

Niagara Escarpment **ViEWS**

SPRING 2023 (MARCH, APRIL, MAY)



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Spring 2023
(March, April, May)

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Views & Vistas, Favourite Photographs from the Entire Niagara Escarpment in Canada, Published 2021



Conservation Halton Award, 2014
to Mike Davis in Media/Blogger Category

15 YEARS OF PUBLISHING

Threats to the Niagara Escarpment



It may be that protections for nature that once seemed permanent and safe, can easily and swiftly be removed by a government in power. Bill 23, *More Homes Built Faster*, is the current threat, as it requires conservation authorities, which may have lands on or near the Niagara Escarpment, to give up responsibility for protecting people from the dangers of development in wetlands. Increasingly, storms around the world are causing severe floods, and wetlands are known to mitigate disasters by absorbing and holding water. They also protect water quality. Eliminating the conservation authorities' role in considering development is a dangerous and foolish move. As seen in our feature on Bill 23 in this issue, the conservation

authorities are united in their opposition to this change.

Bill 23 also has proposed amendments that will remove lands from the Greenbelt Plan, in order to make them available for development. The Greenbelt Foundation and the Niagara Escarpment

Biosphere Network both oppose these amendments.

There is some support for these plans. Just a few days before Hazel McCallion died, she made a public statement in favour of removing 15 parcels of land from the Greenbelt Plan, in order to permit housing development there. This was surprising given that Ms. McCallion had been chair of the Greenbelt Council at the time, but was in keeping with her legacy of fully developing the fertile farmlands that became the City of Mississauga. Once nicknamed "the Queen of Sprawl," she did, however, say that she regretted not working more for higher density and public transit. She also once chaired a provincial panel on smart growth.

Concerns About Bill 23

At the time I write this, serious concerns remain around Bill 23:

1. Ontario's integrity commissioner is investigating whether the Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing did wrong in allowing development on Greenbelt lands.
2. It has been reported that the federal environment minister is considering intervening in the Greenbelt development plans, on the grounds that they work against necessary preparations for climate change.
3. If I remember correctly from a recent interview of the housing minister, conducted by TVO's Steven Paiken, only 10 per cent of the planned new housing is intended to be affordable. Yet I thought the main point of the housing crisis was a lack of affordable housing. Surely this isn't enough! What's clear is that the issues raised by Bill 23 are not over, and countless people and organizations oppose the bill, including the Chiefs of Ontario and First Nations. To read what some of these organizations have stated, see our feature article. Be sure also to read Bob Barnett's take on the Bill, in his regular view of land conservation.

Lighter Content

Not all the content in this Spring issue is as heavy. For lighter, more enjoyable experiences, take an armchair tour of Short Hills Provincial Park, led and photographed by Art Weaver. He shares his impressive photos of birds, animals, plants and waterfalls from his frequent explorations here.

Another beautiful escape is provided by Greg Coman, a professional photographer with a love of nature. He shares some of his favourite landscapes and captures of wild animals in our feature look at his work.

For an intriguing glimpse into local prehistory, check out our feature piece on Brenda McEnery, who has amassed an amazing collection of stones that could perhaps have been used as tools by Indigenous people many, many centuries ago. Even if this can't be proven, many of her finds are simply beautiful.


As always, let me know what you think of our content, whether we're right or wrong, whether it was interesting or made you yawn! We love to hear from you.

Gloria Hildebrandt


P.S. Wild animals need wild spaces.

The offices of *Niagara Escarpment Views* are located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, specifically The Ajetance Treaty No. 19, of 1818, when Chief Ajetance sold the lands to the Indian Department of the government.

Let us know what you think!

Write us at editor@NEViews.ca or
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More Online!

 Keep in touch with Escarpment news between issues at our website. We have unique content not seen in the magazine, and you can leave comments in response. See www.NEViews.ca.



Niagara Escarpment Views is on Facebook as:
www.facebook.com/N.E.Views

■ READERS & VIEWERS

Your people have to “strongly” voice their opinions against this situation [Bill 23]. Doug Ford should not get away with this.

Edward Naftolin, Burlington

Editor's note: See our feature in this issue and Bob Barnett's view of Land Conservation.



I very much enjoyed the article in your winter issue about Highlands Nordic by Sandra Howe. As a long-time member of the Halton Outdoor Club (formerly the Halton Cross Country Ski Club) I have enjoyed many ski outings at Highlands, and I have made major equipment

purchases there. I am always keen to sing its praises as a successful family business that prides itself on providing top-notch grooming and service. I was aware of some of the information in the article, but much was new to me, many of our members would know less than me. This is a long-winded

way of getting to my point: I am on the Club's Board and am also editor of our quarterly Club Newsletter. I am wondering if you would grant me permission to reproduce the text of

your article... for our March issue. The Halton Outdoor Club is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023 and a look at one of our favourite and long-lasting destinations would fit with other special 50th content we have planned.

**Lorraine Walter, Secretary,
Halton Outdoor Club**



I want to send my deepest appreciation for the beautiful article you wrote about the Bird Kingdom. You really covered it all so well and said so many great things, I can't thank you enough. The staff takes great pride in the care they give the birds and also the work they put into keeping the place presentable for the visitors and also educating them about birds. Steve is a great ambassador for Bird Kingdom and truly enjoyed giving you an in-depth tour.

He may have mentioned the number of calls we get daily to take in various birds but mainly large parrots. People don't realize they can live up to 90 years, are very loud, (up to 120 decibels)

and need constant social interaction. For this reason, we are focusing our conservation efforts on this message which will hopefully help the wild populations of parrots. Please thank Mike Davis for the great photographs, I especially liked the one at the start of the story taken behind the waterfall. The graphics used with this photo really complemented the article. Sincere thanks from everyone here at Bird Kingdom!

Marilyn Vann, Niagara Falls



Just spent an enjoyable hour with your new issue. What a delightful Light up the Hills article with many fabulous pictures each worth a 1000 words! You captured the

tradition of this amazing event which showcases Halton Hills' community spirit. Last night's Ignition event was awesome again after 3 years. Sure your article brought out some new families.

Always enjoy learning the new people, places and things you present your followers. Congratulations on your 15 years too!

Gerry Kentner, Georgetown



After many excellent articles it was inevitable that a dud would be printed. I refer to the breathless chronicle of the purported Royal Retreat in 1973. To begin with, I am not interested in architectural tours of dwellings that exist because of British colonialism. How did those toffs acquire their lands and their wealth, anyway? But more important editorially, your “View” said you visited to find out whether Liz slept there. Alas, the article leaves us none the wiser. Liz and Phil were taken to the John Eaton estate, and Rolling Hills, owned by an Eaton acolyte was nearby, and? And? And ...? Suddenly they are touring Rolling Hills, and sleeping there? Was the Eaton estate too shabby for Liz and Phil, so they moved to better quarters? What is the factual basis for the claim on the heritage plaque that Liz and Phil were ever at Rolling Hills, let alone slept there? A

photo caption suggests it was likely that they slept at Rolling Hills to meet members of the Hunt Clubs the next morning. If so, couldn't they drop in from the nearby Eaton estate? Where

did their security and entourage sleep? Did Fred and the Missus (who apparently does not have a first name, just the Missus Wallace) serve Liz and Phil bangers and mash Saturday morning? Did Liz and Phil in fact ever meet the hoity toits of the Hunt Clubs? They had to be at Woodbine Racetrack in good time on that Saturday.

There is a bureaucratic position in Ottawa known approximately as the Queen's representative in Canada (separate from the Governor-General.) That position is responsible for the detailed planning of royal tours. I would imagine that that office, or the Public Archives, would have sufficient information to learn the truth about that fine Friday and Saturday -- if in fact the truth is desired. Overall, a silly and pointless article.

Doug Yonson, Nepean

John Mark Rowe responds: This is an interesting letter by a man with an obvious bias. While “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous” aren’t of interest to everyone, they are a glimpse of the powerful economic and political classes. Some people are also very interested in the “George Washington Slept Here” stories as well. By the way, Library and Archives Canada was consulted.

My latest NE Views arrived late last week and I read the article about the queen’s stay near Georgetown right away, of course. It was very interesting and brought a lot of thoughts to mind. I hadn’t heard of the owner of the property but was interested to hear that he was head of Smith and Stone as several of my relatives have worked there. The property looked

very nice and I’m sure the queen would have enjoyed it. When I was in high school one summer I heard that the queen was going to be passing through Brampton and I thought it would be cool to see her in person so I took the bus there and saw her as she passed by in a motorcade near Main and Queen Streets. That could have been the same trip to Canada when she stayed near Georgetown and who knows, she may have been on her way there that very day. I was wondering about security, the security contingent for the Royal Family must be incredible and I wonder what security arrangements they had at this place. Anyway I enjoyed the article, thanks for publishing that! I thought I would mention also that I have a copy of your book. I asked for it for my

birthday earlier this week. I’ve been enjoying reading and looking at it from time to time. It’s one of those books you can put down and pick up later and read in no particular order which is nice. There’s lots of information there about places on the NE which I didn’t know about even though I’ve lived nearby for most of my life.

David McDonald, Toronto



Great magazine! We have a 2017 Chevy Bolt and love driving it, especially on curvy

roads on the Escarpment! Four addenda to the EV article. First, there is an app available to arrange charging at private residences if you are really stuck. Second, driving the speed limit or even slower greatly increases your range, so you can actually enjoy being stuck in traffic as your range increases! Third, you can join a local chapter of EV Societies across Ontario and Canada to obtain great insights into EV operation. Fourth, check the Comments on most charge apps for the latest availability info for a charger.

Neal Bonnor, Dundas

PS we received \$16000 in incentives back in 2018 for our Bolt and garage level 2 charger!



Asparagus, Tomato & Goat Cheese Quinoa Salad

Scan to view recipe

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EVENTS



► In November 2022, the seven-foot-tall tree sculpture Thinker Squirrel by Robbin Wenzoski was unveiled across from the Dufferin County Courthouse. PHOTO PROVIDED.

◄ At a Hands Off the Greenbelt Rally in Georgetown on Nov. 18, about 60 people took part, including Green Party of Ontario leader Mike Schreiner. PHOTO PROVIDED.

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◀ Owner Cheryl Discenza and Mayor of Halton Hills, Ann Lawlor, formally opened Foliage, Georgetown's houseplant store, on Mill St. on Jan. 10.

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EVENTS



▲ A full house of authors and customers gathered at the 37th annual Ginger Press Authors' open house on Dec. 10 at The Ginger Press Bookshop in Owen Sound, hosted by owner Maryann Thomas.



▲ As part of an Anishinaabek Cultural Experience on Jan. 15 at Cape Croker Park on the Bruce Peninsula, Caley Patrick Nadjiwon Doran explained the significance of this Culturally Modified Tree and the freshwater spring at his feet.





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People & Homes At Risk

RESPONSES TO THE ONTARIO
GOVERNMENT'S BILL 23

COMPILED BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT





Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, will deliver a two-fold punch to Niagara Escarpment areas, through changes already made to the Conservation Authorities Act and proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan.



With a majority in the last election, Premier Doug Ford's

Progressive Conservative government passed Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, on Nov. 28, 2022. While this is old news by the time this issue goes to print, it may be convenient or even important to record in one place, responses to the Act by relevant organizations.

No one denies that there is a need for more housing, especially affordable and low-cost or modest housing. A drive around most towns or rural areas will show how many new large or even “monster” homes there are, or are under construction, which can't be seen as affordable. Even small houses that previously were sufficient to shelter families of four, have additions built on, even as the average size of many families is shrinking. There is a great need for affordable housing.

Bill 23 will deliver a two-fold punch to Niagara Escarpment areas, through changes already made to the Conservation Authorities Act and proposed changes to the Greenbelt Plan.

Conservation Ontario

According to Conservation Ontario, which represents the 36 conservation authorities in Ontario, these are the negative consequences of Bill 23, which will:

- Weaken the ability of conservation authorities to continue protecting people and property from natural hazards;
- Place new responsibilities on municipalities related to natural hazards and natural resources that they are unprepared and under resourced to tackle;

- Diminish the ability to protect critical natural infrastructure like wetlands that reduce flooding and protect water quality in lakes and rivers.

Conservation Ontario goes on to state that the changes “to delegate conservation authority regulatory responsibility to individual municipalities are contrary to the core mandate of conservation authorities and may put additional people – and their homes – at more risk. The ability of conservation authorities to regulate development in hazardous areas is critical for successful emergency preparedness response in order to prevent the worst outcomes. Municipalities have successfully relied on the benefits of a long-standing conservation authority partnership which has used local watershed science to guide decision-making.”

Here are excerpts of responses to Bill 23 from conservation authorities (CAs) along the Niagara Escarpment, from north to south.

Grey Sauble Conservation

Conservation authorities have concerns, particularly around two proposals: one that transfers regulatory responsibilities in some municipal jurisdictions from conservation authorities to municipalities; and a second that prevents municipalities from working with conservation authorities to provide development application review services for anything beyond natural hazards.

What is the advantage of changes that do not solve the housing crisis, but create a host of new problems – not just for conservation authorities and municipalities, but also for the development community?

This is a watershed



moment for Ontario. For decades, municipalities – and Ontarians – have relied on CAs to keep our communities safe and help plan our communities well. This partnership uses local, watershed science, collected and built over years, to guide decision-making.

Bill 23... changes the rules and rolls back 70 years of successful science-based watershed protection by Ontario's 36 CAs. These changes are contrary to the core mandate of CAs and could put people – and their homes – at risk.

Successful emergency preparedness relies on CAs to regulate development in hazardous areas. This prevents the worst possible outcome which at the top of the list, is loss of life. Delegating this risk to select municipalities creates an additional level of risk that municipalities have not had to manage until now.

We must protect and include green infrastructure

“... changes to delegate conservation authority regulatory responsibility to individual municipalities are contrary to the core mandate of conservation authorities and may put additional people – and their homes – at more risk.”

(wetlands, forests, riparian areas, etc.) because they cost-effectively, and efficiently reduce flood risks and protect water quality. Flood management relies on ‘conserving’ the interconnected

waters and lands of Ontario’s environment.

Ontario’s conservation authority model is internationally recognized for leading the way in creating healthy, safe communities,

especially now at a time when emergency preparedness is more important than ever.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

In the Nottawasaga watershed, there are 33 provincially significant wetlands (PSW), 34 important but non-provincially significant wetlands as well as approximately 80 wetlands and wetland complexes in the Nottawasaga watershed that are unevaluated, but would likely become provincially significant if they were evaluated. The Ontario government is proposing to change the evaluation system and redefine what PSWs are. If the new legislation is approved, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is no longer involved in evaluating wetlands. If conservation authorities also are taken out of the picture, who will oversee development around wetlands with an objective lens? The proposed



changes are signaling that municipalities will play a large role in protecting people and property from natural hazards and the evaluation of wetlands. Municipalities have neither capacity nor expertise in water resources engineering, environmental planning and regulatory compliance... Executive Members of NVCA's Board of Directors recommend municipalities retain the option to enter into agreements with conservation authorities, and that the Ontario Government pause Bill 23 and continue to work with conservation authorities...

Credit Valley Conservation

The changes limit the way conservation authorities can work with their municipal partners to plan safe development while maintaining the benefits of nature in our communities. The changes raise a number of

The Bill would make it easier to develop where wetlands or other natural features exist.

concerns because they:

- prohibit a municipality's choice to request that conservation authorities comment on conservation and environmental matters in the development review process, except for flooding and erosion;
- remove critical tests that are used in reviewing permit applications;
- empower the Minister to freeze conservation authority user fees;
- would enable the Minister to exempt certain types of Planning Act applications from requiring a conservation authority permit;

- would make conservation lands available to support housing development. Conservation authority lands are acquired to protect against flooding and erosion and provide residents access to local greenspaces... CVC does not retain lands that are surplus to this purpose.

Conservation Halton

Conservation Halton has identified areas where the government needs to press pause. Conservation Halton is asking the Province to engage with Conservation Authorities to consider better alternatives to balancing housing

supply with protection of communities from flooding and erosion. We want the core mandate of Conservation Authorities, to protect life and property, to in fact be upheld.

Hamilton Conservation Authority

The changes reduce our ability to protect people and property from natural hazards – which the Province has repeatedly stated is our core mandate - and reduce protection for our green spaces and natural areas. We urge the government to pause. Homes are indeed important, but let's not solve one crisis and create another.

HCA receives and reviews permit and development applications, for everything from a homeowner wanting to build a deck adjacent to a local creek to multi-million-dollar developments that could impact flooding, erosion and natural areas. Our role is to ensure the proposed project



doesn't create undue safety risks due to natural hazards or harm the natural environment.

Municipalities do not have the expertise or capacity in areas such as water resources engineering, environmental planning and regulatory compliance.

The Bill would make it easier to develop where wetlands or other natural features exist. Wetlands and natural areas could be dealt with in a fragmented way, with potential for re-evaluation of what deems a wetland significant and allowances for offsetting of natural heritage features. This may indeed get homes built faster, but at what cost?

We help steer development to appropriate places where it will not harm the environment or create safety risks for people.

Changes should consider a watershed-based approach and continue to provide

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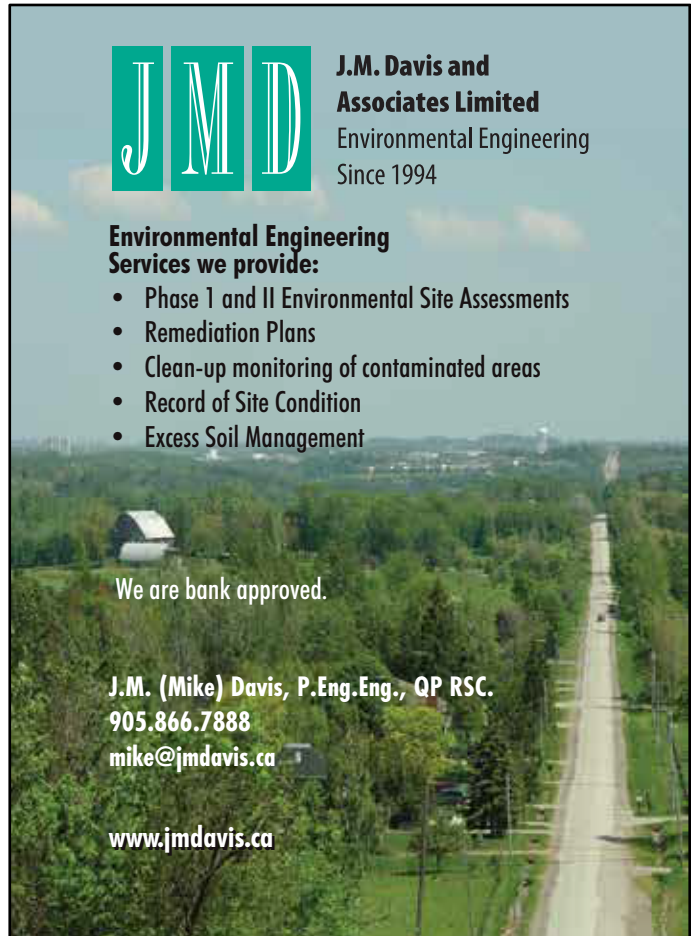
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It will also, for the first time in our history, result in a significant net loss of available farmland within the Greenbelt. Given that Ontario is losing an average of 319 acres of farmland every day, we cannot afford to lose even more of some of Canada's most fertile and productive land.

conservation authorities with the ability to review and comment on natural heritage and natural hazards in permitting and planning applications.

Further, conservation authorities will be asked to identify conservation lands where development could take place. There is

very little land owned by HCA where development would be appropriate.

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

We support the Province's goal of increasing the housing supply. However, the proposed changes affecting CAs and our

mandate will have minimal effect in increasing the housing supply and could lead to unintended future consequences associated with the loss of critical natural heritage features such as wetlands. The diminished role of CAs could also lead to more development being located in natural hazards, higher costs in property damage, increased burden on municipal partners, and absolute erosion of the ecosystem approach applied through the established integrated watershed management lens.

GREENBELT CHANGES

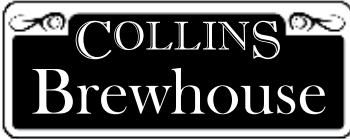
The Ontario government is also proposing amendments to the Greenbelt Plan in order to support Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act. Lands that are

on or near the Niagara Escarpment, and that are proposed for removal from the Greenbelt Plan, include in the City of Hamilton and the Town of Grimsby. The proposal notes that the Grimsby lands "are currently designated as Specialty Crop (Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape Area) and Natural Heritage System in the Greenbelt and would be redesignated to Town/Village under this proposal."

Greenbelt Foundation

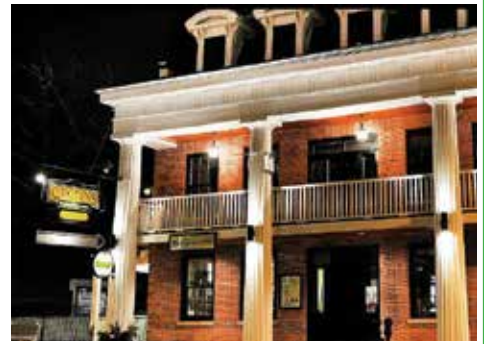
A statement on Dec. 8, 2022, released by the Greenbelt Foundation, includes "The integrity of the Greenbelt is what has made it a global success story and we must ensure that it remains permanently protected.... Proposed changes would remove protections and open land within the Greenbelt to development, a dangerous





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precedent, which will damage valuable water systems and wetlands that supply ground water, reduce flood risks and improve climate resilience for the nearby communities. It will also, for the first time in our history, result in a significant net loss of available farmland within the Greenbelt. Given that

Ontario is losing an average of 319 acres of farmland every day, we cannot afford to lose even more of some of Canada's most fertile and productive land."

Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Network
"Bill 23's erosion of the Greenbelt, which intersects the Niagara Escarpment

Biosphere from Niagara to Tobermory, is effectively an attack on biodiversity and on the capacity of our natural areas and farmlands to provide ecosystem benefits, human physical and mental health benefits, and in this time of food insecurity, the ability to feed ourselves... Ontario's... Bill 23 presents a clear and

present threat to the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere." **NEV**

Share your opinion of these changes! Write to us at editor@NEViews.ca and/or write your local Member of Provincial Parliament.





Swayze Falls, in Short Hills Provincial Park, seen from the valley floor in spring. It is the tallest of more than a dozen waterfalls in the park.



SHORT HILLS PROVINCIAL PARK

Spectacular Year Round

WRITTEN & PHOTOGRAPHED BY ART WEAVER

When I first discovered Short Hills Provincial Park in the early 1990s, it immediately became my favourite year-round running/hiking location. Winter in the park is surreal and silent while summer is robust and full of texture. Fall is exciting with brilliant colours and the activity of migration, however, nothing beats spring. Spring in Short Hills celebrates life. The waterfalls are full and showing their power, spring flowers are erupting, trees are greening and the diversity of birds becomes apparent as they return for another year.



Short Hills was established as a provincial park in 1985 and is located southwest of St. Catharines near Fonthill. Currently 6.6 square km, it continues to grow through opportunistic acquisition. Sitting on the Niagara Escarpment, Short Hills is the headwaters for Twelve Mile Creek with numerous waterfalls, streams and rapids which have cut much of the park into valleys and ridges. It is strictly a nature reserve with multiple trails for hiking, running,

cross country skiing and designated trails for mountain biking and horseback riding. It has no facilities other than a basic toilet at each of the three parking lots located on Pelham Rd, Wiley Rd and Roland Rd.

Short Hills is considered Carolinian Forest. In addition to hills, valleys and streams, it boasts upland aquifers, swamps, open fields, mature forest, post-agricultural scrub, and lower seasonal wetlands. This variety has encouraged an enormous diversity of flora and fauna making it a paradise

for nature photographers and bird watchers. There are a few flat areas in the park showing signs of a past farming culture. One trail actually has an old abandoned set of harrowing discs.

Every time I enter the park, I discover something new. Some of the more exotic wildlife I've seen, include a Red Bellied Snake, Northern Flying Squirrel, Rufous-sided Towhee and Indigo Bunting. The variety of wild flowers and fungi is incredible, changing with the seasons and too numerous to list. I often feel

like I'm walking from one picture postcard into another.

The Roland Rd entrance has a wheelchair-accessible trail leading to Swayze Falls, the gem of the park. At 14m this waterfall is the tallest in the park and has an observation deck built on the south wall of the valley. It is a favourite destination in the spring for most hikers due to the spectacular volume of water as the surrounding forest comes to life. In the summer, it has a tendency to dry up but the deck is positioned over the ravine edge so that the view



▲ One winter, ice built up in the main channel of Swayze Falls, forcing water to flow to the side, where it froze into this beautiful, giant turquoise jewel of ice.

► The brilliant blue of the spectacular Indigo Bunting is eye catching.



▲ Previously named the Rufous-sided Towhee, this colourful bird with a sharp chirping call is now known as the Eastern Towhee.





▲ Terrace Falls is spectacular all year but spring runoff is breathtaking. It is the widest waterfall in the park.

▼ Blue Cohosh comes up quite early in the spring. The flowers and early foliage are near black. The leaves turn green and clusters of large blue berries are produced. Leaves and berries can be toxic.



of the horseshoe-shaped gorge is still spectacular. One winter some freaky weather, heavy snow, heavy rain and a sudden deep freeze caused one section of the falls to fast freeze into a giant turquoise jewel. When the sun hit the ice, it glowed from within which was hypnotic.

Favourite Falls

One of my absolute favourite spots in Short Hills is Terrace Falls, a place my wife Kerry and I affectionately call “Stinky” Falls. It’s a beautiful waterfall with a straight edge and approximately five to six m high. The waterfall is surrounded by mature hardwood including Hemlock, making it postcard-perfect through all four seasons. This falls rarely dries up but in the spring with its incredible volume of water, you can hear it rumble long before you see



▲ This timid White-tailed Deer continued to peek around this Sugar Maple as long as we didn't move. Those eyes are hypnotic.

it. This waterfall is very accessible on the north side and it's easy to sit and lose yourself in the natural beauty. The Short Hills area has quite a bit of sulphur in the sub strait. At certain times of the year the sulphur makes its way to the surface. Those not familiar with this may look at their fellow hikers asking "What have you been eating?"

Visiting this park regularly, I have accumulated many stories about the wildlife. Late one spring I was in the middle of a long, early morning trail run with my friend Tony. We were on an upland trail which turned sharply to face a large open field sandwiched between two heavily wooded valleys. Suddenly a half dozen deer heads popped up above the thick grasses and wild flowers. We froze in our tracks, trying not to startle them further. The scene was breathtaking. They were all bucks as their antlers were showing. The staring contest continued as we inched our way along the trail hoping they would continue their meal. A couple more heads popped up. We kept inching forward, a couple more heads popped up and then they broke and started to run. White tails started to appear out of nowhere and numbers continued to grow. In a matter of seconds, the field became a firework display of white tails bobbing up and down and disappearing into the neighbouring valleys. And then it was over, the field was empty except for two totally stunned runners. We estimated nearly 50 deer. We felt bad about disturbing them yet really excited about the experience.



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Timid Coyote

Another warm spring day Kerry and I were out for a long hike, following one of the many tributaries. We stopped on the crest of a ridge perhaps 10m above the water to enjoy the view. We noticed movement almost directly below us. It was a coyote trying to cross to our side of the creek. It was balancing on a fallen tree trunk that was short of our bank. The last three m were only small branches and twigs. The coyote was shifting back and forth, pawing at the water, trying to decide how best not to get wet. We stood and watched, mesmerized and at the same time amused by its predicament. Finally, it made a desperate leap but its hind legs and tail hit the water. It scrambled up the bank and disappeared into the brush. We never saw it again but will never forget the experience.

Not only do the extensive trails in Short Hills touch on a variety of eco-systems, they offer connectivity to a variety of destinations outside of the park. Following the Bruce Trail west of the park leads to Rockway Conservation Area and a little further west is the Louth Conservation Area, both harbouring beautiful waterfalls. Heading east, the trails lead to the Reynoldsville ghost town, Morningstar Mill and Museum, DeCew House plus the Laura Secord, 12 Mile Creek and Steve Bauer trails. There is a lot to explore and only your hiking range limits the potential for adventure. **NEV**

Art Weaver's last feature for this magazine was "The Challenging Beauty of Niagara Glen" in Autumn 2019. His photography can be seen at his gallery site at trailape.ca.

► Likely a leucistic Eastern Gray Squirrel, this squirrel stood out as white when it was hopping through the woods in the fall.



▼ A Giant Swallowtail on blooming Teasel





▲ This Red-tailed Hawk sat posing for quite a while. It actually turned as if it was modelling.

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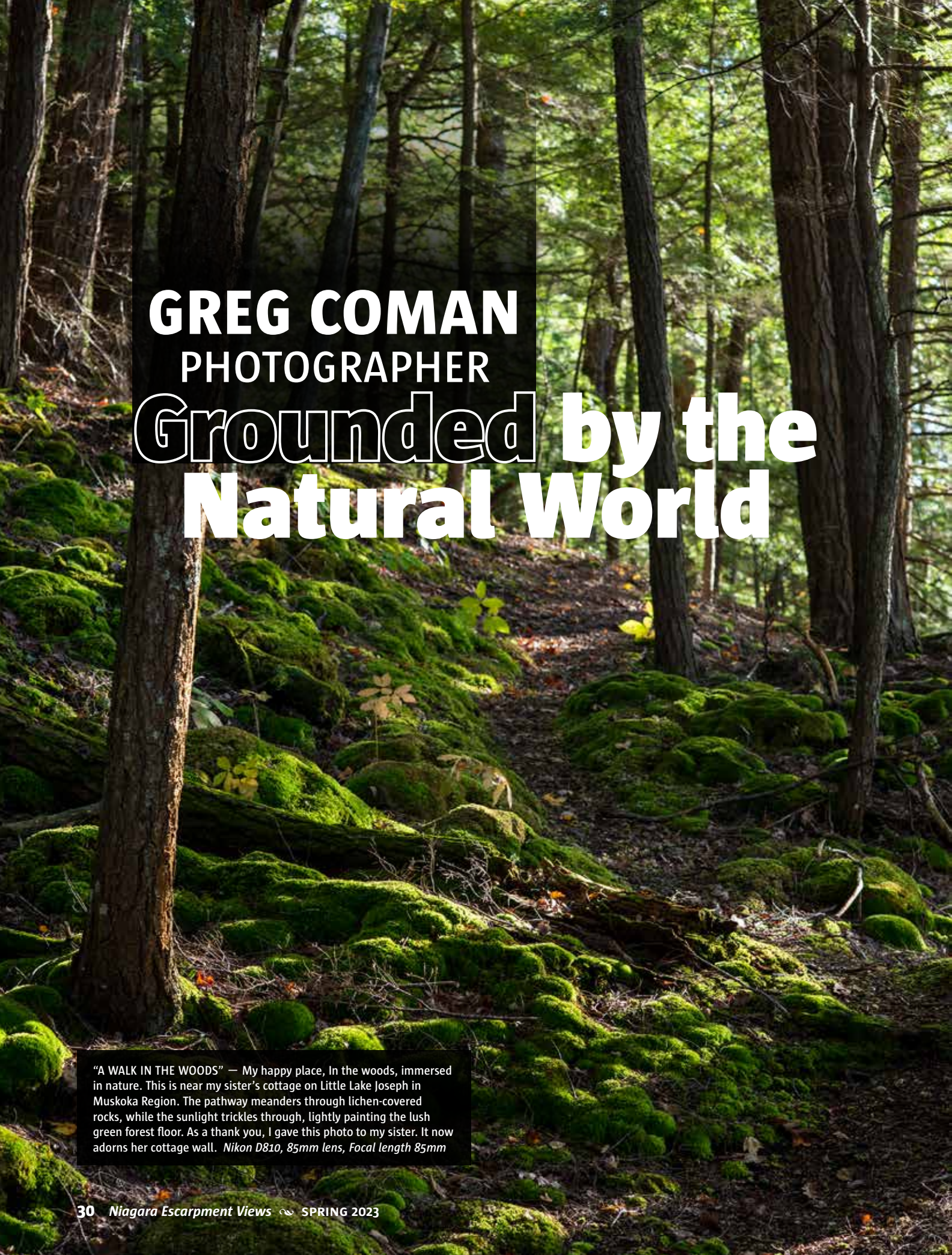
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Stoney Creek in spring, photographed from the Niagara Escarpment,
looking across to Mount Nemo on the horizon. PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAVIS.







GREG COMAN
PHOTOGRAPHER
**Grounded by the
Natural World**

“A WALK IN THE WOODS” — My happy place. In the woods, immersed in nature. This is near my sister’s cottage on Little Lake Joseph in Muskoka Region. The pathway meanders through lichen-covered rocks, while the sunlight trickles through, lightly painting the lush green forest floor. As a thank you, I gave this photo to my sister. It now adorns her cottage wall. *Nikon D810, 85mm lens, Focal length 85mm*

► “HUMMINGBIRD” — One spring day, I was working in my studio, and I looked out the window to see this cute little hummingbird perched on a nearby branch. I have caught fleeting glimpses of the occasional hummingbird hovering around the flowers, but they’re here and gone very quickly. This was the first time I have seen one stationary.
Nikon D810, 70-200 mm lens, Focal length 200mm



▼ “TOAD STOOL” — I was hiking on a trail in the Haliburton Highlands, near the Leslie Frost Natural Resource Centre, shooting with my macro lens, a fixed 105mm Nikkor lens, as I hoped to photograph mushrooms up close. They are abundant along these trails, especially in fall. I lay on my belly for this shot, when this little toad unexpectedly landed on the mushroom that I was photographing. Talk about a photobomb, one that I was thrilled to have captured!
Nikon D810, 105 mm lens, Focal length 105mm





◀ “CANADIAN SHIELD” — While driving along the TransCanada Highway, enroute to Ottawa, I saw this rocky landscape and had to stop. I was attracted to the light, as the sun dropped low in the sky behind the clouds. I composed this image with the rocks in the foreground, set against the moody sky. When I’m on a driving trip, I avoid big highways. I want to be able to stop and photograph if something catches my eye. For me, that is part of the journey. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 24mm*



▲ “STORMHAVEN” — Stormhaven Backcountry Campground on the northern Bruce Peninsula is a hidden gem, although it took a lot of planning and preparation to get there. I booked my permit six months prior in order to secure one of the coveted shoreside campsites. Overnight campers need to be prepared for a two-hour hike on a treacherous section of the Bruce Trail, packing everything in and out for the overnight stay, including a lightweight tent, sleeping bag, camp stove, food and water. I also packed my dSLR camera. This photo was taken at the spot where I would get my drinking water, fresh out of Georgian Bay, using a filtered water pump. Sleeping under the stars on the secluded white limestone shoreline was well worth the effort. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 24mm*





▲ “INTO THE MIST” — The Lake Huron shoreline boasts some of the most spectacular sunsets in Ontario. The calm shallow waters make for ideal kayaking conditions. I photographed this duo of sunset kayakers from the beach at MacGregor Point Provincial Park, which is located on a seven-km stretch of coastline. The minimalist composition of this image instilled in me a sense of calmness and wonder. Perhaps it prompts the viewer to ask “what lies beyond the limits of this frame?” *Nikon D810, 70-200 mm lens, Focal length 200mm*

▼ “MONSTER” — We found this injured baby bird on the side of the road. We suspect it had been attacked by a bird of prey, and dropped. We soon identified it as a young Grackle. A day later we serendipitously found an abandoned bird’s nest. It became the bird’s new home. While we searched for an animal rescue facility, we nursed it to the best of our surrogate abilities. We affectionately called it Monster because of the way it would squawk as I dug in the garden looking for its favourite food source, worms. Hobbitstee, a wildlife rehabilitation centre, would become its new home before being released. We hope it is now back in the wild where all little monsters belong. *Nikon D810, 85 mm lens, Focal length 85mm*



▼ “ON THE HORIZON” — The Bruce Trail holds a special place in my heart, having hiked the entire 900-km trail end to end with my kids. One of my favourite sections of the trail is near Tobermory in the Bruce Peninsula National Park. I have been back to this section many times. On this occasion, I was co-leading an Adventurer group. Several of my photos taken along this section of the Bruce Trail have been published, including the front cover of *UP!* - WestJet’s inflight magazine, as well as the *Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine*. *Nikon D810, 70-200 mm lens, Focal length 200mm*





◀ “ARTIST’S PALETTE” — The Speyside South Side Trail of the Bruce Trail is one of our favourites to walk the dog, because it’s an easy loop trail. While walking this in the early autumn, I was intrigued by the twisted branches of the Sumacs, amidst the warm colours of the foliage. I shot this with my iPhone. I may not always have my dSLR camera with me, so I work with what I have. If someone asks me what the best camera is, I always say “it’s the camera that you have with you.” Although I choose Nikon as my tool of the trade, I have used many other types of cameras as well, including Canon, Olympus, Minolta, Pentax, and Sony. *iPhone 8, focal length 28mm*



◀ “TREELINE” — I like the simplicity of this winter scene. I shot this at Scotsdale Farm, a favourite local destination of mine for hiking. Scotsdale is also one of my favourite spots for photographing family portraits and engagement shoots. It can be very popular on weekends, so I like to go during the week or later in the day. It’s a large property and the Bruce Trail winds through it. I shoot in all seasons and weather conditions. I’ve photographed a dance school there on one of the hottest days of the year, and photographed a couple’s portrait on one of the coldest. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 70mm*

► “SPLASH” — The Grotto near Tobermory in Bruce Peninsula National Park is a cave with a natural pool of water. The light illuminates through an underwater tunnel, enhancing the deep blue colour. This photo is the decisive moment that one of the Adventurers in our group dove into the clear, very cold water. I have heard stories of scuba divers swimming through the tunnel, however that is not recommended unless you are an experienced cave diver. The hike into The Grotto is tricky, and on one occasion I came face to face with a snake climbing on the rocks. *Nikon D810, 24-70mm lens, Focal length 24mm*



► “MISTY POND” — This shot was taken close to home, just a few minutes’ walk away. It’s a familiar and quiet pond, which changes character with the seasons. I shot this on a winter day, when the fluctuations in temperature caused foggy conditions. I go to this spot often and have spotted muskrats, turtles, and coyotes. It is also a popular spot for various types of water fowl. I printed this on acrylic and have it hanging proudly on my living room wall. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 35mm*





▲ “NORTHERN REFLECTIONS” — I rediscovered the magnificence of Algonquin Park in the last couple of years. I was amazed by the sheer size of it, and the multitude of lakes, trails, and backcountry campsites to explore. One may say it could take a lifetime to explore, and not see all of it. This was shot in late fall. I applied an infrared filter to highlight the trees and reflection. There’s a sense of mystery as the eye is drawn to the dark area, perhaps wondering what lies beyond. This photo won first place in the Halton PhotoArt 2022 contest, in the scenery category. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 70mm*

Artist’s Statement

I’m a Halton Hills photographer with a recognizable style, not limited by subject matter. I open my senses to the world around me, quietly observing, and when the moment is right, utilizing the camera to capture the decisive moment. Creatively speaking, I’m earthy, grounded by the natural world around me, including people, creatures, landscapes, and spaces.

I have had solo exhibitions at the Side Door Gallery, Georgetown, and the Fez Batik, Toronto, as well as numerous juried exhibitions, including the Scotiabank Contact festival, PhotoArt, and other mixed media exhibitions at the Red Door Gallery, Georgetown, Holcim Gallery, Milton, and Helson Galleries, Halton Hills. My images have been printed in numerous publications including *UP!* - the West Jet Inflight magazine, the *Bruce Trail Conservancy Magazine*, *SideRoads of Halton Hills*,

and *Niagara Escarpment Views* on several occasions, including a photo essay about hiking the Bruce Trail from end to end.

I’m past president of Halton Hills Camera Club, and also a member of Fine Art Society of Milton, (FASM). As part of the FASM Fall Studio Tour last year, I hosted my first photography exhibition at my Halton studio. My photographs cover a variety of themes including landscapes, as well as specific themes including underwater photography, and abandoned spaces.

My business, Greg Coman Photography, provides services including portraits, engagements, weddings, and corporate events. A specialty is family portraiture set in a natural environment. To see more of my work, check out www.gregcoman.com, and follow me on Instagram.

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“GETTING THE SHOT” — My partner Jody took this shot of me while hiking together at the Bruce Peninsula National Park. I am pictured here with my workhorse of a camera, the Nikon D810, with the Nikkor 24-70 mm /f2.8 lens. If I have to choose one lens, due to space/weight limitations, it would be the 24-70mm, my go-to lens due to its versatility.
 PHOTO BY JODY VAN DER KWAAK. *Canon 5D Mark II, 85 mm lens, Focal length 85mm*

▼ “ICING ON THE CAKE” — American Falls, viewed here from the Canadian side, is the second largest of the three waterfalls that together are known as Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls can get very busy on weekends. In order to avoid the crowds, we went midweek on a cold winter day in February. We had the place to ourselves, which is a rarity. Winter is my favourite time to photograph the Falls. I love how the trees are coated in ice. It had been overcast but then the sun popped through the clouds, and a rainbow manifested in the icy mist. Nature provided a wonderful palette of colour, from the blue sky, to the dark green water, to the varied colours of the rainbow. *Nikon D810, 24-70 mm lens, Focal length 70mm*



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A woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a purple jacket and black pants, stands in a forest. The ground is covered in brown pine needles. A large, smooth, round stone is integrated into the letter 'O' in the title 'A Passion for Rocks'.

A Passion for Rocks

WRITTEN BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT | PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAVIS

Brenda McEnery is a rock hound. For the last 40 years, since owning a house in the village of Erin, she has been collecting beautiful and puzzling stones of all shapes and sizes. During construction of the house, a large, perfectly round stone was excavated and became her first find. The rear yard of the house backs onto a ravine containing the Credit River, and here she has found countless more pieces.



Brenda McEnery at the Credit River which flows close to her house in the village of Erin.



▲ Brenda's finds are organized and displayed on tables and benches in the garage. PHOTO BY GLORIA HILDEBRANDT.



Two folding tables and some sturdy benches have been set up in the garage to display her finds, including a significant collection of many perfectly round or oval stones in sizes from a cannonball down to a musket ball. Many of the other pieces look like natural rocks, although when she points out some features, they become more intriguing and less like they're completely natural. Some have grooves as if from wear. Edges look like

they might once have been sharp. Lines in stone may have been made deliberately. Some items look like scrapers or grinders or axes or hammers. Some have suggestions of grooves where they might have been tied to handles.

Brenda believes that her finds may be very old artifacts from Indigenous people who used to live and hunt in the area. She has examined and studied each piece and done research on possible uses. Having found

similarities among the finds, she categorizes them as round and egg-shaped rocks, tools, exotics, and having the shapes of kites, spears and almonds.

"I have a lot of round, ovoid, smooth rocks that seem to be prevalent in this area," she says. "All have been found within a two-km radius, mostly along the banks of the Credit River."

She has gathered so many of these rocks that she uses them as decorations in her garden, and has lined them up on a retaining

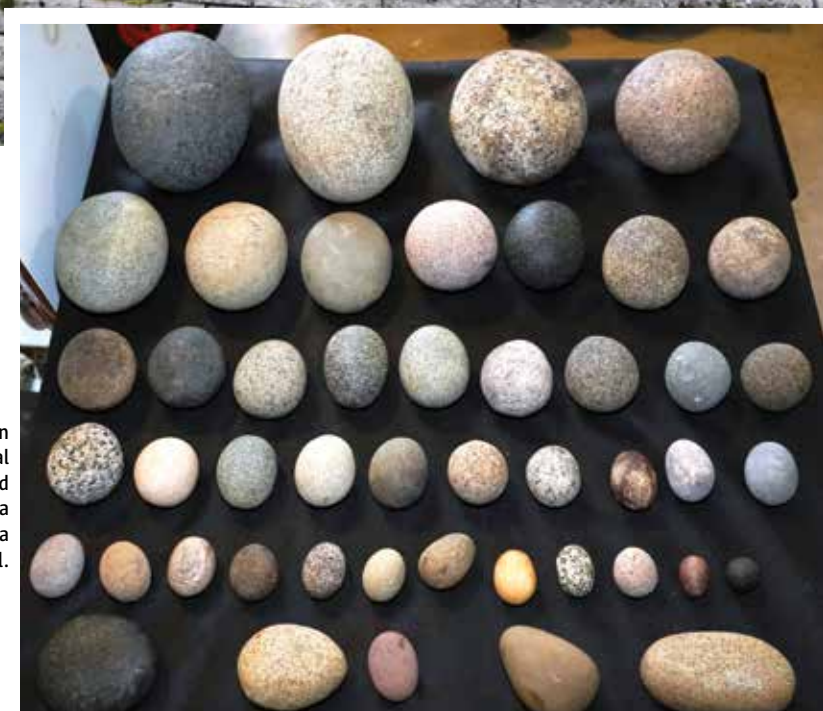
wall. She demonstrates one possible use for them as a grinder on a stone that has a remarkable curve on one side. Together, the stones make a good fit. If not used for grinding, the round rocks might have been used for pounding or as a weapon.

Brenda shows that some of the round stones are highly magnetic. She shares that she learned that some of the smaller stones could have been heated by fire and used in women's birthing



▲ Brenda's garden in Erin is decorated by many perfectly round, large stones that she found locally. These are only some of them.

► Brenda's collection of round and oval rocks arranged from the sizes of a cannonball down to a musket ball.





▲ An arrangement of various finds, in the shapes of planers, scrapers, kites, some with distinct holes and others with possible notches.

canals to help soften and open the cervix for birth.

Ancient Tools

Brenda believes that some of her finds could have been ancient tools, perhaps used once and dropped. Some flat rocks have a distinct hole at one end, and Brenda can show how two of them could work as coupling stones to hold a stick in place against a bow drill to start fire. Others look like planers. Some rocks have a rounded end with a notch and a point at the other end, suggesting that they could have been axes. There are similar shapes to many of the rocks, but in different sizes.

“I have this theory that, like us, the ancients made tools and used the same principles as you would in a small tool as you would in a large,” explains Brenda. “For instance, we have teaspoons and then we

have larger spoons for stirring and then it goes up to shovels for digging. I believe I found in my patterning that the Indigenous did the same.”

In her category of “exotics,” or pieces that don’t naturally occur in this area, Brenda puts a beautiful black granite cannonball-sized round stone, rose quartz pieces with extremely sharp edges, and what she thinks are fossilized pieces of bison and horse teeth.

“According to mainstream archaeology,” declares Brenda, “fossilization of vertebrates did not happen in this area, so either it did, or these obviously were transported here.” Other pieces are suggestive of spear heads or knives, while bow-shaped rocks could be used to sharpen other stones or smooth out fibres or strings made of animal hide.

“Mainstream archaeology will say these are not of the



▲ Resembling a “headstone,” this large rock contains grooves that can be seen as a stick figure crossed by a horizontal line.

most correct material,” Brenda admits, “and there’s no flaking or definitive pecking marks, but I believe the nature of the soil around here tends to be very alkaline so the artifacts are highly eroded and they are thousands of years old.”

Brenda has grouped similarly shaped rocks together, making impressive collections. “One of the phenomena of this area is what I call the kite shape,” she explains, “the one, two, three, with a point on the end,



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▲ Brenda holding a possible grinding stone on a rock with a curved surface that could serve as a mortar. The two make a pleasing fit.

repeated so many times here. They're everywhere. Whether they're points or axes, I'm not sure. They're in sizes from very small to very large."

She claims that almond-shaped rocks she has found would have had a sharp edge and been used for cutting or scraping, although the edges are highly eroded. The lack of clearly worked edges in her finds prevents some people from instantly confirming them to be human artifacts. She is encouraged, however, by some interest that has been shown, saying that Tanya Hill-Montour, archaeology supervisor and consultant with Six Nations of the Grand River, as well as an archaeology representative from Mississaugas of the Credit, have concluded that some of the finds are Archaic in nature, which means they are as much as 7,000 to 10,000 years old.

Brenda has sought official responses from many organizations since early 2021. "All levels of government have been informed of the artifacts," she says, "and Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport has registered the coordinates I sent them as site leads."

Sensitive Issues

There can be issues around archaeology. Many different reasons are given for leaving finds where they are. People wanting to develop a site can be delayed or even prevented if finds prove to be significant and the site becomes protected. Indigenous people today may want to have finds from their ancestors repatriated or left *in situ*, or untouched in their original locations, especially if the items have a spiritual aspect. Professional archaeologists need artifacts kept *in situ*, in order to have proper records and the best understanding of the items.

Yet some of Brenda's pieces were dug up when



▲ Brenda demonstrates how two rocks with a hole in an end might have been used as coupling stones to hold a stick for a bow drill to make fire.

construction was done in her housing subdivision. If she hadn't taken them home, they would have been pulverized or haphazardly buried by machinery.

Brenda has the best intentions with her finds. She stopped gathering pieces when she was told to by one organization, and all she wants is to add to the documentation

of Indigenous people having been in the area, as well as have Indigenous inclusion in any archaeological exploration of the prehistory of Erin Village. **NEV**



▲ Interesting finds that Brenda thinks may have been scrapers and points, with kite-shaped rocks in the lower right and at the bottom, exotics including rose quartz.



▲ The size of a basketball, this round white stone was revealed by excavation work done in Brenda's neighbourhood.



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More Houses, Less Habitat

By Bob Barnett

It is ironic that just as Canada was hosting thousands of delegates from all over the world in December 2022 to discuss measures to better protect our land and species, the Ontario government was proposing to remove 7,000 acres of protected Greenbelt land. Granted, they were talking about replacing it with 9,000 acres in the Paris Galt Moraine, which, however, is doubtless already designated for protection. Bill 23 and associated measures have several pretty serious measures, all in the name of building more houses more quickly:

- 1) Removal of 7,000 acres, almost 28 sq km, from the Greenbelt;
- 2) Encouraging the sale of conservation authority (CA) lands;
- 3) Removing the power of CAs to comment on development plans;
- 4) Expanding municipal zones where housing would be permitted;
- 5) Removing the right of citizens to comment on matters before the Ontario Land Tribunal;
- 6) Giving Ontario mayors the power to decide housing matters with only 1/3 council support;

- 7) Allowing mayors to veto outright, motions limiting housing;
- 8) Eliminating municipal development charges worth billions of dollars used to pay for servicing of land;
- 9) Dramatically reducing the funding for the Niagara Escarpment Commission;
- 10) Even removing the listing of heritage buildings to prevent substantial change.

If these measures were destined to provide high density housing on land serviced by roads, sewers, transit and employment, it would be a noble endeavour. Instead, sprawling subdivisions will cover these newly-designated housing lands which are farmland and forest beyond the edge of current housing, selected and purchased by developers. That will not only remove the services nature provides in those areas, like cleaner air, water, less flooding, carbon sequestration, pollinators, habitat for important species, tourism and recreation and even aesthetic values, but will replace it with roads and pollution from cars. Just seeing trees and nature has been demonstrated to reduce health costs.

If the selected 7,000 acres are grazing land, the loss of

nature's services is at least \$1 million per year, but if forested lands are being removed, we lose \$12.6 million each year from those natural services listed above EVERY year thereafter. That value includes only the Greenbelt lands, not CA lands or other municipal lands removed from protection.

Losing Species in Ontario

The irony is that these measures were introduced just as the world looked to Egypt for solutions to our climate crisis. Then the world's view shifted to Montreal where 198 counties strove to find ways to protect 30 per cent of our land before 2030. Eminent biologists like E. O. Wilson calculate that we need not 30 per cent, but 50 per cent to prevent the sixth great extinction which is going on right now, mainly through habitat loss. We don't just lose species in the jungle in Brazil, but right here in Ontario where hundreds of species are under dire threat.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture calculates that we are losing over 300 acres of farmland every day. We need the cropland to grow things locally. Otherwise, we have to truck, ship or fly things in from all over the world at great ecological cost. We need to minimize our CO2 from transportation.

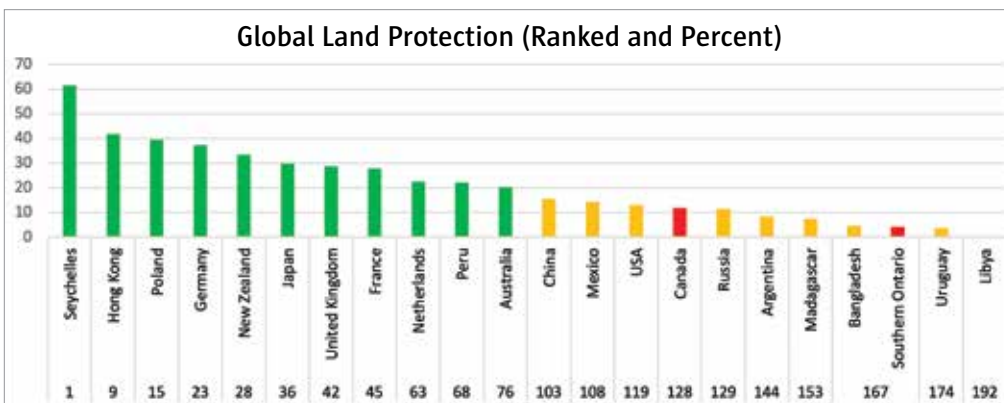
One of the things that started me on the road to conservation was visiting the Bruce Trail where every month, I saw new fields being converted to subdivisions in Brampton and St. Catharines. That pushed me to start

looking for land to get the Trail off roads and into the forest. That morphed into Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy where, after 25 years, we are conserving 20 properties this year with 13 sq km worth about \$10 million. We are the second biggest land conserver here in southern Ontario with 21,300 acres, or 86 sq km, protected. Despite our struggles, all the land trusts, CAs and governments have only protected 4.3 per cent of our land, not 20 per cent and certainly not the 30 per cent we are aiming for.

In December, the federal government announced four new Indigenous protected areas, covering a million acres, to protect caribou and a few other threatened species. We need this kind of help in southern Ontario's hotbed of rare, endangered and threatened species as well. Every acre protected here will protect scores of species. Building Highway 413 and stealing land from our Greenbelt will only make species more vulnerable. But that's just an externality to Doug Ford's friends. They want more back yards and lawnmowers. Just yesterday I drove by a succession of signs announcing more new development in Brampton.

The loss of 7,000 acres in the Greenbelt, building Hwy 413, losing municipal and conservation authority lands will mean we have a steeper, higher hill to climb than we did before. Southern Ontario with its most intense species diversity has only reached 1/7 of the 30 per cent international goal. The graph here, based on information from the United Nations Environment Programme, shows where we sit compared to other countries. Ours is a poor start when the rest of the world is at 14.6 per cent or half of the global goal.

Bob Barnett is executive director of Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy and can be reached at 888.815.9575 or through www.escarpment.ca.



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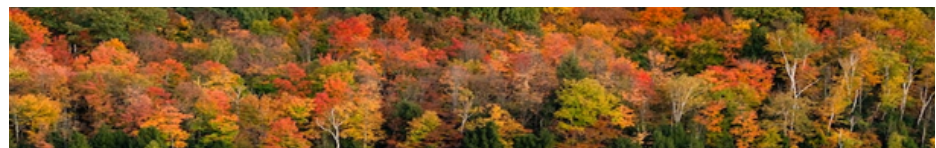
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Conservation and Climate Watch

By Don McLean

Conservation authorities (CAs) are a crucial part of Ontario's climatic defences because they limit damage from the storms which are becoming more extreme as climate change intensifies. Their extensive natural lands sequester carbon and help keep it out of our atmosphere. They also protect biodiversity and provide public recreational trails, parks and campgrounds.

The province of Alberta came to Ontario for advice in 2013, after Calgary was devastated by the most expensive flooding in Canadian history, which also hit many smaller communities. Eight years later, when climate change caused flooding in British Columbia, their government also turned to Ontario.

Both provinces wanted to know more about conservation authorities, an Ontario innovation with a mandate to minimize extreme storm damage. They oversee the health of watersheds, protect wetlands, river valleys and natural features, and limit the location of human-created structures in flood-exposed locations. As the second largest landholder in the province, CA-owned wetlands, forests and other natural landscapes provide a very significant carbon sink. Losing such features is second only to the burning of fossil fuels in worsening the global climate. That's why volunteer climate activists in Hamilton have started watching CAs closely. Their Conservation Watch program has proven valuable and easy to join or duplicate from any part of Ontario.

Constraints on CAs

Conservation Watch was launched early in 2021 by the

Hamilton 350 Committee, a long-standing climate action group. It was initially a response to legislation of the Progressive Conservative provincial government that imposed major constraints on Ontario CAs that reduced their environmental protection functions, slashed citizen membership on their oversight boards and narrowed their mandates.

The huge public opposition to those changes in late 2020 led Hamilton 350 to begin monitoring the meetings of five boards of CAs. They wanted to better understand what the legislative and regulatory changes meant for climate and the natural world.

An immediate appreciation was of the critical role that CAs play in preserving conservation lands, constraining new environmental damages and minimizing such climatic impacts as flooding.

The first CAs were established in the 1940s and quickly expanded after Hurricane Hazel killed more than 80 people in the mid 1950s. There are now 36 CAs overseeing nearly all streams in southern Ontario and some in the northern part of the province. Their boundaries are defined by watersheds so the management of each is shared by multiple municipalities.

PC Disregard for Climate

Climate activists were already appalled by the PC government's disregard for the climate crisis after it tore up the provincial climate plan, cancelled dozens of wind and solar projects, and eliminated Ontario's independent environmental commissioner. They saw Conservation Watch as a way to spot change in the making.

An early example was a development proposal to replace an Ancaster Creek

headwaters marsh with five large warehouses and parking lots for more than 1,000 vehicles. Making this public knowledge generated 200 letters that helped convince the Hamilton CA board to change direction and reject the proposal. It also led hundreds of residents to participate in the subsequent public consultation and convince the CA to keep its policy of not allowing wetlands, forests and other natural features to be "offset" or removed and "re-constructed" in another location.

Conservation Watch monitors have been impressed by the diligent data collection of CA biologists, ecologists, hydrologists and others who track stream flows, drought conditions, invasive species, and many other critical ecosystem features. While CA land holdings are extensive, they are quite variable in size. A late 2022 report to the Niagara Peninsula CA board noted that the Hamilton CA owns 9.6 per cent of its jurisdictional area in comparison to the protected 1.5 per cent of the Niagara watersheds.

In late 2022, the province legislated further changes to CAs, removing some of their

permitting responsibilities and eliminating "pollution and land conservation" from the list of factors they could consider in their permit decisions. In addition, it banned CAs from their long-time practice of reviewing development proposals for municipal governments to evaluate their ecological impacts.

Conservation Watch is entirely volunteer and welcomes others who would like to learn more about these essential managers of our natural world. The work by Zoom is not difficult and new participants are paired with experienced watchers to cover one daytime or evening meeting per month. If you would be interested in learning how your local CA works and have about two to three hours you could spare each month, contact Sue Carson at d.carson@sympatico.ca.

Don McLean is a retired university lecturer in environmental studies who is a volunteer in Conservation Watch. He is a co-founder of Hamilton 350 and of Environment Hamilton. He has been inducted into Hamilton's Gallery of Distinction and awarded an honorary Doctorate of Laws by McMaster University.



Threatened Ancaster Creek headwaters marsh on Garner Road that was saved from development. PHOTO BY NANCY HURST.

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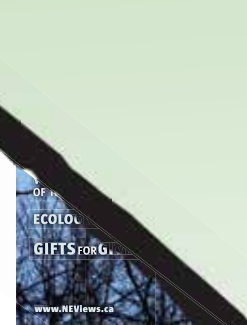
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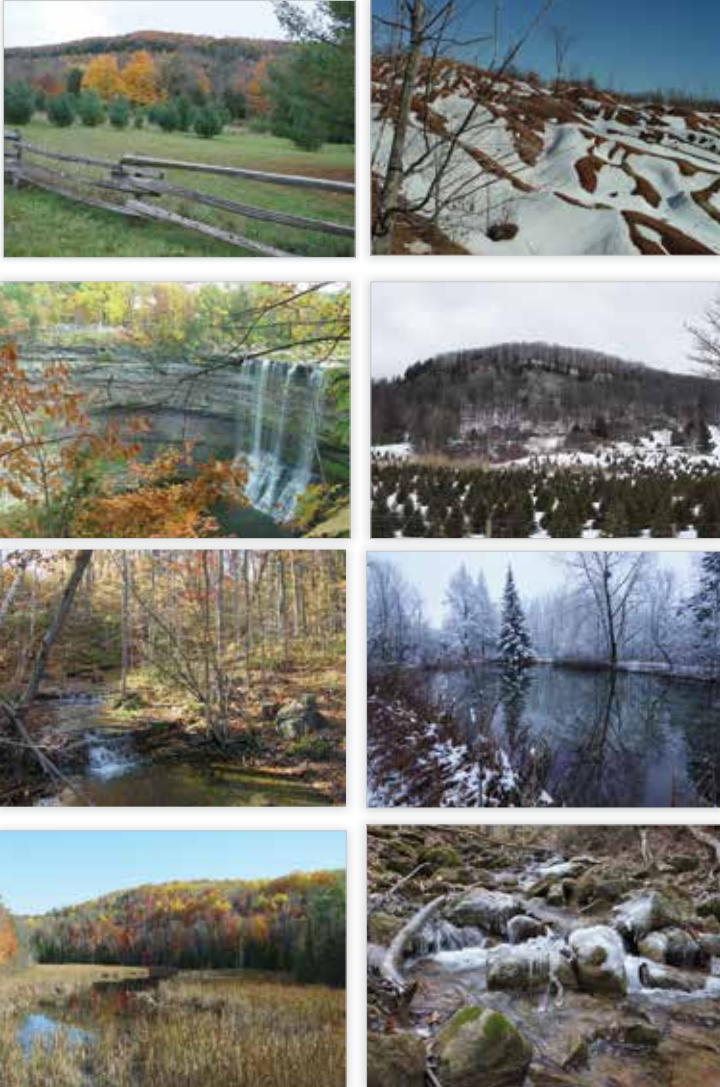
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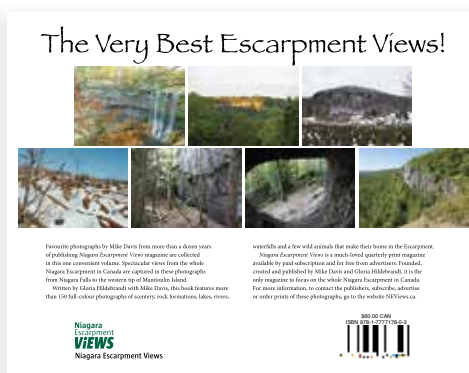
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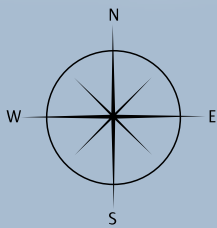
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