



A close-up, artistic photograph of a Goat's Beard seed head, showing the intricate, feathery structure of the seeds against a dark green background. The seed head is positioned diagonally across the frame, with some seeds in sharp focus and others blurred.

OUR MISSION

Through the combined efforts of the community, *rare*'s team of staff and advisors and local Indigenous Peoples, we will discover the most inclusive practices and answers to environmental issues, stewarding the reserve's diverse network of natural landscapes for ecological integrity and future generations to come.

OUR VALUES

- Conserving biodiversity
- Strengthening science and Indigenous Knowledge
- Building diverse communities
- Training the next generation of land stewards

OUR VISION

To offer the community, including local Indigenous Peoples, the international community and future generations, a diverse network of connected natural areas, protected intact and in perpetuity. As an international leader in conservation, research, restoration and education, *rare* will show leadership and serve as a model system that not only demonstrates the link between ecological integrity and economic sustainability, but includes meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, all of which are critical for the enhancement and quality of life of the planet.

Connecting all Relationships in the Natural World



Stephanie Sobek-Swant

What a year 2017 was for our community at *rare*! In the following pages you will find our report to you on our goals and accomplishments you made possible. Looking back on all the wonderful moments and the successes you shared with us this past year, I feel humbled and want to thank you for the many contributions you have made to help us progress towards our goals. Thank you for your generous gifts — whether it was a donation, hands-on hard work, wisdom or enthusiasm, you enabled us to grow this year and you elevated our impact. We are proud to have you as part of a network of committed people who are making *rare* a household word and who truly care about the environment and their role as part of it.

Our dedication to honouring many ways of knowing and being allow lines of inquiry from many fields and worldviews to come together to create discoveries and allow a completely new set of questions and approaches to arise, creating models for use around the world. No other environmental organization in Canada takes this approach — connecting with people's minds, inspiring them to protect green spaces in perpetuity, honouring and respecting the ones who came before us and the ones who will come after us.

I would also like to acknowledge and express my gratitude to all of the original stewards of the land on which *rare* resides, its first three properties falling within the Haldimand Tract, which spans six miles on either side of the Grand River from source to mouth. Understanding that this land has been rich in diverse Indigenous presence since time immemorial, we would like to honour and respect the sovereignty of several Indigenous Nations: the Onkwehon:we Peoples of Six Nations of the Grand River and the Anishinaabe Peoples of Mississaugas of the New Credit. Nia:wen and Miigwech (thank you) to these Nations who share their lands with us. We'd also like to acknowledge the Neutral Peoples (and their ancestors) and the Indigenous Paleo Hunters that we have archeological evidence for dating back 1,200 and 10,500 years, respectively. Lastly, we'd like to acknowledge those Indigenous Peoples who currently live, work and learn in the urban landscape around us, such other self-identified and status First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

As *rare* works towards making the environment more relevant in people's lives, our long-term, inquiry-based approach as an environmental institute mirrors the way Indigenous Peoples have disseminated information since time immemorial and respects their multigenerational approaches to learning. We look forward to co-creating knowledge that is inclusive of Indigenous ways of knowing and being and the Arts and Western science, thereby creating new ecological and cultural thinking that is just and reflects diversity and is therefore best suited to address current environmental and societal issues in a fulsome manner. This means both recognizing all human beings as an integral part of the environment, and recognizing that a healthy environment is integral for our survival and that Earth is not a commodity.

As we are deepening our relationships with partners like you, I'm excited for what's to come next. I'm hopeful that 2018 will be the year when I can share with you that we have more property protected, more students engaged and that we continue to share our knowledge to educate the next generation of conservationists to be responsible stewards of these lands.

Thank you for being *rare*!

Dr. Stephanie Sobek-Swant
Executive Director

REPORTING ON OUR GOALS

In *Conservation & Connectivity; Strategy & Plans: 2015-2019*, based on sessions held with community members, researchers, educators, practitioners and others who contribute to our work, we described our goals for the years ahead.

By explaining *rare*'s mission, vision, values and goals we are fulfilling a commitment that we take very seriously — a commitment to be transparent and accountable to the public we serve. As a land trust, *rare* protects, intact and in perpetuity, 900+ acres of environmentally significant lands for public benefit. We steward these lands, not only by furthering the science and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge that will result in best practices, but also by training the next generation of conservationists and creating an entire community of support for them and for our goals.

You can read the full version of *Conservation & Connectivity; Strategy and Plans: 2015-2019* online at raresites.org under *About Us*. Please read on for a report on our progress toward these goals in the 2016-2017 fiscal year (September 1, 2016, to August 31, 2017).

Conservation

OUR GOAL: MAINTAINING, RESTORING AND ENHANCING HABITAT WITH SCIENCE-BASED METHODS

Efforts to restore and enhance target areas at *rare* are progressing as outlined in our Environmental Management Plan. There are approximately 55 acres of forest plantation on *rare's* existing 900+ acres. Most are alternating rows of pine and black walnut, a planting approach known as intercropping. Others include monocultures of pine or spruce and small areas of other species which were planted in the 1980s for producing lumber, furniture, panelling and other uses. Single species plantations are less common in the forest industry, as people now know that they can be decimated by pest outbreaks. Our goal is to naturalize and restore these plantations to increase the area of healthy and diverse mixed deciduous forest on the property, as it would have occurred historically.

As a long-term plan for forest management, thinning will increase space and light in the understory, giving a healthy population of saplings the chance to grow. Where desirable tree species (sugar maple, beech, oaks) are lacking, *rare* staff and volunteers will transplant seedlings from nearby forests or purchase from native nurseries. Increased light will also encourage native wildflowers and ferns to grow. Ultimately, the full diversity of tree species and tree sizes will return together with various stages of decaying wood and their inhabitants, such as wood-boring insects, cavity-nesting birds, and hibernating bats.

Photo (right): A view of one of the areas of walnut-pine plantation in the Thompson Tract, illustrating understory fern and sapling growth.



Photo by T. Woodcock

OUR GOAL: STRENGTHENING SPRINGBANK COMMUNITY GARDENS OPERATIONS

We have been strengthening the operations of the Springbank Community Gardens through strong community leadership and coordination of volunteers and financial support from a variety of sources:

- Funds from the Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation supported the purchase of new garden tools for the community garden
- Sunrise Rotary Club, Whole Kids Foundation and Tree Mobile assisted with the creation of our new fruit orchard within the Food Bank Gardens
- A grant from the Healthy Kids Community Challenge built a seed saving area within the Education and Demonstration garden

All of these projects, as well as the maintenance of the Food Bank Gardens, were achieved with the help of over 1020 volunteer hours. Thanks to all our amazing volunteers for supporting this program in 2017!



Photo by T. Jarvis

Photo (above): Southwood Secondary School Co-op Student Kyra Pope plants the new Seed Saving Garden in *rare's* Education & Demonstration Garden.



Photos by T. Woodcock

THE RESTORATION OF BAUMAN CREEK

The portion of Bauman Creek that crosses the Grand River floodplain was historically diverted to increase cropland, with a culvert installed for farm equipment access. When the area was retired from agriculture, it was allowed to naturalize. Eventually, the culvert shifted and water gradually stopped flowing.

After an assessment, *rare* undertook restoration efforts to improve and reconnect habitat to the Grand River. The restored channel has deep pools that retain water during summer dry periods and shallow sections with faster, turbulent currents. More than 400 metres of habitable channel have been restored at *rare*. The developing wetland remains at a reduced size, fed by ground water and periodic flooding from the creek. An Earth Day Tree Planting event was held to improve the riparian buffer with further volunteer efforts during the year to help with invasive species control.

Photos (above): A comparison of Bauman Creek in November 2016, as construction activities on the channel restoration were near completion (left) and after one year (right).

SPOTLIGHT:

- 1** The Cambridge Sunrise Rotary Club generously donated and planted trees for the Food Bank Garden fruit orchard. Later in the year, they returned and repeated their efforts in the Pollinator Grove, part of the Pollinator Conservatory.
- 2** Fiix Software donated their hard work at a corporate outing, removing invasive *Phragmites* plants on *rare* property. They have also been working with us to develop novel experiences for our trail users using technology.



Photo by T. Jarvis



Photo by A. Fraser

WHAT'S AHEAD?



The Land Management and Gardens departments will continue with restoration and stewardship projects in the next fiscal year, as these long-term, landscape scale changes need close monitoring and maintenance. Restoration work, including more riparian tree planting, invasive plant removal and channel alignment improvement, will continue at Bauman Creek. The Savvas Chamberlain Pollinator Conservatory will expand to include a volunteer-planted Pollinator Grove and a rain garden installation at North House. In collaboration with REEP Green Solutions, North House will also be used as an education facility for storm water management. Opportunities for the community to learn and be involved in ecology will continue through volunteer stewardship events, the expansion of the turtle hatchery and a new volunteer-driven native plant propagation project.

In the Food Bank Garden, the United Way Waterloo Region Communities Giving Circle Project will contribute funding and expertise to assist with educational opportunities at the gardens — ensuring a bountiful harvest and a pleasant experience for all. The Libro Credit Union Prosperity Fund, Life Co-op Community Fund and Trillium Mutual ROOTS Community Fund will be supporting other garden improvements. A new partnership with Seeds of Diversity Canada will see more heritage vegetable varieties being grown, with seeds from these plants saved for future use. The resulting surplus produce will be donated to food banks.

Research

OUR GOAL: OPTIMIZE A MONITORING PROGRAM TO INCLUDE A FULL SUITE OF BIOLOGICAL INDICATORS AND MAKE BEST USE OF *rare* RESOURCES

In February 2017, we hired our first ever Ecological Monitoring Technician, funded by the John and Pat McCutcheon Charitable Foundation. The Ecological Monitoring Technician role is dedicated to revising the existing monitoring program at *rare* and making recommendations for the future. Informed by an extensive review of the scientific literature, proven protocols, communication with partners from academia, non-profit, government and environment consulting firms, we looked at nearly 10 years of data with a critical eye and identified opportunities for optimization in our programs for water quality, air quality and terrestrial health.

We will continue this process throughout 2018 as we start to implement change that reflects current methods and priorities and focus on communicating the results of this important long-term monitoring effort to the community in accessible forms, for example through report cards.

Photo (right): A Ruby-throated Hummingbird feeding her young.



Photo by D. Thomas

OUR GOAL: INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF APPLIED RESEARCH CONDUCTED AT *rare*

We increased our research impact this year with support from the Cambridge & North Dumfries Community Foundation — Ages Foundation that resulted not only in one Fellowship, but three additional graduate student bursaries that supported environmental research ranging from the impacts of invasive earthworms to the ability of different habitats to suppress noise pollution. This scholarship program is an important tool in attracting new research to *rare*, meeting goals to broaden our reach and further internal research interests. In total, seven new studies began on the *rare* reserve this year involving four institutions and 10 additional studies are ongoing from previous years. Researchers from three projects made use of onsite accommodations during the field season. The number of peer-reviewed publications produced from research occurring on the *rare* reserve increased to 25.

Photo (left): Owen Lucas, Canada Summer Job Student, measuring the rate of flow at Cruickston Creek.



Photo by J. Quinn

RESEARCH PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Celebrating successes! Below are a few highlights from *rare* research projects in 2017.

- 1** Julie Kreiner, Paul Kron, and Brian Husband (University of Guelph): Unreduced gamete production in Brassicaceae species. This study is the first of its kind and showed that 2n gametes may be more common in species capable of asexual reproduction, where natural selection against them is weakened.
- 2** Meghan Grguric (University of Guelph): Management of giant hogweed using chemical and manual control options with a focus on seed viability after regeneration. Results of this study showed that if you cut giant hogweed at the base of the stem when it's developing seeds, it won't come back!



Photo credited to Upper Canada College

BLITZING AWAY

On July 15-16 2017, we celebrated our first-ever 24 hour BioBlitz — an event focused on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a given area and over a short timeframe. We had 48 species experts conduct scientific surveys and lead groups of all ages and experience to count the number of plants, animals and other organisms that could be found. A Kiwenzie, meaning ‘wise one’ in Anishinaabe, joined us from the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation and led a special walk-about. Over 200 people made more than 3000 observations of 969 species, with the Monarch Butterfly and American Goldfinch being the most commonly reported animals.

Nearly 350 species were newly documented for the property. As one of 35 BioBlitz events that took place across the country for Canada150, our totals contributed to the 39,759 observations made by 9,935 people from coast to coast to coast.

Photo (above): Jessica Middleton searching wetlands for frogs, salamanders and turtles during the Norval BioBlitz.



Photo by O. Abdulrahman

AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

From 2008 to 2017, many skilled volunteers collected data on bird migration each spring and fall at *rare*. Volunteers banded birds at the ECO Centre and Springbank Gardens and walked set routes weekly each season; counting birds seen or heard across various habitats from forests to meadows and along the Grand River. For over ten years, we have been fortunate to have a dedicated group of birders participate in this effort.

Thank you for sharing your skills with us!

Photo (left): Bill Wilson holding a Cedar Waxwing.

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Bill & Heather Wilson | Ross Dickson | Bill Handorf | Lisa Pachereva | Brett Fried |
| Marilyn Armstrong | Linda Dutka | Larry Hubble | John & Michelle Tomins | Georg Hentsch |
| Heather Bagge | Randy Fowler | Ruth Kroft | Rob Unruh | Erica Hentsch |
| Jason Bracey | David Gascoigne & Miriam Bauman | Anne McLagan | Claire Wehrle | Andy Steinberg |
| Emily Damstra | Gerrie Grainge | Dawn Miles | Tony Zammit | Bill Read |
| Marco & Donna DeBruin | Jerry Guenther | Barb & Glenn Mockford | Kevin Grundy | Omar Abdulrahman |
| | | Anna Muss | | |

WHAT'S AHEAD? ➔

Looking ahead for 2018, we will complete our triennial water monitoring program for the fifth time, collecting macroinvertebrate samples from creeks and wetlands on the *rare* reserve. The goal of this program is to collect long-term data to examine the ecological health of aquatic habitats at *rare*, and to inform management plans, restoration activities and future research projects. A new partnership with the School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability at the University of Waterloo will see a third-year class conduct their field course at *rare* in July, tackling invasive species challenges and monitoring the success of native tree plantings.

Finally, we are excited to lead the way for Waterloo Region in the 2018 City Nature Challenge. More than 60 cities around the world will take part in this friendly competition from April 27-30, to highlight biodiversity of species within cities worldwide.

Education

OUR GOAL: INGRAINING THE *CHAIN OF LEARNING* IN ALL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT *rare*

The *Chain of Learning*, which builds knowledge and a sense of wonder and excitement in everyone involved, from the most senior scientist to the youngest student, continues to grow at *rare* through the connection between research and education. In 2017, we invited scientists to share their knowledge in current research with children participating in summer *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) Camps, on topics as diverse as pollinators and pollination through native bee species and song sparrows, all the way to ambush bugs and other insects. Children were given the opportunity to participate in corresponding hands-on research and monitoring methods used by these researchers while learning about professional techniques, equipment — and careers!

We are particularly excited to share that *rare* has expanded the *Chain of Learning* beyond scientific research to highlight other

forms of inquiry, including Indigenous knowledge and history. This year, for the first time a Haudenauonee knowledge keeper was invited to share ways of knowing with children during Summer ECO Camp. Children were offered teachings on smudging, traditional plant medicines, the medicine wheel, two-row wampum, the three sisters garden, Mohawk language and sacred space, incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing and being into our land-based education programs. These changes were welcomed with great enthusiasm by parents and children alike.

Through fiscal 2017 *rare's* education department continued to build the *Chain of Learning*, adding additional grade levels to our Mirrored Research program to include the elementary level. The Benthic Invertebrate Monitoring program, a fun, research-based activity that explores small ground-dwelling critters in the sediment of

creeks and streams, was revised to include appropriate activities for grades 6-8, upon request from *rare* educators and elementary school teachers who would like to share this popular program with younger children. Elementary students were able to calculate estimates of ecosystem health based on samples they collected in the Grand River and analyzed, which demonstrates the cross-curriculum impact of our programs that touch many subjects including applied math.

Thanks to support from the International Plowing Match (1995 and 2012) Fund held at the Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation, smaller-size chest waders were acquired to allow younger grades safely to participate in hands-on water-based monitoring methods.

OUR GOAL: SPREADING THE ECO MOVEMENT ACROSS WATERLOO REGION AND THE GRAND RIVER WATERSHED

The *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) program has become so successful that the message of our unique approach to outdoor environmental education increasingly attracts new participant groups. This includes 804 new students from 10 schools that have not visited *rare* before.

Our impact extends across Waterloo Region and Wellington, with participants from all cities and townships. Besides school participants, the ECO program has also gained popularity with independent community groups, such as Grow Community Centre, Life with a Baby, and KW Humane Society. And whether kids can get to *rare* or not, the message of Every Child Outdoors continues to spread.

Photo (right): ECO Campers birding with citizen science.



Photo by E. Leslie



Photo by E. Leslie

“I like getting outdoors and being in tune with nature. I am really big into ornithology so I like seeing the birds. I think I learn better outside rather than inside because I am more comfortable outdoors.”

— Darwin Ingrao, age 9



Photo by E. Leslie

WHAT'S AHEAD?



As the coming year progresses, we plan on enriching current ECO programs and developing new school modules, working with Musagetes, members of the school boards and local Indigenous Peoples to determine both curricular and community needs.

In particular, we want to encourage repeat visits so that students gain a deeper understanding of all aspects of the work at *rare*, especially by pairing new Indigenous knowledge and Arts-based programs with the current science themed modules, demonstrating the richness that these different forms of inquiry provide and offering important and unique experiences for students as they create connections on the land at *rare* in different ways.

Reconciliation is important for all Canadians to engage in, and we look forward to contributing through meaningful programs that reflect the connection of Indigenous worldviews and histories of the lands, along with respect for traditional knowledge of the first stewards of these lands.

Thank you, volunteers!

Thank you to our wonderful *rare* volunteers! Volunteers at *rare* are valued and play an essential role in accomplishing our goals. We could not do what we do without your help and support. This year we had more volunteer hours contributed to *rare* than ever before! Every minute a volunteer contributes their unique skills, expertise and abilities, a direct contribution to *rare* and the community is made. Whether it is monitoring species, helping with administration, assisting with ECO programs, removing invasive species, weeding in the gardens, supporting events — and so much more — each of you are integral in protecting and stewarding the *rare* property.

Thank you for providing your helping hands to make an amazing impact this fiscal year at *rare*.

Photo (right): Our lovely foodbank garden volunteer, Laura Brown.



THANK YOU for the support of all participants, pledgers, sponsors, and volunteers who made the 2016 Walk & Run for *rare* possible. This annual, signature event for *rare* was able to raise just over \$38,000 in support of the *Turn the Map Green* campaign, ensuring 18,500 square meters of land is protected intact, in perpetuity. Teams supported five different *Turn the Map Green rare* locations — Blair Flats, the *rare* Every Child Outdoors (ECO) Centre, Cliffs & Alvars, Crabapple Fields and Wetlands.

Turn the Map Green is *rare*'s grassroots effort to ensure the protection of its first three properties, comprising of more than 900 acres of environmentally significant land. For as little as \$2/ square metre, parts of *rare* can be symbolically adopted, protecting the reserve and all the species that call *rare* home for future generations to come.

The 2018 date is set for **September 30** and we hope to see you there!

Thank you for your tremendous ongoing support!



Spring 2018 Updates

The “Sonic Sewer” of Urban Life

By Joy Roberts, Ph.D.

Almost a decade ago, world-renowned Canadian composer, Dr. R. Murray Schafer, spent time at *rare*, planning and hosting his Harbingers of Spring Sound Walk. As participants hiked *rare*'s trails, they encountered performances and sound installations that highlighted the sounds of the river, the forest and the cultural history of the area.

Schafer expressed his delight at the opportunity *rare* offers, on over 900 acres, to get away from what he calls the “sonic sewer” of urban life. “To have this natural setting so close to so many people, is very special and very important to protect,” he said. These sentiments led him to accept the invitation to become one of *rare*'s

International Ambassadors — people who represent important avenues for *rare*'s outreach around the world.

Considered the “father of acoustic ecology” — the study of the relationship between humans and their environment expressed in sound — Schafer has been concerned about the damaging effects of noise on people. The term “noise pollution” has been around for a long time; but Schafer expressed concern that we have become so conditioned to accept it that we expose ourselves, and especially our children, to constant health risks.

Schafer's music could be heard at *rare* again this past summer, along with that of composers Mark Sirett, Rupert Lang and

music inspired by some Indigenous beliefs including a Ute prayer, “Earth Teach Me” — all part of a choral Sound Walk, produced by Mark Vuorinen, Artistic Director of the Grand Philharmonic Choir.

Theatre director, Peter Sellars, is known to have said: “The purpose of art is to find a way to wake people up who are going through their lives sleepwalking and say: ‘Stop it. You can't walk past this. This is your life.’”

Perhaps no one has done more to help us do so than Dr. R. Murray Schafer. And in the ten years since his music first played in the *rare* landscape, the needs have only become more urgent. ■■



The Grand Philharmonic Choir performing at *rare*. Photo by T. Jarvis

Enjoy the Silence

By Jonas Hamberg, Ph.D. Candidate with the Conservation and Restoration Lab at the University of Waterloo

The *rare* Charitable Research Reserve is a destination for both humans and wildlife to experience nature, to reflect quietly and to re-energize. It's also an oasis in the otherwise unfortunately loud and rapidly expanding tri-city area. The *rare* reserve is perhaps most notably bisected by a busy road, but also surrounded by quarrying, construction and the busiest airline route in Canada. Noise — by definition unwanted sound — leaves no visible trace after its emission, but can still cause long-lasting damage to both humans and wildlife.

A quick look at a local real estate website shows 183 matches for ‘quiet’ in listings, but 0 for ‘loud.’ In Kitchener, the most common bylaw complaint is noise, growing from 2,068 complaints in 2002 to 3,783 in 2012. Noise pollution has been found to lead to sleep deprivation, cognitive impairment, tinnitus and stress in humans. As for wildlife, unnatural noise has been shown to cause stress, avoidance and changed behaviour by birds, and it negatively affects everything from bats to frogs to even fish. While there is some noise regulation for workers (e.g. Ontario OSHA regulation) and residential noise bylaws, there is generally no legal protection from noise for humans or wildlife in natural areas.

The good news is that since noise does not leave visible traces, improvement can be instant. Even when we cannot get at the source, there are natural ways to reduce the effect of noise. Trees and hedges have commonly been planted to reduce noise; and natural areas with more foliage tend to block noise better than parking-lots and other open human-made areas. Acquiring more natural areas and keeping them from being developed is also a method of pre-emptively creating quiet zones and buffers.

My hypothesis is that tall-grass prairies can be as effective as forests in blocking horizontally spreading noise, i.e. anything but airplanes, especially in late fall to spring when dead prairie plants are left standing and create more of a barrier than harvested and empty fields. So, noise abatement may be another great ecosystem service that tall-grass prairie provides, along with creating habitat for pollinators, sequestering carbon and many other benefits.

In the coming year I will be at *rare* testing this hypothesis by making noise and measuring it. If you see me, come up and say hi! I'm only trying to build a stronger case for conservation and restoration. If not, enjoy the silence where you can get it! ■■



Volunteer Profile: Erica Shelley

By Tom Woodcock, *rare Planning Ecologist*

Before becoming a beekeeper (apiarist), Erica Shelley travelled a different path. Originally from Mesa, Arizona, she attended Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and then obtained a Ph.D. from Oregon Health Sciences University. She taught university courses such as Microbiology and Physiology at the University of Toronto and University of Waterloo, and homeschooled her three boys. Then, during a homeschooling field trip in 2010, they saw an observation hive, and she became hooked on honey bees — and the notion of free honey! Straight away she ordered two hives.

Erica started her own company, Best for Bees, to spread knowledge of healthy beekeeping, starting small with a few courses each year and one hive-building workshop. Today the business has expanded

to include multiple workshops each year, a tech transfer program, a school program with an observation hive, management of small apiaries and humane removal of bees from structures. This year she is offering fewer courses in order to focus on other bee related projects, including writing a book.

“My beekeeping philosophy is about balancing nature with the health of the hive. When bees are treated as an agricultural product, they become more susceptible to diseases and environmental problems. By purposely bringing honey bees back to their more natural state we can increase their overall health.”

Since 2015, Erica has kept two hives at the *rare* Community Gardens to help with pollination and education. Most of the honey produced is left with the hive or used to help supplement weaker hives.

“We have several challenges for our pollinators in Canada, and the government has developed a pollinator plan which still needs some work. As one pollinator destroying chemical is outlawed, farmers start using others that are equally detrimental. The other big challenge is urban sprawl: as cities expand, bees lose habitat. I sincerely think that our bees would not be in danger if there was simply more food for them. We have a tendency to plant non-native flowers or grow lawns that provide zero food for our pollinators. Farms only have one or two crops that bloom for a short time or that don’t provide pollinator food at all. We need to find a healthy balance between keeping healthy honey bees, respecting our native pollinators and having food for all the people in Canada.”



Photo by J. Phippen

rare Goes to Washington

By Jenna Quinn, *Program Scientist — Research Priorities, Partnerships & Monitoring*

In January 2018, Allie Abram, Ecological Monitoring Technician, and I traveled to Washington, D.C. for a meeting with the North American Butterfly Monitoring Network (NABMN). What a treat to talk butterflies in the midst of a cold blustery winter!

NABMN is a collective of butterfly monitoring programs in North America, including data collectors, data users and informatics specialists directed by Leslie Ries at Georgetown University. The group shares data, standardized protocols and lessons learned to support their ultimate goal of expanding program participation and developing shared approaches to data management, visualization and analysis.

Another benefit of NABMN is management of a data collection system for butterfly monitoring projects called PollardBase. The name comes from Ernie Pollard, a British lepidopterist (butterfly scientist) who developed walking butterfly survey protocol in the

1970s. Approximately 15 projects across North America, including *rare* — the only one in Canada — use the Pollard Walk method to monitor butterflies, to enter, track and share data, as well as to encourage and communicate with volunteer citizen scientists.

The meeting was an exciting chance to discuss the challenges and successes of nearly 10 years of butterfly monitoring at *rare*, and to look ahead as we trailblaze for other future Canadian projects. Butterfly monitoring at *rare* began in 2006 to document local butterfly abundance and diversity. We have great opportunities to use collected data on a local scale — informing best management practices right here at *rare*, combining our data with that of other organizations to gain a better understanding of large-scale trends in butterfly populations across North America. As *raresites* grows in Waterloo and Wellington Regions, these new resources will help us engage more citizen scientists in our butterfly monitoring program and scale up our monitoring efforts with relative ease.





Male Buffleheads in flight. Photo by M. Weissmann

NATURE SIGHTINGS:

#rareMoment

Nature Notes

By Bill Wilson & Ross Dickson, Community Volunteers

Thanks to a suggestion by Heather Bagg, mid-day “sky watches” were organized for late October and early November to scope the sky for GOLDEN EAGLES. November 7 at the Confluence was exceptional: Ross Dickson, Jerry Guenther and Bill Wilson tallied 6 GOLDEN EAGLES between 11:10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Wilson had a 7th around 3:30 p.m.

DUNLIN, a spring and fall migrant through Waterloo Region was present at the Confluence October 13 to November 12 in small numbers; however, on November 1 and 2, Jerry Guenther and Bill Wilson observed 43 foraging in the mud among the cobbles.

Jason Bracey and Larry Hubble reported 68 SANDHILL CRANES, 84 AMERICAN PIPITS, and 4 RUSTY BLACKBIRDS at *rare* during the annual Fall Count November 5. A SHORT-EARED OWL found January 17 near the Springbank Community Gardens by Ross Dickson was a one-day wonder.

Autumn waterfowl sightings at the Confluence included a GREATER WHITE FRONTED GOOSE October 23 by Bill Wilson and 5 HOODED MERGANSERS November 21 by Cambridge birder, Nathan Hood. Mike Weissmann watched Drake BUFFLEHEADS from *rare*’s River Trail November 10.

In late fall, the first sighting of TRUMPETER SWANS was December 10

near the islands at the *rare* cliffs by Andy Kelly. By late December and early January as many as 48 TRUMPETER SWANS (December 30) and 8 MUTE SWANS (December 15) were present. Sightings were reported by several Linear Trail walkers and Jerry Guenther, Don Thomas and Bill Wilson.

Ice jams extending upstream past the Confluence throughout much of January were unprecedented in the memory of Preston “old timers.” Foraging and roosting habitat (open water) for wintering waterfowl was significantly reduced and, for some periods of time, eliminated. Nevertheless, pockets of open water would, at times, provide habitat for roosting. In the early morning January 12, Bill Wilson counted 224 COMMON GOLDENEYE rafting in the baylet and on the evening January 27, Jerry Guenther counted 109 in a tight raft in the outflow of the Speed River. Ice blocks attracted a locally uncommon RED FOX photographed January 28 by Bill Wilson.

Surveillance of the Confluence area on the chilly morning of December 31 by Bill Wilson produced un-common winter sightings of a RED-SHOULDERED HAWK and a PEREGRINE FALCON each with prey, and a GLAUCOUS GULL.

A *rare* trail camera captured a COYOTE at 3:37 a.m. December 24.

Read the BOBOLINK multi-year monitoring report compiled by Bill Wilson, found on *rare*’s website under the RESEARCH tab.



Broken ice piles in Grand River channel January 20 at 8:11 a.m. Photo by B. Wilson

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*



A coyote at night. Photo by Trail Cam

HAVE SOME *rare* FINDS OF YOUR OWN?



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

Thank you to our 2016-2017 supporters

The following individuals, foundations, government agencies, organizations and businesses helped *rare* make an impact and work toward its vision in the last fiscal year (September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017). For a full list of all donors — considered Founders — to *A Natural Investment*, please see the list in our 2014/2015 report, available on request or online. As noted below, we welcome corrections so that the permanent donor wall, to be established at the end of the campaign, reflects you appropriately.

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In honour of

Joyce MacCallum
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Larry Shantz
Nick St. Pierre Beke

Notes

We ask that you please take the time to review your name on the list. Although every effort has been made to record it properly sometimes mistakes happen and we want to get it right. If you do see an error in your listing please let us know by contacting rare@rareites.org or 519-650-9336.

Please also note that we have a number of donors currently listed as anonymous — if you think your name should appear on this list please let us know.

**Denotes Bedrock Club
Monthly Donor**

* Deceased

Year at a glance

OUR PROGRAMS & EVENTS ENGAGED
+9,000
CHILDREN, YOUTH & COMMUNITY MEMBERS



Including: **1,815** *Every Child Outdoors* (ECO) program participants from **34** schools (not including the **170** youth who participated in March Break and Summer ECO Camps), **95+** community gardeners, **900+** community event participants including **200** bioblitzers and **178** walkers and runners at the 2016 Walk & Run for *rare*.



+260 contributed
more than
VOLUNTEERS

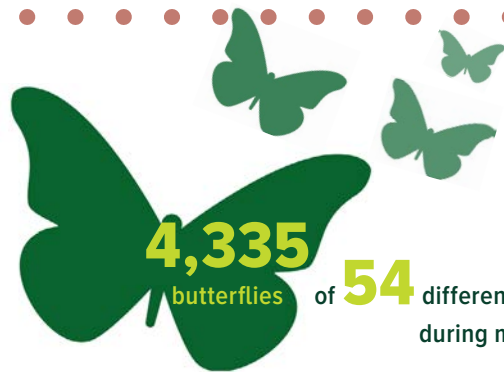
5,000+
HOURS OF SUPPORT

Including: **30+** volunteer groups assisting with land management and the Springbank Farm gardens, **2,600+** hours by citizen scientists and **270** hours of lent hands at ECO programs.



5,000 pounds
of fresh, organic
produce donated to
local food banks

**BIG HARVEST AT
SPRINGBANK
FOOD BANK GARDENS**



4,335
butterflies of **54** different species counted
during monitoring season

18 NEW OR
ONGOING
RESEARCH PROJECTS



362 NEW SPECIES
DOCUMENTED AT *rare*

5 PAPERS
PUBLISHED



43,064m²
turned green

for the
+3,700
species that call
rare home

8 INVASIVE
PLANT SPECIES
MANAGED

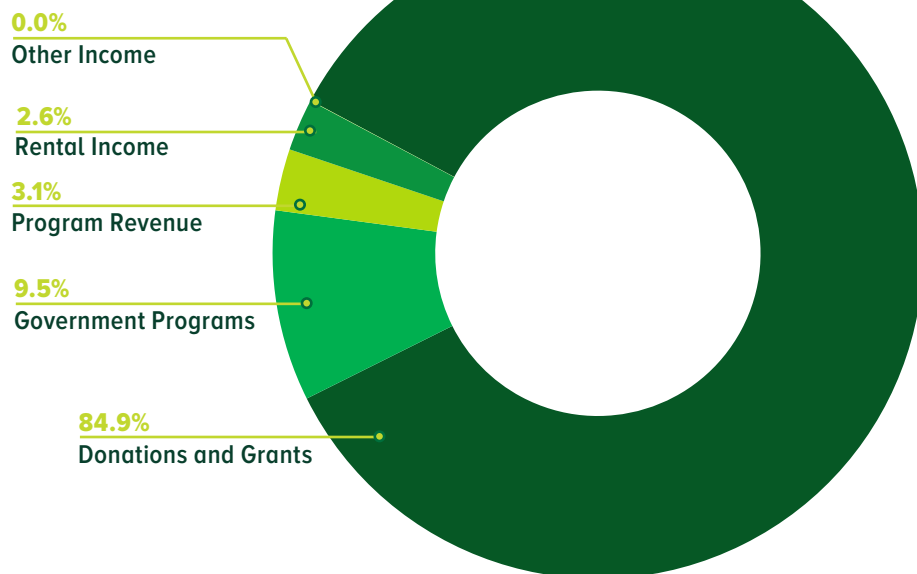


23 NATIVE
PLANT SPECIES
PLANTED



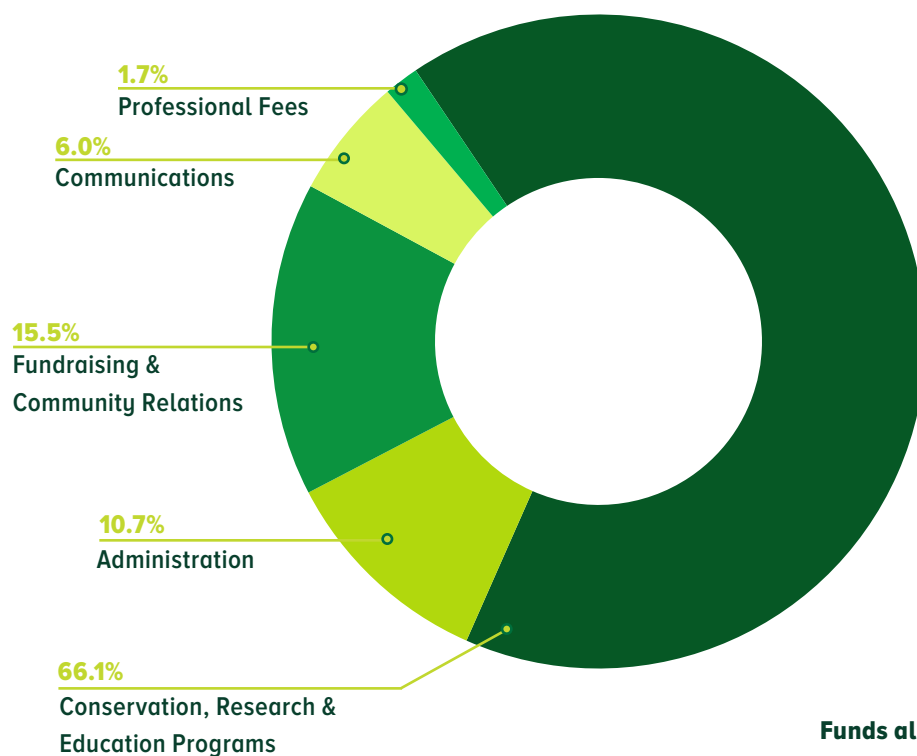
Financial highlights

Year ended August 31, 2017



STATEMENT OF REVENUE¹

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Donations and Grants | \$1,517,898 |
| Government Programs | \$169,560 |
| Program Revenue | \$54,755 |
| Rental Income | \$46,275 |
| Other Income | \$253 |
| Total | \$1,788,741 |



STATEMENT OF EXPENSES

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Conservation, Research & Education Programs ² | \$804,382 |
| Administration | \$130,810 |
| Fundraising & Community Relations | \$188,980 |
| Communications | \$72,596 |
| Professional Fees | \$20,914 |
| Total | \$1,217,682 |

Funds allocated to expenses in the next fiscal year **\$571,060³**

Notes:

1. Inclusive of Operating and Capital Revenues
2. Includes cost of amortization (\$200,104)
3. Allocation towards anticipated future expense in following fiscal year

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Current Assets (Cash and Receivables) | \$827,368 |
| Capital Assets: Land | \$5,957,174 |
| Capital Assets: Buildings, FF&E, etc. | \$3,266,723 |
| Current Liabilities (Payables, etc.) | (\$434,334) |
| Mortgage Payable | (\$4,160,600) |
| Total Net Assets | \$5,456,331 |

Leadership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Keith Ainsworth, Chair of the Board; Electrical Engineer; retired CEO, COM DEV International
Gerald Achtymichuk, Family Physician
Peter Krause, President, Krause Corporate Solutions
Brian McGee, Chartered Accountant; Partner, Zeifman & Company LLP
Angela Tsementzis, Architect; B.E.S. B.Arch, OAA, LEED AP

INTERNATIONAL AMBASSADORS

David Agro, Architect; conservationist
Ljubodrag Andric, Photographer; latest work Visible Cities
Michael Barnstijn, retired Partner, RIM; Philanthropist; Musagetes Foundation
David Buckland, Founder, Cape Farewell www.capefarewell.com; Director of Art from a Changing Arctic
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Severn Cullis-Suzuki, Environmental Activist; Speaker; Television host; Author
Ron Dembo, Founder, Zerofootprint
Louise MacCallum, retired Software Engineer; Philanthropist; Musagetes Foundation
R. Murray Schafer, Composer; Educator; Environmentalist
Sheila O'Donovan, Founder, Lisaard House
Jane Urquhart, OC; Author
Frances Westley, Chair of Social Innovation Generation
Morden Yolles, Multi-award-winning Structural Engineer; Restaurateur; Photographer

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EAC)

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Jorge L. Hurtado-Gonzales, Data and Field Specialist, Environment and Climate Change Canada
John MacDonald, Archaeologist
Stephen Murphy, Professor and Associate Chair, Undergraduate Studies, Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo
Mark Pomeroy, Fisheries Biologist, Stantec Consulting Ltd.
Don Russell, Qalipu Mi'kmaq/Acadian French Artist
Bill Wilson, retired Teacher; Naturalist; Bird Monitoring Coordinator, *rare* Charitable Research Reserve
Brett Woodman, Terrestrial and Wetland Biologist, Natural Resource Solutions Inc.
Tony Zammit, Aquatic and Terrestrial Ecologist, Grand River Conservation Authority

EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (EDAC)

Jason Bracey, Teacher, Department Head of Geography, Southwood Secondary School
Colinda Clyne, Curriculum Leader for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education, Upper Grand District School Board
Louise Dawe, retired Teacher; Community volunteer
Christopher Giesler, Teacher, Southwood Secondary School
Dan Schneider, Outdoor Educator and Naturalist, GRCA, retired

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David Lieberman, Associate Professor, John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Design, University of Toronto
John Straube, Associate Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Waterloo

EASTERN COMMA COMMITTEE

Shawn Van Sluys, Executive Director, Musagetes
Karen Houle, poet & philosopher, University of Guelph
Elwood Jimmy, Musagetes Program Coordinator

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Thiam Lim, former *rare* Board Member
Keith Martin, CPA CA, HM Advisors
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David Mitten, retired; Executive Director, Siding and Window Dealers Association of Canada
Leslie Pearson, Community Volunteer, Oakville
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Simon Poladian, Owner, Eagle Towing Equipment
Joy Roberts, Ph.D., Board Chair, Musagetes Foundation; Founder and Director, Eramosa Institute
Paul Ross, Partner, KPMG
Irene Schmidt-Adeney, Writer, Ayr News
Hugh Thompson, CEO, Thompson Centre for Art and Design

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Ken Dance, President, Dance Environmental Inc.
Valerie Hall (see previous)
Joy Roberts (see previous)

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Graham Buck, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Vince Deschamps, Midwestern Ontario Program Director, Nature Conservancy of Canada
Paul General, Six Nations Lands & Resources
Chris Gosselin, retired
Kate Hagerman, Manager of Environmental Planning and Sustainability, Region of Waterloo
Peter Krause, *rare* Board of Directors
Dr. Greg C. Michalenko, Grand River Environmental Network
Dave Montgomery, Premier Environmental Services Inc.
Krista Long, Ontario Farmland Trust
John Prescott, Nature Guelph
Josh Shea, Waterloo Stewardship Council
Roger Suffling, Waterloo Region Nature
Tony Zammit (see previous)

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Colleen Mercer Clarke, Coastal Ecologist, Landscape Architect, University of Waterloo
Alan Morgan, Professor Emeritus, Earth and Environmental Sciences, University of Waterloo

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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 acknowledges and offers gratitude to all the original stewards of the land in which *rare* resides, within the Haldimand Treaty, spanning six miles on either side of the Grand River from source to mouth.

We would like to say Nia:wen (thank you) to the Haudenauonee Peoples of Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation for sharing their treaty lands with us. We acknowledge the ancestral land holders, the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation of the Anishinaabek Peoples by saying Miigwetch (thank you).

Lastly, we acknowledge those Indigenous peoples who live, work and learn in the urban landscape around us such as the Métis, Inuit and other status and non-status First Nations People.

As a community it is crucial that we honour and uphold our role as treaty people by caring for the land and all of its inhabitants including the plants, the animals, the water, the fire, each other and our ancestors. Please keep the land and its inhabitants in your minds and hearts as you enjoy your time with us at *rare*.



American Rubyspot Damselfly Female. Photo by J. Dillon & J. Moser

“The organization has a bold vision and is on its way to becoming Canada’s leading environmental institute, bringing together the brightest minds in ecological and cultural research with artists, authors and the broader community.”

— Dr. John English
Historian, professor, politician
rare Campaign and Community Cabinet Member

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time at *rare* and appreciated meeting so many volunteers. This organization has a very important role to play on the world stage and I intend to do my part to help it achieve its vision.”

— Severn Cullis-Suzuki
Environmental Activist
rare International Ambassador

“I want to say thanks. Thanks from all of us. This sort of thing helps everyone, whether they know it or not. So thanks. And congratulations.”

— Jane Jacobs, now deceased
Urban Planner and Environmental Activist



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Bluebird. Photo by A. Gray



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