# KENNEBEC LAKE ASSOCIATION

## Spring Newsletter May 2009

### A word from the President...

The last half of March went out like a lamb, and the arrival of spring is proving to be very enjoyable. It always comes as such a pleasant surprise when, just as you are beginning to think winter will never end, the sun begins to climb in the sky, and seemingly in no time, the snow dwindles and eventually disappears.

Some of us around the lake are again heavily into the production of maple syrup, tapping trees and taking out sap the old-fashioned way — emptying the pails into large buckets and hauling these out of the bush to where they can be picked up and transported back to the fire for boiling down in the evaporator. Where the pioneers would have used teams of horses, today's four-wheelers make that aspect of the work quite a bit easier.

The boiling down can't be rushed, and at a ratio of 40:1 of sap to eventual syrup yield, the entire job is still mighty labour-intensive. Since the sap runs best when warm days follow cold nights, we are toiling under favourable conditions, mostly under a warm spring sun. When the collecting is done at the end of the day, we seize the opportunity to join good friends around the fire for a hot coffee or a cold beer, tell stale jokes and solve the world's problems. Then it becomes clear once again why many of us chose to move to Kennebec Lake.

When the final product is poured over pancakes and sampled, we are gratified to realize that our product tastes just as good — or better — than the commercial product. And we made it ourselves!

We look forward to seeing all of you again as snowbirds return from the south and seasonal cottagers begin to open up places to get ready for summer activities. Welcome back Kennebecers!

*Terry Kennedy*

### Gray is *Green*

On Saturday, March 28, 2009, at the Cottage Life Show in Toronto, eastern Ontario carried off two Canada-wide awards for championing the environment. The KLA's own Gray Merriam received the Green Cottager Award/Individual, and the Charleston Lake Association, northeast of Gananoque, earned the Green Cottager Award/Cottager Group.

Each award brings $2,000 from *Cottage Life* magazine to be donated to the volunteer stewardship group of the winner's choice. Gray has donated the $2,000 to the Friends of the Salmon River to be used in concert with the KLA in the Kennebec Lake subwatershed.

Gray has spent most of his life promoting good environmental stewardship. Not only do he and his wife Aileen practise this on their own land on the Salmon River, but they also teach others how to incorporate "green" into their land, water and lives. A retired professor in landscape ecology at Carleton University, Gray has helped countless individuals and groups undertake resourceful lake planning and watershed preservation.

Congratulations Gray Merriam and the Charleston Lake Association for highlighting eastern Ontario's continuing efforts to embrace "green" in our lifestyles.

*Terry Kennedy congratulates Gray Merriam at the Cottage Life Show in March 2009*

*Salmon River cottager Lise Blaurock and John DuChene of Kennebec Lake nominated Gray Merriam for this award. Gray is currently a member of the KLA, founding president and current co-president of the Friends of the Salmon River, and chair of the Frontenac Stewardship Council.*

**Mark your calendars... Summer 2009 events (Details page 3)**

**27 June** Sharbot Lake Loon Workshop

**11 July** The Algonquin Land Claim: A Return to Self-Determination

**15 August** Annual General Meeting - Kennebec Lake Association

**N.B.** Flowers that Bloom in the Spring - by request: groups of 4-6, May and early June. Call Aileen Merriam 613-335-3589

***Reminder*** by 15 September 2009 everyone must have their boating card.

See www.boaterexam.com for courses. e.g. July 11 and 25, 1-4 p.m. Canadian Tire Corporation, Kingston

Local course? www.kennebeclake.ca

**Public Library Hours:** If you are a seasonal resident, show the librarian a copy of your property tax bill to confirm your resident status and receive your free card. Then you can borrow books from any branch and order books via the Internet to be delivered to your preferred branch.

**Arden Branch, Community Centre**
**5998 Arden Road, 613-335-2570**

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday | 2 to 6 p.m. |
| Thursday | 5 to 8 p.m. |
| Friday* | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. |
| *from July 3 to August 28 | |
| Saturday | 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. |

**Mountain Grove Branch, Old School**
**1455 Mountain Grove Road**

| | |
|---|---|
| Tuesday | 2 to 5 p.m. |
| Wednesday | 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. |
| Friday* | 2 to 5 p.m. |
| *except from July 3 to August 28 | |
| Saturday | 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. |

### *What's Happening This Summer*

*Hiking, swimming, golfing, sightseeing — here are just a few ideas. Be sure to pick up activity guides (for Perth, North & Central Frontenac, Kingston) at tourist information booths for special events and attractions in the area.*

- Orchids at Purdon's Conservation Area
- Perth Wildlife Reserve Trail
- Hell Hole caves off Highway 41, near Centreville
- Tour our local artisans
- Garlic Festival in Perth, August 8-9
- Parham Fair, August 28-30
- Verona Farmers' Market
- Swimming lessons at Big Clear Lake
- Kids' summer program on Thursdays and Fridays all summer at the Arden Community Centre

### *Recreation Clubs and Activities*

***Arden Community Centre***

**Arden Seniors "Happy Gang"**
1st Tuesday each month, 11 a.m.
Contact: Jack Patterson, 335-3469

**Glee Club**, Tuesday, 1 p.m.
Contact: Helen Prasky, 335-2486

**Line Dancing**, Monday, 9:30 a.m.
Contact: Rosemary Wadham, 335-2893

**Fit 'n Fun**, Tuesday, 9 a.m.
Contact: Gloria Smiley, 335-2188

**Tai Chi**, Wednesday mornings
Beginners at 9:15 a.m., veterans at 10.
Contact: Helen Prasky, 335-2486

**T.O.P.S.**, Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.
Contact: Carol Patterson, 335-3469

***Sharbot Lake High School***

**Volleyball**, Monday, 7 p.m.
Contact: Rick Greenstreet, 279-1962


**KLA Executive 2009**

*President:* Terry Kennedy 335-3606
*Past President:* Bill Van Vugt 335-2082
*1st Vice-President:* John DuChene 335-3567
*2nd Vice-President:* Judy Kennedy 335-3606
*Secretary:* Gloria Smiley 335-2188
*Treasurer:* Mike Wise 335-2409
*Lake Steward:* Bernie Dertinger 821-2101
*Members-at-Large:* Noreen Dertinger, Stella Dorsman, Doug Harvey, Aileen Merriam, Karen Pepper, Peter Smiley, Ed Swain, Marj Swain, Terry Trojek

***Newsletter Team***
*Editor/Design/Input:* Aileen Merriam
*Text Editors:* Charlotte DuChene, Judy Kennedy
*Reproduction:* Judy and Terry Kennedy
*Thanks to contributors of articles and illustrations and to those who collate and distribute the newsletter.*
***Website:*** *Work on the KLA website is ongoing. We expect the initial makeover to be complete this summer. Send your ideas to webmaster@kennebeclake.ca.*


**Constitutional Updates:** At the 2008 Annual General Meeting in August, the Executive recommended and the Association approved the following amendments to the KLA constitution:

1. Those currently eligible for Associate Membership are now eligible for full Membership, and the Associate Membership category has been eliminated.
2. The Executive is permitted, within limits, to set the date of the Annual General Meeting.
3. The financial year is now August 1 to July 31.
4. The Treasurer is no longer required to be one of the two Executive Officers signing cheques.
5. It is now a requirement that the Association not place itself in a deficit position.
6. Keeping limited funds as petty cash is allowed.
7. The Executive can cooperatively distribute duties within the Executive and across appointed committees, according to individual interests and skills.

**Household Hazardous Waste Day**: Take your hazardous waste to the southwest corner of Highways 7 and 38 on July 25, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Helpful hint: Last year's longest lineups were caused by those who came early to avoid the rush**.** www.centralfrontenac.com.

**Drinking Water Testing:** The Kingston Regional Health Laboratory tests drinking water for free. Pick up sample bottles at your local Health Unit. Samples are accepted at the following times:
**Sharbot Lake:** 279-2151, Tuesday, 8:30 to 11 a.m.
**Cloyne:** 336-8989, Wednesday, 8:30 to 11 a.m.
**Kingston:** 549-1232, Monday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. till noon.
For faster results, deliver directly to the **Public Health Lab** (548-6630) 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 181 Barrie St., Kingston.

### *Burning Issues*

by Charlotte DuChene

Burning of household waste, anything from packaging, plastics, food scraps, treated wood, even newspaper and junk mail, is one of the largest known sources of dioxins and furans in Ontario. Released into the air, these toxins fall onto the leaves of plants that farm animals eat, finally to be ingested by humans in dairy products and fats in meat. Exposure to dioxins has been linked to increased risk of cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes, to name just a few health problems. Also, pollutants in the smoke can trigger respiratory illnesses.

Alternatives to burning garbage include buying items with less packaging, recycling, and composting organic waste. For more information, visit www.REALaction.ca, call 613-283-3482, or call Bruce Gillies (Environment Canada), 416-739-5890.

Our township has just passed a bylaw to regulate open air burning, banning both the construction and traditional uses of old-style burn barrels. An "outdoor incinerator" is defined as "a steel shipping-style barrel or similar-sized non-combustible device … ." They have to be well ventilated, with "a platform in the bottom of the barrel or a firebox with air inlets below the fire to supply adequate combustion and to aid in a more complete and clean burn." The bylaw also forbids burning anything other than clean, dry, untreated wood, brush and leaves; even then, brushing, chipping and composting would be better. Other details in the bylaw include no burning during high winds, as well as larger setbacks from buildings and property lines. The township will investigate complaints and can levy fines through its bylaw officer or the fire department. The township's website (www.centralfrontenac.com) has a link to a site with information about proper incinerator construction and setup.

### *PULLED PORK*

by Judy Kennedy

This recipe is great for crowds. You can sit on the beach or dock all day while dinner is cooking. Spice it up with a hotter barbecue sauce, if desired. Cole slaw is a popular accompaniment.

1 **pork butt roast**
1/2 cup (125 mL) **orange juice**
1 bottle (455 mL) Kraft Regular **BBQ Sauce**

Place pork, orange juice and barbecue sauce in slow cooker. Cook on low all day. At dinner, use two forks to pull the meat apart in strands.
Mix with as much of the cooking sauce as you wish, and serve on your favourite buns. Garnish with onions, pickles, tomatoes, etc.

### *At the Cottage: A fearless look at Canada's summer obsession*

Charles Gordon. McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1992

This book was published a few years ago, but when I asked around Kennebec Lake, it seems *At the Cottage* has not appeared on too many cottage shelves. It is a humorous but helpful look at many of the joys and frustrations of cottaging. You will recognize yourself and assorted family members in many of the chapters and stories.

From cottage plumbing escapades to leaking roofs, rainy day programs to fun with bugs, you will be entertained by real stories that you, too, have probably experienced.

A must-have for all those who either live here or make the trek every weekend and holiday.

by Judy Kennedy

## Mark your calendars...

**Loon Workshop**

*Come out and hear experts in the fields of loon behaviour, natural history and conservation management.* (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Bird Studies Canada, Mississippi Field Naturalists and more.)

View exhibits, hear loon calls, see photographs and browse among materials from the Nature Lovers' Bookstore, Lanark. Draw (open to lake associations) for a loon nesting platform built by Ontario Power Generation, environmental sustainability division.

Sponsored by: Frontenac Stewardship Council, Friends of the Salmon River, KLA, Sharbot Lake Property Owners' Association

**When: Saturday, 27 June 2009, 9 to 5. Where: Sharbot Lake, Oso Recreation Hall and Anglican Church Hall**
**Information: Gray Merriam 613-335-3589**

**The Algonquin Land Claim, A Return to Self-Determination**

*Join us for an informative talk and discussion.* Some 200 years ago, the Algonquin First Nation were dispossessed of all their land base without their consent and without compensation. Glenn Tunnock will provide a historiographic account of the Algonquin journey from pre-European contact to the present with insights on aboriginal self-determination.

Sponsored by: Kennebec and District Historical Society and KLA

**When: Saturday, 11 July 2009 1 pm Where: Kennebec Recreation Hall**
**Information: Glenn Tunnock gtunnock@tunnockconsulting.ca, 613-326-0040**

**KLA Annual General Meeting...**

*Bring your family and friends to the Kennebec Lake Association AGM.*

Learn what's been happening over the past year. Elect next year's Executive; tell them what your priorities are for 2009/2010. View exhibits from various local organizations related to you and your lake. Visit with Kennebec neighbours.

**When: Saturday, 15 August 2009 10 am Where: Kennebec Recreation Hall**

**Wally and the Beav** by Bernie Dertinger

It appears we have a complaint against the beaver building dams on Beaver Creek, seemingly impeding the walleye from reaching a spawning ground a bit farther upstream. Walleye fisher persons grumble about the scarcity of catchable fish in the lake, and statistics from MNR confirm the problem. Do those beaver dams prevent the walleye from reaching a prime spawning area?

Anecdotal information says that walleye have been observed spawning "upcreek." Perhaps in years with a strong run-off, walleye can find their way around obstructions, and in other years, they can't. That might explain the pronounced lack of certain age classes in the walleye population. So this spring, KLA volunteers are attempting to shine a light on the subject, literally, by searching with a powerful flashlight for the reflection from the eyes of the walleye.

Some anglers would like to see the beaver dams taken out, but to be effective, both the beaver and the dams would have to be removed. We are not likely to prevail in such a contest, though. Besides, all kinds of rules, including regulations of the federal Fisheries Act, would have to be complied with and obstacles overcome — a formidable, costly, multi-year project with an uncertain outcome. To get at the dams in Beaver Creek with equipment, one needs permission from the abutting landowners. Blowing them to smithereens with dynamite requires a permit and a certified expert; and only certified trappers with a permit can trap or shoot beaver during the open season from October to March. Even if the rules and regulations are successfully dealt with, the beaver can only be stopped for a short while. Better that we learn to live with them.

To do that, the KLA has applied for a COSEWIC grant to improve walleye spawning beds. Last summer, members of the Stewardship Committee toured the lake with a MNR expert and identified a shoal at the mouth of Beaver Creek as a good candidate for rehabilitation. So we may be able to have our prize game fish and enjoy the beaver as well.

### *Walleye Watchers Succeed!*

In the middle of night and during inclement weather, volunteers with flashlights were surveying spawning locations and habits of walleye with the goal of eventually improving the walleye fishery in Kennebec Lake. Bernie Dertinger, our lake steward, along with Greg Morris, Peter Smiley, Terry Trojek and Chris Sobanski, monitored the water temperature in the lake's feeder creeks until it rose to above 6˚C at the end of March. Because the lake temperature was still too cold for spawning and the water levels were high in the creeks, enabling the fish to both enter and exit the streams unimpeded by beaver dams, they focused their efforts on the creeks.

On April 10, about 12 walleye were sighted; the next night, 20 to 30. The surveyors also discovered suckers in the same area. Were they feeding on the walleye spawn? On the weekend of April 17, with water temperatures rising and water levels dropping, the annual walleye spawning run appeared to be ending, at least in the creeks. At one creek that Friday, Chris found a number of exceptionally large walleye (about 10 to 15 lbs.). After midnight the next night in the same location, 15 smaller walleye were observed, though widely scattered and clearly not in the groups or showing the mating behaviour previously seen. By late April, it seemed unlikely that fish would be able to go upstream in either Beaver Creek or upper Crooked Creek, but there was still sufficient water flow over the low points in dams for fish to get downstream.

MNR biologist Cam McCauley has been able to explain some of the group's observations: Due to variable weather patterns, the walleye spawn was more spread out this year. Regarding walleye having the ability to return to the lake when water levels begin to drop, he says that the fish move quickly up the stream when ready to spawn and then return almost immediately to the lake. The fry hatch two to three weeks later and could have difficulty reaching the lake if new barriers or lower water levels prevent downstream movement. Suckers observed in the creeks are also there to spawn and do not tend to feed on walleye eggs.

According to Cam, stream habitats are popular spawning locations, but he believes that enhancing lake spawning shoals can also increase walleye production. He congratulated our volunteers on a job well done and recommended that we take pictures and map out special interest locations that could benefit from future habitat improvement efforts. Bernie suggests that we concentrate on two or three possible spawning areas in the lake and watch them closely during next year's spawning period. Once we have an understanding of the lake's habitats, we can plan and implement appropriate stewardship activities.

### Worried About Weeds?

If you are determined to eradicate weeds from your lawn or garden, many chemical-free options are available to you. One choice you no longer have is a chemical pesticide, which pollutes the air, the soil and the water.

The Ontario government has passed a law banning the use and sale of cosmetic pesticides, effective April 22, Earth Day. For more information on the ban, as well as links to environmentally friendly gardening practices, see www.ontario.ca/environment or call 1-800-565-4923.

by Charlotte DuChene

### *Did you know....?*

You are better **not** to cover your BBQ when it is not in use. We have heard it from two very reliable sources: a manufacturer of pedestal BBQs and a salesman of Napoleon BBQs with whom we spoke at the Big Backyard Show in Ottawa. One would imagine a cover would protect your BBQ from the elements; however, it actually encourages and holds condensation, which will promote rusting.

by Peter and Gloria Smiley

### *Mouthwash vs Mosquitoes*

by Charlotte DuChene

It's mosquito season again. Actually, as I write this, the ice is still on the lake, but I do know that rush of frustration when, with the long-awaited arrival of spring, it's nearly impossible to be outside without wearing a virtual suit of armour.

Even though we know that it is a battle we can't win, we are eager to hear about non-chemical ways to ward off the enemy. And we've heard of plenty — from Bounce sheets to Listerine. Apparently, some concoctions may have some merit. So we're asking KLA Newsletter readers to test the alternative repellents below (source: www.eartheasy.com).

1. In a New England Journal of Medicine study, oil of eucalyptus at 30% concentration prevented mosquito bites for 120.1 minutes, while Bite Blocker™ with 2% soybean oil kept bites away for 96.4 minutes. (The eucalyptus oil must have a minimum of 70% cineole content, the active therapeutic ingredient.) Citronella performed poorly, repelling bugs for only 20 minutes.
2. If you're using the barbecue, throw a bit of sage or rosemary on the coals.
3. Mix one part garlic juice with five parts water in a small spray bottle. Shake well before using. Spray lightly on exposed body parts for an effective repellent lasting up to five or six hours. Or dip strips of cotton cloth in this mixture and hang in areas such as patios.
4. Neem oil is a natural vegetable oil extracted from the neem tree in India. The leaves, seeds and seed oil of the neem tree contain sallanin, a compound that has effective mosquito-repelling properties. Neem oil is safe to use. Look for new neem oil-based commercial products on the market.
5. Plant marigolds around your yard; the flowers give off a fragrance bugs and flying insects don't like.

Go ahead and try tying the Bounce sheets to your clothing and spraying with Listerine. Report back to us with your findings, which we'll print in a future issue. By the way, if you test # 3, I suggest you do it when not expecting visitors.

*Thanks to Lise Blaurock for sending in the five ideas.*

**God in his wisdom made the fly**
**And then forgot to tell us why**
**Ogden Nash**

### *Black Flies, Little Black Flies…*

**Did you know…**

- Over a hundred species of black flies have been recorded in Canada. Very few take human blood. Most species prefer bird blood, and a significant number do not take blood at all.
- Only adult females bite, taking blood before laying 150 to 800 eggs in the oxygenated water of streams and rivers. The female cuts a hole in the skin of mammals or birds with her rasping tongue, injects anticoagulants, and laps up the blood that pools in the hole.
- Black fly eggs and larvae are damaged by pollution, so if you have black flies, it means your water is clean. The larvae are filter feeders and in sufficient numbers can improve the quality of the water. Black fly larvae are also a valuable food source for many fish species. Black flies themselves are important food for many birds.
- Emerging adults live for two to three weeks. Black fly season varies each year. The flies remain inactive until the air temperature rises to at least 10 degrees C.
- A good breeze will keep them at bay. Unlike mosquitoes, they do not come indoors, are only active during the day, and cannot bite through clothing.
- Protect yourself from black fly bites by wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Tuck your pant legs into your socks and your shirt into your pants. Wear light-coloured clothing. The flies are attracted to dark colours so don't choose blue, purple, black, or brown. White and yellow are good choices.
- Black flies are attracted to the carbon dioxide we breathe out, so try to stay calm -- hyperventilation doesn't help.

Adapted from *Black Fly Time in Quebec*, by biologist Beth Girdler, Elphin, ON, with permission

by Aileen Merriam

### *What's the buzz?*

by Charlotte DuChene

A global team of scientists are working to cure dengue fever, which affects 50 million people annually in Asia, South and Central America and Mexico, and to control the mosquitoes that transmit the viruses that cause it.

According to a recent Cornell study, mosquitoes not only buzz but flap their wings and change their tune to create a harmonic duet just before mating on the fly. When just a few centimetres apart, they "interact acoustically."

Professor of neurobiology and behaviour Ron Hoy says, "The frequency at which males and females converge is a harmonic or multiple of their wing-beat frequencies, which is approximately 400 hertz [vibrations per second] for the female and 600 hertz for the male." Just before the couple mates, the duet settles at about 1,200 hertz, "roughly an octave and a half above concert A [the pitch to which instruments are tuned]." The mosquitoes adjust the resonance of their thoracic box to produce a harmonic frequency that converges at three times the female's fundamental frequency and two times that of the male. Researchers measured the physiological responses of the mosquitoes to the sounds of potential mates.

If the researchers can determine the factors males and females use to choose a mate, they could come up with and release "sexy" sterilized males to compete with wild populations.

Oh yes, and remember how we all thought female mosquitoes were deaf? This study proves otherwise.

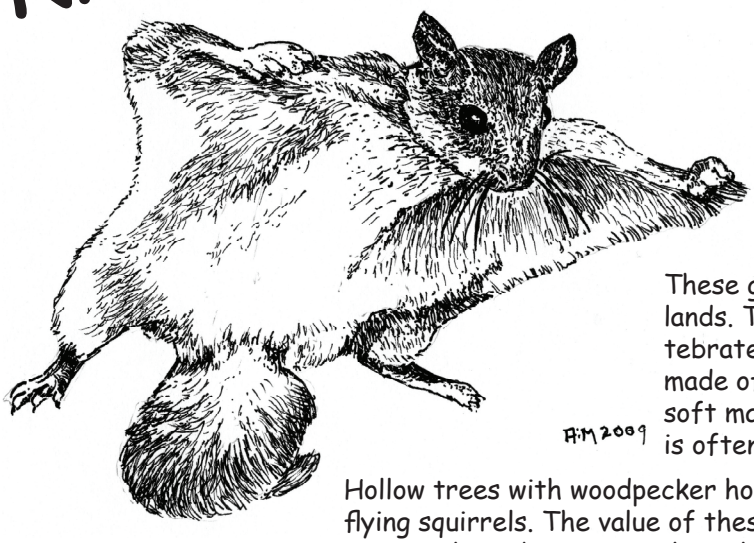
Information Source: *Cornell Chronicle Online*

# NATURE NOTES

## Night Flyers

### Northern Flying Squirrels

### Glaucomys sabrinus



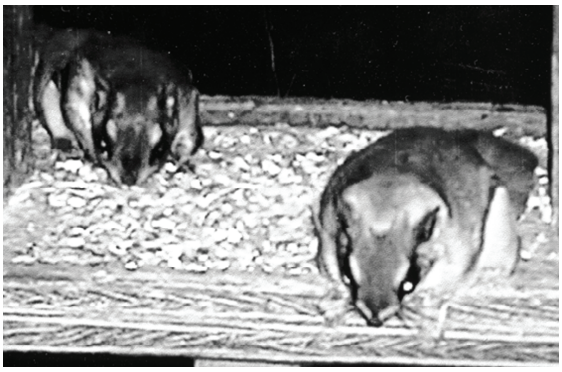

Sitting around a campfire or hiking after dusk is an experience that helps connect us to the mysterious world of night life. Nothing is as awe-inspiring as witnessing the soundless gliding of nocturnal squirrels as they move from tree to tree in the light of the full moon or campfire.

These graceful creatures of the night live in mature woodlands. They feed on ground fungi, nuts, seeds, lichens, invertebrates, fruits, flowers, buds and tree sap. Their nests are made of stringy bark, such as that of cedars, or any other soft material gathered from trees and the forest floor. Food is often stored on stumps or at tree bases.

Hollow trees with woodpecker holes are apartment buildings for cavity dwellers like flying squirrels. The value of these trees as habitat behooves us to think twice before cutting them down. Our relatively short stay on Kennebec Lake is enriched by the life around us, connected and interconnected in such a complex way that it can make us feel wonderfully small in the face of it.

The perfection of nature's designs is highlighted by one of the important ecological roles of the flying squirrel: it disperses spores of ground fungi that collectively create an underground nutrient network. Many trees and other forest plants tap into this network in what is called mycorrhizal associations, enabling them to access nourishment from fungal decomposition of forest litter. A healthy forest community depends on the well-being of all its members, as each plays a critical role in the well-being of the whole.

Text: Bea Heissler
Illustration: Aileen Merriam



Thanks to Naish and Sharon Delaney - flying squirrels at their bird feeder.

**Northern Flying Squirrel**

Length: about 30 cm (including 14 cm tail)
Weight: 75-140 g
Furry membrane stretched from front to back legs; broad, flat tail
Glides: 3-50 m; can change direction mid-glide
Mate late winter, early spring; average number of young: 3
40 days old: walk but not glide
End of summer: glide as well as parents
Predators: owls, martens, fishers, weasels, raccoons, bobcats and domestic cats (squirrels usually caught when on the ground seeking truffles).
Source: www.flyingsquirrels.com

by Aileen Merriam

**Health Food for Hummers**

**You were asking** … how to attract hummingbirds to our gardens and offer them something healthier than sugar water?

Many of our beautiful native plants attract hummingbirds with their bright flowers and sweet nectar. Growing near us in the wild are different species of milkweed (Aesclepias) and bee balm (Monarda). Along our shores, we find cardinal flowers (Lobelia) and spotted jewelweed (Impatiens). In open, sunny areas, columbine (Aquilegia), lupines (Lupinus) and penstemons (Penstemon) are great attractors. These are just a few, and most will flourish in your garden.

by Aileen Merriam