

# Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club Newsletter



May 2026



*Spring in the Dufferin Hi-Land feels like the forest is waking up — wildflowers are blooming, birds are returning from their yearly migration, and the trees are coming to life. This spring is shaping up to be very busy at the Dufferin Hi-Land Club as we celebrate the return of warm weather with a series of special events, challenge hikes and biodiversity initiatives.*

*On May 9-10, a tough crew of hikers enjoyed some wonderful weather and completed the entire length of the Dufferin Hi-Land section in our annual End-to-End hike. Be sure to check out the photos on page 3. The Seven Rivers hike series starts on the last week of May. This series stretches across the Blue Mountain, Dufferin Hi-Land, and Caledon Hills sections of the Trail with hikes along the Humber, Nottawasaga, Boyne, Pine, Mad, Noisy, and Pretty Rivers. On the first weekend in June, our hike leader Stuart Law, will be leading a group to explore some of the Bruce Peninsula's most fascinating botanical spots: Flowerpot Island, the Crane River, Singing Sands, the Oliphant Fens, Petrel Point, and the Bruce Alvar. These wildflower-focused hikes — in conjunction with longtime BTC plant lovers Anne Armstrong and Jeannine Kralt — are a team effort among the Peninsula, Iroquoia, and Dufferin Hi-Land Clubs. And of course, the Tuesday hiker series continues to be available every week with a myriad of hikes throughout the hi-lands.*

*Our Dufferin Hi-Land biodiversity group has been just as busy. On May 14, they teamed up with students from Orangeville District Secondary School to plant milkweed and clear out invasive periwinkle plants. Earlier in the month, a group of Scouts from Toronto braved some very chilly spring weather to pull garlic mustard — another invasive plant that threatens the Trail ecosystem. June is packed with more biodiversity events, including caring for our American Chestnut plantings on June 6.*

*Whether you're looking for a challenging hike, or prefer a more leisurely pace, check out the hike schedule on page 2 to find something that suits you. Also be sure to look at the biodiversity page on our website to learn about everything that the Dufferin Hi-Land club is doing to protect our native species and fauna.*

*Lorraine Campbell,  
editor*

# Upcoming Hikes

June 2

## **Scotsdale Farm and Indigenous Village, Forest Bathing**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 7 km

June 5-7

## **Peninsula Wildflower Hike Series**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 3-6 km/day

June 6, 13, 20, 27

## **Seven Rivers Hike Badge Series**

- Pace - Medium
- Distance - 10 - 12 km/day

June 6

## **American Chestnut Tree Maintenance**

- Pace - Easy
- Distance - 3 km

June 9

## **Peter Beecham and Griffith Ravine Side Trails**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 5 km

June 12

## **Niagara E2E #3: Louth Conservation Area to Short Hills**

- Pace - Medium
- Distance - 14 km

June 16

## **Silver Creek- 10th line**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 5 km

June 19

## **Niagara E2E #4: Short Hills to Welland Canal**

- Pace - Medium
- Distance - 18 km

June 23

## **Cold Creek**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 6 km

June 26

## **Niagara E2E #5: Welland Canal to Queenston Heights**

- Pace - Medium
- Distance - 18 km

June 30

## **Boyne Valley Side Trail Loop**

- Pace - Leisurely
- Distance - 6 km

Hikes are led by experienced leaders from the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club. You must pre-register. Check the website for more information about dates, times and meeting locations. 

# What a Weekend!

*A huge congratulations to everyone who took part in the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club's 2-Day End-to-End Hike on Mother's Day weekend.*

*Over two days hikers took on the beautiful — and seriously hilly — Dufferin Hi-Land section of the Bruce Trail, supported by dedicated volunteers, checkpoints, refreshments, and trail sweeps along the way.*

*Events like this are such a special reminder of what makes our Club so strong: community, commitment, and a shared love for protecting and enjoying the Bruce Trail.*

*Thank you to every hiker, volunteer, sweep, checkpoint helper, and organizer who helped make the weekend possible. Congratulations to everyone who earned their Red Trillium Badge!*



## Bruce Trail Day - October 4, 2026

*Save the date for the Bruce Trail's biggest celebration of the year.*

*Join us on October 4 for Bruce Trail Day. The Dufferin Hi-Land Club will be marking the occasion with a musical hike through the Split Rock Narrows. The day will be filled with activities for all ages, including a children's sing-along, biodiversity hikes, delicious food, and performances by local musicians. It's shaping up to be a memorable celebration, and no pre-registration is required.*



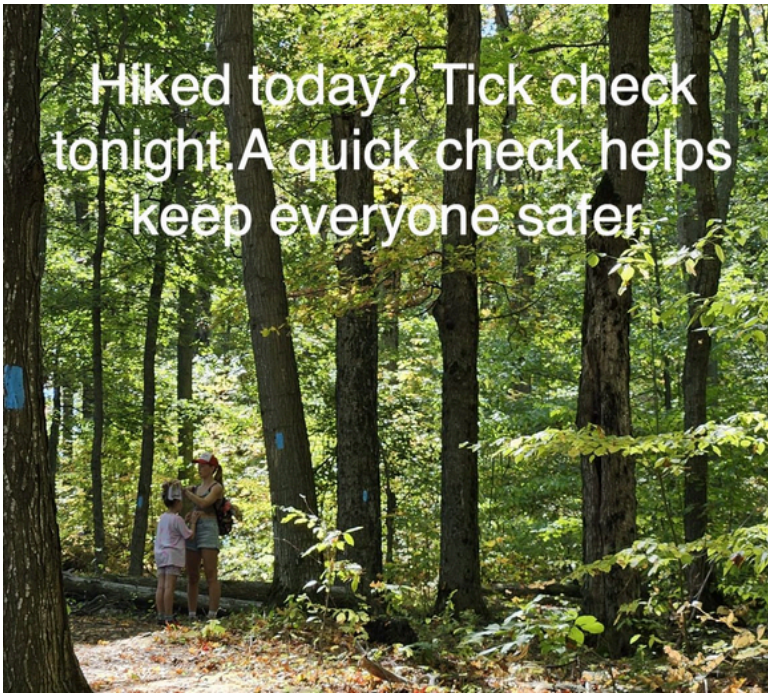
*Come hike the tunnel in Mulmur, no, no it's not under the 401.*



*Going west from the Rock Hill corner, hikers had to walk on the shoulders of 10 Sideroad. The ever increasing traffic volume and speed were less than ideal as hiking conditions.*

*Trevor and Denise Downey own the property on the south side. Decades ago the previous owner planted four rows of spruce trees on their property paralleling the road. With the Downey's approval the trail is now running 800 metres between the mature trees, creating a shaded, quiet tunnel. Thank you, thank you to the Downey's for their support of the Bruce Trail.*

*A big thank you to trail captains, Lindsay and Ed for helping to open the westerly extension this spring.*



While we all enjoy the warmer weather on the Trail, spring brings with it an unfortunate visitor - ticks. There are a few things you can do before setting out to protect yourself. Remember to wear light-colored clothing, long sleeves, and tuck your pants into your socks to prevent ticks from landing on your skin. It may also be helpful to spray on insect repellent periodically. After hiking, always do a full-body tick check, especially in warm spots like behind your knees or along your waistline. If you find a tick, remove it carefully.

Enjoy the Trails - just watch for ticks!

## In Memoriam

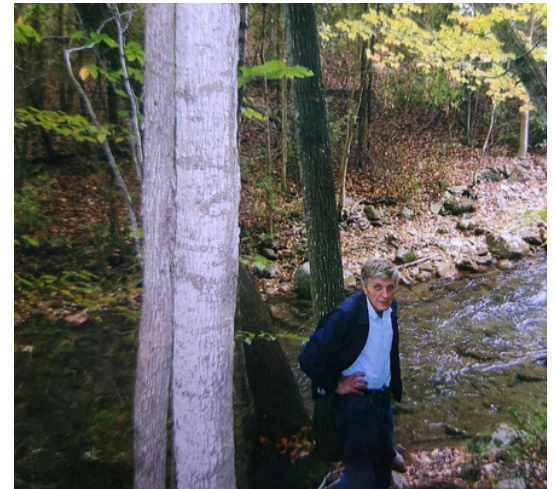
### John Matson

January 02, 1951 - November 20, 2025

Long time Dufferin Hi-Land BTC member John Matson passed away November 20, 2025 .

Celebration of Life for John was held May 02, 2025

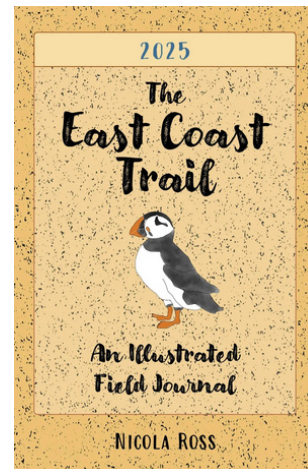
John lived beside the trail on 1st Line EHS, An avid hiker, passionate about the Bruce Trail, what it stood for and what it represented. Whether a bridge needed to be built, a new trail cut and cleared or general trail maintenance needed, John was always there. He will be missed.



## Upcoming Speakers

Nicola Ross (author of *Loops and Lattes*, plus many more) will be giving a talk about the East Coast Trail at the Orangeville Library on June 10 at 7:00

Registration is required.



# Trail Updates

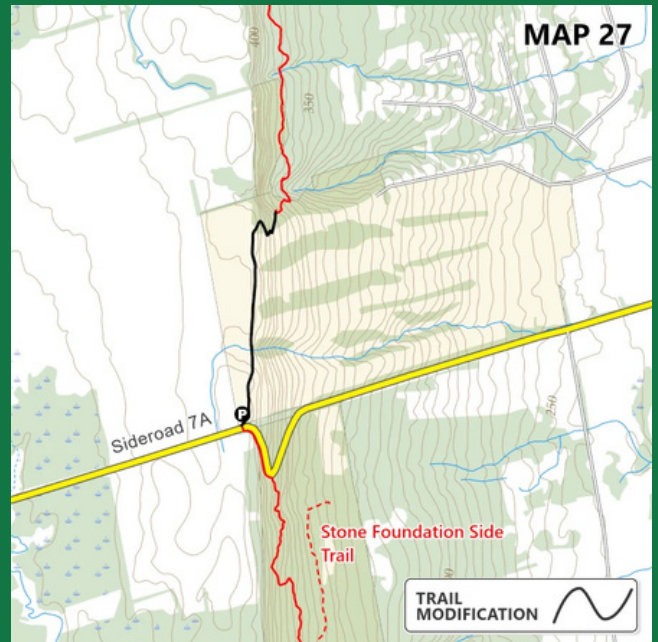


The trails within Mono Cliffs Provincial Park have been re-blazed as Bruce Trail Side Trails and are once again part of the Bruce Trail network, retaining their original names as they appear in the Bruce Trail Reference, Ed 31. We apologize for the confusion.

This affects the following side trails :

- \* Lookout Side Trail
- \* Walter Tovell Side Trail
- \* Carriage Side Trail
- \* South Outlier Connector
- \* South Outlier Loop Trail
- \* McCarston's Lake Side Trail

The main Bruce Trail at Talisman Forest Nature Reserve has been rerouted slightly to provide a better hiking experience. Old Main Trail distance = 802 m  
New Main Trail distance = 735 m



# Biodiversity

## Putting Regenerative and Restorative Studies into Practice

On May 14, Grade 11 and 12 students from Orangeville and District Secondary School's (ODSS) Greenhouse Class, along with members of the school's Green Association for Environmental Activism, a.k.a. GAEA (pronounced Gaia) Club, both headed by Kurtis McMurray, Head/Lead; Canadian and World Studies, put regenerative and restorative ecological studies into practice. Mara McHaffie, Ecologist and Land Stewardship Coordinator for the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC), guided students through two projects: one designed to replant native species in decline and the other to remove invasive species and create space for native species to grow.



Planting milkweed seeds.



ODSS Milkweed Group.



Milkweed seedling and seed planting.



Preparing to Plant



Milkweed seedling planting.



Tender seedling in new home.



Milkweed seed planting.

# Biodiversity

A BTC plantation and meadow restoration project on the Russel property became the new habitat for seedlings raised in ODSS's greenhouse. Students disembarked from the bus, protectively guarding tender seedlings. After Mara emphasized the importance of their initiative in helping to improve ecological integrity and reverse biodiversity loss, she provided a brief description of the projects and students set to work. Monarch caterpillars eat only milkweed so supplementing their habitat helps reverse their dramatic decline. Seedlings and seeds were planted throughout the meadow and plantation to improve the health of the ecosystem.



*Pulling Periwinkle.*



*Pulling more periwinkle.*



*Horsetail now has space to grow. Can you spot it?*



*Trout lilies have their space back.*



*ODSS Periwinkle Group*

Across the road at Rock Hill, students removed invasive periwinkle to allow space for native species to thrive. Periwinkle is native to parts of Europe and Asia, but not North America. Like other invasives, it crowds out native species and turns a diverse ecosystem into a monoculture, affecting flora and fauna that depend on local species. As the periwinkle was cleared, it was gratifying to identify the emergence of horsetail and trout lilies which had been competing for their own space and now had space to spread their roots and thrive.

Thank you to all who participated. It makes a difference for all of us!

# Toronto Scouts on Honeywood Ridge.

Last year (2025), a massive ice storm scuttled plans for members of Toronto Scouts to remove garlic mustard from a prolific invasion on Honeywood Ridge. This year on May 2nd, despite the early-morning snow cover, a hardy and enthusiastic group of Beavers, Cubs, and their adults arrived to tackle the task.

This was no run-of-the-mill garlic mustard pull. Grant Wigle, a.k.a. Hawkeye, Contact Scouter for the 433rd Toronto Beavers, came organized with a camp stove, propane tank, and water for hand-washing! Of course, all supplies had to be hauled approximately one kilometre up a significant grade to our designated muster point, situated in a clearing marking the start of our target area.



*Beginning the uphill trek with supplies.*



*The view from the top.*



*Tending to Garlic Mustard around the tangle of last year's storm damage.*



*Removing Garlic Mustard from along the trail.*



*It takes a lot of Garlic Mustard to fill eight bags!*



*Sharing food, stories, and camaraderie.*

# Update on Boyne Valley Hunting

The Environmental Registry of Ontario recently posted a decision on hunting within the Boyne Valley Provincial Park, and the addition of several surrounding properties. We are happy to report that hunting will not be allowed within the previously existing park areas and will only be allowed within the properties that have been added to the park. All of these properties allowed hunting previously, so effectively, there is no change that will impact our hiking and nature trails. We would like to thank everyone who submitted comments in regards to this proposal. It could not have been done without you. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Parks, and the Ontario Government for their governance and wisdom in revising this proposal/decision in such a way as to allow people to safely enjoy the wonderful natural areas in which the Boyne Valley resides. Additionally, the expansion of the park with new properties is a great act of conservation and protection, to which we applaud all involved.



Hey Forest Friends! We have an update on hunting.



The Dufferin Hi-Land Club runs on the energy of our volunteers, and there are plenty of ways to jump in. If you love being out on the trail, we're always happy to welcome new hike leaders or folks who want to help with trail maintenance.

More of an organizer? We've got spots for planning events, helping with publicity, and representing the club at community events.

If tech is your thing, we'd love a hand with marketing, social media, or website support.

Reach out and tell us how you'd like to get involved — we'd be excited to have you join us.



## Join us for a Hike!

Visit us on social media:  
#dufferinhiland