



Bees at Springbank Farm Community Gardens. Photo by D. Crowell

FEATURE

Planning Ecologist Tom Woodcock welcomes some buzz-worthy friends back to *rare*



Photo by D. Crowell

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The bees are back in town

By Tom Woodcock

There is an often-repeated statement that bees are responsible for one in three bites of food that people consume, but pollinators are responsible for much more. Honey bees and their central role in our agricultural systems have often been in the news in recent years, as food security has become a hot topic. A wide variety of emerging threats to the honey bees, and to the apiculture industry in Canada, have been documented. The most obvious product of their labour is honey, but their activity is also required for production and reproduction of many of the fruits and vegetables that give variety to our diet, and a large proportion of the vitamins and minerals that we need.

Following a brief absence, honey bee hives are once again located at the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve. In the early summer of 2015, two colonies of bees were placed adjacent to the Butterfly Trail near the Springbank Farm Community Gardens. The bees will be cared for by Erica Shelley (www.bestforbees.com), a local honey bee expert and *rare* apicultural

volunteer. One of the hives is tenanted by a “rescue” colony, recovered from the ceiling of a residential dining room in Waterloo. The bees and their brood were humanely removed and transported to *rare*, where they have settled in nicely.

From a practical standpoint, the presence of the bees will help address any pollination deficits at the Gardens, where local residents produce their own food, or volunteer their efforts in the Food Bank Garden. The bees will also provide educational opportunities for *rare* visitors, and will also allow *rare* to be a part of Erica’s progressive approach to beekeeping. The Langstroth hive was invented in the 1800s for the convenience of beekeepers, allowing frames of comb to easily be removed for hive manipulation and honey extraction. The top bar hive, in contrast, does not confine the bees to frames and allows them to build comb in the configuration they prefer to maintain

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The bees are back in town

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healthy conditions of ventilation and temperature. By comparing performance of bee colonies in the different types of hives, Erica is working to give bees a healthier life and, at the same time, improve the prospects of Ontario's beekeeping industry.

Future sustainable agricultural methods will rely on a suite of pollinators, wild and managed, to meet the demands of diverse crops and maximize their yield. Wild

ecosystems, such as those at *rare*, also need effective pollination service to function properly. Sustainable plant populations are the foundation of any ecosystem, whether we are considering forests providing habitat for our wildlife, wetlands cleaning our water, or farmland producing food for the human population. The role of pollinators must not be taken for granted in our ecosystem management efforts; our food, water, and biodiversity depend on them. ■■

The new honey hives at *rare*. Top, a top-bar hive ; bottom, a traditional Langstroth Hive. Photos by T. Woodcock

Connecting communities to their roots

By Joy Roberts

It was a particularly beautiful morning at the Springbank Farm Community Gardens. You could hear the wistfulness in Angelo's voice as he recounted it just hours later from his office in Waterloo. But not all was calm as the sun strengthened and warmed the earth after a particularly cool night. While Angelo was stopping by the gardens for a quick visit, other gardeners were struggling with the primitive water system and hoping to get enough moisture on to the plants to see them through to the next rain.

Angelo expresses his delight at discovering *rare's* community gardens when he was attempting to convince his parents, who grew up in Italy, to move here from Orillia. At first the Loberto family rented four plots and tended to them with their accustomed diligence and skill. Stephanie Sobek-Swant, *rare's* Executive Director, says that the Loberto plots put hers to shame and she is glad that she is located in another part of the gardens so her efforts and those of her three year-old daughter could not be so readily compared.

"The gardens at *rare* made all the difference for my parents," says Angelo. "In this idyllic setting they had beauty and something so familiar to them. They felt at home. We've reigned in our enthusiasm a bit now and have only two plots, but the amount of

fresh food coming out of them is still amazing. There is nothing quite like stopping in on the way home from work to pick a fresh cucumber and tomato for a salad."

Dan Radoslav, the gardens expert at *rare*, laments the watering system; "We have applied for many grants to cover the upgrade and even after multiple successful entries we still fell short of the total \$17,000 required for the complete project. This means we rely on the generosity of individual donors and other organisations for the chance to see the project become a reality. Springbank Farm has great potential and by raising another \$5,000-\$7,000 we would be able to finish this essential project and support the gardens into the future."

Springbank Farm offers the largest privately owned community gardens in the Waterloo Region, with 110 plots and the capacity to add more as time and funds permit. There is also a volunteer-run garden producing food for the Cambridge Self Help Food Bank, and education gardens that support *rare's* *Every Child Outdoors* program.

The education gardens are an important part of our programming and always an attraction. At various times they have included a pizza garden for small kids,

producing basil, tomatoes and peppers; a plot labelled the Three Sisters Gardens with squash, corn and beans, allowing native youth to demonstrate best practices to their non-native counterparts; and a permaculture technique known as hugelkultur that uses a mound of buried organic matter to keep the soil rich for years, even decades.

In addition to the public education and gardening experiences at Springbank Farm, the site is also home to our interpretive butterfly trail which features native plants and bushes, built with help from Sir Sanford Fleming students; a conceptual longhouse, designed and erected by Dr. Bill Woodworth, an architect with the University Of Waterloo School Of Architecture in Cambridge and Mohawk band member; and the Pavilion, built with help from the School of Architecture graduate Laura Knap and volunteers, using sustainably sourced wood from Eastern Ontario, and funded by the Kalvelman-Fonn Foundation and the Cloverleaf Foundation.

In fact, everything at the Springbank Farm Community Gardens is made possible by community support and involvement.

To learn more please visit us at raresites.org. ■■



Springbank Farm Gardens. Photo by D. Radoslav



Barn Swallow banding. Photo by J. Quinn

QUESTION

How do nesting structures help protect Barn Swallows?

ANSWER Nesting structures are built to provide new nesting habitat for barn swallows, a species at risk in Ontario. When barn swallows migrate to Ontario in the spring, they often return to nesting locations used the previous year. However, nesting habitat can become unavailable for various reasons, including demolition or renovation of barns, bridges, and other structures where barn swallows typically nest. Providing new nesting structures near the birds' previous nesting location may contribute to the conservation of this species. Our research focuses on assessing if social cues – barn swallow decoys and vocalizations – can be used to attract barn swallows to new nesting structures.

Although barn swallows are still common in southern Ontario, their population declined by an estimated 66% in Ontario from 1970 to 2012. Because loss of nesting habitat is one of several factors that may be contributing to their decline, many organizations are building nesting structures for barn swallows. However, it seems that few barn swallows nest in these new structures. We hypothesized that barn swallows would be more likely to nest at a structure that already had a nesting colony compared to a structure without nesting birds. To make it appear as though a structure had an active nesting colony, we attached wooden barn swallow decoys to the structure and broadcasted barn swallow songs and calls. Many

bird species select habitat based on social cues from other birds, in addition to what we often consider to be habitat characteristics, such as vegetation.

We are collaborating with Bird Studies Canada on the social cues project at ten properties in southern Ontario, including rare. At each property, two new nesting structures were constructed to replace lost nesting habitat, one with decoys and vocalizations, and one with no social cues. We are monitoring how frequently barn swallows visit the structures, both when the birds arrive in the spring and again before they depart in the fall. We are also monitoring if the birds build nests and tracking the success of each nest. So far, some interesting observations include barn swallows responding to the social cues by interacting with the decoys and counter singing with the broadcasted vocalizations. Also, barn swallows have nested at five of the ten properties, including rare. After the 2015 breeding season, we will analyze the data to help us understand if social cues can be used to attract barn swallows to new nesting structures, potentially improving conservation efforts for this species at risk. ■ ■

By Andrew Campomizzi, Research Scientist, Bird Ecology and Conservation Ontario



Barn Swallow structure. Photo by Z. Lebrun-Southcott

ASK A RESEARCHER

You've asked, and we've answered!

Dr. Andrew Campomizzi has worked as an avian ecologist for more than 15 years. He began working with BECO, Bird Ecology and Conservation Ontario, in 2014 after completing post-doctoral research at the Institute of Renewable Natural Resources at Texas A&M University. There has been much curiosity from *rare* gardeners and trail users regarding the new nesting structures erected on the property this spring. If you ever see something on the property that leaves you wondering, don't hesitate to get in touch with us. We welcome your calls and emails to 519-650-9336 or rare@raresites.org.



North House. Photo by J. Quinn

North House education gets a boost from TD

By Gerrit Kamminga

“Make the bed come down!” is a phrase that I have heard more times than I can possibly fathom. “Alright folks, stand back, here it comes!” is my usual reply. As the young squad is ushered backwards into the North

House living room I steady my grip on the garage door remote capable of completing such a task. Once all limbs are clear, a simple click of a button magically lowers the bed out of its ceiling hideaway towards the floor with a gentle mechanical hum. The brief silence of awed observation is typically only broken with the inevitable “make the bed go up!”

Although this is only one example, North House provides a myriad of features that connect design to functionality. Originally built for the United States Department of Energy International Solar Decathlon competition in 2009, North House is a one-of-a-kind solar-powered, green housing prototype. It is an 800 sq. foot case study of energy conservation, design and engineering and green building technologies. It was Canada’s only entry to the competition in its year, winning fourth overall and taking first place for its education program. As an educator, North House is truly the ideal classroom for demonstrating environmentally sustainable energy production

and consumption to all ages. While visiting, individuals get to observe technological processes such as automated exterior shades to regulate solar radiation, solar thermal water heating, photovoltaic cell energy generation, and materials capable of regulating temperature through the phase changing of an interior salt-hydrate solution. As with all educational programming at *rare*, North House opportunities are part of the *Chain of Learning*, which allows knowledge to flow from North House’s most senior designers down to the youngest explorers that pass through its doors.

With the support of TD Bank, the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve has been able to develop North House programming to allow greater interaction and inquiry-based learning. These advancements are made possible through additional educational materials and demonstrations developed by *rare* education staff and volunteers. ■■

TD cheque presentation at North House. Photo by R. Oei



INTRODUCING OUR NEW WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

We are pleased to announce our 2015 Eastern Comma writer-in-residence, prolific writer, poet, and Traditional Teacher for First Nation’s House, Lee Maracle.

Living in our solar powered living lab, North House, Maracle will explore the relationship between science and art, and the common inspiration they share: nature.

Currently an instructor at the University of Toronto, Maracle will be with us from September to the end of October, so if you see her on the property, don’t be a stranger- she’s eager to meet the faces of *rare*!



Inspiring the next generation

By Erika Kastner

We consider ourselves lucky to be a part of a likeminded community – one that understands the importance of preserving these 900+ acres and educating our community on the importance access to nature plays in our lives. A huge part of that involves inspiring and educating the next generation of environmental conservationists. All of the hard work we do here at *rare* would mean nothing without the leaders of tomorrow to carry on our passion. Providing opportunities for our community, especially our youth, to connect with nature and become inspired by it is incredibly vital to ensuring *rare*, and other places like it, are here for future generations.

At the heart of this inspiration we have our *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) environmental programing where we provide inspiring programs and activities for youth that foster an inquisitive, explorative mind. In addition to ECO, an important part of our programming also includes welcoming co-op students and interns from local high schools and post-secondary institutions. It is, in fact, how I ended up at *rare*. It is also how Kayla Martin got involved.

For five months last year we welcomed Kayla's smiling face and enthusiastic attitude every morning as she completed her high school co-op term at *rare*. During her time here she witnessed first-hand ECO's impact; "I learned that outdoor environmental education is important...programs

that allow students to make connections between the things they learn in the classroom and the local landscape. Students seemed to appreciate what they learned in class much more when they could see its importance and relevance in the local environment."

A majority of Kayla's time was spent supporting ECO, but she also had the opportunity to get involved with some of the other important work we do here, like ecological monitoring. Kayla spent time out in the field helping collect valuable information on salamanders – and it was because of her experience here that Kayla has decided to study environmental sciences at university this fall.

Every youth should have the opportunity to be a part of nature programs that can spark a passion in them. Help us ensure that *rare* is here to stay and that we are able to continue to provide the opportunity for our community to connect with nature. Please consider making a donation – every little bit helps and will contribute to our ongoing efforts to train the next generation of environmental conservationists. Or, consider becoming a member of our Bedrock Club, giving monthly allowing you to maximize your gift in an affordable way and is the best way to make sure that every dollar works harder and goes further.



Kayla in the field. Photo by J. Quinn

"My experience showed me that *rare* provides valuable opportunities for young people, whether that may be an elementary student visiting with their class or a co-op student like myself, to get involved in the environment and the local community."

When it is time for Kayla to pass on the knowledge she's learned from her environmental sciences degree we want her to know that *rare* will still be here for her to share with her community – help us make sure it is, intact and in perpetuity. Help us continue to train the next generation of environmental conservationists. Help protect our future. ■■



To send in a donation, fill in form and cut here.



Yes – I can help!

Donor Name _____

Mailing Address with City and Postal Code _____

Telephone _____

email _____

- I'll join *rare*'s Bedrock Club! I would like *rare* to receive my pre-authorized monthly donation of \$ _____, to be automatically withdrawn on the 15th of every month through: My chequing account ("Void" cheque enclosed)
 Credit Card

I am enclosing a one-time gift of:

\$250 \$100 \$50 \$20 or \$ _____

Yes, I would like to receive email updates from *rare*.

Payment Information :

Please send cheques payable to

rare Charitable Research Reserve
1679 Blair Road
Cambridge, ON N3H 4R8

OR

Please provide credit card information VISA M/C A/E

Name as it appears on the card _____

Card No. _____

Expires _____ Signature _____

You may also donate securely online through raresites.org/donate

Name to appear on Founding Donors list, to be displayed permanently at *rare* upon completion of the capital campaign:



Adrian & Ilana on butterfly day. Photo by J. Quinn

EVERY CHILD OUTDOORS (ECO) CAMP BUTTERFLY DAY SPONSORED BY BUTTERFLY SALON & SPA



A huge THANK YOU to our friends at Butterfly Salon & Spa in the Quebec St. Mall in downtown Guelph. Because of this sponsorship, campers spent each Thursday afternoon catching, identifying, and learning about the important role butterflies play in a healthy and sustainable environment as pollinators and indicator species.

Owner and Stylist Ahmad (Adrian) Hammoud and Ilana Hammoud were on hand with nets and encouragement for the campers. "It's my pleasure to participate in this way, helping to get *Every Child Outdoors* to ensure their health and well being. And in recognition of Ramadan, it was also a way for me to give back to my community."

Thank you Butterfly Salon & Spa for helping to make enjoyable the solid science that contributes to healthy development of youth and the training of the next generation of environmental conservationists!

A rare Chain of Learning in action

By Jason Bracey

You may be aware that *rare's* education vision is one that incorporates a *Chain of Learning* model in which individuals of different ages, levels and areas of expertise share their knowledge and passion of nature and pass it along the chain, strengthening each learning link in the process. Using this model, I jumped at the chance to pilot a mentorship program involving grade 12 students from Southwood Secondary School in Cambridge and a class of grade ones from Cedar Creek School in Ayr. My hope was that over the course of four months we would share our learning and expertise, foster community partnerships, and inspire youth to become more engaged in nature fostering life-long learning.

On a bitterly cold day this past March, my grade 12 students from the Environmental Science and Resource Management class and the Specialist High Skills Major Program (SHSM) Environment, along with Ms. Logan's grade ones, descended on the *rare* ECO Centre. They were quickly paired up with their "buddies" (one grade 12 with one grade one), and started the process of getting to know one another. The majority of the day was focused on snowshoeing, and as it was the first trip to *rare* for many, the students were excited to explore the property while learning about winter ecology and how to track animals in

the snow. By the end of the day you could already see the bonds starting to cement and the mentorship to take hold – the grade ones even sat with their grade 12 buddies on the bus ride home.

We made two more trips to *rare* over the course of the program, and each time the grade 12 students took on more of a leadership role as they hiked the River Trail and helped teach their buddies about bedrock, spring plants, and bird migration. By the last trip the grade 12s were responsible for leading the entire day where the importance of citizen science was the focus with dedicated *rare* volunteer, Ross Dickson, leading a bird banding demonstration, and students learning to use benthic invertebrates as indicators to test water quality.

From my perspective
this project was an
overwhelming success.

When all was said and done I saw the unbridled enthusiasm of young students wanting to learn about nature and taking the first steps to life-long learning, community partnerships created between Southwood and Cedar Creek, and complete engagement in learning and confidence building through hands-on activities. We also saw students further develop their skills in reading and writing, critical thinking, and creativity.

Buddies snowshoeing. Photo by J. Bracey



The *Chain of Learning* was in full effect with teachings moving up and down the chain - teachers, *rare* staff, volunteers and the students themselves. What also struck me was how the chain also quickly became a web. Students were taking what they were learning from myself, Ms. Logan, *rare* staff and volunteers, and they were teaching each other. Mentors were teaching their buddies, buddies were teaching their mentors, and mentors were even teaching mentors. A community of learning was created and through this mentorship program the next generation has been introduced to the beauty and importance of the natural world through their time spent at *rare*. I can't wait to do it all again next year! ■■



The new bridge at Cruickston Creek. Photo by C. Pope

Cruickston Creek restoration

By Carleigh Pope

This past February, one of the three coldwater creeks at the **rare Charitable Research Reserve** underwent a major face-lift. Through a truly collaborative effort between **rare** staff, volunteer groups, and funders, **rare** was able to undertake this ecological restoration project.

Cruickston Creek is a coldwater creek that lies in the southeastern portion of the reserve. Historically, the fields adjacent to the creek were farmed, but in 2003 they were taken out of production and left to naturalize. Despite ceasing agricultural practices, a legacy of the historical management of the area still remained, namely, a perched culvert. Culverts are installed in waterways to allow vehicles to cross watercourses, however, often there are problems associated with sediment-infilling and in the case of Cruickston, erosion. The

Cruickston Creek culvert was a ‘perched’ culvert meaning that its downstream end had a 30 centimetre drop before rejoining the watercourse. This created a significant obstacle for wildlife within the creek.

Ecological restoration is by no means an overnight process: it takes months, if not years, of planning and monitoring to ensure a project is carried out properly and effectively. The planning for the restoration of Cruickston Creek began in 2008 and came to fruition in the winter of 2015. The perched culvert was carefully excavated from Cruickston and was replaced by a footbridge to facilitate stream crossing. Following the construction activities the site was further enhanced by planting over 500 native trees, shrubs, and perennials.

In future years, the new footbridge at Cruickston Creek will be part of a trail

connection between the neighbouring subdivision of Cambridge West and the Springbank Farm Community Gardens. Beyond the physical connectivity this bridge represents, the project also represents a success story in community engagement. From the local groups that helped with planting, to the new farm gate at Blair Road built by the Conestoga College Woodworking students, the restoration of Cruickston Creek would not have been possible without this invaluable community support. ■■

Special thanks to:

Great Lakes Guardian Community Environment Fund, Ontario Ministry of the Environment

The Moffat Family Foundation, The Cambridge North Dumfries Community Foundation

Conestoga College Woodworking Technology Program

Battlefield Equipment Rentals



Cheyenne, our new Community Stewardship Coordinator, shows her frustrations with the phone system. Photo by E. Kastner

CALL ME MAYBE

We are in desperate need of a new phone system – it’s on its last legs and we’re worried it’ll go kaput at any moment. We’re already starting to see its deterioration with connectivity issues – random hang-ups, cut outs, and interference are all real issues and a random game of chance every time we pick up the phone.

We want to be able to serve our community by protecting these 900+ acres effectively and efficiently. A working phone system is a vital element in ensuring we are able to do so. Besides the obvious reason of not

being able to connect with our community, not having a working phone system hinders our ability to run a productive office, and it also puts us in a place of risk. We need to be able to call emergency services if something went wrong!

If you have a working phone system you are no longer in need of, perhaps it’s collecting dust in storage, we would greatly appreciate the donation. Please call us at 519-650-9336 or email erika.kastner@raresites.org.

Wetland communities: What role do plants play in keeping our water clean?



Lindsey hard at work. Photo by D. Marshall

By Jenna Quinn

One of *rare's* newest research projects is tackling an important issue on the Grand River with broader application around the globe. Lindsey Clairmont, Ph.D. student and this year's recipient of the *rare* RBC Graduate Scholarship in Water Research, is studying a relationship that to date has been largely unexplored.

Her work will investigate what role the plant and bacteria communities play in removing contaminants from wastewater, an important and relevant topic on the Grand River – home to 30 wastewater treatment plants that discharge their treated effluent into rivers in the watershed. In addition to six other sites along the river, Lindsey will be collecting samples and conducting part of her research on the *rare* reserve.

“As the human population continues to grow, it places an increasing pressure on a limited drinking water supply that is negatively impacted by pollutants originating from industrial, agricultural, and human activities” says Lindsey on the importance of her work, “In addition to wastewater

treatment facilities, we rely heavily on natural and constructed wetlands to facilitate the removal of contaminants from wastewater. Natural wetlands, like the ones at *rare*, can act as a guide to aid in the design of more effective and efficient constructed wetlands.”

Lindsey hopes her work will ultimately improve water quality in North America by increasing our understanding of the processes involved in natural treatment of wastewater and helping to inform environmental engineers in constructed wetland design.

Each year, *rare* selects one student for its annual \$4,000 scholarship. The funds help support the student's research and travel expenses, as well as provide funding for the student to present their work at a conference in their discipline. Effective science communication is a key link in *rare's* *Chain of Learning*, and there are lots of opportunities for researchers to get involved with student and community education programs. ■■



Help us get *Every Child Outdoors* – September 27

Register today for our sixth annual community event, the 2015 **Walk & Run for *rare***, and help us raise funds and awareness for our *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) environmental programming. - **Fundraising rewards, prizes, BBQ, and entertainment to follow!**

Whether you're looking for a **corporate team building** experience, a **group outing** or just an opportunity to **get outside and have fun**, we'd love to see you!

At *rare* we take seriously the role we play in fostering the next generation of environmental conservationists. Throughout the years, the **Walk & Run for *rare*** has generated funds and awareness to help **support education staff**; renovations to, and the completion of, our educational hub, the ***rare* ECO Centre**; provide **educational supplies**; provide **bus and camp subsidies** for children attending ECO; and so much more. To date, we have seen over **10,000 youth participate in ECO**, and now an average of **2,500 a year** – but we're not done yet!

Visit raresites.org for more information and to register, or contact Erika at erika.kastner@raresites.org or 519-650-9336 x 122



Photo by D. Crowell



Rose-breasted Grosbeak. Photo by M. Weissmann

Nature notes

By Bill Wilson

Notable waterfowl at the Confluence this spring included five RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (Jerry Guenther; Bill Wilson) and a pair of BLUE-WINGED TEAL (John & Michelle Tomins).

A pair of adult BALD EAGLES and a “white-belly” subadult were regularly reported throughout March to mid-April. A nest occupied and subsequently abandoned by a pair near *rare* was not re-occupied in 2015.

Eyes on the trail yield interesting observations as well. On March 9, Jerry Guenther and Bill Wilson spotted 100s – then 1000s of pepper-like specs on the snow surface: SHORTWING SNOWFLY (*Allocapnia vivipara*).

The addition of a second Osprey tower on the property in November 2014 offers breeding pairs three nesting platforms between Blair Bridge and George Street. On April 23, Jason Bracey and students in his *Chain of Learning* program at *rare* observed six airborne OSPREY above the Osprey Meadow. Early on, nesting behaviour was observed at all three platforms; however, by mid-July, only the nests at Blair Bridge and Osprey Meadow hatched young.

Teachable moment: while Jason Bracey and his students were observing NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOWS, and considering their role as aerial foragers in the ecology of the river, “a Sharp-shinned Hawk swooped in and plucked a swallow out of midair in its talons and flew off in the forest”.

Some sightings on the river are not only unexpected but also unusual. On April 17, Christina Edwards and Gail Hill photographed six RED-NECKED GREBES. On May 3, Miriam Bauman and David

Gascoigne photographed a COMMON LOON. While not unusual overhead this time of year as they migrate north, these species rarely “put down” along this section of the Grand.

Monitoring Blair Flats following the mid-April prescribed burn (see *rare Review* Spring 2015) was a priority. Lead bird monitors, Marco and Donna DeBruin undertook weekly monitoring. The day after the burn, April 17, ten species of bird were observed including WILSON’S SNIPE and HORNED LARK. Miriam Bauman and David Gascoigne reported four SANDHILL CRANES on May 3.

Tim Skuse reported SPOTTED SANDPIPER near the Confluence on June 23. Three days earlier, Ross Dickson observed an agitated one in the new growth of the burn area exhibiting behaviour to suggest either a nest or new chicks nearby.

On June 24, Ross Dickson observed at least eight species of “Odes” (i.e. dragonflies and damselflies) including CALICO PENNANT, immature MEADOWHAWK, BLUETS and SPREADWING DAMSELFLIES.

In June, John Macdonald reported a new plant species at *rare*: BLUE-EYED GRASS.

Along the Grand Allée on June 13, John Macdonald counted four leaves and four sepals on a TRILLIUM suggesting to him that earlier in the season it had four petals as well. Would a flower bring luck to an Ontarian?

In the Thompson Tract, Julie Reid observed for the first time at *rare*, EASTERN PINE ELFEN (May 9), DREAMY DUSKYWING (May 18), SILVERY BLUE (May 26) and INDIAN SKIPPER butterflies (June 19).

The fine filament mesh of a mist net not only makes birdbanding possible but “captures” the odd insect. Ross Dickson netted a female BLACK HORSEFLY (25 mm). ■■

NATURE SIGHTINGS:

#rareMoment

“A short walk down the Maple Lane Trail at *rare*, a flash of blue and a 45 year quest was fulfilled. My nana gave me my first book on birds when I was eight years old. She told me she liked the Bluebird best because she saw many of them nesting on the farm, and they were so beautiful and brave protecting their families. I decided I would see one, but didn’t know how difficult that would be as their numbers declined. Suddenly, there he was, posing in a tree, unafraid, curious, watching me as I watched him. A flash of blue in the trees, a decades long desire fulfilled, and warm memories of my nana in my heart – thanks to *rare*.”

– Julie Reid, *rare* patron, April 16, 2015

Do you have a memorable nature sighting you wish to share? Tweet or Instagram using the hashtag #rareMoment or submit to rare@raresites.org with the subject line: *rare* Moment



Bluebird. Photo by J. Reid

HAVE SOME *rare* FINDS OF YOUR OWN?

Contact *rare* Nature Notes by emailing rare@raresites.org with “Nature Notes” in the subject line.



Photo by D. Crowell

What *rare* means to us

By Stephanie Sobek-Swant

As many of our long term stakeholders know, the *rare* Charitable Research Reserve was originally known as the Cruickston Charitable Research Reserve. When I speak about *rare* at conferences and meetings, I'm often asked what our name stands for and people frequently assume it's an acronym. Sometimes people express their fondness for the old name, but mostly they just have fun guessing at what rare means. Most recently, a fellow naturalist at the Ontario Nature meeting suggested that *rare* certainly must be short for "really awesome research environment." While he definitely was on the right track with regard to our research excellence, *rare* is not an acronym. Let me explain what our name and logo really means.

The discussion is timely, because 2014 marked the ten-year anniversary of our name change. At that time, some volunteers pointed out that "Cruickston" is a name attached to the colonial period of the

land's history, coming from the Cruickston Castle, the ship that brought an early owner, William Ashton, over from England in 1853. Since artefacts from thousands of years ago were being found on the property (we now know those artefacts go back more than 10,500 years), and since our motto is "intact in perpetuity," indicating thinking well into the future, a name symbolising a much greater time period was called for!

In 2003, graphic designers led the organisation through a series of stakeholder meetings, drawing out of them what the property and our work meant to them. Volunteers, donors, board members and others in the community came together and chose a name and a logo that expressed what the organisation is all about: the uniqueness of the property, its delicacy, its preciousness and incomparable value in a developed world.



The two squares also symbolise the "repel and attract" nature of the property. The solid square in our logo suggests "reserve" and the protection we provide to the sensitive areas of the *rare* property. On the other side of that boundary, the open square suggests "research" and that we welcome the involvement of the community, from senior researchers and practitioners to the youngest citizen through our *Chain of Learning*. Their involvement will make possible the discovery of all the amazing things offered by the diverse habitats and species that can be found on the property.

What does *rare* mean to you? Join the conversation #rareto me on social media, or send in your thoughts to erika.kastner@raresites.org ■■

rare TO ME

We're on a quest to discover what *rare* means to you! Is it a place? An opportunity? A sanctuary?

This is *rare* to Carleigh - share what it means to you by tagging us on social media or using #rareto me



Photo by C. Richardson

WE NEED CAMPUS AMBASSADORS!

We're looking for enthusiastic and committed individuals to represent us on campus. Do you have a passion for nature? Want to get more involved in your community? Become a *rare* Campus Ambassador and help us get Every Student Outdoors!

Contact Cheyanne for more details at cheyanne.richardson@raresites.org or 519-650-9336 x. 126

Leadership

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CONTACT US

1679 Blair Road
Cambridge, ON N3H 4R8

Phone: 519-650-9336
Toll Free: 1-866-927-3866
Fax: 519-650-5923
rare@raresites.org
raresites.org



The *rare* Charitable Research Reserve
would like to acknowledge the
Attawandaron people on whose traditional
territory we live and work and offer respect
to our Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and
Métis neighbours as we strengthen our
relationships with them.

POSTCARD FROM CAMP

Our very first edition of postcard from camp!

Our *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) environmental programming welcomes children and youth to the property to get hands on experience in nature to foster inquisitive and explorative minds. Every edition of the *rare Review* will feature an ECO camper's postcard showcasing their time at *rare*.

This is Shelby's postcard. Shelby is eight years old and from Cambridge. As you can see, when Shelby thinks of *rare*, it's filled with turtles, butterflies and ladybugs.

We hope that Shelby comes back to camp next year!



Shelby, age eight



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