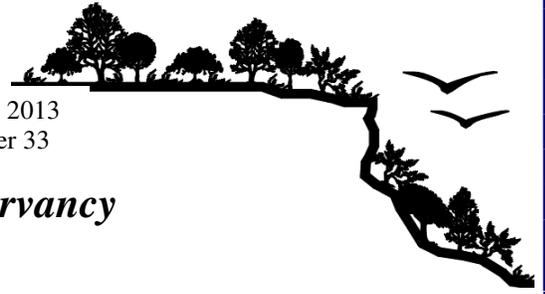


Precipice

Spring 2013
Number 33



*Newsletter of the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy
Protecting the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve*



AGM June 16

Now **37** sq.
km protected
• **9160** acres
• **16** km Huron
shoreline
• **120** Reserves

Another big chunk of **Manitoulin's Huron Shore** will be protected on June 20th. After our Christmas mail-out we received enough donations to purchase the property. This new 106-acre addition to our reserve system adds to the 191 acres we protected in 2005 and 2009. We still have a mortgage on the 2009 property for \$20,000 and we'll now put a mortgage for \$50,000 on the 2013 parcel. That means we still need \$10,000 a year to finish the payments. A \$100 donation to this great property protects 831 square metres of land (or about 1/4 acre) and creates \$700 of ecological benefits every year. With important natural features like wetland, alvar and Pitcher's Thistle, this is a fantastic opportunity we could not pass up. If you haven't contributed, I hope you will get a certificate naming you or a friend or relative as a supporter of this project.

New Reserves:

| | | |
|--|------------------|---------------|
| Springer St. Vincent..... | 99 acres | Page 6 |
| Peabody | 85 acres | Page 6 |
| Huron Shore..... | 106 acres | Page 6 |
| AGM June 16 | | Page 2 |
| 4.06% S. Ontario conserved | | Page 4 |
| Found labels | | Page 4 |
| The Little Grape that Could | | Page 5 |

New Tax Savings for New Donors

The last federal budget included a new incentive for "first-time" donors (donor or spouse have not donated for 5 years). They've added 25% extra benefit for the first \$1,000 donated.

Right now a donor gets 40 to 46% worth of tax benefit on a donation. This new proposal raises that donation benefit to 65 to 71% as a way to encourage new supporters to help charities like ours create nature reserves.

This new program means it only costs a new donor about \$30 to conserve 831 square metres of natural land!

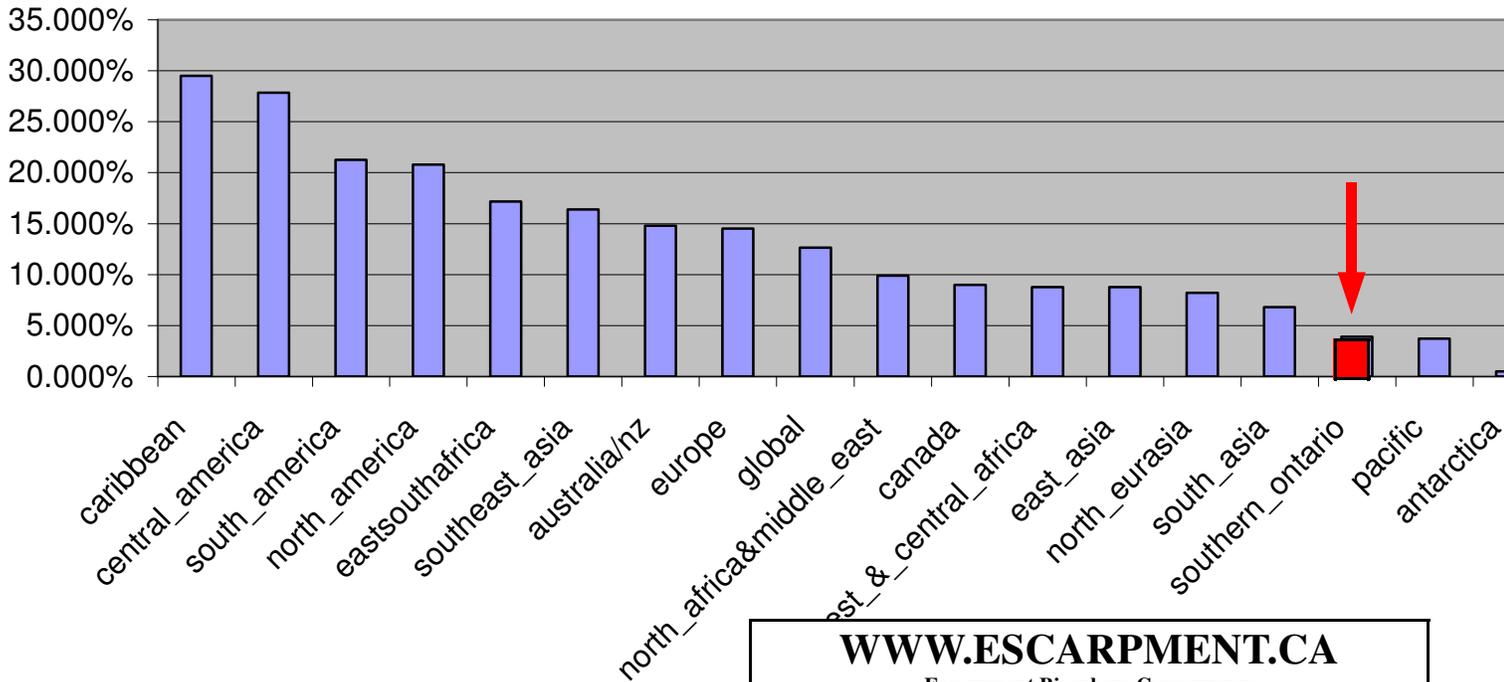
Found@Escarpment.ca
Refer to **E 003211**

USE THIS LABEL to identify your things. Just like hotels put

labels on pictures, furniture and TV sets, you can protect your valuables from theft. They don't come off! First they deter a thief, second they help police to return things. Costs nothing, but a donation of \$20 gets 20 labels. See page 4....

4.06% of Southern Ontario Conserved

With Nature Conservancy conserving about half of Cockburn Island, just west of Manitoulin and figures from Ducks Unlimited, the number has grown a bit. **This does not offset the fact that Ontario has promised 17% conserved land to protect our biodiversity, but has no funding to achieve this.**



Potential projects, perhaps you can help.

Manitoulin Shore We're acquiring the property in June. Every \$100 conserves 831 square metres and an invitation to visit.

Misery Bay We can acquire another 25 acres for \$14,900.

AGM and Bylaws

At our next AGM, on June 16, 1:00 pm at Whole Village 20725 Shaw's Creek Road in Caledon, we will discuss new government mandated bylaws for all charities and a bylaw requested by Environment Canada and drafted by Robert Wilson which the board has endorsed:

***Final Distribution:** In the event of the dissolution or winding up of the corporation, and after payment of the corporations debts and liabilities, all assets which were received as ecological gifts pursuant to the Ecological Gifts Program of Environment Canada shall be distributed to one or more eligible Ecological Gift Program recipients, and all remaining assets shall be distributed to one or more eligible donees, as defined in the Income Tax Act of Canada and amendments thereto, which have objects similar to those of the corporation.*

The board has recommended that members continue to be approved by the board. A change is recommended to allow officers who are not directors and voting by proxy. Other than that our existing bylaws will be reformulated to suit the government.

WWW.ESCARPMENT.CA

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Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy - Contact List

| For help with... | Please contact... | |
|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
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| Chair | Sarah Thomson | (416) 960-8121 |
| Secretary | Gwen Harris | (416) 762-7645 |
| Newsletter | Bob Barnett | (416) 960-8121 |
| Land Stewardship | Ivan Chan | (705) 444-2684 |
| Vice Chair | Malcolm Silver | (416)-225-5190 |
| Treasurer | Tim Watson | (416)-960-8121 |
| Freer Point | Roy Jeffery | (705)-368-3377 |
| Telecom | Anna Barnett | (416) 960-8121 |
| Grants, events | Leigh Paulseth | (416)-960-8121 |
| Fax | | (416) 960-9460 |

The Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy is a registered charity whose mission is: a) To establish, maintain and manage a system of nature reserves in the area of the Niagara Escarpment (including the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve), including the maintenance of physical features of scientific and/or ecological, cultural, historic or scenic interest; to maintain, enhance or restore areas of native species or natural habitat; and to encourage and support scientific research and educational services related thereto; and b) To educate the public about conservation and preservation of the landscape, ecology and wildlife of the Niagara Escarpment partly through providing low impact, ecologically sustainable recreational opportunities which complement and do not substantially conflict with this objective.

Fall Fairs

You will see us at quite a few fall fairs. The only one booked to date is Port Egin's Pumpkin Fest on October 5th and 6th in the Environment Tent. You may also see us at the Leaside Corn Roast in Toronto, September 15 or in Tara, Teeswater or Wiarton. We're just working out our fall schedule. See our web site or call for more information. We show maps at these events which show our progress to date and we bring material describing how rural landowners can often get a tax receipt for \$100,000 to protect their land.

Butterfly Festival Join us again for our **THIRD** annual Monarch Butterfly Festival at the National Park in Tobermory August 24th and 25th. Yes, we'll need volunteers, so give us a call or send an email if you can help. Bring the kids! Chasing butterflies is a lot of fun. Unfortunately, the Monarch population is plummeting but we hope our research helps to identify the causes. Research to date indicates that increased pesticide use in the US and Canada is the main problem whereas logging in their Mexican wintering ground is decreasing.

Green Living The Green Living show in Toronto was another big success. Our display was right beside the birds; lots of people stopped to see the Turkey Vulture, Kestrel, Great Horned Owl and Red-Tailed Hawk. In the process they saw our map and got to hear how they could get an income tax receipt for \$100,000 to ensure they never had a gravel pit on their property. The current issue of Niagara Escarpment Views has a big STOP (gravel pits) sign and we had a big poster of a STOP sign. Ted Cowan created a giant scale where people could vote with a looney for and against the proposed Toronto Casino. Over 100 people voted and the scale was always weighted down on the NO CASINO side. That started a lot of conversations.

Green Living gives us a chance to get our supporters down for a shift. We thank **Jim and Margaret Taylor, Carol Townsend, Tom Waechter, Kathy Szkaradzinski, and the usual suspects: Bryan Grimes, Frank Morley, Anna Barnett and Ted Cowan** for helping us meet and greet.

The show brought us some potential landowners, volunteers like foresters **Dan Holmes and Ian Dunn** and several highly qualified potential staffers. The wall-sized BIG MAP was a big success again this year showing protected areas in southern Ontario. With all of the lands protected by regulation like the Greenbelt and all the lands protected by conservation authorities and land trusts the map looked pretty green. EBC had its own flyers there showing that, collectively, we have only protected 4% of southern Ontario compared to the province's target of 17%.

Regulation is a good start. It generally precludes severing the land, but often allows houses, intensive forestry and the gravel pits that are regularly approved despite being prohibited by the Niagara Escarpment Plan. Recent figures from MNR show the Greenbelt protecting 4.6% of southern Ontario while a further 1.1% is protected as an area of natural and scientific interest (ANSI) and 2.5% as a significant wetland. In total 8.2% is protected by regulation.



her home in Scarborough. We will be missing her great work getting our message out on Facebook, applying for many successful grants and getting our management plans whipped into shape. **Thank you Leigh!**

Leigh Paulseth has taken a full time job with Friends of the Rouge, much closer to



SPECIES AT RISK CONFERENCE

On April 8 and 9, about 200 people came from all over the province to the Royal Ontario Museum for a series of informed speakers at the Ontario Endangered Species Act Conference. The science was good, but there was no discussion of habitat protection. For me the highlight was my discussion with MNR's director of the SAR Branch confirmed there was no funding to protect habitat. Perhaps we should have a conference on protecting habitat.



EBC's WINE of choice!

All the proceeds of "The Little Grape" go to charity. EBC gets a share proportional to the amount we drink. Buy a bottle, enter the code on the back into their website and we get that share of the profit. **And it's GOOD!** Look in the Argentina section at the LCBO.

EBC's IDENTITY LABELS

These labels just don't come off!

Put one on your valuables at home, work or cottage to help deter thieves or just neighbours who borrowed something and forgot to return it. Just like the war amps key tags, we'll get your cell phone back if you misplace it or leave it on the bus. You can put a label on pretty much anything: a boat, motor, camera, cell phone, drill, computer or your chain saw. They just don't scrape off. That's why hotels and business use them. **If an item is found or turned in to police, the finder emails EBC, we look up the number and make the connection. EBC will maintain the record permanently.**



We give them out for free to donors. You contribute \$20 and we thank you by giving you 20 labels. Not only do you get 20 labels, but you conserve 166 square metres (1800 square feet) of land. If you are a new donor, it only costs \$6 after your tax savings (see page 1). "Old" donors get them for \$11 after tax savings.

WATER LEVEL ALLIANCE

Biosphere Conservation Foundation is working closely with the **Water Level Alliance** to make the state of our Great Lakes better known. We care because our coastal wetlands are drying out. **Even the ferry to Manitoulin can't get into dock! Donations are welcome to Biosphere Conservation Foundation at the same address as EBC.**



EBC's reserve on Lake Huron at Zinkan Cove with the North American Native Plant Society. This is the type of land along the shore which will soon be nothing but rock. We applaud the decision of the International Joint Commission to reduce water flow through the St. Clair River to sustain Lake Huron.

GLENCARN UPDATE

Ivan Chan and Bob Barnett have rebuilt and strengthened the fences on our new Stephens Reserve four times after they've been cut and pulled down by off road vehicle riders. **Doug van Horne** donated 100 feet of Page Wire fence which is now strategically located across the main trails, leaving just a hikers hole. The Conservation Authority plans to fence in their parking lot. Ed Stephens has put rocks and huge concrete blocks across other trails. I heard last week that we've dramatically reduced the traffic, but you can still see new tracks. We hope the Ganaraska Trail will soon be fun for pedestrians again, without huge potholes full of water gouged out by the ATVs.

Walk with Us We have a new flyer highlighting 16 places where you can join us on our reserves for a walk. Glencairn is the most southerly, while there are four locations on the Bruce Trail which cross EBC reserves. Manitoulin contains our crown jewels like the Cup and Saucer. Directions are provided in each case.



Manitoulin's Cup and Saucer Trail visited by about 20,000 people every year. **Walk with Us!**

Opening the McKichan

Reserve April 21 **Jim McKichan, Bryan Grimes, Anne Marie Roussy and Peter Jennings** dug four mighty deep holes in sloppy goo to put up two new signs. Jim's sign is a masterpiece of craftsmanship built under **Audrey McKichan's** scrutiny. **Thank you Jim and Audrey for this great reserve right on the north bank of the Hockley Valley.**



Cutting the ribbon



Current Projects

Near Ravenna: We are still working to get this severance completed to protect the Bruce trail and important Escarpment land.

Near Brantford: A 130-acre potential reserve to protect a lake.

Near Hanover: Two agreements with dramatic esker and wetlands

Springmount: An 84-acre wetland is being severed from the farm.

Near Chatsworth: A 130-acre agreement will protect Saugeen River headwaters and forested land.



Potential reserve near Brantford

Niagara Escarpment Views EBC now has a full page in every issue. This time our article will cover property taxation including exemption for nature reserves. One small municipality on Manitoulin is losing \$2,200 in revenue from our reserves. The issue is clouded as that same municipality gets almost \$500,000 of provincial partnership grants which attempt to redress the imbalance in assessment across the province. Ontario, its regions and municipalities gain \$650,000 from the ecological services the same reserves provide every year. There must be a better way to pay for municipal services than charging landowners who choose to sequester carbon and providing healthy outdoor recreation. **Bob Barnett** wrote a letter to the editor of the **Manitoulin Expositor** responding to an initiative from the **Manitoulin Municipal Association** to question our exemption from property taxes. On May 10 we're meeting **Dan Marinigh** of MNR to discuss this issue further. Overall, EBC provides over \$21 million a year of ecological services. This is but a small fraction of the \$84 billion dollars the province saves every year from "free" services provided by nature (water purification, flood protection, improved air quality, pollination, recreation and many more).

YOUR LEGACY EBC has produced a new brochure to help our members and friends leave a legacy of nature. Landowners can protect their land with conservation agreements or donation of the "back 40". This can be done now or through a bequest. Examples of three legacy donors are included. Jim Harvey left us a beautiful reserve near Creemore while Mary Hackney left us her estate which will keep us safe financially, even after we created three new reserves in her name. Please consider EBC as you plan your estate. Look after yourself and your kids first, but save yourself and your estate from paying Stephen Harper ... donate to us instead and leave more for your estate!

We need Stewards...call Bob Barnett



Facebook EBC has reached over 200 "friends" thanks to a great effort by **Leigh** to keep our site current. Visit us! [Facebook.com/EscarpmentBiosphereConservancy](https://www.facebook.com/EscarpmentBiosphereConservancy)

Property Taxes on conserved Lands EBC is working with **Jan Gerhardt** to contest his property taxes. A few years ago Jan donated a conservation agreement on his wetland near Erin. Our appraisers estimated the value of that gift at \$95,000 on that 49-acre property. This means that the value of his property was reduced by \$95,000 when he placed that agreement on title with its covenants to protect the wetland.

Unfortunately MPAC, our Municipal Property Assessment Corporation doesn't understand the concept. They think the property is still worth the same for assessment purposes. We've asked them for comparables and they have provided other properties under the forest management tax reduction program, but not properties with legal restrictions on title preventing quarries and more houses.

EBC is helping to bring this matter to the Assessment Review Board by hiring experts to study the issue. We think it is most unfair that landowners who have given up so much of their value to protect nature are paying the same taxes as others who have made no such contribution. Stay tuned as this matter winds its way through the bureaucracy and the tribunal.

AIRMILES Yes, we still collect airmiles. They have brought us a whole bunch of good things including:

- our television display for exhibits
- our laptop computer
- a GPS for the car (to help us find landowners)
- a trip to a conference in Winnipeg
- a backup device for our computer

You can help ... call us for a card or transfer your airmiles to our account.

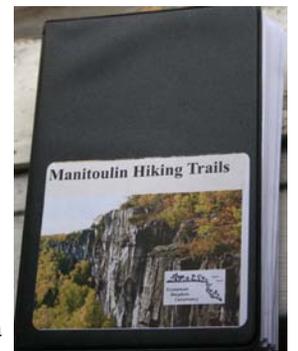
HELP US ACQUIRE HURON SHORE
Every \$100 donated conserves 831 square metres. That is only \$54 after taxes or only \$29 for a "new" donor.



Manitoulin Hiking Guide

EBC's new guidebook is as close as your phone. Call for this pocket-sized but powerful guide. Twenty trails to explore.

If you want a special member's deal phone **Bargain Bob** at 1-888-815-9575 or email rbarnett@escarpment.ca



You're Invited to our Glencairn Reserve Richard Aaron will lead us on a nature walk July 21st at 11:00, til 3 or 4:00.

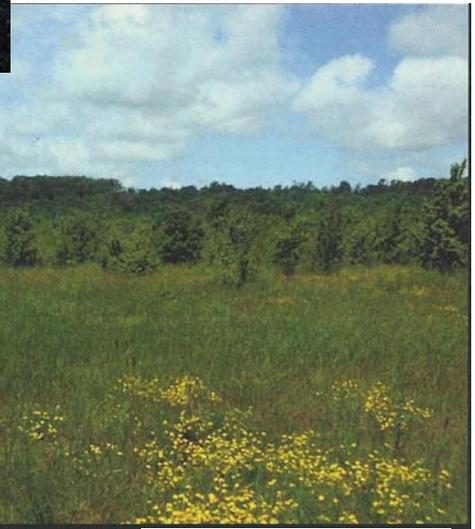


Spend the day exploring one of our newest properties, the two-kilometre-long Glencairn Nature Reserve., nestled beside the Mad River and on the Ganaraska Trail. The focus will be wildflowers, trees, shrubs and ferns found on this great reserve. Richard will also discuss the ecology, natural history, lore and uses of many of the plants we encounter. Richard Aaron is a well-known naturalist who has given walks, workshops and lectures to nearly 60 community groups, naturalist clubs, parks and universities. Visit him at <http://natureknowledge.weebly.com>. We'd like to charge \$20 per person or \$30 per family. Phone us to reserve a spot and get directions. This is part of our **Walk with Us** program to encourage visits to our nature reserves.

Any Time: Visit an EBC

reserve, just call us for directions. Help us list the birds and plants found there. Get the kids out on a scavenger hunt, bring your camera.

What you'll see at Glencairn



Photos: Hugh Crymble

Peabody (#119)

Chris has been working with us for many years to see this land near Kemble donated. He and his family will retain the building lot while EBC will receive the "C" shaped 85 acre lot around it including the old "cottage". This property has great Escarpment features right up to the Ordovician "shore" escarpment which is not part of the Niagara Escarpment Plan. There is a substantial wetland at the west end of the property while close to County Road 1 there is a minor escarpment and one of the biggest Green Ash Mac Kirk had ever seen. Three north/south creeks cross the east/west property. Thank you, Chris for your second nature reserve.

Looking west toward the "lower" Escarpment

Springer St. Vincent

Gunter Springer and his family trust have donated their tenth nature reserve. This is a dramatic forest right on top of the Bayview Escarpment and just north of his other reserve in that area. The Bruce Trail winds just east and north of the reserve.

Looking east toward the Bayview Escarpment soon...it'll all be trees.

Gunter and Vicky have planted thousands of trees on this marginal farmland . The east end of the property has natural deciduous forest. Gunter has been on EBC's board for at least five years as he works to create a legacy of forest which will create ecological benefits in perpetuity. He alone sequesters about 1,565 tonnes per year of carbon on 577 acres. His forests provide \$1,586,000 of ecological services annually. Thank you Gunter.

