

Northumberland Land Trust

Ontario, Canada

Preserving Northumberland County - one acre at a time

The Preserver, November 2015

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: The pen is still a mighty weapon

John Geale

The past few months have demonstrated that land does not have to be purchased or donated in order to save it - or at least try. Three letters in support of various conservation efforts have been written in the last few months, and our members should know about them.

Our most recent letter was sent in August to the Planning Services Department of the Municipality of Clarington. This might need a little clarification, since Clarington is not in Northumberland County. But that Municipality is spearheading a project to create a nature reserve west of Port Hope which includes some Lake Ontario shoreline and runs north almost to Highway 401. The area will be at least 175 hectares, and includes the southwest corner of Northumberland County. A stewardship plan has been developed, and the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority, one of our Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative partners, would be the lead agency in managing the property. This is a wonderful opportunity to preserve a large chunk of land with the potential for passive recreation, education, research, and enhanced wildlife habitat, and the NLT Board was proud to support the concept.

Back in April, Director Janette Johnston crafted a letter in response to the fact

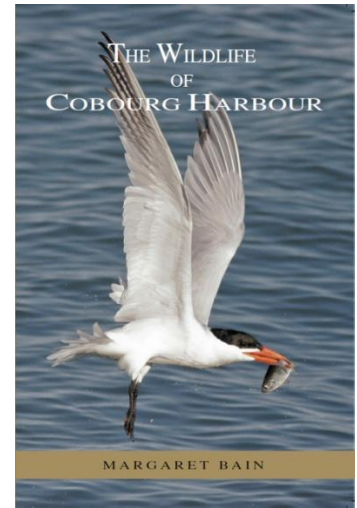
that this year has seen the beginning of the 10-year review of legislation governing the Ontario Greenbelt, the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine. The Oak Ridges Moraine is obviously the portion of most local concern, but with appropriate linkage areas, these three regions can combine to create a huge area of significant conservation lands. As Janette pointed out, NOW is the time to strengthen the legislation concerning these areas to ensure that they are not lost to development, because once lost they would never be recovered. This was a chance to add NLT's voice to those of many like-minded organizations who hope that the Land Use Planning Review Committee will make strong recommendations to the Ontario government and that the government will follow through appropriately.

Also in April, acting more locally, Miriam Mutton used her experience on Cobourg Town Council to help address concerns about the proposed expansion of the Cobourg harbour to include 116 additional boat slips. There was a strong belief that it was more important to preserve the nearby wildlife habitat, not only the open water in the harbour itself, but the mainland area known as the west headland. NLT, and many others, expressed this

viewpoint to the Town Council. Eventually the proposed expansion was cancelled, and the citizens of Cobourg (and visitors from many other parts of the province) can continue to enjoy walking, birding, and general wildlife viewing around the western area of the harbour.

This latter success inspired Margaret Bain (widely respected expert birder and long-time member of the Willow Beach Field Naturalists) to do some writing as well, and she produced a wonderful book entitled "The Wildlife of Cobourg Harbour." She published the book largely at her own expense, but supported by several local environmental organizations including NLT. It is not a field guide for experienced birders or other expert naturalists, but rather a season-by-season account of many of the birds, mammals, insects and plants that can be encountered by almost any observant walker around the harbour and

along the west headland. Included are many excellent photographs, donated by local photographers, of an amazing number of the species mentioned in the text. The book is available at the Burnham Family Market on Highway 2 and at Dave's Books on King Street West in Cobourg. Several copies will also be available for sale at various NLT events, and Margaret says she is happy to deliver a book locally to anyone who contacts her at mjcbain@sympatico.ca. The cost, including GST, is only \$10, and everyone who visits the Cobourg harbour is encouraged to obtain a copy.



DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19 – Rick Beaver, Alderville's well-known artist and biologist, will open this season's Speaker Series. He will give us his perspective on the Rice Lake Plains and the black oak savanna, an ecosystem that is home to rare flora and fauna including over 35 species at risk and 163 species of birds that use the habitat for nesting, foraging, or migrating. Rick will have some of his artwork on display and available for purchase. All of our Speaker Series events will be at the Cobourg Community Centre, 750 Darcy Street, beginning with light refreshments at 7:00 p.m. Admission is free and open to all.



THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 – The second speaker of this season's series is Joe Crowley. Joe is the Herpetology Species at Risk Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. He will offer a comprehensive overview of the reptiles and amphibians of Northumberland: the species present, the threats they face, and their legal status and protection. We will also learn what is being done



to help this declining group of fascinating animals and how we can do our part. NLT is planning to invest in a significant amount of herptile field work on our properties next spring, so this address is particularly timely.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18 - The season's final speaker has not been confirmed at the time of printing, but February 18 is the date.

For more information on any of these events, see our web site (<http://www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca/>), or phone (905-342-3851) or e-mail (president@northumberlandlandtrust.ca) John Geale.

STEWARDSHIP NOTES

A lot has happened at all five Nature Reserves since the August newsletter:

McEwen • NLT signs have been installed along the entire north fenceline
• the Willow Beach Field Naturalists enjoyed a sunny

(though cold) fall outing on which the pond, last spring's burn site, and the drumlin were visited

- a large percentage of the remaining Scotch pines have been removed
- the 7 nest boxes in the fields have been cleaned out to make them ready for next year, and a Wood Duck nest box has been installed to the south of the pond (pictured to right)



LLOEC • thanks to a \$2200 grant from the TD Friends of the Environment (TDFoE), 15 GPS units have been acquired that will enhance the students' outdoor learning experience; thanks to TDFoE, as well as Mark Rupke, our LLOEC Steward, for organizing this grant

Pelton • one of the two red pine plantations has been thinned by removing every third row; this will allow the remaining trees to grow more vigorously and permit other species to begin moving into the cleared spaces to enhance the biodiversity

Leckey • more Scotch pines have been removed, but our second scheduled day was rained out; it has been rescheduled for November 21

Chub Point • a new sign has been installed (pictured to right)
• Ted Nasmith, who lives close to the property, has agreed to be our Steward for the property

- September 26 was a beautiful sunny day for the official opening; about 30 supporters attended and enjoyed refreshments at the Grafton Inn



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY - Whitney Lake will again be organizing next year's annual fund-raising dinner, and she is looking for a couple of volunteers to give her a hand. If you think you might be interested in this, please contact Whitney at 905-375-5285 or whitlake@hotmail.com.

THANKS!!

The support received this year from both organizations and individuals has been most welcome. In addition to the TD Friends of the Environment mentioned above, thanks are also due to:

- ✓ The Northumberland Stewardship Council, who dispersed the remainder of its assets and sent a cheque for over \$7400. This has been deposited this in our Restricted Stewardship account, and it will allow us to carry out serious searches for Species At Risk on three NLT properties.
- ✓ TransCanada Corporation, who generously approved a grant of \$5000 to be used for prairie habitat maintenance and improvement. This allowed us to proceed with last spring's prescribed burn of the north field at the McEwen Nature Reserve.
- ✓ The Ontario Land Trust Alliance, which has been a wonderful source of support. They have provided advice, field personnel and funds to help with governance, property management, and Species At Risk investigations.
- ✓ All members and other supporters at last month's well-attended annual dinner. Everyone enjoyed the music, a fine meal, and an informative address on the turtles of Ontario. Many thanks to all who attended (and to those who showed their support by buying tickets knowing they could not attend!), to Dalewood Golf Club for an excellent venue, and to Whitney Lake for organizing the whole affair.



MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

You may now submit your membership and make donations by using Canada Helps: please go to <http://www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca/index.htm> and click on the blue "Donate Now through Canada Helps" button; this will allow you to use your credit card. Otherwise:

Please fill out the form below. Make cheques payable to
"Northumberland Land Trust", and mail to:
Northumberland Land Trust, P. O. Box 1153, Cobourg, ON, K9A 5A4

✂ -----

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other: _____

Last name _____ First name(s) _____

Address _____

Number and Street

City/town

Postal code

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

Individual: \$25 Family: \$40 Supporting: \$50

Corporate: \$100

Donation: \$100 \$250 Other _____

I wish to remain anonymous

The NLT recognizes its supporters in print and online. If you wish your membership or donation to remain anonymous, please indicate this at the time of your contribution by ticking the box above. To view the NLT privacy policy please visit our website.