

Bruce Trail CONSERVANCY

DUFFERIN HI-LAND CLUB

FALL 2021



FALL FEATURES

- BATTLE FOR PINE RIVER
- AUTUMN WONDERS
- NEW ADVENTURE SERIES
- BIRTHDAY BOOTS BOOK
- OUTDOOR BENEFITS FOR KIDS

Security cameras capture trespassers on ATVs after they unlawfully dismantled DHBTC barriers. Photo by Tom Thayer

THE BATTLE FOR THE PINE RIVER NATURE RESERVE

The end of the beginning?

Bounded to the north and west by 15 Side Road and 2nd Line in Mulmur, and to the south by the 150-acre Ministry of Natural Resources and Forest (MNRF) Pine River Fishing Reserve, are approximately two hundred acres of steep hills, gullies, creeks, forest, and wetlands. Through the generosity of local donors and member donations these lands became Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) lands in the fall of 2020. But unlike so many of the pictures of pristine lands published by the BTC asking for our support, these lands are deeply scarred by more than 40 years of off-road vehicle use, target shooting and trash from parties.

Actively promoted by off-road magazines, social media, and word of mouth, with little to no on the ground oversight the lands were popular as a "free-for-all" where practically anything goes. Film crews shot off road promotional pieces for North American car manufacturers, and others produced seedier videos on the lands.

It was clear to Dufferin Hi-Land Club volunteers that this was not to be one of the easier BTC land management challenges.

Reclaiming a damaged wilderness

The first task was to keep trespassers and vehicles off the land. Fences, gates, log and concrete barriers were positioned across the obvious entrances. As the MNRF did not have the manpower resources to assist, we worked with them and took on the responsibility of their land access points as well. Bins of garbage and the burned down remains of a beautiful cottage were removed. 'BTC Managed Land' and 'Hiking Only' signs were posted and volunteers walked the properties informing everyone of the intention to convert the land to a nature reserve.

To be fair, a large majority of off roaders accepted the change in land use and fewer came back. - *continued*
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HI-LAND VIEWS

A NOTE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

It's the moment we've all been waiting for - a return to Organized Hiking. This is my favourite time of year to hike, no bugs, cooler temps and let's admit it, fall colours are stunning. There are a number of new guidelines to assist with the safe transition back to our wonderful trails and you can learn more by following this link:

<https://brucetrail.org/pages/explore-the-trail/hike-schedule>.



Susan @ Mt Brunswick - British Columbia.

I'd also like to extend a big warm welcome to all the new members who joined this last year. Membership in the Dufferin section increased 24% to over 600 members since last spring. It is my hope that you've been out enjoying this "ribbon of wilderness" and the benefits of walking outdoors.

The 25km Dufferin Hi-Land Challenge is our first scheduled event on October 2nd. Why not register with a friend and enjoy the beauty of fall while helping to fundraise for your Club? <https://dufferinbrucetrailclub.org/hikes/challenge-hikes/>

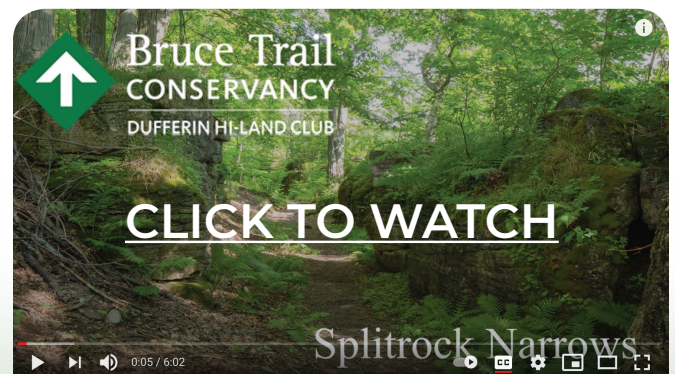
Are you looking to meet other like-minded people who like being active in the community?

Volunteers participate in many ways: at snack tables at check points, as sweeps on various hikes, by writing an article for the newsletter (the one you're reading), learning the ways of trail workers and land stewards or perhaps developing ideas for youth hiking. Participate where you shine best and to the degree that you have time. Learn alongside our experienced members.

<https://dufferinbrucetrailclub.org/apply-for-volunteer-position/>

Our Club is excited to introduce the newly secured Pine River Nature Reserve, with a new side trail to explore this fall. This is an ongoing reclamation project that illustrates the great conservation work we continue to do in our community. Be sure to lace up your boots and enjoy! Together we work wonders. - Susan Ford
[Contact Susan](#)

FEATURE VIDEO



[Bruce Trail Family Events - Want to Learn about Trees, Treasures and Rocks? See \[dufferinbrucetrailclub.org\]\(https://dufferinbrucetrailclub.org\).](#)

HI-LAND VIEWS

THE BATTLE FOR THE PINE RIVER NATURE RESERVE - *continued*

FALL 2021

However, we found it necessary to change our signs to 'BTC Owned and Managed Lands', post video surveillance signs, nail log barriers in place, and be there daily to run and chase down trespassers.

A hardcore minority refused to accept the new ownership even when threatened with prosecution and over the next nine months it was a battle. As fast as trespassers ripped down barriers and signs, smashed cameras, and forced new entrances and trails, volunteers rebuilt and replaced them. The ferocity of a handful of determined trespassers escalated until enough evidence was collected for the OPP to lay charges.

Over the past weeks a period of quiet has the team hopeful. The major "mudding" season for off roaders is the end of September and October. We have contacted off road magazines telling them of the change in land use and if necessary, will again employ OPP officers to assist us.



Undeterred by vandalism, a DHBTC volunteer reinforces a barrier torn apart by trespassers.

Was it all worthwhile? Our volunteers believe so. As intrusions have lessened and the land is quieter, our cameras have captured more and more animals returning. BTC ecologists have walked the land with NEC and Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority ecologists, in preparation to obtain their approval to fill in some of the most egregious ruts and for limited hydro seeding of indigenous grasses and wildflowers.

Following a three-season inventorying of the land a BTC Land Stewardship Plan will be prepared this winter. Longer term trees will be planted in the most popular spots to discourage partying and campfires.



In addition to the noise and disturbance to wildlife, ATV damage to the landscape is extensive.



Security camera footage captures deer returning to the forest once ATV traffic is diminished.

All photos Brian Cornfield.

The new 2.5km Pine River Valley Side Trail has been constructed through the less damaged eastern section, it crosses streams, skirts gullies, and brings you to four ponds. This new side trail connects with the Main Trail and Kilgorie Side Trail and makes a wonderful two-hour meandering loop that includes a river walk and the Provincial fishing pond. It also passes by the abandoned 1909 Dufferin Light and Power Hydro Plant driven by the still cascading Pine River.

Perhaps next year will be the beginning of the middle.
- John Dickason

AUTUMN WONDERS TO LOOK FOR

As well as the beauty of the leaves changing colours in fall, there are many things to watch for on your next Bruce Trail hike.



VIEW FROM MONO CLIFFS PLATFORM

Milkweed pods are ripening and when the pods dry out and open the seeds are dispersed in the wind. The milkweed floss was used to fill lifejackets during WWII and some clothing designers are using it as a replacement for goose down in jackets today.



MILKWEED POD



MILKWEED SEEDS

Teasel seed heads are sharp to touch and remain attractive throughout the winter. Teasel seed heads were made into a "card" used on woven wool as far back as the middle ages.



TEASEL

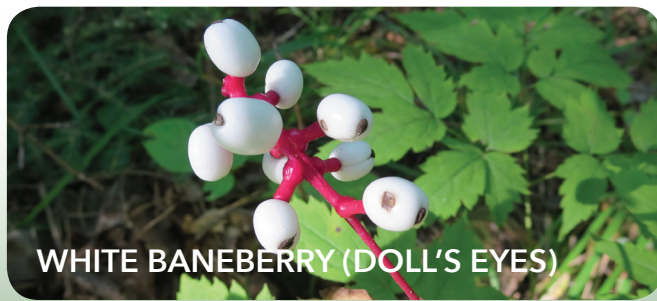
Many of the spring wildflowers that we enjoyed earlier this year can be seen with their fruit at this time of year. Examples include **false solomon's seal**, **blue cohosh** and **white baneberry (or doll's eyes)**.



FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL



BLUE COHOSH



WHITE BANEERRY (DOLL'S EYES)

In early fall **jewelweed** is delightful both for its beautiful flowers, but also its exploding seed pods. When the seeds are dark, they explode particularly well. Just tap the bottom of the pod with your finger.



JEWELWEED

Try taking a closer look to find out how many different kinds of **asters** and **goldenrod** that you can find on your hike. An identification app like [iNaturalist](#) (free) can be very helpful to get you started.



ASTER & GOLDENROD

Wild clematis or **virgin's bower** is another plant with seed heads that last well into winter. Watch for the vine climbing up trees.



WILD CLEMATIS

All kinds of fungi take advantage of the often damp weather in autumn to quickly pop up. These **inky caps** quickly change from the caps to look like dripping black ink. **Dead man's fingers** are aptly named.



INKY CAPS



DEAD MAN'S FINGERS

Woolly bear caterpillars are often seen hurrying around in the fall perhaps looking for the spot where they will spend the winter. Woolly bears are reputed to predict the severity of the winter by the width of their rusty band - the wider the rusty band, the milder the winter. - Brenda Carling



WOOLLY BEAR CATERPILLAR

All photos by Brenda Carling

NEW ADVENTURE SERIES

Are you 15 years of age or under and looking for a challenge? Why not combine your love of exploring the outdoors with an opportunity to learn more about the natural environment by earning one of the following new badges?

Explorer's Badge - To earn this badge, you will need to complete 2 hikes in each of the 4 seasons. All 8 hikes must be done in a 12-month period for a total of 30km. Share flora/fauna/fungi photos on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) and tag @DufferinHiLandBruceTrailClub.



Adventurer's Badge - To earn this badge, you need to complete 2 hikes in each of the 4 seasons. All 8 hikes must be done in a 12-month period for a total distance of 60km. Share flora/fauna/fungi photos on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) and tag @DufferinHiLandBruceTrailClub.



Know before you go

Not sure where to begin? Check out <https://bruce-trail.org/pages/explore-the-trail/know-before-you-go> which provides information on Rules for Trail Use, how to read a blaze, trail safety, what to pack and more.

Become a Bruce Trail Conservancy Citizen Science Volunteer using the iNaturalist App. Using the free powerful online tool iNaturalist, collect data and upload species observations along the trail at <https://inaturalist.ca/projects/bruce-trail-conservancy>.

Find suggested Hiking Routes on the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail at: <https://dufferinbruce-trailclub.org/bruce-trail-club-badges/>.

Download the Dufferin Bruce Trail Hiking Log at: <https://dufferinbruce-trailclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/My-Bruce-Trail-Hiking-Log.pdf>

How to receive your Iron-on Badge

Send your badge request together with your hike log, a *self-addressed, stamped envelope* and \$8 per badge to:

Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club
P.O. Box 698 Alliston ON
L9R 1V9

-OR-

E-transfer \$8 to [dhbtc treasurer](#). Take a photo of your hiking log and email it to [dhbtc badge submission](#).

Learn more about hiking at <https://hikeontario.com/yhp/index.htm>.

Learn more about kids conservation and education <https://www.earthrangers.com/>.

ONE MORE REASON FOR KIDS TO GET OUTDOORS

There are many compelling reasons for young people to experience the wonders of the Bruce Trail; from increasing physical and mental well-being, to enhancing our understanding of and connection to our planet. Yet another important reason has come to light – and it is about light. Myopia, or nearsightedness, has been associated with children and youth who do not spend enough time outdoors in natural sunlight.



Many benefits for kids hiking outdoors.

There has been a dramatic increase in myopia worldwide. In some parts of China and Korea up to 90 percent of young people are near-sighted compared to 20 percent sixty years ago. Half the teenagers in the United States and Europe suffer from myopia. Myopia usually develops in childhood and adolescence when the eyes are still growing. While genetics may explain some myopia, it does not account for all cases. Studies in Australia, Denmark, Taiwan, the UK and China showed a significant decrease in the likelihood of children developing near-sightedness if they spend more time outdoors.

It was previously thought that reading or focusing on objects close up was the main cause of nearsightedness, but these studies showed that it doesn't matter if children spent time reading or using electronic devices indoors. The key element to reduce myopia was time spent outdoors. Children participating in sports indoors, despite getting the benefit of increased fitness, did not show a decrease in the chance of developing nearsightedness.

The good news as we consider sun protection is that

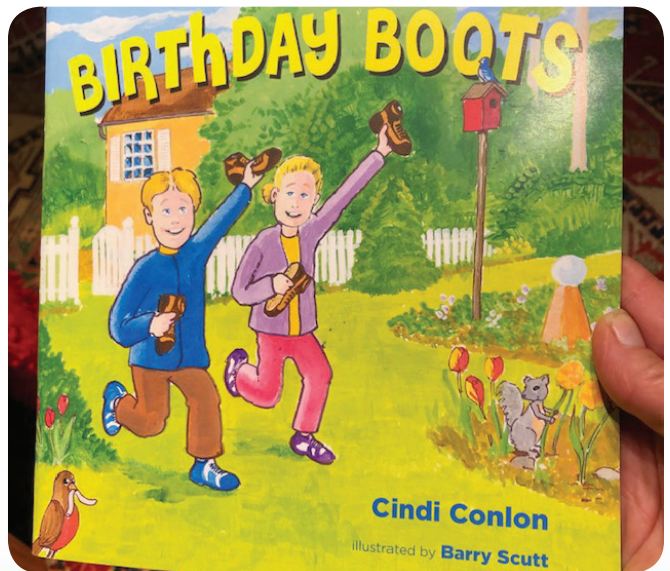
light levels outside while wearing sunglasses or a hat and in shaded areas are still strong enough for myopia reduction. The many studies done on this topic agree that at least one hour in outdoor light per day is needed to show a positive effect on children's eyesight.

Given these findings, we can all find further inspiration to get outside with young people on the Bruce Trail. - Brenda Carling

BIRTHDAY BOOTS MAKES A GREAT GIFT

Looking for a fun and easy way to inspire the next generation of naturalists and hikers while supporting the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club?

Birthday Boots, created by Guelph writer Cindi Conlon and illustrator Barry Schutt, is a delightful tale of a young family's first hike on the Bruce Trail. Twin siblings Molly and Max learn about the trail's origin, and then discover the many reasons that people of all ages, cultures, and activity levels enjoy exploring this 'Ribbon of Wilderness'.



Enjoy reading Birthday Boots with little ones

To order your copy of Birthday Boots, send an E-transfer for \$15, along with your mailing address to [dhbtc treasurer](mailto:dhbtc_treasurer@dufferinhibc.ca).

2021-2022 DUFFERIN HI-LAND BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Left to right: Peter Blackmere, Maria Burton, Susan Ford, Brenda Carling, Helen Bailey, Jim Preyde, Tom Thayer, Carl Tafel, Carl Alexander, John Dickason, Melina Cormier and Bob Slack. Absent from photo: Brian Cornfield, Les Babbage and Jackie Foster.

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John Dickason	Ex-officio, BTC Representative

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Robert Wray	Special Hike Committee



**Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY**

DUFFERIN HI-LAND CLUB
DUFFERINBRUCETRAILCLUB.ORG

BOYNE VALLEY 25K CHALLENGE

Can you handle 25 kilometres of hilly terrain all in one day?

Test your limits and take Dufferin Hi-Land's Boyne Valley 25K Challenge. Enjoy the spectacular ever changing scenery along this loop hike that begins and ends at the Rock Hill Parking Lot on the 1st Line EHS in Mulmur.

Supported with checkpoints providing refreshments and goodies, successful hikers will earn our new 25K Challenge Badge.


For on line registration details, go to <https://hikes.brucetrail.org/event/boyne-valley-25k-challenge/2021-10-02>



*** Save the Date ***

APPRECIATION EVENT SUNDAY NOV 7 2021

Details to follow in an upcoming e-blast and at dufferinbrucetrailclub.org

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