

# The Aquila

Issue #14 July 2019

## THIS ISSUE

Birds of Thickson's Woods -  
Hermit Warbler  
New to the Checklist - Canada Jay  
Not on the List - Brown Pelican  
Documenting the Biodiversity  
Nothing  
Fungi Checklist

Northern Parula *Setophaga americana* (Mike McEvoy)

Supported by



**RED RAVEN**  
MARKETING

# A Day I will Never Forget

## by Jax Nasimok



Jax Nasimok

## The Birds of Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve *Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis**

**S**aturday April 27 was a cold, wet and dreary day. However, since it was migration season, my dad and I figured it couldn't hurt to check out Thickson's Woods. So, off we went to Durham's best spring migration hotspot; it certainly lives up to its reputation.

Upon arriving at Thickson's Woods, very few cars were parked, adding to our dismay. We got out, completed our usual bug spray routine, and headed off into the woods. We decided to check out the little loop on the first right upon entering the woods. We split up, each walking a different way around the loop, in case one of us flushed something. Having noted nothing other than a few Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*), a Yellow-rumped Warbler (*Setophaga coronata*) and a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) on my side, it didn't look like it was going to be a good day. We met up at the tip of the loop near the small row of junipers, to see if anything would fly in.



Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis*. The first record for Thickson's Woods, Whitby, Ontario.  
April 27, 2019 (Jax Nasimok).

Within seconds, a Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* called from just out of view. A few seconds later, I noticed a warbler in the trees above us. Upon zooming in with my camera, I saw a bird with a dark back, light undersides, and a yellowish head; matching a brief description of a Black-throated Green Warbler. If it had been a busy day at Thickson's, I would have dismissed it and kept going. That day, was not a busy day. I followed it with my camera, and things just didn't look right. I couldn't quite place it but I knew something still didn't fit. I considered a Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* but how could it have ended up here? It was then I realized that I should just trust my instinct and called out to my dad, "GET ON THAT BIRD!!!" It was a good thing I did. A few seconds later, it disappeared into the conifers and never returned to that spot.

By now, I was starting to get excited but I didn't want to risk calling the wrong ID. I knew it was probably a Black-throated Green, but there was a nagging feeling at the back of my head telling me that that was wrong. It really looked like a Hermit. I knew a Hermit Warbler would be rare, really rare, but it looked like one! I also knew I had to get the word out as soon as possible as it could leave at any time. Luckily, my dad had a data plan on his phone, and right away, I told him to look up Hermit and Black-throated Green. Now I was getting confident it was a Hermit. It had a plain, golden yellow head, a small black bib not extending down the sides, no streaking on the flanks, and a blue-gray back matched Hermit but not a Black-throated Green. I considered how unlikely it was for a Hermit to end up here, I ran off to find another birder to verify it.

I left my dad to keep watch for the bird while I went off jogging. Being a quiet day in dreary weather, very few birders were to be found. Finally, I ran into Rayfield Pye. I probably didn't look like the most promising person to be coming over the hill, a teenager with a camera around his neck, jogging and accidentally spooking the Blue-headed Vireo *Vireo solitarius* he was watching. Not only that, but to then ask him to verify my possible Hermit Warbler sighting. Nonetheless, he greeted me kindly and took the time to review the photos. It looked like a Hermit Warbler but we concluded we should find Denis Barry, as he would know....Dennis Barry was nowhere to be found. Rayfield decided we would go out to his car, where he had a guide. Then, we would be able to make a more conclusive identification.

Fast forward a few minutes and we have the Field Guide to Eastern Birds of North America. Inside, he opened to the warbler section where there were many western vagrants including Black-throated Gray *Setophaga nigrescens* and Townsend's Warbler *Setophaga townsendi*, but no Hermit. By now, I was out of options but to go

## The Aquila



(Ed McAskill)



(Greg Dudley)

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* Thicksion's Woods,  
Whitby, Ontario. April 28, 2019  
Photos: top (Ed McAskill); above Greg Dudley).

home, forty minutes away in Markham, and post the pictures online to get an answer. After a quick check to see if the warbler returned, but it hadn't, we left.

On the way out, we ran into the Pickering Naturalists Club on a scheduled outing. They asked if we had seen anything interesting. Still not positive on the identification, I said they could see the photos of the Hermit Warbler for themselves. They had mixed opinions. To be fair, it is not easy to make a conclusive identification on the bird while viewing it on a three-inch camera screen in bad light. So off we went to post it, and off they went to keep an eye out for the bird.

Upon arriving at home we posted my images online to Toronto and Southern Ontario Birding, and within two hours got a

Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis*. The first record for Thicksion's Woods, Whitby, Ontario. April 27, 2019 (Jax Nasimok).



definite response, it was a Hermit Warbler! From then, the news of the bird was shared through multiple sites online, including the Ontario Bird-alert, eBird, the Ontario Birds Facebook Page, and many more. Over the next two days and the early morning of the next, it was seen by hundreds of birders, many getting a life bird with this little warbler. I feel so lucky to have found this bird and I am so glad so many birders got a chance to see it. Going back that afternoon, put a smile on my face to see so many excited birders enjoying this bird. If only all the rarities showed up on weekends!

**Note:** Hermit Warbler *Setophaga occidentalis* is a vagrant to Ontario from the Pacific Coast. This birds looks to be a male in its first spring and if accepted by the Ontario Bird Records Committee it will be the 8th record for Ontario. This is the 323rd species on the Thicksion's Woods Bird Checklist.

Jax Nasimok lives in Markham and is 15 years old. He has been birding for 7 years. I'm sure we will hear his name again when he discovers another major rarity, somewhere in Ontario, but preferably at Thicksion's Woods.  
Phill Holder

## Addition to the Thicksen's Woods Bird Checklist #322

### CANADA JAY

*Perisoreus canadensis*



Canada Jay *Perisoreus canadensis* taken in Algonquin Park, October 2018 (Phill Holder).

#### Glenn Coady

Expert birder and resident of Thicksen's Woods is working on a mammoth publication that will, in my view, become one of the best researched and most referenced books in Canadian ornithological history.

**Birds of the Greater Toronto Area**, will probably be in three volumes and will take Glenn 8 to 10 years to complete and will document all valid records of birds recorded less than 200 times.

Glenn states "This will be giving the Toronto area back its own ornithological legacy that until now has never been compiled in one place. And I have unearthed some truly staggering material. It is mind-blowing what information had been lost to the mists of time."

Glenn explains that half the battle is knowing where and how to search and what is available and where. Even more exciting is when he is able to solve 19th century puzzles that have been long forgotten. It can be a slow and labour intensive process, but it is very gratifying.

Glenn actually found the Canada Jay record fortuitously while searching for other historical Oshawa material. It was a side tangent discovered by accident.

On February 21, 1931, the recently formed Marshall Saunders Woodland Bird Study Club of the Oshawa Collegiate and Vocational Institute took a hike to "The Pines" (the colloquial name for Thicksen's Woods from the 1900s to the 1930s) and the 10 members of the club, along with their teacher and hike leader Arthur Slyfield (the school librarian) found a Canada Jay, both crossbills and Evening Grosbeak among a couple of dozen species.

The winter of 1929/30 saw a sizable Canada Jay flight in southern Ontario. There are several known instances of small or individual "echo flights" in the winter after a good flight year, and that is likely the explanation for this bird.

In addition to Canada Jay being added to the list, Glenn points out that Thicksen's Woods Nature Reserve now has six Corvid species on the list, something no other area in Ontario can claim! In addition to Canada Jay these are: Blue Jay, Eurasian Jackdaw, American Crow, Fish Crow and Common Raven. *Phill Holder*

# Not on the list, but oh so close

On the morning of May 22, 2019, Denny Barry called me to say that he had just received a call from Newcastle resident, Ian Whittaker who had been watching a dark pelican, fly around the Newcastle Harbour, and would I go down and check it out. I grabbed my binoculars and camera, headed out and was there in about five minutes.

At the harbour there was nothing unusual happening so I walked around eagerly scanning the lake, shoreline and boats – nothing unusual for about 15 minutes.

Then, it seemed out of nowhere, a Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* flew into view from between the many moored boats. Even though, I was actually looking for a pelican, it was quite a shock as the bird looked huge among the boats. I took a few photos and called Dennis and whoever was in my phone.

Even though Brown Pelican has been recorded in the Great Lakes many times and I remember the 2002 “Invasion” when at least eight Brown Pelicans were recorded in the Great Lakes (Wormington 2002) it is still very rare and much sort after by Ontario birders.

This is the first record for Durham, and therefore was not on the Thickson’s Woods Bird Checklist. So I got a little excited when it was seen to fly out of Newcastle Harbour and head west.

Unfortunately it was not seen flying over Thickson’s Bay but it surely had to, as it was seen that afternoon flying past Toronto and over the next couple of days as far west as Jordan Harbour, Niagara.

There didn’t seem to be any weather patterns that pushed this bird into the Great Lakes, from the south US coast - it was just lost!

I identified the pelican as a young bird but couldn’t tell if it was a male or female. My smart wife said it was probably a male, so it won’t be asking for directions!!

So this bird does not make the Thickson’s Woods Bird Checklist and reminds me of my initial research into the current list when there was a record of a Northern Hawk



Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* at Newcastle Harbour, Ontario May 22, 2019 (Phill Holder).

Owl, many years ago only 100 metres outside the checklist circle. So Northern Hawk Owl is also not on the list, even though there is a high probability it must have entered the circle at some point! Rules are rules.

Phill Holder

Wormington A. 2002. Brown Pelicans on the Great Lakes, The Invasion of 2002. Birders Journal 11-6. 228-240.



Phill Holder



Phill Holder



Phill Holder



Phill Holder

## WASPS, FLIES, ANTS and BEETLES 2019

I found this European Paper Wasp *Polistes dominula* top left, on May 20th. It had obviously over-wintered as a fertilized queen and will start a new colony. The Bee Fly *Exoprosopa* spp. top right was taken on June 2, and is one of many Bee Flies that can be seen nectaring on flowers. One of our common ant species *Formica glacialis* bottom left, photographed in a resident's garden on June 2. Bottom right is a Junebug / May Beetle which is actually a member of the Scarab Beetle family *Phyllophaga* spp. We get these beetles in our moth traps all the time but most of them cannot be identified to species.

# MAMMALS, MITES and SNAILS 2019

We tried desperately to trap a Meadow Jumping Mouse *Zapus hudsonius*, during our mammal surveys, without success, even though we had seen them many times in the Meadow. Ed McAskill photographed this mouse at nearby Cranberry Marsh. I sent the image to expert Fiona Reid for positive identification.

As small as a pin head the Clover Mite *Bryobia praetiosa* is barely visible to the naked eye, but through Mike's macro lens, looks all furry.

We have started to document gastropods and this is an Amber Snail *Succineidae Oxyloma*. At about 1cm long this is our first of this spring.



Ed McAskill



Mike McEvoy



Phill Holder

# Mothing

Phill Holder

It has become an annual event; we pack all our mothing gear and head to the Haliburton Highlands to set traps and document moths in areas never moth-ed before.

This year we were invited to set up at a newly donated, wonderful property just outside the town of Haliburton. Ed Propat organised the event and we had the full team in attendance: David Beadle, Mike King, Mike McEvoy, Phil Reyenga, Dennis Barry, Margaret Carney and myself.

The landowners, Margaret and Leopoldina Dobrzensky, donated 500 acres of pristine forest and we would be the first naturalists surveying the moths for the Barnum Creek Nature Reserve.

To cover an area properly in one night requires a lot of equipment and ideally has to be within reach of a reliable power source and/or have an accessible trail in which a generator could be placed to provide the power. Fortunately we were able to set up near a cabin that had power.

We placed eight traps, six of which were with Mercury Vapour (MV) bulbs, one was using a black light and one was a new specially designed LED moth light.

Over the winter I found out about a newly designed moth light, described as "*a leap forward in technology, enabling serious moth trapping in remote areas without weighty batteries, cables, a generator or mains supply*".

So I was intrigued as this is the one thing every travelling moth-er dreams of.

**Worldwide Butterflies** out of the UK are advertising **The Goodden GemLight**, which they claim runs all night on eight AA rechargeable batteries. extremely lightweight and ultra compact. If this works it would be remarkable.

I had to have one! The web site shows a moth trap full of moths and I was convinced enough to order one.

Coincidentally it arrived the day before the Haliburton trip. The instructions stated that the best batteries to use would be AA, greater than 2700mAh, however the best I could find at short notice was 2000mAh.

It also stated that the light works best when there are no other lights in the area to compete with it and I thought the Haliburton Highlands would be the ideal location to test the Goodden GemLight.

I converted one of my regular traps to take the new light and with David Beadle's help placed it as far away as possible from the other lights. I was a little bit concerned as in an otherwise very dark forest having six MV lights may possibly have an effect on the LED light.



Lappet Moth *Phyllodesma americana*  
Barnum Creek Nature Reserve, Haliburton.  
Caught using the Goodden GemLight (Phill Holder).

## The Aquila

It was an extremely successful night with easily 250 species in the traps, including new moths for all of us. But I was equally as excited to see if the new GemLight worked. And it did! The batteries I bought lasted all night and the light worked as advertised.

We were thrilled to have so many moths to show Haliburton Highlands Land Trust members and other visitors from the general public who came for a presentation by Ed Poropat and to see how we trap and photograph moths.

The new light was not as productive as an MV bulb, but the trap was still full of moths, including many sphinx moths and a nice fresh *Cecropia*. To be fair, Worldwide Butterflies do state that it will not attract the quantity of moths that MV bulbs attract but in my view certainly competes with blacklight bulbs. The obvious advantage is that it can be placed literally anywhere. I think that this light will be essential for targeting specific moth species in difficult to reach habitats like bogs.

I wanted to do another test and modified the trap to raise the light a couple of centimetres to see if the light would be more productive. So, I set the trap in a very dark part of the Oak Ridges Moraine, away from any lights.

Again, the light worked as advertised, and maybe caught a few more moths than last time, with some great months in the trap, again many sphinx moths including Modest Sphinx which was a real treat.

I also tried the light in Thickson's Woods, where it would compete with other lights and it was not as productive in the quantity of moths as previous nights, but it did catch a new month for the list, a Salt Marsh Moth.

So this light works, no doubt, and I will spend some time this winter making a trap specifically for this light, as I feel I can make a more efficient trap more compatible with the light design. Worldwide Butterflies do sell a trap designed for this light, but personally, I prefer to make my own traps.

I'm sure that this light will also work very well with a sheet and if travelling to any remote location, you could easily pack a sheet with the GemLight and that is all you would really need.

The GemLight is not inexpensive at approximately \$300 including currency exchange and shipping to Canada, but does provide greater opportunities to catch moths in otherwise inaccessible locations. I certainly think I will be buying more GemLights.

Salt Marsh Moth *Estigmene acrea*  
Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve, Whitby.  
Caught using the Goodden GemLight (Phill Holder).

### The Goodden GemLight



The GemLight runs on 8 AA rechargeable batteries, weighs only 360g, including batteries, fits in the palm of your hand, and runs for over 10 hours on a single charge.

The Gemlight uses specially produced Ultraviolet LED emitters that are more powerful and effective than any other battery light. The GemLight is the result of years of research and investment and has been tested both in the tropics and temperate regions. It is not claimed to be a replacement for powerful Mercury Vapour (MV) but in off-peak seasons it has on occasions outperformed MV.

The light has a daylight sensor and the light will turn itself on at dusk and off at dawn thus allowing the moths to settle. Very convenient and practical.

There are built in safety features, including flashing indicators to warn when the light will turn on as looking at the UV emitter could cause damage to your eyes if viewed directly. The use of UV safety glasses is recommended.

More information can be found at [www.wwb.co.uk](http://www.wwb.co.uk)



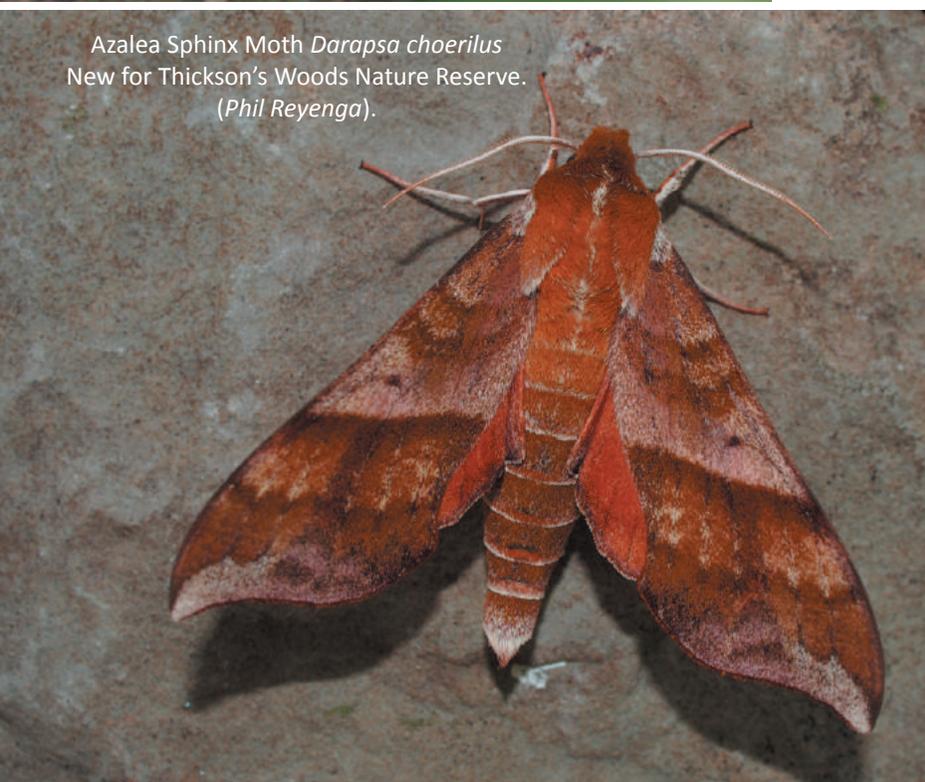
# The Aquila



Virginia Creeper Sphinx Moth *Darapsa myron*  
Oak Ridges Moraine.  
Caught using the Goodden GemLight (Phill Holder).



Modest Sphinx Moth *Pachysphinx modesta*  
Oak Ridges Moraine.  
Caught using the Goodden GemLight (Phill Holder).



Azalea Sphinx Moth *Darapsa choerilus*  
New for Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve.  
(Phil Reyenga).



Rose Hooktip *Oreta rosea*  
New for Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve.  
(Mike McEvoy).

At Thickson's, after a cold wet spring, we finally got started and so far we have added 15 species to the moth list which now stands at 1036, with still some moths to be identified and others from previous years under review. *Phill Holder*

Introducing  
**NEW LYNX HD+**

**LYNX HD+** is the newest range of binoculars introduced from Kite Optics. With up to date design and engineering the Lynx HD+ gives perfectly natural colour rendition and wide-angle views all within a light weight design.

The revolutionary optical system is suited to all conditions and circumstances. Combined with its top-of-the-line lightweight construction, Kite bring to market one of the smallest and lightest binoculars ever made. The Lynx HD+ 8x30 fits into the pockets of your vest while the 10x50 is no bigger or heavier than most 42mm binoculars on the market. For the first time ever, you can enjoy the amazing light gathering capabilities of large diameter binoculars without the traditional downsides of size, weight, and small field.

From  
**KITE OPTICS®**



Now in sizes: 8x30 • 10x30 • 8x42 • 10x42 • 10x50



**novagrade®**

*Digiscoping just got  
a lot easier*

*Attach your  
phone to any  
eyepiece in  
seconds*

**NEW 'Double Gripper'** for extra support



Universal mount for taking photos and video through eyepieces of spotting scopes, binoculars, microscopes etc.



## VIATO

A UNIQUE BACKPACK

### FAST AND EASY

- Universal fit attaches to most standard tripods\*
- Stores your essential gear in 15L of storage space
- Carry your camera/scope system on your back
- Slips from your back in seconds ready to use

**YOUR TRIPOD+BACKPACK IN ONE®**

### EXCEPTIONAL COMFORT

- Balances weight as you hike • Padded back panel and ventilated mesh
- Waterproof bottom • Multiple compartments to organise gear • Keep gear from touching ground, free from dirt • Weather cover

\*Tripod sold separately

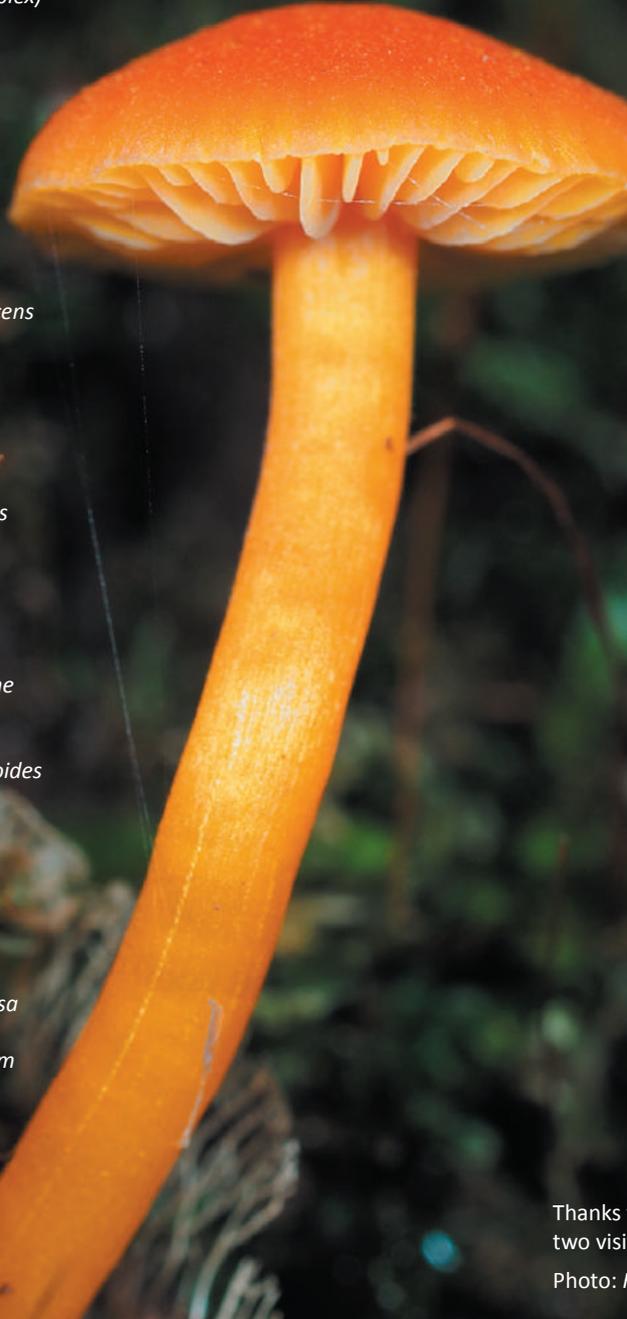
Distributed in Canada by Red Raven Marketing [www.redravenphoto.com](http://www.redravenphoto.com)

# Thickson's Woods Checklist of Fungi

## Type

## Scientific Name

Gilled	<i>Amanita flavoconia</i>
Gilled	<i>Amanita muscaria</i> var. <i>guessowii</i>
Gilled	<i>Armillaria mellea</i> (complex)
Gilled	<i>Clitocybula ocula</i>
Gilled	<i>Coprinus micaceus</i>
Gilled	<i>Crepidotus applanatus</i>
Gilled	<i>Crepidotus mollis</i>
Gilled	<i>Entoloma abortivum</i>
Gilled	<i>Galerina autumnalis</i>
Gilled	<i>Gymnopus dryophilus</i>
Gilled	<i>Hygrocybe miniata</i>
Gilled	<i>Hygrocybe virginea</i>
Gilled	<i>Lactarius deterrimus</i>
Gilled	<i>Lactarius vinaceorufescens</i>
Gilled	<i>Lentinellus ursinus</i>
Gilled	<i>Marasmius rotula</i>
Gilled	<i>Mycena leaiana</i>
Gilled	<i>Mycena purpureofusca</i>
Gilled	<i>Omphalina epichysium</i>
Gilled	<i>Panellus serotinus</i>
Gilled	<i>Paxillus atrotomentosus</i>
Gilled	<i>Plicaturopsis crispa</i>
Gilled	<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>
Gilled	<i>Pluteus chrysophlebius</i>
Gilled	<i>Pluteus granularis</i>
Gilled	<i>Rickenella fibula</i>
Gilled	<i>Schizophyllum commune</i>
Gilled	<i>Tricholoma myomyces</i>
Gilled	<i>Tricholoma vaccinum</i>
Gilled	<i>Tricholomopsis sulfureoides</i>
Gilled	<i>Xerula furfuracea</i>
Boletes	<i>Suillus brevipes</i>
Puffballs & similar	<i>Calvatia gigantea</i>
Puffballs & similar	<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>
Puffballs & similar	<i>Lycoperdon pyriforme</i>
Polypores	<i>Abortiporus fractipes</i>
Polypores	<i>Daedaleopsis confragosa</i>
Polypores	<i>Fomes fomentarius</i>
Polypores	<i>Ganoderma applanatum</i>
Polypores	<i>Laetiporus sulphureus</i>
Polypores	<i>Oxyporus populinus</i>
Polypores	<i>Piptoporus betulinus</i>
Polypores	<i>Polyporus brumalis</i>
Polypores	<i>Polyporus varius</i>
Polypores	<i>Postia caesia</i>



## Type

## Scientific Name

Polypores	<i>Trametes pubescens</i>
Polypores	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>
Polypores	<i>Trichaptum biforme</i>
Polypores	<i>Tyromyces chioneus</i>
Parchment & resupinates	<i>Hymenochaete rubiginosa</i>
Parchment & resupinates	<i>Irpex lacteus</i>
Parchment & resupinates	<i>Phlebia tremellosa</i>
Parchment & resupinates	<i>Stereum ostrea</i>
Tooth fungi	<i>Steccherinum ochraceum</i>
Coral fungi	<i>Clavulina cristata</i>
Coral fungi	<i>Ramariopsis crocea</i>
Coral fungi	<i>Ramariopsis kunzei</i>
Coral fungi	<i>Ramariopsis laeticolor</i>
Cup & disc fungi	<i>Bisporella citrina</i>
Cup & disc fungi	<i>Peziza</i> sp.
Cup & disc fungi	<i>Mollisia cinerea</i>
Cup & disc fungi	<i>Scutellinia setosa</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Dacrymyces palmatus</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Dacryopinax spathularia</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Exidia alba</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Sebacina conrescens</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Sebacina sparassoidea</i>
Jelly fungi	<i>Tremellodendron pallidum</i>
Asco jellies	<i>Ascocoryne</i> sp.
Club fungi & earthtongues	<i>Xylaria polymorpha</i>
Carbon-like balls & cushions	<i>Apiosporina morbosa</i>
Carbon-like balls & cushions	<i>Daldinia childiae</i>
Carbon-like balls & cushions	<i>Hypoxylon fragiforme</i>
Carbon-like balls & cushions	<i>Ustulina deusta</i>
Other	<i>Physalacria inflata</i>
Slime moulds	<i>Arcyria</i> sp.
Slime moulds	<i>Reticularia lycoperdon</i>
Slime moulds	<i>Trichia varia</i>
Slime moulds	<i>Tubifera ferruginosa</i>

Thanks to Richard Aaron for creating this checklist from his first two visits to Thickson's Woods Nature Reserve.

Photo: *Hygrocybe miniata*. (Mike McEvoy)

Cerulean Warbler *Setophaga cerulea*  
(Ed McAskill)



[www.mattholderfund.com](http://www.mattholderfund.com)

[www.facebook.com/mattholderfund](https://www.facebook.com/mattholderfund)