

Northumberland Land Trust

Ontario, Canada

Preserving Northumberland County - one acre at a time

The Preserver, May 2016

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Youth and NLT

John Geale

A current television ad for a well-known fast-food chain points out that, contrary to some commonly held opinions, the "younger" generation is perfectly capable of doing responsible work with enthusiasm and competence. Our team of Fleming College students certainly proved to be responsible, enthusiastic and competent - see their article on page 4. If the future of the world depends on people like them, it is in good hands. But it is still important to remember that we do not inherit the earth from past generations, we are borrowing it from future generations. We should do all we can to ensure that we hand over the earth to our children in the best possible condition, and I believe that land trusts are an important part of this process.

NLT needs to take advantage of the energy, intelligence and creativity of younger people, and we have been fortunate to be able to lower the average age of both our Board and our Stewardship Team in the last couple of years. This is not as easy as it sounds, because younger people tend to have jobs and families that preclude a lot of volunteer time. But if we can engage them, it will help to ensure that as we older folks move on there will be knowledgeable and willing individuals to whom we can pass the torch.

In fact, besides the membership and other support that all our members so generously give, a truly valuable contribution we can all make is to connect the younger people in our lives to NLT - and to charities in general. One more important conversation to have with our kids!

AGM - JUNE 14

This is your official notice of our Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Cobourg Public Library beginning at 7:30 p.m. on June 14. Refreshments will be available at 7:00 p.m., to be followed by our short business meeting. Next, our guest speaker will be John Urquhart (at right), a herpetologist and environmental consultant whom we have contracted to carry out species at risk surveys on four of our



John Urquhart – and large snapping turtle!

properties. John will bring us up to date on his searches for hog-nosed snakes, Blanding's turtles, Louisiana Waterthrush, American Ginseng, and at least 15 other at-risk species.

This should be a fascinating presentation, so mark your calendar now, and we hope to see you there.

OTHER DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

May 14 - a stewardship "work" morning at the McEwen Nature Reserve. Depending on weather and how many people show up, we will check nest boxes, work on the trail, install signs, and/or do some fence maintenance. Meet at the corner of the 10th Line (Port Hope) and Walker Road at 9:00 a.m.; we will finish by noon. Helpers and observers are welcome. For more information, contact John Geale at 905-342-3851 or mcewen@nltrust.ca.

May 28 - a Scots pine removal morning at the McEwen Nature Reserve. Meet at the corner of the 10th Line (Port Hope) and Walker Road at 9:00 a.m.; we will finish by noon. The first task will be to determine if there are in fact any of these trees remaining - we've made good progress. Helpers and observers are welcome. For more information, contact Bill Newell at 905-396-5343 or stewardship@nltrust.ca.

June 4 - the second annual Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative wildlife walk at our McEwen Nature Reserve. Our guide this year will be well-known birder Elizabeth Kellogg. Sightings will likely include nesting Eastern Bluebirds, Tree Swallows and possibly Wood Ducks, singing Grasshopper and Field Sparrows, and eastern newts and other amphibians in the pond. Meet at the corner of the 10th Line (Port Hope) and Walker Road at 9:00 a.m., and bring water and snacks if you wish. Everyone is welcome. For more information, contact Bill Newell as above.

June 15 - same as May 14, but the contact until June 12 is Bill Newell; on June 13 and 14, contact John Geale.

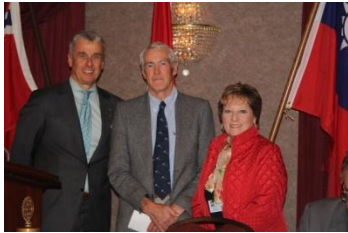
June 18 - a public hike at the Pelton Nature Reserve. We will check the new nest box, inspect the site of April's prescribed burn, and look for birds and other wildlife. Meet at the Peter's Woods parking lot at 9:00 a.m. All are welcome. For more information, contact Tom Jackman at 905-373-6530 or pelton@nltrust.ca.



Prescribed burn underway at Pelton

THANK YOU ROTARY CLUB!

Last winter NLT applied to Cobourg's Rotary Club for funding to be used for species-at-risk surveys of our Pelton and McEwen Nature Reserves and at a property that we were hoping to acquire on the shore of Lake Ontario not far east of Grafton. This potential acquisition was designated as a provincially significant wetland over 20 years ago, and that designation is still valid. But to solidify our application for it to qualify as an eco-gift (which has significant tax advantages to the donors) we wanted to determine which (if any) endangered species could be found there.



John Geale receives \$7000 cheque from Rotary's Gord Ley (left) and President Beth Selby.

In early April, President John Geale was delighted to receive a phone call to say that we had been awarded \$7000 by the Rotary Club! The cheque was presented to John on the club's luncheon on April 22 - see photo to left. This very generous grant has already been used to contract John Urquhart of Blazing Star Environmental to carry out the surveys mentioned above.

One noteworthy benefit of this grant is that the documented presence of species-at-risk on a property opens the doors to significant other funding from both federal and provincial governments as well as organizations such as the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. John Urquhart tells us that he is almost certain to find several at-risk species on these properties, and we look forward to leveraging his findings to produce additional funding for proper management at all our Nature Reserves.

As a footnote to this story, it now appears that by the end of summer the "potential acquisition" mentioned above will become an actual acquisition. The owners have very generously decided to donate the 35 acre property to NLT, and we are in the process of carrying out the legal work to complete the deal. This effectively increases the value of the Rotary grant, as we can be more confident of additional stewardship funding for the property. More on this exciting story in the August newsletter!

MORE NEST BOXES!

Thanks to Bill Newell's hard work, we have installed six new nest boxes this spring. Two are at the Leckey Nature Reserve, one is at the Pelton NR, and three are at the McEwen NR. These are all suitable for Eastern Bluebirds or Tree Swallows, and at last report swallows appeared to be claiming several of them. We now have a total of 13 bluebird/swallow boxes and one Wood Duck box available for willing occupants. Stewardship Team members Dylan Radcliffe (left) and Tom Jackman helped with the Leckey NR installation.

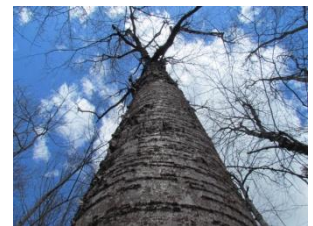


The Northumberland Land Trust Collaborates with Fleming College to Inventory a Newly Acquired Property Near Lake Ontario

By: Meghan Hill, Melissa Risto, Jesse Snider and Carly White

This past winter a student team from Fleming College in the Ecosystem Management Technology program took on the task of assessing the Chub Point Nature Reserve near Grafton, Ontario. This property, donated to the Northumberland Land Trust (NLT) in January of 2015, was mostly uncharted by its new owners and thus the student team stepped in to find out which tree species and invasives were present and which species at risk (SAR), if any, were using the property. Collected data were used to design a management plan whose main purpose was to maintain the site's natural condition.

The field work for the project took place in January and February of 2016 with the team members finding the most abundant species on the site to be Yellow Birch, Large-toothed Aspen, and Eastern White Cedar. Unfortunately the team also found that some parts of the property were infested with European Buckthorn, a hardy



Yellow Birch

invasive shrub, for which the student team went on to collect GPS coordinates. A team of volunteers and members of the NLT Stewardship Team has already used these to locate some individuals or clumps and cut them down. Additionally, invasive *Phragmites* and Dog-strangling Vine were found along the property borders. The team made recommendations for the management of these particular invasive species.



Eastern Milksnake –
photo by Joe Crowley

After walking the property numerous times some unique features were noted. Striped Maple, a tree not usually found as far south as Grafton, was documented. Vernal pools, which are important amphibian breeding habitats, were found scattered throughout the site. Evidence of Pileated Woodpeckers and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers was also seen. Lastly, four at-risk species (Blanding's Turtle, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Eastern Milksnake and Canada Warbler) were identified as potential users of the site.

Overall, the student team had an amazing experience navigating this frozen treed swamp and were very grateful for being involved in this project.

Editor's note: This team proved itself to be highly competent and a pleasure to work with. In addition to the management plan, they also created a very useful invasive species poster which we plan to add to the signs at four of our properties. We are delighted with the results of this collaboration with Fleming College.

WALLACE BIRDATHON 2016

As always, May is NLT's Wallace Birdathon month, but this year we have changed to a new format that we hope engage more people and add a little excitement.

NLT has five properties, and five of Northumberland County's best birders have agreed to cover one property each. Here's the lineup:



Roger Frost - Leckey



Margaret Bain - LLOEC



David Geale - Pelton



Doug McRae - Chub Point



Ben Walters - McEwen

Each of these birders will choose a 24-hour period in May and spend as much of that period as they wish to, trying to find as many bird species as they can on their property. They have also agreed to note any other interesting species encountered (mammals, snakes, butterflies, etc.).

If you would like to get involved in this important fund-raiser, here's what you do:

1. Choose a birder and sponsor him or her.
2. Guess how many bird species will be found between them; there will be a prize of 2 litres of Northumberland County maple syrup for the closest guess.
3. If you would like to accompany one of the birders for all or part of their 24 hours, there are a maximum of NINE such places available for sponsorships of at least \$75. To request this, contact John Geale at president@nltrust.ca or 905-342-3851, BEFORE MAY 17.

There are three ways of making your sponsorship:

1. Contact John Geale (as above, or in person) or any NLT Board member.
2. Go to our website (www.nltrust.ca) and follow any of several links to the Wallace Birdathon - for instance, click on "HOW YOU CAN HELP" then scroll down to the "WALLACE BIRDATHON" button and click it; here you can use a credit card.
3. Fill out the form on the back of this page and mail it with your cheque to:
Northumberland Land Trust, P.O. Box 1153, Cobourg, ON, K9A 5A4

Income tax receipts will be issued for all sponsorships of at least \$20.

Please join us in this major fund-raising effort; all funds from the Birdathon will be used for our stewardship work, keeping our properties natural and available to the public.



WALLACE BIRDATHON 2016

PLEDGE SHEET



Please print clearly

Sponsor's name: _____

Number and street: _____

City/town: _____ Postal code: _____

e-mail address: _____

Do you wish to remain anonymous? (circle one): yes no

Choose your birder* (circle one): Margaret Roger David Doug Ben

Amount of your sponsorship: \$ _____ (please enclose your cheque)

Total species guess#: _____ [Note: any given species will be counted only once, even if it is seen by more than one birder.]

*Birders: Margaret Bain (LLOEC), Roger Frost (Leckey), David Geale (Pelton), Doug McRae (Chub Point), Ben Walters (McEwen)

#Guesses: a prize of 2 L of Northumberland County maple syrup is offered to the sponsor whose guess is closest to the actual total number of bird species identified by all the birders.

Tax receipts will be issued for all donations of \$20 or more. Cheques should be made out to Northumberland Land Trust (Birdathon)

Questions may be addressed, or pledges made, to John Geale, at president@nltrust.ca or 905-342-3851, or by contacting any member of the NLT Board.

Donations may also be made using a credit card by going to www.NLTrust.ca, choosing the "How You Can Help" button and then scrolling down and selecting "Wallace Birdathon".

If you would like to accompany one of the birders for all or part of his/her day, you may do so (maximum 9 sponsors) for a minimum sponsorship of \$75. Contact John Geale BEFORE MAY 17 (and preferably earlier) to arrange this.

Note: The NLT recognizes its supporters in print and online. If you wish your donation to remain anonymous, please indicate this above.

View our Privacy Policy here: <http://www.NLTrust.ca/policies.htm>