

Summer Events

Frog Walks at Hyla Park Nature Preserve, Fredericton | Thursdays until August 31

Our amphibian adventures happen every Thursday evening from 7 to 8 pm until August 31. If you would like to join up for a Frog Walk, please contact Kaela at kaela.neil@ntnb.org or (506) 458-7556. Private walks can also be booked for classes, daycares, scouts, guides or other small groups.

New River Island Nature Preserve Big Canoe Paddling Trips | Saturday, July 1

For the fourth year in a row, we will be partnering with Canoe Kayak NB, Maritime DayTripping and GetOutside! NB during the Annual Sand Sculpture Competition at New River Beach Provincial Park. Join us from 10 am to 4 pm to bring people on an hour-long paddle to our New River Island Nature Preserve – the beautiful backdrop of the park. No registration is necessary – just find us on the beach that day!

The Great Fundy Cleanup, Charlotte County (volunteers needed!) | Saturday, July 15 (Rain day July 16)

Join us and our many partners for our large-scale, one-day marine debris cleanup event on coastal and island nature preserves and other protected areas in the Bay of Fundy. Cleanups will happen throughout the morning and afternoon, with a celebration event in the Village of Blacks Harbour at 4:30 PM. For more information and to register, please get in touch with Kelsey at kelsey.hogan@ntnb.org or (506) 458-7556.

Village of Bath River Run | Monday, August 7

The Nature Trust is joining the Village of Bath in hosting their annual River Run from Bath Fair Grounds to Florenceville-Bristol, and then on to Hartland on Monday, Aug. 7, with a stop at Green Island Nature Preserve. The Nature Trust will have staff on Green Island leading interpretive activities. Canoe and kayak rentals will be available. To register, please contact Kelsey at kelsey.hogan@ntnb.org or (506) 453-4886. For more information on boat rentals, contact bathfairgrounds@gmail.com or (506) 278-5293 or see bathfairgrounds.com.

Opening of the Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve | Sunday, August 13

Join the Nature Trust and the Elgin Eco Association as we celebrate the protection of the Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve in Elgin, NB. The celebrations will begin at 1 PM at the head of the Mapleton Acadian Trail, with brief speeches and interpretive hikes being offered. A BBQ will start at 2 PM, along with music and games. If you would like more information, please contact Kelsey at kelsey.hogan@ntnb.org or (506) 458-7556.



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The Landscape for Conservation in New Brunswick



Photos: Ferris Street Forest and Wetland Nature Preserve

A message from the President:

Taking a bird's eye view of the Nature Trust's landscape at this moment in time, I can't fail to be impressed by what we, together, have achieved, and the great challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

The Nature Trust is currently celebrating its 30th anniversary of land conservation. We will be celebrating many milestones this year, one of these being the completion of the Campaign for Coastal Land in Charlotte County, a breathtaking accomplishment of fundraising, community mobilization, and conservation. Kudos to our staff, who amaze me with their commitment every single day, to our emeritus trustees Jessie Davies and Ken Hirtle, and to the late Don Dennison, our past president, who never wavered in his faith and determination that we could do it. Of course, none of our accomplishments would be possible without the community volunteer support, the help of other NGOs, corporate donations, and the assistance of elected officials that astounded and lifted us. Our fruitful partnership with the Elgin Eco Association points the way to new projects and new partnerships in beautiful Albert county and the southeast. I can go listing more successful projects in the Miramichi region and in the Oromocto area, but I need to conserve space in this short column for some thoughts about the

future. The success of the Nature Trust over the past several years brings with it new challenges and questions related to growing the Trust and the strategic direction we might follow.

Generational change is sweeping across our landscape. Many of the lands held by New Brunswickers are old homesteads, farms, and other rural properties whose owners have been engaged in land stewardship that includes nature preservation, but also farming and some limited forest land use like logging for personal use and limited timber sale. Many older landowners find that their family members are unwilling to simply take on such a life as land stewards, and yet they care about the land, and recognize the value to both the local community and to wildlife that careful stewardship has created over many years. Can stepping up to help such landowners preserve this kind of harmonious blend of farming, forest stewardship, and nature preservation help advance the mission of the Nature Trust, to conserve, to steward, and to educate?

Our success and ability has not gone unnoticed in other corners of our landscape. We are in conversation with owners of timber lands with whom we might partner to bring more active and rigorous conservation to their lands. Government departments increasingly seek our advice and staff expertise.

An emerging "carbon economy" is another promising and challenging landscape feature to land owners including the Nature Trust. What are the opportunities and risks of these kinds of new-to-us potential partnerships and programs?

The Nature Trust represents a group of citizens concerned with conserving nature. Given this fact, how far should we extend ourselves to meet our mandate to educate, or engage the public on contemporary conservation challenges and the policy and legislative landscape that affects our work? How can we be effective advocates for nature while keeping our focus on land acquisition and stewardship?

Finally, it's no exaggeration to say we are bursting at the seams and require new office space in which to work. This begs the question, "What kind of physical presence on our landscape do we want the Trust to have?" Does our organization have the connections and the community support to contemplate leading the development of a green building in Fredericton that would be a hub for other environmental groups? The first exploratory meetings have already taken place.

Our ambition is great, but we have many questions and are now looking to you, our community, for guidance. Under the leadership of our past president Mike Bonga and Trustee Emeritus Lynn MacKinnon, we have successfully ticked the boxes on our current strategic plan. We have greatly strengthened our business model, including policy development, financial tracking, communication, and record keeping. We have had first conversations about developing a new strategic plan, and we hope to complete that process at a meeting in the fall. Please share with us your views for the Nature Trust so that we will move forward together.

What does the conservation landscape look like to you?

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Become a member of the Nature Trust or renew membership for 2017.

Our network of supporters and members are key to our successes in conservation, stewardship, and education.

Please consider making a donation, become a member, or renew your membership for this year.

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

Name _____

Address _____

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

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

Charitable receipt required? Yes No

Mail to: The Nature Trust of New Brunswick, PO Box 603, Stn. A, Fredericton, NB E3B 5A6

AS A MEMBER, YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- The knowledge that you are a part of efforts to conserve and steward significant natural areas in the province of New Brunswick.
- Two issues of our print newsletter and one copy of the Annual Report.
- Monthly e-Newsletter
- Invitations for field trips, workshops, and other events.
- The right to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- 10% discount on gear, rental, and training at COJO Diving – a Fredericton-based scuba diving business.

Elgin Eco Association: Grassroots approach to land conservation and stewardship



Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve, Photo by Richelle Martin

There are a lot of passionate people in New Brunswick who value the health of the natural environment and our connectedness to it. Having worked closely with community groups on conservation and stewardship of land across the province over the years, the Nature Trust has learned the power of grassroots organizations to influence large conservation action in their communities. The Elgin Eco Association and the successful conservation of the Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve is a great example of this potential.



Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve, Photo by Alyssa Martin Photography

The Elgin Eco Association (EEA) was established in 2005 and is run by dedicated and passionate volunteers with a mandate to encourage healthy outdoor living, sustainability and ecotourism in the community of Elgin, NB. The EEA has maintained the beautiful Mapleton Acadian Forest Trail in their community since the inception of their organization. This 3km trail network takes visitors through mature Acadian Forest, along ravines and across streams. It is used for educational programming and is a draw for hikers from across the province. The EEA has installed educational interpretive signage along the trail, lookout platforms, and nesting boxes for the elusive northern flying squirrel.

The land features true Acadian Forest, with a mix of a variety of hard and soft wood trees including eastern cedar, red spruce, yellow birch and red maple, to name a few. The Acadian Forest is a resilient forest well adapted for our climate and supporting a diversity of understory plant species, birds and mammals. It is classified as an endangered forest type in North America by the World Wildlife Fund, with less than 5 percent of pre-settlement area of intact Acadian forest remaining.

When the area changed land ownership in the summer of

2016 and this Acadian Forest was slated for clear-cut, the EEA took action to conserve the trail and forest. A crowd-funding campaign was developed to raise the funds needed to purchase the land, the EEA held fundraisers, naturalists were invited to compile inventories of species present on the land, and a video with stunning footage from the Mapleton Acadian Forest Trail was developed by photojournalist Nick Hawkins and Ian Lodge, "A Forest is Forever: Help Save Mapleton" which received thousands of views. The EEA approached the Nature Trust to partner on conserving the land and trail and after months of campaigns and fundraising, the Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve was officially protected in December 2016.

Thanks to the efforts and determination of the EEA, the community and numerous supporters and donors, the 64.74 hectare (160 acre) piece of forest and trail is now conserved forever and will continue to be stewarded by the EEA. The Elgin Eco Association and the Nature Trust of New Brunswick will be hosting an opening ceremony for the nature preserve on August 13th to celebrate the newly acquired preserve. A huge thank you to those who contributed to the protection of the Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve, including major funders: Mountain Equipment Co-Op, The New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund, and the Government of Canada through the Natural Areas Conservation Program.



Mapleton Acadian Forest Nature Preserve, Photo by Alyssa Martin Photography

The Nature Trust advocates for conservation, stewardship, and education



Hyla Park Nature Preserve, Photo: Nature Trust of New Brunswick

Navigating the conservation landscape in New Brunswick presents the Nature Trust with many challenges, but also provides us with opportunities to advocate for issues important to our mission. The Nature Trust has engaged with all levels of government to ask questions and to offer advice regarding our ongoing concerns.

Three main areas of interest for the Nature Trust have been: Wetland Management Strategy and the Water Classification Regulations, Large scale Conservation and achievement of national targets set for protected land and water, and Marine Protected Areas in the Bay of Fundy.

Wetland & Water Management

New Brunswick contains a vast network of wetlands. Contributing to the ecological diversity of the province, these wetlands provide habitat, climate change mitigation, and water and air filtration. With many wetlands sitting on or near urban areas where pressure for development is great, the Nature Trust has encouraged the Province of New Brunswick to announce their Long-term Wetland Management Strategy, a crucial tool in the protection of wetlands.

Water classification is an important tool used to protect watersheds and ensure sustainability. The Water Classification Regulation prompted watershed groups in New Brunswick to undertake extensive work, however their work has yet to be put to use by the Province. In March of 2016, the Department of Environment and Local Government announced that they would begin work on a new water strategy. The implementation of an enhanced water strategy for our province is a crucial step in protecting New Brunswick's watersheds.

Large-scale Conservation

The Nature Trust has made significant strides conserving private lands and continues to help landowners understand how they, too, can step up for conservation. At the present time, 49 landowners have made that step. However, the scientific evidence for what it will take to conserve the variety of wild plants and animals, as well as the ecosystems they depend on, suggests much more must be done.

The Government of Canada, in response to this scientific understanding and international commitments, has set a conservation target at 17 percent of Canada's land mass by 2020. Despite the efforts of the Nature Trust and our partners, New Brunswick currently sits at 4.6 percent of land protected – well below the national target. Moreover, the province has not set a 2020 goal to work toward, the way other provinces and the federal government have done. We are eager to join with the Province of New Brunswick to make a commitment to reach that lofty goal of 17% protection.

Conservation easements are increasingly being used as a conservation tool worldwide on privately owned land. An easement protects land that still permits some use of land like recreation, farming and forestry, provided the style of use maintains the land's natural character. Biological features may be preserved, while land uses that permit the owner to enjoy a moderate livelihood from its resources also are permitted. Easements are tailored to meet the specific requirements of each property and donor, with the donor and all future owners legally responsible to conform with the goals of the easement. The Nature Trust's role in this arrangement is to help the landowner to complete

the scientific and legal requirements, to legally register the easement, monitor the easement and to ensure compliance.

We look forward to working with more landowners on conservation easements. We believe governments can help groups like the Nature Trust promote easements among landowners. Easements on private lands could, if strongly promoted, be an important tool to help the province reach conservation goals. Please contact renata.woodward@ntnb.org if you are interested to learn more.

Marine Protected Areas

The Bay of Fundy's ecological diversity and significance is linked to its unique long and narrow shape, creating the highest tides in the world. The large volume of water passing through the narrow passages throughout the Bay produce upwellings that support high concentrations of the plankton that many birds, fish, and marine mammals feed on. Additionally, the Bay is crucial to New Brunswick's economy through both the fishing and the ecotourism sectors.

Much of the waters off southwest New Brunswick have been discussed as potential sites for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to allow for a marine wildlife refuge. The Nature Trust was pleased to learn about the federal support for MPAs and the commitment to protect five percent of Canada's marine areas by 2017 and ten percent by 2020. This is an opportunity to protect coastal areas surrounding the Nature Trust's 15 unique nature preserves around the Southwestern Bay of Fundy. The Nature Trust has encouraged the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to consider the scientific merit of each Ecologically and Biologically Significant Area (EBSA) site so far identified by DFO staff, including those in Passamaquoddy Bay and the waters around the Western Isles and Grand.

Finally, step up to help us to help nature

The Nature Trust encourages anybody interested in any of the topics mentioned above to reach out to the Nature Trust. Connecting with even more individuals and community groups is something we love doing. Together we are stronger and more able to care for our land. We believe this to be the foundation on which wildlife, wild places, people, livelihoods, and communities grow and flourish.

Support Wildlife This Holiday Season



For just \$30, you can symbolically adopt one of New Brunswick's many animals.

Your choices include: Bobolink, Cobblestone Tiger Beetle, Gray Treefrog, Canada Warbler or a Wood Turtle. With the adoption, you will receive a personalized adoption certificate, a fact sheet about the species of your choice, a Nature Trust sticker, and a thank you letter.

This would make an excellent holiday gift, and you would be helping the Nature Trust continue to protect the habitats of New Brunswick wildlife.

*Donations are also eligible for a \$25 charitable tax receipt.

Adoptions can be made through CanadaHelps or by contacting the Nature Trust at chelsea.divalentin@ntnb.org or at (506) 457-2398.

Please note: If this is a gift, please provide 5 business days advanced notice to ensure your gift arrives on time!

Save the Date - On The Rise 2018

Save the date! Our sixth annual fundraiser, On The Rise, will be held on Saturday, April 21st from 7 - 11:30pm at the Crowne Plaze Hotel in Fredericton. This fundraiser helps support the Nature Trust in it's mission to conserve, steward, and educate in New Brunswick. The event will feature a live/silent auction, the Don Bosse Jazz Quartet, a keynote speaker, and appetizers, along with a cash bar. Tickets can be purchased through CanadaHelps or by calling our office at (506) 457-2398.

Thank you to Office Interiors in Fredericton for printing this issue of Refuge!

Love the way you work.



As the Nature Trust approaches the end of its 30th anniversary, we would like to extend a sincere thank you to each of our members, supporters, and dedicated volunteers that have made our organization what it is today.

Our 30th anniversary was celebrated in style, with the official launch happening at our On The Rise fundraiser event, followed by many public paddles, frog walks, and hikes through the beautiful protected natural spaces.

In September, our strategic planning sessions took place at Adair's Lodge. More than ever, we are motivated by the energizing volunteers and supporters that help us achieve our mission every day. Our new five year plan will soon be released to the public. We hope you will join us along the way as we work to achieve these goals and make a difference in growing conservation, stewardship and education efforts in New Brunswick.



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Carli le Roux

Protecting New Brunswick's Wood Turtles



Photo: Dalhousie University - Biodiversity Outreach Guide

Story by Carli le Roux, Conservation Project Coordinator

Walking along a stream with the spring morning just warming up, birds clearing their throats and the gurgle of the stream are the only sounds to be heard. I see a slight rustle on the sand and there it is, a wood turtle! The slight bit of orange on the inside of the legs, giving it away. In no time, it scuttled off at a speed you wouldn't think a turtle could muster; quickly dipping into the stream and it was gone. From this first memory of a wood turtle, I noticed something very striking: turtles do not like to be disturbed.

Many people see wood turtles and some even see them on their own land, but they often do not know that these turtles are a threatened species. It's hard to believe that something you see in your backyard can be threatened. Some people over time recognize specific turtles, feeling connected to them and even naming them. But they know that the best thing to do when you see these unique creatures, is to leave them alone.

Wood turtles are fragile as hatchlings and very few of them survive to become adults. From the moment of digging themselves out of their nests they are exposed to natural and other threats. As adults, their size and shells give them more protection, but it cannot always save them. Some of the major threats adult turtles have to deal with are related to road kill or injury; development of their habitat; farming in the floodplain they use for cover and food; or something as simple as bringing one home to show your kids. These threats are difficult to deal with since it's not only about the natural habitat, but more about the habitat they share with humans.

The Nature Trust's multi-year wood turtle project aims to protect wood turtles through education and public engagement. By tapping into local knowledge on wood turtle the Nature Trust is involving communities in helping with the recovery of this species on private land. Community groups are

providing input on local turtle populations, what the specific threats in their communities are, and how these can be overcome to increase the turtles' chances of long term survival. Some of these efforts involve not bringing attention to them as a species, but instead promoting the concept of leaving all wildlife alone and trying not to disturb wildlife in their environment.

Using information from the communities, help from scientists and experts, the Nature Trust is developing guidelines for landowners to manage their land in a wood turtle friendly way. In the next few years these guidelines will be used to reach out to more communities and landowners with wood turtle habitat. The Nature Trust will work with landowners to help protect and manage the habitat wood turtles need to thrive.

Using these guidelines, the Nature Trust wants to give wood turtles as much protection as they can by helping landowners take care of turtle habitat on their land. Making small changes to the way we do things can keep unique species like wood turtles in our streams, our backyards and our children's memories.

To learn more about this project, and the conservation options available to protect species on your property, please contact Carli le Roux at (506) 457-2398 or carli.leroux@ntnb.org. The Nature Trust acknowledges the support of: Government of Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk and NB Wildlife Trust Fund.

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Photo: Removing Japanese Knotweed in Hyla Park Nature Preserve

Story by Richelle Martin, Stewardship Manager

From Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) to emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), invasive species are having detrimental impacts to biodiversity, economies and human health across the world. Invasive species can be any non-native or introduced species that threaten the natural function of native biodiversity. According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, invasive species are the second most common threat associated with species extinction and the most common threat associated with the extinction of amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.



Photo: Removing Japanese Knotweed in Hyla Park Nature Preserve

The Nature Trust, along with the help of our many volunteers, work to consistently monitor and manage the spread of invasive species within our nature preserves. A significant effort has been put forth to identify the presence of invasive species and the risks they pose to their unique surroundings. Recently, we have begun active removal of invasive species such as Japanese knotweed at Hyla Park Nature Preserve in Fredericton. Japanese Knotweed threatens the lush flora of Hyla Park due to its tendency to outcompete and overcrowd the native wetland vegetation required by the many species found there, such as the park's namesake, the gray tree frog (*Hyla versicolor*). Invasive species removal is both time and labor intensive. Thanks to many volunteers who spent many hours over the summer removing the plant and its roots, as well as disposing plant material, the invasive plant will not spread throughout the preserve.

Education and awareness is at the forefront of the Nature Trust's campaign to manage the spread of invasive species. As an individual, purchasing and planting native species is an effective way to prevent contributing to this growing issue.



Photo: Japanese Knotweed in Hyla Park Nature Preserve

Many non-native ornamental plants have the ability to reproduce and become invasive species. These foreign plants, and the absence of their natural competition, are able to spread and pose as new competition to native flora and fauna

Continual monitoring efforts are necessary to ensure the successful eradication of invasive species. Without the help of our volunteers, stewards, and neighbors, these efforts would not be possible. If you would like to get involved, volunteers are always welcome to assist in developing management plans, spending time outdoors monitoring and removing invasive species, and working to restore our nature preserves. Interested volunteers can contact our stewardship manager Richelle Martin at richelle.martin@ntnb.org or (506) 453-4886.



Photo: New Brunswick Museum, Conservation on Canvas Exhibition

Story by Bethany Young, Engagement Organizer

With throngs of people lining up to get Michael McEwing's autograph, and the New Brunswick Museum full of bright natural landscapes, camera flashes, laughter and stories of these conserved areas around the province, the Conservation on Canvas touring exhibition was launched. Michael's reflections during the grand opening event were a tribute to a lifelong friendship between the Nature Trust of and this talented artist and art educator:

"Nature continues to be a central theme in my art. A deep respect and love of nature has always been an important part of my life. The Conservation on Canvas project started as a personal challenge to discover new areas of New Brunswick landscape and seascape that I had yet to capture in paint. Early on, it began to dawn on me that this project would become about more than just exploring and painting nature preserves. It has become just as much about the incredible people who have joined me on the journey. The Nature Trust of New Brunswick staff, board members, stewards, and volunteers have provided a wealth of knowledge and inspiration along the way. What I have gained from them is now embedded in the works themselves— aesthetic and ecological passion.

My hope is that this exhibition will be a testament to what the Nature Trust of New Brunswick is working so hard to conserve. This series invites the viewer to join me on this adventure of discovering the wide diversity and unique ecology of these outstanding nature preserves. What started as an art project is now something much more—a friendship with an organization that I expect will be a lifelong one." -Michael McEwing



Photo: Michael McEwing painting Connors Bros. Nature Preserve at Pea Point - Doug Dickinson

Featuring preserves from Grand Manan and Blacks Harbour to Shea Lake, the Conservation on Canvas exhibition is a diverse showcase of New Brunswick's landscapes and biodiversity. In

partnership with the New Brunswick Museum and the Nature Trust, the goal of the project is to raise awareness of the natural diversity across the province and to celebrate land conservation as a means of ensuring these landscapes remain protected.

The exhibition will remain at the New Brunswick Museum until mid-January 2018. It will then travel to the Andrew & Laura McCain Art Gallery in Florenceville-Bristol, the Sunbury Shores Arts & Nature Centre in Saint Andrews, the Grand Manan Art Gallery and the Grand Manan Museum. The exhibition tour will conclude at Government House in Fredericton in fall 2018. Art-in-nature workshops on nature preserves will accompany the exhibition at each location, led by McEwing, fellow artists, and naturalists, that will allow guests to deepen their knowledge of local biodiversity and create their own masterpieces.

In honour of the Nature Trust's 30th anniversary, we celebrate the discovery of nature preserves by an artist's creative expression. May these works of art inspire reflection on our province's natural heritage and allow a greater understanding of the importance of nature in the lives of all New Brunswickers.