

Refuge

Conserve. Steward. Educate.

Vol. 24, No. 1 | Spring 2015



On the Rise fundraising event to take place in April



2014 On the Rise event attendees checking out the silent auction. (Photo: Bang On Photography)

The Nature Trust of New Brunswick's annual fundraising event 'On the Rise' is underway for the third year in a row. It will take place on Saturday, April 25, 2015 at the Delta Fredericton. This event helps the Nature Trust to raise valuable funds, allowing the organization to continue to conserve beautiful, ecologically significant landscapes in New Brunswick, as well as build awareness of these efforts. This year, the Nature Trust will be making an exciting conservation announcement about a newly conserved area in the province.

"We want to make this year's event the biggest one yet, so we thought it would be the perfect time to share the news of a nature preserve acquisition that has been in the works for some time now with everyone who attends," says Nature Trust President Mike Bonga. "It will make the event extra special because guests will be the first to hear about it and it will give us a chance to celebrate with them."

Additional highlights for the evening include musical entertainment by blues musician Charlie A'Court and a live and silent auction of New Brunswick items, tastes, experiences, artwork, and adventures. There will also be live painting taking place throughout the evening by Elizabeth Sargeant—a talented

local artist who has previously competed in the Fredericton Art Battle.

"Our auction is always popular because it offers such unique and interesting adventures like whale watching, birding, and kayak trips. Plus, we always see some amazing nature-inspired artwork," says Bonga. "Also new to this year, we are adding some more interactive components to the evening—a live auction and live art."

"The support we have seen so far from sponsors, auction donors, and volunteers has been overwhelming," says Bonga. "People want to help our cause in any way they can and we thank them for that."

This event would not be possible without the support of community sponsors, including title sponsors Altus Group Limited, Connors Bros. Clover Leaf Seafoods Company, TD Canada Trust and Picaroons Traditional Ales, major sponsors McCain Foods and Delta Fredericton, participating sponsor Cox & Palmer, supporting sponsor Freeman Audio Visual, and media sponsor Newcap Radio (UP 93.1 FM).

The ticket price is \$50 each and includes the full line-up of entertainment and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets can be purchased by



A great blue heron at low tide (Photo: Mike Bonga)

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President's Message

During our annual general meeting at the Gagetown Legion in October, I was privileged to be elected as the President of the Nature Trust of New Brunswick. This being my first "President's Message", I will share some thoughts about why I value the Nature Trust.

Like many of our members, I often (very often) find myself stumbling through the woods of NB. I gravitate to those places that are undisturbed and striking to look at. NB has many of those places. For most of my years, I haven't paid much thought to how the greatest spots in the province were preserved in the state they were in. In the past few years, I've learned that many of the properties that I admire the most are preserved by the Nature Trust and their volunteers. A brief study of our website will reveal that many of the properties that we see on our daily commutes are preserved by the Nature Trust as parks in the midst of villages or key features in our vistas.

I've recently taken the opportunity to visit and walk within many of our preserves. In September 2014, for example, while fishing with friends on a rare, calm, blue sky day on the Bay of Fundy, we nudged up to South Wolf Island just to have a look. The tide was low, birds were peacefully active, and it was spectacular.

I am beginning to understand the legacy of the donations of these properties, their fascinating histories, and their ecological significance. Opportunities to encounter some of NB's best landscapes are enabled by the donors, volunteers and staff of the Nature Trust. It's reassuring to know that these properties are preserved forever.

In the coming issues of *Refuge*, I hope to report more great experiences of exploring new properties preserved by the Nature Trust.

Sincerely,

Mike Bonga
President, Nature Trust of New Brunswick

On the rise 2015 (continued)

contacting the Nature Trust office at (506) 457-2398 or by visiting the 404 Queen Street, 3rd floor location. They can also be purchased online at EventBrite.ca. For more information about the event, please contact Jessica at communications@ntnb.org.

Conservation planning in three NB regions

The Nature Trust of New Brunswick's conservation planning team has been busy over the past year with a number of projects throughout the province. We have been active in the lower St. John River (LSJR) region and we have expanded our conservation planning work to two other regions—the upper St. John River (USJR) and St. Croix River.

The LSJR bioregion is truly a hotspot for biodiversity in New Brunswick. The region contains diverse habitats, including rich and productive floodplains, freshwater wetlands, and areas of mature forest. These habitats support significant numbers of migratory birds, rare plants, and abundant wildlife. The Nature Trust recently completed a Habitat Conservation Strategy for the LSJR that helped to identify areas of highest priority for conservation. In the summer of 2014, we used this report to plan an outreach campaign, targeting landowners living in these high priority areas. We met with farmers, woodlot owners, and families—all with strong connections to their land and an appreciation for their region's beauty.

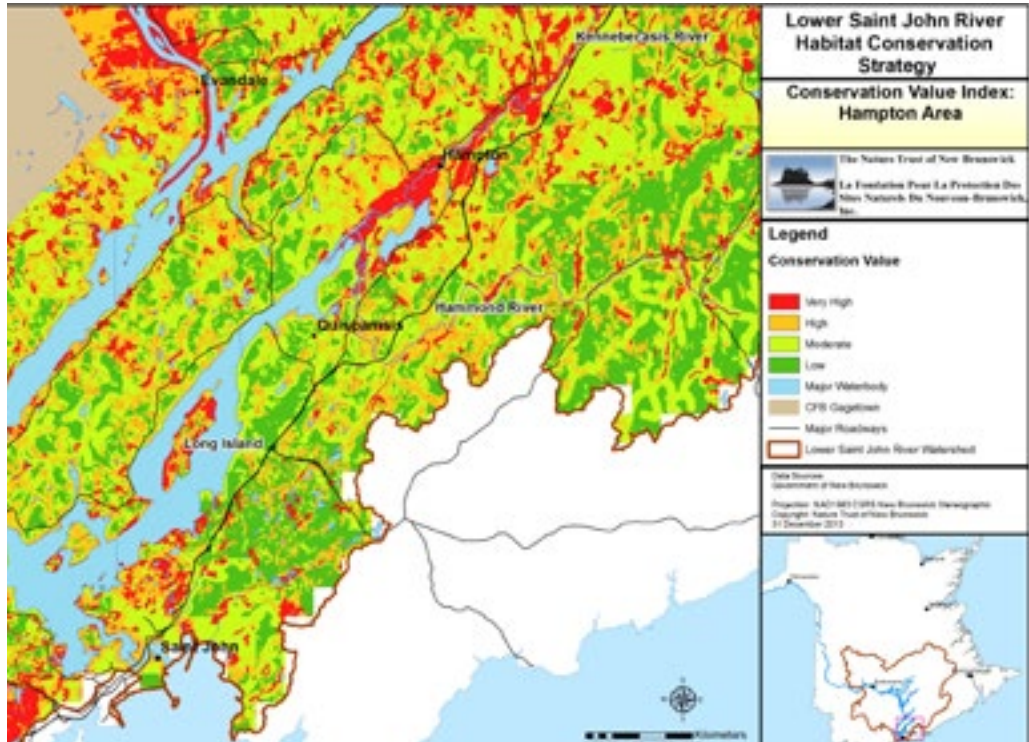
Over 30 landowners were keen to share their knowledge about their property and to learn more about caring for sensitive habitats and species found there. Many of these landowners have decided to participate in our Landowner Stewardship program, which includes the development of voluntary stewardship agreements. This program will keep track of the people who are stewarding species at risk and their habitat on their land. In turn, we will provide them with information and educational opportunities to support their conservation and stewardship efforts. For example, demonstration events will show farmers how to keep turtles and ground-nesting birds safe, or show camp owners how to maintain a healthy shoreline along wetlands, lakes, and streams.

The Nature Trust is also in the early stages of conservation planning in the USJR region, where we are identifying areas of high conservation value to help communities and organizations protect important habitat. The Nature Trust will also partner with organizations working with species at risk such as wood turtles along the Madawaska River or the endangered cobblestone tiger beetle and Furbish's lousewort along the St. John River.

In the southwest corner of the province, along the NB-Maine border, you can find the St. Croix River – this watershed is unique because it provides an opportunity for the Nature Trust



Beautiful, donated artwork from last year's silent auction at On the Rise. (Photo: Bang On Photography)

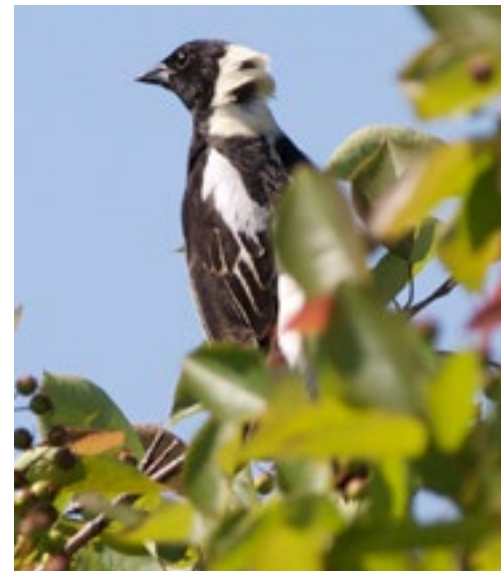


Example of a map used when planning landowner outreach for the LSJR project.

to collaborate with conservation organizations in both countries. Since 2012, the Nature Trust and the Woodie Wheaton Land Trust in Maine have had a cross-border working agreement to help facilitate future conservation projects. We have also partnered with the Nature Conservancy of Canada to develop a Habitat Conservation Strategy for the Lower Bay of Fundy region, which includes the St. Croix River. This information will be used to help identify future conservation priorities for our organization and create more partnerships in the area.

Stay tuned for updates and, as always, if you would like more information please get in contact with Aaron Dowding, Conservation Planning Manager at staff@ntnb.org.

This project has been supported by the Government of Canada, NB Wildlife Trust Fund, NB Environmental Trust Fund, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, and Small Change Fund.



Bobolink - a ground-nesting, grassland bird and a focus species for the Landowner Stewardship program. (Photo: Jessica Bradford)

Looking forward to 2015 stewardship events



Crossing the bridge at the Blueberry Hill snowshoe event (Photo: Maureen Boone)

There was certainly no concern about having enough snow for our snowshoe events this year. The 1st Westfield Scouts led a successful public snowshoe at Blueberry Hill Nature Preserve on February 8 as part of Grand Bay-Westfield's Winterfest 2015, which brought 40 people out for a guided excursion.

We also partnered with the Meduxnekeag River Association for a snowshoe along with the Multicultural Association of Carleton County in the Meduxnekeag Valley Nature Preserve on March 4. We then ventured into the Beardsley Hill Nature Preserve on March 7 for a snowshoe trip, which was open to the public. This was an excellent opportunity to connect with the Carleton County community and take advantage of all the snow the winter brought us.

Life insurance—a way to provide a generous planned gift

Article submitted by Lydia LaPointe, CLU, Chartered Financial Consultant, York Financial Services Inc.



Lydia LaPointe (far right) with a group of volunteers during the Charlotte Isles Clean-up event at Meredith Houseworth Memorial Seashore on Grand Manan, September 2014. (Photo: Richelle Martin)

If you are a supporter of the work being done by the Nature Trust, and you want to assure the organization's continued viability into the future, then planned giving makes sense. One method is to use life insurance, which can provide a very generous gift at a reasonable cost. Life insurance is a secure method of creating a legacy. It is guaranteed and outside your will, leaving 100 per cent of your estate for your heirs.

We have lots more excitement in store for the upcoming field season with a new series of paddling events in partnership with Canoe Kayak New Brunswick (CKNB). We will continue with some events that were successful last year such as the New River Island Nature Preserve paddling excursions during the annual New River Beach Sand Sculpture Competition, plus we have some new trips planned. Thank you again to CKNB for supporting our conservation and stewardship efforts by helping to bring more awareness to our nature preserves and providing a way to get to many of them that are otherwise difficult to access.

We are aiming to get our weekly Frog Walks back on track for this summer and have already started booking private walks for day camps. We are also planning for a Frog Walk

Guide training day to take place on Saturday, May 30, 2015 at our Hyla Park Nature Preserve to train leaders in other communities to guide public walks and help spread the amphibian enthusiasm and awareness even further.

We would also like to announce our first ever month-long Nature Trust Preserve Grand Tour. The stewardship team will spend the month of July touring around several nature preserves and meeting with volunteers along the way to complete trail maintenance, install brand new interpretive signs, conduct flora and fauna surveys, general monitoring, and updates to our preserve management plans. We may even squeeze in some Frog Walks along the way. This will be an important way for the Nature Trust to better focus efforts on preserves in need of monitoring and maintenance.

To be successful in this endeavor we will need the participation of as many volunteers as possible. We will be releasing more details on the Grand Tour soon, so if you would like to be added to a contact list to get updates for this project or if you would like more information about the paddling or Frog Walk events, please get in touch with our Stewardship Coordinator, Richelle at ntnbpreserves@ntnb.org or 457-2398.

Donate online through CanadaHelps!

- More payment methods
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Find the CanadaHelps button on our website naturetrust.nb.ca or search for us at canadahelps.org.



You have three choices for distributing your estate: your heirs, charity, and the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). Did you know that your Registered Savings Plans (RRSP's, RRIF's, LIRA's and LIF's) are 100 per cent taxable if you have no spouse when you die? If you, like most people, want your hard earned life savings to pass to your heirs, life insurance can help make this happen. It is possible to redirect taxes payable on your estate away from CRA. Life insurance and good tax planning can help minimize the amount of taxes payable at your death. Here is how it is done:

Many people have purchased life insurance to pay the taxes to CRA, so that their family can inherit the full amount they saved. However, if you purchase life insurance equivalent to the full amount of your registered savings, you can make a generous gift of 100 per cent of your savings to the Nature Trust, by naming the organization as the beneficiary. Your family will receive the life insurance proceeds tax free. Also, the life insurance will be distributed outside the will, avoiding delays, complications, and possible creditor claims.

Life insurance (continued)

If you name the Nature Trust as the beneficiary of your retirement savings, the full amount of your gift qualifies for a charitable tax receipt for your estate and CRA is no longer a beneficiary of your estate.
For more information, contact your insurance advisor or the Nature Trust office. Feel free to also contact me by email at lydial@nb.sympatico.ca or by phone 506-443-RRSP (7777).

About the author - Lydia LaPointe, CLU, Chartered Financial Consultant is a Nature Trust supporter and volunteer. She has been a part of the On the Rise planning committee for two years and also joins in on any beach cleanups happening on nature preserves in her beloved Charlotte County, where she grew up. Lydia is also a former United Way Campaign Chair and founder of their endowment fund. In 2013, Lydia was named the Mactaquac County Chamber of Commerce Corporate Citizen of the Year. For more information, visit www.lydialapointe.com.



Looking forward to spring/summer 2015 with Canoe Kayak NB. (Photo taken by Bibo Pohl during the 2014 New River Island paddling event)

NEWS BULLETIN

Would you like to receive your Refuge and Annual Reports electronically? If so, please contact Jessica at communications@ntnb.org or contact the office at (506) 457-2398. Also, did you know the Nature Trust sends out MONTHLY electronic newsletters? If you are not receiving these newsletters to your email and would like to, please also contact Jessica.

In the spring/summer season we bring on many more staff members to help support stewardship and our field events. We are currently seeking desks and office chairs to fill a satellite office to accommodate seasonal staff members. In addition to those we are seeking donations of used tablet devices, and any trail maintenance tools such as sheers, shovels and handsaws. If you are able to donate or loan any of these items, please get in touch with Richelle at ntnbpreserves@ntnb.org.



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I want to support land conservation in New Brunswick and become a member of the Nature Trust.



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Please find enclosed my gift of:

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 I would like to give: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Postal code _____ Phone _____

Email _____

A cheque to the Nature Trust of New Brunswick is enclosed.

I will pay by Visa. Visa # _____ Exp. _____

Charitable tax receipt requested (Must be requested for donations under \$20. For donations over \$20, a tax receipt will be issued).

Mail to / contactez: Nature Trust of New Brunswick | La Fondation pour la protection des sites naturels du Nouveau-Brunswick PO Box 603 Stn. A | Fredericton, NB | E3B 5A6

Conservation on Canvas project from the artist's perspective

Article submitted by Michael McEwing, Artist and Art Educator



Michael McEwing presenting the Conservation on Canvas during an artist talk at the Dooryard Arts Festival in Woodstock.

My introduction to the work of the Nature Trust came through discovering the New Brunswick Nature Sessions project – a video series of regional musical artists performing acoustically in various Nature Trust sites. I was fascinated by the idea of artistically interpreting the experience of specific nature preserves. At the time, I was completing a series of more than a dozen oil landscapes depicting a single region – the Tantramar Marshlands near Sackville.

By the fall of 2012, I was looking for a new challenge and decided to approach the Nature Trust about the idea of visiting each preserve and completing at least one landscape painting representing each site. In an initial meeting with Renata Woodward, Jessica Bradford, and Wayne Burley, I was met with a lot of encouragement and enthusiasm over the idea. It has since evolved into the Conservation on Canvas project.

Thank you to all of our volunteers and supporters!

The importance of volunteers to the Nature Trust cannot be stated enough! They allow us to accomplish so much and also stretch our dollars even further.

Here are some of the AMAZING volunteers who have been hard at work with us lately:

- **Garrett Broderson** was supporting the conservation planning team with research and report writing.
- **Carli le Roux** has been helping the conservation planning team with research and writing for the USJR project.
- **Jennifer Ling**, who has been volunteering for over a year now, supports the organization through administrative work.
- **Edith Miller**, a long-time volunteer and a delight to have around the office, supports the organization through administrative tasks and stewardship work. She is always a huge help when it comes to getting our Refuge mailed out!
- **Yvonne Cheung** has been helping the stewardship team with updating management plans.
- Thanks to the **Oromocto High School Youth Stewards of the Environment**, and **Lori Waugh** for all of your help taking care of our James C. Yerxa Nature Preserve.

What started as a personal artistic challenge has led to much more – namely, a deeper respect for the importance of nature conservation and the work involved. So far, I have visited 24 of the preserves through hiking, snowshoeing, kayaking, canoeing, and even by small aircraft. Each site is an absolute treasure. In exploring



Michael McEwing painting the Arthur Kyle Nature Preserve (Becaguimac Island) during the 'Paint the Heartland' event last summer. (Photo: Michael McEwing)

- **Ainsley Swift** has helped out with stewardship, as well as the collection of trail data for a future nature preserve.
- **Ishu Vaibhav** is one of our bright, young volunteers who has been with us for almost two years now. Thank you for your help from both the office and at home!
- **James Donald** from Hiking NB has been collecting important trail data for us.
- Our **Board Members** and **volunteer committee members** put in a lot of hours overseeing the operations of the organization, ensuring our success – thank you!
- **Lydia LaPointe**, **Suzanne Wood**, and **Judy Richardson** have joined our On the Rise fundraising committee again and we are so happy to see them back. Welcome also to **Jamie Young** and **Terry Webb** who will be making sure this is our best event yet!
- **Dijonna Brooks** has recently started her STU internship with us and has been a huge help with communications.

And, special mentions to:

- **Justine Spits** has been a long-time volunteer and supporter of the Nature Trust. She attends many excursions, work days and has also volunteered her

each site, I have also met many wonderful people – staff, board members, land stewards, and volunteers – who are deeply passionate about nature and efforts to preserve it for future generations.

With over a dozen completed canvases at this point, I consider many to reflect the shared experiences I have had with these people, as they have led me to a greater understanding of each preserve and what makes it unique and special. Their passion for nature is often contagious, and I find myself advocating for conservation efforts as I discuss this artistic project with others. Although the originally-conceived project will be completed at some point in the next couple of years, I have discovered that there is a lifetime's worth of paintings in the preserves that already exist. This project might just be the beginning.

About the author - Michael McEwing is an artist and art educator working and living in Carleton County. He is currently undertaking a project to visit and paint all of the Nature Trust's preserves. For more information about the Conservation on Canvas project and stay up-to-date with Michael's adventures, visit the project blog at www.conservationcanvas.weebly.com.



Completed painting (30 x 40") of Mowat Island (part of the Western Isles Nature Preserve). (Photo: Michael McEwing)

time to help with our translation. With a keen eye for detail, we were recently able to hire her on contract to support us with conservation planning research and translation. Her contract has come to an end, but we thank her very much for her hard work.

- **Sara Flanagan** is another dedicated and hard-working volunteer who we were able to hire on for a short period of time to support us with financial and administrative duties at a time when the work load was heavy. We are grateful for her positive energy in the office.
- **Bethany Young** has been working with us since the fall on a YMCA internship as an executive assistant. Although her focus has been mainly on writing funding applications, she has also been a major support system for all other departments. Thank you, Bethany!

There is not a day that goes by that a volunteer does not influence the positive work that we do here to **CONSERVE**, **STEWARD**, and **EDUCATE**. We are grateful to those who want to give back to their environment and their community through this organization and we thank you for that.

Nature Trust-led ExploreEcoNB project wins national award



Group photo of the partners involved in the ExploreEcoNB mobile app project. (Photo: CWTA)

A ground-breaking partnership between government agencies, recreational groups and environmental NGOs in New Brunswick spearheaded by the Nature Trust has received a national award for helping people connect with nature and the outdoors.

The groups responsible for ExploreEcoNB, an innovative mobile-mapping application, were presented with the Connected to the Community award from the Canadian Wireless Telecommunications Association (CTWA) during a ceremony at the Crowne Plaza in Fredericton on Thursday, Feb. 12. The award pays tribute to outstanding organizations who have partnered with Canada's wireless industry to improve the lives of Canadians. Jessica Bradford, Nature Trust communications coordinator and project manager for ExploreEcoNB accepted the award on behalf of the group. It was presented by CWTA President and CEO Bernard Lord, former premier of New Brunswick. Premier Brian Gallant was also present at the event to speak and hand out awards.

"The ExploreEcoNB project came about after our organization created an app designed to build public awareness of our network of preserves in New Brunswick. We decided to open it up to more provincial partners because of its great potential to connect people with even more natural places in the province, some of which they may not have known existed before," says Renata Woodward, Executive Director, Nature Trust of New Brunswick. "We are thrilled to be recognized by the CWTA for this amazing partnership effort to connect the community with nature."

Other award recipients included the RCMP Foundation's Moncton Fallen RCMP Members Fund for their text to donate campaign, the New Brunswick Community College's Mobile First Technology Office of Applied Research and Innovation, the Donald Fraser Memorial School, and Connected Voices Health Research Project.

ExploreEcoNB is a free mobile application that brings many of the exciting natural attractions waiting to be discovered in New Brunswick

right to your fingertips. Available on Android, iOS and Windows platforms, the app connects people with more than 300 opportunities for adventure in the outdoors, highlighting nature preserves/reserves, national and provincial parks, province-wide trail networks, Protected Natural Areas, Important Bird Areas, entry points along the St. John River and more.

App users can explore these natural areas by using the app's mapping feature, which also offers the ability to choose a destination of choice based on type of activity, proximity, or one of the province's tourism regions.

The app was created through a unique partnership between the Nature Trust of New Brunswick, Conservation Council of New Brunswick (CCNB), Department of Natural Resources, Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Nature NB, New Brunswick Provincial Parks, Parks Canada, Sentiers NB Trails, Meduxnekeag River Association, and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS). Truly a homegrown effort, the development of the app was supported by Fredericton-based business Stellar Learning Strategies and the Moncton-based tech company Cognitive X.

Since its launch in August 2014, ExploreEcoNB has been downloaded more than 1,400 times, helping hundreds of New Brunswickers gain a deeper appreciation for their natural environment by experiencing the wonders of what our wilderness, waterways, public parks and trails have to offer.

ExploreEcoNB was made possible by funding from Mountain Equipment Co-Op's Community Contribution program, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund, the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund, as well as equal funding and in-kind contributions from all participating partner organizations.

For more information, visit ExploreEcoNB.ca or find the app in the Apple Store, Android Play Store, or Windows Store.



Jessica Bradford, Nature Trust communications coordinator accepting award on behalf of ExploreEcoNB partners, with other award recipients and dignitaries, including Premier Brian Gallant, the Honourable Rob Moore, Member of Parliament Rodney Weston, and CWTA CEO and former Premier Bernard Lord. (Photo: CWTA)



Refuge

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Remembering a true friend of the Nature Trust - Don Dennison



On Wednesday, July 1, 2015, Don Dennison died peacefully in Fredericton, NB from complications of squamous cell cancer.

The death of Don Dennison is a loss for the Nature Trust of New Brunswick and he will be missed greatly. We are fortunate and thankful for his dedicated service on the Board of Directors over the past 10 years, as he brought incredible energy and leadership to the organization.

During his time as President of the Board of Directors, Don advocated to develop a sustainable business model for the organization, while ensuring that the entire province benefits from the Nature Trust's conservation work. He initiated the development of a partnership committee that focuses on collaborating with corporations and private businesses to diversify funding opportunities for the organization. He also advocated for innovation, increased focus on communications and public relations to gain awareness for the organization, service in both official languages and increased land conservation awareness in the northern part of New Brunswick.

One of his major contributions was the development of the Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Land Conservation that has become an annual event hosted by the Office of the Lieutenant Governor in partnership with the Nature Trust to recognize individuals or groups who make a difference in land conservation in the province. He often concerned himself with the economic health of the province, but

understood that balance between economy and environment is important and that we need to take care of our environment for the sake of the natural world and future generations.

Don was a man with a big heart. His outstanding diplomacy and listening skills always brought calmness and a sense that the organization would succeed no matter what obstacles were encountered. He never missed a celebration, whether it was an announcement of a new nature preserve or a casual meeting with staff. He visited many of the nature preserves and never hesitated to pitch in with clean up activities.

His family supported his passion and often attended Nature Trust events, helped with translation tasks, or sought out awareness opportunities for the Nature Trust. In 2014, he was recognized for his many contributions to the Nature Trust and named Trustee Emeritus with the organization.

Although Don has moved on, his spirit and legacy of land conservation will be with us for years to come. Fellow board members and staff have been inspired by Don's actions and leadership and will be following in his footsteps to make New Brunswick a better place for everyone.

Those who wish to donate, can do so online at CanadaHelps.org, search for the 'Nature Trust of New Brunswick' and select 'In Memory of Donald Dennison' in the dropdown menu. You can also call the office at (506) 457-2398 for more information.

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President's Message

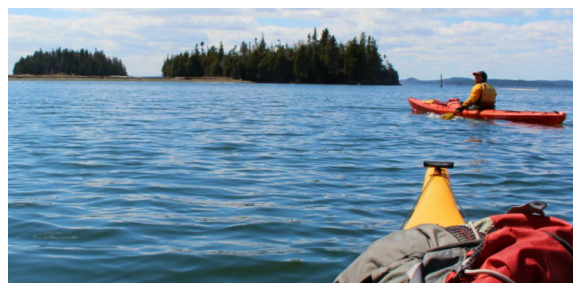
All of the staff and friends of the Nature Trust are greatly saddened by the recent passing of our friend and mentor Don Dennison. Don was very active with the Nature Trust, even in recent weeks. His wisdom, leadership, and kindness will always be appreciated. Don's legacy can be seen in the activities that we are undertaking in 2015. He was a strong promoter of our outreach programs, many of which are underway today.

Our third annual fundraising event, "On the Rise", which took place in April, was a great success with approximately 350 attending and enjoying our auction, live music, food, art and social occasion. It was especially gratifying to announce the completion of the donation of Frye Island Nature Preserve by Connors Bros. Cloverleaf Seafoods Company—the culmination of an effort that was years in the making. I was privileged to have a guided tour of Frye Island by kayak in April (thanks Walter) and, I must say, it is one of New Brunswick's finest places (see photo below).

In the coming months, we will continue our outreach with great summer programs. Our "Grand Tour" events will give the public the opportunity to visit half of the Nature Trust's conserved lands. These events will highlight our stewardship activities and give participants an opportunity to experience some of New Brunswick's most outstanding landscapes.

We are also looking forward to announcing a new nature preserve toward the end of August in Neguac, our first on the Acadian Peninsula, and we hope you can make it (see page 2 for date and time).

Sincerely,
Mike Bonga
President, Nature Trust of New Brunswick



Nature Trust presents first ever 'Grand Tour' event series



Paddling & Wildflowers event participants at Sea Dog Cove Nature Preserve on the Kingston Peninsula.

This year, the Nature Trust of New Brunswick is embarking on its first ever 'Grand Tour' event series - visiting more nature preserves in one season than ever before to accomplish important stewardship work and showcase the unique and natural beauty of each preserve. Along the way, stewardship staff and board members aim to engage the local communities in the process, creating awareness of conservation efforts in the province and providing people with opportunities for hands-on volunteerism. The Nature Trust's Grand Tour is taking place during the summer season and between June and September a total of 21 nature preserves will be visited—almost half of the Nature Trust's conserved lands.

"The Nature Trust is growing rapidly, with seven new nature preserve acquisitions in the last year," says Walter Emrich, Chair of the Stewardship Committee for the Board of Directors. "The Grand Tour is a way to celebrate conservation, build community partnerships focused on stewardship, and engage volunteers to help improve trail systems, accessibility, and awareness of the Nature Trust's nature preserves."

While each Grand Tour event will be different based on the unique needs of the nature preserve, some of the stewardship tasks to be completed include trail maintenance, interpretive/directional signage installation, garbage cleanup, and monitoring of flora and fauna. Some events may be more focused on activities such as paddling or hiking, but will still offer an opportunity to monitor wildlife and/or any disturbances to land for future management of the preserve. It will also help the Nature Trust to develop connections, which will hopefully lead to building more stewardship groups in the future.

"We have always done trail days, beach cleanups, and nature walks on our nature preserves, but this year will be the first time that we will be doing this many events at different preserves as part of a Grand Tour," says Richelle Martin, Stewardship Coordinator. "If we are able to engage a lot of volunteers and successfully complete our stewardship goals, then we will likely use this model again in the future, perhaps every three to five years."



On the Kennebecasis River just off of Sea Dog Cove Nature Preserve.

Grand Tour events have already taken place at seven nature preserves, including Sea Dog Cove Nature Preserve on the Kingston Peninsula, three island nature preserves in the Upper St. John River, and Boars Head Nature Preserve and Blueberry Hill Nature Preserve in the Saint John area. Events to come will span from Charlotte County to the Acadian Peninsula. For a full list of Grand Tour events, see list in the right-hand column.

The Nature Trust thanks all supporters who have made the Grand Tour possible: TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, Environmental Trust Fund, Science Horizons, EcoAction, Crane Mountain Enhancement Fund, and the Greater Saint John Community Foundation.

We are now accepting nominations for the 2015 Lieutenant Governor's Award for Excellence in Land Conservation.

More information can be found online at naturetrust.nb.ca or by calling the office at (506) 457-2398.

2015 NATURE TRUST GRAND TOUR EVENTS

See below for a full list of events. If you are interested in participating in any of these events, please contact Richelle, Stewardship Coordinator at ntnbpreserves@ntnb.org or (506) 457-7484.

Caughey-Taylor Nature Preserve Work Day (Bocabec/St. Andrews area)
Wednesday, July 15, 10 am – 3 pm

Connors Bros. Nature Preserve at Pea Point Work Days (Blacks Harbour)
Trail work - Thursday, July 16, 10 am - 3 pm
Shoreline clean-up (hosted with CPAWS-NB) - Friday, July 17, 10 am - 2 pm

Cape Enrage Nature Preserve Work Day & Birding Trip with Roland Chiasson from Nature NB (Cape Enrage/Albert County)
Tuesday, July 21, 11 am – 4 pm

Thompson Marsh Nature Preserve and Beldings Reef Nature Preserve Work Day (Chance Harbour)
Friday, July 24, 10 am – 5 pm

'Get Outside! NB' - New River Island Nature Preserve Paddle with CKNB during the Annual Sand Sculpture Competition (New River Beach Provincial Park)
Saturday, July 25, happening throughout the day

Thomas B. Munro Memorial Shoreline and Seven Days Work Cliff Nature Preserve Work Day (Grand Manan)
Sunday, July 26, 9 am – 5:30 pm

Meredith Houseworth Memorial Seashore Work Day (Grand Manan)
Monday, July 27, 10 am – 2 pm

Paddleboard Yoga at Pickerel Pond Nature Preserve (Grand Lake area)
Sunday, August 9, Time TBA

Frye Island Nature Preserve Grand Opening & Clean-up Day (St. George)
Saturday, August 29, Time TBA

Réserve naturelle Joseph Allain Nature Preserve Grand Opening Celebration (Neguac)
Saturday, August 22, 12 pm

Pagan Point Tree Planting Day (St. Andrews)
Saturday, September 12, 11 am - 2 pm

Clark Gregory Nature Preserve Visit (Deer Island)
Time and date TBA

Blending conservation and youth engagement efforts in the Upper St. John River region



Big canoe trip past the new Eagle's Eye Nature Preserve in the Upper St. John River. (Photo: Avi Dlggle)

Another island in the upper St. John River has been conserved by the Nature Trust of New Brunswick to protect the rare cobblestone tiger beetle—an insect listed as endangered under Canada's *Species at Risk Act*. Located in Simonds, the island is known as 'Lower Presque Isle Island' or 'Peele Island'. In May, the Nature Trust announced a competition for Florenceville Elementary Students to participate in naming the new nature preserve during a land conservation workshop day held in partnership with the Meduxnekeag River Association and the Andrew & Laura McCain Art Gallery.

"When land is donated to Nature Trust for conservation, the naming of it is based on geographic location or the donor's wishes," says Renata Woodward, Executive Director of the Nature Trust. "There is no donor in this case because the Nature Trust purchased this island and it has two names."

"This project urged the younger generation to ask their parents and grandparents about their natural surroundings and get excited about the traditional knowledge of their ancestors that is often forgotten," says Woodward. "It is our hope that this will help people in the community, specifically youth, to feel tied to the land and be more aware of conservation initiatives in their region."

Friends of the Nature Trust - Stewardship Groups

Article submitted by Richelle Martin, Stewardship Coordinator

Alongside 'conservation' and 'education', the third pillar of the Nature Trust of New Brunswick's mandate is 'stewardship'. Nature Trust staff is taking new actions to further develop this pillar by strengthening grass-roots community engagement through the creation of new stewardship groups across the province.

As our organization is growing and the number of nature preserves is increasing year by year, we are seeking more involvement from local groups in the management and care of the nature preserves in their respective communities. To date, we have a network of over 150 dedicated voluntary land stewards, caring for over 40 nature

At 12.7 hectares (31.4 acres), Lower Presque Isle Island is situated in the St. John River between two other Nature Trust island preserves—Green Island Nature Preserve to the north in Florenceville-Bristol and Arthur-Kyle Nature Preserve (Middle Becaguimec Island) to the south in Hartland. With an increasing presence in the area, this also builds upon past conservation efforts to undertake rare plant surveys and protect land for Furbish's lousewort in the region.

"We are pleased to be partnering with the Nature Trust of New Brunswick and participating in their conservation workshop and naming contest," said Valerie Carmichael, Community Coordinator for Centreville Community School and Florenceville Elementary School. "Having the opportunity to choose the name for a nature preserve close to their school gives students new insight into their community's history and natural environment. The students have a once in a lifetime opportunity to be active participants engaged in creating history—the official naming and celebration of the new nature preserve."

Half of the newly conserved island is identified as Provincially Significant Wetland, while the remaining area consists of forested land, as well barren sand and rocky cobble along

preserves, ensuring healthy ecosystems and species diversity. The land stewards act as the eyes and ears on the ground for the Nature Trust, monitoring the preserves yearly and reporting back any changes or new findings.

The Friends of Blueberry Hill, Friends of James C. Yerxa Nature Preserve (Oromocto High School Youth Stewards of the Environment), and Friends of Grindstone Island are the three current stewardship groups that have proven to be extremely successful. The Nature Trust was encouraged by the success of the partnerships and decided to move towards this model of group (continued on page 4)

the perimeter. It is this habitat that serves as critical habitat and nesting grounds for the cobblestone tiger beetle. This species, found only in nine known locations in Canada (all of which are in New Brunswick), is endangered because of its limited geographic distribution and small population. The purchase of the island was made possible by Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Fund for Species at Risk and is the third island in the area protected for the beetle.

Six classes submitted names to a selection committee that consisted of Nature Trust board members and community partners from the Florenceville-Bristol area, including representatives from McCains, the Andrew and Laura McCain Art Gallery, and the Meduxnekeag River Association.

The name selected for the island is 'Eagle's Eye Nature Preserve', a submission inspired by the healthy population of eagles often seen flying over the island and surrounding areas. In their submission, the students of Mrs. Shaw's grade three class at Florenceville Elementary School explained that they had learned from talking to their parents and other adults in their community, that the eagle population at one time was not doing well in the area, but, because of changes that were made to protect them, they were able to rebound.

"We think that this shows that changes that we choose to make CAN make a difference," stated their submission. "We believe that the majestic eagles will be watching over the island and its many creatures and plants for years to come."

It was announced at the grand opening event that took place on June 27, which included art workshops, a community BBQ, and a big canoe paddling trip with Canoe Kayak New Brunswick to visit the three island nature preserves in the region.

The Nature Trust thanks all partners in this initiative, including McCains, Canoe Kayak New Brunswick, the Town of Florenceville-Bristol, the Andrew and Laura McCain Art Gallery, the Meduxnekeag River Association, Florenceville Elementary School, and all of the classes that participated in the contest and brought forth so many creative names.



OHS Youth Stewards of the Environment with new signage.

Stewardship Groups (continued)

stewardship for other preserves, with a goal to develop 10 new stewardship groups in the next year.

This initiative will strengthen the Nature Trust's ability to care for its lands in perpetuity while also engaging new stakeholders from all walks of life in conservation. Just as 'stewardship' means different things to different people, the stewardship responsibilities that are taken on at different preserves will vary depending on community values and environmental needs. The responsibilities that the stewardship groups choose to take on are flexible, with room for innovative ideas and new approaches. For example, the creation of the Friends of Blueberry Hill group led to the multi-year Henderson Brook restoration project, which included the removal of two old, deteriorating culverts, stabilization of the eroding river banks, tree planting, and the installation of a pedestrian walking bridge. The Friends of Grindstone Island are organizing a monitoring trip to the island for next year to complete botanical and ornithological surveys. The Friends of Yerxa Nature Preserve (The Oromocto High School Youth Stewards of the Environment) have spent the past two years monitoring the seasonal changes at the preserve, and have recently helped install a new sign.

This project will have long-term benefits for both the Nature Trust and the local communities. It is all about empowering people to take responsibility for the care of their local environment, and spreading appreciation and awareness for New Brunswick's natural heritage. By establishing groups of people dedicated to the long-term management of nature preserves, the surrounding community will become accountable for these green spaces, learning hands-on how to steward their local environment. We hope to foster a collaborative approach to land conservation and outdoor recreation. We want to get people excited about conservation, and we want to inspire people to enjoy nature with respect, so that future generations can have the opportunity to do the same.



Would you like to receive your Refuge and Annual Reports electronically? If so, please contact Jessica at communications@ntnb.org or contact the office at (506) 457-2398. Also, did you know the Nature Trust sends out MONTHLY electronic newsletters? If you are not receiving these newsletters to your email and would like to, please contact Jessica.

If you or a group you know would be interested in learning more about our stewardship group model and how to get involved, please feel free to contact me at ntnbpreserves@ntnb.org.



Volunteer group at Boars Head Nature Preserve in July (Photo: Richelle Martin)



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