



gbt.org

SUMMER 2024

# LANDSCRIPT

PROTECTING **GEORGIAN BAY'S** WILDERNESS LANDS

*The Corridor Project:*

**32,900 acres  
protected**

Bats of  
Georgian Bay

Maintaining nature  
at the cottage

Lake Sturgeon  
conservation

Photo: Sarah Koetsier



# The Corridor Project:

## Protecting 32,900 acres of wilderness and counting



Photo: Brooks Greer

Georgian Bay is characterized by its wildness—natural areas stretching into the horizon, filled with an abundance of plant and animal life. This environment, loved by so many, is only possible because of the large areas of intact, interconnected wilderness that run the length of the coast and stretch for many kilometres inland. For several years now, the Georgian Bay Land Trust has been working on the Corridor Project to ensure that this natural backbone will be connected and protected forever, for everyone.

We're thrilled to announce that the southern portion of the Corridor Project has now become a reality. The Georgian Bay Land Trust and the Township of Georgian Bay have signed an agreement to conserve an extensive network of land stretching from Honey Harbour to Twelve Mile Bay, directly conserving 553 acres of municipal land and providing additional protection to 32,900 acres of crown forests and wetlands. This agreement will have a significant impact on the long-term environmental health of southeastern Georgian Bay, and will ensure that these lands remain available for all people to access in their natural state. We hope to increase the impact of this work in the coming years by conserving additional corridor lands to the north.

The Corridor Project stems from a recognition that natural places need our help. In Canada and around the world, animal populations and the habitats they depend on are disappearing at an alarming rate. Just south of Georgian Bay, 70% of Ontario's forests and 80% of its wetlands have been destroyed, and more continue to be lost each year. The Georgian Bay region is facing increasing pressures which are only going to grow.

We're extremely fortunate that at this moment, eastern Georgian Bay remains a pocket with large areas of mostly intact wilderness. Here, 80% of forests and 90% of wetlands remain. We are internationally recognized by UNESCO for our unique landscape and ecology, which is like nowhere else on Earth. The many islands, inlets, and rivers of the coast combine to form the largest interface of land and freshwater in the world, and support the richest biodiversity of reptiles and amphibians in Canada. Many animal species that are suffering elsewhere in the province are able to maintain healthy populations here. This is an extraordinary legacy to leave to future generations and to the world—an incredibly important place to protect.





The historic agreement between Georgian Bay Township and the Georgian Bay Land Trust significantly impacts this protection by conserving a 553-acre network of township lands stretching from northern Honey Harbour to Twelve Mile Bay, and from Highway 400 west to the coast. These lands have been zoned for environmental protection by the township due to the important forests and wetlands they contain, and the agreement with the Land Trust now makes this status permanent, while ensuring that this land remains open for public recreation and Indigenous use. This agreement was developed in consultation with Moose Deer Point First Nation, and does not include any of the lands that the Township is working on returning to Moose Deer Point. Importantly, this network of newly protected lands surrounds approximately 32,900 acres of equally ecologically significant crown land. By protecting the township property, we are adding a significant layer of protection to all of these lands. The result is an extensive protected corridor that fills the gaps between existing conservation areas and dramatically increases long-term resiliency in the landscape.

Why is a corridor important? People need access to nature, and nature needs space and connectivity in order to survive. When habitat gets fragmented into smaller parcels, animals lose the ability to move freely, and sources of pollution and disturbance enter the landscape. This is particularly concerning in the era of climate change, as animals will need to move longer distances in order to adapt to changing conditions and access suitable habitats. Protecting a corridor along the coast will allow Georgian Bay to continue to serve as a refuge for hundreds of plant and animal species whose habitats are being fragmented elsewhere, and give wildlife the space it needs to adapt and survive. It will allow our forests to grow older and richer, and preserve our network of 14,700 inland wetlands, known as the “kidneys of the landscape” for their role in filtering out pollutants from our water. All of this translates into a cleaner, healthier, richer, and more resilient landscape to hand on to future generations.

We’re so grateful to those who have stepped up already to support this project. Firstly, to the Township of Georgian Bay,



for the vision they have shown in leaving this legacy for the future. The character and health of Georgian Bay many years from now will be traced back to this decision. Thank you to the Government of Canada for providing \$580,000 in funding through Canada’s Nature Fund, to the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and the Government of Ontario for funding from Ontario’s Greenlands Conservation Partnership, and to several private donors from the Georgian Bay community. This funding has been used to compensate the Township for their generous commitment to conservation, and to create a permanent stewardship fund which will allow for ongoing care and monitoring of the protected land. We need additional donations now to complete this stewardship fund and to fund the middle and northern portions of the project—if you would like to contribute, please visit [gblt.org/corridor](http://gblt.org/corridor).

This is just the beginning of the Corridor Project, as we work over the next few years to fill in more gaps to the north and extend corridor protections through the Township of the Archipelago and Carling. You can help make this vision possible. Visit [gblt.org/corridor](http://gblt.org/corridor) to learn more and get involved.

# Remembering Wally King



In March, the Georgian Bay Land Trust marked the end of an era with the passing of our founder, Wally King.

Wally was a tremendous force on Georgian Bay. A financial professional by trade, Wally was a people person who thrived on connecting his networks and making things happen. Much of his passion and energies were directed towards his cottage in Sans Souci and the Georgian Bay community.

Many of Georgian Bay's current organizations and institutions were shaped by Wally's vision and work. He served as President of both the Sans Souci Copperhead Association and the Georgian Bay Association, and was instrumental in the founding of the Township of the Archipelago. In 1991,

he became concerned that Georgian Bay's natural places needed protection, and organized a small group of volunteers to found the Georgian Bay Land Trust.

For its first decade of life, the Land Trust was a fledgling organization propelled forward by the optimism and perseverance of volunteers, Wally chief among them. He mustered his networks to enlist the help of fellow professionals and Georgian Bay enthusiasts. These volunteers worked together to secure our initial property donations, form partnerships within the growing land trust community, lobby for laws to strengthen conservation, and establish stewardship funds which would make our work secure. By the time our first full-time staff member was hired in 2003, Wally and his team were able to hand over a well-respected and established organization.

Even after he stepped back from a leadership role, Wally remained keenly interested in the operations and success of the Land Trust. He was a regular presence at events and meetings, ready to offer advice and encouragement, and his love of history and knack for storytelling ensured that we never forgot our roots. Together with his wife Marilyn, Wally established the Land Trust's King Family Fund, which annually awards a bursary to support projects that enrich the Georgian Bay community (see following page). In any given year, we received more donations from Wally and Marilyn than from anyone else, because of Wally's habit of making contributions in honour of friends and family members, and in memory of many Georgian Bay community members who had passed on. It is now our turn to remember him, and we send our condolences to Marilyn, their children Martha, Graham, and Elizabeth, and everyone else who is mourning.

The Georgian Bay Land Trust won't be the same without Wally King. We will miss his stories, his passion, and his regular letters and phone calls. Wally got this organization started, and he has kept us on our toes ever since. Thank you Wally for your remarkable legacy.



*Wally presides over the dedication ceremony for Friend Island, the Georgian Bay Land Trust's second protected property*



*Georgian Bay Land Trust Directors visit Friend Island for an inspection, June 20 1992. Wally (left) is joined by Barbara Barrett, Gary French, Chris Baines, Stephen Griggs, and Sandy Phillips*



## King Family Bursary Winner: Amelia Stea MacLaurin

The King Family Bursary was founded in 2014 after Wally and Marilyn King established the King Family Fund to support projects that enhance awareness and appreciation of Georgian Bay's unique environment, history, communities, and culture. Since then, the bursary has supported artists, scientists, authors, community organizers, and more, and helped build lasting connections between diverse individuals working with a shared passion for Georgian Bay.

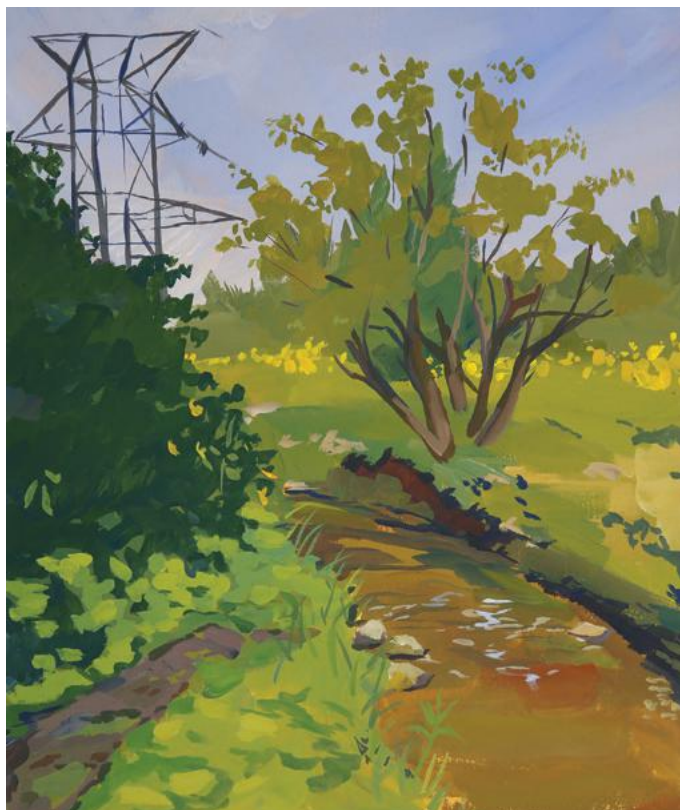
We're delighted to announce the 2024 winner of the King Family Bursary, Amelia Stea MacLaurin. Congratulations Amelia!

Amelia Stea MacLaurin is a Toronto based artist. Her background is in environmental design and she currently works in community arts. Her work is focused on the intersection of community, honest documentation, and archivism. Amelia works primarily in paint and photography, and is a collector of images, shooting with both film and digital photography. As an avid camper and canoer, she has spent a lot of time over the last dozen years tripping along the Georgian Bay and surrounding areas.

Amelia will spend the next year visiting, painting, and photographing the waterways of Georgian Bay and creating a Waterways Zine: sharing the exploration of four seasons of Georgian Bay Waters. She will produce a documentation of paintings, photographs, and drawings woven into a physical, shareable, and tangible record of her time on the water. This zine will be a time-capsule project, studying the waterways, wetlands, and tributaries through visual mediums over the course of twelve months. It will exist in both digitally accessible content and as a run of limited edition physical copies.

This project would not be possible without the support of the King Family Bursary: thank you so much to Wally and Marilyn.

See more of Amelia's work at [www.asteamac.com](http://www.asteamac.com) or on Instagram @steamac.



The Georgian Bay Land Trust is a 1% for the Planet non-profit partner!

The 1% for the Planet network connects businesses and non-profits to protect the planet. If you own a business, consider joining 1% for the Planet, naming the Georgian Bay Land Trust as your beneficiary.

For more information visit [onepercentfortheplanet.org](http://onepercentfortheplanet.org).

# ? Georgian Bay **QUERY:**

## *Why is it important to maintain natural habitat around your cottage?*

Answered by Stefani Matis, Land Securement Assistant, Georgian Bay Land Trust



*Red Columbines are one of many beautiful wildflowers that will grow naturally around your cottage*

Cottage life is so much more than just owning a property. It's about relaxing and taking time for family while making memories that will last a lifetime. Given that memories can be made anywhere, why is the cottage so special? The answer lies in what the natural landscape has to offer.

The eastern coast of Georgian Bay is beautiful with its distinct rock landscapes, open waters, wetlands, and white pine and red oak forests. It hosts a wide variety of species, many of which rely on being largely undisturbed to thrive. For so many of us, memories of the cottage are filled with finding frogs and turtles, collecting blueberries and mushrooms, and watching the birds flitting through the trees while we learn their unique calls and behaviours. If we want to keep these traditions alive for generations to come, it's important to let the wild areas around your cottage stay wild.

**Species composition and edge effect.** Leaving the area around your cottage in its natural state has numerous benefits for both you and the plants and animals we all love so much. In addition to actively removing potential

habitat and damaging plant communities, clearing vegetation around your cottage disrupts the natural species composition and contributes to edge effect disturbance. Each species we see around our cottage fills a unique niche in their ecosystem and they each rely on specific conditions to thrive. For example, a plant that lives in the shade of a tree may not be able to survive in full sun if that tree were to be removed. In turn, any animals that relied on that plant will also be forced to find other habitat. Different species also help manage abiotic features, such as making certain nutrients bioavailable for use, limiting erosion through root structures, or acting as a wind break. Removing a species from an area could entirely change how the ecosystem functions.

**Habitat fragmentation.** On top of the direct impacts, clearing around your cottage contributes to habitat fragmentation, making it harder for species to move through the environment and separates populations from each other. A group of cottages with cleared properties in the same area can significantly impact connectivity. In extreme cases habitat fragmentation can lead to a decline in genetic diversity, and cause populations of species to be unable to adapt to disturbances or disease.

**Unwanted guests.** Altering the natural area around your cottage may also have unexpected impacts. For example, having open areas or a grass lawn along the shoreline entices Canada Geese to use the area for grazing. This can result in noisy guests and an abundance of mess that makes enjoying your spaces more difficult. Disturbed areas are also more vulnerable to invasive species, which spread ferociously and are hard to remove. It is likely you will end up spending more time trying to manage the species that fill the space than achieving an easy to maintain open area.

**Brush and dead trees are habitat too!** It is also important to leave the dead trees and sticks on your property, as many species use them as habitat as well. Standing dead trees are used by cavity nesters such as woodpeckers and bats, which help control insect populations. Brush piles and other fallen sticks and logs are important habitat and overwintering sites for salamanders, grouse, and thrashers, and rock piles are important for skinks and snakes which can help with rodent regulation. It may not be intuitive to leave these elements in place as they are commonly thought of as messy, however they are absolutely worth the biodiversity they support.

As we enter into another great cottage season, try to remember the impact your actions have on the ecosystem around you, and let your cottage keep the characteristics that make it unique compared to your home back in the city!



## Thank You Laura!



After nine years volunteering as LandScript editor, Laura Sunderland is stepping down from the role.

Laura first joined us for the Summer 2015 issue of LandScript, and has been a consistent asset

to our work ever since. She has approached every issue of the LandScript with thoughtfulness and curiosity, always

has excellent ideas for articles, and takes the time to think about topics that would be of genuine interest to the community. We benefit from Laura's trained eye for grammar and clarity of language, and appreciate her flexibility in adapting to changing schedules and deadlines. She has been an outstanding person to work with (and someone who possesses the rare talent of making phone meetings fun!) and we are really going to miss her.

Laura has taken on a new job with the Caledon Public Library where we know she will do great things. Thank you Laura for giving so generously of your time for so many years, for helping us explore so many fascinating topics, and for adding immeasurably to the quality of our work!

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## Welcome new staff: Adam Grottoli & Suzanne Legault

The Georgian Bay Land Trust team is growing! We're delighted to welcome staff into two new roles to increase our organizational capacity.



### **Adam Grottoli – Corridor Project Ecologist**

Adam Grottoli is a wildlife biologist who completed his Master's Degree studying at-risk bats at the University of Waterloo. Prior to joining the Land Trust, he spent three years at the Assiniboine

Park Zoo in Winnipeg, where he worked with endangered butterflies and at-risk birds, and conducted conservation research on arctic and subarctic marine mammals including seals, beluga, and polar bears.

Adam joins our team to direct the stewardship of our newly protected Corridor Project lands (see pages 2-3). Together with our two Corridor Students, Adam will spend the summer conducting on the ground monitoring and species surveys across the new network of lands, and will use this information to develop a long-term plan to care for these places.

In his first month on the job, Adam has already proven to be a very thoughtful and capable addition to the team. We're lucky to have him with us, and we look forward to a great summer ahead!



### **Suzanne Legault – Office Administrator and Executive Assistant**

Suzanne Legault is an administrative professional with over a decade of experience conducting essential office work for businesses and non-profits. She spent many

years working with an Italian espresso machine importer (if you have questions about high-end coffee equipment, she's the one to ask!) and has also done great work for a Sudbury-based film nonprofit and the United Way.

Suzanne brings conscientiousness, expertise, and attention to detail into this important role with the Land Trust. She also has a natural connection to Georgian Bay, having spent childhood summers at her grandparents' cottage in McGregor Bay.

Suzanne will be taking over the majority of administrative work at the Land Trust, including processing donations, responding to your inquiries, and conducting behind the scenes work across almost all of our programs. She is already doing an excellent job and we are so grateful to have her on the team.

# Echoes of the Night: Georgian Bay's Silent Flyers

By Adam Grottoli, Corridor Project Ecologist, Georgian Bay Land Trust



Photo: Merlin Tuttle.org

As dusk descended upon the springtime oak savanna forest, I looked intently at the tiny crack in my assigned corner of the deteriorating building, seemingly staring at nothing, yet afraid to blink should I miss the moment. Just as dusk turned to twilight, in the silence I heard a barely audible click.

A colleague located at an adjacent corner of the building had tapped their tally counter. And as if that sound was an “all-clear” signal, a dark round object dropped from my assigned corner, fell about halfway to the ground, caught itself in the air, then was gone from sight as quickly as it came. I clicked my tally counter. Suddenly, all around me I could hear, click, click, click, as my colleagues used their counters to keep track of buildings’ residents leaving through the various exit routes. There were over 70 clicks that night, each of which represented a bat emerging from their daytime roost, and taking flight into the night sky in pursuit of their insect prey. With wings slicing through the air, they navigate with their echolocation, inaudible to the human ear, guiding them to insects. One of those bats was a little brown myotis, which we caught the previous night and tracked to this building using radiotelemetry. The little brown myotis from that night were remnants of the once vast populations that roamed most of night-time skies of North America.

Shrouded in misconception, the presence of bats is sometimes met with fear and misunderstanding. Yet, these nocturnal creatures have an essential role in Georgian Bay’s ecosystems and in ecosystems around the planet, silently playing their part in ways that often go unnoticed. Bats are

a remarkably diverse group of mammals with over 1,400 documented species, each filling a unique ecological role, from plant pollinator to insect hunter extraordinaire.

Eastern Georgian Bay is home to eight of these bat species, all of which prey solely on insects, and seven of which are Endangered. They are voracious eaters that can eat up to 50 percent of their body weight in a single night! It is estimated that bats in North America provide anywhere from \$3.7 billion to \$53 billion in agricultural pest control. The eight local species can be broadly categorized into two groups: migratory bats that fly to warmer locations in the winter, and non-migratory bats that hibernate in caves for the winter. While each group faces different challenges, the most dire is the impact of a non-native fungus that grows in the caves of hibernating bats causing the disease white-nose syndrome. Over the past 18 years the disease has decimated populations of the little brown myotis, northern myotis, eastern small-footed myotis, and tri-coloured bat. Many colonies of these bats disappeared entirely and those remaining are struggling to recover to stable population levels. Other threats to all bats include habitat loss, improper management of wind turbines, and the reduction in insect populations.



## Bats of Georgian Bay



**Silver-haired Bat**  
(*Lasionycteris noctivagans*)



**Big Brown Bat**  
(*Eptesicus fuscus*)



**Eastern Red Bat**  
(*Lasiurus borealis*)



**Small-footed Myotis**  
(*Myotis leibii*)



**Hoary Bat**  
(*Lasiurus cinereus*)



**Little Brown Myotis**  
(*Myotis lucifugus*)



**Northern Long-eared Myotis**  
(*Myotis septentrionalis*)



**Tri-coloured Bat**  
(*Perimyotis subflavus*)



 **Endangered**

Photos: ©Merlin Tuttle.org

The story from the beginning of this article was from my second night working on a project designed to study social aspects of bat biology so that conservation workers can better protect them from the threats they face. However, you don't need to be a researcher to get involved with bat conservation! Females of hibernating bat species need to give birth and raise their young in colonies. Setting up bat boxes is a great way to provide summer habitat for the little brown myotis. Go to [batwatch.ca/setting-bat-house](http://batwatch.ca/setting-bat-house) to find out the best way to set up your bat house. Mature or dead hardwood trees provide essential habitat for northern myotis, so leaving any non-hazardous ones standing on your property can be very helpful in the recovery of this species. Finally, if you know

where bats are living, you can participate in citizen science through [batwatch.ca](http://batwatch.ca) or [inaturalist.org](http://inaturalist.org).

Like any wild animal, handling bats must be left to experts, and in no circumstances should you attempt to handle a bat. If you have a bat in your home, please follow this guide: [batwatch.ca/what-do-if-you-find-bat-your-house](http://batwatch.ca/what-do-if-you-find-bat-your-house).



*Do you have a species you'd like to see spotlighted in an upcoming issue? Send us your suggestion at [info@gblt.org](mailto:info@gblt.org).*



## Property Spotlight:

# Three new places protected

We were honoured to welcome three new protected properties into our care in late 2023. Thanks to the generosity of these donors, each of these three places will remain a sanctuary for nature forever. All three of these projects were made possible in part by funding from the Government of Canada through the Natural Heritage Conservation Program, part of Canada's Nature Fund.

Photo: Bradley Squarek



## Robertson Nature Reserve

**12 acres • Donated by Dr. Hamish Robertson**

This beautiful, west-facing property is located at the north end of Go Home Bay, where it manages to include both wave-blasted rocks and secluded, sheltered nooks.

There are five distinct habitat types within these twelve acres, including rock barrens that are home to Massasaugas and Five-lined Skinks, an alder thicket that provides good overwintering habitat for animals, and a small but rich fen. This property also borders several shoreline marshes, which will now remain forever undisturbed by their neighbour.

We conducted some of the Land Trust's Prairie Warbler research here last summer, and were delighted to find these small black and yellow birds nesting among the junipers. It is places like this that help these birds thrive in Georgian Bay while being absent from much of the surrounding region.

We are so grateful to Dr. Robertson for making this gift to nature, as well as to American Friends of Canadian Conservation for their assistance in conserving this special place.



Photo: Eleanor Proctor

## Madawaska Club of Go Home Bay Conservation Easement

**1,436 acres • Donated by the Madawaska Club of Go Home Bay**

This substantial new conservation easement represents a commitment on the part of the Madawaska Club to protect forever the natural places at the heart of Go Home Bay. These 1,436 acres, interspersed throughout the community, contain a rich mosaic of interlocking habitat types, and support over 200 plant species, 100+ birds, 25 species of reptiles and amphibians, 21 mammals, and 40+ insects. 22 species at risk have been documented using this land.

Conserving these lands means that nature can continue to thrive in this exceptional part of Georgian Bay. As a conservation easement, these lands remain privately owned by the Madawaska Club, and will be managed in a way that strengthens the club's ongoing conservation efforts, rather than opened for public use. Thank you to the Madawaska Club for the vision they have shown in leaving this natural legacy for future generations.

Photo: Sarah Bouman



## Seven Islands Easement

**28 acres • Donated anonymously**

This conservation easement protects seven of the kind of islands that Georgian Bay is known for. Each a mix of forest and rock, with wetlands tucked into their shorelines and hollows, they are obviously beautiful and surprisingly biodiverse. These islands are part of a larger island group, and particularly abundant in many of Georgian Bay's at-risk reptiles. Thank you to the donors for choosing to conserve these jewels of Georgian Bay.



# Preserving a Living Legacy: Lake Sturgeon Conservation Project in Eastern Georgian Bay

By Steven Kell, Species at Risk Biologist and Program Coordinator, Shawanaga First Nation



Biologists Carter Rouleau (SFN) and Katrina Krievins (GBMGB) check egg mats for sturgeon eggs in a tributary near Port Severn.



Top down drone footage of adult sturgeon seen during a spawning event. The 2 larger sturgeon are females and the smaller is a male.

*This article highlights some of the excellent conservation work being done by partner organizations and communities on Georgian Bay.*

In a concerted endeavor to safeguard the dwindling lake sturgeon population in Eastern Georgian Bay, the Shawanaga First Nation (SFN) and the Georgian Bay Mnídoo Gamii Biosphere (GBMGB) embarked on an extensive conservation initiative spanning from 2019 to 2023. This collaborative effort sought to address crucial knowledge gaps and advocate for the preservation of this revered species.

The lake sturgeon, affectionately known as Nme (pronounced Nah-may or N-may) in Anishinaabemowin, holds profound cultural significance and ecological importance. However, it faces an array of threats within the region. Officially designated as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO) and deemed threatened by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), the survival of the lake sturgeon hangs precariously in the balance due to habitat degradation, overfishing, and various other human-induced pressures such as dams and locks.

Acknowledging the urgency of the situation, SFN and GBMGB initiated the project in the autumn of 2019 with the ambitious objective of bridging existing knowledge gaps and formulating a comprehensive conservation strategy for the species. This endeavor involved collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), blending scientific research with the gathering of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to inform conservation endeavors.

Over the course of three years, project personnel meticulously monitored potential spawning grounds along the eastern shoreline of Georgian Bay, spanning from the Severn River

to the French River. Despite encountering challenges such as the absence of sturgeon activity in certain monitored areas, the project yielded invaluable insights into the habitat preferences and behavioral patterns of lake sturgeon.

A distinguishing aspect of the project has been its steadfast commitment to integrating Indigenous knowledge obtained through interviews with Elders and Knowledge Holders, alongside local insights from commercial fishermen and residents. This Indigenous knowledge, rooted in centuries-old traditions and observations, has played a pivotal role in identifying potential spawning grounds and shaping conservation strategies that honor the cultural significance of the species.

Looking ahead, the project emphasizes the importance of evaluating human impact on fish and their habitats, advocating for a holistic, community-centered approach to conservation, and prioritizing Indigenous perspectives in educational materials. Shawanaga has just received another 2 years of funding to continue this project over 2024 into 2026. The focus will be on understanding lake sturgeon behavior, pinpointing critical habitat areas, and further integrating TEK into research and conservation objectives, further building on the knowledge gaps identified in their Lake Sturgeon conservation plan created in 2023.

As the project progresses, stakeholders remain steadfast in their commitment to collaborative efforts aimed at safeguarding and revitalizing the lake sturgeon population in Eastern Georgian Bay, ensuring a sustainable future for this iconic species and safeguarding its cultural heritage and ecological vitality for 7 generations to come.

*To learn more about this project and its findings, check out the video "Nme – King of Fish" on Steven Kell's YouTube channel.*

# Welcome Summer Students

We're happy to welcome six new employees to join the Georgian Bay Land Trust's staff this summer. Research Students Jacqueline and Tyson will work on our research projects on Whip-poor-wills and Prairie Warblers which began last year, tagging and tracking these birds to learn more about their habitat usage and breeding habits on Georgian Bay. Conservation Interns Victoria and Fran will monitor the Georgian Bay Land Trust's protected properties, interface with visitors, and assist with a variety of stewardship activities. Corridor Students Hayden and Joey will conduct a large-scale survey of the flora and fauna of the Land Trust's new Corridor Project lands (see pages 2-3), and assist with stewardship tasks. Please say hello if you see any of these six on the Bay this summer!

## Research Students



**Jacqueline McLean** recently completed a double major in Conservation Biology and Forest Conservation Science at the University of Toronto. She is passionate about applied conservation work and helping to protect local ecosystems for

both wildlife and people of present and future generations. Jacqueline is excited to be working with the Land Trust this summer and is looking forward to expanding her knowledge of native flora and fauna, connecting with the local community, and helping to protect this special place that many call home.



**Tyson Shank** earned his diploma in Conservation Biology at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology in 2022. Since then, he has worked field positions performing wildlife surveys in coastal British Columbia, northern Alberta, and eastern Ontario. In

his free time, he can often be found out birding, hiking, or camping. Tyson is passionate about species-at-risk conservation and can't wait to learn more about how data collected with the Georgian Bay Land Trust will influence conservation decisions.

## Conservation Interns



**Victoria McGrath** is a student in Environment, History, and International Development at McGill University. Victoria's academic interests lie in sustainable development, and she recently conducted a multi-disciplinary study across Kenya and Tanzania focusing

on human-wildlife conflict in agrarian communities. Growing up spending her summers on a cottage in Spider Bay, she is passionate about environmental preservation and outdoor recreation, and she looks forward to helping protect Georgian Bay's unique ecosystem.



**Fran Stephens** is currently studying Earth System Science at McGill University. Fran has spent every summer at her cottage in Go Home Bay and has always had a passion for the Georgian Bay landscape and its wildlife. She is thrilled to start as a conservation intern this summer and

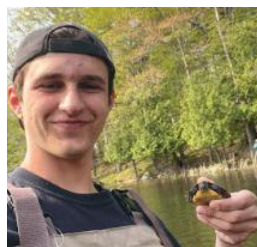
hopes to gain more knowledge about ecosystem preservation and to spread awareness to the community. Fran is eager to contribute to the Georgian Bay Land Trust's conservation practices and to help protect the diverse ecosystems and species that make Georgian Bay so unique.

## Corridor Students



**Hayden O'Brien** grew up cottaging in Go Home Bay, exploring and learning about its biodiversity. He studied environmental sciences at Queen's University and developed an appreciation for the delicacy of ecosystem biodiversity and threats posed to it. He is particularly

interested in hydrology and wildlife management. Hayden has spent his past few years living and working in Banff National Park and is excited to return to contribute to the conservation effort along the network of corridors on the eastern shore of Georgian Bay.



**Joey Trusler** is currently pursuing his passion for the natural world by studying Biology and Geography at Queen's University. Like his summers, his academic interests are deeply rooted in the landscapes and biodiversity of Go Home Bay. His time spent in the area has solidified

his love for the environment and highlighted the importance of conservation. Joey aspires to use his education to advocate for sustainable practices and to educate others about the value and vulnerability of local biodiversity, ensuring that Georgian Bay can be enjoyed by generations to come.

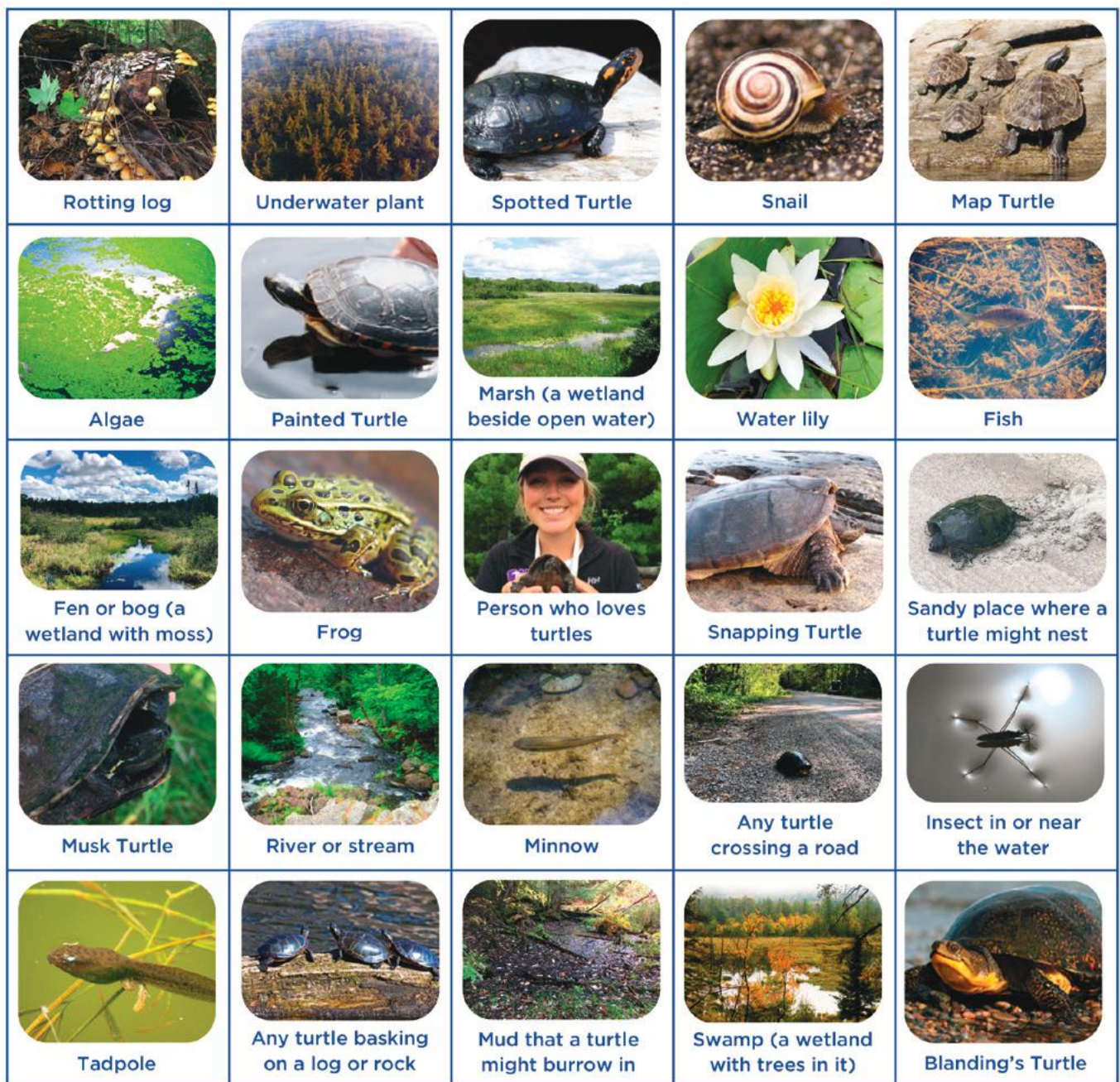


# Kids' Turtle Bingo!

The Georgian Bay area is home to six different species of turtles.  
How many can you find?

This bingo grid contains turtles, their habitats, and food sources. See how much you can complete over the summer of 2024, and send your results to [info@gbt.org](mailto:info@gbt.org) by Labour Day weekend. Take pictures if you can! Each completed row will get you an entry in a draw to win a free t-shirt.

If you see a turtle over the summer that you need help identifying, send us a picture at [info@gbt.org](mailto:info@gbt.org).



## MPP Graydon Smith joins us to recognize Ontario Trillium Foundation grant

On a rainy day in April, Parry-Sound Muskoka MPP Graydon Smith joined us to celebrate a \$349,900 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation that has helped us grow our conservation work over the past three years.

This grant was awarded to accelerate the conservation of ecologically significant lands, forests, and wetlands in the Georgian Bay area through increased capacity and landowner outreach. Grant funds were used in part to conduct strategic ecosystem mapping to identify the most important lands for environmental protection, and conduct outreach to priority landowners to inform them of the significance of their land and the conservation options available to them. As part of this, funds contributed to a number of staffing positions, communications and advertising, equipment rentals, hosting workshops, developing information materials, and helping with some key administrative costs.

We're so grateful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the support, which has allowed us to reach more landowners and protect more environmentally significant land around Georgian Bay. Thank you!



*Parry-Sound Muskoka MPP Graydon Smith with Georgian Bay Land Trust staff, volunteers, and land donors celebrating funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.*

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## Ontario Greenlands Funding Renewed

We are happy to report that this spring, the Ontario government chose to renew the Greenlands Conservation Partnership with an announcement of \$20 million over 4 years to support land conservation across the province.

The Greenlands Conservation Partnership was initially created in 2020, and since then has helped land trusts protect 412,000 acres of land across 65 different conservation properties. The program works by providing matching funding for land protection projects to organizations including the Ontario

Land Trust Alliance, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Ontario's many local and regional land trusts – including us! Our Corridor Project (see pages 2-3) was made possible in part by funding through this program.

The Georgian Bay Land Trust was part of an effort led by the Ontario Land Trust Alliance to advocate for the importance of renewing this funding, and we're encouraged to see the outcome. Thank you to everyone who was part of this investment in nature.

### STAY WILD with GBLT summer clothing!

Wear your love of Georgian Bay and support the Land Trust with our new summer merchandise.

**STAY WILD** designs are available on sweatshirts and sweatpants, short- and long-sleeved Ts, and baseball caps. Details at [gblt.org/merchandise](https://gblt.org/merchandise).





## Georgian Bay Snapshot

"Secret Oasis"  
by Ariel Estulin



"I've visited this spot countless times over the years, and with each return, it's a new experience of discovery."

Taken on Philip Edward Island. See more of Ariel's photography on Instagram @ariel.estulin or at arielestulin.com



## TributeGIFTS

*Received from September 28 2023 – May 1 2024*

### In Memory

Audrey & Allan Baker	Estelle Funston
Sean C. Belshaw	Betty (Joy) Hall &
Dorothy & Jim Bennett	Hugh B. Hall
John Birnbaum	Cliff Harding
Beatrice Bond	Laurie Hornell
Bruno Emil Brandt	William Paul Hughes
Kelly Buckingham	John Paul Jeffrey
Anthony Burt	Peter M. Kemerer
John Catto	Michael Ketchum
Charles Coke	Charles Wallis "Wally" King
Donald Coppa	Dorothy & Bill Leonard
Helen & Bill Dane	Roy Linden
John W. Duncanson	Molly Anne Macdonald
J. Moffat Dunlap	Jane Maher
Robert G. Eakin	William C. McCoy
Catherine Eaton	Ian McLeod

Helmut Mechliniski
Ruth Miller
Douglas Ross Norris
Peter Russell
Kathy Southee
Robert Stevens
John D. Stevenson
Peter Terry
George Trusler
Mary Jane, Maggie, and Peter Tushingham
Terry Ukrainec
Willem J. van der Toorn
David Walker
David Yule
Walter & Stella Yusko

### In Honour

Douglas Alexander	Terry & Dot
Clair Balfour	Keenleyside
Nancy Coates	Paul Kennedy
Sondra Cornett	Rob & Pam Kennedy
Barbara Crabtree	Frances Reinholdt
Wendy Hadwen	Tom Scoon
Janice A. House	Beth Stewart
Tait Hyland	Bryn Turnbull



gbt.org

SUMMER 2024

# SUMMEREVENTS

PROTECTING **GEORGIAN BAY'S** WILDERNESS LANDS

## Summer Events 2024



### **Spring Bird Migration Walk – June 2, 9–11am**

Beausoleil Island, Honey Harbour. Join us for a hike to check out some of the birds migrating through at this time of year.



### **Bird Research Demonstration – August 17, 10am–12pm**

Long Island, Go Home Bay. Join our research staff to learn about their work with Prairie Warblers and Whip-poor-wills this summer.



### **Cocktails on the Lizard – July 5, 3–5pm**

The Lizard, Cognashene. Bring your afternoon cocktails to the Lizard and enjoy this beautiful island with friends.



### **Fall Bird Migration Walk – September 14, 10am–12pm**

Sans Souci. Join us for a hike to check out some of the birds migrating through at this time of year.



### **Sunset and Star Photography – July 31, 7–10pm**

The Lizard, Cognashene. Photographer Ariel Estulin will lead us in a workshop on getting the most out of photographing these beautiful celestial phenomena.



For more information about any of these events, and to register, please visit [gbt.org/events](https://gbt.org/events).



### **Nature Walk – August 7, 10am–12pm**

Friend Island, Pointe au Baril. Join us for a naturalist's tour of this beautiful island.

## Sponsors

Thanks to our generous sponsors



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The Georgian Bay Land Trust acts to preserve the wilderness lands of eastern Georgian Bay and the North Channel through strategic conservation planning, land securement, stewardship, conservation research, and education.



We are a registered Canadian charity (#13195 8811 RR0001)

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