

ORMLT Future

Protecting and restoring the natural environment of the Oak Ridges Moraine for future generations

Vol. 1 No. 4

Secord property has been secured

Join us to celebrate on June 20th

Thanks to successful fund raising efforts, and generous supporters such as the City of Toronto, Province of Ontario, the Regional Municipality of Durham, the Fitzhenry Family Foundation and Sauriol and Walk participants, the ORMLT now holds a conservation easement on the Secord property. The 48 acres, located just south of the hamlet of Goodwood, is a strategic link between two large blocks of existing conservation land owned by the Toronto Region Conservation Authority. It is characterised by mature forest and wetland, and contains a portion of the Goodwood/Glasgow wetland complex.

"We are very pleased to have completed this transaction," said Don Prince, chief land securement officer for



the ORMLT, "it demonstrates what can be achieved when conservation organisations work together." The TRCA now owns the property, while the ORMLT holds the easement.

"We've seen increasing develop-

ment pressure in the area in recent years, including golf courses, estate residential development and aggregate interests," said Prince, "our conservation easement means that the land will be protected forever."



"We are planning to celebrate this event by holding a special donor recognition event on the property on Thursday, June 20th" says Tom Atkins, president of the ORMLT, "and we extend an invitation to all ORMLT members and friends to join us there." (see map below)

More on land securement on page 2.

Plan to attend our AGM!

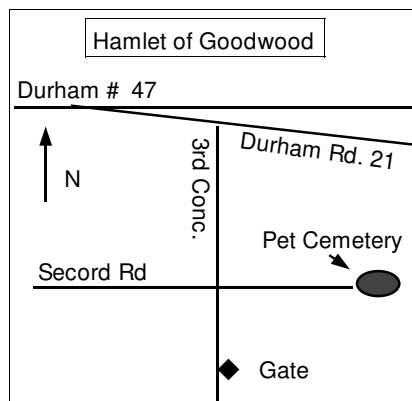
AGM and Secord celebration

The ORMLT will be holding its Annual General Meeting following the Secord ceremony on Thursday, June 20th at 3:00 p.m.

The recognition ceremony will be at the gate to the property on the 3rd concession (0.6 km south of Secord Road). The AGM will be next to the pet cemetery on TRCA-owned land at the cul de sac on the east end of Secord Road.

Schedule:

- Celebration & sign unveiling: 3:00 pm
- Guided hike on the property: 3:30
- Picnic: 4:30
- AGM: 5:15



We will be electing our board of directors for the coming year and ask you, our members, to join us. Refer to

the map (left) and call the ORMLT office (905) 841-3678 for further information.

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Land update - a busy winter

Wilder Easement Finalised

The ORMLT now holds a conservation easement on 711 acres of land in the City of Pickering. The property, which is actually seven parcels of land, is located at the headwaters of Duffins Creek between two provincially significant wetlands: Claremont and Glen Major.

King Township

Beth Harper's King Township property has been certified as a gift of ecologically sensitive land by Environment Canada. This is a key step in the process - Ms Harper plans to donate the initial 10 acres to the ORMLT right away, with the remaining eight acres to come to the trust as a bequeathment.

Uxbridge Township

Conservation easements on two other properties in Uxbridge Township are also nearing completion. The first is 74 acres of

well forested land—the final documentation for the ecological gift tax certification has been completed. The property, much of which is former agricultural land, is now reforested, and the owners, John and Patricia McCutcheon, approached the ORMLT for assistance in conserving the property in perpetuity.

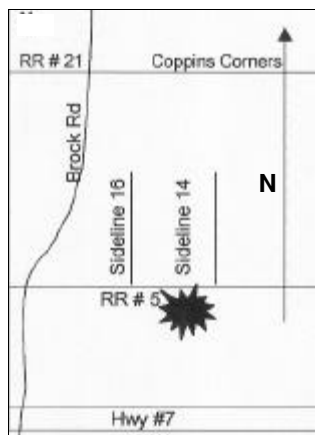
Eco tax certification has also been completed for the second property, belonging to Robert and Ann Shepherd. The ORMLT will hold the conservation easement on the 10 acre Uxbridge area property.

Don Prince, chief land securement officer for the ORMLT, notes that the Land Committee is working on further properties totaling more than 1,000 acres across the moraine. You can contact Don at (905) 677-6090, or email him at djprince1@ogers.com for information on how the ORMLT can assist you with conservation options on your land.

Wilder recognition event

Make plans to join us on Thursday, May 9th at 11 a.m. at 2045 Regional Road #5 (east of Brock Road), in Claremont for the sign unveiling to mark the donation of the conservation easement on 711 acres at the Wilder property.

"This dedication ceremony marks the largest single land donation under the Eco Gift Program on the Oak Ridges Moraine to date", says Tom Atkins, president of the ORMLT, "and we invite everyone interested in preserving the moraine to help us celebrate."



Call for volunteers

We need your skills!

The ORMLT is working on a far-reaching landowner contact program that will take place in communities across the moraine.

We've partnered with the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy to create a volunteer's guide to creating nature reserves, and now we are seeking your help on our outreach efforts. If you'd like to find out how you can help, contact the ORMLT office at (905) 841-3678.

We're also looking for volunteers to help with organising this year's Sauriol dinner. Please call Don Prince at (905) 677-6090.

MOU pending with York Region

The ORMLT's Board of Directors has approved in principle a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Regional Municipality of York at its April Board meeting.

Under the partnership agreement, the ORMLT will work with the Region to help

secure private land located in environmentally sensitive areas. The ORMLT and York Region will seek donations of land or conservation easements on moraine properties that are deemed environmentally sensitive or ecologically significant.

As part of the MOU, the Region has

agreed to pay a portion of the land securement costs. "This is great news for the ORMLT as these costs can be significant," said Tom Atkins, ORMLT president, "we are very pleased by this agreement and hope that similar MOUs can be signed with the other regional municipalities and counties on the Moraine."

Birder supports ORMLT

Spring has finally arrived, and for ORMLT supporter Marcel Gahbauer, one of the traditions of the season is participating in the Baillie Birdathon - an annual event established in 1976 as a fundraiser for organizations supporting the research and conservation of wild birds and their habitat. "This year I've chosen to designate the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust as the beneficiary of my Baillie Birdathon," says Gahbauer, as he prepares for a favourite rite of spring.

The Baillie Birdathon is a challenge for birders to see how many species can be found and identified in a 24-hour period in May - and how much money can be raised for conservation in

the process. A portion of the funds raised by each participant is directed to Bird Studies Canada, which provides financial support to migration monitoring stations, endangered species research, and other related projects across the country. The remainder is dedicated to an organisation of the participant's choice - in this case, the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust.

Pledges of any amount would be greatly appreciated - Marcel's track record is between 132-135 species, and he will be focusing on the Oak Ridges Moraine through mid-May. You can contact Marcel at 613 248-1103, or at marcel.gahbauer@utoronto.ca. For more information on the Baillie Birdathon, call Bird Studies Canada at 1-888-448-BIRD.

2nd annual walk for the moraine

This year's Walk for the Moraine will be on Sunday, September 29th. Seneca College, King Campus has once again kindly agreed to let us use their facilities and trails.

"Our fundraising goal this year is \$30,000," said Jennifer Robertson, co-chair of the organizing committee along with Gloria Marsh, "we have been seeking corporate sponsorships, and of course look forward to the ever-important pledges that our walk participants will bring in. We are once again partnering with the Oak Ridges Trail Association (ORTA), whose members will be guiding the hikes on the Seneca trails."

"We'd love to see hikers and walkers from all across the moraine this year," notes Marsh, "and we are also extending an invitation to everyone in Toronto who is interested in protecting the moraine."

The walk will be a great opportunity to learn about the importance of the moraine and meet others who can share their expertise. This year there will be special displays highlighting the diverse flora and fauna of the moraine.

**WALK FOR THE
MORaine**

Moraine video - students work with ORMLT on outreach project

By Mary Louise Colantonio

The ORMLT has embarked on a video project in partnership with Woodbridge College, a school belonging to the York Region Board of Education. This outreach and communications initiative was sparked by a request to educate the students about the moraine.

Students from two OAC economic geography classes as well as the film class have interviewed an organic farmer who farms on the moraine, a land donor (Ken Purvis), a biologist (Natalie Helferty), a TRCA representative (Mike Fenning) with the ORMLT's chief land securement officer, Don Prince, as a land securement partner, an ORMLT

Board member (Tom Atkins), a photographer and pictorial story teller (Lou Wise), as well as a government representative (Mayor Bell, Richmond Hill).

There were two shoots on the moraine, as well as a Town Hall Meeting at Lake Wilcox in Richmond Hill.

The students will be composing origi-



Joining Tom Atkins, ORMLT president (right) are Woodbridge College teachers Enrico Lappano (music and technical communications, and Varsha Redkar (Geography).

nal music. The project is cross-curricular (geography, music, film, and economics) and ground breaking in that it is viewed as a new educational approach involving the community and outside groups.

Tom Atkins and Mary Louise Colantonio visited the participating classes to present the issues and background material to the students and will be reporting to ORMLT representatives to monitor the video's progress and content, as it must reflect the vision of the Trust.

The students also hope to participate in a hike led by Natalie Helferty at the Jefferson Forest.

The ORMLT's Board has endorsed funding support for travel and film costs and will be using the video for educational purposes.

Interested in long distance savings?

Environment Telecom will help you save money while you support the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, the Ontario Environment Network and the Niagara Escarpment.

With every long distance call you make, 20% of Environment Telecom's dollars go to these organisations. Environment Telecom has been designed to support conservation by local groups, making it much easier for members of the community to participate while they save money on long distance services. For more information, contact Bob Barnett at (416) 960-8121, or 1 877 NATASHA.

Our booth at Canada Blooms...

Many thanks to everyone who visited our booth at Canada Blooms in March—we are following up with everyone who expressed an interest in donating their properties or easements.

And congratulations to Sandra Boudreau of Oak Ridges who won the water colour painted by local artist Valerie Kent.



ORMLT Life Members

Donors and corporate supporters who give \$500 or more become life members of the ORMLT. Welcome and thank you for your generous support: the Fitzhenry Family Foundation, Aurora Home Hardware, Lipani Landscape, Peter You of Kodak Image Check in Aurora & IBM.

Remember, a conservation easement is forever...or as someone put it recently: "perpetuity is a very long time..."

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust is a non-profit registered charity dedicated to protecting and restoring the natural environment. *ORMLT Future* is the official newsletter of the Land Trust and is published quarterly. If you would like information on membership, donation opportunities or would like to volunteer, call: (905) 841-3678, fax: 841-3271 or visit our website at: www.oakridgesmoraine.org. Our mailing address is: 15150 Yonge St. Ste 2A, Aurora, ON, L4G 1M2, or you can email us at: landtrust@bellnet.

Walk and Weed—June 15th

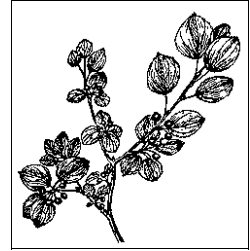
Join the “Buckthorn Brigade” on Saturday, June 15th and help us launch the stewardship program at our first property, donated last year by Ken Purvis.

Natalie Helferty is spearheading efforts to clear the land of invasive species, the most prominent of which is buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*). This will be a combined outing with the Oak Ridges Trail Association and the Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists.

“We’re putting out the call to everyone who is willing to take a few hours to help us begin the task of bringing the land back to its natural state,” says Helferty, who promises an educational and entertaining time, “there will be other biologists joining us and so bring your questions and curiosity” She also recommends a good pair of work gloves and

long pants.

The day gets under way at 9:30 on Saturday morning. The property is located at 766 Chalk Lake Road in the Township of Uxbridge (Map 6 Scugog West ORTA map) west of Lake Ridge Road. Meet at the Richmond Hill GO Train station on Major Mackenzie Drive east of Yonge Street at 9 a.m. to car-pool. There is limited parking on site or at Chalk Lake Springs on the north-west corner of Lake Ridge Road and Chalk Lake Road. Car-pool parking will be at the springs - call Natalie Helferty (905) 780-8403 for more information.



Buckthorn, aka common or European buckthorn, an invasive that displaces native species

The Red Oak—the oak of the Oak Ridges Moraine

By Peter Attfield

The Oak Ridges Moraine is named for its red oak trees. They can thrive on the well-drained sandy or gravelly ridges of the Moraine. Such soils and sunny locations also favour white pine trees, and explain our Moraine’s other name of *The Great Pine Ridge*.

When walking through the woods, the first sign of red oaks you’ll probably notice is their dead leaves on the ground. Red oaks grow fairly tall (typically 18 to 25 metres, or 60 to 80 feet). Their growing leaves may be out of sight in the forest canopy. In spring, oak leaves unfold later than other species, and appear reddish at first.

During the Moraine’s trillium season from late April to late May, look for white trilliums whose petals are streaked with green, or completely green. Then look for an oak nearby. The trillium’s unusual colouring is caused by micro-organisms often associated with oaks.

Throughout summer the leaves are shiny green. In fall they turn a rusty brown, and linger on the tree much later than other species. This makes it easy to find oak trees in the last week of October and first week of November. The leaves finally fall on top of other trees’ leaves. They are slow to decompose, and keep their shape for a long time. If you’re skiing on the Moraine in winter and find leaves stuck to your ski wax, chances are good that they’re oaks!

Acorns are quite rich in fat and protein. Black bears, deer, raccoons, squirrels,



ruffed grouse, wild turkeys, wood ducks, blue jays and nuthatches all eat them. They are also high in tannin, which makes them less palatable than white oak acorns. Native peoples repeatedly boiled the acorns to dissolve the tannin.

Compared with white oak, red oaks are faster growing and not so long-lived. They can reach 300 years of age. The wood is valued for furniture, flooring, interior trim, veneer, and firewood.

Of all the trees, the oak has been

most venerated by ancient cultures. To the Greeks, Romans, Norse and Celts, it was the thunder tree, with direct connections to the gods. An oak tree near the house was said to serve as a lightning rod. The word “Druid” comes from “dru”, meaning oak.

In a German fable, a man promises to pay the devil after he harvests his first crop - then proceeds to plant acorns. Another vows to pay his debt to the devil when the last leaf falls. But it is said that the last leaf never falls from an oak tree.

You might want to test some folk remedies. If you have a toothache, drive a nail into an oak. If you suffer from gout, take some hairs from your leg and nail clippings, place them in a hole in an oak tree, and close it with cow dung; wait three months. Or on the day of the summer solstice, rub a piece of oak in your left palm in silence. This was claimed to prevent illness throughout the year.

And if you’re trying to choose a romantic partner, float two acorns in a cup of water. If they come together, it means you’ll share true love.

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