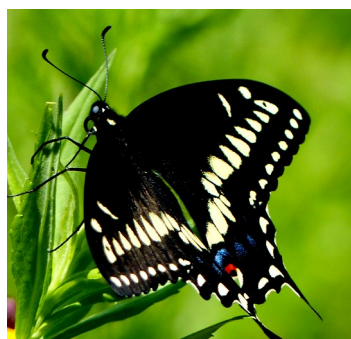


THE THAMES TALBOT LAND TRUST

TaTTLe^r





Black Swallowtail by Ric Symmes

Richard Ivey 1925 - 2019

On December 28, 2019, the Thames Talbot Land Trust (TTLT) lost a cherished friend and patron with the passing of Richard (Dick) Ivey. Because they were an inseparable team, any testament to Richard cannot help but be one to Beryl as well. It would be difficult to overstate their contributions, not only to conservation and TTLT, but in so many other philanthropic areas.

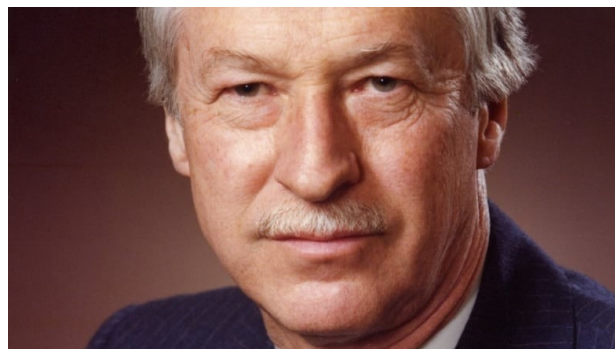


Photo courtesy of Ivey Business School

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Since the inception of the Trust, the Iveys have been its principal patrons. From initial start-up costs to staffing, land securement and property stewardship, their generous financial support allowed TTLT to take enormous strides forward.

As important as their financial assistance was their moral support. A fledgling organization could have no better stamp of credibility than the endorsement of Richard and Beryl Ivey. In recognition of their crucial initial support, it was the Iveys who cut the cake during the Trust's Inaugural Evening celebration in October of 2000.

Perhaps the most momentous example of their commitment to TTLT occurred in 2005. The TTLT Board recognized the importance of having a reserve of capital – a revolving internal loan fund – that could be deployed quickly to take advantage of conservation opportunities when they arose. Might the Iveys entertain a request for a landmark donation to initiate the fund?

Again, Richard and Beryl came through. On Friday, October 14, 2005, conservation history was made when the Iveys announced the *Ivey Natural Lands Legacy*, a \$1 million gift to TTLT's new Opportunities Fund. Ever the business person, Richard required that any expenditure from the fund be matched dollar for dollar by outside sources, a stipulation that the Trust has successfully met and exceeded over the years.

In their later years, the Iveys moved to Toronto to be closer to family, but they continued to follow the work of the Trust. Upon Beryl's passing in 2007, she left a substantial bequest to TTLT to support the securement of properties in the Skunk's Misery area. Located in Southwest Middlesex not far from her childhood home in Kent County, this Carolinian forest complex is one of the Trust's priority landscapes. In 2015, a portion of this bequest was used to secure Beryl Ivey Woods. While he was not able to attend the dedication in person, Richard did convey his delight in having Beryl so honoured.

Continued page 2.

Richard Ivey 1925 - 2019 Cont.

In 2016, Richard helped push TTLT's \$1.6 million Hawk Cliff Campaign over the top with another substantial gift to the Opportunities Fund, thereby ensuring the Trust remained well positioned to take advantage of new opportunities in the coming years.

As late as the weeks immediately preceding his passing, Richard followed with interest the Trust's current Vision 20/20 Campaign, making a generous unsolicited contribution. The 2019 purchases of Sitler Woods and the Bebenssee Tract extension are the most recent examples of acquisitions made possible by the Opportunities Fund.

TTLT members were on

hand for the Celebration of Life ceremony held at the Ivey School of Business on February 1, 2020. There, we joined many others as family members, friends and associates shared recollections of Richard's remarkable life and honoured his contributions to our community. Following the formal program, we were pleased to share our gratitude for Richard's support of TTLT directly with his children.

Clearly, the Ivey chapter of TTLT's history is a storied one, and the Trust would not be where it is today without their support. While Beryl, and now Richard, have left our midst, the *Ivey Natural Lands Legacy* will live on forever.

- Bernie VanDenBelt



Richard and Beryl Ivey played a pivotal role in the securement of nature reserves in the Skunk's Misery area.

Species Spotlight

Skunk Cabbage – An Early Spring Wetland Indicator

As the name implies, Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) is a foul-smelling, low-growing plant with large leaves. It is found in deciduous swamps and along seepage slopes, springs and streams from Nova Scotia to Ontario and south to Tennessee.

The unique flowers emerge in late winter or early spring, well before other flowers. The leaves emerge later, after pollination. The flowers are produced on a spadix that is contained within a spathe 10-15 cm tall and mottled purple in colour. The flowers have the unique ability to generate their own heat, reaching temperatures of up to 15-30°C above air temperature to melt their way through frozen ground. Skunk Cabbage is pollinated by early carrion-feeding insects (scavenging flies, stoneflies and bees) that also emerge at this time, attracted by its foul smell and warmth. It reproduces by hard, pea-sized seeds

that fall in the mud and are carried away by animals or flood waters. The plant is not poisonous to the touch but the putrid smell that is given off when the leaf is broken likely discourages animals from nib-

bling or disturbing it and the soft muddy wetland habitat it grows in. The plant is well anchored into the earth by roots that contract after growing, pulling the stem deeper into the mud. Each year the plant grows deeper into the earth, so older plants are almost impossible to dig up or be washed away in floods. The leaves decay in early summer, essentially dissolving into a black, slimy substance that soaks back into the ground.

Dried or cooked Skunk Cabbage was used extensively by various native peoples as a medicinal plant, seasoning, and magical talisman. The roots are considered toxic and the raw leaves can burn the mouth because they contain crystals of calcium oxalate. Hungry Black Bears and Snapping Turtles are known to eat the foliage occasionally, when little else is available after they come out of hibernation.

Skunk Cabbage is a fascinating plant, a harbinger of spring, that deserves a second look.

- Cathy Quinlan, Terrestrial Biologist



Skunk Cabbage in Westminster Ponds by Cathy Quinlan



Skunk Cabbage leaves emerging and flower still visible by Cathy Quinlan

President's Message

As for many of you, the past few weeks have presented multiple challenges for TTLT as the COVID-19 outbreak unfolds. Our previous board meeting was held online, using the Zoom platform, as were other recent meetings. Our ability to adapt typifies the flexible approach with which the Thames



Red Maple leaf by Dave Wake

Talbot Land Trust pursues its conservation goals. No doubt, further adjustments lie ahead for all of us. I am now able to look back on my two-year term as TTLT President. It confirmed what I knew

already. The Thames Talbot Land Trust is its people: our staff, volunteers, members, and supporters, all dedicated to the preservation and nurturing of natural areas.

We recently lost our most generous benefactor, Dick Ivey, who made our activities possible from early on with the creation of our Opportunities Fund, used to purchase high priority lands as they become available on short notice. This fund has been pivotal in the acquisition of many properties. We were saddened also with the loss of Pat Dewdney, official botanist of Newport Forest and dedicated contributor to our conservation goals. Our Executive Director of ten years, Suzanne McDonald, retired at the end of 2019, leaving a legacy of efficient fundraising and wisdom. A new employment opportunity called away our former Vice President, Chris Leys. These departures posed special challenges as we were beginning the process of creating and implementing our new strategic plan.

Fortunately, our Conservation Property Manager, Daria Koscinski, has been of invaluable assistance in bridging the gap, making my extended task as President enormously easier. Rebecca Launchbury has become our skilled bookkeeper, as if her

other tasks with school programs and field activities were not enough. Our administrative managers, Ashley Turner and Colin Johnson, have helped keep the ship afloat by taking care of our daily interactions with the outside world.

I'm also privileged to have shared my status as Officer with our gifted Treasurer, Adrienne James, and with other talented people such as Dave Wake, Kim McCabe, Sarah Hodgkiss, and Kaitlin Richardson, who is anxiously poised to take over the reins.

Last but not least is an army of dedicated volunteers, too many to list exhaustively. Our committee chairs, Cathy Quinlan, Kaitlin Richardson, Bernie VanDenBelt, Erin Zukiwski, Ric Symmes, and Dave Wake were aided by a dedicated cohort of board directors and other volunteers. I must mention perennial contributors such as Stan Caveney, Muriel Andreae and Donald Craig, who are always ready to face the next task at hand.

To this I must add our generous supporters, who contribute land or money. A special salute goes to our monthly donors, who ensure a predictable and steady flow of income, and I encourage all our members to join that important circle.

To all, I offer my heartfelt gratitude.

We are in good shape!

- André Lachance



Some TTLT staff and volunteers at a workshop in 2018

The Thames Talbot Land Trust and the COVID-19 pandemic: a time to be generous

As long-time supporters of Thames Talbot Land Trust, you are committed to our mission and goals. At this time of crisis, we are working hard to deliver that mission. We continue to evaluate and process land acquisitions, develop property management plans, and organize events (both virtual and in-person, once conditions allow). However, as you can imagine, the current restrictions have affected us as well. We have projects and grants on hold, fundraising events that had to be deferred or cancelled, and funders whose priorities have shifted towards health care at this time. We remain in good shape, but expect decreases in some revenue streams this year, which might affect our ability to deliver the full range of programs we had hoped for.

Likewise, you and your family may be experiencing unprecedented pressures, financially and emotionally. For many of our donors, supporting us at this time is not possible. We are thinking of you in your time of need as well.

For supporters who are in a position to donate, we would greatly appreciate your additional support to help us through these difficult times. Your generous gift will help us remain in a strong position to deliver our mission once the worst of this crisis is over. More than ever, people will need nature for healing and recovery. Please donate online at www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca or send your cheque to the address on page 8.

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are subject to postponement or cancellation depending on the status of the COVID-19 epidemic. Please see the "Upcoming Events" page on our website (www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca) to view the status of each event and to RSVP.

Spring Gardening at the Auzins Community Wildflower Garden

Multiple dates including Tuesday, May 26th & Friday, June 19th

Hawk Cliff Woods

The Auzins Community Wildflower Garden serves as a demonstration site for native plant gardening as well as a source of seeds for interested community members who want to grow native plants for their own gardens. We are looking for help with garden maintenance, including weeding, cleaning up last year's plants, mulching, clearing the trail, and replanting as needed. Feel free to drop in anytime between 10 am and 2 pm, or stay the whole time.



Gardening by TLT staff

PASSPORT TO NATURE

Passport to Nature is a series of free events hosted by TLT and its volunteers. Pre-registration is required.

More information about each event is available at www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca

Butterflies and Bugs

Saturday, June 13th, 1 pm - 3 pm

@ Newport Forest

Discover more about bugs, butterflies and other insects with Stan Caveney, enthusiastic entomologist and naturalist, while hiking at Newport Forest.



Praying mantis by Stan Caveney

Yoga

Saturday, June 20th, 8:30 am or 10 am

@ Hawk Cliff Woods

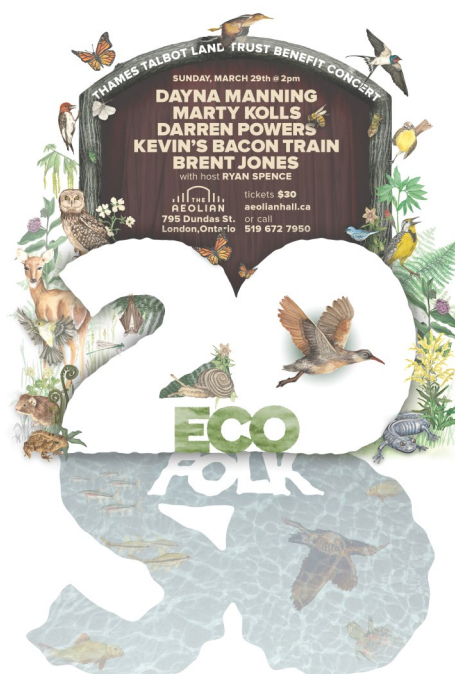
Yoga has many benefits to the mind, body and soul. Nature offers similar benefits so why not combine yoga with nature? Join Leigh Shand, Certified Ayurvedic Yoga Therapist, Lifestyle Consultant, Holistic Practitioner and nature lover, for a 60-minute yoga practice at either 8:30 am or 10:00 am. Please bring your own mat, comfortable exercise clothing and a reusable water bottle. No experience required. Namaste.

Eco Folk 2020

Sunday, October 25th 2020

Aeolian Hall, London

The Eco Folk Benefit Concert has been postponed from its original date to October 25th 2020 due to the COVID-19 virus. All of the performers originally scheduled for March 29th are available for the new October date. Mark the new date on your calendars. See you in the fall!



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

An easy way to stay up to date on all things TLT is to follow us on our various social media platforms.

If you have photos from any of our properties or events, please don't forget to tag us or send them our way!



@THAMESTALBOTLANDTRUST



@THAMESTALBOT



@THAMESTALBOT

Herp Helpers Workshop

It's a summer evening. The sun has just set, and there's a slight breeze. You're ready. You've got your rain boots on, your clipboard and papers. You walk to the edge of a pond, pen clicked and at the ready. "Glunk. Glunk, glunk." Ah yes, it's the sweet music of a Green Frog, not unlike the sound of a plucked banjo string. "Peep. Peep." Could it be? A Spring Peeper has joined the chorus! As you revel in the frog pond song, you furiously jot down the GPS coordinates, the species identified, the weather and habitat conditions, etc. and without even knowing it, you've completed your frog survey.

It's a new day. The sun is shining but hasn't reached its full peak. You've got your walking shoes on, safety vest, clipboard and papers. You start out on your pre-determined route. Lo and behold, you see a 2-ft long Eastern Ribbonsnake basking on the side of the road! You take a picture - *click click* - and record all the vital information. You continue and find a myriad of snakes, frogs and turtles, some alive, some dead. You record the information and move on to the cover board. You find the board and slowly lift it, cautious not to frighten any creatures that may be underneath. Oh.My.Goodness. Two Spotted Salamanders! You record the information and finish your surveying.

The day is done. You're a citizen scientist now. As you

tuck yourself into bed, you send a silent thanks to TTLT, for none of this would have been possible without their Amphibian and Reptile Survey Workshop Series.

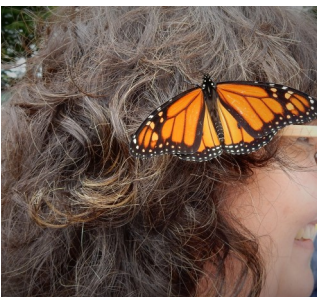
- Darby Alderson

Are you interested in becoming a citizen scientist? Stay tuned for TTLT's upcoming Amphibian and Reptile Workshop Series!



Spotted salamander by Daria Koscinski

Passport to Nature



Monarch release by André Lachance

What do yoga, photography and knitting all have in common?

They all take part outside as part of our Passport to Nature program.

Bombarded by a wave of scientific articles linking human physical and mental health to time spent in nature, we at TTLT looked to create additional opportunities for people to enjoy the outdoors.

Whether it be hiking, meditating, watching wildlife, or just soaking up the rays with a good book, everybody has a reason to love the outdoors. We created this program to find fun activities on our nature reserves so that people can understand why it is important to conserve the limited natural areas that remain in southern Ontario.

"The idea is to get people outside enjoying nature, along with the benefits to mental and physical health. The more people enjoy nature, the greater the desire to conserve it" explains Ric Symmes, chair of TTLT's Passport to Nature Committee.

The activities range from hikes led by naturalists on flowers, butterflies or trees to an outdoor knitting circle.

After the success of the first year's program, we simply had to run it again this year. All of the events are free and are

limited to about 20 people so that there is a more engaging experience.

The new series of events is scheduled to start in May and run throughout the year. Check out all the events and sign up at www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca under the "Passport to Nature" tab.

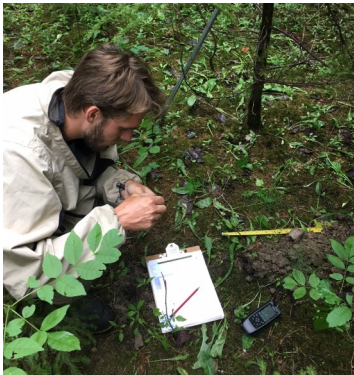
Please note that events may be modified or deferred in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Colin Johnson



Yoga at Meadowlily Nature Preserve by Erin Zukowski

The Importance of Land Trusts in the Modern Era of Conservation



Ecosystem monitoring

being. Canada currently has a long way to go – only about 11% of the nation's land area is currently protected. Even when national and provincial parks around the world are combined, these protected areas are insufficient to sustain global biodiversity (Kamal et al., 2015).

Conservation at the federal and provincial levels and even, to some extent, by municipalities and conservation authorities is largely at the mercy of our politicians. Land trusts offer a more stable model of biological conservation for several reasons.

First, they have a *local focus* – they target small but locally significant areas and protect species and habitats that may be overlooked on a nationwide scale. In Canada, close to 99% of protected land is located in the sparsely populated northern portions of the country. Without a doubt, this land is worthy of protection in perpetuity, but Canada's biodiversity is not concentrated in the north but in the south. The most biologically diverse regions of the country, such as Ontario's Carolinian Zone, are some of the least protected. Land trusts fill a substantial conservation gap in these biologically diverse regions.

Second, land trusts maintain a mandate focused on *conservation* above all other priorities – they are typically volunteer-run and reliant on donations from conservation-minded individuals, which makes them less likely to set aside conservation objectives in favor of optimizing the visitor experience. Land trusts do not see their properties as generators of revenue but as protected spaces above all else.

In January of 2019, in the face of accelerating environmental change and continued destruction of natural habitats around the world, the Convention on Biological Diversity released a statement asserting that 30% of the planet needs to be protected by 2030 in order to sustain biodiversity, slow mass extinctions and minimize the impacts of climate change on the natural environment and human well-being.

Third, the focus of land trusts is not only to protect large core habitats, but the *linkages and adjacent features* that support these habitats. Many national and provincial parks exist in isolation with no objective to protect features that connect them to the surrounding landscape.

Finally, land trusts are better suited to *engaging the public* in meaningful conservation activities – whereas national and provincial governments often retain professionals to perform conservation activities, land trusts rely on volunteers from local communities.

I have a hypothesis: because of their local focus, prioritization of conservation over visitor experience and reliance on volunteers and donations, land trusts protect more species per dollar spent than national and provincial protected areas. Statistics supporting this theory are difficult, if not impossible, to come by. However, a visit to a local land trust property and a look around at the diversity of flora and fauna protected in these small areas is convincing. As we approach our deadline for conserving a third of the planet's surface over the next decade, the contribution of land trusts to achieving this objective cannot be overlooked.

- Will Van Hemessen

References:

Kamal, S., M. Grodzinska-Jurczak and G. Brown. 2015. Conservation on private land: a review of global strategies with a proposed classification system. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 58 (4), pp. 576-597.



Native plant gardening at Hawk Cliff Woods



Butterfly and bug education at Meadowlily Nature Reserve



Building a board walk at Joany's Woods

Remembering Pat Dewdney 1942 - 2020

On March 12, 2020, TTLT lost a dear friend and ardent supporter with the passing of Pat Dewdney. Born in Brighton, England, Pat went on to study English at Western University. After marrying, she and her husband, Kee, moved to Michigan where Pat studied Library Science. Upon moving back to London in 1968, she worked for the London library system concluding her tenure there as Director of Community Relations for the London Public Library. Pat then went on to earn her PhD and subsequently became a UWO faculty member in the Department of Library Science.

In the year 2000, now retired, Pat and Kee purchased a 110-acre property near Wardsville they named Newport Forest in honour of the family that once farmed there. There they embarked upon an ambitious plan of forest restoration as well as an all-taxa biological inventory of the property that has since catalogued approximately 2500 species.

As a well-trained amateur botanist, Pat had an intimate knowledge of the diversity of plant species, particularly flowers, thriving at Newport. Jane Bowles, a former TTLT director and renowned botanist, conducted many botanical forays at Newport Forest along with Pat. Jane found her to be an attentive and talented student of botany and thoroughly enjoyed her company.

In 2007, Pat and Kee donated their much-loved property to the Land Trust to ensure it would be managed for conservation in perpetuity. However, they remained its principal stewards, and continued their work with the assistance of a wide circle of friends and associates. They chronicled their efforts through an electronic newsletter



Pat Dewdney by Jane Bowles

entitled Newport Forest Bulletin. In recognition of their remarkable conservation efforts, the Dewdneys were recipients of a Conservation Award from Nature London in 2018.

Any outing at Newport Forest would not be complete without a time of fellowship at the "Nook" in the shade of a mighty Black Maple. The Nook was where light refreshments were served to participants after innumerable field trips at Newport Forest—general nature hikes, or specialized hikes to survey butterflies in the summer or fungi in the fall.

For many of us TTLT folk, a lasting memory of Pat will be of her as our charming and hospitable host during such gatherings. Conversations at the Nook were always lively and informed, often under the close watch of a raccoon overhead in the tree.

Pat moved around the group plying us with her delicious home-baked snacks and cold drinks. She was always fascinated and delighted on hearing what the visitors had discovered.

Despite health challenges over the years, Pat continued to visit Newport Forest regularly with Kee, often working near the Nook while Kee ventured further afield. They remained gracious hosts to the many visitors to the property, including those who came each spring to view the spectacular stand of Virginia Bluebells. Pat will be missed dearly by the wide community of naturalists that had come to know and respect her over the years but will live on in our hearts and through her beloved Newport Forest.

- Bernie VanDenBelt and Stan Caveney



Bluebell flowers by Dave Wake

The Thames Talbot Land Trust Annual General Meeting

**Wednesday
June 17**

Join us on June 17, 2020 at 6 pm for our Annual General Meeting; all are welcome! TTLT's AGM will be hosted using an online format this year. The AGM will highlight what TTLT accomplished in 2019 along with guest speaker, Brendon Samuels, on the topic "Bird-Friendly Buildings and Communities in the Forest City". The AGM gives members a chance

to elect new directors who will guide the organization in the year to come. Anyone wishing to become a member may sign up on our website or mail a cheque to Thames Talbot Land

Trust for \$50. If mailing a cheque, please indicate your donation is intended for a membership. All reading materials for the AGM will be made available on our website page listed below. If you are not able to access these materials online, or are unsure of your membership status, contact us for more information. Staff members continue to check for messages while working from home.

Email: info@ttl.t.ca

Phone: 519-858-3442

<https://www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca/agm2020>

Thames Talbot Land Trust

PO Box 25054

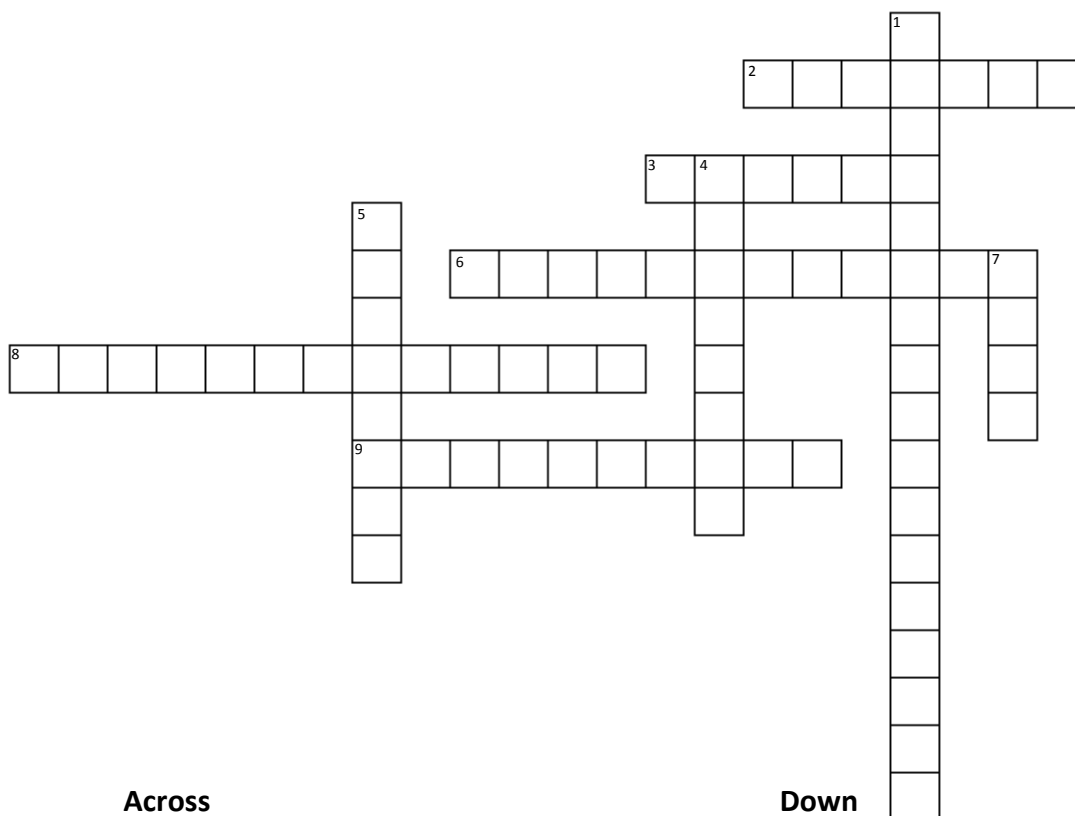
London, ON N6C 6A8

Do you think you know all about environmental issues?

Solutions will be posted at www.thamestalbotlandtrust.ca/crossword_answers

Make it a challenge and donate to TTLT if you can't finish the puzzle. Tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$20.

Environmental Issues



Across

Down

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2. Also known as an illness or sickness | 1. Something that can be used again and again (two words) |
| 3. A plant or animal known to an area before European settlement | 4. A water form due to certain pollutants in the atmosphere (two words) |
| 6. What is melting at the North and South poles? (three words) | 5. An introduced plant or animal that causes harm |
| 8. Climate Change (two words) | 7. Smoke and other pollutants combined with fog |
| 9. Temperatures have been rising since which revolution? | |

Bloopers on the Trail

Are you looking for an easy and creative way to spruce up your wardrobe? Do you like wearing nature-themed attire? Then have we got a solution for you! Come walking with us through the meadow on a fall day, and you too can discover the wonders of Tick Trefoil. Simply walk past this plant and your clothes will have instant seedy decoration. The plant uses this strategy to disperse its seeds far and wide by sticking them to deer and other mammals, who wander around and drop seeds wherever they walk. And it's not just Tick Trefoil; there are also other sticky seeds such as burrs and beggarticks. Their Velcro-like coating ensures they stick to any

passers-by. For an extra treat, put your seedy clothes through a washer-dryer cycle and transfer these beautiful adornments to everything else you own. Your family members will delight in discovering a seedy pattern on their favourite shirt or a clump of burrs in their socks.

Thames Talbot 
Land Trust

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- Rebecca
Launchbury

