



ORMLT Volunteer Assignment Description

Nature Reserve Guardian	
	About the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust
	<p>The ORMLT partners with the community to protect and steward ecologically significant properties on and near the Oak Ridges Moraine through donations, purchases and conservation easements with local landowners. The Moraine is one of the most significant landforms in southern Ontario and was formed 12,000 years ago by retreating glaciers. These land tracts clean our water and air, support wildlife habitat and passage, protect significant natural features and functions and secure connections between other protected areas, and they do so in perpetuity. We also play a role in climate change resiliency by protecting ecosystem services such as flood control through maintaining wetlands.</p> <p><u>Our three core areas of focus include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting land into perpetuity • Stewardship and monitoring • Education and Outreach <p><u>Our Mission</u></p> <p>The Land Trust works to ensure a healthy ecosystem and natural environment that thrives forever, on and near the Oak Ridges Moraine.</p>
	Position Summary and Objectives
	<p>Working as a team, Nature Reserve Guardians play an important role in monitoring properties through site visits, completing observation forms and trail maintenance. Depending on the site, volunteers are also involved with ongoing management of the ecosystems, managing a pollinator garden, invasive species monitoring and removal, habitat/species monitoring and clean up.</p> <p>There are also opportunities to take on leadership roles, both with coordinating volunteer activity and training at our nature reserves, or with public education and guided tours.</p>
	Supervisor/Contact, Accountability
	<p>ORMLT volunteers are supported by program staff (who have expertise in conservation and ecomanagement) and the Coordinator of the Volunteers and Community Partnerships. Ongoing consultation and communications ensure volunteers are comfortable in their roles and that questions or support is provided as needed.</p>
	Time Commitment
	<p>A commitment of at least 6 visits (2-3 hours per visit), annually is required. Activities are mainly from April through late October, with some occasional monitoring during the winter months. Key stewardship is focused more heavily on the spring and fall months, however, days/times are flexible and are coordinated with the ORMLT staff and other stewardship volunteers.</p>



	Location
	<p>Nature Reserve Guardians will be assigned a role at one of the following nature reserves depending on their interests and the location that would be convenient. Currently, the sites in which we need more comprehensive, ongoing support are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Starcliff (King City)• Beeton Heritage Forest (Beeton/New Tecumthes)• MapleCross (King City) <p>Monitoring at our other nature reserves is completed a few times per year and assigned based on interest, availability and location. These sites are located across the Moraine.</p>
	Responsibilities & Duties
	<p>As a Nature Reserve Guardian, you will have the opportunity to participate in a range of tasks (depending on the specific site), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Property monitoring including completing a property record form and reporting back to the ORMLT team.○ Documenting specific property features and habitat with photographs.○ Trail maintenance including clearing trails of debris, cutting back overhanging vegetation, and repairing bridges.○ Invasive species removal (including Garlic Mustard pulls, Buckthorn busts, and others).○ Maintaining bridges (for those with appropriate skills).○ Data collection for habitat or species monitoring projects.○ Lead tours to introduce the general public to the nature reserve and biodiversity of the property (for volunteers interested in education).
	Qualifications & Requirements
	<p>The following qualifications/comfort level are helpful, depending on the specific stewardship activities you are involved with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Comfortable working outside under various weather conditions, in a variety of terrain.○ Able to perform physical work involving bending or stooping, walking 1-4 km over uneven ground, lifting upwards of 10lbs and using various hand tools.○ Basic knowledge of, or interest in, local ecology and species identification.○ Any technical skills/qualifications such as species ID, native plant identification and seed collection, trail maintenance, building, chainsaw certification, First Aid certification etc. would be an asset.○ Volunteers can choose the site that would be of interest and convenient to them, however they will need to have (or arrange) their own transportation to and from the property.
	Training/Safety Management Requirements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Attend a general orientation to the organization.○ Attend role specific training and safety guidelines as required (on-site and virtual).



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review role specific training and risk management guidelines and resources. ○ Attend refresher trainings as offered by the ORMLT to maintain up-to-date information on any role specific information and safety guidelines.
	Benefits
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work as part of a dedicated team supporting the ORMLT mission and our commitment to conservation, stewardship and education. ○ Gain skills and experience relating to conservation and land management. ○ Meet and learn from staff and consultants with expertise in eco management and conservation. ○ Expand your network – meet other volunteers interested in protecting land and conservation across the Moraine.

Appendix Documents	
	Nature Reserve - Site Specific Information
	<p><u>Beeton Heritage Forest Nature Reserve</u></p> <p>This nature reserve is a 108 acres property located in the Town of New Tecumseth with public access, located approximately 15 minutes from Schomberg and 30 minutes from Newmarket. It is home to diverse ecosystems of wetlands, forests (including old-growth forest), and meadows which clean our air and protect our water, including Beeton Creek.</p>
	<p><u>Starcliff Nature Reserve</u></p> <p>The Star-Cliff Nature Reserve is located in King township (at the ORMLT offices). It is an 18-acre property encompassing mature forest, century-old deciduous trees, and a kettle lake. In 2016, the property was designated as a Monarch Way Station, recognizing the sensitive habitat of milkweed and grasslands that this property provides for the butterfly.</p> <p>Additional activities at this site include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Looking after a pollinator garden (tending to native plants, weeding, mulching, invasive species removal and general garden maintenance) ○ Mowing and looking after the grounds around the main office ○ Maintaining and improving the trail to the kettle lake (spring and fall) ○ For volunteers interested in taking on additional responsibilities or leadership roles, there is an opportunity to assist with and/or lead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - expand/refine the pollinator gardens, garden beds using native plants as educational demonstration gardens for visitors. - build and install 6 nesting box for bird habitat. - improving the trail to the kettle lake, including adding steps in the steep areas, - lead occasional public on-site tours of the gardens and grounds
	<p><u>MapleCross King Nature Reserve</u></p> <p>MapleCross King Nature Reserve is an 80 acre property of diverse land located in the Township of King and home to Barn Swallows, Snapping Turtles and other Species at Risk. Present habitats include forest swamp, coniferous plantations, a constructed marsh wetland and cultural meadow. The swamp, being approximately 27 acres, is a Provincially Significant Wetland. Currently the former front horse paddocks are being restored for grassland habitat.</p>



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There is a large stable area which is used as a gathering place for education and event activities.

Volunteer support on this site is more event focused (around planting or invasive species removal), however some monitoring and planting activities may be required throughout the year.

Other ORMLT Properties - General Monitoring Guidelines

The Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust (ORMLT) protects more than 65 properties, totaling 5,000 acres of precious habitat on and near the Oak Ridges Moraine, including 12 nature reserves which are owned by the Land Trust. Each unique nature reserve requires different stewardship activities to best protect and restore these critical habitats across the Moraine.

General Property Steward Activities

ORMLT Property Stewards act as the “eyes and ears” for a property and report any concerns to the ORMLT staff. This involves completing a detailed monitoring form for each visit. Actions to complete a monitoring visit include:

- Noting any trespassing, vandalism, dumping, cut trees, invasive plants etc.
- Noting any new trails, cut trees, invasive plants, etc.
- Identifying the flora and fauna of the nature reserve.
- Removing small pieces of litter or garbage (no heavy or hazardous material removal).
- Additional activities may include invasive species removal, trail maintenance and habitat enhancement which are coordinated with the ORMLT prior to beginning any projects.

Guidelines and Restriction. Volunteer Should Not

- Access a property without notifying ORMLT, a minimum of 24 hours prior to the visit.
- Perform maintenance using hand or power tools without written consent from the ORMLT.
- Construct new trails or bridges without approval from the ORMLT.
- Enter confrontational situations with others that are observed harming the property and/or performing illegal activities.
- Enter into any situation that creates unnecessary risk to themselves or the property and its features within.
- Introduce new plantings, habitat structures, signs, barriers etc., unless approved in writing by the ORMLT.

Monitoring a Property

Volunteers will be assigned at least one partner, and a nature reserve, based on their location and availability. Visits are conducted at least three time a year for an approximate 2-3 hours visit. They occur once between April and May, once between July and August and once Sept to November. Spending time throughout the year on a property helps volunteers develop a relationship with the land that is vitally important to learning about the property to assess opportunities, and threats that may exist. Observations and insights provide important feedback for ORMLT conservation staff as they develop future property management plans.