLAR Scavenger Hunt. Jim Gilfx (and a few elves) planted surprises around the entire park. Jim obviously worked long and hard planning this great day. It was cool and sunny - perfect for the running around we had to do between hiding spots.

To give just a few hints of things we found on our lists: a live dragonfly, salamander, toad, fly (yes - live), and a big frog were some highlights (sorry no one got a live snake). Other items included from the X-Rated list were screws and nuts and eggs.

Miriam was too late to hunt, but she was a big help setting up dinner. A special thank you goes to Jill and Dave for helping hide (those crazy elves!) our treasures. And thanks to Taylor N. for ideas on toys.

After we were all exhausted, we had our potluck picnic and played a little volleyball. By 6:00 we all had cleaned up and drove home in such a good mood (reportedly, one happy car of four sang songs of all types on the entire half hour ride to Oak Park).

I know it made Jim and other long time SOLAR members glad to see so many new faces. WELCOME! We usually break you in slowly at first!

Excellent adventure Jim! We all voted this was a winner idea and are looking forward to the sequel. What do you think?

Jim?

Jim?

Jim?

JIM?

Review

What's up? Dock!

On Sundays, April 25, and May 2 SOLAR members proved their worth by assisting the Bald Mountain Recreation Area rangers in improving one of the docks at the Graham Lake access site. This dock sees alot of use throughout the year and is very important to fishermen who are wheelchair bound or otherwise unable to participate in the outdoors.

The dock is constructed on floats, held in place by poles sunk into the lake bottom. Our task involved not only constructing the new extension but removing the poles holding the end section, floating our extension into position, and then relocating the end section. Once this was accomplished we had to sink the poles to hold the dock in place.

But it wasn't all work. Once the work on the dock was done, we had a chance to take the Mountain Bikes around the trails a few times just to find out where the mud was and to prove ourselves against it. We shared our lunches in a sort of miniaturized version of the requisite SOLAR pot-luck.

If you were unable to assist in this endeavor, never fear. The park holds a work day every month on the second Saturday. The SOLAR club gets alot of use from this park from weekly Mountain Bike outings to the Halloween party and more, and it is good to have this opportunity to give a little back.

Special thanks go to Jess (I'll fix it with the Sawz-All) Harding for giving us this opportunity.

(Rain, cont'd from page 2)

fenders. Fortunately the water evaporates quickly from the roads following short summer afternoon showers, making it "safe" to ride again. You could even go the extreme of not riding unless the weather forecast is for zero percent chance of rain, but how often does that happen? Setting your minimum chance of rain higher will get you out more, but with an increased chance of being rained on.

While riding my first few TOSRVs I would occasionally get caught in a brief shower. Nobody else around me was running for shelter and so I grinned and bore it. After all I had already started the ride, and it didn't look like the rain would last very long. Then it happened. As I was about to head out of Columbus on TOSRV one year, a light rain was falling. I had a light nylon windbreaker on to protect my torso from the rain, but my legs were exposed. The thought of venturing out to spend who knows how much time in the rain just to ride to Portsmouth was not very appealing. If a friend had not lent me his rain pants, I might not have ridden that year. An hour or so later as the rain was stopping, I remember getting off the bike a couple of times to remove the rain gear and then putting it back on a mile or two later. I got hot before removing it and wet before putting it back on.

Next I bought a cycling suit made of Versatech a breathable, water resistant fabric. Both the jacket and pants have narrow polypropylene inserts running the full length of the arms and legs. I bought the suit for riding PBP (Paris-Brest-Paris) and the qualifier rides in the US. PBP is a 760 mile, 4 day ride held every 4 years in France. The first time that I used the suit, it didn't keep me completely dry, but at least I didn't

get hot.

As it turned out it took me a couple of years to figure out that I had finally assembled my foul weather cycling gear. It consists of polypropylene jersey and shorts, wool arm and leg warmers and the Versatech jacket. Both wool and polypropylene wick moisture away from the body. I've known this for years, but one incident on a PBP qualifier a few years ago showed me what that phrase means in real world terms. I had been riding in the rain for a while and my leg warmers were soaking wet. I reached down to tug one of them up a bit, and all of a sudden I felt the cold moisture against my skin. As soon as I stopped pulling on the leg warmer, the sense of dry warmth returned. Wow! Since that revelation, I have ridden many miles in the rain and have not looked for a big tree or bridge to hide under. Although I still have enough sense to not start a training ride in the rain.

During the riding season, I normally ride with the Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Club on Saturday mornings. You can choose from rides of 20 to 60 miles in total distance. After Memorial Day, they start at 8:00. If you'd like some coaching or cycling companionship, you can give me a call at 595-7991.

Review

Go Fly a Kite!

On Saturday, April 10, SOLAR met at the playing field at Kimball High School in Royal Oak for a day of kiting. Trip leader Jim Gilfix made sure that there were plenty of kites (and other toys, of course) to go around. Most impressive was Kevin Wiley's stunt kite with a hundred (yes, one hundred) foot tail. Steve Gardner took advantage of the day to launch a few rockets between wind gusts. Just as we were about to leave, Leslie Cohen, Teresa Savarino, and Pam Claydon showed up so we got the kites back out and went at the skies again for a few more hours. Yes, Teresa, it does take a while to bring a kite down from 400 feet up. Afterwards, some of us went back to Steve's for pizza and hot tub. All in all, it was a grand way to spend a Saturday afternoon.

Congratulations

to the SOLAR members who finished the TOSRV this year: Steve Linkemann, Tom Asmus, Claude Vacas, Dennis Keating, Marco Scarpetta, Matteo DiTommaso and Doug Burwell. The TOSRV is a two day bicycle tour in southern Ohio.

In Profile

Steve Linkemann

Address: Westland, Michigan

Occupation: Computer Programmer

Hobbies/Interests: Bicycling, Computers, Science Fiction, and Jazz

How did you hear about S.O.L.A.R.? From my sister Rachel

What do you like best about S.O.L.A.R.? The people

About the Ray

The Ray is a monthly publication of the S.O.L.A.R. Club and is provided free of charge to the current dues paid members. For those members who move outside of a 200 mile radius of the Detroit Area and would like to continue receiving the Ray, a \$5.00 annual subscription fee will be charged to cover mailing costs.

DEADLINE for the Ray is the Friday after the general meeting for the following month's edition. Contributions in the form of comments, trip reports and notices, recipes, photos are welcome. Send all contributions to: Steve Gardner, RAY Editor, 10024 Borgenman, Huntington Woods, MI 48070-1103. Or please feel free to call Steve @ 547-4998 or Lori Love, RAY Editor @ 420-2175.

Meeting Location

The purpose of the S.O.L.A.R. Club is to promote and advance interest in the outdoors through information and participation. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at the Colony Hall, located at 21780 Evergreen Rd. in Southfield, between 8 & 9 Mile Roads at 7:30 PM SHARP. Membership dues are \$20.00 per individual and \$30.00 per family. Lifetime memberships available.

STEERING COMMITTEE

President	Al Fytak / 852-7514
Vice-President	Jess Harding / 375-5268
Secretary	Laura Bowman / 960-1516
Treasurer	Joan Govan / 356-3627
Activities	Cindy Harrison / 331-2804
Membership	Maria Picano / 420-3423
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S.O.L.A.R. Ray	Lori Lee Love / 420-2175
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	Joan Hettinger / 377-2377
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