

THE BLUE PRINT

The Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club Newsletter
www.bmbtc.org, P.O. Box 91, Collingwood, ON, L9Y 3Z4



**Sign up now for Hikes in
July to October**

JOIN US

We're Recruiting Volunteers at BMBTC

- Communications Team
- End-to-End & Events/Fundraising
- Other positions available!

Email volunteers@bmbtc.org for more info

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BMBTC Executives 22/23

President

Kelly-Leigh Thomas
President@bmbtc.org

Vice President

Frank Huggins

Treasurer

Rob Alsop

Secretary

Sandy McNair

Trail Director

Linda Finley
trailmaintenance@bmbtc.org

Landowner Relations Directors

Dave and Bev Matthews
Landowner.relations@bmbtc.org

Land Steward Director

Stan Kaczmarek

Membership Director

Dave Cole
davidnotes@rogers.com

Hike Director

Allison Thomas
hikecoordinator@bmbtc.org

Events and Fundraising Director

Christine Lasky
events@bmbtc.org

Volunteer Coordinator

Sandy Buik
volunteers@bmbtc.org

Communications Director

Rebecca Koroll
communications@bmbtc.org

Director at Large

Dick Edwards

Past President and BTC Rep

Michael Treuman

BMBTC Support Teams

Hike Team

Allison Thomas
hikecoordinator@bmbtc.org

Mary-Lynne Chenard
Michelle Wacker

Event and Fundraising Team

Christine Lasky
events@bmbtc.org

Mary Jane McIntyre
Mary Huggins
Rob Johnston
Carol Riches

Communications Team

Rebecca Koroll (newsletter)
Blueprint@bmbtc.org

Caitlin Foisy (social media)
Communications@bmbtc.org

Vera Cvetkovic (webmaster)



Summer is officially here! The earth has tilted 23.5 degrees toward the sun and created many peoples' favourite day of the year, the longest one! First Nations, Inuit and Metis, along with so many, celebrated the Summer Solstice together. Traditionally, our Blue Mountains Club schedules a hike to honour both the Summer Solstice and National People's Indigenous Day. This year we dedicated our hike to the memory of the late Jill Doble. Jill enjoyed leading this hike each year and hosting a potluck following the hike. She started a great tradition that we are now able to continue as COVID restrictions have abated. Sixteen happy hikers headed out to enjoy the Margaret Paull Side Trail in the late afternoon and enjoyed perfect weather. The potluck was a feast and demonstrated that Blue Mountains hikers can cook too!

Earlier in June, Jennifer Roy led us on our inaugural hike of our freshly minted Balsam Wetlands Nature Reserve. Our two new summer Trail Ambassadors joined us on the hike. We welcomed Kaitlin and Jeslyn. Their role as Trail Ambassadors will include working daily on our Blue Mountains section greeting hikers, collecting and documenting trash, reporting graffiti, fallen trees and other trail obstacles. This successful program began last year in two sections of the Bruce Trail and has been expanded to include all 9 sections of the Bruce Trail this year.

The Working Together Annual Conference restarted this summer and took place at Mansfield Ski Club late June. Volunteers from all Clubs joined and met Staff from the BTC, BTC's CEO Michael McDonald and Chair Leah Myers and our guest speaker Janna Chegahno, First Nation and Indigenous Relationship Advisor Peninsula Bruce Trail Club. Janna led an informative and thought provoking talk on relationships and relationship building. An in person meeting was very refreshing after all the Zoom meetings the past couple of years. I participated in the Presidents Meeting and Landowner Stewardship Program update. Others from our Club joined the Biodiversity workshop and Social Media Tips and Tricks. Kudos to BTC for putting on this top rate event and to the over 100 volunteers that joined in to make Working Together such a success. Enjoy your summer and all the hiking that it may bring!



END TO END

**Blue Mountains End-to-End
October 1-2, 2022**



Join us for a 2-day hike through the Blue Mountains section enjoying the beauty of the rugged terrain while bathing in the spectacular fall colours.

Event will cover approximately 39 km on Day 1 and 32 km on Day 2, with 3 refreshment stations each day offering water/snacks/assistance.

Registration will open July 1, 2022 through the online BTC Hike Schedule (hikes.brucetrail.org).

The \$70 fee for members (\$80 for non-members) will cover bus transportation to the start point each day, refreshments, a BBQ when you finish hiking on Saturday, online registration fees, and End-to-End badges.

Details will be emailed to participants once registration is received.

**For more information, contact
Mary-Lynne Chenard at
btcbbluevents@gmail.com.**



Welcome to our BMBTC Trail Ambassadors!

Kaitlin is studying Ecology at the University of Guelph and is looking forward to putting her knowledge to use on the trail and sharing her passion of the environment with all the hikers she meets. Right now her favourite section in Blue Mountains is the newly opened Balsam Wetlands nature reserve! When she's not on the Bruce Trail, Kaitlin can be found spending time at the beach, running, reading or spending time with friends.



**Keep an eye out
for the Blue
Mountains Section
Trail Ambassadors
this summer!**

Jeslyn is studying Environmental and Urban Sustainability at Toronto Metropolitan University, she's excited to spend time in the field after learning virtually for the last two years. Her Favourite section of the Bruce Trail is the Boyne Valley Loop. When she's not on the trail you can find her participating in endurance sports like road cycling and training for a marathon! Jeslyn recently returned from Hiking the West Coast Trail on Vancouver Island.

Adventures with the Hills by Charlene Hill



On November 7, 2020 we started our Bruce Trail journey at the cairn in Queenston, Ontario. After being at home for so long during lockdowns, we were itching for an adventure and decided to take on the beloved Bruce.

Our kids were 5 & 7 at the time and we had only one rule - everyone walks the whole trail on their own 2 feet. Grandma & Grandpa joined us for that first hiking weekend and to our great pleasure, quickly decided that they'd be sticking with us the whole way!!

We've been hiking the trail in sequence from South to North and have been getting out to hike a new section any time we have a free day! Every section of trail has greeted us with new beauty and adventure and in a way, the Bruce has begun to feel like home!

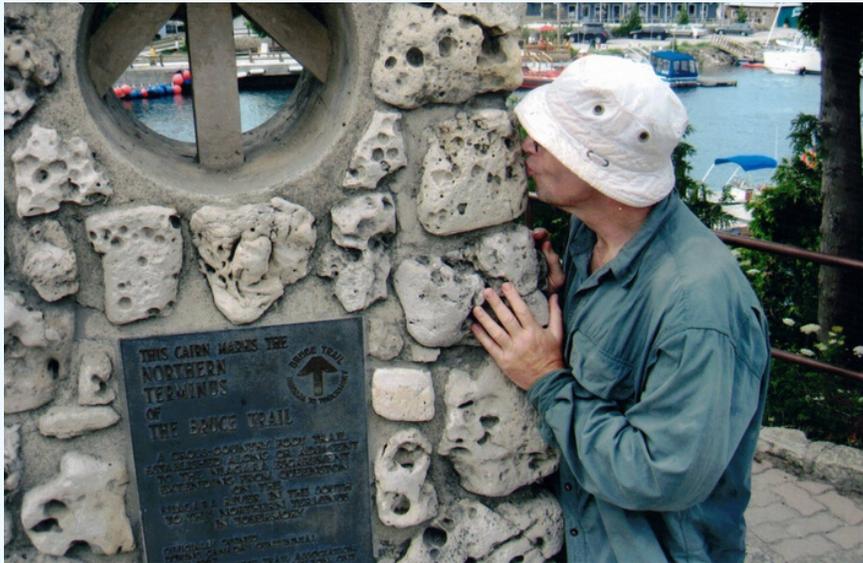
We started hiking the Blue Mountains section of the trail on Jan 22/22. It was a cold snowy day when we set out, hiking through Noisy River Provincial Park, but the snow coming down around us just made the whole hike more magical! Our pace has definitely slowed as we made our way through the Blue Mountains in the Winter, but we found as long as we stuck to the middle of the trail, we could usually avoid sinking up to our waists in snow!

We discovered some of our very favourite side trails while hiking in the Blue Mountains section. The Keyhole Side Trail and Standing Rock & Caves Side Trail were so much fun and had so many unexpected surprises!

It is June now and we are nearing the end of the Blue Mountains section. Our goal is to finish the Bruce by next Fall, but already we have so many places in the Blue Mountains we can't wait to revisit and enjoy once again!



HART FISCHER - DOUBLE WHAMMY GUY by Dick Edwards



Not long ago I noted in the BTC magazine that the number of people completing full end-to-ends is growing each year. This spring when Hart Fischer announced he was retiring from the Board after several years (at least back to the early 2000's), I was reminded of his rather spectacular end-to-end and realized few of the current crop of Blue Mountains Bruce-Trailers were aware of the event of which I speak.

Back in the olden days, 2006 to be exact, Hart, recently retired, was looking for someone to accompany him on a continuous Niagara to Tobermory end to end. Such a trek typically requires at least a month's commitment of time. Having a partner and two cars, makes such a hike much easier to manipulate. However, after finding no one able to join him, he decided to wing it solo.

On June 17, 2006, he parked his car under the shadow of General Brock on Queenston Heights, touched the southern cairn of the Bruce Trail and began walking north. At kilometer 26, after a wee rest, he turned southwards and hiked back to his car, for a day's journey of 52 km. Next day, he parked at km 26, hiked several km north, and again returned to the car for another double distance day. You get the idea! He kept doing two-way daily hikes until he reached Tobermory 1- and 1/2- months later on July 30, completing the first ever (to my knowledge) double hike of the Bruce Trail. I like to call it "Hart's Double Whammy."



His daily distances grew beyond the first day's 52, as his stamina built up, sometimes exceeding 100 km. Every 7 days he did allow himself a day off! Besides a deserved 'R and R' break, his loving wife Jan needed to know her hiking hubby was alive and well. Along the route, Hart camped most nights, either in the back of his van or at a campground.

On some days, hiker friends joined him, especially on the Peninsula where their moral support helped in the final lap towards completion. Their baked goodies surely supplied essential shots of energy towards that goal as well.

The boots Hart wore on that "incredible journey" were donated to the Park Museum at Tobermory and to my knowledge, should still be on display. Check it out next time you are there.

Challenging hikes remain a feature of Hart's legacy. In recent years, he created the Rim-to-Rim badges that BTC members are able to pursue. I read the requirement for one of those badges: you touch one side (rim) of the Pretty River Valley, then hike across the valley and touch the other rim. Are you then done? No way! You have to go all the way back across the valley to your start and retouch that rim. The Rim-to-Rim is another Double Whammy! ...Why am I not surprised?

Although retired from the Board, Hart is still leading hikes which he always makes enjoyable. So, you should join one! You can assume those hikes will be one-way singles, not double whammies. Maybe?



Birding on the Bruce Trail By Mary Jane McIntyre



Recently, a bird watching hike led by Dick Edwards was offered in the hike schedule. I had read the book, *Field Notes from an Unintentional Birder: A Memoir* by Julia Zarankin. I had no illusions that this hike would be life-changing as was noted in the book but one has to start somewhere.

It was a good day with a 'bluebird' sky- I've seen that term in our social media posts. We drove to kilometre 7.6 of the Blue Mountains section and commenced our walk. The pace was leisurely with frequent stops to look and listen. Dick has a bird sound app on his phone that he would play as we stood quietly. It fooled me every time as the phone seemed to throw the bird call out into the air. I thought the bird was replying. At kilometre 7 there is an unplowed field, shown as BTC Preserved Land (Ed 30, Map 21), where Dick had attracted a bobolink on his pre-hike.

Bobolinks nest on the ground, usually in hayfields making a well-concealed cup nest made of grass and stems. The female incubates 5-6 eggs for 11-13 days. The male provides aerial displays and sings to distract invaders. Dick played his bobolink tune and the male flew up to a nearby tree where he stayed for several minutes. The male is identified by black bill, black wings with a white patch and black tail, buff/yellow nape of neck. The yellow spot on the nape was easy to see. When he decided we were no danger, he flew to tall grass in the field and perched. In some areas of our section, farmers hold off on cutting until the breeding and nesting season is over. Bobolinks are rated a species at risk by the Conservancy.

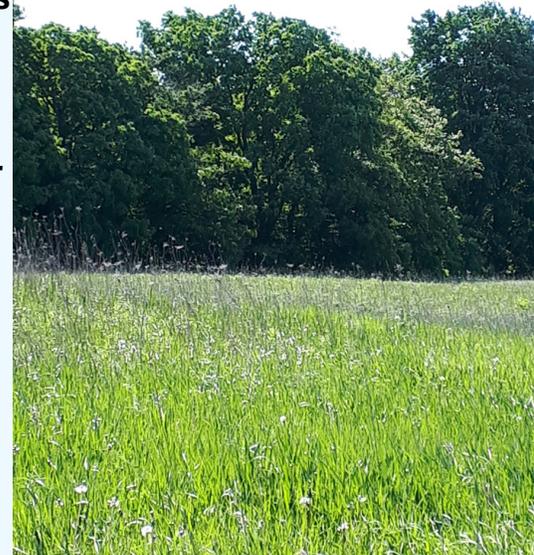
It was a pleasant way to spend time on the trail. Dick mentioned that ideally, the hike should be earlier in Spring when the birds are migrating and easier to see before the trees become too leafy. If you want a vigorous workout and lots of friendly conversation on your hike, a bird watching hike may not be for you but it is a wonderful learning experience to stand and be quiet on the trail. You might recognize the bird call next time without an app!

I live in a neighbourhood with lots of big deciduous and coniferous trees. We see and hear blue jays, chickadees, sparrows and cardinals everyday. Our male cardinals call 'burrito, burrito, burrito.'

Thanks, to Lone Pine Field Guide *Birds of Ontario* by Andy Bezener for further reference and of course, Dick Edwards for a pleasant morning.

From the *Globe and Mail*:

[Tuning into the melodic mystery of bird song](#)



ON THE MOVE



BTC Event Recap by Vera Cvetkovic

The Bruce Trail Conservancy organized the first in-person event in two years on Sunday June 12 at Mansfield Ski Lodge. They gathered staff and volunteers together for a day of networking, learning and collaboration. This was a great opportunity to attend various workshops, network with other volunteers in similar roles from different clubs, and engage in big group presentations and discussions.

The day started with a welcome note from BTC CEO Michael McDonald, followed by two parallel tracks of various workshops and guest speaker Janna Chegahno, First Nation and Indigenous Relationship Advisor. At the end of the day, we all enjoyed a social event with food, drinks and live music to celebrate 60 years of BTC volunteers.

