

FALL 2022



Photo by Karen Couch

President's Message

Alicia Aitchison

As I sit down to write for our fall issue, it is 30+ degrees outside, hot & humid – so it's lovely to look forward to my favorite time of year for hiking – the fall. The beautiful colors, crisp mornings, and no bugs!!

Even with the heat and the bugs, the summer has been wonderful, and many things have been happening within our club and at the BTC. Along with other club volunteers, I attended the first major in-person BTC event: The Working Together Conference. The day was a celebration of 60 years of BTC volunteers with informative workshops, excellent presentations and topped off with a barbeque social, live music and prizes. So wonderful to get together and celebrate! Michael McDonald gave a preview of an updated strategic plan which is in the works and highlighted exciting things to come!

Our club's Biodiversity Committee has been hard at work with many pull parties. In just one year we have already had an impact in reducing invasive plant species along the trail. The weekly bluebird monitoring volunteers are going to be reporting soon on a fabulously successful year.

Mark your calendars for **Bruce Trail Day 2022** – Sunday October 2nd. Our planning committee has been hard at work to bring you an exciting day – details to follow!

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to our two newest NBTC Board Members, Sam Rutherford and Tammy Morris. To help you get to know them better, their bios are in the newsletter. This has us in the perfect position of having a full board of directors! However, we have at least one long-term board member looking to pass the baton, so keep your eyes open for upcoming volunteer opportunities!

In addition to serving on the Board of Directors, there are many other ways to get involved in our club. Currently we have over 140 active volunteers in the Niagara club and over 1450 volunteers donate their time and talents to the BTC and the 9 member clubs. If you would like to get involved, please reach out and join us in *Preserving a ribbon of wilderness for everyone, forever!*



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NIAGARA BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

P.O. Box 331
BEAMSVILLE ON L0R 1B0

EMAIL

niagarabrucetrailclub@gmail.com

WEBSITE

niagarabrucetrail.club

FACEBOOK

Niagara Bruce Trail Club

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@BTCNiagara1

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Bruce Trail Day 2022

Sunday October 2, 2022 at 1 p.m.

Discover the Bruce Trail. May this be the year
to connect with nature.

Family-friendly hikes throughout the day, Presentation
at 1 p.m. Niagara College, NOTL Campus.



The Bruce Trail, Canada's longest footpath, is 900km following the Niagara Escarpment from Queenston in the south to Tobermory in the north. Nine volunteer clubs look after this trail, providing trail maintenance, conservancy projects, hiking, and much more. The Niagara Club is responsible for Queenston to Grimsby.

Bruce Trail Day is a time to explore all that the Bruce has to offer.

Themes of some of the hikes available:
Easy Does It, Youth, Screaming Tunnel,
and Biodiversity.

Online registration at
hikes.brucetrail.org

Open to members & non-members



NBTC Event Tube Scarf

\$15 (includes taxes)

Depicts 5 Niagara Event badges
Black background
Shipping Fee: \$5.00

To order: <http://niagarabrucetrail.club/wp/nbtcmerchandise/>

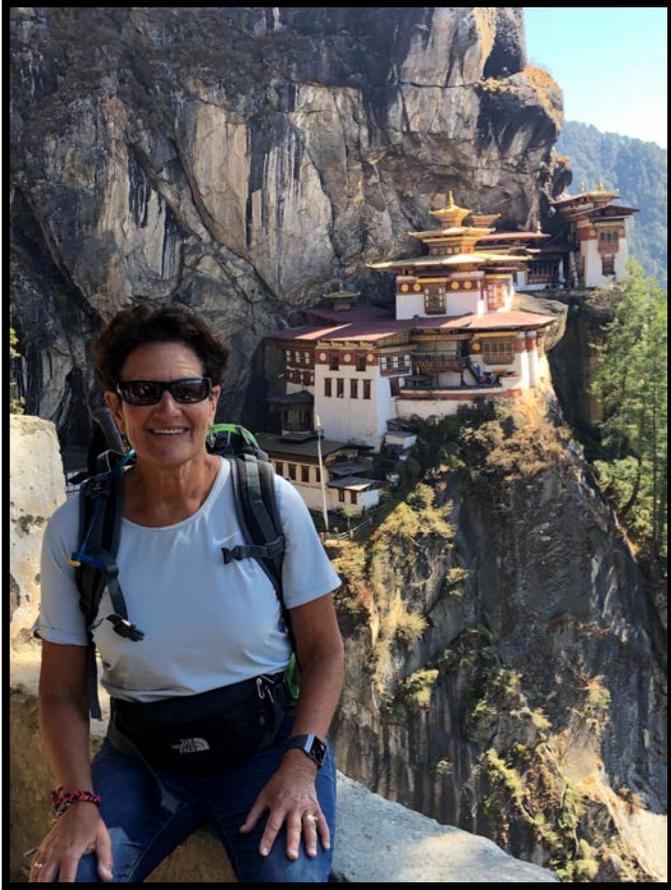


NBTC Deca Scarf

\$15 (includes taxes)

Depicts 10 Other Niagara Badges
White background
Shipping Fee: \$5.00

BTC Board welcomes new board members Tammy Morris and Sam Rutherford



My name is Tammy Morris, and I am fortunate to live in St. Catharines, about 300 metres from the base of the Escarpment under Brock University. I worked for 40 years in IT, most recently for my family's cabinet hardware business as a Project Manager. I recently retired and am very excited to put my energy towards being one of two Directors/Members at Large of the Niagara Bruce Trail Club. One of my first jobs is as the NBTC Archivist. I have been an avid hiker for most of my life, experiencing the beauty of the world from the trails of Canada, the US, France, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Nepal, and Bhutan.

The Niagara Escarpment is one of Ontario's most valuable treasures. I used to think that a 'hike' meant climbing a mountain for a view, but in the early days of COVID, I decided to begin a Bruce

Trail E2E with some friends, and now realize that nothing could be farther from the truth. Starting in Niagara, I have almost completed to the end of the Iroquoia section as well as all of Dufferin Highlands plus a few hikes in the Toronto and Caledon sections. I have experienced the Bruce Trail in all seasons and have been delighted at every turn by the natural beauty of the escarpment landscape, forest, wildflowers, streams, and waterfalls. I feel privileged to be joining this dedicated volunteer organization *preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.* ◀



My name is Sam Rutherford and I live in Ridgeway. I have been a member of the Niagara Bruce Trail Club since 2017 and have recently volunteered to join the NBTC board as Director-at-Large. My wife Janet and I have completed the entire Bruce Trail end-to-end, having started in April 2017 and completing in June 2021. Since retiring on July 30, 2021, I have completed the Hike Leader training and have been actively leading hikes since last September. It has been a very rewarding experience meeting new people and learning the hike routes. I have also actively participated in all the event hikes held over the past year. The organization and execution of these events has been excellent, and the volunteer support is amazing. I look forward to joining the Board meetings and supporting the other members of the Board as required. Thanks for your support. See you on the trail! ◀

Trail Maintenance

RICK WATERS

TRAIL MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

With the cooperation of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and the work of two NBTC Trail Captains, Philip Beale and Howie McRae, this Spring we created two new Side Trails in the Louth Conservation Area.

The Lower Falls ST is a 1.7km trail connecting to the main Bruce Trail at both ends. Walking down into a Glen the trail reaches 16 Mile Creek then you see the lower waterfall. Mature trees along this trail and the waterfall make it a great trail to experience.



The Midway ST cuts through the middle of the Conservation Area. It is a shortcut side trail which gives hikers an option to wander and explore through Louth CA. It connects to the main Bruce Trail at both ends and the north end of the trail is opposite one terminus of the Lower Falls ST. ◀



Main Trail Blazes			
	White Blaze Represents a straight ahead hiking path		Tuxedo Blaze Emphasizes white blaze
	Left Turn Indicates a noteworthy directional change in the Trail		Right Turn Indicates a noteworthy directional change in the Trail
Side Trail Blazes			
	Blue Blaze Straight ahead on a Side Trail		Left Turn Indicates a noteworthy directional change on a Side Trail
	Right Turn Indicates a noteworthy directional change on a Side Trail		End Blaze Represents the end of a Side Trail

Blazes can be found on: trees, fence posts, t-bar posts, stiles, bridges, rocks, hydro poles, etc.

Please stay on the Blazed Trail



Margaret Northfield refreshing blazes on the 12 Side Trail

Trail Maintenance From Page 4

This big oak tree fell across the main Bruce Trail late July 2022 near Dorchester Rd. Thanks to a hiker emailing to our Club mailbox, we were able to get to it the next day. It was virtually impossible to get past the tree without doing some serious climbing. With a sharp chainsaw and two tanks of gas, Rob Stevens and his assistant were able to get the trail cleared in 90 minutes. Harsh comments aimed at the tree could be heard several times during the course of its removal. Thanks, Rob, for all the sweat equity you put into this job. ◀



Hiking 101 – May 2022
Photo: Lauren Doig

Niagara Bruce Trail Club
**HIKING
101** Fall
2022

Session 1: Sundays - Sept. 11, 18 & 25
Session 2: Sundays - Oct 16, 30 & 31
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

- ▶ The same course running in different locations with a maximum of 15 participants.
- ▶ This introduction to hiking is for novice hikers, members and non-members. Guidance on where to begin, what to wear and what to take along.
- ▶ Learn about the 900 km Bruce Trail, Canada's oldest and longest footpath that runs along the Niagara Escarpment.
- ▶ Combination workshop/Q&A followed by short hikes along the Trail. COVID distancing rules apply.
- ▶ Dress in weather appropriate clothing and wear good walking shoes.
- ▶ Cost: members \$30, non-members \$40. Upon completion of all 3 sessions, participants will receive a FREE NBTC tube scarf (\$15 value).

ONLINE REGISTRATION - hikes.brucetrail.org

Welcome Back, Laura!

Submitted by Janet Davey

The weather was perfect for the 29th Laura Secord hike, held on June 11th. It was wonderful to see so many new and returning hikers after a two-year hiatus! 62 hikers woke up very early to meet the bus at 5:45 a.m. to take them to the Laura Secord homestead. From there, hikers walked 32 kilometres along the Bruce Trail to DeCew House.



The day started with Lauren Doig checking hikers in.

Of course, none of our event hikes would be possible without our wonderful volunteers.



Long-time checkpoint volunteers Kathy and Doug Thoms, supported by Judy Socha, were at the first checkpoint to greet hikers and offer words of encouragement

The next checkpoint was manned by new checkpoint volunteers Jennifer Gladding and Mark Chrisp who welcomed hikers with snacks and beverages.



The first hiker arrived at 11:39 a.m. at DeCew House and was greeted by our new Trail Ambassadors, Jacob and Ryan.

After their long journey, hikers were very happy to see our own wonderful Laura Secord (Diane Marlatt) who awarded them with their badge. Lynn Menger and Joan Worthington were on hand to offer sandwiches, snacks, and water to the tired hikers.

Margaret Northfield volunteered her time to sell our new merchandise. Many hikers took advantage of the opportunity to purchase a t-shirt, neck scarf or bumper sticker.



After hikers had a chance to rest and eat, Ineke Brinkman and Joan Worthington drove them back to their cars at the Niagara Region office.

Welcome back, Laura!

From Page 6

Congratulations and thank you to all the hikers who participated!

If you were unable to finish, remember that you can still complete the hike at any time and earn the individual Laura Second badge.

Our volunteers are the lifeline of our club! Thank you for making time to support the hikers and our club and make the day so special! ◀

Niagara 2022 End to End

Submitted by Wendy Howick

The Niagara End to End hike was held over three days on the Victoria Day weekend, for the first time after a two-year hiatus. Day One was hot and humid, Day Two was cold and rainy, and Day Three was just right for weather. The trail maintenance crew had done a superb job, in advance, of clearing all the trails, refreshing the blazes, and preparing the newly opened rerouted section at Park and Ridge Roads.

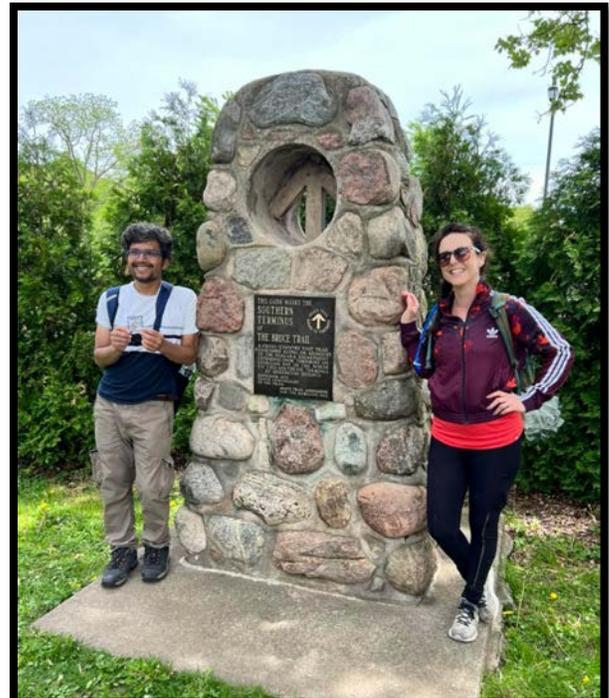
It was a smaller group than in prior years, with only 65 hikers registered and 45 hikers finishing all three days.

The real joy to me as a volunteer is meeting the ones trying it for the first time, who are appreciative of the beauty of the route, and jubilant on finishing. Sourabh Jain had never hiked more than 10 km before. He blew out his shoes the first day and had to get new ones. He completed each day in the middle of the pack, arriving an hour and a half after first place finisher Dale Street, and two hours before the final finishers. He now plans to complete the entire BT within the next two years.

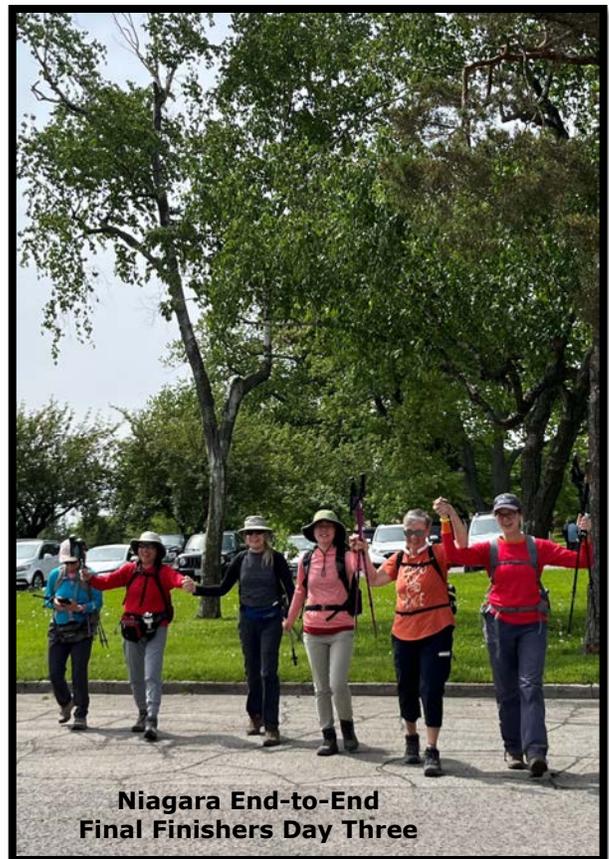
Members of the final finishing group were particularly inspiring with their enthusiasm – each day - by hiking together at the end for safety and encouragement. They definitely had the biggest smiles when they approached the final checkpoint.

There were 30 volunteers involved over the weekend in putting on this event, including Karen Jantz and myself as co-ordinators. (Photos by Karen Jantz.)

All the hikers were grateful for the delicious snacks provided by the checkpoint volunteers, organized by Diane Marlatt. Brock University and Niagara Parks Commission, proved to be valuable partners by providing free parking. ◀



Sourabh Jain and Heather Morrison



**Niagara End-to-End
Final Finishers Day Three**

Karen Merlo, Sharon Mah-Gin, Karen Wilson, Gina Ang, Cathy Sweeney, and Kristine Nohavicka

What's an Invasive Species Pull Party?

Submitted by Susan Gammage

An Invasive Species Pull Party (ISPP) is a get-together of volunteers who head out on the Bruce trail to monitor and clear targeted patches of invasive plants that threaten the habitat of native species.

ISPP's are an initiative of the Niagara BTC and other clubs to promote identification and active participation in the care and protection of native flora along the trail. The Bruce Trail Conservancy supports this work by providing knowledgeable staff and sturdy tools.

NBTC holds ISPP's in the Spring and Fall when the plants are easily identified. With a bit of training, any NBTC member can become familiar with the four major species we are looking to control. In fact, you may already be familiar with some of them (I'm looking at you, garlic mustard!) Along the way, we also learn to identify the native species we are trying to protect.

In the Spring we pull garlic mustard and greater celandine. The plants are young, tender, and easily pulled out by hand. During our Fall pull parties, we tackle honeysuckle and buckthorn, both of which are small shrubs. We use tools called extractagators, borrowed from the Bruce Trail Conservancy, to assist (an extractagator seems to be a hybrid between a gator, a lever, and a giant wrench).

We work for roughly an hour and the impact our small groups have had on the targeted locations is quite remarkable and satisfying.

Look for our upcoming ISPP's on the NBTC calendar this Fall. We invite you to come out, join the crew, learn some plant ID, and help protect our little ribbon of wilderness! ◀



Rosettes



2nd Year



Pods

PHOTO CREDITS:

- Garlic Mustard Rosettes: Richard Smythe
- Garlic Mustard Second Year: Brian Popelier
- Garlic Mustard Pods: Claire Estey



Common Buckthorn Leaves
Photo: Kate Pearson



Lonicera (Honeysuckle): flowers
Photo: Brian Popelier

Niagara's Most Unwanted:

By Klari Kalkman,
Landowner Relations Director

- Most Unwanted #1: Non-native Honeysuckle
The Grapevine, Fall 2021
- Most Unwanted #2: Common Buckthorn
The Grapevine, Winter 2021/2022
- Most Unwanted #3: Garlic Mustard
The Grapevine Spring 2022
- Most Unwanted #4: Japanese Stiltgrass
The Grapevine Summer 2022

Elevate your adventure.

Use code
NIAGARABT
and for each tour booked by
your club for 2023, we will donate
\$25 to the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

"The Arches", Portland Creek Newfoundland, courtesy of Newfoundland Tourism.

Let's hike in 2023!

Banff Hiking

8 Days – July, August

NEW Hike P.E.I.

7 Days – June, July

Newfoundland Hiking East

8 Days – August

Newfoundland Hiking West

8 Days – July

NEW Québec Eastern Townships

6 Days – September

Saguenay Hiking

8 Days – August

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To book contact your local travel professional, call **1-888-716-5523** or visit deluxehiking.com.



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Ready for Adventure



In response to an increase in litter along the Bruce Trail over the past few years and building on a successful pilot project completed in 2021 in the Peninsula club section, the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) launched the **Hike it, Love it, Keep it Clean** project, with the goal of cleaning up the Bruce Trail and learning more about the litter that is ending up on the trail. Anyone out hiking along the Bruce Trail or side trails who wishes to participate is welcomed.

Go for a hike, keeping an eye out for litter along the Bruce Trail – choose any section of main Bruce Trail (white blazes) or side trail (blue blazes), or the adjacent parking lots

Check the BTC website for the complete list of safety guidelines, the [Litter Collection Project Information Video](#), and the equipment to bring for a litter pick-up. See <https://bruce-trail.org/hike-it-love-it-keep-it-clean-litter-project/> ◀



"Take A Hike" bumper stickers (4"x8")

\$7 (includes \$2 shipping).

To order: <http://niagarabrucetrail.club/wp/nbtcmerchandise/>



Enjoy Nature

NBTC Volunteers work to preserve & maintain the trail for everyone, forever. You can support the TRAIL by donating at <http://niagarabrucetrail.club/wp/donate/>

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The Grapevine is the newsletter of the Niagara Bruce Club, one of the nine member clubs of the Bruce Trail Conservancy. **The Grapevine** appears four times a year.

NBTC Members are invited to submit stories and photos. Copy due date for the Winter 2022/2023 is October 31, 2022.

For editorial guidelines and for rates to advertise, contact btcgrapevine@gmail.com

BRUCE TRAIL CONSERVANCY MISSION

Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.