

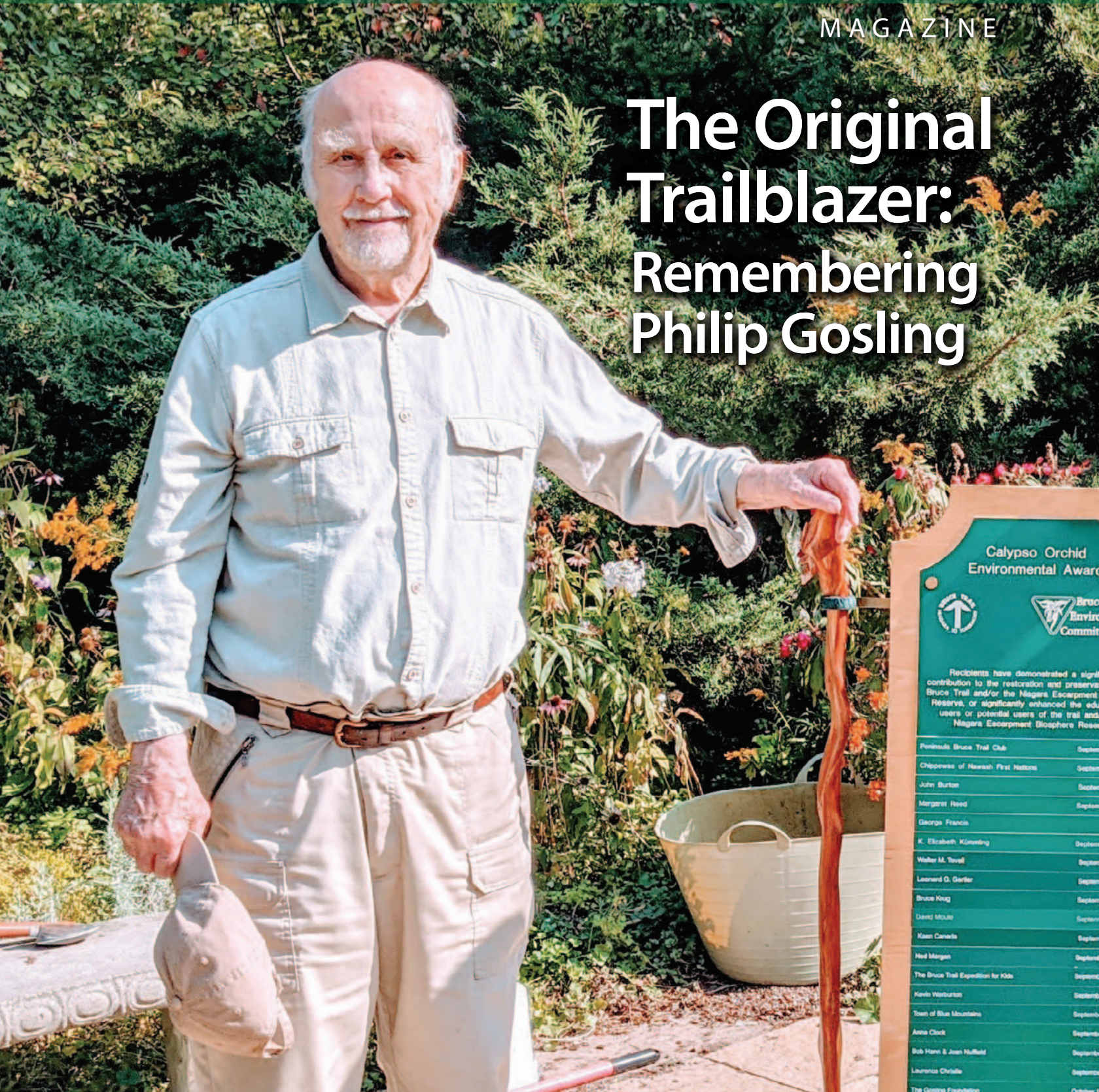
VOL. 63, NO.2, SPRING 2026

Bruce Trail

C O N S E R V A N C Y

MAGAZINE

The Original Trailblazer: Remembering Philip Gosling



Calypso Orchid Environmental Award

Recipients have demonstrated a significant contribution to the restoration and preservation of Bruce Trail and/or the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve, or significantly enhanced the educational value of the trail and/or the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve.

Peninsula Bruce Trail Club	September
Chippewas of Neenah First Nations	October
John Burton	September
Margaret Reed	September
George Francis	September
K. Elizabeth Koenig	September
Walker M. Sival	September
Leonard G. Gerler	September
Bruce Krug	September
Daniel Moulé	September
Karen Canale	September
Neil Morgan	September
The Bruce Trail Expedition for Kids	September
Kevin Westerman	September
Town of Blue Mountains	September
Anna Clark	September
Bob Hans & Joan Haffield	September
Laurenna Christie	September
The Gosling Foundation	October

Our Mission

Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY

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SPRING 2026



Photo: BTC Archives

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To receive your magazine by email:

- Fill out the request form at brucetrail.org (About Us > Stay Informed > Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine)
- Call 1-800-665-4453, or
- Email info@brucetrail.org



Photo: Brian Popliar

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Cover photo: Dr. Philip R. Gosling, Bruce Trail Co-founder and Honorary President, in 2020, by Michael McDonald

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The Niagara Escarpment/Gchi-Bimadina/Kastenhkraktátye is the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples. In both spirit and partnership, we recognize and thank the Anishinaabek, Huron-Wendat, Tionontati, Neutral Nation, Haudenosaunee, Métis, and all who provided stewardship of these lands over millennia. Together may we care for this land and each other, drawing upon the strength of our mutual history through peace and friendship, to create a lasting legacy of conservation for generations to come.

The Bruce Trail
scale in kilometres
0 50

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Chief Executive Officer's Message

Late last year, our community lost a great champion for nature when Philip Gosling, the Bruce Trail's last living co-founder, passed away at the age of 97.

Philip was the original trailblazer of the Bruce Trail, our Honorary President, and – I am very grateful to say – my friend.

One of my greatest joys since becoming Chief Executive Officer of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) was spending time with Philip, who always encouraged us to “make no small plans.” Philip was thrilled with what the BTC has become and was proud of our great success. While I will miss the sound of his cheery laughter and his buoyant spirit, I know Philip would press us to move forward, to be bold in our work to

protect the Bruce Trail and the irreplaceable lands it crosses. This is what we will continue to do.

This issue of *Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine* is centered around the theme of sound. I sometimes think about all that Philip heard during his time blazing the Bruce Trail in the early 1960s – often a solitary pursuit. Like so many of our staff and volunteers over the years, he did this work so future generations could continue to hear the same beautiful birdsongs and develop a lifelong connection with nature that would lead to its protection. Because of those who came before us, we get to appreciate the sound of cattails rustling across a marsh, the crunch of snow under our boots, and the rush of water down rivers and over falls. The sounds nature gifts us are as meaningful to our experience as the beauty it provides.

In the coming pages you will read about some of the amazing contributions Philip made to the Bruce Trail and the natural world more broadly, in addition to fantastic features on the sounds of biodiversity, music along the Bruce Trail, and an article on bats, whose relationship to sound is their superpower. I also hope Hike-a-thon participants will hear our cheers of encouragement on page 8 as they get ready for some epic treks in nature this spring.

A cacophony of delights awaits you on your next hike along our iconic Bruce Trail. May the joys of nature echo through you and your memories forever.

Happy Hiking,

Michael McDonald,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Philip Gosling (right) with Michael McDonald in 2023

Photo: Michael McDonald

Content deadline for Blazes for the summer 2026 issue is May 1, 2026.

Send content to: Laura Tuohy, BTC Manager of Community Engagement, at ltuohy@brucetrail.org

NIAGARA

niagara.brucetrail.org

Fort-to-Fort Hike – April 18-19, 2026

Hike the entire length of the Niagara Parkway from Fort George to Old Fort Erie, over two days. Enjoy approximately 27 km each day of beautiful river scenery. Small hills involved but mostly paved paths with some road walking. Fee includes bus, parking, checkpoints and badge (badge for two-day event only). Registration for the two days is \$70 for members (\$80 for non-members); for one day \$60 for members (\$70 for non-members). Registration is open at hikes.brucetrail.org



Niagara End-to-End – May 16-18, 2026

Lace up your boots and hike the full 80-km Niagara section of the Bruce Trail over three days. Along the way, enjoy scenic rock formations, vineyards, orchards, and historic remnants that make this stretch of trail truly outstanding. Earn your (new!) End-to-End badge by completing all three days.

Nutritious snacks and fruits will be available at checkpoints throughout your hike with a light lunch served at the end point beside the Southern Cairn. Daily bus transportation is provided.

Registration for the three-day hike is \$80 for members (\$90 for non-members); for the single-day hikes, \$40 for members (\$50 non-members), available for each day. Registration is open at hikes.brucetrail.org



Laura Secord Hike – June 13, 2026

Enjoy a part of our Canadian heritage by hiking along the Bruce Trail from Laura Secord's Homestead in Queenston to DeCew House in Thorold. We are sure this 32 km hike was a challenge for Laura in a long dress and no Nikes, but we never heard any complaints. Follow her lead and rise to the challenge.

Registration is \$60 for members, \$70 for non-members; kids \$25 and \$30. Fee includes bus, checkpoints, light lunch and a (new for 2026) badge.

Register at hikes.brucetrail.org.



Registration opens Wednesday, June 24 at 9:00 am for Bruce Trail Conservancy members at hikes.brucetrail.org under Saturday September 12, 2026. If any spots are still available at 9:00 am, July 8, 2026, registration will also be opened then for non-members. Details will be emailed to participants once registration is received. These are longer hikes and not suitable for beginning or moderately paced hikers. For both days, hikers are expected to maintain an average pace of 4 km/hr (or faster). Hikers must reach each checkpoint by a prescribed time in order to continue and to ensure everyone is off the trail well before dark.

Space is limited, hikes go rain or shine, and no dogs are permitted on this event. There will be no refunds or tax receipts issued for anyone who cancels their registration. For questions, please contact Jacquie Van Dyke at vdyke0946@gmail.com.

TORONTO

torontobrucetrailclub.org

Toronto End-to-End – September 12-13, 2026

Please join us for our annual self-led End-to-End. You will complete the 50 km distance over two days (approximately 28 km on Saturday and 22 km on Sunday). Both days will traverse the varied terrain of the Toronto section from just south of Hilton Falls to the south entrance of the Cheltenham Badlands.

Checkpoint stations will be approximately every 10 km offering refreshments, water refill, and assistance. The 2-Day hike fee is \$55 for both adult and child BTC members and \$60 for adult and child non-members. This fee covers bus transportation from the meeting point to the hike starting point each day, refreshments, parking and permit costs, online registration fees, and the official NEW End-to-End badge.

CALEDON HILLS

caledonbrucetrail.ca

Caledon Hills Fall Colours End-to-End: October 10-12, 2026

Plan to enjoy the spectacular fall colours as you hike 72.4 kilometres of main Trail through the famous Caledon Hills. The distance can be completed on Saturday and Sunday only (two-day option) or over the long weekend (three-day option). A new 2-day badge is in the works! **Registration opens June 30** at hikes.brucetrail.org and is limited to 100 hikers.



**All End-to-End and Challenge Hikes can be found at brucetrail.org/end-to-end-and-challenge-hikes-2026
These hikes are challenging and not recommended for new hikers. Instead, check out the wide range of regular group hikes offered by Bruce Trail Clubs throughout the year at hikes.brucetrail.org.**

Visit Club websites
for more news, events
and hikes.

DUFFERIN HI-LAND

dufferinbruceclub.org

Dufferin Hi-Land 2-Day End-to-End – May 9-10, 2026

Our annual 2-Day End-to-End will take place on Mother's Day Weekend, May 9 & 10. This is a great opportunity to complete our section of the Trail with other hiking enthusiasts while making new friends and renewing acquaintances. Springtime scenery in Dufferin County is spectacular. The baked goods and treats at our checkpoints are renown along the Trail! Registration is \$65.00 for members, \$75.00 or non-members. Registration is open at hikes.brucetrail.org.

BLUE MOUNTAINS

bmbtc.org

Blue Mountains End-to-End – May 23-25, 2026

Join us this spring for the Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club 2-Day or



3-Day End-to-End hike event. Both hikes will wind their way through the beautiful and varied terrain of the Blue Mountains Club trails. Enjoy the early signs of nature awakening, the beautiful vistas and the rugged escarpment.

Whether you choose the 2-Day or 3-Day option, both hikes will cover the 69 km distance of our section which runs from Lavender to Swiss Meadows. Checkpoint stations will be offered approximately every 10 km offering snacks, water refill and assistance along the way.

The 2-Day hike fee is \$75 for members and \$85 for non-members and includes bus transportation to the start point each day, refreshments, a Saturday end-of-hike BBQ, online registration fees and the E2E badge. The price for the 3-Day hike is \$85 for members and \$95 for non-members and includes all the same benefits of the 2-Day, and the added cost of busing the extra day.

Registration opens March 3, 2026. Details will be emailed to participants once registration is received. Note, these are longer distances and generally not suitable for beginning hikers.

BEAVER VALLEY
beavervalleybruce-trail.org



Beaver Valley Annual Falling Water Event – May 30, 2026

Come and test your mettle! This is an approximately 30 km hike that traverses the beautiful, rugged upper Beaver Valley. It's a challenging hike during which you'll experience all that spring has to offer, including cascading creeks and waterfalls. Registrants should have experience with hiking long distances over strenuous terrain. The \$40 registration fee covers the cost of online registration, refreshments and the badge.

Registration opens March 2, 2026 at 8:30 am at hikes.brucetrail.org. Details of the event will be emailed to participants once registration is received. For more information contact beavervalleytrailactivities@gmail.com

Beaver Valley Annual End-to-End – August 29-30 & September 5-7, 2026

Hike the Beaver Valley section over five challenging days and experience the beauty the valley has to offer. Registrants should have experience with hiking long distances over strenuous terrain. The \$130 registration fee includes online registration, bus shuttle transportation, refreshments and the End-to-End badge.

Registration opens May 4, 2026 at 8:30 am at hikes.brucetrail.org, so mark your calendar to secure your spot. Registration is limited to 50 hikers. When registration is full, there will be an option offered online to be added to a wait list. Details of the event will be emailed to participants once registration is received. For more information contact beavervalleytrailactivities@gmail.com

SYDENHAM

sydenhambrucetrail.ca

Sydenham End-to-End Trail Run – May 2026 (8 days)

The Sydenham Bruce Trail Club (SBTC), in partnership with the Peninsula Bruce Trail Club (PBTC), is excited to offer its first-ever trail running Sydenham End-to-End series in 2026. Join the fun and earn a specially-designed trail running SBTC End-to-End badge! The series will take place over 4 weekends (8 days) in May, covering 19-23 km per day. The group will meet and park at the end of each day's route, with bus transportation provided in the morning to the starting point.

Note, these are group trail runs. Not a race. Not a hike. Runners are expected to remain between the lead runner and the sweep at all times. Anticipate each day to be running for about 3 hours, at a pace ranging from 7-9 min/km.

Registration is \$160 which covers bus transportation (at a weekend rate), snacks, and the new SBTC End-to-End badge. Any surplus funds will support the PBTC hike program.

For details and registration visit hikes.brucetrail.org (under May 2, 2026).

PENINSULA

peninsula.brucetrail.org

Peninsula End-to-End in 18 Series – April, May, June, September & October, 2026

Complete the Peninsula section of the Bruce Trail over 18 hikes. Hikes take place on Thursdays and Fridays in April, May, June, September and October. For details visit hikes.brucetrail.org (under April 30, 2026).

Peninsula End-to-End Makeup Series – April 2026

This series of 10 individual hikes is for hikers who are missing certain parts in their completion of the Peninsula section and would like to complete those specific hikes without registering for the full series. Participants may choose only the sections they are missing or opt to complete all 10 hikes to finish the full Peninsula End-to-End. Each hike requires separate registration. Visit peninsula.brucetrail.org/hikes for details.

2026 Peninsula Hiking Festival – October 2-4, 2026

This fall the Peninsula Hiking Festival returns to the Saugeen (Bruce) Peninsula, with a theme of *Common Ground: A Celebration of Trail, Place, and Belonging*. The festival brings together guided hikes, trail community, and a shared celebration of the Bruce Trail and the people connected to it. The weekend will feature:

- Diverse program of guided hikes
- Friday evening social at Camp Celtic
- Saturday keynote dinner and auction
- Bruce Trail Day activities on Sunday

Hosted at Camp Celtic, the Festival is designed for hikers, volunteers, and members of the broader trail community – a weekend grounded in connection, stewardship, and shared experience. More details – including hike registration and dinner tickets – will be shared in the months ahead. •

BRUCE TRAIL HIKE-A-THON

Launches this May!

Lace up your hiking boots this spring in support of the Bruce Trail Conservancy

Hikers of all skills and ages are invited to join us for the Bruce Trail Hike-a-thon, a month-long, self-led hiking and fundraising event in support of the Trail we love.

In 2025, over 85 participants joined the Hike-a-thon, raising over \$40,000 and making a powerful collective impact on the Bruce Trail.

Like last year, all funds raised through Hike-a-thon 2026 will support the BTC's Trail Development and Maintenance Endowment Fund, which helps build and maintain essential infrastructure along the Trail.

Plus, all funds raised through Hike-a-thon 2026 will be matched, doubling the impact of each hiker's step and each donor's dollar.

Participation is easy!

- Set an individual goal or hike as a team with friends, family or coworkers.
- Share your goals and encourage donations through the new and improved Bruce Trail Hike-a-thon online platform.

- Hike throughout the month of May.
- Earn your Bruce Trail Hike-a-thon 2026 badge, participate in weekly draws, and compete for hiking and fundraising prizes.

Registration opens April 1st.

Get started at brucetrail.org/hike-a-thon-2026



Photo: Lilla Fodor

Spring Bioblitzes

Help take a snapshot of Bruce Trail biodiversity

Join us at a Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) Nature Reserve for a spring bioblitz and explore a beautiful area with other nature lovers while contributing important biodiversity data.

A bioblitz is a fun, community science event where naturalists, scientists, and nature enthusiasts work together to record as many species as possible in a specific place and time.

How it works

These Bruce Trail Conservancy bioblitzes are open to the public and to people of all levels of nature experience.

We'll gather at the nature reserve and break into small groups – containing expert or amateur naturalists, BTC staff and volunteers, and keen observers. Each group will look and listen for as many different species as they can, recording what they observe and logging it in the iNaturalist app. No past experience necessary.

Two Spring Bioblitz Events

May 9, 2026, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Meltwater Moraine Nature Reserve
Caledon Hills section, Caledon East, ON

June 6, 2026, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Eagle's Summit Nature Reserve
Beaver Valley section, Kimberley, ON

Why join a BTC Bioblitz?

- Help identify species along the Bruce Trail.
- Build an observation map.
- Contribute to conservation work.
- Connect with nature.
- Win prizes for most observations and most species recorded!



Photo: Monica Pasquale

Register today at brucetrail.org/spring-bioblitzes-2026

Questions?

Contact Shimeem Al-Ayash, Outreach Coordinator at shimeem.al-ayash@brucetrail.org

SAVE THE DATE

Bruce Trail Day - October 4, 2026

Let's get ready to welcome everyone to a Trail-wide celebration!

Bruce Trail Day is our largest outreach event of the year and a wonderful way to introduce more people to the Bruce Trail Conservancy's work in *preserving a ribbon of wilderness, for everyone, forever.*

Free on-Trail events and virtual activities will encourage people to explore the Bruce Trail and learn more about the amazing variety of life along the Niagara Escarpment. Each of the nine Bruce Trail Clubs will host a family-friendly event unique to their section.

Interested in joining the Bruce Trail Day team? Hundreds of volunteers are needed to make Bruce Trail Day happen. From planning and promotion to leading activities and welcoming participants, there are many ways you can help. Apply today at brucetrail.org/apply-online-to-volunteer

Watch for details at brucetrail.org/bruce-trail-day-2026



Photo: Brooke Henry



FOR OUR MEMBERS

MEMBER REFERRAL GROWS OUR COMMUNITY

Refer a friend today and you'll both get special offers.

Over 150 members have committed to becoming Member Ambassadors and encouraging friends to join the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Anyone can be a Member Ambassador. Think of how much we could accomplish if all our members encouraged just one other person to join.

Ruth Moffat has taken on this challenge with enthusiasm. Ruth is our first member to encourage ten new members to join. Not only did she earn all three coveted member referral badges, but each of the members she referred received a free set of downloadable maps, helping them kick off their Bruce Trail adventures. Congratulations and thank you, Ruth!

Referring is simple

1. Get your referral coupon code from your login at brucetrail.org.
2. Refer your friends and family and give them your code.
3. Receive benefits when someone uses your code when they join.

Benefits

Free Digital Maps for New Members

Joining members who use a referral code will receive a free set of digital maps to help them explore the Bruce Trail.



Ruth Moffat is the first to earn all three Membership Ambassador badges.

Photo: c/o Ruth Moffat

New Badges for You **NEW for 2026**

- Prize draws: You'll each be entered in a draw for a great Bruce Trail prize. Draws will happen four times a year covering referrals in the previous three months.
- Annual Hike with CEO: You'll each be invited to join a guided hike exclusively for Membership Ambassadors and their referred members, led by BTC CEO Michael McDonald.

Visit brucetrail.org/membership-referral-program-info/ to get started.

ROM DISCOUNT FOR BTC MEMBERS

The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) in Toronto has extended its special offer for Bruce Trail Conservancy members through 2026.

To save 15% off ROM admission, buy your tickets at rom.on.ca and enter the promo code: **BTCROM**



A Tale of Two Coyotes, from *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2025*

Photo: Parham Pourahmad

This promo code can be used on multiple visits to the ROM throughout 2026 – so you'll have a chance to enjoy ROM galleries and special exhibitions all year round.

If you haven't yet caught the amazing *Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2025* feature exhibition, or want to see it again with a friend, now is the perfect time. This exhibit closes March 29, 2026.

Or take in *Crawford Lake: Layers in Time*, a special exhibit highlighting the global significance of a remarkable Bruce Trail destination whose lake-bottom sediments contain a unique record of our impact on the planet.

Extend your exploration of nature through this special BTC member perk!

What's in Your Pack?

With Trail Maintenance Volunteer Ron Savage

Longtime volunteer Ron Savage opens his pack to share what a Trail Captain might typically carry in the course of their work on the Bruce Trail.

Ron knows trail work. He joined the Sydenham Bruce Trail Club Board in 1999 as an archivist and just six months later stepped into the role of Trail Director, a role he continues to serve in today. Along with overseeing the planning, maintenance and overall quality of the Bruce Trail in the Sydenham section, Ron acts as a Trail Captain for four segments of the Trail.

Trail Captains hike their assigned segments at least once a month, carrying out minor maintenance activities such as blazing, picking up garbage, trimming brush, and removing small fallen trees

and branches. Here's what's in Ron's 'Trail Captain' pack:

Cell Phone

Whenever Ron is out on the Trail, he carries his cell phone with him for safety and so that he has access to the Bruce Trail App. His favourite feature in the Bruce Trail App is the "Report Trail Issue" tool, which uses GPS to pinpoint the exact locations of fallen trees, flooding, or other concerns and report them to Trail Directors. Ron uses this function to remind himself of the severity of the issue so he can plan accordingly to return and resolve it.

Trimming Tools

Keeping the Trail clear of broken or overgrown branches and foliage is a big part of being a Trail Captain. Ron always carries a pair of loppers, which handle most trimming needs. For branches that are too large for loppers but not quite worthy of hauling out a chainsaw, Ron uses a foldable pruning saw that packs neatly into his bag.

Blazing Equipment

When heading out to repaint blazes, Ron brings a blazing kit that includes blue or white paint, a scraper, water and a rag – all stored in old Javex or orange juice bottles to reduce waste. Even when he isn't heading out with blazing in mind, he likes to bring a paintbrush and some paint, just in case he comes across a blaze that needs a little refreshing. Ron carries his paintbrush in a Ziploc bag to protect it from drying out. Sometimes he will also carry a spare blaze board, which is useful for areas with few large trees or where birch bark makes blazes difficult to see.

Diamond Signs

In the springtime, Ron will carry extra diamond signs to replace those damaged or lost during the winter. Diamond signs are strategically placed in locations along the Trail where blazes need more visibility. To install them, Ron will bring either a hammer or a lightweight, battery-powered drill with nails or screws.

Bug Spray

Bug spray is a must for Ron in the spring. Mosquitos can be particularly pesky when a Trail Captain has stopped to perform maintenance duties. And ticks are an ever-present concern, so repellent is essential.

First Aid Kit

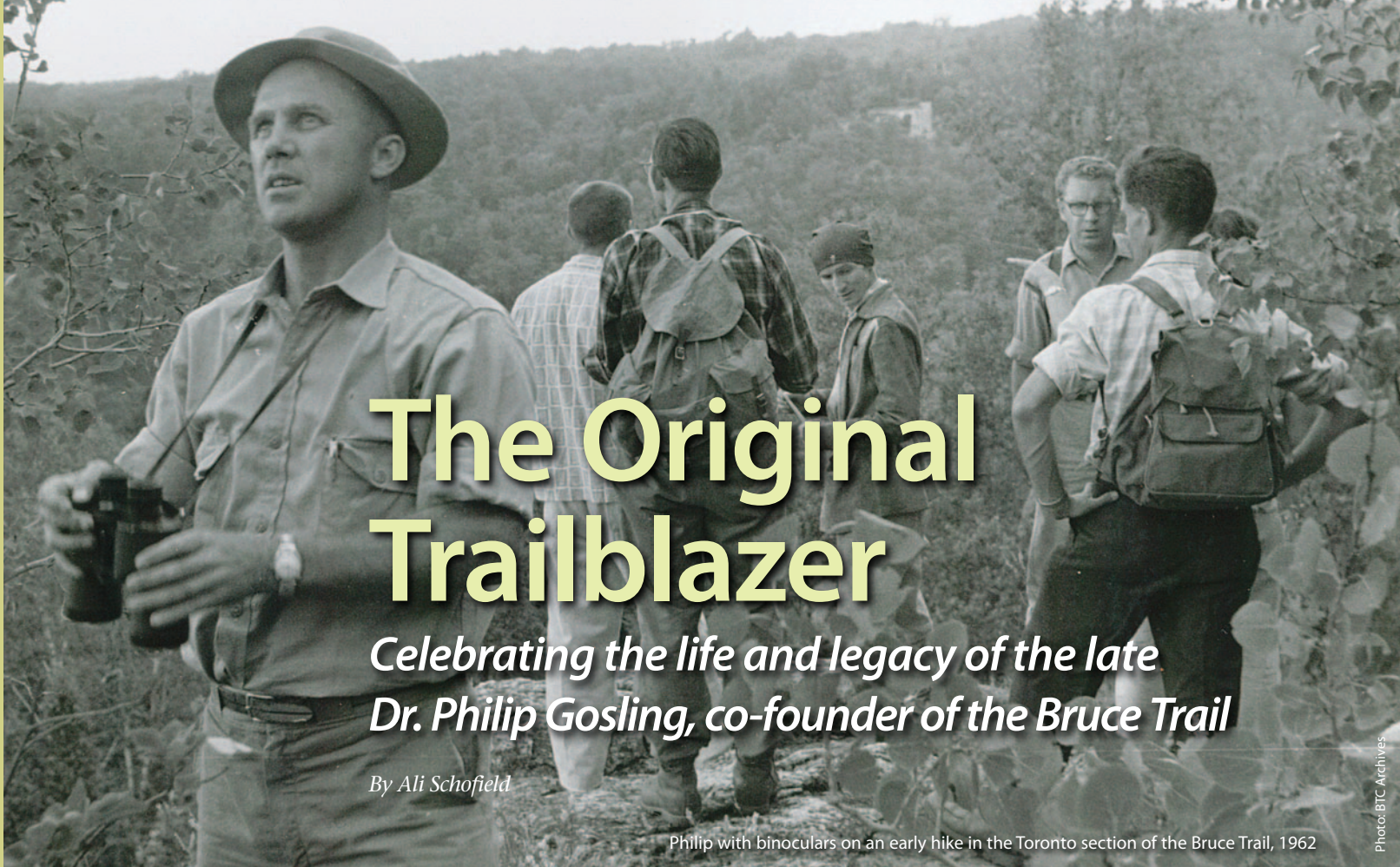
Safety is always top of mind, so Ron never hits the Trail without a well-stocked first aid kit. It's important to be prepared for anything when out in the wilderness.

Ron's Final Tip

When asked if there were any final must-haves, Ron noted that a high-energy snack is important to keep you going, "I love a Reese's Peanut Butter Cup," he says. "It makes the long walk back to the car not seem so far." •



Photo: Ron Savage



The Original Trailblazer

Celebrating the life and legacy of the late Dr. Philip Gosling, co-founder of the Bruce Trail

By Ali Schofield

Philip with binoculars on an early hike in the Toronto section of the Bruce Trail, 1962

Photo: BTC Archives

“Lang may yer lum reek.” This was the Scottish wish Philip Gosling recited as he lit the logs in his fireplace at the first meeting of the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club in 1964: a blessing for a long life and a happy future.

Shortly after the flame had caught, the fire began smoking wildly, forcing the small group of volunteers to rush out into the snow, unable to contain their laughter.

At the time, Philip considered the group’s emergency exit into the cold a disastrous start, but maybe there was more than just smoke in the air. Perhaps Philip’s wish at that inaugural meeting lingered as those volunteers embarked on the great and important task before them: creating and caring for the Bruce Trail.

Falling in love with nature

Born in Birmingham, England in 1929, Philip Gosling’s life contained many interesting chapters and callings.

As a young man, Philip served in the British military and spent time as a guard at Buckingham Palace. In 1955, he immigrated to Canada, building a successful career in property development, and later, as founder of Wellington Breweries. Arguably his greatest legacy, however, stemmed from being one of the co-founders of the Bruce Trail and a steadfast champion for the preservation of nature.

When Philip arrived in Canada he was in awe of its natural beauty. His fascination with the flora and fauna he observed deepened his interest in the natural world; he became an avid birder, took a wildlife course, and, in the late 1950s, joined the Hamilton Naturalists’ Club and the Federation of Ontario

Naturalists (FON, now Ontario Nature). When the Bruce Trail Committee of the FON was formed in an effort to save the Niagara Escarpment from development, Philip was asked to be one of its inaugural members.

Of the four co-founders of the Bruce Trail – which include Ray Lowes, Robert MacLaren, and Norman Pearson – Philip was the original trailblazer. In the early 1960s, as plans for the Bruce Trail began to take shape, his determination to secure the Trail led him to take a year off from his business to do the legwork that would lead to its establishment. On May 14, 1962, Philip officially became the Bruce Trail’s first Trail Director. He spent the next twelve months going door to door along the Escarpment, seeking handshake agreements with landowners and gathering support for the Trail.

“What we needed were people to work on the ground,” Philip said in an interview with the *Guelph Mercury* in 2013. “I had a natural ability for this kind of work. We went from area to area, holding meetings, showing on a map the vision for the trail. And people were really taken with this idea of a

“As a young man I discovered the joy of birds and nature, and... it motivated me to step up and rally others to preserve important natural areas like the Niagara Escarpment. And along the way nature so enriched my life.”

– Philip Gosling

continuous trail. It caught on.” Gradually, Philip pieced together the passages that would eventually become Canada’s longest and oldest marked footpath. As the number of supporters grew, local Bruce Trail Clubs formed to steward Ontario’s new long-distance trail. In 1964, Philip became the first President of the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club, serving until 1966.

Throughout those early years – and for the rest of his life – Philip was a devoted advocate of the Bruce Trail, making connections throughout the province that led to lifelong friendships and deep public support for preserving the Niagara Escarpment.

Championing biodiversity

Philip’s legacy of nature conservation extends far beyond the 900 kilometres of the Bruce Trail. In addition to the pivotal role he played in garnering public support our footpath,



Philip measuring the Bruce Trail with a modified bicycle wheel, 1962

Photo: BTC Archives

Philip was seriously concerned about emerging threats to biodiversity and felt compelled to act.

In 1977, Philip and his late first wife Jean, whom he met when they were both working on the Bruce Trail, founded the Outdoor Art and Science School which later became The Gosling Foundation. The foundation supports the transformation of the nature sector to enable it to protect and restore biodiversity for the benefit of all. Since its inception, The Gosling Foundation has given millions of dollars to support



Philip (centre) with fellow Bruce Trail co-founders Ray Lowes (left) and Norman Pearson (right), 1990

Photo: BTC Archives

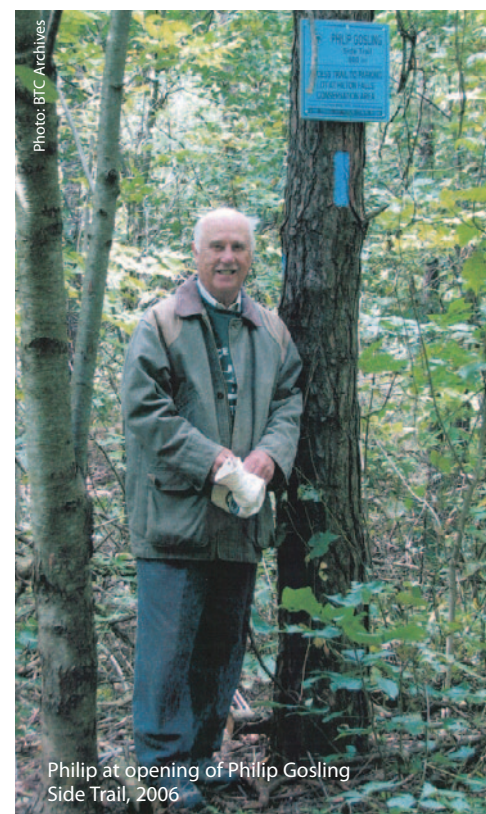
the establishment of community gardens and the securement of vulnerable lands, enhance the effectiveness of organizations in the nature sector, and fund scientific research projects.

One of the most significant investments of The Gosling Foundation is the Gosling Research Institute for Plant Preservation (GRIPP) established at the University of Guelph in 2011 by Philip and his second wife, notable naturalist and plant scientist Susan Gosling. GRIPP aims to preserve endangered plant biodiversity through education, service programs, and research focused on conservation of North American endemic and endangered plant species, and crops of economic importance. It is the only research-intensive facility for cryopreservation of endangered plant biodiversity in Canada.

Philip’s commitment to the protection of nature did not go unnoticed. He received an honorary doctorate in science from the University of Guelph in 2008, and was named Honorary President of the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) that same year. In 2013, he was awarded the Order of Canada for “his crucial contributions to the creation of Ontario’s Bruce Trail and for his philanthropic devotion to the natural world.”

A living legacy

When Michael McDonald started as Chief Executive Officer of the Bruce Trail Conservancy he met with Philip at his home in Guelph. Philip gave him encouragement, advice, and a seedling from his backyard Tulip Tree, which he had cultivated from seeds he



Philip at opening of Philip Gosling Side Trail, 2006

Photo: BTC Archives



Photo: Michael McDonald

Philip gifts a Tulip Tree seedling to BTC in 2019, accepted by CEO Michael McDonald

found while blazing the Bruce Trail. Michael graciously accepted this generous gift and gave it to the Bruce Trail community. During a special celebration in 2019, the Tulip Tree was planted at Fisher's Pond Nature Reserve in the Iroquoia section, a still-growing symbol to the BTC of our shared legacy of conservation across generations.

Over the following years, Michael continued his regular visits with Philip and, in 2024, Philip had an idea. He wanted to engage members in identifying an area along the Bruce Trail that showcased all that the founders had sought to protect when the Trail was first being blazed over sixty years before: a place with Escarpment features and native species where one could feel immersed in nature. It felt only natural that this "Founders' Footpath" be established in the Caledon Hills section where Philip served as the first Club President. With significant support from current Club President Sandy Green, several volunteers, and input from Caledon Hills Club members, a portion of Trail at the Akela and Scouter's Heather and Ross Hamlin Nature Reserve at Riverside Woods was chosen. When the Founders' Footpath was dedicated on

Bruce Trail Day that October, Philip made what would be his last public appearance at a Bruce Trail event to cut the ribbon.

Farewell to our friend

There may have been something to that wish Philip made for longevity and a happy future at the inaugural meeting of the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club. After a lifetime dedicated to protecting nature across Ontario, Philip passed away in December 2025, at the age of 97.

"The Bruce Trail Conservancy has truly realized the vision we set out so long ago," Philip said in a message to BTC members for the 2025 Annual General Meeting. "I am very happy and proud of its incredible success."

Philip will be remembered for his relentless love of nature, his tenacity and resourcefulness, and his willingness to – quite literally – go the distance. His efforts were instrumental in galvanizing a community of like-minded naturalists that has now spanned over six decades and included thousands of people. This legacy of conservation is one we have all taken up as champions for the Bruce Trail. As we continue to care for the beauty and biodiversity of the Niagara Escarpment that so captivated Philip, his memory will be with us – every step of the way. •

Philip Gosling published three books about his life and time blazing the Bruce Trail:

Can They Save this Ribbon of Wilderness? (2012), *Bruce Trail Stories* (2022) and *The Many Paths I Followed* (2023). *Bruce Trail Stories* is available for purchase at the Bruce Trail Conservancy store in Dundas and online at brucetrail.org/store.

To make a donation in memory of Philip Gosling, please visit brucetrail.org/donate-philip-gosling/ or call 1-800-665-4453.

"The Bruce Trail changed my life - it lengthened my stride and brought joy to my heart."

**– Philip Gosling,
at the 50th Anniversary
Volunteer Celebration**

Philip passes the baton to the next generation at the BTC 50th Anniversary event in Tobermory, 2017



Photo: James Masters

PHOTO CONTEST 2026:

COLOURS OF THE BRUCE TRAIL

Show us the colours along the Bruce Trail that catch your eye for your chance to win!

The bright yellow spots on a salamander's back. The delicate ombres of orchids in bloom. The warm tones of mid-autumn leaves. The Bruce Trail is a vibrant place to explore nature in every season.

For this photo contest, we want to see the Bruce Trail in all its colourful glory. Show us the hues that make you happy – the ones that delight, inspire and surprise you. Capture the colours of the Bruce Trail.

What you need to know:

- To be eligible, photos must be taken from the Bruce Trail, so please abide by the Bruce Trail Users' Code and stay on the marked path.
- If you have a dog, always keep them on a leash. Any pictures of dogs off-leash will be disqualified.
- Photos do not need to be taken recently; images from past seasons and adventures are encouraged.
- If there are people in your picture, be sure to get their permission before submitting your photo to the contest.
- The use of AI in creating or editing an image is strictly prohibited.
- The contest deadline is 11:59 p.m. on June 1, 2026.

Entries will be narrowed down to ten finalists based on photographic quality, visual impact, originality, and how well they express the theme. All finalists will be featured in the fall 2026 issue of *Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine*. The Grand Prize Winner and two Runners Up will each receive a one-year membership to the BTC and one of three prizes.

Grand Prize

\$250 BTC Store Gift Card + a One-Year BTC Membership

First Runner Up

\$100 BTC Store Gift Card + a One-Year BTC Membership

Second Runner Up

\$50 BTC Store Gift Card + a One-Year BTC Membership

For full contest details, rules and regulations, and to submit your photo, visit bruce-trail.org/photocontest.

Contest Launch: April 1, 2026

Contest Deadline: June 1, 2026 at 11:59 pm



Hiking in Harmony

By Ali Schofield

Making and enjoying music along the Bruce Trail



Keiko Yoden-Kuepfer and Sound Investment Choir

Photo: Rob Johnston

For some, it's easy to hear music on the Bruce Trail. Hiking along, our footfall becomes a rhythm.

The breeze in the trees creates a moody bassline. A distant Woodpecker, mining a tree for a meal, adds improvised percussion. If you're lucky, you might even hear frogs singing or a bird's melody. Sometimes, it's hard not to hum along.

Across the Niagara Escarpment, groups of Bruce Trail volunteers have gone a step further, creating a chorus between

nature and the naturalist by inviting musicians and their instruments to the Trail. These music hikes have become a regular offering for some Bruce Trail Clubs in recent years, adding a new and creative twist to the hike schedule.

On Bruce Trail Day, October 5, 2025, the Dufferin Hi-land Club and Blue Mountains Club, did just that,

welcoming the musical stylings of local artists to natural areas along the Trail.

Blues Mountain

The idea of hosting a music hike first came to Rob Johnston, a volunteer for the Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club, in 2022. He was looking to become more involved and had a dream of bringing musicians onto the Trail. He imagined people hearing music as they hiked, adding another layer to the Bruce Trail

experience. He brought this idea to a member of the Club Board who encouraged him to do it. "Not the answer I expected," Rob shared, "but very much in-line with the Bruce Trail philosophy."

The Club's first music hike was held in September 2022. The response was so positive that it is now a regular part of the Blue Mountains Club's Bruce Trail Day program. As visitors to the 2025 event explored the Nottawasaga Bluffs Side Trail, local performers shared their talents on a wide range of instruments.

"We have a lot of musical variety," Rob said. "Singers, songwriters, and guitarists obviously, but also violinists, flautists, drum circles, choirs, horn players, and bagpipers." Other acts included a local church organist – the talented Keiko Yoden-Kuepfer – who played Bach, and the Honey paw duet, who sang Lithuanian folk songs, accompanying themselves on a hollow tree they strung like a harp. "There is a great musician community around South Georgian Bay, and all our musicians come from this area."

All of the acts use very little sound reinforcement equipment, such as



Honey paw

Photo: Rob Johnston

microphones and amplification. “Acoustic and natural is better in the woods,” Rob says, and causes less disruption for wildlife.

The Club received over 400 hikers during the three-hour event on Bruce Trail Day, though musicians were spread out enough along the Trail that attendees still had a feeling of surprise when they came upon each new act. “My favourite part was when through-hikers stumbled across it,” Rob said. “They came out of the woods all wide-eyed and amazed.”

While there are similar events held around the world, Rob says they try to keep their music hikes in line with the Bruce Trail’s mission, adding that the music is seen as an enhancement to the hike experience. “It’s not a concert with people listening for extended periods, rather the hope is they pause and take in a song, then continue on their hike.”

Singing along at Splitrock Narrows

On the same day in the Dufferin Hi-Land section, Club President Tom Thayer had coordinated a music hike program along a loop at Splitrock Narrows Nature Reserve in Mono with the hopes of introducing more people to the Bruce Trail.

“Music is a universal language and attracts people from all different walks of

life,” Tom explained. “We wanted to attract a far more diverse crowd and find a better way to give back to the community in general.”

A musician himself, Tom leaned on friendships and connections made over several years in the industry to bring the event to life. On that unusually warm October day, the folk, rock and country stylings of local musical artists – including The Fitzees, Sandy Harron, Dean Woods, Break Even Boys, and Carl Tafel – were heard by hundreds of people from nearby communities. Tom noted that, in addition to significant positive feedback, the event brought in new members and Club volunteers including hike leaders and Board members. “The musicians all loved doing it as well,” Tom said. “They loved playing in nature.”

For the upcoming Bruce Trail Day on Sunday, October 4, 2026, the Dufferin Hi-land Club aims to build on the success of last year’s event by incorporating different types of bands and musical artists, which may include Caribbean sounds and children’s music.

Echoes of Impact

Both events provided new opportunities to connect with nature and with people from across Bruce Trail communities. Musicians brought along their family



Pipemaster Sheila Stewart

Photo: Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club

and friends who may not have otherwise thought about exploring the Bruce Trail. Hikers meanwhile were introduced to local musicians who opened their ears to a new way to experience nature. Together, musical artists, volunteers, and attendees created a memorable and meaningful event. The success of music hikes demonstrates that, when you are able to combine your passions, you can create something really special – you can even build a community. •



Carl Tafel at Splitrock Narrows Nature Reserve

Photo: Cadence Summerfeldt

Listening in the Dark:

How acoustic monitoring reveals the hidden world of bats

By Laura Tuohy



Endangered Tri-coloured Bat in flight

Photo: © Merlin Tuttle.org

A Tri-coloured Bat darts through the night, sending calls into the world and listening for the returning echoes that indicate a meal is nearby.

Her high frequency calls – inaudible to human ears – allow her to pinpoint the tiniest of insects through echolocation. And it's a good thing. She needs to consume her full body weight in insects every night – the equivalent of 5,000 mosquitos. Sound is crucial to her survival.

Nearby, on a tree on the Wetland Ridge Side Trail, a small green box with a specialized microphone picks up her ultrasonic calls and records them. Later, students at Niagara College will retrieve and analyse the recordings to understand more about the species of bat that roost, breed or forage near this Bruce Trail side trail on the Niagara-on-the-Lake campus.

Niagara College graduates Maggie Annett and Topaz Goold were curious about these secretive and often misunderstood creatures and set out to build on the college's 12 years of bat monitoring studies through a year-long project in 2024-5. What they learned would provide insight into bats and the magic and the limitations of acoustic monitoring.

Why Listen for Bats?

Topaz and Maggie contend that monitoring bat populations is key to

understanding and ultimately helping creatures that are endangered, unjustly feared, and underestimated. "Monitoring is one of the most important things you can do to help a species, in addition to protecting habitat," says Maggie. The two also emphasize in their study that bats can be "used as bioindicators for assessing ecosystem health due to their sensitivity to environmental stressors, making them important subjects for monitoring research".

While there are more than 1,500 species of bat worldwide (accounting for one in every five mammal species), eight species of bat are found in Ontario.

Threats to Bats in Ontario

- **White Nose Syndrome**, a fungal disease, disrupts hibernation.
- **Habitat loss** from development and land use changes, removes vital roosting, breeding and foraging sites.
- **Pesticides** reduce insect availability, a primary food source.
- **Wind turbines** cause collisions or pressure changes, particularly affecting migratory species.



One of six acoustic bat monitors installed around Niagara College

Photo: Topaz Goold

Unfortunately, disease, habitat loss and wind turbines are taking their toll on populations. All but one Ontario bat species are endangered.

Despite these threats, there are gaps in knowledge about bat population sizes and ranges. Monitoring populations is important but can be difficult given the elusive nocturnal behaviour of bats.

However, this is where sound can help. Because all eight Ontario bat species use echolocation to navigate and forage, they emit calls almost continuously while active and flying. This constant production of sounds provides an opportunity to document the presence of bats and even what species they may be. That is, so long as we can detect them.

Spectrograms: Seeing Sound

Acoustic monitoring technology allows us to listen in to bat calls and even visualize them. The acoustic monitors that Maggie and Topaz used in their study recorded sounds in six locations on campus every evening from May through November. The monitors, installed in different habitats, were triggered to record whenever a high frequency sound was detected louder than the overall background noise.

The recordings were uploaded to a computer and run through two programs, colourfully named Kaleidoscope Pro and SonoBat. Both programs put the data through an automatic ID algorithm to give a preliminary list of possible species detected. And both programs created spectrograms – visual representations of bat calls showing frequency, rhythm and pattern – that Topaz and Maggie could analyse.

When Topaz analysed the recordings from the bat detector on the Wetland Ridge Side Trail, she saw repetitive ‘hockey stick’ shaped marks between ~43-50 kHz, the signature of a Tri-coloured Bat. Each species has its own ‘signature’ based on frequency and timing of the calls they make.

The eight Ontario bat species generally fall into two groups by frequency. The high frequency group (with an average frequency of 35 kHz or higher) includes the three Myotis species, the Tri-coloured Bat, and the Eastern Red

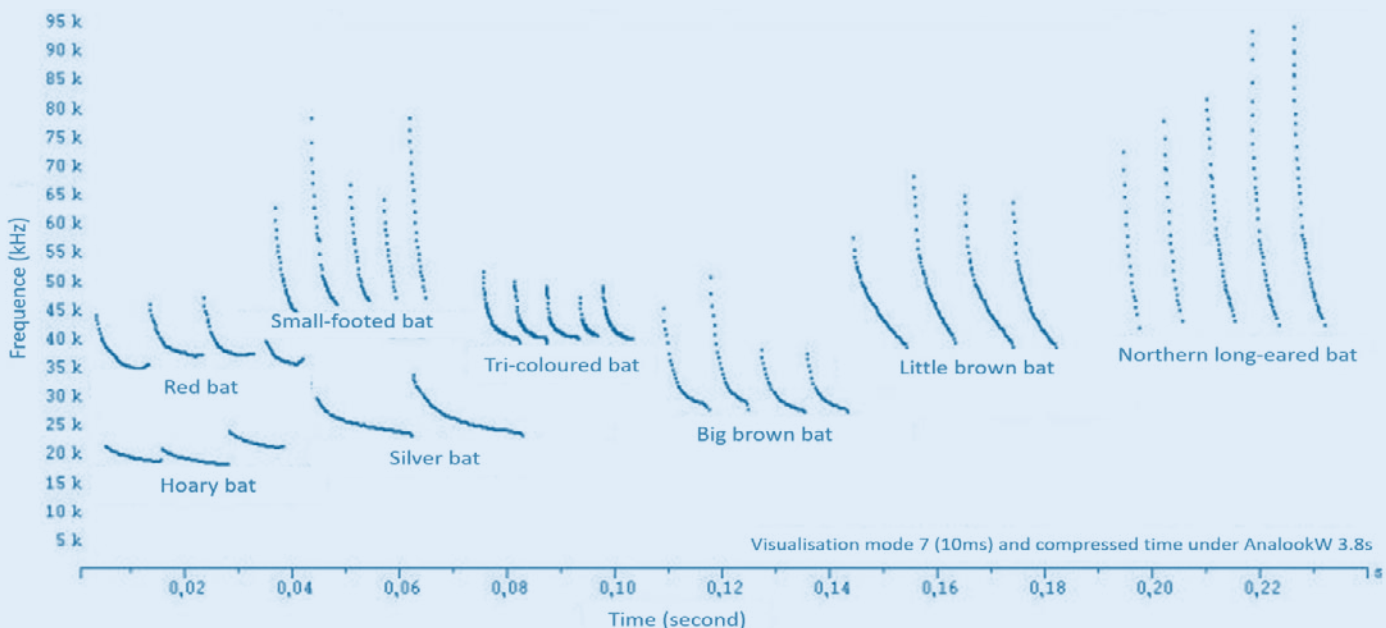
Bats of Ontario		Number of Recordings (Niagara College, May-Nov. 2024)
MIGRATORY SPECIES		
Hoary Bat (<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>)**		4,635
Silver-haired Bat (<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>)**		2,838
Eastern Red Bat (<i>Lasiurus borealis</i>)**		624
HIBERNATING/NON-MIGRATORY SPECIES		
Big Brown Bat (<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>)		4,635
Little Brown Myotis (<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>)**		29
Northern (Long-eared) Myotis (<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>)**		13
Tri-coloured Bat (<i>Perimyotis subflavus</i>)**		3
Eastern Small-footed Myotis (<i>Myotis leibii</i>)*		0
** Endangered provincially and nationally * Endangered provincially		

Bat. The low frequency group (20-35 kHz) includes the Big Brown Bat, Silver-haired Bat, and Hoary Bat.

The frequencies that bats employ also reflect their preferred habitats and prey. Generally, species that prefer open spaces use lower-frequency calls (which travel farther than higher frequencies), and these species tend to detect and prefer larger insects. Those in cluttered environments use higher-frequency, short-range calls for precise navigation, and are able to detect smaller prey. Species that forage along forest edges or gaps often exhibit intermediate frequencies or a range of frequencies. So when we notice a diversity of bat species, that generally reflects a diversity of habitats and a diversity of insects.



Typical spectrograms of eight Ontario bat species





Big Brown Bat in flight

Photo: Maxwell Giffen, iNaturalist CC

Presence but not Abundance

Across all six monitor locations in Maggie and Topaz's study, a whopping 232,337 files—750 GB of data—were obtained and analyzed. Many of the files were unusable or contained no evidence of bats. But, the team did uncover and verify 12,441 recordings of bat calls. In them, seven of the eight Ontario bat species were represented, including three migratory species, and four who live in the region.

These results are promising and reveal a richness of bat species in the area, though they do not mean the presence of over 12,000 bats. Each recording is a 'pass' of a bat. Multiple recordings may be made by multiple bats, or by one individual passing the microphone multiple times. The recorders can't tell us how many bats are in the area, but they can confirm the presence or absence of species and indicate the level of bat activity in the area surrounding the monitor.

Bat Detector Limitations

The nearly instant creation of spectrograms and automatic identification by the acoustic monitoring software seems magical. However, through their study Maggie and Topaz discovered limitations with the detectors and cautioned against relying on the 'auto ID' function of the programs. "It's really easy to put up monitors, run the recordings through a computer program, and then just take the results at face value," says Topaz. But

manual verification checks were necessary, and they even discovered differences in accuracy between the two computer programs using the same data.

Distinguishing species using spectrograms takes time and a fair amount of study and practice. And even then, it's an inexact science. Some species calls – particularly in the three *Myotis* species – overlap and can be notoriously hard to distinguish. Low quality recordings with much background noise or low signal strength also affect the accuracy of identification. And, to make matters more complicated, calls of individual bats can vary.

Monitoring bats over the long-term can ideally help identify trends in bat populations. Even though bat monitoring has taken place at Niagara College over 13 years, the results are difficult to compare due to changes in technology and differences in monitoring protocol. Key to Maggie and Topaz's project was an evaluation of the work of previous students, testing a standardized protocol and making recommendations for the future. Students who follow their example will be able to build on their work, hopefully have access to improved technology, and in time, a more accurate picture of bat populations at Niagara College will emerge.

Niagara Escarpment Bats and the Bruce Trail

Recording the presence of seven of the eight Ontario bat species within just one kilometre of Niagara College's

Niagara-on-the-Lake campus was satisfying for Maggie and Topaz, and perhaps a bit surprising given the near-urban environment. "It's a testament to the impact of the Bruce Trail," says Maggie, "(The results) show that even small actions, and the small bits of habitat we set aside, can make a difference."

The term 'echolocation' was coined in 1959, just a few short years before the opening of the Bruce Trail. In that time, threats to bats have only increased – putting most bat species at risk of extinction. Fortunately in that same time, the Bruce Trail Conservancy increased the amount of protected habitat for bats and other Niagara Escarpment species. And technology has made it easier than ever to gain access to their acoustic world. By listening to the world beyond our earshot, we can continue to learn about these fascinating and important creatures and safeguard their future. •

Bat References

- Learn more about Ontario bats (onnaturemagazine.com/bat-guide.html)
- Check out bat conservation work worldwide (batcon.org)
- Get involved in bat monitoring and protection (batwatch.ca)

Spectrogram of Tri-coloured Bat from SonoBat program

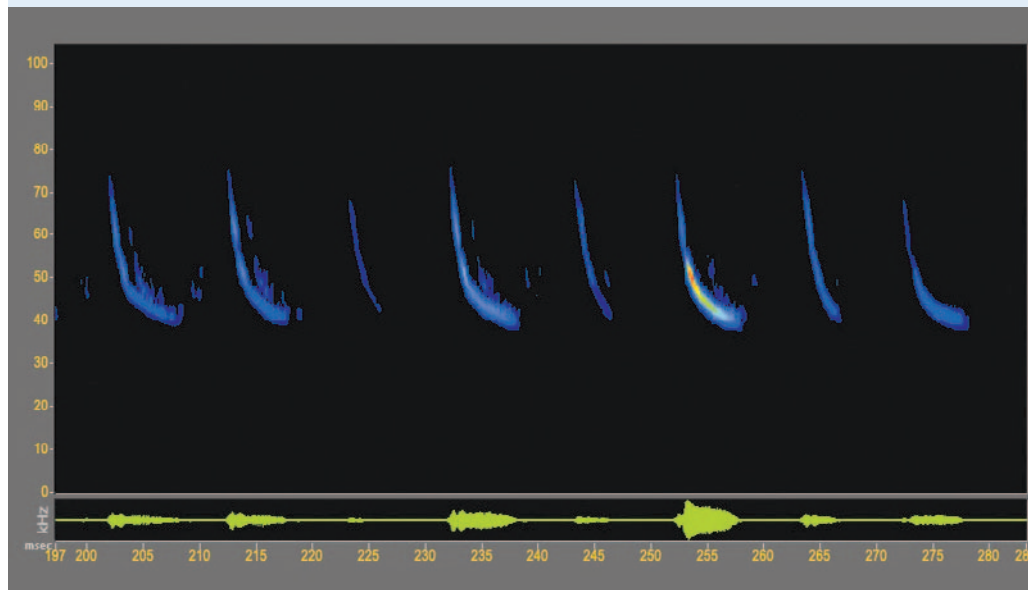


Photo: Oscar Johnson, iNaturalist CC BY-NC-ND

Preserving a ribbon of wilderness, one month at a time

By Angela Rocchi, monthly donor

Over the years, I have experienced a lot of enjoyment on the Bruce Trail.

It's great for my physical health, and even better for my mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. Connecting to nature on a regular basis keeps me grounded and fills me up with a simple joy.

I had never thought about becoming a donor until a friend chose the Bruce Trail Conservancy for memorial donations. Following this, through my friends who volunteer with the Bruce Trail Conservancy, and regular updates in the quarterly magazine, I started learning more about the mission to secure the Bruce Trail permanently – not simply as a path, but to preserve the habitat of the Niagara Escarpment.

After the initial memorial donation, I became an annual donor, then switched to monthly donations. It's a small way to give back and to keep the Trail available and accessible to myself and others.

I understand the importance of monthly donations as a reliable revenue stream for charities like the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Monthly contributions allow them to make plans within a known budget. Even if my contribution is small, they all add up to financial stability and security. It's better for me as well, as I never have to remember 'did I contribute this year or not?' An added benefit is that a small monthly donation is relatively painless compared to a bigger annual amount.

The process of signing up was simple – the website is set up very well to establish a monthly contribution. In return, the Bruce Trail Conservancy is great for regular, reliable communication and issuing my tax receipts promptly.

Someone recently asked me: in a world of competing needs and priorities, why support the Bruce Trail Conservancy? My answer is: we have not been good caretakers of our planet. I believe the Bruce Trail Conservancy is an excellent caretaker for their 900 km of wilderness, and all the flora and fauna within it. Now more than ever, we need

places where nature is protected and held sacred.

If the Bruce Trail Conservancy matters to you, then I highly recommend the monthly donation program, for your benefit and theirs. •

Long-time supporter, Angela Rocchi, made her first donation to the Bruce Trail Conservancy in 2008, eventually becoming a member of the Iroquoia Club, and signing on as a monthly donor in 2020. We thank Angela for sharing her story with us.



Photo: ©/o Angela Rocchi



Shifting Soundscapes: What sounds tell us about the health of our ecosystems

By Laura Tuohy

Photo: Liz Corbett (with sound graphic added by BTC)

The early morning chorus of birdsong is one of the most evocative signs of spring.

The buzz of cicadas and crickets tell us summer is here. The bass “jug-o-rum” of a bullfrog signals we’re near a wetland. Every chirp, croak, grumble and buzz in nature connects us to a time and place.

What would a hike on the Bruce Trail be like without these sonic touchstones? The natural symphony not only creates a soundtrack to our experience, it tells us about who we share the world with, what they are up to, and how they are doing.

We may live in a visual world, yet our ears may be the first to detect when something has changed, if we are willing to listen.

Silence is Sounding a Warning

Numerous studies from across the world are documenting how natural soundscapes are changing, being disrupted and falling silent. A 2021 study published in *Nature* magazine on 200,000 natural areas in North America and Europe found a “pervasive loss of acoustic diversity and intensity in soundscapes” in the last 25 years, driven by reductions in species diversity and abundance. Simply put, our natural soundscapes are becoming quieter and less diverse.

Much of this research has, unsurprisingly, focussed on birds. Humans have been drawn to birds and birdsong for generations and plenty of historical data exists to track trends. A 2019 study published in *Science* showed that wild

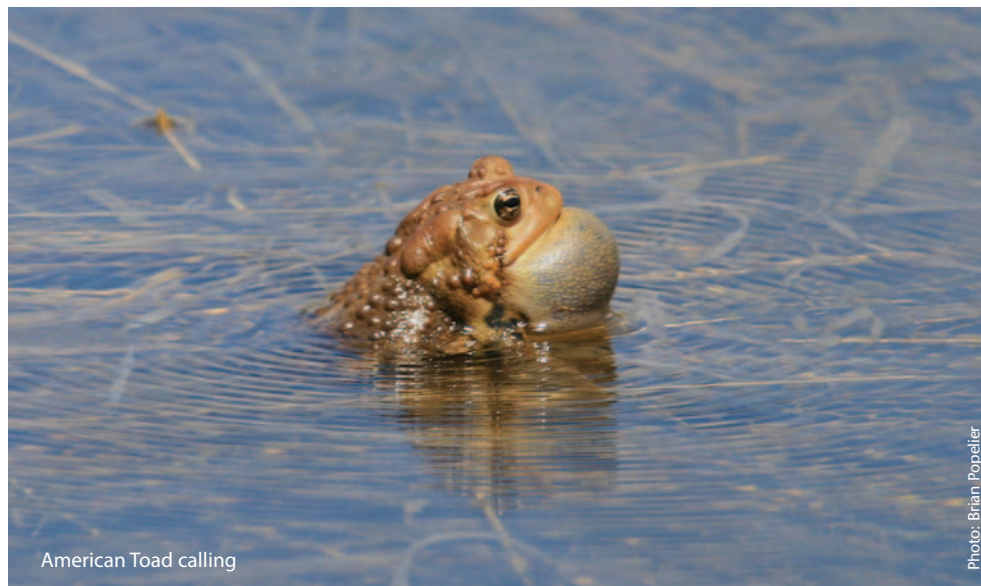
bird populations in the continental U.S. and Canada have declined by almost 30% since 1970. One in four birds in the U.S. and Canada has disappeared in that time - their sounds now only heard in recordings.

Insects, though less studied acoustically, are also facing decline. In 2019, *Biological Conservation* reported that 40% of all insect species are declining globally and a third are endangered. With insects forming the buzzing, clicking base of many ecological communities, their losses have widespread effects.

Amphibians are also sending a strong signal that something is wrong. As of

2022, the Global Amphibian Assessment (of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) indicated that 41% of all amphibian species are threatened with extinction. Amongst the most sensitive ecological indicators, amphibians are warning us of changes to environmental conditions through the loss of their croaks and bellows.

As species disappear so do their calls and noises, rendering our natural soundscapes quieter and less varied. The depleted soundscapes are also competing with human-made noise. From transportation, to industry, and urban development noise pollution masks



American Toad calling

Photo: Brian Popelier

natural sounds, hinders animal communication and navigation, and causes stress and behavior changes in wildlife. Meanwhile, climate change is throwing off acoustics. Altered seasons are causing some animals to shift the timing of their vocalization or move to new areas, while warming temperatures even change how sound travels.

A Symphony Disrupted

In a healthy ecosystem, we expect to hear a variety of sounds and volumes. To paraphrase acoustic ecologist Bernie Krause, species evolve to occupy different niches of acoustic space in a healthy environment – so they're not shouting over top of one another – like members of an orchestra with multiple instruments within the strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion.

The quieter, less diverse natural soundscapes we're witnessing reflect three things: a loss of biodiversity, changes in climate, and the impact of human-made noise. It's as though nature's orchestra is slowly losing instruments and players, those left behind are playing out of sync, while traffic from outside the concert hall grows louder.

Silent Spring and Shifting Baseline Syndrome

The loss of birdsong is not news. In 1962, Rachel Carson in her seminal book "Silent Spring" wrote of the hazards of industrial chemicals and the devastating effects they were having on wildlife and human health. Her writing helped kickstart the modern environmental movement in North America and inspired a generation to take action to change our behaviours and stem the damage.

Some may wonder if anything has changed since Carson wrote those words. Certainly, progress has been made on the phasing out dangerous chemicals like DDT, but threats to birds, biodiversity and natural soundscapes have only increased in number and intensity over the last 60 years.

To make matters worse, we may no longer be shocked by a silent spring. Part of the problem is we are acclimating to the incremental absence of natural sounds. What we hear today is not what our grandparents experienced, yet we may not even be aware of the change.

This is known as "shifting baseline syndrome" and describes how our perception of what is normal in the environment changes gradually over time. Each generation judges ecological health through the lens of its own experience, leading to a sort of "environmental generational amnesia" in which degraded conditions feel familiar, and therefore accepted. As baselines shift, it becomes harder to recognize the scale of environmental change, or what could be restored.

Recording and Recreating Soundscapes

To help address this misperception caused by shifting baselines, and to better understand our changing world, researchers in bioacoustics have been recording, documenting and even recreating natural soundscapes.

Bernie Krause, a California-based musician and scientist has amassed the world's oldest collection of soundscapes – 4,500 hours of ecosystem sounds from around the world since the late 1960s. Today, some of the sounds have since become "acoustic fossils", existing only in Krause's archive.

Where historical recordings of natural soundscapes don't exist, some researchers have reconstructed them by combining long-term monitoring data and citizen science records for sites, with sound recordings for individual species. Simon Butler, Professor of Applied Ecology at the University of East Anglia, is one such researcher. As a tangible demonstration of biodiversity loss, Butler hopes such reconstructions will heighten awareness and encourage support for conservation.



Short-winged Meadow Katydid

Photo: Richard Baxter CC BY-NC

Connecting to Nature through Sound

Sound plays a key role in how we experience nature. It confers a sense of place – taking us to a time, a location, a season. And there is growing recognition that natural sounds are beneficial to human health and wellbeing.

It behooves us to listen more. We may seek silence in the countryside, being weary of noise pollution in the city, but nature is not meant to be silent. Let us listen to nature attentively and recognize the soundscape that we are part of. If we attune ourselves to the sounds of creatures, waters, wind and even plants, we can get to know our environment and notice its changes, while reducing stress and boosting our mood. We're fortunate – the Bruce Trail gives us countless opportunities to do just that.

On your next walk, take a moment to reflect on the natural sounds that are meaningful to you and help you feel a deeper connection with nature. Make time to stop and simply listen. Though it can be hard to keep our ears open to our changing environments, we must stay connected to the sounds of nature if we wish to live in harmony with it. •



Singing Winter Wren

Photo: Brian Popelier

"On the mornings that had once throbbled with the dawn chorus of robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of other bird voices, there was now no sound; only silence lay over the fields and woods and marsh."

– Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 1962

Conservation in Action: New Protected Areas

Eight new protected natural areas have been secured by the Bruce Trail Conservancy in the last three months. This record number of successes represents the culmination of many years of hard work by our Land Securement teams and generous support from donors who support our mission.

YEAR-END SUPPORT

Four crucial natural areas were protected thanks to over 1,600 donors who responded to our year-end appeal – preserving 124 acres of Niagara Escarpment habitats and securing 2.9 km of Bruce Trail.

Flyby Timbers – Sydenham section

Map 35, Wiarton

37 acres | 690 metres of Bruce Trail

Fieldview Connection (expansion) – Sydenham section

Map 30, Bayview Nature Reserve

26 acres | 325 metres of Bruce Trail

Greenrise Run (expansion) – Blue Mountains section

Map 22, Devil's Glen

23 acres | 604 metres of Bruce Trail

Stillwater Nature Reserve – Toronto section

Map 13, Silver Creek

38 acres | 1.2 km of Bruce Trail

You can read more about these important acquisitions in the winter 2025-26 issue of Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine or visit brucetrail.org/year-end-appeal-2025 for details.



Greenrise Run (expansion) – Blue Mountains section

Photo: Brooke Henry



Stillwater Nature Reserve – Toronto section

Photo: Brooke Henry

DONATIONS OF LAND

Two properties have recently come into the Bruce Trail Conservancy's care through donation of land.

Town of Pelham – Niagara section

Map 3, Short Hills

0.4 acres | 10 metres of Bruce Trail

Sometimes, securing the shortest of trail segments can make all the difference. The Bruce Trail has crossed a small unopened road allowance near the border of the Town of Pelham and the City of St. Catharines for many years as it weaves between the BTC-managed Sigfrid property and other lands northwest of Short Hills Provincial Park.

Although considered public rights of way, unopened road allowances can present a risk to trail continuity if acquired by adjacent landowners. Fortunately, after discussions with BTC staff and volunteers of the Niagara Bruce Trail Club, the Town of Pelham approved a 'gratuitous transfer' of a portion of the road allowance to the BTC. Not only does this donation secure the Trail, it expands the adjacent Sigfrid property by 0.4 acres. The Bruce Trail Conservancy and Niagara Bruce Trail Club are grateful for the working relationships with the Town of Pelham which have been strengthened through this process.

Wandering Paws Nature Reserve – Peninsula section

Map 38, Lion's Head

100 acres | 458 m of Side Trail

Libby Knowles purchased 100 acres near Lion's Head over 24 years ago. Drawn to its beautiful interior forests and rocky outcrops, she kept it undeveloped and enjoyed exploring it with her kids and her dog on trips from their cottage in Collingwood. Nestled next to Lion's Head Provincial Nature Reserve, and accessible only by foot, it felt remote and peaceful.

Wandering Paws sits within two provincially significant ANSIs (Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest) for life science and earth science. Dense forests of Maple, Birch and Beech show little signs of human disturbance. The scarp outcrops host a variety of ferns, including the uncommon Green Spleenwort. Pockets of swamp are home to regionally rare plants like Tuckerman's Sedge. This wonderful variety of habitats contributes to a large, uninterrupted conservation corridor in the area.

Over the years, Libby got to know the property and care for it, stretching the skills she obtained from a Woodlot Manager course at the University of Toronto. She remembers looking for the old route of the Bruce Trail which ran through the property in the 1980s – but the forest had long since obscured its passage. Now the main way to explore the property is by the Ilse Hanel Side Trail, created when the Main Trail was rerouted to follow the Optimum Route around the Lion's Head peninsula.



Wandering Paws Nature Reserve – Peninsula section

Photo: Brian Popelier



Wandering Paws Nature Reserve – Peninsula section

Photo: Brian Popelier

As a Bruce Trail landowner, Libby stayed in touch with the work of the BTC. While reading Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine, she became inspired by the stories of donors in its pages and decided to pursue the idea of donating her land.

"I love walking sections of the Bruce Trail and hope that this donation compliments the contiguous forest of the Lion's Head area that is so important to the animals and birds living there," shares Libby. "The Bruce Trail Conservancy will forever keep this property undeveloped and natural, I am sure."

The new name 'Wandering Paws' is a nod to Libby's explorations with her dog, and to all the creatures who will find a protected home or safe passage on the new nature reserve.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy is grateful to Libby for her stewardship and for her generous donation of land. This wonderful gift will ensure that future generations – and wandering paws – will continue to explore and benefit from this special place on the Niagara Escarpment.

Options for Landowners

The Bruce Trail Conservancy can help you plan long-term options for your Niagara Escarpment property. Whether your interest is in conservation, estate planning, or financial and tax benefits, there are a variety of options available that can provide benefits for families and for the future of the Niagara Escarpment.

For more information contact Esme Batten at 1-800-665-4453 ext. 256 or esme.batten@bruce-trail.org, or visit bruce-trail.org/ways-to-donate-land

Conservation in Action: New Protected Areas

OTHER SUCCESSES

Rockview Bluff Nature Reserve – Sydenham section

Map 33, *The Glen*

5.3 acres | 204 metres of Bruce Trail

Rockview Bluff Nature Reserve is a small but key part of the Bruce Trail experience and conservation corridor north-west of Owen Sound. Contained in its five acres are a fully forested Escarpment slope and a flatter section of naturally regenerating former agricultural land, with the Trail running between these two habitats at the top of the Escarpment. The previous owners graciously hosted the Bruce Trail on their land since the late 1990s, and Sydenham Bruce Trail Club volunteers maintained and fostered this important relationship. Now 204 metres of Bruce Trail Optimum Route is permanently protected for future generations.



Rockview Bluff Nature Reserve – Sydenham section

Photo: Ron Savage



Amber Crest – Peninsula section

Amber Crest – Peninsula section

Map 37, *Hope Bay*

5.0 acres | 60 metres of Bruce Trail

Amber Crest is one of several small properties that sit between two BTC protected natural areas – Cape Dundas Nature Reserve (secured in 2017) and the Mackie property (secured in 1991) – making it an important step towards creating an unbroken conservation corridor and protecting Trail continuity through this area. This newly protected natural area is helping to fill a gap in an otherwise continuous 22 km protected natural corridor from Hope Bay to Barrow Bay. Its name evokes the amber colour of maple sap from the property's mature Sugar Maples, and the crest-like Escarpment features of the property. •

Stillwater Nature Reserve, Rockview Bluff Nature Reserve, Wandering Paws Nature Reserve, and Amber Crest were made possible with the financial support of:



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Caring for the Talisman of Tomorrow:

How the Bruce Trail Conservancy stewards newly protected properties

By Laura Tuohy

When the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) protects a new piece of the Niagara Escarpment, the story does not end with the signing of papers. In many ways, that moment marks the beginning of a long relationship with the land.

Properties like the newly-acquired former Talisman Mountain Resort lands in the Beaver Valley are welcomed into the Bruce Trail's conservation corridor to be stewarded for generations. Through learning, planning, and active stewardship, we care for these new lands to maintain and enhance biodiversity, improve connectivity of natural corridors, and protect unique habitat and Species at Risk. Over the past 60 years, the BTC has cultivated extensive experience with this approach to stewardship. A team of ecologists and a committed network of volunteers manage over 15,800 acres across the Niagara Escarpment through collaboration, expertise and dedicated resources.

Getting to Know the Land

Once a property comes into the BTC's care, the first priority is to understand it. BTC ecologists conduct detailed ecological inventories of the new property over at least three seasons. They document habitat types, record species and identify any Species at Risk. They also assess existing and potential threats, from invasive species and encroachment to the impacts of past land use and climate change.

Research strengthens this fieldwork. Past environmental studies in the area can offer useful background. Previous landowners and neighbours may provide insights. And even citizen science obser-

ventions shared by trail users in the BTC's iNaturalist project can contribute to building a fuller picture of the property.

Creating a Stewardship Plan

This baseline knowledge allows BTC staff to develop a unique stewardship plan tailored to the property's needs. Each plan acts as a roadmap for care, outlining ecological data, historical context, and practical recommendations. Stewardship plans guide habitat protection, restoration opportunities, and trail placement, ensuring decisions and actions align with BTC's mission and values.

Some properties require minimal intervention beyond monitoring and protection from damage. Others, like Talisman, are more complex due to intensive past land use.

Dedicating Attention and Hands-on Care

Each protected natural area is assigned a volunteer Land Steward who helps carry out the recommendations in the stewardship plan. Land Stewards visit the site regularly to monitor conditions, record new species, and report emerging concerns.

When bigger projects are required on the property, teams of volunteers and staff work together. They may remove invasive species, clean up litter, plant native trees and shrubs, or tackle other larger stewardship activities.

Restoring and Building Resilience

At sites like the Talisman lands, restoration and site remediation will be a long-term undertaking. The former ski hills there represent one of the largest breaks in the forest canopy for a 10-kilometre stretch of the Escarpment. Old equipment and structures on site present additional ecological and logistical challenges. Addressing these challenges will require careful planning and years of reforestation, clean-up and monitoring, sometimes in collaboration with contractors who bring specialized

Talisman Opportunities

The landmark acquisition of the lands at the former Talisman Mountain Resort in the Beaver Valley presents a rare opportunity for ambitious large-scale ecological restoration along the Escarpment. Watch your inbox this summer for an update and more opportunities to support the purchase, restoration and long-term stewardship of this newly protected area. To give today please call 1-800-665-4453 ext. 0 or visit brucetrail.org/donate-talisman.

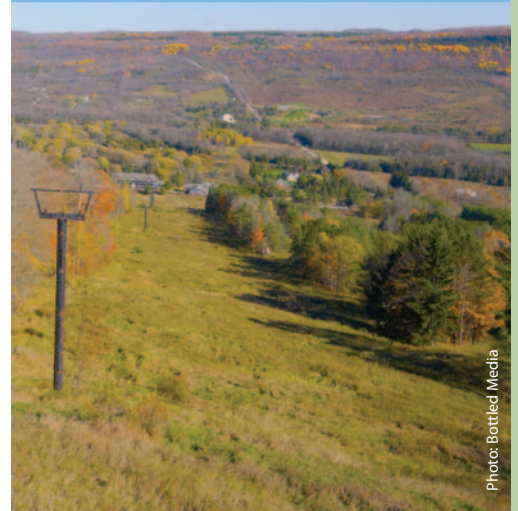


Photo: Bottled Media

skills and equipment.

As with all BTC restoration work, the focus is on helping ecosystems become connected, self-sustaining, resilient and adaptable to threats like climate change.

Long-term Commitment

Stewardship does not end when a plan is written or a project is completed. Staff and volunteers build an ongoing relationship with the land, updating plans as conditions change and new knowledge emerges.

Each new protected property strengthens the Bruce Trail's conservation corridor and deepens BTC's ability to care for the Niagara Escarpment. From careful study to long-term restoration, we ensure places like Talisman can become part of a healthy, biodiverse and connected landscape well into the future. •



Photo: Beth Gillespy



Explore Like a Local

Photo: Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club

Spring is a wonderful time to explore local Niagara Escarpment businesses before or after a hike.

After a long winter, the roads are easier to navigate, the air is getting warmer, the sun is out longer – the world is your oyster!

If you're planning on hiking in the Toronto or Beaver Valley sections this spring, or travelling through these areas, consider visiting one of these excellent local businesses recommended by Bruce Trail Club volunteers.

TORONTO BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

Shepherd's Crook

86 Main Street South, Georgetown
Recommended by Tom S., Hiking Director and Hike Leader

According to Tom, "If you're looking for a classic neighbourhood pub with character after a hike in the Georgetown area, Shepherd's Crook is a standout choice." Housed in a charming historic stone building, this cozy spot has comfortable seating, friendly faces, and is perfect for a pint or a meal with friends. The menu features hearty, traditional pub fare, as well as Tom's favourite dish, the Montreal Smoked Meat sandwich made with meat direct from Lester's Deli

in Montreal. Complementing this is a selection of 19 beers on tap, including Ontario microbrews, imports, and cider.

Beaumont Mill Antiques & Collectibles

586 Main Street, Glen Williams
Recommended by David R., Secretary
 The Beaumont Mill hosts a treasure trove of antiques and collectibles dating

from the 1880s to the 1980s. Once used as a wool mill, the stone structure was originally built in 1878. Inside, you'll find themed rooms and 36 different vendors over three floors filled with furniture, toys, household goods, sports memorabilia and more. David's favourite finds include nostalgic items like Corgi toy trucks, old Coke bottles and vintage





Beaumont Mill Antiques & Collectibles

Photo: Helena Dowsland (TripAdvisor)

toboggans. “It is truly a living museum representing items that baby boomers and their parents and grandparents cherished growing up.”

Spirit Tree Estate Cidery

1137 Boston Mills Road, Caledon

Recommended by Magdalena V., Editor, E-notes

Located directly on the Bruce Trail, this craft cidery makes its hard cider with Ontario apples or pears. They also offer pizza made fresh in their wood-fired



Photo: Spirit Tree Estate Cidery

Lunch outside Spirit Tree

oven, as well as other bistro items featuring locally grown produce, perfect for lunch. The cidery includes a general store where you can grab cider and artisan baked goods to go. While there's lots to choose from, Magdalena especially enjoys their dry-hopped cider, “What could be better after or during a good hike?” (Note: The cidery is closed for winter maintenance until April 15.)

BEAVER VALLEY BRUCE TRAIL CLUB

The Kimberley General Store/Justin's Oven

235304 Grey County Rd 13, Kimberley
Recommended by Ian C., Landowner Relations Director

Ian recommends the Kimberley General Store and its sister company Justin's Oven for their great retail and restaurant experiences in which you can feel the heart of their owners. Both Stacy and Justin care deeply about the people and natural environment of the Beaver Valley, and it shows through their baked goods and quality offerings. The food is fresh and local, plus the property features a backyard patio, often with live music, perfect for those warmer days. Ian most looks forward to Stacy's daily fresh-baked sourdough bread and pies, and Justin's Friday night wood-fired pizzas!

Marilynne

19 Toronto St N, Markdale

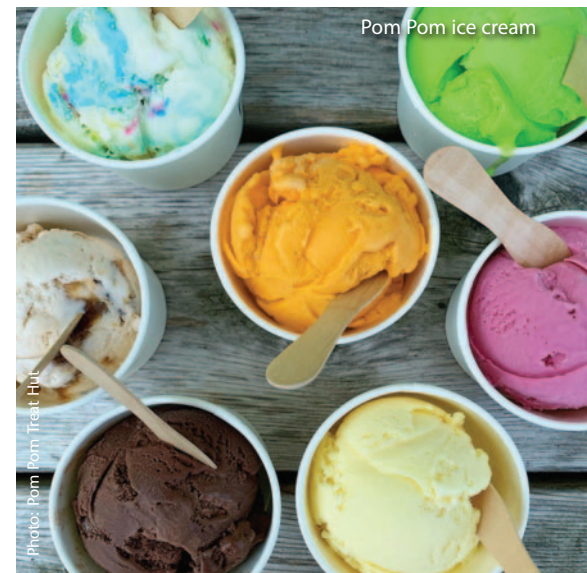
Recommended by Margaret P., Trail Captain, Land Steward, and Club Director
After honing his skills in Toronto, Chef Brandon returned to Markdale to open a restaurant named after his grandmother. Located in a 1913 firehall, the restaurant offers a flavourful take on comfort food using local Grey County ingredients, with a menu that changes with the season. While the crispy chicken sandwich is a crowd favourite, Margaret often opts for something from the rotating specials board, which recently featured dishes like French onion soup and a classic Waldorf salad.

Pom Pom

25 Sykes Street N Meaford, or 6 Bruce Street North Thornbury

Recommended by Jane M., Club Communications Coordinator

Pom Pom, known for its made-in-house traditional and plant-based ice cream, has become a beloved community favourite. With a focus on inclusivity, the shop offers gluten-free and dairy-free options for those who need them. When she visits, Jane likes to try the featured drink or ice cream flavour, with past highlights including a Cinnamon Toast Crunch latte and a peach cobbler sundae. As a bonus, Pom Pom sells fun books, puzzles and souvenir items, including the Bruce Trail Reference Guide. Owners Andrea and Rheanna support many community events and initiatives, adding to the shop's welcoming presence.



Pom Pom ice cream

Photo: Pom Pom Treat Hut

PINTS, PUZZLES, PATIOS AND MORE

Whether browsing antiques in Glen Williams or enjoying an ice cream in Meaford, we hope you have a chance to enjoy these local establishments and the many others along the Niagara Escarpment.

Please note that these suggestions are based on the experiences of our volunteers, who did not receive anything in exchange for their recommendations. They are not official endorsements from the Bruce Trail Conservancy, nor paid advertisements from the businesses. Think of this like printed word-of-mouth from your fellow hikers. Enjoy exploring like a local! •

BRUCE TRAIL – END-TO-END LIST

2025

Congratulations to our members who have completed an End-to-End of the entire Bruce Trail – an extraordinary physical and personal journey. The following are members who received their End-to-End recognition in 2025.

E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES	E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES	E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES	E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES
4907	Karen Leitch		4960	Sharon Schmidt		5013	Michael Doyle	2nd Time	5066	Andrea Kovacs	
4908	Daniel Leitch		4961	Sandra Green	13th Time	5014	Michael Doyle	3rd Time	5067	Rita Hotchkiss	
4909	Henriette Jansen		4962	Sandra Green	14th Time	5015	Daniel Lak		5068	Lesley Raleigh	
4910	Hilary Mackenzie		4963	Karen Wilson		5016	John Rockx		5069	Les Wilcox	
4911	Gurbeen Bhasin		4964	Isaac Horvath		5017	Maggie Rockx		5070	Jeff Rogers	
4912	Anthony Ambrosino		4965	Nancy McGlone		5018	Fran De Brabandere	8th Time	5071	Sally Rogers	
4913	Seungmin Yang		4966	Elizabeth Narejko		5019	Michael Pierrynowski		5072	Heather Zrini	
4914	Ki-Moon Kim		4967	Susan Rimmelzwaan		5020	Marry Ann O'Brien		5073	Terry Wagg & Pam Renton	
4915	Lilla Fodor	3rd Time	4968	Kaila Lawton		5021	Bob Gierling		5074	Donna McLean	
4916	Lilla Fodor	4th Time	4969	Dennis Charette		5022	Tricia Glassco		5075	Lucy Zeppieri	
4917	Catherine Lee		4970	Gloria Yeung		5023	Jeffrey Winget		5076	Suzanne Morrison	
4918	Margaret Parkin		4971	Ian Mills		5024	Linda Winget		5077	Anita Bergsma	2nd Time
4919	Margaret Corner	23rd Time	4972	Deborah Mills		5025	Svetlana Gujic		5078	Nancy Morena-De Nino	
4920	Charlie Fahlenbock		4973	Jamie Cappelli		5026	Hilary Armstrong		5079	Karina Lahnakoski	
4921	Andrew Turnbull		4974	Lisa Martel		5027	Barbara Anne Ottewell		5080	Sioe Ing Radan	
4922	Cheryl Mitchell	10th Time	4975	Julie Tyndall	5th Time	5028	Richard Ottewell		5081	Waltraud Uebelhoer	
4923	Jennifer Duffy		4976	Julie Tyndall	6th Time	5029	Hie Yong Lee		5082	Suzanne Gervais	
4924	George Chifor		4977	Smadar Junkin	26th Time	5030	Kymm Patterson		5083	Daryl Keays	3rd Time
4925	Elizabeth Mitchell		4978	Judy Brydges		5031	Sharon Bradley		5084	Michael Colby	
4926	Robert Fry	3rd Time	4979	Margaret Corner	25th Time	5032	Ashley Green		5085	Christopher Greenfield	
4927	D Neil McFadgen	10th Time	4980	Kristina Nethercott		5033	Kim Hillis		5086	Moira Oosterhuis	
4928	D Neil McFadgen	11th Time	4981	Adam Bertoldi		5034	Aldis van Warmerdam		5087	Jacquie Van Dyke	15th Time
4929	Lera Ryan	4th Time	4982	Shyla Tibando		5035	Nancy Lake		5088	Frank Colavecchio	
4930	Jason Trout		4983	Daniel Chojnacki		5036	Katie Lake		5089	Jan Neutel	
4931	John Pan		4984	Serge Demers		5037	Jeremy Marvan		5090	Darlene Ormsby	
4932	Rhonda Lawson		4985	Jodi Danzinger		5038	Alex Kraas		5091	Lee Ann Neelands	
4933	Tally McCallum		4986	Kyra Paterson		5039	Erin Szumsky		5092	Taniya Mann	
4934	Mary-Ellen Cole	7th Time	4987	Lily Li		5040	Mary-Ellen Cole	8th Time	5093	Joslyn Biggins	
4935	Michele Kitson	3rd Time	4988	Wendy Peyer		5041	Michele Kitson	4th Time	5094	Tricia Christie	
4936	Sharon Pynn		4989	Gale Senechal		5042	Catherine Clarke		5095	Robert McArthur	
4937	Matthew Burtney		4990	Karen Keenan-Chyc		5043	Margaret O'Dell	19th Time	5096	Cynthia Haxell	
4938	Rachel Charlong		4991	Loraine Marrett Walter		5044	Robert McCallum		5097	Robert Hamer	
4939	Margaret O'Dell	18th Time	4992	Margaret Corner	26th Time	5045	Robert McCallum	2nd Time	5098	Sabine Huesing	
4940	Thaddeus Homewood		4993	Patricia Morrison		5046	Lynda McCallum		5099	Michael Mondloch	
4941	Marnie Folsetter		4994	Emily Morrison		5047	Lynda McCallum	2nd Time	5100	Cathy Mondloch	
4942	Marie-Louise Thomas	2nd Time	4995	Monica Pasquali		5048	Wen Yan		5101	Sandra Green	15th Time
4943	Margaret Corner	24th Time	4996	Jennifer Keenan		5049	Michael Stein		5102	Mike DVM Ritter & Jenny Ritter	
4944	John & Darlene Charette		4997	Martin Keenan		5050	Karen Holt		5103	Mary Pitura	2nd Time
4945	Fiona Nisbet	11th Time	4998	Angela (Liquan) Cen		5051	Jacqueline Thorpe		5104	Irene & Art Dreyer	2nd Time
4946	Takashi Seki		4999	Jagbir Brar		5052	Sunil Khare		5105	Cherian Thomas	
4947	Christopher Lailey	11th Time	5000	David Franklin	3rd Time	5053	Isabel Hilgendag		5106	Nirmala Thomas	
4948	Christopher Lailey	12th Time	5001	Myrna Bumstead		5054	Bruce Hogg	2nd Time	5107	Keith Hutchinson	
4949	Karen & Cameron Serles		5002	Simone Sterio-Risk		5055	Amanda Campbell		5108	Marilyn Radbourne	2nd Time
4950	Lauren Doig	3rd Time	5003	Darrin Risk		5056	Cathy Roberts		5109	Carol Fraser	
4951	Rob Tick		5004	Anne Ruhl Murray		5057	Stephane Chenier		5110	Julie Rice	
4952	Mohammad Shafiq		5005	Jane Ruhl		5058	Sharon Stocking		5111	Karen Poste	
4953	Kathy Hamm		5006	James Lawson		5059	Don Young	18th Time	5112	Kathleen Manson	
4954	Ron Taylor		5007	Benoit Génier		5060	Don Young	19th Time	5113	Paula Sheppard	
4955	Rob Rogers		5008	Erica Porter		5061	Carl Chenier		5114	Maureen Chunick	
4956	Susana Baranowicz		5009	Josh Johnson		5062	Jane Woollard		5115	Steven White	12th Time
4957	Czeslaw Baranowicz		5010	Lola Porter		5063	Janine Gray		5116	Cathy Gallagher	
4958	Bailey Bingham		5011	Nancy Huber		5064	Laura Agro-De Rosa		5117	Jennifer Sinstead	
4959	Lanny Bingham		5012	Kimberly Robinson		5065	Peter De Rosa		5118	Mary-Ellen Cole	9th Time

E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES	E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES	E2E#	NAME	#OF TIMES
5119	Christine Steger		5140	Lucia Huisman	4th Time	5160	Patricia Turner	
5120	Madonna Munro		5141	Annie Bruggers	6th Time	5161	Janet Baine	
5121	Paul Hurrell		5142	Annie Bruggers	7th Time	5162	Derek Saunders	
5122	Bayley Hurrell		5143	Stewart Brown		5163	Shawn O'Connor	
5123	Lisa Graham		5144	Suzanne Thibault		5164	Angela Troyer	
5124	Frances Waite		5145	Teresa Grisch		5165	Gurvir Singh Grewal	
5125	Brenda Davis		5146	Linda Vanmaar		5166	Dave Salt	3rd Time
5126	Kathy Uher		5147	Brenda Lorenz		5167	Jessica Davis	
5127	Wendy Thompson		5148	Barbara Jordan		5168	Seta Moore-Bridge	
5128	Hellen Beasley		5149	Catherine Jordan		5169	Scott Bridge	
5129	Aaron Robinson		5150	Karin Toews		5170	Nancy Stadler-Salt	
5130	Chandra Vanderboom		5151	Joelle Aarlaht		5171	Blake Martin	
5131	Laura Meerstra		5152	Tina Valkenburg		5172	Carmelina Martin	
5132	Jacques Boilard	3rd Time	5153	Mike Hruden		5173	Paula Ideias	
5133	Asia Shin	3rd Time	5154	Alean Wingenroth-Jackman		5174	Colleen Zouhar	
5134	Randy Vanderlaan				2nd Time			
5135	Sara Cressman & David Martin		5155	Amanda Cudmore				
5136	Andrew Bryce		5156	Pamela Forsyth				
5137	Olindo Rizzolo		5157	Susan Casson				
5138	Murray Hamblin		5158	Susannah Baker				
5139	Kimbra Dixon	2nd Time	5159	Stefan Baker				

End-to-Ends reach 5000!

In 2025 the Bruce Trail Conservancy celebrated the 5,000th End-to-End recognized since the Trail officially opened in 1967. Congratulations to number 5,000 David Franklin and to all who have completed the entire Bruce Trail from Queenston to Tobermory.

So Many Kilometres

Together our end-to-enders have walked the equivalent of 112 times around the earth... and counting!



Volunteer Awards: Call for Nominations

Do you know an outstanding volunteer? Someone who has gone above and beyond in support of the Bruce Trail and the work of the Bruce Trail Conservancy? Help us recognize their remarkable contribution by nominating them for one of our annual volunteer awards.

These awards have been established to honour those who have made an exceptional contribution to the Bruce Trail Conservancy and to formally recognize the time, skills, enthusiasm and passion they have shared in support of our mission.

Honorary Membership

For lasting, significant volunteer contributions to the organization at both the Bruce Trail Club and Bruce Trail Conservancy levels. The nominee must have demonstrated leadership, innovation, and commitment and have accomplished significant achievements in furthering the Bruce Trail Conservancy mission. The recipient is awarded a complimentary lifetime membership.

Ross McLean Volunteer of the Year Award

For extraordinary contributions to the Bruce Trail Conservancy within the last year. The award is not intended to recognize a lifetime of contributions as that would preclude volunteers who have been with us for a short time. Any form of volunteering for the Bruce Trail Conservancy may be considered for this award.

Jack Morgan Award

For significant contribution to the land securement efforts of the Bruce Trail Conservancy in the past year by an individual or group. This award showcases the recipient's hard work and dedication to the Bruce Trail Conservancy's mission and land securement goals. Award recipients may be involved in any aspect of the land securement process, from nurturing positive relationships to advancing complex securement endeavors with creative thinking or action.

Leaders in Hiking Award

For exceptional leadership within the Bruce Trail Conservancy hiking program demonstrated by an outstanding Hike Leader, Hike Director or other Bruce Trail Conservancy volunteer. This may be presented to more than one individual per year.

Calypso Orchid Environmental Award

For significant contribution to the restoration, preservation or environmental education along the Bruce Trail and/or Niagara Escarpment. Awarded to an individual, volunteer group, institution or company. The recipient does not need to be a member or volunteer of the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Random Acts of Kindness

For demonstrating values essential to the Bruce Trail experience: showing kindness, demonstrating consideration, and sharing compassion for others. This may be presented to more than one individual per year.

Susan Oleskevich Award

For exceptional long-term commitment to the construction and maintenance of the Bruce Trail. The recipient must: be an outstanding trail worker; have been actively involved in the physical work of trail maintenance and development, and; have long-standing commitment to trail work.

For more information on any of these awards please contact BTC Volunteer Coordinator Rhiannon Carruthers at rhiannon.carruthers@bruce-trail.org

Nominate a volunteer or group today at bruce-trail.org/volunteer-recognition

Deadline for nominations is June 30, 2026



Trail Changes & Notices

DECEMBER 2025 – FEBRUARY 2026, POST EDITION 31

FOR THE LATEST TRAIL CHANGE AND NOTICES, VISIT BRUCETRAIL.ORG/TRAIL_CHANGES

Trail Changes & Notices are online and in the Bruce Trail App

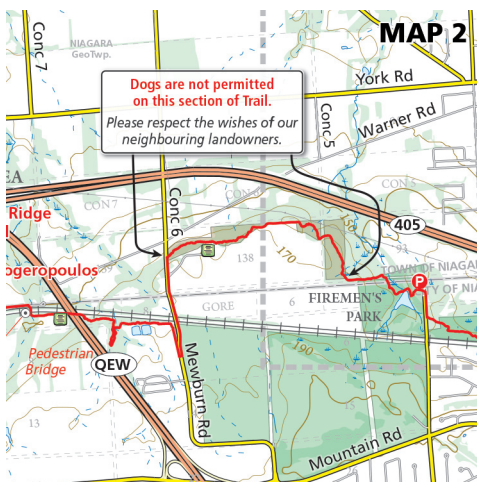
Visit brucetrail.org/trail_changes for the latest changes, searchable by Map Number, Club Section, and even by text in the description.

Download the Bruce Trail App to have the most up-to-date trail data on your mobile device.

NIAGARA

Map 2 – Dogs not permitted

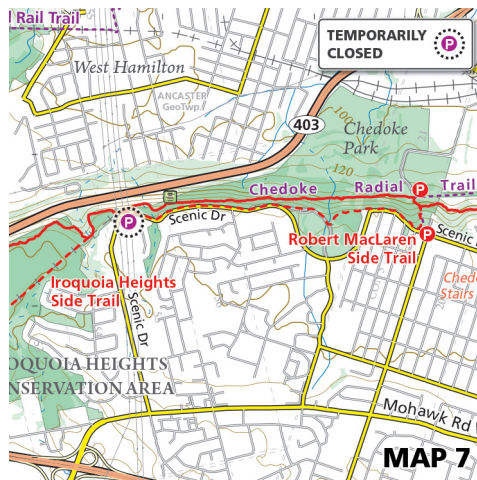
Dogs are not permitted on the Bruce Trail between Fireman's Park and Concession 6/Mewburn Rd in Niagara, at the request of neighbouring landowners. See more guidelines for hiking with your dog at brucetrail.org/dogs-on-the-trail.



IROQUOIA

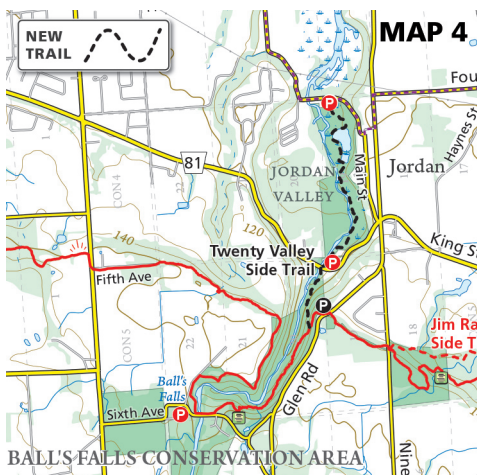
Map 7 – Parking at Scenic Drive, Temporary Closure

The municipal parking lot at 1180 Scenic Drive in Hamilton is temporarily closed due to construction at the Scenic Reservoir. The construction is expected to be completed in May 2026. •



Map 4 - Twenty Valley Side Trail

The former Jordan Hollow Side Trail has been extended and renamed Twenty Valley Side Trail. This 1.9 km trail connects the main Bruce Trail with the newly created Sho'arishon Park Neutral Nation Legacy Site on King Street in Lincoln, and continues along Twenty Mile Creek to Twenty First Street.



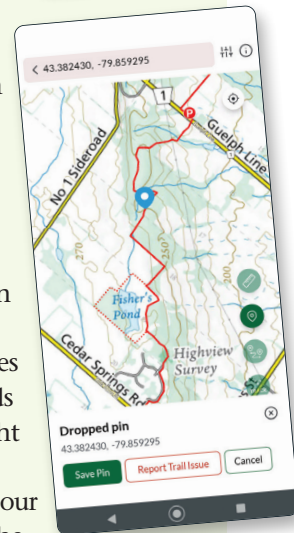
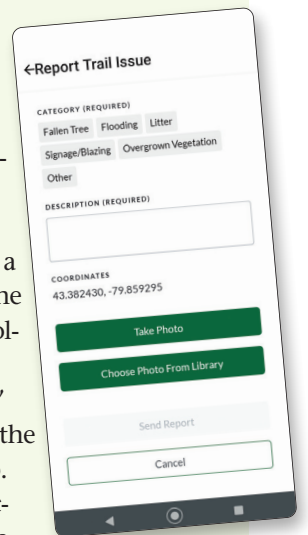
REPORT A TRAIL ISSUE

You can help the Bruce Trail Conservancy maintain over 1,300 km of trail by using the "Report Trail Issue" feature in the Bruce Trail App.

Thousands of volunteers care for the Bruce Trail and its many side trails: painting blazes, maintaining a clear treadway, building boardwalks and more. Though volunteers regularly monitor and care for the trail, conditions can change quickly and it can help to have issues reported by hikers. If you notice something that needs attention on the trail, you can send a report directly to the appropriate trail volunteers using the "Report Trail Issue" function found in the Pin tool of the app. The reporting function lets you send a location (with GPS coordinates), as description and even a photo to the trail volunteers in the Bruce Trail Club responsible for that area. You don't need to know what section you are in or who to contact. The app takes care of that and sends you report to the right Club.

With these reports our trail crew will have the details they need and you will have helped keep the trail safe and navigable for future hikers.

For more information visit brucetrail.org/bruce-trail-app or visit the "News" section of the Bruce Trail App



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The Bruce Trail Conservancy extends deepest gratitude to all our donors whose generous support we rely on to protect, steward and connect people to the Niagara Escarpment.

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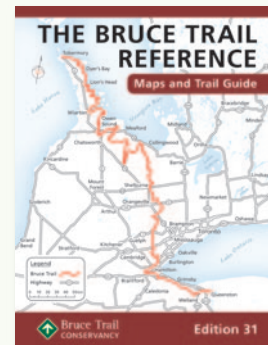


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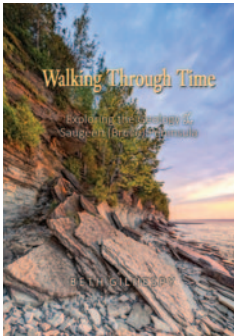


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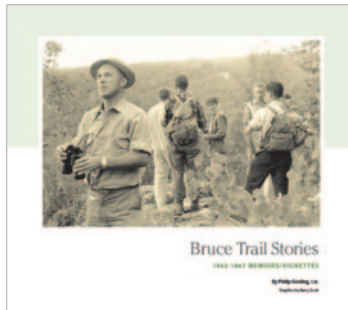
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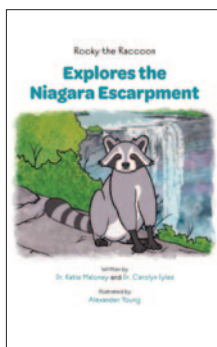
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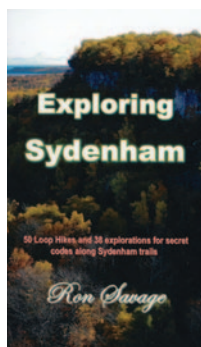
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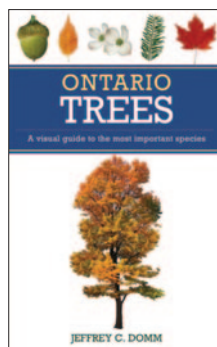
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Photo: Esme Batten



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