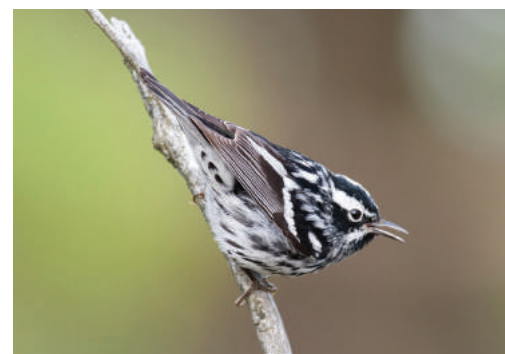




ANNUAL REPORT 2023



PROTECTING **GEORGIAN BAY'S** WILDERNESS LANDS



Conservation LEADERSHIP on Georgian Bay

A CONSERVATION PLAN FOR
21,000 acres

PRIORITIZED
15 key
specific habitat types



PROTECTING **GEORGIAN BAY'S** WILDERNESS LANDS



DEAR FRIENDS

It's a wonderful feeling to look back on my first year as Chair of the Georgian Bay Land Trust and see all that our community has accomplished. Here are just a few of the things that you made possible this year:

For the first time, the Land Trust is leading our own scientific research projects on species of importance to our Georgian Bay ecosystem. Initial results from our studies on Prairie Warblers and Eastern Whip-poor-wills have started to come in, and we look forward to more findings that will impact conservation decisionmaking.

Thanks to the generosity and environmentalism of local landowners, we protected 1,476 more acres of land, creating the Madawaska Club of Go Home Bay Conservation Easement, the Robertson Nature Reserve, and the Seven Islands Easement.

We continued our collaboration with the Georgian Bay Mniidoo Gamii Biosphere, Shawanaga First Nation, Magnetawan First Nation, and other community partners through the Maamwi Anjiakiziwin project, aimed at improving outcomes for species-at-risk throughout the region.

Particularly exciting in behind-the-scenes work is the progress that we made on our Georgian Bay Corridor Project, which will begin coming to fruition in 2024. This project will have a major impact on the future of Georgian Bay - stay tuned!

I'm very grateful to everyone who contributes to the work of the Land Trust. We could not exist without our fantastic donors, volunteers, and partners. Our growing staff team, led by Executive Director Bill Lougheed, works hard every day to translate our community's passion into results on the ground. To each one of you who aids our work in your own way - thank you!

Have a wonderful summer!



CATHY BONGARD
Board Chair

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Executive Director

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Protected Areas Manager

Janet Brough
Senior Development Officer

Sarah Koetsier
Communications Director

Stefani Matis
Land Securement Assistant

Adam Grottoli
Corridor Project Ecologist

Suzanne Legault
Office Administrator
& Executive Assistant

Irina Denissova
Bookkeeper

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Carl Spiess
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John Stark
Cindy Tripp
Janny Vincent
Barbara Zimmerman

PLAN

Using science to identify and prioritize key habitats for conservation so that species are protected and our coastal ecosystem remains resilient

SPECIES HABITAT AND THREAT MAPPING

In 2023, we began work on the “ground-truthing” portion of our species-at-risk habitat mapping. This mapping is intended to show the specific locations of the preferred habitat for each of Georgian Bay’s 50 species at risk, in order to inform conservation priorities. We have generated computer mapping for the entire eastern Georgian Bay region based on existing data, and this year our staff visited a selection of locations in person to document in detail the habitat types found there. These in-person findings will be compared with the habitat classifications generated through our computer mapping, in order to confirm or improve the accuracy of our computer models. Ultimately, we hope to be able to map the entire region with high accuracy in order to inform land use and conservation planning.



LANDOWNER OUTREACH

Now in year three of our Ontario Trillium Foundation grant, we designed new outreach brochures and contacted priority landowners by mail to share information about conservation options. This year, our efforts focused on the Carling Township area, where we have identified opportunities for owners of ecologically significant land to contribute greatly to large-scale connectivity and resilience in the landscape. Efforts to work with these landowners to conserve their land will continue in 2024.

CORRIDOR PROJECT PROGRESS

Many of this year’s behind-the-scenes efforts went into planning for the Land Trust’s Corridor Project, which aims to secure our region’s ecological integrity and protect public access to nature by creating a protected habitat corridor along much of Georgian Bay’s eastern shoreline. Significant progress on the project was made in 2023, which we look forward to sharing publicly in 2024.



PROTECT

Securing ecologically significant lands to protect habitats and species and to create open spaces for community enjoyment



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 Prairie Warblers, 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 are so grateful to Dr. Robertson for choosing to make this wonderful gift to nature, as well as to American Friends of Canadian Conservation for their assistance in conserving this special place.



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.

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 as a permanent sanctuary for nature rather than opened for public use. Thank you to the Madawaska Club for leaving this natural legacy for future generations.

**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.

STEWARD

Working alongside communities to monitor and maintain wilderness lands forever



PHRAGMITES REMOVAL

Our largest physical stewardship task continues to be the removal of invasive *Phragmites*, which occupies one week of our time in August. Fortunately, after significant effort several years ago, the amount of *Phragmites* growing each year is manageable, and once again in 2023 we were able to cut down all new regrowth, and leave our properties *Phragmites*-free at the end of the season.

LANDSCAPE

LANDSCAPE

We improved our property stewardship this year by adopting the program Landscape, which allows for integrated reporting on site visits, ongoing projects, property features, and more. A number of our volunteer stewards have received training and begun using the app, and we hope to complete roll-out in 2024.



PROPERTY STEWARDSHIP

Our staff and volunteer stewards conducted 114 monitoring visits to our protected properties in 2023, helping to look after 7,700 acres across 72 properties. On these visits, they documented flora and fauna, collected garbage, monitored visitor use, tackled invasive species, and tracked any habitat changes.

EXCERPTS FROM VOLUNTEER STEWARD REPORTS:

“It was overcast and cool when we arrived and the lichen-covered rocks were slippery. But the sun shone half way through our inspection. We saw many mushrooms this year - must have been due to the rainy summer conditions. A small bag of garbage was collected including a helium balloon, a piece of rope and lots of blue dock foam pieces.”

VICTORIA T

LEARN

Advancing conservation by conducting scientific studies and using our properties to support research

2023 marked a new milestone for the Land Trust: conducting our own in-house scientific research on species of conservation concern. Spearheaded by Protected Areas Manager Aaron Rusak, and assisted by our summer students, these projects will continue over the next few years.



PRAIRIE WARBLER PROJECT

Prairie Warblers have a robust breeding population in eastern Georgian Bay, while being absent from most of the rest of Canada. This project seeks to answer the questions: How does the Georgian Bay population of Prairie Warblers differ from the population in the United States? What do they like about Georgian Bay? And how can we protect their habitat?

To do this, we banded and Motus tagged 30 male Prairie Warblers. Our research students tracked 15 of these birds over the summer, and were able to create maps of the areas they occupy, how their territories overlap with neighbouring birds, and how they move around the Bay after breeding. The other 15 birds were outfitted with longer-lasting Motus tags, and were tracked remotely as they passed Motus towers during their southbound migration and while overwintering, to determine whether the Georgian Bay population overwinters in the same locations as their American counterparts.



EASTERN WHIP-POOR-WILL PROJECT

Whip-poor-wills are an at-risk species whose populations have fluctuated in Georgian Bay over the years. In order to proactively preserve this iconic species and its habitat, we are undertaking a three year research project to learn about Whip-poor-will nesting requirements.

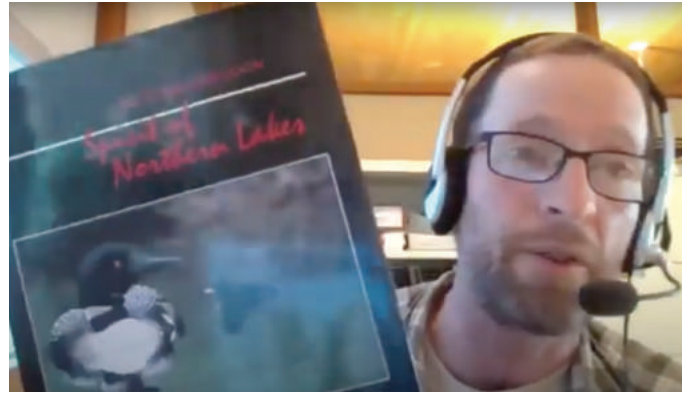
This project studies a successful population in the Go Home Bay area, in an attempt to discover the specific habitats they choose to build nests in. Our research students spent the summer of 2023 conducting evening surveys to identify the locations of Whip-poor-wills by sound, and following up with daytime fieldwork to track down the nests. We determined that this protocol alone is not enough to successfully locate nests, and in following years will affix Motus tags to Whip-poor-wills to better track their movements and find nest locations.

INSPIRE

Bringing communities together and cultivating the next generation of conservationists that will protect our land and species



550 people joined us for **SUMMER AND FALL EVENTS**, including a paddling excursion, nature walks, yoga on the rocks and more.



Our **VIRTUAL LANDMARK SPEAKER SERIES** connected our community with experts to discuss loon population declines, wetland classification, and turtle conservation.



Our conservation properties welcomed **2,000+ VISITORS** for activities including hiking, birdwatching, picnicking, and swimming.



We reached over **6,000 PEOPLE** through our **LANDSCRIPT** newsletter, sharing topics including the importance of native plants for butterflies and moths, how to be environmentally friendly while closing the cottage, common lichens of Georgian Bay, and advice on how to deal with ticks.



We continued to share the wonders of nature with our **5,800 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS**, and inspire engagement through initiatives like **AARON AND ELEANOR'S BIG DAY**.

FINANCIALS

Georgian Bay Land Trust

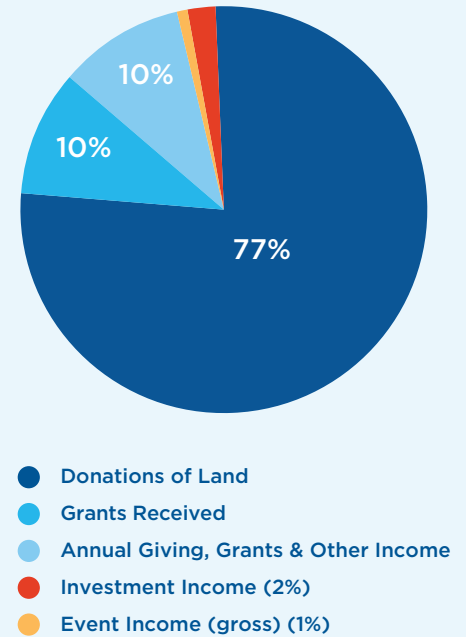
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION | Year Ended December 31, 2023

ASSETS	2023	2022
CURRENT		
Cash	716,300	396,194
Sundry Receivables	-	14,560
HST Rebate Receivable	12,221	14,096
Prepays	38,026	14,367
	<u>766,547</u>	<u>439,217</u>
Legacy Stewardship Fund	1,073,108	1,072,108
Alexander Stewardship Fund	118,093	104,293
Andy Griggs Memorial Stewardship Fund	55,836	55,836
David & Beverly Stager Stewardship Fund	51,341	51,341
Watson Stewardship Fund	177,297	173,297
Property-Specific Stewardship Funds	293,494	245,561
Stewardship Campaign	98,175	98,175
Sheila MacFeeters Memorial Fund	217,949	200,288
Wally And Marilyn King and Family Fund	111,615	115,115
John Catto Conservation Fund	200,000	200,000
Conservation Lands Securement Fund	518,636	558,554
Conservation Working Fund	3,045,987	3,045,987
Property and Equipment	50,505,919	44,541,249
	<u>57,233,997</u>	<u>50,901,021</u>
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	47,887	17,118
	<u>47,887</u>	<u>17,118</u>
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	718,660	422,099
Internally Restricted Net Assets	3,764,623	3,804,541
Externally Restricted Net Assets	2,196,908	2,116,014
Net Assets Invested in Property	50,505,919	44,541,249
	<u>57,186,110</u>	<u>50,883,903</u>
	<u>57,233,997</u>	<u>50,901,021</u>

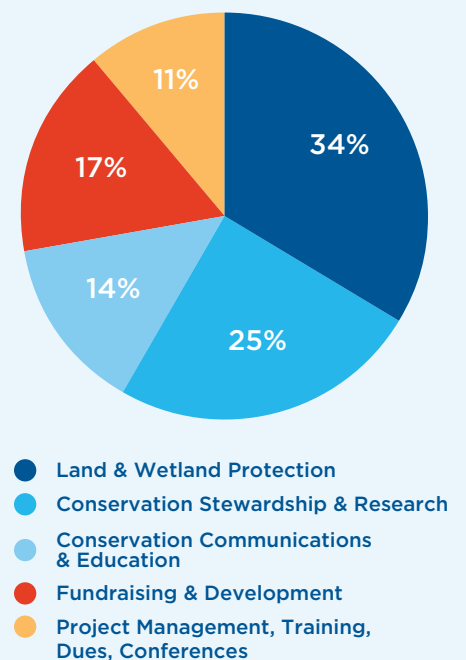
CONDENSED STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE | Jan 1 to Dec 31, 2023

OPERATING REVENUE	2023	2022
Donations & Grants	1,443,976	791,131
Georgian Bay Book Sales (net)	0	2,166
Events (net)	105,578	57,234
Investment	111,280	234,689
	<u>1,660,834</u>	<u>1,085,220</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Land & Wetland Protection	310,791	272,851
Conservation Stewardship & Research	227,058	179,242
Conservation Communications & Education	124,152	117,183
Fundraising	155,114	90,845
Management, dues, training, conferences	96,319	107,790
Funds and Revenues Dedicated or Used to Create New Nature Reserves	454,520	304,858
	<u>1,367,954</u>	<u>1,072,769</u>
Excess Revenue over Expenses	<u>292,880</u>	<u>12,451</u>
CAPITAL REVENUE		
Donations: Externally Restricted Funds	22,811	8,650
Donations: Internally Restricted Funds	21,665	90,770
Value of Land Secured	5,964,670	5,486,000
	<u>6,009,146</u>	<u>5,585,420</u>

REVENUE



EXPENSES



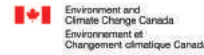
The Georgian Bay Trust Foundation, Inc.
(operating as Georgian Bay Land Trust)
Reg. Charity # 13195 8811 RR0001 Complete audited
financial statements are available upon request

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Many Thanks to our Generous Sponsors



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Cumulative Giving

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Over \$500,000

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Over \$300,000

Geordie Dalglish Family
Robert & Julia Foster
Wally & Marilyn King
Ontario Trillium Foundation

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Over \$200,000

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& Michael Williams
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Tom & Pamela Scoon
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Over \$100,000

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Over \$50,000

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Over \$20,000

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Kerry & Achim Mueller
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Bob & John Suter
Rob & Val Thompson
Robert Thomson
Jill Hodgins Ukrainec
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George Wilson
Donald & Jane Wright
Donald Paton Wright
Barbara Zimmerman
Anonymous Donors

DONORS

Your generous donations ensure that Georgian Bay's wilderness lands are protected in perpetuity. We are honoured to celebrate the following supporters who made gifts from January 1 through December 31, 2023.

PROTECTED PROPERTIES

Our deepest appreciation to those who donated property or conservation easements, or made contributions for land protection projects in 2023:

Madawaska Club of Go Home Bay Conservation Easement
Madawaska Club of Go Home Bay

Seven Islands Easement
Anonymous

Robertson Nature Reserve
Dr. Hamish Robertson

Conservation Lands Securement Fund
Maureen & Jim Cooper
Brien & Nancy Dane
Michael Douglas
Jan Ruby & Mary Thomson

Corridor Project
Alan & Janet Heisey
Pamela & Tom Scoon

STEWARDSHIP FUNDS

Stewardship Funds are long-term investments that support the ongoing annual stewardship of our protected properties. Thank you to those who made contributions in 2023:

Legacy Stewardship Fund
Diane MacDiarmid & Ian MacDonald

Andy Griggs Memorial Fund, Pointe au Baril

Dave & Bev Stager Sandy Island Stewardship Fund, Sandy & Martyr Islands

Douglas & Marylon Alexander Stewardship Fund, Wah Wah Taysee
Michael Wenban & Virginia Froman-Wenban

Watson Family Stewardship Fund, Cognashene, Go Home Bay & Honey Harbour
Ralph & Caroline Grose
Peter S. Watson

SHEILA MACFEETERS MEMORIAL FUND

This fund supports our work through conservation planning and research. Thank you to those who made contributions in 2023:

Estate of Sheila MacFeeters MacFeeters Family Fund at Toronto Foundation

PLEDGE FOR THE BAY

The five-year Pledge for the Bay enables the Land Trust to better plan for the future in land protection, stewardship, education, and outreach, knowing resources are in place from committed supporters. Thank you to these supporters for your generous pledges:

Leader of the Bay (\$25,000 over 5 years)
Jennifer Ivey Bannock
The Bowman Family
Maureen & Jim Cooper
Fred & Sue Dalley
Mason Family Foundation
Paul & Martha McLean
Robin & Robert Ogilvie
Francie & John Pepper
Robert & Valerie Thompson
Jan Ruby & Mary Thomson
Margot & James Tushingham
Tom & Pamela Scoon

ANNUAL SUPPORTERS

Our achievements are shared with our generous supporters who care about the conservation of Georgian Bay as much as we do. Thank you to all those who made contributions in 2023:

\$100,000 - \$249,999
Ontario Trillium Foundation
The Estate of Nancy Powis
Pamela & Tom Scoon

\$50,000 - \$99,999
Great Lakes Basin Conservancy
Wildlife Habitat Canada

\$25,000 - \$49,999
Jan Ruby & Mary Thomson

\$10,000 - \$24,999

The Roger D. & Diane M. Ashton Fund at WCPD Foundation
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The Langar Foundation
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Including a gift to the Georgian Bay Land Trust in your will or estate plans is a special way to leave a legacy to wilderness. Thank you to those who have planned a future gift:

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 Donald & Lorraine Lawson
 Peter S. Watson
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If you would like to leave your legacy for the Bay we all love, please contact Janet at 416.440.1519 x 104 or janet.brough@gblt.org.

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In preparing this report, we have tried our best to be as accurate as possible. If there is an omission or a spelling error, please accept our sincerest apologies and contact us at 416.440.1519 x107 or info@gblt.org so that we can update our records.



OUR MISSION

The Georgian Bay Land Trust acts to protect wilderness lands and species along the eastern shore of Georgian Bay and the North Channel and its near watershed, through strategic conservation planning, land securement, stewardship, research, and education.

OUR VISION

An eastern Georgian Bay and North Channel whose islands, shores, and inland watersheds are connected and strengthened by a network of protected natural lands and habitats, where native species thrive and people interact with the natural world.

OUR VALUES

Love and respect for our special place; Integrity and commitment to our work; Inspiring others to preserve this natural wonder.

Georgian Bay Trust Foundation, Inc. operating as Georgian Bay Land Trust
120 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 1000 | Toronto, ON | M4P 1E2
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