

NIAGARA ESCARPMENT *Views*

Spring 2014 (March, April, May)

GARDENS!
Annual Special Issue

Faces on the Escarpment

Gardens of Georgetown & Dundas

The Spread of Community Gardens

Jefferson Salamanders Live

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NIAGARA ESCARPMENT **Views**

Spring 2014
(March, April, May)

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Georgetown Horticultural Society
Garden Tour. PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

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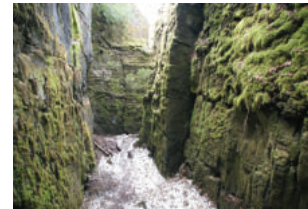
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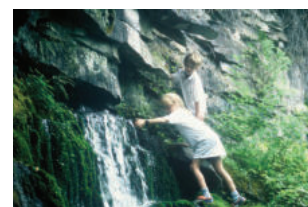


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Letters to the editor may be edited for space and published in the magazine, on the website or in print materials.

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From the Ice Storm to Spring and Beyond

With the Ice Storm of 2013 behind us, many people still may be cleaning up from it through Spring and beyond. It seems that the central part of the Niagara Escarpment was hit the hardest. Owners of forest and woodlands likely have downed trees and broken branches to deal with, and perhaps even new trees to plant. Tree service companies are tremendously busy and have long waiting lists. I have my eye on some large cedar trees that broke off in the storm, whose trunks might make stout posts for a large split-rail arbour that I would really like to have built this year.

Some of the lessons that I've learned from this storm are: I can never have too many large bottles of water for emergencies, it's easy to go to bed early when the house is dark and chilly, a woodstove with cooktop space is a blessing,

and neighbours are happy to help each other. What did you learn from the storm or what damage have you been dealing with?

Luxuriating in Spring

One of the many pleasures of editing a magazine like ours is the need to think about the next season. In the depth of Winter, I'm focussing on Spring: thinking about Spring events, selecting Spring photographs. With the Spring issue always our annual special issue on gardens, I get to luxuriate in gorgeous scenes of design and plantings.

This year we report on two of last year's community garden tours, one in Georgetown and one in Dundas. Mike Davis took some lovely photographs of outdoor spaces to which people obviously dedicate themselves. Friends of mine who are great gardeners, say that they have put more money in the ground than pirates! The best thing is that you

can experience tours like these for yourself this year.

We also include vegetable gardens in this issue, specifically some of the countless public community gardens that have sprouted up along the Niagara Escarpment in recent years. Sue Horner got the dirt on a few of them for us.

Daniel K. Wilson surprised us with his views of the many "faces" he sees in Escarpment territory all year round. He may have you giving things a double take on your own walks.

Conservation

We also invited naturalist Don Scallen to muck about and teach us the ways of the iconic Jefferson salamander. This shy little creature has been known to stop dump trucks, at least indirectly, as its rare status protects its habitats from development.

Finally, we had our intern Amanda Grant look at the work of



the conservation authorities along the Niagara Escarpment: why they were strengthened, and the important role they play in our own World Biosphere Reserve.

Keep sending us your thoughts and special photos. Our Readers and Viewers section is becoming a vibrant part of the magazine, and we all enjoy reading and seeing what you find important.

Gloria

Gloria
editor@NEViews.ca

P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.



Write us at editor@NEViews.ca
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Georgetown ON L7G 2V2.



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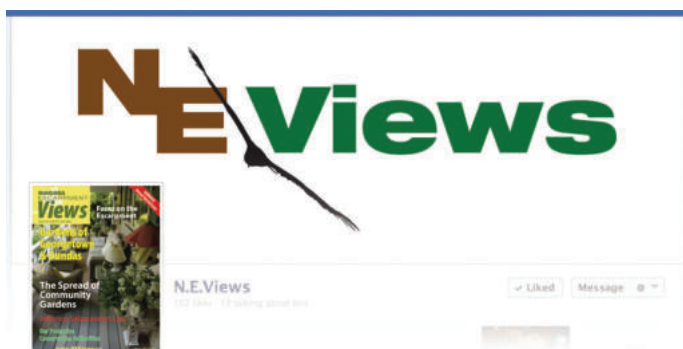
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Our website www.NEViews.ca
has additional content not seen
in our print magazine.

Here's the latest on our blog:

- ▶ Dreaming of Gardens After the Ice Storm
- ▶ Exterior Christmas Decorating Ideas from United Way of Halton Hills' Tour
- ▶ Michael Chong's Reform Act
- ▶ Orangeville Celebrates 150 Years and First Night
- ▶ EcoFest Niagara's TED Talks
- ▶ Niagara Escarpment Mural Artist Robert Johannsen





Readers & Viewers



I just wanted to write to thank you for keeping me engaged with the Niagara Escarpment. After spending 25 years in Georgetown and often walking on the Escarpment alone or with friends, I miss it. However, the Peterborough area has its own charm which I am falling in love with too.. This latest issue has many lovely photos taken by Mike and his article on the e-bike was especially interesting. I remember I bought one in the early days when I was coordinator for Willow Park Ecology Centre and wanted to ride there with sustainable transportation. I never actually got there that way but eventually bought a Smart Car. Your articles, too, are a wonderful read and I know that the magazine is the realization of a lifetime dream. Please keep the great articles coming; I will visit soon.

Ruth Kuchinad, Keene

Got the Views. Very informative, beautiful pics. Great article on bikes.

Marek Jakubczyk, Woodbridge



It was a very good article with the exception of your definition of an eBike. The eBike in your picture is fundamentally an electric scooter with pedals. The pedals are in most cases not very functional, provide little assist and serve only to avoid licensing requirements. Without the pedals the eBike would be considered a low speed motorcycle/scooter and require an entry level motorcycle driving test, licensing and insurance. If owners remove the pedals (generally because of the dangers of low curb clearance) they are required to license & insure the vehicle. Note: eBikes are not allowed on designated bicycle paths and multi-use recreational trails.

There are a variety of good hybrid bicycles available that are primarily bicycles with an electric assist motors. They will get one up the Escarpment but do require active participation.

You are correct that eBikes run the full gamut of quality and it really is the Wild West out there. A lot of early dealers sold them for six months and then disappeared. Parts are a big problem especially when it comes to electric engines and controllers as there are few standards in the industry.

Enjoyed your article and the Views magazine. Cheers and safe cycling.

Patrick (Bear) Maloney, President, Grimsby Active Transportation Committee, Grimsby

Websters Falls & Tews Falls are in Dundas! Great magazine.

Jane Kappele, Dundas

Hi I went to Owen Sound Foodland and they did not have any free copies of your magazine, I would really like to get one, do you know when they will have them in stock?

Dorothy Mercier, via Facebook



Reading Judith Jones letter and Editor response in Winter 2013-14 issue, and checking the locations shown on back cover, this is obviously still a work in progress. I refer you to <http://www.canmaps.com/topo/nts50/topomap/041g16.htm> There is a series of maps covering Manitoulin available, this is the one for Kagawong and West Bay area. If you refer to the map and move the cursor over it, you can see by the elevation lines where the bluffs

run on the north shore of Manitoulin. For example, you show no bluffs along the shore of West Bay, which has prominent bluffs continuing south on past the bottom on both shores. Conversely, you show bluffs on Barrie Island, which is quite low and flat, while the west shore of Bayfield Sound and Cape Roberts are quite high. I am looking to see if I can find a topographic map that shows complete elevation and contour lines of Manitoulin, and will refer or send it to you if I find it. For now, find attached a view from my deck across West Bay showing the Escarpment in the background, which I am fond of referring to as my “million dollar view.” We really enjoyed the issues of the magazine we found in Foodland in Mindemoya.

Bill Elliott, M'Chigengeng





Editor's note: Not everyone on Manitoulin Island enjoys the magazine:

Please take us off of your mailing list! At a meeting in Little Current a few years back, your representative referred to us Island residents as "the ignorant masses." That was rude and ignorant. We do not want to read something published by someone who has no respect for those of us who live on the most beautiful Island in the world. Maybe he is just jealous because he is stuck in the city! TAKE US OFF YOUR LIST!

Glen and Rochel Totman

and

Please remove us from your mailing list as we are among the "people" that your C.E.O. stated that you were trying to save our land from. Generations of us farmers/landowners (people) are the reason that the Manitoulin is so pristine and healthy. WE love our land and do not need your type telling us how to care for it.

Glen Totman, Sheguiandah

Editor's note: We did not have a representative at a meeting in Little Current. We also have no C.E.O. The founders, owners and independent publishers of this publication are Mike Davis and Gloria Hildebrandt. We do respect those who live on Manitoulin and do not tell them how to care for it. We did, however, remove this writer from our mailing list as requested.

Our family are very excited about all the places we will visit this coming year after collecting a plethora of free magazines from *Niagara Escarpment Views*! Thank you for the deal yesterday on our two-year subscription.

Lori Ryan, St. Catharines, via Facebook



Editor's note: With permission, Dianne Miller of Georgetown painted the photo by Helen Powers that was published in Spring 2013. Here are both the painting and the photo as it appeared in Niagara Escarpment Views.

Stories from the Kitchen Garden at Dundurn Castle

Written and photographed by Helen Powers

Hamilton has many beautiful heritage properties which tell stories from the past and show us how people lived here in different eras. One of the most famous is Dundurn Castle, a stunning neoclassical building by Sir John Macdonald in 1829, a lasting testament to the city's history. This property has been the home of many notable residents and has been the site of many important events in the city's history. Today it stands as a testament to the city's rich heritage and is a popular destination for visitors.

Sir John Macdonald was a local politician for 20 years and the premier of Canada from 1873 to 1878. He was the first prime minister of Canada and his name is on many of the buildings in the city. He was a man of many talents and his legacy is still felt today.

Authentic Restoration
The stories of Dundurn Castle's past are brought to life through the restoration of the property. The castle has been restored to its original grandeur, with many of the original features still intact. This allows visitors to experience the castle as it was in the past, providing a unique and educational experience.

Views
16 Spring 2013

The Kitchen Garden at Dundurn Castle
The kitchen garden at Dundurn Castle is a beautiful example of a heritage garden. It was created in the 1830s and is one of the oldest in the city. The garden is filled with a variety of plants, including vegetables, herbs, and flowers. It is a popular spot for visitors to see and is a great place to learn about the history of the castle and the city.

Views
17 Spring 2013

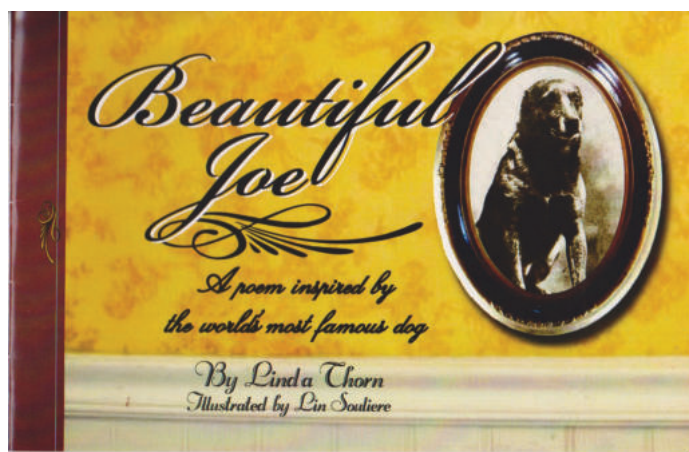
This is Helen's response: Diane did a lovely job! I enjoy the different perception she gives to the scene - showing that the view from the camera lens is only a starting point of how to see the garden.



I recently came across your magazine for the first time at the Eco Fair in Welland in the Fall of 2013. I thought you may be interested in this photo taken from Red Lodge Resort on Lake Manitou of the sun setting over Cup & Saucer.

Chris Spence, St.Catharines





Beautiful Joe Retold

Linda Thorn of Wiarton has written and self published a poem inspired by the Beautiful Joe story. Lin Souliere of Lion's Head created the 14 illustrations in the softcover book. "My goal for re-telling the old story is to further advance the advocacy for humane treatment of animals," writes Thorn. Endorsed by the Beautiful Joe Heritage Society, the work is available online at Amazon Kindle books as *Beautiful Joe – a true dog rescue story*, with a portion of sales going to the Beautiful Joe Heritage Society.

Out-of-Range Spotted Towhee



The appearance of this Spotted Towhee at a feeder in Glen Williams in late January caused a bit of local interest. According to the Peterson Field Guide, the Eastern Towhee is fairly common in eastern Canada, while this Spotted Towhee is uncommon here, usually found in the west. PHOTO BY GARTH RILEY OF ETOBICOKE.



International Appointment for Founders of Books With No Bounds

Julia and Emma Mogus of Oakville, sisters who are the force behind Books With No Bounds which delivers books and improves literacy for Aboriginal youth in Canada, have been appointed as Child Rights Ambassadors for Sweden's The World's Children's Prize.

PHOTO BY JACK MOGUS.

Extend the Gardening Season



Various models of greenhouses are available from Europa Greenhouses, located near the Escarpment in Ballinafad between Georgetown and Erin. Made of aluminum and glass, they come in kit form and can be picked up or shipped anywhere in Ontario. The Princess model, above, is the most popular. There are larger sizes and a smaller, lean-to model. Greenhouse parts are also available. PHOTO PROVIDED.

Theatre Festival Spring Openings

Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Arms and the Man, April 4
Cabaret, April 10
The Charity that Began at Home, April 25
When We Are Married, May 7
The Philadelphia Story, May 15

shawfest.com
1.800.511.shaw

Stratford Festival, Stratford

Crazy For You, April 21
Alice Through the Looking-Glass, April 30
King Lear, May 5
Man of La Mancha, May 8
Mother Courage and Her Children, May 15
A Midsummer Night's Dream, May 16
King John, May 21
Hay Fever, May 28

stratfordfestival.ca
1.800.567.1600



◀ Arms and the Man
illustration by Emily Cooper.
Courtesy of Shaw Festival.

Seana McKenna, Geraint Wyn
Davis and Ben Carlson in Mother
Courage and Her Children.
Photography by Don Dixon.
Digital artist: Krista Dodson.
Courtesy of Stratford Festival. ▼



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▲ Artist Robert Johannsen was joined by daughter Chantal Johnson and son Christopher Johnson at the Nov. 16 reception for his exhibition "Solo" at Williams Mill in Glen Williams. Escarpment-area scenes are on the wall.

Right, Peter Middleton of Owen Sound received a leadership award at the A.D. Latonnell Conservation Symposium on Nov. 21 at Nottawasaga Inn Resort and Conference Centre, Alliston. From left: Dick Hibma, Chair of Conservation Ontario, and Krista McKee, both of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority. ▼



▲ On Nov. 17, a new roof for the Royal Canadian Legion in Lion's Head, paid for by an \$11,000 grant from Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), was celebrated by, from left: Mike Myatt of OTF; Bill Walker, MPP Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound; Milt McIver, Mayor of North Bruce Peninsula; Bob Mansfield, Historian; and Jean Shearer, President of Lion's Head Legion Branch #202 Ladies Auxiliary. Photo by Ross Webb.



▲ From left, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Bill Walker joined Provincial Constable Jon Malott, Provincial Constable Bryan Boshold and Detachment Commander Wayne Thompson, all of the Bruce Peninsula OPP. Malott and Boshold were awarded an Ontario Medal for Police Bravery on Nov. 21 for rescuing a couple from a capsized boat southwest of Tobermory in September 2012. Photo courtesy of Office of the Lt.-Gov. David Onley.



▲ Hayden Downes-Mills of Georgetown held one of his free bike giveaways on Nov. 23. Hayden's Re-Bicycling is a volunteer program that accepts used bikes, saves their parts or repairs them, and gives them away for free. On this day 37 bikes were given out. In total, the program has distributed more than 594 bikes. More information is on Facebook as Hayden's Re-Bicycling or haltongateway.ca/rebicycling.



▲ Malcolm Allen, M.P. for Welland (NDP) attended Eco Fest 2013 in Welland on Nov. 30. Jane Hanlon, executive director of organizer Greening Niagara joined him at the sponsors' sign. *Niagara Escarpment Views* was happy to be a sponsor.

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Events Along the Rock



▲ Justin Trudeau, M.P. and leader of the Liberal Party, toured some towns in the Escarpment area on Dec. 2. Here he meets the public in Georgetown.

The Ice Storm of 2013 caused vast damage to the central part of the Niagara Escarpment among other places. Some people were without power for more than a week around Christmas. This photo was taken Dec. 23. Cleaning up tree debris could go through the spring and into summer. ►



Wearing white, Sylvia Jones, MPP for Dufferin-Caledon mugs for the camera during her free family skate in Caledon East on Jan. 18. ►





▲ Participants in the 2014 Courage Polar Bear Dip dash out of Lake Ontario at Coronation Park, Oakville, on New Year's Day. The event raises money for World Vision's clean water projects.

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Events Along the Rock



▲ The Niagara Bruce Trail Club's annual New Year's Day president's hike was led this year by Barbara Henderson. With a funny hat theme, this hike launched the 50th anniversary year for this local club. There were 50 hikers participating and sharing a hot lunch afterwards. PHOTO BY DANIEL WILSON.

On Jan. 26, as part of Alton Mill's weekend Fire & Ice festival, Andrea Bird gave a demonstration of working with paint and wax. ►

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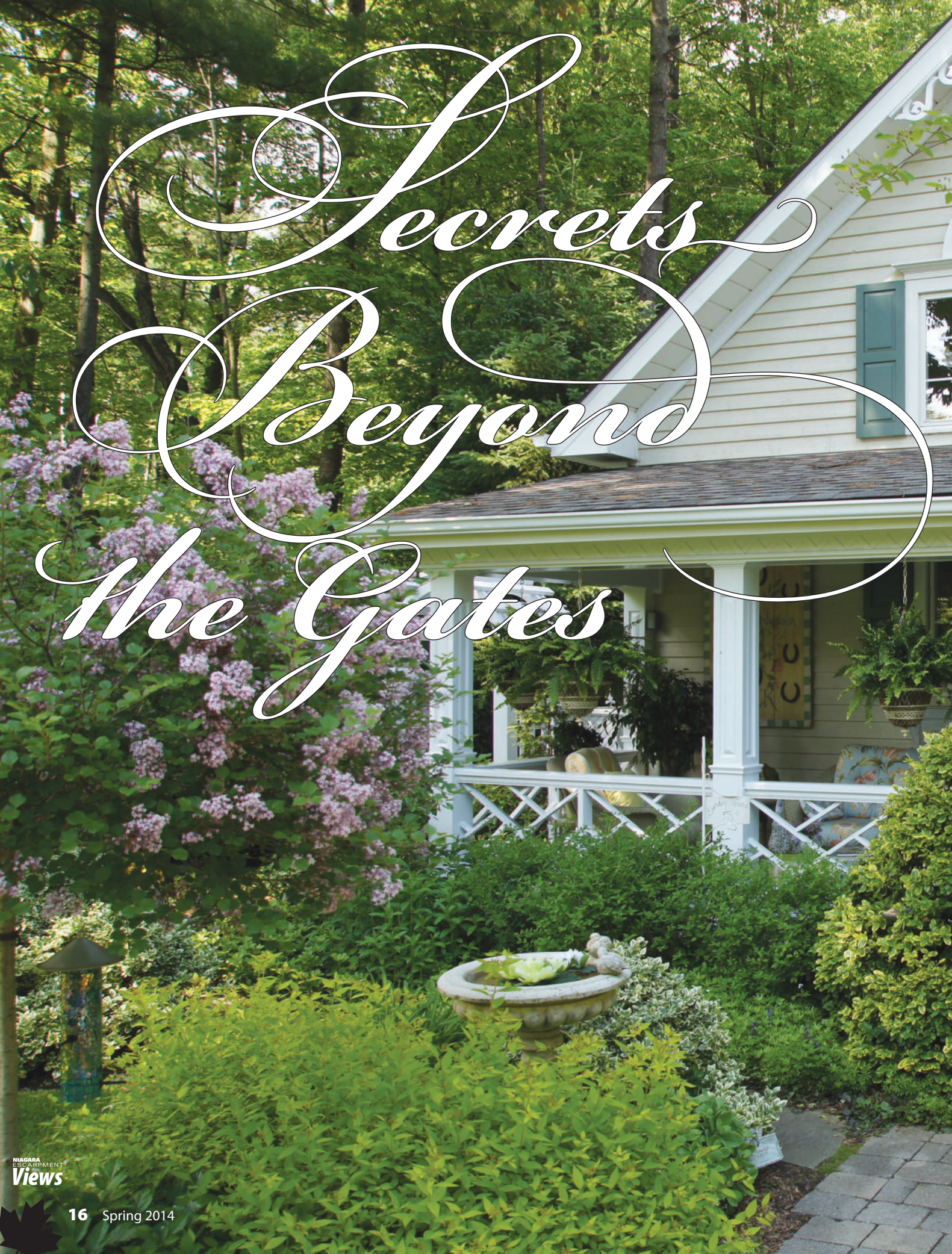
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Secrets Beyond the Gates



Photographs by Mike Davis
Written by Gloria Hildebrandt

Last year, the Carnegie Gallery of Dundas held its Secret Gardens 20th anniversary tour on June 2. The next weekend, Georgetown Horticultural Society let people Through the Garden Gate to see eight selected properties. Interest in these tours seems to be only – well, growing: ticket sales for the Dundas tour were up 50 per cent from last year.

The long winter of dreaming about gardens, planning improvements, wanting to get busy, ends with a spring of melting snow and worrying changes of temperature until suddenly it's early June and there is absolutely everything to do at once: buys seeds, plants and amendments, cultivate beds, plant! And then there are the private garden tours. They take up a precious weekend day when you could/should be in your own garden, but how fabulous and inspiring it is to see what others have achieved! Here is some of what people saw last year in Dundas and Georgetown. **NEV**

▲ Private yet inviting, this end of a large house on Sixth Line near Georgetown is surrounded by lavish plantings providing both seasonal blooms and year-round appeal.

Continued ►

MAGAZINE
SUPPLEMENT
Views



▲ This stunning Beauty Bush in full bloom on this early June day had visitors enthralled. The garden on Metcalfe Court in Georgetown travels steeply down a terraced slope.

Stepping through an arbour is a pleasure. Arbours can define a space, announce a transition, frame a view, invite a stroll. This intriguing arbour made of pipes is in the back garden of a house on Melville St. in Dundas. The blooms, shade trees, water features and meandering paths fascinated visitors. ►

This striking house on a large rural property on Woodhill Rd., Lynden, on the Dundas tour, is beautifully introduced by interesting groundcovers, perennials, flowering shrubs, evergreens, a crazy paving stone path, and stately arbour. The property also features a circulating waterfall to a large natural pond. The owners are professionals; they run a commercial greenhouse operation. ▼



This shady front garden without lawn, on Georgetown's Queen St., shows its owners' love of hostas and rhododendrons. Although relatively young, begun in 2008, this impressive garden fills the large lot, including the side and back yard of the house. ►





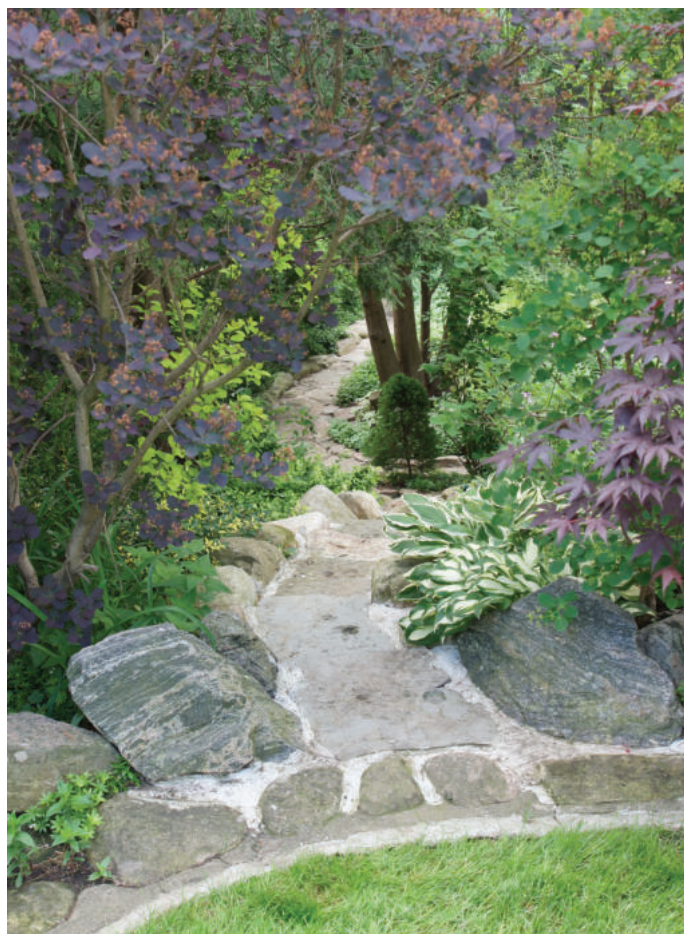
▲ Gardens edging the front steps provide a welcome to a beautiful curving verandah at the front of this house on South St. West in Dundas. Around the back, a small garden surrounds a water fountain and a large outdoor living space offers cooking, dining and lounging near an outdoor gas fireplace. ▼

Snow-in-summer trails over the retaining walls hand built by the owner of this terraced front garden on Queen St., Georgetown. A variety of perennials, shrubs, stately trees and a row of bright red geraniums fills the beds. ▼



▲ One of several members of the Dundas Valley School of Arts found the view of this back garden on Cayley St. in Dundas so beautiful, she spent the day painting outside. Flat rock walls hold garden beds on the rolling multi-level ¾-acre property. ▼

This garden on Chelvin Dr. in Georgetown has an extensive structure of beautiful rocks cemented in place to define walkways and garden beds. The garden descends in the rear, among colourful trees, shrubs, evergreens and ground covers. ▼



Community garden move

Written by Sue Horner Photographed by Mike Davis



ment growing like a weed:

*Peek over the fence at some
of the community gardens
taking root along the
Niagara Escarpment...*



Lush green leaves marked the spinach patch beside Chris Hadfield Public School in Milton last year. At least, the patch was lush during first recess. Word spread quickly once children working in the 18-bed community garden had a taste.

"The kids had never picked and eaten something they had grown," says teacher Erin Walsh. "By second recess, word had flown through the school, and the crop was decimated."

That's just one of the benefits of a community garden: Notoriously picky children will eat anything they had a part in growing. Even better, it's local, healthy food.

A community garden is one that grows or offers space to grow food to meet the needs of a neighbourhood's residents. Besides tasty spinach, the benefits include reducing climate change, supporting the local economy, and contributing to food banks.

Tending the gardens is also a family-friendly physical activity that promotes community spirit and a connection with nature. Those with green thumbs pass along their knowledge, and rookies gain a sense of accomplishment.

▲ BurlingtonGreen volunteers and sponsors work this Central Park Victory Garden, growing some fresh food for local food banks.

Continued ►

NIAGARA
ESCARPMENT
Views



▲ The front of Beaver Valley Community School in Thornbury has a mural of the Niagara Escarpment by Mark Osborne, at the back of a garden.

Michelle Bennett, co-ordinator of Burlington's Central Park community garden shows visitors one of the thriving garden beds packed with fresh salad greens. ▼

Marigolds glow in the evening near St. George's Anglican Church, Owen Sound. The old tennis court is now home to one of the many gardens in the Community Garden project run by Canadian Mental Health Association of Owen Sound. Tomatoes ripen in raised beds behind. ►





'Backyards' in Burlington

Over a two-year pilot, 168 eager gardeners vied for 29 plots at the Central Park community garden in Burlington. Its success will mean two new gardens in 2014.

The City of Burlington funded the garden in 2011. BurlingtonGreen, a non-profit environmental association, received a provincial grant to operate the garden for the city. Local businesses sponsored garden beds in the communal "victory garden," planted with vegetables that are donated to local food banks.

"We chose Central Park for the pilot because it's already busy with soccer, baseball, a seniors' centre, arena and washrooms, and we get daily visitors," explains Michelle Bennett, co-ordinator of the program.

Central Park is an allotment garden, where the city rents plots to residents. Bennett likens the setup to a complex of backyards, with gardeners chatting and sharing advice about staking tomatoes or dealing with potato beetles.

"There are so many nice stories from the garden," she says. "One woman rented a plot as a birthday present for her 92-year-old grandfather because it gives them something to do together."

All about community

For the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) of Owen Sound, "community" sums up the appeal of its garden project.

"When people walk by our gardens, they stop and chat," says Teresa Pearson of the CMHA's Grey-Bruce branch. She co-ordinates CMHA's social recreation program, which offers social interaction to help those diagnosed with mental health disorders gain independence and purpose.

The project began in 2009 in a small vegetable patch,



▲ Children of Chris Hadfield Public School in Milton autographed this sign commemorating the day in May 2012 when the community garden was created.

with its produce supporting a brunch program at the CMHA's drop-in facility. Since then, CMHA has added four more gardens and 63 community garden plots. "Snack gardens" also let passersby pick cherry tomatoes and other goodies from planters.

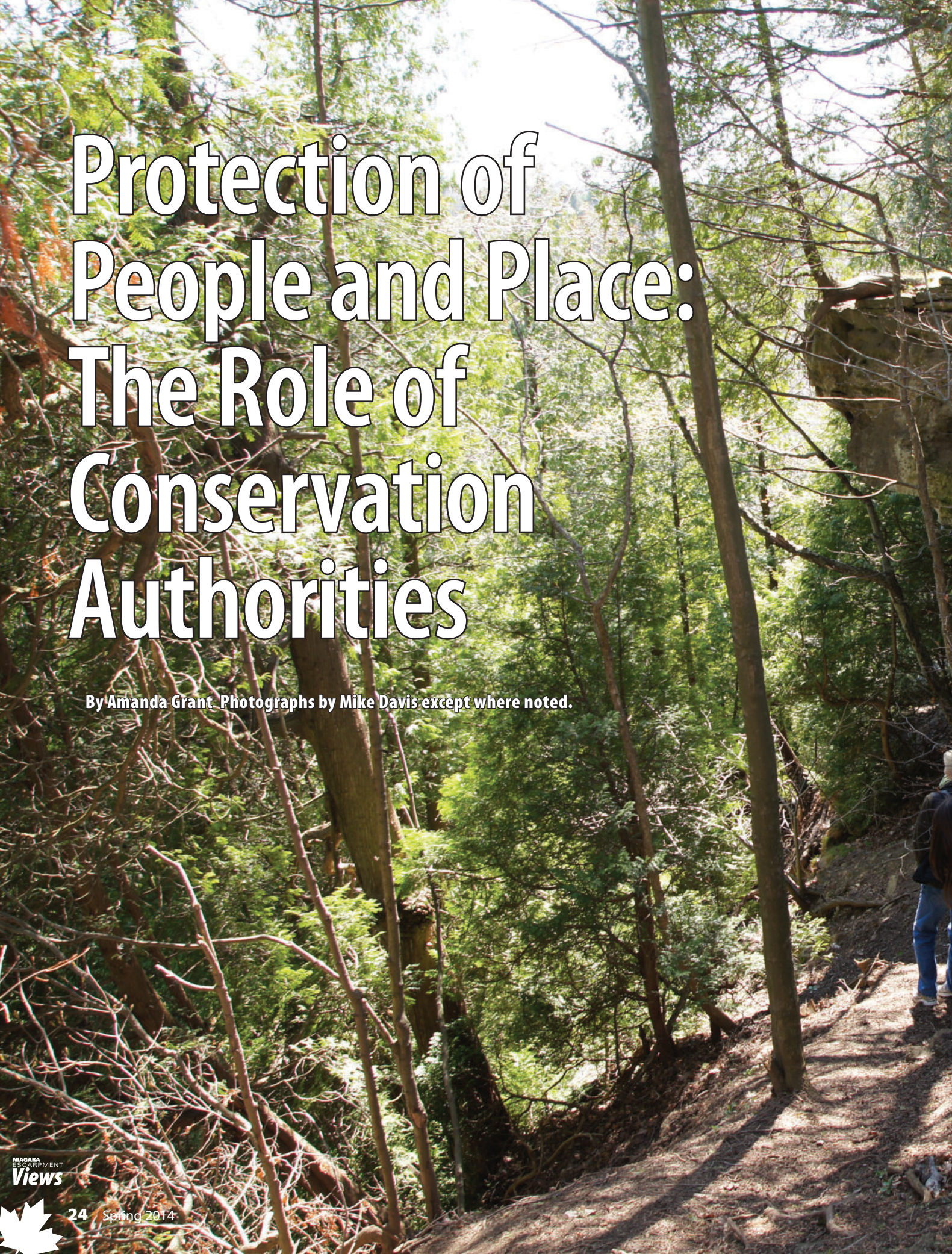
Employees and clients do the planting, weeding and harvesting. Master gardeners offer advice on rotating crops or dealing with bugs.

"The community garden project means so much to people," says Pearson. "We have hired some of our clients to work in the garden, and this can be the first job they have held."



Continued on page 40 ►

NIAGARA
ESCAPMENT
Views



Protection of People and Place: The Role of Conservation Authorities

By Amanda Grant Photographs by Mike Davis except where noted.



On Oct. 15, 1954, Hurricane Hazel hit Toronto and the surrounding areas, killing 81 people. Thirty-five of these deaths occurred on Raymore Drive, a residential area that was built up in the Humber River floodplain. In the wake of such destruction, the Government of Ontario took a closer look at existing legislation regarding conservation authorities (CAs). Hurricane Hazel helped illustrate why the Conservation Authorities Act was needed, not only to protect lands and animals, but also the human population.

As Hurricane Hazel rolled into Ontario, it was clear that the city of Toronto was ill prepared to deal with a storm of this magnitude. Having already experienced particularly heavy rain, the water levels in Toronto were high. The army was called in to help deal with the hurricane damage, but thousands of people lost their homes in extreme flooding. As a result, today the Ontario Conservation Authority is divided into jurisdictions based on watersheds and has regulations to protect them.

The Conservation Authorities Act was first legislated in 1946 by groups concerned over the health of renewable natural resources in Ontario. In the wake of Hurricane Hazel, greater power was given to CAs. Areas like Raymore Drive had been developed residentially in spite of its location in a floodplain. If this practice was ended, fewer people would be in harm's way. By expanding the power of the CAs,

◀ People enjoying the Niagara Escarpment in April during the annual Hawkwatch at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area, part of Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

Continued ▶

NIAGARA
ESCARPMENT
Views





▲ Although the Credit River winds through Halton Hills, which is part of the Region of Halton, it is part of the watershed managed by Credit Valley Conservation Authority, based in Peel Region. CAs have jurisdiction over lands according to how water flows. This is the Credit in March.

In 1954, Hurricane Hazel caused death and destruction in Toronto. To prevent future losses such as these destroyed homes along the Humber River, Conservation Authorities were given control of floodplains.

PHOTO BY MARTIN TAYLOR, TAKEN OCT. 16, 1954, COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA CREATIVE COMMONS. ►



the government allowed them to purchase and take control of lands located in potential flood areas and allowed for regulation and acquiring of lands for recreation.

There are 36 CAs in Ontario, with six located along the Niagara Escarpment. These six stretch from Niagara up to, but not including, the Bruce Peninsula: Niagara Peninsula, Hamilton, Halton, Credit Valley, Nottawasaga Valley and Grey Sauble. All work to protect the environment and human population around the Escarpment and include three of the Great Lakes plus countless rivers, creeks and streams. Boundaries for each CA are based on water flow rather than city and town boundaries. This means that while residents might live in Halton, the land their homes sit on may be part of Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVCA) because of the direction ground water flows.

The common mandate shared by most CAs is to protect, restore and manage natural resources including waterways and lands, to monitor watersheds and waters for public safety, and to protect ecosystems. To achieve this, the Niagara Escarpment has to be understood.

“The Escarpment plays a major role in our job,” explains Judi Orendorff, Director of Lands and Natural Heritage for CVCA. “It creates different climates which result in unique habitat communities. For example, the Escarpment literally creates a physical barrier in part of the Credit Valley area. You will find different fish in one part of the area than another. It impacts what species live where.”

People Vs. Nature

Chris Hamilton, Community Relations officer with Hamilton Conservation stresses that it takes the community as a whole to protect the environment, and that it's important to educate the

Continued on page 44 ►





Highlights of Conservation Halton

- The Niagara Escarpment is a feature in five of Conservation Halton's Parks (Crawford Lake, Hilton Falls, Kelso/Glen Eden, Mount Nemo, and Rattlesnake Point) and drew more than 800,000 people in 2012.
- From an ecological standpoint, the Niagara Escarpment within Conservation Halton's watershed is home to many of Ontario's species at risk, notably the Jefferson Salamander.
- Conservation Halton spans 1,000 sq. km of land, 17 creeks, approximately 26 km of Lake Ontario shoreline, extensive forest cover and 80 km of the Niagara Escarpment.
- Mandate is to create avenues for sustainable synergy between the natural world and the 511,000 residents that make up the Halton watershed.
- There are significant challenges to overcome and adapt to as we work to protect our natural spaces and ensure that the ecological needs of the environment are met. As we manage these spaces, we have to consider the needs of business and citizens while grappling with stressors that include: climate change, intensified urbanization and growth, pollution, the introduction of non-native invasive species.

Norm Miller,
Communications Advisor,
Conservation Halton

◀ This well-used trail in the popular Inglis Falls Conservation Area, part of Owen Sound's Grey Sauble Conservation, shows the exposed roots of trees, caused by foot traffic from the roughly 30,000 visitors each year. BY KRISTA MCKEE.



Endangered, Iconic Jefferson Salamander



Written and photographed
by Don Scallen

The Jefferson salamander stirs as snowmelt trickles into her subterranean realm. Bare-skinned, soft-bodied and scarcely as thick as an index finger, she crawls methodically upwards through fissures in the dolomite rock. Then, gaining the surface and finding that a protective cloak of darkness has settled over the forest, she creeps into the leaf litter.

Her keen olfactory sense registers the odour wafting from a particular vernal pool – “her” pond, the one where she hatched and the one she has returned to every spring for a dozen years.

At the pond she slips into the ring of open water surrounding the largely ice-covered surface. The temperature of the water is scarcely above zero, but still fully adequate for Jefferson salamander breeding. Within a few days she will mate, lay her precious eggs and then retreat back underground where she will remain for the next 11

months, until the revolving Earth again tilts the northern hemisphere towards the sun.

I’ve watched Jefferson salamanders over many springs. I find it astonishing that these small vertebrates, bereft of fur or scales, can thrive in temperatures that leave their human observers, wrapped in winter parkas, shivering pondside. Some years they even arrive at the ponds before winter has lapsed. On March 18, 2012 I found Jefferson salamanders breeding at a pond near Terra Cotta. Freshly laid eggs were clustered along submerged branches.

These egg masses are smaller than those of the more abundant Spotted salamander. Whereas a Spotted salamander egg mass can approach the size of a closed fist and contain 200 or so eggs, a typical Jefferson egg mass is about thumb-sized, containing generally, from 10 to 60 eggs.

Secrets Yet to Learn

The scarcity of Jefferson salamanders and the brief window of opportunity to observe them above ground, means we undoubtedly have a lot to learn about them. Jim Bogart, Professor Emeritus at the University of Guelph and the pre-eminent Jefferson salamander expert in Canada, says “One would think studying a species for over 30 years would reveal all of their secrets but I think we are still in the initial stages.”

During his decades of Jefferson salamander research Bogart focused on their perplexing genetics. What he discovered was astonishing. He found that Jefferson salamanders, along with other species of related salamanders, live alongside a fifth column of all female clones that perpetuate themselves, in Bogart’s words, by “stealing sperm from the males.”

▲ The endangered Jefferson salamander returns each spring to the forest pool where she was hatched, to lay her own eggs. Photographed in March, the beginning of the breeding season, this vernal pool is on the Niagara Escarpment near Terra Cotta.

Continued ►

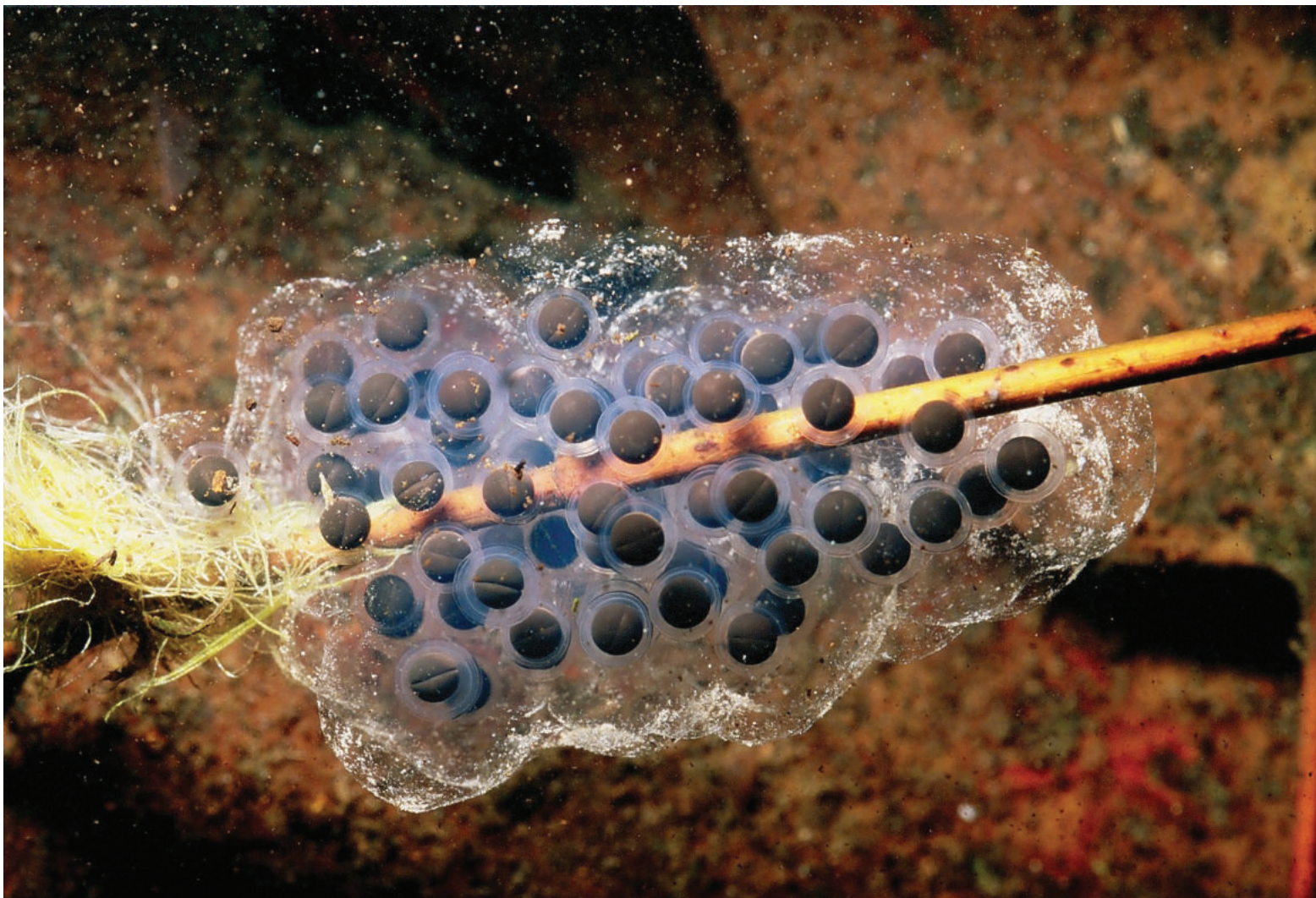
NIAGARA
ESCARPMENT
Views



▲ The Jefferson salamander was designated an endangered species in 2010.

Jefferson salamanders surface in early spring to mate and lay eggs, and then return underground for 11 months. ▼





▲ A Jefferson salamander egg mass, laid underwater, contains only from 10 to 60 eggs. Don Scallen's years of patient exploration of Escarpment wetlands have resulted in his breathtaking photography.

Along with his ground-breaking genetic research, Bogart presided over studies of Jefferson salamander habitat. One of his students, Karine Berault, looked at the critical habitat of Jefferson salamanders for her Master's thesis. This research involved inserting small transmitters into the body cavities of female salamanders. One memorable field session Berault followed a salamander that was moving far too fast. The puzzle was solved when Berault tracked the signal to a gartersnake. Berault, snake in hand, returned to Bogart's University of Guelph lab, where she awaited the inevitable reappearance of the swallowed transmitter.

Along with discovering that gartersnakes feed on Jefferson salamanders, Berault's research discovered that Jefferson salamanders could travel more than one km from their breeding ponds. This had important implications for habitat protection. Bogart says "Prior to my study, developers assumed that a 30 metre 'buffer' was all that a salamander would need around a breeding pond."

"Gartersnake" instead of the two-word "garter snake" is the new spelling, decided a few years ago by the Canadian Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Network.

The Jefferson salamander was designated as an endangered species in 2010 by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Professor Bogart explained the reasons: "This salamander has a restricted range within populated and highly modified areas. Over the past three generations, the species has disappeared from many historic locations and the remaining locations are threatened by development, loss of habitat, and potentially the presence of those sperm-stealing unisexual populations of salamanders." Jeffersons are found primarily along the Niagara Escarpment with outlying populations in

Norfolk County, York Region and a few other locales.

Niagara Escarpment a Necessity

The deciduous forest of the Niagara Escarpment offers the Jefferson salamander the best hope for survival. Crucial is the continuity of that forest, for it allows the salamanders to travel, maintaining the health of the species through genetic mixing.

Recently, a swath of this Niagara Escarpment forest was threatened by a quarry expansion proposed by Nelson Aggregates in the Mount Nemo area of Burlington. The humble

Continued on page 48 ►

**NIAGARA
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"The Castle" on DeCew Road overlooking the Niagara Escarpment near St. Catharines.
Photograph by Mike Davis

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◀ Sunburst Locust trees provide a high canopy over this peaceful seating area surrounded by flowering bushes at the back of a house on Little John Rd., Dundas.

Shallow but wide, this garden on Georgetown's Chelvin Dr. is a 28-year-old beauty with a pond, large established flower bed and a planter bench from which to enjoy it all. ▼



◀ Sometimes the simplest treatment can provide a big impact. At the side of a large rural garden on 15 Sideroad near Georgetown, two purple Muskoka chairs and a yellow lantern punctuate the gorgeous green.

▲ One of many beautiful scenes in a large country garden on Old Hwy. 99, Dundas. This path passes a waterfall, leads through a large seat-arbour, toward sculptures and antique cars displayed through the property.

Continued on page 36 ►

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▲ A small lot on Cayley St., Dundas, packs in a lot of charm with a large patio, welcome shade trees and a fenced-off dog run.





▲ It's always party time in this back yard on Abel Court in Dundas, with an impressive wood-fired pizza oven cabana and a nearby outdoor, in-ground hot tub surrounded by a patio.



◀ A long border blooming in blue on a hot June day in Lucy Maud Montgomery Garden, Norval, at the edge of Georgetown. Volunteers created and maintain this tribute to the author of *Anne of Green Gables*, a resident of the village in the 1930s. The large roadside garden includes a gazebo with quotations from Montgomery's works and a famous analemmatic sun dial, in which the viewer's shadow serves to mark the time.

▲ This garden on Grant Ave., Dundas, descends a steep ravine and has a dramatic entrance along a waterfall and fish pond. The central terrace seating area has an arbour with birdhouses, a sun dial and fountain.

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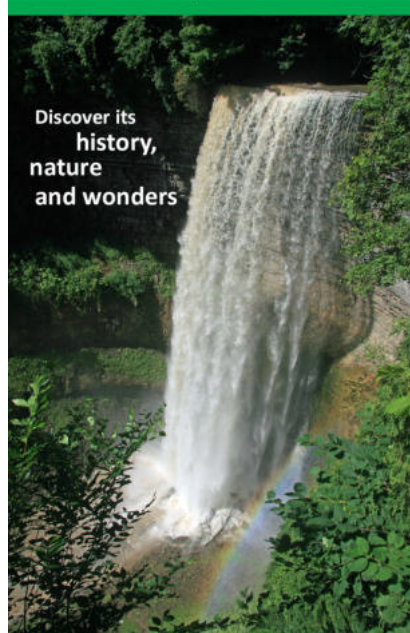
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Ideas for Transplanting



Give houseplants a summer vacation in a sheltered spot outside.



Furnish a sheltered outdoor space near the garden.



Place fake snakes near the vegetable patch to frighten off rabbits.



Muddy garden gloves drying outside make a charming display.



Highlight an old stump by adding a hanging flower basket above it.



Frame a pretty potted plant with a rustic easel.

Attach planters to a tall fence for high interest.

For a healthy natural pond, let native plants form a tall screen at the edge.

Plant the boulevard space beyond the sidewalk.



Consider using everything as a planter, even an old iron woodstove.

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▲ Gardens ripen in August when schools are out. The Chris Hadfield Public School Garden has Swiss chard, tomatoes, sunflowers and more, ready for picking.



Single hollyhocks bloom cheerfully in the Beaver Valley Community School. ▼





In the back yard of Beaver Valley Community School, a pergola stands ready to support vines planted at the corners. ▼

Eat local

Greening Niagara believes consuming local food is the most effective action we can take on climate change. Besides requiring less fuel to ship, local produce is less likely to be genetically modified or contaminated with pesticides.

The group received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to provide community gardens and related workshops. In three years, it has started 15 gardens in multiple communities throughout Niagara, including St. Catharines, Thorold and Welland.

“The *Living in Niagara* report helped us determine where to locate the gardens,” explains Jane Hanlon, executive director. “We want them within walking distance of apartments, areas where there are seniors and children, or communities without grocery stores.”

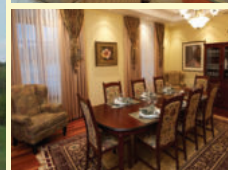
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▲ At the Owen Sound community garden, master gardeners provide helpful advice, and are acknowledged.

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Greening Niagara works with community volunteers to set up the garden, and shares techniques for soil structure, gardening, composting, canning and more.

The Centennial garden in

St. Catharines hosts seasonal work parties to maintain the plots, followed by potluck lunches.

"The bonding is so beneficial, especially to newcomers to Canada,"

At right, Sean James, sustainable gardening columnist for this magazine, discusses the health of plants with visitors to the Central Park garden in Burlington. ▼



What do community gardens grow?

Burlington encourages high-yielding beans, spinach, lettuce, zucchini, radishes and kohlrabi.

CMHA likes produce that can be frozen, processed or thrown into soups, stews or salsa.

Greening Niagara's favourite item is squash, because it's nutritional, filling and stores well. It also helps break up the soil for future plantings.

Chris Hadfield School appeals to students with fast-growing sunflowers, abundant zucchini and unusual purple carrots. They experiment with tomatoes later turned into ketchup, vegetables made into soup and kale eaten as kale chips.

Hanlon says. "They may struggle with language but still make connections in the garden."

Learning by doing

Back at Chris Hadfield school, the two-year-old garden has become a living, breathing classroom.

"The school uses the garden to provide hands-on experiences that make math come alive," Walsh says. "We also use it to talk about ecological footprint, water conservation, local food, composting and more."

The garden also builds connections within the fast-growing, diverse community. A mix of students and teachers do the planting, watering and weeding, with families helping out over the summer. The school also plants items like karela, a type of bitter gourd, that are familiar to diverse cultures.

Meanwhile, the seeds planted at Christopher Hadfield have sprouted in another way: Walsh has moved to a new school, where she's overseeing the start-up of a second community garden. **NEV**

Sue Horner is a freelance writer who lives in Oakville and recalls the excitement of planting fast-growing radishes for her two young sons. Her last article for this magazine was "Antiquing: A Treasure Hunt Through Time," Summer 2009.

Here are some of the other gardens along the Escarpment:

HALTON HILLS

Acton Community Garden, Rotary Park, off Elizabeth Street

Collingwood

Cook Community Garden, Leslie Drive
Osler Community Garden, 785847 Grey Road 19

FORT ERIE

Sally's Garden, 255 Gilmore Road;
another on Dominion Road

HAMILTON

Hamilton Community Garden Network, 22 Veevers Drive

Hamilton Sustainable Victory Gardens, 504 Upper Sherman Ave.

West Highland Church (the King's Garden and the Hamilton Community Garden), 1605 Garth Street

MEAFORD

Georgian Bay Secondary School Community Garden, 125 Eliza Street

OAKVILLE:

Three community allotment gardens, at Shell Park, Kingsford Gardens and Lyons Lane

RIPLEY:

Bruce Botanical Food Garden, 62 Park Street

THORN BURY

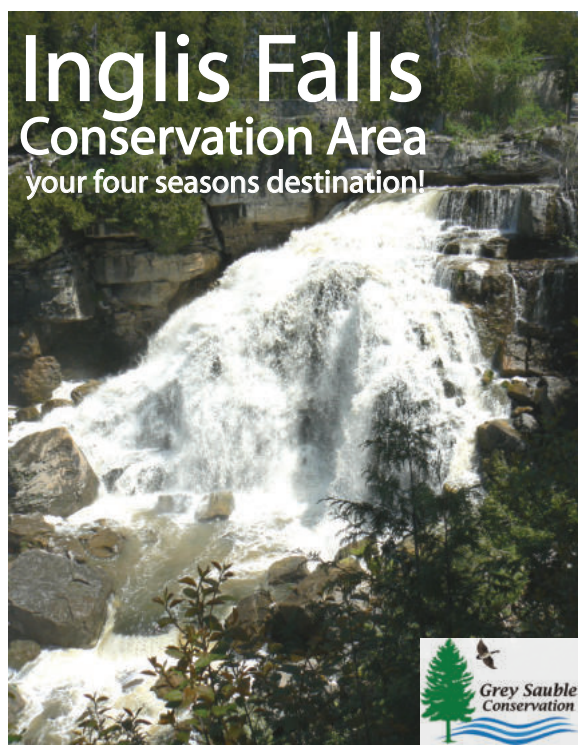
Beaver Valley Community School Community Garden, 189 Bruce Street

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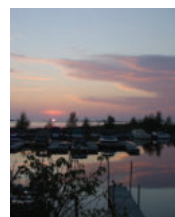
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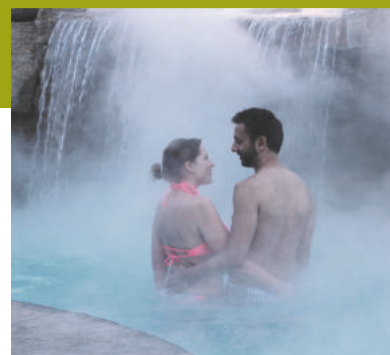
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As the CA serving the largest urban population in the Niagara Escarpment, Hamilton Conservation Authority has to manage the pressures of human activity and development on nature. Here, the view from the Escarpment shows the Burlington Skyway, left, and the industrial section of Hamilton, right. ►





◀ Even in mid-May, the Singhampton Caves on a Blue Side Trail of the Bruce Trail remain cool enough to retain snow and ice. These caves are in Nottawasaga Bluffs Conservation Area, run by Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

public in how to help manage conservation areas.

“One of our more difficult issues is to strike a balance between public use and public overuse,” he says. “Trails and natural areas are becoming more and more popular and as our population grows the increase in human traffic to these areas increases as well.”

Krista McKee, Community Relations Coordinator with

Grey Sauble Conservation in Owen Sound, explains that “With the increase in tourism our trails of course receive more wear and tear. There is soil compacting, erosion and tree roots exposed. We have created looped trails in some of our conservation areas in conjunction with the Bruce Trail, as well as built boardwalks and

Continued on page 46 ►

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The common mandate shared by most CAs is to protect, restore and manage natural resources including waterways and lands, to monitor watersheds and waters for public safety, and to protect ecosystems.

changed trail routes to preserve areas of concern.” McKee points out that Inglis Falls Conservation Area has 30,000 visitors each year, with 25,000 of them in June, July, August and part of September.

Kim Frohlich, an ecologist with Niagara Peninsula

Conservation Halton has Hwy 401 running right through the Escarpment near Milton. This view is from Rattlesnake Point looking across to Mt. Nemo, only two of their seven conservation areas. ▼



▲ From Grey Sauble Conservation's Old Baldy, the view of Beaver Valley is vast, showing few buildings.

Conservation Authority, adds that the larger the population, the bigger the risk is to at-risk species along the Escarpment.

Demands of New Development

“Certainly not unique to Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), growth and development pressures are one of the most pressing challenges we face in protecting the watershed and promoting sustainable development,” agrees Heather Kepran, Communications & Public Relations Coordinator for NVCA. “By 2031, more than 100,000 new residents will call the watershed home. NVCA needs to ensure that new development is done with regard to flood and erosion risk, promote environmentally friendly stormwater management to safeguard surface water quality, and be aware that new demand for outdoor recreation may put pressure on natural areas.”

Every day CAs along the Escarpment work to “manage priorities,” Orendorff says.





Conservation Authorities Along the Niagara Escarpment

They ensure the environment functions in a healthy, sustainable way, while allowing the human population in these areas to prosper. The job of the CAs isn't just about protecting land and trees and water, it's the delicate job of fostering the unique species of the Niagara Escarpment while meeting the needs of the population.

From water resource managers, to ecologists, to watershed planners and administration to watershed planners and administration, staff members play an important role in the function of CAs. The public is also encouraged to get involved by volunteering with any of the CAs and contributing to the management of natural resources. Opportunities to plant trees and pull invasive species are offered frequently.

"Be vocal," adds Hamilton. "Support conservation. Let others know and let your children know. Take your kids or your friends out to a conservation area and experience what you can't get at a city park. Once it's in your blood, you'll never be rid of your love of nature or the outdoors." **NEV**

From south to north:
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (npca.ca)
Hamilton Conservation Authority (conservationhamilton.ca)
Conservation Halton (conservationhalton.ca)
Credit Valley Conservation Authority (creditvalleyca.ca)
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (nvca.on.ca)
Grey Sauble Conservation (greysauble.on.ca)

In Canada, the Niagara Escarpment continues through Bruce Peninsula and Manitoulin Island, but both areas are without conservation authorities. The Niagara Escarpment comes very close to, but does not appear in, **Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority** (svca.on.ca).

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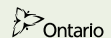
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Jefferson salamander became the totem animal for the opposition to this proposal.

In the fall of 2012 the “Joint Board,” a group of government agencies made up of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Region of Halton, the City of Burlington, Conservation Halton and the Niagara Escarpment Commission, ruled against the quarry expansion. The Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) provided the necessary underpinning for this decision. One of the primary objectives of the NEP is the protection of “unique ecologic areas,” in this case being the habitat of the endangered Jefferson salamander.

Of course the defeat of the quarry application did more than protect the Jefferson salamander. As Professor Bogart says, “Habitat protection for one species can protect many other plant or animal species that have not been adequately studied and may exist in the same rare or unique habitats.” The Jefferson salamander became the unlikely champion of a myriad of other life forms.

I’m thankful that the Niagara Escarpment Plan saved the Jefferson salamander and its habitat in Burlington. But I wonder about the prospects of diverse natural habitats that do not have “endangered” species to rally around – or the provisions of a Niagara Escarpment Plan to protect them.

And I wonder too, about a more fundamental question. Almost every village, town and city in Ontario and, of course, the province as a whole, looks to

Continued on page 50

**A sleepy-looking Jefferson
salamander lays eggs
on a submerged stick in
a spring pond. ►**





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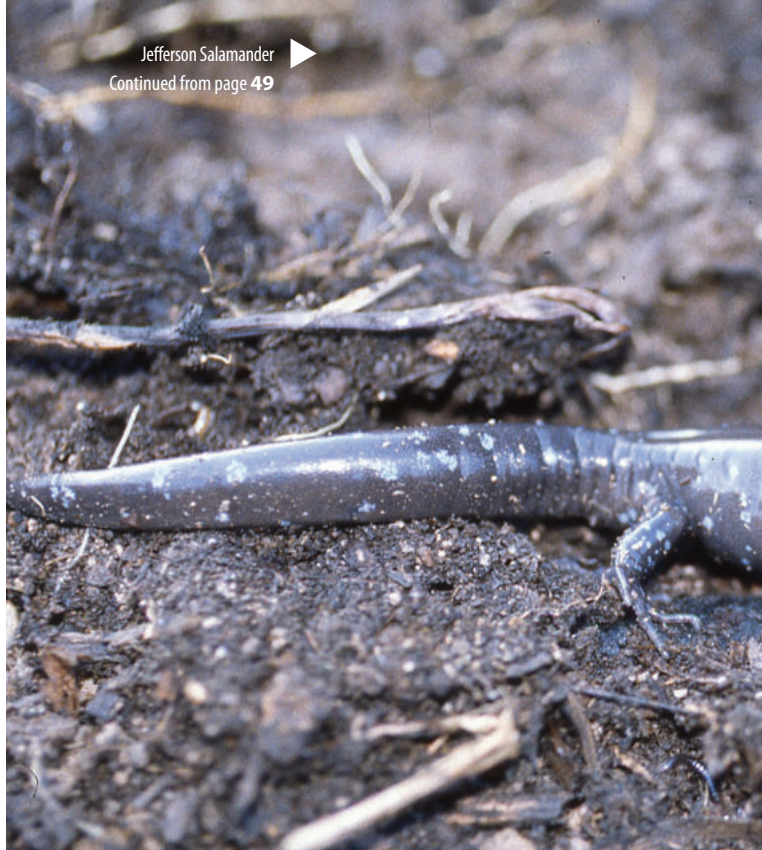
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50 Spring 2014

Jefferson Salamander
Continued from page 49



▲ Jefferson salamanders have a grey or brown back, and may have blue flecks on the sides and limbs. There are also different species of salamanders, the more abundant Spotted salamanders, with yellow spots, and Blue-spotted salamanders.

Leaf litter helps to camouflage this Jefferson salamander. Note the blue specks on its sides and limbs. ▼

continued growth for economic salvation. That growth, of course, requires tremendous quantities of aggregate. The pressure to mine the valuable dolomite of the Niagara Escarpment, the stronghold of the Jefferson salamander, will remain intense.

This spring however, I'll try to forget this uncomfortable





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truth and once again venture into the cold night to welcome the Jefferson salamanders back to the vernal pools – a mysterious and wonderful rite of spring that has likely unfolded for thousands of years - and one that can so easily be brought to an end. **NEV**

Don Scallen, a teacher from Georgetown, writes a regular blog called "Notes From the Wild" at inthehills.ca/blogs and volunteers for Toronto Zoo's Turtle Tally Program. His last article for this magazine was "Sanctuary During the Year of the Frog," Spring 2008.



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Face to Face on the Niagara Escarpment

Photos and story by
Daniel K. Wilson

Can you see faces in these images? Daniel Wilson has been recording faces he sees in nature for a number of years. To find them takes a keen eye and a fair amount of imagination. Unleash your inner child and take flight!

Remember looking up at the sky when you were young and seeing familiar shapes and objects floating amongst the clouds? If you answered yes, then you're probably a bit like me. I've been spotting "things that look like other things" for a long time, including faces. But I don't just see them in the sky. I see faces everywhere.

When I was a little kid I saw faces and animals hiding in the clouds, just like the other kids. But being a creative and somewhat obsessive little guy, my fascination didn't stop there. I'd also see faces in floor tiles, trees, my cereal bowl – you name it.

And I still do. I can spend hours at Little Cove near Tobermory scouring the beach in search of boulders that seem to be staring back up at me, or carefully inspecting every frozen puddle I come across in Short Hills Provincial Park hoping to find something interesting to photograph.

I always thought it was a little strange that I saw all these faces – especially faces that weren't really faces – so much, and kept it pretty much to myself. But it turns out that my "affliction" is quite common and actually has a name: pareidolia (pronounced *parr-i-DOH-lee-a*).

Pareidolia: a psychological phenomenon involving a vague and random stimulus being perceived as significant, a form of apophenia. Common examples include seeing images of animals or faces in clouds, the man in the moon or the Moon rabbit, and hearing hidden messages on records when played in reverse. (Wikipedia)

Pareidolia is a psychological term and it occurs when an individual encounters something significant or distinct – usually a sight or sound – in something that really isn't meant to be.

Thinking that you're hearing the phone ring while taking a shower is just one way that people experience pareidolia. Visually, it could be seeing a face in an electrical outlet, discovering Elvis on a cinnamon bun or spotting a dragon in a soufflé of clouds.

Interestingly, some psychologists use pareidolia to try and

Continued ►



▲ **Face in the Falls, Waterdown.** If you use your imagination, you can see two eyes near the top of Great Falls and the cave in the center of the picture is the gaping mouth. The water coming over the falls below the eyes looks like teeth, or fur, or both.



▲ **Mr. Big Chin, Eugenia Falls near Flesherton.** Although the retaining wall at this popular nature park is man-made, I doubt the face was intended by its creators.



▲ **Polydectes.** Named for the king who was turned to stone after gazing upon the severed head of the Gorgon Medusa. I found him in Meaford.



▲ Smiley Face, Niagara Falls. Ice that had formed on the iron barrier broke off and fell in the snow, along with a few flecks of paint. Fortunately for me, they fell in just the right position.

Entish, near Welbeck, Ontario. This strange looking creature reminded me of the tree herders in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. ►



▲ Snow Demon, Niagara Falls. It's amazing how the elements - snow, wind and dust - can all come together to create such a recognizable image. This was shot at the base of the American Falls from the Canadian side.



understand our mental states. Both the Rorschach Inkblot Test and Holtzman Inkblot Technique encourage this phenomenon to examine personality characteristics and emotional functioning.

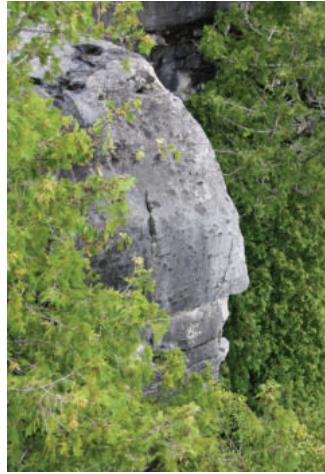
The late great Carl Sagan thought we were hardwired to identify the human face for survival, allowing us to use only minimal details to recognize the “enemy” in places with limited visibility. Others believe we have just learned to be very careful about potential adversaries over time, with the brain simply overreacting to something that looks like a possible threat in order to survive.

Whether it’s an evolutionary trait or not, I’ve certainly had a lot of fun with it. And while I’ve photographed faces from just about everywhere I’ve travelled, I feel the Niagara Escarpment, with all its interesting limestone formations, diverse shorelines, cliff “faces” and old growth forests, is one of the better places to go “people” watching. **NEV**

Daniel K. Wilson is a nature and wildlife photographer whose pictures have appeared in a number of Canadian publications. Some of these photos appeared recently in The Standard of St. Catharines. He currently resides in St. David's. Some of his more unique nature photography will be on display at the Niagara Falls Public Library during the month of June 2014. For more: danielkwilsonphotography.blogspot.ca.



▲ Samurai Rock, Dyer's Bay near Cabot Head Lighthouse, Bruce Peninsula. I was instantly reminded of the classical Japanese paintings of the samurai when I stumbled upon this hardened warrior.



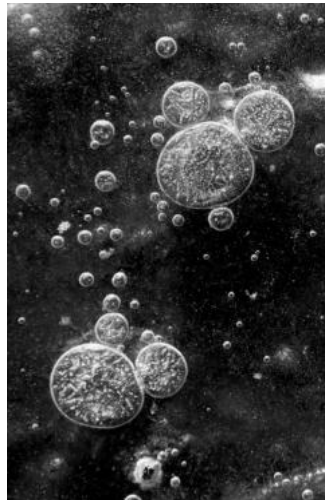
▲ Nosey Joe, near Lion's Head. There's a slightly more famous cliff face at Lion's Head but I like this one better.



▲ Skull Rock, MacGregor Point Provincial Park. I seem to find a lot of creepy looking faces during my travels.



▲ Ghostcicle. Snow and ice formations have always fascinated me. I spotted this grim spectre haunting Great Falls in Waterdown.



▲ Mickey & Minnie, Eramosa Karst Conservation Area, Stoney Creek. Air bubbles trapped in the ice made me think of the famous mouse couple.



▲ Happy Beech, near Owen Sound. I think the smile says it all.



▲ Ghostcicle, Silver Creek Conservation Area. This “face” was probably caused by the tree growing next to, and finally absorbing, part of a barbed-wire fence. The rest of the fence has since been removed, but the peaceful smile remains.



▲ Serpent Rock, Burnt Point Loop Trail, Tobermory. This is one of my favourite places to hike when I'm at the tip of the Bruce. The rocks, as well as the wildlife (I've spotted a bear, rattlesnakes and gigantic wolf spiders here) are so diverse and interesting. Flowerpot Island can be seen in the background.



Costa Rica vs. Canada – Our Natural Areas and Tourism

Written and photographed by Sean James



▲ Researchers study the breeding habits of fauna such as this Red and Green Tree frog at La Selva Biological Station.



▲ This little peccary walks right up to tourists at La Selva Biological Station. The opportunity to get close to nature brings in tourist dollars enabling the protection of land and further research.

Travelling Costa Rica is amazing! With all the jungles, birds and wildlife, it's not surprising that 80 per cent of Costa Rica's income is from tourism. Eco-organizations put a lot of thought into drawing in the public with eco-adventure attractions like zip-lining and canopy tours. It could be argued that this negatively affects the environment but the money brought in serves to protect more and more land, which in turn, brings in more tourists – a beneficial loop for all.

There are many spectacular sights to visit, including the Poas Volcano, which is part of the *Cordillera Volcánica Central* – a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve similar to our own Niagara Escarpment, deemed a unique environment in the world and therefore worth protecting. Another destination in the same Biosphere Reserve is the La Selva Biological Station, which protects 1,536 hectares of lowland rainforest where tourists can rent cabins and tour the park. The Organization for Tropical Studies manages this and many other

parks and preserves. They get quite creative about protecting land. They even pay farmers to protect trees on neighbouring land to provide habitat for the critically endangered Great Green Macaw. They do incredible fundraising work to protect and expand the areas they manage.

Researchers are always on the sites, studying the interactions of nature and recovery methods for endangered species. They recognize that there's money to be made while protecting nature...which allows them to protect even more. They work with non-governmental organizations and the government. Tourists, in several cases, stay with the researchers, getting to know them and seeing the work first hand.

On the other hand, our Escarpment always seems to be under threat. Funding cuts are made to our parks. Even though it's a UNESCO site and it's in the Greenbelt, citizens are constantly forced to fight against new and expanding quarries. Much could be done to make protected land more accessible. Boardwalks

through wetlands would bring in more tourists, especially birders, which would help pay to protect more land. Are you seeing a common thread here? Accessibility might also make us appreciate those areas more, and fight and donate to protect them.

Through a mix of government, public interest groups and business relationships, even Mexico has managed to protect roughly 10 per cent of its total area. Southern Ontario has only 3.8 per cent protected! The most threatened areas in Ontario, including wetlands, tall grass prairie and oak savannah are in the south of the province.

People in Costa Rica buy farmland to turn it back into jungle and create habitat. Here in southern Ontario, more homes and additions go up every year. Do we just think we have so much we can afford to waste it? Are business interests too powerful and too short-sighted to see the environmental services that natural areas offer? Are environmental groups not doing a good enough job of communicating to government

agencies and politicians? These are questions that we need to answer soon and we need to be reaching out to those in positions of power and influence. We need to be using our buying and voting power to protect what's important. We need to be active in local "green" groups and we need to donate to groups like the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) to protect the area we live in that we love so much. EBC's funding from the Ontario government has been reduced to zero.

In the meantime, if you want to be inspired by nature and beauty, visit Costa Rica. Go to support the great preservation work they're doing. Go see the lovely gardens like Wilson Botanical Gardens, (also an Organization for Tropical Studies site). Go to see the amazing beaches. Come back and inspire your friends with how much more we can do to protect our natural areas.

Contact Sean at 905.876.4852, sdjames@on.aibn.com, on Twitter @seanfernrIDGE or at the Fern Ridge website (fernrIDGELANDSCAPING.COM).





View of Land Conservation: Walk with Us

By Bob Barnett



▲ The Barnett children on the Bruce Trail.

One Sunday in April 1984, our young family started hiking the Bruce Trail at the cairn at Queenston.

My six year-old son and eight year-old daughter walked 10 km, stopping to swing on vines and hiding behind rocks to scare us. Then as the sun set, we rode our previously positioned bicycles back to the van along a quiet side road.

That trip changed my life. Over the next two and a half years, we hiked the whole 750-km trail to Tobermory through a bit of mud, a few mosquitos, and not enough rain to melt us. We invited the kid's friends, ate a lot of trail mix, dangled our feet over the edge of the Escarpment, pushed hay bales, identified plants, watched Turkey Vultures, porcupines and snakes while having a family-changing experience as we shared a bit of adversity but achieved a huge goal together. Despite having our shuttle bicycle stolen one day, we reached Tobermory while my son was still eight years old; at that time the youngest to complete the whole thing.

Today I run Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC), a land trust with 9,350 protected acres on 123 sites. I read books like *Last Child in the Woods* by Richard Louv, about how we need to spend time in nature to be healthy. When we started EBC, the philosophy among land trusts was to protect pieces of nature from people and provide sanctuary for rare species. After 16 years of working away in the shadows protecting "sort of secret" reserves intended for only our initiated friends who watch birds, I've now concluded that we have to interest people in our project if we are to get support. We have to find a way to get families out into nature if we are to reverse government funding cuts and build our base of support to the point where we can sustain our work with landowners to protect more and more land to

recreate a commons we can visit to restore our health.

Nature Heals

I wondered what it was that made me feel good when I visited the woods. Eva M. Selhub and Alan C. Logan explained that in *Your Brain on Nature*. After centuries of exploiting nature and living and working in dimly lit, poorly ventilated workplaces and houses, the notion of nature as a natural healer again gained popularity in the mid to late 19th century. Henry David Thoreau, and John Muir of Thornbury fame who started the American parks system, voiced their concerns about urban life and described nature as essential to well-being. Muir reported that "tired, nerve-shaken, over-civilized people" could benefit from wandering in wilderness. Doctors prescribed natural retreat centres with walks in nature as the cure for all sorts of ailments.

Lately, doctors have prescribed pills instead. Since TV, watching football has replaced walking in the woods. Our children play video games because it is reported to be dangerous to let them outside or even walk to school. All this has resulted in a 50 per cent drop in visits to U.S. national parks and probably the same in Canada.

Wake-up Call

Science caught up with the notion that nature has value when in 1979 Michigan's Roger Ulrich began studying the science of nature's impact on health. First there were a few scattered studies showing that students who had viewed natural scenes had increased feelings of affection, playfulness, friendliness and elation.

More and more studies followed which showed that not only looking at nature, but being in nature brought increases in serotonin production, lower stress, higher

creativity, less muscular tension, and lower heart rates. The Japanese call it "forest bathing," but walking in nature has been shown scientifically to improve mood and vigour. By decreasing psychological stress, depressive symptoms and hostility, nature increases cancer-killing cells, anti-viral cells and improves the functioning of the immune system.

Patients recover better in a room with plants or a view of nature while students learn better in a classroom with a view and better still outdoors in nature. Sick leaves are reduced if there are plants in the workplace. In short, green spaces produce better health and learning.

"The brain is absolutely influenced by nature, and it is no longer an option to write off philosophers and poets as mere romantic dreamers," write Selhub and Logan. "The results of the scientific investigations ... should serve as a wake-up call for all of us. The mortality of individuals, nations and even the planet itself is dependent on the recognition and acceptance that nature is part of us. Our perception of stress, our mental state, our immunity, our happiness, and our resilience are all chemically influenced by the nervous system in its response to the natural environment."

For more information, read *Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity*, edited by Eric Chivian and Aaron Bernstein.

Our EBC has produced the brochure "Walk with Us" to identify 16 places where our Conservancy encourages walking in nature. These walks were also described in the last two issues of *Niagara Escarpment Views*. Please join us in the woods. **NEV**

Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy
escarpment.ca rbarnett@escarpment.ca 888.815.9575



Eating Along the Niagara Escarpment

Here are some places to eat near the Niagara Escarpment from Niagara Falls to Manitoulin Island, that we think you should consider. We welcome your recommendations! Send them to editor@NEViews.ca. Include your name or ask to be anonymous.

COLLINGWOOD

Café Chartreuse

Gourmet taste where the menu is never the same two days in a row.

70 Hurontario St., Collingwood,
705.444.0099, cafechartreuse.com

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Highland Grounds

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8 Toronto Rd., Flesherton, 519.924.0001

Knights Inn

Canadian and East Indian dishes, served with joy.

774107 Hwy 10 S., Flesherton,
519.924.3300, knightsinnflesherton.ca

GEORGETOWN

The McGibbon Hotel

Pub grub, best wings in town, Thurs. & Fri. lunch buffet.

79 Main St. S., Georgetown, 905.877.3388

MARKDALE

The Market Shoppe

Eat in by the fireplace or take out! Homemade soups, fresh sandwiches, locally roasted organic fair trade coffee, in-house baking.

7 Toronto St. S., Markdale, 519.986.4144,
themarketshoppe.com

MEAFORD

The Leaky Canoe Pub & Eatery

Warm, friendly pub on the main street. Open weeknights to 11 pm. Enormous portions.

94 Sykes St. N., Meaford, 519.538.1377

NIAGARA FALLS

The Flying Saucer Restaurant

"Out of this world food at down to earth prices!"

6768 Lundy's Lane, Niagara Falls, 905.356.4553

Fireside dining. Terra Cotta Inn's downstairs pub has tables by the large fireplace. They offer a few Niagara wines: Henry of Pelham is one supplier. The pub menu is varied and plentiful, from spring rolls to calamari for starters, through salads and pastas to salmon and steak as well as pizzas and burgers. Upstairs, several more formal rooms offer fine Italian dining with an emphasis on seafood, including salads, risotto and pastas, as well as veal, steak, lamb, chicken and more. In warm weather, the large patio offers dining outdoors with a view of the Credit River. ►



The larger towns along the Escarpment all have several popular large chain restaurant options. Sometimes, the tried and true is exactly what you want if you have kids, or had a hard day's hiking, biking, climbing, kayaking or just shopping or touring.

Other times, when eating is an occasion, chains aren't available or you want to try something new, it's useful to know of local interesting places. The Escarpment is close to plenty of various places to eat, from an all-day breakfast, to great cups of coffee, cappuccino and espresso, to gourmet lunches with great views, to soulful suppers on your way home after exploring. Check out the places in our directory!

Continued on page 58 ►



Eating Along the Niagara Escarpment

Continued from page 57 ►

NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

Bistro Six-One

Reasonably priced food prepared fresh when ordered. Wood-oven thin-crust pizzas. Interesting local wine list.

61-63 Queen St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, 905.468.2532, bistrosixone.com

Great North American Grill at Hilton Garden Inn

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500 York Rd., Niagara-on-the-Lake, 905.984.4200, niagaraonthelake.hgi.com

Old Town Goodies

Fun take-out place or eat at tiny counter. Great paninis, cappuccino, ice cream, sweets & treats.

29 Queen St., Niagara-on-the-Lake, 289.868.9603.

The Farmhouse Café at Caroline Cellars

Wine country lunches six days a week. Full list of Caroline Cellars wines.

Walk-ins welcome. "A sophisticated twist on homey, feel-good food."

1010 Line 2, Virgil, 905.468.8814, carolinecellars.com

RAVENNA

Ravenna Country Market

Busy lunch destination for gourmet entrees, soups, sandwiches made on site from fresh, local, homemade ingredients.

495972 Grey Rd. 2, Ravenna, 519.599.2796, ravennacountrymarket.ca

ROCKWOOD

Heaven on 7 Bistro and Pub

"Great food & reasonable prices." Philip Algar, Brampton

262 Main St. S., Rockwood, 519.856.2693

TERRA COTTA

The Terra Cotta Inn

"One of the most beautiful dining locations in Ontario." Riverside setting for weddings, fine dining, hearty pub fare. Four dining rooms, banquet hall, lower level pub & wine bar with fireplace, outdoor patio in warm seasons.

175 King St., Terra Cotta, 905.873.2223, 1.800.520.0920, cotta.ca

VINELAND

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4600 Victoria Ave., Vineland, 289.567.0487, goculinary.ca



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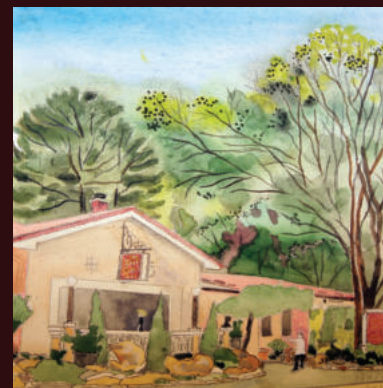
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Politicians' Views: UNESCO Biosphere Designation ?

This question was sent to some local politicians. Some responses follow.

In 2012 UNESCO renewed its designation of the Niagara Escarpment as a World Biosphere Reserve. What, if any, is the significance of this? What does it mean for the Niagara Escarpment?

Hon. Michael Chong, MP for Wellington-Halton Hills (Conservative Party of Canada)

The Niagara Escarpment stretches 725 km from Niagara Falls to Manitoulin Island. Approximately six million Ontarians live within a short drive of the Escarpment, which traverses one of the most heavily populated regions of Canada. Rich in biodiversity, this remarkable natural area covers nearly 2,000 km² and is home to hundreds of species at risk, important watersheds, farmlands and 450-million years of geological history.

Recognizing its importance, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) designated the Escarpment as a World Biosphere Reserve in 1990. A biosphere reserve is an ecologically important area that also supports economic and recreational activities. In a biosphere reserve, local committees of representatives from sectors such as agriculture, tourism, business, conservation, and education, work together to develop projects that link conservation with economic development in their community. These voluntary committees ensure that the protection of this important ecological area has the support of local communities. UNESCO's renewal of this designation in 2012 is a testament to the hard work of local citizens in protecting this important part of Canada's natural environment.

Kevin Flynn, MPP for Oakville (Ontario Liberal)

The significance is that it gives the Niagara Escarpment international recognition for the important ecological and cultural values in an area. It also provides a mechanism based on local commitment and local ability to apply sound stewardship (and protection where necessary) to the use of resources in an area to support present and future generations.

We are actually waiting for the final determination in 2014.

As part of the review process, external reviewers appointed by the Canadian Commission for UNESCO were assigned to prepare a Periodic Review Report. This was completed in December 2013 and the conclusion of the external reviewers was: "that the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve definitely merits continued membership in the world network of Biosphere Reserves."

The review Report accompanied by the recommendations has been submitted to UNESCO (January 2013) and will be considered by the Advisory Committee on Biosphere Reserves, who will make the final determination on the status of the biosphere reserve designation and provide confirmation of the final recommendations. We anticipate hearing the results sometime in 2014.

NEC staff is continuing to collaborate with and engage biosphere reserve partners and stakeholders to promote and support the principles of the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve.

Political Representatives

Listed by riding



Standing up for the Niagara Escarpment



Andrea Horwath

MPP Hamilton Centre
(905) 544 9644

Monique Taylor

MPP Hamilton Mountain
(905) 388 9734

Michael Mantha

MPP Algoma-Manitoulin
(705) 461 9710

Paul Miller

MPP Hamilton East-Stoney Creek
(905) 545 0114

Milton ▼



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Ted Chudleigh – MPP Halton
Constituency office

174 Mill Street, Milton L9T 1S2
905-878-1729 or ted.chudleigh@pc.ola.org

Oakville ▼

On April 22 we celebrate Earth Day!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding Ontario's green initiatives please contact my office.



Kevin Flynn
MPP – Oakville

Community Office:
2318 Lakeshore Road West, Unit 2
Tel: 905.827.5141
kflynn.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Wellington-Hilton Hills ▼



Michael Chong

Member of Parliament,
Wellington - Halton Hills

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Georgetown ON L7G 4K1
905-702-2597
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NIAGARA
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Views



Coming Events

For more events go to www.NEViews.ca

March 1-April 6 weekends; March 10-14 daily **Maple Town**, Mountsberg Conservation Area, Campbellville. conservationhalton.ca 905.854.2276

March 1 **Snowshoeing & Hot Chocolate**, Terra Cotta Conservation Area, Halton Hills. creditvalleyca.ca 905.670.1615



March 1-April 6 weekends; March 10-14 daily **Sweet Water Season**, Crawford Lake, Milton. conservationhalton.ca 905.854.0234.



March 2, 9, 12, 13, 16, 23, 29, 30 **Maple Syrup Festival**, Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton. westfieldheritage.ca 519.621.8851

March 29 **Bird-Friendly Certified Hay Program Information Session**, Terra Cotta Conservation Area, Halton Hills.
Register: creditvalleyca.ca/about-cvc/events-calendar/



March 29-30 **The Old Tyme Maple Syrup Festival**, (the largest outdoor maple syrup festival in Grey and Bruce Counties), Saugeen Bluffs Conservation Area, Paisley. 10:00am – 4:00pm both days; Admission: \$8.00/adult/ \$3.00/child; preschoolers free
All proceeds go to local conservation projects; hosted by Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation. svca.on.ca 519.367.3040.x 229



April 5 **Halton Eco Festival**, Glen Abbey Community Centre, Oakville. oakvillepeacecentre.org

April 5&6 **Spring Tonic Maple Syrup Festival**, Tiffin Centre for Conservation, Utopia. nvca.on.ca 705.424.1479

April 6, 13, 20, 27 **Spring Sundays**, Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton. conservationhamilton.ca 1.800.883.0104

April 18-21 **April Easter Campout**, Valens Lake Conservation Area, Cambridge. conservationhamilton.ca 905.525.2183

April 26 **Annual Tree Seedling Sale**, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, Owen Sound. greysauble.on.ca

April 27 **The Escarpment Project: Hamilton cleanup** escarpmentproject.ca

May 1- Oct. 31 **The Healthy Hikes Challenge**, any Ontario Conservation Area. HealthyHikes.ca

May 4 **Doors Open**, Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton. conservationhamilton.ca 1.800.883.0104

May 9 **Georgetown Horticultural Society Plant Sale and Silent Auction**, Gellert Community Centre, Georgetown. geohort.com/plant

May 11 **Women's Work: Mother's Day**, Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton. conservationhamilton.ca 1.800.883.0104

May 16-19 **Victoria Day Weekend Campout**, Valens Lake Conservation Area, Cambridge. conservationhamilton.ca 905.525.2183

May 18, 19, 25 **Queen Victoria – A Woman of Influence**, Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton. conservationhamilton.ca 1.800.883.0104

May 24 **Collingwood Horticultural Society Plant Sale**, Trinity United Church, Collingwood. gardenontario.org/site.php/collingwood 705.607.0645

May 24 **Family Tree Planting Day**, Eramosa Karst Conservation Area, Stoney Creek. conservationhamilton.ca 905.525.2181

May 30-31 **Bruce Peninsula Orchid Festival**, Bruce Peninsula National Park, Tobermory. orchidfest.ca

May 31 **Punisher Adventure Race**, Christie Lake Conservation Area, Dundas. conservationhamilton.ca thepunisheradventurerace.com

June 1 **21st Annual Secret Gardens Tour**, The Carnegie Gallery, Dundas. carnegiegallery.org 905.627.4265

June 7 **Niagara-on-the-Lake Shaw Guild Garden Tour**, Niagara-on-the-Lake. 1.800.511.7429.



June 22 **Through the Garden Gate Georgetown Annual Garden Tour**. Tickets at Foodstuffs. 905.877.6569



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Niagara Escarpment Views



The seeds of our future are taking root right now, for better or worse. This page shares better, forward-thinking ideas and celebrates significant environmental achievements that can help us lead the way in creating the Niagara Escarpment as a healthy, sustainable example of a thriving World Biosphere Reserve. Send us your recommendations for good achievements!

GRANTS FOR ESCARPMENT BIOSPHERE CONSERVANCY

Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy will be able to work on **more trails and land conservation** thanks to recent grant awards. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation has granted them money for trails on the Bruce and Manitoulin Island, and Terra Tundra Foundation has granted \$15,000 toward land conservation.

BIRD-FRIENDLY CERTIFIED HAY

With the goal of helping the threatened grassland bird species Boblink and Eastern Meadowlark, Credit Valley Conservation is developing a Bird-Friendly Certified Hay program. The program will encourage the growth of a new crop, hay that is certified as being friendly to grassland birds. This should increase the amount of farmed **cropland that is harvested in a way that protects nesting birds**. This may mean delaying cutting until July 15, or upon notification by the conservation authority. It is hoped that the certified hay would fetch a premium price. For more information, call Mark Eastman, 905.670.1615 x 430 or see www.creditvalleyca.ca/grasslandrecovery.



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

2011-2021 is the Decade on Biodiversity: Get Involved and Help the World!



Halton-Peel BioDiversity Network (HPBDN) promotes awareness of biodiversity within Halton and Peel. We focus on three ways to achieve this: education, communication and facilitation.

Some Background

The United Nations General Assembly declared the 10 years between 2011-2020 to be the “Decade on Biodiversity.” In 2010, in Japan, governments from around the world agreed to a strategic plan, goals and targets, that have become known as the “Aichi Targets.”

What is Biodiversity anyway?

Biodiversity consists of genes, species, ecosystems, and the goods and services they provide.

What are the Aichi Targets?

They are goals which promote biodiversity for the future:

- Address the underlying cause of biodiversity loss
- Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity
- Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems and genetic diversity
- Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

What Halton-Peel BioDiversity Network does:

1. Share knowledge for community action and projects.
2. Enable sustained efforts to mainstream biodiversity.
3. Create a forum for dialogue and action for Halton-Peel groups and stakeholders.
4. Enable residents and stakeholders to understand and contribute to international, national and provincial efforts for biodiversity.
5. Create a mechanism to have ongoing capacity building for biodiversity, especially as it relates to the 10-year plan of work, the Aichi Targets and the Decade on Biological Diversity.
6. Strive to contribute to the provincial, national and international efforts for biodiversity from the unique Halton-Peel perspective.

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in Spring:
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The Nitty Gritty on Biodiversity:



Genes: units of inherited material, which determine what an organism looks like, what it is, and how it behaves.



Species: a group of organisms capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring. Includes plants, animals and micro-organisms.



Ecosystem: a community of plants, animals and other species, interacting with one another and the physical environment around them.



Ecosystem Goods and Services: the benefits that people and the environment derive from ecosystems, including both physical goods and ecological services.

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Halton Eco Festival: April 5

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