

# Northumberland Land Trust

Ontario, Canada

Preserving Northumberland County - one acre at a time

The Preserver, May 2014

**SAVE THE DATE!** Our Annual General Meeting will be held at Palisade Gardens, on Monday, June 16, 2014. There will be refreshments available at 7:00 p.m., and the meeting will begin at 7:30. Our speaker is Mark Stabb, Central Ontario Program Director for the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Almost all of us live on what used to be the floor of glacial Lake Iroquois, so Mark's presentation will be of particular interest. It is entitled "Legacy for a lost lake: Conserving land in the Lake Iroquois Plain", with a focus on Northumberland County.

In conformity with the Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act your Directors will be filing for Articles of Continuance which require approval by the members. As well, new By-laws will be prepared to conform to the new Act and they will also require approval by our members. Both documents will be presented at this AGM for approval.

James McGrath (jamesmcgrathlaw@bellnet.ca), Past-President of the Board of Directors, is preparing the documents required to be approved, and any member wishing to review the new Articles and By-laws is asked to contact his office, 905-373-1999, to make arrangements to drop into his office to read or pick up a copy.

Please join us for this important and entertaining meeting.

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## **STEWARDSHIP NOTES**

We are sorry to report that, after four years of excellent stewardship of the Leckey Property, Julie Munro has decided that she must at least temporarily resign from this position. We thank her for her enthusiastic and conscientious work, and hope she may rejoin us in the future. In the meantime, Bill Newell will be the Steward for this property; he may be contacted at [leckey@northumberlandlandtrust.ca](mailto:leckey@northumberlandlandtrust.ca).

At the Pelton Property, we will have a hike on June 21 to remove a small amount of trash discovered last fall and to inspect the tree plantings of the last two years. If you would like to join us, you may get details of when to meet at the Peter's Woods parking lot from Russ Lake at 905-372-3636 or [pelton@northumberlandtrust.ca](mailto:pelton@northumberlandtrust.ca).



Our most ambitious project of the year, the prescribed burn at the McEwen Property, was completed on April 24. Our contractors, Lands and Forests Consulting, did a masterful job of turning the south field into a black, barren-looking moonscape, but by the time you read this it will already be returning to the green, lush grassland that we wish to pre-

serve. The Tree Swallow pair that had claimed the east nest box was already hawk-fire had been the Eastern Blue-



ing for insects before the fully extinguished, and birds that had four eggs happily returned to their nest. The property to determine how the Grasshopper Sparrows land species found here respond to this burn.



and other grass- Three photos of the burn are shown here; more can be seen on our website: <http://www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca/>.

Mark Rupke continues with his many projects at the Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre. You would be most welcome to join Mark and the Willow Beach Field Naturalists on Sunday, May 18 at 1:00 p.m. to explore this property. Mark will discuss native uses of plants and how he uses these details to discuss appropriate relationships with the natural world. We will see a number of plants which Mark has transplanted from a woodland which is being cleared for development, and which are enriching the diversity of the area. We will also have an opportunity to observe life in some of the Centre's vernal pools. The Laurie Lawson Centre is located at 8000 Telephone Road, between Theatre Road and Burnham Street.

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## **MAY IS BIRDATHON MONTH!**

For the few remaining uninitiated, the Wallace Birdathon is one of our most important fund-raisers of the year. The basic idea is that one of Northumberland's most expert birders, Roger Frost, spends a 24-hour period scouring the birding hotspots in the County and identifies as many bird species as he can - usually about 150. Our supporters sponsor him for a number of cents (or even dollars!) per species or for a flat amount, and we collect the donations on his behalf. Sponsors receive an income tax receipt and Roger's report, and get the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping to preserve some our County's most attractive areas. Please sponsor Roger by contacting John Geale at 905-342-3851 or [vice-president@northumberlandlandtrust.ca](mailto:vice-president@northumberlandlandtrust.ca), or through any Board member. We hope to equal or surpass last year's total of about \$2100 to support our stewardship activities. You may also use a credit card to make a donation at [www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca](http://www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca) by selecting "Donate Now" then "Please Choose a Fund".

## MEET OUR NEW DIRECTOR



We are delighted to welcome Whitney Lake as our newest director. Whitney has been nursing for 30 years, and is currently the charge nurse of the Cancer and Supportive Care Clinic at Northumberland Hills Hospital. Five years ago she decided our planet needed a cure and she signed onto an Honours degree in Environmental Science at Trent University to try and tackle that goal. Set to graduate in the spring of 2015, she says this has been an extremely rewarding and challenging phase of her life. Whitney has written a paper on the Laurie Lawson

property for a study on wetlands, so she is already well familiar with our best-known property. She has also embraced agricultural studies, enjoying both backyard chickens at her home and bee hives on her parents' land not far from our Pelton Property. She enjoys painting, mosaic stained glass, and travelling with her four children, and brings to the Land Trust experience in both leadership and governance.

We look forward to working with her as she adds her talents to the Board and gradually gets involved with our various projects.

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## POTENTIAL NEW PROPERTY

The Board of Directors has been contacted by a property owner who is considering donating to us a property near Grafton. Members of the Board and the Stewardship Committee have visited the property twice and walked through it to see what it might offer. It is a small property (7 hectares, or about 17 acres), but it is a nice wet woods with a good variety of tree species. It probably includes some vernal ponds (temporary, in spring) that could be breeding habitat for a species of salamander considered to be at risk. For this reason, it probably cannot be built on or used for other purposes under current legislation.

In the coming months, we will be considering carefully the costs involved if we were to acquire this property, including legal and surveying costs, invasive species control (a small amount of dog-strangling vine, buckthorn and phragmites were observed), fencing, and signage. We also must evaluate the potential benefits of owning such a property, including permanent protection for a species at risk, and generally low stewardship costs.

We will keep our membership updated on any developments regarding this property. Perhaps by the time of the AGM we will know more, and we hope you will join us at Palisade Gardens on June 16. (See page 1 for details.)

