



# What's Growing On? The Fletcher Wildlife Garden Newsletter

[www.ofnc.ca/fletcher](http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher)

November - December 2013

## Winter is on our doorstep.

Text by Sandra Garland and France Thibodeau  
Photos by Robert Berry



This is a busy time of year for chipmunks as they must provision their burrows for the winter to come.

This is the time of year when everything slows down, even the garden. The days are getting shorter, the nights a little darker, and animals and humans alike begin to ready themselves for the cold times ahead.

The trees have lost their leaves making it easier to spot the few birds that remain, as well as their now-abandoned nests. Winter squirrel nests can also be seen, and visitors will notice the new squirrel boxes we've installed on trees here and there. We're hoping red squirrels will use them and leave the larger roosting boxes available for birds to shelter from winter storms. Thanks to the Cubs of the 1st Blackburn Hamlet troop for building both.

Fall chores include collecting seeds to grow for our plant sale in the spring, putting lids and a thick layer of leaves on the plant boxes in our nursery, and mulching the garden beds. We'll be

planting a few more trees before the ground freezes too.

The garden is quieter now, as most migratory birds have left for warmer latitudes and no insect sounds can be heard. We'll start filling our bird feeders soon – just so we can see winter residents, like the bright, bold cardinals, and the ever-present chickadees. Soon, the only other evidence of wildlife will be paw prints in the snow.

It's been another year full of successes, thanks to the continuing efforts of all the volunteers who make the Fletcher Wildlife Garden possible. Work on the habitats has been hard, and long, yet rewarding. One success, mentioned in this issue, is the Monarch Waystation, a haven for butterflies, insects and birds alike. We will also learn about how butterflies cope with the winter months, and how leaving some leaf litter in your yard may help their caterpillars survive the chill until spring can revitalize them.



One of the many abandoned bird nests at the garden. This one may have belonged to an American Redstart.



## How to Reach Us

### Contact Us!

#### FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Box 35069 Westgate PO  
Ottawa ON  
K1Z 1A2

Tel: (613) 234-6767  
Email: [fletcher@ofnc.ca](mailto:fletcher@ofnc.ca)

### Find us Online!

#### FLETCHER WILDLIFE GARDEN

Our Website: [www.onfc.ca/fletcher](http://www.onfc.ca/fletcher)  
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On Deviantart: [the-fwg.deviantart.com](http://the-fwg.deviantart.com)

## New Faces at Fletcher Wildlife Garden

You may see some new faces at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden interpretation centre on a more regular basis. We would like to introduce Brenda McCrea and Eleanor Zurbrigg who will be volunteering as co-managers of the interpretation centre. They will help with organizing the centre and coordinating the functions that occur there. If you have any suggestions or comments, please bring them to their attention and we will see what they can do. Eleanor and Brenda hope to be at the interpretation centre more frequently so stop by to say hello or just to warm up as the winter season approaches.



Brenda (left) and Eleanor (right) in front of the FWG Interpretation Centre.

## Thank you, John!



John Kevern (pictured left) received a certificate of appreciation from the FWG Management Committee on the occasion of his retirement from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. John and his team have assisted the FWG volunteers on many occasions by providing expertise and equipment to supplement FWG resources. Barry Cottam presented John his certificate at the Friday morning group's coffee break on October 11.



## New Birdhouses for the Garden

Text by Christine Hanrahan

Thanks to the generosity of a local high school, the garden has six more bird houses to replace old and decaying ones. Students of Richard Watters, at Bell High School in Bell's Corners, make a variety of bird houses, which the school distributes free of charge to various local areas. This year, some are making their way to the Fletcher Wildlife Garden. All of this was arranged for us by Chris Bruce, local birder and photographer. Thanks and kudos to all of them.

In April 2013, Bruce Burns made four bird houses for us, which Claudia Burns and I put up, and which immediately attracted tree swallows. A pair landed on one of them as we were putting up the others. In exchange for the bird houses, Claudia took home some FWG plants.



## A Visit to Carleton University

Text by Lynn OvendYn, photos by Barry Cottam



A view inside the greenhouse that our volunteers visited.

On a recent Friday morning, several volunteers hiked over the locks to Carleton University to see the research garden and greenhouse. Our host for the morning was Steven Chatfield, who teaches biotechnology in the Biology Department. Since several faculty members study the secondary metabolites of plants, particularly natural medicinal compounds, they maintain several medicinal and culinary species in the smaller greenhouse. They would like to expand their collection of native species in an outdoor herb garden. Last spring, Steven began reclaiming the old research garden located between the Nesbitt Building and the Rideau River.

After 5 years of neglect, the entire garden, walls, fence and surrounding trees were swathed in dog-strangling vine (DSV). Over the summer, he cleared the

enclosure of most of the visible DSV, using a scythe-like weed cutter in areas of debris around the perimeter and a front-end loader to remove the upper 10 cm or so of soil in the main central portion. The piles of DSV-laden soil will (hopefully) compost into a rich organic soil for use in the garden. Steven built a few raised beds this summer and hopes to see the garden fill up with many more raised beds, for both student projects and medicinal/ culinary plant species.

Like allies in a righteous war, we commiserated with Steven about DSV and enjoyed hearing about his energetic attack on this tough invasive competitor. We also talked about how we might cooperate in propagating native plant species and supporting research projects of Carleton students.



Visiting the research garden

# How Butterflies Spend the Winter

Text & photos by Christine Hanrahan



A gorgeous orange Eastern Comma Vutterfly

Butterflies seem such fragile creatures, too delicate to survive our harsh winters. And yet they do, emerging the following year to delight us once again. Over the millennia, butterflies have evolved various ways of defying the frigid weather in northerly climates. The most common way to spend the winter is as a chrysalis, caterpillar or, in some cases, as eggs. Other species migrate to warmer places, monarchs to Mexico and other species to the southern US. And finally, there are the tough guys of the butterfly world, who overwinter in the adult stage.

It seems miraculous that adult butterflies can survive our long, harsh winter and equally mystifying that larvae, pupae, and eggs can withstand the rigours of winter. But, they do so by preparing themselves for hibernation.

“By changing their physiology, butterflies, or their eggs, larvae, or pupae, are able to survive the winter for months in a state of suspended animation” (James and Nunnallee 2011).

Around Ottawa, overwintering adult butterflies include mourning cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*), eastern comma (*Polygonia comma*), green comma (*Polygonia faunus*), gray comma (*Polygonia progne*), question mark (*Polygonia interrogationis*), Milbert’s tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis milberti*), and Compton tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis vaualbum*). However, some of the larger mourning cloaks we see in this region are likely migrants from further south, and question mark butterflies may also be migratory in part.

When we really stop and think about it, it seems particularly astonishing that an adult butterfly, at wisp of a thing, can endure temperatures that may plunge to  $-30^{\circ}\text{C}$ ? How can they withstand heavy snow, freezing rain, and winter gales?

The answer is hibernation and something called diapause. Just as some mammals “shut down” for the winter and hibernate, so do those few butterfly species that overwinter here. But first they must find safe shelter, usually under loose tree bark or in crevices, cavities, logs, and even caves. I’ve also seen some butterflies, particularly Milbert’s tortoiseshells, emerging in spring from the eaves of old buildings.

According to James and Nunnallee (2011), hibernating adults go into a “physiological state

called diapause, characterized by a lowered metabolic rate and radical biochemical changes. Diapause is different from simple dormancy or inactivity as occurs in butterflies and their immature stages during cool periods in spring and autumn or overnight. It is a rigidly controlled physiological mechanism that is genetically fixed or induced by environmental cues.”

Before hibernating, these adult butterflies fatten up by feeding voraciously, often on rotting fruit and sap. This is no different to what hibernating mammals do (think of bears gorging on food to put on fat for the long winter months).



A Mourning Cloak butterfly.



A Question mark butterfly, one of the many species found at Fletcher

Warm spells encourage adults to become active again, even if for just a brief period, and it is then you may see them fluttering through woodlands in the Ottawa area. When cold weather returns, they retreat to shelter.

During the very early, warm spring of 2010, I found active butterflies in mid-March. In the unusual heat wave of mid-March 2012, when the temperature hit 30°C, I saw several mourning cloaks fluttering around the woods. But when the temperatures cooled again, the butterflies vanished.

The next time you are on a winter walk through the woods somewhere like the Fletcher Wildlife Garden, remember that you may well be passing close by some overwintering adult butterflies, just waiting to emerge and fly again.

*Reference: James, D.G. and Nunnallee, D. 2011. Life histories of Cascadia butterflies. Oregon State University Press.*



## Hibernation Boxes for Butterflies

Text by Christine Hanrahan

With a commendable desire to help butterflies, many of us have added a hibernation box or hibernaculum to our yard for overwintering adults to use. However, it seems that butterflies have other ideas. Although somewhere, someone may have witnessed butterflies using one of these structures, none of us has ever heard of such use. In general, these hibernation boxes are considered no more than decorative garden ornaments. Most butterfly experts agree that lepidoptera prefer to find their own overwintering sites, usually under the loose bark of trees. So, it's more helpful to retain trees — both living and dead (snags) — so that the butterflies can find snug, safe quarters for winter.

# Butterfly Meadow End of Year Report

Text and photos by Diane Ledge

Our season, the seventh for me, started a little slow this year due to the rainy spring, and the poor weather kept some volunteers away. Three work sessions had to be canceled because of rain and one because of heat.

On May 1, we raked a section of the Butterfly Meadow (BM), and the following week we removed much dead vegetation, include dry dog-strangling vine (DSV) along the east side of the path through the meadow. The focus this year was on the three areas planted last year, with great success, and other older sections of the meadow.

A considerable amount of energy was devoted to maintaining the Model Monarch Waystation (MWS), including regular weeding and adding more plants. In June, we removed the fence that had been installed last year to prevent animals from eating the new plants and a black plastic border was laid down along the path to make a division between the grass and the waystation.

In 2012, we started to build a system of hoses to bring water from the storage tank into the MWS to create a wet area. This year, once spring meltwater had drained away, we were able to complete the job. It was very laborious to lay landscape cloth and hoses and cover them with soil, wood chips, and rocks, but with good results.

During the first week of September, we completed the jobs we had planned for the season and started preparing for next year. Four volunteers worked at removing DSV under trees and in the surrounding area to prepare the site for a group of Carleton students who were coming to help on the morning of September 23.

September 11 was the last regular Wednesday evening session for working in the BM. We worked just outside the north side of the meadow where new fruit trees would be planted. The plan was to replace dead trees in this area and remove invasive species to create a buffer zone for the BM. We removed mostly DSV and raspberry canes to make room for the new shrubs. Stewardship Rangers helped immensely by digging and sifting the soil to remove DSV roots. Two members of the FWG committee then met on Friday, September 20 to plant a serviceberry, two elderberries, three dogwoods and two nannyberries.



Our j olunteer Lesley, hard at work.



Some of the many dedicated volunteers working at the Monarch Waystation

The 2013 season was very productive, and I could have not accomplished so much without our dedicated volunteers. I am very grateful for all their help. Thank you all!



## Friends of the FWG Facebook Chatter

Monarch migration news - <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/fall2013/update092613.html>

Birds and Windows project - <http://birdswindows.biology.ualberta.ca/> - The University of Alberta is asking people to register and submit information about birds hitting their windows

Creating rest stops for migratory birds - <http://www.ecosystemgardening.com/creating-rest-stops-for-migratory-birds-in-your-ecosystem-garden.html>

Spectacular close-ups of butterfly wings - <http://www.weather.com/home-garden/garden/butterfly-wings-20130918>

Keys to asters (<http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/flora-fauna/keys/asters/index.php>) and goldenrods (<http://www.ofnc.ca/fletcher/flora-fauna/keys/goldenrods/index.php>) of the Ottawa region

Ontario's tree atlas - [http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/ClimateChange/2ColumnSubPage/STDPROD\\_085782.html?region=nativeSpecies](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/ClimateChange/2ColumnSubPage/STDPROD_085782.html?region=nativeSpecies)

Certify Your Garden as a Monarch Waystation - <http://www.thegardenbuzz.com/2013/09/certify-your-garden-as-a-monarch-waystation.html>

Butterflies drink turtle tears - <http://www.treehugger.com/natural-sciences/butterflies-drink-turtle-tears-for-their-salt-fix.html>

Convention centre aims to attract butterflies with Monarch Waystation - <http://triblive.com/lifestyles/2411624-74/butterflies-waystation-monarch-says-center-monarchs-butterfly-convention-attract-plants#axzz2ewFc4MOS>

Birds in flight - <http://www.visualnews.com/2013/09/11/captured-mid-air-small-birds-look-like-flight/>

How hummingbirds sip nectar (video) - <http://player.vimeo.com/video/68897592>

Good resource for native plant propagation techniques - <http://nativeplants.for.uidaho.edu/>



## 2013 in the Backyard Garden

Text by Isabelle Nicol and Barbara Riley, photo by France Thibodeau



A female Goldfinch, eating seeds.

Each year the Backyard Garden (BYG) absorbs the labour of many volunteers just on basic maintenance: weeding, transplanting, thinning, battling invasive DSV, pruning, mulching, grass cutting, edging, composting, pond clearing, and maintaining bird feeder and birdbath. These all demand a major commitment of time and energy from mid-April to the end of October. BYG volunteers are also needed to take on additional, urgent tasks involving other FWG activities, for example, preparations for the annual plant sale.

As a result, any accomplishment beyond ongoing BYG work requires an extraordinary effort. In 2013, this extra effort resulted in two landmark achievements: the creation of a new area — the

Plum Tree Garden — and the compilation of a complete plant list, in Latin, English, and French, for each garden bed.

The Plum Tree Garden, created from an overgrown, neglected area, completes the far end of the BYG and provides a suitable connection between two other sections: the Woodland Walk and the Wetland. In addition to plum trees and other native plants, it features a dry bed constructed of stones found on site.

The compilation of plant names is the first, essential step toward an identification system. Proper naming in three languages demanded research and continual consultation and verification. Now there is a solid database to build on in the future.

Other activities included the addition of three new native plants to the garden (Ironweed, Amethyst Aster, and Mountain Mint), the design of permanent signs for all Garden beds, and a very welcome day of heavy-duty work by an enthusiastic group of volunteers from Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

The BYG entertains a constant stream of visitors: bicyclists discovering it for the first time, parents and children coming for a picnic, photographers, dog walkers, birdwatchers, and those wanting to enjoy a few moments of peace in the midst of their chaotic day. Special visitors are the botanical artists for whom the garden serves as a classroom.

Sightings of wildlife this year included the gorgeous Giant Swallowtail butterflies that made several appearances over the summer.

Looking ahead to next year we plan to follow up on 2013 achievements:

- install signs identifying each bed by purpose or main characteristic
- develop a way to enable visitors to identify plants
- extend the existing flagstone path to the Plum Tree Garden
- add a new plant, White Monarda, to attract Hummingbird Moths



## In and Around the Ash Woodlot, 2013

Text and photos by Sandy Garland

I've always thought the best season for the Ash Woodlot was spring when bloodroot, trilliums, baneberry, violets, and other early wildflowers are blooming; the trees are just starting to leaf out; and no invasives can be seen yet. But this year, the woods were spectacular in the fall. Many of the sugar maples that we've been planting for so many years are now "preteens" and their fall colours make the woods glow. Zigzag goldenrods, white snakeroot, and heart-leafed and large-leafed asters add their own subtle colours, and the autumn sun shines through the thinning leaf canopy illuminating everything.

### Changes to come

The Ash Woodlot is going to change dramatically over the next few years. For one thing, we'll have to find a new name for this habitat as the dominant ash trees succumb to Emerald Ash Borer. When the FWG was first established, the woodlot consisted of planted trees – mainly green ash,

red oak, Norway spruce, and Scots pine - with mowed grass between. Over the years, other species have grown up: mountain ash, red-berried elder, black cherry, and of course invasive buckthorn and honeysuckle. Manitoba and Norway maples arrived in fall leaves, spread in the woods to enrich the soil.

We've planted a variety of native species in an effort to move toward a mixed maple-beech forest, typical of this part of Canada. Sugar maples of various ages are doing well, but beech trees are a bit harder to find. Other additions have been pagoda dogwood, balsam fir, beaked hazel, ironwood, and basswood, all of which are thriving.

Maintenance consists of removing buckthorn, honeysuckle, Norway and Manitoba maple seedlings, dog-strangling vine, motherwort, garlic mustard, and burdock (all non-native) and planting common forest-floor species, such as sedges, bellwort, and ferns.

In anticipation of the death of the ash trees and the opportunity that presents, we've doubled efforts to introduce more native seedlings and saplings. Thanks to Iola Price and Renate Sander-Regier for donating many sugar and red maples and balsam firs to this cause. Thanks also to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for giving us two yellow birch saplings – and promises of more native species to come.

DSV removal is an ongoing – and huge – problem. Although I spent many hours pulling and digging this summer, a quick calculation showed that I'd have to work around the clock for many years in order to make a dent. Currently, I am pinning my hopes on the moth larvae that have been found to eat DSV leaves and the possibility of a soil organism that may exclude DSV. More news on these fronts as soon as we have something concrete to report.

On the south side of the woods, three pin cherries proved popular with leaf-cutter bees last year. This year, I added chokecherry and bush honeysuckle and scattered hundreds of chokecherry seeds along the perimeter in hopes of having a band of these small trees that flower in spring and produce fruit later in the summer. I pulled DSV off earlier plantings (blackberry, clematis), but in one area the plants were too numerous and large to deal with, so I covered it with a tarpaulin. We've used this technique earlier, with good results and a bare spot to plant the following year.



The Ash Woods



Just a few of the plants in the Ash Woods

### Contribution to the Monarch waystation project

On June 9, we held a milkweed planting bee, during which we cleared DSV around the milkweeds (about 24) that had been planted in 2012 in the field just north of the Ash Woodlot and planted about 50 more common milkweed plants donated by Iola Price and Ken Young, as well as seedlings grown in 2012. When you visit the FWG, you'll see this area, which is surrounded by red flagging tape.

On September 23, Iola and I supervised a group of Carleton students, who planted more donated common milkweeds as well as two flats of seedlings from our nursery around the circumference. The students also pulled DSV out of trees and shrubs in the surrounding area.

### Insect Hotel

Late in the summer, I began construction of an "insect hotel" on the south side of the woods near where Sophie Cardinal (of AAFC) had placed a bee box in 2012. It's made of stacked pallets with paving bricks as spacers.

I've been filling the layers with a variety of material, including dry hollow stems of cup-plants, day lilies, and wild parsnip, rolled up bamboo blinds, pieces of wood with holes drilled into the ends, clumps of grass, pine cones, etc. I added some vertical 1X2s on the outside to fasten all pallets together to minimize disturbance.

Small sweat bees started investigating the hotel quite quickly and seemed to be interested in the cup-plant stems – white bits of pulp can be seen where something has been excavating.



FWG's first 'Insect Hotel'

Although I thought I started too late to see any egg laying, one of the drilled holes is already filled. I'm looking forward to seeing who moves in next year!



# Bug Day 2013!



Participants being led through the gardens for a collecting/nature hike.

On September 7, the Entomological Society of Ontario hosted Ottawa's first Bug Day. The major goal of this event was to foster in the general public a greater appreciation for insects through a mixture of various interactive displays and activities. Bug Day was sponsored by a Public Encouragement Grant from the Entomological Society of Canada and by the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club, who hosted us at the Fletcher Wildlife Garden.

Text and photos by Sophie Cardinal



Old and young alike were captivated by the insects found

Despite less than perfect weather, the turnout was great, with attendance estimated at over 800 people; one family came all the way from Montréal! Numerous entomologists volunteered to organize various activities and displays. By the time that the doors officially opened at 11 am, a sizeable crowd was already present and roaming the various displays.



Learning how to pin and label

Throughout the day, entomologists led insect collecting trips/nature walks in and around the FWG. While sharing their vast knowledge about the natural history of insects, they also demonstrated how to spot, observe, and collect various bugs. Kids (and the young at heart) were given nets to take on the walks, and the first 40 children received insect-collecting kits to



"Fishing" for aquatic insects

take home. Participants were then shown how to pin, label, and identify the insects they collected, and were encouraged to use catch and release practices when possible.



Bravely holding the Macleay's Spectre walking sticks

The live insect zoo contained numerous insects for people to observe, touch, hold, and smell. There were also displays and demonstrations on caterpillar rearing, aquatic insects, micro-insects, the leek moth, and bees. People's eyes were opened (literally) to just how small insects can be and how intricately beautiful they are under the microscope. Many beautiful insect works of art (which are now surely covering the fridges of many homes) were produced throughout the day at the craft table. The cockroach races, along with some other displays, even made the local CBC 6 pm news!

All in all, Bug Day was a great success, surpassing everyone's expectations, and surely inspiring a few future entomologists. We have received a lot of positive feedback from the public, including comments on how their kids now won't stop turning over rocks looking for insects. Thanks to everyone who helped make this event happen. We look forward to doing it again next year!



Cockroach race in action



# Old Field Habitat, 2013 Report



A view of the Old Field

Text by Christine Hanrahan

In May, 2012, a section of the old field was rototilled by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. This portion was on the north-west side, along the service road, and adjacent to the sumac thickets.

Although the purpose was to help get rid of the spreading lamium and garlic mustard, it was interesting to see the changes that resulted. A host of different species grew up, mostly annuals and biennials, but a few perennials as well. Most were, unsurprisingly, non-native species, two of which were new for our plant list. I cleared out an area at the back of the rototilled section and planted yarrow, purple coneflower, pearly everlasting, joe-pye weed and common milkweed, as part of the Monarch Waystation Project.

In 2013, most of the annuals found the previous year in the rototilled site didn't reappear, but certain

other species spread rapidly, including non-naive catnip and the native evening primrose. All of the species I planted survived and grew, but heavy weeding was needed to give them room to grow. I had said right from the start, that I didn't want to create another mini-garden there with the attendant need to water and weed, so, after some initial weeding, I limited work to monitoring and removing some of the biggest plants that threatened to overwhelm the planted species, most of which were fine at the end of summer 2013.

In late summer, volunteers removed a large swathe of dog-strangling vine (DSV) in another section of the Old Field. I also pulled and cut DSV around the pearly everlasting that has been in the site for some years (not planted) and around milkweeds. Ash and walnut trees were cut down.

## Plans for future management

I see several options for managing the Old Field habitat, going into the future:

- 1 - Discontinue mowing. Continue removing trees and shrubs as they appear, and continue removing DSV (scything, pulling, cutting).
- 2 - Discontinue mowing but limit the goldenrod and raspberry (by cutting or scything) so that a balance is achieved between the two dominant species. Continue removing trees, shrubs and DSV as in 1.
- 3 - Do a one-time mowing and plowing (the northern section in autumn 2014, the southern section in autumn 2015), and monitor the evolution of the site after this action. Continue removing DSV as it appears (hoeing may work in such a situation, but would have to be done regularly).
- 4 - Turn a small part of the old field into an extension of the butterfly meadow. This would involve a lot of work and would be high maintenance. Probably not feasible or even desired.
- 5 - Mow regularly with the same rotation as above: the northern section one year, the southern section, the next, which means each section is mowed every two years. Whether this would effect a change is doubtful, and is probably not worth doing, given the experience we've had with mowing thus far.
- 6 - Other ideas include scything each section every second year in autumn (less destructive than mowing to small wildlife such as all the toads who shelter in the Old Field). However, this is probably not feasible either, as it requires a lot of work and scythes may not be easy to use on the raspberries.

## Nature Notes: Plant(s) of the Month



All text by Christine Hanrahan

This collage shows some of the wild foods used by birds and mammals at the garden. On the left are the seeds of Manitoba maple (*Acer negundo*), which feed a wide variety of creatures, particularly in deepest winter when not much else is left. Top right are crabapples (*Malus*). Not all are eaten by wildlife, and not all are eaten at this time. Many are left until after first frost, with some fruit remaining into the first part of the winter and providing food for squirrels, finches, waxwings, robins (those that overwinter), etc. Bottom right is a cluster of mountain ash berries (*Sorbus*), which get consumed pretty quickly by robins, waxwings, starlings, and others.

## Nature Notes: Reptile of the Month

Barry Cottam took this first photo of a garter snake at the FWG! These snakes are very common in the region, but for whatever reason had not been seen at the FWG. However, that may be about to change. Diane noticed one in the Butterfly Meadow in July, Sandy saw one on the trail at the end of September 29, Chris reported he saw one last year (2012), and today Barry and Isabelle saw one around the Backyard Garden.

Garter snakes are often encountered in gardens and urban parks, and we're not sure why they have not been seen at the FWG before. We have ample sites for shelter, resting, and hibernating (they will use chipmunk burrows, go under logs, in stumps, under buildings, etc.). There is a good supply of food as they eat frogs and toads, mice, voles, eggs and young of ground-nesting birds, worms, and probably grasshoppers and other insects.



## Nature Notes: Bug of the Month



Praying mantis (*Mantis religiosa*) eating a woolly bear caterpillar (*Pyrrhaectia isabella*). The large, familiar mantis is a European species that is widely used here for biocontrol of insects in gardens. As Robert Berry's photo shows so well, these insects will go after even relatively large prey. The poor victim here is a caterpillar familiar to all: an Isabella Tiger Moth caterpillar or "woolly bear."

See more on our **PHOTOBLOG**: [www.pbbase.com/fwg/](http://www.pbbase.com/fwg/)